

The Amateur Gentleman

By Jeffrey Farnol

BEGIN HERE TODAY
Barnabas Barty, son of John Barty, former English champion prizefighter, determines to become a gentleman after receiving an inheritance of \$50,000. He changes his name to Barnabas Barty. On the way to London he meets Lady Cleone, a woman who is a prizefighter's wife, and finally succeeds in winning her promise to marry him. Her hand is sought also by Chichester, a noble, and Sir Mortimer Carnaby, Chichester has a strong influence over Barnabas. Barnabas is bound by Jasper Gaunt, a money lender.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY
INSTALLMENT ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-NINE (Continued)

And thus did Barnabas, in his folly, forego great joy, and set aside the desire of his heart that he might tread that harder way, which yet can be trod only by the foot of a man.

A distant clock was striking as Barnabas rode in at the rusted gates of Ashleydown and under an avenue of somber trees beyond which rose the chimneys of a spacious house, clear and plain against the palpitating splendor of the stars. But the house, like its surroundings, wore a desolate, neglected look, moreover it was dark, not a light was to be seen anywhere from attic to cellar.

Yet, as Barnabas followed the sweep of the avenue, he suddenly espied a soft glow that streamed from an uncurtained window giving upon the terrace; therefore he drew rein, and dismounting, led his horse in among the trees and, having tethered him there, advanced toward the gloomy house, his gaze upon the lighted window, and treading with an even growing caution.

Now, as he went, he took out one of the pistols, cocked it, and with it ready in his hand, came to the window and peered into the room.

It was a long, low chamber with a fireplace at one end, and here, his frowning gaze bent upon the blazing logs, sat Mr. Chichester. Upon the small table at his elbow were decanter and glasses, with a hat and gloves and a long traveling cloak. As Barnabas stood there Mr. Chichester stirred impatiently, cast a frowning glance at the clock in the corner and reaching out to the bell-rope that hung beside the mantel, jerked it viciously, and so fell to scowling at the fire again until the door opened and a bullet-headed, square-shouldered fellow entered, a formidable ruffian with pugilist written in his every feature; to whom Mr. Chichester appeared to give certain commands; and so dismissed him with an impatient gesture of his slim, white hands.

Then Barnabas raised the pistol-belt and, beating in the window, loosed the catch, and, as Mr. Chichester sprang to his feet, opened the casement and stepped into the room.

For a long moment neither spoke, while eyes met and questioned eyes, those of Barnabas wide and bright, Mr. Chichester's narrowed to shining slits. And indeed, as they fronted each other thus, each was the opposite of the other, Barnabas leaning in the window, his pistol hand hidden behind him, a wary, bedraggled figure mired from heel to head; Mr. Chichester standing rigidly erect, immaculate of dress from polished boot to snowy cravat.

(To be continued).

INSTALLMENT ONE HUNDRED THIRTY

"So," said he at last, breaking the ominous silence, "so it's—yes, it is Mr. Barty. I think, unpleasantly damp and devilish muddy, and, consequently, rather more objectionable than usual."

"I have ridden far, and the roads were bad," said Barnabas.

"Ah! and pray why inflict yourself upon me?"

"For a very good and sufficient reason, sir."

"Ha, a reason?" said Mr. Chichester, lounging against the mantel.

"Can it be you have discerned at last that the highly dramatic meeting between father and son at a certain banquet, not so long ago, was entirely contrived by myself—that it was my hand drove you from society and made you the derision of London, Mr. Barty?"

"Why, yes," sighed Barnabas; "I guessed that much, sir."

"Indeed, I admire your perspicacity," Mr. Barty. And now, I presume you have a broken idea of pummeling me with your fists? But, sir, I am no prizefighter, like you and your estimable father, and I warn you that—"

"Sir," said Barnabas softly, "do not trouble to ring the bell, my mission here is—not to thrash you."

"No? Gad, sir, but you're very forbearing, on my soul you are!"

"Sir," he said, more softly than before, "give me leave to tell you that the Lady Cleone will not keep her appointment here, tonight."

"Ah-h!" said Mr. Chichester slowly, and staring at Barnabas under his drawn brows, "you—mean—?"

"That she was safe home three-quarters of an hour ago."

Mr. Chichester's long, white fingers, which had been resting on the bell-rope, released it, and lifting his hand swiftly, he loosened his high cravat, and so stood, breathing heavily, his eyes once more narrowed to shining slits, and with the scar burning redly upon his cheek.

"So you have dared," he began thickly, "you have dared to interfere again? You have dared to come here, to tell me so?"

"No, sir," answered Barnabas, shaking his head, "I have come here to kill you!"

Barnabas spoke very gently, but as Mr. Chichester beheld his calm eye, the prominence of his chin, and his grimly-smiling mouth, his eyes widened suddenly, his clenched fingers opened, and he reached out again toward the bell-rope.

"Stop!" said Barnabas, and speaking, levelled his pistol.

"Ah!" sighed Mr. Chichester, falling back a step, "you mean to murder me, do you?"

"I said 'kill'—though yours is the better word, perhaps. Here are two pistols, you will observe; one is for you and one for me. And we are about to sit down—here, at the table, and do our very utmost to murder each other. But first, I must trouble you to lock the door yonder and bring me the key. Lock it, I say!"

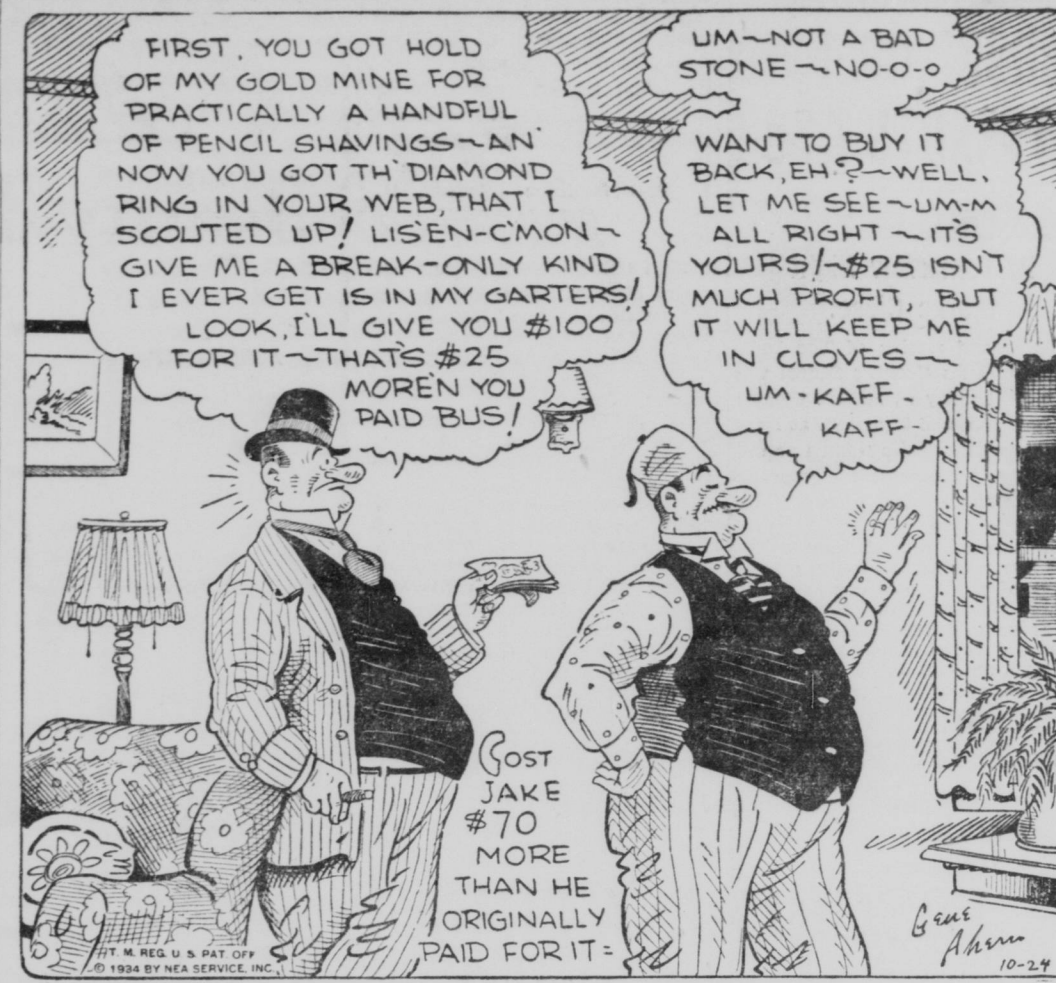
Very slowly, and with his eyes fixed in a wide stare upon the threatening muzzle of the weapon Barnabas held, Mr. Chichester crossed to the door, hesitated, turned the key, and drawing it from the lock, stood with it balanced in his hand a moment, and then tossed it toward Barnabas.

Now the key lay within a yard of Barnabas who, stepping forward, made as though to reach down for it; but in that instant he glanced up at Mr. Chichester under his brows, and in that instant also, Mr. Chichester took a swift, backward step toward the hearth; wherefore, because of this, and because of the look in Mr. Chichester's eyes, Barnabas smiled, and, so smiling, kicked the key into a far corner.

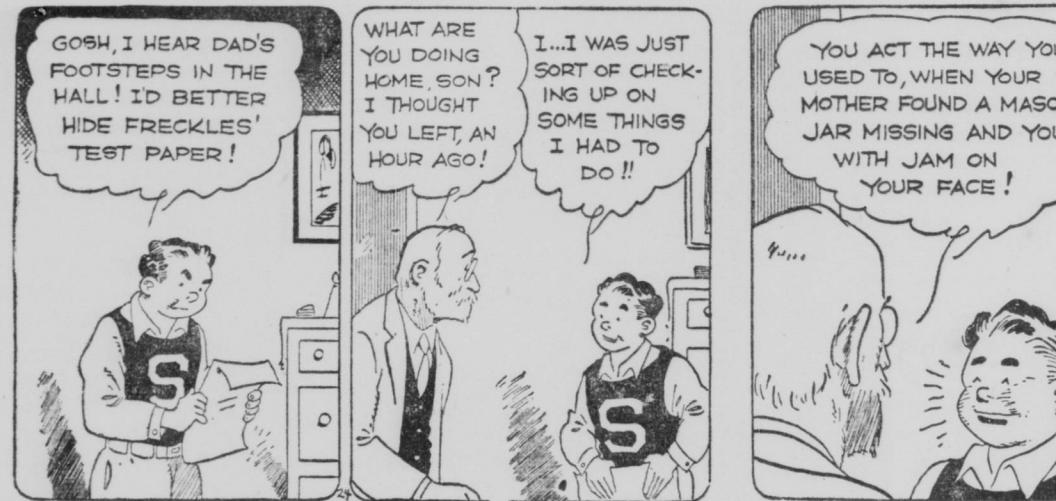
(To be continued).

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASHINGTON TUBBS II



ALLEY OOP



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



TARZAN AND THE CITY OF GOLD



OUT OUR WAY



WASHINGTON TUBBS II



ALLEY OOP



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



TARZAN AND THE CITY OF GOLD

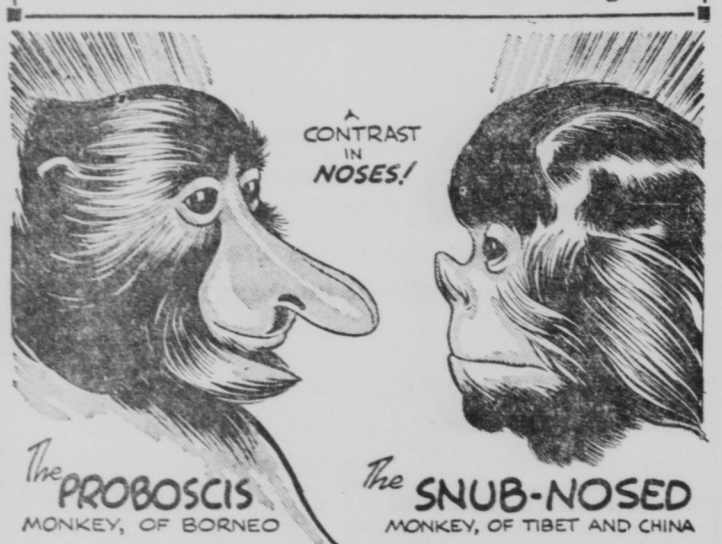


ALLEY OOP



THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



THE KIWI lays the largest eggs, in proportion to its size, of all the birds in the world. Frequently it lays eggs five inches in length. The bird also is unusual in having its nostrils on the end of its beak.

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