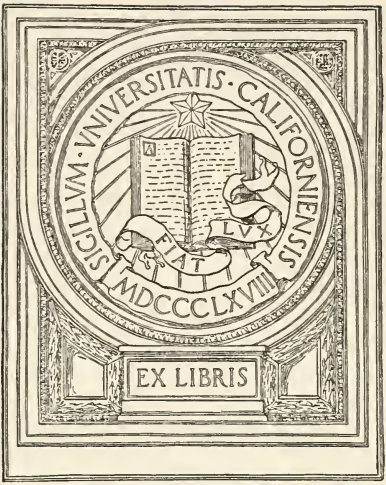
A FAMILY TREE

Brander Matthews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A FAMILY TREE

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A FAMILY TREE

And Other Stories

BY

BRANDER MATTHEWS

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I.

JUNE 22, 1887.—This is the longest day of the year; and it has seemed the longest of my life. I scarcely closed my eyes last night during the endless hours, while my memory persisted in recalling every word she had spoken in our brief talk, and in bringing up before me again every movement of her head as she sat between me and the fading twilight that outlined her delicate figure against the gray curtain. With the early dawn I arose restlessly, impatient to get away from solitude; I began the day with a railroad ride of five hours in cars which grew hotter and dustier as the train sped along the arid track:—but it is not because of any of these things, or because of all of them, that the day has seemed so long to me. There is a reason deeper and more potent than these trifles. Even as I write now her face comes

between me and this paper—I see again the laughing eye and the twisted wave of the golden hair—and it is only by a tense effort that I can refrain from throwing away the pen and rushing out into the night to pace aimlessly until I shall drop from exhaustion.

Just why I have sat me down to begin this journal, I confess I do not know. It is in obedience to a vague impulse, almost irresistible, and altogether inexplicable. To talk to a friend is a relief; and with a pen in my hand and this blank-book before me, I feel as though I might hold silent converse with myself. A man, heart-sore and ready to hate all women for the sake of one, whom he has loved too well for his own peace, must try vainly to supply the male need of the female by a development in himself of feminine traits. To keep a diary calls for an introspective loquacity wherein woman is more gifted than man; but if there comes a demand for a faculty, I suppose that the male of our species is as ready to develop it as the female; and I must make out here with some feeble masculine imitation of the feminine garrulity of egotism. A man writing a diary resembles one of the plants which are both male and female. (What is the use of having

studied botany if I cannot draw on my little learning for a figure of speech? What does it profit me to have studied moral philosophy if I cannot bear up under a blow as a philosopher ought? And why was I the poet of our class if I cannot deck this consolatory diary with a dried flower of rhetoric now and again?)

I have come to the country for hard work. I am to spend my summer searching the town records, reading the court-rolls, comparing deeds and wills, until I can construct anew and with legal certainty the Wycherly genealogy, and until we may know whether or not our client Bradford is the rightful heir. It is not often that a lawyer here, in our new America, has to go back two centuries and a half, more or less, to get at the rights and wrongs of a suit brought only a month or two ago. But so it is, and if the Richard Wycherly who is said to have lived in this little town about the time of the Pequot War, and who was the elder brother of the Walter Wycherly, serving as aide to Colonel Nicolls when New Amsterdam surrendered—if this Wycherly died without children or if none of his issue survive to this day, then our client, John Bradford, Esq., of Eastbourne, England, a direct descendant of the younger brother,

Walter Wycherly, is the heir-at-law of the vast estate which has suddenly lapsed and devolved on the Wycherly family. But if even a single descendant of Richard Wycherly, the elder brother, survive, then our client has no case, and the estate, with all the accumulated rentals of half a century, belongs to this unknown and unsuspecting offspring of the man who came hither when there was little else here than a block-house for a place of refuge against the roving Niantics and Narragansetts. I can foresee endless labor before me in tracing out the posterity of this Richard Wycherly, if he left a large family. Indeed, if that be the case, my task is almost hopeless. Yet it may prove easier than I think; he may not have married, or there may be so few descendants that I can climb along the family tree with but little labor.

II.

JUNE 29.—I have been here a week now, and I make slow headway. I fear I put little heart into my work—I fear, indeed, that I have little heart left to put into anything. The town-clerk is away, and no one else can guide me through the old records. A certain Dr. Darling, once the rector of the Episcopalian church here, and an indefatigable antiquary, is said to know more than anyone else about the countless details of the local history; he was called by a congregation in Chicago three or four years ago, but he is in the habit of returning for a fortnight or so every summer; and he is expected to arrive early next month. In the meanwhile I read in the old records as best I may; and I study out the worn inscriptions on the broken tombstones in the little old cemetery. There are graves there of men born three centuries ago, in England, when Elizabeth was Queen, before the Invincible Armada set sail from the coast of Spain—men who left

old England to cross the doubtful ocean and to lay their bones here at last on the bleak shores of New England. This little town has its history thickset with deeds of gold and men of character. A mere summer resort it is now, with a beach, a light-house, a life-saving station, two large hotels, and three boarding-houses.

The chief street bends as it nears the old stone pier which is the centre of the settlement, and from which it straightens itself out on one side toward the beach and on the other along the rocky cliff. The village store—it has rivals, but as yet no one seriously threatens its supremacy and its ample adequacy for the needs of the little town—the store is near the centre of the curve and within a stone's throw of the water. The druggist's shop, which is also the post-office, is hard by, and so are the barber's shop and the cavernous smithy, and a queer and tiny den where all sorts of curiosities, oriental rugs, Japanese fans, ostrich eggs, specimens of coral, and numberless other unrelated things, are vended by a dark man who is dressed like a Turk and who looks like an English Jew. Not far off is a little low building on which a sign announces that the sojourner or the wayfarer may always refresh himself with Ice-

cream and Clam-chowder—either simultaneously or consecutively, at his choice.

Beyond these are the boarding-houses, enlarged and enlarged again, with wings outstretched on every side, and with unending outhouses dark with negro cooks and washer-women. The two larger hotels are at opposite ends of this crescent, one towering high over the rocks and the other spreading wide on the broad meadow back of the beach. One is called the Hope Haven House—and I have already discovered that Hope Haven was the earliest name given to the little harbor by the weary adventurer who first lowered sail and dropped anchor in the grateful shelter of the headland. The sagamore who held sway over the painted Indians with whom these European immigrants were soon to quarrel, was Miantonomo; and his name is commemorated to-day by the other hotel—the one within a minute's walk of the surf as it breaks sharply on the broad, hard beach.

It is at the Miantonomo that I have spent the past seven days seeking surcease of thought in such work as I have been able to do, and in dull mechanic observation of my neighbors. I am in no mood to agree with Browning—

"This world's no blot for us
Nor blank; it means intensely and means good.
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

And yet to spy out the secrets of feminine psychology is a vent for my bitterness against woman. I should like to try my hand at a monograph on the Summer Girl, caustic enough even for her to detect its acidity—if ever she happened to read it. In general, however, she reads nothing but imported novels in flimsy paper covers; and she reads these only in the intervals of flirting and chatter—infrequent interstices of time. About dusk the omnibus arrives from the railroad station, and little giggling groups gather in the corners of the piazza to take stock of the newcomers. If a young man appears, I think they wonder to what fortunate maiden he comes consigned; there is a dearth of young men here, as there is at most other summer resorts, and any young lady having captured a young man is more willing to withstand the accusation of forestalling than she is to merge her proprietary right to her bond-slave.

When other girls arrive, there is a moment of impatience at the augmented over-supply of this perishable article; there is a glut of girls already.

The new-comers are scrutinized as they step up on the piazza, standing there uncomfortably while the father of the family registers his name at the office. But the next morning, after breakfast, acquaintance is scraped speedily enough; and before night comes again, the new-comers and the earlier guests are already bosom friends. I see them promenading the wide corridor, to and fro, with their arms about each others' waists. We have had a drenching down-pour of rain for two days now, and if it continues for twenty-four hours longer I look for a falling out of some of these caged tigresses, impatiently pacing the piazzas in the lee of the rain. I doubt if their nerves can stand the depression and the compression much longer.

III.

JUNE 30.—Shortly after I had written my journal yesterday afternoon, the rain suddenly ceased. I was sitting on the piazza—smoking silently and rejoicing inwardly as I marked the thunderous crash of the angry waves, vaguely consonant with my stormy mood—when I became conscious of the subdued excitement always perceptible here on the arrival of the morning and evening trains. I raised my eyes when a carriage stopped in front of the steps and a young lady alighted. As she approached, she seemed to give the lie to the thoughts about her kind which I had been expressing here in black and white. Woman is unfathomable at all times, and as inscrutable as the sphinx and as unchanging as that stony creature of art — yet this girl was not as other girls, by virtue of an undefinable grace which was as a revelation of her beauty of spirit.

She wore a simple gray travelling dress tightly sheathing her tall, slim figure. With one hand

she was loosing a dark veil which had been drawn snugly about her head, and which fell just as she passed before me; I saw a face of pathetic beauty. I fancied even that there was an expression of appealing timidity in her large dark eyes. At the top of the steps the landlord of the hotel met her, and she asked him if the rooms she had written for were ready. Then she returned to the carriage and assisted an old gentleman to alight from it; leaning on her young arm he climbed slowly to the piazza and passed into the house.

As she disappeared in the open door I caught myself wondering who she was—as if any woman was of any consequence to me now! And yet her portrait lingered with me, and I recalled the slight figure, the curve of her arm as she released the veil, the gentleness with which she aided the feeble steps of her aged companion, the helpless expression as though she had a burden put on her when she herself would fain lean on another. I sat still for a few moments wondering why I was thinking about her. Then I threw my cigar over the piazza-rail with an impatient gesture, and called myself a fool for giving a second thought to a girl who was probably as healthy as I, and twice as happy. What reason had I to read my melan-

choly into her face? Probably she was ready for her three meals a day, and capable of letting good digestion wait on appetite. Striding into the office of the hotel, I joined the usual little group of inquisitive folk looking over the register; and there I read, in the feeble handwriting of the old man—

Abram Bell, Buffalo, N. Y.
Miss Martha Ransom, Buffalo, N. Y.

It mattered little to me that her name was Martha and that she came from Buffalo. In indignation at my own weak curiosity, I lighted another cigar and set out for a brisk walk. When a man is sick at heart, a tramp through the moist fields after a summer shower is consoling, even though the melancholy twilight is soon to settle down.

Back of the village, in the hollow of the triangle it forms, is the old cemetery; and here I am wont to walk, partly because a graveyard seems a fit place for my disconsolate soul, and partly because it is from tombstones that I hope to get help in my genealogical quest. I have already deciphered, as best I can, every epitaph in the cemetery, and perhaps this was the reason I walked

through the graveyard and into a barren patch of land beyond it and nearer to the cross-roads. This scant acre, rocky and overgrown with weeds, is known as Dedman's Field, although there is now no Dedman in the village, nor has there been so far back as I have been able to trace. Almost in the centre of this little field, on a little hillock, stands an aspen-tree, a most unusual growth for this part of the New England coast.

As I drew near, the evening breeze sprang up and the loose branches shivered. There was an uncanny suggestion in the sudden movement, and I looked at the tree askance. I knew the old tradition that the aspen trembles to-day because it gave its wood to make the cross which was set on the hill of Calvary, just as the willow is thought to weep forever because its branches were taken to make a scourge as the slow procession toiled up Golgotha. Again these dread legends came back to me, and I felt again the weight of the awful idea of an eternity of punishment. The aspen or the willow were fit wood to make an oar for the cursed Vanderdecken, or a staff for the wandering Ahasuerus. As this fancy came to me, the tree near which I stood shivered again, as though possessed by an evil spirit.

For the moment I had surrendered myself so fully to this morbid mood that I started when a young man stepped from behind the aspen and asked me if I could direct him to the Miantonomo House. He was a handsome youngster, tall and sturdy. A slight but not unpleasing accent betrayed that he was a Southerner, probably from Baltimore. I gave him the simple directions needed, only wondering how any man might lose his way so near so small a village as this. He thanked me courteously and strode forward like one going to see his beloved. Trust comes before betrayal, I thought bitterly, as I went on.

After a few paces more I found myself at the neglected stone wall which marked the irregular boundaries of Dedman's Field, and almost involuntarily I turned to gaze again on the impatient lover, for such he seemed to me. At the other side of the field he, too, had come to the low wall. The tall aspen towered between us, shivering with the brisk breeze; and its bending branches, swaying with the wind, were now green and now white, as the leaves were blown about and exposed their lower sides. Just then the dark clouds which had shrouded the sun for two days broke asunder, and the last gleams of the sunset sprang toward

us. As I paused in one corner of the field to look at the young man stepping over the low wall, I saw a strange sight. A gust of wind smote the aspen-tree and it shivered again, and in the red rays of the setting sun every white leaf seemed suddenly to be dipped in blood.

When I drew near to the hotel, I heard the jangle of the bell announcing supper. After that simple meal I fell into conversation with the landlord, who is what many people would call a character. He began life as a sailor, going up to the Banks regularly for cod; then he turned farmer; after a while he began to take summer boarders; and in time he made enough out of them to sell his frequently enlarged farm-house and build the Miantonomo. Despite his present exalted functions, he retains the exterior of a fisherman, and whenever his pushing, bustling, ambitious wife will allow it, he is to be seen in his shirt-sleeves by the kitchen door, smoking a pipe.

"So you've been to Dedman's Field and seen Mary Martin's tree about dusk, eh?" he said, when I had told him of my walk. "Well, I dunno's I'd like to spend the night there. They doo say that lot is ha'nted; but then they'll say

anything, an' I ain't never seen anyone who'd ever seen anything there."

Having thus whetted my curiosity artistically, he yielded to my request for the history of Mary Martin, with the reasons why she was thought not to rest in her grave.

"Well," he began, "I dunno's there's much to tell"—and then he told the whole story, and it was a story common enough and commonplace.

Just before the outbreak of the Revolution a girl named Mary Martin had fallen in love with her cousin—and she had loved too well. After a while, as usual, he tired of her—more often I think it is the woman who tires of the man—and he gave out that he was going away. She besought him to do her justice and to make her an honest woman—as though it were in his power to do that! He refused and got ready to depart. The night before he was to go, she met him again at the aspen-tree which had often been their trysting-place; and for her this was a final and fatal tryst. He refused her pleadings, and as she clung to him, he shook her off roughly and went on his way, leaving her lying alone at the foot of the tree. There she was found the next morning, dying. She was an orphan, and the man who had

wronged her was her nearest kinsman. No news came from him for a year or so, and then a messenger bore away the child of the dead girl—a daughter. Neither the girl nor her father was ever seen in the town, although there was a report, so the landlord told me, that Nathan Martin had joined the Tories during the war, and that he even guided the marauding band which had harried his old home.

IV.

JULY 3.—Yesterday was Saturday, and in the evening there was a hop here at the Miantonomo, the first of the season. Few men could feel less attuned for dancing than I,—but I took a seat near a window and fed my melancholy by watching the dancers. These were mostly young girls; I think I have recorded already that there is a plentiful lack of young men here. Now indeed is the time foretold of the prophet, when seven women shall lay hold of one man. I am not vain, but I think I could see in the eyes of more than seven women a desire to lay hold of this young man, but they restrained themselves and were guilty of no overt act. There are more than twice seven young women in the hotel, and there were only two young men to trip a measure with them—one is a very young man of sixteen, and the other is an old young man of forty, with a coming corpulency and a baldness already achieved. They devoted themselves nobly and did their duty in the

dance like men—but what are two among so many ?

Quite the prettiest girl in the room was the tender-eyed Miss Ransom, whose dark beauty was heightened by the simplicity of her white dress. I could not but watch the graceful poise of her head as she turned in the circles of the waltz. Then I noted the delicate lines of her slim figure and her exquisite coloring. Why is it, I wonder, that I see her face as through a veil of sorrow ? She is not morose or downcast, and she bore her share in the innocent revelry of the dance gayly enough. Although I have no warrant of any such separation, I find myself looking at her as a being apart from the others. Unconsciously, my eyes followed her about the floor. As the waltz ceased she sat down almost opposite the window where I had taken up my post of observation. Unexpectedly a color kindled in her cheeks, to fade at once and leave her paler than before.

I looked up and I saw a young man crossing the room. As he stood before her, the momentary confusion had given place to contentment. A smile came back to her lips and the light beamed from her deep eyes. When the signal was given

for a square dance, she took the arm of the young man. As they moved off together, past my window, to take their places at the head of the room, I recognized in her partner the wanderer who had accosted me near the aspen-tree, in the twilight, two days ago. He is a fine, manly, handsome young fellow, and the crisp curls of his light hair encircle a bright and elevated countenance.

I heard the first notes of the lancers, and I saw them bow to each other and advance hand in hand in unison with the lively music. Then I gave up the sport of looking on and went out for a walk on the beach, where the treacherous waves were now rippling gently, forgetful of their vicious violence of two days ago. I paced the hard sand for two hours or more, and then I came back to bed. I slept well, though I woke early, and I am writing this now before breakfast, for it is Sunday morning and I think I shall go to church.

V.

JULY 5.—After all, there was a peculiar and horrible history attached to that tree, a history far weirder and more wonderful than the commonplace tale of desertion and death that the landlord told me. Yesterday a few of the visitors at the two hotels arranged an impromptu celebration of the glorious Fourth. After the boys had split the air all the morning with the sharp snapping of their firecrackers, there was a gathering at an open space in an orchard just back of the centre of the village. The former rector of the Episcopalian church, Dr. Darling, read the Declaration of Independence in a fine orotund manner. Then a young lawyer from Atlanta delivered the oration of the day. His name is Thaxter, and he is the wanderer I met under the blood-red aspen on the evening of his arrival.

Although he is a Southerner, his oration was wholly free from the perfervid rhetoric we have been used to expect from the speakers of the

Southland. He was dignified, direct, practical. He is one of the men of the New South, strong in their patriotism and hopeful for the future of our common country. There was much in his unaffected and unstudied speech which called for thoughtful consideration, and which would repay it. At first he dwelt on the political needs of our time, and he showed us how much our forefathers had left for us to do. Toward the end of his speech he became a little more florid, and it was then that he pictured to us the Liberty Tree planted by the men of the Revolution, watered by their blood, and spreading its branches over us to-day—a Liberty Tree here in the West, which, like the banyan of the East, sends down new shoots to take root in new soil and to become new trunks, each self-sustaining and all firmly bound together. Then he made an antithesis between this Liberty Tree, which is a Tree of Life, and that fit symbol of license, the gallows, which is the Tree of Death. So by easy stages he was brought to the telling of the fateful origin of the lonely aspen standing solitary in a barren field within sight of us all—a tree which might fairly serve as a type of the superstitions of a dark day now long past and never to return. That aspen had its root in a human heart,

and it drew its first nourishment from the body of a murdered man.

Amid the indefinite disquiet of the audience, the speaker told his story, and I think it was new to nearly all his hearers, as it was to me. Not many years after this coast was first settled, a man of this little town committed suicide, and in accordance with the harsh jurisprudence of those unenlightened days, he was buried at the cross-roads with a stake through his heart, that the people passing on four ways might be warned not to sin as he had sinned—not to take that which it was not theirs to take at will, a human life. This barbarous custom, common enough in Europe, had never been established in the American colonies, and perhaps but this single instance is recorded. So great was the horror excited by the execution of the dread sentence, that the wayfarers shunned the unhallowed spot. Both roads swerved aside and met again where they cross each other now, many feet beyond the place where the stake was planted; and it was not for a long while that a strange thing was known to have happened. The dry stick, thrust through a man's body and moistened by his blood, had taken root in its human bed and had begun to put forth leaves. Men came

from far and near to gaze on a growth as mysterious as it was appalling. Year by year as they watched, the tree grew and flourished ; it sent out roots to take hold of the earth, and branches that spread abroad to the air. It grew apace, like an ill weed. It grew sturdily, as though it were a good tree and not an accursed thing — and yet it was an aspen, and it shivered perpetually as though in remembrance of its shameful planting.

Having told this grewsome tale to his horror-stricken hearers, the orator paused for a moment only, and then he applied the figure adroitly to the contemporary politicians, committing suicide for the sake of party spoils, and encouraging a noxious growth even by their awful death.

I liked the speech—and even before I heard it I had liked the speaker. After the exercises were over I found a common friend to make us acquainted, and I hastened to tell Mr. Thaxter what I thought about his oration. He showed unaffected pleasure when praised, and a modest surprise that anybody should care for so hasty an improvisation.

I recalled our first meeting almost within the shadow of the impious tree he had made into so fine a figure in his address. He told me that

he had the legend from Dr. Darling. I asked if he knew the cause of the suicide which had met with so peculiar a *post-mortem* punishment. The young Southerner answered that he had inferred, from something the clergyman had said casually, that it was because of a woman. But what need had I to inquire? I might have known that when there was mischief to be made, there was a wife or a sweetheart at the bottom of it.

I must have let fall some hint of what I was thinking, for Thaxter flushed and ventured gravely to differ from me; no doubt the man himself was to blame for the way the woman had treated him. The young Southerner said this with a certain fierceness of manner which made me smile, but it did not displease me. It struck me as fit and proper that woman should be defended by a man who is in love with Miss Martha Ransom — and I have seen the two together too often in the past three days not to have detected the symptoms I know only too well.

"I must refer you to Dr. Darling," he said, at last, "if you want any further information about this Richard Wycherly."

As he spoke this name I confess that I started

with surprise. Richard Wycherly is the man whose descendants I have come here to trace. I have already searched for his tombstone in vain, and no wonder, since the stake that marked his resting-place waves its eerie boughs above his grave. I have found traces also of a son of Richard Wycherly, but any record of that son's death and burial has hitherto evaded me. The books of the town were ill-kept at the time, and they are ill-preserved now; they give me little help.

I asked the Southerner a few questions, but soon I saw that he had told me all he knew, and that for more I must go to Dr. Darling. From what Thaxter said, I take it that the rector is an enthusiast—a man with a hobby—and I doubt not that I shall find him willing to take me up behind him for a canter; it will be my fault if I do not get him to go the road I seek to explore.

VI.

JULY 8.—I have had one long talk with Dr. Darling at the Hope Haven House, and I am to have another. Thaxter told the tale as told to him; and the doctor has confirmed it in every detail. Richard Wycherly came here from Bristol, England, in 1640. He was a widower. It was about ten years later that an intrigue between him and the wife of one Captain Clark, then absent on an expedition to South America, was broken off. The woman saw the error of her ways, so the writer of a contemporary letter puts it, and she renounced the devil and all his works, including Richard Wycherly. Her lover seems to have pleaded with her often and vainly. At last, when he abandoned hope of recovering her, he gave up his life. It was the loss of his wife which had driven him out of England to America, so tradition said; and it was the loss of another man's wife which sent him out of the world.

After Richard Wycherly's untimely death by his own hand, his only child, Robert, a boy who

had been left behind in England, grew to manhood and crossed to America, and made a futile effort to clear his father's memory from the stain of self-slaughter. Failing in this filial duty, Robert intended to return to England, but instead, having a full share of the paternal foolishness where a woman was concerned, he fell in love with Patience, a daughter of Judge Hutton. So he settled down in America and married her, and lived with her for ten years or more in increasing enmity and strife. Of this unhappy marriage of Robert, three children were born; two boys, twins, Roderick and Rupert, were so like their mother that their father came to hate them almost before they left their cradles. There was a third child, a girl, Mercy, on whom her father bestowed all the pent-up affection of his impulsive nature.

With increasing years the acerbity of Mrs. Robert Wycherly's temper was sharpened, until at last her husband could bear it no longer. He threatened to take his daughter and leave his wife, and go where she would never hear of him again. The shrew retorted that nothing would suit her better. One evening, as they were returning home from a funeral, they had words of an unforgetable bitterness, and the wife clinched her

thrust by an allusion to the living sign of his father's disgraceful death and burial—the aspen tree which was casting its shivering shadow across their path, as they came back from the graveyard in the twilight. Robert Wycherly made no answer, but he took his little daughter by the hand, and he was never seen here again. In vindictive solitude his wife awaited his return; and without him his sons grew to manhood. At last the wife and mother died, without a word from her husband or a sight of her daughter.

I asked Dr. Darling if he had any notion where Robert Wycherly went and what befell him. What happened in the end, the doctor could not tell me, but where Robert probably went was known by a letter (still extant and in the antiquary's private collection) from a friend of old Judge Hutton, who saw a man remarkably like Robert Wycherly in New York in 1673, and this man had with him a beautiful girl apparently about eighteen years old, and very like the Judge's daughter, Patience, as the friend recalled her in girlhood. Now, it was in 1660 that Robert Wycherly had fled from here, taking with him his daughter, Mercy, then five years old; and in 1673 she would be just eighteen.

VII.

JULY 10.—This afternoon I went again to Dedman's Field for another look at the aspen, which has for me an enigmatic fascination. It has been a glaring hot day and there was a heated stillness throughout the village; and apparently everyone was resting before venturing out again under the brazen sky. I could not feel a breath of wind, and yet as I drew near the tree, it sighed as though a lost soul were imprisoned within it.

When I went up to the tree, to my surprise—and yet why should I be surprised?—I discovered that its trunk was curiously carved with hearts and linked initials. I begin to think that the tree must be a trysting-place for the village lovers in the spring; and that even the summer boarders, when they go forth in pairs, fall in with this odd fashion which makes a Flirtation Walk of Dedman's Field.

The newest of all these many emblems of displayed affection was a large heart, forcibly but ir-

regularly incised, and enclosing two pairs of initials—M. R. above P. T. Can these stand for Martha Ransom and Paul Thaxter?

Turning my back on the ominous tree, I stepped over the low wall into the church-yard, where I sat down on a crumbling tombstone. The date cut on it was 1649—the year before Richard Wycherly killed himself for a woman. It seemed to me strange and inscrutable that the stone should be cold and as it were dead, while the tree, only a year younger, was alive.

Sitting there idly, ruminant and lazy, I became conscious of music. The organ of the church swelled out as the congregation began to pour forth. Almost at the head of the procession came Miss Ransom and Mr. Thaxter. Is he looking forward with the hope that there may come a day when he will take her to church, once for all, to make her his own for life? He has his dream, the happy man, and it may be that there shall come no sharp awakening. But who knows what a day may bring forth? Who knows aught of the tempest or of the treachery which may be hidden even in the pathetic placidity of a face like hers? Why is it that I find myself pitying them both?

VIII.

JULY 18.—To-day I have made great progress in the quest which brought me here. Richard Wycherly, the suicide, left one child, Robert, who married here within a year after his father's death, and who, about 1660, deserted his wife and fled to New York, taking with him his daughter, Mercy, and leaving behind with their mother his twin sons, Rupert and Roderick. This much I knew and had recorded here already. To-day I found two books, one a missing volume of the old town-records, and within its covers, closely hidden, was the other, a thin copy-book wherein a former town-clerk (who seems to have been a bit of a gossip with his pen) had kept a fragmentary diary. From these two sources I have been enabled to piece together a segment of the history as terrible as what has gone before. It is again a tale of death, and a death on account of a woman.

Together Rupert and Roderick grew to manhood, and they were with their abandoned and

embittered mother when she died in 1687. I have this morning scraped the moss from her tombstone, and the date is plain enough. After she had departed this life, the smouldering jealousy between her two sons blazed out fiercely, and soon it was fed with new fuel. Each had begrudged the other the slightest caress from the withered mother; and now each found the other his rival for the smiles of the village beauty. For a year or more they both wooed her, and for a year she doubted which she would take, or whether she would take either. But so fierce were they both that all other suitors were discouraged, and the twins alone remained; and between them she had to make her choice. Of the two, Rupert was the less harsh, the less brutal; and to him she gave her hand. In vain Roderick raged. Before the wedding he withdrew himself from the village and joined a tribe of Indians. For months after the marriage, and after a son, Ralph, had been born to Rupert and his wife, Roderick was never seen. He dwelt alone in the woods with his envy and his unrequited passion. He consorted only with the redskin, not fiercer or more cruel than he.

At last, without warning, he came back, worn

and thin, consumed by an inward fire, which had not wasted away or burned itself out. It was at least a fortnight after his return before the brothers met. Then they came together for the last time, and the spot where they stood face to face was within sight of the church in which Rupert had wedded the woman Roderick loved. As near as I can make out from the incomplete notes of the clerk, it must have been almost under the shadow of the aspen-tree which was rooted in their grandfather's heart.

As to what passed between them before the fatal blow was struck, I can conjecture only. But I surmise that it must have been some foul insult hurled by Roderick against the woman he had wished to marry. Whatever it may have been, it was more than Rupert could brook. He seized the nearest weapon, the broken limb of a tree—perhaps a branch of the very aspen which trembles there to-day in direful memory of the murder. With this he smote his brother. As the club fell, Roderick tried to spring aside, and it struck him on the temple and he pitched forward —dead. And thus was the old story of Cain and Abel acted over again here, in new America, two centuries ago.

The rest is soon told. Rupert was tried for the fratricide and he was hanged on a gallows set up in a corner of Dedman's Field. His widow died of a broken heart; and his son Ralph was left to the care of strangers. Born in 1681, Ralph Wycherly did not marry until 1715, being then thirty-four years of age. He died in 1762, and his death was unlike the death of his father and of his grandfather, and of his great-grandfather. He expired of old age, in his bed, comforted by the devotion of his only child, a daughter, Margaret by name.

IX.

JULY 20.—I had hoped to close this catalogue of crime, but it is not to be. There is a blight on the Wycherly family, and in my questing I go from bad to worse. Margaret Wycherly became the wife of one John Martin in 1734. She was the mother of two sons, who married and died young. When Mrs. Martin died, in 1771, only two of her grandchildren survived her—Nathan, a son of her elder son, and Mary, a daughter of her younger son. She had lived to see these grandchildren grow to youth. Happy for her that she did not live to see them die!

Shortly after I arrived here the landlord of this hotel told me the legend of Dedman's Field, and the village belief that Mary Martin's spirit walked there at night. Now I find that this tale of horror is part of the family history I am trying to piece together. It was Mary, Mrs. Martin's granddaughter, who died of a broken heart under the shadow of the aspen; and it was Nathan, the grandson, who had abandoned his cousin.

X.

JULY 23.—Dr. Darling is again at the Hope Haven Hotel, and I shall try to have a talk with him to-day. In the meantime I must set down here the news just received from our office in New York. The man to whom I had written went to work without delay. He found that Robert Wycherly was in New York in 1676 and that he died in 1685 and was buried in Trinity church-yard, although his tombstone is no longer to be found there. There are no signs of his having married again, and as I happened to have discovered that his deserted wife survived him, not departing this life, which she had used to make all about her miserable, until 1687, this question need not detain me further. Before her father's death Mercy Wycherly married Arthur Rampisham or Ransom —the name seems then to have been written both ways. It is an English place-name, and its abbreviated pronunciation is not in accord with the earlier orthography. As it happens, the Rampisham or Ransom genealogy has been worked out

in detail by an Albany antiquary; and from this it is easy to see that there was only one descendant of this Mrs. Arthur Ransom alive in 1870, the year in which the genealogy was printed, and just two hundred years since she herself had been married.

Other branches of the Rampisham or Ransom stock had flourished and spread, but this branch had withered as though there were a fatality upon it; the families were always small and early deaths were frequent. The sole representative of the daughter of Robert Wycherly was Edward Ransom, who in 1870 was living in Buffalo, where, in 1862, he had married a daughter of Abram Bell, Esq. As to any children he might have, the compiler of the genealogy was not informed. But the world is very small, and what the compiler did not know, I am in a position to learn at will. Mr. Abram Bell, of Buffalo, is now in this hotel, and his granddaughter with him is Miss Martha Ransom.

If this Martha Ransom is an only child, and if I find that Nathan Martin left no legitimate children, then the wealth that our English client is seeking belongs to her, and to her alone.

I was seated on the piazza this morning after breakfast when the mail arrived with this letter

from the office in New York, and I read it while I finished my cigar. As I was folding the letter and putting it away in my pocket I chanced to look up, and Miss Ransom passed before me. Full of the extraordinary information I had just received I gazed at her for a moment unwittingly, and it was not until I happened to find myself staring at her brown hair, brushed back tightly and tied in an old-fashioned knot, that I awoke to her presence and my unconscious rudeness. But she did not see me. Her mind was elsewhere—as mine had been.

There is a gentle simplicity about her, a certain old-world quaintness, which charms me. I delight to follow her about with my eyes so long as I may do so without discourtesy. If she chances to catch my glance, I get a frank look from her deep brown eyes—and I find myself puzzled by the pathetic appeal I imagine I see in them. For this pathos there is no apparent reason, and I suppose it is all a figment of my fancy. Sometimes it seems to me that even a suggestion of humor lurks at the corner of her mouth. And there is no disputing that often enough her laugh rings out cheerily.

But not to-day did I hear its silver music. To-day there was a stiffness in her carriage and a fire

in her eye I have not seen there before. Unexpected as was this change in her, I do not find it unbecoming. Paul Thaxter was by her side as they came up the walk to the hotel, and it appeared as though he were pleading—and in vain. As they drew near the piazza-steps something she said seemed to cut him sharply, and then he, too, stiffened. And so they parted, at the foot of the steps, in the full bitterness of a lover's quarrel—the first, it may be, but of a certainty not the last. The momentary grief of this morning will serve to give flavor to the reconciliation which is sure to follow it this afternoon. Joys without sorrows are as impossible as valleys without mountains. "The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken," so Longfellow tells us; and though Longfellow was a sentimentalist he was right for once. Through a prism of misery many a man has seen for the first time a rainbow of hope. There are more people happy in the world than there are people who think themselves happy. Within a day or two I have begun to suspect that my morbid misogyny was dying, and that in its place there was coming an indefinable feeling of oblivion as remote from contentment as it is from unrest.

XI.

JULY 24.—Before I went to bed last night I had ten minutes' talk with old Mr. Bell. Miss Ransom sat by his side in the parlor all the evening, refusing to dance, and trying not to let the world suspect her misery; and it was not until two or three of the more lively young ladies in this house fairly forced her to join them in a game of "Consequences," that I had a chance for a brief chat with her grandfather. When once we got into conversation, it was not long before I had all the information I sought:—I wonder how I should succeed as a reporter or as a detective? I began by a compliment to Miss Ransom and by a remark that she took good care of her grandfather. Mr. Bell needed no more than this to begin her praises, and I soon knew that she was his only granddaughter, and the only surviving child of her parents. She at least can read her title clear, and her claim to direct descent from Richard Wycherly is beyond dispute.

XII.

JULY 26.—Yesterday evening I met Dr. Darling at the Hope Haven House by appointment. He stood on the piazza by the door as I came up the path.

"Would you object to a walk with our talk?" he asked, as he shook hands. "It has been oppressively hot all the afternoon, and I have not left the house to-day. A tramp for a mile or two in the night air will rest me."

I expressed my preference for walking, especially in the cool of the evening.

"Then what do you say to our taking a little turn up by the church-yard?" he suggested, as we came down the steps of the hotel. "We can have another look at the wicked tree in the so-called Dedman's Field."

"So-called?" I queried, adding that I had often wondered who Dedman might have been, especially since I had failed to find any of the name mentioned either in the town records or in the cemetery.

"There never was a Dedman," the Doctor answered; "and the proper name, as we have it now, is a corruption. This waste place was called Dead Man's Field, as who should say Aceldama, the Field of Blood."

"Much as the church-yard has been styled God's Acre," I remarked.

"Precisely. And this Dedman's Field is truly the Devil's Acre, for it has seen deviltry enough and to spare, since that foul tree began to grow in the midst of it."

When we came in sight of the lonely aspen in the centre of the dead man's field, we saw it bathed in white by the moonlight, and there was something spectral about it, as though it were draped with a shroud.

Reminded of my quest, I asked the Doctor if he could tell me anything of the career of Nathan Martin after he had abandoned his cousin Mary.

He answered that he had traced Martin to his death.

"Did he ever marry?"

"No."

"Was it true that he sent back here for his child?"

"Yes."

"Was he one of the Tory bushwhackers?"

"Yes."

"Then I suppose he got shot in one of their skirmishes with the patriots. Where did he die?"

The Doctor pointed to the aspen in front of us and answered impressively:

"There—on the tree before you."

"What?" I cried in astonishment.

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "here he died. He had ventured back as a member of a band of Tory raiders which ravaged the coast with fire and sword. At last the patriots could stand it no longer, and they formed a strong body to punish the miscreants who were murdering throughout the coast. On the outskirts of this village these Americans captured a man wearing a Continental uniform. It was Nathan Martin. He was tried as a spy, and as a spy he was sentenced to be hanged. But before daybreak on the day of execution he escaped. The alarm was given speedily and men scattered on all sides in pursuit. A little knot of them came upon Martin, hiding here among the tombstones of this church-yard. When he saw he was discovered he ran down that road in the gray dawn, and leaped over the low wall into Dedman's Field. They fired at him from the

road as he tried to shelter himself behind the aspen, and the bullets aimed at him were embedded in the bark."

"Then, for once, at least," said I, "that tree saved a man's life."

"Yes," Dr. Darling retorted, "it saved a man's life for a fate worse than death."

"How so?"

"In this way. Nathan Martin was unarmed, and while their guns covered him he dared not stir a step. Two of the patriots threatened him with their rifles while the rest spread through the field and surrounded him. In less than a minute the miserable wretch was in their hands, and in two minutes more he was hanging amid the boughs of the aspen. At last the tree had brought forth fruit after its kind."

The Doctor ceased speaking, and we walked on in silence for a few moments. As we turned the corner of the church-yard a young couple passed us. The shadow of the moonlight was on their faces, but I had no difficulty in recognizing Miss Martha Ransom and Mr. Paul Thaxter. Evidently they had made up their quarrel, and their manner displayed unconsciously a full enjoyment of the happiness which follows the reconciliation of lovers.

The sight of Miss Ransom brought to mind the other question I wished to ask Dr. Darling:

"You said that Nathan Martin recovered his child before he died. What became of her?"

"She was brought up by a distant cousin of her father's living in Providence, and in 1800 or thereabouts she married a man named Thaxter. Her only son went South to Atlanta not long before the war, and married there. And his only son again—who is thus the only grandchild of Nathan Martin's daughter—is here now."

I did not start at this, startling as it was. I felt almost as though I had expected some such strange disclosure.

"Mr. Paul Thaxter?" I asked.

And the Doctor answered, "Yes."

"Do you know the young lady with whom he was walking?" I inquired.

"Her name is Ransom—is it not?" he returned. "I think I have seen her with Mr. Abram Bell."

"She is Miss Martha Ransom, and she too is a direct descendant of Richard Wycherly."

"You don't tell me?" cried the Doctor. "This is really extraordinary." It was his turn to be astonished.

The young couple came in sight again as we turned the corner of the church-yard.

"There they are before us now," said I, "the sole surviving offspring of the man who is buried under that tree. They are ignorant of their remote relationship; they little think they have a common ancestor; they know nothing of the family history, with its bloodshed, its wrongs, its woes, and its avengings."

Dr. Darling paused and laid his hand on my arm.

"Are we the only men who know them to be akin?" he asked, impressively.

"I think I am the only man who has worked out the relationship, and you are the only man I have told."

"Then let us say nothing about it to them!" he urged, impetuously. "Why soil their young minds and blacken their happy youth by a knowledge of these sad sins? There is no need to lay this burden of sorrow and wickedness on their young shoulders. Let the dead past bury its dead, and let them be happy while they may."

I agreed with him in thinking that it would not be right to tell them anything without due cause.

"But there is no cause," the Doctor declared; "there can be no cause."

"I do not know," I answered.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"We may have to tell Miss Ransom that a great fortune has fallen at her feet unawares."

The Doctor hesitated:

"Would it not be best to say nothing—even if a million dollars were to depend on her knowing? The possession of riches is a great trial, and few come out of the ordeal with unscarred hearts."

XIII.

AUGUST 7.—I linger here needlessly. My work is done and I ought to be about my business. But I am captive to the lazy charm of this place, and I lack energy to go away. It is hotter now than it has been. Even here on this rocky coast, where the breeze may blow across three thousand miles of blue water, there are times when I feel as though I had wandered inadvertently into the torrid zone.

To-day after church I had a little talk with old Mr. Bell, who seemed unusually excited, with moods of alternate depression and elation. Finally he told me that his granddaughter was engaged to be married to Mr. Paul Thaxter. The wedding is not to take place until late in the fall. The young Southerner has accepted an offered partnership with a growing firm of New York lawyers, and he is soon to come North to live. I congratulated the old gentleman on the engagement and on the northward migration of the bridegroom, which

would soften the separation of Mr. Bell and his granddaughter.

"New York is not so very far from Buffalo," I said. "The trip is but a span compared with the journey to Atlanta."

He sighed and answered:

"It is a long way for an old man."

As he spoke, the young people came in view. I had seen them together at church, and they had since gone for a walk. Miss Ransom's hand was laid shyly in Mr. Thaxter's arm. He bore himself boldly and proudly, as became a man who knew what a prize he had won. Her happiness, although less expansive, was not less obvious to a persistent observer.

The color came and went in her cheeks as she and her lover drew near. She brought him straight to Mr. Bell.

"Grandpa," she said, standing before him and twining her arm about his, with a pretty caressing gesture, "I have a favor to ask you—a very great favor indeed."

The old man smiled before he spoke, as though to suggest that he had rarely denied her any request.

"Present your petition," he said, at last.

"Well," she began, "Paul"—and as his name passed her lips a blush fled again across her face—"Paul has had a letter from a friend in New York who wants to rent his house, a lovely little house in Irving Place, near Union Square. It is beautifully furnished, and Paul thinks it is just what I should like."

She paused—hesitated for a moment—and then said no more.

"And what is this great favor you have to ask?" Mr. Bell inquired.

"Only this, sir," answered young Thaxter, after a glance at his future wife; "this house, small as it is, would be lonely for Martha if you were not there. What we have come to beg of you is that you be our guest."

"That is it, grandpa," cried she; "I know it is a great deal to ask, to expect you to give up your own house to join us in a strange city—but you will make me so happy, if you will promise."

The old man looked from one to the other.

"Do you really wish me to come and live with you in New York?" he asked.

"Indeed we do," answered his granddaughter, hastily.

"It is what I most desire," said Thaxter.

I had drawn a little on one side as the young people joined Mr. Bell. Now, as they were wishing to talk freely of their hopes and plans, I edged away without notice, and I heard no more of their projects for the future.

XIV.

August 14. — The story I have to tell is strange enough in itself, and it had best be told swiftly and simply. For the past fortnight the heat has been continuous and intense. For a month no rain has fallen. The fields have been parched for want of water, and the grass has yellowed and shrunk. Here, by the sea, we thought we could fairly count on a breeze; but of late it has been infrequent and unsatisfactory. Even at night the temperature was relentlessly high.

But this morning there were the first signs of a coming change. Before the sun rose the heat was as great as it had been at noon on other days. There was tense oppression in the air, not wholly due to the sultriness, and not to be thrown off by the utmost endeavor.

"This is what I call earthquake weather," said a Californian, after breakfast; and a Wisconsin man capped this remark by the assertion that if he were at home, he should think a tornado might descend on him before nightfall.

The morning wore away with increasing discomfort. From our hotel few people ventured out into the pitiless scorching of the sun; and when I entered the church there was but a scanty congregation. It was to hear Dr. Darling's final sermon for the summer that I had come. He preached from the text: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

After the service I lingered to walk home with him, and as the congregation scattered I joined him at the vestry door. Before he was ready to depart the church was empty. When he came out, it was obvious that a storm was upon us. In the far northwest ponderous clouds rolled up, and the atmosphere was even heavier than it had been earlier in the day. As we left the church door the angry mass on the horizon lifted a little, and in the rift was revealed an ominous copper color. I glanced up at the vane on the steeple, and I saw that the wind was still blowing fitfully toward the northwest, where the clouds were darkly compacting themselves.

Before we had taken ten steps there was a vague and indefinite movement of this dense mass toward us. The upper current of air had changed already and the lower was dying away. Clouds

began to break away from the northwest and to drift toward us, and to scud away over our heads — certain forerunners of the fast-approaching storm. Soon these lesser masses, which had been fleecy, thickened into gray. We quickened our pace as streaks of forked light split the huge bulk of cloud, and the low muttering of thunder reached our ears. The solid body lowering on the horizon spread up and moved over us with increasing speed.

Not a breath of wind was yet to be felt, as we walked rapidly through the churchyard and skirted Dedman's Field. Soon we saw the trees on a low hill, a mile or more in the distance, bend and sway and thrash their branches, as the wind caught them and twisted them. Far off down the road the dust sprang up in a whirling cone. Then at last the full force of the wind was upon us all at once, and we were almost choked with the hot, sandy particles that filled the air. The flashes of lightning were more frequent and the thunder had a sharper clang; and we knew that we were in the midst of one of the most magnificent midsummer storms that ever man had seen.

The members of the congregation had had a fair start of us, and only a few were still in sight,

hurrying home. Miss Ransom and Mr. Thaxter, who had loitered as we had, had also been caught. They were crossing Dedman's Field as the first great drops of rain fell, and they took refuge under the aspen, in the centre of the acre, waiting for the storm to spend itself and pass away. With another wider flash of lightning and a cracking and tearing report as though the thunder were rending some stout obstacle, the rain fell fast,—in sheets——in torrents—with terrific force. The heavens opened and the floods came. In a moment we were drenched to the skin, and the road on which we were walking was gullied by the resistless rush. There was no respite. The wind and the rain gained in velocity; and we were in the thick of the storm.

Suddenly there was a more blinding flash and a crash as of a park of artillery. They came almost together; and we knew that the bolt must have fallen within a few feet of us.

Stunned and blinded, we glanced about us. Then all at once we stood still. The aspen in the centre of Dedman's Field was shattered to the ground. The lightning had struck it fairly, and it was split in two. The falling branches, twisted and scorched already, hid from sight the young

couple we had seen standing in its shelter but a moment before.

I called to the Doctor as I sprang over the wall into the field. Before I could reach the tree the western sky lightened a little and the darkness began to pass away. It seemed as though the aspen had been felled by the last shot of the storm.

As I ran up, I saw the two figures lying on the ground, side by side, just back of the broken trunk. I stooped over them, and then I started back in horror. There lay Martha Ransom and Paul Thaxter—lifeless. It flashed through me that the decree of fate was fulfilled at last. As I stood there transfixed with dread, I felt as though this were the inscrutable, inexorable end of a Greek tragedy, whereof I might be chorus, witness of all things and powerless to prevent evil. The Greeks, I remembered, had a fancy that the laurel averted lightning, and I found myself wondering if they had any legend about the aspen.

By this time the rain had ceased altogether, and over the hills afar off, where we had first seen the trees swaying, there was now a gleam of sunshine, creeping slowly toward us. The storm was still muttering as it rolled away to the east, but a rainbow arched its black abyss. The worst had been

done here and the destroyer had gone on its way. When Dr. Darling joined me, we raised the bodies, gently extricating them from the broken branches which had felled the lovers to the earth. Apparently the main stem of the tree had struck the young Southerner on the shoulder. As we laid him on the grass beside his future bride, a deep sigh broke from her lips and she opened her eyes. In a minute more we knew that she had no other injury than the shock.

Help came, and we bore Paul Thaxter to the nearest house, where a skilful surgeon was prompt with his services. Dr. Darling and I waited at the door to learn the worst.

At last the physician beckoned to us.

"The man's arm is broken," he said, "and he is stunned by the blow, but he is not dead, and I see no reason why he should not get well."

Dr. Darling and I looked at each other as he left us to go back to the wounded man. The same thought was in our hearts.

"Love is too strong for Fate," he said, at length; "let us hope that the curse which was on Richard Wycherley, and on his children, and on his children's children, has died, now that Heaven has destroyed the living witness to his shameful end."

MEMORIES.

MEMORIES.

When Christmas broke over the fort in the far Northwest where Lieutenant Robert Douglas, U. S. A., was stationed, the wind was blowing gently from the southeast. There had been a light snowfall during the night, and as the sun arose there was a faint suggestion of warmth in the beams that glistened across the crystalline flakes. It seemed as though for a while the cold had loosened its grip. All through the morning the weather was mild for the season and for the place, and by noon there was even a vague hint of a possible thaw. The mail-rider who brought the weekly bag of letters and newspapers had trotted his broncho into the quadrangle a little before one o'clock, exactly on time. No railroad and no telegraph line linked Fort Roosevelt with the rest of the world; and only once in seven days did the soldiers, who were stationed on the outpost of civilization, get news from its head-quarters. Time was when the troopers quartered there had

fought the Indians of the border; but the rotting stockade had been torn down long since, and Fort Roosevelt was now a fort in name only. Its narrow, low buildings, made of logs, shacked sometimes, and sometimes squared and more regularly joined, still sheltered brave men, but they no longer needed to do battle with redskins; they had to confront a white enemy only, and they found cold winter a fiercer foe and more unrelenting than the Sioux. Its assault was harder to withstand, for, although the Indian is now armed with the repeating rifle his armory is not exhaustless—and nature's is. Outside of the government reservation there was no house within fifty miles, save the tumble-down shanty of a Missouri squatter, four or five furlongs away, at the bend of the river. No friendly smoke curling hospitably upward comforted the eye that might interrogate the horizon.

It was about two o'clock when the blizzard began. At noon a solemn stillness filled the air, after the wind from the southeast had died away early in the day. Then, all at once, there was a black cloud in the northwest, swelling forward boldly—on the plains of the West, as on the coasts of the East the most dangerous northwester is

wont to come butt-end first. Lieutenant Douglas saw the signal and knew its significance. He looked at his watch; there would be time for the trooper to return before the storm was upon them. Two of the lank and sallow children of Pike County Pete lay sick of a fever in the wretched cabin by the elbow of the river; they were attended by the surgeon of the post, and they had been nursed by the doctor's daughter, Lucy. It was to them that the officer had sent a mounted messenger with a few delicacies from his scant store, such as the doctor had suggested. Douglas stood for a moment at the corner of the parade between the storehouse of the commissary and the long, single-story stables. He was a young man still, despite the grizzled mustache which curved over his resolute mouth, and the touch of gray in his hair. His eye was sharp and his figure straight and sturdy. As he gazed, the black cloud uprose and spread wide, and the blizzard broke. He caught the first breath of the icy simoom which came sweeping across the Sahara of arid snow, and he went back into the stables to give a few words of warning and advice to his men.

When he came out a little later to cross the quadrangle to the officers' quarters, the breeze had

freshened and quickened until it blew a gale. The velocity of the wind was increasing, and it was already thirty miles an hour. Within sixty minutes the temperature fell as many degrees. The atmosphere, thick with flying snow, as fine as sand and as sharp as a needle, began to darken as though it were already nightfall. The lieutenant strode through the storm, which for the most part was steady and unswerving, although now and again a gust swept sideways, and for a few seconds there might be an eddy. But the break was for a moment only. Then the wind gathered its strength and again rushed ahead, irresistible and pitiless. A fine shower of icy particles, frozen snow-dust and solid rain-drops, made Douglas's passage from the stable to his own door almost impossible, sheltered as was the little square within the buildings of the fort. Out in the open no one can make headway against the ice-blast for long, and only the most experienced plainsman could hold his own.

The stout log-house, in which the officers had their quarters, shook with the fury of the gale as Robert Douglas entered the sitting-room he shared with his fellow-subaltern, Paulding Van Dyke. The mail had been distributed, and the

servant had laid on the table the letters and papers of the two officers. For Van Dyke there were at least a dozen envelopes, besides two or three packets—presents, no doubt, thought Douglas, as he took up his single letter from a tidy heap of newspapers on which it rested. It was Christmas afternoon, and probably Van Dyke was at the doctor's little house talking to Lucy, whom he was to marry in the spring—and that was why he was now neglecting the many Christmas greetings the mail-rider had brought him. Douglas tore open his own letter, and as he read it his sad face brightened and his eyes lost a little of their severity. It was a brief note from the editor of an important review in New York declaring that he had great pleasure in accepting Mr. Douglas's thoughtful and admirable essay, 'How to Train the Indian for Citizenship,' and that he hoped to find room for it in an early number. The officer had taken the letter to the light to read; and having put the editorial communication into his pocket he stood at the window, silent in thought. On the level ground before his door the fantasy of the wind had heaped a grave-like mound of snow, as though some frozen giant had been buried there. Douglas's eyes fell on it unwittingly, and the sorrowful

shrieking of the wind, as though demons were chanting a dirge, struck chill on his ear, and he shivered.

He turned away and threw another cottonwood stick on the fire, which was waning with the weariness of ashen age. Then he set a chair between the light and the heat, and gathering up his heap of newspapers he sat down. He broke the wrappers and arranged the papers in order; they were a week's issue of the *Gotham Gazette*, for it was by taking a New York daily journal that he kept touch of the world. He began to read the earliest in date, in which the freshest news was then a fortnight stale. Rumors of wars there were a plenty, and the young soldier, immured in a wooden house in a vast loneliness, was almost ready to wish himself a Russian, that his blood might be tingling with the ardor of impending battle. There followed an account of a grand ball in London, and a description of a new play in Paris; but for Robert Douglas these items of intelligence lacked interest. Yet, with the persistence of one whose reading matter is rationed, he pursued diligently the long column of cable despatches from Europe. Suddenly, as he read, his face flushed, and then blanched. His grasp on

the paper tightened and his eyes travelled swiftly till he came to the end of the paragraph. Then an unconscious sigh broke from him. He lowered the newspaper and sat still, staring at the blank wall before him.

Outside, the blizzard blew with untiring swiftness, but the thoughts of the lonely man within were quicker yet. These bore him far away, across time and space, back to his childhood. He saw himself again a boy of ten, passing his grievous first day at a military academy in a little town in New York, on the banks of the Hudson. It was a winter morning, and there was snow in the air when he was brought before the principal, an old West Pointer, kindly in intent, strict in discipline. On the principal's knee sat a little girl, his niece, a year or two older than the new-comer. Bright golden hair fell in ringlets about her beautiful head, and she had a bright smile for the diffident boy. The scene arose before him again, and he knew that his life had been changed by that smile. Without an effort he recalled all the incidents of his first few months at boarding-school. He saw the house itself with the right-angled piazza, and the huge snow-heap in the bend below, fallen from the two roofs meeting above it—

a snow-heap into which he had suddenly been tossed, neck and crop, as he came out on the piazza during the recess of that first day at school —a snow-heap from the feathery mass of which he had to flounder as best he could though it rose high above his head. He saw again, as plainly as though a score of years had not passed, the level parade-ground where the boys built an Eskimo hut out of snow, a regular igloo, with its tunnel-like entrance through which they crawled on hands and knees to crouch around the fire within to eat doughnuts and crullers and other Dutch goodies. He saw again the long hill down which the boys "went belly-whoppers," coasting into the village. He saw the shop, half-way down, where one might buy the surreptitious dime-novel in its yellow cover with the figure of an Indian on the warpath, and where only might be procured a certain sort of lollipop, an unforgetable joy of boyhood never elsewhere discoverable—saccharine globes, brown and striped, and impaled, three or four of them, on the branches of a sassafras twig. He saw again the frozen pond in the woods where he first skated. He heard again the sharp roll of the drum which aroused half a hundred youths to breakfast before their sleep was half complete.

He felt again the blows he took and gave in the weekly fights in which the larger boys made the younger engage every Sunday morning under the gallery of the gymnasium, during the long dull interval between breakfast and church. But what he could most readily recall was the little girl, dark-eyed and golden-haired, imperious and roguish, adored by all the boys, petted by all, and joining in their gentler sports once in a while. Was it not on his sled that she had been pulled to the top of the hill? Was it not with him that she had coasted more often than with any other lad?

Then the winter went, and summer came and was gone, and another winter also; and as Robert Douglas sat silent and staring, the memory of yet another summer passed him, and again he felt the heat of that Fourth-of-July morning. No longer was he at school in a little town on the Hudson—he was at Saratoga in the ample park of an old hotel since burnt to the ground. As he alighted from the train and came forward under the noble trees which arched high above his head, and through which the sun played in patches on the cool broad paths, he found before him, just within the wide gates, the little girl on a visit there to her aunt. He was turned of eleven then, and she

was not thirteen, as she stood before him with the sunlight sifting through the branches and gilding the refined gold of her hair. His cheeks flamed again as he remembered the shy hesitancy with which he obeyed her aunt's behest and kissed her. The little maid was haughty even then, and she knew her power already; but she was affable, and she led him away to show him over the grounds, to point out the tree which she had chosen as her own, and to share his torpedoes and firecrackers. All day long they played together, making many a delightful explosion—faint echoes only of the mighty battle which had been a-fighting in the next State for three days. Little boy as he was, the news from the field of Gettysburg stirred him, as despatch after despatch was posted on the door of the telegraph-office, where a dense ring of restless men and women were gathered, eager even for the wildest rumors; although of course he did not then know that the ticking instrument was telling the fate of a nation. When night settled down at last, and the stars came out, after he and Miriam had played together all day joyously, there was good news from the front, and cheer after cheer broke from the strained throats of the throng. Then fireworks of surpassing splendor were set off

in the grounds among the tall trees. A youthful voice from the piazza started the stalwart chant of "John Brown's Body," and it was taken up instantly by the compact hundreds of men and women. Conscious of excitement and emboldened by the confusion and the darkness, he tried again to kiss the little girl, but she slipped through his hands and slapped his face. As the man sat alone in his quarters, with the newspaper clinched in his hand, he felt once more the blow which had fallen on the boy's cheek. It was a sweet memory; and a lad's affection feeds on struggle and rebuff. Douglas knew that his love for Miriam had grown with the years, as the boy grew to be a youth.

The days sped and the months; and it was years before Robert and Miriam met again in friendly intimacy. They were in Rome; he was a boy of fifteen, tall enough to think himself well-nigh a man. She was almost seventeen; her aunt's friends had ceased calling her Miriam—she was now Miss De Ruyter. She had been a very pretty child and she had become a beautiful girl; and she delighted in the exercise of her power. Toward Douglas her demeanor varied; more often than not it was as imperious as might become a young lady who tolerated an awkward boy.

Sometimes she gave no heed to him as she rode her pony to the meet on the Campagna, sitting erect in her saddle, her lithe figure revealed by the tight black habit. Sometimes she was glad to have him with her, and the two young Americans would go forth together to see the wonders of old Rome, rambling through the ruined baths of Caracalla, where the broken walls, steeped in wintry sunshine, were joyous with the echoing laughter of unthinking youth; or clambering to the top of the mighty dome of St. Peter's, where they brushed against Papal Zouaves, servants of the church militant, and heard the bugle-calls of the French cavalry who were there to protect the person of Saint Peter's successor.

The last day of the carnival was her last in Rome; it was Shrove-Tuesday; and that evening, after the final race of the riderless horses from the grand-stand in the Piazza del Popolo, came the sport of *mocoletti*. The Corso was dotted with flaring tapers, which came and went like fire-flies. The game was to puff out your neighbor's while keeping your own alight. With a Yankee boy's ingenuity Robert Douglas had made ready a thin rope, tipped by a grapnel, and this he threw up to the side of the balcony where

Miriam De Ruyter was talking with old Prince Castellamare. Up the rope he climbed, hand over hand, with his tall taper stuck in his hat, and when his foot was firm on the rail she had not seen him yet. A light puff of his breath over her shoulder, and her candle was out. She turned with a start—and he handed her his taper to replace the one he had extinguished. Mrs. De Ruyter asked him to join them, and from the high balcony he could see far up and down the Corso where the lights were fewer already and waning away. The moon had risen, and it flooded the street with its molten silver. Robert heard the old Prince tell Mrs. De Ruyter that if she wished ever again to return to Rome she must go that night to the Fountain of Trevi and drink of the running water by the moonlight. The old lady asked Robert to go with them; and so it was that the boy, who was not yet a man, and the girl, who was almost a woman, stood side by side before the broad basin where the fountain of promise was flashing in the moonbeams, and together they drank the water held in the hollow of their hands. It was then that he had said to her with boyish frankness, "When I am twenty-one, of course, I shall ask you to marry me." She

turned sharply and faced him as he stood before her in the moonlight by the trembling water; but she made no reply. The enigmatic look she gave him he could never forget, and for years he pondered its meaning in vain. Before he could speak again, her aunt called her and they drove back to the hotel; and in the morning she was gone. As Robert Douglas recalled every incident of that happy evening of youth and hope, he thought that for one of them at least the promise of the Fountain of Trevi had been kept; although he knew he should never return to Rome she had gone back again to the Eternal City, for joy and for sorrow and for the last time.

It was in Paris that Robert Douglas next met Miriam—it was in Paris, on the day when the empty empire came to nought—on the evening of September 4, 1870. He was standing idle and impassive in the Place Vendôme, where the column of the great Napoleon towered high over the mob which had just spurned forth Napoleon the Little, when he was swept along by the tumult of men and boys, arm in arm, harshly chanting the "Marseillaise," and exultingly shouting forth the chorus of a popular song of the hour, "Si c'est de la canaille, eh b'en, j'en suis!" In the main the mob

was good-natured enough, although the ground-swell of brutal destruction was to be detected even then. After nightfall he stepped almost into the midst of a band of singers on the Boulevard Montmartre, rougher than most of those that had gone before, and more boisterous. The men in blouses were swarming about an open carriage in which sat a frightened old woman and a girl as calm as she was beautiful. Robert knew them at a glance, and he sprang forward to the wheel of the vehicle. "Criez donc 'Vive la République!'" yelled a hoarse-throated and bulky brute almost in the old lady's ear. She sank back on the cushions, trembling violently and with her hands raised to her head. "Mais, certainement!" cried Robert, jumping on the step of the carriage; "we are friends of France—we are Americans of the United States—Vive la République!" Then he gave the driver a sharp word of command, and as the crowd shouted in response to his cry, the horses plunged ahead and they were clear of the throng. In a moment more they turned into the peace and quiet of a side-street. Mrs. de Ruyter was profuse and incoherent in her thanks. Miriam held out her hand, and the pressure of her fingers tingled to his heart.

"The curs!" she said; "they did not dare to rise against the Emperor until he was defeated by the Germans." All day had Douglas been rejoicing at the downfall of the crowned impostor, but none the less did he feel the heat of this speech. Miriam had shown no signs of trepidation when the violent ruffians were surging about the carriage. With perfect self-possession she had been trying vainly to sustain her aunt and to transfer to the old lady a little of her own fire and strength. Now, as she spoke, there came into her face a look of regal scorn; she had an expression like that of the fair aristocrats as they were going to the guillotine in 1793.

Two days later Robert Douglas aided Mrs. De Ruyter and her niece to quit Paris, and he went with them on one of the last trains to leave the unfortunate city before it was beleaguered by the Prussians. Since then he had not seen Miriam at all—and only twice had he heard from her. When his father, too feeble to battle longer with misfortune, gave up the struggle and laid him down and died, she wrote him first, from London; and hers was no barren epistle of condolence, but a womanly letter, full of feeling, abounding with sympathy. She clasped his hand across the At-

lantic. There was a frankness about the letter which was almost affectionate. The words were simple, but behind them there was almost an invitation to speak out. Then, at least, Robert had no right to speak—so he thought. He was poor, and there were debts that he must pay by his labor. She was rich, and used to the society of dukes and princes. He felt that it would be wrong and selfish for him to ask her to share his garret and his crust. If fortune should smile on him, as he was determined that it must, then he would speak out and empty his heart and lay bare his soul before her. They were young—he was barely twenty-three; they could wait—they *must* wait. At that time it was simply impossible for him to say a word. So he held his peace; he answered her letter, and there the correspondence rested.

For a year or two he did not hear from her again, but he heard about her unceasingly. The newspapers were frequent in praise of her beauty, and they were loud in reporting her success in English society. London correspondents of the American newspapers gave brilliant pen-portraits of her. Her photographs, even, were to be purchased at a shop in Broadway; Robert Douglas

seeing one in the window had gone in indignantly and bought them all. One Sunday morning a cable message in the *Gotham Gazette* announced that she was to marry an English duke; then Robert came near writing again. But before he had made up his mind, there followed an authoritative denial. After all, he asked himself, what warrant had he to question? He had no home to offer her. His struggles were as hard as ever, and they were no nearer a triumphant termination. His heart was full of her; he could recall every word of their brief interviews in the past ten years; she beamed on him at the end of his vista of hope. But he said nothing—there was nothing for him to say.

Then, suddenly, one summer day, there came the announcement of her approaching marriage to the young Prince Castellamare, the eldest son of the Prince Castellamare with whom she had been talking on the balcony of the Corso on the night of Shrove-Tuesday, 1867, when Robert Douglas climbed up to blow out her taper and to offer her his own. As he sat silent in his quarters in the fort in the Far West, with the storm wailing outside, he remembered his effort to disbelieve this rumor and to expect that it would

be denied like its predecessors. But by the chill in his heart he knew better. Hope stiffened and froze, as private letters to friends in New York from friends in Europe soon confirmed the public report. The day when Robert first felt the conviction of the truth of the announcement he could not forget—it was a day of torrid heat in the very centre of a New York midsummer, yet he shivered and his skin shrank as no mid-winter blizzard in the West had ever affected him since. And he burned also on that day as Sahara would not scorch him; and he reeled under the blow like a man with a sunstroke. By that time he had paid off his father's debts, and it was but a question of months before he might feel the ground firm under his feet; all at once the earth trembled under him and opened as if to swallow him up; of a sudden his incentive was gone; he had labored for nought.

The newspapers described the beauty of the American bride and extolled the lineage of the Italian bridegroom; it was a love-match, they said, and not the sordid bargain in which the woman's money was bartered for the man's title. Prince Castellamare was as wealthy as Miss De Ruyter; he had no need to sell himself; if he

married an American girl it was because he loved her. And if she married him, no doubt it was because she loved him ; she had had offers as good in England and Germany, and she had refused them ; she had chosen well, they said moreover, for the prince was a handsome fellow, honest, open-hearted, as only an Italian nobleman may be nowadays. In due season the wedding-day was fixed and the date was telegraphed under the Atlantic to America, with detailed descriptions of the *trousseau* and the *corbeille*. Robert Douglas sought out a wedding gift : he had a jeweller copy in gold, the brass button of the military school where first he met her, and in this there was cunningly contrived a space for a tiny watch of exquisite workmanship. He sent her this simple trinket with a brief wish for her happiness. Then for a few weeks he went about his daily task with a stab at his heart and a hatred of each day as it dawned.

A fortnight after the wedding there came a letter to thank him for his gift, so beautiful and so aptly chosen, and to tell him that she had not forgotten her friends in America, although some of them had almost forgotten her, to judge by their prolonged silence. In conclusion, she wrote to

him that should he ever come to Rome she would be very glad to see him—and so would the Prince, with whom she had often talked about Mr. Douglas, and who knew that Robert had gone with her when she drank of the waters of the Fountain of Trevi, which had brought her back to Rome.

When he had read this final letter an overwhelming sense of loneliness swept over him. The light had gone out of his life—the hope for which he had lived was dead. There was no use in repining; a strong man does not die of a broken heart. Work there is in plenty in the world for a man to do, if he be but willing. A chance came in his way to get steady employment at hard labor with the risk of death—and he snatched at it greedily. The President of the United States had just then the right to appoint a certain number of extra second lieutenants, and by the aid of an old friend of his father, who was also an old friend of the President, Robert Douglas secured one of the commissions. That was why this Christmas found him at Fort Roosevelt, on the plains, in a blizzard. And these were the memories that passed before him as he sat in front of the fire, upright and rigid.

At last he raised the newspaper, still clinched

tightly in his fingers, and again he read the paragraph. It was a telegram from Rome, and it told the startling shock given to Italian society by the sudden death of the young Princess Castellamare, formerly Miss Miriam de Ruyter, of New York, one of the many noted beauties of the New World who had married nobles of the Old World. The telegram continued with the assertion that the match between Miss De Ruyter and Prince Castellamare had turned out more happily than most of the international alliances between youth and beauty on one side, and an old title on the other. The Prince and Princess were notoriously devoted to each other. The Prince is now inconsolable. The Princess died very unexpectedly. She had been ailing a little for a day or two, but she persisted in going to the costume ball at the Quirinal, where she represented "America," resplendent with diamonds and radiant with youth and beauty. She was forced to go home before the ball was over—and in less than twenty-four hours she lay cold in death. She left no child. Her memory will be pleasantly cherished in the American colony in Rome, where there is abundant testimony to her untiring affability and to her unfailing generosity.

When Robert Douglas had finished rereading this paragraph of the cable despatch he drew a long breath. Then he folded the newspaper carefully. For a moment he sat with the flat roll in his hand. At last he arose and walked to a corner of the room, where a travelling-desk lay on the top of a rough board table. Lifting the lid of the desk, he put away the newspaper by the side of a little bundle of letters and a packet of photographs. Then he turned away and stood by the window, looking out into the welter of the tempest. The mournful moan of the wind sounded in his ears like a solemn requiem. The house shook with the stress of the storm and he rejoiced at it. This war of the elements was in consonance with his feelings.

How long he stood there at the window staring at the storm and marvelling at its might—if, indeed, he saw it at all—he did not know. But he was roused from his reverie by the sudden inroad of the comrade who shared his quarters.

As Paulding Van Dyke broke into the room he cried :

" If that tenderfoot who didn't know the difference between a Montana chinook and a Dakota blizzard were here now, he would find out to-day, pretty dern quick! "

Robert Douglas turned slowly, like one awakened from sleep.

"Are you ready?" Van Dyke asked, hurriedly.

"Ready for what?" inquired Douglas.

"Don't you know?" returned Van Dyke. "Two of Pike County Pete's kids are out somewhere in the storm. We must get them in at once or the poor little devils may be frozen to death."

"How do you know they are lost?" was the question Douglas asked, as he put on his heavy overcoat and placed a flask of brandy in one of its pockets.

"The man you sent down to the cabin this morning with those things you offered, when Lucy told you about the scantiness of their supplies ——"

"George Gordon?"

"Yes—he's just back now. It has taken him two hours to get here through the blizzard. And he brings word that Pike County Pete's old woman is almost wild with fear because the two kids strayed out before the storm began——"

"Then there's no time to lose," Douglas interrupted. "Have you called the men?"

"I asked for volunteers, and there will be a

dozen or more of the boys ready as soon as we are. I told them to get on all their extra coats—this blizzard cuts like a sand-blast."

Robert Douglas opened the case of a compass, examined it hastily, and then put it in the pocket of his great-coat. He lighted two lanterns and gave one to Van Dyke. From the wall he took a coil of rope, a hundred feet long, with a loop at every ten feet.

Then Douglas and Van Dyke passed out into the quadrangle, where they found a group of soldiers awaiting them. The officers chose nine men. Taking the opposite ends of the rope themselves, they bade the nine men each take a loop. Thus fastened together in a line a hundred feet long, so that they might sweep the plain, they went forth into the night to rescue two little children.

And as they left the fort behind them, and bore down toward the bank of the river, the storm howled and roared like a strange wild beast, starved and resistless with hunger.

IDLE NOTES OF AN UNEVENTFUL VOYAGE.

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SATURDAY, THE 11TH.—Here we are, on board the Royal Mail Steamship *Barataria*, gliding down the muddy Mersey on our way home to America. The *Barataria* is perhaps the fastest boat afloat, and a first favorite with the travelling public. So it is that we are five hundred and thirty first-class passengers. All sorts and conditions of men we are, homeward bound, nearly all of us. There may be a scant dozen Britons on board, and perhaps as many more Germans; and the rest—more than five hundred of us—are Americans.

We untied our steamer-chairs, wisely painted a visible green, that they might be picked out with certainty from the hundreds of others not distinguished by this academic color. Then we sat us down to take stock of our fellow-passengers before we should run into the jaws of the Irish Channel. There were not a few people we knew. We saw a young couple from Chicago, bent on

enjoying the few final days of their wedding journey: he was boiling over with energetic activity; and she was as pretty as a bride should be, with a pleasant, bird-like manner. We recognized a gentleman from Philadelphia, the owner of an authenticated great-grandfather, of whom he was not prouder than a man might well be. He was walking with a Scot Abroad, a North Briton who had tried life and made a good living in almost every one of the British colonies on which the sun never sets. Not far off we discovered a clever man from Boston, the author of the satirical story, 'None of Your Business,' who was understood to have spent the summer in applying the finishing touches to a brilliant international novel, 'Princes, Americans, and Fools.' We saw a perky little parson from Brooklyn, who—so our friend Brown told us—had just been appointed Professor of Homœopathic Theology in a New England fresh-water college. Then there was our friend Brown himself, who knew everybody and whom everybody knew, who took an interest in all things and who had always the latest news.

Before we had been in our chairs ten minutes, and just as the *Barataria* passed the Rock Light, our friend Brown spied us out and came and

stood before us. He had a cigarette in his mouth and his hands in his pockets.

"Don't you give thanks that you are quit of that miserable apology for a town, called Liverpool?" he asked. "Once I heard a man call it a semi-detached suburb of New York—but he was a Bostonian, and jealous. New York isn't very clean, I know, but it is not the marvel of ugly dirt and of dirty ugliness that Liverpool is. Just look at the sky now, it is as dingy as the river—and I can't say more than that. The highest proof possible of the beauty and charm of England is that the wandering American is willing to pass through this gateway of gloom to attain it. To my mind there is nothing satisfactory about Liverpool—except the facilities for leaving it; and I confess I do not see how anyone ever stays over-night who can borrow enough to pay his fare to London. Why, do you know"—and here the voice of our friend Brown took on accents of unspeakable scorn and loathing—"do you know that Liverpool has an obscure and probably obscene suburb called Bootle? Bootle! Just think of it! And how could a white man live in town where the horse-cars run past his door to Bootle? Liverpool always strikes me as a sort of

huge and oppressive practical joke that the nineteenth century has played on mankind. And I am not inclined to forgive Nature for wasting an earthquake on an inoffensive city like Charleston when it could have been used here to so much better advantage in ridding the earth of Liverpool!"

Our friend Brown knows full well that we do not share his extravagance; and his delivery of this last appalling sentiment was at once defiant and interrogative. We answered that we did not agree with him at all, and that Liverpool was a monument to the enterprise of the Englishmen of the last hundred years.

"It is all very well for you to say that," our friend Brown replied, "but I am the victim of a scurvy trick, and I hold Liverpool responsible, and all its inhabitants. I find that I have a man in my state-room with me, and he is little Mat Hitchcock. Now, you know whether or not that is a cheerful prospect."

We agreed that if we had to choose a companion for an ocean voyage it would not be Mr. C. Mather Hitchcock.

"He is a bore of the utmost perseverance," returned our friend Brown, with a recurrence of his

heat, "he is a conversational styptic. If Erasmus were to-day to publish his 'Praise of Fools,' Mat Hitchcock would be capable of writing to thank him for the compliment."

Here our friend Brown seemed to have fallen again into extravagance; and we said so.

"That is because you don't know what he has been trying to do," said our friend Brown. "He has started twice to tell me the ancient and honorable tale of Captain Judkins and the fog on the Banks. I headed him off by the bold assertion that I was in a hurry, as I was going with one of the engineers to take a little walk through the boilers."

We expressed our doubt that even Mat Hitchcock should believe that.

"But he did," our friend Brown answered. "He is very credulous indeed—he even believes in himself. I'm going to beg the chief steward to give me a seat at table as far from his as possible."

Just then a very pretty girl passed by, engaged in an earnest discussion of comparative literature with the perky little parson. We caught only a fragment of a single sentence—"but Jane Austen is so minute."

"That girl was on the boat going over," said our friend Brown; "she's from Baltimore, and all

those terrapin girls are pretty. We used to call her the Pocket Venus; but now she has taken to talking about Miss Austen, I think I shall call her Jane, for she too is 'so minute.' You see how she has already carried the parson into camp. Just let her give you one good glance, and she has you on a string for the rest of the trip. And I think her mischievous mouth is quite as fetching as her soulful eyes. She has a very taking way, and she flirts gently, with an innocent manner most consummate and masterly. I believe almost any pretty girl, who happens to be clever also, is capable of filling the chair of Applied Histrionics in a girl's college—that is, if there were ever any need of such a course of instruction."

The rattling reverberations of a Cathayan gong notified us that dinner was about to be served. When we took our seats at table, we saw afar off, at the other end, the young lady whom our friend Brown had called Jane Austen; and we saw also that our friend Brown had a place exactly opposite to hers, and that Mat Hitchcock was removed from him by at least two tables.

SUNDAY, THE 12TH.—Soon after breakfast we dropped anchor off Queenstown, while the *Bara-*

taria waited for the London mails. A few passengers went ashore, either to attend church or to taste the real old Irish whiskey on Irish soil. As we were not at sea, there was no service on board. To lie at anchor is very relaxing to the morals, and it was wellnigh impossible even to make believe that this was Sunday morning. The New England conscience has been sharpened by the east wind of Boston and by inherited dyspepsia, but it was not sharp enough to cut the lethargy engendered by the sunshiny quiet of the *Barataria's* decks, as the boat lay at anchor in Queenstown harbor, and we were not surprised to see the clever man from Boston lying back lazily in his steamer-chair, with a yellow-covered novel in his hand, bearing a most naturalistic title. We observed that ladies of the strictest bringing up, who would shrink from the thought of entering a shop on Sunday, did not now disdain to dicker with the aquatic pedlers, whose boat-loads of Irish lace and Irish bog-oak ornaments encompassed the ship about. These pedlers were mostly pleasant-faced Irishwomen, with tongues as ready as an Irish tongue is expected to be.

So the morning glided away imperceptibly until the tender came out to us again, with the six hun-

dred and more sacks of the mails and a dozen or two belated passengers. Among these passengers was one whom we could not but remark. He was a young Englishman, tall and blond, with a full beard; he was not yet thirty, and he walked like one sure and proud of his youth and his strength and himself. He was a handsome, manly fellow, and the only peculiarity of manner we noted was a certain vague shyness, equally removed from diffidence and from defiance—the two extremes into which a shy man is liable to fall.

After luncheon, as the *Barataria* was gliding past the bleak coast of the Green Isle, our friend Brown took one of our chairs.

"Did you see a young Englishman," he asked, "who came on board at Queenstown—a fine-looking fellow, and a gentleman every inch of him? Well, he had the seat next me at table, and we got talking, of course. He is a university man—used to be Fellow of Merton, at Oxford, you know—and he's a barrister. But his interest seems to be rather in politics than law. He's a high-and-dry Tory of the fine old crusted kind, and he has a deep admiration for the conservatism of our Constitution. He is going over now to investigate the workings of our institutions on the

spot. And he seems to know something of our institutions, though he is as ignorant as most of them about our geography. He actually asked me what were the great lakes of America, adding that, of course, he knew Wenham Lake, but he couldn't always remember the names of the others. Yet I like him; he's genuine, he's sterling, hall-marked, 925 fine. He tells me that he is going straight to Salt Lake City, to look into the Mormon Problem. I'm inclined to think that he has his mind set on doing a book about us—like the rest of the bold Britons who see the broad United States from the windows of the parlor car, as they rush from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate."

Later in the day, shortly before dinner, as we were taking our three-mile walk—twenty-seven times around the upper deck—we saw the young Englishman sitting in a most elaborate life-saving steamer-chair, with beautiful leather cushions, and with a great variety of devices for raising and regulating the foot-rests and the head-rests.

Our friend Brown nudged us as we passed, and said: "Neat thing in chairs, isn't it? And did you note his initials painted on the back—'H. R. H.' I don't know his name yet, but I

feel that it is my duty hereafter to call him His Royal Highness."

Just then the pretty girl from Baltimore came out on deck from the ladies' cabin.

"I'll leave you to finish your constitutional alone," said our friend Brown, "for I've promised to take Jane Austen for a walk before dinner."

MONDAY, THE 13TH.—In general the travelling Scotchman is good company, but the Scot Abroad, who happened to have a seat opposite to us at table, was an exception to this rule. He was a rumbling, grumbling creature, a contemner of the United States, and a most voracious eater. When we came down to luncheon a little late we found him in serried argument with the gentleman from Philadelphia, who had also a proper fondness for the good things of this life, and who was speaking of Pennsylvania as a land flowing with milk and honey.

"There's no market like Philadelphia," he was saying. "Further East they don't know what a terrapin is, or a canvas-back, either. You hear people talk about canvas-back in New York who can't tell a canvas-back from a red-head—not but

what a red-head is a good enough duck. And I like teal."

"Those ducks are the best things you have in the States, perhaps," said the Scot Abroad, "but they're not as good as the ducks in China. I've eaten two at a time there."

"I can eat two canvas-backs," returned the gentleman from Philadelphia, "and without a great appetite either. I'm not hungry now—I'm only eating because I've nothing else to do."

"There's nothing in the States equal to green turtle, as you get it in the City," the Scot Abroad remarked.

"You say that because you've never tasted terrapin in Philadelphia," was the triumphant retort. "And it must be done by a darkey cook, too. A white man doesn't know anything about terrapin; he hasn't any right to touch it. But a darkey deals with Br'er Terrapin gently, like an artist and a lover. Why, if I ever found a white man who could really cook terrapin, I'd bet there were kinks in his hair."

The Scot Abroad changed his tack but not his tactics.

"These American apples," he said, "that you are exporting from the States now are poor stuff."

"Sometimes they are," confessed the gentleman from Philadelphia; "there's odds in them, I know. And there's nothing worse than a bad apple, just as there's nothing better than a good apple. By the bye, do you make your apple-pie as we do—with a pint of sweet champagne?"

The Scot Abroad was cornered, but he met the difficulty boldly.

"I never made an apple-pie," he said, "but I'll cook a mutton chop with you."

"Then I should have to broil you a steak," replied the gentleman from Philadelphia, with calm self-confidence.

"Have you ever noticed," whispered our friend Brown, who had come down to lunch with us, "how the Philadelphians seem to have modified Wordsworth's boast? They pride themselves on good living and no thinking."

It is needless to say that our friend Brown is a New Yorker. We told him that he made a mistake in saying so many malicious things.

"But just think of the many more I don't say," he urged in extenuation.

"Did you ever try cream with your buckwheat cakes?" asked the gentleman from Philadelphia.

But before the Scot Abroad could gather his

forces, our friend Brown remarked, "I can't listen to any more of this—I must have air. On board ship our gastronomic sins have a habit of rising up and bearing witness against us. I had an *au revoir* breakfast this morning; and if I don't get on deck in a minute I may be seized again with *nassau*, as the old lady called it."

As we mounted to the upper deck our friend Brown asked, "Have you seen His Royal Highness this morning? I had a little chat with him before breakfast—I warned him not to let that Hitchcock tell him the tale of Judkins in the fog. I like H. R. H.—he's genuine and simple and manly."

We paused opposite our chairs and invited our friend Brown to sit down for a little chat.

"I'm sorry," he answered, "but I can't wait now. I'm bespoken. I've promised to play shuffleboard with Jane Austen."

Just then the young couple from Chicago passed before us, and the lady whom our friend Brown called Jane Austen came up from the lower deck and joined them. Before our friend Brown had taken leave of us to unite himself to this little party, H. R. H. happened within hail of the Chicago bridegroom, who seized him at

once and took him up, nothing loath, to be presented to the Chicago bride and to Jane Austen.

"I'll give His Royal Highness just five minutes to get acquainted," said our friend Brown, "and then I'll sail in and claim my game of shuffleboard."

But before the five minutes were up, the little quartet at the other end of the boat—the young couple from Chicago, Jane Austen, and His Royal Highness—had gone down to the lower deck to play shuffleboard, without a thought of our friend Brown.

"She is a pretty girl," said our friend Brown, "but she has left me out in the cold, hasn't she? as the deacon said, If I wasn't a religious man, I could swear with the best of you."

The run that day was just four hundred miles.

TUESDAY, THE 14TH.—There came up a sudden spurtle of rain, early in the afternoon, which drove most of the *Barataria's* passengers in-doors. When we went into the music-room for a minute we found the pretty American girl at the piano, singing, "'Way down on the Swanee River," while the young Englishman was turning the

leaves for her. As we came out our friend Brown stopped us.

"His Royal Highness takes to it kindly, doesn't he?" was his greeting to us. "I'm glad to see it. He's a fine fellow, and it's fortunate that he has fallen into the hands of a sample girl like Jane Austen. You see, he is coming over to study our institutions, and I like to see him at work on so favorable a specimen of the most fascinating of them all—the American girl."

The sentiments of our friend Brown were excellent, but there was perhaps a shade of annoyance in his voice. We asked him how he had been wasting his morning.

"I've been talking to that Scotchman," he answered; "trying to trepan a merry jest into him; but it was love's labor lost. I told him I went over on the *Dalmatic*, of the Blue Ball Line, you know, and I praised the discipline of that boat, saying that whenever I might go on deck I always found somebody on the lookout,—if it wasn't one of the officers, it was an engineer or a steward or a cook. And, would you believe it? that North Briton took this seriously, and told me he thought there must be some exaggeration, as he could hardly think that they would put a cook on

the bridge of any one of these Atlantic liners. He's quite impervious to a joke. If I get to talking much with him I shall lose my specific levity. Isn't it curious that these Britishers don't recognize mendacity as an elementary form of humor?"

We expressed sympathy with our friend Brown.

"There's more back," he went on. "I changed the subject and we began discussing sight-seeing. At last, when I happened to say that the Paris Opéra was a magnificent monument of the Second Empire, that Scotchman floored me with an enthusiastic query as to whether I had ever seen Holyrood. But I had my revenge on him. I called up Mat Hitchcock and I introduced them, and I begged Mat to tell that interesting anecdote of Captain Judkins, and then I escaped with my life."

We asked our friend Brown what he was going to do after dinner.

"I don't know what to do," he replied; "perhaps I can get a chance to turn over Jane Austen's music for her. Otherwise I don't know where to go. That's the worst of life on board ship; if it rains, you can't gather around the fire and swap stories. I couldn't stand a sailor's life, not because of the hardships and dangers but because of

the deprivations. You see, a sailor at sea has no chance to sit down before his hearth and enjoy the pleasant loquacity of a hickory log. I set great store by an open fire. Now, a sailor is deprived of one of the highest of human pleasures—he can't build a fire, any more than he can play billiards or ride horseback; he has never a chance to acquire these accomplishments, poor fellow. Even on shore I suppose he has to stand by and see the other man poke the fire—and that's an open confession of inferiority. I may, perhaps, acknowledge that you can edit a newspaper better than I can, or conduct a prayer-meeting better than I, but I will not confess inferiority in the making of a wood-fire."

We took occasion to say that we had noticed the lofty bearing of a man making a fire.

"It is true enough," our friend Brown continued; "and no wonder. Prometheus was proud, you know, and so have been all fire-makers since his time. I have wondered sometimes if the first murder—Cain and Abel quarrelled over a burnt-offering, didn't they?—did not arise out of a prolonged discussion of rival theories of building a wood-fire on the altar. But I hate to think that there should be any stain on the purity of the

crackling flame—even historically. That's what makes me so angry when I see a miserable set of cast-iron logs, adorned with stray sprigs of asbestos mistletoe! Did you ever see anything more indecent than that shallow sham, blazing with unsatisfying gas? It is a mere immoral mockery of one of nature's greatest gifts, all very well on the stage, of course, where all is imitation and suggestion only, but at home it is a soul-destroying device of the devil, for it tends to kill the love of truth at what should be its altar—the family hearth."

We suggested that perhaps this was pushing the Parsee doctrine a little too far.

"No," insisted our friend Brown, "I'll stand by what I have said, and go to the stake for it, if need be. A cast-iron imitation of a wood-fire is degrading, disgusting, indecorous. A hickory stick across the andirons, hissing and blazing, is the first element of winter hygiene and of youthful morals. Spare the log and you will spoil the child. Are you aware that the return to the open fireplace is coincident in our country with the recent remarkable revival of public interest in political purity?"

We acknowledged that this curious coincidence had hitherto evaded us.

"You see it now," our friend Brown continued; "fire is the centre of the world and of life and of society. That's why I am always sorry for the sailor; he cannot warm his hands by the cheery crackle of the back-log. His case is almost as hard as that of the unfortunate wretch who lives in a boarding-house and who has to huddle over a register. It makes me sad to think of the thousands of homes without hearths—where the little children at Christmas have to hang their stockings over against a mere empty hole in the wall, with the hope that Santa Claus will come down a flue. And the sailor is but little better off."

We remarked that there were fiery furnaces, seven times heated, deep down in the bowels of the boat.

"Did you ever go down there?" asked our friend Brown. "Well, I have done it, and it is not a pleasant recollection. I'd just as lief not know that there are more than a hundred poor devils down under our feet now, almost naked, grimy with soot and half-choked with fine coal-dust. Out of sight, out of mind. But a stoker has no sinecure. If it wasn't a cheerful sight for me to see, what must it be for him to live? Did I ever tell you about Cable J. Dexter, the great

Chicago grain speculator? He was stranded in 'Frisco in 1870 without a cent between him and starvation, and he shipped as stoker on a Pacific Mail Steamer. He made the round trip and then he quit; starvation was shorter and not surer. Only a year ago, after he had engineered the big boom in winter wheat, he told me that sometimes he waked up at midnight to feel at his side for the coal-shovel—exactly as though all his wealth were a dream and the hard labor a present reality."

Just then the clever man from Boston sauntered along by us, and our friend Brown suggested that we four should settle down to whist until such time as it might please the clerk of the weather to turn off the rain.

The run that day was four hundred and twenty miles.

WEDNESDAY, THE 15TH.—The little skurry of wind on Tuesday had raised a slight swell, and with the increase in motion there were fewer people on deck in the morning.

"I have to take great care of my internal equilibrium," said our friend Brown; "if I make the slightest error of judgment in my conduct or my diet, then I suffer for it all the rest of the trip.

I've discovered a great remedy, and I tried it again last night successfully. It's to take a poached egg on toast after you have gone to bed, and wash it down with a little hot Scotch whiskey. It's sovran for sea-sickness. Going over I gave it to a man who was feeling desperately miserable, and who was doubly despondent because he couldn't take care of his wife and baby. Well, it cured him. I mixed it pretty stiff, and it did its work. But he told me the next morning that for nearly an hour after he took it he thought he was a bigamist and the father of twins."

We remarked that intemperance was doubly dangerous on shipboard.

"Yes," our friend Brown went on; "I suppose a sailor, when he takes a drop too much, sees sea-serpents climbing in over the bow. Did you ever hear about the girl down in Maine, who wrote her lover a quadruple temperance letter?"

We expressed our ignorance of this anecdote.

"'Tisn't much of a story," said our friend Brown, "but it shows what queer things a girl will do sometimes. Well, down at Casco, in Maine, there was a young fellow who had worked his way up from before the mast until he was captain of a new ship, and part owner too. Then he asked his girl

to marry him, and she took him. The first cruise of the new ship was to be the young skipper's last voyage, for he'd had an offer of a partnership. After he'd been gone about a week the girl got over the sorrow of parting, and began to take stock of his character. He was good, healthy, kindly, intelligent, long-headed, and keen-witted. She had every chance of happiness with such a husband. So far as she could see, he hadn't a fault, nor even a failing which might ripen into a fault. It was true that sometimes he went on a 'tear' when he came off cruise. The more she thought about this, the more she feared that this might grow to be a habit, and land him in a drunkard's grave. You see, she got morbid about this one possible speck. At last she sat down and wrote him a letter, telling him just how she felt, and begging him, by the love he bore her, not to touch another drop, and, above all, not to go on a spree when he came ashore after the cruise. When she'd got her letter written she felt better—merely writing it had relieved her mind. But she didn't know where to address it. It was too late to reach her lover at Liverpool, the first port the new ship was bound for, and it was quite uncertain where he would go next. He had told her that

his course depended entirely on freights, and on the advices he should get in Liverpool, and that he might go to Havre or to Bordeaux, or to Marseilles or to Genoa, he didn't know which. She solved the difficulty by making four copies of the letter and sending one to each port. Now, it so happened that her lover sailed from Liverpool for Havre, and from Havre to Bordeaux, and from Bordeaux to Marseilles, and from Marseilles to Genoa ; and he got all four copies of that letter. And, when he read the fourth copy, he was just too mad to hold in, so he sat right down and wrote her a short note, breaking off the engagement, and telling her that a woman who hadn't any more confidence in a man than to treat him that way had better be released from the obligation of marrying him."

We inquired whether this lovers' quarrel had not been mended when the sailor came home.

"He wasn't that kind of man at all," answered our friend Brown. "If he was set, he was set. When he got back from the cruise he didn't go on a spree. I believe he never touched another drop of liquor. But he never went to see the girl. He sold out his share in the ship and accepted the partnership, and in less than two years he married

the senior partner's daughter. About that time an old aunt of his wife's died, and left her the house next door to the captain's first girl; and they set up housekeeping there, right under that girl's eyes, and she's seen his family growing up around him year by year, while she lived on, a little old maid, all alone by herself. Women are kittle cattle, aren't they?"

Then our friend Brown rose and shook himself. "I think there's a good moral in that story for all girls," he said, "and I guess I'll go and tell it to Jane Austen."

A pleasant laugh rang out as the young Englishman and the American girl threaded their way through the double row of steamer-chairs on the shady side of the steamer.

Our friend Brown glanced up, and it was with a certain acidity that he said, "Fine teeth are a great incentive to gayety."

He watched the young people as they walked away. "His Royal Highness seems to be taking notice," he said; "I think I'll go into the smoking-room and join the Guild of the Holy Poker. I'm not one of the effeminate few who prefer the childish excitement of betting on the run to the manly sport of Draw."

Then he left us and we saw him no more all that afternoon. Apparently he found the game most interesting. Before dinner, as we were taking our walk, we passed a group of young men and we overheard one of them say, "I sized Brown up for two pair—Aces And—so I drew two cards and bet the limit."

"Well?" anxiously asked another of the group.

It must be confessed that we slackened the gait of our preprandial constitutional, to catch the answer.

"Well," returned the first speaker, "he weakened."

Then we walked on again briskly, frankly confessing that one touch of Poker makes the whole world kin.

The run that day was four hundred and fifty miles.

THURSDAY, THE 16TH.—Shortly after midnight we ran into a dense bank of fog. As we were likely at any moment to meet detachments of the fishing fleet, the *Barataria's* engines were slowed down. The harsh voice of the fog-horn was to be heard at frequent intervals during the night, and it waked us before cock-crow in the morning.

When we went on deck the air was thick and moist; and the dampness settled on the rigging and dropped gloomily on the deck.

"I think this drip, drip, drip of the fog is quite as demoralizing as the fog-horn is disheartening," said our friend Brown, as we joined him on the lower deck, where we could find shelter from the moisture of the mist. "And the wild notes of the fog-horn have every vice a sound can have."

The young couple from Chicago came up to us, and the bride seemed to be uneasy in her mind.

"My wife sat up half the night, looking through the porthole for fear something might happen," said the bridegroom, jocularly.

"I didn't do anything of the sort," she replied, indignantly. "But this fog is terrible, isn't it? Do you think the captain knows where he is?"

"We're within a mile of land now," our friend Brown answered, "only we are not going that way," and he pointed down.

The bride tried to smile at his feeble jest.

"Don't you harrow up your young soul with anticipatory disaster," our friend Brown continued, consolingly. "It isn't good for people's nerves on board ship to get talking about the wreck of the *Oregon* or reading the 'Wreck of the

Grosvenor.' It's much more amusing to read the 'Wreck of the Thomas Hyke,' which was altogether more remarkable."

"But if we should run into something?" she returned, despondently.

"'It would be bad for the coo,' as Stephenson said," our friend Brown rejoined. "Our enlightened selfishness may rejoice that we could run over any ordinary boat and scarcely feel it. So you need not worry about the summer styles in life-preservers, and the most fashionable ways of wearing them. You must remember that the captain is the ship's husband, and he can't afford to lose the boat unless he wants to be the ship's widower."

"The captain has a good many lives to care for," said the Chicago bridegroom; "no other boat carries five hundred first-class passengers."

"But other boats carry fifteen hundred steerage, sometimes, besides first-class passengers," retorted our friend Brown. "Really, though we seem to be a great many, there are fewer souls on board now than most big boats carry. I confess I don't like to cross on a ship that takes steerage passengers; in case of danger, they would have the bad taste to think their lives as valuable as mine."

The pretty American girl looked out of the door, not far from us, and the Chicago bride called her. Our friend Brown volunteered to bring down from the upper deck the chairs of the party. We offered to assist him. When we came back with the chairs we found that the handsome young Englishman had also joined the gathering. While our friend Brown was tucking the rugs and wraps about Jane Austen, as he called her, His Royal Highness went after his steamer-chair also. Thus we formed a compact little group on the lower deck, partly sheltered from the thick dampness of the fog and from the enervating roar of the fog-horn.

For a while the conversation was general; and when it flagged our friend Brown suggested "Twenty Questions," offering to take his Royal Highness on his side and explain the game to him if Jane Austen would lend her aid. The young couple from Chicago had become engaged the summer before at Narragansett Pier, and they were practised in the art. Although we should have preferred to stand afar off and take no part in the quarrel, the young couple from Chicago enlisted us on their side. The perky little parson joined us, and Mat Hitchcock thrust himself

among our opponents. And the rest of the afternoon glided away in acrimonious discussion.

Our run that day was only three hundred and ninety miles. But toward evening the fog was blown away by a fresh breeze.

FRIDAY, THE 17TH.—There was a cloudless sunrise this morning, as glorious a sight as a man may see. But when we reproached our friend Brown for having missed it, he was quick to explain.

"I hope I'm too good a Christian," he said, "to have part or lot in the Parsee ceremony of getting up to see the sun rise. Besides, I was suffering from a singularly acute attack of marine inertia, perhaps a reaction from the mental activity of yesterday's 'Twenty Questions.' Don't you fall into a condition of sloth sometimes at sea, when you don't want anything but just to be let alone?"

We acknowledged that this phase of feeling was easy to understand.

"I have been moved to liken a long day at sea to a *tirade* in a French tragedy, when the watery Alexandrines roll over you in most exasperating monotony," he proceeded. "There's a great deal

of tautology about the ocean; it's always saying ditto to itself. You tire of seeing the waves follow each other, almost as though they were drilled in platoons, with now and then a top-lofty one riding ahead proudly like an ensign."

We quoted the jest about Britannia ruling the waves and not ruling them straight.

"You tell that imported joke to His Royal Highness and he'll laugh at it," said our friend Brown. "When I can catch Jane Austen alone I'll quote to her the French saying that 'Women are like the waves of the ocean—always the same and yet never alike.'"

We remarked that she was probably preparing for the concert which was to take place that night.

"Yes," he replied, "His Royal Highness and Jane Austen are to sing a duet. The perky little parson is getting up the show. I think it would be a good scheme to have a theatre on board ship, regularly fitted up. You may remember that Noah, the founder of the P. and O. line, when he went to sea, took his menagerie with him. I suppose that must have relieved the monotony of the voyage not a little. A really enterprising steamship company nowadays would make proper

arrangements, so that its boats on every voyage would receive a hail from the Flying Dutchman and get a glimpse of the sea-serpent rearing its horrid head."

Although there was not a theatre on board the *Barataria*, there was a printing-press for the purpose of preparing the daily bills-of-fare, and capable of printing also the bill-of-the-play of the Grand Entertainment and Concert which was given that evening in the main saloon. The programme of the Grand Entertainment and Concert was divided into two parts; in the first part the Scot Abroad sang "Auld Lang Syne," the Chicago bridegroom recited "Buck Fanshaw's Funeral," the Chicago bride sang "In the Gloaming," the perky little parson read "The Raven," the handsome young Englishman sang "The Vagabond," and the pretty American girl sang "Let me Dream Again." The final number of the first part, so the programme informed us, was the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner," "by the 530 *Barataria* chorus." This began well enough, but as barely a dozen of the five hundred and thirty knew the words of the American anthem, it "rather petered out toward the end," as our friend Brown put it.

Our friend Brown had no part or lot in the Grand Entertainment and Concert. He sat in the music-room and made sarcastic remarks. The chief numbers of the second part were what the programme declared to be a "Banjo Solo, by Messrs. Knox and Decker," and a duet by Jane Austen and His Royal Highness. As the music of this duet was as emotional as the words were warm, our friend Brown got up and went out on deck for a walk in the dark. Thus he missed the final item on the play-bill, the singing of "God Save the Queen," "by the 530 *Barataria* chorus," a failure even more lamentable than that of "The Star-Spangled Banner," and for the same reason.

Between the two parts the plate had been passed around, and nearly seventy-five pounds had been collected, to be divided between the Sailors' Orphan Asylum at Liverpool and a hospital in New York.

Our run that day was four hundred and sixty-five miles.

SATURDAY, THE 18TH.—This was to be the last day of our voyage. Shortly after noon it was announced that the run was four hundred and sixty-two miles, and that we were then a little

less than two hundred miles from Sandy Hook. A certain half-suppressed excitement began to be perceptible among the passengers, and it increased as the hours passed, and we drew nearer and nearer to our native land.

Four steamer-chairs had been taken right up into the bow, and here the young couple from Chicago, Jane Austen, and His Royal Highness had sat all the afternoon. Our friend Brown had joined the group twice or thrice. He had been made welcome, yet he was uneasy and soon wandered away again. The three Americans were engaged in telling the young Englishman all about America, the United States in general, and the cities of Chicago and Baltimore in particular. Probably our friend Brown, as a New Yorker, had no need for the information, which the young Englishman accepted with pleasure.

He joined us as we stood under the bridge, after dinner, just as the *Barataria*, to the great joy of its five hundred and thirty passengers, was rapidly gliding ahead of a steamer of an opposition line which had left Queenstown two days before us.

"What is the use of all this excitement about seeing land?" he asked. "I've seen the sacred

soil of Long Island before now—in fact, I was born there."

We told him that most of the passengers were probably rejoicing at the swiftness of our homeward voyage—almost the quickest on record.

"The *Barataria* is really fast," he returned, "but few people have discovered a little trick of the steamship companies to reduce the apparent length of the voyage. Once the time was taken from Liverpool to New York; then it was counted from Queenstown to Sandy Hook; and now they are beginning to reckon it from Fastnet to Fire Island. By this fictitious shortening they can save a day seemingly, even if the boats were no faster."

We remarked that the voyage was now so short that the old sociability among the passengers was dying out. The gentleman from Philadelphia had told us Captain Kitchener complained that it was no longer worth while to get acquainted with his passengers, and that he had given up all attempt at friendly overtures ever since a passenger, to whom he had been explaining things, had offered him a shilling.

"That passenger must have been on his return trip," said our friend Brown; "after a fellow has

spent six weeks in England, he stands ready to tip an archbishop half a crown."

While we were talking, the clouds had blown away from the moon and the soft rays bathed in silver splendor the watery pathway of the boat. Snatches of song came fitfully from two or three little groups gathered in pleasant corners. We saw the young couple from Chicago were half concealed behind a boat, and that he had his arm around her, and that she had laid her head on his shoulder.

We drew Brown's attention to the young moon, shedding its silent sympathy over the lovers.

"It's the same old moon, you know," he retorted, "the same old moon, *qui en a vu bien d'autres.*"

Our friend was not given to quoting French, and this seemed to us to be the outward and audible sign of an inward and spiritual dissatisfaction. His pace, as we walked the deck, was violent and irregular. At last he stopped abruptly.

"Ah," he said, "there's His Royal Highness making the most of his last evening with Jane Austen. Perhaps he's wondering if he is going to find in Salt Lake City any girls as agreeable as she is."

We remarked that she was a good type of the pretty American girl.

"All cats are gray at night," he replied, sharply, "and every girl is pretty by moonlight."

A few minutes after it struck four bells. Then the *Barataria* was abreast of Fire Island Light, and the firework signals were let off, which made known our presence to the men ashore, who were searching the horizon for incoming steamers. Long before we reached Sandy Hook the news of our arrival in America had been flashed under the ocean to London and Paris.

SUNDAY, THE 19TH.—When we waked in the morning, before daybreak, the *Barataria* was at anchor in the lower bay, off Quarantine. We went on deck and saw the electric lights twinkling in the dawn along the Brooklyn Bridge, which makes Siamese Twins of the two great cities on the East River.

By the time the health officer had given the *Barataria* a clean bill, the deck had begun to fill up; and, when the boat started, at least half the passengers were gazing at the green shores of their native land.

As we passed Bedloe's Island, our friend Brown

gazed up at M. Bartholdi's colossal figure, and smiled as he said: "There she stands, you see, holding the torch of liberty now, after having so long extended the palm of charity."

We noted that something had given a tinge of acerbity to our friend Brown's remarks, and that his humor was more saturnine.

"You will observe," he continued, "that I have emerged from my stateroom this morning crowned with the high hat of civilization, although it looks as rough as the buffalo-robe of barbarism. Observe, also, our fellow-passengers of the female persuasion. There's a modern Jewish adage, I believe, that a man should clothe himself beneath his ability, his children according to his ability, and his wife above his ability. Judging from the clothing of the wives on this boat the past week, one would think ill of the ability of the men on board. But just look at the women now. It is only at sea that a woman doesn't care how she looks, and as soon as she gets in sight of land she makes up for lost time. I'd give a picayune to see the face of His Royal Highness when he gets his first glimpse of Jane Austen this morning."

But this pleasure was denied him, as the young

Englishman had met the American girl before we caught sight of either of them. She had donned a most becoming dress of a most coquettish simplicity. As they passed us she was apparently expressing to him her resolute determination to attempt varied violations of the revenue laws.

When the *Barataria* had been warped alongside the dock, and the baggage was beginning to be examined by Uncle Sam's white-capped officers, we saw them again for a moment. He was taking his leave. They shook hands heartily. The American girl, already surrounded by the spoils of her summer campaign, abstracted her attention from her ten trunks long enough to bestow on him a brilliant smile of farewell.

Not far from us was the young couple from Chicago; they accosted His Royal Highness as he passed; and, in answer to some question of the bridegroom's, we heard the young Englishman say:

"I've changed my mind, you know. I don't think I shall start off just yet a while. They tell me that St. John Hopkins College is no end of an interesting place, and I'm thinking of going there first."

ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

I.

MR. ROBERT WHITE GOES IN SEARCH OF A STORY.

ONE afternoon late in September, as Mr. Robert White was about to leave the private office of the *Gotham Gazette*, having settled on the subject of the editorial article he was to write for the next morning's paper, the chief called him back.

"By the way, White," he asked, "have you a story or a sketch you could give us for Sunday?"

"I don't know," answered White; "that is to say, I haven't one concealed about my person just now—but perhaps I can scare up something before you need it."

"I wish you would," the editor returned. "You know that we are making a feature of the short story in the Sunday paper, and we are running short of copy. We have several things promised us, but they are slow in coming. Rudolph Vernon, for example, was to have given me a

tragic tale for this week; but here I have a letter from him begging off on the plea that his wife's grandmother has just died, and——"

"And so he's not attuned for tragedy, eh?" interrupted White, smiling. "Well, I'll try to turn out something; but a good idea for a short story is a shy bird, and doesn't come for the calling. It is only now and then I can get within reach of one to put salt on its tail. The trouble is that all I could lime I have served up already in the dainty dish I called 'Nightmare's Nests.'"

"I don't know that we really need anything as peculiar or as striking as most of those stories were," said the editor, meditatively. "I doubt sometimes whether the sketch from real life isn't really more popular than the most daringly original fantasy of Poe's or Hawthorne's. The simple little story, with a touch of the pathetic about it, that's what the women like; and after all, you know, fiction is meant to please the women mostly."

"I do know it," said White, with a saddened smile. "Woman likes the cut-and-dried better than the unconventional and unexpected; it is only in the fashions that she wants the latest novelty."

"Then your task is the easier," suggested the editor.

"Not for me," White returned. "I can't do at will the Dying Infant, or the Deserted Wife, or the Cruel Parent and the Lovely Daughter. Some fellows find it easy enough to turn on the water-works and make the women weep; but I never could. The grewsome, now, or the gleeful, I can tackle when I'm in the mood, but the maudlin evades me."

"Well, I'll leave it to you," said the editor, turning back to his work. "Do the best you can for us. You know what we want."

"But I don't know where I'm going to get it," was White's final remark, as he left the chief's office and went to his own desk.

Sitting down, he took up his pen, thought for a minute or two, laughed gently to himself once or twice, made a few incomprehensible notes on a scrap of paper, and then wrote a column of brevier on the subject assigned to him—"Philadelphia as a Rest-Cure." After reading this over carefully and making a correction here and there, he sent it up to the composing-room. Then he took his hat and left the building, his day's work done.

When he reached Madison Square, in his walk up-town, it was about six o'clock. His family was still in the country—the lovely September weather was too tempting, and White had not the heart to recall his wife to town, although he heartily hated his condition of grass-widower. With a feeling of disgusted loneliness he went to the College Club and had a solitary meal, which he ate with an ill grace. But a good dinner and a good cup of coffee after it, and a good cigar, combined to make another man of him. He lingered in the smoking-room for a while, lazily glancing over the evening paper. Then he threw aside the crackling sheet and tried to devise a plot for a possible story, or to recall a character about whom a tale might be told. But his invention was sluggish and he made no headway in his work. Feeling that his recumbent posture might be tending to increase his mental inertia, he arose, and throwing away his cigar, he went out for a walk, in the hope that the exercise might stimulate his dormant faculties, or that, in his rambles, he might happen on a suggestion.

The evening was warm but not unpleasant; a refreshing breeze was blowing up from the bay and clearing the atmosphere of the foul odors of streets

everywhere torn up by the excavations of a new company, until they looked as though French rioters had been building barricades, or veterans of the Army of the Potomac had been throwing up temporary intrenchments. Just as this military suggestion occurred to Robert White, the illusion was strengthened by the martial notes of "Marching through Georgia," which rang across the Square as a militia regiment with its band tramped up Broadway. While he was thus attuned for war's alarms, he found himself before a huge iron rotunda, as devoid of all architectural beauty as might be a gigantic napkin-ring capped by an inverted saucer. A coronet of electric lights circled the broad roof, and a necklace of these glaring gems was suspended over the sidewalk in front of the entrance, illuminating many bold advertisements to the effect that a cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg was on exhibition within.

As it happened, Robert White had not yet seen this cyclorama, which had only been recently opened to the public. Obeying the impulse of the moment, he crossed the street and entered the building.

He passed down a long, dim tunnel, and mounted a winding stair, coming out at last upon

an open platform—and the effect was as though he had been sitting upon King Solomon's carpet and by it had been instantly transported, through time and space, to the centre of a battle-field and into the midst of the fight. To an imaginative spectator the impression of reality was overpowering, and White found himself waiting for the men to move, and wondering why the thunder of the cannon did not deafen him. He felt himself in the very thick of the tussle of war—an on-looker at the great game of battle. He was alone at first, and there was a subdued hush which lent a mysterious solemnity to the noiseless combat. The Pennsylvania hills stretched away from him on all sides, and the July sun beat down on the dashing cavalry, on the broken ranks ill sheltered by the low stone walls, on the splendid movement of Pickett's division, on the swiftly served batteries, on the wounded men borne quickly to the rear, and on the surgeons working rapidly, bare-armed and bloody. Here and there the smoke hung low over the grass, a lingering witness to the artillery duel which preceded the magnificent advance of the Southern infantry. On all sides were heroic devotion, noble bravery, dogged persistence, and awful carnage.

As White stood silent in the midst of this silent warfare, he felt as though he could count the cost of this combat in precious lives, for he knew how few were the families of this wide nation but had one of their best-beloved clad in gray in the long lines of Lee, or massed in blue on Cemetery Ridge to stand the shock of the charging Virginians.

The platform slowly filled up with later arrivals, and Robert White was aroused from his revery; he began to study the canvas before him more carefully. His own interest was rather in the navy than in the army, but he was familiar with the chief movements on this field. He recognized the generals and he noted the details of the picture. The art of the painter delighted him; the variety, the movement, the vivacity of the work appealed to his appreciation; with the relish of a Yankee he enjoyed the ingenious devices by which the eye of the spectator was deceived; he detected one or two of the tricks—a well, for instance, half painted and half real, and a stretcher carried by one soldier in the picture itself and by another out in the foreground with real grass springing up under his feet; and, although he discovered, he almost doubted—the illusion was well-nigh perfect.

By this time the throng on the platform had thickened. It was densest on the opposite side; and White slowly became conscious that a lecturer was there explaining to the gathering group the main lines of the battle and its chief episodes. Remembering that when he entered he had seen a figure in blue, with an empty sleeve pinned across the breast, sitting apart in the centre of the platform, he recalled the custom of most cycloramas to have a veteran, a wounded survivor of the struggle, to tell the tale of the day and to fight his battles o'er every hour to changing companies of visitors.

"It was just there," said the lecturer, "that Colonel Delancey Jones and Lieutenant-Colonel Oliphant of our regiment were killed within less than five minutes; and not ten minutes later our Major, Laurence Laughton, was badly wounded. Few know how terrific was the loss of life on this bloody field. There were more men killed in this single battle than in the whole Crimean war, which lasted more than eighteen months."

As White listened he found himself involuntarily remarking something unusual in this fragment of the lecturer's little speech. It was not the manner, which was confident enough, nor the de-

livery, which was sufficiently intelligent, but rather the voice of the speaker. This did not sound like the voice of an old soldier; it was fresher, younger, and, indeed, almost boyish.

"That little building there is an exact reproduction of the farm-house of old John Burns, of Gettysburg:

'Just where the tide of battle turns,
Erect and lonely stood old John Burns.
How do you think the man was dressed?
He wore an ancient long buff vest,
Yellow as saffron—but his best;
And, buttoned over his manly breast,
Was a bright blue coat, with a rolling collar,
And large, gilt buttons—size of a dollar;
He wore a broad-brimmed, bell-crowned hat,
White as the locks on which it sat. . . .
But Burns, unmindful of jeer and scoff,
Stood there picking the rebels off—
With his long, brown rifle and bell-crowned hat,
And the swallow-tails they were laughing at. . . .
In fighting the battle, the question's whether
You'll show a hat that's white, or a feather!'

"That's John Burns's house there, with the gable toward you, and those are his bees and his cows that the poet mentions. Farther away to the right is General Meade with his staff——"

Involuntarily White had drawn nearer to the speaker; and the lecturer, in his rotation around the platform, now advanced three or four paces toward the journalist. Then for the first time White got a good view of him; he saw a slight figure, undeveloped rather than shrunk, about which hung loosely a faded blue uniform with the empty sleeve of the right arm pinned across the breast. The lecturer's walk as he passed from one point to another was alert and youthful; his face was long and thin; his dark eyes were piercing and restless; his hair was so light that it might be white; his chin was apparently clean shaven, and he did not wear even a military moustache. Altogether he produced upon the journalist an inexplicable impression of extreme juvenility; he could not believe that this Boy in Blue was old enough to have been at the battle of Gettysburg, fought just a quarter of a century ago. Even if the North, like the South, had robbed the cradle and the grave, a drummer-boy of fifteen at the battle would now be a man of forty, and it seemed impossible that the lecturer had attained half that age. The journalist could not help thinking that the soldier was only a youth, with a strangely aged look for one so young, it is true,

and worn with pain, it may be, and without an arm—and yet, for all this, but little more than a boy.

While White had been coming to this conclusion the lecturer had been drawing nearer to him, and was now standing not five feet distant.

"That clump of trees there was the point Pickett had told his men to go for, and they did get to it too—but they couldn't hold it. Those trees mark the spot farthest north ever reached by the Southern soldiers at any time during the battle. There was pretty hot fighting in among those bushes for a while, and then the Johnnies began to fall back. It was just then that we were sent in."

"Were you there, sir?" asked an awed young lady, as much over-dressed as the red-haired young man with her.

"Yes, miss," was the prompt answer.

White was now close to the speaker, and he examined him again carefully. Despite the uniform and the empty sleeve, and a certain appearance of having undergone hardships, it was simply impossible that the fellow should be telling the truth.

"Where did you stand?" asked the young lady.

"Just back of that clump of trees there, miss.

When the rebs broke we were told to go in, and we went in at once; and, as I told you, Colonel Delancey Jones was killed first and Lieutenant-Colonel Oliphant next, and Major Laughton was wounded, and it was Captain Bryce that took us through the fight after that."

"Oh, Charley!" said the young lady to her red-haired companion. "Just think! He was there; isn't it perfectly awful?"

"I guess it was pretty lively for him," responded the young man; "but when there's a war a fellow feels he must go, you know."

"Did you lose your arm there?" asked the young lady.

"Yes, miss. It was taken off by a ball from Mason's battery. That's Mason's battery over there on the hill; in the woods, almost."

As White heard this answer, which seemed to him a repulsive falsehood, he looked the lecturer full in the face.

"Oh, Charley!" said the young lady to her red-haired companion. "He did lose his arm there! Isn't it perfectly dreadful? And he is so young, too!"

"I guess he's older than he looks," Charley jauntily replied.

The lecturer caught White's gaze fixed full upon him, and he returned the glance without the slightest suggestion of embarrassment.

"So you were wounded there, were you?" queried White.

"Yes, sir; just in front of those trees, as the boys went on."

"And how did you feel?" pursued White.

"I didn't know anything for a few minutes, and then I felt sorry that we had been beaten; they say a wounded man always thinks that his side has got the worst of it."

The speaker was now close to White, and the journalist no longer doubted that the Boy in Blue was a boy in fact, masquerading as a man and as a soldier. To White this seemed like trading on patriotism—a piece of despicable trickery. The fellow bore it off bravely enough, as though unconscious of the contemptible part he was playing. He stood the close scrutiny of the journalist with imperturbable calm. His face was coldly serious; and even his eyes did not betray any guilty knowledge of his false position; their glance was honest and open.

"The boy is a good actor," thought White, "but what is the object of this queer perform-

ance? Surely there are old soldiers enough in the city to explain a battle picture without the need of dressing up a slim youth in the cast-off clothes of a wounded veteran."

Taking a place by the railing of the platform just alongside White, the mysterious lecturer pointed to a group of horsemen and said:

"That's General Hancock there, with his staff."

White interrupted with the sudden question:

"Were *you* in the war?"

The youth looked at White in surprise and answered simply:

"Of course."

"In what regiment?" White continued.

"The 41st, Colonel Delancey Jones," the boy replied. "They used to call us the Fighting 41st."

"And you were at the battle of Gettysburg?" pursued White.

"Of course," was the reply, accompanied by a strange look of surprise. "Haven't I been telling you about it?"

"Were you also at the battle of Buena Vista?" asked White, sarcastically.

This question seemed to puzzle the young man. "Buena Vista?" he repeated slowly, with dazed expression. "I don't know."

"Perhaps you took part also in the battle of Bunker Hill?" White went on.

"Oh, no," replied the young fellow quickly, his face lighting at once. "No—you've been getting things mixed. Bunker Hill was in the Revolutionary War, and Gettysburg was in the Rebellion. The Revolutionary War was over long before I was born."

"And how old were you when the battle of Gettysburg was fought?" was White's next question.

Again a puzzled look came into the face of the lecturer.

"How old was I? I don't know how old I was then. But I was there!" he added, with sudden emphasis, as though he were defying the lurking smile which flitted across White's mouth.

"And it was at Gettysburg you lost your arm by a cannon-ball?" White asked.

"Yes—yes!" was the impatient reply. "Didn't I tell you so before?"

And with a suggestion of defiance the Boy in Blue passed behind White and resumed his description of the combatants.

White asked no more questions, and he listened in silence for a few minutes. He did not feel

quite as sure that the young fellow was a humbug as he had at first. There was an air of good faith about him, as though he believed what he was saying. It did not seem possible that this was a mere piece of acting; and if it were, what might be its motive? That the boy had been at Gettysburg was simply impossible; and why he should dress as a soldier, and pretend to have taken part in the fight, was a puzzle to which White did not see the solution.

On entering the building the journalist had bought an illustrated description of the battle, proffered by a page at the door; and now, as he mechanically turned the leaves of this, his eyes fell on the name of the business manager of the Gettysburg Cyclorama—Mr. Harry Brackett. White knew Brackett well when the present manager had been a reporter of the *Gotham Gazette;* and when he saw Brackett's name he knew to whom he could apply for information. It was at all times a weakness of White's to spy out a mystery, and he deemed the present circumstances too curious not to demand investigation.

At the door of the manager's office, near the entrance, he found Harry Brackett, who greeted him with great cordiality.

"Glad to see you, White," he said. "Good show up-stairs, isn't it? I wish you could give us a column of brevier in the *Gazette*, just to boom it, now that people are coming back to town again. A good rattling editorial on object-lessons in the teaching of American history would be very timely, wouldn't it?"

White laughed. "If you want a reading notice on the fourth page, you had better apply to the publisher for his lowest column rates. I won't volunteer a good notice for you, because I don't approve of your Infant Phenomenon, the Boy Warrior."

"So you have tumbled to it, have you?" returned Brackett, smiling.

"Well," said White, "it doesn't take extraordinary acumen to 'tumble,' as you call it. The battle of Gettysburg was fought in 1863, and it is now 1888; and if that boy up-stairs was only a babe in arms then, he would be twenty-five now—and he isn't. That's as simple as the statement of the clever French woman who was asked her age, and who answered that she must be at least twenty-one, as her daughter was twenty."

"That boy does look odd, I'll allow," Brackett remarked. "Lots of people ask me about him."

"And what do you tell them?" was White's natural query.

"I stand 'em off somehow; I give 'em some kind of a ghost-story. They're not particular, most of 'em. Besides, it's only when going out that they ask questions—and they paid their money coming in."

"Then, as I'm coming out, I suppose there is no use in my requesting information?" suggested White.

"You're one of the boys," replied Harry Brackett. "You are a friend of mine; you are a newspaper man too, and you may give us a paragraph; so I don't care if I do tell you the story."

"Then there is a story to tell?"

"Rather!" Harry Brackett rejoined, emphatically.

"Ah!" said White. "Come over to the Apollo House and give me the latest particulars. A story is just what I have been looking for all day."

II.

THE STORY MR. ROBERT WHITE FOUND.

Early in the spring certain old-fashioned houses, low and wide-spreading, standing alone, each in a garden that came forward to the broad avenue, having long lingered as reminders of an earlier time when New York was not as huge as it is now, nor as heaped together, nor as hurried, were seized by rude hands and torn down ruthlessly. After the dust of their destruction had blown away, the large rectangle of land thus laid bare was roughly levelled and smoothed. Within this space, which was almost square, an enormous circle was drawn; and soon a ring of solid brick-work arose a foot or more above the surface of the soil. Upon this foundation swift workmen soon erected the iron skeleton of a mighty rotunda, which stood out against the evening sky, well knit and rigid, like a gigantic rat-trap. In the perfect adaptation of the means to the end, in the vigor and symmetry of its outlines, in its simple strength and its deli-

cate firmness, in the marvellous adjustment of its strain whereby there was not a superfluous pound of metal, this iron framework was a model of American skill in the noble art of the smith. But soon the beauty of this supple skeleton was hidden under a dull covering of wrinkled sheet-iron; and the building, as it drew to completion, became uglier and uglier day by day.

The erection of an edifice so unusual as this inflated round tower, aroused the greatest curiosity among the boys of the neighborhood. But no boy followed the labors of the workmen with keener interest than Dick Harmony, a lad of seventeen, who tended the newspaper-stand on the opposite side of the avenue. On a board supported by a folding trestle the journals of the day were displayed every morning and every afternoon under the charge of Dick Harmony. This stand was a branch of a more important establishment two blocks farther up the avenue. Newspapers are the most perishable of commodities; they spoil on the vender's hands in a very few hours; and Dick Harmony found that his trade was brisk only in the mornings and afternoons, and that in the middle of the day, from eleven to three, there was a slack time. This intermission Dick had been

wont to utilize in long walks; but he now spent it wholly on the other side of the avenue, in rapt contemplation of the progress of the strange building which had aroused his interest from the first.

In the very beginning, indeed, he had hated the intruding edifice, from loyal love for its predecessors. He had always liked the looks of the old houses, now swept aside by the advancing besom of improvement. He had taken pleasure, more or less unconsciously, in noting their differences from the taller, smarter, and newer houses by which they were surrounded. He had admired the dignity of their dingy yellow bricks. He had had a fondness for the few faded and dusty flowers that grew along the paths of the gardens in front, and around the basin of the dried-up fountains. He had liked to see the vines clambering over the shallow cast-iron balconies. Once he had even ventured to wish that he were rich enough to own one of those houses—the one on the corner was the one he would choose—and if he lived in it, he would open the gate of the garden, and let other boys in to enjoy the restful green. It was a daring dream, he knew; probably the man who dwelt in that little old house on the corner was worth a hundred thousand dollars, or maybe a million.

Dick Harmony made two dollars and a half a week.

It may be that the newsboy was as rich on his two dollars and a half a week as was the man who had been living in the house on the corner, now torn down and replaced by the circular iron building; for Dick was all alone in the world; he had nobody dependent on him; he was an orphan, without brother or sister, or any living relative, so far as he knew; he could spend his weekly wages as he chose. His wants were few and simple and easily satisfied. When he had a dime or a quarter to spare he might do what he pleased with the money; he could go to the theatre, or to the minstrels, or to the circus. He wondered whether the new building was to be a circus.

He expressed to a casual acquaintance, a boot-black, his hope that it might prove to be a circus.

"What are ye givin' me?" cried this young gentleman. "Na—that ain't no circus."

"It's round, like a circus," returned Dick, "an' if it ain't a circus, what is it?"

"I'll give ye the steer. I shined a young feller this mornin', an' he said it was to be a cyclone-hammer—a sort of pianneraimer, he said. Ye go in

the door and up in the middle somehow, and there you are bang on the battle-field right in with the soldiers a-fightin' away!"

"What battle-field?" asked Dick.

"Battle o' Gettysburg, o' course," answered the bootblack. "Didn't I tell ye it was a pianner-aimer o' Gettysburg? *Shine?*"

This final syllable was addressed, not to the guardian of the news-stand, but to a gentleman on the other side of the avenue; and, as this gentleman nodded, the bootblack cut short the conversation with his friend.

Dick Harmony had but scant teaching; but he had studied a brief history of the United States, and from this he derived his sole notions of the history of the world. Like not a few American boys who have had more chances to learn better, he was inclined to think that 1492 was the date of the creation of the universe, which, however, had not really got going until 1776. He recalled vaguely the battle of Gettysburg as having taken place on the Fourth of July, 1863.

The news that the circular building in process of erection before his eyes was to contain some sort of picture or reproduction of this famous fight, quickened his desire to learn more about Gettys-

burg. As it happened, long before the building was roofed in, a call was issued for a reunion of the veterans of both sides, and the newspapers were frequent in allusions to the battle. At last a boys' paper, which Dick read regularly every week, gave an illustrated account of Gettysburg and reprinted Lincoln's speech. As the boy read the story of Pickett's charge and of its repulse, his blood tingled with martial ardor; he wished he had been a man then to have a share in the hard struggle for Little Round Top, and to have a hand in the bloody cookery of the Devil's Kitchen. But the fighting is all over, the boy knew; this was years ago; the battles are ended, the country is at peace again, and everybody is glad. None the less did Dick regret that he had not lived in those times, that he might see so great a fight. Then he wondered what a panorama or a cyclorama might be, and he longed to see at least the picture, since he had missed the real battle.

Therefore Dick Harmony spent as much time as he could spare from his news-stand in watching the completion of the building. As soon as the morning demand for newspapers slackened, the boy closed his trestle, stowed it away, and crossed the avenue. After a few days the workmen came

to know him, and the foreman tolerated his presence where other boys were not allowed to enter. He was shy and silent generally; but now and again his curiosity got the better of him, and he asked questions about the battle—questions which the workmen were puzzled to answer, and which they merely laughed at. He bore their rude jesting without anger; a reproachful glance from his dark eyes was his only retort. He was persistent in his attendance, and always obliging. He was never unwilling to run on an errand for the foreman or for one of the men. At noon he went to the nearest saloon and came back with their cans of beer balanced along a stick. Everybody knew him at last, and so it came to pass that he was tacitly granted the freedom of the place.

He saw the roof put on with its broad ring of heavy glass in thick panes. He watched the fungus growth of the central platform, which at one time came to look like the skeleton of a wooden mushroom. He examined its twin set of spiral stairs, one within the other, like a double corkscrew. He looked on while the passage was built from the platform to the main door, a long wooden tunnel. He walked around the inner circumference of the edifice as the men laid the

broad ties and single rail of a circular track. He wondered at the huge wooden tower on wheels—not unlike those used by the ancients in an assault on a walled city—which was built to run upon the primitive railroad. He was present when there was thrust into the building the canvas of the picture, a long limp roll like a Gargantuan sausage. He was there when the spool upon which this canvas had been reeled was raised up perpendicularly and fastened to pivots at the top and bottom of the moving tower. He was permitted to see the picture unrolled and made fast to a great iron ring, just under the edge of the roof, as the tower was wheeled slowly around the rotunda. He saw the canvas tightened by another iron ring joined in sections to its lower edge. He looked on while the men stretched the canopy which was to spread over the heads of the spectators as they might stand on the platform, and which hung from the apex of the building for a week at least, neglected and limp, like the umbrella of a gigantic Mrs. Gamp. He gazed with wonder as the artist touched up the painting here and there, as need was, heightening the brilliancy of a cannon in one place or toning down the glitter of a button in another.

This painter was not the chief painter of the cyclorama, which was the work of a distinguished Frenchman, a famous depicter of battle-scenes. The man Dick saw was a burly Alsatian, who had been one of the principal assistants of the French artist, and who, on the return of the great painter to France, had been deputed to set up the cyclorama in New York. He spoke English like a Frenchman, and French like a German. His huge bulk and his shock of iron-gray hair gave him a forbidding appearance; and his voice was so harsh that Dick Harmony was afraid of him and kept out of his way, while following his operations with unfailing interest.

Among the many ingenious devices for concealing from the spectator the exact junction of the real foreground with the painted cloth of the picture, was a little pond of water in a corner of a stone wall, cunningly set off by aquatic plants, some of them genuine and some of them merely painted. One morning, when Dick entered the building he started back as he heard the big Alsatian loudly swearing in German-French and French-English, because the workmen had carelessly crushed a little group of these plants.

"Sacré dunder!" he cried, in stentorian tones.

"The brute who spoild my cad-dails, vere is he? Vere is the idiod, dad I breag his head?"

Dick crept around behind the central platform and soon discovered the cause of this portentous outbreak. In constructing a few feet of real stone wall, a cluster of cat-tails just at the edge of the pond had been trampled and broken beyond repair.

"Dunder of hefen!" the Alsatian roared; "if I attrap the workman beasd who did me dad drick, I breag his neg! Vere vil I find more cad-dails now?"

For some time the human volcano continued thus; and its eruption of trilingual profanity did not wholly intermit until the shrill whistles of the neighboring factories proclaimed the noontide recess. Even then the artist muttered spasmodically as he went out to his lunch. Dick did not dare to address him then. But nearly an hour later the Alsatian returned, having made a satisfactory midday meal, as his smiling face testified. Dick stood afar off until the painter, leaning back on a grassy mound, had lighted his cigarette, and then he ventured to approach.

"If you want some more of those cat-tails," he said timidly, "I think I know where you can get them."

Then he drew back a few paces, doubtfully.

"You dink you know vere to ged dem?" answered the artist, rising from the ground and towering over the lad; "den I shall go vid you all ad once."

"They may be gone now, but I don't think they are; for the man used to have 'em regularly, and I guess he's got 'em still," the boy returned, with rising courage.

"Ve sall go see," was the Frenchman's reply.

As it happened, Dick was thus able to be of service to the artist. In his wanderings during his noon leisure, before he spent the middle of the day in the cyclorama, he had marked a florist who kept cat-tails. To this man's shop he guided the painter, who was enabled to replace the broken plants. Dick carried the tall stems as he walked back to the cyclorama by the side of the artist, whose roughness had waned and who spoke gently to the boy. In a few minutes Dick was answering questions about himself—who he was, what he did for a living, how he came to be off duty in the very busiest part of the day, how he liked the cyclorama. When the boy declared that he thought the picture of the battle the most wonderful thing he had ever seen, the man smiled

not unkindly as he said, "You haf not seen much of dings. But id is nod badd—nod so badd—I haf seen vorse, perhabs. Id is not so badd."

And from that morning the American boy and the big Alsatian were on friendly terms. After his lunch the artist liked to smoke a cigarette before returning to work, and then he would talk to Dick, explaining the details of the great picture and dwelling on the difficulty they had had to get at the exact facts of the mighty combat. As he told of the successive movements of the two armies during the three-days' fighting, the boy's face would flush and his eyes would flash, and he would hold himself erect like a soldier.

Seeing these things, one day the artist asked, "You vould vish to haf been ad de baddle, eh?"

"There ain't anything I'd like better," replied Dick. "To be a real soldier and to see a real fight in a real war—that's what I'd like."

"Bud de war is nod veridably amusing," returned the artist. "For my pard, I lofed it nod."

"Were you a real soldier?" cried the boy, eagerly.

The Alsatian nodded, as he rolled another cigarette.

"In a real war?" pursued Dick.

"Id vas a real var, I assure you," the painter responded.

"Did you ever kill anybody?" the lad inquired next, with growing excitement.

"I don't know—— "

Dick was evidently disappointed at this.

"Bud dey haf me almost killed vonce. I haf a Prussian saber-cud on my shoulder here."

"Did you get wounded at Gettysburg?" Dick asked.

"Bud no—bud no," answered the Frenchman. "Id vas at the siege of Paris—I vas a *Mobile*—and ve fought vid de Germans."

"They were Hessians, I suppose?" Dick suggested.

"Dey vere Hessians and Prussians and Bavarians and Saxons — bud de Prussians vere de vorse."

For a few seconds Dick was silent in thought.

"I knew the French helped us lick the Hessians over here in the Revolutionary War, but I didn't know that the Hessians had been fighting the French over in Europe too," he said, at last. "I suppose it was to get even for their having been beaten so bad over here."

This suggestion seemed humorous even to the

Alsatian, who smiled, and rolled another cigarette meditatively.

"Should you lofe to be painded in de picdure?" he asked suddenly.

"Wouldn't I!" cried Dick. "There ain't anything I'd like better."

"Dere's a drummer-boy vounded dere in de veat-field and he is all dorn. I will paind him once more. You will pose for him."

"But I haven't any uniform," said the boy.

"Dere are uniforms dere in dat case. Dake a jacked and a cap."

Dick sprang to the large box which the artist had pointed out. There were all sorts of uniforms in it—infantry, cavalry, and artillery, volunteers' and regulars', bright zouave red and butternut gray. In a minute the boy had found the jacket and fez of a zouave drummer.

"Is this what I am to wear?" he asked.

The artist nodded. Dick threw off his own coarse coat and donned the trim jacket of the drummer-boy. As he put in on, he drew himself up and stood erect, in soldierly fashion, with his shoulders well squared. Then he adjusted the fez and marched back to the Alsatian.

"Dad's vell," said the artist, examining him

critically. "Now go lie down in de veatfield and I paind you."

Never had an artist a more patient model. Uncomplainingly the lad lay in the position assigned to him until every muscle in his body ached. Even then it was the Frenchman who bade him rise and rest, long before the American would have confessed his fatigue at the unwonted strain. Dick had never in his life been as happy as he was when first he put on that uniform. With a boy's faculty of self-deception, he felt as though he were in very truth a soldier, and as though the fate of the day might depend on his bearing himself bravely.

The sharp eyes of the artist quickly discovered the delight Dick took in wearing the zouave jacket and the fez, and to please the boy the good-natured Alsatian devised excuses to let the youngster try on almost every uniform in the box, until at last it came to be understood that, while Dick was in the cyclorama, he might wear whatever military costume he liked.

One morning Dick was able to get to the building a little earlier than usual. He put on the dark blue uniform of a New York regiment and then looked about for the artist, whom he found

at last high up on the wheeled tower, engaged in freshening the foliage of a tall tree. Dick climbed up and sat down beside him, watching his labors with never-failing interest. The painter greeted him pleasantly, paused in his work long enough to roll a cigarette, asked the boy a question or two, and then returned to his task. When the mid-day whistle shrilled through the air the Frenchman did not lay aside his brush at once, saying that he had almost finished what he had in hand and he wanted to spare himself the bother of clambering again to the top of the tower. The workmen left the building to eat their dinners.

"I vill finish in dree minudes now," the Alsatian remarked, as he threw away his cigarette half-smoked and worked with increased energy.

A minute later Dick gave a sudden cry of alarm and disappeared over the side of the tower. The artist's cigarette had fallen among the shavings that littered the ground; it had smoldered there for a few seconds until some chance breath of wind had fanned it into flame. When Dick happened to look down he saw a tiny little bonfire sparkling exactly under the inflammable canvas of the cyclorama. He called to the painter—there was no one else in the building to hear his startled

shout—and he set out for the ground as fast as he could. As he came down the ladder he saw the fire brightening and beginning to blaze up, and he feared that he might be too late. He quickened his descent, but another glance below showed him the flames growing taller and thrusting their hot tongues toward the tinder-like picture. With boyish recklessness, half-intentionally and half-unconsciously, he loosened his hold on the ladder down which he was climbing and sprang to the ground. He plunged through the air for twenty feet or more; but in his unexpected start he lost his balance and fell, with turning body, and with arms and legs extending wildly. Then, at last, he landed heavily exactly on the fire, which had been the cause of his self-sacrificing movement and which was instantly extinguished by the weight of his body and by the shock of his fall. Where he had dropped he lay motionless. He had struck on his right hand and on his head.

The painter reached the ground a few seconds after the boy, and he found him lying in a heap on a mass of loose earth and shavings and like rubbish. Dick was insensible. Some of the workmen soon came running in at the loud call of the Alsatian, and one of them rang for an ambulance.

The boy had not moved when the doctor came.

"Is he dead?" asked the Alsatian, as the doctor arose from his examination.

"He's pretty badly hurt," was the answer, "but I don't believe he'll die. The right arm seems to be broken, and there are severe contusions on the head. We'll take him to the hospital, and we'll soon see what is the matter with him."

With a little aid from the doctor, the strong Alsatian raised the boy's body in his arms and bore it gently to the ambulance. As Dick was placed on the stretcher he opened his eyes and asked, "Did I save the panorama?"

"Bud yes—bud yes," cried the artist.

The boy smiled and closed his eyes and again became unconscious as the doctor took his seat in the ambulance and it drove off.

The artist came to the hospital that afternoon and left instructions to give the boy every attention and every delicacy that might be good for him. They refused to let him see Dick, who was still insensible.

The next day the painter called again. He was then told that the boy's right arm had been amputated, that the injuries to the head were serious but probably not fatal, and that the patient could

receive no one. He was informed that it would be useless to see the boy, who was delirious with fever and not able to recognize anyone.

The painter went to the hospital every day, and in time he began to get good news. Dick was a strong, healthy lad, and he was bearing up bravely. As soon as the fever abated and the boy came out of his delirium, the Alsatian brought a bunch of flowers with him on his daily visit and sent them up to the boy's bedside; but it was long before Dick had strength or desire to ask whence they came.

And so the days passed and the weeks. The spring had grown into the summer. Decoration Day had been celebrated, and the Fourth of July was near at hand. The cyclorama was finished after a while, and thrown open to the public. And the boy still lay on a bed in the hospital.

At last a day came when the doctor told the burly Alsatian with the gruff voice that Dick Harmony could begin to see his friends now; the artist was the only friend he had who cared enough for him to ask to see him.

The doctor conducted him to the bedside and stood by, lest the excitement might be more than the patient could bear.

As Dick saw the Frenchman his eyes brightened, he moved the stump of his right arm as though to hold out his hand, he tried to rise from the bed, and he fell back, feeble but happy.

"Is the cyclorama all right?" he cried, before his visitor could say a word.

"Bud yes—bud yes," answered the Alsatian. "Id vas you dad safed him."

The smile brightened on Dick's face as he asked, "Is it finished yet?"

The artist nodded.

"Can I see it soon?" inquired the boy.

The artist looked at the physician.

"We can let him out in less than a month, I think," said the doctor, in reply to this mute interrogation.

"Den in less dan a month you vill see it," the Frenchman declared.

"Will they let me in now that it is finished?" asked Dick, doubtfully.

"I vill dake you in myself," responded the painter. "Or how vill you lofe to come vid us—ve need a boy dere now?"

Dick looked at him for a moment speechless. It seemed to him as though this offer opened the portals of Paradise.

"Do you mean it, honest?" he was able to ask at last.

The artist nodded again, smiling at the joy he saw in the boy's eyes.

"Of course I should like it," Dick went on. "I should like it better than anything else in the world. I don't care what wages you pay; I'll come for less than any other boy you can get."

The Frenchman was engaged in rolling a cigarette, which he now put between his lips, at the same time drawing a match-box from his pocket. Suddenly he remembered where he was.

"Vell, den," he said, rising, "dad's all right. Ven you are all vell, you come to us and ve gif you a place."

"I'll get well pretty quick, I tell you," replied the boy. "I'm in a hurry to see how it looks now it is all done."

And this favorable prognostic was duly fulfilled. From the day of the artist's visit, and encouraged by the glad tidings he brought, the boy steadily improved. The arm made a good healing and there was no recurrence of the delirium. Just how serious might be the injury to the head the doctors had not been able to determine, but they

were encouraged to hope that it would not again trouble him.

A fortnight later the convalescent was released, pale and feeble, but buoyed up by delightful anticipations. The good-natured Alsatian took him at once to the cyclorama, and supported his weak steps as he tottered up the spiral staircase and out upon the centre platform, from which the battle-field stretched away on every side.

"Oh!" he cried, with an outbreak of joy as he gazed about him, "isn't it beautiful? This is a real battle, isn't it? I didn't think anything could be so pretty. I could stay here forever looking at it and looking at it."

The artist led him to one of the benches and the boy sank down on it, as though the excitement had been too much for him in his enfeebled state.

It was then about three in the afternoon, and at that hour Captain Carroll was accustomed to deliver a brief lecture to the spectators who might be assembled, in which he set forth the story of the battle with the fervent floridity of Hibernian eloquence.

Dick Harmony listened to the periods of the orator with awe-stricken attention.

"Was Captain Carroll really at Gettysburg?" he inquired of the Alsatian, who had taken a seat by his side.

"Bud yes—bud yes. It vas dere he lose his arm."

Then for the first time the boy saw that the old soldier had an empty sleeve pinned across the right breast of his uniform.

"He lost his arm fighting and I lost mine by accident," cried Dick, bitterly. "I hadn't the luck to be a soldier."

The painter looked at the boy in surprise; then he said gravely:

"He is as you—you bode lost your arms on the field of baddle; Capdain Carroll ad de real Geddysburg and you ad dis Geddysburg here."

Dick gazed earnestly at the artist as this was said; but the large face of the Frenchman was placid and without a smile. Then the newsboy drew himself up and replied:

"Yes, that's true enough. I was wounded on the battle-field of Gettysburg, wasn't it?"

And thereafter this idea remained with him and was never abandoned.

As Dick's strength returned he was put on duty. He was to sell descriptive pamphlets to

the spectators on the central platform. A uniform was provided for him. To his delight it was not unlike that worn by Captain Carroll, and the boy proceeded at once to pin his sleeve across his breast as the old soldier had done. In other things also did he imitate the captain immediately —in his upright carriage, in his walk, in his manner of speech, and even in his special phrases.

From the old officer the boy learned the vocabulary of the American soldier, developed during the long marches and hard fights of four years of civil war. He spoke of the Confederate soldiers as "Johnnies;" he called an infantry musket a "howitzer;" he knew that "salt-horse" and "cow-feed" were nicknames for corned-beef and vegetables; and he referred to coffee as "boiled rye."

Captain Carroll was conscious that he served as a model for Dick, and he was flattered by it. He took a fancy to the lad, and talked to him about the war by the hour, on the rainy days when the visitors to the cyclorama were scant.

"Were you in any battle besides Gettysburg?" Dick asked, one morning.

"I was in all of them, I think," was the Irishman's answer; "and I was wounded at most."

"Have you been hit more than once?" was the boy's eager question.

"I had me thumb shot off at Bull Run, and the whole hand taken off at Antietam, and the rest of the arm went at Gettysburg, as ye see. I come of a good stock, and I had to be economical of me mimbers. There's some who never get wounded at all, at all, and there's more that get killed in every contemptuous little fight they go into—not that I regret me exparience at all; I ped dear for it, but it was worth it. Ah, but there was illigant fightin' at Gettysburg!"

"I'm sure it was the greatest battle ever fought," declared Dick, enthusiastically.

"I dunno," returned the Irishman. "There was pretty work at Cold Harbor and in the Seven Days. It was then the Fightin' Forty-first was thinned out a bit; I got me wound in me lung there, and a bullet in me leg."

Dick gazed with awe at the veteran, who discovered a fresh wound whenever the tale of a new battle was told. He believed it all, and he did the Irishman little more than justice. The body of Captain Carroll was scarred with many a cicatrix, indelible records of his devotion to the adopted country in whose service he had lost his health.

In the hottest days of the summer Dick was at his post, although he confided to Captain Carroll that his head "felt queer sometimes," and the old soldier immediately returned that the bullet in his leg was giving him more trouble, and he was afraid the wound was going to open.

In the last week of June there came three days of intense heat, which greatly distressed both the veteran and the lad who kept him company on the central platform. On the fourth day of the hot spell Harry Brackett, who had left the *Gotham Gazette*, to become the manager of the cyclorama, was detained by private affairs and did not arrive at the office until 1 o'clock. Then he found awaiting him a letter from Captain Carroll announcing the sudden reopening of the wound in the leg, which would confine the veteran to the house for a week at least.

"What shall we do for a lecturer?" Brackett asked of the Alsatian painter, whom he had happened to find in the office.

"Is he necessary?" returned the artist.

"Isn't he?" was the journalist's reply. "The people pay their money not only to see a picture of the battle, but to hear an old soldier speak a piece about it, and stoke it up to them for all it's worth."

"Dey haf none to-day," the painter remarked, smiling.

"That's so," said Brackett. "Let's go up on the mushroom and see how they like it without a speech."

The Alsatian threw his cigarette away and followed the journalist down the long tunnel which led to the spiral stairs. As they reached the steps they heard a sound of applause.

"What's that for?" asked Brackett.

"I don't know," answered the Frenchman.

"Sounds as though some one had been making a speech and had got an encore."

"Hush!" said the artist, suddenly grasping Brackett's arm. "Lisden!"

From the platform above them came down the familiar periods of Captain Carroll's lecture.

Brackett stared at the painter in great surprise. "It isn't the Irishman, is it?" he asked.

"Hush!" said the artist again. "Lisden a liddle."

The voice from above was speaking again. "It is as though you were now gazing on a vision of the decisive onslaught of the supreme moment of the greatest civil war known to the history of man —a mighty war of a mighty people who fought

their battles, not with hirelings and not with mercenaries, but with their own right arms, and who spent their own blood freely, and their children's blood, and the blood of their children's children!"

Again the applause broke forth.

"It is the captain's speech," cried Brackett; "but it doesn't sound like the captain's voice."

"It is de boy," said the artist, mounting the steps.

As they came out on top of the platform they saw Dick Harmony standing by the rail on one side, as Captain Carroll was wont to do; and they found him delivering the captain's speech, to which he had listened so often that he had unconsciously committed it to memory.

The artist and the journalist heard him out.

"The young feller's got it down fine, hasn't he?" said Brackett. "He takes himself seriously, too; he's talking just as though he had been in the battle himself."

"And vat harm is id?" asked the Frenchman.

When the lecture was ended Dick gravely answered the questions of some of the spectators, and then joined his friend in the centre of the platform.

"You've done us a good turn, Dick," said

Brackett; "and you've done it very well too. I've no doubt some of the people think you really were at the battle."

"Wasn't I?" asked Dick, doubtfully.

The journalist looked at the boy in astonishment and gave a low whistle. He was about to answer when the painter grasped his arm and led him aside.

"You say de boy did vell," he whispered; "vy not let him alone? He is not lying; he believes he vas dere."

"But he isn't telling the truth either," replied Brackett. "Still, we shall have to let him lecture till the captain gets on his legs again."

But the captain never got on his legs again. His wound refused to heal, and under the exhaustion of the pain the old soldier died at last, after an illness of less than a fortnight.

During his absence Dick Harmony had delivered his lecture whenever there was a sufficient gathering of spectators. By frequent repetition of the words he had been confirmed in his belief that he was speaking of what he had seen himself. There was a mental metempsychosis by which he transformed himself into the old soldier. He knew that he was Dick Harmony, but he felt also

that he was a veteran of the Army of the Potomac. He had assimilated the information derived from the captain, and with the knowledge he seemed to think that he had acquired also the personality of the elder man.

III.

WHY MR. ROBERT WHITE DID NOT USE THE STORY.

The next afternoon as Mr. Robert White was again leaving the office of the editor of the *Gotham Gazette*, the chief checked him once more with a query.

"By the way, White, have you found a story for us yet?" he asked.

"I think I have," was White's answer. "But I want to get expert testimony before I write it."

"Don't make it too scientific—the simply pathetic is what the women like best, you know."

"Well," rejoined White, "the story that I hope to tell is simple enough certainly, and I don't know but what it is pathetic too in a way, although I confess I thought it comic at first."

"I'm not sure," said the editor, "that I altogether approve of a story about which the author is in doubt, for then he is likely to puzzle the

reader, and no woman likes that. However, I know I can rely on you. Good-afternoon."

Robert White went to his desk and wrote his daily article—it was on "Boston as the True Site of the Garden of Eden"—and he sent it up to the composing-room. Then he walked up-town briskly and entered the College Club, where he found Doctor Cheever awaiting him. Doctor Cheever made a specialty of diseases of the mind. He was also White's family physician, and he and the journalist were old friends; they had been classmates at college.

"Am I late?" White inquired.

"You asked me for 6.30 and it is now 6.31," Doctor Cheever answered.

"Let us proceed to the dining-room at once," White replied. "The dinner is ordered."

"Then, as your mind is now at rest about that most important matter, perhaps you can inform me why you asked me here."

"Sit down, and you shall know," said White; and he told the doctor the story of Dick Harmony's accident and its consequences, and the strange delusion under which the boy was laboring.

Doctor Cheever listened most attentively, now and again interrupting to put a pertinent question.

When White had finished his story his friend said, "This is a very interesting case you have been describing. I should like to see the boy for myself."

"That's just what I was going to suggest," replied White.

And so, when their dinner was over, they walked down the broad avenue to the cyclorama. A throng was already gathered on the platform, and the young voice of Dick Harmony could be heard indicating the main features of the great fight.

When in his revolving around the outer rail, the boy came near Doctor Cheever, the physician asked a few questions about the battle-field, and so led the conversation easily to Dick's own share in it. The answers were not unlike those the boy had given Robert White on the preceding evening. Doctor Cheever was gentle and kindly, but his questions were more searching than White's had been.

When they had seen and heard enough, the doctor and the journalist came out into the street.

"Well?" asked Doctor Cheever.

"I wanted you to come here," White answered, "and examine the boy for yourself."

"Why?" queried the doctor.

"Because I think you can give me special information as to his mental status."

"It is an interesting case, certainly," Doctor Cheever replied, "but not altogether abnormal. The boy is perfectly honest in his false statements; he is saying only what he now believes to be strictly true. He wanted to have been at that battle; and after the injury to his head his will was able to master his memory. That he now thinks and asserts that he was at the battle of Gettysburg, you may call an astounding example of self-deception, and so should I, perhaps, if I had not seen other instances quite as startling."

"Just as George IV. came to believe that he was present in the flesh at Waterloo," suggested White.

"Precisely," the Doctor returned; "but sometimes it happens without insanity or a broken head."

"I'm glad to have your opinion as to the boy's mental condition."

"What did you want it for?" was Doctor Cheever's next question.

"To use in a story," said the journalist. "I think I can work this up into a sketch for the

Sunday paper—a sketch which would not be lacking in a certain novelty."

"Better not," remarked the doctor, dryly.

"Why not?" inquired White, a little provoked by his friend's manner.

"Why not?" Doctor Cheever repeated. "Why not?—why, because the boy might read it."

SCHERZI & SKIZZEN.

SCHERZI & SKIZZEN.

I.

SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS.

THE dining-room of the Babel Club has a large bay-window which projects into Piccadilly; and at a table in this bay-window four men were dining one evening in July. It had been raining nearly all day, but at last the clearing-up shower had come and gone; a few clouds dappled the blue sky in the dropping twilight, and a fresh, moist breeze blew softly across the Green Park, bearing a suggestion of summer into the dark dining-room of the club.

The Babel Club, as most people know, is a haunt of the polyglot. No man is eligible who cannot speak three languages. But the unwritten law of the club, more powerful than that of the Medes and Persians, decreed that no language but English should ever be heard within its walls, ex-

cept in cases of necessity; and some of its more vainglorious members thought that the English spoken in the club house was singular in its union of purity and freedom. There were many foreigners who came to the Babel as members or as guests, but it was rarely that one of them did not use our idiom as though it were his own.

Of the four men seated in the bay-window of the dining-room on this fair evening in July, two were Englishmen and two were not. Of the Englishmen, one was tall, handsome, blond, full-bearded, pleasant-spoken, and shy; the other was short, plump, dark, and sallow, and there was a trace of the Hebrew in his broad face. Of the two who were not English, one was a Hungarian, and looked like a Turk, with his rich olive skin; and the other was an American, with straggling brown whiskers and an inadequate and doubtful beard which girt a face solemn and almost forbidding in repose, but gayly lighting up when a smile showed the level white teeth.

They were old friends, all of them, and they liked to dine with each other at least once a year. The last time they had sat down to meat together had been in Rome. Some chance word recalled this former banquet, and the American said that

he had dreamt that when next they dined together it would be in Yokohama.

"Why not?" asked the shorter Englishman.

"Why not, indeed?" repeated his blond countryman, whose name was Cecil Cameron.

"Speaking of dreams," the Hungarian remarked, "I must tell you a strange one I had last night. I dreamed that I was on a horse and riding a steeple-chase, a thing I have never done in my life, fond as I am of horses. The mare I was riding was as black as night——"

"I should say that was the proper color for a nightmare," interrupted the American, Steele Wyoming by name.

"I was riding a black mare, as I said," the Hungarian continued, ignoring this needless remark, "and I had cleared all but three of the obstacles. As I came to the next—a stiff hurdle—I suddenly noticed that I was wearing, not the fit attire of a gentleman-rider, but a strange, loose robe—in fact, a sort of shroud. I cleared the hurdle, and went along to the stone wall, which was next before me. When I was about ten yards from it I became conscious that there were shafts on each side of me, and that my horse was harnessed to a hansom. I confess that I wondered how I should succeed in

leaping the stone wall. It was too late to hesitate. I went on, and I went over without mishap. The mare gathered herself well together, and rose in the air as easily as before, and the hansom rose with her. My brother is a great stickler for etiquette, and I remember feeling glad that he was not present to reprove me for riding a steeplechase in a shroud with my horse harnessed to a hansom. Yet I had but little time for any self-congratulation, as the water-jump yawned before me—the last leap of all, and the most difficult. Again, as I approached the obstacle, I made a discovery: this time I became conscious that another horse was rapidly overtaking me—a fiery roan, ridden by the Devil in person—a red devil, like Mephisto in the opera. I glanced back at him in surprise; and then, to my horror, I saw for the first time that Death was the driver of the cab behind me. Perched aloft in the high seat of the hansom was a bare and fleshless skeleton, with a white cowl over his sightless head. The roan and his red rider gained on me, and we took the water-jump in the same stride. I cleared it and rode in, an easy winner. My rival miscalculated; his horse made a false step, and the roan and his red rider fell into the ditch together. There was a

sudden hissing, and a mass of steam rose up, dark and crackling, like a thunder-cloud, and then——"

"And then?" echoed Cecil Cameron.

"And then I awoke—that was all," the Hungarian answered.

"I'm like Charles Lamb," said the shorter Englishman. "I have a nightmare now and then, but I don't keep a stud of them."

"I do not wish to be hypercritical about any man's dream—I have had too many of my own which would not bear investigation," the American remarked, with a grave face, "but I understood you to say that the red devil rode a red horse."

"Yes," was the Hungarian's answer.

"I thought I had not mistaken you," the New Yorker returned. "Now, isn't red on red false heraldry?"

"I suppose that black death on a pale horse is a more proper coat," Cameron suggested. "Did I ever tell you my dream about the Devil, Wyoming?"

"No," was the American's answer.

"Well, it wasn't about the Devil personally; it was about his legal residence. I had been sitting up late reading that new theological romance, 'A Chartered Libertine,' and it had worn on my

nerves so that when I went to bed at last I could not sleep. It must have been nearly daybreak when I fell into a troubled slumber. I dreamed many strange dreams, very complicated, all of them, twisted and contorted, fantastic and impossible, as is the manner of dreams. Finally, I dreamed that I was dead, and that I had gone straightway to Hell, a murky, sulphurous space, vague and indistinct, with confused vistas stretching away on every side, down all of which I felt compelled to walk. And so I toiled on for hours, as though in search of some unknown goal. When, in the end, after a long day of wearing fatigue, there began to be visible before me, through the rolling smoke of the pit, a mystic glow toward which I was impelled irresistibly; when I approached I discovered that this brightness was caused by innumerable gas-jets, only that they were immeasurably more glaring than any gas-jet. Their brilliancy blinded me, and the curling fumes of the sulphur rolled up beside me; and so it was that I could not read the legend that these flames formed. The gas-jets, if gas-jets they were, were apparently grouped in letters of fire, such as are used for illuminations in honor of the royal family. All at once I aroused strength to struggle

against the fascination which drew me on, but I strove in vain. The fiery sentence blazed as before, and toward it I was attracted as by a mighty loadstone. With every step the heat increased. With every step the strain on my eyeballs seemed to double; the flaming letters flickered before me in all fantastic shapes, now like children playing innocently, and now like wicked imps mocking at my impotence. At last a sudden stillness fell on the place, the hot blast which blew paused for a moment, the thronging clouds parted as though by chance, the flickering flames blazed firmly, and, in this second's respite, I was able to read the legend written in letters of fire. It was a warning I had read before in happier hours. It ran: 'Please keep off the grass.'"

"But I do not think that is quite as queer as my dream," commented the Hungarian.

"It is a good dream," the American remarked, "a very good dream indeed."

"It is the best dream I ever heard," said the man who had told it, "excepting Alfred's here," and he indicated his fellow-countryman.

"And in what way is Alfred's stranger than yours, or the one we heard before yours?" asked the American.

"In this way—the dreams which have been told to-night are both out of nature, you will admit that, won't you, Wyoming?" said the taller Englishman.

"Yes, I am willing to admit that," Wyoming replied; "they are out of nature—and one of them was out of heraldry, too, as I said before; but then it is the nature of all dreams to be out of nature. I never heard of but one that was not."

"Then when you hear Alfred's you will have heard of two," returned his opponent.

Both the Hungarian and the American looked toward Alfred.

The sallow little Englishman blushed a little, and then said: "I will tell you my dream if you like. I dreamt it Christmas night, three years ago."

"That is odd," interrupted the American, "because I dreamed my dream Christmas night, three years ago."

"If you would like to tell yours now," began Alfred, courteously; he had always an air of high breeding.

"No, thank you," Wyoming replied, "I'll tell mine after yours, if I think it will bear telling then. In the meantime you have the floor."

"It was on Christmas night, three years ago," said Alfred. "I went to bed a little before midnight and I fell asleep almost at once, and I began to dream. What I dreamt was this: I was in France and I had received an invitation from a lady to pay her a visit at her château. In my dream I knew the château and I knew the lady. When awake, I had never heard of either—and I have since made inquiry and no such person exists, nor is there any such château. But in my dream I had met the lady before, and her husband, and I knew that her married life was not happy, and that she kept open house for the sake of distraction. I knew also that many pleasant people were to be met within her gates; and, therefore, I accepted her invitation, only wondering why it had been sent, as my acquaintance with her was very slight. When I arrived, late in the afternoon, at the railway station where I was to alight, I found a carriage awaiting me and the groom handed me a note. This was from the lady, telling me that the guest, whose room I was in turn to occupy, had been ill, and that he would be able to depart only the next morning, and that, therefore, an apartment had been taken for me at the village inn for the night. The carriage would

take me there, and, waiting while I dressed, it would bring me to the château to dinner. I found the rooms at the inn comfortable, and I had a bath and dressed leisurely. When I entered the château a lackey told me that *Madame la Marquise* wished to see me.—What's the matter, Wyoming, are you ill?"

"No—no—it's nothing," answered the American, hastily. "Go on. Your story interests me strangely, as they say on the stage."

The Englishman waited while Wyoming filled a glass of champagne and began to drink it. Then he resumed his tale.

"I followed the lackey through several handsome apartments to the spacious drawing-room, at one end of which was a smaller room reserved by the lady of the house for herself. After the servant had announced me, in obedience to a gesture of hers, he released the heavy curtains which draped the wide door I had entered by, and which now shut me in with my hostess. I found her lying on a sofa, 'dallying and dangerous,' as Charles Lamb describes Peg Woffington in Hogarth's portrait. She was a very handsome woman, although no longer in her first youth. As she greeted me cordially and motioned to a seat

by her side, I saw that there were tears in her eyes. In two minutes more I was proffering my sympathy, and she was telling me how miserably she was misunderstood by the frivolous people about her, and most of all by her husband, who could not comprehend the ethereal aspirations of her soul. In a pathetic gesture she stretched forth her hand—a hand of singular beauty— and I took it in mine. She did not withdraw it, but she looked at me reproachfully. At this moment the curtains were parted violently, her husband strode into the room followed by his brother. He paused just beyond the threshold and glared at me. For a moment we looked each other in the eye. Then he said, peremptorily : '*Sortez, Monsieur !*' What was I to do ? I glanced at the lady, and, interpreting her expression as best I could, I bowed and left the room. A minute more and I was on my way back to the village inn on foot. As I walked I had bitter thoughts ; I foresaw a needless duel ; I knew that there was no possibility of explanation to a husband enraged by jealousy. At the inn I had a bit of dinner ; I read a few chapters of a French novel, feeling myself strangely like its despicable hero ; and then I went to bed and to sleep. In the morning there

came a knock at my door, and a letter was handed in. Here, I thought, is the challenge. Now I must go out and stand up before an absurd Frenchman whom I scarcely know, and he will try to kill me. So thinking, I opened the letter. It was not from the husband, but from the wife. It was not a challenge ; it was an appeal. She had succeeded in explaining everything to her husband, who begged me to accept his sincere regrets for his hasty and inconsiderate action. Still, as it would recall an unpleasant scene if I were to come to the château just then, she suggested that I should postpone my visit until the next year. I confess that I was only too delighted to get out of the ridiculous scrape, and I did not care whether or not I ever saw the château again. I ordered my breakfast and dressed. Then the sun was pouring in at the window, and I read the lady's letter again. As I saw it in the full daylight it seemed as though there was something unusual about it. I examined it carefully, and then I discovered what the matter was. The letter I held in my hand, apparently in the writing of the lady, was a lithographed form!"

"That is very curious," the Hungarian remarked, as the Englishman ended.

"It is rather curious," said the American.

"Then you will confess now," cried the tall, blonde Englishman, "that there are two dreams not out of nature—Alfred's and yours?"

"No," returned Wyoming, quickly.

"Why not?"

"Because I still know only one dream not out of nature. Alfred's dream and my dream are one and the same."

Alfred turned and faced Wyoming with a start of surprise.

"Do you mean to say," he asked, "that you also have dreamt my dream?"

"Yes," calmly replied the American.

"Impossible!" said Alfred's countryman; then he corrected himself hastily; "I mean that it is improbable."

"It is so improbable that I was staggered as Alfred told his story," Wyoming returned. "But, improbable or not, it is the fact, and I think I can prove it."

He felt in the breast pocket of his coat and then turned to Alfred.

"Do you remember the name of the château?" he asked.

"Yes," Alfred answered.

"And of the lady?"

"Yes."

"Was it the Château Sazerac?"

"Yes!" cried Alfred, "how do you know?"

The American smiled gently.

"I know," he said, "because I dreamed the same dream on the same night you did."

"The name of the lady?" suggested the Hungarian.

"True," Wyoming went on. "And was the lady the wife of the Marquis de la Tour-Martel?"

"She was," answered the man who had told the dream, "but how in——"

"One question more," interrupted the American; "do you think you would recognize the letter lithographed in fac-simile of the lady's handwriting?"

"Of course I should," was the answer. "Why do you ask?"

"I dreamt that I was invited to the Château Sazerac; and I met the Marquise de la Tour-Martel; and I was ordered out by her husband; and I received a letter from her explaining all; and begging me to go away." Wyoming spoke rapidly. "But my adventure went further than yours. When I was awakened from my dream, I was hold-

ing a piece of paper in my hand. I took it to the window, and it was the lithographed circular in the writing of Madame de la Tour-Martel. I have it now." He thrust his hand again into his breast pocket, and drew forth a paper. "Here it is. Do you recognize it?" he asked.

Alfred seized the letter eagerly. One glance was sufficient. It fell from his hands.

"Yes," he said, "it is the same."

There was a moment of silence.

The Hungarian was the first to speak.

"Let us go up into the smoking-room for our coffee," he said. "There is an odor of cooking here."

II.

CHESTERFIELD'S POSTAL-CARDS TO HIS SON.

The address on all the postal-cards was the same. It was as follows :

Master A. Lincoln Chesterfield,
Military & Classical Institute,
Tarrytown, N. Y.

The first postal-card contained the following message :

N. Y., 3/1/80.

My Dear Boy : You are big enough to go to meeting barefoot, as the Yankee captain said to me in '55 when I ran away to sea, no older than you are now. I expect you to hoe your own row, as I'm off by the 10.30 Pacific express. I've no time for long letters, but I'll drop you a postal-card of advice now and then. Rule No. 1 : Tell

the truth. Rule No. 2: Show the sand that's in you. Verbum sap-head, as the foreman used to say when I ran a country weekly in '68.

Your aff'te Father,
J. Quincy A. Chesterfield.

The second postal-card:

LEADVILLE, COL., 17/1/80.

DEAR BOY: It's as cold here as the north end of a gravestone. I'm glad you're getting a good grip on the classics. Latin is useful: get the inside track and give the mare her head, as I heard the sports say in Cal., when I was lecturing in '75 on "Rum and Reform." Don't be scared of Greek either—especially as you haven't begun it yet. Rule 3: Never borrow trouble; it's no good crossing a river before you get there.

Your affectionate Father.

P. S.—The mine is doing A 1.

The third postal-card:

CHICAGO, 3/2/80.

DEAR BOY: Sorry to hear you fought that Smith—a little bit of a cuss, looking like a bar of soap after a hard day's wash. I knew his father

in '69, when I was in the Conn. legislature. He's a pretty poor shoat, as we used to say in Cinn. in '60, when I was a telegraph clerk. Let the fellow alone. Rule 4: Keep out of a row, if you can. Rule 5: If you can't keep out, go in head-first and fight like a fire-zouave. It's the first fight that prevents more; just as we used to nail the skin of a chipmunk to the barn to warn off the rest.

Y'r Father.

The fourth postal-card:

OMAHA, 18/2/80.

DEAR BOY: A difference of opinion makes horse-races, as I've heard many a time in Ky., when I was a walking gent. on the southern circuit, in '58. But now you've whaled the Smith boy, go easy. The mine gets better and better.

Your Father.

The fifth postal-card:

ON PALACE CAR "DAKOTA," ILL. C. C. RY., 29/2/80.

D'R BOY: The mine is splendid. Over two millions in sight; and your revered dad owns a whole and undivided 1/5. Of course, I'll send you the $10. Rule No. 6: Pay C. O. D. always. I

was clerk for an auctioneer in '57, and I saw that if a man don't pay on the nail, he soon gets sold out under the hammer. Tell the principal to draw on me for amt. due for schooling.

Y'r Father.

The sixth postal-card:

S. F., 21/3/80.

D'R BOY: Yours rec'd. I taught school myself in '66, and I found all the boys knew more than I did. Rule 7: Don't think too much of yourself. The sun would shine, even if the cock didn't crow.

J. Quincy A. Chesterfield.

The seventh postal-card:

LEADVILLE, 29/3/80.

DEAR ABE: Stick to the French Grammar; it isn't easy. When I studied it in the trenches before Richmond in '64 the irregular verbs nearly threw me, but I mounted them every day as regularly as I did guard—though I didn't hone for it, as Johnny Reb used to say. What should I have done in Europe in '76, when I was introducing Cal. wines, if I'd not known French? Rule 8:

Learn all the foreign tongues you can. Rule 9: Learn to hold your own.

Y'r aff. Father.

The eighth postal-card:

CHICAGO, 30/4/80.

D'R BOY: I've had no time to write. I've gone into big spec with a man I first met in '65 when I took photos in Boston. They call Boston a good place to hail from: he and I got out of it quick, so as to hail from it as soon as possible. How do you get on with your mathematics?

Your Father,

J. Quincy A. Chesterfield.

The ninth postal-card:

ST. LOUIS, 10/5/80.

DEAR ABE: I am sorry the arithmetic teacher is going to leave. I hope your next one will be as good. As I found in '59 when I was a surveyor, it's a handy thing to have figures at the ends of your fingers. The spec looks bigger still. We've taken in the man who edited the N. Y. daily on which I was a reporter in '67.

Y'r affectionate Father.

The tenth postal-card:

LEADVILLE, 20/5/80.

D'R BOY: The mine is paying big money and I'm putting it all in the spec—for a permanent investment, as Uncle Dan'l said when I was on the Street in '72, before the panic made me sell my seat in the board. I've struck a streak of luck sure. Rule 10: When in luck, crowd things.

J. Quincy A. Chesterfield.

The eleventh postal-card:

LEADVILLE, 13/6/80.

MY DEAR ABE: Mine looks badly; spec looks worse. But I don't give in; I've Yankee grit. I believe if a Yankee was lying at the point of death, he'd whittle it off to pick his teeth with. But I'm worried and hurried. Tell the principal I'll remit the quarter now due in a week or two.

J. Q. A. C.

The twelfth postal-card.

N. Y., 20/6/80.

MY DEAR BOY: The spec has caved in and all that's left of that whole and undivided 1/5 of mine has gone to pay the loss. Y'r father is as badly off as he was in '65 when he peddled a History of

the Rebellion, or in '73 when he went to Fla. to manage an orange plantation. I must have time to look around. Telegraph me at once if the principal has not a teacher of mathematics yet. I'll apply for the place. I shall be glad to be with you again, my Abe.

Your affectionate Father

The thirteenth postal-card:

GRAND CENTRAL DEPOT, N. Y., 21/6/80.

D'R BOY: Y'r telegram rec'd. Can't accept place. Have sent ck. for quarter due. Leave 3:45 for China to introduce American inventions. Will write fully on P. M. steamer. Shall be back in 8 or 10 mo's.—unless I run down to Australia. I think there's a spec in patent medicines down there.

Bless you, my boy.

Y'r Father,

J. Quincy A. Chesterfield.

III.

IN A BOB-TAIL CAR.

It was about noon of a dark day late in November, and a long-threatened drizzle of hail chilled the air, as Harry Brackett came out of the Apollo House and stood on the corner of Fourth Avenue, waiting for a cross-town car. He was going down-town to the office of the *Gotham Gazette* to write up an interview he had just had with the latest British invader of these United States, Lady Smith-Smith, the fair authoress of the very popular novel, 'Smile and be a Villain Still,' five rival editions of which were then for sale everywhere in New York. Harry Brackett intended to ride past Union Square to Sixth Avenue in the cross-town car, and then to go to the *Gotham Gazette* by the elevated railway, so he transferred five cents for the fare of the latter and five cents for the fare of the former from his waistcoat pocket to a little pocket in his overcoat. Then

he buttoned the overcoat tightly about him, as the raw wind blew harshly across the city from river to river. He looked down the street for the car; it was afar off, on the other side of Third Avenue, and he was standing on the corner of Fourth Avenue.

"A bob-tail car," said Harry Brackett to himself, "is like a policeman: it is never here just when it is wanted. And yet it is a necessary evil—like the policeman again. Perhaps there is here a philosophical thought that might be worked up as a comic editorial article for the fifth column. 'The Bob-tail car'—why, the very name is humorous. And there are lots of things to be said about it. For instance, I can get something out of the suggestion that the heart of a coquette is like a bob-tail car, there is always room for one more; but I suppose I must not venture on any pun about 'ringing the belle.' Then I can say that the bob-tail car is a one-horse concern, and is therefore a victim of the healthy American hatred of one-horse concerns. It has no past; no gentleman of the road ever robbed its passengers; no road-agent nowadays would think of 'holding it up.' Perhaps that's why there is no poetry about a bob-tail car, as there is about a stage-coach.

Even Rudolph Vernon, the most modern of professional poets, wouldn't dream of writing verses on 'Riding in a Bob-tail Car.' Wasn't it Heine who said that the monks of the Middle Ages thought that Greek was a personal invention of the devil, and that he agreed with them? That's what the bob-tail car is—a personal invention of the devil. The stove-pipe hat, the frying-pan, the tenement-house, and the bob-tail car—these are the choicest and the chief of the devil's gifts to New York. Why doesn't that car come? confound it! Although it cannot swear itself, it is the cause of much swearing."

Just then the car came lumbering along and bumping with a repeated jar as its track crossed the tracks on Fourth Avenue. Harry Brackett jumped on it as it passed the corner where he stood. His example was followed by a stranger, who took the seat opposite to him.

As the car sped along toward Broadway, Harry Brackett mechanically read, as he had read a dozen times before, the printed request to place the exact fare in the box. "Suppose I don't put it in?" he mused; "what will happen? The driver will ask for it—if he has time and happens to think of it. This is very tempting to a man who wants

to try the Virginia plan of readjusting his debts. Here is just the opportunity for anyone addicted to petty larceny. I think I shall call that article 'The Bob-tail Car as a Demoralizer.' It is most demoralizing for a man to feel that he can probably evade the payment of his fare, since there is no conductor to ask for it. However, I suppose the main reliance of the company is on the honesty of the individual citizen, who would rather pay his debts than not. I doubt if there is any need to dun the average American for five cents."

Harry Brackett lowered his eyes from the printed notice at which he had been staring unconsciously for a minute, and they fell on the man sitting opposite to him—the man who had entered the car as he did.

"I wonder if he is the average American?" thought Brackett. "He hasn't paid his fare yet. I wonder if he will? It isn't my business to dun him for it; and yet I'd like to know whether his intentions are honorable or not."

The car turned sharply into Broadway, and then came to a halt to allow two young ladies to enter. A third young lady escorted them to the car, and kissed them affectionately, and said:

"Good-by! You will be *sure* to come again! I have enjoyed your visit so much."

Then the two young ladies kissed her, and they said, both speaking at once and very rapidly:

"Oh, yes. We've had *such* a good time! We'll write you! And you *must* come out to Orange and see us soon! Good-by! Good-by! Remember us to your mother! *Good-by!*"

At last the sweet sorrow of this parting was over; the third young lady withdrew to the sidewalk; the two young ladies came inside the car; the other passengers breathed more freely; the man opposite to Harry Brackett winked at him slyly; and the car went on again.

There was a vacant seat on the side of the car opposite to Harry Brackett—or, at least, there would have been one if the ladies on that side had not, with characteristic coolness, spread out their skirts so as to occupy the whole space. The two young ladies stood for a moment after they had entered the car; they looked for a seat, but no one of the other ladies made a sign of moving to make room for them. The man opposite to Harry Brackett rose and proffered his seat. The ladies did not thank him, or even so much as look at him.

"*You* take it, Nelly," said one.

"I sha'n't do anything of the sort. I'm not a *bit* tired!" returned the other. "I *insist* on your sitting down!"

"But I'm not tired *now*."

"Louise Valeria Munson," her friend declared, with humorous emphasis, "if you don't sit right down, I'll call a *policeman!*"

"Well, I guess there's room for us both," said Louise Valeria Munson; "I'm sure there ought to be."

By this time some of the other ladies on the seat had discovered that they were perhaps taking up a little more than their fair share of space, and there was a readjustment of frontier. The vacancy was slightly broadened, and both young ladies sat down.

The man who had got in just after Harry Brackett, and who had given up his seat, stood in the centre of the car with his hand through a strap. But he made no effort to pay his fare. The driver rang his bell, the passengers looked at each other inquiringly, and one of the two young ladies who had just seated themselves produced a dime, which was passed along and dropped into the fare-box in accordance with the printed instructions of the company.

Three ladies left the car just before it turned into Fourteenth Street; and after it had rounded the curve two elderly gentlemen entered and sat down by the side of Harry Brackett. The man who had not paid his fare kindly volunteered to drop their money into the box, but did not put in any of his own. Harry Brackett was certain of this, for he had watched him closely.

The two elderly gentlemen continued a conversation begun before they entered the car. "I'll tell you," said one of them, so loudly that Harry Brackett could not help overhearing, "the most remarkable thing that man Skinner ever did. One day he got caught in one of his amusing little swindles; by some slip-up of his ingenuity he did not allow himself quite rope enough, and so he was brought up with a round turn in the Tombs. He got two years in Sing Sing, but he never went up at all—he served his time by substitute!"

"What?" cried his companion, in surprise.

"He did!" answered the first speaker. "That's just what he did! He had a substitute to go to State's Prison for him, while he went up to Albany to work for his own pardon!"

"How did he manage that?" asked the other,

in involuntary admiration before so splendid an audacity.

"You've no idea how fertile Skinner was in devices of all kinds," replied the gentleman who was telling the story. "He got out on bail, and he arranged for a light sentence if he pleaded guilty. Then one day, suddenly, a man came into court, giving himself up as Skinner, pleading guilty, and asking for immediate sentence. Of course nobody inquired too curiously into the identity of a self-surrendered prisoner who wanted to go to Sing Sing. Well——"

The car stopped at the corner of Fifth Avenue; several passengers alighted and a party of three ladies came in. There were two vacant seats by the side of Harry Brackett, and as he thought these three ladies wished to sit together, he gave up his place and took another farther down the car. Here he found himself again opposite the man who had entered the car almost simultaneously with him, and who had not yet paid his fare. Harry Brackett wondered whether this attempt to steal a ride was intentional, or whether it was merely inadvertent. His consideration of this metaphysical problem was interrupted by another conversation. His right-hand neighbor, who

was apparently a physician, was telling the friend next to him of the strange desires of convalescents.

"I think," said he, "that the queerest request I ever heard was down in Connecticut. There was a man there, a day-laborer, but a fine young fellow, who had a crowbar driven clean through his head by a forgotten blast. Well, I happened to be the first doctor on the spot, and it was nip-and-tuck whether anything could be done for him; it was a most interesting case. But he was in glorious condition physically. I found out afterward that he was the champion sprint-runner of the place. I got him into the nearest hotel, and in time I managed to patch him up as best I could. At last we pulled him through, and the day came when I was able to tell him that I thought he would recover, and that he was quite out of danger, and that all he had to do was to get his strength back again as fast as he could, and he would be all right again soon. He was lying in bed emaciated and speechless when I said this; and when I added that he could have anything to eat he might fancy, his eyes brightened, and his lips moved. 'Is there anything in particular you would prefer?' I asked him, and his lips moved

again as though he had a wish to express. You see, he hadn't spoken once since the accident, but he seemed to be trying to find his tongue, so I bent over the bed and put my head over his mouth, and finally I heard a faint voice saying, 'Quail on toast!' and as I drew back in surprise, he gave me a wink. Feeble as his tones were, there was infinite gusto in the way he said the words. I suppose he had never had quail on toast in all his life; probably he had dreamed of it as an unattainable luxury."

"Did he get it?" asked the doctor's friend.

"He got it every day," answered the doctor, "until he said he didn't want any more. I remember another man who——"

But now, with many a jolt and jar, the car was rattling noisily across Sixth Avenue under the dripping shadow of the station of the elevated railway. Harry Brackett rose to his feet, and as he did so he glanced again at the man opposite to him, to see if, even then, at the eleventh hour, he did intend to pay his fare. But the man caught Harry Brackett's eye hardily, and looked him in the face with a curiously knowing smile.

There was something very odd about the expression of the man's face, so Harry Brackett

thought, as he left the car and began to mount the steps which led to the station of the elevated railroad. He could not help thinking that there was a queer suggestion in that smile—a suggestion of a certain complicity on his part; it was as though the owner of the smile had ventured to hint that they were birds of a feather.

"Confound his impudence!" said Harry Brackett to himself as he stood before the window of the ticket agent.

Then he put his fingers into the little pocket in his overcoat and took from it two five-cent pieces. And he knew at once why the man opposite had smiled so impertinently;—it was the smile of the pot at the kettle.

IV.

BY TELEPHONE.

It was a suggestion of Hawthorne's—was it not?—that in these more modern days Cupid has no doubt discarded his bow and arrow in favor of a revolver. There are ladies of a beauty so destructive that in their presence the little god would find a Gatling gun his most useful weapon. It is safe to say that the son of Venus does not disdain the latest inventions of Vulcan for the use of Mars, and that he slips off his bandage whenever he goes forth to replenish his armory. Lovers are quick to follow his example, and the house of love has all the modern improvements. Nowadays the sighing swain may tryst by telegraph and the blushing bride must elope by the lightning-express; and if ever there were an Orlando in the streets of New York, he would have to carve his Rosalind's name on the telegraph poles.

If the appliances of modern science had been at the command of Cupid in the past as they are in

the present, the story of many a pair of famous lovers would be other than it is. Leander surely would not have set out to swim to his mistress, had international storm-warnings been sent across the Atlantic, which Hero could have conveyed to him by the Hellespont Direct Cable Company. Paris might never have escaped scot-free with the fair Helen if the deserted husband and monarch had been able to pursue the fugitives at once in his swift steam yacht, the *Menelaus*. And had Friar Laurence been a subscriber to the Verona Telephone Association, that worthy priest would have been able to ring up Romeo and to warn him that the elixir of death which Juliet had taken was but a temporary narcotic, and then might Romeo find that

> Beauty's ensign yet
> Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
> And death's pale flag is not advanced there.

***

As the centuries succeed one another, society becomes more complicated and science develops in all directions; thus is an equilibrium maintained, and the modern lover is aided by the

appliances of science as he is hampered by the intricacies of society. Even the charity fair, that final triumph of the amateur swindler, and the telephone, that unpoetic adjunct of the shop and the office, can be forced to do love's bidding and to serve as instruments in the cunning hands of Cupid.

When the young ladies who were spending the summer at the Seaside House at Sandy Beach resolved to get up a fair for the benefit of the Society for the Supply of Missionaries to Cannibal Countries, they had no more hearty helper than Mr. Samuel Brassey, a young gentleman recently graduated from Columbia College. He was alert, energetic, ingenious, and untiring; and when at last the fair was opened, the young ladies declared that they did not know what they would have done without him. He it was who helped to decorate the ball-room, and to arrange it as a mart for the vending of unconsidered trifles. He it was who devised the Japanese tea-stall for Mrs. Martin, and suggested that this portly and imposing dame should appear in a Japanese dressing-gown. He it was who aided the three Miss Pettitoes, then under Mrs. Martin's motherly wing, to set up their stands—the Well, where Miss Rebecca drew lemon-

ade for everyone that thirsted; the Old Curiosity Shop, where Miss Nelly displayed a helterskelter lot of orts and ends; and the Indian Wigwam, in the dark recesses of which Miss Cassandra, in the garb of Pocahontas, told fortunes.

To Miss Cassandra, who was the eldest and most austere of the three Miss Pettitoes, he suggested certain predictions for certain young men and maidens who were sure to apply to the soothsayer—predictions which seemed to her sufficiently vague and oracular, but which chanced to be pertinent enough to excite the liveliest emotions when they were imparted to the applicants. For Miss Nelly he wrote out many autographs of many famous persons, from Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra, to Queen Elizabeth and George Washington; the signatures of Shakespeare, of which there were a dozen, he declared to be eminently characteristic, as no two were spelled alike; and the sign-manual of Confucius he authorized her to proclaim absolutely unique, as he had copied it from the only tea-chest in the hotel. To him, also, the sirens of the bazar owed their absolute conviction of the necessity of giving no change. Furthermore, he elaborated a novel reversal of the principle of a reduction on taking a quantity; the autographs at

the Old Curiosity Shop, the glasses of attenuated lemonade at the Well, and the little fans at the Japanese tea-stall, were all at twenty-five cents each, three for a dollar. This device alone stamped him as a young man with a most promising head for business; and such Mr. Martin declared him; after asking if the autographs were genuine, and being promptly offered a "written guarantee from the maker."

From these details it will be seen that Mr. Samuel Brassey was on most friendly terms, not to say familiar, with Mrs. Martin and with her charges, the three Miss Pettitoes. He was equally frank and open with all the other young ladies in the hotel, except, it may be, with Miss Bessy Martin. In his relations with Mrs. Martin's handsome niece a persistent observer might have detected a constraint, often cast aside and often recurring. The rest of the girls met him with the sincerity and the unthinking cordiality which are marked characteristics of the young women of America, especially when they chance to be at a summer hotel. So indeed did Miss Martin—but to her his bearing was different. Toward the others he was kindly. To her he was devoted and yet reserved at times, as though under duress.

The least bashful of young men ordinarily, in her presence he found himself shy and not always able to compel his tongue to do his bidding. If she looked at him—and he was a pleasant-faced young fellow—he found himself wondering whether he was blushing or not. Out of her sight he was often miserable; and under her eyes he suffered an exquisite agony. He hovered about her as though he had words of the deepest import trembling on his tongue, but when he sat by her side on the piazza, or danced a Virginia reel opposite to her of a Saturday night, or walked with her to church of a Sunday morning, he had nothing to say for himself.

Whether or not Miss Martin had noted these symptoms, or what her opinion of Mr. Brassey might be or her feelings toward him, no man might know; these things were locked in her breast. The face of a virgin before the asking of the question is as inscrutable as the visage of the Sphinx propounding its riddle. Miss Martin treated Sam as she treated the other young men. She allowed him to help her in the organization of the Post-Office Department of the fair. She was to be the Post-Mistress; and with Sam aiding and abetting, a letter was prepared for every per-

son who could possibly apply for one—a missive not lacking in spice, and not always shown about by the recipient.

At Sam Brassey's suggestion the post-office had been arranged as a public pay station of the Seaside House Telephone Company—so a blue and white sign declared which hung over the corner of the ball-room where the letters were distributed. He had set up a toy telephone in the post-office with a line extending to a summer-house in the grounds about two hundred feet from the hotel. Any person who might pay twenty-five cents at the post-office was entitled to go to the summer-house and hold a conversation by wire. The questions which this casual converser might choose to put were answered promptly and pointedly, for Bessy Martin was a quick-witted and a keen-sighted girl.

So it happened that these telephone talks were a captivating novelty, and during the final evening of the fair the bell in the post-office rang frequently, and Miss Martin's conversation charmed many a quarter into the little box which Sam Brassey had contrived for her to store her takings.

Sam himself was constant in his attendance at

the post-office. However often Mrs. Martin or the three Miss Pettitoes might claim his services, he returned to Bessy as soon as he could. Yet he did not seem altogether pleased at the continual use of the telephone. As the evening wore on, a shadow of resolution deepened on his face. It was as though he had made a promise to himself, and thereafter was only biding his time before he should keep it.

About ten o'clock the ball-room began to empty as the crowd gathered in the dining-room, where the drawing for the grand prize was to take place. The Committee of Management had decided, early in the organization of the fair, not to allow any lotteries. Nevertheless a "subscription" had been opened for a handsome pair of cloisonné vases which Mr. Martin had presented, and every subscriber had a numbered ticket; and now, on the last evening of the fair, there was to be a "casting of lots" to discover to whom the vases might belong. This much the Committee of Management had permitted. The interest in the result of the "casting of lots" was so intense that most of the ladies who had charge of stalls abandoned them for a while and deserted to the dining-room.

Then Sam Brassey stepped up to the window of the post-office.

"Are you going to see the drawing of the prize, Miss Bessy?" he asked.

"No," she answered; "I shall stick to my post."

"That's all right!" he returned, and a smile lightened his face. "That's all right. Then here's my quarter."

So saying, he placed the coin before her and hurried away.

"But what's it for?" she cried. There was no reply, as he had already left the house.

The ball-room was almost empty by this time. Mr. Harry Brackett, who had been writing most amusing letters from Sandy Beach to the *Gotham Gazette*, was standing before the Well and sipping a glass of lemonade for which he had just handed Miss Rebecca a two-dollar bill, receiving no change.

"How much of this tipple have you had?" he asked her.

"Two big buckets full," she answered. "Why?"

Mr. Brackett made no reply, but began to peer earnestly among the vines which formed the bower and draped the well.

"What are you doing?" asked Miss Rebecca.

"I was looking for the other half of that lemon," he replied.

Then he offered her his arm, and they went off together into the dining-room to see who should win the prize.

Miss Bessy Martin was left quite alone in her corner of the ball-room. She was counting up her gains when the telephone bell rang sharply. Before she could put the money down and go to the instrument, there came a second impatient ting-a-ling.

"Somebody seems to be in a hurry," she said, as she took her station before the box and raised the receiver to her ear.

Then began one of those telephonic conversations which are as one-sided as any discussion in which a lady takes part, and which are quite as annoying to the listener. The torture of Tantalus was but a trifle compared with the suffering of an inquisitive person who is permitted to hear the putting of a question and debarred from listening to the answer. Fortunately, there was no one left in the ball-room near enough to the post-office corner to hear even the half of the conversation now to be set down.

"Hello, hello!" was the obligatory remark with which Bessy Martin began the colloquy across the wire.

Of course the response of her partner in the confabulation was as inaudible as he was invisible.

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Brassey, is it?"

. . . . . ?

"Yes. I wondered why you had run off so suddenly."

. . . . . ?

"You have paid your quarter, and you can talk to me just two minutes."

. . . . . ?

"I like to listen to you too."

. . . . . ?

"Of course, I didn't mean *that!* You ought to know me better."

. . . . . ?

"What did you say?"

. . . . . ?

"Not lately."

. . . . . ?

"Yes, she had on a blue dress, and I thought she looked like a fright—didn't you?"

. . . . . ?

"Who *were* you looking at then?"

. . . . . .?

"At me? O Mr. Brassey!"

. . . . . .?

"No; they are not here now."

. . . . . .?

"There's nobody here at all."

. . . . . .?

"Yes; I'm *all* alone—there isn't a creature in sight."

. . . . . .?

"I love secrets! Tell me!"

. . . . . .?

"Tell me now!"

. . . . . .?

"Why can't you tell me now? I'm just dying to know."

. . . . . .?

"I don't believe *you*'ll die."

. . . . . .?

"No, there isn't anybody here at all—nobody, nobody!"

. . . . . .?

"Besides, nobody can hear you but me."

. . . . . .?

"Of course, I'm glad to talk; what girl isn't?"

. . . . . .?

"Well, it is lonely here, just now."

. . . . . .?

"I can't chat half as well through a telephone as I can face to face."

. . . . . .?

"Oh, thank you, sir. That was really very pretty indeed! If you could see me, I'd blush!"

. . . . . .?

"Can you *really* see me in your heart?"

. . . . . .?

How poetic you are to-night!"

. . . . . .?

"I just *doat* on poetry!"

. . . . . .?

"Well, I do love other things too."

. . . . . .?

"O Mr. Brassey!"

. . . . . .?

"You take me so by surprise!"

. . . . . .?

"You really have startled me so!"

. . . . . .?

"I never *thought* of such a thing at all!"

. . . . . .?

"You *do?*"

. . . . . .?

"Really?"

. . . . . .?

"Very much?"

. . . . . .?

"With your whole heart?"

. . . . . .?

"I don't know *what* to say."

. . . . . .?

"But I can't say 'yes' all at once!"

. . . . . .?

"Well—I won't say 'no.'"

. . . . . .?

"But I really must have time to *think!*"

. . . . . .?

"An hour? No, a month at least—or a week, certainly!"

. . . . . .?

"It's cruel of you to want me to make up my mind all at once."

. . . . . .?

"No—no—*no!* I can't give you an answer right now."

. . . . . .?

"Don't be so unreasonable."

. . . . . .?

"Well—of course—I don't *hate* you!"

. . . . . .?

"Perhaps I do like you.'"

. . . . . .?

"Well—just a little, little, weeny, teeny bit."

. . . . . .?

"You are very impatient."

. . . . . .?

"Well, if you *must*, you can speak to Aunty."

. . . . . .?

"She's somewhere about."

. . . . . .?

"Of course, she isn't going away all of a sudden."

. . . . . .?

"Yes, I'll keep her if she comes here."

. . . . . ?

"Yes—yes—I'm all alone still."

. . . . . ?

"Good-by, Sam!"

Miss Bessy Martin hung up the receiver and turned away from the instrument. There was a flush on her cheeks and a light in her eyes. She recognized the novelty of her situation. She had just accepted an offer of marriage, and she was engaged to a young man whom she had not seen since he asked her to wed him. Her heart was

full of joy—and yet it seemed as though the betrothal were incomplete. She was vaguely conscious that something was lacking, although she knew not what.

Before she could determine exactly what might be this missing element of her perfect happiness, Mr. Samuel Brassey rushed in through the open door, flew across the ball-room, and sprang inside the partition of the post-office. Ere she could say "O Sam!" he had clasped her in his arms and kissed her.

She said "O Sam!" once more; but she was no longer conscious of any lacking ingredient of an engagement.

A minute later a throng of people began to pour back from the dining-room, and there were frequent calls for "Mr. Brassey" and "Sam."

With a heightened color, and with an ill-contained excitement, Mr. Samuel Brassey came out of the post-office in answer to this summons.

He found himself face to face with Mr. Martin, who held out his hand and cried:

"I congratulate you, Sam!"

The scarlet dyed the countenances of both Bessy and Sam, as he stammered:

"How—how did you know anything about it?"

Before Mr. Martin could answer, the three Miss Pettitoes and Mr. Harry Brackett came forward. Mr. Brackett bore in his arms the pair of cloisonné vases for which there had just been a "casting of lots."

Then Sam Brassey knew why Mr. Martin had congratulated him.

"You have won the prize!" cried Harry Brackett.

"I have—for a fact!" Sam Brassey answered, as he looked at Bessy Martin. Their eyes met, and they both laughed.

***

"Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps." Some he compels to sign the bond with pen and ink in black and white, and some he binds with a wire.

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