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VOLUME 50. MILTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1909. No. 21

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BANK OF HAMILTON

COUNTY OF HALTON

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FOR 1909

Day of Sitting	Hours of Opening	Jan.	Mar.	May	July.	Sept.	Nov.	1910 Jan.	Mar.
Friday	10.30 a.m.	15	12	7	9	13	12	14	11
Tuesday	12.30 p.m.	12	9	4	6	14	9	11	8
Wednesday	10.00 a.m	13	10	5	7	15	10	12	9
Thursday	10.15 a.m.	14	11	6	8	16	11	13	10
Saturday	10.00 a.m.	16	13	8	10	18	13	15	12
Monday	11.00 a.m.	11	8	3	5	13	8	10	7

ADDRESSES OF CLERKS—1. Wm. Panton, Milton; 2. Arthur Hilmer, Oakville; 3. Georgetown; 4. R. J. McNabb, Acton; 5. Wm. Frazer, Campbellville; Burlington.

ions of the Peace and County Court Sittings, with or without Jury, 8th December, on opening days at 1 p.m.

Sittings, without Jury, 6th April and 5th October, and so often at other required for the despatch of business.

—formerly Terms—11th January, 5th April, 5th July and 4th October.

Notice Accounts, 5th January, 3rd April, 3rd July and 5th October.

By order **W. I. DICK, Milton,**
Clerk of the Peace.

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GOING WEST.
9.03 a.m. 3.58 p.m. 6.42 p.m. 8.30 p.m.
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The Prisoner Of Zenda

By... ANTHONY HOPE

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He was, of course, more moved than I, for he loved his master. Afraid for himself he was not—no man ever saw him that—but to think what might lie in that dark cellar was enough to turn any man's face pale. I went myself and took a silver candlestick from the dining table and struck a light, and as I returned I felt the hot wax drip on my naked hand as the candle swayed to and fro, so that I cannot afford to despise Colonel Sapt for his agitation.

I came to the door of the cellar. The red stain, turning more and more to a dull brown, stretched inside. I walked two yards into the cellar and held the candle high above my head. I saw full bins of wine; I saw spiders crawling on the walls; I saw, too, a couple of empty bottles lying on the floor, and then, away in the corner, I saw the body of a man lying flat on his back with his arms stretched wide and a crimson gash across his throat. I walked to him and knelt down beside him and commended to God the soul of a faithful man, for it was the body of Josef, the little servant, slain in guarding the king.

I felt a hand on my shoulder and, turning, saw Sapt's eyes, glaring and terror struck, beside me.

"The king! My God, the king!" he whispered hoarsely.

I threw the candle's gleam over every inch of the cellar.

"The king is not here," said I.

CHAPTER VII.

I PUT my arm round Sapt's waist and supported him out of the cellar, drawing the battered door close after me. For ten minutes or more we sat silent in the dining room. Then old Sapt rubbed his knuckles into his eyes, gave one great gasp and was himself again. As the clock on the mantelpiece struck 1 he stamped his foot on the floor, saying:

"They've got the king!"

"Yes," said I, "all's well!" as Black Michael's dispatch said. What a moment it must have been for him when the royal salutes were fired at Strelsau this morning! I wonder when he got the message?"

"It must have been sent in the morning," said Sapt. "They must have sent it before news of your arrival at Strelsau reached Zenda—I suppose it came from Zenda."

"And he's carried it about all day!" I exclaimed. "Upon my honor, I'm not the only man who's had a trying day! What did he think, Sapt?"

"What does that matter? What does he think, lad, now?"

I rose to my feet.

"We must get back," I said, "and rouse every soldier in Strelsau. We ought to be in pursuit of Michael before midday."

Old Sapt pulled his pipe and carefully lit it from the candle which guttered on the table.

"The king may be murdered while we sit here," I urged.

Sapt smoked for a moment in silence.

"That cursed old woman!" he broke out. "She must have attracted their attention somehow. I see the game. They came up to kidnap the king, and—as I say—somehow they found him. If you hadn't gone to Strelsau, you and I and Fritz had been in heaven by now."

"And the king?"

"Who knows where the king is now?" he asked.

"Come; let's be off," said I. But he sat still, and suddenly he burst into one of his grating chuckles.

"By Jove, we've shaken up Black Michael!"

"Come, come!" I repeated impatiently.

"And we'll shake him up a bit more," he added, a cunning smile broadening on his wrinkled, weather beaten face and his teeth working on an end of his grizzled mustache. "Aye, lad, we'll go back to Strelsau. The king shall be in his capital again tomorrow."

"The king?"

"The crowned king!"

"You're mad!" I cried.

"If we go back and tell the trick we played, what would you give for our lives?"

"Just what they're worth," said I.

"And for the king's throne? Do you think that the nobles and the people will enjoy being fooled as you've fooled them? Do you think they'll love a king who was too drunk to be crowned and sent a servant to personate him?"

"He was drugged—and I'm no servant."

"Mine will be Black Michael's version."

He rose, came to me and laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Lad," he said, "if you play the man you may save the king yet. Go back and keep his throne warm for him."

"But the duke knows—the villains he has employed know"—

"Aye, but they can't speak!" roared Sapt in grim triumph. "We've got 'em! How can they denounce you without denouncing themselves? 'This is not the king, because we kidnaped the king and murdered his servant.' Can they say that?"

The position flashed on me. Whether Michael knew me or not he could not speak. Unless he produced the king, what could he do? And if he produced the king, where was he? For a moment I was carried away headlong, but in an instant the difficulties came strong upon me.

"I must be found out," I urged.

"Perhaps, but every hour's something. Above all, we must have a king in Strelsau or the city will be Michael's in four and twenty hours, and what would the king's life be worth then—or his throne? Lad, you must do it!"

"Suppose they kill the king?"

"They'll kill him if you don't."

"Sapt, suppose they have killed the king?"

"Then, by heaven, you're as good an Elphberg as Black Michael, and you shall reign in Ruritania. But I don't believe they have, nor will they kill him if you're on the throne. Will they kill him to put you in?"

It was a wild plan—wilder even and hopeless than the trick we had already carried through, but as I listened to Sapt I saw the strong points in our game. And then I was a young man, and I loved action, and I was offered such a hand in such a game as perhaps never man played yet.

"I shall be found out," I said.

"Perhaps," said Sapt. "Come! To Strelsau! We shall be caught like rats in a trap if we stay here."

"Sapt," I cried, "I'll try it!"

"Well played!" said he. "I hope they've left us the horses. I'll go and see."

"We must bury that poor fellow," said I.

"No time," said Sapt.

"I'll do it."

"Hang you!" he grinned. "I make you a king, and—well, do it. Go and

"Thank God, sire! You're safe!"

fetch him while I look to the horses. He can't lie very deep, but I doubt if he'll care about that. Poor little Josef! He was an honest bit of a man."

He went out, and I went to the cellar. I raised poor Josef in my arms and bore him into the passage and thence toward the door of the house. Just inside I laid him down, remembering that I must find spades for our task. At this instant Sapt came up.

"The horses are all right. There's the own brother to the one that brought you here. But you may save yourself that job."

"I'll not go before he's buried."

"Yes, you will."

"Not I, Colonel Sapt, not for all Ruritania."

"You fool!" said he. "Come here."

He drew me to the door. The moon was sinking, but about 300 yards away, coming along the road from Zenda, I made out a party of men. There were seven or eight of them. Four were on horseback, and the rest were walking, and I saw that they carried long implements, which I guessed to be spades and mattocks, on their shoulders.

"They'll save you the trouble," said Sapt. "Come along."

He was right. The approaching party must beyond doubt be Duke Michael's men, come to remove the traces of their evil work. I hesitated no longer, but an irresistible desire seized me. Pointing to the corpse of poor little Josef, I said to Sapt:

"Colonel, we ought to strike a blow for him!"

"You'd like to give him some company, eh? But it's too risky work, your majesty."

"I must have a slap at 'em," said I.

Sapt wavered.

"Well," said he, "it's not business, you know; but you've been a good boy—and if we come to grief, why, hang me, it'll save us a lot of thinking! I'll show you how to touch them."

He cautiously closed the open chink of the door. Then we retreated through the house and made our way to the back entrance. Here our horses were standing. A carriage drive swept all around the lodge.

"Revolver ready?" asked Sapt.

"No; steel for me," said I.

"Gad, you're thirsty tonight," chuckled Sapt. "So be it."

We mounted, drawing our swords, and waited silently for a minute or two. Then we heard the tramp of men on the drive the other side of the house. They came to a stand and one cried:

"Now, then, fetch him out!"

"Now!" whispered Sapt.

Driving the spurs into our horses, we rushed at a gallop round the house, and in a moment we were among the ruffians. Sapt told me afterward that he killed a man, and I believe him, but I saw no more of him. With a cut I split the head of a fellow on a brown horse, and he fell to the ground. Then I found myself opposite a big man, and I was half conscious of another to my right. It was too warm to stay, and with a simultaneous action I drove my spurs into my horse again and my sword full into the big man's breast. His bullet whizzed past my ear—I could almost swear it touched it. I wrenched at the sword, but it would not come, and I dropped it and galloped after Sapt, whom I now saw about twenty yards ahead. I waved my hand in farewell and dropped it a second later with a yell, for a bullet had grazed my finger and I felt the blood. Old Sapt turned round in the saddle. Some one fired again, but they had no rifles, and we were out of range. Sapt fell to laughing.

"That's one to me and two to you, with decent luck," said he. "Little Josef will have company."

"Aye, they'll be a parti carree," said I. My blood was up, and I rejoiced to have killed them.

"Well, a pleasant night's work to the rest!" said he. "I wonder if they noticed you."

"The big fellow did. As I struck him I heard him cry, 'The king!'"

"Good, good! Oh, we'll give Black Michael some work before we've done!"

Pausing an instant, we made a bandage for my wounded finger, which was bleeding freely and ached severely, the bone being much bruised. Then we rode on, asking of our good horses all that was in them. The excitement of the fight and of our great resolve died away, and we rode in gloomy silence. Day broke clear and cold. We found a farmer just up and made him give us sustenance for ourselves and our horses. I, feigning a toothache, muffled my face closely. Then ahead again till Strelsau lay before us. It was 8 o'clock or nearing 9, and the gates were all open, as they always were save when the duke's caprice or intrigues shut them. We rode in by the same way as we had come out the evening before, all four of us—the men and the horses—wearied and jaded. The streets were even quieter than when we had gone—every one was sleeping off last night's revelry—and we met hardly a soul till we reached the little gate of the palace. There Sapt's old groom was waiting for us.

"Is all well, sir?" he asked.

"All's well," said Sapt, and the man, coming to see, took my hand to kiss.

"The king's hurt!" he cried.

"It's nothing" said I as I dismounted. "I caught my finger in the door."

"Remember, silence!" said Sapt. "Ah, but, my good Freyler, I do not need to tell you that."

The old fellow shrugged his shoulders.

"All young men like to ride abroad now and then—why not the king?" said he, and Sapt's laugh left his opinion of my motives undisturbed.

"You should always trust a man," observed Sapt, fitting the key in the lock, "just as far as you must."

We went in and reached the dressing room. Flinging open the door, we saw Fritz von Tarlenheim stretched, fully dressed, on the sofa. He seemed to have been sleeping, but our entry woke him. He leaped to his feet, gave one glance at me and with a joyful cry threw himself on his knees before me.

"Thank God, sire! Thank God, you're safe!" he cried, stretching his hand up to catch hold of mine.

I confess that I was moved. This king, whatever his faults, made people love him. For a moment I could not bear to speak or break the poor fellow's illusion. But tough old Sapt had no such feeling. He slapped his hand on his thigh delightedly.

"Bravo, lad!" cried he. "We shall do!"

Fritz looked up in bewilderment. I held out my hand.

"You're wounded, sire!" he exclaimed.

"It's only a scratch," said I, "but"—I paused.

He rose to his feet with a bewildered air. Holding my hand, he looked me up and down and down and up. Then suddenly he dropped my hand and reeled back.

"Where's the king? Where's the king?" he cried.

"Hush, you fool!" hissed Sapt. "Not so loud! Here's the king."

A knock sounded at the door. Sapt seized me by the hand.

"Here, quick! To the bedroom! Off with your cap and your boots. Get into bed. Cover everything up."

I did as I was bid. A moment later Sapt looked in, nodded, grinned and introduced an extremely smart and deferential young gentleman, who came up to my bedside, bowing again and again, and informed me that he was of the household of the Princess Flavia and that her royal highness had sent him especially to inquire how the king's health was after the fatigues which his majesty had undergone yesterday.

"My best thanks, sir, to my cousin," said I, "and tell her royal highness that I was never better in my life."

"The king," added old Sapt, who, I began to find, loved a good lie for its own sake, "has slept without a break all night."

The young gentleman (he reminded me of Osric in "Hamlet") bowed himself out again. The farce was over, and Fritz von Tarlenheim's pale face recalled us to reality, though, in faith, the farce had to be reality for us now.

"Is the king dead?" he whispered.

"Please God, no," said I. "But he's in the hands of Black Michael."

CHAPTER VIII.

A REAL king's life is perhaps a hard one, but a pretended king's is, I warrant, much harder. On the next day Sapt instructed me in my duties—what I ought to do and what I ought to know—for three hours; then I snatched breakfast, with Sapt still opposite me, telling me that the king always took white wine in the morning and was known to detest all highly seasoned dishes. Then came the chancellor for another three hours, and to him I had to explain that the hurt to my finger (we turned that bullet to happy account) prevented me from writing, whence arose great to do, hunting of precedents and so forth, ending in my "making my mark," and the chancellor attesting it with a superfluity of solemn oaths. Then the French ambassador was introduced to present his credentials. Here my ignorance was of no importance, as the king would have been equally raw to the business. We worked through the whole corps diplomatique in the next few days, a demise of the crown necessitating all this bother.

Then at last I was left alone. I called my new servant (we had chosen to succeed poor Josef a young man who had never known the king), had a brandy and soda brought to me and observed to Sapt that I trusted that I might now have a rest.

Fritz von Tarlenheim was standing by.

"By heaven!" he cried. "We waste time. Aren't we going to throw Black Michael by the heels?"

"Gently, my son, gently," said Sapt, knitting his brows. "It would be a pleasure, but it might cost us dear. Would Michael fail and leave the king alive?"

"And," I suggested, "while the king is here in Strelsau, on his throne, what grievance has he against his dear brother Michael?"

"Are we to do nothing, then?"

"We're to do nothing stupid," growled Sapt.

"In fact, Fritz," said I, "I am reminded of a situation in one of our English plays, 'The Critic.' Have you heard of it? Or, if you like, of two men each covering the other with a revolver. For I can't expose Michael without exposing myself"—

"And the king," put in Sapt.

"And hang me if Michael won't expose himself if he tries to expose me!"

"It's very pretty," said old Sapt.

"If I'm found out," I pursued, "I will make a clean breast of it and fight it out with the duke. But at present I'm waiting for a move from him."

"He'll kill the king," said Fritz.

"Not he," said Sapt.

"Half of the Six are in Strelsau," said Fritz.

"Only half? You're sure?" asked Sapt eagerly.

"Yes, only half."

"Then the king's alive, for the other three are guarding him!" cried Sapt.

"Yes, you're right!" exclaimed Fritz, his face brightening. "If the king were dead and buried, they'd all be here with Michael. You know Michael's back, colonel?"

"I know, curse him!"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," said I, "who are the Six?"

"I think you'll make their acquaintance soon," said Sapt. "They are six gentlemen whom Michael maintains in his household. They belong to him body and soul. There are three Ruritanians; then there's a Frenchman, a Belgian and one of your countrymen."

"They'd all cut a throat if Michael told them," said Fritz.

"Perhaps they'll cut mine," I suggested.

"Nothing more likely," agreed Sapt. "Who are here, Fritz?"

"De Gautet, Bersonin and Detchard."

"The foreigners! It's as plain as a pikestaff. He's brought them and left the Ruritanians with the king. That's because he wants to commit the Ruritanians as deep as he can."

"They were none of them among our friends at the lodge, then?" I asked.

"I wish they had been," said Sapt wistfully. "They had been not six, but four, by now."

I had already developed one attribute of royalty—a feeling that I need not reveal all my mind or my secret designs even to my intimate friends. I had fully resolved on my course of action. I meant to make myself as popular as I could and at the same time to show no disfavor to Michael. By these means I hoped to allay the hostility of his adherents and make it appear, if an open conflict came about, that he was ungrateful and not oppressed.

Yet an open conflict was not what I hoped for.

The king's interest demanded secrecy, and while secrecy lasted I had a fine game to play in Strelsau. Michael should not grow stronger for delay.

I ordered my horse and, attended by Fritz von Tarlenheim, rode in the grand new avenue of the royal park, returning all the salutes which I received with punctilious politeness. Then I rode through a few of the streets, stopped and bought flowers of a pretty girl, paying her with a piece of gold, and then, having attracted the desired amount of attention (for I had a trail of half a thousand people after me), I rode to the residence of the Princess Flavia and asked if she would receive me. This step created much interest and was met with shouts of approval. The princess was very popular, and the chancellor himself had not scrupled to hint to me that the more I pressed my suit and the more sandily I brought it to a prosperous conclusion the stronger should I be in the affection of my subjects. The chancellor, of course, did not understand the difficulties which lay in the way of following his loyal and excellent advice. However, I thought I could do no harm by calling, and in this view Fritz supported me with a cordiality that surprised me until he confessed that he also had his motive for liking a visit to the princess' house, which motive was no other than a great desire to see the princess' lady in waiting and bosom friend, the Countess Helga von Strofzin.

Etiquette seconded Fritz's hopes. While I was ushered into the princess' room he remained with the countess in the antechamber. In spite of the people and servants who were hanging about I doubt not that they managed a tete-a-tete, but I had no leisure to think of them, for I was playing the most delicate move in all my difficult game. I had to keep the princess devoted to me—and yet indifferent to me; I had to show affection for her—and not feel it. I had to make love for another, and that to a girl who, princess or no princess, was the most beautiful I had ever seen. Well, I braced myself to the task, made no easier by the charming embarrassment with which I was received. How I succeeded in carrying out my programme will appear hereafter.

"You are gaining golden laurels," she said. "You are like the prince in Shakespeare who was transformed by becoming king. But I'm forgetting you are king, sire."

"I ask you to speak nothing but what your heart tells you and to call me nothing but my name."

She looked at me for a moment.

"Then I'm glad and proud, Rudolf," said she. "Why, as I told you, your very face is changed."

I acknowledged the compliment, but I disliked the topic, so I said:

"My brother is back, I hear. He made an excursion, didn't he?"

"Yes, he is here," she said, frowning a little.

"He can't stay long from Strelsau, it seems," I observed, smiling. "Well, we are all glad to see him. The nearer he is the better."

The princess glanced at me with a gleam of amusement in her eyes.

"Why, cousin? Is it that you can"—

"See better what he's doing? Perhaps," said I. "And why are you glad?"

"I didn't say I was glad," she answered.

"Some people say so for you."

"There are many insolent people," she said, with delightful haughtiness.

"Possibly you mean that I am one?"

"Your majesty could not be," she said, courtesying in feigned deference, but adding mischievously after a pause, "unless, that is"—

"Well, unless what?"

"Unless you tell me that I mind a snap of my fingers where the Duke of Strelsau is."

Really I wished that I had been the king.

"You don't care where Cousin Michael"—

"Ah, Cousin Michael! I call him the Duke of Strelsau."

"You call him Michael when you meet him?"

"Yes—by the orders of your father."

"I see. And now by mine?"

"If those are your orders."

"Oh, decidedly! We must all be pleasant to our dear Michael."

"You order me to receive his friends, too, I suppose?"

"The Six?"

"You call them that too?"

"To be in the fashion I do. But I order you to receive no one unless you like."

"Except yourself?"

"I pray for myself. I could not order."

As I spoke there came a cheer from the street. The princess ran to the window.

"It is he!" she cried. "It is—the Duke of Strelsau!"

I smiled, but said nothing. She returned to her seat. For a few moments we sat in silence. The noise outside subsided, but I heard the tread of feet in the anteroom. I began to talk on general subjects. This went on for some minutes. I wondered what had become of Michael, but it did not seem to be for me to interfere. All at once, to my great surprise, Flavia, clasping her hands, asked in an agitated voice:

"Are you wise to make him angry?"

"What? Who? How am I making him angry?"

"Why, by keeping him waiting."

"My dear cousin, I don't want to keep him"—

"Well, then, is he to come in?"

"Of course, if you wish it."

She looked at me curiously.

"How funny you are," she said. "Of course no one could be answered while I was with you."

Here was a charming attribute of royalty.

"An excellent etiquette!" I cried. "But I had clean forgotten it, and if I were alone with some one else couldn't you be announced?"

"You know as well as I do I could be, because I am of the blood." And she still looked puzzled.

"I never could remember all these silly rules," said I rather drearily as I inwardly cursed Fritz for not posting me up. "But I'll repair my fault."

I jumped up, flung open the door and advanced into the anteroom. Michael was sitting at a table, a heavy frown on his face. Every one else was standing, save that impudent young dog Fritz, who was lounging easily in an armchair and flirting with the Countess Helga. He leaped to his feet as I entered with a deference whose exactitude lent point to his former neglect. Stay, I had no difficulty in [illegible] that the duke might not see young Fritz.

I held out my hand. Michael took it, and I embraced him. Then I drew him with me into the inner room.

"Brother," I said, "if I had known you were here you should not have waited a moment before I asked the princess to permit me to bring you to her."

He thanked me, but coldly. The man had many qualities, but he could not hide his feelings. A mere schoolboy could have seen that he hated and hated worse to see me with Princess Flavia. Yet I am persuaded that he tried to conceal both feelings from her, that he tried to persuade himself that he believed I was really the king I did not know, of course, that if the king were an [illegible] cleverer and more [illegible] (and I began to think so myself in that role), Michael could not believe that. And if he didn't he must have loathed paying me obedience and hearing my "Michael" and my "Flavia."

"Your hand is hurt, sire," he observed, with concern.

"Yes; I was playing a game with a mongrel dog (I meant to star[illegible] you know, brother, such have uncertain tempers."

He smiled sourly, and his dark eyes rested on me for a moment.

"But is there no danger from the bite?" cried Flavia anxiously.

"None from this," said I. "If I gave him a chance to bite deeper, it would be different, cousin."

"But surely he has been destroyed?" said she.

"Not yet. We're waiting to see if his bite is harmful."

"And if it is?" asked Michael, with his sour smile.

"He'll be knocked on the head, brother," said I.

"You won't play with him any more?" urged Flavia.

"Perhaps I shall."

"He might bite again"

"Doubtless he'll try," said I, smiling. "Then, fearing Michael would say something which I must appear to resent (for, though I might show him my hate, I must seem to be full of favors), I began to compliment him on the magnificent condition of his regiment and of their loyal greeting to me on the day of my coronation. Thence I passed to a rapturous description of the shooting lodge which he had lent me. But he rose suddenly to his feet. His temper was failing him, and as an excuse he said farewell. However, as he reached the door he stopped, saying:

"Three friends of mine are very anxious to have the honor of being presented to you, sire. They are here in the antechamber."

To be continued.

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