

Baby Buster sets up a mighty clatter if he doesn't get his Krumbles the moment the cloth is laid. And Mother makes him chew it. That's what brings out the flavor and goodness in Krumbles, the whole-Durum-wheat food.

Look for this signature

K.H. Kellogg

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(Canada)



All Wheat Ready to Eat

Made in Canada

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The Whig's New Serial Story



GOLD

by STEWART EDWARD WHITE

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CHAPTER II.

WITH the words he sprang forward and hit me twice. The blows started at the very top of his foot, and they shook me as no blows, even with the bare fist, had ever shaken me before or since. Completely dazed, I struck back, but encountered only the empty air. Four or five times from somewhere those pile driver fists descended upon me. Being now prepared to some extent, I raised my elbows and managed to defend my neck and jaws. The attack was immediately transferred to my body, but I stiffened my muscles thickly and took the punishment. My river and farm work had so hardened me there that I believe I could have taken the kick of a mule without damage were I expecting it.

The respite enabled my brain to clear. I recovered slowly from the effect of those first two vicious blows. I saw Ward, his eyes narrowed calculatingly, his body swinging forward like a whalebone spring, delivering his attack with nice accuracy. A slow anger glowed through me. He had begun without the least warning, had caught me absolutely unawares. I hit back.

He was so intent on his own assault, so certain of the blinding effect of his first attack, that I hit him. I saw his head snap back and the blood come from his lips. The blows were weak, for I was still dazed, but they served, together with the slow burn of my anger, greatly to steady me. We were once more on equal terms.

For perhaps two minutes I tried to exchange with him. He was in and out like lightning. He landed on me hard almost every time. He escaped nine out of ten of my return counters. Decidedly I was getting the worst of this, though my heavier body took punishment better than his lighter and more nervous frame. Then suddenly it occurred to me that I was playing his game for him. As long as he could keep away from me he was at an advantage. My best chance was to close. From that moment I took the aggressive and was in consequence the more punished. My rushes to close in were skillfully eluded, and they generally laid me wide open. My head was stinging, and my sight uncertain, though I was in no real distress. Ward danced away and slipped around tense as a panther.

Then by a very simple ruse I got hold of him. I feinted at rushing him, stopped and he landed and then, following closely the blow, managed to seize his arm. For ten seconds he jerked and twisted and struggled to release himself. Then suddenly he gave that up, dove forward and caught me in a grapevine.

He was a fairly skillful wrestler and very strong. It was as though he were made of whalebone springs. But never yet had I met a man of my weight who possessed the same solid strength, and Ward would tip the scales at considerably less. I broke his hold and went after him.

He was as lively as an exceedingly slippery fish. Time after time he all but wriggled from my grasp, and time after time he broke my hold by sheer agility. His exertions must have been to him something terrible, for they required every ounce of his strength at the greatest speed. I could, of course, take it much easier, and every instant I expected to feel him weaken beneath my hands, but apparently he was as vigorous as ever. He was in excellent training. At last, however, I managed to jerk him whirling past me, to throw his feet from under him and to drop him beneath me. As he fell he twisted, and by a sheer stroke I caught his wrist.

Thus through no great skill of my own the fortunes of war had given me a hammerlock on him. Most people know what that is. Any one else can find out by placing his forearm across the small of his back and then getting somebody else to press upward on the forearm. The Greek statue of "The Wrestler" illustrates it. As the pressure increases so does the pain. When the pain becomes intense enough the wrestler rolls over, and the contest is won. Some people can stand it longer than others, but all sooner or later must give up. In fact, skilled wrestlers, knowing that otherwise the inevitable end is a broken arm, save themselves much tribulation by immediately conceding the bout once this deadly hold is gained.

I began to force Talbot Ward's hand slowly up his back. Very gently, an inch at a time, I pressed. He said nothing. Once he attempted to slip sideways; but, finding me of course fully prepared for that, he instantly ceased struggling. After I had pushed the hand to the hurting point I stopped.

"Well?" said I.

He said nothing.

Now, I was young and none too well disciplined, heated by contest and very angry at having been so unexpectedly attacked at the beginning. I was quite

willing to hurt him a little. Slowly and steadily, I am ashamed to say, with considerable satisfaction I pressed the arm upward. The pain must have been intense. I could feel the man's body quiver between my



He Escaped Nine Out of Ten of My Return Counters.

knees and saw the sweat break out afresh. Still he made no sign, but dug his forehead into the floor. "I can stand this as long as you can," said I to myself grimly.

But at last I reached the point where I knew that another inch, another pound, would break the bone.

"Do you give up?" I demanded.

"No!" he gasped explosively.

"I'll break your arm!" I snarled at him.

He made no reply.

The blood was running into my eyes from a small scrape on my forehead. It was nothing, but it annoyed me. I was bruised and heated and mad. Every bit of antagonism in me was aroused. As far as I was concerned, it was a very real fight.

"All right," I growled. "I'll keep you there then, — you!"

Holding the arm in the same position, I settled myself. The pain to the poor chap must have been something fearful, for every muscle and tendon was stretched to the cracking point. His breath came and went in sharp sobs, but he gave no other sign. My heat cooled, though, as I look back on it, far too slowly. Suddenly I arose and flung him from me. He rolled over on his back and lay, his eyes half closed, breathing deeply. We must have been a sweet sight, we two young barbarians, myself marked and swollen and bloody, he with one eye puffed and pale as death. My roommate, absolutely fascinated, did not stir.

The tables lasted only the fraction of a minute, after all. Then abruptly Talbot Ward sat up. He grinned up at me with his characteristic momentary flash of teeth.

"I told you you couldn't lick me," said he.

I stared at him in astonishment.

"Licked? Why, I had you cold!"

"You had not."

"I'd have broken your arm if I had gone any further."

"Well, why didn't you?"

I stared into his eyes blankly.

"Would you have done it?" I asked in a sudden flash of illumination.

"Why, of course," said he, with a faint contempt as he arose.

"Why did you hit me at first as you did? You gave me no warning whatever."

"Do you get any warning in a real fight?"

I could not controvert this, and yet vaguely I felt there must be a fallacy somewhere. I had been told and now told what should or should not be done in an affair that apparently could have no rules and yet had distinctions as to fair and unfair, and some of which were explained and some left as obvious. I felt somewhat confused. But often in my later experience with Talbot Ward I felt just that way, so in retrospect it does not strike me so forcibly as it did at that time.

"But you're a wotter, a perfect wotter," Ward was saying.

Then we all became aware of a knocking and a rattling at the door. It must have been going on for some time.

"If you don't open, I'll get the police," I promised you, I'll get the police," the voice of our landlady was saying.

We looked at each other aghast.

"I suppose we must have been making a little noise," conceded Talbot Ward. Noise! It must have sounded as though the house were coming down. Our ordinary little boxing matches were nothing to it.

Ward threw his military cape around his shoulders and sank back into a seat beneath the window. I put on an overcoat. One of the boys let her in. She was thoroughly angry, and she gave us all notice to go. She had done that same every Saturday night for a year, but we had always wheedled her out of it. This time, however, she seemed to mean business. I suppose we had made a good deal of a racket. When the fact became evident, of course, shouldered the whole responsibility. Thereupon she turned on me. Unexpectedly Talbot Ward spoke up from the obscurity of his corner. His clear voice was incisive, but so courteous with the cold snarl of the high bred aristocrat that Mrs. Simpkins was cut short in the middle of a sentence.

"I beg you, calm yourself, madam," said he. "It is not worth heating yourself over, for the annoyance, such as it is, will soon be removed. Mr. Munroe and myself are shortly departing together for California."

If I had any scruples—and I do not remember many—they were overcome within the next day or two. It was agreed that I was to go in Ward's employ, he to pay my passage money and all expenses. I gave him half the gold I might pick up. This seemed to me at least an eminently satisfactory and businesslike arrangement. Ward bought the outfit for both of us. It turned out that he was a Mexican war veteran—hence the military cape—and in consequence an old campaigner. His experience and my rural upbringing saved us from most of the ridiculous purchases men made at that time. We had stout clothes and boots, a waterproof apron, picks and shovels, blankets and long strips of canvas, three axes, knives, one rifle, a double shotgun and a Colt's revolver apiece. The latter seemed to me a wonderful weapon, with its six charges in the turning cylinder, but I had no opportunity to try it.

Ward decided instantly for the Panama route.

"It's the most expensive, but also the quickest," said he. "A sailing ship around the Horn takes forever, and across the plains is ditto. Every day we wait some other fellow is landing in the diggings."

Nearly every evening he popped into our boarding house, where, owing to the imminence of my departure, I had been restored to favor. I never did find out where he lived. We took our passage at the steamship office. We went to the variety shows and sang "Oh, Susannah" with the rest. We strutted a bit and were only restrained from donning our fannel shirts and Colt's revolving pistols in the streets of New York by a little remnant, a very little remnant, of common sense.

When the time at last came we boarded our steamship and hung over the rail and cheered like crazy things. I personally felt as though a lid had been lifted from my spirit and that a rolling cloud of enthusiasm was at last allowed to puff out to fill my heaven.

In two days we were both over being seasick and had a chance to look around us. Our ship was a sidewheel steamer of about a thousand tons, and she carried 250 passengers, which was about 200 more than her regular complement. They were as miscellaneous a lot as mortal eye ever fell upon, from the lank Maine Yankee to the tall, mallow, black haired man from Louisiana. I suppose, too, all grades of the social order must have been represented, but in our youth and high spirits we did not go into details of that sort. Every man, with the exception of a dozen or so, wore a red shirt, a slouch hat, a revolver and a bowie knife, and most of us had started to grow beards. Unless one scrutinized closely such unimportant details as features, ways of speech or manners, one could not place his man's former status, whether as lawyer, physician or roansteak. And we were too busy for that. I never saw such a busy place as that spluttering old ship slowly wallowing her way south toward the tropical seas. We had 50,000 things to discuss, beginning with Marshall's first discovery, skipping through the clouds of rumors of all sorts, down to intimate details of climate, outfit, prospects, plans and the best methods of getting at the gold. And to all these subjects we brought a dozen points of view, each of which was strange to all the others. We had with us men from every stratum of society and from every point of the compass. Each was a product of his own training and mental upbringing and was incapable, without great effort, of understanding his neighbor's point of view. Conversation and travel were in those days very limited; it must be remembered, and different communities and sections of the country produced strong types. With us discussion became an adventurous exploration into a new country. The man from Maine could not but be interested in finding out what that strange, straight haired, dark creature from Carolina might think of even the most commonplace subject. Only our subjects were not commonplace.

So my chief impression of that voyage down was of knots of men talking hurriedly and excitedly, as though there were not a moment to waste, and the hum of voices rising and falling far into the night.

(Continued Next Saturday.)

A girl always likes to express her opinion, but a widow never tells a man her opinion of anything until she finds out his opinion of it.

It is difficult for a man to climb up in this world, but it hurts him lots worse to climb down again.

MAGIC BAKING POWDER

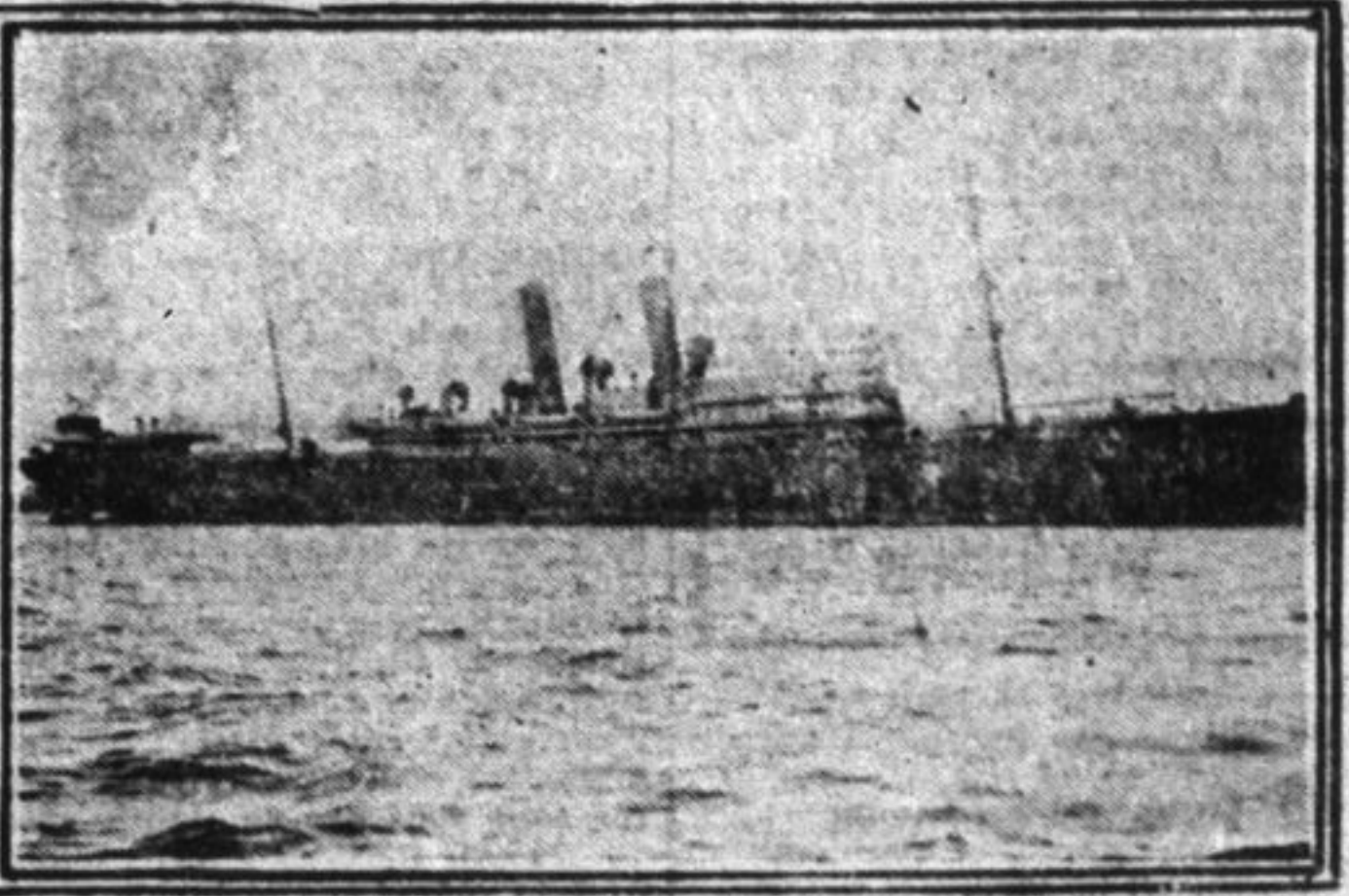


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