

The Girl From the Effete East

By ARTHUR DENSMORE

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BARRINGTON was completing his first year of practice when Theodore Tuppenheim arrived in Knuckleville. Mr. Tuppenheim was selling stock in the "Charitable Gold Mining Company at 5 cents per share, price to advance to 10 cents at the end of thirty days. Incidentally he found time to foster in Barrington's bosom the spirit of discontent which ten months' fruitless waiting for clients had engendered. If he were a clever, clean cut young man like Barrington, did Barrington know what he'd do? Move west. He wouldn't fritter away his time in a mossbacked New England hamlet where people looked down on a fellow just because they'd known him all his life and could remember when he was a little shaver and went with patches on his trousers. No, sir. He'd just gather together his earthly possessions and take the first train for Gilt Gulch, Nev. There was the coming town; there lay the opportunity for an able young man to rise. No reason in the world why he should not be in the United States senate within five years. That would be coming some? Well, everybody and everything came some in that country. Why, sir, where the thriving city of Gilt Gulch now stood there had been less than two years since naught but sagebrush and alkali. And now look at it—just look at it! Six thousand inhabitants and more coming by every train! Simply couldn't get houses up fast enough for 'em. Had to camp out in tents. And every blamed one of 'em making money. Why, sir, you couldn't find a bootblack in Gilt Gulch who was worth less than fifty thousand!

This vision of wealth and political prominence was quite too much for Barrington. He adjusted his affairs in Knuckleville, which was no very difficult matter, took tearful leave of numerous relatives and of a certain pretty damsel, who was not yet a relative, but had rashly promised to become one whenever Barrington's income should suffice for the support of two persons, and hid himself to Gilt Gulch, promising to send souvenir postcards from every municipality he passed through on the way.

Now, underneath the lurid exaggeration with which Mr. Theodore Tuppenheim had clothed his narrative of the rise of Gilt Gulch there lay a respectable substratum of truth, and the combination of Barrington's ingenious appearance with certain letters of introduction to persons financially prominent in Gilt Gulch, which Mr. Tuppenheim procured for him, resulted in his speedily establishing a thriving practice. For the most part it was work in connection with the location of mining claims, and, besides numerous fees in cash, Barrington acquired several claims of his own, which he disposed of profitably.

In brief, at the end of a year Barrington had waxed so prosperous as to feel himself warranted in marrying. The Knuckleville Weekly Times announced editorially that it understood that young Mr. Barrington, for whom its readers would remember, the Times had predicted a brilliant career when he hung out his shingle in Knuckleville, was now one of the leading men in the west, and the other village maidens were openly jealous of Susie Cutler, whose good fortune it was to be to marry a millionaire.

But Susie herself had no illusions. She even refused to permit Barrington to come east for the marriage. Her childhood lessons of thrift and economy had taken deep root in her mind, and she would not, she said, have the price of a round trip railroad ticket thrown away. If Barrington felt that he must spend the money, let him buy a cabinet organ or a secondhand piano for the front parlor. They would be married in their own house at Gilt Gulch and after that take a little wedding trip to Colorado Springs or maybe Denver. Perhaps, being a prudent damsel, Susie desired to have a glance at Gilt Gulch before she committed herself irrevocably. At any rate, matters had been thus arranged, and the date set for the wedding being but two days away and Susie due to arrive that afternoon, Barrington was in the state of ecstasy appropriate to such circumstances. It was in this moment of supreme happiness that misfortune befell him.

The work Barrington had been doing requires to be performed with great accuracy; otherwise it is not only valueless, but may be the occasion of great loss to the client. Now, it is possible that Barrington possessed genius. People who have that, you know, are apt to be careless as to details. Perhaps it was merely that, being deeply in love, he could not concentrate his mind upon his work. However that may be, Hartford, the attorney whose office was next to Barrington's, had discovered in the course of an investigation of the records that Barrington had filed documents containing serious errors. He spoke to Barrington about it in a perfectly friendly way. Barrington received his kindly admonitions with a contempt which he was at no pains to disguise. Why should he pay heed to the remarks of a man who wore baggy trousers and long hair and played fero, to say nothing of becoming intoxicated now and then? He knew well

enough what inspired these critical observations. Hartford was jealous of the prosperity which Barrington had so rapidly achieved. Let him stop caviling, said the virtuous Barrington to himself, and seek success by leading a sober life, as he did.

Feeling that he had been insulted, Barrington thereafter confined his communications with Hartford to a curt "How are you?" accompanied by a barely perceptible nod when they chanced to meet. It was with a good deal of surprise, therefore, that Hartford, glancing up from his rather dilapidated desk as he heard the door open, perceived Barrington entering his office. One had not to look at Barrington twice to be convinced that he was badly frightened. His eyes, which ordinarily regarded those about him with an air of easy toleration, were wide with terror, and his well chiseled features, customarily wearing an air of placid conceit, were now white and drawn. His manner toward Hartford was no longer supercilious. All his carefully constructed attitude of dignity had vanished.

"You've been in this part of the country longer than I have, Hartford," said he. "I want your advice as a friend, you know."

Hartford nodded and withdrew his pipe from his lips. "Sure," said he succinctly. "What's the row?"

"Why, you see," said Barrington, "it seems that in filing the papers for Jim Busby on that last mining claim of his I made a slight error. I have been doing a large business, you know, Hartford—a very large business—and it was inevitable that I should make a mistake occasionally. It seems that some unscrupulous persons have taken advantage of this purely technical slip and have jumped Busby's claim, and he is very much exercised about it."

"I should think he might be," Hartford observed.

"Yes," repeated Barrington, "he is much exercised and quite unreasonable about it. He came into my office a few moments ago and demanded an explanation. Of course I couldn't tell him anything except that it was just a mistake such as any man might make, and he said I was lying to him. He said I was too smart to make a fool break like that and that I was in with the gang that were trying to do him out of a claim that would have made him rich. I argued with him the best I could, but it didn't budge him. He said he didn't see that it made much difference, anyhow, whether I was a fool or a knave, because either way I hadn't any right to live, and he wound up by saying that he'd just go down to the Jolly Dog and get a few drinks to put him in the right frame of mind and then he'd come back and reduce the membership of the Gilt Gulch bar by one."

It is significant of Hartford's broad and tolerant temperament that he did not remind Barrington that he had previously predicted such a catastrophe as had now befallen. Nevertheless a slight glimmer of amusement stole across his face.

"So you want my advice, do you?" he asked.

"I should appreciate it very much," said Barrington.

"Well, you shall have it," said Hartford laconically, rapping the bowl of his pipe against the heel of his shoe. "If Jim Busby were out gunning for me and I couldn't shoot any better than you can, and I had a comfortable little sum saved, as you have, and there were a pretty girl in New England who didn't know any better than to love me, as she does you, I'd go east on the half past 2 train, and I wouldn't hurry back."

"But the trouble is," Barrington explained, "Susie—Miss Cutler, that is—will be here on the train that gets in at 2:50. The trains pass on the first siding out, you know. The fact is we are to be married day after tomorrow at noon. You'll pardon my omitting to send you an invitation, won't you? It was quite unintentional. I've been so busy."

"Oh," Hartford broke in, with a deprecatory wave of his arm, "you need not apologize. It's just one of those little mistakes a busy man is bound to make every now and then. I haven't Susie's disposition. I'll forgive you."

Then Hartford looked at his watch and found that it was twenty minutes past 2.

"You'll have to move lively, my boy," he said. "Keep an eye open for Jim, and if the coast is clear take the 2:30. If it isn't, walk over to Sand City and take the next one there."

"But about Susie," Barrington remonstrated.

"Pshaw!" growled Hartford. "That's easy enough. Leave a note for her with the station master, telling her to go back to Colorado Springs and you'll meet her there. If you don't have time to write a note, have the station master tell her you've been called away on a life and death matter and that she's to go to the hotel and wait until you send her word. Don't you worry about the girl. She'll prefer a slightly delayed wedding to an expedited funeral. Hurry up now. You've just about time to make it."

As he slipped down the main street of Gilt Gulch on his way to the station Barrington caught a glimpse of Jim Busby's gaunt profile as he stood at the bar of the Jolly Dog, his back toward the entrance. Barrington's indolent heart rejoiced as he reflected that the ten mile walk to Sand City would now be unnecessary. It was just twenty-eight minutes past 2 when he reached the station. He gave the necessary instructions concerning Susie to the station master and rushed out upon the platform. But the train which made up at Gilt Gulch was not yet ready to depart. A freight car had left the rails, blocking the track. Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, and still the obstruction remained. Barrington

grew uneasy. Jim Busby might at any moment deem that he had imbibed a quantity of liquor commensurate with his contemplated task and begin to search for him. But at the end of twenty minutes, to his great relief, the perspiring train crew succeeded in re-planting the derailed car, and the freight train pulled slowly out upon a siding. Even as it did so Barrington caught sight of the 2:50 train as it rounded the curve just beyond the station.

A moment later Susie Cutler, her trim little figure set off by a skillfully tailored gray traveling suit and her face wearing the look of determination befitting a girl who had just completed a journey nearly across the continent alone, descended to the platform of Gilt Gulch station. Barrington rushed toward her joyfully. Within three steps of her he encountered an obstacle—a very serious obstacle. This was nothing less than the muzzle of a revolver. Behind the revolver stood Mr. James Busby.

"Now, young man," said Mr. Busby, "we'll attend to your little matter, and we won't be long doing it."

Then Busby became suddenly conscious of a voice, evidently feminine, proceeding from some point in his rear and of the light pressure of a hand upon his arm.

"Do you know," said the voice, "it's dreadfully careless of you pointing that thing at anybody so. Why, it might go off."

Turning about, Busby looked into the pliant features of Susie Cutler. He decided unhesitatingly that, notwithstanding some freckles and the tendency of the nose to turn up, it was a rather pleasing face to view.

"So it might," said Busby slowly. "So it might."

"Well, then, stop aiming it at Hartford, Barrington," she commanded. "You make me nervous."

"Fact is," said Busby, "I was sort of planning to shoot Mr. Barrington." He had lowered his weapon and spoke very calmly and deliberately.

"What!" shrieked the girl. "You have the audacity to stand there and tell me you mean to commit a cold blooded murder? Where are the police? A splendid place this must be to live in, where a man goes out to kill another as coolly as he'd eat his breakfast!"

"That's the way with all you folks from out Boston way," grumbled Busby. "You're always getting murder and the administration of justice mixed. I ain't going to murder him. I'm going to execute him. He's done me dirt, and if he ain't killed he'll do somebody else dirt. So for the good of everybody he'd ought to be shot. What do you care anyway? Ain't no relative of yours, is he?"

"Why, no," she answered in some confusion, "he isn't a relative exactly—that is, he"—

A gleam of comprehension shone in Busby's eyes.

"Come to think of it," said he, "I heard something about his being going to get married. Be you the girl?"

She nodded.

"Yes," she answered simply, "I'm the girl."

"Then," said Busby, "it's clear enough to my mind that in interfering with this execution you're preventing me from doing you a great favor. Howsomever, if you stick to it that you don't want him shot and if you'll take him out of Nevada and keep him out—"

The girl did not wait for him to finish. She transferred her grasp from Busby's arm to that of Barrington, who during the preceding conversation had stood silent, his face white, his limbs trembling, cold sweat beading his forehead.

"Come, Harry," she said imperiously. Meekly, with bowed head and downcast eyes, Barrington suffered her to lead him aboard the train, which was now, the track being clear, about to move eastward.

Jim Busby sat down upon the edge of the platform and burst into a roar of laughter. Long after the train had disappeared around the curve below the station the station master found him there, his broad shoulders still shaking with merriment.

"Well, you doddering idiot," said the station master, "what's the joke?"

"Oh, ain't he going to get his all right, though?" queried the mirthful Busby. "Did you hear her 'Come, Harry,' him and snake him aboard the train like he'd been a puppy bitched to a string? He got out of life being executed, but he's getting a life sentence, and that's a whole lot worse."

Senatorial Repartee.

Once in the senate chamber John J. Ingalls was directing some remarks to Senator Hoar of Massachusetts. The other senator from that state, Mr. Dawes, having come in while Mr. Ingalls was speaking, thought the words were meant for his ear, and so, interrupting, he asked Ingalls if he was directing the remarks at him. The Kansas senator turned slowly around, for Mr. Dawes sat behind him, and then, with delicious intonation, but an instant wit, he said, "I was directing my remarks to the successor of Charles Sumner and not to the successor of Daniel Webster."

The repartee has become traditional, and the utterance was at once placed alongside of that reply of Conkling to Senator Thurman, which is also traditional in the senate chamber. Conkling was speaking, and Thurman had said, interrupting him, "Does the senator aim his remarks at me; he constantly turns to me?" when Mr. Conkling, with delicious gravity, bowing to Thurman, with whom he was very friendly, said: "When I turn to the senator I turn as the Mussulman turns to Mecca; I turn as I would turn to the common-law of England—the world's most copious fount of jurisprudence."

THE SOUTH'S INDIFFERENCE.

Lack of Interest in the Question of Forest Conservation One of the Greatest Drawbacks to the Success of the Movement.

(By John H. Finney, Secretary Appalachian National Forest Association.)

The South faces many problems affecting its well-being and prosperity—it has the many grave ones involved in the race question; in child and other labor problems; in educational problems; in combating the boll weevil; in eradicating the so-called hookworm; in overturning many gross misconceptions concerning the South and its rightful place in the Nation; in work for placing it on a sure foundation for coming greatness and wealth and power, and many more, bravely and with determination to solve them rightly!

The largest economic question of them all, the one bearing the most of menace and danger to the whole South—to the South of today as well as to the glorious South that will be—the Forest Question—IT IGNORES!

The South's indifference to Forest Conservation is, therefore, a matter of grave concern to those who know forest conditions, and we may with propriety sharply set forth some of the serious facts bearing on this vital question.

The South contains over 200 million acres of forest area with a stand of perhaps 600 billion feet, nearly two-fifths of the total timber area of the Nation and over one-fourth of the standing timber.

It contains the most valuable species found on the continent—all the long-leaf pine, all the cypress, all the hardwood; more significant, the Appalachian region is the natural home of the hardwoods and is practically the only remaining virgin source of supply of this indispensable forest product.

Apart from the area owned and held as woodlots which, though large in acreage is relatively unimportant as a source of timber supply, the great majority, perhaps 75 per cent of the South's timber wealth, is owned by "aliens" (not used as a term of reproach), whose only motive is to cut it and convert it into wealth at the earliest possible moment.

With 14,000 sawmills, or 45 per cent of those in the entire Nation, located in the South, turning out lumber valued at 300 million dollars yearly, this "conversion" is going on so rapidly that the entire exhaustion of our timber wealth is in sight! In 15 or 20 years, at the present rate of cutting, the timber industry of the South comes to an end—if nothing be done to prevent it!

These are facts so serious that no right-minded man who loves the South should complacently contemplate them; so full of dangers that it should mean the complete awakening of the South to them; so difficult that their solution requires the utmost of patriotism and unselfishness and forethought. Look into the matter briefly. These lands are private property, whether owned by original citizens or corporations, and such ownership by aliens has been encouraged and gladly aided in all the States. These owners, therefore, are welcome citizens; their co-operation and capital have been of vast value in the upbuilding of the commerce of the States; they have paid their taxes; they are large employers of labor; their product goes to all parts of the world; they have certain vested an inalienable rights. This is the owner's side and his just contention, and must be clearly recognized.

There is another side to the question which deeply concerns the State and it merits thought. It may be stated thus: Suppose all the forests worth cutting in Georgia to be owned by one man or one corporation engaged in their complete cutting; suppose these operations are wanton and wasteful and to the highest degree harmful to the continued material prosperity of Georgia; suppose that a continuance of these methods meant the total destruction in 25 years of this great Georgia natural resource, with its inevitable desolation of vast areas of forest lands that are of value only when forested; suppose these operations mean not only diminished tax returns yearly, but a complete cessation of taxes at the end of 15 years—has Georgia no voice in methods being pursued to these inevitable ends? Has Georgia no concern in a matter of her very life as a fair and prosperous State? Has Georgia no duty to her citizens to prevent her total desolation?

Substitute for Georgia the "South" and for the "supposed owner of all the land" several hundred owners of the same land, all imbued with the single and same idea of "exploitation," and the same viewpoint applies, because in the entire South there is hardly yet in evidence

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a single agency at work or in contemplation that is moving to remedy these conditions! There exists some "Obvious State Duties in Forest Conservation" which we will try to make plain in our next letter, for with the co-operation of the State and the owners there can be brought to pass the perpetuation of the South's timber wealth.

Back to the Farm.

Danville Bee.

The nation-wide popular rebellion against the extortionate high prices of foods and the marvelous developments attained in modern progressive and intensive farming are conspiring to bring about a most desirable result and to arouse and emphasize the cry "Back to the Soil."

However much the domination of the markets by the trusts and their manipulation of values may have contributed to the high prices of all food products, back of and beyond all this in promoting such results are the rapid increase of urban population and the decrease or failure of proportionate increase in the rural population which produces the foods for the masses. The desertion of the farms by the youths and girls in large numbers and their removal to cities to become wage-earners, has greatly diminished the productive capacity of the country and largely increased the number of consumers, who are not producers.

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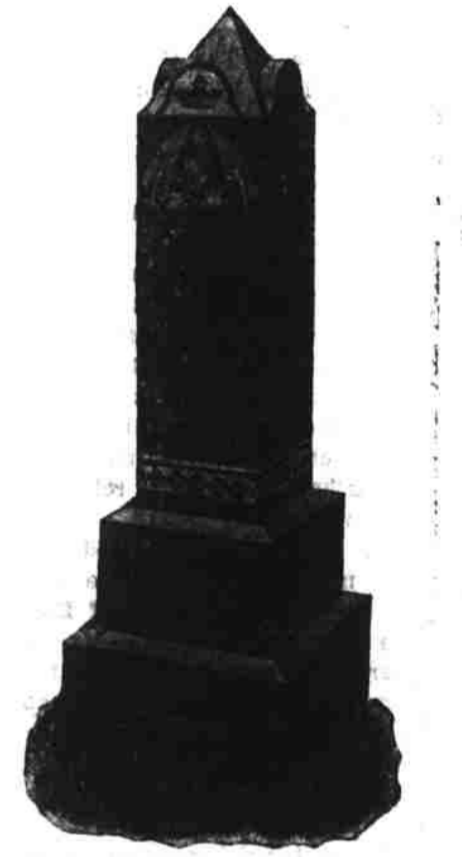
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