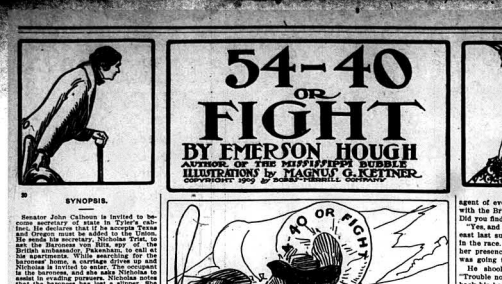


**SYNOPSIS.**

Senator John Calhoun is invited to become secretary of state in Texas cabinet. He declares that if he accepts Texas and Oregon must be added to the Union. He sends his secretary, Nicholas Trist, to Texas to negotiate annexation. Trist is met by British emissary, Pakenham, who visits his apartments. While searching for the honorable home, a carriage drives up and Nicholas is invited to enter. The occupant of the carriage proves to be a woman who needs to evade pursuers. Nicholas notes that the baroness has lost a slipper. She promises a big reward, but extracts a pledge that she will tell Calhoun what he wants to know concerning Texas annexation. Pursuers arrive and question Nicholas given her a trinket he intended for his sweetheart, Elizabeth Chenault. Calhoun becomes secretary of state. Nicholas reaches Texas and begins his business, but the latter plans he has invited that night. The baroness says she will try to prevent the murderous drunken congressman whom Nicholas knocks down. Nicholas discovers that Texas sends the baroness' daughter, Elizabeth, by mistake, and the wedding is delayed. Nicholas finds the baroness in Mexico, she having escaped from Texas. Pakenham, representing England's intentions regarding Oregon, tells him that the slipper he had in his possession belongs to the Duchess of Malvern. She tells Nicholas that she placed a note in the slipper which caused the breaking off of his marriage, and that she intends to try to prevent Nicholas's marriage she has done. Nicholas decides to follow.

**CHAPTER XXX.—Continued.**

The captain stood at the head of the front team, his hand resting on the yoke as he leaned against the bowed neck of one of the oxen. The men and women were silent, as about the beasts which dragged the wagons. These latter stood as their leaders, some even thus early in the day, for water hereabout was scarce and bitter to the taste. So, at least, stood in silence, we made the salutations of the desert. So, presently, we exchanged the news of east and west.

"There is to-day no news of the gold ships," he said to us, as we communicated. They knew nothing of Oregon. I knew nothing of the east. A national election had been held, regarding which I have not even the names of the candidates of either party, not to mention results. All I could do was to guess and to speculate, in the interim, on the white top of the foremost wagon: "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!"

"Is Polk elected?" I asked the captain of the train.

He nodded. "He shore is," said he. "We're comin' out to take Oregon. What's the news?"

My own grim news was that Oregon was ours and must be ours. I shook hands with a hundred men on that, our badge clasped in stern and silent grip. Then, after a time, I urged other questions foremost in my own mind. Had they seen a small party westbound?

Yes, I had answered. They had passed this light outfit and the Irishman's post. There was one chance in a hundred they might be ahead of us, I told them that fall, for they were traveling light and fast, with good animals, and old Joe Meek was their guide and knew all it through. The women? Well, one was a presentable lady, another was a Gypsy, and another the most beautiful woman ever seen on the trail or anywhere else.

Then they began to question me regarding Oregon. Was it as good as I held? Would it raise wheat and corn and hogs? How was the weather? Would there rain? Was it true I would take much labor to clear a farm?

Of course, I came to politics. Yes, Texas had been annexed, somehow, not by regular vote of the senate. There was much hitch about that. My leader reckoned there was no regular treaty. It was annexed by joint resolution of the house—done by Tyler and Calhoun, just in time to take the feather out of old Polk's cap! The treaty of annexation—why, yes, it was ratified by congress, and everything signed up March 3, just one day before Polk was inaugurated. Texas was the warpath, according to my guess at it, and there was going to be war as sure as shootin'. Polk was after all of Oregon.

"Do you seen that writin' on my wagon top?" asked the captain. "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight. That's what!"

And so they went on to tell us how this cry was spreading, south and west, and over the Rockies and Sierras, although the Whigs did not dare cry it quite as loudly.

And so at last we parted, each the better for the information gained, each for reason known to only God, seemingly practically an endless journey. Our farewells were as cordial, as confident, as had been our greetings. Thousands of miles of unsettled country lay east and west of us, and all around us, our empire, not then won.

I made the journey across the Sierra pass, the snow being now been down on the trails more than usual by the west-bound animal and vehicles. Of all these now coming on, none would get farther west than Fort Hall that year. Our own party, although late to cross, Hastings had yet the plains to cross. I was glad enough when we disgorged into old Fort Laramie in the midst of a blinding snowstorm. Winter had caught us fair and full. I had lost the race!

Here, then, I must winter. Yet I learned that Joe Meek had outfitted at Laramie almost a month earlier, with new animals; had bought a little grain, and, under escort of a cavalry troop which had come west with the Mormon train, had started east in time, perhaps, to make it through to the Missouri. In a race of 1,000 miles, the baroness had already beaten me almost by a month! Further west was, of course, now uncalculable, for no trains or wagons would come west so late, and there were then no stages carrying mail across the great plains. There was nothing for me to do except to wait and eat out my heart at old Fort Laramie, in the society of Indians and trappers, half-breeds and traders. The winter seemed years in length, so gladly I make its story brief.

It was now the spring of 1846, and I was my second year away from Washington. Glad enough I was when the first warm weather of March started east, taking my chances of getting over the plains. At last, to make the long journey alone, I did reach Fort Leavenworth, by this time a few months lower in the transcontinental race.

As to the baroness, she had long since left Fort Leavenworth for the east. I followed still with what speed I could employ. I could not reach Washington now until long after the first bids would be fled and the crowd of growing green on the gallery of Mr. Calhoun's residence. Yes, green was all on the lattice of Kinkhead's mansion. What had happened there for me?

**CHAPTER XXXI.**

**The Payment.**

What man worth in love is woman: what woman seeks in man is love—Hugo.

When I reached Washington it was indeed spring, warm, sweet spring. In the wide avenue the strangling trees were doing their best to dignify the city, and flowers were blooming everywhere. Wonderful enough did all this seem to me after thousands of miles of dreary scenery of bare valleys and rocky hills, wild landscapes, seen often through cold and blinding snows and amid peaks and gorges, or on the dreary, forbidding plains.

Used more, of late, to these wilder scenes, I felt awkward and still half dazed. I did not, at first, seek out my own friends. My first wish was to get in touch with Mr. Calhoun. I knew that so I would most quickly arrive at the heart of events.

He was away when I called at his residence on Georgetown Heights, but I at least heard the wheels of his old omnibus, and presently he entered with his usual composure, Dr. Samuel Ward. When they saw me there, then indeed I received a greeting which repaid me for many things! This over, we all three broke out in laughter at my uncouth appearance. I was clad still in such clothing as I had got on to wear when I came out and hurried on from the Missouri east-ward, and I had as yet found no time for barbers.

"We have had no word from you, Nicholas," said Mr. Calhoun, presently, "since that from Laramie, in the fall of eighteen forty-five. This is the spring of eighteen forty-six! Meantime, we might all have been dead and buried and none of us the wiser. What a country! 'Tis more enormous than the mind of man can encompass.

"You should travel across it to learn that," I grinned.

"Many things have happened since you left. You know that I am back in the senate once more?"

I nodded. "And about Texas?" I began.

"Texas is ours," said he, smiling grimly. "You have heard how? It was a hard fight—politics, diplomacy, fish, sectional fight among politicians. But there is going to be war. Our troops crossed the Sabine more than a year ago. They will cross the Rio Grande before this year is done. The Mexican minister has asked for his passports. The administration has backed down, Tyler to advance. Mr. Polk is carrying out annexation with vigorous hand. Seeking a chance for more territory, now that Texas is safe from England, he plans war on helpless and deserted Mexico! We may hear of a battle now at any time. But the war with Mexico may yet mean war with England. That, of course, endangers our chance to gain all or part of that great Oregon country. Tell me, what have you learned?"

I hurried on now with my own news, briefly as I might. I told them of the allies of England's party waiting in Oregon waters; of the growing suspicion of the Hudson bay people; of the changes in the management at Fort Vancouver; of the change also from a conciliatory policy to one of half hostility. I told them of our wagon trains going west, and of the strength of our frontiersmen, but other, this, justly as I might, by giving facts also regarding the opposition these might meet.

"Precisely," said Calhoun, walking up and down, his head bent. "England is preparing for war! How much are we prepared? It would cost us the revenues of a quarter of a century to come to terms with Texas. It would cost us 50,000 lives. We would need an army of 250,000 men. Where all that to come from? Can we transport our army there in time? But had all this bluster ceased, then we could have deferred this war with Mexico; could have bought with coin what now will cost us blood; and we could also have bought Oregon without the cost of either coin or blood. Delay was what we needed! All of Oregon should have been ours!"

"But, surely, this is not all-news to you?" I began. "Have you not seen Mr. Buchanan? Has he not sent and made her report?"

Mr. Buchanan? queried Calhoun. "That stormy petrel—that advance agent of events! Did she indeed sail with the British ships from Montreal? Did you find her there—Oregon?"

"Yes, and lost her there! She started to Washington, and I lost her in the race. Has she not made known her presence here? She told me she was going to Washington."

He shook his head in surprise. "Trouble now, I fear! Pakenham has back his best ally, our worst antagonist!"

"That certainly is strange," said I. "She had five months the start of me, and in that time she had lost nothing. What she has done or undone, Surely, she is somewhere here, in Washington! She held Texas in her shoes. I tell you she holds Oregon in her pocket to-day!"

I started up, my story half untold. "Where are you going?" asked Mr. Calhoun of me. Dr. Ward looked at me, smiling. "He does not inquire of a certain young lady—"

"I am going to find the Baroness von Ritz!" said I. I flushed red under my tan, I doubt not; but I would not ask a word regarding Elizabeth.

Dr. Ward came and laid a hand on my shoulder. "Republics forget," said he, "but men forget sooner. Perhaps not. Neither do girls from Maryland. Do you think she—"

"That is what I am going to find out."

"How, then? Are you going to Elmhurst as you look now?"

"No. I shall find out many things by first finding the Baroness von Ritz." And before they could make further protests I was out and away.

I hurried now to a certain side street, of which I knew perfectly, and knocked confidently at a door I knew. The neighborhood was asleep in the warm sun, the afternoon nearly time, and began to doubt, but at last my door was opened.

There appeared at the crack of the door the wrinkled visage of the old serving woman, Chloe. I knew that she would be there in precisely this way, unless, indeed, she had gone home in the world why it should not have been. Her eyes, examining me closely, then quickly opened the door and allowed me to step inside, vanishing as was her wont, in silence. I knew the step in the half-hidden hallway beyond, but this was not the step which I awaited; it was that of a man, slow, feeble, hesitating. I started forward as a face appeared in the partial portrait. A glad cry welcomed me in turn. A tall, bent form approached me, and an arm was thrown about my shoulder. It was my white-haired father, ancient scholar, who blitzbehoved! I did not pause to ask how he happened to be there, for I knew perfectly, since it was wholly impossible. I made no wonder at the Chinese Sally Chow, or the little Indian maid, who both came, stared, and silently vanished. Seeing, I knew, that there was strange protector must also have won through to me.

"Ach Gott! Geesgneter Gott! I see you again, my friend!" Thus the old doctor.

"But tell me," I interrupted, "where is the baroness? Of this house, the Baroness von Ritz?"

He looked at me in his mild way. "Why, she is here, of course, my boy."

Now at last I smiled. His eyes, after a time, seemed to become incredible. He turned and reached behind him to a little table. He held up before my face a little gold slipper, with a shell. Then I knew that this last and most incredible thing was true, and, and that in some way these two had found each other! But why? What could it mean?

"Listen now," he began, "and I shall tell you. I was the sixth one day. When I walk alone, I do not much notice. I see, I hear, I feel, but I shut my eyes on the street, I see what? Thus—this, the Tah Gook! At first, I see nothing, but I feel, I hear. I see before me in a woman, young and beautiful, with one leg. Should I do but take her in my arms!"

"It was she," said I.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Fine Growth of Potatoes.**

A remarkable potato has attracted some attention at Anitaville, in Ayrshire, Scotland. Amongst some bushes which Mr. Morran, the station master, has planted, there a potato plant appeared, which he allowed to remain to maturity. It was cut in the autumn of last year it was found that there were at the root of the plant tubers which weighed fully 14 pounds. The potato is of fine quality, with shallow eyes and a beautiful skin.

**As He Understood It.**

Jason Juby (telling of his trip to New York)—Ah! another interesting! sight was them there curb brokers dots' business.

Hiram Whiffle—Seems to me I once heard tell av them fellers—what do they do?

Jason Juby—Why, they buy all the Barnums' tickets and then they go and sell 'em again to suckers at a dollar apiece, at higher price.—Illustrated Bugle Magazine.

**LOCATED HIGH AND DRY**

**Possibly Display of Bill of Generous Denominations Stirs Hiss Hun Some Effect.**

A southerner who was visiting St. Louis wandered into the dining room of the hotel and, seeing a negro waiter, sat who had all the importance of an army officer standing near the door, asked him who the "head nigger" was pointed them. The negro straightened himself to his full height, and pompously replied that "there ain't no nigger here in St. Louis, sah. He is all gentlmen of color."

"Well," said the southerner, drawing a $100 bill from his pocket and fingering it, "I expect he is at the head of them gentlmen and want to make sure that I will be taken care of.

"Oh, sah," said the negro, whose eyes were popping from his head, "did you want to know why the head 'nigger waiter' is? That's me."—Allentown Call.

**Settled Them.**

"I've a sight of trouble with thirteen altogether," remarked a prosperous old farmer, "and all of them drive on credit save the three oldest, who sowed wild oats at a pretty rapid rate, and then came home and settled, on my shoulders with the harrest.

"Well, I was tuckered out to see em back, and I treated 'em, and petted them, and set 'em on their laps again, only to see 'em skeddadle off afresh when things had slowed down, with all the cash they could lay hands on.

"That thereabouts sickened me, so I called the rest of 'em together and said:

"'There's ten of you left, and if any of you 'ud like to follow t'other three I won't try to stop you. But, understand this, though there may be a few more prodigal sons, there'll be no more fatted calves. I've tilled the last of 'em!'

"And," continued the old man, triumphantly, "I've had trouble wi' none of 'em since!"

**Her Father's Child.**

The six-year-old daughter of a well known evangelical preacher was playing on the sidewalk one day, when a shabbily dressed and downcast man approached her father's house.

Halting at the foot of the steps, he looked at her, and in a weary voice—the voice of an unsuccessful boozer—he asked if her father might be found in his study.

"He isn't home," said the little girl, drawing close to him, and gazing up into the tired face. "But I'm just as pretty soon. You go into the house, you poor, perishing soul, and anything you ask for you'll be come."—Youth's Companion.

**The Girl's Handicap.**

In her early nursery days Walter Mabel felt quite proud as she sat on the front step and watched some boys playing in the street.

After a time one little boy came up to talk to her and to admire, in his rough little way, her bright shiny shoes and pink sash.

"She's got a wasp-waist and little girl, drawing close to him, and gazing up into the tired face—"I'm just as pretty soon. You go into the house, you poor, perishing soul, and anything you ask for you'll be come."—Youth's Companion.

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"She's got a wasp-waist," exclaimed the girlie, "and my nice corsel ain't nothin' to her. I'm just as a girl!"

"Yes sir-ee," replied the boy, "I wouldn't want to be any girl at all, because lookin how much more neck you had to wash."

**To Make Fruit Jar Rubbers Last.**

To have fruit jar rubbers last, keep them well covered in a jar full of flour until used, and they will be as removed from empty jars. One can then afford to buy good ones. Rubbers, if used thus they will safely last several seasons. Where there is trouble with rubbers, they are often be made to eke out one more season by using two of the same size together, and placing down tight. Always stand newly filled jars upside down until cool, to rest the tops and rubbers.—Designer.

**WRONG SORT**

**Perhaps Plain Old Meat, Potatoes and Bread May Be Regular Food for a Time.**

A change to the right kind of food can lift one from a sick bed. A lady in Walden, N. Y., says:

"Last spring I became bed-fast with severe stomach troubles accompanied by sick headaches. I had grown worse until I became so low I could scarcely retain any food on my stomach. I tried about every kind.

"I had become completely discouraged, and given up all hope, and thought I was doomed to starve to death, until one day my husband, trying to find something I could retain, brought home some Grape-Nuts.

"To my surprise the food agreed with me, digested perfectly and without distress. I began improving from that on, at once. My flesh (which had been flabby) began to harden, and I began to improve in every way and every day, and in a very few weeks I gained 20 pounds in weight.

"I liked Grape-Nuts so well that for four months I ate no other food, and only all my own work again, and feel that life is worth living.

"Grape-Nuts food has been a God-send to my family; it surely saved my life; and my two little boys have thrived on it wonderfully." 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.

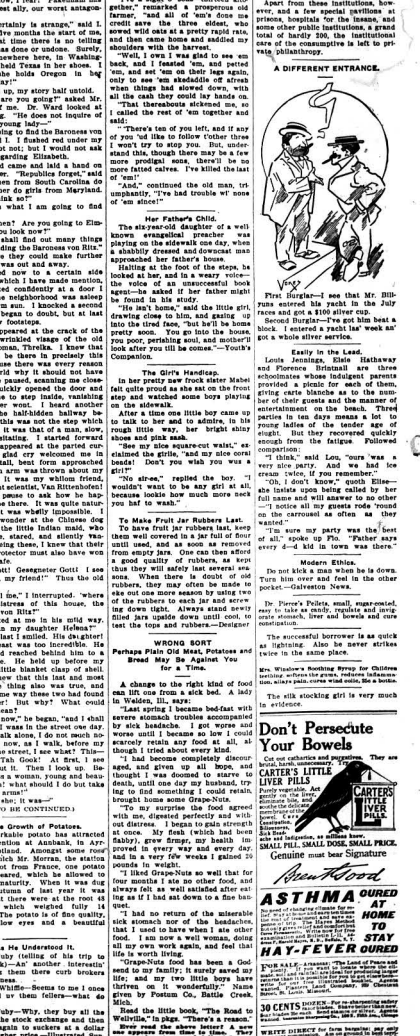
**CARING FOR TUBERCULOSIS**

**Thirty-Nine State and 114 Local Sanitoria Provided, But These Are Only a Beginning.**

In spite of the fact that state sanitoria and hospitals for tuberculosis have been established in 21 states, and 114 municipal or county hospitals in 18 states, vastly more public provision must be made to stamp out consumption, says the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. Nearly every state east of the Mississippi river, and many west of it, have a state sanitorium, and west of the Mississippi river, state sanitoria have been established in Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Utah, and Oregon. There are 33 sanatoria provided by those states. Massachusetts having four, Connecticut and Pennsylvania three and Texas two. Including sanatoria, hospitals and sick houses, there are 114 municipal or county hospitals for the care of tuberculous patients.

Apart from these institutions, however, and the municipal pavilions at prisons, hospitals for the insane, and other public institutions, a grand total of hardly 200, the institutional care of this consumptive is left to private philanthropy.

**A DIFFERENT ENTRANCE.**




**Easily in the Lead.**

Louis Jennings, Elsie Hathaway and Florence Brintnall are three pretty mates whose Indian parents provided a placie for each of them, namely carte blanche as to the number of their guests and the manner of entertainment on the beach. Three parties in the day means a lot to young ladies of the tender age of eight. But they recovered quickly enough from the fatigue. Followed conversation:

"I think," said Lou, "ours was a very nice party." And we had ice cream twice, if you remember."

"Oh, I don't know," quoth Elsie—the spoiled young baby called by her full name and will answer to no other if she notice all my guests rode 'round on the carrousel as often as they wanted."

"I am sure my party was the best of all," spoke up Flo. "Father says every 6—4 he thinks it was there."

**Modern Ethics.**

Do not kick a man when he is down. Turn him over and feel in the other fellow's pocketbook.

Dr. Pierce's Pellets, small, sugar-coated, easy to take as candy, regulate and invigorate stomach, liver and bowels and cure constipation.

The successful borrower is as quick to forget as the lender is never strikes twice in the same place.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. Be a bottle.

The silk stocking girl is very much in evidence.

**Don't Persecute Your Bowels**

Cathartics are violent, harsh, unnecessary. They are not CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS

Purely vegetable. Act gently on the liver. Cure Sick Headache, Bilious Headache, Dizziness, Sick Stomach, Bad Taste, Coated Tongue, Indigestion, as millions know.

SMALL PILL. SMALL DOSE. SMALL PRICE.

Genuine must bear Signature

Brent Good

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**HAY-FEVER CURED**

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