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Edited by Herbert Kaufman

JULY
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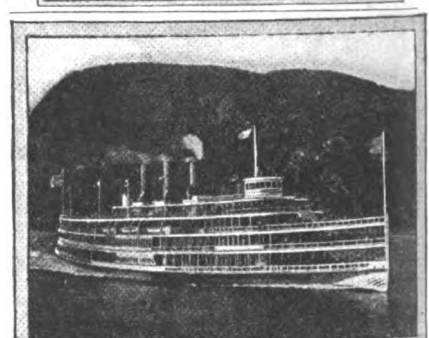
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JULY
McCLURE'S for JULY

A Story of Bold Men and Raw Places

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The Wanderer of the Wasteland

by Zane Grey

Illustrations by W. Herbert Dunton

THERE were only two of the Larey's left, Adam and Guerd. Adam had been the favorite of his mother and when she died she left her small fortune to him. But he divided with his brother and the pair, upon Guerd's suggestion, started west in search of fortune and adventure; Guerd, selfish, jealous of Adam, inclined to be wild, fell in with evil companions and soon took to the life of the professional gambler. Ill-feeling, long brewing between the brothers, reached a crisis when Guerd "filched the favor of dark eyes that had smiled first upon Adam." Thereupon, Adam set out alone. At Picacho he got a job, and, in this land of quick friendships, soon made friends. Among them — Pat Regan, Mackay, Merryvale, Arallanes — and then there was Margarita, "who waited around the corner of every hour watching with her dusky eyes."

AS the slow solemn days drifted onward, it came to pass that the dreaming, pondering Adam suddenly awakened to the danger in the dusky-eyed Margarita.

The realization came to Adam at the still sunset hour when he and she were watching the river slide like a gleam of gold out of the west. They were walking among the scattered mesquites along the sandy bank, a place lonesome and hidden from the village behind, yet open to the wide space of river and valley beyond. The air seemed full of marvelous tints of gold and rose and purple. Adam, more than usually drawn by Margarita's sympathy, was trying to tell her something of the burden on his mind, that he was alone in the world, with only a hard gray future before him, with no one to care whether he lived or died.

Then had come his awakening. It did not speak well for Margarita's conceptions of behavior, but it proved her a creature all heart and blood. To be suddenly enveloped by a wind of flame, in the slender twining form of this girl of Spanish nature, was for Adam at once a revelation and a catastrophe. But if he was staggered he was also responsive, as in a former moment of poignancy he had vowed he would be. A strong and shuddering power took hold of his heart, and he felt the leap, the beat, the burn of his blood. When he lifted Margarita and gathered her in a close embrace it was more than a hot up-flashing of boyish passion that flushed his face and started tears from under his tight-shut eyelids. It was a sore hunger for he knew not what, a gratefulness that he could express only by violence, a yielding to something deeper and more far-reaching than was true of the moment.

Adam loosened Margarita's hold upon his neck and held her back from him so he could see her face. It was sweet, rosy. Her eyes were shining, black and fathomless as night.

"Girl, do you — love me?" he demanded; and if his

"Guerd, you have robbed me of playmates, money, girl friends," snapped Adam, "then a worthless woman. You're a cheat, a liar!"

voice broke with the strange eagerness of a boy, his look had all the sternness of a man.

"Ah!" whispered Margarita.

"You — you big-hearted girl!"

he exclaimed, with a laugh that was glad, yet had a tremor in it. "Margarita, I — I must love you, too — since I feel so strange."

Then he bent to her lips, and from these first real kisses that had ever been spent upon him by a woman he realized in one flash his danger. He released Margarita in a consideration she did not comprehend; and in her pouting reproach, her soft-eyed appeal, her little brown hands that would not let go of him, there was further menace.

Adam, gay and teasing, yet kind and tactful, tried to find a way to resist her.

"Señorita, some one will see us," he said.

"Who cares?" Margarita flung out.

"But, child, we — we must think."

"Señor, no woman ever thinks when love is in her heart and on her lips."

Her reply seemed to rebuke Adam, for he sensed in it what might be true of life, rather than just of this one little girl, swayed by unknown and uncontrollable forces. She appeared to him then subtly and strongly, as if there was infinitely more than wilful love in her. But it did not seem to be the peril of her proffered love that restrained Adam, so much as the strange consciousness of the willingness of his spirit to meet hers half-way.

Suddenly Margarita's mood changed. She became like a cat that had been purring under a soft agreeable hand, and then had been stroked the wrong way.

"Señor, think he love me?" she flashed at him, suddenly growing white.



"Yes — I said so — Margarita. Of course I do," he hastened to assure her.

"Maybe you — a gringo liar!"

Adam might have resented this insulting hint but for his uncertainty of himself, his consequent embarrassment, and his thrilling sense of the nearness of her blazing eyes. What a little devil she looked! He remembered again what Arallanes had called her. This did not antagonize Adam, but it gave him proof of his imprudence, of his dreaming carelessness. Margarita might not be a girl to whom he should have made love, but it was too late. Besides, he did not regret that.

"If the *grande Señor* trifle — Margarita will cut out his heart!"

This swift speech, inflexible and wonderful with a passion that revealed to Adam the half-savage nature of a woman whose race was alien to his, astounded and horrified him, and yet made his blood tingle wildly.

"Margarita, I do not trifle," replied Adam, earnestly. "God knows I'm glad you — you care for me. How have I offended you? What is it you want?"

"Let *Señor* swear he love me," she demanded, imperiously.

Adam answered to that with the wildness that truly seemed flashing more and more from him; and the laughter and boldness on his lips hid the gravity that had settled there. He was no clod. Under the softness of him hid a flint that struck fire.

As Margarita had been alluring and provocative, then as furious as a barbarian queen, so she now changed again to another personality in which it pleased her to be proud, cold, aloof, an outraged woman to be wooed back to tenderness. If, at the last moment of the walk home, Margarita evinced signs of another sudden transformation, Adam appeared not to note them. Leaving her in the dusk at the door where the *Señora* sat he strode away to the bank of the river. When he felt himself free and safe once more, he let out a great breath of relief.

"Whew! Now I've done it! . . . So she'd cut my heart out? — and I had to swear I loved her! The little savage! . . . But she's amazing — and she's adorable with all her cat-claws. Wouldn't Guerd rave over a girl like Margarita? . . . And here I am, standing on my two feet, in possession of all my faculties — Adam Larey, a boy who thought he had principles — yet now I'm a ranting lover of a dark-skinned, black-eyed slip of a greaser girl! It can't be true!"

With that outburst came sobering thought. Adam's resolve not to ponder and brood about himself was as if it had never been. He knew he would never make such a resolve again. For hours he strolled up and down the sandy bank, deep in thought, yet aware of the night and the stars, the encompassing mountains, and the silent, gleaming river, winding away in the gloom.

Adam at length gave up in despair, and went to bed, hoping in slumber to forget a complexity of circumstance and emotion that seemed to him an epitome of his callow helplessness. But slumber did not come. He thought how his spiritual development had been enlarged at the expense of his physical. He had an instinct to use his muscles in manly work or in a fight forced upon him, but this was all his equipment to cope with the desert. Yet what more did he need? The desert began to loom to Adam as a region inimicable to comfort and culture. He had almost decided that the physical nature of the desert was going to be good for him. But what of its spirit, mood, passion as typified by Margarita Arallanes?

He did not blind himself to her charm. He saw her to be a simple child of the desert, like an Indian, answering to savage impulses, wholly unconscious of what had been to him a breach of womanly reserve and restraint. Was she good or bad? How could she be bad if she did not know any better?

Thus Adam pondered and conjectured, and cursed his ignorance, and lamented his failings, all the time honest to acknowledge that he was fond of Margarita and drawn to her. About the only conclusion he formed from his perplexity was the one that he owed it to Margarita to live up to his principles. He could be kind and good to her, and ardent and good for her, and ardent and loving, too; and the stronger he was to resist the peril of her, the greater would be his service.

At this juncture he recollected Merryvale's significant remarks about the qualities needed by men who were to survive in the desert; and his nobler sentiments suffered a rout. He could

not be himself as he wanted to be in this raw country. The suddenness, harshness, fierceness of the desert grafted different and combating qualities upon a man or else it snuffed him out, like a candle blown by a gusty wind. Adam had, however, already learned that it was not in him to quit.

Next morning, as every morning, the awakening was sweet, fresh, new, hopeful. Another day! And the wonderful dry keenness of the air, the color that made the earth seem a land of enchantment, were enough in themselves to make life worth living.

Margarita's repentance for her moods of yesterday took a material turn in the preparation of an unusually good breakfast for Adam. He was always hungry, and good meals were rare. Adam liked her attentions, and he encouraged them.

A boat had been expected for several days; and Adam looked forward to its arrival as a gala occasion. He hoped this one would bring skilled mechanics or new machinery or something that would start up the mill and end this idleness which he feared would presently invite disaster.

When some time later the boat did arrive Adam was among the first to meet it at the dock.

He encountered Mackay coming ashore in the company of a man and two women, one of whom was

young. The manager showed a beaming face for the first time in many days. Repairs for the mill engine had come, and besides, Mackay had met friends of his from the coast who were on their way up the river to Ehrenberg, and thence by stage to Phoenix. Mackay at once introduced Adam to the party; and it so turned out that presently the manager, who was extremely busy, left his friends for Adam to entertain. They were people whom Adam liked immediately, and as the girl was strikingly pretty, it seemed to Adam that his task was more than agreeable.

He showed them around the little village and then explained how interesting it would be for them to see the gold mill. The girl was keen to go, but the mother preferred to sit in the shade on the river bank and watch the children play in the sand. So Adam escorted the daughter and devoted himself to her instruction and pleasure. That was a delightful hour. How long a time it seemed since he had been in the company of a girl like those he had known at home! She was merry, intelligent, a little shy. Upon returning to the river bank they walked a while among the mesquites.

He was invited aboard the boat to have luncheon with the mother and daughter. Everything tended to make this a red-letter day for Adam. The hours passed all too swiftly, and the time came for the boat to depart. Adam felt he was going to lose something. While bidding the girl good-bye he knew he held her hand closer and longer than he should have done. But she did not try to withdraw it! Then when the boat swung free from the shore Adam read in the girl's eyes the thought keen in his own mind — that they would never meet again. This incident of farewell seemed somehow poignant with regret. The round of circumstance might never again bring a girl like that into Adam's life, if it were to be lived in these untrodden ways. He waved his hand with all the eloquence which it would express. Then the obtruding foliage on the bank hid the boat, and the girl was gone.

Some of Mackay's laborers were working with unloaded freight on the dock. One of these was Regan, the little Irishman who had been keen to mark Adam on several occasions. He winked at Mackay and pointed to Adam.

"Mac, sure that boy's a devil with the women!"

Mackay roared with laughter, and looked significantly past Adam as if this mirth was not wholly due to his presence alone. Some one else seemed implicated. Suddenly Adam turned. Margarita stood there, with face and mien of a tragedy queen, and it seemed to Adam that her burning black eyes did not see anything in the world but him. Then, with one of her swift actions, graceful and lithe, yet violent, she wheeled and fled.

"Oh, Lord!" murmured Adam, aghast at the sudden-dawning significance of the case. Mackay and Arallanes, and his friend Pat might laugh if it pleased them, but they were not in his boots. He had absolutely forgotten Margarita's existence. Probably he had passed her without seeing her. Most assuredly she had seen every move of his, and read his mind, too. Now what would she do? He could not see the humor of his situation at the moment, but as he took a short cut through the shady mesquites toward his hut, and presently espied Margarita in ambush, waiting to pounce upon him, he had to laugh. What fiendish glee this predicament of his would have aroused in his brother Guerd! Adam, the lofty, the supercilious, had come a cropper at last — such would have been Guerd's scorn and rapture!

Adam pretended not to see Margarita. She had selected a secluded spot in which to waylay him. He sheered away more to the right, hoping to put a still denser clump of mesquites between him and the river bank. Passing this point he breathed freer; but upon entering a little sunny glade, where the sand shone white and hot, he heard the thudding of soft swift footsteps.

Margarita came rushing upon him even as he turned. So swiftly she came that he could not get a good look at her, but she appeared a writhing, supple little thing, instinct with fury. Hissing Spanish maledictions she flung herself upward, and before he could ward her off, she had slapped and scratched his face, and beat wildly at him with flying brown fists. He thrust her away, but she sprang back. Then, suddenly hot with anger, he grasped her and jerking her off her feet, he shook her with far from gentle force, and did not desist till he saw that he was hurting her. Letting her down and holding her at arm's length he gazed hard at the white face, framed by disheveled black hair, and



I Have Grown Tired of a Tree

by Theodosia Garrison

Decoration by H. Devitt Welsh

I HAVE grown tired of a tree,
And had a mountain weary me
As might some guest who stays too long
After the feasting and the song;
But I have never tired at all
Of the city's ceaseless carnival,
Or mountains made of brick and stone,
Raised by the hands of man alone.

I have been weary by the sea,
But never where humanity
Surges like some deep tide that beats
Day-long against the city streets;
Better than gardens Spring-endowed,
The hundred faces of a crowd,
Each with its history that lies
Clear-writ between the mouth and eyes.

God made some lives for silent places,
And some for tumult and men's faces,
And some find peace in flower and herb,
And some on a crowded city curb.



lighted by eyes so magnificently expressive of supreme passion that his anger was shocked into wonder and admiration. Desert eyes! Right there a conception dawned in his mind — he was seeing a spirit through eyes developed by the desert.

"Margarita!" he exclaimed, "are you a cat — that you —"

"I hate you," she hissed, interrupting him. The expulsion of her breath, the bursting swell of her breast, the quiver of her whole lissom body, all amazed Adam. Such a little girl, such a frail strength, such a deficient brain to hold all that passion! What would she do if she had real cause for wrath?

"Ah, Margarita, you don't mean that. I didn't do anything. Let me tell you."

She repeated her passionate utterance, and Adam saw that he could no more change her than he could hope to move the mountain. Resentment stirred in him.

"Well," he burst out, boyishly, "if you're so darned fickle as that I'm glad you do hate me."

Then he released his hold on her arms, and turning away without another glance in her direction, he strode from the glade. He took the gun he had repaired and set off down the river trail. When he got into the bottomlands of willow and cottonwood he glided noiselessly along, watching and listening for game of some kind. Tracks were not infrequent, but he did not hear or see any sign of bird or beast to shoot. All creatures of the wild, like the human denizens, were resting and sleeping away the hot hours of midday. For Adam to burn and to sweat under the sun were rather pleasant sensations. Nevertheless he kept to the shady places, resting upon every log or inviting place, and he did not exert himself when in action.

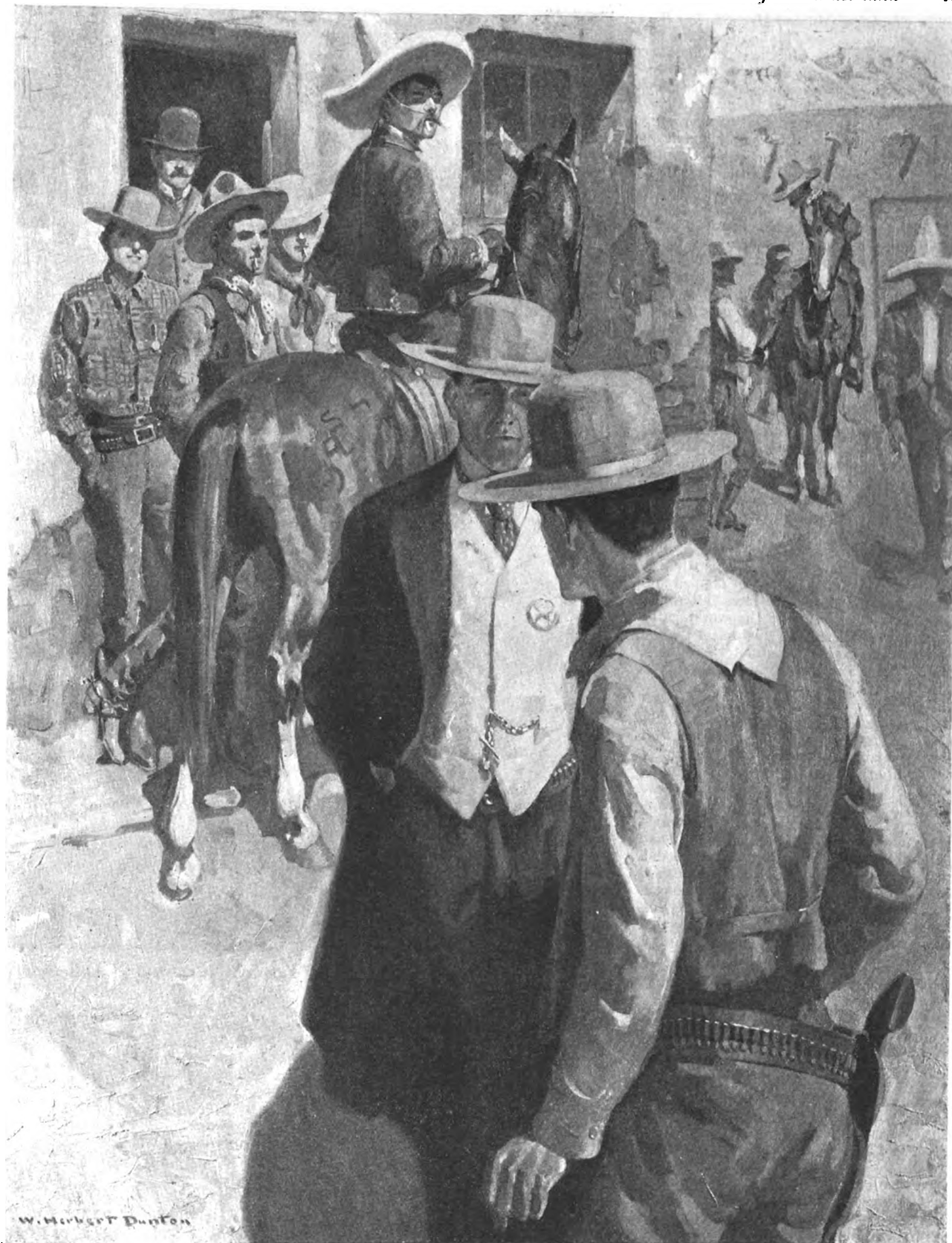
Being low down he could not see through the thickets or the scattered groups of trees, and only occasionally did he come out into an open place that led to the river bank. The intense silence, deadness, lifelessness of the bottomlands fascinated Adam, and drew him on and on, as if to penetrate to the densest coverts. But he did not see even a bird. He could not hear the slightest sound. Still the fresh tracks in the dust told him that living creatures had gone down to the water not long since. Adam rested more often, choosing the shady seats under the cottonwoods, and the feeling of lonesomeness and watchfulness grew upon him. It held a vague yet great content. It was a lazy idle dreaming state, in which he did not want anything to happen. The feeling seemed familiar, yet he knew he was only beginning to have it.

About the middle of the afternoon he retraced his steps as far back as the point he had descended into the bottomlands; and here, turning to the right, he ascended a low scaly slope that was the first rise of the rough ground above the river valley. The characters of earth and plant were strikingly different from those in the lowlands.

Sight of these unknown trees, and of a strange cacti, reminded Adam of the young girl who had walked with him only a few hours past and had evinced such keen interest in these desert growths. Adam sighed. She was gone, far up the river; and somehow he regretted it. He shook off a memory he considered sentimental nonsense. Could not he meet a nice girl without being moon-struck? Then he remembered Margarita and her jealous fury. What a little tigress! He laughed, and ruefully felt of the red welts and scratches upon his face. Strange that he no longer resented the outrage of her attack upon him!

In the wide mouth of a wash not more than a mile from the village Adam halted to admire some exceedingly beautiful trees.

As he walked around to the side toward the river he heard a cry. Wheeling quickly he espied Margarita running toward him, evidently from the river-



"I'm not much of a gambler, Collishaw," said Adam, "but I'll bet you a stack of gold twenties against your fancy vest that Guerd never collects a dollar of his crooked deal"

trail, down which he had gone some hours since. She had seen him and she was close. Adam strode to meet her, first with surprise and concern, and then as she neared him, with perturbation. Margarita's hair was flying. Blood showed on her white face. She had torn her dress.

"Margarita!" cried Adam, as he reached her. "What's the matter?"

She was so out of breath she could scarcely speak.

"Felix — he hide back there — in trail," she panted. "Margarita watch — she know — she go round — find Señor — tell him!"

The girl labored under extreme agitation which, however, did not seem to be fright.

"Felix? You mean the Mexican who drew a knife on your father? The fellow I threw around — up at Picacho?"

"Sí, Señor," replied Margarita, with a catch in her low voice.

"Well, what of it? Why does Felix hide up in the trail?"

"Felix swore revenge. He kill you."

"Oh-ho! . . . So that's it," ejaculated Adam, and he whistled his surprise. A hot tight sensation struck deeply inside him. "Then you came to find me — warn me?"

She nodded vehemently and clung to him, evidently wearied and weakening.

"Margarita, that was good of you," said Adam, earnestly, and he led her out of the sun into the shade of the tree. With his handkerchief he wiped the blood from thorn scratches on her cheek. The dusky eyes shone with a vastly different light from the lurid hate of a few hours back. "I thank you, girl, and I'll not forget it. . . . But why did you run out in the sun and through the thorns to warn me?"

"Señor know now — he kill Felix before Felix kill him," replied Margarita, in [Continued on page 71]

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The Wanderer of the Wasteland

(Continued from page 13)

speech that might have been naive had its simplicity not been so deadly.

Adam laughed again, a little grimly. This was not the first time there had been forced upon him a hint of the inevitableness of life in the desert. But it was not his duty to ambush the Mexican who would ambush him. The little coldness thrilled out of Adam to the close throbbing presence of Margarita. The fragrance, the very breath of her went to his head, like wine. "But girl—only a little while ago—you slapped me—scratched me—hated me," he said, in wonder and reproach.

"No—no—no! Margarita love Señor!" she cried, and seemed to twine around him and climb into his arms at once. The same fire, the same intensity as of that unforgettable moment of hate and passion dominated her now; only, it was love.

And this time it was Adam who sought her red lips and returned her kisses. Again that shuddering wild gust in his blood! It was as strange and imperious to him then as in a sober reflection it had been bold, gripping, physical. In this instance, he was weaker in its grip, but still he conquered. Releasing Margarita he led her to a shady place in the sand under the green tree, and found a seat where he could lean against a low branch. Margarita fell against his shoulder, and there clung to him, and wept. Her dusky hair rippled over him, soft and silky to the touch of his fingers. The poor faded dress, of a fabric unknown to Adam, ragged and dusty and torn, and the little shoes, worn and cracked, showing the soles of her stockingless feet, spoke eloquently of poverty. Adam noted the slender grace of her slight form, the arch of the bare instep, the shapeliness of her ankles, brown almost as an Indian's. And all at once there charged over him an overwhelming sense of the pitifulness and the wonderfulness of her.

"My God!" whispered Adam, under his breath. Something big and undefined was born in him then. He saw her, he pitied her, he loved her, he wanted her; but these feelings were not so much what constituted the bigness and vagueness that waved through his soul. He could not grasp it. But it had to do with the life, the beauty, the passion, the soul of this Mexican girl; and it was akin to a reverence he felt for the things in her that she could not understand. Margarita soon recovered, and assumed a demeanor so shy and modest and wistful that Adam could not believe she was the same girl. Nevertheless he took good care not to awaken her other characteristics.

"Margarita, what is the name of this beautiful tree?" he asked.

"Palo verde. It means green tree. It is beloved by the Spaniards," she replied.

"No wonder. I've fallen in love with it—and I guess, under it," said Adam, with a laugh, as he looked up through the countless shining twigs of green that made a network like a spider-web across the blue sky. It was singular that he should feel an emotion for a tree. Perhaps this raven-haired girl had bewitched him.

It interested him then to instruct himself further in regard to the desert growths that had been strange to him; and to this end he led Margarita from one point to another, pleased to learn how familiar she was with every growing thing.

Presently Margarita brought to Adam's gaze a tree that resembled smoke, so blue-gray was it, so soft and hazy against the sky. Upon examination Adam was amazed to discover that every branch and twig of this tree was a thorn.

"Palo Christi," murmured Margarita, making the sign of the cross. And she told Adam that this was the crucifixion tree, which was the species that furnished the crown of thorns for the head of Christ.

Sunset ended several happy hours for Adam. He had not forgotten about the Mexican, Felix, and had thought it just as well to let time pass and to keep out of trouble as long as he could. Also, with this in mind, he had strolled across the barrens toward the canyon where the road led down to the village. He and Margarita reached home without seeing any sign of Felix. Arallanes, however, had espied the Mexican sneaking around, and he warned Adam in

no uncertain terms. Merryvale, too, had a word for Adam's ear; and it was significant that he did not advise a waiting course.

In spite of all Adam's reflections he did not need a great deal of urging. After supper he started off for Picacho with Arallanes, and a teamster who was freighting supplies up to the camp. Adam revolved in his mind Merryvale's hint that it was time to be game—that it would not do for him to avoid a meeting with Felix. And Arallanes, for all his temper, was a sensible fellow, well-disposed toward Adam, and he was of the opinion that a good sound beating would cure the Mexican of any further murderous designs.

Picacho was in full blast when they arrived. The dim lights, the discordant yells, the raw smell of spirits, the violence of the crude gambling-hall worked upon Adam's already excited mind; and by the time he had imbibed a few drinks he was ready for anything. But they did not find Felix. They went out and searched the camp without avail, and upon returning to the saloon Arallanes learned from a Mexican that Felix had taken himself off on foot for Yuma. Adam joined Arallanes and his friends in the felicitations of the moment, and it took several drinks to celebrate the easy riddance of a common enemy.

Then Adam, if not half-drunk, at least somewhat under the influence of rum, started to walk back to his lodgings. He had sense enough to know that if he remained there he would get drunk. The walk was long, and by reason of the heavy dragging sand, one of considerable labor. Adam was in full possession of his faculties when he reached the village. But his blood was hot from the exercise, and the excitement of the prospective battle of the early evening had given way to an excitement of the senses, in the youthful romance felt in the dark canyon, the starlight, the wildness of the place. So when in the pale gloom of the mesquites Margarita glided to him like a lissom spectre, to enfold him and cling and whisper, Adam had not the will, nor the heart, nor the desire to resist her.

ADAM'S dull eyelids opened on a dim gray desert dawn. The world seemed dead, and life in him, like the opaque gloom in his sight, stirred sluggishly to a sense of blankness. Out of slumber and oblivion he had awakened to consciousness of another day; and suddenly as thought came, he hated the morning with its soft sweet silent freshness. Instinctively, as a child fearing the sunlight that must betray his misbehavior, he shut his eyes and hid his face.

But the coming of the dawn was in his mind and it showed pale through his shut lids. He could not hold back the hours. Something had happened in the night and he would never be the same again. With a sharp pang, a sense of incomprehensible loss, a conviction of shame, and a terrible dread of the staggering consequences of his weakness, Adam felt die in him the old unreasoning instinctive boy. And there was more, too deep and too subtle for him to divine; but it had to do with a feminine strain in him, a sweetness and purity inherited from his mother and developed by her teachings. It had separated him from his brother Guerd and kept him aloof from a baseness common to their comrades. Nevertheless the wildness of this raw uncouth primitive west had been his undoing.

It was with bitterness that Adam again faced the growing light. How useless to hate the dawn! All he could do was to resign himself to fate. The joy of life, the enchantments, the following of the gleam,—all that had made him feel different from other boys and hide his dreams, failed now in the hard truth of his abasement. He could not understand the severity of the judgment he meted out to himself. His pain, his sorrow were for the vague death of that in him which he had never known or valued until it was gone. And the tight drawing knot in his breast, the gnawing of remorse, the guilty consciousness that he had betrayed the best in him, the strange dark oppression,—these grew and reached a climax, until something gave way within him and there was a sinking of the heart, a weary and inscrutable feeling.

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Then he remembered Margarita, and the very life and current of his blood seemed to change. A revulsion too swift to grasp—a fleeting hate burned out in sudden blaze! Like a hot wave the memory of Margarita surged over Adam, her strange new sweetness, the cunning of her when she waylaid him in the dead of night, the clinging lissomness of her and the whispered incoherence that needed no translation, the inevitableness of the silent imperious demand of her presence, unashamed and insistent, somehow glorious in its abandonment.

Adam leaped out of his blankets, breaking up this mood and thought by violent action. When he went out of the mesquites the sun shone gold over the purple peaks. For Adam then, the sunrise was glorious, the desert was wild and free, the earth was an immense region to explore, and nature, however insatiable and inexorable, was prodigal of compensations. He drank a sweet cup that held one drop of poisoned bitterness. Life swelled in his breast. He wished he were an Indian.

MARGARITA'S greeting was at once a delight and a surprise. Her smile, the light of her dusky eyes would have made any man happier. But there was a subtle air about her this morning that gave Adam a slight shock, an undefined impression that he represented less to Margarita than he had on yesterday. He thrust from him thoughts that were discourteous and disloyal to her, and disturbing to him.

After breakfast Adam went up to the mill. There was no work for him. Mackay expected to start operating in a day or two, and was particularly pleased about it. Adam had to kill more time. It was not so difficult this morning. Among the cursing and sweating and idling men Adam forgot the remorseful consciousness of his awakening hour that morning.

Then came the shrill whistle of the down-river boat. Idle men flocked toward the dock. It happened that at the moment Adam was high up on the ridge a mile back of the mill, where he had climbed over rough ground out of sheer need of action. At once he retraced his steps down hill toward the river.

When he reached the open space on the bank before the dock he found it crowded with an unusual number of men, all manifestly more than ordinarily interested in something concerning the boat. By slipping through the mesquites Adam got around to the edge of the crowd.

A tall gaunt man, strode off the gang-plank. His height, his form, his gait were familiar to Adam. He had seen that embroidered flowery vest with its silver star conspicuously in sight, and the brown beardless face with its square jaw and sunny lines.

"Collishaw!" ejaculated Adam, in surprise and dismay. He recognized in this man one whom he had known at Ehrenberg, a gambling, gun-fighting sheriff to whom Guerd had become attached. Adam, however, had not liked him on first acquaintance and through later circumstances had come to hate him. "What brings him here?" Adam asked himself. "It wouldn't surprise me to see Guerd with him."

The mere thought of such a possibility disturbed him greatly. As his glance swept back of Collishaw his pulse beat quicker. The next passenger to stride off the gang-plank was a very tall, superbly built young man. Adam would have known that form in a crowd of a thousand men. His heart leaped with a great throb. Guerd, his brother! And in that moment of thrilling recognition the passion of boyhood love resurged supreme. Adam stood as if rooted to the spot by the gladness that throbbed in every fibre of his being.

Guerd looked up. His handsome heated face, bold and keen and reckless, flashed in the sunlight. His piercing gaze swept over the crowd upon the bank.

"Hello, Adam," he yelled, with a gay hard laugh. Then he prodded Collishaw and pointed up at Adam. "There he is—the damned run-off! We've found him."

Adam plunged away into the thicket of mesquites, and indifferent to the clawing thorns he did not halt until he was far down the bank. Then panting and sweating he threw himself upon the sand in a shady place, and endeavored to subdue the riot of his emotions.

It died hard, that regurgitation of brother-love. It represented most of his life, and all of his home associations, and the memories of youth. How warm and fine that suddenly revived emotion! How deep-seated, beyond his control! Plucked out by the roots it yet

lived hidden in the depths of him. Adam in his flight to be alone had yielded to the amaze and shame and fury stirred in him by a realization of joy in the mere sight of this brother who hated him. For years his love had fought against the gradual truth of Guerd's hate. Adam had no fear of Guerd, nor any reason why he could not face him, except this tenderness of which he was ashamed. When he had fought down the awkward sentiment he would show Guerd and Collishaw what he was made of.

Adam spent several hours there in the thicket, communing with himself, and later conjecturing what his brother's motive was in coming to Picacho, and what circumstances might arise. Guerd could want to hunt him for only one reason, and that was a reason as old as the hills to Adam. Money! That was Guerd's motive, with an added possibility of further desire to dominate and hound.

"I'll fool him," said Adam, resolutely, as he got up to return. "And if that coyote-faced Collishaw nags me again I'll—I'll —"

He crossed the thicket, climbed the bare slope and descending into the canyon he went back to the village by this roundabout way. Turning a sharp curve he came suddenly upon a number of workmen, mostly Mexicans. They were standing under a wooden trestle that had been built across the canyon at this narrow point. All of them appeared to be gazing upward, and naturally Adam directed his gaze likewise.

Thus without warning he saw the distorted and ghastly face of a man hanging by the neck on a rope tied to the trestle. The spectacle gave Adam a terrible shock. The picture in all its ghastliness was branded forever upon his sensitive mind. Then Adam, forcing himself, strode on down the canyon.

"That's Collishaw's work," muttered Adam, darkly, and he remembered stories told of the sheriff's grim hand in more than one act of border justice. What a hard country!

In front of the village store Adam encountered Merryvale, and he asked him for particulars about the execution.

"Wall, I don't know much," replied the old watchman, scratching his head. "There's been some placer-miners shot an' robbed up the river. This Collishaw is a regular sure enough sheriff takin' the law to himself. Wall, he an' his deputies say they tracked that murderin' gang to Picacho, an' swore they identified one of them. Arallanes stuck up fer that greaser. There was a hot argument, an' by Gosh! I just swore Collishaw was goin' to draw on Arallanes. The greaser swore by all his Virgins that he wasn't the man, an' was swearin' he could prove it when the rope choked him off. . . . I was fer waitin' a little to give the feller a chance. But Collishaw came down here to hang some one, an' you bet he was goin' to do it."

"I know him, Merryvale, and you're betting right," replied Adam, forcefully.

"Adam, one of his men is a fine lookin' young chap that sure must be your brother."

"Yes, you're right about that, too."

"Wall, wall!—You don't seem powerful glad. . . . Son, be careful what you say to Collishaw. He don't ring right to an old timer like me. He courts the crowd. An' he's been askin' for you. There he comes now."

The sheriff appeared approaching with several companions and halted before the store. His was a striking figure, but his face was repellent. It was that of a man comparatively young in years, but old in experience. His massive head was set on a bull neck of swarthy and weathered skin; his broad face, of similar hue, appeared a mass of criss-crossed lines; and his eyes, dark and glittering, roved incessantly in all directions.

Adam knew that Collishaw had seen him first. And acting upon the resolution that he had made down in the thicket he strode over to the sheriff.

"COLLISHAW, I've been told you wanted me," said Adam.

"Hello, Larey! Yes, I was inquiren' about you," replied Collishaw. He half offered to shake hands, but Adam took no notice.

"What do you want of me?" asked Adam, and he did not like the shrewd calculating glance that seemed to take instant stock of the change in his fortune and character.

"It's a matter of that little gamblin' debt you owe Guerd," he replied, in a low voice, and his tone was one of persuasion. "It's this heah way, Adam. I come in on that an' I shore need money. You run off without settlin' up, an' I'm shore advisin' you to do it now."

"Collishaw, are you threatening me with some such job as you put on that poor greaser?" inquired Adam, sarcastically.

Collishaw straightened up with a jerk and shed his confidential and admonishing air.

"No, I can't arrest you on a gamblin' debt," he replied, bluntly. "But I'm shore goin' to make you pay."

"You are, like hell!" retorted Adam. "What had you to do with it? It Guerd owed you money in that game, I'm not responsible. I didn't pay because I caught Guerd holding out aces on me. I'll bet you a stack of gold twenties against your fancy vest that Guerd never collects a dollar of his crooked deal."

With that Adam turned on his heel and strode off toward the river. His hard-earned independence added something to the wrong done him by these men. The rankling of the injustice he had suffered at Ehrenberg had softened only in regard to the girl in the case. Margarita had come between that affair and the present hour. This other girl had really been nothing to him, but Margarita had become everything. A gratefulness, a big generous warmth stirred in Adam's heart for the dark-eyed Mexican girl. What did it matter who she was? In this desert he must learn to adjust differences of class, and race, and habit, in relation to the wildness of time and place.

In the open sandy space leading to the houses near the river, Adam met Arallanes. The usually genial foreman appeared pale, sombre, sick. To Adam's surprise Arallanes would not talk about the hanging. The man was certainly not a coward, but there seemed a hint of fear in his reticence. Arallanes, however, was not so close-lipped concerning Guerd Larey. In fact, he spoke openly to Guerd's discredit.

"*Quien sabe, Señor?*" he concluded. "Maybe it's best for you. Margarita is a she-cat. You are my friend. I should tell you. . . . but, well, *Señor*, if you would keep Margarita, look out for your brother."

ADAM gaped his astonishment as he turned away. It took him some time to realize the content of Arallanes's warning and advice. But what fixed itself in Adam's mind was the fact that Guerd had run across Margarita, and had been attracted by her. How perfectly natural! How absolutely inevitable! Adam could not remember any girl he had ever admired or liked in all his life that Guerd had not taken away from him. Adam could recall the time when he had been happy to give up anything or any one to his brother. But out here in the desert, where he was beginning to assimilate the meaning of a man's fight for his life and his possessions, he felt vastly different. Moreover, he had gone too far with Margarita. She belonged to him, and his principles were such that he believed he owed her a like return of affection, and besides that, Margarita was only seventeen.

"But—suppose she likes Guerd—and wants him—as she wanted me?" muttered Adam, answering to a divining flash of the inevitable order of things to be. Only last night she had changed the world for him—opened his eyes to life not as it was dreamed, but lived!

Adam found Arallanes's wife home alone. "*Señora*, where is Margarita?"

"Margarita is there, *Señor*," she replied, with dark eloquent glance upon Adam and a slow gesture toward the river bank. She was the mother of the girl. Adam felt reluctant to trust his interpretation of her look. But he was assured of her kindness, her respect and regard. Did he deserve them? As he turned to go toward the river the pang of acute remorse revived in his breast. And he shook his head. How terribly he was at the mercy of his emotions!

Adam soon espied Guerd and Margarita on the river bank some few rods below the landing-place. Here was a pretty sandy nook, shaded by a large mesquite. Two enormous wheels connected by an iron bar, a piece of discarded mill machinery, stood in the shade of the tree. Margarita sat on the cross-bar and Guerd stood beside her. They did not hear Adam's approach on the soft sand.

"*Señorita*, one look from your midnight eyes—and I fell in love with you," Guerd was declaring with gay passion, and his hand upon her was as bold as his speech. "You little Spanish princess! . . . Hidden in this mining-camp, a desert flower born to blush unseen! I shall —"

It was here that Adam walked around the high wheels to confront them. Despite the tumult within him he preserved a cool and quiet exterior. Margarita's radiance vanished in surprise.

"Well, if it ain't old Adam!" ejaculated her companion. "You son-of-a-gun! . . . Why, you've changed."

"Guerd," began Adam, and then his voice halted, if it did not fail. To meet his brother

this way was a tremendous ordeal. And Guerd's presence seemed to charge the very air. Worship of this magnificent brother had been the strongest thing in Adam's life, next to love of mother. Guerd Larey's face was beautiful, yet virile and strong. The beauty was mere perfection of feature. The big curved mouth, the square chin, the straight nose, the large hazel-green eyes, full of laughter and love of life, the broad forehead and clustering fair hair,—all these were features that made him singularly handsome. His skin was clear healthy tan with a tinge of red. Adam saw no change in Guerd, except perhaps an intensifying of an expression of wildness, which made him all the more fascinating to look at. For Adam the mocking thing about Guerd's god-like beauty was the fact that it deceived. At heart, at soul, Guerd was as false as hell!

"Old Adam, are you goin' to shake hands?" queried Guerd, lazily extending his arm. "You shure strike me queer, boy!"

"No," replied Adam, and his quick revolving thoughts grasped at Guerd's slipshod speech. It was not affectation Guerd had absorbed even the provincial words and idioms of the uncouth west.

"All right. Suit yourself," said Guerd, with good nature. "I reckon you see I'm rather pleasantly engaged."

"Yes, I see," returned Adam, bitterly, with a fleeting glance at Margarita. "Guerd, I met Collishaw, and he had the gall to brag me for that gambling debt. I told him what I thought. And I've hunted you up to tell you that you cheated me—I'll not pay it!"

"Oh, yes, you will, old Adam," replied Guerd, smilingly.

"I will not," said Adam, forcefully.

"Boy, you'll pay it or I'll take it out of your hide," declared Guerd, slowly frowning, as if a curious hint of some change in Adam had dawned upon him.

"You can't take it that way—or any other way," retorted Adam.

"But say—I didn't cheat," remonstrated Guerd, evidently making a last stand of argument to gain his end.

"You lie!" flashed Adam. "Guerd, let's waste no words. I told you at Ehrenberg after you played that shabby trick on me—over the girl there—I told you I was done with you for good. I am through."

Guerd seemed to realize with wonder and chagrin that he had now to deal with a man.

"Through and he's damned!" exclaimed Guerd, and he took his arm from around Margarita and rose to his lofty height. "I'm sick of your milk-sop ideas. All I want of you is that money. If you don't pony up with it I'll tear your clothes off gettin' it!"

Adam laughed tauntingly. "I'll say to you what I said to Collishaw—You will like hell! . . . Guerd, I can beat you to a gun. And if you jump me now, when for weeks I've worked like a galley-slave in this gold-mill—why, it'll be the sorriest fight you ever started."

GUERD Larey's lips framed curses that were inaudible. He was astounded.

"I'll meet you after I get through talking to this girl," he said.

"Any time you want," rejoined Adam, biting. "The worm has turned, Guerd Larey. Your goose has stopped laying golden eggs. You've bullied me all my life. You've hated me. . . . Oh, I remember so well! You robbed me of toys, clothes, playmates. Then girl friends! Then money! . . . Then—a worthless woman! . . . You're a fraud—a cheat—a liar! . . . You've fallen in with your kind out here and you're going straight to hell!"

The whiteness of Guerd's face attested his roused passion.

"So you followed me out here to say all that?" he queried.

"No, not altogether," replied Adam. "I came after Margarita."

"Came after Margarita?" echoed Guerd, blankly. "Is that her name?—Say, Adam, is this one of your goody-goody tricks? Rescuing a damsel in distress sort of thing? . . . You and I have fallen out more than once over that. I kick—I—"

"Guerd, we've fallen out forever," interrupted Adam, and then he turned to the girl.

"Margarita, I want you—"

"But it's none of your damned business," burst out Guerd, hotly, interrupting in turn. "What do you care about a Mexican girl? I won't stand your interference."

"But Guerd—it is my business," returned Adam, haltingly. "She's—my girl."

"What!" ejaculated Guerd, incredulously. Then he bent down to peer into Margarita's face, and from that he swept a flashing glance at Adam. His eyes were widened.

McCLURE'S for JULY

then, intensely bright, quickened and sharpened with swift turns of thought. "Boy, you don't mean you're on friendly terms with this greaser girl?"

"Yes," replied Adam.

Guerd violently controlled what must have been a spasm of fiendish glee. His amaze, deep as it was, seemed not to be his predominant feeling, but that very amaze was something to force exquisitely upon Adam how far he had fallen. The moment was dark, hateful, far-reaching in effect, impossible to realize. Guerd's glance flashed back and forth from Adam to Margarita. But he had not yet grasped what was the tragic thing for Adam — the truth of how fatefully far this love affair had gone. Adam's heart sank like lead in his breast. What humiliation he must suffer if he betrayed himself!

"Adam, where two gentlemen admire the lady in question, the choice is always left to her," began Guerd, with something of mockery in his rich voice. A devil gleamed from him then, and the look of him, the stature, the gallant action of him as he bowed before Margarita, fascinated Adam even in his miserable struggle to appear a man.

"But Guerd, you — you've known Margarita only a few moments," he expostulated. "How can you put such a choice to — to her? It's — it's an insult."

"Adam, that is for Margarita to decide," responded Guerd. "Women change. It is something you have not learned." Then as he turned to Margarita he seemed to blaze with magnetism. The grace of him, and the beauty of him in that moment, made of him a perfect physical embodiment of the emotions of which he was master. He knew his power over women. "Margarita, Adam and I are brothers. We are always falling in love with the same girl. You must choose be-

tween us." And he bent over to whisper in her ear, with his strong brown hand on her arm, at once gallant yet masterful.

The scene was a nightmare to Adam. How could this be something that was happening? Margarita seemed a transformed creature, shy, coy, alluring, with the half-veiled dusky eyes lighted with the same fire that had shone in them for Adam.

"Margarita, will you come?" cried Adam, goaded to end this situation.

"No, Señor," she replied softly.

"I beg of you — come!" implored Adam, with hands outstretched to her.

The girl shook her black head. She radiated a strange glow like the warm shade of an opal. Older she seemed to Adam and surer of herself and somehow deeper in that mystic obsession of passion he had often sensed in her. No spiritual conception of what Adam regarded as his obligation to her could ever dawn in that little brain. She loved her pretty face and beautiful body. She gloried in this power over men. And the new man she felt to be still unwon — him who was stronger of instinct and harder to hold, under whose brutal hand she would cringe and thrill and pant and fight — him she would choose. So Adam read Margarita in that moment. If he had felt love for her, which he doubted, it was dead. It seemed that of the three there, he was the only one who was true and who understood.

"Margarita, have you forgotten last night?" asked Adam, huskily.

"Ah, Señor — so long ago and far away!"

Adam whirled abruptly, and plunging into the thicket of mosquitoes he tore a way through, unmindful of the thorns. When he reached his quarters there was blood on his hands and face, but the sting of the thorns was as nothing to the hurt in his heart.

[To Be Continued]

In the Name of Gold—Hara-Kiri

(Continued from page 34)

based upon long experience. It is the experience that people trust, and this experience is that a gold reserve of, say, ten per cent., is enough to enable bankers and governments to meet all the demands that customarily arise among the holders of paper money and credit currency for the actual gold.

But let us go behind this and locate the true source of distrust.

Pick up any financial paper or periodical and you will notice that the topic of first importance is the state of the money-market. You will find serious study of the "gold reserves" of the Bank of England, of the Bank of France, of the Imperial Bank of Germany, of the National Banks of the United States, and of the Federal Reserve Banks; and you will find at last that the state of the money-market is pronounced good or bad, sound or perilous, accordingly as these gold reserves are high or low. That is to say, the relation so solemnly discussed is not the relation of money to the amount of wealth existing or in process of manufacture, but the relation of the total volume of paper money and credit currency to — have you guessed it? — that little block of gold less than thirty feet square.

Is this not a fantastic fact?

It appears that a banker cannot be trusted to lend credit in his own discretion. He is required by law to keep gold on hand in a certain ratio to his liabilities, which means that the amount of credit he may lend is definitely limited by as much of that little block of gold as he can lay his hands upon and lock up in his safe.

It appears that the great Federal Reserve Bank System cannot be trusted to issue paper money in its own unlimited discretion. The law provides that it shall keep in its vaults a certain ratio of actual gold as a "reserve" against the paper money it puts into circulation. Thus the amount of paper money the Federal Reserve System may create is determined not by the amount of wealth existing or in process of manufacture, but by as much of that block of gold less than thirty feet square as it can lay its hands upon.

Likewise, the Bank of England, which issues the English money; the Bank of France, which issues the French money; and the Imperial Bank of Germany, which issues the mark — none of these can be

trusted to issue money in its own wisdom and discretion. Each of them is limited by the legal or traditional necessity of maintaining a certain average ratio of gold to the paper money they put into circulation.

In every case you see that what people trust at last is not the judgment and integrity of the banker who issues credit currency in the form of check books, nor of the government that issues paper money — but the gold reserve. That is the only thing they really trust. And the degree in which they trust the gold reserve is a measure of their distrust of banks and governments.

There is no international law to require, for example, the Bank of England to maintain any fixed ratio of gold reserve to the paper money it issues, nor could there be any such law; but custom and experience have established what that ratio of gold reserve shall average to be week by week. If it falls below the traditional average, there is trouble and excitement and apprehension on all the exchanges of the world. This would end in outright distrust if it continued, but the Bank of England is sensitive to such uneasiness. It stops issuing money, reaches out to all the places where gold is to be had and gathers it in, and thus re-establishes the ratio. Then a sigh of relief is heard through the whole international financial system and confidence is duly restored, by a little decimal mark in the weekly statement of the great Bank of England.

And now we come to a much more fantastic fact, namely, that the amount of gold available as "reserve" — the quantity of that precious yellow metal which determines how much money shall circulate through the channels of finance and commerce — bears no natural relation to the amount of wealth existing. The quantity of gold is arbitrary. Additions to the supply are accidental and miraculous. Thus, in fifteen years from 1896 to 1910, inclusive, the amount of gold produced was one-third as much as had been produced in the preceding four hundred years. This enormous increase was owing, first, to the South African discoveries, and, secondly, to the invention of the cyanide process of extraction. The result of this was that the whole world was flooded with money — not only with gold, but with the paper money and credit currency which rest upon gold reserves. Hence that phenomenal rise in prices which

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