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THE STRAND MAGAZINE

The White Christ

By

HALL CAINE

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THE STRAND MAGAZIN

Contents for January, 1909.

Frontispiece : " O men of many races, be brothers one to another ! "

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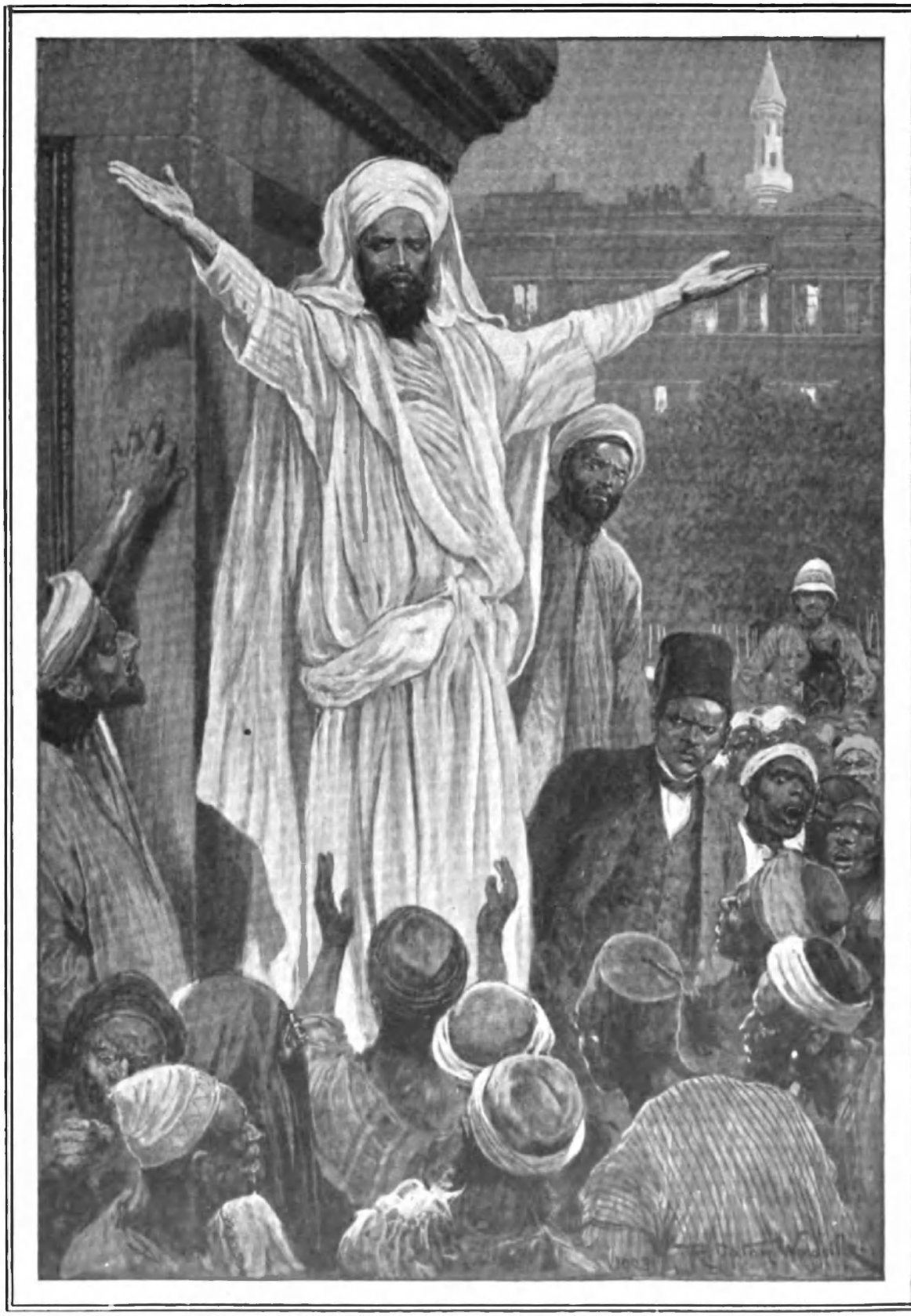


"O MEN OF MANY RACES, BE BROTHERS ONE TO ANOTHER!"

(*See page* 610.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xxxvi. JANUARY, 1909 No. 216.

The White Christ.

By HALL CAINE.

[The Arabs have a tradition that in "the time of the end" a Redeemer will come to unite the faiths of the world into one faith, and the peoples of the world into one people. This Redeemer is sometimes known as the Mahdi, sometimes as Mohammed, sometimes as Jesus, but generally as the White Prophet of Peace, meaning the Christ.]

FIRST BOOK :—The Crescent and the Cross.

CHAPTER XIII.

ISHMAEL AMEER was the son of a Libyan carpenter and boat-builder, who, shortly before the days of the Mahdi, had removed with his family to Khartoum. His earliest memory was of the solitary figure of the great white pasha on the roof of the palace, looking up the Nile for the relief army that never arrived, and of the same white-headed Englishman, with the pale face, who, walking to and fro on the sands outside the palace garden, patted his head and smiled.

His next memory was of the morning after the fall of the desert city, when, awakened by the melancholy moan of the great onbeya, the elephant's horn that was the trumpet of death, he heard the hellish shrieks of the massacre that was going on in the streets, and saw his mother lying dead in front of the door of the inner closet in which she had hidden her child, and found his father's body on the outer threshold.

He was seven years of age at this time, and being adopted by an uncle, a merchant in the town, who had been rich enough to buy his own life, he was sent in due course first to the little school of the mosque in Khartoum, and afterwards, at eighteen, to El Azhar, in Cairo, where, with other poor students, he slept in the stifling rooms under the flat roof, and lived on the hard bread and the jars of cheese and butter which were sent to him from home.

Within four years he had passed the highest examination at the Arabic University, taking the rank of alim (doctor of Koranic divinity), which entitled him to teach and preach in any quarter of the Mohammedan world, and then, equally by reason of his rich voice and his devout mind, he was made reader in the mosque of El Azhar.

Morality was low among the governing classes at that period, and when it occurred that the Grand Kadi, who was a compound of the Eastern voluptuary and the libertine of the Parisian boulevards, marrying for the fourth time, made a feast that went on for a week, in which the days were spent in eating and drinking and the nights in carousing of an unsaintly character, the orgy so shocked the young alim from the desert that he went down to the great man's house to protest.

"How is this, your Eminence?" he said, stoutly. "The Koran teaches temperance, chastity, and contempt of the things of the world—yet you, who are a tower and a light in Islam, have darkened our faces before the infidel."

So daring an outrage on the authority of the Kadi had never been committed before, and Ishmael was promptly flung into the streets; but the matter made some noise and led, in the end, to the expulsion of all the governors (the Ulema) of the University except the one man who, being the first cause of the scandal, was also the representative of the Sultan, and therefore could not be changed.

Meantime Ishmael, returning no more to El Azhar, had settled himself on an island far up the river, and there, practising extreme austerities, he gathered a great reputation for holiness, and attracted attention throughout the valley of the Nile by breathing out threatenings and slaughter—not so much against the leaders of his own people, who were degrading Islam, as against the Christians under whose hated bondage, as he believed, the whole Mohammedan world was going mad.

So wide was the appeal of Ishmael's impeachment, and so vast became his following, that the Government (now Anglo-Egyptian), always sure that after sand-storms and sand-flies holy men of all sorts were the most pernicious products of the Soudan, thought it necessary to put him down, and for this purpose they sent two companies of Arab camel police, promising a reward to the one that should capture the new prophet.

The two camel corps set out on different tracks, but each resolving to take Ishmael by night, they entered his village at the same time by opposite ends, met in the darkness, and fought and destroyed one another, so that when morning dawned they saw their leaders on both sides lying dead in the crimsoning light.

The gruesome incident had the effect of the supernatural on the Arab intellect, and when Ishmael and his followers, with nothing but a stick in one hand and the Koran in the other, came down with a roar of voices and the sand whirling in the wind, the native remnant turned tail and fled before the young prophet's face.

Then the Governor-General, an agnostic with a contempt for "mystic senses" of all kinds, sent a ruckling, swearing, unbelieving company of British infantry, and they took Ishmael without further trouble, brought him up to Khartoum, put him on trial for plotting against the Christian Governor of his province, and imprisoned him in a compound outside the town.

But soon the Government began to see that, though they had crushed Ishmael, they could not crush Ishmaelism, and they lent an ear to certain of the leaders of his own faith, judges of the Mohammedan law courts, who, having put their heads together, had devised a scheme to wean him from his asceticism, and so destroy the movement by destroying the man. The scheme was an old one, the wiles of a woman, and they knew the very woman for the purpose.

This was a girl named Adila, a Copt, only twenty years of age, and by no means a voluptuous creature, but a little, winsome thing, very sweet and feminine, always freshly clad and walking barefoot on the hot sand with an erect confidence that was beautiful to see.

Adila had been the daughter of a Christian merchant at Assouan, and there, six years before, she had been kidnapped by a Bisharin tribe, who, answering her tears with rough comfort, promised to make her a queen.

In their own way they did so, for, those being the dark days of Mahdism, they brought her to Omdurman and put her up to auction in the open slave-market, where the black eunuch of the Calipha, after thrusting his yellow fingers into her mouth to examine her teeth, bought her, among other girls, for his master's harem.

There, with forty women of varying ages, gathered by concupiscence from all quarters of the Soudan, she was mewed up in the close atmosphere of two sealed chambers in the Calipha's crudely gorgeous palace, seeing no more of her owner than his coffee-coloured countenance as he passed once a day through the curtained rooms, and signalled to one or other of their bedecked and beringleted occupants to follow him down a hidden stairway to his private quarters. At such moments of inspection Adila would sit trembling and breathless, in dread of being seen, and she found her companions only too happy to help her to hide herself from the attentions they were seeking for themselves.

This lasted nearly a year, and then came a day when the howling in the streets outside, the wailing of shells overhead, and the crashing of cannon-balls in the dome of the Mahdi's tomb told the imprisoned women, who were creeping together in corners and clinging to each other in terror, that the English had come at last, and the Calipha had fallen and fled.

When Adila was set at liberty by the English Sirdar, she learned that, in grief at the loss of their daughter, her parents had died, and so, ashamed to return to Assouan, after being a slave-girl in Omdurman, she took service with a Greek widow who kept a bakery in Khartoum. It was there the sheikhs of the law courts found her, and they proceeded to coax and flatter her, telling her she had been a good girl who had seen much sorrow, and therefore ought to know some happiness now, to which end they had found a husband to marry her, and he was a fine, handsome man, young and learned and rich.

At this, Adila, remembering the Calipha, and thinking that such a person as they pictured could only want her as the slave of his bed, turned sharply upon them and said, "When did I ask you to find me a man?" and the sheikhs had to go back discomfited.

Meantime Ishmael, raving against the Christians, who were corrupting Mohammedans while he was lying helpless in his prison, fell into a fever, and the Greek mistress of Adila, hearing who had been

meant for her hand-maiden, and fearing the girl might think too much of herself, began to taunt and mock her.

"They told you he was rich, didn't they?" said the widow. "Well, he has no bread but what the Government gives him, and he is in chains and he is dying, and you would only have had to nurse him and bury him. That's all the husband you would have got, my girl, so perhaps you are better off where you are."

But the widow's taunting went wide, for as soon as Adila had heard her out she went across to the Mohammedan court-house and said:—

"Why didn't you tell me it was Ishmael Ameer you meant?"

The sheikhs answered with a show of shame that they had intended to do so eventually, and if they had not done so at first it was only out of fear of frightening her.

"He's sick and in chains, isn't he?" said Adila.

They admitted that it was true.

"He may never come out of prison alive—isn't that so?"

They could not deny it.

"Then I want to marry him," said Adila.

"What a strange girl you are!" said the sheikhs, but without more ado the marriage document was drawn up in Ishmael's name, Adila signed it, half her dowry was paid to her, and she promptly gave the money to the poor.

Next day Ishmael was tossing on his angerib in the mud hut which served for his cell when he saw his Soudanese guard come in, followed by four women, and the first of them was Adila, carrying a basketful of cakes, such as are made in that country for a marriage festival. One moment she stood over him as he lay on his bed with what seemed to be dews of death on his forehead, and then, putting her basket on the ground, she slipped to her knees by his side and said:—

"I am Adila. I belong to you now and have come to take care of you."

"Why do you come to me?" he answered. "Go away. I don't want you."

"But we are married and I am your wife, and I am here to nurse you until you are well," she said.

"I shall never be well," he replied. "I am dying and will soon be dead. Why should you waste your life on me, my girl? Go away and God bless you!"

With that she kissed his hand and her tears fell over it, but after a moment she wiped her eyes, rose to her feet, and, turning briskly to the other women, said:—

"Take your cakes and be off with you—I'm going to stay."

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE weeks longer Ishmael lay in the grip of his fever, and day and night Adila tended him, moistening his parched lips and cooling his hot forehead, while he raged against his enemies in his strong delirium, crying, "Down with the Christians! Drive them away! Kill them!" Then the thunging and roaring in his poor brain ceased, and his body was like a boat that had slid in an instant out of a stormy sea into a quiet harbour. Opening his eyes, with his face to the red wall, in the cool light of a breathless morning, he heard behind him the soft and mellow voice of a woman who seemed to be whispering to herself or to Heaven, and she was saying:—

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

"What is that?" he asked, closing his eyes again; and at the next moment the mellow voice came from somewhere above his face:—

"So you are better? Oh, how good that is! I am Adila. Don't you remember me?"

"What was that you were saying, my girl?"

"That? Oh, that was the prayer of the Lord Isa (Jesus)."

"The Lord Isa?"

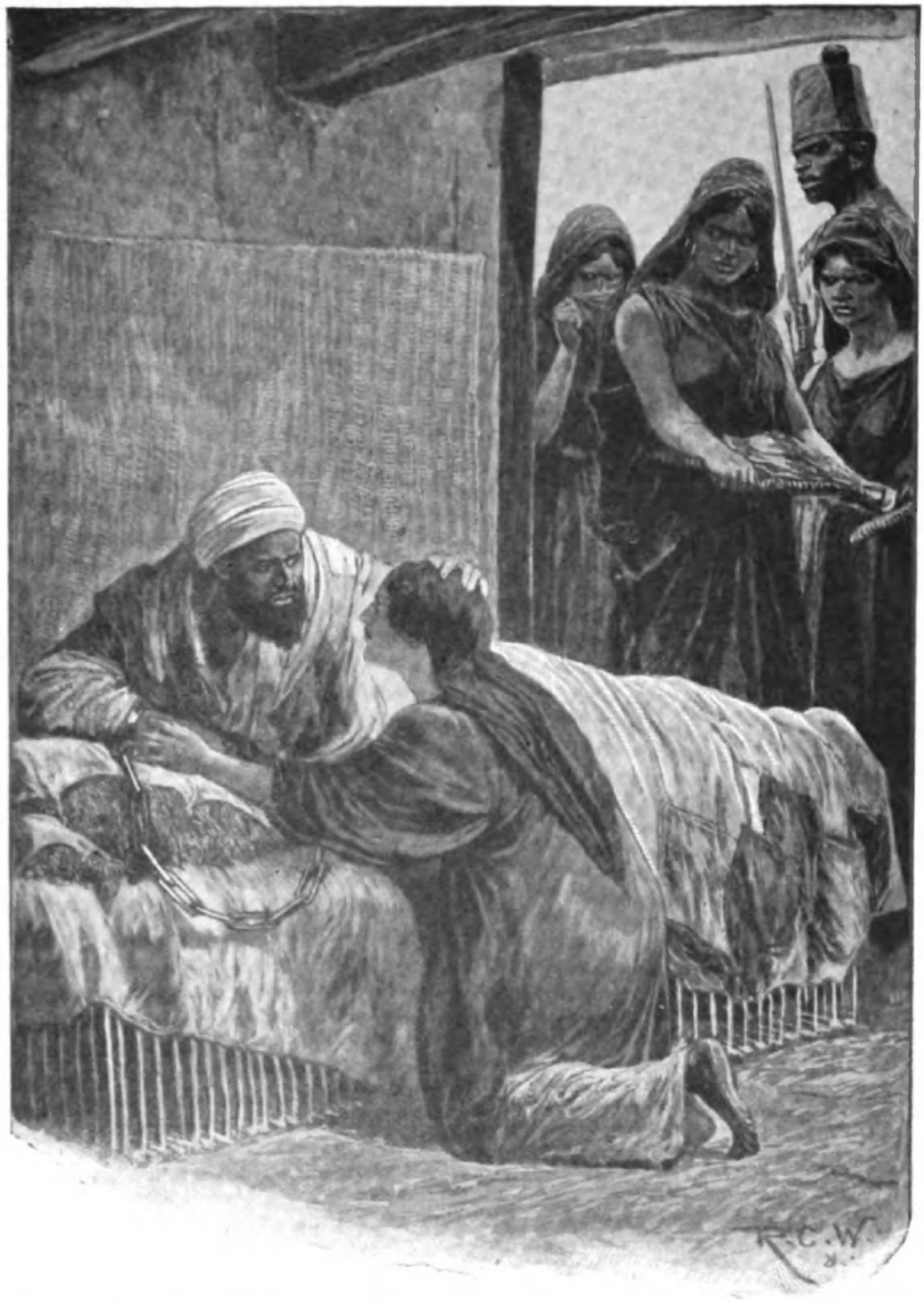
"Don't you know? Long ago my father told me about Him, and I've not forgotten it even yet. He was only a poor man, a poor Jewish man, a carpenter, but He was so good that He loved all the world, especially sinful women when they were sorry, and little helpless children. He never did harm to His enemies either, but people were cruel and they crucified Him. And now He is in heaven, sitting at God's right hand, with Mary, His mother, beside Him."

There was silence for a moment, and then:—

"Say His prayer again, Adila."

So Adila, with more constraint than before, but still soft and sweetly, began afresh:—

"Our Father, Which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is th



"SHE SLIPPED TO HER KNEES BY HIS SIDE AND SAID: 'I AM ADILA. I BELONG TO YOU NOW AND HAVE COME TO TAKE CARE OF YOU.'"

kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

Thus the little Coptic woman, in her soft and mellow voice, said her Lord's Prayer in that mud hut on the edge of the desert, with only the sick man to hear her, and he was a prisoner and in chains; but long before she had finished Ishmael's face was hidden in his bed clothes and he was crying like a child.

There were three weeks more of a painless and dreamy convalescence, in which Adila repeated other stories her father had told her, and Ishmael saw Christianity for the first time as it used to be, and wondered to find it a faith so sweet and so true, and, above all, save for the character of Jesus, so like his own.

Then a new set of emotions took possession

of him, and with returning strength he began to see Adila with fresh eyes. He loved to look at her soft, round form, and he found the air of his gloomy prison full of perfume and light when she walked with her beautiful erect bearing and smiling blue eyes about his bed. Hitherto she had slept on a mattress which she had laid out on the ground by the side of his angerib, but now he wished to change places, and when nothing would avail with her to do so he would stretch out his arm at night until their hands met and clasped, and thus linked together they would fall asleep.

At length he would awake in the darkness, not being able to sleep for thinking of her, and finding one night that she was awake too, he said in a tremulous voice :—

"Will you not kiss me, Adila?"

"Should I?" she whispered, and she did.

Next day the black Soudanese guard that had been set to watch him reported to the Mohammedan sheikhs that the devotee had been swallowed up in the man, whereupon the sheikhs, with a chuckle, reported the same to the Government, and then Ishmael with certain formalities was set free.

At the expense of his uncle a house was found for him outside the town, for in contempt of his weakness in being tricked, as his people believed, by a Coptic slave-girl, his following had gone and he and Adila were to be left alone. Little they recked of that, though, for in the first sweet joys of husband and wife they were very happy, talking in delicious whispers and with the frank candour of the East of the child that was to come. He was sure it would be a girl, so they agreed to call it Ayesha (Mary), she for the sake of the sinful soul who had washed her Master's feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and he in memory of the poor Jewish woman, the mother of Isa, whose heart had been torn with grief for the sorrows of her son.

But when at length came their day of days, at the height of their happiness a bolt fell out of a cloudless sky, for though God gave them a child, and it was a girl, He took the mother in place of it.

She made a brave end, the sweet Coptic woman, only thinking of Ishmael and holding his hand to cheer him. It was noon, the sun was hot outside, and in the cool shade of the courtyard three Moslems chanted the Islamee la Illaha, for so much they could do even for the infidel, while Ishmael sat within on one side of his wife's angerib, with his uncle, seventy years of age now, on the other. She was too weak to speak to her husband, but she held up her mouth to him like a child to be kissed, and then the old man closed her eyes, and said :—

"Be comforted, my son—death is a black camel that kneels at the gate of all."

There were no women to wail outside the house that night, and next day, when Adila had to be buried, it was neither in the Mohammedan cemetery with those who had "received direction," nor in the Christian one with English soldiers who had fallen in fight, that the slave-wife of a prisoner could be laid, but out in the open desert where there was nothing save the sand and the sky.

They laid her with her face to Jerusalem, wrapped in a coco-nut mat, and put a few thorns over her to keep off the eagles, and when this was done they would have left her, saying she would sleep cool in her soft bed, for a warm wind was blowing and the sun was beginning to set, but Ishmael would not go.

In his sorrow and misery, his doubt and darkness, he was asking himself whether, if his poor Coptic wife was doomed to hell as an unbeliever, he could ever be happy in heaven. The moon had risen when at length they drew him away, and even then in the stillness of the lonely desert he looked back again and again at the dark patch on the white waste of the wilderness in which he was leaving her behind him.

Next morning he took the child from the midwife's arms, and, carrying it across to his uncle, he asked him to take care of it and bring it up, for he was leaving Khartoum and did not know how long he might be away. Where was he going to? He could not say. Had he any money? None, but God would provide for him.

"Better stay in the Soudan and marry another woman, a believer," said his uncle, and then Ishmael answered, in a quivering voice :—

"No, no, by Allah! One wife I had, and if she was a Christian and was once a slave, I loved her, and never—never—shall another woman take her place."

He was ten years away, and only at long intervals did anybody hear of him, and it was sometimes from Mecca, sometimes from Jerusalem, sometimes from Rome, and finally from the depths of the Libyan desert. Then he reappeared at Alexandria, and, entering a little mosque, he exercised his right as alim and went up into the pulpit to preach.

His teaching was like fire, and men were like fuel before it. Day by day the crowds increased that came to hear him, until Alexandria seemed to be aflame, and he had

to remove to the large mosque of Abou Abbas in the square of the same name.

Such was the man whom Gordon Lord was sent to arrest.

CHAPTER XV.

"Head-quarters, Caracol Attarin,
"Alexandria.

"My Dearest Helena,—I have seen my man and it is all a mistake! I can have no hesitation in saying so—a mistake! Ishmael Ameer is not the cause of the riots which are taking place here—never has been, never can be. And if his preaching should ever lead by any indirect means to sporadic outbursts of fanaticism the fault will be ours—ours, and nobody else's.

"Colonel Jenkinson and the Commandant of Police met me on my arrival. It seems my coming had somehow got wind, but the only effect of the rumour had been to increase the panic, for even the conservative elements among the Europeans had made a run on the gunsmiths' shops for firearms and—could you believe it?—on the chemists' for prussic acid, to be used by their women in case of the worst.

"Next morning I saw my man for the first time. It was outside Abou Abbas, on the toe of the east port, where the native population, with quiet Eastern greeting, of hands to the lips and forehead, were following him from his lodging to the mosque.

"My dear girl, he is not a bit like the man you imagined. Young—as young as I am, at all events—tall, very tall (his head showing above others in a crowd), with clean-cut face, brown complexion, skin soft and clear, hands like a woman's, and large, beaming black eyes as frank as a child's. His dress is purely Oriental, being white throughout, save for the red slippers under the caftan and the tip of the tarboosh above the turban. No mealy-mouthed person, though, but a spontaneous, passionate man, careless alike of the frowns of men and the smiles of women, a real type of the Arab out of the desert, uncorrupted by the cities, a man of peace, perhaps, but full of deadly fire and dauntless energy.

"My dear Helena, I liked my first sight of Ishmael Ameer, and thinking I saw in him some of the barbarous virtues we have civilized away, some of the fine old stuff of the Arab nobleman who would light his beacon to guide you to his tent even if you were his worst enemy, I could not help but say to myself, 'By ——, here's a man I want to fight!'

"As soon as he had gone into the mosque I sent Hafiz and the two Egyptians after him by different doors, with strict injunctions against collusion of any kind, and then went off to the police head-quarters in the Governorat to await their report. Hafiz himself was the first to come to me, and he brought a circumstantial story. Not a word of sedition, not a syllable about the Christians, good, bad, or indifferent! Did the man flatter the Moslems? Exactly the reverse! Never had Hafiz heard such a rating of a congregation even from a Mohammedan preacher.

"The sermon had been on the degradation of woman in the East, which the preacher had denounced as a disgrace to their humanity. Christians believed it to be due to their faith, but what had degraded woman in Mohammedan countries was not the Mohammedan religion but the people's own degradation.

"'I dreamt last night,' he said, 'that in punishment of your offences against woman God lifted the passion of love out of the heart of man. What a chaos! A cockpit of selfishness and sin! Woman is meant to sweeten life, to bind its parts together—will you continue to degrade her? Fools, are you wiser than God, trying to undo what He has done?'

"Such was Ishmael's sermon, as Hafiz reported it, and when the Egyptians came their account was essentially the same; but just at the moment when I was asking myself what there could be in teaching like this to set Moslem against Christian, tinkle-tinkle went the bell of the telephone, and the Commandant of Police, who had been listening with a supercilious smile, seemed to take a certain joy in telling me that his inspector in the quarter of Abou Abbas was calling for reinforcements because a fresh disturbance had broken out there.

"In three minutes I was on the spot, and the first thing I saw was the white figure of Ishmael Ameer lashing his way through a turbulent crowd, whereupon the Commandant, who was riding by my side, said, 'See that? Are you satisfied now, sir?' to which I answered, 'Don't be a fool,' with a stronger word to drive it home, and then made for the middle of the throng.

"It was all over before I got there, for Christians and Moslems alike were flying before Ishmael's face, and, without waiting for a word of thanks, he was gone too, and in another moment the square was clear, save for a dozen men, native and European, whom the police had put under arrest.

"With these rascals I returned to the Governorat and investigated the riot, which turned out to be a very petty affair, originating in an effort on the part of a couple of low-class Greeks to attend to the Scriptural injunction to spoil the Egyptians by robbing a shop (covered only by a net) while its native owner was in the mosque.

"Next morning came a letter from Ishmael Ameer, beginning, 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful,' but otherwise written without preamble or circumlocution, saying he was aware that certain incidents in connection with his services had assumed an anti-Christian aspect, and begging to be permitted, in the interests of peace and in order to give a feeling of security to Europeans, to preach openly at noon the next day in the square of Mohammed Ali.

"I need not tell you, my dear Helena, that everybody at the Governorat thought the letter a piece of appalling effrontery, and, of course, the Commandant—who is one of the good Christians, with a rooted contempt for anything in a turban (forgetting that Jesus Christ probably wore one)—made himself big with phrases out of Blue Books about the only way to suppress disorder being to refuse to let sedition show its head. But I have never been afraid of a mob, and, thinking the situation justified the experiment, I advised the Governor to let the man come.

"One thing I did, though, my dear Helena, and that was to dictate a pretty stiff reply, saying I should be present myself with a regiment of soldiers, and if, instead of pacifying the people, he aggravated their hostility, I should make it my personal business to see that he would be the first to suffer.

"That night all the world and his wife declared that I was fishing in troubled waters, and I hear that some brave souls fled panic-stricken by the last train to Cairo, where they are now, I presume, preferring their petitions at the Agency; but next morning (that is to say, this morning) the air was calmer, and the great square, when I reached it, was as quiet as an inland sea.

"It was a wonderful sight, however, with the 1st Suffolk lining the east walls, and the 2nd Berkshire lining the west; and the overflowing Egyptian and European populace between, standing together yet apart, like the hosts of Pharaoh and of Israel with the Red Sea dividing them.

"I rode up with Jenkinson a little before twelve, and I think the people saw that, though we had permitted this unusual experiment in the interests of peace, we meant business. A space had been kept clear for Ishmael at the foot of the statue of the great Khedive, and hardly had the last notes of the midday call to prayers died away when our man arrived. He was afoot, quite unattended, walking with an active step and that assured nobility of bearing which belongs to the Arab blood alone. He bowed to me, with a simple dignity that had not a particle either of fear or defiance, and again, Heaven knows why, I said to myself, 'By ——, I want to fight that man!'

"Then he stepped on to the angerib that had been placed for him as a platform and began to speak. His first words were a surprise, being in English, and faultlessly spoken.

"'The earth and the sky are full of trouble. God has afflicted us; praise to His name,' he began, and then, pointing to the warships that were just visible in the bay, he cried:—

"'Men who are watching the heavens and who speak with authority tell us that great conflicts are coming among the nations of the world. Why is it so? What is dividing us? Is it race? We are the sons of one Father. Is it faith? It is the work of religion not only to set men free, but to bind them together. Our Koran says: "Thou shalt love thy brother as thyself, and never act towards him but as thou wouldst that he should act towards thee" The Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Law of Moses say the same. The true Christian is the true Moslem—the true Moslem is the true Jew. All that is right in religion includes itself in one commandment—love one another! Then, why warfare between brethren so near akin?'

"His voice, my dear Helena, was such as I had never in my life heard before. It throbbed with the throb that is peculiar to the voice of the Arab singer and seems to go through you like an electric current His sermon, too, which was sometimes in English, sometimes in Arabic, the two languages so intermingled that the whole vast congregation of the cosmopolitan seaport seemed to follow him at once, was not like preaching at all, but vehement, enthusiastic, extempore prayer

"I have sent a long account of it to the Consul-General, so I dare say you will see what it contained. It was the only preaching I have ever heard that seemed to me to deserve the name of inspiration. Sedition? In one passage alone did it so much as skirt the problem of England in Egypt, and then

there was a spirit in the man's fiery words that was above the finest patriotism. Speaking of the universal hope of all religions, the hope of a time to come when the Almighty will make all the faiths of the world one faith, and all the peoples of the world one people, he said:—

"'In visions of the night I see that promised day, and what is our Egypt then? She, the oldest of the nations, who has seen so many centuries of persecution and shame, trodden under the heel of hard task-masters, and buried in the sands of her deserts, what is she? She is the meeting-place of nations, the hand-clasp of two worlds, the interpreter and the peacemaker between East and West. We can never be a great nation—let us be a good one. Is it not enough? Look around! We stand amid ruins half as old as the earth itself—is it not worth waiting for?'

"Then in his last word, speaking first in Arabic and afterwards in English, he cried:—

"'O men of many races, be brothers one to another! God is great! God is great! Take hands, O sons of one Father, believers in one God! Pray to Him who changes all things but Himself changeth not! God is great! God is great! Let Allah Akbar sound for ever through your souls!'

"The effect was overwhelming. Even some of the low-class Greeks and Italians were sobbing aloud, and our poor Egyptian children were like people possessed. Hungry, out of work, many of them wearing a single garment, and that a ragged one—yet a new magnificence seemed to be given to their lives. Something radiant and glorious seemed to glimmer in the distance, making their present sufferings look small and mean.

"And I? I don't know, my dear Helena, how I can better tell you what I felt than by telling you what I did. I was looking down from the saddle at my 1st Suffolk and my 2nd Berkshire, standing in line with their poor little rifles, when something gripped me by the throat, and I signed to the officers, shouted 'Back to your quarters!' and rode off, without waiting to see what would happen, because I *knew*.

"I have written both to the General and to my father, telling them I have not arrested Ishmael Ameer and don't intend to do so. If this is quackery and spiritual legerdemain to cover sedition and conspiracy, I throw up the sponge and count myself among the fools. But Ishmael Ameer is one of the flame-bearers of the world. Let who will put him down—I will *not*.

"My dearest Helena, I've written all this about the new prophet and not a word about yourself, though I've been feeling the quivering grip of your hand in mine every moment of the time. The memory of that delicious quarter of an hour in the garden has sweetened the sulphurous air of Alexandria for me, and I'm in a fever to get back 'Smash the Mahdi!' you said, thinking if I didn't obey my father and yours I should offend both and so lead to trouble between you and me. But the Consul-General is a just man, if he is a hard one, and I should not deserve to be his son if I did not dare to warn him when he was going to do wrong Neither should I deserve to be loved by the bravest girl alive if I hadn't the pluck to stand up for the right.

"Good night, sweetheart! It's two in the morning, the town is as quiet as a desert village, and I am going to turn in.—GORDON.

"P.S.—Forgot to say Ishmael Ameer is to go up to Cairo shortly, so you'll soon see him for yourself. But Heaven help me, what is to become of Gordon Lord when you've once looked on this son of the wilderness?

"P.P.S.—Not an arrest since yesterday!"

CHAPTER XVI.

"General's House,
"Citadel, Cairo.

"MY DEAR GORDON,—You're in for it! In that whispering gallery which people call the East, where everything is known before it happens to happen, rumours without end were coming to Cairo of what you were doing in Alexandria, but nobody in authority believed the half of it until your letters arrived at noon to-day, and now—heigho, for the wind and the rain!

"My dear dad is going about like an old Tom with his tail up, and as for the Consul-General—whew! (a whistle, your Excellency).

"Let me take things in their order, though, so that you may see what has come to pass. I was reading your letter for the third (or was it the thirtieth?) time this afternoon, when who should come in but the Princess Nazimah, so I couldn't resist an impulse to tell her what your son of Hagar had to say on the position of Eastern women, thinking it would gratify her and she would agree. But no, not a bit of it; off she went on the other side, with talk straight out of the harem, showing that the woman of the East isn't worthy of emancipation and shouldn't get it—*yet*.

"It seems that if the men of the East are 'beasts,' the women are 'creatures.' Love? They never heard of such a thing. Husband?

The word doesn't exist for them. Not *my* master, even! Just master! Living together like schoolgirls and loving each other like sisters—think of that, my dear!

"And when I urged that we were all taught to love one another—all Christians, at all events—she cried: 'What! And share one man between four of you?' In short, the condition was only possible to cocks and hens, and that Eastern women could put up with it showed they were creatures—simple creatures, content and happy if their husbands (beg pardon, their masters) gave them equal presents of dresses and jewels and Turkish delight. No, let the woman of the East keep a little longer to her harem window, her closed carriage, and the wisp of mousseline de soie she calls her veil, or she'll misuse her liberty. 'Oh, I know. I say what I think. I don't care.'

"As for your Ishmael, the Princess wouldn't have him at any price. He's just another Mahdi, and if he's championing the cause of women the son of a duck knows how to swim. His predecessor began by denouncing slavery and ended by being the biggest slave-dealer in the Soudan. Ergo, your Ishmael, who cares neither for 'the frowns of man nor the smiles of woman,' is going to finish up like Solomon or Samson, either as the tyrant of a hundred women or the victim of one of them whose heart is snares and nets. 'Oh, I know. Every man is a sultan to himself, and the tail of a dog is never straight.'

"But as for you, it seems you are 'a brother of girls,' which being interpreted means you are a man to whom God has given a clean heart to love all women as his sisters, and courage and strength to fight for their protection. 'Didn't I tell you that you had the best of the bunch, my child?' (She did, Serenity.) 'But though he is a soldier and as brave as a lion, he has too much of the woman in him.' In this respect you resemble, it seems, one of the Princess's own husbands, but having had a variety of them, both right and left-handed, she found a difficulty in fixing your prototype. 'My first husband was like that—or no, it was my second—or perhaps it was one of the other ones.'

"But this being so, O virtuous one, it became my duty to get you back from Alexandria as speedily as possible. 'Love, like the sparrows, comes and goes. Oh, I know. I've seen it myself, my child.'

"'And listen, my moon. Don't allow your Gordon' (she calls you Gourdan) 'to go against his father. Nuneham is the greatest man in the world, but let anybody cross him—*mon Dieu!* If you go out as the wind you meet the whirlwind, and serve you right, too.'

"In complete agreement on this point, the Princess and I were parting in much kindness when father came dashing into my drawing-room like a gust of the Khamseen (hot wind), having just had a telephone message from the Consul-General requiring him to go down to the Agency without delay. Whereupon, with a word or two of apology to the Princess and a rumbling subterranean growl of 'Don't know what the d—— that young man . . .' he picked up your letter to himself and was gone in a moment.

"It is now 10 p.m. and he hasn't come back yet. Another telephone message told me he wouldn't be home to dinner, so I dined alone, with only Mosie Gobs for company, but he waits on me like my shadow, and gives me good advice on all occasions.

"It seems his heart is still on fire with love for me, and, having caught him examining his face in my toilet-glass this morning, I was amused, and a little touched, when he asked me to-night if the Army Surgeon had any medicine to make people white.

"Apparently, his former love was a small black maiden who works in the laundry, and he shares your view (as revealed in happier hours, your Highness) that there's nothing in the world so nice as a little girl except a big one. But I find he hasn't the best opinion of you, for when I was trying to while away an hour after dinner by playing the piano I overheard the monkey telling the cook that to see her hands (*i.e.*, mine) run over the teeth of the music-box amazes the mind—therefore, why should her husband (*id est*, you) spend so much time in the coffee-shop?

"Since then I've been out in the arbour trying to live over again the delicious quarter of an hour you speak of, but though the wing of night is over the city and the air is as soft as somebody's kiss is (except sometimes), it was a dreadful failure, for when I closed my eyes, thinking hearts see each other, I could feel nothing but the sting of a mosquito, and could only hear the watchman crying 'Wahhed!' and what that is you've only to open your mouth wide and then say it, and you'll know.

"So here I am at my desk talking against time until father comes, and there's something to say. And if you would know how I am myself, I would tell you, most glorious and respected, that I'm as tranquil as can be

"WHY SHOULD HER HUSBAND SPEND SO MUCH TIME IN THE COFFEE-SHOP?"

expected considering what a fever you've put me in, for, falling on my knees before your unsullied hands, O Serenity, it seems to me you're a dunce after all, and have gone and done exactly what your great namesake did before you, in spite of his tragic fate to warn you.

"The trouble in Gordon major's case was that the Government gave him a discretionary power and he used it, and it seems as if something similar has happened to Gordon minor, with the same results. I hope to goodness they may send you a definite order as the consequence of their colloguing to-night, and then you can have no choice, and there will be no further trouble.

"That is not to say that I think you are wrong in your view of this new Mahdi, but merely that I don't want to know anything about him. His protests against the spirit of the world may be good and beneficial, but peace and quiet are better. His predictions

about the millennium may be right, too, and if he likes to live on that dinner of herbs let him. Can't you leave such people to boil their own pot without you providing them with sticks? I'm a woman, of course, and my Moslem sisters may be suffering this, that, or the other injustice, but when it comes to letting these things get in between your happiness and mine, what the dickens, and the deuce, and the divil do I care?—which is proof of what Mosie says to the cook about the sweetness of my tongue.

"As for your 'Arab nobleman' taking me by storm, no, thank you! I dare say he has yellow nails, and if one touched the tip of his nose it would be as soft as Mosie's. I hate him anyway, and if you are ever again tempted to fight him, take my advice *and fall!* But look here, Mr. Charlie Gordon Lord! If you're so very keen for a fight come here and fight *me*—I'm game for you!

"Soberly, my dear—dear, don't think I'm not proud of you that you are the only man in all Egypt, aye, or the world, who dares stand up to your father. When God made you he made you without fear—I know that. He made you with a heart that would die rather than do a wrong—I know that too. I don't believe you are taking advantage of your position as a son, either; and when people blame your parents for bringing you up as an Arab I know it all comes from deeper down than that. I suppose it is the Plymouth rock in you, the soul and blood of the men of the *Mayflower*. You cannot help it, and you would fight your own father for what you believed to be the right.

"But, oh, dear, that's just what makes me tremble. Your father and you on opposite sides is a thing too terrible to think about. English gentlemen? Yes, I'm not saying anything to the contrary, but British bulldogs too, and, as if that were not enough, *you've* got the American eagle in you as well. You'll destroy each other—that will be the end of it. And if you ask me what reason I have for saying so, I answer—simply a woman's, I *know!* I *know!*

"Father just back—dreadfully excited and exhausted—had to get him off to bed. Something fresh brewing—cannot tell what.

"I gather that your friend the Grand Kadi was at the Agency to-night—but I'll hear more in the morning.

"It's very late and the city seems to be tossing in its sleep—a kind of somnambulent moan coming up from it. They say the Nile is beginning to rise, and by the light of the moon (it has just risen) I can faintly see a streak of red water down the middle of the river. Ugh! It's like blood and makes me shiver, so I must go to bed.

"Father much better this morning. But oh! oh! oh! . . . It seems you are to be telegraphed for to return immediately. Something you have to do in Cairo—I don't know what. I'm glad you are to come back, though, for I hate to think of you in the same city as that man Ishmael. Let me hear from you the minute you arrive, for I may have something to say by that time, and meantime I send this letter by hand to your quarters at Kasr el-Nil.

"That red streak in the Nile is plain enough this morning. I suppose it's only the first water that comes pouring down from the clay soil of Abyssinia, but I hate to look at it.

"Take care of yourself, Gordon, dear—I'm really a shocking coward, you know.

HELENA.

"P.S.—Another dream last night! Same as before exactly—that man coming between you and me."

CHAPTER XVII.

RETURNING to Cairo by the first train the following morning, Gordon received Helena's letter and replied to it:—

"Just arrived, in obedience to their telegram. But don't be afraid, dearest. Nothing can happen that will injure either of us. My father cannot have wished me to arrest an innocent man. Therefore set your mind at ease and be happy. Going over to the Agency now, but hope to see you in the course of the day. Greetings to the General and all my love to his daughter.—GORDON."

But in spite of the brave tone of this letter, he was not without a certain uneasiness as he rode across to his father's house. "I couldn't have acted otherwise," he thought. And then, recalling Helena's hint of something else which it was intended he should do, he told himself that his father was being deceived and did not know what he was doing. "First of all I must tell him the truth—at all costs, the truth," he thought.

This firm resolution was a little shaken the moment he entered the garden and the home atmosphere began to creep upon him. And when Ibrahim, his father's Egyptian servant, told him that his mother, who had been less well since he went away, was keeping her bed that morning, the shadow of domestic trouble seemed to banish his stalwart purpose.

Bounding upstairs three steps at a time, he called in a cheery voice at his mother's door, but almost before the faint, half-frightened answer came back to him he was in the room, and the pale-faced old lady in her nightdress was in his arms.

"I knew it was you," she said, and then, with her thin, moist hands clasped about his neck, and her head against his breast, she began in a plaintive, hesitating voice, as if she were afraid of her own son, to warn and reprove him.

"I don't understand what is happening, dear, but you must never let anybody poison your mind against your father. He may be a little hard sometimes—I'm not denying that—but then he is not to be judged like other men—he is really not, you know. He would cut off his right hand if he thought it had done him a wrong, but he is very tender to those he loves, and he loves you, dear, and wants to do so much for you. It was pitiful to hear him last night, Gordon. 'I feel as if my enemy has stolen my own son,' he said. 'My own son, my own son,' he kept saying, until I could have cried, and I couldn't sleep for thinking of it. You won't let anybody poison your mind against your father?—promise me you won't, dear."

Gordon comforted and kissed her, and rallied her and laughed, but he felt for a moment as if he had come back as a traitor to destroy the happiness of home.

Fatimah followed him out of the room, and, winking to keep back her tears, she whispered some disconnected story of what had happened on the day on which his father received his letter.

"Oh, my eye, my soul, it was sad! We could hear his footsteps in his bedroom all night long. Sometimes he was speaking to himself. 'The scoundrels!' 'They don't know what shame is!' 'Haven't I had enough? And now he too! My son, my son!'"

Gordon went downstairs with a slow and heavy step. He felt as if everything were conspiring to make him abandon his purpose. "Why can't I leave things alone?" he thought. But just as he reached the hall the Egyptian Prime Minister, who was leaving the house, passed in front of him without seeing him, and a certain sinister look in the man's sallow face wiped out in an instant all the softening effect of the scenes upstairs. "Take care!" he thought. "Tell him the truth, whatever happens."

When he entered the library he expected his father to fly out at him, but the old man was very quiet.

"Sit down—I shall be ready in a moment," he said, and he continued to write without raising his eyes.

Gordon saw that his father's face was more than usually furrowed and severe, and a voice seemed to say to him, "Don't be afraid!" So he walked over to the window and tried to look at the glistening waters of the Nile and the red wedges of Pyramids across the river.

"Well, I received your letter," said the old man, after a moment. "But what was the nonsensical reason you gave me for not doing your duty?"

It was the brusque tone he had always taken with his secretaries when they were in the wrong, but it was a blunder to adopt it with Gordon, who flushed up to the forehead, wheeled round from the window, walked up to the desk, and said, beginning a little hesitatingly, but gathering strength as he went on:—

"My reason, father . . . for not doing my . . . what I was sent to do . . . was merely that I found I could not do it without being either a rascal or a fool."

The old man flinched and his glasses fell. "Explain yourself," he said.

"I came to the conclusion, sir, that you were mistaken in this matter."

"Really!"

"Possibly misinformed——"

"Indeed!"

"By British officials who don't know what they are talking about, or by native scoundrels who do."

Not for forty years had anybody in Egypt spoken to the Consul-General like that, but he only said:—

"Don't stand there like a parson in a pulpit. Sit down and tell me all about it." Whereupon Gordon took a seat by the desk.

"The only riot I witnessed in Alexandria, sir, was due simply to the bad feeling which always exists between the lowest elements of the European and Egyptian inhabitants. Ishmael Ameer had nothing to do with it. On the contrary, he helped to put it down."

"You heard what he had said in the mosques?"

"I had one of his sermons reported to me, sir, and it was teaching such as would have had your own sympathy, being in line with what you have always said yourself about the corruptions of Islam and the necessity of uplifting the Egyptian woman as a means of raising the Egyptian man."

"So you decided, it seems——"

"I decided, father, that to arrest Ishmael

Ameer as one who was promulgating sedition and inciting the people to rebellion would be an act of injustice which you could not wish me to perpetrate in your name."

The Consul-General put up his glasses, looked for a letter which lay on the desk, glanced at it, and said:—

"I see you say that before you arrived in Alexandria it was known you were to come."

"That is so, sir."

"And that after the riot you counselled the Governor to consent to the man's request that he should preach in public."

"I did, sir. I thought it would be a good experiment to try the effect of a little moral influence."

"Of course, the experiment was justified?"

"Perfectly justified — the people dispersed quietly and there has not been a single arrest since."

"But you had a battalion of soldiers on the spot?"

"I had—it was only right to be ready for emergencies."

The old man laughed bitterly. "I'm surprised at you. Don't you see how you've been hoodwinked? The man was warned of your coming — warned from Cairo, from El Azhar, which I find you were so foolish as to visit before you left for Alexandria. Everything was prepared for you. A trick, an Eastern trick, and you were so simple as to be taken in. I'm ashamed of you — ashamed of you before my servants, my secretaries."

Gordon coloured up to his flickering, steel-blue eyes and said:—

"Father, I must ask you to begin by remembering that I am no longer a child and not quite a simpleton. I *know* the Egyptians. I know them better than all your people put together."

"Better than your father himself, perhaps?"

"I'M ASHAMED OF YOU—ASHAMED OF YOU BEFORE MY SERVANTS."

"Yes, sir, better than my father himself, because—because I love them, whereas you—you have hated them from the first. They've never deceived me yet, sir, and, with your permission, I'm not going to deceive them."

The passionate words were hotly, almost aggressively spoken, but from some unfathomable depth of the father's heart the old man was proud of his son at that moment—strong, fearless, and right.

"And the sermon in public—was that also on the corruption of Islam?"

"No, sir; it was about the spirit of the world—the greed of wealth which is making people forget in these days that the true welfare of a nation is moral, not material."

"Anything else?"

"Yes—the hope of a time when the world will have so far progressed towards peace that arms will be laid down and a Redeemer will come to proclaim a universal brotherhood."

"That didn't strike you as ridiculous—to see one unlettered man trying to efface the laws of civilized society—asking sensible people to turn their backs on the facts of life in order to live in a spiritual hot-house of dreams?"

"No, father, that did not strike me as ridiculous, because——"

"Because what—what, now?"

"Because John the Baptist and Jesus Christ did precisely the same thing."

There was silence for a moment, and then the old man said:—

"In this golden age that is to come, he predicts, I am told, a peculiar place for Egypt—is that so?"

"Yes, sir. He holds that in the commonwealth of the world Egypt, by reason of her geographical position, will become the interpreter and peacemaker between the East and the West—that that's what she has lived so long for."

"Yet it didn't occur to you that this was sedition in its most seductive form, and that the man who promulgated it was probably the most dangerous of the demagogues—the worst of the Egyptians who prate about the natives governing themselves and the English being usurping foreigners?"

"No, sir, that didn't occur to me at all, because I felt that a Moslem people had a right to their own ideals, and also because I thought——"

"Well? Well?"

"That the man who imagines that the soul of a nation can be governed by the sword—whoever he is, King, Kaiser, or—or Czar—is the worst of tyrants."

The old autocrat flinched visibly. The scene was becoming tragic to him. For forty years he had been fighting his enemies, and he had beaten them, and now suddenly his own son was standing up as his foe. After a moment of silence he rose and said, with stony gravity:—

"Very well! Having heard your views on Ishmael Ameer, and incidentally on myself, and all I have hitherto attempted to do in Egypt, it only remains to me to tell you what I intend to do now. You know that this man is coming on to Cairo?"

Gordon bowed.

"You are probably aware that it is intended that he shall preach at El Azhar?"

"I didn't know that, sir, but I'm not surprised to hear it."

"Well, El Azhar has to be closed before he arrives."

"Closed?"

"That is what I said—closed, shut up, and its students and professors turned into the streets."

"But there are six thousand of them—from all parts of the Mohammedan world, sir."

"That's why! The Press as a medium of disaffection was bad enough, but El Azhar is worse. It is a hotbed of rebellion, and a word spoken there goes, as by wireless telegraphy, all over Egypt. It is a secret society, and as such it must be stopped."

"But have you reflected——"

"Do I do anything without reflection?"

"Closed, you say? The University? The mosque of mosques? It is impossible! You are trifling with me."

"Have you taken leave of your senses, sir?"

"I beg your pardon, father. I only wish to prevent you from doing something you will never cease to regret. It's dangerous work to touch the religious beliefs of an Eastern people—you know that, sir, better than I do. And if you shut up your University, their holy of holies, you shake the foundations of their society. It's like shutting up St. Peter's in Rome, or St. Paul's in London."

"Both events have happened," said the old man, resuming his seat.

"Father, I beg of you to beware. Trust me, I know these people. No Christian nation nowadays believes in Christianity as these Moslems believe in Islam. We don't care enough for our faith to fight for it. But these dusky millions will die for their religion. And then there's Ishmael Ameer—you must see for yourself what manner of man he is—

careless alike of comfort or fame, a fanatic if you like, but he has only to call to the people and they'll follow him. All the wealth and well-being you have bestowed on them will go to the winds and they'll follow him to a man."

The Consul-General's lip curled again, and he said, quietly, "You ask me to believe that at the word of this man, without a penny and with his head full of worthless noise, the blue-shirted fellaheen will leave their comfortable homes and their lands?"

"Aye, and their wives and children, too—everything they have or ever hope to have! And if he promises them nothing but danger and death, all the more they'll go to him."

"Then we must deal with him also."

"You can't—you can't do anything with a man like that—a man who wants nothing and is afraid of nothing—except kill him, and you can't do that either."

The Consul-General did not reply immediately, and, coming closer, Gordon began to plead with him.

"Father, believe me, I know what I am saying. Don't be blind to the storm that is brewing, and so undo all the good you have ever done. For Egypt's sake, England's, your own, don't let damnable scoundrels like the Grand Kadi and the Prime Minister play on you like a pipe."

It was Gordon who had blundered now, and the consequences were cruel. The ruthless, saturnine old man rose again, and on his square-hewn face there was an icy smile.

"That brings me," he said, speaking very slowly, "from what *I* have done to what *you* must do. The Ulema of El Azhar have received an order to close the University. It went to them this morning through the President of the Council, who is acting as Regent in the absence of the Khedive. If they refuse to go it will be your duty to turn them out."

"Mine?"

"Yours! The Governor of the city and the Commandant of Police will go with you, but where six thousand students and a disaffected population have to be dealt with the military will be required. If you had brought Ishmael Ameer back from Alexandria this step might have been unnecessary, but now instead of one man you have to arrest hundreds."

"But if they resist—and they will—I know they will——"

"In that case they will come under a special tribunal as persons assaulting the members of the British Army of Occupation, and be dispatched without delay to the Soudan."

"But surely——"

"The Ulema are required to signify their assent by to-morrow morning, and we are to meet at the Citadel at four in the afternoon. You will probably be required to be there."

"But, father——"

"We left something to your discretion before, hoping to give you an opportunity of distinguishing yourself in the eyes of England, but in this case your orders will be definite, and your only duty will be to obey."

"But will you not permit me to——"

"That will do for the present. I'm busy. Good day!"

Gordon went out dazed and dumbfounded. He saw nothing of Ibrahim, who handed him his linen-covered cap in the hall, or of the page-boy at the porch who gave him his reins and held down his stirrup. When he came back to consciousness he was riding by the side of the Nile, where the bridge was open, and a number of boats with white sails, like a flight of great sea-gulls, were sweeping through.

At the next moment he was at the entrance to his own quarters, and found a white motor-car standing there. It was Helena's car, and, leaping from the saddle, he went bounding up the stairs.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HELENA was at his door, with an anxious and perplexed face, talking to his soldier servant. At the next instant they were in each other's arms, and their troubles were gone. Her smile seemed to light up his room more than all its wealth of sunlight, and nothing else was of the smallest consequence. But after a moment she drew out a letter and said:—

"I told father you were back, and he dictated a message to you. He was going to send it by his A.D.C., but I asked to be allowed to bring it myself and he consented. Here it is, dear."

Gordon opened and read the General's letter. It was a formal request that he should be in attendance at the Citadel at four the following day to receive urgent and important instructions.

"You know what it refers to, Helena?"

"Yes, I know," she answered.

The look of perplexity had returned to her face, and for some minutes they stood arm in arm by the open window, looking down at the Nile in a dazed and dreamy way.

"What are you going to do, Gordon?"

"I don't know—yet."

"It will be an order now, and as an officer you can do nothing but obey."

"I suppose not, dear."

"There are so many things calling for your obedience, too—honour, ambition, everything a soldier can want, you know."

"I know! I know!"

She crept closer and said, "Then there's something else, dear."

"What else, Helena?"

"Haven't I always told you that sooner or later that man would come between us?"

"Ishmael?"

"Yes. Last night my father said . . . but I hate to mention it."

"Tell me, dear, tell me."

"He said, 'You couldn't marry a man who had disobeyed and been degraded?'"

"Meaning that if I refused to obey orders, you and I, perhaps . . . by arrangement between your father and mine, maybe——"

"That is what I understood him to mean, dear, and therefore I came to see you."

He flushed crimson for a moment and then began to laugh.

"No, no! I'll never believe that of them. It would be monstrous—impossible!"

But the questioning look in Helena's eyes remained and he tried to reassure her. So many things might happen to remove the difficulty altogether. The Ulema might take the order of the Government as a protest against the visit of Ishmael Ameer, and send him instructions not to come to Cairo.

"He's here already, dear," said Helena.

As she drove down from the citadel she had crossed a crowd of natives coming from the direction of the railway station, and someone had said it was a procession in honour of the new prophet, who had just arrived from Alexandria.

"Then you've seen him yourself, Helena?"

"I saw a man in a white dress on a white horse, but I didn't look—I had somebody else to think about."

He was carried away by the singleness of her love, and with a score of passionate expressions he kissed her beautiful white hands and did his best to comfort her.

"Never mind, dear! Don't be afraid! The Governors of El Azhar may agree to close their doors—temporarily, at all events. Anyhow, we'll muddle through somehow."

She made him promise not to go near "the new Mahdi," and then began to draw on her long yellow driving gloves.

"I suppose the gossips of Cairo would be shocked if they knew I had come to see you," she said.

"It's not the first time you've been here, though. You're here always—see!" he said, and with his arm about her waist he took her round his room to look at her portraits that hung on the walls. It was Helena here, Helena there, Helena everywhere, but since that was the first time the real Helena had visited his quarters, she must drink his health in them.

She would only drink it in water, and when she had done so she had to slip off her glove again and dip her finger into the same glass that he might drink her own health as well. In spite of the shadow of trouble which hung over them they were very happy. A world of warm impulses coursed through their veins, and they could hardly permit themselves to part. It was sweet to stand by the window again and look down at the dazzling Nile. For them the old river flowed, for them it sang its sleepy song. They looked into each other's eyes and smiled without speaking. It was just as if their hearts saw each other and were satisfied.

At length she clasped her arms about his neck, and he felt the warm glow of her body.

"You think that still, Gordon?"

"What, dearest?"

"That love is above everything?"

"Everything in the world," he whispered, and then she kissed him of herself, and nothing else mattered—nothing on earth or in heaven.

CHAPTER XIX

WHEN Helena had gone the air of his room seemed to be more dumb and empty than it had ever been before; but the bell of the telephone rang immediately, and Hafiz spoke to him.

Hafiz had just heard from his uncle that the Ulema were to meet at eight o'clock to consider what course they ought to adopt. The Chancellor was in favour of submission to superior force, but some of his colleagues of the reactionary party—the old stick-in-the-muds made in Mecca—not being able to believe the Government could be in earnest, were advocating revolt, even resistance.

"Hadn't you better go up to El Azhar to-night, Gordon, and tell them the Government means business? They'll believe *you*, you know, and it may save riot, perhaps bloodshed."

"I hadn't intended to go there again, Hafiz, but if you think I can do any good——"

"You can—I'm sure you can. Let me call for you at eight, and we'll go up together."

"Can't see why we shouldn't. . . . But wait! Ishmael Ameer is in Cairo. Will he be there, think you?"

"Don't know—should think it very likely."

"Well, it can't be helped. Eight o'clock, then! By-bye!" said Gordon, and with that he rang off and wrote to Helena, telling her what he was going to do. He was going to break his word to her again, but it was only in the interests of peace and with the hope of preventing trouble.

"Don't suppose these people can influence me a hair's breadth, dearest," he said, "and, above all, don't be angry."

At eight o'clock Hafiz came for him, and, dressed in mufti, they walked up to the University. With more than usual ceremony they were taken to the Chancellor's room in the roof, and there, in a tense, electrical atmosphere, the Ulema were already assembled—a group of eight or nine rugged and unkempt creatures in their farageeyeh (a loose grey robe, like that of a monk), squatting on the divans about the walls. All the Governors of El Azhar were present except the Grand Kadi, and the only stranger there, except themselves, was Ishmael Ameer, who sat, in his spotless white dress and with his solemn face, on a chair beside the door.

In silence, and with many sweeping salaams from floor to forehead, Gordon was received by the company, and at the request of the Chancellor he explained the object of his visit. It was not official, and it was scarcely proper, but it was intended to do good. There were moments when, passion being excited, there was a serious risk of collision between governors and governed. This was one of them. Rightly or wrongly, the Consul-General was convinced that the University of Cairo was likely to become a centre of sedition. Could they not agree to close it for a time, at all events?

At that the electrical atmosphere of the room broke into rumblings of thunder. The order of the Government was an outrage on the Mohammedan religion, which England had pledged herself to respect. El Azhar was one of the three holy places of the Islamic world, and to close it was to take the bread of life from the Moslems. "The Government might as well cut our throats at once and have done with it," said someone.

From denouncing the order of the Government, the Ulema went on to denounce the Government itself. It was eating the people! It was like wolves trying to devour them! "Are we to be body and soul under the heel of the infidel?" they asked themselves.

After that they denounced Lord Nuneham. He was the slave of power! He was drunk with the strong drink of authority! The University was their voice—he had deprived them of every other—and now he was trying to strike them dumb! When somebody, remembering that they were speaking before the Consul-General's son, suggested that if he was doing a bad act it might be with a good conscience, an alim with an injured eye and a malignant face cried, "No, by Allah! The man who usurps the power of God becomes a devil, and that's what Nuneham is and long has been."

Listening to their violence Gordon had found himself taking his father's part, and at this moment his anger had risen so high that he was struggling against an impulse to take the unkempt creature by the throat and fling him out of the room, when the soft voice of the Chancellor began to plead for peace.

"Mohammed, blessed be his name, always yielded to superior force; and who are we that we should be too proud to follow his example?"

But at that the reactionary party became louder and fiercer than before. "Our prophet in the Koran," cried one, "has commanded us not to seek war and not to begin it. But he has also told us that if war is waged against Islam we are to resist it under penalty of being ourselves as unbelievers, and to follow up those who assail us without pity and without remorse. Therefore, if the English close our holy El Azhar they will be waging war on our religion, and, by the Most High God, we will fight them to the last man, woman, and child."

At that instant Hafiz, who had been trembling in an obscure seat by the door, rose to his feet and said, in a nervous voice, addressing his uncle:—

"Eminence, may I say something?"

"Speak, son of my sister," said the Chancellor.

"It is about Colonel Lord," said Hafiz. "If you refuse to close El Azhar, an order to force you to do so will be issued to the Army and Colonel Lord will be required to carry it into effect."

"Well?"

"He is the friend of the Mussulmans, your Eminence, but if you resist him he will be compelled to kill you."

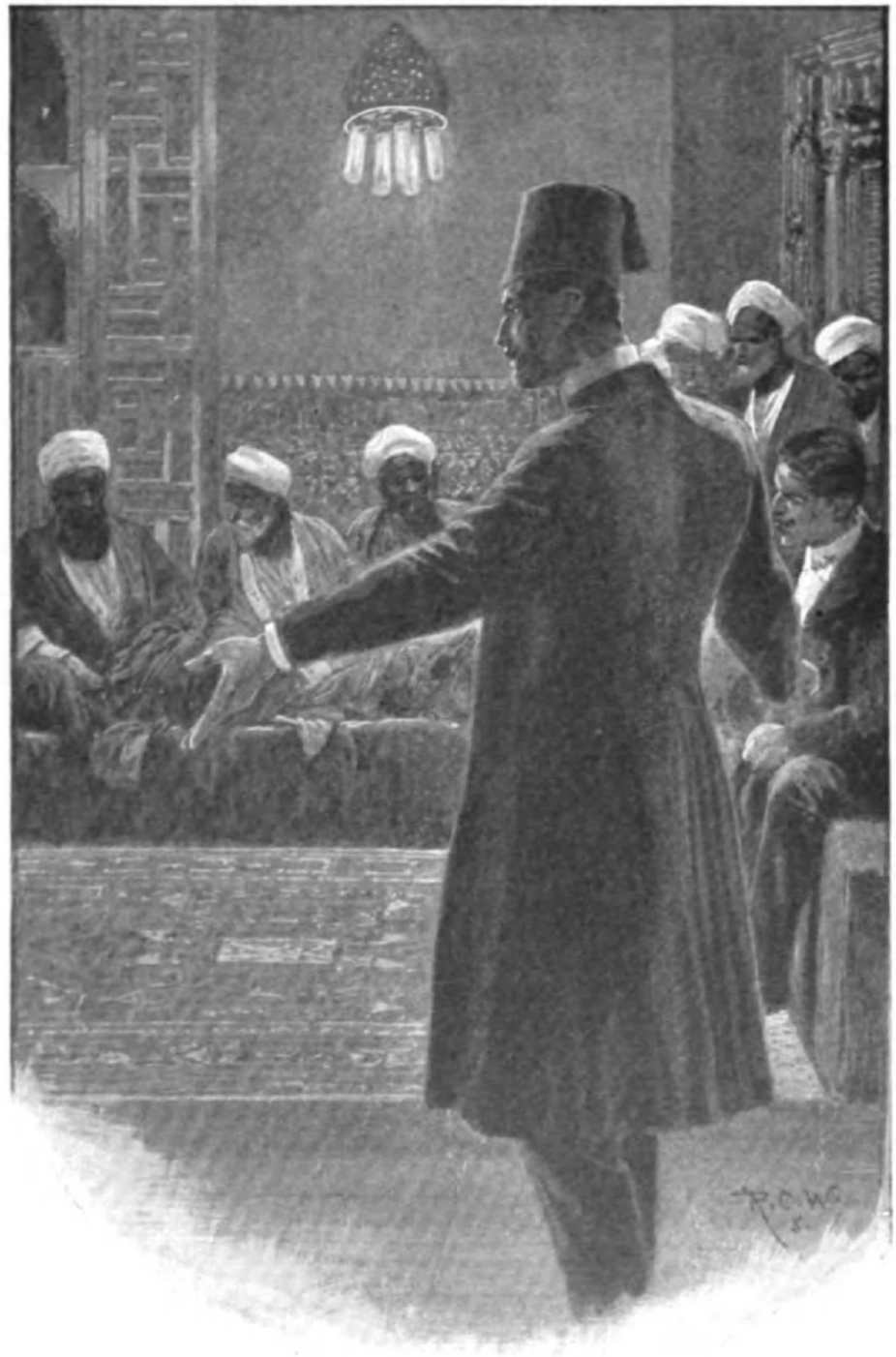
"Wouldn't it be well to say 'With God's permission'?" said the man with the injured

eye, whereupon Hafiz wheeled round on him and answered, hotly:—

"He has the bayonets and he has the courage, and if you fight him there won't be so much as a rat among you that will be left alive."

There was a moment of tense and breathless silence, and then Hafiz, now as nervous as before, said quietly: "On the other hand, if he refuses to obey his orders he will lose his place and rank as a soldier. Which of these do you wish to see, your Eminence?"

There was another moment of breathless silence, and then Ishmael Ameer, who had not spoken before, said in his quivering voice:—



"HAFIZ WHEELED ROUND ON HIM AND ANSWERED, HOTLY, 'HE HAS THE BAYONETS AND HE HAS THE COURAGE.'"

"Let us call on God to guide us, my brothers—in tears and in fervent prayer, all night long in the mosque, until His light shines on us and a door of hope has opened."

CHAPTER XX.

As Gordon returned to barracks the air of the native section of the city seemed to tingle with excitement. The dirty, unpaved streets with their overhanging tenements were thronged. Framed portraits of Ishmael Ameer, with candles burning in front of them, were standing on the counters of nearly all the *cafés*, and the men squatting on the benches about were chanting the Koran. One man, generally a blind man, with his right hand behind his ear, would be reciting the text, and at the close of every Sura the others would be crying, "Allah! Allah!"

In the densest quarter, where the streets were narrowest and most full of ruts, the houses most wretched and the windows most covered with cobwebs, a company of dervishes were walking in procession, bearing their ragged banners and singing their weird Arab music to the accompaniment of pipes and drums, while boys parading beside them were carrying tin lamps and open flares. Before certain of the houses they stopped, and for some minutes they swayed their bodies to an increasing chorus of "Allah! Allah! Allah!"

Gordon saw what had happened. With the coming of the new teacher a wave of religious feeling had swept over the city. Dam it up suddenly, and what scenes of fanatical frenzy might not occur!

Back in his room, with the window down to shut out the noises of the river and the bridge, he tried to come to a conclusion as to what he ought to do the following day if the Ulema decided to resist. They *would* resist; he had no doubt about that, for where men were under the influence of gusts of religious passion they might call on God, but God's answer was always the same.

If the Ulema were to decide not to close their sacred place they would intend to die in defence of it, and, seeing the issue from the Moslem point of view, that El Azhar was the centre of their spiritual life, Gordon concluded that they would be justified in resisting. If they were justified the order to evict them would be wicked, and the act of eviction would be a crime. "I can't do it!" he told himself. "I can't and I won't!"

This firm resolve relieved him for a moment, and then he began to ask himself what would happen if he refused to obey. The bad work would be done all the same, for somebody else would do it. "What then will be the result?" he thought.

The first result would be that he himself would suffer. He would be tried for insubordination, and, of course, degraded and punished. As a man he might be in the right, but as a soldier he would be in the wrong. He thought of his hard-fought fights and of the honours he had won, and his head went round in a whirl.

The next result would be that he would bring disgrace on his father as well. His refusal to obey orders would become known, and if the consequences he expected should come to pass he would seem to stand up as the first of his father's accusers. He, his father's only son, would be the means of condemning him in the eyes of England, of Europe, of the world! In his old age, too, and after all he had done for Egypt!

Then, above all, there was Helena! The General would side with the Consul-General, and Helena would be required to cast in her lot either with her father or with him. If she sided with him she would have to break with her father; if she sided with her father she would have to part from him. In either case the happiness of her life would be wasted—*he* would have wasted it, and he would have wasted his own happiness as well.

This thought seemed to take him by the throat and stifle him. He leapt from the bed on which he had been lying in restless pain and threw open the window. The river and the bridge were quiet by that time, but through the breathless night air there came the music of a waltz. It was the last dance of the visiting season at an hotel near by—a number of British officers were dancing on the edge of the volcano.

Gordon shut the window and again threw himself on the bed. At length the problem that tormented him seemed to resolve itself into one issue. His father did not realize that the Moslems would die rather than give up possession of their holy place, and that in order to turn them out of it he would have to destroy them—slaughter them. A man could not outrage the most sacred of human feelings without being morally blind to what he was doing. His father was a great man—a thousand times greater than he himself could ever hope to be—but in this case he was blind and somebody had to open his eyes.

"I'll go and bring him to reason," he thought. "He may insult me if he likes, but no matter!"

"A COMPANY OF DERVISHES WERE WALKING IN PROCESSION."

The last cab had rattled home and the streets were silent when Gordon reached the entrance to the Agency. Then he saw that it was late, for the house was in darkness, and not even the window of the library showed a light. The moon was full, and he looked at his watch. Good heavens! It was two o'clock!

The house dog heard his footsteps on the gravel path, and barked and bounded towards him; then, recognising him, it began to snuffle and to lick his hands. At the same moment a light appeared in an upper window. It was the window of his mother's room, and at sight of it his resolution began to ebb away, and he was once more seized with uncertainty.

Strife between himself and his father would extinguish the last rays of his mother's flickering life. He could see her looking at him with her pleading and frightened eyes.

"Am I really going to kill my mother—that too?" he thought.

He was as far as ever from knowing what course he ought to take on the morrow, but the light in his mother's window, filtering through the lace curtains that were drawn across it, was like a tear-dimmed, accusing eye, and with a new emotion he was compelled to turn away.

As two o'clock struck on the soft cathedral bell of a little clock by the side of her bed, Fatimah rose with a yawn, switched on the electric light, and filled a small glass from a bottle on the mantelpiece.

"Time to take your medicine, my lady," she said, in a sleepy voice.

Her mistress did not reply immediately, and she asked:—

"Are you asleep?"

But her lady, who was wide awake, whispered, "Hush! Do you hear Rover? Isn't that somebody on the path?"

Fatimah listened as well as she could through the drums of sleep that were beating in her ears, and then she answered:—

"No; I hear nothing."

"I thought it was Gordon's footstep," said the old lady, raising herself in bed to take the medicine that Fatimah was holding out to her.

"It's strange! Gordon's step is exactly like his grandfather's."

"Don't spill it, my lady," said Fatimah, and with a trembling hand the old lady drank off her dose.

"He's like his grandfather in other things, too. I remember when I was a girl there was a story of how he struck one of his soldiers in the Civil War, thinking the man was guilty of some offence. But afterwards he found the poor fellow was innocent and had taken the blow for his brother without saying a word. Father never forgave himself for that—never!"

"Shall I put on the eider-down? The nights are cold if the days are hot, you know."

"Yes—no—just as you think best, nurse. . . . I'm sure Gordon will do what is right, whatever happens. I'm sorry for his father, though. Did you hear what he said when he came to bid me good night: 'They think they've caught me now that they've caught my son, but let them wait—we'll see.'"

"Hush!" said Fatimah, and she pointed to the wall of the adjoining room. From the other side of it came the faint sound of measured footsteps.

"He's walking again—can't sleep, I suppose," said Fatimah, in a drowsy whisper.

"Ah, well!" said the old lady, after listening for a moment; and then Fatimah put out the light and went back to her bed.

"God bless my boy!" said a tremulous voice in the darkness.

After that there was a sigh, and then silence—save for the hollow thud of the footsteps in the adjoining room.

CHAPTER XXI.

BEFORE Gordon was out of bed next morning Hafiz rang him up on the telephone. He had just heard from his uncle, the Chancellor, that as a result of their night-long deliberation and prayer the Ulema had decided to ask the Consul-General to receive Ishmael Ameer and listen to a suggestion.

"What will it be?" asked Gordon.

"That the Government should leave El Azhar alone on condition that the Ulema consent to open it, and all the mosques connected with it, to public and police inspection, so as to dissipate the suspicion that they are centres of sedition."

"Splendid! To make the mosques as free as Christian churches is a splendid thought—an inspiration. But if the Government will not agree, what then?"

"Then the order to close El Azhar will be resisted. 'Only over our dead bodies,' they say, 'shall the soldiers enter it.'"

Gordon went about his work that morning like a man dazed and dumb, but after lunch he dressed himself carefully in his full-dress staff uniform. He wore all his decorations—his Distinguished Service Order, the King's and war medal of the South African War with three clasps, the Soudan medal with four clasps, the Medjidieh, and the Khedive's star. It was not for nothing that he did so, or merely because he was going to an official conference, but with a certain pride as of a man who had won the right to consideration.

Taking a cab by the gate of the barracks, he drove through the native quarters of the city and saw crowds surging through the streets in the direction of El Azhar. The atmosphere seemed to tingle with the spirit of revolution, and seeing the sublime instinct of humanity which leads people in defence of their faith to the place where danger is greatest, he felt glad and proud that what was best in him was about to conquer.

Arriving at the Citadel he found Helena's black boy waiting for him at the door of the

General's house with a message from his mistress, saying the gentlemen had not arrived and she wished to see him. The city below lay bright under the warm soolham of the afternoon sun, and the swallows were swirling past the windows of Helena's sitting-room, but Helena herself was under a cloud.

"I see what it is—you are angry with me for going to El Azhar last night," said Gordon.

"No, it isn't that, though I think you might have kept faith with me," she answered. "But we have no time to lose, and I have something to say to you. In the first place, I want you to know that Colonel Macfarlane, your Deputy Assistant Adjutant, has been ordered to stand by. He will be only too happy to take your place if necessary."

"He's welcome!" said Gordon.

Her brows were contracted, her lips set. She fastened her eyes on him and said:—

"Then there is something else I wish to tell you."

"What is it, Helena?"

"When my father asked me if I could marry a man who had disobeyed and been degraded, I said . . . But it doesn't matter what I said. My father has hardly ever spoken to me since. It has been the first cloud that has come between us—the very first. But when I answered him as I did there was something I had forgotten."

"What was it, dearest?"

"I cannot tell you what it was—I can only tell you what it comes to."

"What does it come to, Helena?"

"That whatever happens to-day I can never leave my father—never as long as he lives."

"God forbid that you should be tempted to do so—but why?"

"That is what I cannot tell you. It is a secret."

"I can think of no secret that I could not share with you, Helena."

"Nor I with you—if it were my own—but this isn't."

"I cannot understand you, dear."

"Say it is somebody else's secret, and that his life, his career, depends upon it. Say it couldn't be told to you without putting you in a false position, involving you in responsibilities which you have no right to bear."

"You puzzle me, bewilder me, Helena."

"Then trust me, dear; trust me for the present, at all events, and some day you shall know everything," she said, whereupon Gordon, who had not taken his eyes off her, said:—

"So what it really comes to is this—that whatever course your father takes to-day I must take it also, under pain of a violent separation from you! Isn't that it, Helena? Isn't it? And, if so, isn't it like sending a man into battle with his hands tied and his eyes blindfold?"

She dropped her head, but made no reply.

"That is not what I expected of you, Helena. The Helena who has been living in my mind is a girl who would say to me at a moment like this, 'Do what you believe to be right, Gordon; and whether you are degraded to the lowest rank or raised to the highest honour, I will be with you—I will stand by your side!'"

Her eyes flashed and she drew herself up.

"So you think I couldn't say that—that I didn't say anything like it when my father spoke to me? But if you have been thinking of me as a girl like that, I have been thinking of you as a man who would say, 'I love you, and do you know what my love means? It means that my love for you is above everything and everybody in the world.'"

"And it is, Helena, it is."

"Then why," she said, with her eyes fixed on his, "why do you let this Egyptian and his interests come between us? If you take his part after what I have just told you, will it not be the same thing in the end as choosing him against me?"

"Don't vex me, Helena. I've told you before that your jealousy of this man is nonsense."

The word cut her to the quick and she drew herself up again.

"Very well," she said, with a new force, "if it's jealousy and if it's nonsense you must make your account with it. I said I *couldn't* tell you why I cannot leave my father—now I *won't*. You must choose between us. It is either that man or me."

"You mean that if the General decides against Ishmael Ameer you will follow your father, and that I—whatever my conscience may say—I must follow you?"

Her eyes blazed and she answered, "Yes."

"Good God, Helena! What is it you want me to be? Is it a man or a manikin?"

At that moment the young lieutenant who was the General's aide-de-camp came in to say that the Consul-General and the Prime Minister had arrived, and required Colonel Lord's attendance.

"Presently," said Gordon, and as soon as the lieutenant had gone he turned to Helena again.

"Helena," he said, "there is not a moment

to lose. Remember, this is the last time I can see you before I am required to act one way or other. God knows what may happen before I come out of that room. Will you send me into it without any choice?"

She was breathing hard and biting her under lip.

"Your happiness is dearer to me than anything else in life, dear; but I am a man, not a child, and if I am to follow your father in order not to lose you, I must know why. Will you tell me?"

Without raising her eyes, Helena answered, "No!"

"Very well!" he said. "In that case it must be as the fates determine." And, straightening his sword-belt, he stepped to the door.

"GOOD GOD, HELENA! WHAT IS IT YOU WANT ME TO BE? IS IT A MAN OR A MANIKIN?"

Helena looked up at him and in a fluttering voice called, "Gordon!"

He turned, with his hand on the handle. "What is it?"

For one instant she had an impulse to break her promise and tell him of her father's infirmity, but at the next moment she thought of the Egyptian and her pride and jealousy conquered.

"What is it, Helena?"

"Nothing," she said, and fled into her bedroom.

Gordon looked after her until she had disappeared, and then—hot, angry, nervous, less able than before to meet the ordeal before him—he turned the handle of the door and entered the General's office.

(To be continued.)

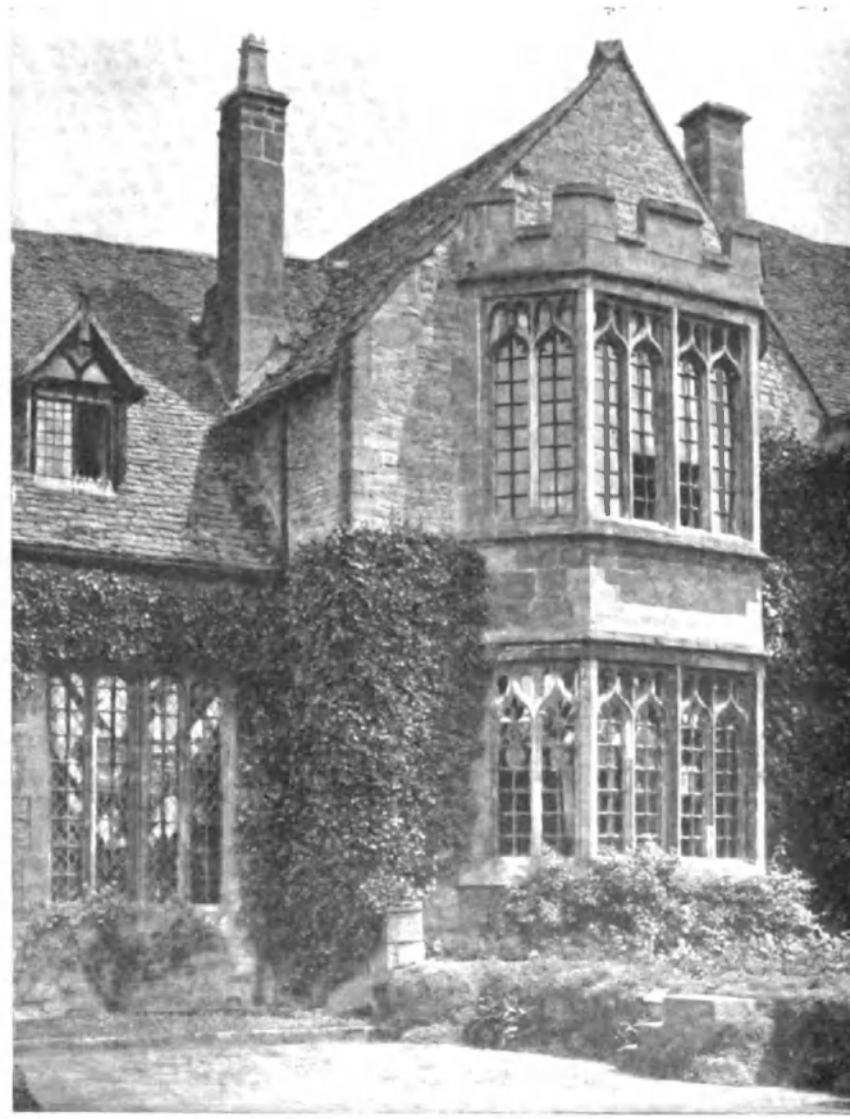
ENGLISH HOMES AND GARDENS.

IV.

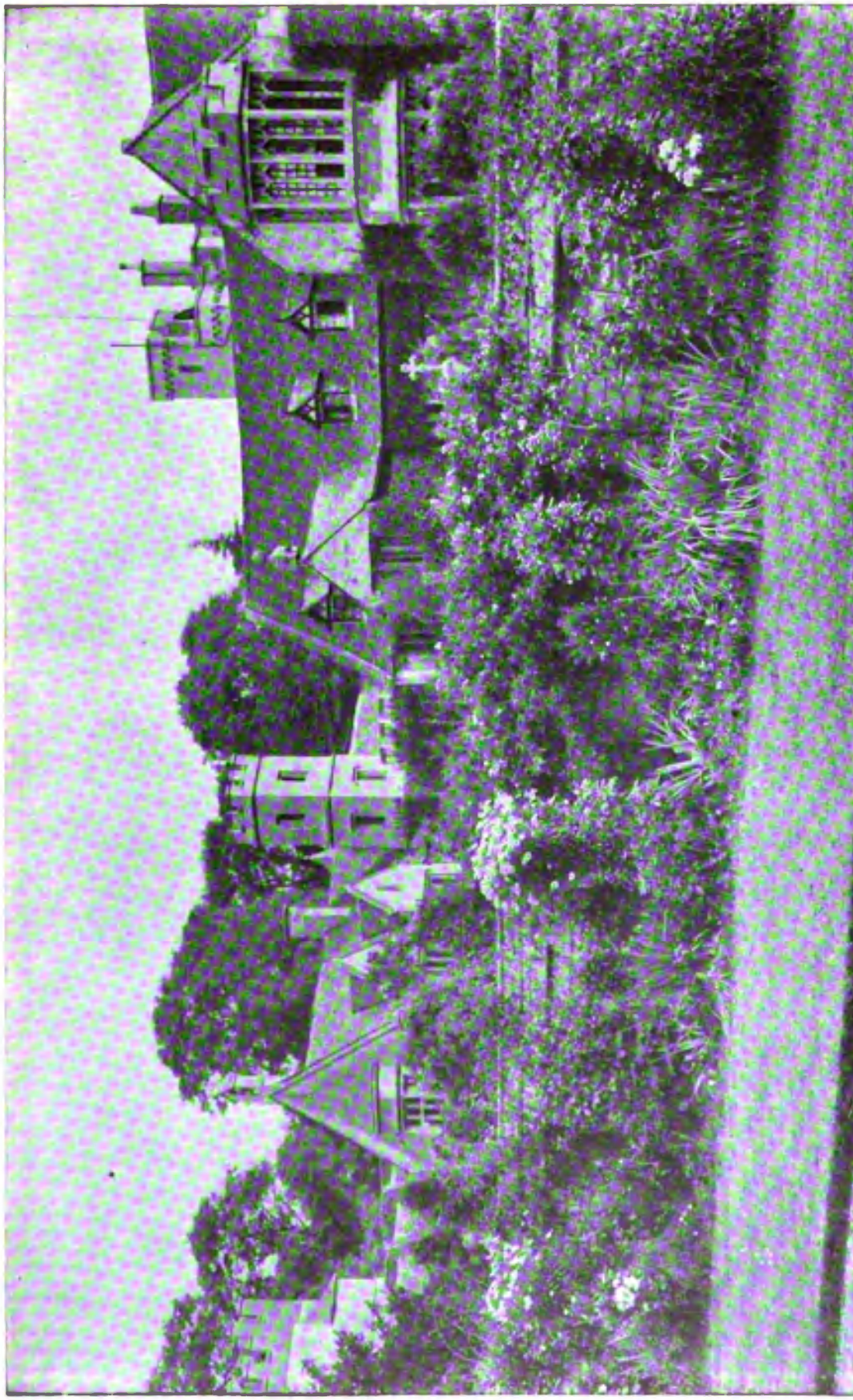
SOUTHAM DELABERE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

The Residence of Mrs. Ratcliff.

BUILT practically at one time and by one man, the "pretty Mannour Place" of Southam got through the eighteenth century—that difficult century for a Tudor house to weather—unstuccoed, unsashed, unparapeted, unenlarged, and yet throughout was well cared for and adequately repaired. It was the wonder, the museum piece, of the whole region. Totally different from their "taste," it was yet so good and perfect of its kind that it commanded their respect, if not their admiration. "It is one of the greatest curiosities in the county," wrote Rudder, in 1779, and Bigland, in 1796, is more superlative still, assuring us that it "is certainly the oldest Dwelling House in the County, and has been declared by able antiquarians to be of as long standing, and to retain more of the original form than any in the kingdom." "Able antiquarians" in the eighteenth century were apt to be more dogmatic than accurate. A building of which no stone is older than Henry VIII. is young compared to some of our "dwelling-houses." None the less, a Henry VIII. house tempered by time and untouched by man is a delicious thing, and those who then saw it are to be envied. One grieves at the sight of the Victorian Gothic towers and turrets, wings and



From a] LATE GOTHIC BAYS. *[Photograph.*

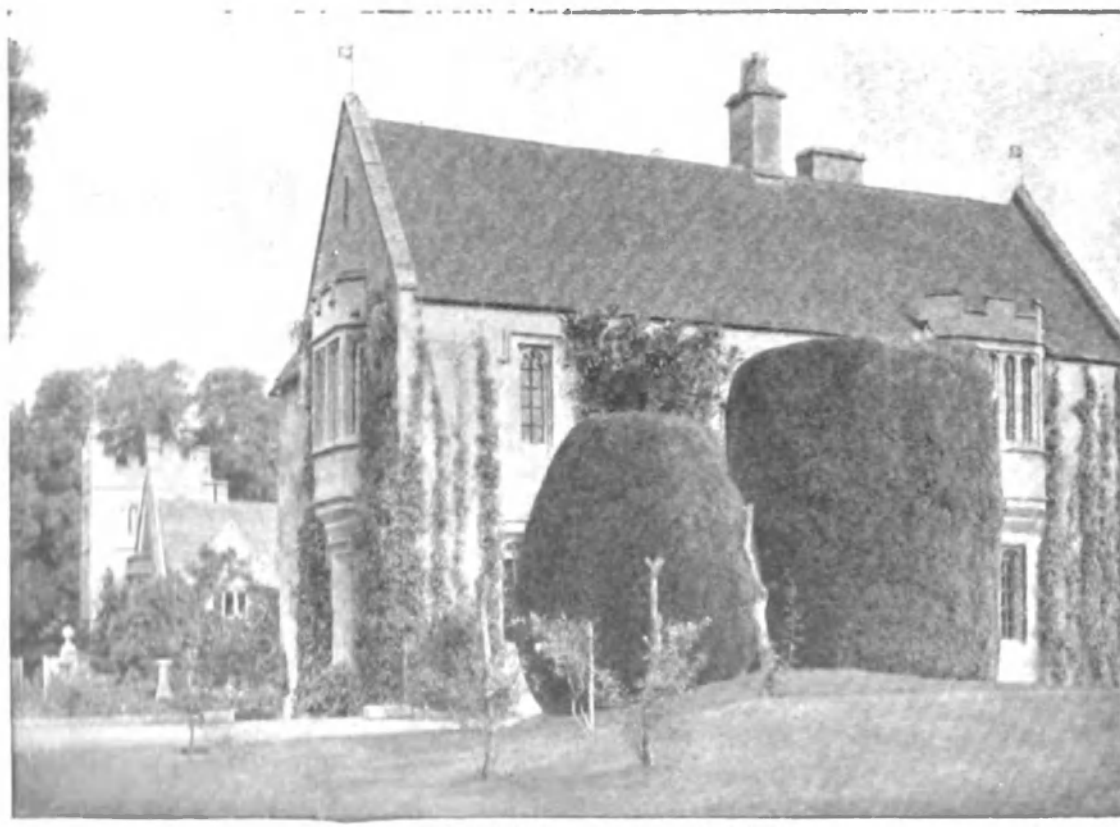


PART OF THE WEST FRONT FROM BELOW THE TERRACE.

[Photograph.

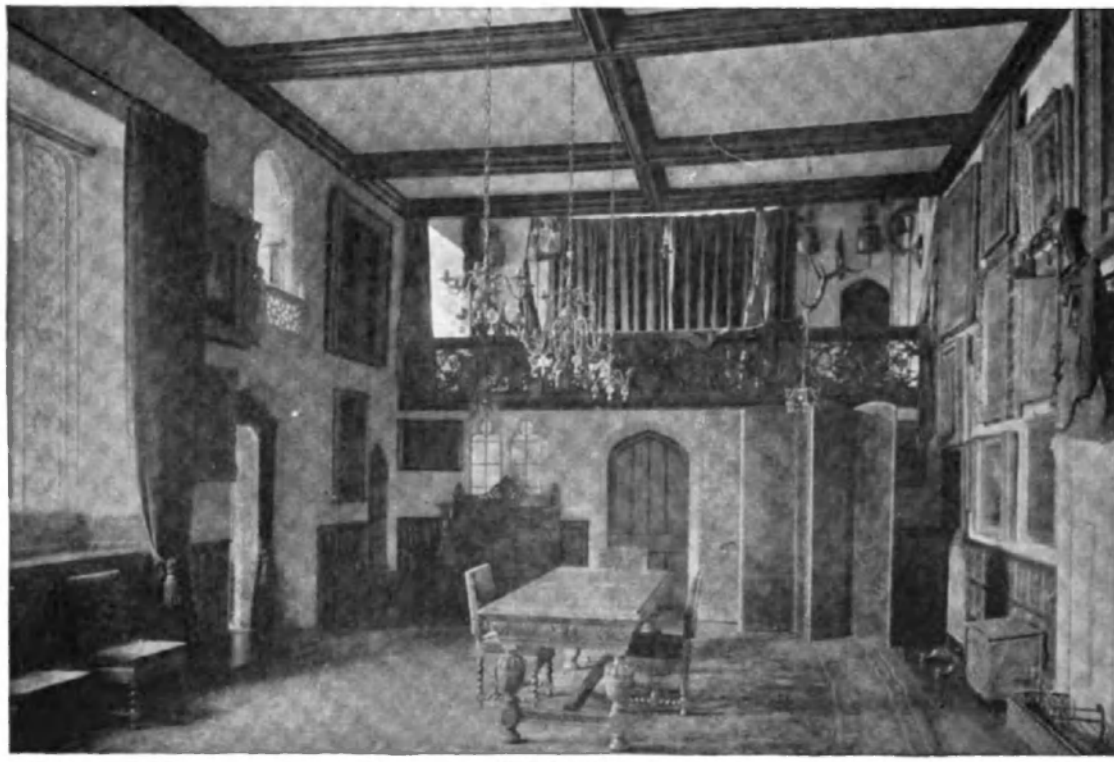
From a]

From a] THE WEST FRONT FROM THE TERRACE GARDEN. *[Photograph.*



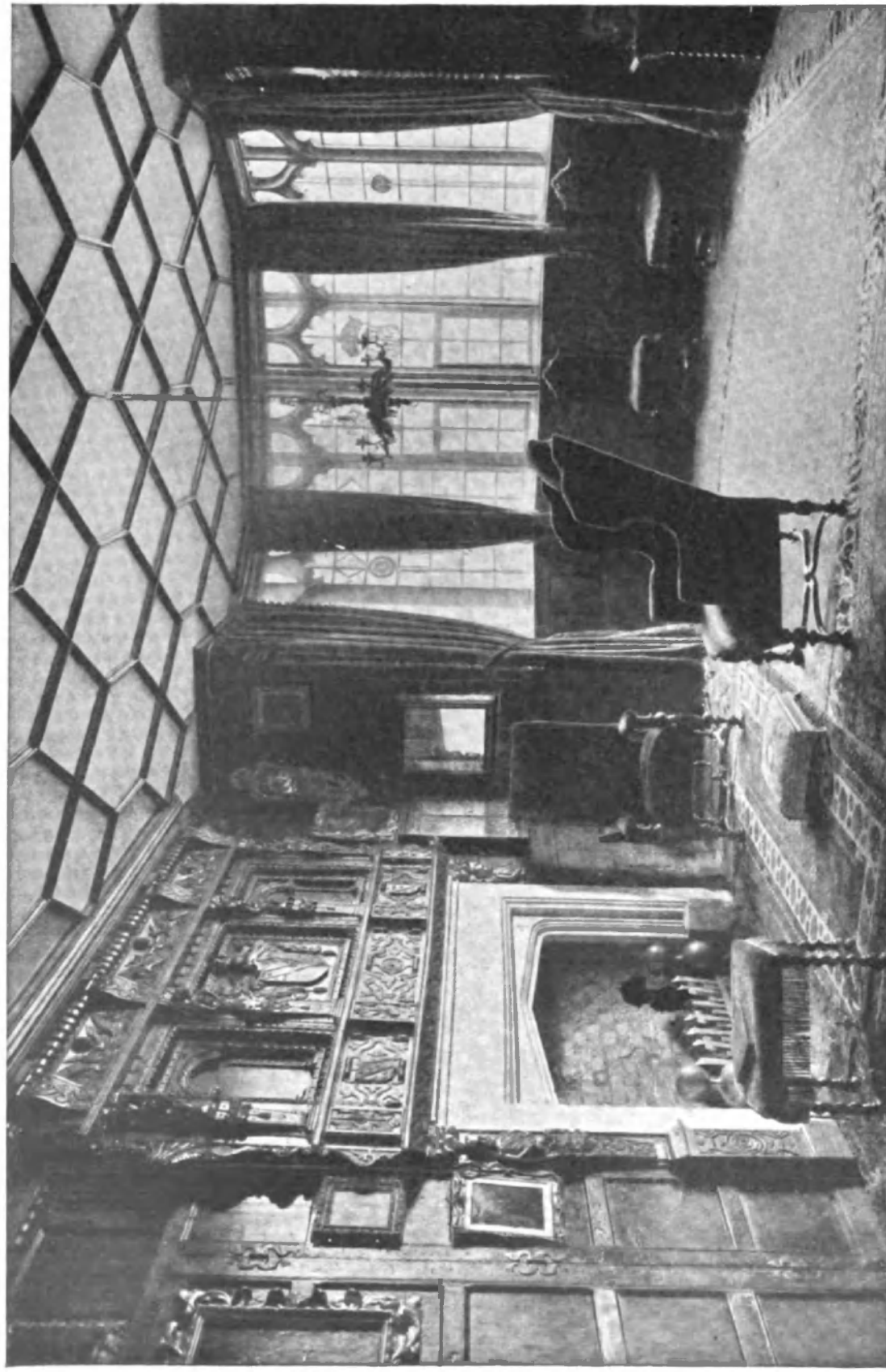
From a] GREAT YEWS NEAR THE SOUTH FRONT. *[Photograph.*

outbuildings, which flaunt their garish forms and assert their determined picturesqueness around the modest simplicity and restrained charm of Sir John Huddleston's ancient home. Inheriting the property in 1513, he lived on till 1546, and had ample time to make a complete job of the house before he died. Except where the work is clearly modern, it is essentially of the early half of the sixteenth century, and this not only applies to the masonry, but to the woodwork also. Many of the doors are priceless. Their surface, through the tone and texture which time has set on them, still shows the tool marks of Sir John's carpenters, and they are hinged and handled still as Sir John's blacksmith left them.



From a] THE HALL. *[Photograph.*

Sir John, dying in 1546, left much property and a considerable family. The North Country estates, which he had come into on his nephew's death, now passed to his eldest son, but the Gloucestershire properties went to his other sons and to his daughters, and Southam he willed to his "daughter Elynor Huddleston." This designation implies that she was then a spinster, but she shortly afterwards gave her hand and fortune to Kenard De la Bere of Kynnersley, County Hereford. The De la Beres, of course, "came over with the Conqueror," whether truly or apocryphally one cannot say, but apocryphal, certainly, was their claim to another distinction. Bigland, in 1796, prints from a picture in Cheltenham, "in the possession of John De la Bere, Esq.," an engraving of a knight kneeling and holding, as if just receiving it, a ducal coronet, out of which stand five ostrich plumes. This picture was not precious to the family merely; it was a special joy to "able antiquarians," who fully believed it to be "an invention, ascribed to John Ab Eyck in 1400," but really to date fifty years earlier than that; to be, in fact, a contemporary portrait of Sir Richard De la Bere receiving investiture from the Black Prince, whose life he had saved at Crecy. "An invention" it truly is, as our fourteenth century knight kneels on a seventeenth century tabouret, and is backed by the ample folds of a curtain looped up as no mediæval curtain ever was. History is dumb as to Sir Richard's act of valour, and probably the tradition merely grew out of the fact that ostrich plumes were the De la Bere crest, and this we find—together with his arms impaling Huddleston and quartering other local families — on the mantelpieces which Kenard De la Bere added to his father-in-law's house; and more especially in the library, where it will be seen to occupy the whole of the great panel above the fire-arch; the feathers, however, are here eleven in number.

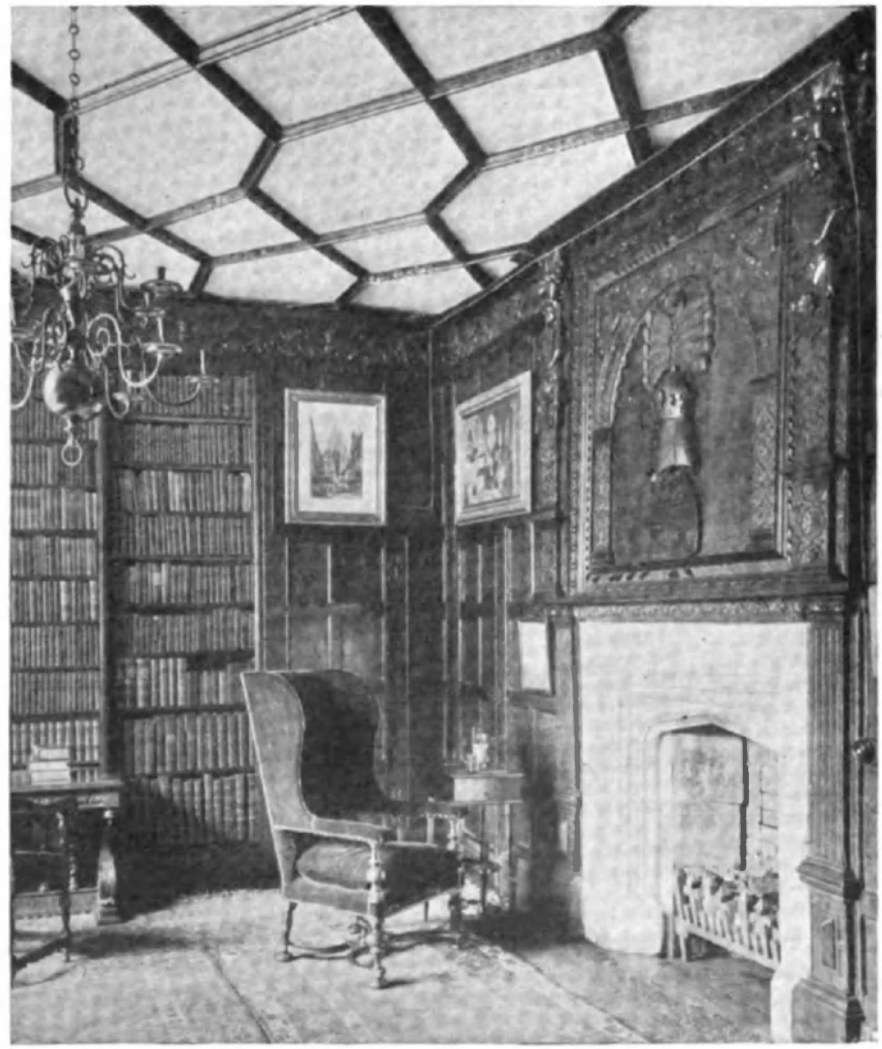


THE DRAWING-ROOM.

(Photograph.

From a]

The male line of De la Bere continued till 1735. They became the dominating family in Cheltenham, whose "Seneshal" one of them generally was, and whose more fashionable quarters are largely built on land which they had held. But with Southam they tampered little, though they may have remodelled and ceiled the hall, whose interior has largely lost its Gothic character. The ceiling beams, however, show mouldings of fairly early date, and as the practice of stopping the hall at the wall-plate was in Sir John's day beginning to supersede the ancient fashion of showing the open roof, the beams may be original. The present staircase dates from Queen Anne, and about the same time extensive gardens in the Dutch style may have been laid out. Anyhow, such appear in Kip's engraving of the place in the County History published in 1712 by Sir Robert Atkins, who calls it "a handsome large seat." But the later and more truthful Lysons, in his "Antiquities of Gloucestershire," puts a barn where Kip has a pleasaunce, and probably a large part of these gardens existed only in his imagination. "If it isn't there it ought to be, and I will draw it in," seems to have been Kip's principle in much of his illustration work. To-day indeed the gardens are much as Kip designed them, but rendered less stately and more amusing by a certain unexpectedness of enclosure and diversity of level, obtained, no doubt, by the removal of the little farm without entirely demolishing its walls or obliterating its ground plan. Southam sits charmingly in its grounds. Nestling at the foot of the great hill of Cleeve, the "extraordinary fertility" of its lowlands encompasses it with noble timber. Closer by, its cedars lend umbrage, its great yew hedges mystery to its lawns and alleys. The old roadway of pre-macadam days is now a broad gravel path running below the low terrace wall, which the illustration shows dressed with creeper, shrub, and border plant, and from it the two quite excellent gables of Sir John's west front, the one with its double oriel, the other topped by its sundial, fascinate at every turn by their orginal charm and acquired tone.



From a] THE LIBRARY. *[Photograph*

THE KANGAROO.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

THE Kangaroo's chauffeur was absolutely certain—a certainty confirmed with strange oaths—that the motor could not be budged from its present abiding-place (a ditch by the road) under a couple of hours. The Kangaroo glanced at his watch. It was nearly one, and the keen air crossing the high-lying moors had excited an appetite always good, and now ravenous. He looked about him. North, south, east, and west stretched the enchanting Forest of Ys in all its vernal glory, but, at the moment, a plain brick tavern would have excited greater enthusiasm. A poet may feed upon primroses ; a young and healthy politician prefers bread and cheese and a tankard of ale.

"Think there's an inn about?" he asked the chauffeur.

That individual was flat on his back beneath the car, trying to ascertain whether his beloved machine was vitally injured or not. He answered, crisply:—

"I know there ain't. Never seed such a Gawd-forsaken spawt in all my life."

The Kangaroo sighed and stared at the hanging beech wood just opposite. Above the trees arose a faint reek of smoke. He pulled out his map. Yes, yes, the Lord be praised! Unless he was entirely out of his reckoning, the smoke must be floating out of the chimneys of Queen's Jalland Manor. The name Jalland struck a chord. One of his most ardent supporters was a man of the name of George Jalland. Jalland, upon the day when the Kangaroo was nominated as candidate for the Forest Division of Slowshire, had entreated him to look him up, to drop in at any time, preferably—by Jove, yes!—*preferably lunch-time.* What a bit of luck!

He told the chauffeur that he would return in an hour or two, and then made a bee-line for the reek of smoke. Within ten minutes a very comfortable-looking butler had ushered him into a small, oak-panelled hall, where a party of ladies had assembled. Mr. Jalland was not at home, but Mrs. Jalland—— The butler, in a lowered tone, indicated a very kindly-faced dame upon the hearthrug, to whom, a minute later, the Kangaroo was explaining that Mr. Jalland had asked him to call about lunch-time.

"You are just in time for luncheon," said Mrs. Jalland. "The Colonel will be so sorry to miss you. He went to London yesterday to have his hair cut."

The Kangaroo bit his lip. *Mister* Jalland! What an unfortunate blunder! Probably George Jalland was a colonel of Militia or Yeomanry. To mask a slight confusion he plunged into a recital of his misadventure. Miss Jalland, a sparkling creature, fresh as dew, exhibited the most kindly interest.

They went into luncheon without anybody discovering the stranger's name.

The Kangaroo found himself between

Mrs. Bungay, of Slufter, and his hostess. Across the table scintillated the turquoise-blue eyes of Miss Jalland, whose Christian name was Beatrix. Next to her sat Lady Albinia Lovibond, and lower down the Misses Mottisfont, sisters of Sir Giles Mottisfont, and aunts—as the Kangaroo was well aware—of young Giles Mottisfont, the rival candidate.

The Kangaroo, realizing that he was in mixed company, reckoned himself fortunate inasmuch as Sir Giles, a Tory of the Tories, was not present. It rather surprised him to find the spinsters beneath the roof of such an out-and-out Rad as George Jalland. Upon the other hand, his agent had told him that these Foresters were all connected by intermarriage.

An excellent omelette was handed round.

By this time the Kangaroo was on terms with himself and his company. He told a capital story with his first glass of claret, and capped it with a better before he was half-way through his cutlet.

Then a truly awful thing happened!

Miss Jalland said suddenly and sweetly, "Have you met this poisonous bounder whom they call the Kangaroo?"

Afterwards, the Kangaroo admitted candidly that he ought to have replied at once, "I am he!" But his tongue clave to his palate and his eyes popped out of his head. Then, desperately, with a laugh that sounded the dreariest he had ever heard, he said, weakly, "I know him quite well."

Obviously, the admission damaged him in the eyes of the Misses Mottisfont. The dear ladies looked down their thin, aquiline noses, and sighed.

"What astonishes *us*," continued Miss Jalland, "is that he should dare to come here."

"Why is he called the Kangaroo?" bleated Lady Albinia.

Beatrix replied, "Because he bounds and bounds and bounds."

The Kangaroo nodded pleasantly.

"He won the long jump and the high jump at Oxford," he explained, modestly.

"Oh!" said Beatrix. She cast a swift glance at the speaker, divining, possibly, something mysterious and therefore exciting. "But he bounds, doesn't he?"

The Kangaroo hesitated. The eyes of the ladies were upon him. Mrs. Bungay, in the very act of conveying salad to her mouth, paused expectantly.

"He has some very nice friends, you know."

In a hollow tone Lady Albinia muttered, "George knows him—but George knows all the riff-raff in the county."

The Kangaroo then realized that he had come to the house of the wrong Jalland. George, who knew the riff-raff, and asked them to luncheon, lived hard by. Beatrix turned the screw.

"I was told," she said, pleasantly, "that he was called the Kangaroo because he is just as unconscious of his bounding as that animal."

"Oh!" said the Kangaroo, with a becoming blush, "I had never heard that."

Beatrix, noting the blush, said, apologetically, "I dare say you're one of his nice friends."

"I'm not blind to his faults," said the Kangaroo, with a valiant effort, "and when I was at Oxford I really thought he was a most remarkable young man. Are you keen about —er—croquet?"

"I hate it," said Miss Jalland.

"So do I," murmured the Kangaroo, crumbling his bread.

"You play golf?" said Mrs. Jalland.

"Yes."

"Have you played on our little course here?"

"Not yet."

"What is your handicap?" demanded Miss Beatrix.

"I'm scratch at Berwick-on-Tweed."

At once he became conscious that the impending clouds had rolled by. Colonel Jalland, it seemed, was the president of the Queen's Jalland Golf Club; Miss Beatrix played for the county. In a word, "scratch" had opened all hearts. Even Mrs. Bungay remarked, in a smooth, heavy voice, "Mr. Bungay has a handicap of twenty-two, but he's the keenest player in the club."

"Except father," amended Miss Beatrix. Then she put the question which was destined to bring about amazing results. "Have you your clubs in your car?"

"Yes," said the Kangaroo.

"Then we can play one round after luncheon."

This was said with an air of finality, which slightly upset whatever resolutions the Kangaroo might have made about escaping as soon as he had gulped down a cup of coffee. Miss Beatrix—as he discovered later—was an only daughter and an autocrat. Also, she wanted a lesson at golf from a man who was scratch at Berwick-on-Tweed. Also, she wanted to escape from the Misses Mottisfont. Also, she was inordinately curious, and she

could not understand—and meant to find out—why the Kangaroo had blushed like a bread-and-butter miss. The Kangaroo hadn't a lie ready, or if he had he didn't use it. And he admitted afterwards that there was a dynamic quality about the blue eyes of Miss Beatrix. Whatever his faults may have been he was no craner at hairy fences. From his youth he had leaped first and looked afterwards.

"I shall be delighted," he said.

Coffee was served in the drawing-room, and a servant was dispatched for the golf clubs. The Kangaroo heartened himself up with a glass of the Colonel's old brown brandy, for it was reasonably certain that the man sent for the clubs would discover the name of the mysterious guest, and then, without doubt, a very unpleasant five minutes might follow. Sipping his liqueur, he kept one eye on the turn in the carriage drive, whence Discovery, in the Jalland livery, might at any moment appear. The other eye was entirely at Miss Jalland's service, and, indeed, focused upon her. The Kangaroo considered himself to be something of a connoisseur in female beauty; and he decided that Miss Beatrix was a wonder: a happy mixture of urban and Arcadian, for, if she lived in this enchanting forest, her frock had most certainly come from Paris, *viâ* London, perhaps. She sparkled with a certain crystalline freshness, the sparkle of some delicious spring bubbling out of a field that the Lord had blessed, not the artificial ebullition of champagne. Obviously, too, she had perceptive qualities, for she said with conviction, just as the Kangaroo was lighting his second cigarette, "I see you prefer persons to things."

"You mean I would sooner look at a young miss than an old master? I would."

Miss Beatrix laughed, but she knew that no Bungay or Lovibond would have turned a phrase like this, partly because they couldn't, and partly also because they wouldn't, considering all compliments as bad form.

Just then the servant appeared carrying the clubs.

And, behold, fluttering in the summer breeze was a large red label plainly stamped with the Kangaroo's hideous and unmistakable name.

It was an unfortunate moment, because the Kangaroo could see that the pair of eyes so close to his own had discerned the label, and in their lucid depths danced imps of curiosity. Afterwards it occurred to him that he might have walked up to the man, taken the clubs from him, torn off the label, and pocketed it.

Instead he remained glued to the ground. Sensation was cruelly heightened, action simply paralyzed.

And then the miracle happened!

The name upon the red flaunting label was not his name; the clubs were not his clubs! Only the day before he had been playing golf with a friend at Westchester. He had driven the friend in his car to Westchester Station. A porter, who assuredly must be sought out and tipped, had evidently taken the wrong set of clubs.

The name upon the red label was—Raleigh, a name to warm the cockles of every female heart; a name that was a synonym for gallantry, enterprise, and resource.

The real Raleigh was red-headed, of mean stature, and much freckled.

Miss Beatrix flashed a glance upon the label and then looked discreetly at the blue haze upon the horizon. Still out of the corner of her eye she saw the Kangaroo slip half a crown into the servant's hand. Half a crown was an absurdly large tip, but it indicated a generous heart. Her eyes suffused a soft radiance when she turned them once more upon the Kangaroo. To her surprise he was blushing again. Then she heard him say, almost falteringly:—

"Did you see my chauffeur? Had he any message?"

"No, Sir Joseph," said the man, anxious to display somewhat inchoate powers of observation; "I did not. The car was standing by the road, and I took the only set of clubs I saw, Sir Joseph."

"Quite right," said the Kangaroo, pulling himself together.

The man walked away. Miss Beatrix gazed pensively at the Kangaroo. He was tall, distinguished-looking, with an aquiline nose, and excellent hands and feet.

"Why were you not christened Walter?" she whispered.

"It was an unpardonable oversight," he replied. "As a matter of fact I would pay a handsome sum of money to be Walter. I hate my own name."

His Christian name—one dislikes to set it down—was Ezekiel!

"Come on!" said Beatrix. She approached her mother, the Kangaroo following. In her clear, kind tones she said, crisply:—

"Sir Joseph Raleigh and I are off."

Mrs. Jalland beamed pleasantly.

"Sir Joseph Raleigh," she repeated, softly.

"Not one of us," she included the Misses Mottisfont, who were smiling blandly, "knew who you were."

Lady Albinia blinked. "I used to know in my younger days a Sir Joseph Raleigh, a little, funny, nice, red-headed man."

Miss Beatrix frowned.

"Dear Lady Albinia, you are speaking of Sir Joseph's father, isn't she?"

"Yes," said the Kangaroo. Then he added, hastily, "It's such a pity one can't choose one's father."

Lady Albinia, vaguely sensible of a rebuke, murmured in an injured tone, "I said he was nice and funny."

"Not too funny, I hope?" the Kangaroo asked.

"He used to make me die with laughter," said Lady Albinia. "He always had a new riddle."

"Good heavens!" said the Kangaroo.

"We shall be back in time for tea," said Miss Beatrix.

They walked off together towards the first tee.

"Lady Albinia is doddering," said Beatrix. "It was awfully nice of you to take it so calmly. I say, how many strokes will you give me? Shall we try a stroke a hole?"

"If you like," said the Kangaroo.

Now that the danger was over he felt amazingly exhilarated, but his spirits fell perceptibly when his caddie handed him the driver. He then remembered what he had entirely forgotten—that Joe Raleigh was left-handed. To play with his clubs was simply an impossibility, even for a scratch player without fear and without reproach.

"Your honour," said Beatrix.

The Kangaroo took the club.

Then for the third time he blushed.

"I suppose you can drive two hundred yards every time?" said Beatrix.

The Kangaroo wiped the perspiration from his forehead as he replied, "Not every time."

The caddie teed up the ball.

Then the second miracle happened.

The Kangaroo espied in the bag of clubs a steel putter. He looked at it as Romeo gazed at Juliet. Then, with a gay laugh, he said: "Miss Jalland, I *can* drive two hundred yards, and, honestly, this match won't be much fun for you if I play with these clubs. Now, what do you say to this? I'll play with my putter and nothing else, and I'll give you a third."

"I play for Slowshire," said Beatrix. "I don't think you can do it, Sir Joseph, but——"

"I can try," said the Kangaroo.

He seized the putter. It had a nice shaft—a really pretty bit of hickory.

"Good gracious!" said Beatrix.

The Kangaroo had driven the ball at least one hundred and fifty yards. "You'll take your strokes at the usual holes," said he, as they descended the slope towards the first green.

"Yes," said Beatrix, meekly. "It's awfully good of you to play with me at all." His goodness must have impressed her powerfully, for she foozled the approach shot disgracefully.

"Keep your eye on the ball," said the Kangaroo.

He won the first hole in four--bogey!

After this the match became a procession. The Kangaroo played like Harry Vardon, and Beatrix, dear girl, lost everything except her temper. Everything is said advisedly. When the Kangaroo played his ball out of the sand-bunker near the ninth and laid himself dead his antagonist remarked, "This is a liberal education for me."

And she meant it.

The Kangaroo saw at once that she had great aptitude for the game, but had been badly taught. He gave to her some advice which she spoke of afterwards as simply priceless. And when he won the match at the fourteenth with six up and four to play, the young lady thanked him with a truly humble and grateful heart. She was so nice about it, so unaffectedly delighted with her antagonist's performance—which, indeed, was very remarkable—that the Kangaroo lost sense of the proportion of things. For instance, his offer to give her another lesson next day was not only unjustifiable but almost preposterous, a fact which he realized when she said, ardently, "Oh, if you would!"

They strolled to the fifteenth tee.

"Now, then, for the bye!" said our hero.

"One moment," said Beatrix. Then, awe informing her charming voice, she said, "Sir Joseph, will you do me a great favour?"

"Anything," said the absurd Kangaroo.

"I want you to take your driver and drive the green. Tommy Bungay did it once, or says he did, with the wind behind him. Nobody saw him do it. I want to tell him that I saw you do it."

The unhappy Kangaroo hesitated. Not so his caddie, who possibly felt that he had not earned his shilling. The youth drew forth the driver and handed it obsequiously

to the finest golfer he had ever followed round Queen's Jalland course.

"I do wish Tommy were here," murmured Beatrix.

The Kangaroo took the driver. As he did so Beatrix saw how it was fashioned.

"It's a left-handed club," she gasped.

"Good gracious! You are a left-handed player, and you played me right-handed with a putter, and beat me six to four! Well, I think you're the most wonderful person in the world. Now—drive!"

The Kangaroo addressed the ball. He knew that Joe Raleigh loved this driver with

"OH!"

"Yes," said the Kangaroo, sticking out his jaw. A way out of the wood had been vouchsafed him. "Of course it is."

"But you played right-handed all round the course."

"I did," said the Kangaroo. The poor fellow was quite desperate. "I—er—thought it would make a better match."

a love passing the love of women; he knew that the man who made it was dead; he knew that such a masterpiece could never be copied. And yet with diabolical deliberation he addressed the ball, and smote.

"Oh!"

"Never did that before," said the Kangaroo, gazing at the broken shaft.

"It's my fault; I made you press."

The Kangaroo stared at the mutilated driver beloved of his own familiar friend. The shaft was irretrievably shattered. Beatrix saw that he was quite upset.

"Let us walk back to the house," she said, in a voice tender with sympathy.

In silence the Kangaroo walked beside her. He felt that the moment for confession had come; and he felt, with poignant regret, that confession ought to have been made before the sacrifice of the driver. He was telling himself that he had behaved like a coward and a—bounder! Perhaps he was a bounder. Then he heard the voice of the siren, with its beguiling inflections. What a dear, sweet face she had!

"You will feel that this has quite spoiled the afternoon, Sir Joseph?"

"Nothing could spoil the afternoon," said the Kangaroo, firmly. "I've had two delightful hours with you, Miss Jalland, and I shall not forget them in a hurry."

A warmer colour flowed into the young lady's cheeks. She was reflecting that a Raleigh, of necessity, must be of an impulsive and expansive temperament.

"Are you a lineal descendant of Sir Walter?" she asked, shyly. Then, in melting tones, she murmured, "He was always one of my heroes."

The Kangaroo looked at her, with a vertical line between his handsome brows.

"Do you set much value on lineage—and all that sort of thing?"

"Of course I do. Don't you?"

"No; I don t."

"Noblesse oblige," said the young lady. "One wouldn't expect much from a man of the name of—er—Snookson."

"Why Snookson?" said the Kangaroo, in a cold voice.

"I mentioned Snookson because it happens to be the name of this carpet-bagger who, hateful man, is going to rob poor Giley Mottisfont of his seat."

The line between the Kangaroo's eyes deepened and darkened.

"Oh!" he said, scornfully. "And don't you think that a rather remarkable fact?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"This hateful carpet-bagger, this poisonous bounder, this unspeakable person, whose name is Snookson——"

"Ezekiel Snookson!"

"Ezekiel Snookson comes down into a place which is considered by both parties to be a Tory stronghold. He has no friends in the Forest of Ys, no property, no affiliations whatever. He has to rely entirely upon his tongue and the cause he pleads. The other fellow is a Forester, related to everybody, a county magnate, with a name that is part of the history of England, and yet he, Giley Mottisfont, can't hold his own."

"He can with hounds."

"Possibly. Ezekiel Snookson, I believe, is a bit of a thruster in that line, too."

"I forgot that he was a friend of yours," she murmured, contritely, for she perceived that her companion was really stirred to the centre.

The Kangaroo's eyes sparkled, his forehead cleared, his voice softened pleasantly.

"I should like you to meet this man," he said.

"Oh, I'm sure that mamma——"

"Would object to your meeting him? Is it possible?"

"Papa and she feel rather strongly about politics. Uncle George, you see, ratted."

"I have met your Uncle George. He struck me as a singularly charming and intelligent man."

"But he's a Free Trader."

"I perceive that all is said."

"Perhaps," ventured Beatrix, "you are a Free Trader?"

"I am, Miss Jalland."

They had reached the small gate which led to the garden of the Manor; and, as yet, the Kangaroo had not made confession. He opened the gate, gazing reflectively at the palings, sharply pointed, which surrounded the domain. Never before had he realized so keenly that he was without the pale of so much that is desirable in English life.

"I think I'll say good-bye now," he said, awkwardly.

"Sir Joseph!"

"I am a Free Trader."

"I suppose even Free Traders like a cup of tea?"

"I am a friend and a believer in this son of Snook."

"If that is the case, perhaps you would like something stronger than tea." He saw a ravishing dimple at the corner of her mouth. "After golf papa takes gin and ginger-beer."

The Kangaroo burst out laughing.

"I can't resist gin and ginger-beer," he said, as he followed the little witch through the gate.

On the lawn, beneath the big ilex, sat the same ladies whom the Kangaroo had met at luncheon. But talking to Lady Albinia was a short, stout, very red-faced gentleman.

"There's papa," said Miss Jalland. "He'll be too delighted to meet you."

"To meet—me?"

"When he hears that you, a left-handed man, played me right-handed with a putter, giving me six strokes and a disgraceful beating, he will want to fall down and worship."

"He doesn't look that sort at all," said the Kangaroo, doubtfully. "But it might be as well not to mention that I'm—er—a Free Trader."

"As if I should give you away like that!" she retorted, reproachfully.

The next moment Colonel Jalland looked up and saw them. He stared at the Kangaroo, and as he stared his face grew purple, and his eyes, rather too prominent, seemed to bulge out of his head. It is relevant to mention that his nickname in the regiment he had commanded was "Pepperbox."

"Papa asked you to drop in to lunch, didn't he?" whispered Beatrix.

"'WHO THE DEUCE ARE YOU?' SAID THE COLONEL."

"No," said the Kangaroo. "It must have been your Uncle George."

"Do you know—papa?"

"I have never met him."

"He looks as if he knew you."

The Colonel advanced to receive his guest. Beatrix did the honours.

"Papa, this is Sir Joseph Raleigh, who has just given me the most humiliating beating. He played with his putter, gave me six strokes, and a lot of splendid advice."

Beatrix began joyfully, but her voice, beneath the apoplectic stare of her sire, dwindled away into a funereal diminuendo.

"Sir Joseph Raleigh," said the Colonel, in a terrible voice, "is short, freckled, red-headed, and a—gentleman."

"Just like his poor, dear father," bleated Lady Albinia.

"Who the deuce are you, sir?" said the Colonel.

The Kangaroo laughed. He had a sense of humour, and he couldn't help it.

"I'm Ezekiel Snookson," he said. Then, with a manner that might not have discredited the illustrious Sir Walter, he bowed politely and added, "I came here by mistake to lunch with a friend and supporter of mine, Mr. George Jalland. I discovered my mistake too late to rectify it without upsetting a very kind hostess. Perhaps, too"—he glanced at Miss Beatrix—"I was being entertained so delightfully that I funked—er—embarrassing explanations. If it would afford any of you"—he included the Misses Mottisfont in his all-embracing glance—"any satisfaction to—er—trample on me, I will lie down on the lawn and let you do so."

The elderly spinsters shook their heads. The Colonel's complexion assumed a less imperial tint.

"That's all very well," he growled, "but why did you call yourself Raleigh?"

"I didn't. My friend Joe Raleigh happened to have his name printed in large black letters upon a red label attached to his golf clubs, which were left by mistake in my car."

"Oh-h-h!" exclaimed Miss Jalland. "Then they weren't your own clubs?"

"Of course not."

"And you deliberately smashed that driver?"

"Deliberately."

"And you're not a left-handed player?"

"I am not."

A smile rippled across her face. "That makes things much easier for me," she murmured.

The Kangaroo addressed the company.

"If nobody will trample on me, may I say good-bye and thank you for a very pleasant afternoon?"

Mrs. Jalland raised her quiet voice.

"You will let me give you a cup of tea, Mr.—er—Snookson?"

Beatrix nudged her father. He prided himself upon a reputation for generous, although not ostentatious, hospitality.

"Perhaps you would prefer a gin and ginger-beer?"

"Please."

Afterwards Mrs. Snookson always said that her husband allowed himself to be beaten by Colonel Jalland in the game of golf that was played after the gin and ginger-beer had been swallowed. The Kangaroo was obliged to play with another man's clubs, but it is a fact that at the seventeenth hole, when the Colonel and his opponent were all square, the Kangaroo foozled his approach and then missed a two-foot putt! At the eighteenth, the Colonel, being dormy and therefore unduly full of confidence, undertook to carry the green with his second, and landed in the ditch. Why such an experienced player as the Kangaroo should have taken his mid-iron instead of his mashie, and dropped his ball into the gorse bushes beyond the last green, is something which howls for explanation.

The Kangaroo, who must have had a touch of the bounder in him, blamed his caddie.

Joe Raleigh sent his friend's bride an original wedding present—a bangle, with a broken golf club cunningly fashioned out of brilliants.

The Comic Side of Crime.

IV.

Written and Illustrated by HARRY FURNISS.

A JUDGE has to depend upon what he is told, and, with the exception of judging the character of the prisoner or witnesses by their manner and expression, not by what he sees.

Still, there is the inevitable exception, and I think it is worth following Major Arthur Griffiths all the way to Malta to find it. Although it ended in an innocent man's torture and death, the crass stupidity of the judge is, perhaps (apart from the awful sequel), the most comic action in the annals of criminal procedure.

We have to go some way, I say, and also some way back in history to Malta, in the early part of the seventeenth century.

A judge of Malta, of the name of Cambo, rose from his bed one morning full of Christian feeling and charity and thankfulness, as all good judges ought, and, opening his window, saw to his astonishment directly under it one man stab another, who was killed on the spot. The assassin's cap fell off, and the judge had a good look at him. The assassin, observing he was watched, and by a judge, too, for everyone knew each other in Malta, threw the sheath of the knife away and took to his heels. The judge knew if the scoundrel was caught he would have to try him, so he watched the fellow run round the corner and disappear.

Still looking in the direction in which the murderer had run, the judge saw a baker coming along on his round with his loaves, merrily whistling, little knowing a crime had been committed in that street a moment before. He stopped as his eye fell on the sheath of a stiletto, and he stooped and picked it up and shoved it into his pocket. A little farther on he was startled by seeing a man evidently murdered lying across his path.

Terrified and frightened out of his wits the baker hid himself under a portico, fearing if the patrol came along and he was found near the body—as there was no one else by—he would be accused. The patrol did come up at that moment. It then flashed across the poor, timid baker that he would be arrested, so he foolishly dropped his basket and ran away as hard as he could. The patrol at once made after and arrested him. The sheath of the stiletto found in his pocket exactly fitted the blade found through the heart of the murdered man. He was the murderer!

All this the judge saw from his window. He made no sign, said nothing, closed his window-blinds, completed his toilet, and

"THE ASSASSIN OBSERVED HE WAS WATCHED."

went down to breakfast. Before he had finished it the police called to acquaint him of the tragedy. They had the murderer; he was to try him. The judge said nothing. He thought the matter out, and decided that, according to law, he was the judge—not a witness—and he must therefore await the case until it came before him, and then try it according to the evidence of the witnesses.

The case was not strong against the baker, so the judge "used every endeavour to make the accused confess his crime." Failing, he ordered the baker to be tortured until he did confess. Now the judge felt that, although he knew the prisoner was innocent, he having confessed his guilt, it was only left to him to pass sentence of death, and the poor, innocent man was duly put to death!

Has Sir William Gilbert, in all his extravaganza and topsy-turvyism of legal procedure, ever thought of a satire on the judicial mind more gruesome or more comic than that?

The sequel, perhaps, will be better enjoyed. The real culprit was subsequently brought before Judge Cambo on another charge, and condemned. The assassin then freely, and unsolicited, informed the Court that he had committed the murder for which the poor baker had wrongfully suffered, and called as a witness to his crime the judge, who, he knew, had seen him commit the murder. The judge tried to justify himself—he had only done his duty, and in sentencing the wrong man he avoided doing violence to his own legal scruples!

He had to pay for his scruples, for he was kicked off the Bench, and had to support the poor family the baker he had killed had left behind.

Here is another criminal comedy, surely a grim sort of comedy, too, which pervades the story of a young Cheshire farmer who sailed for Canada some thirty years ago, carrying with him a large amount of money wherewith to acquire land and commence operations in a considerable way in Manitoba. It was in the early days of the promise of the West, so far as concerned the Dominion, and Manitoba was not then the well-known, the popular, or the well railway-served province it is now, but still it was an enterprising field, and men in earnest with clean hearts harked thither, and men, too, with evil consciences followed the same track.

Young Joseph Jackson, scarce out of his teens, was chummed up to on the voyage by a fair-speaking stranger, who was much interested in the plans of the lad, revealed without hesitation, doubt of his fellow-men, or fear of any kind. Curiously enough, it turned out that he, too, was bound for the same land with the same design, and what could be better, happier, or more convenient than that the two should travel together, and matters were arranged accordingly.

The journey West was pleasant, and letters from Jackson crossed the Atlantic full of hopeful promise. Then communications ceased, and nothing more was heard of the young emigrant.

Eventual inquiries led to the discovery of the farmstead out in the wilds of Manitoba where Jackson and his companion had rested the night preparatory to essaying the final stretch of their march. They were well within reach of Jackson's destination, and early on a bright morn they set out together, each carrying his baggage.

At the farm where Jackson was expected the stranger arrived late at night, with his own and Jackson's impedimenta. He was weary and worried; Jackson, being done up, was, he said, following slowly along. As the latter did not arrive, the stranger next day set out to search for him, and, curiously, he never returned.

The mystery lasted seven days and more. It had all the elements of a romance such as novelists have often based their themes upon, from Charles Reade down to the hack who produces the errand lad's penny "blood."

A year passed and then, deep down in a gorge, in a lonely spot lying between the two farmsteads, a skeleton was found with only traces of clothing left. Great boulders partially concealed the remains, but the bed of the stream was dry, and thus Nature helped detection. Murder will out, and it was murder in this case, for the victim's skull was found to be smashed.

A small leather wallet, concealed in the murdered youth's apparel, had resisted the elements so well that it was possible to decipher parts of a letter contained therein, which established identity. The skeleton was that of Joseph Jackson, presumably done to death by the stranger friend who had so mysteriously disappeared, but not, it afterwards turned out, without having appropriated everything of value contained in the victim's baggage.

Now comes the comedy, grotesque, but still comedy of the true kind.

In a low-down shanty, in one of the worst quarters of 'Frisco, a crowd of men, most ne'er-do-wells, such as Fielding might aptly describe as "the sweepings of Newgate and the scum of hell," had foregathered at night

to play euchre by the aid of petroleum flares. Curses were deep, so was the drinking. The gambling went on regardless of arrivals and departures.

Presently one of the gamblers delayed the game while he cut up some tobacco. Not having completed the operation with sufficient promptitude, he was angrily told to pick up his cards, and he did so. His knife fell on the table. Under the bright petroleum flare it attracted all eyes, for its silver "hefts," elaborately engraved, shone brilliantly. Before the smoker could recover it, a strange hand had clutched the glittering thing.

Then the row began. A surly demand for its return was ignored, and then the smoker, with an oath, yelled, "Give me my knife."

"THE SMOKER, WITH AN OATH, YELLED, 'GIVE ME MY KNIFE.'"

"Your knife! You're not Joseph Jackson, eh? I rather fancy it a bit, so I think I'll stick to it," and the hand that held it passed it quietly into a pocket.

A blow, a struggle, tables overturned, lights sent swinging, and then a general mêlée. The police arriving ended matters, for the claimant to the knife and the one who had seized it were held till the morrow.

Then the truth came out. The gambler who claimed the knife was the companion of poor Joseph Jackson, whom he had murdered and robbed for his money. Like many other ruffians, he had been unable to resist temptation, and that temptation was the richly-decorated, silver-hafted champagne-knife which the murdered man had left to him by his father, who bore the same name. The inscription on the knife was, "Joseph Jackson, from his friend, John Rogers." And it came fra' Sheffield.

Let us pass to a story of a lighter kind. Monsieur Claude, Chief of the Paris Police in the Second Empire, gives a striking instance of how clever and quick-witted polished rogues can be. "There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip" is an old adage that should be written up in the office of every detective. Claude was ordered to arrest an escaped prisoner who had been punished for pretending to be a broker, and had obtained large sums from the credulous and ignorant public.

"Take care," said the Government; "that rascal is very clever; he has as many tricks as a monkey."

Now it is necessary to state that at that time Paris was mad over the songs of Pierre Jean de Béranger. This old poet was little seen by his admirers, being opposed to public acclaim. His songs were sung everywhere,

and his fame was at its height. I do not suppose the energetic Monsieur Claude, as he went off in search of his man, thought of the song-writer; his mind was concentrated upon catching the escaped prisoner, whom he had seen before. Single-handed, Claude penetrated into the haunts of vice, the dancing saloons in the lowest quarters. He thought

"THEY BOWED TO HIM AND EMBRACED HIM, AND THREW BOUQUETS OF FLOWERS OVER HIM."

it likely that the convict whom he was in search of would be leading a merry life; and he was right.

On entering the famous Closerie des Lilas, he found his man surrounded by a swarm of pretty girls, the bewitching *danseuses* of the Latin Quarter. Claude walked straight up to the corner where the convict was, his eyes fixed on his prey. The escaped prisoner saw him coming and turned pale. Claude felt he was his!

He was just close enough to capture him when he saw the wily one turn his head and whisper something into the ear of one of his companions. What he whispered was, "It is Béranger!"

In a moment all the beauties surrounded Claude, hemming him in. They bowed to him and embraced him, and threw bouquets of flowers over him. The music stopped, the dancers joined the throng, and with one voice cried, "Vive Béranger! Vive Béranger!"

Their delight at finding their song-writing hero in their midst intoxicated them, and poor Claude was powerless. He was so embarrassed by their embraces, and the flowers and compliments showered on him, that he could neither move nor speak, and the convict managed to escape before his clever trick was discovered.

Let me conclude this article with one or two stories within my own experience. There is no doubt that we artists are, without knowing it, occasionally detectives. By the way, it would be interesting to realize, now that photography has taken the place of the "Special Artist," how many little tragedies and comedies are detected by its means. The real amateur detective is the snapshot. In the very early days of photography that fruitful playwright, Dion Boucicault, utilized the camera for the detection of crime in his celebrated play, "The Octoroon." A man is taking a photograph—the plate is exposed; a murder is being committed at the moment an Indian, thinking the camera on a tripod is a gun, knocks it down. When the moment comes for the villain to be confounded, among the *débris* of the old smashed camera is found the negative, which being developed and printed provides a perfect picture of the tragedy!

Artists are pestered out of their lives by members of the great unemployed body of models knocking at their studio doors for work. I have always made it a rule never to employ a casual model. One runs all sorts of risks. Rightly or wrongly, I believe a real assassin once sat to me to represent a murder

I had to illustrate in fiction, and after that incident I never employed a model without knowing something about his or her antecedents. The man knocked at my studio door just as I had read the manuscript which had been sent to me to illustrate. He was an Italian, with a ferocious and diabolical expression, but with the bloom left by fair Italy's sun still upon his cheeks and a profusion of black hair. Excellent for a painter, but not much use to a black-and-white artist, who only requires a human lay-figure to hang clothes upon. Colour does not count, and long hair and beards and moustaches are obstacles, for we illustrators have to draw the characters we have in mind, and not the object in front of us. One model sat to me for all my work for nine years.

Well, I informed the Italian that if he cared to remain I would give him a sitting then and there. He was eloquent in his thanks, and almost embraced me when he saw a large representation of St. Mark's in Venice on my walls. He posed and spoke like an aristocrat, and smoked a cigarette I gave him with the air of a count such as Ouida might have described. There was such an air of distinction about the man that I almost apologized to him for requesting him to take off his coat — which I was careful to see he placed away from any draperies or furniture—turn up his soiled shirt-sleeves, and kneel down.

I was soon at work, roughing the design out quickly in pencil, he chattering all the time in broken English in a pleasant way about his love of art, of England and the English, and his deep regard for me in particular. He praised my studio, and assured me that it was an honour as well as a pleasure to pose in it for so distinguished a follower of Raphael. He was absolutely ignorant of everything about me. I did not believe one word he said. Probably he did not believe me either when I told him that I must just have one little drop of Italian blood left in my composition, as the Furnisses are descended from the Pope Furnese. He called me Signor Furnese from that moment, and may have thought it my name. What he evidently did not know was my profession, as I was not drawing on the paper on my easel, but writing notes from the MS. to guide me in the design. Then, rising, I dragged to a side window an old chest, posed the Italian in a kneeling position in front of it, placed a dagger in his left hand, which was holding the lid of the chest open, and taking the head of my lay figure I placed it in his right hand. Then I retreated to my easel to draw the group. When I looked up, to my astonishment the Italian's face and manner had entirely changed. The bloom of Italy had vanished from his cheeks, and a sickly greenish tint brought out more markedly than ever the blackness of his hair. Perspiration was on his brow and a frightened look in his eye. "What born actors these Italians are!" thought I. But he was trembling, too.

"Pardon me," I said, "do not be *too* realistic. You have, of course, murdered that woman, and you are hiding her head;

"PERSPIRATION WAS ON HIS BROW AND A FRIGHTENED LOOK IN HIS EYE."

but you are not acting, you know, so pray be still for a few minutes."

I worked—he was silent, but his agitation increased, and at last, jumping up, he gabbled furiously in Italian, not a word of which I understood. Putting on his dirty coat, taking up his hat, and still gesticulating, he left me hurriedly. I called to know if he was ill, if he was coming again to complete the sitting, and put my hand in my pocket to give him some remuneration, but without looking back he vanished quickly down the street. I never saw him again. Furthermore, I never heard of his calling upon any brother artist after that, although he was known as a model up to his visit to my studio, when no doubt he mistook me for a detective.

I could recall many instances in which artists have assisted in the discovery of crime. Caricaturists, I know, as regards character, must have often done so. We seize on the worst features of our subjects and emphasize them—that is caricature; perhaps we produce some bad and hidden trait in the character of a man or woman that sets their friends thinking, and so discover a phase of character not previously evident. Is it not Mark Twain who has said that the mission of humour is to make people reflect? I recall one amazing case in which I unconsciously played the part of an artist-detective, although not quite in the way of which I have been speaking. At one time I contributed to the *Illustrated London News* and other periodicals many illustrations seriously treating of passing events, such as are now supplied by the camera. It was my lot to act as special artist, and to sketch scenes and events week by week, and I travelled about to get material, constantly sketching crowds and "bits of character" in order to get, so far as might be, truth in the drawing of the passing show. I have more than once detected a man in the crowd I have fixed to sketch scowl and clear off, or watch me anxiously, change colour, and look uncomfortable, mistaking me for a detective taking notes; but in many cases the crowds in these scenes in illustrated papers were purely imaginary, and sometimes the event was drawn without "Our Special Artist" being on the spot at all.

It so happened that I had to draw the finish of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. I had a sketch of the background; as for the rest—well, there had to be the man in the boat firing the gun, and, to balance the design, I gave him as companions in the boat a gentleman and a lady. Naturally, the lady was nervous of the gun being fired, and of course her companion supported her round the waist.

The sequel to this was a furious letter from a stranger to reprimand me for my gross impertinence in portraying him in such a position. I had little idea, he said, what such a liberty on my part had led to. The writer's wife knew he had gone to the race, and knew he was also in the boat with the man who invited him, and who had fired the gun, but when the scene appeared in print he had to own up that there was a lady in the affair as well, and now his domestic happiness had been destroyed. He wrote from a business firm, giving only his initials. I replied that had he known that I, the artist, had not been to the race—that, furthermore, the drawing was a purely imaginary one, and that it was not only drawn but actually engraved before the event—he need never have given himself away!

"WHEN THE SCENE APPEARED IN PRINT HE HAD TO OWN UP."

A SNAPSHOT.

By ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER

(The Hon. Mrs. Alfred Felkin).

"SO you have escaped the all-devouring religious appetite of our esteemed hostess and have not gone to church after all?" remarked Sir Edgar Larrington from the depths of his chair, as Miss Cumnor came slowly across the lawn to join him. She made a pretty picture in her white serge dress and large black hat, a rose-coloured sunshade screening her flower-like face from the fierce morning light. So Sir Edgar thought; and he was a connoisseur on the subject of women's beauty. "I commend you," he added.

Maud Cumnor laughed softly as she attained the shadow of the cedar tree on the far side of the lawn, and sank into another chair beside his. "Yes, I have escaped; but I had a hard fight for freedom, for Lady MacBannock was set on my attending her beloved church this morning. I suppose she thinks I need it."

"So you do—from the excellent woman's point of view. To my unregenerate eyes, your need of church-going is your greatest and most compelling charm. I cannot endure religious women." Maud winced. She was by no means strait-laced, but she now and then shrank from Sir Edgar's freely-avowed distaste for anything connected with what Lady MacBannock called "good things." Such irreligion might be very amusing in a mere acquaintance, but there seemed something terrible in it in connection with a possible husband.

"So our worthy MacBannock tried to influence you for good, did she?" Larrington continued.

"YES, I HAVE ESCAPED; BUT I HAD A HARD FIGHT FOR FREEDOM."

"She did. She tried all her arts and blandishments, such as they are, to lure me into the church-going omnibus; but in vain. At first she almost succeeded in guiding my erring feet aright; but I remembered you and the sunshine and the shadow of the cedar tree, and was strong to resist." Maud might in her heart of hearts disapprove of her suitor's flippancy; but she had not the moral courage to express this disapproval in words. She was a sweet-natured girl, and clever withal; but she lacked the strength of character necessary to make a stand against the follies and foibles of her particular set.

He lazily lit a cigarette. "How dear and sweet of you to disappoint Janet MacBannock and your guardian angel and all the religious influences for my poor sake! I feel immensely flattered. I remember when I was a child I was taught that everybody had a guardian angel watching over him or her, as the case might be, whose special business it was to prevent the patient from 'falling into sin or running into any kind of danger.'"

"I used to believe that, too, when I was little," said Miss Cumnor. "It was a most comforting and soothing belief, and I'm sorry I've outgrown it. It used to make one feel so safe in the dark."

"And so confoundedly uncomfortable in the light," added Larrington. "I should much dislike to feel that an angelic eye was on all my comings and goings. And my comings and goings are such that I doubt if the angelic eye would enjoy the process any more than I should. So I am thankful that I have outgrown that particular illusion."

"I'm not. I'm awfully sorry that I can't go on believing all the nice, impossible, absurd things that I believed when I was a child. Now that I've grown up, life seems so dull and sordid and matter of fact, and nothing seems really to signify except having plenty of money."

"Thank Heaven that it is so, and that the reign of the guardian angel is over and Mammon is enthroned in his place!" Sir Edgar was perfectly aware that Mammon, rather than any guardian angel, would stand his friend in his suit for the hand of the beautiful Miss Cumnor. He knew well enough that he was no fit husband for any high-souled and pure-minded girl; but he also knew that half the fashionable mothers of Mayfair were keen on his track, in the hope that they should secure him as a match for their respective daughters, for he was one of the richest commoners in England.

"I expect that your guardian angel had a pretty rough time of it," said Maud, with her soft laugh.

"Rather! He said at last that it was more than one angel's work, and that he must either have a cherub in buttons under him or else throw up the situation. I really couldn't stand the racket of two guardian angels, so I gave him a month's notice on the spot."

Maud laughed again. Although instinctively she shrank from him, Sir Edgar never failed to amuse her. "Now, I should think Lady MacBannock's guardian angel has an easy time," she remarked, "because she never wants to do anything that the most narrow-minded angel could possibly object to."

"An easy time of it? I should just think he had! Never thwarted in anything, but has his own way from morning till night. Getting stout and masterful, as all old servants do, and suffering from a swelled head! By the way, did my lady drag those two wretched little boys to church with her?"

"Of course she did. Didn't you notice their Eton suits and white collars at breakfast, in honour of the intended ceremony?" replied Maud.

"I did, now you mention it. I forgot it was Sunday, and wondered why those horrid twins were so clean. It didn't occur to me that they were youthful victims already robed in their sacrificial garments. I wonder if they took their beastly camera with them?"

"Good gracious, no! Their mother would never have allowed such sacrilege as taking a camera into church. You don't know your MacBannock, or you would never have asked such a question. But it's a comfort—isn't it?—to feel that they are safe for the present, and can't be snapshotting us in all sorts of unbecoming attitudes."

"It is," replied Larrington, with a sigh of relief. "Of all pernicious animals on the face of this earth, I think that an intelligent boy with a camera is the most pernicious. And this particular boy—being twins—is the worst case I ever came across."

"I know. Aren't they too dreadful for words? They photographed me walking across the lawn on a windy day, and I look like a dancing Mænad. And they snapshotted their mother shaking hands with the Presbyterian minister, which looks exactly like a Bank-holiday couple making love."

Sir Edgar laughed. "You don't say so? How more than delightful!"

"You see," Maud went on to explain, "it appears as if the pair were holding—not shaking—hands, and as if they had been at it for the last hour. That is the worst of

snapshots; they permanently preserve a temporary state of things. Like an isolated quotation from a conversation without the context, they give an utterly false impression while sticking to the absolute truth."

"Of course they do; that is their *raison d'être* in both cases. Do you think that our friends would trouble to repeat our words in order to convey a correct impression? Not they! It is only when they wish to create a false impression that they stoop to quote us verbatim. Humanity never tells the truth except when it finds the truth more misleading than a lie."

Again Maud winced, and yet laughed at the same time.

"But how delicious of those dear boys thus accurately to represent and yet utterly to misrepresent their estimable mother! I can forgive their existence—even their temporary absence from Eton—on account of this. But don't let us talk any more about the excellent MacBannocks; let us talk about ourselves, a much more interesting and instructive subject. Have you forgotten that I am going away from here at six o'clock this evening, and that I have something very important to say to you before I go?" Maud's face fell. She knew well enough that she had come to a turning-point in her life's story, and she hated to be reminded of it. The inherent weakness of her nature shrank from taking any decided action either one way or another; she preferred to let things drift, and to leave other people to settle her affairs for her. But now the time had come for her to take her life into her own hands, and to decide once and for ever what course her future was to take. And she quailed before the ordeal.

Among her various admirers there was one who had always stood a head and shoulders above all the others in Maud Cumnor's estimation—namely, Eric Golding, a young officer, whom she had known and loved from her earliest girlhood. Eric was straight and manly and honourable—the ideal of all that an English soldier ought to be; also he was deeply religious, with the silent and unemotional religion of the typical well-bred Englishman. Maud had known Eric ever since they were big boy and little girl together, and she had never heard him say a word or express a thought that offended against the most exalted ideals of enthusiastic girlhood. Just as Edgar Larrington stimulated the lower side of her intellectual nature, Eric Golding stirred the higher and more spiritual side. With him she was always at her very best; and she knew that he was capable of drawing out and expanding the very highest of which her character was susceptible.

The only quality which Eric lacked to make him a perfect husband was the quality of wealth; but, unfortunately, that was a quality which loomed large in the eyes of Maud Cumnor and her circle. He had enough to make a wife comfortable in a moderate way, as he had small private means in addition to his pay; but comfort in a modest way was by no means a thing to which Maud had been taught to believe her beauty entitled her. Love in a cottage—or rather in a seven-roomed villa—with two or three women-servants as his handmaidens, was not at all the style of thing which the beautiful Miss Cumnor had been brought up to expect of fate; nay, she demanded—and had been taught by her mother that she had every right to demand—one town and two or three country houses, and a large retinue of men-servants and maid-servants, and horses and asses, with several motor-cars thrown in.

With her accustomed weakness of character, Maud had neither refused nor accepted Eric Golding. She had followed her own inclinations to the point of accepting his devotion and telling him that she returned it, and permitting a sort of understanding between them that eventually, after she had had her fling of pleasure, she would settle down and marry him; and, on the other hand, she had drifted with the current of her mother's wishes to the extent of insisting upon Eric's keeping their engagement a secret, and in her own mind regarding her lover as bound and herself as still free.

Such was the state of things when Sir Edgar Larrington appeared upon the scene and singled out the lovely Miss Cumnor for his special attentions. He was an extremely wealthy man, having amassed his pile in South Africa and come home to England to enjoy it upon the death of an uncle from whom he inherited the baronetcy. There was no doubt that, from a worldly point of view, he was a splendid match for any girl; and that was the only point of view which ever intruded itself upon Mrs. Cumnor's notice. She did not trouble to inquire into the character or past history of so desirable a suitor for her daughter's hand; he had great wealth and an ancient title; and that was enough, and more than enough, for her. But Maud was clearer-sighted than her mother, and possessed quicker perceptions; and she knew instinctively that Sir Edgar was not a "nice" man in the sense that Eric was "nice." She had hoped that things would

go on drifting as they had drifted for so long, and that she could still continue to carry on a flirtation with both Sir Edgar Larrington and Captain Golding; but Sir Edgar was leaving Castle MacBannock that very evening, and she had seen a look in his eyes that told her she must finally choose between him and Eric before he went.

"Have you forgotten that I am leaving Castle MacBannock to-night?" he repeated.

"I am trying to forget it, because it will be so dull when you are gone," replied Maud, still temporizing with her fate. She was one of those women who cannot help flirting with any man, however much she may dislike his attentions. "And I think it is very unkind of you to remind me, just when I was enjoying myself with your instructive conversation," she added.

"But *I* cannot forget it," said the man; and there was a sound in his voice which frightened Maud, and yet—little flirt that she was!—made her decide that she must use all her arts until she heard it again.

"We've got on so well together from the very first, haven't we, Miss Cumnor?"

"Awfully well; and that's because you are so understanding. I don't think I ever met anyone more understanding than you are."

Larrington smiled. He understood Maud through and through—far better than she thought he did—and he knew exactly the doubts that were passing through her mind. Like a cat playing with a mouse, he enjoyed to see the duplex natures warring in the girl's soul and striving for the mastery; and the fact that he felt sure of winning in the end, made his relish of the struggle all the keener. He was as modern and as complex and analytical as Maud herself.

"I have a theory that the people we get on well with here are the people whom we knew in a former existence," continued Maud; "the people who understand our ways and talk our language. There are people we know quite intimately, who never talk the same language as we do; while we sometimes meet absolute strangers who not only talk the same language, but the same *patois*."

"You and I talked the same *patois* the first time we met, if you remember," said Sir Edgar, still with that frightening tone in his voice; "and we've talked it ever since." He could play upon Maud as a man plays upon a musical instrument—he knew all her moods, and could call them up at will. And this strange affinity between them was—perhaps even more than her undoubted beauty—the reason of her attraction for a man who had the pick of London to choose from. Now he played with her varying moods and adapted himself to them; but when they were married, he said to himself, he would mould her character to his will. He did not like her idealistic and romantic side; he knew that it was at war with him, and that he failed to satisfy its demands; but this evil would soon be cured after marriage, for he knew that—given time and opportunity—he could utterly crush and destroy Maud's higher nature, and make her as complete an atheist and a worldling as himself. And he meant to do it.

"I am sure you and I must have belonged to the same country in a former state," said Maud.

"To the same country, my dear Miss Cumnor? Say rather to the same county, the same district, the same village street. Neither of us has a single soul-idiom that is not to the other as household words."

"I am sure I never knew Lady MacBannock in a former state. Did you?"

"Heaven forbid! I wouldn't know her in this if she wasn't a relation," replied Larrington, with a laugh. Then suddenly his face changed. "Good gracious!" he exclaimed. "There is the lovely Miss Black-Smith coming to join us. I thought she was safe in church, under the all-seeing eye of the MacBannock."

"So did I," groaned Maud.

"I fondly believed that you and I were the only survivors of the church-going omnibus," said Sir Edgar.

"That was my impression. But my noble example must have emboldened her also to rebel."

Larrington sat up in his chair. "I cannot say good-bye to you with the eyes of Europe and Miss Black-Smith upon us, because I have something very particular to say to you as well as good-bye. Come up to the waterfall with me this afternoon, and let me say it there."

"Won't it be rather too hot for such a long walk?" demurred Maud.

"I don't think so, as it is in the shade all the way. But we can select a cool spot in the woods if you prefer it."

"Can't we say good-bye on the lawn as everybody else does?" persisted Maud, still struggling feebly for freedom.

"Certainly not. We shall say good-bye either at the waterfall or in the woods; you can decide which."

As usual, Maud succumbed to the stronger will. "Very well, then; let it be the waterfall."

Sir Edgar smiled to himself under his moustache. He knew he could always conquer her if he wished. And as he was a masterful man, and likewise an unscrupulous one, this sense of power was very pleasant to him. "The waterfall it shall be," he agreed; and then the Philistines in the form of Miss Black-Smith were upon them, and no more could be said except such as was suitable for the ears of that inquisitive damsel.

Maud soon withdrew herself from the other two and went into the house and up to her own room. She did not feel in the mood for idle conversation just then, when she knew that her future life was hanging in the balance. With the quick intuition of womanhood, she was perfectly aware that Edgar Larrington intended to leave Castle MacBannock as her accepted lover. She would have liked the present state of things to continue indefinitely, and was sorry that the inevitable time had come. It was very nice to have a wealthy suitor at her beck and call, laying motor-cars and opera-boxes and various gewgaws at her feet whenever she deigned to accept them, as Sir Edgar had been doing all through the last season.

But, in spite of her short tale of years, Maud was wise enough to realize that the indefiniteness which delights a woman is in no way agreeable to a man, and that Edgar had stood the dangling process as long as he would. True, Eric Golding had stood it for as many years as the baronet had endured it for months; but then Eric loved her better than he loved himself, and Sir Edgar did not —which made all the difference, as Miss Cumnor was clever enough to see. Larrington had got to the point when she must either take him or let him go; he was tired of dangling at her apron-strings and impatient of her temporary rule over him, and Maud was sharp enough to recognise this fact and to face it. She knew she must make up her mind either to become Lady Larrington, with all the sacrifice of freedom and idealism which that (to some people) enviable position entailed, or else to fling this magnificent chance of an exceptionally brilliant match to the winds, and to count the world well lost for love of Eric Golding. And the question had to be decided by her this very afternoon.

She knew well enough that she could not both eat her cake and have it. Her marriage with Sir Edgar would finally and irrevocably close her friendship with Captain Golding, for Eric was far too true a man ever to stoop to play the *rôle* of tame cat to any woman. But though Eric and his love meant a great deal to her, the snares of rank and wealth and luxury meant a great deal also; and, for the life of her, Maud could not make up her mind which she desired most, and which she should most deeply regret to lose.

Through her window she watched the omnibus return and discharge its pious load at the front door. Then she saw Sir Edgar strolling back from the stable with Miss Black-Smith, in whose company he had been to inspect the horses; and she felt a pang of jealousy as she wondered whether that young lady would be asked to accept the desirable position of Lady Larrington should she herself refuse it. She was not in the least jealous of any woman who might win Edgar's love and admiration; she knew too well what those were worth. But she was very jealous indeed of any woman who might eventually rule over his princely houses and wear his priceless family diamonds, since she computed with equal precision the worth of these also.

Then she saw the twins avoiding the eagle eye of their mother, and hovering about with their beloved camera, ready to prey upon anybody who was so misguided as to come within their merciless range. And finally she heard the gong sound, and went down to lunch with her mind, as she believed, still in doubt as to whether she should choose the higher or the lower road; but, in reality, slowly veering round in the direction of the latter.

When luncheon was over she failed—as usual—to resist Sir Edgar's wishes, and started obediently with him for the waterfall at the top of the glen. They had no difficulty in evading Lady MacBannock this time, as that worthy woman had retired to her room with a religious book, in order to indulge in a little surreptitious yet sanctified slumber. Of this blessed repose her ladyship's sons had likewise taken advantage, and had escaped from the enforced study of the Shorter Catechism, with the inevitable camera clumsily concealed inside one of their jackets.

It was an ideal day for amateur photographers. In the still, pure atmosphere and blazing sunshine photographs could almost take themselves, whilst objects invisible to the naked eye could be clearly reproduced upon the camera. Therefore the twins could hardly be expected to sacrifice so glorious an opportunity of practising their favourite art to the exigencies of their mother's principles.

Miss Cumnor and her lover walked slowly up the glen, talking at first upon indifferent

subjects. But Sir Edgar had soon had enough of this shilly-shallying, and he said abruptly:—

"Miss Cumnor, I have brought you here to say something very particular to you, and you are a less clever girl than I take you for if you cannot guess what that something is."

As was her custom, Maud tried to evade a straightforward question and answer. "I'm sure I can't, as I never was very good at guessing games. A double acrostic drives me to the verge of distraction, while a missing word competition produces in me the most aggravated symptoms of brain-fever. I never guessed anything correctly in my life."

"Then if you cannot guess my riddle I shall have to give you the answer and put it plain. The question I have brought you here to ask you is, will you be my wife?"

Maud shrugged her graceful shoulders. "Oh, dear, what a pity it is that men always will spoil pleasant conversations by introducing some dreadfully straightforward question!"

"We introduce the straightforward questions simply because we want straightforward answers. So please give me one."

"But I hate straightforward questions and answers. They always remind me of a funny, antiquated little book that a former governess of my mother's used to teach me when I was a small girl, called 'The Child's Guide to Knowledge.' *You'd* have enjoyed it; for it was full of straightforward questions and answers as to what bread is made of, and what are the three diseases of wheat, and things like that. There was no vagueness about it anywhere." Sir Edgar smiled again under cover of his moustache. It amused him to see his victim's pretty struggles against the snare he had laid for her; and he entertained no fears as to his final success. He knew Maud and himself too well to doubt that his will in the end would certainly subjugate hers.

"It is difficult to believe that you were trained in so definite a school," he said.

"I was; but I was too complex and indefinite and generally modern by nature for it to have any lasting effect upon me," replied Maud.

"Well, then, I am afraid you will have to fall back upon the effects of this early training, and strive to be definite just once again. Don't you see that I've stood this hanging-on business long enough, and I can't do with any more of it? I want you for my wife, and I mean to have you, Maud."

"But our friendship has been so pleasant——" Maud began.

The man, however, cut her short. "Not to me. Don't you know that you are far too attractive a woman for your friendship to be satisfying to any man? Men want either less or more. And now you must make up your mind whether you will become my wife or whether we must part altogether. I will be your husband or your enemy, but never your friend. I like you far too well for that."

The parting of the ways had come just as Maud had foreseen. And it was for her—and her alone—to decide which path she was going to take.

"I can give you everything you want," Edgar went on, "and you shall have a lovely time for the rest of your life. There is nothing that money can buy that shall not be yours. And you are very fond of the things that money can buy, you know you are, my dear little Maud!"

She was, and she knew it. So she smiled and did not speak, but Edgar felt that she was yielding.

"'With all my worldly goods I thee endow' will be no empty boast in my case," the man continued, knowing well wherein his chief claim to her consideration lay. He was wise enough to realize that if Maud married him it would be for money and not for love. But as long as he won her for his wife, he did not care what her motive might be in marrying him. He had not a high ideal of the sanctity of the holy estate.

They were at the top of the glen by this time, and close to the precipice down which the water dashed in rainy seasons; but after the dry summer the waterfall was reduced to a thread of silver. And as they reached the summit of the ascent, Edgar stood still with a look of triumph on his cynical features. "Maud, come to me; I want you, my dearest girl; and I can give you everything you want, if you will only come," he cried, stretching out both hands towards her in his intense longing to possess so exquisite a piece of youth and beauty.

For a second Maud turned involuntarily towards the outstretched hands, which were offering her all that her world considered worthy of acceptance; and her face, too, was full of triumph because she had served Mammon to such good purpose. Then, suddenly, one of those inexplicable changes came over her to which all impressionable natures such as hers are subject. She did not know what caused it; whether Sir Edgar

"MAUD, COME TO ME; I WANT YOU."

had appealed too obviously to her lower nature, and so had grated upon her higher susceptibilities; or whether his casual reference to the Marriage Service had reminded her of all the sacrament of marriage was meant to be, and of all that it could be with such a man as Eric Golding. She pictured herself standing at the altar with Edgar Larrington, and shuddered to think what a travesty the beautiful old form of words would be when exchanged between herself and him, with nothing but worldly ambitions upon the one side and mere physical attractions upon the other. All she knew was that in an instant, without apparent why or wherefore, a change had come o'er the spirit of her dream.

She experienced a sudden revolt against Sir Edgar, and for all that he stood for in her life; and a sudden longing for the true peace and happiness which a union with Eric Golding would entail. It seemed absurd, ridiculous, puerile, she knew, to change about in this way like a fickle child; but Sir Edgar had in some inexplicable manner suddenly ceased to dominate her; and with the remembrance of Eric there swept over her the memory how faithful and true he had been to her ever since she was a child, and how his devotion had never failed or faltered, and how good he was, and how manly and unselfish. And then she recalled all the dreams that she had dreamed about him in her romantic girlhood before the iron of worldliness had entered into her soul; and how in these dreams he had always played the *rôle* of the ideal fairy prince. All at once it seemed to be made clear to her that Eric Golding was the one man in the world for her, and that deliberately to break so true a heart as his would be a baseness of which even she at her worst was not capable.

Sir Edgar, quick to read her moods, saw the change in her face, and his spirits sank. "Come to me, Maud," he repeated. Surely it was impossible that he should lose her now; but at the mere thought of such a thing his desire for her increased tenfold.

Then at last she spoke, and he was more startled at the change in her voice than at the change in her face. There was a ring of firmness and decision in it that he had never heard before. "No, Sir Edgar; please don't ask me. I can never marry you—never."

"Why on earth not? I can give you what few men can give you, and can make you abundantly happy."

"You can give me everything that money can buy, I know, but you cannot make me happy. There are some things that money cannot buy, and those happen to be the things I want."

"But, my dear child, this is nonsense worthy of a sentimental schoolgirl."

"Perhaps; but it is what I think and mean. I don't love you, Sir Edgar; and that is the long and the short of it."

"But, my dear girl, I never asked you to love me; I only asked you to marry me. And if you will do that I promise you I will never bother you about your feelings. I am not a romantic boy, you know, who is always applying a thermometer to the state of his lady-love's affections."

"I couldn't marry a man I didn't love," replied Maud, with a persistence that surprised even herself, to say nothing of Sir Edgar.

"Why not? Most women in our rank of life do. Believe me, love in a cottage is a most *bourgeois* form of entertainment."

"I cannot marry you," persisted Maud, still with that unaccustomed firmness.

"Oh, yes, you can, and will. I know that I shall win you in the end and make you as happy as the day is long. I am not afraid. I shall go on asking you as long as you are free, till you are compelled to say 'yes' in order to silence me."

Maud drew herself up haughtily. "You are mistaken in the state of affairs," she said. "I am not free; I am engaged to be married to Captain Golding." The words seemed to speak themselves; she had not meant to say them. They came out without any volition on her part. And when she had said them, and knew that she had burnt her boats, she was filled with a strange gladness.

But Larrington was thunderstruck. It was inconceivable to him that any young girl, however clever, should have played with him in this way. "Engaged to Golding?" was all that he could say.

Again Maud felt impelled to speak as if by some power outside herself.

"Yes, I am engaged to Captain Golding; but for reasons of our own we have seen fit to keep the engagement secret for a time, so I must beg you to respect my confidence. I felt that I owed it to you to let you know, after the honour you have done me in asking me to be your wife; but I am sure I can trust you not to let it go any farther until Captain Golding and myself see fit to announce it publicly."

She had indeed burnt her boats now with a vengeance, and was elated with that sense of triumphant relief which such bonfires usually produce in those who have the courage to ignite them.

"Of course I will respect your confidence," replied Larrington, manfully struggling to conceal the rage and mortification which consumed him; "but I cannot help saying that I consider you have treated me very badly."

Maud was about to reply when a sort of war-whoop from the other side of the ravine startled them both, and they looked across the waterfall to see the dreaded twins swiftly beating a retreat.

"Confound those beastly boys!" exclaimed Edgar, angrily, thankful to find an object on which to vent his temper. "I'm blessed if they haven't had the impudence to take a snapshot of you and me! I should like to give them both a good hiding."

"They are rather tiresome," Maud agreed, quite coolly: "and now don't you think we had better be getting back again, or we shall be late for tea." Under his breath Edgar cursed the fickleness and uncertainty of the artistic temperament, and felt there was something to be said for stupid women after all; at any rate, you knew where you were with them. He understood Maud so well that he was fully aware she had intended to accept him, whatever her previous relations with Captain Golding might have been, and that suddenly and inexplicably she had changed her mind. But as to what had induced this rapid change of front he had not the slightest idea. Being a man of the world, he adapted himself to Miss Cumnor's altered attitude with as good a grace as he could muster; but nevertheless the homeward walk was decidedly uncomfortable. Under his calm exterior Sir Edgar was furiously angry with Maud for having made a fool of him, and with himself for having been made a fool of; and yet all the while he knew her well enough to perceive that she had been innocent of any deliberate intention to deceive him, and that her sudden alternations of mood were utterly beyond her own control. He was as certain as if she had told him so, that when she walked up the glen with him she intended to accept him and throw Golding over. But why had she so suddenly altered her mind? That he could not even dimly guess at.

As the two approached the garden the boys perceived them and rushed to meet them.

"I say," cried the twins, simultaneously, "we've just got such a good snapshot of you two!"

"Delighted to hear it," replied Sir Edgar, dryly. "You caught us in a happy moment, when the wolf was unexpectedly playing the part of the lamb."

"You shall have a copy," promised the elder of the twins graciously, "as soon as it is developed and printed; and we can print awfully fast in such weather as this." Maud duly thanked them, and they flew back to their tea.

"Then, good-bye, Miss Cumnor," said Sir Edgar, as he opened the gate leading from the glen into the garden. "I doubt if we shall ever meet again, so I take this opportunity of thanking you for many a pleasant—and one extremely unpleasant—hour." And then they joined the rest of the party on the lawn.

When tea was over Sir Edgar took his leave; and Maud marvelled at her own indifference to the fact that she had let the great chance of her life, from a worldly point of view, slip by for ever. The evening came and passed in due course, and the next day dawned, but still she was upheld by a strange feeling of exaltation in this giving up of herself finally to Eric and Eric's love.

When she came back from her drive with Lady MacBannock in the afternoon, she found the twins awaiting her in the hall with white and scared faces.

"I say, will you come into the schoolroom for a minute?" asked Ian, the oldest twin, in a frightened whisper. "There's something awfully rummy happened."

"There's a chap at school," remarked Ivor, as they followed Maud down the passage leading to the schoolroom, "who tells queer tales about how cameras can see things that we can't see, don't you know?—ghosts and things like that. I thought he was only gassing; but now I'm blowed if there isn't something in it after all!"

"It makes a fellow feel queer when he finds he has photographed things that people can't see—gives him sort of creeps down the back, don't you know!" added Ian, as they all three entered the schoolroom, and he handed Maud a roughly-printed photograph that was lying on the table.

She took it and examined it carefully. There were she and Sir Edgar standing by

"A SORT OF WAR-WHOOP FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAVINE STARTLED THEM BOTH."

"SHE TOOK IT AND EXAMINED IT CAREFULLY."

the waterfall, as they had stood that afternoon. She knew the exact moment when the snapshot had been taken. It was when he held out his arms to her and she so nearly accepted him, just before that unaccountable rush of newly-awakened love for Eric suddenly flooded her soul. Yes; it was a very good likeness both of herself and of her discarded suitor.

But there was more on the film than that.

Midway between herself and Sir Edgar stood a dazzling and dimly-outlined figure of surpassing grace and dignity—a winged and radiant Presence surrounded by an aura of pure white light. Its left hand lay like a splash of sunshine upon Maud's shoulder, as if gently pushing her away from her companion's outstretched arms; while in Its right hand, thrust implacably between the man and the woman, was an upraised flaming sword.

Filer the Faithless.

By ARTHUR MORRISON.

OF all the afflictions brought on a suffering civilization by the Limited Liability Acts as they stand in the statutes of this commercial country, few can exceed the troubles, pains, and harassments of Mr. Nathaniel Dowdall, consequent on his investment of an odd hundred pounds in Filer's Royal and Imperial Circus, Limited. It was no matter of a public issue of shares at the hands of a professional promoter, no case of a glowing prospectus with a titled directorate. Filer, of Filer's Royal and Imperial Circus, indeed, made fresh issues of shares whenever he found the opportunity, and wherever he fell across the confiding investor. He was managing director, and, it is to be presumed, the rest of the board also. He was Filer, and there was the long and short, the thick and thin, the beginning and end of it. From time to time the capital of Filer, Limited, was increased by just as much as some hopeful stranger might be persuaded to entrust to Filer, managing director, in exchange for an elegantly-printed certificate constituting him a partner (limited) in the joys and sorrows of Filer. Then Filer's Royal and Imperial Circus passed on, and if the new shareholder remained quiescent there was nobody in the world so ready to let bygones be bygones as the magnanimous Filer.

Mr. Nathaniel Dowdall did not remain quiescent. He followed Filer with letters, monthly, fortnightly, and then weekly. Some came back through the Dead Letter Office, a few vanished wholly into the unknown, but some caught Filer at towns where the circus pitched, and others overtook him, redirected; and that in sufficient numbers to grow, after a year or so, something of a nuisance to the otherwise unruffled Filer. So much so, that he went so far as to answer one or two of the later and more violent, in a tone of grieved affability. And then Mr. Dowdall wrote thus:—

Without Prejudice.

613, Bramblebury Road, Streatham Hill, S.W.,
May 15th.

SIR,—I will have no more of your evasions and promises. You have obtained my money by fraudulent misrepresentation, and I demand its instant return. Unless I receive by Thursday next your cheque for the sum of one hundred pounds, I shall place the whole affair in the hands of my solicitors to deal with as they consider best, with a view not only to the recovery of the money, but to the proper punishment of a disgraceful fraud. This letter is final.

Your obedient servant,
NATHANIEL DOWDALL.

It would be difficult, thought Mr. Dowdall (and Mrs. Dowdall agreed with him), to devise a more peremptory missive than this; though, indeed, since each of the last two letters had ended with the declaration that it was final, the concluding clause might be considered by now to have lost some of its force. But on the other hand, "Without Prejudice" was quite new, and very terrible to behold. Filer's answer, however, came in this form:—

Filer's Royal and Imperial Circus, Limited,
May 16th.

MY DEAR MR. NATHANIEL DOWDALL,—My natural delight at hearing once again from so highly esteemed a friend and partner as yourself was somewhat chastened by a suspicion that the tone of your letter was one of irritation. I need hardly assure you that it would afford me the highest and purest pleasure to comply with your thoughtful suggestion that I should send you my cheque for one hundred pounds, but I have reason to believe that the presentation of that cheque at the bank would result in a pang of disappointment which far be it from me to inflict upon you. The stream of wealth, in fact, which is destined inevitably to overtake our enterprise in time, and which I shall welcome chiefly because it will enable me to divert a large volume of it toward you, is meeting with a temporary obstruction. In the meantime permit me to thank you for the kind thought which prompted your charmingly original heading, and to rejoice to learn that you are still without prejudice against

Your devoted, though
temporarily embarrassed partner,
PLANTAGENET FILER.

Mr. Dowdall perused this letter with eyes that emerged steadily till they threatened to overhang his most prominent waistcoat-

button. Speechless, he passed it across the breakfast-table to Mrs. Dowdall, who, having read it in her turn, barely mustered the words, "Well, I never did!"

This was Mr. Dowdall's rejoinder, written after an hour's interval of simmering wrath:—

Streatham Hill, S.W.,
May 17th.

MR. FILER,—I am not to be turned aside by impudent flippancy. I may remind you that, even though you may have made away with my money, you have goods which may be seized in satisfaction of my claim, and unless I receive the sum of which you have defrauded me before the end of the week I shall take steps to secure it by the means provided by law. This letter is final. NATHANIEL DOWDALL.

As Mr. Dowdall anticipated, this produced a change in Filer's attitude. His answer, though still amiable in tone, indicated surrender:—

Filer's Royal and Imperial
Circus, Limited,
May 18th.

MY DEAR MR. DOWDALL,—It grieves me to perceive, from your last letter, that my fear of a certain irritation on your part of late was well-founded, and I hasten to remove all occasion for an asperity which I feel sure you have already regretted. My sorrow is chiefly that you should cut yourself off from participation in the noble revenues which are shortly to accrue to this enterprise; but, rather than my honour should be in any way called in question, I will even encounter the bitterness of this disappointment. It would increase my distress if, in addition to your sacrifice of the golden opportunity, you were to incur legal expenses; and therefore I am now freely handing over to you a valuable part of the property of this company, more than equivalent to the sum you have invested. It should arrive in the course of a day or so, by rail, in a large case, carriage forward. I am now leaving England, with the enterprise, for an extended Continental tour, and take this opportunity of tendering you my heartiest farewells, and expressing my pleasure that our business connection terminates in friendly concord. Your late partner but eternal well-wisher,

PLANTAGENET FILER.

P.S.—The case should be handled with care. It is not a new one, and in some places it is not altogether what one might wish.—P. F.

This was far more satisfactory, and Mr. Dowdall beamed as he passed the letter to his wife, who beamed again as she handed it back. Plainly he had gone the right way to work to bring such a fellow as Filer to his senses. Clearly Filer had realized at last that Nathaniel Dowdall was not to be trifled with, and had offered the best composition in his power without waiting for a legal seizure. Perhaps, also, there was a little in Mrs. Dowdall's suggestion that some traces of honesty lingered in Filer's system yet; for, in truth, he might have left the country without notice, and so have removed his goods beyond the reach of bailiffs.

There were possible awkwardnesses to be considered, of course. Showmen's accessories were of little use to Mr. Dowdall, and might prove difficult to dispose of. But that was a matter best left till the goods arrived. For the rest of that day and for some part of the next Mr. Dowdall was patient and hopeful. And then the case arrived.

"'IT'S THE RAILWAY VAN, SIR,' ANNOUNCED SELINA.

Mr. Dowdall was sitting in the inconvenient little back room which the household was taught to call his study, and Mrs. Dowdall was consulting him on the eternal domestic question, beef or mutton, when the blank and bewildered face of Selina the housemaid appeared at the door, and the hand of Selina extended toward Mr. Dowdall a large biscuit-coloured delivery sheet.

"It's the railway van, sir," announced Selina; "and they've brought a tiger."

"A tiger!" gasped Mr. Dowdall, quite forgetting to shut his mouth after the utterance.

And "A tiger!" echoed Mrs. Dowdall, faintly, opening her mouth wider still.

"Yes, m'm," replied the housemaid. "It's in a big wooden cage, a-nowlin' an' stampin'

an' goin' on dreadful. And there's six pound four and eightpence to pay."

In the blank pause that followed, vague rumblings, shouts, and yelps from the direction of the street reached the ears of Mr. Dowdall, like the ancestral voices that prophesied war to Kubla Khan. He rose, murmuring helplessly; his murmurs increased as he reached the study door, and the burden of their plaint was, "Six pound four and eightpence!"

Then he turned suddenly on Selina. "I won't have it!" he exclaimed. "Send it away."

And Mrs. Dowdall, awakened to a sudden sense of danger, caught his arm, pushed Selina into the passage, and shut the door after her in one complicated spasm of presence of mind.

The noises from the street grew in volume, and it was clear that a public attraction had been scented, and the inevitable torrent of shouting boys had set in. Presently Selina returned with the report that, whether Mr. Dowdall paid the railway charges or waited to be sued for them, the tiger addressed to him would be delivered there and then. The men, it seemed, had given her to understand that the tiger's society was no longer desired, either by themselves or by any other person connected with the railway.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Dowdall, recovering something of his natural sense of civic propriety. "People can't be expected to take in any tigers anybody likes to address to them! It would undermine the whole fabric of society. I—I won't be bullied. Is the front door shut?"

The front door was shut, and with so much of assured security Mr. Dowdall betook himself to the drawing-room, the window whereof commanded the nearest view of the street and the area railings. Boys were competing for seats on those same railings, and the standing-room in the street was growing rapidly less. From the tail of a large van stout planks sloped, and down these planks slid a huge wooden, iron-bound case, lowered by many ropes in the hands of several excited men. From within the case came angry growls, and as it reached the pavement Mr. Dowdall observed that its front was a sort of door of stout iron-clamped planks with narrow intervals between them, through which intervals came glimpes of restless, fiery yellow fur.

The case came to rest before the railings, and the carman, perceiving Mr. Dowdall at the window, waved the biscuit-coloured delivery sheet and hailed him. Mr. Dowdall raised the sash and parleyed.

"Are you goin' to pay this 'ere money now, sir?" demanded the carman.

"Certainly not," retorted Mr. Dowdall. "I don't want a tiger—I didn't order one—the whole things a—a clerical error. Mark it 'Dead Parcels Office' and take it back!"

"Dead parcels!" repeated the carman, with withering scorn. "It's about the livest parcel *I* ever see, an' it's pretty near marked some of us gettin' it 'ere. Dead parcels! It's my orders to leave it 'ere, pay or not, sign or not; an' the comp'ny'll see you about the charges arterwards. Dead parcels! 'Ere, git up!"

And with that the carman sought his perch, and the van clattered away with its retinue of ropes, planks, and wholly untipped porters.

The crowd was bigger and noisier every minute, and the bolder among the boys were already tentatively pushing sticks between the planks, to the manifest disapproval of the tiger, and as he watched, Mr. Dowdall recalled the warning that the case was "not altogether what one might wish." He broke into a sweat of apprehension, wildly wondering what would be the legal charge for an ordinary street boy devoured by a tiger. And as he wondered there appeared, towering above the heads by the street corner, a policeman's helmet.

The policeman elbowed steadily through the crowd, sternly ordering it to "pass along there," without any particular result. He walked cautiously round the case and observed the direction on the label. Then he ascended Mr. Dowdall's front steps and was about to ring the bell, when Mr. Dowdall, with diplomatic resource, addressed him first from the window.

"Good morning, constable," he said. "There's a tiger down there I want cleared away from my doorstep"

This would not seem to have been a request for which the policeman was prepared. He paused, looked back at the case, and then again at Mr. Dowdall.

"It's your tiger, sir," he said at length.

"Oh, no," replied Mr. Dowdall, airily; "not at all. Somebody seems to have dropped it—out of a cart, I fancy." He inwardly congratulated himself on the conscientious accuracy of this conjecture. "Yes," he added, "I'm pretty sure it was dropped out of a cart."

"It's got your name and address on it, anyhow," retorted the policeman.

HE WALKED CAUTIOUSLY ROUND THE CASE.'

"Ah, yes, yes; that's merely a—a coinci dence. A tiger might have anybody's name on it, you know; not at all uncommon. Done to throw you off the scent. I should think there'd be quite a handsome reward for finding a thing like that, if you took it to the station"

The policeman, sternly contemptuous, disregarded the suggestion. "That tiger's causin' an obstruction," he said, severely.

"Yes," assented Mr. Dowdall. "Shocking. I give it in charge."

The constable, with rising wrath, surveyed the crowd that now filled the street, and turned once more to Mr. Dowdall. "That tiger's your property," he said, "and if you don't take it indoors it'll be my dooty to summons you." And with that he produced a notebook and wrote laboriously.

And now as he wrote a sergeant arrived, who positively ordered Mr. Dowdall to take his tiger indoors instantly. Mr. Dowdall desperately contemplated the prospect of standing a siege of public, police, and tiger combined; when there arrived on the heels of the others an inspector, a far better diplomatist than either of his inferior officers. He first carefully examined the case and its inscriptions, and then politely inquired if Mr. Dowdall were in any way connected with Filer's Circus. Mr. Dowdall was cornered. To deny Filer's Circus to a responsible police-officer meant to renounce hope of redress from Filer. Mr. Dowdall first hesitated, and then admitted his partnership; and straightway was deprived of all defence

"Ah, just so," said the diplomatic inspector. "I see you've a nice wide carriage entrance in the side road—we'll see about getting him in there. Three or four men with rollers and crowbars can do it in no time. I should think you could get the men and the tackle too from Brady's in five minutes; I'll send a man to see about it for you."

Now, perhaps partly because of the soothing manner of the inspector, Mr. Dowdall was beginning to feel a little less alarmed at the state of affairs. The tiger had not killed anybody yet, and seemed to have grown a good deal quieter now that his not very roomy habitation had come to rest; and that same habitation had as yet shown no signs of giving way anywhere. The front planks were so strong, the padlock was so very large, and the air spaces were so very narrow that the creature could scarcely see, let alone get out. And indeed a tiger was no doubt rather a valuable possession, if you could find a buyer. There would be no great risk in allowing the case and its prisoner to stand in the back garden with all doors locked for a little while—an hour or so—till he could get an offer for it. For by now Mr. Dowdall's natural business instincts were beginning to assert themselves, and he had formed a plan.

He calmed the natural agitation of Mrs.

Dowdall, and dispatched an urgent telegram to Padgebury, the eminent wild beast dealer of Shadwell, thus:—

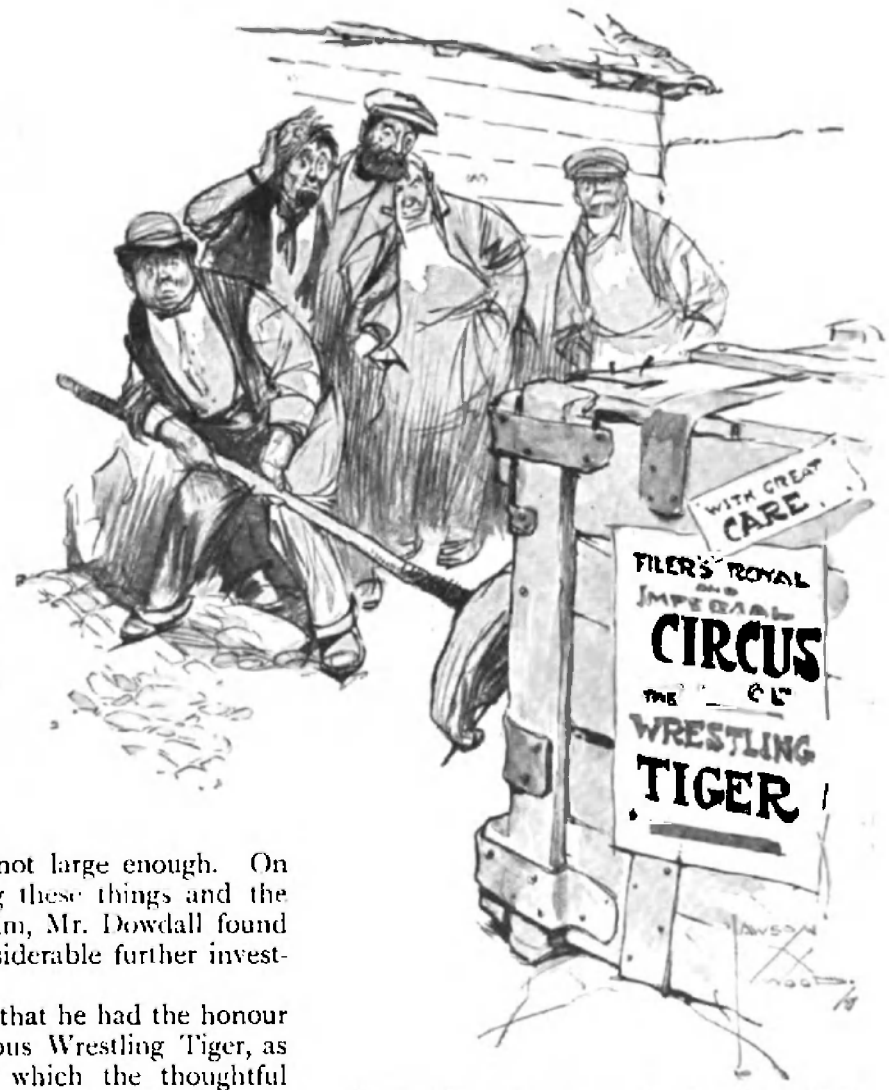
To PADGEBURY, or anybody in charge, Shadwell. —Come instantly. Magnificent business opening. Unusual opportunity.—DOWDALL, 613, Bramblebury Road, S.W.

This done, Mr. Dowdall resigned himself, with comparative equanimity, to observing the exertions of half-a-dozen dishevelled men, who, with strong arms and much stronger language, shoved and hauled and scuffled the iron-bound case along the pavement and round the corner, and so through the gates at the side, amid the enthusiasm of the populace and to the newly-aroused growls and flops of the tiger. Somebody suggested a joint of beef to keep the beast quiet, and all the men suggested beer for other purposes, when at last the case rested in the farthest corner of the stable-yard. The joint of beef was found to be too large to pass between the planks, when presented at the end of a pole, and so had to be hacked into small pieces; but the only distinct complaint about the beer was that it was not large enough. On the whole, considering these things and the railway company's claim, Mr. Dowdall found himself making a considerable further investment in Filer.

Also he discovered that he had the honour of receiving the famous Wrestling Tiger, as announced by a bill which the thoughtful Filer had pasted on one side of the case; whereon it was made known that at Filer's Royal and Imperial Circus the gifted quadruped would wrestle a fall every night in its cage, with its trainer, or with any gentleman in the house who would oblige; having already killed fifteen champion wrestlers in sundry European capitals, with great applause from the discriminating public. Mr. Dowdall was somewhat gratified to find himself in possession of so valuable an animal, and inwardly blamed himself for his early anxiety to repudiate its ownership.

Early in the afternoon a man arrived from Padgebury's. He was a mild, colourless person in shabby corduroys, and he had come, he explained, because Mr. Padgebury and his head man were out on business, and the telegram seemed to be important.

"Yes," replied Mr. Dowdall, impressively, "it was—for Mr. Padgebury. The fact is, when I sent that telegram I had reluctantly



"THE JOINT OF BEEF WAS FOUND TO BE TOO LARGE."

decided to part with my tiger—the most magnificent and talented creature ever placed upon the market. I'm not so sure about it now, but a sufficiently good offer might tempt me. It's in the stable-yard; go and look at it while I wait here."

The man shook his head feebly. "Tigers ain't my department, sir," he said; "it's the

canaries what I look after. If it 'ad a-been a pipin' bullfinch, now——"

"Oh, but surely," protested Mr. Dowdall, "as a responsible man from Padgebury's—a leading man on the staff, you know—you can deal with just a simple matter of an ordinary tiger. Come, now; just go and run your eye over him."

But the man shook his head again. "I ain't no judge of a tiger," he replied. "I don't know 'is p'ints. Anythink in the way of a redpoll I could take on easy. An 'if you ain't sure you really want to sell 'im, p'r'aps you'd better think it over for a day or two."

"Oh, no—not at all," Mr. Dowdall interposed, hastily. "I'd rather get the parting over at once and have done with it. I'd like you to go and tell Mr. Padgebury about it as soon as he gets back. It's a most extraordinary tiger—wrestles, and does card tricks, and all that. When will Mr. Padgebury be back?"

The canary-tamer was not quite certain, but it was pretty sure to be some time in the afternoon.

"Very well, get him to come along at once with a van. But there's one thing you might tell me," Mr. Dowdall proceeded, confidentially. "You'd scarcely believe it, but some of my servants are foolishly nervous about that tiger. Now you are a man of experience. Couldn't you give it something to keep it quiet till Mr. Padgebury comes?"

"Beef?" suggested the canary-man, interrogatively.

"It's got beef," Mr. Dowdall replied. "But I don't mean food. Something to send it to sleep, for instance?"

"Whisky," replied the shabby man, promptly. "They tame hedgehogs with that."

"But how can I give a tiger whisky?"

The canary-man rubbed his ear thoughtfully for a moment. Then he said, "Force 'is mouth open and pour it down 'is throat."

But a very little more conversation made it clear that neither Mr. Dowdall nor the man from Padgebury's was prepared to adopt this method personally; and after a little more negotiation it was agreed that Padgebury's retainer should visit the stable-yard with a view to devising a less adventurous means of administering the whisky.

Presently he returned and reported his plan. "There's precious little room between the planks," he said. "In fact, you can't properly see in without shoving your eye rayther too close to the door. But there's a bit of an iron trough fixed inside, with water, an' if I'd got a good large basinful o' whisky, an' the garden-squirt, I think I could get some of it into the trough."

A quart of whisky was produced accordingly, and the garden-squirt; and in five minutes more the canary-man returned to report complete success, and to receive a fee of half a crown. Furthermore, he received fervid injunctions to send the whole Padgebury tiger-staff at the earliest possible moment; and so departed.

Perfect silence fell upon the stable-yard. Not a growl could be heard by a listener from any window at the back of the house, and the boot-boy, reconnoitring the stable-yard, reported that the tiger was motionless at the bottom of the cage—probably asleep. The household excitement was relieved, and household affairs began to resume their course.

Half an hour—an hour—an hour and a half—two hours passed in peace and quiet; and then, with a sudden burst of frantic shrieks, the cook, the boot-boy, and Selina came up the kitchen stairs in a rush. The tiger! The tiger! The tiger was climbing through the scullery window!

Who was first and who was last of the whole household out of the front door will never be known; it is merely conjectured that Mr. Dowdall was *not* the last, because, foremost in this moment of peril, he was certainly first round the street corner, where he was so fortunate as to butt heavily into a policeman.

"Good evening, constable," gasped Mr. Dowdall, maintaining his balance by hugging the policeman's arm; "good evening! There's an interesting pet of my wife's gone astray in the house, and I think if you were to keep guard at the front door while I sent for Padgebury's——"

"Padgebury's?" repeated the policeman, suspiciously. "Padgebury's? What's this 'ere pet? Is it the tiger as there's been such a fuss about?"

"Well," admitted Mr. Dowdall, glancing back apprehensively, "as a matter of fact, it *is* what you might more or less call a tiger, so to speak, but there's no need to feel alarmed on that account. I give you full authority to use your truncheon."

"Oh, you do, do you?" observed the man, strangely ungratefully. Nevertheless, he looked cautiously round the corner, and then began to walk toward Mr. Dowdall's front door, followed by that gentleman at some little distance. For it chanced that this was an ambitious young policeman, anxious

to distinguish himself; and he hoped that there might be a possibility of doing it at no vast risk, after all. Wherefore it was with some irritation that he heard the shriek of a police-whistle farther up the road, where Mrs. Dowdall had taken refuge with a friend who always kept the instrument handy.

The whistle had the effect of hurrying the young policeman, who resolved, if he could not be the sole representative of the force on the spot, at any rate to be the first. He mounted the front steps, cautiously approached the open door, and looked in. He ventured as far as the mat, and then beyond it, listening intently. And then he cleared the doorstep in one bound, closing the door behind him with great agility, but turning instantly to peep through a clear part of the glass panel. For he had been scared by the apparition of a great yellow head rising over the lower stairs.

"It's gone upstairs!" he cried presently, for the information of anybody within hearing, which was nobody.

For the whistle was attracting stragglers to the house where its possessor, with distended countenance, was blowing it from the first-floor window, and Mr. Dowdall, in the doorway of a neighbour opposite, was dispatching a stream of telegrams to Padgebury, like minute-guns.

And in the midst of all this arrived Padgebury's van, with the great Padgebury himself and half-a-dozen stalwart retainers, and much tackle of iron and rope. Padgebury had started out immediately on the report of his canary-tamer, and so had escaped the fire of telegrams which Mr. Dowdall was still maintaining.

The wild beast dealer shook his head when he learned the state of affairs. "You didn't say he was loose in the house when you offered to sell him," he observed, solemnly.

"Well, I was thinking of allowing a discount in consideration of that," replied Mr. Dowdall; "a moderate discount."

Padgebury shook his head again. "In our trade," he said, "you'll find there's a deal of difference between a loose tiger and one in a cage. Loose tigers don't command any price to speak of. There's no demand for 'em."

Nevertheless, he consented to reconnoitre, with a view to securing Mr. Dowdall's specimen, on the understanding that if no deal resulted he should charge for his services. And so, slowly, with many precautions, the front door was opened, and Padgebury and his staff, listening anxiously, approached the stairs a few steps at a time.

After a pause of careful peeping, Padgebury, greatly daring, crept up the stairs and listened on the landing. Then he beckoned silently to his men, who followed with as little noise as possible, and found their principal pointing significantly at a bedroom door, standing ajar, from beyond which came distinct sounds of heavy breathing.

The men gathered on the landing, awaiting orders. And then suddenly there arose from within the room the sound of a loud, horrible yawn, and following that, in a thick but cheerful voice, the chorus:—

> Put me among the girrls!
> Put me among the girrls!
> Do me a favour, do!
> I'll do the same for you;
> If you'll put——

Padgebury bounced into the room and the chorus broke off; and his men, crowding behind him, saw the tiger lying at length on the bed, fur and teeth and whiskers complete, with a decanter hugged under one paw.

"Whirroo!" cried the tiger. "Get out! 'Tis enough to give a man the palpitations to have yez jumpin' out av nowhere like that, an ugly crowd! An' me that unwell an' all! Get out wid yez!"

Padgebury turned one glance of amazement on his staff, and then, being a prompt man, seized the tiger by the jaw, forced it open, and peered into the cavernous skull. "Why, I believe it's Lanigan!" he said.

"What, Misther Padgebury!" cried the tiger. "'Tis the blessin' o' the wurrld to see ye, Misther Padgebury! Oh, Misther Padgebury, 'tis moighty lonely I am! Nobody loves me in this—this—this here outrajis integument. They trate me like a leper; an' 'tis drouthy worrk, growlin' like a tiger two days together, an' moighty poor conversation, wid no provisions but wan bag av biscuits. Misther Padgebury, is all av 'em you, or is there a dirthy crowd av ruffins in this room?"

"There's enough of us here to see you safely to the police-station, anyhow," answered Padgebury, grimly. "What's this game?"

"Misther Padgebury, dear, if ye shpake to me like that I'll cry like a babby, an' me that broken-hearted too. Take a drop from the decanther—'tis good stuff in this house. An' where's that gallows-hoppin' thief, Filer?"

"Filer? I don't know."

"Filer's Circus started for the Continent the day afore yesterday, so I heard," observed one of Padgebury's men.

"HIS MEN, CROWDING BEHIND HIM, SAW THE TIGER LYING AT LENGTH ON THE BED."

"What?" wailed the tiger. "The day before yesterday? Then I'm robbed to the skin an' bones av me! Sivin months have I been doin' the wrestlin' tiger an' makin' the fortune av the show, an' not two months' pay have I got out av it! An' now he's given me the shake afther all! The curse o' the wurrld on the ugly head av him! I'll tell ye, Misther Padgebury. The wrestling tiger was the only thing that brought the show a pinny, though 'tis mesilf thut says ut. Night afther night I towld Filer I'd give the swindle away in the middle av the show if I didn't get my money, an' night afther night he blarneyed me into goin' through onct more. Ye see, we'd thumpin' thick bars to the cage, an' 'twasn't likely anybody not b'longing to the show was goin' wrestlin' with a tiger; so we faced it out aisy enough till I threatened, an' thin Filer blarneyed me. But at last I'd be blarneyed no more, an' I got a rale paper summons for him; an' thin says Filer, frightened by the paper summons, 'I'm at the bottom av my finances, Lanigan, me boy, an' what I haven't got I can't pay. But we'll raise some,' says he, 'if ye'll do as I tell ye. Now, there's a troublesome ould parrty as calls himself a shareholder,' says he, 'an' I'll put ye in a close-nailed case and sind ye to him. An' I'll be along there as soon as you will an' sooner,' says Filer, 'bekase I'll go by passenger thrain an' you by goods. An' whin the old man's terrified into fits with havin' a rampin', ragin' tiger brought to his peaceful risidince, why I'll get him to pay a call on his shares on conditions av takin' you away again. Thin,' says Filer, 'I'll pay every cint av your money and a prisent to the top av it!' Misther Padgebury, I did ut; an' afther that niver again ask me to be a tiger, nor a package on any goods thrain! I'm bruised all over me like a toad, and the lovely feather-bed itself is hard to me bones."

"Well," remarked Padgebury, "you don't seem to have done much good for yourself since you left me, and you're in a bigger scrape now than ever. There's Mr. Dowdall and a policeman at the front door."

"Misther Dowdall's a jintleman," said the tiger. "He's the only man that iver gave me whisky out av a garden squirrt. Plensheous whisky. It was the whisky, an' nothing but ut, that gave me the courage to open the padlock and come to look for some more. Give my compliments to Misther Dowdall an' tell him he's a betther man than his partner, an' I'd rather dale with him. The firrm owes me thirty-wan pound ten an' six."

And the tiger pulled its mouth open with its right paw, and thrust the neck of the decanter once again between the cruel fangs.

The London Stage.

MISS GERTRUDE ELLIOTT, as Stasia, the servant, in "The Passing of the Third Floor Back," has a part somewhat out of her usual range, but she plays it with a naturalness and sense of character that are of the greatest help to the play. It will be remembered that the "slut" of the first act becomes, through the influence of the Mysterious Stranger, the "slavey" of the second and the "servant" of the third act, and in indicating this transformation Miss Elliott is particularly successful. Mr. Forbes-Robertson did a courageous thing when he produced such an unconventional play, but, happily, his temerity received its reward, and this modern Morality Play has been one of the successes of the season.

MISS DAGMAR WIEHE, who plays the part of Ethel Parker-Jennings in the London production of "Jack Straw," has a part which does not provide any great scope for powerful acting, but she invests the character with such charm as to add considerably to the attraction of the play.

MISS EVELYN MILLARD has so endeared herself to the public by her performances in "The Adventure of Lady Ursula," "Monsieur Beaucaire," and other romantic plays, that her venture into management was watched with the keenest interest. The result has been a most gratifying success, for she has in "Idols" a play which seems likely to serve her for some time to come. The part of Irene Merriam is one which gives Miss Millard some opportunities for really powerful acting, and in the great trial scene she rouses the audience to the highest enthusiasm.

MISS HILDA TREVELYAN'S performance as Maggie in "What Every Woman Knows" is one of the delights of London. Though it may be true that good plays make good players, nothing can detract from the merit of an impersonation which is as near perfect as can be. It is a fit companion to her Wendy in "Peter Pan," and the two characters are an accomplishment of which any actress might well be proud.

MISS MARIE TEMPEST has a part in "Mrs. Dot" which fits her like the proverbial glove. And when so suited what a delightful actress she is to watch! Overflowing with humour and good spirits, her personality and infectious laughter act as a tonic on the most jaded of nerves. If only we could hear her sing more often our happiness would be complete.

MISS DENISE ORME makes her first stage appearance since her marriage in "The Hon'ble Phil," and, as Marie, sings and acts with all her well-known charm. Miss Orme's experience of the stage has been a singularly happy one, as she has had none of the long years of waiting which are the lot of most aspirants to leading parts. On her very first appearance in musical comedy she played one of the name-parts in "The Little Michus," and from the good start thus made she has never looked back.

MISS MARIE LÖHR, who has made such a success as Margaret in Mr. Tree's splendid production of "Faust," possesses one great qualification for the part—she looks it to perfection. Miss Löhr is one of the youngest leading ladies in London, being still under twenty years of age. The daughter of that well-known actress, Miss Kate Bishop, hers is clearly a case of inherited talent, though success has not been won without much hard work. This is not Miss Löhr's first appearance at His Majesty's—most playgoers will remember what a pretty picture she made as Rosey Mackenzie in "Colonel Newcombe." Few theatrical careers have opened so auspiciously, and her future will be watched with the liveliest interest.

MISS ISABEL JAY, with her beauty and high spirits, makes an ideal Princess for such a pretty love story as runs through "The King of Cadonia," the subject of our last illustration. There are few better voices than hers on the musical comedy stage to-day, and her method still bears evidence of the training received at the Savoy, where her first great success was gained.

MISS GERTRUDE ELLIOTT,

And a scene from "The Passing of the Third Floor Back," in which she appears.

From Photographs by Foulsham & Banfield and Dover Street Studios.

MISS DAGMAR WIEHE,
And a scene from "Jack Straw," in which she appears.
From Photographs by Mme. Lallie Charles and Dover Street Studios.

MISS EVELYN MILLARD,
And a scene from "Idols," in which she appears.
From Photographs by Ellis & Walery and Dover Street Studios.

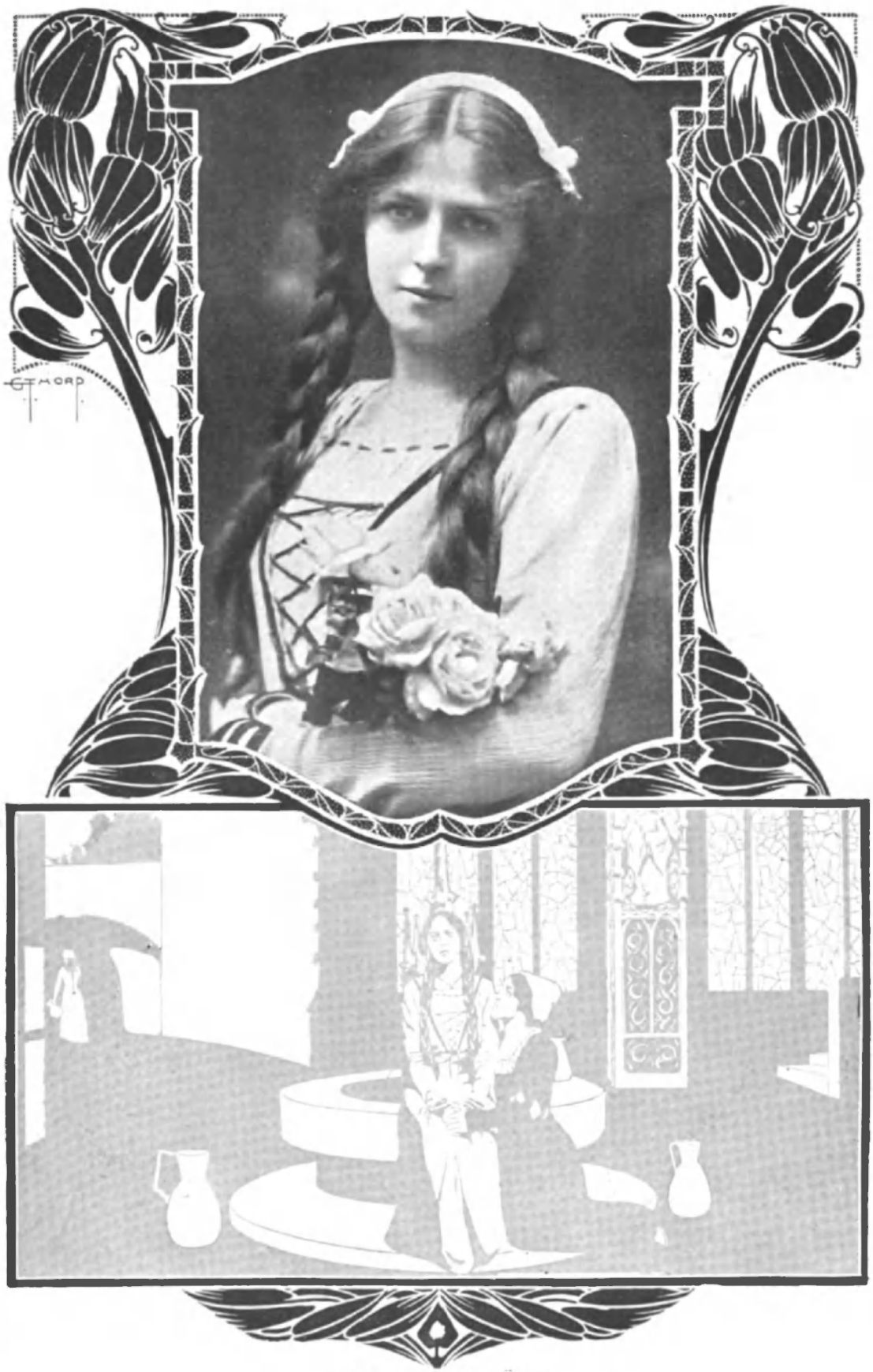
MISS HILDA TREVELYAN,
And a scene from "What Every Woman Knows," in which she appears.
From Photographs by Ellis & Walery.

MISS MARIE TEMPEST,
And a scene from "Mrs. Dot," in which she appears.
From Photographs by Dover Street Studios.

MISS DENISE ORME.

And portion of a scene from "The Hon'ble Phil," in which she appears.

From Photographs by Dover Street Studios and Bassano, Ltd.



MISS MARIE LOHR,
And a scene from "Faust," in which she appears.
From a Photograph by Dover Street Studios.

MISS ISABEL JAY,
And a scene from "The King of Cadonia," in which she appears.
From Photographs by Foulsham & Banfield.

PRIZE MONEY

BY

W. W. JACOBS

THE old man stood by the window, gazing at the frozen fields beyond. The sign of the Cauliflower was stiff with snow, and the breath of a pair of waiting horses in a wagon beneath ascended in clouds of steam.

"Amusements?" he said slowly, as he came back with a shiver and, resuming his seat by the tap-room fire, looked at the wayfarer who had been idly questioning him. "Claybury men don't have much time for amusements. The last one I can call to mind was Bill Chambers being nailed up in a pig-sty he was cleaning out, but there was such a fuss made over that—by Bill—that it sort o' disheartened people."

He got up again restlessly, and, walking round the table, gazed long and hard into three or four mugs.

"Sometimes a little gets left in them," he explained, meeting the stranger's inquiring glance. The latter started, and, knocking on the table with the handle of his knife, explained that he had been informed by a man outside that his companion was the bitterest teetotaller in Claybury.

"That's one o' Bob Pretty's larks," said the old man, flushing. "I see you talking to 'im, and I thought as 'ow he warn't up to no good. Biggest rascal in Claybury, he is. I've said so afore, and I'll say so agin."

He bowed to the donor and buried his old face in the mug.

"A poacher!" he said, taking breath. "A thief!" he continued, after another draught. "I wonder whether Smith spilt any of this a-carrying of it in?"

He put down the empty mug and made a careful examination of the floor, until a musical rapping on the table brought the landlord into the room again.

"My best respects," he said, gratefully, as he placed the mug on the settle by his side and slowly filled a long clay pipe. Next time you see Bob Pretty ask 'im wot happened to the prize hamper. He's done a good many things has Bob, but it'll be a long time afore Claybury men'll look over that.

It was Henery Walker's idea. Henery 'ad been away to see an uncle of 'is wife's wot had money and nobody to leave it to—leastways, so Henery thought when he wasted his money going over to see 'im—and he came back full of the idea, which he 'ad picked up from the old man.

"We each pay twopence a week till Christmas," he ses, "and we buy a hamper with a goose or a turkey in it, and bottles o' rum and whisky and gin, as far as the money'll go, and then we all draw lots for it, and the one that wins has it."

It took a lot of explaining to some of 'em, but Smith, the landlord, helped Henery, and in less than four days twenty-three men had paid their tuppences to Henery, who 'ad been made the seckitary, and told him to hand them over to Smith in case he lost his memory.

Bob Pretty joined one arternoon on the quiet, and more than one of 'em talked of 'aving their money back, but, arter Smith 'ad explained as 'ow he would see fair play, they thought better of it.

"He'll 'ave the same chance as all of you," he ses. "No more and no less."

"I'd feel more easy in my mind, though, if 'e wasn't in it," ses Bill Chambers, staring at Bob. "I never knew 'im to lose anything yet."

"You don't know everything, Bill," ses Bob, shaking his 'ead. "You don't know me; else you wouldn't talk like that. I've never been caught doing wrong yet, and I 'ope I never shall."

"It's all right, Bill," ses George Kettle. "Mr. Smith'll see fair, and I'd sooner win Bob Pretty's money than anybody's."

"I 'ope you will, mate," ses Bob; "that's what I joined for."

"Bob's money is as good as anybody else's," ses George Kettle, looking round at the others. "It don't signify to me where he got it from."

"Ah, I don't like to hear you talk like that, George," ses Bob Pretty. "I've thought more than once that you 'ad them ideas."

He drank up his beer and went off 'ome, shaking his 'ead, and, arter three or four of 'em 'ad explained to George Kettle wot he meant, George went off 'ome, too.

The week afore Christmas, Smith, the landlord, said as 'ow he 'ad got enough money, and three days arter we all came up 'ere to see the prize drawn. It was one o' the biggest hampers Smith could get; and there was a fine, large turkey in it, a large goose, three pounds o' pork sausages, a bottle o' whisky, a bottle o' rum, a bottle o' brandy, a bottle o' gin, and two bottles o' wine. The hamper was all decorated with holly, and a little flag was stuck in the top.

On'y men as belonged was allowed to feel the turkey and the goose, and arter a time Smith said as 'ow p'r'aps they'd better leave off, and 'e put all the things back in the hamper and fastened up the lid.

"How are we going to draw the lottery?" ses John Biggs, the blacksmith.

"There'll be twenty-three bits o' paper," ses Smith, "and they'll be numbered from one to twenty-three. Then they'll be twisted up all the same shape and put in this 'ere paper bag, which I shall 'old as each man draws. The chap that draws the paper with the figger '1' on it wins."

He tore up twenty-three bits o' paper all about the same size, and then with a black-lead pencil 'e put the numbers on, while everybody leaned over 'im to see fair play. Then he twisted every bit o' paper up and held them in his 'and.

"Is that satisfactory?" he ses.

"Couldn't be fairer," ses Bill Chambers.

"Mind," ses Smith, putting them into a tall paper bag that had 'ad sugar in it and shaking them up, "Number 1 wins the prize. Who's going to draw fust?"

All of 'em hung back and looked at each other; they all seemed to think they'd 'ave a better chance when there wasn't so many numbers left in the bag.

"Come on," ses Smith, the landlord. "Somebody must be fust."

"Go on, George Kettle," ses Bob Pretty. "You're sure to win. I 'ad a dream you did."

"Go on yourself," ses George.

"I never 'ave no luck," ses Bob; "but if Henery Walker will draw fust, I'll draw second. Somebody must begin."

"O' course they must," ses Henery, "and if you're so anxious why don't you 'ave fust try?"

Bob Pretty tried to laugh it off, but they wouldn't 'ave it, and at last he takes out a pocket-'andkerchief and offers it to Smith, the landlord.

"All right, I'll go fust if you'll blindfold me," he ses.

"There ain't no need for that, Bob," ses Mr. Smith. "You can't see in the bag, and even if you could it wouldn't help you."

"Never mind; you blindfold me," ses Bob; "it'll set a good example to the others."

Smith did it at last, and when Bob Pretty put his 'and in the bag and pulled out a paper you might ha' heard a pin drop.

"Open it and see what number it is, Mr. Smith," ses Bob Pretty. "Twenty-three, I expect; I never 'ave no luck."

Smith rolled out the paper, and then 'e turned pale and 'is eyes seemed to stick right out of his 'ead.

"He's won it!" he ses, in a choky voice.

"'HE'S WON IT!' HE SES, IN A CHOKY VOICE. 'IT'S NUMBER ONE.'"

"It's Number 1. Bob Pretty 'as won the prize."

You never 'eard such a noise in this 'ere public-'ouse afore or since; everybody shouting their 'ardest, and Bill Chambers stamping up and down the room as if he'd gone right out of his mind.

"Silence!" ses Mr. Smith, at last. "Silence! How dare you make that noise in my 'ouse, giving it a bad name! Bob Pretty 'as won it fair and square. Nothing could ha' been fairer. You ought to be ashamed o' yourselves."

Bob Pretty wouldn't believe it at fust. He said that Smith was making game of 'im, and, when Smith held the paper under 'is nose, he kept the handkerchief on his eyes and wouldn't look at it.

"I've seen you afore to-day," he says, nodding his 'ead. "I like a joke as well as anybody, but it ain't fair to try and make fun of a pore, 'ard-working man like that."

I never see a man so astonished in my life as Bob Pretty was, when 'e found out it was really true. He seemed fair 'mazed-like, and stood there scratching his 'ead, as if he didn't know where 'e was. He come round at last, arter a pint o' beer that Smith 'ad stood 'im, and then he made a little speech, thanking Smith for the fair way he 'ad acted, and took up the hamper.

"'Strewth, it is heavy," he ses, getting it up on his back. "Well, so long, mates."

"Ain't you—ain't you going to stand us a drink out o' one o' them bottles?" ses Peter Gubbins, as Bob got to the door.

Bob Pretty went out as if he didn't 'ear; then he stopped, sudden-like, and turned round and put his 'ead in at the door agin, and stood looking at 'em.

"No, mates," he ses, at last, "and I wonder at you for asking, arter what you've all said about me. I'm a pore man, but I've got my feelings. I drawed fust becos nobody else would, and all the thanks I get for it is to be called a thief."

He went off down the road, and by and by Bill Chambers, wot 'ad been sitting staring straight in front of 'im, got up and went to the door, and stood looking arter 'im like a

man in a dream. None of 'em seemed to be able to believe that the lottery could be all over so soon, and Bob Pretty going off with it, and when they did make up their minds to it, it was one o' the most miserable sights you ever see. The idea that they 'ad been paying a pint a week for Bob Pretty for months nearly sent some of 'em out of their minds.

"It can't be 'elped," ses Mr. Smith. "He 'ad the pluck to draw fust, and he won; anybody else might ha' done it. He gave you the offer, George Kettle, and you, too, Henery Walker."

Henery Walker was too low-spirited to answer 'im; and arter Smith 'ad said "Hush!" to George Kettle three times, he up and put 'im outside for the sake of the 'ouse.

When 'e came back it was all quiet and everybody was staring their 'ardest at little Dicky Weed, the tailor, who was sitting with his head in his 'ands, thinking, and every now and then taking them away and looking up at the ceiling, or else leaning forward with a start and looking as if 'e saw something crawling on the wall.

"Wot's the matter with you?" ses Mr. Smith.

Dicky Weed didn't answer 'im. He shut his eyes tight and then 'e jumps up all of a sudden. "I've got it!" he says. "Where's that bag?"

"Wot bag?" ses Mr. Smith, staring at 'im.

"The bag with the papers in," ses Dicky.

"Where Bob Pretty ought to be," ses Bill Chambers. "On the fire."

"Wot?" screams Dicky Weed. "Now you've been and spoilt everything!"

"Speak English," ses Bill.

"I will!" ses Dicky, trembling all over with temper. "Who asked you to put it on the fire? Who asked you to put yourself forward? I see it all now, and it's too late."

"Wot's too late?" ses Sam Jones.

"When Bob Pretty put his 'and in that bag," ses Dicky Weed, holding up 'is finger and looking at them, "he'd got a bit o' paper already in it—a bit o' paper with the figger '1' on it. That's 'ow he done it. While we was all watching Mr. Smith, he was getting 'is own bit o' paper ready."

He 'ad to say it three times afore they understood 'im, and then they went down on their knees and burnt their fingers picking up bits o' paper that 'ad fallen in the fireplace. They found six pieces in all, but not one with the number they was looking for on it, and then they all got up and said wot ought to be done to Bob Pretty.

"You can't do anything," ses Smith, the landlord. "You can't prove it. After all, it's only Dicky's idea."

Arf-a-dozen of 'em all began speaking at once, but Bill Chambers gave 'em the wink, and pretended to agree with 'im.

"We're going to have that hamper back," he ses, as soon as Mr. Smith 'ad gone back to the bar, "but it won't do to let 'im know. He don't like to think that Bob Pretty was one too many for 'im."

"Let's all go to Bob Pretty's and take it," ses Peter Gubbins, wot 'ad been in the Militia.

Dicky Weed shook his 'ead. "He'd 'ave the lor on us for robbery," he ses; "there's nothing he'd like better."

They talked it over till closing-time, but nobody seemed to know wot to do, and they stood outside in the bitter cold for over arf an hour still trying to make up their minds 'ow to get that hamper back. Fust one went off 'ome and then another, and at last, when there was on'y three or four of 'em left, Henery Walker, wot prided himself on 'is artfulness, 'ad an idea.

"One of us must get Bob Pretty up 'ere to-morrow night and stand 'im a pint, or p'r'aps two pints," he ses. "While he's here two other chaps must 'ave a row close by his 'ouse and pretend to fight. Mrs. Pretty and the young 'uns are sure to run out to look at it, and while they are out another chap can go in quiet-like and get the hamper."

It seemed a wunnerful good idea, and Bill Chambers said so; and 'e flattered Henery Walker up until Henery didn't know where to look, as the saying is.

"And wot's to be done with the hamper when we've got it?" ses Sam Jones.

"Have it drawed for agin," ses Henery. "It'll 'ave to be done on the quiet, o' course."

Sam Jones stood thinking for a bit. "Burn the hamper and draw lots for everything separate," 'e ses, very slow. "If Bob Pretty ses it's 'is turkey and goose and spirits, tell 'im to prove it. We sha'n't know nothing about it."

Henery Walker said it was a good plan; and arter talking it over they walked 'ome all very pleased with theirselves. They talked it over next day with the other chaps; and Henery Walker said arterwards that p'r'aps it was talked over a bit too much.

It took 'em some time to make up their minds about it, but at last it was settled that Peter Gubbins was to stand Bob Pretty the beer; Ted Brown, who was well known for his 'ot temper, and Joe Smith was to 'ave the quarrel; and Henery Walker was to slip in

and steal the hamper, and 'ide the things up at his place.

Bob Pretty fell into the trap at once. He was standing at 'is gate in the dark, next day, smoking a pipe, when Peter Gubbins passed, and Peter, arter stopping and asking 'im for a light, spoke about 'is luck in getting the hamper, and told 'im he didn't bear no malice for it.

"You 'ad the pluck to draw fust," he ses, "and you won."

Bob Pretty said he was a Briton, and arter a little more talk Peter asked 'im to go and 'ave a pint with 'im to show that there was no ill-feeling. They came into this 'ere Cauliflower public-'ouse like brothers, and in less than ten minutes everybody was making as much fuss o' Bob Pretty as if 'e'd been the best man in Claybury.

"Arter all, a man can't 'elp winning a prize," ses Bill Chambers, looking round.

Bill Chambers caught 'old of him by the coat and asked 'im to have arf a pint with 'im.

Bob had the arf-pint, and arter that another one with Sam Jones, and then 'e said 'e really must be going, as his wife was expecting 'im. He pushed Bill Chambers's 'at over his eyes —a thing Bill can't abear—and arter filling 'is pipe agin from Sam Jones's box he got up and went.

"Mind you," ses Bill Chambers, looking round, "if 'e comes back and ses somebody 'as taken his hamper, nobody knows nothing about it."

"I 'ope Henery Walker 'as got it all right," ses Dicky Weed. "When shall we know?"

"He'll come up 'ere and tell us," ses Bill Chambers. "It's time 'e was here, a'most."

Five minutes arterwards the door opened and Henery Walker came staggering in. He was as white as a sheet, his 'at was knocked

"THE DOOR OPENED AND HENERY WALKER CAME STAGGERING IN."

"I couldn't," ses Bob.

He sat down and 'elped hisself out o' Sam Jones's baccy-box; and one or two got up on the quiet and went outside to listen to wot was going on down the road. Everybody was wondering wot was happening, and when Bob Pretty got up and said 'e must be going, on one side of his 'ead, and there was two or three nasty-looking scratches on 'is cheek. He came straight to Bill Chambers's mug—wot 'ad just been filled--and emptied it, and then 'e sat down on a seat gasping for breath.

"Wot's the matter, Henery?" ses Bill, staring at 'im with 'is mouth open.

Henery Walker groaned and shook his 'ead.

"Didn't you get the hamper?" ses Bill, turning pale.

Henery Walker shook his 'ead agin.

"Shut up!" he ses, as Bill Chambers started finding fault. "I done the best I could. Nothing could ha' 'appened better—to start with. Directly Ted Brown and Joe Smith started, Mrs. Pretty and her sister, and all the kids excepting the baby, run out, and they'd 'ardly gone afore I was inside the back door and looking for that hamper, and I'd hardly started afore I heard them coming back agin. I was at the foot o' the stairs at the time, and, not knowing wot to do, I went up 'em into Bob's bedroom."

"Well?" ses Bill Chambers, as Henery Walker stopped and looked round.

"A'most direckly arterwards I 'eard Mrs. Pretty and her sister coming upstairs," ses Henery Walker, with a shudder. "I was under the bed at the time, and afore I could say a word Mrs. Pretty gave a loud screech and scratched my face something cruel. I thought she'd gone mad."

"You've made a nice mess of it!" ses Bill Chambers.

"Mess!" ses Henery, firing up. "Wot would you ha' done?"

"I should ha' managed diff rent," ses Bill Chambers. "Did she know who you was?"

"Know who I was?" ses Henery. "O' course she did. It's my belief that Bob knew all about it and told 'er wot to do."

"Well, you've done it now, Henery," ses Bill Chambers. "Still, that's your affair."

"Ho, is it?" ses Henery Walker. "You 'ad as much to do with it as I 'ad, excepting that you was sitting up 'ere in comfort while I was doing all the work. It's a wonder to me I got off as well as I did."

"'WHERE'S HENERY WALKER?' HE SES, IN A LOUD VOICE."

Bill Chambers sat staring at 'im and scratching his 'ead, and just then they all 'eard the voice of Bob Pretty, very distinct, outside, asking for Henery Walker. Then the door opened, and Bob Pretty, carrying his 'ead very 'igh, walked into the room.

"Where's Henery Walker?" he ses, in a loud voice.

Henery Walker put down the empty mug wot he'd been pretending to drink out of and tried to smile at 'im.

"Halloa, Bob!" he ses.

"What was you doing in my 'ouse?" ses Bob Pretty, very severe.

"I—I just looked in to see whether you was in, Bob," ses Henery.

"That's why you was found under my bed, I s'pose?" ses Bob Pretty. "I want a straight answer, Henery Walker, and I mean to 'ave it, else I'm going off to Cudford for Policeman White."

"I went there to get that hamper," ses Henery Walker, plucking up spirit. "You won it unfair last night, and we determined for to get it back. So now you know."

"I call on all of you to witness that," ses Bob, looking round. "Henery Walker went into my 'ouse to steal my hamper. He ses so, and it wasn't 'is fault he couldn't find it. I'm a pore man and I can't afford such things; I sold it this morning, a bargain, for thirty bob."

"Well, then there's no call to make a fuss over it, Bob," ses Bill Chambers.

"I sold it for thirty bob," ses Bob Pretty, "and when I went out this evening I left the money on my bedroom mantelpiece—one pound, two arf-crowns, two two-shilling pieces, and two sixpences. My wife and her sister both saw it there. That they'll swear to."

"Well, wot about it?" ses Sam Jones, staring at 'im.

"Arter my pore wife 'ad begged and prayed Henery Walker on 'er bended knees to spare 'er life and go," ses Bob Pretty, "she looked at the mantelpiece and found the money 'ad disappeared."

Henery Walker got up all white and shaking and flung 'is arms about, trying to get 'is breath.

"Do you mean to say I stole it?" he ses, at last.

"O' course I do," ses Bob Pretty. "Why, you said yourself afore these witnesses and Mr. Smith that you came to steal the hamper. Wot's the difference between stealing the hamper and the money I sold it for?"

Henery Walker tried for to answer 'im, but he couldn't speak a word.

"I left my pore wife with 'er apron over her 'ead sobbing as if her 'art would break," ses Bob Pretty; "not because o' the loss of the money so much, but to think of Henery Walker doing such a thing—and 'aving to go to jail for it."

"I never touched your money, and you know it," ses Henery Walker, finding his breath at last. "I don't believe it was there. You and your wife 'ud swear anything."

"As you please, Henery," ses Bob Pretty. "Only I'm going straight off to Cudford to see Policeman White; he'll be glad of a job, I know. There's three of us to swear to it, and you was found under my bed."

"Let bygones be bygones, Bob," ses Bill Chambers, trying to smile at 'im.

"No, mate," ses Bob Pretty. "I'm going to 'ave my rights, but I don't want to be 'ard on a man I've known all my life; and if, afore I go to my bed to-night, the thirty shillings is brought to me, I won't say as I won't look over it."

He stood for a moment shaking his 'ead at them, and then, still holding it very 'igh, he turned round and walked out.

"He never left no money on the mantelpiece," ses Sam Jones, at last. "Don't you believe it. You go to jail, Henery."

"Anything sooner than be done by Bob Pretty," ses George Kettle.

"There's not much doing now, Henery," ses Bill Chambers, in a soft voice.

Henery Walker wouldn't listen to 'em, and he jumped up and carried on like a madman. His idea was for 'em all to club together to pay the money, and to borrow it from Smith, the landlord, to go on with. They wouldn't 'ear of it at fust, but arter Smith 'ad pointed out that they might 'ave to go to jail with Henery, and said things about 'is licence, they gave way. Bob Pretty was just starting off to see Policeman White when they took the money, and instead o' telling 'im wot they thought of 'im, as they 'ad intended, Henery Walker 'ad to walk alongside of 'im and beg and pray of 'im to take the money. He took it at last as a favour to Henery, and bought the hamper back with it next morning—cheap. Leastways, he said so.

BRIDGE BLUNDERS,

OR

HANDS THAT WENT WRONG.

By WILLIAM DALTON,

Author of "Dalton's Complete Bridge."

WHEN I mentioned to my friends that I had been asked to write an article on "Blunders at Bridge," they said: "That's easy enough. You have only got to watch So-and-so for half an hour to get any amount of material," naming their own particular pet aversion at the bridge table. Certainly one sees plenty of mistakes and makes plenty of mistakes every day that one plays bridge, but still it is not altogether easy to quote remarkable instances. The result of mistakes varies so very much. Sometimes quite a small error will have the most dire consequences, and at other times one may make a bad blunder and yet not lose much by it.

Everybody who plays bridge regularly is bound to make mistakes. That is an absolute certainty. Do not run away with the idea that the faculty of making blunders, and bad blunders, is confined to indifferent players. Nobody is perfect at anything. We are told that even Homer nodded at times, and in the same way even the finest bridge-players will occasionally be caught napping. The only difference is that when the good player has made a blunder he will generally be the first to recognise the fact and to acknowledge it, whereas the indifferent player will try to defend himself and to argue that he was right.

There are certain common and rather expensive errors which inexperienced players are very apt to fall into. Perhaps the most common of them all is not returning their partner's original lead at No Trumps because they can see a winning card, or possibly a tenace, in the dummy. They fail to recognise that that winning card or that tenace is there and is bound to make in any case, whether they lead up to it or not, so instead of continuing with the original suit they open another one at random, and the result is generally disastrous.

There can be no more aggravating partner than the player who will not return your original lead at No Trumps. He will say afterwards, "I could not return your lead right up to the ace or the king." But why not? That ace or that king is going to win a trick, and the sooner it is got rid of the better.

A similar instance is when a player has to lead up to dummy and holds king and one other of a suit of which neither the ace nor the queen is in the dummy hand. Nothing will induce the indifferent player to touch this suit. He will lead anything rather. He will cling on like grim death to that singly guarded king, although it is absolutely useless unless his partner has either the ace or queen. This lead of the king from king and one up to weakness in dummy is a very favourite one with all good players, especially against a suit declaration. It can do no possible harm, and it may be so very useful. I remember once leading from this combination up to the knave and two others in dummy. My king won the trick and I followed with the small one; my partner won with the queen and led another small one, which I trumped. The dealer had the ace all the time, but he had tried to play what

is known as the "Bath *coup*," with the result that he did not win a trick in the suit at all.

Some players are very wooden. Not long ago I was playing with a partner of this pattern against a No-Trump declaration made by the dummy. My partner had the opening lead, and things had gone very badly for us—in fact, we had not won a single trick. At last he got the lead. Every suit was marked against us except spades, which had not been touched. My partner had king and one other, and the queen, 10, and another were in dummy. The game was absolutely lost unless I held the ace and knave of spades. As a matter of fact I had them both and three others, but do you suppose that he would lead that king of spades? Not a chance. He led something else and we lost the game. When it was over I suggested, very mildly, "Could not you have tried me with a spade? It was the only chance of saving the game." He replied, in a most aggrieved tone of voice, "I couldn't possibly lead that. I had only king and one other, and I was certain to make a trick in the suit if I sat tight with it." He did sit tight with it, and we made one trick in the suit, but that was all we did make; and we lost five by cards instead of losing only the odd trick. Yet nothing on earth would have induced that man to acknowledge that he had played wrong.

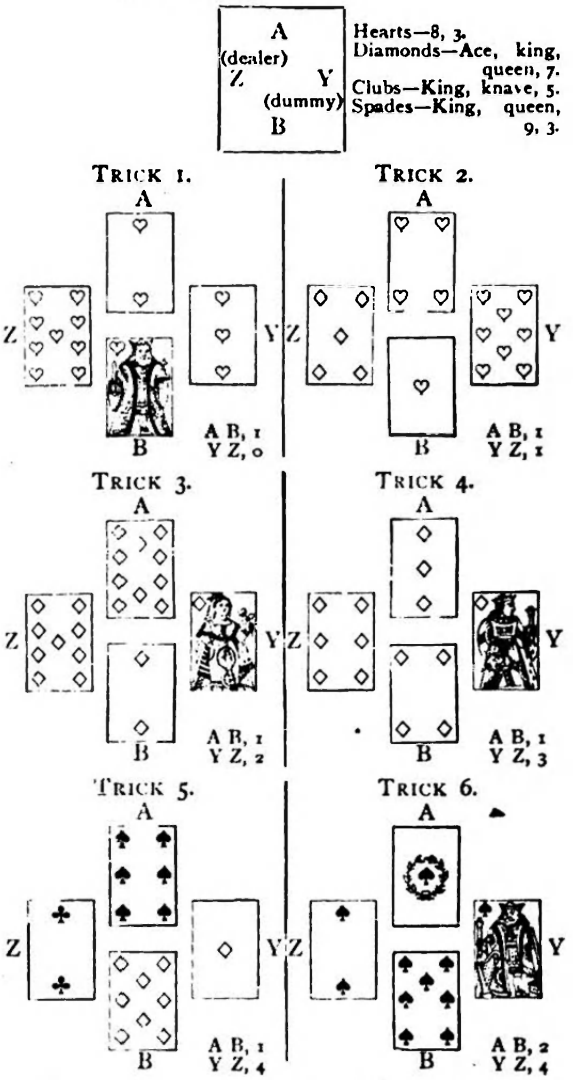
Leading an ace "to have a look round" is another very common form of giving away tricks. Certainly the look round is obtained, but often at a heavy expense, and the lock round is usually of very little use when it is obtained. Some players never seem to realize that an ace has other uses besides winning one trick. Its proper office is to slay a king or queen, and to stop that suit for the time being. Also it is invaluable as a card of re-entry, and those precious cards of re-entry—how dearly we miss them when they have been lightly parted with early in the hand. The value of an ace is nowadays recognised by almost everybody in the No-Trump game, but against a suit declaration it is still a favourite practice with weak players to lead out an ace if they have one so as to see the dummy hand before parting with the lead, and many a game is sacrificed by so doing.

One sometimes sees the most extraordinary and inexplicable blunders, but I think that the worst I ever saw made by a player with any pretensions to knowledge of the game, or even to common sense, was the following.

The score was Y Z 24, A B 18.

Z dealt and left it to Y, who declared diamonds. A had to lead. A's hand and Y's were:—

Hearts—Queen, knave, 7, 6, 5, 4, 2.
Diamonds—10, 3.
Clubs—Queen, 4.
Spades—Ace, 6.



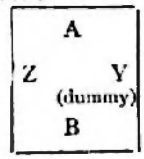
A now had to lead. His partner was marked with the best trump, the knave, and the only remaining heart. The only possible chance of saving the game was that his partner had the ace of clubs, but what a chance it was. If his partner had the ace of clubs, which he had, the 7 of trumps in dummy's hand could be drawn and all the hearts were good—three by cards and the game. The dealer had played the hand very badly. He ought to have cleared his spade suit before he touched the trumps at all. If he had done this the game would never have been in doubt, but he did not do it. By taking out the trumps before getting rid of the ace of spades, he presented his opponents with a splendid opportunity of turning the

tables on him; and fancy a man being offered such a chance as this of getting out of a tight place and not availing himself of it. It seems hardly credible, but it is a fact that after serious thought A led the knave of hearts, dummy made his little trump, and all that A B made were the knave of trumps and the ace of clubs, losing three by cards instead of winning three. A's partner looked at him for a moment and said nothing—his feelings were too deep for words.

A hand occurred lately in which the leading of a wrong card brought about the most disastrous result. The case was much discussed and opinions were greatly divided as to which of the two partners was wrong.

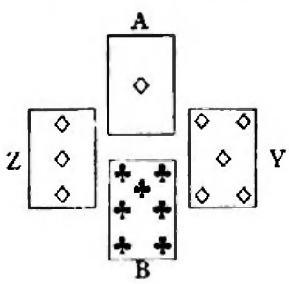
The score was A B 24, Y Z 6, the last game of the rubber. Z dealt and declared no trumps. B doubled. A led the ace of diamonds and the dummy hand was put down.

Hearts—None.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 9, 8, 6, 4, 2.
Clubs—6.
Spades—9, 8, 7, 4.



Hearts—10, 7, 3.
Diamonds—5.
Clubs—10, 9, 8, 5, 3.
Spades—6, 5, 3, 2.

The first trick was:—



A then had to consider what to play next. It was, of course, quite obvious to him that his partner had doubled on hearts; but he had not got one. The position of all the diamonds was also marked. The dealer had the king, 10, 7 remaining. Just ask yourself how you would have continued this hand, without knowing anything about the disposition of the unknown cards. The state of the score had considerable bearing on it. With a game and 24 against him the dealer's declaration was very likely to have been a desperation one, and B might easily have an entry card in spades or clubs, or even in both. He had directed his partner by his discard not to lead a club; therefore A had two courses open to him—either to lead a spade in the hope that B might have the ace, or to put Z in by leading the queen of diamonds and so compel him to open a fresh suit up to B. He elected to take the latter course, and led the queen of diamonds, and by so doing lost the game and rubber. The dealer had six clubs headed by the quart major, which, with the king of diamonds, gave him the odd trick and game.

B's hand, on which he doubled, was a very singular one:—

Hearts—Ace, king, queen, 9, 6, 5, 4, 2.
Diamonds—None.
Clubs—7.
Spades—Ace, king, queen, knave.

Directly his partner led the ace of diamonds he said to himself, "If I discard my single club, my partner must lead me either a heart or a spade, and in either case there is a laid down grand slam," but he was a little hasty in his judgment. He could see eleven hearts, eight in his own hand and three on the table, and it ought to have occurred to him that it was not only possible, but even probable, that his partner was void in hearts, and would be very much on the horns of a dilemma as to how to put him in. If this had occurred to him, he would surely have discarded his ace of spades so as to leave his partner in no possible doubt. He had an absolute certainty of the small slam, by discarding the ace of spades, at 24 points per trick, but this was not enough for him; he tried to squeeze an extra trick and an extra 20 points for grand slam, and by so doing lost the game and rubber. Instead of taking the certainty of 164 points and winning the rubber, he lost 24 points and the rubber as well, amounting to a net loss of 388 points.

A and B were both first-rate players, and after it was over each blamed the other for having played wrong, B arguing that A ought to have tried him with a spade, after he had discarded the club, as being the only possible chance, A retaliating by saying that B ought to have discarded the ace of spades to the diamond trick, so as to show him what to lead. The onlookers joined in the discussion, some taking one side and some the other, and the hand was afterwards submitted to two or three leading lights of the game of bridge, but again opinions were divided. Anyhow, whichever was to blame, it was certainly a record difference to be made by the play of one wrong card.

Playing too quickly to the first trick, without giving oneself time to thoroughly review the situation, is a very fruitful source of error; in fact, nearly all the bad muddles made by the dealer in manipulating his two hands can be traced to this cause. The most common blunder which is made in this way is winning the first trick in the wrong hand. This situation is constantly occurring in different forms. Let us take a simple instance:—

DEALER'S HAND.
Hearts—Ace, 4, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, king, 8, 3.
Clubs—Ace, queen, 8, 5.
Spades—5, 2.

DUMMY'S HAND.
Hearts—Queen, knave, 10.
Diamonds—10, 7.
Clubs—8, 5.
Spades—King, queen, knave, 10, 4, 3.

The dealer declares no trumps, a small heart is led, and dummy's 10 is good. If the dealer plays a small one quickly from his own hand, he has no possible chance of ever putting dummy in again after the spades are established, but if he takes over the 10 of hearts with his ace dummy can get in again with either the queen or knave of hearts and make his long spades.

Many and many a game is lost by the dealer not stopping to think the situation out before he plays a card at all. I threw away a game myself, quite recently, through this very blunder.

Our opponents were 18 up and we were 8. I dealt and left it to my partner, who declared no trumps. The two hands were :—

DEALER.	DUMMY.
Hearts—10, 2.	Hearts—Ace, 4.
Diamonds—10, 9, 4, 3.	Diamonds—Ace, knave, 7, 2.
Clubs—Ace, king, 9, 8, 4, 2.	Clubs—Knave, 7.
Spades—Knave.	Spades—Ace, queen, 8, 6, 4.

The 5 of spades was led. Sometimes one makes up one's mind that a particular card is in one hand, and feels so certain of its being there that one does not stop to think what will happen should the presumption be wrong. I did so in this case. I at once placed the king of spades with the leader and played the 4 from dummy without having reviewed the situation at all. If I had given it a moment's thought before playing to the first trick I should have seen that I had an absolute certainty of winning the game by putting on the ace of spades at once, and giving away the first trick in clubs, unless there were four clubs in one hand, which was not likely. Five tricks in clubs and the other three aces would have given me the game. What happened was that the third player won the first trick with the king of spades, and at once opened the heart suit, of which he had six. I won with the ace of hearts, and led the knave of clubs; it was covered by the queen, and my only possible hope of winning the game then was to drop the 10 of clubs on the second round. It did not come off, and we lost the odd trick and the game, instead of winning two by cards, game, and rubber. My partner—good, honest man—said not a word, probably because he failed to recognise what possibilities I had missed; but, unfortunately for me, a very observant friend of mine was looking over my hand, and he spotted it at once. "What in the world is the use of your writing books on bridge," he said, "if you don't practise what you preach? That hand was almost identical with an Illustrative Hand which you quoted and explained in 'Bridge Abridged.'" The accusation was, alas! only too true. I had given almost exactly the same hand, and expatiated at some length on the importance of putting on the ace at once and risking nothing.

One of the most curious blunders which I ever saw, and at the same time a very profitable one for my partner and myself, occurred in the final round of a mixed bridge tournament.

Each side had won one rubber and one game in the deciding rubber. The man on my right, who was an extremely pleasant and agreeable player, but who appeared to have a somewhat elementary knowledge of the finer points of the game, dealt, and declared no trumps on a good, sound hand with three aces. His partner put down five diamonds headed by queen, knave, 10, the king of clubs, and no other possible card of entry. He got in at once, put his partner in with the king of clubs, and led the queen of diamonds. I held king and two small ones, and I naturally allowed the queen to win. The knave was then led, which I won with my king. I noticed my opponent give a little start of surprise when my king appeared on the second round. The diamond suit was now blocked by his own ace, and he only won two by cards. He appeared to think this rather a fine *coup*, and said to me when the hand was over, "I quite thought I should win the game when the queen of diamonds made." I said, "Yes, it was a lucky inspiration of mine holding up the king," although it is hardly necessary to say that it was a most simple and ordinary proceeding.

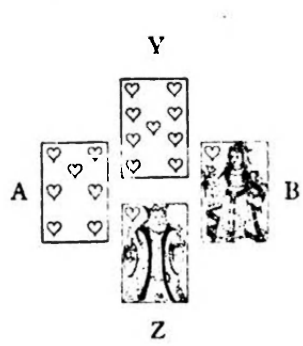
It was then my deal, and the situation was rather a desperate one, with a game and 24 to love against us. I declared no trumps on the following rather sketchy hand :—

Hearts—King, 5.
Diamonds—7, 2.
Clubs—Ace, king, 10, 9, 6, 4.
Spades—Queen, 10, 3.

The 7 of hearts was led and my partner put down :—

Hearts—Knave, 9.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 6, 3.
Clubs—Knave, 5, 2.
Spades—9, 8, 6.

The first trick was :—



The prospect was then very bad indeed for us. There were four winning hearts at least in one hand, and the ace and king of spades also against us. My only chance of winning the game was to find the king of diamonds on my left and to succeed in dropping the queen of clubs. I led the 2 of diamonds and finessed the queen, which won the trick. That was one fence passed. I then led dummy's knave of clubs; it was covered by the queen and there was the game won—six tricks in clubs, two in diamonds, and one in hearts—and we won the rubber and the tournament.

I may mention that I had no temptation to finesse the diamonds a second time, as the player on my left had discarded her remaining two small ones on the clubs, and the situation was disclosed. The fourth player had the king of diamonds all the time, but he had been so struck by the success of my holding up the king in the last hand that he tried the same *coup*, but with a very different result. His hand was :—

Hearts—Queen, 6, 3.
Diamonds—King, 10. 8.
Clubs—Queen, 7, 2.
Spades—Ace, king, 8, 5,

and his projected *coup* was about as bad as anything could be. By a simple application of the Eleven Rule his partner was marked with at least three winning hearts, and probably four—as a matter of fact she had five left. Anyhow, supposing that she had only three, he could see a certainty of six tricks—three in hearts, one in diamonds, and two in spades, with no possibility of losing the game and a good chance of winning it. As the cards were placed we must have lost two tricks, but the lucky coincidence of my having held up the king of diamonds in the previous hand not only saved the game, but won us the rubber, and, incidentally, the tournament also.

The blunders made by beginners, simply from a want of knowledge of the game, sometimes produce most unexpected results, and have been known to upset altogether the calculations of more experienced players, as the following little anecdote will illustrate.

A certain man, whom we will call the Neophyte, had been elected a member of a well-known London club where a great deal of bridge is played, and where the standard of play is distinctly good. He had a very shadowy and imperfect knowledge of the game, but he had played a good deal with people of his own calibre, and, so far from being conscious of his limitations, he really fancied himself very much as a bridge-player. What he lacked in knowledge he made up for in self-confidence.

The very first time that he appeared in the card room of his new club he happened to cut in to a rubber with three of the best players, where he was hopelessly outclassed. His proposer was present and said to him, "I must warn you that you are trying yourself rather high playing in this company." "Oh, I'm not afraid," he replied; "give me the cards and I can hold my own with the best of them." "All right," said his friend; "go ahead."

The first few hands were comparatively simple. The Neophyte held very good cards and did not commit any particularly egregious blunders. Then the opponent on his right had the deal. The score was one game all, and 8 to love against the dealer. The dealer left it and dummy declared no trumps.

The four hands were :—

Hearts—8, 6, 2.
Diamonds—10, 9, 8, 5, 3.
Clubs—Knave, 7, 3.
Spades—8, 5.

Hearts—10, 3.
Diamonds—Queen, 6.
Clubs—Queen, 6, 2.
Spades—King, queen, 10, 6, 4, 2

A (neophyte) (dealer)
Z Y (dummy)
B

Hearts—King, knave, 5.
Diamonds—Ace, knave, 4.
Clubs—Ace, king, 10, 9, 8, 5.
Spades—Ace.

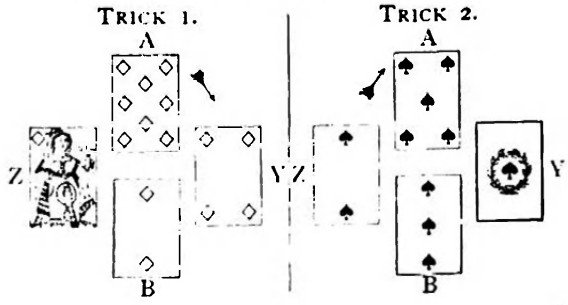
Hearts—Ace, queen, 9, 7, 4.
Diamonds—King, 7, 2.
Clubs—4.
Spades—Knave, 9, 7, 3.

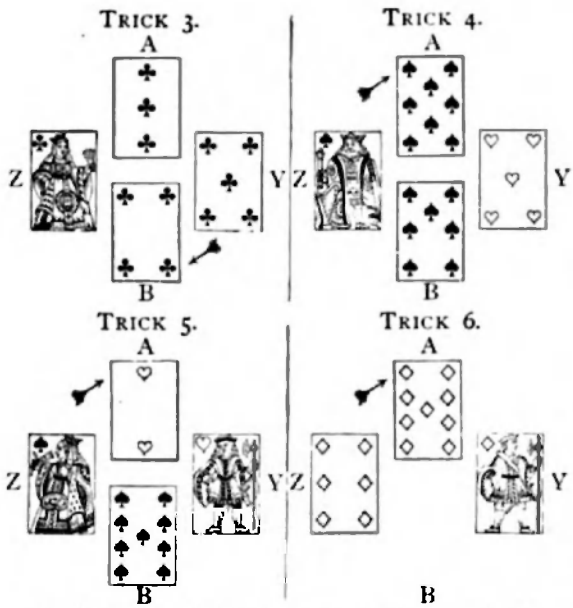
The Neophyte had to lead from a very bad hand. He had a hazy sort of notion in his head that when he had a sequence he ought to lead one of them, but he did not think it mattered which he led, so he selected the 8 of diamonds.

The sequel is really very instructive. The 4 was put on from dummy, and the third player saw at once, by the Eleven Rule, that the dealer could not beat the 8, so he passed it, only, to his utter consternation, to see it taken by the queen in the dealer's hand.

The dealer could now see the grand slam if he could succeed in catching the knave of spades, and a certainty of the small slam in any case, the king, 10, 9 of diamonds being plainly marked in the Neophyte's hand.

The first six tricks were :—



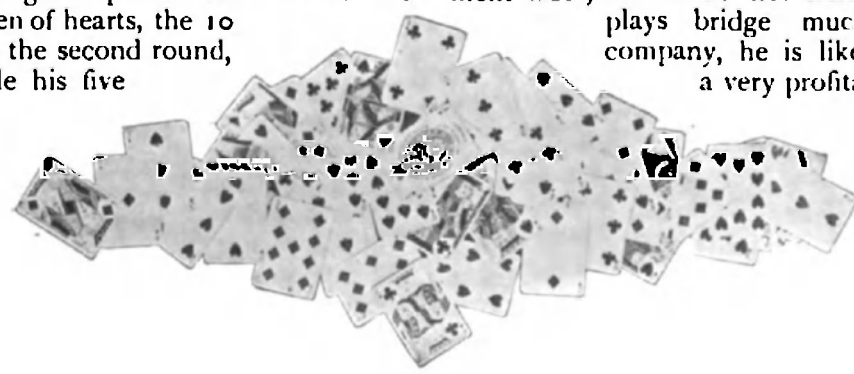


As he played the knave of diamonds from dummy's hand the dealer threw down his cards and said, "It's no good playing it. The clubs are good against the cards, but I must give you one trick in hearts. We win the small slam, 72 below and 50 above."

"Not at all," said the fourth player, putting down the king of diamonds. "I win that trick, and one or two more." And he calmly proceeded to gather the trick.

The dealer's face was a study. He was a very careful player, who rather prided himself on extracting the utmost value from every hand, and never in his life before had he failed to win a game which was absolutely at his mercy, but the Neophyte's original lead of the 8 of diamonds had marked the king, 10, 9 so plainly in his hand that the dealer did not regard the play of the knave instead of the ace as being a finesse at all, nor did he dream for a moment that he was taking any possible risk. If a thunderbolt had come through the roof, it would not have surprised him so much as the appearance of the king of diamonds from B's hand. The game proceeded. B led the ace and queen of hearts, the 10 dropped on the second round, and he made his five hearts, and then led the knave of spades to the twelfth trick. The dummy was now left with the ace of diamonds and the ace of clubs, and the dealer had to discard one of them. He had been so upset by the very unexpected turn of affairs that he had neglected to watch the discards as closely as he would otherwise have done. The Neophyte meanwhile had discarded all his diamonds and left himself with the knave and 7 of clubs. At the twelfth trick some glimmering of intelligence prompted him to discard the knave and keep the 7. The dealer, who was driven into a corner, grasped at this chance, and, placing the remaining club in B's hand, discarded dummy's ace of diamonds, with the result that B made his last diamond, and won two by cards and the game and rubber.

When it was over there was a stony silence for a few moments. Then the Neophyte's partner said to him, "That 8 of diamonds of yours was rather a peculiar lead, wasn't it? Don't you generally lead your fourth best?" "Oh," he said, "I don't pay any attention to the 'book' leads. I play by the light of common sense. When I have three cards in sequence I always lead one of them, and I did it in this case. It came off all right, didn't it?" "It certainly did that," said his partner, "but at the same time it is apt to be rather misleading. When you lead from a top sequence it is usual to lead your highest." "That is the worst of you ultra-scientific players," said the Neophyte; "you play too much by rule." Then, turning to the dealer, he proceeded to explain the situation. "If I had been in your place, now, I should have made sure of winning the game when I could see it on the table, without trying any experiments. I always believe in winning the game when one can." The disconsolate dealer answered not a word. Any attempt at explanation was quite beyond him. The Neophyte not only had the best of the argument but the best of the settlement also; still I do not fancy that, if he plays bridge much in good company, he is likely to find it a very profitable pastime.



The Three Mothers.

By E. BLAND.

THE hearse and the mourning-coach went out at a demure foot-pace; they came back at a trot that was almost gay. It did not matter. The hearse was now only a smart empty showcase, bright with plate-glass and silvered fittings, and in the mourning-coach the mother sat alone.

This was the end.

When she should be once more in the empty house she might cry, scream, laugh, go mad. Nothing would make any difference. There was no one to be awakened. There was no white presence that must be lapped in silence and horrible flowers. The cook and the maids had brought the flowers. Her gift to the dead had been the silence.

They were talking about her in the warm, pleasant kitchen, where the fire glowed redly and tea and toast scented the air.

"Poor soul," said the cook, "but she's borne up wonderful, I must say."

"Heartless," was the housemaid's epithet; and she added, "She might have cried a bit when they carried it out, if only for the look of the thing."

"You don't understand," said the cook, heavily. "You'll see, she'll break down soon as ever she gets back from the burying. I shouldn't wonder if she was to go right off of her head, or something."

"Ain't she got never a friend to turn to, a time like this?" asked the cook's niece, who had dropped in to tea.

"Not a single one, if you'll believe me. It's my belief she's done something she hadn't ought, and this is a judgment on her. Sin always comes home to roost." So the parlourmaid.

"You be quiet with your texts," the cook admonished; "if you come to texts, people that live in glass houses shouldn't quote Scripture. I know more about you than you think, my lady."

The parlourmaid flushed and scowled.

"No, but," said the niece, "hasn't she really got e'er a friend?"

"Father dead," said the cook. "Mother in India 'long of her other friends. Husband burnt to death under her very nose, as you might say, just before the baby came. Only married a year when he was taken. And now the baby. Cruel hard, I call it."

"She tell you all that?" the parlourmaid sneered.

"Not she! Catch her telling us anything. She's a good mistress, she is, and quite the lady. Keeps herself *to* herself."

"Then how . . . ?"

"She's got a book," said the cook, only very slightly embarrassed, "a die-airy, where you write down what happens every day. I jest happened to glance into it one day I was doing the dining-room grate—not knowing what it was, d'you see?"

"She'll marry again all right," said the niece.

"With that face?" said the housemaid.

The niece asked how she came to be like that, and the cook told her.

"It was the fire, what her good gentleman lost his life in. She was near done for herself. Wishes to God she had—in the book, I mean. Ah, she's had some trouble, she has." The written record of another woman's agony was poignant even to remembrance, and the cook sniffed. "Well, God help us all's what I say. There she is. I'll make her a nice cup of tea."

But the woman who had lost everything left the tea on the table in the dining-room, where the clock ticked, "Emp-ty, emp-ty, emp-ty," and wandered through the house. And still she kept silence. There was the room where the child had lived—its cot, its soft woolly toys, its little gowns. And the room where it had lain dead, among the flowers and the silence, and the scent of camphor and eau de Cologne.

"Nothing," she said, "nothing, nothing. I suppose," she said, dry-eyed and detached, "I suppose I ought to cry. Or pray, perhaps?" She fell on her knees by the bed—it was an experiment.

But no tears came and no prayers. Only

the insistent silence filled her ears and battered at her brain.

"*Oh*, my baby, my baby!" she said, and a sob caught in her throat. But she did not cry.

So then she got up from her knees like one with a purpose new-born, and went very quickly and quietly down the stairs and out at the front door. It slammed behind her.

"There! If she hasn't gone out! To make away with herself, I shouldn't wonder," said the housemaid, in pleasant excitement.

"You oughter let the police know," said the niece.

"You leave her be," said the cook. "I don't know as it wouldn't be the best thing for her, poor thing. What's she got to live for?"

"I call that heathen, that's what I call it," said the parlourmaid; "it's wrong to make away with yourself, whatever goes wrong. It's our duty to bear whatever's laid upon us."

"Ah," said the cook, "it's easy enough to see *you've* never 'ad nothing to bear. If she comes back I'll make a excuse to go up and say a kind word. You see if I don't."

"I do wonder where she's gone, though," said the housemaid.

"It'll be in all the papers if she does make away with herself," the parlourmaid pointed out.

"If *you* ever get in the papers," said the cook, "it won't be for anything so 'armless and innocent. So now you know. I'd give a crown to be sure that she ain't come to no 'arm."

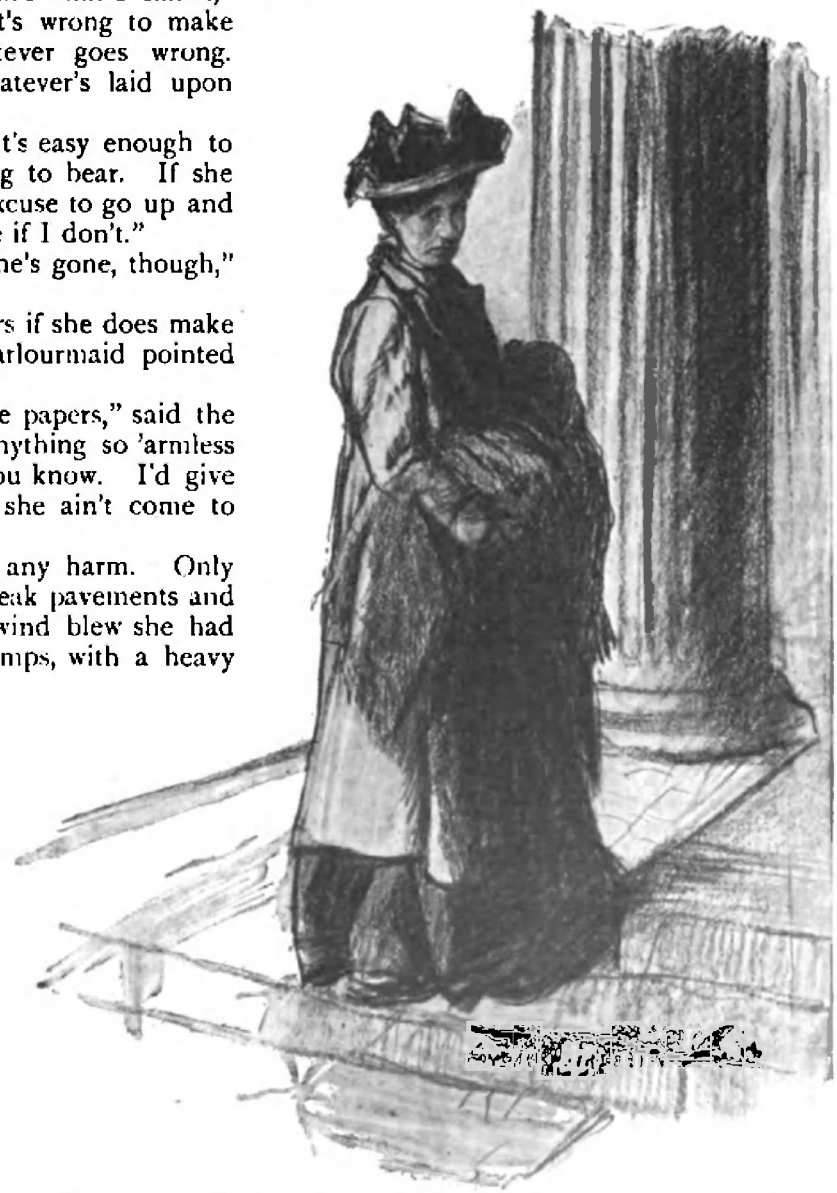
She had not come to any harm. Only after a blind treading of bleak pavements and streets where an unkind wind blew she had come to wide steps and lamps, with a heavy swing-door through which a priest had just passed. She was not a Catholic, not even a Christian. The early days of her life had been too sweet for her to need peace; the later days too bitter for her to find it. But the gnawing chill of the December evening drove her, without any conscious will of hers, towards the shaft of light that had shown as the door opened. In there it would be warm and quiet. And it would not be the house where the child had lived and died.

She went up the steps, and as she went a hand touched her and someone spoke low in her ear.

"Lady, lady, won't you spare me a trifle? I 'aven't tasted food since yesterday morning—so 'elp me God, I haven't!"

She turned. A woman stood beside her—very shabby, very pale, with a horrible flattened hat and dreadful clothes. In her arms, under a shawl thin as a nun's veil, she held a baby.

"You're luckier than I am," said the woman whose veil was on her face, and her eyes were greedy with the rounded outline under the shawl. "I haven't got my purse—yes, here's a penny, loose in my pocket."



"IN HER ARMS, UNDER A SHAWL THIN AS A NUN'S VEIL, SHE HELD A BABY."

The voice of the policeman broke through the other woman's thanks—such thanks for such a gift.

"Now, then, at it again!" he said. "You give me your name and address," he added, sternly.

The woman muttered some formula.

"We can't 'ave you beggin' all over the place," he went on. "On the church steps and all. You'll hear of this again, I shouldn't wonder. 'Ere, you be off outer this! Hear?"

The woman with the child looked at him and crept away.

"Oh, don't!" said the mother who had no child. "You wouldn't prosecute her for that?"

"Course not, mum," the man reassured her. "But you 'ave to keep 'em up to the mark or you wouldn't be able to get into the church for the crowds of them there'd be. It's only encouraging them to give to beggars."

"I only gave her a penny," said the mother.

"Gin—that's what it'll go in," said the majesty of the law.

She went into the church. It was almost dark, except for a brightness that shone between thick pillars far away to the right.

The altar rose up into shadows. The red light burned before the altar. Here and there a kneeling figure. She kneeled also. Here, perhaps, one might be able to cry: tears made things easier, people said. She herself had thought so once. But no tears came. And her agony was wound like a cord about and around her heart, so that she could not pray. She kneeled there a very long time. The great calm, splendid silence, the atmosphere of devotion, the presence of a great love and understanding that filled it, gave to her tortured mind the rest that a couch in a darkened room might give to limbs strained with the rack and to eyes scorched by the flames that lick round the stake. Life was all torture still, but this was a breathing space. At first she thought of the woman on the steps—the mother who had her child—and envy and pity fought in her. She might get the address from the policeman and go and see the woman—help, perhaps. No, no. It was all no use. What was the good of helping one woman in a world where any woman might at any moment have this to bear?

Gradually peace, like an incoming tide, lapped in small waves round her soul. Or the exhaustion of prolonged agony, calling itself peace. She could no longer think—could hardly feel. Intense pain was becoming itself an anæsthetic. The shadowy pillars seemed to move as shadows do, and the little red light, hung between earth and heaven, swam before her eyes. A little more it seemed and she would forget everything.

But she roused herself. There was something in the world that she must not forget. Something beyond herself and her anguish. Her own mother. She must not forget. She was to her mother what that which she had lost had been to her. She rose and walked down the aisle. The soft yellow glow from behind the pillars seemed brighter than ever, to eyes that had rested so long on the twilight that surrounds the altar.

"I wonder what that light is!" she said, and was glad for her own mother's sake that she could still wonder about anything. She walked towards the light, and presently perceived that the light, coming from some unseen place, shone full on a picture—no, a group of figures of wax or wood.

It was a rocky cave, as tradition tells that the stable was where Christ was born. Ivy wreathed about the stones. There was the straw, and the ox and the ass among it; also those two travellers for whom there was no room in the inn. They bent in adoration over the manger where the Hope of the World lay cradled.

Outside were the kneeling kings with their gifts, and the star-led shepherds, and beyond, in the deep eastern sky, the star that had led them.

It was the scene that has inspired Raphael and Correggio, set forth with ingenuous realism, as loving peasant children might have set it.

And the centre of it all—that on which was concentrated the light of the lamps, and the light of love in the eyes of the Holy Mother, of the angels, the adoring kings, and the shepherds—was the Child, the waxen image of the Child who was born and laid in a manger, the image which the Catholic Church sets up at Christmas to remind simple people how the King of Heaven came down and was a little child. The very simplicity of it made a more direct appeal than could have been made by all the Raphaels and Correggios in the world. That wooden image of the Holy Mother bore on its face the light of love and joy the human mother herself had known—and the shadow of a greater sorrow even than this of hers, which was greater than all sorrows in the world.

The mother who had no child found that

"THE CHILD AWOKE AND SMILED."

she was kneeling again, her arms on the wooden rail worn smooth by the arms of the many who had knelt there to realize, at sight of this picture, the meaning of Christmas. There was no one kneeling there now but she. She felt herself alone among the kneeling shepherds and kings; and her eyes, like theirs, were turned on the child.

The image was very life-like. The Holy Child lay covered in soft, white draperies that showed only the little round head and one tiny hand. Just so, so many times, the mother has seen her baby sleep curled up, warm and safe in the kind firelight, her baby that now lay so straight and white and cold in a very dark place, alone.

"My baby, my baby," she said, and hid her face. And then she knew that she was crying, and praying, too. The tears were hot and many, and the prayer was only a cry for help.

"Oh, God," she murmured, "help, help, help!" And again, and yet again: "Oh, God, help!"

All the dear memories of the past, that made up the desolation of the present, she had put away because she could not bear to look at them; now she reached out her hands to them, clasped them, pressed the sharp thorns against her heart, that she might call for help from the lowest depths of her sorrow.

Her face was against the wooden rail, wet with her tears. She crouched there. Faith could move mountains. Perhaps it was true about miracles. If she only prayed hard enough, perhaps she might go home to find her baby asleep in his cot—perhaps all this would be only a dream. No, that was nonsense, of course; but——

"Oh, my baby, my baby! Oh, God, help!" she moaned, almost aloud.

And then the miracle happened. She never doubted that it was a miracle. A little soft sound crept to her ears—not a sigh, not a cry, not a sob—the contented, crooning murmur that a little child makes at the end of sleep, the little lovely sound that had drawn her so often to the cot-side in the pleasant fire-lit room when life was there.

She looked round. No one had come in—no happy mother with a baby in her arms, such as she had thought, from that soft sound, to find close behind her. She was

all alone, with the Holy Family, and the shepherds, and the angels, and the kings.

She dried her eyes and listened. Again the little beautiful sound, and then . . . . It was no fairy story but the true truth. The mother who had no child saw, in the crib where pious folks had laid a waxen image, the movement of a living child. The little dark head stirred on the pillow, the little pink hands stretched out, the little arms thrust back the draperies, and amid the soft whiteness of them the child awoke and smiled—no cold image of the Divine infant, but a little, live, naked, human thing.

The human mother glanced round—the quick glance of a hunted animal that reassures itself. Next moment she had crept under the wooden rail and caught up the baby.

Its limbs moved in slow softness as her own child's had moved. It lay contented against her, wrapped in the white woollen folds, and covered with her furs.

The wind was wild as she reached the swing-door. It tried to uncover the child, and blew great flakes of snow in the mother's face. She held the baby very closely.

She does not know how she got home. The next thing she remembers is pushing past the housemaid and carrying up those stairs, down which others had carried her baby, this new baby that was not hers.

"Brought home a baby? Says she's adopted it? Well, then, it's the best day's work she could ha' done, an' I'm going straight up to tell her so."

So the cook goes, leaving the housemaid and the parlourmaid and the niece to sniff in concert.

Upstairs there is firelight and warmth, with two women worshipping a naked child.

And in the church much talk and wonder and grief for the bambino that has been stolen—the little image of wood and wax so like life, that cost so much, and was so useful in reminding the faithful what the gift from Heaven was that came to a human mother on Christmas Day.

For three days the mother had fed her hungry heart on the miracle-baby; it was three days before she remembered that other mother and that other baby on the steps outside the church. Then she bestirred herself, found the policeman, and got from him the address that he had so severely noted.

"I doubt you'll not find it a deserving case, mum," he said. "I frightened her off

"UPSTAIRS THERE IS FIRELIGHT AND WARMTH, WITH TWO WOMEN WORSHIPPING A NAKED CHILD."

this beat. Ain't been here since. That shows she wasn't up to no good."

It was a narrow street, where the house doors are never shut, and the children play in the gutter with such toys as they have—rags and bones and bits of broken wood The door-posts are grimed to the level of a man's shoulder by the incoming and outgoing of tired people in greasy clothes. The stairs were foul, and a cold wind blew down them.

"Top floor," a dirty painted woman told her—"top floor, left hand. But I fancy she's made a bolt—that's what I think. She was stony, I know, and three weeks' owing. I did take 'er up a nice cup of tea yesterday, but I couldn't make no one hear. She ain't much class, anyhow."

It was the man on the second floor—the man without collar and without shoes—who broke the door open. He protested that it was agin the law. But the mother who had found the miracle-baby found for the man a pretty little golden argument.

"Well, if you say so," he said; "but if there's any rumpus—well, you're a lady, and you'll say it was you. An' if you don't, I shall—see?"

"Yes, yes—there won't be any fuss. It's all right. Only do make haste. For certain there's something wrong. And just feel how the wind blows under the door. The window must be open."

It was. And now the door hung crookedly from a broken hinge.

Of course, you have known all the time, as the mother knew, that the woman would be dead.

She was. Her empty arms outstretched, she lay very cold and stiff on a bed that was old iron and sacking. The casement window had blown open and the snow had drifted half across the room and lay in a frozen streak like a shaft of dead-white moonshine. You know all that. It shows itself. What you do not know perhaps—what at any rate the mother did not know who looked fearfully through the broken door—is that it was this woman who had stolen the waxen Christ Child, stripped her own baby, and laid it, with who knows what desperate incoherence of hope and love and faith, in the Holy Manger, and had gone away hugging the waxen babe that could not feel the bitter night under that shawl, thin as a nun's veil.

She had taken the Christ Child home; she called it home, one supposes. And, once safely there, some scruple, some forgotten reverence, must have come to her.

For she had set up an altar in that bare place.

Over the old sugar-box that used to serve her for table she had laid the greenish shawl that was thin as a nun's veil. She had wrapped the Image of the New Born Saviour in a blue and white neckerchief that must have had to her the value of a relic, for it was clean, and its creases showed that it had long lain folded.

She had set up two candles in chipped beer bottles and lighted them. They must have burned bravely, illumining that shrine, till the wind thrust itself through the window and made everything dark and cold again.

And the last lean alms that Life had given she had spent on those two candles.

So the image of the Mother of God got back its bambino. And the mother who had no child got the miracle-baby. And the mother who made the shrine with her last coin and her last warmth and her last love-relic, got . . .

"Good thing for her she went off like she did," said the policeman. "She'd a got a month for nicking of that image, sure as I'm a sinner. Theft *an'* sacrullidge. It's serious, that is. Lucky let-off, I call it."

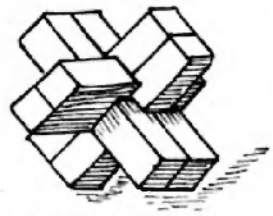
THE WORLD'S BEST PUZZLES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

Author of "The Canterbury Puzzles: and Other Curious Problems," etc.

THE complete history of puzzles has yet to be written, and it is a larger subject than the reader may suspect. It is not proposed to attempt such an account, even in a compressed form, in these pages, but merely to give some examples of the best puzzles of all ages. The word "best" is here used in the popular sense, the puzzles selected being those which have created, or are calculated to create, widespread interest. All good puzzles have a mathematical base, but, although mathematicians have a higher standard of excellence than is displayed in some of the examples I shall give, most of them are of a kind that may be appreciated by those who possess little or no knowledge of the most exact of sciences.

In the earliest records of man we find puzzles. The Chinese were familiar with arithmetic and geometry 4,000 years ago, and in the last number of this magazine I attempted a short account of the history of Tangrams, a form of puzzle invented by a Chinaman named Tan some 2,000 years before the Christian era. Everybody must also be familiar with the "Chinese Cross," which is sold in the toy shops and is of great antiquity (1). The six pieces are to be found cut in a variety of different ways.



1.—The ancient "Chinese Cross Puzzle."

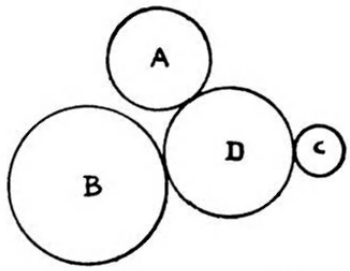
The most ancient puzzles of which we know the author's name (if we except the more or less mythical Chinaman, Tan) are contained in an old Egyptian papyrus in the British Museum, entitled "Directions for Knowing All Dark Things," written between the years 1700 B.C. and 1100 B.C., but believed to be a revised edition of an older treatise of about 3400 B.C. The author was a priest named Ahmes. Here is one of his arithmetical puzzles that should be immediately solved by any child who knows the rudiments of algebra. It is given by Mr. W. W. Rouse Ball in his "Short History of Mathematics." "Find a number which, when added to its seventh part, equals 19."

Here is a puzzle by Pappus, who lived at Alexandria about the end of the third century. I give it in the form that I presented it some years ago under the title "Papa's Puzzle," just to see how many readers would discover that it was by Pappus himself. "The little maid's papa has taken two different-sized rectangular pieces of cardboard, and has clipped off a triangular

2.—"Papa's Puzzle."

piece from one of them, so that when it is suspended by a thread from the point A it hangs with the long side perfectly horizontal, as shown in the illustration (2). He has perplexed the child by asking her to find the point A on the other card, so as to produce a similar result when cut and suspended by a thread." Of course, the point must not be found by trial clippings. A curious and pretty point is involved in this setting of the puzzle. Can the reader discover it?

Puzzles are perpetually being re-invented that were known ages ago. Here is a good example. A correspondent recently sent me this as a new problem. "Describe a circle D that shall touch three given circles, A, B, and C" (3).

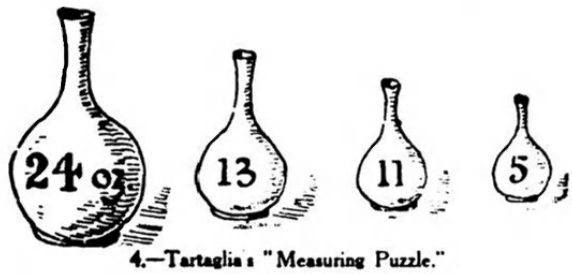


3.—Apollonius's Puzzle, 200 B.C.

. Now this geometrical puzzle was first propounded by Apollonius (260–200 B.C.), was solved by Vieta in the sixteenth century, described by Fermat as "this famous and noble problem," and solved in a beautiful but quite different manner by Sir Isaac Newton himself. It is a difficult poser, and I merely refer to it as an example of the fact that a good puzzle never goes out of date or loses its freshness for successive generations.

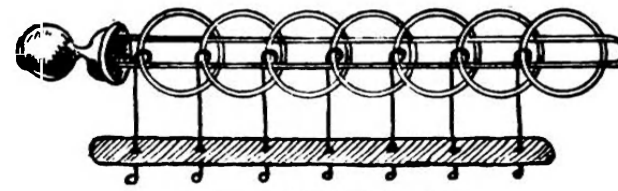
I should like to give examples of puzzles from Pythagoras, Zeno, Euclid, Archimedes, Brahmagupta the Hindu, and others, but the limits of this article will not permit. Readers will, however, be interested to know that the first English puzzlist whose name has come down to us was a Yorkshireman — no other than Alcuin, Abbot of Canterbury (A.D. 735–804). Here is a little puzzle from his works: "If 100 bushels of corn are distributed among 100 people in such a manner that each man shall receive three bushels, each woman two, and each child half a bushel, how many men, women, and children were there?" There are six different correct answers, if we exclude the case of 20 men, no women, and 80 children.

You frequently hear somebody ask the rather absurd question, "What would 10 be if 4 were 6?" though perhaps they may vary the actual numbers. Or one will put to you the problem of the "Turks and Christians,' where the fifteen Turks are thrown overboard in a storm. Or you may be set the puzzle of the jealous husbands with their wives who have to cross a river in a boat that will only hold two persons. These and many other equally familiar puzzles, that are to be found in every modern collection, are derived from a book by Niccola Fontana (1500–1559), known as "Tartaglia," or the stammerer. Here is one of his puzzles — the first "measuring" puzzle on record. A gentleman is robbed of a vessel containing 24oz. of balsam, which the three robbers have to divide equally amongst them by means of three vessels, holding respectively 13oz., 11oz., and 5oz. (4). How are they able to do it?



4.—Tartaglia's "Measuring Puzzle."

Very few readers will be unfamiliar with the old mechanical puzzle sold in the shops to-day under the name of "The Chinese Rings," though it is very doubtful whether it ever had its origin in China. Its old English


5.—The ancient "Tiring Irons."

name is "The Tiring Irons" (5), and specimens have been found in various parts of our country and abroad, made in iron by local smiths and sometimes deposited in strange places, such as a church belfry. It has been used largely in Norway as a lock for bags and boxes. I need not describe it, as it will be at once recognised. This puzzle was first written about by Hieronymus Cardan (1501–1576), the eminent mathematician.

Another puzzle that has achieved great fame is the "Weights Puzzle." A man has

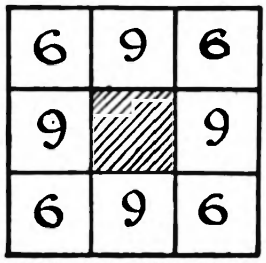

6.—Bachet's "Weights Puzzle."

four different weights which enable him to weigh any number of pounds (no fractions) from 1lb. up to 40lb. Any weight may be placed in either of the scale pans. What are the four weights? (6).

This first appeared in the "Problems Pleasant and Delectable," by Claude Gaspar Bachet de Méziriac (1581–1638), who was also one of the earliest writers to discuss the formation of magic squares.

Another puzzle that is widely known as "The Blind Abbess and Her Nuns," though it is always cropping up in a variety of different forms, is also due to Bachet. This is how he presents it. A gentleman had a

wine-bin of eight compartments, as in the illustration (7), containing 60 bottles, arranged as shown. His dishonest servant stole 4 bottles and rearranged the remainder. The gentleman noticed that the bottles had been redistributed, but as there were still 21 bottles on every side he innocently concluded that all the 60 were there. The servant, emboldened by his success, again stole 4 bottles and rearranged the remainder without discovery. In fact, on two more occasions he repeated his theft of 4 bottles, always leaving the remainder so arranged symmetrically that there were 21 on every side. How did he arrange them on the four occasions so as to steal the 16 bottles?

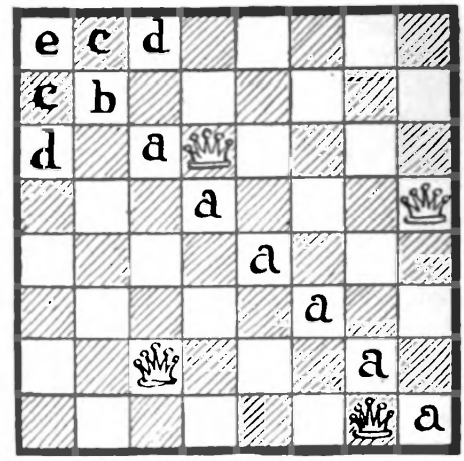


7.—Bachet's "Wine-Bins."

Practically all the collections of puzzles that I have mentioned are brought together in the "Mathematical and Philosophical Recreations" of Jacques Ozanam (1640–1717), which was revised with additions by Montucla in 1750 and 1790. There are various English editions, the last being that of 1840. Though the book has many errors, it is an interesting collection and contains hundreds of familiar old friends that are to be found in every little book of puzzles that has appeared during the last century.

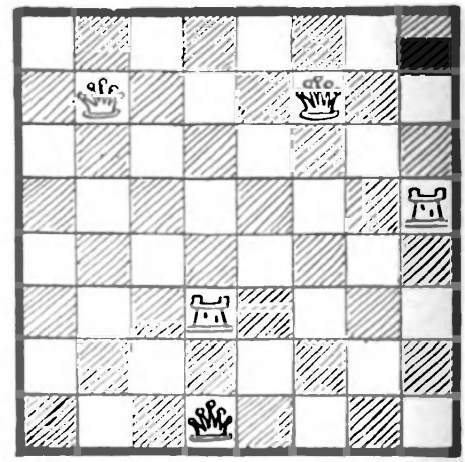
As in so many other ways, the past hundred years has been remarkably fruitful in the invention of puzzles. I will now give some examples from the most popular and successful of these. First of all there is "The Fifteen Schoolgirls," propounded by T. P. Kirkman in 1850. All the fifteen girls are to walk out in triplets every day for a week, but no girl may ever walk in company with any other girl more than once. Can you group the girls for the seven days?

The well-known "Eight Queens Puzzle"—to place eight queens on a chessboard so that no queen shall attack another—was first proposed by Nauck in 1850, and it has quite a little literature of its own. In 1863, C. F. de Jaenisch first discussed the "Five Queens Puzzle"—to place five queens on the chessboard so that every square shall be attacked or occupied—which was propounded by his friend, a "Mr. de R." As readers of this magazine have during the past year been made acquainted with certain variations of this puzzle, a few remarks respecting it may be acceptable. Jaenisch showed that if no queen may attack another there are 91 different ways of placing the five queens, reversals and reflections not counting as different. If the queens may attack one another, I have recorded hundreds of ways, but it is not practicable to enumerate them exactly. I pointed out in 1899 that if four queens are placed as shown in the diagram (8), then the fifth queen may be placed on any one of the twelve squares marked a, b, c, d, and e; or a rook on the two squares, c; or a bishop on the eight squares, a, b, and e; or a pawn on the square b; or a king on the four squares, b, c, and e. The only known

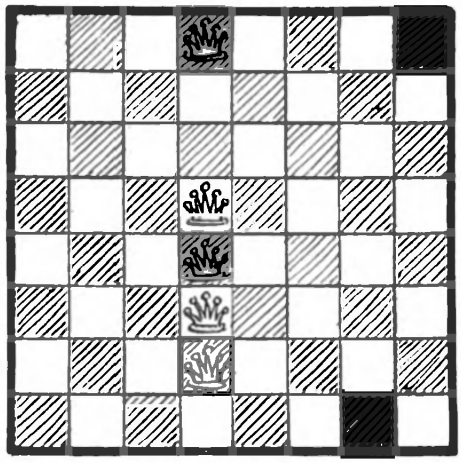


8.—The Guarded Chessboard.

arrangement for four queens and a knight is that given by Mr. J. Wallis in THE STRAND for last August. I have recorded a large number of solutions with four queens and a rook, or bishop, but the only arrangement, I believe, with three queens and two rooks in which all the pieces are guarded is that of which I give an illustration (9), first published by Dr. C. Planck. But I have recently found a solution with three queens, a rook, and a bishop, though the pieces do not protect one another. Readers may like to try to find it.

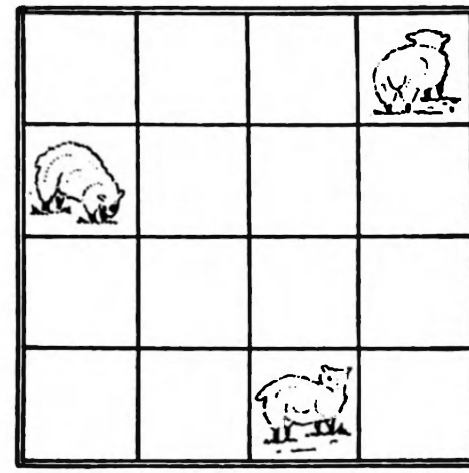

9.—Board guarded by three queens and two rooks, all protected

Here is a five-queen puzzle that I gave in a fanciful dress in 1897 (10). As the queens were there represented as hats on sixty-four pegs, I will keep to the title, "The Hat-Peg Puzzle." It will be seen that every square is guarded. The puzzle is to remove one queen to a different square so that still every square is guarded, then move a second queen under a similar condition, then a third queen, and finally a fourth queen. After the fourth move every square must be attacked or occupied, but no queen must then attack another. Of course, the moves need not be "queen moves"; you can move a queen to any part of the board.



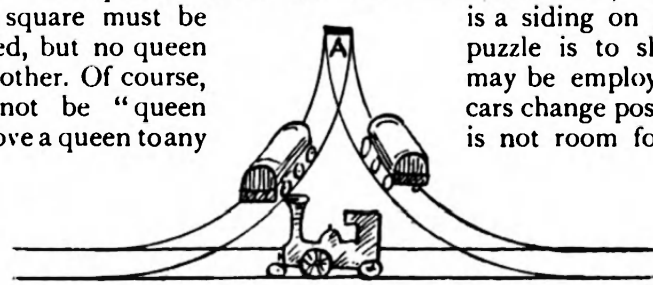
10.—The "Hat-Peg Puzzle."

Some readers who do not play chess have a curious notion that these puzzles have something to do with the game, so they pass them by. That is why I sometimes dress them up in the following fanciful manner. A farmer had three sheep and an arrangement of sixteen pens, divided off by hurdles, as shown in the illustration. In how many different ways could he place those sheep, each in a separate pen, so that every pen should be either occupied or in line, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, with at least one sheep? I give one arrangement (11). How many other arrangements can you find? Mere reversals or reflections in a mirror are not counted as different. The late "Lewis Carroll" produced some original puzzles, the best of which will be found in his book, "A Tangled Tale." But the most widely known is his "Monkey and Weight," which was discussed in the issue of this magazine for last May.



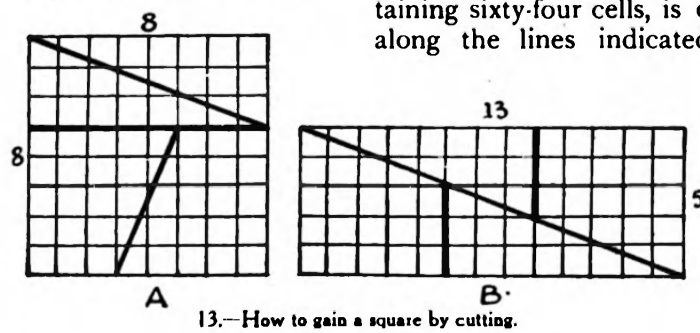
11.—The "Three Sheep Puzzle."

About twenty years ago a "Railway Puzzle" (12) was very popular, and was sold, in a mechanical form, in the toy shops. There is a siding on a main line, and the puzzle is to show how the engine may be employed to make the two cars change positions. Though there is not room for the engine to turn at the point A, it can enter on one side, push a car down to A, then return to the main line, enter the siding the other way, and pull the car back. No flying shunts are allowed. The puzzle is quite easy, but more difficult extensions of it have been made. The author of this little poser is not known.



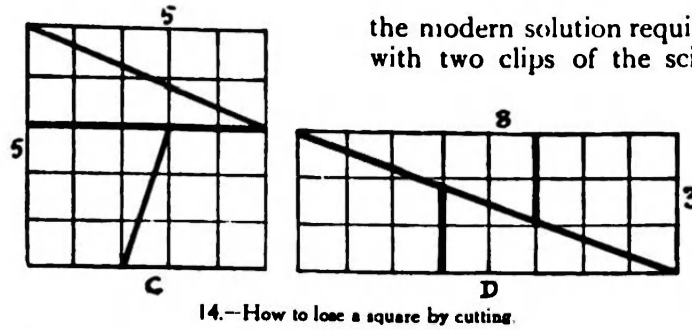
12.—The "Railway Puzzle."

A paradoxical puzzle, sometimes known as "The Dissected Chessboard" (13), is a great favourite, and it is surprising how it perplexes many people. In diagram A the square, containing sixty-four cells, is cut into four pieces along the lines indicated, and these four pieces are seen reassembled in diagram B, where there are now sixty-five cells. Where does the additional cell come from? It is not known

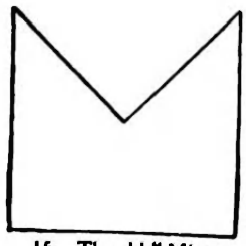


13.—How to gain a square by cutting.

who first discovered this particular paradox, but it was printed in a German work in 1868, and no earlier publication has been discovered, though Ozanam gives a puzzle on similar lines. The reader who is familiar with it may be interested in the companion that I now give (14). In diagram C the square, containing twenty-five cells, is cut into four parts, which are reassembled in diagram D. But in this case instead of gaining a cell we lose one! Where has it gone?

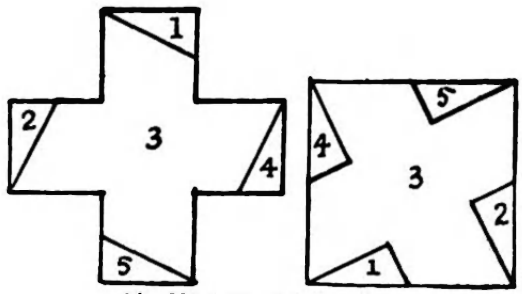


14.—How to lose a square by cutting.

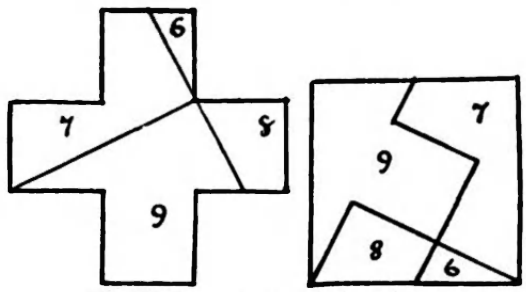

15.—The old "Mitre Puzzle," really impossible of solution.

The little "Mitre Puzzle" (15)—to cut a piece of paper of the shape indicated (a square with one quarter removed) into four parts of the same size and shape—I have not been able to trace to an earlier date than 1835. Strictly speaking, it is impossible of solution, but I will give the answer that is always presented, and that seems to satisfy most people.

The well-known puzzle of cutting a Greek cross into pieces that will fit together and form a square is believed to be of Indian origin, and I give the elegant Hindu solution in five pieces (16). But who first published the modern solution requiring only four pieces with two clips of the scissors, which I also give (17), is uncertain. I have from time to time given numerous extensions of this puzzle.

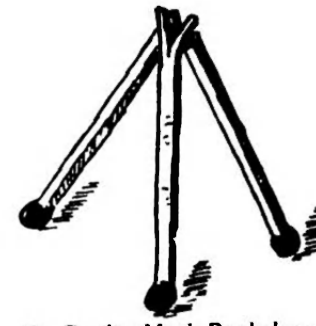


16.—Hindu Puzzle in five pieces.

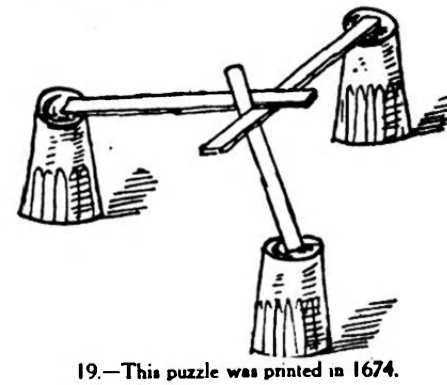


17.—Modern version in only four pieces.

If you split one end of a lucifer match, reduce the thickness of the end of another, and join them together, you can then stand them on end supported by a third match, as shown in the illustration (18). It is a favourite little puzzle now to lift the three matches all together with a fourth match. One is tempted to jump at the conclusion that this puzzle is probably not older than the date of the introduction of lucifer matches, but I have discovered it at an earlier date.


18.—Familiar Match Puzzle, known before matches were invented.

Then, again, three sticks may be placed together in the manner I have shown (19), with the exterior ends resting on three tumblers or other objects, so that they will support a heavy weight in the middle. This puzzle is at least as old as 1674, for I have it in a book of that date.

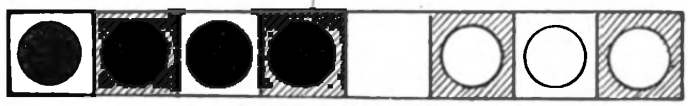

19.—This puzzle was printed in 1674.

The next puzzle was first propounded by P. G. Tait in 1884. Eight counters are placed together in a row, alternately black and white (20). In four moves, each time moving two contiguous counters, arrange them so


20.—Tait's "Counter Puzzle."

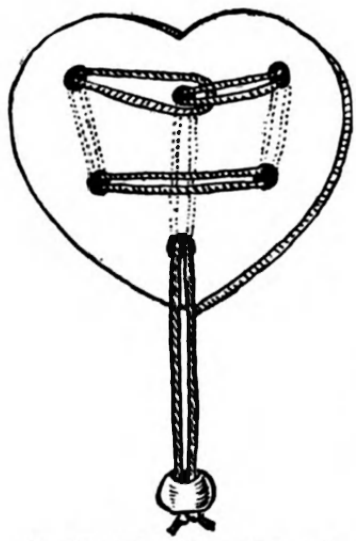
that they stand in an unbroken line with the four black counters together, and the four white ones also together. You are not allowed to reverse the order of a pair when sliding them to a new position, or to adjust the counters between the moves.

But who first invented the "Leaping Frogs" (21) is unknown. You place four black



21.—"Leap-Frog Puzzle."

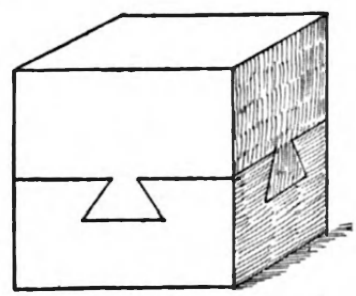
draughts and three white ones in a row as shown. The puzzle is to make the colours exchange sides. The blacks move only to the right and the white only to the left, but any draught may jump over one of the opposite colour, if the square beyond is vacant. An extension of this puzzle was given in my article, "Puzzles from Games," in THE STRAND MAGAZINE for March last. It was called "The Grasshoppers' Quadrille."



22.—The "Heart Puzzle." Juvenile favourite for generations.

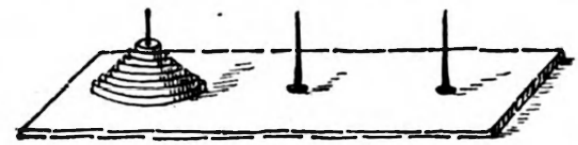
There are various string puzzles that for generations have been favourites with boys. One is "The Heart Puzzle" (22). It will be seen at a glance how the string with a loop at one end and a bead (too large to pass through a hole) is threaded through the holes in the wooden heart. The puzzle is to detach the string and bead from the heart. This is so easy that the puzzle was probably originally devised for the delectation of the infant in arms.

Here is a curious mechanical puzzle (23) that was given to me some ten years ago, but I cannot say who first invented it. It consists of two solid blocks of wood securely dovetailed together. On the other two vertical sides that are not visible the appearance is precisely the same as on those shown. How were the pieces put together? When I published this little puzzle in a London newspaper I received (though they were unsolicited) quite a stack of models in oak, in teak, in mahogany, rosewood, satinwood, elm, and deal, some half a foot in length, and others varying in size right down to a delicate little model about half an inch square. It seemed to create considerable interest.



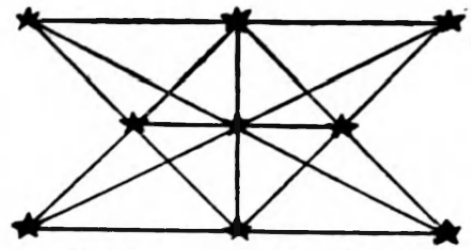
23.—How are the two pieces put together?

In 1883 M. Claus (an anagrammatic pseudonym of M. E. Lucas, the French mathematician) brought out "The Tower of Hanoï" (24). There are eight discs of wood, of varying sizes, with holes in them. These are placed on one of three pegs in order of size, the largest being at the bottom and the smallest at the top. The puzzle is to transfer the eight discs to one of the other pegs, moving one disc at a time from peg to peg, but never putting a disc on one that is smaller than itself. M. de Parville gave the following fanciful account of the origin of the puzzle. In the great temple of Benares, beneath the dome that marks the centre of the world, is a brass plate in which are fixed three diamond needles, each a cubit high and as thick as the body of a bee. On one of these needles, at the Creation, were placed sixty-four discs of pure gold, the largest disc resting on the brass plate, and the others being smaller and smaller up to the top one. Day and night unceasingly the priests transfer the discs from one needle to another, according to the fixed and immutable laws of Bramah, which require that the priest must not move more than one disc at a time, and that he must place this disc on a needle so that there is no smaller disc below it. When the sixty-four discs shall have been thus transferred to another needle, tower, temple, and Brahmins alike will crumble into dust, and with a thunderclap the world will vanish. Of course, the point is to discover how many moves are necessary to remove all the eight discs, or the sixty-four, as



24.—The "Tower of Hanoi."

the case may be. I have given elsewhere the general solution for any number of needles.

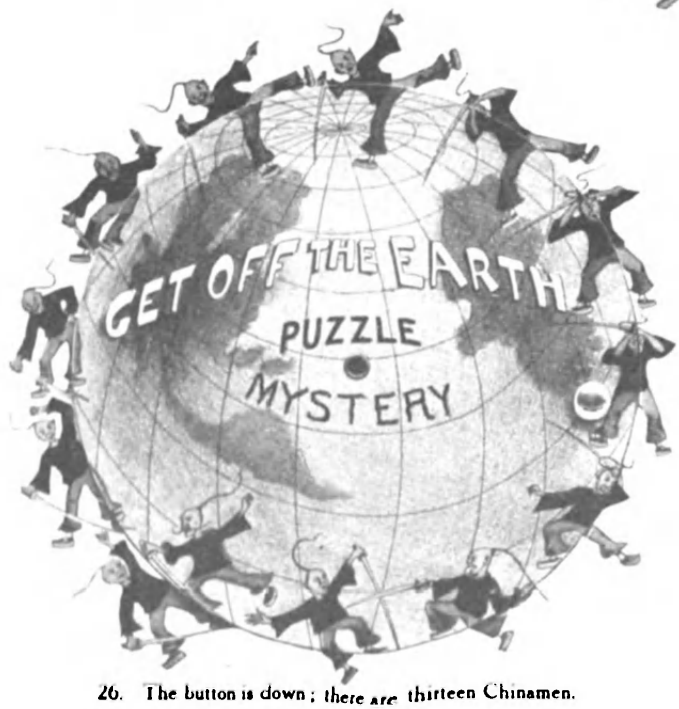


25.—Sir Isaac Newton's "Tree Puzzle."

What are known as "Points and Lines" puzzles are found very interesting by many people. The most familiar example, to plant nine trees so that they shall form ten straight rows with three trees in every row (25), is attributed to Sir Isaac Newton, but the earliest collection of such puzzles is, I believe, in a rare little book that I possess—published in 1821. The Rev. Mr. Wilkinson showed some quarter of a century ago that eleven points may be arranged to form sixteen lines of three, and in 1897 I published an arrangement of sixteen points forming fifteen lines of four. Can you solve these two examples? No general method has yet been discovered.

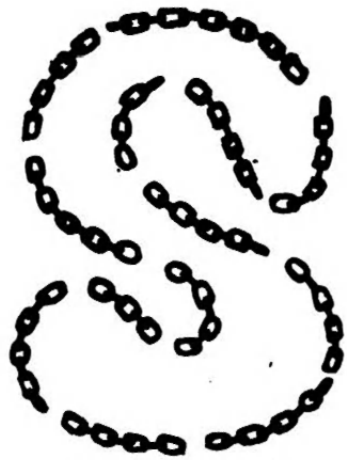
The "Fifteen Puzzle" and the "Pony Puzzle," creations of that veteran, Mr. Sam Loyd, are too well known to readers of this magazine to need more than mention. But his "Get Off the Earth" Puzzle, though perhaps not so widely known as it deserves to be, is, I consider, his best invention. It consists of a square card on which a disc is revolved, its revolution being restricted by a button, or paper-fastener, fixed in the disc and moving in a slot cut in the lower card. When the button is down (26) there are thirteen grotesque Chinamen striking very warlike attitudes round the edge of the globe; but when you move the button up (27), one of these has mysteriously disappeared. The puzzle is to discover what has become of him, and very few people are able to give an intelligible explanation of the matter. A certain humorist, on being shown the puzzle and asked, "Where does the Chinaman go?" could only supply the answer, "It depends on the life he leads!"

27.—The button is up. There are now twelve men only. Which one has disappeared?



26. The button is down; there are thirteen Chinamen.

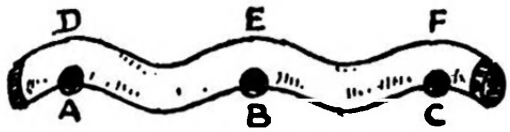
As an example of how a new and instructive little principle may be illustrated in a puzzle I give Mr. Loyd's "Chain Puzzle" (28) in a somewhat simplified form, so that every reader should be able to solve it and appreciate it. A farmer brought thirteen pieces of chain (one hundred links in all), as illustrated on the next page, to a blacksmith, to get them made into one endless chain. The smith charged



28.—Loyd's "Chain Puzzle" simplified.

one penny for each required mend. What was the amount of his bill? A mend includes opening a link and closing it.

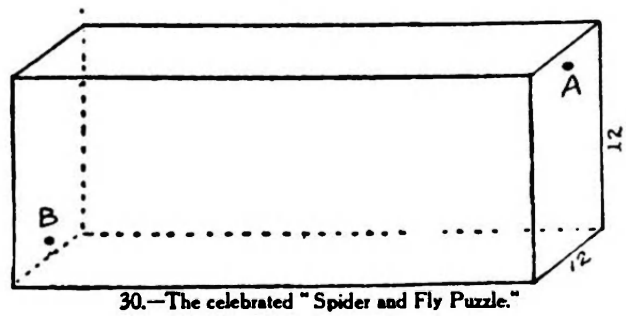
Some years ago there was a craze for rolling pellet puzzles, though they are really more trials of patience than puzzles; and these were nearly all mere variations of the first one that was made, the "Pigs in Clover," by Mr. Sam Loyd. However, there was one that I remember, called "The Switchback" (29), that could be solved by a puzzle trick which I was surprised to notice how few people discovered. It will be seen from the illustration that there were three little nests or



29.—The "Switchback Puzzle."

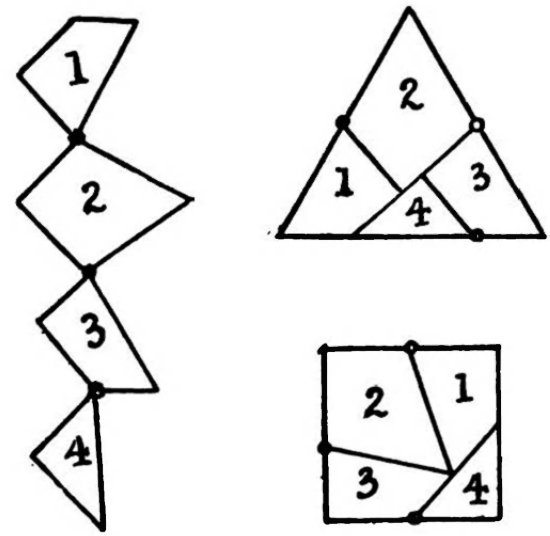
hollows at A, B, and C in the glass tube, into which the three shots or pellets had to be rolled. The trick was to first reverse the tube so that the three depressions, D, E, and F, were at the bottom. It was quite easy to get the shots into these hollows, and when you had them in position you had merely to twist the tube with a quick turn of the fingers, holding it at the ends, when the pellets would fall into the required positions. You could hardly fail once in a hundred attempts, yet I have seen people try the puzzle for hours without success, while this simple trick never occurred to them.

As the Editor of this magazine courteously insists that I shall include a few of my own puzzles, I add three little things that have aroused a certain amount of interest. The discussion in a London daily newspaper of "The Spider and the Fly" (30) a few years ago showed how startling to the general reader certain facts may be concerning the elementary laws of what, for want of a better word, are called geodesics. Inside a rectangular room, measuring 30ft. in length and 12ft. in width and height, a spider is at a point on the middle of one of the end walls, 1ft. from the ceiling, as at A in the illustration, and a fly is on the opposite wall, 1ft. from the floor in the centre, as shown at B. What is the shortest distance that the spider must crawl in order to reach the fly, which remains stationary? Of course, the spider never drops or uses its web, but crawls fairly. The large majority of people are confident that the answer must be 42ft. As a matter of fact it is exactly 40ft., and the spider's route actually takes him over five of the six sides of the room! The reader may like to find the actual route of the spider.



30.—The celebrated "Spider and Fly Puzzle."

The "Triangle and Square" (31) is a more



31.—A practical demonstration of the "Triangle and Square Puzzle."

subtle thing. The puzzle is to cut an equilateral triangle into four pieces that may be put together to form a perfect square. The illustration shows the puzzle in a rather curious practical form, as it was made in polished mahogany with brass hinges for use by certain audiences. It will be seen that the four pieces form a sort of chain, and that when they are closed up in one direction they form the triangle,

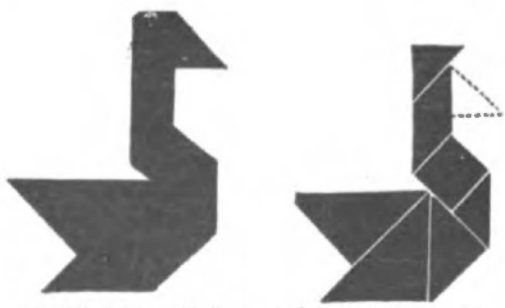
and when closed in the other direction they form a square. The solution is not merely approximate, but geometrically exact.

In "Catching the Mice" (32), the cat goes round and round the circle in the direction that they are looking and eats every thirteenth

32.—"Catching the Mice." How to eat the white mouse third.

mouse, reserving the white mouse for a tit-bit at the finish. At which mouse must she start her count? The answer to this is that she must begin her count at the seventh mouse (calling the white mouse the first)—that is, at the one nearest to the tip of the cat's tail. Make the count, striking out the mice as they are eaten and taking care not to include these again in your count, and you will find this is correct. Now try to discover what is the smallest number that the cat can count round and round if she must start at the white mouse (calling that "one" in the count) and make the white mouse the *third* eaten.

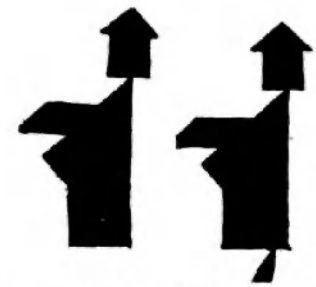
Before closing this article I will give, as promised, the solutions to the two special puzzles in the article, "Tales with Tangrams," in the issue of this magazine for last month. First, the design that cannot be formed with the seven Tangrams is the Swan. I repeat the design as it appeared (33), and give



33.—The "impossible" swan and the corrected version.

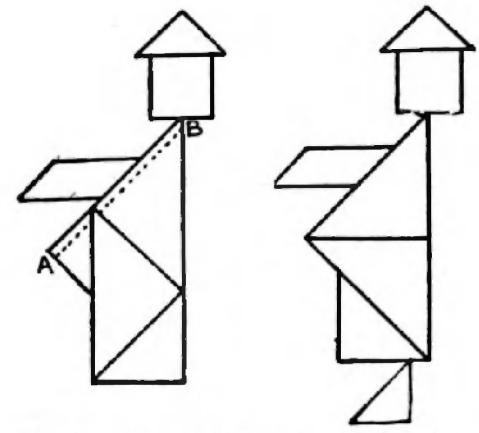
the nearest solution that is possible. In the corrected version the top piece might also be placed in the position indicated by dotted lines, but the result would more resemble a duck than a swan.

As to the paradox, the new diagrams will show how the figures are constructed—each with the seven Tangrams. It will be noticed that in both cases the head, hat, and arm are precisely alike, and the width at the base of the body the same. But this body contains four pieces



34.—Each of these figures is constructed from the same seven pieces. Where does the second man get his foot from?

in the first case, and in the second design only three. The first is larger than the second by exactly that narrow strip indicated by the dotted line between A and B (35). This



35.—This explains the Tangram paradox given above.

strip is therefore exactly equal in area to the piece forming the foot in the other design, though when thus distributed along the side of the body the increased dimension is not easily apparent to the eye.

The solutions to puzzles in the above article will appear in the next number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A Compendium of Short Articles.

I.—"That Reminds Me."

MANY and varied are the methods to which busy men have recourse in order, as the Yankees put it, to keep their memory "peeled."

Very simple is the mnemonical system of a well-known journalist, who merely ties a small piece of ribbon round his walking-stick. Many a Benedict has a penchant for tying his handkerchief into a series of knots to remind him of the numerous little domestic duties he has faithfully promised to perform during the day.

A very successful plan is that of a shrewd City man, who has recourse to the use of pepper or snuff to jog his memory. A liberal dose spread over his handkerchief greets his olfactory nerves whenever he extracts it from his pocket, and, as he himself says, then "that reminds me." It is a somewhat uncomfortable plan, but, it must be admitted, it is decidedly effective.

It is not for safety that the individual in one of our illustrations has taken the precaution to pin his kerchief to his coat. It is merely his peculiar form of reminder.

Doubly effective is the method adopted by some astute people who place their finger-rings on their key-ring. By this means they are not only reminded of something by the absence of their rings from their hands, but every time they use their keys the fact is forced upon their attention.

A message placed loosely inside one's hat is not likely to be overlooked, as it will probably drop out and attract attention the moment the owner removes his headgear.

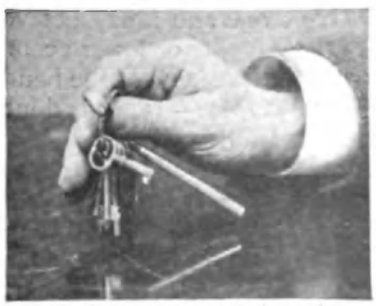
There is one old Government clerk in Whitehall who is an amusement to all the juniors. When he has any matter of urgent importance to attend to in the morning he invariably ties two of his fingers together with a small piece of red tape.

1.—A piece of ribbon tied to your stick is a good reminder.

2.—So is the well-known plan of tying knots in your handkerchief.

3.—While a little pepper or snuff on the handkerchief is sure to jog the memory.

4.—Another good plan is to pin your handkerchief to the lining of your pocket.



5.—If all these fail, try placing a ring on your key-ring——

6.—Or a memorandum inside your hat——

7.—Or, as a last resource, tie two of your fingers together.

From Photos. by Clarke & Hyde Press Agency.

II.—Every Man's Musical Instrument—The Hand-Horn.

By F. Gilbert Smith.

THE interesting fact that every member of the human race possesses, in its two hands, an embryo musical instrument which, when developed, is capable of holding its own against any artificial wind instrument of similar capacity, has not hitherto been dreamt of, or, if dreamt of, not scientifically demonstrated.

I wish, in the first place, to make perfectly clear these two points. Firstly, that the instrument I am about to describe is a wind instrument, and is to be treated as such. It is manifestly as unfair to take the hand-horn and blow into it and expect it to immediately produce melodious music as to expect any other wind instrument to do the same. Secondly, that the moment you produce a sound, however husky, with your closed hands, that moment you have discovered for yourself "every man's" musical instrument; and that, with this article to guide you, it is a moral certainty that before long you will be able easily to separate notes up to one and a half octaves. I will not add the usual qualification, "if you carefully carry out my instructions," for once you find that you can produce a note, and that not a fixed note, the gradual development of the instrument becomes a fascination.

How to Make the Instrument.—Figs. 1, 2, and 3 give side, front, and back views respectively of the instrument as it appears when the lowest note is being produced; while Fig. 4 gives a view of the interior of the left hand. Note particularly the following points: That the aperture between the thumbs for blowing is as narrow as possible; that the maximum distance obtainable must be secured between points "A" and "B" (Fig. 2); that the tips of the fingers of the right hand do not extend lower over the left than is necessary to cover the space "C"; and that in the left hand the fingers somewhat overlap one another, in order to fill up the spaces between. In a word, that the largest possible cavity, with a single opening (between the thumbs), is obtained. As a help to securing the right form of the instrument it is useful to take several apples, and to select the largest that you can contain in your hands without there being any crevices (Fig. 6). Then practise forming the hands round it until you are satisfied that the shape is correct.

How to Hold It.—Figs. 1 and 5 illustrate the position in which the instrument is held to the mouth and the disposition of the arms. Note particularly that the end joints of the thumbs are pressed against the upper lip, while the bottom lip is loose and is thrown somewhat forward to cover the joints of the thumbs and the extreme top end only of the aperture.

How to Play It.—The hand-horn, as here described, is a one-keyed instrument, the second finger of the left hand being the key. This key is manipulated, as shown in Figs. 7 and 8, from the root joint, and the slightest possible movement of this finger produces a variation in tone in the lower register; while the movement is more marked in the higher. With the exception of the third finger, which may move in sympathy with the second, the remainder of the instrument must not be altered in the smallest degree for the production of different notes. When the key is raised to its highest possible elevation, as in Fig. 8, a considerable cavity should be revealed underneath it, and care should be taken that the outer edge of the right hand does not tend to get nearer to the palm of the left, and so reduce this cavity, which must be as large as possible for the production of the higher notes.

As regards breathing, take deep inspirations, as in singing, when little or no effort will be required to produce full and clear notes. Articulation is best obtained by jerking the air from the back of the throat, as when one says "who, who," sharply. "Tongueing," as in the flute, does not appear to me practicable.

Its Range.—The hand-horn, as I at present know it, has a range of slightly under two and a half octaves, and in my case rises to somewhat below top C on the piano. As far as this article is concerned, however, it has a range of about one and a half octaves, which will be pitched higher or lower according to the smallness or largeness of the hands.

How I Discovered It.—It will doubtless be of interest to describe how I discovered the hand-horn. Well, it was in this way. When a boy my father taught me in a crude way to imitate the cuckoo's call with my hands. I soon improved on what he taught me, and you may judge how closely I mimicked the bird by the two

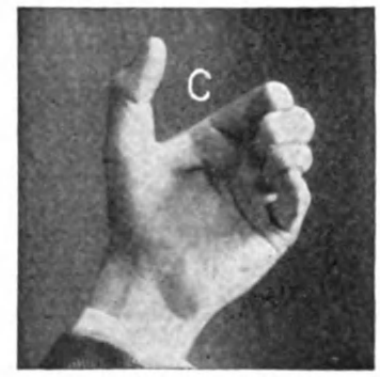
following incidents. One day I was hiding behind a bush, practising the cuckoo's call, when suddenly two young sportsmen peered round the bush, one whispering to the other, "Stand still; I'll pot him!" Needless to add, he didn't. On another occasion I hid myself under a bush and called my supposed mate, or rival—I know not which—on to the branches immediately over my head. The poor bird, being unable to locate me, worked himself into a perfect fury of rage.

I did not stop at imitating the cuckoo, but gradually, over a period of nearly twenty years, evolved the hand-horn—or, more correctly speaking, the hand-horn evolved itself. Muscles, and the nerves controlling them, which hitherto had been little used, were gradually developed, until now I have almost perfect control over the second finger on the left hand. This is the most important thing to achieve—at any rate, as regards the first octave and a half. I do not hope myself ever fully to master the muscles which must be controlled to produce the highest notes, as I have begun too late in life. My son, however, who has mastered the instrument as here described, simply from watching me play it, has a much better chance to do so.

1.—Side view of the hand-horn.

2.—As it appears from the front.

3.—Back view of the instrument.



4.—Interior of the left hand.

5.—How the arms should be held.

6.—Practising the formation of the hand with an apple.

7.—The second finger of the left hand is used as a key.

8.—How the key is manipulated.
From Photos. by John Burrows, Prestatyn, N. Wales.

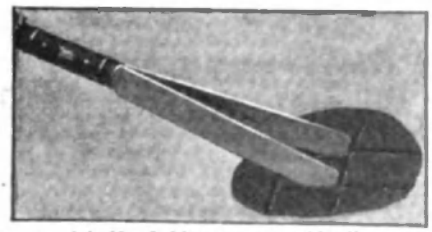
Evolution has practically finished its work on man's artificial musical instruments, but it has hardly commenced to operate on his natural and universal one. Perhaps it may not be too much to hope that before long the hand-horn will prove its right to the title of "every man's musical instrument."

III.—Wouldn't It Be Funny If——

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES SCOTT.

THERE are dozens of common things used daily in a household to the sight of which people have become so accustomed that any alteration, combination, or transposition of them would appear almost ludicrous, if not wholly inconvenient. The objects now dealt with are really very little modified, yet what strange aspects they present!

When we are cutting up our dinner with an ordinary knife it is impossible to cut a piece of meat or potato into more than two sections at one stroke; but by using a double blade, as in Fig. 1, we should secure three sections at every movement. The number of portions is, of course, increased as additional cuts are made. With a common knife the rates successively would be, by making symmetrical cross cuts, two, four, six, eight, etc., instead of three, nine, fifteen, twenty-five (or even more), *with precisely the same attempts.*



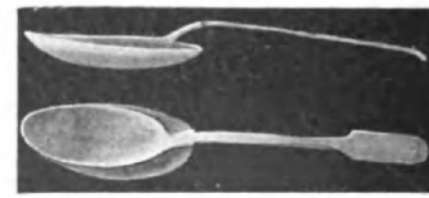
1.—A knife of this pattern would relieve you of much hard work.

2. The proper position for a saucer.

3.—A combined brush and comb would prove very useful.

4.—Why not have pipes made in this way?

5.—An accommodating egg-cup.



6.—With spoons like these nothing need be spilled.

Why are saucers used? No one seems to know with full certainty. Some people say that they are intended to keep the table-cloth clean by catching spilled liquid; others declare that they should be used for cooling the drink. As it is universally considered to be bad form to follow the latter practice, I will assume that the first suggestion is correct. But even in the event of the second belief being right, the illustrated notion seems to be equally effective (Fig. 2). To anyone who imagines that such an arrangement would be unsteady and awkward, I advise fixing a common saucer in such a position, and making a rough test. With this utensil, however, a saucer-bowl would be permanently attached to the edge of the cup, and would be, of course, quite firm. No liquid could be spilt on the table-cloth; nor would drinking from this queer-looking affair be at all troublesome; indeed, I believe it would be rather pleasant.

7.—Tea, coffee, and cocoa in one pot.

Simple as is the idea of a combined comb and brush (Fig. 3), I do not think that anything of the kind is on the market. The mother—we will leave the critical father out of the question—would be less worried if she had only to look for one article instead of two, where children have access to them.

Turning to men, I am reminded that I have a device—or rather the design of one—associated with one of their own customs. Now, except among navvies, a pipe-bowl is held with its orifice upwards, being made for that position. By just turning a bowl so that its mouth is directed frontwards a great change is effected, and I dare say that many people would laugh at a man who paraded the streets smoking such a curious pipe. Why should this be so? The bowl would be as suitable so placed, supposing it had a perforated lid, and it is clear that such a pipe would be much more

easily kept clean, as a brush could be so readily passed through the stem and bowl.

The egg-cup is so trivial a thing as to seem to call for no treatment or interference; yet it should be amenable to improvement in the interests of one's temper. It does not need telling that the dimensions of eggs are various —very various indeed! Notwithstanding this fact, a standard size egg-cup has to do duty, as a rule, for both large and small. This is not as it should be. Suppose we construct a four-sided egg-cup, having a screw in the middle part, by means of which the valves could be opened to suitable distances or squeezed tightly together (Fig. 4). In a case of this kind, provided the inner surfaces were somewhat roughened, every size of egg could find a temporary shelter, being neither so propped up as to topple over nor so much concealed as to make one feel foolish when cracking it.

Everybody who uses a spoon knows quite well that, whether medicine is being measured or fine sugar ladled out, some of the stuff is bound to drop. By affixing a secondary bowl beneath the ordinary one (Fig. 5), trouble of this character could be avoided.

Family people know what an awful confusion occurs when father wants coffee, mother wants tea, and the sons and daughters divide their preferences between these two and cocoa. Breakfast and tea times are made uncomfortable in consequence of the number of utensils and the successive waiting for the water. By having a large pot divided into three compartments, each communicating with a spout, the three beverages could be made at the same time, and so save trouble. Now who will be the first to use so awkward-looking, though useful, a contrivance?

IV.—Some Queer Champions.

By Aubrey Gentry.

MANY people will be surprised to learn that there are scores of championships held in all parts of England—and, indeed, of the world—of which they have no knowledge. When the news is read that such-and-such a man has won the championship in, say, the faggot-eating competition, the true significance that this man is really entitled to be described as a champion rarely enters into the reader's head.

Yet a host of these champions exist—many of them unknown, all of them unapplauded by the multitude and neglected by the Press generally.

A champion brought to this country for the purpose of giving exhibitions of his skill was Mr. Fred Lindsay, who can wield with a most marvellous display of dexterity the Australian stock-whip. The fact of being able to crack a whip does not appear, on the face of it, a very extraordinary feat, but the Australian stock-whip is a very different article from ours, the stock being eighteen inches and the thong twenty-four feet in length. At a distance of twenty-five feet Mr. Lindsay can cut a cigarette in half, the cigarette during the operation being held in the mouth of an attendant. Other of Mr. Lindsay's feats are: the extinguishing of a lighted candle; then, with a different twist of the whip, cutting it in half; taking the ash from a cigar whilst the weed is being smoked; and cutting an ordinary wine-bottle in two. Yet, dangerous as his weapon may appear, Mr. Lindsay can make it perfectly harmless. To prove the perfect control he has over the whip, Mr. Lindsay will flog a man with apparently terrific force, yet the man is not injured in any way; he will tie the thong round a man's arm, a feat which, if the judgment were to err in the slightest, would cut the arm in half. Then he can wind the thong round a lady's neck, but the lady would not feel it and no marks would be visible. All of which performances show that Mr. Lindsay is just what he claims to be—the champion whip-cracker of the world.

The sight of one hundred and fifty men calmly puffing at pipes and seated at tables with judges watching their every action is a strange one, yet it has been seen in London. The rules for this contest, which carried with it the championship of the pipe-smoking world, were that each man would be provided with one-eighth of an ounce of tobacco; that the competitor must furnish his own pipe, to be passed by the judges before being loaded; that pipes were to be filled once only, and that forty seconds would be allowed for the purpose of lighting up, no relighting to be allowed. The smoker who made his pipe last for the longest period won the first prize (a thirty-guinea piano) and, incidentally,

1.—The champion whip-cracker.
From a Photo. by Campbell-Gray.

2.—Mr. Thomas Wood, Champion Smoker.
From a Photograph.

3.—The faggot-eating champion is the figure on the extreme right.
From a Photograph.

4.—This barber, even when blindfolded, can shave you in twenty-seven seconds.
From a Photo. by R. W. Smith.

5.—A winner of the shoeblacks' championship.
From a Photo. by Geo. Newnes, Ltd.

6.—A weight-carrying champion of Paris.
From a Photograph.

7.—A record-breaking axe-wielder.
From a Photo. by Campbell-Gray.

the championship. Two hours and twelve minutes proved to be the winning time, and a new champion was proclaimed in the person of Mr. Thomas Wood, a painter by trade and a smoker from choice.

What may be termed a substantial supper was recently partaken of by a man at a public-house in Exmouth Street, London. The cause of the supper was a bet made between two men that Mr. Eugen Bowden could not consume a tin of faggots. A tin of these delicacies, it may be mentioned, contains thirty-six, each of the weight of six ounces. The faggots (which have been called the poor man's rissole) were supplied by a firm of butchers, Barnett Brothers, and were guaranteed to be of good weight. The contest took place in front of a large and appreciative audience. Not only did Mr. Bowden justify the faith placed in him by his backer, but he added to the original number by having two faggots crushed and made into gravy, and over and above this added a half-quartern loaf to the supper. The victor, who is undoubtedly entitled to term himself the faggot-eating champion, was apparently none the worse for entering the arena.

The quick-shaving champion of England, and possibly of the world, is Mr. Robert Hardie, of Shepherd's Bush. Mr. Hardie's record of shaving five men in one minute fifteen seconds stood for some years, but not long ago the champion of the razor thought he would try for new and better times, so he managed to shave six men in one minute twenty-nine seconds. Mr. Hardie a little time back issued a challenge to the world for five hundred pounds, and this money can be won by anybody who will take up the cudgels at either quick or blindfold shaving, and is able to beat the existing champion's times.

Mr. Hardie can shave one man, no matter how harsh his beard, in twelve seconds, or he will allow himself to be blindfolded and then make a clean job of it in twenty-seven seconds. Besides these times, which are accomplished by the aid of an ordinary razor, Mr. Hardie will give any man a perfectly satisfactory shave with the aid of a carving-knife in forty-five seconds, and with a pen-knife in twenty-eight seconds.

The shoeblacks' championship — held among members of the Central (Reds) Shoeblack Society — was first inaugurated in 1902. Out of the fifty boys who constitute the staff of the home, six are annually chosen to represent the school. The boys themselves vote for their favourites. They have no false pride about the matter, and if they fancy they are good enough to enter the competition they do not hesitate to put their own names down. Three factors are taken into consideration. They are: time, quality, general style of the work done. The contest is judged by well-known men, the superintendent of the school and the managing director of Messrs. Day and Martin being among the number. The championship takes place every May, and the conditions are the same as those prevailing in the streets—that is to say, the boys come direct from their stations and with the same tools enter for the fight.

The "Bancroft" gold medal, which the championship carries, is held for one year only, and is in the custody of an official of the society, but the silver watch which goes with the medal is the winner's absolute property. Three other prizes are given. The honour of holding the gold medal is much coveted, and the yearly struggle is always a very keen one.

Leaving for awhile the queer champions of England, we go for one "out-of-the-way" champion to the shores of La Belle France, and in the person of M. Jean Ricaud, a market porter, we find the weight-carrying champion of Paris. The weight, as will be seen from the illustration, is obtained by carrying on the head a number of sacks, filled with we know not what. M. Ricaud won the 1907 championship by supporting a burden weighing about six hundredweight on his shoulders. The distance was about sixty yards, and the victor's time was fifty-eight seconds.

Tree-felling contests are very few and far between in England, if, indeed, one has ever been held. But we recently had a visit from two axe-wielders, Messrs. Harry Jackson and Peter Maclaren by name, both Australians by birth, who are champions in this direction. Mr. Jackson once cut through a tree of sixty-three inches circumference in one minute eleven seconds; he also sawed through a tree seventy-six inches in girth in two minutes twelve seconds. The two partners won the double-handed saw championship by sawing through a tree seventy-six inches in circumference in forty-two seconds. Both these champions appeared at the Hippodrome in London. Their performances in Australia are vouched for, and are not mere reports. Naturally, they have both won many prizes by their skill, but the event upon which Mr. Jackson is most fond of dwelling is when he won the contest held before the now Prince of Wales (then the Duke of York) in Hobart, Tasmania.

V.—"Drapery Figures."

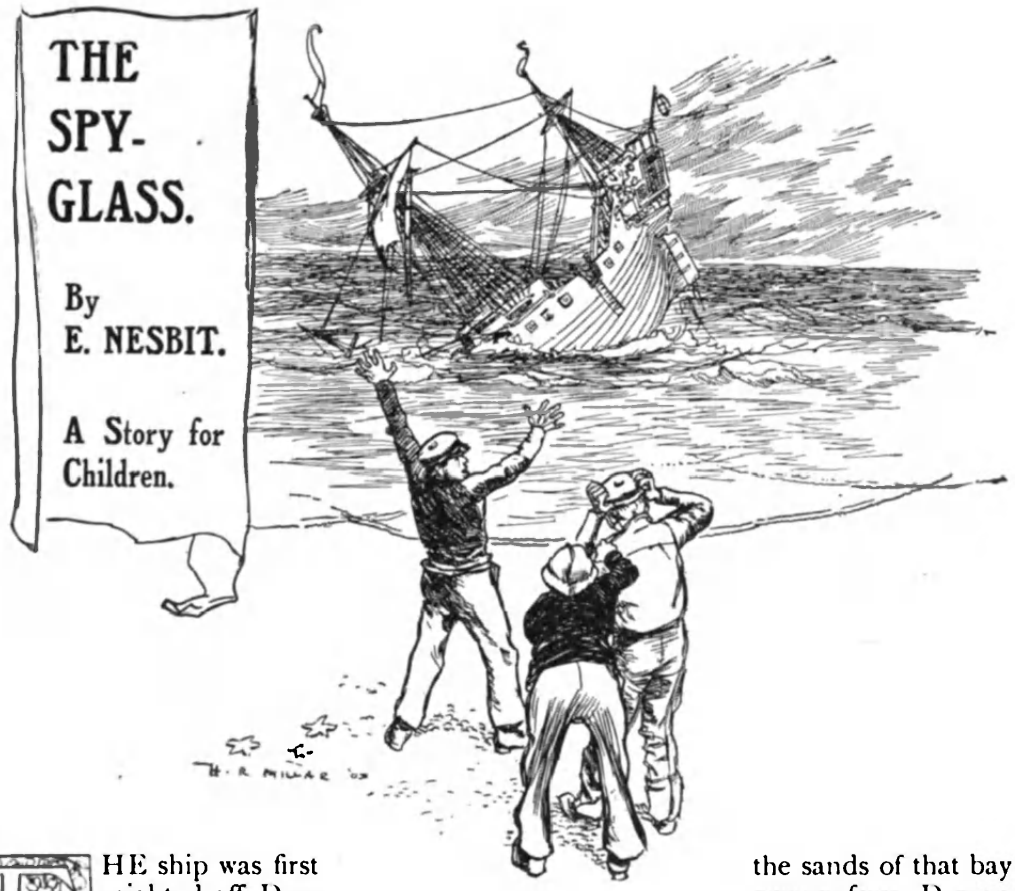
By Walter Goodman.

THESE sketches were done from studio draperies and costumes thrown carelessly in a heap, suggesting, by their folds, classic or fanciful figures as they appeared to the eye of the artist, as in case of faces seen in the fire, and similar objects. A special interest attaches to these studies from the fact that they were done fifty-four years ago by the late J. M. Leigh, father of the late Henry S. Leigh, author of "The Carols of Cockayne," and founder and master of the famous School of Art in Newman Street, Oxford Street, where Sir Edward J. Poynter, P.R.A., and many other artists studied drawing. The writer was also a student there and can vouch for the accuracy of the accompanying fanciful designs, having seen them done. It is not an uncommon thing for artists to receive suggestions from random blots or smudges of ink, or from the paint smears left on the palette, which may often be developed by a lively imagination into weird and wonderful results. But there is something extraordinary in the effect of these "Drapery Figures" which makes them quite unique.

THE SPY-GLASS.

By E. NESBIT.

A Story for Children.



THE ship was first sighted off Dungeness. She was labouring heavily. Her paint was peculiar and her rig outlandish.

"Blessed if I ever see such a rig—nor such lines neither," old Hawkhurst said.

"She do be a rum 'un," said young Benenden, who had strolled along the beach with the glasses the gentleman gave him for saving the little boy from drowning. "Don't know as I ever see another just like her."

"I'll give half a dollar to any chap as can tell me where she hails from—and what port it is where they have ships o' that cut," said middle-aged Haversham to the group that had now gathered.

"George!" exclaimed young Benenden from under his field-glasses, "she's going." And she went. Her bow went down suddenly and she stood stern up in the water—like a duck after rain. Then quite slowly, with no unseemly hurry, but with no moment's change of what seemed to be her fixed purpose, the ship sank and the grey rolling waves wiped out the place where she had been.

When ships go down off Dungeness, things from them have a way of being washed up on the sands of that bay which curves from Dungeness to Folkestone, where the sea has bitten a piece out of the land—just such a half-moon-shaped piece as you bite out of a slice of bread and butter.

Now, if you live by the sea and are grown-up you know that if you find anything on the seashore your duty is to take it up to the coastguards and say, "Please, I've found this."

Edward, staying with an aunt at the seaside, but whose real home was in a little villa in the suburbs, was not grown-up—and he kept everything he found; and one thing he found was a square case of old leather embossed with odd little figures of men and animals and words that Edward could not read. There were several things inside: queer-looking instruments, rather like those in the little box of mathematical instruments that he had had as a prize at school; and in a groove of the soaked velvet lining lay a neat little brass telescope.

Edward picked it up and put it to his eye, and tried to see through it a little tug that was sturdily puffing up Channel. He failed to find the tug, and found himself gazing at a little cloud on the horizon. As he looked it grew larger and darker, and presently

he looked through the glass again; but he found he needed both hands to keep it steady, so he set down the case with the other instruments on the sand at his feet and put the glass to his eye once more.

He had thought it was a sandy shore, but almost at once he saw that it was not sand but fine shingle, and the discovery of this mistake surprised him so much that he kept on looking at the shingle through the little telescope, which showed it quite plainly. And as he looked the shingle grew coarser.

Something hard pressed against his foot, and he lowered the glass.

He was surrounded by big stones, and they all seemed to be moving; some were tumbling off others that lay in heaps below them, and others were rolling away from the beach in every direction. And the place where he had put down the case was covered with great stones which he could not move.

The only person in sight was another boy in a blue jersey with red letters on his chest.

"Hi!" said Edward, and the boy also said "Hi!"

"Come along here," said Edward, "and I'll show you something."

"Let's see what you found," said Gustus, and Edward gave him the glass. He directed it with inexpert fingers to the sea wall, so little trodden that on it the grass grows.

"Oh, look!" cried Edward, very loud. "Look at the grass!"

Gustus let the glass fall to long arm's length and said "Krikey!"

The grass and flowers on the sea-wall had grown a foot and a half—quite tropical they looked.

"Well?" said Edward.

"What's the matter wiv everyfink?" said Gustus. "We must both be a bit balmy, seems ter me."

"What's balmy?" asked Edward.

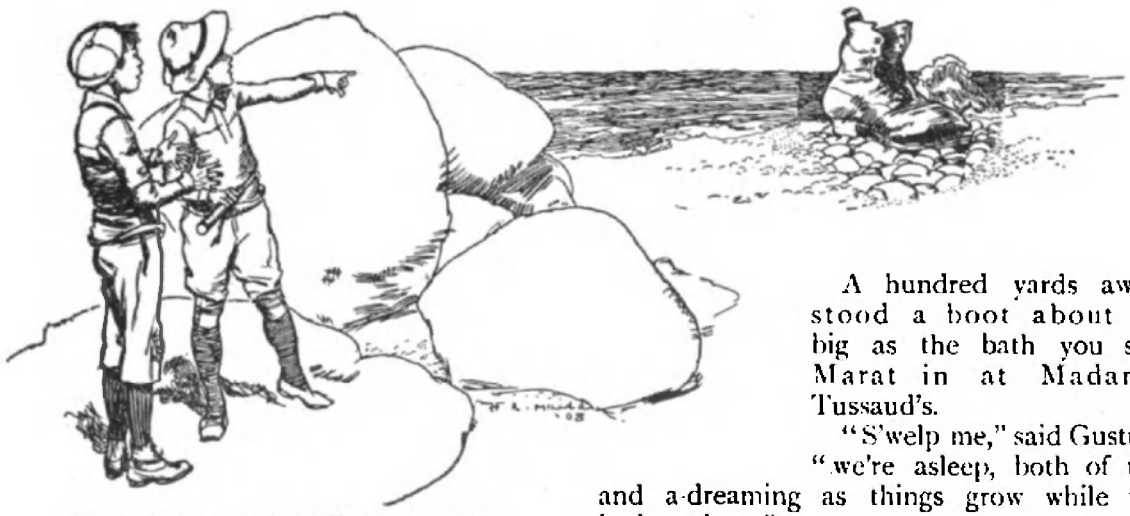
"Off your chump—looney—like what you and me is," said Gustus. "First you sees things, then I sees 'em."

"It was only fancy, I expect," said Edward. "I expect the grass on the sea-wall was always like that, really."

"Let's have a look through your spy-glass at that little barge," said Gustus, still holding the glass.

Edward snatched the glass from Gustus.

"Look!" he said; "look!" and pointed.



"'LOOK!' HE SAID; 'LOOK!' AND POINTED."

"Right-o!" the boy remarked, and came.

This boy was staying at the camp where the white tents were below the Grand Redoubt, though his home was in the slums.

"I say," said Edward, "did you see anyone move these stones?"

"I ain't only just come up on to the sea-wall," said the boy, who was called Gustus.

"They all came round me," said Edward, rather pale. "I was just taking a squint through this little telescope I've found—and they came rolling up to me."

A hundred yards away stood a boot about as big as the bath you see Marat in at Madame Tussaud's.

"S'welp me," said Gustus, "we're asleep, both of us, and a-dreaming as things grow while we look at them."

"But we're not dreaming," Edward objected. "You let me pinch you and you'll see."

"No fun in that," said Gustus. "Tell you what—it's the spy-glass—that's what it is. Hold on; I'll put something up for you to look at—a mark like—something as doesn't matter."

He fumbled in his pocket and held up a boot-lace. Next moment he had dropped the boot-lace, which, swollen as it was with the magic of the glass, lay like a snake on the stone at his feet.

So the glass *was* a magic glass, as, of course, you know already.

"My!" said Gustus; "wouldn't I like to look at my victuals through that there!"

Thus we find Edward of the villa—and through him Gustus of the slum—in possession of a unique instrument of magic. What could they do with it?

Both were agreed that it would be a fine thing to get some money and look at it, so that it would grow big. But Gustus never had any pocket-money, and Edward had had his confiscated to pay for a window he had not intended to break.

Gustus felt certain that someone would find out about the spy-glass and take it away from them. His experience was that anything you happened to like was always taken away.

"I been thinking," said Gustus, on the third day. "When I'm a man I'm a-going to be a burglar. You has to use your head-piece in that trade, I tell you. So I don't think thinking's swipes, like some blokes do. And I think p'r'aps it don't turn everything big. An' if we could find out what it don't turn big we could see what we wanted to turn big on what it didn't turn big, and then it wouldn't turn anything big except what we wanted it to. See?"

Edward did not see; and I don't suppose you do, either.

So Gustus went on to explain that teacher had told him there were some substances impervious to light, and some to cold, and so on and so forth, and that what they wanted was a substance that should be impervious to the magic effects of the spy-glass.

"So if we get a tanner and set it on a plate and squint at it it'll get bigger—but so'll the plate. And we don't want to litter the place up with plates the bigness of cart-wheels. But if the plate didn't get big we could look at the tanner till it covered the plate, and then go on looking and looking and looking and see nothing but the tanner till it was as big as a circus. See?"

This time Edward did see. But they got no farther, because it was time to go to the circus. There was a circus at Dymchurch just then, and that was what made Gustus think of the sixpence growing to that size.

It was a very nice circus, and all the boys from the camp went to it—also Edward, who managed to scramble over and wriggle under benches till he was sitting next to his friend.

It was the size of the elephant that did it. Edward had not seen an elephant before, and when he saw it, instead of saying, "What a size he is!" as everybody else did, he said to himself, "What a size I could make him!" and pulled out the spy-glass, and by a miracle of good luck or bad got it levelled at the elephant as it went by. He turned the glass slowly as the elephant went out, and the elephant only just got out in time. Another moment and it would have been too big to get through the door. The audience cheered madly. They thought it was a clever trick; and so it would have been, very clever.

"You silly cuckoo," said Gustus, bitterly; "now you've turned that great thing loose on the country, and how's his keeper to manage him?"

"I could make the keeper big, too."

"Then if I was you I should just bunk out and do it."

Edward obeyed, slipped under the canvas of the circus tent, and found himself on the yellow, trampled grass of the field among guy-ropes, orange-peel, banana-skins, and dirty paper. Far above him and everyone else towered the elephant—it was now as big as the church.

Edward pointed the glass at the man who was patting the elephant's foot and telling it to "Come down with you!" Edward was very much frightened. He did not know whether you could be put in prison for making an elephant's keeper about forty times his proper size. But he felt that something must be done to control the gigantic mountain of black-lead-coloured living flesh. So he looked at the keeper through the spy-glass, but the keeper remained his normal size!

In the shock of this failure he dropped the spy-glass, picked it up, and tried once more to fix the keeper. Instead he only got a circle of black-lead-coloured elephant; and while he was trying to find the keeper, and finding nothing but more and more of the elephant, a shout startled him and he dropped the glass once more.

"Well," said one of the men, "what a turn it give me! I thought Jumbo'd grown as big as a railway station, s'welp me if I didn't."

"Now, that's rum," said another, "so did I."

"And he *ain't*," said a third; "seems to me he's a bit below his usual figure. Got a bit thin or somethink, ain't he?"

Edward slipped back into the tent unobserved.

"It's all right," he whispered to his friend; "he's gone back to his proper size; and the man didn't change at all."

He told all that had happened.

"Ho!" Gustus said, slowly—"Ho! All

"FAR ABOVE HIM AND EVERYONE ELSE TOWERED THE ELEPHANT."

right. Conjuring's a rum thing. You don't never know where you are!"

That evening after tea Edward went as he had been told to do to the place on the shore where the big stones had taught him the magic of the spy-glass.

Gustus was already at the tryst.

"See here," he said, "I'm a goin' to do something brave and fearless, I am, like Lord Nelson and the boy on the fire-ship. You out with that spy-glass, an' I'll let you look at *me*. Then we'll know where we are."

Very much afraid, Edward pulled out the glass and looked.

And nothing happened!

"That's number one," said Gustus. "Now, number two."

He snatched the telescope from Edward's hand, and turned it round and looked through the other end at the great stones. Edward, standing by, saw them get smaller and smaller—turn to pebbles, to beach, to sand. When Gustus turned the glass to the giant grass and flowers on the sea-wall, they also drew back into themselves, got smaller and smaller, and presently were as they had been before ever Edward picked up the magic spy-glass.

"Now we know all about it—I *don't* think," said Gustus. "To-morrow we'll have a look at that there model engine of yours that you say works."

They did. They had a look at it through the spy-glass, and it became a quite efficient motor; of rather an odd pattern it is true, and very bumpy, but capable of quite a decent speed. They went up to the hills in it, and so unusual was its design that no one who saw it ever forgot it. People talk about that rummy motor at Bonnington and Aldington to this day. The boys stopped often, to use the spy-glass on various objects. Trees, for instance, could be made to grow surprisingly, and there were patches of giant wheat found that year near Ashford which were never satisfactorily accounted for. Blackberries, too, could be enlarged to a most wonderful and delicious fruit.

It was a beautiful ride. As they came home they met a woman driving a weak-looking little cow. It went by on one side of the engine and the woman went by on the other. When they were restored to each other the cow was nearly the size of a cart-horse and the woman did not recognise it. She ran back along the road after her cow, which must, she said, have taken fright at the beastly motor. She scolded violently as she went. So the boys had to make the cow small again, when she wasn't looking.

"This is all very well," said Gustus; "but

"IT BECAME QUITE AN EFFICIENT MOTOR."

we've got our fortune to make, I *don't* think. We've got to get hold of a tanner—or a bob would be better. I see I shall have to do some thinking," he added.

They stopped in a quiet road close by Dymchurch; the engine was made small again, and Edward went home with it under his arm.

It was the next day that they found the shilling on the road. They could hardly believe their good luck. They went out on to the shore with it, put it on Edward's hand while Gustus looked at it with the glass, and the shilling began to grow.

"It's as big as a saucer," said Edward, "and it's heavy. I'll rest it on these stones. It's as big as a plate; it's as big as a tea-tray; it's as big as a cart-wheel."

And it was.

"Now," said Gustus, "we'll go and borrow a cart to take it away. Come on."

But Edward could not come on. His hand was in the hollow between the two stones, and above lay tons of silver. He could not move, and the stones couldn't move. There was nothing for it but to look at the great round lump of silver through the wrong end of the spy-glass till it got small enough for Edward to lift it. And then, unfortunately, Gustus looked a little too long, and the shilling, having gone back to its own size, went a little farther—and it went to sixpenny size, and then went out altogether.

So nobody got anything by that.

And now came the time when, as was to be expected, Edward dropped the telescope in his aunt's presence. She said, "What's that?" picked it up with quite unfair quickness, and looked through it, and through the open window at a fishing-boat, which instantly swelled to the size of a man-of-war.

"My goodness! what a strong glass!" said the aunt.

"Isn't it?" said Edward, gently taking it from her. He looked at the ship through the glass's other end till she got to her proper size again and then smaller. He just stopped in time to prevent her disappearing altogether.

"I'll take care of it for you," said the aunt. And for the first time in their lives Edward said "No" to his aunt.

It was a terrible moment.

Edward, quite frenzied by his own courage, turned the glass on one object after another—the furniture grew as he looked, and when he lowered the glass the aunt was pinned fast between a monster table-leg and a giant chiffonier.

"There!" said Edward. "And I sha'n't let you out till you say you won't take it to take care of either."

"Oh, have it your own way," said the aunt, faintly, and closed her eyes. When she opened them the furniture was its right size and Edward was gone. He had twinges of conscience, but the aunt never mentioned the subject again. I have reason to suppose that *she* supposed that she had had a fit of an unusual and alarming nature.

Next day the boys in the camp were to go back to their slums. Edward and Gustus

parted on the seashore and Edward cried. He had never met a boy whom he liked as he liked Gustus. And Gustus himself was almost melted.

"I will say for you you're more like a man and less like a snivelling white rabbit now than what you was when I met you. Well, we ain't done nothing to speak of with that there conjuring trick of yours, but we've 'ad a right good time. So long. See you 'gain some day."

Edward hesitated, spluttered, and still weeping flung his arms round Gustus.

"'Ere, none o' that," said Gustus, sternly. "If you ain't man enough to know better, I am. Shake 'ands like a Briton; right about face—and part game."

He suited the action to the word.

Edward went back to his aunt snivelling, defenceless but happy. He had never had a friend except Gustus, and now he had given Gustus the greatest treasure that he possessed.

For Edward was not such a white rabbit as he seemed. And in that last embrace he had managed to slip the little telescope into the pocket of the reefer-coat which Gustus wore, ready for his journey.

And the holidays ended and Edward went back to his villa. Be sure he had given Gustus his home address, and begged him to write, but Gustus never did.

Presently Edward's father came home from India, and they left his aunt to her villa and went to live on a sloping hill at Chislehurst, at a jolly little house which was Edward's father's very own. They were not rich, and Edward could not go to a very good school, and, though there was enough to eat and wear, what there was was very plain. For Edward's father had been wounded, and somehow had not got a pension.

Now one night in the next summer Edward woke up in his bed with the feeling that there was someone in the room. And there was. A dark figure was squeezing itself through the window. Edward was far too frightened to scream. He simply lay and listened to his heart. It was like listening to a cheap American clock. The next moment a lantern flashed in his eyes and a masked face bent over him.

"Where does your father keep his money?" said a muffled voice.

"In the b-b-b-b-bank," replied the wretched Edward, truthfully.

"I mean what he's got in the house."

"In his trousers pocket," said Edward, "only he puts it in the dressing-table drawer at night."

"You must go and get it," said the burglar, for such he plainly was.

"Must I?" said Edward, wondering how he could get out of betraying his father's confidence and being branded as a criminal.

"Yes," said the burglar in an awful voice; "get up and go."

"*No*," said Edward, and he was as much surprised at his courage as you are.

"Bravo!" said the burglar, flinging off his mask. "I see you *aren't* such a white rabbit as what I thought you."

"It's Gustus," said Edward. "Oh, Gustus, I'm so glad! Oh, Gustus, I'm so sorry! I always hoped you wouldn't be a burglar. And now you are."

"I am so," said Gustus, with pride; "but," he added, sadly, "this is my first burglary."

"Couldn't it be the last?" suggested Edward.

"That," replied Gustus, "depends on you."

"I'll do anything," said Edward, "anything."

"You see," said Gustus, sitting down on the edge of the bed, in a confidential attitude, with the dark lantern in one hand and the mask in the other, "when you're as hard up as we are, there's not much of a living to be made honest. I'm sure I wonder we don't all of us turn burglars, so I do. And that glass of yours—you little beggar—you did me proper—sticking of that thing in my pocket like what you did. Well, it kept us alive last winter, that's a cert. I used to look at the victuals with it, like what I said I would. A farden's worth o' pease-pudden was a dinner for three when that glass was about, and a penn'orth o' block-trimmings turned into a big beefsteak almost. They used to wonder how I got so much for the money. But I'm always funky o' being found out—or of losing the blessed spy-glass—or of someone pinching it. So we got to do what I always said—make some use of it. And if I go along and nick your father's dibs we'll make our fortunes right away."

"No," said Edward, "but I'll ask father."

"Rot." Gustus was crisp and contemptuous. "He'd think you was off your chump, and he'd get me lagged."

"It would be stealing," said Edward.

"Not when you'll pay it back."

"Yes, it would," said Edward. "Oh, don't ask me—I can't."

"Then I shall," said Gustus. "Where's his room?"

"Oh, don't!" said Edward. "I've got a half-sovereign of my own. I'll give you that."

"Lawk!" said Gustus. "Why the blue monkeys couldn't you say so? Come on."

He pulled Edward out of bed by the leg, hurried his clothes on anyhow, and half-dragged, half-coaxed him through the window and down by the ivy and the chicken-house roof. They stood face to face in the sloping garden and Edward's teeth chattered. Gustus caught him by his hand and led him away.

At the other end of the shrubbery, where the rockery was, Gustus stooped and dragged out a big clinker—then another, and another. There was a hole like a big rabbit-hole. If Edward had really been a white rabbit it would just have fitted him.

"I'll go first," said Gustus, and went, head-foremost. "Come on," he said, hollowly, from inside. And Edward, too, went. It was dreadful crawling into that damp hole in the dark. As his head got through the hole he saw that it led to a cave, and below him stood a dark figure. The lighted lantern was on the ground.

"Come on," said Gustus; "I'll catch you if you fall."

With a rush and a scramble Edward got in.

"It's caves," said Gustus; "a chap I know that goes about the country bottoming cane-chairs, 'e told me about it. And I nosed about and found you lived here. So then I thought what a go. So now we'll put your half-shiner down and look at it, and we'll have a gold-mine, and you can pretend to find it."

"Halves!" said Edward, briefly and firmly.

"You're a man," said Gustus. "Now, then!" He led the way through a maze of chalk caves till they came to a convenient spot, which he had marked. And now Edward emptied his pockets on the sand—he had brought all the contents of his money-box, and there was more silver than gold, and more copper than either, and more odd rubbish than there was anything else. You know what a boy's pockets are like. Stones and putty, and slate-pencils and marbles—I urge in excuse that Edward was a little boy—a bit of plasticine, and pieces of wood.

"No time to sort 'em," said Gustus, and, putting the lantern in a suitable position, he got out the glass and began to look through it at the tumbled heap.

And the heap began to grow. It grew out sideways till it touched the walls of the recess, and outwards till it touched the top of the recess, and then it slowly worked out into the big cave and came nearer and nearer to the boys. Everything grew—stones, putty, money, wood, plasticine, and the chalk of the cave itself.

Gustus patted the growing mass as though it were alive and he loved it.

"Here's clothes, and beef, and bread, and tea, and coffee—and baccy—and a good school, and me a engineer. I feel it all a-growing and a-growing. You feel of it, Teddy."

Edward obediently put his hand on the side of the pile.

"I say—stop!" he cried, suddenly.

"A little bit more," said Gustus.

"Drop it, I say," said Edward, so fiercely that Gustus, in his surprise, actually did drop the glass, and it rolled away into the darkness.

"Now you've done it," said Gustus. "I daresay it's smashed."

"I don't care if it is," said Edward. "Why didn't you stop when I said stop? My hand's caught."

"So it is," said Gustus. "It's fast between the rock and this precious Tom Tiddler's ground of ours. Hold on a bit."

"I'LL FIND THE GLASS AND MAKE THE GOLD SMALLER, SO AS YOU CAN GET YOUR HAND OUT."

"I can't help holding on," said Edward, bitterly.

"I mean, don't you fret. I'll find the glass in a jiffy and make the gold smaller, so as you can get your hand out."

But Gustus could not find the glass. And, what is more, no one ever has found it to this day.

"It's no good," said Gustus, at last. "I'll go and find your father. They must come and dig you out."

"And they'll lag you if they see you. You said they would," said Edward, not at all sure what lagging was, but sure that it was something dreadful. "Write a letter and put it in his letter-box. They'll find it in the morning."

"And leave you pinned by the hand all night? Likely—I *don't* think," said Gustus.

"I'd rather," said Edward, bravely, but his voice was weak. "I couldn't bear you to be lagged, Gustus. I do love you so."

"None of that," said Gustus, sternly. "I'll leave you the lamp; I can find my way with matches. Keep up your pecker, and never say die."

"I won't say it—I promise I won't," said Edward, bravely. "Oh, Gustus!"

That was how it happened that Edward's father was roused from slumber by violent shakings from an unknown hand, while an unknown voice uttered these surprising words:—

"Edward is in the gold and silver and copper mine that we've found under your garden. Come along and get him out."

When Edward's father was at last persuaded that Gustus was not a silly dream—and this took some time—he got up.

He did not believe a word that Gustus said, even when Gustus added "S'welp me!" which he did several times.

But Edward's bed was empty—his clothes gone.

Edward's father got the gardener from next door—with, at the suggestion of Gustus, a pick—the hole in the rockery was enlarged, and all three got in.

And when they got to the place where Edward was, there, sure enough, was Edward, pinned by the hand between a piece of wood and a piece of rock. Neither the father nor the gardener noticed any metal. Edward had fainted.

They got him out; a couple of strokes with the pick released his hand, but it was bruised and bleeding.

They all turned to go, but they had not gone twenty yards before there was a crash and a report like thunder, and a slow, rumbling, rattling noise very dreadful to hear.

"Get out of this quick, sir," said the gardener; "the roof's fell in; this part of the caves ain't safe."

Edward was very feverish and ill for several days, during which he told his father the whole story—of which his father did not believe a word. But he was kind to Gustus, because Gustus was evidently fond of Edward.

When Edward was well enough to walk in the garden his father and he found that a good deal of the shrubbery had sunk, so that the trees looked as though they were growing in a pit.

It spoiled the look of the garden, and Edward's father decided to move the trees to the other side.

When this was done the first tree uprooted showed a dark hollow below it. The man is not born who will not examine and explore a dark hollow in his own grounds. So Edward's father explored.

This is the true story of the discovery of that extraordinary vein of silver, copper, and gold which has excited so much interest in scientific and mining circles. Learned papers have been written about it, learned professors have been rude to each other about it, but no one knows how it came there except Gustus and Edward and you and me. Edward's father is quite as ignorant as anyone else, but he is much richer than most of them; and, at any rate, he knows that it was Gustus who first told him of the gold-mine, and who risked being lagged—arrested by the police, that is—rather than let Edward wait till morning with his hand fast between gold and rock.

So Edward and Gustus have been to a good preparatory school, and now they are at Winchester, and presently they will be at Oxford. And when Gustus is twenty-one he will have half the money that came from the gold-mine. And then he and Edward mean to start a school of their own. And the boys who are to go to it are to be the sort of boys who go to the summer camp of the Grand Redoubt near the sea—the kind of boy that Gustus was.

So the spy-glass will do some good, after all, though it *was* so unmanageable to begin with.

Perhaps it may even be found again. But I rather hope it won't. It might, really, have done much more mischief than it did—and if anyone found it, it might do more yet.

There is no moral to this story, except . . . But, no—there is no moral.

CURIOSITIES.

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

MARVELLOUS CHESTNUT CARVINGS.

THE heads of these four little figures are carved out of chestnuts, cleverly dressed and mounted on empty reels by Lionel Le Couteux, the engraver and etcher. In every case the simplest materials are employed and the utmost ingenuity is displayed in the selection. Fig. 1: A Knight of Malta shouting his profession of faith across the world of the East. His cuirass is the back of a driving-glove and his mantle a piece of wash-leather, with a fine grass seed as tassel. His Order is the poppy-seed vessel, and his helmet an autumn leaf. Fig. 2: Mme. Jadis (Mrs. Olden Times). Her headdress is the tail of a crawfish set on a frill of paper; her pelerine is cut from an oak leaf over a vest of peacock's feather; finishings of lichens and turquoise brooch at throat, and another of oak gall on her bosom. Fig. 3: Honnête Dame (Genteel Lady). Headdress of beetle wings and collar of poppy-head; waistcoat and cape of suède kid. Fig. 4: Siamese Dancer. Headdress of husk of poppy-seed; collar of skeleton leaves, with different grass seeds as ornaments. — Miss Alice M. Ivimy, Hôtel de Sèze, 16, Rue de Sèze, Paris.

A SUGGESTION FOR CHRISTMAS DECORATION.

HERE is a photograph of a grandfather clock in Christmas dress. The nose, mouth, pipe, eyebrows, and the outer circles of the eyes are cut out of brown paper and pasted on the outside of the glass. The winding holes form the pupils of the eyes, and these being a little distance behind the glass the eyes appear to roll as one approaches or passes the clock. The wreath is of holly and evergreen and the beard of wool.— Mr. G. W. Clarke, 5, Fulford, York.

THE GEESE OF NIEDER-MORLEN.

IN the little Hessean village of Nieder-Mörlen, between Giessen and Frankfort, a strange scene may be witnessed every evening at half-past five. Some two thousand geese, which have spent the day on the river's bank below the village, at a given signal from their leaders make their way homewards with much pomp and circumstance and raucous noise. The strangest part of the proceeding is seen when they reach the village street and, without any guidance or driving, waddle each into its own yard for the night. Like so many squads they break off in their dozens from the main body, knowing instinctively their owners' door, and with solemn gait enter in as though conscious of their own innate cleverness.— Mr. A. H. Ross, Ham, Devonport.

CHAIR MADE FROM AN ELEPHANT'S JAW.

I THINK this chair, made from an elephant's jaw, will interest STRAND readers. It was designed and mounted by Messrs. Theobald Brothers, taxidermists, Mysore, South India. The jaw belonged to a rogue elephant shot by Cpt. Wilkinson, A. D. C. to the former Viceroy, Lord Curzon. The woodwork—*i.e.*, the legs and centre standard—is of very old sandalwood, richly carved by expert Burmese workmen and finished with dark blue morocco. Of course, the chair is more of an ornament than a useful article of furniture, though in a drawing-room it makes a handsome trophy.—Mr. William H. R. Theobald, Mysore, India.

STRANGE STORY OF A STATUE.

MOST readers of THE STRAND, I think, will not hesitate for a moment to pronounce this statue of Sir Walter Scott to be a most clever piece of sculpture. Their praise will be the more unstinted when they hear the story concerning it, as it was related to me by one of the oldest inhabitants of East Kilbride, in Scotland, where the statue has now found a home. It appears to have been carved during his spare time by an apprentice mason named William R. Neil, at the early age of eighteen, and originally stood in a washhouse belonging to the sculptor's uncle at Eaglesham. But his uncle and he quarrelled, and on the youngster seeking to smash the statue with a hammer, which he sought from an East Kilbride master mason, the latter had it removed to his garden at midnight. In the morning it is said the whole town turned out to see the statue in its new home. The sculptor died but a few years ago at a good old age. It is quite a romantic story, of which few who go to visit the clever work are aware.—Mr. James A. King, 18, Muir Street, Motherwell, Scotland.

BULLOCK AS HOUSE-WARMER.

THIS photograph represents the living-room in the house of a poor Spanish "cura," or parish priest, of a small village high up in one of the many "sierras." During the cold and long winter months a bullock is kept in the room in order to give warmth to the inmates, this method being found more economical than the customary "brasero." At the end of the cold season the bullock is sold and a new one is bought for the succeeding winter. A small profit is made in this way each year.—Dr. Frankland Dent, 3, Claremont Drive, Headingley, Leeds.

"ONCE BIT, TWICE SHY."

THIS is not, as I would at first appear, a tombstone to a favourite horse or dog, but an intimation that termsare "cash and no credit given." It may be seen outside Black Horse Inn, Borough Green, Kent.—Mrs. F. Pawlett, Leahurst, Platt, Borough Green, Kent.

AN INDIAN DWARF.

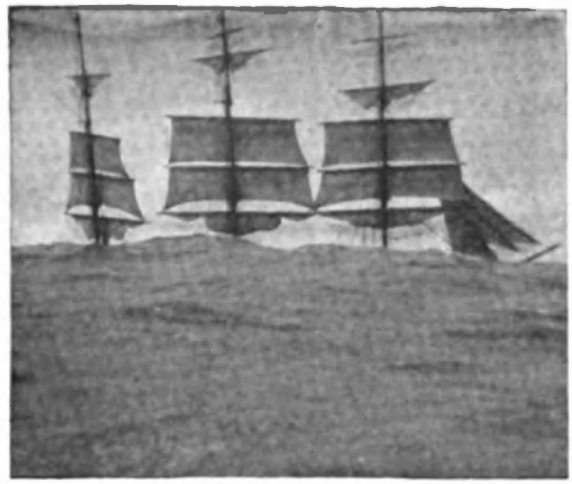
THIS quaint little figure is a dwarf I encountered last winter down in the Native State of Hyderabad—Nizam's Dominions. As seen from the photograph, he is standing between two girls' parasols

which are not more than three feet in length. He told me that he was fifty-two years of age.—Mr. H. R. Osborne, Diocesan Boys' School, Naini Tal, U.P., India.

GATE WITH A HISTORY.

THE gate in the photograph is not a freak of Nature, but the work of men's hands, being made from a tree trunk and parts of branches. It is situated in Avon, Mass., close beside the main road to Boston, and has long been an object of curiosity to

passengers on the trolley-cars which pass by. The land in that section was owned at one time by a Mr. Porter, who erected the gate with the word "Porter" inserted. When the town of Avon established a water supply some of Mr. Porter's land was taken for that purpose. In the dispute that ensued he thought himself unfairly treated, and changed the word to "Equity" as a continual reminder of the injustice, real or fancied, which he suffered. The gate has stood unchanged for twenty years, bleached and weather-beaten, but still strong and serviceable, and is used almost daily.—Mr. F. Horace Moore, 67, West Ashland Street, Brockton, Mass., U.S.A.

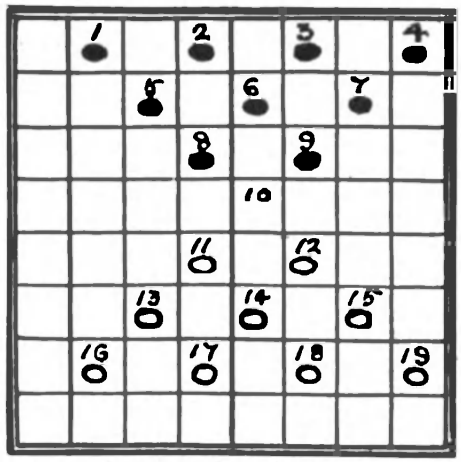


NOT A DERELICT.

I SEND you a photograph of my vessel, *Arctic Stream*, taken from a boat during a calm following a severe storm off Cape Horn. The sails are hauled up to prevent them being torn by the violent rolling of the ship. I put out boats occasionally in this sort of weather, as it affords practice under the probable conditions that would exist should we at any time have to abandon the ship. When this particular photograph was taken the ship was rolling rails under.—Captain Charles C. Dixon.

THE SWAFFHAM TINKER AND HIS DOG.

THESE two quaint figures are carved on the two top pews and reading-desk of Swaffham Church. According to legend the tinker had a dream, bidding him go to London Bridge and a stranger would reveal to him how to find a pot of money; so off he went with his dog, and at the bridge a stranger stopped him, saying, "Last night I had a dream, bidding me go to Swaffham and dig in such and such a place and there find a pot of money; but I don't believe in dreams." Then back went the tinker, dug for, and found the pot as described, and also an inscription bidding him dig deeper, which he did, and found another, and with them restored Swaffham Church. The carvings here represented were put up to perpetuate his memory.—Miss D. Smith, The Hospital, Swaffham.



TRANSPOSITION PROBLEM.

THE problem is to transpose two sets of draught-men by playing only upon the squares which are numbered. The moves are not confined to strict alternation—indeed, it would be impossible with that condition; but any number of moves with one colour may be played in succession. The moves are similar to those of the men in the game of draughts, but with the difference that the men hopped over are not removed from the board. The first few moves will illustrate what is meant: 9 to 10, 11 to 9, 13 to 11, 10 to 13, 12 to 10, 8 to 12, 5 to 8, 10 to 5, 15 to 10, 12 to 15, etc. The solution will be given next month.—Mr. J. Wallis, 51, Holsworthy Square, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.

A HUMAN PINCUSHION.

ON Romney Marshes, in Sussex, is to be found a man who is able to stick pins in any part of his body without causing himself pain. The photo-

graph shows Mr. W. Cooke, the human pincushion in question, with a lady's hat-pin through his right arm, one through his cheek, and a tie-pin stuck in his left arm. Are there any other instances of such insensibility to pain?—Mr. H. W. Ford-Lindsay, Clive Vale, Hastings.

NOT SO FIERCE AS HE LOOKS.

THOUGH this appears to be a photograph of a man smoking and drinking, it is only a tobacco-jar carved from the outer shell of a coco-nut. The hands are a pair of kid gloves, and the body was made from a pair of trousers and a sweater stuffed with pillows and rags. I also send you another photograph showing the head on a larger scale. — Mr. J. Riddick, 1,557, Fillmore Street, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

NEW USE FOR BROKEN BOTTLES.

THE farmers in a hop-growing section of Oregon built a farmers' telephone line out of such material as they happened to have at hand. The line was built of hop wire which had been used as trellis for the vines; and this was tied to the necks of bottles, which took the place of the ordinary glass or porcelain insulator. A large spike, with a leather head, fastened the neck of the bottle to the pole or cross-arm. —Mr. P. O'Gara, Assistant Pathologist, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

EDITORIAL CONFIDENCES.

As we anticipated, a great number of readers have written extolling Hall Caine's new story and assuring us that, in their estimation, it promises to be as enthralling as either "The Manxman" or "The Christian." The third instalment which appears in our February number fully bears out the prophecy we made when announcing the story. As one correspondent most aptly puts it—"the narrative is one to read and to heed." It may interest readers to know that Mr. Hall Caine has not only spent much of his life in Egypt, but also that he wrote a considerable portion of "The White Christ" on the banks of the Nile. The artist who is illustrating the story so effectively and vividly, Mr. R. Caton Woodville, the celebrated painter of battle pictures, is more than familiar with the scenes depicted in "The White Christ." Mr. Woodville's most noted canvases are The Death of General Sir Herbert Stewart and The Guards at Tel-el-Kebir, which were painted for the late Queen Victoria and which now hang on the walls of Windsor Castle. The artist, who is Commander of the Order of Medjidieh and of Daniello Montenegro, passed through the Turkish and Egyptian Wars of 1878 and 1882, during which time he contributed vivid and realistic pictures of the two campaigns to "The Illustrated London News" and other well-known publications. Mr. Woodville is taking an especial interest in illustrating "The White Christ" not only on account of the unique position which the author holds in the literary world but also because he is, in a way, revisiting the exciting scenes of his earlier life.

EMMA CALVÉ IN "CARMEN."
Photo. Copyright by A. Dupont, N. Y.

Our February number will be rich in fiction and articles of unusual interest. The color section should appeal to all lovers of the beautiful. It is entitled "The Favorite Portraits of Grand Opera Artistes" and will consist of eight full-page reproductions in duotone of the most famous and beautiful singers who are appearing, or who have appeared, at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. All these portraits have been made by Aimé Dupont, the celebrated photographic artist whose work is as well-known in Europe as it is on this continent. These portraits show the artistes in their most famous rôles and include such singers as Sembrich, Calvé, Nordica, Fremstadt, Farrar, Eames, Homer, etc. They are printed in a very effective, subdued tone on highly calendared paper, each portrait being surrounded by an artistic border. The reproductions are quite worthy of being framed and will prove an equal delight to all who have and all who have not heard these famous singers. To add to the interest of the series the portraits have been selected as being the favorites of the distinguished artistes themselves. No lover of music should fail to secure this unique and beautiful collection of portraits.

Another interesting item which will be found in the February number is one entitled "My Reminiscences," which is written by the famous comedian, Mr. Harry Lauder. Mr. Lauder, as many readers may be aware, rose from the position of pit-boy in the coal-mines to that of the most celebrated and highly paid vaudeville artist in the world. He is that *rara avis* a born humorist and is known throughout America as "the man who made King Edward laugh." Lauder writes his own songs and composes the music, and by means of them and an inimitable personality has made millions feel happy. He has had many queer experiences and he commences to tell them in next month's STRAND with his dry Scotch humor which compels laughter. These "Reminiscences" will appeal to everyone who is sufficiently young in heart to enjoy a good laugh and we congratulate our readers as well as ourselves in their publication.

We have been for some time now endeavoring to make our fiction as bright and humorous as possible, for we are fully convinced that mournful and tragic stories, while they probably do no harm to the strong-minded, are apt to render the sensitive somewhat morbid and depressed. There is enough sadness in the world without serving it up in our fiction, and so we shall try to give our readers as much humorous writing as possible. Real humorous stories are not easy to get—in fact they are the rarest of all fiction—but in Morley Roberts' "The Mad Hatter" will be found a story brimful of funny situations. It is not, perhaps, wise to give the plot of a future story, but

MR. HARRY LAUDER.

MR. MORLEY ROBERTS.

we may take our readers into our confidence to the extent of saying that the "mad hatter" is a contributor to a magazine who, in his fury at having his contributions rejected, determines to get even with the editor. He very nearly does so in a series of amazing and ridiculous adventures.

Other fiction in our February number will include stories by the gifted Arthur Morrison, Frank Savile, Austin Phillips and E. Nesbit. All these are excellently illustrated by the best artists. The two popular series, "English Homes and Gardens," and "The Comic Side of Crime" will be continued.

An article which is sure to appeal to a very wide circle of readers is one entitled, "The Best Attested Ghost Stories." Since a certain celebrated English scientist declared that he not only believed in ghosts, but had seen them, many people have come forward to back up the scientist's assertion by recounting "real" ghost stories. Most of these cannot, of course, be credited, but the Society of Psychical Research has been collecting for twenty years true evidence of phantasms, and from this evidence the writer of the article recounts six ghost stories which have impressed him most "by their simplicity, their directness, and by the triumphant success with which their narrators have withstood searching cross-examination." A foreword to the article will give readers some idea of the value of these "Best Attested Ghost Stories." "In every case," says the writer, "the seer of ghosts has been a normal individual not given to crotchets or delusions, and bearing an excellent character for veracity. I might have chosen the spectres seen by Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge and other persons of note, but I have preferred to leave the mediumistic séance severely alone, and to find my examples outside the professed and professing circles of spiritualism and in the walks of everyday life and people." We may add that should readers of the six instances of authenticated ghost stories related in our next number know of any better authenticated we should be very glad to be put in possession of their testimony. Do not, however, send your own ghost stories until you have read these.

This present number of the STRAND contains an article on "The World's Best Puzzles," and we have no doubt that many readers will endeavor to solve them. In our next number the writer, Professor Dudeney, gives the solutions which are no less interesting than the puzzles themselves. We should be glad to hear from readers who have endeavored to solve these "best puzzles," and to learn in how many they were successful.

Two other articles of value and interest will be found in our next number, the first being one entitled "Bills of Birds," illustrated by that wonderful natural history artist, J. A. Shepherd. Is a bird, regardless of anatomy and physiology, a higher being than a beast? The author of the article declares that it is, for, says he, "no beast soars and sings to its sweetheart; no beast remains in lifelong partnership with the wife of its youth; no beast builds itself a summer-house and decks it with feathers and bright shells. A beast is a grovelling denizen of the earth; a bird is a free citizen of the air." "Bills of Birds" is a nature article which will charm and delight all who take an interest in the natural things of life.

The second article to which we referred is called "The Experiences of a Conjurer," and is written by Horace Goldin, a past master in the art. Mr. Goldin has performed a good deal in the presence of European royalties and he is usually engaged when any little prince or princess belonging to the Imperial and Royal families is permitted the privilege of "giving a party." Mr. Goldin has frequently had the honor of "puzzling royalty" (though possibly Royalty is no more difficult to puzzle than the average commoner) and he relates in an amusing and interesting way how he accomplished this. The article is fully illustrated.

Just a word before concluding these "Editorial Confidences." We are endeavoring as far as possible to give our readers the best magazine in the world—and the STRAND is known practically in every quarter of the globe—and we would ask them to assist us in our efforts to double its present great circulation by mentioning the publication to their friends whenever the opportunity occurs. A year's subscription to the STRAND makes an ideal gift to a friend. Why? Because you will come into his or her thoughts every time it is received. In a word the STRAND MAGAZINE is the greatest thing in the world to keep one's memory green. Try it.

MR. ARTHUR MORRISON.

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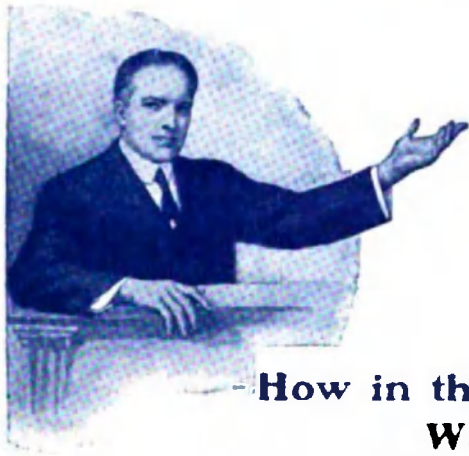

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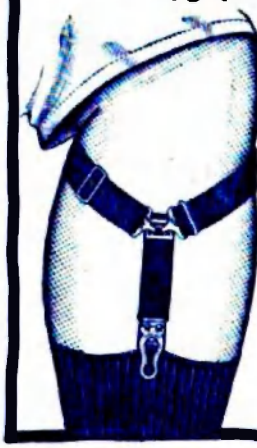

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