

persons sought. And I am inclined to agree with them.

'Yes,' I replied. 'There is little doubt that Maligni and Barilotti are the same.'

'There is little doubt of it if the police say so,' said the major. 'Did Byrnes tell you that he had taken any steps toward learning the real identity of Luigi Barilotti?'

He did. He claims that it has been proven that no Luigi Barilotti existed in New York until this one bought tickets for passage. He further states that this Luigi Barilotti who appeared so suddenly had plenty of money. The habits of Italians in New York are not such that one with plenty of money to spend would remain long in obscurity.'

'True enough,' I said. 'The search is ended. Now the chase begins. Of course you will follow them.'

Maubikeck bent upon me a peculiar, inscrutable look—a look that seemed to combine hatred, passion and secret purpose, but which, after all, left the face blank and unreadable. Maubikeck's face was of the kind that, under control of the will, was like carved marble. But in his eyes those lurked fires unquenchable, and these fires were burning now for Nita Barilotti.

'Mr Wilberton,' he said, extending his right arm, 'as long as there is one drop of blood flowing through my veins, it flows for Nita Barilotti. There is an arm that has before been raised in her behalf, and which will be again, and there is another like it, equally quick to strike; and these two arms, working together, will tear limb from limb that man who injures Nita Barilotti, or marries her against her will, be he in America, Italy, or at the corners of the earth. I shall follow. It was in connection with that resolve that I came here. He turned to the major now. 'What can I do with my lion? The coat of keeping and feeding them is considerable. This, of course, is a strain on me now that my income is cut off. I have no means other than what I earn. I am poor. I thought of you at once as the man to help me.'

The major stroked his moustache and looked at the lion tamer.

'Of course,' he said, in his blunt way. 'How much do you need? You may have all I can spare, and can pay it back at your own convenience.'

Maubikeck blushed—nothing but this could have made him blush.

'You mistake my meaning, sir. Yet it was my own fault in not making a clearer statement—making my meaning plain. I thought of you, not in the light of money-lender, but as Park Commissioner, who would perhaps be pleased to take the lions as a loan, place them in the menagerie at the Park, and have them fed, of course, at the expense of the city. Is the plan feasible?'

'I don't see why not,' I said. 'Goodness knows, our Zoo needs some fresh attractions. Barnum, it is said, did the same thing in years gone by. I have heard that Forepaugh has done the same. Why not Maubikeck?'

The major at a moment thinking.

'Yes,' he said. 'I believe it has been done, though I do not recall a case in my term of office. But, of course, it could be done only on full vote of the board. We meet to-morrow morning, and I will broach the matter in such a way as to enlist their interest. I don't think there will be any difficulty in getting them to accept.'

'I thank you,' said Maubikeck, simply.

'That will take the lions off your hands and off your mind,' I said. 'We can get away at once. When shall we sail?'

Maubikeck looked at me in surprise. The major wheeled his chair around and faced me.

'Well, *Br!*' he ejaculated. 'Are you going to Italy?'

'I am going wherever Maligni goes,' I replied. 'He has something that I want as much as Maubikeck wants Nita. The red box. We will go together, lion-tamer, and hunt the scoundrel down.'

Think well over this, Mr Wilberton,' said Maubikeck, 'before you decide finally to go. Hunting a man in Sardinia, where Maligni is certainly going, is very different from hunting him in New York, where you have the assistance of a great police force. There are dangers to be met with there that cannot be imagined. Once in Sardinia, Maligni can kill the man who follows him, and will not suffer for the crime. If he has outwitted us here with your boasted police force to aid us, how much more easily can he do it there, where force is about the only law recognized!'

'But,' I replied, impatiently, 'you are going to brave the dangers, are you not, for the girl you love? Then why not I?'

A peculiar look again came in Maubikeck's eyes.

'There is a great difference,' he said, 'between us. I am, of course, risking my life, but I know the country to which I am going. You would be an utter stranger. This would not matter much if everything should turn out as we wish, and you had me to guide you. But if anything happened to me, you would be at the mercy of the most dangerous lot of brigands in the world.'

I laughed at this.

'Brigands there may be, Maubikeck, but all Sardinia is not given over to the industry of brigandage. You may have some reason for not wishing me to accompany you. If so, then I will go alone. But I am determined to follow Maligni and obtain the red box, or writing from him the secret it contained when he got it from Barilotti.'

'Then I will say no more,' said the lion-tamer. 'If you insist upon going, then go with me. I thought only of your own safety. Personally, I shall be glad to have you for a companion.'

So it was settled, and, after a little more talk, the lion-tamer and I started uptown, I promising to meet the major at the club at our usual hour in the afternoon.

When the hour came, I found the major waiting for me in an impatient mood.

'Now, see here, Wilberton,' he said, before I had even time to sit down and light a cigar, 'this resolve of yours to go to Sardinia is ridiculous. I appreciate your sentiments in the matter, your reason for wishing to obtain possession of that red box or its contents and all that, but the risk is too great. You must not go.'

'But I am going,' I replied, calmly.

'You and Maubikeck speak glibly about danger and all that sort of rot. What danger? Anyhow, danger or no danger, I am going.'

'I wasn't thinking so much of the actual danger from contact with Maligni,' said the major. 'A bullet would soon put an end to his mischief-making powers. But are you wise in trusting yourself with this Maubikeck? What do you know of him?'

'Why, I thought you had developed a great admiration for Maubikeck,' I said, in surprise. 'What new crochets have you got into your head now?'

'Look here, Dick,' replied the major: 'it is one thing to admire a man's physical power or beauty, and its another thing to trust him. As a perfect specimen of man, physically, I do admire the lion-tamer. He is grand. But he is too mysterious. Has he, in these days that you have spent together, told you anything about himself?'

'No,' I answered, reluctantly. 'I must confess that he is very reticent about himself. He fights shy of any allusion to his former life. Any question I ask is warded off skillfully, and he evidently wishes to say nothing on the subject. He is affable and pleasant enough when you let him alone as a subject, but if you turn your quizzes on him he shuts up like a clam. To-day when he said he knew something about Sardinia, he said more than he has in all the time we have been together.'

'That's just it,' said the major. 'That remark has been tumbling about in my cranium ever since he made it. Mark my words, Wilberton, it is something more than mere chance that brings those two men together. I do not like you to take the risk. Maubikeck may be all right, then again he may be all wrong.'

'Wrong or right, I am going,' I replied, stubbornly. 'The man may have his own good reasons for his reticence in regard to himself. I do not hold it against a man because he does not unveil to me the secrets of his heart. And I am in the game too deeply now to withdraw. I am going to see the thing through and get that red box. That contains the secret I want. I don't care for Maubikeck's secrets.'

'Well, Dick, old man,' said the major, with a sigh, 'if you must go, you must. But take a word of advice: Keep your eyes wide open and your revolver handy. In case of suspicion, don't wait for proof, but shoot.'

I laughed, and patted the major's arm.

'I will take care of myself,' I said, 'and good care at that. Now I must ask a favour of you. I cannot see Edith. It is but right that she should know why I am starting off on this journey, yet it would be unwise to breathe or write a word of our suspicions, lest they prove to be unfounded. So I shall write a letter to Edith, telling her that I am called away on matters of the utmost importance to her and me, and bidding her adieu, asking her to be true to me until I return, and assuring her of my own fathomless love. And to you I shall look to see that that letter is safely put into Edith's own hand when no other—or no unfriendly eye—is looking.'

'Trust me, Dick, I'll do it,' said the major. 'Come, let us take a stroll before supper.'

I saw that the major was somewhat affected by the prospect of my departure, and humoured him by walking with him to Dalmonico's, making our conversation as light and gay as possible, which effort had the double effect of pleasing him and keeping my own mind from dwelling upon the uncertainties and danger of my Sardinian man-hunt.

(To be Continued.)

WONDERFUL Blood-Purifying Effect —OF— Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

Mr. Charles Stephenson, a well-known Railway Employé at Kaiapoi, New Zealand, writes:

"About ten years ago, while engaged in slunting, my foot caught between the rails, and my leg was fractured below the knee. It healed in time, but I have been troubled ever since with swollen veins, and have been obliged, at times, to wear a bandage. About



a year ago it became much worse, and I feared I should be obliged to give up my work. A friend advised me to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I did so, and after taking four bottles the swelling disappeared, and I have not been troubled with it since."

Ayer's Sarsaparilla Has cured others, will cure you.

Nerve, Blood, & Skin Diseases

CURED BY TAKING
HERR RASSMUSSEN'S
(The Celebrated Danish Herbalist)
ALFALINE HERBAL REMEDIES
(Registered),
A Permanent Cure for
Nerve, Skin, and Blood Diseases.

HERR RASSMUSSEN, the Celebrated Danish Herbalist and Gold Medalist, of 40 Lambton Quay, Wellington, N.Z., and 547 George Street, Sydney, is world-renowned for the thousands of Cures which have been effected by his Herbal Remedies, and the

Thousands of Testimonials Speak for themselves as to the immense virtues of these Herbal Remedies.

ALFALINE VITALITY PILLS
Are a Certain Cure for Weak Nerves, Depressed Spirits, Debility, and Weakness of the Spine, Brain, and Nerves. Special Powerful Course, 43s. 6d.; Ordinary Course, 23s. 6d.; Smaller Boxes, 12s. and 5s. 6d. Send for Free Pamphlet.

ALFALINE BLOOD PILLS
Are unsurpassed as a Blood Purifier and Blood Tonic, and will eradicate the most obstinate Blood and Skin Affections. Price, same as Vitality Pills.

His Alfaline Universal Pills for Female Complaints, Rheumatic Pills, Asthma and Cough Pills, Fat Reducing Powders, Vagitorole Powders, Gargle Powders, Flesh Producing Powders, Worm Cakes, Bath Tablets, Encapsulated Oil and Jujubes, Hair Restoring and Complication Beautifier, Liver and Kidney Pills, are all simply wonderful.

Send for his Free Book, which contains all particulars and many useful hints and numerous testimonials. All Correspondence Private and Confidential. Write without delay, and address—

HERR RASSMUSSEN,
91 LAMBTON QUAY, WELLINGTON, N.Z.

SPECIALTIES! SPECIALTIES! 1895. 1895.

BEAUTIFUL, UNIQUE AND CHASTE.

EX LATEST ARRIVALS

DIRECT FROM THE ENGLISH,
BEST CONTINENTAL, AND
AMERICAN HOUSES

A Large Shipment of
INVITATION AND CALL CARDS
WEDDING CARDS, with Envelopes to match
BALL PROGRAMMES, PENCILS AND TIES
FANCY PAPERS AND CARDS, for Concert
Programmes
MENU CARDS, numerous designs.
MOURNING CARDS AND ENVELOPES
SYLLABUS CARDS and other Novelties.

THE TRADE SUPPLIED.

The Cheapest and Most Artistic House in the Australasian Colonies.

Country Orders receive prompt attention. Call or Send for Samples.

AUCKLAND STAR LITHOGRAPHIC AND PRINTING WORKS,
SHORTLAND AND FORT-STS., AUCKLAND
H. BRETHERTON, Proprietor.

MERCHANTS IN NEW ZEALAND WRITING TO CEYLON TO OBTAIN SURATURA TEA.

THE following copy of a letter was written by the exporters of Suratura Tea to the Wellington agents:—

"Colombo, 2nd Sept., 1895.

"Dear Sirs,—There seems to be a great deal of correspondence between dealers in your Colony and merchants here re Suratura Teas, and we have on more than one occasion heard them highly spoken of in Colombo. We mention this as we think it will be as well for you in self-protection to register the mark (if you have not already done so) as early as possible, as we ourselves have known the labels of other well-known brands very closely, if not almost, copied, and we feel sure were this to happen to Suratura, and inferior teas sold under a similar, or perhaps the same name, it would be very detrimental to all parties concerned. Of course, we refuse to ship the teas (Suratura) to any firm but your good selves, and shall always endeavour to protect you at this end as far as is in our power.—Yours, etc.,"

The endeavor made to obtain this wonderful Tea is proof of its public appreciation and quality.

The duty on Suratura is charged at 4d per lb. the old rate being 6d.

STEADY !!

There is a Ran on our Blends. While we are glad to see it, And happy to keep pace with it, We want to point out
THERE IS NO NEED FOR ALARM.

THE QUALITY

ALWAYS THE SAME.

And will be just as good next week as this.

We hold an IMMENSE STOCK, and there is ENOUGH FOR EVERYBODY.

Please keep calm, WE WON'T FAIL YOU.

Yours faithfully,

EMPIRE TEA COMPANY.

W. & G. TURNBULL & CO.,

Proprietors.

'There is a great difference,' he said, 'between us. I am, of course, risking my life, but I know the country to which I am going. You would be an utter stranger. This would not matter much if everything should turn out as we wish, and you had me to guide you. But if anything happened to me, you would be at the mercy of the most dangerous lot of brigands in the world.'

I laughed at this.

'Lady of a Certain Age: 'I like this dress; but it doesn't match my complexion.' Candid friend: 'Oh, that's but a trifle; you can alter your complexion to suit!'