

"Did that—ah—railroad yarn of mine attract any attention?" he inquired, as he bit the end from the cigar.

"Attention!" said Moose. "See here, haven't you been reading the papers?"

"Haven't seen one since I've been away," said Bud. "I had other things to do. Was there a follow story on it?"

"About eight of 'em," said Moose. "Why, that 'Saved by a Bride' thing fairly tore this town in two. Talk about your boomerangs!"

"Why, that story couldn't hurt anybody!" said Bud.

"You think not?" said Moose. "Wait till I give you the list of killed and injured. First comes the engineer, Fowler, the 'grizzled old veteran,' and so forth. He got laid off for six months for letting people ride on the engine and getting caught at it. He's been in here every day since, looking for you. Then there was your friend Hudson. They found out he leaked to you, and they trans-

ferred him to the Salt Lake office, where he doesn't know any newspaper men."

The cigar dropped out of Bud's fingers, and rolled along the floor. Charlie Hudson had been one of his best friends.

"Oh, that ain't near all of it!" said Moose cheerily. "Perry lost his job with the railroad company on account of the story. They kicked him out bodily the next morning, and—"

"Gee whiz!" said Bud. "I'll bet the bride will never forgive me!"

"Well, I wouldn't give myself any uneasiness about the *bride*," said Moose reassuringly; "but if you really want to do any squaring, you might go and see Perry's *wife*. I understand she's taken the four children and gone back to Illinois. That story bumped everybody connected with it but you, and it's raised your salary ten bucks a week. Stick around a while until I see what's here for to-day, and I'll pick you out a good story!"

The Only Specimen

BY HOWARD P. ROCKEY

"I PICKED up a treasure in Vecchio's shop to-day," said Dr. Martin, as we sat over our cigars. "I don't know whether you men care anything about old coins or not, but this one is interesting merely because of its age."

He drew from his waistcoat-pocket a little packet of tissue-paper and unwrapped a small disk of tarnished silver.

"It's one of the earliest French coins known," he said, passing it to Harland, who sat on his left. "It was issued during the reign of Charlemagne—about 780, I think—and I believe it to be a unique specimen. There isn't another in any public collection, and I'm congratulating myself on finding a coin that is worth a small fortune."

Harland examined it curiously and passed it to me.

"What do you suppose it's worth?" I asked.

"I don't know," said Dr. Martin. "Several hundred dollars, anyway. Of course, there are many older coins, but this particular coinage was thought to have disappeared from the face of the earth. Vecchio hadn't any idea of its real value, and didn't even know where he got it. He said it had been with a

lot of other old copper and silver money he bought some time ago. I searched through the whole lot, but there was nothing else of any value there."

I looked at it wonderingly. It was badly made, and the head of the Frankish king was hardly a flattering likeness of any human being; but it was interesting to hold in one's palm an authentic relic of the earliest era of medieval civilization. I passed it to Carrick.

"How do you suppose these old coins last so long?" said Barton. "I can't keep a present-day American dollar for five minutes."

Dr. Martin smiled, and turned to discuss some professional question with young Sampson, who had just hung out his shingle as an M.D.

We chatted on pleasantly for nearly an hour, and finally Martin arose to go, declining my offer of another cigar, and saying that he had an urgent call to make before going to bed.

"Who has my coin?" he asked. "I did not get it back?"

There was a little scuffle as we all looked about for it.

"I gave it to Carrick," I said.

"And I to Barton," said Carrick.

Every one hastened to disclaim possession of the coin. All had seen it, and had given it in turn to his neighbor; but there was no sign of it anywhere. Next to Martin, on his right, sat Billington, whom I had brought home with me from the office. He was a stranger to all the others, and only a casual acquaintance with me.

"Please look and see if somebody has not inadvertently slipped it into his pocket," Martin asked. "I should not like to lose that coin."

We all searched, but without avail. The coin was not to be found. Martin was nervous and upset.

"I would not lose that coin for a great deal," he said. "I don't care so much about its money value, but I want it for my collection."

"My dear fellow," I said, "it must be here. It couldn't have rolled far away."

"If any one is keeping it for a joke, please don't annoy me any longer," said Martin, really exercised. "I am in a hurry."

Every one immediately disclaimed such an idea, and all professed ignorance of the coin's whereabouts, some rather testily. I saw that Martin was seriously annoyed, however, so I said:

"In order that there may be no misunderstanding about this, I think we should all permit ourselves to be searched. Of course, none of us would deliberately keep Dr. Martin's coin; but in fairness to ourselves, I think we should satisfy him of the fact."

"Certainly," said Sampson. "It's a most unpleasant situation, and while I don't believe that Martin would suspect us of anything of the sort, I, for one, should like to prove that I haven't his coin."

Every one assented but Billington. I turned in surprise, to see him sitting white and nervous in his chair.

"Surely," I said, "you have no objection to our searching you, if you haven't Martin's coin—"

I paused abruptly. I had not meant to put it in that way, but the words slipped out before I had thought of their sound.

"I do object," he said slowly. "I did not keep Dr. Martin's coin, but I will not permit myself to be searched."

Martin turned on him.

"You seemed very much interested in it," he said. "To whom did you give it?"

"I—I really don't remember giving it to any one," said Billington. "In fact, I don't

think I did give it to any one. You were talking when I finished looking at it, and I laid it on the table in front of me—right there."

"I don't believe it!" snapped Martin, losing his temper completely.

Billington turned ashen.

"Dr. Martin," he said, "do you accuse me of stealing your coin?"

Before any one could speak I stepped between them.

"Please," I said, "let us have no more words like this. I am sure there has been some unfortunate mistake. If you must go now, Martin, can you not trust me to sift this matter to the bottom? Mr. Billington is my guest here, as are all of you. I am sure he would not deliberately take your coin. I am surprised at his attitude, but I feel that he must have some good reason for it. The coin must and shall be found, and as its loss occurred in my house I shall stand responsible for it."

"You can't do that," said Martin. "I told you there was no other in existence."

"Then it wouldn't be much use to take it, for either it would have to remain hidden, or it would disclose the identity of the—the man who had it," I said.

"That is true," said Martin. "Good night!"

He left us abruptly. The others, making various excuses, followed. When they had all gone save Billington I turned to him questioningly.

"Well?" I said, inviting some explanation.

"I wish I knew you better," he said earnestly. "Then I should know better how to begin."

"There is only one way to begin," I said. "Have you or have you not the coin? If you have not, prove it to me."

"I cannot prove it to you," he said. "That coin is either in this room or in the pocket of one of the men who left."

"Do you mean to accuse my friends—" I began hotly.

"Remember that they have accused me," said Billington.

"Do you blame them?" I asked.

"No, I don't," he said quickly. "Only, among gentlemen, a man's word should be sufficient. I accept theirs; they refuse to accept mine."

"But they were willing to be searched," said I. "You refused."

"I could not do otherwise," he said.

I looked at him searchingly, puzzled. As

I watched him, I saw him start. A look of intense relief—of genuine joy—spread over his features, and he walked quickly to the fireplace. Arrived there, he stooped and picked up, from a tiny crevice in the hearth, a silver coin.

In triumph he turned and held it out to me. I took it in my hand and examined it closely. It was Martin's coin.

"Then why on earth have you allowed this

suspicion to fall upon you?" I asked. "Why would you not consent to a search, when you knew you were innocent?"

He drew a small silver object from his pocket and passed it to me.

"Because," he said, "I had in my possession what is probably the only other of these coins now in existence. I have never seen one like it until Dr. Martin showed us his to-night."

Cupid & Co.

BY THOMAS L. MASSON

WHEN Springton sauntered out of the breakfast-room, with his morning cigar in his mouth, there was a man waiting for him in the hall.

Although he was late, Springton was in good humor. On the evening before he had made the somewhat intimate acquaintance of one of earth's fairest—a lovely girl whom he had met only a few weeks before, and on whom he had called for the first time, in response to an invitation. A rather unusual thing, this; for to this well-known and well-to-do bachelor love had hitherto been unattractive. He was too much absorbed in his business affairs.

The man bowed.

"I beg pardon, sir, but I represent the Globe Tourist Agency. Should be glad to go over with you some of our most popular honeymoon routes."

"Honeymoon routes?"

"Yes, sir. Even if you don't buy your tickets through us, it will be all right. It's a matter of business with us to furnish information. Now, I have one or two specialties—out-of-the-way jaunts never before put on the market, and—"

Springton gazed at him in astonishment.

"What made you think," he asked, "that I was interested in honeymoons?"

The man smiled.

"It's our business to know," he said significantly. "Quite an easy matter, I assure you. We have our lists of eligibles, and know pretty well what they are doing. Hope I haven't intruded. Here's my card. You can reach me over the telephone at any time. Pray don't make any arrangement without consulting me. I assure you I can make it worth your while. Thank you, sir. Good morning."

Springton marveled, as he made his way down to his office. It was, however, rather flattering.

He entered his office at eleven o'clock. His chief clerk, with unusually solemn face, approached him.

"There's quite a mob outside to see you, sir."

"What do they want?"

"Personal business, they say."

"Well, show the first one in. May as well get them off my mind."

In a moment a dapper young man entered the office.

"Mr. Springton? Ah, good morning, sir! Are you interested in building-lots in the suburbs? During the first year of married life, you know, you will want to be quiet. Now, here's a choice bit of land—a wonder. Why, sir, in a year it will treble in value. Three minutes from station. Or, if you want to remain in town, I have some really choice locations. Here's my card. Any time—"

He was ushered out, and the next man was shown in. He was a trifle coarser in structure.

"I came to solicit your market-bill, sir. We take the place of the housekeeper, you know. Relieve young wife of all responsibility. Guarantee choice cuts all year around. Don't have to call and select anything. We do it all. Takes away natural embarrassment young wife feels during the first year. Will furnish bond, if necessary. Bills weekly. Pay when you please. Won't you give us a trial order?"

Springton promised to put his name on file, and the third man was ushered in.

"I want to call your attention to our banking facilities," he said. "I represent the Sixteenth National. We make a specialty of