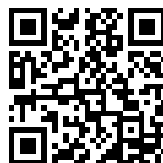


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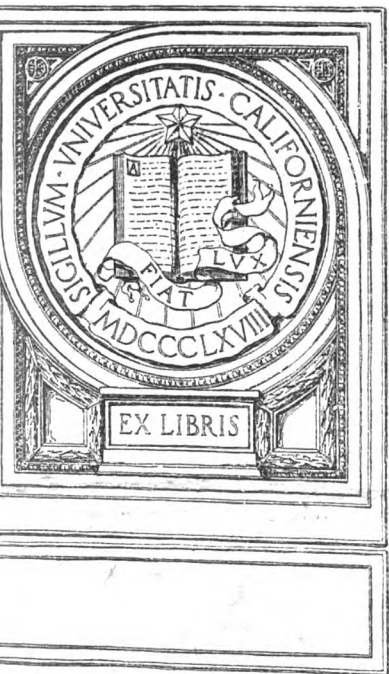
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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



A POPULAR JOURNAL  
OF GENERAL LITERATURE



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

VOL. LXXXI.—JANUARY TO JUNE, 1908

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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JANUARY, 1908



## THE DUCHESS OF DREAMS

BY EDITH MACVANE

*Author of "The Adventures of Joujou," etc.*

### I.

IT was in Pau, one spring, that Mrs. J. Harrison Rumbold had made the acquaintance of the Grand Duchess Varvara.

A period of intimacy which, though spasmodic, was not wholly one-sided, had followed their meeting. For, "Sacred blue, my angel!" the Grand Duchess had cried in answer to the mild remonstrances of a relative of hers, a minor German royalty—"Sacred blue," (for the imperial Varvara, like other highly-placed personages, often took advantage of her exalted station, to use language more violent than polite,) "my angel, what would you? She amuses me, this red-skin! And for us other poor Russians, born *ennuyées*, is it not sufficient recommendation for a new friend, that she chases away our boredom? Moreover, she has asked me to visit her, in the virgin-forest of America. And should a kind Heaven ever terminate the sufferings of my poor Alexieff, and should I ever be able, by craft or by audacity, to escape from my post at court and my wearisome prison of Lithuania—then

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NUMBER 481

## 2. The Duchess of Dreams

*crac!* you shall see me and my sapphires on the *Cinquieme Avenue!*" And the Grand Duchess, with a snap of her sparkling blue eyes, lit a cigarette from her turquoise-studded case, and blew faint, meditative rings of pleased anticipation.

The next year a group of enterprising Moscow Nihilists had played directly into Mrs. Rumbold's hand by tossing one of their favorite missiles at the elderly grand duke, on the occasion of his Easter visit to their city. A twelvemonth later his youthful widow had announced her intention of touring the globe—a plan which, as her married life had been one of strict retirement and attendance on her husband's infirmities, had evidently not been opposed at imperial headquarters. Mrs. Rumbold, reading the tiny item in the Russian column of the *London Times*, had seen her opportunity and grasped at it.

Armed with the acceptance which the Grand Duchess by return flash of cable sent back to her, she proceeded to take the Newport world by storm. With the aid and advice of Mr. Willy Lushington, her social mentor and factotum, and backed by her husband's uncounted millions, she issued invitations for an entertainment in honor of Her Imperial Highness—invitations which were eagerly accepted by the delectable Newport circle which had previously snubbed the little upstart. Even the great Mrs. Borridaile, its acknowledged leader, had signified her intention of honoring the affair with her presence. When Mrs. Rumbold received the last-named acceptance, together with that of the rising young diplomat, Jack Borridaile, the great lady's nephew and heir, and the coronetted scrawl of Prince Debreczin, her noble Hungarian guest, the ambitious hostess surveyed these symbols of triumph solemnly, as Alexander may have been supposed to regard his wreath of bays.

As a crowning honor, only the day before the arrival of the expected princess on the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, Mrs. Rumbold received an afternoon call from Mrs. Borridaile herself.

The chatelaine of Stormcliff (the large Græco-Renaissance pile which "Gentleman Jim" Rumbold's money had erected between Bellevue Avenue and Narragansett Bay) was seated in the Italian garden, drinking tea. Plans for the forthcoming entertainment, acceptances, bills, etc., lay on the enormous silver tray between her and Mr. Lushington. Just at the moment, however, they were discussing a less agreeable topic—the annoying case of a young country girl to whom, during a visit at Bar Harbor last summer, Mrs. Rumbold had given a brief and gushing patronage, and whom she had urged to a city career and then, only naturally, forgotten. To have the young person take her encouragement as serious, to have her come to New York last winter to claim a fulfilment of Mrs. Rumbold's profuse and airy promises—that was surely unreasonable enough; but now, at this breath-

lessly interesting moment, "Back she comes," cried Mrs. Rumbold, "as bad pennies always do!"

Mr. Lushington glanced over the tremulous little scrawl which Mrs. Rumbold had handed him for inspection. "She seems to have had rather a hard time," he observed languidly. "Sick, and no work, and no money—deuced unpleasant, you know!"

"I dare say," retorted Mrs. Rumbold, in a tone of strong displeasure; "but I don't see why I should be held responsible for it, simply because I told her she had only to come to New York and she would leap at once into the first rank of living actresses. Well, I'm sure I was sincere—why should n't she? She was a pretty little thing, that I won't deny, with yellow hair down to her ankles. And she had talent, too—that Sunday school stage lit up, I can tell you, when she came out with her imitations and her little French songs. You see, she was the daughter of somebody's French governess, who ever so long ago had run away from Bar Harbor and married a fisherman. So, altogether, I was interested in the girl, you see. I may have made some nonsensical promises, perhaps, that if she'd come to New York I'd see that she made the theatrical success she was fitted for. You know how one talks sometimes."

"And the goose took you seriously?" cried Mr. Lushington, with ready sympathy.

Mrs. Rumbold's nod expressed her contempt for the whole business. "Willy, you'll have to see her and settle with her. She's waiting now. Angélique Hooper, that's her name. Wait—here's her letter. Offer her a hundred cash—a thousand—I don't care. But get rid of her, there's a dear boy, before the Grand Duchess arrives. And, heavens! there's a motor now!"—as the shriek of an approaching machine was heard from the road that wound below the terrace. "Some one come to take tea," added Mrs. Rumbold, with satisfaction. "I wonder who can it be!"

In a moment her soul nearly fainted within her for satisfaction; for in the three figures escorted by green-coated footmen over slopes of velvety lawn she recognized no other than Mrs. Borridaile, her nephew Jack, and the celebrated prince from Buda-Pesth, who was honoring the American summer with his presence. For the first time, perhaps, Mrs. Rumbold recognized the supreme success of her Grand Duchess campaign; but her carefully trained eyes betrayed no surprise and no delight beyond that of the well-bred hostess. With her blonde head a little on one side, she gushed at her callers, with perfect taste.

"Dear Mrs. Borridaile, this is so charming of you! And you, Prince, what a pleasure! Charles, place chairs. Mr. Borridaile, I am delighted to see you. Now sit down, all of you, please, and let me give you some tea!"

With a hand that almost trembled with pleasure, the hostess dispensed her offered refreshment—tea made, in deference to the expected guest, in a large brass samovar, then served in glasses and sweetened with rum instead of cut sugar.

“But, Willy, if you *must* see that—er—young person about that—er—business, we will spare you just for one moment.” She turned toward her able assistant with a glittering smile of meaning. With a bow, he departed. Mrs. Rumbold turned back to her guests.

“So you are coming to my dance on Wednesday night, are n’t you?” she said—“for my little friend from Russia? Now, you know, I think that is so dear of you!”

“The Grand Duchess Varvara,” mused Prince Debreczin thoughtfully—“I met her husband over at Monte Carlo—the Grand Duke Alexieff—and a brute he was, with stick-out ears. But I never met the lovely Varvara herself—her elderly husband kept her rather close, I fancy. Besides that, she was ill with heart trouble, they said—fainting fits and that sort of thing.”

The Prince, a tall, lean-shouldered man, with beautifully finished ears and feet, placed his aristocratic finger-tips together and smiled at the assemblage. His manners were charming, but the lines about his heavy-lidded eyes were many and enigmatic. At his last observation, Mrs. Borridaile smiled her dignified, middle-aged smile.

“Poor little soul!—it seems time that she began to enjoy life at last! And how long, Mrs. Rumbold, did you say that she intends to honor Newport with her presence?”

Mrs. Rumbold smiled exultantly. “A month, no less than a month, she promises faithfully.”

“Ah!” Mrs. Borridaile smiled in return. “We must try and make the time pass pleasantly for her”—at this “we” in the mouth of the august lady before her Mrs. Rumbold’s frame experienced an agreeable tingle—“even if we can’t speak her language with her! But I suppose at least you will have the Russian ambassador here to meet her, shall you not?”

Mrs. Rumbold was effusively regretful. “That’s our one stroke of adversity,” she gushed, with a very becoming little sigh. “You know he was a great friend of my duchess’s father, and used to trot her on his knee; and as he has never seen her since, I thought it would be such a charming reunion for them. But, by bad luck, the poor count writes me that it would be quite against etiquette for him to come here to meet the members of the Japanese commission, and as they were already invited—oh, do excuse me, Mr. Borridaile!” She brought herself up short in sudden embarrassment. “I’m sure the presence of the American commissioners will more than atone, in itself, for the absence of the poor old ambassador!”

Jack Borridaile bowed politely, with a smile which showed his handsome teeth. He was, indeed, the American secretary of the international commission which was at that moment, with the importance of strict secrecy and much free advertising, sitting at Newport to negotiate the new American-Japanese treaty. The combination of brains, energy, and other desirable qualities which he presented caused him, it was generally said, to be looked on with special favor at Washington; and his aunt made no scruple of declaring openly that she expected some day to visit him at St. James.

The Hungarian smiled at him. "To say nothing," he said, "of the honorable secretary! Yes, I am sure that no one will miss the poor ambassador, except it be the poor little Russian, who might like to find some one to talk her dreadful native tongue with her!"

Borridaile looked up in some surprise. "But you, Prince," he said—"I thought that you knew your way around among the *ovskies* and the *vitches!*"

"I? Not a word!"—the Prince was quick in his denial. "We Hungarians, you must know, hate and fear Russia. As for myself, I have never set foot within her boundaries."

"But I thought," said Mrs. Rumbold in disappointment, "that you knew Alexieff."

Debreczin shrugged his angular shoulders. "The most formal acquaintance. At Monte Carlo we used to meet at the Prince of Monaco's private circle. But to know a Russian, as you yourself have doubtless observed, Madame Rumbold, is not necessarily to understand his barbarous tongue!"

Mrs. Rumbold nodded eagerly. "Certainly the dear Grand Duchess always spoke English with us at Pau, or sometimes French."

Down the long path, between rows of new exotic hollyhocks and tall Persian pinks, came Willy Lushington. Behind him, on a small gold salver, a green-liveried footman bore an envelope of light yellow paper. Mrs. Rumbold, carelessly picking up the message, smiled to hear the careless familiar greetings between her confidential manager and her new friends. At last they were all together, and she was arrived in the class to which she rightfully belonged! After six years of indomitable struggle, the field was hers at last.

She smiled triumphantly into Willy's face as he bent over her for a glass of tea. "Did you arrange the *h'm* and the *h'm h'm?*" she asked in a confidential aside.

Willy shook his head. "She refused pointblank to go off without seeing you," he answered in the same tone. "Thanks, a small slice of lemon in mine, please! She flew into such a rage when I offered her a check, that I had to promise that you would see her—just a moment will do, before dinner-time. Oh, I know it's unpleasant, but



there's no other way out. We can't have the park gate bombarded this way, you know."

Mrs. Borridaile, catching the last words, drew a droll face of commiseration. "Ah, the reporters!" she sighed in sympathy. "I can feel for you, Mrs. Rumbold. Last month, when monseigneur arrived, they were awful, and now it's your turn, you and your Grand Duchess! I saw a little yellow-haired person, in a raglan and a brown veil, lurking about your lodge when we drove in. The Prince was so amused!"

Debreczin laughed. "Before I had landed from the *Deutschland*," he said, "there was a swarm of them up the gang-plank with their red note-books, asking me my opinion of the country. So I can't help thinking that it's my turn now, you see, to amuse myself with them! So I made them stop the auto at the gate here, and I began to ask the veiled lady her impressions of Newport."

"Oh, Prince!" Mrs. Rumbold gushed with polite laughter; Jack Borridaile frowned slightly, while the Hungarian proceeded.

"But this turning of the tables, you see, did not please her ladyship at all! She showed me her back and began to walk away. Monsieur Jack began to call me names, and, altogether, my attempts at journalism were not a success at all," finished the Prince in an aggrieved tone; then, turning to Mrs. Borridaile: "But for the future, now that I am avenged on the tribe, I promise to behave. *Voilà!*"

"You should have cheated the tribe in the first place," observed Mrs. Rumbold, "like my little Grand Duchess. She is crossing incognito, you see, as plain madame, and with a very small suite. It is really the only way, you see, to travel with any comfort. Will you pardon me if I glance at this message, please?"

With a languid hand and a nodded apology to Mrs. Borridaile, Mrs. Rumbold opened the yellow telegram which still lay on the table beside her. Around the table the merry chatter of the tea-drinkers grew and gathered. Nobody noticed that the hostess's face as she read turned a curious violet-gray under her maquillage, and that the yellow paper rattled unsteadily in her hand.

Then she raised her eyes, with an airy and resolute smile.

"I have here," she said slowly, "the Nantucket wireless from my dear Varvara. Her ship docks at Hoboken at half past seven o'clock to-morrow morning. And as soon as she is done with the customs, we breakfast together on the *Lotus*."

## II.

IN the glittering pleasure-house which Mr. Rumbold's millions (combined with the enterprise of Willy Lushington and the taste of a French designer) had erected in the Italian gardens on the terrace of Stormcliff, the dance of Wednesday night was in full swing.

"But it is like our ice-palaces, that one builds in the winter on the frozen Neva!" the Grand Duchess had cried in admiration when she had first entered the pavilion, and the delighted company had murmured their assent. The erection before them was indeed a remarkable imitation of an ice-palace—a huge dome, maintained by a silver framework and built of frosted glass, shining with crystals, sparkling with artfully concealed electric lights. The floor, laid flat for dancing, was made of some polished white wood that shone smooth as ice. Spreading out in every direction from the central dome were mimic cloisters, caverns, and delightful little labyrinths, whose ways wound among a delightful confusion of snowy pillars and glittering stalagmites. Here and there in this arctic wilderness were set pale-green pools fed by splashing fountains. Even to a fancy less newly exalted than that of Mrs. Rumbold, the illusion might well have been given of the Snow Queen's palace and its mistress, as before a grotto of sparkling crystals and festooned green leaves stood a slender, black-haired figure, jewelled, blooming, and exquisite—her Imperial Highness, the Grand Duchess Varvara.

Behind her Highness, splendid and extremely warm in the fierce barbarism of his native costume, stood a huge Cossack servant; and beside her, thrusting his long nose forward for occasional notice from the slender, white-gloved hand, a tall, silver-coated wolf-hound added the last touch of picturesqueness to her appearance. Little Mrs. Rumbold, in a cloth-of-gold dress and an enormous diamond tiara, looked like an overdressed school-girl standing beside her.

Unconscious of the jostling, chattering crowd, Jack Borridaile stood staring at the beautiful Russian with the unconscious delight of a school-boy. Never before in his life, he reflected with a smile, had he seen so complete a realization of the dream princess on the frontispiece of his childhood's fairy book; the divinity to whom, in those far-away days, he had dedicated all his secret adoration. Her gown, artfully woven of some gauzy silver cloth, defined the curving slenderness of her delicate shape, and fell heavily about her feet in a dragging border of bright sequins and clustering seed pearls. On her breast glittered a galaxy of jewelled orders, and among the curling shadows of her hair there sparkled like hoar frost a little coronet of diamond stars.

So far the details of her appearance were thoroughly Western and Parisian; but at the sight of the jewelled chains which clasped her long thick throat and hung down over the milky perfection of her bosom, Jack recalled, with a sudden little vague chill, the despotic, half-Eastern royalty from whom she was sprung. Both in their value and in the fashion in which they were worn, those flashing stones emphasized the alien blood of their wearer, and the immeasurable height at which she was placed above any ordinary man who should presume

to fall victim to her beauty and her charm. All sapphires they were, huge, half-barbaric lakes of blue, square, oval, and hexagonal, strung together in curiously wrought links of platinum. As she moved, they rippled and sparkled from her throat to the hem of her dress, like a summer wave breaking over her. In all the world there could be nothing more gloriously, more triumphantly blue; except the two large eyes whose lustrous depths outmatched even the fire-pointed ultramarine of the gorgeous baubles below them.

With a throb of self-conscious remorse, Jack pulled himself away from his ill-timed devotions, to the various duties which claimed him. His petition for dances with the charming stranger had been rewarded, by her bustling hostess, with the promise of a waltz at the far end of the evening. And until that happy moment the hours of dancing, of supper, and finally of the intricate baby-games of the cotillion, wore along (to one guest, at least) interminable and endless.

And yet the cotillion was universally owned to be brilliant and striking above the ordinary. Two or three of the figures indeed, it was whispered by the leader, Mr. Lushington, to his occasional partners, were of the Grand Duchess's own proposing, and were danced here at the pavilion of Stormcliff exactly as they had been by the Russian court last summer at Tsarskoe Selo. These innovations—the dance of the Snow Crystals, the Circus of the Wolves, and the Tartar Charge—passed off with quite a brilliant success. At the many compliments showered upon the Grand Duchess for her delightful ideas, she laughed and showed her large white teeth in a glistening line against the soft crimson of her lip.

“Look,” said Jack's partner to him, as they sank into their seats after their final turn in the fantastic whirl. Jack's partner, curious to say, was by the caprice of fate (and the artful manipulations of her affectionate mother) no other than Mrs. Rumbold's daughter Letty. She wore a gown of one kind of lace over a slip of another kind of lace, and at least two pounds of white Ceylon pearls suspended around her pink neck. She sat in perfect contentment sipping a sorbet between the claims of the dance (Letty was fond of eating) and fancying herself irresistible.

“Look,” she said, “there's somebody arriving—a nice old gentleman with lots of stars. Do have a sorbet, Mr. Borridaile! You won't? But I must finish mine just the same. Look, there's mamma bowing to him. I wonder why does she look so ill?”

The next moment Letty was sitting alone with her ice, for an energetic young matron in pink satin, looking about for some one upon whom she might bestow a large green jade monkey with ruby eyes, had pounced upon Jack and carried him off. Between the exertion of replying to her congratulations on the subject of Letty, and of

attending to the slippery green animal which she affectionately insisted upon carrying with them in the waltz, he managed to put his foot through her chiffon flounces and almost to collide with Prince Debrecin and his imperial partner.

"There," said Mrs. Marsten frankly, "that was all my fault—but I'm glad of it, for now here's an excuse to stop a moment by Mrs. Rumbold and have a good stare at the Grand Duchess when she comes back. She's quite lovely, you know, she and those sapphires of hers! You watch and wait—inside of a week there won't be a sapphire left, for love or dollars, in the city of New York, and the price of blue glass will go so high that we shall have to pay double for our Bromo-Seltzer. But *I* am not going to be left behind, you can be sure. I've been back to the villa already, for a long-distance chat with my little Tiffany man in his suburban home—to tell him to hold all the sapphires in the shop till I can get down to the city to-morrow afternoon!"

"Yes, they are sapphires, are n't they," responded Jack, with as much indifference as he could assume, "that our Imperial Highness is wearing?"

Mrs. Marsten's frank lips relaxed into an unmistakable grin. "Don't be a humbug, Jack!" she said; then with a sudden exclamation: "Look there, Jack, do you know who that is that has just arrived? The Russian ambassador—I've seen him in Washington. And oh, isn't he wearing the loveliest plaques and cordons that ever you saw?"

Whatever were the decorative qualities of his Excellency's decorations, Jack did not observe; for just at that moment he saw the Grand Duchess, on the Hungarian's arm, approaching their side of the glittering grotto.

"Yes, madame," the ambassador was observing to Mrs. Rumbold, who, as her daughter had remarked, looked suddenly pinched and wan beneath her battlemented tiara of glittering brilliants, "when I heard that her Imperial Highness had actually arrived I decided to waive the purely formal objections of which I wrote you." For one instant his near-sighted eyes glared with undiplomatic hatred through their glasses at a twinkling little Japanese dancing past with the daughter of the house; then turning back to his hostess with a bow: "So I found myself unable to resist this opportunity to pay my homages to you, madame, and to her Imperial Highness. When she was a child I knew her parents well; and the late Grand Duke, her husband, was my oldest friend."

Smiling, bright-eyed, with the excitement of the dance painting her carmine cheeks, Varvara paused before them. For an instant, as the ambassador turned to greet her, there was an awkward pause of a curious length and tensiety. The Hungarian glanced from one to the other. On his arm Jack felt a slight and significant pinch from his

observant partner. Then, in a voice oddly dry and toneless, the hostess spoke.

"Princess," she said slowly, with a little laugh, "if such a formality be necessary, I have the honor to present to you your own ambassador!" And with a deep obeisance, the newcomer bent low over the unsteady little hand which the Grand Duchess extended to him. For that her hostess's emotion had extended itself to her, there could be no doubt; from her cheeks and lips the bright color had flown, and her large eyes shone blue-black against the whiteness of her face. Then, in a strong and evident effort at self-command, she spoke with an appealing dignity.

"Prince," she said, "for the honor which you pay me in coming to-night, I beg you to accept my thanks. Believe me, I bring you every expression of esteem from his Imperial Majesty!"

What compliments his Excellency murmured in reply Jack could not distinguish; his chief emotion at the time being, indeed, a lively desire to punch the head of the starred and ribboned individual whose presence seemed to cause his adorable princess so much pain. Her next words, however, were more reassuring, as, with one hand laid lightly on her hostess's arm, the Grand Duchess turned back to the waiting diplomat.

"I see, Prince," she said, with a little laugh, "we may as well take you into our confidence. For, confess you knew it already! I cannot deny I am here as a truant. Promise you will not betray me to his Majesty my cousin—at any rate, not to-morrow!"

She laughed again, but her face betrayed her anxiety. With a little shrill titter of relief, Mrs. Rumbold echoed her guest's plea to the smiling ambassador, who turned with a silky gesture of his long, slender hands.

"Ah, madame," he said deprecatingly, "I beg you, have no fear of my loyalty to you! For"—and his voice trailed off into strange purring syllables of some unknown tongue, with sputtering sibilants and strangely vibrating gutturals.

The Grand Duchess listened attentively, while in sudden helplessness the hostess turned her white face from one guest to another. The little silver whistle blew, Jack's moment of liberty had expired, but he stood immovable, his jaw dropped in amazement; for before his eyes, the calm dignity of the Grand Duchess collapsed like a toy-balloon beneath the inquiring pin of its youthful owner; and, burying her white face in her hands, she sank with a little cry upon the divan behind her. Her great wolf-hound, springing forward, licked her concealing fingers with a plaintive caress of his long pink tongue.

"Madame, madame, what have I done?" inquired the ambassador in the startled accents of real dismay. What he had said in that strange tongue, so to harrow and distress his solitary hearer, Jack could not

divine. His indignation was, however, forced to restrain itself, and the hostess glanced in equal silence at the bent figure before them.

With a heroic effort, Jack turned to rejoin his waiting partner. Suddenly the Grand Duchess raised her face, with a wet and charming smile. "Forgive me," she said in little broken accents, "but it is long since I have heard my native tongue. . . . And you see those were the last words he said, my poor Alexieff, to the Governor of Moscow that morning. . . . And it brought it all back . . . the terrible scene on the steps of the Kremlin."

"My poor darling!" burst out Mrs. Rumbold, with a sudden gush of vociferous pity. And as the bystanders rushed with fans, and glasses of champagne, and good advice, Jack turned with his green monkey and walked dutifully back to the impatient Letty. The poor little Grand Duchess was on the road to recovery, it seemed; and at all events, the cotillion was drawing to a close, and the next dance—the dance of the evening!—belonged to him.

### III.

To the seductive strains of the "*Amoureuse*" the glittering crowd swayed and whirled in more or less perfect rhythm. The air, heavy with the scent of the dying roses, bore also the burden of sauce tartare, roasted plover, and the keen bouquet of Veuve Cliquot. "It's so warm, sacred blue!" remarked Jack's partner plaintively. "Yes, it is warm to boil your tea on the ceiling! Should you think it very bizarre and very unconventional of me, monsieur, if I suggested a few moments of fresh air?"

To this proposal Jack assented, as he would have agreed to a voyage to the moon, suggested by the same lips. And accordingly, a few moments later, they walked together over the half-lit terrace, toward the rustling vines of the pergola. The glittering palace of crystal, with its babel of tongues and its blaring violins, seemed miles, centuries, away. From the corner of his eyes, Jack glanced at the silver-white figure, with the slim and ghostly dog at its hand, which walked beside him in the star-lit darkness.

"Princess," he said suddenly, "tell me—have n't I seen you before?"

For an instant her white figure swayed against the dark embowering trellis, and he heard her light breath come and go. Was it a return of her recent illness or had he by unlucky chance said something to distress her? "Madame!" he cried, springing forward with real concern and trouble in his honest voice. The Grand Duchess waved him aside with one white arm.

"Nothing, nothing!" she said quickly. "My foot caught in a tangled spray of vine, that was all. This darkness is confusing. If

you will allow me, I will take your arm, monsieur. And now, monsieur, tell me when it was you saw me, and where?"

"I don't know," answered Jack happily, as he looked down at the little hand, white upon his arm. "Yes—that is, of course I know. I saw you first, madame, about twenty-four years ago."

She gasped. "Twenty-four years, monsieur! But I was only a baby then!"

"And I," responded Jack, with answering gravity—"I was not quite so tiny then, perhaps; but I own it was not as a baby, madame, that I had the privilege of seeing you! No, better than that, I had a fairy book to which I was much attached, and the frontispiece was a beautiful colored print, a picture of the lady whom the prince discovered sleeping in the frozen palace. I would rather have died, I think, than own it; but in my secret thoughts I took that lady for *my* lady. And now, Princess"—he hesitated a moment—"whether I look at you or at the absurd little picture that I have carried for so many years in the inmost disk of my brain, I see the same eyes and the same smile and the same coronet of stars."

"And the same frozen palace—don't forget the frozen palace, monsieur!"

He paused, then responded recklessly:

"Yes, the frozen palace, where the princess slept. But don't you see, madame, when the prince came—the princess woke up?"

He paused, frightened at his own daring. Why was it that his heart stirred—stirred like a shy school-boy at his first shrine—as he listened for her reply?

"But you see, monsieur," the Grand Duchess observed, "I have been awake all the time!" She paused, and with a sudden effort dragged the conversation back to its original subject. "This paragon of ladies in your picture-book, monsieur," she said lightly—"was she Russian, I wonder, and what was her name?"

The wistful frankness of her tone left him no room to suspect her of coquetry; so with equal simplicity he answered her:

"Yes, of course she was Russian; why not? And the name printed in large gilt letters below her picture was as pretty as your own—'The Duchess of Dreams.'"

"'The Duchess of Dreams'!" she echoed, looking at him out of startled eyes; then with a laughing intake of breath, and pausing with a gesture of sudden solemnity, "When we look at the sea," she went on slowly, "moving so softly there below us, and the quiet stars overhead . . . what are we, any of us, czar or millionaire, grand duke or grand duchess, but dreams, little empty, feeble dreams? Yes, monsieur, you may call me that if you choose—the Duchess of Dreams!"

Her voice died away in lingering cadences of ineffable sadness, as

she leaned out, like a plummy white bird in the darkness, over the iron balustrade, toward the murmuring sea. Jack, standing silent beside her, could not see her face; but from her tone he fancied, in a quick flight of remembrance, that her face was pale as it had been just now in the presence of the ambassador, and her blue eyes dark with unshed tears; and with a quick, wrenching pang of suddenly born jealousy, which amazed him with its bitterness and its sudden revelation of his real sensations—in quick, grudging jealousy, his mind flew back to the vanished Grand Duke, whose title but just now had been on her lips. He was dead, it was true, this man who had once possessed her; but his identity lived on, of necessity, in her; and his memory, after two years' widowhood, survived in her heart with sufficient vividness to call out the painful emotion which he himself had witnessed no more than a half-hour ago.

The dog beside her, a slender white were-wolf in the shadows, whimpered lightly and rubbed his long nose in his mistress's hand. She turned back with a little start and a quick change of tone.

"My poor Vassily! Is he bored, my *chéri*? Come, monsieur, I think our dance must be at an end, and my partners wait. Come, monsieur!"

She turned with a sweep of her pale silver drapery and a tinkle of her hanging sapphire chains. Jack sprang forward; almost in spite of himself, it seemed to him, his hand touched hers. "Wait, madame." And her changing face, as it turned itself once more to him, was again tremulous and overcast. Then, putting out her hand in a sudden impulse which seemed to overmaster her and in spite of herself to twist the words from her unwilling lips,

"Ah, monsieur," she said, "if you could know what it is, when one is very far from home, and troubled, and filled with fears of this big, lonely world—if you could know what it is to see one friendly face!"

A quick step sounded on the gravelled walk behind them. "Madame," cried a well known voice, "pardon me that I intrude. But how could I forget my privilege of my promised dance?"

The Hungarian, bowing low, offered his arm for the Grand Duchess's acceptance. The light from the pavilion lit up his handsome, high-featured face and the collar of the Golden Fleece which sparkled at his neck. The great white dog, yawning and stretching himself, ran up and followed his mistress.

Jack Borriddale, with a low bow which concealed the rage in his face, turned toward the marble staircase. The imperial Varvara waved her hand in an airy leavetaking.

"Good-night, monsieur!" she cried. "Or is it good-morning? For there is the dawn coming up over the sea." Then, turning to her newly-arrived partner, "Shall we return to the pavilion, Prince?"



she asked lightly. Then as she encountered the glance of his dark, heavy-lidded eyes, she shrank suddenly, almost imperceptibly, away. His outstretched hand detained her.

"Not yet, Princess!"—his words, though smilingly uttered, had the sudden keen force of a command. "For first, you see, we are going to have a few words together, you and I!"

## IV.

DEBRECZIN'S first words were, however, of no obviously terrifying tenor. "I am indeed glad, Princess," he observed courteously, "to see that you are so soon recovered from your recent faintness. I remember, that spring at Monte Carlo, how your poor husband disquieted himself over those heart attacks of yours. Often and often has he described to me how you would sink down with your lips so blue, *mon Dieu!* as your own sapphires. To-night, however, I recognize none of these alarming symptoms—I congratulate you, madame!"

The Grand Duchess stood silent, fingering the petals of a rose on the wall by which she stood. Then, as though with an effort,

"Mrs. Rumbold had not understood from you yesterday, monsieur," she said slowly, "that you were on such friendly terms with—with my poor husband as your present words would imply."

"Nor had I understood—forgive me, madame," rejoined the Prince quickly—"that your Imperial Highness was on such friendly terms with his Imperial Highness, your lamented husband, as your recent emotional attack at the recalling of his memory would imply!"

Varvara drew herself up in indignant amazement. "I think, monsieur," she said coldly, "that you forget yourself!"

He fixed her smilingly with his eye. "No, Princess," he said slowly, "I forget nothing—neither myself nor the Grand Duke Alexieff nor your charming self, madame! My memory, if I may boast it so, is usually reckoned infallible; a voice heard in passing, a face whirled by in an automobile—these airy trifles remain forever indelibly fixed upon my brain. But pardon me"—he interrupted his own words with a laugh—"that I thus discourse on my own peculiarities. Do I bore you, madame?"

Varvara stood silent. He repeated his question. She turned toward him eyes which shone cold and luminous in the half-lit darkness.

"Yes," she said, "you bore me. Shall we dance, monsieur? It will be the last dance of the night."

The Prince laughed softly, as though her sharp words had been subtle flattery. "But you allowed Monsieur Borridaile the privilege of ten minutes on the terrace, Princess," he insisted. "Is he, then, so much more favored than I?"

"Since frankness is the fashion—yes," she answered deliberately.

Again the Prince laughed. "Bravo, madame! For the young man's sake, I am glad to hear it. My poor friend Jack!—I have watched him this evening; he is not one who readily falls in love. But this evening—ah!" With a delicate gesture he kissed his finger-tips. "I congratulate you, madame; you have won a life-long slave—a faithful and valuable slave."

The Grand Duchess's fingers scattered the rose petals in pale showers around her. Indignation, horror of the soft-voiced man beside her, caught at her breath and stiffened the muscles of her flying fingers; but down beneath anger and wounded dignity the insolent words of Debreczin had struck from her heart a strange pang of a new and secret delight. With a curious hesitation in her manner she turned back to her tormentor.

"And now, monsieur," she said in a low voice, "have you insulted me long enough, or shall we return to the ball-room?"

"Madame!"—the Prince's air was filled with a grieved astonishment. "Insult you? I assure you such was not my intention. Blame it rather upon this insipid French language that we talk together, so"—his supple tongue melted in soft feline cadences as he leaned toward the white-clad, shrinking figure.

He ceased. The Grand Duchess was silent. He spoke again. She turned with a little fluttering laugh.

"And why," she asked quickly, "am I expected to understand Hungarian?"

For a moment their eyes encountered and clashed in the twilight; then, "Princess," rejoined Debreczin slowly, "the language that I spoke was Russian!"

She flung up her head with the triumph of one who finds her answer ready. "But, sacred blue, monsieur!—only yesterday you assured Madame Borridaile you understood no word of Russian!"

"Certainly," he replied with smiling candor; "that is what I said and what I would say again. It is, you see, imperatively demanded by my position that I disown all acquaintance and connection with things Russian. The country, the language, are not only unknown but hostile to me. The Russian service? It does not exist. The Grand Duke Alexieff? I once called red or black with him at Monte Carlo. For the rest, I am a prince of the Dual Empire, immensely respected, drawing an enormous revenue from my vast wheat lands in Eastern Hungary. Ah, *mon Dieu!*"—his tones broke off in the accents of a profound self-pity. "If I had never met the Grand Duke Alexieff, madame!"

"I think," retorted the Russian coldly, "that I may echo that wish, monsieur!"

"Shall we sit down?" Nearby stood a carved stone bench (fetched

by Mrs. Rumbold at fabulous expense from a decayed Italian villa). Unwilling, as though compelled to surrender by an inward force stronger than inclination, the Grand Duchess sank down upon the indicated seat. With a deprecating gesture, the Prince seated himself at her side.

"You are right, Princess," he retorted in answer to her last words, "for your own sake, perhaps; for mine, beyond all doubt or question. We played together, Alexieff and I, first roulette and then baccarat. I played—the weakness is in my blood—like a madman. He played like a consummate artist. His reputation, as you know, spread over Europe. The result of our week's play together, however"—he took in a long breath—"was *not* spread through Europe—no, it leaked not even over Monte Carlo!"

The Grand Duchess moved restlessly upon her seat. What was to be the outcome of these monstrous, unsusought confidences? "You lost, monsieur?" she asked indifferently.

He laughed shortly. "I lost? You the wife of Alexieff, and yet you don't *know* the fate of all that played with him? He had brains, I own it. Gambler, soldier, statesman—ah! if he had been Czar! I might then have kept my estates, perhaps—but as the case stood I played with him and lost—everything! A whole province of Hungary, madame, my funded property in the Bank of France, the jewels that were to be my wife's when I should marry—such payment was obviously impossible. So, to redeem my possessions, I sold myself to him—myself, body and soul."

The Grand Duchess turned. A sudden fear was in her eyes. "What do you mean?" she asked quickly.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Again, Princess—you the wife of Alexieff, and yet do not know that he, alone of all the Grand Dukes, was deep in the secret statesmanship and crooked policy of Russia? Ordinary tools for his service—professional spies, adventuresses, noblemen publicly ruined and degraded—there were ready enough to his hand. But a prince of royal descent, whose name and possessions might seem to warrant him as incorruptible—such an instrument was worth his own price. So at the price of my own estates and revenues, Alexieff bought me. At his death, my incriminating notes-of-hand were passed on to Pobydonestieff. At *his* death—*mon Dieu!* large as the amount may be, it sometimes seems to me that I have more than earned it already!"

"So you act," asked the Grand Duchess bluntly, "as spy for our government?"

He made a gesture of putting aside the ugly word with his hand. "As Russian agent, madame! I confess the work is not without its exhilarations. At Algeciras, for instance, the balking of the German

policy—all my work, Princess! And now I am sent here to Newport——”

He paused for a moment. The Princess's eyes, touched with contempt and a curious fear, were on him. “To look after me?” she asked with a delicately-edged insolence.

He bowed. “Undoubtedly that will be one of my most pleasing avocations; but my serious purpose, madame——” He leaned forward, to whisper in her shrinking ear. “This secret treaty that the Americans are making with Japan—we have reliable information, it defines the terms on which inviolability will be guaranteed to the Chinese frontier. The new alliance is aimed directly at Russia. It becomes absolutely necessary for the prosperity, for the very life, of our interests in the Far East, that we know the terms of this new contract. Do you follow me, madame?”

She nodded with the bewildered air of one who wades suddenly in waters unexpectedly deep. “You honor me with your confidence in so vital a matter, monsieur—and as a good Russian, I wish you success.”

“A thousand thanks, Princess!” His teeth flashed at her in a smile. “But I want, you see, more than your good wishes. I want your help.”

This time she turned, confronting him. “What do you mean?” she asked tersely.

“Listen!”—again he spoke cautiously in her ear. “Your new friend, Monsieur Borridaile, is, as you know, the secretary of the American commission. When I accepted the invitation of madame, his aunt, to make my home with them in Newport, I had, I own, certain scepticisms concerning the wisdom of the course; and I own that I am now baffled—balked by the too open door which lies before me. A guest's hands are, as you know, tied by the very privileges which he enjoys, by the obvious simplicity of the various means which lie ready to him. My utmost caution and astuteness show me no means to obtain the documents I need, without drawing on myself a plain suspicion which means my ruin; for one breath of suspicion attached to the name of Debreczin and *pouf!* I become a broken tool, useless for Russia's purpose, ruined. On the other hand, if I fail in my mission, I am ruined.” He took in a sharp breath that whistled between his lips. “You see my dilemma, Princess?” he asked slowly.

“It is a painful one,” she replied briefly.

“Painful,” he retorted, “but—this evening only have I perceived it—not insoluble. Madame, just now I told you I need your help. Here is the case, stated baldly: John Borridaile has a secret; John Borridaile is—or would be—your lover; I want you to win that secret from him.”

Varvara sprang to her feet. In the faint gray of approaching daylight, her beautiful face showed as colorless as the light itself. Her hands were clenched, her eyes blazed.

"What vile bargain do you propose to me, monsieur?" she asked in a tense whisper. "I to play for this young man's heart, to win his honest affection, and then betray him? Do you think that anything you could offer me, monsieur, could buy me to corruption such as this?"

With deliberation the Prince drew his cigarette-case from his pocket. "You will have one, Princess? Ah, I forgot, you smoke only the imperial make. But you will give me permission? A thousand thanks!" With the adroitness of one long used to play human souls, he allowed the cool-dropping instants of silence to fall on the flaming spirit of the woman before him. Then:

"In exchange I offer you, Princess, my silence. The cable message which I had intended to send this morning to my imperial master—I will not send it."

She surveyed him indomitably. "To the Czar—to call me home, you mean?"

"Since you put it that way, yes"—he smiled at her with the admiration of an adversary who can afford to be gallant. "The truant shall not be betrayed—she shall have her month of freedom and pleasure and—and love. But—she must pay for it."

"But suppose," she replied with an effort, "I do not care to buy! Suppose I withdraw from the game—suppose I leave Newport tomorrow!"

"In that case," replied the Prince, with dangerous suavity, "you lose your promised month, and your friend, Madame Rumbold—*eh bien*, she loses something more!"

The Grand Duchess started. This was a new aspect of the case. "Madame Rumbold," she said softly. "Very well, monsieur, if you make it her affair as well as mine—" Her large eyes brightened with a sudden idea. "Then if it is only money that is needed—"

The Prince drew himself up with a sudden indignant haughtiness which, all things considered, brought a fleeting smile to the white lips of Varvara. "I, madame—do you think that one of my blood is to be bought and sold with the gold of an American millionaire, like one of their own politicians?—even if the money, in buying back my notes-of-hand to Alexieff, could buy back my reputation, which my employers hold between their hands. No; exposure, nothing less, is the weapon which they hold always over me in case of failure." For a moment a bitter constriction passed over his dark, high-featured face. "Listen, madame!" he added suddenly.

She stood piteously. Listening was in every glance of her tortured

eyes, in her slender, shrinking form. From the Hungarian's voice and features as he confronted her, the courtly suavity dropped suddenly away as a poniard is plucked from its velvet sheath.

"Listen, Princess," he said. "The terms of the treaty I must know—my choice lies between that knowledge and ruin. You can win me that knowledge, so before you lies the same choice as mine. *Mon Dieu!*"—he broke off suddenly in the plaintive tones of self-pity—"if you think I enjoy the situation in which I am placed, if you think I find pleasure in the terms which I am obliged to make with you—But when ruin stares one in the face—ruin, do you understand? That is not a pretty word, either to you or to me. Come! I ask you no troublesome questions, you observe—I merely inquire, do you accept my terms? The party is breaking up, they will remark our absence. Come!" he cried again, as she continued to hesitate, "is it to be yes or no?"

Her eyes fell from his. Lingly she sank down upon the cold carved stone of the bench. Through her tormented mind ran swift gray reflections of the past years of her life—years of stagnant monotony, of deadening restrictions, of a loneliness too forlorn to be endured even in retrospect. Was it to that dungeon that she must now return? That the radiant and mysterious influence which to-night for the first time had come into her life could by no possibility be prolonged beyond the present, no one knew better than herself. The barriers of rank, of deep-running worldly prejudices and age-old caste ideas, must make forever impossible for her the realization of such happiness as to-night had touched her with the edge of its wing.

But the month—the promised month of free, delightful life, illuminated now by the exquisite allurements of this new undreamed-of joy? The dull level of lonely sadness to which then her life must return—would it be made any more intolerable by the consciousness of the guilt which was hers?—while to the end of her life she would bear a heart enriched by the treasures of the remembered days. And yet—to betray him!

"I can't do it!" she gasped with dry lips. "You have no right to propose such a bargain to me. A traitress! For whom and for what, monsieur, do you take me?"

Through the blue rings of his cigarette smoke his dark eyes surveyed her steadily. For the first time there passed between them a glance of perfect understanding.

"You know, madame," he said softly, "for whom and for what I take you!"

There was a moment's pause. The Princess's face was quite white. She laughed recklessly.

"You are right, monsieur," she said. "Who am I, to cavil at the

terms you offer me? I agree, monsieur—here is my hand. I will do my best!”

Over her hand his eyes glinted with sudden tigerish ferocity. “Your best!” He sneered openly. “This is no question of your best. You must *do* it, do you understand? My employer accepts no excuse from me—I accept none from you. The terms of the Japanese treaty or—you know what, madame!”

She gathered her forces for a final word. “Here comes Mrs. Rumbold. Tell me—out of your experience, can you give me a word of advice—how do I begin, how do I go to work?”

His answering smile cut with delicate two-edged meaning. “Princess, you are a beautiful woman—that is the beginning. Madame, you are a beautiful woman—that is the way you go to work!”

She shrank away from him to meet the smile of her hostess descending the marble steps, with Willy Lushington beside her.

“You naughty *chérie*, do you not know that every one is beginning to say good-night? Prince, you are a wretch to rob the Ice Palace of its queen. Are you not ashamed?”

The Prince bowed low in profession of his penitence; he bowed low enough, indeed, to hide the triumph that flamed from his heavy-lidded eyes.

## V.

IN the large arm-chair by the open window, with her dark hair rolling like an inky stream over the white folds of her night-dress, sat the Grand Duchess Varvara. Her white dog was coiled at her feet, and her maid nodded sleepily over her, bathing her forehead with water of violets.

For the past hour the turrets of Stormcliff had been touched with the pallor of dawn and sunk in the silence of sleep; but from the girl by the window sleep had never seemed so far away. What was it he had said to her, this new friend with the brave outside and the clear, honest eyes?—“For when the prince came, you see, the princess woke up!”

Yes, that was true. From the sloth of egotism and vanity and unscrupulous self-seeking, she had waked up at last; only—there was the unspeakable horror of it—to sink, with eyes wide open, into depths of which she had never dreamed. Should she, after all, accept the conditions offered her by this Hungarian? Yes. . . . No. . . . The consequences of either answer cut through her thoughts like a whip. And through the confusion of these hurrying visions, like the new sun burning through the misty sea-rim below her, pierced and kindled the light of Jack Borridaile’s kind gray eyes.

There came a tap at the door, echoing with sinister oddness through the silence of the room. The maid opened the door, and in flew no

less a person than the mistress of the mansion herself, her slim shoulders covered with a long trailing negligee of flowered silk, her bare feet thrust in a pair of pink embroidered slippers.

"My dear Madame Rumbold! So you are sleepless, too! Pardon me if I rejoice at your misfortune, since it brings me so much happiness. Rose, place a chair."

Mrs. Rumbold smiled sweetly as she settled herself and her ruffles in the large blue damask chair which the maid wheeled up to her. For a moment the two ladies eyed each other, covertly but intently, while the maid shook the gold-topped perfume bottle (monogrammed, like all the other portable property in the room, with a large V and a crown) and with the wet handkerchief dabbled the white forehead beneath her hand.

"Poor little princess!" gushed Mrs. Rumbold, with profuse sympathy. Then with a sudden inspiration, "Perhaps her Highness will allow me, Rose," she said, "to bathe her head for a while. I have a gift for curing headache, a positive gift! For, as my poor James always says when he has one of his nervous attacks, in the touch of affection there is healing! You will allow me, Princess?"

With a smile the Grand Duchess watched her hostess as with bland insistence the latter took gold-topped bottle and handkerchief together from the hand of the sleepy maid, and bent her blonde head and flowery negligee over the chair of the fair sufferer.

"Will her Highness desire anything more?" inquired the maid, with a deferential yawn.

"No, Rose, you may go. I will take care of your mistress for a little while. There, dear Princess, that is better, is it not?"

The door closed behind the retreating servant. With little cat-like steps, Mrs. Rumbold gathered her pink flounces about her, and, flying to the door, she made sure that it was fastened. Then with a second thought she opened it very cautiously, to make certain that no listener stood concealed behind its panels. The other doors and the windows having been treated in the same way, she came back with leisurely steps to the blue damask arm-chair, and flung herself into it with a yawn. The perfumed handkerchief lay upon the rug, the gold-topped bottle distributed its essence to the hungry air; and the ministering hands of Mrs. Rumbold, clenched into lazy fists, were extended above her head in a long and comfortable stretch.

"Thank Heaven," she remarked piously, "for just one moment's rest! Upon my word, after the strain I've been through to-night, I wonder my face is n't cracked to bits. But we've done it—yes, we've done it!" Her whisper had the fervor of a shout; and as her slim fists came down from the air, she sprang to her feet with a sudden triumphant pirouette.



The girl in the chair, holding her aching head between her hands, surveyed her with wide-open, fixed eyes, filled with dumb suffering, like those of a dog.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Rumbold again, "it has been a gorgeous success. To you, my dear Miss Hooper, I don't mind owning that to-night has made me—thanks to Mr. Rumbold and Mr. Lushington! Willy managed things rather cleverly the other day in New York, did n't he? The clothes and the jewels and Petroff—oh, Petroff, he *was* a stroke, and the wolfhound, too—to say nothing about the stars and orders from the pawn-shops, and all the books with the details about Russia! Yes, it was a busy day, and it has brought me good returns. Though, I must own, I have had the same feeling all the time that I had the day Jim and I climbed Vesuvius. We'd come pretty high, and everybody could see we were on the top, but who could tell what moment it would all crack and blow up under our feet? Well, it did n't. So as the worst is passed and vanquished, I think I may say our month is safe."

The girl surveyed her shrinkingly. "Yes," she said softly; "that was what I understood—one month."

Mrs. Rumbold nodded in reply. "After proclaiming it over the country, I can hardly make it less than the allotted time. And, after all, why not? I don't mind saying, after the success you've made to-night, that I'm not afraid to risk my social advancement on your performance. You have done splendidly, Miss Hooper, and Mr. Rumbold and I shall have the greatest satisfaction in handing you your check. I told you, you know, and now you see I was right, that you have a genius for the stage—a born actress, my dear, a born actress! And when you let the black out of your hair, and drop your French accent, there's really no reason why you should n't go on the stage in earnest. For the way you caught the royal air, you know, a little country girl like you—it was a wonder!—and the way you worked in your Russian allusions, out of your Tolstoi and Baedeker's—it could n't have been better. Yes, I see now and more clearly, it was a special Providence that brought you to my door yesterday!"

The girl's smile was tinged with a faint bitterness. "Though perhaps," she answered slowly, "you did n't suspect it at the time."

Mrs. Rumbold shook her head with solemnity. "Which only shows, my dear, how inscrutable are the ways—well, but I'm free to own I was in despair! With that wretched cable from the Grand Duchess, telling me of her sudden illness—bad enough if it had arrived on time, but delayed two whole weeks by the censor in Petersburg—goodness gracious! what would have become of me if you had n't turned up? I should have been the laughing-stock of Newport—ruined, disgraced forever! It was a risky business, I own, but you've pulled it through,

and saved me. Yes, and when that wretched ambassador popped in to-night, after declaring he could n't come"—she stopped to gasp—"when all of a sudden in he walked, with his threats to report to Petersburg and his horrid, chattering Russian—I don't mind owning, Miss Hooper, that you saved the situation again. You might have knocked me over with a straw; I was helpless, just helpless. But the way you wriggled out of the whole fix, and made him look foolish instead of us—it was genius, positive genius!

"So I say, as *that* point is met and weathered, the rest of the month will be plain sailing. Because, after all, when you come to think of it, that dreadful ambassador was the only person in this continent who could possibly have given us away. As for the danger of the news getting back to Russia, and being contradicted there—who in Russia, I ask you, ever dreams of looking at an American newspaper? Especially the evening shockers, which are the only ones to print details about the Grand Duchess, you know. As for the Russian representatives of the Associated Press—well, I'll tell Mr. Rumbold to attend to *them*." She rose to her feet. "Good-night, my dear child!"

The girl put out her hand. "One moment, Mrs. Rumbold. I think it only honest to tell you——" She paused and wet her lips. Mrs. Rumbold surveyed her with suddenly quickened interest.

"What is it?" she said sharply.

"That man with the fat eyelids and the gold collar," answered the other wearily, "that Hungarian prince—he knows."

Mrs. Rumbold's little pink face went suddenly the color of ashes. She grasped the back of the chintz arm-chair for support. "But he told me," she said thinly, "that he knew nothing of Russia—that he had barely met Alexieff—that he had never laid eyes on the Grand Duchess Varvara!"

The girl smiled dully. "He had his own reasons for denying all knowledge of Russia," she answered, "and, as things have turned out, he has tricked you to some advantage to himself."

"What?" cried Mrs. Rumbold. "What? You mean that he——"

"I mean," answered the girl concisely, "that he offers to make terms, to—what do you call it?—compound the felony. He offers to keep silent if—if I——" Her tongue halted and stumbled. For the first time, it seemed to her, the full iniquitous depths of the proposed transaction lay fully revealed to her. An hour since, in her assumed character, it had been the treachery to a friend which had alone presented itself to her; now she began to realize, the treachery to her country was no less. She sat silent, sunk in the depths of self-aborrence. Yes, even to buy one month—one whole month—of the ineffable living joy which to-night had revealed to her, the price was too much to pay!

She was recalled to herself by Mrs. Rumbold's long-drawn laugh of relief. "Oh, so *that's* how the land lies? Thank Heaven we get off so easily!"

The girl glanced up quickly. Upon the unspoken meanings which laughed openly from Mrs. Rumbold's cynical green eyes, she felt herself shrivelling in a sudden wave of scarlet shame. Not till that moment had she suspected there were depths lower and more disgraceful than those to which she had already fallen. "No, no, madame," she said hoarsely; "I beg you to believe . . . it's not *that* he has asked of me!"

Her hostess's gaze was one of frank bewilderment. "Then what in the world——" she cried.

"It's—it's business," said the girl in painful accents; "certain information that he wants. He asked that I turn spy, traitress, for him——"

At the word "business" Mrs. Rumbold's delicate face sharpened itself as on sudden flint. "Not—not any of Mr. Rumbold's schemes?" she asked harshly. "Not the Pacific Steamship Combine or the B. & W. deal?"

The girl shook her head. "No—something quite outside the house, I assure you! But it's not worth mentioning, after all. I have made up my mind it's not worth buying immunity at such a price, and, with your permission, I'll disappear to-morrow."

Her tones trailed off in the accents of a profound despair. Then she turned with a little sharp exclamation of pain. Mrs. Rumbold's bony little hand had descended like a vise upon her bare shoulder.

"You're going to leave me in the lurch?" she breathed shrilly. "You're going to leave me at this man's mercy, to be ruined and made ridiculous in the eyes of the whole country? It's not that I'd be afraid of the Grand Duchess herself—she's a good-natured soul enough, and she'd appreciate the situation her cable left me in. But the newspapers—the American newspapers! You've got to stand by to save me from them, do you hear? It's you that has the price to buy his silence—whatever he asked of you, it's not as dishonorable as your betrayal of me would be. Promise you'll do your best—promise you'll stick by me—promise!"

Her fingers sank deep in the girl's soft flesh; but neither so deep nor so painfully as her words sank in her listener's mind. Her duty to Mrs. Rumbold!—this was a point which she must not forget.

Remembering the bitter determination of the Hungarian's threat, she could not doubt that her failure to meet his demands, whether by open refusal or by quiet disappearance, would be met by the same resentful use of the weapon he held in his hands. Not only she herself, but Mrs. Rumbold, the Rumbold name and position and soaring ambitions, lay

in the power of a desperate and unscrupulous man. Of the two 'evil rôles now presented to her by the comedy upon which she had so blithely entered, which was it her duty to choose? So far as consequences went, adroit handling of the business might save Borrirdaile from any calamitous results, even from any knowledge, of the betrayal of diplomatic secrecy. That solution of the trouble, difficult and risky though it surely was, was yet not impossible. Already and without her will, her fertile brain was spinning expedients. Moreover, her heart, still throbbing with the quick, cruel, exquisite elixir which the night's chance had distilled into it, cast its weight heavily in this side of the scale.

What right had she, after all, to become the instrument of disgrace and ruin to the woman who had trusted her?

With a sudden resolution, she lifted her blue eyes to the steely gaze that flamed down into hers.

"You are right, madame," she said, with a little shake in her voice. "I'll do my best, I promise you."

"Ah!" Mrs. Rumbold relaxed in sudden relief. "Then *that's* settled. I don't ask you what the Prince wants you to find out, because it's probably something dangerous, and there's no use in my burning my fingers—I prefer to stay on the safe side of the fence whenever it's possible. But if you want any help at any time, dear child, just come to me. The best of luck to you—and now, my dear, good-night!"

The crisp pink draperies rustled from the room, the door was closed. The great white dog, crouched carefully on an outlying fold of his mistress's white night-dress, rubbed his cold nose in a timid caress upon her arm. The homely touch, coming to her as it were through a dark maze of falsehood and doubt and strange new bewilderments, touched her to a sudden childlike helplessness.

Slipping to her knees, the girl pressed her cheek to his warm silken fur. "Dear dog," she said, "I'm a cheat. But you know, don't you, that I only did it for fun? I never meant to be really bad—but now there's no choice left to me!"

The dog, regarding her with affection, wagged a patient tail and licked away the slow tears that ran trickling down her cheeks.

## VI.

DURING the fortnight that followed, it became increasingly evident to Newport and to the world that if ever social capital had been profitably invested, it was the time, money, and energy that Mrs. J. Harrison Rumbold had invested in her dazzling importation of an imperial Grand Duchess. From the day after the ball there had been no doubt about that in the minds of the unprivileged many who read in the New York dailies (which put their political and foreign news on some inside page in order to do justice to the really interesting sub-

ject of the day) the spread headlines describing the Fairy-like and Costly Entertainment Given to Newport's Most Exclusive Set, by Mrs. J. Harrison Rumbold, in Honor of her Guest the Grand Duchess Varvara; nor, for the matter of that, could there remain any lingering doubts on the subject of Mrs. Rumbold's social fitness in the minds of those who next day sent their cards and monogrammed letters to swell the haystack piled on the gold tray carried to Mrs. Rumbold's bedside.

"Mrs. Vanhuysen requests the pleasure——" "Mrs. Borridaile requests the pleasure——" "Mrs. Seton-Jones requests the pleasure——" Everybody in Newport that *was* anybody, in fact, requested the pleasure of Mrs. Rumbold's company and that of her imperial guest, the Grand Duchess Varvara!

The newly-rich set, who before had formed Mrs. Rumbold's coterie of intimates, now gazed on her with far-off, dazzled eyes. As for the leaders, who had snubbed her, they were now only too glad to acknowledge her bow as she drove down Bellevue Avenue of an afternoon. Her place, indeed, in the fairy ring drawn about the innermost circle of society, could no longer be disputed by the most prejudiced. And after Willy Lushington, the Newport world confessed in a gasping admiration for the cleverness by which it had been overcome, it was the Grand Duchess that had done it.

In spite of continual rumbling threats, that lady's August Relative had not yet desolated the New World by cabling for her immediate return. However, as her time at the best was to be limited, she openly declared her purpose of escaping from her national boredom by enjoying the New World delights to the fullest; and even the indefatigable Mrs. Rumbold herself was sometimes pale under her maquillage before the coming of the morning found the little Grand Duchess ready to shut up her toy-box and go home.

Altogether, it was the most brilliant season that Newport had seen for many a year. Not only European royalty, but international diplomacy in the persons of the American and Japanese commissioners, were present to add distinction to the usual humdrum of American society. Mrs. Rumbold had announced the forthcoming visit of a distinguished American Senator (Tomlinson of Virginia, well known to be associated with "Gentleman Jim" in the colossal B. & W. deal, and a power in the White House). And to crown all with a delicious thrill which gave almost the illusion of royalty, there were murmurs of hovering Anarchists. Mrs. Rumbold imported a couple of plain-clothes men to ride on bicycles behind her and the Grand Duchess in their automobile. The Czar himself could touch no higher pinnacle of importance.

Outside the immediate earshot of the ladies of Stormcliff, yet

another topic was offered to wag tongues and set ears to pricking. The desperate devotion paid by Jack Borridaile to the imperial Varvara—what would be its outcome? The difference in rank between them, with the thousand obstacles which it represented, was so obvious and final that a diplomatist, of all men in the world, was the least likely to attempt bridging it. Furthermore, it was an open secret that the enterprising mother of Letty Rumbold had already marked down Jack as her prey. Was it not possible this permitted devotion to her beautiful guest was only part of Mrs. Rumbold's deep-laid schemes? To win him to the house through interest in a quarter manifestly impossible; then, perhaps, when the beautiful stranger received her orders to leave Newport, and her admirer was left to fancy himself disconsolate—then perhaps propinquity, a little artful managing, a few smiles and tender overtures of sympathy from Letty—well, one could never tell. In these affairs tact was everything, and in bringing Newport to her knees she had already accomplished a more stupendous task than in winning over young Jack Borridaile.

But Jack himself, had this adroit schemer known it, was by no means of a calibre or of a mood to be dangled thus easily and then caught on the rebound by a waiting hand. Having never before, in all his thirty years, so much as fancied himself in love, his suddenly conceived passion for the charming Varvara had all the fire and purity of a first attachment; while at his period of life his feelings were deep and not easily shaken.

Just what procedure the situation demanded from him was a question to which he had given many anxious days and restless, despairing nights. Though troubled with no false modesty, he well understood the gulf that lay between a plain American citizen and an imperial daughter of all the Russias. The situation, viewed in the strong light of practical common sense, seemed sufficiently hopeless. And then, always at her side dangled the unpleasant Debreczin, whom so many people considered a Hungarian blending of Bayard and of Brummel. That he was over-head-and-ears in love with Varvara was evident; and if she happened to return his fancy, what objections could be raised, even by the august head of her family, to the suit of a long-descended noble, knight of the Golden Fleece, and own cousin to the Hapsburgs? The idea was monstrous, disgusting—but always, unhappily, perfectly possible.

After all, what midsummer madness was his thought of winning such a prize! Even the Grand Duchess herself, it seemed, must realize his folly. For, "Oh, Mr. Borridaile," she had said to him one fine August morning, as they waited together under the *porte cochère* of Stormcliff for the other members of the party who were to drive on Jack's four-in-hand coach, the Firefly, up-river for lunch and back

again—"oh, Mr. Borridaile, it's all very well, you know, your pretty story of the Duchess of Dreams and the gallant knight! But suppose the princess was a hard, tough, thick-skinned sort of creature, that refused to wake up, even when he poked pins into her and screamed in her ear? Or suppose, even, that she did wake up, and found that she was held down with a thousand invisible chains, so that no matter how hard she tried, she could not move. . . . And she had to sit up, and bite her lip to keep the tears back, as she watched the prince ride away again. Tell me," she added, with a curious hint of pain in her voice, "what would have happened then?"

"I don't know," Jack answered sturdily, "for in my story, you see, it never could happen that the prince rode away."

## VII.

It was not till the homeward drive that Prince Debreczin found an opportunity to renew his private conversation with the lady whose personality held for him so keen and significant an interest.

Her company in the outward course was monopolized by the host, Jack Borridaile; but by an astute piece of manœuvring on the part of Mrs. Rumbold it was Miss Letty who shared the box with the coachman on the return trip. ("She is so ambitious to learn four-in-hand driving, the dear child!")

Thus it fell out that the Grand Duchess, with her blue hat and her enormous white dog, bestowed herself in the back seat of the vehicle. Her devoted Hungarian clambered immediately to the vacant place by her side. In the privacy thus assured, and guaranteed, moreover, by the beat of hoofs and the rush of the flying air, the Prince bent suddenly toward the lady at his side.

"Madame," he said softly, "I had expected that you would make this opportunity. It is long since we have spoken together. I had thought you would have news for me before this."

The girl cast a little scared look on him from her large blue eyes. "I am sorry," she answered in a low tone; "I have nothing."

"Nothing?" The monosyllable flashed out at her like a whip. She shrank away, protesting faintly.

"But I have tried, monsieur, I have tried my best! Here in this town, where I am so conspicuous, every step of mine is watched and guarded. This recent foolish agitation about the dynamiters—it has made things ten times harder for me."

The Prince was loud in his scorn. "The Anarchists? They murdered my queen, it is true. But here in America—bah! I mock myself not badly of them and their dynamite!"

The little fat Senator on the seat before them, catching the last word of this speech, removed his cigar from his mouth and turned.

"The Anarchists? You are right, Prince—a set of crazy bums! They do say some of them have been seen lurking about Newport this year—Morrow, that served a term at Auburn last year for wrecking a peanut-stand with a bomb, and Zebuykurtz, who did an Anarchist play a while ago in New York and was egged off the stage. Don't be scared, Duchess. America'll take good care of you."

The Grand Duchess bowed sweetly. "A thousand thanks, Monsieur the Senator!" Then as the gallant statesman turned back to his conversation with Mrs. Marsten, the girl's voice sank again to a tremulous whisper:

"What can I do, monsieur? Already my Petroff has cultivated intimacy with one of the under-footmen at Borridaile Court, where the sittings are held. He finds they sit with doors and windows wide open—no possible chance of listening!"

The Prince smiled sardonically. "But the method I pointed out to you, madame! All Newport has remarked his devotion. Do you really believe he could deny you anything?"

A crimson flush swept over her face. In an agony of helpless self-revelation, her blue eyes travelled to the broad-shouldered back which towered on the box seat. Then she answered her questioner with energy.

"I do believe it! Yes, once or twice already, when I have dared to lead the conversation to these forbidden topics, he has drawn back always——"

With a bored impatience, her tormentor interrupted her. "Indeed? But all this, madame, is none of my affair. My chief gives me till Sunday; I give you till Saturday!"

In wide-eyed horror the girl gasped at him. "Till Saturday? And this is Thursday!"

"By Saturday noon," Debreczin went on icily, "if you have not handed me the desired information, then I advise you to glance at the New York papers for Saturday evening. They will probably interest you—you and Madame Rumbold." Then as the girl, in half-comprehending terror, continued to stare at him, he leaned toward her with a sudden tone of finality. "Forty-five hours I give you, madame—till noon on Saturday."

With a sudden thought, she faced him. "And suppose, monsieur, I give you the same?"

"My secrets, you mean?"—the Prince was openly triumphant. "Do you fancy, madame, I had not weighed consequences before I took you into my confidence? If you speak before Saturday to betray my secrets, together with those of Russia, will it not be to destroy with your own hand your character as Russian Grand Duchess? On the other hand, if you refuse my terms and speak on Saturday after I have spoken, *who will believe you?*"



The girl collapsed in sudden despair. "You are very subtle, monsieur. I have no chance but to serve you. What shall I do?"

The Prince leaned toward her, whispering impressively. "Listen, madame: to-night, as you know, Mr. Rumbold gives a dinner—what they call a stag dinner—in honor of his friend, the little fat Senator on the seat before us. Among the guests are the members of the commission, American and Japanese. Mr. Borridaile, as secretary, will attend. Now, as I happen to know, the commission has an extra session at seven o'clock. The dinner is at half-past eight. This means, of course, that from their sitting, the commission move straight to the dinner-table. After dinner—*eh bien*, madame, after dinner things are not impossible!"

The girl answered him with a despairing recklessness. "Oh, monsieur, what is the use of my hesitating any more? I have Mrs. Rumbold to think of, as well as myself. Yes, I'll serve you faithfully this time! I'll stay home from Mrs. Marsten's dinner-dance to-night—this faintness that has already attacked me once or twice may serve as my excuse. But then"—she paused to reflect—"those plain-clothes men that have lately been such a restriction upon me—"

The Prince nodded. "Have no fear, madame. All private police shall be withdrawn from the grounds. You have seen yourself how the Senator feels on the subject. We will speak to Mr. Rumbold, who, to my certain knowledge, regards the whole alarm as absurd. Trust me, the way shall be cleared."

The Grand Duchess pressed her white cheek to Vassily's feathery ear, and spoke still with the same recklessness: "And then, monsieur, if I succeed in extracting any information or laying hand on any papers, how shall I convey them to you?"

"Telephone—messenger . . ." The Prince considered the question with care. "All methods are likely to be unsafe. No, here is the best way. I will excuse myself from the dinner—an engagement, say, to play bridge at the club. I will go there in my automobile. I will change my Inverness for a black raincoat which I left in the cloak-room last week. I will go to the pier, take a canoe, and paddle back to Mr. Rumbold's harbor below. At the near end of the pergola, where we spoke together that first night, you will find me waiting. Upon my word, the situation becomes truly dramatic! You understand the arrangements, Princess?"

The girl took in her breath. Her face was very white but her voice was steady as she responded: "The rear end of the pergola at, say, twelve o'clock. Yes, it is understood!"

The coach whirled from the wide thronged avenue into the white road that led between green lawns to the door of Stormcliff. As Debreczin noticed the tremulous shrinking of the fingers which for an

instant were laid in his for the descent, he smiled grimly to himself. Then as the coachman, turning away from his restive team, came back to rejoin his imperial guest, the Prince observed with a smile which for once was devoid of all save satisfaction the self-revealing glance which, like the sparkle of living sunshine, flashed between the two. A passionate longing, a clinging tenderness, a perfect trust—in both pairs of young eyes, his keen gaze read no less. And he touched his cold lips with his gloved hand, to control their smile of triumph.

"She can deny him nothing," was the thought that ran tingling through his brain, "and he—he can deny her nothing!" He turned to follow the party to the tennis-lawn, where tea-tables were spread. "On Sunday," he resolved piously, "I go to mass, for beyond doubt I shall have the wherewithal for thankfulness!"

### VIII.

To the deep regret of everybody concerned, the Grand Duchess was unable to accompany her hostess to Mrs. Marsten's dinner-dance that was to follow the coaching-party. The long exposure to the August sun had given her a nervous headache which showed itself plainly in her white cheeks and nervously twitching hands. The doctor, hastily summoned, recommended quiet and absolute repose. Fortunately, Mr. Rumbold's dinner party to the Senator and the commissioners was separated from the apartments of the imperial lady by something like a quarter of a mile of masonry and space. Mrs. Rumbold, with affectionate solicitude and many injunctions to the maids in charge of her guest, swept off to her evening of pleasure.

It might have been ten o'clock that the Grand Duchess, under the ministering hands of her maid, fell into a deep sleep. The servant, glad enough to be released for enjoyment of the gaieties below, nodded to her companion, and together they tip-toed from the room.

By eleven o'clock the dinner and informal speech-making were over. In Mr. Rumbold's celebrated pool-room, with its dozen green tables and huge, glittering buffet, the guests disported themselves after the manner of men more or less hard worked, relaxing in the warmth of a summer night. Glistening white shirt-sleeves and a glistening black cigar, a long slim cue and a long iced drink, seemed, to judge by the appearance of the roomful, to represent the moment's idea of solid comfort. From the responsibilities of the day, as from the constraints of female presence, they were now freed. Even had their eyes, dazzled with the glistening whiteness of the room and fixed upon the spinning ivory balls, been able to pierce the vine-embowered gloom of the veranda without, they would hardly have found in the presence of an inquisitive servant maid any ground for concern or even for surprise.

Up-stairs in the apartment of the Grand Duchess Varvara, the

Pompadour bed was empty. The doors were all bolted on the inside, with the exception of the glazed casement leading to the stone balcony and flying staircase without; this latter, curiously enough, was fast locked from the outside. In one corner of the boudoir, beside a suit-case of cheap and shabby canvas, Vassily lay curled as a proud and sleepless guardian. The suit-case was, however, empty of a certain humble uniform which for the past month had been packed away, and which might quite reasonably have expected never to be called into service again. The black alpaca gown was, in fact, at this moment doing duty on the piazza outside the pool-room window. Beneath the starched ruffles of the white bib-apron labored a heart torn between two violently conflicting necessities, and from under the crisp white trifle of the muslin cap two wide-open blue eyes followed with straining watchfulness every movement of hand or eye in the jovial, smoke-filled room within.

The gentlemen were absorbed in their game, in their stories, in absorbing the contents of the buffet. The window, cut low to the floor, was casemented after the French fashion, and therefore blocked with no wire mosquito bar. Before the window stood a little Turkish divan. Over the high-cushioned back of the divan, John Borridaile, warmed with the eager pursuit of his game, had a moment before flung his coat.

The girl without stood breathing unsteadily, like one exhausted with running. To-night, as she knew, she had come face to face with the necessity of action, under penalty of a price which her perplexed sense of honor as well as her tormented heart forbade her to pay. Until this moment what programme of action had framed itself in her whirling brain, she hardly knew, hardly dared to think. But now—was it Providence she had to thank, or those powers of evil which are said to make smooth the path of the unwilling sinner?

The wearer of that coat had, as she knew, come straight from the evening session of the commission to the dinner-table; he, the repositor and recorder of all its secrets, which were the secrets of the great nation's party to the compact. Folded in the pockets of that innocent black garment, who could tell were what revealing papers, what world-swaying documents? She had but to watch her opportunity, when the careless heads in the room within were circled attentively around some spectacularly skilful play, and then so gently, ever so gently, put out her hand and draw it toward her.

Then she would be free—free from her intolerable servitude to the sleek, heavy-eyed gentleman who even then before her eyes was delighting the roomful with his superb handling of the cue. She would be free of her intolerable dread of bringing disgrace upon Mrs. Rumbold, free to enjoy the two weeks of ineffable and immeasurable bliss

that yet remained to her; relieved, above all, of the haunting horror that in disappearing she would leave behind her, not the exquisite phantasm of an unattainable dream, but the vulgar scandal of an ordinary cheat and impostor.

But she would be a thief.

The glittering room behind the black waving casement swayed and rocked before her. There was a sensation of nausea in her throat, of cold moisture upon her limbs, of a black, unanswerable bewilderment in her brain. One thing only she saw clearly: whatever way she chose, she would be choosing the path of evil, of irreparable injury to some other human soul beside herself. Here was the penalty of that false situation which, in girlish glee and unthinking exultation in her own dazzling good-fortune, she had accepted at the hands of Mrs. Rumbold. And now, since evil she must do, why not choose that which would at least result in no immediate and inevitable catastrophe to the victim? For, after all, it might be years before the Russian government would betray the fact that it held this information; and even then it would not be she herself, it would be Prince Debreczin, who would betray the name of John Borridaile as one concerned in the business. After all, why should she augur any ill consequences for him, either to-day or in the distant future?

She would be a thief, it is true; but would the mere filching of these pieces of paper alter one whit her moral status in this regard? She, already the thief of honor, the thief of love—was it not laughable that she should shrink from this last and least of disgraces?

The room within was suddenly very still. The Hungarian, with a delicate flourish of his cue, had bent over the further table. Before her eyes were ringed a throng of tensely attentive backs. Through the open casement her hand crawled like a soft white snake. For the moment it seemed to her she had no emotion, no life, no blood.

"Bravo!" came a hoarse, jovial voice from the table—the Senator's voice. "Good for you! Now the red ball, Prince!"

Again the room was silent. Still her hand crawled on. It touched the soft, tingling folds of cloth, grasped them, began its journey back again. The buttons scraped lightly against the edge of the casement—behind the girl's rigid lips, the gullet rose stranglingly. There was an outburst of applause from the table. "You're all right, Prince!" "Where's Jerome Keough now?" "When you want to tour the country, Prince, I'd like the chance to manage you!" The coat, like the black shadow of a swaying candle-flame, had slipped from the divan, through the casement, had lost itself in the thick blackness of the night without.

Inside the room the Hungarian, as though playing directly into the hands of his tool and accomplice, continued his game, swift.

daring, and spectacular. Outside, in the darkness of the piazza, his cause was progressing with no less brilliance. With shrinking, resolute hands, the girl fumbled rapidly through the many pockets of the coat. Handkerchief, pocket-book, cigarette-case, two coronetted envelopes whereon, with a pang of guilty delight, she saw her own careless handwriting; a half-dozen newspaper cuttings . . . stay, what was this?

Between her hands she held a long manila envelope. The seal was of red wax, large and official-looking. Turning it over, she beheld in the upper right-hand corner the words, "Official Business"—from whence her scared glance flew to the superscription, unmistakable in Jack's clear black handwriting:

*For the Honorable*

*The Secretary of State,*

*Washington, D. C.*

Her hands quivered, her heart leaped in a spasm which seemed the very sickness of triumph. The official report of the proceedings of the commission, which the secretary had obviously brought with him to wait a better opportunity for mailing—the very information for which her tormentor had conditioned—here she held it in her hand!

Behind the lace-covered casement she could hear the Prince making his adieux and acknowledgments to his host, amid the chorused remonstrances of his friends and admirers. In a few moments now he would be there at the secret meeting-place. Very well, she was not afraid to meet him! With stealthy touch she replaced the coat between the window and the divan, just as it might have fallen when flung down by the wearer. For one moment her sharpened glance, darting between the waving lace curtains of the casement, fell as it seemed directly into the eyes of Borridaile. He was standing at the other side of the nearest pool-table, his hands raised to light a cigarette, his careless glance filled with laughter at the pleasantries of the little Japanese at his elbow. Never before as in this moment when she herself crouched invisible before him, divided from him by one link more added to the chain of treachery which bound her, had he appeared to her so upright, so filled with a vivid and kindly life, so completely the incarnation of all that woman desires in man. Suddenly his figure melted and swam in a blur of blinding tears. Clamping her teeth over her lower lip in a hard bite, the girl sprang silently to her feet. With noiseless steps she made her way down the stone staircase, down the garden-path, to the tangled rose-garden above the terrace and pergola.

Here, as she knew, it was safe to wait. On this night of festivity

the servants were all on duty in the house; and even if one caught a glimpse of a little maid in cap and apron wandering through the grounds, what then? And for the first time she blessed Mrs. Rumbold for her passion for things European, in excluding from her grounds the crudely revealing radiance of electric light.

She had sat there perhaps a half-hour, sheltered behind a dew-wet and fragrant rose-tree, looking out over the dim liquid expanse before her, when suddenly she started . . . strained her ears. Yes, it was unmistakable—faintly, rhythmically, every moment nearer, the dip of a paddle came up to her through the windless darkness of the night. He was coming, the master to whom like Faust she was selling body and soul in return for an ephemeral and sordid boon. Well, it was too late now to draw back. Let him come, she was ready! With convulsive finger-tips she pressed the precious document, folded in one corner of her apron; and so she stood motionless, listening . . . listening . . . listening . . .

Then faintly splashing paddle echoed hollowly within the walls of the artificial harbor below; soft footsteps sounded upon the marble stairs. The moment had come. With flying feet, the girl fled down the half-seen steps that led to the terrace below. She paused for a moment, straining her eyes through the shadows. Swift as her movements had been, it was plain that her enemy's eagerness had led his steps in advance of hers. With faltering steps, she entered the pergola.

Beneath the vine-covered trellis it was very dark—not so dark, however, but she could distinguish the tall, black-clad figure which stood against the dusk of the leafy wall. Horror of the thing she had to do pervaded her like a deadly environing essence—horror of the man who had driven her to this shame as to a shambles, horror of his presence, his touch, his very voice.

Thrusting the document into his willing hands, "Here, take it!" she whipped the words at him like a lash. Then with recoil quick as from a serpent she turned back to the starlit space of the doorway. The air without smelled fresh and sweet to her nostrils. And she—what right had she to be breathing it at all?

The sustaining fire of necessary action once removed, quick and terrible was the fall of her soul to the ashes of reaction. By a brave and skilful piece of audacity, she had bought a moment's safety for herself and for Mrs. Rumbold; but who could tell what future calamity she had unloosed for her own soul, for the country she loved, for the man who was a thousand times dearer to her than both together? For a moment the wild impulse flamed up within her to turn back, to beg from her enemy the restitution of the stolen letter, to offer him— A helpless laugh fluttered up in her throat. To demand of

the wolf the lamb already rent and half swallowed—that were the more reasonable request!

On the marble steps below her sounded the flying tread of feet. Turning, she found herself again face to face with the tall figure in its long black coat.

“Is that you, madame? Have you brought anything for me?”

She stood silent, motionless, staring through the starlit darkness. For the tones, quick to the point of ferocity, were those of Debreczin.

## IX.

SHE laughed, a little jangling, guarded peal, at her own terror. What had seemed bewildering was, after all, at second glance contemptibly simple.

“Monsieur,” she whispered hurriedly, “I had not thought you so dull as not to understand that letter I handed you just now. Did you fancy it was a mere billet-doux? Must I explain it was the official report of the commission, which I stole just now—that is the word, *stole*—from the coat-pocket of the secretary?”

The Prince bent toward her. “Are you dreaming?” he asked harshly.

“I? Oh, no!” she answered, with a sigh. “Look at the letter, monsieur. You will see that I speak the truth.”

“What letter?” he repeated, with furious impatience. “You have given me no letter!”

“Do you deny,” she asked with sudden horror, “the letter you took from my hand just now in the pergola?”

He laughed sardonically. “You are clever, madame—but I repeat, I must deny your story absolutely!”

She caught at her breath, while in her soul bewilderment congealed itself to the cold concreteness of formulated terror. This over-subtle opponent of hers—it was plain now for what purpose he had retreated through the darkness of the pergola, doubled the path below, and reascended the marble staircase in renewed pursuit of his victim. Her mistake—she understood now what careless folly, what mere vanity, her mistake had been. To yield up the precious document without verification, without spoken acknowledgment in return, that was bad enough; but the original, the fatal, mistake lay deeper. To think that by one piece of nefarious service she could buy her freedom from the unscrupulous man who held such power over her—to believe that by straining her abilities to their perpetual utmost, by steeping her soul in crime at his command, she could ever hope to win her quittance from a master such as this! She understood now—she had betrayed all that she held most dear, and for nothing. She had paid the price, but had failed to grasp the recompense.

The Hungarian's cold voice broke in on her whirling thoughts. "Let us talk business, madame," he said decidedly. "I am no child, you understand, to be caught with a cock-and-bull excuse such as this. You thought perhaps you could buy your own immunity and spare your lover by one and the same clever stroke at the expense of poor Debreczin's stupidity. Ah, no, madame; if you must tell me lies, I beg you to flatter my intelligence with more subtle lies than this. Come, you say you succeeded in laying hands on one of the official reports of the commission?"

She nodded wearily. "To my shame—yes!"

He took a step toward her; she could see his eyes glisten in the darkness. "I begin to understand. It is highly possible you have the letter; but, having done so much, your heart fails at the last, the deciding step. Come—if you really have possession of it, hand it over!"

She stepped back. "As I have told you," she replied unsteadily, "it is no longer in my possession."

"If I could be sure of that!" His voice was in her ear; again she stepped back from his unpleasant nearness, but this time she found herself held by a vise-like constriction on her arm. "I am weary of your trifling, madame. You swear to me you laid hands on the necessary document; you refuse to yield it to me. Very well, it becomes my plain duty to find if you speak the truth!"

Again she recoiled from him, struggling helplessly, like a wild bird against the detaining springe. "What do you mean?" she asked in a choked whisper.

"I shall search you, madame!"

She drew herself up rigidly against his hand. "You dare not," she protested vehemently, "with the city all around us, with a whole houseful ready to rouse itself if I call for help. No, monsieur, I am not afraid!"

"That is fortunate," he retorted with irony. "I should think, you see, that you would be afraid of the spectacle thus presented to Newport and the world—the Grand Duchess Varvara, in the masquerade of a parlor-maid, keeping a midnight rendezvous with Debreczin, the celebrated eater of hearts. My poor friend Jack! I can see his face as he hears——"

He felt her quiver and droop upon his arm. "Scream!" he said agreeably. "Scream, *ma belle*, scream!"

"But you have the letter, you have it already!" her feeble protest reiterated itself, then broke off in a strangling gasp of horror. His heavy hand was on her shoulder. Desperately she resisted, while from her rigid lips the helpless agony of flesh and spirit broke in a breathless, half-voiced cry.



Soft and inarticulate as was her protest, it was not without its effect. The nightmare touch which detained her suddenly relaxed, Debreczin's head was suddenly lifted to glare straight before him. The girl, held now only by a hand on one quivering arm, turned to follow the direction of his eyes. There before her, half seen in the leafy shadows of the terrace, stood a figure in that dim light the reduplication of the one beside her—a tall, lean-shouldered form, wearing a long, dark coat. "Was you wantin' help, lady?" asked the figure briskly.

The girl took in her breath in a wave of sudden relief that saw nothing beyond the moment's blessed deliverance. The special watchman lately employed by Mrs. Rumbold, and whom the man at her side had vauntingly promised to have discharged before the meeting of to-night—how could she ever have believed that his boasted influence, even with the Senator on his side, would weigh heavily enough with Mr. Rumbold to cause him to give over his settled plans?

"So you're the secret-service man?" she gasped. "Thank God you've come!"

But the Hungarian's hold on her arm did not relax. "Then if you're a policeman, my good man," he said with swift readiness, "you can give me assistance. Here is no question of vulgar assault—this woman has a valuable letter that she has stolen from me. I call on you to force her to restore it."

"A letter?"—the man before them repeated the word in accents of sharp inquiry. In sudden comprehension, the girl took in her breath. How bewildered she had been, how lost in sickened horror at the physical violence offered her, not to have understood at once!

"Then it was to you," she asked swiftly, "that I handed the letter just now in the pergola?"

The man nodded with a reluctance visible in the darkness. "Yes'm. Jest to me. Though, I'll own, I did n't rightly understand."

Suddenly the detaining touch on her arm relaxed and fell. The Hungarian, laughing delightedly in the darkness, was bowing before her with all his old-time suavity. "Madame! A thousand pardons! Your mistake was, after all, a perfectly natural one—who could have suspected a watchman? Here, my man, I'll take the letter."

The girl raised her hand. "No, wait one moment—wait!"

For, struggling to a sudden overmastering life within her, she was conscious of the impulse which, as a few moments ago she had turned from the pergola, had moved her soul to sudden qualms of doubt. And this new-born thing, this suddenly illuminated power of perception, this steadfast defiance of all ill consequences save the stain of evil consciously incurred, she knew for herself, her very self. There on the dim rustling hillside beneath the stars, between a stranger openly

hostile and a stranger unknown, and weighed down by a burden of remorse and fears and hopeless, tender longings, her distracted, untaught soul came for the first time to itself. This piece of hideous treachery that she had planned—why, it was impossible. Thank God for the power of choice which still was hers!

"No," she said quietly; "I have changed my mind. I can't let you have the letter after all."

"Indeed!" replied the Prince, with a breath that whistled curiously between his teeth. "And what do you propose to do with it?"

"It goes back to its owner," she replied with intrepidity, "tomorrow."

Debreczin turned from her to the waiting policeman. "Here," he said, "give me the letter, my man. Here's a dollar for your pains."

But the shadowy form drew back. "Will I give it to him, lady?" he asked doubtfully.

"No!" she cried beneath her breath.

The Prince laughed. "This becomes absurd," he said coolly. "I see I must inform you of my identity. I am one of Mrs. Borridaile's visitors, the Prince Debreczin."

With a tone quickened to a curiously vivid interest, the watchman interrupted him: "A prince did you say, sir?"

"A prince," retorted the Hungarian, "of the Dual Empire. Now you know who I am, will you give me my property?"

The man drew back with a gesture expressive even in the dim starlight. "If you think I'm one to favor princess!" he returned with brief contempt.

For an instant the Hungarian stood silent, then, advancing in sudden desperation, "I'll have that letter," he hissed with a curious roughness of accent which showed how strangely he was excited. "I'm going to have that letter, if I have to wring both your necks to get it!"

For an instant the girl's flesh stirred in terror—would his ruthless determination lead him, after all, to fling all prudence to the winds? The power of those long, sinewy hands of his she knew only too well. Suddenly her breath came back to her, in a little fluttering laugh of pure joy. The stranger's arm was lifted; in his outstretched hand, levelled with the Prince's head, was a small object that glittered wanly in the starlight.

"Prince or no prince," said the man in a voice that seemed to clamp itself over the other's will like a vise, "lay a finger on me or on the young lady, and this is what you git. It's death, no less. Do you understand?"

Debreczin, drawing himself haughtily to his angular height, stood immovable. "Put up your pistol, man," he said with dignity. "I

am not one, you understand, to be frightened by mere threats of death; though I recognize, I own, the superior force of the argument you present. For one of my rank, as you know, the disgrace of the public fracas which you threaten would be infinitely worse than death. So as the situation has plainly reached the point of impossibility, I see no reason for continuing it longer. Madame, I have the honor to bid you good-night!"

The girl stared at him. Was he thus easily abandoning the field? With what purpose did he go, with what plans of retaliatory vengeance?

"You understand," he said swiftly. "The conditions remain unchanged. There are still thirty-six hours left. I think, in view of the consequences entailed by your continual obstinacy, I can afford to abandon the present field of dispute. Tell your mistress from me I will give her as I said till noon on Saturday. Twelve o'clock on Saturday, do you understand? And if by then——"

His voice broke off in a sudden inarticulate snarl more horrifying than any spoken words. Then, recovering himself:

"*Au revoir, ma belle!*" His tone was jaunty with a cynical assurance which showed how secure was his confidence in her ultimate surrender. Then, doffing his hat with a sardonic salute, he turned and ran lightly down the marble steps.

From the tall figure of the stranger, motionless in the darkness before her, the girl turned with a little weary sigh. Until this moment she had not realized how completely the terrible strain of the night had drained her of nervous and muscular force. And her very voice drooped limply as she said:

"And now will you give me my letter? Thank you very, very much. It's impossible that you could ever know how much you have done for me to-night."

"Wait a moment," said the stranger's voice, with an odd eagerness. "I beg pardon, ma'am, if I'm wrong, but ain't it—ain't it Angie Hooper?"

The girl recoiled like a detected thief. Her first and strongest impulse was to turn in flight. Then as the familiar accent, the old familiar name, touched warmly upon cords of her soul long disused, she was drawn back as by a homing instinct deeper and more powerful than the springs of her terror. For a moment her eyes strained through the thick shadows; then with suddenly kindled recollection,

"Elmer Morrow!" she cried softly.

## X.

THE man laughed—a laugh of joy so acute that its unbearable ecstasy ended in a sob. "I thought 't was you," he said brokenly, "but I was n't goin' to give you away before *him*. Good Lord, Angie,

have I ever stopped thinkin' of you sence I left East Bayville? Tell me—how are you, little girl?"

"I'm well," she answered softly. "And you, Elmer? I'm glad to see you have such a good place, and doing so well in it!"

"Wait one moment," said the man harshly, "'fore you let yourself speak with me one moment further, I want you to understand out an' out how I stand—I can't lie to you, Angie! You think I stand here for the law. Well, I don't. I stand here agin it!"

For an instant the girl stared, horror-smitten. Then the remembrance of her own deed of an hour ago came back to her quick and stinging. Who was she, to recoil from this poor playmate of her childhood, however low he had fallen?

"You're not—a burglar, Elmer?" she asked in pitiful accents.

"A burglar!" The harsh New England voice tossed the word back to her in the same scornful tones as those in which they had repudiated the Hungarian's assertion of his title. "So you think I'd go agin the laws for my own greed and gain? No, it's the laws themselves I'm after—the laws and the tyrants that ride atop of 'em! Do you know what this is, Angie?"

He held out to her the little shining instrument with which, a few moments before, he had compelled the submission of her tormentor. In a curiously shrinking terror, she bent over it. It was no revolver, as she had thought, but a black body the size and shape of a thick candle, curiously bound over and over with myriad twists of shining white wire.

"Let me look at it—quick, I must be going!" she said hurriedly. The man drew back his hand.

"T ain't safe for little girls to handle," he said, with a ghastly attempt at jocularity. "It's—it's dynamite."

"Dynamite!" From the horror of that word, as from the living presence of death, the girl recoiled in a purely instinctive panic which for one fearful instant made all perils of the soul seem light. Then, controlling herself to face the import of that word, her quick thought travelled back across Mrs. Rumbold's terrors and precautions of the last few days, to the Senator's mention of Elmer's very name this afternoon.

"Then you're—an Anarchist, Elmer?" she asked gently.

"An Anarchist—why not?" he retorted vehemently. "If you could see the life I've led sence I come up to N' York—I've ben swindled, I've ben starvin', I've ben in jail fer takin' food I had to have or starve. Then, comin' out o' jail, what chance was there fer me—an ex-convict! Do you know what it means fer a man to have that name tagged onto him, Angie? So when I fell in with a Russian chap that started to tell me what was wrong with the world, an' the

way to mend it, do you think it's queer I listened to him? For he told me *right*. So I jined in with him. Though, I'll own, I ain't done much to date. Last year when I tried my bomb went wild. But this time, ef it's the last time I lift my hand on earth, I ain't agoin' to miss!"

The girl stood listening in restless hesitation. Twelve o'clock, as she knew, had sounded; by one o'clock Mrs. Rumbold might be home from the dance. She might be missed; even ascending by the outside staircase of carved stone that led from the rose-garden to her boudoir window, she might find awkward encounter. Nevertheless, there was in Morrow's last words a grim and foreboding wildness that held her motionless to the spot.

"Elmer," she whispered, "what do you mean? Not——" The sudden thought that came to her chilled her lips beyond the power of speech.

His eyes scorched hers through the darkness. "You'll not give me away, Angie, *that* I know! You know fer yourself there's nothin' I can refuse you, even ef I never ben more than dirt under your little feet to you. But ef you ask me to put the noose 'round my neck and give you the rope's end to hold, then it's done—done cheerful. Yes, I'm down here on business, I'll own, sence you ask me, Angie!" He lowered his voice to a whisper that cut her ear like a needle: "I'm after—I'm after that Russian princess that's stayin' here in the house."

"Oh!" Beyond the monosyllable, she could make no immediate reply. Her chief conscious fear was that the rising faintness which numbed her limbs should likewise take from her the power of action in this swift and terrible crisis. She gripped her hands and breathed hard. Should she reveal to the man before her the secret which would preserve her in assured safety from the shocking danger which loomed violent and hideous before her? The secret which, after all, unless by some miracle, would within a brief and measured space of time be blazed by the Hungarian before the eyes of a grinning world? And yet the miracle—to the chances of that miracle her soul clung when faced with the alternative of intrusting her momentous secret to the keeping of the poor crack-brain before her. Swiftly her distraught soul gathered its forces together to grapple with this flying and desperate necessity.

"Elmer," she said, "you told me just now there was nothing you would n't do for me."

He raised his hand in solemn affirmation. From the gaily-lighted house on the hillside above, the gay notes of a piano came down to them through the whispering darkness. She could see the wire-wrapped dynamite glisten whitely in his hand.

"Fore the Lord," he said earnestly, "I spoke no more'n the truth. Sence the old days when I kerried your books to school, Angie, I never wanted any greater privilege than to serve you. Anything's done that you have a mind to ask me!"

She leaned toward him with swift intensity. "Then, Elmer, don't do this terrible thing. For my sake, spare the Princess Varvara!"

"What?" he cried in harsh amazement. "You, Angie, takin' the side of the oppressors of the poor? What's the Princess to you, that you should take her part? What have you to do with her, I say?" Then, as his eyes, piercing the darkness, took in for the first time the details of the black and white uniform she wore, he spoke with dawning comprehension: "Ah, you're here in the same house with her. You're one of the hired help, Angie, I reckon?"

She nodded in a sudden perception of the grotesque truth of his words. He went on swiftly:

"You're maid to the Princess herself, then, perhaps, Angie?"

"I am much with the Princess—yes," she answered tremulously.

"Fond of her?" he asked roughly.

She hesitated; scorn of her own feeble nature, hatred of her own flagrant misdoings, made any affirmative answer to that question an impossible mockery which, even for the sake of the vital point to be gained, ran beyond her powers. So,

"I am sorry for her," she replied in a low voice.

Morrow's sardonic misbelief broke from him in a hoarse but guarded spasm of laughter.

"Sorry for her!" he sneered. "That's a good one, Angie! When was she ever sorry for one of the poor wretches that she an' her kin have ground into the dust for centuries? And what call have we to feel sorry for her, set up high and mighty in her grandeur an' happiness above us? But jest the same——"

"Wait a moment, Elmer!" The girl snatched at the flying opportunity revealed by his words. "Listen, Elmer—so it's for her privileges you hate her, for the happiness you think she enjoys above you and me?"

He nodded. "But I know a way to even things up!"—and with the glittering object in his hand he gesticulated murderously. The girl shrank away.

"Be careful with that fearful stuff, Elmer, please!" His arms sank obediently to his sides. She went on feverishly:

"But, Elmer, if I could assure you with absolute knowledge, on absolute faith, that the woman whom you are intending to kill is of all women in the world the most miserable; that beneath the splendor for which you hate her lies nothing but hatred for herself, remorse for the past, and terror for the future; that with the whole force

of her unhappy heart she loves a man to whom she can be nothing more than the common dust under his feet; that she lies body and soul at the mercy of an unscrupulous tyrant who is planning to destroy her more slowly but no less cruelly than you—oh, Elmer, don't you think that you at least might hold back your hand and have mercy on her?"

He seemed unexpectedly struck by her words. "So the pore girl's in love," he said, with a deep sigh. "Well, I can feel for her there. Pore thing!"

"You'll spare her, Elmer, you and your friends?" she asked, with a throbbing hope.

Still he hesitated. "You say," he asked slowly, "that some one else is after her, meanin' mischief?"

She nodded painfully. "Mischief," she replied, "far worse than the death that you hold over her."

He tenderly fingered the dynamite in his hand. "That's queer," he replied simply. "What can it be, I wonder, an' who can it be—worse'n *this*?" Again he considered; then with the quickness of a sudden thought, "That chap that you was havin' the row with jest now," he asked swiftly. "I ain't had a chance yet to speak of him—fact is, he was clean knocked out o' my head by the sight o' you, Angie, an' the sound o' your voice saying 'Elmer' agin. But—what was that message he gin you fer your mistress? Angie, is he her enemy that you are speakin' of?"

She nodded sorrowfully. "And you saw the kind of man he is. Don't you think you can safely leave her to him?"

"To him!"—he repeated her words savagely. "And him a prince, one of the destroyers of mankind. Yes, you're right, Angie—we'll leave the whole devil's brood to devour each other, like a nest o' scorpions. You're—sure he'll do it, Angie?"

"As sure," she replied, "as I am of nothing else on earth!"

He was quick to detect the note of anguish in her voice. "And what's that to you, Angie?" he asked, with contempt. "It's not you the cuss is goin' to hurt, is it? If it were——!"

"No, no, indeed!" she dispelled any doubt which might lead to Elmer's detection of her secret. "No one is going to hurt me, Elmer; thank you very much just the same. And now I must say good-night—it grows frightfully late. Thank you for what you have done for me—for promising not to harm my princess, for saving me from that ruffian just now, for saving my letter. Ah, my letter!"

"Here it is." He produced it from his pocket and held it out to her. In a whirl of suddenly-born perplexities, she surveyed the pale half-seen symbol of her temptation, of her fall, of her tardy regeneration.

How to convey it back to its rightful owner? How to send it to the post, or to Borridaile Court, without admitting some one fatally into the confidence of the Grand Duchess Varvara? And to return it to the owner with her own hand— Suddenly her troubled eye fell on the mute, humbly waiting figure before her.

After all, whom could she better trust than this old friend of her childhood, this faithful, slavish adorer who, half-crazed though he might be, carried unchanged his devotion to her as the one unswerving idea of his unsteady soul? And, after all, beside him, what choice had she? "Elmer," she said quickly, "will you do something for me?"

"If you'll let me," he replied, with the hungry fervor of a fanatic to his patron saint, "I'll die for you!"

"My poor old Elmer!" she sighed pityingly. "But it's nothing like that I want from you—it's something that may, possibly, turn out to your own advantage. Will you deliver this letter for me, please?"

"To the Hungarian prince?" he said sharply.

"No, no, indeed! To the gentleman who wrote it, and to whom it belongs, Mr. John Borridaile"—her tongue faltered tinglingly upon the syllables, with a betraying softness which she suddenly feared might reveal her weakness to the man before her. But she, intent on the details of her request, noticed nothing. "Mr. John Borridaile," she repeated bravely, "at Borridaile Court, near Ochre Point—the house is well known; you will have no trouble finding it. I want you to speak with him personally. I want you to deliver the letter into his own hand and no one else's. You understand?"

"I understand," he replied steadily. "And what do I tell him?"

"You tell him—ah!" She hesitated for a moment. "Tell him you were acquainted with one of the servants at Stormcliff; and, passing down the road last night, you spied this letter under the *porte cochère*. You showed it to one of the servants, who said that Mr. Borridaile, as secretary of the commission, would be the person most probably in correspondence with the Secretary of State. And so—Elmer, you will do this for me?"

"You know from the old days, Angie, whether you can trust me!" The pathos of his tone drew her thoughts suddenly from her own sad perplexities to his.

"My poor old friend, how selfish I have been toward you! I must go now. But first—listen! I can't bear to think of you in this terrible way of life. Elmer, if you won't be offended—I have some money saved—"

"What do you take me for?" She started back in fear from the withering indignation of his tone. Then, recovering himself, he



went on with a sudden weary droop in his voice: "You know how much life has been worth to me, Angie dear, sence that day four year ago when you said 'no' to me. I have my Cause, of course—that's somethin'. But I sometimes think ef I could jest do somethin' fer you, somethin' that would make you happy as I can't, an' die doin' it— But that's plumb foolishness. I mustn't hender you here longer, an' mebbe git you a scoldin' from your boss. Your letter'll go to your Mr. Borridaile first thing in the mornin', never fear, an' now—good-by, Angie!"

"My poor Elmer!"—she gave him her hand. "But you have n't told me yet what I can do for you, how I——"

"Nothin'!" he interrupted her sternly. "I ain't a man for a respectable workin' girl to be seen with—an ex-jail-bird, do you hear? But you've stopped an' talked to me fer once—you've given me the sweetness of your voice to remember—an' that's more'n I could have asked. I ain't got the right to stay no longer. Good-by again, an' God bless you, Angie!"

As suddenly as he had come, his tall, dark form melted into the blackness of the pergola. The girl, left alone upon the terrace, stood for a moment motionless in the fragrant living mystery of the night.

But that other night two weeks ago—when for the first time her poor, stunted, feeble little soul had awakened to life, before the magical words and presence of love! In that new, transfiguring brilliance the path of life had stretched almost plain before her; but now to what ruin this maze was to lead her in the end, who could tell?

But the weariness of her body quieted even the trouble of her mind. With her feet stumbling under her, almost without care whether she were discovered or not, she made her way to the deserted gardens and the darkened outer stairway that led to the locked door of her room.

Vassily, whimpering softly, welcomed her return.

## XI.

### TWENTY-SIX hours!

This was the first thought that came to the mind of the girl who woke in the great Pompadour bed, as her feverish glance fell upon the little gilt clock ticking upon the chimney-piece. She was free, it was true, from the intolerable inner stain which for one infamous moment she had planned; but in twenty-six hours she must face open disgrace, open ruin.

Twenty-six hours! Why, indeed, drag out this hideous suspense for that allotted time, like a condemned criminal awaiting the hour of his execution? She had saved the man whom she loved from the danger which threatened him at her own hands, she had by sacrificing her unspotted image in his heart saved at once his honor and her

own. But he would never know it; he would never know that in thus damning herself before the world she had in reality saved herself from the greater condemnation, that in falling as it seemed beneath his contempt she had in reality risen to the poor best of her feeble, passionate soul. But she knew it. In the sordid, empty years which stretched like a grim, interminable pathway before her, that knowledge would be all the light and comfort she would have—she had best make the most of it. But Jack would never know.

And to-day, to look into his honest, kindly eyes bent in adoration on her, and to figure to herself the bitter contempt which would flash from them to-morrow evening as they dwelt upon the headlines which the Hungarian had pictured to her yesterday—no, it was more, in the enfeebled nervous state produced by last night's strain, than she could bear. Twenty-six hours! Why, indeed, should this farce last more than one hour more?

To Mrs. Rumbold, accordingly, she went. That lady, propped up on innumerable little pink silk cushions, finishing her chocolate and her correspondence together, looked up with a smile of careless triumph as her guest entered her room. Her morning's mail contained so much that was flattering, so much that was delightful—and all owing to the daringly played stroke symbolized to her by the drooping, heavy-eyed beauty who, wrapped in fluttering, pale-blue draperies, came trailing softly into her room.

But the maid dismissed, the door examined and then carefully locked—ah, then! Mrs. Rumbold, sitting bolt upright among her rosy pillows, listened to a flat, unvarnished tale of failure that drove the blood from her little sharp face and brought her white teeth glistening between her whiter lips.

She had not climbed to her present position of eminence, however, without the aid of a practical nature which made her even in this desperate moment perceive the futility of wasting time in reproaches and in lamentations. Therefore, it was not in open words, but in her tone, as thin and cold as the glance of her blade-blue eyes, that she made manifest her rage and contempt for the self-confessed bungler before her.

To give up the game, to slip out of sight now, with a whole day left in which to combat the schemes of this wretched Hungarian? Never! What was the girl thinking of? Because she had failed ignominiously, must she now turn coward? Because she had made a botch of the whole affair, did that mean that Mrs. Rumbold, taking it into her capable hands, could not conduct it to success? Bah! What the man wanted was money, of course. To-night, at Mrs. Borridaile's dinner or the Eustis's baccarat party, she would take the opportunity of interviewing him, and hearing his price.

The girl, remembering Debreczin's haughty disclaimer of money-seeking on the occasion of their first interview together, relapsed into miserable doubt from the hope momentarily induced by Mrs. Rumbold's confident words. "But if," she said painfully, "he refuses to treat on such a basis—if he will not accept money as the price of his silence——"

Mrs. Rumbold tossed her head. "Don't talk like an idiot," she said sharply. "Of course this person has his cash price—like you yourself! Though I regret to tell you, young lady, that *your* check will be very considerably diminished by this enormous outlay which you might have saved and did n't. No, don't argue the matter!" She raised her voice peevishly as the girl, flushing hotly, opened her mouth to protest. "My nerves have really had all they can stand for one day; and if I'm to clear up the mess you've made of things, I think I shall need them in their best condition for to-night. You may go now!" She turned abruptly, and as the girl, as white as she had been red before, rose obediently to her feet, a faint grin wrinkled the thin lips of the lady sinking back upon her pillows. "If you ask me," she said, "who the joke is on, I should say there's not a bad one on Mrs. Borridaile, if she only knew! A professional blackmailer as a guest—h'm! Not so much better than a professional humbug, is it, my dear?"

This taunt passed, however, high like summer thunder over the suffering soul before her. To finish out the allotted span of service demanded of her, to play her part with spirit before the piercing, trustful eyes of the man she loved—here was task enough for her strength, without wasting any force in idle indignation.

It was in the evening indeed, when at his aunt's house she should see Jack for the last time, that her trial was to come. The day passed slowly, hour by hour. The routine of their usual life claimed them—a luncheon party, bridge, a motor-ride. Twenty hours before the clock stroke which should settle her fate, and cover her with infamy in the eyes of the man she loved! Never to see him again, that was hard enough, but it was all within the conditions of the game. But to think of him knowing her for the cheat she was! Eighteen hours! No, it was impossible that Mrs. Rumbold should be able to compound with the implacable Shylock who had seen his own terms rejected. After all, there was a ray of comfort for the girl: She *had* rejected those infamous terms! She had undone, at all risk to herself, the harm she had plotted against Jack. It was all confusion, all misery, but at least she had not done as much evil as she might have done. Fourteen hours!

It was eight o'clock when she sat down at the dinner-table at Mrs. Borridaile's, face to face with the eyes which had pierced, now smiling, now reproachful, through all her day's waking dream. And for that

very reason, perhaps, the eyes themselves, and the familiar voice thrilling in her ear—like the flower-wreathed table before her and the gay, gorgeous company—seemed to her no more than pigments of an exquisite, evanescent dream, from which so soon and so roughly she must be awakened.

Her awakening, however, which, though not final, was sufficiently complete, came to her even before the allotted time. It was in the drawing-room after dinner, while the party were sipping their liqueurs and waiting for the automobiles which should convey them to the baccarat party which was to follow, that Debreczin, smiling agreeably, crossed the room to join his young host and the lady who was known to the assembled company as the Grand Duchess Varvara.

She greeted his coming with a gay and resolute smile. A few commonplaces of conversation followed. Then, as though the effort were too great, the girl turned away her eyes listlessly toward the other end of the room, where Mrs. Marsten, seated at the piano, trilled little French songs with spirit and grace. Two short sentences exchanged by the two men behind her struck suddenly upon her ears:

“Any news of the missing document, my brave?”

“No.”

Borridaile's tone, as he uttered his monosyllabic reply, was unfamiliar, like the voice of a stranger—grim, cold, touched with a profound but resolute despair. She clenched her hands and bit her cheeks from the inside to keep from fainting, as Debreczin's swift undertone went on:

“But go quickly and telephone again to the chief of police, my friend.”

The hostess, stopping in her dignified progress across the room, addressed her nephew suddenly:

“My dear Jack, what can be detaining them at the garage? It grows late, and we promised to begin play promptly at eleven o'clock. Will you have the goodness, my dear boy, to see what delays the automobiles?”

With a bow and a brief apology, Jack was gone. His aunt stood lamenting, with affectionate solicitude, his suddenly changed looks and the anxious preoccupation which she had noticed in him to-day. “They work him like a galley-slave on that commission, upon my word! Last night he was not in his bed. All to-day——” Suddenly her eye was caught by something ghastly in the beautiful white face before her, and, throwing out her plump, soft hand, she saved the girl from falling.

“Princess!” she cried with real anxiety. “You are going to faint! Here, my dear child. Prince, ask Willis to bring a glass of water!”

Mrs Rumbold, amiably concerned, bustled up with vinaigrette and

good advice. "These heart attacks—my poor darling! You are better now?"

The girl opened her blue eyes with a little resolute smile. "Thank you all, so much! But I am quite well now. A passing twinge—sacred blue, but the evening is so warm!"

Mrs. Borridaile, relieved of her sudden anxiety, readily accepted the excuse. "Certainly, the heat of the room; these rooms are on the leeward side—here we are miserably close! My dear child, I advise you to allow Prince Debreczin to take you to the air."

The girl rose unsteadily. "Yes," she responded, "if he will be so kind!" And, stiffening her muscles so as to profit as little as possible by the willing and detested arm offered for her support, she trailed her shimmering blue draperies slowly across the room, through the glazed doorway, and out on the cool, dark piazza and wide *porte cochère* beyond.

"Now, Princess," said Debreczin with ironic courtesy, as, dropping his arm, she turned with swiftly restored forces to face him in the half-lit darkness—"now, Princess, my congratulations that you came to your senses after all——"

"Tell me!" Her choked voice interrupted his drawling words. "What does this mean? Is it possible he never received the letter?"

"And why should he have received it?"

"You know why!" she returned with energy. "Because, as I told you, I sent that letter back last night to its rightful owner!"

The Prince laughed impatiently. "Madame, I have been in America long enough to understand the game that your nation calls bluff. Do you suppose I do not see that in this pretense of having returned the letter to Mr. Borridaile you are trying to throw me off the track and evade my terms?"

"Monsieur, I have told you the truth!"

"Bah, madame! We have no time to waste. Listen! My chief grows pressing; my information must be in Petersburg by Sunday. *Mon Dieu*, madame! do you think that I enjoy any better than you do this business into which we are forced? I assure you it is all excessively painful to me—and by the very fact of my employing means so distasteful, you may perceive my desperate necessity."

"Yes."

"Come, madame, the letter! Or as noon strikes on Saturday this wretched secret of yours, this thrilling, delicious scandal of your imposture and Mrs. Rumbold's, is wired to the office of every newspaper in New York. The headlines, *ma belle*—have you thought of the headlines? And the pictures! Your friend, Monsieur Jack, will be able to cut out the picture that he so much desires!"

From beyond the wall of dark cedars below the house came the

faint, half-heard screech of an automobile. The sound seemed to recall the Prince to a sudden recollection of the moment's needs.

"Here come the machines," he said quickly. "In a moment we shall be off; we must not attract attention by lingering here. We shall have time to speak together later; and I have no doubt, by your keeping the letter for me, that we shall come to excellent terms!"

The girl bowed mechanically. A moment's solitude in which to collect her forces scattered by the unlooked for, the appalling blow dealt her by the Prince's recent words, seemed to her the utmost she could ask.

"If you would be so kind, monsieur," she said, with a deliberate though tremulous return to her *grande dame* manner, "as to bring me my wrap."

With a smile which grimly recognized the necessity of the comedy thus played between them, the Prince bowed. "Madame," he answered, "I am, as you know, always at your command!"

In a moment he had gone, and she was left standing alone in the half-lit and flower-scented veranda. Jack had never received the letter—there was the fact to which her brain must learn to adjust itself. Not only had her original misdoing been all for nothing, but her tardy restitution as well. She had stained her soul with the crimes of theft and treachery, but she had not thereby succeeded in buying her immunity from the Hungarian's threats. She had braved ruin and disgrace for herself and for the woman who had befriended her, but she had not thereby delivered the man she loved from the calamity inflicted upon him by her own hand. Jack was ruined, Mrs. Rumbold was ruined, she was ruined; and for the general mess that she had made of things, she had no one to thank but herself.

To trust so urgent, so vital, a commission to a poor, wild-witted outlaw like Elmer Morrow! For the carelessness and cowardice which had thus snatched at the first and easiest chance presented her for restoring the letter, she was now properly punished. And yet—poor Elmer, the friend of her childhood, her devoted dog and slave! Upon whom in this world, in this hard-hearted, bewildering world, could she rely, if not on him? He had protested his willingness to lay down his life for her; so why not—

She caught in her breath. His life! A chill thought trickled like melting ice into her feverish, whirling brain. His life! After all, the Hungarian had last night beheld him face to face; she knew her enemy's determination, his readiness to avail himself of all means the most unscrupulous to gain his end; was it not more reasonable to suppose that his fault, rather than Elmer's, lay at the bottom of the mystery of the undelivered letter? In that case, by what fraud or secret violence? And where was poor Elmer now?

Her despairing eyes swept the shadowy garden before her. Suddenly they remained riveted, focused in horror—on the empty air? Was it solid flesh upon which her straining glance rested, or a visualized projection of her own agonized thoughts, a mysterious and transcendental confirmation of her sudden fears?

For out from the wall of dark cedars slipped a form as dark as they. With cat-like steps across the lawn, silently drawing nearer and nearer, came the figure—that long dark coat, that high-boned, pallid face, those searching, gleaming eyes. Even in the faint light that streamed from the drawing-room behind her, there could be no room for doubt. She opened her mouth to cry his name. Then a falling gleam of light, as he crept nearer into it, swept the breath from between her lips like a sudden body-blow. For in that sudden, half-lit radiance she perceived that the man advancing so softly upon her moved with outstretched arm; and in the hand was something that shone pale and indistinct in the shifting light.

There are instants, as that in which the oarsman finds himself poised on the edge of the cataract, in which the human mind works quickly. In a swiftly darting swoop of thought, the girl's mind rushed back to this man's words of the night before, to his avowed object in coming to Newport, to his desperate, half-crazed ferocity of purpose; then in a suddenly comprehending flash her eye dropped to the magnificence of drapery which shimmered about her in the broad pale bar of light that fell from the window; to the glittering orders upon her breast, to the betraying strings of sapphires which swung and rippled around her like liquid lapis-lazuli. For whom was she taken by the desperate fanatic before her? To what fate had he devoted her? She knew.

She knew, but she stood motionless, silent. To address Elmer by his name, to discover to him her real personality—this would mean to evoke an immediate and hideous scandal, to rob Mrs. Rumbold of her last desperate chances of success. On the other hand, to cry for the help which lay ready in the house before her—what could that mean but to bring other human beings, defenseless and unsuspecting, into the circle of death wherein she stood? If it should be Jack who came to her call! No, her fate was her fate, she would meet it alone.

After all, what did she lose? Was this not perhaps the true solution? For her who had made of life so grotesque and insoluble a tangle, was not death the open door of escape? The dark shape crept nearer, nearer. She shut her eyes.

"Good-by, Jack," she whispered softly to herself. And with head gallantly uplifted she stood facing death with a smile.

## XII.

IN her ears sounded a suddenly pulsating roar, through her closed lids flashed a blinding vermilion in the glare of a sudden flash. "This is the end!" she said to herself. Then,

"Princess!" cried a voice near her—a dear, well-known voice. Opening her eyes, she saw Jack leaping down toward her from behind the acetylene search-lamps of a huge, loud-roaring car. Horror for his endangered safety was her only thought.

"No, no!" she cried with a desperate gesture. "Don't come near me—no, no!"

Jack stood stock-still in hopeless bewilderment. "What?" he said. Then, following the direction of her rigidly-staring eyes, he turned toward the dark, thin form which stood behind him. The girl took in her breath. Then,

"Is this Mr. Borridaile?" asked the harsh, quick tones of Elmer Morrow.

"It is," retorted Jack grimly; then, turning with fierce solicitude toward the girl, who had shrunk back from the betraying glare of the lamps, "Has this fellow been annoying you?" he asked swiftly.

She stretched out one cold and tremulous hand, in a vain hope of drawing him away from the deadly peril before him. Morrow advanced quickly. His arm was outstretched. "No, no!" she whispered again. Then the blaze of the motor-lamps, falling upon his hand, revealed to her the white object which it held extended—not the silver wrapped missile of last night, but a letter.

She stared. Was it possible? Was it possible?

She was dimly conscious of Jack's eager leap forward, of his quick grasp which clutched the letter extended to him, of his short, deep laugh of relief. "Thank God!"

"It's yours, sir?" asked the voice of Elmer Morrow.

From Jack's face, ruddy in the kindling light, the careworn lines and pallor had already vanished, and his eyes were the eyes of a man newly-delivered from an unspeakable anxiety. The girl's heart smote her in a shame too deep for words that hers should have been the hand to inflict, if only for a few hours, such suffering upon him. And she bowed silently as Jack turned to her with a brief word of explanation and apology.

"This happens to be a rather important paper which disappeared unaccountably last night," he said, "and which has caused me some anxiety. You'll excuse me one moment while I question this man, Princess?"

Again she nodded in silence. And in a passion of gratitude, not so much for the life which Elmer Morrow had unwittingly spared to her, but for the boon more precious than life which he had brought



her, she stood listening to his glib answers to Jack's searching questions, as he repeated parrot-like the story which she herself had put in his mouth the night before.

There was a sudden step behind her, a familiar detested voice.

"Aha, my brave, here you are! Princess, here is your cloak. Allow me, madame. And, *mon Dieu*, what is this?"

Jack, glowing with delighted relief, explained his good fortune to his friend. The girl, listening to the latter's warm congratulations, almost spoiled the situation by laughing aloud. So she stood with eyes downcast, a little withdrawn into the shadows, lest a stray glance might betray her appreciation of the ironical quality of the situation. Meanwhile Jack's gentle inquisition went on:

"But tell me, my man—why, when you realized that this letter was probably of some importance, did you not return it at once?"

"Ain't I tried to?" replied Elmer, with some sullenness. "I came here this mornin', but the young chap that opened the door, he fired me out like I was askin' for somethin' instead of bringin' it. Then I tried to speak with some of the other help—turned down agin. So then I laid for you out in the road there, and when you come along in your automobile, I tried to hail you, but the cop he told me to move on——"

"And so," Jack interposed with kindly severity, "the only means left you was to come prowling over the lawn after dark, alarming the lady into the agitation I saw just now."

In suddenly kindling terror, the girl took in her breath. Poor Elmer, beyond a doubt, had done nobly; but if thus closely questioned, who could tell what he might not divulge? And that the supposed annoyance to her should be made the pretext for an inquiry which might at any moment end so disastrously for her made the present situation near to intolerable.

"Indeed, monsieur," with some impatience she addressed Jack in French, "I assure you the annoyance to me was purely imaginary."

She stopped short on the word. The French language was to her, after all, no more than the ambush of the ostrich. Often enough, in her girlhood days, the old friend before her had heard her display her accomplishment in that direction. And now if, in the incautiousness borne of sudden amazement, he should recognize and betray her—— In quick panic she turned toward the door; but her steps were almost immediately halted by the silky tones of the Hungarian's voice:

"My dear Jack, it seems to me that you take a great deal for granted. You find this man in possession of a valuable document—you find him, as you say, prowling like a thief over your grounds at night—and yet you accept his very improbable story of picking up the

letter on the driveway last night. Now, my advice to you, my dear friend, would be to have the man detained and the affair sharply looked into."

Barely checking her exclamation of amazement, the girl turned. That the Prince, who last night had so thoroughly compromised himself in Morrow's presence, should now go out of his way to urge the detention of a witness possessed of knowledge that might be his ruin! Then, as swiftly, she recognized the subtle malice of the stroke. Any testimony which Morrow might give must involve the Grand Duchess as well as the Prince; he could afford to take his chances on Morrow's silence, for the sake of the additional weapon which the man's detention and possible testimony placed in his hand. And even in the extreme case, should Morrow dare to peach on him, who would take the word of an ex-convict, and of an impostor such as herself, against a nobleman of the Prince's rank and character?

The four stood silent in a brief interim fraught for three of them with strangely thrilling possibilities, while the unconscious Jack Borradaile weighed his reply:

"It is possible, Prince, that you may be right. See here, my good chap"—he turned to the silent Elmer, waiting motionless in the dark—"you have done me a great service, the promised reward is at your disposal. But, you understand, there is something a bit fishy about all this! I regret to say I shall have to have you detained and the details of the matter looked into. Your friend among Mrs. Rumbold's servants, for instance——"

In a moment's dizziness the girl swayed against the vine-covered pillar of the veranda. To do her justice, it was the peril to Elmer, the ungrateful reward which by her means was now being dealt out to him for his faithful and difficult fulfilment of her trust, that weighed like tragedy upon her soul. But even in that desperate and generous panic self-preservation was not entirely forgotten. The bare thread of possible escape, held out by Mrs. Rumbold's coming negotiations with the Prince—how completely it must be rent and snapped by any detailed inquisition of poor Elmer, by any such search among the Stormcliff servants as that threatened by Borradaile's words! Forgetting the immediate risk in the greater danger looming behind, disregarding, above all, any peril to herself in the undeserved punishment threatening the faithful old friend who unknowingly stood before her, she stepped desperately forward into the blazing white light of the acetylene motor-lamps.

"Mr. Borradaile," she said breathlessly, "if it is on my account that you intend to punish this man who has done you so great a service—then, I beg you, understand clearly that he has been guilty of no offense toward me! But rather, if you take me into consideration at

all in the matter, let me plead as his advocate! I am perhaps meddling with matters beyond my concern, but you see——” For one moment her lips halted on the words framed for them by her flying brain; there came the second thought—why not? One falsehood the more—what could it matter? And, besides, were her words so very untrue, after all? “You see, monsieur, at home I see so much of injustice, so much of cruelty—here, at least, let me see mercy! To me his story sounds most reasonable. Give him your thanks, monsieur, and his reward, and let him go!”

In Jack’s gaze, bent upon her in the keen radiance of the search-light, she beheld a generous admiration of her ardor, a glad surrender to her request. She turned to Elmer—their eyes met. The blaze of light made any sign of weakness on her part an impossible thing; but her heart stood still as she read in his glance a complete and astounded intelligence.

In that revealing moment, he had recognized her! She lowered her eyes helplessly. Her secret lay at the mercy of this poor wretch’s incautious word, of his irrepressible amazement. With swift resolution she forced her careless gaze back to that dark glance, bent upon her from beyond the white radiance of the lamps. Then, like light flashing from the edge of a knife, she beheld his swift eyes travelling to the tall form of the Prince beside her. In that keen secret glance, as plainly as on a printed page, she read Morrow’s recognition of his last night’s opponent, his recollection of her own words, his perfect understanding which suddenly pieced together the scattered and baffling elements of the fantastic situation into one comprehended whole. She held her breath tight against her laboring heart—now, surely, the end must come! But the necessity of loyalty, in the unsteady soul before her, served to clamp even its wild amazement in the shackles of silence. Her breath came fluttering back to her lips. Elmer, who had asked no better than to serve her, had indeed served her well! Jack’s voice cut in on the whirl of her thoughts.

“You are right, madame,” he said briefly. “Here, my man, I formally retract any doubts I may have expressed of you. You are free to go and come as you choose. To-night, as you see, I am engaged; but come at twelve to-morrow and you will find your check ready for you—with my best thanks. You have done me an incalculable service, I can assure you.”

The stranger’s voice broke hollowly over the pent-up storm of emotion which one of his listener’s, at least, knew to be raging beneath his shabby and half-concealed exterior. “All right, sir”—his tone, though broken, was full of a resolute independence; “though before you talked of suspectin’ me, you might have found whether I was after your check—which I ain’t, you see. Thank you jest the same,

but you won't see me in the mornin'." With a sudden stiffening of his lank form, he turned away from Jack's protests, to the girl still standing rigid in the light.

"Thank you, lady," he said simply. Pity was in his haggard eyes—pity, an anguish of helpless concern, of inextinguishable yearning. "I don't understand, but I know you're in trouble," his eyes said, like the mournful eyes of a faithful spaniel. "I'd give my life to serve you, but there's nothing I can do."

She bowed gravely, to conceal the betraying moisture which flashed responsively into her eyes. The next moment Elmer had melted into the darkness as silently and mysteriously as he had come.

"Upon my word!" said Borridaile, with a long breath of bewilderment. Then as with a caressing touch he fingered the precious document just restored to him, "I was a brute to that poor chap!" he burst out regretfully. "To-morrow I must have him searched for, if only to make my apologies. I owe it to you, Princess, that I am not guilty of worse ingratitude toward him. You were right, I admit. But then, when are n't you right?"

A flare of soft rosy light poured from the suddenly opened door behind them, mingling with the blue-white blaze in which they stood. Soft voices and laughter broke the ominous and rustling stillness of the night. In a moment the *porte cochère* swarmed with the chattering members of the dinner company, with footmen and chauffeurs, and automobiles arriving from the garage. Jack added a hurried word to his last speech:

"One moment, Princess—I must go at once to telephone my chief of this fortunate find, and send word to the police. Beyond a doubt, this is my lucky night." For one moment his eyes rested in hers, and uncontrollably, poignantly, her eyes answered him. "Yes," he said beneath his breath, "in spite of everything, Princess—this is my lucky night!"

As they turned toward their automobiles, Mrs. Rumbold halted for one instant to pin up a dark curling lock in her imperial guest's coiffure, slightly ruffled by the damp night breeze.

"You have come to no arrangement with the Prince?"—her whisper was as cold and as barely perceptible as her touch. "Very well, then; now it is my turn. We will see if I make the same failure as you!"

### XIII.

THE next morning's sun, peering through the dark silk blinds of the Grand Duchess's apartment, wakened its occupant from a short and feverish sleep. From his white fur rug beside her bed, Vassily rose up yawning and stretching his long limbs, like another white fur rug

suddenly quickened into life. "Get up, lazy mistress," his blue eyes seemed to say. "Get up, come outdoors, and play with me!"

But from his innocent and engaging glances his mistress's eyes shot fiercely to the clock on the mantelpiece.

Seven o'clock—only five hours now! She sat bolt upright against her pillows, all sleep smitten from her by the returning horror of that creeping danger whose presence never left her, day or night.

Why, last night, had she so far yielded to the weakness of the flesh, in the exhaustion borne of her long-continued strain, as to allow herself to be urged home from the baccarat-party by the over-attentive Borridaile, before her hostess was ready to accompany her? Why had she not at all risks, at all hazards, learned last night from Mrs. Rumbold's own lips the outcome of her interview with the antagonist who held her fate in his pitiless hands? Was it not, plainly speaking, mere cowardice that had urged her to cherish, as long as might be possible, the vain and pitiful hope held out to her by her hostess's over-confident attempt? The hope was indeed atrophied to the point of nothingness; still, it was a chance, a bare chance. And now—how long must it be before she could decorously gain admission to Mrs. Rumbold's carefully guarded apartment? Two hours at the least. In this sleepless, torturing suspense, how pass those wearily dragging moments?

To her ears came, as though in answer, the twitter of the birds and the faint, half-heard murmur of the sea. In an irrepressible impulse that touched her hurt soul with the comfort of balm, she leaped from her bed. And in an incredibly short space of time she was tubbed, curled, and dressed, and flying with Vassily, past the sentinel Petroff, down beneath the stone arches of the great staircase outside her window.

Though the sun was already far up from the horizon, the closed blinds of the villa told of a household sunk in sleep, and the grounds were deserted save for the silent gardeners who moved with rake and mowers over the green, velvety lawn. On rose-trees and laburnums hung the spangled wetness of the dew, and the still air was touched with the clear freshness of the early morning. For one moment the girl stood smiling at the blue sky, the unwrinkled sea, and the white gulls which swooped in swift aerial circles over the sparkling green vines of the pergola. She moved enmeshed in a dark net of falsehood and intrigue which she herself had woven, she stood face to face with the imminence of open disgrace, her heart was seared and stinging with the flame of a love as impossible as it was real and passionate. But nevertheless she and the morning were young together, and all about her was the living fragrance of the sea.

By one-half of her blood, at least, she came of a race to which for generations the smell of salt water had been as the breath of life.

And now, in the lonely stillness of the early morning, it seemed to her that she found herself suddenly face to face, not with her feeble, tormented self, but with a dear friend long familiar, with a great mother that could never fail her. Upon her soul knocked the echo of half-remembered words—"There is no sorrow but the sea can drown." And, drawn by the lure of an inward yearning hardly less deep and living than the torments of love and fear that urged her restless feet, she flew down the wet marble steps toward the shimmering watery floor below her.

With the dog leaping beside her, she entered the walled enclosure of the little artificial harbor where, motionless between high curving breakwaters, Mr. Rumbold's fleet of crack racers and dandy pleasure-boats lay waiting at their moorings. Floating beside the white stone steps, as though left expressly as a temptation for the first comer, was a slim, pale-green canoe.

In a moment's hesitation, the girl stood surveying it; while Vassily, dipping his feathery white paw in the water, gazed at her wistfully. "Dear old *chéri*," she said regretfully, "I love you so much, but a little canoe is hardly the place for a big dog like you. Lie down, good puppy, lie down! You'll wait for your mistress, won't you?"

She bent to pick up the paddle which lay convenient in the bow of the little craft. Below her feet tinkled the faint, hollow music of the almost imperceptible ripples. "All sorrows," she whispered to herself, "even my sorrows, you can drown, my dear old sea—whether I sail over your beautiful surface or lie asleep beneath it. Come, little boat! We are going to take a voyage together, you and I!"

#### XIV.

THIS was not the first morning that Jack Borridaile, under the sting of a sharper necessity than that of sleep, had returned to float wistfully over a certain portion of the bay whence, like Romeo, he could gaze upon a certain balconied window. And this morning, newly released as he was from the grinding anxieties which yesterday had threatened the abrupt and disgraceful termination of his career, he had set out on his early sail with a heart for the moment almost as gay as a boy's. To be sure, as his aunt had significantly said to him only last night, Endymion was in his grave and the moon was as far out of reach as ever; but the Grand Duchess, for all her imperial rank, was no cold moon-goddess, but a living, breathing woman. Only last night, as her dear blue eyes had met his— Suddenly he took in his breath; for at that moment, like some dazzling incarnation of his secret visions, from between the high walls of the breakwater flashed the sudden phantom of Varvara.

Her paddle fell in her lap, and she sat staring at him, her eyes

shining wide, the color coming and going in her cheeks, a beautiful apparition. Jack pushed the tiller down hard in his slow drifting craft, and rushed to lean over the side of the gunwale nearest the breakwater. "Good-morning," he called softly, cautiously, in a vague fear that any clumsiness on his part might blur the vision and bring him back to unwelcome wakefulness. "Good-morning," he called softly, "Duchess of Dreams!"

For an instant he saw her breath flutter beneath her red mouth and the white folds that hid her bosom; then a burst of laughter, oddly hysterical though it might be, brought him to a delightful conviction of his own wakefulness and of her reality. "Good-morning, Ivan Alexandrovitch!" she cried in a voice which, though a trifle unsteady, was as sweet to his ears as ever. "I am just starting for home, by the shortest sea-route. Where are you bound, may I ask?"

"For Odessa!" answered Jack promptly; then with all the persuasiveness that he could force into his tone: "Come aboard, Princess! My armored cruiser will ferry you over in half the time of that small torpedo-boat of yours!"

She sat motionless with the paddle in her lap, still staring at him, while the two small crafts slid slowly together in the smooth and oily tide. "I've left my poor Vassily alone on the shore—I promised him that I would be back soon. Besides—oh, no, I can't, monsieur! Don't you understand I can't?"

"You can!" he replied with determination. "Whatever the case might be in Russia, here in happy America I can assure you upon my honor there's no reason why we should n't take a little morning sail together and let Vassily wait a few moments more. I'm like Mohammed—I can't come to you with no wind to fill my sails, but you have a paddle in your mountain there. Ah, Princess, please come!"

Still she confronted him, hesitating. For the first time he was struck by the pallor of her cheeks and the dark circles that ringed her beautiful eyes. Man-like, his thoughts flow to the most obvious explanation. "See here," he said seriously. "There's another good reason. You're looking pale, Princess. Now, I'll venture to say you have n't eaten an atom of breakfast yet this morning!"

She shook her head with a weary little smile.

"Come aboard and have breakfast, please!" he urged boyishly.

With a little gesture of surrender, as though further resistance lay beyond her strength, the girl before him lowered her paddle in a sharp cut of the green water. A few strokes brought her within the range of Jack's alertly waiting boat-hook. He extended his hand—lightly she leaped aboard.

A moment later the green canoe trailed bumping at the stern

of the drifting white knockabout. And the skipper, delightedly doing the honors of his craft, spread the broad taffrail with tinned quail and English biscuit and every kind of cheese that was over invented in France.

"I'm not an army—you need n't turn out your whole commissariat for me, monsieur!" cried his guest in ineffectual protest as, with an obvious determination to reward his eager friendliness, she turned her languid appetite toward the sandwiches which he busily prepared.

To have her there as his guest, all to himself, in the solitude of the morning, seemed to Jack so delightful that for the moment he forgot all about the doubts and the tormenting certainties which usually oppressed him in her beloved presence.

"Look!" she cried suddenly, shading her bright eyes with her hand. And Jack, becoming for the first time aware of a whimpering, splashing sound that filled the air, looked back toward Mr. Rumbold's harbor in the direction indicated. Trailing a sparkling wake of bubbles, a sharp white and black nose cut the water like the fin of some swiftly following shark. And in a moment two beseeching blue eyes looked up from the green shadows beside the boat, and a wailing, clamorous voice besought humbly for admittance.

The Grand Duchess burst into reckless laughter. "Here's spirit," she said, "here's determination. Naughty Vassily, I told you to wait. Now go home, bad dog, go straight back to the steps and wait for your mistress! No, you can't come aboard. I'm sorry, but you must go home."

"No," cried Jack; "don't send him home. I sympathize with him, you see—a sort of fellow-feeling. Go forward, Princess, so he shan't wet you."

"But you can't lift him, that enormous creature!" she protested as he rolled up his sleeves and leaned over the side of the boat.

"Can't I?" he retorted, with pardonable pride. And a moment later, as the Grand Duchess, laughing, took quick advantage of the shelter of the sail—a half-minute later, a shining, silvery monster showered the deck with his flying spray, and ecstatically licked the brown hands which had so effectively befriended him.

"Good dog," said Jack, rubbing the wet nose caressingly. "And now don't soak your mistress, that's all I ask of you, and don't trample those sandwiches. Here's a biscuit for you—do you care for biscuits? And now lie down here in the sun and get dry."

"Dear dog!" said his mistress tenderly, as she stroked the glistening head beside her. "The gentleman is very good to us, isn't he?" She glanced up at Jack, with a flicker of tragic seriousness in her large eyes. "You are strong, monsieur, like two men! And you have



the kindest heart in the world, I think," she finished in a little quick undertone, as though thinking aloud. But before Jack could reply, her mood had changed again, and she began to feed Vassily with sandwiches.

With a little frank gesture, uncoquettish as a child, she dragged from her arms the long gloves that hid their whiteness, and tossed them, together with her broad lingerie hat, into the cockpit of the boat.

"I don't mind the sun," she answered Jack's unspoken warning; "it never burns me, and, besides, here I am in the shadow of the sail. Oh, lovely, lovely morning!"

She stretched out her two white arms toward the little fleecy clouds that dotted the sky above her. Her black hair, released from the concealing screen of the wide ruffled hat, showed red lights in the sunlight, and little dark rings that curled softly against the creamy skin of her neck. She seemed a creature ineffably young and fresh and living. Jack, staring at her, closed his jaw in the strength of a sudden purpose. After all, she was no more than a woman; and had he the courage of his life, he was no less than a man!

"Ah, monsieur," she cried, "you don't know, it is impossible, really, that you should know, how delicious this is for Vassily and me, to find ourselves floating here for one moment of freedom on the beautiful wide sea! All my griefs and shames and bitter, grinding memories—I've left them behind me on the shore where they belong! And out here on the salt water, with the sound of it and the smell of it all about me, and the swaying rhythm of it under my feet, I dare to be myself again. For this one little moment between the past that I leave behind me and the future that waits for me, I'm myself, and I'm alive—I'm alive!" But her voice went high and thrilling, the words were torn from her, it seemed, as though by some other power than her own free will. With a little wild gesture, she clasped her white hands above the curling shadows of her hair. "Ah, this world is a glorious place!" she said, and, like the blaze of a salt-sprinkled fire, her long eyes shot their sudden blue flames at Jack. "This world is a better place than the heaven they tell us of!" she cried again. "And to think I never knew it until this moment!"

Slowly Jack rose to his feet. The tiller, freed from his restraining hand, swung back and forth as the boat rocked in the long rollers of the tranquil sea. "Madame," he said with blunt determination, "if, as you say, you are happier here than you are at home, then why do you go home?"

She sat staring at him, her hands still twisted among the dark tendrils of her hair. Over her expressive face flickered a curious change, a faint shadow as of fear. Then with a little careless laugh,

"The world is a glorious place," she repeated, "to play in, monsieur! But when the game is played out, you see, we must all go home at last!"

At the faintly touched mockery of the speech, with its application so evidently designed for him, Jack set his teeth in sudden fixity of purpose. She was an imperial princess, this girl who sat with airy balance and laughing eyes upon the gunwale of his knockabout; about her delicate form was drawn a charmed ring, invisible, perhaps, in the healthy sunlight of the morning, but none the less existent and impassable. Jack spoke not in hope, but simply because he had passed the point where resistance and suppression were possible.

"So it has been only a game to you, Princess?" he said quietly. "To me—well, it has n't been play for me, that's all. And for the rest of it, I have the most curious sensation that where you are, that's my home."

"Oh, don't!" she cried, with a swift change of voice and a sudden quivering gesture. "Don't, please don't!"

He stood staring down at her as she crouched upon the taffrail beside her great dog, her hand outstretched as though in warning and her large eyes fixed imploringly on his face. She looked very little, somehow, very helpless and very sorrowful, and his tone was gentle with the sweetness and the pain of a new-born hope as he answered her slowly:

"No, madame, I will say nothing, you can be sure, to give you pain. But what harm can it do, even, to an imperial princess, to hear a man tell her—only once—that he loves her with all the strength and honesty of his heart!"

"Oh, don't!" she said again, with a sharp intake of her breath. "You must n't say so . . . I must n't listen to you . . . it's all so impossible. Don't you see it for yourself?"

She turned toward him piteously, and at the sight of the weakness in her quivering face his heart was touched with sudden self-forgotten compensation. "I see," he said gravely; "and all the more, I beg your forgiveness. You mean . . . it is impossible?"

She nodded, and her chin quivered. An overmastering impulse drove Jack on to turn the knife in the wound which ran already so deep in his heart. "But if it were n't impossible," he said quickly, "then you mean—you mean——"

She lifted her face and tried to speak; and over the unspoken words which her trembling lips refused to frame she smiled at him.

"Varvara!" he said very softly; then, rising to his feet in sudden purposeful strength, he took her hand in both of his.

"Then why should it be impossible?" he cried in quick resolve. "If you love me, is there anything in the world that is impossible?"

If we love each other, where in the world is the power to keep us apart? Beside the fact of our love, what is name, or rank, or all these foolish inventions that we like to make ourselves miserable about? Tell me, dear, is it true, do you really love me?"

She looked at him, still silent, and nodded slowly. Then as she heard his answering breath, and felt his grasp tighten upon her hand,

"But what does that matter?" she cried in a little weeping voice which thrilled his heart. "Whether we love each other or not, we are still a thousand miles away from each other. Ah, *mon Dieu!*" she broke out with sudden wildness—"the chains—the chains, if you knew of them, that hold me down!"

Across Jack's troubled mind smote the blackness of a sudden thought. In spite of himself, his mind ran back, with a curious instinct of self-torture, to his jealous pangs of the first night that he had met her, and to her own anguished outburst at the recollections evoked by the ambassador's words. Was it the dead grand duke, in his far-off imperial tomb, that stood between them? For the thousandth time he rebelled in grudging inward fury against the fact of her widowhood. No matter how well he loved her, he could never be the first! "You are thinking of—your husband?" he asked painfully.

"No!" she answered with a shiver, as she withdrew her hand from his.

"You will tell me the truth?" he persisted gently. "When you speak of the obstacles between us, you are thinking perhaps of some barrier more vital and painful even than the difference of rank? There is—some one that stands between us?"

She averted her head. "You'll know all about it soon enough," she returned; "soon, soon enough!"

"But must I wait till then?" he pleaded sadly. "Can't you give me that much of your confidence, dear? Tell me—is there any one you have left behind you in Europe, and must go back to again?"

She shook her head with a little dreary laugh. "Oh, no," she answered; "not that, indeed!"

"Then," he persisted, "some one—in America?" She was silent. His tormented fancy ran back over the past two weeks, to the admirer dangling always at her elbow, conspicuous not only for his devotion, but by the fact that he alone, in the Western world, was of rank conceivably admitted by her as equal to her own. "Not——" he hesitated—"not Debreczin?"

She turned back to him, trying to smile, trying to deny. But the betraying blood, which under the stress of this inquisition had forsaken her face, came back to it in a rush of distressful scarlet.

"I see," said Jack quietly; "then here is the long-sought explana-

tion why you were allowed to come to our barbarous America. You are to marry Prince Debreczin."

She found her voice. "No, no, indeed!" she cried in an explosion of the distress pent up within her. But the denial served in no way to lift the cloud from the gloomy eyes which Jack bent upon her.

"Varvara," he said, "if it is admitted that we love each other, then there can be no question of impertinent curiosity between you and me. I demand, I think, no more than I have a right to know, when I ask you this mysterious tie between Debreczin and you, this hold of his which gives him the power to stand between you and me——" He stopped abruptly. A dark thought, unspoken, almost unthought, cast its flickering shadow for one instant between them.

She sprang to her feet. Vassily, whimpering, thrust his cold nose into her outstretched hand.

"No, no!" she cried. "No, nothing like that! I'm not wicked, indeed! I can't bear to have you think——" She broke off suddenly, staring at him, while from her kindling features, as from a wind-blown lantern, the sustaining radiance sank and died. "No," she added in a quiet despair which overbore his breathless protests—"no, think of me as you please. However wicked you believe me, you can't think me as worthless a sinner as I really am. Oh, you'll know, you'll know soon enough!—and all I ask of you, when you hear the whole shameful truth, is, out of all this love you offer me, to give me just a little charity."

Borridaile, putting out his sunburned hand, took her trembling white fingers in his firm clasp. "Princess," he said sturdily, "I admit I cannot understand your words, but I can do better than that: I can read your eyes, I can understand your soul. My diplomatic training has not been long, perhaps, but it has given me some insight into men and things; and, besides, there is in these things an instinct that cannot deceive us. You tell me of your sins. I tell you that here is your first one, in telling me what is not true! On the purity and faith of your soul, though you and Debreczin and the court of Russia assure me of a thousand mysteries to the contrary, I stand ready to stake me my life and all I have. Varvara, listen to me!"

With a little shuddering sigh she drew her hand from his. "I don't know," she said, "whether you are moved by my reasons, but the reasons themselves, at least, remain unmoved and immovable! Ah, *mon Dieu!*" she cried with a little quick break in her voice, "what's the use of talking about it any more? Let us go home!"

Even in the dumb perplexity of his suffering her last words recalled Jack to a sudden sense of his surroundings. Looking out upon the world about him, he became conscious that a light wind had caught the sail, and his boat was sliding quickly past cliffs and cluster-

ing cottages towards the white line of Bailey's Beach. In a moment he had pushed down the tiller, drawn in the sheet, and pointed the knockabout's nose by the wind for the green point of Stormcliff. The light craft heeled to the breeze, the faint air freshened and drove her over the long wrinkling rollers that swung in slowly from the sea.

The Grand Duchess, perched high upon the windward rail, looked down upon Jack with eyes whose dumb anguish seemed strangely out of harmony with the jaunty airiness of her position. "Let us go home," she said again.

Jack looked at her in wonder. "Yes," he said under his breath; "it's true, I think. If it's no more than the force of my love compelling yours, I do believe that you care a little bit for me!" Then as she turned her head away, with a little glistening line of wetness marking the curving outline of her cheek, Jack leaped to his feet in a sudden heat of determination.

"Princess," he said in a quick changed voice, "do you know how to sail a boat?"

She nodded, with a little sad look of surprise and perplexity. Then suddenly she started, as a dull, muffled roar came over the water. Jack laughed excitedly.

"No," he said; "not like that fool of a yachtsman—I won't ask you to weigh anchor or to fire off the cannon, Princess! But come here—take the tiller!"

With a little wondering glance, she slid from her airy perch and obeyed; and with careful paws her dog followed her. Jack, standing beside her, pointed with his hand at the long, low-lying point across the bay.

"Look there, Princess," he said. "You see that distant shore, with the rocky point and the village beyond?"

She nodded, still wondering; and, swayed towards him by the motion of the leaping boat, she waited silently for his next words.

"That village, madame, is known as Little Compton," Jack went on with an odd, masterful tone in his voice. "Not indeed that that fact is worthy of being called to your attention, but if you will look again you will see a church spire—a little white spire that points up through the trees beyond the windmill. You see the church spire, Princess?"

"Yes," she answered; "I see it."

"And you know, Princess," Jack went on—"no, don't turn your head away, I beg you! You know, perhaps, what miracle can be done in a church—even in a little white village church of New England? Answer me, I beg!"

Again she nodded, this time slowly and hesitatingly; and in spite

of her evident inward suffering a sudden color dyed her wet cheeks with its mounting carmine. Jack surveyed her in sudden ecstasy.

"Yes," he said in triumph; "you do care! Princess, you come of good old fighting stock; are n't you brave enough, for the sake of something that is very sweet and precious to us both, to break through those chains, and throw away your title and your royalty and your castle in Lithuania that bores you so, for the sake of the love that I have for you, and you have—yes, you cannot deny it!—for me? What else in life, Varvara, is worth thinking of, but just that love? And is n't it a more terrible thing to think of facing life without it, all alone, than to brave the anger and the indignation of the Emperor, six thousand miles away? When you are my wife, dear—don't you see?—you'll be an American, too, and we can defy the power of all the Russias to lay a finger on you! As for Debreczin,—I snap my fingers at Debreczin! These mysterious sins of yours—I'll take the burden of them on my shoulders! Your sins? Pshaw! We'll seal them up in a dispatch-box with your sapphires and your diamond cross and your stars and orders and medals, and send them back, express paid, to his Imperial Majesty. And I'll buy you more jewels, dear, bigger and prettier—I'll buy you such lots more!"

She stood blushing, trembling, hesitating. With a sudden gesture of determination, Jack seized her unsteady hand and closed the soft white fingers over the straining stick of the helm.

"There before you, straight before you as our course points now," he said excitedly, "is the church at Little Compton, where with this breeze we can be in a half-hour. Keep her as she goes, Varvara, and inside of an hour you will be my wife, and I'll be your husband, to take care of you and fight for you before the whole world. That's what it will mean, Varvara, if you keep her on her course across the bay. But, on the other hand, if you choose, you can put the tiller hard down and bring her about—back to Newport, and the court of Russia, and the chains again. Here, madame the admiral, the ship is yours!"

With a little eager laugh that caught curiously in his throat, he turned away. "I'll sit in the cock-pit with Vassily here," he said, "and we'll leave everything to you. My dearest," he cried in a sudden outburst of triumphant tenderness, "my dearest, I defy you to bring this boat about!"

With a final glance at the bright figure with the melting eyes and the dusky, wind-blown hair, he sank from his tall height to a long-legged knot, to dispute the small floor space with the huge Vassily. The dog, whose white coat was already dry and glistening in the sun, surveyed him with friendly blue eyes and the offer of a slender pointed paw.

"Your little missus is taking us on a journey, my dear dog," Jack confided to him in a happy undertone. "Then you'll be my dog, too, you see, and she'll be my missus, do you understand? Give us your paw, good old chap. We're going to be *such* friends!"

Suddenly the sloping floor beneath him swayed and wavered, then righted itself to level. With a flapping of canvas and a clatter of block and halyard, the boat stood for an instant quivering in the eye of the wind. Then her white sail swung over and filled away, the green water rose to her leeward rail; and, leaping over the long, slow rollers, the knockabout stood on her homeward tack, back to the Newport shore again.

## XV.

LETTY RUMBOLD, who had as usual been out for the early morning horseback exercise recommended for her stout figure, came lumbering heavily up the wide staircase of the central hall. With impatient fingers she rapped upon her mother's door. Then following volitionally upon the knock, she entered the spacious and flowery room where that lady, instead of reclining lazily upon her pink silk cushions as usual at this hour, was sitting bolt upright, talking excitedly into the telephone. Her haggard eyes commanded her amazed daughter to silence.

"Very well, Jim—then you'll see the *Evening Flier* and the *Hurricane* and *Town Tidbits* . . . You're afraid it's no use? Offer them anything, Jim, anything! . . . But there are others that can't be squared? You advise a trip to the Far East on the *Lotus*? . . . No, Jim, we must stand our ground. Oh, I shall die of shame, I know I shall! Good heavens, my dear, do what you *can*!"

With a brief word of farewell that ended in an exclamation of despair, Mrs. Rumbold flung the little glittering instrument upon the bed. In sudden wonder, Letty surveyed the dark-ringed eyes and haggard lips before her. "Whatever have you eaten, mamma," she inquired practically, "to make you look so ill?"

Her mother continued to stare at her with unseeing eyes; then coming suddenly and peevishly to herself: "Well, Letty? Don't stand staring there—what is it?"

A word was sufficient to unlock the bubbling fountain of news before her. "Oh, mamma, I've just been down on the terrace, and I saw Jack Borridaile's knockabout coming in from a sail. And who do you suppose he helped out and rowed ashore—and kissed her hand, right on the harbor steps—who do you suppose?"

For a moment her mother's wandering eyes were focused in sudden attention. "Not," she asked—"not the Grand Duchess?"

"I do mean just that," retorted Miss Rumbold in an aggrieved tone, "and you know I always told you he was falling head-over-heels

in love with her, the artful thing. Of course men are always fascinated with these foreigners—and what chance could I have, beside a widow?"

To these reproaches of her ungrateful offspring, Mrs. Rumbold made no response. "Well, she can't marry him, that's one thing sure!" she observed briefly.

"It's all very well talking, mamma," argued the injured Letty, "but if you had seen the way he kissed her hand . . . and then, just think of them out there in the boat together, for hours and hours. Just getting in at ten o'clock—who knows when they started?"

"Well, that's no more than a princess is privileged to do, if she chooses," responded Mrs. Rumbold, with vague but pointed charity. "But as for marrying, you know, my dear child, that that is out of the question." With a sudden gesture which sent the pillows flying in a rosy flurry about her, she flung out a despairing hand.

"Out of the question?" she cried. "Everything is out of the question now—we're finished, done for! What do these foolish little details matter now, when everything is going smash around us?"

Letty stared. "Has papa gone long on a falling market again?" she asked practically.

Mrs. Rumbold wailed on her bed. "Worse than that, my child—my poor, ruined darling!"

"Shall I send Céline to you, mamma?" asked Letty calmly. "You are very ill."

With an effort, Mrs. Rumbold pulled herself together again. "You may speak to Céline," she returned briefly, "and tell her to go to the Grand Duchess's apartments, and ask her Imperial Highness to have the graciousness to pay me a short call. Tell her to say my head is so excessively bad this morning!"

"You are going to speak to her about Jack Borridaile—that's good!" Letty exclaimed with satisfaction, as she turned away to do her mother's bidding.

In a few moments the expected guest, with face smiling but white as the glistening linen of her gown, was ushered into the room by the deferential maid.

"Good-morning, Duchess. So many thanks for this favor!"

"Good-morning, dear madame. Do I have the unhappiness to see you ill?"

"A mere migraine, a nothing. Céline, place a chair for her Imperial Highness. Will you sit down, dear Duchess? Céline, you may go."

A moment's silence, a swift examination of doors, a cautious slipping of bolts, and Mrs. Rumbold, with her flowered pink dressing-gown flouncing about her, came flying back to her waiting visitor. The girl,



with one hand laid upon her throat to control its laboring cords, rose to confront her.

"I see it in your eyes, madame," she observed quietly, "what I knew all along. Prince Debreczin refused to listen to you."

Mrs. Rumbold's answer, though no louder than a whisper, tore the air like a cry.

"He denied the whole business to my face! He declared the offer of money was an insult—that, having discovered our fraud, it became his duty to the widow of his friend Alexieff to expose the whole affair. The news goes back to Russia, it goes to the New York papers, at noon to-day, do you hear that? To-day!"

The girl sat silent, numbed by the crushing blow that loomed so close it seemed to have already fallen. In reproaches and lamentations Mrs. Rumbold's voice swept on:

"When everything was going so beautifully—when I had climbed so far and attained so much"—with a despairing gesture she swept the heap of monogrammed and crested correspondence lying scattered on the lace coverlid before her, visible sign and symbol of her social triumph—"when I had gained *this*, comes this heartless, sneaking wretch, like a housemaid with her broomstick, and sweeps the whole business away like a spider's web! And to think, if it were n't for him, for him, the one human being in this world to see through our little ruse—! Why did he come to Newport? Why did he ever tell me he knew no Russian, and had never laid eyes on the Princess Varvara? Why can't he hold his wretched tongue? Why could n't you do what he wanted you to, you obstinate girl? Or, failing that, why could n't you have killed him where he stood, before you allowed him to bring this ruin on Mr. Rumbold and Letty and me?"

The girl bowed her head in patient and acquiescent suffering, then mechanically her unhappy glance went to the little Dresden clock beside Mrs. Rumbold's bed.

Ten o'clock! Only two hours now until—until—— She shivered at the thought as at the touch of a cold wind. From the clock-face it seemed to her that Debreczin's heavy-lidded eyes leered out at her with a triumphant impassivity, like those of Fate. Like Destiny herself, he held her love, her honor, her life itself, between his slowly moving hands; and, like Destiny, he knew neither pity nor pause. Until this moment she had not known how strong, in spite of the Hungarian's fantastic protestations of his honor and his tale of the penalty lying over his own head in case of failure, had been her faith in the power of Mrs. Rumbold's money.

"I am sorry," she said helplessly; "but I expected no less than to hear you had failed with him. He told me, you see, that all the money in Newport would be useless as the price of his own safety;

and, consequently, that he would accept from me as the price of my own immunity nothing less than the service which he demanded of me."

"And yet," cried Mrs. Rumbold fiercely, "you refused to pay!"

The girl moved her head wearily. "I could n't," she answered.

"Could n't," repeated the other woman, with scorn, "after I had picked you up out of the gutter, and covered you with gold, and trusted you—yes, trusted you! Here you could n't put out your hand to save me from the ruin that you yourself have brought on me! Very well, then—is there any reason why I should put out my hand to save you?"

The girl's face, white before, took on a curious rigidity of line and tint. "Madame," she said, with dignity, "as I told you yesterday, I am willing to disappear at any moment, and rid you of my presence forever. From the self-reproach and useless sorrow that I take with me, how could you save me?"

"Indeed!" sneered Mrs. Rumbold. "You are willing to disappear, are you, and leave me alone to bear the brunt of the exposure that's coming down on us to-night? I've just spoken on the long-distance with Mr. Rumbold in New York, to ask him to see the editors of the evening papers, and find out what they'll take for keeping still. But he himself admits it's useless—if not one, then another, then the whole hideous crowd of them, will be on my shoulders with pictures and headlines: 'Mrs. Rumbold's Little Game on Newport Society'—'Fake Duchess Queens It in Our Exclusive Set'—and ghastly things like that, shouted at the street corners and giggled over at every dinner in Newport—this very night! This very night!"

She wrung her hands. In helpless misery the girl turned toward her—Mrs. Rumbold cut her short.

"Listen to me, Miss Hooper! You plan to run off and leave me to bear the disgrace alone? No! I have it all planned out—you are an impostor, a stray French adventuress who happens to resemble the Duchess—who got wind of the visit, who stole the jewels and came here to supplant her—a daring, skilful game that deceived even me! You will please make full confession to the police—I will give you the details later on."

The girl rose to her feet with a little suppressed cry. "The police? Mrs. Rumbold, you intend to have me arrested?"

Mrs. Rumbold's little, pointed face set itself in the hardness of steel. "How else," she said clearly, "can I make it plain to the world that I had no part in the swindling game that you have played? It makes me appear small enough that you were able to deceive me—after my intimacy with the Grand Duchess that I have talked so much about! Still, it's my only chance, to range myself with the rest of

Newport among the people that your audacity has fooled—and to cut myself off entirely from you and all your works. You can make it harder for me by denying my story if you choose—but I can promise you your ingratitude will make it none the easier for you!”

“Wait a moment,” said the girl half-inarticulately. “Wait a moment.”

Her faculties, weakened by the strain of the past few days, reeled and fainted like those of a drunkard. With a desperate effort she forced herself to a right comprehension of Mrs. Rumbold’s words.

Poverty, heart-break, the knowledge of her degradation in the eyes of the one she loved best—all these sorrows she had been prepared for. But in the loss of all that made life dear, hers had been still the inalienable right which Nature herself denies to no suffering creature—the right to drag herself away to some hidden corner, alone with her pain. But now to be pilloried in public, to be openly disgraced before all the world—before him who was more than all the world to her—

This gay game of deceit, begun in such triumphant lightness of heart—who could have foreseen with what fatal rapidity its initiate germ of falsehood would sprout and spread to contaminate the whole? In vain she had struggled against succeeding temptations as they confronted her—the primal yielding, the original and fundamental sin, had been hers. On that quagmire basis of evil, no structure but that foredoomed to ruin could ever have been erected; though this knowledge made no less bitter the realization that now the inevitable had befallen, and she was shelterless.

“Mrs. Rumbold,” she asked slowly, “you are intending to give me to the police as a swindler; to have me dragged into court with Prince Debreczin as my accuser; to have me sent to—jail perhaps?”

“What else,” retorted Mrs. Rumbold with peevish resolution, “is left for me to do? I’m very sorry, but your ruin lies at your own door! You refused to save yourself—very well, you can’t expect to drag me down with you, you know! My right to disown your imposture is the same as that of an Alpine climber to cut the rope that binds him to a falling comrade—it will do you no good, and me a lot of harm, to go down with you. And in view of the fact that all your good luck has come from me, and all this bad luck from your own wilful obstinacy, I really think that you might promise to uphold my story in every particular. The time is so short!”—her thin voice rose feverishly. “Come, we must get our details together—will you promise?”

The girl held her head proudly erect. Resolution had come to her, resolution and a sudden kindling thought. “Madame,” she said

in a low tone, "you are right. Whatever your motive, you have been kind to me, and you have trusted me. I owe you in return all the reparation in my power for this ruin I have brought upon you. Draw up the story by which I can save you. I promise I will blacken myself faithfully in your behalf!"

"Now you are talking sense—there's a dear!" gushed Mrs. Rumbold, with a vast sigh of relief. The girl, however, interrupted her with a gesture quickly interposed.

"One moment, Mrs. Rumbold—there's a condition, one condition!" She hesitated a moment, while her listener stared. "To all the world," the girl went on painfully, "I will admit myself the vile swindler and impostor that you purpose to paint me—to all the world but one! For there's one person, you see—whom I should wish to have know the truth——"

Her voice trailed away in faltering accents of a controlled but profound suffering. Mrs. Rumbold broke into a peal of jangled laughter.

"One person!" she cried. "Hoity-toity! And who may this favored person be?"

"The one person," retorted the girl in tones of a recovered firmness, "in this world of shams and lies, who believes in me; the one who is far enough divided from me, Heaven knows, by all the barriers between us and by the evil that I have already done. He must despise me, of course, when he learns the truth; but I should like to have him know that, at least, all this was not on my side a scheme of intended evil—that careless, thoughtless, though I have been, I am at least not so sunk in sin as the published reports would make him believe. The truth, in short, as it stands between us—that is what I should wish him to know, and him alone—just enough to save a rag of his respect, a vestige of his pity."

"H'm, h'm!" cried the lady sharply. "And this precious paragon of whom you speak—do you suppose I don't know, young lady, to whom you are referring?"

For an instant her listener's white face blazed to a sudden scarlet. Mrs. Rumbold swept on:

"Though I will own, when my daughter came in just now and told me of your early morning sail, and of your conduct when you landed—I will own that I hardly believed in the possibility of such imprudence. Jack Borrیداile indeed!"

Before the veiled insult contained in Mrs. Rumbold's tones, the girl drew herself up with sudden dignity:

"And if I wish to preserve, so far as possible, Mr. Borrیداile's good opinion of me, do you find that wish unwarrantable? Perhaps I owe him that much—certainly he has never failed"—for an instant

her voice halted in a self-revealing break—"certainly he has never failed in respect toward me!"

"Ah!" Mrs. Rumbold's little sharp eyes ran through and through the wan and quivering countenance before her. "Ah!" she said again, as bit by bit she pieced together the mute confession of the downcast eyes before her with all the varying circumstances of the past two weeks, culminating in the adventure of this morning. What a fool she had been not to have seen it before! Had she perhaps imperilled her beloved Letty's future establishment beyond repair? John Borridaile, in spite of his diplomatic correctness of standard, had been known at times to display a reckless disinterestedness, a dogged tenacity of purpose. And should this girl before her, in all her appealing loveliness, be allowed to go to him with her pity-compelling tale—

"Has John Borridaile asked you?"—Mrs. Rumbold put the question concisely—"or not, to be his wife?"

The young woman before her rose to her feet, a tall, slim figure in her white gown. Her face was brightly flushed, her eyes sparkled wide-open. "Mrs. Rumbold," she retorted with dignity, "I have done my best to serve you, I have promised to face disgrace and disaster in order to repair, as far as possible, the mischief that I have done you. But more than that you have no right to ask. I must refuse to answer your question!"

Mrs. Rumbold turned white with anger. "But I must know!" she cried shrilly. "I have a right to know! Mr. Borridaile, young lady, is practically engaged to my daughter Letty—the union of two great American families, of two magnificent fortunes—in all respects most suitable. Now that I have told you so much, will you have the goodness to tell me: has Mr. Borridaile been so foolish as to ask you to marry him?"

"How could he," retorted the girl quickly, "if he is engaged to your daughter?"

Mrs. Rumbold reflected desperately. Then a sudden quick thought gave her at once the ready answer to the girl's retort, and a weapon wherewith to make a final clutch after the establishment of her adored child.

"I said not that he *is*, but that he *was*, engaged to my daughter! Why have we changed our minds and broken it off? For reasons which even in your eyes may make him less desirable as a dupe and victim! Jack Borridaile is a fraud, my dear, nothing less—a worthless young adventurer, sponging on society and diplomacy, on the strength of his aunt's name. He never had but a few thousands of his own, and *that* went in dissipation and wild-cat investments years ago. And as for his expectations from his aunt—Mr. Rumbold has

it in confidence from his solicitor that the young man's disgraceful conduct has at last driven Mrs. Borridaile to alter her will and leave every penny to a second cousin of her husband's in Topeka, Kansas! My dear, John Borridaile is in debt up to his ears, he has borrowed from every Jew in town, he has forged his aunt's name, it is well known that he has accepted bribes for the use of his influence with the Secretary of State. His aunt has bought him off so often, she is beginning to be weary of the process. Any moment that she withdraws her countenance from him, crash! goes Mr. John Borridaile."

Mrs. Rumbold spoke rapidly, feverishly, her eloquence accumulating facts as it rolled on its onward course. "So much," she said, "for your great speculation, my dear! I hate to disappoint you or to betray what should be strictly confidential. But in your position I think it only right you should be warned that the game you are playing is not worth the candle!"

For one moment she stood regarding the girl at the window, whose large, melancholy eyes, bent on the watery floor beneath the terrace, seemed to follow with wistful glance the airy progress of a white-sailed boat that darted to and fro over the long blue rollers. After Mrs. Rumbold had ceased speaking her listener turned slowly, with a startled and enigmatical glance.

"It's very wicked of me," she said in a low voice, "to listen to your horrible stories about him—but, oh, Heaven forgive me! I *want* to listen to them! You mean to tell me that Mr. Borridaile is no better than I am myself—that he is making believe to be something which he is not, and intentionally deceiving the world all about him?"

"I mean to say just that!" retorted the lady. "Just like you, as you say, my dear—there's a pair of you, the Princess and the millionaire. I wonder would you care to have Mr. Rumbold show the proofs of what I have been telling you, or have you heard enough?"

"I have heard enough," repeated the girl slowly. "A pair of us—there's a pair of us!" Then glancing up suddenly, "Then tell me, Mrs. Rumbold," she cried, "what is to keep us apart?"

In the reaction of a sudden fear, Mrs. Rumbold stared at her opponent. Had the game been too keen, her weapon too subtle? Had the stroke from which she expected so much recoiled upon her from her enemy's hand?

"Tell me," said the girl again, while her triumph rose and throbbed in her accents, "if Mr. Borridaile is no better than I, how should I wrong him by accepting the offer which he makes me? If he is no more diplomat and millionaire than I am Grand Duchess of all the Russias, if he stands on the brink of a ruin as fearful as

mine, if discovery is a calamity to be dreaded no less by him than by me—then how should I wrong him by accepting him as my husband?"

For an instant Mrs. Rumbold's fertile brain reeled in a stupefied perplexity before this threatening fuse kindled by the spark of her own over-active wit. Then with a supreme effort she hurled her ready reply.

"Why is Mr. Borridaile's situation no better than your own, when he has cause as good to dread discovery as your own? I'll tell you why—because *he is not discovered!* In your fortnight's experience of the world you may have heard the maxim, 'It's not the sin, it's the getting found out, that is fatal!' and Jack Borridaile is not going to get found out! His aunt, you may be sure, would sacrifice every penny of her fortune rather than allow the great name of Borridaile to be smirched by a revelation of Mr. Jack's escapades. He has family friends, professional friends, who would move heaven and earth to save him. No, John Borridaile is not going to be found out; he's not going to be paraded in the police-court, in the evening papers, his name made the byword at every boarding-house table from here to California—he's not been fool enough to leave his precious secret at the mercy of that treacherous ruffian Debrezczin!"

Limply the girl's slight form drooped against the casement by which she stood. "Please don't," she urged faintly; "I own I was wrong and you're right, you are very right."

Mrs. Rumbold, with keen eyes shining wide with a returning triumph, picked up the little telephone-receiver that tinkled lightly at her elbow. "Mr. Rumbold with news from New York, I suppose," she observed eagerly. "I gave orders I should be disturbed only for something very important."

The girl at the window turned her tortured, unseeing eyes away from the little family conversation to which she was thus made unwilling witness. Suddenly her darkened consciousness was pierced by the syllables of a word which, like Dante's inscription over the gates of Hell, served as key-note to the whole abandonment of her sorrow.

"The chief of police—yes!" Mrs. Rumbold's high, clear tones repeated the word with a curious hesitation. "Yes, this is Mrs. Rumbold. Hello! Put your mouth closer to the transmitter, please. Yes, the Grand Duchess is still here!"

The girl turned quickly—Mrs. Rumbold's eyes, suddenly haggard like those of a woman of seventy, were raised to hers. The same thought, the same realization, flashed from each to each.

By mere force of habit, the girl's swift glance travelled to the clock. An hour—but there was still an hour left! Yet here, antici-

pating the vulgar, hideous fate which to-night would claim her, were those grim hands of the law stretching themselves relentlessly toward her. Debrezczin had promised her till noon; in robbing her of this last hour, it seemed to her that he had inflicted a blow more wantonly cruel than the prime fact of the betrayal itself.

"Hello!" Mrs. Rumbold's little, pointed face, stiffened to the intensity of listening, was mottled in a curiously grayish pallor. "Yes . . . I am listening. Oh, I understand." For one instant her strangled breath escaped in a sigh of relief. "You wish to warn me to take special precautions in guarding my guest, the Russian Duchess? Oh, yes, certainly. Thank you so very much. The Anarchists are up to mischief again, you say?"

Terror for her own immediate safety smitten from her mind only to give place to vague, unformulated fears, the girl stepped forward. Mrs. Rumbold, however, had already regained something like composure, as she continued the conversation.

"Yes, I'll repeat your words if you wish it—you say there was a bomb-throwing right here in Newport only an hour ago? Yes, certainly I heard the explosion . . . Dynamite? . . . I thought it was a yacht coming to anchor in the bay! . . . The wretch himself was killed by the concussion, you say? . . . Yes, I understand you . . . The celebrated American Anarchist, Harrow—yes, *Morrow*, you say—just out of doing time in Auburn for the same offense . . . yes."

Dead! Elmer Morrow was dead! Even in the midst of her own distress, the girl was conscious of a regretful, yearning pang that filled her eyes with tears. And in swift, pitying vision her fancy flew back to the interview of two nights ago in the garden below—to Elmer's white, wistful face, his glance of dumb, pathetic passion, his voice as he had said, "If I could just do something for you, dear, to make you happy as I can't, and die doing it." And now poor Elmer—death was already his, without even the sorry comfort that he had asked.

Mrs. Rumbold's sharp voice continued: "On the steps of the Yacht Club—yes, I understand. But tell me, did the wretch do any damage to any one but himself? Good Heavens! speak out, man! It was n't any of *my* family, I know that! Hello! . . . Yes, you say his Highness was just stepping out of his automobile—"

Through her listener's mind flamed swift thought and swifter memory. The ruthless determination of Elmer's poor fanatical soul, the baleful glance with which, last night, he had silently recognized in the enemy of the mythical Grand Duchess the malicious and deadly foe of the girl whom, with all that was good in his unhappy soul, he so undoubtedly loved. "If I could just do something for you, dear, and die doing it."



*Had he done it?*

Mrs. Rumbold's sharp notes, rising to hysteria, repeated her last question. "Hello! . . . Who's on the line? Hello, this is Police Headquarters again? Yes . . . Hello! Tell me, did this wretch succeed in injuring the Prince?"

Another instant's pause, tense, terrible. Then the glittering instrument fell from Mrs. Rumbold's hand with a dull thud upon the counterpane. She wet her lips once or twice carefully with her tongue and swallowed with painful slowness.

"Prince Debreczin is dead," she said.

## XVI.

JACK BORRIDAILE'S knockabout was making long, dreary tacks up and down beneath the cliffs, from Ochre Point to Bailey's and back again. Just what there was to call him to shore again, he failed to see. To be sure, the commission was to hold an informal meeting at twelve o'clock, but the presence of the secretary was not necessary. And unless absolutely required to do so, by irresistible duty, why bring this new and bleeding wound within the range of inquisitive human eyes and wearisome human tongues?

His work of which he had been so proud and so fond—in the emptiness of life as it now presented itself to him, where was the power of work to fill his days or his heart? And yesterday, in the desperation born of his mysterious loss and looming disgrace, he had assured his guardian powers that the lost letter, once restored, would be all he would ever ask of them! Very well, the letter had been recovered, verified, and even now was in the hands of the august personage for whom, and for whom alone, it was designed. His career was safe, his honor placed beyond doubt or question—and here he was, the most miserable failure in the way of a man that the Atlantic Ocean bore to-day on her long heaving rollers.

He was not good enough to be the husband of the woman he loved. There was the plain, unvarnished truth that stared him in the face.

In spite of the strongly-balanced nature which put all desperate measures out of the question, the long, white-crested waves that rolled from the bow of his craft looked to him strangely peaceful and alluring. But even in the bewildered extremity of his pain his chief thought was not for himself, but for her. "Poor little thing," he said to himself sadly; "it's rough on her, too. Poor little thing, she cried when we said good-by!" And even the secret pang of delight that lay hidden at the core of his suffering, to know that through all the darkness of their inevitable separation her love would follow him—even this solitary ray of joy was turned to bitterness in

his generous heart. No, even for love of him, he would not, with his own good-will, let a dark day enter into her life!

His boat, lying down to the fresh sea-wind, drew her swift course beneath the high-walled terrace and gray towers of Stormcliff. With self-denying resolution, Jack turned his head away. What was the use of gazing, like the silly fox in the fable, after those beautiful grapes that hung so high above his head? What he was suffering served him just right; he should have known better in the first place; he was rightly punished for his vanity and his audacity.

No, he would not look! Leaping from wave to wave, his boat was almost abreast of the breakwater whence Varvara had this morning emerged. Above him was the window—after all, just one look—

His heart leaped painfully, and through his body was a curious sensation, as though the blood had quivered in his veins. In the dinghy near him, propelled by a sailor with *Lotus* in large gold letters across his breast, was a fluttering white figure which stood up and waved to him.

"Wait a moment!" shouted Jack. Starting to his feet, he cast off his neatly-coiled main halyards, so that the white sail came down with a run, thundering in the wind and dipping its white folds into the sea. Then Jack pushed his tiller hard down and hove his boat to, under her bit of jib. On the long green wash of the rollers she rocked, held between wind and tide; while her skipper, leaning out over the gunwale, seized the dinghy with his boat-hook and drew her with cautious skill to the side of his dancing craft.

"Just a moment, Mr. Borrیداile, please!" cried the voice which in all the world he loved best to hear. "Will you help me aboard, please? Just one moment—the man will wait. There . . . thanks, here I am quite safely."

They stood face to face on the unsteady floor of the cockpit, while the sailor, dropping to a discreet distance, waited obediently for his passenger's return. "Varvara," cried Jack, "what is it? Tell me quickly!"

Her cheeks were still white, but her blue eyes shone dark and glittering against the dusky, wind-blown background of her hair. Never before, Jack thought, had he seen her look so lovely, so utterly desirable. "Jack!" she cried, and at that name his pulses leaped in a sudden triumph—a triumph swiftly subdued by the sudden sombreness of her tone and look.

"I have news for you," she said. "Prince Debreczin is dead."

Jack stared. "Dead?" he repeated stupidly. Before the great inviolable fact of death, darkening the summer morning, touching with its faint cold hand the warm life that thrilled in his youthful

veins—before that great primal fact of death, all thought of the significance and possible consequences of this particular death was smitten from his mind.

“Debrezcin dead?”—his tongue dragged itself helplessly over the words. “But I ate breakfast with him this very morning.”

“But since then,” cried the girl swiftly—“you remember the shock of an explosion that we heard barely an hour ago?” Horror-smitten, stupefied, Jack nodded his assent. The girl’s breathless voice swept on:

“That shock we heard—it was not a yacht’s cannon; it was the explosion of the dynamite bomb from the hand of an Anarchist, on the steps of the Yacht Club above here; and Prince Debrezcin—Prince Debrezcin was blown to atoms.”

She shuddered in the sudden sickness of purely physical revulsion. Jack, forgetful of his own dismay, took her cold hands in a gesture of reverential and comforting tenderness.

“I understand,” he said in a low voice, “what you must suffer in finding yourself approached for the second time in your life by this unspeakable horror. To have your husband’s assassination thus hideously recalled to you——”

To his amazement, his words of respectful sympathy were cut short by a shrill and hysterical peal of laughter—though when his dismayed glance met her eyes he found no laughter there; only tears, and perplexity, and the extreme of a desperate resolve.

“My husband?” she cried. “That is what I have come to tell you. I never had any husband! He was a sham, a make-believe, like my title, my sapphires, everything about me!”

Jack dropped her hands. His eyes as he looked into hers were the eyes with which one looks into the face of death.

“Oh, child!” was all he said.

She read in his face the meaning which she had conveyed to him. “No,” she said weakly; “it’s all very bad to know, but it’s not quite—so bad as you think.”

“You are not the Grand Duchess Varvara of Russia?” he asked sternly.

She shook her head wearily. At the sight of the suffering in her face, his gravity relaxed suddenly into pleading gentleness:

“But if you were going to tell me this story at all, why did you wait till now? What has happened since an hour ago?” At the word the remembrance came back to him, of the newly-learned and hideous disaster which this new revelation, more closely personal and more painful yet, had for the instant driven from his mind.

“The man who stood between us is dead,” he said slowly, “Debrezcin is dead, so now you come to me?”

She winced before the vague, unspoken meanings of his words; then, controlling herself to a silent response, she nodded in affirmation.

Upon his next question, the answer to which must settle all the love and faith that his life held, Jack's tongue hesitated and stumbled like that of a school-boy.

"Tell me the truth: what was Debreczin to you?"

She lifted her blue eyes, dark with suffering, heavy with the clinging wetness of tears, to his face.

"Not that—believe me, Jack, not that—neither he nor any one else that has ever walked the earth! But the sin of which I am guilty, Debreczin knew. He threatened me with shameful exposure; he drove me to serve him in wicked secret ways. Though when it came to the point, I could n't do it—even for Mrs. Rumbold's sake. I could n't. That letter that you lost—it was I that stole it, at his bidding. Though when the time came for me to give it to him, I could n't betray you, after all, even to save her; so I defied him, and sent it back to you."

Jack stared at her. "Wait a moment! Debreczin a spy—Debreczin a blackmailer? My dear girl—are you sure there's not some mistake?"

"There's no mistake," she answered gently. "It's not so very hard to deceive an honest man like you, you know. I did it; why should n't he?"

Jack was silent. These were deep waters into which the mystery of his love had drifted—the stolen letter, the weighty affairs of two great nations, his professional honor that had so nearly been wrecked beyond repair. Yet through the dark confusion of these appalling revelations there came to him, pure and clear as the very truth, the self-condemning voice of the woman he loved and the self-torturing candor of her eyes.

"I don't understand," he said with firmness; "but whatever harm was meditated, none was done. And of one thing I feel confident: though you may yield to an instant's weakness, never would you be guilty of any treachery toward me or any other human being. Debreczin is dead, we will let his sin rest with him. But if he traded in his knowledge of your imposture, to drive you for his own evil purposes——"

The girl stretched out her hand. "He was wicked, he was cruel, his death means for me a deliverance from what would have been worse than death, I grant you all that. But, oh! if he was bad, I am worse still—a swindler, a humbug who has cheated you out of your honest love. But listen—I have come back to you, partly because I no longer have the fear of open disgrace hanging over me, partly

because I have heard something just now which makes me hope that you will have charity and understanding for my mistakes. For in the beginning, Jack, it was nothing more than a mistake, I swear to you! I never meant to be really bad, but I was very lonely and helpless; and when the temptation came to me——”

“I am listening!” said Jack steadily, but his brain whirled.

She leaned toward him breathlessly.

“You see,” she said, “I came to Mrs. Rumbold’s just at the moment when she was in despair. Her Grand Duchess had n’t come, and all her plans were ruined. I had had a hard winter, Jack—my first winter in the city! You see, Mrs. Rumbold herself had told me to come up from Maine to go on the stage, and that she herself would look out for me. She painted such an alluring future for me, I sold my little house and boat that my father had left me, and came flying after her to New York. But she had forgotten all about me, Jack! My letters were sent downstairs again, Mrs. Rumbold turned her head away from me when I waited on her sidewalk. Oh, how lonely the streets were, Jack! And all the crowds that stared at me, so that I had to wear a veil—and the theatre managers, who laughed at me and tried to take my hand, when I came back to their offices for the twentieth time, to see if they had n’t a chance for me at last. My money was spent so soon—then I was sick—then I went and tried to be a housemaid, just to keep from starvation . . . But the master of the house was horrid! horrid!” She shivered and Jack’s fists clenched themselves. “And the lady said I was too good-looking for a servant . . . and I did n’t know what to do, so I came back to Mrs. Rumbold. I thought, if I could speak to her face to face, perhaps she would remember . . . You see, the family I lived with had brought me to a place near here for the summer . . . so when I had to leave, I just walked over here. I saw you, Jack, that day that I waited at the park gate. You made that dreadful man be quiet when he spoke so rudely to me . . . and, oh! but I was grateful to you!”

“Ah . . . Debreczin . . . the little reporter!” cried Jack, dimly groping in his memory. “But she was such a huddled, stooped little thing—and she had yellow hair under her brown veil, I remember.”

The girl before him smiled rather bitterly. “When one has n’t eaten anything for two days, one is apt to huddle!” she answered briefly, while Jack surveyed her in bewildered and heart-smitten compassion. Then as she touched her flying strands of red-black hair, “And as for the hair,” she said, “it does n’t take very long to change yellow hair to black—nor, thank Heaven, does it take very long to change it back to yellow again!”

Jack laughed helplessly. "I'm so glad," he said. "I love yellow hair."

"So you see," she went on swiftly, "when all of a sudden I was brought in out of the dark, into that splendid, glittering palace . . . and Mr. Rumbold came in with his wife, in all her perplexity . . . and all of a sudden he shouted out with his idea—what could I do? It looked so delicious, so entrancing, what they proposed to me to do—an adventure in fairy-land, a glimpse of the heaven I had read about! Then the wild rush on the yacht to New York that night—the dash through the shops—and the study and the training and the practice—oh, I was mad with excitement, I was tipsy with delight! That what I was doing was wrong never entered my head until that first night when you looked across the table at me—you remember, dear—and your eyes—your eyes, Jack, ran through and through me! Then after dinner"—her voice dropped to its sombre depths—"after dinner, Debreczin came to me and told me he had recognized my cheat. In return for my services in stealing your new treaty for him, he offered me his silence. How that ended, I have already told you. If I did n't realize at the beginning that the game I have played was nothing more nor less than a colossal sin, believe me, I realize it now. Debreczin is dead—I am hardly better than dead, in the knowledge that you despise me."

He looked at her keenly. "Despise you? So you think I despise you?"

She laughed bitterly. "A swindler and a humbug! A poor little girl from the coast of Maine, who happened to have a French mother and a small gift for play-acting! A nobody, a nothing at all—a Duchess of Dreams, indeed!"

"To me," said Jack slowly, "you are all the world!"

For a moment she stared at him through the blue mists of tears that filled her eyes. Then,

"Oh, Jack, I dared hope as much!" she cried, her voice thrilling to the wind. "I dared hope I might find in you understanding and charity even for faults like mine. For Mrs. Rumbold, you see, hoping to turn me away from you—she has told me everything!"

She paused for breath. Jack, placed beyond the power of new perplexity by the various startling revelations of this enigmatical interview, merely stared at her as she swept on:

"She has told me everything—and there is the reason that I have had the courage to come back to you. For if you are nothing that you pretend to be, Jack, neither am I! If you are a humbug, so am I! There's a pair of us, dear! We've played the game together, now we'll repent in dust and ashes together—we'll meet disgrace together if we have to—but together, Jack, always together!"

She paused, flushed and kindling, and over her last amazing offer her blue eyes shone a benediction into the face beside her. Jack drew a long breath of perplexity.

"I don't know," he said dryly, "what my dear friend Mrs. Rumbold has been telling you about me. But at all events, dear, I should rather not see you quite so ready to believe stories so very much to my discredit. Of course——" he added hastily. But with a sharp exclamation of trouble, the girl beside him rose suddenly to her feet. Her face was curiously changed and stony, and her voice came with difficulty, as though she had been running.

"Oh, I see, I see!" she said wildly. "I've been a fool, I understand now. I was so glad to believe her when she said you were an adventurer and a swindler, Jack—I was so delighted to believe that you were pulled down to my own miserable level—that I never stopped to ask myself if it were likely that such an absurd story could be true. I beg your pardon a thousand times for so wronging you, believe me! I see I have made a dreadful mistake. Will you signal the man to come up with the dinghy, please?"

But Jack had seized her hands again in his strong clasp. "My dear, my dear," he cried, "do you think that I could have any blame for you because, instead of turning your back upon me when you heard evil stories about me, you came and offered yourself to me? Do you think that I have anything but pity for you and your deceit, as you call it—you poor little deserted child, alone in the big, heartless world? But never alone again, dear, never again!" He paused a moment, bending over her; and their eyes met, gray eyes and blue.

"You have n't told me yet," he said smiling—"what is your name, my Duchess of Dreams?"

"My name," she answered softly, "is Angélique Hooper. Not much of a name, after Princess Varvara, is it?"

"Angélique," he repeated slowly, "Angélique Borridaile . . . yes, that does n't sound too bad, that combination. Look, dear!" In the light of a sudden kindling purpose, his bronzed face flushed and his square jaw set itself into lines of strong determination. With one hand still holding hers, he pointed with the other at the low-lying point of land across the bay.

"The little steeple is there still," he said gravely, "and the little white church. Out of the loyalty of your heart, you refused an hour ago to come there with me. But now, my dear little Angélique, my best-beloved till the end of the world—now, now may I point the boat across the bay?"

The deep eyes, bright with a blissful yielding, were fixed on his. "You want me?" she said slowly. "With all my faults that you know of, with the possibility of a thousand faults of which you know

nothing, you still love me and trust me and ask me to be your wife?"

"I love you," he answered steadily. "I trust you as I trust nothing else on earth. Answer me—will you be my wife?"

She nodded slowly, while her trembling lips broke in a smile. With a short boyish laugh of utter happiness, Jack Borridaile sprang forward to his halcyards.

"There's no time to lose!" he cried swiftly. "First the little white church, very quiet and discreet; then the train from Tiverton; then New York—thank Heaven, this is Saturday! So to-morrow you can wash the horrid black stuff from your beautiful hair, and send out for some new clothes, and send a man back with a check for your dear Vassily if you want him—and anything, anything else in the world that I can get for you, dear! Then on Monday I run back here for the final meeting of the commission and say good-by to my aunt, and—and to pay proper respect"—his face darkened—"to the memory of that poor wretch Debreczin, who, whatever his sins, has gone to pay for them now. Then on Tuesday, dearest!"

Her eyes, full of adoration, met his quick smile.

"On Tuesday, dearest, we go down to Hoboken together and take the steamer to Cherbourg. In Paris, you see, we can concoct a nice little story—more of our humbug, you see, darling!—to tell when we come home again. Perhaps we can find an impecunious marquis to own you as her ward—oh, there are lots of ways in which to fool our fellow mortals, my dear, and keep poor Mrs. Rumbold's secret from leaking out to a disrespectful world!"

"And that reminds me," cried the girl: "I mustn't be so selfish as to forget Mrs. Rumbold. I must send some word back to her."

"Be quick!" Jack eased off the sheet of his half-hoisted mainsail. "Here's a page of my note-book—here's a pencil!"

Hastily scrawling a few words, she returned the paper to him. "Read it!" she commanded as her tender eyes smiled into his face; and, with an answering smile, he read aloud:

To Mrs. Rumbold: His Majesty commands my immediate presence.

VARVARA.

"Will that do, your Majesty?" she whispered shyly. For answer he looked at her, and his triumph was in his eyes. "Dear!" he breathed softly.

A moment later the seaman of the dinghy, with the message to his mistress folded safely in his pocket, was pulling for the high-walled harbor. And the knockabout, with all sail set and sheets started, was flying over the waves toward the opposite shore.





## A VISION OF COLD

BY RUPERT HUGHES

**B**ENEATH a little Himalaya of sheets, coverlets, comforters, spreads, quilts, blankets, and what-not, here I lie as cozily as a fallen Titan buried under a mountain thrown by Jupiter. It is shrewd weather this morning—or so the dog-cold peak of my bluish nose tells me; and when my one exposed eye is thawed enough to open and peer out, I see that I left the window too wide last night, for the snow has sifted in, and lies whitening the floor, and the curtains are shivering and flying from the wind. My breath curls up from my one bare nostril as steam from a kettle. My scalp-lock on the pillow must surely be frozen off. Not for worlds, though, would I put out my hand to feel and make sure.

And now some one knocks with hard cold raps, and tells me that it is time to get up. Oh, you impertinent housemaids, you are used to rising betimes, and you may easily make bold to walk about the warm halls! But as for me—I have left my window open and the snow is blowing in!

From force of habit I have answered the knock with a request that the cold water be turned on in the tub. And, now that I think of it, I believe it is a hot-bath morning. I call in vain. There is no answer. I look out again and sniff the cold. Yes, I know it is a hot-bath morning. Why did n't these people put a bell where one could reach it without getting out of bed?

I turn over to escape the sight of that gaping window, and have much difficulty in negotiating the warm spots again. The room is so cold that it seems as if my very glance would freeze and hang like a

long icicle from my lower lid. The bedspread lies like a crumpled field of snow.

It reminds me of the amusing adventure of a fellow-student at my old preparatory academy. One white holiday he went out hunting, and while he was scouring the bleak meadows and the barren thickets his fellows took great pleasure in a joke they planned for him. But he stayed away too late for them to enjoy their reward. He had lost his path, had begged a snack of late supper at a farmhouse, had been told the way back, and had lost it in the dark again and again. As he stumbled doggedly home, his one consolation was the thought of his warm bed. He reached the dormitory at midnight. He climbed the stairs on wooden feet, he pushed blindly into his dark room, where no fire greeted him. He undressed as swiftly as fatigue allowed, dropping his clothes like autumn leaves upon the floor. His last strength oozed in a sigh of joy as he leaped into his bed. He plunged his shivering legs to the knees into a heap of snow his loving schoolmates had neatly spread between the sheets. He was too tired to yell. But he got up.

My own flesh creeps in sympathy. I should prefer to think of something warm.

But now my coverlet is the little mill-pond in the village of my early boyhood in Missouri, and I recall the January day when a band of religious fanatics—Campbellites, they were called—went to the pond for the rite of baptism. Wagonloads of men and women came there in cheap and thin "ascension robes." They waited on the bank while their teeth chattered as they sang hymns in helpless staccato.

I remember the stupefaction of the six-year-oldster that I was, when I saw the preacher wade right in up to his waist. He had to break the ice before him with a staff. And there he stood, summoning the converts one by one. Mighty must have been the faith that led them to him. As they arrived, he would put one hand behind their backs and one at their throats and, shivering out his formula, souse them under. Some of them struggled, and all of them came up coughing and sputtering and dazed. Then they were led dripping to the wagons, and the drivers whipped up the horses for a close race between pneumonia and salvation. I thought then, as now, that it was the ungracefullest way of absorbing divine grace ever devised, and that a title deed to a mansion on the sunniest street in Paradise would be none too great a reward for such an initiation fee.

If I must think of winter scenes, let it be an endless chain of Montreal tobogganers, or one of the bob-sleds loaded with boys and girls, that used to scour the hills of my later boyhood in Iowa, and used now and then to collide with a lamp-post or the hind wheels or front legs of a passing team. A few bones used to crackle like icicles, but youth knitted them together speedily.

Now my bed is the frozen Mississippi. There goes my younger brother, a mere boy, very erect and proud in his long and shapely coat. He is "snapping the whip" with a group of hilarious school-fellows. They are giggling at the skating of a very fat girl just ahead of them. She bowls along like a huge medicine ball, and she is very funny to see.

Swish—crackle—bang—splash! The ice is giving way all around them.

*Douse!* they are over their heads in the river. They bump together. Then each for himself. The ice comes off in their hands as they try to mount, but at last they find firm ledges. My brother has one knee out and is scrambling to safety. He glances back and sees the fat girl sinking. Her expression is terribly ridiculous.

He drops back into the river. A few strokes bring him behind her. He put his hands under her arms and treads water, while she clutches at him in vain. He calls, too, to the youths who stand staring in amazement. At last they understand. They skate to shore and come back with long planks, which they thrust out. It is a mighty job getting that hysterical fat girl hoisted into safety. And when finally she is out of danger, my brother is so cold that he can hardly keep afloat till the rescuing hands reach out for him.

Fortunately, he is too strong to die of a chill, and too young for the grateful fat girl to marry.

The thought of the spacious Mississippi reminds me, too, of the days when the ice used to break up and go gliding down the swift current. The great hummocks struggled and jostled and bellowed like sullen buffaloes. One day two young men rowed up the stream to shoot wild ducks that had gathered there. Eventually, in the scramble of those ice-herds, their boat was twisted and overturned. The two young men sank. One never returned alive to the light of day. The other rose to the surface. He was nearly beheaded, like John the Baptist, by two grinding cakes of ice; but he succeeded at length in crawling out on a floe thick enough to uphold him. There he drifted, swirling in the eddies, threatened by bulks that rose at him like sharks. His screams for help were heard and a boat put out for him, but it was driven ashore by the muttering pack. The current was carrying him toward the bridge. Some one ran out with a long rope, and held it dangling. He watched it with mad eagerness.

A swirl of water swept him toward the sharp edge of the ice-breaker in front of one of the piers. His floe escaped it by a sickening slider.

And now the rope is before him. He makes ready, seizes it with mortal earnestness! The men above begin to lift him. He rises slowly, slowly, toward safety. And now—his hands are too numb to hold. They turn to wood. They slide along the rope like pulleys. Straight down he drops, the ice opens beneath him, closes above him.

On the bridge a woman faints with a little cry. It is a week before they find the body, miles down the river.

And here I lie whimpering at the thought of one quick plunge in a cold tub, knowing from long experience that the aftermath is reactive rapture and lyric glow. But if I could only think of something warm for a while, I might take courage. Poetry for instance. Shakespeare? But he was the man who said, " 'T is a cold and biting night, Horatio," and "Poor Tom." And it was his Pericles who called himself "a man throug'd up with cold." Keats is better; he was very warm. Ugh! He was the man who wrote:

The owl for all his feathers was a-cold.  
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass.

There was one poet at least who could put heat enough into his verse: Dante, the dismal visitant of Hell's most fiery torments.

But here again, in that Italian Inferno the ultimate torment was the ice; for in the ninth circle Dante and Vergil walked carefully among the livid souls sunk to their chins in the frozen stream, "*l'ombra dolenti nella ghiaccia.*" Their chattering teeth pounded "like the beaks of storks," and the tears squeezed from them by the cold froze their eyelids together. It was here that Dante found Ugolino's skull gnawing the skull of the ancient enemy who had starved him and his wailing children to death. Well may commentator Scartazzini call it, in his orotund Italian, "*la dolorosa e commoventissima storia della sua tragica morta.*"

I can see Doré's ghoulish picture of those sprinkled, frigid skulls. Out of my sight, hell's broth!

But now I come from the underworld into the over-hell of a wintry storm. A blizzard harries the Atlantic coast, and we people in New York count ourselves ill used because the streets are canyons of snowy wind and the cars run slowly and one must wait for them overlong on uncomfortable corners. It is not easy to get to the offices, and women must postpone shopping; husbands reach home late and soppy, and children grow troublesome from staying indoors all day.

At night, at the unspeakable cold and lonely hour before the dawn, an isolated house takes fire. Two sisters live there, one a spinster, one a widow with two children. The mother, waking at the call of love, and rising in the cold to see that her babes are snugly tucked in, gropes sleepily through dense warm smoke. The door is red as the open maw of a furnace. She screams. Her sister in another room wakes and, leaping from her window into a great drift of snow, runs to a distant fire-alarm. She is barefooted, clad only in a thin night-gown. The mother, seizing a child in each arm, makes her way to the roof of a

little hall. From her window the blazes thrust at her like torches. The wind worries her one light robe as she clutches her children to her icy breast. Her sister waits at the alarm-box; she is palsied with cold, and her bare feet are freezing as she stands.

At last, through the swirl of the storm, she hears a clangor of bells, she sees the fire-engine plunging through the thick snow. The horses tug and agonize; they are more beautiful than the chariot steeds of the sun. A half-hour of agony, a few frost-bitten fingers, frozen feet and ears, and no lives are lost. And yet, the Lord knows it was cold enough!

But all that day and all that night and all the next day there were hundreds of sailors aloft, tugging at canvases like boards; in the teeth of a gale they must grip icy rigging that cut and slipped through their hands. And in spite of all they could do and endure, some of their boats were shouldered gradually ashore, where the boiling surf pounded them and their men to pieces. A wild and bitter death was theirs, like that of the skipper of the *Hesperus*, frozen to his wheel.

Of one crew, wrecked off Fire Island, two men were left alive. The life-savers saw them, but could not launch the boats, try as they would. Nor could the life-lines be shot so far against the wind. These two men must wait in the lurching crow's nest. Huge companies of billows, all slushy with a dust of ice, rose up and leapt at them, smote them with bullet-volleys of spray. Hour after hour the men clung, battered, soaked, and shaken by the sea, gnawed and blistered by the furious wind. The sleep of death began to come upon them, but they fought it off. They danced and beat themselves till they could do no more, then they pounded each other, smote each other in the face till the blood came from their cracked lips. The life-saving crew watched them in an agony of helplessness. Tough as they were and used to the horrors that flourish along the beaches, they wept like children at the torment of their fellow men. The day wore on; night came; the life-savers built a fire on the beach as an allurement of hope. They trusted that some change in the wind would let them launch a boat. But the long night drifted on. Icy wave followed icy wave through the gloom, each taking toll of these prisoners of storm. Still the two men beat the longing for death out of each other. Still their mighty strength resisted all the inquisitorial tortures of the sea. The dawn found them alive. Late in the day the wind veered, a boat was launched, the men were taken off, and in the little hovel on the beach they found a palace of comfort where they could suffer the pangs of frozen flesh and pneumonia in quiet. What suffering must that long reality have been when the brief thought of it is such pain!

And still I lie here afraid to stand up and strip to take my wonted exercise before the open window, and then tune my arteries to a halle-

lujah chorus with a moment's splash in a coolish tub. I'll play the craven no longer. In an access of fearlessness, I make bold to rise to one elbow—whew! but it's cold. Back I sink again. The thought of that tub is worse than the sudden memory of an incident in Anthony Fiala's Polar expedition. One of his men fell through the ice and was rescued with difficulty. It was necessary for him to change his clothes at once. And he did; stripped to the hide in that God-and-man-forsaken region. "Fortunately," says Fiala, "it was only twenty degrees below zero." Fortunately! Only! Ye gods!

Now what is that figure limping across my counterpane?—a manikin in colonial garb. My bed must be the camp at Valley Forge. On such a morn as this the lonely sentinel watches the huge snowball of the moon roll down the sky, and the hardly warmer sun come up. In the garish daylight he can see the bitter post where he has dragged his bare feet back and forth, through the black hours.

With a rush of self-pity he sees the red traces where his bleeding soles have left footprints of glory on the white. But little he recks of glory. He thinks of the night-long weariness and the marrow-chill of his bones. He has no overcoat and no gloves, and where his palms have touched the barrel of his flintlock the skin has stuck to the iron.

All night the wind has slashed him this way and that, as with a broadsword. But even when, in his weariness, he thinks of his rest, now that his tour of duty is almost done, there is no joy in the thought; for in the blast-shaken huts the other soldiers lie on the hard ground without blankets and even without straw. They have been trying to forget their inveterate hunger in sleeping and in dreaming perhaps of the victories they have not had and have no right to hope. Or in dreaming, rather, of the homes they have left, of the mother clattering over the great pot hanging in the fireplace and savory with an incense of hot soup. So there our forefathers lie, blanketless, aching, on the stony ground, and there the tattered sentinel stands and blows upon his fingers, numbed and sodden with the cold.

Away with you, old Continentals, away from my bedside, for you make my heart bleed even as your poor feet.

No, come back, pitiful little handful of you, for your place is taken by a phantasmagory of stupendous tragedy. My bed is now the road from Moscow, and Napoleon's myriads agonize across it for the homes they never shall see again. Thousands of horses foundered with weariness, lie shivering in the drifts, but quaking more with the fear of wolves that throng to raven on their living flesh. And men too lie helpless beneath their fangs and their up-shot howls of triumph. Men who were not many months ago hugging their womenfolk good-by are now snow-smothered hulks that wolves devour.

Then there were fifty thousand unarmed workmen, women, and children, who struggled after the army and made great sport for the jackal Cossacks. These and such soldiers as were captured and not instantly cut down, the humorous Russians, maddened for revenge, would strip stark naked and march in columns of misery through the blizzards, or turn them over to the peasants for an Indian torture.

In the midst of all these huge sufferings, I can never forget the chance allusion I read somewhere once, of the old French marshal—Junot, I think it was—who tried to cheer his shivering men by the force of example. Every morning of that arctic retreat he came from his tent in his bare skin, set a mirror on the breech of a cannon, lathered his cheeks and chin, and shaved with majestic deliberation, as Adam might have shaved in Eden. An unimportant sort of thing to do, but a Spartan proof of a captain's mettle, and almost the only cheerful thing in all that colossal cataclysm.

Here comes a little band, bursting out of a thicket into the open. It is Marshal Ney, "bravest of the brave," leading the rearguard into an overpowering swarm of Cossacks, infusing somehow new life into the dead hearts of his little band, changing exhaustion to frenzy, and forcing them to cut their way through the fiercest enemy, to make the last hours of life as terrible as possible, and to fight off to the last the merciful insistence of inevitable death.

And so the Grand Army that entered Russia four hundred thousand strong freezes and starves and crumbles till only twelve thousand reach the river Beresina. And there a few thousands of allies meet them, but the Russians have them all trapped beyond hope of escape. Still the soldiers fight, and the herded stragglers, driven into a cattle-panic, dash for the river. The bridge breaks. They plunge into the ice-choked stream. They drown in mobs, wrestling, groping, choking, screaming.

The battle ends at last. The Grand Army was. Napoleon, cowering in his sleigh, has fled. The battle-field is deserted; the river freezes over again; and all is peaceful till spring comes to unchain the stream. Then the dark waters disgorge their loot and cast it on the banks. The awestruck peasants count twenty thousand dead—dead for an alien egotist, dead in the most causeless, the most hideous, war that ever raved upon this bitter earth. What are the Russian winds but the multitudinous wail of those human hecatombs?

Fall thicker, snows, and lie like ermine on those anguished veterans, dead to such little purpose in such awful pain.

And as for me, let me leap out with joy to the petty trials that confront us lucky souls, born out of Napoleon's reach, and in the golden summer of America at peace. It is morning and this is the Land of the Forenoon.



## OMAR IN CENTRAL PARK

BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

ONE May morning of the present year, as the iridescent mists were rolling away from the lawns and copses of Central Park, still sleepy with dew, a strange figure suddenly made its appearance at the Seventh Avenue entrance, and passed in to the fresh green silence. It was as yet quite early. The cars still had an all-night look about them, and only here and there a forlorn figure that had risen too early, or stayed up too late, stood out in spectral emphasis upon the empty echoing streets. Inside the Park a sprinkling of nocturnal visitors still dozed upon the benches, or lay stretched upon the grass, and here and there an early worm was reading a morning paper. The habitual early-morning horseman would once in a while canter by, or a negro pass to his work on an ancient bicycle.

There was as yet hardly any one sufficiently awake to mark the apparition of young Septimus Maugan as he glided, little more material than the morning mist, along the pathways of the Park; a figure scarcely less weird and enigmatical than the young man who carried the banner with the strange device in Longfellow's poem.

But Septimus Maugan carried no banner. Instead, under one arm he carried a five cent loaf, under the other a fifty cent bottle of California claret; and protruding from a side pocket was a bulky roll of paper; a book of—unpublished—verses.

Septimus was a tall, slim lad about nineteen, with good shoulders and a springy walk. He had a long, rather Hamlet-like face, fine eyes, dreamy and yet at the same time alert and humorous, and he had quite a quantity of long, Liszt-shaped hair. If you can imagine such an anomaly nowadays, he looked as though he might be a poetical college boy.

As he swung along, with his supple stride, he seemed to take a



quite original delight in the morning sky, and the morning air, as though they had happened in the world for the first time. Not a bird or a spray of blossom escaped his eager young eyes, and as he walked he threw up his chin and laughed, and murmured snatches of song to himself; and especially you might have caught the words "Free, free, free!"

Presently he came to a halt in a secluded corner of the Park, where on a knoll of lawn a particularly inviting tree offered passers-by its morning shadow. Accepting the invitation, Septimus seated himself comfortably with his back against its trunk, and looked out with entire satisfaction upon the glittering green about him.

"I have now," he said aloud, "all the comforts of Omar Khayyam's paradise, except one, and I have 'A Book of Verses Underneath the Bough'—a Book of Verses none the less dear to me, perhaps even none the less good, because they have been rejected by the publishers; and a 'Bough' none the less real and green for growing in Central Park. 'A jug of wine,' 'a loaf of bread,' all the better for not being imported," and as he spoke, he placed the bottle of California claret securely on the grass at one side of him, and the five cent loaf on the other.

"Yes," he continued; "nothing is lacking but 'Thou'! However," looking at his dollar watch which still remained to him, the only kind of watch we can never lose, "it is only half past six, a little early to expect her yet; also, perhaps, a little early for claret," he added presently, as he deftly pushed in the cork of the bottle with a strong finger; "but Omar's instructions are imperative—the red rose of dawn must be greeted with draughts of the red wine. 'Come fill the cup.' But alas! I have no cup—well, the dawn must be content with my drinking to her out of the bottle."

So Septimus lifted up his eyes and lips to the morning sky and drank to the risen day in the red wine of California. Then, with his pocket knife he sawed off a thick slice from his loaf of bread, and as it and the claret made somewhat sour acquaintance in his morning stomach, he murmured:

"Would you forget a woman—drink red wine;  
Would you remember her—then drink red wine.  
Is your heart breaking just to see her face?  
Gaze deep within this mirror of—red wine."

Septimus had, the afternoon before, abruptly decided upon a change in his way of life. He was the son of a well-to-do dry-goods man, and for three years had been a clerk in his father's counting-house, supposedly "learning the business." But Septimus's mother had been a little French woman with romantic eyes, and it is to be feared that

to her account must be laid the fact of Septimus being that saddest of all family disappointments—a poet.

To the bewilderment of his father, and others engaged in it, Septimus didn't take to the dry-goods business. Why a promising young man should prefer literature to the dry-goods business, and books of poems to books of account, I do not pretend to explain. But the phenomenon occasionally happened, and it had happened in the case of Septimus Maugan. His relatives shook their heads over such unheard of tastes, and that mysterious entirety, "the firm," of which his father was only one, though the chief member, could n't make young Mr. Septimus out at all. It was not merely his incorrigible idleness, and his absorption in other tasks than those allotted to him, that the firm occasionally murmured at,—it had even yesterday made a formal protest against his personal appearance; his Liszt-shaped hair, his soft, silk necktie, his romantic hat; the firm had mildly requested him to try and look a little more like a young dry-goods man! Septimus had taken the affront as a compliment, declared that he would die first, and flung out of his father's counting-house never to return. For him in future, eat or starve, life should be the life poetic, the life for which he was born. After all, the needs of the poetic life were few. Had not the great Persian tabulated them in a formula so simple that the poorest poet could apply it:

" A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,  
A jug of wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou  
Beside me, singing in the wilderness—  
O, wilderness were Paradise enow! "

So Septimus, half seriously, half humorously, had decided to celebrate his first day of freedom by an up-to-date application of Omar's famous quotation. As for the days to follow, had he not a book of unpublished verses under his arm, wherewith to buy his simple necessities, the loaf of bread and the jug of wine? The "Bough" was given free by the City authorities—but "Thou"—ah, where was "Thou"?

Pending the arrival of "Thou," Septimus unrolled his manuscript, and read his own poems half-aloud with much feeling and intense pleasure, only turning aside from them now and again to drink red wine, and munch his loaf of bread in obedience to the Master's command. This reading of his poems gave him not only æsthetic and personal satisfaction, it also gave him a profound sense of security in a world which, however inclement to other poets, could not, he felt certain, allow the poet of such verses to starve.

As he read, as poets will, he half forgot his surroundings, keeping

only the sense of the fresh green and the morning sky, oblivious of the occasional passer-by who eyed curiously the odd young figure under the tree, murmuring musically to himself. But presently, he was aroused from his reverie by a tiny figure with bright eyes, a great brush-like tail, and quaintly beseeching paws. It was a Park squirrel, foraging for peanuts. Septimus looked up.

"An omen," he said, laughing whimsically to himself. "Like Orpheus, I attract the very animals with the sound of my voice. If I am not careful I shall have these rocks and trees coming a-begging for my autograph.

"Little creature," he continued, "you are my first disciple,—I haven't a peanut in the world. Omar quite forgot to mention peanuts."

At that moment a bare-foot urchin passed by, intent on any entertaining mischief that might come his way, and Septimus hailed him.

"Go and buy me five cents' worth of peanuts," he said, giving him the necessary nickel. "And if you come back with them in safety, I will give you ten cents."

The urchin disappeared in a flash, and it seemed scarcely more than a flash ere he returned. Meanwhile, the squirrel got what fun he could out of a crust of bread; and on the arrival of the peanuts, he and Septimus became fast friends for the day.

The Park was now beginning to wake up to its daily business as a public park. The benches began to fill, and the passers-by became more frequent. A park-keeper, or an occasional park policeman blossomed here and there on the asphalt walks; and presently began the beautiful morning procession of smart young type-writers, and "sales-ladies," like a morning stream of morning glories, swiftly, and yet in maiden meditation, on their way to meet—nine o'clock. Septimus lost interest in his manuscript as this tide of enchantment set in, and he watched it in silence, watched it for "Thou"—only occasionally murmuring to himself a line from one of his unpublished poems: "The girls that never can be mine."

"The girls that never can be mine!  
 In every lane and street  
 I hear a voice that sounds like Thine,  
 The patter of small feet.  
 Straightway I follow fleet—  
 O love, alas! they are not thine.  
 They are not half so sweet.  
 And, even worse, they are not mine!"

"Thou" was evidently not an early riser; and, as Septimus thought it over, and watched that pretty tide of morning glories, he was glad that she was not.

Soon those flowers, commonly called babies, began to dot the lawn, and run up and down the green slopes, watched by the proud wistful eyes of young mothers. Septimus, too, watched them with hardly less affectionate attention. He liked looking at them even more than at the beautiful "sales-ladies." And his eyes were not lost either upon the mothers or the babies. There is nothing in the world so vain as a girl baby of three years old, no such consummate flirt. You have but to look at her for her to put on all the airs of a finished coquette. Such a young Eve had for some time been running up and down the green bank on which our Central Park Omar was seated, and each time she ran up or down she looked through the corner of her eye roguishly to see if her feat had been appreciated by the big gentleman sitting under the tree, who was so evidently in love with her.

Septimus, observing her wiles, pretended to be indifferent, and soon a little blonde, blue-eyed creature, hardly bigger than his squirrel, was touching his arm, and looking up into his face with all the confidence of her divine innocence; a little voice said:

"Are you the weather man?"

And, as she said this, Septimus's heart smote him, for he was absolutely out of candy.

However, that young urchin who had been the peanut messenger, having by this time consumed his ten cents in such dissipations as were to be bought for the money, was at the moment hovering near, with an eye to further business. Septimus hailed him.

"Run as fast as you can, and bring a half a pound of candy, and I will give you fifteen cents when you get back."

Once more the urchin was gone in a flash, and in a flash returned; and Septimus and the three year old Eve were fast friends till a smiling appreciative young Irish woman felt it was time to end the flirtation by wheeling a much candified young lady home in a mail cart, from which cries and sobs of farewell resounded for some distance through the green boughs.

After Baby Eve had gone, Septimus felt lonely for a little while, but soon a sadder and a wiser group of three, two women and a man, arrested his attention. They belonged to that nondescript class for which there seems to be no other word than "respectable." They were not working people, and yet they were. One might say they belonged to the upper-lower middle-class, the class that gives us our foremen and forewomen, and an occasional chauffeur. They made a somewhat uncomfortable group, but not a really sad one. They were too middle class to be sad. The man had evidently been drinking over night, and his wife and mother had with the best intentions brought him out into the morning Park,—to hear the birds.

The mother was a dear old lady with almost entire innocence of

the situation. The wife was pretty, but a little peaked—with sitting up waiting, one might surmise, for the Omar Khayyam footfall on the stairs. The man, a good-looking fellow enough, except for a certain common conceit in himself, which is a mark of his class, sat silent and morose, vouchsafing scarcely a grunt to the somewhat over-acted delight of his companions in the vernal prospect that surrounded them. For some reason, he seemed to have lost interest in birds, and when asked for the name of that tree, he seemed entirely disinclined to give it.

Presently the mother's voice floated up to Septimus under his tree. "Don't you think a nice cup of strong tea would be good for you, John?"

John seemed to take as little interest in a nice strong cup of tea as he did in the flowers and trees of Central Park. His wife gently shook her head at her mother-in-law. That was not the way.

Presently the mother, who seemed to be one of those lovable, innocent persons entirely without that guile which is tact, essayed again.

"Perhaps, John," she said, turning to a fruiterer's paper-bag at her side, "perhaps you would like a peach?"

This seemed really too much for John. At least it aroused him, and he looked at his mother with a sad, stern look, as much as to say that the eating of peaches was a weakness, even a vice, for which he had no sympathy whatsoever.

Humbly in the wrong, the mother subsided, and silence once more fell upon the group, till presently John turned to his wife. "Give me some money," he said.

She looked at him straight and cold and yet pitiful, and gave him half a dollar. The mother had not noticed this proceeding. Her pure old heart was occupied with this rare holiday of hers in Central Park. "It is an ill wind——"

So when John with strange suddenness recovered from his inertia and sped toward the Seventh Avenue entrance to the Park, the mother asked in all ignorance: "Where is John going?" and the wife answered: "He has gone to send a telegram. He will be back in a moment."

And John returned presently in a much more genial mood, and seating himself, took a flask from his pocket and drank.

And the mother, once more diplomatic, said: "You seem better now, John, but do you think that that whiskey is good for you? Don't you think it would do you good to have a little walk? I know how it is. You have been working too hard. You need a change. What do you say, Mary? Suppose we go and see the animals! They might cheer you up a little."

As John was by this time in a more accommodating mood, the

proposition seemed less fantastic than it would have seemed a few minutes before. Even now it did not seem to exactly fascinate him. However, as a concession to the two sad women who loved him, John went—to see the animals.

Septimus had watched the little drama with all the sinister intelligence of youth. As it moved away drearily to see the animals, he said to himself, moralizing thus: "Poor fellow! you give me distastefully, and, of course, quite unnecessarily, the symbol of the false Omarian, the man who has taken Omar Khayyam's name in vain, and misunderstood and misapplied his many-sided philosophy. You, 'poor John,' who must now, for your sins, wearily gaze at what your dear mother calls 'the animals,' you have, apparently, only assimilated one fourth of that quotation which is the Master's philosophy—you have remembered the 'jug of wine' and forgotten the rest. Like so many followers of Omar, you forgot the 'Loaf of Bread,' forgot the 'Book of Verses,' and more than forgot, nay, insult and despitefully use, the faithful 'Thou' at your elbow, who would die for your sake."

Now as Septimus eloquently pronounced the word "Thou," soliloquizing dramatically as his manner was, an old man who had been observing him for some time with a sad, amused expression—a shabby, distinguished, white-haired old man, with that unmistakable face which we call "the map of Ireland"—rose from his bench and advanced towards him up the slope. Septimus smiled him an invitation, and as the old man arrived "beneath the Bough" he made a courtly gesture to Septimus, after the manner of his wonderful race, and speaking in perfect Irish, said: "Young sir, I would not disturb your studies, but I confess to a curiosity as to the subject of them."

"I," answered Septimus, with a smile in which the jug of wine was beginning to predominate over the loaf of bread, "I am a disciple of Omar Khayyam, and to-day is his birthday."

"Omar—what?" asked the Irishman.

"Saint Omar, don't you know?"

"Do you mean where the priests come from?" asked the old man, who like all his countrymen was a devout Catholic, with a far away cousin at St. Omer.

"The very same," answered Septimus.

"And 'tis him you are celebrating?"

"It is indeed."

"Ah, he was a great Irishman!"

"Won't you drink to him, too?"

"On your life, I will——"

And so old Tim Mulligan, who had been, he explained, the champion middleweight of his day, though now grown old and fallen upon

evil days, set the bottle of California claret to his lips and drank. He put it down with a wry face.

"Did the Saint drink this?" he said.

"He did," answered Septimus.

"Communion wine, I suppose," said the ex-prize-fighter.

"I guess so," answered Septimus. "You see, 'Rye' was n't invented in those days."

"Too bad," said the old man sadly.

"But happily it is now," Septimus continued, slipping something very like his last dollar bill into the old man's hand.

Old Tim Mulligan, who had for some time been desirous of celebrating the glorious return of day in his own manner, but had so far pondered in vain on the wherewithal, now took a ceremonious farewell of Septimus, with many prophecies as to the illustrious future in store for him, when old Tim Mulligan should be no more.

Now the time has come to explain that our little Septimus was by no means a practised Omarian. A few bottles of beer would probably represent the tavern room of his young life. He was also accustomed to a great boyish breakfast, and it was now nearing noon. Therefore his unaccustomed poetical fare began suddenly to tell on him in a way with which the world at large is familiar, but with which he now became acquainted for the first time. Was it the "Loaf of Bread" or the "Jug of Wine" that accounted for this strange dreaming inertia, this jocular paralysis of his members, these fantastic whims of a body that so far had been so athletically under his control, and for a certain vociferous elation which impelled him to saw the air, and recite his Master in a voice that was anon explosive as a volcano, and anon as gentle as the dying breeze?

While Septimus was wondering what was the matter with him, and yet feeling strangely contented and even saucy all the time, a burly blue-coated figure turned the corner of the shrubbery and gazed with considerable interest at the young philosopher. The form took further observations, and then valiantly advanced up the slope. He took Septimus for a Columbia boy, and so was wary. Now there are some patrolmen who like Columbia boys, and some who for some strange reason do not. Our Park policeman was one of the latter, and it must be added that either the "Loaf of Bread" or "Jug of Wine" had brought Septimus to that spiritual condition when nothing seems so amusing as the precarious diversion of "jollyng" a member of the New York police. So as patrolman No. 163,257 approached up the slope, Septimus smiled banteringly upon him, and believing it the height of wit, said, "Can this be 'Thou'?"

The answer of 163,257 was brutally brief.

"You are under arrest," he said.

The rest is silence—till next morning in an adjacent police court, when Septimus as one of a number of fellow Omarians, stood before a cold and busy magistrate, all too accustomed to Omarians—under another name.

Asked the charge against the prisoner, patrolman 163,257 deposed that he had found him in Central Park, behaving in a very strange manner, with a half-eaten loaf of bread under one arm and an empty claret bottle under the other. Both these articles were in custody at the police station. Also a quantity of manuscript, which appeared to be poetry. When the prisoner was arrested, he made the extraordinary remark, "Can it be thou?"

"What is your profession?" asked the magistrate turning to Septimus.

"I am a poet."

"How do you account for your behavior yesterday in a public park?"

"I was celebrating the birthday of the poet Omar."

"Are you an Englishman?"

"No, your honor."

"Why then do you drop your aitches? You mean 'Homer.'"

"Pardon me, your honor, I mean Omar, Omar Khayyam of Naishapur."

"Never heard of him," grunted the magistrate; and then finished, as he turned to the next Omarian on the line: "I fine you five dollars. You look like a gentleman. Try in future to behave like one."

"I thank your worship," said Septimus, and withdrew.



## RANDOM PHILOSOPHY

Hate is often unconscious fascination.

The ocean roars only where it is shallow.

Titania was not the last woman to love a donkey.

Reform is a plant that grows well in the sunlight of publicity.

If friends are regarded as assets only, we will soon spend them.

Red tape is the bandage that keeps a mummified institution together.

The gossip deserves credit for choosing some one more interesting than himself to talk about.

*George Llewellyn Rees*



NO. 1000  
ANNAPOLIS

# THE FIRST INDORSEMENT

*By Leila Burton Wells*

COLONEL ALLEN sat in his office, his hand resting on a set of charges which had recently been laid on his desk. A great frown ploughed its way up to the white crest of his hair, and his eyes rested in sombre contemplation on the grassy slope that lay carpet-wise before his window, rolling down in straight, shaven splendor to meet a fringe of bamboo trees in the west.

Heartlessly cutting his window in two, a slender pole, straight and shapely as a bayonet, rose into the dense tropical sky, flaunting a star-spattered flag.

Colonel Allen had followed that flag from his boyhood, and his father and grandfather had followed it before him. His heart knew no music save the rattle of drums and the pipe of bugles. He was a soldier first, and everything else afterwards.

In his face all who ran might read the story of a blameless life, traced in indelible characters of fidelity and truth. There were no harsh lines anywhere, for time had wrinkled the yellow ivory of the skin softly; and from under the shaggy brows two keenly tolerant eyes looked out, guarded above by a dome-like brow, and below by a warning jaw. He held his head high, as befitted a man who had led men, and his smile was frequent and genial; yet one might pick him out from a thousand as a man whom sorrow had not ignored.

The case of the soldier whose charges Colonel Allen had been investigating had touched him unwontedly. Not that the man was innocent; for the witnesses had been examined with painstaking care, and there was scarcely the shadow of a doubt of his guilt. But the accused was young—so young that the honorless years that stretched before him seemed to the older man pitiful almost beyond conception.

The colonel was very lenient toward youth; for his own son, had he lived, would have been about the age of this boy. The memory of that young, dauntless life that he had hoped to lead into the high places touched him still with the pungency of a first sorrow. Nothing had seemed of much moment since he had lost his boy. The days had come and gone, and brought their meed of pleasure and honor; but ever a voice in his heart cried out for that other life, that should have carried into another generation the name he himself had held so stainless.

Unconsciously Colonel Allen crumpled the paper under his hand. Some parent had had high hopes for this boy, too, and by his own act the son had made them things of naught.

With a suppressed sigh, the colonel unfolded the crumpled sheets and read the charges through again.

In that Sergeant John Wilde, Troop "M," —th Cavalry, being in charge of Troop "M" Cavalry Mess, and as such having in charge the said Troop rations, did, in violation of the 62d Article of War, barter and sell certain portions of said rations, and fraudulently convert the proceeds to his own personal use.

This at Pasay Barracks, on or about the 25th day of June, 190—

The colonel slowly folded and creased the paper and placed a little bronze weight upon it. He drummed abstractedly on the desk with his fingers, his eyes again seeking the strip of green before his window.

As if it had been etched upon the sword, he saw the man's whole life history. His own unfavorable indorsement, the dishonorable discharge and subsequent imprisonment; and then—what?

He put his hand before his eyes as if to shut out the picture. He had seen it so often—the gradual slope downward of a life that had begun with fair promise.

He drew his brows together, and stretched out his hand to the bell. Well, as a man has sowed, so must he reap. Life is, after all, only a great battle-field, encumbered with the victor and the vanquished; and the one cannot stop to pluck the other out of the ditch. The coward or the wrongdoer has little chance in that great rush toward the goal of victory, for a false step at the beginning may tumble him into a bottomless pit, from which there is no emerging. Colonel Allen had no patience with a man smeared with the slime of dishonor; but he condemned none without a hearing.

When the orderly appeared in answer to his ring, the colonel directed him to have prisoner John Wilde brought in without delay; and, turning again to his desk, busied himself with his papers.

The band was playing at guard-mounting—some popular air with a plaintive melody running through it. Unconsciously the colonel tried to fit the words to the music, but they eluded him, though they were quite familiar. He stirred restlessly. The hot breeze brushed against the ylang-ylang tree in front of his office, and little breaths of perfume drifted past his window. From far off he could see the sapphire sky dipping into the solemn silver waters of the bay, and the ragged arms of the banana palms laced across the sunburned hills. Everything was instinct with vivid, palpitating life, but the scheme of color was laid on so recklessly that it irritated rather than soothed. Nature seemed to

have outdone herself in her efforts to conceal the manifestations of disease and death which lay hidden beneath her radiant garments.

The colonel felt a curious sense of impending evil. The band was marching nearer, and again came that haunting refrain. What were the words? He had heard Helen humming them only yesterday—something about a mother who had sacrificed her sons to her country. It was good to give one's sons up that way. It had not been permitted him even to know where his boy was laid, or how he had died. The news of his death had come, and nothing more. That was the colonel's cross, and it was a heavy one. All his hopes lay buried in that unknown grave.

Sighing, he brushed back the damp hair from his brow; and when the orderly reported: "Prisoner John Wilde, sir," he did not lift his head.

"Bring him in," he directed, reaching for his pen to put his signature to an order.

There was a moment's pause—afterward it seemed to the colonel that that blessed respite must have lasted a century; that respite in which he fingered his papers carelessly, without *knowing*.

Measured steps sounded along the hall, and the door was opened to admit the prisoner. The colonel opened a drawer to place an important paper therein, and then lifted his head . . .

There was silence in the great room—the silence that comes before death or disaster. Through the pulseless quiet, the adjutant's voice could be heard dictating a report, and the nervous click-click of a typewriter in the sergeant major's office.

After what seemed a lifetime, the colonel lifted his head and spoke—and, to his surprise, his voice sounded absolutely natural.

"Leave the prisoner with me," he said slowly, "and do not let me be disturbed. You can wait in the adjoining office"—to the sentinel. "I will ring when I want you."

He was silent while the door opened and closed; and then, as the prisoner took an impulsive step forward, he raised a peremptory hand.

"Wait!" he said commandingly, and walked swiftly toward the adjutant's office.

"Desmond," he said, addressing the officer seated at the desk, "I want you to go at once to the quartermaster, and speak to him about that road I pointed out to you last night. Get his answer, and bring it to me here."

He gripped the woodwork of the door with his trembling hand as the young officer arose and reached for his cap.

"Do you wish to sign these before I go, sir?" he asked, indicating some orders on the desk.

"No," the colonel said, forcing himself to speak calmly; "leave

them here, and I will attend to them later. There is nothing special, is there?"

"No, sir; nothing special."

The colonel waited in a sort of agony while the younger man gathered some papers together and stepped out into the hall; then he went back into his own room, closed and locked the doors between the two offices, and turned to look at the man who stood there.

The prisoner's face was turned away from the light, his hands were locked against his sides. He might have been hewn out of granite, so still he was; not a muscle of his superb frame even quivered. The colonel felt something tighten in his throat, and a strange sensation that he might have called fear, if he had ever known fear, overpowered him. He tried to speak twice before his voice came, and when it did it was frozen and threadlike. He stretched out his hands, that had somehow grown old and tremulous in a moment, to that immovable figure.

"Come here to the window," he whispered, "and let me look at you." All the command had gone from his voice; it was the wailing prayer of one who is afraid of a blow.

With an automaton-like movement the prisoner turned his face to the window, and the full laughing sunlight picked out every feature with nice distinctness.

The colonel looked, and looked, and looked again; and all the agony of the crucifixion was in his face. His eyes, which were the bravest eyes in the world, had the hunted stare of one who has been struck from behind, without realizing the extent of the hurt he has received. He had no words—nothing but that horrible, uncomprehending, terrified stare. Was this man before him really his own son? Bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh? Was this the boy that had issued from the sanctity of his home? *This?*

Suddenly, with a great and exceeding bitter cry, the prisoner tore himself away from those eyes, and fell crouching to the floor, hiding his face.

"Father!" he moaned. "Father——"

And the colonel, hearing, shivered as if a cold wind had blown over him, and stared dizzily around the room—at the huddled figure, at the rows of military books, at the sunlight; he even listened to the distant music of the band—

One was killed at Appomattox many miles away;  
The other sleeps at Chickamauga——

He strode over and, stretching forth his hands, took the bowed head in them, and studied the face feature by feature.

No, there was no mistake. There were the same reckless eyes, the

same high cheek bones; the weak chin with the cleft in it, which he had tried to think would strengthen with age; the wavy bronze hair, so like——

The colonel suddenly dropped his hands and covered his face.

"It is true!" he whispered, shuddering. "*True!*" And then, with a mighty effort, as if the words were wrenched from him, he stared out at the heartless sky, crying aloud: "And their bullets spared me for—*this!*"

"Father——"

"Stand up, sir!" The colonel's voice rang out as if on a battlefield. At its tone an army would have moved. "Stand up and let me look at you—*my son!*"

The prisoner somehow got to his feet, and raised his head. His face was whiter than paper, and tears had blurred it.

So they stood staring into each other's eyes—father and son! Only a few feet separating them, yet as widely divided as if all the seas lay between.

At last the older man spoke, and his voice was devoid of emotion.

"Thank God," he said slowly, "that your mother is dead."

A spasm of pain twisted the prisoner's face, and the knuckles of his knotted hands showed white; but he made no answer.

"Why are you not dead, too?" went on his father dispassionately. "I want to understand—how is it that you are still alive—and can come to me like this?"

The prisoner was silent. He wet his dry lips, but no word came.

"How is it that you are still alive?"—again that inexorable voice.

This time the dry lips opened. "I let you think me dead, sir. It was the kindest thing. I never thought to look in your face again. I wanted to spare you disgrace——"

"You wanted to spare me——?"

"I hoped you would never know. It worked out so well. It was at Fort Meade, sir, that I got into trouble the first time. I got in with that crowd at Leed City, and—it was over a game of cards. They gave me a week to pull out, and they swore to expose me if I refused. You wondered why I was so anxious to take that trip to California. It was my only chance. I lived through hell in those days before I left. I was afraid to look in your face. Then came the accident on the Oakland ferry, and my opportunity. They printed my name in the list of dead, and I made no denial. I enlisted under an assumed name, and shipped on the first transport to the islands." The words caught in his throat. "I knew there was no good in me. I—I was afraid of myself——"

"Go on!"

"I wanted to keep the old name clean; and I was never fit for anything but the barracks—never from the first. I fell from the high

places to the low places; and the low places suited me. Oh, father, I was always afraid of—your goodness! It lay on me like a hand of iron. I would have died rather than have you know my low instincts. I thought it a fine thing to get out from under your influence, and go the pace; but I meant—a quick flush rose to his brow and his eyes dropped—"I meant——"

"Go on!"

"I meant, sir, to be *honest*." He lifted his head for a moment with defiant pride, and there was an almost terrifying glimpse of the likeness between the two men—the stainless soldier and the thief!

The colonel clutched the arms of his chair with his shaking hands. The veins stood out on his forehead like gnarled ropes.

"Then, this," he said slowly, touching the paper on the desk—"this is true?"

The prisoner was silent.

"Is it true, sir?"

Again the question remained unanswered. There was no sound in the room, save the little whispering hiss of a quickly drawn breath. The colonel's eyes no longer condemned; they were filled with a great, hopeless terror. He moved with the slow listlessness of a person who has recovered from a long illness.

His son, watching him, groaned aloud.

"I tried to go straight, sir," he almost wailed. "God knows, when I let you think I was dead, and came over here far away from all who knew me, I meant to live a clean life; but there is something inside that drags me down! I can fight and die like your son, but—I can't live that way!"

For the first time the colonel bowed his white head! It was for this, then, that he had worked and struggled and achieved. To have his very integrity turned against him! This thing with the prison looming big behind was his own son! This was the boy who had knelt at his mother's knee, and lisped a baby prayer. This was the same gallant little figure he had set astride his big cavalry horse, and who had cried dauntlessly: "Let go the reins, father. I'm not afraid."

No, he had never been afraid. He could shoot straight and ride straight, but he could not live straight. He, with his mother's divine blood in his veins, could stoop to dishonor. The colonel lifted his haggard face to the strip of blue sky visible through his window, as if he would pierce the shadows of the unknown.

"Mary," he whispered pathetically, unconsciously speaking aloud, "my only comfort is that you cannot see—that *you cannot see!*" His voice trembled, and with a sudden panting cry he held out his arms. "My boy!" he sobbed; and again: "My boy!"

The prisoner, stricken as with palsy, fell on his knees.

## The First Indorsement

"I am not worthy," he stammered. "Nothing can ever make me worthy of your pain. Let me go out of your life again, and be as one dead. If I could have killed myself when I knew they would bring me before you, I would have done it gladly, but I was under guard. How could I imagine my trial would take place here? I knew you were in the islands, but how could I picture *this*?" A sudden convulsion contracted his face, and he stretched out pleading hands. "No one need ever know," he urged in a whisper. "If I do not come to trial, or if you could put a favorable indorsement——"

"What do you mean?"

The colonel lifted his head, and in his eyes the quick light of action sprang. He stretched out his hand with a protective gesture toward the charges.

"What do you mean?" he repeated.

His son's eyes fell.

"Only, that—you might—hush it up. It all lies in your hands."

"You would have me lie?"

The question burst like a thunderbolt in the quiet room.

"It would not be a lie, for you do not know——"

"You have told me that you are guilty!"

"It could be forgotten. You do not *know*!"

"God!"

The colonel lifted a ghastly face. For the first time, full realization came home to him. Those innocent bits of paper under his hand were pregnant with horror. It was his own son he must send before a tribunal which would be certain to condemn him. The charges but awaited his signature——

He steadied himself and tried to piece things together. There were ways of defeating justice—he had the power in his hands if he would but use it. No one would know. He repeated that tempting sentence over to himself, snatching greedily at the hope it offered. No one would know! Though in his heart he hugged a leprous secret, eating away by loathsome stages the white record of his life, the world would remain in ignorance. He would not live to be pointed out as the father of a thief! Great drops of agony broke out on his brow. It was not just that a man should condemn his own, and—ah, it was bitter at the end of a long life to face disgrace——

He had reached out his hand for his pen when suddenly out of the silence came a girl's voice. He started and put out a horrified hand. He had forgotten——

"Daddy!" called the voice. "Daddy!"

The prisoner went livid! His lips formed a name, but he could not utter it. He trembled where he stood. Then——

"Don't let her come in," he gasped.

The colonel rose to his feet.

"Dad!"

Those in the room were trying to compose themselves.

"Come to the window, dad. I've something to tell you."

Mechanically the colonel obeyed the girlish voice; and the prisoner from his corner saw dainty feminine hands reining a big horse over the grass. A face like sunshine was framed for a moment in the window, and two serene blue eyes touched with laughter looked into the colonel's grim visage. The prisoner heard a voice dainty and clear, with the music of home and peace in it, a voice that was strangely like his mother's—

He crouched down as if he had been struck with a lash. His sister—and she did not *know!* God keep her from ever knowing! He crushed his hands into his ears, that he might not hear—

"Hurry up with your old papers, then," the voice was saying. "I don't believe they are important—not as important as what I have waiting for you at home! My something has captain's shoulder straps, and wears yellow stripes, and is the dearest thing in the world—next to you! Do let the old office go, just this once. You promised to see him this morning, and he has come all the way from Manila." There was a pause, and a reply in the colonel's deep tones, inaudible to the other man. Then the girl gave a teasing laugh. "I'll wait just twenty minutes, then—not an instant longer. But why can't I come in?"—petulantly.

The prisoner shivered.

"Because——" The colonel's voice broke and then went on evenly—"because I am interviewing a prisoner."

"A prisoner? Oh, I'll go, then. But don't be hard on him, Dad. He may have a sweetheart somewhere."

"And a father," said the colonel slowly.

"A father, of course!" Her gay laugh rang out. "Not that that matters, for fathers are heartless things—fussing over orders and indorsements, and interviewing prisoners, and making themselves generally disagreeable, when they ought to be at home, listening— Now, don't frown—I am going this minute. Come along, Dandy. We have been dismissed. No, it is no use detaining me!"—touching her horse with a little imperious hand. "I refuse to stay where I am not wanted. If any one asks me where you are," she called back, with a little rebellious pout, "I shall tell them that you are doing your duty!" She threw a mischievous smile over her shoulder. "Is it horrid, dad, doing one's duty?" she demanded, flying off into the sunshine, and laughing as she flew.

"Is it horrid, doing one's duty?"—the colonel repeated the thoughtless question mechanically, as he turned to face the tragedy in the room.



He averted his eyes as something crept out of the corner and held out shaking hands. He dared not look.

"You heard her?" The words tumbled out through twisted lips. "Father, for her sake, be merciful!"

The young man's face was hideous with pain, and his great figure had no longer either shape or form; it was crumpled like a sapless leaf.

Without answering, the colonel stumbled over to his desk, and fumbled for his pen. His eyes were glazed so that he could hardly see. He knew that mess call was sounding, and that if he wrote he must write quickly. There must be no suspicion.

A butterfly, fluttering in through the wide window, brushed against his cheek. Startled, he raised his head—and there, blown out against the cloudless sky, stars and stripes burned to white silver in the sun, floated his country's flag!

It was the flag he had fought and bled for; the flag that he had hoped would wrap him in his grave, and guard him in his long sleep—and he was called upon to betray it! He whose life had been one long prayer of service; whose obedience to its call had been a by-word in the army! Something fluttered in his throat, and there was a noise as of cannon booming in his ears.

He looked and looked, and the sweat gathered on his brow.

He did not know how long he sat there fighting with himself; but he did know when, with an effort that seemed to shake the very centre of his being, he took up his pen and wrote.

The bugle was still sounding, and somebody was laughing outside, as he handed the paper to his son, and bowed his white head on his arms.

"First Indorsement.

"Respectfully forwarded to the Military Secretary, Department of Luzon.

"I have personally investigated this case——"

The room was going around as the prisoner picked out the words, struggling with them, fighting them. His father's hand had written them; his father's kind hand which had never denied him anything. Why was he afraid?

"I have personally investigated this case, and in my opinion these charges can be sustained."

The boyish lips faltered pathetically, and then, after an almost imperceptible pause, he went on bravely:

"Trial by general courts-martial is recommended.

"REYNOLDS G. ALLEN,

"Colonel Commanding."



## HYPOCHONDRIA

BY GEORGE LINCOLN WALTON, M.D.

THE THIRD OF A SERIES OF FIVE POPULAR PAPERS ON WORRY AND ALLIED MENTAL STATES, WITH PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-CURE. THE PRECEDING PAPERS WERE "WORRY AND OBSESSION," IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER, AND "THE DOUBTING FOLLY" IN THE DECEMBER NUMBER, OF LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE.

*Il marche, dort, mange et boit comme tous les autres; mais cela n'empêche pas qu'il ne soit fort malade.*

MOLIÈRE (*Le malade imaginaire*).

THE hypochondriac is one who devotes undue attention to his own physical or mental condition, and who is unduly anxious regarding his health.

This state of mind does not, at first thought, seem a very serious trouble, but when the question of health occupies the entire attention of an individual, the condition is a most unhappy one, especially for his family and his friends. The tendency, even in mild form, narrows his field of usefulness and pleasure, and gradually sets him apart from his fellows. This is especially true since his fears are rarely strictly limited to matters of health. His anxiety to be perfectly well is generally accompanied by an anxiety to be perfectly comfortable and perfectly safe, an anxiety which itself paves the way to mental discomfort, and causes the over-cautious to appear a coward.

The hypochondriac may offer the picture of health, or may have some real ill regarding which he is unduly anxious.

Let us study the typical hypochondriac as he presents himself to the physician. The consultation is preceded by one or more letters explaining his exact condition, naming the previous consultants and

describing the various remedies he has taken. At the time of his visit voluminous notes are consulted, lest some detail be omitted. In his description anatomical terms abound; thus, he has pain in his lungs, heart, or kidney, not in his chest or back. Demonstration by the physician of the soundness of these organs is met by argument, at which the hypochondriac is generally adept.

The suggestion that he devotes undue attention to his own condition is met with indignant denial. Proposals that he should exercise, travel, engage in games, or otherwise occupy himself, fall on deaf ears, but he is always ready to try a new drug.

If a medicine is found with whose ingredients the patient is not already familiar, its use is likely to produce a beneficial effect for a few days, after which the old complaints return.



A certain lady is said to be so dominated by the fear of cancer that she rarely leaves her house, and then only for a drive upon unfrequented roads. After the departure of a visitor, I am told, the hangings are removed and the rugs shaken.

Another case which came to my attention is that of a young man who, for fear of taking cold, remains in bed, with the windows of the room tightly closed and a fire constantly burning. He has allowed his hair to grow until it reaches his waist, he is covered with several blankets, wears underclothes under his nightshirt, and refuses to extend his wrist from under the bedclothes.

There are men of robust health who can neither stir abroad nor be left alone, on account of overwhelming fear of impending ill.

Such faulty mental habits in minor degree are common. There are those who will not drink from a bottle without first inspecting its mouth for flakes of glass; some will not smoke a cigar which has been touched by another; some will not shake hands if it can possibly be avoided; another pads his clothing lest he injure himself in falling. Many decline to share the occupations and pleasures of others through fear of possible wet feet, drafts of air, exhaustion, or other calamity. Such tendencies, though falling short of hypochondria, pave the way for hypochondria, and, in any event, gradually narrow the sphere of usefulness and pleasure.

No part of the body is exempt from the fears of the hypochondriac, but he is especially prone to centre his attention upon the obscure and inaccessible organs.

An anecdote is told of a physician who had a patient of this type—a big, robust woman who was never without a long list of ailments. The last time she sent for the doctor, he lost patience with her. As

she was telling him how she was suffering from rheumatism, sore throat, nervous indigestion, heartburn, pains in the back of the head, and what not, he interrupted her. "Ah," he said in an admiring tone, "what splendid health you must have in order to be able to stand all these complaints!"

The so-called phobias are so closely allied to hypochondria that it will not be out of place to discuss them here.

A phobia is an insistent and engrossing fear, without adequate cause as judged by ordinary standards.

Familiar instances are fear of open places (agoraphobia), fear of closed places (claustrophobia), and fear of contamination (mysophobia).

The sufferer from agoraphobia cannot bring himself to cross alone an open field or square. The sufferer from claustrophobia will invent any excuse to avoid an elevator or the theatre.

A lady, when asked if she disliked to go to the theatre or church, answered, "Not at all, but of course I like to have one foot in the aisle; I suppose every one does that."

The victim of mysophobia will wash the hands after touching any object, and will, so far as possible, avoid touching objects which he thinks may possibly convey infection. Some use tissue paper to turn the door-knob, some extract coins from the pocketbook with pincers.

I have seen a lady in a car carefully open a piece of paper containing her fare, pour the money into the conductor's hand, carefully fold up the paper so that she should not touch the inside, and afterwards drop it from the tips of her fingers into a rubbish barrel.

The case of a nurse who was dominated by fear of infection has come to my attention. If her handkerchief touched the table it was discarded. She became very adept at moving objects about with her elbows, and was finally reduced to helplessness and had to be cared for by others.



Those dominated by the conviction that they cannot stand noises or other sources of discomfort rarely reach the point of a certain old lady who used to wander from clinic to clinic, able to think of nothing else than the ringing in her ears, and to attend to no other business than efforts for its relief. She was counselled again and again that since nothing was to be found in the ears she should endeavor to reconcile herself to the inevitable, and to turn her thoughts in other directions. Unfortunately, she had become peculiarly adept in the detection of disagreeable sights, sounds, and other sources of irritation, and had for a long term of years practised quite the opposite of control. She had hitherto either insisted on discontinuance of all sources of

irritation, fled their neighborhood, or put on blue glasses and stopped her ears with cotton. When, finally, her sharpened sense caught the sound of her own circulation, she could think of nothing but this unavoidable source of discomfort, which was prepared to follow her to the uttermost parts of the earth.

To the hypochondriac who concentrates his attention upon the digestive tract, this part of his body occupies the foreground of all his thoughts. He exaggerates its delicacy of structure and the serious consequences of disturbing it even by an attack of indigestion.

A patient to whom a certain fruit was suggested said he could not eat it. He was asked what the effect would be. He answered that he did not know, he had not eaten any for twenty years and did not dare to risk the experiment.

Extreme antipathies to various foods are fostered among this class. A lady told me recently that she perfectly abominated cereals, that she simply could not stand vegetables, that she could not bear anything in the shape of an apple, that she could not abide spinach, and that baked beans made her sick at the stomach.



The heart is perhaps the organ most often the object of solicitude on the part of the hypochondriac. When we realize that the pulse may vary in the healthy individual from 60 to over 100, according to circumstances, and that mere excitement may send it to the latter figure, we may appreciate the feeling of the hypochondriac who counts his pulse at frequent intervals and is alarmed if it varies from a given figure.

Inspection of the tongue is a common occupation of the hypochondriac, who is generally more familiar than his medical attendant with the anatomy of this organ.

Insistent desire regarding the temperature is common not only among hypochondriacs, but among others. I do not allude to the internal temperature (though I have been surprised to learn how many people carry a clinical thermometer and take their own temperature from time to time); I refer to the temperature of the room or of the outside air.

The wish to feel a certain degree of warmth is so overpowering in some cases that neither work nor play can be carried on until the thermometer registers a certain figure. A person with this tendency dares not step out to mail a letter without donning hat and overcoat, and the mere thought of a cold bath causes him to shudder.

Golf has cured many a victim of this obsession. It takes only a few games to teach the most delicately constituted that he can remain for hours in his shirt-sleeves on quite a cold day, and that the cold

shower (preferably preceded by a warm one) invigorates instead of depressing him.

Further experiment will convince him that he can wear thin underwear and low shoes all winter. Such experiences may encourage him to risk a cold plunge in the morning, followed by a brisk rub and a few simple exercises before dressing.

Morbid fears in themselves produce physical manifestations which add to the discomfort and alarm of the hypochondriac. I allude to the rush of blood to the head, the chill, the mental confusion, and the palpitation. It is true that one cannot at will materially alter his circulation, but he can do so gradually by habit of thought. To convince ourselves of this fact, we need only to remember to what a degree blushing becomes modified in any individual by a change of mental attitude. Similarly, the person who has practised mental and physical relaxation will find that the blood no longer rushes to his head upon hearing a criticism or remembering a possible source of worry.

The automatic processes of the body are in general performed best when the attention is directed elsewhere. After ordinary care is taken, too minute attention to the digestive apparatus, for example, may retard rather than aid it.

Watching the digestion too closely is like pulling up seeds to see if they are growing.



The over-solicitous individual who finds himself drifting into hypochondria should remind himself that it would be better to have an attack of indigestion or a fit of sickness than to become a permanent hypochondriac; that the indigestion and the sickness are by no means certain, but that the hypochondria is sure to come if these faulty mental tendencies are encouraged.

I have known a dressmaker in a fair way to abandon her occupation through aversion to touching a pair of scissors or other object that had been handled by another, or even to shaking hands. It sufficed in her case to suggest this line of thought, and to point out the inevitable narrowing of her sphere of usefulness and pleasure through the domination of this habit of mind. In a short time she was seeking opportunities to shake hands, and to handle after others the tools of her trade, in order to practise her new-found freedom from self-inflicted trammels.

Even with regard to more tangible fears, as of elevators, fires, tunnels, and the like, a certain tranquillity may be gradually attained by a similar philosophy. Suppose instead of dwelling on the possibility of frightful disaster the sufferer practises saying, "The worst that can happen to me is no worse than for me to let these fears gradually

lessen my sphere of operations till I finally shut myself up in my chamber and become a confirmed hypochondriac." The pursuance of this line of thought may result in the former coward seeking, instead of avoiding, opportunities to ride in elevators and tunnels, and even to occupy an inside seat at the theatre, just to try his new-found power, and to rejoice in doing as others do, instead of being set apart as a hopeless "crank."

The more attention is paid to the sensations, the more they demand. Nor can the degree of attention they deserve be measured by their own insistence.

Try the experiment of thinking intently of the end of your thumb, and imagining it is going to sleep; the chances are ten to one that in five minutes it will have all the sensations of going to sleep.



If this is true of the healthy-minded individual, how much more must it be so in the person who allows his thoughts to dwell with prolonged and anxious attention on such parts of his body as may be the immediate seat of his fears. The next step is for various sensations (boring, burning, prickling, stabbing, and the like) to appear spontaneously, and, if attention is paid them, rapidly to increase in intensity.

Medical instructors are continually consulted by students who fear that they have the diseases they are studying. The knowledge that pneumonia produces pain in a certain spot leads to a concentration of attention upon that region which in itself tends to produce pain. The mere knowledge of the location of the appendix transforms the most harmless sensations in that region into symptoms of serious menace. The sensible student learns to quiet these alarms, but the victim of "hypos" returns again and again for examination, and perhaps finally reaches the point of imparting, instead of obtaining, information, like the patient in a recent anecdote from the *Youth's Companion*:

It seems that a man who was constantly changing physicians at last called in a young doctor who was just beginning his practice.

"I lose my breath when I climb a hill or a steep flight of stairs," said the patient. "If I hurry, I often get a sharp pain in my side. Those are the symptoms of a serious heart trouble."

"Not necessarily, sir," began the physician, but he was interrupted.

"I beg your pardon!" said the patient irritably. "It is n't for a young physician like you to disagree with an old and experienced invalid like me, sir!"

It is probable that the mere pressure of part upon part of the body, and even the ordinary activity of its organs, would give rise to sensations if we watched for them.

The term "imaginary" is too loosely applied to the sensations of the hypochondriac. This designation is unjustified, and only irritates the sufferer, rouses his antagonism, and undermines his confidence in the judgment of his adviser. He knows that the sensations are there. To call them imaginary is like telling one who inspects an insect through a microscope that the claws do not look enormous; they *do* look enormous—through the microscope—but this does not make them so. The worrier must learn to realize that he is looking at his sensations, as he does at everything else, *through a microscope!*

If a person living near a waterfall ignores the sound, he soon ceases to notice it, but if he listens for it, it increases, and becomes finally unbearable. Common sense teaches him to concentrate his attention elsewhere; similarly, it demands that the victim of "hypos" disregard his various sensations and devote his attention to outside affairs, unless the sensations are accompanied by obvious physical signs.

Intead of running to the doctor, let him *do* something—ride horse-back, play golf, anything requiring exercise out of doors. Let him devote his entire energy to the exercise, and thus substitute the healthy sensations of fatigue and hunger for the exaggerated pains and the anomalous sensations which are fostered by solicitous self-study.

Let him remember, moreover, that nature will stand an enormous amount of outside abuse, but resents being kept under close surveillance.

In practising the neglect of the sensations, one should not allow his mind to dwell on the possibility that he is overlooking something serious, but rather on the danger of his becoming "hipped," a prey to his own doubts and fears, and unable to accomplish anything in life beyond catering to his own morbid fancies.

*The subject treated in the February number will be "Sleeplessness."*



## MASTERY

BY CHARLOTTE PORTER

SOMETIMES the Angel in me's down  
 Struggling among men in the town;  
 Sometimes, aloof, along the peak,  
 Alone, it hears the Lord God speak.

Sometimes, it is so strong, I bear  
 His word to me where all men fare:  
 O best! if in the battling street  
 Life's harshest voice to me rings sweet!





## NURSING AN OIL DEAL

BY CHARLES U. BECKER

“YOU were speaking of fortunes in oil a while ago,” observed the blond-haired brakeman, entering the swaying caboos of cattle extra 916 and taking a seat beside me, as we pulled out of the yards at Topeka and headed for Kansas City. “Well, it was down in the oil-country—around Beaufort—that I cut my last wisdom tooth and came to realize just what kind of a swath fate mows through the plans of men.

“When I put an extra rubber-band around my thousand-dollar roll and lit out for the new oil-field, I fancied I was getting the early start that’d yield me the proverbial fat worm, but when I arrived I discovered about forty thousand men who’d started earlier.

“There was an alert-looking pack of real-estate agents lined up on the depot platform when I poked my head out of the car window. Yelling and jabbering, they closed in on the first passenger to alight, a dignified, portly chap, and rushed him back and forth until he suddenly vanished, leaving me in doubt as to his fate. Then they pounced upon the next one.

“To me it was a new kind of a reception, and I was busy taking observations and figuring what I’d do when it came my turn to step off when a red-faced, frenzied man saw me and claimed my undivided attention by charging. He stopped just before he collided with the car, and, fluttering a document under my nose, yelled frantically: ‘Sell five acres of Bean Lake! Sell five acres of Bean Lake!’

“‘What’s five acres of Bean Lake?’ I asked when he paused to catch his breath.

“‘Why, great snakes!’ he snorted. ‘Brother, I have saved you! Why, sir, it’s five acres in the very centre of what’s going to be the greatest oil-producing corner on earth that I’m offering you. Think

of it! Grab it, develop it, and you'll be able to light the world and bring a train-load of gold to your door. Sell five acres of Bean Lake!' he bellowed, and gave another exhibition flight into the murky, befuddling realm of adjectives.

"How much?" I ventured when he fell back.

"I'm ashamed to tell you," he whispered, after glancing furtively about. "Only ten thousand dollars per acre."

"Can that be possible!" I cried, feeling to make sure I still had my thousand.

"They're boring a hundred wells out there this minute," he continued rapidly, eying my pocket, "and they'd be boring a thousand if the railroad could bring rigs and piping here fast enough. One well is due to spout to-morrow, and when it comes in there'll be a stampede out of this town for the lake that'll live in history. Land values'll shoot heavenward till you'll have to make a balloon ascension to reach them."

"In view of those conservative statistics, your price is entirely too cheap."

"Don't I know it?" he fervently assured me. "It's the gospel I've been preaching up hill and down dale ever since my arrival. But I need a little development money. Take the five acres, and in a week you'll be a millionaire."

"Have you a family?"

"Wife and ten children—but what's that got to do with snapping up this gilt-edged bargain?"

"Everything. If you did n't have a family, I would n't hesitate about taking advantage of this splendid opportunity to enrich myself, but I have n't the heart to deprive your children of their daily bread. You keep the five acres until they make you a million, and then send the money to your children, with my compliments. I have n't a card with me, but my name's——"

"Great Scott!" he cried, backing away from me. "Say, you ain't looking for an oil-well. It's a sanitarium you want."

"If Beaufort had such an institution," I retorted, "you'd be a patient for treatment for running around trying to cheat your wife and children out of an inheritance."

"He did n't wait to hear any more, and I went up to the Jeff Davis Hotel, and got a bed for seventy-five cents. It was a cane-bottomed chair, all the other kinds having been preëmpted hours before my arrival. There being no more room around the wall of the hotel office, I took it outside under the twinkling stars and tilted it back against the building.

"Presently I noticed something sticking out of the pants pocket of the man on my right. As he was sound asleep, I leaned over to see what it was, and my heart skipped two or three beats, for it was a roll of

greenbacks—the biggest thing of the kind I'd ever seen! Naturally, I turned to see if the man on my left was awake. He was not, and I slapped my right cheek as though killing a mosquito—they being so plentiful that the destruction of an imaginary one would not attract attention—to determine whether I was just dreaming; for there was a huge roll bulging out of that man's pocket! Then, with little thrills chasing up and down my spine, I rose to reconnoitre, and, believe me truly, I counted sixteen rolls! There must have been more, because there were men sleeping out of reach of the light of the street lamp.

"And the sixteen men were snoring! I could n't see a policeman in either direction, and I sank back in bed to fight it out with myself. The idea of fleeing from Beaufort so soon did not appeal to me, for I had wandered two thousand miles to see an oil boom, and what I had observed convinced me that 'zee puffawmance vas not yait hawf ovah.'

"Well, after threshing the matter over carefully, I concluded there would be other nights, and that if I could n't find opportunity in the daytime I knew where she would be lurking in the limelight of a street lamp after the sun went down.

"Tilting my bed back against the wall, I courted sleep, but the utterly helpless condition of those rolls got on my nerves. After tossing restlessly about for quite a while, I rose and, taking my couch in one hand—because I'd noticed some men sitting on the sidewalk with their feet in the gutter, nodding—I went in to interview the proprietor of the Jeff Davis.

"'Don't you know,' I said, 'that you're in a fair way to ruin both the reputation of this hotel and the morals of the community?'

"'How so?' he inquired, with a lifting of the eyebrows.

"'Why, by letting men sleep in chairs on the sidewalk with rolls of money big enough to choke an elephant sticking from their pockets.'

"'We did n't use to allow it,' he laughed, 'but a man must tolerate a lot of things during an oil boom.'

"'Has n't Beaufort a safe bank?'

"'Best in the world. But say, you've just arrived, have n't you?'

"I said that I had come in on the evening train.

"'Well, then that explains your prejudice,' he said in a patronizing tone. 'You see, somebody's likely to be seized with a notion to sell something any minute of the night or day,' he condescended when I urged him to turn on more light, 'and lope down the street spreading the glad tidings. Checks, or running to the bank to get your money when you feel in a buying mood, don't go here, being entirely too cumbersome. In Beaufort you've got to be Johnny-at-the-rat-hole, with your wad between your left forefinger and thumb and ready to commence dealing when a bargain makes its appearance, or somebody'll reach over your shoulder and scoop it from under your nose.'

"I thanked him and retired, waking the next morning to find a line of men reaching from somewhere inside of the Jeff Davis to the sidewalk and down the street half a block. The uncut condition of their hair and the hang of their clothes told me they were natives.

"A man in line opposite me, observing me yawn and stretch my arms and legs to get rid of the cramps, said: 'Sell my place for six bits. Price inside is a dollar. I've got to run home and milk the cow.'

"'Price of what?' I bit eagerly.

"'Place in line to wash your face when you reach the tub.'

"'Get out! I'm no millionaire.'

"'Then,' replied he, appearing sorry for my helpless condition, 'fall in line and earn an honest dollar. You'll be sure to sell out before you reach the tub, and after the rush lets up a little you can run down to the river and clean up.'

"From the way the line was steadily advancing into the hotel, it was evident people inside were taking chances, and that there was good money in the occupation if the boom continued, but I figured it would take a scandalous lot of walking and waiting to make a million, so I turned that one down.

"When I returned from my bath in the river, business had opened in real-estate square, a vacant tract fenced off in the rear of the Jeff Davis, and it did n't take me two seconds to discover that all the land had changed hands so many times, lifting the price at each change, that my roll would n't buy a patch in the proved territory big enough for me to bore a well with a bridge auger. But I stood around listening to men handling ten, twenty-five, and fifty-thousand-dollar deals as if they were dimes, quarters, and halves, until I felt perfectly at home.

"It was during that tranquil period when I thought I had a hunch in the guise of an idea, and I pranced across the street to the office of Bingham and Jones, a firm owning or holding options on nine-tenths of the land in the proved territory. The place was alive with men, well-fed, prosperous-looking chaps, grouped about, conversing in whispers.

"Bingham sat at a roll-top desk, a stenographer at each elbow, tugging at his black mustache as he dictated letters and telegrams in tones reaching to the remotest corner of the office. I heard him send breezy messages to a dozen notoriously well-known millionaires about his rip-snorting bargains, advising them to rush their orders if they wanted to get in on the ground floor, before I stepped forth and said I desired to have a private talk with him.

"'This is my busy day,' he replied, studying the outlines of my figure over his shoulder. 'Please call later.'

"'It is a matter concerning your welfare,' I pressed, 'and I insist on doing my duty.'

"'Ah!' he ejaculated, and the stenographers, being well trained,

gave me a fleeting look and scattered to their machines without a sign from their chief. 'This way, please,' he added, leading me into the room where all the firm's heavy thinking was done.

"'Having deserted our happy firesides and perhaps come thousands of miles, for all you know,' I protested, after closing the door, 'it is n't fair to us for you to tip off all the good things to stay-at-home millionaires.'

"When he began a lecture on his duty to old customers who took whatever he offered, having learned that he never recommended anything rotten at the core, I cut him short with 'What'll you take for an acre of ground in the proved territory, you to bore the well and produce a gusher before I fork over the price?'

"'Why—why—you want to buy an acre with a flowing well?'

"'That's the nub of my meaning.'

"'It's a new idea. Lemme see,' he pleaded; and, pondering a few moments, added impressively: 'One hundred and forty thousand dollars.'

"'Sold!' I snapped, with a flourish of my arms, startling him. 'When can you begin boring?'

"'In—in the morning. You've bought the acre?'

"'Certainly. Start the drill at once, and have the contract ready for signing in the morning.'

"I was for rushing away, but at his earnest request hung around the main office, where the fat boys were whispering, blowing to everybody who'd stand hitched about the well that I was buying, but saying nothing concerning the price. Before the morning was half gone Bingham had sold six half-acre tracts, wells guaranteed, at the price I was to pay for an acre.

"And I was thankful the next morning that I'd done him that favor, for when we came to make the contract he had the nerve to request the deposit of seventeen hundred and fifty dollars in the Beaufort bank to cover the cost of drilling.

"'Back up there! Your foot's over the trace-chain,' I said frigidly. 'That's not the proper caper to cut when there's a procession of men waiting outside to sign contracts for wells. It might make them bashful about coming in here if they were to learn how much I'm getting for my money.'

"He saw my meaning, also the blow-holes in his position, and I side-stepped the deposit without any further debate.

"Those little routine matters being disposed of, I went out and encountered Anthony Rockwell, fresh from Wall Street, New York, a large suit-case in each hand, sweating and hurling frightful language at the evil genius which had led him to Beaufort. Being interested now in the good name of the town, his speech naturally shocked me, and I

stopped to uproot, if not too far advanced, the cancerous prejudice which was gnawing into his soul.

" 'I have enough money scattered about at home,' he confessed, his voice quavering, 'to buy this blooming, blasted, bloody burg, lock, stock, and barrel, and yet I can't find a bed. Why don't they stop this infernal clatter about oil and options long enough to bring in a train-load of beds? The savages ought to know that a man without a bed can't be in a decent trading humor. If I don't find one before the next train out, I'm going home.'

" While returning from my river bath the morning after my arrival I'd found a nice room in a large house at the edge of the town, and after Anthony had asked all the questions he could think of about beds, I told him of my find, offering to get an extra cot and share the room with him. He jumped my offer all spraddled out, and when he'd adjusted himself to my quarters later, he remembered to ask me what I was doing in Beaufort.

" 'Drilling wells,' I rejoined as nonchalantly as though that'd always been my business.

" 'For commerce?' he asked.

" 'No, sir, for my own individual use. I'm not going to let go of the one I'm drilling now, regardless of the tempting standing offer the Standard has made for it when it begins spouting.'

" He expressed a desire to see my well, and we drove out about sunrise the next morning. In order to give Anthony an idea how it'd cut up when it got the finishing touches, I slipped over to the completed Bateman well while he was watching the drill work and induced Steve O'Brien, the watchman, to let it spout two minutes. Steve tapped me at the rate of fifty dollars per minute, pleading in self-defense that the owner was somewhere in the territory, and that he'd lose his job if caught wasting oil.

" Anthony was so impressed with the outlook that, during our drive back to town, he asked what I'd take for my well.

" 'I've told you I would n't sell,' I laughed, 'but, just to satisfy my curiosity as to what your ideas of oil well values might be, and how they stack up alongside of the Standard's, what'll you give?'

" 'Oh,' he returned, 'I might pay two hundred thousand dollars.'

" 'Shucks! I can see you don't want a well. That's the Standard's offer for a well in half an acre.'

" 'Huh! Perhaps I'd give that, and five thousand more, for a half.'

" 'Pshaw!' I cried, but when in Anthony's presence the rest of the day—and because of the number of crooked real-estate agents in town, I did n't lose sight of him many minutes—my demeanor indicated that I was undergoing a fierce struggle with myself. I hardly noticed when he spoke, answering with grunts, nods, and monosyllables.

## Nursing an Oil Deal

"As we were retiring that night I decided not to keep ourselves in suspense any longer, and I told him hesitatingly that I'd take his offer. He was pleased, and pointed out that I need n't feel so bad about the sacrifice, since I had enough land left for another well, which assurance restored my outward cheerfulness.

"When we drew up the contract Anthony insisted on tacking this clause to it: 'Provided land values are maintained.' The boom looked as though it was copper-lined and riveted at the seams, and, not being of a peevish nature, I let the proviso in.

"At this stage of the deal I began to feel my oats, and, in order to have room to think and to let my dignity expand, I hired an office and hung out the sign,

PHILIP PATTERSON

PROMOTER AND DEVELOPER OF OIL PROPERTIES

*Gushers a Specialty*

"But I had n't strained my mind thinking before I made the painful discovery that there were some things to do before I could hope for a place beside men who, planting their dollars one at a time and keeping them dry, had climbed slowly to fortune through years strewn with material that'd make good reading for future generations looking for pointers on the rocky road to wealth. Certainly I had a past, but I promptly locked its doors and boarded up its windows, and when not receiving calls from my client and reports from Bingham on the progress of the well, I wrote a new one of success after a dramatic but honest struggle with adversity, and prepared copies for distribution the day the newspaper men would swoop down upon me for an interview.

"I was planning a visit to my native village in a special train, with a band, hacks, flags, and a banquet with the wine served in steins, in order to get even with the old codgers who used to openly predict I'd never amount to a hill of beans and that I'd hang before I was thirty—yes, sir, I was smoking some—when Dan Tapley galloped into town and whispered to a few of us having our hearts and souls hitched to the oil business that his well was down twenty-six hundred and forty-three feet, that it was as dry as a shuck, and that he was going to pull up his drill unless something was done.

"We grasped his meaning instantly. Dry wells had been bored at respectable distances on three sides of the producing territory, and the Tapley well, being on the fourth side, would show investors that the Beaufort oil-field was a small pool, and put a crimp that would n't come out in the tail of the boom.

"We tried to look pleased in spite of the pain it gave us to have to ante up two hundred and fifty dollars a day to induce Dan to keep on

boring, but we soon discovered we'd subsidized a genius. One cloudy night he laid a small pipe from the tank which supplied the drill boiler with fuel oil to the pump which forced water down the well to wash out the drill cuttings. You never would have suspected its existence, for it was underground, and when a big crowd of investors would come out in the daytime to roost round the well till it came in, Dan'd open a secret valve while tinkering with the pump-gear, and presently there'd be a healthy flow of oil with the drill-washings. The moment he'd see it he'd dash at the crowd, yelling:

"' Back, men, back! For heaven's sake, fall back! She's going to spout!'

" Two or three squirts of oil would send the investors racing madly back to town, and they'd fall, panting and perspiring, into the arms of the waiting real-estate agents, and you can imagine what'd happen.

" Thus we managed to enliven six days of the week Bingham said it'd take to drill my well, and in the afternoon of the seventh Anthony rushed into my office with the rumor that it was manifesting signs of spouting.

" ' Then you'd better get busy counting your money,' I suggested, and at that moment I heard a newsboy outside crying, ' Extra! All about the new oil discovery. Big accident!'

" It flashed across my mind, as I sprang to the open window, that the paper would n't get out an extra on my well, since it was nearly in the centre of the producing territory and its spouting a foregone conclusion.

" No, I saw the Tapley well had struck oil, which was an outrage, because we'd paid Dan a thousand dollars, and not one of us had thought of making him sign a contract letting us in on anything he might strike.

" Desiring all the disgusting details, I yelled for the boy to fetch a paper, and when he came, spread the sheet out on the desk so that Anthony could read with me.

" The oil discovery was in a town forty miles east of us!

" The accident? Oh, yes. It was merely the breaking of the bit of the Tapley well drill when it encountered a ledge of granite, and when Dan got through hauling the rod out to put on a new bit, the prying public found that the hole was three thousand feet deep, a little matter of fifteen hundred feet too deep to strike oil in that territory.

" ' Of course,' I laughed, turning to Anthony, ' this will not interfere with our deal.'

" ' Sure not,' he replied, with a smile, adding, ' not if land values are maintained. That's in the contract, you know.'

" Yes, I knew, and I also knew from the noise which'd started over in real-estate square since we'd obtained the paper that values had



already sagged several feet. I could n't recall when I'd ever heard such harrowing cries of distress.

"While I was using up valuable time trying to think, Anthony left the office, and the next instant Bingham fell in, screaming:

"It's in! It's in! The well! The well! Come over to the office at once, and we'll complete the transfer."

"All right, the moment I count my money," I rejoined, fishing up my thousand-dollar roll to see how much was left. There was eight hundred missing, but I refrained from conveying that information to Bingham, because he was so intensely excited I did n't think it'd interest him.

"Come over to my office and count it," he urged. "Plenty of room there."

"No, thanks; it's a habit of mine, which I've never been able to break, of counting my money alone and sitting with it a few minutes before going out to pass it around."

"Well," he cautioned, "don't lose any more precious time than absolutely necessary when you come to the sitting part, for my wife's telephoned for me to come home and hang some pictures."

He dashed for the door, and, after giving him time to reach his office, I collected my papers, raced out to my room, and found Anthony serenely packing his suit-case.

"Why, what does this mean?" I demanded impulsively.

"That I was born under a lucky star," he returned, his chubby chops wrinkled with an exasperating grin. That grin was the straw that broke the back of the patient camel, and I proceeded to frizzle the foliage around him. As he got through packing before I finished my job, I insisted on escorting him to the depot, though he assured me he knew the way well enough to hazard going alone.

"Well, so long!" he shouted cheerily from the rear platform of the last sleeper as the train pulled out. "Glad to've met you, and, honest, it pains me to see you ranting in the sun, for you're likely to be overcome by heat or burst a blood-vessel."

As I was looking over my unexpressed thoughts for a suitable retort, I caught sight of Bingham advancing through the crowd at a pace which told me he was looking for somebody, and I took a long walk in the country, returning after the stars had made their appearance.

Learning over the 'phone that Bingham was safe in the arms of his family, I remembered how I'd spent my first night in Beaufort. Feeling too tired to trudge out to my room, I got one of the Jeff Davis open-air beds for ten cents, a depreciation of sixty-five cents, which gives you a fair base from which to reckon the immense distance oil-land values fell after that newspaper extra.

"There were men nodding on all sides of me, but they seemed to be

having had dreams, muttering and crying out often as though in great mental agony, and I also made the distressing observation that something had happened to give rolls a mighty big scare, for there was n't a single one playing peek-a-boo with the stars.

"As a heavy dew was falling, and the mosquitoes very annoying, I gave my bed to a man trying to sleep leaning against the lamp-post, and went down to Phil Burke's, in the basement of the Jeff Davis, to drown my rage in a drink before sneaking home.

"The place was packed with men engaged in the same occupation, and I managed, after a herculean struggle, to rivet my hands to the brass bar-rail, got a high-ball after repeating my request until I was hoarse, planked down a crumpled dollar bill and received four seventy-five in change, a mixed costing the same as two straights captured together.

"That revived my interest in life, and I chased out and ran a corner on dollar bills, harvesting forty-two. Hurrying back, I ordered high-balls as fast as the overworked force could mix them, laying down a fresh bill each time. When I'd stowed away twenty of my favorite brand and earned eighty dollars, the crowd began to filter away to bed, and the bartender got time to look at my money long enough to give me correct change.

"The success of the deal in high-balls completely turned my head, and the next morning I was up with the lark, preparing for a career which looked good to me.

"Fortunately I'd brought a full beard to Beaufort, and when I cut off my mustache and peeled my chin, leaving what in some sections are called Rock Islands, but more generally known as mutton-chops, and put on a frock coat, a stained-glass-effect vest, and a high hat, and stepped over to the mirror, for a minute I thought I was looking out of the window at a man displaying a lot of nerve watching me make my toilet.

"Well, after I'd become so reconciled to my changed condition as to be able to look upon my reflection without losing my temper and longing for a basket of nervous eggs, I started for the depot, the landlady standing on the front porch, her arms akimbo, staring after me in a manner which convinced me I'd overlooked a bet by not leaving the room rent for my friend, Mr. Patterson, to settle.

"The train had just arrived, and as it was between me and the depot, the real-estate agents thought I'd come in on it when I crossed between a sleeper and a chair car and stepped jauntily to the platform. It was the same bunch that'd met the train the day I arrived in Beaufort, but any one could see at a glance that somebody'd left them holding the sack and that they were sick of their job. They blinked and stared a few seconds before appearing to realize that I was a stranger in

need of plucking, and then they closed in on me with a rush, evincing such eagerness to gain my attention and such jealousy of one another that I was forced to retain possession of my suit-cases in order to prevent bloodshed over who should have the honor of carrying them. We marched up to the Jeff Davis, where I registered as Colonel H. James Dalrymple, Chicago.

" 'Gentlemen,' I said, as I turned from handing the pen to the smiling clerk, 'I've come to your hospitable city in search of a safe investment for capital.'

"At that moment Bingham excitedly elbowed his way through the crowd, demanding, 'Which way did he run?'

" 'My dear sir, are you seeking some one?' I inquired.

"He fell back and gave me a searching look. 'Why—why,' he stammered, 'it was yours!'

" 'Mine!' I cried, my heart pounding like an engine climbing a steep grade. 'What *are* you talking about?'

" 'Bingham,' shouted a man out in the crowd, 'keep your troubles to yourself. The gentleman's looking for an investment.'

" 'Oh, I beg your pardon,' Bingham apologized. 'Your voice misled me. Please proceed.'

" 'That's all right, sir,' I replied, delighted over my escape. 'I prefer oil properties,' I added, turning to the crowd. 'I've very little money myself—I felt sure they'd interpret this as capitalistic modesty—but a company of Chicago, St. Paul, and Milwaukee men, having confidence in my business judgment, asked me to run down and look over this field. After I've had breakfast I'll be pleased to begin inspecting.'

"The clerk informed me, when I returned to the office an hour later, that my friends were waiting outside, and when I threw open the door I was greeted with a chorus of 'Here's your automobile,' 'No, this is your hack,' and 'Colonel, your carriage is waiting here.' Men stood holding the doors open, shouting and gesticulating to attract my attention. I selected a big automobile for my morning ride, and nearly lost my life reaching it, for the owners of the other vehicles tried to head me off and pull me back.

"I led a strenuous life after that. When we'd return from inspecting one bonanza, I'd be yanked out of my carriage or automobile, rushed across the street or down an alley, and thrust into another vehicle, and with a hurrah we'd be off again. I believe I left the imprint of my number nine shoes in every square rod of ground within a twenty-mile radius of Beaufort.

"I never failed to ask embarrassing questions about the Tapley well when we'd whiz past it, and at first the agents were both bashful and crude at satisfying my curiosity or diverting my attention; but

under my tutorage they improved rapidly and were soon diplomats at saying nothing in answer to a leading question and could drape a lie with language that sounded exactly like the truth.

"The generous way I had of making favorable reports to my backers after each dash into the country shoved the silver thread in my popularity thermometer to the top of the tube. In the morning it was 'Good morning, colonel,' and 'How are you feeling this morning, colonel?' from every side, and I'd have to stop and shake hands with several thousand men and render as many reports on the state of my feelings. At night, when I'd start to retire, it was 'Good night, colonel,' 'Sleep tight, colonel,' 'Pleasant dreams, colonel,' and I'd have to repeat the hand-shaking act many times, and they would n't scatter, either, until I'd staggered up the grand stairway—there was no elevator in the Jeff Davis—to my room and closed the door.

"But one night I jumped out of bed to call a bell-hop to fetch me another pitcher of ice-water quick, and a man who'd been sleeping in a chair tilted against my door fell backwards into the room. After the excitement had subsided, I was able to observe that he was not the only one guarding my roost. In order to see whether I'd have any difficulty in leaving Beaufort when the critical moment arrived, I'd rise in the middle of the night after that and take a walk, but I'd never stroll more than a block before I'd meet some of my friends.

"My longing for the simple life was intensified after I'd slipped down to Burke's a number of times to realize on what remained of my dollar-bill corner, for every confounded time I dived into my jeans to pay for a high-ball I'd ordered all by its lonesome, somebody'd touch me gently on the shoulder and say, 'Why, colonel, we can't tolerate this! I insist on joining you and paying for the drinks.'

"Though I went through the motions often of digging up money to pay for little things, I never got a chance to spend a cent. I kept books on what the real estate men were out, however, and after the sum had passed the two-thousand-dollar mark, and they were waiting for my backers to authorize me to take sixty-five thousand acres of sure-thing oil-land off their hands, they gave a big banquet in my honor at the Jeff Davis.

"I poured most of my wine on the floor under the table while the agents were exchanging felicitations and boosting Beaufort as a safe place for the laboring classes to plant their honest dollars, and when I thought the rest of the company were thoroughly soaked, I rose with a smile, stepped around in front of the banquet-hall door, and in a neat, humorous speech revealed my identity.

"It was so quiet in the hall while I was working up to the lemon that I could hear the banqueters breathing asthmatically through mouths that'd dropped open. I laughed at the close of my revelation,

and my hilarity seemed to break the spell which 'd settled over the erstwhile joyous feast. Their champagne appetite was changed into a fierce thirst for blood.

"Yes, sir, I got away—a man can go some with a mob yelping at his heels—but I lost my baggage, did n't have time to pay my hotel bill, and had to swim the deep, muddy river. With my stove-pipe hat and evening clothes, I must have created considerable of a sensation among the alligators, snakes, and frogs which inhabited the slimy swamp through which I waded five miles to get to another railroad.

"Though I failed to establish communication with Dame Fortune and get mine, I came to appreciate what a strain the President must be under at White House receptions, and on tours of the country, when the people press forward to grasp his hand. Before I ran away from the farm I used to read about self-made Presidents, and have trances from which I'd emerge about the time the Senate would pass a resolution questioning the motive of one of my many generous acts in behalf of the down-trodden people; but since my Beaufort experience I've withdrawn those immature visions from circulation, and I desire to enter an emphatic protest against ever being elected President."



## THE HOUSE OF PAIN

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES.

UNTIL the Prison House of Pain none willingly repair,—  
 The bravest who an entrance gain  
 Reluctant linger there,—  
 For Pleasure, passing by that door, stays not to cheer the sight,  
 And Sympathy but muffles sound and banishes the light.

Yet in the Prison House of Pain things full of beauty blow,—  
 Like Christmas-roses, which attain  
 Perfection 'mid the snow,—  
 Love, entering, in his mild warmth the darkest shadows melt,  
 And often, where the hush is deep, the waft of wings is felt.

Ah, me! the Prison House of Pain!—what lessons there are bought!—  
 Lessons of a sublimer strain  
 Than any elsewhere taught,—  
 Amid its loneliness and gloom, grave meanings grow more clear,  
 For to no Earthly dwelling-place seems God so strangely near!

# THE FORTUNES OF SPLINTER

By D. M. Henderson, Jr.

“ I ’VE heard the sleep of the just is sweet and sound,” Deuce commented, as Splinter, despite the vigorous shake he gave him, snored on, “ but the slumber of this here unjust cuss had got it beat bad ! ”

“ Sorry we had to spile yore nap,” he puffed, when Splinter was at last aroused, “ but we ’d like the honor of yore company.”

Notwithstanding his drowsiness, Splinter caught the meaning under Deuce’s irony. He grew wide-awake in an instant. “ You don’t mean you want me fur killin’ that Greaser ? ” he gasped.

The committee scratched its heads.

“ Yo’re goin’ to hang an American citizen fur pluggin’ a Greaser ! Shade o’ Sam Houston ! Ain’t you the patriotic lot ! ”

The committee, prepared only for physical resistance, quailed before this style of attack. Splinter renewed the assault. “ Would n’t he have done me if I had n’t done him ? ”

Deuce essayed the committee’s rescue. “ What ’s the use of goin’ on that-a-way ? If we let you off, ev’ry cut-throat in the State will invite hisself to High Hope. Be reasonable, Splinter ! ”

“ I *am* reasonable,” Splinter doggedly returned. “ Killin’ a Greaser ain’t a hangin’ offense, no way I look at it.”

Gila now took up the argument. “ It might n’t be as much of a hangin’ offense as some other things, but we ain’t got no jail to stow you in, an’ ’tween lettin’ you go an’ stringin’ you up, we think the last is nearest to justice.”

“ That ’s exactly it,” Deuce approved, and the rest chorused assent. “ You’d better git ready, Splinter,” Deuce added.

Splinter, however, clutched at a straw. “ So if you had a jail you would n’t hang me ! Well, I was a builder afore I took up prospectin’. Lemme build High Hope a jail an’ serve a term in it. Then I’d get my just dues an’ no more.”

The dumfounded committee raised many objections when it recovered its speech, but Splinter answered them convincingly; he even went so far as to offer to defray the cost of building. The committee, however, still hesitated.

"I've said all I'm going to say," Splinter said resignedly. "If you gents don't want to give me a square deal, all right. If you don't want a jail that will advertise High Hope an' make the other camps jealous, all right. But when I'm swingin' from a limb I hope High Hope will learn how you had the chance to boost her sky-high an' turned it down!"

The committee could hold out no longer. "Yo're too public-spirited a cuss to hang!" Deuce averred, grasping Splinter's hand. His companions quickly followed his lead.

Now that the situation was in his hands, Splinter made the most of it. "How long a term do you gents think right?" he suddenly queried.

The committee scratched its heads.

"What's yore notion about it?" Deuce asked.

"Seein' as how it was only a Greaser, how does a year strike you?"

Deuce looked at his companions; they nodded affirmatively. "A year it is," he agreed.

On the next day the committee writhed under the jeers of High Hope, for Splinter had disappeared. But two days later he returned, serenely mounted upon a wagon containing lumber, hardware, and tools. Choosing a prominent site, he set to **work** diligently.

Some months later he proudly announced to expectant High Hope that the building was ready for inspection. Prepared to receive with due modesty its felicitations, he awaited the inspecting party.

"I've seed many a jail, but nary one with bay-winders an' peaked roof, an' nary one painted in sich rainbow colors," remarked Thirsty. "Looks like it's meant fur summer boarders 'stead o' convicts."

Splinter glared at him. "Durn yore opinion! Why, gents, I tried to make her *different!* That gay paint an' them bay-winders is what's goin' to make it known outside o' High Hope."

Splinter's defense was received approvingly by the inspecting party, so Thirsty shifted his ground. "It ain't got no cells!" he sneered. "Shucks! The one they had in my town had nothin' but cells." He grew reminiscent. "They had two long rows on each floor, with a hall between. My cell was on the second floor, an'——"

He paused, but too late. "Yore cell, huh?" snapped Splinter. "So you were one of the pris'ners? Well, I don't want no advice from a jail-bird!"

"Jail-bird yoreself!" was on the tip of his critic's tongue, but Splinter, in expectation of the retort to which he had left himself open, assumed such a belligerent attitude that Thirsty left it unsaid.

Suddenly realizing how near he had come to falling short of his duties as host, Splinter turned away. Luckily, the criticisms he now heard were all highly commendatory, and he soon recovered his spirits.

Indeed, under these influences he became so jovial and entertaining that High Hope, already glorying in her jail, began to congratulate herself upon her prisoner.

It was becoming a nightly custom in High Hope to pay Splinter a visit. One evening, when a group of representative High Hopers gathered at the jail, Splinter attempted the removal of the one barrier between him and contentment.

"Look a' here," he ventured. "My cash is goin'. How is this jail to be vitted when I'm broke?"

An ominous silence greeted his query. "That's yore lookout, Splinter. We did n't bargain fur that," Deuce said cautiously.

"Other jails pay fur themselves," Thirsty suggested. "The convicts make shoes."

"The *resident* of this jail is willin' to do all he kin to make it self-supportin'," Splinter returned. "I'll try to find a way, if you gents leave it to me."

"Anythink you do suits us," Deuce answered, voicing the views of his relieved companions.

With this assurance, Splinter at once sought a means of support. Before another week elapsed he bought the stock of "The Bung-hole" from its retiring proprietor, and placed in front of the jail a sign:

GRAND OPENING

*Backcuss's Bar!*

SPLINTER JUBB, PROP.

The fust drink free evry night  
to evry costumer!

As Splinter gazed admiringly at the signboard, Thirsty, on his way by, stopped to read. "Backcuss! Who's Backcuss?" he inquired.

Splinter regarded him witheringly. "If you had any book-larnin' you'd know Backcuss was the god o' wine!"

High Hope stopped before the sign, gaped, grinned, and entered to procure its first drink, which, as the crafty Splinter had foreseen, was many drinks removed from its last. The free drink inducement had been nothing short of an inspiration; even Thirsty, prone as he still was to praise his home jail at the expense of High Hope's, was silenced.

High Hope grew fond of Splinter; the business of the bar showed a steady increase; the jail became a popular resort. Splinter's imprisonment, as a consequence, was so much to his liking that he began to regret that he had not asked for a longer sentence. As his term drew to a close, his customers often found him absorbed in thought.

Now Thirsty, who had watched enviously Splinter's prosperity, at this time grew also deeply meditative. A few days before Splinter's term expired his thought bore fruit. When night came, strengthened



by many drinks of Splinter's strongest brand, he started on a rampage. After a brave attempt to shoot out the stars, he returned, whooping blood-curdlingly, to the jail. The crowd hurriedly made way for him.

"Where must I put my hat?" he inquired of Splinter.

Splinter surveyed the battered article in Thirsty's grasp scornfully. "Is it too valuable to wear?" he queried.

"I'm going to live here," Thirsty volunteered, "an' 't ain't perlite to wear a hat in the house!"

"Goin' to live here, are you?" Splinter asked.

"Yep. Yore time's up, and I'm the man fur the place! I arrest myself fur disorderly conduct!"

Splinter's glance rested for an instant on an open trap-door near where Thirsty was standing. He stepped forward. "Oh, if that's so, lemme take yore hat," he said cordially. When he got within striking distance his fist and foot shot out, and Thirsty crashed through the trap-door opening.

"Make yoreself at home," Splinter chuckled, as he closed and battened the door. "Sing out when you want feed, an' I'll pass you the bread and water."

In high glee at Thirsty's discomfiture, Splinter returned to the bar, but as he faced his amused customers his mood changed.

"Disorderly conduct," he sighed. "Ain't that a picayune thing alongside o' killin' a man?"

"See here, Splinter, no one looks on you as a murderer!" Deuce protested.

"'Course not!" the crowd seconded.

But Splinter sighed again. "It's kind of you all," he returned dolefully, "but a man's conshunce don't lie! There's blood on my hands."

"You've got a mighty slow-actin' conshunce," Gila remarked. "You did n't think yoreself a murderer when we was goin' to hang you."

"My conshunce don't tell me it's murder," Splinter explained, "but it does say my punishment was too light fur my crime. I was wonderin' if I could n't get another year put onto my term?"

Despite his reproachful glances, his suggestion evoked uproarious laughter. There was no opposition, however. "If it'll take that unnatural look off yore face, I'm willin'," Deuce assented. "What d' ye say, gents?"

"Shore he can!" the crowd returned heartily.

At this moment Gila thought of Thirsty and pitied him. "Can't you give Thirsty better quarters?" he pleaded.

Splinter hesitated; the proposal was far from his liking, yet he did not wish to appear in a bad light. An incident that occurred while he pondered saved him from further embarrassment, however. A bullet

from Thirsty's Colt passed through the floor and shattered the glass that Gila was about to drain. Gila made a wild leap after the stamped-in crowd. "Don't mind what I said!" he bawled. "You've got the durned fool in the right place!"

Thirsty made an outcry when he heard Splinter closing the jail. "Lemme out, Splinter! If you've got a heart in you, lemme out!"

"You ain't tired o' the jail already?" Splinter replied.

"Lemme out, an' I hope I may die if I bother you ag'in!"

"Durn me if you ain't changeable!" Splinter soliloquized. "Well," he said finally, "if yo're so dead anxious, I guess I'll have to let you go. Pass up yore gun."

Thirsty scrambled up and made for the open when Splinter threw back the trap-door.

"Hold on! You've got some free drinks comin' to you," Splinter called after him. "Here, drink to my new year! My term's been stretched."

Thirsty glanced venomously at his adversary, then longingly at the bar. His desires conquered his hatred; he seized the proffered glass. Splinter did not stint him. After many drinks Thirsty's memory dimmed. "I was a fool to buck ag'in' you!" he gurgled.

The second year of Splinter's term was as prosperous as the first. At its close, more than ever desirous of remaining, he again began to plot a means to continue his occupancy. Before he had determined upon a course, however, his thoughts were diverted.

On the day before that on which his term expired, word reached him that Thirsty had sprained an ankle. Since Thirsty had begun no second movement to oust him, Splinter felt quite kindly towards him, and now, actuated by a sympathetic impulse, he carried to the unfortunate a flask containing his most excellent brand. He found Thirsty in a fever of impatience.

Splinter's kindness impelled Thirsty at last to make him his confidant. "Will you do me a favor, Splinter?" he asked.

"Shore! Say the word!" Splinter responded cordially.

Thirsty reddened. "I was to meet the stage to-day. A lady what's goin' to marry me is comin' on it. I wish you'd meet it fur me and steer her up here."

Splinter's cordiality vanished. "I ain't one you kin make a fool of!" he growled.

"I ain't tryin' to," Thirsty reassured him. "I'm in dead earnest. I writ an advertisement to a matrimony paper fur fun, an' she answered it. She writ sich a nice letter I took a longin' to see her, so I sent her money to come out. If we like each other on fust sight, we're goin' to send over to Gold Gulch fur the Sky Pilot to splice us."

Convinced of Thirsty's sincerity, Splinter excitedly strode off to meet the stage. Thirsty, meanwhile, shaved himself and made an elaborate toilet. Then, nervously expectant, he sat at the window. After a long wait he saw her of his dreams approaching, gallantly escorted by Splinter. Beside himself with excitement, he hobbled across the room for a last squint in his cracked mirror. After a desperate struggle with a refractory lock of hair, he limped back to the window. But instead of leading his sweetheart towards him, Splinter had turned with her into the road that led to the jail.

Thirsty rubbed his eyes, but his sight had not deceived him. As the lagging minutes passed without the pair's reappearance, his dreadful doubt became a conviction. He had been betrayed; Splinter had stolen his intended. He started after them, in a frenzy, but the pain from his ankle forced him to return. Hurling himself despairingly across his cot, he exhausted his vocabulary of oaths.

When night fell, his fellow-townsmen stopped on their way to the jail to inquire concerning his accident, and the indignation which the recital of his wrongs aroused comforted him greatly. When it was discovered that Splinter had even failed to send for the minister, the wrath of the party bubbled over.

"He's disgraced High Hope, an' there oughter be somethink done to him!" Gila exclaimed.

"Maria ain't to blame!" Thirsty wailed. "I'll bet she's still expectin' the Sky Pilot."

"Knowin' nothin' to the contrary about her," Deuce observed, "we'll take that view of it. It's up to us then to help Thirsty rescue her! What d'ye say, gents, to carryin' him to the jail?"

The suggestion was eagerly welcomed. Thirsty, borne on the shoulders of his supporters, now grew joyously anticipative. He was to win back his sweetheart and crush Splinters. And might not this tidal wave of sympathy land him in the place he had so long begrudged his enemy?

The party found the barroom closed, but a light shone from an adjoining room, and Deuce's thunderous knock brought Splinter in swift response. The party, expecting to meet Splinter's companion, entered quietly; the woman, however, was not in the room.

"What kin I do fur you, gents?" Splinter inquired blandly.

"How kin you meet honest men without tremblin'?" Thirsty burst forth.

Splinter coolly stared at him. "What's up? I don't tumble," he returned.

"Ain't you robbed me of a wife? Ain't you scandalized High Hope? Ain't you brought to this publick institushun a woman you ain't marrit to?"

"No!" Splinter thundered; "I ain't!"

Thirsty fell into the arms of his friends and gasped.

"D'ye mean to tell us you did n't steal Thirsty's gal? D'ye mean to say she ain't here now?" Deuce queried.

In answer, Splinter pointed to a paper tacked on one of the walls. "Read that!" he said scornfully.

Moved by curiosity, Deuce obeyed. "Let's hear it!" his companions cried. He read aloud:

THIS CERTIFIES

That on the 7th day of July, in the year 1893, Horatio Jubb and Maria Boone were by me united in Holy Matrimony at Coyote Corners, Mo., in accordance with the laws of the State of Missouri.

EZEKIEL BURROWS, Minister.

"Who's Horatio Jubb?" demanded Thirsty.

"That's me—when I ain't Splinter," the accused replied.

"An' the lady you met is yore wife, that was Maria Boone?"

"She's got the fambly Bible to back it up," returned Splinter. "I'd git her to bring it down if her head was n't achin' from her trip. We had a misunderstandin' back East, an' I left her, but we've made it all up, and we're goin' to pull together."

"But how is it she was goin' to marry me when she was already tied to you?" Thirsty asked.

"'Cause she read in the paper that I'd bin lynched," Splinter explained. "A newspaper cuss was here on the day I plugged the Greaser, an' heard the committee plannin' to string me up. He went afore the affair came off, but he wrote up my death all the same. Durned if he did n't even put in my last words!"

Thirsty turned away in despair.

"It's on us, gents!" Deuce exclaimed.

"You'd do better next time," Splinter volunteered, "to make sure afore you attack a lady's character, or accuse a man who's done so much fur this town of scandalizin' it!"

The crowd squirmed beneath his reproach, and its leading members, desirous of appeasing him, held a hurried consultation.

"Splinter," said Deuce, withdrawing from the group, "would it make things right if we agreed to let you be a pris'ner here forever?"

"Pris'ner!" Splinter cried in fine scorn. "D'ye think I'd let Maria live here as a pris'ner's wife? I've got more pride!"

"Then you're not goin' to live here?" Thirsty cried eagerly.

Splinter hedged. "Well, not on those terms," he drawled.

The group held another conference. "S'pose we make you constable o' High Hope, and let this be yore quarters?"

Splinter bowed condescendingly. "I call that handsome!" he said, shaking hands all around.

"An' now," Gila suggested, "let 's lick'er! I'm drier 'n blazes!"

"Not to-night," Splinter said, to the expectant crowd's utter astonishment. "Maria's room 's over the bar. She's a White Ribboner! I would n't have her know I kept a bar fur the world. I had to steer her round the back way to keep her from seein' my beer sign."

"D'ye mean to say yo're goin' to close the bar!" exploded Thirsty.

"Don't all look so skeered," Splinter said. "I've decided to earn my livin' in a cleaner way, but I ain't goin' back on you gents." He pondered a moment; then he eyed Thirsty benevolently. "You and me 've been at each others' throats long enough," he said to that worthy. "What these gents have done comes hard on you, but I'm goin' to make it right. If you come up here early to-morrow and get the stuff out afore Maria knows it, you kin have it to set up bizness at Boston's old stand."

Forgetting his injured ankle in his joy, Thirsty leaped forward and clasped Splinter in a bear hug. "Ain't you the square one!" he bawled.

Gila, whose thought had remained in the present, interrupted the felicities. "My throat 's on fire, Splinter! Can't we sneak in easy an' git just one drink all around?"

"I—I guess you kin!" Splinter agreed uneasily, feeling for the bar-room key. Some one near him uttered a low warning; turning, he saw that his wife had entered the room.

"They wanted to go back in the kitchen fur a drink o' water, Maria," he stammered, neglecting in his confusion to introduce his spouse, "but I feared the squeakin' o' the pump would disturb you."

The little woman in the doorway gazed at him with gentle disapproval. "You should n't let your regard for me make you inhospitable, Horatio, especially when the throat of one of your guests is on fire. If your friends will excuse me a moment, I'll bring iced tea." She left the room quickly.

"Iced tea!" Thirsty gasped. "Iced tea!" his companions echoed. They stared at each other aghast. Then, with one impulse, they turned and fled on tiptoe out into the open.

Splinter's inclination was to laugh, but the thought that he must invent an excuse for his friends' sudden departure checked him. When he was about at his wits' end, they reappeared.

"Splinter, she'd feel mighty bad not to find us, would n't she?" Deuce queried.

"'T would bust her heart!" Splinter solemnly returned.

"Then we'll take the dose," Deuce said resignedly. "High Hope 's got to treat its fust female horspital!"

The party lived nobly up to this high resolve. Deuce, as he was served, raised his glass and proposed "The fust lady o' High Hope! God bless her!" His companions lifted theirs. "The fust lady o' High Hope! God bless her!" they echoed. Then, unflinchingly, without a grimace, they drank.



## THE PÆAN OF THE POPPIES

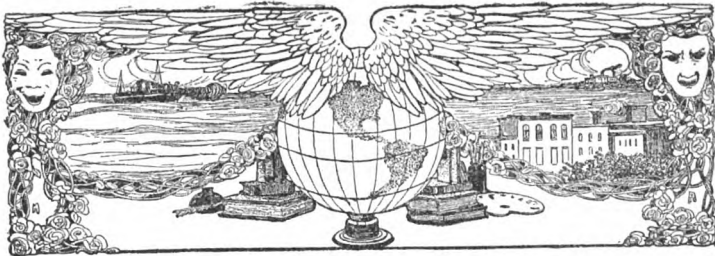
BY HERMAN SCHEFFAUER

**S**PRENT from the hands of Spring,  
 The golden seed is falling  
 O'er meadows loud with light  
 And hills that harvest bring  
 When warm the winds go calling  
 The poppies up from night,  
 Restoring Earth her sight.

The mountains sway with flame  
 Where the frail glories tremble,—  
 Fair, fallen stars of fire!  
 The valleys green acclaim  
 The legions that assemble  
 In royal robe and tire,  
 With timbrel, shawm, and quire.

Stained with the ruby's wine,  
 Gilt by the sunset lustre,  
 Swung by the sunset breeze,—  
 So do their beakers shine,  
 So flare their crowns in clusters,  
 So bow across the leas  
 Like beacons o'er the seas.

Afar in darker lands  
 I feel their kisses burning  
 As sweet, uncertain lips,  
 As faint, unhindered hands  
 Are felt by exiles yearning  
 On shores when tears eclipse  
 The wan and westering ships.



## WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND  
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

### A NEW YEAR'S THOUGHT

**T**HERE is no more pathetic case of self-conviction than the annual summing up of memory before the tribunal of hope at the close of the year. Taking an honest inventory of stock and sales, what one of us is not desperately in debt, wickedly reckless and extravagant of others' confidence and trust, worthy of banishment from deluded society, quite misplaced and falsely estimated? There are novelists who would fain be painters, actors who yearn for the author's name, soldiers who know that they should have studied medicine, nay, there are even lawyers of brilliant reputation who would gladly exchange lots with the starved teacher, the discouraged clergyman, the obscure poet. Out of the very depths of our restlessness and discontent comes nature's fairest vision, the unuttered and unutterable word of our secret powers. Every vivid, sensate thing in creation is conscious of possible, unexpressed power; this consciousness it is which gives zest to life. And one of the conditions of effective existence is the simultaneous desire to energize our powers. We need no prophet to make us sure that just the "bundle of relations" which produced this particular entity have never been coördinated for another and will never again be repeated by infinitely experimenting nature. We are rightly indignant, then, with the poor return we are making upon her investment. Power and the unquenchable desire to express that power in distinct, original, adequate terms, nature implanted at birth in each of us. Small wonder that we face the calendar with the sting of disappointment and the scourge of

doubt. Small wonder that the mother of six boys cannot see why she was put into this wilderness of nameless heroisms, or that the poet should be forever doomed to watch the flaming sword that bars him from the garden of unurgéd achievement. Somewhere we shall order this wretched matter better. Some time we shall love the thing we are doing. To earn one's bread by the sweat of one's brow and to deserve one's butter by a sweet imagination is possible for every man or woman who knows the meaning of the vocation that commands and the avocation that invites. Year by year to widen the paths of possible, beautiful expression—that is the meaning of growth and of its painful interims.

PHILIP BECKER GOETZ

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### LEGISLATIVE PAY

**A**N election to Congress will be regarded henceforward as much more desirable than ever before, thanks to the recent increase of the salaries of Members by fifty per cent. Seven thousand five hundred dollars a year is an income large enough to furnish a strong attraction, independently of the glory to be gained through the exercise of an opportunity to legislate for the nation.

As a matter of fact, there was small justice in the plea that five thousand dollars was not an adequate salary for a Congressman—a fact which becomes manifest when it is considered that the work required extends over only six months in the year, the balance of the twelvemonth being so much leisure available for utilization in other activities. Thus, for example, the lawyers in the House of Representatives devote their time between sessions, as a rule, to the practice of their profession.

In urging the passage of the bill to raise Congressional salaries, one argument used was that Washington was an expensive place to live in. The truth is, however, that such is very far from being the case. Apparently, the capital city has acquired this reputation through the circumstances that people are constantly going thither on holiday-making trips from all parts of the country. When they get home, they count the cost, and say, "Goodness me! what an expensive place Washington is!" But such trips always do cost a great deal of money, no matter where one goes, and certainly food costs no more in Washington than elsewhere, while rents are extraordinarily low—handsome houses in the fashionable section being easily obtainable for fifty dollars a month—and the wages of servants are a third less than in Philadelphia or New York.

There is a widespread popular impression to the effect that Congressmen are obliged to keep up a fashionable position in Washington. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. Senators and their



families are "somebody," if they choose to be, and happen to have money to spend in entertaining; but members of the House, as a rule, are not encountered in the fashionable drawing-rooms of the capital. Most of them live in very modest quarters in hotels, and to scenes of social festivity they are strangers, unless it be a reception at the White House. There are a few Representatives who are conspicuous in the society of Washington, but the fact has nothing to do with the circumstance that they are in Congress.

The necessary expenses of Congressmen are cut down to a minimum. Not long ago each Representative was provided by the nation with a secretary, at one hundred dollars a month; and at the present time two great apartment houses are in process of erection, at a cost of five million dollars, one for the Senate and the other for the House, in which luxurious private rooms will be set aside for the use of every legislator.

RENÉ BACHE

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## THE PROBLEM OF CUBA

THE future of the island of Cuba is a question which will probably give rise to much headache in Washington; for the time must come, and come soon, when the American people will be called on to decide what their policy in respect to Cuba is going to be.

When Estrada Palmas was appointed President, there seemed reason to think that the natives were in a condition to govern themselves and to pay a certain amount of respect to the natural laws of morality and justice. But Cuban self-government soon resolved itself into a scramble for the Treasury and the prosecution of private vengeance.

The insurrection of last year was the final straw which led to intervention on the part of the United States, and the installation of the existing provisional government under Mr. Magoon.

The bloodshed, persecution, and graft which characterized the first presidency will be a feature of the second also if the United States troops are withdrawn. But worse will follow. The Liberals are divided among themselves. The followers of General Gomez are bitter enemies of the supporters of Dr. Zayas. If Gomez becomes President, the Zayists will rise against him. If Zayas heads the poll, the Miguelistas will take to the woods. If a third party is elected, they are quite likely to unite against him.

Now, an insurrection in Cuba is not serious as regards killed and wounded, but it is most serious in respect to the security of property. A very small uprising can cause an almost incredible amount of damage, and it is almost impossible to catch the insurgents, who know the woods

thoroughly and have steadfast friends among the country people. All the American interests in this island, valued at many million dollars, will be jeopardized. The blood shed in two interventions, the millions spent in war, will have been expended in vain unless the government at Washington decides to keep the island.

Again, the position of the black race in Cuba must be considered. They form the large majority of the population and could easily put an army of fifty thousand fighting men into the field. At present there is no state where the negro is so well treated as in Cuba; but a black political party has been formed, at present small in numbers, whose avowed object is to obtain an even better condition than they enjoy now. Further, they do not scruple to announce that what they do not obtain by political pressure they will obtain by force. A negro insurrection and perhaps triumph in Cuba would be disastrous for the Southern States, and it behooves the authorities at Washington to keep a stern eye on this movement. Racial troubles would very soon end the possibility of a prosperous Cuba.

The splendid trade which has been built up between the island and the continent can continue only under American rule.

The currency question, the present hindrance (outside politics) to commercial prosperity, must eventually be solved by the adoption of the dollar. The tobacco-workers have gained their strike for American money, many of the biggest sugar plantations pay in that coin, and the men on the other plantations are clamoring for it. In the province of Santiago it is the only recognized coinage.

But a still more important factor remains. In a few years American enterprise and American labor will have completed the Panama Canal, the greatest engineering triumph of the century. What is the relationship of Cuba to the Panama Canal? Since earliest times Havana has been recognized as the key of the Eastern and Western Worlds. Cuba, with its many splendid bays and harbors, will be the key to the Panama Canal.

The American people must not be content to build this great waterway and leave Cuba in hostile or even in neutral hands. The Suez Canal is the vital link in the British Empire, and the Panama Canal will surely prove no less important to America. Not only for its commercial position as the shipping exchange of the Atlantic and the Pacific will Havana be recognized, but far more as the strategic centre of the United States's naval policy.

What the American people must decide, then, is to make the second occupation of Cuba permanent, either by the suppression of the republic and the maintenance of an American government or by the appointment of an American governor with the power of veto, of American supervisors in all departments, and the maintenance of an American

## A Parting

garrison. The Cubans require government, good and plenty. . They cannot get it among themselves; they must have it sooner or later from Washington.

AN ENGLISH RESIDENT

## ESPERANTO

**E**SPERANTISTS are surely a bloodthirsty lot. They would like to fill the graves of a large number of dead languages. In this respect they are not unlike, although more candidly ambitious than, every nation on the globe, each of which thinks its own language by all odds the best, and cherishes the hope, more or less forlorn, that its own tongue will some day become the universal world language.

One of the chief claims for Esperanto is that it is easily understood and easily learned. That is so, provided you are a college graduate and have studied Latin, Greek, French, German, and a few other languages. The rest of the people, comprising probably as much as ninety per cent. of the population, have about as much chance with Esperanto as a horse doctor in a garage. In thirty minutes the college professor can learn more about theoretical Esperanto than he can ever find in books about the practical slang that passes current on the lower East Side of New York. And don't forget that this slang is expressive. The inhabitants of the Bowery understand one another. They lose no time in turning beautiful diplomatic phrases. With them expression follows concept, quick as a flash.

There is no doubt that Esperanto is an elegant and ingenious contrivance to those who are able to appreciate it, but, after all, its success or failure turns upon the fundamental question whether a language can be fabricated and instituted by statute or otherwise formally, or necessarily confined by its nature to the "jest growed" Topsy class. A little of both perhaps, with a preponderance in favor of the latter. If Esperanto succeeds in keeping some well-intentioned people out of mischief, it will have served a good purpose.

ELLIS O. JONES



## A PARTING

BY FRANCIS MARQUETTE

**K**EEP me in your fairest thoughts, my fair;  
 Day shall be deep when that we meet again—  
 In some far valley of the timeless air—  
 Unto that peace this pain shall be a stair.

# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY, 1908



## THE WOMAN HE LOVED

BY MARIE VAN VORST

*Author of "Amanda of the Mill," etc.*

### I.

THERE was never in the world a better fellow than Jimmy Bulstrode. If he had been poorer, his generousities would have ruined him over and over again. He was always being taken in, was the recipient of hundreds of begging letters—which he hired another soft-hearted person to read. He offended charitable organizations by never passing a beggar's outstretched hand without dropping a coin in it. He was altogether a distressingly impracticable rich person, surrounded by people who admired him for what he really was and by those who tried to squeeze him for what he was worth!

It was a general wonder to people who knew him slightly why Mr. Bulstrode had never married. The gentleman himself knew the answer perfectly, but it amused him to discuss the question, in spite of the pain it gave him to approach even in his thoughts *the reason why*.

Mary Falconer, the woman he loved, was the wife of a man of whom Bulstrode could only think in pitiful contempt. But thanks to an element of chivalry in the character of the hero of this story, the years, as time went on, spread back of both the woman and the man in an

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honorable series, of whose history neither one had any reason to be ashamed.

Nevertheless, it struck them both as rather humorous, after all, that of the three concerned Jack Falconer should be the only renegade, and notwithstanding profit by the combined good faith of his wife and the man who loved her.

Oh, there was nothing easy in the task that Jimmy set for himself! And it did not facilitate matters that Mary Falconer scarcely ever helped him in the least. She was a beautiful woman, a very tender woman, and there were times when he felt that she cleverly and cruelly taunted him with puritanism and with his simple, old-fashioned ideas and crystal clearness of vision—the *culte* he had regarding marriage, and the sacred way in which he held bonds and vows. It was no help at all to think she rebelled and jested at his reserve; that she did her best to break it—and there were times when it was a brilliant siege. But down in her heart she respected him, and as she saw around her the domestic wrecks with which the matrimonial seas are encumbered, and knew that her own craft promised to go safely through the storm, Mary Falconer more than once had been grateful to her friend.

As far as the man was concerned, each year—there had been ten of them—he found the situation becoming more difficult and dangerous. Not only did the future appear to him impossible as things were, but he began to hate his arid past. What, after all, was he getting out of his colossal sacrifice, he was sometimes led to ask himself? The only reward he wanted was the woman herself, and it now seemed that she would never be his.

A fortnight before, on leaving his ship at Plymouth, Bulstrode had found among other letters in his mail a bid from the Duke of Westboro' for a week's shooting in the west of England.

"There were sure to be heaps of people Jimmy would know," and Bulstrode eagerly read the subjoined list until he saw in a flash the name of the one woman in the world. He at once telegraphed his acceptance.

Mary Falconer had indeed been one of the many guests, and during the time from Saturday to Saturday, the length of the stay of the house party at Westboro', Bulstrode had been able most successfully to forget the world and every truth in it excepting one. He forgot that his friend the Duke of Westboro' was a miserable man whose wife had run away from him, he forgot the intrigues and interest of his fellow visitors, and remembered only that once again, after a separation of a year, he was under the same roof with the woman he loved.

He liked on coming down-stairs in the morning to wonder where he would first see her and what their meeting would be and how the first sight of her would affect him. He was never disappointed, for each

time that he saw Mary Falconer gave him a fresh sense of her beauty and her charm.

She had suddenly come upon him one morning in the game room, where he bent with the keeper over a pile of brown and ruddy feathers of a not inconsiderable killing.

"I thought"—she had touched the pretty dangling heads with the feminine luxury of needless pity—"I fancied you more of a poet, Jimmy."

And during Mrs. Falconer's stay at the Castle Bulstrode had not shot again. The birds lay safe in their coverts. And during the week of the house party Bulstrode rather thought that fortune favored him in an especial manner; and in the hours he contrived to pass with his friend, either driving through Blankshire lanes or motoring to Penhaven Abbey, or in some one of the beautiful rooms to whose treasures of art and age they were both sensitive, Mary Falconer may have found the vigorous sportsman to be something of a poet still.

Bulstrode was rather slight of build, yet with an evident strength of body that indicated a familiarity with exercise, a healthful habit of sport and activity. His eyes, clear-sighted and strong, looked through the medium of no glass, happily and naively on the world. Many years before, his hair had begun to turn gray and had not nearly finished the process; it grew thickly and was quite dark about his ears and on his brow. Having gained experience and kept his youth, he was as rare and delightful as fine wine—as inspiring as spring. It was his heart, Mrs. Falconer said, that made him so—his good, gentle, generous heart!—and she should know.

His fastidiousness in point of dress and his good taste kept him close to elegance of attire. "You turn yourself out, Jimmy, on every occasion," she had said, "as if you were on the point of meeting the woman you loved." And Bulstrode had replied that such consistent hopefulness should certainly be ultimately rewarded!

He gave the impression of a man who in his youth starts out to take a long and pleasant journey and finds the route easy, the taverns agreeable, and the scenes all the guide-book promised. Midway—he had turned the page of forty—midway pausing to look back, Bulstrode saw the experiences of his travels in their sunny valley, full of goodly memories; and the future, to his sweet hopefulness, promised to be a pleasant journey to the end.

## II.

THE morning after all the other guests had gone Bulstrode stood in the window of his room, his face turned toward the country. It seemed to beckon him. It called him from the park's end, where suave and smooth the curving downs met the more precise contour of the

eastern field; from hedges snugly holding in the roadway, the roads themselves running off on pleasant excursions to townships whose names were suggestive of romance; whose gentle beauty had mellowed with the ages which gave them value and left them perfect.

With the sweetness of a bell, with the invitingness of a beckoning hand, the English countryside summoned Bulstrode to come out to it, to explore and penetrate for himself. He gazed charmed and entranced at the expanse of rippling meadow where, enclosed by the curtains of soft old trees, the thatch of the eaves lifted breast to sun and mist, and chimneys black with immemorial fires indicated the farms of Westboro'—rich, homely and respectable—as they left upon the landscape harmonious color and history of thrift. To the east was the dim suggestion of the little town, and some few miles in a hollow lay the farmlands known as "The Dials."

At the Duke's urging, Mr. Bulstrode had been led to stop on at Westboro' Castle after the house party had dissolved, and there had since been many long tramps across country, with the dogs at heel, and by Bulstrode's side the Duke, for the time diverted from his semi-melancholy, semi-egotistical cynicism, and transformed into an enthusiastic sport.

With accustomed geniality, the American had given himself over to his host; and from the time Westboro' put out a bait of "Oh, you're decidedly *not* turning in at this hour, old man!" Bulstrode had flanked the Duke on the opposite side of the fireplace in the East Library, there after coffee to wear away half the night.

During the following week alone with Westboro', Bulstrode found that he had listened for the sum of many hours together, and tallied up very closely the scores of the last few miserable years. On all sides of the room ranged the tiers of books, holding their counsels, keeping to themselves their romances and tragedies, and walling in discreetly the Westboro' story whose greatest interest consisted in the fact that it was still warm with the breath of existence; which circumstance, even if the recital lacked art, gave it a certain value. To the Tudor room, where the beams, black as if carved out of shadows, laid venerable arms across the ceiling, where window-hangings in rigid folds shut behind them the pallid panes of the mullions, where the firelight crept up the wainscoting until it met the descending darkness and was vanquished, the two gentlemen drifted from habit, and here Westboro's confidences wore thin the night.

After they had parted, Bulstrode, going to his apartments, finding there the cheer of his dressing-room fire, and the bright look of the chintz and the surrounding lamplight, felt inclined to shut his door, stretch his arms, and breathe deeply, in a measure to throw off the weight of his friend's burdens. The night air met him as he opened his

windows to it, and brought the balm of terrace garden scents, the sharp odors of box, and the fragrant dampness of the night. He would usually find some consolation in the companionship of a cigarette, and it was only at the close of some such bout with cynic or misanthrope, when confronted with the tragedies of married life, that Jimmy Bulstrode was inclined to place a high value on bachelorhood.

His friendship with the Duke of Westboro' dated back some ten years. Bulstrode had first known the Englishman at Newport, where, then not a young man, he had come obviously and frankly in search of an American wife. The search was unusual in that it was not for money, but, as Westboro' put it, for "type and race." His mother had been an American. He had adored her and wanted an American mother for his children. The woman herself—and how Bulstrode saw it as he followed the deserted husband's narrative!—had been a secondary thing. Bulstrode recalled easily the summary and conventional courtship and the vulgar brilliance of the wedding. He had been one of Westboro's ushers, and his smaller part of the affair left him with the distressing idea that he had assisted at a sacrifice. His cordial liking for the Englishman, however, made him somewhat guarantee a happy future for the Duchess, and his cordial liking for Westboro' had not diminished with years.

It would be euphemistic to say that Westboro' poured out his heart to Mr. Bulstrode. Englishman do not have such means of refreshment. Little by little, rather, in short, curt phrases, a cynical word here, only followed after some moments' silence by the rest of the mocking phrase, whilst the smoky wreaths of the two men's cigars veiled the confidences, half restrained, half helped along, by his companion, the Duke slowly told the story of ten years of married life; drawing away the curtain, in this intimacy, from the history of the separation which at the moment formed the subject of general public comment. Bulstrode did not quite know when the last wretched fact was disclosed, but he was relieved when the moment came that the Duke thought opportune to say:

"There, old chap, you have the whole story; it's this cursed tradition of marriage, and you're a lucky fellow to be free. I have never spoken to any one before—you know it. I don't need to tell you so, but you were in, as it were, at the start; and what do you think of the finish?"

Mr. Bulstrode reserved his opinion.

Under other circumstances than these which called upon his friendship and sympathy, he might have been tempted in the congenial rooms apportioned him, between the pages of his books and the puffs of his cigarette, to have indulged in his own meditations. But he confessed it was probably just as well.

There was about the Britisher a *bonne foi* to which the other's



nature responded. There was in Westboro' an honesty his friend believed it would be easy to betray. And the man as a whole, he decided, it would be hard not to love. His experiences were so varied, his education so complete, and his interests so broad; just to have been bred and born to so much tradition and beauty gives a man something which the citizens of the New World can only by the help of the memory of their ancestry conceive.

Westboro' Castle had been built in the sixteenth century by a lover of the Virgin Queen. The courts were paved with memories. In the Picture Hall the ardent gentleman had three hundred years before for one sole hour entertained Elizabeth at a feast. She left him, obdurate and unyielding; he went crazy and followed the royal coach to the park gate, weeping, his hands before his face; and there on the ground—his fair curls torn, and the dust from the departing vehicles all that was left of the glory that touched him—his people found him.

Jimmy mentally compared the house from which the Duke had married his American wife, with Westboro' Castle. The palace in a Western city boasted indeed a square of ground round it, for it was situated on the principal avenue of Detroit. It had been furnished to order by a New York decorator, with the usual mixing of epochs and periods. There were indeed examples of the Old Masters in the parlor, something from the worst of many schools; there were indeed motor-cars in the stables, and a thousand books in the library, but as he thought of Westboro' Gallery, where Gainsborough, Raikes, and Lawrence vied in their portrayal of the beauties of the time; of the yellow manuscripts and parchments and missals, of the first editions, that made the library's collection treasures known to two continents, Mr. Bulstrode was inclined to think that the Duchess of Westboro' had been given something in return for her "type and race."

Westboro' himself had no debts; he ran his own estates, and the flight of his wife left him no poorer so far as possessions were concerned.

"How they prate of inequality, and of the crime of grafting the American rose on these old stalks," Mr. Bulstrode mused. The beauty of Frances, Duchess of Westboro', he had himself been one of the first to concede; a portrait of her by Lehnbach did not to his eyes do her justice. The fresh purity of her type had not been seized by the German. She would be an ideal Duchess, he had said of her when the mission of Westboro' to America had been bruited, and Westboro' had thought: "She's a strong, fine woman and will bear 'me beautiful children."

She had borne him two. Bulstrode, in passing through the house, had seen the low gates at the doors of two sunny rooms, the toys spread as they had been left by little hands. His own were the only

apartments in that wing of the castle, and the silence at the end of the hall was never broken. When Westboro' had come to this part of his narrative, he had waited quiet so long that his companion had naturally taken the evening to be at its end. The Duke had thrown his cigar away, and, lifting from the table near him a leather case, opened it and handed over to Mr. Bulstrode the photograph of two little bare-legged boys in sailor clothes. They stood hand in hand, a pretty pair. Looking at it, and gently turning it over on the other side, Mr. Bulstrode read:

"Frederick Cecil John Edward, Marquis of Wotherington, three years old. Guy Perceval, Lord Feversham, aged two years."

So few years and so many titles and so many names.

"So young?" the American said softly. "They look older, Westboro'. I should have thought them older. Such manly little chaps!"

Westboro's voice had a dull sound as he took the case from his friend's hand.

"They are Westboro's, I think, neck and crop. Scarlet fever—in three days, Bulstrode—both in three days."

And that had been all.

Bulstrode had left the Duke and gone upstairs. On the other side of his cheerful rooms the empty nurseries in the ghostly moonlight held their doors wide open, as if to welcome at the low gates those bright heads if they should come.

Jimmy, whose sentimentality consisted in his acting immediately when anything was to be done and otherwise not wasting itself, mixed himself a whiskey and soda from the array of drinks that so often exists at an Anglo-Saxon's elbow, and, after a turn or two in his dressing-room, brought practically out:

"It's ridiculous—sheer nonsense. There should be children here. The woman was selfish and puritanical, and the man is no lover,—that's what's the matter! But Westboro' certainly loves her in his big, cold, affectionate way." Jimmy smiled at his own fashion of putting it. And how any woman with a mind and common sense could help loving Westboro', castle and countryside, as well as Cecil tenth Duke of the line, the American visitor failed to see!

And the other man, not unnaturally, once their good-nights exchanged and Mr. Bulstrode's door fastened after him, thought of his companion, whose character and personality in their very difference to his own charmed him.

"He's got no nasty corners," he thus described him, "not one. One does n't run up against any jabs or stings; and there's something so deucedly strong in his quiet manner. You've got a feeling about him that he's right; and somehow you're not jarred by his being so, he's so nice about it. He's the right sort."

The boyish phraseology with which the analysis of Mr. Bulstrode

was mentally made by Westboro' himself was much of the same character as the Frenchman's who "*tu tois*" himself in reverie. But Westboro' grew more elderly as he thought on: "I've never known before why Bulstrode did not marry." His recent house party—the women of it—passed before his mental mirror. There were several images of an American lady whose frocks and hats, whose wit and grace, whose dark beauty, had made brilliant and memorable her passing through Westboro'. Possibly the remembrance of this Mrs. Falconer at dinner the last night of her stay was what most persistently lingered in the Duke's mind. She had sat at his left in a gown he recalled as becoming, and her jewels had shone like fire on her bosom. He had particularly remarked them in thinking of the idle jewels of his own house, left behind by the flight of the Duchess. Mary Falconer had been more brilliant than her ornaments, and Westboro' had thoroughly enjoyed his guest. He had asked this woman especially because she charmed him; without forming the reason, he had a latent hope that she might do more than charm. He wanted to forget, and to be eased from the haunting memory that stung and never soothed. From his first tête-à-tête with Mrs. Falconer, he had at once seen that there was nothing there for him.

Bulstrode had said that Westboro' was not a lover. Reserved as far as all feeling was concerned, he had made no advances to the beautiful American, but contented himself with watching her. She could not be in love with her brutish husband, who, out of the week spent at Westboro', was visible only two days. Then Mr. Bulstrode had come. Pictures of the two talking in the long twilights, riding together, walking on the terrace side by side, came vividly to Westboro's recollection.

"That," he decided, "is a real flesh and blood woman, the kind of woman I should have married. Bulstrode is a lucky devil."

### III.

"A CHAP," Westboro' said to Jimmy, in a mild, unpretentious mood of philosophy, "is of course a husband; more naturally than people give him credit for, a father; but first of all,—and that's what so few women take into consideration,—*he is a man.*"

The Duke had fallen into the habit of breaking through the silences when each man, following his own thoughts, would forget the other. And remarks such as these, his companion knew, referred to the long talks whose more intense personalities had ceased.

This day Westboro' brought out his little paragraph as between the hedges of a lowland lane the two rode at a walk after a long, hard canter from Penhaven, fifteen miles behind them on the hill. On either side the top of the thorn was veiled with rime. Down into the hedge's thickness, from his seat on his horse, Mr. Bulstrode could look into the

dark tangled interstices of the thicket and its delicious browns and greens. Into the thorns here and there dried leaves had fallen, and from the hedge as well as from the country, clouded and gray with mist, came a sharpened sweetness, a blended smell of fields over which early winter had passed, a smell of woods over which the fires cast smoky veils. In the freshness and with the eager exercise, Mr. Bulstrode's cheeks had reddened. He sat his horse well, and his enjoyment of life, his ease with it, his charming spirit, shone in the face he turned to the Duke. For some miles given over to the sympathetic task of managing his horse, he had enjoyed like a boy, and during his ride had thought of nothing but the physical delight of the open air and the motion.

"Yes," he returned to his friend's remark; "as far as any point of interest goes, we may grant you that we began as men. I mean to say that monkeys are n't useful in one's deductions for *emotional* hypotheses, at any rate! I'll grant you, for our use, then, that we were men to begin with."

"Are n't we just as much so to-day, for all our civilization?" demanded his host.

"Well, we don't primarily knock on the head a woman whose physique has pleased us and carry her off while she's unconscious."

"It might in some cases be a good thing if we did," Westboro' growled.

Bulstrode ran his hand along the silky neck of his horse, from whose nostrils smoke came in little puffs that met the moisture of the air.

"Oh, we're not, you know, so awfully far away from our instincts in anything, old man! There is n't any cast-iron rule about feelings. They depend on the individual."

"Oh, you've never married"—Westboro' tried frankly to irritate him—"and you can't, you know——"

The sweet temper of the other accepted the Duke's scorn. "I'm not married, or very theoretical about it, either. One can only, after all, have his own point of view."

"We're not, I expect, fair to the women," the Duke generously acknowledged. "We look for so much in them. We expect them to be so much."

"A wife," Mr. Bulstrode completed for him, "a mother, a friend——"

Westboro' finished it for them and other men: "And a mistress."

And here Bulstrode took him up for the first time, with a note of challenge in his voice.

"And what, my dear man, did you intend that the Duchess should take *you* for? No, I mean to say, quite man to man, given that any woman could or does contain all the qualities you so temperately ask."

Westboro' smiled at the first curtness he had ever heard in his friend's voice.

"Oh, you know we men don't fuss or bother about ourselves."

"You married her at eighteen," Bulstrode said. "You made her a duchess. You had already lived a life, and she was a child beside you in experience. You required motherhood of her, and in return——"

"Well?" Westboro' turned about in his saddle and faced his earnest friend. "What, then, in your opinion, might I have been?"

"You might have been from the start"—Bulstrode said it shortly—"a lover. It's not a bad rôle. We Anglo-Saxons have no sentimental education. Our puritanism makes us half the time timid at courtship and love."

The gentlemen rode a little on with slackened rein. Westboro's eyeglass cord was almost motionless as he stared out between his horse's ears down the lane.

"Perhaps, after all"—he fetched it out slowly—"there's something in what you say."

Whether or not there was any truth in Bulstrode's commonplace remark, it lingered in his host's mind all day. It gave him for the first time a link to follow—an idea—and the Duke, entirely unused to analysis, accustomed to act, if not on impulse, certainly according to his will and pleasure without concession, harked back in a groping, touching fashion, like an awkward boy looking for a lost treasure, upsetting as he went old haunts, turning over things for years not brought to the light of day. And it took him all the afternoon and a good part of the evening to reach the place where he thought he had lost originally his joy. Unlike the happier boy, he could not seize his bliss once recovered and stow it away; it was only remembrance that brought him back, and with a tightening heart as he realized once more the form and quality of his lost happiness,—there he must leave it and see it fade again into the past.

#### IV.

THE following evening, Bulstrode sat in his dressing-room reading "The Vicar of Wakefield."

When Westboro' came in Jimmy looked up and quoted aloud: "When lovely woman stoops to folly and finds at length that men betray——"

"Oh, they console themselves quickly," Westboro' finished. "Don't fancy anything else, my dear fellow. They console themselves."

"They may pretend to do so."

"They succeed."

Westboro' took the little book from his friend's hand and shut it firmly, as if afraid that the rest of the verse might slip out and refute him. "Bulstrode, she consoles herself, she is perfectly happy."

"How are you, then, so sure?"

"Oh, I hear of her in Paris." The Duke's features contracted. "She's contriving to pass her time—to pass her time."

Bulstrode leaned over toward his friend—Westboro' sat opposite him—and put his hand on the Duke's knee.

"You must certainly go to her."

Westboro' stroked his mustache before he answered:

"Not if I never see her again."

"You should decidedly go to her."

The other shook his head. "Not if it meant twice the hell it is now."

"Why not?"

"I went to her once. I may say twice," he slowly said, "since we separated." And as he stopped speaking Bulstrode could only imagine what the result had been.

"I don't think I'm a Westboro', really, for I could n't follow any woman's carriage puling like a schoolboy, as my ancestor did. There's a great deal of my mother's blood in me, and it's a different blend."

Bulstrode's eyes were on the little book between the Duke's aristocratic hands.

"She has, I grant you, a lot to forgive; but she quite well knows all the blame I acknowledge—quite well. I don't believe I'm any worse than the run of mankind, and, whether I am or not, I've made all the amends I can, and I have nothing more to say."

His eyeglass had dropped; his face looked worn; he showed his age more than a happier man would have done at his years. His mood of thinking it out by himself continued for so long that Mr. Bulstrode finally asked:

"What, if I may be so near you as to question, do you mean, old chap, to do?"

Westboro' had it all laid out for himself—his ready answer showed it.

"You say I'm not a lover," he reminded his friend. "No doubt you're right. But I'm an affectionate chap; at any rate, I can't bear this——" He looked about hopelessly. The words were forced out by the high mark of his unhappiness. "This infernal solitude. Even when a good comrade like yourself is in it, the house seems to speak to me from the empty rooms in this wing." (Bulstrode knew he was thinking of the nurseries with the low latches and little gates.) "I can't stand it. When I get out of England and abroad, the place fetches me back again like a magnet. I'm a home-keeping sort of man, and I want my home."

His friend gently urged in the silence: "Well?"

"I shall wait," the Duke went on with the plan he had been forced

to make out for himself. "I shall hold on, keep along a bit, and then—I shall go to the other woman." And the Duke, as he raised his eyes to his companion, fixed his glass firmly and felt that he challenged in every way Mr. Bulstrode's disapproval. "The Duchess—it goes without saying—will get her divorce. Why she has not already done so, I can't imagine."

As Westboro' appeared inclined to leave the subject there, Mr. Bulstrode pressed him further. "And then?"

"I fancy I shall marry the other woman."

Bulstrode started. The complexion of the idea was so foreign to him that he could not for a moment let himself think that he understood it.

"You will," he said, "marry one woman whilst you distinctly love another?"

The Duke nodded; then said: "Love? Well, I begin to believe I don't know anything about it! It should, of course, suppose some sort of return. If, as you say, I *love* a woman, I'm not made of the stuff that can go along loving a lot without anything on her side."

The dressing-clock at the bedside on the little stand chimed an hour. It was two o'clock. The Duke of Westboro' rose.

"You must think me a colossal ass, my dear friend, but if it had not been for your awfully good companionship and your kindness, I dare say that by now I should have already made some sort of fatal blunder."

At the door Bulstrode put his hand on his friend's arm, and, as though nothing in the conversation apart from the Duchess had any real significance, he said simply:

"You are, then, in sum, simply waiting?"

"Oh, yes," agreed the other, rather blankly. And the other man knew that he had been told only half the thought in his friend's mind.

"She may get a divorce at any time, you know, quite easily, without my taking any further steps."

"Oh, I see perfectly," Jimmy accepted, and as the door closed after his host he said almost aloud: "He thinks, then, there is half a chance that the Duchess will return." And, wondering very much how far a woman is willing to sacrifice herself for a man, granted that she loves him, he relit his cigar and opened his book again.

## V.

THE next day Bulstrode, no longer able to resist the beckoning country, went out, as it were, to it, as if he said: "Here I am. What will you do with me?" If Blankshire could for awhile make him forget the problems he had been housed with, brush him up a bit, he thought it would be a good thing. Therefore when his horse came up

to the door he threw himself on the animal in a nervous haste to be gone, and, setting off in the direction of Penhaven, obeyed its summons at last.

Westboro' had run up to London for a day or two, and Bulstrode, at the Duke's something more than invitation—a sort of appeal—was to stay on indefinitely. It must be confessed that he rather selfishly looked forward to the course of an untroubled afternoon, to an evening amongst the books whose files had tempted him for days.

But the pity of all he had sympathetically been closeted with was great in his mind. Whereas his native delicacy and slow judgment had led him to keep silent until now towards his host, it was in no wise because Jimmy had not quite made up his mind that he would not spare Westboro' at all when the moment, if it ever came, should present itself for him to speak. He did not, however, think well of those sudden moral attacks which, unless dealt to a delinquent quite ready to receive them, return as a rule in a sinister manner upon the unfortunate giver. Nor did he in the smallest degree count himself prepared to lay down the law to any one. Not unless the Duke should put to him telling questions which his frankness would not hesitate to answer, would he give any opinion. His thoughts, now set free from Westboro' himself by the man's absence, turned to the woman.

He almost was inclined to feel it so—the handicap of her great wealth and her great beauty, her superficial worldly education, her youth, and, above all, the tendency towards individualism that the American country fosters in its young women; the habitual considering of herself as an important person on whom the eyes of society were admiringly fixed; the sudden entrée into a difficult life; the new country, the new characteristics of another race, and, above all, her English husband. What qualities the character of Frances, Duchess of Westboro', possessed, which had developed in maturity and beauty, he did not of course know, but that her worldly history had been a repetition of a dozen other worldly histories, culminating at length in a separation from her husband, was to him, as to every one, an ordinary and uninteresting fact. The one circumstance about the affair that as far as his opinion went was interesting was that Westboro' was in love with his wife.

As he rode along he thought of the Duchess naturally, in Paris, surrounded by a train of ardent admirers—she had them always, everywhere. She was disillusioned, of course, probably angry, piqued, and, unfortunately, she had been betrayed; and he shrugged with a gentle desperation as he made a mental picture of the last scene: the inevitable divorce, the wrecking of another household, unless—unless one of them loved sufficiently to save the situation.

His thoughts came to a standstill as his horse stopped short before



a gate. His riding had fetched him up before it. The mare stretched out her long neck, set free by a relaxing rein; she sniffed the latch and put her head over the wicket, and the rider saw that they had come across fields and were at the entrance of a deserted property. The gate gave access to a forest road where the thick underbrush was untidy and on whose walk the piles of leaves lay as they had fallen. He could see no farther in, and, thinking to come at the end upon a forsaken garden, the precincts of an untenanted country-house, he leaned down, tried the gate, which fairly swung in to his hand, and the mare passed through. There was the delicious intimacy about the woods which the sense of coming alone and unexpectedly upon the old and forsaken gives the traveller. He is a discoverer of secrets, a legitimate spy upon stories which he flatters himself that he is the first to read. He becomes intimate with another man's past, and, as he must necessarily in all ignorance tell himself his own tales, indiscretion may be said to be a doubtful quantity.

A bit back in the bare brown woods he saw the flash of a marble pillar; it shone white and clear in the setting of russet and against the boles of the trees. A little further away gleamed another figure on its base of fluted marble, and still further along, leaf overlaid and thus effaced, he could discern the contour of a sunken garden. The place grew more pretentious as he slowly picked his way, and he was unprepared for coming suddenly onto a gravel path from which he thought the leaves had been blown away. Here Mr. Bulstrode dismounted, and, with the bridle over his arm, walked toward the path's end, pleasantly interested; and now, as he thought it should by this do, the house struck on him through an archway contrived by the training of old trees over a circle of stone. The house broke on him in the shape of an Elizabethan manse: long and old, with soft rose color of brick in places, and the color of a faded leaf in others where the dampness had soaked in and had through countless midsummer suns been burned out again. Before the windows flashed the red of bright curtains. The house was distinctly, and he thought it seemed happily, occupied. He stopped where he stood by the arch, a little confused and a little balked in his romantic treat, and not the less feeling himself an intruder. But before he could turn his horse and unobtrusively lead her back the way they had come, the house's occupant—no doubt she who gave it the air of being so happily tenanted—had come out with a garden hat on her head, a pair of garden shears in her hands, and, with the precision of intention, turned sharply towards the arched forest walk, and in this way squarely upon Mr. Bulstrode.

The surprise to him was without doubt the greater; for she knew him at once, and he for a second did not recognize her. Her extreme English air, the straw hat tied under her chin, and the face it framed,

so decidedly altered. His first greeting mentally, before he spoke aloud to her, was masculine: "Why, her beauty—what in heaven's name has she done with it?"

"What are you doing here?"

They both asked it at once, and the lady, having lived so long in an insular country, was adept at its possibilities of great hospitality as well as capable of freezing out an unwelcome visitor. This time she chose to freeze the poor gentleman, and then, touched by his utter bewilderment and his innocence of wilful intrusion, she smiled more humanly.

"Won't you, since you *are* here, come in and have a cup of tea?"

She followed up at once their mutual question by saying: "As for being here, you will admit that, given the part of the country it is, no one has a better right."

"Oh, I'll admit anything you like," he laughed, "if you will only admit us. You see, we are two."

The lady came up to him in a more friendly manner; she gave him her hand, and she really smiled beautifully. Then she put her hand on the nose of the horse, with the touch one has for familiar things.

"She's a perfect dear, is n't she?—a dear! So you are riding her, then? Well, you'll find her easy to tie; she stands well. There's nothing she can spoil—that's the charm of such an old, tumble-down place."

As Bulstrode followed after the trailing dress just touching the gravel with a rustling sound, he had the feeling of being suddenly, willy nilly, taken and put into the heart of a story book. He smiled. "Well, I've done the first chapter, and now I've got to go on in the book, I suppose, whether I want to be here or not, to the end."

"I thought I was making a voyage of discovery," he told her as they sat in the low room before a fire and before her table and tea-cups. "I fancied I was the only person within miles round. I expect no one has a right to be so bold, but I really did n't dream the place was lived in, as you, of course, know."

"Drink your tea," she bade, "and eat your toast, before I make you tell me if you have come to see me as a messenger."

"And if I have?"

It was delicious tea, and the American of her had somehow found cream for it, which un-English luxury the American in him fully appreciated. The liquid in the blue and white cups was pale as saffron, and the toast was a feather.

"At five o'clock there's nothing like it in the world," he breathed. "I did n't hope for this to-day. I had recklessly thrown five o'clock over, for I'm alone at the Castle." He drank his tea, finishing it with a sigh. Then he said: "I can actually venture to ask you for another

cup, for I am nobody's messenger or envoy, my dear, nobody's. I'm just an indiscreet, humdrum individual who has been too charmingly rewarded for an intrusion. You saw my surprise, did n't you? And I'm not very clever at putting on things."

The Duchess tacitly accepted, he supposed, for she made him a second cup of tea, slowly.

"You don't know that I've been thinking about you all day," he said, "and I can frankly say that I've been making a very different picture of you indeed."

She took no notice whatsoever of his personality. "You are in England, then," she said rather formally. "I never think of any one of my own country people as being here. I always think of Americans as being in the States, men above all; for they fit so badly in the English atmosphere, don't they? It's always incongruous to me to hear their r's and a's rattling about in this soft language. It's too horrid of me to speak so. You, of course, are out of the category. But as you stood there, with Banshee's nose over your shoulder, you fitted quite beautifully in with everything. I don't believe I should mind you, ever, anywhere, and yet I more naturally think of you at Newport, don't you see?"

Her companion cried: "Oh, no, I'm in England, and you can't alter the fact. At least, if you can, please don't, for Newport on the 15th of December, and with no such tea or fire——"

"Oh!" she permitted, "you may stay. I said you fitted—only——"

Bulstrode interposed: "Don't, at least for a few moments, entertain them—buts and onlys. They are nearly as bad as those magical traveling trunks that would transport me to the United States. It is so—let me say—*neutral* in this place, I should think I might remain. I don't know why you are here or with whom, nor for how long, or for how deep, but it is singularly perfect to have found you."

His hostess had left her seat behind the table, and, taking a chair by the fireside, where Mr. Bulstrode was sitting, undid the ribbons of her garden hat and let the basketlike object fall on the floor.

"You must promise me, first of all, that you will not say you have seen me. Otherwise I shall leave here to-morrow, and nobody shall ever know where I am again."

However her command might conflict with what was in his mind, he was obliged to give her his word. He had no right not to do so.

"And nothing," she said, "must make you break this promise, Mr. Bulstrode. I know how good you are, and how you do all sorts of Quixotic, funny things, but in this case please—please——"

"Mind my own business?" he nodded. "I will, Duchess, I will."

She looked at him steadily a moment and seemed satisfied, for she relaxed the tensivity of her manner, which was the first Americanism she

had displayed, and in her pretty, soft drawl asked him with less perfunctory interest than her words implied: "You are at Westboro'?"

"Yes, since the 25th."

"And you're staying on?"

"I seem to be more or less of a fixture—until the holidays, I expect."

"Lucky you!" she breathed, and at his expression of candid surprise she half laughed. "Oh, I mean as far as the Castle goes! Isn't it really too delightful?"

He was able to say honestly: "Quite the most beautiful house I've ever seen."

"Yes, I think so, too," she nodded. "It's not so important as many others, but it's more perfect—more like a home."

Mr. Bulstrode sat back in his chair and tried to make her forget him. Between the fire and the shadow he wanted to watch her face, from which he now saw that the beauty he remembered had not faded but had been transformed. She was lovely in another way: the brilliant, blooming girl, fully blown at eighteen, with the dazzling charm of health, no longer existed in the Duchess of Westboro'. She had refined very much indeed. The aggressive air of the American princess had been replaced by the colder, more serene hauteur of the English duchess. She was evidently a very proud woman—the arch of her brows said so, and the line of her lips. All her lines were sharper and finer. Her color—and he could not as he studied her quite regret it—her color was quite gone. Her pallor made her more delicate, and her eyes—it was in them that Mr. Bulstrode thought he saw the greatest change of all; as they were now fixed upon him, there was something melancholy in their profound and deeply circled gray.

"What rooms will they have given you?" she asked after a moment. Then, "Wait," she commanded; "I know. The south wing, the Henry IV rooms, that look into the gardens. I always gave those to the men. There's something extremely homelike about them, don't you think so? And have you ever seen anything like those winter roses in that court? Did any bloom this year? The trellis runs up along the terrace balustrade. Or possibly you don't care for flowers—of course you would n't as a girl does."

A girl—with that face and those eyes? Why, she must have been talking back ten years! Mr. Bulstrode drew a breath.

"I know the roses you mean. It would be difficult to forget them. Your gardener takes such pride in them. For some reason, they are never gathered; they fall as they hang."

She was looking at him with an intensity almost painful, but she said nothing further, and after a moment more Mr. Bulstrode replied to another question.

"As it chances, I don't occupy the Henry IV rooms. I have mine on the other side of the Castle quite. Don't they call them the West Rooms?"

She caught her breath a little, but she was in splendid training with all her years of English life behind her. Her face nevertheless showed how well she knew those rooms, without the added note in her voice as she said:

"Oh, those West Rooms—you have those!"

And in the quiet that fell as her eyes sought the fire, he quite knew how her thoughts travelled down the hall to the open nursery doors with their waiting gates. Whatever were her reasons for being here, Mr. Bulstrode saw that he had surprised her in a moment of sadness, and that his visit, in spite of his indiscretion, was not wholly unwelcome. But in this sudden way coming upon some one connected with her own life, she had been completely taken unawares, and her lapse into something like sentiment was short. Even as he looked at her she hardened.

"You have naturally not asked me anything, Mr. Bulstrode," she said, coldly enough now, "and even more naturally still I have no explanations to give. By to-morrow I may be gone. I may live here for the rest of my life. I never leave my garden; I am quite unknown to the people about. If any one in Westboro' learns that I am here I shall leave at once. You will not come again. It is discourteous to say so, to ask it."

He had risen from his chair.

"Oh, but it's quite, quite dark. However will you manage?"

"Oh, we'll pick our way back well enough," he assured her. "The distance to the road is nothing, and from here on it runs straight to the Abbey."

The Duchess followed him slowly to the door, and there she asked abruptly: "Is Westboro' to be down all winter? I did n't know it. I thought he was out of England or I should not have come here at all."

"Oh!" Mr. Bulstrode answered, "he's too restless to be long anywhere. I expect he'll pack up and be off before we know it. He's away just now, at any rate, and I'm kicking my heels up there quite alone. I'm not to return—ever?" He ventured: "You may so fully trust me that"—and he saw that she hesitated and pursued: "I shall ride up to the little gate again, and if it is unlatched——"

"Oh, don't count on it," she advised him; "don't,—it's against all my plans."

Somebody in the shape of a lad had unfastened the mare and preceded Mr. Bulstrode on foot with a lantern, by whose flicker, with much delicate caution and pretended shyness, Banshee picked her way to the road, through the woods which Mr. Bulstrode an hour before had fancied led into a deserted garden.

## VI.

"You see"—he put it to her delicacy to understand—"it's scarcely, in a way, fair to him—I feel it so, at least. It gives me the sensation of knowing more than he does in his own house about that which presumably should be Westboro's secret."

"You mean to say"—the Duchess pinned him down—"that you'll give me away because of one of those peculiar ideas of honor that make a person betray a trust in order to salve his conscience?"

Mr. Bulstrode had come again, faithfully, making the pilgrimage to the forest road, and he was not surprised that it should finally have turned out so that one day the gate yielded to his touch, and he found the Duchess, if not waiting for him, distinctly there. During their delightful little talks—and they had been so—not once had the name of Mr. Bulstrode's host been mentioned; and if the lady had a curiosity concerning her lord and once master, she did not display it to the visitor.

"I mean to say," Mr. Bulstrode replied in answer to her challenge, which was fiery, "that I really don't want to play false to Westboro—more false than I shall, in the course of events, be forced to be. Of course your secret—I need not say so—is entirely safe. But the Duke comes back in a day or two, and rather than face him with this silence which you have imposed upon me, I am going back to London before he returns."

The sewing she had chosen to finger—a duchess, and an American one at that, is not looked to to do more—lay at her feet. By her side was a basket of considerable proportions, and it was full to the brim with linen: the very fine white stuff overflowed from the basket like snow. The Duchess of Westboro's handiwork had already caught the eye of her guest. And now as her long hands and her long finger tipped by its golden thimble handled her sewing, Mrs. Bulstrode watched her interestedly and found great loveliness in her bending face.

"I did n't think any of you knew how to sew," he mused aloud.

"Any of us!" she smiled. "Do you by that mean American duchesses? Or do you mean women who have left their husbands? Or in just what class do you think of me regarding your last remark?"

She folded up her work and dropped her thimble in the nest of snow. Mr. Bulstrode acknowledged that his conclusion, whatever it had been, was wrong.

"When I married," the Duchess said, "I was the best four-in-hand whip for a woman in my set. I don't think I am a keen needlewoman, really, and I know then I did n't recognize a needle by sight. When my little boys were born I sent to Paris for everything they wore, and I can remember that I did n't even know for what the little clothes were intended, many of them, when they came home in my first son's layette.

I have learned to sew since I came here to The Dials. I've been here three months now, and I really must have proved a clever pupil, for I assure you that they tell me I have made some pretty things." As she spoke she held up the seam she ran, and Mr. Bulstrode, who himself confessed to not knowing a needle by sight, was forced to peer over the seam and endeavor to find her tiny stitches. He exclaimed:

"Three months! You must have been horribly dull!"

"No."

"You are known," he said, "throughout the countryside—not that I've been making inquiries, but in spite of myself I have heard—as a stranger, presumably a Frenchwoman—a widow—who will probably buy The Dials."

"Oh, I shall never buy them," she assured him, and then abruptly: "Had you been free to speak, what would you have told Westboro'?"

He waited a second, then answered her lightly, but with a feeling which she did not mistake: "I should have asked him to come and see you run up that seam."

"He would not have come."

Remembering very clearly how determined Westboro's decision had been, he did not affirm to the lady his belief that Westboro' would in reality have flown to her.

At the door she later bade him good-by and appeared to gather her courage together, and with a lapse into a simplicity so entire that she seemed only Frances Denby and to possess no more of title or distinction than any lovely woman, she said to him:

"Mr. Bulstrode, please don't leave the Castle."

"Oh, I could n't sit opposite my friend at dinner, I could n't meet his eyes now, my dear child."

The Duchess touched his arm. "It's sweet of you to call me so. You are really as young as I am, and certainly I feel an age beyond you. Please stay."

The pleasure which his visits had been to her had brought something of animation and interest to her cold face. Dressed in a dark and simple gown, her fur stole about her neck, she had this afternoon followed him out of the house into the garden, and walked slowly along by his side toward the gate.

"Of all people in the world, one would choose you, I think, to be the friend of——" She caught herself up. "I mean to say, can't you forget those stupid little ideas of honor and friendship and all that?" She put it beautifully. "I, of course, will give up seeing you," she renounced, "but it will be a world of comfort just to feel that you are there."

As he did not at once succumb to her blandishments, she asked pointblank:

"Promise me to stop on."

"I at least won't go without letting you know of it."

"Without my permission?"

"I won't say that."

"But I'm sure that you mean it"—she nodded happily—"and you're *such* a help!"

She was so affectionate as she bade him good-by that only at the little road did he begin to wonder just what help he was! Was he aiding her to detective poor Westboro'? Was he adding an air of protection to some feminine treachery?

"Oh, no," he decided; "she's incapable of anything of the sort. But I must clear out;" and he decided that at once, so soon as Westboro' should be at home, he would take himself away to ground still more neutral than The Dials had proved to be.

## VII.

BUT Westboro' showed no intention of coming home immediately. Instead, with a droll egoism, as if the fact that he had made poor Bulstrode a party to his unhappiness gave him thereafter a right to the other's time, even in absence, he laid a firm hold on Jimmy. The Duke finally put pen to paper, and the scrappy letter received at the Castle touched the deserted visitor; it proved to have been written at a *Bureau de Poste* in Paris:

Don't, for God's sake, go off, old man. Keep up *your* end. [His end!] Stop on at Westboro. Use the place as if it were all put up for your amusement. Just live there, so I may feel it's alive. Let me find a human being at home when I turn up. I'll wire in a day or so.

"So he is in Paris, then." Mr. Bulstrode had supposed so, and did not doubt that the Duke had gone there to find news of his wife.

Poor fellow, if he were searching for the Duchess! Well, Bulstrode *would* "keep up his end"! He had nothing else to do, for the time being, but to mind other people's business. He so put it to himself. Indeed, he could not but believe it was fortunate for more than one person that something could keep him from minding his own.

An undefined discretion kept him from going to the Moated Grange, as to himself he styled the retreat the Duchess had made of The Dials. And in spite of the absolute freedom now given him to prowls about amongst the books; in spite of his "evenings out," as he called them, Jimmy found the time at Westboro' to drag lamentably. His own affairs, which he so faithlessly denied, came to him in batches of letters whose questions could not be solved by return mail. He became over his own thoughts restless, and he sent a telegram to his host: "Better have



a look at things here yourself. Can't possibly stop on longer than . . ." And he set a day.

"If Westboro', poor devil, has to look forward to a life of this unaccompanied grandeur!" he pitied him. The lines and files of soft-footed, impersonal servants, the perfect, stilted attention, the silence, and the inhumanness of a man's lonely life, became intolerable to Jimmy Bulstrode. Even though Frances, Duchess of Westboro', had truly said that the Castle was a delightful home, Mr. Bulstrode began to wonder what the word comprised or meant; certainly nothing like his occupation of another man's house, or like any life that is lived alone.

At the end of the first week that the American spent at Westboro' he had condensed the Castle, as he said to himself, as far as possible, to the proportions of a Harlem flat, and he lived in it. In the almost small breakfast-room whose windows gave on the terrace, and where all the December sun that was visible came in to find him, he took his meals, each of them but dinner, which was determinedly and imperially served by five men in one of the dining-rooms, and at which function, as he expressed it, he "shut his eyes and just ate blindly through." He lived out of doors all day, took his tea in his dressing-room, and read and smoked until the august dinner hour called him to dress and dine alone. For a week he lived "without sight of a human being," so he said, for the domestics were only machines. And towards the end of the week he would have gone to see *any one!* An enemy would have been *too easy!* And the only person within range was, of course, the Duchess of Westboro'.

#### VIII.

WESTBORO' had made a confidant of Bulstrode, and the Duchess had not. Mr. Bulstrode liked it in her. To be sure, the cases were quite different: there was no reason why the man, deserted by his wife and bruised in his pride and in his heart, no matter how much in the wrong he might have been,—there was no reason why he should not have talked to his old friend. Nevertheless, Westboro' accused himself of weakness.

"I've blabbed like a woman," he acknowledged ruefully.

But the Duchess had not spoken; nor, with the fine curiosity of the true woman, had she been in any eager haste to discover what her husband had said of her; nor yet had she asked if he had spoken at all. On the other hand, aided by an extreme patience, and with still greater delicacy, she had waited, understanding that her caller, whose mettle and character she knew would not permit him to betray a trust, might, however naively, disclose what he knew without being conscious of it.

But if Mr. Bulstrode gave himself or his host away, the Duchess made no sign that she had profited by such indiscretions. The impersonality of their conversations was indeed a relief to Bulstrode, and it

made it possible for him to feel himself less a traitor at the Duke's hearth. But she talked very sweetly, too, of her children. She had the second picture to the Duke's of the little boys, and showed it to him as the father had done.

"Westboro' has the companion to this," he had not minded telling her as they sat together in the small room he had grown to know as well as the larger rooms of the Castle. And at the end of a few moments Mr. Bulstrode quite blurted out: "Why, in Heaven's name, do you women make men suffer so?"

The Duchess, who had been working, dropped her bit of muslin and looked, with her cherry lips parted and her great, serious eyes, for all the world like a lady in a gift book. Her face was eighteenth century and childlike.

Mr. Bulstrode nodded. "Oh, yes, you've got so easily the upper hand, the very least of you, you know, over the best of us. It's such an unfair supremacy. You've got such a clever knowledge of little things, such a sense of the scale of the feelings, and you certainly make the very most of your power over us all. Can't you"—and his eyes, half serious and half reproachful, seemed as he looked at her to question all the womankind he knew—"can't you ever love us well enough just quite simply to make us happy?"

The Duchess had taken her sewing up again, and her eyes were upon it. Mr. Bulstrode waited for a little, following her stitches through the muslin, and the flash of her thimble in the light.

"Can't you?" he softly repeated. "Is n't it, after all, a good sort of way of spending one's life, making another happy?"

"American women are n't taught that, you know," she said. "It is n't taught us that the end and aim of our existence is to make a man happy."

He did n't seem at all touched by the general excuse she gave. He seemed to be still waiting.

"And so, you see," she went on, "those of us that do learn that after all there may be something in what you say,—those of us that learn only found it out after a lot of hard experiences, and it is sometimes too late!"

She seemed to think his direct question called for a distinct answer, for she admitted: "Oh, yes, of course there are some of us who would give a great deal to try. And you see, moreover," she went on with her subject as she turned the corners of her square, "you put it well when you said 'love enough.' You see, that's the whole thing, Mr. Bulstrode, to love enough. One can of course, in that case, do nearly all there is to do, can't one?"

"Nearly all," he had conceded, smiling, and added: "*And a great deal more.*"

## IX.

THE household gods, whose dignity and harmony had not been disturbed during the absence of the master of Westboro', were unable, however, to give him very much comfort on his return. The Duke's motor cut quickly up the long drive and severed, clove as it were, a way through the frosty air and let him into the park. The poor man had only a sense of wretchedness on coming home—"coming back," he now put it. Huddled down deep in his fur coat, its collar hunched round his ears, his face was as gloomy as that of a man dispossessed of all his goods as doors thrown open into the fragrant and agreeably warmed halls fetched him further home. But the knowledge that the house had been lived in during his absence was not ungrateful. He sniffed the odor of a familiar brand of cigar, and before he had quite plumbed the melancholy of the place to its depths Jimmy Bulstrode had sunned out of one of the inner rooms, and the grasp of the friendly hand and the sound of the cheerful voice struck a chord in Westboro' that shook him.

"I've been like a fiend possessed," he said to Jimmy, in the evening when they found themselves once more before the fire. "I've scarcely known what I've been doing, or why; but I know one thing, and that is that I'm the most wretched man alive."

Bulstrode nodded. "You did go to Paris?"

"Yes," said the Duke; "and what I found out there has driven me insane."

Although ignorant of the variations of his friend's discovery, Bulstrode was pretty certain of one that *had not* been made.

"You may not, old chap, you know," he said smoothly, "have found out *all* the truth."

Westboro' raised his hand. "Come," he said; "no palliations; you can't smooth over the facts. Frances is not in Paris. She has not been in Paris for several months." He paused.

"In itself not a tragedy," murmured his friend. "Paris is considered at times a place as well *not* to be in!"

But Bulstrode's remark did not distract his friend from his narrative.

"She has not been in Paris since I saw her twelve months ago, and she has left no sign or trace of where she has gone. There is no address, no way that I can find her. Not that a discovery is not, of course, ultimately possible; but what in the interval if I should wish to write to her? What if I should need to see her? What if I should die?"

"Would you, in any of those cases, send for her?"

"I don't know," the Duke admitted.

"But," Jimmy asked him, "did you go to Paris this time only to see the Duchess?"

"Since you ask me frankly," the Duke admitted, "I don't think that I did."

"At all events," the other said, "you surely did not go to spy upon her, Westboro'?"

Westboro' was silent; and then he answered quietly:

"I should never ask a question, not if it meant a certain discovery of something that I feared or suspected. I don't think I should ever seek to find out something she did n't want me to know."

At the blindness of a man regarding his own intentions, Bulstrode smiled behind his cigar. "Well?" he helped him.

"I went over," returned the gentleman—"and I suppose you'll scarcely believe a man whom you say is not a lover capable of such sentimentality—simply, if possible, to have a sight of her, to see her go out of her door or to see her go in, to see her possibly get into a carriage, and how did I know that it would not be with another man?"

"How did you find out that she had left?"

"I asked for her at her hotel."

"The first question, then," smiled Jimmy.

"A fair one?"

"Oh, perfectly!"

"I was told that the Duchess had left Paris months before."

"And then?" Bulstrode's voice was placid as he spoke for the Duke. "Then you went to her bankers, her bakers and candlestick-makers; in short, you asked all over the place, did n't you?"

The Duke swore gently. "Well, what would you have a man do?"

"Why, I would have him do *that*," nodded Jimmy, "by all means. *Any* man would have done so."

In the half second of interval whilst the Duke was obliged to swallow his friend's sarcasm, Bulstrode had time to think: "Here I am, once more in the heart of an intrigue. Its fetters are all about me, and I am wretchedly bound by honor not to do the simple, natural thing." Then he asked boldly: "Well, what do you think about it, Westboro'?"

"Think?" Westboro' repeated. "Why that she has deliberately escaped from me, put herself out of any possible reach; she does n't want a reconciliation, and she has gone away. She may have gone away alone and she may not: that I don't know, and I don't believe I want to know."

"Oh, you'll find her." It was with the most delightful security and contentment that his friend was able to tell the Duke this. But the cheerful note struck the poor husband the disagreeablest of blows.

"Gad!" he laughed, "what a cold brand of creature a bachelor is! 'Find her!' as one might speak of finding an umbrella that you've left by mistake at your club. Of course she can be found. There are not

many mysteries that search can't solve in these days. And duchesses don't drop off the face of the earth. I could no doubt have found her in twenty-four hours, but I did n't try to. I don't know that I *want* to find her. It is n't the fact of where she's gone that counts; it's that she wanted to go—that she has voluntarily made the separation final and complete."

"Then," persisted Bulstrode, "you don't really want to find her?"

"Jove!" The Duke turned on him. "You don't know what it is to love a woman! You've got some imagination—try to use it, can't you? Can't you?"

He met the American's handsome eyes. A flush rose under Mr. Bulstrode's cheek. Westboro' put his hand on his friend's shoulder. "I beg your pardon, dear old chap."

"Oh, that's all right," Bulstrode assured him.

The host then demanded a schedule of how his guest had passed his time during the fortnight, and the poor fellow found it very hard to account for his days in detail.

"You must, in fine," his friend summed up, "have been in a blue state of boredom most of the time. You're a brick to have stuck it out so, and I'm awfully obliged."

Bulstrode, after assuring Westboro' that he had not been too martyred, and that Westboro' was ideal, if deserted, and that he had at different moments felt like all the different dukes of the line, further said that he should have to go up to London that week.

"I can't hear of it," Westboro' flatly told him. "You can't leave me here in this state. It's sheer brutality! Let me at least put my mind in order. Help me to get my balance and to plan out what I shall do."

"My dear man"—Bulstrode was quite clear about it—"you must more or less know your own mind now. Why, you'd already mapped out your entire future before you went to Paris. Would you be frank with me? You did of course go to see something about your wife; but did you afterwards see Madame de Bassevigne?"

"Yes, I went to see her."

Bulstrode waited.

"The day I got to Paris, I went in at five o'clock. I spent an hour with her, and I knew when I crossed the door-sill that I should never cross that threshold again. I had in reality, I expect, gone there more or less to tell her this; at all events, I did tell her this and that I should never see her again."

"My dear old man," Jimmy said, with more feeling than the situation, enlightened as he felt himself by all that he knew to be, had hitherto let him display—"my dear old man, I'm glad of it! That is the best news yet."

Westboro' shrugged.

"No matter then," Bulstrode continued, "what turns up or doesn't turn up, or how any way opens or closes, in no case, I understand you, will you return to 'the other woman,' as you put it."

"No," said Westboro'; "I shall never return. After I left her street," he went on, "I walked up the Champs Elysées to the Avenue du Bois, where my wife had her hotel. And if you'll believe it of me, I sat out under one of the trees like a tramp or like a love-sick poet. I mooned about like a college boy; I hung about for hours, only to find out that she had gone."

Bulstrode got up and crossed the room; he opened the long window on the terrace. The December night was mild. There were fleeting veils of clouds overhead, through which shone the faint winter stars. The clumps of trees stood out dark and mysterious on the lawns, and over the tops of the elms hung the half moon.

"It will be full in a fortnight," the Duke said.

"Yes," said Jimmy; "it's the Christmas moon."

#### X.

THE expression "*Il n' faut pas brusquer les chose*" was constantly in Jimmy's mind as he thought of his two friends: stars at different points of the heaven, whose course is inevitably towards each other, but whose meeting must be ultimately to blend and not to dash each other to destruction.

He said to the Duke the next time they found themselves together:

"Supposing that you had seen the Duchess in Paris? Would you have endeavored to make your peace with her?" And Westboro' had assured him no.

"The fact that I love her," he had argued, "proves nothing but itself, does it? After being for a fortnight, as I was the last time I saw her, once again a part of her life—after that she turned me out, and I can't forget it. Moreover, she does n't really care for me, Bulstrode, she does n't, and she can never forgive me."

That Westboro' was in a state to deserve forgiveness Bulstrode had questioned before now, but he did not think it needful to tell him so. He watched his friend draw his own conclusions. He saw him point his own morals, and he was sure that in this way he would best understand the true state of affairs. The melancholy pilgrimage to the hotel on the Avenue du Bois Bulstrode quite understood was as near as Westboro' would ever go to the tradition of his ancestors. No one would find the present Duke lying face downwards on the grass at the little gate of the moated grange. Westboro' had gone as far as he would go.

When he casually asked Bulstrode his plans for Christmas week, the Duke was struck by the expression of his guest's face.

"Do you then, like a lot of us, hate the holidays?"

"Oh, no," hastened the genial soul; "'course not."

"Nor I," Westboro' said. "I expect there's too long a line of jolly Christmases back of me. We make a lot of it in England, you know. I don't hate it, but, nevertheless, I don't want to have it come to this empty house and find me the only Westboro' here."

"Why not," Jimmy urged, "run over to the continent?"

"Oh, it's a custom of ours to pass the holidays at the Castle."

Bulstrode bowed to the customs of such ancient stamp.

"But are n't there," he wondered, "heaps of children all about that one could do something for?"

"Oh, the tenants will be noisy and cheerful, of course. What do you say to a Christmas house party? I'll make the list out now."

But Bulstrode told him frankly that he must go.

"There is," he concluded, "every reason in the world why I should."

The Duke smiled. "Let's bring every reason here."

But Mr. Bulstrode shook his head, purposely not choosing to understand. "Oh, you could n't! To be frank, it's a point of honor that calls me away, and I know that under those circumstances——"

The Duke raised his brows curiously. "Of course, if you put it like that. You're very secretive. I've told you all my secrets."

"But you're married, you see!" Jimmy exclaimed, and the Duke laughed.

"Which means I have the privilege of giving away other people's and my own affairs."

"Well," Jimmy explained, "an unmarried person is a kind of legitimate safe for others to rent out. They put in their little secret contributions and fancy that their rights will be undisturbed. If you've a wife, of course you tell her."

"And," said the Duke, "if you have n't, you tell the woman you love."

Westboro' had laid out a visiting list and a pencil and paper.

"How long will your point of honor keep you, old man?" And Jimmy hoped not indefinitely.

"For Christmas Eve we'll narrow things into the most intimate circle possible. I shall ask the Ravensworths of Surrey and their children; there are eight of them—ripping little things; they used to play with my boys. We'll turn them loose and have a tree, Bulstrode."

Jimmy watched his face with a keen pity, for there was not one ray of light in it as he planned for his celebration by proxy.

"I'll let you off all the week, but you'll come back for Christmas Eve. There must be some one in charge—I mean to say, some one—that is, if the whole thing is too much for me, why, I'll bolt, and you'll have to stand by."

As he spoke, he was writing the names on a sheet of paper. Bulstrode felt the plan to be rather *triste* and lifeless, and he knew that he could not and would not keep the Duchess's secret much longer, let its revelation cost him what it would.

"Westboro'," he said, "I shall have to be getting off to-morrow. You know I would stand by you if I possibly could see my way clear."

"Oh, I perfectly well know," the Duke acknowledged, "what a rotten bore I've been, and how sick of me you must be." He wrote on: "I shall ask Mrs. Falconer; her husband is in the States; she is quite alone in town at the Sorghams'." As he noted this last name the Duke folded his list up. He was in evening dress, long and lean, pale and listless. There was, nevertheless, an ultra refinement in his face, like an image that had been smoothed and softened and given beauty by time, so his experience had added to his distinction.

As he looked up quickly at him, struck with his last words, the American felt his host to be extremely good looking, and he noticed, too, the passion of misery and despair in the man's eyes. It gave him an idea of how reckless Westboro' could be if driven to extremes. He saw in a flash of memory a scene which he had come upon during Mrs. Falconer's last visit to the Castle, and the event had taken place in this same room: Mary Falconer standing before the book-shelf replacing a book, the Duke by her side talking to her. At that time Bulstrode felt that he was interrupting an interview which the man at least would have been glad to have continued undisturbed. As he looked at the Duke a slow flush crept through him; he felt the warmth rise inside his collar and beat in his face. He had never been jealous in his life, but he realized in a second the extreme ephemeral quality of his claim upon a woman whom he had loved for many years. What right or hold could he hope to have over a heart which no claim of his had ever made his own, and from whose knowledge he had, in the essence of chivalry, kept his own love? To a man like Jimmy Bulstrode, the shadow of another in a woman's life was a desecration, an ardent look was a profanation to her. Mary Falconer's beauty, her live brilliance, came before him with a vividness like pain. She had no right, under the circumstances, to come here. The woman who should be the holiday time spirit, and who was waiting so to be, did not, singularly enough, cross his mind, nor did he understand that Westboro's little ruse was half sport. He saw only the Duke's misanthropic, cynical mood and the dangerous attraction he might have for a woman.

And the Duke's voice continued: "I should think in a week's time you might put a capsheaf over your point of honor and run back for Christmas Eve."

Bulstrode had slightly turned his face away, and bent to light his cigar.



"Oh, yes," he said easily; "with a week's leave of absence one can accomplish miracles."

The Duke, enchanted with his success, nodded affectionately at Jimmy. "You'll arrange perhaps to come down with Mrs. Falconer on the Friday train. I can't spare you any longer."

Poor Bulstrode, sinking lower and lower in his own estimation, now that he had succumbed, consented longer to play his double part in his friend's house, grew determined in a sort of reckless debauch as he capitulated.

"Oh, we'll fetch down together the toys and things for the tree," he offered.

"Ripping," nodded his Grace absently, for he had already forgotten his party.

"I spent my last Christmas out of England, curiously enough," said Westboro'. "I spent it at Cannes. It was there I went to find the Duchess the first time that she left me. She had taken a villa at Cannes, and I don't suppose she ever expected to see me again. I remained with her a fortnight—she forgave me a great deal. I believe everything might have gone well if it had not been for two things."

He waited for so long, haunted by the fatal effect of these two things, that Mr. Bulstrode spoke to him.

"What were they, Westboro'?"

"Well, one alone in the course of events, I expect, was quite enough. Madame de Bassevigne came to the Riviera." The Duke continued meditatively: "It's a great deal to look to any woman to forgive, I know, but somehow I was ass enough to hope that Frances would forgive me again; but I was n't clever enough to make her."

"Clever?" said the other voice.

"Wise enough, then," the Duke amended.

"Sincere enough, more likely," said the American.

Westboro' by a gesture accepted all the amendments for his purpose, and confessed: "I did n't, at any rate, know how, and I see the real reason now for the first time: I was n't the right kind of a lover, and I never have been, with my wife."

"Westboro'," said his friend quietly, "you did n't deserve her faintest regard, much less her pardon."

The Duke looked at him sharply. "Oh, I don't know that," he corrected, but without anger. "You must remember that I married a woman as cold as ice, and as egotistical as I was myself. She was a great beauty, I grant you, and she was a stunning duchess; but I found out that I wanted a woman more than anything else."

The Duke got up and walked over to the fireplace, where he stood with his hands behind his back.

"You did n't love her, Westboro'."

"Of course that's it," accepted the Duke.

"And what," his friend asked, "has so completely transformed your feelings?"

"She did," the Duke quickly answered him. "The night she sent me away from her forever. I had come in and told her everything and asked her pardon once for all. I meant it, believe me, with all my heart. It was Christmas night, in her bed-room at the villa. She sat there on the edge of the bed in her white wrapper. Don't imagine, Bulstrode, that I was the kind of a man who would go in and bring a thunder-storm into a clear atmosphere. My wife had heard things, she had seen things. She asked me questions, and I told her the truth. When I got through, she simply looked at me as though I were some unwelcome stranger whose presence she resented, and very quietly and pitilessly she sent me away. She said she hoped she would never set eyes on my face again; she asked me to give her my word of honor that I would never seek her again. And I gave her my word. I had n't got beyond the door when I heard her lock it behind me, and I had n't left the house before I realized that I loved my wife. But how much, Bulstrode, how much? I have n't yet found out."

Bulstrode sat silently staring before him. The vision of the woman down in the little house at the end of the forest walk was before his eyes. It was only a stone's throw from her husband's door.

"You tell me that you were with her a year ago?" he asked.

The Duke nodded.

"She forgave you and took you back, and then sent you away?"

"Yes," he replied in irritation. "Why do you, for God's sake, repeat it so?"

"To see the way, my dear Westboro', to see clear."

Westboro' stared at him, not fully taking note of his happy, confident voice; nor did he half hear the still more sanguine prophecy:

"Believe me, old chap, everything will come out all right for you both."

The Duke clenched his hand at his side, and his face grew intense as he said:

"God! And to think that only last Christmas time I held her in my arms!"

## XI.

"My dear Duchess, it seems an unconscionable waste of time and life for any one to ignore the inevitable! It's such a prodigal throwing out of the window of riches!"

Bulstrode took her hands, both of them, in his as she stood in the winter sunshine, the open house-door behind her, the terrace and its broken stairs of crumbling stone before her.

"Why, my dear lady, if I kept a diary of daily events, I could n't

write down one page of good reasons why you should be living here and Westboro' up there, and I a comic go-between, in the secret of both and the confidence of one."

"Oh!" she interrupted, "then you're in the confidence——"

"Of your husband, yes," Bulstrode found himself startled into betrayal.

She drew her hands from him and walked on a little in the sunshine, and he followed by her side.

"I don't mind," she permitted—"you're such a perfect dear. I should n't mind at all if I thought that the confidence were a good one."

Her tone was light and cool, but the gentleman never failed to notice that when the Duchess spoke of the Duke there was a tremor under her words, a warmth, an agitation, which she vainly tried to control.

"Confidences," she said, "are very rarely just, you know, and *les absents ont toujours tort*."

"Oh, you don't mean——?" Bulstrode emphasized.

"It was a confidence, was n't it?"

"A real one," she was assured.

"Well, then, you'll keep it, of course."

She drew the stole up round her long fair neck; her delicate head came out of the soft fur like a flower. But before she could follow up her words Bulstrode said:

"You know how he loves you."

He felt more than knew that she trembled, and he saw an instinctive gesture which he understood meant that he should be silent.

"You and I put it quite clearly the other day." Her voice was serene again. "If one only cares *enough*—that's the necessary thing for every question."

"Well?"

She half shrugged, made a little motion with her white hands, and this answer said for her: "That is indeed the question, and I have n't solved it."

They stopped at the terraced walk. The low stones, dark and black, were filled in their interstices with fine lines of greenish moss. On the sunny corner the dial's shadow fell across the noon. The Duchess put her hand on the warmed stones.

"It's a heavenly day," she said. "I don't believe that the Riviera is warmer. I never have seen such an English December."

Her eyes, which had been fixed on the woods below the garden, now turned towards the house, and rested on one of the upper windows, where the sun fell on the little panes. The Duchess remained looking up for a few seconds; then she came back to her guest.

"I started, you know, to tell you something"—Bulstrode smiled at

her. "I once served on a jury in the West, and although the case was a miserably sad one in every way, I could n't take it as seriously as I should have done, for from the first the whole thing seemed so unnecessary, and the crisis could so easily have been avoided."

"I know," she interrupted him. "But you're rather wrong. You can't say 'from the first.'"

He capitulated: "Well, grant so if you like; only agree with me when I say"—he put his hand down on the dial's edge—"from this lovely noontime on, every hour you waste is clear loss. The Duke loves you as women are rarely loved, and, after all," he said with something like passion in his agreeable voice, "what *do* you all expect! Love does n't hang on every tree for a woman to pluck at will, and you have the great luck, my dear Duchess, to be loved by your *own* husband. Why *don't* you go to him?"

"Go to him!" she echoed.

He curtly replied: "Why not?"

"My dear friend!"

"Why, did n't you forbid him to go to you?"

"Ah!" she nodded, "the confidence, it was intimate indeed. But, since you have got it, won't you agree that any man, if he loved a woman, would disobey her?"

"Westboro' would not."

The Duchess said coldly: "Pride is not love."

"You did n't mean him, then, to keep his vow?"

"Yes," she slowly thought out; "I did indeed, with all my heart."

"And now?"

She turned toward the house again, and as she walked back said: "I don't quite know."

And Mr. Bulstrode asked her: "That is why you are here, to find out?"

"Partly."

Her companion's face grew stern. The Duchess did not see it, for her eyes had again swept the upper window. At her side Mr. Bulstrode went on: "You have taken ten years to discover that you did not love your husband. You have taken one year to begin to wonder, to doubt, to suspect, to half think that you do; it's an unstable state of heart, Duchess, terribly unstable."

The woman stopped short at his side, and now as she lifted up her eyes and saw him, was a little startled, if not frightened, at his expression.

"Unstable," she repeated, with a world of scorn in her voice. "How can you use that word to me, knowing the facts of the case?"

"Oh, a man," said Mr. Bulstrode rather impatiently, "is a worthless, wretched piece of mechanism altogether. I grant you that—utterly

unworthy the love or confidence of any good woman. He is capable of all the vagaries and infidelities possible. We'll judge him so. But," he continued, "these wandering, vagrant derelicts have been known to tie fast, to find port, to cast anchor. They have even brought great riches and important treasures into harbor, fetched a world of good luck home. There's only one thing in the universe that can keep a man, Duchess, only one."

"Well?" she encouraged him.

"A woman's heart," he said deeply, "a woman's true tenderness; and it needs all that heart, all its love, all its patience and sacrifice, to keep that man—all and forever."

He saw her bosom heave; she had thrown her fur off, as if its warmth stifled her. Vivid color had come into her face. Her pallor for the time was destroyed, and as she flashed a rebellious look at him, a look of revolt and selfhood, he seemed to see again the American girl,—wilful, egotistical, spoiled, an imperious creature whose caprices had been opposed to the Duke's Anglo-Saxon temperament and national egoism.

At this moment the window the Duchess looked toward opened part way; it was under the eaves, and there must have been a dove-cote near, for there came the soft sound of cooing, like the call of a young bird. Possibly the gentle note reached the woman's hearing as well, for her face transcendently softened.

"I think," she said with evident effort to speak in a commonplace tone, "it would be quite futile to urge Cecil to come."

"Oh, I shan't advise him so."

Mr. Bulstrode's quick answer made her look at him in so much surprise that he went on to say: "I would not, in justice to him, in justice to the great love I have been permitted to see, advise him to come."

The Duchess, during the months of analysis, suffering, and experience, had not admitted to herself that should her husband return she would receive him, nor had she decided as to quite how obdurate she would be, and she was curious at the attitude of this gentle friend. She naïvely asked:

"Why would you not advise him so?"

Mr. Bulstrode said, still continuing his pleasant sentimentousness: "The woman's heart must be as stable as the man's is uncertain, and the man who comes back after such a separation must not find a woman who does not know her own mind. He must, on the contrary, find one who has no mind or will or life but his."

As Mr. Bulstrode looked at the person to whom he spoke, he was somewhat struck by a maternal look in her. He had never clearly discovered it before. Her breast, from which the fur had fallen, as it

rose and fell under her soft gown was full, generous, and beautiful; even as he spoke in a certain accusation against her, she seemed to have altered.

"Westboro'," he said, a little confused, "must come back to a woman, Duchess, to a woman—to a consoler. I wish I could express myself—almost to a *mother* as well as to a wife."

The ardent color dyed her face again; her lips moved. She put her hand out toward him, and as he took it he understood that she wished him to bid her good-by and to leave her alone. He heard what she struggled to say:

"He must not come, Mr. Bulstrode, he must not come."

"No," he accepted sadly for his friend; "no, he must not come."

## XII.

THE gray house in its half forsaken seclusion, the lie of the land round it, its shut-offness from the world, its ancient beauty, was to the visitor of the Duchess a constant suggestion of a property and countryside which must inevitably fall into his own possession; of a place that somewhere must exist on this selfsame island, where doors, windows, low, inviting rooms, shadowy stairways, ingles, gables, terraces, dials, and sunken garden were all conceived, planned, and waiting to be the settings for a life of his own, and for *hers*.

"No one, Jimmy, is old," Mrs. Falconer had said to him on one occasion when a word regarding gray hairs had drifted into their conversation. Noticing the reflection of the light along her hair, Mr. Bulstrode had spoken of its bright quality, and she had covered the strand with her hand suddenly as if she knew that in the radiant mesh there ran a line she would not have him see. "No one is old, Jimmy, who has even the least little bit of future towards which he looks. It's only those people whose doors are all shut, whose window-blinds are all drawn to, who, no matter which way they look, see no opening into a distance towards which they will want to go—only those people are old."

And as for Bulstrode, if Mrs. Falconer's idea were right, he was a very young man still, for at the end of every path others opened and led rapidly away. Scene gave onto scene, dissolved, and grew new again. Every door gave to rooms whose suites were delightful, indefinite, and all followed towards a future whose existence Bulstrode never doubted. But there were certainly times, as the days went methodically on, there were decidedly many times, when it took all his faith and his spirit to endure the *etaps* that lay between himself and life. Such a little tranquil home as this towards which his secret visits led him was what he dreamed of sharing with her. He did not with any degree of anxiety ask himself if it were dead men's shoes he was waiting for, and

no clear, formulated thought of tangible events took existence in his mind. But he knew that he waited for his own.

Since the return of the Duke Mr. Bulstrode chose those times for going to The Dials when his host was least likely to take note of his absence; but it happened that more than once the Duke missed him at just the wrong moment, and more than once had been given the direction in which Bulstrode's footsteps had turned.

One morning, during a walk with his agent, Westboro', the map of the district before him, inquired what had ever been done with the property known as The Dials, and into whose hands the old place had fallen. It seemed that it had been let for some months to a foreigner, a widow, who lived there, and alone.

Westboro' considered it, the farms and forests, as they lay mapped out before him at the extreme foot of the Castle's parks. It was a little square of some fifty acres by itself; it had never interested him before.

How long did the lease run on? Did the agent know?

He believed for another year.

The Duke gave instructions to have the property looked into, with a view to purchase. And as the man put up his papers, he vouchsafed to his employer:

"The present tenant is very exclusive; she sees nobody; has never, I believe, even been to the abbey. An old gardener who was dismissed says the servants are all foreign."

The Duke gave only a tepid interest to the information, which would have passed entirely from his mind had it not been for his next meeting with Jimmy Bulstrode.

Jimmy, as much to shake off the impression his last talk with the Duchess had left on his mind, as to prolong his exercise, had gone down out of the garden and across the place on foot over the rough winter fields with their rimy furrows and their barren floors. As he made his way toward the bottom hedge, looking for a stile he knew would be there a little further on, cutting an entrance out through the thorn to the road, he met Westboro', like himself on foot and with his hand upon the stile. The presence of the Duke where Bulstrode knew that he was least thought to be and where he was now sadly sure he was not opportune—Bulstrode stopped short, troubled, and not for a moment thinking that the fact of his being here himself was singular, made his way determinedly through the stile, greeted the Duke, his own demeanor decidedly one which said: "Don't go on in that direction; follow rather out of the turnstile with me"—led his friend rather brusquely down the bank, and, hitching his arm in Westboro's, forced him along with him into the road.

"I ran down here to look over these meadows," said Westboro'.  
"You seem yourself in a way to be pacing the land off."

"Oh, I love 'cross country walking," said Bulstrode warmly.

"You must," smiled the Duke, "to have cut off into those barren fields. Were you lost?"

Westboro stopped and looked back. "You must have come directly down through The Dials."

"The Dials?" the American helplessly repeated. "Do you mean the old house and garden?"

Bulstrode's manner and speech were so rarely curt and evasive, he seemed so embarrassed and taken unawares, that as the two men sat in the motor which waited for the Duke down the road, Westboro' fixed his glass in his eye and looked hard for a second at his friend. Bulstrode's cheerful face was distinctly disturbed.

"I'm thinking something of buying 'The Dials,'" Westboro' after a moment said against the wind.

And poor Jimmy, for whom if the house had not sufficiently up till now materialized out of his fancy as a possession, declared himself at once. It was only a little bit of England.

"Well," he exclaimed, "to be frank, old man, I've been thinking I should like to buy that property. You could surely spare me this little corner of Blankshire."

"Spare it!" cried Westboro'. "My dear chap, fancy how ripping to have you a landlord here! To catch and hold you so! We'll go over the whole place together. My agent shall put the matter through for you."

"Good God, no!" said Bulstrode. "Don't let your man have wind of any such a deal. The place would go up like a rocket in price. If you really yourself care to withdraw as much as possible, that's the most you can do. But, for God's sake, keep off the place, like a good fellow!"

Behind his long mustaches the Duke covered a smile, but he conciliated his agitated friend.

"I'll keep off the grass until the turf is all your own, my dear Bulstrode."

"Thanks!" said Bulstrode cordially, and sat back with a sigh of relief. "There," he reflected peacefully, "my presence is explained—it's quite perfect. I shall be a landowner in England. At all events, it's lucky the property is sympathetic. I'm glad I did n't get balled up in this affair in, let us say, New Jersey, to find myself forced to purchase the Hackensack Meadows."

"Did the old house look deserted?" asked the Duke wickedly.

"Oh, rather!" replied the other gentleman.

"Really!" wondered Westboro'. "Why, they tell me that it was let to a Donna Incognita—a foreign lady."

Bulstrode, whether at his own lie or at the shock of his companion's knowledge, blushed, and his friend saw him redden. And the Duke, in



whom candor was one of his charms, stared at his friend, half opened his mouth, and then sat speechless. The suggestiveness of the whole affair rushed over him so rapidly that he had not time to ask himself whether he credited his suspicions or not.

"Good heavens! Jimmy carrying on a vulgar intrigue in a simple country village!" Half surreptitiously, he looked at the face of the man by his side, but Jimmy, leaning forward, addressed some remark to the chauffeur, and showed no intention of meeting the Duke's eyes. If it were not a vulgar intrigue, what could it have been? How difficult it grew to connect any such liaison with his friend! But as he thought, the Duke began to ask why, after all, it should be so extraordinary. Why should he suppose Jimmy to be so unlike the rest of his set? More scrupulous, more sinless, than other men,—than himself? He could not answer his own question, but he did so think of Bulstrode, and since his late house party he had believed that Jimmy cared for Mrs. Falconer. The lady at The Dials was certainly not she, and he was asking the American down in order to give Bulstrode pleasure. Why, if what he began to suspect were true, should he please any one but himself?

The car softly rolled in between the Castle gates and up the broad avenue. Westboro' recalled his friend's excuse for absenting himself in Christmas week—a point of honor—he must get away—he refused to be kept. Perhaps he had gone further than he intended and would be glad to be let out of it? . . . Ah, then, but why *buy* The Dials? It looked like a permanence.

Bulstrode, in the shadow of this delinquency, surrounded certainly in the mind of the Duke by an atmosphere of intrigue, became very human, rather consolingly human. In their mutual intercourse the Duke had felt himself living in a clearer atmosphere than he usually breathed. Alongside Bulstrode's mode of life, points of view, and principles, his own life had seemed more mistaken than he had ever thought it to be. And although Jimmy had never breathed a word of criticism, the Duke had felt himself judged by his friend's just though gentle codes.

By the time he had reached this point in his reflections the motor had stopped at one of the side doors.

"There is, of course, some perfectly proper explanation of it," the Duke decided. "It is a harmless flirtation, if any flirtation at all. Perhaps it's a beneficent bit of benevolence; at any rate, it's his own affair, and, after all, he's going to buy the property—perhaps he's going to marry. Why not?"

Ashamed to have placed his friend, if only momentarily, in an equivocal position, he turned about as they got out of the car and put an affectionate hand on the American's shoulder.

"Oh, I expect you've got some wonderful scheme up your sleeve. You're going to be married and fetch your bride to The Dials."

Poor Bulstrode unfortunately echoed: "*Married!*" with a world of scorn in his tone. "My poor Westboro', after what I've lately seen and heard here—forgive me if I say that for the time at least I'm not too sharply tempted."

## XIII.

"SINCE," he said as he greeted her, "you appear to be intending to live here forever, you'll welcome me when I come back from London. If I don't run in before Christmas, you'll understand, won't you, that it is because I simply have n't dared? Westboro' has already seen me cut across to this place."

The Duchess interrupted him: "Oh, in that case I shall of course be obliged to move away." And to her great surprise Bulstrode quickly agreed with her.

"I should think it wise—not, of course, in the least knowing why you originally came."

She looked at him rather quizzically.

"You mean to say that you don't, then, really know?"

"Oh!"—he was truthful—"I have rather an idea, and I hope a more or less true one."

But the lady did not confess or in any wise help him. He went on to say:

"Your love for the Castle could n't of course long continue to keep you mewed up here; and you'll be shortly discovered. As far as your own interests are concerned, it will be rather better to obtain the divorce as soon as possible."

"Oh, Mr. Bulstrode," she interposed, "don't misread me."

He nodded sagely. "On the contrary, I am translating you from sight, my dear Duchess. And you are decidedly in your right regarding the Duke."

She was so at his mercy that she hardly moved her lips, watching his face. And as Bulstrode lit the cigarette she permitted him and took his seat before the tea things which she had set at his elbow, he went on to make out her case for her.

"He has quite spoiled your life. He has been a brute; and not in the least worth your——"

But the Duchess had dropped her tongs; they fell ringing on the hard-wood floor. She raised a scarlet face to him.

"It's a *piège*," she murmured, "an *autodafè*."

"No," he said quietly; "it's a plain truth. Westboro' has told me everything. I must think that he has done so. The man of me naturally condones him, and the friend in me is inclined to be lenient. But the justice and right, my dear Duchess, are all on your side."

"Oh! Justice and right!" she dismissed. "Only criminals need such words."

Bulstrode said coolly: "But Westboro' *has* been a criminal!"

"If he were," emphasized the Duchess, "did n't I forgive him?"

"Of course you did, my dear," her friend agreed warmly; "how wonderfully, how beautifully, every one knows. And he is all the more, therefore, dreadfully to be blamed."

She said passionately: "What do you mean, Mr. Bulstrode? How—why do you speak to me like this?"

Her extraordinary guest drank his tea with singular peace of mind.

"I think he is dreadfully to be blamed."

"But why should you tell it to me?"

"Why not?" he returned, his charming eyes on hers with the greatest tribute of affection and sympathy. "I've known you for years, I'm fond of you, you've been horribly wronged, and I'm going to see that things are made right for you. I've been very blind. I have longed for a reconciliation, I admit, with this husband who, poor stuff as he is, loves you still. But I see what a sentimental ass I've been, and how right you are."

She put her hand up to her throat as if the soft lace suffocated her.

"What," she gasped, "do you know of my plans and my intentions, Mr. Bulstrode? I have not told them to you."

"But I've been able to guess them," he replied.

"You've dared to, then?" she flashed.

"Oh, don't blame me!" he returned. "Seeing you as I have all the while, I've been forced to make out something to attach some reason to your living in this isolation. You've wanted, not unnaturally and very cleverly, I acknowledge, to see what's been going on at Westboro', what the Duke's up to."

Her voice was suffocated as she said:

"Oh, stop, please! Whatever has come to you, Mr. Bulstrode, I don't know, or why you dare to speak to me as you do."

Seeing her agitation, he said smoothly: "My dear child, you're so right in everything you've done, and of course I shall stand by you."

She made a dismissing gesture. "Oh, I don't need you, I don't want you."

He smiled benignly on her. "But I'm here, and I'm going to see you through."

"See me through what?"

"Through your divorce," he said practically.

"But you're Westboro's friend," she stammered, and he repudiated with just a little hesitation in his voice:

"Oh, not so much as yours! But I'm the friend of both of you in this. It's the best thing all round."

The gentleman's attitude so baffled her, he was so serious and yet he took it so lightly apparently, that she was obliged to believe he meant what he said.

"You talked to me very differently," she reminded him, and he shrugged.

"Oh, I've been far too emotional and unpractical. I'm going henceforth to look at things from the worldly and conventional standpoint."

She put out her hand beseechingly. "Oh, leave that for the rest of us. It quite spoils you."

"I don't pretend to think——" He made his gaze small as he looked past her in an attitude of reflection. "Oh, I don't at all claim that it's an ideal way of looking at things. But there is not much idealism in the modern divorce, is there?"

The Duchess took a turn across the floor, twisting her fair hands together, then came round to his side and sat down on a low chair near him.

"Are you quite serious?" she asked. "But I know that you are not. Let me at least think so. Your words shock me horribly"—and she looked piteously at him. "I have felt you to be such a gentle person, and yours is such an understanding atmosphere."

Bulstrode had given himself methodically another cup of tea, and helped himself now to sugar.

"Oh, atmosphere!" he repeated scornfully. "One can't live on air, you know. And I have been of the most colorless kind."

"Well, you've changed terribly," she accused him.

"I've only come down to solid earth," he explained. "And the earth's after all where we belong, Duchess. Stand firm, keep to your own part of it, and don't cloud-gaze, or somebody with a claim will knock you off your little foothold."

"Oh, Mr. *Bulstrode!*" exclaimed his companion.

The gentleman, who appeared at length quite to have finished his material enjoyment of the tea, put his second empty cup down and looked at the lady.

"You should have married an *American* husband," he said to her, "a man who would have idolized you, not cared whether you developed or not. A duchess is n't far enough up. An *American* empress is higher."

The lady listening to him shuddered a little.

"As it is," he went on regretfully, "you've been forced to develop, whether or not you wanted to; to grow finer and freer, to go farther on, to become more delightful. Here you are, progressed and civilized, after years of education, experience, and suffering, and, my poor child, *here* you are all alone!"

She again said his name under her breath with a gasp.

"Oh, no, no!" he softly ejaculated. "It is not *fair!* You're terribly wasted, and you've been, as you too well know, terribly betrayed."

But here he felt her hand on his arm with a strong grasp. She shook that arm a little.

"Don't go on," she said deeply. "I tell you *not* to go on." After a few seconds, in which he heard the fire and the slow bubbling of the gently boiling water and the cooing of the doves without, under the eaves, the Duchess said: "Listen to me. I have n't talked at all to you. Let me say something now."

Her companion reflected to himself: "Well, at all events, she's not going to malign the Duke; *that's* a foregone conclusion!"

The Duchess clasped her hands round her knee and raised her face to him.

"Do you think," she asked, "that there's any egoist as nasty as a feminine one? Men are admitted to be generally selfish, but we specialize, and each one of us has the faculty of getting up some new and peculiar brand, I begin to believe. At any rate, when I married I was an egoist, and I've stayed on being one until a very little time ago. I suppose I must in a way have more or less 'ornamented my position,' as the papers say. I did have two children as well, and in that way fulfilled my duty as a Westboro'. But really and truly, Mr. Bulstrode, I have never in the least been a wife, and very little of a mother. I was as silly and as vain as could be, and I never for a moment valued my husband. I was n't indifferent to my children, but I was absorbed by my worldly life, and when my little boys were taken ill and died, I was on a dahabeah on the Nile, and I don't think that Cecil ever forgave us for being so far away."

She remained quiet for a long time, looking down at her hands, and when she lifted her face Bulstrode saw that there were tears in her eyes.

"That," she went on, "broke the ice around my heart, when I came home to those empty rooms."

He said soothingly: "There, there, my child."

"Oh, let me go on," she urged him, "let me speak. I shall probably never feel like doing so again. But at that time when I turned to find my husband, I discovered that I had no power over him, and I realized that for years I had not possessed his love. I suppose you'll tell me that it is unusual for a woman to see so clearly as this. Perhaps it is. At any rate, just because I did see clearly I forgave him when he came to me last year at Cannes."

"You were wonderful," he repeated again, "perfectly noble, and, as I said before, Westboro' did not deserve you."

She did not here, as she had before done, catch him up; on the contrary, after a few moments she asked him point-blank:

"What, then, do you advise us, knowing us both, to do?"

He was distinctly disappointed that she should have put the question to him, and gave her time to withdraw it as he asked tentatively: "You really feel that you must ask me, Duchess?"

"Tell me, at all events."

"You are quite sure that you could not go back to your husband?"

After a little pause she lingeringly said:

"Yes, quite sure. You must know that he will not be the first to break the ice now." Then she pushed: "You would advise my filing my papers for divorce?"

Held in this way pitilessly for a direct challenge, Bulstrode met her eyes with his own, asking her gently:

"Is there nothing that speaks for Westboro' more distinctly than anything I can say? And more appealingly than anything which you in all your pride feel?"

The Duchess assented that there was, with a movement of her lips; she put her hands over her face and so sat quietly for a few moments, and when she spoke again to her visitor her words were irrelevant. When some few moments later she bade him good-by, she regretted his absence in London and begged him to come to see her as soon as he returned.

"Come," she said, "at least to see whether I am here or whether I have struck my tent and gone away."

As Bulstrode stood in the doorway she asked him:

"You say there are a lot of people at the Castle for Christmas, and among them is Mrs. Falconer, is n't she? Is she really so very lovely?"

"It's a different type of loveliness from yours," Mr. Bulstrode returned. And the Duchess supposed: "A happier type?"

"Well, she's rather happy, I think, take it all together," Jimmy said.

"Has she children?"

"None."

"Is she in love with her husband?"

And Bulstrode was so long searching for a reply that the Duchess laughed quietly.

"Poor man," she said, "don't bother. But, then, since she's so happy, she must be in love with somebody else's husband."

But he put her right immediately.

"I don't think she in the least is. And why," he went on, "since happiness is so greatly the question of other people's state of mind, might we not let it go at the fact that she is herself very much loved?"

The Duchess looked at her guest rather absently. She was thinking

of the happy beauty, the woman of a different type to her own, whose presence at Westboro' had been sought by her husband for the second time.

"Oh," she answered rather absently, giving Jimmy her hand, "she would n't, you know, be happy if the feeling were all on the other side."

#### XIV.

ENGLAND, the heart of the countryside, freshened by December and drifted over by delicate breaths that are scarcely fog, and through which, like a chrysanthemum seen behind ground glass, the sun contrives to shine,—the English country in December is one thing; London quite another.

Bulstrode rather wandered than went across from Paddington to his destination, part of the time on foot, part of the time peering from a crawling hansom, in immediate peril of collision with every other object that, like himself, lost bearings in the nightmarish yellow fog.

He fetched up before No. — Portman Square at mid-day, and rang the door bell of Lady Sorgham's town house, and in his eagerness to find his friend did not ask himself how the time accorded with calling hours.

She was at home.

An insignificant footman told him so, and the gentleman reflected that it was astonishing what the words heard often in the course of ten years meant to him still!

In the sitting-room, before a coal fire, a writing-table at her side, a pen in her hand, he found Mrs. Falconer.

He sincerely struggled with an inability to speak at once; even the consoling how-d'-dos that cover for us a multitude of feelings were not at his tongue's end. There usually surrounded the occasions on which, after an absence, he came face to face with his friend, a mysterious veil, through which it was not until she had charmingly declared herself to his cleared vision that he could speak.

The fire had burned away a few feet of fog, and lighted lamps and candles shone pallidly through an obscurity about whose existence there could be no doubt.

The inmates of Lady Sorgham's thoroughly English and thoroughly comfortable drawing-room were aliens, possessing neither of them a hearthstone within a range of several thousand miles. But no sooner had they greeted—Bulstrode triumphantly peering at her through both real and mental haze—shaken hands, and each found a seat before the grate, than an enchanting homeliness overspread the place. Bulstrode felt it and smiled with content to think she also possessed the feeling, and remembered an occasion when they had both of them missed a train for some out-of-the-way place and found themselves side by side in a

mid-country station, to pass there three hours of a broiling afternoon. The flies and mosquitoes buzzed about them, the thermometer registered ninety degrees, but, happy, cool, and unruffled, Mary Falconer, smiling up at him from her hard bench, had said :

“ Jimmy, let 's *build* here ! ”

In the room where they now talked, wreaths of fog filled the corners like spiders' dusty webs that poised and swung. The odor that stamps England hung in the mist, furthermore permeated with the scent of a bouquet at Mrs. Falconer's elbow and which at one moment of his visit Jimmy recognized for a lot of roses sent by parcel post from the Westboro' greeneries.

“ Do you ever sew ? ” he asked her, and she admitted to a thimble which persistently, with a suggestion of reproach, turned up every now and then amongst her belongings ; now falling out from a jewel-box, then stowed away in a handkerchief-case, out of place and continually reproachful : kept because it had been her mother's.

Although the picture of the Duchess at her work was fresh in his mind, he did not tell Mrs. Falconer of it.

No matter to what extent he had thought of her, and it was pretty sure to be a wide one, her beauty struck him every time afresh. There was the fine exquisiteness of *fin de race* in Mary Falconer. Her father had been an Irishman born, and the type of his island's lovely women was repeated in his daughter's eyes, the set of her head, and her arms. Her taper and small-boned little wrists, her cool hands with the slender fingers, told in muscle and moulding the well-finished, well turned-out creature whose race it had taken generations to perfect. These distinctions her clever father bequeathed her as well as her laugh and her wit.

Bulstrode stayed on in the dingy, delightful room until, at an order of his hostess, luncheon was served them on a small table, and over the good things of an amazingly well understood buffet, and a bottle of wine, they were left alone. Bulstrode stayed on until the fog in the corners darkened to the blackest of ugly webs and choked the fire and clutched the candles' slender throats as if to suffocate the flame. Tea was served and put away, and the period known as *entre chien et loup* at length stole up Portman Square alongside the fog and found Mr. Bulstrode still staying on.

If he did not speak other than in a general way of his host at Westboro', he did of The Dials and the fascination the old place possessed for him.

The Dials was in point of fact very prettily described to Mrs. Falconer, who looked it out on the map of Blankshire, and Bulstrode's purchase (for he had legally gone in for it, the whole thing) was made to seem a very jewel of a property.



"It's as lovely as an old print," she said, "as good as a Turner. You're a great artist along your lines, Jimmy. Don't have it rebuilt by some more than designing architect in trouble, or landscape-gardened by some inebriated Adam out of charity. Leave it beautifully alone."

"Oh, I will," he assured her. "It shall tumble and crumble away in peace."

"When I come down," she said, "we'll go together all over it."

But at this friendly suggestion Bulstrode bolted the topic with curious haste. Later, much later, when the lamps in the street and the square found themselves with no visible transition lighting night-time, as they had lighted day, and when the hansoms began to swing the early diners along to their destinations, a hansom drew up before No. — Portman Square.

Bulstrode had been to his hotel to dress. And just where they had chosen to lunch, the gentleman and lady dined, at the same small table with little ceremony; and when coffee and liqueurs had been removed, and across the foggy room the smoke of Jimmy's cigar had blown its azure breath, the house proper had to him the air of having been bewitched, off the face of London Town! Only the sitting-room seemed miraculously to have remained, poised in mid-air, and he took it as an especial favor of the Genii that this at least stood firm! The room, in foggy haze, hung over Portman Square like a bubble blown out for him, and over its lovely sides the image of the lady was indefinitely deflected.

After he had come to the close of all he had to tell her—for it was their habit to give each other detailed accounts of their *faits et gestes* since the last meeting—there fell between them one of those silences that are either, as the case may be, adored or dreaded. The poor man knew that as usual it must cruelly fall to him brutally to shatter the quiet. But on this night the temptation to sit and watch her, to listen to what neither of them said, was too strong, and he delayed and delayed, until the delicious silence grew so prolonged that Jimmy could not have spoken for a kingdom. The interruption came from without.

It was at the hour soft-footed London had ceased to roll its rubber tires down the little street, and only an occasional cab slipped by unheard. But a small hand-cart on which a piano-organ was installed wheeled by No. — Portman Square, and stopped directly under the Sorghams' window, and a man began to sing:

"I'll sing thee songs of Araby  
And tales of old Cashmere."

The creature was singing for his living, for his supper doubtless, certainly for his breakfast, but he chanced to possess a remarkable gift,

and he evidently loved his trade. The silence—wherein all London appeared to listen, the quiet wherein the magically suspended room had swung and swung until even Mr. Bulstrode's clear mind and good sense began fatally to blur and swing with the pendulant room—was broken into by the song.

And as Bulstrode moved and turned away his eyes from the woman's face, she sighed and covered her own eyes with her hands. Between them the small coffee-table had been taken away. Mrs. Falconer was in a lower chair than her friend, leaning forward, her hands lying loosely in her lap. The distance between them his hand could have bridged in one gesture. The voice of the street-singer was superb, liquid and sweet. He sang his ballad well.

I'll sing thee songs of Araby,  
And tales of fair Cashmere,  
Wild tales to cheat thee of a sigh,  
Or charm thee to a tear.

And dreams of delight shall on thee break,  
And rainbow visions rise,  
And all my soul shall strive to wake  
Sweet wonder in thine eyes.

Though those twin lakes, when wonder wakes,  
My raptur'd song shall sink,  
And as the diver dives for pearls,  
Bring tears, bright tears to their brink;

And dreams of delight shall on thee break,  
And rainbow visions rise,  
And all my soul shall strive to wake  
Sweet wonder in thine eyes.

Mrs. Falconer's guest rose.

"Jimmy! It's only ten o'clock."

"I must, however, go."

"Nonsense! Where will you pass the next hour and a half? There's not a cat in town."

"Nevertheless, I promised a man to meet him at the——"

"Jimmy!"

He had reached the door, making his way with a dogged determination and like a man who has touched terra firma after months on a dancing brig, still not feeling quite sure of the land or its tricks.

"How you hurry from me!" she said softly.

"Oh, I'm hurrying off," he explained brightly, "because I want to get hold of that chap out there and take him to supper, and to find out why he is n't on the operatic stage. He's got a jolly voice. Good night, good night."

He was gone from her with scant courtesy and a brusquerie she knew well, adored, and hated! During these last years she had done her cruel best, her wicked best, to soften and change and break it down.

The curtains as she drew them back showed that the fog had for the most part lifted, and she was just in time to see the piano and the two musicians disappear in the mist which still tenaciously held the end of the street in shadow—and a gentleman in long evening cloak and high hat hurry after the street people. Mrs. Falconer's face was tender as she watched the distinguished figure melt into the fog, and at her last glimpse of her friend she blew a kiss against the pane.

## XV.

JIMMY BULSTRODE on the day following, for the only time on record en route to meet Her, stopped for a rendezvous with another woman! He was hurrying across the forest when the Duchess herself appeared to him at the big dial. Even the gentleman who was anticipating the feast that one woman alone could offer to his ocular sense, found the Duchess very lovely as she greeted him.

She wore her furs, muff, and big enveloping stole, her hat with fur on it, and a veil. She was not in house or garden trim. The urban elegance of her toilet was a surprise to Bulstrode, and he took in her readiness for something he had not expected, something great, something decisive.

"It's good of you to come when you must be full of delightful ways of passing your time, Mr. Bulstrode," she said, "and I wanted so much to see you again."

"Again?"

"Of course," she replied, nodding, "again and many times. But I mean, I wanted to see you *here*."

Bulstrode did not want her to tell him a piece of final news. He did not care to learn of an arbitrary departure, and he said, laughing: "Then you don't like my property? Any repairs you——"

"Oh, I adore The Dials," she said gravely, "and I can't think why they ever let you buy it, or what you'll do with it after I'm gone." She smiled. ". . . or with whom." Before he could speak she added: "Where is my husband to-day?"

"I left him wandering about the house like a lost spirit," Bulstrode replied. "Looking," he went on, "all about for something or other. I expect he himself did n't quite know what. For something to cheer up the empty rooms."

"Oh, don't," she murmured.

But Bulstrode seemed pleased with the picture he drew. "I doubt if Westboro' stops in the house alone; he's probably gone out shooting."

"But he's a house full of people!"

"No one has come or is coming after all."

"You don't mean to say that they've all refused!"

"Yes," Jimmy said, "every man of them, and all the women as well."

The Duchess put out her hand quickly, and said touchingly: "Oh, but you don't for a moment think——"

"That it's because of the scandal, dear lady?" he smiled. "Well, that *would* be a new phase! No, I think, on the other hand, they would revel, and the only reason in the world that they have *not* come down is that they were really asked too late. Christmas week, you know——"

"And of course, then, Mrs. Falconer"—the Duchess's face brightened—"she——"

"Oh, *she!*" Bulstrode exclaimed. "She's as right as possible. She's to be along this afternoon *même*."

"Oh!" accepted the Duchess. "And with whom does she come?"

Bulstrode waited. "Well, of course the poor thing expects to find more or less some one to help her bear up her end. And I can't say how she will take the fact of only us two——"

The Duchess's interruption was cheerful.

"Why, she, of course, will go directly back; you don't for a second think that she would stop on alone like that?"

"Alone?" Bulstrode gave her with a little malice. "But she'll have Westboro' and me so entirely to herself, and one can always ask in the rector or curate or corral a neighbor."

But the Duchess shook her head as if she understood. "Oh, no, not at this time."

Bulstrode miscomprehended blithely: "Christmas time? You see, I know the visiting lady pretty well, and I believe she'll feel *me* to be more or less of a stand-by, and I know her spirit and her human kindness. I am inclined to think that she will feel it's up to her *not* to run off like a hare; to think that Westboro' may, in a way, need her; and that when she finds everybody's gone back on the poor man, and there's to be no tree after all, why, I'm tempted, by Jove, to think——!"

The Duchess helped him: "That she will make a charity of it."

"Yes, if you like," he laughed. "Or be a sport," he preferred to put it. "Stay on, stand by. It will be perfectly ripping of her, you know."

But the Duchess had no sympathy for the other woman's delightful qualities. Her eyes fixed themselves on the trees before her, and as a shot rang out in the distance she said abruptly: "Why, that might be Cecil, might n't it? Does he shoot birds on your premises?"

Bulstrode wondered very much for what reason she was habited

in street dress and furs: whether she had planned to leave The Dials or had intended going up to see her husband.

"Forgive me," he said, "if I seem to be shockingly in a hurry, but I *must* have a look at the time, for as it happens, even in this far-off place, I've an engagement."

Impulsively putting out her hand, the Duchess exclaimed: "I can't ever, *ever* thank you."

"Oh, after your divorce——"

But she cried out so against his words that he hastened: "You want me to think then that you do not believe——"

"Believe!" she ardently repeated. "Oh, I don't know what I believe or think;" and he saw that the poor thing spoke the truth. "It's I who am as unstable as the sea, Mr. Bulstrode, I who am the derelict."

He contradicted her gently: "My dear, you're only trying to solve alone a problem which it takes two to answer. When you see Westboro' you will know."

She turned on him with the first sparkle of humor he had ever seen her display. "Why don't you marry Mrs. Falconer?"

Bulstrode did n't start; indeed, the idea had such a familiar sound it would have been hard to frighten him with it from any corner.

"I thought you did n't believe in divorces?"

"Oh, but you'd make a wonderful husband!"

Bulstrode laughed. "No one has ever thought so—*la preuve*——?"

With great frankness in her gesture and a great—he was quick to see it—a great affection, she put out her hand to him and said: "Oh, yes, you'd make a wonderful companion, and you've been a wonderful friend. If anything good comes to me now, I shall in great measure owe it to you."

He protested: "You owe me nothing, nothing."

There were tears in her eyes as she said: "But I want to, I like to, and I do. I don't know," she went on, "that I might not have been reconciled ultimately to my husband, but I feel quite sure it would have been only the basting up of the seam—it would have ripped away again. Did you ever"—she challenged him with still a little sparkle of humor—"hear of a thing called a change of heart, Mr. Bulstrode?"

"Yes, at Methodist meetings."

She said gravely: "That's not what I mean. But whatever *has* happened, it's only been since you told me things."

Her face was so girlish, her eyes so sweet, her humility so sudden, that her companion found himself embarrassed and could hardly find words to say good-by to her. She went on to say in a tone so low that he bent a little over the dial to hear her: "You told me you could not advise my husband to come to me."

Ah, had he? It was hard to remember that. *Had* he said so?

"I think," she whispered, "you need not keep him away now if he should want to come."

As her friend said nothing she added in a voice more like a child's than a great duchess's: "You may trust me. I *want* him to come. There, I've said it. I *hope* he'll come. If he does n't——"

"Why, then, you'll go away," he finished. "You can't bear it."

The Duchess shook her head. "I'll go *to* him, on the contrary."

"You were going?"

"Yes, when you came."

Bulstrode cried out: "Oh, I'm off then, I'm off for Penhaven, and I shan't be back for hours. You may count on me."

The Duchess smiled delightfully, and was in a second the elusive woman, intangible and impossible to seize.

"No, no," she said; "please don't exile yourself either to-day or to-morrow. It is n't, after all, the moment, and as I want to prove to you that I'm not jealous—I've decided to wait until Mrs. Falconer has gone."

## XVI.

THE waste of his territory, its largesse to no purpose, its vastness through which only unbearable silences echoed; accumulated revenues and hereditary title, only added to the Duke's melancholy.

The poor gentleman's mood led him to resent each fresh defection on the part of those whom he had invited to his house party as a personal wound inflicted by an old friend at a time when charity would have been sweet; and it was with really tragic melancholy that he threw the last letter down exclaiming:

"And they all with one consent began to make excuse."

He quite waited for a line from Mrs. Falconer which would tell him that she too had decided to abandon him; and the thought of what he believed to be Jimmy's complications at The Dials caused him half to regard the matter with a pity for her.

"If Jimmy is n't married, he's the most whited of sepulchres!"

The shine of holly, the glimmer of mistletoe, the odor of spruce and pine and heavier scent of hemlock, bewitched the Castle throughout with their fragrance. Setting and decoration suggested a feast, and the Duke as he passed through the upper halls and by the doors of his children's rooms, saw holly wreaths on the walls, and that the little gates were twisted with green.

Jimmy came back from London the following day at an early hour, and, to the Duke's surprise—it was like a southern winter over his cold despair—it turned out that Mrs. Falconer was actually to follow on. Bulstrode planned it all out: the next day he would motor over to Penhaven, and there meet Mrs. Falconer's train. The Duke smiled

subtly behind his mustaches; it began to go well in with what he was beginning to believe in regard to his friend. Bulstrode had come back alone, and in the nature of affairs he would pay a visit *en attendant* Mrs. Falconer's return to The Dials. And when after a lame excuse the gentleman made off on foot after luncheon and alone, Westboro', wickedly spying him, saw that he cut off in the proper direction for suspicion to follow him. The Duke, frowning at his deceitfulness, again affirmed to himself: "Well, he is the most whited of sepulchres."

The day was dampish, and the Duke, unable to bear the silence of the house, took his rifle and his dogs and, with a lack of resource and superfluity of ennui to urge him from the Castle, he started to tramp off his unrest.

The afternoon was young, and the bare, naked sunlight fell over the bare nakedness of the land. The little low clumps of neutral-colored underbrush, the reddish-brown thickets between wood and field, would hide the birds well, and with his gun across his back, his hands in his pockets, his Grace covered many miles before he at length stopped to take in the length of the land or to listen for wings.

Coveys unseen by him, and their whirring unheard, had indeed flown up and away. His dogs had run off, and, without being abruptly brought to heel, skulked back by themselves, shamefaced and bewildered by the hunter's indifference. Holly reddened on the hedges, the scarlet berries bright among the glowing leaves; high in the poplars the parasite mistletoe with its crystal balls hung tiny white globules like fairy grapes. High holiday was in the air, and over the gray winter landscape the finest possible powder of snow lay pale under the furtive sun. As the forest edges closed about him and still with no idea of where he was going, the Duke continued to tramp until he unconsciously entered the property Bulstrode had lately acquired and which he had begged his friend to avoid.

There was something in the country air, in its pungent sweetness, and in the season, that penetrated even Westboro's melancholy, and every now and then he lifted his head to breathe in deeply the fragrance of hemlock and the cold earthy aroma, the spice of bracken and the balm of a fragrant thicket that smelled like a rose. It was winter, however, and although a snowbird piped in it and the sun was out, there was a December quality that for Westboro', in the mood he was, shadowed all the festivities of the time. He heard the bird, who was persistent and sharp-voiced, and for the first thinking of the other game he had come out for, he paused. His dogs were gone, the beggars! He called them to no purpose, whistled and waited. They were a new brace and young. God knew where they had cut away to!

Before him as he stood, the brown vistas of the winter forest opened out here and there into ochre circles, filled at this hour with brilliant

sunlight, their round openings overflowing with winter gold. The light filtered gently out and was swallowed up by the cold and closer wood. Under his feet there was only the faint ghost of the late snowfall on the turned up, curled up edges of the dry leaves, where beeches, red as copper, and iron strong oaks, struck their roots deep down into the mould. Westboro' did not know where he had wandered to, but here and there through the bare trees gleamed the white of a statue on its mossy base, and a little farther along a broken pedestal held its slender column up amongst the tree-trunks, as mossy and veined as they, and right in the heart of the bowl, on a brick pedestal, was a sun-dial, a round brass disk, cut into with the tooth of time, and all black and green. The sun at this moment shone full on it, and its slight shadow fell along the noon. The Duke stooped down and through his glass read the inscription:

*"Utere dum licet."*

"I'm a trespasser," he thought. "Here I am on Bulstrode's property, and *this* is The Dials."

Through an opening just to the right he could see a brown path, and at the end of it a gate.

"What the deuce could Jimmy have so wanted this old place for? What was he hiding here?"

He turned back, with the intention of taking as sudden leave of the place as he had made an entrance. He saw his dogs in front of him and called them. Before him lay the clean low fall of the meadow, with the line of high hedge, and directly opposite him rose the elms of his own park. He had not gone more than a couple of hundred feet away before he paused again and turned about to have one last look at the enchanting place. As he halted thus, in Jimmy's property, he at first took what he saw for a trick of sight, and he stood perfectly rigid, peering back at the opening he had left not five minutes before. He leaned forward, setting his eyeglass and staring at two figures who had come into the bowl and stood close by the big dial.

The Duke set his gun on the ground and leaned upon it. There was a cordial meeting between the two people. He could hear the voices, but he could not distinguish their words, and during all the interview, which must have consumed some fifteen minutes, the Duke never stirred. Finally, and, curiously enough, it seemed a short time to him, they took leave of each other, the man going out of the forest by a different path, the woman slowly turning down the neat walk that led to the brick arch and to the old house. Whether or not the Duke had at this moment the vaguest suspicion of his friend or of his wife that did them any wrong in his mind, he never had time or clearness to reflect or to ask himself. A dense blindness took his senses away. He put his hands out to steady himself in vain, and staggered. His



dogs were at his feet, he fell over them, struggled to get his balance back, and like a stricken tree went down. In his heavy fall his gun discharged, filling his upper arm and shoulder with a quantity of birdshot. The scattering pain, instead of finishing his faint, roused him with a sharp, ugly sting, and the rush of the warm wet blood. He half picked himself up, and then, aware of the pain tearing his muscles and flesh, fell back like a dog on his haunches. Through his confusion he still contrived to remember a little path, and inch by inch he dragged himself towards it. He pulled along over the leaves and russet patches of ground. His bare hand finally struck the bricks of the little walk, and he could still know that he was wonderfully in the road. There was a cloud before his swimming eyes and his troubled mind; his face, pale as death, was lifted towards the arch. Leaving a bloody trail as he crawled along the ground, he contrived to reach the gate, and fell across its threshold. His head lay on his arm, the string of his broken eyeglass wound pathetically about his wrist. Westboro' proved to be a modern replica of the poor knight who fell face downward on the grass when Elizabeth's carriage passed him by some three hundred years before the present duke.

## XVII.

THE Duchess of Westboro' hurried back to her house, to the house that was not her home; to the little long drawing-room that was not hers. For the first time since her voluntary exile, since her occupation of this little asylum, she found it bereft of charm and the cozy, dear place as cold to her as if the snows had drifted in and filled a deserted nest. It had nevertheless been a cloister, and she knew it, where the best of her had prayed, where the true woman—and the true woman is always something of a saint—had folded submissive hands, where self had gone away and left nothing at all but love.

On this Christmas eve The Dials was the loneliest corner of England. The scarcely occupied house suggested to the Duchess the thought of a stocking hung before a chimney when there were no children who cared whether it was filled or not, when there was no reason why any St. Nicholas should pass. But it was only the very edge of her thoughts that touched anything so fantastic as this picture. The Duchess was very serious and very lonely. With a sigh, and winking back tears which had come, she threw off her furs, laid off her hat, and, after poking up the fire into sparkling brightness, she wandered upstairs to the apartment that she had made her bedroom. Under the low eaves the bed-chamber shone out gay with chintz, fresh and sweet as a mid-winter bouquet, the frostiness coming in around it through the slightly opened window, and there was the scent of the firs and the cedar wood that closely hemmed the old place in.

"Heavens!" thought the Duchess, half aloud. "How dreadfully in love Jimmy Bulstrode is, how dreadfully, faithfully, in love!" And then she went on to say: "How dreadfully I am myself in love, and no one is hurrying to me!"

She walked aimlessly about the pretty room, irritated and annoyed at the cloister effect. She found it too remote, too virgin, and no room for a wife. "I promised," she mused, "to wait until Mrs. Falconer has gone. I shall break my promise. Oh, I can't really wait at all! If things are going on to be as bad as this, I want to leave England, I want at least to know. And Jimmy will forgive me, it's such a wonderfully good cause: a woman going to find her husband on Christmas Eve!"

The Duchess threw open the window to its widest. Down in the garden on the stone wall the big dial lay in the shadow of the afternoon. She could not read its motto, but she knew perfectly what it said—

*Utere dum licet*

As she leaned out above her garden under her window, the snowballs hung their waxen globes in a green tree. There were a few winter roses blooming, and the English garden had the beauty of summer in winter-time.

The Duchess heard a sharp sound close to the house. It was a rifle shot, and it died instantly on the still air. Shots were not uncommon in this season, but here in the Dial woods they were entirely out of character; in fact, they were quite inadmissible. There was no shooting let, and a shot could only mean poaching, or something more serious. The Duchess waited a few moments, but no other sound followed. She nevertheless drew the casement in, and, going downstairs, threw her stole about her shoulders and opened the house door into the garden. At the sight of her, down by the other end of the wall, the gardener lifted up his bent form and with a little pannier of hot-house violets in his hands hurried toward his lady.

"Mellon," said she, "have you any violets?"

The Duchess took the fragrant basket with its delicate burden.

"A mort, my lady."

"Pick them all, Mellon, and all the flowers from the green-house as well, every one of them, and fetch up whatever there is to the cottage."

The old man was deaf, as well as discreet, and if this sudden command to vandalism surprised him, he did not say so. Holding his hand behind his ear, he nodded.

"I shall send them," the Duchess thought, "up to Jimmy Bulstrode. I think he will understand, and I will ask him at the same

time to take his friend off somewhere in a motor that I may go unobserved to the Castle."

She said a few more words to the old man, asked him a few questions, then with the basket on her arm she was about to turn away when she remembered the shot.

"Did you hear a rifle shot, Mellon? They should not be shooting about here, you know." But the old man had heard nothing, and, intending to find the lodge-keeper who was clipping the trees on the lower terrace and ask him to go through the woods and investigate for her, the Duchess walked toward the gate and in the direction of the brick path.

As she came up to it she gave a low cry, lifted her hands to her heart; the basket of flowers fell to the earth and scattered their purple blooms at her feet. Then the hands that had gone to her heart extended, she held out her arms and went forward, crying her husband's name.

The Duke of Westboro' had managed to pick himself up. He was a strong man, in the fullness of health and vigor; there was nothing of the mollycoddle about the last duke of the line. The sound of voices had reached his dulled ear, his swoon was over, and he had manfully, with a few sturdy curses, pulled himself up and now stood, albeit very pale, clinging to the gate-post, leaning on it, finding his legs shaking and his balance not all he could wish. Before him was a little brick house, with bright curtains to the window, and between it and himself, lovely as a ghost and no less white, was his wife, and her arms were extended toward him.

"Cecil!" she cried. "Oh, my God! Cecil, what has happened to you?"

Before Westboro' knew it, the arms to which he had gone in visions were about him and the soft shoulder gave him a prop more fragile perhaps than the stone against which he leaned, but it was a living support, and it felt warm and wonderful.

"Don't," he said vaguely, "get near me. I'm nasty and bloody. It's all right; I'm only a bit scratched, really. A lot of beastly shot has gone off into my shoulder. Just call some one to help me, will you?"

"Cecil," she said, "lean on me, put your arm around my shoulder; you can perfectly well get along with only me. Come! Come!"

The Duke saw that he could perfectly get along with another faint—he was near to it, but something beside his wound and his light head kept him manfully on his feet. With his left hand he very firmly pushed the Duchess a little away from him.

"Come?" he repeated. "Come where?"

"Home," said the Duchess, with a catch in her voice—she was

bearing up. "Oh, lean on me! You'll fall, you'll fall! Mellon!" she cried. "Oh, Mellon!"

But the Duke put up his hand. "I'm all right," he said. "Don't call. What house is that? What home do you mean?"

"Mine," said the Duchess; "my house—that is, I mean to say, Mr. Bulstrode's."

The Duchess saw a slight wave of red rush up her husband's pale cheek.

"Confound Bulstrode!" he breathed. "What the devil does he do here? I saw you together—I saw you not half an hour since—that is the whole mischief of it—it was too much for me—it took away my senses, and I fell on my gun, and the beastly thing went off. If I ever get back to where Bulstrode is——"

"Cecil!" cried the Duchess. She again wound her arms around him, and it was as well that she was a strong, fine creature, and that the columns of the gate were back of him, for Westboro' was swaying like a child that has just learned to walk.

"He is fainting!" she cried. "Mellon, Mellon!"

The old man had not heard his mistress, but he had seen her, and, after staring open-mouthed at the couple at the gate, he came scurrying like a rabbit, dropping his shears on the wall. They hit the big dial with a ring.

The Duke heard the steps and tried to start forward; also tried weakly to extricate himself from his wife's embrace. "I beg your pardon," he said, with a coolness that had something of the humorous in its formality—"I beg your pardon, but I am *not* going to Bulstrode's house, you know."

"*Cecil*," pleaded the woman tenderly, "how ridiculous you are! Mr. Bulstrode's house! Why, it's mine! Oh, don't break my heart. He's only bought it, you know, that's all."

"Break her heart!" It was a new voice that spoke to the Duke of Westboro'. He had never heard it in all his life. It was warm and struggling for clearness, it was full of tears and quivering, it was the voice of love, and unmistakable, certainly, to a lover.

"What was Bulstrode doing here?" he persisted.

"Going to Mrs. Falconer," breathed the Duchess.

The Duke moved a step forward: "What are you doing here?"

"Going to you, Cecil—I have *been* going to you all day. I think I have been going to you ever since you left me that night on the Riviera; at any rate, I was on my way to the Castle as you came."

The Duke halted again on his crawling way. Mellon, who had really reached his side, was doing his best to be of some use and kept himself well under the wounded arm, on which the blood had clotted and dried but had ceased to flow.

"Lean hard on me, your Grace," pleaded the gardener, and with his word he looked over at his mistress to see if she realized who their noble visitor was.

With fine disregard for his help or his existence, the Duke said crossly: "Send this confounded gardener away."

"Oh, Cecil, no, no; you can't stand without him."

They had reached the garden wall, just at the place where the big dial, round and shining, had come a little out of the shadow and the last of the afternoon sun touched its edges. Westboro' lurched toward the wall. "Send this man away," he commanded.

"He is deaf, Cecil, as the stones." But at her husband's face she motioned to Mellon: "Stand away a bit. His Grace wants to rest on the wall. I'll call you."

With her arms about him, Westboro' leaned on the garden wall, his ashen face lifted to his wife.

"I've only one arm," he said. He put it around her and he drew her down as close to him as he could. He felt her face warm against his, wet against his with tears. As the Duke, who Mr. Bulstrode said was no lover, kissed his wife, the dial seemed to sing its motto aloud.

"You *were* coming to me?" he breathed. "Do you forgive me? . . . Then," said Westboro', satisfied by what he heard, "I'm cured. I love you—I love you."

The woman could not find her voice, but as she held him she was the warmest, sweetest prop that ever a wounded man leaned upon. After a few seconds she helped him to rise, helped him on, and he found his balance and his equilibrium to be very wonderful under the circumstances, and managed to reach the doorsill. Mellon and the maids were there, and as the Duchess passed in, leading her husband, she bade them send for a doctor as fast as they could and to send at once for Mr. Bulstrode at the Castle.

Westboro's wound had become a sort of intoxication to him, and he assured her, "I'll be all right in an hour. I need no one but you; send them all away, all away."

He had never commanded her before, he had let her rule him, he had been indifferent to her disobedience. But now she did what he bade her, and led him into the drawing-room, suddenly repossessed of all its old charm; led him to the lounge, where he sank down. Here, by his side, she gave him stimulants and bathed his head and hands, waiting for the doctor to come, and Westboro', like his ancestors who had fought in the King's Wars, bore up like a man with no resemblance whatsoever to the amorous cavalier whose curls had met the dust of the road for love of Queen Elizabeth.

The Duchess found him that best of all things—very much of a man, and knew that he was hers. And he, more wild with love for

her than suffering physical pain, found her a woman and knew that she loved him and that she was his.

The house, so deserted and desolate an hour ago, grew fresh, warm, and rosy as over the west meadows the sunset, gilding the wall and The Dials, flushed the windows red, and the deserted bird's nest, lately "filled with snow," appeared to have, as the light rained upon it, filled itself with roses. So, an hour later, it seemed to Mr. Bulstrode, when he came and found it housing the lovers.

### XVIII.

As he speeded toward Penhaven Mr. Bulstrode leaned toward the man who drove him.

"Stop first at the inn, will you, Bowles? I'll order tea there, and then drive on to the station at the Hants. It's the three o'clock from London we're to meet, you know, and we've just the time."

The Abbey and its clustering village hung on the hillside some fifteen lovely miles away to the south of them. And Bulstrode, who was at length obediently answering the call of it, and in response to the fancied bell of the entire countryside religiously hastening to whatever might reward him, settled happily back in his corner. He saw the mist fly by him as his carriage cut its way rapidly through Blankshire. The air was not too cold, in spite of the dampness, for the vapor rose high, and above and below it the atmosphere was clear. Bulstrode felt he might safely leave the Duchess in the mood she was, and he washed his hands for the time being of both man and wife. In spite of what she said, he believed in her jealousy, and smiled at his own subtlety in so having helped that work on. But he left them both now. He might safely do so. He had only stood on the bank ready to aid, and they could swim alone he found, and with no little alacrity gave himself up to the commonplaces of his own affairs. Mrs. Falconer herself had chosen Penhaven as a place possible to drive over to, as far as Mr. Bulstrode was concerned, and far enough away to stop over in for tea. Bulstrode carried the scheme she had written out for him in his pocket. It bore the arrivals of trains, the address of the inn; she had herself written this, recurring to the pretty fallacy she liked to indulge in that Jimmy forgot trains, missed them, and forgot rendezvous. Well, he at all events was not likely to miss this meeting. He had thought about nothing else since he left her in London, and prepared for her as he was always preparing for her, as one makes ready for the dearest guest at a feast.

The fact that not only had she divinely consented to the Penhaven scheme, but that she had herself arranged the whole thing, made the romance of the idea first appeal to herself and then readily to Bulstrode; the fact that she had been the creator of the little excursion

that gave them to each other for several hours before what the castle had to offer them of surprise or dullness, did not in any measure rob the occasion of the charm of the *imprevu* for the lady herself. Nor did she in the least feel that it was any the less his because it was so essentially her own plan.

It proved either too cold or too late to see the cathedral, to see anything more than the close which side by side they had wandered through together a few moments before tea. Penhaven's distinguished gloom was not disturbed, and in their subterranean vaults lying all along their stones the dukes and the abbés and the duchesses remained unlit in their stern crypts by the verger's candle on this Christmas eve.

At the little vulgar inn (in a stuffy sitting-room a fire had spluttered for some quarter of an hour before the train arrived) Mrs. Falconer had made him his tea in a vulgar little bowl-like teapot whose blue glaze served very well, as her hands held the vessel and poured from it, for a halo. As she buttered him slices of toast, spread them with gooseberry jam, as she herself ate and drank and laughed and chattered, with the tea-things about her and her sleeves turned back for cutting and buttering and spreading, she had been with the roundness of her wrists and the suave grace of her capable hands, most adorably a woman, most adorably dear.

Her furs and coat laid aside, the hat at his asking laid aside in order, although he did not tell her so, that the air of home might be more complete for them. Vis-à-vis they had eaten together and laughed together and talked together till it grew later and later, and the motor waited without in the yard amongst the ravens and the ducks who peered from the straw of their winter quarters at the big awkward machine.

"Jimmy," she had started, when the crumbs and dishes had been cleared away, and for some seconds did not follow up his name with any other word.

It was always Bulstrode who took wonderful care of the time. It was he who gave her her hat, its pins, her coat, her furs, her gloves, one by one, her muff last, his eyes on her as each article slowly went to place, until her big white veil wound and wound and pinned and fastened and hid her. "Jimmy," she whispered as he ruthlessly and definitely opened the door and the cold rushed in, "let's build *hers*."

Still, it was she who took all the blame of their tardy departure from the homely hospitality of the inn; she assured him that she could make a wonderful toilet and in an incredibly short time, and that for once she would n't be late for dinner at the Castle.

"Not," Bulstrode assured her, "that it in the least matters, but the Duke as likely as not will choose to dine alone, he is so moody."

"In which case"—she had stopped with her foot on the auto step—"Penhaven is n't a bad place for tea, and why would n't dinner at this perfect inn . . . ?"

But Bulstrode had met her face with a shake of his head and a shrug of his shoulders, and most firmly put her in and sat down by her side.

"I can't tell you what we will really find at the Castle. The Duchess herself may have, in the interval, gone back to her husband."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Mrs. Falconer. "How horribly *de trop* we shall then be!"

And Bulstrode consoled her with the thought that if they were *de trop* they would at least be *de trop ensemble*.

### XIX.

AMONGST the handful of letters waiting for Mrs. Falconer in her dressing-room there had been a despatch from America. Even this and a hasty look at her mail had not succeeded in holding her attention or even carrying it beyond the house. Her husband had expected to land in Liverpool at the end of the coming week; he was to take her home with him. And until he arrived she was breathing as she always did in his absence, deep.

There had been no one to greet them as Bulstrode and herself came into the Castle, and she had hurried to her rooms to begin without loss of time her boasted rapid toilet. The dress whose harmony had impressed her host on her former visit was laid out for her; its sumptuous color overspread the bed. But Mrs. Falconer chose instead a white gown whose art of holding to her, and holding her in its simple lines and splendid sheen, made its beauty.

There was so much of the true woman in her; she was so entirely lovely a creature, the best example of the tall, glorious type of the really beautiful American. Her nationality gave her a freedom, a full serene frankness of grace, a certain imperial set of the head.

Mr. Bulstrode had said to the Duchess that a woman should, above all, console. Mary Falconer would have known what he meant. That sex she gloriously represented . . . ! the sweetness and dearness of her. . . ! Well, there were a few women, no doubt, like her. He hoped so for the sake of the race, for the sake of the hearts of other men. She was the ideal of fireside, of homes; and when, as she had twice done, she bade him "build here," he knew what she meant and felt, and that she was exquisitely herself—home.

Leaning over her dressing-table, she scrutinized not her face, whose ardent beauty seemed to bloom upon the glass, but her hair as it fell and rippled and flowed round her brows. Along the edge of the most lustrous of waves was a touch as if her powder-puff had brushed her



hair. She put up her hand, smoothed the line, then let it lie as it grew, declaring itself to be the first clear unmistakable white. A gardener's basket full of roses and camellias, gardenias and carnations, had been sent up for her, but under the diamond at her breast she chose rather to fasten in a spray of mistletoe with its pale, grape-like berries. A long green scarf fell over her arm and against the whiteness of her dress like a branch of spring verdure, and, permitted by the fashion of the day, there shook and trembled in her ears long pear-shaped pearls which, like her thimble, had been her mother's.

As she left the security of her room and fire for the corridors and the publicity of the lower rooms, for the first time in her life she had a sudden feeling of *pruderie* at the bare beauty of her neck and arms. She felt as if she were coming unclad into the street, and drew her scarf across her breast. But Mrs. Falconer found herself to be quite alone in the drawing-room, and before she had time to be bewildered at her long desertion, a letter was handed her with a few murmured words by a footman. It perhaps served her right, she reflected, for so blandly coming into a house during a state of domestic upheaval, that she should turn out to be not alone the only guest, but without host or friend! The letter told her, as gently as it could without the satisfaction of any explanation, that both Bulstrode and the Duke of Westboro' were unavoidably absent. She turned the letter over with keen disappointment. Her dress, her beauty, which the drive from Penhaven and the afternoon's happiness had heightened to a point that she might be pardoned for seeing, were then all for nothing! On what extravagant bent could the two men have gone?

"Both of them," she soliloquized with a shrug, "off on a hunt, I dare say, after a fool of a woman who does n't know enough to stop at home."

Before she could further lash at her absent hostess, she found herself a few seconds later taking the scarcely palpable arm of the rector, whom the Duke in a moment of abstraction had asked to the Christmas tree and whom he had subsequently forgotten to put off. The rector alone, of all the expected, turned up, his smile vacuous and his appetite in order. At the table laid for four, and great enough for forty, the clergyman and the lady faced each other. Mrs. Falconer smiled kindly, for as her friend had told the Duchess on the same afternoon, she was kind; and if she resented the apology for a man her slender *vis-à-vis* presented, she did not show her scorn; she smiled kindly at him. His cloth and habit, and cut even, wore the air of disapproval. Her jewels, the bare splendor of her neck and arms, seemed out of place, and yet she could not but be perfectly sure that even the dull eyes of her *vis-à-vis* not alone reflected but confirmed how lovely she was.

The reverend gentleman was new to Blankshire, but it turned out that he already knew its hearsays and its *on dit*, and he knew, when she asked him, something of the country and The Dials. It may have been that the bright aspect of the lady, her light mockery—for as she would she could not help falling into them even with this half human creature—wickedly drew him on, gave the man license, as he thought, to descend to scandal; at all events, after dinner, over a cigar smoked in her presence, the empty glass of benedictine at his elbow, in his cheeks a muddy red diffused from his wine, the gentleman leaned forward and tried to adapt his speech and topic to the worldly vein which he imagined was the habitual tenor of a fashionable woman's life.

"Even this lovely shire," he drawled, "cannot, so it would seem, be free from scandal. And where a minister would naturally look for help, wretchedly enough for the most part he only finds examples and warnings."

The rector lifted his eyes to the fine old ceiling as if in its shields and blazons he was impressed by the blots of recent sins.

His companion, who had good-humoredly been amused by his intense Britishness thus far, his pale lack of individuality, his perfect type, now looked sharply at him.

Mary Falconer indeed—the rector had been more than right—was used to the indifferent, rather brutal handling by society of human lives. Possibly, as she adored people, no one of her set was more interested in the comedies and dramas of her *contemporains*. But there are ways and channels; what runs clear in one runs muddy in another.

"Don't you think we might let the Westboro' ghosts alone on Christmas Eve?" She rose and stood before the rector in her soft luminous dress. "You see, we've been so drolly left here, you and I, as a sort of guard,—don't you feel it so?"

The rector's hand touched the little liqueur glass. He picked it up and in a second of abstraction drained its oily emptiness.

"Let me ring," said Mrs. Falconer, "and let me send for some more benedictine, or, better still, for some *fine*."

"No," he refused, and sedately put her right. "No more of anything, I think, unless it might be a bottle of soda. But it was not our host I was about to deplore. You spoke of lovely Blankshire and then spoke of The Dials. Do you know the place?"

Only, she told him, by hearsay.

He solemnly supposed so; so he himself chiefly knew it, as indeed all the countryside was growing to know it.

"It should be"—the rector was witty at the old place's expense—"it should more properly be called the Bells. It rings out."

The rector read well; his bishop confessed to his having a gift. He had, moreover, an eighteenth century palate for the spicy *racontees*

of the day. And, too dull to feel his hearer's antagonism, the rector told what the neighbors said of The Dials.

Half as though he would appeal to the lady's aloofness from intrigue and demand that she should stand by him, half as though he were simply giving one of the interesting legends of the county, he unfolded, with more or less unction and animation, the scandal concerning the property.

"What a miserable little incident!" she said quietly, her handsome eyes on his.

The rector smiled sadly. "The fact that it is *here*, within such range, so near——"

"Pollutes the air of Blankshire," she helped him.

"Oh, it cries out!" he agreed. "And under the circumstances, of course, the Duke can't say anything; he indeed endeavored to buy the property, but he was suddenly stopped, mysteriously crowded out."

"And who, then, did buy it?" asked Mrs. Falconer.

"The lady's protector," the rector informed. "He remains incognito for the time. Let us pray he will marry her."

The eyes of the lady to whom the rector was retailing his little gossip were so intimately on him that the poor man coughed and turned. He was uneasy. But Mrs. Falconer in reality was not looking at him; neither did she at once find ready words to refute, to cast down, to blot out, his hideous suggestion that filled the room with its sooty blot. The man before her grew so detestable that she could bear his presence no longer; she found herself, however, wanting to learn all his knowledge to its finest detail. She found that she despised herself for any interest she might take. She got rid of him at length, how she never knew. But she saw him leave her presence with thanksgiving.

## XX.

WHEN the miserable man, as she called him, had taken his leave, Mrs. Falconer looked about rather defiantly, as if the objects with which the room was filled were hostile. Then with a half audible exclamation she sank down in a chair, her elbow on the arm of it and her chin in her hand.

Well, the imputation, the character, of what she had just heard vulgarly said and to which for a bewildered second she had perhaps almost vulgarly listened, was highly dreadful, highly disordering to her fashion of thinking and believing about Jimmy Bulstrode. Oh, for a moment she had half believed what that creature said, and her eyes had winked fast at the serious little game before them. In the swiftness of the revolutions it had seemed for a sole flash real; but now that the noise had stopped and the carousel as well, she saw how wooden the horses were and that they were as dead as doornails. If

she had been disturbed, she came loyally back now, with a glow and a rush of tenderness as she instantly reinstated what could never lose caste.

Oh, The Dials! She could n't conceive what Jimmy had in reality rashly, delightfully, done there; what he had planned or installed, if he had planned or installed anything. But whatever the truth was, it was sure to be essentially right, as far as ethics went, she knew *that* at least. But Jimmy's delicacy, and his heart, were all too fine for the crude wisdom of the world, or for her common sense, that would have told him no doubt, had he cared to ask, that he was rash and wild.

She was prepared to hear that he had made some Magdalen a home in this prudish country place. At this possibility Jimmy's kindness and charity stood out graciously in strong contrast to the prudish judgment.

There were several long mirrors set in the panels of the room, like lakes between green shores of old brocade, and they reflected her as she leaned forward in her chair and looked about her, taking in the brightness of the perfect little room. It had been cut off from the wider, grander spaces for more intimate passages in the social course of events, but there was nothing newly planned in its colors and tapestries, its hangings and furnishings; the effect was sombre, rather; the objects had the air of use, of having participated in past existences, and, like faithful servants, they seemed to wait to serve perfectly new events.

The especial brightness of the room came from the gay festooning that had found its way throughout the Castle. The mirrors were dark with the velvet rounds of hemlock from which the miserable face of scandal, the sardonic face of divorce under the conditions of the present domestic situation, might well grin satyr-like from the Christmas wreaths. No doubt there were lots of ghosts about, ready to stride, to flutter, or to walk; the American woman put their histories and their legends impatiently by.

The facile way in which the Duchess had slipped out from the chafing of domestic harness, the egotistical *geste* with which she had so widely thrown over her responsibilities, fetched Mrs. Falconer up to her own life, from whose problems indeed her husband's absence alone set her free. Her affairs had of late rapidly progressed, flying, whirling. The circles the event of her marriage had originally created touched at last the farthest limit; there was nothing left for them now but to scatter. The vortex had rapidly narrowed down, was narrowing down, and nothing remained but a sole object in the bed of the clear water; and as Mary Falconer looked at it she knew that the thing was a stone.

"We spend," she had once said to Bulstrode, "half our lives forging chains, and the other half trying to make ourselves free." Had n't

she wrenched with all her might to be rid of hers? Materially she still wore her bonds and moved with a ball.

As she had driven away from Charing Cross station a month ago, after seeing her husband aboard the Dover and Calais special, she had breathed—breathed—breathed—stretched her arms and hands out to London, felt on her eyes and brow a dew that meant the very dawning of liberty broke for her, and that she was for the time at least blessed by it, and free.

The Sorghams' London house had opened its refuge wide for her, and she had gone into it like a child, to sleep and rest, and there she had grown up again, to begin to think and to plan, project and puzzle, as those who grow up must do. She had never thought to such practical purpose as she did in these days, and never come so nearly reaching an end.

Just before dressing for dinner on this night, at the sensation the touch of her husband's telegram gave her, she realized how near to a not unusual decision she was, and when she put the envelope by with the rest of her mail, the part of her mind which she would not let herself look into was in confusion and doubt.

More effectively than Falconer's coming could have done, his few telegraphed words brought him to his wife's consideration. And the fantastic story of The Dials helped her, ridiculous as it was, burlesque as it was, to think. The story gave her, in the very humor of it, a shock, and helped her more reasonably to consider what otherwise her feelings would have turned to tragedy.

Jimmy's ecstasies about the place recurred to her with renewed cordiality. He had spent an hour at least describing it, and when he had finished with "A woman must be there, it is made for a woman," Mary Falconer had only seen herself in the frame that the old place presented. She exclaimed aloud: "Oh no, no," and continued to affirm to herself that it was too fantastically absurd—Jimmy!

"It's only some delightful bit of charity, and he's too afraid of my wretched conservatism and my ironies to have told me frankly about it."

Having in a very unfeminine way opened a crack for reason, its honest face peered through, and Mrs. Falconer glanced at it with a sigh and a half-amused recognition, as if she had not been face to face with anything so cool and eminent for a long time.

Jimmy had hinted to her of a secret, in London; there was something he said he wished to tell her about, would tell her in full later, something that involved much happiness to others, and could it have been this? Could it have been that he was really secretly married? That at last the step of which he had constantly spoken, for which indeed there had been times when together they had even half-heartedly

planned—could it be that the one safeguard for them both had actually been formed by him, and alone? But she only permitted this conception of The Dials to obtain hold for a second. "Ridiculous!" she repeated. "Ridiculous! Not that I believe a word or any innuendo of the shocking old Wizard, but it only shows—it only shows the helplessness of a woman who is not bound to a man, and how entirely the man is free!"

But Mary Falconer's face softened as there came out clearly to her the real picture of Jimmy that always kept itself somewhere between her eyes and her brain. Oh, there were men of talent and fashion who did not hesitate to make merry, who were more or less good, more or less antipathetic, and for whom society never had a word of reproach; but Jimmy, distinguished and charming, with every taste and means to gratify them, with—so to put it—the woman of his heart at his very doors—how did he live? Why, for everybody in the world but for himself. And through it all, in spite of the fact that he appeared blindly to shut his eyes against their mutual love, he lived for her. Oh, he was the best, the best!

She listened as she stood there for the hum of the motor which might tell her he was coming back. She wanted to ask him to tell her the truth about The Dials. She wanted above all else to see him again.

She remembered them one by one—the happy occasions they had caught and made the most of, and each after the other, they became lovely harbors where like ships her thoughts lay at anchor. Penhaven was certainly one of the best. She congratulated herself that she had conceived that day, and without any blame she acknowledged it to herself that if Jimmy had only wished it they would have been there together now.

She had taken her chair again and sat back deeply in the great fauteuil. The brocade made a dark-hued background against which her head, frankly thrown back, defined its charming lines. Her bare arms folded across her breast, her foot swinging gently to and fro, she continued to muse and dream, and, as she thought of Bulstrode, to love him.

Some one came in and piled up the fire and slipped out, but no message was brought her to tell her what had become of her host and Bulstrode.

The long, sympathetic silence beginning at the fireside flowed through the vast rooms and corridors, and out into the night, down the lanes and the road, until its completeness and tonelessness were broken by the memory of the bells of Penhaven as she and Jimmy had heard them whilst they rang the angelus in the close. And the discordant note of The Dials was drowned, confused, and lost in her intense listening to the Penhaven bells. Some chord or other, or some fine spring

touched as she so thought on, brought back to her the fact of the despatch upstairs, which, if any, had an imperative importance. Falconer had sent it from Palm Beach, where he had gone to get rid of a troublesome gripe. He did not, in the few lines which told his wife that he was seedy and had put off his sailing, suggest that she should come to America. But he would not resent her return, that she knew. He would probably treat her decently for at least a fortnight.

"I don't know a creature," she praised herself, "who would have stayed on with Jack, and nothing but Jimmy has helped me to stick it out. If he really loved me, would he have let me go on as I have gone on? I don't know. Unless he loved me, could he have helped me at all? I think not."

"How," thought Mary Falconer, "could he ever have been what he so wonderfully is, if he had lived for himself or been anything but the best?" Upstairs in her room a few hours before, the mark of silver on her hair had been a whip to urge on her rebellion; to tell her to seize and make the most of the fleeting time, to warn her of the age which when her beauty and her youth were gone was all that could remain for them both. But now there began to blow across her soul a freshness. She had indeed been drawing long breaths in her husband's absence, but, free as they were, they left her stifled and panting, as if to get the oxygen she had been obliged to climb too far. Now, on the contrary, she was lifted as by wings, and whilst they fluttered about her she breathed evenly yet fully, and the air on the heights was something better than wine.

There is an unspoiled enjoyment in the thing which has never given us pain. It may be a sensual and ecstatic prerogative of passion to make the object suffer, but there is a different sense of happiness in that which never does harm or hurt or wrong to the thing it loves. So she could think of Bulstrode without pain, without regret, without reproach. And if the ardor and passion in her became suffused and slowly paled, there was a starry brightness, a beauty, in her face and in her eyes, such as Bulstrode, when he came in to find her waiting, had never seen before.

## XXI.

BULSTRODE had thought himself prepared to see the guest who waited for his return. The intimate scene he had just left, the shock of his friend's abrupt conclusion to his romance, touched him profoundly. The love he had witnessed, the gentleness and the joy of pardon, combined with the fact that he was all by himself going back to the Castle and would find Mary Falconer there and alone, culminated in a high swinging excitement. It was the big *motif* of the orchestra, and he felt sure, as he thought of the dark, charming envelope the Castle made, holding the treasure she was, keeping her there for him,

that there was nothing more left for him to feel. His heart was full of her. The ecstasy at The Dials put it to him more than ever poignantly what a frugal, sterile thing it is to consider a woman's honor before taking love: how bereft they both were of anything like happiness! The strict observance of law and customs and rights was all very well for the time, but for to-morrow, for the next year? They were growing fewer to be counted on, these chary, arid years? Whereas their promises were of course tremendous, and they stood for every man as cups which he might fill with whatever decoction he pleased, still they took with them their bitter pay. If, as he then drove, his car could have caught up with these years which he had let slip, he would have, in the way he then felt, torn them out of their peaceful, remorseless gardens where, since they had been rendered up blameless, they slept the sleep of the blest.

One false swerve of the motor at the pace they were going, and there would not be any more questions to solve. If he died now he might justly say that he had not lived, he had not lived! Who would give him back what he had missed? The motto on The Dials repeated itself to him: "*Utere dum licet.*"

He pushed into the Castle on his arrival, hurried to dress, and went downstairs. It seemed to him, as he put aside the portières, that these curtains were at last all there was between himself and her, that he was going home, coming home at last, that ways he had for years seen approaching met at length to-night here. It was with the very clear realization of the culmination of the time that Bulstrode went in to find his friend.

He had stopped to make himself irreproachable, and expected to find her waiting and friendly and lovely—when had he found her anything else? But as rising from her chair, the scarf slipping back from her bare shoulders, she put out her hand and greeted him, the dazzling sense that breaks on a man's consciousness when he finds himself alone with the woman he loves proved for a second that he had need of all his control, and could not speak.

"Jimmy," she exclaimed, "you're as white as a ghost! You look as though you'd been to a wake, and I don't believe you've had a mouthful of dinner."

He remembered that it might be polite to apologize to her for the entire desertion of the household.

"My poor friend, what in heaven's name must you think of us all!"

"Of you all?" (True enough, there had been another!) She had thought volumes, comedies, tragedies, melodramas, but what she thought did n't so much matter as did the fact that he had not, whatever festivities he had honored, dined. Should n't they have something here together before the fire?



"I seem," Mrs. Falconer said, "to have a blighting effect upon my host."

"Westboro' 's the happiest man in Blankshire."

"Which means that he has found his Duchess?"

"He has found his Duchess."

When Mr. Bulstrode entered the room, by the light on his face like the brightness of the morning as he caught sight of her, Mrs. Falconer saw that there was no other woman in his heart. In the relief that this brought her, she was tempted to play with him and with her suspicions, but only for a moment.

"Ah," she smiled, "you chose a gruesome guest to keep me company on Christmas Eve! That shocking parson! He told me things! But I fancy I begin to see the right of it. Is the Duke by any chance at The Dials?"

"Just that—by chance."

"And the Duchess, on the contrary, has been there by premeditation."

"Yes, for a long time."

Mrs. Falconer nodded: "She has a dramatic sense, has n't she? She's romance itself, is n't she?"

Bulstrode exclaimed rather absently:

"Oh, I dare say, I dare say."

Then, turning to her with unusual vehemence:

"Do, for heaven's sake, leave them. They're together. If you only knew how I can forget them!" He threw out his hands with a sort of supplication. But she pleaded to being curious and demanded a detail or two.

And, with a sigh, for the next quarter of an hour Jimmy satisfied her curiosity and told her every word of the Westboro' romance from beginning to end. Mary Falconer thought that it made a touching story: one over which a woman might ponder, and from which, if she chose, she might draw wise conclusions.

Jimmy finished with a description of the Duke's arrival at his wife's gate. He assured Mrs. Falconer that their host was only slightly scratched. But they both understood how the Westboro's would prefer their reunion should be kept as sacred as possible.

"Wonderful, wonderful reunion in the sainted 'Dials.'"

She laughed and emphasized the word "sainted" with a little grimace.

In every word of Jimmy's story she had recognized what a part he had played. How kind a counsellor he had been,—how good a friend.

"So that's what kept you from coming to London!" she exclaimed. "It's getting to be a perfect form of dissipation with you, this absorp-

tion in other people's affairs. But you don't realize what ultimately fetched the Duchess so charmingly around."

Bulstrode affirmed sordidly: "Common sense."

"Not at all," Mrs. Falconer was sure of it. "She was jealous of me."

And he repeated: "Heartily jealous;" delighted that his tactics should be understood by her. "I meant that she should be jealous. I played you for just that end. It was presumptuous, but successful."

She did not appear to find that he had been overbold, and laughed. "If by no greater effort than coming down for Christmas, I've accomplished a reconciliation in the peerage——"

"Oh, I think we've decidedly our value," he acknowledged, "even when we're played alone—and what we'd accomplish if we did things together——"

But she still held to the subject tenaciously.

"It will always be agreeable for the Westboro's to remember that at the crisis neither one of them really gave in. People always revel so in their egotistical triumphs."

But Bulstrode, who had more than enough of other people and their affairs, tried to dismiss them.

"They're both in love, and that's all that really matters, and since they're happy——"

He had seated himself on a tapestried stool close beside the chair that she had taken again. Using her Christian name for one of the rare times in his life, he pleaded: "Can't we leave them, Mary—can't we?"

She looked at him, startled, and said that the rest seemed pretty effectually to have left *them*, rose from her chair with her words, crossed the room to one of the long windows, and drew back the curtain.

The cold glass against which she pressed her cheek sent a shock through her, but she stayed for a second close to the pane as if she would implore the newer transport, the stiller transport of the icy cold, to transfuse her veins.

The changed temperature had chased away the fog, and the night spread its serene beauty over the park, where the moonlight lay along the terrace like snow. Far down the slope rose one by one the outlines of the bare trees, and the wide landscape shone and shone until it finally was lost in the mists. Bulstrode had followed over and stood by Mrs. Falconer's side, and the scene before him seemed full of joy, full of gifts, full of largesse. The ornament on the woman's bosom stirred with her breathing, shot a million fine sparkles, and below it the spray of mistletoe rose and fell, rose and fell.

Bulstrode put his hand out and took the spray and fastened it in his buttonhole, saying that like that it was above her.

His voice, one she had never heard, made her unwisely turn to meet his eyes, to shake with the emotion of the adventurer trembling on the edge of the precipice, just to hang over which and to shudder he has climbed high. She put her hand out between them, holding him back.

"I've had a telegram from my husband. He's very ill. He's in Palm Beach, and I'm going over to him next week."

Falconer's name was sovereign for breaking spells as far as Jimmy was concerned, but the wife's phrase this time gave him only a more violent revelation of his cruel hope. She went on:

"It's not alarming, but with a heart like Jack's anything might happen. It's only when I'm with him that he keeps up any sort of shape."

The fact of his holding in his the hand that she had put out to keep him from her did not serve to aid in a serene continuation of her plans, and the silence became a burden which if she did not herself lift would crush her.

She said hurriedly: "And you will help me to go."

And then Bulstrode spoke. "No," he said, "oh, no!"

For the briefest space she yielded to what he meant and was at last wicked enough and human enough to promise to do. But she had on this solemn evening—for it had so been—come too far, gone up too high, to drag down all the way with him on a single word. In supremest happiness, however, at what he said and how he said it, she gave a little soft laugh, and although she was under the mistletoe, she felt that she looked down on him, loving him so much more that in adorable weakness he had suddenly grown small and dear.

"Oh, Jimmy," she whispered, "how heavenly of you! But you can't go back on ten years in one week. You can't, you know! You've thrown me like a giant so *far*, I've gone right on up."

Still looking at her, he shook his head as she repeated:

"You'll help me, you'll help me! You can't go back!"

"I *can* go back," he said, "on everything and everybody in the world."

At the frank, simple words and the sense of what they meant, at the sound of his new voice, it was as if all the dykes at last were down, and strong, bright, but most beautiful, the sea came rushing in. The little space between them grew light, they seemed happy creatures, whose creation meant solely that they should belong to each other. As she saw Bulstrode coming toward her and knew that in a moment more she would be in his arms, and that at his first touch she would let everything go, she found one word to say and it proved only to be his name:

"Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy!"

But there was in it an appeal. She could count the times she had wept in her life, very nearly; she had often said that a woman only weeps when she has nothing else to do, and there had always been so much, every minute in her life; and as if in logic affirmation there seemed now for her nothing to do but to cry. The tears which covered her face and fell into her palms and against the chair on which she leaned comforted her in a measure and served to loosen the tension of her mind. She had succeeded in miraculously keeping away from him, just within touch of her, held back by a hand whose white gentleness was not so exquisitely strong but that he loved her too well to break the tender barrier. She never afterwards knew what appeal she made or how she besought, but it must have been of a force to keep him so transfixed and pale.

"Oh, you have told me over and over again! Do you think I am deaf or blind, or that I have found you dumb? Such love, Jimmy, such high sweet perfectness! Why, there is n't a woman in a million who has known it, or even dreamed what such love could mean! Why, there has n't been a day or an hour for ten years that you have not spoken it to me in the most adorable way, in the most beautiful way; and in every kind thing you have done, in every foolish, dear thing, I have been so vain as to think that I counted for something in it, that you did it a little for me. Women have had their lovers, their scandals, their great passions. But I have had *you* without flaw, without a change, without regret. Hush!" she cried, wiping her tears away. "Hush! It's quite safe to let me go on. The only fear is that *you* may speak."

The arm which she had held out to keep him from her had fallen upon his shoulder, lay about his neck as he knelt by her chair.

"It's been horrible," she said, shaking her head. "Horrible,—the days and the nights, the days and the nights! There have been times when I could have killed him and killed myself as well. But then you've come, and your presence has helped me, and that's the way I've pulled along, because by your silence you told me to pull along, because by the fact that you did n't speak I understood that you thought I should be brave, and I have been—thanks to you—and I shall be—thanks to you! Oh!" she cried passionately, "if you think because I am saying it all out that I want to go back, that I don't see what I am running away from, and what you mean, you're cruel, you're cruel!"

Her other hand had found its fellow, and they both lay on his shoulders.

"I only think of you," he breathed, "and of how——"

She covered his lips. "Oh, hush, hush, you *have* told me, in the only way there was to tell! I'm too stupid to be able to combine a lover and a husband. The day and the hour you spoke I should never

have seen my husband again. And that's where it stands, that's how it is, and you know it. You loved me because I was like that, and I love you because you are the bravest of the brave. There you are!" she cried, and drew away from him triumphantly, letting her arms fall. "There we both are!"

"Have you any vague conception of what this is for me?" Bulstrode asked.

"Oh, I dare say," she cried, with a kind of petulance, "that I am only thinking of my own bewildering happiness. There," she exclaimed at his face, "I see you have a new weapon: pity. Oh, don't use that against me; and I warn you that everything in the world will crumble if you speak."

Her hands, which he was holding closely, she drew from him and laid them both on his breast, and met his eyes full with her own. Her lips were slightly trembling, and she was as white as a winter day. In the moment of silence they passed like this, she seemed to him like some great precious pearl, some priceless rose, fragrant, lustrous, made for him, gathered for him, yet beyond his right. She seemed, above all, the woman, the mate; her glorious sex, her tenderness, her humanness, drew him and dazzled him; and nevertheless, through his daze and over his desire, he heard, with his finest, her cry:

"Jimmy, Jimmy, don't speak, don't speak. Ah, if you really love me——"

He really loved her. Rising from where he knelt by her chair, Bulstrode went over, stood a second by the chimney-piece, then took a few paces up and down the room, came back to her, and said the thing the real man says to the woman he really loves:

"I want to make you happy, Mary. I will do whatever you wish me to do."

"Ah, then, go!"

Bulstrode looked wearily about, as though of its own accord a door might unclose or a portière lift.

"Go where, pray, at this time of night, or morning?"

"Oh, to The Dials. Ring for a motor; they will take you in again; or go to the rector's."

The last of the fire had flared up. The flame went out.

Sinking back in her chair, she waited in a tranced stillness, her eyes on the ashes of the fire. She had said her say out, perhaps the man knew it, and as she leaned back in the cushions he saw how completely it all lay with him at the end. She thought he came back and waited a second at her side; she thought he bent a moment over her, but she did not stir until the cold wind from an opening door, till the clicking of a latch, made her start, and then she turned to see that he had gone.

## XXII.

BULSTRODE came back to the Castle at nine o'clock. But the hour had the effect of being much earlier. The winter morning panoplied with festivity began its life slowly, and not all the day's brightness through which he had speeded in his motor had yet come into his house. Bulstrode, drawn by it, went directly back to the room he had left several hours before, as though he expected still to find Mrs. Falconer sitting before the extinguished fire.

Two parlor-maids were whisking their skirts and dusters out of the opposite door, a footman at their heels. Touches of the inevitable order which reduces an agreeable disarray to the impersonal had already been put to the scene of Jimmy's tenderness, and the curtains drawn well away from the long windows let in the morning that entered broadly and fell across the hearth and the fresh lit fire.

Clean logs replaced the cold ashes; the match had just finished with the kindlings, and Bulstrode went over to welcome the crackling of the young blaze.

The absence of his host, the Castle once more handed over to him for the time, gave him a feeling of proprietorship in the bright, cordial room, but, looking up at the portraits of Westboro's in ruffs and velvets, Jimmy could n't find an ancestor! There were none like him. None. Their amours and indulgences had written brilliant and amusing history; the gentlemen had gone mad at ladies' carriage-wheels, they had carried off their scandals with the highest of hands, and still held their heads well. They had carved and raped and loved their way down to the present time, and were none the less a proud line of pure British blood. The American bachelor, about whose fine head nothing picturesque or worthy of history circled, looked up at the Dukes of Westboro' musingly, and there was not a peer or a noble better to look upon or who had been at heart a truer lover, although Mr. Bulstrode did not know it.

During the lapse of time between his leaving this same room and his present return, Bulstrode had not tossed on a sleepless bed; he had slept soundly, and during his rest the several Dials had called out like bells their voice: "*Utere dum licet*," and finally a real bell had roused him to the fact that it was day, a new day, and that unless he was killed en route to the Castle, nothing could keep him from the place and from her.

He had no consolation in the fact that the honor and decency of society were by him strengthened and retained, nor did he plan out the sane, wise project of not seeing her again. Nor did he weigh or balance his charge or responsibility. There had been a cessation of vibration of any kind, and only one supreme, sovereign reality took possession of the world and of himself, and the limitless beauty and

the limitless delight he had breathed in ever since he left her and knew how she loved him. Nothing, he had so felt, could dull or tarnish the glory of her face, nothing, no matter what life held for them both, could efface the touch she had laid upon him, as her arms were about his neck. Through the interval his past life appeared to have been, on through the new and un-lived interval to come, she would be as last night she had been, she would look at him as last night she had looked. "Heavens!" he meditated in the faces of the self-indulgent, cynical Westboro's, "I am not going to be *blasé* through six paradises just because there happens to be a seventh!"

A new fire spun its lilac flames behind his back. The spicy breath of the wreaths of hemlock was deliciously sweet. Little by little the sun had made its eastern way and sparkled at the pane outside, and in the radiant clarity the terrace and its charming railing, the urns with the little cedars, stood out clearly, and, more than all else, the truth cried itself to him that, whatever happened, she was still here, still in the house with him!

He had chosen a Christmas gift for her in London, and determined now to send it up to her with some roses, and in this way to announce the fact that he had come back from The Dials, and was ready to use the day with her. He so simply felt how beautiful it would be to see her, that it did not for a second occur to him to wonder if she on her part would feel a certain embarrassment.

In answer to his ring, not a man-servant, but the perfect house-keeper rustled in in her crisp silks, her cameos, and her "Christmas face," as one of the little Westboro' chaps had called her rosy countenance on one of his few Christmas days.

Where would Mr. Bulstrode please have breakfast?

Why, wherever it best suited, went with the house, with the day. Where, indeed, and that was more to the point, would Mrs. Falconer have it?

Mrs. Falconer? Why, Mr. Bulstrode did n't know, then, that Mrs. Falconer had gone?

She saw by his face that he knew nothing less in the world.

Why, directly the despatch had been fetched over from the Abbey station. There had been but twenty minutes between the getting of it and her starting away. A motor had been sent with her and the maid, and Mrs. Falconer had fortunately been able to make the train; the only one, it so happened, being Christmas Day, that connected with the Dover and Calais special.

The matter of fact bit of news came to Bulstrode so coldly and ruthlessly that it took some seconds for the bitter thought that she had gone because she could n't trust him, to penetrate. Then this gave place to an effulgent hope that it might be herself she could n't

trust. But the discovery that she had left him no message of any kind, and that she was, above all, irrevocably gone, struck him more cruelly than had any blow in his kindly life. He could not suffer in peace before the bland creature in silks and cameos. Crises and departures, battle, murder, and sudden death, he felt she would accept serenely should any of them chance to occur at Westboro', and, above all, if they were part of the sacred family history. But Mrs. Falconer and he were not Westboro's, and he wanted to be rid of his companion and to find himself alone, in order to turn it all over in his mind. He at first believed that there had never been any telegram, and that she had only employed a polite ruse in order to facilitate her flight.

Why, at all events, could n't she have left him a line? She might, he ruefully complained, have strained a point and wished him a Merry Christmas. As he walked to and fro in the room now supremely deserted, he began slowly to approach a certain hypothesis which as soon as he granted he as violently discarded. But the thought was imperious: something of its kind always haunted him like a bad ghost. It could usually be dismissed, but now it was persistent. A despatch had certainly come the night before. Another might have followed on this morning, hard upon it? To have been sent over from the Abbey on a holiday, it must have been a very grave message indeed; "a matter," as the old term went, "of life and death." The phrase began to repeat itself and the conviction to grow, and as he was obliged to give it admittance and to face it and to wonder what the shock would be to her, and what the news would be to him, how it would change things, and how they would both meet it, his promenade to and fro in the room brought him up before the centre table, and he looked down upon it at length with a seeing eye. "Why not? Why not?" he was wondering. We are all so essentially mortal, and lightning never had struck yet, why not then at last *in this place*? And since there had been neither shame nor blame, why could n't he face the possibility of a perfectly natural mortality? Before him on the table lay Mrs. Falconer's green scarf, and as Bulstrode lifted the soft thing, he saw underneath it a despatch.

Then he knew instantly that she had left both scarf and telegram there, and that this was the message for him. He seemed, as the word he had not read met him in this form, to have been waiting all his life for just this news. The road so long in winding home had wound home at length, and now that he believed the crisis was really reached, there was something infinitely stilling in its solemnity.

Bulstrode could not at once draw the sheet from its envelope. He lit a cigar and sat down before the fire and smoked.

Mrs. Shawles came in again presently and told him that she had laid his breakfast in the little room facing the gardens. Then she



waited, and as Bulstrode looked up at her he forced himself to smile faintly and wished her a Merry Christmas.

She thanked him, gave him many, and said it was a happy morning for all of the Westboro's, and that the Castle and the house would see new times and better times, etc., and when he had stirred himself to the point of putting what he had for her into her hand, he was not sure whether or not he wanted her this time to go and leave him alone.

She still hesitated. It was a custom with them, she told him, with the Westboro's, to have hall prayers on holidays. When the Duke himself was there he always read them; the servants and the children of the place had already come in. In the absence of the family, *would* Mr. Bulstrode . . . ?

"Oh, no, on no account, on no account," he hurried. "Is n't there some one else?"

Well, of course there was Portman.

The guest was sure that Portman would do it quite in the proper way, and as for himself, he would have his breakfast in a few moments—he thanked her.

And Mrs. Shawles, who had expected a more favorable answer, left open on the table the little Book which she had brought in with her.

Bulstrode took it up after she was gone.

In a few seconds he heard from the distance the sound of the children singing. Their voices ceased, to be followed by the subdued murmur of reading. As Bulstrode opened the Book he held, the leaves fell apart at the marriage rite. He hurriedly passed this over, and his eyes were arrested by the opening lines of a more solemn service. He paused to read the beautiful, pitiful words, and then, the open book in his hands, he drew the telegram out of its cover. . . .



## CUPID, TINKER

BY SAM S. STINSON

CUPID is a tinker bold;  
 Come, ye maids, attend!  
 With his little pot of gold,  
 Cupid is a tinker bold.  
 Fares he forth to young and old,  
 Crying: "Hearts to mend!"  
 Cupid is a tinker bold;  
 Come, ye maids, attend!



## SLEEPLESSNESS

BY GEORGE LINCOLN WALTON, M.D.

THE FOURTH OF A SERIES OF POPULAR PAPERS ON WORRY AND ALLIED MENTAL STATES, WITH PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-CURE. THE PRECEDING PAPERS WERE "WORRY AND OBSESSION," IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER; "THE DOUBTING FOLLY," IN THE DECEMBER NUMBER, AND "HYPOCHONDRIA," IN THE JANUARY NUMBER OF LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE.

He shall enjoy the same tranquillity in his sleep as when awake.  
DIGBY'S EPICURUS, *Maxim XL.*

**S**LEEPLESSNESS, in the majority of cases, is due to a faulty habit of mind. The preparation for a sleepless night begins with the waking hours, is continued through the day, and reaches its maximum when we cease from the occupations which have in some degree diverted our attention from harassing thoughts, and retire, to struggle, in darkness and solitude, with the worries, doubts, regrets, and forebodings which now assume gigantic and fantastic shapes.

It may surprise those who are familiar with the time-honored misconstruction of the views and habits of Epicurus, to learn that his idea of pleasure was the possession of a tranquil mind, attained, not by excess in living, but by the pursuit of wisdom, and by the casting out of fear. Nor did this philosopher deem solitude and seclusion needful adjuncts to the cultivation of the ideal mental state. Indeed, he expressly says that "the quiet and safety that are found in solitude and retirement from the world may be equally enjoyed by us, though in it, provided that we keep strictly to the medium of temperance, and confine our desires to what Nature exacts for its preservation, which is common and easily to be procured."

In other words, temperance is a prerequisite to tranquillity; temperance not merely in such fundamental matters as eating and drinking, but in undertakings social, financial, political, or whatsoever.

He who would sleep at night must regulate his day, first, by not undertaking more than he can accomplish without undue stress, and, second, by carrying through what he does undertake, as far as he may, without the running accompaniment of undue solicitude, anxious doubts, and morbid fears such as have been discussed in the former papers of this series. It is futile to expect that a fretful, impatient, and over-anxious frame of mind, continuing through the day and every day, will be suddenly replaced at night by the placid and comfortable mental state which shall insure a restful sleep.

Before proceeding, then, to the immediate measures for inducing sleep, let us consider the suitable preparatory measures.

The nervous breakdown which precludes sleep is oftener due to worry than to work. Nor should the sufferer jump too quickly to the conclusion that it is the loss of sleep rather than the worry that makes him wretched. It is astonishing how much work can be carried on without extreme fatigue, provided it be undertaken with confidence and pursued without impatience. It is, however, essential that the work be varied and, at due intervals, broken. Trainers for athletic contests know that increasing practice without diversion defeats its end, and particularly insist upon cessation of violent effort directly before the final test. Why should we not treat our minds as well as our bodies?



The active and over-scrupulous business or professional man who allows no time for rest or recreation, who can confer no responsibility upon his subordinates, who cultivates no fad, and is impatient of every moment spent away from his occupation, is in danger of eventually "going stale," and having to spend a longer and less profitable vacation in a sanitarium than would have sufficed to avert the disaster.

It will harm few of us to take a bird's eye view of our affairs at stated intervals, and ask ourselves if the time has not arrived when it will be a saving of time and money as well as worry for us to delegate more of the details, and more even of the responsibilities, to others, concentrating our own energies upon such tasks as we are now peculiarly qualified to undertake.

To the man determined to accomplish a lifetime of work before he rests, there is food for thought in the following anecdote:

When Pyrrhus was about to sail for Italy, Cineas, a wise and good man, asked him what were his intentions and expectations.

"To conquer Rome," said Pyrrhus.

"And what will you do next, my lord?"

"Next, I will conquer Italy."

"And after that?"

"We will subdue Carthage, Macedonia, all Africa, and all Greece."

"And when we have conquered all we can, what shall we do?"

"Do? Why, then we will sit down and spend our time in peace and comfort."

"Ah, my lord," said the wise Cineas, "what prevents our being in peace and comfort now?"

The time to take a vacation is before one is exhausted. If one is discontented during his vacation, he should take it, none the less, as a matter of duty, not expecting to enjoy every moment of it, but contenting himself with the anticipation of greater pleasure in the resumption of his duties. He should cultivate an interest in outdoor occupation or some study that carries him into the fields or woods. Aside from the time on shipboard, the worst possible vacation for the overworked business or professional man is the trip to Europe, if spent in crowding into the shortest possible time the greatest possible amount of information on matters artistic, architectural, and historic.



No one can acquire the habit of sleep who has not learned the habit of concentration, of devoting himself single-minded to the matter in hand. If we practise devoting our minds, as we do our bodies, to one object at a time, we shall not only accomplish more, but with less exhaustion. Training in this direction will help us, on retiring, to view sleep as our present duty, and a sufficient duty, without taking the opportunity at that time to adjust (or to try to adjust) all our tangles, to review our past sources of discomfort, and to speculate upon the ills of the future.

A walk, a bath, a few gymnastic exercises, will often serve a useful purpose before retiring, but if they are undertaken in a fretful and impatient spirit, and are accompanied by doubts of their effectiveness and the insistent thought that sleep will not follow these or any other procedure, they are likely to accomplish little.

The best immediate preparation for sleep is the confidence that one will sleep, and *indifference if one does not*.

This frame of mind is best attained by the habitual adoption of the same attitude toward all the affairs of life. It is an aid in its adoption as regards sleep to learn that many have for years slept only a few hours a night, without noticeable impairment of their health or comfort.

Let us now consider some of the faulty mental habits directly

affecting sleep itself. First comes the compulsive thought that one must sleep *now*, and the impatient count of the wakeful hours supposed to be irrecoverably lost from the coveted number. This insistence in itself precludes sleep. The thought, "No matter if I don't sleep to-night; I will some other night," will work wonders in the direction of producing sleep to-night. The belief that no definite number of hours' sleep is absolutely necessary is essential to the acquisition of this attitude. Such belief is justified by ample experience. One must remember also that continuance of any given position, in bed, even without unconsciousness, is more restful than tossing about. The mere experiment of remaining immobile in a certain position as long as possible, and concentrating the mind on the thought, "I am getting sleepy, I am getting sleepy," will oftener produce the desired result than watching the proverbial sheep follow one another over the wall.



Next comes the compulsive thought that we cannot sleep until everything is "squared up," and all mental pictures completed.

The story is told that a gentleman took a room in the hotel next another who was notoriously fussy. He remembered this fact after dropping one boot carelessly to the floor, and laid the other gently down. After a pause he heard a rap on the door and a querulous "For heaven's sake, drop the other boot, or I can't get to sleep."

Many find themselves unable to sleep until the whole household is accounted for and the house locked for the night, until certain news is received, and the like. The same tendency postpones sleep till all affairs are straightened out in the mind, as well as in reality. A little reflection shows how indefinite must be the postponement of sleep under such conditions.

No training is more important for the victim of compulsive tendencies than the practice of trusting something to luck and to the morrow, and reconciling himself to the fact that at no time, in this world, will all things be finally adjusted to his satisfaction.

Next comes the insistent desire to sleep in a certain bed, with a certain degree of light or darkness, heat or cold, air or absence of air. This is in line with the desire to eat certain foods only, at a certain table and at a certain time. The man who loses his appetite if dinner is half an hour late is unable to sleep again if once waked up. This individual must say to himself, "Any one can stand what he likes; it takes a philosopher to stand what he does not like," and try at being a philosopher instead of a sensitive plant.

Inability to sleep while certain noises are continued must be similarly combated. If one goes from place to place in search of the quiet

spot for sleep, he may finally find quiet itself oppressive, or, worse yet, may be kept awake by hearing his own circulation, from which escape is out of the question.

He who finds himself persistently out of joint with his surroundings will do well to ponder the language of the Chinese philosopher:

"The legs of the stork are long, the legs of the duck are short; you cannot make the legs of the stork short, neither can you make the legs of the duck long. Why worry?"

With regard to the character of the sleep itself, the attitude of our mind in sleep is dominated, to a degree, at least, by its attitude in the waking hours. It is probable that during profound sleep the mind is inactive, and that dreams occur only during the transition state from profound sleep to wakefulness. It is conceivable that in the ideal sleep there is only one such period, but ordinarily there occur many such periods during the night, and for the restless and uneasy sleeper the night may furnish a succession of such periods, with comparatively little undisturbed rest. The character of the pictures and suggestions of dreams, though in new combinations, are largely dependent on our daily experiences. Is it not, then, worth while to encourage, during our waking hours, such thoughts as are restful and useful, rather than those which serve no purpose but annoyance.

If we will, we can select our thoughts as we do our companions.

*The subject treated in the March number will be "Home Treatment."*



## THE SPELL OF THE NORTH

BY ROSCOE BRUMBAUGH

LET word be passed and the journey start;  
 Swing out into line the yelping pack;  
 Strong is the wanderlust in my heart,  
 The load hangs easy upon my back.

It matters not that the way is long;  
 The stinging wind makes the fire small sweet.  
 A wolf-dog friend and a snatch of song,  
 And crunch, crunch, crunch, of moccasined feet.

Some old gray witch that I cannot see  
 Has placed her charm in the storm and snow;  
 The Great White Silence is calling me,  
 The Long Trail beckons, and I must go.

# A STORY THAT WENT WRONG

*By Thomas L. Masson*

IT was nearly seven o'clock in the evening when Mr. and Mrs. Butts, with their young son, Bobbie, returned from their visit to their bachelor friend, Henry Burr.

This gentleman kept a small country establishment not many miles away. He was an old friend, but latterly had lived much by himself, indulging in divers intellectual fads common to a certain species of bachelor.

As they stood once more in their own domicile, Mr. Butts, lighting the gas, looked rapturously at Mrs. Butts. Mrs. Butts, on her part, looked rapturously at Mr. Butts.

"Never again for me!" said Butts.

"Nor for me!" said Mrs. Butts.

"What's the matter with Henry, any way?" continued Butts.

"Nothing more than happens to any man when he has no one to consult but himself, and no one to think of but himself."

At this Butts reflected.

"I don't believe it," he said at last. "I don't believe I would ever get that way. That incident of the slippers was a perfect example."

"What was that?"

"Oh, it's hardly worth mentioning except as illustration of a principle. But you know the day we went fishing? Well, I got my feet wet, and Henry lent me his slippers. I believe, in a burst of confidence or recklessness, I asked him for them. Well, at any rate, while I was sitting with him on the piazza with those slippers on, I saw a golf ball out on the lawn and started to pick it up. Henry stopped me, his eye on those slippers—they were n't especially good ones, any way. 'Where are you going?' says he. 'I'm going out to pick up that golf ball,' says I. 'If you don't mind,' says he in a most infernally solicitous way, 'the grass is wet, and I'd rather not have you go out there with those slippers on.'"

Butts paused dramatically.

"Did you ever," he exclaimed, "hear anything more absolutely dead against the spirit of hospitality than that? Suppose I did ruin

his old slippers? What then? Why, if he had been in *my* house, I should have let him spoil, ruin, soak, burn up, tear up, anything I had, rather than *dream* of hurting his feelings or making him the least uncomfortable."

Mrs. Butts smiled sympathizingly.

"Of course you would," she said. "So would I or any one who had been trained into thinking about others. But you must remember that Henry has not had all those opportunities. He did the same thing about Bobbie. When the boy discovered that Henry was a crank, that only inspired him to act worse than usual. He got into Henry's room one day and disturbed some of his books. Henry was awfully mad about it, and he made me feel he was mad. He did that unpardonable thing that no host should ever do: he made me feel that I was making him uncomfortable."

"Umph! He made us both feel that way."

"Quite so. But you must remember that if he really knew that he had made us feel that way, he himself would feel terribly."

"Nonsense!" replied Butts, who was thoroughly put out with his friend, and was n't going even to listen to reason. "He would n't think anything of the sort. He'd merely say to himself that we were peculiar and touchy. I tell you, my dear girl, when a man permits himself to get in that condition he ought to be called down. The worst of it is that he is by far the most intellectual man I know. He's so logical that he lies around and waits for people to make mistakes, in order that he may correct them. Whereas, if he would only apply a little of his own logic to himself, he would see quite plainly that it is a good deal more important for a man to make a few sacrifices for his friends. By the way, did n't he call you down for feeding his dog?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Butts, the recollection of the affair spurring her to unusual excitement. "I should say so! Of course, strictly speaking, I should n't have done it."

"Logically speaking, you mean."

"Yes. Well, I gave Buck, the dog, a piece of sugar. Oh my! You ought to have seen Henry glare at me. Then he picked up the dog by the neck and almost threw him into the corner, as much as to say, 'Don't you go near *her* again.'"

Butts was now so angry that he could scarcely control himself.

"That's it, that's it!" he cried. "I'll be hanged if I ever go near *him* again! The trouble with him is," he went on, "that he does n't perceive that our human relationships are infinitely more important than any logical standpoint. Besides, he is n't always right himself, and when he does make mistakes——"

"Why, of course, my dear. His whole life is a mistake. The life of any man who has time to cultivate himself is a mistake."



Butts turned, his face full of enthusiasm.

"By Jove! old lady," he said, "that's a good thing you said. You probably don't realize what a good thing it is. Do you know, I've got an idea. I believe I can write a story about Henry. At any rate, I'm going to try."

Butts was a man of considerable imagination and literary talent. Occasionally he indulged in writing, and he had been quite successful.

Full of his subject, he lost no time. After their late dinner was over, he repaired at once to his den, working far into the night. The selfishness of his friend Henry Burr was his inspiring theme.

The next day he took his copy to his office and had it typewritten. When he came home that night he rubbed his hands together gleefully.

"I tell you, my dear," he said, with that wonderful enthusiasm—so often mistaken—which the man who has created something feels afterwards—"I tell you I've done an *immense* thing. Maybe I have n't polished off Henry! Oh, I've shown him up!"

"You don't mean to say——" broke in Mrs. Butts.

"Yes, I do—that's just what I mean. I've got them all in—slippers, dog, Bobbie, the whole thing. I've put him in the worst light. Only, of course, a true light. No, you can't see it now. You wait. I've sent it to *Bellington's Magazine*."

His wife surveyed him in mild dismay.

"Suppose Henry should see it," she said.

"That's the intention. I want him to. I expect him to. I'll mail him a copy. Oh, never fear! It will do him good. Just what he needs."

"But are you sure it won't lose us his friendship? For you know at heart, my dear, Henry is all right. He would do anything for us in a crisis. Is it worth while?"

Butts got red with indignation.

"Of course it's worth while," he exclaimed, his masculine obstinacy only growing more vigorous in the face of a just criticism. "Why, it's an insult to my intelligence to have a man treat me that way! Oh, say! Won't it be great? How small it will make Henry feel! And he can't help but acknowledge I'm right. He'll know how to treat us better next time, I'll bet."

"Suppose *Bellington's Magazine* does n't accept it?"

"I'll keep on sending it, if it costs me twenty dollars in postage."

Mrs. Butts's pessimism was doomed to be unrewarded. One morning a week later a letter was handed to her husband at the breakfast table. It bore the well known Bellington imprint.

Butts tore it open. There was about his manner, however, not the same ring of exultation that might have been expected under the peculiarly fortunate circumstances. He had done some thinking since.

"Well," he said, "you see, I was right. I knew that story was good. Here's a check and a letter from the editor thanking me for sending it."

"Short stories must be in demand," said Mrs. Butts.

"Of course they are. Besides, this contained a little human experience that every one will recognize at once. I knew it was good."

His wife looked at him keenly. "You don't seem to be quite as overjoyed about it as you usually are," she said.

Under this mild probe Butts winced slightly. But he was game.

"Never felt finer," he replied briefly.

As the days wore on, however, he grew slightly more melancholy, especially as his friend Henry was in the habit of dropping in at his office every few days to pay him a friendly visit. One evening he said to Mrs. Butts suddenly:

"Say, my dear, I want to ask you something. Do you think Henry would get *too* mad about that story?"

To this Mrs. Butts, who had in the mean time been permitted to read it, replied:

"I don't think he's going to throw his arms around your neck in appreciation."

"But will he get over it? Will——"

"He may. Of course you are hitting him in a vital spot—his vanity. And I must say you have n't spared him any."

Her remarks, slightly unsympathetic as they were, did not raise Butts's spirits.

"What did you let me do it for?" he said. "I'm not engaged in missionary work, any way. Let's accept our friends as we find them. I don't see Henry often enough to have it make much difference."

Mrs. Butts possessed a certain amount of feminine philosophy.

"I felt that way in the beginning," she said. "Still, now that it is done, I would n't care about it. Let it go. It may do him a lot of good."

The more Butts thought of it, however, the more timid he became. Like the month of March, he had begun like a blustering lion, but was rapidly diminishing to a lamb.

"I guess," he said feebly one morning, "the game is n't worth the candle. I'm going around to Bellington's to-day to withdraw that story and give them back the money."

"If you really feel that way, dear, perhaps you'd better. I can see that it's disturbing you. You have n't slept well lately."

Now that Butts had made his resolve, he became confidential.

"I know it," he replied. "I hated, just hated, to admit it, but the fact is, the thing has worried me a lot, and while it's perfectly true about Henry—all true—I dislike to have any trouble with an old

friend. Why, I feel better already at the thought of getting it back. My! but it will be a load off my shoulders."

That afternoon—it was Saturday—Mrs. Butts, who was waiting for him to come home, opened the front door as her husband almost staggered up the steps.

"Is it all right?" she said smilingly.

In reply, Butts entered the hall, drew from beneath his arm the latest copy of *Bellington's Magazine*, and threw it with a loud slap on the table, trying to conceal by this noise the aching void of courage within him.

"No," he cried. "I should say it *wasn't* all right. Did you ever see such luck? I never dreamed they would use it so soon. But it seems it was just the right length for a certain place—that's probably why they took the miserable thing—and they rushed it in and here it is in this month's number, in cold type, with my name to it. Oh, why did I wait so long?"

His astonished wife grasped him by the arm.

"Oh! Oh!" she gasped. "And that is n't the worst of it, either."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that, supposing you had fixed it all right—never dreaming there would be the slightest difficulty about it, and thinking it would be so nice all around for all of us—I have asked Henry to spend Sunday with us. I telephoned him this morning."

They gazed at each other in silent, awful emphasis.

"When is he coming?" asked Butts, his voice sinking into a kind of terrified despair. "Come!" he said, grabbing her by the shoulder nervously. "Let's know the worst now, at once. When is it?"

"At any moment. He said he would be here to dinner."

Her husband grasped her hand feverishly, like a drowning man clutching at a straw.

"Perhaps," he said hoarsely, "he has seen it. He reads everything. Perhaps he won't come. Perhaps he's mad and will *never* come."

He smiled almost fiendishly in his abject cowardice.

"Perhaps," he said, "we'll never see him again."

Being a woman, and not subject to that species of cowardice which is the peculiar prerogative of most men, Mrs. Butts was unable fully to appreciate her husband's fright.

"Of course he'll come," she said. "Don't worry. It will do him good. We won't be too serious about it. Perhaps it is better to laugh it off."

"That's it!" exclaimed Butts, like a man who gets a reprieve after being sentenced to be hanged. "You're a wonder. Why didn't I think of that before? Laugh! Of course. Make a joke of it. Ha! ha!"

Then he grew sober again as his eye fastened on the red-blue-green of the magazine cover.

"I *did* tell the truth," he said dubiously.

"And the worst of it is, my dear, that you have gone into all the horrible details."

"I know it."

Butts was now reduced to that pitiable case of funk where a man, in order to float in the clouds, is ready to throw overboard his whole moral nature, without a qualm. Anything, thought Butts, to square himself with his friend.

And, indeed, at this inauspicious moment that gentleman appeared upon the scene.

There was a click of the gate—sounding to Butts like the cocking of a revolver in the hands of a deadly enemy. The door was opened by Mrs. Butts, and Mr. Burr entered, holding in his hand rather ostentatiously (as Butts thought) a copy of *Bellington's Magazine*.

Being a woman, Mrs. Butts was perfect, for she had had the usual feminine training which included a course of kissing your hated rival in the friendliest manner possible. With just the pitch of exuberant welcome in her voice, she said, assuming a masculine freedom:

"Hello, Henry! I'm so glad to see you!"

"Hello, Henry!" said Butts, advancing with a sickly grin. "Delighted, I'm sure."

In the whole course of his life Butts had never before used a "Delighted, I'm sure" to any one. Mrs. Butts said afterwards that she had never (in view of his story) witnessed a more insulting greeting.

As for Burr, it was quite evident that he was laboring under some unusual agitation. He rolled and unrolled his copy of *Bellington's* with a rapidity that belied his facial attempt at calmness.

At this moment the maid called Mrs. Butts to the rear of the house to adjust some domestic difficulty, and she hurriedly left the room.

Burr lost no time. He grabbed Butts by the arm.

"Look here!" he said in a strained voice. "Come in here and sit down. I want to see you right off."

Poor Butts, thus left alone, his knees metaphorically and almost physically knocking together, followed Burr into the living-room. Down they both sat and faced each other grimly.

Burr's face was a combination of perplexity, wounded vanity, and triumph. For, in reality, he had the better of it. He was the injured one. Therefore he was much more composed.

"Look here!" he repeated. "What the devil does this mean? Why did n't you tell me about this before? Never was more surprised in my life! Happened to buy a copy of *Bellington's* by chance, saw

your name, and of course, being interested, I read. You certainly have laid me out! You must have meant it, too."

Butts realized there was only one course to pursue. He must do some tall lying.

"Meant what?" he asked in the most innocent manner.

"Why, what you said about me."

Butts got up. His manner grew suddenly confidential. At the same time there was a slightly injured tone to his voice.

"I guess," he said, "you've never written a story, have you?" He knew Burr had n't.

"No."

"Well, if you had, you'd understand. Now, is n't that funny?" he went on, his voice growing reminiscent. "That's great. Of course I see it all now. You thought—ha! you thought I meant you. Ha!"

"Why, did n't you? Those slippers——"

Butts grasped him by the arm.

"Is n't that grand?" he said in a far-off manner. "Is n't it rich? My dear boy, do you suppose I'd do a thing like that—if I really meant it? I should say not. Not me! No, sir! Let me explain. A writer—an author—that is, one who creates things—is obliged to seize upon any incident, no matter how trivial, and use it for his purpose. Now, with me, you understand—I work by contraries. That is, I take a situation and just make it the opposite from what it really is. You know, my dear boy, I've always considered you a model—you know more in a minute than I do in a year—and so I said to myself, 'I'll just twist him about. I'll go the limit, and just imagine how *another man* in Henry's place could make himself unendurable.' Eh? Now do you understand? And to think—and to think, you really suspected me of—— Ha! What a joke!"

As Butts, now hopelessly committed, went on with his gyrations, Burr's eyes were fastened upon him in a curious medley of doubt, surprise, and awakened knowledge.

"Well," he said, his voice rising slightly, "I don't know, I——"

"You don't mean to tell me you think I really meant to be personal? Now, my dear boy, *don't!* Really, you are beginning to make me feel very uncomfortable."

Butts said this as if by very contrast to bring up before his friend's vision just how delightfully unconscious and comfortable he *had* been.

Burr looked at him curiously for a moment. Then he shook his head.

"I'm sorry you did n't mean it," he said. "However, you have done me a great service."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, the fact is, that story is true. You may think I'm not that

sort, but I am; and when I read it I realized what I am. You see, old man, living alone as I do, I'm bound to get narrow, without meaning it. And it's a great thing to have a jolt like that once in a while." Burr got up and held out his hand. "Old man, I want to thank you! You've done me a great service."

At this moment Mrs. Butts came back. She did not see her husband's warning look. Burr turned to her.

"I was just saying to Jack," he went on, before Butts had time to interrupt, "that his little story has done me an awful lot of good. It made me mad at first, and then it set me to thinking. I had drifted into too selfish a way, I guess, without meaning it, and it came in the nick of time."

Mrs. Butts smiled.

"You *did* need it, Henry," she said. "I told Jack he rubbed it in too much, but he insisted that it was true. Only, I'm so glad—we're both glad, I'm sure—that we did it, because we really cared for you, and——"

She caught Butts giving her an agonized look. As for Burr, he smiled. After all, he was getting some fun out of the whole miserable affair. Then he turned to Butts.

"Well, Jack," he said, "it's some consolation for me to know that if you've made me out selfish, you've certainly made yourself out a first-class liar."

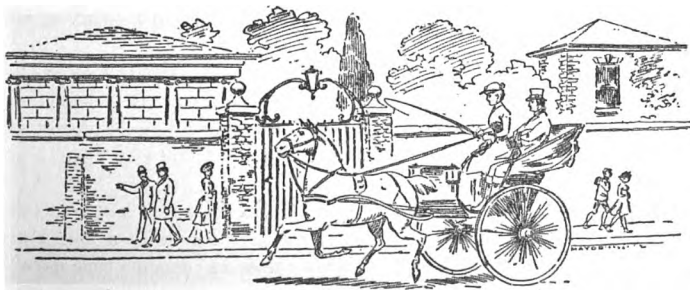
"You don't mean," exclaimed Mrs. Butts, "that you tried to make Henry think it was n't true?"

Butts faced them with a hopelessly weak, melancholy smile.

"It's your fault," he said to his wife. "Why did you leave me at such a critical moment?"

In reply, Mrs. Butts gazed at him scornfully.

"You men are all alike," she said. "Even when you're stupid enough occasionally to tell the truth, you're too cowardly to stick to it."



# “IN MEMORY OF OLD VIRGINIA”

*By La Salle Corbell Pickett*

ALL the seats were taken in the car which I entered one morning in early April. An old colored man sat next the door. It is not often in these days that I see that type of black man. I used to see that kind on the old Virginia plantation, where he was “Ung Lige” or “Ung Sambo” to all the household. His days were devoted to useful toil, and his evenings to his banjo and the old plantation melodies that no one can ever sing again as musically as they were sung then; and never in his wildest visions did he dream of logarithms and Greek roots for his race.

“Take this seat, Mistis,” he said, rising promptly. “Mistis” sounded very “homey” and pleasant to me. It had been so long since I was “Mistis” to anybody.

“Thank you, uncle,” said I. “Keep your seat. I would just as lief stand.”

“Scuse me, please, Mistis, but ’tain’t fitten fer you teh stan’; you mus’ set,” he admonished respectfully.

I took the seat, thanking him for his courtesy. Soon a departing passenger left a vacancy.

“There is a seat for you,” I said to the old man.

“Between the ladies, ma’am?” He hesitated.

“Yes,” I said.

He bowed apologetically to right and left and took the vacant place.

Just before leaving the car I slipped a silver piece into his hand, saying: “Uncle, get you a nice luncheon with this—in memory of old Virginia.”

“Thank you, my Mistis,” he said, opening his hand to look at the little gift, and then closing it. Then he touched his hat and thanked me again. I left the car with a sunnier feeling in my heart because of the chance meeting, but with no thought that I should ever again hear of my old Virginian.

That afternoon I received a bunch of arbutus which had been left for me by an old colored man—“fur the tall lady with a long blue coat an’ white hair—in memory of ole Virginia an’ dem ole time days.”



## THE QUESTIONINGS OF DON

BY MINNA THOMAS ANTRIM

THE advent of a governess occurred a week after Don's sixth birthday. While in town the winter previous, Don had gone to a kindergarten, Susan in alert attendance to and fro; but the Kennedys intended to remain at The Willows this year—hence the scheme of home instruction. When one morning there walked into the nursery a very comely young person, who said she had come to play with him and tell him about things, Don's eyes shone joyously.

"Must I stop askin' when I've wanted to know 'bout free hard fings?" he asked.

"You may ask me about a hundred," she smiled. Don's face reminded Ada Barry of one of Raphael's Cherubs, as, in fact, it had others. She herself was too young to hold impulse quite in check. The child's beauty fascinated her, his half-mannish "baby" talk assisting. With a little cry, such as girl-children give when a new doll is forthcoming, she caught Don up in her strong arms and kissed him heartily. "You darling!" she exclaimed. "How I shall love you!"

This sounded very good to Don, to whom Beauty never had appealed in vain. His face, however, grew a trifle redder.

"Is your name Wuth?" he asked winningly. Don had known one charming girl, a friend of his mother's, who was so called.

"Ruth? No, dear, it is——" His governess hesitated; she wanted him to call her "Ada," but she was eighteen, and how could she "govern" a child who called her by her first name? Therefore, "It is Miss Barry," she said ruefully.

"Are you a-doin' to live at our house many days?" he asked, his desire that she should very obvious.

"All winter, if you will have me."



"I'm ve'wy glad," Don said, with characteristic courtesy; then wonderingly: "Who brung you?"

"I came in a car," said Miss Barry, "from town with your Mamma and Mr. Kennedy."

Don nodded. Keith—his idolized stepfather—and his mother, had dined in town, he remembered. He had supped without them.

"An' w'en are you a-doin' to tell me 'bout a hundred fings?"

Ada smiled into the sweet little face. "Now, let's find a nice place——"

"Let's do down in de woods, where Dreybeard is—Dreybeard's my old stwirrel!"

"Let's!" interrupted Ada.

They hurried through the orchard and down to the immense walnut tree where Greybeard the knowing usually hid.

"Here's where I play," said Don simply.

"Then," answered Miss Barry, "here's where we will play until Jack Frost freezes us out."

"An' tell 'bout a hundred fings?"

"Just so," smiled his new comrade. "And now," said she, "you begin. Ask me, and then I'll ask you things."

"But," protested Don nervously, "I don't know 'bout fings much, only—but——"

The girl's hand patted Don's reassuringly. "You know about Greybeard, and all these beautiful trees, and such things."

Don smiled. "Oh, yes," he said happily; "'bout 'em I know lots, en 'bout birds, en trees, en—turtles," he added.

"And now what first?" asked Ada.

Don's brow wrinkled. The vista of coming wisdom almost took away his ability to concentrate. Still, time was fleeting, and oh, he did so desire to know 'bout so many fings! My! it was hard when a little boy must fink, quick, 'bout what to ask first. Suddenly his brow cleared; 'at funny word John had said—at's what he would ask first.

"W'at's a cinch?" he demanded.

Ada started, and Greybeard chuckled; at least, he made a snorting noise up in his leafy watch-tower, that amused Don's preceptress hugely. "A cinch?" echoed she, trying valiantly to look serious. "Where did you hear such a word, dear?"

"John, our chauffeur, sayed 'at workin' for Keif was a cinch."

"He probably meant that it was an easy thing to please so kind an employer."

"Oh!" said Don comprehendingly. Again his brow wrinkled; then, "W'at's Hell?" he asked.

Ada turned her flaming face swiftly. She began to realize that

catechetical seances under Don might require infinite tact, as well as serpentine wisdom, if she was to come off satisfactorily. Teaching was yet new to her.

"That," said she gravely, "is a very, very naughty word——" She paused, for Don had flushed painfully. To say a very naughty word, especially before a lady, Keith had told him was an ungentlemanly act.

"Please excuse me," he almost whispered. "I—I—did n't know 'at 'Hell' was a bad-boy word." Then anxiously: "John says it lots, but I won't never say—at word adain, Miss Barry."

"No," said Ada fondly; "I would n't, dear. Well?"

Don looked up. "Dat's two asks, is n't it?"

"Two questions, Son."

"Two twestions," echoed Don receptively. "Now—twestion—me one," he suggested courteously.

"Thank you," said she. "Please tell me about these beautiful leaves, and from which trees these two came. We have no leaves like these in the city."

Don told her, and so correctly that she asked who had taught him woodcraft.

"Keif," said Don proudly. "He knows ev'wyfing, even 'bout de gold at de uvver side de rainbow, and w'at do you fink Keif done?"

"What?" smiled Ada.

"One day he lifted Mamma like she was only but little, an' he tarried her down-stairs en up adain—at was w'en she was ve'vy much better, but not 'zactly all well. She had de—de—ammonia."

Ada Barry smiled tenderly into the eager face. "Your father must be a very strong man," she said.

"He's only a step," explained Don. "Keif ain't my truly farver, but he's my ve'wy bestest friend in de whole world, Keif is."

The boy's beautiful eyes glowed loyally.

"Dere ain't no farver 'at's more better to his little boy 'en Keif is to me," he continued, being thrice anxious that Miss Barry should comprehend Mr. Kennedy's worth.

"I am sure of it, dear. And now," said Ada briskly, "what else shall I tell you about?"

Don's face colored—he had one question to ask that ever since his first visit to church had caused him several indignant thrills.

"'Cept you was n't a stranger lady, I——"

"I am not a stranger, dear; I'm here to be your teacher and play-fellow, you know."

Don sidled a trifle closer. Ada's friendly tone was very convincing, and oh, how soft her hand was! Don was something of a connoisseur in hands. Finally he plunged.

"Mamma says 'at it 's not nice for little boys to tum down 'tairs 'fore ladies en gemplemen in dere nighties, en why," he demanded almost hotly, "does Mr. Bwooks, Mamma's wector, tum to church 'fore 'em in his nightie? 'At ain't nice!"

Ada's lips quivered, but she combated mirth sternly and vindicated the rector.

"I 'm sorry 'at I finked Mr. Bwooks was n't p'lite," said Don contritely. "I never did want to do to church wiv Mamma adain, but——"

"You will now," said Ada.

"Yes, Miss Barry, I am wantin' to go some uvver day," he replied thoughtfully. "Dod has many houses, has n't He?" he pursued.

"Very many."

"Do all of 'em have wed welwet carpets on?"

"Some do," replied Ada, coloring nervously.

"I 'speck Dod likes wed; 'pears so."

"He made it," smiled Ada; "but I think, of all colors, He best loves green, for it covers His foot-stool," she added reverently.

"W'at 's His foot-stool?" queried Don, looking around sharply.

"The whole earth is His——"

"'Cept here—dis all b'longs to Keif," Don said jealously. "'Way over dere, an' farver yet, 'at 's all our place."

Ada, feeling a bit nonplussed, considered silence golden and maintained it.

"Ain't it funny 'at Dod tan't talk," said Don presently. He was looking wistfully toward the cloudless sky. "'Pears He tan't hear good, eiver," he went on. "I asted Him if He would n't please speak jes' softly to me, one night, but he would n't. En I hollered up, one day when I finked poor Mamma was a-doin' to die, but never Dod did n't speak wiv me. If he loves me, w'vy don't He, Miss Barry?"

Ada explained the Great Silence as well as she could, being unversed in theology. Particularly she impressed upon Don how God's ears were especially attentive to Little Ones' petitions.

With fascinated eyes and eager ears, the boy gazed and listened; then, with faith new-born and glowing, said he enthusiastically:

"He 's 'most as lovin' as Keif, is n't He?"

A silence ensued. Then—

"See dat gwate big spruce twee? Dat is a-doin' to be our Kwismas twee," commented Don presently.

"And what do you want Santa Claus to bring you?" she smilingly asked.

"Dere ain't any," said Don sadly.

"What!" exclaimed Ada, staring.

"Santa Tlaus."

"Who's been telling you that?"

"Bobby. He's a wed-head boy—our gardener's boy—he sayed 'at Santa Tlaus was only a big man dwessed up wiv a funny face en a beard; en dere is n't any waindeers, eiver."

"Bobby's wrong," said Ada, wishing she had the red-headed boy within spankable nearness. To Don Yuletide had always been a season of pressed down and overflowing joy, she felt sure.

"It was Owen, Bobby's farver, 'at telled Bobby 'at dere was no Santa; en he sayed it was a—a—oh, I fordet w'at——"

"A sin?"

"Yes, a sin to tell children a lie 'bout a Kwiss."

Impulsive Ada muttered.

"I did n't hear w'at you sayed," Don remarked.

"Perhaps it is as well," she said demurely.

"But," pursued the boy anxiously, "why ain't dere no weally twuly Santa?"

Ada's brow wrinkled. She had either to brand old Owen or to insist upon the verity of the beautiful fable that has been the loving link between the Christ-child and the children of Christendom since the eastern miracle that changed the world. Her decision was quickly made. But before she spoke she thought of a way by which Don's faith in hair-splitting Owen's reliability might be preserved without the sacrifice of Don's patron saint, Nicholas the Great.

"Certainly there is a Santa Claus. You see, it's this way." Don leaned two small elbows upon his knees and looked up into her face confidingly. As a devotee in the Oracle, so believed the boy in his new playfellow. "Perhaps Owen lived far, far away over the ocean, where Santa Claus never went, and where the eight little reindeers could not possibly have travelled. If this is so, of course Owen never saw him."

"An' Owen was mistaken," said Don, his eyes aglow.

"He assuredly was," said Ada, rising in answer to a gong.

"Tum, luncheon is weady," said Don.

Whereupon they went in hand in hand.



# RAKES

*By Will Levington Comfort*

RAKES sat in the opening of a Mindayan bungalow, and his queerly-cut eyelids were drawn together by the intensity of light. The flicker of a thought came to me. It had to do with the different eyes one must be equipped with, if the light before the Great White Throne were stronger than this. Had Rakes swung a thought like that, his would have come without idleness or irony, for these were not in the man. His thoughts, such as they were, formed slowly, thoroughly, but without adornment, each thought straining his limitations to the roof of his brain. And if action were involved in one of his thoughts, Rakes carried out the action as good hounds run—to the death.

Everywhere, a little above the ground, save where the jungle made a dark background, the sunlight waved in pure white flame. It was the vividest time of the day, in the hottest time of the year, in the fieriest island of our just-now globe. The shine was insidious. You could breathe in it, you could walk in it, but if you did not get to cover when your scalp prickled, you would likely be buried in the eventide by the wild dogs of Minday. Or possibly, if your vitality were immense, the sun would spare your life, but fry the contents of your brain-pan, which is worse than losing an arm.

Rakes was exchanging languages with a young Mindayan, as naked as the trunk of a cocoa-palm and the color of the dead wet oak-leaves with which the Michigan woods are floored in the spring. This is the color of Mindayans to a man, for they breed true, but the women are lighter. The medium through which the white man and the oak-stained one came together in speech was eighteen or twenty words of American which the latter had learned in a journey to Luzon. Through these and the signs which clasp the world, Rakes was amassing Mindayan for the purpose—and here is the story—of administering Methodism.

Minday is one of the thousand isles of the Philippine archipelago, big as Delaware, but not yet in the strategy of American generals. Indeed, Spain, in her supremacy, had not flourished in Minday, because it was a remote and self-sufficient isle; and there is a Spanish tradition which holds that each native of Minday is possessed of seven devils and the leaders ten.

Rakes had conquered the island alone, chiefly because he came without side-arms. And then he made gestures on the beach, endeavoring to make himself understood that he was a teacher of the word of John Wesley and others, which gestures were mistaken to have a mystical meaning. Mindayans are well-religioned folk, the Prophet and Buddha being on the island in spirit, and also tribal gods. You will find that such advancement makes a nation receptive to new signs. And so it came about, after deciding not to kill Rakes, they waited patiently for their Messiah to learn their language and explain.

And now we must go back to Michigan, and lead up to the meaning of this lone American (in the stained and frayed khaki of an American trooper) sitting in a bungalow of this sun-smitten isle. The Rakeses had been a large, queer, brief folk in their town; and the town was restricted as a mortise-box in its thought and heart. Certain members of the family set themselves apart from their kind through the possession of harelips; and all but Amma—the late parents must rise to explain the name—within a year met the Reaper without pomp or heraldry. In fact, the funerals overlapped, so that the neighbors were dazed. The name of Rakes stands in the community to this day for Old Mortality at his worst.

There was left this boy, Amma, a strange, wordless type of Failure, of whom I alone am left to tell you.

He aspired to the ministry, but after years of study his ordination was refused. Then he went in for a berth in the foreign mission field, but his dream was denied, not because he was shabby of person or mind—just that the curse of his race uprose against him. There was at this time an alternative from the Salvation Army—the trouble with Spain which involved the Far East. Amma Rakes chose the service of Uncle Sam as a means to reach his mission-field.

This is a document, not a tale, or I should not enter the story. I have waited for the perspective to loom clear in every detail before putting down my lines. Rakes took on in the cavalry because a horse outfit had been called to the Philippines. I was there before him, having buried many things dear to me, but not all my relatives.

Never did a rookie climb to a higher altitude on Fool's Hill than did Rakes in the troop. Men of the service are mean. There is a vulture outside for the soldier's every dollar, and there is a punishment for every calendared error. Uncle Sam is the step-mother, and the soldier the bad boy. So long as he does his chores, without showing any particular individuality, he may come in to his meals without attracting the gad from the closet; but he must not attempt to fold himself between his blankets in any fashion other than is set down in the regulations.

This sort of repression is harsh to the soul; and then there are no

women within regulations to prevent a soldier from being a mere man. It is my conviction to-day, with the coolness of years upon me, that away from women, most men are just erect animals with a little larger capacity for sentiment, and a more versatile appetite for food and drink and deviltry.

All this in extenuation for the way we treated Rakes. As I looked at him then, as one member of a squad at another, he was a lady-like mutt who would not hit back. As I look at him now in the perspective, tender from the many pains of manhood and with the glance of a sweet woman falling upon the decenter fields of my being—I have to put the patience of Rakes along with the martyrdom of Stephen.

He could sleep on the sand; he could hike with the hardest. I recall no howl from him when we rode twelve hours over a blistering stretch of Luzon, from San Pedro Macati to Indang—without a halt for coffee or bacon. Our first fight was that day, and every fourth trooper held four horses while we skirmished forward on foot. There was quite as much iron in the jaw of Rakes as in Cutler's, our captain, whose valor vibrated across the Pacific afterward; and the lips of Rakes were no more variegated than mine.

Still he was the mucker to us. I think he must have been the same to the Methodist conference and to the committee on foreign missions.

We were in the Camarines when the dawn broke without Rakes in our precious midst. His get-away was clean, for he had been on post in the night. The strange organism left his rifle and blankets, but took the stuff which becomes a man's own upon issue. We thought that the sun and the service and our iniquity had driven him to the bolo suicide—that is, walking out of the lines to deliberate death at the hands of "our little brown brothers," as a home newspaper ventured to call these southern Tagals, thrice-blessed of the devil.

I, for one, had preserved enough humanity afield to get the sting of shame. My squad was silent that day, so I think I had no monopoly on the sentiment. In the next march we struck war.

It was a fight little in numbers, but the kind which makes the mess-talk of English regiments for decades and their flag decorations. In all honesty, we did n't do it well. We were too green, too used to the volley-and-run game of the Gugus. They had numbers, a jungle to fire from on two sides, and a leader, the distinguishing point—a leader in khaki and endowed with the white man's oaths. We were herded for slaughter on the hot open trail.

I saw that day how men open their mouths when they are struck about the belt. I heard souls speak as they passed—strange, befuddled utterances because their brains and lips were running down, but things of great and memorable meaning. I saw Captain Cutler stand for thirty seconds, dismayed, wordless, in the horrid yellow glare, while the coward

inside of me buried himself in the broken, sullied straws of my religion. A soldier can see no worse thing than Havoc in the face of his chief. But, bless him, he righted with a revivifying curse, and shot us into the jungle to carry poisoned salads of Krag metal to the "niggers" and a crucifixion to the white man—the deserter.

When all was still again, we asked each other, "Did you get him? Did you get him?" We were all too spent to lie. . . . We had all shot at him, but had heard him working the "niggers" against us afterward. No, we had not seen his face, but we did not doubt that it was Rakes.

And what a killing he had made to pay for our pleasantries! Nine had gone back to their fathers, and eleven lay upon the trail, with a fight on their hands to live—maimed.

You must serve in the tropics, and you must fight against one of your countrymen at the head of Malays, to know how to hate. Billy Knight, of Indiana, which state seems to breed soldiers of humor, propped himself up on the sand as he died, and we heard him fight out the words one by one:

"My Gawd!—if you could only ha' got him—hell would ha' been a cinch—for me!"

Our military father in his mansion in Manila called us in after that fight—may graciousness be upon his end—and told us to climb aboard his boat at Batangas. A New York paper published a story of our jungle work and a story of Rakes, wherein he swung the eternal human interest which lies in the tale of a scapegoat turning into a fire-brand. The Manila press printed the story simultaneously, so that we were enabled to learn what we had done. Our first thought, and I think the thought of all Luzon for nine days, was to send out an army, if necessary, for the express purpose of killing Rakes. I tell you again that there is no hate among men such as a renegade can inspire.

We fattened in Manila through the rains, and then were loaded upon a ship again. Except that it was not home, no one among the enlisted ones knew our coming port. We discussed all the isles of the archipelago we had heard of, about eight, but the secret did not emerge until we roused the sand of an empty, sun-blinded inlet and heard the name "Minday." Not a banco came out, nor a lighter to help us ashore. We knew then that we were in the midst of a people who put up no front for peace.

"My men," Cutler said, as the sailors lowered the boats and the beach appeared as white as a shell road (I remember that he held his campaign-hat, as he talked, a few inches above his head to get the shade but to let the air circulate), "we are now about to meet the best fighting man of the islands. We are out for doings in a mannish sense of the word. We are at the edge of Mother Earth's middle cinch, meaning the Equator, and the price of life here is to kill first—and kill all the



time—snakes and men. On this island, in this here campaign, nobody drinks anything but boiled water diluted with coffee—see? I say—see?”

We knew he meant it, none better than I, and we went ashore strong in the faith that he was right. The town was deserted—nearly. The men and maids were gone, but there were a few diseased and the dogs; also a bare-footed old woman who felt called upon to entertain.

I remember in the twilight when our ship put out to sea—that I said “good-by” to my world. That instant Manila seemed to me as close to home as my neighbor’s dining-room.

Always I have wanted to know who took the first drink in Minday. The man who did it was a degenerate or braver than the dare-devil who swallowed the first oyster. The old woman of bare-feet stood beside a cask of white rum. Here comes my confession. It was dark. Certain troopers had already drunk and still lived.

I was drowning in the Crusoe silence and in the horrid pressure of loneliness. I had watched my ship sink into the dark. Here was candle-light, the laugh of my men, the old woman, and the panacea of the soldier.

Presently I was laughing and unafraid; presently I was talking the woman’s language, and she seemed as wise to me as the spirit of the Orient, without the serpent, and as kind as the mother of my father’s daughter. She patted me upon the back when I gave her money.

And then—I do not know how long afterward—I was alone with a tithe of my brain and my soul shrinking under the cover of brutalized flesh. I saw the cool moon dancing, but the earth I could not see, nor the shacks of men. Above the splitting, wavering chaos, my brain boomed back to me, “Minday—the price of life—kill first—” . . . My side-arms were gone. I was emptier than Adam of modern defense, for Adam’s system was never called upon to distill drugged rum.

They came—the little devils—and my heart shrivelled for the knife to set it free. Instead, Minday put me negative by the route of flashing stars—a blow upon the head.

All of which brings us to the beginning of this manhandled tale. I awoke late in the forenoon, my brain working on a little boy’s shift and my limbs bound in lassitude. I saw Rakes in the doorway with the oak-tanned one, engaged in the labored hand and lip converse. For hours, it seemed, I watched, hungering for the white man’s word, too weak to hate him, to utter his name, or to ask why I lived. Yet I remembered the Camarines, and my skull was full of wonderings.

Rakes, our goat, labored on with the language, calm, gentle, homely unto pain. To think that I had heard military commands garnished with Homeric curses from this same entity in the jungles below Luzon

—that one hell-filled jungle! I saw now that he had the endurance of concentration, such as is the gift only of mystics, and that he was driving the monkey-mind of the Mindayan to the beds of torture with it. . . . My vitality waned unto sleep again and again—while Rakes toiled.

At last when the undertow of heat poured in through the door and through the woven bamboo walls, almost dizzying, the eyes of the white man turned to me, and saw that mine were open. He came to my side, saying quickly:

“I was so glad to be able to save your life, Will.”

The interpreter-boy seized the moment to flee, and we were alone. This was the dynamo of my regiment's hatred, whose face was close to mine.

“You did n't do a good job, Rakes,” I whispered. “I feel dead below my mouth. Where am I?”

“You are in the real village—two miles back from the port. I was awake when they brought you fellows in—all of you drugged. They knifed the others, but I begged for you. I'm not strong here yet, or I might have saved your friends. I begged for your life—through the interpreter—saying that you were a great teacher among the soldiers—because you had always been so kind to me.”

“Huh?” I managed to get out.

He had the valor to repeat it—“because you had always been so kind to me.”

“The captain warned us not to drink,” I said childishly.

“It was never like you to drink, Will,” he replied gently.

“Has there been a battle?”

“Not yet.”

“I suppose you will lead their action against us—when the fight comes?” I faltered. It seemed to take me an hour to get the sentence out. I was feeling my stomach then. It felt like a tomato-can which has been opened with a hatchet and left for a day in the sun.

“I lead—natives—against my countrymen?” he asked vaguely, and his burned, expressionless face drew up from mine. “Why, I am not a fighting man!” It seemed to come to him then that my mind was rudderless, and he brought water in a gourd to bathe my forehead and wrists.

“I was next to you, Rakes, when our troop got into a fight—the first fight,” I whispered, watching his face. I had to get this thing straight, though the poison, dying out of me, took most of my life with it. “You were a fighting man that day! And then again in the Camarines—you were a devil of a fighting man, and the bullets curved about you!”

Seven times I had to repeat that I was not delirious after that, before he answered me:

“What are the Camarines, Will?”

Even then, God forgive me, I thought he lied, and lied well. In ten words I told him what the Camarines had meant to us, to which I added: "There is one word in our language, Rakes, which needs no adjective. You are that word—Deserter!"

He was not stung, as a lesser man would be, but looked calmly down and carved a sentence, vivid and imperishable, upon the wall of my throne-room:

"I am not a deserter to my faith! . . . Listen," he went on, with a martyr's forbearance. "I was second in the class in my last year at the theological school, but they would not ordain me, because I preached in my trial what I thought to be a wider piety than theirs. I asked them for the smallest mission, in the farthest, most dreadful land, and was answered by a whisper through the assembly—a whisper of my madness. Then, even then,—and God knows I hold no bitterness,—I did not desert my faith, but I had no money, and had to use the service to cross the seas to my place of work—here—the last and loneliest port on earth. . . . And, Will, I did not come here by the Camarines."

I lay still and listened in pain and wonder at the last boundary of weakness. Years afterward I verified it all and found the other facts set down earlier. But I needed no verification then, as I listened and looked into the face of the man who had saved me. In spite of the sun and the poison and the service, I uncovered my humanity and rallied to his tale and his cause. He saw it and picked up my hand, just as over the open came the sharp crack of a Krag and the answer of its mates.

I tried to get up, but my legs were sticks of another volition than mine. "Have you a gun, Rakes?" I called. "The niggers may kill us before the fight—have you a gun?"

"No," he said; "I am not a fighting man."

Minday answered the Krag. "Pull me to the door and let me see!" I yelled. "It's the fight—the Minday fight. . . . I have died ten times this day—I can die again. Pull me to the door, old Missionary!"

I saw his jaw in the midst of action again, and it was clean. I have adored men who have no such jaw as that man's—our Goat. Obediently, he took me by the shoulders and slid me over the matting to the doorway, and I saw the naked Mindayans gather in the open as the Tagals had never done for us.

Then out of the jungle came the khaki—my men—strange, quick lines, moving as I had moved with them, blowing their bubbles of white smoke, dropping down, running forward, answering to the trumpet-talk like running-metal answering the grooves of a mold. The lust was upon me, but I had no body.

"Hush, Will," Rakes whispered, when I yelled. "I'm only on

sufferance here until I learn the language. The natives may remember us and send back a man with a knife."

"Hell!" I threw back. "They'll have to send six, and they're somewhat busy to spare 'em! . . . I can see dead from here, old Missionary—but your folks are sure fightin'!"

Lots more of this brute stuff came from the animal I carry. I pack a considerable animal, and I had never seen Americans fight from the battle-ground of sure-enough Malays before.

In the blazing open, in a light so strong that it was hard to see through it, the forces met,—the Mindayans with guns dating from Magellan, my men with the swift, animate Krag; a squadron of white men, three skeleton troops from forty states, stacked up against a thousand-odd glistening fiends with a fool's willingness to die.

They met—before my eyes, they met—these forces, and the dead flew out of the lines like chaff, and were trampled like chaff by the toilers. Hand-to-hand; shiny brown of flesh against the dull brown of khaki; the jungle full of reserves exchanging poison; science against brute emotion; seasoned courage against fanaticism; yellow sky above, yellow sand beneath, blood-letting between, and the eternal jungle on every hand—a battle—a battle for the gods.

I did not know my outfit's prowess until that day, for it was steady, steady. A man might waver, but the line was true. . . . I heard the screams of the major before the trumpet interpreted. I tried to get out of the shack to them, but my hands pawed the matting—could not lift the anchorage of my hips. And Rakes stood over me, watching, the lines of his moiled, sweating face weaving with sorrow.

My troop was in the van, running toward us, the Mindayans falling back—natives whose sires had stopped Spain. The picture still moves thrillingly in my understanding. . . . They came until I saw the faces of my fellows—Burns, Roberts, Peck, Beatty, Cutler, my captain—white lips drawn apart—guns hot with the throw of metal—throats hot, hearts hot—dead unthought-of, sentiment covered in lust and thirst. And I turned to this new god in my thoughts—Rakes—whose homeliness had hurt my eyes—and I saw his tears for the men who had brutalized him.

The natives halted, picked up reserves. It was the instant of all terrible fights, when each puts forth his final grain of courage and the lesser zeal is killed. When punch and science are gone, the final flicker of gameness wins fights for spiders and boys and armies. We had it.

The living Mindayans dissipated into the jungle and stayed, and the town was American. I lay pinned to the matting, and grinning like a cat over a dead warm sparrow. Then I hearkened unto Rakes, who was staring out in the open where the white men swarmed, our outfit nearest.

"Will," he said quietly, "the boys have killed my chance here of being a defender of the faith."

Then he placed his hand upon my forehead, and it felt so sweet that I think, for an instant, I fainted. . . . They were coming when I looked up. They saw Rakes, and my ashes of the night before, lower down in the doorway. Captain Cutler was in the lead; men of my troop behind him. I tried to make them hear—these white men—as they rushed in, full of the hang-over hell of the fight.

But they would not hear. They saw only the crown of a great day—to kill the deserter who had cost them many brothers in the Camarines, and who stood, as they thought, behind the deaths of the present. Such a finish of such a day would call down the glory of the Pantheon.

"Get him!" Cutler shouted.

"No, no!" I screamed back, but the devils would n't listen.

The captain came in first, and I caught his legs, but the top-sergeant went by with a native knife. I hated him before that day; I have not ceased to hate. Prayers and curses of mine found no point of penetration. . . . Cutler reached down and struck me, not with a weapon, but with his hand. And in the darkened corner, where I had lain, I saw the fluids go out of my savior.

There was an instant on the floor as I crawled to him—an instant brief as the waver of a leaf—in which my soul heard above the shouting at the door:

"I have always lost—but it's all right. . . . Thanks, Will. . . . Some time—I—shall—win."

Frenziedly, as they carried me back to camp, I told them what they had done. Weeks afterward, when we touched Luzon, relieved forever of Minday, the coffee-coolers at Manila told us that one Devlin, the renegade of the Camarines, since notorious, had been put to death by volunteer infantry. Cutler ordered my release from the guard-house, when this word came in, and he asked me to tell him all over again about the missionary at Minday.

In me, the wound does n't heal, not even in the broad healing of the years. I have made pilgrimage to the little town of Rakes in Michigan. And now I have tried to tell the story out of my heart, but the things one cannot tell are only vider.

Cutler is retired. His body became a congress of fevers. He is a neighbor of mine, and raises bull-pups and strawberries for a living, so that he can study ancient philosophies and buy quinine. He tells me that Rakes will come back some time, and fight it out all over again, and that he will not have to "use the army" then.

Though I never answer to this fad of his, being stronger on dogs and berries, I fetch a bottle of beer from the window-sill, and think of Rakes's last sentence, "Some time—I shall—win."

# CHATTERTON

## AN ECHO

*By Harold Susman*



I WAS born in Bristol. I was named Thomas after Thomas Chatterton, the poet. Chatterton was born in Bristol. His home there is pointed out. His poems are in a Bristol library. His "Last Will and Testament" is in a Bristol museum. His cenotaph is in a Bristol church-yard.

My father, William Underhill, was a librarian in Bristol. He was intensely interested in Chatterton. He wanted to write a biography of the poet. My mother, Jane Appleton, was a school-teacher in Bristol. She too was intensely interested in Chatterton. And she too wanted to write a biography of the poet. Miss Appleton went to the library and asked Mr. Underhill for books. Miss Appleton talked to Mr. Underhill about Chatterton. Mr. Underhill talked to Miss Appleton about Chatterton. They met again and again. They talked again and again. And their talk was always of Chatterton.

One day Mr. Underhill said to Miss Appleton: "Will you collaborate with me?" Miss Appleton said: "Yes." They collaborated. Another day Mr. Underhill said to Miss Appleton: "Will you marry me?" Miss Appleton said: "Yes." They married. A year later a child was born to them—a boy. I was that boy. And, as I stated in the beginning, they named me Thomas, after the poet.

My father loved Chatterton more than he loved my mother. My mother loved Chatterton more than she loved my father. And my father and mother loved Chatterton more than they loved me. It was Chatterton the first thing in the morning, and it was Chatterton the last thing at night. Chatterton's books were on the tables, and Chatterton's pictures were on the walls. But of all this I was absolutely unconscious until I was six and a half years old. Then it was that my mother handed me an old French music folio, and, showing me the illuminated capitals, said: "There! Fall in love with that. That is what Chatterton did." And that is what I did, too. I "fell in love" with it. I was filled with delight. And so was my mother, and so was my father. After that my mother taught me to read from the Gothic characters of an old black-letter Bible, "just like Chatterton."

I learned rapidly, and before I was eight I had read all of Chatterton's works. These writings often caused me to weep, sometimes wildly.

Then there was St. Mary Redcliffe, the ancient church so intimately associated with Chatterton. My father and my mother were known there as future biographers of the poet, and I was known as their "Marvellous Boy." I was admitted at all times, and I often stood before the old tombs or in the wonderful muniment-room, or else just sat still in a sort of trance, dreaming of Chatterton, Chatterton, Chatterton!

And then there was the garret where I used to go, and, with crude colors, draw heraldic designs, and knights in armor, and castles, and churches.

I went to school, and when I was ten I was confirmed—just as he had been. "But you have n't written a poem yet," said my father. "No, I know it," said I sadly. "And he had at your age," said my father. "Yes, I know that too," said I. And I wept, and I went without food and without sleep until I too had written a poem—along similar lines to his. I labelled it "An Echo," and as such it was published in a newspaper. An echo! Yes, that is what it was. That is what I was. An echo! Nothing more and nothing less. After that, I was always writing verses, and my verses were always echoes of his verses. Then it was that my father died. My mother wept. I did not. "Are n't you sorry your father is dead?" said my mother. "No," said I. "Why not?" said my mother. "Because he should have been dead long ago," said I. "What do you mean?" said she. "Chatterton's father was dead before *he* was born," said I. "Well, at any rate," said she, "you will have to earn your living now. What will you do?" "Be apprenticed to an attorney," said I. "Why?" said my mother. "Because he was," said I.

And so my mother got me a position with an attorney. His name was Joseph Whitehead. I was sorry that it was not "John Lambert." And oh, how I longed for "Thomas Palmer," the jeweller's apprentice, and "Thomas Carey," the pipe-maker, and "William Smith," the sailor-actor! And oh, where was "John Broughton," who was eventually to collect my writings?

But I did my work faithfully, even as he had done, and I worked on *my* Rowley papers. I studied history and heraldry, art and architecture, physics and metaphysics. Two years went by in this way. And then I sent some papers to Philip Carroll, representing them as the newly-discovered work of Chatterton—just as Chatterton had sent his papers to Horace Walpole, representing them as the newly-discovered work of Rowley. Like Walpole, Carroll was enthusiastic, in the beginning; and, like Walpole, Carroll was indifferent in the end.

After I had been in the attorney's office for "two years and nine

months," I knew that my time was up. I was "seventeen years and five months." I must take the next step. I must go to London.

In London I found lodgings with a chemist named Morrison, in lieu of a "plasterer named Walmsley." I wrote, and wrote, and wrote. I wrote all day and almost all night. I hardly ever stopped. I could not stop. I had to write. There was so much to say, and there was so little time to say it in. I wrote squibs and songs and tales—all like Chatterton's. I wrote a "burletta," like his "Revenge." Is this his revenge? Am I his revenge?

When he was seventeen and nine months he died, and by his own hand. I am seventeen and nine months. I must die. I must die by my own hand. Or is it by his hand? At any rate, I must die. What else can I do? He lived his life. I have lived his life. I have had no individuality of my own. I have been his echo. What can an echo do of itself? Nothing! A voice must speak before there can be an echo. If there was no voice after seventeen years and nine months, how can there be an echo after seventeen years and nine months? I have done everything that he did. I have done nothing that he did not do. I have lived as he lived. And now I must die as he died.

Is it fate? Is it physiology? Is it psychology? Is it hypnotism? Is it theosophy? Is it spiritualism? Is it reincarnation? Am I Chatterton? Or am I only Chatterton's echo? I do not know. All I know is that I must die. I have swallowed the arsenic. . . .



## THE SKATERS

BY LURANA W. SHELDON

THE frost has tinged the landscape far and near  
 With morning's crimson and the sunset's gold;  
 Glad autumn winds their merry tales have told  
 Of garnered harvests ripe with winter's cheer.

Bleak are the hills, yet from the frozen streams  
 There comes a whisper of approaching glee;  
 The ice-clad meadows wait expectantly,  
 While all the earth of some fair purpose dreams.

At last the sleigh-bells tinkle on the green,  
 And where the white is spread from shore to shore  
 The ring of sharpened steel is heard once more,  
 And youthful faces glorify the scene.





## MRS. WEIMER'S GIFT OF TONGUES

BY ELSIE SINGMASTER

“MOM, the sugar is all.”  
Louisa Weimer, whose hands were covered with flour, raised her arm to brush the curls out of her eyes. No one could have accomplished the awkward gesture with more grace than Louisa.

Her mother gave no sign that she heard, save that the gleam in her black eyes became brighter. She continued to move about the table with a light step, and gently opened and closed the oven-door.

“Mom,” said Louisa again, “shall I fetch some sugar?”

Mrs. Weimer still made no response, until Louisa, after having washed her hands, put on her sunbonnet and started toward the door.

“Where are you going, Louisa?” she asked, not in Louisa’s somewhat halting English, but in Pennsylvania German.

Louisa’s eyes were blue, but they could flash none the less brightly for that.

“I said I was going to the store for sugar,” she answered, now also in German.

“All right,” said her mother pleasantly. “Bring cinnamon, too.”

The screen-door closed sharply behind Louisa.

“Always Dutch,” she muttered as she went down the board-walk.

“This is the only place in Millerstown where it is now all the time everything Dutch.”

Then, catching sight of her “company girl,” Mary Kuhns, Louisa ran on to join her.

Back in the kitchen, Mrs. Weimer went on with her work. She had her daughter’s habit of talking to herself. Her speech was shorter, however, and delivered in German.

"I will not talk English, not if I live to be a hundred," she said.

She knew well enough that hers was the only house in Millers-town in which English was constantly frowned upon. Nor was it because she did not understand it. One could not help understanding it. One heard little else in these degenerate days. Degenerate they were indeed. The young people no longer obeyed their parents, they were extravagant, they must always be going to the county seat on the trolley cars—Mrs. Weimer hated the sound of the gong. These things had not been when she was young. They had all come in with the speaking of English, and as for her and her house they would not speak it, nor would she acknowledge that she understood it, even though such an attitude involved not a little inconvenience.

Louisa meanwhile was exercising her English to her heart's content. Her arm lay across Mary Kuhns's shoulder, and their sunbonnets were close together.

"I tell you," Mary was saying, "if you ever want to have your picture enlarged, now is your chance, Louisa. It don't make anything out what sort of a picture you have. He can put another dress to it, or a hat, if you want a hat, or he can take a hat off. And he can make a pompadour for you."

Louisa's heart leaped. The height of her mother's ambition was to own a crayon portrait of herself to hang beside that of her departed husband on the parlor wall, and another of Louisa to hang opposite.

"But how much does it cost?" she asked, her hopes suddenly falling.

"It is a special sale. It is only ninety-eight cents."

"Ninety-eight cents!" repeated Louisa. "Is he yet here?"

"Yes, and he will go round to every house."

Louisa slipped out of Mary's grasp.

"I must go hurry and tell my Mom."

She sped on to the store to accomplish her errand, then home. This time she spoke hurriedly in German.

Mrs. Weimer was as much excited as Louisa herself. Of course they could not afford to have the pictures framed at once, but they would not mind that.

"When did Mary say he would come?"

Before Louisa could reply, there was a gentle tap at the door. Both women turned, a little startled. Who was it who had come down the board-walk so quietly?

Before them stood a young and slender man, whom they would have guessed to be the crayon-portrait agent, even without the large portfolio which he carried under his arm. There was a metropolitan air about him which impressed even Mrs. Weimer. His hat was in his hand. The Millerstown men did not go to the trouble of removing

their hats when they rapped at one's door. His skin was very white, his eyes very black, his dark hair very smooth.

"Good morning," he said, in a gentle voice. "I hear you are interested in portraits. I have something here which is finer than oils."

"Yes," said Louisa, thinking regretfully of her soiled dress. "Come in and take a chair once."

"Thank you," said the young man, with a bow. "But can't we sit out here on the porch?" It was a warm morning, and the stifling air in the kitchen could be felt at the door. He held the door open, first for Mrs. Weimer, then for Louisa.

"If you will sit here, miss, and your mother here, I can show the pictures to advantage."

"What does he say, Louisa?" asked Mrs. Weimer. She always insisted that English be translated for her.

"He says you shall sit down," answered Louisa impatiently. Once more she was to be disgraced by her mother's German.

"Your mother don't understand English?" the agent asked politely. "But you do?"

"No, she don't, but I do. Pretty near everything is getting English. But Mom, she still talks Dutch."

The young man fanned himself with his hat, and looked at Louisa. Louisa in her close-fitting calico dress was a pleasing spectacle.

"It is a warm day," he said. "Now, I have here a very fine line of crayons, as you will see. These pictures I will show you are some of the most beautiful young ladies of the county seat. This is a young lady on Fourth Street."

He held up before them the first of his portraits. No one could have dreamed that the original came from any place smaller than the county seat. The cut of her dress, the brilliant jewel at her throat, and, most of all, the towering pompadour, proclaimed her as city bred. Louisa gave an "Oh!" of rapture, and even her mother was impressed.

"Imagine how handsome the lady will look in a fine frame. And this is a picture of her mother. It is a fine black and white effect. She is a widow."

"What does he say?" asked Mrs. Weimer.

"This is the young lady's mother."

"Would not your mother like an effect something like this?"

"I think it is grand," said Louisa. "Mom, how would you like such a picture?"

Mrs. Weimer's eyes glistened.

"Ask him how much it will cost, Louisa."

Louisa translated her mother's question.

"You cannot buy such a picture anywhere else for less than four

dollars. These are special rates. Ninety-eight cents is all the firm is asking. You will never have another chance like this. The firm is about to leave this section. You think you will take one?"

"He says, will you take one?" translated Louisa.

"Yes, if it is only ninety-eight cents."

Louisa translated again.

"That is our price. Your mother has a picture of herself?"

Louisa brought her mother's photograph from the album in the parlor. That she brought with her another did not escape the agent's eye.

"And now," he began, when he had put down in his note-book the directions for Mrs. Weimer's picture, "don't the young lady want one too? Excuse me, but you would make a handsome picture."

Mrs. Weimer saw Louisa blush.

"What does he say, Louisa?"

"He says, would I like such a picture?" Louisa clasped her hands. "Ach, please, please, Mom!"

"All right," consented Mrs. Weimer.

The agent held out his hand for Louisa's picture.

"Ah, this is a good one," he said, in his gentle voice. "But we must touch up these cheeks so they look a little more like what they do naturally. And what color would you like the dress to be?"

Louisa heaved a rapturous sigh which ended in the word "Pink."

The young man wrote down the directions for her picture. Then Mrs. Weimer expected him to go. He stayed on, however, asking Louisa for a drink, then, when she had given him some raspberry vinegar, lingering to show her some other pictures from his portfolio. Mrs. Weimer was disturbed because Louisa was neglecting her work. She herself went back to the kitchen and finished mixing the cake which Louisa had begun. Several times she went to the door, but Louisa did not turn her head. Mrs. Weimer decided that she did not altogether trust the young man. One could never be sure about these English.

Millerstown talked of little else than crayon portraits during the next week. The women talked them over when they met in the store, the children whispered about them in school, until the teacher forbade all mention of the word "picture."

To Louisa the week seemed long. She had never seen any one so good-looking or with such fine manners as the agent.

For some reason, the young man did not follow the same plan in the delivery of his pictures as he had in their sale. Instead of starting at the head of Main Street and going from house to house, he went, first of all, to the Weimers'. When he came it was just eight o'clock, and

Louisa and her mother were half through with the week's baking. They did not expect him till afternoon, and they were both much surprised, and Louisa much annoyed. She had dreamed all the week that he would come in the afternoon, when she was dressed to receive him.

"Good morning," he said in his gentle fashion.

"Good morning," answered Louisa.

"This is a beautiful morning," he said hurriedly. "I have brought the pictures. Will you step out and look at them?"

Louisa moved toward the door.

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Weimer.

"We shall go out on the porch to see our pictures."

"You tell him he shall bring them in here," commanded Mrs. Weimer. Then he would not keep Louisa from her work.

"You shall bring the pictures in here," translated Louisa unwillingly.

The young man bowed and backed out on the porch. When he returned he carried, not the light portfolio, but two heavily-framed pictures. One he leaned against the kitchen wall, the other he slowly uncovered.

"We didn't order frames, Louisa," said Mrs. Weimer.

"Well, perhaps these are not our pictures."

At first glance, indeed, the picture which he held up for their inspection seemed to belong to neither of them. It was the likeness of a young woman clad in the pinkest of pink dresses, which, however, was no pinker than her cheeks. Her eyes were blue, and her brown hair was piled into a high pompadour.

"But that is grand!" sighed Louisa. "But"—the admiration changed to bewilderment—"but—who——" Suddenly Louisa flushed a rosy red. "Is it me?"

The young man bowed.

"Who is it?" asked her mother, then saw her question answered in Louisa's face. "Is it you?"

"Of course," answered Louisa.

For an instant Mrs. Weimer said nothing. She looked from Louisa to the picture, and from the picture back to Louisa. Surely it did look a little like Louisa.

"But we cannot take the frames. Tell him that, Louisa."

"And this," said the young man, as he turned the other picture to the light—"this is your mother."

Louisa and her mother both exclaimed this time. There was no mistaking the likeness. The cabinet photograph had been exactly copied.

"Louisa, you go and get my purse," said Mrs. Weimer. The agent

was already folding up the covers which he had taken from the portraits. Mrs. Weimer laid her hand on one. "Not the frames," she said in German.

The young man shook his head. The jaunty air which he had worn on the occasion of his first visit had departed. He seemed a little frightened. When Louisa returned he was standing with his hand on the latch of the door.

"Give him his money, Louisa," said Mrs. Weimer. Perhaps—but no, they would never give away such beautiful frames.

Louisa counted out the money. The young man no longer looked pleasantly at her; in fact, he did not look at her at all. Suddenly he made an incoherent remark.

"What did you say?" asked Louisa.

"The pictures are three dollars and ninety-eight cents apiece. The firm have decided they cannot sell any without the frames. This is a fine quality of gilt, warranted never to wear off."

"What did you say?" demanded Louisa again.

"The pictures are three dollars and ninety-eight cents. The firm——"

"What does he say, Louisa?" asked her mother.

"He says the pictures are three dollars and ninety-eight cents."

"Tell him we do not want the frames. We only want the pictures."

Louisa repeated her mother's words.

"But we cannot sell the pictures alone. The firm have decided——" The young man seemed to be taking a firmer hold on the door-latch. He had never delivered crayon portraits before, and was new to the tricks it involved. "You see, you'll have to have the frames anyhow. You might as well have them now." He spoke as though he were reciting from a book. "They are the finest gilt on the market. The firm——"

"What does he say, Louisa?"

"He says we will have to have the frames anyhow, Mom," translated Louisa wistfully.

"I cannot afford frames. I did not order frames. You tell him to take his pictures from the frames and take his money."

"She says," repeated Louisa, "you shall take the pictures from the frames. We don't want the frames."

"But the firm——" The young man paused and laid a hand on each of the pictures. "The firm have decided that you cannot have the pictures without the frames."

"We cannot have the pictures without the frames!" repeated Louisa. "Are you not in your right mind? We ordered the pictures for ninety-eight cents. It was nothing at all said from frames."

"I cannot help it. The firm——"

"What does he say, Louisa?"

"He says he will not give us the pictures unless we take the frames."

Mrs. Weimer's black eyes blazed.

"What will he do with them?"

"Take them along back with him, I guess. Perhaps he will show them round like the others."

"No, he will not."

"You are sure you do not want the pictures?" put in the young man. He had opened the door, then grasped the pictures again. "Both the pictures are very fine. You will never get any better ones. They——"

Louisa was aware that the pictures were fine.

"You are a cheat," she said suddenly.

The young man flushed from the top of his high collar to the top of his white forehead.

"I can't help it," he said angrily. "The firm——"

"What does he say, Louisa?"

"He says he will take the pictures away. He is a cheat." Louisa could scarcely keep her voice steady.

"Good morning," said the young man. He was trying vainly to push the door open without letting go of the heavy frames. The latch had dropped, however, and he was powerless.

"What will you do with the pictures?" asked Mrs. Weimer in German.

"I do not understand. I do not speak German. I must go. Good morning." He set one of the pictures against the wall for an instant, lifted the latch, seized the picture again, and pushed the door open with his foot.

Louisa burst into tears. It seemed as though she could not let the beautiful pictures go. Nor was her disappointment less keen than her mother's. Mrs. Weimer saw the young man's shoulders move through the door, and she stepped forward.

"Not so fast, young man," she said in German.

The young man winced as he felt his arm caught as though in a vise. He started to draw it back, and Mrs. Weimer opened the door wide enough for his arm and the picture to slip back. He was in a moment again wholly within the kitchen. There he flattened himself against the wall. Before him stood Mrs. Weimer, her finger shaking in his face, from her lips pouring a torrent of incomprehensible words.

"Let me go," he said weakly.

Mrs. Weimer talked on.

"I do not understand you. Let me go. I am English. It is not my fault. The firm——"

Mrs. Weimer caught the drift of his words. She had forgotten that he could not understand her. Her speech had all been wasted. For a moment rage held her silent; then her eyes shone.

"Louisa, you go into the front room," she commanded, in German—Mrs. Weimer did not lose her presence of mind in the greatest of excitement—"and shut the door."

Louisa obeyed, weeping.

"Now!" Mrs. Weimer surveyed the figure before her, from the wavy black hair which Louisa so admired, down to the tips of the pointed shoes. She wondered how any one could have such feet.

"You——" She looked around to be sure that Louisa had closed the door. "You are a humbug, that is what you are," she said in plain Millerstown English. "You are a fraud, you are a cheat, you ought to go to the jail, that is where you ought to go. That is where you will anyhow come some day. You ought to be thrashed."

The young man put up his hand as though to ward off some physical violence.

"Let me go," he said again.

"You are a thief," said Mrs. Weimer. "It is n't such trash in all Millerstown like you English. You are a robber and a swindler. You——"

"I will let you have them for ninety-eight cents," he said desperately. "Only let me go." His hands were busy with the fastenings which held the pictures to the frames. "I'll take them out. I can't help it. The firm——"

"Don't talk from the firm," said Mrs. Weimer sternly. "Here is your money."

The young man received the money in a shaking hand, then lifted the heavy frames.

"G-good morning," he faltered.

"Good-by," said Mrs. Weimer meaningly. "Good-by for always." Then she opened the door into the sitting-room.

"He is gone, Louisa," she said in German. "And here are the pictures. I settled him. And, Louisa"—she thrust her hands deep into her mixing-bowl as she spoke—"now you can see what it is like to be English."



When Hymen banquets he invites but one woman—at a time.

The lies of Love are white in comparison with the truths of Hatred.

Competition may be the life of trade, but it is often the death of tradesmen.

Reverence is dead. Ancestral bones are now used for Keys and Step-ladders.



# THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY JEW

AN OBSERVATION

*By Ezra Brudno*



IF the life of the Jew of past generations was a tragedy, the life of the twentieth-century Jew is a tragi-comedy—the sort of tragi-comedy that would make a Heine laugh and weep at the same time. I am not speaking of the long-bearded Jew who prays daily for the Messiah; I am not alluding to the Yiddish-speaking immigrant who pushes a cart in Hester Street or makes a machine hum in some dingy sweat-shop; I have no reference to him whose horizon is coëxtensive with his creed. He belongs to the present decade only as a matter of physical chronology; in spirit, in essence, he is a product of the past. His life is more often either wholly tragic or comic. The subject of this observation is the Jew who believes the Messiah has neither come, nor that he ever will; the smooth-shaven Jew who speaks faultless English, German, French, or whatever his native tongue happens to be; the liberal minded man who hangs between the orthodox Jew and the heterodox Christian like a pendulum in an encased clock, swaying from side to side without touching either.

But although the twentieth-century Jew is radically the same in France, Germany, Russia, or England, I shall aim my observations at the Jew in America, because here, owing to the numerous distinct sects and classes, he is more clearly defined.



I have hinted at tragedy and comedy in the immigrant's life, but it becomes such only when the Jew of the last century and of this clash. For if it were not for the latter's influence, or rather interference, the immigrant would perhaps be the most contented citizen. His wants are of the simplest, and are easily gratified. Having been hunted, starved, butchered, he desires no more than freedom, food, safety. These he finds here in abundance. Of course at first, in spite of his satiety, he is somewhat unhappy. There is a lurking longing in his

breast for "home"; he loves everything that has a scent of "home"; he misses the atmosphere of "home." Not that he likes that "home"—he speaks of it with a creeping sense of horror; but he is helpless against the enchanting echo of old memories. The warm, ill-smelling synagogue of his native town, as contrasted with the airy American house of worship, calls him back with the magic charm of childhood; the communal atmosphere of the Pale lures him with the sweetness of a family fireside; somehow, at a safe distance, the very yoke from which he sought to free himself seems to him now pregnant with poetic sentiment. Does not the beggar grown rich sometimes yearn for his discarded tatters? American customs and atmosphere are to him what a flood of sunshine is to the blind; he may feel its warmth, but the brilliant beams are not for him. It is only after a sojourn of a few years that his viewpoint begins to broaden. Then he begins to realize that in the whole history of his people the Jew never had a period of tranquillity parallel to the present in the United States. Gradually he even becomes proud of his adopted fatherland. And while in his heart of hearts he never ceases to hanker after "the fish, which we did eat in Egypt," he knows that this country is his Canaan, the Promised Land.



His tragedy or comedy only begins with the growth of his "Jakie" and "Rachel," or perhaps more often Jim and Catherine. It is the old story of the hen hatching duck's eggs. The young ones go swimming in the large pond while the poor old hen, in despair, claps her wings and raises the dust on the sandy shore. She calls them back, she is sure the waters will drown them, and when she beholds them gliding safely toward the other end she begins to fear they will never return. More often Jim and Catherine usher in a tragedy—the tragedy of the race. And the tragedy is not always one-sided. The fierce struggle arises from misunderstanding. Jim and Catherine demand independence; and they win their fight for it. But not infrequently independence is another name for tyranny. Jim cannot understand why "the old man" is so fond of the synagogue; he fails to see what chains "daddie" to those musty habits he brought over from the Old Country. Catherine frowns at the sound of the "old lady's" Yiddish; her mother's old-fashioned manners annoy her. At first the "old folks" make a bitter fight, but if old age has patience, youth has vigor. Little by little the elderly people weaken; they soon begin to yield, but yield as they might, they never bend enough to please Jim and Catherine. Alas! alas! how often they break because they cannot bend!

And Jim and Catherine? They have prospered. They have changed their Sabbath from the seventh to the first day; they have changed

their prayer-book from Hebrew to English (and they do not even pray in English); they have changed beef for ham; they have scrupulously, nay, religiously, weeded out every oriental herb from their garden; and despite all, they seem to want something—something indefinite and yet something that fills them with restlessness, with discontent, with a sense of failure. They are conscious of a void they cannot fill. They sometimes feel they have been fighting for a worthless cause.



For Jim and Catherine want to gain in one leap what has taken others many struggling years, perhaps generations, to accomplish. They have gained other things with such ease that at first this, too, seems easy. I mean social recognition. They frequently forget that they have only bridged the past and the present, and that the only usefulness there is in a bridge is that it gives others a chance to cross a chasm. They refuse to be treated as they would treat others. The same Jim and Catherine, when success smiles upon them, manifest a snobbishness toward the rest of their people that makes the seclusiveness of the non-Jew appear the warmest hospitality. Nothing is more ludicrously pathetic than the attitude of these climbers toward their less fortunate co-religionists. Jim and Catherine are ever moving, ever running away from the "lower classes." The lower classes in Judaic parlance are the foreign born, and particularly those of Russian and Polish extraction, summarily dismissed as the Pullacks. Jim and Catherine are very often Pullacks themselves, but to speak of the Pullacks with proper contempt is frequently a means of escaping this stigma. Luckily, the fates are not as unjust as we are inclined to believe. Jim and Catherine sneer, only to be sneered at. The non-Jewish Jim and Catherine do not seem to recognize the difference between a Pullack and the other kind. To them they are only Jews, for whom Society has not yet raised the barrier. Now and then a Jim or a Catherine succeeds in climbing over or crawling under this obstacle, sometimes in disguise, but more often they find the barrier too high and too close to the ground. This failure brings despair; it stuns them; they cannot conceive the cause of it. Not infrequently the disappointment fills them with a bitterness that develops timid defiance; at other times they lose courage and run back to their clan.

But there is the twentieth-century Jew freed from these trammels. The sons and daughters of Jim and Catherine, and those whose antecedents do not stare at them like a threatening shadow; those who give little thought to society. These may be divided into three distinct classes. I shall label them for classification as the Oriental-Occidentals, the Compromisers, and the Occidentals, respectively.

The Oriental-Occidentals are those whose modern culture has been sifted through an oriental sieve. They are rarely of American birth. Having been reared in a purely Jewish atmosphere, imbued in childhood with the mysticism of Hebrew lore, filled with hazy dreams of the East, they cannot free themselves from these influences even when they imagine themselves wholly emancipated. They emerge from the past by sheer will, as it were, and at an unimpressible age. For this partial metamorphosis is usually wrought in them either through contact with the outside world or through some thoughts inculcated in them by books, whose authors, like themselves, also belonged to the Oriental-Occidental class. Thus they fail to grasp the real spirit of the occident and are only half-conscious of the extent to which they are still steeped in orientalism. Even when some of them become agnostics they are at heart closer to the faith and traditions of their fathers than to the new cult. Their transition from pure orientalism to this hybrid state has the element of revolt rather than that of development. They constantly harp upon occidentalism, which is, in fact, only an orientalism with an occidental coloring; they helplessly view the occident with an oriental eye. The recruits to Zionism, with few exceptions, have been gained from these ranks. They have also contributed liberally to Socialism and to many other "isms." Socialism and Zionism, in their case, are the mere bubbles that rise on the surface of wine while it is in a state of fermentation. Their so-called idealism is a mere outlet of their restlessness, of their fermentation. The two strongly conflicting elements, the oriental and occidental, clash together, with this sort of idealism as a result. An unappeasable grievance, or a supposed grievance, has given birth to these ideas in their heads. It would be a safe wager that those very enthusiasts who to-day clamor for Zionism would clamor to-morrow for something diametrically opposite had the dream of Zionism come true. I mention Zionism in particular because this class has made it appear a Jewish issue. Fortunately, the Jews are too intensely patriotic in countries where freedom has been given them, and have too much practical sense, to subscribe to such a pernicious scheme, which is not only un-American but also detrimental to the development of the Jew in this country. As a matter of truth, there is scarcely a self-supporting Jew in Europe and America who has any real desire to settle in Palestine or create a Jewish State anywhere else. America is their Zion, and any country that welcomes them is their Palestine. Talk is cheap, and harangue dirt cheap. The Oriental-Occidentals are the fathers of this movement. Paradoxical as it may sound, they seek to orientalize the occident through the influence of the occident.

Then there are the Compromisers. They are particularly prevalent in this country and wherever the Jew has been permitted to

share the educational privileges with Gentiles. This constantly increasing class struck root in Germany a little after the death of the renowned philosopher and reformer, Moses Mendelssohn. In a sense, he was the Luther of Judaism. Although he never posted any edict, his two-fold attitude and his attempt at reconciling the then modern philosophy with Judaism broke the ice, so to speak. Up to his time only one mode of interpretation of Judaism was possible. He forced a new view. And while in practice he adhered to the Old Faith, his interpretation of the Faith opened a door for reformers; and a legion of reformers really followed him. These reformers, ever since, have had one eye upon Judaism and the other upon the outside world, and have trimmed the former so that it might correspond with the latter. But as these reformers have invariably been rabbis, they have always been bound to reconcile their position and to offer excuses, as it were, for their step. Their flocks followed blindly, and the younger element welcomed this departure from the rigid orthodoxy. Orthodoxy was quite a burden, and the young were glad to throw it off.



With the early emigration of German Jews to America, a few rabbis, notably the illustrious Bohemian, Dr. Wise, smuggled over the reform movement, which was then at its zenith in Germany, and advanced a few steps farther; and, as in the case of Moses Mendelssohn, the followers of Dr. Wise gave more latitude to his ideas of reform than he had wished to convey. Moreover, the flock here was easy to guide; for though unusually alert and thrifty in the field of commerce, the vast majority of those immigrants were of a rather low intellectual stratum. Besides, they were new-comers, their minds were bent upon worldly achievements, and therefore left such matters as theology entirely in the hands of the clergy. The clergy, again, eager to please the yielding congregations and still more eager to come in closer touch with the outside world, have gradually lopped away the branches of that old tree until there is barely a stump left of the trunk. Reform Judaism to-day consists of a belief in God plus a negation: that is, that it is neither Christianity nor any other of the accepted creeds. It is really no more than the code of Ethical Culture, but in order to give this creed a Jewish flavor the rabbis, for obvious reasons, have retained New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement, and these, too, only nominally. This is the creed which Dr. Felix Adler, with more boldness and with clearer logic, has promulgated. The leaders of Reform Judaism would perhaps have followed in the footsteps of this eminent scholar and moralist, but the fear of exterminating the Jew—the Jew, not Judaism—checks them.

In fact, it is not even the fear of exterminating the Jew that makes this class maintain its Jewish identity; for no one is more jealous of the privilege of "mixing" with non-Jews than the Jews classified under this head. To be "the only Jew on the street," to hobnob conspicuously with Gentiles, to be "complimented" that one does not look like a Jew, seem to be the ambition and pride of the Compromiser. His love for the Jew who still adheres to the traditions of his race is not particularly burning. It is no exaggeration to say that the Christian shows more respect and toleration for the orthodox Hebrew than the Compromiser. So much so that there is a gulf dividing these two classes almost as wide as that which separates the Jew and Gentile. True, there is an apparent community of interest, but only on the surface. And this gulf is not due to the differences of opinion (for the average Compromiser is not a thinking Jew, and not one who would fight for a religious principle), but to the contempt of this class for everything Hebraic, or oriental, if you will. A single attendance at service in any temple tells the story. Everything about the temple and the service savors of Protestant formalism. One needs only to recall what Judaism was since times immemorial, and what it still is among the orthodox—its distinctly oriental character—and to give a casual glance at the modern synagogue at prayer. One cannot help but see the glaring imitation of Protestantism. The fancy prayer book, the organ, the choir, the minister with his eyes raised ceiling-wards and his affected emotionalism—these are all borrowed from modern Christianity. Even the Torah, the quaint, traditional scroll of parchment upon which the Law is written by hand, which, if for no other purpose, should have been preserved as a historic relic—even this antique has been banished from the pulpit because it looks too Hebraic, and the printed Bible (of the pattern adopted in Christian churches) has been substituted.



In other words, the Compromiser is paradoxical. He hates Hebraism, yet would not confess it. Instead, he lauds it even while he is destroying it. He proclaims in his temple that the Jew is only such by virtue of his creed, and yet shrinks from intermarriage with a non-Jew, even though the latter agrees with him on matters of religion. He ostensibly seeks the society of the Gentile, but his society is in quotation-marks. Society to him is the club, the ball-room, the dinner party. So far and no further. You will often hear the Compromiser grumble, "The Gentiles care for us only during business hours." And yet, as a matter of fact, this is about the extent the Compromiser himself would go. His love for "mixing" is not so

much his natural desire as his vanity of showing his Jewish neighbor that he is "received." The frequent outcry of the Jew against discrimination in some club or summer hotel is not so much from a desire to remove the barrier as from a sense of injustice. It is not that he seeks to enter, but he would have the door open.

And no one is as jealous of the Jew's reputation and as keenly sensitive to his standing in the community as the Compromiser. He not only wishes to come to the non-Jew with clean hands, to use a legal phraseology, but he is ever watchful that every other Jew come in the same manner. All talk about Jewish greed notwithstanding, even in money matters this class is making great sacrifices that the name of the Jew be vindicated. He is not only striving to be as good as the non-Jew, but to be better. His highest aim in life is to remove the prejudice that has existed between his people and the non-Jew. He feels a personal responsibility for every Jew in the land, be he ever so humble. To hear that a Jew has committed a crime, that a co-racial has done anything that might provoke the displeasure of his Christian neighbor, becomes a source of real grief to him. Somehow he feels himself to be the guardian angel of his race.

In short, the Compromiser is on the fence, to use a common colloquialism. He has stripped himself of the creed of his fathers, he has assimilated the life of the occident, and yet, though somewhat reluctantly, would not yield to total absorption. For although he is a stranger to the traditions of his people, although the language of his ancient race is a closed book to him, although his sympathies are with occidentalism, yet he is still too close to those traditions, language, and orientalism to disregard them. The shadow of his past is still threatening him.



Between the Compromiser and the Occidental is but one step. I refer to the third class. This class is as yet small but is gradually growing and promises to be overwhelming. The Occidentals have come to recognize that which the Compromisers would rather ignore.

The Occidentals are comprised of two elements: the thinker and the passivist, if I may coin the term. The former faces the truth unflinchingly. Once the conviction dawns upon him that he is not a Jew religiously—at best no more than a theist and very often an agnostic—what reason is there for him to perpetuate his race? Is he not an American? Has not his country flourished through the annihilation of this race instinct? Are not the European nationalities the mere grist for this nation? Why should he seek to perpetuate his race more than the Scotchman or the Scandinavian? His problems are the problems of his country only, his ideals the ideals of his com-

patriots. True, he is no Christian, but he is no different than tens of thousands of born Christians whose creed is rationalism. He has no compunction about the possible death-blow to Judaism; he has no contrition about the possible extinction of his race; he is willing to flow quietly into the common stream and fall, if fall he must, into larger waters.

His attitude toward his race is neutral. He is never ashamed of his lineage nor is he possessed of any boastful pride, for he knows he is not chosen. Even though strong of the conviction that his is the only way of solving the so-called Jewish problem, he is not a propagandist, makes no noise about his ideas, poses as neither martyr nor idealist. As often as not, he intermarries, if such a step brings no tragedy to his nearest of kin. For he is not a terrorist; he is peacefully carrying out his convictions. Since he never poses, he never offers any apologies for the ill behavior of a co-racial, no more than an Englishman holds himself to account for every countryman of his; nor does he ask any credit if a member of his race accomplishes anything noble. He loves occidentalism with the love of a zealous convert, believes sincerely in the betterment of the classes, and is quite certain that time will eventually solve his people's problems. He is not blind to the fact that there is prejudice against himself and his people; he fully realizes that he must needs have ten times the ability of the non-Jew to accomplish that for which the latter receives ten times as much credit as he does, yet he does not grumble, because he sees the causes and knows that chronic diseases cannot be easily cured; sometimes they are never cured. He accepts the truth as he finds it, without wasting his precious life and energy in tracing the "whys" and "wherefores." He is solving his people's problem in the way that appears to him most plausible.



The second element, which I have termed passivist, has reached the same conclusion but through a different channel. While the thinker often springs directly from the fold of Judaism and frees himself from his racial fetters by sheer power of conviction, the passivist has almost unconsciously drifted away from his clan through some generations of indifference toward Judaism. Thus many of the Portuguese Jews, the pioneers in this country, have gradually been swallowed by the outside world. Very likely the sons and daughters of the Compromisers of to-day will eventually be carried off by the same tide that has washed away the sons and daughters of the Compromisers of yesterday, unless the cruel winds of class hatred will force them back to the shore.

Furthermore, the view of the modern Jew is different from that of his fathers. While the Jew of the past regarded everything as subor-



dinate to his faith, and it was with the eyes of his faith that he looked upon the world, the twentieth-century Jew views life as a man first, and as a Jew last. His desires, ambitions, and hopes are of the nation of which he is a part, not of his race, not of his creed. It is the natural pride of his blood that sometimes makes him strive for recognition as a member of his race, but only as a means of removing the world's prejudice, not with the hope of retaining his Jewish identity.



## FATE

BY MERIBAH PHILBRICK ABBOTT

S AID the Vase from Tokio:  
 "I'm so costly, as you know,  
 That I hope to see myself  
 Soon on some collector's shelf,  
 Ticketed and marked with care,  
 'Do not handle. Very rare'!"

Said the little Urn from Greece:  
 "I am no museum piece;  
 Yet my figure knocks askew  
 Such a twisted thing as you;  
 Grace and Beauty, line on line,  
 Pave my way to fame divine!"

Said the Jar from Ispahan:  
 "Years I boast—a wondrous span;  
 And the Bard hath made of me  
 Songs for all eternity.  
 Cease your chatter, lumps of clay,  
 Only *I* outlive to-day!"

Said the maid, from Dublin hired:  
 "Faith, this dustin' makes me tired!  
*Smash*—ye haythin out o' shape!  
*Smash*—ye ugly furrin ape!"  
 In the ash heap, hid from sight,  
 All the vases lay that night.



## THE WIDOW SMITH'S DOG

BY WILLIAM R. LIGHTON

ON the night of the last Tuesday in July the municipal council held its final meeting prior to reorganizing under the new city administration. There was tacit understanding that nothing of importance would occur at this meeting—it was to be held in mere perfunctory obedience to charter provision. The old council was almost wholly of one political persuasion; its morals, too, were of striking homogeneity, and it had worked in sweet accord through its two years' control of city affairs. Public clamor had been vociferous at times, but the members belonged to the caste of the professional politician, which places very low valuation upon public outcry. So, if credit might be given to the gossip of the late campaign, the old council had done many things, not counting cost—counting profits, rather, and counting them in very substantial figures. But in this instance the politicians had overreached themselves, and a "citizens' movement" had wrought a municipal revolution. A reform mayor, treasurer, and comptroller had been elected, and the reform element had gained control of the council.

Thus it was quite natural that an air of indifference should pervade the chamber on this Tuesday night. The defeated and disgruntled members were not disposed to add to the ignominy of their position by doing things which were certain to be undone by the veto of the new mayor.

It was at the press table, just under the president's high seat, that this apathy was most clearly to be seen. As a rule, each of the morning papers put two men on this assignment, with sometimes a special stenographic assistant; to-night there was but one man from each paper.

"They're a sorry looking crowd, aren't they?" said Windham, of the *Gazette*. "Journalism is no snap, but it's a surer cinch than

politics. Those fellows will be nothing more than outcasts, forlorn as downy little chickens with no mother hen to hide 'em."

"They're no chickens," laughed Gregg, the *Times* man. "They're more like mud-turtles. They've got hard shells on their backs. And they'll find other mud-holes, too," he added.

Windham was scanning a printed list of the councilmen, ticking off their names with his pencil.

"There are six of those who've lost their jobs that claimed to have an air-tight cinch," he said, "and people mostly believed them. Don't it beat the devil? There's Ike Daley, of the Second, for one. Who'd have thought he could possibly lose his grip?"

"The *Times* prophesied it," Gregg answered complacently.

"That puts an element of comedy into it," Windham scoffed. "I wish they'd get to work," he fidgeted; "I want to get some sleep to-night."

"Daley's turning his good eye this way," Gregg cautioned. "He's got something for us. Don't I know the signs? He's taking a fresh chew."

Daley, the retiring member from the Second Ward, left his place in the group of mourners and ambled toward the press table. He bent down, his elbows on the green table-top, his upturned palms supporting his big face and pushing his hanging cheeks into grotesque shapes.

"Say, boys," he said, with confidential lowering of voice, "I want to put you onto something. I've got a special here I'm going to introduce, and I want you two to take hold and help it along."

It was an affliction to have Daley come so near as to admit of his whispering confidentially; his face was unqualifiedly ugly and repulsive.

"Which one of us are you looking at?" Windham growled, tilting back his chair. Daley's strabismus was partly accountable for his unattractiveness, and it was this one blemish over which he was sensitive. He scowled upon Windham.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked. "If you don't want the item, don't listen; I'll give it to Gregg." He bent toward Gregg and began again in his harsh whisper. The instinct of the newspaper man conquered Windham's repugnance, and he too leaned forward.

"What is it, Daley?" he asked in propitiation. "Of course I want it."

"Oh!" Daley said, not wholly appeased. "Say, I've done you favors enough, when I could. There's no call for you to get crusty, just because you think I'm down."

"That's all right, Ike," Windham answered, with semblance of cordiality. "I'm just tired, that's all. Go ahead; what's the item?"

"Well," Daley said, with return to his confidential manner, "I'm going down and out to-night. I know I've had hard things said about me, and you fellows have written some of 'em. I reckon I've deserved it sometimes; we're none of us perfect. Any way, I don't bear no malice. Here, take a cigar, Jim. You don't smoke, Billy, do you?"

Daley's cigars were always of the best. Gregg lit the fat black roll with deep satisfaction, and rearranged his sheets of copy paper.

"Well," Daley said again, "I say I know I ain't high in public favor just now. But what I want to do is to go out of my seat with a creditable act—just to show folks I know how to be white—see? I've got a resolution in my pocket that I'll send up to the clerk to be read under new business, and it'll be referred to-night. Of course final action can't be taken; I don't want to urge it, any way, because that might look as if there was something wrong with it. But I know it'll be hard to get the new council to do anything with it. They'll be afraid to pass anything that's left over. But say, what I want you fellows to do is to try and say what you can for it in the papers—you'll see it's straight and all that—and see if you can't get up enough feeling for it to let the new fellows pass it without queering themselves in their wards. You listen when it's read, and see if you can't do it. I'm going to explain it a little, and that'll give you the facts. I'll be much obliged if you can help it along; I will, sure."

The president of the council had mounted to his place and was rapping for order, and Daley straightened himself and went to his seat.

"What in the world?" Gregg whispered to Windham. "What's up? Daley doing a creditable act! Ain't that rich?"

"The council will come to order!" said the president. "The clerk will call the roll." The formal opening of the meeting proceeded, the listless, droning voice of the clerk and the solemn and woe-begone aspect of the retiring members making the ceremony seem a veritable burial service for the political dead. The after-proceedings were equally dull and wearisome. The committees, wary of committing themselves into the hands of their successors, declared themselves not ready to report matters in their charge, and the old council seemed likely to die by the purely natural process of inanition. It was only at the press table that interest glowed in a faint spark, for Daley's special was still to come.

"One thing's sure," Windham whispered: "it's going to be something for Ike Daley. He has n't saved anything out of his stealings; he's pretty near destitute. He's going to cut open the goose that's been laying the golden eggs."

"Oh, maybe not," Gregg mildly protested. The flavor of Daley's cigar was in his mouth and made him charitable. "Give the old man credit for decency—until we know better, any way."

"Credit Daley with decency!" Windham blurted. "Jim, you're getting childish. The next thing you know, your paper'll put you on the editorial side and raise your salary."

"Oh, now, just you wait a minute," Gregg said. "Daley's as dead as a skinned cat, of course, and he knows it better than anybody. Maybe he wants to set up a sort of moral monument for himself in his resolution."

"New business," the clerk read from the Order of Procedure, and the words conjured a deeper gloom into the semicircle of faces. To suggest new business under the circumstances seemed as heartless and senseless as to try to borrow money from a newspaper reporter on the eve of pay-day. There was a rustle of surprised interest when Daley arose in his place and addressed the chair for recognition.

"Mr. President," he sputtered, "I know I'll seem ridiculous in offering new business now, but I've got a resolution here that I'll ask the clerk to read." He waddled to the clerk's desk and handed up his folded sheet from which the clerk read in his monotonous chant:

"Concurrent Resolution of the City Council and Mayor of the City of Blankton. To Remit Dog Tax to Mary B. Smith. By Isaac Daley.

"Whereas, Mary B. Smith, widow, a resident of the city of Blankton, is the owner of one certain dog of the breed known as fox-hound, and bearing the name of Jock, and,

"Whereas, the city ordinances of the city of Blankton prescribe an annual tax of one dollar and fifty cents upon all dogs owned and kept within the corporate limits of said city, and,

"Whereas, the said Mary B. Smith, widow, has dependent upon her for support three small children and is in destitute circumstances and unable to pay the tax aforesaid,

"Therefore, Be It Resolved by the City Council of the City of Blankton, the Mayor concurring, that the said Mary B. Smith have remitted to her the said tax, and that she be permitted to hold the said dog free and exempt from payment of said tax so long as the said dog shall live."

A ripple of laughter ran through the chamber and floated up to the vaulted roof, where it awoke hollow echoes. It was like laughing at a funeral. The interest died from Windham's face, and he threw down his pencil.

"The infernal fool!" he muttered. "Jim, did you ever know one like him?"

"Oh, it takes a lot of fools to make up a complete set," Gregg chuckled. "Keep still, now; let's hear what he has to say."

Daley stood in his place, his face reddening; but he was not of a temperament to be laughed down.

"Mr. President," he said, "I want to explain this resolution a little. Then maybe you fellows won't think it's so funny. I hope political feeling may be so far forgotten in the next council as to allow this resolution to pass. It ought to pass. If there was ever a case that deserved sympathy, it's this one. I know the facts. This woman, as the resolution says, is a widow, and she's got no means of support except from her own labor over the wash-tub. She's got three little children, and this dog is about all they've got in life. Smith got him when his oldest boy was a baby, and the children have all had him as their dearest companion, and they're very fond of him. Most of us can remember how we've loved dumb brutes when we were little shavers. But the woman is utterly unable to pay the tax. It's due now, and unless some help comes pretty soon, why, she's going to lose the dog. That's about all I have to say. I used to know her husband, and I've known her. I've inquired into her circumstances, and I know what the resolution says is true. I think the council can afford to forget politics and do a humane act once in a while. I'm willing to face ridicule by fathering the resolution, any way."

Another member took the floor and solemnly proposed an amendment:

"Mr. President, I move as an amendment to the last clause the addition of the words, 'or until the said Mary B. Smith, widow, shall remarry.'"

The laughter was heartier now, and even the indifferent clerk committed himself to a feeble smile. Then another heartless scoffer moved reference of the resolution to the standing committee on Fire and Water, another proposed the Sewer Committee, and altogether Daley's "good act" seemed in a bad way.

"Now, Mr. President," he said in deprecation, "this don't seem quite the right thing to do. The case don't deserve such treatment; it's a straight case. Now, no harm can come of it if the resolution is referred to a special committee of those who'll hold over to the new council, and I think I can convince them and the whole council that it ought to pass. I'd like to have that done. The poverty of a destitute widow is n't a thing to make sport of."

The members were not in the humor for prolonging the merriment; already it had lost its savor, and Daley's suggestion met with no further opposition. The others were willing that he should make an ass of himself if he chose. They were painfully conscious of their own claims to asinine greatness, and hopeful that Daley's bray might be loud enough to distract attention from their own poor exit from public life. The special committee was duly appointed from the "hold-overs," and the meeting went on its mournful way toward adjournment.

Gregg had covered several sheets of his paper with the episode, to

the disgust of Windham, who had sat passively paring his nails. When the meeting was adjourned and they two were in the elevator cage going toward the street, Windham expressed himself.

"Jim, you don't mean to turn in any stuff about that blamed dog?"

"Sure!" Gregg answered. "Why not? If Purdy don't like it, he can kill it. It can't do any harm, and it may do the old lady some good. I reckon it's a genuine case, don't you?"

"Oh, Lord!" Windham said. "Jim, I thought you were only feeble-minded, but it seems you're a microcephalous idiot."

Gregg laughed contentedly. "Good!" he said. "Wisdom's too commonplace. There are too many wise men like you. I feel better to be a fool."

"I reckon I ought n't to disparage you," Windham fired in parting. "Of course idiocy is what's expected of you. A reporter can't shape the policy of his paper."

When a week had passed the new council was organized, and "reform," which in municipal politics is generally but the mask for a new order of deviltry, was begun. Four lines in the *Gazette* had summarized Windham's impression of the Widow Smith and her dog, and Gregg's more elaborate effort had been blue-pencilled to a single "stick" in the *Times*. The matter was quite dead in the minds of both men.

At noon of the day following the reorganization, while Windham sat at his table working furiously upon his matter for the afternoon edition, he suddenly felt a heavy hand upon his shoulder, and found Ike Daley smiling down upon him. Daley's smile had been known to turn drunken men sober from sheer fright, and had changed the course of human lives. Windham shivered with repugnance and bent with renewed energy to his work.

"Say, Billy," Daley said, "I want to see the old man."

"Then what are you looking at me for?" Windham snapped. He could not bear interruption in the midst of a "story." But Daley showed no resentment.

"Can I see him?" he asked.

Windham did not answer, but wrote to the bottom of his page, then numbered a new sheet.

"Billy, can I see him?" Daley persisted.

"If you're fond of philosophic experiments, you might try it," Windham returned rudely, and Daley's cross-eyes glowered angrily. He turned heavily upon his heel and pursued his way up the avenue which led between the rows of reporters' tables to the city editor's enclosed den.

"I say, confound the whole race of pestiferous, cross-eyed ex-councilmen," Windham snarled to the man at the next table. He finished his work with a sigh of satisfaction, and was drawing on his cuffs in

preparation for lunch, when the electric "buzzer" over his table gave him harsh summons to the city editor's room. There he found Daley grinning in restored good humor.

"Windy," the city editor said, "Ike here's been saying something about the widow—what's her name?—Smith—about the Widow Smith and her pup. Do you know anything about the case? Ike says you do."

"Ike's told me all about it," Windham answered, with the distaste of a hungry man for irrelevancies; "but I don't know a thing."

Daley overlooked the implication.

"I told you about her the night I introduced my resolution," he said. "You remember that, don't you?"

"I know what you said," Windham agreed.

The city editor swung himself back and forth in his chair for a moment, sketching geometrical designs upon his blotter.

"Ike says he's going to take a special council committee down this afternoon to visit with the widow a little," he said finally, "and he wants us to send a man along and give her a little space. It seems her husband used to work in our engine-room. Go along, Billy, and give the old lady a lift. We're going to be a little short to-morrow morning any way, likely, from the looks of things at present. Give her a half-column."

"I'm much obliged, Johnson," Daley said, rising ponderously. "You won't be sorry for it; the case is as straight as a string. What you say'll help along fine. You come to Committee Room B, Billy, at two o'clock."

At two o'clock Windham found Daley and the special committee awaiting him. Gregg sat upon one of the oak tables in the committee room, swinging his feet and smoking a fat black cigar. He grinned broadly at Windham.

"Microcephalous idiocy must be catching," he said.

"Johnson caught it this morning," Windham returned. "Is it chronic or acute? Can a man have it twice? If he can't, you ought to be thankful."

The Second Ward, whence Daley hailed, was on the side of the city which made it necessary for the papers to employ police reporters. It was in the Second Ward that the "other half" of the city lived and went its devious way, quite ignored until some particularly flagrant breach of the peace made police intervention necessary. Daley knew the ward, and the ward knew Daley, and he and his escort were the subjects of much chaffing comment as they sought the home of the Widow Smith. Chinese launderers had their guttural say; Italian women, bearing heavy nondescript burdens upon their heads, paused to chatter together; a young negress, strumming a banjo in her open



doorway, sang a snatch of broad verse. Altogether the councilmanic party had a flattering reception in the Second.

Through dirty streets, along shorter and dirtier alleys and byways, Daley led the way, halting at last before a rough board shanty set in a desolate muddy yard. Through the roof of the shanty projected a joint of battered and rusty stovepipe; a broken window-pane was stopped with a ragged pair of blue overalls; coal ashes formed a pathway from the tottering gate to the front door.

"This is where she lives, gentlemen," Daley said, and he went gingerly to work opening the rickety gate.

The party was met by a woman of that age politely named "uncertain." The line of beauty is the curve; such is the dictum of the artist. Accordingly the Widow Smith should have possessed beauty; for her make-up was rich in curves. There were many impudent little curves and wriggles in her broad face, her neck was a composite of fat curves, and the peripheral curve of her waist was immense. She was in calico, and of a degree of cleanness suggestive of very recent and spasmodic effort. Her hair was tidy in its knot at the back of her head.

The party was much cramped when it had found its way into the single room of the shanty. There was but one chair, not half so well preserved as the widow herself, so no one tried to sit down. And there were the children, owl-eyed and uncomfortable under the combined effect of late towelling and present scrutiny of so many eyes. They were pathetic little examples of what childhood may become under given conditions, and Windham's face sobered; he had two children of his own. Gregg, as became a bachelor, was less susceptible to such feeling.

Suddenly Windham's sober face broadened into a smile, and the smile deepened into a chuckle, for he had become aware of the presence of The Dog—a bleary-eyed, lop-eared old hound, which sat upon its haunches near the children, beating apologetically upon the floor with its bony tail. Windham slapped his hand coaxingly upon his knee, and the old dog ducked its head and licked its hanging chops in friendly recognition of the attention, but stood its ground by the side of the baby.

"This is the lady we've come to meet, gentlemen," Daley said in collective introduction, and the widow did her best to bend her figure into a courtesy, smoothing her pudgy hands over her vast breadth of apron and looking at the floor.

"I've been telling these gentlemen of your situation, Mrs. Smith," Daley continued, "and they thought they'd like to come down and see you—and Jock."

There was an awkward pause, the widow fishing in the depths of her mind for appropriate speech, none of the others feeling constrained to

speak. But Daley was never abashed by an awkward pause, and he went on in his splashing voice:

"And there's the dog, too, gentlemen. You see how fond it is of the children, and how they cling to it."

The baby was clinging to it quite literally, mumbling the end of its hard tail between his toothless gums, while the old animal elevated its sniffing nose and blinked with watery eyes, seemingly doing its best to awaken slumbering sympathy.

"It's very hard, gentlemen," the widow managed to say at last, "for a respectable woman like me to be brought to asking charity. That's all it is, just charity; but it's not charity to me so much as to my fatherless children." Of course the little drama would have lacked an essential element had the widow not turned away her face and lifted a corner of her apron to her eyes, while her visitors shifted and shuffled their feet uneasily. "I'm bound to be away from home a good bit of the time, and have to leave the little ones here, with nobody to look after them but Jock. And he's a faithful dog, gentlemen; that he is. I feel just as safe as if I'd left them with a big brother."

There was a little further speech, carried on for the most part between Daley and the widow, and then the party withdrew, half shamefacedly, Daley's shrewd eyes searching the faces of his companions in a study of the effect wrought.

"You're going to do better by her this time, ain't you, Billy?" Gregg asked.

"Johnson said half a column," Windham answered. "He'll have to make it a double quarter; how can I crowd her figure into anything narrower?"

But he had left a dollar behind him in the little shanty, and his half column was written with a willing hand, despite his brusquerie. His story was such as a newspaper man can write when he is pushed to it—full of those realities which his practised eye sees, and rounded with such sentiment as a father-hearted man feels toward the destitute children of another. When the last touch was bestowed, he felt that he had done full justice to the Widow Smith and her children, and incidentally to the old fox-hound. Nor was the *Times* less generous, Gregg's story was a pattern of its kind, and altogether Daley's resolution and its intended beneficiaries fared well. A Sunday intervened before the next council meeting, and the Woman's Page of the *Gazette* took hold of the case, the women reporters handling it according to womanly instincts, telling of the widow's manner of wearing her knot of hair, and of the cut of her calico frock, made in the style of two or three years ago, when her circumstances had been prosperous. But it was of the children that they made the most. Set a forlorn child before a woman reporter, and she'll do the rest, God bless her!

When the night of the next council meeting arrived, the special committee reported favorably upon Daley's resolution, and Daley was himself permitted to stand in his old place on the floor of the chamber for a few minutes, that he might make a special plea for its passage. But of course it did n't pass; its association with the name of Daley made its defeat a foregone fact. For Daley had been the designer and executor of half the scandalous "deals" which had sealed the doom of the last council. That he should stand in the place of foster-father to the resolution was enough. The recently-elected members were still too new in their places, and felt the public eye to be too closely upon them, to allow of their dealing in sentiment at the possible cost of favor in their wards. It was dangerous to meddle with any relic of the defunct administration.

Daley listened to the vote with some eagerness upon his usually impassive face. He did not appear to be greatly disturbed; a professional politician loses sensitiveness, or loses the way of showing it, anyhow. Even a shadow of a smile lurked in the sheltered nooks of his big face for a moment when the result was announced; but that soon passed, and he bore himself with his accustomed air of perfect placidity as he left the chamber.

The newspaper chronicles of the defeat of the resolution had a note of protest in them, as though councilmanic duty had been violated, and there were several editorial paragraphs, more or less biting, reflecting upon the stolidity of the councilmanic heart. A few of the papers in neighboring towns lent their notes of serious or humorous comment, and the fame of the Widow Smith and her old hound spread abroad over a wide territory.

A month passed, and other matters had superseded this in fickle public attention, when one day it happened that Windham's morning assignment took him into the Second Ward. He had nearly completed his collection of data, and was bending his steps along the principal and most prosperous street of the ward, mentally casting the opening lines of his "story" and oblivious to externals, when he heard his name called.

"Hello, Billy! Say, you ain't forgetting old friends, are you?"

He found himself standing before a small saloon whose front was newly painted and gilded and covered with the cheap bright glitter of beer-signs. In the doorway stood Ike Daley, bare-headed, in his shirt-sleeves, and wearing a bibbed white apron. Windham glanced at the swinging sign overhead and read the legend, "Ike's Home Place."

"Why, Ike, how's this?" Windham said. "I did n't know about this."

"You're terrible benighted," Daley answered, with his widest and most astounding grin. "Say, you don't read the papers, do you?"

"I had n't seen anything about this," Windham said. "How long ago is it?"

"Two weeks," Daley answered. "Come in and see how I'm fixed. I think I'm pretty snug."

And snug enough it was, with clean saw-dusted floor, bright mirrors, new bar, and polished glassware. Daley made his way behind the bar and stood with ready hand uplifted.

"What's it going to be, Billy?" he asked hospitably. "This is on me, for old acquaintance."

"Thanks; I don't drink, Ike," Windham answered. "I don't like to be unsociable, though. Give me a lemonade, will you?"

Then, while Daley was engaged with the drink, talking inconsequently the while, a swinging door at the back of the room was pushed open and a dog entered. The appearance of the beast seemed familiar to Windham—lop ears and blinking eyes; yet it was not altogether the same, for its trunk was rounder, its ribs were less in evidence, and its tail was carried with an air of confidence and consciousness of improved social status. About its neck was a leather collar, bearing a bright tax-tag.

"Why, Ike," Windham said, "is n't that the Widow Smith's foxhound?"

"Same dog," Daley answered. "He hangs around here a good bit now."

"He's got his tax paid," Windham commented; "who paid it?"

Daley had completed the shaking of his lemonade, and was pouring it delicately through a metallic strainer into its glass. He shook out the last drops and pushed the glass toward Windham.

"Oh," he said then, quite carelessly, "lots of people paid it. I'll bet no dog before ever had so much tax paid on him as he's had in the last thirty days. I'll tell you something, Billy; it may make a good item, after all you wrote about her and her dog. Why, after that resolution of mine did n't pass—of course I knew it was n't going to pass; it just naturally could n't—nobody ever thought it would, or wanted it to; it was n't in the deal that it should pass. Well, any way, when it did n't pass, why, folks just climbed over each other to get a chance to pay that dog-tax. Not only folks in town, either; don't you think it. There was lots of 'em from out of town that sent her money, and some of the nicest letters you ever seen. She could've paid the tax on five hundred dogs, if she'd wanted to. Why, only as late as last week Mrs. Daley got eleven dollars in letters."

"Mrs.—who?" Windham shouted.

"Mrs. Daley," Ike repeated. "Great Scott, Billy! You don't mean you did n't know that, either? Why, lord o' love! We've been married more than two weeks—the same day I opened up here, it was.

Say, I don't mind telling you, but of course it's on the Q. T.: it was the tax that folks paid on that dog that helped me to start this place. You can't think how grateful I am to you boys for your help. I'd 'a' been down on my luck if you fellows had n't been so good-natured about it all. Better let me put a little claret in that lemonade, or mix you a cocktail. I'm a master hand with a cocktail."

But Windham replaced his untasted lemonade upon the bar and went out without a word.



## THE SILENT ONE

BY THEODOSIA GARRISON

THE moon to-night is like the sun  
 Through blossomed branches seen;  
 Come out with me, dear Silent one,  
 And trip it on the green.

"Nay, Lad, go you within its light,  
 Nor stay to urge me so.

"T was on another moonlit night  
 My heart broke long ago."

Oh, loud and high the pipers play,  
 To speed the dancers on;  
 Come out and be as glad as they,  
 Oh, little Silent one.

"Nay, Lad, where all your mates are met  
 Go you the self-same way.  
 Another dance I would forget  
 Wherein I, too, was gay."

But here you sit long day by day  
 With those whose joys are done;  
 What mates these townfolk old and gray  
 For you, dear Silent one?

"Nay, Lad, they're done with joys and fears;  
 Rare comrades should we prove;  
 For they are very old with years,  
 And I am old with love."



## WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND  
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

### DISGRACES

**M**R. CARNEGIE has said that it is a disgrace to die rich. Chemist Wiley, chief of the "poison squad" at Washington, remarked in Cleveland recently that it is a disgrace to die young. The former simply promulgates an ethical dictum; the latter rests his case on the simple but comprehensive scientific grounds that, in order to live long, it is only necessary to know how. Dr. Wiley himself has firmly determined to live to the ripe old age of one hundred years—and so far he has made good.

Now is the time for those philosophers who say that ignorance is the only sin to step up and circulate this testimonial from Dr. Wiley. Unfortunately, Dr. Wiley only alludes to the knowledge of the laws of hygiene, diet, and surgery. The gospel of "know how," however, is somewhat broader. To live long we must not only know how to find the time to learn the laws he speaks of with so much confidence, but we must have the prescience to distinguish between two or more conflicting laws proclaimed by different people with equal vehemence; and then we must know how to procure the things the said laws prescribe—which opens up the whole question of jobs, wages, cost of living, and the rest. We must know further how to dodge trolley-cars and automobiles; how to foresee and avoid railroad wrecks, and other acts of Providence perpetrated through his capitalistic "trustees." Not only must we know the proper kind of food, but we must know that the pure food law is in good working order. Not only must we know

that pure water is wholesome, but we must know how to control the political machine that controls the water-works. Then there are the constitution which prevents the feeding of hungry school-children in New York and elsewhere, and an occasional war, all of them staunch allies of the Grim Reaper. Shall we call these disgraces—especially the noble act of dying for one's country—or shall we distinguish them as the exceptional misfortunes which prove the rule? Perhaps we may hear from the Doctor further when the death rate of the present poison squad is tabulated.

In the meantime, Mr. Carnegie has much the better of the argument, for those who take his advice and die poor will greatly outnumber those who take Dr. Wiley's advice and moor their barks at "Pier 100."

ELLIS O. JONES

### FEDERAL SERVICE AS AN OCCUPATION

**S**HOULD a young man seriously contemplate entering the federal service at this time? That is a problem which confronts many, the more so because under the civil service rules one is not obliged to rely on personal influence to get or retain a position.

The answer to this question cannot be given categorically. It all depends upon the young man himself. For those who have little ambition and very moderate abilities, the service offers the average reward. Those who have tolerable abilities, a good deal of energy, and perseverance will make a mistake in getting on Uncle Sam's pay-roll, for the reason that it is so hard to get off.

Probably the extraordinary career of Secretary of the Treasury Cortelyou has done more than anything else to stimulate young men to enter the service. A few years ago Mr. Cortelyou was a stenographer; now he is even mentioned as a candidate for the Presidency. Ergo, every young man has a similar opportunity. Of course there are always opportunities, but, aside from Mr. Cortelyou's unquestioned abilities, he was fortunate in many respects. For instance, if President Cleveland had not been in need of a stenographer on one occasion, his rise would hardly have been so rapid.

The government employs an enormous number of people, and generally at salaries below those paid in commercial life. As a rule, the hours are short and the work not difficult; but the sense of security is apt to lull ambition to rest, and decrease the efficiency of the worker. There are many men earning a thousand dollars a year or less in the service to-day who if they had been thrown on their own resources might have done a great deal better for themselves.

The postal department has the largest number of employees, and

these are the hardest worked; yet unless in executive positions, the maximum salary is twelve hundred dollars a year, and the great mass never get anywhere near that sum until late in life. Indeed, most of them never get above a thousand.

The great corporations employ a greater number of men than the government, pay better salaries, and offer wider opportunities. The Carnegie Company has developed more successful business men than the government, and will continue to do so. In every corporation there is a constant and insistent demand for men of ability, and no rule of any kind protects the laggards. And this is, in the main, a good thing; for the young man needs the stimulus which comes from the knowledge the unless he keeps up to the mark he will be discharged, and that unless he improves he will never be promoted.

Uncle Sam is a steady paymaster and a lenient employer, but he is not given to developing character. The most commendable thing he does in this line is to provide employment for thousands of women who receive better than the average commercial pay, and are protected in a way that is not always possible elsewhere. The government service is not intended as a last refuge for derelicts or incompetents, and yet those are the ones who receive the most benefits. Under ordinary circumstances, none others should apply.

JOSEPH M. ROGERS

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## A PROLOGUE TO THE OPERA

WE were about to start for the opera when, irritated by an ineffectual struggle with the German of the libretto, my Uncle broke in with:

"In Buda-Pesth the Ring of the Nibelung is sung in Hungarian, and so the listening Magyar knows why Wotan's anger is kindled against his daughter. In Paris the *Midinette* whom chance has favored with an opportunity to attend the opera understands Leonora's perturbation for her troubadour, because it is expressed in the tongue she hears daily. In Berlin the good housewife, a regular attendant at the opera, knows all about that sad coquette Carmen, her soldier, and her toreador, because, although the original libretto is in French, the singers are declaiming in the speech used by the good *Frau* in daily converse with her green-grocer. It is only with us that the lyric drama is sung in a foreign language, known to but a small proportion of the listeners."

"So much the better," declares my Scotch Aunt, who is proud of her descent from John Knox. "If folk insist upon going to the opera, they had better not know what it is about. The story is always immoral, excepting, of course, 'Lucia di Lammermoor.' That was taken from Sir Walter Scott."



No one ever argues with my Scotch Aunt—at least, not more than once. We have all had our initial experience.

“What difference does it make?” drawls Cousin Philip, whose speech is more lethargic than his thought. “If you don’t know what the singers are trilling about, you are not troubled by the inanities of the librettist—and your librettist is usually a sorry dramatist. Your mind is soothed and your imagination stimulated. You sit there and make up your own story. Ten to one it’s better than the composer’s.”

Here Polly, our little guest from the country, breaks in with: “I’ve only been to the opera once—to hear ‘Aïda.’ I did n’t think about the words at all. It was the glorious pictures that I loved: the procession, the dances, the trumpet chorus, the Nile by moonlight, the gates of Thebes.”

“That is just it,” argues Philip. “Opera is orally only an appeal to the senses and the emotions. It is far from the loftiest form of drama, which makes you think. Opera merely makes you feel.”

“It made me feel disgusted,” says my Scotch Aunt.

She once saw “The Queen of Sheba,” and has never forgotten—nor forgiven—the ballet.

“Grant that it makes one feel,” says my Uncle. “My emotion will not lose its poignancy when I hear Tannhäuser, waking from the sensualities of the Hörselberg siren, and homesick for the simpler delights of his own Wörthburg, cry out in words that I can understand: ‘The nightingale I hear no more!’ And those interminable recitatives in ‘Don Giovanni’ would not get on my nerves if the loquacity of that merry rogue Leporello, and the blandishments of his suave master, came bubbling forth in English.”

“They are more convincing and less embarrassing in Italian,” softly insists Cousin Philip. “It is the very tongue for an intrigue. Your English is too straightforward for these gentlemen.”

“Well, there’s ‘La Bohème.’ Why not call it simply ‘Bohemia’? The impoverished students, shivering in their cold attic in the Latin Quarter, burn up Rudolph’s drama to warm themselves, while they indulge in a running comment alive with wit and humor that could be translated into English without losing its savor. And when Hansel and Gretel, lost in the gloomy forest on the Ilsenstein, kneel down to say their prayers under that big fir tree, I am sure the little song would lose none of its pathos if I understood the very words that tell all about the fourteen angels who guard the two children in their version of ‘Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep.’”

My Aunt is growing restless—she has not had much chance to speak to-night.

“It is time we are off to the opera,” she says. “It is a hard climb to our seats.”

"Yes," says Cousin Philip, "and I wish I knew some language more potent than English to express my Alpine feelings as I climb."

As we start off, I am compelled to smile. They may deny their longing to hear the opera in English as much as they please, but every one of them has come within the last day or two to borrow my well-thumbed English version.

ROBERT GILBERT WELSH

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## MODERN NATURE STUDY DISCLOSES "NATURE FAKERS"

**P**ERHAPS the years I have spent in the haunts of the feathered game and the small fur-bearers will be sufficient excuse for my saying a word on this most unpleasant topic.

It seems at first almost impossible to believe that any one who has made a study, even a partial one, of the quiet, shy, greedy, silent, elusive birds and animals, could make the initial mistake of crediting them with sentiments that belong exclusively to man.

Not once in all my observations have I seen any bird or beast display any knowledge of the healing art, unless it were the act of licking a sore place by the dog, a domestic animal. The broken legs of the mink and the muskrat, after they have been trapped, are ruthlessly bitten or twisted off by these animals. The broken wings of the ducks—poor crippled birds, how many I have seen dragging out a miserable existence in far hidden places, waiting unknowingly for the "freeze-up" that would drive them forth to the open places and speedy death by man or bird or beast—do not mend, although I have seen them dab them softly with the bill. A broken leg of a shore bird never knits, as the wounded creature continually irritates it by dragging itself through the thick cover. The wild ducks display a certain amount of care in dispelling any water that has soaked through the plumage and down, and carefully oil the place, dabbing the bill on the oil-teat and wiping it back and forth over the wetted place. Cruelty seems to be one of the characteristics of the wild fowl, as they usually drive away from them any member of the flock that has an injured leg or a broken wing.

The main characteristics of all the varieties of the species I have watched are greed and selfishness, especially among the males. With the exception of the Great Northern Diver, who takes upon himself the care of the lately hatched young, all the males of the ducks, the rail, the sandpiper, the plover, leave to the female all or nearly all the nest-building, her own food-gathering, and the care and protection of the growing flock. The male muskrats gather together near the banks and feast while the females build the spring house in the marsh,

a rather nice adjustment of temperamental balances, not having tried to purchase Paris, dispose of Chicago, match the Sultan for his harem with green blinds, nor inflict upon his future the pains of early error. Indeed, had conditions allowed Taine to persevere in the manner of mild excellence which characterized his conduct until some time after his arrival in Kentucky, he would have been like those happy nations of hypothesis which have no history.

Look, for instance, at his reason for studying medicine. He declared that a man of this twentieth century had no license to live and move and speak in the midst of valuable men unless he had perfected himself in some one calling; not only perfected himself theoretically, but made a financial success. "When I have done what other men without fortune are compelled to do, then I shall feel that I have the right to rove and delve in unproductive affairs to my heart's content. No man shall ever be able to say to me that because I have money I have failed to make good on his own grounds."

Note the thoroughness with which he carried out his undertaking. He fitted his offices in Cabron with all the conveniences and accessories of his craft and deposited one hundred dollars in a Cabron bank, declaring, "I shall live on that and my practice until I have made a success—or starve to death!"

The Kentucky winter was on. Taine stood at the window of his operating-room. It was the afternoon of the third day, and he was virgin to patient of any sort. A drizzling rain was falling, just cold enough to make it precarious to the health. As it was Saturday, the streets were filled with marketing countrymen and steaming mules. It was possible to distinguish the Cabronites from the state-builders of the surrounding hills, although neither class was well-dressed. In the feminine fragments scattered here and there through the throng, Taine searched for beauty. He was looking for verification of the statement that had been drummed into his head since a child, anent the superior qualities of the Kentucky women and the Kentucky horses.

Cabron was a local option town. Taine learned this after he had leased his office; not that it would have made any difference, but an illusion was broken nevertheless. The horses now in evidence in the streets of Cabron were winter-coated and too bedraggled by the drizzle to be judged from a second-story window. The ladies—they were winter-coated and rain-worried. Taine did not want to be hasty in his judgment. He had come to Cabron to live, and he regarded the street with hope, rather than with the quick-conclusioned scepticism of a transient.

Suddenly his heart leaped with unselfish joy. One of those rare creatures which brighten the annals and make the reputation of any community appeared directly across the street. She was the best of

anywhere, a joy to look upon; and standing beside her was a huge young male person, of finely cut cloth and figure, splendid of shoulder and goodly of smile. There was either a flaw in Taine's window-pane or something the matter with the giant's nose, but this was a secondary consideration. The woman was flawless. Taine felt much warmer toward Kentucky and called his servant from the back room.

"Jim," he said, "do you happen to know that couple across the street?"

"Yassah," said Jim. "Dat dah am Miss Leila Briadridge an' Mistah T'hune Glossop. Dey ol' families hyah, sah, an' Mistah Glossop, he am a doctor man, lahk yoh-all, sah."

"Oh," said Taine. He had noted the much-frequented stairway across the street, and the gilded sign surmounting, "Terhune Glossop, M.D."

"And the lady, Jim," he questioned presently—"is she about to become——" He halted, reflecting that even in his enthusiasm curiosity ill became a gentleman. But Jim had caught the trend.

"Ah reckon, Mistah Doctah."

The pair across the street parted with seeming levity and understanding. Taine was lost in meditation, his eyes trailing the quick grace of the feminine figure as it disappeared behind the vehicles a little further up the street. Then it was borne to him that there was a step upon his own stairway. Patient or not, it was his first nibble, and he awaited the issue, moistening with excitement.

An old man entered—a strangely impressive old man, roughly but cleanly attired, very tall and clear-eyed. His age was manifested in the pallor of the skin rather than in the lines of years; and what at first glance seemed emaciation had the look of mere leanness upon closer scrutiny. Again, the whiteness of the beard bespoke an old man, but there was no quaver of voice, crook of figure, nor slowness of gait to carry out the impression.

"I am Jared Lensing," the caller said, and he added thoughtfully, as if he had heard of the other from a foreign source, "And so this is Dr. Taine?"

Taine bowed and inquired if there was something he could do. It appeared that there was a possibility of some slight derangement which made an examination advisable. From the beginning, Taine apprehended nothing serious, and in the interval of work was able to find not the slightest organic lesion; indeed, he was astonished to discover in this man of seventy the rhythm and vitality of a budding athlete one-fourth as old. In the latter part of the work the patient sat perfectly rigid, eyes closed, the breathing scarcely perceptible. Taine touched the man's shoulder at last.

The eyelids fluttered and there was a slight quiver of the facial

nishings of his reception-room were graceful and elegant. He occupied an entire upper suite; his sleeping-chamber adjoined, and he took pleasure in making the whole artistic according to his state of growth. In spite of all these initial details, so adequately covered, he did not get the patients.

The hundred-dollar surplus had been broken.

Now, across the street was the young doctor, Terhune Glossop. Taine did not need the stimulus afforded in watching how young Glossop was getting the business. In fact, the other was inaugurating a career of success that should leave him free to retire a young man, provided that he husbanded his resources. Taine had reason to believe that Glossop was but an ordinary minister of medical affairs, and also that he was a fine young Kentuckian. There was absolutely no malice in his heart toward his rival. He had the graciousness to believe that there was room for two at the top.

His hate on this June day, as he looked out of the window, was for Cabron, and Cabron's system of patronage. Glossop was a native of satisfactory lineage, and his town had arisen to serve him when he returned from school. Taine liked Glossop, so far as he knew him, and hated Cabron, her ways, streets, complacency, aristocracy, Browning classes, mules, men, mice and women. He indulged in the heretical remark that intrinsic worth does not win for a man, but pull.

Now, it must be explained at this point that Taine was all out of perspective. He was only twenty-eight, wherein it is easy to consider oneself of such importance that the world will stop its traffic to conspire against an individual. Then again he had not been taking sufficient exercise; and he had been reading Hindoo metaphysics to such a degree that his mental digestive-fluids had all been used to assimilate splendid concepts regarding protoplasm and planetary chains. In a word, not having the balance of the day's work, he should have kept himself from getting stale by many tablets of humor and recreation, which he failed to do. His practice was not bringing him in quite enough to pay his rent and board. Consequently, when his hundred dollars was gone, he must starve or quit—unless something happened.

Finally, he carried about the rankling thought that he could attract all the practice he could handle, merely by allowing Cabron and the banks of Cabron to find out that he was a millionaire.

The sight of a woman across the street in the sunlight pulled him at length out of all these thoughts. She halted before Glossop's stairway with an uncertain gesture, abandoned the idea of going up, then crossed the street hurriedly. It was the figure Taine had always admired, the girl he had seen first with Terhune Glossop six months before. In amazement he hearkened now to her light quick tread upon his own stairs. As she paused at the door of the reception-room,

he strode forth with business-like celerity from the rear apartment. He had seen her only from a distance before. All the details which the distance had covered proved to be fitted to his own ideals. It was the moment of a lifetime.

"One of my hounds bit me," she said quietly. "At least, his teeth wounded my arm. The fault was all mine."

"If you will sit down, please, I shall see what can be done about it," said Taine.

And then he became just a workman, and the burden of the days ceased to gnaw. Taine found an ugly laceration upon the wrist, closer examination showing the radial artery to be slightly torn. There was not time to administer an anæsthetic, since the band about the fore-arm but imperfectly allayed the hemorrhage. Deftly he picked up the severed tissues and applied an electric cautery to the whole surface. When this work was done, and he was putting on the bandage, it occurred to Taine to marvel at the girl's nerve. No whimper had come from her; and yet the red-hot loop and the stitches must have caused messages of havoc to fly from the wound to the brain.

Taine liked Cabron better; liked Kentucky better. His admiration for the individual was unfeigned. Her face was deathly white, and he gave her a stimulant, bidding her rest for awhile.

"You are very brave indeed," he said, "and I am glad I shall not have to hurt you any more."

"So am I," she said faintly.

She arose after a moment, saying that she had told no one of her accident, and that her mother might worry, finding her gone. Taine regarded her now with unprofessional eyes. He wondered how he could have been so ruthless—wondered if she had come to him because the man across the street could not have found it in his heart to hurt her.

"Come back to-morrow morning for a new dressing," he said.

"Yes, doctor," she answered, and was gone.

Taine took his old stand at the window and stared out upon the dusty, shadowy street, but his hate did not come back. The twilight had deepened and he was preparing to take a walk before supper, when Terhune Glossop came in hastily.

"Hello, doctor!" he said. "Did n't I see aright this afternoon—about Miss Briadridge coming here? I've been busy and could n't get away before. My interest, you understand, is purely unprofessional, sir."

"Yes," Taine replied curiously; "Miss Briadridge was here."

Glossop dropped into a chair. "What was the trouble?"

Taine explained and the other groaned. "I could n't have done it—to her!" Glossop said, with a shudder. "And yet I would have

To a great many good men that last sentence of Taine's would have come merely as an amenity of speech. Inasmuch as he meant exactly what he said, and deranged the tenor of his life to carry out his promise, Taine is peculiar.

Miss Briadridge came to his office twice more. The healing was instant and entire. The idleness into which he relapsed was even harder to bear than before; and, strangely enough, his mind seemed to have lost for the time the rhythm and sense of the occult. Lady Thoroughbred enthroned herself, and the ethereal images of his old concentrations lay broken about her.

The little volume which Jared Lensing, his first patient, left behind, had led to more and more books—Blavatsky, Swedenborg, the Christian and the Eastern mystics. He read our own Emerson with new, strange light. Taine did not realize how deeply the trend of his thought and the manner of his life had been affected. The old man had not come again; his prophecies were but vaguely recalled; the whole episode was but one of the background shadows of Taine's mind, but the fact remains that he had entered into a new world from that day.

And now he had come back from that world to the haunt of a woman, whom he had had the temerity to name Lady Thoroughbred. Moreover, he had promised to help another man win this woman, who had aroused in his own heart undreamed emotions, a formidable passion. In a single afternoon Leila Briadridge and Terhune Glossop, Kentuckians, had entered his office and his life. From an ascetic, he had become a man of matter—a lover and the friend of a lover—of a single woman. The stuff of fearful wreckage was contained in the situation.

Taine did not come to a full realization until after the final call of Miss Briadridge. It was getting dark. He paced the office with sweat upon his brow and a tumult in his heart. With all the intensity of will, he swore unto himself that he would put the woman out of mind forever, and be the man's friend. Yet the moment he relaxed the furious tension, Lady Thoroughbred swept back with a flash of color into the arena of his mind.

### III

A FEW mornings later, Taine was surprised to receive an invitation to dine with Professor Briadridge and his family. He accepted gladly, for certain reasons, and with a tremulous sense of doubt on account of other circumstances. It was the first concession from upper Cabron; in fact, the first notice of his presence that the Kentucky aristocracy had deigned to give.

Professor Briadridge was representative. He was one of Cabron's best beloved. Both a barber and a Baptist preacher of Taine's acquaint-

ance had declared the professor to be among the finest of living men. It was common property that he was the state's master of mathematics and that he loved the old British poets. Glossop had said that he was "a grand but a pent man," but Glossop was stung at the time. It was furthermore witnessed that the town clock might be adjusted by the professor's uprisings and sittings-down, and that the name of Briadridge was attached to certain papers which had made Kentucky a state.

At all events, Taine put on his evening wear for the first time since he came to Cabron. It was plain that he had not grown any heavier. His thoughts took a rueful turn as he reflected what his aspirations had been as he had placed the garments, new and perfect, into his case and set out for the field of his career. After the ease and gentility which came over him as he dressed, his mind presently began to chafe under this new complication in the shape of Glossop.

Why was he not allowed to play with this romance which had come to him? Not to win the woman, for he had thought not to marry; but to treasure the story that mellows the man. He might have grown larger and gentler through the processes of affection, he reflected tenderly, and builded a virgin ideal to hallow his days.

It was a six-pillared Colonial, the home of the Briadridges, set fully two hundred yards back from the street. The lights were turned on at six, just as he veered into the gravel walk. The beauty of the house and grounds stimulated Taine. Professor Briadridge greeted him warmly and immediately led the way out to dinner, where the ladies were waiting. The mother was a fragile woman with eyes that nestled at once into the visitor's confidences. He could not remember having met any one who drew him so quickly by the heart as this delicate, low-voiced, warm-hearted lady.

Yet Taine could not quite forget at first that he was being weighed; that his manner was being judged, his face and physique examined, and his mental capacity measured. After this night, he supposed that he would be courted or dropped beyond redemption. Here was Cabron, the essence. Here was culture in the father; heart in the mother; and culture, heart, and beauty in the young woman. To-morrow the decision would go forth from the professor to his colleagues; from the mother to the first-water families; from Miss Leila to her "beautiful companions." Up in his office in the next ten days he would catch the reverberations. If practice did not come, it would be a significant sign that Cabron did not approve.

While he rebelled against the system, he refused to be dismayed by it. Physically and facially, Taine was imposing; as good-looking, in fact, as a man dares be who loves the friendship of men. He, too, had come from a family nicely adjusted in its social and internal relations—a family that had given him poise and character, a brain



make his character a dear part of my life. He has aspired to enter my family, sir. To leave the companionship of the woman he seeks to marry for that of Dub Bowen and his crowd, militates against the future happiness of my daughter, her mother, and myself. Personally, I am not ill-pleased because Terhune has encountered what he calls his 'pride.' Pray let us join the ladies, my dear doctor."

The more Taine thought about the professor's remarks in this direction, the more he felt his own rebuke. It was plain, indeed, that the name of Terhune Glossop was an indelicacy to Miss Leila's father, who was not only a very gentle but a very determined man. It was equally plain that Professor Briadridge was pent, bound in the ethics of Cabron, as Terhune Glossop had said, but for the very human and broad purpose of making it hard for that young man to get back into the graces of the family. Taine guessed that Glossop had not hurt his cause for the first time.

And now a word about Taine's own point of view. He felt that he was doing Glossop a vivid wrong, because his brain held a constant picture of Leila Briadridge in her most enchanting poses. It was not only to-night, in her home, but in all the late days, that she had come to be the very flavor of all his thoughts. This was yellow treachery to the man whom he had promised to befriend. Since, however, he had not given way to the woman's attractions, not even acknowledged them in his own brain, but fought to the death with their every encroachment, he was not yet prepared to go to Glossop, withdraw his allegiance, and declare his rivalry. His talk to Professor Briadridge in Glossop's defense was the struggle of that which he deemed within himself still to be clean, and therefore the impatience of the professor made only a surface mark.

Miss Leila and her mother were in the sitting-room, under a reading-lamp; the latter for fancy-work purposes, the girl with a book. It struck Taine now, as it had many times before during the evening, that Miss Leila had no appearance of a woman whose heart was breaking. Conversation became animated, until the professor was called to his study by the needs of a student. After that, as if the responsibilities of her day were ended, Mrs. Professor relaxed into the daintiest, most cultivated series of dozes that Taine had ever had the pleasure of attending.

"I imagine that Madame Duprez in 'The Treasure of Franchard' could nap like that—prettily, with silence and color," Taine whispered, as they drew their chairs over toward the grate.

The weather was cool for June, and there had been a rain in the afternoon. A huge lump of coal was just glowing enough to keep alive.

"To think," responded Miss Leila, "that in twenty-five or thirty

years I shall be like that, nodding under the evening lamp with my knitting. Only I shall be stout and placid, starting up every little while to add my comment to some conversation which has been folded and tucked away moments before. And then I shall snore."

Taine shook with low laughter. The thought filled him with mirth that this fair, lithe girl should ever become a quaint ample figure nodding under a dim lamp. She smiled at him queerly, and he saw her perfect teeth in the fire-light. In fear of himself, he brought up the subject of Terhune Glossop.

"I suppose a fatherly or brotherly spirit would become me at this moment," he said, when the topic was in hand, "but I cannot summon either. And yet I feel deeply for him."

He told her how the big-hearted fellow had appealed to him, and how Terhune Glossop had forgotten his own sorrow to offer assistance to his brother-physician who was faring ill in business. Miss Leila stared at the fire.

"I can't believe that there is any fundamental wrong in him," Taine added. "The act of letting a professional gambler win one's week-end earnings, when one can afford to lose, is not a deadly sin, not a grievous one—from our standpoint—though it may have a wicked look from the standpoint of our elders. Terhune Glossop has been away to school and college. He has heard big cities throbbing about his ears. He has felt the restless whisperings from the lower stratum of packed life. Vitality is very powerful within him. He cannot use it all here in this still, white community. His work, though he works hard, does not make him glad to rest at night. Hours with you are all he needs, but they pass very quickly, and when they are ended Cabron offers nothing but bed or Dub Bowen. He said to me, 'Would you make an apology to Professor Briardridge, if you felt that you had done no wrong?' I told him I would not, and told him, Miss Briardridge, that if the opportunity ever offered I should try to make you look at the error—from a man's standpoint."

Brave as had been Taine's effort, a woman does not like this sort of thing. Especially, she does not like it from a man who has interested her; and if she is a woman of ignited faculties, she knows that she is not ornamental while seeing things from a man's standpoint. Miss Leila seized the poker firmly in her right hand, and began to devastate the huge lump that should have lasted all night. The room was already warm.

"Dr. Taine," she said jerkily, between short-arm jolts, "I have known Terhune Glossop since I was a little girl. He was a big, lovable boy—as now. If a woman did n't love him too well, he would make the woman happy—in streaks. His latest escapade is not a matter of life or death. To those to whom my life is welded"—she pointed with the

red-tipped poker toward the study and toward the dozing figure under the lamp—"it means the added error which calls down catastrophe. To me it means a lack of tenderness which a woman needs, inasmuch as he did not go up to Cincinnati for his relaxations—or some place large enough not to make gossip of his doings. . . . One day when I was a little girl, Terhune Glossop struck me because I would not be his horse. I loved him just the same the next day, but my father never forgave him. There might come a time when Terhune Glossop might strike his playmate again—if she—if she would n't be his horse!"

She slammed the poker into the brass frame, and leaned back into her chair, bright-cheeked and panting.

"Leila—I say, Leila!" exclaimed Mrs. Professor, starting up in her chair. "Whatever are you doing to that poor fire this June night?"

"Oh, I do hate to see anything doddle along like that fire was doddling!" Miss Leila answered.

#### IV

Taine arose. The root of his every hair was prickling with heat. The moment was large with mirth and pain. He had seen the heart of a woman, as never before in all his days. He loved her furiously, but without the faith of fruition. The boy, the man, the soul, the flesh, of him cried out for this maid. He heard his own lips speaking commonplaces. He paid his devoirs to the mother, and his hand closed lightly upon the slender fingers of the girl. The front door closed upon him, and he was alone with the biggest thing that had ever befallen.

For hours he walked the streets, in every direction as far as the pavements extended. It was a cool, breezy night, soft with rain that would not fall, starless, rich with earthiness. His senses were keen as a wild animal's. He smelled the hemp in the meadows, smelled the rain in the air, the drugs and groceries and paints from the various locked stores that he passed. He heard the light winds in the wires and locust boughs, horses stamping in the far stables, the step of the night-watch at the other end of Main Street, the cry of a child behind the shutters. His fingers were clenched, his lips dry, his veins dilated.

He heard her laugh at the dinner table; saw her bend to turn down the reading-lamp as her mother dozed; saw her poking the fire tense-armed; saw her fire-lit eyes. Every movement and word of hers came back to haunt him. Quick as death his heart had burst all the bonds of self-sufficiency.

He walked by the great, still house which held her, sleeping. Two squares away, the court-house clock struck two. The silence was so complete and his nerves so vibrant that he could catch, through the

damp air, the creak of the hammer as it fell upon the bell. There was a light over a Main Street drug-store which he had not noted before. It was on the third-floor, in the rear, and the window was open. Voices reached him below in the street. A cigarette was flipped down into the road, and a man above cleared his throat. Then Taine heard plainly a harsh, drawingl voice:

"I'll just see that tew dollahs, suh, an' experiment three moh in a similah co'se!"

It was Dub Bowen. Taine shuddered, and turned to his rooms, grown suddenly tired and cold.

When he awoke, Jim was cleaning up the laboratory, busy with the ashes of yesterday. Jim was unusual—a bulky, sad-looking darky, who meditated much upon the sorrows of his race, and heaven to come. He was studying for the ministry, and not infrequently when Taine's lamp was put out at night and the books and pipes put away, Jim's candles still illumined the Bible page and the black, rapt face. And Taine only used six or seven hours after midnight for sleeping purposes. Jim's dream of power was to hurl forth such volume and voice of accusation that the sin-smitten colored folk would grovel and moan for deliverance. He had tried it once on the mountain "niggers" in the ruin of an old moonshine distillery, and glory had waited on him. Since then Jim's eyes had gleamed, and all he needed, by his own word, was "a li'l moh polish, Mistah Doctah, a li'l moh polish," to command a Cabron colored mission. It is important that he believed Taine all a white man can be in honor and gentleness.

"Lawd-a-mahnty, Mistah Doctah, yoh-all is suah in tahm dis mahnin'! Must hab gone a-baid uhly last night," he said, fully aware that Taine's rest had been cut in two.

"Rather early, Jim."

"Yoh is lookin' febrish, sah. Is yoh-all well?"

"Quite well, thank you, Jim?"

"Yoh-all is de cleanes' man!" Jim went on. "Der was n't nothin' in dese rooms needin' detention dis a-mahnin'." The child-new mind was struggling with weighty problems—and words.

Taine was looking out into the street. The bus had just come in from the depot, having met the morning train from the north. Terhune Glossop stepped out at the crossing, but came toward Taine's offices instead of entering his own. Taine greeted him, with sensations altogether new to his mind. The other replied curtly.

"Send that nigger out of here. I've got something to say to you, Taine," he added.

Jim was wiping the glazed doors of the cabinets. It was evident that Glossop had been drinking.

"Jim will be through in a moment, Glossop," Taine said coldly.

The Kentuckian strode up to him and inquired in a suppressed voice: "You were over to her house last night—what do you mean?"

"Sit down and tell me what you mean, doctor," Taine inquired.

"I mean that a man who would take advantage of another in trouble deserves to get a hole through some useful organ, and Kentucky is n't so — effete but that he sometimes gets it."

"You are disappointing this morning, doctor," Taine said, without irritation. "I believe we had better postpone this little communion, as I think I saw a patient climbing your stairs a moment ago."

Glossop expressed his disregard for business in rather brutal English. Meanwhile the woman who had climbed the Glossop stairway, finding the offices closed, was making her way across toward the rival.

"You'll have to excuse me, at least, doctor," Taine observed. "I have n't reached the stage of growth wherein I can share such abandon. If I am not mistaken, as Sherlock Holmes used to say, the lady is coming here."

Glossop proved politic enough not to care to be seen at this hour in his fellow practitioner's office, and accordingly passed out the rear way. Taine was busy throughout the forenoon, but the second session of the day was unbroken by any soothing task, and he was chained to the thinking rack. The unworthy thought came, was banished, but insinuated itself again—that if Terhune Glossop insisted upon quarrelling with him, it would kill his own promise of fealty; and he, Taine, if Nature ordained, might win the woman.

No land in the world could have furnished a day of rounder beauty than this Kentucky day of June. The darkies just had to sing and whistle and laugh aloud, and their women had to swing glad and giggling through the streets. The warm air from the brilliant skies exerted a pressure upon their vitality as upon the seeds in the warmed soil. It is on such a day that a man's brain falls in love with the color and symmetry of matter, and loses the attractions of the subtler planes. Glossop came over in the twilight and sat by the open window.

"Dr. Taine," he said contritely, "can you forgive a chap who made a beast of himself in your office this morning?"

Taine extended his hand with a sinking heart. He felt himself as wax before the lovable erring human who sinned so rashly and begged to be forgiven with such courtly grace—felt himself called up from the tropic country of romance into the cool, uncolored clime of friendship. His own ardor quailed before the other's sufferings. He saw before him a man who had never been drilled to pain. The cross-fire of harsh experience was playing upon him now with violence. And it was true that this Kentuckian had the right of way to the heart of Lady Thoroughbred. The promise of aid had been given. It must

hold. Taine took a drink of water and sat down in the gloom before his caller. He spoke dully at first:

"I would n't count all things lost, if I were you, Terhune. I had a talk with the professor and Mrs. Professor last night—and with Miss Briadridge. It looks to me as if pure white conduct, hard work, and lots of good cheer might bring you back a home there. The professor, speaking frankly, is not for you, but you are not to wed the professor. I have faith in you—or I should try to put a jungle full of lions in the way of your winning—that girl!" Taine had never felt his speech go from him in such an irresponsible fashion before. "Please don't think that I talk from saintly standpoints. I carry about an animal that will not be starved. Something brought me into this case, and I can only say—that if you would write her a brave letter——"

Glossop was staring at him strangely. Taine's passion, so suddenly ignited, had made him forget that to be the other's friend he must be little more than an interested third party. The Kentuckian, however, had experienced a complete change from the mood of the morning, and it occurred to him that Taine's queer manner arose out of the situation's delicacy. He declared that he would write a letter, a brave letter, if it were in him; thanked the other with memorable warmth and departed.

The next morning there was a note from Professor Briadridge in Taine's mail. "I have been thinking deeply of the fascinating matters which you opened for me on the evening of your call," he wrote. "I wish to ask a favor of you. Will you not give a little informal talk on those subjects to a few of my choicest friends next Friday evening at the college hall, Telania? You have intellectual challengers which it is wicked to reserve all for yourself. The more I think of this idea of having you speak to us, the more it appears to me as a good idea all around; so I hope you will not deny Cabron the pleasure. Miss Leila and her mother extend their very kindest wishes."

The real purpose was obvious. The good professor approved of him, and was endeavoring to secure for his new young friend social standing and its concomitant in Cabron—professional activity. Taine disliked the ordeal, but dared not refuse. With the letter of acceptance sealed, his mind turned to the lady. Had she any part in bringing this enterprise about? What was the secret of her tremendous hold upon his thoughts and his life? He had been in the presence of beautiful women before, he thought—and just here his fancy took the whip hand: she was flower-like in delicacy, but steel-nerved; she had mind, courage, wit, and sweetness; she had ardor, a deep fountain of it (a dream told him), which had never yet overflowed to the surface. . . . But Kentucky boasted scores of beautiful women! What was this marvel of *her* personality, which so fitted itself about his heart, so

swelled his veins and played roseate and somber lights upon his mind—coloring strangely all that had been there before? Material things furnished no answer, and he turned to his Eastern philosophies.

Disturbed with fears, he entered Telania Hall three nights later. Fully fifty people were there. Professor Briadridge's choice friends were not so few as he had reckoned. The audience was largely made up of women, and the composite up-turned countenance was fitted to inspire any red-blooded speaker. What manner of food these Southern ladies eat seems not especially diverse from that of outer lands; but, in the proper fettle and plumage, they are the substance itself of freshness and fairness.

Taine did not call the Southern lady faultless, as Southern gentlemen do. He believed Kentucky wives and daughters and sweethearts to be intolerant listeners, excessive and erratic conversationalists; but he observed that they are bred in an atmosphere of chivalrous sires and sons and lovers, which is the first condition for fine blooming. The blur of misery did not waver in the faces before him; erudition had not put its dusty gray insignia there; bravado did not cheapen the manner of the mistresses, nor was their happiness dissembled. That they were the salt of the earth was so manifest that they did not take pains to point it out to an observer.

Miss Leila and her mother sat together. Terhune Glossop, impressively huge and fitted, sat apart. His presence showed that Professor Briadridge had not personally conducted the invitations. The brightest branches of old Kentucky lineage were there—a sprig of Gentry, a blossom of Breckenridge, twigs of the Lees and Woolsons and Calhouns, families of fixed traditions when the colonies were thirteen, men who had colleged in Cabron and polished in Venice and Munich, for the express purpose of breeding better horses after they returned to the lime-sweetened waters and rolling meadows of the Blue Grass.

Taine's eye was held by the broken-nosed young giant as he began. He was embarrassed, and said so. Terhune Glossop regarded him with honest pity. This appealed to Taine, put him in the very heat of his rival's heart. When he heard himself discoursing upon the priceless attainment of growing spirituality, his self-hate became almost uncontainable. Even as the larger part of his faculties warmed under the attention of the people and responded to it, certain fibres were arranging a confession to Terhune Glossop. With some sentences he felt that he was hurting himself against the element of Cabron he needed for his career, but which he had hated out of all proportion—the Orthodoxy, the tribe of commercial prayers, as he had designated them in the moments of black mood. But something that he said quite artlessly about the beautiful dreamy lives led by the mystics of Mother India took the sting away. His eyes turned to Leila Briadridge as he said:

"We, men and women, are manifesting in the critical stage of evolution, bounded beneath by protoplasm and above by solar systems. Manhood is the crucial instant—the arena of conflict between the flesh and the spirit. The result, in each individual, is growth of ineffable glory or a sinking back through a gauntlet of horrors into extinction."

He grew really fine at the close, forgetting his own passions. At the far end of the ocean of Eastern philosophy, he pictured a port which all human craft freely and safely may enter. Cabron gathered about him and thanked him unequivocally. Professor Briadridge, having vouched for him, the speaker could do no wrong, save to bore or to reveal a constitutional stupidity. Terhune Glossop was one of those who thanked him heartily, and when he had passed on, the Briadridges, who had hovered meanwhile, presented the official thanks of the assembly in terms of beauty.

"You have stormed old Cabron's heart!" whispered the professor. His wife added her own felicitations, and begged him to join a little party that was just now going over to her house for some coffee. Taine stepped out of Telania Hall with Miss Leila. In a shadow of locust trees, not far from the entrance, Terhune Glossop stood and watched them pass.

"It seems strange to me that one of our own people should stand before us with such an astonishing philosophy," the girl was saying. "And yet it seems as if I had heard it all before—somewhere."

"In other lives," Taine whispered with a laugh.

He had not seen Glossop. It was the strangest night of his career to Taine. The college grounds were full of rustlings and sharp little shadows. The moonlight was brilliant above the foliage. The man's hand touched her dress as they walked. He sensed the odor of roses which she wore upon her breast. He became as irresponsible as a wind-blown spirit.

"Do you find it hard, doctor, to live the perfectly pure life you have outlined?" Miss Leila asked demurely.

"So hard that I only touch the edge of its garment in my most exalted moments," he said.

"Tell me again why there is a seeming familiarity to me in the strange things you said," she whispered.

He wished that the voices of the people behind him were the winds of a desert. He wished that he was alone with this girl in that desert, in an oasis, far from caravan-lines, making an Eden for her out of a fountain and some date-trees and his mysterious love.

"If you have learned the lessons in other lives, they surely would seem familiar to you."

"Have I—this Inside I—lived and studied all these things before?"

"I know that I have loved you before, Leila Briadridge!"



She halted and drew back from him.

"I know that somewhere I loved you—and that you were taken from me; that I have hungered and hungered for you ages and ages, and that—oh, how I love you—"

His hand was tight upon the thick of her arm, his face leaning close. Her senses wavered; her valiant presence of mind was dazed by the suddenness of the storming. For the first time in her history, she called out for help.

"Father!"

"Yes, Leila, yes; what is it?"

"I was only going to say," she faltered, bravely righting herself—"I was only going to say that Dr. Taine suggests—as a reason for my being familiar with what he said to-night—that I have learned it all—in other lives!"

The professor could not see her face. He possibly attributed her faltering to the difficulty of expressing a subtle idea. "No less a personage than our towering Huxley declares that reincarnation is as rational a theory as any to account for the problems of man and mind and nature," he answered.

She had saved herself. She held her place beside him only to avoid the comment of the others. . . . It had been akin to a fit of madness with Taine, and the pangs of reaction crept in now. The Colonial house was ahead, with the illumined pillars. There were no words of reparation. His brain did not contain a commonplace remark to relieve the tension.

Presently he was in the sitting-room. The servants were passing refreshments, and he was trying not to look rigid, trying to answer with some freedom and courtesy the questions directed his way, but his brain was no longer a set of polished, lightning machinery. Thoughts crowded over his senses like poisonous vapors. He was the betrayer of Terhune Glossop, his friend, and he had startled a civilized girl with a barbarous wooing. Indeed, the machinery of his brain seemed to be running down, the dismantled parts bruising themselves against each other.

He heard Miss Leila's voice, but could not look at her—save when her back was turned. Just once, as he had glimpsed her eyes, he saw that they were feverishly bright. Though her voice was lower than any in the room, it silenced all others for his ears. Mrs. Professor came to him.

"Boy," she whispered, in a sweet sort of partnership-fashion, "you have been studying too hard. I want to remind you that in the usual course of events you have fifty years yet to fix your place in the Earth and your peace with God. Many men of marvellous mind have forgotten to rest. Now, Boy, we have a Harrison Chief saddle filly, coming four,

in the stable, and she is just softening for exercise. I want you to take an hour's ride every day or two. Leila has a brown saddle-mare and will go with you sometimes. I have always wanted a boy like you, and now that your mother is n't here, I'm going to mother you—make you take outdoors medicine in ponderous doses. There is a look in your eyes to-night that I knew would come, but which I did n't expect to live to see. I'll call at your office in the morning and finish my lecture."

From that moment, he loved Mrs. Professor.

The opportunity for leaving came. He parted from the professor and the guests. The mother had pressed his hand, and Miss Leila stepped forward extending her own. It was burning.

"Am I ever to be forgiven?" he whispered.

"I do not know. Good-night."

## V

ON the morning after Taine's talk at Telania Hall, Miss Leila received a letter from Terhune Glossop which she read several times. The letter was Terhune Glossop at his best; manly, not fulsome. There was mettle in it and clarity, and the big sorrow-bitten chap showed decently behind. And yet Miss Leila's heart did not rise up in answer. There was something about it all that struck her as school-boyish. The night had drawn her, for all time, away from the world which Terhune Glossop adorned and darkened. That part of her nature which once verged to the love of her old playmate had snapped back into rigidity. She felt herself stirring in a larger sphere, full of pitfalls and subtle emotions.

The vaster areas of Taine filled her mind. He had startled her cruelly. A Northern woman might perhaps have cut him from her mind. He had left her with a dread among other emotions—a dread of him more poignant than the fear of Terhune Glossop had ever been. The latter inspired a physical fear solely. Taine had struck at the roots of life. His avowal had seemed to winnow the very substance out of her heart. Its suddenness and intensity had lifted the Will out of the throne of her mind. And something far within her had answered. Here was the crux. In the burn of his passion, something deeper than her brain had sent a flaming signal back.

This was barbaric. It would have crazed her father, she reflected, to learn that she of Cabron, Kentucky, had carried down from the dim ages such a strain of reversion—that the love of man and woman could mean anything to his daughter but a repressed felicity.

The final reading of Terhune's letter made her conscious of a rising sense of impatience. A mirror told her just now that she was pale and that there were dark lines under her eyes. Her lips were

dry, but very red, and there was a glow in her eyes that had never been there before. The whole reflection frightened her. This stranger, Taine, had made her look like this.

Now, Miss Leila was a steady-nerved young woman, by no means accustomed to make herself miserable by brooding over matters beyond her moulding. And yet that moment, as she searched her mind carefully, she found that the one thing of all which she desired to do was to sit behind her own locked door and *think*. She wanted to live over that cyclonic moment of last night, to repeat the words of his, and measure the silences which followed. It was this brooding, she realized, which had so altered her face overnight. The tingling desire to continue it signified a breach in her moral equipment; or else it signified that this stranger held a mastery over her. She preferred to acknowledge the former and to reinforce the weakness, losing sight of the fact that the conditions amounted to the same thing.

And so, forcefully, she drew her mind back to Terhune Glossop, who had begged the boon of a ride and a talk with her. She could do no less for him; and certainly there was no better way to check this new ruin. Five minutes later, she had hung up the receiver in the sitting-room below, and the appointment was made. Mrs. Professor was regarding her queerly.

"Leila, what is the meaning of this impulse?" she inquired. "You don't care anything about Terhune."

"Don't be too sure, mother. Terhune has written me a letter. He seems to be at his winsomest."

"It will make your father ill—if you ride with him this afternoon."

"It can't be so bad as that," Miss Leila said. "You may tell him—if he becomes very ill—that the ride means nothing; that Terhune's letter was so pitiful——"

"I could have told him that without hearing from you, but father does not see so clearly as I do."

"And how clearly do you see, Little Mother?" Leila questioned, and she caught her breath quickly.

"I see that my big girl has found a real lover—a terribly real lover," she whispered. "Still, I think I approve of him."

The girl caught up a chair and placed it before her mother.

"Sit down!" she demanded. "Now please explain to me when you began to divine things."

Mrs. Professor laughed. "Have you looked into the glass this morning? Has your mother ever been a girl?"

"Will you believe me when I tell you that I acknowledge no lover—no real lover?" she questioned hotly. "Do you know that if I married any Cabron man this week, this month, that man would be Terhune Glossop?"

"You do not need nor mean to marry this week or month, dear," the mother said cheerfully.

Miss Leila laughed in spite of herself. Of course she did not guess that her mother had called upon Taine in his office an hour before and extracted, through sheer quality of heart, a complete confession from a very miserable young man; nor guess that her mother had been able to adjust in her own mind Taine's sudden fury of passion with his cooler purpose of aiding Terhune Glossop; nor that Mrs. Professor had gladly promised to act as a man's confidante, instead of mother to the girl concerned. Miss Leila thought only that her face had betrayed her, or that possibly some word of Taine's might have reached her mother's ears the night before.

A quick thought came into the girl's mind. She would fix that face of hers. If her mother had overheard—that was irreparable—but carrying about tell-tale pallor and color, the ice and burn of a stranger's ardor, this must no longer be. Out through the summer-kitchen, Miss Leila passed in full stride straight to the kennels. She loosed the hounds, opened the pup-stalls, and the pack leaped about her glorified. The accident of days before, the wound of which was healed, had not changed her love for her pets. Then, back in the meadow, after racing with the dogs until flushed and panting, she halted at the tank where the horses and cattle drank, and splashed the troubling countenance again and again with icy spring-water. Her luncheon was an olive and a lettuce leaf, and she started outdoors again, but the mid-day was so penetratingly hot, and so marvellously drowsy and still, that she sought her own shutters, the locked door, and the most relishable poem of her acquaintance, to bide the time, and keep it free from Taine.

At four, when Terhune Glossop appeared upon his roan stallion, a high-actioned beast of faulty pedigree but invincible saddle quality, Miss Leila joined him presently on her own brown saddle-mare. They rode out together on the white Cornube pike.

"Since you telephoned this morning, Miss Leila," he said spiritedly, "I have felt that I could dig a new course for the Kentucky River and budge the Knobs bare-handed."

She saw that he had taken her message to mean that he was fully reinstated; she saw, too, that the present held ugly business, inasmuch as she must hurt him.

"I felt that I should have this last talk with you," she said unsteadily. "But, Terhune, the thing that you want—can never be."

His bridle-arm drew up and the gloved hand grew tense. The action started within her an unworthy impulse to smile at him. She could not realize that there was bigness in his love for her. This was the boy again—the boy who had struck her because she would not be

his horse. Throughout her entire being, she felt a larger and an older woman than the one who had ridden and whispered with this man before. The horses were pulled to a walk.

"You let me ride with you to tell me this?" he questioned.

"I could not tell you over the 'phone. You begged a ride with me, and I saw no reason why we should not ride together, nor why we cannot be friends."

"Leila, are you going to let a little mistake of mine—that amounts to so little—break up my life this way? Don't you know that I have felt that you were my girl since we were little tads together?"

She should have seen that there was something dangerous in his unwonied self-repression; but, instead, only the pathetic note of his question appealed to her. The truth was, she had learned only the night before what the word "man" meant to her; and with it had come the realization that she had never loved Terhune Glossop, and never could. She found herself comparing her present companion with the splendid figure on the platform at Telania Hall—the man who outlined the path of inflexible morality; and the comparison made way for the Taine, a lover, who had stepped down from the platform and in the outer shadows whispered burning words; who had called for her heart with such unblended power, that she had responded like an aroused Eve, designed so to answer in the scheme of creation.

"Terhune, that 'little mistake' forced me to understand that I did not love you in the way a wife should. Except for that, I might have gone on planning to be your wife without knowing all that a wife may be."

She should not have spoken that last sentence, but the day and the night had been so full of the stranger whose limitations she had not felt, that the restrictions of the present chafed. Terhune reached over and grasped her bridle-rein, and the brown saddle-mare was pulled up with a jerk. The man's face was mottled with anger and his full lower lip was trembling. Miss Leila paled a little, but did not lose her smile.

"Let's forget all this grown-up business, Terhune," she said cheerfully. "Let's be playmates again, out for a ride on a glorious afternoon."

"Was it Dr. Taine who showed you what a wife may be?" he asked. The savage within him was rising.

"It was Dr. Taine who championed your cause to my father and to me," she replied. There was a pleading note in her own voice, in spite of herself.

His hand darted up her bridle-rein to her wrist, and closed tightly. She felt the stocky riding-whip in her free hand. They were passing through the Knobs, four miles out from Cabron, on the Cornube pike.

The nearest house was a half-mile behind. The road was carved in the slaty hills. The brilliance of the afternoon had waned and the land was still as a desert. Miss Leila tried to control herself, but her heart was pounding with horror, inspired by the face that bent toward her.

"Was it Taine who showed you what it means to be a wife?"

Now, there was innate viciousness in the words as he repeated them. With all her sudden force, she tried to jerk her wrist free, but his grip held easily. Maddened by the touch of his strength upon her body, she struck the face above hers with the butt of her riding-whip—a crushing blow.

Glossop's rangey, high-strung beast bolted sideways as the gad swished through the air. The man's horsemanship was as thrilling that instant as his deed was despicable. Braced in his stirrups, he held fast to the girl as his mount leaped, lifting her clear from her saddle and into his arms. She screamed, but the sound was quickly smothered by the great face pressed over her lips. She did not swoon; she knew that he was senseless to pain; saw that his right cheek was disordered from her blow. He laughed and panted words. The horse beneath them was speeding like heaven's wrath up the stony pike toward Cornube. The brown mare was whinnying behind.

Miss Leila lay still in his arms, afraid that his passion might rise to murder if she fed it by resistance; and in itself resistance was useless. She was thinking that she would have slain him had there been a weapon in her hands. The courage of Confederate raiders; a heart steadied and steeled by the feuds of her fathers; a spirit never broken, never aroused until now—such was the stuff and making of the woman who lay passively for the moment in the hands of the crazed Kentuckian.

She was tainted forever—this was her thought. No matter what the physical end might be—there was destined an ugly aftermath in that she, a Kentucky woman, had been bent in the strength of a man. This act of his changed all for both of them. The thing would be known. Kentucky would never suffer him to practise again—and she would be one of those who stand apart. And as she knew Terhune Glossop, she knew that the present was his region of action, that his present madness for the burden in his arms meant more to him than career, or death by torture.

Glossop thought she had fainted. He dropped his head to her cheek and kissed her. The roan stallion raced on under his double burden.

"I thought you had blinded me, Leila," he said. "You know, you have always blinded me, but I'll be very good to you. I'll show you what it means to be a wife. You brought it all on yourself, little girl. . . . I did not dream of this wonderful ride! . . . Do you know that

it is getting dark—dark—and we are getting up into the mountains—you and I—old playmates?”

Once before, when he had been drinking, she had heard him play with words like this. The physical agony which he did not seem to sense was nevertheless manifested in his tension of brain. Ice was gathering about her heart. The fear, deeper than death, held her understanding. She did not know just how to begin her battle. . . . She opened her eyes at last. His face sickened her.

“Put me down, Terhune!” she cried. “Let me go home—alone. My horse is following. You have done a terrible thing, but I will lie for you and myself. I will tell them that we lost our way. A boy threw a stone and hurt your face. . . . Can’t you see—that to treat a woman this way—proves that you never loved her—proves that you never loved me?”

He laughed and spurred the roan. “You reason like a babe, Leila,” he answered. “It was not until you made me know that another man had pointed out to you the way to be a wife that I lost Cabron and the world. I will show you. I will make you happy. . . . No man but Terhune Glossop shall have Leila Briadridge. I would rather have you hating me than any other woman clinging to my knees. . . . I love you. I love you so that if God warned me to hold you sixty seconds and die—I should hold you until the end!”

He kissed her tightened lips and started her whole being into screaming war. Nails and fists sought his face until he was forced to drop the bridle-rein and draw the battling creature tight against his chest to save himself.

It was dark. The roan stallion had been turned from the Cornube pike into a narrow forest path in the mountains. Weakness had come over her, as if she had just awakened from a long illness. Long before, he had told her of his hunting-lodge in the thickly wooded Knobs. The weight was telling upon the gallant beast, and the mare had caught up. A drop of rain came out of the dark to touch the woman’s face.

She who had struck out so gamely for her own life and her joys of living seemed another creature, of another age. Now, in the dark, Leila Briadridge was a shivering, horrified woman who deemed herself already lost to the open bright ways of the world—one of the beings she had pitied so often—who pass to and fro, shrinking or brazen, through the whispering streets.

Large drops fell upon her face. They were making an up-trail through walnuts and beeches. In lightning and heavy rain at last, Terhune stepped down from the roan and tied him at the door of a cabin of logs. The woman was still in his arms as he caught the mare and led her around, making her fast in a shed behind. Then, as his

free hand fumbled with a key in the door, a flash of lightning showed her the figure of the sixteen-hand roan, standing drooped and ridden-out. The door opened, the spring clicked as it was shut again, and she was placed upon her feet. He found a candle, and in the first flare she saw a belt and holster, with a pistol-butt protruding, that hung from a fork of a camp-cot, at the far-end of the cabin. She sped toward it, pulled the gun free from the holster, and drew back the trigger.

At the click he turned weakly, turned upon her a face demolished. The nausea of reaction had come upon him. He smiled and sank to a bench, covering his face with his hands.

"You could n't shoot straight enough to kill your old playmate," he said dully.

## VI

TAINÉ was busy on the morning following his talk to the chosen of Cabron at Telania Hall; so busy that he had to meet Mrs. Briardridge in the reception-room, leaving a patient within. And yet their five-minutes' conversation was not without benefits and significance. Naturally self-sufficing in his miseries, Taine was not a little amazed to find himself telling Miss Leila's mother all that had happened. They had liked each other thoroughly from the beginning, and something about her pulled the truth from him. When she gave him her hand at the door, Taine was conscious of feeling somewhat better.

"My dear boy," she said, laughing softly, "I don't know of any woman who was ever lost to a man by a too tumultuous courtship—that is, I don't know of any Kentucky woman. The thing that startled Leila was that you came first as a friend of the clouded lover."

"About that—I only ask you to believe one thing," said Taine. "I meant the part when I undertook to play it. There was not an ounce of guile in me then. What I did last night is more startling to me than any one else. I had tried to put Miss Leila out of my thoughts—until Terhune Glossop won or lost. And now, in the semblance of honor, I must go to him to-day and withdraw my allegiance, telling him what I have done."

"I suppose that is the princely way," she observed, "but go to your patient now, Boy, and we will have more secrets together. All will be well, except—be careful when you talk with Terhune!"

Taine thanked Providence for plenty of work to do that day. At four in the afternoon, as he was preparing to make his call upon the man across the street, he saw the Kentuckian emerge in riding clothes. A little later his eyes were filled with the beautiful pair as they started out on the Cornube pike. There was much virtue in the fact that a stranger turned up Taine's stairway just at that juncture, requiring strenuous action to clear away a temple of pain.



It became bitterly plain that his words had turned the mind of the girl back to her old lover. This was all that Glossop could have asked. If this were the end, he need not tell Terhune—until—some time when they had all put on the coolness of years, and there were little Leilas and little Kentuckians for Taine, the lonely bachelor, to play with in the gardens of the old Colonial house.

In a melancholy fashion, when the day's work was done, Taine builded for himself the future of solitude. Work; the whitening romance ever in his heart; self-control that would make, at last, even friendship possible with Terhune's wife. And then he would go to India and sit down; study the old and perfect philosophies at first hand in still, dreamy, contemplative India. He might become a renouncer of the world, a Sannyassi wanderer, wind-bitten, sun-painted, with the wooden begging-bowl in hand and the subtlest treasures of the cosmos in his brain. . . . Why did India lure him so? he questioned in his bereavement. Why had Reincarnation become such a grippable fact to him since the coming of his first patient? Why did Karma appeal to him as the exact balance adjusted, not for a life-time but for all eternity, between cause and effect?

"For all the world, I am like the poor wall-flower maiden who turns her eyes to God since she cannot win a human lover," he concluded, and his mind did not gainsay the words. Instead, his mind pictured anew the handsome pair of Kentuckians riding out on the Cornube pike—the belle and the giant. After supper he returned from the hotel to his rooms, just as the rain began. Jim, his colored man, was studying the Bible in the laboratory.

"Good-night, Mistah Doctah. Looks 's if it might rain right smaht befoh mawnin'!"

"It does that, Jim. . . . Say, have the Briadridges always lived here in Cabron, Jim?"

"Seems lahk dey allus dun libbed hyah, sah—yassah."

"And Mrs. Briadridge's family?"

"Yassah. Ole Cabron folks—de Galadins. Mrs. Briadridge she wah a Galadin, sah—Miss Millicent Galadin—an' the mos' lobly young lady dat ebah grew in Cabron—leas'ways de cullud folks dun say so. Dey use to call Miss Millie 'de White Dove,' Mistah Doctah, cos' she wah so gentle an' so puhty an' so good. Why, dey ain't nuthin' Miss Millie would n't do foh po' folks! Dah was an old niggah died bah hisself, widout no kin t' bury him, an' what does Miss Millie do but hab huh mammy buy a fine coffin, an' hab de body buried from de big Galadin house. Yassah, we dun called dat a-lady 'de White Dove,' an' de ole niggahs call huh so yit, an' Miss Leila dey dun call 'de li'l White Dove,' Mistah Doctah."

There was something in the old tradition that pained, but which

was mighty sweet to the listener. More and more as he looked back upon Kentucky, heard the folk-lore of the Galadins and the Briardridges; as he rode over the splendid grazing hills, looking the old state in the face—the better he could understand the forces which had been brought together to make such a woman as Leila Briardridge, the woman who allowed him to stitch and cauterize a painful wound without a whimper, and who was brave enough to keep her own counsel when he had descended with his avowal like a scourge upon her maidenhood.

As often happens on the eve of eventualities, Taine felt very kindly this night toward his good servant. "Jim, how are you coming along in your studies?" he inquired.

"Right smaht, sah. Ah's comin' in de Spirit, Mistah Doctah. Cullud folks dey don' care much which am de gospels an' which am de pentateucks—dey want a wahmin' uhligion—dey want powah, sah! Ah's comin' in de Spirit, which am de suah way to furnish de powah!"

"You are quite right, Jim, as I see it," said Taine, adding laughingly: "There is surely good soul-substance in the Cabron religion as you expound it."

The sound of a visitor at the other end of the suite now called Taine thither. He met Professor Briardridge just entering the reception-room. The visit at this hour was an evidence of disorder, even if the professor's face had not shown rigid and pale.

"Doctor, I have been impelled, seconded by Mrs. Briardridge, to ask your help to-night. Miss Leila was imprudent enough to go out riding this afternoon with Terhune Glossop. Neither has returned. My daughter, it appears, received a long letter from the young man this forenoon, and out of pity, as she confided to her mother, consented to have a last ride and talk with the young man. I was not consulted or I should have forbidden the step. I am almost afraid to tell you how grave my fears are."

"Do you mean that Miss Briardridge rode out this afternoon in a spirit of kindness—only?" Taine asked quickly.

"Her mother is seldom wrong in matters of this nature."

"Then you think that some accident has befallen?"

"I am hoping that it is only an accident that detains them," said the elder man. His voice and manner made the inference plain. Taine felt a sort of blindness come over him—the rage akin to, yet diverse from, that of the parent.

"You have honored me with your confidence, professor. I should say that we had better search the country to-night."

"Thank you. Put on boots and a rain-coat. I have ordered horses at the house. I have told no one else. It is you and I to-night. After that—Cabron must help us!"

Taine stepped to his desk to lock it.

"Better take that thing along, doctor," the professor suggested, pointing to the butt of a six-shooter which lay in one of the upper pigeon-holes. Taine obeyed, and they hurried out of the office, Jim following them to the door.

"Leave a light in the laboratory, but don't stay up for me, Jim," Taine said at the head of the stairs. Walking through the rain toward the house of pillars a few moments afterward, he asked:

"Is an elopement out of the question, professor?"

"Quite, sir. Miss Leila would not consider such a step. Since a child she has had nothing forbidden, but has wound her Daddy to her own wishes."

Ten minutes later, they mounted the livery saddle-horses which had been brought to the Colonial house. It was eight-thirty when they turned onto the Cornube pike in black dark and driving rain. Taine was not yet ready to believe that Glossop had used physical strength to possess the girl. His thoughts were boiling at the merest supposition of such a thing, but reason led him to the belief that Lady Thoroughbred, knowing her father's dislike for Terhune, and smarting under the reaction of his own madness, the night before, had quietly ridden to the point of matrimony with her old suitor. Shuddering at his own weakness, Taine could not hastily condemn Terhune. It was a disinclination to complicate the father's sorrows, not cowardice, which held him from confession.

"Frankly, professor, I can't quite think as you do—even yet," he declared. "They may have lost their way in the rain. They may have stopped at some farm-house, waiting for the rain to stop. This is civilization, sir. A man does not obtain a woman in the direct fashion of running away with her. They are old playmates; they know each other well. It is far easier for me to believe that we will hear of a wedding before breakfast."

"It is good of you, doctor, but I know Terhune Glossop and I know Leila. She has refused him finally—angered him to the point of violence. Where they are is for us to find out, and it is for God to keep me from killing him when I do."

Even in his anguish, Taine marvelled at the man who rode beside him; marvelled at Kentucky. The pedant and book-lover were gone from the first mathematician of his state. There was a woman in trouble. Here was a Kentuckian out to kill the cause.

They reached Cornube in two hours. It was a mountain town of feuds and saloons and mines. At the hotel, Taine stood by when Professor Briadridge telephoned back to Cabron. There was a rattle of an answering voice in the instrument, and the professor's jaw tightened.

"My wife has heard nothing, doctor," he said.

At the livery-stable, no word could be had of Terhune Glossop or his companion. It was a sudden thought of Taine's to drop into one of the saloons on the chief street. The professor followed. The former ordered a bottle of beer and inquired casually if Terhune Glossop had been in the place that evening.

"Yes, sir, he was here a little while ago," the man replied.

"Drinking?" Taine questioned in a quick, confiding voice.

"I did n't notice particularly. He took some stuff away. Guess there is to be a game somewhere. He certainly needed a stimulant. That roan stud of his kicked at him—just grazed his cheek, but tore it open."

Just at this moment the bar-tender happened to look at Taine's companion. He became puzzled, and tightened up on general principles. Taine touched the elder man's hand, and they withdrew.

"Doctor, I am going to ask a favor of you now," the professor declared.

"Speak it," said Taine. He was sickened by the thought that Glossop had come to that place for whiskey, leaving the woman somewhere. And the Kentuckian had received a wound somewhere—this news was potential with terrors—and possibly lied about the cause to the bar-tender. He had left his office in Cabron at four in the afternoon, free from hurt.

"I want you to go home, my boy. I want you to leave me here with this work. I need to be alone now. I shall find Terhune Glossop before dawn—and in what happens you have no part. It is a father's business—the business of a wrecked man. Go to your office and telephone from there to my wife—that I am waiting here, and that I sent you back. Good-by—my dear young friend!"

Taine did not take the outstretched hand at once. His first impulse was to exclaim that the love in his heart made the affair his own business as well as the father's, but the events of the night before came back to mind. The professor's fingers found his.

"Do this thing for me, Dr. Taine!"

"It is the hardest thing you could ask, professor, but I am off," he answered.

Taine turned back in the saddle a few minutes later, and saw the old man standing in the darkness in front of a harness-shop. Only the faintest, most broken gleams of the street-lamp, a few rods away, touched the rain-coat and the white beard. And Taine reflected that this was Kentucky preserving her most holy traditions.

That ride stands out in his thoughts as the journey of deepest gloom. He had not alone to bear the tortures of a lover inflicted by the most devilish conditions, but he had been banished from the

possibility of striving in her cause. It was about eleven when he left Cornube, and, riding slowly over a trail with which he was but little familiar, he did not reach Cabron until after one. There was bitterness in the thought that there was no need for haste. The heart was not in him to talk with Mrs. Professor, even by 'phone; so he wrote a brief note, covering the affair up to the time he left Cornube, and despatched it to the lady by Jim.

In his room, twenty minutes later, he heard his servant return. As Jim did not call him, he was made to know that Mrs. Professor had no good word to send. The colored man went back to the lamp and Bible in the laboratory, delving for power, careless of sleep. Taine was buffeted about among his miseries in the dark—it seemed to him for hours—before he sank beneath.

## VII

"LEILA," Glossop went on mockingly, raising his head from between his hands, "you could n't kill me. Don't you know what the Bible says about such things?"

He lolled his head again, seemingly deathly ill.

"I know what the Bible says, and I know what Kentucky thinks. I do not care to kill you—as you sit there—across the room—even after what you have done. But do not approach me, Terhune, or I shall forget what the Bible says."

He arose with difficulty. The pain was telling upon him now. Saliva filled his mouth faster than he could swallow. For an instant he seemed to forget her presence.

In spite of all, pity came to her heart. The innocence of her hand was already fouled by her blow in self-defense; the purity of her name was darkened by her presence in this place; the values of her womanhood were diminished by the ride in his arms, the beauty gone forever out of her life—still she pitied him. . . . No matter what became of Leila Briadridge, she knew, as she knew her father and her state, that Terhune Glossop's portion for this night's work was death. And possibly he did love her. In his blind, brutal way—possibly he loved her! It was his passion for her that had brought them there. She had told him, in cold, pitiless language, because her heart was disordered by the new dominance of Taine, that his quest of her was hopeless. That was why he had gone mad. . . . Terhune Glossop would never put his hand upon her again, but she could not kill him—across the room.

He was swaying now before a little cabinet upon the wall. His hand fumbled with a tiny key. Drops of perspiration stood out upon his face before he succeeded in unlocking the door and drew forth a hunting-flask of whiskey.

"You must forgive me for getting ill this way," he said brokenly. "I must look mighty silly to you on this our wedding-night!"

"You should go for help," she answered, ignoring the last part of his sentence, although the words beat against the inner walls of her mind.

"After the honeymoon," he added, pouring out a half-tumbler of the liquor.

"No one would have thought that there lived such a brute in Terhune Glossop."

"It is almost as new to me—this brute—but I love *you!* Won't you have a bit of stimulant?"

She shook her head.

"It is good when one has been half blinded," he declared. Opening the door, he held the glass under the streaming eaves until it was filled, for the Kentuckian does not like clear spirit. Then he drank, rinsed the glass carefully, and filled it with pure rain-water, holding it toward her.

"I would not take a drink of water under your roof."

He was silent a long time. The whiskey steadied the tumult within him, but seemed to sharpen the pain of his wound. "Leila," he said at last, "do you remember when we were little tads together and I struck you?"

She nodded. It was the first reference he had ever made to the incident.

"I have wakened in the midst of the night—many a time, Leila—wet with shame at the thought of that. I could n't speak about it until now. I knew you could n't forgive me altogether. You could n't—only now—now that you have paid it back—I have been hoping that we might call it off."

"I did forgive you years ago," she answered. "It was my father who never could forgive you. What you have done to-day, nothing can balance. Don't you know that at this moment father, perhaps other men of Cabron, are out searching? . . . Do you think a mountain-lodge eight miles from home will hide you?"

"I would fight an army for you, Leila."

"But you could not win. . . . You know what my father will do when he finds you. And after that, there is nothing but death and shame for him—whom you have called the cleanest man in Cabron. And my mother—what of her after this night?"

He winced a little.

"And even if you should happen to live, Terhune Glossop—after this night," she went on, "Kentucky will be a forbidden land to you! . . . And what of me whom you have crushed in your arms and locked in your cabin in the wilderness? Some one will say, 'Leila Briadridge

was always a strange, uncertain girl, with her guns and horses and hounds. Who knows but Terhune Glossop may not be to blame, after all? . . . This is what you have done for me. This is your chivalry. Had I the deviltry in my veins to commit murder now and make my way back to Cabron alone, and there to cry aloud that I had killed you to save myself, our world would hail me as the queen of Kentucky women! . . . But I have not the coldness of blood—it seems.”

Glossop walked the floor for several minutes. Her arraignment of his lack of chivalry wounded the race-instinct of the man. The thought of his new enemy came to save him from self-reproach.

“You have told me how I have hurt all the others, but what have I done to Taine?” he asked suddenly, and the name seemed to spur his anger. “You forget Taine.”

Her answer was memorable, even dramatic: “Dr. Taine is a part of the world I used to live in before I went out riding—with you!”

He felt the blow of the words, but his own grievance rose higher than hers in the boy-mind. “Darling, if you were not made for me, there is a big mistake somewhere in the creation of things. I will be kind to you always. I would give both my eyes—to your riding-whip—at the word!”

The picture he made bending toward her was nothing less than tragic.

“We might ride to Cornube and be married,” he went on. “We could tell them that the rain kept us from going back, and that my horse or a boy with a sling-shot hurt my face. It is not too late—and I love you! I think I could be a big clean man with you at the helm—with you to set the weights straight. I thought when we rode out to-day that we were to be affianced again. When you told me the other, it seemed to jerk me into madness. Won’t you ride on with me to Cornube? No lie will ever be whispered about you then, and there will be no killing at day-break!”

The finer ideal was in her brain. Though she knew vaguely that her words speeded some dreadful issue, she uttered them: “Terhune, I can never marry you!”

He glanced at her with instantaneous fury, finished the liquor in the flask without water, and drew a six-shooter from the cabinet, placing it in his pocket. Putting on his gloves, he said:

“I want to kiss you once more!”

When he took a step toward her, she raised the pistol.

“Tell me,” he pleaded, “that Taine has not changed your heart toward me. Tell me that—and let me kiss you once!”

“I have never lied to you,” she managed to say. “Don’t come near me and make me kill you—please!” In its tenseness and harshness, her voice was like a sound from some nether plane.

"I believe you would shoot—you thoroughbred!" he whispered. "You shall have a chance before morning. Do you know what I am going to do in the meantime?"

Her senses reeled because she caught his thought. She made no effort to answer.

"I am going out to kill the man who has robbed me of you," he said, looking past her extended arm into her eyes. "When I come back, sweetheart, you can try your hand and your aim! I don't know but that it would be a neater, prettier thing for you to kill me—than for your father—or for me to fall down fighting off Cabron!"

The gun was heavy and cold in her hand. The terror in the thought of this giant falling before her in this lodge in the wilderness for the instant prevailed against the act. The thought was insinuated in her mind that he was only frightening her. He turned from her, glanced about the room. There was an axe hanging in a leathern case upon the wall. He removed it, opened the door, and tossed it forth. She did not catch the significance then. He took the key from the inside of the socket and placed it in the outside of the door.

It was the moment of all life to her, rather the climacteric moment of all lives. One picture was vivid—dark-red upon the wall of her brain: Terhune standing in the dark hallway of Taine's office and calling his victim out from the sleeping-room! . . . Taine would know nothing—not even of her ride. . . . Before her was the creature of wax played upon by pain, passion and liquor.

"Terhune," she said in the last spasm of strength, "you have despoiled my name. Don't add to your eternal debt by thinking the death of a clean man!"

"A clean man," he repeated, raging—"a clean man who disarmed his rival—then knifed him! He has warped your judgment so that it is not worthy of a Kentucky woman who can kill the man who loves her."

He stepped out of the door, shutting it hastily behind him and turning the key. She heard his heel as it was drawn from the sucking mire, heard the nicker of the roan stallion. . . . There was no sham. He meant to kill Taine. Her mind was a mechanism for producing horrors. She saw the whole thing hours ahead—saw Taine rise from his bed at the call of the murderer—she peered into the dark of the hall without the reception-room—she saw Taine meet the End, with a withering of her own flesh—saw the murderer run down the stairs, gain his mount, and come back to her.

"Terhune! Terhune!" she screamed.

"It looks as if I had touched the quick!" was the answer from outside.

"Don't go!"



She heard the stirrup leathers strain as he gained the saddle and reined about to the door.

"I'd fight all Cabron to get to him now to kill him—after that voice of yours!" he called.

"Come back! I—I—you may kiss me, Terhune!"

She fired through the door at the voice, heard him laugh and spur away.

### VIII

HAD Terhune Glossop ridden directly back to Cabron after leaving Leila Briadridge in the lodge, he would have met her father and Taine on their way to Cornube; in which case the rain and darkness would have covered a tragedy of magnitude. As it was, the hunting-flask played a trick upon the Kentuckian. He rode out through the dripping forest, and halted upon the pike. He was sick, burnt-out with his passions. Eight miles to the left was Cabron, dry, the place of dreadful work. To the right, two miles, was Cornube, with boundless medicine for his pains. He reasoned that it was still some hours to midnight, and that he need not reach Cabron before that hour; reasoned that the woman was safe as in some Himalayan temple. The chance devil took hold of his already softened faculties, and he turned to the right.

In Cornube, Terhune encountered certain friends of former hunting trips. The drinks were thickly plied. The Kentuckian intimated that he was out for a killing. His friends drew him to cover, detaining him on various pretexts. They were not yet sure that he was on the right ground for vengeance. In his fresh strength, the moments passed with facile swiftness to the Cabronite, who did not tell the tale, but just dropped hints. His friends at length, becoming imbued with Cornube liquor and the spirit of Terhune's enterprise, not only gave up all thought of restraining him, but became so impressed with the needs of Kentucky manhood at such a juncture, as to offer their lives in his cause. Glossop waved them back, and they had to be content to speed him on his way.

It was now nearly eleven, and, by the peculiar perversity of events, Taine and the professor happened to be in the saloon at the very moment when the Cause rode by outside, rowelling his roan on the Cabron pike—the huge figure hunched forward with drink.

The roan stallion was a tower of strength, but he had carried two, one a giant, for miles at a killing pace; he had stood in the rain at the door of the lodge, and then put twelve more gruelling miles behind him. By the time Cabron was approached, the roan needed the road in his struggle to keep his feet.

Terhune's hideous intent was in no way assailed; and, fuming with liquor as he was, there remained some craft in his brain. He

intended to take no chance about reaching the mountain-lodge again. This roan was not good for that last stroke, and he must have a fresh mount for his escape. He reached the dividing ways at the edge of the town, the right leading to his stables, the left to his office. The roan veered to the way of rest; the rider jerked him back. The splendid beast lost his legs and his head entirely, and tumbled forward upon the turf in the crotch of the roads. Glossop threw himself clear, gained his feet unhurt—and felt in the dark that his mount was either foundered or dying. The Kentuckian left his horse and made his way forward into the town, his legs unsteadied by drink and the hours in the saddle. The court-house clock struck one. The rain had ceased.

A light in Taine's laboratory bothered Terhune. He wanted darkness up there; wanted the man to be called from his bed, dulled with sleep, to the door. It is not Kentucky shooting ethics to give one's enemy a chance. As he was, covered with mud, his riding clothes stained from rain and the saddle, and his face depicting a wild night, he dared not apply to Getts, the liveryman, for a fresh mount. Getts of Cabron was peculiar inasmuch as he had the Kentucky ideal of a good horse, and kept a few in his rent-barns, but would not let them out to rough riders. Glossop had a fresh suit in his office and went up-stairs to change, trusting to find riding-boots at the livery. Watching the light across the way in Taine's laboratory at intervals, he washed and redressed, and presently walked stiffly up Main Street to the stables. There was no one abroad. Getts's hostler came forth sleepily from the office.

"I've got a suffering patient four miles up Cornube way. Give me a good saddle-horse," Terhune said, articulating slowly and with care.

"A couple of the best ones are out, Doc," the man said.

It did not occur to the Kentuckian to inquire who had them. "Put a saddle on the best thing you have," he replied, "and lend me a pair of leggins."

Five minutes later he rode out of the barn. The light was still in Taine's laboratory. Glossop led the horse into an alley-way at the rear of the building, and then climbed the stairway into his own offices. It was one-twenty-five. He fell asleep in the chair, and missed the fact that his enemy rode in, turned over his horse at the livery, and ascended the opposite stairway. When Glossop awoke it was after three. His body felt dead in places, but the hunting-flask started the arteries to work and pulled the whole into something akin to rhythm. Yes, and the hunting-flask gave him back his savage with the purpose to kill. The light was out in the laboratory across the street.

The faintest possible gray was in the air as he picked his way across the muddy pavement. He had looked again that the horse was safe in the alley. In the stairway entrance, he felt himself shaking, and he

paused in the primal black, his back to the gray orifice, to take a drink. Then he walked up-stairs, flat-footed, softly yet steadily, his huge hand scraping along the high wainscot of the inner side.

The door of the reception-room was open. The darkness within was opaque. He entered. From somewhere in the private part of the suite came a soft, scraping tread, as of bare feet upon a bare hardwood floor. His throat filled with a scream. Beside his fear of the dark, he suffered the stress of that final instant of deep perception which a man who has brooded upon a crime knows before the crime's consummation. It is an instant akin to the last of the body's life, when the soul emerges from its dungeon and catches its familiar vision of the worlds. The Kentuckian cleared his throat.

"It's me—Terhune Glossop. Open the door—I want to speak with you, Dr. Taine," he heard himself say unctuously. And the murderer saw his own body in the dark—the body from which the voice came. It was Terhune Glossop shrunken, twisted, claw-fingered, clutching a gun in the utter dark.

There was no answer from within, save the heinous tread. A hand fell upon the panel of the operating-room door, against which Glossop stood—a groping hand that rubbed down the casing until it came to the knob and then to the key. . . . The key was turned softly and with a leisure that gave the murderer time to conjure knives behind him and armed men within—gave him time to yearn for the sweet death which waited for him in the mountain-lodge. It was the thought of Leila Briadridge up yonder that kept the scream in his throat. He thrust the pistol forward. The door creaked and the victim was there—the figure black against the darkness.

Glossop fired, and his pent scream found vent. Blinded in the flash, he fired again—again at the thing blubbering on the floor—again from the stair-top—and down he went—the devil gone from him—a shrieking, nerve-rent slayer—into the gray dawn. He reached the horse in the alley, gained the saddle, and rowelled away. At the far-end of town he drew up to drink. . . . The hunting-flask that had led, hastened, maddened, delayed him, stood by at the last, the ordained enemy, the ultimate friend.

At the fork of the roads, the roan was still lying. The Cornube pike stretched ahead, a rolling gray line in the dawn-gloom. He hearkened for an instant to the sound of hoof-beats. It was not from behind, as he had feared, but from before him, on the Cornube pike. He did not want to meet any one, and rode to the left, toward his own house, until the rider passed. As he turned, there was something even in the denseness of the morning, that aroused him about the lone figure that passed into the city. He regained the Cornube pike and spurred deep.

The daylight strengthened and thrust his fears farther and farther behind. . . . Was he not Terhune Glossop, Kentuckian, who had killed his enemy? . . . Was he not going now to bide with the woman of his heart? . . . Perhaps she would not be harsh enough to keep her word about killing him at his approach. The last sentence which she had cried out to him through the door before firing recurred repeatedly to his brain, and almost smothered him with passion. . . . He had killed the man who had caused that concession, but still it was wonderful to hear the words from her lips. . . . He spurred the blowing beast. . . . It was possible that she might not be able to keep her promise. Perhaps she might not be able—quite—to keep her promise! His brain hugged the last dreadful possibilities, the scene of which was to be the corner of the mountain-lodge.

The thought came to him that he might use craft to disarm her, but the Kentuckian put it away. Craft was for the warfare of men. His courage had returned, and with it the tremendous physical ardor of the man, which blinded him to any values of living without her. Hot-lipped, he bent forward in the saddle, cursing the broken-gaited, broken-winded rent-horse breed, already lathered and spent. It was full day when he gained the mountain-ridge and turned into the forest path toward the lodge. A strange thought came now—strange for the time and place, but a simple lover's instinct. He reined up beside a clear pool of rain-water in the wood, dismounted, and laved his face and hands and rinsed his mouth thoroughly. As he bent forward toward the surface of the water such a tide of pain flowed and swelled in his wound that he was left trembling and blood-drawn. The hunting-flask helped him again. Then he drank deeply and dried his face and hands upon a pocket handkerchief. This done, Terhune Glossop walked forward toward the lodge, leading his tired mount.

Ahead through the sun-dazzled thicket loomed the dull roof of the little cabin. A chit-chit fluttered above his head, uttering her "peep, pee-rrup" with incessant querulousness, a little fem bird that had left her properties behind with her mate, or some big boy of her acquaintance, and was out for adventures. . . . In the shed behind the cabin a horse whinnied. Terhune's mount raised the answer. It was brutally loud, like the falling of metal pieces upon an iron floor. The chit-chit whisked away as if exploded. The sun was like a sweet young god in the dripping woods. . . . The man wondered how the little brown saddle-mare knew the livery horse. The branches parted so that he could see the lodge as a whole.

The Kentuckian halted and brushed his hands over his eyes. The door of the lodge was open, and two men stood in the aperture. . . . The chit-chit fluttered back reservedly. It was her eternal question, "peep, pee-rrup?" that she wanted to know.

## IX

LEILA BRIADRIDGE, a prisoner in the lodge, paced back and forth for several minutes after Terhune left. At a certain step of her walk, she would catch with the tail of her eye a peculiar waver on the wall. She turned to it at last and found a small mirror there. A white, waxy thing looked out at her. It was her own face, grown desolate as a winter garden. The frame of the glass was screwed to the wall. She put her strength against it, but there was no turning the thing aside.

She passed through all the pangs of the fallen. Leila Briadridge felt herself a degraded creature, whose last hope—her lover of yesterday—would soon be out of reach of her arms. . . . She concentrated in her mind the intensest thought-forms of warning, and drove them toward him in the forlorn hope that he might respond and protect himself. She hurled these supreme figures of her brain-force into his sleeping-room, as she imagined it, the place behind the laboratory, the door of which she had only glimpsed. And she sent with her thoughts the ardor of a Southern woman's tortured heart, a prayer that it might shield him from all harm—not that he might be saved for her, but only that he might live!

A kind of stupor saved her faculties when they were straining too far. . . . When the hiatus was over, she was vaguely conscious that she had been screaming, that the candle had lost its inches, that her hands were bleeding—though the door still held. The small flame guttered. She found another candle in the cabinet. It was the last. She did not light it until the wick of the first fell in the running wax. . . . The fear of utter darkness, the locked door, the imprisoning forest—with the thought of Terhune Glossop coming back—all these amounted to something monstrous.

She talked through the wall to the little brown saddle-mare outside, scolded and clucked to her pet, until the animal stepped about briskly and nickered back. At last she sat down rigidly, her eyes devouring the candle-flame, her will active to its highest tension. Out of the terrible silence at last, a far cry came. She rushed to the door. Her physical sense told her that it might be an owl or wild-cat, yet, with lips to the key-hole, she screamed an answer. There was a death-pang in the waiting, but the cry was repeated:

“Halloo-oo!”

“Help! Terhune Glossop's lodge!” she sent back in full strength.  
“Coming—coming!”

She prayed that this was no vagary of the storm in her brain. The prayer was answered, because the interminable waiting was broken by the reassuring voice again, a big, slow voice. . . . It was human, real. She heard a heavy step outside.

"Who are you?" she called at last.

"Jared Lensing. And who are you, lady, and what is wrong?"

"Terhune Glossop has locked me in here and has gone back to Cabron to kill Dr. Taine. I am Leila Briadridge!"

"The little white dove," she heard him say. "I felt that there was something wrong in my forest to-night."

She had heard of the old mystic of the mountains, and been afraid at the thought of him when a little child. Now he spoke of her by a name she had heard years and years ago from the colored people.

"There is an axe out there somewhere," she called. "He threw it out before he locked the door!"

"Poor little girlie—poor little Leila! Did he hurt you?"

She had no fear of the old man now. Something big and different from fear was in her heart. Taine had told her about him. "I found a pistol here—to defend myself. . . . I should have killed him before he went away!"

"No, no! Not 'the little white dove.' . . . I have found the axe. Stand back from the door, child!"

Three blows tore the lock from the socket, and the old man stood before her in the doorway. She thanked him almost incoherently, but he did not listen. His eyes were upon her face.

"You did well not to kill him, little one. You have passed through a season of terror and travail, but you are on the path to peace."

"But Terhune has gone back to Cabron to kill Dr. Taine!"

"Child," the old man said earnestly, "my young friend, Taine, must go to the breast of Mother India in this incarnation. He has not done this yet, so you need not fear."

Strange as the words were, there was buoyancy in them. "Some time," she exclaimed, "I shall show you how deeply grateful I am, but I must ride back now!"

He bade her stop on the threshold till he brought the mare around; then assisted her, with clumsy kindness, into the saddle.

"And now wait, child," he said. "I will run before you until we reach the pike. You could never find the road without help in this darkness." He took her bridle-rein in the places where the wet foliage hung low over the path. The woman reached down and grasped his hand when the mare's hoofs touched the stony highway.

"But wait, little one," he pursued. "If you go back to Cabron on this pike, you might meet that poor young disordered soul coming this way. Follow me, and I shall put you safely on the Holly pike. It is but a little longer." He led her a quarter of a mile toward Cornube; then east a mile to the parallel highway. "And remember, all is well, little white dove, and may the Masters prosper your journey!"

Steadily the good mare pounded her way home. The woman could

not retain the cheer which the old mystic had imparted. She remembered that Taine had already been in India during his trip about the world. This was what Jared Lensing might have meant, although he said that Dr. Taine "must go to the breast of Mother India"—which is not the mere globe-trotter's way.

The most delicate tint of gray suffused the east, and the fields and meadows sent out their perfect fragrance in the rain-washed air. All that a Kentucky summer means wooed the land awake under the cover of morning dusk. The thickets were fluttering, and colts whinnied in the pasture-lands. Even before there was light enough for her to see the farther hills loom tier on tier against the mellowing sky, shafts of vital heat came out of the sunrise country.

Cabron at last in the vale, with her black church-spires and courthouse dome! The town grew in the anguished eyes of the woman, broadened in the deep-gray silence, unfolded its streets and outer lanes. All that Cabron had meant to her before in her pride and beauty was changed now. It was hers no longer; an abode, perhaps, but dead to her heart. She felt that the night had plucked her out of the blooming regions of her youth, and dropped her, a dishevelled thing, on the desolate down-slopes of age.

The Holly and the Cornube pikes converged at the edge of the town. She heard a horseman ahead, but would not pause. If it were Terhune Glossop, she had her pistol. . . . But the horseman turned into a by-way. It was the man she feared, but he was a murderer now, hunted, afraid of his kind. At the junction of the ways, her mare leaped aside with a snort of fright. The woman saw the roan stallion lying there—the first tangible picture out of the night of chaos. Her body drooped forward and she clutched the mare's mane. Terhune Glossop had not lied to her, but had come back to Cabron. Objects left her eyes for an instant as if a red-black wall had risen between her and the world.

Men were not running to and fro. The doctors' offices faced each other across the street. She slipped down from the mount at Taine's doorway. There were no voices above. Each step was a mountain. . . . Gray light came in the window at the head of the stairway. The woman saw the black-wet threshold—the stained rug within. She rushed through the reception-room, screaming her lover's name.

## X

JARED LENSING turned back toward the Cornube pike when the hoof-beats of the little brown saddle-mare grew distant. He walked rapidly and with a swing, walked like a man who is much outdoors and used to the way and the darkness. He directed his steps toward Cornube when he regained that highway, and in slightly over a half-

hour entered the principal street of the place. It was there that he met Professor Briadridge riding toward him.

"I have news of your daughter, sir," Jared Lensing said.

"Yes, yes—speak quickly, I beg of you!"

"I left her a half-hour ago on the way to Cabron."

"Was she alone?" The question was demanded breathlessly.

"Yes, alone, and without grave harm upon her."

The old mystic related quickly what had happened during the afternoon ride, as he had drawn the facts of the episode from the frenzied girl; how she had fared in the lodge; of Terhune Glossop's intention to ride back to Cabron to kill Taine; lastly, a touch only, in regard to his own rescue of the woman.

"God will reward you, sir, and I, His servant, in good time! . . . But that fiend—has he returned to the lodge?"

"He had not a half-hour ago."

"But might he not meet Leila on the road?"

"No. For I saw her safely on the Holly pike to avoid such a meeting."

"And will Terhune Glossop surely come back to the lodge—if he gets out of Cabron alive? Will he return—thinking to find her there?" The professor's voice was broken with hatred.

"Yes, he will be there soon."

"Then, I shall go to the lodge and wait for him. My work will soon be done. Great God! that an erect animal, Nature's makeshift for a human, should kill a man like Taine! . . . And to think that I should have sent Taine back to Cabron—to his death!"

"As I told your daughter—something has intervened to save Taine," Jared Lensing said. "He is destined to touch the hem of Mother India's garment in this life."

The words did not instantly appeal to the professor. He was consumed with a desire to reach the lodge before Terhune Glossop could get away from the vicinity. It did not occur to him to use the subtler phenomena which so engaged him from an intellectual standpoint, in the practice of these terrible affairs. His first business was to kill Glossop; his first hope that Taine might live. Vaguely the rest to him was a broken life—an end of shame and misery.

"I have not your faith, sir. Will you direct me to the lodge now? May I hope to see you soon in Cabron—or Cornube?"

"I shall follow you to the lodge, Professor Briadridge, and I want you to think as you ride, how futile and boyish it is to kill an enemy. . . . Turn into the second mountain foot-path to the left."

The father rode on. Jared Lensing followed, tireless, head bowed, but shoulders erect. The morning was now perfect, still, sweet, warm and vivid. Kentucky has the breath of a babe on such a morning—a



babe revelling in June. The old man turned into the forest path less than a quarter of an hour after the professor. They met at the lodge, the owner of which had not yet returned.

"And now, sir," the father began, "what did you mean about it being 'futile and boyish' to slay a despoiler?"

"Professor Briadridge, you have lived a clean, fine life," the mystic said. "Your days have been cast in pleasant places. All of beauty and much of truth have come into your life and home. You have debts to pay left over from other lives, but they have not dragged over this entire existence of yours, brutalizing the whole. The tragedy has come in a night to try you. This is the crucial moment of your three-score years. If you should kill this poor, savage boy, you will have failed in the eyes of all justice. You will call upon yourself a harsher lesson in a harsher environment in another life. If you have pity, and bear your sorrow without rebellion, you will have sanctioned the sweet peace which has been yours here; and your next coming will be cast in a brighter, finer sphere of earth life."

"But I am a Kentuckian!"

"So am I."

"But he is a menace to man and womankind!"

"The law of cause and effect will take care of the infant-soul."

"But I see only the one way—to extirpate this menace."

"The higher the virtue if you master this difficult lesson."

Professor Briadridge glanced at the other. His own face was ashen, his frail, chalk-white hands were trembling. "You have never fathered a daughter, sir."

"No."

"Then can you judge me on any but ethical grounds?"

"Yes." For the first moment, the mystic showed emotion.

"Would you try to prevent me, by any physical means, from killing Terhune Glossop—if he came?" the professor asked in a harsh voice.

"No. If I cannot change your intent, I cannot change the law."

"Thank you, sir. Then how can you judge me—not being a father?"

"Because I have lived through the part of Terhune Glossop, who will be here in a few minutes—unless I hear amiss! He has already turned into the forest-path from the Cornube pike."

The professor drew his pistol and stepped to the door of the lodge.

"I did not hear him," he muttered excitedly. "Go on."

"You do not remember me, because I stayed apart—even in those early days. I loved a woman. It was thirty years ago. She is still to me—and I can say it now with a mind clean from desire—the most beautiful woman Kentucky ever fostered. I went to her at last and

asked her if I could ever be her husband. She said no. I was as Terhune Glossop then—save that I did not give way. Instead, I came here to these fresh mountains to fight out my battle and walk with God. Had I followed my first thoughts, I should have killed you, Laurence Briadridge, and I should have kidnapped 'the white dove.'"

At this instant, the professor's mount behind the lodge startled them with shrill neighing and the answer came from ahead. The father of Leila Briadridge turned from the mystic to the parting branches down the path, from which Terhune Glossop emerged.

The gun was in the professor's hand, and his man came forward. Glossop's eyes were staring in the sunlight, his lips weaving in a drugged, hardly sane way. He was armed, but he seemed to forget that the men before him were there for his death or theirs, seemed to forget that this was Kentucky. He swayed forward, leading his mount and accusing his senses. . . . To die by her hand—that was the thing—that was his right. . . . In the shadow behind the girl's father Jared Lensing turned his gaze back and forth from the man to the boy.

At last, and very suddenly when it came, Terhune Glossop believed his eyes. He saw his end—"the fighting death"—dropped the bridle-rein, and drew valiantly.

"Wait!" called her father in a quick, hard way.

Glossop's arm was tranced by the voice, his gun pointing down. The other's weapon was levelled at him—he was covered, helpless. His eyes glanced furtively about. He wanted the girl; he wanted a drink.

"I am waiting," he muttered. There was a whining note in the words.

Without answering for a moment, the professor held him. In the silence, a small bird hopping from branch to branch above the head of the Kentuckian began to declaim her importance. The gun, the waiting, the face of the father, wrought havoc in the strained nerves of the murderer. A raw, high-pitched cry came from his throat. He leaped behind his mount into the thicket and was gone—with his hunting-flask. The livery saddle-horse trotted forward expectantly.

The mystic softly gripped the other's arm.

"But if he has killed Taine?" Professor Briadridge said at last.

"Kentucky will find him."

The horses and the men were standing together.

"Will you ride home with me—and rest?" the father asked slowly.

"Yes—for the day," said the other.

## XI

TAINE was aroused from sleep by the shots. Jim was dying when he reached the reception-room. The name of "Mistah T'hune" was upon the servant's lips, but no other words. The colored man had

been sacrificed in the dark, answering the door softly, so as not to disturb his idol. Taine ran to the window, at the sound of beating hoofs, and saw the Kentuckian riding madly through the gray toward the edge of the town.

After that he carried the body into the operating-room, and lamentations filled his heart. The ultimate meaning was partly obscured. Wherever Lady Thoroughbred was, Glossop had left her—not to kill a harmless ducky, but himself. . . . Leila Briardridge must have mentioned his name in her agony! The daybreak had an awfulness to his eyes. . . . Last night her father had denied him a part in the action. This dawn, a servant had met the death designed for him.

Again there was a saddle-horse in the street, but this time he did not go to the window. When a step reached him from the stairway, he thought it was some one who had heard the shots and was coming to investigate. The reception- and operating-rooms were in dreadful condition with the lights turned on. . . . The step upon the stairs was slow and strange, as of some one lame and moving stealthily. Then out of the intermittent silence came a woman's scream. He ran into the reception-room, into the arms of a frenzied woman! It was the embrace of all his dreams, but endured only for a second. Leila Briardridge fought herself free.

"I saw the floor here," she gasped, backing from him. "I thought you were dead!"

"It was my servant who met him at the door—in the dark—I was asleep," the man faltered. "Oh, won't you please sit down?"

She was in the hallway now, and he followed.

"I must go home. . . . He left me locked in his hunting-lodge, saying that he was coming here to kill you. When I saw the floor—I thought—that he had kept his word! Don't touch me——"

"But when you came?" he stammered clumsily.

"I was beside myself!"

"Please, may I not walk home with you?"

"No—no!"

"But may I not see you to-day?"

"I—I don't want to see you!" She was half-way down the stairs.

Furious rebellion surged over him. "But I love you, Leila!" he called.

Her answer was inarticulate. He dared not follow.

The part which Leila Briardridge played that night was one of the things which Cabron never learned. She was supposed to have returned alone after angering Terhune Glossop during their ride. The Glossop part was clearer in the public eye. He had killed Taine's servant in the darkness of the hallway, instead of his rival. Cabron

could have forgiven him, after certain formalities, for shooting Jim, but the fact that he stayed away made it plain that his intent was more serious than the death of a colored man. That Leila Briadridge was seldom seen in the streets of Cabron, and never in society, was attributed to the fact that she was grieving for her lost love, Terhune Glossop. Cabron had been adjusted to the romance of these two, and could not give it up.

That Professor Briadridge resigned his chair at the university at the end of the semester, late in June, and devoted himself to the queer old man of the mountains and occult fandangoes, was attributed to the fact that the best of men and the finest of faculties must grow old. Finally, what Taine's lecture at Telania Hall failed to accomplish in the way of securing for him a certain desired percentage of the Cabron medical practice, the withdrawal of Glossop achieved. His career rounded, and the labor and dollars thereof wearied.

The heart was dead within him, for his romance endured without fruition. He had encountered a seemingly irresistible force—ancient, honorable Kentucky. As the weeks drew on, he half-despaired of ever winning Leila Briadridge, although he felt the love of her like heat from a hidden sun. In his inmost heart, her adventure had left no blemish upon her, but the clean-bred, sensitive creature felt that there was, and held herself apart—as after the first moment on Taine's stairway on the dawn of the murder. He had long Sunday walks with the professor; and occasionally Jared Lensing made a third, his brain and body an untainted wonderland. Then, too, Taine's friendly conversations with Mrs. Briadridge were fine and frequent, but Lady Thoroughbred remained in the background always. She spoke, often served him with cakes or tea in the afternoon, but there was no heart-chance. Taine did not dare to blunder to find out; and yet her sweetness and mellowness sang forever in his veins.

It was mid-October when he announced that he was about to give up his practice. Cabron gathered about him in surprise. There was some real disappointment, too, so that he was called upon to explain the volume of his finances, and that he had chosen to make good in some career merely to satisfy himself that he was not dependent upon his fortune.

"You have come to be my boy, and I don't know what I shall do without you," Mrs. Briadridge said.

They were on terms of understanding. "To be your boy is one of those poor, sad dreams of mine," he answered.

"Doctor, you would n't leave Leila without one real talk?"

"She is so strange—so sensitive—that I feared to wound her," he said. "You know how I love her. You know the woman-heart; you know your own daughter. Shall I seek her before I go?"

"I would not have you wound her, much as I like you. . . Listen, she has ridden out to the hemp-fields with the hounds. I told her this morning at breakfast that you were going away—that you were a millionaire who had merely used Cabron to learn a lesson in self-reliance—that you were going to India. She listened calmly, asked questions steadily. Her self-control made me love her—as a woman, not as a daughter! But the moment I left her, she called for the brown saddle-mare and rode away up the lanes. It is not her way to saddle in the forenoon. Ride out into the fields and meet her, Boy!"

Taine could hardly wait until the darcy had saddled the filly. The good mother's sanction warmed him, and the young equine aristocrat took him racking up the lane at a fine pace, while the figments of his romance gleamed and glanced. He heard the hounds long before he saw his horsewoman. His doubts multiplied, but higher spirits vanquished each unworthy increase. He must meet her joyously, as the victor comes.

And the day was all gold—sunlight in everything—pressed sunlight upon the rolling meadows, sprayed sunlight in the thickest foliage, splintered sunbeams upon the stock-ponds, pure yellow beauty in the ozone. And the hemp-stalks were golden-browned in the oven of summer; and the leaves of the beeches and oaks were basted red-brown for the turning.

She was coming toward him. Her hair looked a darker brown under the broad hat; or perhaps it was because her face was so white. It was a wonderful thing about her that in all distress she had kept her physique glowing; and, too, she had journeyed with her father into a far ethereal country, with Jared Lensing for a guide. She was a full woman, Leila Briadridge, ripened in knowledge and sorrow and outdoors and the love of a man. Their mounts halted together.

"I have come to say good-by to you alone," Taine began.

She had not given him her hand, and Taine did not know that an old fear had unconsciously prevented, a fear left over from another ride.

"I have given the hounds a terrific run," she said. "Let's go to the big oak tree yonder and talk while the dogs rest."

They rode to the shade and dismounted. All about them were fields empty of men. The hounds lolled about, panting, and the mares browsed with hanging bridle-reins. The woman spoke:

"I wanted to see you, too. It seemed quite in keeping with the Dr. Taine I imagined, to learn, as I did this morning, that you were a millionaire working here for a little while. You had an imperious way—that a young man making his own career cannot have."

"I used money only up to the time my office was furnished," he said. "I am not ungrateful to money now, because Cabron has come to mean more to me than I can bear. Still, if that pond yonder were

bottomless, I would toss every ounce of property I own into the centre if it, and gladly give my word never to leave the field surrounding it in this life, building my shelter from the weeds and hedges and subsisting upon the greens and berries until the grains came with the new year—Miss Leila, I would give up my books and friends and world—for your love!”

“I am not a marriageable woman, Dr. Taine.”

“Because of that night?”

“Yes.”

He bent his head toward her. “Miss Leila, if you had been dragged by the stirrup over stony ways—if your face and hair had passed through fire—if your limbs and hands had been broken and your voice torn out—I should love you. You would be Leila Briadridge to me. You are *you*—the other part of Taine—my lost companion for whom I have searched since the earth cooled.”

She spoke softly, coherently, the man of him so perfectly in hand that she listened without fear. . . . But she could not forget herself.

“I am so very human that I pray you now, doctor, to go away. We look at these things differently in Kentucky. Had I been wiser, and not such a girl, on that night you talked at Telania, we might have been made glad then—and I should not have ridden the next day. But I was a frightened little girl who did not know until afterward—that I had found my real lover. . . . I am different now. I feel—I feel that I am not all my own to give you!”

“Is there no India for you and me?” he faltered.

“Ah, please—don’t!”

He helped her into the saddle and rode back beside her without speaking. The chill of hopelessness crept over him. They were in the immediate grounds of the Colonial house, and Mrs. Briadridge had appeared at the door of the summer kitchen, when he said:

“If I can’t live without you in India—may I not come back?”

She turned her face away.

They halted before the mother. A groom came out from the stables, but the elder woman beckoned him back. None of the servants were in sight. The professor was in his study at the far end of the vast house—with his teacher. The still brilliant day rested upon them all.

“You two desolate dears—have n’t you made yourselves happy yet?” Mrs. Professor asked softly.

Taine drew a sudden bright wisdom from the sympathy of the mother—his beloved friend.

“Leila—Leila,” he said intensely, “I love you more for that night! That one night of your life has made you bigger, braver, more beautiful!”

She fled in-doors. The groom came. The mother led Taine into the dim, cool sitting-room. He was alone for ages after that, sunk in a broad leathern chair. . . . A door opened at last, Leila was in the orifice. She came forward silently, as if he were sleeping, and bent over him.

"What did you mean by those words?" she whispered.

"All that is dear and true in my heart—I meant," he answered.

As one enchanted, he saw the old lights come back to her eyes, and her face swing closer, closer to his own.



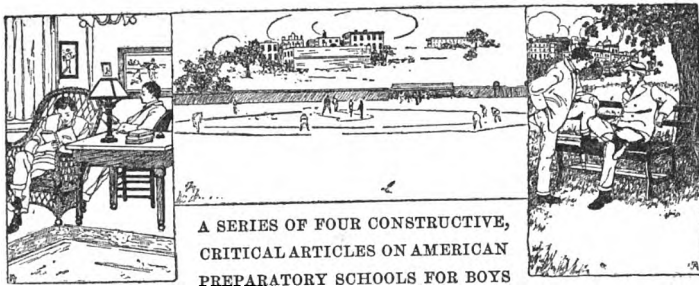
## THE MARCH WIND

BY MARY COLES CARRINGTON

**B**END a bough across my path,  
 Freakish gallant of the trees!  
 What, has all your happy laughter  
 Changed to wailing sighs like these?  
 Nay, I know you love to tease.  
 Song and mirth will follow after!

Many whims the rover hath;  
 Mischief prompts his mimic woe;  
 Rough good-will is in his greeting,  
 Cheerily he calls, "Heigho!  
 Join my rambles to and fro!  
 Come, rejoice—for life is fleeting!"

So, despite his gusty wrath,  
 I too wander, blithe and free;  
 Strength of youth, pure joy of living,  
 Health and hope return to me.  
 Warrior wind, thy ministry  
 Brings me peace—take my thanksgiving!



A SERIES OF FOUR CONSTRUCTIVE,  
CRITICAL ARTICLES ON AMERICAN  
PREPARATORY SCHOOLS FOR BOYS

## EDUCATING OUR BOYS

BY JOSEPH M. ROGERS

### FIRST PAPER—THE COST

**T**HE average annual cost of educating and maintaining a boy at the leading private, non-military boarding-schools and academies in this country is one thousand dollars.

The boy devotes, on an average, one hundred and fifty days a year to original study.

He competes with many boys who have two hundred days for study.

He has great advantages in the way of physical development and general culture, but in most cases he is kept too busy.

His vacations and holidays are out of all proportion to his working days at school. A more reasonable adjustment would bring about better results.

Secondary education—by which we mean that secured at preparatory schools—at private cost, has been much neglected in this country by philanthropists. The cost of obtaining this education away from home and in an atmosphere which is wholesome and character developing should be very materially reduced, so as to place it within the reach of many more boys.

In this series of articles the foregoing propositions, as well as some others, will be considered. The papers are intended to be instructive and constructive, and have no other purpose than to show existing merits which may be extended, and to point out defects which may be remedied. They deal with a subject of vital importance to parents and guardians, and to the boys themselves.

Only non-military schools will be dealt with—not because mili-



tary schools are without conspicuous merit, but because these are in a class by themselves, owing to the fact that military training requires an added expenditure of time and money with which other schools are not concerned. However, many of the deductions herein apply also to the schools where military instruction is given.

Girls' schools are not considered, for the reason that secondary education of the coming wives and mothers of the race is, or should be, on an essentially different basis from that of our boys. It is the coming men of the nation whose intellectual equipment is now under consideration.



No apology or excuse is offered for discussing here and now a subject of such vital importance at a time when the best educators of the land are so pessimistic as to conditions in all branches of education. President Woodrow Wilson, of Princeton University, said in a recent address:

"The children of the last two or three decades have not been educated. The pupils of our colleges of the last few decades have not been educated. With all our educating, we have instructed nobody, and with all our instructing, we have educated nobody. We are daily cramming their [the youths'] minds with an enormous mass of irrelevant facts. It is better to see one thing than to look at a hundred. It is better to conduct a student to the inner chamber of one fact than to take him on a trip seeing greater knowledge.

"Any course of study which disciplines the mind is beneficial to the student. Anything that does not is not beneficial to him. We have got to do away with the idea that one branch of our association [of teachers] is preparing children for the other branch to teach. A boy does not cross a bridge into a new land when he leaves school to enter college. He just continues on his fair journey of education. School does not prepare the boy for college. Both are doing the best they can to educate him."

These are serious words by one of the greatest of American educators. A hundred other statements might be quoted from leading pedagogues substantially to the same effect. Never was the time when they and intelligent parents everywhere were so thoroughly aroused to the necessity of improvement in our schools—in *all* our schools, of whatever kind. It is because they *are* aroused that so much of good may be expected, and that right early.

President Wilson's rather pessimistic utterances contrast sharply with some of our unthinking and complacent national boasting. We are prone to assume and even vociferate that we have the best schools in the world. At the same time, you will find nearly every intelligent

teacher and parent complaining that things are not as they should be. We must cease boasting and get down to facts in this as in every other line of human endeavor. What we are boasting of is not so much our performance as our intention.

It ought to be said at the outset that much of the present deplorable condition in our schools of all kinds arises from a misconception of what education is and how it may be achieved. Some of the strongest and most useful men in the country have never had what is commonly known as a liberal education, meaning that given in the ordinary college, or even any academic instruction worth mentioning. This applies not only to men in commercial life, but to many in the professions, even those engaged in literature. This does not mean that these men have not been well educated. It is not even to be taken as an argument against our system of education through schools. It is simply cited as showing that the school is not the only institution or avenue for educating youth. It is, however, the most available, the most widely used, and the best that is open to the multitude. Even the "self-made man" would have been no worse for academic instruction. He simply reached his goal by another and more difficult path, one which the average boy will find it hard to follow. Yet the school itself can do little for the one who is not started right, who is not willing to walk right, and who cannot do more than acquire a certain amount of facts. Unless every factor in education—and there are many outside the school—is brought to bear properly, there can be no complete education.



Schools are only a means to an end, and education itself, in the last analysis, is simply character building. The young man just out of college is really only beginning his real education, unless he has been unusually fortunate in his environment and in his early mental attitude toward life. He has, or should have, an advantage over his less favored fellows. Unfortunately, results too often show that either the schooling has been defective or he has failed to take advantage of his opportunities, for school is little more than an open door to opportunity in life. Thousands close this as well as other doors of opportunity and write failure against their lives. The fault is partly in themselves and partly in our system of education. Any school may be made the best in the world if only the boy has the willing mind, and the best in the world is useless without the coöperation of student and parents.

As it will be necessary to use a few technical phrases in these papers, it may be explained here that what is termed primary education includes all to the close of the grammar grades. This is supposed to occupy eight years, and the normal child who is not deterred by illness or other

untoward circumstance should complete the course by the end of his fourteenth or fifteenth year.

Secondary education is such as is supplied in high schools and boarding-schools and academies preparatory for college, and normally requires four years. The curriculum includes elementary study in the classics, modern languages, mathematics, history, literature, applied and natural sciences, and a slight incursion into philosophy. Many boys and girls are unable to finish this course without interruption, so that the average age at completion is more than eighteen years, which the system contemplates as the normal for those who enter at six and continue to the close.

Higher, or superior, education includes college or university academic courses as well as much of the professional training, though formerly the latter was classed as a distinct branch.

This educational classification has been well established but a short time, yet it is already beginning to fall of its own weight, for the very reason that obviously and innately education is a personal and individual affair. We have schools for convenience because it is cheaper and in some (though not in all) respects better to educate in masses—only better when the other multitudinous influences are dominant or even predominant.



In sixty years great strides have been made in this country in the direction of better primary and superior education—at least so far as outward manifestations are concerned. Secondary education, lying between these two, has not been given the popular attention it deserves. Indeed, the average parent does not realize or recognize the classification, though for all practical purposes it is an important one.

The bulk of primary education is provided at public cost. We are proud of our "common schools"—though they are far below what from an ideal standpoint they should be. No teacher is physically or mentally competent to give proper instruction to forty children, which is the average size of a division in the public schools. Under such conditions individual instruction is largely impossible and must be devoted principally to the laggards at the expense of the brighter children—or vice versa. Nevertheless, comparatively speaking, our common schools do give good instruction. It is amazing that so much is accomplished under such difficulties. It is because the average teacher—usually a woman—gives of her vitality and sympathy and mental force to an extent which is abnormal and deplorable, that the children of tender years are so well grounded in the elements of knowledge. The time will come when no such task will be placed on the young women of this country, and when the teachers will not only be honored but well paid

for their services. It may be said that primarily the need of the public schools is a reduction of the number of children in a division to twenty-five as a maximum. It would be better to place the number at twenty. It would pay in every way.

Theoretically every child is provided with education at public cost. Every State by law assumes this obligation, though it is not always fully performed. In many States, and particularly in some of those in the South, education is at a low ebb, and the public school year in rural districts amounts only to a few months. It is encouraging that in this section there is a growing enlightened public sentiment on this subject which is producing results.

Complete educational statistics are available only for the year 1906. These indicate an enrolment of 16,642,000 in the public schools, with an average attendance during term time of only 11,712,000. There were at the same time 1,312,000 children in private primary schools. The larger figure used is to an extent nominal. It represents in many States not those who attend school, but who are of school age. The second figure used is open to some question, since in many schools there are actually enrolled pupils who scarcely attend at all. In any event, there is a very considerable part of the population of school age which is without any or more than a very modest educational equipment. In this respect we are far behind Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia.



In American secondary schools in the year 1906 there were 925,000 pupils—742,000 at the public high schools and only 183,000 at private schools of all kinds. Many thousands of these latter were in the preparatory departments of the numerous small colleges all over the land, but largely in the South and West. The majority were in the private schools in the large cities. The Roman Catholic Church is more energetic than any other denomination in the private education of the children of its membership.

In superior education (colleges and universities nominally for academic study, but largely given over to technical instruction) there were 51,000 in State institutions and 97,000 at other than State institutions. In professional schools (law, medicine, theology, engineering, and the like, usually in connection with an academic institution) there were 11,000 students at State and 51,000 at other than State institutions. There were also 69,000 pupils at normal schools (all but 10,000 of them in State-supported institutions), and there were about 400,000 attending art, music, business, industrial, and trade schools, including those at Indian schools and those for the deaf, blind, and other unfortunates.

It appears from these official figures that about nine per cent of the primary scholars, under twenty per cent of the secondary scholars, and over seventy per cent of university and professional students are educated at private cost.\* Private education of children in primary schools is generally secured through preference, while superior education at private expense is a necessity except in those States where public universities are established; and at the latter only tuition is free, and other expenses about the same as at endowed institutions. At many non-State colleges and universities scholarships and other student aid are provided, so that for many the expense is no greater than at the State institutions.

Secondary education is in a different category from either of the other branches. In most rural districts it must be at private cost, and while in cities it is usually optional, instruction at private cost is often desirable if the expense can be afforded. This sort of education comes at the crucial time in a boy's life—a time when pregnant idealism is his chief mental characteristic, and when he needs the most patient, tender, and intelligent care. Yet for some unknown reason this is the period when boys are likely to receive the least attention from their parents.



There is little difficulty in understanding what is being done by the primary schools of this country. Statistics, both federal and State, are ample, and many volumes by expert writers may be consulted. So, also, as to superior education; there is scarcely any limit to the detailed information at hand. But concerning secondary education at private cost there is practically no such opportunity. These institutions are in no way federated, are under no common jurisdiction, nor are they all aiming precisely at the same ends. The only way to discover what is being done by these schools is to study each institution separately through its own literature. In preparing these papers requests were sent for catalogues and prospectuses to all of the boys' schools (non-military) which advertise in several of the magazines making a feature of educational publicity. In addition, requests were sent to a number of institutions which advertise only in local journals, or which do not advertise at all. From all of the multitude of reports received, sixty were selected as being the most thoroughly representative, and data of various kinds were tabulated. A careful reading of all the literature

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\* As reports do not always differentiate between primary and secondary students in public schools, this figure is only approximate. Apparently only 8 per cent attend private primary schools, but allowance is made for possible error or confusion in statistics.

supplied, some personal investigations of a number of the schools, and experience in educational affairs for twenty-five years were factors in producing the following studies.

The sixty selected schools embrace every phase of private secondary, non-military schools for boys, and as nearly as possible in the proper proportion. These schools may be divided into two classes: those which are proprietary and run for a profit, and those supported by endowment and other gifts, generally from some religious denomination. We may also roughly divide boarding-schools from those which are not, though here no sharp line can be drawn. Still another division might be made of the non-boarding-schools in large cities, which are not generally run for profit, and the boarding-schools in the country or suburbs of large cities. A final classification might be made of those which have long been in existence and those which are comparatively new. The former are usually the best endowed and have the largest number of students. In boarding schools the average attendance is about fifty pupils.

Representatives of all these schools have been given a proportionate showing in the tables compiled, so as to represent as nearly as possible all the various sorts of secondary private schools in every section of the country. The pupils include boys as young as six years (though these are not many) and all the way up to those who are ready to enter college. Of necessity, a few leading coeducational schools have been included, to get a complete representation, but statistics as to boys only have been used.



In these sixty representative schools the average cost of tuition (so far as it is specified) is \$182 a year. In most of them the charge varies according to the age and grade of the pupil, but the figures given represent a fair average. In city schools where there are no boarding pupils the charge for tuition is generally higher than at the boarding-schools where outside "day pupils" are sometimes allowed.

The average charge for board, tuition, room-rent, and ordinary incidentals at the boarding-schools is \$608 a year. In most schools charges vary according to the size and location of the room or the number of boys in a room. At some schools wealthy boys may have an entire suite of rooms. The sum above mentioned seems to be really less than the actual average sum paid at a majority of the schools, but is based on figures in the catalogues.

In most of the boarding-schools there is an extra charge for starched laundry, or the number of pieces per week without charge is limited to a dozen. In some there is no limitation, and in others all laundry is charged for.

Almost without exception there is extra charge for music, use of

instruments, vocal instruction, dancing, and drawing. The charges vary through wide limits. In many schools a sum of from five to twenty-five dollars is charged as an athletic fee, and in some the cost of church sittings is assessed. Assuming that the average boy will take at least one of these extras, and will pay an athletic and church fee, the additional expense from these sources amounts, at a very conservative estimate, to eighty dollars per year. This does not include books, for which a charge is almost invariably made; stationery, or spending money, which latter most schools try to limit to fifty cents or one dollar per week. It does not include the cost of athletic uniforms, sporting goods, nor the cost of maintaining such pupils as do not go home for the longer vacations. The general charge for the latter in the more select private boarding-schools is ten dollars a week. Others charge less, but only one principal announces that during vacations boys may remain as his "guests."

We have now arrived at the chief items of expense, aside from clothing and travelling expenses. As most boys live some distance from home, the cost of six journeys a year amounts to a considerable sum. Then, the clothing cost is constantly increasing. Most parents desire that their boys be neatly dressed, and the pace seems to be set by those with the most money. Where there is no extravagance, and only a good supply of clothing, not including gymnasium suits, athletic uniforms, and the like, the annual expense is certain to amount to one hundred and fifty dollars, and probably averages a good deal more.

Adding all these sums, and making allowances for unspecified items, it appears that the average cost of maintaining a boy at a boarding-school is easily one thousand dollars a year.



It should be noted, however, that this does not mean that the average boy pays so much. The figures given represent the school average. As the cheaper schools are those most largely attended, the average individual cost would be less than one thousand dollars. It is impossible to give the average individual cost, because in many cases the attendance is not stated, but it seems a fair deduction, after considering all the circumstances, that the average annual cost per boy to the parent for all purposes is seven hundred and fifty dollars. Probably it is more.

Either is a large tax upon the income of the man of moderate means, who has several children to educate, and usually several at the same time. It is a sum that eats largely into the income even of a man with ten thousand dollars a year, if he lives in a city and maintains any sort of social pretensions. And the sum compares with about one hundred dollars paid for the same purpose three generations ago. It used

to be said of Connecticut that its principal industries were making Yankee notions and conducting boarding-schools. Of the latter there were and are many. They have ever maintained high rank, partly because of local conditions and partly because of easy access to New York City, where most of the patrons live.

Boarding-schools sixty years ago were many where the entire charge for maintaining and educating a boy was seventy-five dollars a year. This undoubtedly represents far more than the same sum at present, but the contrast is substantial not only in the amount paid but in the benefits conferred on the pupil. The Connecticut schoolmaster (taken as a type) was apt to be a rural clergyman who eked out his small stipend by preparing boys for college and caring for those youngsters whose parents, for whatever reason, were glad to have them away from home. Usually the clergyman had a farm, and the boys were required to do some work on it. As he was the sole teacher, and as he raised practically all the food, the fee of seventy-five dollars was largely clear gain. Instruction was thorough, though the curriculum was necessarily limited in the existing state of the science of pedagogy. Of comforts such as are now considered requisite in the cheapest school, there was none. The boys had enough to eat and a comfortable place to sleep, were required to study diligently, and that was about all. There were no sports as we understand the term in these days, though the youngsters seem to have had a good time, and many became prominent, useful men. In this type of school, instruction formed the principal business. If the boys sometimes rebelled at a narrow, irksome existence, they were at least in no Dotheboys Hall. The stern old Puritan idea of duty and thoroughness was instilled into the mind of many a boy who had no such training at home.



Now, it would be foolish to say that it would be desirable, even if possible, to restore these schools to their elemental condition. Their defects were as prominent as their virtues, and in any event times have changed so that they would be no longer suited to modern conditions. Perhaps the greatest advantage to a boy attending those schools lay in the fact that he came early in contact with the stern realities of life, began those necessary conflicts with his environment, and learned the great value of overcoming difficulties of various kinds. Life was not easy for a boy in those days, and the law of survival of the fittest worked more impartially than now. There was little mollycoddling, even if too little sympathy.

By contrast, the modern boarding-school boy lives in fine buildings and dormitories, equipped with all modern improvements, well furnished and heated. The food is ample and of great variety. In his leisure



hours he has a library, reading-room, gymnasium, swimming-tank, athletic field, and bowling alley. If he desires mental aid, he can call on a large corps of well-trained teachers to help him over the hard places. He lives in comfort—even luxury—and in an atmosphere which is generally charming and often much better than at home or that which he will find in after life. Wackford Squeers has no representative in this country, as the principals and teachers of these schools are among the ablest and best men and women in the land. They aim not only to instruct but to develop character. They desire not only to fill the young minds with knowledge, but to give them a sense of perspective so that they may get a due value of proportion among the many factors which make up the busy, complicated, competitive modern life. Even in the proprietary schools the money-making element is necessarily kept in the background. The schools could not make money unless they fairly succeeded in developing all-around young men. Entrance to the highest college and university is the goal of nearly every one of them, and each has an ambition to make a fine record in scholarship as well as to develop other phases of character.

That all this must be done in a very short school year will be developed in the succeeding article of this series. At present we are concerned chiefly with the feature of expense, which requires a little detailed analysis. In one of the institutions concerned in this study the total charge for board, tuition, and incidentals is only one hundred dollars a year. The price is so small because of a fine donated equipment, a large endowment, and heavy annual gifts. The institution is in Kentucky, and maintains its own farms, which reduce the cost of keeping students. There are a few other institutions in the country with a remarkably low annual charge, which are maintained by church organizations. In most of them the student may reduce the cost by personal service. At the other extreme and with somewhat the same academic standard is the best endowed private secondary school in the country, where the expense to the student is almost at the maximum.



The cheapest schools, as already stated, are those longest established, which have received considerable endowment; but there is not one of them anywhere wholly able to dispense with the tuition fee, although there are some scholarships covering tuition and there are other financial aids for students. Student work and prizes help a few to lessen the cost. Schools like Phillips Exeter, Peddie, Berea, and Mercersburg are the cheapest, but in these the lowest average cost for those without scholarships is four hundred dollars, not including clothes or travelling expenses. At one boarding-school of high reputation the total cost is as

low as two hundred and fifty dollars, with a few extras to be paid, but only seventeen of the schools on the list before us give the first cost without extras at five hundred dollars a year or less.

In city schools only tuition and incidentals figure in the advertised cost. The boy lives at home, and here the expense of maintenance is much less than away from home, no matter to what social or financial stratum he belongs. Most of these schools were originally started by some religious denomination or philanthropists of strong Christian aims, and have been long established. And it may be said that in no one of the schools under consideration is religious training omitted. In every case it is advertised as a feature, though it is seldom sectarian. Some of the city day-schools go far back in our national history. Hopkins Grammar and Penn Charter date from the seventeenth century, and several others from the eighteenth. All of them have some endowment, and in almost every case the equipment has been gratuitously furnished. The tuition fee is devoted entirely to bearing the cost of instruction, and does not always fully meet that charge. And against this one must remember that the total sum spent for public schooling in the most advanced States of the country is only twenty-five to thirty dollars per capita. In some it is no more than five dollars.

The cost of maintaining these schools is great. Buildings are expensive to erect and maintain, while the salaries paid are high—higher than the average paid college professors, if we include all institutions claiming to be colleges.

These city schools do excellent work, and in many respects are not open to the criticisms to be made on the boarding-schools. They train the individual often with the invaluable assistance of the home circle. To some extent, they lack the benefits which come to boys away from home, where they are thrown to some degree upon their own responsibilities, but they have advantages of their own, and as a rule are far ahead of the public high schools as at present conducted. The expense, aside from tuition, of sending a boy to these city schools is considerable. Usually the item of clothing is more expensive than for the boy who goes to public high school, and parents desire to furnish as many "extras" as possible. Without endowment, these schools could not furnish tuition at anything like the present figures and maintain existing standards. At all of them the item for books, stationery, athletic fees, etc., is considerable.

The cost of secondary education at boarding-schools seems to be greater than that of superior education. By the time a boy is prepared for college, in the opinion of parents, he is fitted for a little more roughing it than in his adolescent years. He can even earn money in his leisure hours, which are greater in number, since the restrictions are notably and properly fewer. And it is a strange and most unsatisfac-

tory fact that opportunities for superior education at small cost are more numerous than for secondary education, which the greater number of boys require.

We have some five hundred educational institutions in this country going by the name of college or university. They are of all ranks in pedagogy and all are doing good work. Aside from the few State universities, which are almost entirely in the West, all these institutions have developed at private expense. There are a few such institutions with a "plant" and endowment valued at twenty million dollars or more, and not one of them feels sufficiently equipped. A large number of them are "worth" more than a million, but the cry is still "Give, give!" The response is liberal, so that an increase in facilities is going on all the time. New institutions are being founded, and the average attendance is increasing, without the average cost to the student being lessened. On the contrary, it is increasing. But the figures as well as the statistics of attendance already given show that the bulk of the work of superior education is being done at private cost, while that of secondary education is four-fifths in the public high schools.

The unpleasant situation that confronts every parent is that it is more expensive to give his son the highly important secondary education than to give him that superior education which many parents do not consider necessary. If it were a fact that every boy who gets secondary education continued his studies and took up superior education, the situation would be less unsatisfactory, for a bright boy in college might make up for the deficiencies in public secondary schools. But the figures show all too plainly that only a small fraction of those who get secondary education are enabled to secure the superior. In these practical days it is becoming more and more the opinion of many hard-headed business men that the college, as at present conducted, does not properly train boys for active life in the commercial world. But it would be difficult to find the most pessimistic parent who would deny the necessity of secondary education (even in its present unsatisfactory state) for all except those who expect to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. And the number of parents who can give a boy education for four years beyond the grammar grades is vastly greater than those who can afford to continue his education for four years more at college.

The reader is cautioned against supposing that this or subsequent articles are attacks upon schools individually or collectively. They are a candid examination of facts as they are, with suggestions (many emanating from preparatory school principals themselves) intended to be helpful for the future.

In an article next month some details of instruction will be considered. It will include facts not generally known and which parents ought carefully to consider.

# THE CASE OF THE WIDDER HAWKINS

By *Johnson Morton*

“SHE cost the Township about two hundred and nineteen dollars last year!” Darius Foss lifted his eyes from his papers to fling the words at his fellow selectmen grouped, in what might have been called secret and especial session, around the dining room table at the poor-farm. His listening colleagues stared blankly at one another in the silence of consternation, which Elder Babcock was the first to break. The Elder rose ponderously and brought down on the red and blue checked cloth a heavy hand that rattled the permanent group of castors and pickle-jars in the centre. His words, however, belied his threatening attitude. “Mr. Chairman,” he looked at Alonzo Jeffers as he spoke, for no degree of excitement could render him unparliamentary, “Mr. Chairman, I move that the Treasurer be asked to read aloud the items of this ’ere account.”

Stout, red-faced Mr. Jeffers, lolling in his chair at the head of the table, was of less formal habit. He was content to nod lazily in the Treasurer’s direction. “Go on, Dari,” said he. Meanwhile Mr. Foss, assisted by the remaining members of the Board, the Hatch boys, twin veterans of seventy-five, who did nothing singly, had arranged his papers in neat order. Now, clearing his throat, he rose to his feet. “I ain’t entered these ’ere items in my book yet,” he began, “because I’m afraid they ain’t complete; new ones keep a comin’ in, from time to time. But, so fur as I kin make out, what I’ve got on memorandum, so to speak, is correct. First, of course, there’s her keep here at the Farm. Fifty-two weeks at two dollars a week makes one hundred and four dollars. That’s plain, ain’t it? Then there’s an item of clothin’ without goin’ into particulars—three dresses and—ahem,—it’s some kind of a *wrapper*, I guess, that comes to \$61.70. But the rest is well—just kinder foolishness, you may say—that brings up the sum total.” He broke off lamely.

“Read it all right out, Mr. Treasurer,” came the inexorable voice of Elder Babcock.

Darius Foss braced himself; an uneasy flush mounted to his cheeks. “It riles me, gentlemen; but it kinder tickles me too.” He laughed

knowingly as he spoke. "Well, here goes! I'll give you the things exactly as I've got 'em down!" Then with fine stoicism he read aloud the list.

ADDITIONAL EXPENSE ACCOUNT OF MRS. AMELIA HAWKINS  
WIDOW-INMATE OF THE ROCKVILLE POOR-FARM.

Two Bottles, 'Bloom of Spring' Complexion Wash	\$1.50
1 Pair Rhine Stone Side-Combs	3.25
14 yards Pink Baby Ribbon	1.26
1 set Silver Bangles	6.25
3 Cakes 'Cream of Musk' Toilet Soap	.60
2 Sets 'DuBarry' Undergarments	5.00
2 Pairs 'Jenny Lind' Opera Hose	3.60
1 Story Book ('Woman's Weapons')	1.50
Ditto ('The Duke's Mad Love')	1.50
Ditto ('More Saint Than Sinner')	1.50
1 Manicure Set	.98
2 Bottles 'Champion Bronze' Hair Invigorator	2.16
1 Jar 'Cupid' Lip Salve	.45
4 'Fascination' Curls (To match)	3.75
1 Box Initial Papeterie	.68
2 Pairs French-Heeled Shoes	8.50
1 Bottle 'L'eau l'Amour' Cologne	.45
1 Year's subscription to 'Fireside Guardian'	1.75
1 Pair Lace-trimmed 'Defiance' Corsets	9.25

"By gum!" interrupted the stern tones of Elder Babcock. "This beats the Dutch!" His upper lip lengthened to horrified disapproval, a protest to the uncontrolled smiles of his colleagues. "An' how under the canopy, Mr. Chairman, did she git *credit* for all them things, I'd like to know?"

Mr. Jeffers again nodded helplessly towards the Treasurer, who came to the rescue.

"That I can't justly say, Elder," he declared. "Women is strange folks, take 'em by and large—of course, as a man that ain't never tried matrimony, you ain't bound to believe me, but it's so. I presume myself that it's a kind of a way with her that the widder's got. She kin come it over 'most any one, I've been told. Now this business begun quite a spell back and, as them headin's at 'lection time put it, there's 'counties still to hear from.' She's an eddicated woman, is Miss Hawkins, writes an elegant hand and gives out a fine line of words too. She says she begun by answerin' advertisements and ordering things. Well, some of 'em 'd come C. O. D. and, of course, she had to let them go back, not havin' a cent to bless herself with. But others would come all right, for she never give no Poor-Farm address, and you know what those folks that set out to sell things is. They'll take risks, I tell you! But, by and by when the bills follered, what she'd kinder charged up, and got too pressin' for comfort as

time went on, why, what'd she do but pass 'em all over to me. I was some staggered, I tell you, but I could n't make no move till we'd had this meetin'. And now, gentlemen, I ask ye, what air we goin' to do about it? Bills is bills and has got to be paid. We don't want no lady that is, so to speak, a ward of ours took up for gettin' goods under false pretenses, do we? She ain't liable, as the Psalmist would say, to sin no more. I talked up to her pretty sharp, I guess, when we had it out. And bein', as she is, a poor, lone widder-woman with no man, you may say, to cherish and protect her, it'd be my vote, gentlemen, that we had n't ought to be too hard."

The heads of the others moved gently up and down in sympathetic assent; but the head of Elder Babcock shook vigorously from side to side.

"By gum," again his big hand pounded the table. "By gum, Mr. Treasurer," roared he, "you're pretty near right in what you say! She *do* need a man; one that'll put his foot down good and solid. By gum, there ain't no woman livin' that had n't ought to have a master!"

Over the wrinkled face of Darius Foss had stolen a smile of humorous intent. He leaned forward, chuckling.

"Air you suggestin', Elder," he asked, "that we'd better git a husband for the Widder Hawkins?"

In the uproar that followed the Elder took no part. He drew his bushy brows together in an attitude of impressive thoughtfulness. Then, as the laughter subsided, he rose and faced Alonzo Jeffers.

"Mr. Chairman," said he, "and gentlemen, I've been considerin' and it hes been borne in on me that, as the poet says, there's many a true word spoken in jest. We're facin' here, gentlemen, a turrible ticklish situation. A widder and a woman to whom we stand in the position of gardeens, is gittin' to be more'n we kin handle. She's a bringin' discredit on the Township with her ways o' wilful, not to say dishonest, extravagance. She needs control that no collective body ain't fitted to give her. Now, as my esteemed colleague here," he leaned forward and bowed profoundly to Darius Foss, "has put me a question, I will answer it, though perhaps not jest as he has expected. You ask me, Mr. Treasurer, if I am suggestin' that we git a husband for the Widder Hawkins. Mr. Treasurer, your question has set me thinkin' and has made me develop a plan. Mr. Treasurer, my answer is confined to two words, and them words is, *I be!*"

He waved aside a burst of applause and went on. This time he addressed the chairman. He drew a picture of the lady in the case, relict of the late Pliny Hawkins, whose short career in Rockville had run and lost the race of misfortune to Sheriff, Auctioneer and Undertaker in turn. He added an appealing protest against the sapping of the town's resources by female extravagance. He frowned upon any

excess of sentiment in the matter, and he ended by stating his scheme for the settlement of the difficulty. This was done concisely and along strict business lines.

"Let us appropriate a certain yearly sum," he suggested, "for the next three years—say seventy-five dollars a year—and let us add to this sum another given amount that may be called a bonus—perhaps seventy-five dollars more—sort of a weddin' present too; and let us make it known that these payments will be made to any man, provided he's of good character and proper financial standing, who shall be willin' to marry the said Widder and take her, so to speak, off our hands! This is fair in both ways," he added; "the town'll save money, and the Widder's a young woman yet—not risin' greatly above fifty-five, I presume, and liable to become under good management," his great hand struck the table once more, "a fittin' helpmate and an ornament to her sex!"

And the motion as put by the chair was carried, somewhat to the surprise of the Treasurer, still prone to regard the whole affair as a joke. Indeed, Alonzo Jeffers stirred to unwonted and unassisted activity by the novel situation, added a spoke of his own and appointed the Elder, over his protestations of reluctance, a committee of one to wait upon the Widder Hawkins and acquaint her with the decision of the Board.

The Meeting adjourned for three weeks and, in the interval, Rockville experienced a period of excitement unparalleled in its history. Nothing since the burning of the Freewill Baptist Meeting-house in the early seventies had so absorbed its leisure and engrossed its conversation. Contemporaneous happenings in themselves of importance, were allowed to pass almost unnoted. The killing of two of Cyrus Perkins's best sheep by "a dog or dogs unknown," and the advent of a letter with a foreign stamp on it and addressed to the minister's wife, made ripples scarcely discernible in the great wave of commotion that swept the surface of village life.

From the beginning the consensus of opinions among the selectmen had been in favor of secrecy, for, as the Treasurer had humorously expressed it when he declared himself against all forms of publicity, "'Twas *advertisements* that got the widder into her little difficulties, you know, and 'tain't in reason to suppose they're goin' to git her out of 'em!" So the ordinary means were ignored: such as notices tacked to the trees in front of the store, and placards inside, among the announcements of tax and mortgage sales, lost cuff-buttons or the advent of some noted breeding-stallion. But the method unani- mously adopted for securing a husband for the widow, that of "letting it be known" by that most potent disseminator on earth, the word of mouth, was of startling efficiency.

The "Rockville Weekly War-Cry," a timorous organ prone to conciliation at any cost, buried its disappointment at the loss of a paid advertisement on its front page, in a series of delicately veiled editorials that carried the glad tidings into neighboring counties. As a result applications poured in from all parts of the state. The smooth, red face of Chairman Jeffers developed some faint lines of worry. "It's goin' to be a bigger thing than I bargained for, boys," he would declare at some impromptu meeting of the Board on a shady corner or behind the railway station. "I suppose it's all O. K., but I don't mind saying I'm kinder scared!"

The twins would shake assenting heads in unison, and even the humorous optimism of the Treasurer grew serious at the sight of the ever increasing pile of applications in the Chairman's hands. "Bile 'em well down before the meetin', Lon," he would advise, "and present only the likeliest. With that whole lot to decide on we'd be settin' way into hayin'-time!" Indeed, the only person in Rockville who showed no sign of emotion or even interest was, curiously enough, the one most concerned, the Widow Hawkins herself. Never of a sociable disposition, she seemed more aloof than ever. Though on her face—as she passed along the street, her dress held deftly to exhibit her trim ankles and the height of her heels, her side-combs gleaming triumphantly among the wealth of bronze curls—one might have discovered that look of content said to rest only on a consciousness of receipted bills and a secure possession of the articles for which they had been incurred!

Elder Babcock had returned from his interview with the widow in a state of limp dejection. He reported her as of a very difficult turn of mind. "She took on turrible," he declared. "Said 'twas taking away the only right left to her—choosin' a husband, I suppose she meant—and an insult to her womanhood. She cried some considerable too. She's a dependent sort of little woman; kinder made me feel sorry for her. But, by gum, I reasoned with her, I tell ye; told her 'twas well meant and pointed out that the town was ready to pay her bills and let her keep the merchandise. After that she kinder mellered a little, though, by gum, she would n't agree. But she said that I might come round again and talk it over some more."

And the Elder's repeated visits were evidently of avail, for on the day of the night appointed for the meeting, he announced that the widow had at last given her consent, "reluctant but cheerful" he felt called upon to add.

The town-room, in which the selectmen met, was over the store and was approached by a flight of steps on the outside of the building. And a group of small boys at the foot of these steps, an augmented number of well-filled chairs on the store piazza, and an array of buggies



hitched under the trees, from which the murmur of women's voices came through the June twilight, gave unmistakable indication of absorbing interest to the group of selectmen as they climbed ponderously and pompously to the upper story.

Once in the room, behind closed doors, Alonzo Jeffers took the chair. He looked at his colleagues and discovered only the Hatch twins and Darius Foss. "Why, the elder ain't come yet!" he declared. But the Treasurer, perhaps with plans of his own for the later evening, was consulting a big silver watch. He rose to a point of order. "Mr. Chairman," said he, "as we have a quorum present and seein' as it's past the time already, I move that we don't wait no longer for Elder Babcock, but call the meetin' at once and proceed to business." The mute consent of the twins bore out his words and so the chairman rapped for silence. Then he produced some folded papers from his pocket and spread them out before him on the table.

"Gentlemen," he began, "I ain't goin' at this in no formal way, because it's rather a personal matter. I hev done what you asked me to—kinder sorted out the applications—and, takin' all things into consideration," his broad red face had grown smooth with relief, "I did n't find no more 'n four out of the hull eighty-seven that air with talkin' over. Here I've writ down a sort o' history of each applicant and with your permission," he settled his formidable steel-bowed spectacles on his fat, red nose, "I'll read 'em out:

"*First:* Abram Ruffin; slim-built man, fifty-eight years of age, resident of this township. Says he's a glass blower by trade, but ain't practised it lately, preferrin' to live out o' doors on account of weak lungs. Occupies a cabin in the West Woods and—"

"What; old Hermit Abe!" interrupted Darius Foss, scornfully. "Why, he ain't got more 'n one shirt to his back, and I've allers suspicioned him of havin' made off with a bang-up shoat of mine that I missed from my upper-farm! Can't you do no better 'n *that*?"

The chairman did not reply. He turned up the sputtering wick of the lamp beside him and went on:

"*Second:* Bela J. Belcher of Briartown, fleshy man, sixty-four years old, occupation farmer. Says he's a widower and—"

Now it was the horrified exclamation of the Hatch boys that interrupted. The twins spoke excitedly in a sort of fraternal antiphony. "Widower! Claims he's a widower, does he? Why, that's scandalous! He married a second cousin of mother's forty years ago. From over Pomfret way, she was! She could n't stan' him. He had mean ways. Left him back in '80. But she's alive and flourishin'! Boardin' with her daughter out near Dayton, Ohio!"

Alonzo Jeffers put down the paper. He drew a long breath and his manner was severe.

"It don't seem possible to suit you fellers and I ain't more'n half done yet. Jest you hold on till I read the next, and mebbe you 'll think it's more promisin'.

"*Third*: Oscar Oleson; Swede, forty-seven years old. Resident of Farview Corners and veteran of the Spanish War. At present he has no occupation—but says his bank account——"

This time the laughter of all his listeners broke in. Darius Foss found his voice first.

"Bank account! That's an old joke! Lord, it's *too* good! Lon Jeffers, ain't you never heard about *that*? Guess the Elder'd have somethin' to say, if he was here. Don't you remember the story of the Swede who did him in that horse-trade. Guess he'd 'a' found a bank account if there'd been one visible to the naked eye—Oscar Oleson—Lord, it's *too* good. Why, the Elder——" Then as the church clock outside tolled eight jarring strokes, he broke off suddenly. "By George! where is the Elder any way?" he asked. He turned suddenly at the sound of a step on the platform outside. The others followed his gaze. The door opened and then, like a response to an invocation, the Elder stepped within. But *such* an Elder! The eyes of his colleagues fastened on him wonderingly.

He wore his Sunday suit of black; cuffs of shining whiteness concealed his hands; his grizzled hair was parted down the middle; a brave lawn tie encircled his rugged neck, and in the buttonhole of his coat a flower bloomed! He waved aside the Treasurer's greeting and, closing the door, stood with his hand on the knob.

"Mr. Chairman," said he, "and gentlemen." His voice had in it a quality new and strange—a gentleness that was almost apologetic. "Gentlemen, I dunno but some sort of explanation is due from me. I kinder feel underhanded, though it's all square, as Alonzo here could tell you. That fourth application—I've heard your proceedin's out there on the stairs—is mine, made out legally and in due form. But this evenin', seein' that, as the poets put it, there ain't no time like the present, why, the widder and me—not all at once, gentlemen, I guess I do see things some different than I did three weeks ago—we concluded there war'n't no use to wait and so we slipped down to the minister's and was, so to speak, made one! There 'll be a little matter of business for us to attend to bye and bye, gentlemen, but now——" he stopped suddenly and with a conscious smile flung wide the door.

The late widow Hawkins stood revealed. She glittered with brightness; she radiated color; she even diffused a subtle fragrance of "Cream of Musk" soap!

The Elder took her tightly gloved hand and led her into the room.

"But now, gentlemen," he repeated, "let me make you all acquainted with Mis' Babcock."

# THE TESTING OF THE EARLS

By *John Reed Scott*

*Author of "The Colonel of the Red Hussars," "Beatrice of Clare," etc.*

THE Lady Maude Herbert turned sharply from her sister and leaned upon the crenellated parapet.

Behind her rose the gray grimness of the keep; before her stretched the rim of Wales that lay between the castle of the Herberts and the sea. The salt was in the air; with the sunshine and the mountain. It was a morning to live—to laugh and be satisfied.

But the Lady Maude laughed not, nor was she satisfied; and to her, just then, life was rather a burden than a joy.

The Lady Margaret looked at her with a smile that had in it more of pity than sympathy; then she went and stood beside her.

"Cheer up, dear," she said. "Forget the past; think of the present."

The Lady Maude shrugged her shoulders.

"It is the present that troubles me," she said.

"Only because you will not forget the past."

"May be I do not want to forget it."

The Lady Margaret laughed. "Now, out on you for a sentimental child. Think of your coming power and estate."

The other made a wry face. "And the ladder by which I climb to them."

"Chatelaine of Topcliffe and all his other castles."

"I would rather live in quietness here in Pembroke."

"Countess of Northumberland," the younger went on.

The Lady Maude's face grew wryer still. "Aye, Countess of Northumberland and, therefore, wife to Henry Percy."

"The great Northern Earl!"

"Great! may be, in land and wealth and power and name and stature."

The smile of tolerant pity came again. "Methinks, my dear, you confess to crowding Fortune."

The Lady Maude faced her sister.

"Why do *you* not take the Percy?" she asked.

The smile broadened. "For the best of reasons—he does not ask me."

"But if he were to ask you?"

The Lady Margaret paused a moment contemplatively.

"I believe you actually are serious," she said.

The elder caught her arm. "Serious! I was never more so. Will you do it?"

"No, certainly, no . . . nor could I if I tried."

"I will aid you . . . I will . . ."

The other raised her hand imperatively.

"Are you blind, Maude?" she said. "Do you not know that Percy loves you? Think you he would turn to the sister if you flung him aside?"

"He would turn somewhere. He has ever liked you best of us all . . . after me."

"A long way after. Besides, why should he pick me to fill your place? You have five other sisters."

"You all are welcome to him."

The Lady Margaret drew herself up into one of the depressions of the parapet and swung there.

"Yet half the maids of England envy you this match."

"They all are welcome to him."

"*Mon Dieu*, Maude, the man is not the Great Turk. First you give him to your six sisters, and then to the whole Kingdom."

"I would gladly give him to Perdition to be well rid of him."

The other looked at her shrewdly.

"There is one than Percy you best send to Perdition, my dear sister," she said.

The elder's face flushed. "It will profit nothing for us to discuss the other one," she answered curtly.

"Doubtless, as I have learned heretofore. Yet still am I at a loss what there is in him that appeals to you."

"Everything that Percy has not."

"Poverty, perchance?"

"Aye, poverty; and a noble mind and heart."

The younger laughed again. "Noble mind and heart, forsooth! About as much as has that mongrel hound crossing the bailey yonder."

"You never liked him. You cannot judge him fairly."

"No, I never liked him . . . nor did any one else I ever heard of, save you, my sister. The whole world knows him false, sullen, suspicious, crafty, cruel, a coward."

The elder went full angry now.

"This is too much!" she exclaimed.

"Aye, so it is; too much baseness for most men to live with every day. Yet he seems to thrive under it amazingly."

The Lady Maude's face was flaming. "Really, my dear, one well might think you love the man, you seem to scorn him so."

The other smiled; then dropped lightly to the wall and put an arm around her sister's shoulders.

"Come, dear," she said; "forgive me. I did not mean to hurt you. You are sad enough as it is."

The Lady Maude caught her hand and held it tight.

"I know, dear," she said; "I know. And you are right. It is a great match for me, one of seven poor orphan sisters. Yet I would it were another Henry."

For a space there was silence. Then she sighed.

"Percy comes to-morrow," she said. "I wish it all were over—the greeting—the wedding—the first year."

"The year will pass quickly enough."

"But the other years!"

"Wait until they come."

A wan smile touched the Lady Maude's lips.

"My wise baby sister!" she said. "How much fitter bride for Percy you would make."

The younger smiled. "You can be wise enough when you wish. And, mayhap, you can find me an Earl for husband when you go to Court."

"Any Earl?"

"Aye, any of them; and if none is to hand, a good rich Lord or Baron will suffice."

"Now, I believe it is you who are serious."

"Truly, yes. It is as easy to love a rich man as a poor one, and vastly more convenient after marriage."

"My mercenary little sister," laughed the Lady Maude.

"Your sensible little sister, you mean. For look you, Maude, here are you, the betrothed of the great Northumberland and yet sad and woe-begone because you cannot marry that landless exile, Henry Tudor."

"But even in your own aspect, Henry Tudor might be, in the end, the better match. He may be King some day."

"King! Likely indeed; with Edward at Windsor, two sturdy sons beside him, and the great Gloucester next in line. Oh, no, sister mine; Fate holds no Kingship for your Richmond."

"Think you so, my lady?" said a man's voice behind them. "Well, perchance, you are right."

The two swung around quickly—then viewed the speaker in surprise.

He was tall and rather slender and wore the garb of a Benedictine Monk, with the hood drawn well over his face.

"It seems to me, Father," said the Lady Margaret, "you are presumptuous overmuch. Who are you and how did you gain admission here?"

The Monk threw back his cowl.

"Henry!" exclaimed the Lady Maude.

"Richmond!" muttered her sister.

"In the flesh," said the Earl, and smiled. "I am no ghost."

Then he took their hands in turn and kissed them.

"What means this rashness?" said the Lady Maude. "You are supposed to be in France."

"And hence, less likely to be sought in Wales."

"But the danger!"

"Even you did not recognize me in this disguise—and then, there are few in Wales who would betray a Tudor to a Plantagenet."

"Yet, why risk it when you might be safe beyond the sea?"

The Earl took her hand again and kissed it.

"Can you not guess, my lady?" he asked.

The Lady Margaret had stood aloof, and now she smiled rather disdainfully.

"Who plays for a Crown must chance the hazards," she remarked, and turned away.

"The Lady Margaret does not give the warmest greeting to the Exile," said Henry calmly.

"Methinks it was not *my* welcome you came for, my lord," she flung back.

The Earl watched her rather thoughtfully until she had turned the bastion—then he smiled.

"The same Margaret," he said. "Haughty and outspoken and spoiled. But *you* are glad to see me, *n'est ce pas*, my Maude?"

The Lady Maude flushed—dropped her eyes—hesitated—then looked bravely at him.

"You know I am," she said.

He drew close and made to put his arm about her. But she slipped away. Again he essayed; and again she slipped away.

"Wherefore, sweetheart?" he asked.

"Do Monks in France, at mid-day, make love on the castle walls?" she laughed.

"*Pardieu!* I clean fergot," looking at his black gown.

"And such forgets are quite enough to betray a false Monk to his enemies."

"But there could be no betrayal and no enemy, since you are the only one with whom I would so forget."

She flung up her head with a doubting smile.

"That may be as it may be, my lord," said she. "It is the general peril you play with, I mean."

Henry's face sobered; and the quick suspicion, which ever sat next his heart, shone in his deep-set eyes.

"Of a truth, Maude, this general peril seems to have waxed vastly since I was here a year ago. It gave you no such tremors then. One might almost fancy York himself were lurking here to seize me."

The Lady Maude sat down on the stone bench in the embrasure behind her.

"Come, Henry, it is too soon to get in that frame of mind," she said with a gay laugh. "Come, tell me all about yourself."

The Earl's mouth relaxed in a faint smile under the infection of her laugh.

"There is naught to tell," he said, taking her hand.

"*Parbleu!* A year at the French Court and naught to tell? Were you playing Benedictine there?"

He shook his head. "No, I was not. And yet it might have served my purpose better if I had. Louis has affected the Church lately. I have tried in vain to get him to lend me soldiers."

The Lady Maude eyed him sharply for a moment.

"Still aiming at the Crown?" she asked.

"Yes; and, please God, some day I shall be King in England."

She was silent.

His face grew sour again.

"So even you have lost faith," he said. "Small wonder, then, if France have none."

"Nay, my lord; put it not that way. I have full faith in the righteousness of your cause."

"So has Louis—or so he avers; but that breeds not an army."

"It makes much for victory when an army back it."

The Earl laughed sarcastically. "Methinks, as between a righteous cause without an army and an army without a righteous cause, I would choose the latter."

"Cynic?" she said kindly.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Years of exile and chill looks are not prone to make one optimistic."

"But not all the looks you got were chill," said she.

"No; sometimes the King's were warm enough."

She gave him a quizzical smile. "And sometimes the King's daughter's also."

The sunken cheeks flushed ever so slightly.

"The Lady of Beaujeu," he said. "She has been very kind to me."

"So it has been reported," said the Lady Maude dryly.

"But for her influence with Louis I might, long since, have been given to the headsman on Tower Hill."

"For which, then, your friends in England are her everlasting debtors."

"I shall always remember her goodness to me," the Earl averred.

"Why do you not court her?" the Lady Maude asked curtly. "She could buy you all the men-at-arms you need."

"She would only laugh at me as a lover," he answered quickly—so quickly, indeed, that she knew the idea had been in his mind before—and carefully considered.

She smiled. "What matters her laugh if she get you the soldiers? Rumor has it she is most generous to her—favorites."

Henry frowned very slightly. "You do me grave injustice."

"If I do, I fancy Anne de Valois would be little flattered by your claiming all the injustice and giving none to her."

This was a new mood in the Lady Maude and the Earl was puzzled. Hitherto she had been trusting and gentle; never doubting his affection nor questioning his actions. Many years of their childhood had been spent together when he had been a state prisoner under ward of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and father to the Lady Maude. When he was released from captivity it was said they were betrothed. Whether or not it were truth, it is certain that many times he visited surreptitiously this castle when he was supposed to be in France; and doubtless, the Lady Maude took them as instances of his devotion to her. And Henry let her think it.

But the fact was, he came to hold conference with the Lancastrian leaders in Wales, and with his mother, Margaret of Somerset, then wife to Thomas Lord Stanley. Henry Tudor loved no human being save himself; but he found this daughter of the Yorkist Herberts a convenient aid. So he played on her love, and used her to further his own selfish ends.

And the Lady Maude had waited patiently for him to lead her to the altar—but the careful Henry never led. And so when, lately, the Earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy, the greatest of the Northern Barons, had come a-wooing, the family pressure had driven her to accept him. For as the Lady Margaret had said, it was a great match for a dowerless orphan, and one that any woman in the Kingdom might well have been glad to make. Even Royalty itself would not have scorned the Percy. Still, her heart had clung to the Tudor, and she persistently closed her eyes to his many faults. Now, however, aroused possibly by what the Lady Margaret had just said, she began to regard him with calmer judgment—and already Henry's halo was fading.



But the Earl, with the supreme conceit of his kind, thought only that she was jealous. And though he cared not a whit for her in honest lover fashion, it flattered him. Women had never been over kind to Henry Tudor—doubtless because, with their sex's peculiar intuition, they had quickly read him as he was.

He moved a bit closer.

"Do not let the Lady of Beaujeu worry you. She is nothing to me, dear," he said suavely.

"Nothing but a friend," the Lady Maude corrected.

"Nothing but a friend," he echoed.

She faced him sharply.

"And what, my lord, am I?" she demanded.

The Earl was taken aback.

"You!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, I . . . What am I to you?"

He took her hand.

"You are my very dear sweetheart," he said glibly.

"And did you so style me to the Princess Anne?"

For the briefest interval he hesitated.

"Come, Henry, come," she said, "the truth. It is evident it was not as sweetheart you named me to her. What was it?"

As a matter of fact, he had never named her—but that was not for the Lady Maude to know, so he answered:

"The Princess assumed you were only a friend, and it seemed to me unnecessary to undeceive her."

The Lady Maude laughed. "Quite unnecessary, my lord, since she was not deceived."

"I do not understand," he said. The Tudor's wit was never very quick.

"Think a bit and it will come to you," she answered mockingly.

Henry eyed her in annoyed silence—and she gave him no further word.

Then, suddenly, from beyond the walls, a bugle rang the greeting. The Earl started up; and the Lady Maude also.

Before the barbican a score of horsemen were moving from column into line; in their front two men in riding dress; one tall and bulky, the other short and slender. But one banner was displayed, however: an azure lion rampant on a field of gold.

For an instant Richmond stared across the moat.

"*Mon Dieu!* It is Northumberland himself!" he exclaimed. Then he turned to the Lady Maude. "What, in Heaven's name, brings him here?"

The die was cast sooner than she had thought. An hour since—before the Tudor came—the sight of that banner would have given

her only sharp distress; but now, somehow, the sharpness was gone and only dull indifference remained.

Yet she knew her face was flushed, and that her voice was hard to find. But the Earl did not notice it. He was thinking solely of the peril yonder horsemen meant to him, for whom, living or dead, Edward would gladly give the fairest fief in all his Kingdom.

"The Earl of Northumberland comes to his wedding," she said.

"His wedding!" Henry exclaimed. "His wedding to whom?"

The Lady Maude curtsied low.

"To me, my lord."

For an instant, Henry looked at her in blank surprise—then he laughed shortly.

"Come, Maude," said he, "this is no time for jesting. We shall need all our wits to save me. What brings the Percy, if you know?"

Her face was grave now; his danger had not occurred to her before.

"Believe me, Henry, I do not jest," she said. "I wed Percy three days hence."

This time he knew she spoke truly, and a wave of fierce anger surged across his sallow face.

"So," said he sneeringly, "another friend gone false! What a rare wedding gift I shall be to your new betrothed. Three days hence, say you? Oh, no, my lady; methinks that ceremony will have to bide until he has hurried me to London and the block."

The Lady Maude raised her hand imperiously.

"Come, sir," she said, "cease your wild and childish talk. You know quite well it is nonsense. The point, now, is to effect your escape."

He shrugged his shoulders. "After the trap has caught me."

She stamped her foot with impatience.

"I wonder little you lose friends if you are always so unjust," she said hotly. "Trap, indeed! Did I know of your coming?"

"Perchance, no; but you did know of Percy's. The trap was no one's laying, but you suffered it to close."

"Now, out on you for a narrow-minded and suspicious fool," she cried. "Percy was not due here until to-morrow."

He saw he was in the wrong and he veered quickly.

"Forgive me, Maude," he said; "forgive me. But, surely, you must appreciate how it looked to me."

"It is of no moment how it looked," she answered. "The matter now is to save you from discovery and capture." Then the woman in her added: "If only you had not come, Henry."

The Earl smiled. Never having done a disinterested action in his whole life, he could not comprehend one in another; and he thought he saw the reason for her readiness to aid his escape: the new lover

must not know the old one had been there; and that, with the wedding but three days distant; the Percy were ever a hot-tempered lot.

For a moment he contemplated the satisfaction of causing a rupture of the betrothal. Then he dismissed it; for as Northumberland would likely kill him first, and end the marriage business afterward, the satisfaction to him would be rather brief.

As they talked, the cavalcade had crossed the drawbridge and the bailey and were drawn up before the entrance to the keep, within which Percy's tall form was just disappearing.

"It happens to your fortune," said the Lady Maude, "that my brother is absent until to-night, and so the Earl will be conducted to me at once. You best remain here until I have greeted him, and then you can slip away; your robe will give you courteous passage and no questions, I trust . . . But stay! Is there any likelihood of Northumberland recognizing you?"

Richmond shook his head. "I never laid eyes on him until to-day."

"Then do not forget your habit, and to play the Churchman," she cautioned.

"Never fear," he answered; "I will play my part."

But he did not think it necessary to add that, if the pinch came, his part would be to use, unhesitatingly, the Knight's dagger that rested to his hand beneath his robe.

Around the bastion came the old steward, walking backward; and behind was Percy, and leaning on Percy's arm was one whose height was barely to the great Earl's shoulder.

The Lady Maude waved her hand and both men raised their bonnets.

Suddenly Richmond gave an exclamation.

"St. George! Do I see aright?"

"What is it?" she asked.

"I am lost!"

"Lost!" she echoed. "Wherefore?"

"The man with Percy—look!"

Until then she had given no heed to him.

"Holy Mother!" she whispered. "It cannot be!"

The Tudor almost groaned. "It is; I know him all too well."

The woman was braver than the man.

"Courage, Henry, courage," she urged. "Your disguise will save you."

There was no time for answer, and he braced himself for the ordeal. Northumberland, he had been ready to meet with small fear of recognition; but it was another matter to stand beneath the searching eyes of Richard of Gloucester. And he cursed his luck and the foolish fancy that had led him hither from his temporary refuge at Torveaux.

The Lady Maude curtailed low to the Prince.

"Your Grace honors our poor house," she said. "Until my brother return, except from me Pembroke's welcome and our service."

Richard took her hand and bowed over it.

"We love our faithful Herbert well," he said, "but if you are his deputy, we will gladly spare him his attendance now."

Northumberland stooped and kissed her on the cheek.

"And as my future deputy at Topcliffe," he said, "she will hope to welcome Your Grace often."

Richard laughed. "Topcliffe will be a deal more attractive, I assure you." Then he turned to the Priest. "We give your reverent good morning."

Richmond bowed slightly and raised his hand.

"*Benedicite*," he said, as both Knights uncovered.

The Lady Maude grew cold—then held her breath, as Gloucester, who had given the Monk only a careless glance, suddenly eyed him sharply.

"Your voice seems familiar, good Father," he said. "Have we met before?"

Richmond bowed again—he was trying to steady himself.

"Never, my lord," he said. And, to the girl beside him, the tremble was so evident it seemed to speak his doom.

But the Duke was used to having men grow nervous in his presence; and so it went at that to him. In fact, he had seen Henry Tudor only once or twice before—when both were children at King Henry's Court; and that the gowned figure before him was the Lancastrian chief never entered his mind. Richmond was supposed to be in France, though that he occasionally had ventured into Wales was known to the Yorkists. But to the Earl and Lady Maude, standing there under Gloucester's stern gaze, discovery seemed sure. And Henry's hand sought stealthily his dagger, and the Lady Maude's fingers began to twist one another and grew very cold.

It was but an instant until Richard spoke again, but such instants are measured by no units known to man.

"You ought to know, good Father," he said, "but it is passing strange. I do not often mistake a voice. You are the Earl's chaplain?"

"No, my lord, such is not my good fortune," said Richmond, and made to withdraw.

But the Duke was still searching his memory, and he stayed him.

"Put back your cowl," he said.

The Lady Maude turned to the parapet and gazed outward—seeing nothing. It was only a moment now, and she waited trembling, forcing back the shriek that filled her throat.

And Richmond, too, thought the game was lost, and for the briefest moment he hesitated whether to obey or to use his dagger. Then he obeyed. Most men did, with Gloucester.

Richard leaned forward and scanned the Monk's face critically.

"By St. Paul, it is very curious," he said, turning to Northumberland. "I remember the voice . . . and the face, too, seems familiar, and yet I cannot place them."

"Your Grace sees many faces; a mistake is easy," said the Earl.

The Duke nodded, but with a puzzled air.

"Perchance, yes; but it is rare for me to forget." He gave the Monk another survey . . . "Are you quite sure we have never met?" he demanded.

"Quite sure, my lord," said Richmond, and replaced the hood.

"Your habit smacks of the Benedictines; where is your Abbey?"

"Torveaux, my lord; but I spend much of my time in visitations."

"And the good Father has stopped in passing to give me a message from a friend at Brecknock," said the Lady Maude.

The Monk nodded in acquiescence.

"For which," she went on, turning to him, "I am much your debtor, and I beg that you tarry with us as long as it may suit your convenience. Meanwhile, refreshment awaits you in the hall."

Richmond raised his hand with grave courtesy.

"It is a pleasure to have served you, my lady," he said; "and I thank you for your gracious invitation, but I must fare on at once."

He made a farewell salute and turned away.

"Hold yet a moment," said Richard. "You come from Torveaux, you say?"

The Monk bowed.

"Know you Henry Tudor, sometimes styled Earl of Richmond?"

The Lady Maude gave a bit of a gasp—and Richard shot a quick glance at her. The interval was very grateful to Richmond, and his voice was calm and steady as he answered:

"Yes, Your Grace, I have often seen him in former years."

Gloucester eyed the Priest sternly. "And when did you see him last?"

The Monk dropped his head in thought.

"Not for two years at least," he said.

"Two years! Are you quite sure two months would not be nearer the truth?"

The Monk drew himself up with calm dignity. "The Duke of Gloucester forgets he speaks to a priest of Holy Church."

Richard smiled grimly. "I forget nothing, Sir Benedictine; and least of all, that your Abbey has ever been a nest of Lancastrians; and, it is said, a refuge for this same Tudor when he comes to Wales."

Richmond made no answer.

The Duke began to finger his dagger, shooting it back and forth in its sheath.

Northumberland had backed against the parapet beside the Lady Maude.

"The Monk is a fool to cross Gloucester so," he said, in an undertone.

She answered with a nod; she was too intent on the others to know what he said.

Then the Duke snapped his dagger down sharply.

"Your reverence will be good enough to tarry until we have dined," he ordered. "I will do myself the honor of accompanying you to Torveaux."

The Monk flung up his head; then quickly bowed it humbly.

"Your lordship does me too much favor," he said; "permit me to precede you and acquaint the Abbot of the great honor in store."

A slight smile crossed the Prince's lips.

"We prefer your company to your heraldship," he said curtly, and dismissed him with a wave of the hand.

For an instant Richmond's eyes sought the Lady Maude's—then he went slowly down the wall, leaving her to face the problem of blocking Gloucester's purpose to carry him to Torveaux.

"Surely Your Grace will not leave us so soon?" she said. "Pembroke will return to-night."

"Alas, my lady, I may not linger even until then," said the Duke. "Had I not chanced to meet my good Percy in the town, and so learn his errand here, I would, even now, be headed Eastward. I but turned aside to give you greeting and to wish you joy."

She curtsied low. "I cannot sufficiently thank you, my lord, for your good will and gracious thought." And then she smiled at Northumberland and gave him her hand.

Richard laughed. "Make him stop at Pontefract on your way to Topcliffe," he said; "my own fair spouse will welcome you with delight."

She looked at Percy with a roguish smile.

"Wilt do it, Henry?" she asked.

"That I will, sweetheart, and gladly."

"Good," said Gloucester; "cozen him well, my lady—he will need managing—though his heart is as big as his body. However, I warrant you will find it."

She put her arm within the Earl's.

"I hope, my lord, I have already found it," she said, looking up at him.

"That you have, little one," the Earl exclaimed, patting her cheek.

The Duke laughed again.

"Clever woman," he commented. Then he motioned to the steward, who still waited just out of earshot. "May I beg a bit of water to remove this dust?" he said . . . "No—no!"—as the Lady Maude sprang forward in protest. "Your servant shall conduct me; you two have had no chance for greeting—I insist—" and he followed the steward.

The Lady Maude looked up at Percy and smiled sweetly.

"Art glad to see me, dear?" she asked.

"More glad than you might believe," he said, stroking her hair softly.

"And you are sure—quite sure—you love me?"

"Love you? *Pasque Dieu!* What else, think you, brings me to this end of the world?" he smiled.

She slipped her arm around his.

"Nay, dear," said she. "I know you love me; though why I cannot guess, when you might have the pick of all the Court."

The Earl caught her by the waist, and lifted her till her face was level with his own; then kissed her on the lips.

"Oh, Henry! . . . in sight of all the Courtyard," she protested. But he only laughed and kissed her again.

"Let them," he said. "I forgive them their envy."

She knew the propitious moment had arrived.

"But will you forgive me, I wonder?" she said with grave tone and face.

Percy was too light-hearted, just then, for seriousness—the Lady Maude had never treated him so sweetly hitherto.

"Forgive you?" he said. "I will forgive you anything but a postponement of our wedding day."

"May be you will want no wedding when I have told you," she said.

He smiled indulgently. "Nay, sweetheart; nothing you could tell would work that end. What is it troubles you?"

She wound her arm within his, and turned so that both leaned upon the parapet, facing outward.

"Listen, dear," she said, "and judge me gently . . . The Monk . . . the one with me when you came . . . you did not recognize him?"

The Earl smiled. "Recognize him? Assuredly no; I am not fond of the breed. Methinks I would not recognize Topcliffe's own chaplain if I met him without the walls."

"But this was no Monk."

"No Monk!—he wore the habit."

"As a disguise—"

"Ah! then Gloucester . . ."

"Was right. He had seen him years ago . . . It was the Earl of Richmond."

Percy looked at her in astonishment.

"Richmond!—the Tudor—here!" He made a quick step toward the tower; then halted—frowned—turned, and leaned against the parapet.

"What brings him here?" he demanded.

She saw, of course, what was in his mind. It was the one danger.

"I do not know," she answered. "He appeared here on the wall just as you crossed the bridge. I have no idea whence he came, nor why."

For a space, that to the Lady Maude was endless, the Earl stood silent, looking her in the eyes with steady stare.

"Tell me, Maude," he said presently, "if Richmond were beside me here, as free as I to go or stay, which of us would your heart choose for husband?"

Two hours earlier and her answer would have been quick and ready—and Richmond would have had it. But now there had been a sudden and complete dispelling of the glamour her young dreams had cast about him, and she saw him as he was. And to the bluff and honest Percy, who loved her truly, as she knew, had gone with a rush, the affection she thought given to the other. And she realized that, for months, the struggle had been not so much to love Percy as to keep from forgetting Tudor.

And so she answered the question; and he knew she spoke truth.

"As God is my witness, Henry, I would choose you, though Richmond and all the nobles of England stood beside you."

He took her hand and raised it to his lips.

"May you never regret the choice," he said solemnly. Then fell to thinking.

She looked up at him and away, and up again.

"You will help me save him?" she asked timidly.

He nodded.

"It must be tried," he said. "For Henry Tudor to be found in Pembroke Castle and with Pembroke's sister, would be ill indeed for Pembroke . . . Is there a secret exit beyond the walls?"

"Alas! no; there was one, but as this castle has been held by both Lancastrian and Yorkist, the secret was no secret, and the passage simply another point of danger, so it was closed."

"It is a pity," said Percy; "and the time is short, indeed. However, do you go, sweetheart, and keep Gloucester occupied, while I to this false Monk and counsel with him."

He found Richmond in the great hall, head on breast, before the



fireplace, though the time was June. Nor did he notice Northumberland until the latter touched him on the shoulder. Then he recoiled a step.

"Your lordship startled me," he said.

"Your pardon, good Father, and also the favor of a word with you in private in the chapel yonder."

Richmond inclined his head in acquiescence.

At the portal, Northumberland waved the other ahead and closed the door behind them. The Monk bent knee to the altar and crossed himself—and Percy smiled.

"Come, my Lord of Richmond," he said sharply, "drop the masquerade."

Instantly the Tudor swung around with dagger drawn, and sprang upon him.

But the huge Percy seized him by the wrist and wrenched away the weapon.

"You fool!" he said, holding the Monk at arm's length. "If I had intended harm to you, would I bring you to the chapel?"

Richmond shrugged his shoulders. "Chapels have lost their sanctity in England."

"And in some cases very properly. All that saves you now is my regard for Pembroke."

"And Pembroke's sister," the other sneered.

Percy's eyes blazed.

"We will leave Pembroke's sister out of the conversation, if you please," he said. "You are too small-minded to appreciate nobility of character. The point is to save you from the Duke of Gloucester."

A light came into Richmond's face.

"You will befriend me?" he asked.

"No, not you, Sir Earl. I befriend Pembroke in saving him from the inference of treason your presence carries."

"The end is the same—and, believe me, I shall be none the less grateful."

The Earl laughed shortly. "Grateful! Saint Peter! When did a Tudor learn even the word?"

Richmond answered with a smile.

"Your lordship wastes time," he said. "Gloucester gave us but an hour, and half of that is spent."

Percy nodded. "You have lived in this castle; is there a secret exit available?"

"If there were, I would not have had the pleasure of this meeting with you."

"Then, can you suggest some way to save you this ride with Gloucester to Torveaux, and thence on to the Tower and the block?"

Richmond looked at him shrewdly.

Percy raised his hand sharply.

"Do not say it," he cautioned, "or you take the ride. I aid you only in such a way as brings no suspicion of complicity upon Pembroke, even if we fail."

"What is your plan?" asked the Tudor.

"I have none. This is an occasion which suits your particular mental trend."

Richmond's one aim now was to escape; and it was characteristic of the man to ignore all slights and insults if it would speed his purpose.

"I suppose," he said, "the bridge may not be dropped long enough for me to pass the barbican."

"And so make the connivance plain? Oh no!"

"Then, will the castle furnish me a long, stout rope?"

"I see no great risk in that."

"And can you provide that I have the west wall to myself for a brief time?"

Percy's face brightened. "That will do very well," he said. "There is no moat there, only the sheer rock."

"But the rope," said Richmond.

"Can be hid under your gown."

Richmond smiled. "Of course—but how to get it there?"

Percy frowned. "True enough; it will take a good hundred feet and such lengths are to be had only in the armory."

"Which I have tried to enter, and found locked."

"It shall be open in ten minutes."

"Then give me as many more and Pembroke Castle shall be free of me."

Percy turned away. "I may not tarry longer. If you fail with the rope, conceal yourself as best you can; and may the Virgin aid you. Farewell."

The Tudor bowed. "My thanks, Sir Earl—and may the Red Rose, some day, have the azure Lion beside her, as of yore."

Northumberland made no reply, and the door closed behind him.

Yet the wish was prophetic of the morning, four years thereafter, when Henry Percy stood aloof from battle, while Richard of England rode his last grand charge across Redmore Plain, and died within sword length of the shrinking Tudor.

On the dais at the head of the hall sat the Lady Maude, with the Duke of Gloucester on her right, and the Earl of Northumberland on her left. On Gloucester's other hand was the Lady Margaret. The dinner was almost ended.

"I do not see the Monk of Torveaux," said the Duke, running his eyes along the long board below them. "Is this a fast day of the Benedictines?"

Percy laughed. "I am not an authority on fast days," he said; "they are not in my calendar."

"By St. Paul!" said Richard, "one needs only to look at you to believe it. But the Priest gave no such proof."

He spoke to the steward behind his chair.

"I pray you, good sir, have the Monk found and bring him hither."

"He may be in the chapel," the Lady Maude suggested.

"Or the wine cellar," said Percy.

The two women laughed gaily—a relief to their over-strung nerves—then glanced apprehensively at each other. The next few minutes would spell success or failure.

Richard dipped his fingers in the silver bowl, and wiped them with all the daintiness of a woman.

"These wandering priests are a plague to government," he said. "They are the constant messengers of treason and sedition, and are difficult to apprehend in any overt act. You saw this fellow's attitude when I questioned him; contumacious and disrespectful. And his Abbey is like him. I long to burn it with all it holds—though I may not. Yet some day, mark me, a King of England will clean the land of the breed."

The minutes passed. The meal was finished, and the Duke growing restless.

"*Pardieu!* The fellow seems difficult to find," he said . . . "Ah, at last," as the steward appeared at the far end of the hall . . . "What, alone! Verily, Percy, you must have guessed it—the wine cellar."

But to the Earl and the two women it brought a different meaning; and the Lady Maude gave a quiet sigh of relief, and, beneath the table, her hand found his.

The look on the steward's face told Gloucester his message quicker than his lips.

"So, the Priest has flown," he said, lightly, as the old man knelt before him.

"He has, Your Grace, but through no fault of ours. The bridge has not been lowered since your entry. The rogue went over the west wall; the rope still dangles from the parapet."

"You are quite sure he is not hid within and the rope only a ruse?"

"Absolutely sure; every foot of the castle has been searched."

The Duke nodded.

"My horse!" he ordered—then arose.

"Your ladyship will pardon my abrupt departure," he said, "but I must away. This matter will bear instant investigation at Torveaux."

He bowed over the Lady Maude's hand and then over the Lady Margaret's.

"A word with you, Percy," he said; and drawing on his gauntlets, strode swiftly from the hall.

The two sisters looked at each other.

"Thank God!" both exclaimed.

"Come," said the Lady Margaret, and drew the other to the window in the gallery behind them, overlooking the courtyard.

Gloucester's great charger was just being led before the door. Northumberland stepped forward to hold the stirrup, but the Duke stopped him, and sprang into saddle, without so much as laying hand to pommel. As he swung his horse around, his eye caught the faces at the window above him and he doffed bonnet and called farewell. Then, followed by only the single squire who had attended him hither—his escort of Knights and men-at-arms having been left in the town—he galloped across the bailey and over the drawbridge.

Northumberland watched him until the barbican hid him from sight; then he, too, looked up at the window and waved his hand and smiled.

The Lady Margaret eyed her sister searchingly.

"Do you appreciate what Lord Percy has done?" she asked.

The Lady Maude nodded gravely.

"He has risked honor, lands, and life," she said.

"Yes—and for you; for you, my sister. Gloucester may be Percy's friend, yet think you he would spare him if he knew the story of the dangling rope?"

"Please God he never know!" said the Lady Maude.

The Lady Margaret put her arm around her sister's shoulders.

"Tell me, Maude," she said presently, "which, think you, now, is the nobler of the Earls, and which the safer lover?"

The ring of a spur sounded on the stone floor without.

"He comes," said the Lady Maude, with a happy laugh; "he comes." Then, as Northumberland entered, she went to him, and reaching up, drew his head down and kissed him on the lips.

"Thank you, sweetheart," she said; "thank you, always."



# THE IVORY DOOR

By *E. Ayrton Zangwill*



LITTLE Peggy lies in her cot; she lies there sleeping. Little Peggy is very precious and very, very small. It was only the other day that she came among us; a week ago, indeed, the cot stood empty. Now a human being rests there. How foolish seem the arguments of churchmen. This is the divine testimony, the eternal miracle.

Little Peggy lies very still. Her cheeks as yet are pale; the color waits to be kissed upon them by the sun. She is like a fair white rose, so faint and soft, so tenderly delicate. Her hair is dark, they say, but in truth there is but little edging the whiteness of her lapping shawl. One little wisp I see, escaping at the side. Perchance it has stretched itself to peep and whisper into the marvellous subtleties of the tiny ear.

Little Peggy's hands are like roses, too, unblown baby roses, lying folded on her breast. One would almost deem her praying at the threshold of the strange new world. The wise woman tells me no; it is a pre-natal memory. Little Peggy has not realized the vastness of her universe.

And as I look closer, the little fingers unfold. Each one is so minute and yet so perfect, a masterpiece in miniature. The tiny filbert nails make my breath catch suddenly. What is there about mere littleness that should move us so?

Thus I watch, and presently I begin to think of the kingdom that little Peggy is now entering on. Childhood's Country, they call it, a wondrous land bathed in strange glamour with all the glory and the radiance of the sunrise, with the clearness and the fragrance of the springtide, with the sweet freshness of the early dew. I, too, have dwelt in that land, and I know its splendor. I know its enchantment and its gentle fays. And I know its terror, its grim monsters—midnight monsters ever ready to devour children who wander lonely there.

But little Peggy will not see the monsters; little Peggy will not feel the terror. Love shall wrap her like a garment; love shall shelter her like a nesting bird. In Childhood's Country there is naught shall fright my Peggy; and naught of the outer world can enter through the Ivory Door.

For little Peggy's kingdom stands encircled; its ramparts are built of innocence. And there is one opening, and one only, the ivory gate and the golden. And at it the children oftentimes pull, but it will never yield. Until at last they hap upon the key, a heavy key and hard to bear, and the gate swings open moaningly. Sometimes, alas! they find the key too soon, and then they are despoiled of their heritage. For though many, many children wander out, none ever yet came back again. You may see the little footprints all pointing in the one direction. And the name of that key? It is Pain.

And when my Peggy has passed the portal—ah, little Peggy, what then? For afterwards love avails but little; there are many paths to choose from, and each must walk alone. And for the most part the paths are stony, stony and very steep. The poor wayfarer can hardly climb the hill. And some say that at the journey's end there lies a fair city, another kingdom of little children. But others say they know not; for them it is surely harder. And little Peggy—what will she believe? God grant the path be not too stony that little Peggy has to tread!



## TO JOHN KEATS

BY GEORGE HERBERT CLARKE

In one of those mental voyages into the past which precede death, Keats had told Severn that he thought "the intensest pleasure he had received in life was in watching the growth of flowers," and another time, after lying a while quite still, he murmured, "I feel the flowers growing over me."—*Lord Houghton's Memoir*.

“SEVERN, I feel the flowers o'er me grow.”  
 They grow, loved boy,—the daisies drenched with dew,  
 Pale sentries of the Sleep that silenced you;  
 And violets, that the poet-password know—  
 Your soul to theirs gave whisper long ago:  
 In all that Roman garden none with hue  
 More bright; and many a clovered avenue,  
 Sweet flower-forests waving to and fro.

And every plant in that so holy place  
 Yearns to your lyrèd grave, and all that earth  
 Bears wheresoever into blossoming;  
 And every seed of honor, truth, and grace  
 Quickens when buried there, and comes to birth,  
 Greening above you in eternal Spring.



## THE GALLANT BURGLAR

BY AMBROSE PRATT

ONE mid-November evening—or morning, to be more precise, for midnight had chimed some time before—Constable X. C. B. was slowly and steadily stumping his beat and profanely beshrewing the while the unkind fate which chained his services to a respectable suburb like Hampstead, where the talents of a shrewd fellow like himself were utterly wasted (Constable X. C. B. firmly believed himself a Vidocq) when of a sudden he descried unsteadily approaching him a young man clad in evening clothes.

The young man's collar was awry, and he was manifestly elevated. Constable X. C. B.'s hawk-like eyes unerringly absorbed these facts while the young man lingered for an instant beside a lamp-post. "Swell! Night out! Sprung! Tip!" Thus ran the thoughts of the pillar of the law as the pair converged.

"Goo'-ni', conserbul," said the young man, stopping.

"He's not so very bad, or he'd 'a' called me 'Sarjunt,'" thought X. C. B. disappointedly. He said aloud, "Late to be out, sir." His accents were intended to be awe-inspiring.

The young man gave a tippy lurch, then, with an effort, steadied himself. He looked at X. C. B. with portentous drunken gravity. "Wassat to you?" he demanded. "Wasser dickens that gotter do wi' you? Thass what I wannar know. P'r'aps you'd like my ath-ath (hie) thority? Thass alri'. I'm Lord Athol Srollbyn. Thass who I am. Jussice of the Peace. Thass what I am."

Constable X. C. B. touched his helmet with sudden deference. "Quite so, Lord St. Aulbyn," he said in a voice that offered an oleaginous apology for its former gruffness. Then he saw his chance and seized it. "Your lordship must have lost your way," he hazarded.

"This is 'Ampstead, me lord, not Belgravia." He guffawed as he concluded.

But his lordship did not smile. On the contrary, he frowned. "Conserbul," he said, "you're a com (hic) common fellow. Vulgar, bai Jove. You drop your aitches. You do, conserbul, you do, indeed. Lemme see. Where am I?"

"'Ampstead, me lord," grinned the policeman.

"Hampstead, conserbul," his lordship corrected, with awful gravity. "But whasher street?"

"Eton Avenue, me lord."

His lordship nodded. "Thashorlri," he said; and he extended half a crown.

Constable X. C. B. accepted the coin in the spirit it was offered. It bred in his mind a certain paternal feeling towards the young aristocrat. "See yer where yer goin', me lord, if yer lordship likes," he suggested.

His lordship nodded once more, this time quite genially. "You know Billson's house—the brewer Johnny, don't cher know?" he asked.

"But Mr. Billson is away from home, me lord," said X. C. B., surprised. "I know because he asked me to keep a particular eye on the place o' nights till he comes back."

"Conserbul," said Lord St. Aubyn, with a hideously wicked leer, "I'll tell you a secret. If Billson was at home, I would n't be here. Catch on, conserbul?"

X. C. B. was deeply shocked, even pained, and, although he accepted another half-crown, he felt called upon to utter a protest. "Really, me lord, you'd do better to go back home," he murmured. "She's a beauty an' that's a fact—but you might marry some day yerself, me lord; you might, indeed."

His lordship took X. C. B.'s arm. "I say, you shut up," he commanded. "Come on!"

Five minutes later they stopped before the front of an imposing red-brick mansion.

"The trouble is, I dropped the latch-key she gave me as I came along," hiccupped his lordship. "Ring the bell, will you, conserbul?" He extended a third half-crown. "Ring it good!"

X. C. B. stifled the surging flood of his moral sentiments. Several sternly admonitory reflections occurred to him, but he rang the bell. When he turned round his lordship clutched him eagerly by the arm. "By gum, conserbul," he muttered, "I'm done if Binks answers. I never thought of Binks. Say, you've got ter get me out of this."

X. C. B. saw a sovereign and his eyes blinked. "Wot'll I do?" he gasped.

His lordship with surprising agility, considering his condition,



stepped aside and crouched behind one of the pillars beside the door. "If it's Thomas, it's all right, and I'll come out," he whispered; "but if it's Binks, I'll stay mum; so you'll know. Tell him one of the chimneys is smoking and take him out to the pavement to see. Then I'll slip in as he passes. Catch!"

There was a tiny yellow flicker of light. Constable X. C. B. made a clutch at it, but missed. The sovereign tinkled on the steps. Oblivious of his legal dignity, X. C. B. followed it and picked it up. A few seconds later the door opened and a sleepy flunkey appeared, half dressed, framed against a vague half-light behind.

"What is the matter?" he demanded, then, seeing the constable's uniform, he exclaimed, "Hello! What's up?"

X. C. B. glanced at his lordship and received an imperious sign. "One of your chimbleys is smoking badly," he declared. "At least, it was just now. Step down here for a moment."

"I've got no boots on," grumbled the flunkey; but he followed X. C. B. down the steps. His lordship glided on instant into the house and vanished like a shadow.

"Well, I declare," said X. C. B., "if it ain't stopped! It was a-smokin' horrible when I rang, and sparks as well. It looked as like bein' afire as twin peas in a barrel."

"I guess you saw double," growled the flunkey. "Callin' people from their beds in the middle o' the night on a wild-goose chase like that! You ought ter get work, you ought."

"An' you people ought to clean yer chimbleys," retorted X. C. B.

"They wuz all cleaned last month," snorted the flunkey.

"Last year, you mean," sneered X. C. B.

"Oh, go and bag yer 'ead!" said the irate footman, and he slammed the door in X. C. B.'s face.

"I reckon," murmured X. C. B., "I did that real neat. It was worth the suvrin, an' the suvrin was worth it. Well, it ain't been a bad night, an' that's a fact. One pun, seven an' six; an' all from just exercisin' of me wits, as you might say."

X. C. B. was proud of himself, and he felt convinced that he had every right to be. He had had a nascent twinge of conscience concerning the poor deluded brewer a little earlier; but the sovereign had even wiped the memory of that away. Such is the power of gold that as X. C. B. resumed his interrupted beat he voiced a wish that there were more people like Mrs. Billson and Lord Athol St. Aulbyn in the world.

Curiously enough, at that very moment Lord Athol St. Aulbyn was in almost even terms reciprocating the compliment. He was thinking, "My business would be a really pleasant one if there were more officers like X. C. B. in the metropolitan constabulary."

A peculiar circumstance about the young aristocrat was that the moment he crossed the threshold of Mr. Billson's mansion he was restored to the most perfect sobriety. There must have been something alcoholically antidotal in the air of that chaste abode—a phenomenon and nothing less, since beer had built it. His lordship crossed the hall on tip-toe and glided behind some heavy curtains that hung before an alcove. There he waited until the irate flunkey, having slammed the door in X. C. B.'s face, retired to the lower regions. Then he came out and prepared to ascend the stairs.

First, however, he carefully rearranged his collar before a mirrored panel in the wall.

It was wonderful how noiselessly he moved. For all the sound he made, he might as well have been a shadow. He tried every step before he placed his weight upon it. Some steps he passed over altogether, as if warned by a sixth sense that they might creak. At length he arrived at the first floor landing. A bronze lady in garden of Eden attire shamelessly extended a shaded electric glow lamp in his direction, about a dozen feet away. She was standing in a niche at a corner of the landing where the corridor bifurcated. His lordship glided to her side and, after sweeping with a keen glance either passage, he took a paper from his breast pocket and spread it open on his palm. It was a plan, the ground plan of a house—of Mr. Billson's house. One room in particular was marked with a scarlet cross. His lordship compared the plan with the reality and smiled indulgently. He had discovered a discrepancy, but it was not of much importance. The plan had neglected to portray a certain window. His lordship restored the paper to his pocket and wafted himself gently down the left-hand corridor. At the very end he paused before a heavy oak door. He tried the handle, oh, so gently! It was locked. He shrugged his shoulders, and, bending down, he quietly rolled up the left leg of his trousers almost to the knee. By this action, even in the dim light of the corridor, he stood revealed in his true colors, an up-to-date, expert professional burglar. His calf was bound from knee to ankle with a tight black india-rubber gaiter. This gaiter was graced with a number of pockets and rubber loops. Each pocket held some small, bright, venomous-looking tool; each loop imprisoned a brace, a bit, a chisel, a jimmy, a pincers, or an awl. The burglar selected a jimmy, a pincers, and a long, thin skeleton key, and straightened his trousers. He then took a tiny electric bead-lamp from his pocket, and, touching a spring, flashed a spot of cold white light upon the lock of the door. Stooping down, he sharply eyed the fastenings for a moment, then he deftly inserted the skeleton key in the key-hole and stood up. One glance down the corridor, then he smiled again and turned the key. There followed a sharp click, and the door flew open. The burglar

stared thoughtfully down the passage for a full minute. Hearing nothing, he nodded and entering the room, closed the door behind him. It was as black within as Erebus. He removed the concentrator from his pocket-lamp and touched a spring. A heated wire with an incandescent power equivalent to that of twelve candles showed him a small business study, evidently a merchant's den, furnished with a few chairs, a roll-top desk, a revolving book-case, and a large steel safe. He took up a mat, spread it across the bottom of the door, and then, no doubt from motives of economy, he switched on the electric light belonging to the house, and put his own electric apparatus in his pocket.

His first act was to go over and examine the safe. It was graced with a big brass knob, and above the knob a brass inscription containing the maker's name and the proud legend, "Warranted fire and burglar proof."

As he read this legend, the gentleman known to Constable X. C. B. as Lord St. Aulbyn emitted a low, soft chuckle, expressionful of unadulterated joy and innocent amusement.

"To which I venture with all due reverence to observe, 'Rats!'" he murmured, almost tenderly. He now rolled up the right leg of his trousers. His right calf was even more exquisitely and strangely accoutred than his left. He took from it a number of small tools, or, rather, parts of one large tool, which he pieced together with miraculous speed and ingenuity. Thus he constructed a strange-looking implement about two feet long, that worked on ball-bearing sockets—a multiplication of tiny cogged wheels with a small hand brace. To the end of the brace he fitted an ugly set of tiny, gleaming teeth arranged in a circle three inches in diameter. He then placed the teeth against the safe, immediately around the keyhole, the round handle of the implement against his chest, and he began to work the brace with his hand, holding a dripping oil tube with his left above the teeth. The teeth began on instant to chase each other round with a rotary movement of inconceivable rapidity. It was simply astounding the way they bit into the solid iron, and more astounding still to mark the almost utter soundlessness with which they worked.

At the end of an hour his lordship gave himself a little rest. He certainly deserved it. His handsome face was bathed in perspiration, and he was quivering all over from the prolonged strain. After wiping his forehead and fanning himself with his crush hat till he was cool, he ate a biscuit and then placed a new set of teeth in the brace. The safe was three parts eaten through. Observing this, he set to work with an energy intensified with hope. Twenty minutes later there came of a sudden a little crash, and his lordship fell against the safe, his brace entering the hollow receptacle before him.

His lordship recovered his balance and, dropping the brace, flew to the door of the room. Tearing it open, he put out his head and listened. The house, however, was as silent as a tomb. Reassured, he closed the door and returned to the safe. He found a round, black hole large enough to admit his hand; the piece of steel cut out by the teeth of his wonderful tool had fallen inwards. With the methodical manner of a thorough workman, his lordship took his brace to pieces and restored the parts to their proper receptacles about his person before proceeding to exploit his triumph. When that was done, and not before, he put his hand through the hole in the safe door, and, after a little trouble, found the secret of the lever and drew back the bolts. A second later he turned the big brass knob and pulled the heavy door wide open. The main space of the safe was occupied with a row of account books. One small pigeon-hole, labelled "Cash," was filled with gold and silver money; and a still larger one was piled with jewel-cases.

"Money first," murmured his lordship. The gold was arranged in neat little stacks containing ten sovereigns apiece. There were eleven of them. His lordship transferred them all to his hip pocket. He glanced at the silver and his lip curled. He let it lie. The jewel-cases demanded his attention. He took one down and opened it. It contained a necklet of small but lustrous pearls. "It should stand me in a thou or two," observed his lordship. "Pearls are rather fashionable just now." He slipped the necklace into his vest pocket, replaced the empty case, and took out a larger one. As he raised the lid a dazzling flash of multi-colored lights announced a rich haul of diamonds.

His lordship half closed his eyes. "Now we're talking," he breathed. "These are the ones she wore at the Lord Mayor's ball. Old Billson got them at Streerler's and paid a cool twenty thousand for them. They're half of them Cape, of course, but, even allowing for that and all trade discount, they'll stand me in twelve thousand sure, maybe thirteen."

He swept the jewels into his palm, slipped them into his coat-tail pocket and then replaced the empty case where he had found it. At that moment, by ill luck, one of the ledgers which had been balanced on edge within the safe toppled over and fell to the floor. Probably his sleeve had touched it. But his lordship was too excited now to care very much. He stooped to recover the book, and, with one hasty glance around, prepared to replace it, in order to return to his proper business, when a door of the room opened and a woman entered.

His lordship was instantly aware. For one intense, life-living second he silently cursed the folly of absorption which had prevented him hearing her approach until too late; then, still holding Mr. Bill-

son's ledger in his hand, he turned to look into the muzzle of a revolver and thence above and along the sights into the face of one of the handsomest women he had ever beheld. Her thick black hair fell in streaming masses across her shoulders; her large brown eyes stared determinedly on the burglar from under finely pencilled brows. She was draped in a lace-edged, creamy dressing-robe that enveloped her tall form in one long, straight fall from chin to floor. Her lovely scarlet lips were pressed into a strong, straight line. Her delicate oval chin was thrust out, quite aggressively. Her shapely nostrils were dilated and quivering. "Positively a Juno—an angry Juno," thought his lordship.

"What are you doing there?" demanded the lady.

The questioner tickled the burglar's sense of humor almost irresistibly. But he heroically refrained from replying that he was just looking for a stamp to post a letter to his widowed mother. He did not want to hurt the lady's feelings. He was glad presently that he had suppressed the impulse to be flippant, although there was some tinge of flippancy in his coolly impudent actual response: "Madam, I am about my business."

He was glad because something flashed into the lady's eyes which called on instant every faculty of his lambent fancy into active play. It was a gleam of doubt, of positive anxiety.

"Put up your hands!" she commanded.

He dropped the ledger and obeyed. "Certainly, madam." He was laboring hard with an idea; the germ had already struck root. "Though why—but of course you know best, though it's no part of the programme, is it?" He spoke in a protesting tone. The lady was slowly moving sideways towards the bell. "Don't move—if you wish to live!" she said. "Don't stir a finger. I'm a woman, but a good shot, and no coward, as you'd find."

The burglar gave a puzzled frown. His idea had begun to blossom. "That's all very well, Mrs. Billson," he said in half angry, half injured accents. "But your husband had no right to change the programme without informing me. Certainly I suggested an alarm, et cetera, in the first instance, but he scouted the notion, and I arranged my plans accordingly. Kindly tell me what I am to do and what the game is, before you ring that bell. I am willing to do a lot to oblige Billson, but, hang it all! I decline to be made ridiculous. Suppose I should chance to be caught?"

Mrs. Billson ceased moving sideways, although still quite two paces from the bell.

"What on earth do you mean?" she said.

"Just this: that, Billson or no Billson, I simply refuse to be made the laughing-stock of London, and that's what I should be for

certain if you give an alarm before I'm ready. Why, hang it all!—I beg your pardon, Mrs. Billson, but this thing's going beyond a joke. Can't you see?—I don't even know the house properly. I've got the plan Billson gave me, of course, but I've scarcely looked at it. I only know these two corridors. It's sheer lunacy, that's what it is."

"You must be mad, I think," said Mrs. Billson.

The burglar uttered a groan. "Good heavens!" he said. "Don't tell me you did n't get Billson's letter!"

"If you think you can take me in with so flimsy a trick," cried the lady angrily, "you'll find you are mistaken. Again I warn you that you'll die if you move a muscle." Speaking, she walked past the bell, stopped, and, judging her distance nicely with a swift sidelong glance, she raised her left hand to the button. Her right, holding the revolver, did not waver a hair's breadth.

"Mrs. Billson," said the burglar, "if you press that button, you'll ruin your husband and yourself as surely as the Lord made little apples. Just listen to me a moment, will you? You have me covered—surely you are not afraid?"

"Afraid!" The lady sniffed contemptuously. "Speak, then, but be quick."

"I can see that Billson's letter miscarried," said the burglar rapidly; "but there's surely no need for me to explain to you the mess he is in financially?"

He spoke so earnestly that the lady was involuntarily impressed. "Mess?" she echoed.

The burglar swore most artistically under breath; then instantly apologized. "Billson deserves hanging," he declared; "and, considering the hole his folly has plunged me into, by gad! I'd—but there. At least, you'll know my name, Mrs. Billson. I am Lord Athol St. Aulbyn."

"Lord Athol St. Aulbyn!" echoed Mrs. Billson dazedly.

"Surely, madam, I don't look a burglar?" protested his lordship, with a whimsically ingratiating smile. "If you'd permit me the use of one of my hands, I would offer you my card. You are doubtless aware that I am a co-director with your husband in the Copper Convention Syndicate. He dragged me in, confound him! Once more I beg your pardon, Mrs. Billson. I keep forgetting it's your husband we are discussing. It's so wonderful a thing to me that Billson, dry old Billson, could have won for his wife a lady so——" He paused. "I'm afraid, Mrs. Billson, you'll think I'm a cad. I'd almost said 'charming and beautiful' to your face. It's the circumstances that are to blame."

With the easiest manner in the world, he lowered his arms and bowed to her.

Nor did the lady fire her pistol, though she still kept him covered.

His lordship, having bowed, more leisurely proceeded. "It's this way," he resumed. "The Copper Convention has squeezed the lot of us who are in it as dry as sucked oranges—of money, I mean. But hang on we must for another fortnight, or we shall be hammered on 'Change. The situation is really desperate. My whole fortune is involved, and also, I am ashamed to confess, Lady Athol's. As for Billson, he is in up to the neck. Well, to cut a long story short, we must have twenty thousand pounds by next Monday to tide us over the crisis; and Billson is pledged by word and deed to find the money. Having mortgaged all his own possessions to the hilt, every stick, every stone—but this is not news to you—he arranged with me this little incursion—naturally he preëngaged for your consent—and then he ran over to the continent so that his absence might save his credit in case of any suspicion arising from the transaction. Unfortunately, Mrs. Billson, as you are doubtless aware, business men are occasionally forced to employ devious devices to raise ready money. And your husband's position is so critical that were it to be believed for a moment that your jewels were not really burgled, but that this burglary is a put-up job to tide him over a pass—well, then the deluge! It would mean his bankruptcy, and for the rest of us, me especially, ruin, even beggary. Now, madam, I trust you comprehend."

"My jewels!" cried Mrs. Billson.

The burglar shrugged his shoulders and bowed. "Of course in a week or two they will be redeemed. It is merely intended to pawn them for a short time. You need not fear to lose them. The Copper Convention is as sound as a bell; so Billson says, at all events."

"My jewels," repeated Mrs. Billson.

"We simply must have the money. I've tried to make you understand how important it is." The burglar sighed and cast his eyes on the floor.

"My jewels," said Mrs. Billson for the third time.

The burglar timidly raised his eyes to her face. "I know how you must feel about them," he said. "I'd give a hand if there was any other way. I would indeed."

"My jewels," said Mrs. Billson. She was as pale as a sheet. Her lips were trembling but her eyes were ablaze. "I'll never part with them."

The burglar's head fell sadly to his breast. "For my part, I would not ask you to," he murmured. "I can see now why Billson let me in for this. He was afraid to tell you. Mrs. Billson, I assure you I feel this very keenly. I'm bitterly ashamed. You must think me a frightful bounder. It's just as though I had come here—a perfect stranger—to plead to you for help, for charity. It was perfectly

monstrous in Billson to put me in such a position. I give you my word of honor, madam, I'd have blown out my brains rather than have come, had I dreamed you were ignorant of the arrangement. All that I can say is that I am sorry, deeply, sincerely sorry." He put his hand in his trousers pocket and drew out the great diamond chain.

"My diamonds!" the lady shrieked.

The burglar handed them to her with a courtly bow. "Yours always, I trust," he murmured gently. "It would have been a crime to separate even for a few hours such marvellous artificial from such exquisite natural loveliness. Madam, your jewels mate you perfectly."

Mrs. Billson colored hotly—was it with anger?

The burglar dropped on one knee before her and gently took her hand—the hand that held the pistol—in his own. He pressed it to his lips. "Madam, I sinned in innocence. Can you bring yourself to pardon me?" he murmured. Then he looked up and gazed into her eyes. Mrs. Billson flushed scarlet again, from brow to chin. "You must not kneel to me, Lord Athol," she stammered. "It appears—that—that my husband—that——"

"Ah!" cried the burglar ardently, "would that he did not exist. Though I could forgive him everything, anything, for the pleasure of this moment, if you—could pardon me!"

"I—I—I have, it seems, nothing to forgive," the lady said. "It surely—it was not your fault my husband——"

"He fills your thoughts!" interrupted the burglar jealously. Then again he kissed her hand. "It is only a word I ask?" he pleaded.

"I forgive you," said the lady generously. She did not guess how generously.

The burglar kissed her hand once more. Then very slowly he got afoot. For a long minute he gazed at Mrs. Billson. Mrs. Billson's eyes fell before his ardent gaze. She began to breathe more quickly. "You had better go," she said at last.

"Your kindness emboldens me to dare to hope—that one day we may meet again," whispered the burglar.

"Perhaps," whispered Mrs. Billson. Then suddenly she raised her eyes. "But—but—if what you tell me is true you will be ruined—unless——"

"It matters nothing," said the burglar. "Nothing in the whole world matters except that you should know one moment's sorrow."

"Lord Athol!" she said.

"How beautiful you are!" he breathed.

The crimson flood suffused her cheeks. She opened her right hand. The pistol fell with a soft thud to the carpet at her feet. She stared at the jewels, and her eyes filled with tears.



"You would really be ruined?" she whispered. "That is to say—my husband—"

"Think of him, madam—if you will—but not of me—at least, in that regard. I'd rather die. Do you think I want you to despise me now? It is only from to-night that I begin to live. Oh, why did I not meet you before?"

Mrs. Billson felt positively faint. She had to lean against the wall. "You must go," she said.

"Yes," he replied, and stayed.

Presently she grew stronger. She swayed erect again. "You must go, and you must take the jewels," she said suddenly.

"Never!" he cried.

"But, Lord Athol, you must. You will not refuse my request. It is to save my husband—you will take them to him for me."

"But I should share in your benefaction."

"I wish it," she said softly. She held forth the jewels. The burglar caught her hands and covered them with kisses. She tore them away, leaving the diamonds in his.

"Go!" she said commandingly. She was all a-tremble. "Go quickly! Good-by."

"Nay—au revoir," he pleaded—gallant to the last.

"Au revoir, then," whispered Mrs. Billson.

The burglar caught up his hat, stepped into the passage, and hurried to the end. There he paused and looked back. A white-robed figure watched him from the study door. He kissed his hand to her and tip-toed down the stairs. In the hall he put on his hat, selected a cane from the hat-rack and an overcoat from a line of hooks, and then quietly let himself out into the street. Ten minutes later he awoke a sleeping cabman and drove to Charing Cross. Day was dawning when he got there. He dismissed the cab, and took a hansom to Piccadilly. Thence he drove in a four-wheeler to Soho, and came thus deviously to his lodging. Before the ordinary breakfast hour had arrived he was well on his way to Dover and France, disguised as a working engineer on holiday, in cap and overalls.

Two days later the world knew that the house of Mr. Josiah Billson, the enormously wealthy brewer, had been burgled, and the circumstances of the robbery pointed to the fact that it had been committed by a certain Jack Haynes, known to the police of three kingdoms as one of the most polished rogues and expert thieves in Christendom; because he had left no sign to show how he had gained admittance to the brewer's mansion—a usual thing with Mr. Haynes.

A gentleman who occasionally called himself Lord Athol St. Aubyn read the announcement in the coffee-room of a hotel at Prague. It afforded him infinite amusement.

Constable X. C. B. is still stationed at Hampstead. He still remembers Lord St. Aulbyn with feelings of kindness. It is his constant hope, when on his beat at night, to meet another tipsy nobleman. Never in his wildest dreams did X. C. B. associate the Billson burglary with the naughty young gentleman who gave him the biggest tip of his life on that memorable night. "One pun, seven and sixpence!"

As for Mrs. Billson—but there!



## AN INDIAN PUEBLO AT DUSK IN THE RAIN

BY FAIRMAN ROGERS FURNESS

A STEADY downward pour of dull grey rain,  
That slowly swells the rushing yellow stream,  
And half obscures the fading evening light,  
Confused the dripping landscape in a blur,  
And drew the dusk about us like a cloak.  
Across the pile-built, swaying, wooden bridge,  
On either side, the long uneven lines  
Of houses, built by generations dead,  
Rose tier on tier in silent black relief  
Against the twilight of the western sky.

In sombre rows, on every roof and step,  
The owners of the dark pueblo sat,  
The rain unnoticed, as with eagerness  
They listened to the herald of their tribe  
Cry out out the evening's news from down below.  
And, as the rain whipped up the yellow mud,  
He cried aloud in their own crackling tongue  
Of some new law the Government had made,  
Or of some holy rites that must be held,  
Until the last grey light had died away,  
And all was silent, save the pelting rain  
And echoes of his voice that faded off  
To blend themselves into the falling night.



## HOME TREATMENT

BY GEORGE LINCOLN WALTON, M.D.

THE LAST OF A SERIES OF FIVE POPULAR PAPERS ON WORRY AND ALLIED MENTAL STATES, WITH PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-CURE. THE PRECEDING PAPERS WERE "WORRY AND OBSESSION," IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER; "THE DOUBTING FOLLY," IN THE DECEMBER NUMBER; "HYPOCHONDRIA," IN THE JANUARY NUMBER, AND "SLEEPLESSNESS," IN THE FEBRUARY NUMBER OF LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE.

Submit to what is unavoidable, banish the impossible from the mind, and look around for some new object of interest in life.

GOETHE.

IN the preceding articles we have considered:

I. "Worry and Obsession." Worry is a state of over-solicitude, shown, for example, by useless regrets for the past, and undue anxiety for the future. The term does not include an amount of anxiety justified by circumstances—an anxiety the absence of which would imply a degree of indifference incompatible, perhaps, with great achievement. The faulty habit included under the term "worry" forces the mind to dwell upon one subject until the thoughts become incoherent, jerky, and uncontrolled, and mental pain appears as a warning signal. This attitude of mind not only gives discomfort to the individual, but impairs his usefulness to others, hinders the work of his associates by contagious example, and renders him an uncomfortable and unhelpful member of society in the proportion in which he gives way to the morbid tendency.

The term "obsession" is applied to the insistent habit of thought. This habit gives rise, on the one hand, to compulsive actions, or actions which neglect to perform would cause mental discomfort, and on the

other hand to intolerance of disagreeable occurrences, to abhorrence of various sounds, sights, odors, and to general inability to adjust oneself to his surroundings.

II. "The Doubting Folly." This state of mind is fostered by the insistent desire to make no mistake, a desire leading to chronic indecision and vacillation. The doubting folly is shown, for example, by frequent return to see if one has turned off the gas, locked the door, and the like, and by inability to decide which of two tasks the doubter should take up.

III. "Hypochondria," or the state of over-solicitude regarding one's own physical and mental condition. When such thoughts assume undue proportions, they tend, like other worries, to handicap legitimate effort, to incapacitate the mental sufferer, and to give rise to an unhappy state of affairs not only for the individual himself, but for his family and friends.

IV. "Sleeplessness." This condition is often dependent upon faulty mental habits, especially upon the tendency to burden the mind with worries over the past, present, and future, during the hours which should be devoted to mental as well as physical rest.



The treatment of these faulty mental habits is like the treatment of swearing, or of over-indulgence in food and drink. All attempts to influence another by exhortation, ridicule, or reproach are met by active or passive resistance on the part of the individual toward whom these efforts are directed.

A conscientious resolve on the part of the individual himself, whether started by a casual hint or a new line of thought, is far more likely to be effective than any amount of outside pressure, however well directed.

It is my belief that the over-careful and fussy individual will be more influenced for good by reading the description of a typical hypochondriac than by all the ridicule and argument that can be brought to bear directly upon him either by his friends or his medical adviser. His most striking peculiarity is his conviction that he cannot take the chances others do, that the criticisms he receives are peculiarly annoying, and that his sources of worry are something set apart from the experience of ordinary mortals. This conviction leads him to meet argument by argument, reproach and ridicule by indignant protest or brooding silence. The perusal of these papers may lead him to alter his ideals. Suggestions for home treatment have been scattered through the various pages; it only remains to sum them up.

The first step is the initiation of a new attitude, namely, the

commonplace. The establishment of this attitude involves the sacrifice of self-love, and of the melancholy pleasure of playing the martyr.

The over-sensitive individual must recognize the fact that if people do not want him round it may be because he inflicts his *ego* too obtrusively upon his associates. He must realize that others are more interested in their own affairs than in his, and that however cutting their comments and unjust their criticisms, and however deeply these may sink into his soul, they are only passing incidents with them.

He must realize that if two people whisper they are not necessarily whispering about him, and if they are it is of no consequence, and simply shows their lack of breeding. On public occasions he must realize that others are thinking of themselves, or of the subject in hand, quite as much as they are of him and how he behaves. He must realize that even if he does something foolish it will only make a passing impression on others, and that they will like him none the less for it.

He must practise externalizing his thoughts. If criticised, he must ask himself whether the criticism is just or unjust. If just, he must learn to accept and act upon it; if unjust, he must learn to classify the critic as unreasonable, thoughtless, or ill-natured, place him in the appropriate mental compartment, throw the criticism into the intellectual waste-basket, and proceed upon his way. This practice, difficult at first, will, if assiduously cultivated, become more and more automatic, and will materially modify a fruitful source of worry.

The next step is to practise the control of the dominating impulses or habits of thought (obsessions), both active and passive. If one finds himself impelled continually to drum, whistle, clear the throat, sniff, or blink, he will find the habit cannot be dropped at once, but if he can refrain from it only once or twice in the day, no matter how lost he feels without it, the intervals can be gradually increased until he has finally mastered the habit.

The bearing of this training upon worry may not be immediately obvious, but is a preliminary step of great importance. If one cannot overcome these simple physical compulsions he will find it still harder to overcome the doubts, the fears, and the scruples which underlie his worry.



In the establishment of a new attitude toward annoyances the cultivation of the commonplace ideal is of great importance. It is hard to give up the idea that we are so peculiarly constituted that it produces a special disgust in our case if another constantly clears his throat, and a peculiar annoyance if he rocks. It is difficult to relinquish the belief that, however callous others may be, our nervous system is so delicately adjusted that we cannot work when others

make any unnecessary noise, and we cannot sleep if a clock ticks in our hearing.

If one persistently cultivates the commonplace, he will at last find himself seeking instead of avoiding the objects of his former torture, merely to exercise his new-found mastery of himself, and to realize that "he that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."

It is the imperative duty of every sufferer from doubting folly to say to himself, "I will perform this act once with my whole attention, then leave it and turn my mind in other channels before I have dulled my perception by repetition."

In most instances the doubter can say to himself, "It is better that I should make a mistake in this matter than that I should lose my mental grasp." This thought is particularly applicable to such comparatively unimportant questions as whether one has left the water running in the bath-room, whether one has left a match on the floor, and the like. When it comes to such an important matter as turning off the gas, it would hardly be safe for the doubter thus to philosophize, but he may at least determine to perform the act carefully *once*, and then turn his thoughts in other directions.



If the faulty mental habit takes the direction of hypochondria, one must remind himself that over-solicitude hampers rather than aids the efforts of Nature, and that an occasional attack of indigestion, or a cold, is preferable to the fate of the confirmed hypochondriac, who makes himself a slave for life.

If insistent fears attack one, he must remind himself that the worst that can happen to him is not so bad as the state of the chronic coward and the hypochondriac. He must practice taking the chances that others do, and must learn to go through the dreaded experiences, not with his nervous system stimulated into undue tension, but with body and mind relaxed by such considerations as I have indicated.

If one is prone to indecision, he must remind himself that it is better to do the wrong thing with single mind, than to work himself into a frenzy of anxious doubt. In case the choice is not an important one, he must learn to *pounce* upon either task, and waste no further time. If the doubt concerns an important matter, he must learn to devote only that attention to the matter which is commensurate with its importance, then decide it one way or the other, realizing that it is better to make a mistake, even in an important matter, than to worry oneself into utter helplessness by conflicting emotions.

The over-scrupulous and methodical individual who can neither sleep nor take a vacation until all the affairs of his life are arranged

must remind himself that this happy consummation will not be attained in his lifetime. It behooves him, therefore, if he is ever to sleep, or if he is ever to take a vacation, to do it now, nor need he postpone indefinitely

That blessed mood  
In which the burden of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight,  
Of all this unintelligible world  
Is lightened.

The individual who worries because he does not sleep eight hours must remind himself that many have worked for years on four, and are still vigorous. A valet of sixty-two has recently assured me that for twenty-three years he has averaged no more than four hours a night, and he is to-day lithe and active.

The day's work should be started with the resolution that every task shall be taken up in its turn, without doubts and without forebodings, that bridges shall not be crossed until they are reached, that the vagaries of others shall amuse and interest, not distress, us, and that we will live in the present, not in the past or the future. We must avoid undertaking too much, and whatever we do undertake we must try not to worry as to whether we shall succeed. This only prevents our succeeding. We should devote all our efforts to the task itself, and remember that even failure under these circumstances may be better than success at the expense of prolonged nervous agitation.



“Rest must be complete when taken, and must balance the effort in work—rest meaning often some form of recreation as well as the passive rest of sleep. Economy of effort should be gained through normal concentration—that is, the power of erasing all previous impressions and allowing a subject to hold and carry us, by dropping every thought or effort that interferes with it, in muscle, nerve, and mind.” (Annie Payson Call, “Power Through Repose.”)

Every opportunity should be taken to devote the mind to some occupation outside the daily work. If an *avocation* can be cultivated, so much the better.

The study of music, history, trees, flowers, or birds doubtless seems of trivial interest to one who occupies his leisure hours with such weighty problems as figuring out how rich he would have been if he had bought Calumet & Hecla at 25, but such study is far more restful, and in the long run quite as useful for the over-busy man.

It is not necessary to devote an enormous amount of time to such pursuits. One has only to purchase, for example, Miss Huntington's

"Study of Trees in Winter" and learn the trees in his own doorway, or upon his street, to awaken an interest that will serve him in good stead upon a railway journey, or during an otherwise monotonous sojourn in the country. A walk around the block before dinner with such an object in view is more restful than pondering in one's easy-chair over the fluctuations of the stock market, and the man who is "too busy" for such mental relaxation is paving the way for ultimate, perhaps early, breakdown.

Courtney says that "fads may be said to constitute a perfect mental antitoxin for the poison generated by cerebral activity. To all this will undoubtedly be objected the plea of lack of time. The answer to arguments formed on such flimsy basis is that all the time which is spent in preparing oneself as a candidate for a sanitarium is like the proverbial edged tool in the hands of children and fools."

A little time spent in such simple pursuits as I have indicated, and a few weeks' vacation *before exhaustion appears*, may prevent a year's enforced abstinence from work on account of nervous invalidism.

I am tempted here to say "A stitch in time saves nine," but such adages are dangerous. Each only suggests its own converse. Thus, the adage, "If you want a thing well done you must do it yourself," has caused many a business and professional man to burden himself with details which in the long run he could better intrust to subordinates, even at the risk of an occasional blunder.



Although the main object of these papers is to call attention to the mental rather than the physical treatment of these states, I cannot forbear reminding the reader of certain routine procedures which facilitate the desired improvement in mental attitude. Such are forcing oneself out of doors as frequently and as long as circumstances permit, certainly some time every day; starting the day with a cool plunge, followed by a brisk rub, deep breathing, and a few simple gymnastic exercises; keeping busy; seeking social diversions and cheerful books; a hot drink and gymnastics before retiring.

Worry about the mental condition is disastrous. The habit should be cultivated of taking the mind for what it is, and using it, wasting no time in vain regrets that it is not nimbler or more profound. Just as the digestion is impeded by solicitude, so the working of the brain is hampered by using the energy in worry which should be devoted directly to the task in hand. Children frequently worry because their memory is poor. It should be explained to them that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred apparent lack of memory is only lack of attention, and they should be urged to cease distracting the attention by wandering



in the fields of idle speculation or in making frantic leaps to surmount imaginary obstacles.

It is important for parents of morbidly sensitive and over-scrupulous children, with acute likes and dislikes, to discourage the tendency of the child to become more and more peculiar. Sensitive children are inclined to worry because they think others do not care for them or want them round. If such children can be led to take a bird's-eye view of themselves, they may be made to realize that others crave their society according as they are helpful, entertaining, sympathetic, or tactful, because they instil courage and give comfort. They should be urged, therefore, to cultivate these qualities instead of wasting their energy in tears and recriminations; and they should be encouraged to practise such of these traits as they can master instead of becoming moody in society, or withdrawing to brood in solitude, either of which errors may result in producing on the part of others a genuine dislike. In other words, teach them to avoid enforcing too far their *ego* on themselves or their environment.



Parents must also remember that over-solicitous attention on their part is bound to react to the disadvantage of the child. The story is told of Phillips Brooks that, when a child, he put a newly sharpened pencil into his mouth further and further until it slipped down his throat. He asked his mother what would happen if any one should swallow a pencil. She answered that she supposed it would kill him. Phillips kept silence, and his mother made no further inquiry.

This incident would indicate that Phillips Brooks had already, as a child, attained a mental equipoise which the average individual hardly achieves in a lifetime. The story appeals to me no less as evidence of self-control on the part of the mother; and I like to imagine that she suppressed the question a startled parent would naturally ask, realizing that no amount of worry would recall the pencil if he had swallowed it, and that nothing was to be gained by overturning the household or by giving the boy an example of agitation sure to react to the detriment of the mind unfolding under her supervision.

Unless, therefore, the facts of this story have become distorted by imagery, it shows exceptional heredity and unusual training.

Not every one can claim such heredity, and not every one can look back on such training; but it is not too much to say that every one can so direct his thoughts and so order his actions as gradually to attain a somewhat higher level of self-control than either his natural endowment or his early training would have promised. For mental training is no more limited to feats of memory, and to practice in the solution

of difficult problems, than is physical training comprised in the lifting of heavy weights in harness. In fact, such exercises are always in danger of leaving the mental athlete intellectually muscle-bound, if I may use such an expression; whereas the kind of training I have in mind tends to establish mental poise, to improve the disposition, to fit the mind (and indirectly the body) to better meet the varied exigencies of daily life, and to help the individual to react in every way more comfortably to his surroundings.

I have only hinted at the detailed suggestions by which the worry habit and allied faulty mental tendencies may be combated. The obsessive who is able to alter his ideals and systematically pursue the line of thought here sketched will himself find other directions in which control can be exercised. It is true that no one is likely to reach any of the extreme degrees of incapacity we have considered unless he is naturally endowed with a mind predestined to unbalance. At the same time any of us who have a nervous temperament ever so slightly above the average of intensity will do well to check these tendencies as far as possible in their incipiency, realizing that no physical evil we may dread can be worse than the lot of the confirmed hypochondriac or the compulsively insane.

Perhaps I have dwelt too much upon the extreme results of morbid mental tendencies, and too little upon the ideal for which we should strive. This ideal I shall not attempt to portray, but leave it rather to the imagination. Suffice it to say that the ladder by which self-control is attained is so long that there is ample room to ascend and descend without reaching either end. Some of us are started high on the ladder, some low; but it is certainly within the power of each to alter somewhat his level. We can slide down, but must climb up; and that such commonplaces as are here presented may help some one to gain a rung or two is my earnest wish.



## CONTRASTS

It is when we have wrongs that we most distinctly feel that we have rights.

Several large fortunes have been made by picking up money that has been thrown away.

Some people who are selfish in other respects never think of keeping their opinions to themselves.

No man feels more keenly the exactions of the railroads than the man who has forgotten his pass.

*William E. McKenna*

# A POET OF THE GALLEY

*By L. Frank Tooker*

IT was in the second dog-watch, and the captain and the mate sat on the edge of the house, in the unembarrassing silence that comes to men who have long since exhausted all the possibilities of conversation. More imaginative persons might have been awed by the gorgeous panorama of the passing day; but the mate was scanning a frayed spot on the mizzen topping-lift, and idly wondering whether it would hold out until they reached port, while the captain was listening to the faint sound of a violin. It came from the galley, and somewhat haltingly, as if the player were trying to recall some half-forgotten tune.

"Jerome seems to be having some trouble to get started," he finally remarked. "Been sawing away on that piece every night for a week."

"Don't seem to have much go to it, that 's a fact," agreed the mate. He struck his pipe against the rail to empty it, and, rising, strolled forward to the galley.

Jerome Harris, the steward, was sitting inside, with his head bowed over his violin, tentatively fingering the bow. Deep thought furrowed his brow. He looked up absent-mindedly as Mr. Darrow's head appeared at the door.

"Kind o' like a flea, that tune, ain't it?" suggested the mate. "You don't seem to get your hand on it to any great extent."

Jerome laughed in an embarrassed way.

"Why, I want it just right," he replied. "It's something I'm making up for a song."

"Oh, that 's it, is it?" grinned the mate. "Well, take my word for it, you ain't no Wagner."

He was sitting alone on the rail that evening when Jerome came aft from the galley. The soft Southern night was like a balm to the spirit, soothing and mild. There was just a faint, throbbing flutter of swelling canvas aloft; they could hear a gurgle of water alongside. Jerome paused a moment, then seated himself by the mate's side. He was thirty-five, short, active, with a good-looking face that somehow lacked the quality that the mate called "gumption." He had been a second mate ten years before, but then had begun to sag mentally, like a man who had gained experience without the necessary accompaniment of judgment. For four years he had been a steward with Captain Frazier.

It was clear that he would never rise higher in his calling. Captain, mate, and steward all belonged to the same little seaport town.

"What's your idea for paint for a house, Mr. Darrow?" the steward asked abruptly. "I've been thinking of fixing mother's place up, when I get home after this trip, and not renting it no more. Mother always liked some subdued color,—said it wore better,—but I'm rather partial to white myself—white, with green blinds. Fix the old place up like that, up there on that hill, and you could see it half-way 'cross the sound. It would be considerable of a landmark."

"Thinking of getting married?" asked the mate, with a chuckle.

"Why, I guess *everybody* thinks of it more or less," Jerome confessed. "You don't need to have the date set to do that. Any way, it won't do no harm to fix the place up."

"Not if you can get some one to live in it," agreed the mate, "or can live in it yourself."

"Well, I'm ruther hoping for both," replied the steward. "I'm getting tired of salt water, and if something I've got my mind on goes——" His voice trailed off into silence, and the mate yawned.

It was fully ten minutes before the steward spoke again.

"What you said about me being no Wagner, that's all right," he said. "I ain't, and don't want to be. But if I can get that little thing I was playing just straight, and fix up the whole business like I've planned it, I'll leave old Wagner hull-down when it comes to *touching* the heart. That's what gets *me*—something that makes ye feel teary round the eyes and think of old times and home and all that sort o' thing. That's what goes with folks, and stirs 'em up good's a revival."

"Well, what is that that's going to do so much?" asked the mate incuriously. He was glancing aloft at the topsails, which had fluttered as if with a change of wind.

"Oh, I ain't got it quite worked out yet," Jerome answered.

A week later he seemed nearer a solution, for, instead of scraping tentatively in his galley, he sat on the foot-high sill, in the twilight, and played over and over again a little air. It had a haunting suggestion of sadness in it that stirred even the unmusical captain.

"What's that blame' thing the steward's playing?" he asked the mate fretfully. "It's doleful enough."

"I rather guess that's the thing he says is going to touch the heart," replied the mate, smiling broadly.

"Well, it gets on my nerves," the captain declared, with considerable irritation. "I wish he'd stop it."

"That's your bad conscience," said the mate. "Jerome said it would stir folks up—like a revival."

"If that's the case, I wonder you ain't on your knees," said the captain pointedly.

"Me?" exclaimed the mate. "Why, I belong to the church now."

"So you do," said the captain, with simulated surprise. "I've seen so much of you that it slipped my mind."

He chuckled so long that the indignant mate went forward to finish his pipe. As four bells struck and he prepared to go below, he stopped at the galley a moment, where Jerome was washing his neglected supper dishes.

"Well, I got it worked out at last," he exclaimed. "How did it strike ye?"

"Well, it struck the old man as doleful," replied the frank mate. "He said he wished you'd stop it."

Jerome looked pleased.

"That shows it touched him," he explained complacently, "and if you can touch *him*, you can touch anybody. He ain't got no more ear than a cow."

"Well, I should n't exactly call his opinion favorable," mused the mate.

"Because he did n't hear the words," went on Jerome, with the confidence of the artist. "You wait till I get them fixed, and then you'll see."

The mate was sitting at the cabin table the next afternoon, writing up his log, when Jerome came aft with his dinner dishes. He put them away in their racks in the pantry, and then stopped at the mate's side and laid a sheet of paper before him.

"Read that," he said.

The mate took it up.

"What's this?" he asked, as his eye roved over the sheet. "Poetry?"

"I guess that's about the size of it," answered the steward, with a touch of pride in his voice. "What do you think of it?"

Leaning on his elbows, the mate read aloud:

"The storm is raging, and the sea is high;  
Almost the waves do seem to touch the sky.  
'My God!' the captain cries, 'we're lost! we're lost!  
Think of the precious cargo—what it cost!'

"He wrung his hands; the mate he beat his head  
With his hard fist, and crying, sadly said:  
'No more shall I this good ship proudly steer,  
Or see my wife and five small children dear.'

"The waves they turn the vessel bottom up;  
The crew is spilled like water from a cup.  
Where are they now, oh, who of you can tell?  
The waves roll sternly on, swell upon swell.

"Their wives and sweethearts watch upon the shore  
For men who never shall come back any more;  
Deep in the sea their poor lost bodies lie.  
Pray, Christians, that their souls are in the sky!"

"What do you think of it?" anxiously repeated the steward.

"Fine," said the mate. "It's fine, but ain't it rather sad?"

"Well, it ain't no picnic, you know," ventured the steward.

"Well, I suppose that's so," agreed the mate. He began to read it over again. "I don't know 's I ever saw waves that reached the sky," he criticised. "People ashore are always talking about waves running mountain-high, but you ought to know better."

"That's for the rhyme," declared the steward; "I've got to work sky in some way, and that sounds good. It's what they call the poet's license."

"Well, they ought to pay high for it if it gives them the right to lie like that," argued the mate. "And I don't know either as I like that foul thing the mate does—beat his head with his hard fist. Strikes me his *head* was soft enough. Why don't you make him do something sensible? And that about the ship spilling the crew like water from a cup—where was she? Up in the air? Seems to me, if that was the case, if you'd only give 'em sense enough to hang on to something, you would n't have had to ask for the prayers of anybody to get them up in the sky. They'd been there already. That don't sound like good sense to me."

"You don't know much about poetry, to talk like that," said the offended steward, taking the paper from the mate's hand.

"Oh, I'm only mentioning a thing or two that don't look quite shipshape to me," replied the mate. "Take it all in all, it's fine. Don't see how you come to think it all up."

"Well, it's been on my mind for some time," confessed the steward, somewhat mollified by the mate's general commendation. "I ain't slept much for a week, thinking of it and the music."

"Well, you've certainly got something to show for it," was the mate's generous remark. "When are you going to try it on the old man—sing it to him?"

"Me?" said the steward. Then he laughed. He hesitated a moment before he added: "Say, did you ever hear Annie Bascom sing 'The Brooklyn Theatre is Burning'?"

"Yes," assented the mate.

"Well, was n't that great? Did n't it stir ye? Now, if she can stir up the folks at home like she does with that, what could n't she do with a song like this—about sailors—that everybody at home knows about and would feel? Say, they would n't be a dry eye in the house. If I could just set and hear that girl sing, I'd forget to go home to my

meals. If she only had somebody with a little enterprise to attend to things, she could go through the country giving concerts and make money hand over fist."

"How'd you like the job yourself?" asked the mate.

"I'd get off this old craft so quick my shoes would blister the planks," declared Jerome.

"I guess I see now why you're so interested in fixing up your house," said the mate slyly.

Jerome grinned, and stroked his face with a complacent air.

"Well, they ain't no law against thinking of things," he declared.

"Have you asked her yet?" queried the mate.

Jerome looked at him with some doubt.

"Say, Mr. Darrow," he warned, "I don't know 's I'd care to have what I said go any further. It might hurt me. No, I have n't asked her yet, but it's been on my mind a good deal. I don't believe it would do me much good to have it come to her through outsiders. You know how it is; sometimes when you think and think about things, you kind o' have to let it out to somebody, just to free your mind. I've trusted ye."

"Oh, I would n't let it go far, steward," the mate assured him. "Me and the old man are interested in that song, you know. We would n't say a thing ashore."

"Well, that's all right, then," replied Jerome. "I know I can depend on you two."

That night when he met the captain in the second dog-watch the mate was full of the news.

"Well," he began, as he seated himself by the captain's side, "Jerome's writ a poem."

"A poem!" exclaimed the captain incredulously. "Him!"

"A song," explained the mate, "to fit that music you're so fond of. He wrote it for Annie Bascom to sing on the stage. He's got a notion he'd like to marry her and have her give concerts, and him take the tickets at the door." The mate giggled.

"Oh, sho!" grunted the captain. "She would n't touch him with a ten-foot pole."

"Well, Jerome does n't know it," replied the mate. "It's a pretty good song. We've been talking the matter over."

"He's a fool," grumbled the captain, "and I rather guess you encourage him in his foolishness. You ought to know better."

The mate apparently did not take the captain's criticism to heart, for at dinner the next day he looked up suddenly at the steward as he moved about the table.

"Steward," he suggested, "why don't you sing that song of your'n to Cap'n Frazier? I was——"

"I don't want to hear it," hastily interposed the captain.

"Well, on second thought, I don't know's I blame ye for steering clear of it," went on the mate. "It's a mighty affecting piece. 'T would be rather funny to see you crying in your soup."

"You look out for your own soup," snapped the captain, with unnecessary brutality.

"Oh, that's all right," declared the mate lightly; "I ain't sentimental to any extent."

Jerome's violin was silent that night, and when the mate made the rounds of the deck at the setting of the watch, he stopped at the galley. Jerome was reading by the galley lamp.

"Don't you feel musical to-night, steward?" he asked. "I rather hoped you'd let the captain hear that song."

Jerome looked quietly up at him.

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Darrow," he said, with considerable dignity, "I don't think you're very much interested in that song. You're just making fun of it."

"Why, no," protested the mate; "I'm a good deal interested. Of course I joked the old man about it, he's so blame' serious; but I'd like to hear it again myself. You know how I am—would joke on my death-bed, if I had any one to rise to it like the old man. Why, I know how the tune goes now." He began to hum the air.

The steward looked pleased.

"Well, maybe I'll drop into it before long, when the old man is n't thinking about it, just to see how it strikes him," he agreed.

But that night the fine weather broke, and there came no chance for casual music.

For days they ran through a succession of gales, with nothing about the schooner but the howl of the wind, the roar of the sea, and the constant noise of water sweeping across the deck. The world was an immensity of gray sky and wind-lashed sea, with flying rack, low and dingy, like the smoke from a furnace, racing overhead. Out of the wan grayness of early light the steward made his way aft one morning in a momentary lull. As he neared the cabin bulk-head, he came upon the captain stooping over a water-cask that was thumping ominously with every pitch of the vessel. Out of the tail of his eye the captain caught sight of the steward and beckoned. He put his hand on his shoulder, with his mouth to the steward's ear.

"Go down to Mr. Darrow's room," he screamed—"get ball of marline and handspike. And go quick; this lashing's parted. The cask'll be adrift in a minute."

Jerome nodded and jumped for the steps. As his head rose above the rail, the vessel dropped into the trough of the sea, and, glancing across the deck, the steward saw a high wall of water, gray and hollowed,



with a jagged crest of foam, sweeping down upon them. With a warning shout to the captain, still stooping over the cask, he dropped to the main-deck again, lifted the captain bodily, and flung him up to the poop-deck as the opposite rail vanished from sight beneath the toppling wave.

They found Jerome in the scuppers, between the bulwarks and the water-cask, which had broken loose with the rush of the falling sea across the deck, and they carried him tenderly down to his room, half-drowned and mangled beyond all hope.

It was noon before he regained consciousness, and looked anxiously up into the face of the mate, who was watching by his side.

"How's the old man?" he asked in a hoarse whisper.

"All right, thanks to you," said the mate. His eyes filled. "It was great."

The steward smiled faintly.

"Say, he ain't no feather," he whispered.

"There is n't another man aboard who could have done it, or would have dared to go back as you did," declared the mate.

"Oh, I don't know," Jerome whispered. "Don't no one know what he can do till he gets the chance." He moved his head stiffly and tried to turn in the bunk, but the pain was too great. "What's the matter with me—paralyzed?" he asked.

"No, no," answered the mate hastily; "but you're considerably—bruised. You must n't talk."

"All right," he assented, and closed his eyes.

It was late in the afternoon when the mate came in to see him again. The gale had broken, and a square of sunlight rose and fell on the panel of the door as the vessel rolled heavily on the long swells. He was watching the door anxiously as the mate appeared.

"Who's in the galley?" he demanded. "I did n't like to trouble the old man with questions; but it worried me some."

"The second mate," replied Mr. Darrow. "He's pretty good. Don't you worry about that."

The steward sighed his relief, and presently his eyes wandered to his chest. He nodded toward it.

"Just lift the lid, won't ye?" he whispered. "I want you to get something."

The mate lifted it, and looked around for instructions.

"That paper, there in the corner," Jerome explained. "The poem, you know."

Mr. Darrow found it, copied with care, in an old-fashioned hand, and brought it to him.

"Keep it," Jerome murmured. "I want you to give it to her—to Annie."

The mate nodded, and holding it carefully in his hand, seated himself by Jerome's side. His first thought had been to assure the steward that he himself would yet give it to her; but he knew he would not, and in their stern calling the small, well-meant insincerities of life fall away from men. So he merely nodded and said:

"I will. But you must n't talk, you know."

Jerome smiled, was thoughtful a moment, and then spoke again.

"You said you know how it went—the tune. Do you think you could sing it for me?"

The mate looked at the verses and cleared his throat.

"Want me to try it now, to show you?" he asked gently.

"Why, if you don't mind too much," whispered the steward eagerly, and closed his eyes, listening.

Softly under his breath the mate hummed it over first, trying to recall the tune he had so often heard played; then he cleared his throat again and sang it through. At the end he looked up anxiously.

"How'd it go?" he asked. "All right? Of course I ain't much of a singer."

Jerome opened his eyes.

"Why, you done it real good," he declared, with a pleased smile; "but that last part—'what it cost'—you don't get that quite right. It kind o' slides down." He tried to hum it, but he was too weak, and in pity the mate stopped him.

"Don't," he entreated. "It's too much for you. I guess I know what you mean." He sang it over.

"Good!" murmured the steward. "You've got a real ear. Suppose I'd had to depend on the old man!" He smiled. Then he looked up wistfully, adding: "It's a good deal to ask, Mr. Darrow, but would you mind teaching it to her, and kind o' hinting it was meant for her all along? I hate to trouble ye——"

"I'd do a good deal more'n that for you, Jerome," the mate declared. "I'll teach it to her. I promise."

"Don't say anything more," Jerome warned—"about what I thought about her, you know. I guess we'll let that drop. But, say, would n't I like to hear her sing that just once! Seems as if I would n't mind anything after that."

He was restless through the night, and all that could be done for him was done, but it was little. As the day broke, he opened his eyes, and the mate leaned over him.

"You won't forget that slide at the end of the verses?" he gasped. "It goes"—he tried to show how, but failed. "Never mind; you done it good. I guess you'll remember." With that he closed his eyes on all the music of the world.

## A STRANGE WILL

THE following beautiful and pathetic lines were the only possessions of an insane lawyer who died some years ago in the ward for the insane at the Chicago poor-house, where after his death they were found in his ragged coat. Some members of the Chicago Bar Association came into possession of the paper, and the Association passed a resolution ordering the probate of the strange will, and it was probated in due form and spread upon the records of Cook County, Illinois. Mr. Jesse B. Roote, of the Butte, Montana, bar, while in Chicago, copied the record.

W. I. L.

I CHARLES LOUNSBERRY, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby make and publish this my last will and testament, in order, as justly as may be, to distribute my interest in the world among succeeding men.

That part of my interests which is known in law and recognized in the sheep-bound volumes as my property, being inconsiderable and of none account, I make no disposition of in this my will. My right to live, being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but, these things excepted, all else in the world I now proceed to devise and bequeath.

Item: I give to good fathers and mothers, in trust for their children, all good little words of praise and encouragement and all quaint pet names and endearments, and I charge said parents to use them justly, but generously, as the needs of their children shall require.

Item: I leave to children inclusively, but only for the term of their childhood, all and every the flowers of the fields and the blossoms of the woods, with the right to play among them freely according to the customs of children, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. And I devise to children the banks of the brooks and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, and the odors of the willows that dip therein, and the white clouds that float high over the giant trees.

And I leave the children the long, long days to be merry in, in a thousand ways, and the night and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at, but subject, nevertheless, to the rights hereinafter given to lovers.

Item: I devise to boys, jointly, all the useful, idle fields and commons where ball may be played, all pleasant waters where one may swim, all snow-clad hills where one may coast, and all streams

and ponds where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate, to hold the same for the period of their boyhood. And all meadows, with the clover blossoms and butterflies thereof; the woods with their appurtenances; the squirrels and the birds and echoes and strange noises, and all distant places which may be visited, together with the adventures there found. And I give to said boys each his own place at the fireside at night, with all pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance and without any incumbrance or care.

Item: To lovers I devise their imaginary world, with whatever they may need, as the stars of the sky, the red roses by the wall, the bloom of the hawthorn, the sweet strains of music, and aught else they may desire to figure to each other the lastingness and beauty of their love.

Item: To young men jointly, I devise and bequeath all boisterous, inspiring sports of rivalry, and I give to them the disdain of weakness, and undaunted confidence in their own strength. Though they are rude, I leave to them the power to make lasting friendships and of possessing companions, and to them exclusively I give all merry songs and grave choruses to sing with lusty voices.

Item: And to those who are no longer children or youths or lovers, I leave memory; and bequeath to them the volumes of the poems of Burns and Shakespeare and of other poets, if there be others, to the end that they may live the old days over again, freely and fully without tithe or diminution.

Item: To our loved ones with snowy crowns, I bequeath the happiness of old age, the love and gratitude of their children until they fall asleep.



## THE CHAMPION

BY RICHARD KIRK

**I** RIDE alone into the fray,  
 Yet not alone I ride;  
 Beside me are a host to-day  
 Of knightly ones that died.

They gather at the clarion's call  
 To bid me battle well.  
 My fathers! so at last I fall  
 As nobly as ye fell!



## THE PROFESSOR'S PROBLEM

BY WILLIAM T. NICHOLS

THE Professor was very busy when his wife came into his study, and though she laid a hand softly upon his shoulder he did not look up from his work. Probably he did not feel her touch; possibly he was altogether unconscious of her presence. Perhaps, had he been dragged violently from the great things of science to the little things of domestic existence, he might have been vaguely aware that she was going away for a few days; and he might have reasoned that she had come to bid him good-by. There had been much discussion of this journey she was to take with her daughter, and some of it perforce had reached his ears; but whether any part of it had penetrated to his brain was quite another question. To a few it is permissible to hear without heeding, and certainly the Professor had earned this exemption. When one has gained fame in an abstruse branch of investigation, one is entitled to immunity from the worry of every-day trifles. And when one is just completing a *magnum opus*, which is to overthrow a dictator in the realm of thought, the German savant who has lorded it all these years over a great science, then surely is one beyond the need of noting the coming and going of folk of the commonplace world.

The Professor's wife was proud of her husband, of his achievements, and of the power of intense application which had made them possible. Yet, being a woman, she wept now and then, not because he loved her less but because she feared he loved learning more; though, being a loving woman, she jealously guarded her sorrow from him who caused it. So at the moment of parting she steadied her voice—practice had brought her self-control in such matters—and gave him wifely admonitions appropriate to the occasion as courageously as if she did

not feel that in abandoning him for a week she was leaving him as helpless as a child. Then she bent over him, and kissed his forehead. The salute almost aroused the Professor.

"Very good, very good," he said absently. It was his standing remark for all sorts of times and all sorts of places, a survival of the days when he was only a tutor and heard recitations.

His wife was gone, and the Professor worked on at the broad desk littered with books, pamphlets, proof slips, and manuscripts. There was no sound in the room save the scratching of his pen and the creak of his pivot chair, when he turned to consult a book on the stand at his elbow. Out-of-doors there was more bustle than was usual in that quiet neighborhood. Laborers were chopping away at a tree which long had usurped a fraction of the sidewalk next-door. Across the way painters were turning a big red house into a big yellow one. One of them whistled briskly as he plied his brush, the shrill notes rising above the heavy thuds of the laborers' axes.

The maid-of-all-work tiptoed into the study, arranged a light luncheon on a side-table, and tiptoed out again. A cab drove up to the house, a woman alighted, and was received by the maid. It was a pity, on the whole, that the Professor failed to notice her arrival, just as he had failed to heed the parting words of his wife, when she told him of the arrangement by which her younger sister was to come from another city to preside over the household in her absence. In the rare hours devoted to thoughts of family matters, the Professor sometimes regretted that he had seen so little of his wife's people. This girl, for instance, in whose honor his daughter had been named, was almost a stranger to him.

Nearly four hours of the afternoon had passed when he left his desk. The food on the side-table caught his eye, and he ate sparingly and rapidly, more from habit than from hunger. Then, gathering up a bundle of proofs and papers, he strode down the street toward the college laboratory; for there were a few experiments which must be repeated before he could rest satisfied with the revision of his closing chapter.

Midnight came and went before the Professor's task was done, and he dropped his pen with a little sigh; for his heart was in his book, and the ending of it seemed to him like a farewell to a cherished friend. He had reached the goal for which he had striven for many months, but now that it was achieved he felt more of sadness than of elation. Body and brain were beginning to assert their claims for rest; reaction was following close upon the heels of exertion: his head grew heavy, and a mighty weight pressed upon his limbs. With an effort the Professor gained his feet, and staggered across the room to a lounge. He dropped upon it, the gas-jets seemed to circle swiftly above his head,

there was a dull roaring in his ears; and then lights and sounds died out, and he slept the sleep of exhaustion.

The laboratory janitor roused him at noon, and brought him a cup of coffee. The Professor took it with the meek acquiescence which marked him in matters of food and drink, and felt better for it, though even yet a curious lassitude oppressed him.

"I think I will go home, James," he said. "I shall not be here again to-day."

"All right, sir," said the janitor. "A walk'll do you good. You look used up."

"Very good, very good," said the Professor. His hand shook as he opened the door, and his movements were slow and weary as he descended the steps to the sidewalk. There he paused. The day was bright and clear, and a gentle breeze was sweeping in from the west. He inhaled great breaths of spring air, with a joy that was new to him. For the first time in a decade he realized that there could be pleasure in mere existence. He was considering the novel sensation when—

"Dick! Dick! Old boy, how are you?"

A hearty voice had interrupted the Professor's reverie, and his hand was being shaken in a vigorous grip. A keen-eyed man of middle age was greeting him with enthusiasm. The Professor was flustered; nobody had called him "Dick" since the decennial reunion of his class, and then only after the class dinner.

"Why—why," he stammered, peering through his spectacles at the other, "surely this must be Joe Ross—Dr. Joe Ross."

"Right you are. Or, to be exact enough to suit you sticklers for accuracy, Joseph K. Ross, M.D."

"Very good, very good!" cried the Professor. "And I'm very glad to see you."

The two men shook hands again with fresh heartiness. They had been chums for four years as undergraduates, and in view of their first meeting in nearly a quarter of a century they felt free to indulge in so fervent a demonstration of pleasure.

"Got any boys in college?" queried the doctor. "I have one. That's why I'm here. Came up to see the youngster."

"I have only one child—a daughter."

"And how old is she?"

"Why—why——" The Professor hesitated. "She's ten or twelve—or—somewhere along there—the indefinite age, you know."

"In short dresses yet?" There was a twinkle in the questioner's eye.

"Really," began the badgered Professor, "that is one of the details which may have escaped my observation."

"You're quite well acquainted with her?"

"Oh, yes," said the Professor, in all honesty.

Dr. Ross changed the topic. "I'm only a bird of passage, or I should have a good, old-fashioned talk with you," said he. "The fact is, though, I've hardly five minutes to spare, and it's particularly lucky we met as we did. I'm bound west on one of the queerest cases I ever heard of—a case that ought to be a warning to you midnight-oil fellows. The patient is an electrician, with a special line in which he is famous. He has been an intense student, giving himself body and soul to his work. Well, he wakes up one fine morning, to discover that the last five years are a blank to him, so far as everything but his speciality goes. His family write me that he has seemed perfectly rational at all times. In the five years he lost his mother, and his daughter married. He went to the funeral of the one and the wedding of the other, but he does n't remember either event. How was the trouble discovered? Why, the family found out that he thought the year was 1901. He's taking a vacation now, and I'm going to see if I can do anything for him."

"Do you mean that he was ignorant of his mother's death?"

"Certainly I mean it. And she was a member of his household. If he had lost his wife, it would have been the same story, probably. I doubt if he would have noticed that she was gone."

"Very good, very good," said the Professor, in his absent way.

"Well, I must leave you," said Dr. Ross, with a glance at his watch. "If ever you get worried, find out, first thing, if you remember the year. Eh? I don't half believe you know what year this is, Dick. Take things easier, old man. We're getting on. Remember that the class of nineteen hundred and nine is the most important one you faculty chaps have on your hands."

With a parting hand-clasp the doctor hurried off. The Professor watched his departing figure with a regretful smile.

"The year?" he soliloquized. "Well, well, that's a queer weakness—not to know the year. This, for instance, is nineteen hundred—nineteen hundred—and—what?"

The Professor paused in dismay. He had forgotten the year.

It was not until late that afternoon that he reached his home. He had spent the intervening hours in walking the streets, vainly trying to solve the problem. Any passer-by could have given him the answer, had he dared to put the question, but it is not permissible to the holders of university chairs to wander about college towns asking strangers for such information. His resultless quest for the fourth figure had been a season of increasing agony. Everything had seemed to be slipping from him. As a last resort, he had decided to go home to his wife and lay the difficulty before her. As he approached his house, however, he felt the horror growing upon him. Could he trust his eyes? Where



was the tree half blocking the walk, the tree which had almost caused a neighborhood war? It was gone, and where it had stood stretched unbroken flagging. And that tall red house opposite his own, that eyesore against which his wife had protested so often? Red had given place to yellow! Heavy at heart was the Professor as he entered his domicile.

A tall, slender girl was in the hall. She came forward to greet him, surprised and a little hurt as well that he did not address her at once. But for an instant the Professor was speechless, with his eyes fixed upon her. His daughter? It seemed impossible. Yet, as he gazed, the conviction grew upon him that it must be she. How indeed could he doubt? It was as if his wife stood before him as he had first known her in the flower of her girlhood.

"Mary, Mary!" cried the Professor. He drew her close to him, and kissed her again and again. She was passive for a little. Then she began to free herself from his embrace, very gently but very decidedly.

"Yes, I am Mary; I feared you did n't recognize me at first," she said shyly.

"But you grow so rapidly, my dear; I had n't realized before what a little woman you were."

"Ah! But it is so long since you have seen me." And she smiled with just a trace of coquetry.

He had been away from home for a day, and she called it a long time! His fatherly heart thrilled.

"I'm so glad to hear you say so," he cried. "We will try, dear, to avoid separations in the future."

The surprised look returned to the girl's face, and she said "Oh!" with an inflection he did not understand. The Professor's spirits began to sink again; the thought flashed upon him that perhaps the long neglect of his family had roused in them a kind of repugnance to him. With nervous foreboding he sought a new topic.

"That is a new dress, is it not?" he asked.

"Yes," the girl answered. "Don't you like it?"

"It is very pretty. It does credit to your mother's taste."

"My mother!" She was staring at him now in frank amazement.

The Professor turned away abruptly, and ran up the stairs, possessed by the most terrible of all the fears which had suggested themselves to him that afternoon. He dashed into his wife's room, and searched it with feverish haste and growing despair. Her dressing table was there, but the little collection of toilet accessories had vanished from it; her wraps were nowhere to be found; the closet in which her gowns had hung was almost bare. Even her trunk had disappeared from the spot it had once occupied. He dropped into a chair, and sat there for

many minutes, gazing straight before him with eyes that saw nothing, his body inclined a little forward, and his fingers drumming on his knees. His brain was awirl with a rush of memories, pouring upon him like the flood which follows the tearing away of the dam, but memories, all of them, of the days of his courtship and his early married life, when he had thoughts of other human beings than the man in Berlin.

By compensation's law, floods exhaust themselves all the more quickly for their violence, and presently the Professor's thoughts began to flow in a calmer current. He pointed out to himself that in the period of reaction following the culmination of his labors on his book, he was especially liable to be assailed by delusions, and to yield to them. In his experiences of the afternoon he probably had been led, through his perturbation, to attach too much importance to trifles. Then, too, his scientific work had shown steady improvement rather than deterioration. His colleagues of the faculty apparently had failed to notice any uncanny peculiarity in him. There was, moreover, about him no badge or token of mourning. Unheeding as he might have been of the unscientific side of his life, his daughter surely would have seen to it that his garb bore some decent mark of appreciation of the bereavement he had reason to believe he had suffered.

There was no denying, however, that he was preëminently of the class liable to such a misfortune as that which had befallen the electrician. Ross, with the trained observation of the specialist, had detected something amiss, and had gone out of his way to give him a warning. So far as he could discover, the case of the Western student presented a striking resemblance to his own. He might have magnified trifles, but, on the other hand, he could not understand how the changes in the neighborhood could have escaped his observation. If his scientific investigations of late had been more profound and the results more notable, his success might have been due to a complete oblivion of all things else. His brethren of the faculty had always left him much to his own devices, and long ago had come to regard him in the light of an intellectual machine, not amenable to the laws of ordinary humanity. The absence of emblems of mourning could be explained on the supposition that a considerable time had passed since his great loss. That theory would account, too, for the change in the appearance of the girl down-stairs. Her hair had seemed a shade or two darker than he remembered it, and her features had appeared to be rather more pronounced.

The Professor arose and stood before the looking-glass, regarding his reflection with rueful scrutiny. What an old man he looked, with stooped shoulders and gray-streaked hair and beard, and faded eyes peering out through the gold-rimmed spectacles! And the lines in his

face! Their number surprised him. More than ever the conviction possessed him that years had slipped away without his knowledge. But how many years? That was the question. The Professor tried desperately to come at the answer. Rack his brain as he might, he could get no definite clue. To the best of his knowledge there was no calendar in the house. He subscribed for a daily paper, but never read it, unless his attention was called to some article, and now he had no idea where a copy was to be found. His correspondence was limited, and he made it a rule to burn letters. In short, none of the easy helps out of his difficulty to which the average man would have resorted had such a problem confronted him, was available in his case. Besides, it had flashed upon him that it would never do to give anybody a hint of his condition. He must run no risk of revealing his secret through rash questioning.

Basing his statement on what he believed to be his latest memories, the Professor would have said that the year was 1907. Still, even on that basis, it might be 1906. He knew that he had taken no vacation in two or possibly three years; for he had been too busy to leave his laboratory for more than a day at a time. Then, too, he had been so absorbed in his book that it was entirely possible that month after month had slipped away, until 1907 had been left far behind. Ross had spoken of his son being in the class of 1909; perhaps the doctor had meant it as a kindly jog to his friend's memory. The Professor tried a little figuring: his daughter was born in 1893; the girl downstairs was certainly about sixteen; 1893 and sixteen made 1909. That seemed significant. Allowing, then, that he had lost his wife more than two years before, he might fairly conclude that she had died late in 1906 or 1907. He could find no argument to offer against all this, though he sought one earnestly. For almost any other member of the faculty, it would have been impossible to lose track of the classes in college, but the men who studied under him were few in number and mostly postgraduates or specials, who were not likely to try to impress upon him the beloved numerals distinguishing their class from all others.

The Professor and the girl supped together that evening, and afterwards ensconced themselves on opposite sides of the centre table in the sitting-room. Their talk languished; for a feeling of constraint was upon both of them, and they could find few subjects in common. To do the Professor justice, he longed to speak of his wife, to hear something of her last days, to learn how the end had come. But how could he begin his queries? For the present, at least, he could not bring himself to give Mary an inkling of his misfortune.

"Your mother was a noble woman," he said, at last. The girl raised her eyes from her book, and gazed at him with the same shy look he had noticed after their meeting in the hall.

"She was a very noble woman," he went on; "beyond all question the noblest, purest, gentlest woman I ever knew."

"Yes," the girl answered softly.

"I do not often speak of such things, but I want to say to you that she was more than all the rest of the world to me. I loved her—I cannot tell you how deeply, how sincerely. I do not think I ever knew true happiness except with her."

"But you saw so little of her." The girl had dropped her book, and was staring at him with open-eyed wonder.

"That is the bitterest regret of my life," said the Professor sadly. "But I believe—at least, I hope—that she understood my affection; and I know that her heart was all mine, that she never had even a passing fancy for any other man."

"Sir!"

"Yes, unworthy as I was, she loved me with a love beyond expression. You cannot guess how it cheers me to see you growing so like her. My dear, you are your mother over again."

"But I have been told that I resemble my father."

"Not at all, not at all," the Professor declared earnestly. "Don't think that. Why, Mary, how could you bear to cherish such an idea for an instant? I want you to remember your father as a man who wasted the best years of his life, a poor creature who was in no way worthy of your mother, but who, when it was too late, was roused to a sense of his manifold shortcomings, and repented them deeply and sincerely. I alone can tell you these things, my child."

"But you shall tell me no more!" cried the girl. "I won't listen to them. How could you say them? My father, the best of men——"

She burst into tears, and fled from the room. The Professor heard her sobbing as she made her way up the stairs.

"Ah, true heart, true heart!" he soliloquized, a little puzzled, but more than a little comforted by her vehemence. "I have something to live for still."

When the Professor opened his eyes the next morning he had need of all the fortitude he could summon; for Nature was paying him out for his disregard of the limits she sets to reasonable human endurance. He awoke to find that his head was throbbing, his limbs ached, and a dull pain pervaded his body. It was not altogether a novel state of things; twice or thrice before he had been called upon to undergo similar attacks, and his experience on those occasions had proved that his only hope of relief lay in absolute quiet, with the room darkened. From the moment of his awakening he realized that the attack promised to be the worst of its kind that had ever come to him; and for three days and nights the promise was made good. On the morning of the fourth day he was free from pain, but weak in body and dulled in spirit.

Though he was able to arise and to move about the house, his movements were heavy and his courage was at its ebb. Much to the surprise of Mary, he seemed to avoid his study, preferring to spend the morning with her in the sitting-room. He said little, but kept his eyes fixed upon her with an intentness which puzzled her sadly. Twice he left the room for a brief interval; she noted that in each instance he returned more depressed than ever. He gave her no hint of his purpose on these little journeys about the house; though, for that matter, had she accompanied him, she would have gained no idea of his motives. His first trip was to the kitchen, where he found the maid-of-all-work, and asked the whereabouts of the morning paper.

"Please, sir, I don't keep them no more," the domestic explained. "I use them to light fires—now that the mistress is gone."

"Now that the mistress is gone!" The words rang over and over again in the Professor's ears. He tottered back to the living-room and sat there, silently mourning. Half an hour later he made his second venture, this time penetrating the cold depths of the parlor. There used to be a family Bible there, he remembered, and it cheered him a bit to find it in its old place. With nervous forebodings he turned the pages on which it is customary to record the great events of household history—the marriages, the births, and the deaths. There was the entry of his wedding, and on the next page the record of his daughter's birth, but beyond these there was nothing.

They dined early that day, and soon after the conclusion of the meal the girl told him she was going out. Shopping was her excuse, but her reason, as she confessed to herself, was to escape, at least for a time, the steady gaze of those bespectacled eyes, whose melancholy expression she could not understand. Soon after her flight the Professor emerged from the house, and walked slowly toward the business district of the city. A stationer's sign caught his eye, and he turned into the shop.

"I should like some letter paper," he said to the clerk. "I should like it with the city and the date printed upon it. Can you show me a sample?"

"Certainly," said the salesman. He took from the drawer several sheets, and laid them on the counter.

"Ah, but only three figures of the year are given," the Professor ingenuously observed. "Here 's only one, nine and a cipher. I should want the fourth as well. Could you let me see how it would look?"

"Why, certainly," said the salesman; "but it isn't usual to put it on. All our orders are the other way. Still, if you are particular——"

"Not at all, not at all," the Professor broke in. "This style will do nicely. Please send a package to my house."

He went out of the shop with the feeling that he had barely escaped

detection. "We must be cautious, cautious," he said to himself as he moved on.

When he halted again he had reached the goal of his journey, and was in the office of a company which turned great blocks of granite and marble into polished testimonials of regard for the departed. He desired to buy a monument, he told the man in charge, and briefly described what he had in mind.

"If you will step into the yard, I can show you something which may meet your ideas," said the manager.

"Very good, very good," the Professor observed, a moment later. They were standing before a granite shaft, not tall, but massive, and severely plain in all its details. "How soon can that be placed in position? I should like a name engraved upon it. That could be done here, I presume?"

"Certainly," replied the other. "You desire the dates also, I suppose?"

"Why—why—perhaps—that is—it had better be done later," stammered the Professor.

"If you prefer it so. But will you give me a memorandum? And where is the monument to be placed?"

Where, indeed? A new difficulty confronted the Professor.

"That is not quite decided," he said at last, speaking with a good deal of hesitancy. "I have not settled the—er—er—what one might call the details."

"Ah!" There was a note of surprise in the man's tone, which warned the purchaser that he was conducting the negotiations in a manner out of the common. Again he yielded to the dread of a detection of his infirmity.

"I must have a little time for consideration," he explained. "As soon as possible I shall send you a note. Until you receive it, pray let the matter rest."

The Professor trudged homeward, very downcast, very deeply impressed with the difficulties besetting him, and very much perplexed as to the way out of them.

Mary had returned to the house before the Professor reached it. He found her at a desk in the sitting-room, engaged upon a letter which appeared to be making very slow progress. As he watched her, a new self-reproach cut him to the quick—he had no idea of the character of her chirography. Perhaps she wrote a very bad hand. Were that the case, was he not culpable for neglect of her education? When she had finished the letter, he strolled over to the desk, with a great assumption of carelessness.

"Won't you give me a sample of your writing, Mary?" he asked. "I should very much like to see one."

"But I write so badly—I'm ashamed to show you my hieroglyphics," the girl protested.

"It would be a great favor," he urged humbly.

"Then I suppose I must. But you must promise not to scold me nor be too critical."

"I shall never scold you, my dear," said he earnestly.

"A thousand thanks for the promise. Now what shall I write?"

A bright thought struck the Professor. "Suppose you write a note—well, to Dr. Jones, for instance, about—oh, about anything you please," said he.

The girl's pen raced over the paper, the Professor's eye following its swift motion.

"But, Mary, you're beginning with 'My dear Doctor,'" he objected. "Why don't you put the date first?"

"It isn't the right way. At school they taught us to put the date last."

"I like the other way best, my dear," protested the Professor, growing a little bolder. "Please write it at the top of the page."

"Oh, if you prefer it, I don't mind." She wrote "Tuesday, May the Sixteenth," and looked up at him.

"But the year—you've omitted it," he said.

"Why, certainly, I was taught to omit it from such a note as this. But, of course, if you are particularly anxious——"

"No, no, no!" the Professor cried hastily. "Not at all, not at all. You write beautifully, I'm sure. I'm very much obliged to you."

Baffled once more, he turned from her abruptly. He saw that she was amazed at his actions and words, and for a moment he was on the point of revealing his secret, but something held back the confession. He must have a little more time to prepare himself for the ordeal. When the clock struck nine the girl rose from her chair, and crossed the room to him.

"I must retire early, for I must be up with the sun to-morrow," she said. "I shall be off before your breakfast time. So I think I shall say good-night and good-by together."

"You are going away?" The news took him completely by surprise.

"Yes, by the early train. You understood that I was to start to-morrow, did n't you?"

"I—I—oh, certainly—of course," he answered. Evidently this journey of hers had been planned some time before, and he had been duly notified of it. "Have you arranged for a cab?" he asked.

"Oh, I shan't need one. My satchel is not heavy, you know."

The Professor felt relieved; she could not be contemplating a long absence.

"I shall miss you very much," he said gravely.

"Ah, you are flattering me; you won't think twice of me after to-morrow."

"I shall always miss you when we are parted," declared the Professor, with deep conviction.

"Good-by and good-night then." Half timidly she bent over him and kissed him.

"Good-by, Mary, good-by!" he answered. His voice shook in spite of his effort to be calm.

She paused a moment at the door, and looked back. "I hope before we meet again you will think more kindly of my father." It was a little feminine parting shot.

"Never! Never!" cried the Professor. "Consider him one of the most erring and culpable of men." It was a crumb of comfort for him afterwards that she had vanished before the sentence was completed.

Though the head of the household awoke unusually early the next day, Mary had departed, and was well on her journey before his breakfast was finished. Altogether, the Professor had a bad morning. He visited his study, but a glance at the littered desk appalled him; he went to his wife's room, but found little comfort where so many objects were full of sorrowful suggestions; he sought refuge in the sitting-room, but there his loneliness seemed greater than ever. Yet the hours dragged themselves away, as hours will for the saddest of mortals, and at last the Professor, glancing at his watch, found that it was almost midday. There was a rattle of wheels in the street, and instinctively he hurried to a window. Anything was welcome that might divert his thoughts even for a moment.

A carriage had halted in front of his house, and the driver was opening the door of the vehicle. The Professor idly noticed that the lock was stiff, and that the man had trouble with his task. Then he saw the door swing open and a lady step to the sidewalk.

"My wife!" he cried, and grasped the frame of the window for support. Was it all an optical illusion? He rubbed his eyes, and glanced again at the street. No; it was no trick of overstrained nerves. There she stood, watching the driver carry her trunk from the carriage and up the steps to the house door, and beside her was a little girl. The Professor gave a shout of joy, and dashed into the hall. An instant later his wife was in his arms.

"But, my dear," she expostulated, "I must n't monopolize all your affection. You have n't spoken to Mary yet."

The Professor turned to the child with an embarrassed air. "I am very glad to see you, Mary, I'm sure," he said. "How do you do?" As an afterthought he stooped and pressed his lips to her forehead.



"Did our absence seem long?" asked the wife.

"Long! I thought it was years," said the husband, truthfully enough.

"Then I fear my sister Mary rather neglected you."

"Your sister Mary? Now I see it all!" cried the Professor. "But there ought to be more variety in naming children. This uniformity is liable to cause misunderstandings." Then, as an afterthought, he added quickly: "Oh, she did very nicely. Still, you see, there's nobody like my wife."

About the middle of the afternoon the Professor's wife came into his study. He was at his desk, pretending to work, but he looked up when he heard her step, and beamed upon her joyfully.

"I've a letter which my sister left for me," she said. "There's something about you—I want to read it to you. She says:

"The Professor has talked a good deal to me about father and mother. I never dreamed he was so fond of her as he really must have been; but I don't believe he appreciated papa as much as the rest of us did."

"She seems to have misunderstood me," the Professor hastened to explain; but in his heart he was saying: "Bless her for not making it any worse!

"By the way," he added aloud, "I met my classmate, Dr. Ross, the other day. He has a son in college whom we ought to invite to dinner. His father said, I think, that the boy was in '09. That would make him a—a——?"

He hesitated, looking to his wife to finish his sentence.

"Why, a Soph, of course, since this is 1907," she said.

The Professor sprang to his feet. "He does n't feel a bit younger than I do, I'll be bound!" he cried.

"You are looking wonderfully well," said his wife. "At first I thought you seemed fagged out, but I must have been mistaken. Fighting that man in Berlin must agree with you."

"Hang the man in Berlin! Pardon, the expression, my dear, but we won't think of him just now. Instead, we'll plan a nice quiet summer somewhere in the country, where the people never heard of him. Do you like the idea?"

"Indeed I do. But you will find it dull, I'm afraid. You will have to content yourself with the amusements of any non-scientific citizen on a vacation. No books, no experiments, just nice people and——"

"Very good, very good," said the Professor. And he rubbed his hands gleefully at the prospect.

# CONFESSIONAL—AND CONSEQUENCES

*By Cecilia A. Loizeaux*

THE moment I entered my apartment on the fourth floor of the Algonquin, I knew that some one had been in my rooms, or was still there. I hesitated only a moment before lighting a match. I have nothing to fear at such times, since I have no jewels and am not at all beautiful.

So I lit the gas, and as the light flared into her eyes a startled feminine head arose from the cushions on my couch. I admit that my first impression was distinctly one of annoyance. The head belonged to Felicia Broughton, and I knew too well that when Felicia came to stay all night with me it meant that I was to receive her confession, losing my best hours of sleep as I did so, in order that she, Felicia, her sin off her conscience and onto mine, might sleep soundly and arise the next morning fresh and fair to gather other scalps for her already large collection.

It is my fate to receive the confidences of many people, especially those of young girls who have found that their chums are never to be trusted when the confidences concern men. Felicia is not so very young. She is rather at the between age, which all men and most women find so charming. But she is old—old as the hills—in the art of flirtation. Indeed, with Felicia flirting is positively a profession. She is old enough to know better, too, which makes her all the more dangerous. And then, she is one of those who believe that a sin confessed is not a sin.

She had evidently been asleep, for she blinked at the gas as a cat blinks at the sun. Indeed, she is not unlike a cat. Her eyes are green—lovely, shining green like jewels—and her hair—well, of course there are no auburn cats, but she reminds one of a cat just the same. I have often wondered why men never saw this until they had put up groping hands to find that their scalps had been neatly and painlessly removed.

Any one but Felicia would have looked blowsy. She was merely charmingly mussed, with her skin pink as a baby's from the heat. I knew that I was no more to her than a confessional booth, where after

confessing she would have to do no penance, but I found myself kissing and welcoming her just as cordially as if I did not know this. And, as I noted the pathetic droop to her mouth, I wondered if for once Felicia herself were not the sufferer. For this, as for all my generous impulses toward Felicia, I was speedily rewarded and disillusioned.

She told me nothing until she had eaten and we were making ready for bed. Then, as she braided her hair into two long and girlish plaits and rubbed out imaginary wrinkles, she began her tale. She was very calm at first, and I knew that the weeping would come later, when not even I, the Confessional, could see a reddened nose. But it took her so long to begin that once again I thought it might be her own heart.

"You have n't been beaten, have you, Felicia?" I asked anxiously.

"Mercy, no! Whatever made you think that?" she asked in astonishment, her pink fingers suspended in the air with surprise, her eyes wide open.

"Well, then," I answered snappishly, "get it over with. I'm tired."

"I'm so miserable and sort of frightened," she began, reaching for some more cold cream.

"And so is the man, I presume. That is it, is n't it? You have been obliged through force of circumstances and no fault of your own to refuse another man? Who is he?"

"Charlie Van Zandt. He just would n't take the hint. I tried long ago to make him see that I never could care. And he followed me down to the beach and made an awful scene—why, he almost threatened me. Men are such brutes. You either can't love them—or you can."

"And we all know that you can't, Felicia. You'll get over the scene, whatever it was. I'm not worrying about you. But Charlie Van Zandt is very young, and you are his first venture, I think. And now, for a longer or shorter space of time, depending on just how much of a fool he is, he'll make his mother wretched and a perfect donkey of himself because he thinks he has discovered that all women are heartless. If you had such a thing as a conscience, Felicia Broughton, I'd wish with all my heart that you'd have to wait to see one of your victims cured before you could find another. And I'd hope you would grow old in the process." I turned to stalk from the room, for I meant to sleep on the couch in the sitting-room, leaving Felicia my bed.

At the very door I was stopped by a queer little sound that did not seem to be Felicia at all. I looked at the girl and came back. "That was n't what I came to tell you," she whispered. "Can I put out the light?"

I reached up and turned it off, and then, taking Felicia's hand, led her to the bed, where we sank down. Felicia promptly put her head on my shoulder, and I can't resist Felicia when she cuddles, any more than I can resist a pink, dimpled baby.

"Don't you worry about him, Felicia," I said. "Charlie Van Zandt is a presumptuous little weed, and deserved pulling up from the roots."

"It is n't Charlie at all," she sobbed. "It's Rolfe Carson."

In my excitement, I pushed her from me. Rolfe Carson! I had forgotten about him. This was too good. Could it be that Felicia had met and reduced to his lowest terms the flirt par excellence of all flirts of whom I had ever heard? And with my amazement a great joy came to me. For, years before, Rolfe Carson had played with my little sister, and she—well, she was n't a flirt. I had vowed to get even, and here was my chance.

"Felicia," I said, "I am your friend for life, and I tell you on my honor that you need not weep over this piece of work. 'The bitter's bitten,' " I quoted.

Felicia began to sob. "You do not understand," she said. "I am in love with him." It was a positive wail, a little cry of helplessness, and it was genuine and turned me sick. For, often as I had wished for Felicia's punishment, I hated to see her suffer in this way. But it was fine to know that Felicia really had had a heart hidden away all this time.

"He said he knew you," she went on, sobbingly, "that he used to know you, and that was why I came. I have just come from the beach—he was there—and I feel terribly—as if I had been wicked all my life. Suppose he finds out what a flirt I have been. Suppose that nasty little Van Zandt beast tells him!"

Felicia was astounded by the realization of her own sins. I thought a moment.

"How long have you known him?" I asked.

"Two months—he's been in South America, you know."

I drew a long breath of relief. And then I saw sudden light. There is no flirt who marries, willingly and to his or her knowledge, another flirt. I might still save Felicia.

"Dear," I said, and there must have been something queer in my voice, for I could feel her jewel eyes fix themselves on my face, "you never did a wiser thing in your life than to come to me. But if Rolfe Carson had ever thought you would come to me, he never would have told you he knew me—for I know him, too."

"Do you mean that he was ever in love with you?"

"My dear, I'm ten years older than Rolfe—and always was. Also, I have always been an old maid. But there have been other girls."

And then for hours and hours I told her about all the other girls. I spared no details which would make my story more convincing, and I found that she knew some of the girls I mentioned, though she had not known that the man involved was Rolfe Carson. And she could not do otherwise than believe me.

But she took it all so queerly. I had expected tears, stormy denials—anything but this calm, dry acceptance. And I suddenly realized that she did care for the man, terribly, and I wished that I had not told her. Real love comes to no one twice. It was n't any of my real business, any way.

At daybreak I went to my couch in the sitting-room, where I slept the sleep of the exhausted. And when, late in the forenoon, I tiptoed into the bedroom, I found that Felicia had departed, leaving this note on the dresser: "Of course I believe you—but I can never forgive you. Some day you will understand why."

And then I smiled with a positive relief. I knew that she was already recuperating, and told myself that I had done good work. Within a week Wendell Hall was tagging her around, to the great distress of Carrie Worthington, who came to me and sobbed out the tale of his faithlessness. I was sorry for the child, too, for I knew Felicia well enough to understand that she would finish Wendell Hall before she let him go.

The rest of the tale came to me five weeks later, away out in Iowa, where I had gone to visit relatives, and where I found Rolfe Carson doing the same thing, and incidentally teaching the art of flirtation to an apple-cheeked young cousin of mine.

When I had renewed my acquaintance with him and had had the satisfaction of impressing upon his vanity the facts of my sister's very happy marriage, he confided in me, too, sure of my safety, even as the others.

He told me, and for the life of me I could not help believing in his sincerity as he told it, that at last he was really in love, with the most innocent, sweet-hearted little girl in Massachusetts. And her name was Felicia. I listened with a joy that was deep and far-reaching; but somewhere I felt vaguely sick, too. And then I did the only thing there seemed for me to do; I made a complete job of it. I told Rolfe Carson first just what I thought of his methods, and then I told him all that I knew of the guileless Felicia. I knew all the time, of course, that neither of them would ever speak to me again, for it was inevitable that they should meet and compare notes. But I did n't care. I was tired of being a go-between, and, any way, I was too fond of them both to care to see them made unhappy for life, when by such a small and really pleasurable effort I could prevent it.

And so I told him how even then the guileless and sweet-hearted

Felicia was trailing Wendell Hall, and thereby making the little Worthington girl old before her time. I told him of all her previous flirtations, omitting nothing that I thought might interest him. And when I finally paused to think of more, he said through his teeth, "Are you through?" and in another moment the gate slammed viciously. And that evening he was recalled by telegram to attend to important business in Boston. And he did n't leave any message at all for my apple-cheeked young cousin, with whom he had been going driving the next day. She cried furtively, and I meditated.

And for one whole week I lived in a state of triumph, not unmixed with a feeling of approaching disaster, which I could not shake off. Then there came to me a marked paper from Boston. On the front page, in the most vulgar and ostentatious display, were pictures of Rolfe and Felicia. And beneath the pictures was a whole column of most interesting and readable matter telling how the young people had been married seven weeks before at the beach. It had been a love-at-first-sight affair, and as both were members of very prominent and very conservative families, the young people had chosen to keep the marriage secret until they were ready to sail for South America, where the groom had important business interests.

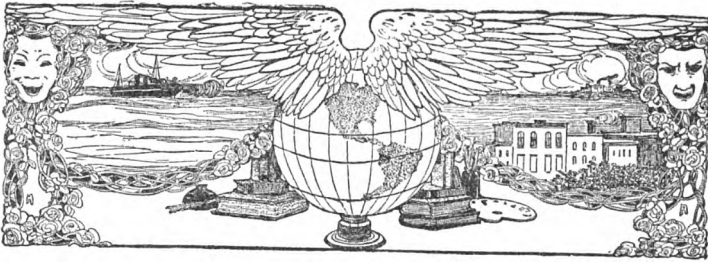
I showed the paper to my apple-cheeked young cousin, and then I sighed a bit wearily. I was too stupid, I told myself, to deserve being a Confessional. They had been married then, when Felicia, a bit frightened at what she had done, came to confess it to me. And I had hurried and forestalled her confession with all the unpleasant things I could think of about her husband. Decidedly pleasant of me, was n't it? Then I had hastened to Rolfe, to repeat my friendly services.

Well, after all, one really gets to the bottom of things now and then. They say that Rolfe and Felicia are a devoted pair. I know the kind. Neither dares to let the other out of sight. They have never come back from South America—but they named their small daughter after me. And when I heard of it—not through them—and sent the child a lovely hand-wrought silver bowl and spoon, the receipt came back to me signed in a cramped hand, evidently written by a guided baby fist, "Rebecca Carson." So I think they really have forgiven me, though they are too proud to say so. And I hope that when she is older they will send me the small Rebecca to educate; for I think they will always live in South America.



A fool may be either a man who fails to understand the world, or a man whom the world fails to understand.

The Young Person is a very terrible creature. It knows so much.



## WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND  
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

### THE INCREASING COST OF LIVING

**A** MAN who is living in the house occupied by his father thirty-five years ago, who has the same size family, and who is living about, he thinks, as his father lived then, discovered an old account-book kept by his father, covering household expenses. Comparing month by month, the son has found that, summing corresponding items, his expenses to-day are twice those recorded by his father.

Well, what is to be done? Investigation results in a merry-go-round like that depicted so often by newspaper cartoonists: every one pointing with his thumb to his neighbor and saying, "*Him.*" The consumer blames the butcher for charging so much for steak, the butcher blames the wholesaler for advancing the price of beef, the wholesaler blames the commission house or packers, the commission house alleges shortage of shipments, the shipper alleges shortage of cars, the railroad alleges cowboys are scaring trains with full-dress suits, the cowboys claim that they are forced to wear them; and back it goes: cattlemen assert that the railroads will not accept cattle unless accompanied by cowboys in full-dress suits, railroads assert government compels this, government asserts commission-men demanded it, commission-men assert that the measure was put through by the wholesalers, wholesalers assert that the butchers themselves did the lobbying, and the butchers promptly unload the responsibility upon the people.

Thread advances—presumably because the lumber for spools is advanced; lumber for spools has advanced because oats are high (the

logging teams require grain three times a day, and that *mounts up*), oats are high because of a wet spring, and as the wet spring was sent presumably by Providence, certainly My Lady must not protest when her gown costs more by fifty per cent.

It is put forward by some social economists that dear money, as the term expresses it, is a sign of prosperity. But is it? Is it, when the prosperity of the many is being milked to swell by greater ratio the prosperity of the few? Is the average man to-day getting his money's worth? Occasionally (we would not breathe the confession outside of our own booming country)—occasionally into the minds of some of us creeps the suspicion that the average man—who occupies the bottom of the heap—is *not*.

JOHN STONE

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### THINGS WORTH CRYING ABOUT

**W**HY do we so dread a book or a play "that ends badly"? Are we really so genuinely sensitive that we cannot bear a touch of sadness? Are our feelings so tremendous that we are afraid of them?

Are we not rather unconsciously governed by the fact that emotion has (for the time being) gone out of fashion, until we Americans bid fair to rival the Japanese in considering it a point of honor to smile, no matter what happens?

A hundred years ago, seventy-five, fifty even, nobody felt in the least ashamed to cry over a fine book, even if some one was looking! A great man like Lord Macaulay wept freely over "Clarissa Harlowe," and did not care who knew it. But then he remembered a truth which we are in danger of forgetting: it is that noble, big things often have a very sad side. Consequently, in letting ourselves be scared, in protecting our imaginations from all possible contact with unhappiness, we too often lose the inspiring effect of contact with real vibrations of heroism and nobility.

Hedging ourselves about from those feelings—painful and pleasant—which give birth to generous emotion, to enthusiasm, to the impulse towards noble, disinterested action, we run a great risk of doing ourselves permanent damage. In every-day existence the deeper feelings may only be brought out now and then in the course of a whole lifetime and, like every other faculty, the capacity for emotion will wither and dry up with disuse.

Therefore, for fear of losing it, let us try never to stifle it, but to keep it alive by every possible means, even by facing books that end badly, novels and every other kind—not grudging our tears, even if some one sees them.

A typical American was lately reading aloud those wise, beautiful



words of an American patriot, the letters of the young soldier Charles Russell Lowell to his betrothed.

Suddenly the impending tragedy grew too much for the reader (thirteen horses were shot under him before his heroic end). She threw down the book with "I can't go on! In a minute I shall be crying."

In a minute, however, she thought better of it. "After all," she said, "some things are worth crying about."

And that is the point. If the book and the play are trashy, cheap, untrue to nature, our emotions will be untouched; but if there be reality and fineness enough to move us—whether in fiction or in an Associated Press despatch—why should we grudge a few tears as the price of keeping alive our imaginations, our sympathies?

MARY MOSS

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### "UNRAVISH'D EARS"

THE Norwegian composer Grieg once played before King Edward, presumably at his majesty's request, as a composer commonly does not force his way uninvited to the royal pianoforte and salute the royal ears with a concord of sweet sounds. Grieg, then, began to play, but King Edward continued to converse with the Norwegian minister. Grieg stopped suddenly and looked at the king; for a composer, even as a cat, may turn his eyes on royalty. The king smiled and Grieg resumed; likewise the king. The composer stopped once more, and this time the king "looked back sternly." But—important point—he ceased conversing.

An American magazine, from which this little story is quoted, makes the following comment: "There are conversations which are superior to symphonies, and the musician cannot be utterly sure that the interruption from which he suffers does not deserve to be given the right of way."

This comment is interesting in that it exhibits a too common viewpoint. The lack of consideration, not to say ordinary courtesy, which King Edward displayed, was due to popular ignorance—which royalty shares with the multitude—of a musician's state of mind at the time when he is interpreting his own or another's composition. If King Edward should invite Mr. Thomas Hardy, say, to read a selection from his "Dynasts," he would scarcely interrupt the distinguished novelist-poet; but one may talk when a musician is playing. And yet the consequences would be less disastrous in the case of a reader than of a musician.

Edward Baxter Perry, the blind pianist, once told me that the slightest interruption gave him sharp physical pain. He also ventured

the opinion that spoken words worth hearing are worth waiting for. An artist is not a piano-playing machine; he cannot give sincerely of his best without intense concentration. A word, a whisper, is sufficient to destroy this concentration if the company of listeners be small. In a large audience the attentive listeners, being in the majority, submerge the inattentive and the rude, and preserve unbroken the bond of sympathy between performer and listener which is absolutely essential to artistic achievement. A host is not responsible for the bad manners of a guest; but to invite a musician to play and then to interrupt him is mere rudeness, in kind or commoner.

*Are* there conversations which are superior to symphonies? What seasoned concert-goer and attendant on musicales has ever overheard a conversation that, in subject matter or expression, quite measured up to Schubert's First Symphony, or Schumann's Second, or Brahms's Third, or Tchaikowsky's Fourth, or Beethoven's Fifth?—or any other symphony of his acquaintance? A fitter obligato to the most superior conversation may be found in the music of a café string band.

The conversation which interrupted Grieg may have been of the most tremendous significance; but a doubt may be permitted to persons who enjoy the acquaintance of neither Norwegian diplomats nor English royalty.

BERT LESTON TAYLOR

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## CHRISTIAN SCIENCE THE FASHION

THE electric car was uncomfortably crowded, but at a corner only part way down-town fully half the passengers alighted.

"What's going on?" demanded one man of another, who was moving past him. "Some sort of an entertainment?"

"No; church, that's all," responded the other, with a smile.

"Church?" repeated the first man, incredulous. "What church?"

"Christian Science," the other responded, and passed on.

"Well, I'm darned!" grunted the first. "Some time I'm going to a Christian Science meeting just to find out what draws them so."

Very likely he did—as did I.

It was the Wednesday night meeting. Without, a dozen autos had been ranged at the curb, and from north, east, west, and south had come pouring the people. I sat in the rear of the amphitheatre. On my left was the paying-teller of the bank which holds my every cent; on my right, the senior partner in the furniture establishment which sold me my household goods. I heard a ringing talk from the attorney whom I had recently empowered to pass upon some important titles.

With a feeling of foolishness I had entered the church. But were

these men fools? Dared I intimate that they, whom I trusted in business, were less acute than myself? If so, then I *was* a fool!

This particular church has a membership, I am told, of eight hundred; the seating capacity is two thousand; at this, a mid-week meeting, virtually every seat was taken. Presuming that all the members were present (which could hardly have been the case), then there were twelve hundred strangers.

Is there another denomination in the world which can thus fill its church in the summer, at a regular mid-week meeting? Sensationalism, you say? No; the Christian Science service has naught of the sensational; in fact, the complaint is freely made that it is dull and that much cannot be understood by the unenlightened.

Curiosity? Yes—but not the merely idle. It is that curiosity which eggs one on to investigate a movement whereby others are being benefited. We none of us like to be on the “outside” of a “good thing.” And gratitude; for it is declared that eighty per cent. of the Christian Scientists have been brought into it through the healing of their physical ills; and they, it must be remembered, have friends and relatives.

Sneers at Christian Science have always arisen from ignorance. Now it is also a mark of bad taste. Christian Science is becoming the *fashion*. Will it not require all its divinity to keep it from yielding to humanity? The student of sociology will watch with interest.

EDWIN L. SABIN



## A LIGHT IN A TENEMENT WINDOW

BY CHESTER FIRKINS

THE frozen city, muffled in the night,  
Lies cold and soundless. Shivering, I creep  
Through narrow lanes, where tired thousands sleep.

Of all the windows, one alone is bright.  
High in that little room where glows the light,  
Doth Revel grin or hungered Sorrow weep?  
Or Death or Birth the lonely vigil keep?  
Who knows? And yet it is a cheerful sight.

So through the dark that wraps all human things,  
In the wide, sleeping city of my Soul,  
God's casement bright holds dim imaginings.  
Death or New Birth, sorrow or joy, my goal?  
I cannot tell; yet hope still shines for me  
Through the warm window of Eternity.

# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

APRIL, 1908



## THEY ALSO SERVE

*THE STORY OF A FAREWELL PERFORMANCE*

BY VIRGINIA TRACY

### PART I. THE PROLOGUE

This is the night  
Which either makes me or foredoes me quite.

WHEN Miss Elizabeth Dane and little old Mrs. Elfrida Watts paused in the twilight hall of the hotel and knocked on the door of Miss Harland's sitting-room, it was opened for them by Mr. Arthur Fosburg, the manager and star of the stock company in which they were all playing. The redoubtable Arthur looked, for the first instant, both forbidding and cross, but as soon as he recognized friends of such long standing he held the door wide open and in his melodious deep boom he bade them enter. Perceiving that Mrs. Watts, who crackled a little with age and was easily agitated, hung fluttering on the threshold, he exclaimed with testy cordiality, "Come in, Elfie, come in!"

"Why—since you're here—if you're waiting for Lydia yourself, Fos——" Elizabeth Dane suggested.

"Oh, not at all! I have something else to do, Liza, on a night

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like this. Besides, she expects you." He knocked on an inner door and said, "Lydia, the ladies are here. Lydia!"

If he got any answer it was not audible to the ladies, who nevertheless laid down their various bundles on a centre-table; Mr. Fosburg put Mrs. Watts into a chair, and Miss Dane dropped down on the window-seat and stared out into the pale summer evening and the pretty town.

"You'll excuse me if I go on packing up, girls," said Mr. Fosburg, who was strapping two big pasteboard boxes together. "It seems as if there was always something to be done at the last minute. You'd think a man had enough to think of with a production like this on his mind, without——" He rang for a bell-boy. "I wonder if Lydia sent my pumps over in the steamer-trunk. I cannot understand why women——"

"Has Chesney come?" interrupted the unawed Elizabeth.

"He was here by five o'clock," said Mr. Fosburg. "I had dinner with him. That is why I am so unfortunately late." Liza Dane had noticed a tea-service and a little broken food on a tray outside the door, and she deduced the circumstance that Lydia had snatched her hasty mouthful of dinner unaccompanied. Mr. Fosburg was steaming on: "Charming fellow, Chesney, charming fellow! A fine brain! But too young to judge a production like this. One of the firm should have come. Lemuel himself should have come. It's as important to them and their theatre as it is to me. But when a man has been so long off Broadway as I have, I suppose he can't expect any consideration. Ah, here"—to the arriving bell-boy. "I suppose you can go as far as the theatre with that dress-suit case. And tell my dresser to come back here at once—this bundle is waiting for him. Ask him what the devil he means by staying so long! How long does he think I'm going to wait for him? I can't wait for him; it's time I was at the theatre now. Tell him Miss Harland will wait and give him the package, but to hurry. Well, go on! Go on!"

He continued to putter about, putting small articles into a shoe-box, frequently consulting the list which Lydia had made for him and pinned over the desk. She had crossed out many things as already packed, he scratched at a few more, and now there remained only two to be accounted for. As he knocked at the inner door again there culminated in his manner a certain restraint, that intense domestic civility which suggests that it is undesirable to quarrel in public. The suggestion generally comes from the beginner of the quarrel, and Liza Dane looked down into the street and sniffed.

"Lydia, my dear," said Mr. Fosburg. "Liddy! Liddy, do you happen to remember where you put my pearl studs?" He opened the door and stuck his head through the aperture. "My pearl—oh,

yes; thank you, yes, quite so! And my new stick of grease-paint? Now, I asked you most particularly—— In my make-up box? Are you sure? Well, thank you. And, Liddy—I can't wait any longer, dear. Elfie and Liza will walk over with you. Will you give Stearns my bundle? What? Well, certainly, yours too, if you think he can carry both. I wonder you did n't have yours sent over earlier in the day! And, Lydia—don't forget to come in and tie my tie for the first act. That fool of mine ties them like a hair-dresser. Yes, all right. I'll leave you now, girls, if you——” He gesticulated with his hat and went.

The two women looked significantly at each other, and the elder sighed. Some sort of falling-out had been plainly indicated, and it was in the air just now that Miss Harland could n't be too careful. Liza Dane fidgeted with the objects on the desk in front of her. Hanging from its bracket was a likeness of Lydia Harland, taken fifteen years ago, when she first joined Fosburg's company, a month after she was sixteen. The desk was not Lydia's, which stood over in a corner, but one which Fosburg had taken from his own rooms and put here for his convenience, and on the little shelf over the first portrait was another photograph of many years ago; across the faded paper ran the legend, “To Thomas Arthur Fosburg. From Lydia. On her Eighteenth birthday.” Miss Dane puckered her face into a rueful kindness. “How young she was!” she said. Old Mrs. Watts sighed again and nodded, and the younger woman sprang up and began to move restlessly about the room.

As she strained her eyes around her in the dusk it seemed to her that despite the declarative devotion of Mr. Fosburg in having two pictures of Lydia on his desk there were far fewer pictures of Mr. Fosburg than there used to be on Lydia's walls. She glanced at the closed door and said softly, “Do you know, Elfie, the gallery of Fos is gradually diminishing?”

“Elizabeth,” Mrs. Watts whispered back, “I sometimes wonder if nowadays Lydia is n't beginning to feel her position?”

“Feel it!” echoed Elizabeth, in scorn. “Feel it! Heaven!”

“Oh, well,” insisted Mrs. Watts, with placid obstinacy, “she did n't, you know! There's always been the oddest sort of innocence about Lydia, kind of like a blind person, if you know what I mean. And she always had the strangest ideas. *Strange*—well! Things about God having given her a chance to make him happy, after all—it would have made you shudder to hear her! All these years, I've never seen her mope nor flirt nor get self-conscious; she's the strangest person for a young woman I ever saw. Nor she don't manage Fos a bit, as it would be so easy to; she has n't arranged anything for herself in case—in case anything came between them. The whole thing's been most

unfortunate, Liza Dane, most unfortunate. I must say, however queer it may sound, that I always thought it a great pity Mrs. Fosburg—since she had left him so many years before he ever saw Liddy—wouldn't get a divorce from him and let him marry that poor child. She——”

“Spiteful old cat!” said the vivacious Liza. “She did n't want him herself, and she did n't want anybody else to have him. Pity she didn't die long ago! Only now——”

“Yes, that's it, of course. Since his wife died, it's thirteen—fifteen months. Why does n't he marry Liddy now?”

“Well, I'll tell you—because he's perfectly comfortable as he is. Why change? I wish to heaven he was n't so sure of her. I wish to heaven he'd get jealous of little Frankie Carzon, but I suppose that's hopeless.”

“Well!” bridled Elfie. “Well, yes! He could n't very well suppose Lydia——”

“No,” said Elizabeth, with a casual yawn; “I don't suppose even Fos is such an empty-headed old fluff as that. How much is Frankie down for the loving-cup?”

“Three dollars. He put down five, but Lydia made him take back two. She made 'em give back all the extra girls' fifty cents and both the children's! Tottie's mother said it was an outrage that she should ever have been asked for it out of the child's five dollars, and so it was. But I don't see but that Earlie Esterbrook could have afforded it perfectly well, playing regularly with Fos the way he is, and his mother jobbing so much and all. Daley and Hoffmann, you know, wanted to come in, and Lydia would have 'em! Well, these days property-men and carpenters get as much as some actors, and of course, with their associations, they have far less expenses! I know I had plenty of other uses for my two dollars, the way they docked us for those nights we lost when he had the quinsy, but it would have looked so funny for me not to give anything, after all the years I've been with Fos——”

“Well, Elfie, well!” said Liza. “I don't grudge mine. I'm really very fond of Fos; he is such a great big, handsome thing—it amuses me to watch him swell and swell. After all, he's a very kind old soul, when he is n't crossed. But, just the same, I wish he would get jealous of Frankie. And I wish Frankie was an older person, so that arriving hot upon Lydia's heart from that calamity of a father dragging him around the world, and with his own endearing reputation of the Hopeless Inebriate, her very candid devotion to him need not have been so distinctly maternal. To fire an inebriate of twenty at Lydia—Lord! Fate is n't often so pat; it ought to mean something. Liddy! ‘Pity is her weapon and her weakness.’ You know Lydia—she does n't accuse God on Frankie's account—she does n't accuse Him, no; but she looks at Him very reproachful!”

“Frank seems a wonderfully good boy to me now,” said Mrs. Watts.

“Now, yes! What would mother say if she could see him now? Or mother’s latest admirer? Or father? Or the third wife of father? Or even grandfather, who they say is cutting quite a dash in South Africa? Not but that they would all be delighted to have the boy turn out well, if they only had time to think about it.”

“Liddy,” said Elfie wanderingly, “has certainly done everything for Frank Carzon.”

“Exactly. And what will he do for her? He does not even grow a beard! He does not even grow up! He does not even roll his really very excellent eyes at her! Oh, for an eligible pretendent to awaken Thomas Arthur!”

“Liddy would n’t look at him.”

“Well, then, oh for an incligible one! A susceptible leading-man with epilepsy in the family or with homicidal mania; that would help some!” She came close to Mrs. Watts, speaking low and forcefully: “I tell you if he gets to New York without marrying Lydia, he’ll never marry her!”

“Oh, my dear! Fos is at least a gentleman! And anyhow he could never get on without her. Even if she was to die—he’s told me a hundred times—no other woman could ever be Lydia to him.”

“No, she would n’t be Lydia, but she’d be new. But I’ll tell you something else, Elfrieda: if he does marry her, we shall have to make ourselves scarce, we that have countenanced the present disgraceful state of affairs! Men like Fos can only stand on their own feet in the backwoods; put them on Broadway and they want to lean up against respectability. You remember that darky maid of Liddy’s, Parthenia, who used to say, ‘As fo’ me, ah’m all fo’ refinement’? Behold the ideal of gentry like our Fos, people who say ‘Ah!’ like a benediction! We will none of us be good enough for the intimates of Mrs. Fosburg, whatever we may have been to Liddy. Already, though he is n’t a bit jealous, he has a sort of grouch against Frankie, and in his soul he dislikes my being on confidential terms with Lydia; he would forbid her to associate with me now if he did n’t need me to laugh at his funny stories. I wonder if Lydia does n’t know that her little Frank would laugh at them, too?—or, if not in this enchanted hour, at least did laugh once at such and will again. But if only he would shake up Fos—or shake up Lydia——” They both stiffened into quiet; Lydia’s hand was on the door.

She came into the dark room with her long, quiet step of leisurely swiftness. “Elfie,” she said, with an upward lilt of welcome; “Liza,” and though she had rehearsed with them all the afternoon, she laid a hand on each as she passed them with that little grasp which gives love and asks for it. Her voice in itself was cool and low, but



her tone was marked by a quick note of affection. "In the dark! And I've been so long, too!" She raised her hand to the button, and the light sprang forth, brightening the clear pallor of her face and following the flow and modulation of her soft gown. It showed her to be slight and very tall. She had an oval face of an unusually pure and tender modelling; her dark hair was fitted to her small head like a cap, the braids crossed on the neck and brought forward again in a wreath of shadowy softness. Everything about her breathed an instinct of generous obedience, an exquisite and absolute docility. She said again, "I've been very long. I'm so sorry. I was running over Tom's third act. One has to be so sure of it in case he does stick. Are we late? Come in."

It was Fosburg's man, and Lydia gave him the package, but stopped him again on the threshold. "I shall come in before first act, Stearns, to see if everything is all right. But in case I forget it then, come to my room for Mr. Fosburg's third-act shirt. (It looks perfectly old now, Liza, just right for the prison.) Don't let him go on without the fob in the first act—he has business with it; and I am on the other side of the stage at his entrance, so you must remind him that the desk shakes, after all. He must n't lean on it. I know you'll remember, Stearns." She bowed her head to him as he left, then pinned on her hat and lifted her own big package. Just as they were going, there came a quick step, a light knock. "Come in, Frank!" said Lydia.

He came in, nodding brightly to the others. Observing her box, he made for it, saying, "Please, Miss Lydia!" For a mere sturdy, handsome, black-headed youngster, not very tall, he had rather a distinguished trick of utterance, rather a touching sort of grace, heritages, probably, from that terrific, that enchanting family of which he came. His whole twenty-year-old tone proclaimed to circling universes that he was but a road for Miss Lydia's feet. She was never Lydia to him, as to the others. You felt that not even martyrdom could have induced him to forego the prefix.

Lydia caught the glance of the two ladies in a confidential hint. "May I come after you in a moment? I should like to speak to Frank." She turned to him when they had gone, and he was shocked to see pain suddenly swimming in her eyes. Frank was not at all a clever boy, but he had what somebody has called "all the intelligences of the heart," and he visibly tautened himself to meet the prayer-like tenderness with which she came up to him and, standing eye to eye in their almost level heights, laid her clasped hands upon his breast. "My dear," she said, "I'm very sorry about something that I have to tell you."

"I'm sorry, too, then, Miss Lydia."

He said it with so kind a challenge that a little smile struggled to her lips. "How old am I, Frank?"

"Thirty-one." It sounded like a chant of praise.

"Well, even that age, then, does n't give one dignity, I find. And it seems that Mr. Fosburg—of course he is very nervous just now, you know, almost ill with anxiety about to-night's performance, and perhaps he is n't quite himself—Mr. Fosburg thinks that for a person of my age I am making myself rather conspicuous—yes, about you, Frank. So that he does not wish us to be much together any more. He wanted you to know this—even this last night. I thought I would better tell you myself——" She stopped as if her own voice hurt her.

Carzon could not control the flush that blurted up over the round boyishness of his face, but he met her with a certain gallantry. "Yes, thanks. It will be all right," he said quickly. "I see. Don't worry!" and he restrained himself from drawing away from her as had been his first impulse.

"Of course we must understand that he——"

"It's the way he sees things!" cried the boy, meaning generosity, but for the life of him unable to keep back a vibration of scorn.

She looked at him and, remembering all the terrors of his neglected childhood, of his brief but highly sensational past, and the wound of that old fault which she had done so much to heal, her heart quailed and then sprang into her throat with a little cry: "Frank! You won't——"

He smiled and shook his head at her. "Don't you fret," he said, and, picking up her box, moved toward the door.

Something struggled in Lydia; she was at that moment so much nearer a full-grown woman than she had ever been before that there seemed something almost strange in forsaking the boy who had been loyal to her for the man who had offended her; yet it did not occur to her that she had any choice.

Meanwhile, to Frank, the queen could do no wrong, but he saw her for the first time as a queen merely; he would have denied it, but now her feet touched earth. "It's all right," he repeated, and, lifting up the box, he once more smiled at her and was gone.

## PART II. THE PERFORMANCE

In the town of Colville the Fosburg Stock Company was an institution. It went away every winter, touring the country with its repertoire, but for five summers in the town's beloved old Opera House it had discoursed sweet music, from Shakespeare to "How Black Got Back," to the Colville public. That public was deeply interested therefore in two sensational announcements: first that the Opera House was to be torn down, and second that the Fosburg Stock, left homeless, would probably march upon New York.

For at this time the farcical injustices of a trust existing among certain theatrical potentates had begun to raise a lively crop of opposition, and the ball of managerial independence, squeezed in too long by an unwise hand, was beginning to puff out in unexpected places. New theatres outside the trust were going up with a rapidity that was even excessive, for, almost all attractions having been previously forced into the trust because there were no other theatres to play in, now of a sudden there were new theatres with no independent attractions to fill them. Under these circumstances the big men of the new condition began to look about them for unsyndicated talent. Joseph Lemuel, the biggest man of all, desired particularly to put a first-class stock company into his new Broadway theatre. He was in a hurry to do this for the approaching season, and so, reports having reached him of the excellence of the Fosburg Stock, it occurred to him that it might be wise to take this company which was already finished and perfected, practically just as it stood.

It was to judge of this plan's feasibility that young Chesney, Lemuel's crack man, had come down to view the final performance of the summer. He was but just back from Europe the day before, but Fosburg was as well satisfied that he had not been able to come earlier. Fosburg had devoted his closing week to a series of farewell revivals, but on this last night he was to produce an untried play of local talent, dealing with the recent war with Spain. This made an additional interest for Chesney, as, in the new zeal for the native drama, the play might prove desirable for the company's opening in New York. And it made an additional interest for the town. This last night for the Fosburg Stock, which was also the last night of the Opera House, was to be a big occasion in Colville. The production of a play by Mr. R. M. Lowney, their fellow-townsmen, stamped the bigness with a final flourish. And every possible flourish before Chesney was capital for Fosburg. He was putting all his money and all his strength into this performance; now with the representative of Lemuel and Broadway before the footlights, and with the concentration of his every hope and energy behind them, the opportunity of his life was here. Long years of patient work, prudence, judgment, self-control, of excellent endeavor, admirable faith with the public, admirable management of his material, had brought this hour to him when his day was already late. He had high hopes, and in the honesty of his leadership where he doubted, he doubted chance, life, Chesney, but not his work, nor his people. The hour had come, and it was his. He had a right to it.

It was all the more annoying that at such a crisis he should have unsettled his nerves by a quarrel with Lydia. Her inconsiderateness in allowing him to do this emphasized her unfitness for the position

of helpmate to a man of temperament, of vast affairs. He had noticed her unfitness more and more of late. Hitherto if there had been one thing in Lydia upon which he could rely, it was her inoffensiveness—"Liddy's a good girl," had been his habitual summary of her. Yet to-day when he had spoken to her about Frankie Carzon—well, she had listened to him at first with gentleness, with surprise, with the bright, tender breathlessness of shocked deprecation beneath reproof so becoming to and in her sex, and then suddenly, at some mere phrase or suggestion of his, she had gone pale, she had closed her eyes and turned away in a protracted and impenetrable silence, quite as if—well, there was no getting away from it, as if he had made her rather sick! What the deuce——! His heart began to puff a little at the recollection of it. Of course, in one way he had been wrong—he ought not to have pretended that he was jealous of the whelp. He had never, as a matter of fact, been at all jealous of anybody, and he certainly could not suppose that a disreputable little gamin whom he had allowed Lydia to pick out of the gutter could exert any influence upon the sentiment of a lady whose taste he himself had taken some trouble to form. But the whole affair was unusual, and when such a gentleman as Mr. Fosburg says that a thing is unusual he has said enough. It made Liddy ridiculous at her age, to be contented in the society of a boy; she who in his own spare time enjoyed such other advantages—it made her ridiculous. And the way in which the youngster amused and looked out for her, did escort duty, fetched and carried for her, was rather a reflection—by the Lord Harry! there was danger of its making him ridiculous—him, T. Arthur Fosburg! Sufficient! It was well that he had stopped it. The thing had been all very well here in Colville, where everybody knew Liddy and was accustomed to see her fussing with lost kittens and sick chambermaids and benefits for cripples—here in Colville she was understood; but when they got to New York—— He found himself brought up against the problem which for weeks he had been trying to avoid. What was to be his attitude to Lydia when they got to New York? Was he going to marry her? Well did he know that it was now or never. His throat was so dry that he sent Stearns out to get some cracked ice.

Until such a course had become possible, he had always taken it for granted that he desired to marry Lydia, and indeed there had been a time when he had desired it immeasurably. Must it not, then, be Lydia's fault if he had changed? For he believed that he could still have idolized her if she had been as she was then, could still have worshipped that adorable goosie of an angel, and it became an added grievance against Lydia that she was somehow managing to put him in the wrong when it was really she who had broken her part of the bargain. He felt that he could have remained always true if Liddy

had remained always seventeen! For he had loved best in her that exquisite ignorance which fitted with his sentimental ideals of womanhood, and now that life had altered and subdued her he thought of her mainly with impatience, with the wearied, affectionate tolerance which he felt for all women whom he knew well enough to perceive that they differed from those in Scott's novels. He had detected in her, moreover, during the past few years, a reasoning habit of mind which was eminently distasteful to him. He liked women to be clever in their own pretty way, clever enough to be appreciative and to let him amuse himself by watching their little minds running around after the ideas bestowed upon them by some masculine providence, like cunning kittens after their tails, but—there had been a winter when Fosburg, having injured his throat, had been unable to act at all; he had had to go to a health resort and lie idle. He had got Lydia a position in the company of a friend of his, and she had travelled with this company all that season and sent him money to live on every week, and this had been her undoing. It jarred on him. He felt that he had been put in a false position, and he hated to remember it; he had been a little restive with her ever since. And, moreover, the friend's company had played a great many theatres on the outskirts of New York, and had "laid off" there between Christmas Week and Holy Week, and Lydia had seen a surprising number of metropolitan performances; here and there she had met an actor who was only an envied name to Fosburg. She had come back to him at the end of the year all alive with quickened observation and a new way of viewing stage effects; she had brought him these treasures of experience on the run, so to speak, and had been promptly snubbed for her pains. It was intolerable to him that he should learn from Lydia. But he was too clever a man not to see the value of all that she had gathered, and in the course of time, by deftly accidental investigations, he was able to acquire all her spoil without having to acknowledge it even to himself. In pursuance of this course he still taught Lydia how to act, and she obeyed him in all things; she did all that he told her to do, only somehow she did it in a different way, and he was just artist enough to perceive the distinction in that difference. No wonder that he was tired of her! He had come to admit to himself, then, that he was tired of her? It made so poor a sound in his own ears that it filled him with chagrin. Then he told himself that what he resented was the aggressive sympathy which people felt for her, the standing that she had won in his life; he hated to seem forced into a thing, to be able to do only what everybody expected of him. Ah, if now, on the contrary, she had actually sunk below him, and it had become visible to the whole world that she was no fit mate for him, how heroic a figure he might have cut! In that case, who so chivalrous as he? He assured himself that if she

had got disfigured in any way, or ill, or blind, or helplessly dependent, he could have stooped to her then; he could have hurried to her pleading arms and raised her to his side! It would have been a graceful thing to do, and his eyes filled with tears at the picture of his thus binding himself before the eyes of an admiring public, at the height of a brilliant career,—his heart melted to Lydia's gratitude. Well, well, perhaps Chesney would make him no offer, in which case things could remain as they were. If, however, he was to become a conspicuous figure in the metropolis, would not an uncongenial wife be a better foil than a neglected sweetheart? He saw himself bowing in crowded drawing-rooms where he was at once safer and more dazzling for this shadow in the background.

It was unfortunately Lydia's knock which recalled him to earth and to the consciousness that his new fortunes were still upon the hazard. The expectancy was torture, his spirit was strained with a thousand various efforts, within his weary brain his responsibilities pulled and clattered opposing ways, scattering, obliterating the lines of his speeches, the cherished impressions of pauses, balances, scores of minute or cumulative effects, upon which his whole future depended, and now—here—heavens, the new grease-paint was too dark, too—no, it was right after all—and during all this there was Lydia composedly rehang- ing his costumes in a more convenient and consecutive arrangement! Fosburg kept on making up in a silent repression of nervousness which amounted to hysteria, and when Lydia asked him if anything had been called yet, he said that "good heavens! he should hope not, indeed!" in a resentment of terror and self-pity which she could only compassionate. She went on arranging on a table in little heaps the property letters, flowers, cigars, his small articles of dress, and so on, a heap to each act; she found the draft of the impromptu speech which the applause at the third act climax was to arouse in Fosburg and pinned it up beside the mirror, and when Stearns came back she took the ice from him and cracked it finer still, but with only a big pin, so that no noise should jar on Fosburg. Stearns began mixing it with a paste of sugar and lemon. He had brought in a handful of late mail from the front of the house, and at a sign from Fosburg Lydia opened the telegrams of good wishes for the performance and read them aloud. There was one from Mr. Harvey, the friendly manager with whom she had done that fruitful season's work, and this was addressed to her, too; there was a letter from Mr. Harvey as well, dealing with some difficulties he was having in getting a new leading woman, and he said how greatly he regretted Lydia. The letter was written from Cincinnati; from there on he was to make flying jumps to San Francisco, whence he was to sail in a fortnight for Australia, and he burlesqued his envy of Fosburg's probable move in the opposite direction.

This was more than Fosburg could bear, and he postponed hearing anything else until after the performance. Lydia cast a searching glance about and could find nothing more to do. "I'm going, Tom," she said, and paused behind his chair with a vague intention of some intimate and especial encouragement for him, in which she was disturbed to find herself remiss. She hesitated a moment, and then, "Best luck!" she said.

"Don't talk now, Liddy," said Mr. Fosburg. "I'm running over my lines." She touched his shoulder, or the shoulder of his dressing-gown, very lightly and kindly, and left him. As she crossed the stage it occurred to her that she might at least have kissed him, and then somehow it seemed as if it were better as it was.

Meanwhile Mr. Fosburg had finished making up, and while Stearns was getting him into his clothes he became more and more the prey of a certain sensation of injury at Lydia's officiousness. By the Lord Harry! the way in which she took charge of things, she acted as if he could n't get on without her! Heavens and earth, if she took possession like this now, what would she do if she were married! Already she took no trouble to please him in the way that other women did; she took everything for granted; she was too sure of him altogether! *Could* he, after all, be so certain of her remaining in the background? And if not, why, to marry her—to have her always there claiming her share—well, yes, then; he was tired of her! Tired of all that she represented, of his obscure life, his unrecognized powers, of the narrow, binding, tedious provincial world which was suffocating his manhood as it had stifled his youth, so that, if he did not escape to-night, if he were cramped down into it again forever— Oh, to get away from it all, to forget it all, to meet the leaders of his profession on equal terms, to enjoy the tardy sweets that had so long been his by right, the prerogatives of money and success, the delayed honors, the recognition of his peers! So he might even find his youth again if he were among only applauding strangers, people who admired him without conditions, without memories! Oh, fresh fields now for his genius, and for his spirit pastures new! Lydia—she would make a connecting link with the humdrum of the galling past! What if—suppose—so far from marrying her— It came upon him out of a clear sky what a relief it would be to be rid of her altogether! He caught his breath, a little stunned, but, looking about him in a kind of daze upon the little dressing-room—brimming with flowers and with all manner of ingenious novelties, from sofa-cushions to cigarette cases, which were the fond tributes of Colville's ladies to the passing star—his fancy flared ungratefully and far away toward a happier land. He saw Fifth Avenue on a May morning, flowering and shining, or bathed in the late light of afternoons that were all silken women and clanking equipages.

He, Fosburg, the observed of all observers, he walked its joyous way! He saw Broadway of a winter's night, the brilliant lights, the hurrying crowds, the gleaming lobby of his theatre, and there glittering down upon the heads of the pressing people, crowning and signing his work, flinging its challenge through the great street and among the works and titles of other men, high in electric fire his blazing name! His spirit rose upon this tide of glory, his life seemed to dilate, and without affirming it, without formulating it, he knew that if he succeeded to-night he would never marry Lydia. No terms, no details, were admitted to his mind, but by the peace of going his own gait, the rapture of freedom that swept high in him, he knew that the decision had passed out of his hands. It was the future's. The future lay before him to-night; let that decide! "This is the night that either makes me or——" The closeness of the time leaped in upon his consciousness again and laid its cold grip on his heart. He broke into an oath, presumably at Stearns, and floundered out of the dresser's hands. Then there came the long whoop of the assistant stage-manager: "Half hour! Ha-a-a-lf hour!"

While Mr. Fosburg's consciousness was thus forced forward in the hot-house atmosphere of hope, Lydia had shut herself into her own room. It was some moments before she remembered that the omnipotent Chesney was to be in front; that for her, too, as for every one, this was an occasion, and that she was on the stage before Tom. She began hurriedly to undress, and her hurry delayed her for a moment by catching in a hook of her waist a chain which she wore beneath her gown. She disentangled it, and in the midst of her speed stood suddenly quiet with the end of it in her hand. Fastened to it was the plain little ring made, in a tender defiance of man's laws, almost like a wedding-ring, which Fosburg had put upon her hand so many years ago. Some time after his wife's death, when his avoidance of any mention of their marriage had become marked, Lydia had taken that ring from her finger and never worn it there again. But oh, those dreadful days between!—when all the bewildered resignation in the world could not keep her from wondering, "Why does n't he want to marry me? What has happened to change anything? Why is it? Why?" And she could find only ignoble answers. Her life being bound up with his for good and all, it had just seemed best to avert her eyes. But all sorts of introspections, reminiscences, questionings, had arisen in her to-night, jarred to the surface by the profound shock of Fosburg's attitude to Frank. She had been perhaps a little morbid since she took off that ring, and she asked herself what she must seem to Fosburg if to him she could appear indiscreet with Frank. The time was somehow gone when she would have thought his prohibition



merely unkind; it was its essential baseness which startled her now. For nearly two years, since he was eighteen, she had done her best by Frank, and so for nearly two years there had been an atmosphere around her of very fresh and very delicate blooms—enthusiasms, generousities, perceptions, all the clear and bright integrities of young imaginings—which had prevented her from discerning altogether how completely undecorated life with Fosburg was. Shaken with a sudden vision, she looked at it, surprised at its deadly commonness, and as she looked a blind, romantic confidence in Fosburg's fundamental nobility departed from her forever. That was a thing she had never dreamed of surviving; its dissolution left the world a strange, unhome-like place, and there came over her of a sudden a horrible and sickly sense of shame, the degrading loneliness of a woman who feels that she is held cheaply by the master of her fate. How did she know now what future he might deal her? She stood there with the ring in her hand, curiously quiet and alone amid all the stirring hum of preparation that was going on about her, and there sprang up in her a fear that made her shudder, yet that seemed to be in the air: what if in going to New York and leaving the old familiar life behind him, he were to desert her altogether? She had known that men did such things, but she had never realized that the men were men like Fosburg and the women women like her. It was the first real challenge of disgrace; how could she bear it? In all her life, in all her seeming stand against the world, she had only followed Fosburg, she had never really chosen for herself, she had never stood alone. If he left her, what would become of her? What would she think of herself? Oh, to what would she fall?—to what, since even now she could fear his going, had she not fallen already? The panic of such an earthquake swept down on her like death; her life seemed drained with it, she felt her breath going, her sight swim in bewilderment; she actually stretched out her arms and suddenly in a hallucination warm and kind as love she felt the support, the steadying comfort, of a boy's hand in hers. She stood there seeming to cling to it, and presently she looked around her reassured. She was in her own room, in her own place in Fosburg's theatre. Her friends, her dear friends, were all about her. Not Frank alone, but Liza and old Mrs. Watts, yes, and the young girls dressing up-stairs, and Tom, too, poor tired Tom. She had only to call aloud to bring him to her. These loved and understood her, they knew her. Strangers did not matter, since these valued her. She was here with them in her true home, not lost in some nightmare world. Why, what a monster she had been making out of life! "We're all overworked and overworried," she told herself, with a quick sense of Fosburg's splendid efforts for the coming struggle, and as she hurriedly drew in her chair to the make-up shelf there came into her mind the very line which had passed through

Fosburg's a few moments before. It is a sentiment apt to be pretty generally upon the lips of players at such a time and she found herself speaking it aloud:

"This is the night  
That either makes me or foredoes me quite."

A little shiver ran over her, and simultaneously came the peremptory howl of information: "Fif—teen minutes!"

Fifteen minutes indeed! It was no time for actors to be privately emotional, and if the two principals in the night's excitement were giving themselves up to that indulgence, no such detachment of interest reigned up-stairs. The rooms above Lydia's were filled with nervous ladies, each of whom felt her career to be at stake that night, felt also and much more poignantly an immediate stage-fright, that she should die if she stuck in her lines. On the other side of the wall the gallery stairs led past these rooms, and up these, their heels trampling upon shrinking female susceptibilities, a roaring horde of boys kicked and trampled and cat-called upon its upward way. "There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night!" whistled the ingénue, who was also a soubrette and believed in being jaunty even at the cannon's mouth. "San Juan' can draw a gallery all right. Does any one know if Mr. Chesney's come?"

Miss Agnes La Vere, her room-mate, continued to revolve rigidly before the looking-glass, pressing in and puffing out her hair, adjusting and readjusting her necklace, her aigrette, her glimmering combs. Her lips moved as she recited her speeches to herself; despite her worldly occupation, she looked austere, withdrawn, maddeningly prepared and ready. The ingénue, still distractedly struggling with her stockings, raised her voice to a provoking shriek: "Does anybody know if Mr. Chesney's come?"

Liza Dane in the next room, mute and cold with fright, started violently and the melted grease-paint which she was putting on her eyelashes fell in a hot and stinging blob upon her smoothly rouged cheek. The pain she scarcely noticed, but the destruction of her make-up appalled her to the heart. She stared at it with the sense of being forsaken by God and nature, while Mrs. Watts called back, "Yes, he's here, Minnie. He had dinner with Mr. Fosburg."

"Oh, I do hope it was a good dinner!" cried Minnie Fuselle. "What's he like? Did Miss Harland say?"

"I don't think Miss Harland met him."

"Oh! Say, you know this morning a shop-girl at Wroxley's asked me why we were n't going to do 'Camille' to-night. I asked her did she think Mr. Fosburg would make a real good Camille? And she

said she did n't care, we should n't have advertised then that we would play the piece that got the most votes."

"Well, it did get the most votes!" declared Mrs. Slocum, mother of Earl Esterbrook, in her high whine, "though it's true Earlie would n't have had any part in that." She was going on to lead the mobs this week, and there were so many extra women up-stairs that the two girls had taken her in to dress with them. "But that's the trouble of having these contests; the play the public chooses leaks out every time. He might have known that it would be 'Camille'—it always is; and Armand's a good enough part for anybody—Earlie's father made one of his greatest successes in it. And then to disappoint—I think it kind of reflects on the company. Seems like a cheat. Earlie does n't like it at all."

"I don't believe anybody'll blame Earlie, Mrs. Slocum," said the ingénue.

Liza Dane drew her skirt triumphantly down over her elaborate head, and as she emerged smiled bitterly at Elfie. "Fancy his letting Liddy have Camille—before Chesney."

"He could n't be expected to," said the sensible old lady. "And he needed a new piece."

"And he wanted the chance to wear three uniforms! I suppose they all get like that when they get old. My pretty Liddy! She does n't say how she feels herself to have nothing to do on a night like this—nothing but stuff, I mean, of course. Coming up through a trap with her hair down to show that she's an apparition!"

"Has anybody tried that trap lately?" asked Mrs. Watts aloud.

"Oh, my soul!" cried Minnie Fuselle, "Frankie Carzon has been riding up and down on it ever since rehearsal. He'll be there to see her up and to see her down, and to bolt it after her. If they'd make him stage-manager, Thomas Arthur could take one unbroken nap."

"They're dangerous things just the same—traps," commented Mrs. Slocum. "I remember in 'Singapore'—Miss Leonard was starring in it then—she and Earlie rode the elephant, and the trap had been used and left unbolted—criminal negligence, I call it—and he put his foot on it and his whole leg went through. If the trap had been big enough, he would just have ridden down on it and disappeared, and even that would have looked very odd, but it was only his leg and kind of tipped him, and he slid Earlie and Miss Leonard right over his head! It was awful! I'm glad you think it's funny, Miss Fuselle. Earlie did n't like it at all; he was quite put out about it. His nervous system was a complete wreck. And, come to think of it, it was n't a trap at all, it was just the stage; the stage had n't been braced properly for the elephant, and he went through."

Minnie Fuselle, forming her curls over her fingers, began to whistle:

The animals went in two by two;  
The elephant and the kangaroo——

“Minnie, Minnie!” Liza called to her. “You ’ll drive us crazy!”  
“The child’s crazy herself,” said Mrs. Watts.

“Oh, Mr. Chesney!” Minnie tragically burlesqued. “Mr. Chesney, like us! Take us—take us to Broadway. We are really very grand. Or take me, anyhow, Mr. Chesney, whatever you do with the others!”

Sympathetic though faltering smiles greeted this sally. People bent closer to their mirrors. Miss La Vere continued to drop mumbled speeches from her lips devoutly, as if they had been pater-nosters. The rooms grew hotter and hotter in the flaring gas, and the tremulous fever in the air increased until the women’s nerves were gasping with it. The noises of the extra girls up-stairs, which had been shrilling higher and higher, suddenly clattered out unbearably; then the ceiling shook. “They are jumping off the chairs, I know they are!” cried Mrs. Watts. Liza Dane rapped on the ceiling with an umbrella, and Earlie, who, having been made-up since seven o’clock, had been helping things along by playing ball in the hall, was brought to a stop by his mother’s voice crying tartly, “Earlie! Earlie, hush up!” The sudden cessation of the din was almost terrifying; it seemed to bring expectation to a focus, and made one feel pale rather than irritated. Minnie felt an impulse to catch somebody’s hand and weep; she began to tie her sash and broke into her incessant whistling, “Give my regards to Broadway, Remember me to Herald Square.” “Miss Fuselle,” said the mother of Earlie, “I suppose you don’t notice that I’m nearest the door; if anybody is whistled out of this room it’ll be me. Perhaps you think it’s only a superstition, but Earlie can tell you if it was n’t so in Miss Folsom’s company, where I did n’t even whistle exactly—for I had seen enough of that years before, when Earlie was a baby, with my own husband whistled right out of the company. The property man used to stand and do it right in front of his door every night, and he got laryngitis and took a little too much whiskey in his medicine, and they gave him his notice; they were only too glad, of course, of a chance to reduce expenses, for the man they got in his place got no such salary as Mr. Slocum. But with Miss Folsom that time I began humming the witches’ music from ‘Macbeth,’ which you know is even unluckier than Mignon’s song—very likely I ought n’t even to mention it to-night—and the company broke up away out in Slihosa, owing us three weeks’ salary, but——”

“I’m going down to use Miss Harland’s pier-glass, Minnie,” interrupted the imperturbable Miss La Vere.

“Oh, Aggie, I would n’t! I’d let her alone to-night. It’s an awfully ticklish kind of a time for her.”

"O—ver—ture!" came the call, like a thud of dreadful realities.

"Heaven help us all!" cried Minnie and subsided.

In an instant there sprang forth thrilling through the theatre, drawing all tingling nerves together, calling to arms every trembling spirit, the sweet, threatening, imperious, implacable music of the orchestra. "O—ver—ture!" cried the voice, and, "Overture to what?" responded a hundred hopes.

On the other side of the stage the call produced a colliding bang, as of many energies suddenly running together. The "boys" were behindhand in their make-ups. The comedian, who had been sitting half-dressed and tranquil, hearing the juvenile man his lines, flew violently forth and flung himself into his own room, and Robbins, the inevitable borrower of make-up, returned the comedian's powder in some haste. After the tide of idle and friendly swearing that always washed over and through their gossip so irrelevantly that it was like the talk of naughty schoolboys showing off, there was for a brief period something like silence. Then immaculate gentlemen began to emerge, completed, from the scuffle of dressing, and to gather in the room occupied by Brownrigg, Robbins, and Frank Carzon. It was known that Brownrigg, in defiance of the best theatrical etiquette, kept a bottle of whiskey in his trunk, and though few of the men cared to touch any liquor just before a performance its mere presence made a lode-stone and a friendly bond. But since Brownrigg was hospitable, Robbins and Ryan took moderate drinks with him; it was, after all, a night on which one needed something.

"Here's to us!" said Ryan. "May Chesney take us, the whole bunch!" They drank with a certain solemnity. Robbins said, "Here's that we all do the best we know!" Ryan gave an excited laugh. "Here's that we may—'and we'll see that street in Heaven that is called Broadway'!"

From somewhere came the voice of young Mr. Erskine, the juvenile, singing, "Oh, mother, mother, mother, pin a rose on me!" A volley of derisive and pleasant profanity was immediately directed at the minstrel and continued thereafter to rattle impartially from the mouths of all upon every subject. Young Mr. Erskine appeared smiling and highly finished in the doorway. "Where's the high hat?" said he.

"Get it yourself," said Carzon. "It's in the box in my tray."

"You want to have it back here by the last act all right. I need it then," said Robbins.

"You've both of you got your nerve with you, borrowing that boy's hat all the season," Ryan volunteered.

The juvenile, polishing the hat with his sleeve, snorted aggrievedly.

"I don't see why. Every last one of you's borrowed it, and every last one of you's borrowed my riding-breeches and Brownie's smoking-jacket! I've got through without buying a high hat the whole season, and I'm not going to begin the last night." He stood pouting.

"The overture's on still, is n't it?" asked Frank nervously.

They paused, listening. "Yes. Good thing it's a long one. I hope Wiley does n't go so dotty over his presentation speech that he forgets to call the acts."

"When's he going to present the cup?"

"End of the third act."

"I wonder if Fos'll be as overcome by surprise at getting it as he is every year at getting his Christmas present? If ever he once lands us irrevocably on Broadway, the next year we'll give him a real surprise: we won't give him anything."

"I hope the cup suits him. Do you put it past him to queer some of us with Chesney if it does n't?"

"Oh, it's all right; Lydia Harland made up the money herself for the one we knew he'd like—the one with the raised mermaids."

Brownrigg was screwing the top on his flask, and, his eye lighting suddenly on Frank, he said, "What's the matter with the Carzon kid?"

"Well," laughed Ryan, "what is the matter with it?"

"Why, it does n't speak. Ask it if it's ill?"

"I'm scared stiff, that's all," said Frank. "It must be nearly first act. Where's my towel?"

"Robbins has it. Have a drink, then; it'll brace you up."

"Not now, thanks."

"Oh, come on! It'll do you good."

"No, really, Brownie, I don't want it."

Robbins began to smirk. "Oh, he's promised Miss Lydia! Did n't you know? He's promised Miss Lydia!" All the men in the room leered.

"Well, was he a good boy, then?" crowed Brownrigg. "Did he always do as he was told? Would never taste the nasty stuff?" He continued to hold out the flask, and Frank, laughing and shaking his head, went over to the wash-stand. "Get a move on you," said he to Robbins. "I'm on in the first act."

Robbins squinted. "Wait a minute, mother's precious! Did Miss Lydia's little boy want to wipe his little hands?"

Frank had put out his hand for the towel, and suddenly he lifted it and brought it down in a strong bend on the head of Mr. Robbins as that gentleman leaned over the basin. The head of Mr. Robbins ducked sharply, and his face disappeared into a pool of soap and water. Frank walked back in triumph, the towel in his hand; he was tre

mendously flushed, but there was a steady, good-tempered sparkle in his eyes. The fickle populace deserted to his side, head over heels, joyous and derisive, and Robbins was left to splutter with his face in a packing-sheet.

"Soak it to him plenty, Frankie," said little Ryan, with his kind sidelong smile. "And you stick to Lydia Harland every day in the week!"

"That's all right," said Frank inaudibly, and bungled the bow of his tie.

"I'll bet the poor girl's got her hands full to-night," said young Mr. Erskine, in a fatherly tone. "With Thomas Arthur, I mean. If it goes right, it'll be to his credit, and if it goes wrong, it'll be her fault. I've noticed that streak in him before," concluded the wise one.

"Well, she has n't got any chance to steal his thunder to-night, so she can't queer herself that way."

Young Mr. Erskine's face assumed an expression of confidential caution. "When do you s'pose they're going to be married?" he demanded. Nobody answered. "You don't mean that you think they are n't going to get married at all!"

"Oh, run somewhere else and talk!" said Ryan. "And talk low."

The juvenile accepted this with the patience of youth for its unreasoning elders. "I don't believe he'd treat her so bad as that," he decided—"not when he's going to New York to be a celebrity. He knows how people look at these things in this business. He would n't want to look such an awful old mutt before everybody." And, casting a last tender glance at the mirror, he cheerfully departed for the stage.

Robbins was out of earshot. Brownrigg cast a glance over his shoulder into Ryan's face. "Well, what would you like to bet? He could have married her over a year ago. What do you bet, if he gets to Broadway without marrying her, by another year he'll have thrown her over altogether?"

"We're not on Broadway yet," was all Ryan could find to say. He called more cheerfully to Robbins: "They say that this man Chesney——"

"First act!"

It was like a blow on the heart. They had long been expecting it, and yet you could see their spirits stagger and their nerves contract. The next moment they had made, clattering and speechless, for the stairs. Only Frank Carzon still stood in the otherwise deserted room, trying to quiet, to control, the passionate young heroics of his anger. He had cherished his Miss Lydia's divinity a hundred-fold more exquisitely because she had stooped to Fosburg, but it had never occurred to him that she was in the least dependent upon Fosburg. If even that morn-

ing he had heard her name bandied about like this, her chances of marriage speculated upon, the desecration would have turned him sick as it did now, yet still he would have felt a brightly burning scorn and triumph. Only now, this evening, since she had forsaken him at Fosburg's bidding, the real, the worldly, state of the case was black and solid to his vision. She was afraid of Fosburg; she had to do his will not only because thus all women should before their lords and masters but perhaps for this other, this hideous reason, that she hung in dread upon his generosity! He saw clearer than ever she could do the menace under which she moved. The boy's knowledge of evil and of fear was extreme and varied. When Lydia had laid her hand upon him two years before, his whole soul had been bruised with panic, with disgust and at the recollection of that healing touch, of his release from bondage, there rose in him such a strength of tenderness that it was as if he gathered up his life for service. He was at that absurd, enchanted age when nothing is so wholly desirable as to die for one's cause, and now it was not Lydia alone, but the whole sex of women and her weakness before which his spirit bowed, at whose need he lifted up his heart. Lydia's treachery to him was like a sacramental sign, a signal for help and pity, since Frank knew how to pity without presumption. For this was, in the end, what he had brought with him out of his lurid boyhood; the world had taught him, after all, only its claim or sanctuary. To do something for her——! And then there came back to him with the sense of the dressing-room walls, the littered shelves, and the whirling hour, the knowledge of his impotence, that no one could step between her and Fosburg, no one could clear that jungle where she walked, nor arm her hand against the monster. He awakened with a start. He—why, he was no longer allowed even her society. He walked quickly toward the stairs; even when he reached the stage he could not rid himself of a certain sense of readiness in her behalf at which, patiently enough, he smiled. They were still calling up to the women's rooms, "First act! First act!"

The stage was full of people who moved incessantly about, looking after their props or trying the upholstery, the distances. None of the usual trivialities were in force; no young people making well-intentioned passes at dance steps to the music of the overture; no knots of jokers; nobody lolling in the settees, nobody humming, nothing inconsequent or light-hearted in that whole glittering assembly, whose only diversion now was looking through the peep-hole to find Chesney. Between ball-dresses and uniforms, stage-hands in their working-clothes ran in and out; gentlemen in irreproachable black and white tugged at the furniture, attempting to arrange it to suit themselves, and were sharply reprimanded by Mr. Fosburg, who, very handsome and con-



manding, stood with his back to the curtain, calling directions into the flies. The scene represented a conservatory and a corner of a ball-room, past the windows of which a torch-light procession advocating war in Cuba was audibly to pass as the curtain rose. Groups of extra people were to be discovered, giving the scene that tone of elegant luxury which they invariably convey so well, and the stage-manager was now worrying around, poking these innocents into photographer's attitudes and turning them into wood. Here and there Lydia followed after him and turned them back again to human beings. The young author hesitated uneasily about, biting his lips and smiling like a person at death's door; every now and then he refreshed himself by peering through the peep-hole at his anxious family, stiff with self-consciousness, in the stage-box. In the opposite box, which was bedraped with flags, sat the Mayor of Colville and his bulking retinue; the young author would renew his consciousness of this fact, swallow horribly, apologize to the person waiting a turn at the peep-hole, and sidle away. Finding himself face to face with Lydia, his eye brightened. "What a pretty dress!" said he spontaneously.

"I'm so glad," said Lydia. "I hoped it would be pretty."

An infinite kindness in her voice unnerved him; he thought favorably for a moment of flinging himself, weeping, on her near and lovely breast and imploring her to tell him truly what she thought of the play's chances. But he restrained this impulse, and she passed on, answered some questions of the electrician, and stood passive, her docile eyes closely attending upon Fosburg.

As they stood together, Frank Carzon passed them with a small, grave bow and took his turn at the peep-hole. There was all the ridiculous stiffness and self-consciousness of youth in this salute, and yet it did not minister to Fosburg's sense of humor. Frank, though a little slouchy and absorbed in the day-time, had the gift of coming out extraordinarily well in evening dress, bore about him, indeed, under those scrupulous conditions, even a kind of radiance at once worldly and romantic, and Fosburg glanced at the bent black head pressed against the curtain with a kind of pang. What weapon, what decoration, was there in the world like the quarter of a century which lay between them! He turned to Lydia and found her eyes dwelling on the boy, and at that he lost his head, lost all necessity for provocation, and, indicating Frank, he said loudly, "Seems to be pretty sober to-night."

Frank gave no sign. Lydia stared for a moment, and then detestably dropped her eyes and moved away. As she went she was vaguely aware that something was happening to her, that all the turmoil of the night held for her some individual issue. But she did not at all discern it.

Meantime Frank looked through the curtain upon an impressive sight. "From pit to dome," through the boxes, the great floors, the wide galleries, through circle after circle of flushed expectancy, the huge old theatre was crowded close. All Colville, from the servants at the summer hotels to the aforesaid Mayor and the corporation, were out to do honor to the farewell night of the Opera House, to Fosburg, to "San Juan." There in the scent of flowers and the glare of chandeliers all Colville's best clothes, best wits, best temper, were merged into a shining integer that rustled and fanned itself, leaned and chattered and peered, crackling its candy-boxes, adjusting its opera-glasses, nodding, preening, settling, anticipating. So good-humored, so complacent, so polite and curious, it sat there, waiting to be pleased, ready to devour all one's sweets, superbly ignorant and indifferent concerning any effort, any intention, in the presentation before which it crouched, so greedy that, if unappeased, who knew but it might spring! And somewhere back among those wide spaces thickly packed sat one young fellow with the fates of a score of people in his hand. Frank felt a little sting through his warm blood; then Wiley clapped his hands and cried out, "Clear!" and he ran with the others. The stage was left to its splendid setting and its groups of extras, to Brownrigg and Minnie Fuselle at the fountain in the centre. There was the hush before the storm; and then, through the stillness, the band of the torch-light procession mingling with the orchestra, first creeping and then bounding, shrieking, sounded the curtain music, the heart-splitting notes of "Dixie"—

Away down South in the land of cotton.

The sick creatures on the stage drew in their breath and felt their muscles stiffening.

Old times there are not forgotten.

Oh, heaven and earth! Was that the kind of music to turn on people's trembling nerves? But all was not yet lost, the deed not signed, the shot not fired, for oh, the curtain was not yet up, there was still time for—what? Then the bell, the long br-r-r of the curtain rising, the dazzling line of footlights, the music shrilling out its heart—

Away, away, away down South—

the widening field of light, behind it the dense black house, of which one could almost feel the breath, the screening wall quite gone, the world rushing in—

In Dixieland I take my stand  
To live or die—

the curtain going higher and higher, the music lower and lower, the procession past, the outburst of applause past, too, and Brownrigg, sensible of how strange would be the sound of his own voice in his ears, opened his breathless lips. The time had come.

Fosburg's conduct of that first act was irreproachable. People played with their attention on him, and found themselves upheld in a strong, inclusive grasp. The blood began to come back to their lips, the flexibility to their voices. Slowly the black gape of the auditorium faded away, the soothing veil of light shut in the stage, the blending of illusion and reality—one's eyes full of tears while one watches not to miss a point—became comfortable and complete. The actors got their receptions and were buoyed up; the play on a tide of attention and response was floated toward success. The sense of the audience being with them liberated the players into an atmosphere of serene power; there was a mounting note in the air, and just when the spectators were beginning to wonder and the time was ripe, on came T. Arthur Fosburg and culled his reward. His was a tremendous reception and calculated to warm the heart. He stood bowing right and left, to Colville at large, to the family of the author, to the Mayor, and to a slight young man who sat about midway of the audience and judged and judged. The aunt of the author had a misbegotten impulse and threw at Mr. Fosburg a thin bunch of wilting roses. Fosburg, lugged perforce out of his character, cursed her in his heart, but he stooped for the flowers, laid them on the coping of the fountain, and radiated upon her a beatific smile. The spectators gleefully gave him another hand, and then his fine voice quieted them, and the play went on. As the hero who has decided to go to the war, he wished a word alone with the lady of his heart. The lady, having apparently a kind of instinct that he might be hanging around the conservatory, obligingly drifted in. Now, this was Lydia's second entrance, but at her first Chesney had observed a delighted purring rustle throughout the house before it broke into the prolonged volley of its welcome. All round him he had heard people saying, "Yes, there she is! There's Miss Harland!" All round him he had recognized the stir of pleasant expectation. So now as she came slowly down the stage he watched her very carefully; he noted the effect of her pale glimmering dress—designed in Arcady, so it seemed, but executed in Paris—as the long, tranquil, lazy thing drooped and foamed and shimmered round her; he watched how as she inclined her head to the hero the light glimmered and trembled in the amethysts about her throat, the amethysts in her soft hair. "Knows how to get herself up!" he congratulated himself. She made a little gesture, she said a few words, and the young man from Broadway sat up straight. The scene went on; the hero

broke his intention to the heroine, who proudly spurred him on; he turned to start for Cuba that very minute, he got as far as the left upper entrance, he made the inevitable pause and said, "Good-by then!" and the lady, with her first realization of love and fear, her heroics all gone, besought him suddenly, "Not yet!" Chesney caught his breath and leaned a little forward. The rest of the act went well the calls, five of them, were cordial and spontaneous, and the actor was smiling as they ran to make their change. "It's going splendidly!" dressing-room cried to dressing-room, and "It's going splendidly!" sang through Fosburg's veins. He was thrilled with the joy of power, with the sweetest relief and confidence. Out in the audience Chesney rolled his programme with ruminative fingers. "By George! his acquisitive managerial mind was saying to itself. "How has he managed to keep her here all these years?"

"Second act!"

Whew! How far along they were already! The second act took them, indeed, as far along as Cuba. To that interesting country nearly the entire population of the first act had taken a little jaunt. Minnie Fuselle and Lydia in nurses' uniforms pursued the unbroken tenor of their love affairs, Minnie vivaciously and with various war-correspondents, Lydia a little *tristement*, as becomes a heroine. Liza Dane as that romantic character "a Spanish woman," prowled mysteriously and young Mr. Erskine, after the ingenuous habit of West Point officers, came near confiding to her the plans of his general, but was saved in time by his faithful orderly, a comic but practical character. All this was innocent and pleasing; it is, however, an open secret that an act must begin lightly, but darken toward its close. During all the early proceedings the ladies and gentlemen had been wandering about the future battlefield, meeting and conversing amiably with reconnoitring parties, but when, just as it was getting dark, the hero decided to pursue his reconnoitring duties rather far afield, all his friends immediately went away and left him alone, and he was promptly nipped up by some fussy Spanish soldiers, who in their contemptible foreign way made him a prisoner. Fosburg gave up his sword with pale, proud dignity and with a rousing, a most patriotic speech, and the curtain came down. The setting and management of the act had been most effective the action clear-cut and quick; something in the silly speeches, the unpractical doings, caught at the heart; something young and honest dazzled the brain, and the pang of the spirit worked out through the noise of the hands. There were seven curtain calls, flushed and smiling artists bowed and bowed, and here and there an innocent called out "Speech!" only to be snubbed by those who knew that this was the wrong time. At last, however, some inopportune calls of "Author!"

routed out that young gentleman, who rose palpitating in the box where his family had finally cornered him, said with truth that he could not make a speech, but that he thanked—here he mentioned every one connected with the production of "San Juan"—and subsided, mopping his brow. The audience kindly applauded him and wished him well.

Behind the scenes every one was happy. In her own room Lydia, who had no change of dress, put some touches to her hair, freshened her make-up, and, going across the stage, knocked at Fosburg's door. "Tom!" she called. Mr. Fosburg opened the door a little way and stood somewhat defensively in the aperture. "Can I help you, Tom?" she asked. "Is n't it wonderful how it's going? It——"

"I'm all right, thank you," said Mr. Fosburg. He was heroically disvelled for the third act, probably in order to suggest that no valet had been provided by the Spaniards. "Just run away a moment, Liddy. Mr. Chesney's here."

"Oh!" said Lydia. "Why, yes——"

Fosburg turned his head to a remark from within. He replied, "Well—a—yes, certainly, she would be delighted," and flung open the door. Lydia saw Chesney slip from the window-sill to his feet; she was aware of a lightly-built young fellow, fastidiously dressed, who bowed to her quickly and deeply and smilingly, with an eager, teasing kind of chivalrousness, so profound that it could afford to entreat your confidential mirth in recognition of all those beautiful things with which you and he were sufficiently familiar to joke. The manner was a new one to Lydia; it was indeed accustomed to baffle and set at ease many more experienced persons, but to Fosburg, with whom it had not been employed, it was unmistakable. He heard Chesney saying, "I hope you really are delighted, Miss Harland," and it was like a sign, the exchange of a talisman; his sensitive egotism recognized the voice of a man welcoming his fellow-sovereign. What was all this? What was there about Liddy, in Heaven's name, to be greeted with this homage? Fosburg turned and stared at Lydia as if she had been a stranger.

"Miss Harland," he said desperately, "is the only person who has not thought very favorably of our play."

This was evidently in reference to some previous encomium by Chesney, who replied with his eyes on Lydia's, "Perhaps you think we're not credulous enough on Broadway? Oh, but we are!"

"You really think, then——" She paused, disliking to suggest that he should commit himself.

Chesney seemed to exchange a twinkle with the future. "Oh, well, the piece does move, you know," he said. "It does move, and—however it does it—it does thrill. Though it's not what I should select to say

to the author, we can swallow pretty near anything for the sake of a thrill in—in our peculiar constituency. You know almost any old tune can stir people up if it reminds them of the day Jack came home or that Mary's boy died down there of the fever. What we want mostly, you see, is to remember—well, remember the Maine!" Lydia smiled, and he added, "You must n't expect too much of us, Miss Harland. We have to play round a little before we settle down to— to Nora? Candida? Melisande? What is it you want?"

Fosburg cleared his throat. Aware of his own culture at having read and condemned these foolish plays, he was considerably annoyed at hearing them referred to Lydia as if they were her natural right. And was this Liddy, radiant and tall, her face brightening and changing to the swift variations of Chesney's voice, and her dark head lifted like a deer's? He hoped she would realize that this was just a way the fellow had! "If Mr. Chesney will excuse you, Lydia," he said "I should be glad to have you look after your properties for this hospital scene. Very complicated," he explained to Chesney, "and property-men—these unions—so unreliable!" He was edging Lydia rapidly toward the door, but he was unable to avert Chesney's farewell bow, with its little mocking sparkle, the challenge of his deference. He heard this ambassador of Broadway saying something about "a pleasure," and "One wonders how you have had time to get it all. You seem to have everything;" then came Lydia's "You are very good" and Chesney's "Not a bit of it. I am in your debt." And then he had got her out and the door shut. Poor Mr. Fosburg! There is no unalloyed pleasure in this world! His guest said many flattering things to him that night, made many profitable concessions, but who was Lydia, what was she, that Chesney should applaud her?

Meanwhile the same rumor in a more amiable form was beginning to get abroad among the company. It was Lydia Harland that was making the hit to-night. For here was one of those occasions, curious but not uncommon, when a part which is lifeless and dull at rehearsal comes suddenly forward at the performance like sympathetic ink on a page held toward the fire. In this instance they did not know whether to attribute the unlooked-for emphasis to an unusual attention in the audience, some informing intelligence between itself and the actress or merely to the fact that Lydia was somehow lighted up. What had got into her to-night? How was it that she seemed to be a little different, to be—as it were—coming out? What was the suggestion in her personality, as of something rich and strange, to which they listened as to a new voice? They had always been fond of her, they had always even admired her, but they had never considered her exciting. Was there, then, something more in Lydia than they had ever suspected? Or had they, now they came to think of it, suspected it all along

though only to-night had the suspicion found voice? In any case, the rumor grew; it sped from lip to lip, from whisper to exclamation, growing by what it fed on till it was the chief gossip, the chief outcry, of the dressing-rooms: "Well, just the same, I tell you it's Lydia Harland's making the hit to-night!" The report came to Liza and to Elfrida Watts and made them at once afraid and glad—they who had lamented Lydia's passiveness and wished that Frankie Carzon, if no one better, would rouse her spirit; it came to Frank himself, who had mourned her need of help and his inability to help her—she who now seemed moving in triumph far away—oh, far beyond the help or hope or thought of little boys!

Thus it came about that as Lydia went here and there, as she joined groups in the entrances or selected hospital supplies in the property-room, she was aware of something tender and especial in people's manner, a little note of wonder and esteem in long familiar voices, congratulatory pressures in the touch of friendly hands, smiling whispers, kindling glances, all the little fluttered rustle of a fond court admitting eagerly her precedence. And Lydia's nature rushed out to all this cordial clamor in that insistent need of love which was as strong as life in her; her blood seemed to flow in her more naturally than for many a day, her heart opened and her spirit lifted. She was happy. Not only for herself; she perceived the evening to be going greatly, Fosburg to be conducting it to victory, and her attention was filled by that. She luxuriated once more in the sense of his power and mastery, of his exceeding worth, so large did he loom on that portentous night, so completely was he once again the great man which she had seen him when she was a girl! She rejoiced to be a trusted part of that machine which was to reorganize his life, to be an officer in the army with which he was winning his kingdom. The attitude of the audience, of the company, Chesney's recognition of her, had welcomed her to a place in these resplendent issues; the past and the future were equally forgotten, and the high-hearted present reigned alone. It was as if a comforting world had taken her by the hand, as if life, after strange, unworthy doubts on her part, had stooped to vindicate itself. Oh, it was good to be happy again! The third act was called.

The third act was the great act; it contained the big scenic effect, the great climax for Fosburg's acting. It was in two scenes. The first set was a field hospital. Lydia's best chance came in this scene, and it went so surprisingly that under other circumstances she would have had to take a scene-call. Even the dark change descending like a damper on the house could hardly put out the applause until some faint moonlight dawned again and revealed the walls of the hero's prison. The crisis of the play had come. Young Mr. Lowney had

seized upon the account of Lieutenant Hobson's watching of the battle of San Juan from Morro Castle and had planted his hero in Hobson's place. The stage was well and grimly set with a barred window to the stage-right and a dreadful expanse of stone wall everywhere else. Here the incarcerated hero was certainly in a bad plight; he was starved, insulted, and generally tormented by the Spaniards, and, besides all this, he was ill with "the fever," from the pathetic wanderings of which he suffered occasional lapses into heroic repartee. Then came the time when he was alone, and the delirium became very bad indeed, and he could bear no more and fainted, and night came on, and at last, when the stage was good and dark, the spirit of his betrothed appeared to him. She appeared to him through the trap in a strong calcium and dressed in a chiffon mist, that legendary garb of visions, and she told the hero a great many things about the conduct and future of the war which it was really very clever of her to know. This was the scene which Lydia had advised against from the beginning; she had particularly deprecated the use of a trap instead of a transparency, more particularly still the use of a special trap which Fosburg had had cut for an exceptional occasion a long time ago. It lay only a little to the left centre—to the player's left, that is to say—and no farther back than the first entrance. As there was no apron to the stage, it seemed to Lydia in the very lap of the audience. "There won't be any illusion, Tom," she had argued. But Mr. Fosburg had said that a premature transparency would spoil the big effect at the end of the act, and that he wanted her in front of him anyhow, so that the audience could see his face, and so she had to be far front, for he was not going to stand up back and have people craning their necks off to see his facial expression. So that was settled. The vision came and said her say as unobtrusively as possible; her patriotic prophecies, however, persisted in bringing forth ill-considered rounds of applause, so that the apparition, anxious, after the uneasy fashion of apparitions, to get away, scurried a little in her lines and sank out of sight with somewhat apologetic swiftness—this was not her scene. Before the crown of her head had well disappeared, the hero had seized the situation again with an attractive groan and then relapsed into his faint. And dawn came, and sunrise, and full day, all in a few moments, with the newest electrical and mechanical effects, with the song of birds and the beginnings of battle, and with the stage-manager almost insane from his chronic combination of responsibility and incompetence. Poor Fosburg, prone and helpless on the stage, began to breathe more easily as the changes followed each other in due form. He had had a moment of almost regretting that he had dispensed with Frank Carzon's services to-night. Little Wiley, that poor stage-manager, was used to leaning so heavily upon Lydia's assistance, and Lydia on Frank's; the stage-hands were



used to them, they liked Liddy, they liked the boy. What if Mr. Fosburg's orders had been premature? He might have let things go as they were for one last performance. But his misgivings were not justified, all went smoothly, and at last, the sun getting in his eyes, the hero woke and sprang over to the window and saw the battle, and in the great speech of the play, while he shook the bars to accompanying crashes from outside, obligingly described it to the audience. Every incident of the Spanish war happened then and there, right in front of that barred window, to be described; every telling remark of every participator, spectator, or newspaper was put into the hero's mouth to describe it with. The whole gamut of emotions was run up to the triumphant climax when the imprisoned patriot broke into a frenzy of sobbing joy. This was Fosburg's opportunity, and he rose to it like a man and an artist. Now or never was his chance to show Chesney that all the acting had not been seen on Broadway; that, whatever people might say, the great race of the old tragedians had not perished from the earth. The material was of the sort which Fosburg could handle superbly, almost perfectly. Of original fervor, of that spiritual vitality commonly called inspiration, he knew nothing, but he had lungs, grace, earnestness, pictorial intelligence, a disciplined mechanism, a magnificent command of his resources; he was well up in pause and pose and pitch, learned in variety and emphasis, past master in "repressed force" and "rising power" and all the thrilling tricks of emphasis; whatever else he knew or did not know, he knew his business. To people not keen about essentials, he was unsurpassable; to people like Chesney, weary of temperamental fakes and slipshod reliance upon personality, this conscientious, conventional, effective skill was rousingly, refreshingly worth-while. So that in the tide of mad applause that swept over the house no one joined more heartily than the connoisseur, glad to let himself go with the populace, glad to be of one cordial spirit with a real occasion. Success was not only here, it was established; Fosburg's fortune was made.

Yet events proceeded. The house, still under Fosburg's control, began to hush itself a little, seeing him stagger to his feet; he turned his back on it, stretching out his arms, crying in an ecstatic invocation of love and longing to "the boys outside," and at the word the prison walls were turned to air; straight across the rear of the stage, right up to the proscenium, they melted away; and there, with only the mesh of the transparency intervening, stretched the hillside of San Juan. It was certainly an achievement of realistic setting, for the slope was high and solid; the supers carefully posed, carefully trained. Fosburg had followed Mr. Remington's picture as closely as his nature would allow, permitting himself only a few little added gallantries of grouping, of flags and music, only a few extra touches of scenic pathos.

There, sure enough, was the weary hill, the blinding sun—almost one felt the quiver of the heat; there was the rain of shot, the toiling rush, the broken lines of figures swarming and stumbling, and there on horseback was the Rough Rider from whose hat a polka-dotted handkerchief streamed in the electric breeze. Perhaps to the highly sophisticated, the thing was rather funny, but yet it was achieved to a miracle—and worked one. The audience sprang to its feet, the orchestra burst into "The Star Spangled Banner," the curtain came down and went up, came down and went up, and enthusiasm ran riot. There were six calls on the tableau, and then a call that shook the house for Fosburg. He took it, bowing profoundly, honestly moved, his heart in his throat. He took another and another and another, then he had on the whole company, then he and the super who had impersonated that particular Rough Rider took one together and the house almost beat its breast with fondness, then he took one alone again with all the flowers he had received set on the stage, then he took one without the flowers. In the wings and entrances the company crowded and pushed and peered, whispering, laughing, jostling, wild with success and eager to see Fosburg's triumph. Young Mr. Erskine held Earlie Esterbrook on his shoulder, Minnie Fuselle burrowed between Robbins and Brownrigg, snuffling with joy.

"Where's Wiley?" said Frank Carzon.

"He's here, he's here all right!" answered little Ryan; and Elfie Watts added, "Liddy's got him." For now was the time to present the loving-cup.

Fosburg stood out there upon the threshold of the sweetest moment of his life. And yet there was something wrong. The temper of an audience, however inarticulate, is always felt; Fosburg did not know how, but he became aware that as the house continued to demand and he to respond, it was beginning to want something else, he did not know what; it still applauded generously, but now it was hoarding up its enthusiasm against the arrival of something which did not come. He had no idea at all of what this could be; nobody else had shared his scene with him; he had taken on the whole company once, out of pure graciousness, and Lowney had had his turn. There was nothing due to any other person. Bewildered and embarrassed, he forgot, poor soul, the caprice and injustice of the crowd; he forgot that unnecessary applause for the apparition, and how Lydia's scene-call had been nipped by the dark change; he forgot most of all the five summers in which Lydia had matured among these people and carried her quiet beauty through a thousand memorable scenes. Thus he and the audience puzzled and polite-regarded each other with growing uneasiness, but while out on the stage he bowed and bowed, in the entrance Liza Dane, craning over Frank Carzon's shoulder, said aloud,

"It's Liddy they want! They want to say good-by to Lydia! Any fool can see that!"

Mrs. Slocum, also observing the strain, whispered to Minnie Fuselle that she could n't think why Mr. Fosburg did n't take Earlie on with him. "That would be awful cute! Sometimes, like to-night, I think Mr. Fosburg's jealous of Earlie. Seems so kind of small for a man in his position!"

"And even uncalled for!" said Minnie Fuselle.

"Don't you think they want Miss Harland?" asked young Mr. Erskine, looking very penetrating, and in the same moment with his words the deed was done. Just as the wise ones in the audience were beginning to stir themselves to call "Speech!" a man in the gallery cried, "Harland," faintly and gingerly here and there some one echoed him, then the call was taken up distinctly, insistently. Fosburg heard it, every one heard it—"Harland! Harland!"—and on the clear pronouncement of the name there came a volley of applause.

The falling curtain struck the stage, and Fosburg walked off. The applause continued, the curtain rose again, and Fosburg said to Lydia, "Go on." She hesitated, looking at him greatly troubled.

"Come with me!" she entreated him, and, as he did not answer: "Take me on!"

He said again, "Go on," and turned away. Lydia advanced slowly toward the footlights, her small, dark head bending to the storm of praise, her grave eyes, full of thanks, moving serenely from face to face. But she felt neither thankful nor serene. She wanted to cry out, "Oh, stop, stop! You don't know what you're doing! You're spoiling everything! This is our big moment, and you're ruining it! This is no time at all for me!" And she wanted to run to Fosburg, to tell him not to mind, that they were excited and did not know what they were doing, that they did not really want her, and, above all, that it was not her fault, she had done nothing.

In the wings Minnie was whispering, "Don't they love her, though? There's a farewell for you! Well, indeed, what did he expect?"

"Liddy's made to-night," said the first-old-man, very kindly.

"Oh, I don't know!" sniffed Liza Dane. "Oh, my poor girl!"

The ridiculous little Carzon boy blinked his absurd young eyes and thought, "Oh, that I might die for her!"

Lydia withdrew, and then at last they got out the call for a speech.

Fosburg had to go on again; for not only was there an immediate polite revival of interest at the prospect of a speech, but if the loving-cup did not get itself introduced at once, the whole crown of the performance would be lost. Lydia was relieved to see that Fosburg was equal to the occasion, that he swallowed his chagrin, pulled himself together, and ordered the curtain up. Thus he caught the ebb-tide and

turned it, smiling benignly once more upon the audience with that conscious benignity of middle-aged, large men, as of gods walking. Then in the pleasant hush, while he cleared his throat, from the right first entrance the stage-manager trembled on.

The stage-manager simpered propitiatingly. He then got out the words, "Mr. Fosburg, if you please—a moment!" Mr. Fosburg, wide-eyed and astonished, but indulgent, encouraged him with a look, and the audience, scenting a new sensation, leaned forward in a rapture. The stage-manager, a little swollen in his own esteem at having got actually started, advanced a little farther, folded his hands across his stomach, and began. He said the usual things about "slight tribute of esteem," "hope it will prove acceptable," "voluntary contributions of every member of the company," "remembrance of many pleasant," and during these comparatively innocuous remarks he ran the gamut from jauntiness through flutter and flounder to a complete hitch. Poor Mr. Fosburg, eyeing him with a kind of threatening, mild benevolence and itching to speak the lines himself, could only smile attention. From the entrance Lydia called softly, and with recovered briskness the stage-manager stepped back to her, got the cup, and handed it over. Mr. Fosburg imposingly took it, and here, perfected, the world came to its focus. The precious thing glittered and shone, the raised mermaids sparkled in the thousand lights, the house pressed forward, applauding wildly, the company in the wings applauded, too; everything hung upon Fosburg, that new star on the horizon; the Mayor in the box, Chesney in the audience, Broadway waiting for the morning-papers, they must all bear witness to this hour. Oh, Cæsar! Oh, Napoleon! What were your crowns?

Mr. Fosburg took the stage—how handsomely!—and faced his glories. As he began his speech, he was brimful of emotion, and he knew enough to let that emotion have full swing, that the house might see and revel in it; the choke in his voice, the tears in his eyes, were very seemly, and did not interfere with his righteousness, his excellent chest-notes, nor his large and flowing gestures. It was a long speech, but it was considered a fine one, full of impressive truths. In it he said that they must pardon any lack of rhetoric in his few words, for this palpable token of good-will from his dear comrades, taking him as it did entirely by surprise, had touched him so deeply that it had almost robbed him of set speech; and yet that he must bear testimony to that no less touching, no less heartfelt encouragement which he—and they—had received from the people of Colville that night. With those dear comrades it had been his pleasure and his privilege to work long and unitedly, and he felt that he spoke in their name as well as his own when he strove to express his sense of the honor that had been done him and them by the farewell gathering of an audience at once so representative and

so select. (Spontaneous applause, hastily muffled by the more correct.) He felt safe in assuming, Mr. Fosburg continued, that never in the illustrious history of that theatre had it held a more brilliant gathering. He then touched upon the various great nights which the fine old building had enjoyed from its opening up to this very time, during the course of which comparisons he launched several compliments, delicately veiled, delicately pointed, at the more influential persons present—notably the Mayor, who struggled to appear unconscious by looking up at the draped eagle spreading away over his box, and at Chesney, who had been amusing himself for some time by drawing little pictures on his cuff, and who under the shadow of this encomium went on finishing the head of an owl and then somewhat suddenly extinguished it under the sketch of a high hat. But, continued Mr. Fosburg, on this auspicious occasion he believed that he was doubly fortunate in being at last permitted to make some return to the Colville public. The time had come when that public's invariable support of the worthiest, the most artistic efforts had borne fruit in encouraging him to produce a work of untried but, he thought he might venture to say, of undoubted, and now of undisputed, merit. (Great applause.) It was, said he, beaming benevolence, the privilege of himself and his company to present, as it was that of the audience to indorse, the first dramatic effort of their youthful fellow-townsmen, Mr. R. M. Lowney. (Wild applause. The Lowney family strangling with the effort to appear unconscious.) Mr. Fosburg went on to say that their reception of this play encouraged him to hope that the day of the American dramatist had dawned at last; he ventured to believe that Mr. Lowney had proved to all present that there were subjects in American history, even in modern American history, as worthy of presentation upon our stage as any occurring in fictitious kingdoms or foreign civilizations outworn and effete, and that clean, wholesome, honest incidents, thrilling with the life-pulse of a young nation, could in the hands of a true artist, himself a type of sound American manhood, be treated with the fullest accuracy and vividness of modern realism, yet avoid the unwholesome after-taste of the problem play—which was not yet, thank God, a typical product of the native stage—and keep in touch with healthy human impulse and the great heart of the people! (Mr. Fosburg, having successfully disentangled himself from these involutions, now paused to take breath and to enjoy the conspicuous commendation of gentlemen anxious to prove to their relations that they had never been to see “Sapho,” or of ladies who had never been able to understand what any one saw in gloomy authors—Sardou and Tolstoi and people like that.) He would always be proud, proceeded the orator, that it was he who had been permitted to call Colville's attention to this achievement of its young citizen. Next season he hoped to make it known

to a larger, though never to a more discerning, public. This night—he was so touched, so moved—he could not look upon the too beautiful and generous gift which he held in his hand (here he glanced with humble pride at the raised mermaids), nor upon the cordial faces crowded between those familiar walls, without the most poignant regret at realizing that they would never again be thus united. Nevertheless, this night would be a bright spot in his memory, he should carry the influence of that memory always with him, and no matter how far he journeyed, nor among what undescried scenes he was called upon to do his work, no recollection would ever be so dear to him, no recognition so precious, as that which he had but now received. In once more thanking his good friends, both before and behind the curtain, he would beg of them a last indulgence, that they would join with him now in an avowal of fellowship, in singing with him the song that was in all their hearts that night, the song of “Auld Lang Syne.” He bowed.

This *coup* was more successful than might have been expected. The audience was thoroughly at home, and it really needed some method of working off its feelings. Fosburg got the actors out on the stage, they started the tune, the gallery broke into a whistling accompaniment, then, while the Mayor showed his public spirit by joining in the song, the house at large slowly lost its self-consciousness and its voice wavered forth. Nobody heard Liza Dane say that she felt like a fool, nor saw Ryan wink at little Carzon. A vast friendliness, a vast mutual satisfaction, pervaded everything. Fosburg, expanding on a wave of melody, was so at peace with the world, so mollified even toward Lydia, that he had almost forgotten how she had been called back over his head, that he had almost forgotten her existence. Publicly lauded he stood there, prosperous, successful, and yet only at the beginning of his prosperity and his success; the world was already his and yet lay all before him. He saw the consciousness of this reflected back upon him from hundreds of faces, he heard from hundreds of voices the clamor which he had called into being. Back there, though swallowed up among so many bulkier people, sat the great Chesney, tranquilly aware that the necessary weapon for next season was in his hand, that he and his management were in for a big thing. But Chesney was, after all, as Fosburg had complained, a very young man, and all the time that he ought to have been thrilled by the sweet sentiment of the music there was dancing through his flippant brain the still more flippant concoction which his memory had been searching for ever since he had met Fosburg; his memory had it now, was obsessed by it, and his eyes twinkled with it as they regarded the renowned Arthur. “For auld lang syne, my dear,” sang all Colville, with a commendable struggle after the Scotch accent; “For auld lang syne,” soothingly and con-

descendingly Fosburg chanted, and Chesney's private music-box tinkled out, "For it stood on its neck with a smile well bred, and it bowed three times to me!" The recollection of a Japanese fairyland for a moment obscured the present, then he was aware again of the closing chorus, and of Fosburg bowing himself backward in retreat. In a moment the curtain would be down, the house swayed forward, intent and fond; all attention and homage, all sound and stillness, all the myriad rays of light itself, seemed to centre upon Fosburg now as, his whole face radiating complacency and triumph, he lifted the loving cup in a timely and graceful gesture. "We'll take a cup o' kindness yet," he sang, and, "With a smile well bred," Chesney chuckled, "and it bowed three times," and at that moment, taking another back and sidewise step, the complacency still flourishing, the cup still extended, the melody still rolling forth, Mr. Fosburg stepped upon the trap and disappeared.

It was too terrible, but it was true. Clutching the cup, his voice freezing in him and his heart bursting, the complacency broken by his very eyebrows, his very features, which seemed to start forward out of his face, he sank softly out of sight. The last thing seen of him was the glitter of the raised mermaids still aloft in his petrified hand. There was no help possible, nothing to be tried, nothing to be done, nothing for it but patience till he was altogether gone, till he was swallowed down into the kindly darkness which had received so many fairy queens, so many ghosts and demons, in its time. So for one instant the whole audience, checked in the full on-rush of its enthusiasm, brought to a halt in the full swing of fervid expression, stood shocked and paralyzed. And then, kindly souls as were gathered there, reacted upon by the hysteria into which Fosburg had purposely worked them, they burst into one gigantic laugh. The crown of the hero's head had scarcely disappeared when the gust came! It broke in such a storm of frenzied mirth, of real relief and jollification, as even an opera house had never heard before. It plunged the house into a kind of fit, and swept away forever any imposition of sentiment, of attitude. It was like a hard shower after a murky day, and people's fancies scudded home before it, then sat down in comfort and roared and roared. Neither respect nor pity quieted them; in all that erstwhile worshipping horde only Chesney felt a rueful twinge of sympathy and, smiling, sighed. Alas for the fête-days of human wishes, for crowns and ceremonials and celebrations, the perfected mechanism, the patient aspiration, the cup and the lip! Alas, poor Fosburg!

The whole company, huddled in the entrance about Lydia's doorway, saw Mr. Fosburg as he came up the cellar-stairs, and, casting one glance at his face, started to scatter. But he stepped in front of the stairway

leading to the women's rooms, and his expression detained the men also, by a sort of paralysis. For Fosburg was now a madman, pure and simple; no one should have spoken to him nor heeded him. But Lydia ran forward from her threshold and with a little brooding cry stretched out her hand. Fosburg turned on her; his distorted face, that was discolored with rage and shame, the eyes suffused with tears, writhed like a maniac's. "You!" he brought forth, and then stood there fighting for breath and strangling on the words which finally began to break from him in little bursts and gushes. "You!—the trap!—left open!—not bolted!—you!—you!—did n't bolt it!—your fault!—to shame me!—before the audience!—after all I—— To shame me!—before the audience! Oh, my God!"

Into the ghastly pause the voice of the head carpenter broke with a strident freshness. "Say, look here, Mr. Fosburg! It ain't Miss Harland's fault. It ain't Miss Harland's business to bolt the trap. She remembered all right, any way! She told the boys that were helping her down to be sure the trap was bolted, and then she run up-stairs to see your end o' the act." He came nearer to the star, spearing him with a surly and an implacable eye. "It was us. We all wanted to see the end o' the act, and we supposed Mr. Carzon was there. Why was n't he? Any way, of course we did n't know you were going to walk right onto it. I'm awful sorry," he said, pointedly turning his back on his employer and bending his proud head toward Lydia. "I'm awful sorry," he repeated.

"Why were n't you there, Frankie?" Liza Dane sang sharply out.

"I could n't manage it," said the boy, mindful of Lydia's peace.

Liza motioned toward the position where Fosburg stood intrenched. "May we go up-stairs now, Fos?" She was a rival of the stage-hand in the curve of her contemptuous lip.

He did not seem to hear her, and the head carpenter pushed past the trembling stage-manager and asked, "Strike, Mr. Fosburg?" He got no reply, and, taking the thing upon himself, clapped his hands and cried, "Strike, boys!"

At the order a blessed confusion descended upon the stage. Amid the whirling scenery, the group of men which had been edging further and further from the star began to break for privacy. Fosburg looked stupidly about him, his head swinging slightly from side to side in a dull but goaded torment. For he was murkily aware that they were all against him; he resented the reference to Frank, which seemed to say that it was all his, Fosburg's, own fault; he resented Lydia's standing there so still, and as the walls of Morro Castle were scurried past him he was rent by the dread that his prey might escape, and suddenly out from the half-articulate mutters of his choking voice there sprang a



cry like the yell of a wild dog. The sharpness of the sound seemed to bring him back to at least a degree of human consciousness, for now he fixed his eyes on Lydia with a controlled and gloating frenzy, the lust of the executioner. "Oh!" he said, "and this was your idea, was it?"

A question sprang into her eyes, but she stood looking at him and said nothing.

"You need n't go," he called to his company. "It was public enough, was n't it? That was her idea—to disgrace me in public. It was a — good idea, too. But you won't gain much by it, my lady. I can tell you that. Oh, look innocent! Look innocent! That's your way. You did n't leave the trap unbolted, I suppose? No, of course not! Or else you did n't mean to. No, of course not! Look here, do you think I don't know what you're up to? To get ahead of me, to ruin me!—to make a fool of me!—a fool of me! First you put your claue in front. To call you back over my head. Then you leave the trap unbolted. To disgrace me. To ruin me. To kill me with Chesney. To break my heart. Before the audience. Because your head's turned with his flattering you. You think you'll get in ahead of me. You think he'll take you to New York. To Broadway. Make a star of you. You blamed fool, you! Well, you get there, then! You get there by yourself if you can! You'll find—I won't take you! I'll never take you! I'm through with you! I——" He shook off the hands of his friends, he drowned their remonstrances with the words which foamed out upon his lips in crazy jerks, his voice rising higher and quicker and louder with the torrents of humiliation that were boiling in his blood. "I suppose you think I can't get on without you; that Chesney won't take me without you. Well, you're wrong. You're wrong. You're what I make you. And nothing else. Do you understand that? And nothing else. If I choose to take you to New York I will. Or not. Just as I choose. It's what I choose. You can't force me. No, by God! Such a trick of yours! You have n't got me safe yet! You ought to have made sure of me before. Well, what's the matter with you? Can't you speak? Say something! Do you think you can get round me now standing there—staring—you ungrateful—you pretend to love me—I won't—I—you—you——"

His voice, which had been breaking more and more, failed altogether, but, coming close to Lydia, he stamped and shook his clinched hands in the air, and at that Frank Carzon forgot his helplessness, stepped in front of the older man, and said, "You're out of your mind, Mr. Fosburg."

They both stood stock-still. The boy's whole air was very rational and quiet; no one could have told why it was that his look and Fosburg's as they clashed challenged a mortal combat. Which one of these

two would master that moment for a lady? Then Fosburg, looming forward above the boy, suddenly lifted his great fist and struck him in the face.

It was a crashing blow. Frank reeled under it a little and took a staggering backward step. As he brought up against the brick wall of the entrance he shook his head as if shaking water out of his eyes—the blurring confusion of the blow—and sent to Lydia across the intervening crowd a quick look of reassurance. He neither spoke nor attempted to avenge himself, to defend himself. He ignored Fosburg altogether; he had but one concern, to flash that message, “It’s all right. Don’t suffer! It’s all right.” All was dizziness with him except the longing of his full young strength to strike and the concentration of his control over that strength. The gasp of the people around him, some one clutching Fosburg’s arm, Fosburg himself suddenly sobered like a man just out of the breakers, looking about him for sympathy, finding none, and making with a shuddering cry for the shelter of Lydia’s room; Lydia, too, moving away, passing him with no recognition except the brooding of her unfathomable eyes,—all those things he was but mistily aware of, and still stood against the wall, his shoulders squared and his head up, but giddy, breathless with an excitement, an exhilaration, beyond speech. For in his difficult service of doing nothing, at least he had endured for her at last! One or two people spoke to him, and he replied, in his limited phraseology, that he was all right, he would be along in a minute. But he did not stir. A sense of something portentous, imminent, of the high tide of Lydia’s life, flushed through his nerves. What would happen to her? What was happening to her? What would Fosburg do with her? What would life do with her? Surely the challenge was thrown down! Out on the stage they were setting the last act, the orchestra in the *entr’acte* medley had come once more upon the memorable strains of “Auld Lang Syne,” and the night that was to decide all Lydia’s future was nearly past. Just then, as he looked at Lydia’s door, it opened, and Fosburg, apparently in his right mind, appeared upon the threshold. His hand was on the knob, the hand which he had dashed into Frank’s face, and the boy saw Lydia lift it and put it to her breast. She laid her cheek on it and kissed it. “Should auld acquaintance be forgot,” persisted the music, and perhaps Fosburg winced a little, but nothing more. Frank put up his handkerchief and wiped away the little blood that was still upon his lips. The electrician, thinking him perhaps a trifle dazed, brushed past without disturbing him. Fosburg crossed the stage to his dressing-room, and the boy in the entrance gathered himself together and went too. Lydia’s door was shut again. On all the turmoil of the past hour order and labor settled afresh, bounded by the steadfast music:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
 An' never brought to mind?  
 Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
 An' the days of auld lang syne?

### PART III. THE EPILOGUE

It was just before dawn, through the somewhat chilling darkness of the empty streets, that Fosburg came back to Lydia. He had experienced a change of heart, and not even the late supper at which he had established so advantageous an understanding with Chesney had availed to dim his clear determination. He had made up his mind to marry her.

For now that the worry and the turmoil were well passed, Fosburg wondered what he had been thinking of in planning otherwise. Lydia was not the sort of woman whose abandonment could be accomplished with any real *éclat*, and, particularly after the revolting scene this evening, any but the most loyal course would do him an injustice. Fosburg was not a man who could live without his self-respect. The tableau of his attack upon Lydia caused him as deadly a heat and nausea as that involuntary exit through the trap; he could not look at it without writhing, and in casting about for some more gratifying attitude a proposal of marriage loomed before his eye. Ever since the close of the performance he had soothed and stayed himself with that prospect; before he went to supper he had sent Lydia some flowers, and he regretted only that no jeweller's was open. Well, to-morrow. To-morrow she should glisten with his remorse. What must she be feeling, poor Lydia? It would do his heart good to see her revive and lift up her head again. His dear Liddy, his good girl! He began to rejoice in the joy that it was his to give, and he forgave her everything. She should be happy at last, for she deserved it. He could marry her, she could play for him in his Broadway opening, and then he could take her off the stage and keep her off; in marrying her he would therefore in a way be getting rid of her—so all things work together for good! Thus Fosburg in his surface thought, while deep and strong his heart cried out for her. For this was the final motive in his bridegroom mood, that he wanted her, oh! he wanted her. The violent fortunes of that night had shaken Fosburg; he felt himself dislodged, uprooted, not quite sure of his self-control or balance; before the newness of the brilliant future he had grown a little lonely and afraid. It was an indifferent and a powerful world that he was entering, and perhaps he who was no longer young would be glad of his home there and his waiting wife. Fourteen years of unbroken alliance, of mutual interests, mutual cares, fourteen years of life together, did not that form an extraordinary clasp of hands? What a madman to have wished to break it!

*Should* old acquaintance be forgot? No, God knows! As he neared the hotel he looked up at Lydia's window and rejoiced to see the warm light shining there as it had shone so many hundred times. She would be sitting at his lamplit table with the coffee things in readiness, and the cloak of her forgiveness would cover him even from his own eyes. Oh, it was only she who could give him peace, who could heal the hurts that he had dealt his pride to-night, she who had loved so long the faults of his heart and the hairs of his head! Out from the shaded brightness of the light there flooded back to him a thousand memories, a thousand pictures, and among these long-disregarded visions of the girl she was when he first knew her, which touched the purest tenderesses of his heart. Ah! heaven, how he had loved her! Long, long ago, oh, long ago! He had so meant to make her happy, and now, thank God, across all those years he had come to redeem the pledges of his good intentions. He knocked at Lydia's door.

Lydia sat in the lamplight at the table, just as he had foreseen. She rose as he came in, but he went straight up to her, he lifted her hands one after the other and kissed them, he raised a fold of her dress and kissed that, too. He said, "My sweet Lydia, my own girl, I beg ten thousand pardons. Forgive me, dear."

"I am very sorry," she replied, "not to have seen about the trap. I am very, very sorry."

"I know it, my poor love. I knew it all the time. I was merely a brute. But I was out of my mind. I did n't know what I was saying. What can I do to make it up to you, dear? I'll apologize to you before the whole company! I'll write a note to little Carzon, if you like, and say I hope I did n't hurt him! I'm so bitterly ashamed that there is n't any humiliation you could put upon me, Lydia," said he, swelling with the notion, "that would bow me too low, if you'll forgive me."

"I think I do forgive you," she said. "Yes, I forgive you."

"That's like you, dear. You're an angel. You're far too good for me, Liddy. No, no coffee, thank you. Listen, Liddy. Some sort of misunderstanding has come between us of late. We must have no more of that. My darling, my poor little girl, all that is over and passed. I've come here to ask you when we are to be married, Lydia."

"Yes," she said; "yes, I thought you would do that."

"I am glad you did me that justice," he replied, a little huffed. "Well, don't trifle, dear. There is no reason why we should wait any longer. When will you be ready?"

"I shall never be ready," said Lydia. "Never again. I have been ready too long." She was aware of his half-articulate "What!" and stood still a moment, gathering and weighing her words, before she added, "I can't marry you, Tom."

"What!" He turned scarlet and straightened up, pricking all over and with a sound of rushing water in his ears. "What do you mean? Are you out of your mind? Don't try to fool with me! Can't marry me? Why not?"

"Because I don't wish to," she answered very gently.

"What!" Of all his sonorous periods this was the only syllable that was left to him. But while he stared at Lydia something came back to him, and then he divined that this was only the outraged pride of womanhood, seemly enough in the future Mrs. Fosburg, but inconvenient to his mood, and he determined, in the language of his lighter moments, to call her bluff. "Come, Liddy! You forget, my dear." He came close to her and shook her fondly by the shoulder. "You know you love me, Liddy. Why, you kissed me, you know—of your own accord you kissed my hand, just after all the trouble. That was my own old Lydia."

She did not stir. "Yes," she said; "I kissed you. That was for good-by. It was my good-by to you—and to all our life. It was just the end. I meant it for that, but I knew you did n't know. It seemed to me I had loved you—a great deal. And you had n't cared enough. You were n't—worth it. But it was so much, I was sorry you had lost it. I was so sorry—sorry for you. That was why I kissed you." Fosburg took his hand from Lydia's shoulder, went over to a chair, and sat down in it.

He never could remember afterwards what words she used in order to make him aware that she was leaving him that night. At first he scarcely paid attention to a fact which he found too incredible, and then he seemed to have known it for a long time. He heard her telling him all her arrangements—how she had called up Mr. Harvey on the long-distance telephone and had agreed to join him in Cincinnati and go to Australia with him, how there was a train about five o'clock that morning which she could take, how she had left Liza instructions about having her things packed and sent after her, all but the little trunk which was already waiting for her downstairs—and the strangeness of it choked and baffled him. Who was this Lydia who had thus taken the management of her life in her own hands? But then suddenly whipped into action by the nip of wondering what every one would say, he began to cry out against all this nonsense, to argue, to reproach, to implore, and when he had exhausted the strains of broken sentiment which were all that he could find to bind her with, he saw that she was drawing on her gloves. And then, "Lydia," he stammered, with that awful lurch and swinging of the soul with which a man gulps down the dregs of his abasement—"Lydia, what am I to do about Chesney?"

"Chesney?"

"If he insists upon you; if—if he won't take me without you."

"He will," she said. "If I were to be had, perhaps he would not, but I am not to be had, and I am not necessary to 'San Juan.'"

"I suppose you think that when you get back from Australia he'll give you something better?" She did not answer, and he said, composedly this time, though with bitter conviction, "Yes, I suppose he will." He sat for a moment grappling with the silent security with which his property was removing itself beyond his reach, and then he broke forth with, "What in the name of heaven has got into you to-night?"

"To-night!" she cried out, with an appalling sob. "Oh, to-night!" and, lifting her arms, she brought them down crossed upon her breast. She stood there, enfolding her emotion, guarding it as if from his intrusion, till at last she said, "Everything. Everything has happened to me to-night. I have come to myself—you have set me free. You have set me quite free. After all these years."

He was puzzled. "Just because I lost my temper. I know I was wrong; but, still, I did have provocation. Any man—I know I made a fool of myself, I know I struck that boy——"

"Ah!"

He started at her tone, and she explained:

"Not because you struck him. Because of the way he felt when you struck him. It made me know. It made me sure."

"Sure! Sure of what?"

"That there are still people in the world, after all, who are—really—young."

"Young!" cried Mr. Fosburg, wounded in a tender spot.

"Oh, not in that way! But single-minded and—honest and—that thing about the strength of ten—you used to read it to me so often, years ago—'My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart——' That's what I mean by being young. He thought of nobody but me, you see. Nothing else. I knew then that there was nothing in the world a man who felt like that about women would n't do to save me."

"Save you! Save you from what? From me?"

"From marrying you," said Lydia.

"I can't understand you," he replied.

She looked at her watch, and then she sat down by the table again, regarding him very sadly, with gentle, ruthless eyes. "Am I to speak?" she asked him. "I have never said anything until now. Perhaps that was where I was most wrong. But I don't think so. It would n't have made any difference if I had tried to tell you how I felt all along. You would have tired of me all the sooner."

"Lydia! I——"

"But now I am tired, too, and must go away. At least, I am tired of what I have been. I must go away from that."

"But, my poor brave girl, what you have been, as you call it, is all over, I swear to you. If we were married——"

"I don't mean that. If we were married, it would be worse. That would be like staying with a rich man whom you would leave if he were poor. If we only loved each other——"

"Lydia! If——?"

"Do you love me?" she asked him. He could not answer. It seemed so easy, and yet he could not say it. "No," she went on. "There is nothing in you to love me with, me nor any woman. And I, too—you've killed my love for you. You've been killing it for years, but I did n't see. Only to-night I saw. There is nothing of it left. But I want to save the other things that are left. I used to think there would be nothing for me without you. But there is. That, really, is what has happened to me, what I have found out to-night."

"You have found out! You mean that you don't need me any longer."

She looked the statement gravely in the face. "Yes, that is it. There are other things that matter in the world. All I need is to get away. Until lately I have been living in a bad dream, where there was n't anything right or wrong, anything staunch or anything—pure; only makeshifts, compromises, learning to get over things. The things that people around me said, the things they felt, the things you taught me, pressed in upon me so that I began to believe them, to think that all the ideas they teach you at home—about love, you know, and friendship, and—honor"—she flushed a little at the high-sounding words—"all the things you learn when you are little, were just tales to be got rid of, that nobody believed them or tried to follow them, but that you laughed and threw them overboard as you got older and knew the world; that what I missed in you, Tom, in our life, I should never find anywhere, that all men were alike and all women had to get used to that, and that I must be glad to cling to what I had and make the best of it, for I was only getting old and finding things out, finding life out like other women, and must be willing to sink into a kind of squalor and comfort, fall into fondness, dependence, habit, all the dreadful things, so that that girl I used to be when I really loved you—I should have had to cover her eyes. Women do that, they tell me, with their daughters. I could n't trust life, that was it, nor see it without you. I thought I had no right to anything except through you, that there was no future for me except with you, no ground under my feet, that I had no standing except what you gave me. My position with the world was in your hands, just as you said to-night, and I used to feel that my real position was there, too, that if anything should ever happen to part us I should be ashamed of everything at last. I could not have borne to be just a woman who—— I felt as if the distinc-

tion between me and—and some other women—was a distinction that you could give or take away, that came from our remaining together, and now I do not feel like that. I do not feel as if my character, myself, depended upon you. They depend upon me, upon me only. I don't believe any longer that nothing is worth-while."

Out of a black pause Fosburg laughed. "Well, I'm not worth-while, I see. Not worth your while, Lydia, that's plain. But don't you think you're pretty late in finding it out." He leaned forward to her. "Little Carzon! What's this you've got in your head about him? He seems to be at the bottom of this. Come, Liddy, is it he that's worth-while? Oh, well, then, no, I take that back. I don't suppose you're in love with the little fool—at your age. But he's up to your standard, is he?"

"He has given me my standard," she replied, in a faint little weariness of pain.

Fosburg reddened darkly, with an oath. "Frank Carzon! That's not the general estimate of him, my good girl. Frankie Carzon, by the Lord Harry! Handsome Carzon's cub!"

"Oh, I know, I know! I know all the things people said about him when he first came to us—oh, Tom, when he was only eighteen!—how hard it's been for him in so many ways, and his father and all that; the dreadful things that have been let happen to him and that he's done. Perhaps it was by those things he learned to understand, perhaps they made him. For the great difference between him and the rest of you is that he does n't think such things are funny. That was what made trying to live better so dreary and hopeless and lonely to me, that it began to seem as if everybody thought them funny, thought that if you could n't laugh at scruples you were just a fool. And when I saw how he felt about me, what he supposed I was like, what he dreamed about me—that poor child—and my—fineness, what a different kind of person I seemed, and oh! of how different a usefulness from what I seemed to you, at first I could hardly bear it, and then it was like day coming when one's ill; and then to-night—to-night—oh!"

"Heavens and earth!" he cried. "The night's been strange enough. That you should desert me before everybody for a fit of temper! That's strange enough."

"Desert you!" she said, and there was a curious, wild softness in her voice. "How long has she—your wife—been dead? More than a year. Was n't it you, then, who deserted me, before everybody, as you say, a year ago? Although you did n't tell me so until to-night. No, you did n't tell me so—you could n't put yourself in the wrong like that; you only tried to starve me out. And I would n't see it. I would n't go. I tried to think it was just your way, and because I was still useful to you you let me stay, and to-night, when you thought I



was n't useful any longer, you threw me away. And I have got to my feet, that's all, that's what surprises you, makes you angry. You know that a year ago I could n't have done that; I should have broken my heart. But deserted you, Tom—oh, if my love's failed, if it has turned out too weak to save us both, as I know love ought to do, yet when I remember how much—how much it used to be——! Oh, if I could show you how I nursed it and hugged it and kept it up and would n't see! Long after you and I had begun to grow apart I loved my love for you better than anything, anywhere; I would have done anything, sunk to anything, sooner than know that it was gone. But it was going, it was going, and I know now that I knew it, and if it had been my child dying I could n't have held it more desperately. If you'd been kind to me to-night, true to me, even cheaply true, you would have enslaved me, to you and to your kind of life forever, but my success came, and you hated me for it, you would n't let it be a part of you, helping you, and you saw what Mr. Chesney thought of me, and you hated me, and I was n't even the woman you used to love, I was just a stranger to you, a thief that you would have liked to see locked up, and you cast me off, turned me out; and I can't come back, Tom, I can't, I don't want to. But when you say that I've deserted you—oh, could n't you see, all that time about the trap, how my heart sprang to you, how I tried to keep hold of the dearness of you, to cling to you, how I tried to assure myself that this was the man I loved so dearly? I was clutching to that because I was drowning, and there, before all those people, you beat me off, you tore my hands open, you did n't leave me one thing to hold to; you kept beating down, knocking away, all that I had tried so hard to save, the little that was left! And then all of a sudden I was just watching you, learning you all over again, trying to see in you something of what I used to live for and finding that there was nothing, there never had been anything, nothing but a picture that I had made myself and worshiped, and even that was gone—you'd destroyed it. Then I saw at last what you were and what I was to you, what I had been all the time I loved you, what any woman would be to you. So then you became a stranger to me, too. Oh, and I was ready to die then, for what was there in this world that was n't strange to me? I had scarcely even seen anything but you. I was waiting, waiting for some kind of an assurance, to get my breath, and then you struck Frank, and I saw him, I saw his face, the way he looked at me, I saw the difference between you, that was all, that was the end. Oh, I was so sorry for you and for all our love that was dead, so, so sorry, and I kissed you, and you thought I could n't help it and you despised me for it!" Her voice caught and, rising, she covered her face with her hands. She said, "Surely you see that I must go."

Unexpectedly enough, he put his head down upon his knees and

began to cry. He was so jarred, chagrined, and sore. "Oh, Liddy," he said, "I was a fool! Don't leave me just now! Oh, Liddy, how can you forget?"

"Forget!" she cried. She caught hold of him, bending over him with closed eyes, swaying a little, like a person in a swoon, her face all swimming with the broken light of tears, and for a moment they clung together in a seeming unity and comprehension. Then the call of the telephone sounded, and she gently released herself.

Fosburg sat there with his face muffled, trying to recover himself, to see his way, his life, in which he had been so strangely shaken. He could see nothing but Lydia and her miserable image of him. Thus he had never been so near to humility, to soundness. And it seemed to him a terrible world in which he found himself, a world in which time and the conditions of living stole away one's youth, stole away one's manhood, before one has had time to capture them, to ennoble oneself with them, and long before the good deliverance of age; stole away along with one's hope and one's integrities that so much more important thing, one's handsome portrait of oneself! It seemed, too, that Lydia was taking all these things away with her; that she on her side had not parted with one of them. She was leaving him to his life of newspaper triumphs and of restaurants, of flat anticipations, disillusion, and incurious wishes, to all the enchantments of notoriety and smoking-rooms and moneyed pleasures, he whose time for enchantment was over and done. Thus it came about that at least he had his little moment of longing to begin again—with her, in a far country; though he remembered the insecurity of her future and the fickle minds of managers, yet he saw how in that material world which had caught and caged him and turned the key on him forever, she was free. Oh, even his success had come too late, he had failed in everything! He had failed in a man's part, he had not bound this woman to him, he had driven her from him—he who had played how weary a many squires of dames, so that their devoirs and successes were as his own breath on his lips, he who in his own life had undertaken to be the immortal lover, above the laws of man! He, too, had been a boy once and had imagined better things. "My strength is as the strength of ten——" Why had she quoted those lines just now? He had recited that then fashionable poem under the humble ardor of her eyes on many a day of gold. From it there came back burningly to him his favorite verse, one which Lydia and other women had often thrilled to beneath his voice:

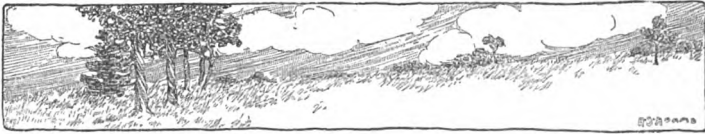
How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favors fall;  
For them I battle to the end  
To save from shame and thrall.

The thing stung him like a snake. "For them I battle to the end——"  
He heard the door close gently, and, looking up, he found himself alone.

Fosburg was alone in Lydia's room, alone with her books and pictures, the empty wrappings of their life.

To Thomas Arthur Fosburg,  
From Lydia,  
On her eighteenth birthday.

Was it possible? Was it possible? He ran to the window and raised the blind. The day had broken. The night of marring or of making, the great night on which success had hung, was come and gone! Fosburg stood staring out of the window into the daily miracle, the new world. There was over everything a cold and cleansing light which touched the familiar street with strangeness. In that pale clearness of the early morning he saw a bell-boy come out and open the door of Lydia's cab, saw Lydia step into it and drive away.

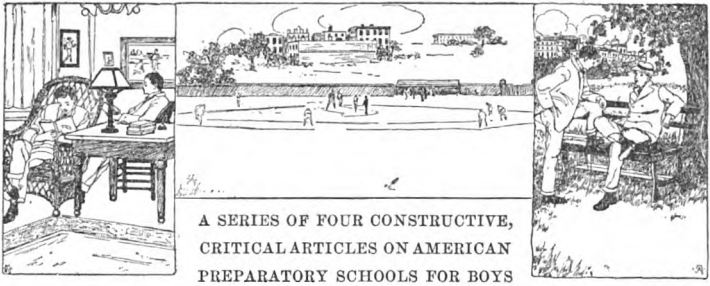


## APRIL

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

**S**WELLING bud and fond suggestion,  
Wafting of perfume,  
Tearful rapture, thrilling question  
Of restraint or bloom,  
Life all dreamlessly asleeping,  
As in death, but now,  
Upward to the sunshine creeping,—  
April, that is thou!

Mystery's authentic dwelling,  
Faith's expanding wing,  
Maiden loveliness foretelling  
Fuller blossoming,  
Prophet of the new creation,  
Priestess of the bough,  
Month of the imagination,—  
April, that is thou!



A SERIES OF FOUR CONSTRUCTIVE,  
CRITICAL ARTICLES ON AMERICAN  
PREPARATORY SCHOOLS FOR BOYS

# EDUCATING OUR BOYS\*

BY JOSEPH M. ROGERS

## SECOND PAPER—THE TIME AND THE TASK

IT is of general knowledge that the tendency in the last thirty years has been to increase the requirements for admission to the higher colleges and universities, while, by a system of electives, it is made relatively easier for a young man to get through the four years of undergraduate work in the academic courses. There is ample opportunity for the hardest and most consistent study, but less necessity for it than formerly in order to get a degree. Obviously this has thrown a great deal more work upon the preparatory students, and a correspondingly increased responsibility upon the secondary schools. Collegiate work in the technical courses is naturally very exacting, as such work is really professional in scope.

Thirty years ago it was not uncommon for boys to enter college at the age of sixteen. To-day such an age is exceptional; the average is between eighteen and twenty. And, by the same token, the boy who now enters college has, in most of the academic studies, an equipment as comprehensive as had formerly the graduates of the smaller colleges which are in some respects the very best in the country. In fact, so far as the classics are concerned, many students

\* What is termed primary education includes all to the close of the grammar grades. Secondary education is such as is supplied in high schools and boarding-schools and academics preparatory for college. Higher, or superior, education includes college or university academic courses as well as much of the professional training.

pay no more attention to them after leaving the secondary schools. Note the roll of students in any college catalogue, and you will find that the classical course is the least patronized. The young men are going in for applied science, for engineering, biology, sociology, or economics, rather than for pure mathematics, philosophy, or Greek and Latin. And for those who do not expect to enter a learned profession, the secondary schools generally give ample equipment in the classics. They give an introduction to the literature and some knowledge of the structure of Latin and Greek, which is all that is essential except for those who desire to become proficient in them, and even they may accomplish this by private study.



Sixty years ago, before secondary education had become differentiated, preparation for college was made by special teachers or clergymen or at private academies, of which there were few, and those generally affiliated with some college. But in those days it was only the elect who ever had a chance to go to college or who had more than primary education. It is in the last thirty years that the secondary schools, both private and public, have become of great importance in our educational system. As our natural resources have become developed, as our increasing population has become more densely settled, the competition for the prizes of life has become keener. At the same time a great change has come over the manner of our living. Whether or not one regrets the simple living of a past generation, it is gone forever. Life is more luxurious, if you please, from your standpoint, or richer and more comfortable from the modern point of view; but undeniably it is much more expensive in every direction. The young man of to-day strongly objects to starting out in life as did his parents. He desires to start from their exact plane of present living or a little higher one, if he may. Whether one calls this the bane of commercialism or an awakening to the richer things which life may yield, is of less importance for the purposes of this discussion than the undeniable fact that such a condition exists.

Parents as well as children are anxious to progress in life, and use every available means to secure advancement. It would be useless to say that education is the sole opportunity for advancement, for there is too much evidence to the contrary; but it is no less than the truth that at the present time education in the school (even in its unsatisfactory status) is the greatest and most available opportunity for the great mass of young men who are without special equipment. Wealth, influence, some lucky accident, and even the direst necessity

have been foundation stones of many brilliant and useful characters; but for most persons the great opportunity is education; and they are wrong who say that education is wholly to blame for so many failures. Rather, does much of the fault lie in those who fail themselves.

One of the oldest and most successful of private school principals in this country recently remarked that every wave of commercial prosperity which has swept over the country in his time has to a degree disorganized his school. Parents who have suddenly become affluent send their children to private school under the misapprehension that, through some peculiar quality in their own money, their sons will become refined and cultured in a short time. These patrons are a trial to principals. Usually they are profoundly ignorant of the real nature and value of education, yet they are, of all patrons, the most captious and complaining. They seem to think a check payable to a schoolmaster ought to produce as instant and desirable results as if they were purchasing an automobile. They seek for their sons not so much development of character as social standing and a veneer of culture. They think they know much better how this should be done than the teachers, with whom they are likely to interfere, or at least whom they do not assist. They are not in sympathy with the theory of Dr. Holmes that the education of a child should begin two hundred years before it is born.



This sudden influx of a large number of new and untrained boys is a disturbing feature to any school. It requires a great deal of hard work to bring the new-comers up to the mental and ethical standard of the school; to convince them that money cannot buy education, but only afford a means toward acquiring it. The ideal way to educate boys in any school would be to conduct them continuously from the lowest to the highest grades. Unfortunately, this is largely impossible, so that much of the time and energy of teachers is expended in working over the raw material, much to the loss of those students who are already imbued with the traditions of the school and its pedagogical methods.

Here is apparent once more the fact that parents look upon education as wholly a pedagogical function, whereas the best school in the world is well nigh impotent without the cordial coöperation of parents, pupil, and other outside factors. A school is not a modern factory for turning out specimens of a highly finished mechanical product of a system. It is an institution where many (but by no means all) factors are at work building character, and which may

be of value or not, depending on circumstances over which the teacher has little control.

We are the more deceived if we think that modern industrial and commercial inventions and processes have displaced the older ideas of fundamental education. These are eternal, and it is only the means of securing a desired end that are to be considered.

It is also noteworthy and of collateral importance that with entrance conditions to college increasing, with age limit advancing, and with a very common feeling among business men that, after all, the value of a college education is overestimated, the number of those who must depend for academic instruction solely on secondary schooling is relatively increasing. More young men and women go to college, of course, but the population is vastly larger. Those in secondary schools are five times as many as those in college, and the ratio is much increased if we count only as college men those who are taking superior academic education, and not technical or professional courses.

It is this almost a million of boys and girls in the secondary schools who are the bulwark of the so-called American educated classes. Those who get only primary education are the masses, and the small number with superior education may be called the intellectual aristocracy; but the most important from a substantial point of view is the youthful million of the educated *bourgeoisie* of the secondary schools, if one may be allowed to use with respect such a term in a country which officially does not recognize any division into classes at all.



Of this million, only twenty per cent. are privately educated, and only a portion of these at boarding schools, academies, and seminaries, where, all things considered, the best equipment, mental, moral, and individually constructive, is to be secured. The rest live at home. The sixty secondary schools with which this discussion is concerned are attended by about eight thousand students. Of these, about three thousand are at city schools where there are no boarding facilities and the rest at boarding-schools and academies, most of which are in the country or suburbs. As explained in the first article, these represent every kind of boys' (non-military) school in the country. Selection of them was made so as to represent every kind of school on as nearly a proportionate basis as possible, so that deductions from a study of conditions in these should fairly represent the whole mass of such schools in the country. The first article dealt with the expense at these schools, which (including travelling, clothing, and all extras)

averages one thousand dollars a year, so far as the schools are concerned. But since the cheaper schools are attended by the greatest number, the average expense per pupil is conservatively estimated at seven hundred and fifty dollars. In a very few the expense is five hundred dollars or less. The present article deals especially with the academic work required each year at these institutions.

Not all the schools under consideration prepare boys for college, but in cases where only younger boys are admitted the curriculum is so scheduled that they may continue their studies for that end. It is recognized that not all students will be able to go to college, and therefore many schools provide special courses, but in the main it may be said that the standard for graduation in these schools is that required for admission to the higher colleges and universities—Harvard, for instance.

It may be thought by some that these boarding-schools are to a great extent nurseries for mothers' darlings, or reform schools for incorrigibles. No mistake could be greater. The aim of these schools is definite, and only mildly affected by monetary conditions, and in no case does that lower the intellectual standard. No matter how fashionable a school might become, it could not maintain itself unless its graduates were equipped for college. Even rich parents of little culture want their sons to go through college, although they may not expect them to become professional men. Rich parents are very insistent on getting what they pay for—even more—and they get full value for their money so far as the teachers can give it. There are derelicts, more or less, in every school, but fewer in these under consideration than at the average public school.



What is required for entrance to the larger colleges?

Unfortunately, this question cannot be answered as definitely as formerly, because there are so many courses leading to a scholastic degree open to young men, and they vary so much, that the entrance requirements differ greatly. In general, it can be said that the young man who enters the classical course in any of the larger colleges must be prepared to pass examinations substantially in the following studies:

*Greek.*—Ability to read Homer and Attic prose at sight, with full understanding of the structure of the language, and translation of easy English into Greek. At least three years' study involved.

*Latin.*—Ability to read Cæsar, Cicero, and Vergil at sight, with knowledge of grammatical construction, and ability to translate easy English into Latin. Three to four years' study involved.



*Modern Languages.*—Familiarity with one modern language (usually French or German) required, and some knowledge of its literature. At least two years' study involved.

*History.*—Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern, especially English and American. At least three years' study involved.

*English.*—A course extending over at least three years, giving familiarity with the English classic and modern writers. Shakespeare is a decidedly important feature.

*Algebra.*—At least through quadratic equations, and for scientific courses advanced algebra, geometry, and sometimes trigonometry.

*Physics.*—Two years' elementary study.

*Chemistry.*—Two years' elementary study.

*Biology.*—Elementary study as well as some knowledge of anatomy and physiology.

*Natural Science.*—Elementary knowledge of geology, zoölogy, and botany.

There are some other studies occasionally required, or which may be accepted as substitutes. Requirements for admission to other courses than the classical vary materially in subjects to be mastered, but not greatly in the amount of preliminary work to be covered.

It will be noted that this is a rather extensive curriculum. The young man who has thoroughly grounded himself in these branches and has learned how to continue study at home (which is not always the case) has an equipment in mere information which is sufficient for almost any one who does not expect to enter professional life. It does not mean that he is thoroughly educated, but that he has acquired knowledge of a rather extensive character which he can convert by use of experience into education. Of course, a college course is desirable for almost any one who can afford it, and who can profit by it (everybody cannot), but the young man of grit and intelligence who can enter college on the foregoing basis has gotten over the hardest part of his educational journey so far as text-books are concerned.



It is the purpose of the secondary school to give the above equipment. Not any young man may take all the studies in full, but substantially he must accomplish these or an equivalent.

How much time is he allowed to do this?

The ordinary course is four years. That is what the best high schools give, and it may be taken as the standard since these schools do four-fifths of this kind of work. Many boys at private schools take five years to cover this ground, though the private school usually has

a wider curriculum and other requirements above the public high schools, but in the former the boy has the advantage of smaller classes and more personal attention from the masters.

The average time given for original study in the schools we are considering is one hundred and fifty days a year, or six hundred days to complete the course.

*This is not time enough for study if the knowledge secured is to be well digested.*

These figures need some explanation. They are the result of a tabulation of the calendars for the current year in the sixty schools mentioned. The actual number of school days in the three terms, omitting Thanksgiving and other holidays, averages 168, although in many schools there are holidays observed which are not mentioned in the calendar. It is well known that the first two and the last two days of each term are seldom devoted to original study, and at least two other days in each term are devoted to review and examinations. Moreover, the last week of the spring term is usually devoted to other than academic exercises, so that a deduction of eighteen days for the year for all causes is very conservative. This leaves an average of one hundred and fifty days for original study, and the actual number of days probably averages less.



Generally schools open the last week in September and close the first or second week in June, with vacations of from two to three weeks at Christmas and a week to ten days at Easter. Some vacation periods are longer than these. In almost every case the Friday after Thanksgiving Day is a holiday, and the previous Wednesday is either a half or complete holiday, since it is get-away-day for the pupils who go home. Nor is this all. Traditionally, Thanksgiving Day closes outdoor sports. Boys who have been in training go home to eat too much and either do not get back at once or return in poor physical condition. Every teacher in a boarding-school knows that the most trying portion of the year is from Thanksgiving to the end of the fall term. Yet this is the time of preparation for examinations, when it is necessary to make as good records as possible. Boys who have attended regularly must perforce be neglected somewhat, so that the delinquents may be brought up to the standard.

The older schools and academies have longer terms. It might almost be said that there is a regular ratio in this respect. Phillips Exeter, for instance, is one of the oldest, one of the most efficient, and one of the cheapest of the schools, but it has more days devoted to

original study than almost any other on the list, its principal rivals in this respect being others of the older schools. Yet the curriculum in these schools is no broader than at schools with shorter study periods. At the latter the boy must compete with students who at other schools have forty or fifty more days of original study each year.

Taking into consideration all the extra care that can possibly be given boys, this does not seem fair. It is impossible that of two equally bright boys one will learn as much in one hundred and fifty days as the other will in one hundred and ninety or two hundred days. There is a loss somewhere for the boy who takes the shorter time, even if he does manage to make as good a showing at examinations, which, after all, are not the true criterion for the best educational standard.



The inevitable result is that boys are made to study too hard. There is no denying that every one of these schools turns out young men well filled up with knowledge, though it may be questioned whether it is often very well digested. At a period in a young man's life when he is undergoing that wondrous and critical transformation from boyhood to manhood, when the fires of sentiment are burning fiercely, he is subjected to the severest discipline of his life. Into this fiery crucible of youth, with all its yearnings, longings, needs, and physical cravings, there is cast an enormous amount of concentrated mental work and strenuous play to be melted in the briefest possible time, so that a well rounded man may be produced. It is impossible. It is impracticable. It is cruel. At a time when sentiment is most needed the boy gets rigid discipline, during term time—and then he is incontinently thrown out into a vacation period of more or less unrestrained idleness! When opportunity for contemplation is most required he is hurried most—and then neglected most. Compared with the work he does now, college life will be a period of leisure. It is bad for him physically, it is bad for him mentally, and it is bad for him psychologically, to be driven hard at the most formative period of his existence. This is the testimony of a mass of teachers and intelligent parents all over the country.

The causes of this shortening of the academic year are many, but not wholly clear in all cases. Testimony on the point is somewhat conflicting. It has been customary to blame it on the schools on the ground that the shorter the term the greater the profit. A considerable investigation does not sustain this view. Most teachers, at least, do not like the short term. They would prefer a longer period, so that they could produce better results, as it is on their records that they

maintain positions and receive promotion. It is true that many of the teachers use the long vacations for adding to their income in various ways, but this does not seem to be the general rule.

The most important testimony is to the effect that the terms are shortened to meet the social requirements of patrons. This is especially true in the most expensive schools. In these days well-to-do people like to leave their homes early in June and return about the first of October. One would suppose that they might nevertheless send their children to school early in September from the watering places, but experience has shown that this is impracticable. Parents desire to come home and give their boys a fitting-out. This is true of the townsmen as well as of those in the large cities. Abundant testimony has been adduced to show that every effort to lengthen the year by beginning earlier and closing later has been resisted by the parents, who even now would like a further curtailment. It is regrettable that most parents will not make such small sacrifices for their children, but it is true. Many are willing to do so, but it advantages nothing if half the boys are in school two weeks before the other half. The work must be done over for the benefit of the late comers. This explanation, though plausible, is disheartening, for it does not account for the long vacations at Easter and Christmas time, which are often prolonged to what seems a ridiculous extent.



The average high or normal school devotes most of ten calendar months to study. These open early in September and close from the middle to the latter part of June, and mid-year vacations are much shorter than in the private schools. And these schools to a large extent set the pace for curriculum requirements in the private schools. The high schools prepare for college in four years, and the private schools must do the same. It is true that some of the high school courses are not as extensive as in some of the private schools, but the reverse is generally the case. Many of the high schools give, through public or private beneficence, scholarships to leading colleges and universities, and these always maintain a high standing.

It may well be said that the private scholar gets more than the boy at high school. He ought to get a great deal more, considering how much more is expended on him, and he ought to get a great deal more in the way of advantages than he does. It is true that there is atmosphere in the private school, that there is more character building, more of many factors essential to the well developed man, but these ought to be accompanied by no more mental effort in academic study than in the high schools. And it is noteworthy that in these days the

high school standard is constantly advancing, and the private schools must keep up with it.

The curriculum of Phillips Exeter may be taken as an example of what a normal boy may be expected to accomplish. It is supposed to take a boy from the grammar school to college in four years, and has so conducted thousands of young men. The student who goes through these four years is certainly equipped with a large amount of knowledge, if he can retain it. He has fully covered the requirements for entering Harvard as above given, and something more. If the boy is of an age to digest all this, and to carry a very considerable portion of it after digestion through life, and is able intelligently to add thereto, he has well nigh acquired what we call a "liberal education," so far as text-books are concerned. He is doing the work which his grandfather did in college and at about the same age. But he has still four years before him, and the truth is that in college he does not need to learn more, so much as to chew the cud of what he has already acquired.



We are here at the very fundamentals of educational principles. What should education mean for the average man? If it means merely to acquire knowledge, then our secondary schools are doing a work which is perhaps more remarkable than those of Germany, where a larger volume of knowledge is imparted, though not in such a wide curriculum. But one of the patent facts which is deplored in Germany is that the *gymnasias* (as they call their secondary schools) are not accomplishing the results expected. Any one familiar with the curricula of these schools stands aghast at the amount of work which is expected of boys by the time they are seventeen. The boys often have learned much that is of no value to them, because they do not know how to use it. The ranks of the Socialist Party are continually recruited from these young men who have been given a thorough and extensive but to them useless course of study, which has not amounted to education in any proper sense of the term. The students have as little time to think, are as little expected to think individually, and on their own account, as is the private in the army. The system there is everything and the individual nothing—which is not the ideal road to education in its broadest sense.

To a lesser degree, this same condition exists in this country. No one pretends that the study of Greek and Latin and the higher mathematics is for most boys utilitarian in the narrow sense of the term. Few college graduates ever look at one of their text-books after graduation, and in a few years are as profoundly ignorant of Hesiod

and the calculus as they were at the beginning. They know how things are done in a general way, but they cannot work out serious problems nor translate difficult Greek without a lexicon. Nor is it particularly desirable that they should be able to do so. As a result they tell their sons at secondary schools who ask them for aid: "It is better for you to work these things out for yourself—you will remember them better." This is a profound pedagogical truth, but the father does not know this. He says it out of sheer laziness or to conceal his own ignorance.

No one interested in education will for a moment deny the value of the classics, or of higher mathematics, or of chemistry and physics. The college-bred man who has made the most of his opportunities, if he carries away little definite knowledge that survives, has, at least, if he has been diligent, acquired habits of mind which are of lasting value to him. The aim of education is to train the mind so that it may make use of what knowledge is acquired, and to give the individual qualities of both obedience and command and in general develop good character. It is character building which is the essential of education rather than the mere primary requisite of obtaining knowledge. But when it comes to defining what character is, we are met with a difficult task. We all know what it is much better than we can define it. It involves getting a due perspective of life, of understanding the relations of mental, moral, and material things to each other in their proper proportions, and in making use of the results. In the last analysis education is abstract rather than concrete. A man might learn the contents of every book in a vast library and be useless to the world or himself, either from a subjective or objective point of view. Ripe scholarship is indeed a valuable and desirable attainment, but it is only part of a fine equipment. The world is filled with human derelicts surcharged with knowledge which they cannot use for themselves or others.



It is easy for the student of sociology to see that in this country and in this age we are placing too much importance upon the objective features of education. Examinations as a rule have no other purpose than to test the memory of the pupil, and the so-called brightest scholars are as a rule those with the most acute memory, which is only one essential of a well-rounded education. For this reason we so seldom hear later of the brilliant students at college, the men who carry off the scholastic prizes; while the less spectacular boy, who has less to remember, often digests the more.

We come to the final statement that secondary private schools as

at present conducted place, as a rule, to much stress on an elongated academic curriculum in too short a space of time. Either the terms of study should be lengthened very materially or less academic work should be attempted. It seems undeniable that the boy who in four years has studied two hundred more days than another is going to be better equipped in every way, provided he be of normal capacity to use what he learns. And proprietary schools might take some lessons from the older academies which give the longest periods of study. The young man in a fashionable boarding-school of recent date gets more of luxury and refinement of a certain kind, more individual attention than in the older academies, but the latter has something which cannot be definitely described and which is of great value to him. Here the youth walks in academic groves where once were those boys who became great men. He sits in the same halls and is surrounded by manifold material and psychological evidences of the past, wherein great achievements were begun. This sort of atmosphere acts as a stimulus to work and a balancing of moral character. What others have done, he may accomplish, and by the same token he has given some hostages to fortune in attempting to tread the paths so many of the successful men of the country have trod before him.



But in the smaller boarding-school the boy has some advantages which may, more or less, compensate for this lack of atmosphere, especially if he is going to college. But the prime fact for consideration at this time is that the boy is given so little time for contemplation, so little for æsthetics, while in the prescribed time limit too much academic and athletic accomplishment is required of him. Nor is it any answer to say that the long vacations should be used to supply these deficiencies. As a rule, these are days of mental stagnation or of wrong development. Parents do not encourage study at this time, believing it to belong wholly to school life. It is as idle in these days to expect a boy to get the proper mental training outside of schools which are established for that very purpose as it is to expect the raw volunteer to compete with the professional soldier. Discipline of mind comes from regular and systematic training, and it is lamentable that in these days parents shift upon the schools not only the mental but also, to a very large degree, the moral training of their boys. It is a lazy parent who refuses to do his duty and then lays the blame upon the teacher because his boy at school has not developed into an all-around man; but it is a deplorable fact that this country is filled with such lazy and ignorant parents.

Schools are expected to do everything—to do altogether too much. In vacation-time parents too often let their boys run riot or put them into close confinement at business, which is apt to be worse. The time for the proper development of our finer natures is from the day of puberty to those of early manhood, and this is the precise period when parents most neglect their children and then complain that it is all the fault of the school-teachers.

But since the schools have to a large extent undertaken this task, they should accomplish it so far as is possible. They may reject the labor if they please—as most public teachers are compelled to do—but so long as each and every one of the private school principals lays so much stress upon the advantages of his school in character building it is essential that they take up much of the work that parents should perform. But this by no means absolves parents from their responsibilities. It is essential that parents and teachers cooperate heartily, and, after all, it is the parents who must do the most if the boy is to be the right sort of a man. The hearthstone cannot be moved anywhere else.



It should be remarked that these criticisms are general. Not all or even many of them apply to any one school. To some of them hardly any are applicable except in mild measure. We are now concerned with general considerations, and not with concrete instances. Nor must it be considered unfair to indulge in so much constructive criticism to the exclusion of a more extended exemplification of the many merits of these private schools. These merits are obvious, are undeniable, are fully appreciated, but for the purposes of this discussion they must, for the most part, be passed over in silence. We are all trying to improve what is confessedly good, but what is able to be greatly stimulated.

In the next article attention will be paid to those elements other than academic which enter into secondary education, and in some respects these are the most important of all for parents to consider.





# THE AFFAIR OF THE THE UPTOWNERS

*By Edmund Vance Cooke*

“THE rooms are all that we could ask,” said Joseph Marmaluke, speaking to Mrs. Deadstone, but unconsciously allowing his gaze to rest upon her daughter. “Mr. Kersey and I are more than satisfied. We were just saying that the atmosphere suggested home rather than a boarding-house.”

Mrs. Deadstone’s face went flabby at the word. The network showed around her eyes, and two deep creases drooped from the corners of her mouth. “Mr. Marmaluke,” she said, with great dignity, “while you and Mr. Kersey are with us, please remember that you are guests, not—not boarders.” She gave another little shudder at the word and continued somewhat hastily: “To be sure, we shall be compelled to accept a certain—er—return for our hospitality, and if you—if you—er—if you could—”

“If you could help us with our little deception, mamma means, it will save the proverbial pride of the Deadstones,” put in the daughter. “Pride is the only heritage we have left, and it’s a horribly unhandy thing to keep house on.”

“My dear Violette,” expostulated Mrs. Deadstone, “that’s not quite what I was about to say. I am sure the gentlemen are sensible of the situation. Your outspokenness is positively brutal. If you were not the daughter of a Deadstone—and a Clinton—I should call it almost vulgar. We are not quite reduced to the extremity my daughter asserts,” she concluded, turning to the gentlemen.

“Oh, no, Mrs. Deadstone,” answered Mr. Marmaluke; “we understand both your delicacy and your daughter’s charming candor. They do you both equal honor.”

“You bet we understand!” cried Mr. Kersey, who had been restlessly gnawing his short, reddish mustache. “Shucks! Have n’t we been through the mill? Joe’s father is no small citizen in Peoria, but since we struck New York we’ve boarded everywhere from Seventh Street up, and now that we have a decent start we want something good and are willing to meet the conditions. If you want your money

in advance now—ow! I beg your pardon. I don't usually prolong my vowels that way, but a sudden twinge in a favorite corn, you know——” and Mr. Kersey glared at his chum as if *he* were the producer of pains in corns.

Mr. Marmaluke paid no attention to the glare, being occupied in intercepting a softer glance of half-humorous distress from the eyes of Miss Deadstone and answering it in kind.

Mrs. Deadstone filled in the gap: “As you were saying, Mr. Marmaluke, you comprehend perfectly, and as *you* were saying, Mr. Kersey, if you insist upon—that is, if you wish to——”

“If you will guard us from the wrath of our uptown relatives, whom we love because we seldom see, we will risk the people separated from us by nothing but a row of bricks on each side,” interrupted Miss Deadstone.

“Then we shall be delighted to come next Monday,” said Mr. Marmaluke.

The last two speakers seemed satisfied, and the young man made a reluctant move to depart, but the maternal Deadstone still seemed unsettled. She evidently was casting about in her mind for proper words to use under such unusual relations as these between a Deadstone and commoner people, relations positively commercial! Presently her mental labor brought forth a verbal mouse. “Any—any baggage?” she said, recalling the language of such hotel clerks as she had personally met.

“Sure!” cried Mr. Kersey. “I was just going to ask if the uptown relatives objected to trunks. They—they could be kept in the closet, perhaps.”

“Oh, you have baggage!” commented Mrs. Deadstone, in an almost inaudible tone of disappointment. Seemingly she was in a conversational *cul-de-sac* again. Mr. Marmaluke and Miss Deadstone looked at the floor. Mr. Kersey arose to the occasion. “Joe, we *didn't* think how to arrange the rooms for our trunks. It's too bad to trouble Miss Deadstone again, but if she would show you——” and Mr. Kersey's voice took an upward glide which sufficed to finish the sentence.

As soon as the two disappeared around the bend in the staircase, Mr. Kersey put his hand into his pocket, and as they returned Mrs. Deadstone was tucking something into the bosom of her gown.

“Say!” said Darby Kersey vigorously, after he and Joseph Marmaluke were a half-block away, “you acted as if the word ‘money’ were an offense against decency. If you should happen to marry that girl, I'll bet it would n't be a year before you were grumbling at the butcher-bills. Lovers always act as if money were the last thing in the world to be spoken of; married people as if it were the first.”

"Darby," returned Mr. Marmaluke loftily, "you're a good fellow, but you have no delicacy."

"Yes, I have," retorted Mr. Kersey. "It's located in my toes, and I want you to remember it."

As the days passed both gentlemen congratulated themselves on their quarters, and the weekly interviews between Mr. Kersey and his hostess appeared to assuage the wounded pride of Mrs. Deadstone to some extent. The uptown relatives remained as distant as rich relatives usually do, and the people separated by the thin brick walls were as oblivious as New York neighbors generally are. Mr. Kersey took occasion to hint, quite too frequently, that he liked the Deadstone soups, while his companion's taste turned towards the Deadstone sweets.

One afternoon, according to custom, after their daily labors in Union Square were ended, the two friends travelled home together, "home," of course, being understood to be the Deadstone stories of brownstone and brick which did their little best to uphold the tradition of a past generation in its boarding-house blighted neighborhood. As they reached this residence they were impressed by an unwonted waste of Deadstone gas, and as they mounted the steps their surprise was increased by the flying open of the front door and the appearance of a negro boy in plum-colored coat and brass buttons. Such was their amazement they scarce could give it utterance, nor could they proceed upstairs or decide what diplomacy was due the interloper in plum-color and brass.

"Did we come up the wrong steps? Is n't this Mrs. Deadstone's?" queried Joe weakly.

"Yassah. Yo' cawd, suh?" answered the plum-color and brass.

"Card?" repeated Darby, as vacantly as if he had never heard of that useful article of identification.

"Yassuh, or what name, suh?"

"Name?" repeated Joe, with an excellent imitation of Darby's blankness. "But you see—we——"

Before his slow tongue unwound the words, there was a little rustle in the adjoining "drawing-room," as Mrs. Deadstone insisted on calling it, and the lady of the house, whose ears had been intent on every sound, appeared in person, gowned, powdered, and lorgnetted. Mrs. Deadstone's face broke into such a smile of welcome that the outermost corners crinkled and cracked, much as the ice all over a pond is sometimes shattered by a sudden fissure in the middle. "Why, if it is n't Mr. Marmaluke and Mr. Kersey!" she exclaimed. "This is so good of you, and goodness has its own reward in this case, for you will meet my dearest friends. Violette, some truants you will be glad to see. Mrs. Jowler, *may* I present Mr. Marmaluke and Mr.

Kersey? Miss Harper, my friends, Mr. Kersey, Mr. Marmaluke. I am sure you have each heard me speak of all of you many times."

Mr. Kersey's outward manifestations were of pure pleasure and wholly proper, but under his breath he murmured melodramatically, "Ha, ha! the uptowners are on our track!" If he and his fellow-boarder were ill at ease during the succeeding half-hour, imagine the feelings of Mrs. Deadstone and her daughter. Miss Harper, a woman of the type which refuses to recognize encroaching age and looks as if it had never known real youth; with long nose and neck and receding chin, suggesting the goose, but with an eye suggesting the hawk, scented a suspicion of she-knew-not-what and determined to hunt it down. Mrs. Jowler, observing and smooth-spoken, complacent and cold, was fully as dangerous.

"In what part of New York are you living, Mr. Marmaluke?" asked Miss Harper, pointing dangerously close to the mark.

"Surely you have n't deserted Mount Vernon, have you?" neatly parried Mrs. Deadstone. "I supposed you were wedded to it."

"I presume I am old-fashioned," said Mrs. Jowler, "but residence outside of Manhattan would be repugnant to me. Do you not find it very difficult getting anywhere?"

"Why, really we—I mean—I had n't noticed it," answered Mr. Marmaluke.

"I presume nearly every place has *some* inconvenience," suggested Miss Deadstone, half pleading, half playful, "perhaps as awkward as that of your present residence."

"Oh, yes, but consider the attractions," said Mr. Marmaluke, speaking directly to her and with emphasis.

Miss Deadstone looked conscious, and the murmur of hidden meaning did not entirely escape Miss Harper. She pricked up her ears, and Mrs. Deadstone boldly plunged to divert her. "Ah, but your friends, Mr. Marmaluke, you should consider your friends. Think how seldom we see you."

"But," said Mr. Marmaluke, "no matter where one lived, one would see some of one's friends too seldom;" and he glanced from the matron to the maid.

"Now, that's what I call graceful!" cried Mr. Kersey. "But really, Mrs. Deadstone, you are right. Why, it has been two months since we have seen you, has n't it?" And then he added to himself, "And that's what I call graceless."

Considering that she had poured their breakfast coffee for them that morning, this was too much even for Mrs. Deadstone, but Mr. Marmaluke murmured sincerely, "It seems that long, any way."

"Well!" ejaculated Mrs. Jowler, with a meaning glance which she divided between Mr. Marmaluke and Miss Deadstone. "I must say

the young men are not what they were in my day. Months, indeed! Why, Mr. Jowler used to call twice a week; yes, and would have called every evening if I had allowed such a thing."

Mr. Marmaluke was distinctly embarrassed, Miss Deadstone was distressed, and Mrs. Deadstone was so affronted that she came near crying out that her daughter looked higher than boarders, while Miss Harper cackled so exultingly that Darby Kersey could not refrain from inquiring what were the habits of young men in *her* day.

While this acted as a counter-irritant in relieving the situation, it did not improve the cordiality of the occasion, and Mrs. Deadstone threw herself into the breach again. "But now that you are here," she beamed, with all the graciousness of old-time hospitality, "you will let us prevail on you to stay to dinner."

Mr. Marmaluke looked as bewildered as if he had never heard of dining out; but his surprise really arose from quite a contrary cause. Stay to dinner! Did n't they always stay to dinner? Could it be that his friend Darby had not settled their board for the current week, and this effusiveness was a sarcastic reminder?

"You'll stay, won't you, Mr. Marmaluke? And you, too, Mr. Kersey?" said Miss Deadstone. "It's just as if we had expected you."

"Oh, we expected to stay," replied Mr. Kersey jauntily, and the laugh which followed made everybody feel better.

The dinner passed off more pleasantly than might have been expected, but Joe found opportunity to remark to Darby that the strain was telling on him, so Mr. Kersey insisted on the necessity of their leaving "to catch the eight-two for Mount Vernon."

"What is it now?" he asked, when they were on the street again. "Theatre?"

"Oh, I suppose so, but I wish I could have had the privilege of entering my own room and changing my clothes."

"Must n't presume too much on formal friends. Be thankful for your invitation to dinner," laughed Darby.

They put in the evening as enjoyably as two healthy and hard-working young men should, and quite dismissed the affair of the uptowners from their minds. The callers would be vanished long before their return and probably would never cross their path again.

The lingering carriage, with liveried driver and footman, whose horses slowly loitered up and down the street to keep their thoroughbred blood stirring, should have warned the young men, but they gave no heed. Sleepily they ascended the Deadstone steps, deliberately they fumbled the Deadstone lock, and then—then they were in the hall, with Mrs. Deadstone coming towards them, yellowish pale. The plum-colored coat and brass buttons were either occupied elsewhere or, more

probably, had gone back to the establishment from which they had come. The loitering carriage was drawing up to the Deadstone curb, cutting off retreat. "Gentlemen, gentlemen," gasped Mrs. Deadstone, "they are just going." She gave an agonized glance up the stair, towards where the Jowler and the Harper were presumably adjusting wraps and hats, and added, "Oh, what will they think?"

A moment more and the vinegar voice of Miss Harper and the oilier tones of Mrs. Jowler suggested the salad-dressing they could give this scandal, as they came trickling down the stairway. "Hide!" groaned Mrs. Deadstone. "For the love of heaven, hide!"

There was no opportunity to object. Mrs. Deadstone half pushed Mr. Marmaluke back of the portières, which screened the door leading to the little "drawing-room," and half thrust Mr. Kersey into a low and seldom-used closet under the stair. There they stood and squatted, not daring to move, while the uptowners made their interminable farewells.

"As for those two young men," Mrs. Jowler was saying, "I am sure that one of them has some breeding and I am almost sure that he would show some brains, under normal conditions."

"Under normal conditions?" queried Miss Deadstone, wholly uncomprehending her mother's nervousness, for she had been above-stairs with their guests.

"Oh, don't pretend to misunderstand. Perhaps *you* can't see it, being in the same beclouded condition yourself, but if your mother is n't in danger of losing a daughter, I never saw the symptoms."

"Oh, my dear Flora," said the perturbed Mrs. Deadstone, with an hysterical laugh, "you were always such a humorist."

"Well, let us hope that you'll find it humorous," put in Miss Harper. "For my part, if you'll pardon my saying so, I was not impressed by the company Mr. Marmaluke keeps."

For the cribbed, cabined, and confined Kersey, who could almost have pinched her where she stood, and who felt tempted to do so, this was far from agreeable.

"What do you mean by symptoms?" asked Miss Deadstone suddenly.

"Why, that's one of them," laughed Mrs. Jowler. "Treasuring an unimportant remark about your beloved and going back to it. Another one is that you enjoy being teased about him. Goodness!"

As before remarked, the stair-closet was little used and consequently dusty. Mr. Kersey had struggled valiantly, but the air was bad, he could not keep absolutely quiet, and the dust *would* mount into his nose. The result, a sneeze.

Mrs. Deadstone, perspiring coldly at every pore, made a last effort, looking through the window of the door. "What handsome horses

you have, Flora! No wonder you use them oftener than you do your motor-car. And what perfect servants!"

The situation might have been saved, had not the dust still acted as potently as old Scotch snuff in Mr. Kersey's nostrils. At the second explosion, Mrs. Jowler stepped aside hastily into the curtain and could scarcely repress a scream. Miss Harper's eyes glittered and her nose went up as if sniffing carrion. Miss Deadstone was unfeignedly astonished.

Mr. Marmaluke emerged from his entanglement with the curtain and Mrs. Jowler. "Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Jowler," he said boldly; "the explanation is simple enough. I have the honor to be the suitor of Miss Violette. I did so want to say 'Good-night' to her, so I came back."

"I knew it!" exclaimed Mrs. Jowler, much placated by her triumph.

"Mr. Marmaluke!" exclaimed the girl.

"What's the use in denying it?" persisted the young man. "You know I have outdone even Mr. Jowler, for I have been here every evening for weeks."

Mrs. Deadstone opened her mouth as if to protest, causing Mr. Marmaluke to add, "And with your mother's consent!"

Mrs. Deadstone, afraid to deny and unwilling to approve, gave a half-groan and toppled back, just in time to reach the arms of Mr. Kersey, as that gentleman scrambled out of the closet.

"Appearances may be against me," said Darby, "but while announcements are in order, I wish to state that I am *not* betrothed to Mrs. Deadstone!"



## INFERENCES

Where is the boom without its bang?

Many a hapless man has died of "charged accounts."

Speed is the vampire that is sucking the blood of nations.

The laughing world pauses only to listen to louder laughter.

Every time Folly jangles her bells, Satan listens attentively.

Nothing is more tragic than comedy—when you are the target.

The wise enjoy timely foolery, but fools have no time for wisdom.

Cynics "simplify" life by cutting out moral obligations.

*Minna Thomas Antrim*



## A GENTLEMAN RANKER

BY MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL

THE big liner, a blaze of light from bow to stern, "a bone in her mouth" as she dashed through the icy surges that thundered under her bows, her screw churning up vast cataracts of phosphorescent glare, made a streak of light between the black sky and blacker ocean. Her decks were slippery with ice, and her funnels coated with the salt spray flung at her by the savage winter winds. Within, however, all was warmth, light, and comfort, especially in the cozy smoking-room. It was the time of year when nobody crossed except sea-dogs. The thirty or forty cabin passengers assembled there were of the kind who could ignore the plunging and pitching of the ship in her sharp dash across the Atlantic, and who sat through dinner when the pantry-racks refused to hold the dishes, and the stewards grew pale while waiting for orders. The cabin company was so small that in five days everybody on the ship knew everybody else. There were half a dozen women on board, but the only one who was able to keep her feet was the remarkably pretty Lady Carstairs. Every line of her delicate, sparkling face, her tall, slight figure, her dainty hands and feet, shouted out her nationality: she was an American. Her husband, who appeared upon the cabin list as Captain Sir Hugh Carstairs, was as handsome as his wife, and equally a type of the beautiful, clean-limbed, clear-eyed young Englishman. The pair would have attracted attention anywhere on account of their youth and beauty, but on this uncomfortable transatlantic trip, with its mid-winter dullness, Lady Carstairs had the centre of the stage. She was a perfect sailor, and appeared rosy, smiling, and exquisitely dressed at every meal. In the morning, in the afternoon, and at night, she took an hour's constitutional around the ship with her husband, her little feet



as steady upon the slippery deck as Sir Hugh's in his broad-soled English shoes, and her charming face shining out of the hood of her mackintosh. Her presence was like the sight and perfume of white hyacinths blooming in January.

The men on the ship, in private confabulation with each other, declared it was an infernal shame that this charming American should belong to any except one of her own countrymen, although Sir Hugh was pronounced to be "pretty good for an Englishman." Every eye on board paid Lady Carstairs the tribute of admiration, but most of all perhaps that of Abram Devries, the Boer from this side of the Vaal, who had the deck-chair next Lady Carstairs, and the little fair-haired boy who was cuddled in Abram Devries's lap during the stormy mornings and the turbulent afternoons when the great liner fought her way through the wintry seas. From his resting-place on Abram's knee, the boy, who appeared upon the passenger list as Hugo Devries, would fix his shy, solemn, long-lashed eyes upon the beautiful lady who sat next him and gaze at her with the innocent adoration of a man-child. The boy's beauty was in singular contrast to Abram Devries, who was by some supposed to be his father and by others his uncle. Abram might have sat for a portrait of Oom Paul at thirty, so rugged, so broad, so homely, was he with his stubble of beard under his chin, the lines in his face as rude as a charcoal-sketch. He wore the black broad-cloth clothes which are the height of elegance on the veldt, and a marvellous white hat of the vintage of 1895. Kipling might have said of Abram:

For he was South Africa,  
And he is South Africa,  
Africa all over.

He was the ugliest object on board the liner, just as Lady Carstairs was the most beautiful, with the little seven-year-old lad, Hugo, a close second.

On the fifth night, when the black rain came down upon the black, passionate ocean, the passengers were assembled in the luxurious red smoking-room to hold moot court. Only one lady was present, the fair-faced Lady Carstairs. She wore a long, soft white gown and dainty little white shoes, which looked like white mice peeping in and out from her skirts. By her side sat Sir Hugh, handsome, silent, and attentive. He had a trick of tugging at his blond mustache, and it revealed a peculiarity of his hands. They were long and slim, like the hands of a gentleman, but they were hard and rough, like the hands of a man who does stable work, or who knows the feel of the plough-handle. Across the back of his right wrist and running up his arm, which was as white as that of a duchess and as sinewy as a

blacksmith's, was a great red scar. Otherwise there was neither spot nor blemish upon him.

On this night of the moot court Abram Devries lumbered into the smoking-room awkwardly enough, holding the little Hugo by the hand. The boy made straight for the beautiful lady and clambered upon the seat next her, looking at her meanwhile as if she were an angel. Lady Carstairs gave him a little welcoming smile, then Abram, with an awkward bow and holding his queer white hat in his hand, took his seat next the boy.

The court was presided over by no less a personage than a retired Justice of the Supreme Court. The scanty cabin list was rich in great lawyers, and it was with something of the fierce passion for a lawyers' battle that the moot court was arranged. The prosecution was to be conducted by a former Attorney-General of the United States, who had brought great criminals to the bar of justice and had overthrown giant corporations who were violators of the law. For the defense were three great lawyers, headed by a man who had once declined the honor of an appointment to the Supreme Bench. The preliminaries were conducted with absolute dignity, and the indictment, a formidable document, was read by the former Attorney-General with noble clearness and emphasis. Abram started violently when he heard his own name proclaimed and found himself indicted for high crimes and misdemeanors for owning and shamelessly wearing his white hat. Abram blushed redly and grinned sheepishly when he was invited to take his place in the improvised dock.

The child, Hugo, left alone on the sofa, turned a pair of piteous eyes toward Lady Carstairs, who motioned him with a sweet gesture to come nearer. This the boy did, and in two minutes his little blond head drooped toward her, his long lashes lay upon his cheek, and he fell into a sleep as soft as the closing of a blossom at evening. Lady Carstairs passed her rounded white arm about him and laid his head upon her lap. It was a picture of the eternal motherhood.

The legal battle then began. The retired Justice of the Supreme Court, a lean old man with an eye of unquenchable brightness, felt the blood of life pouring through his veins to find himself once more down among the captains and the shouting. The former Attorney-General, without a single book of reference, showed an astounding and comprehensive memory of law and precedent, which put each of the three great lawyers on the other side on his mettle. They consulted together in whispers, and then the man who had declined the appointment to the Supreme Bench rose and replied to the opening speech. He and the Attorney-General had been old rivals, if not old enemies, and the superb opening by the prosecution set a pace which took all the wind and limb of the defense to maintain. The jury, made up of

twelve educated and travelled men sitting in a row against the wall, listened intently and felt the kindling of a blaze within them stirred by master hands. The rulings of the Judge in acuteness and impartiality were worthy of a man who had sat for twenty-two years upon the Supreme Bench of the United States. The moot court became a game of the gods. It was meant to last an hour, and at the end of two hours, when the final summing up was finished, it was as if a scant half-hour had passed.

The jury, after receiving the Judge's charge, went out, and those who had watched breathlessly the great battle had a curious let-down feeling. The lawyers on either side, instead of the lawyer-like chaff and good-fellowship of such an occasion, unconsciously observed a strict professional etiquette, each side whispering among themselves only. The audience was quite silent. Sir Hugh Carstairs, who had listened to every word with the strictest attention, sat motionless, his handsome blond head silhouetted against the red velvet background. The beautiful boy still slept upon Lady Carstairs's lap. Abram Devries, uglier than ever, his sombre eyes fixed on the floor, sat as still as one of the hideous stone idols of Somaliland. He had sat so through the whole thrilling two hours.

In five minutes came a great triumph for the prosecution; the jury returned, and the foreman, a great railway magnate, gave the verdict, "Guilty as indicted." The distinguished lawyer who had conducted the defense heard the verdict with smiling composure, but rarely in his life had he felt more chagrined. The Attorney-General, with triumph in his eye, whispered to his junior:

"I would not take ten thousand dollars for this."

Then the Judge in his fine, sonorous, judicial voice asked the prisoner if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him. Abram Devries stood up; his awkwardness, his long black body-coat, his ugliness, made him a singular contrast to the well-conditioned, well-dressed men who sat around him.

"Yes," he said; "may it please your honor, I have something to say in my own behalf."

His first words showed that even Abram Devries had something about him with which to charm. He had a voice so soft, so resonant, so bell-like, that it made his odd English accent poetic and even fascinating. More: this South African had the strange art of enchaining the attention when he spoke, and from the first word he uttered his audience followed him and never let go of him.

"Is it a crime," he said, "to wear this hat? It is all I have left of my home—for once I had a home upon the veldt. Once I had a country, but that too is no more. You know the story, all of you. Two years and eight months it took the whole strength of the greatest

world power, except America, to crush a handful of Boers, and the English are proud of having done it. When it was over, I, who had ridden with De Wet, shipped as deck-hand on an American sailing ship at Cape Town. Then I had nothing except the clothes on my back and this white hat. I had no home, no country, no money, no hope in my heart; the English had finished all that for us Boers."

He spoke these last words with a concentration of rage which showed how wide, how deep, how black, was his hatred of the English.

"But when at Cape Town I saw the American flag flying from the peak of that vessel, suddenly the dead hope in my heart arose to life, and its grave clothes grew radiant as the morning. I would work and I would earn enough to take me and this little boy, then two years old, back to what had once been my country. I would go once more to the farm upon the green veldt, and rebuild the ruined house around the broken chimneys, and the burned mill and the wrecked cattle kraal. I would once more smell the fresh earth as I turned up the furrow. I would be far away from the English, who hate my people, and whom we hate with an everlasting hatred, and I would live like a true Boer and bring this boy up to know about General Joubert, of whom an Englishman said, 'The grave that holds Joubert holds a man,' and I would teach him who De Wet was. The British chased him for two years and eight months and never caught him. I brought but little away from my country, and all of it that I have to take back is this hat, and I would not part with it for anything any one might offer me. When I look at it I am reminded of those happy days when I lived with my father and mother on the farm, and Peter, my lame brother, who could not work in the fields, but who was the best horse-shoer in all that country, and my cousin Lena, the mother of this child——"

Abram stopped, and in the deep pause that followed it was seen that he clenched his broad hands nervously and his strange eyes looked as if he saw a far-off vision. His passionate remembrance, once let loose, took possession of him and transformed the silent, awkward Abram into a man eloquent on his wrongs and rights. A psychic influence radiated from him and caught and held fast all who listened. The Judge felt his judicial character slipping quickly away from him. The great lawyers as well as the whole audience were fast losing themselves in that magic power of appeal which this Boer with chin whiskers possessed all unknown to himself—that power by which the Arab storyteller sitting on the desert sands by night can hold the tribesmen under a spell with a story they have heard a hundred times. The moot court of justice became a body of sympathetic listeners, ready to believe everything that Abram Devries might say.

"Lena was my mother's step-niece. She was no blood relation to any of us, but she was the rose that flowered in our house. Her father

was English, and it was that English poison in her veins that made her—but that will come presently. She was not like the Dutch girls, but was slender and white-skinned, and had long, long lashes, the longest I ever saw, and the darkest. She was a good girl, too, and helped my mother in the churning and butter-making. My mother was a kind woman, and had sense also, and she would not let Lena do the rough work, saying to my father, 'She is no more fit for it than is your razor to chop wood;' and my father, who had the kindest heart that ever beat, said, 'Well, well, she shall not tell her English relations that we work her to death. Let her live easy, and give her a white frock at Easter.' Peter loved her, too—she was to him a little sister; and I—I—she was dear to all of us. There were young men a-plenty who wanted Lena. On Sunday afternoons there would sometimes be half a dozen horses tied to the gate—young men who pretended they wanted to see Peter about horse-shoeing, or to get seed corn from me, or to arrange for a dance in the barn. But they were all casting sheep-eyes at Lena, who in her heart scorned the young Boers. For we are not a handsome race, and our clothes are made by our mothers and sisters.

"We were thinking about the future then, saving our money and buying arms and ammunition. Where? The English do not know to this day. We hid all from the English. We knew a long time before what was coming, and those English devils did not, and they laughed at the idea of our making a fight; but they never caught De Wet—they never caught De Wet! It seemed to me that, knowing the peaceful time was coming to an end, it was but the sweeter. When I would rise and go out of doors at four o'clock in the morning and watch the dun night vanishing away and the cool pink dawn stealing over the veldt, and the still, dark sheep-pool beyond the mill-race grow first silvery and then golden in the morning light, I would think in my heart, 'Soon the morning will be dark with cannon smoke, and instead of the tinkling sheep bells in the green meadows there will be the trampling of war horses and the battle cries.' When evening came and the purple stillness fell upon the land and the large, bright stars came out—the stars in the African night-sky are very large and bright and seem near to earth—I would think, 'Presently there will be no peace at evening time.'

"One winter night in 1900 the bolt fell, and Oom Paul gave the English forty-eight hours to get out of the Boer land. The English did not go—they never go, but hang on like hungry wolves to a carcass. My brother Peter, though he was lame, went to the war as well as I, for Peter could ride, and, besides, De Wet was glad to have so good a horse-shoer. We took with us the blessing of our father and mother, and Lena wept large tears for both Peter and me. I will

not speak of what we did in the war-time; we were both with De Wet. We seldom got letters from home; the English were all about it, and we could not go within a hundred miles of it. At last the war was over—though they never caught De Wet. My brother Peter was killed by almost the last shot that was fired during the war. I think Peter loved Lena, for the last word he spoke was her name.

“Then I went back to the old home. I got there in the evening; by the moon that was climbing over the trees I saw the ruin that had been wrought. The house had been partly burned, but two or three rooms were left, and out of the chimney the blue smoke came gently. There were no sheep bells nor cow bells, nor any living thing of all we had possessed. I was turning over in my mind how I should tell my mother about Peter’s death, when I opened the door into the room where my father and mother sat. My mother kissed me and my father blessed me—we Boers are not like the English, ashamed to love each other. When my mother asked me where my brother was, I wept, and she knew all, and she and my father blessed God that their son had lived honestly and died bravely. I did not see Lena in the room, and I wished to ask about her, but my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. Then my mother, seeing the look in my eye, stopped weeping for Peter and told me about it.

“The English were quartered on our farm, and for a time used our house for a hospital. The last Englishman left there was a common soldier of the sort they call a gentleman ranker. Do you know what a gentleman ranker is? He is a man born to be an officer, and sometimes he has been an officer and he falls so low that he is kicked out of his own class and enlists in the army to keep out of jail. These men who have danced at court balls dance with house-maids because the ladies’-maids will not look at them. Every officer hates to have gentleman rankers in his commando, for they are always evil men and seduce the private soldiers from their duty. Of course they never keep their real names. This one called himself Hugo Percy, a great name in England, but, as he told my mother, and laughed as he told her, he was related to the Percys, and he belonged in the Norfolk Yeomanry.”

At this Lady Carstairs turned her fair face with surprise in her eyes toward her husband. Sir Hugh appeared perfectly composed and continued to twist the end of his mustache. His clear, steel-blue eyes were fixed upon Abram Devries, as were the eyes of every one else in the smoking-room. Abram paused a moment, and then in a voice which expressed all the keenness of his hate cried:

“All gentlemen rankers are scoundrels, villains, breakers of the covenant, but Hugo Percy—oh, my God!”

The comedy was becoming a tragedy indeed.

"My mother said that Hugo Percy had that glorious beauty that the Englishmen, curse them, often have. I tell you the great difference between the Boers and the English is that the English are beautiful to look at and women love them, and the Boers are ugly. But we made a show, a spectacle, a laughing-stock, of these beautiful, well-shaped men, and all any of them know of war to-day is what we taught them. We Boers taught them the game. This Englishman Percy, my mother told me, could sing and play the guitar, and he was sometimes merry and full of jokes, and again sombre and despairing, and then Lena would try to cheer him. After he had been at the farm-house a month he was well enough to rejoin his commando. My mother said Lena went about looking like a ghost, and never spoke Hugo Percy's name. One day about six weeks after he had left he came riding up again with his wrist in a sling. One of our sharpshooters had got a shot at him and had given him a scar on his wrist which he will carry to the day of his death. Lena was out in the garden among the rose-bushes, for it was in the summer time, and my mother, through the window, saw Hugo Percy go up to her and roll up his sleeve and show her the scar, and Lena burst into tears and kissed the scar."

The scene seemed to be reënacted before Abram Devries's eyes: the girl standing among the rose trees with the handsome English trooper, and the passionate kiss upon his scarred wrist.

"And she never gave one of us such a kiss as that, never!" Abram cried, clenching his fists.

No one was looking at Sir Hugh and Lady Carstairs, else they would have seen Sir Hugh's hand tremble slightly as he tugged at his mustache, and the ruddy color dropping out of his face. Lady Carstairs's eyes had grown wide and frightened and were turned upon her husband, but she did not move, and the little lad still slept peacefully with his head upon her lap.

"Within a week Lena was gone. She left a letter—they always do—telling the same old story. She loved and thanked us all, but she must go with Hugo Percy. She would be married to him within twenty-four hours. She felt like a wicked creature in going off with an Englishman, and she hoped Peter and Abram would forgive her and love her, but she could not help it—she could not help it. That was all."

There was a long pause, and Abram Devries sighed heavily, his melancholy eyes looking straight before him, where he saw, not the silent, intense faces of the people listening to him, but only Lena, with her braids of yellow hair and her slim figure.

"There was nothing for us but work, and work we did. My father, seventy years old, held the broken plough, the only one we had left.

My mother, more than sixty, cooked and washed and mended and slaved for us. I did my part, but I think it is ever true that a man who has once led a fighting life cannot work so well afterward. And then we had no money, and the mill had been burned, and the place had been swept clean of everything; the English had got all, all, all we had! Oh, it was a bitter time!

"One evening a year after the war was over I was going home to supper, walking past the sheep-pool, when I saw Lena with a child in her arms sitting on the ground under the green alders. She was bare-headed, and her hat and cloak lay upon the ground. How white and thin she was, but oh, so pretty! When I saw her it was as if I were frozen; I could not move a step. Presently she rose and, holding the child in her arms, walked toward the deep, still pool. Then I knew what she meant to do. I ran forward and caught her. She struggled with all her strength, but it was nothing, and then, taking the child from her arms and laying it upon her cloak, I made her tell me all.

"Percy had married her—that is, poor Lena thought so—and she had been happy for a whole year. Of course, he treated her ill, but that matters nothing to a woman. Then one day he read in a newspaper that his far-off cousin was dead and he was a rich man, with another name and a title which he would not tell Lena. He told her, however, that it was no marriage between her and him. One of his fellows—a gentleman ranker like himself—had played the parson, that was all. He would make her an allowance, enough for herself and her child, but it was ridiculous for her to suppose that she should go to England with him and become 'my lady.' In a moment, so Lena told me, her mind was made up. She would take her child, come to the old place, and seek peace in the deep, dark pool by the mill. But she agreed to all Percy said; told him she would take the money and would never trouble him more. What creatures are women! This simple Lena could make up her mind in a flash of time that she and her child should die together; could look into the eyes of the man she loved and tell him calmly she was satisfied to have him leave her, and deceive him as readily as if she were the most practised adventuress. She only said one thing to him, and this was, 'If you marry, whenever you kiss your wife think of me.' Instead of laughing, Hugo Percy, she said, looked at her with strange eyes and replied, 'That sounds like a covert curse, and unluckily it will stick in my memory.' Then, leaving him quite satisfied, Lena slipped away, took the train, and after two days' travel got to the old place. She had begun to hesitate whether she should take the baby with her when she opened the gate of death or leave him behind, when I saw her and held her back.

"My mother could not forgive Lena, because she had scorned the love of Peter and all of us and had gone with the Englishman,



and, besides, Lena was part English. But I said to my mother, 'If Peter were here, he would wish Lena taken back. She has found that the English are traitors, every one of them, and she has returned to find faith among us Boers.' Then my mother wept and kissed Lena and took the baby in her arms—he was a very beautiful child.

"Women, I say, are strange creatures. There was not one word of ill-feeling between my mother and Lena, and outwardly it was the same as it had been before the war. They spoke softly to each other, and Lena helped my mother much and did all the patching and mending, and my mother was good to the child. But I saw in the eyes of the two women war and not peace. We went on together quietly enough for another year, then one morning in a hot July, when the sky seemed made of molten brass and the earth lay breathless in the burning heat, we found Lena at the bottom of the sheep-pool."

Abram paused again, and, taking out a large white handkerchief, wiped his face, which had grown pale, and then continued:

"The child, who loved his mother well, often cried for her in the night, and in the day he would leave his playthings and, walking unsteadily as young children do, search for his mother and ask where she was. My mother reproached herself much about Lena, but I think she had no cause—women will be women. Old people cannot stand shocks and griefs, so it is not strange that within two years of the end of the war my mother and father were both gone. I could not stay at the old place after that, and so I sold the few cattle and the two horses we had and such corn as was left, and it brought me money enough to take me, with this child, to Cape Town. My heart leaped for the first time when I found myself under that flag. I thought to myself, 'Here is a country, the richest and strongest in the world, which cast off in its youth the heavy yoke of England. Now it can put thirteen millions of fighting men into the field, and the English treat it with very great respect.'

"I had good fortune after I landed in America. I went far away, to where there were gold mines, and, as the case often is, I, who knew nothing of mining, found a great lead and became rich almost before I knew it. But I did not know myself as a rich man, and God in Heaven knows I could never be happy, so I thought I would go back to the old farm, which I had not been able to sell, for no one wanted it, and rebuild the house and mill and the cattle kraal and buy horses and bring up this child of Lena's, far from the English, and never let him know that he had a drop of English blood in his veins. All I had left of my former life, as I had told you, was this hat at which you laughed, but when I put it on I felt as if I were once more Abram Devries, a true Boer, and not that new strange Abram Devries, for I was bewildered with my money and the people it brought about me.

"So you see what this hat means to me. It means the veldt with the green wheat growing softly day by day upon it, and the blue uplands far away, and the still, dark pool with the alders whispering on the bank. It means my home and my father and my mother and my lame brother Peter and Lena——"

Abram Devries's voice broke into a sob that became a cry of anguish. He rose from his chair, snatched the sleeping child from where he lay, his bright head resting on Lady Carstairs's lap, and carried him out on the cold, wind-swept, dimly-lighted deck and covered him up, still sleeping, in the deck-chair. Then Abram Devries lumbered up and down the lurching ship in the darkness, while the winds roared and the giant seas bellowed under her great sides.

He knew not how long he had been walking up and down, for his heart was still hot with love and hate and poignant remembrance, when he found himself standing with his face leaning against the stained glass window of a deck cabin. The window was down a few inches from the top, and in a dream Abram saw Sir Hugh and Lady Carstairs facing each other under the sharp white glare of the electric light. It was as if a hand like death had been passed over Lady Carstairs's star-like beauty. Sir Hugh, pale with rage, was saying:

"A woman has nothing to do with her husband's past. Do you think that a man campaigning in South Africa counts one farm girl more or less?"

Lady Carstairs seemed scarcely to hear him, but only said in a low voice:

"She kissed that scar upon your wrist, and I have often kissed it; and every time you kissed my lips you thought of her. And I have no child."

"I suppose," continued Sir Hugh savagely, "this senseless story of that Boer idiot will be the means of bringing about another international scandal. It will be said that you married me for my title, and I married you for your money."

"I was not thinking of that," answered Lady Carstairs, in the same low voice, her eyes still down-cast, as if she were looking upon a new-made grave. "I was thinking of my poor broken heart."



# WHEN MISS LUCY HAD THE MEASLES

*By Lucy Copinger*

IN spite of her position as wage-earner for the family, Lizzie Bureschy had not yet done with childish things, and was sick with the measles. Miss Lucy stayed with her one afternoon in the close room—and the next day Class A was in the hands of a substitute. Miss Lucy, though grieving that, since she had to catch something, it was not some interestingly pedagogical disease like brain-fag or nervous prostration, consoled herself with the reflection that it might have been the mumps, and so settled down to her enforced holiday with resignation.

Not so, however, was the spirit of Class A. The substitute was of the rank of teachers whose pride is that they are disciplinarians, and, besides, never having had the baby class, she did not understand all those little vagaries that are but evidences of the struggling intellect. No one was allowed to stay in after school to give careful assistance; boards were uncleaned, pencils unsharpened, and the “gee-ranum”—cherished Nature Study blossom of the whole class—faded neglectedly away. For an innocent witticism Bum O'Reilly was sent to the principal, charged with the sin of impertinence; Sophie Bauerschmidt was kept in every day for talking; Anna Karenina had been hooking every afternoon; and as for Frederick William, he hated the substitute with a hatred unusual to his peaceful little nature—this hatred being engendered upon the occasion when he was caught nibbling at a luscious bun. The substitute, unlike Miss Lucy, whose removals were only temporary, had thrown the bun into the waste-basket.

“She is dead,” declared Anna Karenina gloomily. “I seen her, she god run ofer mid a beer-wagon, und she aind nefer goming back.”

“Aw, git de hook,” said Bum skeptically. “Wot yer lying fer?”

“I aind,” said Anna hotly; “and I seen her funeral, they was a grape und den hacks.”

Having thus uttered her account of the splendors of Miss Lucy's obituaries, Anna fell to reflectively spreading her bare toes dam-like across the gutter. The three, Anna, Sophie, and Bum, were sitting

on the curb-stone in front of the school, where they had met to discuss the disappearance of Miss Lucy.

In spite of these convincing details, the other two were doubting. "Maybe her and her beau is going to git married," suggested Sophie, "and maybe then she won't be a teacher no more."

"No," said Bum thoughtfully; "when you git married you don't do nothin' but jest tend babies and live off yer man—unless," he added, with a bitter experience, "he 's a guzzler and you got to take in washin'." Having thus epitomized the chief pleasures and trials of matrimony in general, Bum fell to considering the case of Miss Lucy. He remembered the prophecy of his mother that Miss Lucy was not long for Class A, but he also remembered the teacher's fervent avowal of faithfulness. It might not be too late to dissuade her. As the result of much discussion in this direction, a letter was laboriously written upon a piece of brown paper.

missis loosey [it went] ples do not git marrid we will lern awl  
the time the geranum is ded we will wash our ers

This letter was placed in an envelope, addressed briefly to "missis loosey," and posted.

"She 'll like the ears part," explained the tactful Bum hopefully. "She allus was fussin' about yer ears."

Having despatched this diplomatic plea, Class A waited in a suspense made almost unbearable by the substitute, and when at the end of the week it was apparent that their appeal had not moved Miss Lucy, a change of tactics was decided upon.

"It 's Mister Schmidt she 's marrying mit," Sophie declared. "He 's her beau. I seen her talking mit him oncet, and I know he 's her beau."

Therefore Mr. Schmidt, the janitor, a much married German and the respectable father of ten, was approached. He, janitor-like, was found in the yard reading the paper, an industrious broom beside him in case of the sudden appearance of the principal. To him was made the request to abstain from marriage with Miss Lucy. At first he was stolidly bewildered, then at its repetition, accompanied by the offer of a bribe of three cents, eleven tintags, and a pretzel, the united and respective possessions of Anna, Bum, and Sophie, his amazement changed to alarm. He had always been a little suspicious of Miss Lucy, whose sprightly methods of education were an enigma to him, and this disapproval had been greatly increased when, in accordance with the demands of the Nature Work, he had once caught her flying around the room after the manner and with the melodious call of the crow. As his mind grasped the nature of the demands of the three,

he saw his domestic peace threatened by what was evidently a well-laid plot, and, seizing the near-by broom, he promptly chased the children to the street. There, relieved of pursuit, they again sat gloomily upon the curbstone. Even Bum O'Reilly's usual optimism was obscured, he having in the flight lost five of his cherished tintags.

After much debate it was decided that a mistake had been made in the personality of the object of Miss Lucy's affections. Undoubtedly it was the principal. But the only way in which an interview with him might be obtained was through unusual depravity. Therefore it was agreed that on the next afternoon each member of the committee was to offend in such dire manner that trial by the supreme power would be necessary. This was an easy matter for Anna Karenina. When she appeared, for the first time in three days, the substitute asked her name and then consulted the roll book severely.

"Where have you been?" she asked suspiciously.

Anna regarded her silently.

"Little girl, answer me," repeated the substitute. "What have you been doing?"

"Bie-faze," remarked Anna briefly, "whad you think?" and was immediately appointed to be cast out.

Equally fortunate was Bum, whose manner of offending was the sticking of a wet piece of putty down Frederick William's back; but it was not until after school that Sophie, who had secured only an ordinary "keep-in" for talking, lay down upon the floor and kicked her fat little legs violently, thereby accomplishing her ejection.

So it came about that when the dismissal bell rang and the rest of Class A had departed, the three offenders were arrayed in the hall and, guided by the stern finger of the substitute, were started upon their timid journey up the long hall toward the principal's room.

The principal was a nervous bachelor, whose single state, precariously maintained among so many of the alluring sex, was a thing precious above all price. As it happened, his room had been selected that afternoon for a meeting of the Normal Extension Course of Applied Psychology, a course open only to the most distinguished among the profession. The principal was justly proud of his recent enrolment in this class, and that afternoon the attendance was one of especial importance, a supervisor and two critic teachers having been invited to discuss things scholastic. By the time Class A had gotten into its trappings and the three offenders had started up the hall, the meeting had assembled and had settled down with unctuous dignity to the consideration of the science of education. Upon this august body suddenly the door opened and the principal saw the greasy face of Anna Karenina peering in.

"You can't come in now," he said abruptly, but with the enforced

gentleness of one who speaks in the presence of his supervisor. Then he walked down to the hesitating Anna.

"Get out," he said in subdued but forcible tones. "Get out."

The trio wavered at this command, but just then one of the critic teachers, spying an opportunity of displaying her admirable manner in dealing with children, smiled gaily at Sophie and waved her hand encouragingly.

"What is it, dear?" she queried.

Thus encouraged, the children advanced into the room, where they stood, a ragged and dirty but dauntless three.

Sophie was always quick to respond to any pleasantness.

"He's going to git married," she announced conversationally, pointing to the principal, who turned palé. A frivolous member giggled. This announcement of the notoriously elusive principal's intentions was amusing.

"It's Miz Luzy," said Anna, "und we god a bie-face subsdude."

"But we thought maybe he'd git some one else," Bum suggested artfully. "We want Miss Lucy, and she's got red hair anyhow, and we thought maybe he'd change."

"Maybe you could git him," said the match-making Sophie, with a sidle toward her friend, the critic teacher.

The critic teacher's lack of aversion to matrimony was proverbial, and at this suggestion the principal, with a baleful light in his eye, bore down upon the three, and, in spite of their appealing glances toward the ungrateful critic teacher, they were somehow got rid of. When they reached the street bitter despair at their third futile attempt once more settled upon them. In the exuberance of his grief Bum threw his remaining tintags into the gutter, and Anna relieved herself by slapping Sophie's face vigorously and pulling her hair; whereupon Sophie wept saltily upon her useless pretzel.

There was only one course left—direct appeal. The next afternoon the self-appointed committee started out upon a search for Miss Lucy. During the afternoon the object of the expedition got noised about, and when the committee started it found itself increased by a good half-dozen. Among these additions was Frederick William, who was urged not so much by any unusual devotion to Miss Lucy, as he was goaded by the bitter thought of the forfeited bun. Bum had insisted that every member of the thus-augmented committee should have one requirement to eligibility, and that was the washing of his ears, a condition that all save Anna Karenina willingly complied with. But in spite of this rule it was a queer-looking little company that started out upon the search, for it was upon the raggedest and the dirtiest of Class A's little members that the iron hand of the substitute seemed to have fallen most heavily.

The faith of this little regiment in the finding and ultimate redemption of Miss Lucy was strong, but the way was devious, and the legs of Sophie and of Frederick William were short and fat. Then Anna Karenina, the only one who knew the way, was lured a little aside by the distant gong of a fire engine and made a wrong turn. About six o'clock it began to rain, a cold drizzle. At last the tired children wandered into a street of the very rich, and there finally huddled on the lowest step of one of the high white fronts. They were found there by a policeman, who, wofully ignorant of the whereabouts of Missis Loosey, insisted on taking them all to the station-house. Here, however, there was a kind matron, whose speedy providing against immediate starvation was very acceptable to Frederick William and stopped even Sophie's frightened sniffles. Then there was a bench in the corner where it was agreeably warm and where you could get dry and go quite comfortably to sleep until such time as you were awakened by much clamor and amid cries of "*Ach du lieber!*" "The hivins be praised!" and others equally eloquent, you were restored with gratifying emotion to the bosom of your bereaved family.

In the largeness of her heart at the restoration of her "Jimmie," the whole-hearted Mrs. O'Reilly enfolded the police captain in her capacious arms and planted a resounding smack upon his protesting countenance. Then, after much and loud rejoicing, Anna Karenina, who had viewed these demonstrations with the disdain of one whose mother neither knew nor cared where she might spend her nights, was taken in care by the Bauerschmidts, and the station-house, save for a lingering blush upon the face of the captain, returned to its normal state, and the search for Miss Lucy was over.

Fortunately, the next day Miss Lucy returned to her place, and the rule of the substitute was at an end. Miss Lucy herself was unusually sweet-tempered, for had she not been greeted by the principal with a degree of warmth unusual and most gratifying to her pedagogical pride?

"He is realizing my true teaching capabilities," thought Miss Lucy, with vanity; "I am growing indispensable to the system."



## MARCH

BY MARGARET PRESCOTT MONTAGUE

**A**H, March, for all your chill forbidding dole,  
 The baby April in your arms you bring!  
 So may the weary March days of my soul  
 Awake in me God's April, and His spring!



## THE WORRIER

BY GEORGE LINCOLN WALTON, M.D.

AN ARTICLE SUPPLEMENTAL TO A SERIES OF FIVE POPULAR PAPERS ON WORRY AND ALLIED MENTAL STATES. THE PRECEDING PAPERS WERE "WORRY AND OBSESSION," IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER; "THE DOUBTING FOLLY," IN THE DECEMBER NUMBER; "HYPOCHONDRIA," IN THE JANUARY NUMBER; "SLEEPLESSNESS," IN THE FEBRUARY NUMBER; AND "HOME TREATMENT" IN THE MARCH NUMBER OF LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE.

### AT HOME

Small habits, well pursued betimes,  
May reach the dignity of crimes.

HANNAH MORE.

**M**ORE than one "sunbeam" and "life of the party" in society is the "cross-patch" and "fuss-budget" of the home. His gracious smiles and quips abroad are matched at home by darkened brows and moody silence, broken only by conversation of the italicized variety: "*Will it ever stop raining?*"—"Can't you see that I am busy?"—"What *are* you doing?"—and the like. Whatever banner is exhibited to the outside world, the motto at home seems to be "Whatever is is wrong." Defects in the *ménage*, carefully overlooked when dining out, are called with peculiar unction to the attention of the housekeeper of the home, whose worry to please is only matched by the "sunbeam's" fear that she shall think him satisfied with what is placed before him.

There's something kind of pitiful about a man that grows  
Because the sun beats down too hot, because the wild wind howls,



Who never eats a meal but that the cream ain't thick enough,  
 The coffee ain't been settled right, or else the meat's too tough.  
 Poor chap! He's just the victim of Fate's oldest, meanest trick;  
 You'll see by watching mules and men, they don't need brains to kick.

—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

Add to the "kicking habit" the insistence that each member of the family must be reminded at frequent intervals of his peculiar weaknesses, and that the discussion of uncomfortable topics, long since worn threadbare, must be reopened at every available opportunity, and the adage is justified, "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

Try the following suggestion on approaching the house after a hard day's work: "Why tired and cross? Why not tired and good-natured?" The result may startle the family and cause inquiries about your health, but don't worry if they do. Console yourself with the thought they will like you none the less for giving them a glimpse of that sunny nature of which they have often heard.

By way of alleviating the mental and physical discomfort following a trying day, one is surprised by the effectiveness of taking a bath and changing all the clothing. This treatment, in fact, almost offers a sure cure, but the person who would be most benefitted thereby is the person so obsessed to pursue the miserable tenor of his way that he scouts the suggestion that he thus bestir himself, instead of sinking into an easy chair. He may, however, accept the suggestion that simply changing the shoes and stockings is extremely restful, when reminded that if he had worn kid gloves all day he would be relieved to free his hands from the incubus, and, if gloves must still be worn, to put on a cool pair.

It is a further aid to physical, and indirectly to mental, comfort, if one can learn to wear low shoes and the thinnest of underwear the year round; the former is almost a panacea for fidgets; the latter lessens the perspiration, which increases the susceptibility to drafts, and to even moderate lowering of temperature. The prevailing belief that this procedure is dangerous is disproved by the experience of the many who have given it a thorough trial. The insistent belief of the neurotic that he cannot acquire this habit was touched upon in the article on "Worry and Obsession." If he thinks he is "taking cold," let him throw back his shoulders and take a few deep breaths, or, if convenient, a few exercises, instead of doubling the weight of his underwear, and in the long run he will find that he has not only increased his comfort, but has lessened, rather than increased, the number of his colds.

Much of the worry of the home is retrospective. "If I had only made Mary wear her rubbers!"—"If we had only invested in Calumet and Hecla at 25!"—"If we had only sent John to college!" represent

a fruitful source of family discomfort. The morbid rhyme is familiar to all:

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

I should be glad to learn of any advantage accruing from the indulgence of this attitude toward the bygone. A happier and more sensible habit of mind may be attained by equal familiarity with the following:

Add this suggestion to the verse:  
"It might have been a great deal worse."

A fruitful source of discomfort for the worrier at home is the absence of occupation. He looks forward to mental rest after using his brain all day, but there is no rest for him unless in sleep. The most valuable rest he could give his mind would be to occupy it with something worth while, yet not so strenuous as to cause solicitude. As Saleeby points out, the mock worry of a game is a good antidote for the real worry of life, and a game is far better than nothing, unless the player make, in turn, a work of his play, in which case worry continues.

The hardest task for the worrier at home is to get away from home. With advancing years the temptation grows upon us to spend our evenings by the fireside, to make no new friends and seek no new enjoyments. But this unbroken habit is neither the best preparation for a happy old age nor the best method of counteracting present worry. Nor should one stop to decide whether the special entertainment in question will be worth while; he must depend rather on the realization that if he accepts most opportunities he will be, on the whole, the gainer.

The man whose occupation keeps him indoors all day should make special effort to pass some time in the open air, if possible walking or driving to and from his place of business, and taking at least a stroll in the evening.

As more than one writer has suggested, the best resource is the *fad*. The *fad* will prove an inestimable boon after withdrawing from active work, but it should be commenced long before one discontinues business, else the chances are that he will never take it up, but will fret away his time like the average man who retires from an occupation which has engrossed his attention.

The *fad* should not be pursued too strenuously, or its charm is lost. A lady once told me that she had given up studying flowers because she found she could not master botany in the time at her disposal. Another sees no use in taking up history unless he can become an authority on

some epoch. Another declines to study because he can never overtake the college graduate. But one of the best informed men of my acquaintance had no college education. One of his fads was history, with which he was far more familiar than any but the exceptional college man, outside the teachers of that branch of science.

The usefulness of the fad does not depend upon the perfection attained in its pursuit, but upon the pleasure in its pursuit, and upon the diversion of the mind from its accustomed channels. The more completely one learns to concentrate his thoughts on an *avocation*, the more enthusiasm and effectiveness he can bring to bear on his *vocation* in its turn. A fad that occupies the hands, such as carpentering, turning, or photography, is peculiarly useful if one's taste runs in that direction.

One handicap in cultivating the fad is the lack of interest on the part of our associates, but if we become genuinely interested in any fad that is at all worth while, we shall inevitably add new acquaintances likely to prove at least as interesting as those of our present friends, who have no thoughts outside their daily round of toil. The more fads one cultivates, so long as he avoids the obsession to obtrude them at all times and places, the more interesting he will, in his turn, become to others.

The over-solicitude that defeats its own end, in the case of parents, has been admirably portrayed by Arthur Benson ("Beside Still Waters"):

There was nothing in the world that he more desired than the company and the sympathy of his children; but he had, beside this, an intense and tremulous sense of his responsibility toward them. He attached an undue importance to small indications of character, and thus the children were seldom at ease with their father, because he rebuked them constantly, and found frequent fault, doing almost violence to his tenderness, not from any pleasure in censoriousness, but from a terror, that was almost morbid, of the consequences of the unchecked development of minute tendencies.

Something must be left to natural growth, and to fortune, even in such important matters as the rearing of children.

#### AT THE TABLE

These little things are great to little man.

GOLDSMITH, "The Traveler."

THE insistent habit of mind is nowhere more noticeable than in connection with the food. I have seen a hotel habitué, apparently sane, who invariably cut or broke his bread into minute particles and minutely

inspected each before placing it in his mouth. If this were a book of confessions, I myself should have to plead guilty, among worse things, to having avoided mince pie for weeks after encountering, among other ingredients of this delicacy, a piece of broken glass.

Not infrequently, the obsessive diner so long hesitates before giving his final order that the waiter brings the wrong dish. The insistent thought now replaces the doubting folly, and the diner would as soon think of eating grass as the article offered. I have known him impatiently to leave the table under these circumstances, and to play the ostentatious martyr rather than partake of the food he had at the outset given weighty consideration. I have seen another omit his lunch because water had been spilled upon the cloth, and still another leave the dining-car, with the announcement that he would forego his meal because informed by the conductor that men's shirtwaists without coats were taboo.

The obsessive of this type may by training even reach the point of seeing the amusing instead of the pathetic side of the picture when, in the course of his travels, his request for "a nice bit of chicken, cut thin," is transmitted to the kitchen as "One chick."

One day, with pride, I called the attention of my easy-going friend to the fact that I was eating a dish I had not ordered. He quietly remarked that the next step was to eat it and say nothing! Another friend has this motto in his dining-room: "Eat what is set before you and be thankful." His children will open their eyes when they find others, less reasonably reared, demanding that the potatoes be changed because they are sprinkled with parsley, that a plate be replaced because it has had a piece of cheese upon it, or that the salad of lettuce and tomato be removed in favor of one with tomato alone.

A lady recently told me of breakfasting with a foreign sojourner in America, who, upon being offered the contents of an egg broken into a glass, was not satisfied with declining it, but felt impelled also to express his extreme disgust at this method of serving it, fortunately to the amusement, rather than to the annoyance, of his hostess.

"After this, know likewise," says Epictetus, "that you are a brother, too; and that to this character it belongs to make concessions, to be easily persuaded, to use gentle language, never to claim for yourself any non-essential thing, but cheerfully to give up these to be repaid by a larger share of things essential. For consider what it is, instead of a lettuce, for instance, or a chair, to procure for yourself a good temper. How great an advantage gained!"

The insistent desire to have a certain degree and character of appetite not infrequently leads to consulting the physician. Still more common is the obsession that the appetite must be gratified, the supposition being that the desire for food is, in the growing child or in the

adult, an infallible guide to the amount needed, though it is a matter of common knowledge that this is not true of infants or of domestic animals. If one leaves the table hungry, he soon forgets it, unless inordinately self-centred, and he has no more desire to return than to go back to bed and finish the nap so reluctantly discontinued in the morning.

I have heard the theory advanced by an anxious forecaster of future ills that all unnecessary food, if packed away as adipose tissue, serves to nourish the body in periods of starvation. Assuming that the average individual need consider this stress of circumstance, I am strongly of the impression that the best preparation for enforced abstinence will prove, not a layer of fat, but the habit of abstinence. The nursery poet says:

The worry cow would have lived till now  
 If she'd only saved her breath.  
 She feared the hay would n't last all day,  
 So choked herself to death.

The quantity of food proved by experiment to suffice for the best work, physical or mental, is surprisingly small. A feeling of emptiness, even, is better preparation for active exercise than one of satiety.

It is a national obsession with us that no meal is complete without meat. Order fruit, a cereal, rolls, and coffee at the hotel some morning, and the chances are ten to one that the waiter will ask what you are going to have for *breakfast*, though you have already ordered more than is absolutely necessary for that meal, as demonstrated by the custom upon the Continent, where the sense of fitness is as much violated by the consumption of an enormous breakfast as it is with us by the omission of a single detail.

It may be asked if it is not subversive of discipline for the hotel habitué to become too easy-going. There is doubtless a limit to the virtue of allowing ourselves to be imposed upon, but there is little fear that the individual who opens the question will err in this direction. It behooves him rather to consider the danger of his occupying the unenviable position of the "fuss-budget."

### ON HIS TRAVELS

After all, is it not a part of the fine art of living to take the enjoyment of the moment as it comes without lamenting that it is not something else?

LILIAN WHITING, "Land of Enchantment."

IN no phase of life is the worrying and the "fussy" habit more noticeable than in travel. That is, perhaps, partly because the lack of self-confidence, which so often unsettles the worrier, is peculiarly

effective when he has relinquished the security of his accustomed anchorage. This applies surely to the over-solicitous attention paid by the traveller to the possible dangers of rail and sea. Here is a verse from Wallace Irwin:

“Suppose that this here vessel,” says the skipper with a groan,  
 “Should lose ‘er bearin’s, run away and bump upon a stone;  
 Suppose she’d shiver and go down when save ourselves we could n’t!”  
 The mate replies,  
 “Oh, blow me eyes!  
 Suppose agin she should n’t!”

A common direction taken by the worrying habit in the traveller is that of taking in advance each step of the journey, preparing for every contingency, and suffering beforehand every imaginable hardship and inconvenience. I do not vouch for the story (though I can match it without going far afield) of the gentleman who abandoned his trip from Paris to Buda-Pesth because he found he would be delayed in Vienna six hours—“too long time to wait in the station, and not long enough to go to the hotel.” It is the imperative duty of every traveller to discover interests which shall tide him over a few hours’ delay, wherever it may occur.

It is by no means a waste of time to familiarize ourselves with the geography at least of our own country; to know the situation and appearance of every city of importance; and to know something about the different railroads besides their initials and their rating in the stock market. Again, if we take up the study of the trees, flowers, and birds, with the aid of the admirable popular works now available, we shall not only view the scenery with new eyes, but shall welcome, rather than be driven to despair by, a breakdown in the woods.

It is a mistake to shun our fellow-travellers, from whom we should rather try to learn something. This is a solace in travelling alone, for the boon companion may handicap us in cultivating new acquaintances and gaining new impressions. Though the main object of recreation is diversion from the daily round of thought, the fact need not be lost sight of that the busy man will find his practical interests furthered, rather than hindered, by a little widening of the horizon. Nor should he forget, meantime, the admonition of Succi that if he would make his travels delightful, he must first make himself delightful.

It is inevitable that uncomfortable, as well as agreeable, experiences occur in travel. But the man who spends his time and thought in avoiding the one and seeking the other is steadily forging chains whose gall shall one day surpass the discomforts of a journey around the world. Arthur Benson (“Beside Still Waters”) says that Hugh learned one thing at school, namely, that the disagreeable was not

necessarily the intolerable. Some of us would do well to go back to school and learn this over again. I know of only two ways by which the discomforts of travel can be avoided. One is to ignore them, the other to stay at home.

A fellow traveller told me that on one occasion, in the presence of a beautiful bit of mountain scenery, he overheard two ladies in anxious consultation comparing, article by article, the corresponding menus of two rival hotels. The fact that three varieties of fish were offered at one, while only two were offered at the other, opened so animated a discussion of quantity as opposed to probable quality that the listener discreetly withdrew.

A lady on the Florida express, after reading a novel all day, with an occasional interim during which she gazed through her lorgnette with bored and anxious air, finally said to her companion, "I have not seen a single estate which compares with those in Brookline."

Among the varieties of needless worry imposed upon the traveller by the insistent habit, none is more common or more easily overcome than the refusal to sleep unless noise and light are quite shut out. If the sufferer make of his insistent habit a servant, rather than a master, and instead of reiterating, "I must have quiet and darkness," will confidently assert, "I must get over this nonsense," he will speedily learn that freedom from resentment, and a good circulation of air, are more conducive to sleep than either darkness or silence.

The best drug for the sleepless traveller is the *equo animo* of Cicero.



## SONG

BY WILLIAM H. FROST

MY boat has a purple sail;  
 My course lies West by South;  
 With a vagrant wind abaft my beam,  
 As warm as my true Love's mouth.

And a white gull trails astern,  
 Full white as her virgin breast,  
 On wings as light as the jewelled drops  
 That spill from the curdling crest.

Wind of the mystical East,  
 Wondrous bird of the Sea,  
 Couriers of love from the heart of her,  
 Straight to the heart of me.

# MARSH-LIGHTS

*By Fannie Heaslip Lea*

OUT of the August dusk, in a twilight breathless and remote as that of some descending dream, the arc lights of St. Charles street blossomed suddenly. Like great, opening flowers of purple and silver, they hung against the sky and cast strange shadows on the street below them—a street given sidewalk and cobblestone into the hands of toil—a street where, when commerce ends, the boarding house begins, where long rows of houses, uniformly brown and grey, shoulder each other at the sidewalk's edge, and on whose narrow steps and porches, of a summer evening, submerged humanity comes up to breathe.

The arc-lights only made the heat more dense. Pitiless and bright, they flared above those weary dwellers on the steps, the last cool shadows of early evening routed before their brazen brightness. Beneath them, the cars spun by with a dull roaring of machinery, and an occasional motor cried above the other noises with its strident, warning voice.

On the steps of a dingy, brownish frame house, two young men disputed warmly, their words half lost in the common clamor of the street.

"And I tell you it was a darned pretty piece of work," finished the shorter one, with a stubby fore-finger inside his ill-fitting collar to settle it more loosely. "Doane's my man for orthodonty, every time. That fellow's jaw is as straight as yours now—ah,—what's the good word, Miss Jennie?"

He removed the exploring finger from his wilted collar, and drew his companion ostentatiously to one side before the hesitant approach of a slim, little creature in a black frock, who stood in the frame of the door, against the gloom of the tunnel hall lighted by a single gas jet, and smiled down at them questioningly.

"Come on in, the water's fine," cried the short young man with cheerful urgency. "I'm just telling Jimmy about an operation I saw out at the Dental College to-day,—won't you join us in a seat on the steps?"

Miss Jennie's smile deepened to a wistful dimple. "Is it any cooler there?" she faltered.



The two young dentists broke into eager assurances.

"It's fine and dandy," cried the short one gaily. "A breeze went by ten minutes ago, behind a big red automobile."

"Shut up your nonsense, Billy," said the other young man suddenly. "Miss Jennie looks played out."

He took her elbow carefully as she came down the steps, and released it when she had seated herself on the second. There was a clumsy tenderness in the movement, and a sullen, anxious watchfulness beneath the look he bent on her that struggled oddly with the general uncouth indifference of his manner.

"Had a hard day?" he asked with an obvious attempt at lightness.

"Oh—h!" sighed Miss Jennie wearily. She pushed back, with a little fretful gesture, the heavy hair that fell over her forehead, a ruddy bronze in the shadows, flaming to red in the light. "Heavens! I thought five o'clock would never come. That store is nothin' but an oven in summer."

"Is it hot enough for you?" chirped Billy with quenchless enjoyment. "It was ninety-eight in the hall at lunch to-day."

"What was it at dinner?" smiled Miss Jennie, her forehead losing its little line between the brows.

"Dinner!" said the other young man. "Good Lord!" He fanned Miss Jennie with his stiff, straw hat, and scowled.

"Jimmy got the hot end of the deal at dinner," explained the apostle of mirth with a grin. "He drew a crab that was a patriarch, and had been a long time dead."

"Shut up!" said Jimmy savagely.

Miss Jennie took her hands down from her ears with a little shuddering sigh. "The table gets worse every day," she said, "don't it? I have n't had anything good to eat in a month."

She clasped both hands about her knees, and tilted her head to look at the cloudless sky, deepening above the city lights to a velvet purple.

"Don't it make you sick?" she murmured in the pointless question that needs no answer. Her eyes came back to the street and qusted vaguely in the direction of the clustered lights that marked the business heart.

Jimmy watched her jealously.

"Tell you what we'll do," he said suddenly. "What d'ye say if we catch a West End car out to Tranchina's and have a fish dinner?"

"He thinks he's Rockefeller," crowed Billy with gleeful incredulity.

Miss Jennie, after one startled glance, went back to staring down the street, her hands lying listless and white against her black skirt.

"You did n't eat a thing this evening," insisted Jimmy.

Miss Jennie looked up at him curiously.

"Oh! I watched you," he admitted sullenly; "well, what d'ye say? Billy'll go too, of course," he flung in grudgingly, as the girl still hesitated.

"I don't know—" said Miss Jennie uncertainly.

"We'll get Mrs. Ford to go with Billy, if that's what you're thinking about. It'll be all right then—two couples."

"Me and the widow?—I have an engagement," decided Billy promptly.

"That'll be all right about your engagement," said Jimmy without turning his head. "Want to do it, Miss Jennie?"

"I—not this evening," said Miss Jennie slowly; "I'm much obliged, but I don't think I can." She withdrew her look from the street where the dust rose behind a passing car in eddies and drifts of grey vapor. "Not to-night," she said positively, "but I certainly appreciate you asking me, Dr. Manson."

"All the same, you won't go," retorted Jimmy disagreeably.

He sulked, with one hand drumming restlessly on his hat brim, and his head bent to avoid the glare of the arc.

"I'm feeling kind of tired," said Miss Jennie, with half-hearted evasion.

"Another time will do just as well," began Billy, the good-natured, but Jimmy got to his feet with a slow movement of irritation.

"You going down-town, Bill?" he asked brusquely, and flung himself down the steps.

Billy followed, his fore-finger reverting to the misfit collar, and his round face shining like a full moon in the halo of his straw hat.

"Sorry you won't go, Miss Jennie," he said cheerfully—and trotted off in his friend's wake, with a reproachful whistle.

Miss Jennie sighed again, shifting her position on the narrow steps, so that the street and the retreating backs of the two dentists came within her vision.

At the corner, beneath the arc light, they stopped for a moment, and there was the spurt of a match lifted to a cigarette.

A tall figure with a soft, felt hat drawn low over its eyes passed them when they started on again, and Miss Jennie's face burned with a sudden scorching flush, for Jimmy looked back over his shoulder deliberately and long, to see it mount the steps.

Hastily, she busied herself with the staid and immovable buckle on her small, left shoe, catching her breath sharply at the foot-steps that rung nearer and nearer on the sidewalk.

When the foot-steps ceased, and she lifted her head, some one laid a long stemmed mystery in her lap, its length a green-leaved, thorny delight, its crown a sheathing of tissue paper, white and crackling faintly.

"For me?" asked Miss Jennie radiantly. She drew off the tissue paper with shaking hands, and lifted free a rose, superbly crimson.

"Oh—h!" said Miss Jennie faintly, and laid her cheek against the cool wonder of the petals, her eyes wet with sudden, happy tears.

The rose's giver dropped to the steps beside her with a quick, easy grace and crushed his felt hat between his hands.

"Do you like it?" he asked simply. "I saw it in a florist's window——"

"I never had one before," said Miss Jennie. She held it away from her, and looked at it with eyes grown radiantly clear.

"It's so hot, I rather hated to bring it," he offered whimsically, "such a flame of summer and sun."

"Why, it's cool!" She lifted it to her cheek again, then held it toward him. "Feel!"

He touched the velvet darkness of the rose with one long slender finger.

"I wonder," he mused half aloud, "if Cleopatra may not have been cool to touch?—and Helen's cheek was undoubtedly something like that——"

A car roared past, flinging its noisy menace upon his low words, and overbearing them.

Miss Jennie's wistful dimple deepened against the rose in happy quiet.

"Dust!" he said presently, "grey swirls of it—nothing but dust and noise and heat—God! what a world."

"Have you had your dinner?" asked Miss Jennie timidly. "You're late."

"Please!" he cried protestingly. "Please!" and twisted the soft felt hat into a shapeless mass. "Don't mention the word." He lowered his voice so that the women rocking placidly on the narrow porch might not hear him, and bent a little forward. "I stayed downtown on purpose. I could n't bear the thought of that stuffy dining room, and the noise—the steam—the food—ugh!" He flung out both hands and sprang to his feet without warning. "I'm not hungry, except for a breeze; let's walk over to the square. It's only a dusty and breathless Inferno, but, at least, it may be better than this."

"But you ought to have had your dinner," Miss Jennie insisted gently. She fell into step beside him, the great, red rose still lifted to her face. "You'll be sick, Mr. Stanley."

Stanley shrugged slender shoulders, and smiled as one half hearing.

He walked buoyantly, his hat still crushed between his hands, and the clean dark lines of his poet face clear cut above the low collar and loose black tie.

The shadows of the square opened about them in a welcome gloom. The voice of the cars came fainter, and the vicious whiteness of the arc lights filtered dim and misty through branches heavy set with leaves. Up and down the paved walks, pattered the feet of many children, and the rattle and whirl of the roller-skaters came like the noise of giant cicadae, steady and almost soothing.

Stanley crossed the grass, white even at night with dust, and led the way to a green bench beneath a china tree, larger than its fellows.

"If one could get to the dark just once," he lamented, "just to go out of the light for a breathing space, to feel the blessed, cool, dank dark on your eyelids——" he broke off with a half laugh. "Your city never sleeps," he said dreamily; "she slumbers not nor sleeps. I lay awake last night from twelve till dawn, and all the time that infernal arc light flickered through the window blinds, and threw its shadows on the walls."

"From twelve till dawn?" cried Miss Jennie aghast.

"I made a poem out of the torment," said the boy as if she had not spoken, "but I don't know that it was a good poem, and it *was* torment."

"What was the poem——"

"Listen," said Stanley, "it was this."

His low voice drifted into rhythm, compelling and sweet. Rhyme rang upon rhyme with the chiming cadence of a night bird's notes, or the recurring splash of waves upon the sand. Miss Jennie listened tensely, the crimson rose petals just touching her lips and the white, bare line of her throat.

"Go on!" she said breathlessly, when he had done.

"Dear Little Lady Golden Heart—that's all," he answered lightly; "'tis a poor thing."

"It is perfectly beautiful," said Miss Jennie, and her voice shook. Stanley laughed amusedly.

"I would the worshipful magazine-men were of your opinion," he said ruefully. "Then I might not be selling my soul in a counting house. Four poems home to-day—four!"—he told off four long, nervous fingers in a tragic gesture—"and one of them, the child of my heart."

"'Driftwood'?" asked Miss Jennie fearfully.

Stanley nodded in silence.

Miss Jennie gave a soft little cry of pain.

"And you were so sure——"

"That's the artistic temperament," he corrected, without bitterness. "I am *always* so sure."

"It's perfectly beautiful, too," replied Miss Jennie. Stanley's laugh deepened to a tender note.

"You're an angel," he averred, with conviction, "Little Lady Golden Heart!"

The shadows of the china tree fell about them in a soothing darkness, and Miss Jennie trembled with happiness.

Somewhere, in a world beyond, were shops that prisoned one all day, and tunnel halls lighted by a single gas jet; somewhere, in a world outside, were cars that clanged and moaned, lights that seared their whiteness into tired brains, and streets that echoed to the tread of many feet; somewhere it was hot and the grey dust rose in choking waves—but beneath the china tree, on the green bench, Miss Jennie bent her face to the long-stemmed rose and closed her eyes in the fragrant darkness. The cool of the garden was about her.

Into the stillness of her hour, Stanley's voice fell with a quickening note.

"You've been so sweet to me," he was saying, "I shall hate that part of it——"

"Hate what?" cried Miss Jennie dazedly.

"Not seeing you again," he said. "Of course, the probabilities are that if I get to St. Louis, I shan't stop there. I want to go West."

"Go West?" she repeated slowly.

"I'm boring you," he said quickly, with his little exaggeration of courtesy. "Were n't you listening a bit ago? I said I'd a chance to get away from here." He ran his fingers through the thick, dark hair that fell over his eyes, with a movement inexpressibly young. "I'm restless again. I've got to go." (He was explaining, half to himself.) "I keep thinking of the fields in the moonlight, the wind in the pine trees, the sound of the water under a boat's keel. You don't know, you've never felt the wanderlust; but when it takes me,—I've got to go."

"You have n't been here long," said Miss Jennie. The red rose fell, forgotten, in her lap.

"Six months," he corrected, almost indignantly. "Six months of figures in a book, and stooping over a desk—ugh! The dirty town, the stuffy boarding house, the streets that never sleep. I wonder I've stood it so long." He put out a hand and touched the rose gently.

"You've been so good to me, you've listened to the poems and to me, you've believed I was a genius, where the most of my fellows find me only a fool. How am I going to thank you?"

Miss Jennie found no words for him. She drew further back into the shadow.

"When I was a bit of a kiddie, once," the low voice went on musingly, "I was riding with my father through the woods at night, and we passed a marsh-light—rather it passed us. Do you know what a marsh-light is, Little Lady Golden Heart? A will-o'-the-

wisp, a dancing fire that flies before you and is gone when you think you have come to it. It slipped between the tree-trunks, it fluttered along the ground, it rested over a boggy place, it was before us, and behind us, and about us, and I cried to get down and follow it; when my father refused, I cried myself to sleep against his shoulder; but I've been following marsh-lights ever since."

Half to himself and half to her, the low voice murmured on. The noise of the playing children lessened, no skaters passed them now, and in its mingled panoply of shade and light the square grew slowly still. Once, the ringing sound of a policeman's stick on the pavement came sharply to the two beneath the tree, but Miss Jennie barely started, she sat very still in the shadow.

"Marsh-lights," said Stanley again, "always that, always the lure of the unforeseen, the bend in the road, the broken dream and the vision veiled——"

He leaned forward, elbows upon his knees, clenching his long brown poet-fingers loosely before him.

"Is n't it a great world, though," he demanded exultantly, "with always a to-morrow, and an untried road? See, I've played the vagabond, most of my twenty-six years, worked, when I had to, and written a bit; slept in the open, with my face to the stars, and rubbed shoulders the next night with a silk gown in the city-streets. Nothing to hold me, no one to care."

"Nobody at all?" said Miss Jennie faintly.

"No one at all," he echoed lightly. "I've been knocking about the world by myself since I was a mere kiddie, and thank God the women mean nothing to me nor I to them——" he broke off sharp with a sudden realization of his words, and laid an impulsive hand on Miss Jennie's cold little fingers. He did not notice that she shivered away from the touch.

"That's not for you," he explained whimsically; "you've been different, less like a woman, somehow; more like a younger boy, a sympathetic companion. Little Lady Golden Heart! I shall miss you, often."

"But you will forget," she said dully.

"Forget?" he repeated. "Forget? What does n't one forget in time? Life runs so fast. I shall not forget soon. That place has been a horror to me, except for you—the chattering old women, the dreadful dinners—the stupid girls, and the impossible men." He flung both hands behind his head and leaned it back upon them. "To-morrow night," he said vibrantly, "I'll have the road under my feet, and a clean sky over me—we're going together, another chap and I, with the surprising luggage of the clothes on our backs, and the dreams in our heads——"

"To-morrow!" cried Miss Jennie sharply. "But your things?"

"That," said young Stanley humorously, "is a sordid detail. It is convenient both to the landlady and me that I leave my trunk in her keeping." He laughed with boyish enjoyment. "Wait till she opens it, some few weeks hence, and finds it elaborately packed with one suit of old clothes and two clean collars."

"You don't mean," said Miss Jennie in a hushed voice, "that you are broke—?"

"Flat," said Stanley happily, "flat, flatter, flattest—no pan-cake ever quite so flat."

"But my rose——" cried Miss Jennie with a break in her voice; she held it away from her suddenly.

"Dear Little Lady Golden Heart," he said more quietly, "I had a trifle—and it was for good-by."

Miss Jennie crushed the rose against her cheek in a silence that throbbed with pain.

"You ought n't to have," she said at last, her voice catching on the words. "I—I like it—but you ought n't to have——"

"I wanted to say thank you," he told her simply, "before I was off after my marsh-lights again."

He stood up and she followed him slowly across the square. It was quiet now, except for the rumble of a passing car, and Stanley spoke but once on the way to the steps.

"After all," he said musingly, "we all follow marsh-lights. I dare say you, too, if——"

"Yes," said Miss Jennie hastily, "I reckon so." She sounded very small and tired.

At the steps, Stanley hesitated.

"I think I'm not coming in just yet," he said with one hand on the railing. "It's cooler in the Square."

"You won't stay there all night?" she questioned timidly.

"I've done it before," he laughed, "why not? In any case shall we say good-by now? You'll be down town when I leave."

He held out his hand, and Miss Jennie surrendered five limp, little fingers to its keeping.

"Good-by!" said Stanley lightly.

The girl did not answer. She held the red rose close against her lips.

The gloom of the tunnel hall, with its single gas jet, was about them, for they had mounted the steps and stood within the door.

Stanley tightened his fingers ever so slightly. A nameless fragrance drifted from the rose like an elusive memory.

A sob caught in Miss Jennie's throat, and the sound of it was faint and cruel.

"Good-by," said Stanley again, but a new note whispered in his voice, and he bent his head with a movement, almost of regret.

There was a clatter of feet on the steps and Billy's round face shone in the doorway, with Jimmy's sullen one, beyond.

"Hullo!" cried the chubby Fate. "Gee, but it's hot!"

Stanley loosened his clasp, and Miss Jennie's fingers fell free.

"Good-night," he said, under his breath, and brushed past the two in the door without a word.

Miss Jennie followed him with hazy eyes; she started when Jimmy spoke to her and hid her face against the rose.

"Still tired?" he asked with a disagreeable inflection that barely cloaked the jealous hurt beneath.

Miss Jennie did not answer at once.

"I *am* pretty tired," she said wearily, after a little. "I think I'll go to bed. Good-night."

They watched her mount the half-lit stairs, and midway up, she turned, smiling down at them, with the wistful dimple deepening, above the rose pressed to her cheek.

"It *is* hot, ain't it?" she said plaintively, then the upper darkness hid her, carrying the big rose, as a child carries a doll.



## SONG OF RETURNING

BY HERMANN HAGEDORN, JR.

**H**OMEWARD, homeward!  
 Homeward at last to you—  
 Adown the vale and the shining river,  
 With glowing heart and heart a-quiver,  
 From the night to the dawn and the long day through,  
 To you, to you!

Homeward, homeward!  
 Love of my heart, your cheeks are wet.  
 Did the night bring jealous dreams to you,  
 Saying I might forget?  
 Homeward, homeward!  
 Straight is the river's course and true  
 Through the glad, young hills to you, to you,  
 Love of my heart, to you!





## BRINKER

BY ELFRID BINGHAM

THE stopping of the train awakened me from a hot and uneasy sleep. It was mid-afternoon of a baking August day, and the scene was arid and dispiriting: a red water-tank, with pine-pitch oozing through the paint; a windmill squawking like a sand-hill crane; unending cactus and sage and sand; and a dry wind that mourned and would not be comforted. I would have slept again, knotted up against the prickly red plush of the car-seat, but for the sound of voices.

There were two of these, and one was unusual, as if a meadow-lark had wandered from her lush, green fields, and yet would have her song. I heard it doubtfully at first, afraid to listen lest the dream escape; then scrambled up and over to the window on the other side.

At that instant the train started with a jerk and a clangor of bars and chains, and I had only a brief vision of a girl mounted on a cow-pony, and holding the bridle-rein of another whose back showed the glistening sweat-marks left by a cowpuncher's heavy saddle. Though she sat her pony sturdily enough, the girl was slight of build, and doubtless used to being called "little girl" by her privileged admirers. For all the strangeness of her presence there, she had an air of captivating propriety, and was quite at ease in her blue divided skirts, as well as very pretty under her tilted cowboy hat. She was waving good-by to a man whom I could not see, on the rear platform of the car, and there was something singularly bright and soft and friendly in that farewell. And something wistful too. I thrust my head farther from the window and watched her, and she was still gazing after us when the desert took her in its opal haze.

When I drew back into the oven of a car the object of that wistful farewell had flung his saddle and blankets into the corner by the water-

cooler, and was now kicking off his leather chaps, and stretching himself erect in blue flannel shirt and wrinkled black trousers and the inevitable red silk handkerchief around his neck. His back was toward me, and his face was hidden by his sombrero. Nevertheless I was already walking down the aisle toward him when he turned his blond and placid, sunburned face my way.

"Brinker!" I cried.

"Why, you!" he answered, with his slow smile, and gripped my hand in his.

"What is it this time, Brinker?" I demanded searchingly.

His head was bandaged, and there were splotches of blood on the cloth where it was thickest, above his right ear.

"I've been stealin' horses," he said simply.

"Oh, no!" I protested, incredulous.

"Yes," he insisted gravely, "an' gettin' caught," he added with a grin.

"And being rescued by—who is she, Brinker?" I lightly asked, and was instantly sorry of my raillery. Brinker's face flushed, and he did not answer me, but deftly turned to things we had talked about before. Later, nevertheless, he told me the story in his own way.

"The worst thing about doin' penance," he began, "is that somebody's sure to judge you wrong. You'll remember them Mexicans I was associatin' with because I did n't have the nerve to look a horse in the face? We got to playin' a little poker after workin' hours, an' the way they fixed the cards was so illuminatin' that I let 'em rob me several nights, just out of kindness of heart. Honest, it seemed a shame to spoil their fun. Besides, penance is penance, or ought to be, an' I was in for the whole dose. But one night I'm off my feed, or somethin', an' I proceed to call Señor Pedro with a gun. There's three pairs of hands up in a hurry, an' I'm rakin' in the pot, forgettin' all about that slimy black Jose. He ain't playin', an' the next I know there's a knife under my left arm from behind, an' the table upset, an' four greasers slippin' around on poker chips, an' nothin' much else but knives.

"There's nobody else in the place but the barkeep, an' I reckon he goes on wipin' glasses, an' takin' only a casual interest in our affairs. It ain't long till I'm about all in, with that openin' in my ribs runnin' like a sluice, an' Pedro's on top of me with his knife lifted for the quit-us. Then there's a chair comes smashin' through the mix-up, an' Pedro gets most of it in his yellow face. There's a merry kind of voice singin' out, 'One! Two!' an' some ripe Mexican language, an' then my eyes's full of dust an' blood, an' I can't see who's doin' this Christian act till afterwards, when I come to, lyin' on a bed in the hotel, an' find him leanin' over me.

"I'm much obliged to you," says he, very polite.

"I don't see that," says I.

"I needed excitement," he says. 'It's been frightful dull up on the ranch.'

"That ropes me, an' I watch him critical while he's mixin' some stuff for me to drink. He's slim an' pale, with black hair an' eyes, an' wears city clothes, an' you'd wonder where the fight comes from if you did n't happen to notice that sliver of a smile at the edges of his tight lips, an' did n't see him movin' across the room as springy as a mountain lion.

"Any of 'em dead?" I ask by-an'-by.

"No, but most onhappy," says he. 'Your man'll have to do some deep minin' for that lead you planted in him, an' the one that was on top of you is howlin' for a lookin'-glass, an' the other two's quarrellin' over the chair, where parts of their faces is. I'm awfully obliged to you,' he says again, joyfully.

"So that's how I meet up with Mr. Spencer Thayer, an' our inter-duction's been so uncommon proper that when he comes back from Denver I can't refuse his offer of a job. It ain't exactly his ranch, he tells me, but his father had to take it on a mortgage, an' he's been sent down to spend a couple of years seein' if it can't be made to pay instead of bein' a dee-ficit every year. It's a dinky little ranch in a green park between the front range an' the big Divide, but there's meadows like Iowa an' summer grazin' in the government timber, an' the Thayer cattle's all fat Herefords, an' there's a bunch of thoroughbreds besides the cow-ponies. It's walled in by cliffs an' peaks, like a garden back home, an' ranchin' there seems like play.

"But Mr. Thayer's soon givin' me a superficiality to think about. I suspicion right away there's something on the young fellow's mind. There's days an' days when he lays on his back, smokin' like the Argo smelter, an' the ranch go hang. Then maybe he's up in boots an' corduroy, losin' himself in the pine till we're near loco with worry over him. Next time it's work, an' we're diggin' cattle out of the thick timber, an' countin' the herd, an' drivin' neighbors' stock back onto their own land, an' breakin' any onhappy bronc't ain't already as gentle as a school-teacher.

"Mr. Thayer's learnt a lot about horses in no time, but nobody's any business undertakin' to bust a devil like Cream unless he's got his mind strictly on the job. Cream is the froth of hell. He's an unnatural color, to start with, lighter'n a buckskin, an' like nothin' else but rich dairy cream, with maybe some dirt settled around the edges. There ain't no cream in his disposition, though,—nothing but blood an' Bessemer steel an' fire—*an'* Satan.

"Curly's tryin' to ride Cream one mornin', an' gets thrown clean

on top of the sheds, plenty satisfied. Perceivin' which, Mr. Thayer loosens himself from the post where he's been leanin', with his face set dreamy-like toward the north, an' takes an unexpected interest in the proceedings.

"'Now, that's a horse!' he says, circlin' around Cream, an' laughin' at Curly as he climbs down off the shed.

"'It's my turn now,' says I, very quick, seein' plain what's in Mr. Thayer's mind.

"'Do you want all the fun that's goin', Brinker?' says he gaily, takin' off his coat; an' I might as well whisper in Cream's ear to be good as argue with Mr. Thayer, who's huntin' excitement like a man't wants to forget.

"'He's no tenderfoot, either. He gives that Cream a fight that's good enough for a carnival. Then, when the fight's 'most won, he loses interest about as quick as he took it, an' Cream, playin' a crooked game, knows it. There's a sudden somerset in the air—you seen the trick when that one-eared Indian thing tried it on me at the Denver show, did n't you? Cream flings himself over backward.

"'Look out!' yells the four of us.

"'It's too late. Mr. Thayer don't know the trick, don't throw himself sideways as they go over, but falls under, on his back, with the saddle-horn in his stomach. Cream leaps to his feet, an' stands there lookin' at what he's done.

"'We carry Mr. Thayer into the house, an' when I see the blood tricklin' from his lips an' the dead blue look where the smile has been, I start Marty for the railroad on the best horse in the sheds, urgin' him to kill it. He's to get the doctor from Espinoza, an' telegraph Judge Thayer.

"'There's a while it seems maybe no doctor's needed. It's half an hour before Mr. Thayer comes to, with a moan an' a cry that's cut short between his teeth.

"'I'm all busted up inside,' he says, gaspin', but fetchin' one of them everlastin' smiles. Then the pain's unbearable, an' he goes again, but not for long, comin' an' goin', as if some grinnin' fiend was dippin' him in the pool of death, then jerkin' him back to torture, an' dippin' him again when he could n't stand no more.

"'For two days, two terrible days, I set by his side until my hand's bleedin' from his finger-nails. Then comes Dr. Smiley with the blessed dope, an' gives Mr. Thayer what he's needin' most, which's rest.

"'It's the fifth day, an' Mr. Thayer's quieter, some, after talkin' a lot about matters that's none of my business. The doctor's makin' up sleep, an' I'm left to watch an' give medicine. There's hoof-beats an' the crunch of wheels outside, an' I jump up to meet the Judge. But it ain't the Judge, standin' there in the doorway. It's a girl.

She's wrapped in a long, tan dust-coat, an' she's takin' off a white veil, very slow, as if she's afraid to look. Then she sees Mr. Thayer in the bed, an' creeps forward like some wild thing that's half frightened an' hungry an' shy.

"'Brinker!' cries out Mr. Thayer.

"It's the fever, I think, seein' his flamin' eyes an' twisted lips. The girl answers quicker 'n I can.

"'The telegram come to Uncle Thayer,' she says, 'but he's down with rheumatism, an' auntie, of course, can't travel, an' there's no one else but me.'

"There's a pause, while their eyes meet.

"'It's very sisterly of you, Kitty,' says he. 'I'm glad to see you.'

"Glad! It's a queer way to say glad, an' I conjecturate there's things that's none of my business, so I start to leave. But Mr. Thayer calls me back.

"'Brinker,' says he quietly, though his voice ain't very steady—'Brinker, this is Miss Cabot, my father's ward. She's been a good sister to me ever since we're children together. After Miss Cabot's rested—in the front room there—an' the cook's got supper for her—tell him to do the best he can, Brinker—you'll hitch up the bays an' drive her—'

"'Oh! Oh! Oh!' cries she, her eyes snappin' an' her little hands clinched at her side.

—"'drive her up to Railey's,' Mr. Thayer goes on without heedin'. 'You'll present my compliments to Mis' Railey, an' ask her if she can make room for Miss Cabot for a little while.'

"The girl's face is something to study. It's red, then white, an' angry an' hurt an' oncertain, all in a minute, but she ends by smilin' bright.

"'Then I may stay?' she cries, seemin' as joyous as a child.

"'I'm sure Mis' Railey will be delighted,' says Mr. Thayer, turnin' his face to the wall.

"Miss Kitty stands there a minute longer, lookin' at him, then gives her pretty head a toss an' trips over to where I stand on one foot feelin' like the one that makes a crowd.

"'He's *lots* better, is n't he?' she purrs, with forty-seven different meanin's in her voice. But I'd bet a month's wages it's sobs I hear when she's shut the door of the little front room. Wherefore, I slip out into the air to take a long breath, an' do a lot of thinkin' that don't come to nothin' at all.

"Pretty soon I hear Mr. Thayer callin', 'Brinker! Brinker!' An' when I appear he says, 'Brinker, I wish you to leave off all other work an' be with Miss Cabot constant. She's got a will of her own, an' there's no tellin' what she'll take it into her head to do. An'

particular,' he goes on, with an edge of a smile—'particular I wish you to be right here when Miss Cabot favors me with her company. I think you'll be almost an idee-al chapyrone.'

"Miss Kitty comes out just then, smilin' an' clean, an' says she's not hungry yet, an' she's ready to start for Railey's.

"'Good-by,' she says, saucy as a magpie.

"'Good-by,' says Mr. Thayer, as cold as a cat.

"I c'n handle men an' brones an' cattle some, havin' had various adventures with 'em, good an' bad, but this chapyrone business is the beginnin' of my education. What do you reckon Miss Kitty wants to hear about as we're drivin' to Railey's? Why, it's Mr. Thayer. Curly's told her about that fight when Mr. Thayer saved my life, but she thinks maybe I c'n give her all the *facts*—so she c'n tell Judge Thayer, she says. Bein' very glad to have Judge Thayer know all about it, I proceed; an' when I see how it makes her eyes dance an' the pink rise higher an' higher in her cheeks I remember a lot more about the row, an' the floor of the gamblin' place is carpeted with spangled an' mangled Mexicans before Mr. Thayer drops his chair an' carries me in his arms through an admirin' crowd to the hotel.

"But it ain't only me that's loco. I observe that Mis' Railey's tired face loosens up when she welcomes her visitor. I observe that the sky's glad an' the wind's glad, an' there's an oncommon number of birds a-singin' on the wire fences all the way back to the Star T. An' I observe that Curly an' Marty an' Louis have been startin' a barber-shop behind the sheds, an' even that blastphemous, everybody-be-cussed cook's changed his shirt two days ahead of time.

"But these's inconsequenshal discoveries compared to the grand an' illuminatin' jolt I got next day. I drive Miss Kitty down from Railey's, as agreed, an' when I'm headin' for the house she stops me at the corrals.

"'I want to look at the horses,' says she, an' jumps out. 'Will you please tell the doctor I want to see him?'

"'That's all right,' says I to myself, 'for she wants to talk secret to him.'

"So they have a long talk, an' Dr. Smiley says he's leavin' next day, Mr. Thayer bein' now out of danger, an' Miss Kitty asks him to take a letter for her an' mail it to Judge Thayer.

"'To-morrow,' says Miss Kitty to me, that business bein' settled, 'I want you to begin learnin' me—teachin' me,' she says, 'to ride. An' now, if you please, I'll go back to Railey's, for I've got to tear up something to make a skirt, an' I don't know what on earth it's goin' to be.'

"An' so, havin' come all the way from Denver to see Mr. Thayer, Miss Kitty don't go near him again till he's up an' around the corrals,

which is more 'n a week later. Meantime, I 'm the busiest chapyrone between the Mizzoury an' the Golden Gate. I learn her to ride like a cowboy instead of the city way she knowed before, after which we go stormin' across the pastures, an' rippin' through the woods, an' scalin' rocks wherever a horse's hoofs 'll hold. I show her where the trout pools are. We pick columbines in the damp, dark places an' them little red flowers that grow at the edges of the snowbanks high up on the peaks. It ain't long before she's practisin' with my six-shooter, an' I surmise there ain't no more fear inside that little body of hers than there is in Mr. Thayer.

"As I've related, she don't go near Mr. Thayer for more 'n a week, but I observe that she's in the kitchen every mornin' with the cook, makin' custards an' things, an' I observe there's times when the excitement's faded out of her eyes an' she's hangin' in the saddle like a wilted flower. Then one day we come back from a ride, when she's been fair furious for action, an' Mr. Thayer's settin' on a soap-box in front of the corrals. He's as white as Three X flour, which ain't much whiter 'n Miss Kitty is when she sees him, an' I jump quick for her, thinkin' she's goin' to fall. But she ropes herself in most admirable, an', havin' dismounted as calm as you please, walks up to Mr. Thayer with a smile, stretchin' her hand to him.

"Are you sure you ought to be out so soon?" she asks.

"I'm very fit, thank you," says Mr. Thayer, answerin' her smile as well, an' risin' wobbly on his feet.

"I wrote your father you'd be very careful," Miss Kitty says. Then lifts her finger kind of playful, an' cries out, "Be sure you do now, sir!" Then laughs very loud an' shrill, not like her usual, low, ripplin' laugh at all.

"I'm glad to see Brinker's been takin' excellent care of you," says he.

"Oh, Brinker's a perfect dear!" shrieks Miss Kitty. Then she plunges into talk, chatterin' like a whole treeful of magpies, an' almost as silly.

"Now, what in hell?" says I, sneakin' away through the sheds to the corral behind, where I find Curly an' Marty an' Louis with their hands clapped over their mouths, an' dancin' like they'd been stung by somethin'. Seein' me, Curly busts out with, "He's a perfect dear!" an' Marty bubbles through his fat fists, "He's a perfect dear!" an' Louis squeaks it like a stuck pig. Then the three of 'em fling themselves on the ground an' roll over an' over, holdin' their breaths to keep from shoutin', an' makin' the most calumnious faces.

"Delight yourselves," says I. "I'll argue this proposition with you later."

"Then I walk back through the sheds to stand around, as per orders,

an' observe how polite society converses with poliah an' repose. After awhile Miss Kitty's giggled an' chirruped an' shrieked herself out, an' I ride up to Railey's with her. She does n't say a word the whole time, but when she sees Mis' Railey in the yard she runs an' throws her arms around her an' weeps.

"There, there!" says Mis' Railey, soothin' her. I hang around consider'ble troubled till Mis' Railey comes out an' gives me about the fiercest tongue-larrupin' a live man ever stood for. It's hysterical Miss Kitty is, an' I'm an imbecile to let her overdo herself, an' won't I, for heaven's sake, learn some sense! So she sends me off feelin' about as low-down as a sheep-herder.

"There ain't much happens for about three weeks, except formalities an' some more hystericals. That with worryin' over Miss Kitty, an' not likin' the stormy look in Mr. Thayer's eyes, an' endurin' the jibes an' joshin' of them three onrighteous cowpunchers, I'm gettin' very sore on my job, when it's brought to a stop very sudden an' remarkable.

"Mr. Thayer's been well enough to ride some time, an' spends 'most all day in the saddle, but very little with Miss Kitty an' me. He's never been so silent an' cold since I knowed him, an' I might 'a' suspicioned what he's up to. But I don't, bein' constant busy, as per orders, till one evenin' Mr. Thayer comes sudden up to me behind the corrals.

"Brinker," says he, 'c'n you persuade Miss Cabot to stay at Railey's an' rest to-morrow mornin'.

"I'll try, certain'y," says I, feelin' queer.

"I want you to help me with Cream," he says.

"There's a sickness inside of me, as I understand what he means.

"Thank you," says I, pretendin' I did n't. 'I was hopin' you'd let me bust him pretty soon.'

"Just then I catch sight of somethin' that numbs me all over. It's Miss Kitty's white face peerin' at us out of the half-darkness of the sheds. I'd forgot about her for a minute, an' Mr. Thayer don't know she's there. I suppose my face's comical stupid, for Mr. Thayer gazes at me a minute, then laughs, an' says, 'Don't be a fool, Brinker! He won't play that trick on me this time. It's bust for bust.'

"So sayin', he turns an' goes out by the side gate, an' up toward the house. Then Miss Kitty comes stumblin' out of the shadow, an' it's shockin' pitiful to see. There's no more pride or pretendin' now, an' it's all up with her poor little game, an' it's all plain as day even to an imbecile like me. She staggers out, an' lays hold of a fence rail, an' stares at me with naked fear an' God knows what else in her wide, dark eyes.

"He'll—be—killed!" she gasps.



"There's nothin' I can say—nothin'. So I stand there sick an' foolish, starin' at her while she sways back an' forward, one hand clutchin' the rail, an' the other tearin' the ribbon at her throat. It seems hours an' hours, an' I hear the water complainin' over the pebbles in the crick, an' a bird in the meadow, an' the cook rattlin' pans, an' Cream stompin', stompin' restless in the next corral.

"'Brinker!' says the girl, in a kind of whisper, drawin' in her breath. Then I'm aware she's straightened up, partly, an' dropped her hands, an' is steppin' toward me, slow an' cautious an' desperate. She comes close, an' lays her hand on my arm, an' fixes her eager, pleadin' eyes on mine, an' nothin's hid. I'm lookin' into the heart of a woman, an' it's a strange an' beautiful an' terrible thing to see. Strange an' beautiful an' cruel. It brings sharp back to me one time when I run a mother wildcat into her den, an' she faced me, splendid an' terrible, in front of her whelps. Maybe Miss Kitty sees some of that in my face. Anyhow, her eyes soften, an' swim in tears, an' there's a miserable little quiver in her chin.

"'Brinker,' she purrs, 'will you do something big for me?'

"'I'd do anything in the world for you,' I reply.

"'Then listen! He must n't find Cream here to-morrow morning.'

"'You mean I'm to turn him loose,' I answer. 'But he'd be rounded up an' brought back.'

"'I mean, steal him,' she whispers, an' tightens her fingers on my arm.

"For a minute I'm clean dazed. I start to ask her if she knows what they do to horse-thieves when they catch 'em out here. But I don't. There's a lot of things that suddenly don't seem foolish like they used to. That piece I seen in the opry house in Cheyenne ain't ridiculous now, an' I wonder how I c'd 'a' been so hard on Jake Withers for robbin' that bank at Thermopylis. There's some things a man has no right to judge unless he's had a woman show him her heart an' ask him to do somethin' that maybe he ought n't to do.

"'Besides,' says Miss Kitty, with a risin' note of triumph in her voice, 'you'll be savin' *his* life, an' you owe him that, don't you?'

"It's some hours afterwards I think how funny that kind of reasonin' would sound to the posse when they're huntin' a proper tree. But it seems a powerful argument when she says it, an' it's past all understandin' how soft like wet clay I am in them weak little hands.

"'To-night?' asks Miss Kitty, quiverin'.

"'To-night,' I answer, not knowin' why.

"She gives me both her hands, an' her face's shinin' in the dusk.

"'Oh, thank you! Thank you!' she says, an' then she's gone, an' I stand listenin' to the hoof-beats till all's still again, an' I'm alone with my disreputable undertakin'.

"Well, it ain't important how I make such preparations as are necessary, an' go to bed at the regular time, an' get up again about midnight, an' find the night as bright as day. 'I always steal horses by the full of the moon,' says I, sarcastic. An' that's about the speed of the whole business. I'm a hell of a horse-thief, I am! Maybe I c'd steal a mule, if the mule's willin' an' the owner of it don't object. An' maybe not. I can't recollect any horse-thieves that did n't get caught, soon or late, but they gen'rally did get started, anyhow, which 's more'n I do. But how am I to know that Mr. Thayer's nervous an' wakeful, thinkin' about Cream an' the fun he's goin' to have tomorrow? He hears a noise, an', as I have the pleasure of learnin' afterwards, gets his Winchester an' comes creepin' along the shadows to the corrals. I'm out in the road, an' just gettin' into the saddle on Tuesday, an' Cream's behavin' at his end of the halter like Mary's little lamb. Fine! An' then there's an explosion, an' the whole side of my head's lifted off, an' that's all I know till I have a most onusual dream about bein' on fire in the principal street of Cheyenne an' the fire department hittin' me in the face with a stream of water. That's Curly dashin' water in my face to bring me to.

"For a minute or more I ain't certain where the fire department leaves off an' Curly begins, an' the moonlight has funny red streaks in it, an' my head's singin' an onfamiliar tune. Then I set up, with the help of Curly's arm, an' begin observin' things. I observe that the red streaks's real, bein' provided copious from the nice little irrigatin' ditch the bullet's made on the side of my head. There's a certain embarrassment in the situation. In the first place, Curly ain't speakin' any endearin' words while he holds me up. Marty's holdin' Cream an' Tuesday; Louis, in his stockin' feet, has got his six-shooter most onnecessary conspicuous; an' Mr. Thayer's standin' with his Winchester on his arm. There's a considerable stillness before Mr. Thayer speaks.

"'Have you got anything to say for yourself, Brinker?' he asks, very quiet an' cold.

"'I can't seem to think of any *ap*-propriate remarks,' says I.

"There's another spell of silence, while they all, includin' the horses, look dazed-like an' some sorrowful at me settin' there in the dust, scoopin' the blood off my face an' wipin' my hand on my chaps, an' maintainin' what such dignity as present unhappiness permits.

"'First,' says Mr. Thayer, 'you men'll take him to the pump an' wash him an' bandage his head. Then you'll guard him, two at a time, till morning, when we c'n all think clear. We're likely to be sentimental by moonlight.'

"So sayin', he stalks off to the house, an' I'm washed an' bandaged as per orders, an' allowed to lay down on my blankets while two of my

sorrowin' pardners set on guard. An' even Curly, who does n't stop talkin', ordinary, day or night, ain't any words for this occasion, suitable, an' turns his face away.

"Well, it's after breakfast, an' I've had my coffee an' flapjacks off a soap-box, when Mr. Thayer comes to the shed an' looks me over.

"'Brinker, what's the matter with you?' he asks, reproachful.

"'I've got a headache,' I answer.

"'I did n't know it was you when I fired,' he goes on, repressin' his smile, an' very earnest.

"'Or else you'd 'a' made a better job of it?' says I, which is an ongracious an' bitter speech, considerin' how I know he don't mean that at all. But I'm sore at havin' blundered the business, an' sore at bein' misjudged an' onable to say a word, an' I don't want anybody's pity, particular his'n. Whereupon, there's a kindlin' of anger in his black eyes.

"'No, I would n't have fired at all,' he says, with a sarcastic lip, an' cold as a gun-barrel, an' very slow. 'I think I'd 'a' remembered the pleasure you give me at our first meetin'.'

"Which sends the blood ragin' to the roots of my hair, an' makes the wound thro' an' burn. But just then I think of Miss Kitty's argument about me savin' *his* life, an' it's so blamed funny that I bust out laughin'. That sets Mr. Thayer's face ablaze, an' he takes a step nearer, then stops, an' looks me a long time in the face.

"'I suppose,' he says, deliberate—'I suppose I can trust these—these *men* to deal with you, an' protect their own reputations.'

"He makes a gesture, so, an' turns to go, an' there's Miss Kitty, bendin' over her pony's neck to look into the shed. What she sees is plenty. Her head droops, an' I think she's goin' to tumble from the saddle, but she catches herself very brave, an' climbs down. It's maybe up to me to say somethin', but I can't think of it, while she steps in an' looks at Mr. Thayer, whose face's like a judge, an' three cow-punchers with guns, an' me settin' there on the soap-box, bandaged an' sprinkled sufficient with blood. She's bewildered for a minute, an' white an' dumb. Then the red rushes back in her face.

"'It's not his fault,' she says, facin' Mr. Thayer. 'It's mine.'

"'What do you mean?' asks Mr. Thayer, starin' blank an' unbelievin' at the girl.

"'It's hard—it's onbearable hard, but she does it.

"'I—I asked him—to steal Cream,' she murmurs, an' her eyelids drop, an' her pretty head sinks forward, an' she suddenly covers her blushes with both her hands. Mr. Thayer looks an' looks, an' then— an' then a great change comes on his face, like an illumination. He moves forward, breathless an' on fire, stretchin' his hands toward the girl, whose face's hid.

“‘Kitty!’ he calls, an’ it’s a savage, hungry cry.

“Miss Kitty’s hands drop from her crimson face, she looks through tears, an’ cries out ‘Oh!’ an’ rushes into his arms.

“For a minute we look on, stupid. Then Curly an’ Marty jump an’ grab me, one hold of each arm, an’ whirl me around, an’ march me very solemn, Louis followin’, through the sheds an’ out into the corral, where we line up with our arms over the top rail of the fence, an’ stand lookin’ off into the meadow. One thing an’ another, there’s a lot to think about an’ nothin’ to say.”

Brinker stopped. His face was averted from me as he untied the red silk handkerchief from his neck, and mopped his face with it. The train labored on with its noises, as if every axle had its own complaint of the heat.

“But why did you leave?” I said at last.

He looked at me straight and frankly, but with trouble in his clear blue eyes.

“I ain’t contented any place very long,” he replied.

But my thoughts travelled back to the girl on the cow-pony, and the gloved hand waving the farewell, and the friendly look that followed. And it seemed appropriate that I should reach and clasp Brinker’s hand, in silence.



## HE IS MY FRIEND

BY J. B. E.

WHO hath himself the life-test fitly borne;  
 Who loss hath met and bravely spelled it gain;  
 Who joyed in service, yet must needs be served;  
 Who—mute—hath heard the cruel speech of Pain;  
 Who this, all this—ah, more!—hath deeply known;  
 And still, benign, hath dropped a tear for me,—  
*He* is my friend. Why, then, may *I* repine?

Though lessoned in the self-same school of loss;  
 Though still for me the unattained beck;  
 Though “No one knows!” be still my moan by night;  
 Though double deep the ills of life uproll,  
 Though this, all this—ah, more!—I deeply know,  
 And inly marvel what the days may bring,—  
 May *I* repine? He is my friend! Enough.

# POPPIES AND A SLEEP

By Sarah Chichester Page

## I.

“WHAT’S the use of *being* a widow if you don’t use all your opportunities?” I bullied Hannah. “You know I can’t go without you; or at least I don’t want to go with anybody but you; and the man has sent us the seats now, because you told him, right before me, that you would rather see the ‘Yale Foot-lights’ than any other show on the boards. I *heard* you, Hannah. You told him that nothing on earth would prevent your going if they came to Washington. You flattered him to death; said you’d give anything to see him act; made all sorts of eyes at him. And now you are backing out!”

“Well, good gracious, Betty! where is the money to come from to go up to Washington and spend the night? You know I’ve got to have a new spring hat. This one is a perfect sight now, and would n’t do to wear on the trip.”

“Sell it and buy a new one,” I suggested with enterprise. “There goes Aunt Maria up the road now, carrying her clothes-basket.” Then throwing up the window: “Oh, Aunt Maria! Please come up here for a minute. We want you.”

“Now you’ve done it, Betty! You just know I’m not going to sell this good-looking plume to Aunt Maria for a dollar.”

“Of course not,” I said, getting the hat off her head and the feather out of it at one fell swoop. (You have to be firm and determined with Hannah; she’s wobbly at the start.) “She won’t want a black plume, anyhow. Here are some poppies I paid ten cents for last summer. Put them in—so. Now just look at that!”—setting it coquettishly on my own head as Aunt Maria entered. “Aunt Maria, I’m trying to persuade Miss Hannah to get herself a new hat, and let you have this one”—cocking it up before the glass, and turning with thrilling effect upon the audience.

Aunt Maria, being very fat, had sunk upon a low chair; and was wiping her very black face upon her apron, and blowing hard.

Amiable in the extreme, and wishing to say just what was correct and expected, she affirmed “it certainly did seem like Miss Hannah *needed* a new one.”

"And don't you think this one will be awfully becoming to you, Aunt Maria?"

"Well, Miss Betty, it surely do look powerful well on you"—cocking her head reflectively on one side. "And you always was kinder dark complected. I 'member when yo' ma told me to sew yo' bonnet on; fur she say, 'Maria, dat chile is pretty near black now.' But 'deed I ain't got no money to be buying no new hat with."

"What about that big basket of clothes?" I suggested. "Whose laundry are you taking home?"

"That's Miss Chapin's clothes, and she goin' to give me a dollar and a half for it"—doubtfully. "But Sam—I know he spes to see some o' dat money to-night."

"Then indeed he shan't," I remarked hotly. "It's Sam's business to be giving you the prettiest spring hat in the county; and if he don't, you just give Miss Hannah that money for this one, on your way home." And with a loving look at the wreath of red poppies, Aunt Maria went on her way with the basket.

"Now, Hannah, there's a dollar and a half—and five dollars ought to cover the trip. What about last summer's white skirts? You can always sell them. You might just as well make up your mind to the sacrifice of clothes, pride, and all the rest of it, when it comes down to catching a new man. And a Yale medical student! Not in the least a college boy, is he? Mr. Dunbar is a real man of twenty-eight or thirty, I should think. But where is the best place for us to stay in Washington?"

"Why, Mr. Dunbar told me he stayed a great deal at the Arundel. And he said if we wanted to go there, we might mention his name, and he knew we would receive the best attention."

"But, Hannah," I exclaimed doubtfully, "is n't it the most expensive place in the town?"

"Well, but if we go alone, we'll *have* to go in the best style, won't we? Even if it takes *all* our white linen skirts." Her voice sank to despair. "Here comes Aunt Maria."

"Here 't is, Miss Betty," exclaimed Aunt Maria, quite out of breath. "And no matter what Sam say when I git home, I's gwine to have one handsome summer hat."

"But, *Betty!*" gasped Hannah in consternation. "You know I could not possibly get to Washington if I let Aunt Maria have my hat! I've got to wear this hat up there to get the new one."

I sat down, defeated. There seemed no way out of this. But not so Aunt Maria. She was one of the old régime—one that had "b'longed."

"Why, in co'se, honey! You don't suppose I mind *lending* you de hat fur yo' trip? You jes' go 'long to Washington and catch yo' beau, an' I'll tell Sam you goin' to git me a hat in town. But I don't see

no use in Miss Betty flamin' round de country an' spendin' her money lookin' for beaus, when she knows she got Mr. Conway Nelson all tied up an' hitched to de post."

"You 'll never persuade her of that, Aunt Maria," Hannah said, with venom. "And, between you and me, Mr. Conway is a long way from married to her yet."

Which was the solemn truth!

## II.

We went first to get the hat. And that was easily done, for Hannah is a real beauty. Everything looks just as it should on her dainty head.

I never could see why she was not *born* a widow. She is the most widowy thing you ever saw. Her figure is so graceful and slender; and her skin is like white cream against her glistening black hair. And those lashes were certainly made for a widow! No other kind of girl would know what to do with them.

Of course the hat cost more than we expected. Hannah said widows needed not quite so many things, but they had to be of the very best. (I have never noticed anything pretty that she did n't need—and get.)

We did n't know exactly where the Arundel was; but it was somewhere in the aristocratic northwest, and I felt we could not possibly arrive there with our bags on a trolley-car; so we decided it would be best to return to the station and take the carriage belonging to the hotel. But by that time the carriage was gone; so there was nothing to do but call a cab.

"Twenty-five cents more!" groaned Hannah.

"And ten cents for the poppies," I whispered.

But as she put her slender, arched foot on the step and turned to give the order to the cabman, her chin had just the most perfect tilt, the plume swept her shoulder in the most ravishing curve, and those lashes accentuated her command to such extent that when she said, "and go fast, if you please," he simply *flew*.

"Heaven be praised for the cab!" gasped Hannah piously, as we drew up before the Arundel. For there awaiting us stood Mr. Dunbar and, evidently awaiting *him*, a great white touring car!

It was delightful to be handed out of the carriage, with lackeys seizing our bags. And Hannah was so serenely dignified and gracious—looking just like our great-grandmother when she drove in from Arlington, I fancied. For it takes *blood* to be composed and radiant when there are so few quarters and ten centeses left in one's purse.

It seemed Mr. Dunbar wanted us to lunch with him at Chevy Chase and have an afternoon out in the car.

Hannah ran into the corridor and tied a soft white veil at the side

of her chin. Her chin tilted up, her lashes sweeping down, and dimples appearing in all sorts of new places! I don't know where she had concealed the veil; but she produced it at sight of the car. Did you ever know a widow who was not thoroughly prepared for everything?

I did a lot of talking; and when the knot was properly tied I announced that I would meet them at the hotel, for dinner, when they came back.

Hannah was terribly shocked. Surely I did not think she could go with Mr. Dunbar alone?

"Well, how much more of a settled matron can you get to be?" I inquired scornfully. She was four years older than I; but she did n't look it, and would n't remember it.

Mr. Dunbar was all that was regretful and polite; but what man could fail to be overjoyed at the prospect of getting away for a drive with such a thing as Hannah? Still they demurred till I had to come out plump and say I was going to meet Conway Nelson at the saddler's to look at some new harness. Then with long drawn "*Oh's*" and "*Ah's*" they departed, with gay content. Hannah whispered as she kissed me good-by, "Get the very cheapest room, Betty; for we must ask Mr. Dunbar to have dinner with us—don't you think?"

"It's a blessed thing we've got our return tickets," I sighed. But she gave a happy little laugh as they rolled out past the corner.

While I was explaining at the desk that I did n't care much about our room—just so it did n't cost very much—Conway appeared, and bore me off to Harvey's for lunch, declaring that we were going to eat everything they had there which came out of the water, and try to forget for one day that ham and fried chicken existed.

Conway is the sort of cousin-lover who does n't interfere with the appetite. In fact, the sauces received due appreciation, and we progressed steadily through courses of clams, soft crabs, and shrimp; got well under way with the lobster; and ended with a large bowl of ice-cream and strawberries, to prove to ourselves that we were on a bona fide spree, regardless of digestion or expense. For Conway had sold a cow and a calf that morning; and, so that he got his single harness and a couple of good bits, he was satisfied to "blow in" the rest of the money.

We picked out the harness, and then he helped me select a bride for myself. We did n't spend much time over that, for there was an errand for papa.

Sir John Walton had written him from England regarding the fate of a certain portrait of his great-grandfather, painted by Sir Joshua. Papa had had letters regarding the portrait in his possession, but they were written to his great-grandfather by General Washington, and he had given them to the "Washington Collection" at the Congressional



Library. And now he wanted me to glance over these letters and get the data Sir John needed.

He had asked Conway to do this errand on his last trip to town; but Conway had been in a tearing hurry, for he had seen a girl he knew who was passing through town, and he wanted to get back to lunch with her; so he rushed into the Library, telling them he had just received a letter from Sir Joshua Reynolds, who wished him to consult the "Washington letters" for him.

When the librarian mildly doubted his sanity, he said he believed Sir Joshua must have been his great-grandfather, and that General Washington had written him certain letters. Finding the man still incredulous, he got very red, and said: "Great Scott! I don't know a thing about it. I'll have to bring Betty," and bolted with all speed.

So of course we had to go up there. But as soon as we introduced ourselves the librarian knew more about what we wanted than we did; and found the three letters immediately. He was awfully nice to us, and when we left begged Conway to give his love to Sir Joshua.

We went to Galt's next, to leave a watch for Mr. Carter, which wouldn't go; and then, for the last thing, all the way back to Seventh Street, to the Ten Cent Store. For Conway said when he had got to the station that morning there was Mrs. Randolph, very hot and breathless. She said she had broken her yellow cake-bowl, and had hurried off to the depot to see who was going up to town and would bring her one from the Ten Cent Store. Of course Conway could n't refuse.

There was n't any time for love-making; but even *had* there been, how can you do it in a town? I never could see how town people ever manage to get married anyhow. They say it's usually a sort of business affair there—which is quite natural, with such surroundings.

When Conway was gone and I had hurried back to the hotel, I found Hannah and Mr. Dunbar absorbed to the point of oblivion. I stumbled upon them in the twilight, standing just inside a door, under the impression they were sheltered by a portière, I suppose. It certainly was the only thing in the bare room which could possibly have sheltered a situation of the sort, and the poor things could do no better. But anybody within a mile could see their condition!

He held her hand, and she was looking straight up into his eyes—which were only about six and a half inches away from hers—so steadily, so earnestly, that she did not let her lashes sweep down once while I looked at them. And there within two yards of them was a woman complaining about her room, through her nose, with an awful twang; and a man swearing because he had lost his luggage! I could n't have done a thing. But you know widows can play the game under *any* circumstances.

I bore her off to dress for dinner. Mr. Dunbar implored me to get

her to rest a little; he felt sure he had overtaxed her strength. As if she could n't have handled *three* men in an afternoon without turning a hair!

Our room was small, but good enough; having two mirrors. And we turned on all the lights and got out our evening dresses.

Hannah had got up to where she believed Mr. Dunbar occupied a plane several degrees more elevated than any man she had ever known. His ideals were so different; his manners so deferential.

When there was a knock at the door, and the servant bore in two cocktails on a tray, with that gentleman's compliments, Hannah came very near fainting. But I told her plenty of women drank them in other parts of the country, and the man meant no harm. It was easy enough to send a civil message and pour them down the wash-stand.

Hannah was sentimental enough to taste hers, because he had sent it; but she was compelled to confess that it was the worst dose she had ever tried; so hers followed mine, in silent disillusion.

But she cheered up mightily when the elevator boy brought in a box with two gorgeous bunches of roses. Hers were white and creamy to match her skin; mine were so gorgeously red that my cheeks flamed up to match them. That man certainly had discernment!

And Hannah, as she walked down to dinner in a clinging white crêpe gown, a white rose nestling in the waves of her blue-black hair! Patrician in every turn of her head; and her gorgeous beauty chastened by those eyelashes, to a discreet widowhood!

Grandma Beverley's pearls lay round her white throat, and a little gauze scarf veiled the dimples in her shoulders from the public gaze. For, I declare, every eye was upon us. And nobody could have had the slightest idea we had less than a hundred dollars in our pockets that very minute. We surely did look like it!

Mr. Dunbar was speechless with adoration at first; but when I had told him about our visit to the Library, he was so amused and delighted that he cheered up and did his part toward a delightful dinner-party.

We were not hurried, for he did not come on till the second act in the college play.

Our seats in the theatre were well down in front. And you may depend, every glass was levelled as we went down to them, before the curtain rose.

And such a play! Mr. Dunbar sang like a seraph, and every song was sent straight into Hannah's brown eyes. I suppose he told those Yale men that we were his friends, for some of them began looking at us in the most friendly way. And every time one smiled at me, I smiled right back at him. And of course Hannah did, too—on Mr. Dunbar's account, she said. And presently they began throwing roses into our laps from the stage. Oh, it was all such fun!

The minute it was over, a lot of them—the students—came round to the corridor to be introduced to us; and we went off gaily to eat some more things at the New Willard.

Then they all went back to the hotel with us. Hannah was very much exhausted (?) and trailed slowly far behind with Mr. Dunbar, while I skipped along with half a dozen nice boys.

They were all coming to see us off at nine o'clock next morning. They all got invited to Newington, and vowed they'd be there before a month was over; swearing Virginia was only a suburb of New Haven, anyhow. And finally I divided my lovely red roses among them and promised "never to forget."

All this while Hannah and Mr. Dunbar crept under the shelter of that same inefficient portière, and held hands with the same speechlessness!

It was really awful to break away and know it was all over. I got the boys a little out of the way—dreading the parting agony at the portière. But just as they all were off Mr. Dunbar ran back with a very nice-looking man whom he introduced as Mr. Kennedy, the proprietor of the hotel, and to whose care he confided Hannah most solemnly.

Mr. Kennedy was kindness itself. Begged us to have everything under the sun. Insisted on seeing us into the elevator, and finally went up himself to see us safely out.

"I hope you don't find your room close or warm?" he inquired with solicitude, at the door. "And pray call on me for anything you may need. I am delighted to have any friend of Mr. Dunbar's. He's a fine fellow—we think a heap of him here; and we think a heap of his mother-in-law, too."

"His——?" gasped Hannah, with staring eyes.

"His mother-in-law. Fine woman as ever was in the world. Can't think of her name, but he often brings her here. Well, good-night, young ladies, and happy dreams!"

I got the key out of Hannah's hand and opened the door. Then I pulled her in and locked it, and we sat down, aghast.

"Did he ever tell you he *was n't* married, Hannah?" I demanded sternly.

"N-no. He just did n't mention it"—very feebly.

"Well," I said presently, "let's not talk about it or think about it to-night. Perhaps he is a widower, and did n't think it worth while to mention it."

"Oh, *Betty!*"

"And, anyhow, he will be at the station to-morrow, and I'll see that you have a chance to talk to him. Let's go right to sleep now; for we had better get to the station early, you see."

"I'm going to get up at sunrise," Hannah declared emphatically, "and be down there by half past eight." And she turned out all the lights.

## III.

I was dreadfully tired, and thought I had slept a long time; but it was still quite dark when I awoke. I lay still, so as not to waken Hannah. But presently a dry little sob told me she was not asleep.

"Darling!" I whispered, slipping my arm under her head. And in a moment she held me close, sighing:

"Oh, Betty, I thought you'd *never* wake! The night is so long. I've been awake an hour, I know; and it *won't* get daylight! I don't believe I've slept a bit. I'm too wretched to live!"

And she poured out the whole story of her day with Mr. Dunbar: all the words he had spoken, and all that his eyes had said to her; even the clasp of his hand behind that inefficient portière.

"And now, Betty, you *know* he has n't got any wife—and never had one!"

"All that sounds mighty single to me," I confessed hopefully.

After a very long silence, Hannah stirred closer.

"Betty, you don't suppose—— They would n't ever pass anybody else off for their mother-in-law, would they?"

"Mercy, Hannah! I don't know. Do they ever?"

"Heaven knows *what* they do!" groaned Hannah. "But you don't think Mr. Dunbar would?"

"No, I don't." After ages of restless tossing, Hannah sighed:

"We could n't hear the roosters crowing, even if they have any, with those dreadful trolleys roaring by every minute."

"No," I said; "but it's pitch-black night still. And I've forgotten where the windows are anyhow. Do you remember on which side the room they are?"

"I did n't notice them——" began Hannah, when I suddenly sat up in bed with a horrible presentiment.

"But the bright streets—the electric lights—we ought to see them. Where *are* the windows!" and I switched on the lights. There was n't a sign of a window in the room! I made one dash for my watch on the dressing-table, and stood rubbing my eyes and looking, while Hannah shrieked over my shoulder, "Betty, it's half past nine, and our train has gone!"

Did anybody in this world before ever hear of a room without a single window in it?

I unlocked the door and met a stream of sunshine across the hall. And then *such dressing!* For we knew if we missed the eleven o'clock train we would have to stay till six in the evening, and the state of our pocketbooks made that out of the question.

When Hannah realized she had missed Mr. Dunbar, and must leave town without an explanation, she collapsed.

"Get him on the telephone," I suggested. "You may find him at his hotel."

But he had left the New Willard an hour before; and she could only leave an urgent message for him to be at the station at eleven o'clock.

She could n't eat a mouthful of breakfast for watching the door, hoping he might appear. And though I left her to tip the waiter while I paid our bills at the desk, she forgot all about it; so we never can go back there again!

We reached the station with ten minutes to spare, but there was not a sign of Mr. Dunbar.

Even inside the gate Hannah paced the platform, unable to give up the hope of seeing him.

"Betty, we *must* hold the train," she whispered in agony. "There's the conductor coming; is n't it Captain Goldsborough? I believe he belongs to *the* Goldsboroughs, and if I talk to him he just *can't* break away, can he? I think I'll try, Betty."

And with the dearest dimple in the world coming just near each corner of her mouth, she looked up in his face through the veil of her lashes and said very sweetly, "How do you do, Captain Goldsborough? It's a *very* warm morning, don't you think so?"

"Hot as hades, madam! Get aboard!" He fired the words as he swung himself on the platform. And, very ruefully, she obeyed him.

But there was still a moment's delay, and Hannah hung out of the window, watching.

"Betty, have you a pencil? *Quick!*"

"There's one in my pocketbook"—handing it to her.

She snatched it out and wrote a line on her card, on the back of the book:

*Who is your mother-in-law?*

And as the train began slowly to move out of the station, I saw Mr. Dunbar running toward it. And—will you believe?—Hannah laid that card in my pocketbook and stood up and threw the book out of the window toward him, as hard as she could throw it! And after that, forgetting all about the mother-in-law, she threw a kiss! It's a great mercy he saw the pocketbook at all!

When she had settled back in her seat with a smile of dreamy content on her lips, I merely observed:

"Are you aware you've thrown my ticket out of the window? You are probably prepared to pay my fare."

"Oh, but, Betty!" she cried in dismay. "You know I have n't a single cent—but just that ten cents, you know, for——"

"The poppies. Well, I shall certainly be put off the train at the next stop."

But, glancing down the car, we descried the dear face of Mr. Howdershell, the tinner at home; and he was so pleased to be able to find, after turning all his pockets inside out, that he had just a dollar and five cents, and could accommodate Miss Betty with a ride home!

As we drove up from the station every one was calling and waving to us; and, stopping the carriage, we heard from all sides, "Go to the telephone! A long distance for Miss Hannah! Better hurry up. From Washington, they say. Hope there's no bad news." Hannah jumped out and flew into the drug-store which was our central. I helped Uncle Henry hold the horses, who were fretting to get home; and it seemed an age before she appeared at the door—one wreath of smiles and dimples—and called clear across the street to me, "It's just *step-mother*, Betty."

She said she must write the moment she got home. And she just sat smiling and composing the letter all the way, while I entertained Uncle Henry with our doings in town.

Aunt Maria was waiting for her hat; and Hannah detained her a moment, asking her to post the letter she was scribbling so fast. As she sealed it Aunt Maria said, "Honey, did you ketch your beau?"

"Indeed I did, Aunt Maria," she laughed happily.

"Well, I surely is pleased to hear it. 'Cause now, I s'pose, you can quit struggling."

"But wait one minute, Aunt Maria"—Hannah rushed after her. "Will you get Mr. Jones to put a 'special' on that letter?" And away went the ten cents for those poppies!



## COMPENSATION

BY GRACE MACGOWAN COOKE

I SAW him across the dingy street,  
A little old cobbler, lame, with a hump,  
Yet his whistle came to me clear and sweet  
As he stitched away at a dancing-pump.

Well, some of us limp while others dance;  
There's none of life's pleasures without alloy.  
Let us thank heaven, then, for the chance  
To whistle, while mending the shoes of joy.



## WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND  
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

### BOYS' AND GIRLS' SECRET SOCIETIES

**A**LATELY risen opposition to the so-called secret societies of boys and girls, especially those in the high schools and preparatory schools, is perhaps, on the whole, praiseworthy. But whether the opposition should be directed against the secret societies as an institution or merely against the form of them, with a view, in the latter case, of making them useful as well as ornamental, is not quite clear.

These secret societies are certainly not culpable merely for keeping from the world valuable secrets which would make for the universal benefit. On the contrary, the secrets are meaningless formulas which are not worth repeating, and, therefore, there is no danger of their becoming generally known, even though there were no close corporation carefully to guard them. It is in their obtrusiveness rather than in their secrecy that opposition finds a ready root. If they were retiring and self-sufficient, they would be allowed to pass by unnoticed, but when they afford an artificial vehicle for class distinctions and invidious comparisons, it is time for those who have the best development of our school youth at heart to sit up and take notice.

It may be that the nature of children of all ages requires a certain amount of pabulum in the way of secret activity, and if such societies were really secret, organized for some worthy and charitable purpose which was duly and unostentatiously carried out, they would but conform to that excellent Christian injunction: "when thou doest

alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." But, when they become obtrusive and arrogant, flaunting their pins and functions in a holier-than-thou manner, aping a phenomenon in adult society which is more to be condemned than encouraged, all the while holding out to the uninitiated, as a sign of superiority, a mysterious something whose value would disappear if revealed, it is time for parents and educators to take a hand.

But criticism should be constructive and directive as well as iconoclastic. Organization is good. Why is it not possible to make these particular organizations good? Why is it not possible so to direct and encourage them that membership will be a worthy honor, a reward for good deeds well done? This is the principle of the Phi Beta Kappa society, whose secrets are open to all who will attain excellence in scholarship.

ELLIS O. JONES

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## THE FAT OF THE LAND

**A**MONG the subjects popularly supposed to be of general interest as social topics, the weather takes precedence, by right of age, closely followed by the servant question. Observation, however, leads me to think that there is to-day a theme of even more universal appeal. I refer to Flesh. Have we not all noticed how the ice of even a Boston tea party melts if one lady declines sugar on the plea that it is fattening? Instantly tongues that were tied are loosed, for a touch of fatness makes the whole world kin. The magic phrase "too stout" acts as a general introduction, and each guest is so busy telling her experiences in various systems for lessening avoirdupois that none has time to listen.

Why has this mania for emaciation struck the community? I am myself something of a fatalist on the subject of fat, and, having the figure of a moth-ball, I feel that my craving for a waist-line is simply the desire of the moth for the star, and I have learned to find compensations in the immediate sphere of my sorrow—that sphere being myself.

To my possibly prejudiced point of view, there seem to be certain very desirable moral attributes accompanying a generous adipose deposit. Stout people are generally good-natured, warm-hearted, lovable, and kind. Thin people are often suspicious, sensitive, acrid, censorious.

Stout people have perhaps the virtues of inertia: patience, restfulness, peaceableness, a certain sedentary sympathy—but why should they not accept this fat as a fact and make the best of it? The stout are almost always popular with other people, the thin with themselves.



Let us eat potatoes and drink water, for to-morrow we die, and we might just as well laugh and be fat to-day.

Man, being on a larger scale than woman, feels no more concern about his imaginary waist-line than that with which the earth regards the equator. He feels that all flesh is grass, and that it does n't very much matter whether his individual crop is more abundant than his neighbor's. He submits to his natural tendency, enjoys life, and accepts good-naturedly the thousand natural shocks that his over-abundant flesh is heir to.

Let me assure my brothers and sisters in the bonds of flesh that they will be happier themselves and less wearisome to others if they will cease to think and talk of their size, and will instead cultivate the qualities that are theirs by right of their superior weight.

It is theirs to sit while others stand, to eat while others bant, to rest while others roll, to sleep while others fret. I suppose it is a pleasant sensation to be slender of build, light of foot, and quick of motion, but, on the whole, I am inclined to regard a thin person as one does not regard the unduly celebrated Purple Cow—I'd rather be than see one. Give me corpulent companions. Let the tightly compressed dwellers in my heart's heart be stout women,—and as regards the opposite sex—why, I can only devoutly echo the commentary of Cæsar, "Let me have men about me that are fat!"

W. P.

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### CONCERNING "DEGENERACY"

THESE is one word in our language which I have come to hate with a virulence far greater than that reserved for many mortal sins: the word "degenerate." First popularized by a half-educated coxcomb, who tried to explain the universe in terms of a before-breakfast grouch, it has spread till now genius, insanity, and crime are all lumped under the one overworked heading. This is an extreme instance, of course. The term is usually applied to criminals—any sort of criminals. The man who breaks the law—and gets caught—is not simply one of us who has gone wrong, but a "degenerate," a creature apart, a being outside the pale of human sympathy. This hand-me-down moral classification is backed by a host of physical signs—"stigmata of degeneration," they are called. A lobeless ear gives you so many points toward a Lombroso diploma of "degeneracy"; a low forehead, so many; a high palate, so many; defects of hearing, mouth-breathing, insensitive skin, all have their assigned value. On every hand we are asked to drop the old-fashioned notion that man is a responsible creature, that he belongs to the "educabilia," as Cuvier

would say, and is capable of learning, even though with stripes. Instead, we are told that man is a mere test tube full of diverse moral or immoral chemicals, and that the "expert" can foretell the inevitable reaction by the color of the hair and the cut of the front teeth.

There is an element of truth in all this. There are human beings whose natures are so warped that they cannot go straight. But these unfortunates, while they furnish many of our sensational, un-understandable crimes, are really only a tiny proportion of our criminal population. The average criminal, at the beginning of his career, is very much like the average non-criminal. He may be, usually is, a little more lazy, a little more impulsive, a little less given to estimating the remoter consequences of his acts. And that is all. He commits crime either from the conjunction of impulse and opportunity or from calculation of profit. Train him to curb the impulse or show him that crime is unprofitable and he drops the business, if he can. And that is precisely the way in which every one of us has won to whatever moral position he may hold to-day. There is no sharp division between the sheep and the goats. The man who can look you between the eyes and say that he has never had a criminal impulse, is either a most accomplished liar or has a conveniently slippery memory.

And what is true of the inner nature is true of the outward signs. "Stigmata of degeneration" exist, I know; but there is hardly one of them that cannot be found in more honest men than in thieves. The high palate and receding chin usually mean no more than that their possessor was troubled as a child with adenoid growths, which his parents were too poor or too ignorant or too careless to have removed. The lobeless ear can be found ten times at a fancy ball for every once at a prison chapel. These things may be danger signals; but if so, nature is too wise to restrict their distribution.

Prince Eugene of Savoy had an assortment of "stigmata" that would have sent Lombroso into ecstasies of delight. He was a confirmed mouth-breather. He had a low forehead and a high palate. His chin was receding. He drooled saliva like a teething baby. There are indications that his skin was below par in sensitiveness, though I should n't care to go into details; and his personal habits cannot be discussed in print outside the columns of a medical journal. Louis XIV. must have had some faith in "stigmata," for he refused the young man a commission in the French army. Whereupon, Eugene called the Grande Monarque a stage king for show and a chess king for use, took his sword to the Austrian market—and the things he did to Louis's armies for the next few years are positively painful to contemplate. After that raising of the siege of Turin, for instance, I can think of few more unhealthy jobs than that of instructing old King Louis in the phenomena of "degeneration."

Every criminal who "squares it," as tens of thousands do, gives the lie to our complacent pessimism. Nine-tenths of the crime which costs us an empire's ransom each year is the result of habit, or accident, or environment. These are bad enough, in all conscience, but they can be dealt with. The talk of "degeneration" is little more than a bit of lazy fatalism, which makes us neglect our plain duty and brotherhood for the contemplation of our imagined virtue.

GEORGE L. KNAPP

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### THE UNFAIRNESS OF THE RICH

A FAMILY removed from the country to the outskirts of the city, and brought their chickens along. Having more eggs than she could use, the good woman of the household sold a few among her neighbors, charging twenty cents the dozen; whereas eggs downtown were selling at twenty-five cents. She was perfectly content with the twenty cents; the neighbors were perfectly content with the eggs; and, being of but moderate circumstances, they were glad enough of the saving. However, informed by her laundress, a woman of wealth and position proposed to have some of those eggs.

"But it is ridiculous to pay only twenty cents a dozen!" she declared. "The idea! I am very willing to pay thirty, if they are fresh. I shall tell her so."

She sailed away in her auto—and evidently she "told her," for the next time that the laundress applied for eggs they were thirty cents.

It was the unfairness of the rich—the arrogance of wealth. The one purchaser had too much money. She had money to waste, and she was not satisfied unless she was forcing it somewhere. Ten cents, to her, indicated the difference between wealth and poverty. So it did to the laundress—but from opposite angle. The luxury, not the necessity, of this so-called democracy is setting the standard of value. The viewpoint is wrong; and such little incidents as the inflation of the price of eggs from twenty to thirty cents are what make Socialists.

EDWIN L. SABIN



# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

MAY, 1908



## THE PIRATE OF ALASTAIR

BY RUPERT SARGENT HOLLAND

*Author of "The Count at Harvard," etc.*

### I.

YOU know Alastair? No—how should you? Very few people know it, and I have done my best to keep the secret to myself. The place lies, however, not so very far from great cities on the Atlantic Coast. You take a train northward from Boston, and when you reach the proper station you alight and climb into a countryman's wagon, and he drives you through the pines by a twisting, sand-built road to Alastair. You will know it because you can go no farther, unless you choose to drive into the waves.

Few people come to Alastair. Most of the travellers in this part of the world turn off about a mile inland from the beach and go on for another mile and a half to the Penguin Club. The latter is full of New Yorkers who come to the pines and the sea to hunt and fish and forget Wall Street and Fifth Avenue. They forget it by keeping close together, and dressing for dinner, and dancing every other night.

Alastair itself is only a beach between two great headlands. From the end where my cottage stands, snugly hid in the pines on the edge of the dunes, the beach stretches smooth and white to a little land-

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locked harbor at the farther end. Sit on my porch and look down along the sands to the east and you will see a reef of rocks shaped like the letter U that closes in a little salt water lake with the aid of the distant cliff. It is not quite a lake, rather a small inland sea, for the tides have room to ebb and flow. A ship is settled into the sands of this sea, settled upright, so that one may walk the decks, and I often go there of an afternoon when the tide is low and climb on board. It is a good place to sketch, and I can leave my paints and canvas in the cabin.

I stumbled across Alastair when I was looking for a quiet place in which to write. I found the dilapidated cottage, camped in it for a week, and fell so much in love with the beach that I went to town, bought the house and part of the woods, and moved in. Charles, the man who had served my father before me, demurred at first, but finally gave in, and turned himself into cook, housemaid, and valet for my sake.

From my balcony I can see the distant rocks of the little inland sea and, standing up above them, the high sides of the ship, and its single remaining broken mast pointing straight to the heavens. Sometimes the stars seem to outline where the missing spars and sails should be, and on a bright night I can half close my eyes and fancy that I see the rigging lighted and lanterns burning on the quarter-deck.

There is history hidden in that battered hulk. She is no ordinary vessel, and may once, for all I know, have been a pirate craft. She has the long clipper lines of swiftness, and her high, bulging bow is of a type long past. When I first came to Alastair I made inquiries as to her history, but the oldest farmer could tell me only that she had always been there so far as he knew, and dismissed the subject as of no importance. The people of the near-by country appeared never to have boarded the castaway. I felt the joys of Crusoe when I first climbed on her deck. The name was gone, long ago washed out by the sea; the deck was bare, and the top of the fore-castle choked with sand. I brought a shovel and dug away the rampart drifted against the hatches. At last I could open the door and, clearing the steps of what little sand had sifted through, I descended into the cabin. It was mildewed with damp and water, but in time, by bailing and letting the sun in, I dried it out and found quite a habitable apartment, furnished with table and chairs and a row of bunks along the seaward side. Whatever there had been that was portable the first wreckers must years before have carried off. All that was left was a heavy oaken chest, studded with brass nails, now greenish-yellow, and when I broke the lock I found the chest bare.

My fancy loved to play about the ship. Often I dreamed of her and of a man who should come up out of the sea and tread her deck again.

He was always a magnetic figure, and I never could resist the call of mystery to fight beside him.

## II.

It was the most beautiful August that I remembered. The air was clear as a bell, and day after day the sun rose on a tranquil world and smiled at it for joy. Every morning at breakfast I would say to Charles, "Did you ever know such weather, Charles?" and he would answer, "No, sir, I never did, sir," and every evening at supper I would say, "It has been a glorious day, Charles, has n't it?" and he would answer, "It has, sir, indeed it has, sir." My family servant made a perfect echo.

The afternoon on which I finished the first half of my book I sat for some time on the porch outside my den, smoking. I was too serene to stir. I watched the gulls circle and skim above the pine crowned cliff, and the lazy waves, rising occasionally into sparkling white caps, lift their heads and duck again like playful dolphins. The tide was coming in; I could mark the great wet circles on the beach as it advanced, now receding for a moment, but quickly recovering the lost ground and marching on, steadily winning over the yellow sands. It would be high-tide by sunset or a little after; everything was setting in from sea to land; the salt smell was coming strongly on the east wind.

About five o'clock I shut the door of my cottage and started down the beach, conscious of no further plan than to board the ship and, possibly, catch something of the late afternoon color for my canvas. Now and again I stopped to watch small flocks of sand-snipe scurry over the wet, glistening sands, now to watch a wave recede and leave a path of opalescent pebbles in its wake. There were jewels for all the world and to spare as long as the water bathed the stones.

So, walking leisurely, I came in time to the far end, and looked across the harboring rocks to the ship. To my surprise, a young woman stood on the deck, and fluttering from a splinter of the mast was a white handkerchief. She was looking across at me, her hands shading her eyes from the sunset glitter at my back, and as she saw me look up she waved her hand beckoningly. The easy path to the ship lay through a small break where the rocks joined the cliff, but this break was some distance off. With a smile for what I saw must have happened to the skipper, I climbed over the nearest rocks and stood on the edge of the little inland sea. Sure enough, the tide in rising had covered the causeway to the cliff, and was pouring in, fast filling the harbor, like the bowl of a flooded fountain. The water was not yet deep; it barely covered the path by which the explorer had come, and even off the rocks in front of me it was scarcely up to my knees.

The woman of the ship called, "I'm marooned. I came by the

path and forgot all about the tide. What shall I do?" She pointed towards the way she had come, but I was in rough clothes and quite used to a wetting, so I waded in and, crossing the shallow bowl, quickly scrambled on to the high deck. I stood up dripping and laughing.

"So you thought you'd go for a sail," I asked, "but did n't think you'd sail so far from land?"

The girl—I saw now that she could n't be more than twenty—looked quizzically at me for a second, then smiled, and finally laughed.

"It was such a very real ship," she said, "that I could n't resist the call. I fell asleep sitting against the gunwale, and when I woke up the water was over the path—not very far over, but quite enough to ruin these forever." She pointed to her kid slippers. "I was growing desperate when I saw you on the beach."

I was studying the slippers; there was no question but that the salt water would ruin them. She inspected them also.

"It was very foolish of me to wear them, but I had no idea of going far when I left the club. The first thing I knew, I caught a glimpse of the water, and then I forgot the slippers and walked on until I came to that cliff, and from there I saw this little harbor and this boat, and I could n't resist that, could I?"

I shook my head. "Nobody could resist it."

"I had just about come to the point of taking them off and wading in," she went on, and then finished, "when I sighted you."

"I can go away again," I suggested.

"No," she said slowly; "I'd rather you did n't do that. There must be some other way out of it."

"There are several other ways," I answered. "I've often studied the problem from this very deck."

I thought she looked a little bit surprised. "Do you often find people marooned here—girls, I mean?"

"No, but I've often wondered what I should do if I did. To tell the truth, I've never found any one here before, but the ship looks as if she ought to be inhabited. She's a good ship, and once belonged to a pirate chief."

"How do you know that?" she asked.

"By the oaken chest below-deck. It has the pirate look, though there's nothing in it."

"Yes," she said; "I made an exploring trip and I found the chest."

"Don't you agree with me, then?"

Again there came that quizzical look in her eyes, and then the smile.

"Yes," she said; "it must have belonged to a pirate." She stopped short and the smile spread from her lips to her eyes. "Shall I tell you a secret? When I fell asleep here an hour ago I

dreamed of pirates, of a real old-fashioned buccaneer who came up out of the cabin fully armed, pistols in his pockets and in his hands and a pistol clenched in his teeth. The funny part of it is that he was exceedingly polite to me. Do you ever have such foolish dreams as that?"

"Often; a buccaneer calls on me every other week. I'm only waiting for the chance to ship with one. I think their ghosts must still inhabit Alastair."

The girl's hand stole up to capture some loose strands of hair, and for the first time I noted the fine spun gold in the sun.

"Alastair?" she repeated. "Oh, so this is the beach of Alastair—and you——" She paused. "You must be the man they told me about at the club—you live in a cottage at the far end of the beach, and write books, and never come out of your shell."

I bowed. "I am the man," I said, "and yonder is my home." I pointed westward to where the tip of my balcony showed between the dunes.

"What a beautiful little world!" she said, and then, a moment later, "but how lonely! Who named the place Alastair?"

"I don't know. It's always been called that, apparently."

"It's a lovely name. And what do you call the ship?"

"Oh, just the Ship. Her other name disappeared years and years ago."

"The Ship of Alastair. And do you sometimes come on board of her to write?"

"No, I have a den for that. Sometimes I come here to paint. I keep my things in the cabin."

"Yes, I found them," she said. "You see, I know a great deal more about you than you think."

She walked away and leaned on the bulwark on the other side. "The water's getting quite deep."

I followed. "There's quite a rise of tide. It's nearly full, and then it will turn—in about an hour, I should say."

She looked at the little chatelaine watch she wore, and gave a cry of dismay.

"But that will be seven o'clock, and they dine at the club at that time, and my aunt will be worried half out of her poor old head."

"They dine too early; they miss the best part of the day."

She turned a trifle imperiously towards me. "Still, that is the hour, and I must be getting back. What answers to the problem have your frequent studies brought?"

"The first is to wait until the causeway is dry," I answered, avoiding her eyes and looking out to sea.

"But that is out of the question," she said, with the faint hint of



a tapping foot upon the deck. The touch of authority made me stubborn.

"There's a fine view of the sunset from here, though not so fine as from the cliff beyond my house. You should see that some evening when you're not afraid of missing dinner."

She looked me over while I kept my face away, and I could feel the struggle whether resentment or amusement should have the upper hand. The latter finally won. "Please help me to get home, Mr. ——" she began.

"Felix Selden," I supplied her, "though I'd much rather you stayed here, Miss ——" and I in my turn hung questioning.

"Barbara Graham," she answered quite frankly. Then suddenly she laughed, and I was forced to join her. "Come, Mr. Pirate, now that we are properly known to each other, and I have thanked you for your compliment, will you think of a way to save my poor aunt from nervous prostration? If you will, I promise some day to go without dinner and come to see the sunset from your cliff."

"It's a bargain," I said, and strode resolutely across the deck to the side where the causeway ran.

"But how? What are you going to do?" came in surprised accents from Miss Graham.

I stopped and turned. "You will not wait for the tide, and you must not wet the slippers, so there's only one way left."

"And what is that?" she asked.

"For me to carry you ashore."

I happened to be looking at her, and her face went pink of a second, pink over the brown of the sun.

"But," she stammered, "I don't think that would do."

"It's the only alternative," I said positively.

"Are you sure," she said, "that you are strong enough?"

I looked at her slender figure and laughed. "I have not lived out of doors for nothing," I answered. "I could carry you from here to the Shifting Shoal yonder without tiring."

Again came the infectious laugh, apparently at the thrill of the adventure, and I found it impossible to keep from joining her.

"But it's time I made the boast good," I answered, and, leaning towards her, picked her up in my arms, careful to keep the little slippers and her skirts clear of the waves.

"You must put your arms about my neck to keep the balance," I said, "or I'll not guarantee the consequences."

"Must I?" she said quite demurely, and did as I commanded.

Feeling my way cautiously, I started to cross the causeway. A false step and I should have slipped into the deeper water, so I went slowly, feeling for safe footing as I took each step. Once I glanced momen-

tarily at the face which was so close to mine, but Miss Graham's eyes were fixed on the shore ahead, and would not look at me.

We reached the sand at the foot of the cliff and I put the girl down. She looked at her slippers.

"Splendidly done," she said. "Not a drop of water touched me. You're quite as strong as you said."

"Remember the cause," I answered.

"But you're frightfully wet," she objected, looking at my heavy riding breeches and leggings, which were soaked through. "You must run back to the cottage as fast as you can, to save yourself a cold."

"I must see you to the club first," I answered. "I know a short cut back of the cliff and through the woods."

"Hurry, then," she said. "I'll not have you catching cold on my account."

We scrambled up the headland and struck into the pine woods, I leading, she following close behind. We went along at a dog trot, and, although I often stopped to insure against her tiring, I found that she was a strong runner and wanted no rest. At last we came to a clearing just this side of the club entrance.

"I'll say good-by here," she said, "and spare you the sight of a civilization that you dislike." She held out her hand.

Then I remembered our bargain. "You said that if I set you ashore you would come to see the sunset from my cliff. You have n't forgotten that?"

"No; but I must think out a way. They dine here at such a stupid hour. But I promise you that some afternoon you'll see me strolling down the beach, and then if there's a sunset I'll let you show it to me. You deserve that much, at least, for coming to my rescue."

She gave me her hand a second time, and turned into the grounds of the Penguin Club. I looked at my watch; she would just be in time for dinner.

I walked back through the woods and up the beach. The western sky was fairly ablaze with color. It seemed that a beacon flamed through the pines upon my cliff.

"Have you ever known such a beautiful afternoon, Charles?" I asked my man at supper.

"Never, Mr. Felix, never."

I was sitting so that I could look out of the window at the sea.

"It was unusually glorious, even for Alastair, was n't it?" I pursued.

"Yes, sir, it certainly was, sir, even for Alastair, sir."

After supper I had my coffee on the balcony and sat there and smoked and wondered how long it had been since a petticoat had boarded the Ship.

## III.

THE weather next morning was just right for a ride, and sending for my horse, I made a great circuit of the woods, coming back by the marshes about noon. As I galloped past the upper end of the lowlands I heard a voice calling to me, and, drawing rein, waited until the voice's owner appeared. This proved to be an extremely sunburned young man dressed in very loud tweeds. He carried a fishing-rod over his arm, and a fish-basket dangled from his shoulder.

"I say, do you know the country hereabouts?" he inquired. "I've lost my way, and I'm infernally hot and tired."

He looked it; his lips were almost as mutinous as those of a spoiled child, and even the tilt of his soft felt hat had a dejected air.

"Where do you want to go?" I asked in return. "The Penguin Club lies about three miles off to the east."

"Yes, that's it," he said. "I'm a Penguinite, worse luck." He dropped the fishing-rod and tried to kick some of the mud from his boots. "I came out to get some fishing at five this morning, and not a bite have I had, nor a morsel of food tasted since. My legs ache at the thought of that three miles yet to go. Is n't there a farm-house somewhere near where I could get something to eat?"

The appeal in his eyes was so plaintive that I could not help smiling. Thereat he smiled back.

"It is a beastly pickle, isn't it?" he said. "The next time I'll arrange to have a man follow me with lunch."

It was only a quarter of a mile to my cottage. "Come along with me," I said. "I'll fix you up."

He grinned gratefully, and trudged along beside me until we came to the cottage. I called for Charles and sent him off with the horse. By the time he returned, my guest was feeling considerably better, having postponed famine by the aid of whiskey and soda. He sat down to dinner with the air of a king come into his own. For a time he ate silently but strenuously, then he looked up at me.

"They don't give us such food at the club, no, sir-ee, and as for the wines, they can't compare with your claret. Funny to think of finding such things down here in the country, away off at the end of an empty beach. I did n't know there was a civilized man within fifty miles of here. Do you happen to come from New York?"

"Originally," I made answer. "But it was some time ago."

"Funny thing, New York," said my guest. "When I'm back there I think I'd like to be out in the open country, but as soon as I have my wish I'm crazy for the old burg. I've been down at the Penguin now for more than two weeks, and I don't suppose an hour of the day passes when I don't long for the scenery of Broadway. The worst time is at night. I can sit on the club porch and fairly hear the

Elevated sizzle by. Sometimes it seems as if I really could n't stand it any longer."

"Why do you?" I asked.

"There are reasons, good and sufficient reasons," he answered, with a slow smile. "Reasons for which I might be living in Kamchatka as well as anywhere else."

He looked at me intently for a few seconds, then lighted a cigarette.

"You're not inquisitive, are you? First rule to success in any business affair. However, there are certain facts you are entitled to have: my name is Rodney Islip, and I'm a broker, offices at 57 Wall Street, where I'd be glad to execute any orders for you at any time of year—though between you and me the present is a particularly bad time to invest in anything, not even excluding British consols or Government bonds. This recent French smash put lots of people out of business. You've heard of it, I suppose—the most outrageous swindle since Whitaker Wright."

"I read of it in the papers. It seems this man Etienne induced half the poor of Paris to trust their savings to him, and then played one company into the hands of another until the bubble burst—is n't that about it?"

The man in tweeds nodded. He threw back his head and blew a cloud of smoke in an upward spiral. "So little difference," said he, "between absolute triumph and absolute defeat. A jerk of the ticker may convert the greatest benefactor into the deepest villain. For Etienne—though I think that's only a pseudonym of his—is undoubtedly a villain when you think of the numberless lifetime savings he has swept away. Why will people trust a promoter? Have n't they all of history to judge by?"

"History teaches that people are always ready to be fooled," I answered. "However, I don't blame them. If a man's nerve was only big enough I'd follow him myself."

Islip looked at me with a merry twinkle.

"The solitary life makes you a philosopher," he said. "I envy you. I'm as restless as a hawk."

I smiled. "An uneasy conscience?"

"No; I'm no Etienne. I believe the only place for such men is under lock and key. But I hate to sit still and think—in my present condition."

He did not seem disposed to explain that position, and I would not press him.

After a time we adjourned to my balcony and sat there enjoying the day, carrying on a somewhat desultory conversation. I found that I liked this man; there was a frank camaraderie about him, an openness of face and spirit, that irresistibly appealed. He seemed the better

sort of young New Yorker, thoroughly optimistic, always at his ease. I could see he had the knack of knowing how to dress; even his loose, baggy outing clothes set well upon him.

"Do you ever shoot at gulls?" he asked, noting the birds that wheeled continually in from sea and over the cliffs.

"No; it's bad luck to shoot them. In stormy weather, when sailors can't see their hands before their faces, they can hear the beating of the gulls' wings and look out for hidden rocks. One comes to think a good deal of seafarers down this way."

"I dare say. It must be beastly work in a storm at sea."

"I often think that when I'm in bed on a bad night. The Shoal Light yonder keeps most of the ships away."

We smoked for a time in silence. "What a contrast," Islip said at length, "between this quiet beach and the folks at the club! I think I like this the better of the two, but I should want company."

"Many people over there now?" I asked.

"A goodish number."

"Who are they?" I inquired idly.

"Oh, the usual crowd of city magnates with their wives and families. James G. Purviance of Oil, with the Mrs. and two marriageable daughters. The Mrs. has her eyes on Colonel Fellowes, the man who judges the hackneys at all the shows. I think he'd rather stay single, but the nets are tightening, and Mrs. Purviance is n't going to let him slip. Then there's the Gregory family. The old man sits at the telephone most of the day, giving orders how to run his railroad, though he thinks he is off on a summer holiday; and the three girls and the boy cut capers on the golf-links, and get up theatricals in the evening. Then there are two very decent unattended bachelors, Philip Leroy and Arthur Savage—well, I suppose I might say three, because I'm a bachelor."

"Yes?" I asked in a tone that asked delicately for more.

"Oh, there's Mr. Divine of Rock Bottom Lead, and—let me see—there's a Miss Elizabeth Corey and her niece, Miss Graham, of New York."

I watched him out of the corner of my eye, but his tanned face was placidity itself.

"What are they like?" I asked.

"Very nice. Miss Corey is quite the *grande dame*, in a gentle way."

"And the niece?"

Now I detected a shift in Islip's position.

"Well, she's very nice, too, very nice. I knew her quite well in town." He broke off definitely.

I changed the subject. I did n't care very much about the rest of the guests at the club.

A little later Islip took up his fishing-rod and his empty basket, and we walked up the beach together. At the farther end I pointed him out his road home.

"May I drop in on you again if I'm in the neighborhood?" he asked as we said good-by.

"I wish you would. Next time I'll put you on to a place where you'll get all the fish your basket will hold. I've a little place of my own."

"Thanks. I know you don't care for the club, or I'd ask you up to dinner. If I get word of a sudden break in the market, I'll let you hear."

It was plain that he could n't keep his thoughts long from Wall Street. I smiled at the apparent incongruity of his words there on the beach, then I watched him climb the rocks and disappear. It was pleasant to have company, I considered, but for some reason I found the Ship, when I climbed on board to try my paints, rather lonely. I was not used to having two visitors in as many days.

#### IV.

I HAPPENED to be sitting in my den, writing, the following afternoon, when, glancing out of the big window that looks up the beach, I caught sight of a woman walking near the water. I picked up my binoculars and focused them on her. It proved to be Miss Graham, dressed in a riding-habit, and with a broad felt hat on her head. She was walking in a somewhat aimless fashion, skirting the waves as though she were playing with them. I saw her glance once at the Ship and once in the direction of my house.

I put down the glasses and laid my papers aside. When I went down-stairs I roused Charles out of a sound sleep in the kitchen.

"Do you remember how to make tea—good tea?" I asked him.

"Yes, Mr. Felix. Aren't you feeling well, sir?"

"Quite well. Please make some tea that shall be ready to serve in about an hour, and get out a box of those salty biscuits. Set the small table in the dining-room out in front of the door, with two chairs, and be ready to serve a lady and myself."

"Yes, Mr. Felix." Charles showed no surprise, though he had never received such an order since we had been at Alastair.

I picked up a cap, and left the house. As I did so I noticed that Miss Graham had stopped walking and was gathering shells. Half way to her, and she was still absorbed in the shells, which are quite unusually beautiful here; three-quarters of the way, and she was still playing with them. I had almost reached her, and was raising my cap to speak, before she turned and saw me. A flush of surprise rose to her cheeks.

"Good afternoon."

"Good afternoon, Mr. Hermit. Am I poaching on your preserves?"

"Not in the least. I make you free of the city."

There was a light in her blue eyes which I discovered that I remembered, but I found her riding-habit new and wonderfully prepossessing. I was taking stock of it when she interrupted me.

"I left my horse tied back in the woods. Have n't you ever seen a riding-habit before?"

"Yes. I beg your pardon, but it's so very becoming."

Again the quick flush, and an instant's look at the sand. Then she laughed and shook her riding-crop playfully at me.

"Beware, Mr. Hermit. Any man might say a thing like that, but I expect other things from you. That's one of the penalties of your position: you must be different. I look for the flavor of romance and adventure at Alastair." She laughed at my puzzled face. "Shall I go back home again?"

"No. I will try to remember. Did you come to see the sunset from the cliff?"

"Yes. My aunt has a headache and has stayed in bed all day. I bribed our waiter to save me a little supper and send it up to my room at eight o'clock, so, you see, I'm free of the club and dinner." She spoke impulsively, as I imagined she might do many things, and glanced at me whimsically to see of what I was thinking. She had some of the artlessness of a child playing truant from school. "I do hate stupid conventions, such as chaperons," she added, "especially in summer."

We walked past my cottage, which Miss Graham looked at with much curiosity, asking me a hundred questions about it—how I had discovered it, why I had bought it, how it was fashioned inside, and how I did my marketing. I told her I had the same butcher they had at the club.

"Oh!" she said. "I half hoped you lived by hunting and fishing, but I suppose you'd rather indulge in occasional beefsteaks."

"I'd rather live that way," said I, "but Charles, my man, would n't like that. He has a very cultivated palate."

When we came to the top of the cliff I felt like another Balboa discovering the Pacific. In front of us lay the entrance to the river, the sloping away of the dunes to the low, level fields of meadow-grass, and the distant background of the pines. Here and there the fields were dotted with beach marshmallow, windfalls delicately pink; along the sedgy banks grew clumps of cat-tails, their brown pennons stiff like so much bronze. At a little landing-stage, where the river had hollowed out a harbor in the bank, rode my cat-boat, the sail tightly furled, the mast rocking gently with the tide. As we looked a flock

of sand-snip rose from the tall rank grasses beyond the river and spread themselves like a sail against the western sky. Nature never looked so absolutely peaceful.

"Look," I said: a heron, red-legged, white-bodied, rose from the sedges and flapped his way up the stream. He called to his mate, a low, plaintive cry.

"It is beautiful," said the girl. "I don't wonder that you love it."

"Look," I said: the sun's kaleidoscope was changing, the pale yellows deepening, the pinks turning to reds, to oranges, to brilliant, blazing golds. Again it shifted and softened; red and yellow were saffron, orange the color of coral. Yet again, and the whole west was golden with a purple border, and then as the purple gained and the gold sank we could see the army of pines silhouetted against the dropping fire.

"They come, the armies come!" I cried. "See the spears, see the crested horsemen, see the banners in the rear!"

I turned and her eyes were shining, exulting in the beauty of the scene. Then we were silent for a time, until the blaze had softened and the battle dropped to a harmonious peace.

I found a seat for her, and stretched myself beside it.

"Tell me what you think," she said—"the stories you make up when you come here night after night."

I had known how that view of the sunset quiets, yet I was surprised to find her so still and calm. It seemed as though we had known each other for some time.

I have romanced to myself idly from that cliff when the yellow light lies over the sea and the river and the pines, and I drew upon my memory only to find it well stocked. Moreover, I learned much of the river people, of the birds that live in the marsh and of the animals of the woods. I had watched the purple grackle build his nest and the blue jay forage for his offspring when the summer was young, and I knew many a story of the sea-gulls. Miss Graham was a flattering listener, her lips slightly parted, her eyes alight with interest.

"You must be hungry," I said at last, "lunch at noon, no supper until eight. I should like to offer you my cottage's hospitality."

I was looking for the flush that I knew would come, and was not disappointed.

"Thank you," she answered, "but, you see—what would people think if they looked in your dining-room window and saw me taking tea alone with you?"

"People don't look in my dining-room window," I answered.

She shook her head so decisively that I knew she meant it.

"At least, we will have a cup of tea on the beach," I said, "out



of doors—oh, a dozen yards from the cottage, where all the world may see us if they choose.”

“Splendid!” she cried, and, jumping up, led the way down from the heights.

On the smooth sand some distance from my door Charles had placed the little table. Two chairs faced each other; plates, napkins, and a centre-piece of beach-marshmallows were the decorations, and my man, as straight and rigid as an Egyptian idol, stood a short distance off. Miss Graham gave a little cry of pleasure.

“It’s like the Arabian Nights!” she exclaimed. “The whole thing seems to have sprung out of the sand.”

I seated her at the table.

“You may serve the tea, Charles,” I ordered.

He brought forth the tea-pot, and was about to pour the tea into our cups when Miss Graham expostulated. “It’s the woman’s place to do that!” she exclaimed, and Charles surrendered the tea-pot into her care.

“How many lumps of sugar?” she asked, with the delicate superiority of a hostess to a guest.

“Two.”

“Will you have lemon or cream?” There were both; I thanked my stars that Charles was so thoughtful.

“Lemon.”

I received my tea-cup and a moment later had the satisfaction of hearing Miss Graham say that the brew was delicious. “And such pretty cups! I don’t believe you’re a bit of a hermit, but a very pampered old sybarite.”

“We use these only on state occasions, for our honored guests,” I explained.

“But I don’t feel as if this were a state occasion,” she answered. “It seems quite as though we’d been doing this all summer.”

“I wish we had,” I said quickly.

“I mean, it seems so usual,” she said. “And yet, in reality, you hardly know me at all; why, you have n’t even met Aunt Elizabeth yet.”

“No, that’s true,” I agreed. “But then, on the other hand, you don’t know such a very great deal about me.”

“It’s the very fact that we know so little about each other in the usual ways, and so much in other ways,” Miss Graham attempted to explain, “that makes everything so nice. We’re both so much interested in the Ship and its history, you know.”

“We are,” I answered. “That reminds me that I was to tell you all about the Ship some time.”

“Yes.” She looked off to where the boat lay shining like mahogany

in the yellow afterglow. "But don't you think we'd better wait until we're on board again. The smell of tar and the feel of the wood will make it so much more real."

"Then, you'll come——" I began, and stopped, for Miss Graham was looking past me at the door of my house. I turned to see Islip there, a broad smile wreathing his face.

"Well, well, well!" he remarked, advancing. "What a charming idyl! Really, I had no idea when I came in at the back door that I should find such a pretty picture awaiting me in front." He bowed to Miss Graham. "Where is the horse, Barbara, that goes with your habit?"

"I left him in the woods. He's used to standing." She turned to me. "Mr. Selden, have you met Mr. Islip?"

"Yesterday," I answered. "He lunched here."

"Yes," put in Islip; "and he gave me as good a lunch as he's giving you tea. Really, Selden, you're not living up to your reputation as a recluse." He paused, looking from Miss Graham to me. "I hate an interloper, but I'm afraid that's the part assigned me. When you didn't appear at dinner, and couldn't be found, I volunteered to hunt. I was getting quite worried over the disappearance. Your Aunt Elizabeth——"

"Is ill in bed with a headache," said Miss Graham.

"Quite so; so we didn't like to tell her. I took all the responsibility on myself."

I may have looked somewhat sharply at Islip at these words, for when I turned to the girl I caught an amused gleam in her eyes.

"Thank you, Rodney. Aunt Elizabeth would thank you, too, if she knew."

The young man flushed and bit his lip. Miss Graham had a provoking tone when she wished. I felt sorry for him.

"Won't you sit down and have some tea?" I asked.

He shook his head. "I must be getting back, now I have found her."

He was too polite to look at his watch, but we both knew what he was thinking. "I left my horse in your back yard."

Miss Graham rose. "I must go, too. Thank you, Mr. Selden, for the sunset and the tea. Mr. Islip will find my horse and go back with me." Her eyes were dancing as she looked from one to the other of us men, and I hardly wonder, for I felt distinctly out of sorts all of a sudden, and Islip's face was n't as cheerful as usual.

Charles brought Islip's horse down to the beach, and we three walked up to the point in the pines where Miss Graham had left her mount. There we separated.

"By the way, Selden," said Islip, "the market's shaky; slumping

all yesterday and started in to-day. Better look out for a squall." He grinned as he disappeared.

Charles was clearing away the remains of the tea-party when I returned.

"Sorry, Mr. Felix," said he. "I tried to keep the gentleman away, but he would come out. Said he wanted to see you on pressing business."

"That's all right, Charles. He came to get my guest. We could n't have sat there drinking tea all night."

"No, of course not, sir, of course not."

I turned to go indoors. "By the way, Charles, that tea was splendid; you did yourself proud. Get me out a bottle of Scotch. I think I'll have a little bracer with supper."

By the time supper was finished I was still thinking about the Penguin Club, which was a very singular thing, because ordinarily I had no use for the place.

## V.

THREE days passed before anything further happened to disturb my equanimity of mind, and I was getting back to my accustomed serene outlook on the beach when at dinner I found a tiny note lying at my plate. Charles frequently stopped at the Penguin Club on his way from marketing, to see if by chance any mail had lodged there for me. This time he had discovered the diminutive missive aforesaid tucked into the box that was reserved for me, and which usually contained only the daily papers. The envelope was square and of a delicate shade between violet and gray, and my name was written on it in a fine, bold hand. Inside was a single sheet:

MY DEAR MR. PIRATE OR HERMIT (whichever you are):

I shall visit the Ship Friday afternoon—when the tide is low.

There was no name, not even a bare initial.

I looked at my calendar—I was apt to forget the days of the week—and found that it was already Friday. I folded up the note and put it in my pocket, hardly knowing whether to be vexed or pleased.

The truth of the matter is that I found Miss Graham's last visit disconcerting. It seemed absurd, but she had in some strange manner changed the tone of the beach. Instead of being a place for calm, solitary musing, it had assumed the aspect of a spot made for company. I had never before felt the need of pointing out the pink shades of the sands and the golden crests of the rolling combers, nor of requiring another's admiration of the circling gulls. Now I did, and the result was that the more beautiful the beach, the more restless was I, and this did not suit me at all. I was not so dull as to miss the cause of this

change, and that was the reason why the note both vexed and pleased me. I was vexed that I should be glad, and yet glad that I was in the way of being further vexed.

I looked at the barometer after dinner: it was falling. I glanced at the sky: it was still a deep, dome-like blue, but there were clouds stealing across it that betokened storm. The wind was veering into the northeast; we might have bad weather at a moment's notice.

At the appointed time I went up the beach and clambered aboard the ship. There was no one on board. I descended into the cabin; that was empty. I climbed the stairs, and, coming again on deck, saw Miss Graham starting across the causeway. It was low tide, and the path was above water, covered with shells and barnacles. I threw over a rope-ladder that I had made and hung at the side, and helped her on board. She had on a soft, white lace hat that dropped at the edges and looked delightfully summery. Her gown was white; indeed, the only color she wore was a gold chain and locket that hung low about her neck. She pointed proudly to her stout tan walking-shoes.

"I am wiser to-day," she said; "much more of a sea-woman."

I had thought once before that I had tasted fully the sense of exploration of the Ship, but now I found that I had not. Like two inquisitive children playing at being explorers, we ransacked every corner of the cabin, thumping the boards for secret hiding-places, peering into the dim recesses of the bunks. She opened the brass-bound chest. "There was nothing found in it?" she asked.

"Nothing."

"It seems a shame. How are we ever to find the clue if not in the chest?"

"We must look for it out of doors," I said. "Perhaps if we wish hard enough, the spirits of the old rovers will come back."

So I took cushions that lay with my painting things and made her a seat on deck, and I lighted my pipe, and told her all I had dreamed about the Ship, and how I was sure, if we only had sufficient faith, that a man would come out of the sea to sail her again and bring her as fine adventures as any she had known.

"How different you are from most of the men I have met!" she said. "Now, you seem quite in your setting. It almost makes me doubt that I'm only six hours from town."

"You're not, you're a thousand miles from town, in another world, in another sphere. We don't talk the language of town out here on the Ship; we talk a different tongue."

She shifted so that she could look over the sea, her chin still propped in her hand. "Talk that tongue," she said in that little tone of command peculiar to her.

I talked of the sea and ships, of treasures hidden under the waves,

of derelicts that floated for years without being sighted, of the Ancient Mariner and the Flying Dutchman and all the thousand and one legends of ghost ships and their crews. Meanwhile I watched her, took in the dreamy lustre of her eyes—gray that shaded to blue—the soft brown color of her cheeks and brow, the curling gold of her hair beneath her big white hat, and the delicate little hand that pillowed her chin. I noted the locket, oval and flat, with her initials B. G. intertwined, and the heavy gold links of the chain that softly stirred with her even breaths. She was a child listening to world-old stories, but I knew she was also a woman who had come to change Alastair.

I stopped, and for a time we both sat silent, while the benediction of that glorious afternoon rested upon our spirits. There seemed no limitation to the world. The sea stretched out far past the Shifting Shoal and melted into the sky, and that in turn rose immeasurably high. Only the white clouds flecked the deep blue, casting patches of shade, silver-tipped, upon the waves, and that gave us the lure of contrast.

Barbara looked up—I think it was then that I first called her Barbara consciously to myself—and over at me.

“The world itself is so much more wonderful than anything it contains, and the beauty of it all so much greater than any single beauty, is n’t it?”

I could not agree, looking into her deep, serious eyes, so I held my peace.

“Why is it, I wonder, that we only think these things, only really live, so rarely?”

There was something in her words that made me hope; they seemed to say that she had not often felt thus.

“One exists so much, but lives so little,” I said; “but I could imagine circumstances when one would be always living.”

Her eyes changed, the depths in them vanished, there lay only the surface light that mocked me.

“One?” she echoed.

“Two,” I answered. The moment of thought was over; she had changed as swiftly as the shadow of one of those clouds flying beneath the sun.

“You are a great dreamer,” she said. “Are you also a man of action, I wonder?”

“Give me the chance.”

“Give you the chance? Men of action don’t wait for the chance; they make it.”

“If I were Canute, I would order the tide to come in.”

The red blood flushed her cheeks, her eyelids dropped. I forget everything but the picture that she made—the loveliest picture that I had ever seen or dreamed.

Next moment she sprang up. "But the tide is still out," she said, "and all your wishes will not bring it in. I must be going home."

I was up and standing beside her, leaning on the bulwark. "But you will come again? You'll come again to the Ship and take tea with me, or take supper on the Ship? When will it be?"

"Wait; not for a day or two."

She crossed the deck, and, drawing out a small handkerchief, held it to the breeze.

"The wind is from the northeast," she said. "That means a storm. We may have to wait many days."

"Several, not many," I answered.

She gave a little cry; the handkerchief had blown from her hand and over to the shore.

"Get it for me," she said.

The inland sea was low; I recovered the handkerchief and came back, to find her half way across the causeway.

"Thank you. This is the second way you devised of leaving the ship on foot."

"But it's not the best way," I answered.

I went with her to the great gate of the club and said good-night.

"Oh!" said she. "We forgot and left the cushions lying on the deck. It may rain. A good sailor should make things tight."

"I will," I assured her.

A storm was certainly coming; it sang in the boughs of the pines as I hurried through them, it grew in the gathering clouds that hid the beach, it roared in the loud waves that threw themselves on the shore.

I crossed the mussel-backed path, and climbed on the ship. As I picked up the cushions something slid from them on to the deck. It was a locket, the locket she had worn on the chain about her neck, and it lay open, face upward, looking at me. I saw a small, round photograph of Rodney Islip.

## VI.

THERE was no mistaking those features; they belonged as unquestionably to the man in tweeds as did the locket to Barbara Graham. Moreover, the photograph did him justice, and showed an extremely prepossessing, slightly smiling face, and that I considered added insult to the injury.

I snapped the locket together and put it in my breast pocket; then I hurled the cushions down the cabin-steps, pulled over the hatches, and left the Ship. I was in a very different humor from that of an hour before.

All the way down the beach I pondered the matter. How came the locket to have dropped from the chain, how came it to have fallen open

when the catch seemed so strong? But these were petty, trivial questions, the merest introductions to the great, all-absorbing question—how came Rodney Islip's picture there?

Alas, there seemed only one plausible explanation, and I remembered the slight air of proprietorship, the amused smile as though at some hidden joke, that had struck me when Islip had come upon us drinking tea. So they were in all likelihood engaged to be married, and I a poor joke that had been batted back and forth like a shuttlecock between them. I tried to laugh as one should who sees a clown, head in air, stumble over a broomstick, but the laugh was not even a passable imitation.

The storm was coming, and I was glad of it. I wanted no more of this fine weather when a man was led to lapse into rose-colored dreams and fancy himself a prince with the world as his realm.

The rain began to spin against my face. The storm was coming fast, and the waves barked angrily at my feet, like hounds yelping. But I would not run, I would not even turn up my coat-collar to keep off the wet; I would walk stolidly and let myself be soaked, for the poor, muddle-brained idiot that I was.

But what of her? Barbara Graham looked to me like a consummate flirt, playing with me when she was perhaps a trifle weary of the company of her accredited admirer. I knew that women sometimes did such things; I did not consider that she was the worst of her sex, but merely a striking instance of the sex's insincerity. Yet she had looked like a child, as guileless as a maid in short skirts and braided hair, when she had watched the sea, and then I remembered those sudden flashing changes when the imp of subtle mischief had danced in her blue-gray eyes. She was just a bundle of mischief, to whom a new man was simply so much sport. Yet I envied Islip with all the strength of my heart, which shows how strangely inconsistent I had grown.

Charles had foreseen the storm and had made things tight about the cottage; moreover, he had built a fire in the living-room, which was also the dining-room, to take the chill out of the rapidly dampening air. Ordinarily, I would have been glad to get in and change into dry clothes and stand in front of the fire, snug and comfortable, but now I was as much out of sorts as though the cottage had been a house of cards and had suddenly tumbled down about my head.

Poor Charles! He was soon to feel the rawness of my temper. I had no sooner closed the door than I called to him to get into his oilskins and go to McCullom's with an order to him to have my horse at the back door by eight.

"Yes, Mr. Felix," said Charles. "It's going to be a bad night, sir, asking your pardon."

"I'm going to the Penguin Club, Charles," I answered, "and I don't care if the heavens fall on the way."

"Yes, sir, very good, sir;" and Charles departed, wondering, doubtless, at the strange new master he had found. He knew what I thought of the Penguin.

I changed into my storm clothes—heavy riding breeches, with a leather jacket that buttoned up to my chin. I put the locket in a little pasteboard box and placed it in an inside pocket. Doubtless Miss Graham valued that small gold oval trinket with her monogram woven on the outside and her lover enconced inside, and she should not have to wait until the storm passed to learn that she had not lost it. It would do no harm for her to be disturbed for a few hours; then I would end it.

Charles came back and said that Nero would be around at eight. I had supper in silent state, and then sank into gloomy thought before the fire. Confound me for being such a simple, gullible fool, I who had scarcely laid eyes on a woman before at Alastair! That was the trouble with the affair. In town I should have been prepared, properly gyved and breast-plated, but here she had come upon me in my own natural wilderness, on my own simple beach, in my Ship of day dreams, where everything was as free and open as the sea.

Charles eyed me askance as I pulled my oilskin hat about my ears and vaulted upon Nero. Even the poor beast must have looked at me suspiciously, for this was no night for riding on any simple errand. I must be the bearer of tidings, a figure stepped out of a rough-and-tumble story. Had I only known how that night was to carry me far afield, and how that ride be the first swift gallop into a strange and swirling enterprise!

The pines shot their water into my face as I galloped along the narrow road. The sandy footing gave now and again, and I had to let Nero's instinct save us from foundering in the bogs which the heavy rain was making of the country. The night was black as pitch; the wind, risen to a hurricane, screeched through the forest in a thousand varied voices, each more harsh and ominous than the last. Several times, riding out from the middle of the road, wet branches driven by the gale flung themselves against me and almost thudded me from my horse. I crouched low, bending forward for safety and that I might peer into the murky blackness of the road. Several times Nero stumbled and I almost pitched over his head.

The lights at the gate of the club were out; they were evidently not expecting visitors. I rode Nero to the stables, left him with a groom, and strode into the club's main hall. I must have presented a sorry spectacle; my tight-buttoned leather jacket, my riding-breeches and boots, all soaked and running with water, my hair and face



dripping when I took off my oilskin hat that buckled under my chin.

"Take my name to Miss Graham," I said to the clerk at the desk, and he recognized me and sent a buttons to find her.

"Miss Graham is in the sun-parlor on the porch to the right of the main-door," reported the buttons, "and says she will see you there."

I followed his directions to the porch enclosed with glass, and found Miss Graham sitting there with an elderly woman who proved to be her aunt, Miss Corey.

She presented me, and the elder lady, after making a few comments on the awful night, withdrew. Still standing, I put my hand into my inner pocket and drew forth the box with the locket.

"When I went back to the Ship this afternoon I found you had dropped the locket from your chain. Permit me to return it."

"Oh!" she said. "How good of you to bring it! I discovered it was gone and was afraid I might not be able to find it after the storm. Thank you so much, Mr. Selden."

I felt singularly cold and haughty, and seemed to detect a certain reserve also in her manner. The air of the Penguin Club was not conducive to informality.

I had intended to call her attention to the fact that the locket was open when I came upon it, but could not bring myself to do so in the face of the chill that seemed to have settled down upon us.

"Won't you sit down and talk to me?" she said, but I shook my head.

"I must be getting back. The storm is getting worse every minute. The wood road will soon be a swollen river."

There came a growl of thunder and a flash of livid lightning. Miss Graham scarcely moved a muscle. "I love storms," she said, "but I don't blame you for wanting to get home as soon as you can. You must be soaked even in those clothes."

I looked at my rough attire, and then at the dainty white evening gown she wore, and laughed a little sharply at the contrast.

"It's lucky I don't often come to the club," I said. "They would probably warn me from the premises as a scarecrow of ill omen."

Rodney Islip came on to the porch, in evening dress, as though to emphasize my own incongruities.

"Will you dance, Barbara?" he said. "They're playing one of your favorite waltzes." Then he discovered me. "Hello, old chap!" said he. "How the deuce came you here? You don't mean to tell me you rode through the thick of this storm?"

Petty resentment got the better of me; I barely noticed him, and bowed to the girl.

"Don't let me keep you, Miss Graham. My mission is over. Good night."

She held out her hand; I barely touched it. I was at the door when Rodney spoke. "I say, old man, have you seen the evening papers? Terrible times in France, more trouble on the market; let me get you the news." He was so full of the stock exchange himself that he thought we must all be interested.

"No, I thank you," I answered bluntly, and went out, scorning myself for my rudeness to this chap whose only fault lay in the fact that Miss Graham cared so much about him. I was to be still more scornful of this rudeness to him in the days to come.

I stood in the shadow while they passed me, then I stole back to the glass-covered porch and looked in for a moment at the dancing. I watched Islip lead Miss Graham on to the floor and float away with her, and I caught sight of the locket hanging on its chain about her throat. She looked very fair and lovely in her white gown, with her neck bare, and Islip looked very happy as he danced with her. I looked again at my own rough, uncouth garb. This was no place for me. Suddenly I hated the Penguin Club and all it contained, all its civilization, all its clothes and dances. I would be off to my little hut in the dunes, with no one but Charles by, and he my very humble servant.

Nero was ready, and I swung myself up and plunged off again into the night. Flashes of lightning showed me the depth of the water in the woods. I ploughed my way homeward furiously, caring nothing what happened, riding as though a legion of devils pursued.

I paid no attention to Charles's fire and the hot grog that he had ready. I flung off my sodden clothes and went to bed, finding my one satisfaction in the crashing guns of the thunder that seemed to bombard Alastair from the sky. It was certainly the night for any mysterious deed, I remember thinking as I fell asleep.

## VII.

I MUST have been asleep for some time when a sudden sky-cracking crash of thunder brought me wide awake. An instinctive movement made me jump out of bed and go to the front window which looks out upon the sea. The blackness of the pit, and only the roar of the waves against the cliff! Then while I peered into the night came a flash of lightning, revealing the beach and the waves and the open sea with startling clearness. The scene was over in the time it takes to tell it, but I had seen something—a long ship's boat, oar-blades flashing, half way between the light of the Shifting Shoal and Alastair. There followed blackness, and another crash of the sky's guns.

I waited, my eyes trained on the spot, and again came the flash, and now, out near the Shoal, I saw a long, black schooner, bare of

canvas, pitching like mad in the moil of an angry sea. She was not on the Shoal—she might be some distance off it—but she was tasting a very nasty squall. Darkness, another peal, more lightning, and now I saw that the long boat, shooting furiously landward, was heading towards me, was making straight for the beach as fast as the waves and the oarsmen could drive her. Another lifting of night, and I saw a tall man—he seemed strangely, uncannily tall—half standing, half stooping in the stern sheets, the ends of a cape flying past him in the gale.

When I could see again the long boat was making ready for the dash into the roaring surf. The oarsmen—there were some twelve—were laboring to keep the bow straight on. The tall man was standing up to see where he should go, and I caught sight of his white and storm-distorted face. I could not move, I could not utter a cry; I stood transfixed, scarce breathing, my body taut, waiting to see what would happen next.

Seconds passed in the darkness, then a flash, and I saw that the boat had weathered the worst of the surf, and was grinding on the shore. Four of the men had leaped out and were hauling hard at the sides; the steersman, gaunt and black, still clutched the tiller, half crouching, and was shouting. Succeeding darkness gave me a chance to wonder what manner of men were these making for Alastair, deserting their ship on the coast, and landing where there was no harbor, and only a shingle beach. Light again, and I stood dumfounded, transfixed, for I saw a little procession marching up the beach to the pines east of me: first the tall man in the long, black, flapping cloak, then two men bearing a good-sized box between them, and then two others, carrying what looked to me like shovels. Darkness, a terrible roar of thunder, and I pinched myself to make sure that I was awake.

I struck a match and held it behind my hand in order that no signal should be given. My watch told me the hour was half past one. I found that I was shivering from the cold, and slipped into my coat. At every flash of light I was back at the window, raking the beach with my eyes. I saw nothing but the grounded boat, with a number of men standing by, and far off the tossing bulk of the schooner.

I did not even dare step into the hall to call Charles, so afraid was I of losing something of this remarkable sight. Minutes passed. I kept my watch in my hand. Flash succeeded flash at greater intervals, but the scene was still the same: the boat evidently waiting, the farther reaches of the beach empty.

Half an hour had gone when my patience was rewarded. The same procession appeared from the pines, minus only—so far as I could see—the box that two of them had carried. There was a long interval of blackness, and then I saw the long boat plunging again through

the breakers, and the crew struggling to keep her righted with their oars. I could see the boat was sharp at either end, and the men no novices at the dangerous work of beaching. They were gone, going back to their schooner, and I felt that the spirit of mystery was lifting from Alastair.

Still I waited, and in time the scene lighted, and I saw that the boat had left something: the tall, cloaked man still stood upon the beach, gazing seaward as though to catch the last of his mates. I remember that even in that brief instant I felt there was something strange about him, something fantastic, something out of keeping with the New England shore.

Darkness shut in, the roar of thunder lessened, the lightning passed; the outer world only sent me the deep, distant booming of the sea upon the cliff. I stumbled back to bed and pulled the clothes about me, full of wonder at what my eyes had seen.

I lay there for a long time, thinking, conjecturing what all this strange matter meant. Somehow, my quiet beach had been transformed; the space between the cliffs now shadowed forth a mystery, and yet, preposterous as the idea seemed, I felt in some way that I had always expected a remarkable something to happen, my dreams in some way to come true, for Alastair was no common place and was fit for some surprising history.

In time I dropped asleep, to dream of queer things.

### VIII.

WHEN I awoke in the morning I was more than half of the mind that I had dreamed of the lightning's singular pictures, or at least that, being suddenly startled from sound sleep and dazzled by successive flashes and stunned by the roar of thunder, my imagination had played some trick on me. Anything else seemed too remarkable to be believed. Yet I could not quite convince myself that I had not seen the tormented schooner, the landing on the beach of the long boat, the march into the pines, and the final picture of that tall, gaunt figure gazing seaward. I could not believe that my imagination or my dreams could be so vivid as my remembrance of those scenes.

I questioned Charles closely at breakfast as to how he had passed the night. It seemed that he had slept stolidly through all the uproar. Even had he not, he would probably have seen nothing, for his room was at the back of the house.

The storm continued, though with lessened violence. After breakfast I ventured out, dressed for a wetting, and went first to the place where, as I remembered, the long boat had been beached. The waves had done away with all traces of the keel. Then I followed as nearly as I could the path which the strangers had taken to the pines; but

the wind and rain had obliterated the footsteps, if there had ever been any there. I poked into the pines, only to be drenched by waterfalls for my pains. The mystery was as deep as ever when I finally desisted and went back to shelter.

After some thought, I determined to keep my secret to myself. Charles would respectfully listen to my statement, but without further evidence he would be only too apt, taking the facts in conjunction with my mysterious ride to the club in the evening, to believe I had dreamed it all. What would a schooner's crew be doing on our lonely beach in the height of a midnight storm? A sensible man would naturally be inclined to doubt.

I settled down to work, and, shutting my mind both to the mystery and to Miss Graham, succeeded in getting a good deal done by night. The next day I passed in similar fashion, living in quiet comfort so long as the storm lasted.

The third day broke fair, and early in the morning I swept the sea and the beach with my binoculars. Never were sea and land more peaceful; the tempest appeared to have cleared the atmosphere and brought it to a new serenity. My work accomplished, I set out for the little river to the west of the cliff, to see how my catboat had weathered the gale. I found there was some bailing to be done, and then, called by a gentle breeze, I ran up sail and for an hour beat up the channel. The hot sun of noon sent me home, and I sat down to my mid-day dinner.

Charles had brought me papers and a note from the club. I ran through the papers first, to prove to myself how little I cared for the note, but at last I broke its seal.

I am going to hold you to your invitation for supper in the Ship now that the storm is over. May we have it to-day about six?

That was all, without even a signature.

I was in two minds as to what to do. I could not disappoint her without seeming more than churlish, without writing myself down once and for all as no gentleman, and yet the sight of her note roused much of my sleeping resentment. If I went, I would at least show her that two could play at her game.

I visited the larder and decided on a menu. Then I startled Charles half out of his senses, though to his credit be it said he never showed it. "You will pack these things"—I pointed out certain provisions—"in the wheelbarrow, and take them on to the Ship on the beach. You will also take the folding-table from my study, and two folding-chairs, and set the table on the deck. I am going to take supper there with a lady at six. You can leave the iced tea in a bottle. Have the

supper ready at quarter before the hour, and then leave. We will not require any service."

"Yes, Mr. Felix," said Charles sedately. I frowned as though the whole proceeding bored me, and returned to my work.

At half past five I dressed carefully and left the house. As I walked up the beach I could not help but contrast this sunny scene with the night of storm. Whatever that night had brought to Alastair, it was clear I was not to know much about it.

I waited on the shore until Miss Graham appeared, and crossed the path with her to the Ship. I pulled the short rope-ladder over the side and helped her on board. We beheld a supper table immaculately set, and places for two.

Miss Graham was delighted, and I could not help relenting a little when I saw how very pleased she was. Moreover, I was the host, and she my guest, and I could not cast a shadow over my own feast. I tried, therefore, as best I could, to forget Islip and the locket, and to think only of what a beautiful late afternoon it was, of how fresh the smell of the sea came to the old Ship's decks, and of the beauty of the girl who sat across from me. I think she detected that at first I was making an effort, and so tried to help me, for she was very lively and talkative, making much sport of the supper, all the courses of which were spread before us at once, and of our having to wait upon ourselves.

When we had finished supper, I asked Miss Graham's permission to light a cigarette, and pushed my chair a little back from the table. There was a new moon in the sky, and I pointed it out to her.

"This is the finest hour of the day," I said. "If only the Ship would up anchor and take us for a sail!"

"If your pirate does n't come now, just after supper, with a crescent moon hanging right side up, I don't believe he ever will," put in the girl pensively.

Her playful words, combined with the ingenuous voice and the far-away, child-like dreaming of her eyes, aroused something of my old resentment. Almost before I knew what I was doing I had fallen a victim to an impulsive temptation, and was leaning on the table with my eyes fixed on her.

"Don't you think that a girl who's engaged to one man ought to tell other men so?"

She drew back sharply and faced me with astounded eyes.

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Selden?"

I was in for it, so plunged ahead. "That day you came to the Ship, I had no idea," I blundered on. "I did not know you were such a friend of Islip's."

"Well," she said, "and now that you know?"

"I think you should have told me. I ought to have known before that afternoon."

She was haughtiness itself. "Why, what affair was it of yours?"

I shrugged my shoulders. "I was entitled to know."

"I cannot understand why. What makes you think that Mr. Islip and I"—she hesitated a second—"are such old friends?"

Of a sudden we were in a very nasty tempest, facing each other.

"I happened to see his picture in your locket. It was lying open, face upward."

She did not even tap her foot; she simply sat still and looked her indignation at me.

"Really, Mr. Selden, I cannot see how that affects you. What reason could there be for my telling you my personal affairs?"

I stuck doggedly at it. "I think I should have been told," I repeated.

She gave me a single glance, then rose. "I am going back to the Penguin Club," she said.

I rose also. "Very good. I will see you there."

"No;" she turned to me sharply. "I prefer to go back alone."

She was imperious; I could be equally so.

"And I prefer to go with you. The pines are lonely, and it is growing late. I owe at least that duty to your aunt."

Then she tapped her foot impatiently, angrily. "You are very tiresome, Mr. Selden. I am my own mistress, and I do not want your company."

"And I will not let you go back alone."

"You are very rude." She looked over at the beach as if for some possible help. "Is there no one else?" she asked aloud.

There came a voice from the cabin steps behind me. "If you will permit me, mademoiselle, I should esteem it a great honor."

We both started as if we were shot, and faced about. A tall, somewhat angular man stood before us, hat in hand, bowing low to Miss Graham.

"I heard your question," he said, "and I took it on myself to answer it. Permit me." He stepped forward and placed himself at the girl's side.

"Who are you?" I asked, all amazement, for I was surprised out of my wits.

"My name is Pierre Duponceau," the stranger said, ignoring me and addressing Miss Graham, "and I count myself fortunate in coming on a lady in distress."

We both stood still, taking in the queer figure. Never had I seen a man just like him. He was dressed all in black, but his clothes were singularly rich and of strange pattern. From his shoulders hung a

black cloak held under his chin by two heavily wrought gold chains. Across his open waistcoat, which was black satin flowered in white, were three gold chains, and there were rings on his fingers. Moreover, his manner was strange, exotic, polished to a degree, and his voice had a peculiar, fascinating foreign softness that I had never heard in any other man. His height was over six feet. I recognized the figure that I had seen in the storm.

He was smiling easily, the least perturbed of the three. "Permit me, mademoiselle," he repeated, and offered Miss Graham his arm.

She shot one glance at me, and then, half smiling, placed her hand on his arm. So he led her across the deck to the ladder.

I was still dumb with surprise. I saw the man in black leap to the path, help Miss Graham down the ladder, cross the causeway, and disappear with her behind the cliff. Then I sat down on a chair. Was I awake or dreaming? A man had come out of the Ship at a crucial moment, and a man who, my instinct told me, was not of our age or people. I no longer recognized Alastair; I was beginning even to doubt my sober self.

## IX.

DARKNESS fell, and still the man in the cloak did not return, and I went back to the cottage with my curiosity unsatisfied. I did not know what to make of his sudden appearance, nor of the summary fashion in which he had interposed between Miss Graham and myself. He, a total stranger, escorting her home through the woods! And yet this phase of the matter did not so much surprise me, for I felt intuitively that we were dealing with a gentleman. As far as my recollection of sea-rovers went, I recalled that pirates had always been scrupulously polite in their relations with the gentler sex.

There was no gainsaying that this sudden apparition had interposed himself between Miss Graham and me, yet I did not resent this so much as I might have, because things had been coming to a very bad pass, and might speedily have resulted in even more serious trouble than had occurred.

I questioned Charles closely as to whether he had detected any suspicious characters prowling about the beach, but his answer was in the negative. "If you should notice anything unusual," I told him, "be sure to report it immediately to me." It was clear to me that something was happening of more substantial texture than a dream.

Later in the evening I lighted my pipe and walked in the direction of the Ship. As I came to the path I saw the man in the cloak sitting on deck, and hailed him.

"May I come on board, Monsieur Duponceau?"

He rose and peered at me through the dusk. "Is it the gentleman who dined here this afternoon?" he asked, somewhat suspiciously.



"The same."

"You are welcome," he answered, and I could not help smiling at his assumption of ownership.

He shook hands with me as I came on board, waved to the vacant chair, and poured me water in one of my own glasses.

"I must apologize that I have no wine to offer you," he said in such a manner that my likings instantly went out to him. "I should not even have had the pleasure of offering you this but for the fact that you yourself provided it."

"Will you smoke?" I handed him a cigar, which he accepted, and lighted with a match I furnished. For the first time I noticed a pair of heavy pistols on the table.

"You travel well guarded," said I, looking at them.

"I have need," he answered, "grave need." I looked closely at him. He was in perfect earnest, his pale face absolutely serious, his deep eyes set beneath black brows. He pushed his somewhat long hair back from a fine, broad forehead. "I do not know who you are, sir, but I take you for a friend—one I assure you of a class now sadly small."

"I live near the beach," I explained, "and my name is Selden. I imagine that you are a stranger to this shore?"

"An absolute stranger. I come from the other side of the ocean. This is the first time I have ever been to America."

I waited, but he would vouchsafe nothing further. So we sat and smoked silently, while I felt his keen eyes studying me.

"May I ask your age, Mr. Selden?" he said at length.

"Certainly. Twenty-eight."

"Ah! You are very much younger than I. I am somewhere between forty and fifty, one who has seen much, and so almost an old man."

I could not imagine what was coming.

"It is in reference to this afternoon," he said, as though in answer to my thoughts. "When I hear a woman in distress I am wroth, I cannot but interpose. Still, as I returned here this evening I thought that possibly you might feel aggrieved. Believe me, Mr. Selden, at the time I had eyes only for the lady." He paused, then went on: "If you will pardon a much older man, I would give you a bit of counsel. Never contend with a woman; let her have her way. Above all, never contend with a woman who cares for you."

"I have the least reason in the world to think that this one does," I answered.

He made no reply, but smoked thoughtfully. I suddenly found his further silence unendurable.

"What are your plans, sir?" I asked abruptly. "For I do not

suppose that you dropped down here entirely by chance, and intend to stay until chance again moves you away."

"No, I did not arrive solely by chance," he answered, "although that had much to do with it. But I expect to stay until fortune, be it good or bad, summons me. That is, always supposing, Mr. Selden, that you do not drive me away from your beach."

"I?" I said, much surprised. "How can your stay here hurt me?"

My new acquaintance let his eyes rest upon my face a moment, then smiled as though at a passing joke of his own.

"You have a saying that 'where ignorance is bliss 't is folly to be wise'; I will not explain, therefore, and only hope that you may never know; but"—and his eyes shifted for a moment from mine to the pistols on the table—"if you do know, it will not be a very pretty piece of information."

I clenched my pipe between my teeth; the night wind was stirring; the flavor of strange adventure hung over the Ship as strongly as the salt breeze from the sea. I felt myself indescribably fascinated. Duponceau drew his cloak somewhat closer around him, and muffled it about his chin, so that all of his face I could clearly see was his long, wonderful black eyes. Indeed, they were wonderful—those eyes of his. The more I looked into them, the more they held me, and yet the less I knew about the man himself.

I was just wondering if this Duponceau was not something of a hypnotist when I found that he was speaking in a soft, low, almost ruminative voice.

"I like you, Mr. Selden, I like you extremely, and so I would not bring you into any harm; and yet if you are my friend I shall most likely do so, for that curse was laid upon me in the past. I have had many friends and even more enemies, and some of the friends have turned enemies, but none of the enemies friends. I tell you this so that you may the better judge, because you must be one or the other. Nobody has ever been indifferent."

I could not detect arrogance; simply the statement of facts.

"I would rather be your friend," I answered.

He was silent again, gazing at and through me with his dreamy, speculative vision. I had the feeling that I was in a measure spell-bound—that I could not start a conversation for myself, could not act without his volition.

"There are reasons," he continued in time, "why I cannot tell you much. If I am not one of the world's great men by birth, I am by achievement. There was a Corsican born in the last century whom all the powers of Europe sought for years to bind and silence; there are many men there who would do the same for me. Wherever Napol-

eon went he brought strife; wherever I go strife follows." He ceased looking through me, and gazed at me. "You have your quiet beach, your snug house, your summer with the fair lady of this afternoon; do you still wish me to stay?"

"The Ship is any one's property," I said, "and the shore is free. If you want more, you have only to ask for it at my cottage."

"What would the lady say?" he continued.

"The lady has nothing whatever to say in the matter," I returned, annoyed at his continual reference to Miss Graham. "I am free to choose for myself."

Duponceau smiled. "Mr. Selden, you are a young man of spirit, but you are ignorant, very ignorant. It all depends on the lady. You would not weigh me in the balance for a moment if she willed otherwise. No one is free; there is always some other power. Even the Corsican could not withstand his star." The smile faded, vanished; Duponceau's eyes were stern and fixed.

"I have been called a pirate, a robber, a modern Juggernaut, but it was only because I had my vision, and could see farther than others could."

He was leagues away, his thoughts fighting. I watched him until his mind came back to me.

"Now," he said, "we will fight it out. I take you at your word—the Ship is mine, the shore any one's property."

Suddenly he rose and stood peering up the beach. "Some one is coming," he said, and I saw that his hands felt for the pistols on the table.

I looked, and saw Charles swinging a lantern. "It is only my servant," I answered.

"Can he be trusted?"

"Implicitly."

"Tell him who I am."

We waited until Charles came on board. He showed no surprise at seeing the two of us.

"I came for the dinner things, Mr. Felix," he stated, looking at me and ignoring Duponceau.

"Charles," I said, "this is Monsieur Duponceau, who has lately come to stay in this Ship. You are not to mention his presence here to any one, but will do whatever he asks. You need not take the things away; they may be of use to him in the cabin. Monsieur Duponceau, you may rely on Charles as on yourself."

Charles bowed to the man in black, a fine figure, gazing steadily at my man. I could not help noting the picture that he made, his hand still on the pistols, his soft black hat low upon his forehead, his cloak flung across his shoulder.

Charles turned to go. "Has there been any message for me?" I asked as an afterthought.

"No, Mr. Felix." Charles hesitated; "but I found a man prowling about the back road after supper, and, though I'd never seen him before, I could n't learn his business. He looked like a sly one, sir."

I turned to Duponceau; he was smiling.

"You see, Mr. Selden, how quickly my words find proof. Where I come strife follows."

### X.

SIGNS multiplied. When Charles and I returned to the house we found muddy footprints staining the dining-room floor and tracked across the kitchen. No intruders were to be seen, nor other evidence of their visit, but the mere fact that the sanctity of my home—hitherto always left open to the winds—had been invaded, angered me. I bade Charles see that the house was securely locked hereafter whenever he left it in my absence.

Over the mantel in my den hung two muskets, out-of-date but still capable of boring holes in the atmosphere. My little armory held a shotgun, for use in the marshes, and two revolvers, whose only use heretofore had been for target practice. I took them from the drawer and looked them over; they were ready for work when needed.

I sat on the porch, and considered the situation. Something was about to happen, something—I could not tell what—that centred around this man who had mysteriously taken possession of the Ship and proposed to offer combat on the sands. What he was or who he was I could not guess; speculation in those lines brought me immediately into blind alleys; but there was no doubt that in situation and character he was certainly the direct descendant of a more adventurous age. I was unmistakably drawn to him. I could see him as he stood on the beach, buffeted by the storm, gazing at the men who were pulling away, and as he had stepped from the hatchway, hat in hand, bowing to Barbara Graham with the chivalrous manner of a cavalier, and again as he sat across the table from me, his slender hands ready to seize upon the pistols, his eyes, full of amusement and audacity, looking straight into mine. There was no doubt about it, the Ship belonged to him by right of inheritance, and his arrival had brought me strange tidings. I thought over the matter a long time before I went to bed.

Early the next morning I took my dip in the sea, and was returning, clad in a bath-robe, when I caught sight of a man peering at me from the pines. I waved my towel, and he disappeared. As I was finishing dressing, a little later, I stepped out upon my balcony, and I saw the same man, much nearer now, gazing intently at the cottage. I hate spies, so I spoke somewhat angrily.

"Hi, there! What do you want?" I cried, beckoning to him.

He came forward rather sheepishly, and touched his hat.

"I was only taking a look at your house, sir."

"And is that what you were doing some twenty minutes ago?"

"Yes, sir; that's all I was doing."

"Are you an architect?" I demanded.

He wore a plain blue suit, with an old straw hat, and might have been almost anything.

He smiled. "No, I was merely looking about to see what there was to see. There was n't any harm meant."

"There is n't any harm done, but, then, there is n't anything to see. I'm not very partial to sight-seers, especially when they hide behind trees. If there's anything you want to ask me about, speak out."

He hesitated a moment. "A stranger—a tall man who speaks French—has n't stopped at your house, has he?"

"No. Is he a pal of yours?"

The man grinned. "Not exactly. Well, I won't trouble you any more. Good morning."

At breakfast I again cautioned Charles to remember that he knew nothing.

I could do no work in my present state of mind, so I slung my field-glasses over my shoulder and went to call on Duponceau. He was sitting at the cabin table, breakfasting on the remains of our last night's supper. My heart smote me.

"Why did n't you let me know? I could have brought you breakfast."

"It matters little; yesterday I obtained some food from a farmer, but that is too dangerous." He smiled. "I'm quite used to doing with little."

I sat down while he finished breakfast. After that we walked the short length of the cabin, Duponceau asking me a great many questions about the coast and the country inland. I told him what I could, and he seemed satisfied. Then I decided to take my easel and paints and go up on the cliff above the Ship to paint. "I can keep a good lookout from there of the farther beach," I said. "One can sweep it thoroughly from the cliff with a pair of glasses."

I settled down on the cliff, and for half an hour forgot everything but the scene in front of me. At the end of that time I looked up the distant beach with my glasses. Some one was sitting there, half way up. I studied the figure and decided that it was a woman, no other than Barbara Graham.

Pride is a curious quality. Sometimes it will not even last overnight. My one desire now was to have a few words with Miss Graham, so I left my easel as it stood, and went towards her.

She was half lying, half sitting, in the soft sand, some of which she had moulded into a cushion for her back, and a book lay open at her side, but she was not reading. She was gazing at the sea.

"What do you think of our pirate?"

She started, looked round at me, sat up, and clasped her knees with her hands. I sat down on the sand beside her.

"I was just thinking of him. I was thinking that I like him tremendously."

"Naturally. He rescued you from a very disagreeable fellow."

"Yes," she agreed, without looking at me; "and a girl can never forget a debt of gratitude for that sort of thing."

"I must apologize," I said, "for my rudeness. Of course it was no business of mine whose portrait you had in your locket."

"Of course not," she agreed again; "although it happens that was just the reason why I put it there."

"Put what there?"

"Put Rodney's portrait in the locket, and the locket where you would find it."

"You did? Why?"

"Oh, just to see what you would do—and you did it."

"Yes, I did," I admitted. "Then you're not——" but she interrupted by turning to me.

"Monsieur Duponceau was as polite as he could be, and laughed at all my protests on the way home, but I think he was running into some danger on my account. I believe he has come to Alastair to hide."

"I know he has."

"Oh, tell me all about it!" she begged.

"I know very little. He's an adventurer, and he's fled from Europe, and there are people very anxious to take him back, and he's going to live in the Ship. Moreover, it seems reasonably certain that there's going to be trouble."

"Is there?" she cried, half in excitement, half in delight. "Oh, let's help him!"

I found that I only needed this chance to avow myself openly.

"We will. I've decided to stand by him, whatever happens."

Barbara looked exceedingly delighted. "If I were only a man!" she exclaimed. "As it is, I'll have to do everything by proxy."

"You can help us a lot."

"How?"

"By coming to see us often and bringing us news of the outside world." I instantly identified myself with Duponceau. "That is, if it does n't begin to look too dangerous," I added.

She turned to face the ocean again. "I should like to do some-

thing to help him," she said, "because I like him. Suppose we go to see him now."

I picked up my easel and paints on the cliff, and we boarded the Ship.

At the foot of the cabin stairs Barbara saw the silver-mounted pistols blazing in the sun.

"Oh!" she said, looking at Duponceau, who stood in the door very tall and straight. "Shall you use those?"

"I should not be surprised," he answered gravely.

"Against whom? I have n't seen an enemy on the beach."

"You will see," he answered. "They will come—secretly—perhaps to-night."

"To-night!" she echoed. "And how many will there be?"

There was a grim little smile about his lips now. "I cannot tell; perhaps a dozen, possibly a score; that depends on how resolute a man they think me."

"I think you very resolute," she said soberly; "quite the bravest man I have ever seen."

Unquestionably there was no logic in this remark, and yet I could n't but own that I agreed with Barbara.

"To-night," she mused, her eyes deep with the deliberation of a general. "How will you defend the Ship—one against a dozen?"

"You forget Charles and me," I put in.

"Will you fight, too?" she asked.

"Surely. I looked up my weapons this morning and put them in order. I will bring them on board this afternoon and add them to Monsieur Duponceau's."

"And you, too, believe in the enemy?" she inquired.

"Most certainly. I saw one of them this morning."

Barbara sat down on one of the chairs I had left. "To think," she said, "that Captain Kidd should come to life again! But where is the buried treasure?"

I thought of the chest I had seen carried into the woods on the night of the storm, but said nothing. When I glanced at Duponceau he was smiling at Barbara. "This is a very desperate matter for me," he said, "but even the most desperate affairs are brightened by a woman. You are my good angel, mademoiselle."

He said it in such a way that Barbara could not but be pleased.

"Thank you, monsieur; and what plans have you made for defense?"

Duponceau outlined his plans. First of all he would stay well hidden from sight; then if his enemies should find him, there were three points of attack: from the open sea, from the cliff above the causeway, and from the beach beyond the protecting circle of rocks. We studied

each in turn, and planned how three men, well armed, could hold the Ship against a score. "I should like more ammunition than I have," Duponceau confessed.

"There is plenty in my cottage," I told him.

"Let's get it now," cried Barbara, "and some of the guns."

We went to the cottage, and Barbara, in her interest, forgot what she would have termed the proprieties, and entered, and looked about my dining-room and den while I collected cartridges and pistols. She insisted on helping Charles put up a quantity of food to carry to the Ship. At last we started forth again, she with the provisions, I with a shotgun and two revolvers. Half way down the beach two men came out of the pines and walked down to meet us.

"Where are you going with those guns?" one of them, a surly faced chap, demanded.

"What business is that of yours?" I asked.

He changed his tactics. "We're looking for a man who's reported to have landed somewhere on this beach a night or two ago."

"Yes," I said pleasantly, gazing absently at the sky.

"Well," went on the other, "where are you taking those guns?"

I looked at him angrily now, but before I could find words Barbara was speaking.

"If there is one thing I particularly dislike," she said, "it is curiosity. If you must know, we came out here to hunt sand-snipe, and we're just about to begin. That's all; you may go now;" and she waved her hand towards the pines.

The men were clearly surprised. They were more so when they saw the girl calmly sit down on the sand, motion me to do likewise, and proceed to load one of the revolvers. Shortly after, they withdrew, whispering to each other.

In order to disarm suspicion, we sat there some time, and I built miniature sand fortifications in order to teach Barbara the art of war.

"I wonder if I can learn to shoot?" she said presently. "If I meet many more like those, I shall be tempted to try."

I handed her a loaded pistol. "Aim at that rock out there," I said, pointing at one showing above the water.

She took aim, did not close her eyes, pulled the trigger. The report, sharp and clear, cut the silence of the beach like a knife. We saw the water splash where the bullet entered. A frightened gull screamed loudly away.

The little puff of smoke faded; all was still again.

Barbara looked at the revolver, then at me. Her lips were smiling, but her eyes were deep with excitement.

"The war has begun," I said. "That shot was to let the world know that Alastair is armed."



## XI.

IT was of the first importance that Monsieur Duponceau should keep himself well hid, and to this end he spent his days in the cabin of the Ship, coming out only when night had fallen, and then most circumspectly. There were not the same reasons for concealment in my case, however, so I boarded the Ship soon after I left Barbara that day and set up my easel as an excuse in case any chance observers should look across the beach and see me. This also gave me the chance to keep a careful lookout.

It was perhaps four o'clock when, as I sat on the gunwale of the Ship, sunning myself and leisurely smoking a pipe, I saw Charles approaching with a pitcher and glasses.

"The afternoon being so warm, I thought that you and the other gentleman might be wanting something cool to drink, sir," he explained, when he had come on board; "so I made a pitcher of claret cup."

"Much obliged to you, Charles. Take it down to the cabin, where it'll keep cool until we want it."

Charles disappeared with the clinking pitcher. When he returned I spoke again.

"What is Monsieur Duponceau doing?"

"He is lying in one of the bunks, sir, with his eyes wide open, and when he sees me, he says, sort of pleasant-like, 'You're trying to make me think I'm back in Patee, but unfortunately the setting is n't the same!'"

"I don't expect to be much at home for some time, Charles. I'm going to help Monsieur Duponceau here. We may need you suddenly, so keep an eye on the broken mast, and if you see a lamp or a flag come over at once. Otherwise, keep mum."

"Yes, Mr. Felix. I've been pestered all day with some of them skulking fellows that wants to know my business. May I land 'em one if they interfere?"

"You may land 'em one whenever you feel like it; only, land so hard that there won't be any come-back."

"Yes, I will, sir;" and Charles made so bold as to grin. I could see that the spirit of fight was taking hold of him also.

I went back to my pipe and my drowsy survey of the sea. There was little wind, and the oily rollers swept calmly in with a curiously machine-like rhythm. Far out the funnel of a south-bound steamer sent a black ribbon across the sky; to the west of the Shifting Shoal a sloop was lying to, waiting for the evening breezes. I half dozed, thinking what a peaceful scene it was.

Half an hour later I heard Duponceau call my name from the cabin stairs.

"It's getting intolerably warm down here; might it not be possible for me to come on deck if I kept in the shadow of the gunwale?"

I looked the situation over, and decided that no one could possibly see a man who hid at the side of the ship, keeping low down by the rail. I advised Duponceau of this, and then told him the moment when, the beach being clear, he might dart from the hatchway, and scurry across to shelter. This he did, and, with a sigh of thankfulness at having reached fresh outer air, he stretched himself in the shadow, and I sat opposite, facing him and watching the shore.

"I've been sleeping," Duponceau said, "so that I could stand watch to-night. What a beautiful world! But it's not like France; nothing is like France. And to think I may not see it again!"

"Why?" I asked.

"Because——" He hesitated. "Because I have enemies who would shut me away from the sea and the sky and the sun, and so I have to come to some lonely corner of the New World, and seek refuge. Ah, this new world of yours! It is good for the young, but not for those who have grown gray in the Old. There is only one world for them and one land for me—I love it as I might love a woman."

Foreigners have the habit of sentiment; it did not seem strange to me to listen to the thoughts of an exile spoken in a voice that was musically clear. The frankness of the man cleared away all barriers.

Suddenly looking up, I caught sight of Barbara coming towards us by the path behind the cliff. She carried a package under her arm. As I watched her descend carefully, I saw the two men that I had met in the morning come out of the pines and approach her. As she saw them appear, Barbara involuntarily glanced over to the Ship, and the men instantly turned their eyes in the same direction, and so caught sight of me.

"Sit still and keep very low," I whispered to Duponceau, under cover of my pipe.

Barbara took a step forward.

"Not so fast. Where are you going?" demanded the surly faced chap.

"I am going—where I choose," she answered, and took another step.

"You're not going out to that Ship," he stated. "There's some one hiding here we mean to find."

I caught his words and jumped to my feet.

"What's the trouble? Miss Graham, won't you come on board?"

I was careful to lean directly over Duponceau, in order to shield him better.

"We'll all three come," announced the man.

I was put out; it would be impossible for Duponceau to crawl from

the shelter of the gunwale to the cabin now without being seen. I temporized.

"Well," said I, "suppose——"

"Come on," said the leader to Barbara; "you were very anxious before." He stepped forward.

"Hold up!" I cried, pretending to get angry. "I did n't ask you to come over here. It happens that I'm painting, and don't wish to be disturbed."

The other man laughed. "We won't hurt your painting. I've never been over that boat, and she looks interesting."

Duponceau was still crouching low under me. It was time for me to be emphatic.

"The Ship is mine. I bought it when I bought my cottage. I don't want you on board, and if you try to come on I shall certainly keep you off."

Now Barbara spoke up. "If all this contending is over me," she said, "I'll give up my visit to-day. Some other day will do as well, Mr. Selden. Good-afternoon;" and she started away.

"Not so fast!" The surly faced man was beside her, had his hand on her arm. "You will either go with us, miss, or he gives us a chance to search that boat."

I could scarcely keep Duponceau crouching longer; I could feel that his fingers were itching for one of his revolvers.

"Stop!" called a voice from the cliff, and I saw Rodney Islip standing there. He took in at a flash that Barbara was in trouble, and came leaping to her aid. "What the devil's this? Take your hand away!" and he raised his walking-stick in the man's face. The latter, startled at Islip's violence, dropped Barbara's arm and fell back.

"Now, what do you fellows want here?" demanded Islip. "I've a mind to thrash you both for touching a lady."

"We're going on board that boat," said the man; then he hesitated. "Or we'll take the lady with us."

"Oh, you will?" said Islip.

"Yes," said the leader, his confidence returned; "and I don't think you'll stop us."

Rodney and he squared. The fight would be two to one; Barbara was trembling.

"Now," I cried, and looked along my levelled pistol, "if it's come to fighting, we'll all be in the fight. Islip, bring Miss Graham on the boat. There's a bullet waiting for the man who stops you."

The men fell back, hesitating, and, seizing advantage of the moment, Rodney took Barbara's hand and led her over the causeway. They came up the ladder and on board.

"That's all!" I cried to the men on shore. "You can go!"

I had the drop on them, and their hands did not even seek their pockets as they turned and went into the woods. But I knew that they were as sure of Duponceau's presence as if they had seen him on board.

"Well," said Islip, as he saw the strange figure of the Frenchman hidden behind the bulwark, "here's a pretty kettle of fish! So there is a mystery, and we're carrying guns."

"My dear lady," said Duponceau, rising, "I shall never forgive myself for causing you such distress."

But Barbara was not distressed; instead, she looked very much pleased.

I motioned Duponceau to go below to the cabin, and the others followed him there. I sat at the top of the steps, where I could both join in the conversation and watch the shore.

Barbara placed her package on the table. "I thought I was only bringing you provisions," said she, "but instead I've brought you a recruit. Mr. Islip, this is Monsieur Duponceau," and she added lightly, "the pirate of Alastair."

Islip shook hands. "So you're in on this, too, are you, Selden?" he called up to me. "All arrayed against the blood-hounds, I take it? Well, whatever the game is, count me in on it. I'll feel more as though I were back in little old New York."

"Good!" cried Barbara. "Now you've four men to man the Ship, counting Charles, and a spy at the club to bring you news and food."

She caught sight of the pitcher of claret and poured out four glasses. Then she raised one to her lips.

"I pledge myself in the defense of Monsieur Duponceau, who came out of the sea and found the land inhospitable!" she cried. "Drink with me!"

We drained our glasses.

"That's the oath of fidelity," she said, looking at Islip and me, and I think she knew she could trust us both to the end of the adventure.

The sun was dropping low, and Barbara prepared to leave the Ship. Islip started to join her.

"No," she said; "I'd rather go alone. No one will stop me now. You must stay here and stand watch during the night."

He bowed, but insisted upon escorting her ashore and setting her on the path homeward. Then he came back to the Ship.

"It's curious," he remarked to me as we sat alone on deck, "but I don't feel as though I were living in the twentieth century any longer. It seems as if I'd gone back to about the sixteenth. I'm just thirsting for a revolver and a chance to get in a fight. I didn't know I was really so much of a savage."

"Same here," I answered. "I've always longed to have a fight on this Ship. Then there's something about this man I can't resist."

When it fell dark we supped on the food Barbara had brought, and then we divided up the watch for the night.

## XII.

WE were not yet sufficiently good sailors to drop to sleep in the stuffy bunks below when it was not our turn on watch. Rodney tried it, but soon came up on deck, announcing that he never had felt more wide awake in his life and believed he could last the night through without a wink. So we three busied ourselves making the Ship snug, and Rodney in addition in vainly trying to interrogate Duponceau.

There was no doubt but that in the direction of the beach we were practically impregnable. Invaders would first have to climb the rocks and then splash through the water, or, if they came by the causeway, pass the narrow defile at the base of the cliff. In either case we would have ample chance to defend ourselves, and even if they succeeded in reaching the Ship's side we would have the advantage of being six feet above them. I pulled in the rope ladder that still hung over the side and stowed it away in a cupboard in the cabin. When we had done everything precaution could suggest, we three gathered on the forward deck and sat with our backs to the sea, facing the shore.

The night was clear and cool; there was little sound beyond the regular throbbing of the waves on the beach and the occasional distant call of a bittern from the marshes up-river. As I listened to the talk of the other two, I realized that Rodney was slipping under that same indescribable fascination of Duponceau's as readily as I had done.

"But I say," put in Islip at last, "do you mean to tell me that you came all the way over here without any luggage, that you let those chaps land you just as you were, without anything else?"

"Without anything else save a little box of papers"—Duponceau smiled—"and each paper worth many thousand times its weight in gold."

"Good Heavens!" said Islip. "What kind of securities were those?"

"See how I trust you," returned the other. "We hid the box in the ground back in the woods, between two roots of a hemlock, one pointing south by the compass, the other west. The hemlock is ten paces west of a scarred fir that was stripped of its sea branches by lightning."

"I know the tree," said I.

Rodney rubbed his hands joyfully. "Ye gods and little fishes, think of it! Ever since I was a boy I've wanted to have my hand in a buried treasure. We used to hide tin cans in the backyard, just to

dig them up again. And now to think that I've come across a real treasure! What would those other boys say!"

"Here's one of them now," I put in. "I used to do the very same thing myself."

Duponceau was smiling again. "You can both take it lightly," he said, "because you do not know. Many men, aye, many governments, would give almost anything for a chance at that box out there."

"Better and better. The higher the interest, the more sport for us," said Rodney. "I've always wanted to be mixed up in an international affray. I'm more than ever glad I decided to come to the Penguin, for more reasons than one;" and he looked across slyly at me.

I could not help liking him, even if he was in love with Barbara; he was so open and frank about everything.

After a time Duponceau went below for a two hours' nap, and Islip and I sat on deck, smoking and chatting. About midnight the air grew colder, and we walked to warm ourselves.

"Do you think," said Rodney finally, "that we might go on a hunt for that tree? My eyes are fairly itching to follow that trail, and we might reconnoitre the enemy's position you know. We could make tracks back to the Ship if there was any need."

"Wait till Duponceau comes up, and we'll ask him," I suggested.

In time, at the end of his midnight nap, Duponceau came on deck, and gave us permission to take a survey of the shore. "If I need you," he said, "I'll make the call of the osprey—listen;" and he sent forth a long, quavering cry that was echoed back to us, from cliff and beach.

Armed with revolvers, Rodney and I slipped out of the Ship, forded the lake, and, keeping as close as we could to the rocks, for the night was bright with stars, headed towards the pines.

We said not a word, but tip-toe, I leading, he following, we skirted the woods until we came to the scarred fir. There I turned to look back; the beach lay a bright silver field sloping to the sea, which rippled like quicksilver beneath the stars. The beach was empty as the desert, and still, save for the lapping waves.

"Ten paces to the east," whispered Rodney, and, with infinite caution, we tip-toed through the pines. The trees are very thick there; we felt as if ploughing into an unknown screen. We came to the hemlock, and crouched on the sea side of it, some instinct telling us that there was need of caution. On hands and knees I crawled a foot farther, and beheld a white tent, its guide-ropes running to the hemlock's roots. Islip pulled himself up beside me.

Motionless, we listened, and caught the regular breathing of a sleeping man, then distinguished that of another, and finally heard

some one turn and grunt. In some inexplicable way, these men had happened to camp just above the spot chosen by Duponceau to hide his chest.

I scarce dared turn and crawl away from fear of waking the sleepers, and so lay still, wondering if by any chance they could have already found the treasure, or if there might yet be an opportunity for us to remove it. Suddenly I felt Rodney grip my arm. "Listen," he breathed.

Off in the distance, clear and long, rose the osprey call. Duponceau was in some danger.

We wriggled away from the hemlock, crawled back through the woods, and stood erect only when we reached the edge. There we swept the beach and what we could see of the Ship for signs of men, but the shore was still empty as the desert.

"Shall we run for it?" I asked.

"No," said Rodney; "if there are any men there, they're between us and the boat, or on the boat; we'd best keep close to the cliff until we get our bearings."

The advice was good; like Indians we made the fringe of the woods, keeping in shadow. When we were forced to leave this shelter we skirted the cliff, ready to crouch back at a call or to rush forward. As we neared the shadow of the headland we saw figures climb over the rocks of the little inland sea and head up the beach—four men, silhouetted black against the white sand, and not one of them as tall as Duponceau.

"They have n't got him," I whispered; "at least, he is not with them."

"That's queer," said Rodney. "I have n't heard a shot fired. They must have boarded the Ship."

We crossed the causeway, running lightly, and climbed on board. The deck was as empty as the beach had been when we first crossed it. I rushed below and poked in all the bunks, but not a trace of Duponceau was to be found. Rodney and I stood in the bow and peered across the rocks. We could see nothing save the woods and the sky.

"Well," said Islip at last, "that takes the cake. He's vamosed, vanished, cleared out, and I dare say we'll never see hide or hair of him again. This thing's getting positively spooky, Selden. Are you sure that the man was flesh and blood?"

"I certainly thought so," I answered. "But he came in the middle of the night, and he's gone at the same time. Strange! Where on earth could he go?"

"Search me," said Rodney. "I thought the adventure was almost too real to be true. Such things don't happen, you know—that is, not

consecutively—within a day's ride of New York." He considered the matter gravely. "But what will Barbara say if she finds we have n't kept by him?"

"I was thinking of that myself," I answered, looking blankly at him.

Islip broke into a laugh—such an infectious laugh that I could n't help joining him. "I dare say we're different in most ways, Selden," he said, "but we're alike in one. Well, here's how!" and he held out his hand to me.

We shook hands, half seriously, half in jest, and I took back all the unkind things I had ever thought about him.

We turned and went down the deck on the outer side of the mast. I heard Rodney exclaim and saw him stop and look at the rail where his hand rested. A small gold chain was fastened to the edge. He peered over the side, and then, to my utter amazement, began to throw off his clothes.

"What on earth——" I began, but Rodney only chuckled, and finished undressing. Then from somewhere out in the sea came the osprey's cry, clear, quavering to a minor cadence. Islip slipped over the side, crossed the rocks, and dived into the waves.

I pulled on the chain and up came a bundle of clothes wrapped in Duponceau's cloak. Then I understood, and followed Rodney's example.

Never have I known such a swim as that, in the mystery of starlight, through a sea that seemed made of silver. We found Duponceau by his cry and followed him, resting now and then to float on the silver surface, and again racing hand over hand out through the mystery. We were no longer men, but free sea creatures, in our own element, undismayed.

We swam in a great circle, and at last Duponceau led us back to the Ship. Day was breaking far out, beyond the Shifting Shoal. "I saw them coming," he said, "and so I hung my clothes from the side and took to the waves. They found nothing; perchance now they think me a ghost."

We told him our experience in searching for the chest, and he showed a great deal of perturbation, but finally came to the wise conclusion that we could do nothing in regard to it then.

It was my turn below, and I fell asleep, in a glorious glow from the swim, just as the sky was shading pink.

### XIII.

WHEN I awoke I found Rodney seated on the cabin table.

"Morning, Selden!" he exclaimed. "By the by, who is Monsieur Duponceau?"



I shook my head. "I gave that question up some time ago. How about breakfast?"

"I was thinking of that myself," said Rodney. "I don't mind being a hero, but I prefer to play the part on a full stomach."

"I'll signal Charles." I went up on deck, and found that the sun was high up, and shining on a glorious summer world. I fastened a napkin to the broken stump of the mast.

Fifteen minutes later we saw my canoe steal cautiously about the point of the cliff beyond my house and poke its nose in the direction of the Ship. Charles brought the tiny craft alongside of us.

"They're watching the house closely, Mr. Felix," he said. "It was all I could do to get down to the river without their following."

The canoe had brought us hot coffee, eggs, and rolls. We breakfasted in state in the cabin, with Charles to wait upon us. He had little news, beyond the fact that the pines were patrolled by a number of men.

After breakfast we passed the time as best we could, but the morning went slowly, and we were glad when lunch was ready. This was a meagre meal, made up of the scraps of the provisions Barbara had brought us. I told Charles that I preferred to have him stay with us, as there was no telling when we should need every able-bodied man we could find, and so he brought the canoe on board, stowed her on the after-deck, and devoted himself to the small duties of his new house-keeping.

Duponceau and Islip had slept little the night before, and shortly after lunch they took to their bunks to nap. I was on guard on the forward deck when I heard a voice call, "Ship ahoy!" and looked up to see Barbara on the cliff.

I called to Charles to take my place for a few moments and sallied forth to shore. Barbara joined me at the foot of the headland.

"Well?" she asked eagerly.

I told her the adventures of the previous night, and when I came to the early morning swim her eyes danced and she clapped her hands with delight. "Oh, I wish I had been out there with you!" she cried. "I've always wanted to try a swim in the dark."

"It's just as well you were n't," I answered sagely.

She looked somewhat longingly out to sea. "What a beautiful afternoon! And are the rest of the crew working?"

"The rest of the crew are sleeping. They had too much coffee for dinner last night, and it kept them awake."

"And what is Charles doing?"

I pointed to the deck. "He's on guard. That's the reason I'm here."

"Oh, that's it, is it? I thought you came to see me."

"And so I did. Suppose we sit here at the foot of the cliff, where we can look out to sea and can't be seen. There's a little nook I know of."

I found the place that I sought—a secret crevice in the rocks—and there we sat and watched the tide do its best to reach us as it bounded landward. The afternoon drifted past, and we, borne on its tranquillity, were now talkative, now silent. Barbara rolled her sleeves above her elbows, and played with the water in a little pool beside our ledge of rocks. Her dreaming eyes brooded over the ocean. I watched her, tried to turn my eyes seaward, felt the irresistible call, and came back to watching her. The time had come when I could think only the one thought.

The sun was low, Barbara was humming a little French song. The whole world was adorable.

"Barbara, I love you!"

The words were out, spoken without volition, all of themselves.

She looked up; her singing stopped, and the deep blush-rose crept into her face, while her eyes shrank.

"Barbara, I love you. I have loved you since I first found you on the Ship, and I shall go on loving you until I die. I can't help it; it's not only conscious, it's partly unconscious; it's just you calling to me. Barbara dear, you are all my hope in the world. You are the world. Will you marry me?"

I was leaning forward, thinking only of that sweet, that infinitely sweet face opposite.

She smiled, her eyes turning to watch the waves, and I waited spell-bound for her answer.

"I have n't known you very long," she added, her voice low; "and what do you know of me?"

"Everything. All I could ever know—that you are the one woman in the world."

"But it's summer, and it's easy to say such things in summer. It's all part of the setting. I told you once you were a dreamer. Dreamers are apt to romance, and that is probably why you are now in love with the waves and the sunshine and—with me." The last words were just a whisper. She raised her eyes to mine for a fleeting second, then dropped her lashes.

"Believe me, Barbara, it's not that; it's the truth—the truest thing in the world."

She played with the water in the pool at her side.

"I like you—but, then, I like many. There's Rodney I like also. Perhaps I like you better because I have never seen you in town, nor anywhere but in your chosen country. But I can't forget that there are other treasures in the sea—how can you be sure you won't come

upon another and a finer? Then, too, I like men who do things, men who fight and win out—and so you see,” she finished, with a slight smile, “it’s not that I like any one in particular less, but the infinite possibilities more.”

“Then,” I said stubbornly, “I will wait, and prove my meaning to you.”

She raised her eyes frankly to mine. “I like that,” she said.

After a time we walked back to her path and said good-by. The beach was empty. Islip was sitting on the Ship’s deck, and Barbara waved to him and he waved back. I felt sorry for him, somehow, for now I knew what he must feel. No wonder he could n’t go back to his beloved Wall Street.

“Good-by again,” she said, and then, that the parting might not be too abrupt, she added, “I think I am growing almost as fond as you of your little kingdom. Rule it well.”

“I shall. I have a great deal to prove now.”

She smiled. “Felix of Alastair;” then she turned up the path.

I went back to the Ship mighty with resolves; I thirsted for great deeds to do. When I came on board I found plans for such deeds brewing.

#### XIV.

DUPONCEAU had been brooding all day over the possibility of losing the contents of his precious chest, and so, after some argument, Rodney and he had decided to make the effort to move it to the Ship that night. I pointed out the fact that in all probability the enemy knew nothing whatever of the chest’s position, and had simply happened to camp in the neighborhood of that particular hemlock; but Duponceau’s fears were aroused, and it was evident that he would be satisfied with nothing short of having the strong-box under his eyes.

“What the deuce do you suppose those papers are, that he should be so fearful about them?” I asked Rodney when we were alone.

He shrugged his shoulders. “Heaven knows! The man is n’t crazy, for I’ve been studying him closely all day, and some experience with Wall Street has put me wise on cranks. No, there’s a real, live mystery somewhere, and our friend Pierre is a somebody, though whether the Wandering Jew or the lost Napoleon I can’t say. Suffice it, he’s got a treasure chest, and it’s up to us to sit on it so tight that none of its pieces-of-eight can filter through.”

Fortunately the night was cloudy, and about eleven we were ready to start. I had never felt so completely the desperado before. We were all three armed with revolvers, I carried a coil of rope wound about my waist, and Rodney a dark lantern which Charles had found in the cottage. Duponceau was the least excited. He took command of our expedition with the assurance of a born leader, and, in fact,

it was only his overweening confidence that gave the scheme the least prospect of success.

Just before we left the Ship Charles joined us with two spades, and so, a party of four, we stole over the beach and into the dunes. Duponceau led us to the pine, thence we crawled inward, lying silent after each cracking twig, straining our eyes and ears for news. When we came to the hemlock we lay four abreast and so peered over at the tent that loomed vaguely white ahead. The only sound was a loud and resonant snore.

Duponceau crawled forward on one side of the tent, and then beckoned to me to do the same on the opposite side. When I had wriggled forward some ten feet I could look in at the tent, the sides of which were open to the summer breezes. One man lay within, sleeping. It was clear that the enemy had not expected us.

Duponceau stole to his feet, I did likewise. He entered the tent from one side, and I from the other. With a swift movement he was over the sleeping man, and had pinned him to the bed, while he thrust a handkerchief into his mouth. The sleeper started, struggled, moaned, and lay still; I had held my revolver in his face. In a twinkling we had him bound and gagged, rolled from his bed of boughs, and laid at a little distance. While we did this Islip and Charles cut the guide-ropes, and the house of our enemies fell, collapsing like a great white balloon when the gas escapes. We cleared it away, and the place where the chest was hidden lay before us.

Then followed a strange scene for those unhistoric pines of Alastair. With ears keen for the slightest alarm, Duponceau and I dug, Rodney holding his black lantern so as to aid us, Charles keeping watch. A foot down and my spade struck wood. In five minutes the chest was uncovered. Carefully we raised it and placed it on the ground. As his hand touched the unbroken lock I thought that Duponceau gave a little sigh of relief.

Duponceau and I lifted the chest between us, and as silently as we had entered the woods our party of four withdrew from them. When we came to the edge we halted, and after a few whispered words turned towards the shelter of the cliff. We were some quarter way down it when from the pines at our back came a loud halloo. Almost simultaneously a man sprang out of the shadows before us, and called "Stop!"

"Run!" said Rodney, and, like a football player, lunged, lantern and all, straight at the man's knees. The two went down in a heap, and the man's revolver went off without harm.

"Run, Mr. Felix!" cried Charles, and I saw him jump at the struggling men and pull Islip free.

Duponceau and I ran, caring nothing for shelter now, but making

straight for the Ship. The enemy must have numbered half a dozen. There were cries and curses behind us, and a bullet whizzed into the cliff on our left. Another shout, and we knew they were in full pursuit, with Rodney and Charles acting as our rear-guard.

Luckily the chest was not heavy, and when we came to the rocks we could scramble over them without delay. Into the water we plunged, and, reaching the side of the Ship, heaved the chest on board. Then we scrambled up, dripping and altogether winded.

There was more splashing of water, and we pulled our rear-guard over the side.

Another splash, and I fired straight down into the water. At the shot the enemy retreated, and, cursing, took himself back to the rocks where his friends stood, a mark against the sky.

"We'll get that pirate!" one of the men called. There was silence on the Ship. More threats and curses followed, and then the enemy retired, promising to rout us out next day.

Rodney was the first of us to speak. "Up anchor and off for the Spanish Main!" he cried. "I really feel like a pirate. Where's Duponceau?"

"Here!" We turned and saw our gentleman adventurer sitting on the chest.

Rodney burst into a laugh. "To think that not one of them knew what it was you two carried! They must have thought that we were foraging for food."

We had all four come out of the scrimmage unscathed, except for a few bruises, but we were too much excited to sleep. With much ceremony, we took the chest below and placed it inside of that other brass-bound box that had waited so long for a new treasure. I was sure that Rodney was eager for a look at the inside of Duponceau's box, and, to tell the truth, I also was hoping for a peep at it, but Duponceau preferred to keep its secrets entirely to himself. He was communicative only to a certain point; beyond that he was a very sphinx, and in some way the facts he told us seemed to enwrap him in more mystery.

I went up on deck, where Charles was pacing steadily back and forth.

"You saved Mr. Islip from a very nasty position, Charles," I said. "How did you manage to quiet that fellow so soon?"

"With an upper-cut I learned in the old country, sir. I left him fast asleep. He'd been prowling round the kitchen, sir, and making himself generally disagreeable, and I was glad to settle the score."

"H'm, so we left one trussed like a pig in the woods, and another asleep on the beach. This begins to look serious."

"Yes, Mr. Felix; that's what I've been saying to myself for the last half-hour."

We spent that night in a state of suppressed excitement—that is, all of us except Duponceau, who seemed to regard a trial by bullets as nothing out of the usual.

## XV.

I WATCHED the east turn opalescent with the coming sun, and the sea pass through the pale, translucent colors of the shells beneath its surface, delicate reds and blues and the infinitely soft mother-of-pearl. Then the hues deepened, and the sun, not yet too bold for the eye, rose like the centre of a gorgeous flower. The sea-world was his, and through and over the vast space of it glittered his tiny messengers of living flame. They came even to the side of the Ship and shivered themselves radiantly against its old, gray-green, sea-worn boards.

I had the world to myself, the sea and its dancing colors, the Ship and its early-morning memories. That awe and veneration which steals over the watcher of dawn—as though witness to a birth both physical and spiritual—stole over me, and I wondered how often in the ages past solitary watchers had marvelled from this deck. Life was new and strange and sweet, and as boundless as the ocean before me.

I came back to reality, and wondered how it was that I, who only a week before had been busied with my manuscript in the study of my cottage, should now be facing a life as strange as it was daring. Man cannot live a life to himself alone, occurred to me, and I thought that he would not even if he could. The ordinary, normal course no longer appealed to me. I cared not if our opponents were servants of the law or of a private power struggling to overwhelm my friend. I looked down at the pistol in my belt and smiled; the life of an adventurer was not so bad when it gave one the sea and the sky and the fellowship of men.

Duponceau stood beside me, his face serene, delight in the fresh day mirrored in his eyes.

“Why will men fight and prey on each other?” he asked wonderingly.

“You should know,” I answered.

“Yes,” said he; “I should, and I do. Utopia has not come, and meanwhile we each covet what others have and we have not. Those men yonder merely represent powers that want to do what I have done.”

Charles and Rodney came on deck, and we breakfasted on what was still left of our provisions—a scanty store, that stood in immediate need of replenishing. Then we held a council of war.

“If they are wise,” said Rodney, “they’ll settle down to besiege us. They could starve us out of here in forty-eight hours. I’ve an idea, however, that they’re afraid to do that for fear of legal consequences. I take it this is a purely personal fight.”

"I had the same thoughts; some French enemies of Duponceau's were trying to kidnap him, had been my conclusion."

"Look!" Duponceau was standing, and we followed his gaze and saw a sail-boat—my sail-boat—round the cliff to the west and lie to in the open sea. "Not that way," he said; "there'll be no more swimming done. They're going to guard us from the ocean."

Then Rodney spoke up. "Perhaps I can get across the beach to the cottage and bring some of the tinned meats back."

"Unless they have confiscated my house as well as my boat," I suggested. "However, it's worth a try. Charles stays on guard, and I go with you."

So, a little later, the two of us, having an eye that the men in the sail-boat should not see us, lowered ourselves over the side, and waded waist-deep through the water. We crawled up the rocks and, lying low, peered through breaks at the beach. There was nothing but shining sand between our position and the house.

Carefully we stole over the rocks and, separating slightly, so that each might be unhampered by the other, advanced westward. I had an impression of what it must be to march across a desert in the face of an unseen foe. Only, we did not have the protection of the desert, for there were the dunes above us on the right.

We had gone perhaps half-way when the silence rang with a shot. A little furrow blew up in the sand before me, and I saw a light cloud of smoke steal away from the dunes. An instant's silence, another report, and a furrow was ploughed in the sand ten yards to the rear. We were hemmed in by an unseen ring.

We faced to the dunes, standing stock-still. Two more guns cracked, and the bullets sped in the air, above our heads, but not so far that we could not hear them sing. Rodney could stand it no longer.

"Come out and show yourselves like men!" he cried, his voice high-pitched and straining. An instant's pause, and then two men leaped forward.

Islip's pistol cracked, then another man joined the two, and as by instinct we separated.

Then began a running fire while we beat a retreat. I kept close as I could to the water, emptying my revolver in such a way as to retard the enemy without wounding them; for we suspected that they were seeking to intimidate us, without actually resorting to bloodshed, and we, for our part, had no desire to have any deaths on our hands. They gained on us, for we retreated while they advanced, and it was only by finally taking full speed to my heels and making for the rocks that I won a temporary respite. The enemy stopped, and now we could pepper them, shooting to right and left as fast as we loaded.

I glanced backward, and saw the sail-boat very close—much closer than I liked.

“They’re going to board the Ship!” I cried, and splashed into the water. I tumbled up the side and made for the farther bulwark, calling to Duponceau and Charles to stir themselves. As I did so two men came scrambling over the outer rocks and made for the Ship, while a third held the sail-boat to the shore. I heard shouts, and saw Rodney cross beside me. He stood a moment unprotected, and that instant a bullet took him in the arm and I heard him give a cry of pain.

“It’s nothing—a scratch on the flesh,” he muttered as he crouched.

The two men were climbing the seaward side. I waited, and as the first reared above me I was on him and with all the force in my body hurled him back, so that he lost his hold and fell splashing. The other was balancing, had one foot over, had sprung, when Duponceau and Charles seized him, and he went, legs swinging in a circle, beside his fellow in the sea.

We crouched, for the man in the boat was firing. The two below scrambled out of the waves and scurried back to the sail-boat. Then Rodney and Duponceau kept that side of the Ship, while Charles and I watched the other. There were a few more scattering shots, then the enemy made off.

In time we left Charles on guard and went down to the cabin, while Duponceau examined and bandaged Rodney’s arm. Rodney was right; it was merely a flesh-wound in his fore-arm, but, slight as it was, it seemed to turn him into our hero. It was the first blood of the war.

When the wound was attended to we went on deck, all of us aquiver with excitement, and there we four sat, each with a pistol in his hand, and warm blood beating in his veins.

Noon came, and we lunched on scraps, and tried to make out on smoking many pipefuls of tobacco. The sun slowly crossed the western heavens and commenced to drop. Suddenly I discovered that I was parched with thirst.

“‘Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink.’ There’s no use disguising it any longer; we’ll be caught here like rats in a trap,” I said. “We’d better get away before we fall to eating shoe-leather.”

“But where?” said Duponceau.

“I have plenty of water and food in my house. It’ll stand a good long siege. If any of those rascals are living in it, I’d like to turn them out. What do you say?”

“It sounds pretty good to me,” assented Rodney.

Duponceau nodded, and so it was arranged that we should leave the Ship. There were no two ways about it, to go or to stay and be starved into surrender.



## XVI.

OUR change of base was to be made after sunset, between those hours when the darkness should first steal across the beach, and those when our enemy might expect that we would venture forth under the shade of night. We decided to leave Duponceau's chest where it was for the present, in the belief that the enemy would instantly turn their attention to my cottage, and that the box would be safest in some such place as that deserted cabin.

With night-fall we prepared, glad to be about something after eight hours of patient watching. We were to go in single file, I first, Rodney next, his wounded arm in a sling, then Duponceau, and finally Charles, with some little space between us. We cleaned and loaded our revolvers, and about eight o'clock, when we could no longer see the sail-boat standing out against us, I bade good-by to the Ship, slid over the side into the water, crossed through it, and crept over the rocks. I turned and signalled to Rodney that the coast was clear, and saw him lower himself by one arm and find a footing. Then, with a silent prayer that no stray bullet might lodge in one of us before we reached cover, I stepped gingerly on to the beach. You have seen pictures of African warriors stealing tip-toe through the jungle, their whole bodies alert for any noise. So I went, my sense of hearing abnormally acute, my eyes straining into the twilight for peril. I could neither run nor stop, but stepped on with the precision of an automaton, hoping that in time the stretch of sand would have slipped past beneath my feet and I come to the refuge of the dunes. I did not look back, but knew that three other men were tip-toeing as silently behind me, keen as was I to break into a dash. So on and on I went, for endless time it seemed then—hearing only the sob of the ebb and flow of the tide and the soft, slurring rattle of the water as it slipped back over a stretch of stones.

I neared the cottage, had gone one-half, two-thirds, three-fourths, of the way, and then of a sudden a screaming gull whirred above my head, and, without thought save that I must break this tension, I shot forth full running for the house. I raced over the hard sand, over the soft sand, and when I came to my cottage fell panting in the wide arms of the dunes, quivering, breathless. A moment later the three others had fallen near me, and we all lay there like so many bags of meal.

"That's panic!" said Rodney. "I know now how it comes without any cause."

After a time Charles rose and stole to the kitchen-window. He looked in and shook his head. Then he disappeared around the other side. "Nobody there," he presently reported.

I looked at my pistol and led the way. The front door was ajar, and without any more ado I entered my own house on tip-toe, keen-

eyed as a cat. The others followed, and Charles closed the door and bolted it. I went into the kitchen, found it also empty, and secured that entrance; then, with the same care, we four filed up the stairs and into my study. A man sat in my Morris-chair, smoking my meerschau pipe. I covered him with the revolver as he looked up.

"Hello!" said he. "Never mind the gun. I'm alone in the house, and my gun's not in shooting order."

"Suppose I see, sir," said Charles, and a moment later he found a revolver in the man's hip-pocket and appropriated it.

"Well," I demanded, "what have you to say to breaking into a man's house in his absence?"

The other—you could see he had a sense of humor from the wry smile he made—leaned back and cocked his eye at me. "I heard you'd gone to sea," he answered, "and would n't be coming back soon."

"Who are you, and what do you want?"

"Ah, that's where I have the advantage of you, and a very considerable advantage. What I want is the Frenchman over there." He looked past me at Duponceau. "I come in for gold when I capture him."

I signalled to Charles, and in a trice he had bent the man's arms tight around the back of the chair. I found a rope and tied him there fast. We bound his mouth securely, so that even his wry smile disappeared, and then left him.

The larder was well-stocked, thanks to Charles's foresight, and we made a most excellent supper of potted ham, boned chicken, pilot biscuit, and coffee, boiled as only Charles knows how. While supper was being prepared Duponceau and I made the round of the house, putting up the great storm-shutters with which I usually protected the windows from the winter gales, and piling packing-boxes and extra-heavy furniture against the doors, so that they might be ready to withstand any sudden attack. I was surprised to find how snug we could make the cottage. It had been built to weather the roughest of off-shore gales, but I had never thought of it as useful for a log-house in case of attack by land. I was very proud of it when we barred the last shutter.

Meanwhile Charles was spreading the table, and Rodney, reclining upon a couch as became a wounded warrior, was puffing contentedly at the first cigarette he had had in three days.

"Little did I think, Selden," said he, "when I lunched with you that day, that I'd be coming back as a member of a midnight garrison, defending a mysterious gentleman in a black cloak, who popped up out of the sea. Not but what I enjoy it," he added, as Duponceau looked his way; "I have n't had such a good time since I went bear-hunting in Labrador; but I should like to know what's happened to the market."

"Perhaps I can smuggle Charles through the enemy's lines to the club in a day or two," I answered.

Rodney grunted. "You talk of a day or two as though time were nothing. The whole bottom might drop out in less than an hour. However, I don't care so long as supper's come."

We disposed of a prodigious meal, and when we had finished Duponceau examined with great interest an armory of old swords and other war-like implements that hung over the mantel-piece. Finally he unhooked two long and rusty blades, compared them carefully, and, carrying them with him, went to the stairs.

"You're not going to kill him?" I exclaimed.

"Certainly not; but possibly we can end this campaign to-night. Come with me."

Rodney and I followed him up to my study, where our prisoner was stretched out in the Morris-chair. Duponceau flung the two swords on the centre-table, and I could see a quick look of alarm flare up in the captive's eyes.

"I am about to propose," said Duponceau, "a happy settlement of all our difficulties. Instead of your band of six or eight outlaws fighting my three comrades and myself, what say you if you and I fight it out, you to withdraw your party if I win, I to go with you if I lose? Come, that sounds fair enough." He loosed the bandage from the prisoner's mouth. The wry smile reappeared.

"What do you take me for? I'm no fencer, and the parties back of me would n't stand for such a game anyhow. They want you taken quietly, delivered up, and don't care what happens to any number of me."

Duponceau looked taken aback; he thought over the man's words for a moment, then turned to us. "You'll bear witness that I've done everything in my power to settle this affair with the loss of nobody's blood but my own, and that my offer was refused."

Rodney and I agreed. "What shall we do with him?" I asked.

"Turn him loose," said Rodney. "It's better to have all our enemies on the same side of the house."

Duponceau was of like mind, so we took the man down-stairs, and, opening the front door, sent him out into the night. "I'll tell the chief about what you offered," he said as he left, "and if he says it's a go, we'll bring our best fencer with a flag of truce. But you need n't expect him, for from what I've heard the boss won't risk no chance of losing you."

I closed the door, and double-bolted it. Charles had laid a fire and lighted it, for we were all stiff with our life on board the Ship, and as I stretched out comfortably before it I remembered the old English saying that a man's house is his castle, and was determined that no

men in the pay of private schemers should enter mine without my full consent.

## XVII.

I WAS dreaming of the sharp crackle of musketry when I awoke to find small stones rattling against the shutters of my study window. Duponceau had slept in my bed—as became the guest of honor—and I had found lodging for the night upon the divan that graced the den. I went to the window, and, cautiously peeping through a crack's opening in the shutters, looked for the stone-thrower. I could see only the white top of the nearer dunes, and a sky of cloudless blue, the white and blue as perfect as ever painter dreamed. Although I could not see my visitor, it was evident that the opening shutter was visible, for a larger stone struck the shutter and fell on to the balcony. Curiously enough, it was wrapped in a handkerchief, and one which I instantly saw was not man's property. With this lure, I opened the shutters wide and stepped on to the balcony. Now below me I saw Barbara, dressed for riding, the color in her cheeks high from so much cannonading.

"Good morning," she called to me. "I rode down to the Ship, but found that you had all flown, so I left my horse in the woods and came here. I thought you must have gone for the season, by the looks of the house. May I come in?"

"You may," I cried, my heart bounding with new delight at the sweetness of her voice. "I remember a day when you would n't enter."

"You forget, Mr. Selden, that that was when there was peace in the land. Many things happen in a siege."

"Many delightful things. One minute and I'll be down at the door."

I hurried down-stairs, but before I could open the front door I heard Barbara's voice crying, "Wait, wait!"

Rodney jumped from his couch and joined me. He as well as I had slept in his clothes. "What is it, Felix?" he asked.

"Miss Graham is outside and wants to come in, but she's just called to me to wait. I'll open the little side window first."

I slid the window-bolt and looked out. Two men, the disagreeable chap of our first meeting and another surly-faced individual, stood some twenty feet back of Barbara. I placed my revolver on the window ledge.

"Now, then, what do you men want?" I demanded.

"We don't want the lady to go in," the disagreeable-looking one replied.

"Does the lady want to?" I asked.

"She does," said Barbara, in a most determined tone of voice.

"Then she shall. Slide back the bolts, Rodney," I whispered.

"Now if any one chooses to interfere with her entering my house, he can reflect that he's looking into a straight steel barrel."

The door opened, and Barbara, her head high, walked in. I shut the small window and put the revolver in my pocket. "They're a pretty mad-looking pair out there," I said. "Welcome to the log-house!"

But Barbara was not regarding me.

"Why, Rodney," she exclaimed, "what has happened to your arm? They did n't shoot you, did they?" She had caught sight of Rodney's arm in the sling.

"It's nothing, Barbara," he said, beaming; "only a scratch. I might have been potted by that badly shooting snipe."

She looked at him, her face all admiration. "It's like you to speak lightly, but you've been in danger, and partly on my account, for you'd never have laid eyes on Monsieur Duponceau if it had n't been for me."

I would have drifted out of the room if I could, but I was caught between them and the door.

Rodney smiled; I could imagine how pleased he must be feeling.

"We've had several scraps on the Ship," he explained, "and when our food gave out we came up here."

"You poor dears!" she exclaimed, and this time I was included in her words. "I've been thinking of you every minute of the last two days, and wanting to come over to join you. Well, I've stolen away at last, for a morning ride, and now I'm going to stay here with you."

"Stay here with us!" we both exclaimed in amazement.

"Until after breakfast. I'm going to set your table, and pour your coffee, and fix your rooms, and show you in general what a woman can do in a house."

We both had had visions of that already, I fancy. I caught Rodney's eye; he smiled, and the color rose to his face.

"Where's Charles?" Barbara demanded. I led her into the kitchen, where Charles was busied, and Rodney and I sat on the dresser and watched while Barbara rolled up her sleeves, pinned a napkin over her dress as an apron, and proceeded to direct Charles as to the cooking things. Either one of us would have been supremely happy if the other had not been there.

When the table was set, and the breakfast on its way from the kitchen to the dining-room, Duponceau appeared, for the first time free of the cloak he had worn on the Ship, but still all in black, save for his gold chains, and still enveloped in that peculiar air of mystery which instinctively set him apart from all ordinary beings. Barbara curtsied to him, and he raised her hand to his lips and kissed it with the grace of the old-time school.

"We are not quite forgotten by the outside world," he said, with almost a tinge of royalty in his voice, "very far indeed from forgotten, when so charming an emissary joins us."

Barbara looked pleased; I could see that Duponceau was still her paragon of romance.

"Will you take the head of the table, monsieur?" she asked. He carefully seated her behind the coffee-urn, took his own place, and Rodney and I sat at the sides. It was the first state breakfast my cottage had ever known.

Barbara contrived that we should all forget that we were cooped up in a log-house. She smiled at Rodney and at me impartially, and listened attentively to everything Duponceau said. Even Charles felt her influence. I could see him linger in the doorway on the alert to serve her.

Breakfast came to an end, and Barbara insisted on bandaging Rodney's arm. I think he was sorry that she should know how slight the wound really was, for he demurred, though with a look of great satisfaction; but he finally consented to roll up his sleeve. I drew Duponceau away to my den, and the two were left alone for a long half-hour. Monsieur Pierre and I discussed matters of defense.

When we returned to the living-room Barbara's face was flushed, and Rodney's cheeks were red. His arm was wound with a new bandage and a little gold pin fastened it.

"Will you take me over the house?" asked Barbara, jumping up; and now it was my turn to gloat, for she insisted on poking into every nook and cranny, on learning how two men left to their own devices lived, and on improving what she found. I, who had once been averse to feminine influence about a house, surrendered. She straightened the pictures, rearranged the ornaments and knick-knacks, and finally started in upon my desk.

"Oh, please don't touch that!" I exclaimed.

She stopped and looked at me. "Rodney let me fix his arm when he didn't want to, and you——"

"Please do," I said, motioning towards the papers, and she placed them in little piles, quite regardless of what they were about.

"Now I've been horrid enough," she said when she'd finished. "I dare say men are better off living alone. Think how angry you'd be if a woman should do that every day."

"That depends on the woman. I could imagine——"

"I always told you you were imaginative," she broke in. "The woman you could imagine would probably be a nymph."

"Yes," I agreed; "she is."

"And nymphs are proverbially slippery creatures."

"Yes, so I've heard."

"So she might slip away from you without a moment's notice."

She sat down in my big desk-chair.

"Poor Rodney," she sighed. "It seems as if he were sacrificing a great deal. Think of his stocks and bonds."

"Yes," I agreed. A moment later I added, "I have n't written a line for ever so many days."

"And it's so important that a broker should keep in touch with his office," she added.

"And that a writer should write."

"Then why did you give it up?"

"Duponceau," I answered. Our eyes met, and we both laughed.

There was a brief silence, and then she rose. "I have a feeling that the crisis is coming. Remember that I trust you to shield my pirate. I must go back to the club."

We went down-stairs, and Barbara made her adieux.

"I'll go with you to your horse," said Rodney.

"I should be delighted to go," I put in at the same moment.

"I am not so valuable a man as you," Rodney explained, "in case they should cut us off."

Barbara looked from one to the other of us. "Rodney——" she began.

I bowed. "I yield." He was the older friend, and, much as I feared him, I could but admit that he was entitled to the privilege.

Islip smiled with pleasure. "Thank you," he said.

"Rodney must not go," she finished.

It was my turn to start for the door. "Nor must you," she continued to me. "I am much safer alone than with either of you."

The matter was settled; we could only hold the door open, and let her pass out. We watched her as she went down the beach. Once she turned and waved her riding-crop in farewell. It was cruel that we should be penned up within four walls when the world was crying aloud for joy of the day, and she was going out to it.

We turned back ill at ease towards each other, and just then a bullet ploughed into the house to the right of us. We jumped in, slammed the door, and bolted it.

There was a cry from Charles. "They're coming up the balcony!"

### XVIII.

I WAS up the stairs like a flash, to find Duponceau, one of the old broadswords in his hand, holding the balcony. Men's heads were to be seen just above the flooring of the porch, where the invaders had climbed by means of my trellises, but the owners of those heads seemed very little disposed to come farther. They had no reserves to cover their attack from the protection of the dunes, and Duponceau was proclaim-

ing that he would behead the first rascal that raised himself another inch. At the ring of determination in his voice, no wonder that no one came on. I had barely reached his side, however, when a man flung a handful of sand full in Duponceau's face, temporarily blinding him, at the same moment that another leaped up the trellis and vaulted over the balcony rail. I met him face to face, and recognized the surly chap who had spied on me that first day from the woods. He had not gained his balance when I fell upon him, hoping to topple him back against the rail. Instead, his feet shot out from under him, and, clutching at me, he fell flat on the balcony. He lay there panting a second, his arms about my back, while I tried to get my hands upon his chest to push myself up. Suddenly his grip tightened, and, with a lurch, he rolled me over, so that now I lay underneath and pinned by his arms. Then he tried my game, and, hands on my chest, sought to drive the breath from my body. He was heavy, and I felt myself going, going, drawing each breath harder, seeing red more dully, when with a jerk the pressure lightened, and I looked up to see Charles, his brawny arms about the man's shoulders, slowly but inexorably throwing him over on his side. His hands relaxed, there was a groan, and the man lay flat on his back, Charles securely kneeling on him while I struggled to my feet.

Meantime Duponceau, his sight clear again, had held the balcony, and more, had driven the men down the supports by striking with his sword over the edge.

"Throw him over," he commanded us now, and quickly we had the hapless creature up on the railing and had dropped him into the sand below. He fell with a soft thud, and we turned to other matters.

It was high time. Baffled at the balcony, the enemy were already trying to batter in the front door. At the first sounds below-stairs, Rodney had drawn my dinner-table and the heavy oak settle across the door, and fortified it with every heavy weight in-doors. Now the battering began, and Duponceau and Charles joined him while with an axe I found in my den I hacked away the trellises that climbed to the balcony. Verily the fight was hot when I would cut down my own property.

Crash—crash! A heavy log struck the front door and ripped away a panel. The log was withdrawn, there was a shout, and again came the thudding crash, splintering the upper part of the door and carrying clear in to the settle. I was mad, mad through and through, at the thought of these desperadoes, and a glance at Charles's face told me that he was the same. We built up the barricade, we tried to stay it against the next assault, but this time the upper part of the door burst inward, and we were almost face to face with the foe. Rodney and I crammed the dining-room table into place, and threw the chairs behind it. I cared little now if all the furniture were beaten into splinters.



"Now!" cried Duponceau. There was a boom, a crash, and the battering-ram shot half way into the house. As it cleaved away the door, Duponceau leaped high on to the wreck of the table and laid about him with his sword. I saw one man fall sideways, and the rest, startled into fear by this man with eyes ablaze, stand, hesitate, and fall back.

"Come on!" he cried. "There is room for two abreast!" But no one came on; the passage through that open doorway looked dubious.

A hurried conference, a quick dispersal, and then the enemy was back, armed with clubs cut from the woods. Now they came on with a rush, and the battle joined. Pistols were discarded; it was to be a fight of our old rusty swords, and sticks found by Charles, and the staffs of the pines. Two men leaped into the breach and fell on Duponceau, another slipped in and fell to Rodney's care, while Charles and I gripped our weapons and waited. Duponceau thrust at one of his assailants and with a jerk threw the other across the broken table almost at my feet. A blow aimed at my head fell on Charles's staff, and he had the man reeling in a corner with a sudden thrust of his arm. Another man followed, and he and I laid about each other, blow falling on sword, and sword on pine-wood. We had the advantage in that we stood on the chairs, the table, and what was left of the door, and the enemy had to spring against our entrenched position. Face to face with us, toppling over the broken furniture, their ardor passed, and gradually we drove them back, pressing them out of the doorway harder than they had pressed in. The man opposite me aimed a savage blow, I dodged, and, grappling with him, threw him with all my strength across the table. From there Duponceau rolled him out against his comrades. All this time Monsieur Pierre had fought like a demon, but now one man fell against his legs, while another struck him a glancing blow across the shoulders, and before he could gain his footing he fell from the table back into the room, striking against the settle. He lay there still. Rodney was in his place, and I jumped beside him.

"Now!" I cried, and a moment later we had what was left of the enemy safely at bay.

The attacking party gathered together, and, with many ill looks at us, finally withdrew. Charles pulled the man he had in the corner up before us, and asked what should be done with him. I pointed out to where the others were turning up the beach.

"It seems almost too good for him," said Charles.

"Yes," said I; "it does." I had to hold myself tight in check now as I looked at my broken door and devastated room. "Get out," I cried, "before I begin to talk to you, and tell the rest of your gang that the next time they batter in a man's house I hope they get their

just deserts. A nice band of ruffians they make! The next time you look in this door there'll be murder done. Get out!"

The man got out, helped over the barricade by a none-too-gentle lift from Charles.

I turned to Duponceau; he was just sitting up, rubbing his shoulders. He struggled up to his feet and looked about him.

"I'm afraid, Selden, you'll never forgive yourself for sheltering me. I did n't think it would really come to this."

"I did," I answered. "I knew it; and I knew we'd beat them off. But if they ever come again, it'll be the end of one or the other of us."

"I'd better surrender," he said.

I gave a short laugh. "I'd put you in chains first. This is my house, and I have what guests I choose, and all the powers of Europe shan't prevent me! Do these people think we're living in the Middle Ages?"

"I'm inclined to think we are," said Rodney, from his seat on the overturned settle. "But I've always had a liking for those days, so I don't object."

Then we went to work to build up the front of the house as best we could.

### XIX.

By the time we had finished our repairs the morning was still not far advanced towards noon. I had lighted a pipe and was smoking in the full joy of rest after battle, when Rodney came up to me with a puckered line between his eyebrows.

"I'm afraid," he remarked, "we're going to be let down for the rest of the day."

"Good Lord, man!" I ejaculated, "you would n't be going through that sort of racket each hour in the twenty-four, would you?"

He smiled at my answer. "Not exactly, but just at present we're playing the part of a lot of cooped up rats too realistically to suit your humble servant. I'll be expecting them to set fire to the house next. Besides that, I should n't be surprised if the club would start a search for me at any moment. Anything may have happened in my office, the market may have gone to pot, and my customers be ready to tar and feather me."

"Well," I agreed, "that's all true, and yet if you go it leaves Duponceau just so much more unprotected."

"I know," he mused thoughtfully, rubbing his cheek with his hand. "I wish to the deuce I knew who the man was." He looked at me sharply. "Have n't you an inkling, Felix?"

I shook my head. "All I know is that he came out of the sea in a storm, with his precious treasure-box, and that Fate has apparently appointed us to protect him from his enemies until he sees fit to return

into the sea again. On one subject he's absolutely unapproachable: his antecedents."

"Then why," pursued Rodney, "did you ever take such an infernal liking to him?"

I considered. "Why did you?"

Our eyes met, and we both smiled, chuckled, and then laughed.

"There's an old French adage," said Rodney—"'*cherchez la femme.*'" He took a turn or two up and down the room. Then "See here, Felix," he said, "there's no denying the fact that we're both of us in the same boat, figuratively speaking, even if no longer physically. You had a great drag from the start, because you were living such an unusual sort of life, and were probably a woman-hater, and certainly had no use for society. Those things take with a girl brought up in New York."

I smoked stolidly. "You won the first wound, and that takes with a woman anywhere."

He looked at his bandaged arm and smiled reminiscently. He was probably thinking of that half-hour when she had dressed it.

"But the main point is," he resumed, "that we both knew that the particular girl in question loved romance better than anything else in the world."

"And that Duponceau was romance personified," I added, "which fully explains our actions."

Rodney puffed at his cigarette in silence.

"Yet I've grown very fond of the man," he said presently. "He's brave, and he's a gentleman."

"I'm fond of him, too. I would n't give him up now for the world. I intend to stay right here until something happens."

Rodney finished his cigarette and threw it away. "If you don't mind," he said, "I'll steal over to your farmer's and ride your horse to the club. I've a feeling that something may be doing in the outer world, and that I ought to get next to a ticker. I'll not be long, and I don't think they'll come back before afternoon."

"Go, by all means. The man will give you the horse and show you an inland road, so you'll not fall in with these people. We can get on all right until nightfall."

Rodney started to leave, then turned again.

"I was sore," he said, "that first afternoon when I found you and Barbara having tea here. I'll admit that I'd followed her from New York, expecting to have a clear field; but—well, one can't always get what one wants, and there's luck in this sort of a fight, just as there is in the Street; but it is a good fight, and that's more than I can say for some of the affairs one sees in town. I'm not sore any longer."

He smiled, and somehow his genuineness brought me to my feet.

"It's a square fight all round," I said.

We went down-stairs together, and I pointed out the way to the farm-house. Then I returned to my den to finish my pipe, and to wonder if Rodney was going to the club for news or only to see Barbara. The brief glimpse of her that morning had certainly set us both athrill.

The hours slid past without exertion on my part. Duponceau and I had lunch a little after twelve, and then I returned to the study and stretched myself on the leather couch, with a book before my eyes. The summer sun, warm and sensation-dulling, came in through the window, and the salt breeze was as heavy on the eyes as poppies. The world drowsed, the beach and my house were too warm and still and lethargic for action, and my eyelids closed despite by best intentions. I slept long, deep, and like a tired child, without dreams.

There was a man's step on the stairs. I sat up and rubbed my eyes; I stretched forth my arms and put my feet to the floor. Rodney entered and flopped into the leather arm-chair, an ironic smile on his lips, his eyes bright with the news that he brought.

"Well," he said, "I know: Duponceau's Etienne!"

"Etienne!"

"Yes, Etienne, the French Colossus, the man who made fortunes in months and lost them in hours, who planned to make the poor of France rich and made them poorer than before, the man who's played hob with the markets of Europe for the last six months."

I could say nothing; I was aghast.

"The most precious scoundrel of the age," said Rodney, "but also potentially the greatest benefactor. It was a toss which way his coin would fall, and it fell wrong."

"Well," I said, "I certainly never should have thought it!"

"Nor I," assented Islip; "never, never, never."

"How do you know?" I demanded.

"It's public property. It's all in the papers," he added, pulling a newspaper from his pocket and flinging it over to me. "He escaped from France on a merchant vessel, and landed on the New England coast, carrying with him papers and securities of the greatest value. A score of men have been trying to bag him and the papers without unnecessary noise."

"And we have been harboring him!" I added.

"We certainly have, and doing our best to help him evade his enemies and make off with the remnant of his spoils."

"I can't help it," I said; "I like him, and I don't believe he's as bad as people make out. He's certainly a born leader."

"So was Napoleon," answered Rodney, "and it was n't until he failed that people saw the other side of his genius. I fancy Dupon-

ceau's a genius—he might, perhaps, have been an empire-builder—but his ideas went farther than his means, and so when his bubble bursts the world calls him a villain."

"If his intentions were good, where does the crime lie?"

Rodney thought. "The poor French workmen, the widows and orphans, who had saved and slaved, gave him everything they had, because he knew how to make money multiply as no one else did. He drew them pictures of the great factories and stores and hotels he would build for them with their money, and told them how by adding their infinite mites together they might produce something gigantic. How about them left without a sou?"

"It was their own look-out," I tried to argue.

"Well," said Rodney, "the right and wrong of this sort of thing lie deep, but it may be that a man has no right to use his own imagination to see for other people; that he can build air-castles only for himself."

"Perhaps," I agreed; "but, as you say, if he had succeeded, he would have been a hero."

"That's all the difference. However, he did n't, and so he's an outcast." Rodney laughed. "And to think that I've been doing my best to defend the worst scapegrace the market has known in years."

I sat back on my couch and clasped my hands about my knees.

"What must we do now?" I asked at length.

"Give him up; deliver his precious self and his treasure chest to the blood-hounds."

I shook my head. "No, I can't do that. We've been too close together. They may take him, but I can't have a hand in it."

Rodney sat staring out the window. "Well," said he, "I don't believe I can either, though as a broker I see my duty plain enough. I can't do it, I simply cannot do it."

We sat silent for some time, each intent on his own thoughts.

"Ought we to tell him that we know?" Rodney said finally.

"I was wondering. Perhaps we should, but I don't believe we can. When you face him and look into those clear black eyes and hear that voice I doubt if there'll be anything to do but keep your mouth shut."

"Yet we must do something," objected Rodney, "for I must be off for New York in two hours from now, to try and straighten out my losses."

"Suppose we go down and look at him," I suggested. "Possibly we can think of something then."

We went down-stairs and looked in the dining-room, the hallway, and the kitchen. In the kitchen we found Charles drowsing. We could find no trace of Duponceau. I waked Charles and questioned him.

"When did you last see Monsieur Duponceau?"

Charles rose and pulled a paper from his pocket.

"Only a couple of minutes ago, Mr. Felix," he said, "he gave me this note for you and told me not to disturb you, but to give it to you when you asked for him."

I opened the paper and read it to Rodney.

My ship has come at last. I am going on board. I can get there alone; no one could help me. If you knew all, perchance you would not wish to help me. I have done sufficient harm without taking you and the others farther. Ask mademoiselle to pray for me. Good-by.

I looked up at Rodney in blank amazement; and as we stood so, a shot came from the beach. We turned and made for the stairs.

## XX.

From the balcony we sighted a schooner lying between the beach and the Shifting Shoal. A long-boat was in the water, and men were hurriedly manning it. Below us on the beach stood Duponceau, a pistol in either hand, fronting a half-dozen of his enemies, who were between him and the cottage. I would have leaped to his help, but a glance told me that the matter was too far gone for that.

Duponceau fired quickly, steadily, then wheeled and ran for the dunes. Bullets chased him, ploughed into the sand behind him, whizzed past him, but by some miracle failed to hit him. He reached the nearest sand-wall, and was hidden from us. A moment later and we saw him appear, his pistols reloaded, and watched him stand again at bay and shoot. Then again he fled for the next dune up the beach, and the pursuers, temporarily stayed, were after him again.

It was to be a running fight, stand and deliver, then hide, until the long-boat should ground upon the beach and the fugitive spring into it. I looked to the boat and prayed that it might come quickly, but the distance was long, and the sea ruffled and choppy.

Again Duponceau appeared, and again the enemy were held at bay, and dropped and ducked and dodged as his bullets flew among them.

A moment's stand, and he was hidden in the next dune, loading, making ready for another dash. It was breathless, speechless work. Rodney and I gripped our glasses, shut our teeth, watched and hoped and prayed. Again the enemy were on, after him, gaining fast, and again he shot out from the dunes, and, a lone figure, fronted and scattered them with his fire. A man went down with a bullet in his leg, and Duponceau had gained another breastwork.

Now the boat from the schooner was coming closer in. I caught an agonized glance from Duponceau in its direction, then his eyes returned to his foes, and he was shooting, ducking, and squirming into

the sand-wall. It was a pitiful chase, like that of a hare by hounds, but it was also heroic, for the man made a noble quarry, and the hounds were more than fearful of his fire.

"He's down!" cried Rodney. True, Duponceau had fallen, but on the second he was up and on again, and now he had found the last dune, and he must stand there or dash across the unprotected beach.

"Come on!" We fled down the stairs, through the open door, and hard up the shore. Now we could see another element of danger. Some of the enemy had stolen through the pines, and were firing at Duponceau down the length of his dune.

"Look!" I muttered. We stopped, breathless, panting, wide-eyed. Duponceau burst out from the dune, whirled about, fired back at the hidden foe, wheeled and shot at the men who were following him up the beach, and, turning, headed straight for the Ship.

"Run!" I murmured, and Rodney echoed me: "Run, Duponceau, run, and may Heaven help!"

I have seen men run, but never as Duponceau ran that day. He seemed to skim, almost to fly, across that open space, and behind him came his enemies, no longer firing, no longer cursing, matching their speed against his frantic flight.

The Frenchman neared the rocks, was on them, was up and clambering over the Ship's side. Then came a sharp report, and I could see Duponceau quiver and hang useless—worse than useless, for he was only half over the vessel's rail.

"Good Lord!" I breathed. "He's done!"

But as he hung there Barbara suddenly appeared beside him and pulled him inboard, supported him across the deck, and got him as far as the cabin door before he collapsed on the boards.

Barbara disappeared, and then reappeared with something in her arms.

"The chest!" I muttered. "He could n't forego that!"

I saw Barbara lift and steady Duponceau on his feet, saw him clutch the box with one hand, while he held a revolver in the other. He staggered across the deck.

"Come on!" I breathed, and we were off for the Ship.

The long-boat was half way in when a new shout threatened to sound Duponceau's death-knell. Men came out on the cliff and stood high above him, ready to fire down upon him. There was a ring about him now—enemies on the rocks, on the cliff, and men already scrambling through the water to lay their hands on him.

"Look!" cried Rodney. I saw Barbara whisper in Duponceau's ear, saw him straighten up to his full height and fire at the men above him. One bullet ripped into the cliff, another shattered an arm.

We stood now on the rocks, a stone's throw off. Duponceau looked

seaward and gave a cry. With terrible effort, he leaped to the farther rail, raised himself to plunge—the box still in his arms—into the sea, and sink or swim to help. He balanced, crouched, and then—a clear report and he fell, a leg broken, down into the waves. His stand was over, the fight done; his enemies had taken him.

A couple of men lifted him from the water and carried him to shore; another man followed with the chest. Rodney and I drew near and looked at him; he was conscious, and only his set teeth showed the agony he suffered.

"It's over," he said. "The boat was late." Then his eyes lighted on me, and he tried to smile. "Good-by," he muttered. "Take my good-by to *her*."

Carefully the men lifted him and carried him into the pines.

"He will live," said Rodney briefly, and I nodded. It was not for Duponceau to surrender easily, though I wondered if now he would not prefer it so.

## XXI.

THE long-boat returned to the schooner, and in a quarter-hour the latter had vanished as silently as she had come. Rodney and I went on board the Ship, and found Barbara sitting against the broken mast, her eyes deep with unshed tears of pity. We sat there and talked of Duponceau's flight and capture. "If it had n't been for the chest, he would have escaped," said Barbara. "His face lighted when he had it in his arms again."

It was some little time after this when Rodney stood up.

"I'm going to the club. I have to pack and catch the next train to New York. May I take you home, Barbara?"

The girl's eyes looked over at the beach regretfully, then roamed over the Ship, standing there all desolate, lapsing again into that silence from which it had just been awakened. I saw a certain wistfulness steal into her eyes.

"No, Rodney; I don't think I'll go home just yet. I'm not in the humor to meet aunt and the people at the club. I'd like to sit here and think a while."

"Well," said Rodney, "good-by." He shook hands with her. "Good-by, Felix. If you ever find this place too lonely for you, come and see me in New York. Things do happen there sometimes, though not such things as here in Alastair."

We shook hands, and I thought I caught a glimpse of some passing regret beneath the smile on the surface of his eyes.

As I had watched Duponceau, I watched Rodney disappear into the pines. The cheerful man in tweeds, like the mysterious man of the sea, had said farewell to the beach, but each had left a trace of himself there which I should never forget.



I turned back to Barbara.

"It's all over," she said. "They've all come and gone, and it might have been a dream."

"Here's the Ship," I answered, "riding at anchor, just as she did before."

"That makes it seem more like a dream," she said: "that after all that has happened, the Ship is just the same as on the first day I found her, and the beach"—she turned to face it—"is just as sunny and as desolate."

"Yet the pirate came," I answered, "a real pirate, a lineal descendant of Captain Kidd, and he brought treasure and hid it and dug it up again, and fought like the thorough-going gentleman adventurer he was. Monsieur Pierre Duponceau was no ordinary man."

"Tell me what you know about him," she commanded, and settled down, leaning against the mast.

"He was an uncommon man," I began, "but whether an uncommon man becomes a hero or a scapegrace depends upon the luck of time. Duponceau had ideas that were far above the heads of most men, ideas that some one at a later day might use to great ends, or which he himself might have used so had he been given time. He planned, gathered his cargoes, launched his ships in search of the Golden Fleece, and was on his way to winning it when a quartering gale drove his craft upon the rocks. Had the wind veered by a needle-point, he might have won. He was planning to make the poor of France well-to-do; instead he made them much poorer than they were; and yet those same plans pushed on may succeed when it's too late for the poor investors or for him. That's about the way it stands."

Barbara was silent, her eyes watching the distant glitter of the sea.

"There's so much luck in things, is n't there?" she said finally. "I like him, any way; I like him for what he tried to do." Then, after a pause: "You were always sure something would happen here, were n't you? So was I. Something had to happen. Do you suppose he came of his own free will, or because we had wished so hard for an adventure?"

"Wishing hard can accomplish almost anything, I've been told."

"What are you going to do now that everything is over?" she asked presently.

I shook my head disconsolately.

"Heaven knows! I have barely yet faced the possibility of no more teas on the beach, no more sunsets from the cliff, no more adventures on the Ship. It's not a very pleasant prospect, is it?"

"But the beach and the cliff and the Ship will still be here," she answered.

I followed her gaze seaward.

"A week ago I discovered a curious thing. For years I had lived here and found all the beauty I wanted in watching the changing colors of the waves, and the golden glow through the woods, and the dawn pinks of the sand, and yet all of a sudden I found they had absolutely vanished, that I could n't possibly find them any more."

I waited, and finally I caught her low-whispered, "Why?"

"Something had happened. I could n't see them alone; I could see them only when some one else was there to see them, too."

She gave a little sigh. "I know; I can understand just what you mean."

"The pines show no more armies, and the Ship gives up no more adventures, unless there is some one else here to see and live them with me."

"And," she said slowly, thoughtfully, "if there were some one else, would all these wonders still come?"

"Surely, for we would be living them all the time we were together."

"Poet!" she said. "Dreamer!"

I waited, fearful and hopeful in one.

"And yet I dream, too," she said at last; "and I think that you have shown me more wonderful things than any one else could."

"Then do you still think," I asked, "that some other man will come who can show you more?"

She would not answer my question. "The man we imagined came out of the sea and is gone. I feel as if I'd lived years in a fortnight. Dear old Ship, how I hate to leave her!"

"Why must you? Why not sail on and on in her forever? Why not set sail in her for the Fortunate Isles? Barbara, will you?"

She turned and looked into my eyes, and I read her answer.

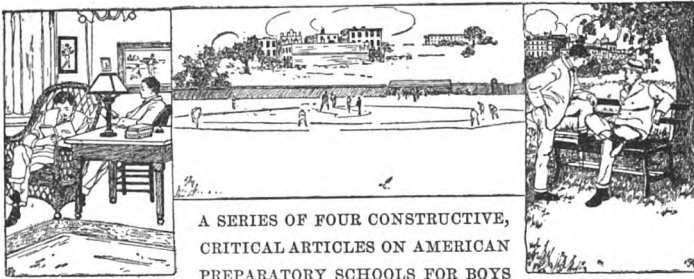
So, with Barbara sitting against the mast, our Ship set sail.



## THE WOOF OF LIFE

BY FRANCIS MARQUETTE

I N the moth-hour's silver gloom,  
 The Weaver at His loom  
 The quiet pattern of my life would trace.  
 The grayness of the moth  
 He wove into the cloth,  
 And wrought thereon the red rose of your face.



# EDUCATING OUR BOYS\*

BY JOSEPH M. ROGERS

## THIRD PAPER—ATHLETICS AND SENTIMENT

**I**N the preceding papers we have shown that it is more expensive to send a boy to a private secondary school than to college, and that he has to work much harder—though there are some compensations.

We have also shown that the boy at private school has privileges and opportunities which he cannot get at the public high school, though to take advantage of them adds to the strenuous life.

We now consider some aspects of the private school which are other than academic.

The dominant note sounded by all heads of private schools is character building. This is proper, since they have in charge the youth at the most impressionable age and at a time when parents often will not or cannot exercise a proper care. There is necessarily some difference in this respect between the private city school, where the boys live at home, and the boarding-school, where the students live on the premises. There is also some difference between the older and larger academies and the smaller schools, where more of a family life is possible. Nevertheless, the aim of all these schools is the same—to pay great attention to the individual student, to give him oppor-

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\* What is termed primary education includes all to the close of the grammar grades. Secondary education is such as is supplied in high schools and boarding-schools and academies preparatory for college. Higher, or superior, education includes college or university academic courses as well as much of the professional training.

tunities of refinement and culture not possible in the public schools, and to discipline his mind while instilling in it principles of right thinking.

The privately conducted school tends more to individualism than is possible in the public high schools. In the latter the curriculum is established for the average boy, or a trifle below that. The teachers have almost a purely pedagogical function. Necessarily, the brighter boys have the best of the situation, and he who cannot keep up the pace leaves school or drops into a lower class. The public school teacher cannot have and is not expected to have that intimacy with his students which is wholly desirable from the parents' point of view. His function is simply academic instruction, and while he often does give special attention to individuals, usually the brighter or the more studious, it is quite out the line of his prescribed duties and may be termed an act of grace. It is well known that many boys at such schools—particularly the more deficient pupils—are frequently tutored by the teachers for a regular fee. This may be entirely proper, but it shows a defect in the system. In the private school, however, it is the dull boys that get the most assistance and that individual attention which they so sorely need.



Between the ages of fifteen and twenty, as has already been pointed out, the boy needs the closest attention. While budding into a man he becomes abnormal in mind and body. Egotism becomes his dominating characteristic. He resents advice, and chafes under parental discipline. He is like a caged tiger, ever seeking to burst his bonds. He has no perspective of life, none of its bitter and wholesome educational experiences, and cannot believe them essential. It is a time when the wisest parents—in spite of their own experiences, which they generally seem to have forgotten—are perplexed. Noting that the boy is often more susceptible to outside influences than to those of the home, he is sent away to school, if such a thing is possible.

Sometimes this act of the parent is the result of mere laziness or a confession of weakness to cope with a difficult situation. The father, engrossed in business, is apt to be tyrannical in the discipline of his son, or else to let him go his own way unmolested. The mother, whose affections are so curiously set on sons, is apt to interfere with the father's ideas. It may be that both have the same love for and the same pride in their son, the same desire to develop him into a good man, but they are apt to take radically different and independent measures. It is no uncommon event for a mother secretly to side with the son against the father, simply because she thinks she under-

stands the boy better. And often that is exactly the case. Her sympathies are broader and her resentment over foolish conduct much less. This psychological problem of adolescence is the most important in the history of any family. It is a subject to which Dr. G. Stanley Hall has devoted two large volumes which form one of the most valuable scientific works in recent years.

But the boy is often sent to school simply because, all other remedies having been exhausted with poor results, a career beyond the hearthstone seems on all grounds to be the last resort. This is apt to be the very best policy, no matter what the social or financial status of the parents. It is good for all concerned. The boy gets a new chance, and the parents, experiencing a powerful sense of relief from the necessity of constant discipline, have time to expend their affections on the absent son without restraint.

A boy will generally take discipline more patiently from strangers than from his parents, since an assumption of inherited rights leads him to assume that he is master of the home, or at least free from its fretting discipline. He does not see the reasons for restrictions imposed upon him, and jumps to the conclusion that they are unjust and not based on real love for him. On the contrary, he more readily accepts discipline at school as just or merited, no matter how disagreeable it may be to him.



In recent years the great outlet for the superabundant energies of the boy is thought to be athletic sports. Doubtless this is correct. Much harm is saved boy as well as man by frequent physical exhaustion. It is an end as well as a means. Almost without exception, the sixty schools which we have under consideration place much stress upon athletics. While it is obvious that accurate data on this subject cannot be compiled, it seems a fair statement (if a comparison can be made between irrelevant things) that the average private school is much better equipped for athletics to-day than it was for academic purposes thirty years ago. One need only look through the various catalogues with their many illustrations to see that this feature bulks large in the minds of the principals. Doubtless much of the expenditure in this direction is due to competition. Boys love sports and so do most fathers, for various reasons; so that in selecting a school, other things being equal, that one better equipped in athletics is likely to be chosen. All of these schools are equipped with gymnasiums, ball fields, running tracks, and tennis courts. Many have swimming pools, and all have a tolerable equipment.

In this respect we are rightly going back two thousand years. The Greeks and the Romans thoroughly believed in athletic development,

not only for physical but for psychological improvement. The Spartans, indeed, exaggerated the importance of athletics, seeking to train fine human animals for warriors rather than build up all-around men. So also in our purely scholastic methods we are somewhat nearer the ancient standards than we were fifty years ago, since now more attention is paid to the individual.

But the feature which is becoming dominant in our schools is competitive sport with other institutions. Take up a list of the boys' books which are printed in such large numbers every year, and you will find that nine-tenths of them deal with scholastic sports, and competitive sports at that. These are the books which boys read with most avidity even before the age of puberty. Certain authors have become famous and rich because of a knack of telling a story of school-boys in which sport is almost the sole theme. They string out the narrative in great detail, which is exactly what the boys want, and it suits the author because it permits him to extend the series indefinitely.



A certain amount of competitive sport between individuals or between classes or between rival schools is, doubtless, excellent. While it is much abused, as is every good thing, still it is based on fundamentally good considerations. It teaches the boy self-control, obedience, and leadership, the very qualities which he needs in after life, no matter what his occupation. It also shows that one must stand or fall by himself. No matter how rich or how popular a boy may be, he cannot hold his own unless he can "deliver the goods," to use the current vernacular. It arouses a spirit of emulation. It leads a boy to eschew cigarettes and sweetmeats and to adopt a wholesome diet and regimen in the hope of getting on the team or aiding it to victory, with proportionate honors for himself. Moreover, in properly conducted schools, the prizes in athletics are only possible to those who maintain at least a fair proficiency in their studies.

So far, so good.

The unpleasant features of athletic exercises as developed in actual experience are of importance. Competitive sport requires the expenditure of an immense amount of energy and concentration of mind to an abnormal degree, and often results in prolonged physical exhaustion and sometimes more or less permanent damage. The survival of the fittest is the inexorable law of sports; but as the prizes to be won are so highly esteemed, every boy of spirit will put forth all his energies to excel. Sport is a pleasure, study a necessary and often disagreeable duty. All of us work hardest at the things which interest us most, and the boy is not to be blamed if he thinks more of athletics

than study, especially as in the former he gets the immediate reward of his efforts, while he must wait long to see the benefit of his academic exercises. It is the tendency of competitive sports as at present conducted to enlarge their value in the boy's mind, so that he devotes most of his energy to them.

This is not a feature of secondary school life only; it continues through his college career. But in the latter it is only the selected few who may hope to participate in the "big games," while at school there is some place in athletics for every one.



The undoubted fact is that, boy or man, we may not exhaust ourselves physically and still be prepared for prolonged mental labor, or vice versa. One must be supreme and the other should be largely subordinate. To establish the exact relationship between the two is, no doubt, difficult. It is here that wisdom on the part of principals and head-masters is required; and it is not strange that in many cases "for the honor of the school" boys are permitted to spend more time and energy in athletic sports than is good for them, seeing that the mental work cannot be relaxed. It is difficult and unpleasant to repress the enthusiasms of youth. It requires more than human intelligence to draw the line at all times properly. It is enough to say that while some of the schools are careful in this respect, others are less so.

The situation would not be so bad if the school year extended over ten months. But as shown in former articles the actual average number of days devoted to original study in private preparatory schools is only one hundred and fifty in each year, and in this time as much mental work must be accomplished as in others where the number of days is two hundred. It is because strenuous mental work and more strenuous physical work are compressed into so short a period of time that there are so many unpleasant and unfortunate results. It is a greater tax than the most strenuous man can bear. It is well known that youth is full of energy, that then recuperation is easiest and quickest. The best armies are composed of young men who best can stand the terrible strain. But it is unwise to overburden youth, and especially under the name of education.

The situation is perhaps all the worse because of the long vacations and frequent holidays. It may be argued that these furnish the desired relief from strenuous work and play. This is not wholly true. The resiliency of youth and its recuperative power do much to ward off danger, but that is hardly a satisfactory way of looking at things. Men do not spend half their time in arduous work and

the rest in recreation. They are more reasonable in disposing the burdens on their own shoulders, and after every season of unusual pressure they are glad to get immediate relief. If the boy were to spend his entire school days in study (which of course he should not) vacations would come as a physical and mental relief, and for this they were originally intended. Even if the school year were spent wholly in sports, a time of rest would be essential. Few baseball players could continue to play all winter even if the weather permitted. At the end of the season these men are "worn to a frazzle," just as are football players at Thanksgiving time. After athletes have a "fine edge" on them, they are fit for a little sharp work and then go to pieces.

Hence the distribution of vacation periods seems abnormal. Practically it works harm. A boy who spreads work and play over ten months in the year comes out better equipped than he who does the same amount of work and play in eight or seven.



Aside from athletics, there are other phases of private school life which are of importance. Personal attention has been mentioned. In a few of the very largest academies there are as many as forty boys in a section, but usually twenty-five is the limit, and these have three or more separate teachers. In most of the boarding-schools the average class numbers no more than ten. The teacher is not so much a hearer of recitations as the "guide, counsellor, and friend" of the pupils, with whom he lives on terms of the greatest intimacy, and to whom he stands *in loco parentis*. In these days only men and women of high mental equipment and generally good character are hired to teach in private schools. Most of them are not only college graduates, but have taken courses in pedagogy. They are enabled to act as individual tutors to the boys, and if this were not the fact, the results would be far different—much less satisfactory. It is this factor which makes it possible for the boy to make such apparent and so much actual academic progress. He is helped over hard places all the way. In many instances this is of the highest value, but it has the inevitable tendency to keep the boy from leaning on his own resources. He does not struggle enough, does not sufficiently work out things within himself. He is rushed. Every hour is crowded, and so, instead of his getting the time to reason out things for himself, his path is made as easy as possible for him. This tends to give him an immense amount of information, but not necessarily to impart discipline of mind so that he can understand and use the knowledge which he has acquired.



That much more good would be accomplished if the lessons were shorter and stretched out over a greater period of time must be evident to any one who has seriously studied the subject. For one thing, it would make examinations of less importance. Many principals are opposed to rigid periodical examinations, preferring to give the boy a standing based on average recitations and the opinion of the teachers as to his proficiency; but the fact that so many boys are preparing for exacting college entrance examinations makes it incumbent on most schools to keep up the older plan during the whole of the course. Some colleges are becoming less stringent as to entrance examinations. They are willing to accept certificates of proficiency from established institutions as a basis for entrance, provided the boy keep up his class work during the first six months, but this plan is not general enough to affect the secondary schools as a whole.



Most of the private schools have good libraries, and in the curriculum much attention is paid to a study of literature, especially English literature, which until the present generation was so sadly neglected even in colleges. The boy who will may, if he have time, learn a great deal in school outside of what is required in the curriculum, because he has the stimulus which his teachers afford, but it is evident that most of his reading is in the winter—between the two athletic seasons. In the fall term not much is done in this direction, and the same may be said of the spring term, when baseball and track athletics are in vogue. Now that inter-academic hockey and basket-ball are coming into vogue—to say nothing of other diverting agencies—where the reading is to come in, who can say?

Most of the masters are anxious to stimulate boys to read, and have their best opportunity in the winter term, but confessedly there is nothing more difficult in the whole realm of pedagogy than to teach literature properly. All sorts of experiments have been tried without producing satisfactory results. Boys in college to-day know infinitely more of the history of literature, of the names of great writers and of what they wrote, than do their fathers, but it is not so certain that they have as fine literary tastes. Taste is most difficult to impart, and upon taste depends one's love of literature. School and college life are all too short to do more than give the boy an appetite, so that in the long life which lies before him he may read and digest the best in literature. Much of the well meant teaching of literature produces only a disgust for the author and his themes.

But the boy at boarding-school is better off than the boy in public school, whose parents are not always fitted to guide him in this direc-

tion. What the former does get is an intimacy with some of the best men and women in the world, who live lives of self sacrifice and consecration, who have high ideals, and who strive to instill them into their pupils. In this school family group there is a freedom that is not often found in the home circle, where other things interfere with parental watchfulness. The boy is stimulated and encouraged, and much good results. Many men of high standing will admit freely that their characters were formed less by home training, which was too close for them to get in perspective; less by information gleaned from text-books, which interested them but mildly, than by the training and wise counsel of schoolmasters who endeavored to fill the lives of students with all the richness of their own mental and moral equipment.

In all these schools a high standard of life is set up. Even in those largely patronized by the rich, wealth is not held up as the greatest thing in the world. There are wild boys at school, there are unruly and restless spirits, but they receive a counterbalance which they never forget. No man can estimate the value of example. It has been the testimony of thousands of men who at school seemed the most obdurate, the least responsive to discipline or advice, that they have carried from school fundamental principles which, after apparently lying dormant for some years, have been used to their great advantage.



The human race is remarkably gregarious. We are beginning in these days to understand the great psychological power of human association. It accounts for many phenomena which were formerly inexplicable. The same fundamental principle applies to a radical mob in a great city and to a large religious gathering. Individuality seems to cease in a crowd, but the individuality of the whole is the sum of that of each person as represented in the individuality of the leader. It is leadership that counts for most in this world, and every parent is desirous of having his boy a leader of some sort in the right direction. Good leadership comes only from a sense of proportion of all the factors which go to make up civilization, from a perspective of society at large, and out of a quality of sympathy and self-control. It is because the individuality of a boy is best controlled and best developed, according to average experience, at private schools that makes the great merit of these institutions. It is this that outweighs many of the objections which have been and may yet be argued against some of them in various details. It is because this factor should be enlarged by the hearty coöperation of parents that this series of articles has been written. It is not saying too much that

upon the secondary schools of this country the future of our citizenship depends more than upon colleges and universities, not only because the pupils are in the ratio of five to one, but because the training comes at the most formative period of life and makes or mars a boy's character often beyond the power of later years to counteract either for good or evil.

And it is because this period of mental and moral discipline is so broken in upon by vacations and frequent holidays that less is accomplished than is to be desired. Is there any valid reason why practically all of the time from the first of September to the latter part of June should not be devoted to the important work of character building and without *prolonged* interruptions? Would any man permit such conditions to prevail in his own business as are to be found in the schools to-day? Boys are not weaklings. The very fact that they accomplish so much mentally and physically in so short a time demonstrate this; but how much more in point of quality might be secured in a greater length of the school year under less strenuous conditions!



Why should a boy have two weeks and more at Christmas or a week to ten days at Easter for vacation? Why should he stop work at the end of May and wait until the end of September before resuming? If he is fagged out, he should not be compelled to work so hard and should be given more time for the tasks assigned. During the long vacations there is constant oozing out of much of the benefits derived during the school period. That a boy is impressionable does not mean that he is sure to retain all he receives. How many days are consumed at the beginning of every school year in getting the boy's mind back to the quitting point in June?

In this busy, material age we are apt to look upon all things and to do all things from a purely commercial aspect of life. Our view of life is entirely too objective. It is not that we are fundamentally avaricious, or governed by material considerations, but we must recognize that in forty years our point of view of life has shifted very considerably. We want the luxuries of life not only for the mere gratification that comes with the using, but because they seem to us to make life richer and better in all respects. We pride ourselves as a nation on having developed from a rather dull plane of mediocrity to where we enjoy the best things of life in abundance. What were luxuries to the last generation are now necessities, and we do not confine our luxuries in any one direction: we want them all. It makes living very expensive, leads the well-to-do to ape the expenditures and customs of the rich. It leads those of small income to live

beyond their means. It is not that these things are necessarily not worth having, but a question of the price we pay for them. And it does not mean that we have become sordid and selfish, for there never was a time when there was more of helpfulness and generosity in the world. But it does mean that we have set a higher view than did our fathers upon the material things of life, and there is very little prospect of a decided change in the future.

What one needs as an accompaniment of wealth, or luxury, or even the things which are not now considered such, is a full, rich nature overflowing with right sentiment and well grounded in principle. Sentiment counts for more in this world than do corporations. It rules the world, though not always wisely, since there is bad sentiment as well as good. But we do need, especially during youth, when our lives are being so largely filled up objectively, so to develop the subjective part of our natures. We must all live with ourselves continually, and what we need is to be on the best possible terms with ourselves. This is essential to contentment, and contentment is much more important than what is sometimes very loosely termed happiness. The oriental lives contentedly in the midst of want and squalor because his mind to him a kingdom is—entirely too much so, we may all agree; but it permits him to bear with equanimity things which to us are simply unthinkable. It is a question of ideals.



With all the many admitted and undoubted benefits which secondary private schools confer, it may be said that the great lack is in sufficient training toward introspection and in the development of the sentimental side of life. We are apt to decry Mrs. Hemans or Peter Parley and have a contempt for the Mary J. Holmes school of fiction; but that sort of literature, with all its shortcomings, was fundamentally strong in that it appealed with simplicity to the better sentiments of our nature. We are apt to think ourselves exceedingly superior to all who have gone before us, and to decry the didactic school of teaching as practised by Dr. Weems and others. But we are not, most unfortunately, filling up the gap caused by the elimination of these factors. We give children courses in Longfellow and Tennyson and Shakespeare in a way that is apt to make them hate these authors for the rest of their lives. We no longer have the good old-fashioned way of "speaking a piece" once a week, or "spelling down" twice a day. We are ashamed of elemental conditions when all the while they are of the first importance.

The result is that to-day the boy is apt to be a very superior young person,—in fact, very much of a prig. He is in some respects

overeducated in that he is overinformed with unrelated facts. He has secured knowledge at a terrific expenditure of vitality, and overestimates its value. He has had no time to digest it: too little training to do so. He is on familiar terms with Cæsar and trigonometry, with football and pole-vaulting. These things bulk large in his mind. They give him his ideals, and what a boy's ideals are, that he is.

But unless coached at home, or by some exceptional teacher, the boy is no longer familiar with the good old stories and poems of the "readers" of an earlier day. This writer, with some experience in such matters, has often said that he believed, all things considered, there is in a given space no other such valuable body of good English literature for the youth to be found anywhere in the world as is contained in McGuffey's "readers." Alas, no one seems to read them now! We have a lot of supplementary reading, books which contain choice tidbits of literature, but some way or other they lack the warmth of sympathy and the note of simplicity which were in the older works. They are often nothing but literary pills.

Perhaps in construction and in literary style the newer reading is vastly superior, but at seventeen style is of much less value to a boy than is sentiment of a proper kind. Boys should be trained to love genuine things for their own sake, and not be compelled to study them as a task. How to do this, it must be confessed, is difficult to tell in general terms, for what is best for any one boy in this respect as well as in others is not best for any other boy in the world. After all, education is an individual problem, and not a general one.



Look over the books in your boy's library. You will find that he enjoys most those which are devoted to sports, to adventure, or to lives of eminent men written to stir up ambitions. These books are well enough in their way; but they are not sufficient for any well educated boy. How many boys in these days read "A Christmas Carol" or the works of J. T. Trowbridge? Even Aldrich and Miss Alcott seem to have lost most of their charm. It is the complaint of mothers, and the comment of booksellers and publishers, that it is difficult to get the right kind of books suitable for girls under eighteen to read. The difficulty is just as great, though not so apparent, in getting the best books for boys. It is not to be expected in this age that either girls or boys will read books entirely without love motives. But the desire is to get for them healthful books, in which the sexual problem is not discussed with distressing frankness, or discussed in a way that leads to wrong conclusions. A boy needs love stories from the time he is sixteen years old, but he does not

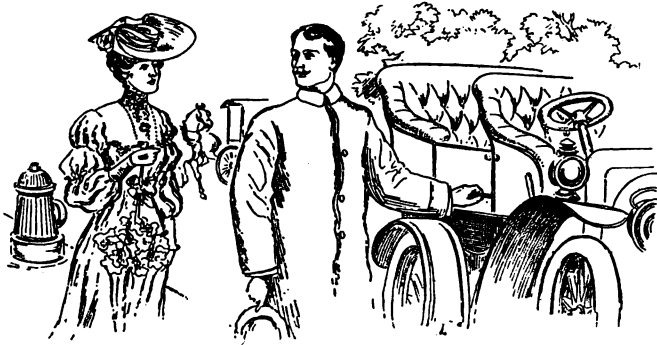
require works based on the philosophy propounded by George Bernard Shaw.

The boy is being trained to become a gentleman. We are apt in these days to forget the etymology of the word and look upon its later definition as a result of our triumphant democracy. The word implies gentleness, a factor which is none too strong in boys or men these days; apparently much less strong than it was a generation ago. Sentiment grows by what it feeds upon. The boy who is in an atmosphere where right sentiment is ever kept to the fore, where it is instilled into him by precept and example, where he gets it in his reading and in his work and in his play, will develop into the true gentleman, and that is what, after all, most parents desire, well knowing that no success is of value which does not have this as a fundamental basis. And this requires everlasting vigilance and great wisdom.

What boots it if a boy learns to parse a few pages of "Paradise Lost" and hates the poem for the rest of his days? What good results come from a term devoted to a philological dissection of "Hamlet" if one loses the beauty of Shakespeare's poetry? We need to give our boys an appetite for good literature instead of putting them through courses of literary anatomy. If once a boy's attitude toward life is properly adjusted, the rest is easy. And thousands of unfortunate boys suffer misery and loss of all kinds from a neglect of this fundamental consideration or a failure to establish it. Mark Hopkins and a log hut made a great university in all of its essential features.

In the secondary private schools of the country character building is prosecuted with more success than in the public schools, and better than in many of the best of homes. It is their great asset, but it can be said, without unduly reflecting on what is already being accomplished in such large measure, that much remains to be done. They have established an ideal, and more and more they must strive to achieve it. Every new boy is himself a difficult task—a distinct and different problem from any which have gone before. Some suggestions as to how this may be achieved will be found next month in the concluding article of this series.





## A MAN'S GAME

BY THOMAS L. MASSON

**M**Y dad and I have always been chums. Somehow, he has never made me feel that I could treat him in any other way than as a real true equal. Dad is the right sort. He takes an interest in the same things that I do. Mother says he is a bigger boy than I, but then I guess that that is n't his fault, because he is only himself, and he says part of me is mother. So that's the reason why, perhaps, he is more of a kid than I am.

I could n't wait for Dad to come home to dinner to tell him about Percy Scott and his new bubble. Percy lives just across the street from us. He is in the same grade that I am—in school, I mean. I guess he thought, though, he was in a different grade, by the way he acted when that thing came.

Percy and his father had been busy for some time building a little house to put it in, back of the big house, but they did n't let on what was going to happen until the day we came home from school, and then Percy says to me, as he waved his hand over the rear of his house, "It's come."

"What's come?" says I, knowing perfectly well what he meant.

"The bubble," says Percy. "Would you like to look at it?"

Of course I wanted to see it, but I was n't going to let on to him.

"I suppose so," said I, just as if I did n't care.

Percy went in and got the key and opened the door of the house. Then we got in behind the bubble and pushed her out where we could see her.

It certainly was great. It was painted a red color that shone in the sun so bright that it made my eyes blink. Percy went around and showed me all the different parts—the detachable rims, and the sparking system, and how it was oiled, and the extra seats.

Percy kept growing bigger and bigger, and I kept growing smaller and smaller. I said I thought it was a very good machine and Percy said he knew it was the best machine made, and then I went over on my side of the road and sat there whittling until Dad came home.

It was almost dark, but I got him out behind the house.

"Dad," I said, "it's come."

"What's come?" said Dad.

I motioned over to Percy Scott's house. "It," I said.

Dad looked at me solemnly. I realized that it was an awful thing that had happened to both of us.

"You mean the new auto?"

"Yes." I said this in a tone that really meant, "What are you going to do about it?"

Dad looked at me mournfully, then he put his arm around my shoulder.

"You want one, don't you, Bud?" he said.

"Awful," said I. "Don't you?"

"Awful," whispered Dad, looking around to see whether Mother could possibly hear us or not. "The worst of it is, Teddy," he continued, "that, between you and me, he can't afford it any more than we can. I bet he mortgaged his house. I suppose Percy felt pretty smart, did n't he?"

I looked at Dad gratefully. Just that kind of a remark on his part is what puts us on the same level. You see, he never hesitates to tell me his real feelings, and, after all, his feelin's is my feelin's and my feelin's is his.

"Yes," said I, "and the worst of it was that Percy—well, he really tried to be nice about it. He felt awful smart over that new machine, and he wanted me to know that he felt smart, but, you see, Dad, he did n't want me to know that he felt too smart."

"Yes," said Dad. "I understand perfectly. He wanted you to feel that he was a *little* bit superior, but he did n't want to rub it in too much. Just enough so that you would n't refuse to go out with him. I know, because I met his father to-day."

"How did he act?" said I.

"Well, I guess he acted toward me just about the same way that Percy acted toward you."

It was a spring day, and while we had been talking we had gone out and sat down on the grass plot in the rear of the house. My hand was in Dad's.



"I wish we could get one," said I.

"Would n't it be great!" replied Dad. "Let's see. We'd have to put up a little house. This would n't be a bad spot, would it?"

"Would n't it be better," said I, "if we could have the house built? You see, they built their own house, but if we should have ours built it would kind of show that we did n't care for money."

"Well, yes," replied Dad. "That would n't be a bad idea. I suppose," he said, looking at me in a sort of dubious way, "it would be your idea, Sonny, to do the thing right; as long as we are going to get a machine, to get one a little bit better than Percy Scott's. We'd want to seem as if we were a little reckless about it."

"Yes, Dad; just as if it did n't make any difference, just as if we were really true live millionnaires. Then I could go over to Percy Scott's—I would wait until his old machine was busted—and I'd say to him, in an easy familiar way, 'Come on, Percy, let me take you out for a little spin this afternoon,' and Percy would be grateful to me that I remembered him."

"That's the right spirit," said Dad. "I'd meet Percy's father down at the club, and I'd go up to him and slap him on the shoulder. 'Scott, old chap, it's too bad your machine is out of commission, but never mind, we are all neighbors. Consider mine at your disposal. There is room enough for all in it! Hey, Sonny? We'd make the Scotts feel like thirty cents, would n't we?'"

"That's what we would," said I, the tears coming to my eyes at the very thought, because, somehow or other, I could n't get over the way Percy had treated me.

Dad dug up the ground savagely with his jack-knife. He always did that when he was mad about something. I've seen him sometimes, when he had had words with Mother, come out, with me sitting on the ground beside him, and toss up the ground for ten minutes without saying a word.

"Well, Sonny," he said at last, "we certainly have got to have a new machine. The worst of it is that I have n't a cent."

"Does that make any difference?" said I. "You say that Mr. Scott did n't have any money. I thought you could do almost anything that you really wanted to do."

Dad's face looked awful solemn. Then his voice fell to a whisper. I saw him looking up to the house as if he was half afraid somebody was listening.

"Sonny," he said, "your mother's got the money, and there's no reason why she should n't spend it." Then he went on, just as if I was n't there: "Here I am, spending every cent I make on her and never having anything to show for it, and she's got her little pile and is as independent as you please. Well, we'll see what can be done."

We got up and went into the house to dinner. Dad kissed Mother, and I went up-stairs and washed my face and hands and brushed my hair. While I was doing it I looked across the street and saw the whole Scott family getting ready to go out and take a ride. My! how they tooted that horn! You know new people always toot their horn.

Well, when I came down to dinner Dad was at it. My! but he is smart!

"I see," he said, just as if he was talking about the weather, "that the Scotts have an automobile. There they go now," he said, looking out of the window.

"Yes," replied Mother; "Mrs. Scott mentioned that they were going to get one. Do you suppose that they can afford it?" she asked, looking at Dad with considerable curiosity.

"Afford it!" replied Dad. "Well, that amuses me. Of course they can't afford it. Why, they can't afford it nearly as much as we can." Then he leaned back in his chair and said, "After all, Mama, perhaps they're right. I suppose Scott goes on the principle that you might just as well have a good time while you can. I don't think much of their machine, do you?"

"Why, it looks rather handsome," said Mother. "But is n't it noisy!"

"Of course it's noisy," I spoke up. "It's a single cylinder. It makes a terrible noise."

"If I could n't have a better machine than that," said Dad, "I would n't have any. Would you?"

Mother shook her head. "No," she said; "but the Scotts seem to be tickled to death with it."

"Oh, yes; they will be patronizing you now."

"She's doing it already," said Mother.

Dad pricked up his ears. "I would n't care if she did," he said. "I consider it positively vulgar to have a dinky little machine like that, don't you?"

"I certainly do," replied Mother.

"But it's great fun, anyhow," said Dad. "I would n't, of course, envy the Scotts, but still it would be kind of nice if we had one, would n't it? Just think what it would mean for you," he said to Mother. "We could go off on little trips, and Sonny here is mechanically minded anyhow, and it would be an education for him. Besides, we'd get out and get the fresh air. I've an idea that you'd like it so much better than horses."

Mother straightened up. Her lips came together.

"Well, there's no use in talking about it," she said. "We can't get one, and I'm not going to think about it. Only, it did make me a little bit provoked to-day when Mrs. Scott was so lordly."

They talked on like this during the dinner, and when it was over I saw Dad look at me in a peculiar way, which was as much as to say "Skidoo!" so I skidooed and left him alone with Mother. But every once and a while I sneaked to the door of the living-room to hear how things were getting on. Once I heard Dad say, "Of course, my dear, don't do it if you don't want to. It's your money, and I don't want to influence you. But just think of those Scotts." And then again I heard him say, "If you can bear living with Mrs. Scott and meeting her almost daily, all right; that is for you to say." And then again, "It is n't as if we did n't have anything. A couple of thousand dollars is n't going to make the slightest difference to you in the long run."

Well, there I was on the outside, sneaking back and forth and wondering just what was going to happen, when by and by Father and Mother came out of the living-room arm in arm, and I knew that the thing was settled. I saw it in Dad's face.

The next day we got busy. Dad telephoned a builder in the morning, and in the afternoon I got leave of absence from school and we went to a shop and looked at machines.

We both of us agreed beforehand that there was only one thing to get, and we got it. It was a week before it came and in the meantime the carpenter had put up the house on the spot we had planned.

I remember when it came I was sitting on the front piazza watching Percy Scott across the way, rubbing up his machine while he waited for his mother. All of a sudden, as ours came down the road—in charge of the man who had been sent out with it—Percy looked up, and then as the machine turned in at our roadway and buzzed up back of our house and I jumped up and ran out, I turned and looked at Percy. His neck was craned away over, and his eyes were as big as saucers. Somehow or other, as the man got out and was telling me how quickly it took him to come from town, I felt Percy coming over. I could feel him coming through the house, and, sure enough, in a moment he appeared.

"Is that yours?"

"Yep," said I.

Percy looked the machine over critically, from the baggage-rack in the rear to the search-lights in front.

"Four cylinders," he asserted, feeling that this was a matter which ought to be beyond all question.

I merely nodded in reply.

Percy sighed. "Nice car," he said. "Are you going to run her yourself?"

"I thought I would," I replied. Then I edged over toward him. "If Dad will let me," I said. "You see, Dad says, with a big machine

like this you have got to be awful careful, and of course I would n't like to do anything to hurt it."

Percy was game.

"Well," he replied, "if you want any help, call on me. I'll be glad to show you all I can."

"Sure," said I; "much obliged."

Then, somehow or other, I felt kind of sorry. When Percy's machine came and he did n't think we could get one, he *did* rub it in. But, then, he did n't rub it in as much as he *might have*. After all, as I stood and looked at Percy, knowing how I felt then, it seemed as if he let me off easy, when he might have said so many things that might have made me feel mean. It was n't natural for him, of course, not to say some things, but then, everything being considered, he did n't treat me as bad as he might have done. And so now it seemed to me as if, although we had gone him one better, there was a chance for me to be real nice to him. And so I said:

"Yes, Percy, I shall be very glad to have you give me some lessons. I don't know, after all, but that your machine is better than ours."

"Do you really think so?" said Percy. "Of course it is n't such a big one as yours, and has n't got as many cylinders."

"No," said I; "but then, cylinders ain't everything."

Percy saw that I was trying to make him feel good and all right, and it got him. And so he came up and he said, "Bud, you're all right. I want to tell you something. When we got our machine it made me feel awful good, and I said to myself, 'There is n't anybody in the world that can get ahead of us,' and when you came over and I showed it to you, I felt as if I was a good deal better than you. But now that you've got your machine and I know that it's a bigger one than ours, I realize it was kind of mean in me to feel this way."

Then he grasped me by the arm. "Do you know," he said, "just between you and me, my dad did n't buy our machine."

"No?" said I.

"No," said Percy. "Dad could n't afford to. Mother bought it for him."

Then it seemed as if something was due to Percy, and so I grabbed him by the arm.

"I want to tell you something," I said.

"Go ahead," said Percy.

"Promise not to tell."

"I'll never tell."

"Well, then," I said, "same here!"

And then, while we were looking at each other, who should come up but Dad.

"Ah, boys," he said, "I see that machine has come."

Then he called out, "Hey, Scott, come up here. I want you to look at it."

And then along from the front of the house came Percy's father.

And there the four of us stood, looking at that machine.

"I see," said Mr. Scott, to Dad, "that you've got a four-cylinder."

"Yes," said Dad. "I suppose I was a fool, but, somehow or other, I—well, I could n't resist it."

Mr. Scott leaned back and put his hands in his pockets and looked over the machine thoughtfully.

"No," he said. "You were right. I wish I had done the same thing. I think I will. I think I'll put my machine in and get a bigger one. The fact is that I would have done it anyhow if it had n't been for my wife. I wanted to get a bigger machine, but you know what economical streaks these women have. She would n't let me."

And then Dad smiled.

"Well, do you know," he said, "I wish my wife was that way. I wanted to begin on a small one, but there was no use. She kept at me until I got this."

Then Dad turned to Mr. Scott.

"If these women," he said, "knew how hard it was to make money these days, they would n't be so anxious for us men to blow it in on bubbles."

And Mr. Scott, he laughed right out.

"That's where you've hit the nail on the head!" he cried.

While as for Percy and me, we kept mum, and from that day on we understood each other.



## THE LESSON OF THE TREES

BY RICHARD KIRK

**M**ASTER, I learn this lesson from the trees:  
 Not to grow old. The maple by my door  
 Puts forth green leaves as cheerily as I,  
 When I was taller than this self-same tree,  
 Put forth my youthful longings. I have erred,  
 Standing a bleak and barren leafless thing  
 Among my hopeful brothers. I am shamed.  
 I will not be less hopeful than the trees;  
 I will not cease to labor and aspire;  
 I will not pause in patient high endeavor:  
 I will be young in heart until I die.

# HELEN'S FIRST SUNDAY

*By George Herbert Clarke*

HELEN timorously but fondly stroked her crisp little skirt of Confederate gray. It was quite new, like Helen herself, and like this first Sunday in the Home. Left motherless in babyhood, and fatherless before she could know the completeness of her desolation, she had been loosely attached to the household of a Cracker aunt, good-natured, illiterate, and slatternly, until rescued by Providence in the person of a wandering Ladies' Aider, and consigned to the Church Home for the orphan girls of Southern soldiers. When they told her about her father, and why she was now to be clothed in gray and cared for by Sister Catharine and Sister Felicia, she smiled happily and said she knew everything about her daddy, and how he "sure fit those drestle mean Yankees all by hisself and come back shot up somp'n turble." The aunt had had one passion in life,—her soldier brother.

The sisters were angels of light, it was true, but they were also models of deportment, and so at short intervals Helen kept a wary eye on the particular guardian of her pew, turning again with little-girlish content to pet the hem and seams and *feel* of her precious skirt. The music was very grand,—never before had she heard anything nearly so loud and beautiful, so exactly like heaven; the high and holy altar and deep-hued windows came shiningly into her child-soul with an awful joy; and her cool, gray dress was so very smooth and nice! The Home was lovely, and the Sisters; but church—oh, *this* church—was just too good to bear. And it seemed to feel gooder all the time. Something is happening right now that sends a little flutter along the friendly fellow-skirts in Helen's pew,—a sound of distant singing, high and clear and pure, a sound surpassingly sweet as it grows and dwindles and grows again, until now it enters the church with a triumphant burst and is borne to the chancel on the voices of twenty boys, clothed in black robes with loose white vests overhanging them. The people are rising; the singing boys are marching slowly to their places; the rector is turning to his desk; the angels are bending forward from the windows the better to watch and listen; and Helen's little soul is alight with a rapture of excitement.

A book is put into her hand, and Sister Catharine's voice is heard

saying: "Keep the place as well as you can, dear, and do as the others do."

"Yes, ma'am; yes, Sister. I won't *move*; honestly, I won't."

"Hush! You must kneel now;" and the all-submissive Helen is kindly pressed down upon her knees, and counselled once more to keep the place.

A low murmur filled the church, led from the chancel:

"Almighty and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare Thou those, O God, who confess their faults. . . ."

What grave, slow words; and how noble and serious the old man's voice! "Amen" burst from the choir-boys, and Helen could not help opening her eyes to look at them. But their heads, all the people's heads, were dutifully bowed, and she trembled and blushed and hid her face in her hands once more.

Again a murmur. People were talking again to Somebody, it seemed, all together. The old rector was talking fast, and the Sisters were talking, and the girls, but Helen did not know what to say, and felt abashed, and waited. And soon the talking was over and the people stood, and Helen, her eyes still penitently screwed up, felt her arm grasped and was lifted to her feet. And they were singing—the boys—a stately song about a great King, and the sea, and the sheep. Helen knew about kings. She had seen a picture of one once, and had asked her teacher about it. The picture showed a great bearded man dressed in red and black, and very straight and strong. And she understood the sea part, too, because she had learned that all the kings lived away across the sea. But the sheep—whose sheep were they? And were they the ones that were lost? And where was the plantation they belonged to? She liked sheep, but she liked goats better, because her cousin Billy had often let her play with his and take long, exciting rides behind it in the three-wheeled cart he made. Oh, if Billy could only be here now! If he only *could*! Or, if she could see him, and tell him all about it! And maybe, if he came, he would be let sing with those other boys. Could that ever be? For Billy sang lovely every day. And whistled. And always played fair and kind. And yonder's a boy looks like he might be Billy, only Billy is n't clean much. Oh, if only—

The Psalter for the morning had been uttered, and the First Lesson

read, and Helen found herself standing for the *Te Deum*. As the organ swelled out the mighty periods, and the boyish voices caught and carried them, it seemed as though her heart must break for very joy. The boys themselves, already remote in their uniformed beauty, remote as gleaming white from quiet gray, receded to her vision until they became creatures of quite another world.

The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.  
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee.  
The noble army of Martyrs praise thee.

The choir! The choir! Almost now a choir invisible to Helen's straining eyes. Her heart began bounding again. She understood, for she was feeling; and knew, because imagination taught her.

O Lord, in Thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

The voices died slowly on the air; the congregation settled down, and with a tiny sigh Helen came back to the realities of pew and church and Sister Catharine. But the reading of the New Testament Lesson failed to interest her. She kept her gaze fixed steadily upon the choir, the smallest boys in which were separated from her pew by only a few feet of aisle space.

One of them, observing the new orphan girl, with her glowing cheeks and shining eyes, smiled at her in good-fellowship. He hoped she was going to sit there every Sunday. She sure was a pretty kid. And he punched his neighbor to win his attention and ask a judgment, while the organist's head hovered dimly above the organ.

"Aw, shut up, Max! Can't you see he's lookin' at us? I ain't goin' to be fined. Why don't you get your *Benedictus*?"

But Max, still with his eyes on Helen, and feeling a sudden liking for cassock and cotta, paid no heed. It was the new-old moment. The gray girl and the white boy were looking towards each other,—a *Benedictus* not found in books.



## EVEN-SONG

BY CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE

MY heart, O love, is a cathedral-chapel  
Where all my thoughts, true ministrants of Beauty,  
Come at the evening-hour to kneel and worship  
Before thy image, shrined there at the altar.



# PATIENCE FESSENDEN'S SCANDALOUS STORY

*By Janet Garth*

**A**CROSS the late afternoon briefly streamed the pale, unreal yellow light of early spring, giving it a startled, prophetic quality, as though something exquisite and momentous were about to happen. In this hour of unfulfilled ecstasies arrived Mary Selwyn, a creature of no poetic or legendary suggestiveness, but pure prose, of a narrow and familiar order—the essence of material domesticity. Her father and mother, plain, sensible Judge Fessenden and his mild wife, had awaited her with a subdued pleasure that now flared into a sudden joy as they kissed Mary's round, pink face and embraced her several layers of ornamental wrappings. It was not a rapture, this annual home-coming of Mary's; but it was a substantial comfort, so thoroughly did her parents feel her to be bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh, blessedly inalienable. They loved her, indeed, for being a flattering extension of their own personalities, for having in her nothing untraceable and foreign.

Presently the judge began to fidget in a manner always intelligible to the women of one's domestic circle; it was half-past six, and supper-time, and the wife and daughter were already started, at full sail, across the wide, uncharted ocean of woman-talk.

Mrs. Fessenden stopped short. "I thought perhaps we ought to wait," she suggested, flushing delicately.

Arthur, her son, bent his quiet, practical face towards hers. "No, don't wait, mother," he said in a low voice. "I saw her going over Harley way."

"It's Patience, I suppose," broke in Mary, in a voice made a little harsh by her effort to conceal the hurt at her sister's absence. "Let us wait, by all means, if you like, mother."

"No," decided the mother waveringly; "I think we will go in. Patience has—not been quite well lately"—she turned in gentle apology to the older sister—"and she must have thought a walk would do her good. She likes to be out at these queer, chill times, you remember."

"I'm sorry she's not well"—Mary Selwyn resumed her matter-of-fact manner. "But when a girl does the things Patience does——!"

They did not speak of her again, Mary because she wished to imply a rebuke of the girl's inhospitable absence, the others because they could find no extenuation, yet would not blame Patience openly. Yet each knew, clearly enough, that it had always been that way with the sisters. If Patience could only bring herself to be a little more—ordinary!

Toward eight o'clock, as Mary sat fluently talking to the others, of her children and her home, some one quietly entered the lamp-lighted room—a tall girl with a narrow, dark face and eyes steadily aflame. Without speaking, she kissed Mary Selwyn—it was the merest soft brushing of the cheek—and slipped into her small, plump hand a bunch of wood-flowers, moist and white. Mary disliked the damp, chilly sensation that the flowers gave her, and she detested the casual and incomplete nature of the girl's greeting. For herself, she preferred a warm human caress, and, as a mother's right, she expected prompt and detailed inquiries about the children. Patience, omitting these proper ceremonies, seated herself silently in a shaded corner of the room.

"Have you had your supper, Patience?" The mother's gentle solicitude was automatic from long exercise.

"No, mother." Then, after a moment's uncomfortable silence: "Oh, Maisie, don't you remember, after all?—the day you and I walked so many miles for little blossoms like these, and got lost, and had such a happy day? I've just come from there—I went to get them for you."

"They're lovely, Patience," said Mary, but she did not think so. The childhood reminiscence meant nothing to her, and Patience's fantastic welcome gave her only discomfort. She suffered acutely, and was ashamed that she suffered, from the girl's sublime neglect of the formulas that other women held essential.

Redbrook, within whose material vision Patience Fessenden had grown to be a woman, was a compact little town of a tedious social homogeneity. Being small enough to preclude any private life on the part of its citizens, and knowing what it did of the Fessendens, it had for years been in the way of asking how in the world, if dear, good Mary Fessenden lacked complete sympathy with her sister, an indulgent attitude was to be expected of outsiders? When Patience had been a gracefully awkward child, with a reputation for brilliant and unexpected sayings, the town had tolerated conscientiously this singular differentiation from its familiar types, but her development into a silent young woman who wrote strange, rhymeless poetry, and who utterly ignored Redbrook, was construed as a wanton affront. "I very often like the insides of people," Patience had told her mother, as a little girl, "but it hurts me to come near the outsides

of them." Indeed, love prompted a leniency beyond the mother's wisdom; and thwarted maternal ambition succumbed for the most part to a vague, wistful pride in the strange, shy girl who more and more became a reticent and shadowy presence.

But while clinging to her isolation from the world, she preserved a profoundly tender love for the few persons who had always been near her—the love, almost, of a blind person to whom those about him have been kind, and who trusts in their protection. There was no confidence; intercourse with Patience was an unsubstantial matter, for her own thoughts took form in writing, never in speech, and she was frankly incurious as to the thoughts of others. Above all, she clung passionately to this home where she had always lived, to the fields and woods of Redbrook. A curiosity as to other scenes appeared not to exist in her. It seemed that the nearest approach to sorrow she had ever known was a likelihood, once, that her father would take his family to a distant city.

When, the next morning, Patience did not appear, Mrs. Fessenden timidly explained that it had become her habit to spend almost all her time in her own room at the top of the house. Left to themselves, therefore, Mary Selwyn and her mother settled themselves in the sewing-room. The seamstresses, and the spring carnival which they were to inaugurate, and to share in which Mary yearly left her own less ample home, were not due for another day. So for this brief time the two were to be intimately alone among the fair soft fabrics whose ultimate shape was so congenial a subject of discussion. The unfolding of sheer, beflowered dress-stuffs, the clicking of shears, the threading of needles, and the warm morning sunshine flowing in and through it all, gave a keen and peculiar satisfaction to both women.

But the peace that comes of contact with muslins and laces could not survive Mary's recollection of a duty to discharge.

"Isn't Patience more of a recluse than ever?" she had demanded, with the air of one from whom it is useless to try to withhold domestic secrets.

"I am afraid so," admitted the mother, tenderly patting the summer wardrobe of Mary's little daughter.

"If it were not for that," Mary went on, with cheerful briskness, "I should so love to have you ask the Cranfields, Charles's cousins, here for Sunday, if you would, mother. They are staying so near, as I told you, and they were so hospitable to us last summer."

"Patience would not wish to interfere with your pleasure," the mother defended her.

"No," conceded Mary, with ponderous scorn, "but she would not speak to the Cranfields for my sake."

"It isn't discourtesy, dear. Oh, how often we have talked of this!" Mrs. Fessenden sighed from an intellectual inability to contest the point her loyal heart was sure of. "She does not understand how other people feel about such things. She simply is not social, as you are and as most girls are, Mary"—which was the formula to which the mother always ultimately resorted, and which indeed summed up all that she herself clearly knew of the strange duckling that lived at her side.

"Then she surely cannot expect other people to understand her."

"But we do understand her!"—in an unconvinced voice—"and you know yourself that the dear child is devoted to us. But you know allowance must be made for people with talent. Ask the Cranfields if you like, Mary. Your father and I are not ashamed of Patience."

"I should like them to come. Perhaps you would speak to Patience about it, mother?"

"My dear," said the mother sadly—for this was the hardest part of all—"my 'speaking to' Patience would not have nearly as much effect as your speaking to your little Dorothy."

"Oh, Dorothy!" Mary's inflection implied that here, indeed, comparisons were preposterous. "Why, mother, she is a perfect little hostess already. I wish you could have seen her superintending the arrangements for her birthday party!" Mary sighed in a rapture of content that the Lord had not seen fit to afflict her with a gifted child. And the sigh was checked, withdrawn, and remade into a smile as a slight sound in the hall was followed by Patience, bearing her customary coals of fire—not the least irritating of her characteristics, Mary thought.

"How good you look!" remarked the perplexing element—"you two with your needles in the sunshine. I like to have you here, Maisie. Oh, I know this blue thing"—she caught up a half stitched garment—"must be for little Carl! Tell me what kind of things he talks about."

By which unconscious master-stroke Mary was so reassured as to Patience's goodness of heart that she bethought herself to utilize the fortunate moment. Perhaps, after all, it was not an impossible thing to "manage" Patience.

"Will you do something for me, dear?" she asked sweetly, after she had responded with a generous flow of anecdote about her little son.

"Oh, please!" smiled Patience.

"Some friends of mine, the Cranfields, are coming here for Sunday. If you would be nice to them——"

"You know that I can't talk to people, Mary," Patience interrupted, almost harshly, and left the room. Mary flushed, and could not rid herself of the sensation of blundering cruelty; it had been like asking a blind person to see.

During the next few days the house was resolutely kept astir. Mary Selwyn was addicted to a fussy hospitality, productive of a kind of righteous discomfort, from which the disturbed family silently fled. Mary herself was enjoying a dominant morning in the cook's hitherto uninvaded province, when the first threat of ultimate disaster sounded. Mrs. Fessenden's hand trembled as she showed the letter. "Mrs. Cranfield writes that her son is unexpectedly with them," she fluttered. "She asks if she may bring him."

"Well, there is the east room," said Mary practically.

"But, Mary, read!" The poor lady held the letter at arm's length. "His mother intimates that he is interested in Patience—wants to know her. Now, what would you? Of course I can't tell him not to come! And if he does, poor Patience will never forgive us. She has hardly spoken to a man in her life."

Mrs. Fessenden sank feebly into a chair, offering her own uncertainty and incompetence, after the manner of weaker persons, as a kind of challenge. She knew that this executive daughter enjoyed domestic emergencies. Well, here was one for her to settle—one she had herself invited.

Mary's pink face beamed above an all-enveloping gingham apron, white with flour. She was not disconcerted. Already the offending Patience had risen in this consistent sister's estimation from the fact that a man sought her. "Martin Cranfield is a charming fellow," she remarked placidly, returning to her dough. "Of course we must have him come."

"But Patience!"

"She need not know anything of this letter. And we can ask Kitty Garrett in to meet him if Patience declines to thaw. I will arrange it." But Mary did not communicate this easy confidence to Mrs. Fessenden, who worried all day and lay awake all night. The imminence of something nameless and formidable had begun to torture her. For the first time her heart swerved utterly from the older daughter, whom one could love with calmness, to the younger, for whom one must always yearn unsatisfied. It was a betrayal of poor, childlike Patience, this invasion; in the sternly loyal household faithlessness had entered, and vulgar plotting. Even the bright dawn, so long in coming, did not banish the mother's fear of a catastrophe she knew herself not strong enough to avert.

Gentle Mrs. Fessenden received her guests with a timid cordiality,

while beside her her matronly daughter glowed with hospitable fervor. Mary secretly thought her mother's anxiety a thing abject and pitiable, and did her honest best to balance it. She therefore devoted herself, chattily, to the new-comers, while Mrs. Fessenden feebly hoped that the non-committal statements—they were not lies, she was sure!—that she had so carefully arranged to protect Patience were safely intact in the very front of her memory. As she had foreseen, she had prompt need of them.

"And that dear genius of yours—does she keep herself hidden away?—how delightful of her! That last poem of hers is very wonderful, Mrs. Fessenden. Such strength, such prophecy! The time-spirit is in her!"

Oh, could not these people understand that it was Patience's unquestioned pleasure to be ignored?—that one did not speak of her in this brisk, familiar way, in such glib phrases of compliment, demanding her actual presence openly? The non-committal defences were produced; they failed of their effect. Mrs. Fessenden reflected desperately that with Mary's voluble coöperation she might succeed in detaching from the perilous subject the silent father, even the facile mother, with her intolerable air of being up with the times; but that unobtrusive visitor, their son, who frowned at his mother's facility, yet who pursued a gracious inquisition of his own, drawing candid answers from Mrs. Fessenden, she knew not why—what was one to do with him? Arthur, who could take him in charge, would not be at home until evening, six hours or so. Fortunately, a carriage in motion is a secure yet polite confinement for a turbulent guest. Mrs. Fessenden ordered hers for immediately after luncheon, and tried courteously to avoid young Mr. Cranfield.

A mist, however, was gathering even then, at eleven in the morning; and by luncheon time it had thickened into a white rain; or rather, perhaps, a falling vapor, noiseless and of a mysterious soft opacity. Patience, lured by the delight of penetrating the gentle blur that lay over the wide stretch of fields, put on her boy's cap and a moment later was valiantly afoot in the red mud, a lithe, springing figure, graciously enveloped in the falling mist. Suddenly, a rod or so beyond the house, she was conscious of a sturdy companion at her side, with a serious, resolute profile and a vibrant voice, eloquent of understanding.

"I should like to go with you, if I may, Miss Fessenden."

He had deliberately accommodated his step to hers without waiting for her reply, and Patience looked up at him in startled resentment at his audacity.

"This is Miss Fessenden, surely," he urged. "I am Martin Cranfield."

Patience was not without certain incisive little weapons of her own—the shyest of creatures is equipped for self-defence. But she felt them at once too delicate and too cruel to use in this connection. She stopped short and looked full at the gravely friendly intruder. “I must tell you,” she said, “that I always walk alone.” Then she had an impulse to add something conciliatory, and said, with an engaging vagueness, “Thank you.”

“But in this case,” Cranfield continued, unruffled, “I am dependent on you for guidance. I don’t know your Redbrook, and in this mist——”

Patience was silent.

“Do you really insist that I take another direction?” He was still grave and patient, as though reasoning with a child.

The girl was puzzled, but not in the least distressed.

“You may come,” she surprised herself by saying. Then she reflected that the strange youth might prove a companion of her brother Arthur’s pattern and walk beside her in faithful silence.

The companion, however, plainly understood himself to be under no compact of muteness. As they swung along together he talked freely and without waiting for a reply, as though he were gently taming a wild creature, accustoming it to his voice and presence. Patience, constrained at first to listen to his voice rather than his words, reflected that all the other voices she had ever heard were grossly lacking in the ample resonance of this. Later, she came to smile at his whimsicalities, and to thank him, silently, for sparing her questions.

Mile after mile they walked along the country road, the warm white rain falling so close about them that they seemed within its friendly density to be within a wonderful and inviolate world of their own. To Martin Cranfield, the girl seemed a new Miranda, so unused was she to human ways, so delicately curious, after the wearing off of her first silent wonder, as to this new, strange personality that had invaded without wounding her. It was plain that Patience had no arts and that she knew no conventions; and neither felt, in that freedom of the long road and the soft rain, that there existed any check upon the rare and limpid honesty of their speech. Subtly and obscurely drawn together, they were direct enough now in their probing of each other’s delicate reticences. In an hour Patience felt herself a transformed creature. She did not remember that before in her life she had spoken unreservedly to a human being; or that, in her serene strength, she had felt the need of such outspoken intimacy. After all, what had they told each other? Foremost in her recollection that night were the simple gratefulness of the man’s presence, and the imagination-stirring quality of his voice and laugh.

It was evening when they buoyantly returned. Their good-night was a promise to walk again in the morning. Mary Selwyn, hearing Cranfield's step, ran out to assure him that a warm supper was waiting, and that in the library sat Miss Kitty Garrett, a person of varied and agreeable accomplishment.

"What a beautiful girl your sister is!" was Martin's only reply to these assurances—a reply which set Mary's fancy galloping along a familiar and congenial path, never before associated with the eccentric Patience. Later, it seemed to her that young Cranfield accepted Miss Garrett's conversational antics with a detached coolness of which she alone knew the significance.

The bewildered Fessendens had no resources to meet the amazements of the next few days. The task which they had foreseen, that of protecting Patience from too importunate guests, would have weighed upon them sufficiently; but it was an even more disturbing experience to see the recluse withdrawing voluntarily from her solitude to spend her days with this young man of strong personality and genial impulses. Mary Selwyn alone took the shrewd, matronly view, and insisted that Cranfield be asked to prolong his visit after his parents' enforced departure. "I haven't a doubt," she confided earnestly to Mrs. Fessenden, "that Martin will fall in love with Patience. Then she can spend the summer getting her things ready, and have an autumn wedding. She may have Dorothy for flower-girl."

At this very moment, it happened, Patience Fessenden and Martin Cranfield stood together at the edge of the meadow below the house. The Patience of three days ago had believed herself inseparably bound to her home, to all that now lay about her. This Patience could regard her surroundings fondly but detachedly; she was no longer a part of them. But Cranfield, through whose urgent, vital influence this astonishing change had come about, had by no means, in separating Patience from her impersonal environment, reconciled her to the rest of humanity. She shrank as sensitively as before from the hazard of human encounter. Through all her tenderly guarded life, whose development had been as direct and natural as a wild flower's, she had always naively considered the demands and aversions of her own spirit as imperative; her ardent acceptance of Cranfield's enthralling personality was no subdual of her sweet and innocent egotism. Therefore what he had now proposed to her seemed monstrous and impossible; nor had he at first understood her reluctance. When he did, it enchanted him.

That there could be a girl who was afraid of weddings—who had suffered, as Patience told him she had suffered, from the mere contemplation of her sister's public nuptials! More than this—



Patience had declared that it would be impossible for her to confess her betrothal and hear comment and congratulation. Her pale face streamed with tears, and her hands grasped his in eager supplication, as she told him this. It was her habit, and, deeper than that, it was her nature, to hold within her own heart the knowledge of her experiences; and that this momentous and intimate secret should cease to be a secret, that it should be told upon the streets of Redbrook, would afflict her with the pain of a thousand wounds.

"I pitied Mary so much when she was married," Patience had innocently confessed. "It was in the church over there beyond the trees; and every one in Redbrook saw."

"But those are such little things, dear," he told her, "if you love me."

She looked at him with a love that was still dumb, so far did it transcend the phrases of her habitual speech.

"You won't ask it of me," she implored of him, a moment afterwards—"those public things?"

"But that is not what marriage means—these things that you fear," urged her lover exultantly. "Your sweet face need not look so troubled, Patience. We can avoid this talk and ceremony that hurts you so. We are sure of each other—we can take it all in our own hands. Why, to-morrow, if we chose, we could be married!"

He spoke in a fervent impulse of reassurance, hardly considering his words.

"Could we? Then," with perfect simplicity, "I am quite ready."

The eager Cranfield was not the man to teach this clear and candid spirit fear and hesitation; nor was he in the mood to examine his own throbbing scruples. Therefore, in his tumultuous joy, he exacted her promise that he might thus promptly claim her; and she gave it fearlessly.

The Fessendens, bereft, sat in family council.

"The boy hasn't a decent instinct or a tradition," repeated the judge violently. "To enter a man's house for the first time and run away with his daughter! It's a cur's trick."

"But it was not Martin's idea," urged Mary Selwyn mildly, knowing that she was tacitly held responsible for the whole affair. "It was Patience's. You know she plainly said so in her letter."

"That is true, Thomas," came the mother's weak, sobbing voice from the sofa. "She did it because she was—afraid of people."

"A girl doesn't elope from shyness!" declared Mary Selwyn stoutly. She was secretly considering which might be the greater individual disgrace and family scandal: to live out an ignoble spinsterhood, or to defy the just conventions by an escapade of this order.

"Her great-grandmother eloped; I think it's heredity," interjected Arthur, with deliberate lightness. "You know we have always worried because she did not seem to have inherited anything."

"It was only because she is so timid and reserved," insisted the mother. "She was afraid even of us, of the things we would want her to do if she married as other girls do. Yet she was not afraid of him!"

"An extraordinary case of timidity!" came the judge's angry sarcasm.

"It was our fault," wailed Mrs. Fessenden. "We drove her into it. We have never known how sensitive she is. We don't know now. I told you, Thomas, that she said in her letter she—could not—even—bear to—say good-by to us. We were not fair to her in letting Martin Cranfield come."

"Why not, if she fancies him to this extent?"—Arthur declined to take the situation tragically. "The poor girl has always been lonely. I'm glad if she is happy."

"The Cranfields are such good people, father," suggested Mary Selwyn. Instinct was guiding her solution of her problem. She could not, after all, overlook the substantial fact that the eccentric Patience was married; that she had, even though in her own peculiar way, achieved the least eccentric of destinies.

"Whatever happens, we shall have been to blame," sobbed Mrs. Fessenden, holding stubbornly to her remorse.

"I wonder if Patience really is as timid as we think her, mother," observed Arthur calmly.

"Redbrook will never think her timid," said Mary Selwyn, always intuitively aware of average estimates and prejudices.

In which she was right; Redbrook's zest in the affair being almost sinister. Patience Fessenden, alert, delighted faces told each other, had run away with a man she had known only three days; and it had leaked out through her own mother that she herself had proposed the elopement! Let those who thought Patience Fessenden modest, reserved, and shy, challenged Redbrook shrilly, read her poems—let them recall her demeanor toward her native town; and let them consider her late disreputable action! Did the town contain another woman capable of even meditating such unmaidenly conduct? But had there indeed been one secretly willing to dispense with the trousseau and bridal veil, the flames of censure that flared in the wake of Patience's happy flight might well have discouraged her. And for years to come, in superfluous warning to the commonplace young creatures whom it rears in the smug decorum that it loves, Redbrook will unctuously cite what it delights to call Patience Fessenden's scandalous story.



## THE SUMMONS OF SPRING

BY EDWIN L. SABIN

SOME day it comes—the subtle announcement of the spring. We may not have responded to the first bluebird, the first robin, the first rain; none of these has appealed. But suddenly spring is thrilling within our soul. We want to go barefoot.

Children *are* going barefoot. Their feet and legs singularly white after the months of confinement, they are gleefully scampering upon the smooth, hard asphalt of the city's pave, and, peeling shoes and stockings, are braving the policeman in the parks. And in the country—ah, in the country!

Here exists the real luxuriousness of barefoot state. Once discarded, shoes and stockings are not resumed again until frost. Small and soft are the feet exposed, say, along in April; small and soft and white and exceedingly tender. Every little pebble hurts, and one must tread gingerly, with sundry screwings of the features and many an "Ouch!"

There can be no offense more egregious than at this time to step with shod foot upon somebody's naked toes. "Look out! Get off, darn you!"

Oh, the sensation of lightness and buoyancy which upbears one in accord with the summons of the season! And (in the country) the sensation of the lush, cool soil against the sole, when the sappy moisture is drunk in by all those pores, long denied, and ascends to vivify the entire being, and when the mud "squashes" up between the wriggling, happy toes; and the bliss of the June road, where the warm dust lies like a velvet pad, so comforting!

How a kid—lad or lass—can run barefoot! How he, or she, wants to run! How he, or she, *must* run! Bless my heart! This zest to "go barefoot" typifies spring universal, when it is in nature to burst bonds, to revel in youth, and to be thankful for life.

# THE TRAGIC END OF GUY DE MAUPASSANT

*By Albert Schinz*

EVER since the shocking end of Maupassant in 1893, at the age of forty-three, after eighteen months spent in an insane asylum, the world has been anxious to know more about the causes of his fatal malady and premature death.

For some years it was difficult to lift the veil. The mother of the dead, absorbed in her grief, was still alive, and, while always glad to talk about the fame and the writings of her son, she avoided as much as possible the discussion of the final tragedy. For her sake, those who knew and were in a position to speak remained silent. But in December, 1903, she followed her son to the grave, and since that time scholars and critics have been busy unravelling the terrible Maupassant mystery.

Recently the results of these investigations have come out, and as far as the story of the late illness and death is concerned, we know now probably all that we shall ever know. The facts are of such a character as to convince those of us who perhaps still doubted it, that life can be more dramatic than fiction.

Thanks to Flaubert, who did not allow his pupil to spoil his literary talent before maturity, Maupassant was over thirty years of age before he gave up his modest position in the bureaux of the government, in Paris, in order to devote himself entirely to literature. One day, unexpectedly, he had surprised the world and at once conquered fame with a little masterpiece, "*Boule de Suif*." The story had been published in the "*Soirées de Médan*," a collective book of Zola and some younger naturalists. Then followed, for the young author, a period of ten years of the most intense production. At first Maupassant, who did not possess a very imaginative mind, drew for his stories from his former experiences in life—from the time of his boyhood in Normandy, where he had become well acquainted with those fishermen and peasants whom he depicted so perfectly; from scenes witnessed during the Franco-Prussian War, when he served as a soldier; and from his Parisian

life, when he was in daily contact with the world of clerks and small employees, and also enjoyed life as a young athlete, being especially fond of rowing. But he would not forever be satisfied with what he had already seen; he wanted to see life under other aspects, and one which had remained closed to him up to that time attracted him particularly, namely, society. A good writer is always welcome in Parisian *salons*; Maupassant was not only well received, but his company was eagerly sought. There can be no doubt that he went there especially with a view to finding new characters for his stories, yet it cannot be denied that he yielded also to the seductions that the life of the rich can offer. He himself had become comparatively wealthy, thanks to his publications, and he could afford a good deal of luxury. But he tried to keep in mind constantly the danger of being absorbed by worldly pleasures, and so he made it a point not to take permanent abode in Paris, as do most writers. He went often to the seashore, to Etretat in Normandy, or to Houlgate, during the summer, to the Riviera during the winter, besides travelling extensively. All in all, taking into account the time devoted to society, and the amount of writing he was doing, Maupassant was leading a very strenuous life; he thought he could do this with impunity, owing to the exceptionally robust health he had enjoyed during the first thirty years of his life.



In the last days of September, 1891, however, he established himself at Cannes for the whole winter, because for some time he had not felt well and strong; but very few suspected that a catastrophe was so near. His mother, who was then living at Nice, and whom he visited almost daily, noticed in the first days of December some alarming symptoms of nervousness in him, but even she did not understand the seriousness of the case. The one who knew best that something was very wrong with Maupassant was his devoted valet, François (who is now a waiter in the Hôtel Terminus, of the Gare Saint Lazare, in Paris). A few days before Christmas he had been awakened one night by reports of a pistol. On entering the room, he found Maupassant shooting in the night, and by way of explanation he declared that he had heard some one scaling the wall of the garden below. The next morning François, rendered suspicious and uneasy by this odd performance, secretly removed the balls from the cartridges and replaced the weapon in the drawer where he had found it.

Maupassant had promised his mother that he would spend Christmas eve with her; but in the morning she received a telegram which read thus: "*Obligé de réveiller aux îles Sainte Marguerite avec Mmes*  
\* \* \* *mais je viendrai finir l'année et passer mon jour de l'an avec toi*"

("Forced to celebrate Christmas eve at Sainte Marguerite, with Mmes. \* \* \* but will come and spend New Year's eve and New Year's day with you"). Signed: Guy.

When New Year's eve came, he did not go, however, and even on the first of January he would have stayed at home had it not been for François, who, seeing him very much depressed, succeeded in cheering him up and persuading him to drive with him to Nice. Guy arrived there in the afternoon. In the course of the dinner, he suddenly began to talk incoherently; at one time he said that by a pill which he had swallowed he had been informed of an event that was of great importance to him. Seeing his mother's dismayed look, he realized the absurdity of his words and by a strong effort succeeded in recovering his countenance. But the meal ended in an embarrassed and mournful silence. As soon as it was over, Maupassant ordered his carriage. His mother, filled with anxious forebodings, entreated him to stay and spend the night at her house; but in vain. She was never to see him again, either alive or dead. She was herself in a rather poor condition of health, which induced her family and her friends to conceal the truth until some time after all was over.



When he reached his house, in Cannes, Maupassant said that he felt tired, and went to his bedroom. François, who had received orders to watch him closely, begged to be allowed to remain near him overnight; but the permission was not granted.

Thus nobody witnessed the scene that immediately followed, but we can reconstruct it easily from what we know of the circumstances before and after. Several times, previous to this crisis, Maupassant had had moments of despondency and had more than once discussed with friends the question of insanity. Dr. Frémy has told how, only a few months before the events here related, he had said to him: "Do you not believe that I shall end by becoming mad? If such were the case, my dear, you ought to tell me. There is no hesitation possible between madness and death. My choice is made beforehand." Others who knew him well have testified to having heard similar remarks from him. Now, on that fatal afternoon of the first of January, 1892, he had realized plainly that he was no longer able to control his mind, even in the presence of others. He therefore decided that the time had come to make good his pledge. He tried his revolver, but without success, since the balls had been removed. Then, fearing, probably, lest his will power might soon leave him, he seized the first weapon within reach, which happened to be a paper-knife lying on the table, and made an attempt to cut his throat. But the instrument was not sharp enough,

and only made a bad wound, which bled abundantly. It must be known that ever since Maupassant had suffered from his nerves, he had lived in a superstitious terror of all physical pain, and anything that reminded him of it, especially blood. Thus, the nervous shock was such that he suddenly began to shriek madly. François came rushing in the room, and a desperate struggle followed, in which he tried in vain to disarm his master. A fit of wild madness had set in, and it was only by the herculean strength of one of the sailors of Maupassant's yacht, who had come to the rescue, that they succeeded in getting control of the patient until the doctor arrived.

A few days later Maupassant was taken to Paris, and confined in the asylum of the famous Dr. Blanche, where he remained for eighteen months. Here he died on July sixth of the following year.

The details concerning his confinement are heart-breaking. Many of them have appeared in print. This sort of publication seems to us to be most undesirable, both from the standpoint of ethics and from the standpoint of good taste. Therefore we omit them here altogether.

Let us, however, recall a touching scene that took place in Cannes shortly before he was conveyed by train to Paris. He dearly loved his yacht *Bel-Ami*, bought with the money earned in selling his novel of the same name. His friends, secretly hoping that the sight of the boat might bring back to him once more his own mind, took him down to the harbor. "With his arms restrained in a strait-jacket, the unfortunate man was taken to the shore. *Bel-Ami* rocked lightly on the sea. . . . The blue sky, the balmy air, the well built lines of his beloved boat, all seemed to calm him. His aspect became gentle. . . . He looked for a long while at his ship, with an expression both melancholy and tender. . . . He moved his lips, but no sound left his mouth. While he was being taken away, he turned round several times to look again at *Bel-Ami*. Those who were with Guy all had tears in their eyes. And it was with tears in his eyes that a faithful friend, Joseph Primoli, told me that harrowing anecdote of the latest illness of his Maupassant." (*Souvenirs sur Maupassant*, Albert Lumbroso.)



Friends, physicians, scholars, have expressed varied opinions regarding the probable origin of Maupassant's insanity. The most recent investigations have convinced us that it would be wrong, probably, to account for it by a single cause, but that, on the contrary, several causes worked together towards the same fatal end.

First of all, it would be difficult to deny that there were hereditary predispositions in Maupassant. Some extraordinary stories are related of Maupassant's ancestors on the maternal side, the Le Poittevin, a

family from Normandy. Here is one attributed to Guy's grandfather. Near the town of Valognes is situated the feudal domain of Gonnevillle, an old mediæval castle with a haunted room. There appears to those who sleep in this room, so runs the legend, a black sheep. So keen was the terror inspired by this haunted chamber that the most miserable of vagabonds preferred, rather than to sleep there, to take his night's rest on the stones of the roadside. M. Le Poittevin slept in this room, and the black sheep appeared to him, saying: "As long as you and your descendants preserve this domain, good fortune will remain with you." The young man bought the property of Gonnevillle as soon as he had gained a fairly good fortune in business in the neighborhood of Rouen.

Here is one concerning Guy's own mother. She had just been married to M. de Maupassant. They were on their wedding trip. In visiting a church at Heidelberg she suddenly found herself alone, her husband having gone on under the guidance of the beadle. She approached a confessional, and, lifting the curtain which hung over the grating, perceived the face of a monk—a livid face, fixing sightless eyes upon her. She drew back terrified. Was it real or an illusion? Fear of insanity seized her. In the meantime the loquacious beadle was pointing out the sculpturing of the confessional; he put his hand on the door, and Mme. de Maupassant thought that if the confessional proved empty,—if she had been the sport of a delusion,—she should go mad. The door opened, and she saw, in monk's clothing, a waxen face from which time had faded the colors, giving it the appearance of a corpse.



Those who remember Maupassant's weird stories, like "*Le Horla*," "*Lui*," "*Apparition*," or his book "*Sur l'eau*," will recognize at once in them the reflection of the same turn of mind which appears in the anecdotes just related,—a fact which is all the more striking in a writer who had shown such strong realistic tendencies in his artistic creed before the time when his health began to decline.

Other very grave symptoms both in Maupassant himself and his mother have been described by physicians; but it would be out of place to mention them here. Only one more thing may be said with regard to this question. Guy had a brother, Hervé, who died a few years before him of exactly the same disease (general paralysis); but this was in consequence of a sunstroke. It would seem rather difficult to attribute to mere chance the fact that these two brothers should have been affected exactly in the same way—insanity—from causes so different. Their systems must have been predisposed that way.

But there are many reasons to believe that Maupassant might have



escaped insanity, had it not been for his strenuous life. His mother was affected in the same way, but the external circumstances that brought about actual madness in her son were avoided in her case. With his brother, insanity was the result of an accident. We have pointed out before that Guy, as a young man, was unusually strong; and, being of an extremely active temperament, he scorned all advices from friends or physicians, not to overwork himself. When he came to Paris his fondness for rowing had made him adopt a régime which, as a doctor has it, "would have been too much for a young athlete at Oxford or Cambridge." But, besides rowing, he worked in his office every day, and he began to write verses and stories. And later, when he gave up rowing, he went into society life, which, as physicians tell us, is particularly trying for the nerves when one has not known it before thirty. Moreover, his literary production at that time was amazing. By and by he made another mistake in taking strong stimulants, such as cocaine, morphine, and especially ether. All this combined was bound to react within comparatively few years upon a constitution predisposed to mental trouble. The physical sufferings were gradually accompanied by fits of melancholy, strange freaks of imagination, regular hallucinations. Maupassant had exactly the same experiences as those related in some of Poe's stories, or in Musset's poetry, especially in the latter's "*Nuit de Décembre*." One night, among others, we are told that while sitting at his table and writing, Maupassant thought that he heard some one opening the door; he turned around and was confronted with his own person entering the room, walking towards the table, then sitting down in front of him, and proceeding to dictate his work.

Instead of trying to avoid further experiences of the kind, Maupassant only plunged deeper into that dangerous atmosphere by making use of his disorders of the brain for his stories. With his antecedents, it would have been a miracle if insanity had been avoided.



And yet, as if all this was not enough, another cause still remains to be indicated which was also working in the same direction. It must be acknowledged that we have no direct information concerning the special circumstances here; but from indirect sources we are led to infer that the actual determining cause which hastened the final crisis is due to a woman, to one of those egoistic, wicked creatures of the so-called "weaker" sex, who know so well how to torture a man who has once yielded to their devilish charms.

The odd and mysterious way in which Maupassant acted in the week previous to the breaking out of his insanity has already been told. After having promised his mother to be with her on Christmas eve, he

telegraphed on the morning of that day that he was "forced" to be elsewhere, namely, at Saint Marguerite. There lived two ladies, sisters, one of whom was the heroine of Maupassant's novel "*Une Vie*." Nobody except the two women seems to have seen him in those days; they apparently monopolized him; not only did he visit them, but there are some indications that they went to his house also. What fatal tragedy took place finally at the *îles Sainte Marguerite*? What did the two *dames du grand monde* do with him, the man broken in health, unable to resist their wicked spell? God knows; no man has ever probed the depths of female cruelty. Our only information is this: As far as the two ladies are concerned, we are told that they left for Paris suddenly, the day after the fatal *réveillon*, with the first train in the morning; and although they were personally acquainted with Mme. de Maupassant, she never saw or heard anything from them since, even after Guy's death.

As to Maupassant, on seeing his mother on the first day of January, he behaved like a man who was mad with grief but could not tell even his mother what the cause of it was. His superhuman efforts to control himself can be read, it seems, even between the lines of those words of Madame de Maupassant: "Upon arriving, Guy, whose eyes were filled with tears, kissed me with extraordinary effusion. All the afternoon we chatted upon a thousand subjects; I noticed in him nothing abnormal except a certain exaltation. It was not until later, at table, in the midst of our dinner, which we ate alone together, that I perceived that his mind was wandering."

And this is all we know. And we still remain asking, *Why?* Those causes—heredity, overwork, cruelty of a woman—may satisfy the scholar, historian, psychologist, physician, but they do not satisfy us as merely human beings, who have not only to study life, but to live it. We remain pondering why the representative of a higher humankind should not be spared that most horrid fate, to have his body survive his mind? It would seem that one of the noblest aims of life would be to rise above the level not only of the animal, but of the average humanity, which is low enough—and yet, the Power that is above all human power deemed it fit to throw back, to the disgusting condition of a mere brute, just that one who had achieved with particular success the difficult and noble end! Why?



Super-men wear badly; and super-women are—beyond belief.

Working harder that his family may play is the American's reading of Chivalry.



## THE SERPENT'S TOOTH

BY DOROTHY DEAKIN

"It is undermining her very existence," I finished feelingly. "The child cries herself to sleep—oh, constantly!"

Young Arnold was very pale; with joyful surprise, perhaps. He seemed unable to speak at first; tongue-tied with happiness, no doubt. And I am Patricia's mother, and I ought to know. He stood with his back to me, gazing out of the drawing-room window at the dusky sky for some time; then he turned and said in an agitated voice:

"You think, then, that my conduct has led your daughter to believe that I love her? You think I am to blame?"

I smiled.

"Oh, not to blame," I murmured; "one does n't expect a young man to hide his heart's deepest feelings. Besides, why should you when Patricia returns your regard so warmly?"

He said no more and presently went away, without, as I expected, at once asking for an interview with Patricia. Then I went upstairs to find Patricia with an apprehensive heart. She was sitting in a low chair before the fire in a frivolous china-blue tea-gown which she chooses to call a negligée. Her pretty little feet were bare and resting on the brass curb of the fender, and she was warming a pair of long silk stockings at the fire.

"So you've got rid of him at last," she began in irritated tones. "I thought he'd *never* go. I thought of sending down to ask him if he'd like Stevens to run round for his pajamas and toothbrush."

"Patricia!"

She laughed impertinently.

"Well, he did stay and stay, did n't he? And I wanted to ask you where you'd put my white opera cloak, because Rivers can't find it, and, mother, what in mercy's name have you done with my best lace handkerchief, the Honiton one Aunt Jane gave me? And I

know there was something else! Oh, yes—that horrid Rosine has n't sent the dress yet, and if I can't go as Badroulbador I won't go at all!"

"Patricia dearest"—I sat down on the edge of the chair opposite to her anxiously—"Mr. Arnold's been talking to me seriously about you this afternoon."

"He has, has he?" she said lightly. "Like his cheek. If Rosine does n't send that dress I'll——"

"He loves you, Patricia!"

She sat up suddenly and stared at me; then she quickly and viciously began to drag on one stocking.

"Now, mother, you're going to be silly. Mr. Arnold does n't care a pin for me. Do you think I don't know the symptoms? Heavens! I've had enough experience. He likes me as a friend. It's just like you, mother, to go and spoil a nice, jolly friendship by fancying things. You're *absolutely* wrong."

"If you will allow me to speak," I said coldly, "I will merely remark that he has just told me so."

"Told you so!"—in rude disbelief.

"Yes, Patricia."

"Then you asked him?"

I was silent.

"You did. Mother, you asked him, I know you did. Of course he said he was fond of me. So he is. Everybody's fond of me——"

"He loves you."

She dropped a little bronze shoe into the fender with a clatter.

"But he *does n't!* Do you think I've got no eyes in my head?"

"I wish you'd heard what he said about your eyes, Patricia."

She blushed and smiled.

"No—really! Poor old dear."

"Why 'poor,' dearest? He has at least three thousand a year."

She sighed.

"Yes, but he's so nice, is n't he? One does n't want nice people to be unhappy."

My spirits sank, yet, curiously enough, I was not surprised. She went on dreamily:

"I shan't like refusing him one bit."

"Refusing him? Patricia!"

She rose from her chair and crossed the room to her dressing table, to take down her thick, bright hair with quick fingers.

"If Rosina does n't send my Chinese dress in time I shall sit down and cry. I have n't another fancy dress except the old gold-colored kimono, and I'm not going to try to dance in a kimono again. Not if I know it."

I followed her anxiously.

"You would n't refuse Mr. Arnold, darling, if he asked you Dearest, you must get a good husband. Your father and I can die easy if we see you in a comfortable home."

Patricia shook her brown hair back and set her lips.

"It's no good trying to work on my feelings, mother, and, besides, you're only forty. You'll live hundreds of years yet; so will father. You are n't the kind of parents who die young."

"Patricia, could n't you try to get over this weakness for poor Kenneth? For my sake——"

"If I marry money," cried she impatiently, "it'll be for my own sake, not yours."

I began to feel more hopeful.

"If you'd heard him this afternoon," I said warmly, "if you'd seen his eager face and heard his ardent, hopeful words——"

This was a slip.

"Hopeful, was he?" said Patricia thoughtfully. "Then I'll damp his ardor for him."

"Not hopeful," I amended hastily; "humble, I should have said. 'Are you sure there is no chance for me?' he asked, with tears in his eyes, poor fellow——"

"Oh, I can't do with a man who cries!"

"I'm afraid she will be adamant," I told him."

"Well, you need n't have said that, because you know nothing at all about it."

I prayed for patience.

"Think it over, darling, before he speaks," I urged; "think of the comforts money gives; and you'll never be happy without a motor, now you've got used to it, will you? Kenneth could n't afford——"

"We'll drop Kenneth, if you don't mind. If that dress does n't come—oh! I'll talk to Rosine when I see her! Mother, is n't it exasperating? If you'd only called this morning, as I asked you——"

"Here it is," said I in offended tones.

Patricia rushed to the brown cardboard box, tore off the lid, flung the sheets of tissue paper to right and left of her, and then stopped suddenly, stared, gasped.

"Mother!"

I crossed the room hastily and peered into the box. Something coarse and black lay folded there, with huge white bosses on it. Patricia snatched it out and held it up. It was a big, clumsy coat. She dropped it on the floor and picked up the next thing. Trousers! It was a black Pierrot suit.

"Patricia! They must have come here by mistake. They are n't from Rosine at all. There's no name on the box."

"It's eight o'clock," said Patricia despairingly. "It's the awful fog, mother. Rosine's boy has lost his way. Aunt Jane and Mildred are to call for me at a quarter to nine. What on earth am I to do?"

"Go in the faultless evening dress of an English gentlewoman," I suggested with a smile which she merely found irritating.

"Oh, mother! If you only would n't try to be funny in really tragic moments. Well, I suppose I shall have to wear these; there's nothing else for it." She held up the black, shapeless things with a giggle.

"Patricia," I said in shocked tones, "I don't think you should jest about such things. It is n't at all nice for a young girl——"

Patricia interrupted me.

"I'll try it on," said she. "What fun! It's a pity Mr. Arnold's gone; it would have cheered him up to see——"

"Patricia!"

But what good was it for me to be shocked? Patricia deliberately dressed herself in the clumsy, ungainly suit, twisted her soft hair into light, flat coils at the back of her head, fitted the black skull cap over her head—it was a large one—and gazed at herself thoughtfully in the glass. The coat came to her knees, and was wide and full; the trousers were very wide too.

"It's rather nice," said she. "I'll pin up the trousers at the bottom with safety pins. It's a good thing I'm so tall, is n't it?"

"Yes, dear. And now take it off and let's consider the question of your dress. Why not wear your satin Empire gown with my Maltese crossover?" I suggested brilliantly. "Do your hair with a high comb, and go as the Empress Josephine."

"Thank you," said she sarcastically. "There won't be more than fifty of 'em. Besides, Empire things are n't fancy dress now; they're merely fashionable. Don't be silly, mother. You might take the white blobs off those huge shoes in the box, and sew them on my black suede slippers. Hurry up."

I gasped.

"Patricia! You're not going to wear those things?"

She laughed.

"To dress in a man's clothes?"

She laughed again.

"What will your poor Aunt Jane say?"

"She'll never know. I shall be in my domino the first half, and I shan't unmask the whole evening. It will be ripping. I think I make a perfectly sweet Pierrot. And to dance without skirts! Oh, mother, heaven won't be in it!"

I groaned.

"What will your father say?"

"He'll never know."

"I suppose nothing that I can say will make any difference?"

"Well, it does n't often, does it, mother?"

"After all I've done for you!"

"How sharper than a thankless child it is to have a serpent's tooth!" misquoted she mischievously. She dropped an airy little kiss in my hair.

"To quote King Lear at your own mother!"

"It is n't everybody's child who *could*."

"Mr. Arnold's fond of Shakespeare," I suggested brightly. Her face fell.

"He's the sort of man who would be!" cried she. "Mother, don't my feet look tiny under these flapping black legs? Don't I look a grotesque little creature? I shall have to dance gentleman and whisper sweet nothings. Oh, what fun I will have! I'll find out what girls are really like. I'll propose to every one I dance with, and make appointments for them all to meet me under the clock at Charing Cross Station to-morrow at three. You shall go with me to see who's there. Hand over that domino, that's a dear. I'm glad it's red. It makes me feel that I only want horns and a tail to—— Do I look like old——"

"Patricia!" I interrupted in horror. Who—who, I ask you, would believe that this terrible child was my daughter? Who would believe that we have brought her up so carefully and modestly and conventionally if they heard her scandalous talk and impish laugh? "If your Aunt Jane guesses——"

"I can manage Aunt Jane."

You will hardly believe that I let her go; that I helped her into her cloak, and kissed her, and saw that she had a nice handkerchief, and said that I hoped she would have a pleasant evening. Yet this is exactly what I did. And I went down and saw her off, and spoke to Jane through the cab door, and hoped her cold was better, and then I went back and told the child's father that I thought young Arnold *did* mean something after all. He said he had n't noticed that Arnold paid Patricia any more attention than he paid to other girls; and I said perhaps not, but did he *ever* notice anything that was n't forced upon him? And he said yes, sometimes, and how did I know? And I said the young man had been sounding me about Patricia's feelings this very afternoon, and that I was sure *he* was all right, if only Patricia was n't so difficult. And her father said the child should n't be hurried, and young Arnold was extremely suitable, and I'd better not put my finger in the pie or I'd spoil everything. How can one wonder that Patricia should be so disrespectful when her own father sets her such an example?

I sat up for Patricia, of course—I always do—and she found me dozing in her armchair before the fire in her room when she came in at three o'clock. I sat up and shivered.

"There's some hot chocolate in the hearth," I said drowsily. "Did you enjoy yourself, darling?"

Then I noticed that her face was very pale and her lips were set in a way I had reason to fear.

"You've been lying to me!" she said sharply, dropping her domino into a scarlet heap on the floor.

My heart sank. What could she have heard?

"Patricia! Is this a way to speak to your mother?"

"Is this a way for my mother to behave?"

I drew myself up with some difficulty.

"Explain yourself."

She flung herself into her low chair and held out her little black suede shoes to the blaze.

"I'm glad I found out in time," said she, "that's all."

"Patricia, what *has* happened?"

My curiosity was more than I could bear.

"I suppose I'd better begin at the beginning," she said, and I watched her changing face and beautiful angry eyes with some anxiety. The black Pierrot suit made her look dazingly fair.

"The first part of the evening," said she slowly, "I wore the domino and behaved and danced like a girl. Mr. Arnold found me at once, because some one had told him I was to wear a scarlet domino with silver spots on it. It was you, of course."

I did not deny it.

"He was very quiet and depressed, I thought, and very gentle and affectionate with me. Generally we talk nonsense all the time and get on splendidly, but all that is gone forever now. And we danced together twice, and just before the time came for us to take off our dominoes and unmask he asked me to go out onto the balcony with him. I knew what was coming, and thought if it *had* to come, the sooner it was over the better."

"But, Patricia——" I began hastily.

Her eyes clouded.

"The sooner the better," said she firmly; "and as soon as we were alone he asked me formally if I would honor him by becoming his wife. Think of it, mother! Quite calmly and seriously, not a stammer or a hint of nervousness. I've never heard such a proposal! It was like asking a person to come in to supper with him."

"What did you say to him, dear?" I asked anxiously.

Patricia was silent. Her face was so white and unhappy that my spirits rose enormously.



"You said yes?" I cried. "For our sakes, you said yes?"

Patricia smiled a little, but I did n't like the way she did it.

"How clever you are, mother!"

"Patricia! You did n't refuse him?"

She set her teeth.

"No, I did n't refuse him. I wish to goodness I had. I thought of father and you, you see—a little—and I thought a good deal of myself, and all the pretty things I must have to make me happy, and I thought how silly to waste one's youth and beauty crying for the moon when it has n't two hundred a year to live on, and the idea of bread and cheese and—well, it did n't attract me——"

"Kenneth is impossible!" I cried.

Patricia smiled and went on:

"So I was silent a long time, and then I thanked him as formally as he had made his offer, and asked him to give me time."

I drew a deep breath. "Thank God!" I cried.

"He seemed surprised," Patricia pursued in a low voice, "surprised and relieved. I could n't understand him a bit. Afterwards I understood everything. How you *could*, mother!"

"Go on," I said hastily.

"And he never even asked me to unmask. It did n't seem to occur to him. It was quite obvious that the thought of making love to me—or—or kissing me, never entered his mind, and we went back to the ball-room, and I got rid of my domino in the hall when no one was looking, and became a slim and impertinent Pierrot for the rest of the evening."

"Not *impertinent*, Patricia?"

She laughed.

"And I can safely say that I know my own sex and my own friends better than I've ever known them in my life. Mother, you don't know what girls are. The way I was led on by my partners was something to remember. 'Rapid' was n't the word. I made love to all of them, and *none* of them minded it, except one girl who'd only been engaged two days and had n't quite come to her senses yet. I asked three girls to marry me, and they none of them definitely refused. I made ever so many appointments all over London for to-morrow, one in Kensington Gardens, another in Russell Square, another at Kew. I kissed one girl on the balcony, and she only laughed and said I was an impertinent boy, and who had brought me up? I told her I had n't been brought up at all, I'd been dragged up."

"Thank you, Patricia," I said, much hurt.

She went on, disregarding my wounded feelings as usual.

"I found most girls much nicer to me than they'd ever taken the

trouble to be before, and I could n't understand why, till I remembered that I was a young man."

"You haven't at all a good opinion of your own sex, Patricia," I said reprovingly.

She shot a quick glance at me.

"It's considerably lower than it was," said she, "after to-night. And then at nearly the end of the evening I began to think more and more of what Mr. Arnold had asked me, and I seemed to see Kenneth's big, reproachful eyes asking me if I'd forgotten——"

"Forgotten what, Patricia?"

"Everything," she pursued hastily, "and his eyes haunted me—you know what *dear* eyes he has, mother?"

"No," said I sharply; "I never noticed anything of the kind."

"And at last I felt that I must get alone somewhere quietly to think, and I went upstairs to Lady Morrison's tiny boudoir—you know that pretty, rose-colored room; and the lights were all low, and I thought that there at least I should be undisturbed, and I shut the door. And then suddenly I heard a noise—a sniffing, choking noise—and I knew that there was a girl in the room crying dreadfully."

"Crying!"

"Yes; sobbing like anything—howling, in fact, absolutely without restraint. I turned the lights up, and you never saw such an exhibition in your life."

"She might have waited till she got home," said I.

"You'd have thought so," said Patricia. "I sat down beside her and asked what the matter was, of course, although I did n't feel like being sympathetic to anybody."

"You never do," said I sadly.

"And she was quite a little thing, with dark hair and gray eyes, and not even pretty—not really pretty, although you could n't tell what she was like because she'd been crying so. 'What is the matter?' I asked as gently as I could. And she only dabbed at her eyes and sniffed. Then I thought that perhaps if I said I was a girl she would tell me more easily. But I remembered that some one had once told me that girls love to confide in a strange man. They think men are so safe. Idiots!"

"Go on," said I. "What had made her cry?"

Patricia rose suddenly and faced me.

"You had," said she surprisingly.

"Patricia!"

"Yes," she pursued deliberately. "The girl was Irene Murchiston. You've heard Mr. Arnold speak of her often enough. They're awfully fond of each other, and he's been waiting till she's eighteen to propose to her. She was eighteen to-day, and this was her first

ball. She had a lovely white frock—*ninon-de-soie*, with snowdrops in little bunches. She's the kind of girl who *would* wear snowdrops. And she was gloriously happy. Then to-night Mr. Arnold came to her and told her what you'd been saying to him."

"I?"

"Don't pretend to misunderstand, mother. This very afternoon you deliberately sent me away, and asked that unfortunate man what his intentions were. You asked him if he was playing with your child's most sacred feelings, and whether he loved me. You said I was fretting myself into an early grave over him."

I quivered under the lash of her dreadful tongue.

"You can't deny it. And he—what could he say? And then you came upstairs to me and said he'd just told you that he loved me!"

"He did say he was fond of you," I insisted feebly.

"Fond!" Her scorn overwhelmed me. "Fond! He's fond of his Aberdeen terrier, too, and his new motor. He's fond of his valet, and fond of playing bridge. Fond! But I soon settled his hash."

I groaned. Was there ever such a child?

"And there was this silly little cry-baby, full of happiness and love for him—though how she can!—and up he comes to her and tells her that he has been led to believe that he is in honor bound to propose to another girl, whom he does n't love, who has been foolishly misconstruing his friendly attention, and who is breaking her heart about him. There's a nice thing. Mother, I could shake you."

"You're a naughty, naughty girl!" I said with a sob.

"But it's all right now," said she calmly.

"Oh, Patricia, you've not—"

"I listened to all she had to say, and then kissed her and told her not to cry any more, because it would all come right. I'd forgotten that I was a man, you see, and she said, how dare I? and was I taking advantage of her broken heart? and I said 'no, of course not,' and she'd better stay up here a little longer. Then I went downstairs to find Mr. Arnold. I found him directly by his Harlequin dress, and he was obviously in the deepest depths of gloomy despair.

"'Cheer up!' I said. He did n't know me, but I could n't help that. 'Patricia's answer is "No,"' I said in low mysterious tones; 'she loves another.'"

"Oh, Patricia, you *don't!*"

"Yes, I do," said she promptly. "I know my own heart now, and I told him what he would find in the pink boudoir if he went and looked. And then I found Aunt Jane and Mildred and came home. And I shall write a note in the morning and thank him very much for his kind offer, but it can never be."

I rose unsteadily to go to my room. It was almost more than I could bear. Patricia did n't move for a moment—not until I nearly reached the door, then she ran after me and kissed me.

"I forgive you, mother," she said softly. "I know you only wanted me to be happy, but you won't do it again, will you?"

"Patricia," said I with a sob, "you will bring my gray hairs—"

"In sorrow to the grave?" she laughed. "You haven't got any gray hairs yet, mother."

"Unless you apologize," I pursued with dignity, "for the disgraceful way you have spoken——"

Patricia sighed.

"I apologize," said she in a queer voice. "You must forgive your hasty little serpent's tooth, mother. I'm so happy to-night. You *must* forgive me to-night."

"Happy?" I cried in dismay. "Happy?"

Patricia laughed again, and went over to the mantelpiece; took down a large photograph of Kenneth taken in white cricket flannels, and kissed it—deliberately kissed it before my horrified eyes.

"Love in a cottage," said she cheerfully.

And I—well, I went to bed.



## IN MEMORIAM

BY GERALDINE MEYRICK

LET us remember our dead; but not with the weakness of weeping,  
Lest the courage and cheer that were theirs put our grieving  
to shame.

Were they the victors or vanquished? No matter, they ever were  
keeping

Face forward, keen eyes on the foe, in their hearts a clear flame.

Only all-dominant Death gave pause to these spirits of daring;

At his signal they halted, ground arms, and lay down to their rest.  
Here are wreaths for your graves, O beloved. For us, we must onward  
be faring,

Must strive as you strove, and must give, as you gave, of our best.



## THE BED OF PROCRUSTES

BY JANE BELFIELD

MRS. RICHARD LAWRENCE was plainly in a quandary. The first year of her widowhood had scarcely drawn to its close, yet she had barely prevented Philip from proposing twice. She "felt in her bones" that she would not be so successful the third time. Since he was already in the family, the situation—to put it mildly—was embarrassing. She could not snub the man; yet to her he could never be anything but her husband's brother.

Flowers every day for the last month—she was almost ashamed to look the messenger in the face—books, candy—positively—

"Mudder"—the small boy on the floor glanced up from the stamps he was diligently sticking into his album—"what did you say the gynit's name was?"

"Giant, Dickey boy—not 'gynit.' The giant's name was Procrustes."

"And what was the name of the strong man who fought with the gynit and killed him?"

"Theseus, dear."

"The gynit was a wicked gynit," went on Dickey reminiscently. "He had an iron bed wot he made travellers lie down on. If they was too long he cut 'em off, and if they was too short he stretched 'em out. Gee whiz! the gynit made things fit, Mudder!"

"Yes, dear. Have you thanked Uncle Philip for those last stamps he sent you?"

"No, I did n't. Is uncles just made to send things, Mudder?"

"Well, then, you'd better write him a nice little note now, before you forget it."

With a long sigh of resignation, the small boy swept his remaining stamps into a heap and ungraciously spread himself flat on the floor. His stiff fingers slowly but with painstaking scribbled for a few

moments. Then he handed the note to his mother, with a second sigh of relief:

DEAR UNCLE PIP,

I thank you for the stamps. They was no good and Ive got them all enyhow. Please dont send me eny more bekaaws its to much trubble two rite notes.

Your loving nefu

RICHARD G. LAWRENCE, JR.

"Why, Dickey!" Mrs. Lawrence gasped in consternation. "How could you write such a note to your uncle?"

"Why, I made it fit!"—indignantly. "Did n't I make it fit, Mudder? And did n't you always say for me to tell the truth?"

"But, dear, it is never right to be rude to people."

"I'm s'prised, Mudder—I'm most s'prised as I ever was. Why, I'm the wicked gynit—and you're going to fight with me."

"No, Boykins—no, no, dear. Run along—mother will have to think about it. Good night. We'll see."

The small boy kissed her gravely. "I'm s'prised, Mudder, that you would expect the gynit to tell lies"—reproachfully.

Mrs. Lawrence mused a while, then, with a sudden impulse, turned to her desk:

MY DEAR PHILIP:

I received your seventh bouquet of roses this week; also the seventh box of candy. The roses I sent to the hospital, and I gave the candy to the children next door. Don't, I beg of you, smother me with attentions which I can never deserve in the way you expect. I appreciate all you have done for the boy and me; and I won't promise to be a sister to you, because I have already been that for eight years. But if you will give me what I really want from you, think of me as I have always thought of you, and just regard me as

DICK'S WIFE.

She despatched both notes, then stole softly into the next room, smilingly tucked in and lay down beside the sleeping "gynit."



## GOOD-BY

BY GRACE SHOUP

WITH hurt too deep  
 For groan or sigh,  
 Eyes that should weep  
 Can smile good by.



## WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND  
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC



### GOING TO THE DOGS

**I**F you would live happily forever after, you must consult the oracle of science before each meal. The proper way to eat at breakfast may be altogether the wrong way by the time dinner is served; and the food that you eat to-day to make you strong and bouncing may give you the rickets if you eat it to-morrow.

Scarcely have we mastered the art of Fletcherizing—chewing every mouthful of coffee or of bacon until our jaws ache and we look like a cow—when all at once we are told by one of Uncle Sam's food experts that we must never think of chewing our meat. No, indeed! The only rational way to eat beefsteak or pork chops or roast turkey is to swallow it in big lumps. And in order that we may be assured that Science knows what it is talking about we are referred in all earnestness to our friend the dog. Does not Fido, to say nothing of Towser, gulp down his meat without chewing it? Therefore, if we would be happy and fair of face, let us do as we are told.

That we are turned over to the dog should not surprise us. The doubting Thomas, in matters of diet, is always referred to an animal of some sort. If he questions the wisdom of living on nuts, he is at once answered and abashed by the reminder that squirrels live on nuts. And what creature so joyous and so nimble as the squirrel? If he hesitates to subscribe to a daily breakfast of oats and corn and strange biscuits done up like hay, he is brought around through the convincing evidence of the horse and the ox. Their diet is confined to grass and

cereals. Then why not his, if he would be noble and strong? So, also, the masterful lion upholds the carnivorous diet; the mighty elephant is the exemplar of the vegetarian; the abundant pig demonstrates the contentment and the tissue that come from eating what's set before you; the powerful bear teaches us that the way to eat properly is to fast; while the whole menagerie, without respect to individuals, preaches the doctrine of uncooked foods.

And so, accordingly, we must study the dog to be convinced of the merit of bolting our meat. What advantage the dog possesses over us, either physically or morally, because he eats in this unmannerly fashion, is not for us to question. It does not profit us to cross swords with Science. Science says, "Go to the dogs." So let us go.

If it be our private opinion that our grandfather is for us a better guide than our poodle, it is not for us to make public speech of it, lest our lack of faith work confusion with all the other good teachings of the world that rest upon the superior wisdom of the lower orders of creation, from the ant of Solomon to the wolf of Thompson-Seton. Moreover, if we put ourselves to it we can find points in which the dog does excel us and thereby become for us an example. He can get a good meal without paying for it; he can outrun a rabbit; he can scratch his head with his feet; he can wiggle his ears; his best friend can kick him in the ribs with impunity; he can carry a basket of apples in his mouth, and he can shake himself dry after a bath. And all this because he does n't chew. What more can we ask?

Therefore, as the sluggard went to the ants to learn wisdom, so likewise let us go to the dogs—until to-morrow or mayhap the day after.

CLIFFORD HOWARD

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## THE PASSING OF THE "HOME"

THE home spirit is being crushed out. Prelates, plutocrats, and poor men alike deplore its passing. As there is no financier who has not his moments of yearning for the simpler life, so there is no priest who sees the substitution of the flat, or "apartment," without a pang. Similarly the "poor man" admits that even in the bonnet-box that he calls "home" the homelike spirit is no more.

Divers reasons are advanced explaining the decline of domesticity. The priest, *par exemple*, blames the irreligious trend of the times. The various lusts of the flesh encroach upon the erstwhile "home" spirit. The poms grow more pompous; the vanities wax more vain. The follies of the rich have become the sins of the well-to-do, and the spirit is deadened. Half of the salaried and wage-earning class are bondsmen to false pretense.

To buy or to rent an entire dwelling in a fashionable locality is



a financial impossibility to any save the very rich. A modest flat—if such things be—may be substituted. The cost is not to be tabulated in coin, which is an afterthought, however. When in Rome one lives as do Romans. Those who dwell in near-homes rarely spend an hour there that can be squandered elsewhere. Especially on Sunday do they steal away like Arabs. Whereas Sunday used to be a day of rest, it is now a restless day, devoted to golf, tennis, motoring, and kindred outdoor pastimes.

In lieu of the well-cooked Sunday dinner of long ago, there is the restaurant “crush,” or high tea, among the mighty, and so wags the world to-day.

The plutocrat argues that he can afford to do anything save antagonize his potential wife and daughters. With the latter he scarcely has more than a speaking acquaintance, for he stays in Wall Street whilst they flit continually from America to Europe until their object is attained, their quest ended. And then? Another Mecca.

The town houses of the rich are opened for a few weeks during the season in order to pay off sundry social obligations in a fitting manner, then on go the boards and off go my lady and her daughters to Palm Beach, Europe, or elsewhere to chase some will-o'-the-wisps of fashion. The titular “head” of the House-Splendid feels like a poor relation on sufferance. The only time in which he is a dominant factor in the life of his own household is when the bills come due, or when his wife gives an affair of pomp. Thus, as has been indicated, he longs as the years go by for a home that is a home; for companionship that means something; for comforts that are not to be found either in the glittering “taverns” of to-day or at “The Club.” Poor, homeless plutocrat!

Hear the wail of the poor man who has also a home, and, alack! no home. His “women folks” are too tired to talk to him. Their strength is spent in the shops seeking shreds and patches wherefrom to make mantles after the pattern, at least, of Madam Midas; or in doing those foolish things that no thrifty helpmeet should do who “considers her ways.” For the poor man’s choice remain only his pipe and evening paper.

Quoths a matron, “Servants are the foes to domesticity.” Especially is this true of the modern maid-of-all-work, who should rather be called the “maid-of-little-work.” She has become a menace both to housekeeping and home-making. She waxes more aggressive as her mistress’s courage wanes. She knows her power and uses it as a shillalah or battering-ram, and, behold, the one who rules is not the one who pays. (The glittering exceptions emphasize the rule.) Only so long as no one offers her higher wages and richer pickings will she stay.

If the Thursday Afternoon Mobilization of Servant Girls of the Second Class could be accurately reported, we should know at last where to lay much of the blame for disrupted homes—for "flats" and other substitutes where janitors assume the burden of service. The average woman is physically incapable of skilled housework and cheery home-making. She is too "worn out." Why, needs no interpreter.

MINNA THOMAS ANTRIM

## THE BENEFACION OF TUBERCULOSIS

THE statement that one in every seven deaths from illness in the United States is the result of tuberculosis proves what a ghastly toll this disease annually exacts. However, as a consequence of the agitation whereby an earnest effort is afoot to combat the spectre and subdue it, tuberculosis is being made to bring its own reward.

In the treatment of the white plague drugs are pronounced as of little value, save to alleviate; and drugs are little used. The arrest and the subjection of tuberculosis are effected mainly through four agencies: food, air, sun, rest.

Ridiculously simple the prescription reads, does it not? Yet how many persons, country or city, abide by it daily? For "food" means wholesome, nourishing food; good food; not milk which is skimmed milk, not steak which is rump steak, not bread which has been aerated and attenuated to the last degree; not food which is to be relished because cheap. The edict of the tuberculosis specialist puts the ban upon the anæmic methods in vogue at many, many a table and by many, many a busy man who thinks himself too busy to take nourishment.

By "air" is indicated pure air. Pure air, even more generally than good food, would seem to be the heritage of all humanity. Nevertheless, probably one-half of those persons who have pure air at their command do not accept it. Pure air by night as well as by day, pure air throughout the whole house, at all hours—ah, what a difference it would make in some houses which you know and which I know! And what a difference it would make in the lives of those harassed, fearful individuals whose ever-present bugbear is the open window, the open door, and the fancied draught; who must cover the head and swathe the shoulders—and who always have a cold, just the same!

The sun, of course, cannot be coerced; but he can be encouraged—instead of being rebuffed by drawn shades which follow him from east around to the west for fear that he will fade the paper and the rugs. There are houses, presumably embodying modern ideas in ventilation and lighting, with wide windows and spacious frontage, into which

the sun's beams never penetrate. All the day the men of them are in down-town sunless counting-room or store; the women of them, when they venture forth, religiously carry parasols. Aye, here is almost a sunless existence; a sinful neglect of nature's chief therapeutic agent.

Rest? Formerly tuberculosis was presumed to be a lazy person's disease—a rocking-chair disease. But experience has altered the dogma and mitigated its sweeping character. Tuberculosis is a disease which tears down; it is a wasting disease, and any drain through action therefore accelerates it. It is ever hammering at man's defenses; let these natural defenses be impaired through excess whereby the nervous and physical plane is lowered, and tuberculosis is apt to effect lodgment. The continual rush, rush, of the American; the hasty meals, the late hours, the disregard of one's mental, moral, and bodily welfare in the furtherance of business and pleasure, only rest will counteract.

Proper food, proper air, proper sun, proper rest—these are the dependence of the victim of consumption. Rescued, he is spreading by his very appearance the gospel of right living: a gospel which, being upon a text so practical, must result eventually in a people at large much saner, redder-blooded, healthier, and happier. Tuberculosis is a lesson.

JOHN STONE

## COÖPERATION

“COÖPERATION” is a beautiful word, than which our lexicons contain none more beautiful. With head high and colors a-streaming, it strides right along in the front rank with “love,” “peace,” “justice,” “honor,” and all that gallant train. We are mightily pleased to mouth it and to discourse lengthily on its wonderful, potential benefits,

Until

Some one proceeds to put it into effect; until capitalists coöperate to raise prices and increase dividends, or laboring men coöperate to raise wages and shorten their hours of toil. Then we rear up on our hind-legs and, in the name of the flag, the constitution, and the consumer, we roundly denounce them,

Unless

We happen to be on the inside.

ELLIS O. JONES



# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JUNE, 1908



## THE PLAGUE OF A HEART

BY HELEN MILECETE

*Author of "The Fascinating of Mr. Savage," etc.*

### I.

MRS. ARBUTHNOT woke from her afternoon nap, got up, and looked in the glass. No one, not even her most jealous enemy, could have accused her of looking her best. So, never willing to be caught looking her worst, she went into the hall of her little two-roomed apartment and moved the indicator to tell the elevator man that Number 52 was out. Then she sat in a comfortable chair and gazed around her.

She was saying good-by to her home. She had enough money to pay the customary six months' rent for her abode; then there would be a small sum left to buy—well, to buy hair-pins. She laughed as she meditated.

A week ago an appalling calamity—the loss of all her money—had found her totally unprepared for such a visitation. The trustee chosen for her by her dying husband had bolted to the Argentine Republic, leaving Mollie Arbuthnot staggered by the magnitude of the disaster. She had never been rich, as New York counts riches, but she had had enough to live on—enough for all her necessities and not a few of what the world calls luxuries. Her little flat was not an expensive

one, and her acquaintances were kind. Invitations were showered upon her, which may have been because she was born a Van Alstyne. But she was rather a particular young woman about the places she frequented. For a woman as poor as she, her enemies said, she had a vast amount of pride.

Sheer weariness of both body and mind had sent her to sleep on this particular afternoon, after a frugal lunch consisting of a roll, a banana, and some milk. She did n't dare waste her small stock of money on mere food. But she was healthy and hungry—and what about dinner?

By an effort of will she dismissed the thought of hunger, and went into her bedroom. Opening a drawer, she took out of it a blue dress, made of muslin and trimmed with frills. It was old-fashioned and crumpled, and the skirt was quite short (Mollie had pretty feet). Then she drew forth a hat—such a ridiculous hat! It was trimmed with blue muslin, with blue muslin strings, and was made of dark yellowy-brown straw. She had paid a matter of seventy-five cents for it when it was new; now it was n't worth five. These treasures she wrapped up in a bundle, then shook them out again, and put her head down on the frills. Her eyes were wet. This gown and this hat stood for happiness to her—the only real happiness she had ever known. They meant disillusion, too. She had handed over her heart, and in return had been offered money, not love. Billie Keane had offered her a settlement instead of a heart. Chiding herself for being so weak-minded as to remember, she refolded the garments and put them away.

She reviewed her present situation in all its bald hideousness. She was not *poor*—oh, no! By comparison, “poor” seemed quite a pretty term. She had no near relatives in all the world, but second cousins and people who were glad to remember the Van Alstyne connection were very civil to her, though it was impossible to claim anything from them. Besides, she did n't want help; she wanted work.

There was nothing to rescue from the wreck of her fortune. A few raving gentlemen—clerks to the bolted trustee—constituted the only assets of the absconder. She had talked with them when she went to inquire the extent of the tragedy, and had been calmer than they.

Reflection made the future appear only the more dreary. “Adventurers are always gay,” said Mollie to herself. “It is a part of their stock in trade. I'll cultivate gayety.” But it was hard to be gay, alone.

Some letters were brought up to her—invitations to dinner, for the most part. But as these meant a carriage, they were of course refused.

“I'll go to the Harriotts,” said Mollie, as she ungratefully put

down her correspondence. The Harriotts had invited her to spend three months with them, and she had not meant to do it, but there was no choice now. They owned, and lived on, an island down in Maine, which they called "Pride's Crossing." Mollie knew that Leta Harriott would not mind when she came, so long as she did come; so she now wrote a little note saying she would start in two days.

There was a certain amount of packing to be done, of course. But, alas, she had no money to purchase the odds and ends which every woman needs when starting for even a short visit. How glad she was that she paid ready money for all her clothes! She had plenty of good muslin frocks and warm tailor-mades—in Maine it is cold in May,—and though her hats were few,—only three of them were worth taking to Pride's Crossing,—they were all becoming to her. She put the ridiculous headgear and the faded blue muslin into the tray of her trunk. Why? Well, because she had a notion they would feel lonely if left at home. A few letters, in a man's handwriting, filled the crown of the hat. She had met the man two years before in a little village in New Brunswick. He was fishing, she was camping out with friends, and he had accepted their invitation to join the party. His behavior afterward had made him something of an enigma to Mollie; but she kept the blue dress.

It was five years since her husband had died—died after marrying her on his deathbed, because he loved her, and because he knew that her father's affairs were in an inextricable tangle, and that Mollie would feel the awful terror of the Gray Wolf snuffing at her door. No one—certainly not Mollie—had ever guessed that Philip Arbuthnot loved her. When he sent for her father—his old friend—and told him that he was dying and must marry Mollie, Mr. Van Alstyne treated the announcement as the raving of a delirious man. But when the doctors assured him it was not, that Philip Arbuthnot was as sensible as any of them, and that the fulfilment of this strange desire would bring the sufferer peace, Mollie's father consented to the marriage.

Arbuthnot's wife saw him but once during the two days he lived after their marriage. As his wife, she inherited all he had, and after her father's death, and the consequent disclosure of the lamentable state of his financial affairs, Mollie realized why Philip Arbuthnot had married her. She thought of him but seldom, but when she did it was with kindness and regret.

So now Mollie dismissed all worries and went down to French Village—the station nearest Pride's Crossing—with the gayety of youth. This was her first experience of travelling in an ordinary day coach, and she found it tiring. There was not much rest at night sitting on those hard, dull red seats.

When the train stopped she jumped out with alacrity. The somnolence of the country station was disturbed by the tuff-tuff of a huge red motor-car. A girl arrayed in scarlet and white rushed up the platform and threw her arms around her guest.

"Mollie, you're a duck! I nearly yelled with joy when I got your letter. You see, I'm in awful trouble. It's perfectly dreadful here. There's a horrid woman staying with us, and she twists Daddy round her finger. Mrs. Haselton—you know her?" Then, without waiting for an answer, she continued: "Where are your checks? John will bring your trunks. Only two? Why, you're not going to leave us so soon, are you?"—sudden terror was apparent in her tone. "I want you for three months at least."

Mollie made no effort to stop this flow of talk. She straightened her hat, which the violence of her friend's embrace had knocked over one ear, handed her dressing-case to the chauffeur and her checks to a grinning person who waited with a huge carry-all for baggage, then followed Leta to the waiting scarlet car.

"I thought you were in mourning," Mollie said, as they wrapped themselves up in cloaks and veils to keep off the dust.

"So I am, but black looks so ugly in the country," answered Miss Harriott. "You don't think it altogether heartless of me to wear red, do you?" As usual, she did not wait for an answer, but rattled on: "Oh, you dear Mollie, why are you so pale? Did not you sleep well last night?"

"No," said Mollie. "I did not come in the sleeper, you see. I had no money."

"No money! Why, have you been speculating?"

"That's about it," said Mrs. Arbuthnot dryly.

"But it will right itself in time," said Leta, with the comfortable philosophy of the woman who knows nothing about such things. "Speculations always do."

"Of course," assented Mollie. It was no part of her desire to be pitied by Miss Harriott, or by any one else. Mrs. Arbuthnot had exactly one hundred dollars in the world, and after this visit—well, she was young and strong, and she intended to be a housemaid, or to go on the stage, or to do some one of those indefinite, supposedly easy things that pretty women always contemplate as a method of earning one's livelihood.

"Why did you ask Mrs. Haselton here, if you don't like her?" demanded Mollie, as they sped along.

"I did not," wailed Leta. "It was papa. You know how careful I've been of him since poor mamma died. Well, he escaped me somehow—it must have been while I was south for a few weeks. I never thought she would take him up. She hates me."

"I'm afraid your father is subject to attacks of this sort," laughed Mollie. She could n't feel gloomy; even the thought of an insignificant bank account was not sufficiently depressing to cloud her eyes this glorious spring day. The trees were coming into leaf. The air was sweet with new bay leaves and sweet fern. The scents brought a memory to Mollie that was both painful and intoxicatingly joyful.

The Harriotts belonged to what Mollie's great-aunt, Miss Van Alstyne, called the "just set bread brand." They were rising. They had tried unsuccessfully to force the portals leading into the inner circles of New York society, and had laid plans for continuing their campaign at Newport, but they perforce had to retire from the fray to their Maine cottage (it was more like a modern hotel), owing to Mrs. Harriott's death. Her loss had occasioned neither great shock nor great sorrow, for she had been an invalid for years, rarely seen by her daughter, visited perfunctorily once a day by her husband. She had suffered from a combination of imaginary ailments and too much luxury, and died of measles and complications, to the great surprise of her physician.

Miss Van Alstyne had consistently refused to know Miss Harriott. The old lady lived in rather poverty-stricken grandeur in a large house in New York, where she dictated her relatives' conduct from an arm-chair. Mollie was the only one who rebelled frequently against the edicts issued by this social autocrat. One of these edicts was: "Mollie, avoid those Harriotts." Mollie, however, was very fond of Leta.

## II.

AFTER a long ride in the automobile, and a short one across the lake in an electric launch, they reached the island where Mr. Harriott had built his house.

That gentleman rushed down to the landing to meet them, reminding Mollie, as he did so, of his own motor-car. He puffed along the path, turned, with a certain amount of caution, and escorted her to the veranda, where she sat down and gazed with breathless rapture at the scene spread before her. The lake, a rippling piece of blue water, was dotted with islands, of which Pride's Crossing was the largest. The house was only a few yards from the water's edge. To the south—the island was long rather than wide—stretched a good four miles of swamp and hilly blueberry barrens; to the northward sparkled the lake.

"It's good," said Mollie; and her host puffed his gratification and approval.

Mr. Harriott was a very harmless person of perhaps forty-five. His little mannerisms were inoffensive, his self-importance amusing, and he was thoroughly kind-hearted. He had a different hobby every



year, and conducted each with the utmost enthusiasm and with the seriousness of a prime minister immersed in grave business of state.

"How did the auto go?" he asked. "Did you like it, Mrs. Arbuthnot?"

"Immensely," she answered.

"And the electric launch? I think it is a great improvement over our old ferry. Do you remember the last time you came? We could n't get across in that old tub, owing to the gale. This boat"—with some pride—"will stand the biggest sea this old lake can whack up."

"Mollie told me she liked the old ferry best," said Leta gayly.

"You don't!"—his tone was full of disappointment and disbelief.

"That old scow? You can't mean it."

"But I do"—she laughed at his dismay. "That old scow, as you call it, suited the lake much better than your launch."

Mr. Harriott was plainly offended. He asked perfunctorily if she were tired, and then added that he wanted her opinion on some mural decorations.

"I find art very fascinating," said he solemnly. "I've built a studio since you were here."

"Do you paint?" asked Mrs. Arbuthnot.

"No, I collect"—with an air of great enthusiasm.

"Mollie's too tired to look at your studio now, Daddy," said Miss Harriott, who wanted to get her friend to herself; and the two girls left him alone.

"We won't go out till dinner-time," said Leta, when Mollie had drunk some chocolate and taken a bath. "The Vandevcers are here. They come just to make use of Daddy; but they're harmless, and Mrs. Haselton is not. *She* has come to marry him. And Lord Taymouth has come to marry me."

"Has he said so?" asked Mollie languidly, from the sofa where she was resting, supported by innumerable pillows.

"No"—scornfully; "but one knows things before a man says them."

"Are you sure you love him, Leta?" demanded Mollie, with some curiosity. "Don't marry him if you don't."

"I *like* him. He's very decent—as he would say;" she laughed. "He's not very intellectual, but he is so clean."

"Nice people are."

"Yes, but they don't always show it. He does. You'll see what I mean when you meet him. But I want you to keep papa out of that woman's way. Let her flirt with Mr. Keane, if she wants to."

"Mr. Keane, did you say? Billie Keane?" Mollie hoped her voice sounded cool and ordinary.

"Yes, of course. You've met him. By the way, papa's heard about those unfortunate speculations of yours. He thinks you ought to marry, so as to be settled and happy."

"But what if I prefer to be unsettled and happy?" replied Mollie. Though her lips were steady, her eyes were not. She would have much preferred not to be obliged to meet Mr. Keane.

"But you don't, do you?" asked Leta indifferently. "I can't spare you just now, any way. Papa is getting fatter—did you notice it?—so he gets up early and hangs works of art in his studio, as a means of reducing flesh. Mrs. Haselton gets up, too."

"Well, I won't"—Mollie spoke with decision. "I refuse to leave my bed at seven o'clock to preside over the flirtations of Mrs. Haselton."

"I don't want you to. I only want you to be nice to papa. You can amuse him, and all that"—with airiness. Leta herself would n't and didn't try to amuse her father.

The whole party—rather an incongruous one—assembled in the hall before dinner. Mrs. Arbuthnot knew none of the guests except Mr. Keane, to whom she vouchsafed a rather cool greeting. Mr. Harriott took Mollie in to dinner, and was evidently pleased with her. She was pleasant to him, and did not ridicule his artistic aspirations.

In Mollie's eyes, Mrs. Haselton had been badly put together. She was handsome, in a florid way, but it was a pity that the same artist had not provided the color for her hair, eyelashes, and eyebrows; they might have toned better. She flattered Mr. Harriott boldly, openly, and he was plainly delighted with her. From what Mollie had heard of the woman's reputation, this slavery on his part portended nothing good.

Lord Taymouth was a handsome young giant, and his manners were excellent. As Leta had said, he was very clean. He made no pretense of hiding how completely he was fascinated by his hostess.

Mollie did not so much as glance in Mr. Keane's direction. She told herself that she was done with him. He was the last man in the world she wanted to see. Once he had been the only man, but those days were over. She had conducted the funeral herself, and shovelled the earth on the grave of a girl's heart. She unconsciously shuddered as she thought of that summer in the woods, and the heartache it had left.

In spite of the undoubted excellence of the dinner, the party did not seem cheerful. A vague dread of something unpleasant impending overshadowed Mrs. Arbuthnot, which common sense made her put down to the awkwardness of being obliged once more to break bread with Billie Keane. Whatever she was, she would not be awkward, and she was turning to Mr. Harriott with determined gayety when Mrs. Haselton's voice stopped the words on her lips.

"Mr. Mitchell is over at MacDonald's."

Mr. Mitchell! Why did Mrs. Haselton talk of him? He was an utter outsider; no one even referred to his existence. But perhaps she meant some Mitchell of whom Mollie had never heard.

"You don't mean Charley Mitchell, who married Miss Appleton?" queried Mrs. Arbuthnot. In New York she would n't have mentioned his name.

"Why, yes," responded Mrs. Haselton calmly; "I do."

Mollie shrugged her shoulders. This woman was unspeakable. Surely the absence or presence of a person of the character of Mr. Mitchell could not concern any of the party, unless it were Mrs. Haselton herself.

Leta tried to engage Lord Taymouth in loud argument, but was too late. Mr. Harriott had heard Mrs. Haselton's words, and, whether they had been intended as a sort of verbal bomb-shell or not, they proved one.

"Not that cad Mitchell?" he exclaimed angrily.

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Haselton. Her face flushed, and she knocked over the salt and then stooped to hide the red. "He's really not so very bad, though."

"He's an out and out blackguard," stormed Mr. Harriott. "He's married, yet he's forever carrying on with other women. I'll not have that man around the village. He might come here."

"There's no way for him to come," remarked Leta flippantly, "unless he swims."

"Well, he certainly can't come here," asserted Mr. Harriott.

"Probably he has n't the faintest desire to do so," said his daughter.

"He's a friend of yours, is n't he, Mrs. Arbuthnot?" and Mrs. Haselton leaned across the table to gaze at Mollie. "Your appearance and his—here—it seems as if you must know him."

Mollie could n't make the woman out at all. What was all the excitement about? Lord Taymouth looked annoyed, Billie Keane amused, Leta's flushed face told of anger, and Mr. Harriott glanced from one to the other with open wrath.

"I know his wife," said Mollie. "She's a distant connection of the Van Alstynes'."

"He says he knows you," persisted Mrs. Haselton.

"Possibly," returned Mollie, eating her ice-cream calmly. "Lots of people say they know me."

Mr. Keane laughed with quiet enjoyment. Mr. Harriott frowned. Mollie was as cool as her cream; her soft gray-blue eyes were unclouded, her dark hair waved in natural undulations round the thoroughbred little head. She saw that Mrs. Haselton regarded her with dislike, but she was no more agitated by what seemed to be almost an attack

from her than she would have been by rudeness from a ragamuffin in the slums of New York.

"It's hot," said the host. "Leta, let's go out."

Over the lake hung a crescent moon, and the woods lay almost silent. Every now and then the leaves moved in the gentle spring breeze. It rose and sank and sang. And far out, in the streak of moonshine, floated a solitary canoe.

When the party separated, Mollie found herself sitting in a big chair on the veranda, by Lord Taymouth.

"The shuffle after dinner was as unsuccessful as if we were looking for good cards at bridge, was n't it?" said he, with calm confidence in her understanding and penetration. "I meant to go out with Miss Leta, but it seems I've lost her."

"Don't say that," replied Mollie. "It sounds ominous."

A second canoe joined the first, and then they both vanished. Who was out? But it did n't interest Mrs. Arbuthnot, and she turned to her companion with a laugh.

"Do you know you were not at all complimentary just now?" she said. "You might have allowed me to cherish the illusion that you did n't find my society altogether objectionable."

"You're Leta's best friend," he said gravely. "What I meant was, I've lost her now. Mr. Harriott is saddled with the snake-charmer, and he's half afraid, half fascinated by her. He does n't quite know what to do."

Mollie shivered. "What's the matter with the party?" she demanded, trying to infuse some gaiety into her tone. "You're all so solemn, so uncomfortable."

"Oh, it'll get livelier by and by," he answered. "We'll play bridge."

"I won't. It would be sacrilege to leave this for bridge."

"There's nothing better to do," said Taymouth. "Did you notice another canoe out there? No one is supposed to have any canoes around here except ourselves. Who do you suppose is with Miss Leta?"

"I don't believe it's she out there," responded Mollie. "By the way, everybody seemed to be terribly wrought up at dinner about that man Mitchell. Of course he's horrible, beyond words; but I can't see why he's worthy of so much attention."

"Don't know anything about him," said Taymouth indifferently. Then he added: "Wish I knew who was in that other canoe. There was one on the water when we came from dinner."

"Probably some of the servants," answered Mollie.

Before he could speak, along strolled Mrs. Haselton, with her host. "He's not come here for nothing," she was saying. "Perhaps your new guest told him——" Then she saw Mollie, and stopped.

Mollie jumped up. "Were you talking about me?" she demanded, and her clear young voice carried far.

Before Mrs. Haselton could recover from her confusion, the Vandeviers joined the party. "What about bridge?" inquired Mr. Vandevier, who was bored, and showed it. "Are n't we going to have any bridge?"

"Yes, bridge," said Leta, suddenly appearing from the hall. "I've been sleeping. Was n't it lazy of me! Now, we could forgive Mollie if she had slept—she's tired."

The host's cheerful "You'll play, Mrs. Arbuthnot?" met with a firm "No, thank you." More reasons than one prevented Mollie from playing bridge. She soon regretted her refusal, however, for Mr. Keane seated himself in Lord Taymouth's vacant chair.

"I want to know what you're going to do about that brute of a trustee of yours," said he.

"There is nothing to do"—her voice was weary. She began to wish she, too, were on the way to the Argentine Republic. Why could n't she find seclusion as well as the wicked trustee?

"Don't you think you sent me a very curt answer to that letter I wrote you two years ago?" Mr. Keane said.

Mrs. Arbuthnot started, and turned to look at him.

"No," she replied.

"You said what you meant, of course; but you might have garnished it a little—might have put it more gently. It hurt—that letter of yours."

Mollie had nothing to say. How could he reproach her, when he— She almost choked.

"You will be friends now, won't you? If I offended you, I'm sorry."

"If you offended me? You use queer words, Mr. Keane;" and she departed very abruptly, leaving him wondering why she behaved so oddly.

Mrs. Arbuthnot spent some moments in reflection before she went to bed. Leta had said she had been sleeping, but Mollie knew that she had not been in the house. She had seen her in her white gown fitting up through the bushes. Why had she lied? But Mrs. Arbuthnot was too tired to puzzle over what did not concern her.

### III.

"Your eyes are blue as the sky," said Mr. Keane.

"Because I always put a piece of blue ribbon inside the rim of my hats," said Mollie coldly. "The reflection makes them blue."

"Why do you think it necessary to administer such large doses of practicality to me? You prescribe disillusion as if you thought me

suffering from disordered passions," he protested, gazing intently at her clear cut face.

She blushed. "I wish you would n't glare at me that way. I can't fish when you do. I never could imagine you suffering from anything disordered."

They were fishing for perch by the run. It had taken more diplomacy than he had ever before expended to lure her out in the boat with him, and his success made him bold. "A cat may look at a queen," said he calmly.

"The queen can't scratch as well as a cat, but she can put up an umbrella;" and she promptly unfurled a large white one, lined with green cotton.

"Your line is fouled."

"I don't care," said she.

"I want to ask you a question," said the artful one.

"Ask, then."

"I can't unless you look at me"—his tone was cross.

"Is it about me?"—putting down the offending screen. "I never use anything for my eyelashes—I heard you announcing at breakfast that you believed all women decorated themselves that way."

"No, it is not," he returned in a tone of disgust. "It is a serious question. Why is Mrs. Haselton so down on Miss Harriott?"

"Ah, you've noticed it, too!"

"Yes." He veiled his triumph by letting his eyes fall. He always wanted to look at her, she was so pretty; but he did n't say so to her. "Some one ought to muzzle that woman. She's an adventuress."

"So am I," laughed his companion.

"There are different brands of adventuresses," he retorted. "But, seriously, she wants to marry Mr. Harriott. She'd make him miserable, and it would be terrible for his daughter. Something must be done."

"Who can do it? What can we do?"

That she should bracket him with herself in any arrangement filled him with rapture, though he did not say so.

"We must keep him from marrying Mrs. Haselton," he said. "She's a lady of too many parts. Don't let her influence Mr. Harriott against his daughter, if you can help it."

"I won't, if I can prevent it," she answered. "By the way, did n't all this hinting of Mrs. Haselton's about Mr. Mitchell seem odd to you?"

"Very odd," said he dryly. "There's our host. Shall we row over and take him out?"

Mr. Harriott was plainly delighted at Mollie's suggestion that he come out fishing with them. He had superintended the carpenters until he felt sure that they were all idiots. A little soothing fresh

air and the gentle handling of a line—he never caught a fish—appealed to his wearied intellect.

“There’s something wrong with this party,” said he, when in the boat. “We don’t mix as we ought to.”

“Oh, *we* do!” Mr. Keane emphasized the pronoun.

“To tell you the truth”—Mr. Harriott spoke confidentially—“I’m uneasy. Mrs. Haselton assures me that she heard footsteps on the veranda in the night, between twelve and two. Leta is so careless about her jewels! Now, could it have been burglars?”

“It might have been I,” said Mr. Keane solemnly. “I’m a bad sleeper, and often wander about at night.”

Mr. Harriott nodded with relief. When they landed every one was on the veranda. Leta was talking with ostentation to Lord Taymouth. Mrs. Haselton leaned over the railing and said:

“How hot you look! Have you been fishing?”

“Yes,” Mr. Harriott answered. “By the way, your nocturnal wanderer was no one more dangerous than Mr. Keane. He does n’t sleep well.”

“Oh!” said Mrs. Haselton—her tone did n’t contain the satisfaction it should have. “I was sure I heard somebody.” She shuddered.

“How terrible!” Leta cried. “It might have been a burglar after all. Papa, you will have to put bars on Mrs. Haselton’s window—she has only one leading to the veranda. It won’t do for her to be frightened here. She might give *Pride’s Crossing* a bad name.”

Mrs. Arbuthnot looked in puzzled wonder at the two women’s faces. Something more than the ordinary fright of a nervous lady had lighted the lamp of anger in them both. What was all this agitation about?

“I’ll have bars put on to-morrow,” said Mr. Harriott. “I’ll put them on for you myself, Mrs. Haselton. I’ll attend to it at once.” He trotted off towards the landing.

Mrs. Haselton followed him. “I assure you, Mr. Harriott, I am not at all alarmed—now.”

But Mr. Harriott interrupted her. “Can’t have you losing your sleep. I’ll see what can be done at once.”

The lady protesting that bars were not at all necessary, and the gentleman assuring her that he would not have her worried on any account, they made a noisy progress towards the wharf.

When Mollie reached the cool seclusion of her room (she had to pass Leta’s door to get to it, as the two girls occupied a suite of two bed-rooms, a sitting room, and a bath-room at the north end of the house) she beheld Leta tearing down through the blueberry bushes towards the big rock at the end of the lake. Mollie arranged her hair, then sat down for a few moments’ reflection. There was a certain amount of thunder in the mental atmosphere. She was not surprised

that Leta did not like Mrs. Haselton, but Mollie thought the girl injudicious to display her feelings so openly.

Lunch time was near when Leta, breathless, hot, and evidently exhausted, hurried into Mollie's room.

"Where have you been?" demanded Mollie abruptly.

"Out," said the other laconically. "Is n't that Haselton woman a beast? It was n't Billie Keane she heard on the veranda."

"What?"

"You believed it? Well, I did n't."

"Who was it, then?" asked Mollie.

Leta looked a bit confused. "That's the question," she said. "I don't believe it was any one. She'd say anything, that woman would."

"She's common," answered Mollie; "but I think you are foolish to let her see you dislike her. Are you really afraid she will marry your father?"

Leta paused, her arms suspended. She was arranging her long hair, which had become loosened by her violent exercise. "Do you think it possible?" she asked.

"Don't you?" said Mollie. "It seemed to me——"

"I suppose you are right," said Leta, with portentous gravity. "It would be an awful thing. Oh, Mollie, don't let her!"

"How can I prevent it?" Mrs. Arbuthnot's tone was aggrieved. "You told me your suspicions when I arrived."

"Yes, but more in fun than anything else. Marry him yourself, Mollie. Why are you a widow? You got nothing, after all, and——"

"Many women get nothing."

"I'll have to be quick now and arrange things with Lord Taymouth," said Leta. "Well, I may as well get it done. Papa has promised to give me a million dollars the day I fix it up. That does n't include my trousseau, of course. If he's thinking of making that woman Mrs. Harriott, I'd better get all the money I can before she controls the finances." Leta straightened her belt, and pulled some bits of bay leaves off her skirt.

"You've been away over to the end of the island," said Mollie. "There's no bay this side of the rocks. No wonder you're hot."

"What a Sherlock Holmes you'd make!" laughed Miss Harriott. "Well, thanks to my forethought, papa will bar up that old cat's window. I know her well. She'll be snuffing around at night if he does n't."

"What does that matter?" said Mollie morosely. "There's something going on. You're not trusting me. Things are so queer. You're excited, Mrs. Haselton's spiteful, and——"

"And Mr. Keane's devoted to you," added Leta significantly.

"That has nothing to do with it"—Mollie's voice was indifferent.



"I'll tell you what's the matter with Mrs. Haselton," said Leta confidentially. "Last winter I took Mr. Mitchell away from her."

"But he's horrid!" Mollie dismissed him as of no importance.

"He is charming."

"My dear Leta, you can't know anything about him. Mrs. Haselton insinuated that he followed me here. You've not seen him, have you?"

"Yes, once. He was here."

"Well, don't cultivate his society. You'll be sorry if you do. Now, his wife is so nice—she has paid his debts over and over again. But she's quite worn out with his scrapes."

"There's the bell! Hurry, Mollie! Daddy is so cross if we keep him waiting."

#### IV.

MR. HARRIOTT devoted a whole afternoon to the putting up of bars on Mrs. Haselton's window, during which time she sat on the veranda, beside him, and smiled, in well feigned rapture, at his display of anxiety for her comfort and peace of mind. To tell the truth, however, she was not a little annoyed with him. She had not altogether believed Mr. Keane when he intimated that he was probably the midnight marauder; nor did she take much stock in the burglar theory. Being of a somewhat curious disposition, she had intended to do a little midnight prowling on her own account, and she did not want her only means of egress barred up. But she wisely kept all her dissatisfaction to herself, and prattled on sweetly about Leta and Lord Taymouth. She tried to find out from Mr. Harriott whether his daughter was disposed to accept the Englishman for her husband. Mr. Harriott knew nothing about it, and so he told her.

Mrs. Haselton threw out judicious hints anent the dreary condition of Mr. Harriott if his daughter married. These English marriages were all very well, she told him, but the bridegroom's relatives were not always disposed to take the father of the bride to their bosoms, even though he had bestowed a fortune on his daughter. The man who provided the money was not always made much account of; and the family of Taymouth—the Duke of Carminster was Lord Taymouth's father—might not welcome Mr. Harriott over-cordially.

She tactfully intimated that an allowance was the wisest way of dowering a daughter, as it could be enlarged or curtailed according as the lady pleased or displeased the father. She laid great stress on Mr. Harriott's certain loneliness after his daughter had left him; then, feeling that she had successfully paved the way for disquieting thoughts on the subject, she thanked him sweetly for his goodness to her, uttered some complimentary observations on the consideration and charm of American husbands, and allowed him to depart. Then she went in the house, assuring herself that she had done a good day's work. Why

should n't she be Mrs. Harriott, and have the spending of the Harriott millions? Why should it all become Leta's? Therefore, Mrs. Haselton's one yearning at present was that the affectionate relations existing between Mr. Harriott and his daughter might, through her scheming and influence, be altered.

Mrs. Haselton's words bore stronger fruit than she had expected, in a way. Mr. Harriott could cherish only one idea at a time, and as he strolled down the veranda, smoking, a brilliant thought occurred to him. Why should n't he marry? And marry Mollie Arbuthnot? It was, he knew well, almost an impossibility that his daughter's marriage with even the son of the Duke of Carminster could materially advance the position of her father in New York; and it was solely in New York that he wanted advancement. European alliances, however high the rank of the man may be, have not, as a rule, done much good socially to the lady's family, when the most exclusive set in New York have gently but firmly refused to have anything to do with them.

Mr. Harriott knew that the coolness on the part of what he was pleased to know as the "four hundred" would be likely to endure forever, unless he could in some way manage to break down the barriers. And Mollie Arbuthnot knew every one worth knowing! If—oh, if she would only accept him! He foresaw endless roads of bliss before him. He and his wife would have the *entrées* everywhere.

He had been attracted by Mrs. Haselton—decidedly attracted. He had even contemplated asking her to marry him. But now the vast flood of light which descended upon him through the illuminating idea of what must happen, should he marry Mollie, quite obliterated the recollection of Mrs. Haselton. He laughed softly to himself. If he could only carry out his plans! And there seemed to be nothing to prevent his getting his desire. The girl was so poor that she was quite sure to accept him, and he did n't mind even if she did primarily accept him for his money.

As a result of these cogitations, Mr. Harriott proceeded to monopolize Mrs. Arbuthnot's society, a manoeuvre which was viewed by Billie Keane with huge disfavor. The latter felt what the successful diplomatist must no doubt often experience when his suggested reforms bear greater fruit than he expects or desires. It was all very well for Mollie to be nice to Mr. Harriott—to influence him in favor of Leta, to arrest any interference in her career on the part of Mrs. Haselton. But Mr. Keane had no intention of relinquishing in favor of Mr. Harriott any of his precious hours wrested from fate to spend with Mollie.

"I wish you would n't always run away when I come near," said Mr. Keane plaintively. He had spent many weary moments looking for

Mollie, and when he found her sitting on the veranda, sewing, she had immediately risen and announced her intention of going to look for Leta. "It's not kind of you," he continued.

She did try to avoid him, but she did not want him to know it. His presence filled her with unbearable self-contempt. "I don't always run away," she said. "I spent all yesterday morning with you in the canoe." She sat down and continued her work.

"You run away altogether too often," he protested. "Why disturb Miss Harriott now? I can tell you where she is: if you look towards the swamp you will see her white gown. She is with Taymouth, who, I doubt not, is inviting her to merge her fortune with his title." He paused a moment, and then inquired suddenly: "Do you believe most marriages are happy?"

"Oh, yes," said Mollie, with an air of cheerful detachment. "I have a large bump of romance concealed somewhere about me—though you might not think it"—she glanced at her slight form and so did he, then both laughed. Billie Keane threw aside his hat, and sat watching her swift-flying fingers.

"What are you making?" he demanded at last. "Is that embroidery?"

"No, it's a handkerchief, and I'm hemming it. My great-aunt gave me a dozen, and do you know, I always despised them? Yes, I did. I would not have hemmed them for anything. But be sure your sins—or omissions—will find you out! And now I need them, so I am doing the despised sewing." She spoke gayly.

Keane frowned. He knew, better than she thought, the extent of the disaster which had befallen her, and the knowledge of her poverty maddened him. He had plenty, she nothing; and, although he loved her, he could n't do one thing to help her.

"Where's Harriott?" he demanded.

"He and Mrs. Haselton are rearranging some pictures in the studio," Mollie said. "He seems much better friends with Leta than he used to be."

"I've noticed it," answered Mr. Keane.

"And he is much nicer to Leta," continued Mrs. Arbuthnot. "He spent the first half of the afternoon, however, in losing his hammer, and the rest of the time losing his temper."

As she spoke, vociferous ejaculations travelled out to them from the studio.

"I did n't mean you to carry out my directions so literally," said Mr. Keane, and his eyes and tone were reproachful.

"What directions?" inquired Mollie. "I'm afraid I don't quite understand."

"I think you've overdone your part, you know. You spend so

much time with Mr. Harriott, protecting him from the wiles of that lady, that——”

“I don’t!” protested Mollie. “He comes and talks to me, and insists on taking me fishing. I don’t see what I can do. I think it must be because he is sorry for me.”

She could have bitten her tongue out after she had spoken; but he only pulled a cushion higher up under the back of his head, and said lazily:

“I don’t believe it’s that.”

“He has always been very nice to me,” said she, “and I really like him, and Leta as well—though my aunt does warn me not to come here.” Quite unconsciously, Mrs. Arbutnot had grown to trust Billie Keane. He was strong and quiet, and she felt instinctively that he was a good man to rely on, though she was quite sure she could n’t ever forgive him for the letter he had sent her two years ago.

Keane wondered of what she was thinking, and wished he knew her well enough to ask. He cursed himself firmly and decisively for accepting the cool way she had disposed of him and his proposal two years before.

“How far is a man justified,” said he, “in telling a woman he loves her? I mean—suppose, for instance, he asks her to marry him, and she refuses him, but he can’t forget her. What can he do? Is it persecution on his part to assiduously cultivate her society? Must he take her ‘no’ to mean, ‘Avoid me, don’t see me,’ or is it right for him to ask her again?”

“I think,” she answered cautiously, “that he had better observe her as he would a barometer. If she’s kind——”

“Yes? Yes?”

“Try again,” Mollie went on. She turned down the hem of her handkerchief, and no flush disturbed the coolness of her cheeks. She did not believe that his question had any reference to her. How could it? He had never given her any special reason to believe that he loved her.

The coming of a servant with tea and all its paraphernalia disturbed their tête-à-tête. Then followed Mr. Harriott’s arrival, heralded by loud argument. That gentleman, who was accompanied, of course, by Mrs. Haselton, was warmly criticising the position of some pictures in the studio.

As was his custom when Mollie was present, Mr. Harriott talked with her, to the exclusion of every one else, and paid her so many compliments that the girl’s feeling of amusement changed to one of annoyance.

Keane’s eyes turned towards the path. He saw Leta and Lord Taymouth approaching, and noticed the man’s triumphant air, noticed

also that the girl looked blighted, faded, and forlorn. "Almost a duchess," muttered Billie to himself. "Why should she look so doleful?" There was surely no need for Miss Harriott to marry her titled lover. Mr. Harriott would n't have been especially grieved by her refusal of the young nobleman, Keane knew. But there was no question about Lord Taymouth's absolute joy. His eyes were bright, his air masterful. "He loves the girl, that's certain," thought Billie Keane; "but I can't make her out."

An unaccountable sense of dissatisfaction with all things crept over Mr. Keane. He did n't enjoy seeing happiness through other people's eyes. Yet he admired the young nobleman because he did n't try to conceal how joyful he was.

Taymouth did n't wait for any one to speak. He knew he carried his news in his eyes, and he led Leta up to her father and said:

"Mr. Harriott, Leta has promised to marry me, if you will consent."

"My goodness! you've startled me!" said Mr. Harriott. "You be good to her! If you're not——" He laughed and shook his fist at his prospective son-in-law. Then he took his hand and said: "You're a good chap. I like you. Leta, come here."

By this time every one was congratulating the young couple, and the din was loud. Leta took advantage of it to seize her father's hand and whisper:

"Daddy, you will settle the money on *me*, won't you? So that I can do just what I like with it?"

"Has he been saying anything to you about money?" Her father's tone was full of stern disapproval.

"Not he!" laughed Leta. "He does n't think of money when I'm around." Her father's air of distrust vanished. "But you will, won't you, Daddy?"

"Of course I will, my dear," said Mr. Harriott. "No husband shall have the spending of your money."

"How much are you going to give me to buy my trousseau?" whispered the girl. "May I have a check soon?"

"Whoever heard of such a thing!" ejaculated the amazed parent. "Listen to this, good people! Leta wants——"

"Don't you dare tell!" interrupted his daughter.

"I must—it's such a joke! Here's a lady just engaged to a man who—poor creature!—hardly has had time to realize what has happened to him—that he is about to become that awful warning to mankind, a husband—when the lady calmly murmurs: 'Daddy, how much are you going to give me for my trousseau?'"

"Did you say that?" inquired Taymouth, beaming on her with fond rapture.

"Yes;" but Leta's voice was fretful, annoyed.

"I never heard of anything so calm, so audacious," commented Mr. Harriott. "How much do you want, Leta?"

But his daughter had vanished in offended haste.

## V.

BILLIE KEANE watched Mr. Harriott stroll off with his future son-in-law, then sought out Leta and invited her to come out in the canoe. She accepted languidly, but announced as a condition that Mollie must go, too. Now, Mrs. Arbuthnot had no desire to spend even a few moments in Mr. Keane's company. She had repeatedly assured herself of that fact, and reiteration sometimes passes for conviction. But, forced by Leta, she reluctantly abandoned her letter writing and walked behind them to the shore. She took one of the paddles, as Leta announced that she proposed to be idle. What was the good of hard labor when some one else could do it in your place? And Mollie looked so graceful paddling!

After a time the capricious Leta caught a glimpse of Taymouth lounging alone on a big rock by the pine trees.

"Land me now," she commanded. "You can go for a little paddle, and then come back for me."

"I don't want to paddle," said Mollie. "I came out only because you insisted on my coming. I'll land too."

"Thereby making the unnecessary third," suggested Billie Keane quietly.

"I can walk home," retorted the lady stiffly.

"You'll do nothing of the sort," said Leta. "You know perfectly well how you loathe the remaining indoors. Now, Mr. Keane, insist on her taking my seat. And then you can come back for me when I call. You need not lose sight of me, you know, Mollie, if you are afraid of Mr. Keane. Do you think you need a chaperon?"—with maliciousness which, though playful, annoyed Mrs. Arbuthnot.

"I am not in the least afraid of Mr. Keane," said she. Outwardly, she appeared very calm and serene; inwardly, she could have choked Leta for her pleasantries.

"How much longer are you going to stay here?" Keane demanded, as Miss Harriott joined her fiancé. He did not refer to Mollie's manifest reluctance to spend a few minutes alone with him.

"I was asked for three months," she replied; "but, of course, now they have altered their plans. Lord Taymouth's people are on their way out, or soon will be, so I suppose Leta will have to go and meet them and take them to Newport. She wants me to help her buy clothes in New York in the autumn. I suppose"—with great vagueness—"I'll wander around somewhere, and then——"

"And then?"

"Make my plans for the winter," said she, with cheerful indefiniteness.

She dangled one hand in the warm water, and bent her head to look in its clear depths. Though she hid it from Mr. Keane, and indeed from all the world, she was worried, horribly, hauntingly worried. In the night watches and in moments of quiet reflection, the tramp of apprehension could not be quieted. Mollie did not know which way to turn. How could she make a living? The market was overcrowded, and she was an incapable. She did not mince matters when discussing her future with herself.

"Have you heard from Gordon lately?" asked Mr. Keane.

A warm scarlet blazed in Mollie's cheeks and neck, and she turned her head away. She had met Jim Gordon that summer—the summer Billie Keane remembered as a white summer, though he had been fool enough to hash the opportunities fate had offered him. He attributed Mrs. Arbuthnot's coldness to himself to the more potent charm of Jim Gordon. He fancied Mollie loved Gordon.

"I've had a line from him—once—since then," faltered she. "He does n't know my address now."

Mr. Keane pondered silently on the reason for her embarrassment, and said quietly: "He's doing rather well."

"His orbit and mine don't cross," said Mollie.

"Not from any fault of his, I'm sure." Mr. Keane's air was very stiff.

"Oh, fate is a good separator," said she, with indifference, and wondered how much Gordon had told him; while he wondered how much she cared for the other man.

"I asked Miss Harriott to invite me here, to meet you," he acknowledged impulsively.

"Why?" she inquired, with real astonishment. "That was surely a great waste of time on your part."

"You need n't remind me of that," he protested hotly. "Do you think I don't realize it? Don't imagine that I do not understand the situation—I comprehend it perfectly. But I'm just as great a fool as the average man, and——"

"Caught!" cried Mrs. Haselton triumphantly, as Mr. Harriott brought his canoe alongside. "We've been creeping near you, stalking you—in fact, playing Indian"—she laughed loudly. "You never heard us! You must have been thoroughly absorbed in your conversation."

"We were discussing the political situation, and we did n't want to deprive you of the small satisfaction of believing that you had frightened us"—Mr. Keane was provokingly calm.

Mollie did not speak.

"We're going to get the mail," proclaimed Mr. Harriott. "Come along, you two. I'm sure there must be some letters for Mrs. Arbuthnot."

"But Leta! We have to go for her."

"She's comfortably ensconced on the wharf, with the adored one," said the lady's father. "She told me to tell you to run away and play. So you really must come with us"—with great geniality. "Roughing it here, we get our letters so late," he grumbled.

"You don't call this roughing it, do you?" laughed Mollie. "Pride's Crossing is like a hotel; it's full of servants, and there are buttons everywhere to turn on the electric light. Now, when I camped out in New Brunswick, we had to *work*. We slept on hemlock boughs, in tents; we bathed in the lake, and took our meals in the shack. There were no bath-rooms, or hot water, and——"

"We made a big fire at night, and paddled around the lake in the starlight," added Mr. Keane.

"Were you there?" demanded Mrs. Haselton. "I should n't have thought that sort of thing was in your line, Billie Keane."

Mr. Keane loathed her when she used his Christian name. He did not desire to be "Billie" to her.

"I had that honor," said he. "You see, you don't know me very well, Mrs. Haselton. We used to get up early, and make coffee," he went on reminiscently. "Do you remember, Mrs. Arbuthnot?"

"You did, you mean," said Mollie. "I got up when the coffee was ready. It was masterly strategy on my part, was n't it?"

"We heard the loons laughing between the dawn and the day," he went on softly. "Oh, those were good days!"

Mollie looked at him as she had never looked since those never-to-be-forgotten days at the camp.

"There are no loons here," she said with regret. "The electric launch has frightened them all away." She leaned forward and said, almost in a whisper: "I heard them yesterday morning up in the still water beyond the big lake."

"You were out so early?" he asked in surprise.

"Yes." Then she added in a louder tone: "How soft the lake water was at camp."

"Mrs. Arbuthnot remembers only the benefit the soft water was to her complexion," jeered Mrs. Haselton.

"Well, now, let's get a move on," commanded Mr. Harriott. "Keane, take Mrs. Haselton."

Mr. Keane decided that there were possibilities of absolute brutality in Harriott, and not latent ones either; but, with an unchanged countenance, he accepted charge of the lady; and it rather pleased him to know that she was quite as much disgusted with the arrangement as



was he himself. Mr. Harriott appropriated Mrs. Arbuthnot and whisked her up to the post-office, down to the wharf, and off towards Pride's Crossing, before the other two had realized his intentions.

"I wonder whether Mrs. Arbuthnot would marry Mr. Harriott, if he asked her," said Mrs. Haselton maliciously. She hoped thereby to make Billie Keane angry. She had watched him carefully and surmised that he loved Mollie. "I think she would," Mrs. Haselton went on speculatively. "She's so poor now, you know, she'll have to take any one."

"I think I know her well enough to be reasonably sure that she would n't marry him—or any other man—unless she loved him," said he, with assumed indifference. But he was n't indifferent—oh, no! Mollie married to that man!

Mrs. Arbuthnot did not mind her host's monopolization of her; she regarded him with amiable tolerance, and laughed at his flattery. Not for worlds would he have confessed his weakness, but he was thoroughly tired of art. He was much more interested in Leta's trousseau and her matrimonial arrangements generally than in the acquiring or arrangement of pictures, however much they had cost. In fact, just at that time matrimony and its attendant ceremonies were occupying his mind to the exclusion of all else. He himself was yearning to marry, and soon.

## VI.

THE canoe bumped. Mollie, paddling in the bow, fell forward. Mr. Keane was jerked upon his face.

"Sit still!" he shouted, when he recovered himself. The wind was blowing hard against them. The waves chunked and gurgled on the sides of the canoe. The head sea threatened to swamp them as the canoe, pinned by the rock, drifted side on to the waves. The unexpected obstacle had its sharp point just hidden by a little veil of water, so that the waves did n't break on it and show its existence.

"I wish we had the birch-bark," he muttered moodily. He shoved off. "Now," he cried, "paddle your hardest! We're taking in too much water to go very far. We must make for that cove." He set his mouth hard. "Must" did n't mean that they were certain to reach there.

Mrs. Arbuthnot said nothing. She had a great faculty for silence in a difficult situation.

Early that morning the whole party had started by train to Megwauk Junction, with three canoes, two men to paddle, and a whole load of lunch baskets. They lunched at the big still water, and then paddled down the chain of lakes. It was about twenty miles from Megwauk to Pride's Crossing.

After landing on one of the islands for a short rest, they started for home, with a ten-mile paddle before them, and a twenty-mile wind against them. It was late, too; they had dawdled over building a fire, and had not noticed the weather. Mr. Keane and Mrs. Arbuthnot had insisted on taking the Peterborough canoe. Each of the big birch-barks had one of the men from MacDonald's in the stern. Mr. Harriott was in the bow of one, and Mr. Vandever in the bow of the other. Leta, Lord Taymouth, Mrs. Haselton, and that nonentity Mrs. Vandever were the passengers. Mr. Harriott had objected strongly to not having Mollie with him, but Mrs. Haselton had adjudged this the moment to assert her claim, and had insisted on her host travelling with her. Mollie was the only girl who could paddle; and it was impossible for Billie Keane to manage the Peterborough alone, and equally impossible for Mrs. Arbuthnot to do the heavy work in the birch-bark. The heavier canoes soon outdistanced the small one. Mollie found her training had made her strong enough to go on with the regular, rhythmic motion for hours. They kept the head of the canoe on to the wind and sea, and got along fairly well. Then, just as they struck a calmer streak of water, where a headland gave a little shelter, they banged—crashed—into the hidden rock.

Mollie had no knowledge of the extent of the damage, and there was no time to look. Keane had a pretty good idea, because he felt the water coming in. The seas threatened to swamp them as they made a staggering course towards a little landing-place near a stalwart pine tree. Above it rocky ledges ranged high, and higher, till it seemed as if they joined the inky sky. An eagle screamed over their heads, and a few premonitory drops of rain splashed on their faces. Mollie's hat had blown away somewhere, and her hair hung down around her shoulders. Her eyes burned with the wind's continual whipping. It was very cold, but her thick red sweater kept her from suffering therefrom. Then, too, the hard work was warming.

"Paddle," commanded the man behind her, in a stern, tense voice. "The water's coming in fast. We don't want to swim—yet."

The swirling water outside, and the horrible black water in the canoe, were very close. She worked desperately. Finally they reached the rock. Keane jumped out and dragged her up by the shoulders. "Get out of the water," he told her. "Take the basket. I'll see to the canoe. There's a hole in her big enough to swamp an iron-clad," he went on dolefully. "Oh, for the birch-bark! I've mended one before this with a bit of rag and some resin. We could be off again in half an hour. But now——" He paused, glanced around him at the weather prospect—which was certainly not encouraging—and continued: "It's settling in for a nasty night. I'm afraid we'll have to try to walk to MacDonald's."

"Through that brush, with rocks as big as houses, and the dark coming on?" said Mollie. "No, thank you. There's a better way than that. We'll make camp."

"In this wind, without any shelter?" he cried. "It would kill you."

"Oh, I'm tough," she retorted. "Any way, there's no chance of getting on. We can construct a lean-to with the canoe carpet. Now aren't you glad we have it? You laughed at me for bringing it, you remember."

The gathering dusk hid the admiring glance he directed towards her. She was plucky, he thought. Then he arranged the canoe as a screen; for an occasional eddy of wind drifted down on them, and it was cold. Mollie made a fireplace of stones, while Keane wrung the water out of the soaked carpet. He chose as good a mossy bit as he could find under the lee of the granite ledge, and cut some saplings for poles for an extemporized tent.

"It will be better than nothing," said the practical lady calmly. "We can keep a little dry."

"Your feet must be soaked," he said, with a sudden rush of dismay at the uncomfortable plight she was in.

"Get the fire going," returned Mollie, "and I'll soon get dry. A wetting won't hurt me. But it will spoil the wood for us, and we'll need a fire badly. I thought so," she added, as the few big drops that had been falling increased to a steady downpour. "Let's get all the wood we can before it's soaked."

Under the hastily arranged lean-to, with a blazing fire in front of them, they were fairly comfortable.

"I can't begin to tell you how annoyed, how terribly worried, I am about this," said he. "I ought never to have allowed you to come in that canoe. I should have sent you with the others. I didn't know the lakes well enough to risk taking you down in such a gale."

"Don't worry," she replied. "It might be a lot worse."

"Can't you take off your shoes?" he besought humbly. "I'll go—"

"You will do nothing of the sort," she interrupted. "What is the good of your getting any wetter than you are? You are as badly off as I am. My feet will soon dry here. I'll stick them in front of the fire—see?" She thrust out a foot, shod with tan kid. "My shoes are done for! They were idiotic ones, anyhow, to wear on an expedition of this sort. They have almost gone to pulp"—with a little laugh—"and if I once got them off they'd never go on again."

"Why do you women wear such silly things on your feet?" he growled. There was relief in venting some of his sympathy for her on even an inoffensive pair of shoes.

"Pure vanity made me wear them," she said confidentially. "They were my best and prettiest." She did not add, as she truthfully could have added, "and the only pair I have." Mollie had not bought her summer outfit of shoes before the crash came.

"We'll have to tramp it when the day dawns," said he morosely, "unless they send to look for us to-night. But they'll probably think we've found shelter in some farm-house or shanty."

"The men know there is no farm or shanty this side of MacDonald's," retorted the lady. "I'm hungry," she said suddenly. "You've not looked in that basket."

He was much relieved at this total change of subject, and promptly pulled the basket towards him. "Nothing but wet sandwiches," he said. "We can't eat such mush."

"Could n't we toast them?" asked the ever practical Mollie. "The fire's lovely. Get a bit of stick, Mr. Keane."

Billie Keane discovered that he could toast them—they were only soggy, not absolute "mush," as he had described them—and they managed to satisfy their hunger with them. Keane wished she would n't be so wondrously sweet and gay. He knew that if she kept on he could n't resist the impulse to tell her that he loved her; and he knew that she would be angry with him if he did. Oh, for a counter-irritant of some sort, to keep him from the fatal topic. "Is this the way to behave?" soliloquized he dolefully. "Alone with her—to annoy her—to spoil everything!" But he had to do something, to risk, perhaps ruin, the friendship he had so toilfully constructed in spite of her opposition. He blurted out: "I have been expecting to hear of your engagement to Jim Gordon. After I sent you that letter——"

"You have been expecting *what*?" she interrupted.

"To hear of your engagement to Jim Gordon," he repeated coolly.

"Oh, well, you can go on expecting," she returned, and her tone was not pleasant. The fire was low, so he could n't see her lip quiver. "Put some wood on, won't you?" she said quietly. He could tell from her tone that he had annoyed her.

"I suppose I may tell you that I think him very lucky."

"You need not tell me anything," retorted Mollie angrily. "I am tired—too tired to talk." She felt chilly, hopeless, and lonely, out there in the dark, listening to the mournful sound of the night wind and the patter of rain on the sodden carpet stretched on poles above her head.

Both sat still after that, gazing into the glowing embers, which purred loudly with the burning of the wet wood. Occasionally a tiny flame blazed up.

The hours passed slowly. When dawn broke, she was sleeping. Billie Keane looked at her tenderly. She seemed very young—like a child almost—as she lay still in the gray light. He stirred up the

jaded fire, and toasted a few more sandwiches. Mollie awoke presently, and they ate their makeshift breakfast in silence.

"I'm afraid there's nothing for us but to tramp it," he said despondently. "Do you think you can stand it?"

"Yes," said she succinctly.

"I wonder why you answered my letter as you did," he said suddenly—he was bold in the daylight.

"It was the only way to answer such a letter."

"But you might have been a bit kinder," he protested. "I said nothing at which you needed to take offense."

"You were at least truthful," she said coldly. "I suppose you were right to be that. But don't let's talk about it any more, please. The subject wearies me."

He turned away, and busied himself hiding the cushions and carpet under the canoe, and putting out the fire. There was not much danger of its spreading, but habit is second nature, and Keane had been too well trained to leave a fire burning in the woods. Then he collected the meagre supply of provisions that was left, and said genially:

"Let's be off."

She had tidied her hair, and washed her face and hands in the lake. "Do you know the way?" she asked.

"No, but I can travel all right by the sun," he replied, with more confidence than he felt. "But perhaps it would be wiser to wait here. They are certain to send, and——"

"No," she answered; "let us go on. We can keep along the side of the lake, where we can see them if they bring a canoe for us."

They travelled all that day, but found it impossible to keep along the edge of the lake, as the brush was too thick and the going too heavy. It was six that evening when they reached MacDonald's; and it was nearly seven when a wildly delighted Mr. Harriott almost danced a jig of rapture around the returned wanderers on the landing at Pride's Crossing.

"How did you get here?" he demanded, with agitation. "I sent the men back in a canoe, but they could n't find a trace of you. We were afraid you had been drowned."

Mollie laughed. "Not quite," she returned, striving to be cheerful. No one knew how glad she was that that long nightmare of a tramp through the woods in Billie Keane's company was over. Everything and everybody seemed hateful to her just then. "It's a poor game being a woman in the woods," laughed she. "One's skirts get so in the way."

Mr. Harriott did not heed her—he was giving instructions for the immediate preparation of refreshment for them—but Mr. Keane wondered at the unwonted bitterness of her tone. His tramp with her had

not affected his temper. "Why did the mention of Jim Gordon flatten her out so quickly?" Billie Keane asked himself; and he found himself utterly unable to answer the question.

## VII.

QUITE worn out with her exertions, Mrs. Arbutnot retired to her bed, where she spent two days in unprofitable reflection. Then she got up and dressed herself. Better the society of real people than that of ghosts, which made her miserable.

Yielding to an impulse, she took out the blue muslin dress, the ridiculous hat, and a bundle of letters. They were not many, and were all in the same handwriting. Some were not signed; others were. The signature was "W. B. Keane." She burned all the letters but one in the fireplace. She thought of throwing the muslin gown to the flames also, but could n't quite bear to do it. That gown was alive, to her.

When she went down on the veranda, she found Mr. Harriott there alone; and his loud lamentations on the subject of her pale cheeks and jaded appearance wearied her unutterably. He nearly drove her to rudeness by his ceaseless fussing.

She went to her room early—at about nine o'clock. Leta was in the sitting-room, writing letters. She announced her intention of sitting up late, to attend to some important correspondence, so Mollie went to bed.

The house was simply a straggling bungalow, and the girls' rooms were the only ones the windows of which did not open on the veranda. They were not very high from the ground, but that was no source of apprehension to the occupants, as burglars were practically unknown in that part of the world. Mollie had often wondered why Leta had chosen those rooms. There was something decidedly attractive to the older woman in having a veranda outside one's window. Leta, however, always laughed and said she preferred to be completely inaccessible, except by door, which one could lock.

Mollie fell into a profound sleep, leaving her light burning. She awoke hurriedly, startled by the sound of a man's voice. Then there was a noise as though some one were getting in at a window. Who could it be? What midnight marauder would want to get in their sitting-room?

Mollie wrapped her dressing-gown around her, opened her door softly, so as not to alarm Leta, and listened.

The electric light in the little hall was turned on, and as the door leading into the sitting-room was ajar, she could see that that apartment was illuminated, too. A man was talking in a subdued tone. It was—who was it? Who could it be at that time of night with Leta? She

knew Miss Harriott was there, for she recognized her laugh. The remembrance of Mrs. Haselton's remarks returned to her mind with annoying persistence. It seemed now as though there must be some truth in them, though at the time Mollie had thought that the woman had lied. Whom had Mrs. Haselton heard on the veranda? It was Leta who had suggested that bars be put up on the inquisitive one's window.

"Leta!" called Mollie. "Leta!"

For a moment there was silence; then Leta opened the door and came out. She wore a white evening gown—such as no one ever donned at Pride's Crossing, for there was no need of ball dresses in the woods.

"Hush!" commanded Miss Harriott in subdued tones. "Did we wake you?"

"Yes," replied Mollie; "of course. Who is in there with you?"

"Jack," returned Leta promptly.

"Well, Jack ought to know better," grumbled Mrs. Arbuthnot. She was relieved to hear it was Jack. For one awful moment she had thought it might be Billie Keane. It was true that the indifferent Mr. Keane took little notice of Miss Harriott beyond that of mere civility due from a guest to the daughter of the house; but he might—men have been known to do such things—have hidden his interest under an assumed air of coldness. "I'm surprised that Lord Taymouth comes here at this time of night," said Mollie sternly. "It looks as if he were not playing a part in a legitimate drama, but were——"

"Nothing of the sort," interposed Leta, still in that cautious whisper. "Do go to bed, Mollie! If the man a girl's engaged to does n't constitute legitimate drama, what does? What does?" She shook Mrs. Arbuthnot gently.

"He must go," said Mollie firmly.

"He's just going," said Leta, with easy assurance. "He wanted to see me in a ball gown, without all the cats about."

"We *cats* leave you alone with him very frequently!" exclaimed Mollie. "You could have worn that gown earlier in the evening. It's two o'clock."

"I know it. But some day, Mollie Arbuthnot, you'll know what it is to be willing to sell your soul for a man!"

"I may know it already," retorted Mrs. Arbuthnot, "but I would n't do it; for afterwards—he would n't want me."

"Are you going to stay here all night arguing about abstract situations?" demanded Miss Harriott. And Mollie fled. Soon she heard the window shut, and Leta moving in her bedroom.

"You'll not tell Jack how shocked you were?" said Miss Harriott pleadingly, before breakfast the next morning. "He would n't like it talked about."

"Bother him and his likes!" said Mollie. "What about you? What a goose you are! I did n't think you cared enough about him to plan to meet him in secret."

"Ah, you don't know everything!" She laughed, and looked so pretty that Mollie kissed her.

Mollie gave Lord Taymouth a rather cold good-morning. She was annoyed at the thought of his behaving in such an injudicious and inconsiderate way. To pay clandestine visits to his fiancée's private apartments at dead of night was a most questionable method of conducting an affair of the heart.

"Don't you sit up rather late?" she asked him as he carried her coffee cup around the table to her.

"Did we disturb you?" he said, with contrition. "I'm very sorry. Leta often lets me run in to say good-night."

"You take a long time," said his mentor sternly. "You'll have nothing left to talk about after you are married, I'm afraid. You are entirely too prodigal."

"We'll always have the newspapers to fall back upon," he laughed. "They are always with us. But, really, Mrs. Arbuthnot, I'm awfully put out. I would n't have bothered you for anything. It's too bad."

"But why on earth do you come in at the window?" she demanded.

"I don't, I assure you," said Taymouth. "I come in by the door."

"I thought I heard you scramble in at the window. That woke me."

"I opened the window—that woke you, perhaps," he corrected. "Leta complained of the heat."

"But it was so late," persisted Mrs. Arbuthnot. "About two."

"Oh, nonsense! It was much earlier than that, I'm certain," he asserted energetically. "You were probably so sleepy that you could n't see your watch. It was n't late at all—really it was n't. Mr. Harriott was still up when I left Leta."

Mollie said no more. She supposed that she must have been mistaken, and had imagined she heard him coming in at the window. She looked at her watch, and saw that it was not fast, and concluded that Lord Taymouth had the lover's proverbial disregard of time, and had not taken count of the hours. Anyhow it was none of her business.

The party at Pride's Crossing pursued an uneventful career for some time after this. Mollie strenuously avoided Mr. Keane. He talked vaguely of returning to Newport. He had many invitations to join house parties, where no girl would have treated him as cavalierly as did Mollie Arbuthnot. Yet he lingered, unhappy, at Pride's Crossing, for the chance of a word, even an ungracious one, from her. Mr. Harriott was delighted to have him stay so long, for Billie Keane's exclusiveness was well known to his host. Mrs. Haselton's intimation that Keane was staying on her account had not been swallowed by the



wily Mr. Harriott. He guessed that Mollie was the cause of this voluntary exile from the haunts of golfers and fashion, and felt that it behooved him to be up and arranging matters with that lady. Yet he did not fear Keane as a rival—Mrs. Arbuthnot was plainly indifferent to him.

The idea of making a brilliant marriage inflated Mr. Harriott with pride, as though it were a thing accomplished. It gathered charm from mere meditation. And why should n't he marry Mollie Arbuthnot? Leta was going to leave him, to go to England, and she probably would n't visit him very often. Why should n't he enjoy a calm promenade along the matrimonial road with a young and beautiful woman?

Filled with this brilliant idea, he sought out Mollie, interrupted a conversation between her and Mr. Vandever without even begging that gentleman's pardon, and walked her off to the lake. There he promptly proceeded to put his plans into execution. He at first talked indefinitely on the subject of his loneliness after Leta's marriage; then he wailed about the extravagance of servants, and the incompetence of even the best of housekeepers when not supervised by a mistress. He wanted to impress his audience with his vast wealth, but he could n't help but see that she was rather inattentive.

At last it occurred to Mrs. Arbuthnot that he was offering her either a home or a position as his housekeeper after his daughter left him. He seemed to require a caretaker.

"It's kind of you," she said, "but really I could n't come and look after your house for you, you know. What would people say if I did? You'd give rise to a scandal. You'll have to marry."

He was quite appalled by her air of cheerful unconcern, her want of understanding. "I intend to marry," said he pompously. "I want you to be Mrs. Harriott."

"You want me to marry you!" she repeated, aghast. "Oh, it's very good of you—you're extremely kind—but I can't marry any one. It's quite impossible. I would n't do at all."

"Now, my dear child," said he, striving to be reassuring, yet not fatherly, "think twice before you refuse the chance of your life. I want to marry you. I'm lonely—or shall be—and besides that—I will be quite candid with you—I want to get on in society, and in that you can be of great assistance to me. I'll not be a trouble to you. I'm fond of you, but there's no moonshine passion about me, and I won't irritate you with too much attention. I've plenty of money, and with your name and my fortune—and I'd settle as much on you for yourself as I'm giving Leta—we'd capture New York."

"Money?" repeated Mollie. "Money?" For the moment her intelligence was completely blurred.

Mr. Harriott thought her tone savored of acquiescence. "Yes," said he, with sublime content; "we'd get every one to our house—we could do anything. You're a Van Alstyne, and I'm one of the richest men in the States."

"Never," said Mollie firmly. "Never. You must buy some other name. You can't get mine."

Harriott started with astonishment; he had expected her to jump at the offer. Meantime Mollie was saying to herself: "What is the matter with me? Two men have offered me money; no man ever offered me his heart. I'm not worth even a battered heart. Have I the plague?" And then, to Mr. Harriott's chagrin, Mollie sat down on a rock and laughed and laughed, uncontrollably, hysterically. Her would-be suitor fled from the sound of that horrible, jeering merriment, which followed him as he dashed homeward over the rocks and through the bushes. Not till he seated himself on the veranda did the sound of the—to him—demoniacal laughter become lost to him.

Mrs. Arbuthnot threw herself down among the bushes and pressed the cool leaves to her aching head. This was the last stroke of fate's whip, and she felt shame, shame unutterable, for the way she had treated the poor man. But laughter was surely better than tears; one or the other must have overcome her, for the shock had been tremendous. He, too, had expected her to sell herself. As she lay still, she realized that Pride's Crossing was no place for her. She would have to go back to her flat.

Ashamed of her outburst, sick at heart because of the way in which Mr. Harriott had offered himself, Mrs. Arbuthnot dejectedly made her way back to the house. A little later she took one of the canoes, and paddled up the lake.

If Mr. Harriott had shown any real affection for her, she would n't have experienced the sickening sense of shame and disgust. But why should two men have expected her to play the part of Esau—to sell her birthright of love for a mess of pottage? What had she done to give rise to such an impression of her?

"And now to find work," thought she finally. "I've been a butterfly long enough. I'll consult Aunt Agatha, and join the ranks of the toilers."

### VIII.

WHEN Mr. Harriott was disquieted, and could not sleep, it was his custom to get up and busy himself about something—such as hanging pictures in his studio, for instance. He rather prided himself on the fact that no one in the house ever knew when he rose early; but by the time he had despatched a maid to fetch him a hammer, and summoned the butler to assist him in opening a case, only those heavily drugged with morphia could have slumbered in his vicinity.

Mrs. Haselton, wakened by the noise of her host's operations on the picture-case, rose languidly. She hated to be disturbed. Why could n't the man stay in bed and allow his guests to slumber in peace? She rang for her maid and her morning chocolate, and then gazed idly out the window. While she was looking, a movement on the edge of the distant lake caught her eye. A canoe was pulled up on the grass, and two heads protruded from behind the low bushes. She recognized Leta and—Charley Mitchell, the man for whom Mr. Harriott had such an aversion! What a noble opportunity had fate vouchsafed to this bored early worm! This was her moment. How she detested the need of art for her eyelashes and eyebrows! If only some benefactor of the human race would invent a permanent dye for them. It took her ten minutes to dress, omitting her bath, but not her paint. The canoe was still there when she looked out again, but the two people had disappeared. Hoping there might still be a chance of paying off some of the score she owed Leta for taking Charley Mitchell away from her the preceding summer, Mrs. Haselton seized her vinaigrette and hurried out to find Mr. Harriott.

The noise of hammering in the studio led to her quickly discovering his whereabouts. He displayed no surprise at her unexpected advent, but was plainly glad to see her. He had found her very much more interesting since Mollie refused him.

"How do you think this 'Nymphs' will look here?" he demanded. "And that Constable landscape there? The light is very good, is n't it? That suggestion of yours about the great mirror——"

"I've something to tell you," she interrupted, "and I'm afraid." She sniffed the salts. "Leta, your daughter, is down by the lake—with Charley Mitchell."

"What!"

"Run!" she cried excitedly. "You may catch them if you hurry! Oh, I'm so worried! Hurry, or you'll miss them! I felt that I ought to tell you. I saw them as I was dressing."

Mr. Harriott rushed out by way of the studio window, followed by the informer. But when they reached the lake they found no trace of Leta and Mr. Mitchell. If they had ever been there, they had discreetly vanished.

"I'm sure I saw them," said Mrs. Haselton.

"You must be mistaken," said he irately. "You——"

"I saw them," she interrupted him ruthlessly.

"Then where are they?" said he angrily.

"Why don't you go and see if she is in her room?" she demanded impatiently.

Mr. Harriott hastened back to the house. When he stood before the door of his daughter's apartments, he thumped on the wooden panels

with agitation. Suddenly the door opened, and there stood Leta. Her hair hung down, and she wore a dressing-gown. She looked like a pretty baby just awakened from sleep.

"What do you want?" she asked rather crossly; then more gayly: "Is your best picture ruined, or have you perchance received some alarming news? What on earth is the matter?"

Mr. Harriott staggered back against the wall. "I thought you were out by the lake," said he blankly—"out with that cad Mitchell! Mrs. Haselton told me she saw you and him together down there, from her bedroom window."

"Mrs. Haselton told you!" answered Leta contemptuously. "She's liable to say anything! How could I be out"—one little bare foot peeped from under the white folds of her gown—"like this?"

"There was a woman with him—who was it? Who is he hanging around here to see? I'll not have it!"

"I told Mollie you would be angry. Oh, I mean——" She stopped, as though confused, then went on: "I did n't intend to tell you!"

"Do you mean to say that Mrs. Arbuthnot was out there with him?" He was more angry than his daughter had ever seen him before.

"Are you so surprised? Don't be silly, Daddy! Why should n't she get up early to go out and meet an old acquaintance, if she wants to? You can't interfere with her friendships."

"Well, I won't have her friend about my place! I will not allow it! No, Leta, I'll not allow that man on the island!" he asseverated, his never pale countenance aflame with additional purple—that of wrath.

"You can't prevent her knowing him," said his daughter.

"Perhaps not; but I can request her to leave this house at once. No wonder she ridicules and despises a decent man."

"Now, Daddy, you'll be sorry for this after breakfast," said Leta, trying, but vainly, to quiet her irascible parent. "Don't say anything about it, will you?" she went on, with ardor. "Let me arrange things. Be quiet, won't you, dear?"

"If the Van Alstynes and their friends behave in this way, I'm glad they won't know me!" said he angrily. "She shall not stay here. I'll not have a woman in my house who meets a man of Charley Mitchell's reputation secretly!"

"Now, you keep quiet," said Leta, striving to subdue the storm she herself had evoked. "Let me manage things. Leave it to your own little Leta. Forget that Puritan conscience of yours——"

"It's my most precious possession," he interrupted grimly.

"But you won't say anything about it, will you, Daddy?" she

said coaxingly. "Just inform Mrs. Haselton that she made a mistake. Her eyesight proved defective—you can say that."

"I shall tell her she was mistaken, that will be sufficient," he answered, with annoyed importance.

But, once beyond the stern gaze of his daughter, he forgot her request, and related the truth—or what he believed to be the truth—to Mrs. Haselton. That lady, thus balked of her hoped-for revenge on Leta, immediately embraced the opportunity to revile Mollie. It was quite immaterial to Mrs. Haselton which of the two girls she succeeded in effacing from her host's good books. Of course she would have preferred to hurl Leta from the pedestal she occupied in her father's heart, but she trusted that the rope of time would effectually hang that young person, once they were rid of the scapegoat Mollie, whom Mrs. Haselton was very well aware that Mr. Mitchell did not come to meet. She knew Leta had lied, and she wondered how Mollie would rest under the burden laid upon her by her friend.

Mrs. Arbuthnot was in her dressing-gown, her hair hanging down, when Leta bounced in—a dishevelled Leta, her eyes full of tears, her hands trembling.

"Mollie, will you help me? Will you lie for me if it is necessary?"

"But surely it is n't necessary," said Mrs. Arbuthnot, smiling. "I hate lies—they require such an awful lot of explaining. It's much easier to tell the truth, really. But what's the matter? Has a former adorer turned up? Has Jack been asking inconvenient questions?"

"Don't joke!"—Leta's voice was sharp, shrill. "I can't bear it. Everything's the matter. You must back me up—you've got to. I'll be ruined if you don't."

"Then tell me what it is. How can I help you if you just keep on talking of ruin?"

"I told Daddy just now that you were out this morning with Charley Mitchell!"

"That was tactless of you"—Mollie's voice was provokingly calm—"seeing that I am not dressed. I was n't with Mr. Mitchell, and I have no intention of letting your father think I was. Why, I'd as soon think of going to meet a—a crocodile!"

"Mollie," Leta said in a tone of such dire anguish that the other woman was alarmed, "you must say—only *say*, mind you—that you were with him, if Daddy asks you. That Haselton cat got up early, and saw him out there, and she rushed out to Daddy and told him. He tore forth and found us gone——"

"Us!" said Mollie.

"Yes"—with impatience—"I was there, of course. Then the virtuous parent tears back to the house to accuse his daughter of perfidy, but he finds her in a night-dress, with a dressing-gown flung

over her shoulders, and her feet bare. He, of course, never thought I could wear a night-dress over my shirt-waist and other clothing. I just had time—I providentially saw her looking out—to climb in the window, pull off my shoes and stockings, and thus produce my alibi, when papa began a cannonade on my door.”

“You!” said Mollie. “What on earth were you doing out there with that Mitchell man? Don’t mix yourself up in his affairs, Leta. He’s just a beast.”

“I *am* mixed up in his affairs. Oh!”—with fretful petulance—“don’t stare at me! You freeze me when you look at me like that. I’m sorry enough, though not in the way you think. But this is no time to talk of that. Mrs. Haselton will insist that it was I she saw, and she may make them—Daddy and Jack—believe it. You’ve got to save me, Mollie! Listen!”—she spoke solemnly. “The old cat was right. I was out there with Charley Mitchell. We used to meet at night, but gave it up, because it was too dangerous; so we’ve met every morning at about four for some time. He was late this morning, however—he overslept himself—and Mrs. Haselton caught us. Now do you see why you’ve got to back me up?”

“You can’t care for that man!” Even to Leta, Mrs. Arbuthnot felt that she could not tell all she had heard concerning Charley Mitchell.

“I do care for him, Mollie. I love him. But that has nothing to do with it now.”

Mollie finished her toilet and went down to breakfast. She tried to assure herself that, being innocent, she did not care what Mr. Harriott said or thought; but she did care. Suppose the scandal should reach the ears of Billie Keane? He might believe it—might believe that she, Mollie Arbuthnot, had gone out at an unearthly hour in the morning to meet a man whose reputation was, to say the least, unsavory.

But she greeted the party with perfect calmness. Mr. Harriott found himself answering her general “Good morning.” After breakfast, Leta, who had remained in her room, sent a maid to request Mollie to come to her at once.

Mollie merely smiled when, as she was leaving to answer Miss Harriott’s summons, Mr. Keane said to her:

“There’s trouble brewing. Our host is unsettled. One would think he was carrying dynamite around in his pockets. He has been on the verge of an explosion all the morning.”

Mollie found Leta in a state of great agitation. She had been crying, and she looked plaintive, pitiful.

“Well,” said she impatiently, “what have you decided, Mollie? Are you going to ruin me? If you tell, I’m done for, forever. Are you going to let Daddy belong to Mrs. Haselton? She’ll marry him if

she can, and make him miserable. Of course she'd get him to disinherit me. Are you going to let Jack throw me over? He will, you know. For Daddy will think it his duty to tell him."

"Why don't *you* tell him?" Mollie wanted to know. "I would if I were you."

Leta shrieked. "Tell him! I'd sooner drown myself! Mollie, Mollie, just hold your tongue. Mr. Mitchell is n't here now. He—he did n't make love to me. You're thinking of his wife, I know. But he needed money, and I lent him two thousand dollars. He thinks of going to Brazil."

"To Brazil? Leta, you're an idiot! He'll go to New York, more like, and there he'll blackmail you. You gave him a check, did n't you?" Leta nodded. "I thought so. And you've written him letters that would incriminate a cardinal, if he had written them to Charley Mitchell. The future duchess in the hands of a man of that kind! It's a pleasant prospect, truly."

"I've not written him many letters."

"One will be enough," said Mollie.

"You wrong him. He is not——"

But Mollie interrupted her. "Was he here that night when you told me it was Jack?"

"Yes." Leta was desperate enough to be truthful.

Mrs. Arbuthnot had nothing further to say. She wondered if Mr. Harriott believed his daughter's statement, wondered if Billie Keane knew—now.

"When you got so annoyed and lectured me," remarked Leta, "I thought up a way to circumvent you. I believed that the dawn would be the safest time, and so it would have been if he had n't been late that morning. Thank Heaven I had Mrs. Haselton's window barred, or she would have been out before I could have gotten away!"

"What is to be done now?" demanded Mrs. Arbuthnot. She was angry—angrier than she had ever been before in her life. Up till now she had never been brought in contact with people who conducted affairs of this sort, and it was all most objectionable to her.

"You see now why you must back me up, must save me, don't you?" begged Leta.

"You mean that you want me to tell your father, if he asks me, that I was out with Mr. Mitchell this morning?"

"Yes"—with calm audacity. "That little lie won't hurt you. Daddy promised me he would n't tell any one. No one else will know. But, like all good women, you want to be *thought* good." Leta's voice was bitter. "If you tell the truth, you'll just ruin everything for me! My life, my future, my—everything! And all because you are not willing to allow one man to think you anything but immaculate!"

Mollie grasped Miss Harriott's hand with vehemence. "How do I know he will ask me?"

"Don't—you've hurt me! You've made my wrist all black and blue!"

"I beg your pardon"—Mrs. Arbuthnot spoke somewhat coldly. "Leta, do you mean to tell every one—this?"

"No; only Daddy and Jack."

"Well, then"—Mollie's voice was so low that Leta could hardly hear her—"I suppose you must. I'll pack to-day, and be off to-morrow morning."

"I suppose you think me a hateful coward," protested Leta, whose tears were abating. "But it really won't hurt you, and otherwise it would ruin me. Remember papa's pride in his Puritan ancestors! It would kill him to think that——"

"Oh, I quite understand," said Mollie coldly. "I must go away at once."

"And leave me here alone?" shrieked Leta. "You must n't! He—he might come back!"

"Well, then, you'll negotiate things alone if he does," answered Mollie crisply. Leta's childish behavior made her furious. "I'll hold my tongue, but I want you to promise, *promise*, that you will never have anything more to do with Charley Mitchell—never write to him, never see him. Will you promise?"

"Yes, yes, I'll promise," said Leta. "Anything you like, Mollie. Come in!"—as a knock announced that some one was at the door.

It was one of the maids, who bore the message that Mr. Harriott would be much obliged if Mrs. Arbuthnot would go to him in his studio.

"And yesterday," said Mollie, when the servant had departed, "Mr. Harriott would have been much honored if Mrs. Arbuthnot had deigned to receive him in her sitting-room! You've given me your promise, Leta?"

"Yes, but do be careful. I wish I could come with you. You dear, dear Mollie! You're the best friend a girl ever had! Don't betray me."

"Don't worry." (Leta shivered; Mrs. Arbuthnot's cold contempt hurt even her.) "I'll lie for you now. But I can't see that you have left me much choice."

Mr. Harriott rose when Mollie entered. She had no air of a guilty person coming to crave pardon. He gave her a chair.

"Will you explain this morning, Mrs. Arbuthnot?" he asked.

"I cannot," said she.

"If you could only tell me why you met him——" he went on.

"I fail to see that it concerns you," she said haughtily.

He hesitated; then, "You did go?" he asked.



"Leta told you so, did n't she?" Mollie answered, with aggravating coolness.

"Will you marry me now?" he blurted out. "I asked you once before, and you were not very gracious. Now I ask you again. Marry me, and we will forget this, and go to Europe."

"I could n't, Mr. Harriott"—she shook her head. "I told you so before. I don't love you, and I can't marry you."

"Well, then," he blustered, "I must request you to leave my house as soon as possible."

"Nothing could induce me to remain," said she. "I came to tell you so."

In spite of his prejudices, Mr. Harriott found himself admiring her, and he regretted her refusal. No social height would be unscaled if he had her for his wife.

"I could n't have things said——" he began uncertainly.

"Quite so," she assented, interrupting him ruthlessly. Then she laughed softly. It was so odd that any one could say things of that sort about her. The laughter died away as the door opened, and Mr. Keane—a pale, angry-eyed, not debonair Billie Keane—presented himself, without an apology for the intrusion.

"Why did you tell Mrs. Haselton that Mrs. Arbuthnot had been caught—*caught*," he repeated, with anger—"meeting Charley Mitchell?" His tone, though quiet, boded no good for Mr. Harriott.

"I'm going," said Mollie hastily, before Mr. Harriott could frame a reply.

"So am I—to MacDonald's this morning," said Billie Keane. "And, Mrs. Arbuthnot, I shall be glad to have the pleasure of escorting you to New York to-morrow."

Mollie was disturbed, but glad—Heaven, only, knew how glad. "Thank you, but I can't travel with you," she said. "You see, I can't afford to go in the Pullman. But if you're just on the train with me, that will do."

"I certainly shall not go in the Pullman without you," he answered. "I'll meet you at the station at half after eleven." Then he opened the door for her. "Now, if you will kindly leave us, I have a few words to say to Mr. Harriott. You may rely on me not to allow this vile calumny to be spread by this man or any of his guests."

What Mr. Keane said to his host no outsider ever knew. Mr. Harriott was silent and distraught for the remainder of the day. He began to fear that he had acted unwisely.

Mrs. Arbuthnot conducted herself just as usual during the whole of that—to Leta—interminable and detestable day. Miss Harriott was glad that her friend was going. She could not feel secure while Mollie remained at Pride's Crossing.

The only really happy person there was Mollie. Billie Keane had said that he did not believe that lie; he had—— Why, Mollie would have given away her most precious possession in exchange for the remembrance of Billie Keane's looks and words.

## IX.

THE long hours of the hot day dragged interminably.

Mr. Keane sat alone in the smoking-room of the private car which a peremptory telegram had summoned to take Mollie and him to New York. Every comfort that money could secure he had provided for her, but he would not annoy her by his presence. He unselfishly effaced himself.

He had admired the girl more than ever when she arrived at French Village station, accompanied by a fussing, self-reproachful Mr. Harriott. The latter felt almost faint when he reflected on the detestable truth: that he had practically turned a Van Alstyne out of his house. And for what? He had an uneasy impression that some one had made a fool of him. He strongly suspected that he had not heard the whole truth about that Charley Mitchell matter. He decided that he had better go to see his doctor in the near future. It was quite evident that he had something the matter with him—probably an enlarged liver. Nothing else could have so altered his usually cheerful and rational point of view. He felt sure that his health was seriously undermined.

When Mrs. Arbuthnot said good-by to Leta, she did not refer to the incident of Mr. Mitchell. Miss Harriott's self-reproaches and ardent thanks grated on her friend's sensibilities. She felt an almost uncontrollable impatience when Leta began to excuse herself, to try to palliate all the circumstances. Mollie managed to bear with apparent calmness the long drive in the automobile, with Mr. Harriott remorseful, Mrs. Haselton sneeringly triumphant, and Leta sometimes fitfully gay, sometimes morosely silent. None of these things made any impression on the scapegoat's mind, except one of boredom. None of these people mattered just then to Mollie Arbuthnot. Keane had said he believed in her; the world had turned bright with the joy of living.

When she parted from Leta at the station, the girl expressed a perfunctory hope that they might meet in New York.

"Tell the truth, Leta," said Mollie, with a little icy laugh: "you never want to see me again."

When the train came in, Mr. Keane gave her a hand to help her up the steps of the car.

"But I'm going in the ordinary day coach," said Mollie.

"Oh, no, you're not," laughed he; "you are coming with me, in

this. I'm a director of this road, you know. I telegraphed for this car for your especial benefit."

She made no protest, she did not argue; she settled herself with books and papers in a corner and shut her eyes. She was strangely exhausted. She had drawn on her courage for too long not to feel weary.

Keane spent a few moments with her, fussing about. He said he admired her pluck; she was so brave, so unselfish.

"Do you think I don't know what you have done?" he asked. "You must n't let it go too far. If Harriott—or that woman—talks, you will have to tell."

"Tell!" cried the girl. "No, I can't tell. I promised not to."

"It's wonderful how a man of Mr. Harriott's type is influenced by a woman like Mrs. Haselton," said Mr. Keane easily; but she did not make any answer to his remark.

Though they lunched and dined together, they both felt that there was something horrible, menacing, portentous, separating them. Mollie shivered, though the day was warm. And an awful, intangible bar lay on Billie Keane's soul. He felt as though there was a hand of ice clutching his heart.

Keane realized that his way and Mollie's were as separate and distinct as fire and water. He loved her and wanted her for his wife, but he had vowed to serve her as faithfully as ever knight served fair lady, without any hope of reward. He was quite firmly convinced that she loved Jim Gordon. Well, he meant to play the fairy godfather, and bring Jim Gordon to her. He also intended to see her through any trouble which might arise through Mrs. Haselton's fondness for gossip. It was more than a woman of her temperament could resist, he well knew, this chance of relating all the scandal about the popular—and what a woman of Mrs. Haselton's class would call prudish—Mrs. Arbuthnot. The theme was one which would surely delight Mrs. Haselton.

As the train jerked and groaned onward, Mollie rather ruefully contemplated her future. Only pride kept her from weeping. But she was never a coward, and she faced her thoughts as determinedly as she had faced Mr. Harriott. There was good stuff in Mrs. Arbuthnot—better even than Keane knew. She realized that Mr. Keane had merely championed her cause as he would have championed that of any woman under the circumstances. She told herself that she could make no plans until she had heard from Miss Van Alstyne. Mollie had asked no help from that lady—only a little advice as to her future course.

They arrived in New York early in the morning. Keane found her a carriage, pressed her hand with kindly preoccupation—no doubt induced by his engagements and business interests—and hurried away.

It was hotter than anything she could ever remember, but then to Mollie the climate of New York in July had been as unknown as that of the North Pole. The horses crawled along like weary flies; the streets were deserted except by the obliged-to-remain brigade, to which she now belonged.

Her flat was cool—at least, it was cooler than the street. The man in the elevator was plainly surprised to see her. No wonder—it was too hot for any one—any one of the class to which Mrs. Arbuthnot seemed to him to belong—to be in town. They brought her up her mail, which contained a letter from her great-aunt. Mollie read it and reread it. She was appalled! She was beginning to realize the price she would have to pay for the lie she had told. This was the epistle:

MY DEAR MOLLIE:

It is all very fine for you to come to me for advice after you have got yourself into such a scrape with that Mitchell man. Mrs. Haselton wrote the particulars to Mrs. Dunlop, and she told your cousin Mary, with whom I am staying. I think you had better get out of the fiasco in your own way. I don't feel at all inclined to bother—now. You have been very foolish. The only thing you can do is to live it down somehow.

I am sorry to hear about that trustee of yours. I never did approve of your marriage with Mr. Arbuthnot, as you know. Death-bed marriages are too much like death-bed repentances; not much good. You ought to marry now—any one. You were very stupid to go to those people, in the first place, and still more so to mix yourself up in their affairs. Mrs. Haselton is a dreadful person. How could you stay in the same house with her? I told you so.

Your affectionate aunt,

AGATHA VAN ALYSTINE.

P. S. Please do not make the ridiculous statement about being a housemaid. You can surely find something better than that to do.

Mollie tore the letter up into infinitesimal pieces and stamped on them. She could n't resist this ebullition of passion; but she laughed at herself later for having given way to it.

"Gravity would be more becoming to me, I suppose," she said to herself. "It is so like Aunt Agatha to abuse Mrs. Haselton, and yet to believe what she says!"

Her cheerful mood did not last long. Pessimism swamped her smiles. Yielding to a sudden impulse, she arrayed herself in the old blue muslin gown and put on the blue hat. How nice they looked! Just for one afternoon she would let her thoughts wander back. Hard work is the best producer of oblivion, and in search of that she vowed to go the next day.

Alarmed by the quick ringing of the electric bell, she ran to open

the door. When she got there she was as surprised to see her visitors—Billie Keane and Mr. Gordon—as were they at the appearance of the girl, clad as she was.

“Come in!” she said gayly, not in the least showing how ardently she wished she was not wearing that dress and that hat. She undid the strings and threw aside the offending headgear, despite Mr. Keane’s protest.

“Where have you been all this time, Mr. Gordon?” asked Mollie.

“Working,” he answered. “Regularly submerged in work. I’m making money.”

“How splendid!” she said cheerfully. “But why have n’t you been to see me?”

“I don’t exactly belong to the butterflies,” explained Gordon. “Besides, I am going to be married next month.”

Billie Keane jumped up and placed himself between Mollie and the future bridegroom. Gordon should n’t be allowed to see her face. “Why did n’t you tell me?” he demanded hotly. “Do you think I would have bothered to bring you to call on Mrs. Arbuthnot, if I had known I was escorting a lovesick bridegroom?”

“Do you fear the laceration of my heart, that you are acting as a screen for my countenance?” laughed Mollie. It never occurred to her that that was precisely what he did fear. “Sit down, Mr. Keane. Let me look at him. How dare you scold him? This converted bachelor needs kind and gentle encouragement.”

“What a lot of courage she has!” thought Billie Keane. “She’s really prostrate with grief, her heart’s broken—why, she must have put on that old dress just to remind herself of those days—and yet she can laugh!”

“Can’t you both dine with me to-night?” asked Jim. “She’s away, you know. I only see her on Sundays now.”

“I will, if Mrs. Arbuthnot agrees to come too, so as to protect me from your rhapsodies,” said Keane hurriedly. “I won’t face an evening alone with you let loose on the subject of a blissful future.” Anything was better than to leave her to dine alone after this, thought he.

“Of course I’ll come,” Mollie said. “It’s unconventional, but—yes, I’ll come.”

“It is seven now, and I am hungry,” said Jim.

“I’ll be ready in a few moments,” she said. “I could n’t wear this old thing, you know.”

“How gay she is at the mere sight of him!” pondered Keane wearily, after she had left them. “I’m glad, old chap, that I rooted you out,” he said aloud. “This matrimonial business of yours has somewhat disappointed me, I confess; but still——”

He stopped, for Mollie had returned to pick up her hat.

"You're looking very sweet in that frock," said Billie Keane. "Just as nice as you did at the camp that summer."

"You never thought that I—Mollie—looked nice," said she.

Keane gasped at this bold declaration. What did she mean? "Yes, I did," he said blankly.

"Hurry up," said Jim callously. "I'm hungry—breakfasted at seven."

Mr. Keane could have thrown his newly discovered friend out of the window with calm satisfaction.

The dinner, at a quiet little restaurant, was a great success. It was nine before it was over. Then, after a few words with Jim Gordon, whose wedding Mollie promised to attend, Mr. Keane assisted Mrs. Arbutnot into a hansom, got in himself, and told the driver where to go.

"We're going for a drive," Keane said quietly to Mollie, as if it were a habit of his to do so between nine and ten o'clock on a summer evening.

"It's getting cooler," she announced quietly. Her gayety had deserted her with her last glimpse of Gordon.

"Yes," he said. Then there was silence.

"I'm going to make a fool of myself," said Keane finally.

"Oh, don't!" laughed his companion. "I'll take it for granted that you know how. It will save you so much trouble."

"See here," he retorted. "I can't say it any other way—you won't give me a chance to talk to you. I love you. I've loved you ever since that summer in camp."

"Ever since I refused you!" said she scornfully.

"Before you refused me," he corrected, with sturdy insistence. "Why, Mollie, I told you so. I love you—there—and I mean to marry you, whether you like it or not."

"You make me the same offer you did then?"—she spoke sharply.

"Yes; why not?"—bewildered.

"To settle twenty-five thousand dollars on me, and——"

"Yes, if you like," he said stiffly. "You want the money, of course, but——"

"Well, I don't, then," she answered crossly. "But that was what you said, and I say again: 'No!'"

The kind dark enveloped them. He put his arm about the girl's waist. "Tell me," he said commandingly: "do you care anything at all about me?"

"That letter," objected she. "You loved me? You never said so."

"I did say it in my letter," he asserted doggedly.

"I've kept it," she answered coolly. "I know it by heart, any-

how. You said: 'After the talk we had on the subject, you cannot be surprised to hear that I do not pretend to have any affection for you.'

"Good heavens! that was n't what I said," he interrupted her.

"Yes, it was. I can show you your letter. There is more: 'I fancy you won't mind that,'" she went on quoting calmly; "'for I will settle twenty-five thousand dollars on you when we marry, and you can do as you like with it. Let me have an answer as soon as possible, as I wish to have everything arranged at once.'"

"Stop!" he cried. "It's a hideous nightmare! Do you mean to tell me that was in the letter you got?"

"Yes," Mollie said.

"I see it all now," he replied. "I sent you a letter I meant for Muriel, my half-sister. She and I—perhaps you've heard—never hit it off, and she knew—of you. She wrote to reproach me because I had n't settled any money on her—she was totally dependent on me. I wrote her that letter in answer to hers—she had said things that were rather brutal. Then she telegraphed me that she was coming on. I thought I had destroyed the letter, but I must have torn up yours by mistake. Mollie, can't you forgive me?"

"You offered me money. It was just after my father's death, and I was poor, but—not for sale!"

"Good heavens, no!" he answered, quite appalled by this awful suggestion. He had spent an illuminating evening, on the whole. She did n't care for Jim Gordon, putting aside the fact of Jim's engagement to another girl. Mollie Arbuthnot was plainly not suffering from a broken heart on his account. Mr. Keane determined to get at the truth of things—to win everything or lose all. "Can you forgive me?" he asked humbly.

"Why did you bring Mr. Gordon to see me?" demanded Mollie.

"Because—don't be angry—because I thought you cared for him. You acted so strangely whenever I mentioned him to you—you seemed so embarrassed. I misunderstood you. I know it now."

"Then he had n't told you? I feared once or twice that——"

"Told me what?" inquired Keane eagerly.

"He knew—that summer in camp—that I loved you," she said quietly. "He found it out, being," she added airily, "temporarily afflicted that way himself about me. He has quite recovered from it, however. We laughed about it to-night."

"You said Jim knew that you loved me *then*," he said. "Is it all past and gone, Mollie? Is there no trace of the old feeling still?"

She wrenched herself away from his arm, and said: "Aunt Agatha refuses to have anything more to do with me. She has heard Mrs. Haselton's story."

"So that woman has talked, has she?" he said, in a tone that boded ill for "that woman." "I don't care if your aunt has heard fifty Haselton stories."

"People will believe it—they'll say you married me out of pity."

"I am so miserable, you might marry *me* out of pity," he retorted. "Do you love me, Mollie?"

"How can I say whether I do or not?" said she. "You see, things are——"

For once wise, Billie Keane took her face between his hands and whispered: "Don't say it. If you let me kiss you, I'll know." And there in the dim starlight of the summer night he kissed her lips. "Now you're mine!"—he spoke with triumph. "Oh, what a horrible dance you've led me! But I've got you, Mollie—I've got all my world here now."



## THE JUNGFRAU

BY KATHARINE LEE BATES

IT is the hour when yon stern height  
 Puts on her bridal grace,  
 The hour when day's departing light  
 Steals to her lonely face,

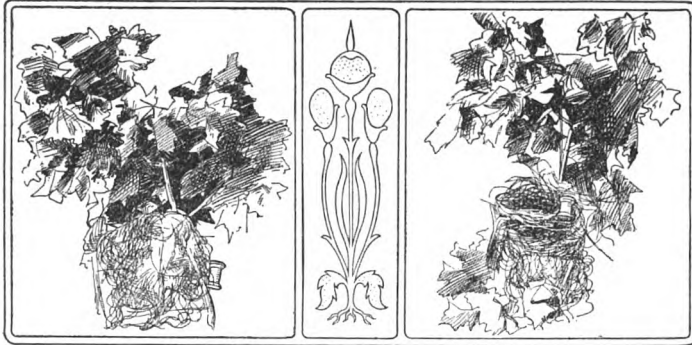
And touches every rugged line  
 With such ethereal gleam,  
 The crystal mountain stands divine,  
 A maiden in her dream.

White, white, as white as seabird's breast  
 That flies against the foam;  
 Yet still her love is unconfessed,  
 The wistful Sun sails home;

But when at last his golden boat  
 Hath faded on the dim  
 Mysterious purple seas remote,  
 Her blush remembers him,—

Blush that betrays her wonted mood  
 Of cold, ungentle snows,  
 The secret heart of maidenhood,  
 A pure, impassioned rose.





## THE FIFTH SUMMER OF OUR KENTUCKY CARDINAL

BY JENNIE BROOKS

Now at last the day begins  
In the east a'breaking;  
In the hedges and the whins  
Sleeping birds are waking.

**T**HE first birds to announce the opening of a new day, summer after summer, were invariably our rare cardinals. When dawn trembled between dark and gray, and trees and birds were scarcely distinguishable, sweet awakening calls fluted from the tree-tops. "Whoo-oo-oo!" the male begins very softly, very sleepily, very slowly, as if taking a long breath, stretching himself, and wondering if it can possibly be time to wake up! A moment's silence and he tries it over again. "Whee-u!" Two notes this time in sighing tones. Another rest (probably napping) and back he goes to the first note: "Whoo! Whoo!"—a trifle louder now, as if he were trying his voice and was hardly yet awake or his throat clear enough to sing. It is very like human folk begin the day, with a stretch and a yawn and a general rallying of forces that will enable them, also, to start it in cheerful fashion. "Whee-u! Whee-u! Whee-u!" Now he has gotten as far as three notes, and all around him are little birds waking up and answering in joyous twitterings. The robin seems the first to respond, and in a drowsy tone that tells its

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own story, that he can scarcely believe the short night is over, and while he is civil enough to answer the cardinal's call, he is yet inclined to grumble at this early bird. Other birds instantly follow the robin's chirp, and, cheered by the chorus he has called into voice, louder and louder rings the cardinal's song. "Whee-u! Whee-u! Whee-u!" he emphasizes with astonishing rapidity six, eight, ten times, even *twenty* (for I count), then adds an admonitory "chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck!" in a lower key. Throwing his voice back to the high-notes, he pours them out so fast that the music holds an undercurrent of trills rippling between the louder tones of his song.



We *heard* them in the maple trees that fifth summer, it is true, but content we must be with the lilt of their song and the flash of their wings in the early spring days, for, again with reason, the *first* nest was made under the eaves of my neighbor's tiny back porch, and our intimacy with them—*my* intimacy—seemed at an end. But a little patience, only, was necessary, and all things righted themselves, and the fifth summer wherein my persevering cardinal made her *eighth* and *ninth* nests of thread held as much of interest as had the preceding summers.

Also, I hasten to state in their defense that it was no fickleness of mind that sent them a-home-making in strange places. It was neglect of their wants and their ways—but not by me or mine! In the fall of the year, following their fourth summer, the big, white, vine-embowered house was leased—leased to a bird-man, who, deep in the study of bird-books, bethought himself not at all of the friendly little feathered folk slipping about beneath the leaves, waiting only an encouraging crumb or piece of suet to woo the heart out of him with their pretty ways.

Old Dave's ("King David's") comment was justified. It was this. When I told him the place was rented he gave no thought to what might befall the property, but emphatically groaned:

"Um-um! Yaas-um! I bet dey don' tek no such keer o' de buhds as yo' all and yo' all's mutheh done!"



At Christmas-time, the snowy days of Yuletide, I went down to the lonely old house, for the renters were off a-merry-making!

The half-shell of cocoanut swung empty in the bleak wind. No Christmas cheer for winter birds, so I cracked and pounded my fingers and the nuts I had brought with me for old sakes' sake, and the feast

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was prepared. An investigation the day following showed guests had been at the board. The shell was empty! But between Christmas holly and the lilacs stretches a long gray gap, and when, in the greening days of spring, I came into my own again, the garden was desolate without the chattering gossip of nests a-making.

April, with her shadows and her shinings, went swiftly by, trailing in her foamy wake a very warm and rosy May that, with languid touch, brought summer flowers into swiftest bloom, and—who knows?—in the home-loving heart of that cardinal stirring into life certain vagrant memories of days and years gone by!

In any case, back she came, to the garden, to me, mayhap with thought of the white-capped "friend of all the birds," so many years familiar in the window-seat.

Into the Virginia-creeper one morning swung my cardinal as I sat on the porch, and, glimpsing me, showed unmistakable signs of delight and surprise. Such flirts and flutters of importance! Such chirpings—as if to say, "Why, you've got back again!" as she recognized my whistle. I hardly dared think she had come to stay, but it proved true, and great was the rejoicing on all sides, for she had been a tenant much loved.

"King David," black, good, benevolent, who, notwithstanding royalty, cuts my wood, carries water, makes all my paths straight; "Jim," the grocer's boy; the "Coal-oil-man," by whose light we all go to bed; Mary, the once tender care-taker of the Friend who is away—all congratulated themselves on a renewed acquaintance, and a general jubilate was sung.



Promptly she began her *eighth nest of threads* (though the young of the first nest of the summer were but two days out of it), falling into the snare I laid for her without an instant's hesitation, and, to tell you the truth, the male bird, with the utmost assurance, hurriedly brought all the family to my garden for rearing, a wide flower-bed of loose loam yielding more succulent worms than the newly sodded lawn of my neighbor.

If the male would not assist in home-making, he certainly redeemed himself in fostering his offspring, for he "mothered" them assiduously and was oftentimes at his wits' end when, feeding one, the others besieged him starvingly. The female paid no heed to any dilemma he got into, but thriftily wove her nest of cotton thread again in the woodbine, again in the same old place, and whenever the male could elude his charges he would fly into the vines, zig-zagging to the top and peering out at me, an interested student, sounding from time to time a threatening note. Correction was in

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store, but he graciously postponed administering it, giving me one more chance to mend my ways and leave his domestic affairs alone!

The second brood—three birds (of the fifth summer and eighth nest of threads)—was soon following about with the half-grown birds who yet demanded food from the discouraged father, and who with *six* at his heels found no time for morbid introspection as he flew from one to the other, wildly distraught, a typical “old woman who lived in a shoe”!

With industrious haste, the female was eagerly ready for nest number 9! And if ever a bird was enwrapt with her own artistic ideas, she was the one. The use of the thread gave her three times the work, and I hope you quite understand that cardinals are not *weaver-birds*, and have never been known to use thread in their careless nests. I had really begun to wonder if this artistic female made the *third* nest each summer for the purpose of holding a third lot of eggs, or if she conjured up the third batch merely as an excuse for further fussing with those fascinating threads! Again, however, she used a tremendous quantity—one hundred and fifty yards—draping the honeysuckle (for she built again at the end of the veranda) with airy festoons.

To tell you of her further domestic affairs would, perhaps, seem a repetition, but I do assure you it is not. Each nesting-time reveals new traits. It's like a new family moving in! She wove a wondrous fabric—singing, whistling, gay as could be! During incubation she showed the same old confidence. Three youngsters soon appeared, very small, very pink, bringing with them voracious appetites. In early dawn they were awake, and until night darkened down kept the old birds feeding them, with but short intermissions for sleep—the other young ones at last “fending” for themselves.



In the *third* summer, and also in the nest above noted, two serious accidents were barely averted. The male bird, in his eagerness, one day could not brook so much instruction on the part of his careful spouse, and, without giving her his morsel, into a gaping mouth he quickly thrust a worm, and as quickly the bird strangled on it, almost going into spasms as it “stuck.” With an angry chirp, the mother bird came to the rescue, and, reaching into the throat of the tiny one, she seized the obstruction firmly, and instantly withdrew it. The male watched her with the silliest air of astonishment, as she masticated the worm and then gave it to another small bird. However, even *she* was liable to blunder, for in the rearing of this last nestful I watched her feeding them one day, when she brought to them a large

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bumble-bee from which she had torn the wings. This clumsy morsel she thrust into a wide open mouth. It was too much for a mouthful. The bill of the tiny bird was held firmly open as if gagged, he could not swallow the bug! He tried and struggled and stood up even, but down it would not go! I went close to see the outcome, crying out, "Well, you've choked him!" But the mother showed little alarm, only intense watchfulness, as her unhappy offspring continued to struggle, and finally with a big and almost expiring gulp down went the bumble-bee, and away went the female for more provender. But in every nestful the father must watch how the thing was done, and, having paid strict attention, was then permitted to do a little feeding on his own account.

To the nest the male would always come in an excited rush, and with such an air of having just the tidbit this time that would answer, but into the mother's mouth it must go, and she, after turning it over two or three times, would thrust it into the gaping mouths of the baby birds—first one and then another. And though the female sat on the edge of the nest awaiting the arrival of the male with his burden of food, and between them were gaping mouths reached blindly up, this well governed husband always, but the once, humbly gave to the mother his provender and store, looking attentively and admiringly into the nest as his better half administered the food according to *her* light as to how children should be nourished.

Neither was milord allowed to give them to drink. The female invariably visited the yellow crock we kept filled with water in the shadow of the leaves just below the nest, and it was a thing he greatly desired to do, watching the mother-bird wistfully as she flew back and forth, satisfying the thirsty throats!



These birds also were soon soon ready for flight, and their actions and preparations were most interesting and beautiful. All day long from early morning the little birds were stirring about, always crowding, pushing each other, and hopping up onto the edge of the nest by turns, and "elbowing" their way back into the over-full nest. The nest proper (without counting the thread) was extremely small this last time, and the birds looked far too little to be going about by themselves. The two parent birds kept close watch all day, one of them ever hanging over the nest, not one moment leaving it alone; one sitting on a twig close by, until at two o'clock in the afternoon the first flight was made, not, however, until the small fledgling had long sat on the nest's edge preening his feathers, looking about him and stretching himself, and trying each leg, to see if it were strong enough to

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stand on. Much time also was given to preparing themselves, oiling the tiny feathers, picking at the small wings, and spreading them to their fullest extent.

It was a funny sight, this making of a toilet to appear in the world, and instinct was strong when it taught them what would be needed, and I am sure the plentiful supply of oil used on their feathers saved the lives of the owners that night. Out, then, hopped the first and strongest of the birds. Hurrah for this green old world!—tho' a fellow may be a trifle tottery about the legs! How he blinked, and clutched, and hopped uncertainly from wire to wire, until he had threaded his way to the top of the piazza (the nest had been within reach). Followed him the second, also balancing himself on the slender wires and climbing up and up, a little round bunch of down, among the vines. Two were safely away when the last and tiniest one essayed the trip. Repeatedly he climbed out of the nest and toppled back. He was too little, his feathers too few, and he was very weak, but he was full of pluck. Finally he managed to cling to the edge of the nest. Then after a long rest, and a dazed look about him, he hopped into a flowering branch of honeysuckle. This was fine, much pleasanter than that stifling old nest; but, my stars! how shaky his legs were! He teetered back and forth, trying wildly to hold his balance, but generally toppled entirely over, on the *outside* this time, catching himself, in his fall, on a lower twig, and then hurrying back into the nest again, to settle down in great apparent comfort—and very glad he was to be safe home. He would rest awhile, then do it all over again. Finally he stayed out for good, and the remainder of the day three diminutive bunches of dove-colored feathers were constantly scurrying up and down the trellis. By dusk two of them had flown across the road into a low green bush of thickly springing young locusts near the campus. The other, the weak one, was sitting safely on a twig close to the nest. After tea he too was gone. As we started out for a stroll, eying askance the black storm clouds overhead, our neighbors called, as we passed, "Here is one of your family running about in the grass." The weakest one of the young red-birds! I captured him, hurrying back home through the rain, much perturbed in mind as to what we should do with this chap. I concluded to put him in the nest, hoping the mother would come to him. In he went, and into the house went I for dry garments. The night grew darker, and the storm wilder, and I continued to worry about the wee one; out I finally went and found that risky young bird out also—out of his nest and sitting there on a twig close to it all alone in the big dark. "Well," said I impatiently, "you will be drowned if I leave you here alone. Over across the road you go into the locust bush. Maybe all your family is there;" and, grasping him, much

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against his will, I plunged through the rain and firmly established the little fellow in a snug place in the close foliage. A wild tempest raged all night, and morning broke to find birds of all kinds drowned by hundreds. In another part of the town, where there was a black-birds' roost, they were blown to the pavement, beaten down by the rain, and in the daylight *shovelled* up and carried away in basketfuls. Robins, sparrows, all flew in wild affright against the doors of houses, and if these doors were opened, dashed in to safe shelter from the storm. What marvellous Providence, then, protected the fledglings?

I had not slept for dread of what might happen to the red-bird babies, and for fear I did not do the right thing, and with the sun's first rays I hurried out to the locust bush, to find it radiant, all green and shining, fresh and fair, and, preening themselves with utmost nonchalance in the warm sun rays, sat three tiny birds—all comfortable and cozy under the softly waving leaves! My heart rose cheerfully up into my throat, and the old birds from the low overhanging branches of the maples exchanged congratulations with me.

All winter the female and her mate came at times to the house, to the window-sills for crumbs, for seed, for suet, for corn-bread, for corn, bringing with them very often the young birds that we had watched throughout the summer and autumn, turning from grays and browns to scarlet and reddish browns, according to their gender. I often wondered what they thought, these youngsters, as they caught their reflections in the glass bowl of water where they daily drank and bathed. Their first acquaintance with themselves was made in soft dove-colored garments. Now each day saw a deeper tint of scarlet on the wings, the long tail feathers also growing scarlet, crests rising on their active little heads, and, positively, they had an outraged air as if they would like to cry out, "Well! what if we *are* undergoing this curious and unaccountable transformation?" and all the time half-scared themselves at what they could n't understand, and, like the little old women whose petticoats were cut off as she slept, they were not quite sure "if I be I." Such a ragged, frowsy-looking fellow as my Lord Cardinal also became when the leaves turned brown and his feathers grew fewer. He even seemed surprised at himself (for he could not miss his reflected vision in the bowl of water) as he hopped about with ragged crest all awry, and feathers impoverished, glaring haughtily at us, as though he dared us to laugh. No more pride in his splendid raiment, no more flaunting of bold colors in the face of modest birds, for he himself had suffered from the haggling of time and domestic affairs.

Instead, he wore the air of an old roué,—reckless, abandoned, ludicrous in the extreme; but as winter waxed old, new feathers replaced his tatters, and, to our joy, he began again to shine resplendent.



# LADY TOMMY

BY OWEN OLIVER

IT always annoys me when people and newspapers style me "a self-made millionaire." It is true that I have made a million by my own exertions; but in other respects I do not admit that the title describes me. I am not old, I am not immersed in business, I do not eat peas with a knife, or drop my h's, or boast of my riches; and I would not discredit my dear old father and mother by calling myself anything but a gentleman.

My mother died when I was twenty-one, and my father a few months later. For the next six years I lived on the interest of a few thousand pounds which he left me, and devoted most of my time to athletics. Then I went abroad and knocked about in wild parts for a couple of years shooting big game. On my return I wanted a little excitement of some kind, so I took to speculation, and speculated for four years with the most astonishing luck. My luck culminated in 1906, when I foresaw the general fall of securities a little sooner than most people; and at the end of the year I found myself a millionaire, and very puzzled what to do with my money.

I was still more puzzled what to do with myself, for the years which had made my fortune had robbed me of my friends. My near relatives were all dead, and I had lost touch with nearly all my old acquaintances. So, as I am a man "who loves his fellow men"—and women—I decided to make a fresh circle of acquaintances. Since I had to begin my social life afresh, I thought I might as well do so in high society, with a view to a political career.

That charming but impoverished old gentleman, Lord Aulderton, happened to be a fellow-director on two boards, and seemed to have rather a liking for me; so I asked his advice.



"I'm a bit lonely," I explained, "and I want to know people; and they might as well be good people. I want to get 'into society,' in fact. I suppose some one would launch me—at a price?"

I am afraid I had come to think that "price" governed everything.

"I dare say," he agreed; "but I would n't." I felt rather abashed for the moment; but the good old boy smiled and patted my shoulder. "I'll ask Broadlands to invite you there for Christmas as a friend of mine," he volunteered. "You'll meet plenty of good people there; but understand that I don't do it because you're a millionaire, but because you're a good fellow."

So I went to Broadlands Castle for Christmas. It was a fine old place, and there were a lot of fine "old" people there—including Lord Aulderton and his wife. She was a dear old creature and took a fancy to me and mothered me. She was especially careful to put me on my guard against match-making mothers who were anxious to secure a millionaire for their daughters.

"If a girl does n't want you for yourself," she advised me, "she is n't worth having. So mind you're not caught."

"I shall be caught—if I want to be," I said with a laugh. For I had come to the conclusion that I should like to settle down, and that I should prefer a lady of birth for my fellow-settler. My preference was n't merely snobbishness, or a desire for position. I found real ladies much more interesting to talk to than the ordinary sort, because they talked about things that interested me, instead of things that only interested them.

At the same time I did not want to be married just for my money; and I could not help feeling that the younger ladies and their mothers were more friendly to me than my personal qualifications deserved. In fact, there was no mother, with a daughter to marry, whom I could regard without suspicion; and only one eligible daughter—Lady Wilhelmina Gwendoline Ermytrude Hardery, generally called "Tommy." She was twenty and called herself a sportswoman. Lady Aulderton called her "mannish" and "fast." I did not agree with those terms, but I found her rather alarming. She could shoot and ride and skate and play billiards and use slang better than most men, and she drove a motor-car at forty miles an hour and shaved corners without turning a hair. In appearance she was tall and full-figured and fair, with golden-red hair, and very good-looking in a well-bred, supercilious style.

For the first few days she made a point of ignoring me, evidently considering me a parvenu—and perhaps as one to whom her mother would like to marry her! But my shooting and billiard-playing gradually extorted a little respect from her; and after she had seen me play football she deliberately made friends with me. I had given up

football for some years; but the younger fellows at the Castle were assisting the town in a match against the Royal Dullshires, and I volunteered my services. They looked upon my offer as a joke at first, but they altered their tone after a little practice together. I was, in fact, an old international, so naturally the rest of the players were scarcely of my calibre.

"Tommy" applauded my performance with great vigor; and when I had dressed and was going to walk back to the Castle I found her waiting for me in the motor.

"I've turned Leroyd out," she said, "because I thought your need was greater than his. I say, Mr. Graham, you're rather old for it. But I like your play!"

"And you're rather young!" I retorted. "But I like your impudence!"

"Then you like the leading feature in my character," she rejoined with a laugh. "So let's be friends; and you can call me all the names you like."

"Lady Wilhelmina Gwendoline Ermyntitude?" I suggested.

"You may call me Tommy," she offered. "You're old enough to be my father."

So we made friends and I called her Tommy, and played billiards with her before dinner, and ping-pong afterwards; and the next day she taught me to drive the motor (big-game shooting was nothing to it!), and we had five or six dances together in the evening. I found it very pleasant to have a chum again, and caught myself wondering whether it would not be nice to have this wild young creature about my "settlement"; but, on the whole, I decided that my regard for her had better be "paternal." From this standpoint I gave her several lectures, and found that, in strong hands, Tommy was not unmanageable.

Lady Aulderton regarded our friendship with undisguised disapproval, and after a few days she pounced upon me in a corner and administered a caution upon the subject of girls who married for money; though, she said, it was n't the girls' fault, so much as their mothers'.

"Your friend Tommy is a case in point," she observed. "She has a girl's heart—a very warm heart, in spite of her abominable ways. You may be surprised to learn that the 'ways' are a recent growth."

"No," I said; "I think I understand. Tommy is n't supposed to have a heart. So she lets the warmth out in—fireworks!"

"Her people would n't let her marry a poor man. So she is acquiring tastes to amuse her when she marries a rich one—as she certainly will."

"I am obliged for the warning!" I said savagely.

"Well," said Lady Aulderton stoutly, "I *do* mean it for a warning. I should be sorry to see unhappiness come to you—or even to Tommy. You may think me a meddling old woman, but I have no son of my own, and——"

"Dear Lady Aulderton," I interrupted, "I think you everything charming."

"A young man should learn to pay compliments," she said grimly, "and I don't mind your practising on an old woman; but I want to be serious. You are new to this sort of thing, and——"

"Oh!" I interrupted. "I think 'this sort of thing' goes on all over the world. I am not quite a guileless youth, Lady Aulderton; but you are very, very kind, and I'll be quite serious since you wish it. Seriously, then, I am not in love with Tommy, and I am quite aware that Tommy is not in love with me, but——"

"Ah-h!" She shook her head. "'But' has done more harm than any word in the language."

"Yes; the point is in the 'but.' *But* I would like to settle down and try the domestic life. It would be a change, you know, and I am fond of changes. I should prefer to marry a lady; and I *like* Tommy, and Tommy likes me. I think—I really think—I could manage the fireworks; and, do you know, I think the fireworks would n't mind being managed. She'd be a bright young thing in a lonely man's house. Seriously, that is how I think about it; and now what do you think, dear lady?"

"I think that you are a cold-blooded, calculating creature!" cried Lady Aulderton. "I hope you will marry Tommy and 'manage' her—poor child!—and be *very unhappy!* And I'm sure *she* will."

Then she swept away and made it plain for some time that I was completely out of her good graces.

The worse of it was that I was n't sure that I wanted to marry Tommy. I liked her very much as a companion, and I did n't want to lose her as such. But I thought that if I had been older, or she had been younger, I should have been satisfied to adopt her as a daughter; and I thought she would have been quite satisfied to be adopted. It was pretty clear that she did not want to marry me; but I feared that, if she did not, I should lose her companionship, and that she would be driven into marriage with some one who would make her very unhappy, and I was quite certain of one thing: that I would do a great deal to secure her happiness.

One day when we were walking by ourselves over the snow I spoke to her upon the subject.

"I say, Tommy," I observed, "I suppose you're going to marry some one some day?"

She nodded.

"And I suppose it will have to be money?"

"Unless you'll be a brick and help me," she said.

I was somewhat taken aback at this, even from Tommy. I suppose I showed my feelings, for she shook me by the arm and laughed.

"I did n't mean *you*," she said. "You vain man! Not but what I'd rather marry you than any one else, if I *had* to marry a millionaire; and if I did I should be jolly nice to you."

"And that would be 'jolly nice' for me," I said with a rather solemn smile. "But you evidently *don't* want to be 'jolly nice' to me; and I'm not sure that I want you to be—in that way. You see, Tommy, I look upon you rather as a big child; a naughty big child, who keeps on using slang after she's promised not to."

"I won't do it any more," she promised. "So you need n't rag me—I mean, reprove me!" She laughed. So did I.

"Well," I said, "I'm 'jolly' fond of you, in some way or other, Tommy; and I'll do my best to 'be a brick' to you. What do you want me to do?"

She took hold of my arm.

"I want them to take me home," she explained. "*Some one* is staying near there; and if I told him why I refused him I expect he'd run away with me. Do you see?"

"That would n't give me any great pleasure," I observed. "Still, as *you* appear to like the idea—and, upon my word, it's better than marrying a man you don't like—I'll do what I can to assist in your wickedness. But I don't see how I am to make them take you home?"

"First," she explained, "you must take a frightful—I mean a great—lot of notice of me."

"Don't I?" I inquired.

"I mean, you must do it seriously, not in a chaffy, elder-brother sort of way, like you do."

"Make love to you, in fact?"

"Yes. Will you? Pretend to, I mean, of course."

"All right. Am I to propose? Or pretend to propose?"

"No; but you must make them think you're going to."

"Very well. Mind I don't end by doing it!"

"You'd better not!" She laughed. "I might end by accepting you. Do you know I'm frightfully—I mean exceedingly—fond of you in a chummy—I mean a friendly—way? Honest Injun! Oh, dear! I can't help slang. I mean—*you* know what I mean, brother Freddie. I *am*!"

"And I am exceedingly fond of you, Tommy," I assured her—"fond enough to want you to have the man of your choice. Well? I'm to make them think I'm going to propose to you—and what then?"

"Then, when they think it's just coming off, you can say that you've lost all your money."

"Umph!" I said. "That would place me in rather an awkward position afterwards, Tommy."

"Then I'll do it. I'll tell mother that you've told me in confidence; and then she'll rush me off home like a shot."

"Umph! And then you'll run away—and repent at leisure—and blame it all on me."

"I'm not mean," she declared indignantly, "and—you won't have to repent for me!"

"No-o," I agreed. "Is he poor, Tommy?"

She nodded.

"Well, I'll do it—on one condition."

"I'll agree to it," she declared promptly. "You won't make any condition that is n't right."

"You promise?"

"Yes, I promise; and there is n't another person in the world whom I would promise blindfolded; not even *him*. So there, brother Freddie."

"Thank you, my dear. The condition is that you will let me help you both."

"Oh! But——"

"But I deserve a little compensation," I stated. "You see, I'm losing a very dear chum, Tommy; and if you believe in your brother you must let him behave like one."

She drew a deep breath.

"If we accept help from any one," she said, "it shall be you. Mr. Graham?"

"Yes, Tommy."

"I suppose—you're not—not—sacrificing yourself?"

"You mean—— Well, I know what you mean; but it does n't come into the question."

"But you've got to answer it," she declared; "and you're on your honor, brother Freddie."

I pulled my mustache thoughtfully.

"I think, Tommy," I said, "my affection for you was 'paternal'—but it *might* have slipped over the border line some day. It won't now; and I should n't wish it to, considering that you prefer some one else. So now it's settled."

"Yes," said Tommy; "but—you'll never know what a lot I think of you. I—I *will* give up slang and being horrid."

"You are never 'horrid,' Tommy," I said; "and now you're going to be delightful."

She was; and I knew that night that my liking for her *had* slipped over the border line! I believe it had always been on the non-paternal

side, but I did not know until too late. If I had n't been such a blind fool, I told myself bitterly, I might have gone on a different line and won pretty, wild Tommy. Anyhow, I decided, I had n't taken my opportunity; and she loved another man; and he might easily be a better one. So she should have my help to get him; and they should both have my help afterwards.

For the next few days Tommy and I were inseparable; and she grew quite a different girl—sweet and gentle and almost diffident; and when we were alone she opened her mind to me; and I felt like a traveller who had strayed into some wonderful white temple unaware.

"I like to tell you how I feel about things," she said, "because you have been so kind to me, and I think such an *awful* lot of your opinion; and I want you to remember me kindly for a little while."

"Indeed, Tommy," I said, "I shall; and for a long while." For the rest of my life, I told myself; and it was hard work not to tell her. But I vowed that I never would give her this pain.

Tommy was to have made the communication to her mother on a Tuesday evening; but in the afternoon, when we were motoring, she turned suddenly to me.

"We've had a nice time, have n't we?" she asked. "I shall never have such a chummy time again all my days!"

"Yes, Tommy," I said. "I'm sorry enough that it is coming to an end."

"Really?" she asked. "You're not saying it just out of politeness?"

"Most really," I assured her; and she clapped her hands and laughed.

"Shall we have another day?" she said.

And I snatched at the extra day like the drowning man prolonging his misery by catching at the proverbial straw.

We were very merry together that evening; and every one looked at us and smiled meaningly; and Lady Aulderton whispered to me when she was saying good-night.

"Forget about my warning," she said. "I think I was wrong, and you will both be very happy."

I did not answer. I felt that it was the last ounce on a nearly broken camel! For Tommy had entered into her part very thoroughly; and each pretty smile that she had given me that evening had been like a knife-thrust.

The following day was even worse; for in a moment of cowardly weakness I asked Tommy for one more day; and she granted it readily.

"I shall like it *so* much," she said. I felt like shooting myself that night and swore that it should be the last.

The next afternoon Tommy and I took a long walk together. We were both very quiet; and when we came to the last clump of trees on the way home we stopped with one accord.

"I shan't see you alone again," I said, "so let me say God bless you, Tommy. If ever I said anything with all my heart, it is that, my dear."

Tommy nodded slowly and turned away from me. She put out her hand to me backward, and I took it.

"Oh, *dear* friend!" she said.

"I hope that you will be very, very happy," I told her, "and that things will turn out as you wish. It is a rash step, but—I suppose you are quite sure about loving him, Tommy dear?"

She clasped her hands suddenly.

"Oh!" she said, "I daren't tell you; but I must. I thought I did—but I don't! I don't, I don't, I *don't!*"

And then she leaned up against a tree and sobbed.

"Then," I said, "you—you need n't go!"

"Need n't go?" She clutched at my arm. "You forget that we have—have made them all think——"

"No," I said; "I do not forget. You are sure that you do not love him?"

"Quite sure. I am quite sure *now* that I never did!"

My heart gave a great leap. If Tommy did not love him, why should she not marry me? And in time learn to change her sisterly affection—and even that was sweet—into something better? And how she would brighten the world for me!

"You don't love any one else?" I asked. "Do you?"

She hung her head. No one would have recognized the old Tommy in this shy girl.

"Yes," she said in a faint whisper. It seemed strange that so soft a sound could hurt so much.

"Then," I said with a sigh, "I can do nothing."

"You could n't do anything if I did n't," she said shakily, "could you?"

"I could have asked you to marry me," I told her. "But now—well, I can do something even now; and it's the only way out of the difficulty. You must say that I have asked you, and that you have refused me."

"That I—have refused you?" she repeated, as if she did n't understand. "Oh, Freddie! It—it would n't be true."

"We'll make it true," I said, clenching my hands fiercely. "Will you—marry me?"

Tommy clutched at her dress with both hands and looked at me; and a tear rolled down each cheek.

"Freddie," she said, "it is n't a real 'ask' because—because you don't mean it. I—I want to know—Freddie, *why* do you ask me to marry you? I mean—I mean—I know that you don't mean me to, but—oh, Freddie, I *must* ask you! Freddie, am I wrong in thinking that you are in love with me?"

I clenched my hands tighter than ever; fought myself; and won. Tommy should not sacrifice her happiness for mine, I decided; and she should not even have the pain of knowing that I had wanted her.

"No, dear," I said quietly; "not in that way."

She wiped her eyes steadily and looked at me; and then she took both my hands.

"Freddie," she said in a very soft, grave voice, "I will not risk your happiness. I will do the hardest thing that a woman can do. Freddie, I do not believe you. I believe that you *do* love me. I believe that you only deny it for my sake. I believe that you will always deny it unless I say what will make me feel ashamed of myself all my life. Freddie, I——"

I put my hand over her mouth suddenly.

"Hush, darling," I said. "You shall not do it. I do love you, Tommy—love you so much that I would rather you marry the man you love. You told me that you did, you know."

"The man I love," said Tommy, "is *you!*"

It was five minutes—or perhaps it was ten—or twenty—before I said anything coherently. Then I laughed.

"A week ago you were going to run away with some one else," I remarked.

Tommy looked at me out of the corners of her eyes and curled her lip in her old scornful way.

"You great donkey!" she said. "He was married three months ago! You were so jolly paternal! I'm going to be as slangy as I like now, you know."

"Go on," I cried, "you—angel! Oh! You *are*, Tommy! You shall say just what you like."

"I like—you!" said Lady Tommy.





# THE BIRTH OF IRONY

*By Katharine Holland Brown*

GUND the Cave-man squatted on the rippled sand outside his burrow door, thrust chin propped on hairy paws, and considered. His harsh yellow brows scowled peevishly; his slow beast brain fumbled in witless circles through his labyrinth of discontent. From time to time he glanced in, questioning, at the sleeping figure behind him, stretched limp on its wonderful couch of painted aurochs skin; but the tranquil, moveless shape gave no reply.

It was certainly very puzzling. The sun was far aloft, in a liquid, cloud-pearled sky; slant blue shadows already dipped from the sharp, dazzling peak of the Council Mount, where the reek of the great Sacrifice still lifted, and widened in amethyst translucence across the tiny checkered fields. He shaded his fierce eyes with a mighty palm, and stared up and down the narrow, burnished river-course, that high-road of his tribal world. Not a human creature was in sight; the pale smoke-pennons that, at day-break, had marked each hollowed hearth, had long since dissolved in the still air. The tribe itself had scattered for the day; some to fish in the cold glassy pools among the hills, some to hunt antelope on the slopes that buttressed the Council Mount, while the women and children had gone to their singing labor in the dry, mellow August fields. According to his computation, the day was now half spent. And yet his mate, she who leaped up always with the first morning-gray, she whose laughter awoke him, with the waking of the glad dawn-wind—still she slept on.

She lay serene, lax as a child at rest, her round cheek pressed against the central orange moon of the great painted skin. Prying sunbeams lit gold streaks in her dusk lashes, and wreathed a flickering carcanet of living gold round the straight ivory of her young breast. Her sweep of black hair folded her, bosom to knee; her hands were shut beneath her little chin. He shifted his body, that he might see her more distinctly; that curious pang which leaped and fluttered and thrilled in his heart whenever he looked upon her sprang keen through his pulses again.

She was not one of his own tribe. She belonged to the Painted Ones, that curious breed which had ruled all the valley until that wild night, three harvests gone, when Gund and his clan, grim and re-

sistless as the black roaring storm that heralded their coming, had swooped down upon their fortress, and slain their warriors, and driven the panic-stricken horde far beyond the westering sky. Her, their Chief had seized, as she crouched behind a mound of wheat in the grotto cache: with one blow he had struck down her fighting hands, and had thrown her amongst the pile of skins and pottery that he had chosen from the booty for his own. Gund, passing by, laden with glorious loot of fresh-killed antelope hides, had seen her, and had paused to reflect. It was not lawful to snatch that which the Chief had already appropriated. Moreover, it was not wholesome. He who braved the tribe's unwritten law must establish his claims by brute strength; and while Gund's arm was powerful, the Chief, flax-haired, bull-fronted giant, held unchallenged championship of all his men. However, this brown panther thing was worth a few bruises. He gathered her up, regardless of her mad blows, her strangling fingers, and carried her to his own cave. And when the Chief came, all foamed with rage, backed by a lowering mob of followers, he beat and lacerated him to ghastly surrender, before their staring eyes.

He lifted his left arm and looked at it critically. From elbow to wrist it was warped and scarred; the Chief's prestige could cling to that small solace. He winced as he remembered the night of hideous pain that followed the combat, the agony with which he had dragged his bruised limbs about the star-lit fields, searching for healing leaves to bind upon the crushed flesh. His mate had looked on, silent, hostile. She would not touch the corn nor the water that he set painfully near her. When he laid his uninjured hand upon her she flew at him like a vicious cat and bit him savagely; the narrow prints still showed white and deep on his tanned flesh. Yet the next day she had crept nearer, gazing in silence, with dark, furtive eyes, while he, groaning, renewed the bandages. Again she would not approach the food, nor drink. But at nightfall she had slipped away, to creep back, hours after, sidling, watchful, her slight arms laden to breaking with fresh-stripped, fragrant twigs for his bed . . . And afterwards, wearied out past fear, she had fallen asleep, with her dark, wilful head against his knee.

The shattered arm was slow to heal. Nevertheless, he did not begrudge what she had cost. It was curious that this was so; for his mate was of little value; she fell far short of the women of his own tribe, his sisters in clan-ship, in point of service. Her body was too light and thin for ploughing; her round wrists bent and twisted beneath the slightest burden of wood or grain; she had neither skill nor humor to grind the corn, to crush the grapes; she flung away in impatient scorn from the pottery trough and the coarse withe weaving, where the other women yielded their patient days. She was always a thorn, a bewilderment. To follow her in her winged hopes, her

tempest sorrows, was to follow a flame; to curb her hurtling passions, her mad delights, was to curb the wind.

However, useless as she was, the glory won by seizing her from the Chief was no empty trifle. For while the Chief still ruled by right of blood, Gund, as his proven conqueror, held many ruler's privileges. A first share in every harvest was accorded him; already his cave drifted sweet with balmy redolence of grapes and corn, with breath of spices, and sharp fragrance of new wine. The bark curtain which shielded his cave-way was a tribal gift; the pile of gray polished flints, ranged orderly on their reed mat, was another. And the huge, painted skin on which his mate lay sleeping was yet a stronger proof of his prerogative.

For a year this robe had been hoarded, all but worshipped; supreme treasure of the Tribe itself. It was a miracle of labor; a triumph of their slow groping art. With its dappled silver surface, cured by unknown craft to the pliance of an April twig, the softness of a leaf; its border, fringed by patient hands with clashing threads of sinew, pearl-white, fine as hair; its painted mimeries, dull spreading moons of orange and green and tawny umber; its fretwork of wizard arabesque in wreathed line and misty crescent—what wonder that the Tribe, in clamorous unison, vowed it a sacred thing, and consecrated it, the crowning sacrifice, to the great God of Harvests, their sovereign deity?

Last night had been the Feast of Harvests, the solemn final ceremonial of the tribal year. On the broad Stone of Sacrifice, a bare wind-swept face of rock, up past Council Mount, high on the farthest pinnacle that challenged the watching sky, the clan, in grave processional, had laid its dearest gifts. Gold grain, and crimson fruit, and deer, new-killed; white supple osier mats, and glittering flints, and rudest pottery; lump amber, darkly glowing; dim graven reindeer horn; pierced iris shells, in endless gleaming rows. And, last of all, their noblest pledge of gratitude, their boldest prayer for further graces, the mighty aurochs skin was lifted and cast, radiant, on the pyre.

Only for a breath it lay. For through that hush of worship rang a wild outcry. Gund's mate had darted forward, dark eyes ablaze, her white face flaming. And she had pounced upon the royal robe, and clasped it tight in both soft arms, and pressed her pleading cheek against the moons of orange, the flaunting arabesques. And he, Gund, thunderstruck and witless, had stood open-mouthed for a long moment. Then he had burst into wild laughter, alike at her passionate whim, and at the Chief's blank, frightened fury. And he had snatched the huge robe from her grasp, and tossed it upon her shoulders, as it were her own.

The Chief, after one venomous look, one whisper, had fallen back; for rage mingled with laughter in Gund's eyes. The ranks behind him

shook and muttered and hissed; the wind of mysterious panic breathed among them. But Gund had only mocked the louder at the pack, mouthing its whimpering fears. And he had wound the painted thing round her bare arms, and tossed her light body high upon the stone, and commanded her that she dance, as propitiation for her blasphemy.

And dance she did, as only she, taught by her shadowy tribal magic, could know. Hour upon hour she swayed and floated and dreamed, white arms uplifted, a leaping fountain of joy. Swift as a red wind-blown leaf, she fluttered through her airy race; ethereal as a twilight mist, she drifted past her woven cadences. At last, when the tribe, sated and dulled with marvelling, had had their fill, she ceased, and stood moveless, head aslant, her soft limbs stiff for utter weariness. Yet he had forced her to mount the stone and dance again, until, her black eyes glazed and staring, her cramped hands shut upon her laboring breast, she had staggered once more to his side, and fallen, begging that she might sleep. For answer, he had struck her piteous mouth. For the madness of his pride was upon him. What other man's mate could brave the challenge of the gray hawk's wing, surpass the wave? And she, weirdly fired to his command, had stirred her flagging limbs and danced on, till the last coals of the great Sacrifice were blotted in milky ash, and the watching stars grew dim.

However, her whim was not yet paid for, he reflected. This would cost him another battle; and not a conflict with the Chief alone. But that did not matter. He would conquer. He always conquered. True, his mate would not bind his wounds for him; for the mere sight of pain amazed and daunted her. But she would pity him, with wide eyes. She would bring him cold water and new bubbling wine. And after nightfall she would sing to him, softly, in her voice like the race of shallow water past its fretted sands, and dance for him once more beneath the grave white stars, light as a drifting cloud before the moon. It would not matter.

And still she slept. And when he leaned above her, to stare with questing eyes into that dreaming face, it was as if he saw her fairness laid afar, beyond his grasp, beneath deep waters: and the cold mirror-pool gleamed motionless between.

He lifted her soft hand, and bent it back and forth in his great hairy clutch. A slow, chill wonder stirred in his dull brain. Giant in strength, he was only a boy in years; for all his might, the tawny down still fruited soft on cheek and chin. However, despite his youth, there were some things that he had seen . . . and now remembered. There had been others of his tribe, who had thus slept—and not awakened. But that was different. Those had been always the wounded, else the old and sick, or the new-born. For such as his mate, surely that sleep could never be. No wound-mark blemished her perfect flesh;

her strength was like the silken reed, that bends but cannot break. And life had always beaten stronger within her than in the thrilled pulses of the wind, the flaming gold of the sun. With breeze and cloud and flying bird-note she was kin. With them, she would be forever young.

His eyes lifted to the thin smoke-wreaths still rising from Council Mound. Then, still questioning, they fell upon the painted robe. And in a breath their dull depths lit and flamed with comprehension.

It was all so clear! He laughed out, shamed that he had not known the truth before.

The God of Harvests was angered, at the withholding of his coronal of sacrifice, this royal skin. For revenge, he had laid this dark sleep upon the woman whose vanity had robbed him of his tribute. It was for Gund to make amends; a simple matter enough.

Well after nightfall, when the tribe, tired from last night's feast, would be safely huddled in their caves, he would bear the aurochs skin up Council Mound, and lay it on the Stone. Then he would try to rouse his mate. If she still slept, he would carry her also to the altar, and lay her there, a mute petition, that the God, now properly placated, might pity and restore. Certainly she deserved some discipline; but surely not even a God could look upon her lovely helplessness unmoved.

Late in the gray whispering starlight, he clambered panting, blind with sweat, up the high gliddery ledges that reared their ramparts before the Council Mound. Another easier trail wound up the farther side; but that lay towards the village; and while the terrors of this lone hideous quest knocked at his heart and weighed his laboring breath, his dread that some wakeful eye might watch and betray was stronger still. There were many others of his tribe who had looked on her with sullen greed. Should they attack him, here on this naked giddy rock, encumbered by her weakness, he could not hope to hold his own.

At last he dragged his burden over the steep black shelf, and stood alone, far in the windy hollow of the midnight sky. All the monstrous fears of his child race lurked at his heels, and peered in his finching eyes. His breath came thick: a red sweat gathered round his gasping mouth.

He laid her on the painted robe, and strung the rings of braided grass on her slim arms, and clasped the wide girdle of pierced elks' teeth about her waist, and tied the chains of mottled rose and amber shells that he had hunted and twined for her, round her tender neck. Then for a moment he stooped and looked into her face, so near, and yet afar beyond his straining grasp, as if it lay beneath the cold mirrored pool.

However, here she would be safe. For here she slept, beneath the sight of the God of Harvests, upon His very altar: that unknown Might who hid the sun, and granted the rain, and lit his own mystic Sacrifice in the daybreak sky. Surely, she was safe. And, at twilight, again he would come, and find her awake, and waving rapturous hands to guide his way.

Then, very softly and quickly, he crawled away down the black splintered ledges, and out upon the wide gray plain, beneath the awful stars. And that strange fire leaped up and stung through heart and brain, and flashed and rippled and burned through thought and soul. And though he did not know nor heed, from his breast came the dull sounds of a brute in pain.

Then, as he ran towards the village, new terror loomed and daunted. For the low flames of dawn were not yet kindled in the East; yet the village was already astir. For swift red sparkles rose flickering before each burrow door. And he sped on, in dread of what he had left behind, in deeper dread of what he went to see.

And in the midst of the village swayed a gaunt man, caked in desert dust and blood-streaked sweat, a leathern horn to his lean bitten mouth. Around him swarmed the tribe, blank crowded faces of amaze. And from lip to lip the herald's message ran.

The Painted Ones, that preposterous relic of their clan, had joined the Arrow-men, a powerful tribe, long the bitter rivals of Gund and all his kin. By tales of the Cave tribe's riches, and of its defenseless state, they had beguiled the Arrow-men into a secret invasion. Now the two clans lay making ready for onslaught, below the screen of foothills, not an hour's march away.

The tribe swayed, muttered, clamored. The Chief arose before them to proclaim his leadership, craven to his melting bones. Silently they looked upon him: his abject hands, his blue, fear-blinded eyes. Then, with one jeering shout, brute laughter and unutterable scorn, they turned from him to Gund. And, roaring their triumph, they flung him to their shoulders, and cried him Leader to the vaulted sky.

When Gund again climbed Council Mount, the year had swung past imprisoning frost and leaping spring, into mellow harvest once more. Again the shadows spread their purple cloak, from the white blind peak across the checkered valley; again the women and children bent to their singing labor in the brown sweet fields. And all the air flowed gold with sunshine, and breathed deep with scent of corn and grape, and sharp pungence of new wine.

He did not attempt the giddy ledge that he had climbed before. The wound that had smitten him down and made him captive in the

first hour of battle had never healed. As he moved, he dragged it, a withered useless limb. That fretted him incessantly. His mate loathed any sign of hurt or pain. He dreaded her shivering anger, her swift disgust, when she should see. However, there were other things for her to look upon, which might soothe her abhorrence. For he was burdened not alone by his crippled limb. Slung on his shoulder hung a broad goatskin bag, weighed down to bursting with his year's treasure hoard. Elks' teeth, strung by the score on glistening sinew; beautiful tanned deer-skins, dappled velvet, soft as the hollow of her own brown palm; a heavy pouch of shining river stones; a handful of tiny feathers, blue, emerald, crimson, to thrust in that black hair. And, most glorious of all, many broad circlets, stolen from his captor's treasure-cache upon the very hour of his escape. Smooth and gleaming, they were; heavy, yellow as the sun, yet round as the braided grass he used to weave on her slim arms. Decked with these miracles, cloaked in the silvery deer-skins, she would be the envy of all the tribe, he thought, exultant. And, joying in these treasures, perhaps she would forget his scarred face, his loose crippled limb.

He crept past the last sharp barricade, and stood upright beneath the golden sky.

Before him stretched the broad shrine, its hacked approach worn smooth by reverent feet. And on the altar, flaunting its ruddy moons beneath the sun, lay the painted aurochs skin. And nothing more.

He stood for a moment, cowering, agape. One hoarse shriek of rage burst from his strangling throat.

Then, as if a mist had lifted from his sight, he found himself still gazing at the aurochs skin, as if he saw more than the mere robe itself. For on it lay a tiny curious heap: a string of mottled rose and amber shells; an elks' tooth girdle; a little pile of silvery ashes and of bleached pearl bone.

He squatted on a near-by boulder, and looked, and looked. After a long time, the heavy goatskin bag slipped its leash and fell open beside him, and spilled its plunder wide upon the stones.

The clink of falling metal roused him. He turned and stared at the gay spoil.

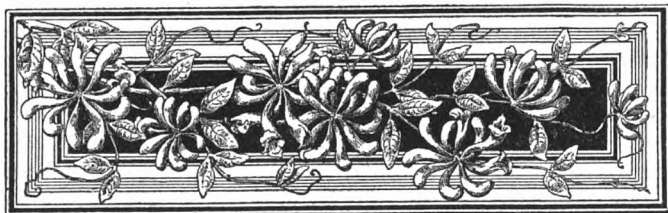
There it all lay: the hard-won treasure of his grim slaving days, his stealthy perilous nights, through this long tortured year. Two deerskins; the ponderous rings of gold; the pouch of glinting river stones; the rainbow feathers for her black hair.

He stared from the one heap to the other; that curious Other, which, beneath the warm light wind, eddied and shifted and blew.

And as he looked, once more that strange pang leaped and thrilled and strove in his breast, like strong beating wings: then fluttered, and sank, and died.

He gaped on, blankly. Presently he leaned forward, resting his elbows on both hairy knees. The rainbow feathers crumpled in his huge palm. And, shout on bellowing shout, his roars of laughter echoed from the watching hills.

And with that wail of rage, and mirth, and agony unspeakable, came Irony into the world.



### A FABLE WITH A MORAL

**T**HERE was once a Jester who was tired of his job, so he resolved to go to his August Master, who was his Master during the other months of the year also, and beg to be released, so that he could seek Fresh Fields and Pastures New. When the King and his Courtiers saw him approaching they began to titter; but the Jester went straight to the Throne and sank upon one knee.

"Sire," he said, "for many years I have capered and grimaced to amuse you, and now I fain would rest."

"He fain would rest!" repeated the Monarch, his sides shaking with mirth.

"Sire, I have a family in far away Provence——"

"Ho ho!" laughed the King. "Ha ha!" echoed the Courtiers. "He he!" giggled the Courtieresses.

"And I beg of your majesty permission——"

"Is n't he the funniest thing!" said the King.

"To let me go and see them," finished the Jester.

The King was wiping his eyes, which were full of tears of merriment. "Take him away, somebody," he said, "or I shall die of laughing. He grows funnier every day."

Attendants surrounded the Jester and forced him kindly but firmly from the Royal Presence.

And he is still the King's Jester.

Moral: It is sometimes harder to lose a reputation than to acquire one.

*Robert T. Hardy*



# LITTLE BILLY HIGGINS'S RHUBARB MONEY

*By John L. Mathews*

**S**YMPATHY is a fellow suffering.

No word or group of words could better describe little Billy Higgins in his boyhood days.

Poor little Billy Higgins! I am about to narrate the saddest event in his career of woe, and at the very outset scalding tears course down my cheeks. Poor little Billy! If I could just for one minute lay hands on that fat groceryman, Blicks, I 'd—but there, it's all so real to me! And yet it had a happy ending. Almost everything has, in this world. Even little Billy himself probably will have. But he didn't start that way.

Billy was handicapped from the start when unkind nature presented old Jim Higgins to him for a Pa. Old Jim Higgins was a bad lot, who borrowed money, dodged his bills, owed rent all his life, and wore a shiny silk hat on week-days for respectability's sake. And poor little Billy, from the day of his coming to the scene of mundane activity, had to bear the burden of being this Jim Higgins's boy, and did n't know what it was that handicapped him so.

Some boys can go right out to the railroad track any day and put two pins on the rail, and spit on them, and hide in the culvert till the train goes by—but it's awful risky, because sometimes mean firemen will dump fire down on you—and have a pair of scissors all made to order. Billy Higgins could n't—unless he found the pins somewhere; and then, like as not, he needed them to hold his tattered clothes together. When Billy's Ma wanted a new roundabout for him for summer wear she used to begin begging Billy's Pa the autumn before, and Billy's Pa would keep promising and putting it off and the next summer would come and go and all the boys would be getting their new warm winter flannels and overcoats—and one night Billy's Pa would come home from the city with a nice new cheap summer suit for Billy, last summer's size, and Billy's Ma would know that he had discovered another clothing store where they had n't learned his habits.

Old Jim Higgins believed in boys earning their own living, and he liked to encourage them to do it, and to set them a good example of

doing it. So when Billy was about six years old Pa made a bargain with him that if Billy would black his Pa's shoes every morning of the year he would get ten cents a week for it, regularly, every week; and if he did n't do it he would get a licking and have to do it anyhow. Pa never made Billy get right out and do anything by telling him he *must* do it. No, he always gave him some such alternative as that, so Billy could do it without having to, if he preferred to. And Billy, knowing his Pa, was very glad to choose the earlier method and do it for ten cents a week. And of course, as he was getting paid for it, he had to furnish his own blacking and shoe-brushes.

When Billy was ten years old he had been blacking his Pa's shoes for four years—two hundred and eight weeks—and his Pa owed him twenty dollars and eighty cents for it. Billy had the number of weeks carefully chalked up on a wall in the barn, and he knew every week how much money he had in that bank. For the first year or so he used to ask Pa for some of the money sometimes; but his Pa believed in two things about this: first, that little boys ought to save their money—which made him keep this for Billy till Billy grew up; and, second, that parents ought to cultivate the faculty of hope in children, and he could best do this by keeping Billy hoping for a day of settlement. A man like Pa is a great help in any community that has not been well trained in childhood, and he proved this by training the grocer and the landlord the same way he did Billy.

Twenty dollars and eighty cents is a great deal of money for a little boy of ten years, but that is n't all little Billy had. He was big enough now to push the lawn-mower, and Pa had hired him to cut the lawn at a quarter a push. That went into the Hope account, too, along with seventy-five cents last winter for clearing the snow off the sidewalk, and ten cents for going down to get a livery rig and telling the man Pa would pay when he brought it back, and ten cents more for taking it back and telling the man that Pa had company and could n't come but would stop in in a day or two. There were lots of other marks on the barn wall for ash-siftings, and for cutting wood for the drum heater on Sunday mornings when Pa wanted to take a bath; and, all in all, there was a total at last of twenty-eight dollars.

Think of having twenty-eight dollars in the bank! Of course there are banks and banks. Some bust up—just when you were going to buy a house or go on a fishing trip. Sometimes the cashier plays poker or the president runs away with the funds, or somebody forges a check on you, or you get into debt and they seize your bank account. A fig for all such banks! None of these things ever happened to Billy's. It was indeed the Bank of Hope—and of faith, and sweet, sweet charity. Year in, year out, Pa stayed right there, and the bank stayed with him. You could not have pried the money away with a

jimmy, and as for the chap who could have raided Billy's bank-account with a garnishee notice or a forged check—well, he would have had to be a mighty smart man to get anything out of Pa. Billy felt safe as far as that was concerned. He was n't much afraid of anything happening to Pa and his Bank. He did wish, sometimes—but there, never matter.

It was when Billy Higgins was eleven years old and had twenty-eight dollars and some odd dimes in the Bank of Hope that the adventure of the Rhubarb Money began to happen to him. If we could to-day dissect little Billy's memory, we should probably find his whole life recorded in chapters, like Sherlock Holmes's: "The Adventure of the Three Cloudies and the White Alley"; "The Adventure of the Raft That Busted in Two"; "The Adventure of Gettin' Licked the Time Me and Jakey Blinks Got Caught in Hank Ruddock's Orchard," and so on to the end.

Money is the root of all evil. Every little while something happens which makes those words truer and truer. As long as Billy was contented with stage money chalked up on the barn wall, representing deposits in the Bank of Hope, he never had any worse troubles than stage fright when Pa was getting a shingle ready. But when he got the hankering for real money—for flashy dimes and quarters, and even for a whole half-dollar—to spend for the Fourth of July, right there was where Billy's real troubles began.

"Pa," he said at supper one night, "did you ever earn any Fourth of July money when you was a boy?"

Pa laid down his knife and fork and smiled at Billy benevolently.

"Why, son," he said, "I never did anything but earn Fourth of July money when I was a boy. I earned so much money some years that the whole community depended on me for fireworks—or would have, if the other boys had n't earned so much, too. Boys don't work and earn now like they did in those days."

"How did you earn it, Pa?" asked Billy.

That sort of a question looks mighty simple; and it is simple—simple as looking in the back of the book for the answer before you begin your arithmetic. But Pa did n't have a book with a key in it, and for a little while he had to guess a good deal and very lively. Ma, who knew more about Pa being a boy than she usually let on, and who had some fun once in a while when she forgot how afraid of Jim Higgins she really was, almost giggled while she watched him guess.

"Why—er—I—er—why, I earned it, son—worked for it—got it by the sweat of my brow and the toil of my hands. That is how boys should work."

"Yes, but what kind of sweat?" persisted Billy. "I mean what did you do that made you sweat?"

"Gardening, maybe," suggested Ma. That was a little bold for Ma, because she was thinking of the time Pa started a garden the very first year after they were married, and it was a good deal of a jolt to Pa when she said it. But Pa would n't be Jim Higgins if he could n't see good luck in adversity.

"Gardening!" he exclaimed, with enthusiastic reminiscence. "Well, I guess!" He said that so you would have thought (and Billy did think, with admiring wonder) that Pa had gardened ten or eleven acres single-handed and might have been the founder of the Department of Agriculture. "Gardening," he added, "was my regular business." He glared at Ma as much as to say, "Let me hear you yap a word about this, now, and we'll settle later." "I made hundreds of dollars gardening," he said aloud. "You make a garden, Billy, and I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll run the garden myself—furnish the back yard for it, and get the seeds, and I'll pay you ten cents an hour for working in it, and you can sell all the vegetables we don't eat."

That sounded easy to Billy. They never were much of a family for vegetables—but it was not till long afterwards that he knew that this was because the butcher was a more credulous fellow than the green-grocer. The vegetable period antedated his memory. So Billy worked and worked, as no boy of Boyville had ever worked before. All the other chaps came and stood around the edge of the little plot of ground and watched Billy spade it up, and sneaked the angleworms he was saving to sell at eighteen for two cents, and made believe they crawled out of the tin can themselves (the worms, I mean). Billy raked and planted and weeded and did everything a little boy can do to make a garden; and sometimes Pa came out in the evening and smoked his pipe and looked at the onions and the cabbages and the cornstalks and all the other green things, and said what a fine thing it was to make two stalks of corn grow where an angleworm had crawled before, and how proud he was of William, and that a farmer's life was the noblest of all. And when things were ready Ma gathered them in and Pa ate them, and there was n't any left for the neighbors; but Billy had ten dollars and fifteen cents more in the Bank of Expectations.

Poor little Billy Higgins! But it is adversity that is the great teacher. Billy swallowed his disappointment and laid plans for the future. The great thing was to find something none of the family ate, and grow that. Billy used to go down to Blicks's grocery store and look at the baskets on the sidewalk and make lists. Potatoes everybody ate, and cucumbers and corn. Boys hook melons. Tomatoes—Ma always canned them.

"Pa," Billy said one day, "do you like architokes?"

"Dote on 'em, son," said Pa. Billy crossed them off his list. He

avored mushrooms for a long time, but Ma queered them; he caught her sighing over a box of them at Blicks's. So one by one the chances slipped until he had almost given up hoping; and then one day a game of follow-my-leader took him over the fence into the old Nelson Ramsay place and the answer was found. There, along the south side of the fence, was that famous early rhubarb Mrs. Ramsay used to give away in the spring to her choicest friends. Mr. Ramsay's house had burned, and he was quarrelling with the insurance company and the man that owned the mortgage, and no one was watching the place. Billy knew that was fine rhubarb, and he suddenly remembered that no one in his family could eat rhubarb at all. Nevertheless, he advanced as cautiously as General McClellan on the Peninsula.

"Pa," he said at table one day, "if I was to grow some nice pie-plant, would you buy it of me?"

Now, that was a fine question, because Pa would rather buy something of Billy and add it to the bank account than eat dinner; Billy knew it was the real test. And Pa declined it.

"No, my son," he said; "there is where I draw the line. Right there I stop. I will buy anything else the ground will produce, from green grass to poison ivy, but I will not buy rhubarb. Nor will I eat it. On rhubarb you would make a dismal failure with me for your trade."

Billy's heart leaped high with expectation and happiness, but he stilled it and tried another question.

"I bet *you* would, Ma," he said. "Would n't you, now—if your little boy grew it and cut it and brought it in?"

Ma shook her head. "No, dear," she said; "I should like to, just to help you along; but neither Pa nor I like rhubarb."

Oh, little Billy Higgins!—I wish I could stop right here and paint you as you were then; no fellow suffering that time, but a joyous, cheerful, impatient boy, waiting till dark to sneak down to the Nelson Ramsay place and hook the rhubarb roots. That's what little Billy Higgins did. He got the old halter-rope that they used to keep the horse in before that time about the chattel mortgage, and he got the hitching-strap from a place he hid it when the man Pa bought the buggy of took it away. He tied them together and took them up-stairs, and that night, ever so late, he sneaked out of the window and went down to Ramsay's lot and hooked half their rhubarb roots and brought them home and hid them in the barn.

That was a terrible night. Nothing but grim determination could ever have nerved him up to it. John Henry Baxter's big Newfoundland dog, Rover, barked all the time, and John Henry, who lived next door to the Ramsay place, leaned out of the window twice, so that Billy had to lie down under the leaves of the rhubarb and hide. But at last John Henry went down and unchained the dog, and as soon as he was

back in the house Rover came over in the most friendly fashion and, seeing what Billy was up to, wagged his tail and dug some too to help.

Then George Stillings went by on the way home from the late train, and after a while Officer O'Leary came by with Mr. Dwiggins, helping him along because Mr. Dwiggins worked at work that you had to take something to brace you up while you did it. They were talking, Mr. Dwiggins very loudly.

"Y' need n' tell me!" he said. "There *are* burglars, too. I've seen 'm. They're very bol'. Look ol' Nels'n Ramsy place now. Where's ol' house? Stole! Thash where. Of'cer—you goin' stan' by and see Nels'n Ramsy place robbed?"

"I'll come back and search it, sorr," said the officer good-naturedly, and Billy, too scared to run, lay under his rhubarb leaves and shivered and shook until he heard Officer O'Leary go safely by again.

It was a long job, but it was done at last, and Billy, with one reassuring hand on Rover's collar, actually dared invade the dark barn at home and hide his basket. Then he took off his shoes and carefully shinned up the safety line into his window, and was sound asleep in two minutes. But poor Rover—he got whipped by John Henry for digging in the rhubarb garden next day, when Billy was not there.

The next thing was to get that rhubarb planted. You can't plant rhubarb at night. You have to see. Billy waited for a certain fête day long known to him, the first Thursday in the month. On that magic day Ma always spread out a lunch for him on the kitchen table and hied herself away to the all-day missionary meeting. No one was left at home but Billy, and, undisturbed, he planted the roots in a carefully planned row along the south side of the fence of his own yard. He raked the ground over them carefully, so no one would notice that it had been disturbed; and no one did. Thereafter he went whistling on his way and waited for something to happen. Nothing did happen until spring, though Billy managed on successive "first Thursdays" to sprinkle the ground with good rich stable manure from a box across the alley. The roots were sheltered from the snow by this covering, and from the north wind by the fence, and early in the spring began putting forth leaves as swiftly and as unexpectedly as a fig-tree puts out its green figs.

Of course they found it out then, and Billy had to pretend that it just came up—that he knew it was there all along—that he was thinking of that very row when he asked about their eating it—for Billy had learned that caution which, outside of business, is plain lying, and he sometimes had to lie good and strong to maintain his innocence. But, since the cat was out of the bag, he tilled his ground openly, until at last the stalks were big enough to cut.

When that happy day came he went down the line on his hands and

knees, towing a big market basket after him, and with a kitchen knife chopped the leaf from every stalk and put the stalk in his basket. He had enough to crowd it to the handle. He borrowed Hank Smithers' wheelbarrow to carry it in, and when he was sure nobody in his house was looking he sneaked away with it, around two blocks the back way and up Deacon Street, right to the door of old Jacob Blicks's green-grocery store. There he stopped and looked in. The coast was clear. Old Jakey was standing in the middle of the store chewing a cracker, and there were no customers. Little Billy Higgins took the basket off the wheelbarrow and laboriously lugged it into the store. Old Jakey looked at him ruminatively.

"Mister Blicks," said Billy, "is n't that fine rhubarb?"

The groceryman looked at it.

"Ya," he said; "dot vass fine rhubarrrrrb. Dot vass fine. Vere didt you get it?"

"I grew it," said Billy. "It's for sale. I want to sell it. Will you buy it?"

The groceryman looked again.

"Ya," he said; "I buy 'em." He took the basket and walked aft to the scales in the dark and shadowy part of the store, where customers seldom penetrated. He weighed it thoughtfully. Then he set the basket aside with some other baskets of green groceries in the back of the store, and came out to Billy.

"I gif you seventy-five cents," he said, and looked benevolently at Billy.

"All right," said Billy.

"Ya," said the groceryman.

He stood there silently after that, chewing at another cracker. He was always chewing crackers, and Billy waited patiently for him to get through. When the last crumb had disappeared he ventured to remind him.

"Seventy-five cents, you said," he remarked.

"Ya, dot is right," said Mr. Blicks, drawing another cracker from his capacious pocket and beginning to munch it. Billy looked at him a little uneasily, but waited as politely as he could until that cracker, too, was eaten. Then, swallowing at nothing, very hard, he began another query:

"Well—that is—Mr. Blicks—you see—when would I get the money, please? Could I have it now?"

Mr. Blicks looked down at him and beamed benevolently. He took out another cracker, bit off a morsel, chewed it a moment, and reached out a hand to pat Billy on the top of the head.

"Vy, my poy," he said, as if pronouncing a benediction, "I will sharge dot on Bapa's bill."

Probably you can see the force of that all at once. Billy did n't. He fidgetted first on one foot and then on the other, trying to figure out just when that meant he would get it. As he got back to the first foot for the third time, comprehension began to dawn. In another minute he had grasped it—in all its horror. Tears welled up in his eyes, but he shed them not. Billy was not one of your weaklings, to shed tears over money before an old Dutch groceryman. No, sir! He turned and marched straight out of that grocery store and got his wheelbarrow and went and returned it to Hank Smithers. Then he walked around by the Nelson Ramsay place and sat down behind the fence and cried all he wanted to.

Perhaps you think that is all there is to the story of little Billy Higgins and his Rhubarb Money; but if you do you are mightily mistaken. Billy was sobbing there to his heart's content when Mr. Henry Spriggs went by and heard him. Henry Spriggs was the editor of the weekly paper, and he had to investigate everything he heard to get enough to fill the places between the advertisements. He leaned over the fence, saw Billy, vaulted over, and sat down beside him.

"What's the matter with Billy Higgins?" he asked, putting a sympathetic hand on Billy's knee (and there you see again that nothing comes in so apt as that "fellow suffering"). Editor Spriggs had a sort of corkscrew voice that drew an answer from the most unwilling. It drew one now from little Billy Higgins, who, between his sobs, poured out the whole tale of the Bank of Hope and the Rhubarb Money. Editor Spriggs listened with holy joy. He was no friend of Pa Higgins. Little Billy was twelve years old, and the invitations to the Higgins nuptials were not yet paid for. As he listened a plan unfolded itself in his mind and enlarged there and became complete.

"Listen to me, Billy," he said. "This is a thing the people ought to know, so that other little boys won't grow rhubarb and take it to Mr. Blicks and not get any money for it. Did you know I pay people for writing for my paper?"

No, Billy had never heard of it; but it was true.

"Now," said Mr. Spriggs, "you come down to my office with me and I will give you a clean sheet of paper and a pencil, and I want you to write out for me your account with Pa and his Bank of Hope, and all about the garden and the rhubarb and Mr. Blicks, and I will print it and I will pay you seventy-five cents for it—and I will give you the money now."

He placed a quarter and a half-dollar on Billy's knee while he spoke. Billy clutched them eagerly and slid them into his pocket. Then he dried his tears and started up.

"Come along!" he said briskly. It sounded too easy to be true.



and he was not going to risk anything by waiting. They went to the office of the paper, and Billy wrote it all out and gave it to Mr. Spriggs, and Mr. Spriggs called a man in from the next room and handed it to him.

"Here, Van," he said, "set this in pica and double-lead it. Drop out that poem in the two-column box in the middle of the front page, and put this in it with an eighteen-point gothic head. Hustle it up, so we can get it out to-morrow."

Little Billy Higgins did not say anything about his adventure at home that evening, and he kept still about the rhubarb, too. He was still keeping quiet about it the next day; for as he thought it over, he felt that somehow, somewhere, there was something peculiar about it. Later a faint rumor of trouble came to his ears. He was not exactly afraid, but, desiring to remain unobtrusive, he was very still indeed, in a deep closet, when his Pa came home that night.

Pa came home like a thunder-cloud. He had the paper in his inside pocket, and unfolded it and shook it at Ma, and roared at her about her offspring, and being disgraced off the face of the earth, and suing the editor for libel. When she called and Billy finally emerged Pa roared at him, too, but to Billy's immense surprise did not lick him—for the editor had printed in big type under Billy's story:

Little Billy Higgins has sworn a Bible oath to tell me if his Pa whips him for this; and if he does, I will print that, too.

No, little Billy Higgins did not get licked. And he had the seventy-five cents. And though, when I first began to write this tale, I was moved to grief by the contemplation of the Bank of Hope, I must not forget that in the end there was solace even for its lone depositor.

Little Billy always called at the post-office for the family mail. The next day he found a letter for himself in the box. It was from Mr. Blinks, and it contained seventy-five cents, and was labelled "Billy Higgins's Rhubarb Money." And four other days after that he found letters to himself from people he had never supposed owed him anything, but that his Pa owed money to, and every one held seventy-five cents and said it was Rhubarb Money, and every one said "for value received," which puzzled Billy a good deal.

Billy was getting the habit of keeping very still at home, so he did not tell about these seventy-five centises. He did not put them in any Bank of Hope, either, but spent them on the most elaborate Fourth of July Boyville had ever witnessed among its junior members. And somehow, after being hoodooed all through boyhood by something he could not define and did not understand, and which was just being Pa Higgins's little boy and nothing else, Billy suddenly found that

wherever he went people smiled at him and called him "Billy" with much affection; and for years and years they would shout after him and ask if he had any rhubarb he would like to sell that spring.



## SUMMER SCHOOL

BY CLARENCE URMY

**D**O you recall the Summer School  
So free from any hint of rule,  
That met down by the purple pool?

For roof, a sycamore's green gloom,  
An alder alcove, laurel room,  
And classic paths of myrtle bloom.

Religion, Art, the Church, all took  
Their turn beside the willowed brook;  
And Nature's illustrated book

Was dictionary, gazetteer,  
Concordance, making all things clear,  
The old things new, the far things near.

A Course In Music found the stream  
A fond exponent of the theme;  
The syllabus said: "Listen! Dream!"

The while the class in Light<sup>And</sup> Shade  
Had but to wander down the glade,  
And lo, what art the boughs displayed!

There must have been some small surprise  
Among the birds and butterflies  
At many questions and replies!

Ah, happy school-days! Pupils two,  
Just You and I—how moments flew  
Beneath that dome of green and blue!

And have You not dreamed o'er and o'er  
Of Summer School in days of yore  
By purple pool and sycamore?

# THE LONE WAR

By *Will Levington Comfort*

*Author of "Lady Thoroughbred, Kentuckian," etc.*

WHEN I think it all over again, red spots fly like little blurred disks across my wall, and self-hate possesses me as the burn of fresh poison crawls through one's veins. It has come as a last hope that I may be able to tell this incubus out of my soul. Certainly I should tell it well, if contact with the core of the tragedy and subsequent deep-sea meditations make for grasp and vividness.

Gnedlan, who did it all—God knows what I have done for him—had the clearest, deepest mind in which I ever had the honor to dip. Though I knew him better than any living man, it is plain that I only sported and sputtered in the surface warmth of his mental fathoms. As a babe, as a boy, as a misanthrope, he was masterful. And wise beyond his time, he was, in the ways of men. Of the most alluring traps which find our weaknesses, none appealed to him. It was as if he had been through all and learned their shallow viciousness.

We studied together. Gnedlan leaped intuitively from peak to peak in culture. I toiled the descents with my packs, forded, and eventually agonized my way to the height, only to perceive him sitting serenely on a far summit. Thus, too, he mastered the crowning illusion of our time, Commerce, and was laughing at the utter vanity of his own opulence by the time I had wiped the rime out of my eyes to gaze in amazement at my first thousand pieces of silver.

Finally he was a man of singular passions, hard-held all—but one! Now, you and I know that the size of a man's body has nothing to do with his acumen or spirit, but the government does not recognize the fact. There came into our lives the contagion which imminent war breathed in the air. We responded to the tumult of the instant. We were young men and strong; we would serve our country. Because I had worn the State's uniform at intervals, kept up certain dues and drilled upon a dancing-floor, the nation, in her dire extremity, gave me a commission. Because Gnedlan was a half-inch under the stature which a United States soldier must attain, he was refused the glory of becoming a private.

Upon hearing of his rejection, my first impulse was to laugh. Well I knew his endurance, his physical agility, and his courage. He was a small package, it is true, but contained the very oil of military qualities, with a saint for a mother and a sire whose valor had screamed in the Rebellion. He came to me with a face that had met death and conquered, only to encounter seven devils beyond the pale. Neither in brain nor body nor pride had he ever known defeat until this hour. Here was a government regulation which caught and crushed all three in the dead brute pressure of eighty millions.

"Don't talk about it, Garrick!" he broke out suddenly. "I came to you like a poisoned rat to water, but I don't want to talk!"

It was in my office, and we sat together while the afternoon dulled and darkened. When a band swung by below, pounding out the old thrilling line, ". . . that our flag was still there!" the little man beside me shivered. His fingers found my knee, my hand, and tightened like twisted wires. He arose swiftly and bade me good-by in a tense, harsh way. I heard his quick step in the hall. That was the way Gnedlan left me—the concentrated man.

The days that followed should have been the dearest of a man's life. There were ninety-odd men who loved me, a volunteer company of infantry which was the envy—in point of raw material—of the regular officers. Women came to praise and pray for us; and men, broken by work and pleasure, so that they could not follow, came to offer up their zeal in lamentations and champagne. It was the shallow hour of idolatry which precedes the time—in an unsentimental war—when those who wait at home would tear the Capitol from the shoulders of the nation for using up their sons.

But the days were without exaltation to me, because I was listening for my friend. Indeed, without Gnedlan, I resembled a country in a season when the staple grain is devastated by plague. In a night he had vanished from his home, office, bank, business, and club—out of the Western world and all its bulky civilization. So often had he convinced me of the fallacy of every phase of suicide philosophy, that I could not hold the fear of his self-death. Still, I knew the depth of his wound, and shuddered at the form his reprisal would take.

My company was shipped across to Manila and tried out for several months in the rice-lands north of the city. Our opportunity for real work was complicated by the exigencies of a brigade. We had so little chance to dash out into the open and show the stuff we were made of, that in the rare moments of possibility I drove my company to the task with zeal, possibly a little showy. At all events, I was called into Manila and presented with a formal expression of appreciation on the substance of my men and the character of my leadership. I cannot tell which was greater at the time—my amusement or my amazement.

"General," I said to the Little White Chief, as soon as I could get him alone, "give me a bit of real service before I go home."

"You big fire-eater!" he laughed. "If I did n't need such men as you, I'd kill you off in Minday!"

"Send me to Minday," I pleaded, knowing the island only as a blotch in the southern waters which stood for fanatic fighting.

"Garrick," he said suddenly, "I'll make you a Major, Mex., and give you a battalion and a ship to take you to Minday. Then as I need the ship, I'll leave you there to clean up or die. The Spaniards tried to take Minday and failed. A bunch of our good marines were exterminated before their feet were dry from landing. These Mindayans are Turks and pit-terriers and padded-cellites rolled into one and led by a Spanish pirate. Good-by, Garrick. You have brought it on yourself. I don't expect to see you again."

Waiting for the transport, I learned from a commander of marines that the Mindayans were, in truth, led by a Spaniard who had the technique of the fighting game at his finger-tips; and also that out of sheer love for him, the natives from the farthest ravine of the island furnished their lungs, legs, knives, and lives in glad spirit. As a last word, the Little White Chief intimated that he dared not hope ever to find my body.

It was borne to me on ship that my men were nervous about Minday. This was not strange, since the island had been advertised so subtly as the home of a religion which makes fighters, and of fighters who make creepish carvings out of the flesh of the invader. It is without any pride whatsoever that I declare that my own ennui was not yet lifted. The whole war appealed to me as unworthy of a white man. I believe in valor, but I want it glinting with soul-sparks. Hunting little black men out of their homes furnished no room for the play of other than purely physical heroisms.

The Mindayans allowed us to enter a hell-heated lagoon, but gave us fight within two hours. From the standpoint of the outer world, that fight was hardly a reckonable affair, but to me, the leader of less than four hundred men, sixteen lost, merely on the edges, without an answering blow, was like another Wilderness. On the second day, a detached American column again suffered the advertised extermination, and I had to file for reference a new note of terror—covered in official wordings—to be sent to the Little White Chief in Manila.

It becomes monotonous when I set forth that on the third day my sentries on three sides met vile un-unctioned deaths; and this in full withering daylight.

I was terrified, not that I conjured a personal decapitation or dismemberment, but that I felt my brand of leadership held up before my men in this same awful light. I could not send out a small line of

skirmishers, but that it would be dried up by Minday's hot metal, full of death and hot hearts full of hate. I could not send out my full force without losing my base. I could not concentrate my entire battalion against the surrounding jungle, because it was too heinous and sinister to answer my numbers.

The name of the town on the lagoon was Arecima, and I was chained there by my provisions. A mere sit-tight garrison hugging its muscles around its bacon and coffee cannot conquer an island, and I had begged my general to allow me to do this thing. "Kill the Spaniard first!" was his last word. Instead, the Spaniard was trampling upon my nerves and vitality—a psychically-oppressive little fiend who manifested behind the foliage of Minday. It is true that his natives could curl up like the variable lizards upon the leaves of the land. More than ever in my helplessness, I felt the need of Gnedlan.

Men looked at me as they buried their beloved. My aides came into headquarters silently, and I imagined unutterable things behind their official rhetoric and regulation calm. And even as we discussed the situation, it was likely that an orderly would approach to chronicle a fresh murder. Once I overheard one officer say to another: "Garrick prayed to come, and now where is the zeal of this erstwhile fighting demon?"

And the enlisted men looked to me for their lives, or—bless them!—a chance for their lives. They whimpered at the thought of home, shuddered at the blinding, unbroken sea northward, staggered pitifully along the baked white roads of the town, and dreamed of the tasks they had once meant to do—beyond the war. I passed along the lines and looked from face to face. The fear of death had wiped the steadiness and constancy from their eyes—even from the eyes of my own company. Here and there was a look of sullen hate directed upon me; and here and there, what was infinitely worse, the face of some youth with quivering lips and grieved, frightened eyes—looking up at me like a child imploring to be saved.

I went back to my quarters and sat down. Inactivity and death by the knife, the white man's horror,—these and the sun and the man-eating jungle had poisoned the manhood of my command. It came to me then that the least of all evils was to divide my force, attack with one and hold the town with the other, in the event that the Mindayans utterly refused to attempt to retake their town with us all in it. In the hope of such an attack, I determined to wait one more day. To keep madness from the brains of my men, I must act, even though I was assured that a division of my force meant a reunion in heaven or hell, each soldier according to his soul's imprint. I called my captains together and told them.

Then in the last of the twilight, as I alone stood by the open win-

dow, thinking, thinking, my eyes were attracted by a strange little figure approaching in the road below, with a soldier on either side. It was too dark to distinguish the face, but something about the walk of the little man quickened my heart like cocaine. The three passed the sentries below and were on the stair. I sat sweating, rigid, while my orderly brought word that an American who claimed to have been a prisoner in the hands of the Mindayans, since the fight of the American marines, had come forth from the jungle under a truce-flag with a message for me.

"Bring him in," I gasped.

And then I saw Gnedlan in the candle-light. His face was brown as a dead leaf, devastated by pain, attenuated as an eagle's head, but classic still to me; and the old light of genius lived with the suffering in his eyes. His wasted figure was sunk in the soiled khaki of one of my dead American soldiers. The whitish, haggard lips formed my name. I beckoned the orderly out of the room. The stress of the instant robbed months from my fundamental vitality. Out of something like a trance, I emerged to find that we were alone, to feel his hand and hear his whisper:

"Garrick!"

I was not fit to speak.

"I have arranged for you to pull out of here," he said in a quick, vital way. "If I had n't found *you* to be in command, I should have crucified your outfit days ago as I did the marines. Possibly you have seen how futile you are, and how I have lanced your men like bad bulls in the slaughter-pen——"

"Are you 'The Spaniard,' Gnedlan?" I whispered hoarsely, but he did not need to answer, for I saw it all. My brain struggled, as a child in heavy armor, with the horror of the days to come and with the horror of this man's retaliation.

". . . I could have wept a tear for every obscure soldier's wound," I heard him saying bitterly, "and drops of blood I had to give with glad passion for every skirmish of my country's men! My country, *my country*, petrified the heart of me—left me to stand like a poor cripple while her *men* marched away!"

"Oh, Gnedlan," I faltered.

"Now listen," he commanded: "to-morrow morning there will be native boats in the lagoon—enough to hold all your men, and provisions to last until you get to Pinang—two days north. I labored hard with the chiefs to arrange this, because I have not the hate to massacre the men of my old friend."

"Gnedlan," I answered, "you have been pal and prophet to me, but I am bound to the wheel of my own bravado. I asked to come out here to make a killing. I shall do it even if it be—my men and I!"

"It will be your men, if you stay, Garrick. I am bound to the Mindayan wheel—strange naked men of violence who have built their army and their religion about me. In the jungle I have three times your force, each with a quicker zeal to die than your best. Alone, they are a chaos of frothing fiends, but with a leader—"

The words of the Little White Chief rang in my brain: "Kill the Spaniard first!" I saw that Gnedlan was not mad, but that his hate had seemingly burned to death a certain set of brain fibres. He desired to save me, but at the price of white men fleeing from Malays. . . . I saw that something was eating out his vitals. He had the look of one dying steady-limbed. I loved him. I had orders to kill him. The men who served me, their mothers, sweethearts, children, the nation I served with them—all demanded me to put out of the way this friend of mine.

"I could take you prisoner now, Gnedlan."

"When I came under a truce-flag?" he whispered with a smile.

"You came under a misrepresentation. You were here on the island before the marines."

"You could not take me prisoner because—because you are Garrick," he said softly.

I smiled in answer, though the moment had many phases and a bruise in each. It must have been a sick, white smile, for I felt that he had spoken the truth. I could defeat my men easier than to kill him. The moment was too big for me, and I was torn in the storm of it. I falter to express the thought which formed in my brain. Though I gave it no utterance, the fact that my brain held and fondled such a thought shows the vivid yellow of my make-up. It was that Gnedlan and I should kill each other, leaving Minday to its own and the invader.

He leaned forward and took my hand again. "You never doubted my judgment before, Garrick," he pleaded. "Take the boats in the morning. Tell them to send a regiment."

It was a dark moment in that feverish night. A cordon of American soldiers were lying about us, bound in by the jungle which was vitalized by a people who dreamed of the white man's blood; outside of all, the swaying, soulless sea. We stood together, Gnedlan and I, as we had done in other crises up the years,—carrion insects in the dead air, the only human sound a sentry's boot.

And that sound arraigned me for a slayer. . . . Fragmentary pictures of the morrow flashed through my brain. I saw the dirty fight of knives and torture, Gnedlan working out his lone war against his friend and his people; sunlight, sand, the sea, faces of my men dripping out their lives, the naked, nameless horde closing in, red-eyed, open-mouthed; the ghastly litter of war; my own boys bereft of their



trophy parts; the women, the children, and the lust. . . . And beyond it all, I saw my Gnedlan, with the torrid night settling down—sitting apart from the victory, his head bowed in his hands. . . .

“Gnedlan,” I said, “I must tell you at the end, now, that you are and have always been to me like a babe to a woman—five-sixths of my life. That being said, I can only add—go your way and we’ll slay each other in the morning—you and Minday, my men and I.”

I gave him a passport beyond the lines, his last look wringing my soul. I stepped to the window to see him make his way out into the road between the sentries, a queer, quick-moving little figure. There was no moon, and the party vanished like phantoms out of the lantern-ray at the door of headquarters. I tried to catch his thoughts as he went back to the barbarians. . . . Just then out of the dark at the south end of the town rose a scream in which was wrapped a white man’s curse, and I knew that the half-human snakes of Minday had dipped their fangs into the vitals of another American outpost. God knows I might have had more strength had the scream found me five minutes earlier.

I called in the captains, told them Minday had offered us boats to make a get-away, and that I had refused to accept. It was a good omen, however, I intimated, saying that the natives were probably hard-pressed for ammunition, or with fear of us, to send in such a word. The little American ex-marine, I lied, was bound by the truce to carry back my decision, but was promised his liberty. I felt that I was smothering in the presence of these good men. That was a night in which I put on great age.

Out of the dawn came no alarm. For an hour in the first light a native fleet hung off-shore. Gnedlan had hoped that the night would change my word. The forenoon was a martyrdom of waiting.

Full day. The jungle parted, and a small native force dashed out, as I thought, to attract our attention for a flank movement. We were squared off in the centre of the town, with the sea behind. Manifestly we could stand no driving. It was hold or fall. The intrepid little native outfit came in, bent on eating us alive. Against them was shot my own company, while the rest of us watched with frightful intensity for the development of the enemy’s strategy.

Apparently there was none. On came the mad little flock which my company stopped with a volley, and finished, even to the cripples, in a minute’s ragged firing. “Gnedlan is showing me how the Mindayans can die,” was my thought, “and presently he will show his own kind of leadership.” I wondered if he knew he was putting the old gusto of the fight into my men who had been so long and so subtly terrified. Again the jungle opened and another little host sped forth, cool, undismayed, and over it we spread steel-poisoning.

I saw my second-in-command lick his lips under his field-glass, and I heard the hoarse, wondering cry from the throats of my men—the cry that should not come from the bodies of the world's most civilized creatures, because it is a perfect fury of animal lust, because it means that fear and sense to pain are being down-ridden by the horrid hunger to kill.

“Just a lot of dog-meat,” drawled a voice, bearing to me humor out of hell.

From the destroying sand to the pitiless sun, my brain roved to find the meaning of the enemy's movement. The belated truth came in a whirlwind when the third ill-starred platoon ran out into the altar of the open. In the quick illness of utter shame my heart went out to the little man—Gnedlan, who was deliberately whipping his own force for my sake. And yet against the delicate fabric of friendship pressed the iron of my task. . . . “You are Garrick,” my thoughts ran. “You forgot it last night. Don't forget it now—Garrick, U. S. A., Major, Mex.,—a tentacle stretching out from a trunk of eighty millions—for war—for war now!”

I smashed the third finger of the enemy.

No humans would stand being cut up indefinitely in this easy, isolated fashion. That the Mindayans had suffered three such advances showed their faith and love for Gnedlan. I feared already that they would kill the man who sacrificed them, and knew that in the next move they would spend full force and fury. . . . There was silence, while we watched the jungle opening, as the crowd watches the hall of a circus-tent for the hippodrome. Anything but silence and waiting, my men could stand now, for warmed-over courage cools quickly.

But Gnedlan did not suffer us to wait long. On a splendid bay pony, he emerged alone from cover and spurred full-length around the jungle-edge and back again, bending forward in the saddle and shouting an inspiration at the horde concealed in the foliage. Numbed and cold, I watched for his death. Half of my men had dropped to the ground and were picking at the flying figure two hundred yards away with their Krags. “The Spaniard! The Spaniard!” rumbled over the American command.

Still he lived and rode; and, suddenly veering his mount toward us, he came in like a thoroughbred on the stretch. That the jungles poured out their hundreds that instant was a lesser issue to me than the fate of a single horseman.

“Get him alive! Take him alive!” I screamed. “The niggers are coming—save your shells for them!” My order went down the line, but the repeating voices were slow to break the din of firing. When I saw that the Mindayans had forgotten us in frenzy to kill their old leader, the last hope for his life died out of me. . . .

Thus he galloped in, two forces concentrating their fire at him; thus my friend came to speak to me.

"Take the fight, captain!" I called to the second-in-command. "Hold the men's fire until the natives are half across the open. I am going to get the last word from the—from the marine!"

Forty yards from my line, as I ran to him, the pony went down. In a passion to have him alone at the last, I fought back the men who would have followed me. . . . Up from the flying sand rose the face of Gnedlan with blood and a laugh and the terrible sunlight upon it. The air about my ears was electric with Mindayan slugs. He lay in the sand, smiling up at me, his body riddled by the lead of his men and the steel of mine. Yet he had words for me and a will to utter them. Faintly the words came, but not without a trace of the old briskness:

"Now, Garrick—they have no leader, and they only have two rounds of ammunition to a man—two to a man, and they're wasting a lot at me. Don't let them get in with the knives and you've got to win! . . . I thought it all out last night—and because you came—I could n't—I could n't keep my hate trimmed and burning! . . . I've hurt my soul and lost my country, but I've got you, Garrick—have n't I—always? . . . always? . . . Go back to the fight—"

His face turned toward the sand, and his passing tore the substance out of my heart. Yet a last time he raised his head, and his eyes, dim with dreams, stared back at the natives he had led.

"Garrick, Garrick," he whispered, "don't hurt your soul—lose your country. All hell rises to burn you if you do! . . . And now you must slay—my poor babes in the woods—"

"Don't you see you are dying for your country, Gnedlan?—Gnedlan!" I called into his ear, but he was gone from me.

I awoke back in the lines and broke from the surgeon who was bending over me. It seemed that instant as if all the complications which had restrained me from good leadership fell away like the leash that had bound me to the life of my friend. . . . The fight was on—the fight was on, indeed, and I was out where I belonged, delivering the message which Gnedlan had brought in:

"Don't let 'em get in with their knives! Make every shell count, boys—they're out of gun-fodder! . . . Hold, you white men—make 'em kick against the pricks—and hold for your chance of home! *Home's* the word—hold for it!" I was a mad cripple fuming along the lines.

But we did not keep off the knives. Again and again the black torrent poured in. We broke the point as it came; shattered the trunk

of the charge ere it struck, but the tail inevitably whirled and bit like a stingaree. And before we could fall back to breathe among our dead, the jungle would vomit forth another monster.

I was away upon a far plane of consciousness, trying to catch Gnedlan, who moved faster and faster and finally vanished utterly. Then it seemed as if I were lying upon the sand, when a shadow fell upon my face, a stench to my nostrils and a weight upon my breast. A vulture had settled down in my dream, and with the first tear of his beak I awoke to the pain of my wounds. There was something strange in the air. It was the silence and the dusk.

"Yes, major," the surgeon was saying, "we won the fight, and I don't think there are enough niggers on the island to give us another; but we took a horrible beating to turn the trick. . . . There, don't talk. You accumulated a half-dozen flesh-wounds—holding the men game. It was your busy day."

"Where's the body of—of the marine?" I faltered.

"The niggers dragged it back into the jungle—after their first charge."

I tried to hold fast upon normal things, because I was afraid of the vulture waiting in delirium, but the surgeon's voice travelled farther and farther, and the young stars slipped from my eyes. . . . The remnant of my four companies was relieved by the Little White Chief and safe in Manila again, before my brain swung back into the rhythm of men. Manila arose to do us honor; and until I verged unto madness from the repetition, the survivors related how "the major, all shot to hell, staggered up and down the front, keeping our blood in circulation."

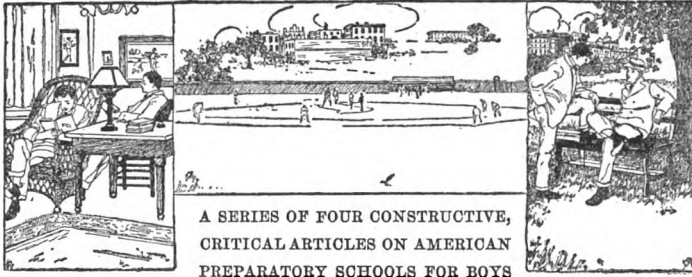
The tale became a veritable haunt to me, because I knew how my country, and the lives of those same brave boys, measured in the crisis against the inner attraction of a friend. When I think it all over again, red spots fly like little blurred disks across my wall, and I hunger for the time when the whole shall be wiped out of mind, as the horrid litter of that fight was covered by the all-digesting sand.



## A CALIFORNIA NIGHT

BY WILLIAM H. FROST

A CRESCENT moon in a purple sky;  
No sound, from crag to rill,  
Save the whispering night-winds in the palm,  
And the fountain's sluggish spill.



# EDUCATING OUR BOYS\*

BY JOSEPH M. ROGERS

## FOURTH PAPER—SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

**I**N the previous articles of this series some of the merits and some of the shortcomings of private secondary education have been considered. It remains to discuss the whole subject in a larger manner, for what affects the private school affects also the public school, its competitor.

That the subject is of growing interest is shown by the increasing attention paid to it by the greatest educators of the country. In a recent address one of the most eminent of them declared that the progress and prosperity of the whole country were absolutely bound up in secondary education. The figures already given sufficiently demonstrate this. There are almost a million boys and girls pursuing academic studies in the secondary schools of the country, while there are less than two hundred thousand in superior educational institutions. It is impossible to say how many of the latter are wholly engaged in academic study, but probably the total is not more than thirty thousand, and it may be a great deal less. The rest are enrolled in professional and technical schools.

The bulk of academic preparation for professional and technical

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\* What is termed primary education includes all to the close of the grammar grades. Secondary education is such as is supplied in high schools and boarding-schools and academies preparatory for college. Higher, or superior, education includes college or university academic courses as well as much of the professional training.

study falls, therefore, on the secondary schools. So great is the decline in the study of the "liberal arts and sciences" that it has alarmed university and college presidents. The views of President Schurman, of Cornell University, as given in his official report for last year, are here quoted not only because of his personal position in the educational world, but because Cornell in a singular manner represents and leads progressive movements in every branch of pedagogy. Dr. Schurman says:

"The spirit of the age is not favorable to the notion of liberal culture. There is a chasm between the Idealism of Athens and the Industrialism of America. Our youth frequent the gainful occupations. Our colleges of arts decline, while the scientific and technical schools are overcrowded. This is a tendency of the *Zeitgeist* which makes itself felt in every university and college in the country. All the more necessary, of course, that our faculties of liberal arts should uphold the banner of disinterested truth, beauty, and humane culture.

"One result is inevitable. As our faculties of arts cease to hold firmly and clearly the conception of liberal education, they cannot blame the people for following their example and even discrediting that unknown object as an elegant superfluity or useless ornament.

"It may be expected that, pending the recovery of an acceptable definition of liberal education, the colleges of arts in America will perform three definite functions: (1) they will give an education in the liberal arts and pure science to the comparatively small number of men who seek it before entering schools of theology, law, medicine, or technology; (2) they will train specialists in language, philosophy, history, economics, politics, and physical science, most of whom after graduation will devote themselves to teaching or writing; (3) they will give a more general education to men who will afterwards devote themselves to business, journalism, the public service, etc."



Here is a distinct admission from high authority that the college of the liberal arts has ceased to perform its functions. And there are plenty of statistics to prove this, if proof be necessary. In Cornell only eighteen per cent are in what we used to call "college," and even this statement of percentage is misleading. Figures for other institutions show in some cases a larger percentage, but it is also more apparent than real because of a peculiar system of classification.

The demonstrated fact that there is nothing to fill this void except the secondary schools is of vast importance in this discussion. Of the million boys and girls in the secondary schools of this country, only a

negligible percentage go through the colleges of liberal arts—those incentives and aids to culture which have accomplished so much in the past.

We are thus confronted with the peculiar fact that the secondary schools, which are almost new institutions with us, have passed through a double process. Their scope has been widened so as to include a curriculum which will prepare the student for entering college, and at the same time boys and girls that attend the preparatory schools are refusing in ever increasing numbers to go to college, even though they demand a type of college training while in preparation for it. This anomaly does not seem to be apparent to many of our educators, or, if so, they have not been able to impress the fact upon the public. When parents complain that their children are compelled to study too hard, they are at the same time unwilling to accept anything less than the best final results. They seem to think there is some sort of pedagogical alchemy by which boys and girls can suddenly be transformed, or else that true knowledge and culture may be injected as with a hypodermic syringe.



It is not strange that parents are perplexed. Many are themselves without even secondary education, and even those who have had a college course cannot understand what a tremendous change has taken place in the last few years. The best educated students of the older school want their boys to be educated as they themselves were, and still get all the present-day scientific and technical training for the stern battle of competition. Because this cannot be accomplished in full, nor in any degree without tremendous effort, they think there is something wrong somewhere and blame the teachers. In consequence it is not remarkable that the boy, beset by fires on every side, pulled hither and thither, comes to look upon himself as a sort of football tossed back and forth between parents and teachers for the benefit of some one other than himself.

For it is distressing—discouraging—that parents cannot be made to understand what a serious problem education is, how vast and complicated is the subject, and how much the success of their children depends upon the earnest thought which parents themselves put into the problem. The man who takes his son into his business watches over him with sedulous care: no detail is too slight to escape his observation, no amount of time and attention too great to bestow upon him so that he may in all respects learn the business in its petty details and its larger factors. But the same parent sends his boy to school and shuffles off his own paramount responsibilities upon the shoulders of the teacher, as he might present him with an umbrella. If the boy's marks

are good, he rejoices: if they are bad, he scolds the boy or the teacher or both and declares that boys do not learn as much as they did in his day—which is false in every particular. They may not be so well educated, but that is an entirely different proposition.

To the average parent, secondary education is a means to an end. The boy may be going to college or to technical school, in which case he is to get as good an equipment as possible. He may be going into business at the end of school, and hence he is to know a lot about figures and science. He does not stop to think that the boy may be getting his only chance of mental discipline, that if he is to be a cultivated and refined man, now is his best opportunity to absorb something and learn to absorb more. Usually he ignores the whole subject or else believes in self-made men, and considers experience the best university in the world. This it sometimes is, but it is also often the most disastrous. He cannot believe that there is any difference between knowledge and information, between education and culture. His mind is hazy about these distinctions, and in any event he considers them as of nothing worth, though he can tell the details of his own business to the last detail and considers them of fundamental importance.



We are met, then, with the further consideration that the secondary schools are called upon to do much of the work not only of the university and college, but of the home circle as well, and that at a time when the average mind is not ripe enough for the task. But since the condition exists, the great question remains as to what we are going to do about it. Things cannot remain as they are. They never do, and in pedagogy there is constant change. The evident need is for bolstering up secondary education in every way possible.

Probably the average reader of these articles will say that the high schools are the acme of perfection in secondary education, and that they have already solved the problem. It is not likely that any well informed parent or teacher will agree to this. High schools have their great and manifold advantages, considering the existing state of the public mind on the whole question of education. We could by no means dispense with them, but any person with the slightest understanding of the pedagogical situation is aware that they have all the defects of their qualities. It is not possible to expect from these public schools the highest development. In education the note of progress comes from the private schools, always has and always must.

We boast entirely too much of our public schools, as if we had discovered an automatic system which is working miracles daily without the interposition of any other factor than the paying of taxes. No



one denies the marvellous benefits of the public schools, but we are mistaken if we believe that the system is perfect or the best from an ideal standpoint. The poorest school may become the best if the pupil can and will make it so. Less depends upon equipment and curriculum and system than upon the individual, for it may be repeated that what is the best method of education for any single individual is not the best for any other individual in the whole world. The school is or should be a labor-saving device assisting the home circle. The parents who think that all the money, all the savants, all the science, and all the systems in the world are alone sufficient to develop and properly educate the average boy, are self deceived. The boy who does not get at home most of his education—using the term in its widest sense—is unfortunate. Some succeed over all obstacles and seemingly without any advantages, but these are few and the failures many. If you cut out the hearthstone, you eliminate that which nature and society have designated as the fundamental factor in education.



We are, then, compelled to face the fact that parents, as a rule, will not admit their full responsibilities; or admitting, will not discharge them. The State, the city, the teachers, are compelled to take up a work rejected by those who are best situated to perform it if they had only the willing mind. The parent measures the teacher by what he or she does for his child not only in mere text-book instruction but in the larger way in which the child is developed. Many of the ablest instructors, particularly in public schools, are unpopular because they refuse to take up the burden which parents attempt to impose upon them. Many of the most popular are those who act more as parents than as pedagogues. And parents ought to know at how great a cost of vitality and of personality this work of supererogation is performed. As a rule, they do not, and consider that it is part of the teacher's duty.

Leaving aside any discussion of conditions in the public schools, for the reason that they will eventually follow the lead of the best private schools, it is important that some remedial measures be taken.

We need more private schools, and we need them endowed so that not only boys of the rich or well-to-do may enjoy them.

There are five hundred titular colleges and universities in the country, but many have little right to the name, being rather glorified secondary schools. With the exception of a few State institutions, all have been founded and are maintained by private benevolence. It is doubtful if there is one of them which could get along without constant additions to equipment, endowment, or gifts to pay current expenses. The aggregate money value of these "plants" and endowments is in

the hundreds of millions, while that of the secondary schools is only a few millions. Here it is seen that the greatest good is being done to the smallest number. The average cost of maintaining a student at the average college, aside from what he pays out of his own pocket, is about two hundred dollars a year, to be provided out of endowment or current gifts. In consequence it is cheaper to send a boy to college than to secondary school, which is just the reverse of what it should be. Not that college education should be made more expensive—it already costs too much—but it is here asserted that aid should be given from the same sources which benefit college boys, to those in greater number who go to secondary school. We have seen that the average school cost at our sixty selected institutions is one thousand dollars, allowing for clothing and travelling expenses, and that the average individual cost is about seven hundred and fifty dollars, and the minimum four hundred dollars. Even the smaller sum is so large that it restricts the advantages of the best secondary education to a limited few, save for those eligibly situated near such a school, or those who hold the few existing scholarships in such institutions.

There ought to be many more endowed secondary schools, both boarding and non-boarding, in this country. There are a number of such institutions that have a fair equipment wholly donated and some endowment, but not one of them is anything like prepared to give the aid which is constantly asked by pupils of bright prospects, good mental equipment, and little means. There is practically only one secondary private school in this country that has an ample equipment and a large endowment, yet this is one of the most expensive for students.



It is not argued that these schools need an elaborate equipment. In general it is better that the "plant" be modest, and that most attention be paid to higher and better things. The boy from fourteen to twenty does not need elaborately constructed dormitories, nor is it necessary that he dine sumptuously in a magnificent hall. The more simplicity there is in the material environment, the better chance has the boy to develop esoterically. At the most impressionable time of life a boy does not need and ought not to have too much attention paid to the luxuries of life. No matter how he be situated financially or socially, he must, if he enter active life at all, have some knowledge of the relations of social forces to each other and of all the life of the country. He should learn that the value of life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesses. He ought to have the best opportunity to get the real perspective of life, to acquire that sense of proportion which will aid him in becoming a leader of men. It is

impossible, as a rule, for any one to develop without some obstacles, and a moderate amount of them is good for a boy. A great many are good for most of them.

There is need in every Congressional district for a well endowed secondary school where the best mentally equipped boys and girls may receive training. As we have already seen, this is the only training of the kind that most of them will ever get, and they ought to have the very best. Most young people, all things considered, can get it better away from home than otherwise, and they can get it reasonably enough if there is enough philanthropy in this country to produce the endowment. Most of the recent additional expense in the great colleges and universities is because of the new curricula in technical training. These courses are not needed in the secondary schools. It ought to be possible for almost any bright boy to get an education at such a school at an annual cost of not more than two hundred and fifty dollars, and there are thousands and thousands who cannot afford to pay that and for whom full scholarships should be provided.



Looking through the catalogues of nearly all of the sixty schools mentioned, there is in every one a demand for better equipment, even by those schools which are commonly called proprietary. Few of the latter make anything more than a moderate living for the principals, and in some it is noted that some building or gymnasium or even dormitory has been erected by a former student or as a memorial to one. Endowments of colleges come mostly from former students. It is true that a few men in this country who have never had a higher education have given vast sums to found or aid colleges, but the great mass of the donations come from alumni, and generally from those of comparatively modest estate. And it is a little disheartening that these should do so much for superior and so little for secondary schools, since they owe at least as great an obligation to the latter as to the former. Possibly they are moved by vanity in erecting monuments in the precincts of their alma mater, where their munificence is more apparent.

The man with a million dollars to give to education can get better results by dividing it up into scholarships among a score of secondary schools than by erecting a gorgeous dormitory for a university, and he will have a more enduring, if not so palpable a monument.

There seems some need for a readjustment of the curriculum of secondary schools so that it should not be so largely based on college entrance qualifications. The latter cannot be ignored, but at a time when so many boys are not going to college a differentiation could be arranged so as to broaden the culture and lessen the amount of useless

work, while more time may be given to developing the imaginative faculty.

It is no argument against this to say that this is a practical age, and that one must prepare for a business life which keeps us active most of the day in tasks into which the maximum of mental and physical effort is injected, so that we have no time for poetry or sentimental nonsense. If a boy is to become simply a business machine and nothing else, we had better at once close all our schools except those devoted to commercial instruction. The fact seems to be forgotten that the great men of the world in every age have been idealists, dreamers. It is "the glorious gift of imagination" which makes man truly great. He must divine the future, whether it have to do with an empire or a labor-saving machine. He must conceive material things and social conditions before they exist. The great cathedral, the mighty bridge, the great painting, the scientific invention, and the moral propaganda are solely the result of imagination.

We see some important thing accomplished, and wonder that some one had not thought of it before. We look at a sky-scraper and in admiration say that it is a noble pile of steel and stone and cement, when in fact it is as much a work of the imagination as a poem or a symphony. The great things in this world are created in the mind of man. Every boy should be trained to become creative, no matter in what groove his life may run.

Our boys need to grow up with more opportunity for thinking on their own account. Any teacher will tell you that the boy who, given a problem differing somewhat from those in the book, can work it out by means of original thought, accomplishes much more for his lasting good than he who simply follows rules. It is the glory of our secondary schools that they are developing this quality in boys, and they ought to have a chance to do a great deal more of it. This takes time, which is the greatest factor in any problem.



This takes us back to the amount of time expended in study, as explained in a former article. Experience has shown that the private schools with their average of no more than one hundred and fifty days a year devoted to original study accomplish as much, so far as examinations for entering college are a test, as do the schools where two hundred days are devoted to the same studies. Wherefore, one might say, it is useless to send a boy to the school with the longer terms. If he gets as much in one hundred and fifty as in two hundred days, by all means choose the shorter period.

If to enter college were all that is expected of secondary education,

this argument might seem sound. But we have seen that this is more largely a theoretical matter than a practical end, and, besides, it eliminates from consideration the greater number of students who do not even finish the secondary courses. Every year boys are left down because of too much pressure, when they might have gotten along very well with a longer school year. In the public high school the courses are established for the average boy, and it is the brighter ones who get the most advantage. In the private school, on the contrary, it is the brightest boys who set the pace, and the poorer ones are urged in every way to keep up with them. As a result, many of the boys in private school take five and even six years, instead of four, to complete preparation for college, when under proper conditions it could easily have been accomplished in four.

There is no just reason why the average boy or girl should not start to school early in September and remain until the middle or latter part of June, with two very brief vacation periods.



When as boys we were assigned to do some chores and attempted to carry twice as much wood as was reasonably possible or to put too many potatoes into a bag, we were told that we carried "a lazy man's load." That is to say, we were so anxious to get through a disagreeable task that we would rather suffer stress for a short time than take our work normally. That is exactly the case with many private schools. At the demand of parents, they are making the boys carry intellectually a lazy man's load. Such parents assume a grave responsibility for this fact. Their action is largely prompted by an unwillingness to have their social engagements interrupted, and as a result the boy is permitted to suffer.

To have a boy at home three weeks at Christmas time and two at Easter (or periods approaching these) is simply dividing up the year in a way that injures the boy's mind, makes concentrated application difficult, and compels him to resort to all sorts of stratagems and subterfuges to make good recitations and pass examinations. These impressive facts ought to be considered by all parents.

The point which more than any other is sought to be made by these articles is that the boy is being unjustly treated, albeit unwittingly, by those who should be his best friends, and to a large extent by those who know better or should know better. The average boy can put in thirty-nine or forty weeks a year at study with great benefit, considering the normal amount of recreation that can be secured during that time. This gives him plenty of time to digest what he learns and to get a better discipline of mind than in the shorter period. The boy does

not need mere facts stored away. There is an abundance of encyclopædias and hand-books of reference for the purpose. But he does want his mind ploughed and harrowed and sown and cultivated until he can reap a rich crop. He needs time for this. He needs encouragement, he needs inspirations, and he needs to have his ideals expanded. The idealism of youth is its greatest asset. At present our schools do most to develop the adolescent mind, and the measure of their success marks the progress of the nation.

I shall perhaps be laughed at or misunderstood when I say that the boy needs more time for poetry. In this age such a statement seems an anachronism. How many boys nowadays read poetry except under compulsion? How many books of verse do booksellers dispose of in a year? I can remember when every cultivated family had prominently on the book table copies of Tennyson, Whittier, Longfellow, or even Byron; when "Paradise Lost" was really read, and when the appearance of a book of verse by one of the great poets was considered an event in the cultured world. It is no argument to say that there are no more poets. That, if true, is a misfortune, but we have plenty of the best poetry by the older masters, which is not read by the rising generation. A course in Shakespearean literary anatomy or a few didactic dissections of poems, as often practised, is generally worse than nothing at all. It is wholly opposed to the poetic spirit. It makes a task of what should be the most delightful occupation in the world. The boy is not to be blamed for this. During his adolescent years he will read poetry with avidity if only he is initiated into its beauties, if only his tendencies are steered in the right direction. At the time the fires of youth are burning with intense heat, when the strongest of human passions, the greatest spurs to action, are being developed, he will, to his great benefit, feed these fires on good poetry if only he gets the proper inspiration.



After all, it is the poet who is the man of deeds. "The things which are seen are temporal: the things which are not seen are eternal." Homer (or the Homeric syndicate, if you please,) did more for Greece than Alexander; Æschylus and Sophocles more than Cimon or Themistocles. Vergil and Horace made Latin literature and a Roman empire, while Dante formed a united Italy long before Victor Immanuel knocked at the gates of Rome. Arndt is more entitled to be known as the father of the German Empire than either Bismarck or von Moltke, while Goethe and Schiller laid out the work even before the balladists began singing the songs of the people. The legions of Grant would never have been gathered save that Whittier sang and Lincoln gave us the grandest of poetry, albeit without versification.

When Wolfe, descending upon Quebec, announced that he would rather be the author of Gray's *Elegy* than victor of Canada he spoke a truth the essence of which has been echoed in the hearts of many great men. He was a prophet and seer who cared not who made the laws of a people so long as he might write their songs. We all of us need more poetry in our lives. It makes better husbands and better wives, better fathers and better mothers. It is the light shining in the darkness of the soul, which illumines and satisfies and removes the dread incubus of worry.

In our ignorance and boastfulness and stupidity we sneer at the people of the Far East as being dreamers—an impracticable and lazy sort of people who are content to live in degradation. Yet out of the East has come every world religion, and religion is the mightiest power in the world. The East is the home of poetry, of romance and action. That mysterious section has had a dominating power over the West even when popularly despised. It drew Alexander and Lucullus, Pompey and Mark Antony. It beckoned the Crusaders by unnumbered myriads. It developed and perfected the arts and sciences when Europe for centuries was submerged in barbarism and intellectual sloth. It tempted Napoleon, and to-day every great nation of the world is a-hungered for a slice of Asia. It is the battleground of history, and by many looked upon as the coming battlefield of Armageddon. But the East, even when in chains, has ever conquered the West. Captivity has led captive because of the impelling force of imagination which knows no swords, no prison bars. It was with this in mind that Shakespeare wrote:

The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus.  
Let no such man be trusted.

The voice of the Bard of All Time needs to be heard in "these practical days." Let us cultivate the soul more, even if it were necessary (which is not the case) to neglect our general intelligence for a little. Who would not rather be a Shakespeare than a Cæsar; a Victor Hugo than a Napoleon; a Bryant than a Genghis Khan? Perhaps none of us can expect to be like any of these in full measure, but if only we possess the right ideals, we shall in some measure accomplish our desires.

In these articles, written for the purpose of stimulating parents and teachers to better things in education, there may be a note which is seemingly of a destructive character, but such has not been the intention.

The private schools are doing splendid work, and they are to be encouraged in every way. Their shortcomings are largely the result of popular misconception, and it is for this reason that this effort is being made to awaken parents and teachers to a higher sense of their mutual responsibilities. The noble band of men and women engaged in secondary education are the peers of any men and women in the world. Their labors are intense, their responsibilities abnormally heavy, they are underpaid, and their greatest handicap is that so often they must work against the ignorance and prejudices of patrons who want bricks made without straw, but insist on the full tale at the end of every session.

These teachers know best what can be done; they wish to do it, but they never can accomplish the best results until they have the hearty and intelligent coöperation of all forces involved, to the end that the youth of this country may go forth to the duties of life "thoroughly furnished to all good works."



## WHAT GOLD CANNOT BUY

BY MARGARET ERSKINE

I OFFERED my gold and silver,  
 I offered my house and lands—  
 All I possessed—to purchase  
 But a grain of the Sandman's sands  
 He keeps for the eyes of children  
 Who, when the shadows creep,  
 He lays in the arms of twilight,  
 To rock to the Land Asleep.

But gold would not buy his treasures,  
 Nor silver, nor house and lands.  
 No goods of the world can purchase  
 A grain of the Sandman's sands;  
 But only a soul unfeeling,  
 Only a heart new born,  
 Only a faith unbroken,  
 Only a trust unsworn.

Only for these the Sandman  
 Opens his generous hands  
 And gives with unstinting measure  
 The grains of his priceless sands.



# THE DELUSION OF GIDEON SNELL

*By James Raymond Perry*

I HAD not visited Mayville for twenty years, but now, chancing to travel through the section in which the village was located, I felt a sudden longing to stay over for a day and take a look at the old town. My train arrived at three o'clock on an October afternoon, and the first object that caught my eye was the modern affair of stone and brick which had replaced the old wooden structure with which I was familiar. Two or three other new buildings in the immediate vicinity gave the town a different aspect from that of the old days; but when I had passed up the principal street a short distance I found the changes were so slight that I could have believed it not more than twenty days, rather than twenty years, since I had been there.

The exterior of the old hotel looked the same as when I last saw it—even to the somewhat dingy paint; though I suppose it must have had several new coats since then.

A new clerk stood behind the desk in the hotel office, but that was about the only change I noticed. The same old pictures hung on the walls; the same old stove stood on its bed of sand; the same old chairs were ranged around; and I doubted not that when evening came the same old idlers—such as were left—would assemble to smoke, discuss politics, and gossip about the town affairs.

I inquired of the clerk if Shelby Bowker still lived on the old Bowker place, and was told that he did. Bowker had been my most intimate companion during the last part of the two years I spent in Mayville; so I determined to go out and see him and renew our long-interrupted friendship. I had received no word from him since I left, neither of us being much given to letter-writing. In fact, through all these years I had no news at all from the town.

The Bowker place was some two miles from the village—just a pleasant distance for a walk that crisp afternoon. So, declining the clerk's proffer of a conveyance, I started forth.

Not far from the hotel I passed the house where Amy Bliss had lived, and I wondered if she lived there still. Probably not. Probably

she had married and moved elsewhere—perhaps far away from Mayville. After twenty years I still recalled the graces of Amy's face and form, and felt in my breast a feeble twinge of pain and a vague sense of loss. All these years I had remained a bachelor, and it made me feel a bit homesick and lonesome to see the house where I had courted Amy.

The village was soon left behind, and thereafter only an occasional house was seen by the roadside. The bushes along the way stood thicker and higher than formerly, and in places whole groves of pine trees had grown up.

I knew that about a mile out from the village a foot-path diverged from the road, and that by following this to Bowker's place a considerable distance would be cut off. I had approached the spot where the path began when I noticed in front of me a lad carrying a short fishing-rod. In one hand he held a forked stick on which were strung four or five small fishes. He was sauntering along leisurely, and I soon overtook him.

As I approached he turned his face towards me, and I noticed a birthmark on his left cheek. Though it was n't large, it was noticeable. The mouth instantly weakened into a helpless little laugh when he saw me, and, without waiting for me to speak, he said, "Hello!" in a peculiarly thin, high voice. I felt sure at once that he was not quite right mentally.

I said "Good afternoon," and was for passing by, but he quickened his step to keep pace with mine. After the manner of weak-minded persons, he appeared to be fond of hearing his own voice. Within a moment of our meeting he was telling me, with ill-concealed pride, of his great skill as a fisherman, and exhibited his poor little catch as evidence.

When he saw me turn towards the foot-path, he turned also, and asked: "Be you going to Snell's or Bowker's?"

"To Bowker's," I said.

"I thought maybe you might be going to Snell's. I'm Snell's Gideon. Do you know Bowker?" he went on.

I replied that I knew him twenty years ago, but had n't seen him since. "I suppose you know him, don't you?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, I know him," he said.

"Is he married?" I asked.

I glanced back as I put the question, and saw a curious look on the weak face.

"Not now," he said.

"Did his wife die?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, she died all right enough," he answered, and his helpless laugh broke unpleasantly on my ears.

I turned and looked at the lad, and said sharply: "What are you laughing at? What do you mean when you say that 'she died all right enough'?"

The boy glanced around him as if to make sure no one was lurking in the bushes by the path, and then said in a half whisper: "She was murdered."

"Murdered!" I exclaimed. "Who murdered her?"

"Oh, I guess old Bowker did," he said. His words were careless enough now, and he spoke in his former high and peculiar tone, for the path, which had been bordered with bushes, had passed up to an open field.

He was garrulous enough now, and as we walked along he related a strange tale. I gathered from his not always quite intelligible talk that about two years before the wife of Shelby Bowker had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. A fruitless search was made, and when no trace of her could be found, there arose suspicion of foul play. It transpired that the girl who had worked for the Bowkers had seen husband and wife start for the village by way of the foot-path directly after breakfast one morning. That was the last seen of Mrs. Bowker by any one except her husband. The latter's story was that they started out together, his wife with the purpose of going on an errand to Snell's, and he with the intention of going to the village. Where the path branched off towards the Snell place, she left him; and he never saw her afterward.

"And was no trace of her ever found?" I asked of the lad.

"Naw, they never found nothin' of her," was his reply. "Bowker he said she'd went crazy and walked into the river, like as not. Allowed she'd been actin' queer for a day or two, but he thought she'd got over it that mornin'."

"Did they drag the river?" I asked.

The lad nodded, but I was n't sure that he fully understood my meaning.

"She did n't go crazy," pursued the half-witted fellow, more interested in that part of the story than in my question. "Old Bowker knocked her on the head."

"How do you know he knocked her on the head?" I asked in a rather severe tone.

"'Cause he did," the boy answered stolidly. "That's the way anybody'd do."

I could n't help a feeling of repulsion for the lad when he uttered the cold-blooded words. I felt certain that if any one weaker than himself were to offend him, he would not hesitate to "knock him on the head" if opportunity offered.

"Well, if he killed her, what did he do with the body?" I asked.

The boy looked at me cunningly.

"That's where old Bowker had a level head," he said. "He pitched her into the quicksand, and it swallowed her up."

"The quicksand?" I repeated. "There is no quicksand in this part of the country."

The lad's face was expressionless. Whether I believed him or not was apparently a matter of indifference to him.

"Did yer see that gopher?" he exclaimed suddenly, pointing up the path. He seemed to have lost all interest in the Bowker question.

We had reached a fork in the path now, and the boy turned off on the branch that led, presumably, to "Snell's." I kept to the straight path which led up to Bowker's.

I had gone only a little distance when I heard the boy's high voice piping to me. I turned and saw him back where the path forked.

"Look out an' not get inter the quicksand!" he shouted, and then disappeared.

"You little liar!" I muttered. "If you had n't made up that yarn about the quicksand, I might have suspected that there was truth in the story."

A little later I was standing at the door of Shelby Bowker's residence. Externally, the old place was little changed. The trees around the house were somewhat larger, and where formerly had been a flower garden was now a neglected patch. Otherwise things looked much the same.

Bowker himself had changed more than his surroundings, though I should have known him had I met him anywhere. His splendid, large brown eyes, once seen, were not easily forgotten. The brown hair had grown quite gray, and there were lines around the eyes and mouth that were not there twenty years before. He moved slowly when he walked, and explained later that he was a victim of rheumatism in the right leg.

He knew me at once, and greeted me with flattering cordiality. When he learned that my bag was at the hotel, nothing would do but that he must send a man to get it.

"You must be my guest while you are in town," he said.

When we entered the dining-room a half-hour later, I saw that covers were laid for but two. A rather pretty young woman came in to wait upon us. She was the wife of the man who worked on the place, my friend explained during one of her temporary absences in the kitchen.

"And have you never become a benedict?" I found occasion to ask.

Bowker smiled. "No," he said; "I've remained a bachelor so far, and am likely to to the end."

After dinner we went into Bowker's snug little library, where in past years he and I had spent many happy hours together.

The weather had changed, and it was raining now. We could hear the autumn tempest pelting against the pane; it seemed very cozy and comfortable sitting there, with our pipes and glasses, and the wood fire that the young woman had set to blazing on the hearth.

The hours flew by, while first one and then the other recalled some incident of the past. Bowker seemed the same good fellow that I had known twenty years ago, and he was as ready with his wit and beaming smile as he had been then.

"And what's become of Amy Bliss?" I asked at last.

"Amy Bliss?" repeated Bowker. "Oh, she married about two years after you went away. She and her husband moved out West somewhere—Colorado, I think. I used to hear of her occasionally, but I've heard nothing for a dozen years now."

"I used to think she liked you better than me, and that I might have won her if it had n't been for you," I said. I could speak of the matter now without a pang. I had never had any feeling against Bowker, for he had made no effort to win her while I was in the field. Indeed, he had seemed cold and indifferent to her. In those days I had thought his very indifference piqued her and made her all the more eager to gain his attention and admiration.

Bowker smiled. "I don't think she was very fond of me," he said. "She was a pretty girl, though, and any man might have felt flattered to gain her love."

When the flow of reminiscence had begun to diminish, I happened to think of the lies the Snell boy had related on the way from the village, and I laughed aloud. "I beg your pardon, Shelby," I said; "but I was thinking of a weird tale a half-witted lad whom I ran across on the way out told about you. He said that some two years ago your wife disappeared, and that you were suspected of murdering her. He announced it as his opinion that you knocked her on the head and then threw her body in a bed of quicksand."

As I proceeded, a smile gathered on Bowker's face, and when I mentioned the quicksand he laughed, though not very heartily.

"The boy had a birthmark on one cheek, had n't he?" he asked.

"Yes," I said.

"That is Gideon Snell. He's a rather bright idiot or a very dull boy, whichever way you care to put it. He's the most famous liar in the county. The yarns that he tells about various people in the vicinity are the most ludicrous and impossible things imaginable. How he ever thinks them up is a mystery.

"Do you remember Arthur Watson? He was a young lawyer, just starting in when you left here, you know. Well, this Snell lad related

to me, one time, down to the minutest detail, a story about how Watson had been found in his office one morning, bound hand and foot and gagged, and how robbers had looted his safe and made off with more than two thousand dollars in cash and securities worth about twelve thousand dollars more. There was n't a word of truth to it. And so Gideon has made me kill an imaginary wife and hide her body in an imaginary bed of quicksand!" And Bowker laughed merrily. "Why, there is n't any quicksand within five hundred miles of here, that I know of," he added.

"What did you think when he was spinning his yarn?" he asked, looking at me with frank eyes. "Did you think your old friend had really turned criminal?"

"No; I knew the lad was lying," I said. "He related some impossible fish stories before he began to exercise his imagination on you."

It was late when we retired that night, and it was late the next morning before I arose. The storm had passed, and things looked bright and fresh in the sunlight. Bowker was up before me, and greeted me with a cheery smile when I came down to breakfast.

He was much distressed when the hired man announced that the horse had been taken ill in the night, and that it would be impossible to drive to the station.

"It looks very inhospitable, my dear fellow, packing you off on foot, with grip in hand," Bowker said in a regretful tone. "If I had a neighbor near by whom I could call on, you should not walk. And, at all events, you should n't walk alone if I had the use of my limbs."

I told him not to feel distressed; that a walk that bright morning would not be unwelcome, and my only regret was that his disability prevented my enjoying his company a little longer.

"Take the foot-path," he shouted from the door as I was passing through the gate. "It'll save you quite a distance. Good-by!" And so we parted.

The foot-path passed down through a valley not far from the Bowker place, and a bend in the river brought the shore up to within less than a furlong's space. As I approached the bottom of the little valley I heard a tumult of excited cries and laughter. Pushing through the bushes that bordered the path, I saw a group of five or six boys a few rods away, gazing at some object in front of them. As I drew nearer, one of the boys seized another who was a little in advance of the rest, and shouted: "Look out, Jack! You'll get in yourself, if you don't take care!"

Then I saw what they were looking at. A few feet beyond, slowly sinking in an ooze of sand and mud, was a wretched yellow cur. Only the head and shoulders and the forepaws were now above the surface.

The poor creature would remain quiet for a moment, and then struggle to extricate himself, but each effort was more feeble than the last, and he was plainly much exhausted. Slowly but surely his body was being engulfed in the treacherous compound. He was n't a pretty dog, but he had one fine feature—a pair of beautiful dark eyes; and they were now looking piteously and imploringly up at the callous faces of the youngsters.

“How did he get in there, boys?” I asked.

“We caught him and threw him in,” replied one of the larger ones with a grin, as if it was a joke that I could relish.

I looked about me, but there was nothing in sight that I could use to aid the poor creature. I recalled seeing a plank beside the path a little distance back, and ran back for it; but it was farther than I had thought, and when I returned, dragging the board, the surface of the bed was smooth. A bubble or two out on the wet surface was all that was left to show where the dog had been swallowed up.

The boys had gone. I could hear them screaming and shouting as they ran down the path towards the town.

I turned away from the spot, sick at heart. For a moment I halted, irresolute, debating whether I should not return to the house and demand of Shelby Bowker how it was that he was ignorant that there was a bed of quicksand within a half-mile of his home.

Then I turned and hurried towards the village, which I reached just in time to board the train. The train passed out in the direction of the Bowker place, and at one point it went by an open field, whence I could look up and see the white walls and chimneys of my old friend's house, standing behind its group of half-denuded trees.

“Is that you, Frank Dawson?”

I looked up at the question, and saw a gentleman in the car aisle, with his hand extended, and a smile on his face.

“I am Frank Dawson,” I answered; “and your face looks familiar, but I can't place you.”

“Don't you remember Arthur Watson?” he asked.

“I should say I did!” was my rejoinder, and I grasped the proffered hand. He said he had seen me as I was getting on the train, and thought I looked like some one he knew; then after a little it flashed upon him who I was, and he came over to speak to me. After a few questions, he asked where I had stayed in Mayville.

I told him.

“Ah, yes; I remember you and Bowker were great friends.” I noticed there was some constraint in his tone when he mentioned Bowker's name.

“Tell me about him,” I said. “I have reason to believe there is some mystery that I have n't fathomed.”

"You have n't heard, then? Well, it's a sad story. Bowker did n't get along well with his wife——"

"He was married, then?" I interrupted in some surprise.

"Yes—sixteen or eighteen years ago, I should say. For several years they appeared to live together happily enough, but after a time the village heard vague rumors of quarrels between them, and about two years ago she suddenly disappeared. No trace of her was ever found. Bowker expressed the opinion that she had roamed away in a fit of dementia, and flung herself into the river. Repeated draggings of the river revealed nothing, however, and common gossip offers a more probable and far more grewsome solution of the mystery."

"Foul play?"

"Yes; the belief is pretty general that Bowker murdered his wife and threw the body into a bed of quicksand not far from his home. Some attempt was made to search the bed, but no thorough search could be made in the shifting sands, and nothing was discovered. There is no tangible evidence to support the theory, and I should dislike very much to base a personal opinion upon any evidence that is at hand; but the belief, nevertheless, is most persistent that Mrs. Bowker found her grave, either through foul play or accident, in the bed of quicksand. Those who hold to this theory say that in no other way could she have passed so utterly from all human ken. That it was an accident is unlikely, they say, as the location of the quicksand was well known to her."

"I don't remember to have ever heard of the place when I lived here," I said.

"No, its presence was unsuspected till about twelve years ago. It was discovered by Bowker himself, who nearly lost his own life in it at the time."

"Bowker was never tried, I suppose?"

"No; the grand jury returned no indictment. There was practically no evidence, and the *corpus delicti* could not be proven."

I was silent.

"Since his wife's disappearance," proceeded Watson, "Bowker rarely comes into the village. He claims to have rheumatism in one leg; but that is believed to be merely an excuse for not leaving his home. It is well known he has been addicted to the use of opium for years, and no one knows when to believe what he says and when not to."

The train was slowing up at the next station beyond Mayville.

"This is where I get off," said the lawyer, and he rose to leave.

"By the way," I asked, as he was leaving, "whom did Bowker marry—any one I knew?"

"Why, yes; you must have known her. Her name was Amy Bliss."



# A HUNDRED DOLLARS DOWN

By *Anna Wharton Morris*



## I.

THE gloom of the long second-story corridor was unbroken, except where the stairs descended. When Alice reached this blessed point of daylight her attention was caught by a large white placard, conspicuously nailed against the wall. It read:

A HUNDRED DOLLARS DOWN  
for the person who returns to the hotel office  
A LADY'S GOLD RING,  
made in the form of a serpent holding a spinel ruby in its mouth.

All thought of her own affairs vanished before this simple announcement. She forgot Harold, her fiancé, whom she had left; and her sick mother, whom she had brought; she even forgot her fear of going down to dinner alone.

Suddenly, and with the sharpness of a pistol-shot, a door close to the placard was flung open, and a tall man dashed out.

Alice and he were thus brought face to face, both startled. She stammered, "Oh, excuse me!" and was immediately ashamed of having spoken. He examined her with a quick glance, then smiled pleasantly, and, saying, "No harm done," walked downstairs.

This abrupt encounter made an impression on the lonely girl out of all proportion to its importance. She knew how it would have pained Harold, who had never in his life been abrupt.

When she went into the dining-room she could not help noticing the tall man, for his seat was near the door; and she could not help blushing, for he was looking straight at her. His lean, dark face held no marks of youth, except the eager eyes, which missed nothing.

Night after night, as Alice went to dinner, she felt the unescapable eyes; but she never saw his eyes or him during the day. There proved to be no one in the hotel whom she cared to know, except a Miss Potter, who formed the habit of chatting with her.

The only way she could baffle her homesickness was to walk, and one day her enthusiasm over the wooded slopes carried her farther than she intended, and brought her to the prettiest glen that mortal ever saw.

She sat right down on the moss, in full enjoyment of the beautiful nook. As her hand rested beside her, it touched something, something harder than the moss. And when she looked under her hand the something glittered. She picked it up—and in her palm lay a lady's gold ring, in the form of a serpent holding a spinel ruby in its mouth.

To find such a toy of civilization in a mountain solitude seemed positively weird. So the nameless lady must have sat just where Alice was sitting now! She cleaned the ring with her handkerchief, and slipped it on her finger. It fitted her, and made a strikingly handsome ornament. When she should be married she might ask Harold—but no, he would never consent to copy such an unconventional ring as that. And she sighed. Anyhow, she had the pleasure of wearing it all the way back to the hotel.

Marching straight to the office, she gave it safely into the hands of the head-clerk.

“There has been great anxiety about this ring,” said the business-like tones of the clerk. “You will please come to me to-morrow for the reward.”

She grew red. She had forgotten. A hundred dollars down! How humiliating, how vulgar! “I do not wish any reward,” she said with dignity.

The clerk showed no emotion, but volunteered that the owner would insist upon giving it. “Then,” said Alice excitedly, “she must never know who found the ring. I would n't be mixed up with this money for anything. Promise not to say a word that could lead to my discovery! You must promise, please.”

And the clerk was enough impressed to promise.

The following day her mother's nurse needed a hot-water bag, and as there was no store nearer than the foot of the mountain, Alice went down in the old stage. She amused herself about the funny little village until time for the return trip, when she clambered into the stage again, her arms full of bundles.

Sinking out of breath on the horsehair seat, she found herself looking into the eyes of the man at whose chamber-door she had stood. He was the only other passenger. The poor girl felt an unreasonable impulse to get out again, but the horses had already started.

She struggled hard to calm herself, to appear perfectly indifferent; but just as she succeeded, she caught sight of his hand, and on his little finger shone the ring which had adorned her own hand only the day before. She could not suppress a start of surprise.

“You recognize the advertised ring?” he said. “I was mighty fortunate ever to see it again.”

“But it's a lady's ring!” she answered involuntarily. Then added, “Oh, excuse me!” and turned away in hot confusion.

But if she had finished, he had not. As the stage rumbled on its way, his smile grew broader.

"Do you know, that's the second time you've asked me to excuse you, and all for nothing. It's useless to put on formalities with me."

She wanted to feel outraged, but she did n't.

"What's the sense," he asked pleasantly, "of thinking you can't speak to any one without an introduction? My name is Robert Burke, and you are Miss Alice Dixon—so now it's just the same as if we'd been introduced."

"I'm afraid not," said Alice, timidly smiling.

"Indeed, it's better than many introductions," he added, "because we really want to know each other."

She was indignant at the assumption.

"Why," he continued, "an introduction without previous knowledge is as empty as a marriage ceremony without previous love."

She began to blush, but, seeing that he was perfectly natural and in earnest, she found herself saying, "But you'll admit the necessity of the marriage ceremony!"

She felt she had achieved an easy triumph, until he answered, "Only publicly. It means nothing between the individuals. If I did n't know that the woman I wanted would stick to me without a ceremony, I would n't have her with a ceremony."

All Alice's home standards arose in solemn warning. She looked across the distant slopes, then suddenly asked, "Is it your theory that's convincing, or only your manner?"

"That's one on me," he shouted. "But judge for yourself. A ceremony of marriage or of introduction is only words. It's what's underneath that counts. There are plenty of girls who willingly live on words alone. It's all they want or understand. But you're not that sort."

She looked at him in frank astonishment. "What *do* you mean? You don't know anything about me."

"Don't I?"—he smiled kindly, parentally. "Can you suppose I don't know anything about you, when I have daily seen recognition in your eyes, in your blush? When I have witnessed the struggle between your assumed propriety and your real self?"

It was too much. She could n't stand it. None of her own friends said such things. All at once she realized the impossibility of remaining another minute shut up with this extraordinary person. So, calling sharply to the driver to stop, she said she would walk the rest of the way. Upon this the masculine passenger cried cheerfully, "Good heavens, child! If you really don't want my company, I'm the one to walk." And he was out before she could say a word.

She felt very uncomfortable about it, knowing that the command

not to talk to any one without an introduction was the very rock basis of society, its chief strength and bulwark. Yet this man had such a curious effect upon her that such considerations seemed trivial, even unworthy.

Thereafter, she never looked toward his table in the dining-room. This was very difficult, but if their eyes had met she would inevitably have smiled; and her unchaperoned state and Mrs. Dixon's orders made recognition impossible.

Thus the matter rested, until Sunday morning brought another surprise. When Alice stepped out on the piazza ready for church, Miss Potter was lying in wait for her, side by side with the interesting man!

Miss Potter put her hand on Alice's arm, saying, "Good morning, Miss Dixon. Is n't it a perfect day! I want to introduce Mr. Burke to you, may I? Mr. Burke, Miss Dixon. Now you must pardon me for hurrying off to church, or I'll be late." And away she went, unnoticed by the couple, who were laughingly shaking hands.

"I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Burke," said Alice.

"Are you, indeed?" he responded gravely. "I was glad to meet you, Miss Dixon, five days ago. But never mind. Now we've settled that little affair, will you take a walk with me?"

"I was going to church," she answered weakly.

"So I judged," he said. "In fact, I built on that, and got Miss Potter to wait here for you."

"Then you mean, will I walk to church with you?"

"No, I don't mean anything of the kind," he said pleasantly. "I never go, because there's so much service at church that I have no chance to worship."

Though his words sounded blasphemous to her orthodox ears, the expression of his face was reverent enough.

He continued briskly, "But to return to my question. Will you take a walk with me?"

For an instant she wavered, then gave him a straightforward smile with her "Yes, thank you."

Alice left her parasol, prayer-book, and gloves inside, and had a delightful feeling that she had also laid aside all mental encumbrances.

"So you have more faith in me," he began, "since Miss Potter stands my sponsor. But what do you know about Miss Potter?"

"Oh," said Alice gaily, "she says her grandmother was a Cookman."

His eyes twinkled. "This is the first time I knew that one's grandmother being a Cookman made one innocuous. Does a grandfather serve as well?"

"You're making fun of me," she said.

"Honor bright! *My* grandfather was a Cookman."

"No!" she cried. "Then you're——"

"Miss Potter's cousin."

"How nice!" said she.

"Now, seriously," he asked, "why does that fact give you any satisfaction, Miss Dixon?"

"Because it's something definite to tell my mother," said Alice truthfully.

"Oh, your mother. It's too bad she's ill. And you spend every evening in her room."

"How do you know that?" Alice opened round eyes.

"I surmised so, because I searched for you unsuccessfully three nights running."

"Well, since you know where I spend my evenings, perhaps you'll tell me where you spend your days."

"In the woods," he said simply, in secret enjoyment of the revelation made by her inquiry.

"Shooting?" she asked innocently.

"No, thank God! I have n't that on my conscience."

Here the road curved, and Burke flung his arm out in a great free gesture toward the magnificent view below them. She stopped, athrill with exhilaration, and both dropped down on a sentinel rock.

She breathed deep, filled with awe and wonder.

"Ah, yes," he said; "this is more inspiring than church."

The remark brought her back to earth. "But I ought to have gone," she sighed.

"No!" he exclaimed with some vehemence. "If you ought to have gone, you would have gone. But why do you say you ought to have gone?"

"Because my mother always likes me to."

He turned square round and looked at her. She wondered what on earth he was going to say. No man had ever raised her interest to such a pitch.

He knit his brows, asking abruptly, "How old are you?"

She gasped, feeling an impulse to be indignant, as she would with any one else. But she saw that the usual attitude would be utterly wasted on him. She saw that he expected a simple answer,—and he got it.

"I am twenty-four," she said.

"Twenty-four," he repeated thoughtfully. "That seems grown-up, mature, old enough to go your own way."

Now she was thoroughly aroused. "No, *not* old enough to go my own way, if that means disregarding my mother's wishes. I know," she continued, her cheeks scarlet, "you're talking about individualism!" (the word spoken with extreme scorn). "That's only another name for selfishness!"

Burke did not seem to notice how remarkably pretty the excitement made her. But his tone softened, as he said, "You mistake me, Miss Dixon. I said nothing about disregarding your mother's wishes, heaven help me! But religion is a deeper matter than mere wishes." He looked her in the face. "It is the bond between each person and his Maker."

Was this the man whom she had supposed to be less religious than the churchgoers? The discovery of her mistake was a revelation. It enabled her mind to cast off its chains of custom, and feel itself free of the universe.

"I see what you mean," she said. "People try to confine worship within four walls, when it takes all outdoors to express it, to hold it."

"Rather say," he rejoined, "that people try to confine worship to word formulas, when it demands the surrender of the whole human heart."

She looked at him with absorption, noting the fire in his eyes. Suddenly she cried, in a tone of triumph, "Now I know what you do every day in the woods!"

Surprised at her quick change, he remarked, "A woman always returns to personalities. Well, what do I do in the woods? I suppose you think I invent sermons for little girls."

She was rather scared, but answered, "I think you write novels."

His eyes twinkled anew, then he threw back his head and laughed so heartily that the hills echoed.

"Don't you?" she persisted.

"Good heavens, no!" he cried. "I have too much respect for genius to try to write novels."

She sighed. "Then I'm no wiser than I was."

He looked puzzled for a moment, then amused. "You funny little puss, you want to know what I do in the woods. Why not say so?"

"Well," she said bravely, "what do you do in the woods?"

"I study birds," was the unexpected answer. "The university sent me up here for some special data. You see, there's nothing mysterious in that."

She smiled at the simplicity of it, saying, "What a beautiful business!"

"Yes," he agreed. "The dear little things are more inspiring in their own homes than they are upon ladies' hats." He glanced at Alice's white-breasted hat, and added, "Even though the ladies be kneeling in a church."

"Oh!" she cried, half frightened. "You have such a way of saying things! I've often been told it's wicked to wear feathers, but this is the first time I believed it. I shall never feel comfortable in this hat again."

"Then why wear it?" he smiled.

"Why," she gasped, "it's pretty, is n't it?"

He nodded.

"And it cost so much!"

"Yes," said he; "it cost much—of life and joy."

She jumped up, crying, "Now, Mr. Burke, must a person go to the bottom of everything like that?" With sudden temerity: "Were n't you occasionally thoughtless yourself when you were young?"

He looked up at her quizzically. "Yes, I was occasionally thoughtless myself—when I was young!" Then with a chuckle: "My dear Miss Dixon, let me add that you also have quite a way of saying things; for, although I have often been told I am getting old, this is the first time I believed it."

The girl's brow puckered. "Oh, how awfully rude of me! But I thought men did n't mind."

"Don't you know," he rejoined, "that it always gives a fellow a pang to see himself as others see him? But"—rising—"you're restless, and want to be getting back to dinner."

## II.

THE gliding days brought punctual letters and roses from Harold. Alice could rehearse the contents of the letters before opening them; and as for the roses—why, there was nothing original, nothing personal, in sending a girl roses. And even if he should follow them in person, it would not add much gaiety to existence. "For," thought Alice, "Mr. Burke says more interesting things in just once walking out from dinner than Harold ever said in his whole life!"

Then came a cloudy Wednesday, so cloudy that she was afraid to go for her customary walk. And during lunch the sky grew darker and rain began to fall heavily.

Her meal finished, Alice stood at the elevator door, waiting to be taken upstairs, for an afternoon of uninterrupted gloom. The elevator-door opened and she was about to step in when a breathless voice cried, "Oh, please, Miss Dixon!"—and the car ascended without her.

"My soul, that was a close shave!" said Burke. "In another minute you'd have been gone irrevocably, and I should n't have seen you all day."

"How absurd!" said smiling Alice. "If you wanted to see me, it would have been a simple matter to send your name up to my mother's room, would n't it?"

"No," he rejoined; "not without also sending up a copy of my family tree, and in the haste of packing I neglected to put one in my trunk. But"—as they walked along the corridor—"it's all right now. You're not nurse this afternoon?"

"No," said Alice; "I have nothing to do. Let's go into the east parlor."

The room was quite deserted, and the noise of the rain and the distant thunder only served to make them feel more cozy. "Thanks be to the elements," said Burke, stretching out his long legs in front of him, "which drove me in to seek shelter."

"And your birds?" asked Alice.

"They all sought shelter too. There's a strange little fellow up here that I'm keeping my eye on. We'll have another walk next Sunday, won't we?—and I'll show you where he hides himself."

Before she could answer, a big clap of thunder which reverberated on all sides of them made her jump.

"It's getting nearer"—he spoke with satisfaction. "There's nothing more glorious than a great storm in the mountains, I think. The worse the storm, the better it proves how steadfast these hills are."

The room grew very black, and Alice gripped her hands together.

"Another of your wise theories," she said. "But I should rather have it proved when I'm not here."

Suddenly the darkness was lit by a blinding flash, and the thunder ripped directly over their heads. She involuntarily covered her eyes, and when she raised them again Burke saw two shining tears. Astonished, he asked, "Are you really frightened, Miss Alice Dixon?"

"Ye-yes, of course I am," stammered the girl, expecting him to laugh at her.

Instead of that, he said, "Well, if you are really frightened, I shall have to invoke my ring."

"What on earth do you mean?" said trembling Alice.

"My ring," he replied gravely. "It has a spinel in it."

She nodded. "Well?"

"Well, spinel rubies are from the east, you know, and consequently are the theme of some curious legends. Many of them come from a mine in Badakshan, which was only discovered—so the Persians say—when an earthquake rent the mountain asunder." His voice sank lower. "And in a storm, they believe you to be quite safe from lightning if you touch the four corners of your house with a spinel ruby."

The sound of Burke's calm, deep voice quieted the girl's nerves and almost convinced her of the truth of the eastern legend. She watched his tall figure move slowly about the room in the semi-darkness, touching each corner with his magic ring. When the next flash illuminated him she could even see the glint of gold in his hand; but this time the crash was longer in following. Returning to her sofa, he smiled kindly at her and sat down.

Alice snuggled into the furthest end, saying, "That's an awfully



weird performance, Mr. Burke. Do you really and truly believe in a charm against the elements?"

He looked very big and dependable. "As much as I believe in any superstition," he answered. "It soothes the mind. It is as efficacious as prayer."

She could scarcely manage to say, "Are you a perfect heathen? Don't you believe in prayer?"

He leaned over and looked her straight in the face. "My dear girl, a wise God would not stop making thunder-storms because a mortal asked him—any more than a wise mother would give up the necessary custom of baking bread because a child asked her."

She shivered. "Oh, I suppose that's just. But it makes a person feel so small and helpless."

"Yes," said Burke; "the popular sentiment is, that nature exists for us humans. As a matter of fact, nature is absolutely indifferent to us." Changing his tone: "Witness a summer shower suddenly ruining a hand-painted chiffon parasol."

Her hearty laugh cleared away all trace of nervousness. "And see!" she said. "Our storm is almost gone. Did your ruby chase it off?"

"What matter," said he, "whether the gem did it or not, so that you have got what you wanted?"

"But really," she said, "I do think your ring is uncanny."

He looked amused. "It is indeed uncanny, for it apparently walked into this hotel alone, as no one can be found to have brought it. Nobody has put in a claim for the reward."

Alice trembled.

"That pie-faced clerk says it was left at the desk in an envelope."

Alice was relieved. "So then you're a hundred dollars in," she laughed.

"You're wrong," answered Burke. "I've put the money away, waiting for the finder of the ring to reveal herself."

"Why do you say 'herself'?" asked curious Alice.

The answer was quick: "Because no man would be fool enough to refuse a hundred dollars." (Alice winced.) "Women don't know the value of money, and they think there's a delicacy in ignoring the fact that it's necessary to life."

She pushed the hair up from her forehead, for her head ached.

Burke clasped both hands over his knee. "I'm quite determined that this modest person shall have the reward. You see, I'm eternally grateful to her, for I'd have been in a bad hole if the ring had n't shown up."

"I see, you'd have been in a bad hole," Alice ventured, "because then the lady to whom it belongs could n't have got it back."

She wriggled uncomfortably under the look of comprehension that he turned upon her. "The lady to whom it belongs does not want it back. She prefers me to wear it," he said slowly.

Alice's heart gave a painful throb. "Then she is still alive," thought the girl. But aloud she said banteringly: "She would have been angry, though, if you had lost it?"

He looked very quizzical, as he answered: "No, the lady to whom it belongs never gets angry."

She emitted a scornful sniff. "Oh, indeed! She must be a saint!" "She is," he said, solemnly and conclusively.

"I thought men did n't like saints," Alice snapped, and thereupon felt dreadfully ashamed. A reaction from the tension of the storm swept over her, and made her utterly miserable. She could n't stand it. "Excuse me," she said; "I'm in a horrid humor to-day, and I'm going straight upstairs. Thanks for sending away the storm."

She stood upon her feet and held out her hand. He took both her hands and looked square into her eyes. "The ring is my mother's," he said simply.

She could not escape his eyes or his hands. She blushed furiously, both for the words themselves and for what they implied. When she said, "Please, Mr. Burke," very weakly, he let go her hands, and they went together to the elevator.

Once safely in her room, she did nothing dramatic. She only sat down on the edge of her bed, and blushed again, quietly by herself. The ring did not belong to a sweetheart! And Mr. Burke had looked at her as though— One might really think—one might suppose—that he was not old, and that he cared for her, for little Alice! How wonderful, and how dreadful!

It had never before occurred to her that marriage with Harold was not a fixed law of nature. Now, in an instant, she knew that she would never marry him. Of course people would be shocked, but her eyes had opened to a new universe, where one did not necessarily do just what was expected.

But she must be fair, she must give Harold another chance. So, with her mother's permission, she wrote, asking him to spend a day with them soon.

When Sunday came she well remembered Burke's offer of a walk, and she longed to go, but had not the courage. Half an hour after church-time she sneaked out with a book and settled in a secluded corner of the porch. She supposed Burke had gone off alone, yet was not greatly surprised when he joined her in a perfectly matter-of-fact manner.

"Come!" he said heartily. "It's late. We'd better start right away."

A perverse mood seized her. "Good morning," she answered. "I'm going to read here. Are you going walking?"

He stood with legs apart, holding his soft hat in both hands. "Am I going walking?" he repeated. "Miss Alice Dixon, you know perfectly well that I've been waiting half an hour to go walking with you. Come now, don't pretend. If you don't feel like walking to-day, say so plainly, and we'll sit here instead."

This complacency was too much for her temper. "No," she said; "we won't walk, and we won't sit here instead."

He sat down on the piazza rail, looking very grave. "What's the matter? Is your mother worse?"

His consideration only made her more contrary. "No, no!" she cried. "Nothing's the matter, except that you seem to feel quite sure that I want to spend the morning with you!" There! She knew she was a little idiot.

"Why, yes," said he coolly; "I did feel quite sure."

Worse and worse. "That's just it," she burst out. "I don't like things taken for granted."

He looked at her trembling lip, her vexed brow, and her brilliant eyes and cheeks, considered a second, and burst into a laugh.

"If you," he said pleasantly, "were an ordinary cat of a girl, I'd believe you were trying to quarrel with me. But, my dear Miss Dixon, let me tell you that you're away off about taking things for granted. It's taking things for granted that makes life possible."

His being right made him all the more irritating. "How dare you call my sex cats?" she cried. "You're entirely too superior. I can't stand your cocksurenness. You never make a mistake."

A cloud passed over his eyes and his face, for he saw that she was thoroughly rebellious.

"Never make a mistake?" he said, getting up from the rail. "Then I've made my first to-day, in supposing there was one girl I could talk to reasonably. Good morning."

And he walked away.

After turning the corner of the piazza, he met an immaculately-clad young man, whom he accosted familiarly: "Why, hello, Harold! What are you doing here?"

The young man held out his hand, saying, "Professor! How you surprised me! What am I doing? I am searching for a Miss Dixon, who was said to be on the piazza. But I find it is a mistake."

Burke regarded him with some care, then said slowly, "No, it is not a mistake. You will find her around that corner, my boy. But I'm afraid she won't want to see you this morning."

Harold smiled politely. "Oh, yes, sir," he said; "she wants to see me. She sent for me."

"What's that?" shouted Burke.

"You think it was indecorous of her," added Harold gently, "but perhaps you did not know that Miss Dixon is going to marry me."

The older man calmly announced, "No, my lad, I did not know it, and I don't know it now."

"It's true, sir," said Harold quaintly. "But I'll see you later, if you'll excuse me."

Burke watched him turn the corner, then walked away alone, with scowling brow.

### III.

ON Monday morning, though no thunderstorm kept him from his woodland work, the professor again sought the far porch-corner.

Alice's eyes were suspiciously red. At sight of him she looked frightened, then embarrassed, then brilliant.

Burke sat down quietly on the rail, saying, "Good morning, Miss Dixon. Yesterday I thought you got rid of me from temper; but I found there was a reason."

She answered boldly, "The reason is gone—forever."

He shook himself, then said briskly, "Good! And now do you want to take a walk?"

"Yes, Mr. Burke," said Alice, dimpling.

"And," he added, "do you want to spend the morning with me?"

"Yes, Mr. Burke," said Alice, and jumped up from her chair.

"Then that's all right!" he cried heartily, striding along beside her. "We'll make up for the twenty-four hours we lost. I want to show you a lovely little nook that you're sure to like, because you'll match it."

"In spite of my being a little goose?" asked Alice.

"Or because of it," said he, smiling. "You know, I'm partial to birds."

Walking and talking happily, they came to the very glen where Alice had found the serpent ring.

"Is n't it perfect!" she cried, sitting down involuntarily just where she had sat before.

"You've already been here!" he said. "Is this where you found my ring, Deceiver?"

Her startled blush answered him, and she murmured, "How did you know?"

"I did n't know!" He laughed with delight. "It was all the ring. Don't you see the ring was bound to bring us back to this spot together?"

She nodded. "Yes, to complete the circle."

"But why," he asked, "did you make such a secret of the find, little goose in your green nest?"

"On account of the reward," she said.

"Your hundred dollars, that's been waiting for you all this time. Now it can go to its owner."

"But I won't accept it, you know."

"It's yours already. It's been yours for two weeks. So you'll have to take it."

"I won't take it," said Alice.

"You won't?"

"I won't."

He sighed a big, mock sigh, saying slowly,

"Where is the man who has the power and skill  
To stem the torrent of a woman's will?  
For if she will, she will, you may depend on 't;  
And if she won't, she won't; so there's an end on 't."

Is the verse true, little Goose?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, laughing the laugh of pure content.

"Then I see another way to settle this dispute between two obstinate persons. Give me your hand."

She drew back.

"You may safely," he said. "The money is not in it."

They sat side by side on the moss, with the green light filtering down upon them through the forest trees. She gave him her hand. He took it in both of his and said gravely, "I love you."

She looked down at the hands, in a rapture of emotion. She struggled, but only weakly. She thought of all the objections that a well-brought-up girl would make to such words from such a stranger, the objections that her mother would make.

He waited patiently.

At last she just raised her eyes to his, and said gently, "I love you."

Ah, what an embrace she found herself clasped in! And what joy, what newly awakened youth, shone in the face above her.

He spoke first. "The sweetness of you," he murmured, "and the courage of you, giving yourself without a question of material things! That's a real giving, a spiritual giving." He turned up her flushing face. "How about my *Past*? That past with a capital P, which ladies always suspect?"

She trembled, but answered earnestly, "I'm thankful to your past, whatever it is, because it made you as you are now."

"Ah!" he breathed, with real awe. "Will you marry me, my Alice?"

"Yes—Mr. Burke," said she.

Upon that, he drew from his finger the serpent ring, and slipped it tenderly on hers.

"My mother only lent it to me," he said, "until I should find my mate. My father gave it to her because her birthday is in July."

"What has that to do with it?" cried Alice. "My birthday is in July, too."

He clapped his hands,—though one was on each side of her,—crying, "Then the ring is doubly yours! Why, don't you know the rhyme for your own month?"

'The glowing ruby shall adorn  
Those who in July are born:  
Then they'll be exempt and free  
From Love's doubts and anxiety.'

"Oh, is n't it lovely?" she said. "The verse, and the ring, and—everything!"

"It is, my dear little Goose, my dear little Bird. I quite agree with you. And as for the reward, which Miss Dixon would not take, Mrs. Robert Burke shall receive for her candy fund—a hundred dollars down."



## MUSINGS

Some things that may be had for the asking are dear at the price.

Misery likes company even better when it does n't like the company.

Maybe it is called a train of thought because it is so apt to get off the track.

Perhaps there is at least as much enjoyment to be had in air-castles as in any other kind.

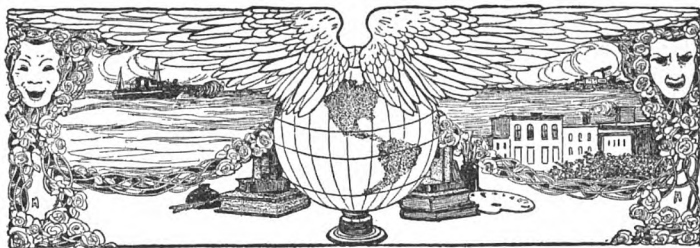
Duty will have to cultivate a more agreeable voice before it will be able to command universal attention.

Some people grumble every time they compare themselves with other people, and so do the other people.

Deeds, of course, are mightier than words; yet some people manage to talk their way through life, and get along pretty well at that.

It is generally unwise to call a man a fool. Even if he agrees with you, he may think he is not such a fool as to need the information.

*William E. McKenna*



## WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND  
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

### MILLIONS AND IMAGINATION

WHEN the vaults of Croesus grow plethoric and he begins to wander downhill in life while his millions still go up, he sometimes plans the unloading of his hoards of yellow ore. When our millionaires can count the few years left them and cannot count their dollars, they often think of spendings and gifts. They disimburse munificently, but not always magnificently, for this requires an imagination, that delicate and ethereal thing which goes to wreck in the pitiless wars of Mammon. To what unoriginal ends and uses go most of the bequests and gifts of our millionaires! One endows a college, another a library, another a church. These, no doubt, are useful institutions. And much goes to charity, as it should.

But to do these things requires no imagination, no insight, no vision. Croesus but follows in the footsteps of former philanthropists. When rightly used upon original impulse and individual inspiration, the majesty and the might of millions offer opportunities for glorious achievements.

There are humanitarian movements, great causes, new developments in science and art, realms of beauty whose estates positively cry to heaven for financial support. There are wonderful inventions for the betterment of conditions of human existence, or the extension of knowledge, but these seldom receive help from the man of money—unless he views them as speculations. There is genius that might be fostered in poor men of great gifts, whose feet are now tangled in “the fell

snare of circumstance." National tastes and ideals might be stimulated, as they have been debased, by gold.

Man of Millions, use your imagination. It and your money will make you a man *in* millions. Consider the great works your myriads of magic golden elves might do. If you hunger for the thanks of men and fear their hate because of what you have and hold, it is easy to exchange it for their gratitude and love.

Imagination makes man, as it makes millions, immortal. The names of Augustus, Mæcenas, Pericles, the dukes of Este, Medici, and of Weimar, shine fair in history, gilded with the gold they gave for Art and Beauty. In times of commercialism, the noblest, youngest art requires a patron, as of old.

Cecil Rhodes, with vast continental dreams, and Frederick Nobel, founder of international prizes for art and science, used their imaginations. Their names will live and be kept gratefully green. The Newdigate prize for poetry at Oxford brings distinction to him who gives and to him who wins.

Millionaires of America, look about you. There are cities to be beautified. There are majestic projects of parks and feats of landscape gardening to be carried out—the most sublime use for millions, as Poe has said. There are deserts that irrigation would make blossom like the rose and fill with farms and fertile fields. There is the extreme need of an endowed theatre for the United States to lift our national drama from the sink of speculation. There are monuments to erect to our dead poets and great men. To our disgrace, we can show no worthy monument to Longfellow, Emerson, or Poe. The Alhambra in Spain is falling to ruin because of lack of funds to restore it. The American millionaire who would subscribe money towards this would be forever enriched by the thanks of the world and of Art.

Let the millionaires of America devote their superfluous riches to these great, shining works, and lasting lustre shall be added to our land. Let them listen not always to lawyers and financiers, but sometimes to the Men Who Dream.

HERMAN SCHEFFAUER

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## A NOVEL REASON FOR TRAVEL

A JAPANESE lady *en voyage* recently gave a novel reason for an extended tour in the United States and Europe. When questioned by a visitor as to what she had seen in America, she expressed great interest in a visit to Mount Vernon, to Arlington, and to the White House, where she had spent an agreeable hour with the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, adding in her slow, carefully worded English, "When I go back to Japan I shall have some topics."



"Topics!" ejaculated her listener. "What do you mean, madame?"

"Topics!" repeated the Oriental lady, with a strong emphasis upon the last syllable. "When my husband brings friends to the house and wishes me to say something, I shall not talk about my children all the time. I shall tell them about Mount Vernon and Arlington and the President. I shall have topics!" exclaimed the little lady of the East in a triumphant tone.

Are American women travelling in search of topics like their sister from the land of the chrysanthemum? When they meet together at an afternoon tea or luncheon, it seems as if they had found more subjects for conversation than the hour would contain. And yet, if we contrast the conversation of a group of women twenty years ago with that of their latter-day sisters who have enjoyed the advantages of travel in their own or in foreign lands, it will be found that the travelled woman of to-day has enlarged her repertoire of subjects immensely, even if she is not, like the naïve Japanese lady, frankly voyaging in search of "topics."

To furnish another reason or inducement for travel is not unlike presenting caviare before dinner to appetites already sharpened by the tonic of a brisk walk in mountain air, yet are not our magazines offering us caviare in the form of charming articles about every place in the known and unknown world? And does not each mail bring us fascinating itineraries from steamship companies and tourist bureaus to whet appetites that need no encouragement? For is not this the age of travel *par excellence*, and does it seem to make very much difference where one goes, so only one journeys somewhere? Nor need the most inveterate traveller weep because there are no more worlds to conquer, when new vistas are constantly opening before him.

Dalmatia is looming up as a land to be explored, and travellers, sated by the wonders of Europe, Egypt, India, and Japan, are already turning eager faces toward this classic land and the adjoining principality of Montenegro, while others are straining their eyes northward toward Iceland. A New York clergyman recently entertained his neighbors at a continental table d'hôte by an enthusiastic recital of the charms of a sojourn in this island of lofty headland and deep bays, and it may be predicted with some measure of assurance that Iceland, like Norway, may become a favorite resort of the tourist in search of novelty in a rugged and picturesque garb.

Perhaps we, in these western lands, need reasons for staying at home rather than incentives to travel—such a reason as A. C. Benson gives in his "At Large," when he says, "Travel is essentially a distraction. I do not want to be distracted any more. . . . Like the lobster in the 'Water Babies,' I cry, 'Let me alone, I want to think.'"

Travel without time for thought is like reading or lecture-going or any other occupation without reflection, a mere rippling of the surface of life. It is only when thought stirs the depths, as the angel's visit stirred the pool of Bethesda, that true and lasting benefit of sojourn in foreign countries and favored lands comes to the traveller.

ANNE HOLLINGSWORTH WHARTON

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## THE ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT

**O** LIBERTY! What crimes are committed in thy name!" Just why it should have become a moral shibboleth that the artistic temperament explains, justifies, and excuses ethical and, stranger still, æsthetic shortcomings, is a fit subject for wonderment—an excellent additional instance of the inconsistency of human attainment. Just why it should be that the man whose soul is supposed to be attuned to the finer harmonies of the æsthetic sense is therefore, as a corollary, lax in his moral code and frequently wanting altogether in the humbler reaches of that æsthetic feeling, offers a curious problem for the thoughtful. It has become an axiom that the artist in whatever field of artistic achievement must be considered without reference to the man, although it is equally axiomatic that the artist is the man. Nevertheless, there is no more primal requisite for true judgment of the artistic than the capability thus to divorce the man in his human failings from the artist in his divine afflatus,—the work of art from the worker thereof. The curious thing is that the "artistic temperament" expects this divorcement carried still further where all reason for so doing is lacking. And the world at large has, with a shrug of shoulders, complacently come to regard the artistic temperament and a wholesome sanity as altogether incompatible; whereas, in reality, they are not.

It is *not* the artistic temperament, but its opposite, that makes the man who writes a good poem delight in dirty linen and indulge in freakish fashion as to his hair. It is not the artistic temperament, but its contrary, that makes the creative genius of any form of art practise the immoral and the unclean—from the neglect to pay his debts to the indecent orgies of the satyr. The sincere love of the beautiful in any of its manifestations never yet made a human being ugly. We are too prone to confound cause with effect in these things. The artistic temperament never belittles. When the possessor of the gift is contemptible we may rest assured that without it he would be more contemptible still. And the world, frequently more charitable than she receives credit for being, and almost always a bad judge of what is artistic, is too apt to cover with the mantle of her complacency

temperament that gets off easily with the charge of being merely artistic. There is nothing artistic in pose, nothing artistic in the assumed delight in the yellows and reds of the moral chromatic scale, but there is much that is dishonest in it. If the innumerable posers who cumber the purlieus of the courts of Art were broken by the world upon some sincere task of righteousness, the artistic atmosphere would receive a purging infinitely to the honor of Art!

Of a truth, we dabble too fearlessly with the sacred things of life. There is nothing nobler in human nature than the genuine artistic gift, yet we have seen it become confused with a thing of shreds and patches. Feeble poetasters and inconsequent fiction-mongers prate about their "art," and we have "artists" all the way up from the "tonorial parlors" through Grub Street to the "studio" of the more or less mongrel professional. No wonder the artistic temperament becomes a factor to reckon with! For, after all, the real artist whose humanity may crop out in idiosyncrasies and obliquities scarcely more pronounced than those of the business man or the man of science—the man of individuality, of thought, and of preoccupation anywhere—is not the moral offense, and by no means the "artistic" offense, that is the poser whose cheap affectations of sincerity seek to prostitute Truth itself.

ROBERT ADGER BOWEN



## THE BREATHLESS HOUR

BY THOMAS MCKEAN

MY child, when once I closed thine eyes in sleep  
 I wept; but, looking on thy loveliness,  
 I smiled, remembering still thy warm caress  
 About my neck. Alas, why did I weep,  
 When all was well with thee upon thy ship  
 Of night; that bark which soon should lightly pass  
 And bear thee to the land of dreams apace,  
 An answering smile upon thy parted lip?

Why did I grieve indeed to see thee thus,  
 Thou tiny sovereign of my loving heart,  
 Which feels with joy the sceptre of thy power?  
 I wept, because, in fancy timorous,  
 I dreamed, with waking eyes, thou might'st depart  
 And ne'er return; that was the breathless hour!







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 6-month loans may be recharged by bringing books to Circulation Desk  
 Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date

**DUE AS STAMPED BELOW**

	APR 13 1991	-
REC. MONTH	MAR 13 1991	
AUTO EXT. DATE	MAR 14 1991	

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