°CAPTIVATING MARY CARSTAIRS°

-you and me both, I believe! And yet—that mad Maginals as a blind enlist with the reform ent to throw out the political grafters who are ing the town. By accident, Varney learns that Carptairs is not a 12 year old girl, but a tiful young woman. Varney's close resemblance erris Staphore, an author of gink tas literprive Ferris Stanhope, an author of pink tea literature, ho has got himself into bad grace in Hunston rough affairs with girls, makes Varney's presence artars with gris, makes varneys pro-own hazardous. The political gang, wo is direction of Boss Ryan and through C editor of the Hunston Gazette, use the eg's resemblance to Stanhope to balk olp in the reform movement. A sour heart Stanhope and a michus finish X Stanhope and a picture finish Varney es of the townspeople. Hammerton, a local who is correspondent for the New York by a ruse learns that Varney's real mission is, by a ruse learns that Yarney's real mission funston is to Kidnap Mary. Maginnis buys out the ette and thus steals a march on Ryan, and he and ney win Hammerton over by making him editor the paper. On pretext of giving a tea, Varney. Mary aboard the yacht, sends the others back, before she is even of it is toking Mary to her father. She tells him she had been warned not

FIFTEENTH INSTALLMENT. Captivating Mary,

his thought from his present ur- can't you?"

like an echo from a distant past.

"But I trust-"

such a patently well meaning old dear. And was glad. yet-"

"Well, then, tell me what he said to you and convert me."

Yet I don't want to at all! For I must say last night when, he thought, things to make saw the sailing master coming towards him. stairs' Cypriani slowed down at an abanit seems just a little to-to support your it harder had piled one on another like Ossa Over the intervening stretch of deck the two doned private landing-the same one by view. Well, then," she said, some perplexity on Pelion, it would not have been impossi- men looked at each other, the master ner- which Peter's trunk had been conveyed showing beneath her smile, "it happened ble. Now his lips appeared sealed by a new vously, Varney victoriously. about 11 o'clock this morning as I was going and overwhelming rejuctance; a resistless It was one of those critical moments whose As the two on board stood watching the down the street to see Elsie Marne-never weakness saturated him through and importance no one can gauge until after the yacht make fast, conversing, if the truth dreaming of mysteries. I met Mr. Higgin- through, seducing his will, filching away his time for gauging is past. However, as it fell be known, somewhat disjointedly, they were son walking towards our house, and we strangers, and yet really this-is not like ly and looked at her. me at all. And there is something very win- She leaned lightly upon the rail, her eyes be safe to try to push on to New York." Varney did not answer her. His eyes point blank-begged me-not to come to a silken veil. At her breast nodded his looking at Varney and laughing at the man's a strange voice: your lunch party today. What have you favor, the Cypriani's perfect rose. In her stupidity. "It certainly would not be safe "You have been waiting for us." te say to that?"

distance, not answering her little laugh. Behind the grave mask of his face he cursed Even in permitting him her acquaintance, "Put about this instant, man!" he cried He greeted Mary at the foot of the stairs, himself heartily for his self-absorption of she had trusted him far past what he had imperiously. "Miss Carstairs wishes to re- cordially, and begged the privilege of esthe morning, which had led him entirely to any right to expect; and now, with his own turn to Hunston as soon as possible." lose sight of Mr. Higginson's activities last sickening game at the touch, she gave this "Right, sir," stammered the astonished her fancy to name. But she stoutly denight. He had fully meant to search out crowning proof of confidence in him-dash- reguson, backing away. "At once, sir." clined his good offices, as she had Varney's that "winning" old man on his excursion ing it full in the face of the whispering Varney met the man's amazement steadily, a moment before, declaring that she could to the town, but in his engrossment over and hinting Higginson, full in his own face haughed into it, and so turned again to his not think of troubling so busy and importhe more important duty of the day the too. Could anything in all the world mat- old friend's daughter. She was conscious of tant a man. matter had dropped completely from his ter beside the fact that this girl believed thinking that this was the first happy smile "But where did you spirit Mr. Hare off to, mind. That the old spy had somehow fer- in him, that she had trusted him not only, the had seen on his face since the night if I might ask?" she said. reted out their secret was now too plain against convention, not only against his when he lit the lamp at Mr. Stanhope's. "On a very important mission, I assure to admit a doubt. But what conceivable use did he mean to make of it? To interfere his power now. Did it better suit his mys- honorable only in the breaking. His mission, the name of this such and such a kind of him I'd make it a personal matter." terious purpose to hold back until the thing all his hours in Hunston, took changed shape steam yacht?" al afterward? .

problem with curiously little spirit, but one betrayal? Never while he lived. to his mean uses. . .

Quest?"

Mea and, if there is any danger, warn Mr. ger?" battle on the Hudson?' And then he wrung thank God!" his hands and said that he couldn't tell me A heavy step sounded near, approaching. nearer the spot whence she had set out I hated this thing till the time came, and

what he meant, but that I'd certainly re-Elbert Carstairs, estranged from his wife and onging for the sight of his daughter, Mary, engages arry Varney and Peter Maginais to take the Car-thought he was doing somebody a kindness

and ways, had once more slipped wholly, from his mind. Something in the look of working her face, its young trustfulness, its utter lack of suspicion, had already laid paralyzing hold upon him. Now a new th ught possessed him; and all at once his breast was in a tumult.

"And yet," he said, with sudden fierce exultation, "you came! " She colored slightly under his look and

tone and, to cover it, gave a light laugh. " O, yes . . . dauntless person that I am! Have you the remotest idea what he was talking about? . . . But O. really we must turn around now! Indeed we must-I hadn't noticed how far we have come. And ITH an obvious effort he wrenched you can show me things as we go back,

gency and brought it to focus upon He started at her speech; asked himself a puzzle which now seemed oddly suddenly and wildly what was wrong with him. A better opening for his crushing an-"Not yet," he said, with impassive face. nouncement could not have been desired. Yet he stood dumb as a man of stone. One "O, I don't like the way you say that! I blurted phrase would commit him irrevocadon't see how you can be so suspicious of bly, but his lips would not say it. And he

> He stared over the water thinking desperately what this might mean.

In that first meeting, radiant as it had somehow seemed to him, he knew that, "I suppose I must-I have had it on my given this chance, he could have carried his very voice.

youth, her beauty, and, most of all, her in- at all!" against himself?

this daughter of Uncle Elbert, whom the old the pause was infinitesimal. Almost as she be quite right-no-not fair-" "The machinery broke down on me,"

makes it all so ridiculous-don't you see? she was saying, apparently quite unaware of see." Naturally I asked, but he only said in his his descent into the psychological deeps, "I see," she said, looking anywhere but at "Ask Ferguson." Sught to consider whether you-your sur- won't you?-is Mr. Higginson merely-see- terious man in Hollaston county!" foundings were likely to be quite safe. I ing things -a sort of he-Cassandra, you know "Where are your eyes, Miss Carstairs? time."

Warney and Mr. Maginnis? You can't mean "No!" answered Varney, so promptly as know it." that there is another plot, involving the to give the air of having waited long for just . . . gacht this time-the likelihood of a naval that question. "There is no danger now, Passing the town wharf laggingly like the "I won't pretend," said Peter, "that I and

THE CHICAGG SUNDAY TRIBUNE.

Something in the look of her face laid paralyzing hands upon him. mind a little, and you have a right to know. business through without a quiver. Even Starting to speak, he broke off, turned and three-quarters of an hour before, Mr. Car-

stopped, so I thought, for a friendly word. speed sharply slackened, but he did not no- a curious uneasy and hangdog expression. from the river bank and advance towards For he and I made friends last night. O, tice it. His mind fastened on the stark fact "The gear's broke down again-in another them. you have a right to think I am too free, of his impotence like a key in a lock; his place. Couldn't possibly have been foreseen, "Why, look!" said Mary. "There's Mr. too easy, in the way I-I make friends with heart leapt up to meet it. He turned slow- sir. We can-hem-manage to beat about Maginnis! I thought he'd gone to town without any trouble, but I fear it would not long ago."

strous, accusing, unbelievably base. Reward against his sudden exaltation for calmness consequently. "I did hate it so!" For the moment his mind attacked the that trust with treachery, that faith with and self-control, "we are both conscious that And she walked off up the woodland path, thing at least was instantly clear. He must Out of his turmoil came peace and light, course, you must think my very extraordi- herself with a good deal to think about. return to Hunston tonight by the first train flooding the far reaches of his soul. nary behavior. Believe me, you shall have Peter, coming on deck, found his friend after his arrival in New York, find Higgin- In crises thought moves with the speed of it very soon. There is nothing in the wide waiting for him, taut as a whipcord. son, and call him to his well earned reckon- light. The young man's mental revolution world-ah-that is, I'd like very much to "Well, old horse!" said Maginnis. "Weling. Meantime . . . here was this girl, was over and done with in a second's time; give it to you now. But-no, no-it wouldn't come back to jolly little Hunston."

daughter turned from the rail and took a curiosity about Mr. Higginson !" she said, a aret. "But what reason," he said mechanically, step forward upon the deck, as though to little hastily. "O, I'll show you. Look! "Sure," said Peter cheerfully. "You knew

"He wouldn't give any! That's what "I thought you ought to know this," direction now and then and tell me what you forever."

pervous apologetic way that he wasn't at "though perhaps you will think it not worth him, "the strangest, the most volatile, and-"O! Then you'll do it tomorrow morning, Iberty, to tell, but that after last night I repeating. But, before we go on, do tell me- not excepting Mr. Higginson-the most mys- when the machinery is all right again?"

Faid: 'But oughtn't you to give me some -or really do you think there is any dan- You are standing within two feet of the hap- The two men looked at each other stead.

maimed thing she was, limping nearer and disappointed in you. I never dreamed that

ashore that morning-and ran out her stairs.

out, it was the master who spoke first. astonished to see the great form of a man The Cypriani rattled and wheezed and her "Very sorry, sir, indeed," he began, with rise from a grassy bed a little way back

ning about this old man. Well, he asked me on the water, her lashes on her cheek like "To New York!" said Mary Carstairs, were glued upon Maginnis, and he called in

"Haven't budged a step," answered Peter, He continued to look at her as from a nocent helplessness, there was something in- Even the furtive glancing sailing master moving out upon the landing. And he describably wistful. indescribably compel- was conscious of the tide of gladness that added what seemed an odd remark to Miss ling; it sprang at him and possessed him: had broken into his young master's eyes. Carstairs: "I knew you were coming back."

corting her to any destination it might be

cowardly enemy, but last and biggest, "He seemed nearly stupefied because you you, madam-that is, Miss Carstairs," said weren't going to scold him, did you notice? Peter, diplomatically, having no idea how And she should not be disappointed. His 1 wonder if you are usually very cross with matters stood. "He begged me to let him with the Cypriani's homegoing was beyond pledge to her father was a Jephthah's oath, him. But on with our sightseeing! What is go back and say good by to you, but I told

"I am awfully glad that you have stopped was done, in order to raise the dog of scan- before the eye of his whirling mind, mon- "Miss Carstairs," said Varney, struggling calling me 'madam,'" said Mary, rather in-

I owe you an explanation for-for what, of swinging her recovered parasol, and finding

meak had for the second time failed to bend finished her last remark Mr. Carstairs' "You think I am eaten up with feminine said Varney, turning away to light a cig-

did he give for his rather unusual re- jog her host toward that promised tour of Look! We're turning around already." it was going to do it when you started. 1 the yacht which had now flagged-so long. "Don't look there. Look in this general read it in your eye when you said farewell

"You are quite mistaken," said Varney.

"No," said Varney, "nor at any other

piest man in America, and you don't even ily, unwi 'ingly. As the look 1 ngthened, each face gave way to a slow reluctant . . smile.

girl.'

serve_"

to walk."

there-" hours more---'

sides-" business."

But Varney had already disappeared be- here, by the name of Higginson?" trap-tight." low. Peter picked up his splendid guitar and, sprawling upon the transom, gave himself up to soft humming and, presently, to direct question, and his eyes instantly "If we find him," he began, as they came the work of composition. Soon, after some shifted. With an evident effort he recap- to the square, "reu-" little painstaking effort, he produced the tured something like his usual steadiness "We must try not to be brutal, Larry," turf. At the left a fountain sprayer now following, to be rendered to the tune of and spoke in a voice of elaborate thoughtful- warned Peter soberies. "I remind myself whiried a mist of water over the trim grass, " Yankee Doodle ":



simply couldn't be done. We were a pair rose and came towards him.

"Hustle! Where the devil to?" "I'm off to New York by the 5 o'clock antly, and spoke in a quiet voice. I'll feel mighty mean doing it, too."

"Well, don't anticipate trouble," called broken down." Peter dryly. "You can't feel mean by the "Broken down?"

"Why not?"

his first duty now was to see Mr. Carstairs, in the world does this mean?" mally surrender his commission. So only, body on board has been bought."

and he began walking rather restlessly up the episode of the morning. and down the deck. "O, this same old rot!" he broke out im-

"Not long after you and Miss Carstairs steamed off," continued Peter, "Hare blew to contract and tighten up. back down here, tired of waiting and a little excited. He had just heard some me a minute." passing whispers about you and me. He excitement in town this afternoon."

'Why, I thought your paper had kicked all that nonsense into a cocked hat."

"A lot of people don't believe the paper, though," said Peter. "On the contrary they believe that you are Stanhope and that you bought the Gazette to disown yourself and save your hide. A foolish idea, but it has doubtless been helped out by whispers from higher up. Smith's selling out has made Ryan see red. Smith's still in town, by the way, which argued a good deal of cool nerve on his part. Hare hears that Ryan is in a murdering humor-"

'You seem to forget entirely that Stanhope-the real, the genuine, double-uxtryguaranteed-has appeared to bear his

"But Hunston doesn't know it yet!" exclaimed Peter. "Kindly get that well into your head. All these Hackleys and Orricks still think that you're their meat-----Where 're you going?"

Varney, pausing at the hatch, deliberated whether he should say anything to Peter about Mr. Higginson's latest and most daring intrusion, and declared for the negative. "'There's no reason," he mused, "why I should let him in on this. And be-

send a telegram to Uncle Elbert. He's very this morning, Ferguson?" tch on my conscience-poor old chap!"

"I'll go with you. Got a reform commit-

"The tale of crime is at an end, For little Laurence Va-arney Declines to swipe his loidy friend

Upon the Cpyria-a-ani!" Peter tried this over to himself with considerable satisfaction. He possessed a rehearing that small chanson.

He came on deck again in five minutes with a face which drove all thoughts of melody from Peter's head. In fact, at sight "Yes. sir?" "What's happened?"

"It was a thing," said Varney, "that with fixed eyes which saw nothing. Peter struct you otherwise."

for the companionway. "Joye! I'll have to der somebody. Well and good. Now, who Varney. is it?"

There isn't any. She goes through at damage was. It was very bad indeed. I'm altogether different." self to wait till eight-ten, unless you want make no mistake here. The effect is about ness.

Varney turned an inquiring eye upon him, view of the fact that he knew nothing of even Mr. Higginson. "Yes." he said. "That's the man."

till you are back in New York, and stay ing the guest of honor away. Peter's face, ter! Why, this is A B C." as he listened, underwent a curious change. "All right. I'm listening. Spell it out for thing!" "Well, well, Peter! Stick it out for three It first slowly gained color, then slowly lost me." it; and all of it, from the top of his forehead to the end of his chin, seemed subtly

His comment at the end was: "Excuse

Upon which he vanished below to see brain. He was back in less than two-minutes, with a tiny spot of red in the corner of his eye; and his manner unwontedly

"You're right. Pretty dumsy treachery ney, who had dropped into a chair. "What was the man thinking about to don't begin to see bottom on this."

Varney's eyes were on the sailing master, who sat far forward, feet on the rail, apparently engrossed in a magazine. The young man had just recalled the master's curious manner when he notified him of the accident to the machinery.

"Larry-you meant to turn' around anyway?

"But Higginson, you see, couldn't predict

"The immediate cause of your turning---'

"Was the little mishap to our gear." He raised his voice: "Ferguson! I'd like eat my hat." a word with you if you please."

of the voice as though it had shot a pro- thing out of him. Fretty clever, the whole jectile into his back. However, he rose at thing, wasn't it? How much Ferguson once and came forward in his usual brisk, may really know, or suspect, I have no stiff way, halting before the two men with idea. Of course, there is only one thing to -"To town," he said aloud. "I've got to a salute. Varney eyed him inscrutably. fear now, and that is scareheads in the "I believe you were in town for a while New York papers tomorrow-attempted

"Yes, sir, I was."

"While there did you chance to see any- that sort should come out-" tee meeting at five-thirty. And some other thing of an elderly gentleman, a stranger "Don't worry. It won't. I'll close his

that name."

mere chance. And O, Ferguson." " Sir?"

"I have just been down to look at the too. markably sweet tenor and pleasurably an- damaged machinery. Ignorant of these mat- They crossed the square, two determined Varney was to go to his grave without ever of the accident, and in particular just how looked up with a certain resentfulness. it took place."

"Very good, sir."

"And-O, Ferguson."

and his guitar slid unheeded to the floor. rious, I think it best to have an expert There followed a silence. So stern were from town advise with me before the work the gazes fastened upon the clerk that, look

THE CHICAGO SUNDAY TRIBUNE.

bang me if I don't rather like that little Varney did not answer immediately. He of repairing begins. You will therefore ing hastily up at Peter's word, he promptly stood at the rail and stared into the woods leave matters just as they are until I in- lost something of his lordly demeanor and

"O-very good, sir." of asses not to see that all along." He "Out with it!" he said encouragingly. Peter turned his dissatisfied eyes from the takin' the four-seven." glanced hurriedly at his watch and started "I'm full partner here. You want to mur- back of the retreating sailing master to "Where did he go?" demanded Varney.

> "What better proof d'you want than the York." the spot?"

broke down. I was mistaken. It was ney. "These are Mr. Carstairs' employés. tested the clerk. "Only his suit case." He will have to deal with them as he "Did he leave no address for the forwardthinks best."

5 o'clock train, however much you may de- "When I went below," continued the He rose immediately and put on his hat. "Naw, sir. He did not." younger man, "it occurred to me to look "With Mr. Higginson, however," he "Of course not. Why on earth should in the engine room and see how bad the mused, starting for the stair, "the case is he?" said Peter.

as if somebody had jammed a crowbar in As one man they descended the stairs, "All bluff!" he stated positively. "Is it of the Irish for intruding themselves into all town!" beg absolution from his promise, and for- "Treachery," said Varney calmiy. "Some- the trouble that hove upon the horizon. "If that's so, where do you recommend It was with acute pleasure that he re- looking?" he had felt, could he go on with clean hands. The two men stared at each other. Var- called, before long, his friend's engagement Peter made a large gesture. "That's a

He told concisely of Mr. Higginson's at- for me. I don't seem to grasp his game." the ferce, since I tipped Hare off." patiently. "I'll never be easy in my mind tempt to break up the lunch party by keep- "And you call yourself a conspirator, Pe-

York at the critical moment would rather ment-" says there seems to be a little suppressed with his own eyes and judge with his own knock the bottom out of the scheme? Why, me to get away-me whom he needs in his York, and I'll hunt him up tonight." business as the red rag for his little old

> They had emerged from the woods and walked a block up Remsen street before Peter replied.

"By Jove! That does seem to explain everything! That's it! It's Higginson, not Smith, who has been pulling all these wires be back on the job tomorrow. Well-Pil from the beginning. I suspected the man leave you, then. Er-Larry. It's just as 4 the first minute I ever clapped eyes on well not to be prowling around after dark him. But where do you suppose he got by yourself, you know. I'll be back at the his hint?"

"Hammerton?" "Never. That boy is trustworthy, or I'll

"Well, I think so, too. Then he simply The sailing master jumped at the sound corrupted Ferguson and wormed the whole kidnaping foiled, and so on. It would ten minutes later." Uncle Elbert's heart if anything of That done, he started rapidly down Rem-

"Higginson? No, sir. I know no one of "If we find him," began Varney again,

"you will please remember that he be-"Ah? I thought not. I asked on the longs to me. Higginson is strictly my some old ballad of Erin. pickings."

Peter grunted, looking rather annoyed,

ticipated singing his ditty to its hero, and ters myself, I can naturally make little of looking men, and entered the Palace hotel.

"Is Mr. Higginson in?"

Left town on the four-seven."

became for the moment almost human. "Well, sir, he's left us. Said he was

"Don't know, sir, but I think to New

Varney turned towards him, half reluct- rogue's face? Why didn't you fire him on "You must know where he checked his baggage to."

train to tell Uncle Elbert that I've resigned. "I told you just now that the machinery "I neither hire nor fire here," said Var- "Didn't have any baggage, sir," pro-

ing of his mail?"

Desisting from the absent but fixed stare

courseven. You'll have to compose your- no mechanic, Lord knows, but a child could "Exactly," said Peter with great hearti- with which he was transfixing the clerk, he drew Varney hurriedly aside.

Varney halted at the head of the com- the works while she was running full tilt. crossed the battered landing and struck likely, after his day's work, that he'd be panionway, surprisingly disappointed. From Probably that is just what somebody did. rapidly up the woodland path for Remsen lolling around the lobby waiting for us to the moment when the Cypriani had put It'll be some days before she'll run again." street and the town. As they walked, Var- call? He's moved! But depend on it, he's about, he had been insistently conscious that Peter's bewilderment deepened. "What ney silently condemned the unfailing genius got more work to do, and he hasn't left

Well, don't look so glum over it," said ney read on Peter's face the swift unfolding for half past 5. For he himself had but horse of another color. I told you he had Peter. "You're not any sorrier about your of precisely his own thought. He was three hours left in Hunston that day, and a faculty for disappearing into a hole and prolonged stay in our midst than I am." rather surprised at Peter's quickness, in he had an urgent use for them-beyond pulling the hole in after him. If anybody besides Ryan knows where he is, I should "I confess once more," said Peter, tramp- say that it might be Miss Carstairs. She ing heavily, "that this chap is too many seems to be his only friend on our side of

> Varney all but jumped. "I'll ask her!" he offered almost precipitately. "The very

"It is quite possible." continued Peter. "Suppose the gang here is deep enough, tensely thoughtful, "that the old rascal has as you think, to plan a little rough house, sneaked to her since the luncheon, to try ostensibly for my benefit, but really to get to pump something out of her about our you into it and thus wipe you out. Doesn't movements-even within the bounds of pos-It occur to you that my fading away to New sibility that he is with her at this mo-

"A great suggestion!" said Varney corit's as clear as noonday! Higginson, learn- dially. "You certainly have a head on ing somehow that I expected to fly off im- you, Peter. Of course, on the other hand, mediately after the lunch party, first tries it is quite possible that he has skippedto break up the party, and, failing that, he made a bee line for Newspaper row. In bribes Ferguson to break up the machinery. that case I'll see if she-Miss Carstairs, you that," he said, standing and staring at Var-

Peter, glancing at his watch, discovered that he was already fifteen minutes late for his committee meeting.

"For this afternoon, then," he said, unwillingly, "you can have him if you can find him. After today, though, he belongs to me: .Wherever he is now, he'll certainly yacht early and we'll have dinner together before your train. Say six-thirty, eh?" "I'll be there."

Peter hurried off for Hare's house with a mingled sense of unjustly baffled vengeance and vague uneasiness. Varney, drawing a long breath of relief, headed for the telegraph office, whence he dispatched the following telegram to Mr. Carstairs: "Plan permanently abandoned. Arrive in

New York by train 9:20 tonight. Expect me

sen street with a steadily mounting spirit.

There was a fine old hedge of box bordering the Carstairs lawn, old rose-bushes inside it, and many flowering shrubs. Splendid oaks curtained the big white house on either side, shading the expanse of close clipped and far to the rear a man in rubber boots was hosing of a phaeton before a carriage house. On the back porch an elderly cook was peeling potatoes and gently crooning

It was a serene and reassuring scene. Yet upon the spacious piazza, which undeniably contributed to the pervading air of all's well, the stunning information came doubtless getting a cushion pitched at his it. You will prepare a written report for Behind the desk a bored clerk sat paring his not at home. Now could be hered for his cushion pitched at his it. You will prepare a written report for Behind the desk a bored clerk sat paring his not at home. Now could be hered for his cushion pitched at his it. head for his pains. But it happened that Mr. Carstairs, explaining in detail the nature nails with a pair of office scissors. He door say where her young mistress had gone, or with whom, or when she would "Excuse my interruption," said Varney. return. Possibly Mrs. Carstairs knew, but Mrs. Carstairs was ill and could not be The clerk's glance lowered tiredly. "Naw. disturbed. Miss Carstairs would be sorry to miss him, the kind hearted girl opined, of it, he came instantly to a sitting position "As the-er-mishap seems to be so so "I don't believe it," said Peter instantly. and would he please leave his name?

[To be continued.] (Copyright by Small, Maynard & Co.]