THE FIGHT

BY EMERSON HOUGH

AUTHOR OF "THE MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGNUS G. KETTNER

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SYNOPSIS.

John Calhoun, former secretary of state in Tyler's cabinet with the final exception of Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Bancroft, arrives in Washington, Texas, with a message to the Baroness von Ritz, wife of the Austrian minister, who counters the baroness and assists her in keeping her secret from the knowledge of John Calhoun, and as a pledge that she will keep Calhoun's secret she promises to bring the baroness of England toward Mexico, she gives Tyler a slipper, the mate to one he already has, and tells him that Calhoun's mission is to make arrangements to be married in Elizabeth Churchill's slipper. Calhoun's mission to any one will try to prevent the marriage. Tyler, in his enthusiasm, promises to help Calhoun, and Calhoun, in his enthusiasm, fortnightly sends the baroness' slipper to Elizabeth Churchill in a box of cigars. The marriage is planned. Calhoun finds the baroness in Montreal, she having succeeded in getting the slipper from Elizabeth's dressing table. The baroness tells him the slipper he had—Calhoun's mate from the slipper he gave Tyler—Pakenham, saying that if the United States should annex Texas Pakenham's king would have her head. Later Calhoun arrives Tyler to head a party in Washington to prevent the annexation of Texas. Calhoun is found unconscious in Washington, Texas, by Nicholas Tyler, who finds the slipper caused the breaking off of his brother's marriage to Elizabeth Churchill. Nicholas follows the baroness to Washington, Texas, and there he finds Calhoun and that she has left for England with Mexico. The baroness tells him that the mate to the slipper is in the Oregon boundary on the forty-ninth parallel. Nicholas Tyler, Calhoun's friend, tells him the slipper of Elizabeth Tyler betrays Pakenham's key to the Oregon boundary. Nicholas Tyler, Calhoun's friend, tells Calhoun the slipper is lost. Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Calhoun's friend, apologizes, Calhoun forgives his friend, and he declares that he will be "a man" and "fight it out." Calhoun's fight is "fought out" by Pakenham.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Proxy of Pakenham.

A man can not possess anything that is better than a good friend; nor can anything that is worse than a bad one.—Bionidas.

When I reached the central part of the city, I did not immediately come to Elmhurst mansion. Instead, I returned to my office, for I felt no concern to see any of my friends or even to take up my duties in business with my chief. It is not for me to tell what feelings were in my mind at this time, Helena von Ritz.

Sleep such as I could gain, refreshed me not at all. Sleep is an evil, and I was in a state of mind, when finally I once more sought out Mr. Calhoun.

He had not expected me, but received me politely and asked what I had gone on about his own plans and with his own affairs. Mr. Calhoun's turrets is doing me the honor of an early morning call," he began. "She is with me now, and I am in another part of the house. As there is matter of some importance to come up, I shall ask you to attend."

He dispatched a servant, and presently the lady, mentioned joined us. She was a pleasing picture enough in her robe of black lace and sulphur-colored silks, but her face was none too happy, and her eyes, I seemed to me, bore traces either of unrest or tears. Mr. Calhoun handed her to a chair, where she began to use her lanpid but effective fan.

"Now, it gives us the greatest regret, my dear sister," began Mr. Calhoun, "to have Gen. Almonte and your husband return to their own country. We have made quite a pleasant acquaintance much, and I regret the disruption of the friendly relations between our countries."

She said the sort of gesture with her fan, and he went on: "It is the regret also of all, my dear lady, that your husband seems so shamelessly to have abandoned you. I am quite aware, if you will allow me to be so frank, that you need some financial assistance."

"My country is ruined," said she. "Also, sense I am ruined, as you say, I have no means of life. I have not even money to secure me some home. That tenor Van Zandt—"

"Yes, Van Zandt did much for us, through your agency, senora. We have benefited by that, and I therefore repeat to you my indebtedness to me personally. I am sorry to tell you that he has signified to me that he will go away against your country. I hear also that your late friend, Mr. Polk, has forgotten most of his promises to you."

"His! I hate also!" she broke out. "He broke his promise to Senor Van Zandt, to my husband, to me!"

Calhoun smiled in his grim fashion. "I am not surprised to hear all this, my dear lady, for you but point out a known characteristic of that gentleman. He has made us many promises which he has forgotten, and offered us even of late distinguished honors which he now seems not to accept. But, since I have been personally responsible to you for some of these things which have gone forward, I wish to know what personal amends I can; and even I shall make them for the good which you have done to this country. Believe me, madam, you served your own country also in so ill manner. This situation could not have been prevented, and it is not your fault. I am to blame, I say that. Had you and I been left alone there would have been no war."

"But I am poor, I have nothing!" she replied.

There was indeed much to her situation, as I knew well, for I had been through her own act that negotiation which would have made her more broken off. All chance of Mexico regain property in Texas was lost through the influence of Mrs. Van Zandt. Now, when all was done, here she was, deserted even by that whose head been her allies in this work.

"My dear senora," said John Calhoun, becoming less formal and more kindly, "you shall have funds sufficient to make you comfortable at least for a time after your return to Mexico. I am not authorized to draw upon our exchequer, and you, of course, would not accept anything in these matters. I regret that my personal fortune is not so large as it might be, but, in such measure as I may, I shall assist you, because I know you need assistance. In return, you must leave this country. The flag is down which once floated over the house of Mexico here."

She hid her face behind her fan, said Calhoun turned aside.

"Madam, have you ever seen this slipper?" he asked, suddenly placing upon the table the slipper which refer a purpose I had brought with me, and meantime turned upon the table.

She flushed a dark look, and did not speak.

"One night, some time ago, your husband pressed a lady across this town to get possession of that very slipper and its contents! There was in the toe of that little shoe a message. As you know, we got from it information of the highest importance. I helped to carry out. Now, we perhaps you have had some personal amus against the other lady in these same complicated affairs, I have taken the liberty of sending a special messenger to ask her presence here this morning. I should like you too to be present, if that is possible, to part with such friendship as may exist in the premises."

I looked suddenly at Mr. Calhoun. It seemed to me he was planning without my aid.

"Yes," he said to me, smiling, "I have neglected to mention to you that the Baroness von Ritz has sent for a special messenger of this place, if you please, I shall now send for her also."

He signaled to his old negro attendant. Presently the lady appeared at the door, and with a deep low answer to our personal grief, she whose entered, followed closely by Mr. Calhoun's inseparable friend, old Ward.

The difference in breeding between these two women was to me at a glance. The Dona Lucresia was beautiful in a way, but lacked the thoroughbred quality which comes in the highest types of womanhood. Affected by nothing but a somewhat mercenary or personal grief, she showed her lack of gameness in adversity. On the other hand, Helena von Ritz, who had lived tragedy all her life, and was now in the climax of such tragedy, was smiling and debonair as though she had been anything but that wholly content with life! She was certainly in some high place, socially, material, caught up here and there on shoulders and secured with silken knots. Her white neck shoulder her arms were partly bare with the short sleeves of the time. She stood, composed and easy, a figure fit for any company or any court, and seemed shaming our little assembly, which seemed was a court at all, only a pot vate meeting in the office of a discredited and disowned leader in a new publican government. Her costume and her bearing were Helena, von Ritz's answer to a woman's fate! A deep color flamed in her cheeks, she stood with head erect and lips smiling brilliantly. Her curtsey was grace itself. Our little party was glorified.

"I interrupt you, gentlemen," she began.

"You the contrary, I am sure, my dear lady," said Dr. Ward, "Senator Calhoun told me he wished you to meet Senor Almonte."

"Yes," resumed Calhoun, "I was just speaking with this lady on some matters concerned with the little slipper. I am minded as he held it up quietly between thumb and finger. "Do you recognize it, Madam Baroness?"

"Ah, my little shoe!" she exclaimed. "But see, it has not been well cared for, this."

"It traveled in my war bag from Oregon to Washington," said I. "We have bullet molds and powder flasks may have damaged it."

"It still would serve as a little purse, perhaps, if you would have the baroness wind certain plans, which you have helped us to carry out. Now, we perhaps you have had some personal amusement at the other lady in these same complicated affairs, I have taken the liberty of sending a special messenger to ask her presence here this morning. I should like you too to be present, if that is possible, to part with such friendship as may exist in the premises."

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"Yes, Van Zandt Did Much for Us, Through Your Agency, Senora."

"Madam," said Mr. Calhoun, "we have met years ago."

She flushed upon him a been look. "It is a young country," said she, but I remember. You foolish, dear Americans! One could have loved you for that."

"Eh, what?" said Dr. Ward, turning to her. "My dear lady, we are too old for that; and as for the other—"

He did not know how hard this charge came to Calhoun, who had actual Helena von Ritz was brave and smiling.

"You are men," she said, "such as we do not have in our courts of Europe. Men of women—that is what this country produces."

"Madam," said Calhoun, "I myself am a very poor sort of man. I am tired. Our plans have failed this month. I cannot live long, at best. What you see in me is simply a purpose—a purpose to accomplish something for my country—purpose which has overcome itself does not desire to see fulfilled. Republics do not reward us. That is why I say shall be our chief reward. I have asked you here also to accept the thanks of all of us who know the intricacies of the events which have taken place. I know, we owe you Texas! Texas not yonder lady, but myself, was the author of the disaster that threatened us. Here was, after all, a simple matter, which, because she only matched fallen with Van Zandt, overwhelmed all those who had faith in neither men, women nor nations. Had all gone well, we might perhaps have had a war for more, for Oregon."

"Would you like Oregon?" she asked, looking at him with a full smile and a low voice.

"More than my life! More than my fortune! More than my name! Clear and keen as that of youth.

"Oregon!" she said.

"All! We do not own all! Perhaps we do not deserve it. Surely we could not expect it. But, if we do, one-half of what that fellow Polk is claiming, we have earned. Oregon is more than we deserve or could ever have. Which would be hard on the southwest, England, as we all know, would prefer that the barrier of our helplessness in Oregon."

"Oregon!" she repeated. "I have had out to him a document whose appearance I, at least, recognized.

"I am tired of Oregon," he said, "but it chances that I have been able to do for my country a little something in favor. Your assistant, Mr. Trist, has been good to me in turn. Perhaps I will ask permission to do for him."

Mr. Calhoun's old negro attendants were nervously opening the door. Presently, he put down his cup and said: "It is true, but vicious. She declined Helena von Ritz's outstretched hand, and swept in a curtsey. Adieu!" said she. "I go!"

Mr. Calhoun gravely offered her an arm; and so with a rustle of her silks she passed out. Helena von Ritz was happy lady who helped to make our map for us.

The baroness herself turned. "I ought not to remain," she hesitated.

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PHILOSOPHY TO THE RESCUE

Pat Went Without His Steak, But at That Everything Was Not Lost.

Charles Nagel, secretary of commerce and labor, says the Irish race has, in addition to its sentiment and romance, a lot of philosophy as one of the characteristics.

"The best illustration I ever heard of this," he explained to a dinner party one evening, "was the case of a poor Irishman who had been given free, juicy piece of steak. He was a religious man, he placed the steak in front of him, and bowed his head as the tones surrounding his benefactor's house, he folded his hands, closed his eyes, and gave thanks to heaven for the meal. Then he was in the attitude of prayer, a dog rushed up and captured the steak. He looked around in time to see the food disappearing over the fill.

"Thank heaven," he exclaimed, again closing his eyes, 'he left me my appetite!'"—The Bobbs Magazine.

HAD CAUGHT THEM.

He (after he had kissed her)—My what's that notice back of us?

She—I guess people trying his new motion picture machine.

Family Enough.

Horace, five year old, has a brother, sister, a sister, three, and with his father and mother, he deemed this family quite sufficient. Recently, however, he was told by his aunt that a little baby was to be added to the family, he protested—

"I think papa and mama might be at spend their money for more strawberries and ice cream sugar for me," he observed, indignantly.

On a certain day a dozen cans of the house are "strawberries" he knew what that meant. His spirit of revolt nearly got the better of him, however, when a second doctor came. A few hours later, coffee the doctor had departed, he Aunt Ella told him he had a new little brother. Horace brightened, and ipioed to his mothe n room. "It's all right, mamma," he assured her. "There's only one."

Serenity.

"The true religious man, amid all the ills of life, stands serene, with head and entertains a peaceful heart. Why, going out to the world, amid all the trials of the city, the agony of the rich, the oppression of the thirsty tyrants, the fierce democracy of the poor, the rage of the ignorant zealot, the sage of Athena, was still the same. Serene, he was, calm under hardness; can stand blows and be content; a rock amid the waves—Socrates, the wonderful, stands the few or many may scream, calumniate, blasphemy, curse, he is the same but the cawing of the seabird about sunset, Socrates, deep-rooted stone!"—Theodore Parker.

The Fly.

"Where on earth do those flies come from?" is a frequent and despairing question.

They may come down the chimneys. If the fireplaces have tipping dampers. They should be closed at all times. An aspirantcle falling off in that direction will be fatal.

If the chimneys have not the tipping dampers, a sufficient weight for a window can be fitted into the fireplace, or, perhaps, a large wire paper may be stuffed up the chimney.

Either method is successful, and is simple to be proof to get rid of these summer pests.

AT THE PARSONAGE.

Coffee Does Not Agree With Them.

"Wife and I had a serious time of it while we were coffee drinkers.

"She had gastritis, headaches, belch fast and would have spells of sickness, while I secured a daily headache from the coffee.

"We naturally sought relief by drugs without avail, for it is now plain enough that no drug will cure the disease induced by coffee; and we, in particularly, so long as the drug lasts, cause the coffee to stay.

"Finally we thought we would try leaving off coffee and using Postum. I said that my head would become unbearable magic, and my old 'freshjin' nervousness left. One day we tried, Postum you know my gastritis has gone?

"We can hardly realize what Postum has done for us.

"I have begun to talk to others. Wife's father and mother were both coffee drinkers and suffering from headaches left entirely a short time after they changed from coffee to Postum.

"I began to enquire among my patrons and found to my astonishment that numbers of them use Postum in place of coffee. Many of the ministers who have visited our parsonage have become enthusiastic champions of Postum." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

BABY.

Cause, Effect.

Jessie—How does Sue manage to win so many admirers?

Joe—Her father is in charge of the local weather bureau, and she gets him to predict the result of the contest, and then she guesses the other way.

For the son of man there is no noble crown, but a crown of thorns.

THAT AWFUL BACKACHE

Cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Morton's Gap, Kentucky.—"I suffered two years with female disorders, bearing-down pains, and had a backache almost all the time. I was completely run down. On advice of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and Liver Pills and an orderly good life, I am now more than two years and I have not had an ache or pain. I do my own work, washing and everything. Your medicine has saved my life. I recommend it to every sufferer I can reach. I tell my neighbors, if you think of a testimonial that help others you may publish it."—Mrs. OLLIE HAYNES, Box 12, Morton's Gap, Kentucky.

Backache is a symptom of organic weakness or derangement. It is a warning that some part is not doing its work. Nothing we know of will do this so surely as Lydia E. Pinkham's Compound.

Letters to Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass., for special advice. Your letter will be answered confidential, and the advice free.

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William Harper, Dean, Appleton, Wis.

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REAL ESTATE.

LOOK! Great Farm Bargain

Fine Farm, 160 acres, 3 miles Ashland, Ashland County, Wisconsin. The Great Bayfield County Fair was held on this farm last year. Good 7-room house, good barn, 40 acres cleared, balance well timbered. Price $40 per acre, $2 down and $2 per month. Write for Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

FOR SALE—Fine Farm, 160 acres, 3 miles Ashland, Ashland County, Wisconsin. The Great Bayfield County Fair was held on this farm last year. Good 7-room house, good barn, 40 acres cleared, balance well timbered. Price $40 per acre, $2 down and $2 per month. Write for Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

FOR SALE—One of the finest improved farms of 160 acres in Ashland County, Wisconsin. Only 3 miles from Ashland. Fine Farm Bulletin on F. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

CHOICE—Iowa Farms, Corn Belt, Near Transportation, Good Schools, Good Roads, Good Markets, Moderate Prices. Write for Free Illustrated Farm Bulletin. Iowa Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

ARKANSAS LANDS 10 acres, without or home, $100 and up. Write for free illustrated Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

MAKE your farm home in the Bluffton district of Northern Michigan. Write for free illustrated Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

THE CORN and wheat belt of Minnesota, and Dakota. Write for free illustrated Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

FOR SALE—Fertile Farm Lands in Virginia. Write for free illustrated Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

BEST LANDS in Southern Michigan. Write for free illustrated Farm Bulletin. Ashland County Land Co., Ashland, Wisconsin.

Particular as to Color and Quality.

Albert, aged three, heard his mother ask his grandma, who was going shopping, to bring her a bunch of blue bells (curlers), at which Albert began crying, exclaiming:

"I don't want a whole bunch of little black kids. I only want one little sister, and I want her white. Me, too."

A Statement of Fact.

The world is very, very old. It has seen a great many things in its long, strange and eventful, and it grows older every year.—Boston Transcript.