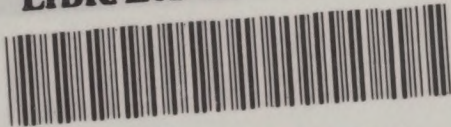


YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

WILLIAM LEE POPHAM

FT MEADE  
GenColl

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00020119536



Class PZ3

Book P815

Copyright N<sup>o</sup>. Y0

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

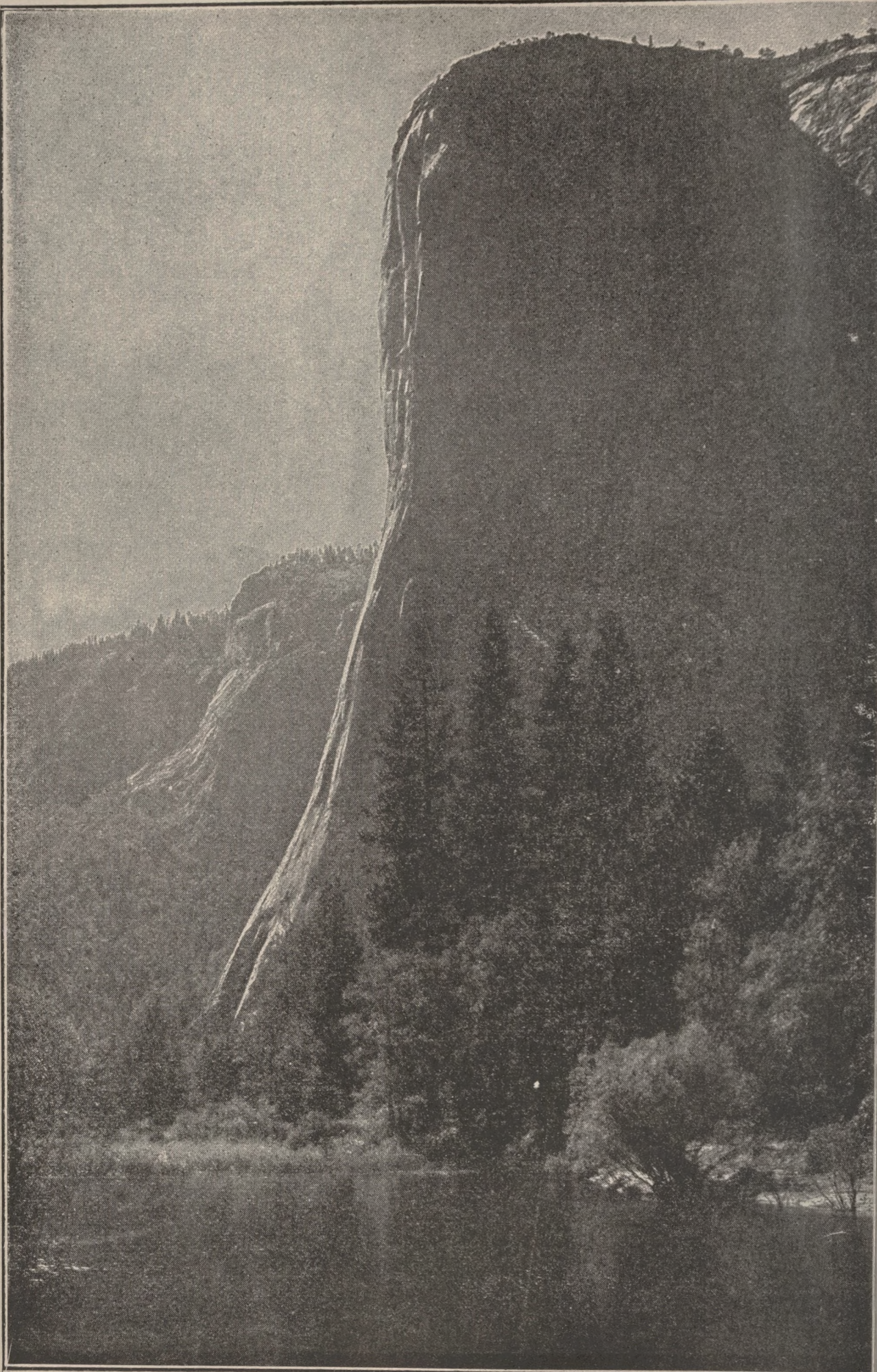






VERNAL FALLS, YOSEMITE VALLEY  
(350 feet from brink to base.)

Courtesy Southern Pacific.



EL CAPTIAN, YOSEMITE VALLEY.  
(3300 feet from base to top.)

Courtesy Southern Pacific.

## YOSEMITE VALLEY

---

The world-wide famous, emerald-tinted, wonderful Yosemite Valley is situated on the west coast of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains which divide California from the rest of the world. About 150 miles from San Francisco, and being about the central section of a range thirty-six miles in length and forty-eight in breadth—known as The Yosemite National Park, Yosemite Valley is a great gorge, about eight miles long by about three-quarters of a mile wide, running almost due east and west, and was discovered in 1851.

Yosemite Valley well deserves its fame as a world-wonder, with its granite domes and cliffs, its glacial canyons, its polished pavements and amphitheaters, its cataracts roaring over cliffs that lift their crests half a mile above the valley floor, its merry streams gleaming amid verdant groves and meadows furred with flowers.

Its center is a level park-like meadow thru which a tuneful river runs; a peaceful place where water-loving trees and plants and flowers adorn its lovely expanse.

Yosemite is a spot of infinite loveliness set as a resting-place amid the stress and turmoil of the mighty world-making of the mountains, serene from the stupendous labor of the storms, the lightnings and the avalanches of the upper range. And, all about the Valley, lies the High Sierra with its white ranks of peaks, its chains of lakes (more than 500 being in the National Park) and not far away, and still in the Park boundary, is the great forest of giant trees whose age and size are equaled nowhere else in the known world—and internationally famous as the "Big Trees of California."

In spring-time all the charming falls and cascades are full and most beautiful, and the Valley and mountain-borders are replete with full-blooming wild flowers. But as spring passes into summer the water-falls become smaller and flowers fewer.

Toward the end of August the sunshine grows hazy, announcing the coming of Indian summer, when the landscapes are more mellow and soft; the mountain light is tinged with pale purple and the warm, brooding days are full of life. The cool nights are very impressive and calm. At last when the flowers shall have survived a summer, full and rich with fragrant service, their duty done, the seeds preserved by Nature, to furnish future summers with their sweet blessings, the sighing pines tell the coming of "Winter Beautiful."

The delights of Yosemite beggar an attempt at description. Its cliffs and domes deceive all measurements of the eye, and penetrate the very sky. The great South Dome, whose massive front is cleft straight down for more than a thousand feet, and polished smooth by the winds and storms of ages; El Capitan, projecting buttress-like, out into the valley, three thousand three hundred feet sheer above the valley floor; Glacier Point, easily accessible, from which one looks down the perpendicular granite wall for more than three thousand feet to the floor of the valley; Bridal Veil, nine hundred feet high and one of the most beautiful waterfalls in all the world; and Yosemite Falls, which tumble down an awful twenty-six hundred feet, are but a few of the inexpressibly beautiful and inspiring sights awaiting the visitor.

Above the level, tranquil loveliness rise mile-high, cloud-supporting walls, grim and gray in place, here and there colored marvelously. Sculptured giant-fashion into domes and half-domes, spires and pinnacles and frowning precipices, recessed for dropping rivers, these Sierra walls encompass the meadow and make of it the flowerful floor of a great chasm.

Yet brook and meadow, green and flowering color of wild blossom, own the sunshine and are not overborne by the carved mountains above; the daisy is as much at home in the Yosemite as is the cloud-like Half Dome at the head of the Valley. In waterfalls and sheer cliffs the Yosemite is supreme. Nowhere else do rivers thunder over cliffs a half-mile high! nor in any other place have the snow-waters of high mountains found such variety and beauty of courses down mountain walls to unify in a valley river. Out from beneath the great snow mantle of the High Sierra in spring, pour the snow-waters into the cup of the Yosemite; and all summer, tho in lessening volume, these



forested, flowering, lake-dotted mountains, great reservoirs of crystal clear water, continue to feed the streams of the Valley.

There are comfortable tent villages in summer for those who would be out-of-doors; and for others, nearer kin to the wilderness and who would rest beneath bright stars, there is the whole width of the Sierra, with dry, clear summer nights and sunny days.

One lacks for no comfort, and the place is accessible the year round. Winter trips to Yosemite have become popular, and accommodations are arranged since the opportunity for a real winter in California has opened, with the joys of skeeing, skating and tobogganing. The glory of the place, in the winter season, with its great bastions roofed with curving parapets of white, its falls silent and frozen, its trees decked with the starry blossoms of the snow; is wonderfully impressive, and the trip a vast enjoyment to the Californian, to whom winter usually means sunny beaches, flowering uplands, orange groves and rose bowers.

The floor of the Valley is four thousand feet above the surf, and the place is in the innermost stronghold of the Sierra.

Yosemite Valley is a great chasm surrounded by walls often sheer, as that of the Half Dome, with its five thousand feet of vertical drop, and El Capitan, with its thirty-three hundred feet of cliff; but of wonderful variety of form—a corridor of stone, once awful in its nakedness, with streams of ice and torrents of water, avalanches of rock and snow howling amid its elemental silence and leaving their indelible inscriptions for future ages to decipher. Now each ice stream is a little river, the glacier cascades are foaming falls, the trails of the avalanche are marked with woods, and the great Yosemite Glacier itself is a park of verdure, of clustering trees and a silver river. Thru an atmosphere of trembling crystal, the iris dust of cataracts tumbles over cliffs of pearl and their voices mingle with the soft winds and rustling leaves, and sound like the surf beating on the beaches, thousands of feet below. Emerald verdure carpets the ice-ground floor of the great stone corridor, the terrible fractures of the upheaved, ice-tortured cliffs, are hidden by quivering curtains of broken light and shade as the clouds fly in airy tumult above, and the emerging sun opens up azure spaces.

The domes are smoothed by distance, the stern recesses of the walls hold cool pools of violet shade, many of the rocks are crystalline and everything is a-quiver with light, vibrant with the impulse of the sun shafts, alive with the vigor of world growth.

Glacier mud makes the grandest of gardens, and nearly everywhere, on the slopes, as on the floor of the valley, verdure is exuberant. The flora of the valley is remarkable in its range from Alpine shrubs and flowers to blooms that flourish at sea-level. There are some nooks of the valley where flowers blossom in these miniature gardens the year round, living on stored-up sunshine in the crags surrounding them. Nearly everywhere that soil can rest, flowers spring up. Lilies, larkspur and lupine, honeysuckle, purple primrose, violets white and violets blue, painter's-brush, Mariposa tulips, mints and sunflowers, orchids and maccasin-flowers, scarlet snow-plants, daisies, geranium and goldenrod, spiraea, columbine and harebells, gillias and phloxes. Of the shrubs are azalea and rhododendron, wild lilac, wild cherry, wild rose, laurel, ceanothus, manzanita, dwarf-oak and willow and chinquapin. There are ferns of every size from plummy woodwardias eight feet high to dainty ivy ferns, delicate maidenhairs and tiny tufted fronds that grow among the rocks. About them are butterflies and humming-birds, warblers, tanager, oriole and nuthatches.

But birds are not numerous in the Valley, nor anywhere in the National Park—notwithstanding statements to the contrary in John Muir's book on "Our National Parks," and which is generally accepted as authoritative. Nor are numerous the "brilliantly colored lizards ranging from the size of a grasshopper to twelve inches in length," which Mr. Muir would have us believe enliven the Valley or the Park. On the contrary, the casual visitor will find no more lizards anywhere in the Yosemite National Park than could be found elsewhere basking in the sunshine along rail fences or among sunny rocks—and certainly none twelve inches in length.

Bear, deer, and other forest roamers are found in the Valley, but are seldom seen by the tourist; squirrels raise prosperous families, keeping all the woods lively with their cunning alertness, and shy according to your degree of fellowship—but protected under governmental rule.

The Valley-floor on which stands a hotel, and tent encampments in pleasant and picturesque places, has for its center a level meadow—and thru this lovely vale runs the Merced river—swelling and rolling in billowy waves, and occasionally deepening into a quiet pool—as if to make a retreat for the fishes. The river, augmented by the falls and by a multitude of silvery founts, winds thru the verdant vale; the “Mad” Merced, some call it from the foamy tumult of its cataracts and rapids, some the “Merry” Merced, from the happy song it sings as it hastens on. Above it bend the tasseled alders, the graceful willows and flowering dogwood. From the heights the stretches of shrubbery, groves of pine and black oak, the flowered meadows with the ever-shifting bands and spots of cloud shadow, turn the valley into a mosaic of charming color. One of the things to marvel at is the exquisite proportionment of it all; the little white violets that border Mirror Lake are as much in place, as much at home, as the highest minaret of snow that tangles the clouds or the mighty bulk of El Capitan.

In other words, Yosemite Valley might be described as being a gorge, a canyon, and a beautiful mountain valley all in one, enclosed by majestic granite walls, bluffs, crags, cliffs, natural spires and domes, rising to dazzling heights; waterfalls tumbling down from a height of 900 to 3,300 feet—sun-lit forests and pleasant groves; rugged-side canyons; beautiful streams; a placid lake; green meadows; all the things that nature uses to make herself pretty, beautiful, picturesque, magnificent, and awe-inspiring; gathered in and around a valley—so small as to be an easy walk for an athlete; and yet in this closely-concentrated and manifold aggregation of natural wonders, the scenic beauties and tremendous magnitudes of height and depth are matchless—to the eye and the soul of the lover of scenery.

Every moment en route from El Portal (the entrance) the magnitude and wonders of the Valley grow in one's eye—but they are only a taste of that which is in store a few miles farther in the Valley where the great panorama of marvels crowd closely around you; smiling and frowning; peaceful and raging; with ripple and murmur, or with roar and thunder; here with a riot of color, there with cold monotonous gray; here beautiful and idyllic, there

grand, gigantic and fearsome. All this within actual sight and sound, or walking distance, and the mammoth cliffs and domes that lure you on, loom up before you at times as if within a stone's throw, and yet so deceitful as to lure you miles when you estimated the distance to be only a few rods. Forest rangers patrol this governmental reserve, and an annual appropriation of \$30,000.00 is made for the improvements of the roads and trails.

## HOW REACHED

Yosemite Valley is now reached by rail the year round. The hand of man has made the journey thither an easy one, but Nature's handiwork is unmolested.

Dame Nature has placed this Valley where all her children can reach it. The main lines of both the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe pass thru Merced—a beautiful little California city in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, where each of the said lines have two daily trains that make connection with the Yosemite Valley R. R.

The ride of about eighty miles thru the Merced Canyon to El Portal (the Yosemite Valley entrance) is replete with great scenery, and unmingled with discomfort. At the Valley entrance, after a luxurious and most restful stop-over at the elegant Hotel Del Portal, you board the stage at the hotel door, and a drive of about ten miles brings you to the Valley floor—and then to the first day's sight-seeing where God has hung his granite pictures in frames of the sky.

But why multiply words in the attempt at description?

Go linger near these wonders and love them; for the hands of their mighty Maker and Builder have placed and preserved them in their virgin ruggedness and matchless beauty, and the greatest government in the world invites all to come—all to see and enjoy every spot of God's wonderland where admission is as free as the cool, crystal waters of the singing Merced that adorns the Valley like a thread of silver thru a vale of gold.

## DEDICATION

---

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO  
CALIFORNIA

---

The charm of California is recognized across the traveled world. It is a charm not merely of attraction, but of persistence, often of compulsion. He who once comes within its influence usually returns, and often remains in permanent and willing fascination.

Climate, that will-o'-the-wisp that has led travelers in search of comfort or health a weary chase over many lands, comes closest to the ideal in California. Had the search of Ponce de Leon been for a climate of perpetual health rather than a fountain of eternal youth, success would have crowned his efforts could he have persevered to western shores.

The thousand miles of length of California, with the sea as one border and the mountains as another, the three hundred miles of varying topography between the borders—northward, where the State touches the region of the pine and fir; southward, where the palm is king—hold varieties of climate that are yet of strangely equable temperature, from the bracing airs of the seacoast, where the year finds an average of fifty-six degrees, to the drier airs of the inland valleys and the glorious climate of the mountains. The general average is about sixty-two degrees, tho thruout the land may be found occasional touches of night frost, merely friendly nips, and at times the thermometer may reach ninety degrees at Los Angeles and, in the great central valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, close around the century mark, tho the air is dry and the heat tolerable.

To briefly describe the climate is to announce the three hundred days of sunshine that make brilliant every year, to say nothing of the wonderful star-set, moonlit nights, with every day and night of the year such as to make outdoor living enjoyable. Here are charms that call one westward from the sweltering summer to where cool sea breezes play above gentle surf and sandy beach, and whisper thru shady boughs above clear watercourses; charms to set one searching for summer clothes for winter wear in a land where December is known only by the calendar and where at Christmas and New Year's they throw roses instead of snowballs and wind up with an ocean dip as a cooler.

This sunny land where every month is June is the home of the earth's biggest and oldest trees, and of Yosemite, both of which are classed as world-wonders. Since my departure, it seems that some sweet spirit is calling me back among the giant trees, towering cliffs, orange groves, wide avenues of magnolias and palms, lanes of pepper trees, and poppies that set the hillsides aflame in a riot of color—and thereamong, I often visit on the wings of dreams. California—the fairyland of romance and pleasant clime, the Eden of fruit and blossom, the abode of happy hearts and beautiful homes, the domain of peaceful dreams—the western world of contrast, with sea-kissed shores, modern cities, friendly citizenship, God-built mountains, snow-clad peaks, fertile valleys, flower gardens, fruit-clad hills, crystal rivers, balmy breezes, and cheering sunbeams.

To be transported in perfect, luxurious comfort from the chilling blasts of an eastern winter to California, with its masses of bud and flower on every hand, their fragrance mingling with that of the orange blossoms wafted upward from ten thousand trees; to look out upon a sea of verdure, thru the dark green leaves of which shine the golden yellow of ripening fruit; to note the palatial homes and dainty cottages, and then from this vernal paradise to lift the eyes and behold, only a little way beyond, lofty summits shining serenely white with snow, or, perhaps, tinged with red and purple in the sunset's glow, is altogether such a dream as beggars the wildest flights of imagination.

To spend a succession of melodious days in a garden rolling out across the valleys, touching the mountain wall with fragrant finger-tips and the golden hills against the dim blue peaks, is to experience in actual life all the beauties of a poet's dream.

For the lover of the long, unruffled, sunlit swell of the Pacific; its white beaches; its shores of keen and varied delight; the cool, rich thrill of the surf; the tug and struggle of fish worth fighting for; a riotous array of fragrant blossoms; air with life—life and perfect happiness: California to whose sea-kissed shores, sun-kissed soil and progressive citizenship the author of this book takes off his hat in

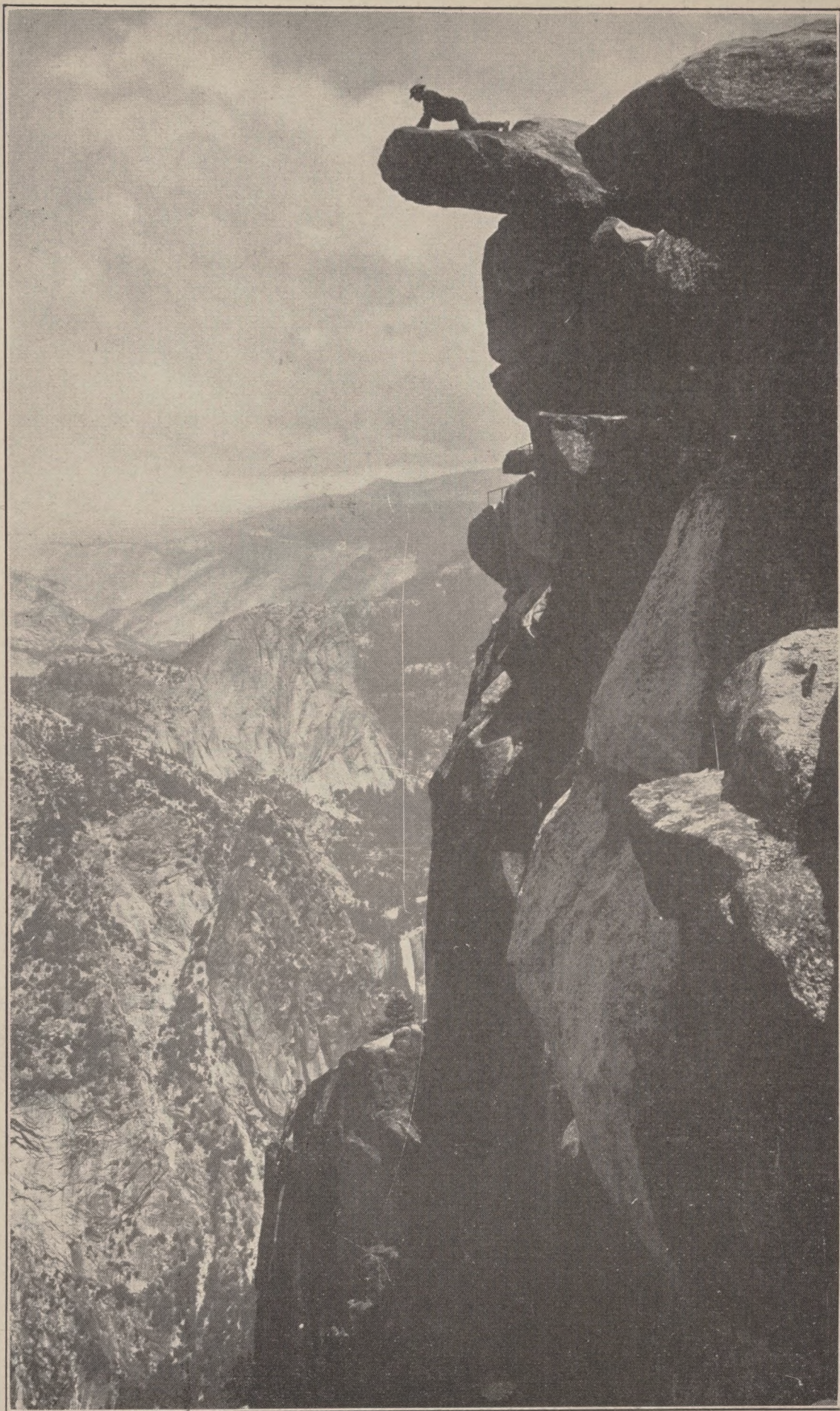
## DEDICATION

to the

STATE OF THE GOLDEN WEST.







OVER-HANGING ROCK  
(3,234 feet above valley floor.)

Photo by Boysen Studio  
Yosemite, Cal.



This tree is named--"Wawona"--Circumference, 85 feet; height, 260 feet; and is found among the 368 Sequoias in the Upper Grove. This tree is not the largest, but perhaps the most popular in the Upper Grove, and thru a tunnel cut in its trunk, the four-horse stages pass with roomy ease.

# Yosemite Valley Romance

WILLIAM LEE POPHAM

II

DESCRIPTION BEING FROM THE AUTHOR'S  
OBSERVATION

Including, besides Yosemite Valley, description of the California "Big  
Trees", Long Beach---"The City by the Sea", and Santa Catalina  
Island---"The Magic Dream-kissed Isle of the Pacific.

BEING A PERMANENT SOUVENIER AND CONVENIENT  
GUIDE BOOK FOR THE TOURIST.

PRICE \$1.00

THE WORLD SUPPLY COMPANY  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

---

Mayes Printing Company  
Louisville, Ky.

PZ3  
P 815  
40

COPYRIGHT 1911  
WILLIAM LEE POPHAM

\$ 1.00

©Cl. A 303440

No. 1.

## CHARACTERS

---

MISS DIXIE DARLINGTON  
(A Winsome Tourist of the West)

CHESTER OAKLAND  
(The Handsome Flirt)

THELMA  
ANNETTA  
EDNA  
ESTELLE  
HAZEL

} Former Sweethearts of Chester Oakland

## **BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

**Poems of Truth, Love and Power.**

**Silver Gems in Seas of Gold.**

**Nutshells of Truth.**

**Love Poems, and the Boyhood of Kentucky's  
Poet.**

**The Village by the Sea.**

**A Tramp's Love.**

**The Valley of Love.**

**She Dared to Win.**

**Love's Rainbow Dream.**

## **SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD SERIES (American).**

- 1. Mammoth Cave Romance.**
- 2. Niagara Falls Romance.**
- 3. Garden of the Gods Romance.**
- 4. Natural Bridge Romance.**
- 5. Yosemite Valley Romance.**
- 6. Yellowstone Park Romance.**
- 7. Washington Monument Romance.**

**Distributed by  
THE WORLD SUPPLY COMPANY,  
LOUISVILLE, KY.**

**Yosemite Valley Romance**





## Yosemite Valley Romance

---

In romantic California, where the wonderful may happen—entering Yosemite Valley, and seated in a four-horse stage, were several tourists—Miss Dixie Darlington in the second seat, and Chester Oakland in the seat farthest to the rear,—these two being strangers to each other. It was the artistic make-up of her back honey-colored hair, the beautiful, soft whiteness of her perfectly-shaped neck, which ornamented the low yoke of a pink dress, that had first engaged Chester Oakland's more serious thoughts. Eying Dixie yet more closely as she turned her head, and looked directly back, observing the unusual scenery, Chester perceived besides the heavy coils of artistic hair, an erect position, at once graceful and independent, her clear gray eyes—soft and penetrating, her lips red as a ripened cherry, but much sweeter—all these charms at once compelling his admiration.

Immediately Chester deplored his ill-luck in being in the rear seat, and his thoughts were rapid in devising a remedy. Noticing that

there was room for one more person in the second seat, a part of which Dixie occupied, Chester "accidentally" permitted the breeze to sweep his hat to the ground, and before the horses had quite stopped, he was out and bounding to catch his hat. The next moment he came running to the stage, hat in hand, and in his haste to mount, he "forgot" the seat from which he had dismounted, and availed himself of the vacant space in the second seat beside Dixie. His face assumed a deeper rosiness as he placed his hat more firmly upon his head; for every occupant had laughed—laughed, he feared, not merely at him chasing the hat, but at his "forgetfulness" in changing seats. Dixie's smile showed two perfect dimples, and rows of pearly teeth, the like of which would be an ornament to any mouth. But the next instant, when Dixie ceased to smile, the man felt guilty of intrusion, felt unwelcome, and that his "made-to-order" accident was unsuccessful.

He sat there, wondering, as many another American had wondered before, and many will after, why God had made beautiful girls independent—even sometimes independent with their superiors—or why He had put the "for-

bidden fruit" on the bough, permitting man to look at close range, to sit beneath the "apple tree" and look with "watering mouth," daring him to taste.

To relieve his own embarrassment, and, perhaps, in his shrewdness, to give Dixie a chance to see what kind of a looking chap he really was, Chester engaged himself in reading one of the "Southern Pacific's" descriptive pamphlets of Yosemite. While he was thus engaged, Dixie took advantage of the opportunity to "look him over." As a traveler on many seas and much land, and being keen to observe, Dixie suspected his intent. But she knew that his endeavor was without any surrender of decency, in the frank and friendly West, as well as in the South—but seldom East of Chicago or North of Indianapolis.

Beyond that boundary, a self-introduction between a lady and a gentleman, is considered by some, nothing less than a crime. In glancing at Chester—in a most shy manner—Dixie noted a high forehead, which inclined her to the belief that he had done, or was capable of doing, something worth while in the world. She saw that his hands were prominent with long

fingers; she noted his weight and height—guessing the former at one hundred and seventy-five, the latter at five, eleven and a half; hair black, covering a shapely head; eyes dark and wonderfully luring, shaded by dark and bountiful lashes; nose and mouth prominent, full chest and very broad shoulders; complexion tan, tinted with rose; and that he dressed in a clean brown canvas coat and trousers—assuming the air of a young military officer in command of some dashing regiment.

Once he slightly shifted his eye, and thought he saw her eyes turned upon him like two heavenly moons. He caught his breath at sight of her—the sort of woman a man would follow around the world, to win.

While still luring her glance he turned his eyes to meet hers—his eyes, penetrating as an arrow—hers flashing as sunbeams.

But when Chester smiled—a smile that almost brought her to his bosom—Dixie turned her head from him, and tried to direct her attention toward a magnificent water-fall in the Valley. But the new scene did not monopolize Dixie's thoughts. "He is the handsomest man I ever saw," she thought, "yea, even beautiful."

## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

Entering the Valley by the El Portal road, the eyes are first caught by the Bridal Veil Fall, called by the Indians "Pohono" (Spirit of the Evil Wind), which comes over the cliffs on the west side of Cathedral Spires.

The fall is very beautiful and dwarfs effectively the highest of European cataracts, not merely in volume but in its precipitous surroundings. The sheer drop of the water, which glides over its glacier-worn lip with an outward curve, is broken, dropping clear six hundred feet and then rushing over a pile of debris to fall three hundred more. From most viewpoints the plunge seems sheer. The fall assumes the aspect of a lacy veil, fastened at top and bottom and swayed by the breeze, fluttering in an illusion that makes the name appropriate. From the cauldron, eddying forth and upward, rises a mist, drifting like smoke, and here, at the end of the afternoon, the setting sun makes sport of the spray and turns the watery element to a semblance of fire with brilliant rainbows that span the stream like vivid ribbons, and set the wet turf and leaves glowing with iridescence. Broken rainbows quiver down and sometimes are met by others wavering up, the

wonderful opalescence of it all making it a scene of infinite beauty. In the winter long icicles hang about the fall, and ice masses hold grottoes roofed with glittering points.

En route, the consecutive points of interest, the descriptions of which follow herewith, seem to have extended to Chester, the opportunity of drawing from Dixie the desired conversation. But while Chester took the pains to point out the points of interest (meanwhile glancing at a guide book) Dixie only listened and looked.

Around the shoulder, behind which Bridal Veil Creek makes its way to the brink, are Cathedral Rocks. They get their name from their resemblance to the Duomo at Florence, and reach an elevation of 2,660 feet above the Valley floor, one spire rising sheer and solitary for 700 feet.

Across the Valley, and nearly opposite the Cathedral rocks (or spires) is El Capitan—greatest of all granite. El Capitan rises 3,300 feet with an apparently vertical front, and has two faces nearly at right angles with each other. It projects into the Valley like a buttress, and presents to the vision at a single glance a superficial area of more than four hundred acres. It

is said that the stupendous bulk of El Capitan is such that it can be seen from a certain vantage-ground at a distance of about fifty miles.

Rooted in the granite wall of El Capitan, is a growing tree which measures a height of about 100 feet, but which, to the eye, and as seen from the stage, looks like a small bush. Seeing this, the beholder soon realizes that the eye cannot begin to justly measure the dazzling heights on either side of the Valley.

The Three Brothers are a fraternal group a little beyond El Capitan, and their resemblance depends upon the point of view. They are sometimes called the Three Graces. To the Indians their attitude is said to have suggested the heads of frogs sitting up ready to leap.

The highest one of the three is 3,530 feet, and is known from other points as Eagle Peak, reached by trail from the Valley.

Sentinel Rock faces Three Brothers from the south wall, and is a splintered granite tower or spire, very slender, and for about 1,500 feet below its apex is nearly perpendicular. The whole height above the river at its base is 3,059 feet.

At the top-most height of this noble tower of

granite is planted a white flag, made by splitting a pillow case, but looking about the size of one's hand.

Proudly the Sentinel Rock stands—as if waving its white flag of peace and keeping a careful watch over the Valley. Doubtless the “pillow case flag” which unfolds its banner o'er the many visitors who seek the Valley's cool retreat of solitude for rest and dreamy slumber, has also covered the pillow for many a reposing dreamer of dreams.

Back of this natural and majestic monument stands Sentinel Dome, whose storm-worn top is 4,142 feet above the Valley.

Reaching the social center of Yosemite Valley, the stage unloaded its “human freight” at the Sentinel Hotel, on the beautiful brink of the Merced river, and in whose clear waters, one sitting upon the back varanda of the hotel can see great schools of fish swimming lazily in their cool retreat.

At this destination of the first day's coaching in Yosemite, there is almost a town, there being, besides the hotel and its annex of six comfortable cottages, the post office, a church, the trans-



portation office, a store, barber shop, telegraph office and several studios.

Heaving eaten lunch at the Sentinel Hotel, one o'clock in the afternoon found Chester and Dixie out walking. For a long time the young couple, so newly acquainted, stood on the bridge, watching the frolicking of the fishes, and admiring the surrounding scenes.

From the bridge the couple saw the top-most height of Glacier Point, 3234 feet above the Valley floor, and the eighteen-foot U. S. flag which proudly waves upon its stony summit, appears to be the size of a lady's small handkerchief, as viewed from the depth below. Learning that to appreciate most fully the beauty and awful height of the tumbling torrent a different viewpoint must be sought, the couple started to the Yosemite Falls, which are directly across the Merced river—opposite the Sentinel Hotel.

Their real grandeur is hardly apparent at first sight from the valley, so lacy seems the scarf of water that waves in greeting from the cliff, altho the stream as it rushes over the lip of the first cataract—for there are three divisions to the fall—is thirty-five feet wide, and when the volume is at its greatest the roar of

## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

the shattered water can be heard all over the valley, reverberating from cliff to cliff and sometimes shaking windows a mile away. In earlier days, doubtless, it leaped in one great plunge from brow to base, twenty-six hundred feet of descent, but the cliff face has been shaken down so that the first plunge measures now but sixteen hundred feet, followed by cascades for six hundred feet more, and a final jump of four hundred feet. From the trail the waters seem, as they gleam thru the trees, to drop the half-mile in one wild dash, but so vast are the cliffs, so towering their height, that the vast body of water seems minimized.

So close the couple went to the falls, that the spraying mist, carried by the breeze, kissed Dixie's cheeks—as dew upon pink blossoms—touching with rosy tenderness the spot that Chester's lips fain would touch.

The difficult climb over huge granite boulders to the foot of the falls afforded Chester no little pleasure in assisting Dixie, a pleasure that was doubtless mutual. Seated upon a mammoth boulder of granite in full view of the tumbling volume of water, the couple rested in the shadow of the cliffs, amid most romantic environment.

Chester was thrilled with the Yosemite and was fully appreciative of its many advantages for making informally the acquaintance of a pretty girl.

Dixie possessed a gentle, friendly eye and yet defiant; she was as modest and yet as haughty, as eager and yet as dignified as any other damsel. But Dixie possessed the charm that could draw the handsome Chester Oakland, the gay gallant whose attention women sought, out of himself. From the moment he caught the soft light of her wonderful gray eyes, and the wonderful grace of her beautiful manner, he straightway forgot every other girl whom he had ever known. The transparent, porcelain quality of Dixie's complexion blended with a pinkness of pure blood, presented a beautiful picture to Chester's imagination.

Just how Chester accomplished Dixie's recognition of acquaintance he never knew. But at his introduction of self, she smiled—a swift flashing smile—that paid a flattering recognition of his attention. But to him she had never smiled enough; therein lay all his trouble.

“You're from the South,” he ventured to say, “I judge, from your given name—the word

‘Dixie’ is beautiful, sounds like a poem.”

“You have another guess,” Dixie replied, and her manner had for the first time the brightness that goes with youth, plus the romantic cultivation of new acquaintanceship.

He looked a question at her.

“I’m a sea-bird,” she informed him, “live in a sand-bed by the Pacific.”

“About the same thing,” he replied, “the West and the South are twins; in the heart of each is that warmth and hospitality which extend a smiling welcome to all the world.”

“But you are a Southerner, aren’t you?” she questioned.

“O yes,” he replied proudly, “like a drum, my heart beats the tune of Dixie and those old Southern melodies—and I think I feel justly proud of my nativity.”

His desire grew to know her occupation. She had responded intelligently to his conversation regarding the standard fiction; evidently she had read much—poetry, fiction, history and some science, but she treated books as one who does not write. Tho she spoke with a love and understanding of art, and even knew the names of the old masters, she showed no sign of being

an artist. Of music, they both had about an equal knowledge.

He invaded business, only to find her inexperience appalling. The stage—she could name the celebrated plays, but her comment did not convey a kindred talent. He noticed, however, and with great pleasure—as do all refined men—that her education did not permit the use of slang, such as, “I’m crazy about that place,” etc., etc.

When they had longer talked of travel, he found her knowledge of Europe quite as familiar as that of America.

“I judge you,” said he, “to be a tourist?”

“Not a professional,” she answered, “it would be too much akin to idleness, but I travel some to bring out the poetry in one’s life, you know”—and in the next breath she quoted:

To the dreamer, life is a poem;  
 To the poet, life is a dream;  
 To the pretender of airs,  
 With his worries and cares,  
 It’s a struggle against the stream.

The dreamer may have his mission,  
The poet fulfills his forte;  
But you'll never find  
The worth-while kind  
An idler nor a sport.

An instant, Dixie looked at Chester as if expecting a comment.

“Very clever—that poem,” he mused, “I like it—and such a place this is for poetry to bubble.”

By this time Chester was saying mentally:

“I believe she would welcome a romance.”

“You write, I presume,” she ventured. “Is not the unique beauty of Yosemite such as to inspire a poem?”

A boyish embarrassment smote him as he replied, “I do not write poetry, I only feel it, yet when a place like Yosemite is graced with a young lady so fair as yourself, I doubt not I would readily find the inspiration, were I a poet.”

Dixie laughed, a full, hearty, bubbling laugh—a laugh that told the merriment of her very soul. It was the first sign that had evidenced her susceptibility to compliments.

Dixie raised a pair of tender gray eyes, eloquent with expression, and said:

“I do so much love the poetry of sky and dell and mountain and sea—and—and—romance or refined excitement or anything that’s different to conventionality.”

Here was his opening. A thousand words rushed to his lips, but as quickly fled. Her face grew brighter, more beautiful than a flower as she waited his next reply.

“You like romance!” he replied, “so do I—and romance is ever inviting; I—I—like you—I think I could more than like you; you are different, pleasingly so, from most girls I meet.”

His eyes flashed a soft light, yet with a steady look of power, but when he looked up, he beheld a look of resistance in her face, a look under which he almost withered.

“Mr. Oakland,” replied Dixie, “I fear you are what I guessed you were—and I must be entirely frank—I feared from the beginning, that you were a flirt.”

“Thanks!” he replied hotly, “I appreciate your opinion; your confidence quite flatters me.”

“Well, I know, it’s not always pleasant to be

frank," retorted Dixie, "but a flirt cannot truly love any one girl—but a handsome flirt can break the heart of many a true girl whose love deserves a mutual response."

"And," Dixie added, "I could not, or at least would not, permit myself to love you."

Chester Oakland felt the shamed color staining his cheek at the fineness of her perception, the delicacy of her withdrawal. It bound him to her as no other words could have done.

"Doesn't it make any difference to you?" he answered slowly and knowing the rash unwisdom of every word as he spoke it, but feeling them all drawn irresistibly from him.

"I mean, whether we go on being friends or not?"

"If not," he added, "speak the word and I shall be enough of a gentleman to respect your decision—I am not an intruder."

"Of course, it makes a difference," she replied, with a woman's intuition to hold on and let go at the same time,—“but you don't mean what you say."

Then she thought: "O, you handsome fellow of brains and charm, I could, I would fol-



low you to the world's end—if—if you really were sincere.”

He went on doggedly:

“Then there's no reason why we can't be friends.”

She hesitated. “Can we?” she just murmured, while her gray eyes, half revealing, half questioning, sought his.

“But we cannot,” she at last said, “we cannot.”

“Then we will not!” he added.

Small wonder that in that dizzy second, Chester was in no pleasant mood. Then a distinct sensation shot over him, his heart began to beat terrifically, and with a tingling sense of mingled defeat and panic.

“While there is yet time,” he pleaded, “can we not agree to cherish this acquaintance, or like a tender flower in its new blossom, must it wither and die?”

“Mr. Oakland,” began Dixie, “I fear I shall cause you to withdraw your complimentary comparison of the West and the South—tho I dislike to do so—but to be still more frank, I think you have broken quite enough trusting hearts without seeking another innocent victim;

doubtless you have broken more hearts than one and my becoming another victim would only flatter your vanity still further."

"You're a fortune-teller, eh?" he grunted.

"I claim no gift of necromancy nor mystic power of prophecy," said she, producing a one-page letter—"What does this mean? I found it upon the stage-floor as we dismounted; guess your pocket's too shallow, Mr. Oakland."

His face reddened as he took the letter which read:

"Dear Chester:—You are the only man I ever loved; the only one I shall ever love. If this must be our eternal parting let it be known to you that my love is unchangeable. Yet, dear Chester, the fault is all my own. I should not have permitted my heart to give a love unsought and unwanted; for you did not ask my love. Good luck to you, Chester, and good-bye.  
THELMA."

Seeing a crimson flush deepen upon his face, and fearing an expression of anger, Dixie said in a gentle way:

"It was merely an accident, Mr. Oakland, that I found the note, and of course, I didn't

know it was yours till I glanced it over—I'm sorry it happened."

"No apology is demanded, Miss Darlington," he returned; "I only want you to be thoughtful. If a man loved you against your will—when you had not sought his love, had never encouraged it, except merely to cultivate a friendly acquaintance, could you return his affection, especially if he were not congenial with your ideal of a lover?"

"Certainly, I could not return such a love as that," she answered.

"Well, that's precisely the case in this instance," he added with emphasis.

"Oh, I could believe your side—even from the evidence contained in this letter," she replied, "if this were the only case—but there are others with whom you have trifled—there are others."

This accusation, Dixie considered a venture, but she felt a curiosity, yea, a material interest to know it all.

"I have your occupation—your profession now," exclaimed the man, "you are a fortune teller."

This undoubtedly led Dixie to believe the pos-

sible truth of her off-hand accusation.

“Then, you might as well confess,” added Dixie, “and if you confess, I will think you more manly—more worthy of my continued friendship.”

“I will wait awhile,” Chester responded, “and in the meantime, I’ll think it over; we’ll discuss this subject more fully at another time.”

Then he thought, “if I should confess—if I should really relate to her my courtship with other girls, would she really think me more manly, or would she despise me all the more?”

Rising from their romantic resting-place, Chester and Dixie resumed their walk across the Valley—arm in arm.

The great Valley is a tragedy of the days of wild unrest, when Nature’s forces were destructive. Today she is covering the scars of the old wounding with verdure. You will be struck with the persistence of life. Where glaciers plowed the rocky field the tenderest flowers spring; where awful forces shattered the granite walls, are now swarming files of pine, fir and balsam. High up in granite cliffs, shrub, flower and tree are clinging, content with a

handful of soil, as if to live were enough. Life marches up the gorges, climbs the precipices, camps on the sides of splintered peaks and braves the storms in exposed situations, as if just to spread soft petal, notched leaf, feathery plume or green branch were enough. You will miss something in the Valley if over the beauty and music of stream and waterfall, you do not see the marching files of plant-life conquering the granite, covering the nakedness, and hear tree, shrub and flower whisper from the heights of the rapture of living. It was all ugly once—a chaos of rock and denuded gorge. We might have wondered, we could not have admired. Now all is healed with bloom and beauty—all geological terribleness veiled under grass and fern, flower and leafy verdancy of the rejoicing trees. The whole movement today is toward beauty, and you will come away rested, renewed and recreated.

For ages this great chasm, whose birthday none can tell, had lain in the heart of the Sierra, unknown and unvisited. It was but yesterday, when men were feverishly searching these western mountains for gold, that Nature gave to the world this other treasure, beautiful beyond the

dreams of men, which all may share and none be poorer for the sharing.

Ere returning to the hotel, the couple visited Camp Curry, the finest and most popular camp in Yosemite—and in the very center of the leading points of greater interest.

Standing at the front door of Sentinel Hotel, (the only hotel on the Valley floor), you gaze upward at the heights of Sentinel Rock. To the east is the wonderful, massive pile of granite forming Half Dome, which towers 5,000 feet into the clouds.

When the shadows of the great cliffs deepened across the Valley, Chester and Dixie returned to the hotel for dinner; and twilight found them sitting contentedly together on the upper veranda over-looking the river.

But soon the time came to retire. On the morrow they would take the stage at seven o'clock—and their rambles had prepared them not only with splendid appetites, but for a night of sweet repose.

## CHAPTER II.

Leaving the Sentinel Hotel in the early crisp of the morning, while yet the dew clung in diamond-brilliant to the sweet faces of the flowers, Chester and Dixie took the stage en route to Glacier Point.

En route, the couple were enchanted with their view of Mirror Lake, which reflects beautiful pictures of the sun-lit heavens and the towering cliffs and domes that border the Valley. Like a great painting from the touch of a master artist, this lake portrays the granite faces of the Valley's natural and permanent habitation, and being a perfect mirror of the varying scenery, it is a beautiful lake, appropriately named.

The Nature-lover's eye may rove over the glorious riot of color and the splendor and majesty of form, the while his ear is charmed and his whole being thrilled as Nature plays for him her wondrous scale of harmony from tinkling rivulet to thunderous waterfall.

Yosemite is pre-eminently a region of contrasts. Yonder, an inaccessible ice-clad peak piercing the sky, and at our feet, a pleasant,

verdant meadow, where cattle graze contentedly and lazy trout lie luxuriously in quiet pools as the placid river ripples thru the gently swaying rushes. But nowhere in the Valley is this swift transition from awe and majesty to peace and calm, more vividly impressed upon the visitor than on the trip to Mirror Lake. A short and easy ramble by the meadows, thru the woods and along a road covered deeply with pine-needles, whose balsam fills the air, brings you to the rim of this liquid looking-glass. No zephyr breaks upon its placid depths, no sound disturbs the stillness of the air. Like a cup of molten silver it lies in the heart of the mountains, and as you gaze and gaze again into this crystal lake the foliage that lines its shore, the dark pines beyond and the giant outline of Mt. Watkins towering in the blue distance, are pictured on its silver surface with a fidelity that makes you hesitate to say where ends reality and where begins similitude.

Farther along, en route, a splendid view is had of Vernal Falls—a scene of glorious beauty—leaping amid sunbeams and shadows three hundred and fifty feet to the granite floor of the dark canyon. At its maximum fullness, the



river is nearly eighty feet wide; its spray is driven outward like smoke, and everything of plant and grass, moss and fern, is kept vividly green by the incessant baptism.

A little beyond—less than a mile—is Nevada Falls, where the same stream plunges downward 600 feet. The descent is not sheer. The great snowy torrent glances from sloping rock about midway just enough to make a compound curve.

The setting of the fall is impressive—Great Liberty Cap, a granite pile rising more than 2,000 feet above the pool, at its base, with Mount Broderick just back of it and the Half Dome near at hand.

Reaching the Glacier Point hotel in time for lunch, Chester and Dixie spent the whole afternoon in that region, which is one of the most popular objective points in the whole domain. Glacier Point is especially remarkable for its commanding position, its great vertical height and the unspeakable sublimity of the view from its projecting rocks.

The over-hanging rock which marks the Point is but a few yards from the hotel. It is exactly 3,324 feet from the top of the jutting rock down

## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

to the floor of the Valley, and a pebble dropped from this point will touch nothing until it strikes the talus, 3,000 feet straight down. The hotel in the Valley is dwarfed to a hut, stately trees are mere shrubs, and men seem dots on the Valley floor.

Much of the northern rim of the Valley lies before you on the same level upon which you stand, with a background of higher mountains. From Placier Point the view takes in all the immediate peaks and many of the higher summits of the Sierra. The scene is sublime. Sharp brinks and precipices plunge into Yosemite on one side, into the dark gorge of Illilouette on the other. The Half Dome soars ethereal amid clouds. The whole northern base of the valley swims in pure light, the creamy cliff of El Capitan, Yosemite Falls, the Royal Arches and the North Dome. Up Tenaya Canyon, Mirror Lake flashes like a facet of a diamond, and the distances blend into blue voids above which towers the naked structure of Cloud's Rest. Vernal and Nevada Falls gleam from Merced Canyon with Liberty Cap behind. The snowy-peak of the Obelisk obscures many of the more distant summits, but a great portion of the snowy

range, Mounts Starr-King, Hoffman, Lyell, Clark, Dana and the Merced group, covered with everlasting snows, upmounting thirteen thousand feet, seem to swim in the azure—mountains, mystic, delectable; in their amethyst, their pearl and amber hues.

Sentinel Dome tops Glacier Point by nearly a thousand feet, and can be climbed without difficulty. It lies about a mile and a half southward. From its summit the San Joaquin Valley and the Coast Range, nearly one hundred miles away, are to be distinctly seen. The south wall may be traversed along the Pohono trail and one notable feature is formed by the Fissures, clefts in the rock that reach down hundreds of feet, one being only four feet across. It is an experience to gaze into the abyss, a decided thrill, not to be lightly forgotten.

The exceptional beauty of the panoramic view from the awe-inspiring height of Glacier Point affords as great inspiration to poet and painter as any spot found elsewhere in picturesque America. As I looked upon the granite forms of the frowning crags which border the Valley on either side, and the various ranges of imposing mountains in the distance, then down upon

the swiftly flowing waters of the Merced river, here resembling a running pool, there broken by surging rapids, and then upon the green carpet of the Valley floor dotted with trees which seem but swaying branches, and then to rest the eye upon the world-famed water-falls, as I looked upon all this panorama of unique wonder, I felt an inspiration, which, if it were possible to express, might throw a perfume on the violet, or add another hue to the rainbow.

When Yosemite was in the forest primeval and heard only the music of its own cataracts, it was a wild flower garden of many varieties, but the need of pasturage and the trampling of many feet have obliterated the delicate beauty which once was all the more striking by contrast with the towering rock walls which shut in the garden. But the Park is still a-bloom, and an excursion beyond the rim of the Valley, and away from the frequented paths will reward the flower lover with azaleas, wild roses, gillias, phloxes, lupines, potentillas, daisies, harebells, iris, the brodiaea and especially the calochortus, or Mariposa tulip, finer than any ever seen in Europe.

Chester and Dixie remained at Glacier Point

Hotel over night to view the gorgeous sun-set and the crimson rosiness of the afterglow when the whole landscape is one heavenly shadow beyond power to describe—and also to see the sun rise from behind the granite hills and ragged, sky-piercing peaks where the sunbeams wake the shadows and kiss them into light.

Sitting near the very summit of the overhanging Rock at Glacier Point—a dazzling height of over 3,000 feet above the Valley floor, Chester and Dixie engaged in a further discussion of the subject of their former conversation.

“About the confession of your ‘affairs of the heart,’ with the other girls,” reminded Dixie, as if she really knew that there were other girls whom Chester had wooed and won—but whom he had disappointed—“you choose,” she added, “to be both frank and honest, I believe, and thus believing, am now prepared to listen to your confession.”

The commanding power in her eyes led him on—led him as if she possessed the power of compulsion.

“Then you will be fair in your hearing, won’t you?” he began. “You will not be led to hate me because I have not been an angel—because I

have been imprudent—because I have had former sweethearts (if we so term them,) and have failed to find in them the ideal to which I aspire in womanhood—you won't hate me for it, will you?"

"Oh, I could never hate you," replied Dixie, "I should dislike to be guilty of 'hating' any one—yet I make no promise, except that if you are really frank and honest, I will be more considerate of your feelings and friendship."

Thus speaking, Dixie thought that her success in securing a confession was rather pleasing; she considered what he had already made, as a great start, yea, a part of his confession.

"Well, if you want frankness and honesty in the relating of my story, you'll certainly get it," he replied, "but know you in advance, that you are the only woman in the world whom I would gratify to this extent—and I say it because you—because I—because you are so different from any other of the fair sex whom I have ever met."

"Thank you," encouraged Dixie, "I really do thank you."

"You judged me rightly," began Chester, "I am—or I mean I have been—a flirt, not alto-

gether intentionally, not I hope, a mean one at heart—but I have been a flirt. Of course I have had former sweethearts—who hasn't? My weakness has been to enjoy the admiration, yea, the affection, of pretty women—of course, women of unquestionable character, but women whom I had never considered in the light of matrimony. Ere this, I have realized my mistake—a mistake which has troubled me no little. Luckily, I used to think—but very unluckily I have since realized—I found myself popular with young ladies—popular in society—the devil's earthly hell; if you will kindly pardon the term—found myself welcome at their social functions, in fact, really much sought after on these occasions. Naturally, that is, naturally for a flirt, I wooed the fairest among them, I seemed to enjoy the bestowal of their affection upon me—their devotion seemed to satisfy my heart's hungering. That I—to use almost a vulgar term—made love to the fairest of them, I do not deny, and that I was fickle I deny less. I do not claim ever to have been a wingless angel, still I knew there was a limit, a boundary-line between decency and degradation, and I never over-stepped it—that is, while I was sober

—but I can't say what happened when the wine glass came around too often. Just here my confession is necessarily a dim one—an uncertainty, hence imperfect, incomplete.

“However, I am frank to confess to having disappointed—I suppose you will so call it—five young ladies, or rather girls. That is to say, I disappointed them by my failure to propose marriage. Understand me, please, I have never gotten so low as to engage myself to any woman and afterwards refuse to marry her. To make good my promise of honest frankness, I'll call the five names—that is their given names—for, I take it, it would be very ungentlemanly in me and unjust to them, to give you their full names; no, I wouldn't be so ungentlemanly as that. Besides Thelma, whose letter you found, and the tone of which bears out my statement, I have wooed Annetta,— Edna,— Estelle,— and Hazel,—have disappointed them all, inasmuch as I never proposed marriage to them. But hear me this: In the light of my experience as a flirt, and fully realizing the folly of same, I had promised myself and my God—and I hereby promise you—that I will never woo another girl or woman whom I consider *uncongenial*, or



whose love I would not try to mutually return. In short, I will no longer be a flirt, but will be a real man."

Saying this, Chester looked up at Dixie, whose smile was like a sunbeam on the face of a crimson lily.

"We'll shake hands on that manly confession, and that earnest promise," said Dixie, as she extended her fair hand.

He held her hand a second—their eyes met, and the eyes of both were moist.

"Now, do you dislike me all the more?" he asked in a pleading tone.

"You are—or you were, as I at first feared—a flirt," she replied, "but you are more gallant, more honorable than most flirts whom I have met."

"But," she continued, "it's a serious wrong to be a willful flirt; it's a low, cowardly, ungal-lant man, and a mean one, who trifles with tender hearts, and who would recklessly make and break an engagement of marriage. I could not love a flirt; yea, could not respect such a character. Doubtless you have committed a sin in your disregard for others, and in the selfish gratification of self and your weak vanity. You

have treated too lightly the affection of tender, and perhaps sincere, hearts. Yet, by close observation, I know that too often girls love unwisely, too often they give a love unsought and unwanted by the one whom they would win. Herein lies the secret of so many broken hearts and blasted lives; for always where mutual love is lacking, the lover's way is against the stream. Too many love and are unloved; too many try to sweep back the ocean wave—attempt the impossible. I am persuaded that you are honest, that you are a better man than you used to be. If I didn't think so, I could not flee from your presence too quickly nor too swiftly. Now, Mr. Oakland, if you desire that I shall continue my confidence in you, if you really want my friendship, want me to believe that you have given an honest confession, you will be obliged to perform a task which is far from being either an easy or a pleasant one."

"I would do anything—be the task easy or hard, bitter or sweet—anything for you," he replied.

"Thank you, Mr. Oakland."

He took her hand in his—"Just name the task you wish."

“Don’t hold my hand yet, please,” she replied, withdrawing it from his pressure, “your task is this: Go see Thelma, Annetta, Edna, Estelle and Hazel—beg their forgiveness of your encouragement of their affection, confess your flirtation to each, and help them, if possible, to marry some man who can return their love.”

“Do you ask me to sweep back the ‘ocean wave’?” he asked.

“I might,” he added, do, yea, I could and would do, everything you ask except the latter—but how could I help them to marry other men?”

“Quite easy,” was her reply.

“Then I will listen with great pleasure,” he replied, “to your ‘easy plan’.”

“Not yet,” she responded, “later I will tell you how—and while the unique plan is unheard of, I guarantee it to work quite nicely. I want each of those disappointed girls to win a true man—one whom they love and one who will truly love them.”

“Then I’ll wait,” he promised, “and do what you say, partly for their sake, partly for honor’s sake, but mostly for your sake.”

“Thank you, Mr. Oakland, you are obliging.”

Then the couple paused to behold the wonderful scenes about them.

The charms and pleasures of Yosemite grow upon you with each succeeding visit, and there are many who, by reason of this subtle attraction, have come, almost unconsciously, to acquire what might be termed the Yosemite habit. Year by year when the outdoor longing seizes them, they throw off the thrall of city life, leave behind them the burden of business, and turning their footsteps to the Sierra fastnesses which ever guard this Golden State, answer gladly to the call of the wild. Here, fishing, tramping, riding, wandering care free along the floor of the Valley, or scaling rugged scarp and crag, resting peacefully at night under the stars, muscles grow firm and nerve steady, while hearts beat in healthful unison with deep-drawn breaths of purest air, and life is once again the joy that it is meant to be.

The mountain climber goes to stretch his muscles and test his hand and eye upon the rougher trails; the fisherman to tempt the trout in the long stretches of the lower river or in the swirling rapids and cascades above; the bota-

nist finds a hundred specimens of the mountain flora to enrich and beautify his store; the geologist may journey there from year to year and still make new discoveries; the landscape artist finds perpetual inspiration for his brush; and the writer feels anew the impotence of words, in poem or in prose, to tell aright the story of Yosemite.

Yosemite can be visited all the year round, and each season has its own special delights and advantages. In the spring the melting snow turns the streams which feed the waterfalls into torrents and the down-rushing water is in full volume; on every side are rivulets, leaping cascades and reverberating waterfalls; in the summer the highest trails are accessible, the weather is delightful and the whole atmosphere has a mellow, golden quality that at once rests and invigorates; in the autumn the air is clear, every outline and wonderful profile of rock and crag, of giant column and massive dome, stands out as tho etched against the sky, the leaves are gently fading thru a myriad shades of green and red and bronze—it is the artist's paradise of color; and in winter, with the Valley floor hidden beneath a snowy cover, with red snow

YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

plants thrusting their way thru the cold earth, like tongues of flame, with every tree and plant drooping gracefully under its wintry burden, with marvelous icicles, like great stalactites, hanging from tower and pinnacle and over-arching rocks—who shall say which is the best time to visit the wondrous garden of the Sierra?

### CHAPTR III.

Leaving the Glacier Point Hotel at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Chester and Dixie reached the Wawona hotel at 6 o'clock—a four-hour pleasant drive up and down hills and mountains, thru sweet-smelling forests of wild flowers, and occasionally passing a deer near the road-side.

After an excellent dinner which proved equal to their increasing appetites, a restful night, and a delicious breakfast at the Wawona hotel, Chester and Dixie, with other tourists, took the nine o'clock stage en route to the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees—twenty-six miles from the Valley, but still in the boundary of the National Park—and a three-hour drive beyond the Wawona hotel. These world-famed forest giants are in Mariposa county, (Cal.) and are known as the *Sequoia gigantea*—being larger than the redwood or *sequoia sempervirens*.

The bark of The Big Trees is fibrous in texture and so soft that one can feel it give under a hard pressure of the finger. It ranges from 10 to 26 inches in thickness and is the color of cinnamon.

The Maripjosa forest (so named because located in Mariposa county) is divided into two

groves, namely: "the upper and the lower grove," and was first discovered (in 1857) by that grand old gentleman and beloved author, Galen Clark, who lived close to Nature in the Sierras and Valley which he loved so well, and whose pen never wrote a lie in relating their beauty and charm.

The area of land containing "The Big Trees" contains 2,589.26 acres, and was ceded to the United States in 1905 by the State of California.

Standing under the shadows of their gigantic arms, I heard the breeze whisper in vain to the aged giants, for they were silent; I heard the wind strive to sway their bodies, but they were immovable.

Endowed with vigor and vitality, with lungs which inhale the mountain air, and feet which reach into the bowels of the earth for sustenance, and skin whose pores drink in the thirst-quenching rain and dew, these "Big Trees"—the largest and oldest living things in the world—seem almost human, almost endowed with a heart if not a soul. Before the morning stars sang together, or ere the shepherds paused at the manger-bed in the sublime presence of the only begotten Son of their Creator, these grand-



est of all living antiquities of the forest, lifted their cloud-kissed heads into the heavens; and could they speak, the oldest of them could relate 8,000 years of history.

Having brought their lunch to the grove of the "Big Trees", Chester and Dixie were in no hurry to return to the hotel.

Having walked amid the groves and around several of the aged giants of the forest and at last, standing together and alone in the tunnel of the tree named Wawona, and thru which the stage had carried them a few hours before, Chester and Dixie felt a growing enthusiasm, while the Yosemite region seemed to grow more and more favorable to romance between them. While they were exchanging smiles and yet conversing in the tunnel of this proud tree which had sheltered lovers of many a century, even a lonely little bird not far away, seemed to sing for the couple's pleasure and benefit. About them, intoxicatingly sweet, smelt the quaint perfume of the pines, and the earth exhaled pleasantly soft and fragrant odors.

"Dixie," began Chester, the first time he had addressed her in such a familiar manner, "I think I could live happily here forever, with you—just you and I."

Her face shone in colors fairer than the rainbow, but Dixie made no reply. Dixie was not so absurd as to think anything might come of this, at once. The handsome chap and erstwhile flirt must first atone for his previous folly, must right some grievous wrongs, must learn something of God's law about the sowing and reaping of harvest, and must prove himself absolutely earnest and true.

Everything was remote; yet undeniably on the horizon of what had been a black night, there were the faint flickerings of new fires. What made Dixie happy now was the knowledge that she had beauty enough, heart enough, to draw to herself admiration and affection which was innocent, unsophisticated, unselfish; that there was for her, here in the forest, a clear fountain flowing. The unaffected hope of romance, the untroubled happiness of her girlhood seemed to shimmer into existence.

Dixie's honey-colored hair fell in heavy small curls about her fair brow, and the flush in her crimson cheeks, the brilliant smile which, to Chester, came only too seldom—but to him, always beautiful, the lithesome grace of her movements brought a sparkle into the eyes of the

warm-blooded man whose love she had surely won from the beginning. Tho infatuated by Chester's charms, and his willingness to atone for past error, Dixie had not become demonstrative. Yet more than once at Chester's attempts to draw her out, Dixie felt a flame burn in her cheeks—a consuming flame of desire, yea, of love. He looked down into the eyes of the girl, his look speaking more eloquently than words, and the blushes danced in Dixie's cheeks like the petals of creamy roses. Without turning her head, Dixie could see his profile.

The tunnel walls of the tree guarded them from the observation of others, and near them was neither vehicle nor foot passenger. For a while Chester remained unmoved in the storm of emotions which had come over him. Then he reached for Dixie's trembling hands which gave themselves to his touch. While yet holding her hand Chester murmured:

“Dixie, I love you so much that life without you would be a miserable existence. I love you so much that without you, even this forest of giant trees and the dear Valley of Yosemite would seem dreary and monotonous. I don't want ever to go away from you. I want us to

be together forever, and to throw my arms about you, to drive away all your clouds, and to kiss away your tears. Since knowing you I feel that this is the only way that I shall ever know happiness—or peace. Since first I heard your voice, since first you smiled upon me, I wake in the morning with your name on my lips and I wander thru the day with your image in my heart. If I try to read, you come between me and the page. If I try to think, you come between my thoughts—yea, my thoughts are of you. You are my books, music—my—my—everything, I go to bed early at night often so that I can lie in the dusk and think of you. And, oh, the only nights that rest me are those filled with dreams of the poem we would make out of life—if—if——”

Ere finishing his sentence, he looked into Dixie's face, and her look defied him.

“Wait!” she demanded. “A great deal must be done before I can listen to you—like that.”

Her head was tilted high, and there was a determined look about the angle of her chin.

A breeze swept her honey-colored hair, which had taken on a touch of sunset-gold.

“But when can this ‘something’ be done?”

asked Chester, "when will you tell me your plan?"

"When we leave Yosemite," she answered, "you will accompany me to my sea-side home—and there I will make known to you the plan."

When Dixie had again smiled upon him, Chester quite forgot his anxiety—and they both were again conscious of the marvelous beauty and immensity of the "Big Trees" about them.

Mariposa Grove, in the Yosemite National Park, is almost invariably visited in conjunction with the Valley trip.

There are 259 Sequoias in the Lower Grove, and 352 in the Upper Grove. The finest tree is the "Mariposa," 100 feet in circumference, and 275 in height, it being named for the county in which the "Big Trees" stand.

While the Mariposa is the finest, it is not the largest in the Upper Grove.

The Hartford, circumference 120 feet, and height 280 feet, is hollow at the base, and has sheltered in its cavity, sixteen persons on horseback.

In the Lower Grove, standing in its time-worn and rugged appearance, which is suggestive of its name, is the Grizzly Giant—the oldest

and biggest tree in the world. This Sequoia is still living, and is said to be nine feet out of plumb. Its estimated age is 8,000 years, circumference 104 feet at the base, height 224 feet, first limb 100 feet from the ground, and  $20\frac{1}{2}$  feet in circumference—and the tree is estimated to contain 1,000,000 feet of lumber.

These figures and measurements, as well as all others in this volume, are according to the United States Geological Survey (as I understand it).

In the Upper Grove there is a quaint low-roofed cabin, one room of which is used as a *curio* store, where many odd, beautiful and useful things, which are made from the knots and other portions of the "Big Trees," are sold. Almost invariably in the different groves, the Sequoias seem to have naturally arranged themselves into family groups and social clusters, some being only a few feet apart.

The Sequoias remain green the year round, and even with their scaly, thick, rough bark, they are unequaled, not only in size, but also in majestic grace and beauty. Some of the Sequoias have been greatly damaged by ancient forest fires, and while bearing the black scars,

they still live to beautify the favorite spot which Dame Nature chose for their home.

At first you will find their great size very deceitful if you try to measure them by the eye; but see a large four-horse stage driven thru the "Wawona", place several men at their base, walk around their trunk, or measure their circumference with a spool of thread or a ball of twine, and you will begin to realize the immensity of their unequalled measurements.

Even now, when you shall have read this chapter, take a spool of thread, get a friend to hold the spool while you unwind it walking a distance of 104 feet, and you will have the circumference of the Grizzly Giant in a comprehensive demonstration.

It is said that when Galen Clark, who was for many years guardian of Yosemite, first knew the Upper Grove, there was exactly one big tree for every day in the year. Three of them have fallen since then. Here is the old log cabin of the keeper, a good sized dwelling dwarfed to a Peter Pan house, measured by the big trees about it. The Lower Grove is a mile away, the original grant covering the trees being about four miles square. The tallest tree, three hun-

dred and twenty-five feet, is named "Columbia." Most of the trees, as in the other well-known groves, have been named for presidents, generals and distinguished men and places, leading often to duplication of titles. On the "Fallen Monarch" a six-horse coach with sixteen passengers has been driven with ease. Roughly, it is said to weigh, as it lies, about three million pounds, with fifty thousand cubic feet of lumber in it, or enough to supply twenty-four miles of board fence six feet high. It is partly buried in six feet of soil accumulated since its fall hundreds of years ago, but its wood is sound, for the heart of a Sequoia seems beyond decay. The gnarled roots of this tree seem incapable of having supported it, and it is a matter of surprise that these trees, as might a Corinthian column, seem to hold their firm stand by their perfect poise and symmetry rather than by any great foundation. Their roots are never deep nor of much radiation.

An interesting tree is the "Telescope," its two hundred feet tunneled by ancient fires, yet still living. One can almost see the stars at noonday thru the tube, and to watch some great



## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

planet's eye blazing down after nightful is a unique experience.

The Big Trees are worth traveling across the continent to see, and form a very conspicuous part of the visit to Yosemite Valley; for these trees, as well as the Valley, are and have long been listed in the leading encyclopedias, as one of the wonders of the world.

BENEATH THE GIANT TREES.

I traveled the Sierras for the joy that it brings  
 To the lover of mountain and dell;  
 And stored in my heart are the memories dear,  
 And the scenes, too many to tell.  
 Beneath the grand trees that kiss the clouds  
 These towers of Nature sublime—  
 I stood enchanted, *enthused*, and inspired  
 Beholding the monarchs of Time.

Old as the ages! and still they're alive,  
 Defying Time's tempest and gale;  
 These are the great masterpieces of Him  
 Who gave to earth forest and vale.  
 Ages ago, God kissed them to life  
 With sunbeams, the rain and the dew,  
 And the long ages since, He has watched over all  
 While into great giants they grew.

And now His noble monuments,  
 These oldest, living things—  
 Stand sentinels of earth and sky,  
 Erect, grand forest kings!  
 Regretting much to leave these spires,  
 Which pierce the heavenly air,  
 I turned at last a backward look  
 And breathed a word of prayer.

Returning at four o'clock in the afternoon, Chester and Dixie found and enjoyed many points of interest en route from the Wawona Hotel—at which place they spent another pleasant evening, and left the following morning at seven o'clock for El Portal, the entrance to and exit from Yosemite Valley, and the terminal of the Yosemite Valley R. R.

En route, the stage halted briefly at Inspiration Point, 1,200 feet above the Valley floor, and from which place a splendid panoramic view of the Valley is had.

Farther along, Artist Point furnished a beautiful view—such as inspires the painter's brush. Still farther on after leaving the Valley floor and to the right of the road, the driver calls attention to the perfect profile of a cat on a cliff-wall, which profile requires no stretching of the imagination to distinguish clearly the natural image.

A little farther, and to the left of the road, is a noble granite cliff called Elephant Rock, so named because of its perfect resemblance to this large quadruped.

## CHAPTER IV.

Having completed their never-to-be-forgotten visit to Yosemite Valley and The Big Trees, Chester and Dixie decided to rest a day or so at the inviting Hotel Del Portal, and all visitors should take time to do likewise, for here at this mountain inn, so beautifully set in its unique surroundings of Dame Nature, is a lover's paradise, a poet's dream-palace and, to the weary tourist, a "cozy corner," where he may enjoy "all the comforts of home."

Deep in the heart of nearly all of us is a primal impulse to get away from the town and close to Nature every little once in a while. Boy and girl, young man and maiden, elder folk in the whirl and bustle of Life's demands, the older yet who are looking for quiet havens—all instinctively love the places that are called wild, tho in their very wildness lies their charm, their soothing anodyne that heals, refreshes and invigorates as we get closer to the ways of our forefathers.

Here is an inn where Nature smiles in thru the windows, breathes thru the open doors, waiting smilingly to take you into her confidence and tell you, in the murmur of the river,

in the rustling of the trees, a thousand secrets that will make you better satisfied with life.

To lounge on wide verandas where pools of golden sunshine and dusky shadow alternate; to feel the mountain zephyr, redolent with the spicery of the pines; to see the cascading river sparkling not so far below but that its hurrying murmur mingles with the song Aeolus whispers to the trees;—does not this conjure up a vision of a place in which to rest, to play awhile at will, but a place of peace, a haven from the turmoil of everyday life, a place of inspiration, where the spirit of youth walks hand in hand with the spirit of love and where romance grows beneath favorable skies?

It seemed that everywhere the wilderness beautiful, beckoned this congenial couple of romantic hearts, and could the rocks break their golden silence, their secrets of wooing might be told, but it were better to leave heaven alone to know what words of love and tender devotion must have been whispered between Chester and Dixie in this mountain solitude.

Here, in this beautiful canyon beloved of the Indians before the paleface came, where later gold-seekers found their glittering fortunes on

the sandbars of the Merced; replacing the rude cabin of the miner and the Indian's tepee, now stands amid romantic setting the luxuriant lodge of the white man.

The Indian hunter poisoning his spear above the bubbling current is gone, tho yet a remnant of the tribes winter in the sheltered Valley; but the trout are yet more abundant, for the white hunter restocks the river every year. The booted miner no longer rocks his cradle or spills his pan upon the banks of the canyon where now the locomotive shrills an echo from the hills, but the wild things of covert and forest are still plentiful and sing and frisk or swiftly gallop thru ferns and flowers, by chaparral and chinquapin, beneath the boscage, as they have ever since Mother Nature mantled the glacier-ground, frost-riven walls and floor of Yosemite with verdure.

Having spent two restful, eventful days at the Hotel Del Portal, Chester and Dixie boarded the Yosemite Valley train at El Portal en route to Merced.

The railroad passes thru the deep canyon of the Merced—the river, placid where the stream is wide and deep, then a raging torrent dashing

## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

over the rocks, is within a stone's throw of the car window almost the entire distance. The ever-changing mountain scenery is fascinating, picturesque, magnificent, and the tree-fringed shores, carven cliffs, stones of many colors by the road-side, are replete with romantic splendor.

Soon the dewy freshness of the dawn was dispelled by the morning sunbeams which penetrated the car window, and the train rolled into Merced in time for noon lunch.

## CHAPTER V.

Back to her home at Long Beach, California—the city by the sea—Dixie went, Chester accompanying her. Dixie was delighted, but no less than was the new acquaintance accompanying her, to return to the land of her abode and nativity, this haven of the beautiful, where the white-caps of the Pacific rise from their blue cradle of the deep to kiss the golden sunbeams, and where the waves, obedient to the wind, play in their tireless ramble with the sandy beach, as if striving to please and entertain the thousands of annual visitors to this famous and unequaled summer and winter resort.

Reached by several railroads, Long Beach has a population of nearly 20,000, and is located on the Pacific Coast, twenty-two miles south of Los Angeles. The numerous visitors the year round, are delighted with the balmy breezes, the laughing, frolicking, and sometimes mad, waves of the sea, the long stretches of smoothly paved and well-kept streets, the splendid homes—beautified by palmettoes, lawns, vines and flowers, the luxurious inns, the fine schools, the great commercial center and excellent citizenship—all of which conspire to ren-



der Long Beach the acme of desirableness as a coast resort, wherein may be found all the modern conveniences and luxuries - which are enjoyed in a municipality not too small for those who would avoid the crowded metropolis, nor yet too large for those who would find comparative quietude in city life.

At Long Beach, a very large area possesses the topographical, scenic and climatic characteristics that foster a residential district of the higher class. Entirely distinct from this, and yet most conveniently situated, is another great area, having the natural conformation inevitably associated with commerce and industry.

From the bluff fronting on the Strand a high mesa stretches back three and a half miles to the foot of Signal Hill. There being a gently sloping elevation, a beautiful view of the ocean is afforded on the one side and the wide-spread Los Angeles and Santa Anna Valleys on the other. Along the south front is the famous San Pedro Bay, which is made into a magnificent harbor by the enclosing arms of Catalina Island and the Government Breakwater. Around the semi-circle of the bay extends fourteen miles of broad, shallow beach, affording the finest and

safest surf bathing on the coast, and at low tide a wave-swept boulevard of hard sand is the lasting delight of the motorist and driver.

The world affords no finer climate than that of Southern California, but even here may be found favored spots, and Long Beach is one of the most delightful and favored in this regard. In a land where severe frost and sun-stroke alike are unknown, there are still comparative extremes of heat and cold which are not found here. The mountains of Catalina on the South and of the Palos Verdes on the West break the rigors of the ocean breezes in the winter, and the constant trade winds temper the summer heat, preventing either extreme and affording an equable temperature that has never failed to delight.

California is a land of enchantment where, if anywhere this side of heaven, the fountain of youth flows in some hidden glade. Within the very sound of railway trains there are desolate stretches of pine forest, and stately palms, lonely reaches of lagoon and marsh, where even the dullest-eyed tourist might feel that there had suddenly come between him and the clattering world an invisible curtain. Behind it the world

is soon forgotten, and miracles may happen.

Chester Oakland, a guest at Dixie's home, had left the quaint cottage-like place for a walk to the sea-side. Tho lacking the ability to express it, he had come to think poetry by the sea, but in his wonder at the strange desert land, which had unexpectedly disclosed itself to him, he forgot completely his intention. Half an hour before, he had left behind him the little wonder of the West—his Dixie. Not really his own, but he delighted thus to claim her. He now faced the blue and sparkling sea, nearly shut in by golden sand cliffs, and had plunged into the dunes, unknown to him until that surprising, mystical moment, in which the world dropped away, and the ocean disappeared, and, alone with the sand and the sky, he stood bound by the ineffable spell of the place—and his thoughts of Dixie. The expanse of rolling desert appealed to him, not as a scene of desolation, but a thing alive, pulsating with warmth and flame and color. Here he beheld the luster of gold, there the tint of glowing bronze. What softness lay in the green of the beech grass! What depth in the darker green of the stunted bayberry bushes! what violet shadows in the

hollow of the valley! How this desert land must glow at sunset! how beautiful must be its splendor under the full moon, and how awe-inspiring must it be on a starry night! Even now, in the brightness of the afternoon, he felt the haunting mystery of the dunes, and, as he smote the fresh, ever-shifting sands with his bare hand, he spoke aloud his thought: "This is Dixie's poem, her inspiring walk, her play-ground, where her face gets its freshness of youth from the soft breath of the sea, where her cheeks steal the crimson of the sun-kissed waves and where her roaming spirit is inspired by the easy-winged roamers, the birds of many seas."

He walked on dreamily, his footsteps muffled in the heavy sand. The only sounds that broke the stillness were the low moaning of the surf, and the plaintive cry of a wheeling gull. Under the enchantment of the place, he forgot that the world existed. He seemed strangely close to some great elemental force. Was it in the surroundings, or in his heart? He had walked away from the beach when he suddenly came upon Dixie who sat in the golden sand like a child in "a play house."

“Hello! you down here too?” he said, “I thought you were at the house.”

“I’m like yonder sea-birds,” replied Dixie, with a bright smile, “I like to be on the wing.”

From the slight eminence of the sand hill, he looked back to the sea, blue and dreaming, not far away. He gazed at its sapphire and the gold of the sands, then at Dixie’s honey-colored hair, the delicate oval of her cheek, and then, as a perfect whole, all her grace and radiant beauty.

Returning the gaze, she looked at him as a dreamer of lovely, strange dreams. For a long half moment, they looked at each other—as they might have gazed on a distant star.

“Do you care if I linger here,” he asked. Her face lighted up instantly.

“Not in the least,” she replied—more like an unpretentious child than a beautiful, grown-up woman.

They talked, and her speech revealed her love for the sea, and sky, and the dunes. The sea, mirroring the red of the afternoon sun, it seemed, might have been painted with her heart’s blood—she seemed so much a part of the enchanted place.

“Can’t you see poetry in yonder wave, there in the graceful sailing of that bird, and here in the gold of fresh sand?”

“Yes, but I can see a great deal more here,” he replied, pointing to where she sat, and smiling.

“I hoped you wouldn’t think this an out-of-the-world place,” she mused.

In his enthusiasm, he sat down on the low mound beside her, and began to talk to her as tho he had always known her.

In all his life of travel, he thought that he had never seen a woman so beautiful, and one who so influenced him, and if he had ever been shy, he forgot his shyness in his rapture, as he poured out a brilliant flow of stories—and wooed her with his eyes.

And the girl listened in sheer delight, the color coming and going in her cheeks. They compared notes on various places they had each seen, for they both had traveled in many lands. And as they talked, he watched her animated face as he would revel in a beautiful painting or a marvelous sunset.

“What a congenial mate you would make for me,” he thought.

From the ends of the earth, they finally returned in their conversation—to the land and sand and sea about them.

“I have never seen a place more beautifully romantic,” he said, “than Yosemite and here—Yosemite, because there we met, and here, because it’s your abode and because you grace this enchanted spot.”

“Before I met you,” he continued, “I had grown tired of the world, of people, and almost of existence. I mean no mere flattery when I say that the moment I made your acquaintance life seemed to grow brighter and existence more desirable. Little wonder that you are so peaceful here. One seems so alone with the sky and the sea. It is so clean, so pure. I feel that the world might be but just created for you—and for me.”

She turned to him eagerly.

“You feel it?” she cried. “Oh, I am glad! A pessimist might call it dull, dreary. I have invited friends from New York and Boston up here to my little bungalow, and they were always delighted with the environment, this—that I love so.” Her flashing eyes and the sweet tone of her voice sent a little thrill thru him.

“I never tire of the dear blue sea,” she went on, after a moment. “I am never lonely. Sometimes in winter I go to New York or Boston, or Paris, perhaps, for two or three months, to see the exhibitions; perhaps study a bit; but I’m always glad to get back. The first of March finds me in my bungalow, watching the waves and birds and listening to their songs. Such blue seas as we have then! One doesn’t find such color in mid-summer. You don’t know the sea unless you live with it, as I do. It’s in my blood, I suppose. I come of a race of sea captains, on my father’s side.”

When the shadows slanted purple across the dunes, they walked back together thru the sand, feeling like old friends.

“I’m sure I knew you a thousand years ago,” he laughed. “Do you believe in the transmigration of souls?”

“Yes—no.” She was grave. “If I *was* here before, I am sure I was a sea gull. They seem nearer, closer to me now than most human beings. I am sure they have souls.”

She stopped, and stood motionless, watching one lonely sea bird sailing far overhead, its great pinions gleaming white against the fath-



omless blue. She was so absorbed that she seemed to forget his existence, and he felt an absurd sense of loneliness.

Silently they walked on. Then he exclaimed in delight, as a sudden turn in their path revealed a low bungalow nestled between the dunes and the sea.

“No wonder you love it!” he cried.

They entered the quiet home with wide windows, open on three sides to the sea and the dunes.

It was filled with all the freshness of sea winds and sunshine. Masses of beautiful flowers added to the sunny effect. He glanced at the great fireplace, in readiness for the cool evening. A grand piano was strewn with music. Books filled low bookcases. Above them, pictures opened glimpses into other lands. Silken cushions of soft, faded rose and green piled up in broad window seats invited one to loaf and dream. Over and above all came the low booming of the surf below.

“It’s the most solitary place in the world, and the most habitable,” he cried, in sheer delight. “What more could the heart of man—or woman—desire?”

To them both, after that first day's meeting, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to talk and walk together every morning. Day after day, out under the sky, beside the sea, in the heart of the dune, or in her studio among her books and pictures, their friendship deepened. With Chester, the relation was more than friendship. He idealized her, set her on a pedestal high above himself, and silently worshiped her.

All the world had changed to him in those recent days of association with Dixie. He loved her not alone for her beauty, but unmistakably for her very self. Leaving Dixie awhile to herself, the full moon found him out in the dunes, unconscious of himself and of everything in the world but the supreme fact that love had come to him with all the more depth and intensity. He stood still on the brow of a low dune, and drew in deep drafts of the bracing air that rushed to him with the tang of untold leagues of briny waves. Then he flung himself down upon the sand, exulting in his closeness to the warm, throbbing heart of the earth mother. All about him was profound silence, except for the faintly heard beat of the ocean.

“To lose Dixie,” he thought, “would be to live a life without a single smile or a word of love—would be like clipping the wings of a sea gull.”

Love taught him many things—to catch the spirit of the dunes, and to listen to the secrets which the winds and the waves are ever striving to reveal. And in turn, he taught Dixie many things. He opened to her wider vistas and taught her more of life than she had ever known, he inspired her to think as she had never thought before. And she, in turn, came to him with all her troubles, her perplexities, her hopes, and her fears. Never in all his life had he come so close to the heart of a woman.

He became conscious, after a little, of a still closer tie of sympathy that drew them together.

Alone in the moon-lit night, while watching the surf break on the beach, he was wondering deep in his heart, whether the time might ever come when Dixie would fully return his love—would she ever consider the making of their lives as one?

The next morning found them still together—alone by the surf. Chester felt the sweet spirit of youth and love and beauty growing each

moment of that heavenly morning. He talked—talked a long time and in the spirit becoming a lover. She listened intently, with her beautiful, fathomless eyes fixed on him, the color coming and going in her young face.

“I hope,” he said, “that you will not longer defer telling me how to tear down the barrier between us. You said that there was a great deal to be done. I am ready to go to the limit of my power for one whom I so really and truly love.”

All his passionate nature flashed into his eyes as he uttered the words, and he felt the sudden rapidity of his heart-beats.

She turned to view him more closely, and seated herself on a low mound of sand, her hands clasping her knees, her soft hair blowing in the sea wind, her eyes fixed on the open sea. She was silent for a long time, while he was still thinking, glancing down at her occasionally, not wanting to interrupt her reverie.

“You don’t care if I go away, if I leave you forever!” he asserted.

She looked up into his face, her eyes like stars.

All the color faded from her face. She sat up

very straight, and gazed at him with grave, sweet eyes.

“You think so? You really believe that?” she questioned. Then she looked away, and the slow red mounted to her cheeks.

The young couple looked like a rare picture, so strong, so good to look upon—each with a rare temperament, such keen love of life—like a god and goddess, as they stood in the searching gaze of each other’s face and the deep, blue ocean.

“Mr. Oakland,” began Dixie, “doubtless you have been wondering what would be my demand of you, or rather what plan I would devise to restore justice to the five girls you have wooed and left disappointed to mourn your departure.”

“If you care to have our acquaintance continue,” she added, “I will now tell you the requirement, and explain the plan—otherwise, it is needless—my telling.”

“It does make a difference to me,” he replied, “I’m ready to know your requirement, to hear your plan.”

“It is simply this,” she explained: “Go to the five girls, tell each of them that you want to

atone for the wrong you have done her by helping her marry another man. Then go to the man who is paying her his attentions; tell him that you knew the girl first, that you intend winning her in case he doesn't want her, but as a respecter of his rights and wishes, you will set a future date, until which, you pledge him not to see or write to her, but after which, you will do your best to woo and win her heart and hand.

“Doubtless in each case, the man will be jealous of you—one who seems so determined and handsome, and I ween that not one of the five men will let the date of their fate pass.”

“Who on earth but ‘Dixie Darlington’ would have ever thought of that?” exclaimed Chester, “it’s a grand scheme!”

“Do you mean to say,” Chester added, “that if I do this successfully, there will be no barrier between us?”

“Do all of this,” she replied, “and when you come back, your Dixie will be waiting for you—waiting to make you happy.” Dixie smiled to encourage him—a bewildering smile with which she had so far paid her way in the world.

“You’re leaving me a powerful lot to do while I’m away.” At first he smiled quizzically. Then

suddenly his face grew serious, and there was a flash in his eyes as he answered: "I'll try, if you want me to, for I reckon," he began speaking more swiftly, "I reckon you're just about the wisest and the best person there is—and the prettiest," he finished lamely.

Dixie felt herself blushing ever so little.

There is always a certain exhilaration in advising others. Her cheeks glowed, and her honey-colored hair was blown by the sea breeze. Problems of her own had been tormenting her for days; it was pleasant to escape for once into some one else's troubles.

Now the burden was his to bear. "If he is worthy of my confidence, and really in earnest, he'll do this, or at least he'll try; if not, he's unworthy, and my aim is to have nothing to do with any man who proves unworthy of my love." Thinking this, she shifted the whole responsibility from her shoulders to his.

What happened to her just then Dixie never quite understood. Suddenly the unusual task she had determined on stood out before her as if lit up by lightning flashes in a lowering night. It was not that she repented, not that she meditated even for an instant taking any other

course than the one she had started upon, yet somehow she was sorry for Chester who was so willing to atone. And the thought of this young life, this fresh, loyal heart gallantly pledging itself if only for a moment to the future she chose, just because she had chosen it, brought tears suddenly to her eyes. She was conscious of a strange, suffocating emotion and giddiness in the bright sunlight. In spite of herself she cried out in sudden appeal: "You won't make a mess out of it will you?"

"With the love I have for you," he replied, "can you not trust my ability to do this?"

This reply almost stunned her.

"To gain much, one must be willing to do much," he added, "it's no child's task—this undertaking, but I must succeed—good-bye, I must go quickly."

"You're gallant, good-bye," then she added softly, "and you'll come back?"

"Yes, I'll come back."

They clasped hands. Somehow, as she lost sight of him in the distance, unwelcome tears again flooded her eyes. Once he turned and waved to her. Dixie watched until he was only a black atom among the foot-paths.



## CHAPTER VI.

Every beautiful morning, Dixie took a walk to the sea—and sat in the sand—the same spot where Chester had left her, and from which place she had watched him till space swallowed his form in the distance. He had roused in the woman a kind of half romantic pity, yea, a growing young love. Dixie wondered whether he would remember the shore where a long stretch of white beach was kissed by the blue waves where they were last together.

She never quite forgot the longing, determined look on Chester's handsome face on the bright morning of his departure. The time lengthened into days and weeks and months since Dixie had clasped his hand. No two days in Love's calendar are alike. Now Dixie had assumed a mood of uneasiness, and almost felt that she had driven him away forever—a thing she would not willingly have done for the whole world. A strangeness seemed to possess Dixie's sentiment. Even in her flower-garden, the morning blossoms revealed new miracles. The birds that once almost ate crumbs from her hands, seemed shy of her presence, and seemed to fear her very melancholy.

Tho she had driven Chester to his tremendous task, Dixie realized that it was sweet to know that he had gone because of his love for her, and had promised to return. A long reflection over the possibility of the failure of Chester's effort at atonement drove Dixie to write him the following letter:

"My dear Chester:—I am addressing you according to your direction, and I hope that if this fails to reach you direct, you will have left proper forwarding notices at the post offices along your route, whereby this may reach you safely and in time. In my quiet moments of reflection since your departure, I have wept many times because I sent you away on such a questionable—and now it sometimes seems to me quixotic—errand. You are surely the one loyal man in a thousand, or you would not have so willingly started on a journey involving such personal sacrifice and such possible failures and disappointing consequences. If you were only back here in this lonely place where I could feel the sunshine of your presence, I would not drive you away again. Doubtless you think me very cruel and inconsiderate of your happiness, but instead, I want you to think of me as merciful, tender and kind. I am just thinking that if you should meet defeat in your manly endeavor, you might never come back, and the thought haunts me day and night. One's honest effort to right a wrong, tho failing in the attempt, is the same in the eye of justice as if the attempt were successful. So, even tho you fail in your endeavor, you will have succeeded in complying with my demand. In case of your failure, you are no less welcome back here by the restless, sad sea—restless and sad, because of your absence. In meeting those girls again, in talking "the old days" over with them, doubtless you will be moved by their love for you,

## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

but remember, that Dixie—your Dixie by the sea, remember—loves you more than they. I was so foolish to drive you from me, and from the enchanting blue sea that you loved so well. I delight to linger long where we rambled in the dear, but alas, too short days when you were here. I love the dunes still more because you loved them and these desolate surroundings—but desolate only since you went away. More than ever, I realize why those five girls loved you so—who could help loving a man like you? I could not consent to be so frank, had you also not been so frank, so honest with me. Each day I find myself looking in the direction in which you disappeared—and the horizon seems like some strange revelation—like some monster that had swallowed you from my view. I feel a strangeness which I cannot describe, a sadness which I cannot explain, a longing which I cannot prevent. When I think of the indifferent way in which I treated your expressed emotion, I become angry with myself. While you are somewhere out in the world fighting against the stream—honestly endeavoring to atone for past error, I feel that I am the one who ought to do the atoning. I have driven you away from welcome arms, from what, to you, seemed an enchanted place, and I do so much deplore my mistake. Now I can atone only with my sadness—and hope to be forgiven. Be brave, my boy; come back to me, and the calling welcome of the blue sea—come back to one so fondly and truly yours,

DIXIE.”

Dixie waited many days, and when no word or line came back from Chester, she decided that he had either not received her letter or else had ceased to think of her. But one day, as she sat day-dreaming, a letter came from Chester, but contained no word of acknowledgment of her letter to him. It read:

## YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

“Dear Dixie:—I have mustered my power and what tact I possessed, and all the genius I could command, only to meet defeat. Not absolute defeat, however, for prospects of success are not entirely wanting. I have visited the five girls to whom I am now seeking to do tardy justice, and have made to each an honest confession, proposed my plan to aid them in getting married—or should I say ‘our plan’? and all are delighted with the idea. And now, having seen two of their lovers, my next task is to see the other three. The two I have seen, became quite jealous of me at once—one became really angry. I think, however, your scheme will prove the magic to aid Cupid as nothing else could do. If I succeed in all five of the cases I’ll come back to you by the enchanting sea. If I meet defeat, I suppose I shall have to meet my fate as bravely as a man can. But where love inspires, the magic, the wonderful may happen; and as you well know, you are my inspiration. In case ‘our plan’ succeeds, I have directed each of the five girls to write me immediately, and gave your post box at Long Beach as my address. Should they write, you are hereby authorized to open said letters as they arrive. To-day I am dreaming of ‘Dixie by the laughing, blue sea’—of our walks and talks in that lovely part of this romantic old globe, and tho I am far away from you, my thoughts encircle you like a strand of honeysuckles might circle a flower-garden. Now, good-bye little girl—my Dixie, good-bye.  
From your loving CHESTER.”

Not many months later, Dixie found letter No. 1, addressed to Chester—in her mail box. Opening it as per her lover’s direction, her glad eyes perceived the following:

“Dear Chester, my dear friend of old, you will be glad to know that as a result of your efforts and talk with the man I was seeking to win, I have ‘landed my fish’ safely

YOSEMITE VALLEY ROMANCE

---

—and he and I are living happily together in our splendid new home. Your scheme proved a world-wonder—but no one but you could have ever made it successful—for your handsomeness (pardon this) can make the best of men jealous—and when a man sees his danger of losing the prize, (pardon again) he gets desperate at once. Human nature is a queer thing, you know—yes, you know it like a book. I can never thank you enough for your scheme in making a husband of my sweetheart. Gratefully yours,

THELMA.”

The following day Dixie had the pleasure of opening letter No. 2.:

“Dear Chester,” it read. “You said that I should write you when the thing happened, and in gratitude for your kindness, here’s the news: He and I became engaged last evening during our moon-lit walk. Old boy, I’ll sure send you a piece of wedding-cake—the biggest, the first and the nicest slice. Your old friend,

ANNETTA.”

Two weeks later, followed letter No. 3.:

“Chester, I could hardly wait to get my pen and ink to inform you that something has happened—and that ‘something’, as you have already guessed, is the very thing I had failed to bring about with all my efforts—but which you, in some queer way, brought about with perfect magical ease. Of course, I refer to my recent marriage to George. He hates you like a snake, and if he really knew it all—my! I don’t know what! I remain your happy married friend,

EDNA.”

Another week brought letter No. 4.:

“Dear Mr. Oakland: At first I privately laughed at your proposed plan—but last Sunday, just after a lovely dinner to which I had invited my sweetheart, he ‘popped the question,’ as a rube would term it. And, Chester, you know that I am such a lover of the old days of my girlhood on the farm, I sometimes like to use some of those queer old-time phrases to express myself. Yet, of course, you know, I never indulge in the use of slang. Your plan proved O. K.—but for goodness sake, keep it quiet! Yours thankfully,

ESTELLE.”

It seemed a long time to Dixie, ere the last message came—but letter No. 5 pleased her no little:

“Mr. Chester Oakland, Dear Sir:—Henry and I were married a fortnight since at the Hillside church. I credit, partly, our union to your unique effort in interviewing Henry as you did. We have just returned from our honeymoon in Canada. I will ever remember you with much gratitude. Very truly yours,

HAZEL.”

While Dixie felt much gratified in receiving the five letters which proved her suggested plan a success, the one thing to happen, for which she was longing, was for the return of Chester. Many a hero wins and never knows the victory. “Could this be the case,” she wondered, “with the victory Chester had wrought—not only in

the successful conclusion of his endeavor to have brought about the five marriages, but his victory in winning Dixie's heart. Yea, many a battle is won and peace declared, and the heroes, who made possible the victory, often never live to see the sweet flag of peace wave above the battle-field. Chester had fought—and had won the battle—now would he claim the victory?" Yea, would he know that he had won? Dixie waited and longed impatiently—but as patiently as a lover could, under like circumstances.

## CHAPTER VII.

After many months of wandering, Chester Oakland made good his promise—returning to Dixie at her home—the same suburban bungalow by the sea where the girl had long waited for the coming of her lover.

“Oh, I knew you would come sometime—I knew you would come back,” cried Dixie, “and I’ve waited these long, long months.”

“It seemed like years to me,” Chester replied.

“It seems ages since I left you by the sea—since I saw your face—the face which has since been my star on earth, like the one bright star which guided the wise men to the manger Divine, this star has guided me back.”

The stately palms, the red birds and the blue birds flashing in and out of the magnolias, the mysterious mangroves, the calm, blue sea, the unbelievable sunset skies—everything about them seemed to echo this wonderful love of theirs. They felt that all this was the setting that God had made for their romance. They would spend their lives here in a little white cottage on the side of a dreamland hill.

“The little spots of golden sunlight are sifting down thru the spray,” he exclaimed, and



“dancing fantastically on the dark water. Let us go there, dear.’

Dixie followed gladly, and her eyes had contracted the habit of following him wherever he went, for to Dixie, Chester was good to see—tall, well developed of figure, his shoulders muscular under the white flannel shirt, and with the pliant freshness of youth in every line. The two lovers stood hand in hand—their eyes, all dewy like the fields at dawn, made speechless speech, altho their lips were dumb, dumb with the greatness of their thoughts.

The secluded place they sought was in the heart of scattered weed-like growth—dew-drenched and swaying in a gentle breeze; their ceiling the blue sky flecked with tossed streak of windy clouds; their carpet had for pattern the deep marks of heavy sands, fringe of grass spangled with flowers, humble flowers that curt-sied to the wind as overlord. Their eyes opened on a field of queer shells that caught the reflection of the ocean and the sky’s delightful blue—but, to the exalted condition of their minds, this very spot opened on the great wide world.

Their faces, like the rude beauties of Nature, shone with the bright beauty of heaven—and

they had in their eyes that calm expression, the deep, unfathomable virtue of a life bounded by huge horizons, great seas, infinity of stars, the purple gloom of woods and the wonders of the trackless Pacific.

As the world aims, so they aimed at some harbor for their lives, some simple explanation of the secret of existence, some little set of rules to go by and to say by, "This is life as we would have it lived."

They had the world before them, and they chose the earth's enchanted spot of inviting solitude.

When Dixie found a moment to spare she liked to go out and talk to Chester. After supper there was still a long clear twilight, and that was her quiet time. She could sit in the low sand and look into his face, and hear stories of the day. She loved this time. There were not only the clever stories to be heard by her association with this man of knowledge—of wide travel, but the inspiration he injected into one's life, the peace that calmed one's fears, and the power which revealed the very beauty of his soul. To them—just Chester and Dixie—the place which they chose to talk over life's sacred

phases, was a dreamland, not far away from flowers of every color,—rich with perfume; and the blue waves swelling with every passing breeze and breaking only to caress the golden sand.

“For long, long months,” he said, “I have been longing to tell my Dixie the love that has filled my heart since the dawn of our knowledge of each other”—and he drew closer by her side.

Dixie pushed him back with her hand, but her heart was singing as she tossed back her head of honey-colored hair. Her eyes were misty as she held her face to the west wind, but it is not always possible to keep the tears from coming, even tho they are happy tears.

The hours passed quickly—more quickly than they knew. The wind had ceased, and the moon rode high in a cloudless sky. After the day of fragrant service, the flowers turned their faces toward the stars, and drank the mist of dew-drops.

Dixie had made no response to his tender emotion.

“Would you care,” he added, “had I not come back?” This time she did not smile.

The air was heavy with the perfume of the

sleeping flowers. Bathed in the mystic glow of romance, it seemed a setting more suited to the cold fishes of the Pacific, than to Dixie whose only response seemed resistance.

Yet in this man's heart the enchanted night, the perfumed air, the romantic scene on which his eyes rested, and—ah! more than all else—the white human figure in the heavy sand—all fanned a flame that almost swayed his whole body.

If there was any emotion that his face betrayed it was certainly not a pleasant one. In the steady eyes was a look of anxiety, almost of fear.

Yet they bore only the dimmest reflection of the storm of emotions that raged behind them. A hundred thoughts were passing thru his mind, and not one that did not bear a sting—not one that lifted for an instant the cloud of despair that had fastened upon him.

And then—a low, sweet voice was suddenly calling to him—a voice that stilled every other sound and quieted the gripping anguish that racked every nerve.

“Chester, you think I'm not glad to have you back with me by the sea?” mused Dixie. “Why,

heaven only knows how I counted the days of your absence—of course I'm glad you're back."

Chester's heart again grew light, and his face beamed with pleasure. They sat thus in sweet communion until the hour grew late.

Occasionally a bat fluttered above their heads, and in the distant, dim spaces the birds piped queer, frightened notes. From a clump of trees came the monotonous hoot of the whippoorwill. The wind, which had blown off the sea all day, now drifted back gently from the land, carrying the scent of pines, and the faint odor of orange-blossoms from the splendid groves. It was a living night, yet one could be very lonely in it if he were alone.

"Dixie," he began, "I have decided to ask you tonight to be my life-partner, I—I—love you as I love no one else—we are congenial and can be happy together—always."

Dixie looked up with a brightened face. In that instant she caught a rosy glimpse of the future, and in that moment, she saw a good man's strong arm and brave heart offering to ease her little self over the rough places of the earth. She suddenly knew that she was listening, not to a boy by the romantic old sea, but to

a real man, a man who had proved himself to be solid gold, a man who was destined to fill a place in the world. His penetrating dark eyes looked honestly into hers, and she knew that he was offering her his fresh young heart—yet a brave heart—one that a woman needs thruout her lifetime.

Suddenly he found a beautiful moist face—moist with happy tears—against his, and a trembling, but happy girl in his arms. The wind rose and rocked the waves like a cradle. The moon peeped over the gray cloud in greater romantic beauty—a real “lover’s moon”—a moon of gold and silver and heavenly hue that lights the earth everywhere—making a lovely night for all lovers such as they.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The following day found Chester and Dixie again at their love-making. The sea was calling them, and they plunged into the sandy waste that lay shadowy, romantic and mysterious under the velvety sky. It had been but a few hours since Chester had asked Dixie's father for his daughter's hand, receiving as reply, "I will answer you tomorrow."

"I wonder," mused Chester, "whether your father has his answer by now?"

"All night I did not sleep," Dixie replied, as she handed Chester a note, her father's reply.

"Dear Mr. Oakland," it read, "after deliberate consideration, I cannot give a favorable answer to your question—at least just now. However, we believe you to be a gentleman, and fully worthy of the best there is in womanhood, but Dixie is our only daughter, you know, our jewel, our household's most precious ornament. Hence, you will not think us unkind. With assurances of greatest respect, I am, yours respectfully,

T. E. DARLINGTON."

"Ha! ha!" Chester exclaimed, "your father makes me laugh." "I wonder," he added, "if I will have to just take you any way—against his will?" Dixie turned ghostly white and drew a little farther away—somewhat coldly, he thought. She bit her lip, her hands fell to her

side, and as she spoke, her face resumed its delicate color.

“Oh,” she replied, “we must respect father’s wishes—or—or—.”

“Respect thunder!” he interrupted, “we belong to each other! No hand can, no hand shall, keep us apart!” Then he himself drew a little farther away. She did not suspect that he shrank back because he was almost overpowered by a desire to take her in his arms, and pour out a flood of passionate words of love.

She turned her face toward the sapphire sea. He knew that she was hurt by his slight withdrawal of body, and he watched her in an agony of heartbreak, as he thought:

“My God, I cannot give her up—I cannot, I cannot!” Soul, and mind, and heart cried out for her.

Suddenly she spoke and her voice had the low, passionate notes in it that he had noticed when she was deeply moved.

“I spent a restless night over father’s attitude,” she said, “and the wind blew all night—and such a sad gale it seemed. Something seemed to be calling me out into the dunes. I lay awake hour after hour, looking into the



darkness, listening to the surf, and longing to be out here with—with you.”

The heartburning fear was constantly in Dixie's mind all day—the fear that something was going to conspire to keep her from the man of her choice. A blur came before her inner vision—a gray fog which gradually resolved itself into rolling sand hills, bronze, and gold, and silver in the sunshine, with glimpses of the sapphire sea beyond. Overhead, the gulls were flying low, their white wings gleaming in the sun, and from the distance came the muffled roar of the surf. The whole scene was more full of mystery, of illusion, than ever before. In Dixie's beautiful young eyes lay a tragic look, when she said:

“I have such a strange, uncanny feeling to-day that something is going to happen. The sad sea reminds me of the invisible world around us, where mysterious things are happening beyond our understanding. It reaches up long arms into the sky, and seizes on wandering messages out of what, to us, is blue emptiness. It makes me feel more and more that for us here on this lonely sand, there is but one road away from this place that leads to our happiness.”

She opened wide her arms to the sea and sky in a graceful little gesture, and then turning to him half shy—"I mean—I guess—we'll have to run off to Europe."

"I would go with you to the world's end, dear," he replied, "but leave it to me, and I'll see to it that your father consents to our marriage."

She stopped her restless movements, and lay very still, as tho listening. Then, opening her eyes, she turned them slowly, very slowly, to him, as tho she were afraid to look lest she should be disappointed. For a moment, she studied him curiously. Then a perfect rapture lighted up her face, and her soul seemed to leap into her eyes, as like a little child, she said, "How—what do you mean? How can you make father change his mind?"

"Leave it to me, dear," he replied, "I'll tell you later."

Chester lay in the sand, looking into space for a moment, as if revolving some scheme in his mind.

"Dixie," suggested Chester, almost commanding, "we'll go to Santa Catalina Island, where your father, mother and little brother

Robert are spending the day fishing. The Island is beautiful now, and the sea is calm for a fine ride in the motor boat to San Pedro, where we'll take a steamer for that 'Magic Isle,' which has been the friendly 'dream spot' of so many lovers such as we."

"You don't intend to urge father to-day to consent to our marriage?" interrogated Dixie, whose questioning look was without one ray of hope.

"Nothing is impossible in that hill-clad land of 'The Magic Isle,'" retorted Chester. Continuing, he said, "Cupid never sleeps, but is ever alert and accommodating on those romantic, dream-kissed shores."

A few hours later Chester, love-thrilled and daring, and Dixie, obedient, and growing more hopeful, reached the Island—both with the one idea of making their dreams come true on that sea-kissed, sun-bathed land amidst scenery befitting their remarkable romance.

Upon arrival, the anxious couple had lunch at the Hotel Metropole—the finest inn on the Island—after which an earnest search of Dixie's father was begun.

Santa Catalina Island, one of the most

charming, unique and picturesque islands of the Pacific, is an area of mountainous land twenty-two miles long, from one to eight miles wide, and contains approximately 55,000 acres. It is populated by the beautiful and thriving little resort city of Avalon. The sea-water projecting into the crescent curve of the Island at the city of Avalon, is called Avalon Bay.

Santa Catalina Island is distant from the mainland about eighteen miles, altho it is twenty-seven miles from San Pedro to Avalon.

San Pedro (the place to board the steamers for the Island) is twenty-seven miles from Los Angeles, and five miles from Long Beach.

The two highest peaks of this ocean mountain range—Orizaba and Black Jack—are 2109 and 2000 feet respectively.

There is very little level on the island, consisting, as it does, of mountains cut by deep canyons and ravines, making it extremely picturesque. A remarkable and well-kept mountain road extends from Avalon to the Isthmus, a distance of twenty-five miles, and the coach ride over this road, or to the Summit—four miles—is one of the most beautiful in the world.

God built the rolling mountains  
With climate far renowned;  
He whispered to the waters,  
And bade them circle round.  
On these fair dream-kissed shores,  
The sea and sunbeams smile,  
And romantic Catalina  
Is the lover's magic Isle.

In the words of McGroarty, "Never came wanderer away from this little world of sun and peace and calm, nestled in the warm embrace of the summer seas, without regret and the longing to return. There is a lure in every isle, even in bleak and desolate isles, but the lure of Santa Catalina is the lure of glowing mountains, and wide, blue waters, flower-bespangled uplands and dream-kissed valleys, forested canyons, bays and estuaries, swinging short lines and the sun-harbored town of Avalon.

God left nothing undone in the making of the golden land of California, even to the flecking of its thousand miles of white swept shore with luring islands. Between the Farralones and the Coronados there is many an island, some that are the size of a principality and some no larger

than a ship's deck, each with its own peculiar fascination and picturesque individuality.

But the fairest of all the California islands is Santa Catalina—"the magic isle in a summer sea."

I delight to dwell in this lovely spot—tho it be but for a little while at a time; I like to dream on the beach of this Crescent bay—in the embracing arms of mountain-peaks, for here by the laughing sea I can steal away from the tug of care—to rest and dream and forget.

For Santa Catalina is at once a haven and a heaven. Its back is to the broad expanses of the sea whence come the driving winds. In the deep shelter of the canyons, and especially where clings to the hills the little, terraced, nest-built town of Avalon, there is eternal calm and the endless comfort of warmth. The winter-wearied traveler can scarce believe his senses when he sits in Avalon at evening after a day of wandering thru the sunlit valleys of the Island and over its sinuous mountain trails, tender with the glow of bright skies, that away beyond the mainland mountains lies the land from whence he came bitter with snow and cold. He looks upon the red holly berries, the wild

lilac and the cherry blossoms in his hands, and wonders how it can be true that he is thus endowed with summer and its blossoms on a winter's day. And, as he wonders, he feels creeping back into his worn nerves and his harassed blood the return of health and calm, as from his heart there rises a song of praise to the God of sun and sky and sea.

If it were only that this magic island is a place of peace, as immune from winter as an equatorial isle, it were enough to mark it as a spot apart from every other place on the round earth. But, added to this, Santa Catalina is of many wonders builded, and of endless delights. You will not tire of seeing the dawn break over the white peaks of the Sierra Madras that lift their gleaming summits of glory across ten leagues of sea and yet twenty leagues of land. Nor will you weary of sunsets there and of moonrises across the face of the deep from behind the eternal hills. As an angel with its great soft wings, so shall peace enfold you then—peace and the gladness that comes alone from the beauty of God's handiwork recreated in your mortal being.

Then comes the lure of life itself—the very

joy of living. And the sails of the gliding ships begin to haunt you. The blood of Phoenician ancestors stirs in your veins. The waters are calling. Another day and it is the hills, the trails, the crags and peaks that lure, awakening the lust for wandering roads, the quarry and the whir of wings.

When weary of rambling amid the high tops of the peaks—the Silent Sentinels of the sea—there are a hundred other attractions on the Island which lure you, as flowers lure the bee.

We are strange creatures of restless fancies and whimsical desires—you and I and all the sons and daughters of Eve and Adam. But, when we tire of nature, bare and unadorned of art, we can come down again from the hill trails and the lilac-scented uplands of Avalon, reintroducing ourselves to civilization thru the medium of tennis racquets and golf links and the wonderful music of the restless sea.

And in this lovely ramble we shall see seals in their native freedom and sea-abode, come to the beach and eat from the hand of any tourist offering them food; and the whole beach is alive with sea gulls on large dreamy wings, or sitting on



the bosom of the sea, or grouped together for their sun-bath upon some large rock.

But let us warn ourselves in advance that we shall go back to the hills and the wild places again, afoot or horseback, or on the stage, as the case may be, to catch another sight of that sweep of mountain upland where the green of the chaparral, the red of the holly and the purple-blue of the wild lilac held us enthralled in its dream of beauty. This and the wild goats standing sheer and clear cut on a cliff against the blue sky—we must, of course, go back for another day of pictures like that.

You will be delighted at the tameness of the sea lions which eat from the boatman's hand.

While a few may be seen at the boat-landing, the principal abode of these interesting creatures is at the rockery, about two miles down the island. Here the rocks are often covered by the sea lions, which are so tame that they permit visitors to approach within a few feet, and pose for their photographs with perfect equanimity, often greeting with loud roars the boats which pass.

All the animals here are extraordinarily tame. Great flocks of gulls alight on the beach almost

within reach of the fishermen, and the peculiar ravens of the island have long been famous for their boldness.

While waiting for Dixie's father to return with his fishing-boat nearer to the island shore, Chester and Dixie availed themselves of the unique ride in the famous big glass-bottom boat over the beautiful Marine Gardens of the ocean.

Floating over the green and blue water in the glass-bottom boats, one sees the goings and comings of aquatic life. The boatman names to you the marine plants and the fish, and tells you the different depths. One is astounded, one questions, one exclaims. Here are shell-encrusted rocks, fish—red, green, gold, zigzagging leisurely among the waving foliage, the seaweed gracefully balancing with the tide; on the clear bottom the sea throws beautiful reflections; here are real trees with long branches waving as on land by a tempest; great fish of all shapes appear as in an artificial aquarium, the sea stars (star fish) shine in the shadows of the rocks; then more luxuriant foliage, with branches bearing clusters of fruit resembling olives. One would think these were fertile fields suddenly submerged by a tempest.

Leaning over the transparencies in the bottom of the boat, people become enchanted beyond expression.

It was the middle of the afternoon when Chester saw Dixie's father, together with her mother and small brother in their fishing boat not far from the island shore.

"Dixie," suggested Chester, "while I arrange our lines and bait, you get in the skiff and go around the bend of the Island where your father's boat is anchored, and bring little Robert to be with us."

"And little brother likes so much to be with us," exclaimed Dixie, as she entered the skiff to obey the request.

In a little while Dixie returned to Chester, leading little Robert, whose toes, pink and rosy, made funny little tracks in the sand. In a few moments, the three were on the Island gathering shells.

"Dixie," began Chester, "I'll venture that little Robert can beat you gathering shells," and showing her a certain kind, he continued, "We'll see who can gather the most of these within five minutes. Now, I'll take Robert up yonder at the bend of the Island, and you stay here by the

skiff—come with me Robert,” he added, “the race is on!”

Dixie laughed at the thought of letting a little child excel her in this familiar art—but the race was on! Not more than four minutes later, Chester had carried little Robert into a hiding-place of the Island.

“Now Robert,” exclaimed Chester, in a very childish and simple manner—even in glee—“let’s play Indian. You hide here—be very still—don’t talk—don’t move—and we’ll play like we’re hunting you—now, be very still while I run and tell Dixie.”

The child lay in perfect obedience—really enjoying the fun of it.

Chester ran to Dixie with an artificial excited expression on his face, and exclaimed: “Oh! Dixie! little Robert is lost—he ran away, and I can’t find him. I was gathering shells, and when I looked up he was gone!”

Oh, Chester! poor little brother!” exclaimed Dixie, “what shall we do?”

“You get in the skiff,” replied Chester, “don’t be so frightened, dear. I guess I’ll find him while you’re gone, but you go tell your father that Robert is lost on the Island. I’ll

stay here and search for him in the meantime. Now, don't be in too much of a hurry dear, he's all right, just somewhere hiding from us, I think—just playin' Indian—maybe."

Dixie hastened to the skiff, and he helped to start her off. "Now don't get excited, dear. Go slowly, I know I'll find him while you're gone—and say!" he called to her as she was gliding away, "Dixie! don't let it excite your mother—it's no use for her to be bothered any way, for I'll find the child—I think I hear him now—but go and tell your father."

Dixie was very professional in handling a skiff, and after watching her till he knew that she was safely started, Chester rushed back to Robert.

"Boo! Boo!" exclaimed the playful man—and the boy enjoyed "playing Indian" no little.

Chester entertained the child till he saw Dixie and her father in the skiff, nearing the Island shore, the father rowing vigorously—as if in a state of great excitement. Remaining in secret seclusion till Mr. Darlington and daughter were nearing the bend of the Island, close upon them, Chester took the child in his arms and hastened out into the waters of the

mad ocean among the big waves—held his hand over the child's nose—using a handkerchief to prevent strangulation, he completely baptised little Robert, and just as Mr. Darlington and Dixie turned the bend their startled eyes beheld the “awful tragedy”—the “heroic rescue” of the child “from a watery grave.” Rodger hardly knew whether Dixie was laughing or crying, for her gladness was mingled with her sadness. As the tall, handsome “rescuer” waded out of the salty deep—defying the mad waves, with dripping clothes—and the wet child safely in his arms, Mr. Darlington met them with a half smile, a serious face and open arms.

“He got lost on the Island, and a wave swallowed him in!” exclaimed the father—meaning the sentence as a question.

“And the waves could have swallowed him completely in another half minute,” replied Chester, partly seeking to avoid Mr. Darlington's direct question..

Then Dixie rushed to her small “rescued” brother,—shouting: “O! my dear little brother—you dear helpless child! You have been saved from a watery grave—and oh, just to think! a

shark might have had him in another minute, had it not been for Chester!”

The calm father caught the girl's spirit of gratitude—and with enthusiasm, said: “Mr. Oakland, we'll shake hands! You have saved my child's life. You are both gallant and heroic.” Then turning to Dixie and taking her hand and placing it in Chester's, he added: “I have no objections to a son-in-law like you. Dixie is yours—she is a queen—treat her as such—and may the union always be a happy one—may God bless you—my son—my daughter.”

The End.







EC 18 1911

One copy del. to Cat. Div.

DEC 18 1911

