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Details supplied by Denny Lien.

- 211 · The Story of the Hudson River · Phillips McClure · ar
- 220 · The War in Zululand · Robert T. Hardy, Jr. · ar
- 224 · Over Africa [Part 1 of 8] · William Murray Graydon · sl
- 235 · The Tic Tac · Anna Leach · ss
- 238 · Chasing the Swordfish · George Ethelbert Walsh · ar
- 240 · The Iron Chancellor · Gilbert N. Marks · bg; on Bismarck.
- 245 · William Tell · Samuel N. Parks · bg
- 247 · The London Zoo · George Holme · ar
- 255 · Out with the Circus [Part 2 of 2] · Matthew White, Jr. · sl
- 261 · In the Woods · F. H. Sweet · pm *The Independent*
- 262 · Nadir Singh's Cavern · Fred A. Nelson · ss
- 268 · A Song of June Time · Anon. · pm *Atlanta Constitution*
- 269 · Andy Grant's Pluck [Part 3 of 6] · Horatio Alger, Jr. · sl
- 279 · Pedro's Luck · Edward S. Ellis · ss
- 283 · Not Without Honor [Part 4 of 6] · William D. Moffat · sl
- 293 · Correspondence · [The Readers] · lc
- 294 · Quaint and Curious · Anon. · cl
- 296 · Qualities That Win · Anon. · cl
- 298 · The World of Science · Anon. · cl
- 300 · Floating Fun · [Various] · hu
- 302 · The Editor's Corner · [The Editor] · cl; presumably by Matthew White, Jr.
- 304 · Stamp Department · Anon. · cl

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View from the Narrows, near West Point.

THE ARGOSY.

VOL. XX. JUNE, 1895. No. 3.

THE STORY OF THE HUDSON RIVER.

Historic associations and legendary tales of the Rhine of America—A stream bristling with mementos of Colonial and Revolutionary days.

By Phillips McClure.

FROM the day in 1609 that Hendrik Hudson anchored his brave little ship, the Half Moon, in the bay at the mouth of "the beautiful river," the story which has followed the stream has been picturesque with romance and stirring adventure.

From the lofty mountains which stand about its head waters, to the Narrows through which it passes into the sea, every stream and valley along its banks has its tale to tell. Cooper has peopled the upper Hudson, and Washington Irving the lower, with the children of their fertile brains.

Take a steamboat from New York to Albany, and from its deck almost all the historic spots are visible. One can stop here and there reading the early history of his country in its most characteristic phases by the landmarks he sees.

Just across the river from New York in Hoboken is Castle Point. It was here that the Hackensack Indians had their fort and

The Poughkeepsie Bridge.

Moonlight View from Kingsley Point, Tarrytown.

council house. There was always a feud between them and the Dutch on Manhattan Island, and one night the Hollanders slipped over the river and made an attack.

The fight drew nearer and nearer the edge of the cliff, until many of the combatants were driven over the edge, to perish in the icy waters below.

This attack fired the anger of the Indians in the interior, and plunged the country in one of the bitterest Indian wars the colonists ever suffered.

A little above Castle Point lie the old Elysian Fields, where the beaux and belles of Manhattan went on summer evenings to walk and talk, and escape the heat of the town.

Not far from the old fashionable park, at Weehawken, there is a sort of armchair formed of stone in the hillside. It was just here that Aaron Burr shot Alexander Hamilton in a duel.

On the city side of the river, overlooking the Harlem, is the old Jumel Mansion, where Aaron Burr at one time lived. During the Revolution this historic old colonial mansion was the home of Roger Morris.

Morris had been Washington's comrade in arms during Braddock's fight, but at this time he was a loyalist. He had married, too, Washington's early sweetheart, Mary Phillipse.

About a mile above this home on Washington Heights the Americans had built a fort called Fort Washington, and garrisoned it with a thousand men. The tories and British, in the autumn of 1776, attacked this stronghold of the Colonists and pressed it so strongly that Washington, watching the struggle from Fort Lee on the other side of the river, took General Putnam and General Greene and crossed over to give assistance, first seeking the house of his old friend Morris.

He found that the family had fled, and the general was making a hurried survey of the field preparatory to sallying out when the pretty young wife of a Pennsylvania soldier, who was following the army as a vivandière, ran up to Washington, and, regardless of his rank, pulled him by the sleeve and whispered a sentence to him.

Washington gave the word to mount instantly, and the Americans fairly ran their horses to the boats.

The sharp eyes of the young woman had seen a regiment of British, whose spies had discovered the whereabouts of the American general, creeping up the heights.

Above Washington Heights is Spuyten Duyvel Creek. In his "Knickerbocker History of New York," Irving says that it received its name from Anthony Van Corlear, who was the great and jolly and reckless trumpeter of Manhattan Island in the early Dutch days.

Once he was obliged to cross this stream in spring when a freshet was sweeping down. They warned him that it would be

death to try it, but Anthony, with his brave trumpet, started out, crying that he would cross it in spite of the devil—"Spuytden Duyvel."

When he reached the middle of the stream it is supposed that the devil caught him, for he blew a blast on his trumpet and sank forever, taking away one of the most interesting characters in the stories of those early days, and naming the creek.

Above Yonkers is the old Phillipse manor house. It was here that Mary Phillipse, who was the daughter of the noble Bohemian who settled here in 1682, was courted by Washington, and rejected him for young Morris. Her wedding was one of the grandest social events in colonial history, bringing together all the great Americans of that day.

The marriage took place under a scarlet canopy embroidered in gold with the Phillipse coat of arms. The legend runs that just as the ceremony was over a tall Indian in a scarlet blanket appeared at the door and said,

"When the eagle takes the lion's mane, then fortune will leave this house."

Twenty years later, the Americans confiscated the Phillipse lands because they were tories, and Washington made the headquarters of the Continental army in the house that his old sweetheart received as her dowry. So the prediction was fulfilled.

There are the stones of old fortresses built in defiance of the Indians all up the Hudson.

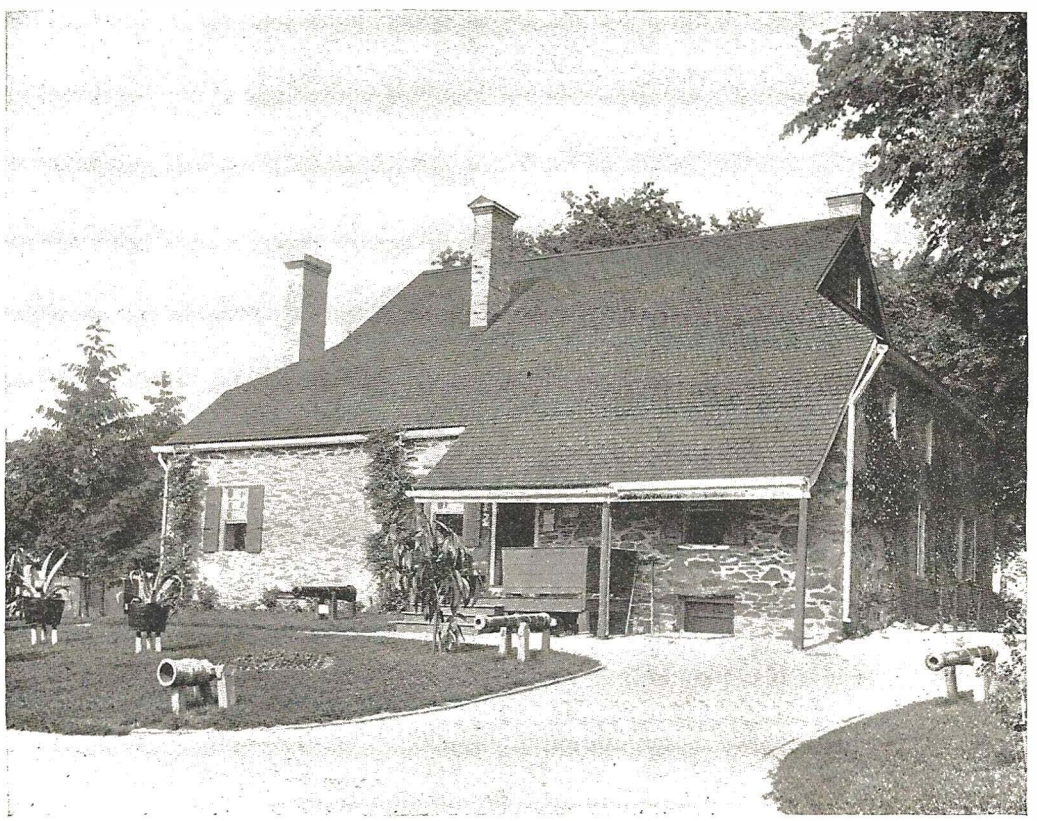
Washington Irving's home, "Sunnyside," was erected on the site of one of these old forts called "Rebel Nest," and still contains part of the original walls.

The Tappan Zee, which stretches out wide in the river opposite "Sunnyside," possesses a legend of its own. It is said that a certain young Dutchman named Van Dam had been dancing and frolicking all Saturday night on the wrong side of the river. When he finally started to cross, he was told that it was too near Sunday for a God fearing young man to be rowing on the river. He replied he would cross if it took him a month of Sundays.

The legend runs that he is rowing yet. Certain it is that he never landed, and boating parties going out on Saturday night are warned that they must not stay too late or they may hear the sound of ghostly oars.

Sleepy Hollow, where Irving's headless horseman rides, is just above Tarrytown. Across the river from Tarrytown is the place where poor young Major André was executed.

André, although he was only twenty nine, was the favorite officer and friend of



Washington's Headquarters, Newburgh.

Sir Henry Clinton. He was an artist, a poet, and a gentleman, whose zeal in duty tightened cords about him which destroyed him. But his memory has been kept green even in the hearts of his foes. In addition to the monument which King George the Third erected over his body in Westminster Abbey, there is a beautiful statue of André in Tarrytown.

Benedict Arnold was a traitor for money, but André was a spy for his country. The bribe which was offered Arnold for betraying his country was a commission as general in the British army and fifty thousand dollars in gold.

For more than a year before he was discovered he carried on a correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton, giving him details of the movements of the Americans. Sir Henry Clinton did not trust Arnold, and, when the time came for André to be sent to make personal negotiations, Sir Henry put his hand on the young man's shoulder and said to him,

"Do not allow yourself to be put in the position of a spy. Do not go within the enemies' lines or carry any papers, or disguise yourself."

But Arnold took the young man within the sentry lines before André knew where he was, and when the conference was over, gave him papers to put in his boots, and at last André was forced to disguise himself to escape. He had gone to the rendezvous in his scarlet uniform.

André was within sight of the British lines when he was captured by American militiamen and the papers found. He was sent to General Washington.

According to the rules of war André should have been hanged at once as a spy, but his rank and his personal charm were such that every effort was made to save him, even by the Americans.

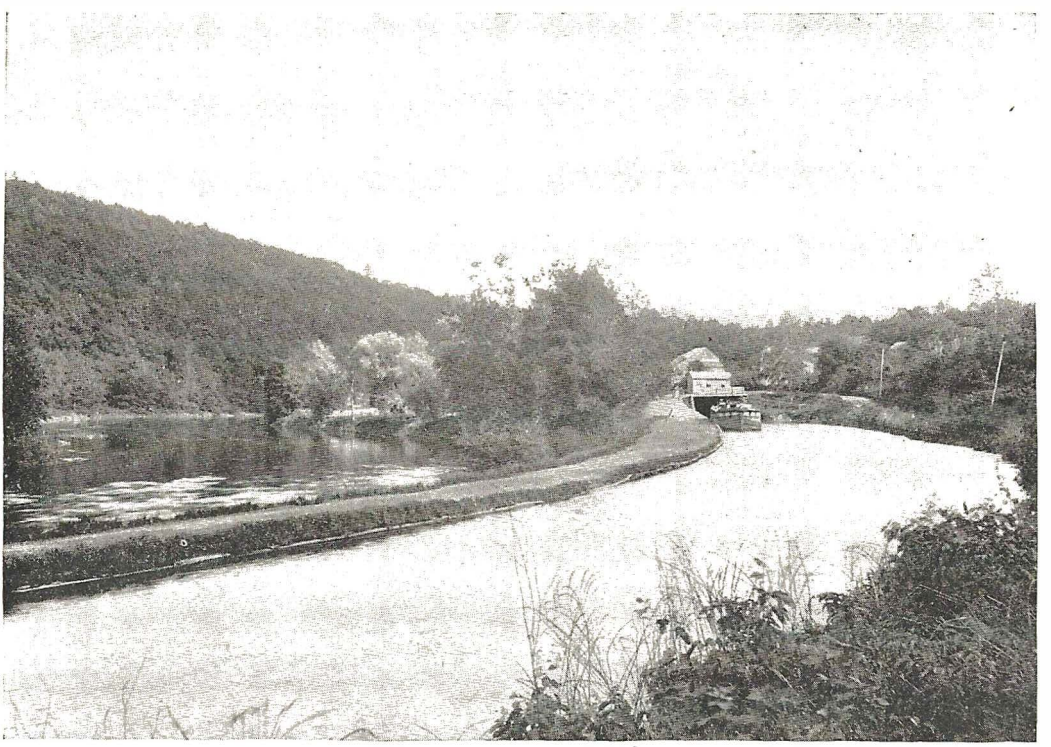
It is said that General Washington was so afraid that his own sense of duty and resolution would waver if he came under the personal influence of the young officer that he refused to see him.

André was reconciled to his death, but deplored the manner of it. It was a terrible fate for a British officer, to be hanged from a gibbet. He sent an affecting appeal to General Washington, asking that he at least might die a soldier's death, by being shot.

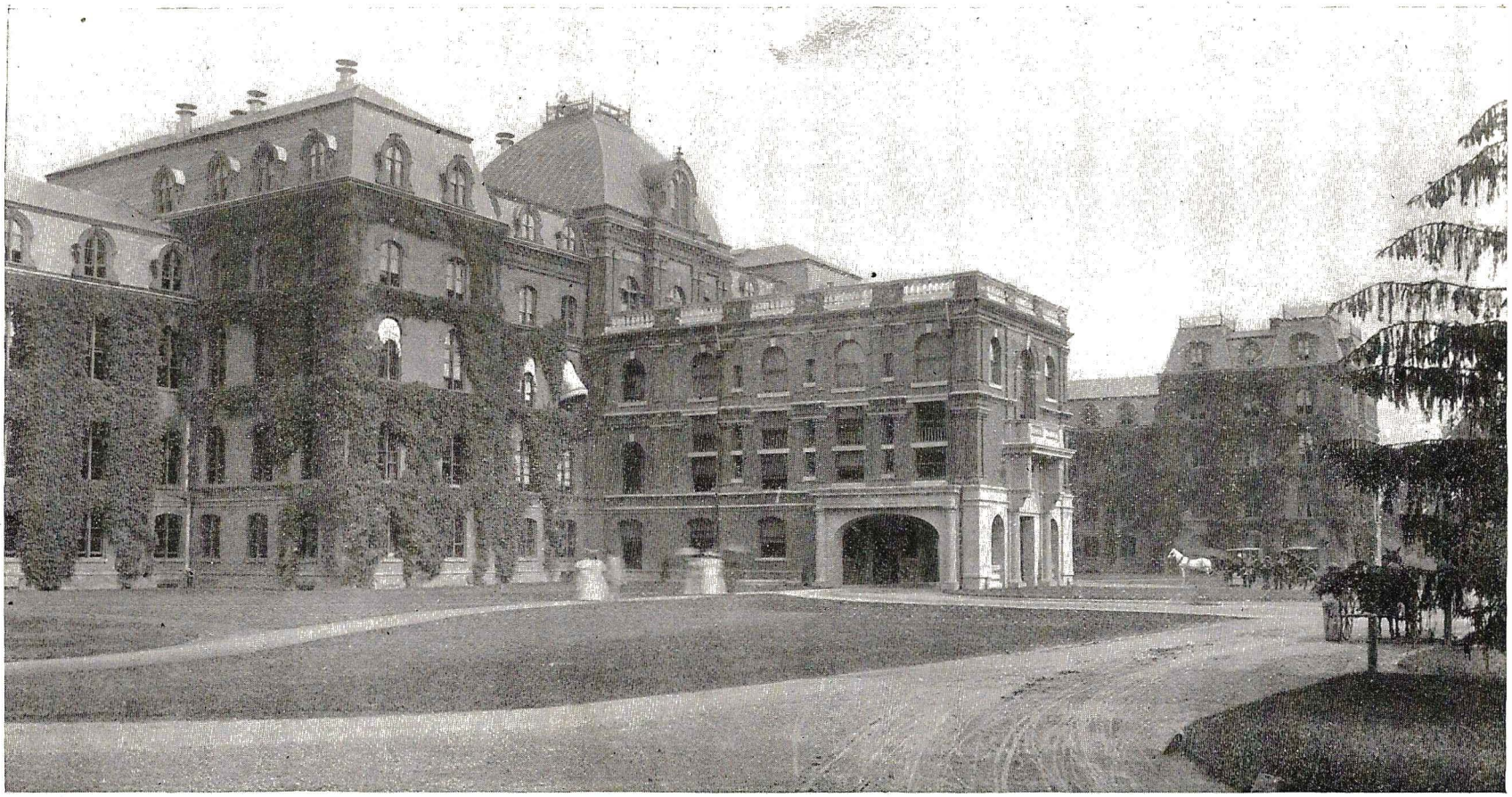
Washington did not answer the letter at all, and André supposed his wish was granted until he saw the gallows before him. Then his heart almost failed. But he met his death like the brave and honest gentleman he was.

All the English army went into mourning for him. His executioner was a tory, for not an American soldier would perform the duty.

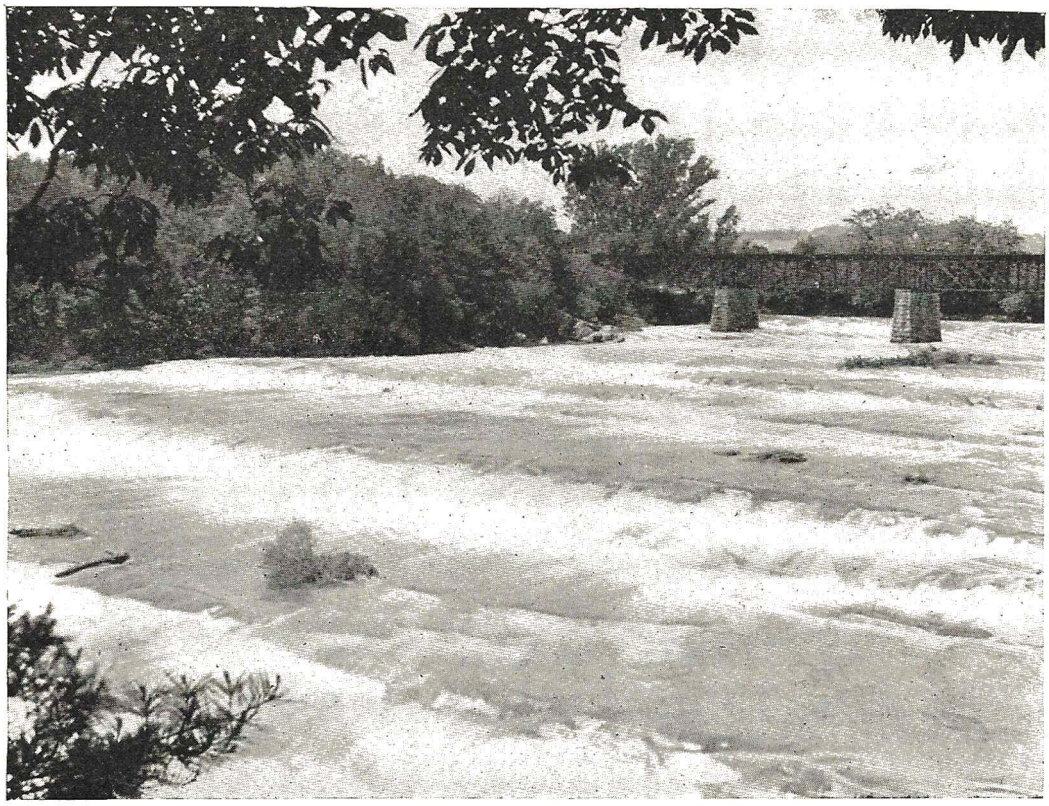
Stony Point, which was one of the places



Rondout Creek and the Delaware and Hudson Canal.



Vassar College, Poughkeepsie.



Gleneerie Falls, Esopus Creek.

taken and retaken during the Revolution, is near Haverstraw Bay. Clinton built a fort there, and Washington sent "Mad Anthony" Wayne to capture it.

"Can you take the fort by assault?" asked Washington.

"I'll storm the Inferno if you wish it, general."

"Try Stone Point first," Washington said drily.

The dogs in the neighborhood were all killed so that there might be no alarm given, and in the middle of the July night the Americans crept up and were upon the very sentinels of the fort before an alarm could be sent out.

The next day the British cannon were on their way to West Point, where they may be seen today.

Opposite Peekskill is Thunder Mountain, whence the storms sweep down in the summer. Tradition has it that a little Dutch goblin orders these gusts.

An old Dutch skipper of the early days said that once when he was sailing through the squall he saw the goblin perched on his bowsprit. The good dominie from Esopus happened to be on board, and he sang a pious hymn. The goblin flew off at the sound, taking the dominie's wife's nightcap, which he hung on the steeple of Esopus Church, to that lady's mortification.

A good many years ago an anchor chain brought up an iron cannon from the river under the mountain. Some speculative spirit suggested that it might be a cannon from Captain Kidd's pirate ship, which had been sunk there, and on the spur of the moment he made up a company to build a coffer dam about the supposed ship, pump out the water, and get the treasure. One New York merchant put twenty thousand dollars in the venture.

For months money and time were spent, until faith and money gave out, and the speculator was a rich man on his commissions.

Anthony's Nose, just opposite, is said to be so called because it resembles the great nose of Anthony Van Corlear, the trumpeter.

There is, too, an old Dutch legend that upon one occasion the great nosed and jovial trumpeter was sailing up the stream with the governor in his boat as the spring shad ran down.

A venturesome fish came near the surface and was instantly killed by a sunbeam reflected from Anthony's brilliant nose.

Lake Sinnipink, above Thunder Mountain and Anthony's Nose, is called Bloody Pond, on account of a great battle which took place here between the English and Americans in 1717. The Americans were defeated and compelled to flee to the mountains, but before leaving they set fire to their five ships, making a great conflagration.

André Monument, Tarrytown.

Dutch Inn at Kingston. Built in 1716.

This let the British through the boom and chain stretched across the river, and left them free to fire and ransack many of the great mansions on the Hudson.

West Point, toward which the ambitions of so many boys are turned, is full of romantic interest, but its story has already been told in THE ARGOSY. (July and August, 1894.)

Newburgh is situated on a steep slope. Hendrik Hudson, who saw the locality in 1609, wrote of it: "It is as beautiful a land as one can tread upon; a very pleasant place to build a town on."

At that time it belonged to the Delaware Indians. These were conquered by the German Lutherans, who called the place "The Palatine Parish of Quassaic." But when the Scotch came in they named it Newburgh from Newburg on the Tay.

General Washington had his headquarters here in 1782–3. The house where he lived has been made into a national museum, where Revolutionary relics are kept.

It was at Newburgh that the tired, brave, ragged, but victorious Continental army was mustered out, and it was here that the celebrated "Newburgh letters" were written, which called upon the country to make Washington king of America. Washington summoned the officers, and made them an address, denouncing the movement as folly, and so put an end to it.

Poughkeepsie, where the beautiful cantalever bridge springs across the river like a piece of lace, is the home of Vassar College. It was the thought of a woman, if a man did endow it. Lydia Booth, Matthew Vassar's niece, was a hard working school teacher, who conceived the plan of such a girl's school. Matthew Vassar was a brewer, who began his business by making three barrels of ale at a time, because he could afford no more. He was a rich man of seventy in 1861, when he gave four hundred thousand dollars to found a college, and he planned it as carefully as he had planned his business venture, so that it has been a great success.

The Kingston of today is the old Dutch village of Wilt Wick chartered by Governor Stuyvesant in 1661. Besides the remains of Dutch quaintness, it has had more than one word in national affairs. The first constitution of New York was adopted here in 1777, and the Legislature assembled only to be dispersed by a bombardment under Sir Henry Clinton.

Rondout is now a part of Kingston. The lovely little creek which flows through it, has been almost ruined by the great Delaware and Hudson Canal, which is bringing the city vast quantities of coal and stone.

Saugerties, one of the loveliest spots on the river, is the Falling Waters village of "Rip Van Winkle." It was in the hills

behind that Hendrik Hudson and his crew rolled their ghostly ninepins.

The river flows by old manor houses full of stories and by new ones telling of the wealth of the country all the way to Albany.

The Dutch traditions have so completely died down in New York, that we never see a Dutch house, or have anything to remind us of the days when New Amsterdam was a little town of gabled houses whose Dutch bricks formed a checkerboard under the eaves. But many of the old Dutch houses are still standing along the banks of the Hudson.

Some of them are manors built by the early merchants for country residences. One of these has still over the door the sword of one of the great Indian chiefs of two hundred years ago. He was a friend of the head of the house of that day, and perhaps owed the possession of the sword to the manor lord's kindness in the first place. The family, which is one of the oldest and best known in New York today, looks with superstitious awe upon the old sword, believing that when it falls, the fortunes of the house will go with it. They are very careful to see that it is securely fastened.

In this same house there is a ghostly legend which almost equals that of Rip Van Winkle's famous Hendrik Hudson men, and the Goblin of Thunder Mountain. The story goes that when an heir is born to the family there is given an infallible sign of his future fortune.

If they will closely watch at midnight, they will see three goblins appear on the kitchen floor to celebrate the joyous event. The fortune of the new heir depends upon the lavishness of their celebration. If he is to be wealthy, they light six candles; if he is to be moderately well off, three; if poor, none at all.

If they light six candles and then oil the boards of the floor with butter, that they may have a skipping ground, they have grown reckless, and the new heir can afford to let his friends indulge themselves.

The goblin legends are most carefully preserved wherever they crop out along the Hudson. At Saugerties in one of the show places, where a park has been constructed the Hendrik Hudson men show themselves on every side.

They are statues made of terra cotta and painted, but after you have listened for hours to goblin stories it is startling to see one grinning from behind a tree, his hand on the trunk, and an eye full of mischief, or to see another sitting cross legged on a stump, evidently thinking over the changes that have come to his old home.

Battle Monument, Schuylerville.

THE WAR IN ZULULAND.

England's memorable struggle with the most warlike race of the Dark Continent —How the Prince Imperial of France fell a victim to Zulu assegais.

By Robert T. Hardy, Jr.

SIR GARNET WOLSELEY, the great English general, claims that the British soldier is the best in the world. As he is himself a British soldier, this is not particularly modest, and we are not going to agree with him; though it is undeniable that the achievements of "Tommy Atkins" place him second to none. "Whilst European armies can only gain some insight into war with the blank ammunition fired during autumn maneuvers," Wolseley says, "Queen Victoria's soldiers learn their lesson with ball cartridge fired in real warfare, and with almost annually recurring regularity."

Louis Napoleon, Prince Imperial of France.

And, truth to tell, Great Britain is seldom at peace with the world. With possessions in every corner of the globe, and with the countless millions of barbarous and semi-civilized people over whom she claims suzerainty, or whose dominions adjoin hers, it is hard to see how things could be otherwise, particularly when one considers her customary high handedness in dealing with weaker nations, as exemplified by the Nicaraguan and Venezuelan disputes of today.

And woe to the picayune power that ventures to cross swords with the doughty Briton! To such a conflict there can be but one termination.

Of all the numerous petty wars in which England has been engaged during the past fifty years, that with the Zulus in 1879 was the one from which she emerged with the least credit.

For twenty years the Zulus and the colonists of Natal and the Transvaal had dwelt amicably side by side. Cetewayo, the Zulu king, foresaw the result of a struggle with the all conquering Britons, and wisely refrained from giving the latter any cause for complaint. But English eyes were covetously focused on the fertile plains of Zululand, and the owners of those eyes longed for an excuse to take possession of the tempting land.

Sir Bartle Frere, the governor of Natal, regarded the presence of such a powerful nation as the Zulus as a constant menace to British interests in South Africa; and so when some of Cetewayo's Swazi vassals made a raid into territory claimed by the whites he immediately imposed obligations on the sable monarch with which it was practically impossible to comply.

The Defense of Rorke's Drift.

From the painting by Alphonse de Neuville.

In vain did Cetewayo disclaim all responsibility for the covert acts of his unruly subjects, and profess his willingness to make atonement. An invasion of Zululand was promptly decided upon by Lord Chelmsford, and a British force was sent thither without delay.

On the very borders of Zululand lies Rorke's Drift, on the Buffalo River, and here a small garrison was left while the rest of the British forces pushed on into the interior.

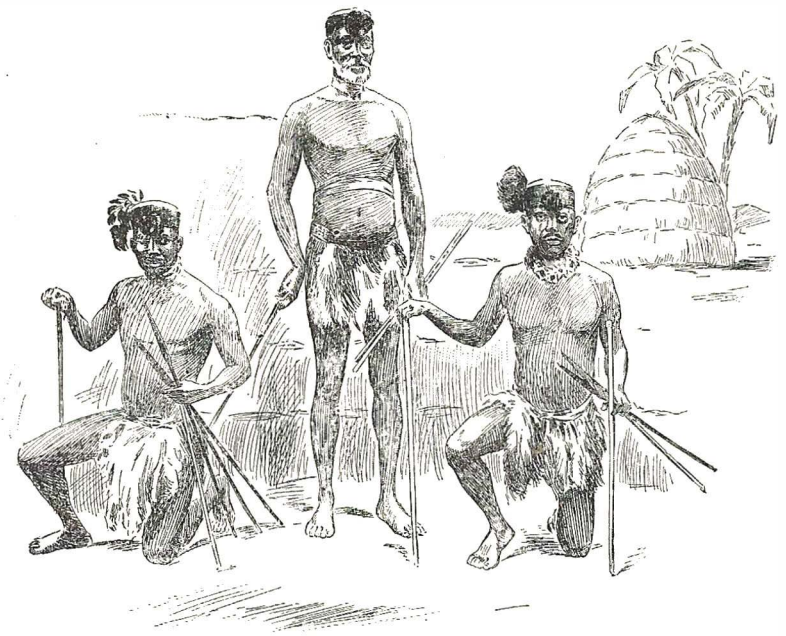
A strong detachment of troops was stationed at Isandhlwana. The position was a peculiarly exposed one, but the resistance met with up to that time had been of so trivial a character that the invaders had conceived a hearty contempt for their dusky antagonists, and no effort was made to entrench the camp, nor was any capable system of scouting adopted.

The wily Zulu king, forced into war by the invasion of his territory, quietly gathered his warriors, and descended upon the forces at Isandhlwana like a thunderclap out of a clear sky.

Outnumbered twenty to one, the gallant band stood shoulder to shoulder, and defended themselves as only men can when life itself is at stake. The blacks fell in swaths, but the odds were too great, and the British column was utterly annihilated. Such a slaughter is only paralleled in modern times by the massacre at the Alamo during the Texans' struggle for independence, and by the battle of the Little Big Horn, where the gallant Custer fell a victim to the red man's prowess and his own rash bravery.

The victorious Zulus next turned their attention to Rorke's Drift, but this position was a stronger one, and had been strengthened by the erection of earthworks. With horrid yells the savages advanced to the attack, but each assault was met by well directed volleys, which even the discipline of the Zulus could not withstand.

With that total disregard for life which is peculiar to all fanatics, Cetewayo's warriors charged again and again. The struggle frequently became a hand to hand one, and the dusky warriors learned the potency of the bayonet when wielded by sturdy Anglo Saxon arms.



Zulu Warriors.

Drawn from a photograph.

At one end of the British position stood a mission house, which was utilized by the besieged as a hospital. During the engagement it was fired, and only for the unflinching bravery of their comrades a large number of wounded would have met death in the flames.

Had the Zulus succeeded in penetrating into the defenses, the fate of the beleaguered garrison would in all probability have been sealed, and a strong effort was made by them to effect an entrance by battering in the door of the burning building. It looked for a few moments as if their ruse might succeed. Hard pressed in other directions the majority of the defenders were insensible to the critical state of affairs in the improvised hospital.

While a few of their comrades assisted the wounded to a place of comparative

safety, two soldiers sprang to the demolished door as it crashed inward. On either side one took his stand, and as fast as the foe passed the portal they were promptly bayonetted. In a brief while the building had been cleared, and the fire had made such headway that it precluded all danger of invasion from that quarter, so the intrepid fellows rejoined their comrades in safety.

The attack was continued until after midnight, but in the early morning a strong force of British arrived, and the little garrison was saved.

For a time the Zulus succeeded in holding their own, but heavy reinforcements from England arrived, and Lord Chelmsford and Sir Garnet Wolseley both entered vigorously upon the work of crushing their erstwhile despised antagonists.

Early in April the Prince Imperial came to Natal from England, and by request was appointed aide-de-camp to Lord Chelmsford. Staff duty proved irksome to the restless young officer, however, and he applied for active service.

He was allowed to join a reconnoissance into Zululand, and while there accompanied a small party on outpost duty. After traveling a considerable distance without seeing any signs of the enemy, they came to a deserted kraal, where the still smoldering embers of a fire indicated a recent occupation. They stopped here to rest a while, and just as they were preparing to return, a large band of Zulus appeared and opened fire on them.

The prince's steed became unmanageable, and he found it impossible to mount. As the rest of the party galloped away, he made a final effort to swing himself into the saddle by means of the holster strap, but it gave way, and the next moment the foe was upon him. When his body was recovered the next day it bore eighteen assegai stabs, all in front, and these and the marks on the ground near by were mute witnesses of the struggle he had made before being overpowered.

The campaign against Cetewayo was now pushed more vigorously than ever. The Zulus gathered in force at Ulundi, where the king's kraals were located, and there made a last stand. A terrific battle ensued, which culminated in the utter defeat of the Zulus.

For a while thereafter a desultory warfare was kept up, but finally a detachment of British troops under Lord Gifford succeeded in capturing Cetewayo, and the blacks were glad to sue for peace.

For several years the captured king was held in Cape Colony, and then he was taken to England, where he attracted considerable attention. He was a tall, finely proportioned man in his youth, with enormous chest and arms. During his detention, however, the sedentary life he led, combined with intemperate habits, produced its usual effect, and his athletic figure became fat and ungainly. His face was of the pronounced negro type, yet imperious and forbidding in expression. He was dignified, but affable, and made numerous

Lord Chelmsford, Commander of the British forces in the Zulu War.

friends during his stay in London. An effort was made to reinstate him as king of the Zulus later, but he had lost his prestige, and had to take refuge from the hostile chiefs in British territory. He died in 1884.

Since the war of 1879 the English have had little or no trouble with the Zulus, but not a year has passed since then but has witnessed collisions between the Queen's troops and various native tribes. The last of any importance was with the Matabele about a year and a half ago. These people are similar in many respects to the Zulus, and are quite as formidable.

The rash attempt of Captain Wilson to capture the king, Lo Bengula, and the subsequent massacre of himself and the thirty five men with him, the details of which are too fresh to require repetition here, revived memories of Isandhlwana. Probably half the little troop might have escaped by riding away upon the sound horses, but not a man would desert his fellows.

There is no more touching scene in the annals of any country than this handful of heroes' fight to the death against such fearful odds. It is a pity British officers cannot learn that discretion is indeed the better part of valor sometimes. Men of the stamp of Captain Wilson and his brave comrades can ill be spared by any nation.

The carved figure was evidently intended for a human representation. It possessed a truly diabolical cast of features, and around its thick neck the grappling anchor had fastened itself securely.

OVER AFRICA.

By William Murray Graydon,

Author of "Under Africa," "The Sun God's Secret," etc.

PROLOGUE.

MR. ROBERT SCUDAMORE, the head of the well known publishing house of Scudamore & Co., was sitting in the luxuriously furnished library of his handsome residence on Madison Avenue. He was smoking a cigar and watching, through the curling wreaths of smoke, a clock standing on the table in front of him, the hands of which pointed to half past seven.

At twenty minutes to eight a bell was heard to peal faintly, and as the publisher took a final whiff at his cigar and dropped it into a brass ash receiver the library door was thrown open and a tall, well built young fellow entered.

He carried a light derby in one hand and a silver headed cane in the other. His cheeks had the ruddy glow of health, his eyes and hair were brown, and a slight mustache of the same color was visible on his upper lip.

Mr. Scudamore advanced to meet him with extended arms.

"My dear Hector," he exclaimed gladly, "I am delighted to see you. How well you are looking! Hard study has not injured you in the least. And today you are to be doubly congratulated—you have finished your college course and you are twenty one years of age."

Hector laughingly accepted these congratulations, and placing his hat and cane on the table, dropped into an easy chair beside them.

The publisher resumed his seat. His countenance had grown suddenly grave, and after watching his companion in silence for a moment or two, he took another cigar from his table drawer and lit it.

"You have had a wearisome ride," he remarked abruptly, "and no doubt you are both tired and hungry. Dinner will be served in half an hour, and in the mean time, Hector, I have something of importance to tell you."

Hector looked up quickly, surprised at his guardian's voice and manner.

"It is just eighteen years," resumed Mr. Scudamore reflectively, "since your father, Ralph Haldane, came to my office, one sultry summer day, and requested employment. He was then about thirty years of age. You, today, Hector, have his features, his voice, his manner—everything is the same. A brief interview satisfied me that he was a man of culture and education—one accustomed to move in the upper circles of society. He maintained a haughty reserve during our conversation, and I soon discovered that he was unwilling to speak of his past life. In spite of this I was favorably impressed. I conceived a liking for him on the spot, and offered him an editorial position in our publishing house.

"That step I never had cause to regret. Ralph Haldane speedily made himself invaluable to us, and in losing him I felt as though I had lost a brother."

Mr. Scudamore paused, and a tear was seen to glisten in his eye.

"I hardly know why I am telling this, Hector," he resumed a moment later, "for you know it by heart. However, this is merely preliminary to something which you do not know. Intimate as I was with your father, Hector, for seven long years I did not know of your existence. I did not even know where Ralph Haldane lived; far less did I suspect him of having a son.

"Your father entered our employ in 1867. In the spring of 1874 it was rumored that an exploring expedition, which had started to cross Africa from east to west several years before, was approaching the coast. In the interests of our weekly publication our firm considered the advisability of sending a representative to meet the expedition, and Ralph Haldane eagerly volunteered his services. After mature reflection, his offer was accepted.

"On the evening before he sailed, your father came to see me in this very room, Hector, and confided to me the secret which he had so zealously guarded for seven long years—that he had a son ten years old, a boy whom he loved dearly and from whom he hated to part.

"Your father begged me to care for you in his absence. He intrusted to me quite a sum of money—which was no doubt in his possession when I first knew him—a small pasteboard box, carefully sealed, and an envelope bearing your name. This letter your father seemed to consider especially valuable.

"'Take good care of this,' he said when he handed it to me, 'and if any disaster befalls me, open it, and follow the instructions contained therein.'

"I promised all that he wished—to care for you as I would for my own son—and the next day Ralph Haldane sailed for Africa with a lighter heart.

"You know what happened then, Hector. I found you at the address your father had given me—a gloomy building in a gloomier neighborhood, away off on the west side of the city. At first you grieved deeply for your father. He had been your only friend, and all you knew he had taught you himself in the evenings. I brought you home to my own family, sent you to school, and cared for you as well as I knew how——"

"You did, Mr. Scudamore; God bless you for it," said Hector fervently, turning a grateful face to his benefactor.

"You remember what followed," continued Mr. Scudamore. "In July of that year our publishing house was partially destroyed by fire, and two days later came the sad news concerning your father—the discovery of a portion of the balloon Mercury, in which he had ascended from Cape Lopez, floating on a tributary of the river Niger. That occurred just eleven years ago, and to this day no trace has been discovered of your father or of his one companion—a native of Cape Lopez. Both perished beyond a doubt.

"I have still something to tell you. The paper your father gave me I placed in the little safe at the office, and it was consumed in the flames. Every vestige of your identity is lost—no, there still remains this slight clue."

Mr. Scudamore took a tiny gold locket from a drawer and handed it to his companion. With trembling fingers Hector touched a visible spring and it flew open, revealing in one side a tiny coil of golden hair and in the other a small portrait, exquisitely painted on ivory, of a beautiful girl, not more than twenty years of age.

"My mother?" exclaimed Hector questioningly.

"So I would suppose," replied the publisher. "That is what the small packet contained. The secret of the lost letter will probably never be known. I was convinced from the beginning that your father was an Englishman, and what strengthens my belief is this: At our last interview he expressed a wish that in case of his death you should graduate from one of our American colleges, and then take a course at the University of Oxford. The former you have just completed. The latter lies open to you."

Hector made no reply for a moment. His brows were knit in perplexity.

"I confess that I am disappointed," he said at length. "I had intended this very day to ask you for information concerning my early life. I remember so distinctly those seven years spent in that dreary tenement house. I can't remember when I came there, though. My recollections begin at that point."

"Of course you can't remember," said Mr. Scudamore; "you were just three years old when your father came to my office, and I am convinced that he had very recently arrived in New York. Some day, perhaps, you will know more; but for the present, Hector, I advise you not to waste time and money on what will almost certainly prove to be a fruitless search. Of the sum that your father placed in my hands enough remains to pay your expenses at Oxford. I shall always regard you as my own son, Hector, and I will see that you are well provided for. But come! There goes the bell. We can discuss your future plans better after we have dined."

"I can never hope to repay your kindness," said Hector, as he followed his guardian from the room, "but I will heed your advice implicitly. This locket shall be my dearest possession. I will never part with it, and some day I hope to lift the veil of mystery that hides from me the secret of my birth, of my early home—and of my mother."

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH HECTOR IS AGITATED BY CONFLICTING EMOTIONS.

On a sultry July morning in the year 1889—almost four years to a day since the interview related in the foregoing prologue—Hector Haldane came out of Cook's well known tourist offices on the corner of Ludgate Circus, London, and walked unsteadily up Fleet Street, his right hand clinched tightly on a bulky looking envelope.

Three weeks before his university course at Oxford had ended. He graduated a full honor man, and left England immediately on a brief continental trip previous to returning to New York, for during the past four years Hector had not once seen his guardian. His vacations he had spent on various tours with college friends.

This very morning he had returned to London, gone directly to Cook's for his mail, and found awaiting him a startling and portentous letter.

It was from a legal firm in New York, and announced in very brief and chilling language the sudden death of Mr. Robert Scudamore.

"Our client was buried two days ago," wrote the lawyer. "As he neglected to make a will, the property reverts to his widow and to a married son and daughter. His account as guardian with yourself shows to your credit the sum of fifty pounds. We inclose a draft for that amount on Messrs. Drummond & Co. of Charing Cross.

"I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

"ISAAC SHARPSON,
"Skyhigh Building,
"Broadway."

It is in nowise surprising that Hector Haldane should be dazed by this piece of news. Mr. Scudamore, the oldest friend

he had, was dead and buried. He had died without making a will—without fulfilling his promise to provide for his ward, and now Hector was face to face with the world on a capital of fifty pounds. To do him justice, this view of the matter did not occur to him. Why should it? He had health, strength, and a superb education.

What he felt keenly was the loss of the man who had been a father to him.

Hector staggered up Fleet Street in utter disregard of the flood of human beings who were pouring cityward from the countless arteries of the vast metropolis—the somber, trafficking hordes who jostled him rudely from side to side, now up against the house fronts, now to the brink of the curbing.

The rumble and roar of the crowded 'busses and the loaded vehicles of every sort were deafening, but Hector heard nothing as he pursued his erratic course westward.

In spirit he was thousands of miles away, in the well remembered library of Robert Scudamore's residence.

After a while he became conscious of the slow progress he was making, and of the din and confusion around him. He concluded to seek the riverside and stroll along the Embankment, where he could think with less interruption.

He crossed the street, guided through the mazes of the traffic by a friendly policeman, and turned into Bouverie Street, sniffing the fresher atmosphere that blew directly from the Thames.

A young porter trundling a heavy box caused Hector to turn aside, and the first thing that met his eye was a bulletin board standing before the office of the *London Illustrated World*, on which a lad with pot and brush had just finished pasting several copiously illustrated pages from the last edition of the paper.

Directly over the first of these sheets—which represented a bearded Englishman in close converse with a fierce looking African warrior—was a placard bearing the following announcement in big black letters:

A Message from the Dead.

A portion of the balloon Mercury, in which Mr. Ralph Haldane ascended from Cape Lopez in 1874, is found by Sir Wilfred Coventry on the shores of Lake Chad. The daring adventurer believed to be still alive in interior Africa.

As Hector's mind grasped the full meaning of these words he turned dizzy for an instant, and leaned against the side of the doorway for support. The passers by looked curiously at this tall young fellow with the resolute mouth and brown mustache, whose ruddy color had so suddenly given place to a ghastly paleness.

The faintness quickly passed away, however, and Hector turned eagerly to the placard again.

His first emotion was one of intense joy. He forgot the sad news that had so lately filled his mind. Ralph Haldane—his own father—was supposed to be alive somewhere in Africa. But the next instant Hector was plunged in the depths of despair. How could he hope to aid his father—to investigate this strange rumor, to explore unknown wilds of Africa—on a capital of fifty pounds? Why, that would hardly procure him a passage from England to the African coast.

"If Mr. Scudamore were only living," thought Hector, "how speedily an expedition would be organized to search for my poor father! Perhaps the management of this publication would be willing to undertake it on their own responsibility. I'd better go in and introduce myself."

He turned to the doorway with the full intention of seeking the editor's office, and almost bumped into a young man with very black hair and mustache, who was coming down the stairway, followed by a short, plump, middle aged gentleman of nautical aspect.

"Why, my dear Hector," exclaimed the former, in a hearty voice, "what a stupendous piece of good fortune! Of all the men you are the one I most desired to see. Let me introduce you to Captain Jolly. This is Hector Haldane, Jolly, of whom we were speaking only a moment or two ago."

"I am delighted to meet you, sir," said Captain Jolly, beaming all over with friendliness, and thrusting out a fat, horny hand. "I hope you're well, sir." Hector quite ignored the captain's greeting in his joy at meeting with Philip Berkeley, his most intimate friend and chum through four long years at Oxford, and his companion on many a vacation jaunt.

"Phil, my boy," he said, "I am in deep trouble. Let us find some quiet place where I can tell you about it. Do you see that placard yonder? Do you know what it means? My father is probably alive today—somewhere in Africa—and I am powerless to aid him."

"That is just why I wished to see you," interrupted Phil; "we'll go to the University Club, have a good dinner, and then talk business. You can tell your story on the way, Hector."

The whole party hailed a cab on Fleet Street, and were soon rattling up the Strand.

With great difficulty, owing to the noise around them, Hector told of his own changed circumstances, and of his great desire to go in search of his lost father. As he concluded, the cab turned into Waterloo Place, and drew up before the marble front of the University Club.

It was mid July, and consequently the building was nearly deserted. Our little party ensconsed themselves in a secluded corner of the big dining room, and the ordered dinner was soon before them.

"I see that you are impatient, my dear

Haldane," said Philip Berkeley. "I would better relieve your mind at once, and as briefly as possible. During our university life you told me much of your own history, and you probably remember hearing me speak of my cousin, Sir Wilfred Coventry, a rather peculiar man, who rarely comes to England, but travels about the world in quest of adventure. It is none other than this same Sir Wilfred who found part of the balloon Mercury in possession of a native who came from the neighborhood of Lake Chad. The account of the affair in the *Illustrated World* is slightly distorted, and it was that which took Captain Jolly and myself to their office this morning.

"Captain Jolly, by the way, has been Sir Wilfred's constant companion for years, and arrived in England only ten days ago on a mission which will be of the deepest interest to you. He expects to sail for Africa in a week or two, taking with him a huge balloon, now being constructed by a firm in Lyons, France.

"It is Sir Wilfred's intention to ascend from Lagos in this balloon and journey into the interior of Africa in search of your lost father, whom he firmly believes is still alive. Sir William is now at Lagos awaiting the arrival of Captain Jolly and myself, who are to accompany him. Captain Jolly was also commissioned to bring with him an old friend of Sir Wilfred's, who unfortunately—or fortunately, I should rather say—is at present shooting grizzlies in the Rocky Mountains. Therefore, my dear Haldane, we have chosen you to take his place."

Hector rose to his feet, greatly excited, and held out a hand to Phil and the captain. "Do you really mean it?" he stammered. "This—this is too generous. It is too good to be true. How can I thank you——?"

Phil gently pushed his friend into the chair. "Not a word, Hector. The obligation is on our side. We shall have the pleasure of your company, and as for expenses, Sir Wilfred attends to all that. He will give a hearty welcome to the son of Ralph Haldane, and your presence will be an added incentive to the search. Captain Jolly will explain everything more fully at your leisure, and will tell you all you want to know. The perils and risks of such an undertaking must be considered, of course, for Sir Wilfred is a very daring man. He and Captain Jolly here have placed their lives in jeopardy more times than I should care to count."

"I will gladly go with you," said Hector, in a voice that was thick with emotion; "I can't find words to thank you. I can only say that you have made me the happiest man in London. It will not be necessary for me to return to New York. My guardian is dead, and my relationship with his family is not close enough to demand my presence. I have a few letters to write, and then I am completely at your service. Africa holds no perils for me. I can only remember that in some part of that vast continent my father is living in a captivity that is worse than death. To rescue him I would go through fire and water. God bless you, my friends, for the noble work that you propose to do. I am with you, body and soul."

Hector extended his hand to Phil and the captain, who each wrung it warmly and in silence, too choked with emotion to speak.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH HECTOR TAKES LEAVE OF THE EARTH.

In one of the navigable passages lying between the sea and the vast system of lagoons which extends along the Slave Coast of the Gulf of Guinea, is the island of Lagos, a British possession containing a town of the same name, with a population of 40,000 people.

Had the reader been on the outskirts of this town on August 31, 1889, he would have witnessed a strange scene. From the center of an open field a monster balloon was tugging at the rope which held it captive, and as it swayed from side to side one could read the name "Explorer" printed in big letters on the silken body.

Directly beneath the wicker car stood the five intrepid men who were about to embark on the most daring voyage ever conceived by man—Sir Wilfred Coventry, Captain Benjamin Jolly, Philip Berkeley, Hector Haldane, and a slim, woolly haired negro from the interior, who answered to the name of Chako.

Surrounding this little group, and plying them with questions and well wishes, were a great number of Europeans, among them such distinguished persons as the Governor of Lagos, the Colonial Secretary, the Collector of Customs, and the Chief Justice of the Province. Surrounding them in turn was a dense circle of natives, thousands in number, waiting with intense interest to see the airship off on its journey.

But before this important event can take place, we must briefly introduce the reader to several of our characters, and incidentally make clear to his mind the purpose and aims of this unprecedented expedition.

Sir Wilfred Coventry, Bart., is a tall, vigorous man, between fifty and sixty years of age, with iron gray hair, beard and mustache, and a perpetual gravity of manner which gives one the impression that he has experienced some great sorrow in his lifetime.

Though the fortunate possessor of a large income, a fine estate at Wiltshire, and a town house in Portman Square, London, his feet have not touched English soil for nearly twenty years. During that period he has wandered from one end of the world to the other on a perpetual search for adventure, in which he seems to

find his only recreation, and which alone makes life worth living to him.

Captain Jolly is a short, thick set little man, with a corpulent stomach, a nautical roll, and a fat, smooth, good humored face, which invariably brings to mind one of Dickens' characters.

Captain Jolly comes by his nautical aspect fairly enough. For twenty years he commanded a sailing vessel, and would, no doubt, have been in command to this day, had not Sir Wilfred taken a fancy to the jovial captain while making a cruise around the Cape of Good Hope in the stanch ship Mary Jane. As a result of this intimacy Captain Jolly abandoned his seafaring life, and has accompanied Sir Wilfred everywhere during the past ten years in the character of a close friend and companion.

With Hector Haldane the reader is already well acquainted, and of Philip Berkeley it need only be said that he is the nearest living relative of Sir Wilfred and the successor to the baronet's immense property. Sir Wilfred doubtless had a warm regard for his cousin, as he had made him a liberal allowance some years before, and had recently sent Captain Jolly to England, with instructions to bring Philip back with him to Lagos.

Philip's mother, through whom he derived his relationship to Sir Wilfred, had been dead for a number of years. Her father was still living in a quiet village in Yorkshire—a country clergyman with a modest income.

And now we come to Chako, on whose shoulders rests the responsibility of this whole affair. An Ashantee by birth, Chako had been stolen from his home at Coomassie by slave raiders, ten or twelve years before, and from that time until the present he had wandered over much of Africa. He finally escaped from captivity, and reached the Slave Coast in the spring of '89, where he accidentally encountered Sir Wilfred Coventry, to whom he displayed a leathern water bottle, bearing the name of the ill fated balloon Mercury.

Chako could speak a little English, and he told Sir Wilfred that this bottle had been given to him by a native on the shores of Lake Chad, and he furthermore declared that a white man was reported to be held in slavery among savage tribes who dwelt far to the southeast of the same lake. Sir Wilfred well remembered Ralph Haldane's ill fated ascension from Cape Lopez in 1874, and he was instantly convinced that this captive white man was none other than the daring aëronaut, long supposed to be dead. He at once determined to effect his rescue. Such a project appealed strongly to his love of adventure.

The baronet was well versed in scientific affairs, and he conceived the idea of penetrating as far as possible into Africa by means of a balloon. He knew that such a voyage as Jules Verne has described in one of his fictitious romances was impossible, but he hoped to journey far into the interior—perhaps even to Lake Chad—and then commence the search on foot.

Sir Wilfred was a man of action. Three days after his meeting with Chako he despatched Captain Jolly to England with a written diagram of a balloon to be constructed by a firm of silk mercers in Lyons, a list of needed supplies, and instructions to bring back with him Philip Berkeley and an old friend. The latter, as the reader knows, was absent from England, and Hector Haldane filled his place.

They left London a week after the interview at the University Club, and reached Lagos twenty seven days later. Sir Wilfred gave Hector an enthusiastic greeting, and gladdened his heart by the positive assertion that his father should be rescued.

No time was lost in preparing for the ascension. Sir Wilfred's friends at Lagos gave him every assistance. He had made his calculations well, and based the amount of baggage he intended to carry on the weight and capacity of the balloon. This baggage comprised guns, a supply of ammunition, biscuit, salted meat, a flask of brandy, a keg of water, and blankets to protect the voyagers from the cold. In addition were beads, looking glasses, and tobacco to pacify the natives they might meet, and the usual outfit of a balloon—sandbags, grappling irons, a map and compass, a barometer, and a rope ladder.

Sir Wilfred had been compelled to wait several days for a favorable wind. On the morning of the 31st he rose at daybreak and hurried to the edge of the town, where he at once released several small fire balloons in rapid succession.

They rose high in the air and then sped swiftly to the northeast—exactly in the direction of Lake Chad.

Sir Wilfred hurried back to his companions with the joyful news, and in less than an hour the great balloon Explorer was slowly filling with hydrogen gas—a substance fourteen and a half times lighter than atmospheric air—which was in process of distillation through a number of heavy casks containing scraps of granulated zinc, sulphuric acid, and a large proportion of water.

The thousands of spectators who had been standing in the field since early morning were venting their impatience in loud cries.

The balloon—stretched apparently to its fullest limit—fretted at its confinement.

Back in the town the Residency bell tolled three, and as the echoes died away Sir Wilfred stepped to the car and placed one hand on the side.

The people instantly became silent. A pin could almost have been heard to drop.

Sir Wilfred was a man of few words. He quietly bade his friends farewell and stepped into the car. Captain Jolly entered next, and then Hector and Philip in turn.

Chako hesitated a moment—no doubt re-

gretting that he had accepted Sir Wilfred's princely offer, and agreed to accompany the expedition—but the baronet quickly seized both his hands, and before he knew it Chako was in the car.

Sir Wilfred made a quick signal, and the governor of Lagos severed the rope with a sharp knife.

Amid loud acclamations from the crowd the balloon shot upward like a rocket, and as the breeze carried it swiftly to the northeast the artillery on the fortress walls boomed loudly over the island—a compliment paid to Sir Wilfred's nationality.

"They are all as good as dead men," said the governor, as he turned back to the town, and this expression of opinion found a ready response in the hearts of his followers.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH HECTOR MEETS WITH A STRANGE ADVENTURE.

As the balloon shot upward at dizzy speed, those within the car were affected by different sensations. Sir Wilfred glanced at the barometer, and then at his compass.

"We are fifteen hundred feet above the earth," he said quietly, "and moving in the proper direction."

No one heeded his words. Hector and Philip were peering timidly over the edge of the car, and Chako was huddled up at the bottom, his face hidden in his hands.

Captain Jolly was gazing at the bulk of the balloon overhead with a ludicrous expression of bewilderment.

The aëronauts were now passing over the vast lagoon that lies between the mainland and the island of Lagos. The town was still in sight to the westward, and between were white sails drifting over the water.

All were fascinated with the charming view, and they continued to gaze downward in silence until the balloon was directly over the fever stricken jungles of the Slave Coast, and the mighty African continent blotted all the eastern horizon.

The balloon rose to a height of two thousand feet, keeping a fairly straight course for the northeast and moving at the rate of twenty five miles an hour, according to Sir Wilfred's calculations.

The country beneath possessed no interesting traits—a level expanse of swampy forest land, intersected by rivers and creeks, with here and there a field of waving grain or a bunch of conical huts.

Then darkness came swiftly on, and the landscape vanished.

Each of the party was provided with a heavy blanket, and now they were put to use, for the atmosphere was intensely cold.

"We could easily drop down to a warmer current of air," said Sir Wilfred, "but I don't like to lose any of the gas so early on the voyage. I think the blankets will keep us pretty comfortable."

"If they don't, I'll give you something that will," said Captain Jolly, and producing a little spirit lamp, he proceeded to boil a pot of coffee.

All partook of this, not excepting Chako, who had entirely recovered from his fright now that darkness had dispelled the terrors of the situation.

"I feel twenty per cent better," said Sir Wilfred, as he drained his cup. "That stuff goes to the right spot, Jolly."

"It does, sir," repeated the captain. "Shall I fill the pot again?"

"No, no," said Sir Wilfred hastily. "One cup apiece is quite enough. A second would spoil our sleep."

"That's about the last thing I feel in the humor for," said Hector, with a laugh.

"And I," added Phil.

"There is nothing to prevent either of you from taking a comfortable nap," said Sir Wilfred. "We are traveling in perfect security under a clear sky. Look at Chako; he is sleeping already, and will feel all the better for it in the morning."

The Ashantee's example was lost upon his companions, however. They remained awake, chatting with each other and looking down at the native villages, marked out by circles of glowing campfires, which they were passing in rapid succession.

At two o'clock in the morning Sir Wilfred glanced at his compass and made an alarming discovery.

"What I feared has taken place," he exclaimed. "The wind has changed, and we are moving almost due north. We shall be blown out of our course."

"Can nothing be done to prevent such a calamity?" asked Hector.

"There is one resort," replied Sir Wilfred. "We can descend to the earth and tie up until morning. Perhaps, by that time the wind will have changed."

This resolve he speedily put into execution by pulling the valve cord, and the hiss of the escaping gas was plainly heard.

"Throw over an anchor," directed Sir Wilfred, and Captain Jolly instantly cast out one of the grappling irons.

At first it did not touch the ground, but as the balloon continued to slowly descend a series of perceptible jerks was presently felt, accompanied by the swashing of branches. The grapnel was trailing through treetops.

"Why doesn't it fasten itself?" exclaimed Sir Wilfred impatiently. "It has every opportunity, for we are moving at a slow rate of speed."

Almost as he spoke a sudden, sharp tug was felt that jolted the car violently.

"We have hooked on at last," said the baronet. "The rope is as taut as an anchor chain. Some one must go down now and secure the grapnel. That is always of the utmost importance."

"Let me do that," cried Hector. "I have good muscles, Sir Wilfred, and plenty of nerve."

"Go ahead," said the baronet briefly, and with Captain Jolly's aid he unfurled the rope ladder and dropped it over the side of the car.

The balloon was poised, motionless, directly over the obstruction on which the grapnel had fastened itself, and the ladder hung side by side with the grappling rope.

"It is probably fast to a tree top," said Sir Wilfred. "Make sure that it has a good hold and then come right back."

"Take good care of yourself," cautioned Captain Jolly. "Hold tight to the bars of the ladder, and don't let your feet slip."

Hector climbed over the side of the car, with Phil's assistance, and went carefully down the ladder, rung by rung.

The flimsy affair twirled and swayed in a most alarming manner, but Hector kept a cool head, and made steady progress toward the bottom.

At last his feet touched something solid —not the limb of a tree, however, which he had counted upon finding, but a flat surface with a perceptible slope to it.

"I must be on the ground," he thought, as he bent down and touched what seemed to be dried grass.

His companions knew by the slack of the ladder that Hector had reached bottom.

"Use the utmost care," Sir Wilfred called down. "If the grapnel gets away from you we may never find you again."

The bare mention of such a catastrophe made Hector's blood turn cold. Resolved not to run any chances in the darkness, he took a match from his pocket and drew it across the front of his jacket.

As it burst into flames he looked eagerly to see how the grapnel was caught, and could hardly repress a cry of astonishment at what he saw.

Not two feet distant was a hideously carved figure of wood, as high as his waist, and intended evidently for a human representation. This monstrosity, which seemed to sprout from the very ground, possessed a truly diabolical cast of features, and around its thick neck the grappling anchor had fastened itself securely.

As the match went out, Hector lit another, with trembling fingers, and made a closer survey of his strange surroundings.

With a hoarse cry that startled his anxious friends overhead, he started back a pace or two. He had made a horrible discovery. On each side of the carven image was a short stake, not more than a foot high, and on the point of each stake was transfixed a human head, both unmistakably European, with pallid skins and yellow hair and beards.

Close by, sticking apparently in the ground, was a short flagstaff, surmounted by a blood stained bit of red, white, and blue satin. Hector recognized at a glance the flag of the French Republic.

Amazed at this discovery, he continued to stare speechlessly at the horrid sight until the match burnt his finger ends and went out.

"Come down, somebody!" he called in a hoarse whisper. "Here are human heads stuck on poles, and ——" The words choked on Hector's lips as the earth seemed to open beneath his feet. With a sharp, crackling noise he shot down through empty space, and fell heavily on his left side.

He pulled himself to his feet with a cry of pain, and staggered about in the darkness, lurching dizzily from side to side. Some obstruction caught his foot, and he fell heavily. The next instant his throat was caught by an invisible hand, and a horrid cry rang in his ears.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH HECTOR FALLS AMONG THE AMAZONS.

THE sudden and unexpected attack quickly brought Hector to a sense of his peril. His unseen adversary was pressing on his chest, uttering horrible cries in rapid succession.

Both Hector's arms were, fortunately, free, and, with a quick jerk, he tore loose his foe's hold on his throat. This brief advantage gave him a chance to exert all his strength, and this he did so effectually that his enemy was flung to the ground. By this time, however, loud cries could be heard in all directions, some close at hand, others far off; and as Hector rolled over in the darkness a couple of times and lay still, trembling with fright, a torch flashed before his eyes, and he was dragged roughly to his feet by a dozen sturdy arms.

The scene upon which he now gazed filled him with terror—and well it might.

He was in a large, circular hut, surrounded by a horde of bloodthirsty savages, while new arrivals were pouring thickly through the open doorway. A multitude of torches now added brilliancy to the scene, and their light helped Hector to a new and most amazing discovery. His captors were female warriors—hideous creatures of immense stature, with brawny limbs and repulsive features.

They wore short trousers and a long sleeveless tunic, confined at the waist by a crimson sash. Huge brass rings dangled from their ears, and they were armed with rifles and cartridge belts, sharp axes, and long bladed knives.

As these uncouth creatures danced about their captive with savage yells, Hector suddenly comprehended what had befallen him.

The balloon had been carried far out of its course—to the province of Dahomey, which adjoins the French possessions at Porto Novo, and these were the king of Dahomey's famous warriors, the terrible and dreaded Amazons.

The grappling iron had fastened itself to a house in one of the Dahomeyan villages, and it was through the roof of this house that Hector had fallen.

The Amazons contented themselves with making a great outcry, but did no bodily harm to their young captive, who stood, pale and defenseless, in the midst of them.

At length Hector ventured to look toward the roof of the hut, which was twenty feet or more from the ground. The jagged hole in the thatch was distinctly visible, and through it he saw a singie twinkling star. Where was the balloon? Had the grapnel torn loose, or had his companions severed the rope and left him to his fate? He was ashamed of his suspicions an instant later, as something suddenly hid the star from view. His friends were still there, and so far their presence was undiscovered.

As he looked at the horde of savage faces around him, Hector reflected with a sinking heart that his rescue was out of the question.

The Amazons were numerous and superbly armed. What could Sir Wilfred and his companions do against such odds? Convinced that he was doomed to slavery at least, if not to speedy death, Hector faced his captors with an air of resignation.

The outcry had ceased by this time, and the Amazons were jabbering at each other in guttural tones. Unperceived by Hector, several male savages had entered the hut—more brutal looking creatures even than the women—and these took a leading part in the discussion.

They were evidently persons of authority, for they wore skull caps, ornamented with nodding plumes of ostrich feathers, and their shoulders were enveloped in leopard skin cloaks.

The discussion lasted but a few moments, and merciful it was for Hector that he did not understand the Dahomeyan tongue.

Then a great confusion fell on the Amazons who were within the hut, and they drew back with much scuffling against the circular walls, leaving about their captive an open space, a dozen feet in diameter.

At the same moment, from without the walls burst a mighty shout, that rose hoarsely on the air, and then slowly subsided.

Hector was at a loss to understand these strange proceedings. He believed at first that the balloon had been discovered, but the intense quiet that now prevailed did not confirm this supposition.

The Amazonian warriors were grouped in a most expectant attitude, and on opposite sides of the inclosure Hector could see the towering ostrich plumes of the men.

Suddenly a tall, grim featured savage entered the open space and strode to Hector's side. His hair was long and frizzled, and he was naked save for a scarlet cloth tied about his waist. In his right hand he bore a ponderous two edged sword.

A horrible dread entered Hector's mind, and it speedily became a reality. The herculean savage—who was probably a professional executioner—tapped him on his shoulder, and motioned him to drop to his knees.

This terrible summons caused Hector's courage to forsake him. He staggered away from his grim companion, and turned appealingly toward the circle of spectators. Ferocious and pitiless were the glances that met his own. All were eager to witness his decapitation. With a reeling brain Hector clasped his hands and extended them toward the roof.

"Help! help!" he cried hoarsely. "Save me! Sir Wilfred, save me!"

Alas! what hope was there? Such a supplication was madness!

A low murmur broke from the impatient fiends. They were eager for the slaughter. The executioner clutched Hector's shoulder in a rough grasp, and forced him to his knees. The huge sword flashed from its polished edge the red reflection of the many torches.

Hector strove to rise, struggling feebly with the savage, but his efforts were of little avail, and he momentarily expected his death blow.

At this critical point Sir Wilfred shouted in a loud, commanding voice through the hole in the ceiling,

"Grasp the ladder, Haldane, and hold on for dear life."

Instantly a terrific report was heard, a puff of smoke spurted into the inclosure, and the executioner, with a hideous yell, rolled headlong to the ground.

Hector sprang to his feet, dazed with joy. The rope ladder, which had been let down through the gap in the roof, was dangling by his side.

"Seize it, quick!" shouted Sir Wilfred.

This brought Hector to his senses. He sprang at the nearest rung and clutched it with both hands.

He heard vaguely a shout from above and a roar of anger from the baffled Amazons. Then the ladder rose upward with a jerk that nearly threw him off, and down through the thatched roof of the hut came two sandbags, scattering their contents right and left.

Next in order was a collision with somebody or other that threatened to tear Hector from his perch, but the obstruction gave way with a ripping noise, and then he was swinging in mid air with the stars shining overhead, and beneath him a multitude of flashing torches, a babel of angry cries, and the occasional crack of a rifle.

As he clung to the swaying ladder, Hector was dimly conscious that his name was being pronounced by some one over his head, and he distinctly heard Sir Wilfred say,

"Stick tight, Haldane; stick tight."

Then the outline of the car was before him, the ladder swayed against it, and willing hands dragged him to a place of safety.

He glanced downward once as they hauled him over the edge, and noted with vague surprise how far off those flickering lights already seemed to be.

He was conscious of nothing after that until he woke to find the eastern sky aglow with the coming dawn. Captain Jolly pressed to his lips a cup of hot coffee.

This draught warmed Hector's chilled body. As remembrance came back he sat up against the side of the car and demanded an account of his rescue.

Sir Wilfred laid aside the map that he had been poring over.

"My dear fellow," he said, "it is through a remarkable Providence—assisted by my agency—that you are alive this morning. I have been in a goodly number of tight places on land and sea during my adventurous career, but I never saw a more marvelous escape from a more imminent peril than you made a few hours ago. The explanation is simple and brief. Our balloon was blown out of its course to the kingdom of Dahomey. The grappling iron caught on a hut in one of the native villages, which was buried in darkness, no doubt because the French, with whom the king of Dahomey is now waging war, were somewhere in the vicinity. That accounts for the presence of the flag and of the two heads that were displayed on the roof.

"As soon as you fell through I descended by the ladder, and took up my position on one of the ridge poles, so that I would be secure from a fall. I was thus enabled to see and hear all that was going on, and you can imagine my feelings during that period, for had the balloon been discovered a single rifle ball fired through the silk would have ended our expedition then and there.

"I possess some knowledge of the Dahomeyan language, and I soon learned of your intended fate. The Amazons believed that you were a Frenchman, and that you had ventured into their town to recover the heads of your comrades. To teach the French soldiers a lesson, they decided to decapitate you at once, and throw your head inside the French lines. The plan for your rescue flashed into my mind like an inspiration.

"I hauled the balloon down until the car almost touched the roof, and secured it by wrapping the grapnel about the neck of the idol. I instructed Jolly to be ready to toss out two sandbags at a given signal, and Chako to cut the grappling rope with an axe at the same instant. Phil held the ladder coiled in his hand, ready to drop it through the roof when I gave the word, and I, rifle in hand, took up my position over the hole.

"The plan worked to perfection. I shot down the executioner in the very nick of time, and as soon as I saw that you had hold of the ladder, I flung my rifle into the car and grasped the edge with both hands. At this signal Jolly flung over the ballast, Chako severed the anchor rope at one stroke, and up went the balloon like a rocket, trailing you and the ladder behind it. You stuck fast in the roof for just a second, though—how the thatch did fly!"

Sir Wilfred leaned against the car, laughing heartily at the recollection.

CHAPTER V.

A NEW DANGER THREATENS.

"It was no laughing matter, though," resumed the baronet, with a sober face. "I don't believe I could snatch you from a place like that again if I tried a thousand times. The fiends don't know yet how your rescue was effected. They did not get even a glimpse of the balloon, though they fired a number of shots through the thatched roof of the hut. Lucky for us that the bullets went astray."

"Shiver my hulk, if I want to go through another such experience," said Captain Jolly.

"We can't tell what lies before us," added Sir Wilfred gravely. "Our perils have just commenced."

"Were those actually the king of Dahomey's female warriors who captured me?" asked Hector.

"Yes," Sir Wilfred replied, "those were the king of Dahomey's famous Amazons—the most justly dreaded people in Africa. Those women soldiers, some twenty thousand in number, comprise the very flower of the king's army. They are noted for courage, hardihood, cruelty, and bloodthirstiness. Their discipline is extremely severe, and they fight with great cunning. So far the French have been no match for them. It was unfortunate that the wind should have deflected us so far from our proper course. I forgot to inform you, however, that we are now headed due northeast and moving at the rate of thirty miles an hour. The wind changed shortly after we had left the Dahomeyan village."

"How far distant is Lake Chad?" inquired Phil.

"Just about eight hundred miles," said the baronet.

"And do we stand a chance of reaching it?"

"A fairly good one," replied Sir Wilfred, "providing the wind continues to blow from the right quarter. Our stock of gas has been depleted, it is true, but we have still a large amount of ballast to depend upon. But let us have breakfast, and discuss such weighty matters afterward."

The meal was already prepared, thanks to Captain Jolly's intuition of what was proper, and all partook of crackers and meat with a relish, washing down the repast with several cups of coffee apiece.

By this time the sun was fully up, and the aëronauts were lost in admiration of the glorious view. The car was passing swiftly over a most varied tract of country at an elevation of nine hundred feet—forest and meadowland, sloping hills and level plains, small lakes and rivers, and sections of cultivated land, with here and there villages, from which issued hordes of naked savages, to gaze in wonder and alarm at the great balloon.

Against the blue horizon to the eastward a profile of deeper tint was visible. "Those are the Kong Mountains," announced Sir Wilfred, "and shortly beyond them lies the river Niger. We shall cross it before noon."

An hour later the balloon passed the borders of the Yariba country, inhabited by fierce and hostile tribes, and the outline of the Kong Mountains grew more distinct.

Sir Wilfred, who was well acquainted with the geographical aspect of the region, discoursed with his companions on various points of interest, and in this entertaining manner time went by unheeded.

Shortly before noon, as the baronet had predicted, the snow capped peaks of the vast Kong Mountain range drew rapidly near.

"Get out your blankets," said Sir Wilfred; "we are going still higher."

He tossed overboard two sandbags, and instantly the balloon rose to a height of 2,200 feet.

Some parts of the mountain range were still more lofty, and Sir Wilfred awaited coming events with much anxiety. The cold was bitter, and the whole party shivered, even with their blankets around them.

At twelve o'clock precisely the balloon drifted into a wide gap between two of the most lofty peaks.

For half an hour the voyagers enjoyed a view of the utmost grandeur—cliffs pinnacled with gigantic trees, rock strewn gorges of vast depth, and streams leaping from ledge to ledge, that glimmered in the distance like silver mist. Then succeeded ranges of foothills, and finally a level and monotonous country again.

Dinner was devoured with keen appetites, and at two o'clock the balloon swept across the Niger, a mighty stream of a dirty yellow color, lined with villages of rude huts, and more pretentious towns built of sun baked bricks.

An hour later Sir William scrutinized his map and his compass.

"We are still headed due northeast," he said, "and moving at a charming rate of speed. The tract of country beneath us is the district of Gando, which is ruled over by a most tyrannical sultan, who butchers ten slaves before his palace gates every morning, and is the proud possessor of fifteen hundred wives. I think we can safely leave the balloon to take care of itself now."

After passing the Kong Mountains Sir Wilfred had permitted some gas to escape, and the balloon was now about five hundred feet above the ground, and moving at great speed.

None of the party had slept since leaving Lagos, and presently Phil rolled himself in a blanket and lay down, with the intention of taking a nap. Sir Wilfred and the captain were intent on a game of checkers, oblivious to all around them.

Hector watched them with great interest.

"What a wonderful man this Sir Wilfred Coventry is!" he said to himself. "He knows not the meaning of fear. There he sits, as unconcerned as though he were in the drawing room of the residency at Lagos, his whole mind given to that striped checkerboard.

"An hour from now he may be called upon to grapple with some mighty question of life or death, and he will take it all as a matter of course. Imagine Napoleon playing checkers on the eve of Waterloo! Had the Corsican possessed Sir Wilfred's temperament, the course of history might have been changed!"

At last Hector's eyelids grew heavy, and he leaned back against the car, and was speedily sound asleep.

The baronet played game after game with his companion until the first shadow of sunset falling across the car, warned them that it was time to stop.

Sir Wilfred eagerly snatched his compass. "We are still headed northeast," he exclaimed, "and the breeze seems to be increasing in power. This is splendid—far more than I dared expect. By Jove!" he added, with a sudden and alarming change of voice, "we are in for it this time, Jolly, and will probably have a close struggle between life and death during the next few minutes. Look over there!" and Sir Wilfred pointed his right hand in the designated direction.

Sir Wilfred's alarm was well founded. Beyond the aëronauts, to the south and west, dark, angry looking clouds were rapidly massing, and from these had come the increasing breeze that so pleased the baronet a moment or two before, but now filled him with dire forebodings.

"There, look at that," he said, as a faint streak of lightning flashed across the horizon. "However, the storm is still some distance away, and it is not impossible that we shall escape it, after all. Time enough to worry when the peril is near at hand and unavoidable. Suppose you wake our friend, Jolly, and then prepare us something to eat. If danger must come we shall be better able to face it on full stomachs."

(To be continued.)

THE TIC TAC.

By Anna Leach.

"IF you'll let me go with Bob, I'll stay at home here and bone all summer. Now, I will honestly. Just think of it, Dr. Grahame."

Dick had a way of calling his father Dr. Grahame when he was very much in earnest, a trick he had caught from patients when he was a little fellow.

"Just think of it," Dick went on. "Suppose in your youthful days, you had had a warrior bold for a brother, and he had been going down into the mountains of West Virginia to hunt moonshiners, wouldn't you have been wild to go along? Now I just want to know if you wouldn't."

Dick rose on his heels and came down again for emphasis, and put the questions in a highly aggrieved tone.

"They are not going to find moonshiners. I know the mountain people," Dr. Grahame replied. "They are as sly as foxes. The soldiers, soldiers from the city, are never going to discover their ways. It is some revenue detective, some spy of their own people, who catches them when they are caught. Dick, you would have no sport. The hunting season is all over."

But Dick saw that his father was weakening. The doctor was very indulgent to his two boys, and doubtless he remembered what a lark he would have found the projected journey when he was Dick's age, as Dick himself had artfully hinted.

"I'm going to catch some of the moonshiners," Dick said. "I've always hankered after being a legitimate detective."

There was a light step in the corridor and Lieutenant Grahame appeared.

"You might as well let him go, father, if it is only to get a few silly notions out of his head. I don't believe myself that there are any stills going now. They send us down there after two or three revenue officers have been fired upon. It stands to reason that the sight of us will close every still in the county. It will be a camp for a month or so, and that will be the end of it."

"If that's the way you are looking at your duty, it would be a good idea to take somebody along who was hunting for something," Dick said.

A week later when he found himself living in a tent on the edge of Blue Creek, the novelty of the life seemed likely to put everything else out of Dick's head. This camping with soldiers was very different from anything he had ever known before.

He had expected to find the men something like Rudyard Kipling's "Soldiers Three," making the hours lively with songs and jokes and tales all day long.

But there was none of that sort on this journey. The men were busy. For all his talk, Lieutenant Grahame was making a vigorous hunt for the offenders, and he was keeping his men on the jump.

Dick wandered about by himself after the first day or two. He found it more interesting.

He made his way down into Blue Creek settlement, the little collection of houses which seemed to be climbing the bank to get out of the muddy creek.

Half way up the slope was the store, where all the mountaineers came to trade, bringing in their skins and tobacco, and getting groceries and calico in exchange.

Dick found it very amusing to sit on the steps here and listen to the men talk. They were shy of him at first, but presently they saw in him only a boy and gossiped about as usual.

The chief topic was the soldiers, and they seemed to be a text for the tales Dick had hoped to hear from the men themselves.

"They ain't genuwine soldiers," one old fellow said. "They mustered them all out after the war."

"If you've got any whisky makin' goin' on up in yore cabin you'd better look out all the same," the store keeper put in. "They are goin' to comb this county, and the men that's caught's goin' to see the inside o' stone walls fer many a year."

Dick, listening, heard a queer little noise behind him. It came from around the corner of the house, and sounded like the frightened cry of a bird.

He looked around. Sitting on the cord wood piled by the side of the store house, was a little figure in a suit of butternut jeans miles too big for him. His long, light hair hung down on his shoulders more carefully tended than that of the other children.

Dick saw that he was lame. Even the bunchy roundabout could not hide the high shoulder. A crutch lay beside him.

Dick walked around.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

The boy was about twelve, but his face looked older than that, for suffering had left its mark.

"What is it they're talkin' about?" he asked.

"About moonshiners," Dick replied. "The soldiers have come down here to hunt them out."

"Will they lock 'em up for sure?"

"If they catch them, they just will," Dick said emphatically. "Are there any around your part of the country?"

"I don't know nothin' about 'em," the boy answered hastily. "Nothin' at all."

Before Dick could say anything more, a tall mountaineer came out of the store, picked up the boy and carried him off to the old white horse tied to a tree by the road. They rode slowly away together.

Dick had conceived an idea. If the moonshiners were making whisky now, they must have a fire. If they had a fire there must be smoke. He would climb to the highest hill and wherever he saw smoke would make a note of it and try to find the place from which it came.

This brilliant scheme had no sooner been thought out than Dick started for the top of Old Bald.

On the way he went through a dense wood. It seemed to him two or three times that he heard a sound as though there was some one near him. It could not be one of the mountain cows, for they all wore bells which clanked their coming.

Dick was a light little fellow, who never made much noise at the worst, and when he wanted to be silent could be as quiet as a squirrel. He slipped along, feeling that the place was wild enough for a real Indian with a tomahawk. But when he came nearer to the figure ahead, he found that it was a man with a jug.

Little prickles went all over Dick's neck and the backs of his hands. He was coming to something after all.

He slipped from tree to tree for half a mile further, and then they came to a little bare place in the wood where only sumac and wintergreen grew.

In the center was an old decaying stump. The man with the jug placed it on the stump, and laid a silver half dollar on the corn cob cork. Then he walked back into the woods and by some means must have made a signal, although Dick heard nothing.

Presently from the leaves and underbrush on the other side appeared the man whom Dick had seen the evening before, carrying the lame boy. He looked about, then walked to the stump, took the jug and money and went hastily back again.

To follow him was Dick's one idea, but he did not dare cross the clearing. Revenue officers had been shot for merely being in this vicinity; he knew that his life would be worth nothing if he were seen now.

He started to skirt the open space. It took him a long way 'round, and when he reached the other side there was no sign that there had been any one but himself in the woods. And although he waited for two hours he saw nobody.

Dick looked everywhere for some means of signaling, but saw nothing. There was a grapevine, dead, hanging down by the side of a tree, but he never thought of that.

"Well, I'll know that man when I see him again, and he can be arrested," Dick told himself.

And then he realized that he had not seen a drop of whisky, nor heard a word concerning it, and while the still must be about there somewhere, there was no sign of it.

It was getting late in the afternoon, and Dick started back to camp on a bee line, guiding himself by his little compass.

Presently he came out on the red clay mountain road, and hanging on the bank above it was a little log cabin.

Dick was hungry and thirsty, and he knew that the mountaineers were as hospitable as Arabs. He went up to the open door, but there was nobody there.

The place was bare, but tolerably clean. A fire of logs smoldered in the big chimney, and a gaudy cheap clock ticked above it. The gourd hung dry on a peg under the one window, and Dick went to get it. He knew that he was welcome to a drink from the well.

But as Dick took down the gourd, he saw something which made him smile at first, and then set him to thinking.

Fastened above the window was a tic tac made in the good old fashioned way, of which every boy knows, with a nail and a string.

But as Dick looked at it a second time he saw that the string from this tic tac was a very strong one and a very long one. It ran from the roof of the house to a tree, and from that tree to another.

With wide eyes Dick followed it. It was almost lost two or three times. Two or three other times he climbed the trees to assure himself it was there, and at last he found its end in the wild grapevine which hung dead on the tree by the side of the clearing.

It was almost dark. Two or three stars were well out. He set his compass by the light of a wax match, and went speeding toward the camp again.

His first impulse was to tell his brother, and then he resolved that he would do nothing of the sort. He would find the still.

He intended to try it in the night. He was so wild with impatience that he wanted to get up that very night, but he had no jug.

The next morning, bright and early, he went down to the store and purchased a jug of molasses. He was afraid to get a jug by itself, for fear somebody might suspect something.

The storekeeper gave him a silver half dollar in change, and Dick felt that his plans were working. He went up the creek, poured out the molasses and washed the jug, hiding it under some rocks.

It was with fingers which were cold with something beside the chill mountain air that Dick got up and dressed himself that night.

He slipped his brother's revolver out of its holster and took that. He did not know what might happen.

It was three miles to the old stump in the woods, but Dick felt that he could have gone there in his sleep. He followed the road to the cabin, and then went the way of the tic tac cord until he reached the clearing. He set his jug and his money on the stump, slipped over to the grapevine, and gave it a gentle pull.

It was brilliant moonlight, but Dick, trusting that there was no one about, ran across the clearing, and hid in a thicket near the place from which he had seen the mountaineer emerge the day before.

He had not very long to wait. The same man came along, stepping cautiously, looked out, took the jug and money, and started back.

Dick followed along in his footsteps until they came to a heap of rocks overshadowed by a dead tree.

One of these rocks the moonshiner pushed easily aside. It was evidently a well used doorway. Getting down on his hands and knees the man crawled through, pulling the door close shut after him. Dick, his heart beating like a trip hammer, opened the door again and followed him.

After a few feet he found that he could stand upright in a sort of cellar filled with barrels and boxes. He could see a light ahead, and could hear subdued talking and laughing.

There were one or two voices he thought he had heard before, and as he peered around he found that one belonged to the storekeeper in the settlement. Another was one of the men he had heard the storekeeper warn against whisky making. They seemed a merry crew, and Dick almost regretted that he wasn't in a position to go in and join the fun and hear the stories.

"Whose jug is it, Leander?" they asked the mountaineer who had brought it in.

Dick felt that something was going to happen now sure enough, for the storekeeper would recognize the jug he had sold him that morning.

"There ain't no sign on it," the man who had brought it in replied.

"Lemme see it," the storekeeper asked. "It's John Hazen's," he reported. "It's one o' that new lot. I sold it to him yesterday."

Dick thanked John Hazen for his thoughtfulness in buying one of the new lot. Evidently his own purchase had not been considered.

He hid behind the boxes until Leander made his way out, and then he followed him again. He must get his jug of whisky to take home; that would be his evidence to prove that he had not been dreaming.

Coming out, Dick saw Leander standing stiff and still in a patch of moonlight. At first he thought he was looking at him, and he put his hand on his brother's pistol.

But in a moment there was the quavering cry of a night owl, and Leander answered it. A rustle came in the underbrush and through it limped the lame boy Dick had seen at the store.

The mountaineer dropped the jug and took the boy up in his arms. He was panting for breath.

"Honey," he said, "you hadn't orter come. You're 'bout dead. Take some o' this," and he poured some whisky from the jug into a tin cup taken from his pocket.

He had seated himself before the big beech tree behind which Dick was standing. But the boy flung the cup aside.

"I don't want none of it. It's pizen. You said you wouldn't make no more or go there again. They'll ketch you an' lock you up, an' what'll I do then?"

"Now jes' be reasonable," the man pleaded. "How'll I ever git money enough to take you to the big doctor to get your back straightened if I can't work at the still? I never did do it before this year, an' when you git well I won't do it no more. Don't you want your back straight, honey?"

"I'd rather have you," the boy said, "an' not be skeered you might be took away an' locked up. I kin git along with a crooked back, easier'n I could get along without you."

The mountaineer sat silent for a moment, then he rose up, still with the boy in his arms.

"I'll have to take this jug over to the stump 'cause it's paid for, but I won't go back no more."

"Honest?" the boy said.

"Hope I may die. But I ain't goin' to give up your gettin' straight."

Dick took the jug of whisky from the stump and sped to the creek. He poured the stuff out as he had poured out the molasses, and broke the jug. Then he went back to the camp and slipped into bed just as daylight broke.

The next afternoon he went over the road again, and again entered the little cabin, where the tic tac had hung over the window.

It was gone. The man meant to keep his promise.

Dick spent the afternoon there, and the next day he went back again.

That night he asked his brother to come out and have a talk with him.

"Father will take that boy in the hospital, and let the man help around, I know," was the sentence with which he finished his story.

"You'd better write to him first," the lieutenant suggested.

"What's the use? I know dad. I'm going to take 'em tomorrow. I want to go back to Washington anyhow."

"How about bagging moonshiners?" with a brotherly grin.

"That's all right. I've bagged something, if it is only a patient for father, which is more than you have. But wait, Bob, my boy, wait. You'll get 'em yet, and cover yourself with glory."

But it was hard for a boy to be guyed and to hold his tongue. It was the hardest thing about the whole business.

Maybe, though, the joy which he took in writing the following letter to Lieutenant Grahame a few days later was some compensation.

DEAR BOB:

In the hurry of my departure I neglected to leave you the inclosed map of the moonshiners' still. As you see, it is just below Old Bald mountain, in a heap of rocks. The smoke rises through a hollow tree. I have marked the rock which covers the passage. You will find there, if you are lucky, Mr. Brouse, the storekeeper, and several of your acquaintances. I am very sorry, my dear brother, that I cannot always accompany you when you are on duty, to give you the benefit of my observation and advice.

Your loving brother,
RICHARD.

P.S.—Dad says the boy will be all right, and he's going to put Leander on the farm.

"Now, I wonder," Lieutenant Bob said to himself, "why Dick went before the shindy? That wasn't like him. Um—um—Leander on the farm. I guess Dick bagged his moonshiner after all, but that's no business of mine."

CHASING THE SWORDFISH.

By George Ethelbert Walsh.

A FULL grown swordfish is a formidable enemy to encounter upon the open sea, and the danger to wooden ships from these fierce creatures is so great that attacks by swordfish are included by insurance companies among sea risks.

The power of the sword when the fish are infuriated is demonstrated by well authenticated cases where they have pierced the sides of vessels, projecting their weapon through copper sheathing and several inches of planks. In the British Museum there is exhibited a heavy beam of a vessel pierced by the sword of one of these creatures. The swordfish struck the ship when at sea with such force that the sword could not be removed without chopping up the plank, and the latter was taken from the old craft to be preserved in the Museum as a curious specimen of the power of these creatures.

In this country there are regular swordfish hunters, and they go about their work with the same care and preparation that a land hunter would if about to engage with a lion in his native jungle. The game is fully as dangerous to hunt, and as uncertain of capture.

Without any cause whatever the swordfish will sometimes turn upon a vessel and attack it with savage ferocity. Old fishermen say that it is seized with temporary insanity, and attacks whatever appears in the neighborhood. The large, man eating sharks are its worst enemies, but when seized with a fit of anger the swordfish does not hesitate to attack the largest shark.

Some terrific battles have taken place between these savage monsters of the deep. The shark endeavors to seize its adversary in its huge jaws, and the swordfish, with equal desperation, attempts to deliver a heavy blow with its weapon in some vital part of the shark.

These conflicts terminate variously. While the sharks have been caught with parts of swordfish in their stomachs, others have been found floating upon the surface of the sea pierced through and through with the weapons of their smaller antagonists. In some instances the two have been found floating together, the swordfish hopelessly struggling to withdraw the sword from the body of its dead enemy.

Usually, however, the large sharks come out victors, and devour the swordfish; but when the latter attain to twelve or fifteen feet in length, as they sometimes do, they are practically the kings of the sea. They never hesitate to attack whales, and by repeatedly stabbing these animals generally retire from the combat victorious.

Old fishermen hunt them along the southern Atlantic coast both for their flesh, which is highly palatable, and to protect the schools of mackerel and bluefish from their ravages. They are very fond of these choice fish, and they congregate in numbers where schools of either mackerel or bluefish are feeding. They rush among the small fish and strike right and left with their swords until they have killed dozens of them. Then they proceed to devour them at leisure, and later follow up the same schools for another meal. Sometimes they strike the large bluefish with such force that they throw them up into the air, cutting them in two with one fell stroke.

The swordfish hunters know the habits and peculiar ways of their victims, and they take advantage of every weakness of the enemy to prevent unnecessary danger. The pursuit of the creatures is exciting because of the peril of it, and in this respect it partakes more of the nature of the chase on land for large game.

The fish is very alert and always quick

in its motions, and then the uncertainty of its actions makes it doubly difficult to capture. The sight of an approaching boat might anger the creature so that it would fly at the craft furiously, or again it might take no notice of it, or flee quickly from it.

On quiet days, when the ocean is smooth, the swordfish loves to come to the surface and swim slowly along, with a portion of its body out of water. Hunters consequently catch sight of the prey at some distance off, and if a light breeze is blowing the vessel can sail down upon the fish with ease.

Apparently the creature is very sleepy and contemplative at times, for it takes no notice of the boat until it touches its body. The hunter takes his position in the front of the schooner, with a small harpoon in his hand and waits for his chance. The harpoon has a detachable head, to which is fastened a long coil of rope. The boat approaches within eight or ten feet of the slowly moving fish. The harpoon is not thrown exactly, but is pushed forward with a sudden jerk of the long handle so that the head strikes the animal close to the back fin. The pole is withdrawn by the harpooner, but the head remains in the fish.

Immediately the latter darts forward, terrified at the blow, and the long line is run out as fast as possible. The sailors, meanwhile, have transferred the other end into a small boat, and in this they place themselves as quickly as possible.

If the swordfish simply swims straight ahead, pulling the boat behind him, there is little risk or danger, for in a very short time he becomes exhausted and dies. Then the creature is drawn up alongside of the schooner and hauled on deck by a tackle.

But a large swordfish is no coward, and even when its death blow has been received it will not always weaken and run away. It very frequently turns angrily and savagely upon its enemy and offers battle until the last breath.

Sometimes it attacks the schooner, and again the small boat. In either instance, the onslaught is dangerous. With a blow that is tremendous it will strike the vessel, often sending her back to harbor leaky and half full of water. If it attacks the small boat, it not only drives a hole clean through it, but sometimes it impales one of the hunters upon its sword. The boat begins to sink immediately, and the men have to scramble in the water for life.

As if conscious of what has caused all the trouble, the infuriated fish strikes right and left among the struggling fishermen until rescue comes from the schooner. Some disastrous battles with a huge swordfish are recorded, and in instances several men lost their lives, while others were wounded by the blows of the sword.

When the swordfish strikes the small boat it sends its weapon through the woodwork, and if the hunters are quick enough they break it off with a blow from the oar. In this way the fish is made helpless and can easily be handled.

When deprived of its only weapon, the creature can be conquered by a swimmer in the water. Its savage nature also seems suddenly to die away when the sword is off or broken. It is doubtful if the sword ever grows again, and the creature when it escapes must spend a forlorn and helpless life ever afterward. It becomes a victim to the mackerel and tiger sharks, who look upon the swordfish as the most delicate sea food.

The fish has a long, lithe, muscular body, with fins snugly fitting into grooves, and is perfectly adapted in every way for the most rapid movements in the water. Its velocity when swimming at full speed is said to be equal to that of a swivel shot, and the shock is as dangerous in its effects as that of a heavy artillery projectile.

With its tremendous speed it can outrun the swiftest shark, although the latter are fast swimmers, and in battling with these creatures it maneuvers all around them, to the great bewilderment of the latter. Usually it will strike the shark a dozen times in as many different places before it is destroyed by its heavier enemy.

The description of a fight between a shark and swordfish is told by an old sea captain of New Brunswick, who witnessed it from the deck of his schooner.

There was a sudden commotion in the water not far from the vessel, and then a huge swordfish darted clean out of the ocean, striking its sword savagely downward. The large fins of an angry shark could be seen churning the water into terrific commotion. Then all was quiet on the surface as the two combatants carried the conflict far down into the depths. A moment later the water was dyed all around with red, showing that blood had been drawn.

Fifty feet from the spot bubbles ascended to the surface, and the wounded shark was seen to describe a curve as it swung over on its back to make a desperate lunge at its enemy. But the swordfish escaped by a few inches, and then drew back and gave a hasty plunge at its enemy again, striking the slippery side of the fish at such an angle that the sword tore a long surface gash into it. The blood began to flow freely.

The shark was now angered and wounded so that its lashings were tremendous. It dashed savagely and continuously at its uninjured adversary. For a moment the swordfish seemed to get too bewildered at this series of fierce onslaughts to strike, and made only a few ineffectual attempts to strike back. Finally, however, it recovered itself, and taking the shark at a disadvantage it landed the point of the sword straight under its belly with tremendous force. It sank over two feet into the soft

flesh, and when it was presently withdrawn the blood spurted out in a crimson stream.

If the swordfish had then retreated from the scene the victory would have been a cheap one. But when it returned to deliver another blow, the dying shark caught it by the tail, and with one savage snap of the powerful jaws it cut off over a foot of the appendage.

This ended the conflict, for the shark soon rolled over dead, and the swordfish slipped away the victor, but minus most of his tail.

THE IRON CHANCELLOR.

Bismarck's dominating influence in Germany—A statesman who has had the genius to conceive and the ability to execute mighty plans for the aggrandizement of his country.

By Gilbert N. Marks.

IT was in the midst of the greatest conflict of the century that the little Otto von Bismarck opened his eyes on a small estate in Prussian Saxony.

Napoleon, the terror of Europe, had found his way back from Elba, and the allied armies were hastening to meet him, to break his power. The air of all Germany was full of dread and hatred of the French, and the little life must have absorbed some of the spirit of the times.

When Bismarck was only ten weeks old, the battle of Waterloo was fought and Napoleon was conquered. But he had left a feeling of humiliation over Germany, one that was only washed away in the blood of the Franco German war; a war which owed its glorious termination, the federation of the German states, to Bismarck.

The gratitude of the German people to Bismarck is one of the most touching things in all history. They have not waited until he was dead to erect statues to him, to name streets in his honor, to preserve and tell again and again the little stories of his youth, and the great stories of his career as soldier and statesman. They let him see in his old age and retirement that he is their national hero.

On his birthday on the first of April, he received fifty thousand telegrams, besides literally bushels of letters, congratulating him upon having reached his eightieth year.

Ten years ago when Bismarck was seventy, the German people all over the world contributed small sums until they had gathered six hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which they sent to him. Part of it was used to buy Bismarck's birthplace with which his father had been compelled to part.

The "iron chancellor" has never been a rich man, his whole fortune being the gifts of the country to whom he added Alsace and Lorraine, and of the king whom he made an emperor.

Looking back over Bismarck's life, we see sixty years of moving history. For more than forty years he was the chief factor in European politics.

He came of a noble and useful ancestry, his grandfather on his mother's side being one of the ministers of Frederick the Great, and his father's family, soldiers and statesmen.

When he was a student at the university of Göttingen he fought twenty eight duels, and left with the reputation of a man who could take good care of himself. But it was not until he was thirty two that the country began to hear of Bismarck.

At this time he was a member of the Prussian House of Burgesses, which resembles our Congress. Bismarck's distinguishing argument was his belief in the absolute right of the king to do what he chose. This naturally attracted the attention of the throne, and Bismarck was made a representative of Prussia in the councils of Germany.

Frederick William IV was king at this time, and William I was only crown prince. Bismarck became his friend, and when Frederick William went insane, and William came to the throne, Bismarck was first made German representative in Russia, and then minister of Prussia.

In Russia he had spent three years in making friends for his country, so that in the event of war, either with Austria over the empire of the German states, or with France, Russia would keep her own armies at home.

Then Bismarck hurried down to France, and made Napoleon III believe that he was a sort of fanatical madman, who would be likely to rush Prussia into all sorts of follies, and who would leave many gates open by which the French might enter and conquer.

Austria had always intended to add the little weak German states that were ruled by petty dukes and kings, to her own empire, but Bismarck had very different views. They were destined to be part of his own country if he knew anything about it.

In 1866 there was a war with Austria, and

The Meeting of Bismarck and Napoleon after Sedan.

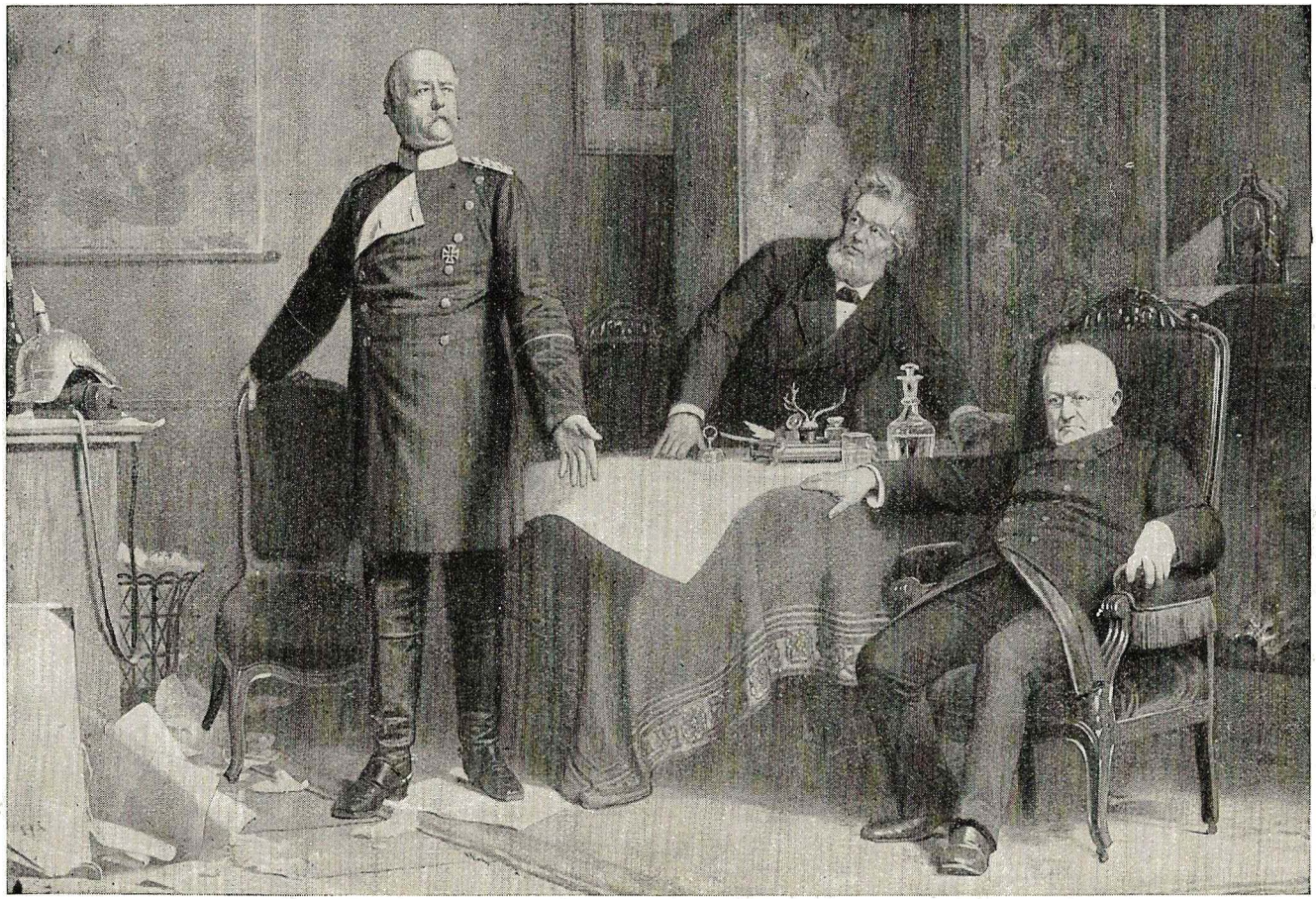
From a photograph by the Berlin Photographic Company after the painting by A. von Werner.

ENGRAVED BY THE GILL ENGRAVING COMPANY, NEW YORK.

Otto von Bismarck.

at its close Prussia was wider by reason of the addition of Schleswig-Holstein, of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and many smaller states. In 1870 Napoleon III, thinking he had an easy country to conquer, crossed the Rhine with an army. When the end came millions of dollars and the rich Rhine provinces of France, belonged to the victorious Prussians, who had made their way into Paris itself.

Everywhere and always Bismarck's plans were followed. The old emperor gave him his absolute confidence, and followed his ideas implicitly.



Bismarck. Favre. Thiers.

Arranging the Preliminaries of Peace at Versailles.

From a photograph by the Berlin Photographic Company after the painting by Carl Wagner.

Count Herbert von Bismarck, the Chancellor's Oldest Son.

From a photograph by Barrano, London.

Bismarck saw in the French victory a golden opportunity, and when the king of Prussia entered Versailles he was proclaimed Emperor of Germany.

But Bismarck's influence did not end here. Prussia was the most talked of nation in the world, and Bismarck meant that it should not fall from its high estate.

France had been a sort of arbiter between the European countries, but France was humiliated, and Bismarck chose that Germany should take that place.

When the Russo Turkish war was over, a conference of nations was called in Berlin, to decide what the result of the war should be, and Bismarck presided. Germany had taken her proper place, and Bismarck's dreams had come true.

But he did not stop even here. Germany had no colonies. They say that whenever Bismarck wanted a thing he carefully planned every step of the way to get it. When he wanted Prussia to dominate Europe, he foresaw wars, and he educated the German army until every officer knew every road and every gun, not only in Germany, but in the enemy's country as well.

When Bismarck wanted colonies, he planned them so successfully that today the German flag is seen in Africa, on the shores of the Indian Ocean, and in the South Pacific. Bismarck has a genius for statesmanship.

Twenty years after the battle of Sedan, where the French were conquered, Bismarck retired to private life. The young emperor wished to rule alone.

But of late years, old as Bismarck is, the young Kaiser has again sought his advice and counsel. But whoever rules, Bismarck is Germany's national hero.

WILLIAM TELL.

The story of Switzerland's hero, told not as myth but as history—The arrow shot by the lakeside that opened the way for two hundred years of war.

By Samuel N. Parks.

IN the year 1307 there was trouble in the peaceful valleys of Switzerland. The people gathered together oftener than usual, and there were mutterings of injustice from one to the other.

Albert I of Austria had looked upon the sturdy populace and the fertile fields, and wanted to add them to his own family estates. He sent Austrian bailiffs to bring the people to revolt that he might conquer them.

The Swiss cantons sent their great men to confer. They were great men to one another, but to the insolent Austrians, who had come in, they were only low peasants.

Stauffacher, one of the prominent men of Uri, had a house carved all over the outside with mottos, and painted gaily. Gessler, the Austrian bailiff, stopped one day before it, and threatened to drive the family out, saying, "Dogs of peasants should not have such fine houses."

There happened to be standing near by a young man who was known as a great hunter of chamois, and a famous shot with the cross bow. It was William Tell, the son in law of Walter Furst, Stauffacher's best friend.

"Had it been my house, I would have shot the Austrian through the heart," he said.

Not long after this there was a fair at Altdorf. Booths were set up in the market place, and the people came to buy and sell and dance.

In the midst of the merrymaking Gessler rode up with a company and caused a pole to be raised in the center of the market

Tell's Chapel, on the Lake of Lucerne.

William Tell's Statue at Altdorf.

place, crowned with the ducal hat of Austria. A proclamation was read, commanding every man to bow to it as to a sovereign.

At the same moment William Tell, with his little son, walked by.

He gave one glance at the hat swinging above his head, and passed on.

Gessler caused him to be seized. He had heard of him before, and with the cruelty of a brutal nature, devised a terrible punishment.

He taunted Tell with his skill with the bow and arrow, and told him that he would like to test it. He caused Tell's little son to be stationed at a considerable distance from his father, placed an apple on his head, and then gave his cross bow to Tell and told him to cleave the apple.

Commanding the child not to move Tell shot, and the fruit fell in halves. As it did, the passionate Swiss held up a second arrow to Gessler's view.

"Had I missed," he said, "this was for you."

Gessler immediately ordered that he be bound and taken in a boat across the lake to his own castle. On the way a storm arose, and as Tell was a famous boatman, he was unbound and bade to guide the craft. Seizing the rudder, he ran it to a rocky point, snatched his cross bow, pushed the boat out into the stormy lake and escaped.

Hiding in the rocks, he heard Gessler and his men riding by after they had landed, the Austrian promising death to the Swiss. While the words were still on the tyrant's tongue, Tell fitted an arrow to his bow and shot Gessler through the heart.

This was the first blood shed in the Swiss insurrection, and it opened a series of wars which lasted two hundred years, but which finally freed Switzerland. In 1388 the canton of Uri, out of gratitude to Tell, built a chapel on the point of rock where he landed.

Of late years it has become the fashion to regard the story of William Tell more in the light of legend than history, and this legendary account tells us that Tell was drowned about the year 1350, while attempting to save the life of a child. This episode the German poet Uhland has used as the theme of one of his poems.

Indeed the name of Tell bids fair to live longer in the memory of mankind than that of many a man who may have performed more doughty deeds, Schiller's play and Rossini's opera having enshrined it in the enduring affections of many peoples.

THE LONDON ZOO.

How this famous collection of animals was started—Anecdotes of the odd doings of some of them, and a description of their improved abodes.

By George Holme.

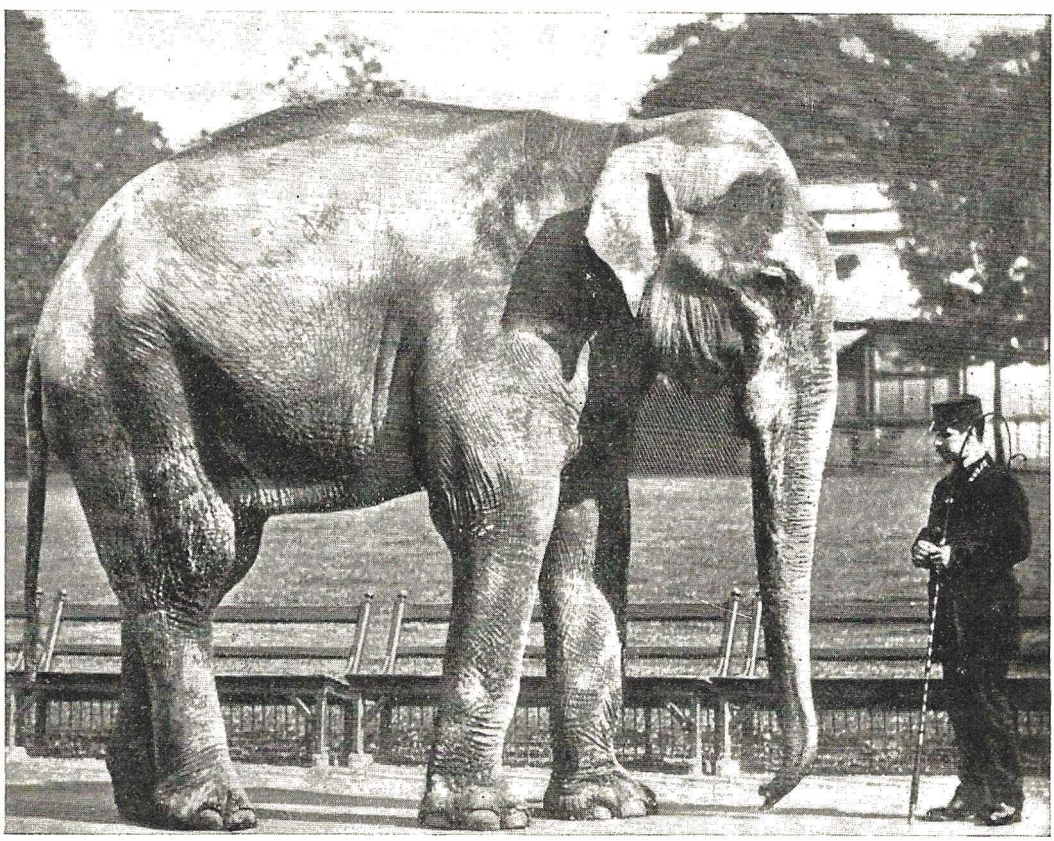
THE elephant—there was only one in England before the Zoölogical Gardens were opened—used to be kept in the Tower of London. King James the First, with a laudable ambition to educate his subjects, had an elephant, a tiger, and a lion or two brought from foreign lands and put where people could see them.

The rats were troublesome in the Tower, as they were almost everywhere else in those old days, and the elephant went pounding and swaying about his narrow quarters in big leather boots to keep the rodents from gnawing his toes.

The Zoölogical Society of England saw in the new Regent's Park a place for the animals, and in 1828 they leased five acres of the inclosure.

The English people thought they were crazy. Five acres seemed a ridiculously large space to devote to such a purpose. But the Zoölogical Society pointed out that England's young men were going away to foreign countries, and that as a matter of pride they would send home specimens of the animal life to be found in them. Today, the Zoo covers over twenty acres and contains nearly three thousand animals. Originally the cages were built exactly on the plan of those which we see in Barnum's circus today. The poor beasts suffered terribly from the close confinement and from the weather, but the gardens became a great resort for fashionable London.

It was not sightseers and holiday makers and children who monopolized the place,

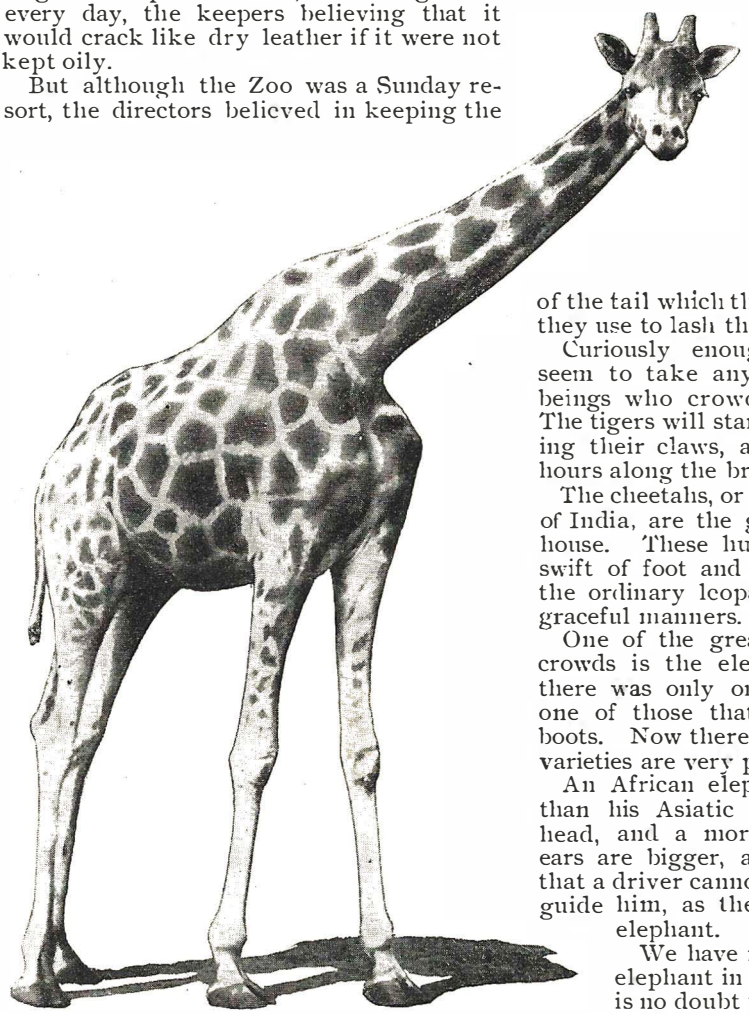


The Big Elephant.

but the lords and ladies of England. On "Monkey Green," in front of the monkey cages, all of gay London congregated every Sunday afternoon. Polite attendants walked about to warn the ladies not to go too near the cages, and to be careful lest the elephant should nibble their leghorn hats.

The ladies were also warned against patting the elephant's hide, as it was greased every day, the keepers believing that it would crack like dry leather if it were not kept oily.

But although the Zoo was a Sunday resort, the directors believed in keeping the



The Giraffe.

Sabbath, so the animals were fed only six days in the week. The poor beasts had a hard time of it in those first years.

Many of them died of consumption, contracted from exposure. The young animals that were born were nearly all deformed in some way, most of them having cleft palates, so that it was impossible for them to take food.

Finally dens were built under the terrace, but even these were not satisfactory, and at last a great lion house, with every arrangement for the comfort of the creatures, was constructed.

Cages were made so large that trees and rocks are inclosed by them, and by an ingenious movable tunnel the lions and tigers are let out into the air.

At first it is very hard to persuade them to enter the tunnel. They think it a new sort of trap, but after they have smelled the grass, and realize that the passage is to lead them out of doors, their joy is almost pitiful, for it is, after all, only an exchange of cages.

Sometimes one of the big cats will catch sight of a deer or some other creature which is its natural prey, and it will stand motionless, lashing its tail from side to side, ready for a spring. Tigers have a claw in the end of the tail which the native East Indians say they use to lash themselves into a fury.

Curiously enough, the animals never seem to take any notice of the human beings who crowd close up to the bars. The tigers will stand by the trees, sharpening their claws, and the pumas will lie for hours along the branches almost invisible.

The cheetahs, or clouded hunting leopards of India, are the great favorites in the cat house. These hunting leopards are very swift of foot and cannot climb trees like the ordinary leopard, but they have very graceful manners.

One of the great resorts of the holiday crowds is the elephant house. At first there was only one elephant, and it was one of those that had worn the leather boots. Now there are several, and the two varieties are very plainly marked.

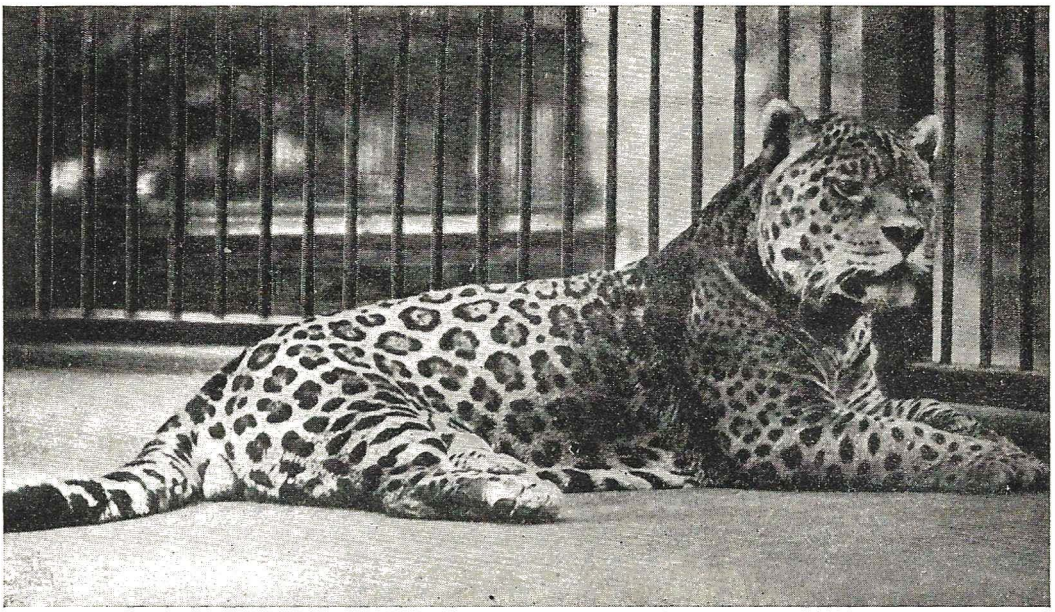
An African elephant is generally larger than his Asiatic brother, has a rounder head, and a more prominent face. His ears are bigger, and his head is so shaped that a driver cannot sit behind his ears and guide him, as the mahout sits the Asiatic elephant.

We have never known an African elephant in a tamed state, but there is no doubt that the ancient Carthaginians used them in war. They could not have been as docile as the Asiatic elephants, however.

We read in the story of Hannibal's wars that that general had to construct rafts to carry his elephants across the river Rhone, although that stream is neither very wide nor very turbulent. In India the elephants are used as a sort of ferry boat across rivers which are too angry for boats.

Jumbo used to be the favorite elephant at the London Zoo. Almost every child that visited the gardens had ridden on his great back and fed him with cakes. When he was sold to come to America, there was a wail from all over England.

In the elephant house there are several rhinoceroses. As a collection they are the



The Jaguar.

best in any country in the world. There are four sorts, but they are hard to distinguish.

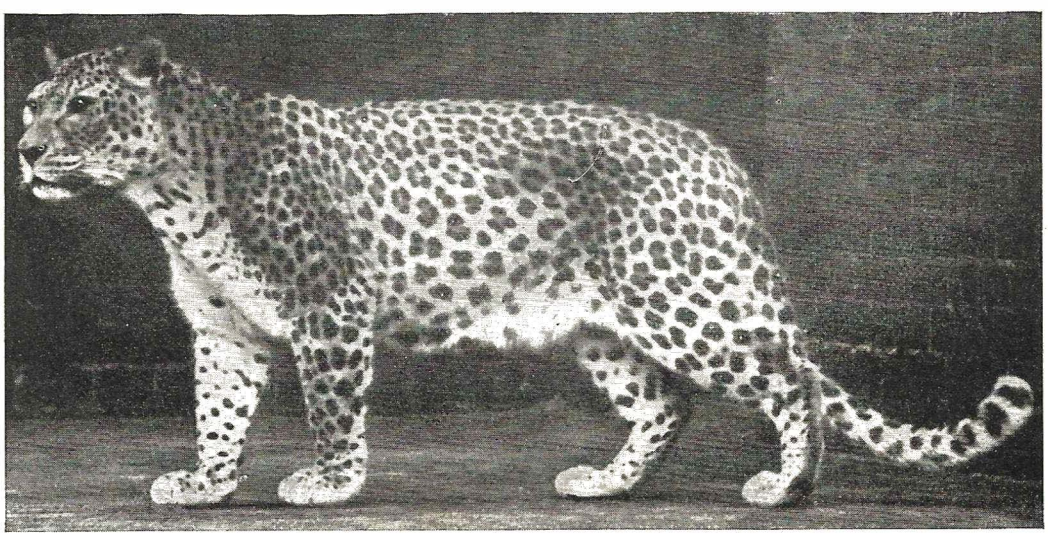
The hippopotamus is also kept here, and he will stand for hours with his huge ugly mouth wide open waiting for buns to be thrown into it. In Africa, where the hippopotamus comes from, his flesh is considered a great delicacy.

There is a story still told of Obash, the first hippopotamus at the garden. Sometimes these animals are very docile, but they show a nature which is almost human in its likes and dislikes.

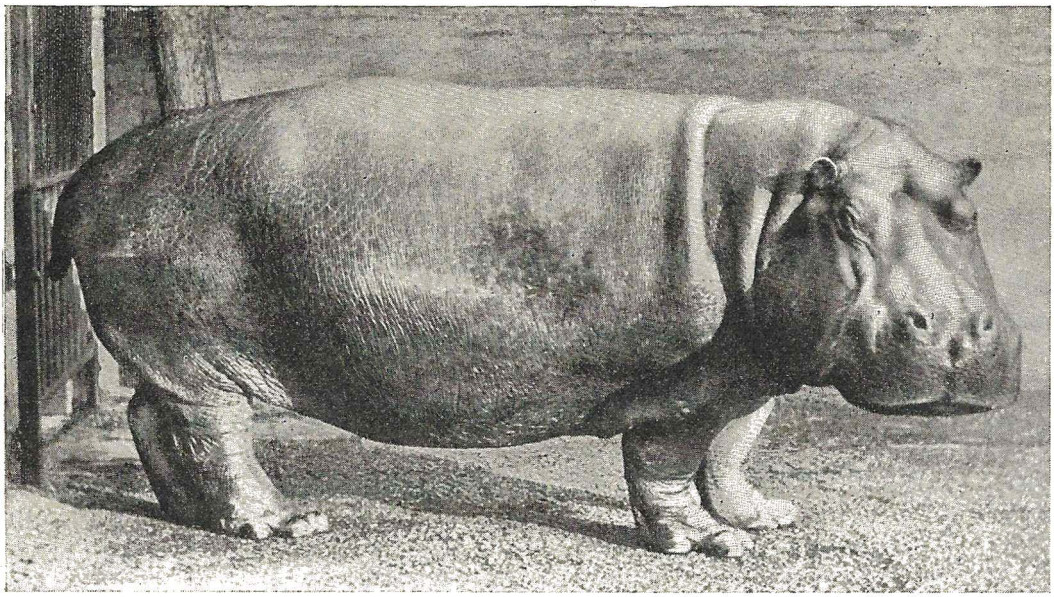
Obash was a hateful creature, who would grow stubborn and take fits of spite, when he would become absolutely unmanageable. Jumbo's keeper, Scott, was the particular object of his hatred, and whenever he saw the elephant keeper coming Obash would fly toward him.

One day, by some unknown means, the hippopotamus got through his gate. Coaxing, driving, everything, was tried to get him back. Finally the superintendent called Scott, put a bank note in his hand, and asked him if he thought he could do anything.

Scott stood in the path and taunted Obash. The huge, unwieldy brute whirled like lightning and tore after him. Scott saw that it was to be a race for life, but he rushed through the gate of the hippopotamus' pen, and leaped over the palings to a place of



The Leopard.



The Hippopotamus.

safety just as Obash snapped his teeth on his coat tails.

At that moment a newspaper reporter sprang out of a cab, weak with excitement.

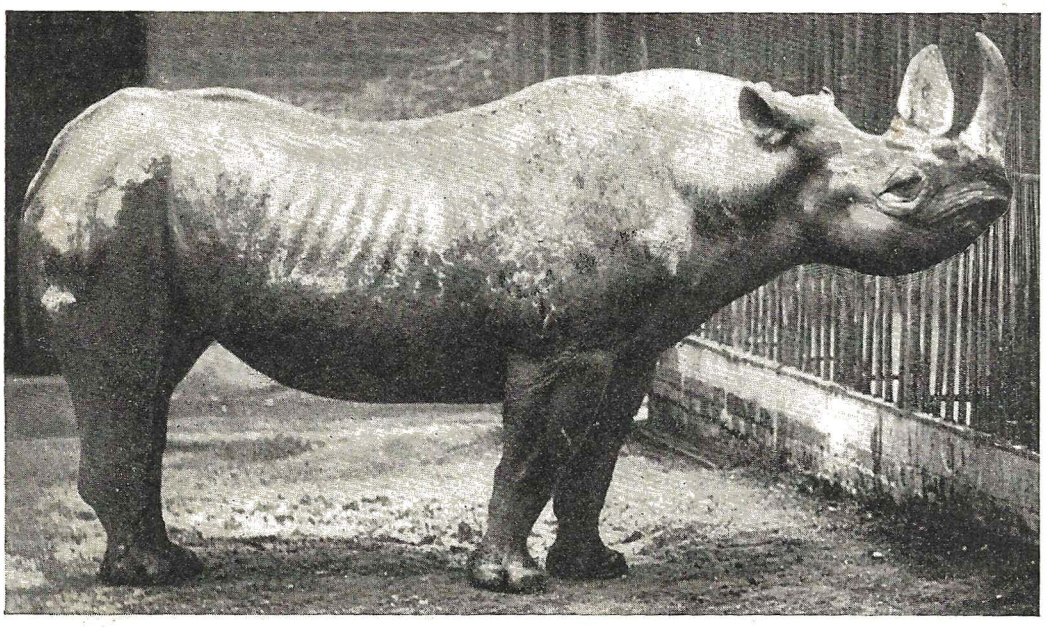
"I heard," he said, "that the wild hippopotamus was loose."

"Oh, no," Scott replied coolly. "Don't you see him there in his pen?"

One of the most perfect buildings is the reptile house. It was built in 1884. Before that the visitor might look at a lot of boxes with dirty blankets in the bottom, but it was seldom he saw a snake. The reptiles were cold, and they were not very fond of being looked at.

Now a large and well lighted hall is provided, and each of the snakes has a glass box of his own, and his own private thermometer, registering the heat to which he is best suited. He needs no blankets.

For the snakes that love water, glass troughs have been built. It is a singular sight to see one of the reptiles bathing, pruning himself and lifting his head as though he were admiring his beautiful scales and the luster of his body.



The Two Horned Rhinoceros.

People who are fond of snakes, and make pets of them, say that their bodies are delightful to the touch, being a good deal like polished steel.

In some of the compartments tree trunks have been placed, and the great serpents may be seen like the pumas, lying along the branches.

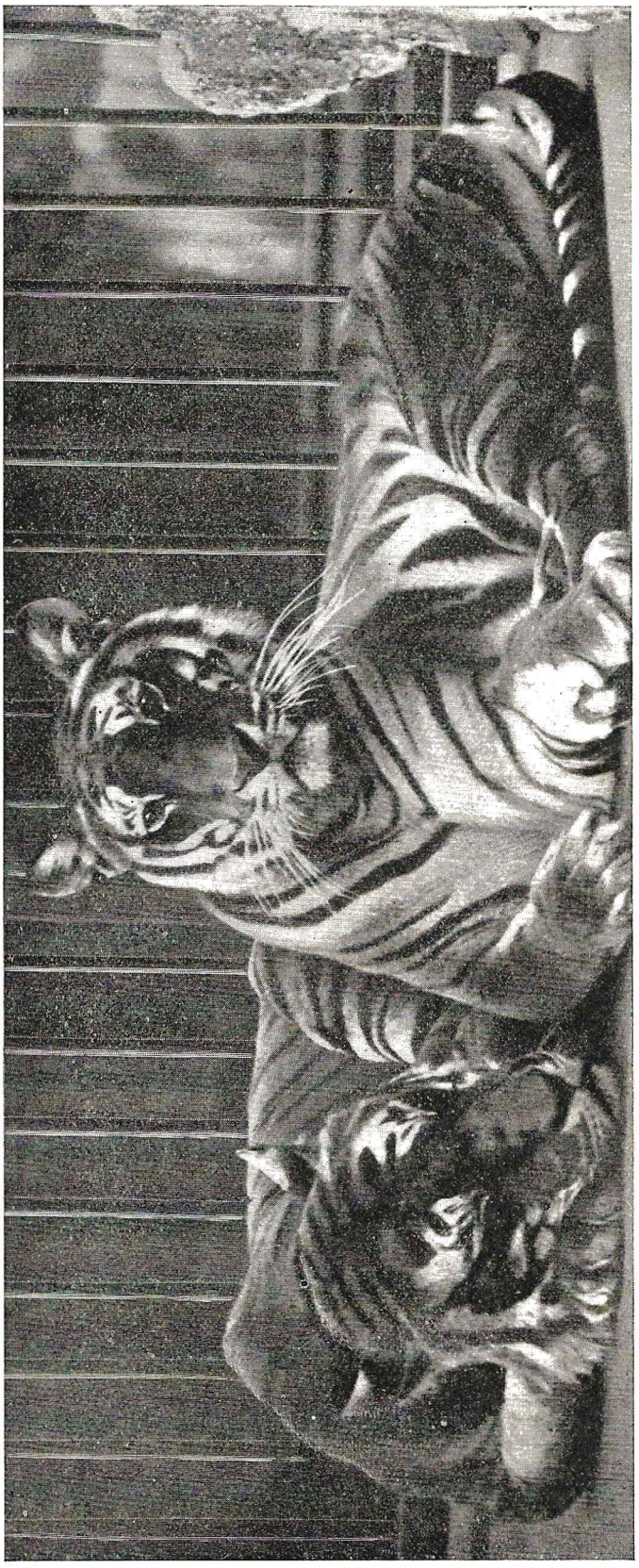
The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will not allow us to see the snakes at the Zoo at feeding time. Small live animals are given to them, such as rats and mice, birds and rabbits, which they are supposed to hypnotize into insensibility before they swallow. A few years ago two great snakes, pythons from India, I think, were confined in the same box. One morning, when the attendant went in to inspect the serpents, he found that one of them had disappeared. There was no way for it to get out of the glass case, and the affair seemed shrouded in mystery, until somebody noticed that hanging jauntily from one corner of the brother snake's mouth was something like a rakishly held cigar.

It was the lost snake's tail. The other one had swallowed him.

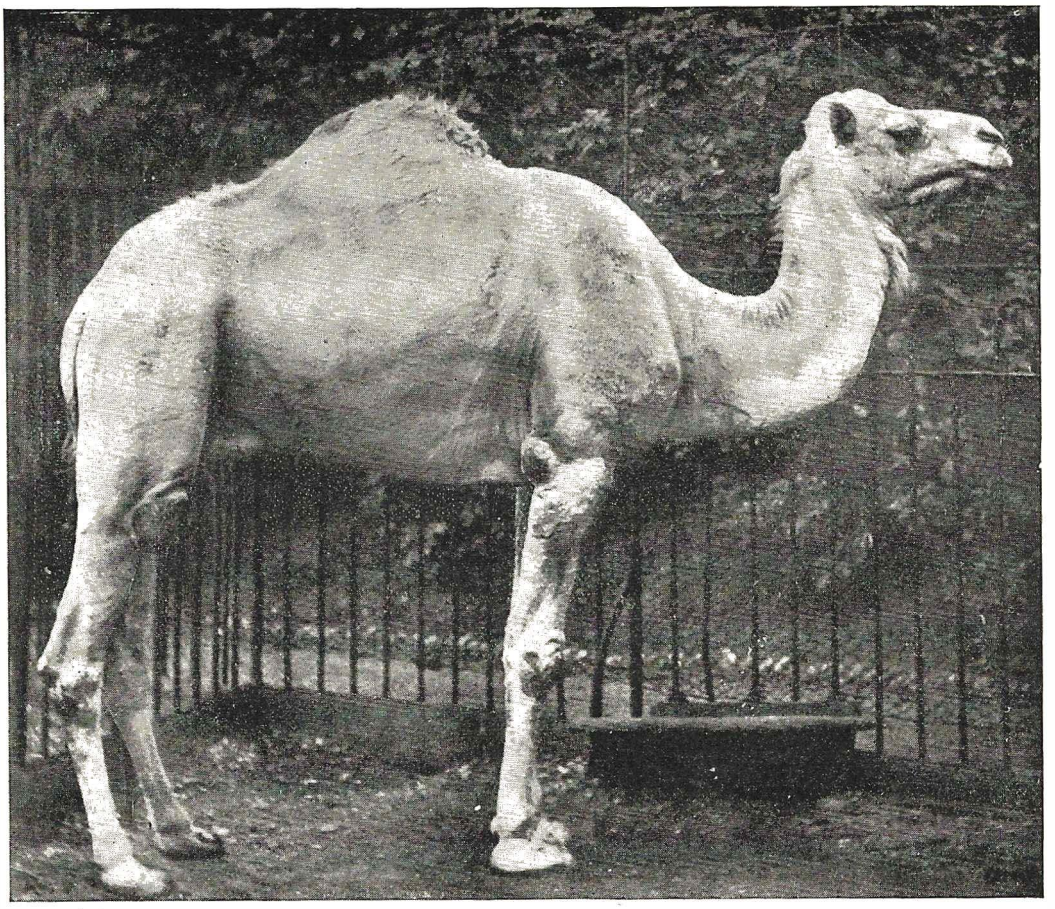
But evidently they could not agree, for after some hours the swallower pushed his brother into the air again, and the latter wrapped himself about a limb, seemingly none the worse for his confinement.

The snakes are very fond of music. When any little instrument is played near them they lift their heads with every sign of pleasure.

In the same building is a fine collection of alligators and crocodiles. Most people think at first that these reptiles are identical. The crocodiles come from India and the alligators from America. The only difference lies in *one tooth*, so that it is not very important.



The Bengal Tigers.



The Arabian Camel.

The curious thing about an alligator or crocodile is that its upper jaw is on a hinge instead of the lower. It throws back the top of its head and lies on the sand waiting for its prey to walk in.

The collection of lizards is in this house, and the beautiful ones come from our own southwest. Some of them look as though carved from a solid turquoise, and others are gaily striped, while larger ones have every appearance of having been made from black and white beads, marked in elaborate patterns.

Deer and pheasants, and fish and birds of all sorts, attract us on every side. Mr. Frank Buckland, the naturalist, did much for the London Zoo, and he has written hundreds of stories of the animals in his delightful books.

Mr. Buckland firmly believed in the sea serpent, and hoped that some day one would be captured for the Zoo's aquarium, but as yet it must be content with whales and sharks for monsters.

Famous people have made several additions to the Zoo. The fat old jaguar which used to lumber around good naturedly was once a pet of Lady Florence Dixie, the sister of the Marquis of Queensbury.

The monkey house, as in the old days, always has its crowd. But today it is delighted children instead of fashionable ladies who throng about it. There are dozens of varieties of monkeys, from the great mandril, with his blue hair, to the educated chimpanzee.

There is always a chimpanzee at the Zoo being educated, and the poor creatures are always dying of consumption. Sometimes they are pitiful objects, sitting wrapped in shawls, with plasters on their chests, and drinking milk punch like a human invalid.

They can be taught to eat and drink like white children. They sleep in beds and have fairly good manners. Sally, a one time favorite at the Zoo, could count up to five, and make most of her wants known.

The flying foxes are kept in the monkey house. They are the only animals known with habits of intemperance. They will watch the pots into which the quickly fermenting juice of the date tree is run by the natives of India, and will drink every drop, lying about in varying stages of intoxication, or flying through the trees, wild from the effects of the liquor.

The parrot house is brilliant, but so noisy that it deafens one. Many of the parrots

were put in the gardens when they were opened in 1828, and these seem as lively as the rest.

The mortality among the animals is great. Sometimes one third of them die in a year, and must be replaced, but most of these deaths occur among the smaller beasts.

When the death of a lion or a gorilla occurs, the Royal Society of Surgeons usually makes an event of the matter, and the body is stuffed. New animals are constantly being added. The projectors of the garden were correct in their knowledge of young Englishmen when they predicted that the young men would send animals to the Zoo from foreign lands. Some years nearly one thousand have come in in this way.

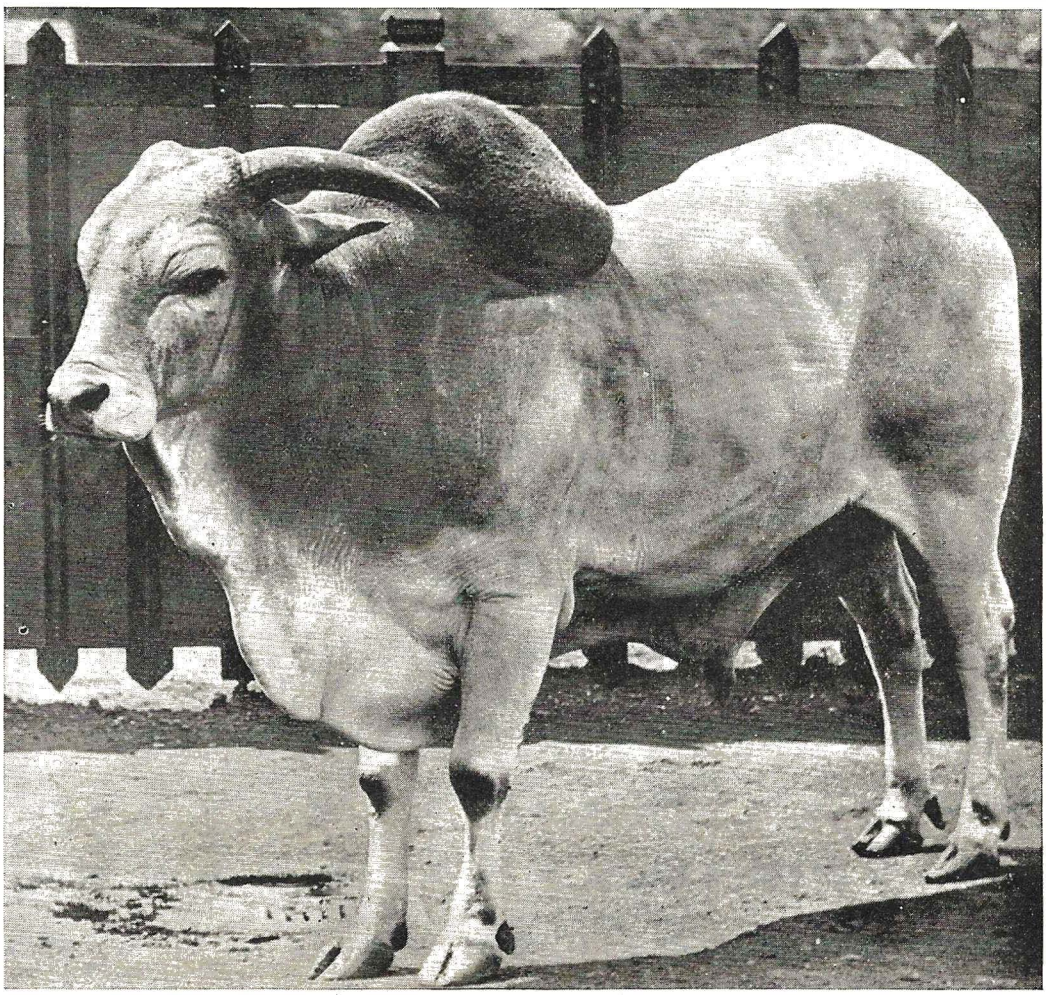
Some of these are specimens which could not be purchased, as they are unique. A tooth billed pigeon from the Samoan Islands, an arrow headed toad, and many other things belong to almost extinct races.

The animals in the gardens are valued at one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, but this is merely approximate, as some of them are beyond value. It seems curious to learn that lions are much cheaper than tigers. A large lion is worth about five hundred dollars, but a tiger is worth a thousand.

It costs twenty five thousand dollars a year to run the gardens. Besides the keepers, a large staff of gardeners is required. And animals eat, even though the elephants are not pampered like that pet at Versailles in the seventeenth century who was sent daily from the king's own kitchen, eighty loaves of white bread, one dozen bottles of wine, two buckets of gravy soup, two buckets of boiled rice, and one truss of hay.

The elephant at the Zoo gets hay, straw, roots, rice, and bread to a weight of one hundred and fifty pounds. The hippopotamus eats two hundred pounds of food a day.

The gentle, lady like giraffe, whom we imagine as cropping daintily at the tender leaves on the tree top, eats fifty pounds of



The Zebu.

The Zebra.

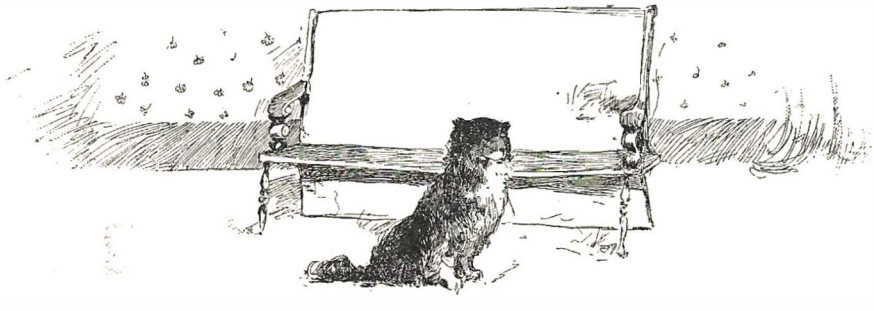
food in a day. Its menu consists of hay, oats, and chaff.

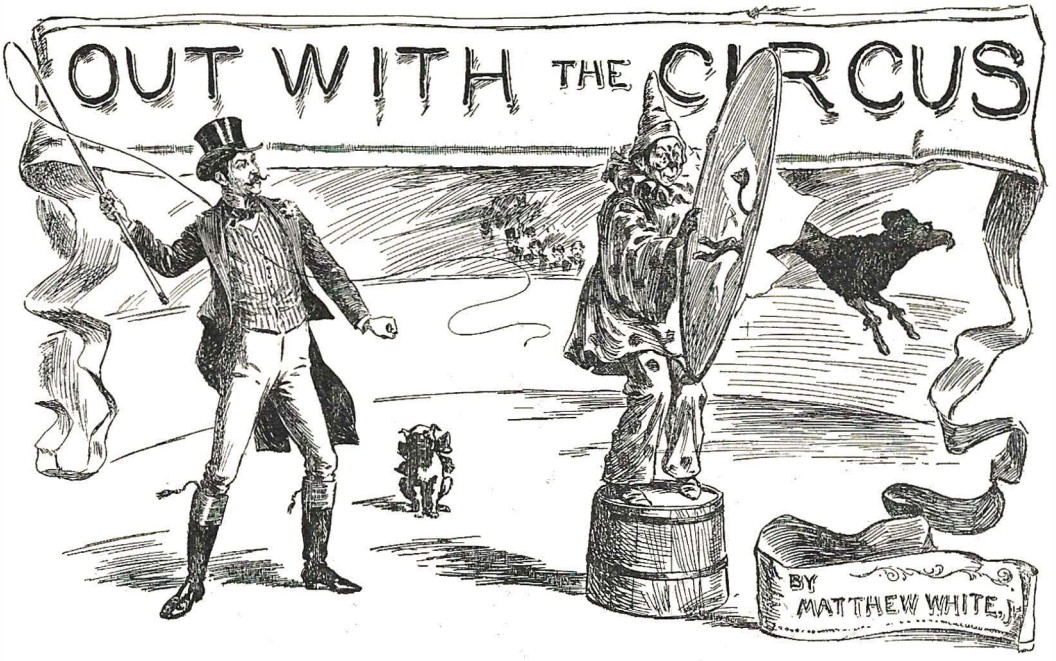
Lions and tigers eat horse flesh usually, but the clever keeper every now and then gives the lions a goat. They eat it, hair, bones and all. This is their natural food, and it keeps them healthy and silky.

The animals are much better off in captivity than they are in a wild state, but they cannot be made to think so. They will not live in their cages as they live at home, and, after all, most that we know of their habits and ways, we get from trackers and hunters. The elephants show none of their clever jungle ways to their captors, and the naturalist who is in earnest still goes to the woods.

It would take much space to describe the beauties of the gardens. There are reedy pools where herons stand, and brilliant beds of flowers. Roses bloom by tiger's cages, and llamas walk by rows of geraniums.

It would be very interesting to put the fauna and flora of a single country together, but this has been found impossible.





CHAPTER VII.

SOME TROUBLE ABOUT A PHOTOGRAPH.

GUY had broken the seal of his letter very hastily, and ran his eye over the contents with great swiftness, so anxious was he to find out whether his chum was going to come to him. But when he had reached the end, he was so utterly amazed and mystified that he felt he must have read wrong.

He hunted about for some spot where he might sit down and go over the epistle with more deliberation.

The Westwater post office was situated in the general store of the place, where there was a good deal of coming and going. But just across the way was a handsome country mansion, setting back from the road in the midst of a wide sweeping lawn, dotted plentifully with towering horse chestnuts. There was no fence, and Guy decided at once that the base of one of these trees was the goal of quiet of which he was in search.

Seated on the grass, he made himself comfortable, and once more possessed himself of the contents of the letter Miss Sue had written for her brother. Here it is:

DEAR GUY:

Poor Gordon is laid up with bad eyes, the result of an unfortunate attempt to anticipate the Fourth. So he can neither come to you nor write.

Of course I had to read your letter to him, so I know your secret. But don't fear, Guy; I will keep as close as the traditional oyster. How could you be so foolish, though? At your age! But now that the thing is done, there is nothing for it but for you to make the best of it. To try and free yourself would only make a bad matter worse.

Of course, though, your family must know as soon as they come home. I wish you had given more particulars. Why didn't you want Gordon to come direct to Greenvale? And I must say I think it a little strange that you should want him at all at such a time. If it is with a view to smoothing matters over with your father and mother, I am free to confess that some woman, myself for instance, would be far more likely to find out the sunny side of the situation, and so make a favorable report on it to the powers that be.

If I can arrange it so as to leave Gordon, I shall come on myself, so keep up your heart, and don't worry. What can't be cured, you know, must be endured, with the best possible grace.

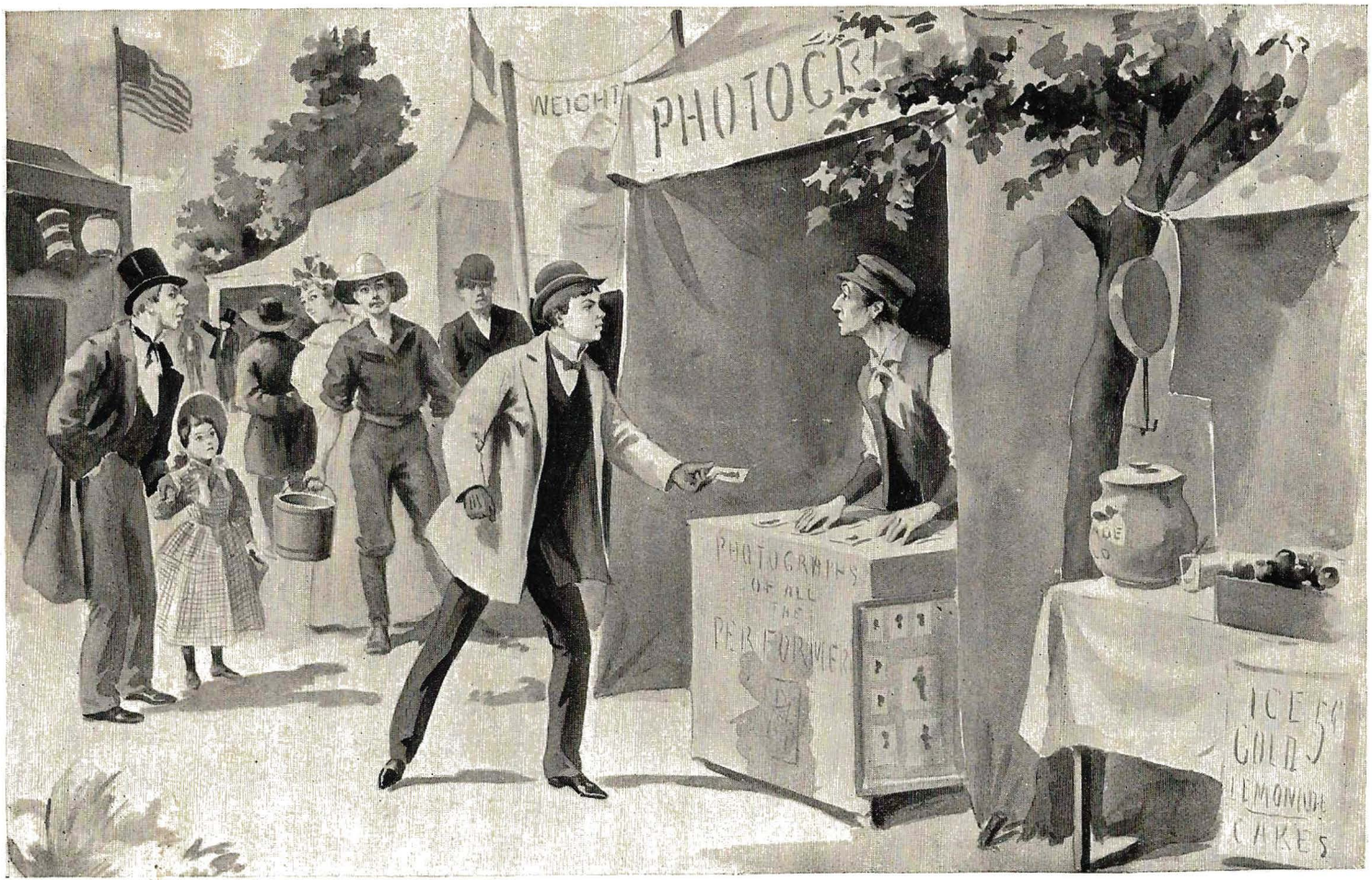
I hope you get along harmoniously. You won't, though, if you keep talking about being held in slavery. That is very imprudent. Gordon sends his best regards. Till I see you, believe me

Very sincerely yours,
SUE F. MAYNARD.

If anything, Guy was more in the dark than ever after a second perusal of the foregoing extraordinary document.

"Why in the name of the seven wonders should she think it strange that I should want Gordon at such a time? And, to cap all, why should a girl be able to do more for me than a fellow? And great Scott, to think of her coming on! What will I do with her? She's sure to let out who I am. And what does she mean by saying that the family must find it out some time? I don't see any necessity for that. By George, now that Gordon can't come, I'm sorry I wrote to him!"

The first 6 chapters of this story appeared in the May issue of THE ARGOSY, *which will be forwarded to any address on receipt of 10 cents.*



"Look here," Guy demanded sharply, bringing out the photograph, "what do you mean by selling these?"

Guy refolded the letter, shoved it in his pocket with an impatient gesture, and was about to rise to his feet when a boy of eleven or twelve suddenly appeared before him.

He had evidently caught sight of Guy from the street and had come over the lawn to accost him.

"I hope you won't mind doing something for me," be began, shifting his feet uneasily as he talked. "At least, it's for my sister."

"What is it?" asked Guy, rather shortly, for he was not in the most amiable of moods.

"Please write your name on this," and the boy took one hand from behind his back and held out a photograph.

Guy gave one look at the card and then fairly gasped.

It was a picture of himself and Nina Melton sitting chatting under the trees as they had done Sunday afternoon in Greenvale.

His brows contracted into a dark frown.

"Where did you get this?" he demanded of the boy in tones so peremptory that the fellow involuntarily stepped back a pace or two.

"I told you my sister gave it to me."

"But where did she get it? This is infamous—there must be a law that will reach such things."

Guy took his two hands to the cardboard and started to tear it in half. Then he changed his mind.

"No; I want to show it to Snap," and he dropped it into the side pocket of his sack coat along with Sue Maynard's letter.

"Here, you mustn't take that picture," the boy exclaimed, as Guy turned to walk off toward the circus grounds.

"You don't suppose I'm going to let you keep it, do you?" asked Guy, in lofty scorn.

"But it isn't yours. Myra bought it—paid a quarter for it."

"Bought it?" repeated Guy, stopping short. "Where did she buy it?"

"Out on the circus grounds, in the photograph tent."

Guy fished in his trousers' pocket and drew out a twenty five cent piece.

"Here, give that to your sister," he said. "That will square us."

"No, it won't," grumbled the boy. "Myra'll be awful mad. I know she will. She saw you sitting there under the tree as we drove up to the post office and sent me to get you to write your name. She said you'd only be too glad to do it."

"I suppose I might be if I was one of the regular circus people," Guy made answer. "But, you see, I'm not. This picture was taken without my knowing anything about it, and I'm going to stop the sale," and spurting with his longer legs, Guy soon left Myra's aggrieved brother in the rear.

Young Lansing was not long in finding the photograph tent among the side shows.

"Look here," he demanded of the youth in charge, as he whipped the offending portrait out of his pocket, "what do you mean by selling these? The thing was stolen. I never sat for that picture; did not know one was being taken, and I will not have them exposed for sale."

Espying three or four on a table, he swept them off as he spoke.

"Look a-here," cried the photograph boy, coming out from behind the improvised counter, war in his eye, "you leave them 'ere fortygrafs alone, do you hear me talkin'? They ain't yours; you ain't nothin' to do with 'em."

"I haven't, haven't I? Well, I guess I've everything to do with them, as they are pictures of me," and turning, Guy started to walk away from the tent with his booty.

But he had barely passed the entrance when the other youth flung himself upon him, and a wrestling match for the possession of the photographs ensued then and there.

The other boy was the stronger of the two, but Guy knew more of the science of the bout, and in three seconds Jim Higgins was stretched upon his back on the grass, with Judge Lansing's son kneeling just above him.

Naturally a crowd had collected, and now Snap bust forth from the midst of it, demanding,

"What's all this disgraceful scene, Lansing? I'm amazed."

Guy looked up quickly at hearing himself addressed by his own name.

"It means, Mr. Snap," he said, "that I've had my fill of this. You have broken your share of the compact in more ways than one."

"You haven't answered my question. Why are you pummeling poor Higgins in this manner?"

"He was trying to force from me photographs of myself, taken without authorization, and which he was selling without my leave. I will not submit to it."

"But you are doing worse now—making a free show of yourself."

Snap stepped close to whisper this in Guy's ear, and realizing that there was truth in the statement, Guy picked up the pictures and started to leave the grounds.

CHAPTER VIII.

GUY HAS A NEW GRIEVANCE.

"HANWAY, oh Hanway, step here a moment, will you please?"

It was Mr. Snap's voice, in exceedingly pleasant tones. He was sitting, smoking, just inside the men's dressing tent. A pleasant looking fellow was talking with him, whom Guy recognized as the man who managed the trained dogs and monkeys.

He had one of the latter on his knee now, a big, ugly looking chap.

"Ah, Hanway," said Mr. Snap, as Guy came up, "I want to introduce you to Professor Heidenback. Bert has told him you have been abroad, and he has expressed a wish to meet you. Here, take this keg. You have time for a few minutes' chat about the Fatherland before the call to dress. By the way, I'll see that you are not further annoyed about those pictures."

"Thank you, Mr. Snap; I wish you would."

Guy seated himself on the upturned keg, which brought him in close proximity to the monkey, who began to thrust his face inquisitively close.

"Behave yourself, Jocko," said the professor. "Slap him once on the nose, Mr. Hanway. That is the only way to make him keep his distance. Have you been in Hamburg?"

"Oh, yes. It reminds me of Venice in some ways—there is so much water all about."

As he spoke, Guy acted on the German's suggestion, and administered a light tap to the monkey's nose. But the fellow only drew back momentarily and was soon trying to investigate the contents of his new neighbor's side pocket.

The professor interrupted himself in a rhapsody about his native land to exclaim,

"There, dat is too bad, Meester Hanway. Wait here one minute, will you you please. I must teach Jocko a lesson he will remember."

Heidenback rose, and dragging the monkey after him by his chain, disappeared in the direction of the cook tent.

"I hope he locks the brute up," muttered Guy. "Monkeys are well enough to laugh at, at a distance, but one doesn't want to snuggle up to them," and young Lansing gave a little shiver of disgust.

An instant later Heidenback reappeared, the monkey still with him.

"Here," he said, resuming his seat by Guy and pressing something into the latter's hand. "If he troubles you again just give him a smell of this."

"This" was pepper, and it was not long before Guy found an opportunity to use it.

Jocko sneezed violently several times. The professor laughed and so did Guy—till the monkey suddenly stopped sneezing and made a vicious snap at his hand.

"I think I'd better keep my distance for a while," Guy observed, as he dodged back out of range. "I must go and dress now, any way."

"I hope I have many more talk with you about de Faderlant, Meester Hanway," remarked the professor.

"Well, they'll all have to be crowded into the next three days," reflected Guy as he went over to his valise.

When he appeared in the ring for his act with Peck a little while later, he was surprised to see Heidenback disguised as an Italian organ grinder, trapesing around the sawdust, Jocko at his heels.

But the monkey wasn't there long. As soon as he caught sight of Guy, he flew at him like a whirlwind, and only Heidenback hauling him up short when he was within a few inches of the "dude" saved the son of a possible Presidential candidate from a vicious attack by an infuriated member of the simian tribe.

The spectators howled with delight. Guy was crimson with fury.

"Take the beast out," he muttered in a loud aside to Heidenback.

"All right," the latter whispered back. "Go on with your part. I'll keep him in check."

Drawing him into close range, the professor compelled Jocko to sit on top of the organ for the rest of the act. But the beast eyed Guy vindictively all through the performance, which was gone through with on this occasion to the low accompaniment of the hand organ.

As soon as they were in the dressing tent, Guy went up to Peck and asked,

"What is that man Heidenback doing in our scene?"

"Oh, Snap thought it would be more realistic to have music by a hand organ than by the band."

"It's to be a regular thing, then, is it?"

"I guess, unless Heidenback kicks at making a Dago of himself. I understand he doesn't much fancy the disguise."

Guy said nothing more, and soon forgot the circumstance in again perplexing his mind over the meaning of Sue Maynard's letter.

"Well, as long as she hasn't turned up here, I suppose I oughtn't to bother my head about it. Lucky I didn't give Gordon our route to the end of the week, or Sue might turn up any day."

Norbury was their next stand, and Guy journeyed thither on the train with all the rest of the company. There was a crowd at the station to see them off and another in Norbury to watch their arrival. Guy had never been so undisguisedly stared at in his life.

"I suppose, though," he told himself, "I ought to be grateful Mr. Snap doesn't expect me to take part in the street parade."

At the performance the evening before, Heidenback and his monkey had not made their appearance as an accompaniment to the dude-countryman act. Guy cherished the hope that the German professor had "kicked" so vigorously at being forced to make a street fakir of himself that in future the brass band would furnish the music as heretofore.

But at the matinée in Norbury behold the monkey and his master were again on hand.

And Jocko had evidently not yet forgotten the pepper episode. As soon as he

caught sight of Guy, he made a spring for him, and this time Heidenback made no attempt to check him. Guy was forced to turn and flee for his life, to the intense joy of the assembled multitude.

Red with rage, young Lansing sought out Mr. Snap.

"Unless that beast is taken out of the ring," he said, "I will not enter it again."

"Unless you do enter it again," replied the manager, in a low, but significant tone, "I go out and announce that the public have had the pleasure of seeing Judge Lansing's son flee from a monkey."

CHAPTER IX.

THE WORM TURNS.

GUY stood silent, thinking for an instant. He now realized the whole trick that had been played on him.

He had been thrown with the monkey trainer that day in Westwater simply to give Jocko an opportunity to annoy him, in the hope that he would retaliate and so get the animal down on him.

The scheme had worked so well that Guy could still hear the ripples of laughter from the spectators as they recalled the dude's undignified flight.

Naturally he was furious. The whole thing seemed such an underhand proceeding. But he knew that Snap would carry out his threat. Besides, to give up now would look as though he really was afraid of the monkey.

"I'll go back," he said quietly; "but remember, if that brute hurts me, you've got to stand the damages."

"Nonsense!" replied Snap, his good humor returning instantly. "He's on the chain. You don't suppose Heidenback would let him get at you! It's only fun."

"It's the sort of fun I don't like, Mr. Snap, and I want it stopped." So saying Guy marched into the ring again.

Jocko did not get the chance to interfere with him further, as the professor held him down close to the organ. But Guy knew that the chasing performance would be repeated in the evening. It was too popular with the public to be omitted.

"It's too humiliating," mused the judge's son. "I've half a mind to cut stick, as our British cousins say, this very afternoon. Yes, sir, I know what I'll do. I'll go over to Greenvale and see if I can't find out the chap who took those photographs. Snap won't think of looking for me there if he takes it into his head to hunt me up."

He had reached a whole mind by the time he had finished dressing.

"I'll let Snap say what he pleases, as long as I'm not by to hear it. I believe I've been an idiot to stay with him as long as I have."

He returned to the hotel and managed to get his trunk and valise to the station without letting the landlord know where it was going from there.

"Now I'm beginning to have an adventure that is worth living through," he said to himself, when he had boarded the train after a swift glance around to make certain that none of Snap's people saw him.

Then he leaned back in his seat with a great sigh of relief as the cars sped past the circus tents.

"By George," he muttered, "I should like to have a glimpse of Snap's face when I don't turn up in time for the performance tonight. I wonder if he really will carry out his threat of exposure. But things have come to that pass now that I don't care whether he does or not. Because I had done a foolish thing there was no sense in my keeping on at it and making the fool record a longer one."

Then he forgot Snap and the show while his mind went forward to Greenvale and Nina Melton.

"I wonder if she has seen any of those photos. Great Scott, I hope not. And if she knew they had been selling them at the circus, I wouldn't blame her for being pretty mad. What a lot of mischief this circus freak of mine has brought about!"

But now it suddenly came over him that he had no means of telling who had taken those pictures he wanted suppressed.

"Another specimen of my heedlessness," he told himself, biting his lip.

It was too late to mend matters now, however. Besides, Guy decided that he really must see Nina Melton again. He wanted to tell her the whole story. He felt this was due her, now that she had been brought into the affair so unpleasantly.

When he arrived at Greenvale he took the 'bus up to the Liberty House.

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Hanway; glad to see you back," exclaimed the clerk affably.

Guy started. He had quite forgotten that he had registered here under his circus name. He was glad to be reminded that he must be consistent.

"There was a lady here inquiring for you, Mr. Hanway," went on the clerk, as he assigned his guest to his former room.

"A lady!" exclaimed Guy, with as much amazement in his tone as though he had been told that the Bey of Tunis had been asking for him.

"Yes, she was here not long ago, and seemed much surprised when I told her that I did not know when you would be back."

"It must be Nina," thought Guy. "It can't possibly be anybody else, although it does seem queer she should come here. But she's evidently seen the pictures and wants to know what it means. Well, the sooner I go round and explain, the better."

So he ate his supper, dressed himself carefully, and sallied forth in the June twilight in the direction of the elm shaded residence near the other end of the town.

He was passing the Pioneer Hotel when a faintly smothered cry of "Guy" smote his ear, there was a rustle of skirts and the next instant a tall young woman of some twenty five years rushed up and grasped him by the hand.

"Sue Maynard!" exclaimed Guy, fairly petrified by the sight of his chum's sister in Greenvale. "What are you doing here?"

"Well, I must say that's a pretty question for you to ask, when you must know that I came to help you out of the awkward scrape you have got yourself into. But come up on the piazza and sit down. There's a quiet corner here where we can talk undisturbed. I know you must have just lots to say to me."

"I can't understand yet though how you came to be here," stammered Guy, still bewildered.

"That's easy enough. Gladys came back unexpectedly from the Pier, so, leaving her with Gordon, I took my maid and the afternoon train, and here I am. Aren't you glad to see me?"

"Why, of course, but—but what I don't comprehend is how you knew I was to be here in Greenvale."

"Stupid, where else should I expect to find you? You wrote Gordon from here and——"

"But I told him I would be in Westwater."

"On Wednesday, yes, but I knew that was only policy on your part. You wanted to see how he would take it before venturing to bring him into—your home, shall I call it? But I am not a boy, Guy, and I was clever enough to read between the lines. So I came straight here. You see you did not think we would guess your secret, but *I* did."

By this time Guy was staring at his chum's sister as though he believed her demented. What on earth did she mean by talking in this rambling manner?

One thing was clear: it was Sue Maynard and not Nina Melton who had inquired for him at the Liberty House. This took a load from his heart.

"Well," he said, allowing himself to settle back comfortably in his chair, "I've cast the die now. I've bolted and the whole thing is bound to come out."

"Oh, Guy, how could you? Didn't I write you, that now the deed was done, you ought to make the best of it? You must patch it up and go back, indeed you must. Why, the scandal will be something frightful."

"Well, it may make a bit of a rumpus for a time, but it is bound to blow over soon. Besides, things got to such a pass that I really couldn't stand it, and—— hold on a minute. Just excuse me a second, Sue, will you? There's somebody I must speak to."

Sauntering slowly past the hotel, their hands filled with letters and newspapers they had just received at the post office, were Nina Melton and her grandmother. Guy hurried after and joined them, with Miss Sue, risen to her feet, peering at the spectacle intently through her lorgnette, a smile of satisfaction on her lips.

CHAPTER X.

A WOULD BE PEACEMAKER.

"Good evening, Miss Melton, Mrs. Melton," Guy began.

He spoke with some embarrassment. Now that he had run after them he did not know exactly why he had done so, especially as he intended calling on them later in the evening.

But as soon as he caught the frigid stare with which his greeting was received, he knew that he had been anxious to know whether those photographs had been seen. He knew now that they had.

"Nina, my dear," said her grandmother in a stately tone, "walk on. I will settle with this young man in one word."

Then, without giving Guy a chance to speak, she turned to him and continued:

"If you had a morsel of self respect remaining, you would not presume to address us. Good night."

"But that's what I wanted to explain."

It was no use, however. Mrs. Melton had moved on to join her granddaughter and when he attempted to follow, she sternly waved him back.

The cold perspiration broke out on Guy's forehead. This was awful. If he could only lay hands on the fellow who took those photographs!

But he would ferret him out, and then compel him to go to Mrs. Melton and confess the whole outrageous affair.

"I'll go to the hotel now," he resolved, "and ask that clerk who is the camera fiend of the town."

He forgot all about Sue Maynard till just as he was passing the Pioneer House at a rush, she called to him.

"I've half a mind to tell her the whole thing," he thought. "Perhaps she could suggest something."

"My dear Guy," she exclaimed, as he resumed his seat, "you are a good boy to act on my advice so promptly. And now, are you ready to take me to her?"

"Take you to her?" Guy repeated in bewilderment. "What do you mean? Who told you——"

"Come, Guy, don't be stupid," interposed Miss Maynard, tapping his arm with her fan. "You must recall the fact that Gordon's eyes are useless for the present, and that I read your letter to him."

"But I never mentioned her in it. In fact when I wrote it I didn't know——"

"Oh yes, you were very mysterious, but as I said before you thought only a boy's eyes would see what you wrote and you wanted to surprise him with the whole truth when you saw him."

"Sue Maynard, I haven't the ghost of an idea of what you are talking about, but if you know the ways of girls I wish you'd tell me how to make up with one I've mortally offended through no fault of my own."

"But I thought you just had made up. That's why I thanked you for acting on my advice, and asked you to take me to her. What have you gone and done now, you wretched boy?"

"I tell you I haven't done anything, Sue. But her grandmother has just given me the greatest sitting down; wouldn't give me the shadow of a chance to defend myself. And all about an old photograph I wasn't in the least responsible for."

"Now you are puzzling me, so just tell me the whole story."

Glad to unburden his soul to so sympathetic a listener Guy began promptly:

"Well, I was at their place Sunday afternoon, talking with—well, with Nina and her grandmother, and some camera fiend took a snap shot of us. But that isn't the worst of it. He printed a lot of the pictures and put them on sale at the circus."

"At the circus! Oh, Guy!"

"Isn't it terrible? I was just wild when I saw them there. Of course she thinks that I had something to do with it, and now she won't have anything to do with *me*."

"But haven't you told her that you were not responsible for the taking of the picture?"

"I tried to, but her grandmother wouldn't listen to a word."

"I should think, though, that she would know you well enough to feel assured that you wouldn't do such a low thing."

"That's all the trouble, Sue; she doesn't know me well at all. If it wasn't for that, of course I'd be given the opportunity to to explain."

"Not know you well? Oh, Guy, what a rash youth you are! But I've promised to help you and not scold. You must contrive to make up somehow. A break now would only make a bad matter worse. Suppose I go around to see her myself. I'll go there with you."

"But they won't let me in."

"Nonsense, of course they'll let you in, you silly boy. Oh, dear, when I think of the absurdity of the whole affair, it almost gives me the hysterics. Wait here till I send Ann for my wrap."

Guy attempted to protest further that it would be quite useless for him to attempt to call upon these people at this time, but Miss Sue was deaf to all discouragement. Finally, believing that in some magical fashion her woman's tact might be able to bridge the chasm, he expressed his willingness to leave the whole matter in her hands, and the wrap having been brought, they started for the Meltons' together. But Guy suggested they need not hurry.

(*To be continued.*)

IN THE WOODS.

THE bobolink sings at the dawn of day,
The whippoorwill sings at night;
The chickadee chirps, and the branches sway;
And the songs are bright, and the songs are gay,
And shadows are put to flight.
For it's singing among the swinging boughs,
It's singing among the grass;
And it's one sings high, and it's one sings low,
And it's one sings fast and another slow,
With a trill and a rush of eager notes,
That thrill as they pour from their tiny throats
As the hours of summer pass.
The bobolink builds in a lonely lea,
The whippoorwill makes no nest;
The chickadee builds in a hollow tree,
With a round little door that few can see,
And he thinks his home the best.
And it's singing among the swinging boughs,
It's singing among the grass;
And it's one sings here, and it's one sings there,
While the moss grown rock has a merry pair,
With some in the grass and some in the trees,
And a trill and a thrill that stirs the breeze
As the hours of summer pass.

The Independent. — — —*F. H. Sweet.*

NADIR SINGH'S CAVERN.

By Fred. A. Nelson.

NADIR SINGH was a Hindoo outcast, the chief of one of the most desperate bands of Dacoit robbers that ever ravaged the wilder districts of upper Burma. For nearly two years he had preyed alike upon the Burmans and their British conquerors; robbing, killing, burning towns and pillaging temples, bearding the English in their very strongholds, until the name of Nadir Singh became one which Burmese mothers used to frighten refractory children into obedience.

Born of a Rajput father and a Bheel mother, this Dacoit chieftain combined the intelligence and indomitable bravery of the former race with the tiger-like ferocity of the latter. He had been outlawed from his native land for the detestable crime of stabbing his own brother, and had fled to Burma, where he presently appeared as the daring leader of a crew of marauders whose depredations formed an unmistakable thorn in the side of the British rulers of the land.

But Nadir came to grief at last, for his murderous exploits became so frequent that a special expedition, guided by two native spies, was despatched against him, with the result that the band of cutthroats was wiped out of existence—all but one—and that was Nadir Singh himself.

Like the famous Nana Sahib of the Sepoy mutiny, he mysteriously disappeared—vanished, apparently into thin air—and I held in my hand a freshly printed proclamation which offered the sum of 15,000 rupees for his capture, dead or alive. This was only one of many, posted in every town of any importance in upper Burma.

The paper ran as follows:

MANDALAY, Aug. 10th, 1891.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

The sum of 15,000 rupees will be paid for the capture, dead or alive, of that notorious outlaw and Dacoit, Nadir Singh, who is at present reported to be lurking somewhere in the wild and mountainous country northeast of Bhamo, in the Mogoung District. All faithful subjects of the government are hereby commanded under penalty of death not to give food, shelter, or other aid to the said Nadir Singh.

BY ORDER OF THE
BURMESE GOVERNMENT.

Had any one told me that within thirty six hours from the time of reading the aforesaid proclamation, I was fated to encounter the dreaded Nadir Singh face to face, I should have set my informant down as a madman; but that is precisely what happened, and this is how it came about.

I was smoking a cheroot out on the veranda of my bungalow at Meinkhoom one terribly hot afternoon in July, when who should come galloping down the dusty road but Lieutenant Dick Ludlow, whom I had not seen since I left Mandalay a month before, on one of the protracted trips up country made incumbent by my duties as government mine inspector.

Ludlow was not alone. He had brought with him a powerful, intelligent looking Sepoy, who saluted and shot a keen glance at me out of his dark eyes as my friend and he pulled up and dismounted in front of the bungalow steps.

With a cry of pleasure, I strode forward and shook Dick's hand warmly, for during my last brief stay in Mandalay, I had conceived a strong liking for the dashing young lieutenant. Cool, and reckless to a degree, he had earned the reputation of being one of the most daring men in his regiment, having gone through enough hair breadth escapes to have sickened many an older man of soldiering.

The Sepoy Ludlow introduced as Huraj Khitoor Rao, a sergeant in the 3rd Bombay Infantry. He was a fine looking fellow, with a dark, commanding face and the build of a gladiator.

"What is the cause of this most welcome visit, lieutenant?" I asked when I had made Ludlow and his companion comfortable inside the bungalow.

For answer Ludlow drew a folded paper from his breast pocket and spread it out on the table before me. It was a duplicate of the proclamation offering 15,000 rupees for the head of Nadir Singh.

I looked up inquiringly.

"I have seen one similar to this before," I said. "In what way does it concern you?"

"Merely that I intend to finger some of that reward," rejoined Dick coolly; "and, moreover, I am going to give you a chance to do the same. The thing in a nutshell is this: my friend here—" and he waved his hand toward the big sergeant, who sat silent and impassive—"not only knows where Nadir Singh is in hiding at this very moment, but will undertake to guide us to the place, in consideration of our assistance and one third of the reward."

I sprang involuntarily to my feet, nearly overturning my chair in my excitement, but Ludlow waved me down.

"If you join the enterprise," he continued, "there will be three of us. Five thousand rupees apiece are not to be sneezed at. I have received leave of absence for three days, which Khitoor says is ample time for the purpose. Now then, will you be one of us?"

"With all my heart!" I cried, and enthusiastically shook hands across the table with Dick and the big Hindoo.

At a sign from Ludlow, the Indian silently rose to close the door, which stood partly open, and then drew closer to the table.

"It is a perilous plan, sahibs," he said after a pause of some length, "for Nadir may have companions. Yet I think we can hold our own. Listen now and I will explain the matter. A fortnight ago, while hunting with a party of English officers near Bhamo, I had the good fortune to save one of their guides—Dankar, he was called—from a jungle panther, and out of gratitude the man revealed to me a secret which he had zealously guarded for many days.

"It was this: he informed me that by following up the course of the stream known as Karauang Creek, which flows into the east branch of the Irrawaddy many miles above Bhamo, and rises in a chain of hills lying to the east of Meinkhoom, I would come at length to a deep valley, walled in by great steep cliffs and ledges of rock.

"At the head of this valley or defile are three great boulders of gray stone in a direct line, the third and smallest of which conceals the entrance to a large cave in the face of the rock. This cavern, sahibs, was formerly the abode of a band of Paloung robbers, but has been deserted for many years. It is now the hiding place of the terrible outlaw, Nadir Singh."

The Hindoo paused to note the effect of his announcement, and after a short interval, resumed:

"Dankar told me that in this cavern Nadir lives alone, waiting until such time as he can enlist a new band and resume his bloodthirsty work. The cave Dankar had discovered by the merest chance, while hunting for young panther cubs among the rocky dens and holes.

"He had kept the secret, hoping to earn the reward offered by the English. Many times, he affirmed, had he seen Nadir himself going to and fro from his concealed cavern, but, having no firearms, dared not encounter him single handed.

"As I have said, I saved Dankar's life, and out of gratitude he revealed to me what I have told you, offering to share the reward with me if I would aid him in capturing the robber. He was a brave and valiant man, sahibs, and I agreed. We laid our plans accordingly, but three days afterward Dankar mysteriously disappeared and I saw him no more. I am convinced that he was in some manner discovered and slain by Nadir Singh, while watching the cavern.

"And now, sahibs, my plan is a simple one. We must make our way up the course of Karauang Creek to the secret cavern. Once there, we will beard the long sought Nadir Singh in his den and win the 15,000 rupees!"

The Indian seated himself, for he had risen involuntarily in his excitement. We all shook hands once more and the compact was sealed.

Half an hour later we started—on the first stage of an enterprise which came within an ace of dooming us to a fate so horrible that it would have appalled even the cool recklessness of Dick Ludlow, had he been able to see into the future.

I had armed myself with a light, short barreled carbine which I had brought from London, and invariably took with me on all my trips. Dick and Khitoor both carried the regulation Martini-Henry repeating rifles. In addition to the above armament Ludlow took with him two long cavalry revolvers and a knife of American make, whose amazing proportions might have led to the belief that size was the one and only essential aimed at by its manufacturer.

We had decided to go on foot, for Khitoor assured us that it would be of no advantage to take horses on account of the roughness of the country to be traversed, besides which they would render us liable to discovery from some of the prowling Dacoits who roamed the region above Meinkhoom. In our haversacks we carried a supply of food sufficient for three days.

Following the Hindoo's guidance, we struck off into the jungle east of the town, traveling as rapidly as the dense undergrowth would permit.

It was no easy matter to keep up with the tall sergeant, for he had thrown himself heart and soul into the undertaking, and strode onward as though his life depended on it.

On he went for nearly two hours, at a long, swinging gait. Then he turned abruptly to the left and took a course which I judged to be due north, following it for some hours more without the slightest deviation.

Once, the tawny body of a jungle panther showed in the long grass to our right. I leveled my carbine at the beast and was about to pull the trigger when the Sepoy turned on me impatiently.

"Hold!" he cried. "It will not do to fire here. Some wandering Dacoit would hear the shot, and it might result in an ambuscade. We must be careful, sahibs!"

I reluctantly lowered my weapon, for I knew that the Sepoy was right. From that time, we traveled as rapidly and quietly as possible, for a man hunt

through an uncertain and probably hostile country is no holiday affair.

It was long after sunset when we emerged from the jungle into a very rugged stretch of territory, broken in places by heaps of jagged rock and patches of wind fallen timber. To the left flowed a swift running mountain stream, which wound in among the rocks and trees, and presently lost itself in the jungle.

"Karauang Creek, sahibs," said Khitoor Rao. "We will camp here until tomorrow."

That night we camped on a level spit of sand close to the bank of the swiftly running mountain stream. Finding dry wood in abundance, we built a roaring fire, and after stowing away a hearty supper, indulged in a chat by the cheerful blaze, and then sank gradually into slumber.

Once during the night I was awakened by the distant screams of a panther, but the brute's cries presently died away and I drifted off to sleep again. When I awoke, the eastern sky was all aflame with a great sheet of dazzling crimson.

A hasty breakfast and we started again, following the course of the stream that Khitoor called Karauang Creek, which ran almost due north. The appearance of the country grew ever wilder and more desolate as we progressed, and for mile upon mile we threaded our way through miry swamps and pathless jungles, alternated by rocky barrens or forests of dead trees. At midday we were many miles from our starting point.

We rested for an hour, ate a substantial meal, and then forged onward. Far ahead, we could see the blue summits of a distant chain of hills, and we knew that they marked the limit of our journey.

The afternoon was well advanced when we entered a narrow and rugged defile, which ran straight in between sheer and almost perpendicular walls of rock, in some places eight or nine hundred feet in height.

In the center of this deep pass foamed and roared the mountain stream—now risen to the proportions of a torrent—whose winding course we had followed all day without the slightest deviation. Altogether, the appearance of the place was wild and gloomy in the extreme.

At the entrance of the valley we halted and held a brief consultation.

Khitoor prudently suggested that it might be well for him to go forward and reconnoiter before we began operations, but Ludlow and I were in favor of pushing on to the cavern at once, though we both admitted that it would have to be done with the utmost caution.

The Indian assented with no great reluctance, and we plunged into the dark and gloomy defile, advancing in single file and unslinging our rifles in readiness for an instant's notice.

On we went, slowly, cautiously, glaring intently into the dark shadows of the pass with an unaccountable feeling of depression.

For fully a mile we picked our way silently onward, and then the pass grew suddenly narrow. The sides broke sheer off from the bottom, running upward to an altitude of close on to a thousand feet, and in places, great heaps of boulders and jagged rocks almost blocked the path.

Suddenly the Sepoy stopped short, and with a shudder, pointed silently to an object which sent a chill clean through me.

At the base of a huge boulder near the rocky wall lay a gleaming white skeleton, picked clean by the vultures and jackals. A round hole in the grinning skull told the story, while near by lay a rusty old cutlass, which we found on examination to be eaten in many places with blood clots.

Scattered about on the flinty ground lay a few torn and faded remnants of what had once been clothing. That was all.

"It is Dankar, sahib," said Khitoor solemnly. "I know him from the fact that three fingers are missing from one of his hands. Look at the skeleton's left hand and you will see that I am right."

It was true. There lay the bones of the finder of the hidden cavern. He had paid the penalty of that discovery with his life, and Nadir Singh had added one more to his long list of crimes.

We left the ghastly thing where it was, and proceeded on our way, keeping in the shadow of the rocks as much as possible. Presently the Sepoy stopped again and called our attention to three great boulders of smooth gray stone directly ahead.

There they were, lying in a perfect geometrical line, though at varying distances apart. According to the deceased Dankar, the last of these stones must bar the entrance to the Dacoit's cavern.

Like prudent generals, we proceeded to hold a council of war before venturing too near the enemy's stronghold. An hour more and it would be dark.

It was evident that whatever was to be done must be carried out immediately unless we wished to give our quarry the advantage of darkness, in which case it seemed probable that he would find a means of making good his escape. We must act at once.

"I will go forward and reconnoiter, sahib," said Khitoor Rao. "Remain quiet and do not move from the spot. If all is well, I will return in five minutes."

The Hindoo crept silently away among the stunted undergrowth and scattered masses of rock, and presently we lost sight of him.

Five—eight—ten minutes dragged slowly by, but our intrepid companion had not yet returned. I had begun to grow distrustful, when suddenly there was a rustle in the underbrush behind me. I wheeled like a flash and cocked my rifle with a sharp click.

"Do not shoot, sahib," said Khitoor Rao, rising to his feet with a faint smile. "I bring good news. The robber is at this very moment in the cavern, for, as Dankar informed me, it is not his habit to venture forth until nightfall.

"There is a tunnel which leads into an inner chamber. I crept up to the entrance, and peering down the passageway, could make out a dim light far within. But he is expecting some one, sahibs, for twice he came to the end of the tunnel and gazed up and down the valley, muttering impatiently in Hindustanee. I narrowly escaped being discovered."

The 15,000 rupees began to look tangible, although the fact of Nadir's expecting some one complicated the situation somewhat. It was plain that the success of the enterprise would be endangered unless we made the attempt at once.

Without further ado, we all crept rapidly toward the last of the three boulders, Ludlow and I following the lead of our Indian guide, who slipped between the rocks and bushes as silently as a serpent. To Dick and myself this came harder, but after a painful crawl of five minutes, we came presently to the entrance of the tunnel, a yawning black hole in the mountain side.

The boulder which was used to close the mouth of the tunnel lay half on its side close to the hole. It was an irregular oval in shape, and so massive that had it not been for the fact that it balanced back and forth on its center of gravity, it would have been impossible for two men of ordinary strength to move it an inch from its position.

There was no time for delay. Nadir's expected companions might come up at any moment, and we knew full well that short would be our shrift in such a case.

Removing our haversacks and shoes, and leaving Khitoor Rao to guard the entrance, with his Martini at full cock and Ludlow's great knife stowed away under his tunic—for it was possible that the wily Dacoit might slip behind us and make for the opening—Ludlow and I crawled into the gloomy hole, in no very hilarious mood, let me add, for it was no joke to beard in his very den the most desperate man in Burma.

By the faint light which filtered in from outside, we saw that we were in a passage barely large enough to allow a man to stand upright. The walls were hard and smooth, and to our surprise we found them perfectly dry.

A few feet more and the tunnel widened considerably, so that we were able to walk abreast without inconvenience.

A dozen yards ahead of us, we could make out a faint, flickering glow, and stealing rapidly down the tunnel, we could see that the light proceeded from a bronze lamp placed on a projecting stone shelf a foot from the floor.

By the dim flame of the lamp, we saw before us a wide chamber, with lofty, circular walls of smooth rock. The floor was covered with a carpeting composed of coarse coir matting, and the walls were concealed from view by long strips of the same material.

Three or four rude stone benches were ranged near the sides, while on the walls of the room hung a varied assortment of cutlasses, sabers, and knives of every description, alternated with polished brass shields and long barreled pistols.

At the farther end of the apartment were five large oblong boxes which we knew to be rifle cases. The place was a veritable arsenal.

But that was not all. A man of gigantic stature sat on the stone bench nearest the lamp, engaged in shoving cartridges into the magazine of a rifle. He wore a long black mustache and pointed goatee, and his glittering, shifting eyes had in them an indefinable something that sent an involuntary chill of fear to my very core.

There could be no mistake. This man was the dreaded Nadir Singh himself.

With magnificent coolness, Ludlow strode silently forward and leveled his rifle at the head of the Dacoit. For an instant he stood like a statue and then the robber looked up.

I shall never forget the expression stamped upon the face of Nadir Singh when he saw himself confronted by a cocked rifle in the hands of a determined man. It was the look of a fiend.

For one brief moment he sat and surveyed us with gleaming eyes. Then the spell was broken, and with the quickness of lightning he swung the butt of the gun in his hand full against the metal lamp, which fell to the stone floor with a clang, and expiring instantly, plunged the cavern into darkness.

A short red flash pierced the gloom, and the deafening report of Dick's rifle filled the cave with rumbling echoes. He had shot at random and it was impossible to tell what he had hit until a light should be brought to bear upon the scene.

Two more red streaks leaped out as we fired together; I heard the heavy patter of sandaled feet upon the stone floor, and just as the glare of a lucifer flamed up in Ludlow's hand, I saw a staggering figure clutch blindly at the coir drapery and then vanish through the very side of the cavern!

In another moment I had picked up and relighted the lamp. The cavern was filled with drifting clouds of rifle smoke, and for a time, I could see nothing but the dark walls looming up before me like grim specters.

So rapidly had the events described followed each other, that my brain was fairly in a whirl. Our slippery foe had vanished as completely as if he had never existed.

"By all that's wonderful!" cried Lud-

low slowly, "the fellow is clean gone! Not a trace of him!"

For a moment he stared at me in blank astonishment. Then a light dawned upon his puzzled brain as he saw a long strip of the coir matting partially torn from its support, and a zigzag trail of blood leading to the opposite wall.

Plainly, one of our random bullets had struck home.

"Look!" he cried. "He has gone through there! Quick, we'll have him yet!"

I strode close to the wall, holding the lamp above my head.

There, under the half disengaged matting, could be plainly seen a small but massive iron door, studded with many brass knobs and firmly set into the solid rock.

Dick eagerly tried the rusted and ponderous handle, but his newly awakened hopes fell as he found that the door opened outward with the fastening upon the other side. Our wily enemy had not neglected to make it secure.

Feeling that the 15,000 rupees were slipping away from us, we made a thorough search of the cavern, which consumed some time but revealed no other means of egress except the tunnel through which we had come.

Reluctantly we turned at last to retrace our steps, when all at once there arose a strange and startling uproar in the direction of the entrance. A loud shout, followed instantly by the quick, sharp report of a rifle, and then an ominous silence.

For a moment we stood gazing blankly at each other by the flickering lamplight, and then bolted headlong for the opening.

As we drew near the mouth of the tunnel we saw a fearful sight. Prone on his face lay Khitoor Rao, our Indian guide, while over him stood a gigantic Chinaman, poising on high a long bladed knife, and possessed of the most cruel and brutal countenance that it has ever been my lot to see.

This, then, was the individual whom Nadir had been expecting. He must have slipped up behind the Hindoo and struck him down unawares.

Near by, to our great surprise, stood Nadir himself, with a bloody bandage wound around his head, for one of our random bullets had grazed his skull. His face shone with triumph and his shifty eyes glittered exultantly.

How he had gained the spot we did not know, though it seemed probable that the iron door through which he had vanished so mysteriously communicated with some passageway leading to the outer air.

In the twinkling of an eye, Ludlow jerked his rifle to a level and took a snap shot at the Chinaman, with such good effect that the son of Confucius was sent spinning round and round with his hand clapped to his temple, while his knife fell upon the rocks.

I pressed eagerly forward, but alas! too late! Nadir Singh—cunning fiend that he was—glided aside like a shadow and in the next moment the great rock which served as a door to the cavern, swung into its socket with a sickening rumble.

It was a full minute before we understood the terrible significance of this action. We were *trapped*—trapped more securely than if we had been thrown into the strongest dungeon that man can devise.

The stone, however, fitted quite imperfectly into its socket, as we could see by light which filtered in through several irregular openings around its base. Yet we knew that the barrier could not be moved from the inside, and as the awful realization of our position dawned upon us to the full, our hearts sank in unutterable dismay.

A triumphant laugh broke forth on the other side of the rock—a harsh, mocking, malignant laugh that rang in our ears like the knell of impending doom. Then a calm, distinct voice began to speak in Burmese:

"Mad fools who have dared to penetrate the lair of Nadir Singh, what think you now of the tiger's stronghold? You answer me not; listen! This cavern, Englishmen, shall be your tomb, the tomb of dogs who found the scent but could not pull down their prey!

"It is impossible to escape; you are doomed to a slow, lingering death by starvation. One other there was, who met death in this valley while engaged upon the same errand as yourselves, but his fate was sweet and merciful compared to that which will be yours. Weeks hence, sahibs, I will return to remove your bones, while your friends who dwell in the towns of the English will never know your fate."

The voice died away and all was silent.

One by one the moments passed by, but neither of us spoke. I felt for Ludlow's hand in the darkness and shook it silently, trying to resign myself to the fact that there was absolutely no escape, Then mechanically we groped our way back into the cave.

With sadly disheartened spirits we lighted the bronze lamp and again went the round of the cavern walls, tapping carefully upon the stone and eagerly listening for any hollow ring which might hold out the faintest hope of escape. But the solid rock gave back no sign of thinness, and save the iron door we were forced to conclude that there was no egress from the cavern except the tunnel.

Once more we examined that massive iron barrier between us and freedom. It was a fruitless task, and we knew it well, but being human, we could not entirely surrender to the ghastly thought that in that black and clammy hole we must remain until we died, inch by inch, with naught left of us but a mere shriveled semblance of humanity.

In vain did Ludlow rain blow after blow with the butt of his rifle upon that ill omened door; the stock of the piece was shattered to fragments, and the echoing clang only filled the cavern and died away again into silence.

Had we possessed powder in sufficient quantity, we might have destroyed that fatal barrier, though I doubt if anything less powerful than dynamite would have accomplished the purpose. But powder there was none, for we searched the cavern thoroughly, and beyond a few rifle shells, found nothing in the way of explosives.

We did, however, find a quantity of Burmese rice brandy and a number of thin, flat cakes, food sufficient to keep us up for perhaps two days more. But it was not the actual pangs of hunger that depressed our spirits; it was the thought of a lingering, torturing death by starvation in that underground place, with none to know our fate save the fiend outside, who was doubtless even then listening for some evidence of distress over which he might gloat.

Throwing myself down upon one of the stone benches, I buried my face in my hands and fairly groaned aloud in utter despair. Even Dick—brave, cool, reckless Dick—made no attempt to conceal his settled despondency. We were doomed as surely as the veriest criminal upon the scaffold.

Slowly the moments passed away, but the silence remained unbroken. Strange thoughts came into our minds, and the images of the past flitted like sad specters before our despairing eyes.

I could see again the damp, crowded thoroughfares of my native London, the great, placid sheet of the sunlit Thames, the fern clad hills and green, rolling meadows of dear old England, and my heart yearned for them with an unutterable longing.

* * * *

Hark! Was it a delusion, or did we hear a faint shout, proceeding from the entrance to the cavern? No; it was unmistakable—some one was shouting hoarsely through the opening.

Springing to my feet, I snatched up my rifle and made a hasty bolt for the tunnel, followed closely by Dick Ludlow. Down that dark passageway we dashed at headlong speed, and could have shouted for joy when we neared the end and saw that the entrance was open!

As we reached the opening, we saw the well known features of Khitoor Rao thrust forward into the hole, as he peered intently down upon us. His face was bruised and grimy, and the blood dripped down upon the floor of the tunnel from a ghastly wound in his temple, but the brave fellow never heeded his hurts in his anxiety for our safety.

"Make haste, sahibs!" sang out the Sepoy instantly. "Quick! the *choor* (robber) may be even now returning."

In hot haste I precipitated myself through the opening, followed by Dick. Out we went, headlong, sprawling recklessly over the sharp rocks, heeding nothing but the one great important fact that we were free once more.

We scrambled to our feet and exultantly drank in long draughts of the keen, invigorating mountain atmosphere. Dick's pent up emotion overcame him completely, and he tossed his helmet high in the air.

"By the head of Vishnu, sahibs," cried the Sepoy impatiently, "there is little time to be lost. Give heed now to what I say. A few yards up the pass there is another tunnel which leads into the cavern—I learned it from the conversation of the Dacoits when I recovered my senses, though I still feigned unconsciousness.

"This tunnel opens into the cavern by a door set in the rock. After a long conversation with the Chinaman, who was only slightly wounded, Nadir Singh went away to blow up the passageway with gunpowder, for he thought it possible that the door might in time be beaten from its hinges. *He is in the tunnel now*, and we must surprise and capture him at the entrance. Now, have your weapons ready and follow me."

"You are a brave fellow, Khitoor," I said with deep emotion, "and we owe you our lives. But the Chinaman, what has become of *him?*"

"I have killed him, sahib," said the Hindoo simply, and his dark eyes gleamed as he spoke. "He sat with his back toward me, believing me too badly injured by the blow he had given me to cause any trouble, but I waited for a favorable opportunity, and creeping up behind him, slew him with Sahib Ludlow's big knife. His body lies yonder behind the second boulder. But come quickly now or we may be too late."

The brave Sepoy led off at once, and following his guidance, we came in a few moments to the entrance of the other tunnel. An overhanging ledge concealed it from view, and several irregular masses of rock were arranged in front of it, hiding the opening so cleverly and effectually that only the closest observer could have detected it.

We were just in time. The Indian had set himself to listening intently at the opening, and presently his sharp ears detected the sound of footsteps. It was Nadir Singh returning up the passage.

"Down! down, sahibs," cried the Hindoo sharply. "He is coming! Make ready!"

We crouched low and riveted our eyes on the opening like so many basilisks. Nearer and nearer came the sound, and soon the gigantic form of the Dacoit chief blocked the entrance.

Out of the hole he came in hot haste, while we watched him with bated breath.

His face and hands were stained with earth, and his garments showed signs of contact with the flinty interior of the tun-

nel. Evidently he had been at great pains to lay his mine so that the passage would be completely blocked by the crumbling mass of earth and rock which would be brought down by the explosion.

I believe he would have given his very soul sooner than be cheated out of his revenge upon the hated Englishmen.

We rose up about him like shadows and hemmed him in. The look of triumph faded out of his face, and for a moment he glared at us with the look of a madman. Then, with a ringing shout, he drew his saber and threw himself upon us like a lion at bay.

It was all over in half a minute. The Sepoy's rifle whirled in the air, and descended with crushing force full upon the head of the Dacoit. But the robber's turban partially checked the effect of the blow, and summoning all his intense vitality, he staggered blindly forward, still lunging at us with his saber.

In an instant we had leaped upon him like tigers and borne him to the ground. We bound his hands firmly behind him, though he struggled with the fury of desperation; then, dragging him to his feet none too tenderly, we prepared to depart, just as a tremendous explosion shook the very ground, and clouds of smoke came pouring out of the entrance to the tunnel. The mine had exploded.

The sun had sunk in a blaze of crimson behind the distant hills long before we emerged from the defile into the level country beyond. Our terrible captive marched haughtily on in proud and dignified silence, looking neither to the right nor left.

We were miles from the cavern which had so nearly proved our tomb, when we halted for the remainder of the night, taking turns in watching our slippery captive until daybreak. At the first appearance of dawn we resumed our march.

The trip back to Meinkhoom was uneventful. We arrived there late in the afternoon completely fagged out, and converting a stone pagoda into a prison house, we placed our captive in it under strong guard and turned in without further delay.

Next day we started with our prisoner for Mandalay, the capital, *via* Bhamo and the passenger barges of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company.

At Bhamo we learned that the gigantic Chinaman whom Khitoor Rao had so summarily put out of existence was none other than the notorious outlaw and opium smuggler, Taloon Chang, who had recently crossed into Burma from the Shan frontier. A price of 1,000 rupees had been set upon his head by the authorities, and this reward was eventually paid over to our Hindoo friend, for Ludlow and I would not touch a cent of it.

We delivered our prisoner into government custody at Mandalay without accident. When his identity became known, we were the heroes of the hour—regular Napoleons in miniature. We were invited to an official banquet at Government House and besieged with questions and congratulations from all sides.

Nadir Singh was duly hanged, in just retribution for his many crimes, and we received the 15,000 rupees. The next steam barge that plowed its way up the Irrawaddy took with it a detachment of troops to confiscate the arms and equipments which Nadir had in his stronghold, and blow up the cavern with dynamite.

Dick's share in the affair won him speedy promotion, and he now sports the stripes and shoulder straps of a captain. As for myself, I was content with the experience.

A SONG OF JUNE TIME,

THE white clouds are like pictures in a breathin' frame o' blue,
An' the sunbeams are a-shootin' all their silver arrows through;
An' it's June time in the country, an' it's June time in the town,
An' the mockin' birds are singin', an' the blossoms rainin' down!

It's June time in old Georgia, or it mighty soon'll be,
With the rivers dashin', splashin', an the winds a-blowin' free!
An' the sun is climbin' higher, an' the nights are full o' moon,
An' a feller's soul is dancin' to the melodies o' June!

—*Atlanta Constitution.*

ANDY GRANT'S PLUCK.*

By Horatio Alger, Jr.,

Author of "The Young Salesman," "The Island Treasure," "Ragged Dick," "Tattered Tom," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS ALREADY PUBLISHED.

OWING to the sudden and unforeseen reduction in his family's finances, caused by the absconding of a bank official for whom his father had been bondsman, Andy Grant is compelled to leave Penhurst Academy. To meet his indebtedness Mr. Grant mortages his house and farm for three thousand dollars, for two years, to Squire Carter, a man of wealth and prominence in the village of Arden.

Andy becomes private tutor in Latin and Greek to Walter Gale, a wealthy young man who is staying at the hotel, but Mr. Gale is summoned to the bedside of a sick relative, and Andy then secures a position in a New York jewelry store.

His predecessor, however, happens to be John Crandall, the nephew of the head clerk, Simon Rich, and when the proprietor, Mr. Flint, goes to Denver, they enter into a plot against Andy.

When the latter returns from lunch one day, Mr. Rich announces that a valuable gold watch is missing, and suggests searching the boys. Both acquiesce, and in Andy's pocket he finds a pawn ticket for the watch in the name of A. Grant.

CHAPTER XIX.

ANDY IS DISCHARGED.

"YOU don't know what it means!" repeated Simon Rich in a sarcastic tone. "Probably not. *I* understand it."

"Do you think I stole a watch and pawned it, Mr. Rich?" demanded Andy with spirit.

"There seems to be absolute proof of your dishonesty. Will you explain how otherwise this pawn ticket is found in your pocket?"

"I can't explain it, nor can I understand it. All I can say is, that I never saw it before."

"You must think I am a fool to be deceived by such a story."

"I can't believe that Andy pawned a watch," said John Crandall hypocritically.

"Will you be kind enough to inform me who did, then?" asked his uncle, with pretended severity.

"I can't guess."

"Nor any one else, I fancy. Of course, Andrew, after this proof of your dishonesty, I cannot retain you in my, or rather, in Mr. Flint's employment."

"Mr. Rich, will you do me a favor?"

"What is it?"

"Will you go with me to the pawnbroker who issued the ticket, and ask him if he ever saw me before?"

"I have no time to go on such a foolish errand. Can you give me the ten dollars you obtained for the watch?"

"I didn't obtain a dollar nor a cent for the watch. I know nothing about it."

"Probably you have laid it away somewhere, or spent it."

"That is not true, and I am sure you don't believe it yourself."

"No impudence, young man! I am forced to believe it. I have treated you kindly since Mr. Flint went away, and that is sufficient to show that I wish to do you no injustice. Is this true or not?"

"I have no fault to find with your treatment, except now."

"I shall continue to act as your friend. I might have you arrested, and your conviction would be certain with the evidence I have in my possession. But I will not do it. I will redeem the watch at my own expense, and be content with discharging you."

"I believe there is a plot against me," said Andy, pale but firm. "It will come out some time. When do you wish me to go?"

"At once. I will pay you to the end of the week, but I could not feel safe in retaining your services any longer. John, will you oblige me by taking Andrew's place till I have a chance to secure another boy?"

"Yes, Uncle Simon, but I don't want to feel that I have had anything to do with Andy's discharge."

"You have not. No one is responsible for it but himself."

"The I will stay while you need me. I don't want to leave you in a hole."

Simon Rich went to the money drawer, and drew out a five dollar bill.

"Here is your pay to the end of the week," he said.

"I prefer to accept pay only to today," replied Andy.

"As you please."

Andy walked out of the store feeling crushed and overwhelmed. He was all at sea concerning the pawn ticket. He could not understand how it got into his pocket.

He formed a resolution. He would go

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around to the pawnbroker's and see if he could obtain any information.

He found the pawn shop without difficulty. It was a small apartment, but seemed quite full of goods of all varieties.

A small man of perhaps sixty was behind the counter. Seated in a rocking chair, sewing, an old lady was to be seen in the rear of the shop.

Andy had never before been in a pawn shop, and would have been interested in examining it, if his errand had not been so serious.

He walked up to the counter.

"Well, young man, what is your business?" asked the old man.

"Do you remember lending some money on a new gold watch last Monday?"

"Was the watch stolen?" asked the pawnbroker, with a shade of anxiety.

"You will have no difficulty about it. It will be redeemed."

"How much did I lend on it?"

"Ten dollars."

"Yes, I remember."

"Can you remember who brought it in?"

"No, except that it was a boy about your size."

"Did he look like me?"

"I can't remember. You see, I have so many customers."

"I remember," said the old lady, speaking up. "He was about your size."

"It was not I?"

"No; he was thinner than you, and he was dark complexioned."

A light began to dawn upon Andy. This description fitted John Crandall.

"Do you remember what kind of an overcoat he wore?"

"It was a light overcoat."

"Thank you. Will you please remember this if you are asked?"

"Did the young gentleman own the watch?"

"He was employed by another party, but I cannot tell you any more at present. The watch will probably be redeemed by a man about thirty five. Don't mention to him that any one has asked you questions about it."

"All right. I shall be glad to oblige you. You are sure it was not stolen?"

"The man who sent the boy was not dishonest. You will have no trouble."

"It was a new watch, and I thought it might be stolen. We poor pawnbrokers have a hard time. If we take stolen property we get into trouble, but how can we tell if the rings and watches they bring in are stolen?"

"Very true. I can see that you must sometimes be puzzled. Do those who pawn articles generally give their own names?"

"Very seldom. They almost always give wrong names. That sometimes leads to trouble. I remember a gentleman who mislaid his ticket, and he could not remember what name he gave. If he had we might have overlooked the loss of the pawn ticket. As it was, we did not know but he might be a fraud, though I think it was all right, and the watch he pawned was his own."

"Thank you for answering my questions. I am sorry to have troubled you," said Andy politely.

"Oh, it is no matter," rejoined the old man, who felt very favorably impressed by Andy's good looks, and frank, open manner.

As Andy went out of the shop he experienced a feeling of relief. He saw that he would be able to prove his innocence through the testimony of the pawnbroker and his wife. He was in no hurry. It would do when Mr. Flint returned. He did not want the friendly jeweler to think that he had been dishonest.

It was clear that he was the victim of a conspiracy, and that the plot had been engineered by Simon Rich, and carried out by his nephew.

As Andy's board was paid by Walter Gale, he would not be distressed by want of employment, but would be able to remain in New York. He might obtain another position, though he foresaw that it would be useless to apply to Simon Rich for a letter of recommendation.

He had not gone more than a hundred feet when he met a boy whom he knew, named James Callahan.

"How do you happen to be here, Andy?" he asked. "Are you on an errand for the firm?"

"I have left them."

"Why is that?"

"They—or rather the clerk—charged me with stealing a gold watch, and pawning it."

"Where?" asked the boy, in some excitement.

Andy pointed out the pawnbroker's shop from which he had just come.

"I saw John Crandall coming out of there yesterday."

"You did?"

"Yes."

"I am not surprised. The pawnbroker described to me the boy who pawned the watch, and I recognized John from the description."

"What does it all mean?"

"Mr. Flint has gone out West, and Mr. Rich and John have conspired to get me into trouble."

"When were you discharged?"

"Less than an hour since."

"Who has taken your place?"

"John Crandall."

James Callahan whistled.

"I see," he said. "It was thundering mean. What are you going to do about it?"

"Wait till Mr. Flint comes home. Give me your address. I may want to call you as a witness."

Callahan gave his number on Ninth Avenue.

"I will note it down."

"How are you going to get along while you are without a place?" asked James, with friendly solicitude.

"I have a friend who will pay my board."

"Good! I am glad to hear it."

"Now," thought Andy, "I have a chain of proof that will clear me with Mr. Flint. That is what I care most about."

CHAPTER XX.

AN INVITATION TO DINNER.

ANDY reached his boarding house at four o'clock.

"What brings you home so early, Mr. Grant?" asked Warren, whose door was open. "Is business poor?"

"It is with me," answered Andy. "I am discharged."

"You don't tell me so? How did it happen?"

"My employer is out West, and the head salesman has discharged me and engaged his nephew in my place."

"It's a shame. What shall you do about it?"

"Wait till Mr. Flint gets home."

"I hope you won't leave us."

"No, I think not."

"Of course you will miss your salary. I wish I could lend you some money, but I have not heard from the article I sent to the *Century*. If accepted they will send me a large check."

"Thank you, Mr. Warren. I shall be able to get along for the present."

Soon Sam Perkins arrived, with a new and gorgeous necktie.

"Glad to see you, Andy," he said. "Won't you go with me to the Star Theater this evening?"

"I can't, Sam; I have no money to spare."

"I thought you got a good salary?"

"Just at present I have none at all. I have been discharged."

"I am sorry for that. I wish there was a vacancy in our place. I should like to get you in there."

"Thank you. That is quite friendly."

Andy was about to go down to supper when Eva, the servant, came up stairs.

"There's a messenger boy down stairs wants to see you, Mr. Grant," she said.

In some surprise Andy went down stairs to see the messenger. He was a short boy of fourteen, Tom Keegan by name.

"I have a letter for Andrew Grant," he said.

"Give it to me. I am Andrew Grant. Here's a dime."

"Thank you," said the boy in a tone of satisfaction, for his weekly income was small.

Andy opened the letter. It was written on fashionable note paper. At the top of the paper was a monogram formed of the letters H and M.

Here is the letter:

MY DEAR Mr. GRANT,

I shall be glad to have you take dinner with us at seven o'clock. I should have given you earlier notice, but supposed you would not be back from the store till six o'clock. You will meet my son Roy, who is a year or two younger than yourself, and my brother, John Crawford. Both will be glad to see you.

Yours sincerely,
HENRIETTA MASON.

"What is it, Andy," asked Sam.

"You can read the note."

"By George, Andy, you are getting into fashionable society. Couldn't you take me along, too?"

"I am afraid I am not well enough acquainted to take such a liberty."

"I'll tell you what I'll do for you. I'll lend you my best necktie."

Sam produced a gorgeous red tie which he held up admiringly.

"Thank you, Sam," said Andy, "but I think that won't suit me as well as you."

"What are you going to wear?"

Andy took from the bureau drawer a plain black tie.

"That!" exclaimed Sam, disgusted. "That is awfully plain."

"It suits my taste."

"Excuse me, Andy, but I don't think you've got any taste."

Andy laughed good naturedly.

"Certainly my taste differs from yours," he said.

"I suppose you'll have a fine layout. I'd like to go to a fashionable dinner myself."

"I'll tell you all about it when I get back."

"Just mention that you've got a friend—a stylish young man whom they'd like to meet. That may bring me an invitation next time."

Andy laughed.

"So for as I am concerned, Sam," he said, "I wish you were going. But you have an engagement at the Star Theater."

"So I have. I almost forgot."

Andy had very little time for preparation, but made what haste he could, and just as the public clocks struck seven he rang the bell of Mrs. Mason's house.

"I am glad you received my invitation in time," said the lady.

"So am I," returned Andy. "Nothing could have been more welcome."

Just then Roy and her brother, Mr. Crawford, entered.

Roy was a pleasant looking boy with dark brown hair and a dark complexion. He was perhaps two inches shorter than Andy.

"This is Roy," said Mrs. Mason.

"I am glad to see you?" said Roy, offering his hand.

Andy felt that he should like his new boy friend.

Next he was introduced to Mr. Crawford, a stout gentleman of perhaps forty, looking very much like his sister.

"I have heard my sister speak of you so often that I am glad to meet you, Andy," he said affably.

"Thank you, sir."

"John, lead the way to the dining room," said his sister.

So they filed down stairs, and took their seats at the table.

Mr. Crawford sat at the head opposite his sister, while Roy and Andy occupied the sides.

When dinner was nearly over, Mr. Crawford remarked, "I believe, Andy, you are in the employ of Mr. Flint, the jeweler."

"I was," answered Andy.

"Surely you have not left him?" exclaimed Mrs. Mason.

"No, I have been discharged."

"I am surprised to hear it. I thought you were a favorite with Mr. Flint."

"So I was. He does not know I have been discharged."

"You puzzle me."

"Mr. Flint is in Colorado, and Mr. Rich, his head salesman, has taken the opportunity to discharge me, and put his nephew in my place."

"But surely he would not venture to do this without some pretext."

"He claims that I took a watch from the case, and pawned it."

"Of course that is untrue."

"Yes, and I am in a position to prove it when Mr. Flint returns."

Andy told the story of his visit to the pawn shop, and the discovery he made there.

"This is a shameful plot!" said Mrs. Mason indignantly. "I am afraid you are in trouble, deprived of your income."

"Fortunately I have no board to pay. That is paid by the gentleman who procured me the situation."

Presently they went up stairs.

"Roy," said his mother, "we will excuse you for an hour while you are getting your Latin lesson."

"I don't like Latin, mother," grumbled Roy, "at least not tonight. I am afraid I can't fix my thoughts on the lesson. I want to be with Andy."

"What are you studying in Latin, Roy?" asked Andy.

"Cæsar."

"If you wish I will help you."

"Can you?" asked Roy joyfully.

"I have been through Cæsar, and Virgil also. When I left the academy I was studying Cicero."

"Roy will be glad of your help, Andy," said his mother. "I did not know you were such a scholar."

"I was getting ready for college, but my father's losses required me to break off."

Andy proved such an efficient helper that Roy found himself at leisure in half an hour.

In the mean time Mrs. Mason asked her brother, "What do you think of my protégé?"

"He seems a manly and attractive boy."

"Can't you find something for him to do?"

"I will talk with him presently, and then decide."

CHAPTER XXI.

NEW PROSPECTS.

AFTER Roy, with Andy's assistance, had prepared his lesson in Cæsar, John Crawford began to converse with him with a view of forming a judgment of his business qualifications.

"Are you especially interested in the jewelry line?" he asked.

"No, sir. It was merely a chance that led me to Mr. Flint's store."

"I see you are a Latin scholar. What career did you expect to follow if your father's misfortune had not interrupted your education?"

"I don't think I should care for a profession. I prefer a life of business."

"You have had no special business in view?"

"No, sir. I think I could adapt myself to any that I had an opportunity to follow."

"What pay did you receive from Mr. Flint?"

"Five dollars a week?"

"I will tell you why I am inquiring. I am in the real estate business, in rather a large way. I have a boy in the office who is not suited to his position. He is a good scholar, but has no head for business. I have made up my mind to discharge him on Saturday. Would you like his place?"

"Very much, sir."

"I can only offer you five dollars a week, but as soon as you make yourself worth more I will raise you."

"That is quite satisfactory, Mr. Crawford. As soon as Mr. Flint returns I can get a recommendation from him. I am quite sure I shall like your business better."

"My sister's recommendation is sufficient."

"Thank you, John," said Mrs. Mason.

"If you become interested in the business and show an aptitude for it there will be a chance to rise. It depends upon that. If you only work for the money, you won't rise."

"I understand, Mr. Crawford, and I am satisfied."

"Mother," said Roy, "I wish you would engage Andy to come here evenings and help me with my lessons. I should learn twice as fast. Besides, I should like his company."

Roy was an only child and it was the desire of his mother's heart that he should acquire a good education. Her means were ample, and her disposition generous.

"I don't know but Andy would feel too tired after being in your uncle's office all day, to teach you in the evening," she said.

"Would you, Andy?" asked Roy.

"No; I should enjoy reviewing my old studies with you."

"Then, I will engage you," said Mrs. Mason. "You can come here at eight every evening."

"I will do so with pleasure."

"And for compensation I will pay you as much as my brother does."

"I wouldn't charge anything for helping Roy," said Andy. "It would only be a pleasure to me."

"Andrew," said Mr. Crawford, "I am afraid you will never make a business man if you are willing to work on those terms. My advice to you is to accept my sister's offer. She can afford to pay you what she offers, and you have your living to make."

"I shall insist upon paying," said Mrs. Mason, "though I appreciate Andy's generous offer."

"Thank you very much. With such an income I shall feel rich."

"I am so glad you are going to help me, Andy," said Roy. "We'll have bully times."

"I don't think Julius Cæsar ever made use of such an expression, Roy," said his uncle.

"When do you wish me to come down to business, Mr. Crawford?" asked Andy.

"You may as well come tomorrow, and get broken in before your regular engagement commences."

"I shall be glad to do so."

"For this week you need only stay till three o'clock in the afternoon. There isn't much doing after that."

When Andy went home it will not be wondered at if he was in a state of exhilaration. His discharge from the jeweler's had turned out to his advantage. His income was now ten dollars a week, and he had no board to pay. He certainly ought to lay up money.

He said to himself that now he would not go back to Mr. Flint's even if he had the chance.

When he entered his room he found Sam Perkins waiting for him.

"I have been thinking, Andy," he said, "that I might be able to get you into our store. I will speak to Mr. Chambers tomorrow."

"There is no occasion, Sam, though I thank you for your kind offer. I have a place."

"What, already?" ejaculated Sam in amazement. "What chance have you had to hunt up a place?"

"The place hunted me up," answered Andy, with a smile. "I met a gentleman at dinner, who offered to take me into his employment."

"What business?"

"Real estate."

"What is the firm?"

"John Crawford & Co."

"I know of the house. The office is on lower Broadway. It is a big firm."

"I am glad of that."

"How much are you to get?"

"Five dollars a week."

"Won't you find it hard to live on that."

"I have got another place, too."

"What do you mean?"

"I am to help a boy about his Latin in the evening. I shall get five dollars a week for that, too."

"What! ten dollars a week in all?"

"You are right. I give you credit for your mathematical talent."

"Why, Andy, you are born to good luck! I wish I was paid ten dollars a week," said Sam rather enviously. "But I didn't know you understood Latin."

"You don't know how learned I am," said Andy, smiling.

"When will you get time for your pupil?"

"In the evening."

"I am sorry for that. I shan't often meet you if you are to be occupied day and evening too."

"We shall meet at breakfast and supper. I shan't leave here to go up town till half past seven."

"But you can't go to the theater."

"I am willing to give that up for five dollars a week."

"So would I be."

"If I hear of any other boy who needs a Latin tutor I will recommend you."

The next morning Andy reported at Mr. Crawford's office. The office he found to be a large one, consisting of three rooms, one of them small, and appropriated to Mr. Crawford's special use.

In the outer rooms were two or three clerks and a boy. The last, James Grey, was a good natured looking fellow, but he had no force or efficiency. He had already received notice that he was to be discharged on the coming Saturday.

"I suppose you are coming in my place," said he to Andy.

"I suppose so. I am sorry that I shall be throwing you out of a position."

"Oh, you needn't mind. I am to be telephone boy at an up town hotel. My cousin got the place for me."

"I am glad of that."

"It will be a soft snap, I think."

"What are the hours?"

"I go on at five o'clock in the afternoon, and stay till midnight."

"Will you like that?"

"Oh, well, I can lie abed the next morning till ten or eleven o'clock, and I won't have much to do when I am on duty. I shall buy a lot of dime novels, and that will fill up the time."

"How do you like the real estate business?"

"Oh, so, so. I guess I'll like being a telephone boy better."

"Andrew, you may go round with James,

and he will give you a little idea of your duties," said Mr. Crawford. "James, you can go to the post office now."

"All right, sir."

"I hope you will soon get another place."

"I have got one already, sir."

"Indeed! I am very glad."

"I am to be a telephone boy."

"I wish you success."

As they walked to the post office together, James remarked,

"Mr. Crawford is a nice man, but I guess I don't hustle enough for him."

"I think I can hustle," said Andy.

"Then you'll suit him."

On Saturday night, when James was paid his salary, he received five dollars extra as a present. Andy thought this very kind and considerate on the part of his new employer. To his surprise he, too, was paid half a week's salary—something he did not expect.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOHN CRANDALL SEEKS TO INJURE ANDY.

THOUGH Simon Rich had succeeded in reinstating his nephew in the store in place of Andy, he was not altogether happy. John Crandall was naturally lazy and inefficient, and his temporary discharge did not seem to have improved him.

When sent out on errands he loitered, and had more than once put his uncle to considerable inconvenience. He was obliged to admit to himself that Andy had had been much more satisfactory.

In the midst of this experience John preferred a request to have his salary raised a dollar a week.

"You know very well that I have no authority to raise your wages," said his uncle sharply.

"Why not, Uncle Simon? You have taken me back on your own authority."

"And I begin to think that I have made a great mistake."

"Perhaps you'd like to have the country boy back again?"

"I am not sure but I would. He did not stay away so long on errands as you do."

"I wonder what he is doing," said John, starting off on a new tack. "I don't suppose he can get a new place."

"If you see him, you might ask him to call," said Simon Rich.

"Why?" asked John suspiciously,

"I may discharge you and take him back."

"In that case, I will tell Mr. Flint about pawning the watch."

Simon Rich looked at his nephew with anger mingled with dismay. He began to see now that to a certain extent he had put himself in John's power.

"You treacherous young rascal, I have a great mind to wring your neck," he said wrathfully.

"Uncle Simon," observed John significantly, "I guess you'd better not act hastily."

"What a fool I was to put myself in the power of that cub!" soliloquized the head salesman.

John saw the effect of his words, and decided to follow them up.

"Don't you think you can raise my wages?" he asked.

"No, I don't. You will be lucky if you stay here till Mr. Flint comes back. After that I can't protect you. He will probably be angry to see you back here. I shall have to tell him that I took you in temporarily. Now I will give you some advice. If you want to remain here permanently turn over a new leaf, and work faithfully. In that case I can speak well of you, and Mr. Flint may be induced to retain you."

John began to think that this might be good advice, and for a day or two paid more attention to his duties.

"I wonder I don't see Andy somewhere," he said to himself. "I am out a good deal, and I ought to meet him. He is probably hunting up positions."

It was not till Tuesday afternoon that he did see him. Andy had been sent to the St. Denis Hotel to meet a customer of the firm. As he came out he fell in with John.

John was the first to see him.

"Hallo, Andy!" he exclaimed. "How are you getting along?"

"Pretty well, thank you."

"I suppose you haven't struck a job yet?"

"Oh, yes, I have."

"You have!" ejaculated John, in surprise. "What kind of a job?"

"I am in a large real estate office down town."

"Did they take you without a recommendation?"

"No."

"My uncle wouldn't give you one."

"I wouldn't ask him for one."

"Who did recommend you then?"

"Mrs. Mason of West Fifty Sixth Street."

"I know. She is one of our customers."

"Yes."

"Probably she hasn't heard of your being suspected of pawning a watch from our stock."

"You might tell her."

"Perhaps I shall," John said to himself. "What pay do you get?"

"Five dollars a week."

"I didn't think you would get a place."

Andy smiled.

"I presume Mr. Rich did not care to have me get another place."

"He thought you would have to go back to the country."

"I am better off than when I was in the jewelry store," said Andy. "How are you getting along?"

"Oh, first class."

"I hope you will be able to keep the place."

"I didn't know but you might be wanting to come back."

"I wouldn't go back if I had the chance."

John was pleased to hear this. He was afraid that Mr. Flint might not be satisfied with his uncle's explanation, and that somehow the truth might come out.

"You must excuse me now," said Andy. "I ought to go back to the office at once."

John returned to the jeweler's full of excitement.

"Whom do you think I met just now, Uncle Simon?" he asked.

"Andy?"

"Yes."

"Did you speak with him?"

"Yes."

"I suppose he is hunting for a place."

"No; he has got one."

"Where is he working?"

"In a real estate office down town. He is getting five dollars a week."

"I didn't think he could get a place without a recommendation."

"He was recommended by one of our customers—Mrs. Mason."

"I see. Well, that is lucky for him."

Simon Rich spoke indifferently. He was rather glad that Andy had found a place, as Mr. Flint would be less likely to find fault with his dismissal.

Not so John. He had never forgiven Andy for superseding him, and he felt aggrieved that he had so soon found employment. Thinking it over, there came to him a mean suggestion. He might be able to get Andy discharged from his present place.

As his uncle seemed indifferent, and might not approve of his contemplated action, he decided to say nothing about it.

That evening after supper he made his way up to West Fifty Sixth Street, and sought out the residence of Mrs. Mason.

He rang the bell.

"Can I see Mrs. Mason?" he asked.

"What name shall I mention?"

"Say it is a boy from Mr. Flint's."

Mrs. Mason received the message in some surprise. What could a boy from Flint's have to say to her?

However she entered the parlor, where John Crandall was waiting to see her.

"You are from Mr. Flint's?" she said.

"Yes, ma'am,"

"What business can you have with me? I have bought no jewelry lately."

"I know it, Mrs. Mason. It isn't about jewelry I wished to speak."

"What then?"

"I met today a boy who was lately employed by our firm—Andrew Grant."

"Well?"

"He said you had recommended him to a real estate firm down town."

"I did so."

"Perhaps you didn't know that he had been discharged from our place for dishonesty."

"I begin to understand," thought Mrs. Mason, and she sat down and examined John curiously.

"Did he steal anything?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered John glibly. "He took a watch—a gold watch—out of the case and pawned it."

"That was bad. And you have come up to tell me of it? You are very considerate. Did Mr. Rich send you, or do you come of your own accord?"

"I came of my own accord. I thought you were deceived in the boy."

"What do you think I ought to do?"

"I thought you would take back the recommendation and get the boy discharged."

"Can you wait here half an hour while I consider what is best to be done?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am.

"I guess I've put a spoke in his wheel," thought John.

In about half an hour the door opened, and to John's amazement Andy walked in.

"You here!" he gasped.

"Yes; I hear you have been warning Mrs. Mason against me."

"I thought she ought to know that you were sent away from our store in disgrace."

"I have something to say to you," said Andy quietly. "I have been to the pawnbroker's *and got a description of the boy who pawned the watch!*"

John turned pale.

"I see you understand," Andy went on, "who did it. So do I, and so does Mrs. Mason. You won't make anything by your attempt to injure me. Good evening!"

John Crandall left the house without a word. He began to be alarmed.

"Suppose Andy tells Flint," he soliloquized. "No matter; he can't prove it."

But he felt uneasy, nevertheless. He did not say anything to his uncle about his visit.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. FLINT'S RETURN.

MR. CRAWFORD was something more than an ordinary real estate dealer. He was thorough and painstaking in whatever he undertook.

In his private office he had a library of volumes relating to architecture, practical building, real estate law, etc. This Andy discovered, and he asked his employer if he might borrow books therefrom.

Mr. Crawford seemed pleased, but he asked, "Do you think you will feel any interest in such dry volumes?"

"I shall not read for interest, but for improvement," answered Andy. "If I am to to follow up this business I want to find out all I can about it."

"You are an unusually sensible boy," said Mr. Crawford. "I am sure you will succeed."

"I mean to if it is possible."

From this time John Crawford felt an added interest in Andy, and took pains to push him forward, and give him practical information about real estate.

"How do you like Andy, John," asked Mrs. Mason, not long afterwards.

"He is a treasure. He does credit to your recommendation."

"I am very much pleased to hear you say so. I consider him a remarkable boy. Roy gets much higher marks at school since Andy began to help him in his lessons."

One day Andy was sent up to the Grand Central Depot on an errand. He arrived just as a train came in from the West. What was his surprise to see Mr. Flint getting out of a parlor car!

"Mr. Flint!" he cried joyfully.

"Andy!" exclaimed the jeweler. "It seems pleasant to see a home face. But how do you happen to be up here at this time? Did Mr. Rich send you?"

"Then you have not heard——" began Andy.

"Heard what?"

"That I have been discharged from your store."

"When did this happen?" asked the jeweler abruptly.

"About two weeks ago."

"Rich never wrote me about it. Who is in your place?"

"John Crandall."

"His nephew? The boy I discharged?"

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Flint's face assumed a stern look.

"This will have to be explained," he said. "What was the pretext for discharging you?"

"Dishonesty. He charged me with stealing a gold watch and pawning it."

"Ridiculous!"

"Then you don't believe me guilty?"

"Certainly not."

"Thank you, Mr. Flint."

"Tell me the circumstances."

"Please excuse me now, Mr. Flint. I am in a real estate office, and am on an errand. If you like I will call at your house, and explain. In the mean time I will let Mr. Rich give you his version."

"Call this evening, Andy."

"It will have to be between seven and half past seven, as I have a pupil in the evening."

"Come to supper at my house, as soon after six as possible."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Flint had telegraphed to Simon Rich of his coming, but through some mistake the telegram did not reach him, so that he was quite taken by surprise when his employer entered the store.

"I had no idea you were anywhere near New York, Mr. Flint," he said.

"Didn't you get my telegram from Buffalo, Mr. Rich?"

"No, sir. I hope you are well."

Just then John Crandall came in from an errand.

"You here!" said the jeweler. "Where is Andy Grant?"

"I was obliged to discharge him," replied Rich nervously.

"Why?"

"Very much to my surprise I discovered that he had stolen a gold watch from the case."

"What evidence had you of it?"

"I found the pawn ticket in his pocket. He pawned it on Third Avenue."

"This surprises me very much," said the jeweler quietly. "Andrew did not strike me as a dishonest boy."

"I was amazed, sir. I could hardly believe my eyes."

"What led you to search for the ticket?"

"I knew that the watch must have been taken either by him or John, who came into the shop occasionally. I accordingly searched both."

"And you found the ticket in Andrew's pocket?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he say? Did he admit the theft?"

"No; he brazened it out, but of course the evidence was overwhelming."

"So you discharged him?"

"Yes. I did not dare to have him remain."

"And you engaged your nephew in his place?"

"Yes, sir. John happened to be here, and knew something of the duties, so I engaged him temporarily, subject, of course, to your approval."

"Where is Andrew now? Have you seen him since?"

"John saw him one day. Where was it, John?"

"On Broadway, near the St. Denis Hotel. He said he had a place."

"Where?"

"In a real estate office."

"I suppose you gave him no recommendation, Mr. Rich?"

"No, sir; I couldn't do it conscientiously. Of course, now that you have returned, if you are dissatisfied with John's being here, we can advertise for another boy."

"I will take a day to consider it. I shall only stay here half an hour and then go up to the house."

When Mr. Flint left the house, Simon Rich said, "The old man took Andy's discharge more quietly than I anticipated."

"Do you think he will let me stay, Uncle Simon?"

"I can't tell yet. One thing I must tell you—you won't stay long unless you turn over a new leaf and attend to your duties."

"I'll do that, never fear! What I am afraid of is, that Andy will come 'round and tell a lot of lies."

"I don't think it will work. You see, the pawn ticket was found in his pocket. He can't get over that very well."

John knew more than his uncle of the nature of Andy's defense, and he could not help feeling apprehensive.

Soon after six o'clock Andy made his appearance at Mr. Flint's house, where he was cordially received.

"I have heard the story of Mr. Rich, Andy," he said. "Now let me have your defense."

"I can give it very briefly. The watch was pawned by John Crandall. Of course it was given him by Mr. Rich."

"How did you find that out?"

"I went 'round to the pawnbroker's, and obtained a description of the boy who pawned the watch. It tallied exactly with John's appearance. That was not all. I met the same day a boy named Jimmy Callahan. He saw John coming out of the pawnbroker's the day before the charge was made against me."

"That is pretty conclusive. Can you explain how the ticket was put in your pocket."

"No, sir. That puzzles me."

"It could easily be done, no doubt. Now, do you want to return to my employ?"

"No, sir, I think not. I am in a real estate office and I think there is more chance for me to rise."

"How did you obtain the position?"

"Through Mrs. Mason of West Fifty Sixth Street. She has been a very good friend to me. The gentleman who employs me is her brother."

"I shall be sorry to lose you, Andy, but I wish you to consult your own interest. As to John Crandall, I shall discharge him at once. I will not permit him to profit by the conspiracy against you. Can you stay this evening?"

"No, sir. I am helping Mrs. Mason's son Roy in his Latin lessons. For this I am paid five dollars per week."

"You seem to be very well provided for, I must say."

"Yes, sir, I have been fortunate."

The next day Mr. Flint notified Simon Rich that he was acquainted with the manner in which evidence had been procured against Andy. Then he turned to the nephew.

"The watch was pawned by you, John," he said, "under the direction of your uncle."

"No, sir," said John. "If Andy Grant has told you this he has told a lie."

"The matter is easily settled. Come around with me to the pawnbroker's."

John stammered and finally confessed.

"Of course I cannot retain your services after this. You, Mr. Rich, may remain till the end of the month. I shall then feel obliged to make a change."

Never were two conspirators more quickly punished. Simon Rich repented bitterly yielding to the temptation to injure Andy. His malice had recoiled upon himself.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ANDY MAKES AN INVESTMENT.

ANDY wrote to his friend Walter Gale, who, it will be remembered, was watching in Pennsylvania by the bedside of his uncle, giving him an account of his change of business. He received the following reply:

I felt indignant when I read your news of the conspiracy of Simon Rich, but was pleased that it led to your advantage. I am inclined to think that you will find your new business a better one than the jewelry trade. The latter, if you went in for yourself, would call for a large capital. In the real estate business capital is not so much needed as good judgment and a large lot of acquaintances. I am not personally acquainted with Mr. Crawford, but know him by reputation as an energetic and honorable business man. If you do not find your income adequate, all you have to do is to apply to me. I will send you fifty dollars or more at any time.

Now as to the prospects of my return, they are remote. My uncle seems cheered by my presence, and his health has improved. He cannot live more than a year or two at the best, but when I came here it seemed to be only a matter of months. I shall remain while I can do him good.

When Mr. Flint returns he will do you justice. You can afford to wait, as your income is larger than before. You suggest that I need not continue to pay your board. This, however, I intend to do, and will advise you to lay aside some money every week, and deposit in a savings bank. The habit of saving is excellent, and cannot be formed too early.

"I am lucky to have such a friend," reflected Andy, as he finished reading this letter. "I will try to make myself worthy of such good fortune."

At the end of six months Andy had acquired a large practical acquaintance with the real estate business. He displayed a degree of judgment which surprised Mr. Crawford.

"You seem more like a young man than a boy," he said. "I am not at all sure but I could leave my business in your hands if I wished to be absent."

This compliment pleased Andy. He had also been raised to seven dollars a week, and this he regarded as a practical compliment.

One evening on his return from West Fifty Sixth Street he strayed into the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where he sat down to rest in the reading room.

Two men were sitting near him whose conversation he could not help hearing.

"I own a considerable plot in Tacoma," said one. "I bought it two years since when I was on my way back from California. I should like to sell the plot if I could get a purchaser."

"If the Northern Pacific Railroad is ever completed the land will be valuable," replied the other.

"True, but will it ever be completed? That date will be very remote, I fancy."

"I don't think so. I would buy the land myself if I had the money, but just at present I have none to spare. How much did you invest?"

"A thousand dollars."

"You might sell perhaps through a real estate agent?"

"The real estate agents here know very little of Western property. I should not know to whom to apply."

Andy thought he saw a chance to procure business for his firm.

"Gentlemen," he said, "will you excuse my saying that I am in a real estate office, and think you can make some satisfactory arrangement with us?"

At the same time he handed the owner of Tacoma property a card of the firm.

"Crawford!" repeated his friend. "Yes, that is a reputable firm. You cannot do better than adopt the young man's suggestion."

Andy Grant had written his name on the card.

"You are rather young for a real estate agent, Mr. Grant," remarked the lot owner.

Andy smiled.

"I am only a subordinate," he said.

"Has your principal ever dealt in Western property?" asked Mr. Bristol.

"Not to any extent, but I have heard him speak favorably of it."

"I will call at your office tomorrow forenoon, then."

Andy apprised Mr. Crawford of the appointment made.

"I shall be glad to see your acquaintance, Andy," said Mr. Crawford. "I have advices from a friend of mine in Washington that the railroad is sure to be completed in a short time. This land will be worth buying. Have you any money?"

"I have a hundred dollars in a savings bank," answered Andy.

"Then I will give you a quarter interest in the purchase, and you can give me a note for the balance which at present you are unable to pay. I am sure we shall make a good deal of money within a short time, and I want you to reap some advantage as it will have come to me through you."

"Thank you, sir. I shall be very glad to have a share in the investment."

About eleven o'clock James Bristol, who proved to be a resident of Newark, New Jersey, presented himself at the office and was introduced by Andy to Mr. Crawford.

"Andy has told me of your business," said the real estate agent. "You have some property in Tacoma."

"Yes, I was persuaded to invest in some two years since. Now I need the money. Do you think you can find me a customer?"

"What do you ask for it?"

"A thousand dollars—the same price I paid."

"Is it eligibly situated?"

"If the town ever amounts to anything, it will be in the business part."

"How many lots will it divide into?"

"Twenty five of the usual city dimensions."

"Then I think I will take it off your hands. Part I will reserve for myself, and a part I will allot to a friend."

"Can you pay me cash?"

"Yes. I will make out a check at once."

Mr. Bristol breathed a sigh of satisfaction.

"I don't mind telling you," he said, "that I am very glad to realize on the investment. I have to meet a note for five hundred dollars in three days, and I was at a loss how to raise the money."

"Then the transaction will be mutually satisfactory," rejoined Mr. Crawford.

"Well, Andy," said his employer, when his customer left the office, "we are now Western land owners. I will draw up a note, which I will get you to sign, for a hundred and fifty dollars, and you can assign to me the money in the savings bank. I shall expect interest at the rate of six per cent."

"I shall be very glad to pay it, sir."

It was a satisfaction to Andy to think that he had made an investment which was likely ere many years to make him golden returns. He began to read with interest the accounts of the growth and development of the West, and decided to be unusually economical in the future so as to be able to pay up the note due to Mr, Crawford, that he might feel that he owned his Western property without incumbrance.

While Andy, as a rule, dressed neatly, there was one respect in which he did not win the approval of his neighbor Sam Perkins.

"I should think a boy with your income would be more particular about his neckties," said Sam.

"What's the matter with my neckties, Sam? Are they not neat?"

"Yes; but they are plain, such as a Quaker might wear. Why don't you get a showy tie like mine?"

Andy smiled as he noticed the gorgeous tie which his friend wore.

"I don't like to be showy," he said.

"You'll never attract the attention of the girls with such a plain tie as you wear. Now, when I walked on Fifth Avenue last Sunday afternoon, as many as twenty girls looked admiringly at my tie."

"That would make me feel bashful, Sam."

"Let me bring you one from the store like mine. You shall have it at the wholesale price."

"No; I think not. It wouldn't be as becoming to me as to you. I don't want to be considered a dude."

"I don't mind it. Next week I'm going

to buy a pair of patent leathers. They will be really economical, as I shall not have to spend money on shines."

One Saturday afternoon, when Andy was walking through one of the quiet streets west of Bleecker, his attention was drawn to a small boy, apparently about eleven years of age, who was quietly crying as he walked along the sidewalk. He had never seen the boy before that he could remember, yet his face wore a familiar expression.

(*To be continued.*)

PEDRO'S LUCK.

By Edward S. Ellis

PEDRO SIMMONS, upon reaching the swell in the prairie, reined up his tough little pony, and raising his powerful glasses to his eyes, gazed sweepingly across the flaming waste of sand which stretched on every hand.

It was one of the hottest of days, even for Arizona, where for weeks together the frightful desert becomes a furnace, the temperature even at midnight hovering above one hundred degrees. The air pulsated like the breath of an oven; the sand, white, glistening, and lying in winrows, was hot enough to bake food, while the brassy sky was without a cloud.

Only the round, fiery sun blazed from the firmament, as if anticipating the awful hour when the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

But man can become accustomed almost to anything; and though Pedro Simmons was a youth, not yet out of his teens, he was insensible to any special discomfort. His broad brimmed sombrero rested jauntily on his well formed head; his flannel shirt was heavy enough to protect him from a searching "norther"; his thick trousers were tucked in the tops of his boots, with their high heels and glistening spurs, and his Winchester rested across his Mexican saddle in front, while he held his pony motionless and scanned every portion of the blistering horizon.

It was sand, heat, sand, heat, everywhere. He was in a world of throbbing, scorching sunlight, enough to appall the stoutest veteran of the plains and mountains.

Far to the eastward, on the very rim of the horizon, a thin, bluish, irregular line could be faintly traced along the sky, where the distant Mogollon Mountains reared their crests from the burning plain, but south, west, and north the quivering atmosphere, like that from Hades itself, was unbroken by forest or mountain peak.

But Pedro was searching for something which he knew he ought to find, and which he believed he would see, if he but made his scrutiny keen enough. He held his glass leveled straight to the north, holding it above and between the drooping ears of his intelligent pony, until at last his penetrating vision discovered the object he had in mind.

It was the flag of the post toward which he was making his way. The fort itself was too low on the plain to be observed, even with the aid of the instrument, while the tall, needle-like staff would have been beyond reach of the most powerful eye, but for the gentle puff of air which lifted the banner and caused it to flap slightly against the sky.

"I didn't think I could be off the track," mused Pedro, lowering the glass. "There is no trail to the fort, but the course is too plain for me to lose it."

He spoke to his pony, who resumed his tramp through the yielding sand, as if he were as insensible to the fearful heat as his owner.

"We'll be there, Jack, by sunset, and then we'll have a good rest."

Pedro Simmons, despite his given name, was an American, born nearly eighteen years before in the city of New York. His career, up to the present time, made it look as if misfortune had selected him for its own, for nearly everything had gone awry with him.

He was an only child, whose mother died so long before, that he held not the most shadowy remembrance of her. Soon after her death, his father, who was a ne'er do well, deserted him, and going West, enlisted in the United States army. Pedro found refuge with a miserly aunt, who promised to leave him a goodly sum of money if he would stay by and serve her until her death.

Pedro did so with the utmost faithfulness. When he was sixteen years old his relative died, and it was found that she had left every cent of her property, which was considerable, to a vagaband nephew, who would not give his cousin a dollar, though Pedro had not a becoming suit of clothing to his back.

Still the lad was not discouraged. He was bright witted, strong, and rugged, and the world was before him. Such a boy need not suffer in this country, and he was resolved to carve out his fortune for himself.

He might have found work in the metropolis, but, yielding to that longing for travel which is natural in one of his years, he determined to go far away. Besides, he wished to find his father, whom he remembered and toward whom he felt an affection, which, sad to say, was not recipro-

cated, for the parent, after his departure, had never made inquiry about his son or shown any interest in his welfare.

The youth readily learned from the headquarters of the army in New York, the name and location of the regiment in which his father had enlisted. He was serving at that time at Camp Verde in Arizona.

It was a good two thousand miles and more to that desolate post in the Southwest, but Pedro made up his mind to go thither, even though he had not five dollars that he could call his own. He soon found employment, and when he had saved sufficient he took a train for St. Louis.

He might have walked, as do the tramps, but he was too proud to do that. He rode as cheaply as he could, but he rode every mile of the way.

A still longer halt was necessary in the Mound City, but he secured the amount of money he wanted at last. Without dwelling upon the particulars, it may be said that about a year after the death of his aunt, he appeared at Camp Verde, having been helped a goodly portion of the latter part of his journey by an army detail returning from Prescott.

His father's regiment was there and a portion of it had returned only a few days before from the pursuit of Geronimo and his elusive miscreants, They had had sharp fighting, and a dozen of the cavalrymen never came back.

One of the latter was the father of Pedro, who was buried with his comrades at the foothills in the Mogollon range. So the lad did not see his parent, and perhaps it was as well, for the son was saved the rebuff which he would have been sure to receive.

Pedro would have enlisted had he been old enough. He was treated with much kindness by the officers and soldiers, and, had he chosen to remain, it is probable that the post would have found some way of turning his services to account.

A couple of cowboys, visiting the fort, promised to give him work if he would go with them to the ranges of their employer, Señor Felipe Ovideo, a wealthy Mexican, whose ranches were in the southern part of the territory near the Mexican line. Pedro eagerly accepted the offer, and, mounting one of the two extra mustangs, rode homeward with them.

It looked now as if the youth was fairly started on the career of cattleman, and would become a member of that army of daring, reckless riders, whose lives form one almost continual round of excitement and peril.

Pedro took to his new work with enthusiasm. He soon became a skilled horseman, learned to throw the riata, to lasso and hurl to the ground a steer while on the full run, to do the work of a man in rounding up, branding, and in fighting back the dusky raiders who sometimes tried and often succeeded in running off the quadrupeds of Señor Felipe Ovideo.

It was Pedro's natural quickness, strength, brightness, and desire to learn that caused him to become so skilful that the cowboys often complimented him on his surprising progress. Everything was promising, when the bad luck which had clung to him so long found him out again.

Felipe Ovideo, the owner of "the cattle on a thousand hills," rarely showed himself to his men, acting through his superintendent, who visited his home far to the south, to make his reports and receive the money with which to pay them their wages; but one day the employer took it into his head to make a tour to the northward among the ranges—a journey which would occupy several week.

He was accompanied by two friends, for the old man lived alone, having no family.

When he saw the attractive face and figure of young Simmons, he made inquiries about him, and finally called him up for a little chat. He seemed to feel a curious interest in him.

"Are you Mexican or American?" asked Señor Ovideo in English.

"American," was the proud response of Pedro.

"Ah—where were you born?"

"In the city of New York."

The face of the Mexican became a thundercloud, and he trembled with passion.

"Had I known that, you never would have worked a day for me; you can serve me no longer; you shall leave without staying another night in camp."

Pedro was more amazed than disturbed by this strange command. He never would have understood it but for the explanation of one of his friends.

Ovideo was a prominent officer under Santa Anna during the war between Mexico and the United States. He fought valiantly, for his hatred of "los Americanos," the invaders of his country, was intense.

During the final march of General Scott to the city of Mexico, the *hacienda* of Ovideo was plundered and burned by the Americans. In the sad affair, in some way never explained, the wife and two children of Ovideo lost their lives. The Mexican naturally was incensed to the highest degree, and swore never to forgive the invaders.

In time, however, when Arizona came into the possession of the United States, his resentment cooled to a certain extent, though he never could feel friendship for those living north of the Rio Grande; but the soldiers who took part in the despoiling and ruination of his home, were members of a New York regiment, and toward all people from that State, his enmity was undying. He made it an iron clad rule that none should ever find employment under him, and, so far as he knew, none ever did.

When, therefore, he learned that Pedro Simmons was a native of New York, all his old passion flamed up and he sent him adrift without another word.

Pedro accepted his ill luck philosophically. There were plenty of other ranches in Arizona and New Mexico, and he knew he would not be long without employment.

He bade his old friends and companions good by, and rode off on his faithful mustang, Jack, taking with him his Winchester, a supply of cartridges, his canteen, and a few indispensable articles.

He headed for the nearest fort, where he meant to stay until some opening should present itself.

At the last stream of warm, brackish water which he crossed, he filled his canteen and rode forward at a plodding walk, until he ascended the swell in the burning plain, and after scanning the horizon, caught sight of the flag lazily fluttering over the post far to the northward.

And so, after this diversion in our narrative, we come back to the point where we started.

Pedro had ridden half a mile further in a brown study, when his pony abruptly threw up his head, pricked his ears, and showed by his manner that he had detected something of a disquieting nature.

"What is it, old fellow?" asked his rider, looking searchingly around on the plain.

It was two days since Pedro had left his friends to the south, and he was pretty certain that they could have nothing to do with the cause of alarm to his animal.

But the youth had lived sufficiently long in the Southwest to learn much of the Apaches, the most terrible tribe of Indians that ever desolated a portion of the American continent. He knew that a band of them had ambushed an emigrant party in the midst of an open plain, where there was not a shrub or blade of grass growing.

They did it by burrowing in the blistering sand, their bodies entirely covered, with only their black, serpent-like eyes peering out and waiting for the chance to leap to their feet and begin their ferocious work.

It might be that something of the kind was on foot, and his more sagacious pony had made the discovery unsuspected by his rider.

But while scanning the desert to the northward, the eye of Pedro detected something unnoticed before. Instantly his glass was to his eye, and he studied the picture.

A fight was going on between a small party of mounted Apaches and several horsemen, who were down on the plain and fighting from behind their prostrate animals. The crack of the rifles and the cries of the Indians sounded faint and further away in the sulphurous air, but the fight was a desperate one.

Pedro sat a minute or two motionless on his horse, asking himself what he ought to do, if indeed he could do anything. Then the desire to aid in the defense of the sorely pressed ones caused him to strike his spurs against the ribs of his pony, who instantly broke into a canter through the sand.

But the chivalrous desire to help the unknown defenders was not gratified. A squad of United States cavalry from the fort beyond, had caught sight of the affray and bore down so swiftly that the Apaches scurried off to the westward.

Determined to punish the marauders for what they had done, the soldiers gave no heed to the little group that had been so sorely harassed, but continued their pursuit of the flying miscreants, who were so well mounted that they and the cavalry soon vanished from sight across the flaming plain to the westward.

Pedro pressed on to the group that was left behind. When he came up to it, he saw a sorry sight, though, sad to say, it was one not uncommon a few years ago in the Southwest.

A party of three horsemen had been assailed by a dozen Apaches, with the fury of tigers. At the first assault all three horses were desperately wounded, two of them falling dead, while the third lived but a few minutes.

The riders made breastworks of their bodies, and fought their assailants, who circled about them, firing as they gained the chance, and swinging about and back and forth on their ponies, so that it was impossible to gain a fair shot at them. One of the Indians, however, was slain and another badly hurt.

But within the same five minutes that this took place, a defender was shot dead, and the other two so severely wounded that one of them survived but a brief while.

The single remaining man could not have held out much longer, but for the appearance of the cavalry, who scattered the Apaches and left him alone on the scorching plain.

Two of the men were stretched out on the sand, as lifeless as their horses. The third was sitting, with his head and shoulders against his dead pony, his arms outspread, his sombrero fallen off, his rifle lying several feet away, while his white face and twitching features showed his pitiful condition.

Had an enemy approached at that moment the man could not have made the first movement toward defense.

Hearing the footfalls, and the voice of a stranger, he opened his half closed eyes and murmured,

"Water—water—water, for the love of heaven!"

Pedro Simmons unslung his canteen, and held the nozzle to the poor man's lips, helping at the same time to support his head, while he eagerly drank of the fluid, which could have been grateful only to one who was tortured with thirst.

"Thanks, very much," he murmured in English, when at last the youth took away the vessel; "but, *mi amigo*, you have come too late."

"Don't say that," replied Pedro hopefully; "it is not far to the fort, and there you will receive the best attention."

The swallow of liquid seemed to infuse new life and strength into the frame of the sufferer. Instead of falling back against the body of his lifeless pony again, he sat upright and looked into the face of the good Samaritan bending over him.

Pedro saw that he had been struck in the breast by a bullet, and his left arm appeared to be helpless. No doubt he underwent much pain.

"We had a sharp fight," he remarked, looking round at the forms of his two companions; "the Apaches are ugly."

The youth picked up the man's sombrero and carefully replaced it on his head.

"Yes; it would have been bad for you, if the soldiers had not appeared."

"Why couldn't they have come sooner?" asked the man bitterly. "Then my friends might have been saved."

"It is too late for regrets; you are left—thank Heaven for that."

"I don't know whether I am any more fortunate than they. I am so badly hurt that I cannot live long."

"I do not think so. You cannot know that; wait until you hear what the surgeon says."

"But the surgeon is at the fort."

"And we will go there."

"How far is it?"

"But a few miles."

"I have no animal; yours cannot carry both of us, and I do not think I am able to sit a horse."

"I can ride to the post and have them bring a litter for you."

"No, no, no; if you leave me I shall not survive against your return."

"Then I will help you into the saddle and walk by your side."

"But that will be imposing too much on you; besides, I discharged you the other day and treated you ill; I do not deserve this."

"Señor Ovideo, you sent me away, because I am a native of New York. Your men told me the reason; if I had come from some other State it would have been different. I feel no ill will; say no more of it."

The man muttered something, but with the help of Pedro he slowly rose to his feet, and leaning heavily on the arm of his young friend, walked the few steps necessary to the side of the waiting pony.

It was a difficult task to get him into the saddle, and though he compressed his lips and summoned his iron resolution, it looked for a time as if he must fail. Once Pedro was sure the wounded man was about to swoon, but another drink from the canteen revived him, and finally he swung his leg over the back of the horse, and the youth adjusted his feet in the stirrups.

It was not necessary to lead Jack, for his intelligence told him what was expected of him. Pedro walked by the side of the Mexican, keeping close watch, and ready for any sudden weakness on his part.

Twice he was obliged to check the animal, while the rider was accorded a few minutes in which to rally. The wounds which he had received did not bleed to any extent, and he would not permit his companion to bandage or give them attention, replying that it would be time enough to do so when they reached the fort, if they should be able to continue the journey that far.

With all Pedro's care, reinforced by the man's indomitable resolution, the task never would have been completed without help. It seemed to occur to the cavalry that had been fruitlessly pursuing the Apaches, that it might be well to look into the work done by the dusky raiders, and several of them galloped back through the sand to the scene of the encounter.

Thus they came upon the wounded man upon the pony, with the youth walking beside him.

Immediately one of the cavalrymen rode up close on the right while a companion did the same on the left. Thus they were able to afford the sufferer excellent support, which, with a swallow of brandy from the flask of another, was so efficient that the rest of the ride to the post was made with comparative comfort.

Arrived at the fort, Señor Felipe Ovideo received every possible attention, He was placed on a cot, and a surgeon made a careful examination of his wounds. They were skilfully dressed, and nothing that could be done was neglected; but when the medical man left the bedside, he gravely shook his head.

"There is little hope for him; he is badly hurt. His exposure on the plain, that exhausting ride, and his age are all against him."

"Don't you think he will get well?" asked Pedro, whose heart was melted with sympathy for the man that had suffered so much, even before he himself was born.

"While there's life there's hope, but it's my belief he will never leave his bed."

The words of the surgeon were verified. Señor Ovideo lingered nearly four days and for a time the prospect of his final recovery was excellent, even his medical attendant expressing hope. Then a change came, and he told the señor that his life would pass within the following twenty four hours.

The patient accepted the verdict with the heroism he had always shown, saying that he expected the result from the first and he had no complaint to utter.

He showed his gratitude to those that had been so attentive and kind, and being wealthy, made them substantial presents.

After his death a sealed letter was handed to Pedro Simmons, whose eyes were so blinded by tears that for a while he was unable to read the following:

PEDRO SIMMONS:

I used you unkindly without cause. You repaid me by the patience, forbearance, and tender love of a Christian. I feel more gratitude than I can express, and thank you from the bottom of my heart. Such deeds as yours are not to be measured by the things of this life; but you are poor, and so I beg you to accept the inclosed as a weak expression of my sentiments toward yourself. It can do me no good, but it may be of help to you. FELIPE OVIDEO.

The inclosure was a check for fifteen thousand dollars.

NOT WITHOUT HONOR.*

By William D. Moffat,

Author of "Belmont," "The Crimson Banner," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

WHEN Pen Rae learns that he is regarded as a drone by the townspeople of Wilton he leaves his mother and younger brother, Will, and goes to New York to take a small position on the *Herald*, which Mr. Austin Terry, one of the editors, and an old friend of Mrs. Rae, secures for him.

Uncle 'Lias, an old negro who drives the boy to the station, tells him that he saw his father, who has not been heard from for many years, the week before, on a train which stopped at Wilton Junction, and likewise produces an envelope bearing a New York address, which he declares that Mr. Rae dropped. After enjoining old 'Lias to secrecy, Pen boards the train, taking with him the scrap of paper for future investigation.

Acting on Mr. Terry's advice, Pen engages a room at Mrs. Buet's boarding house. There he becomes acquainted with Bob Lecky, his landlady's nephew, who undertakes to show him around.

Pen has sundry experiences during his next few weeks in the metropolis. Mr. Terry is suddenly sent to Japan, and Pen, whose slow ways have made him very unpopular in the *Herald* office, overhears two members of the staff discussing the advisability of getting rid of him.

Pen obtains a situation in Clarke & Davis' book store, but his desire to learn more about his father leads him to take a sudden and unannounced trip to Boston, and he is discharged.

All his efforts to obtain another place, during the next few days, prove fruitless, and Pen becomes so discouraged that he is on the verge of giving up, and going back to Wilton.

CHAPTER XXII—(*Continued.*)

THE DARKEST HOUR.

AT that moment there came a tap at the door and the sound of the servant maid's voice calling,

"Mr. Rae! Mr. Rae! Are you there?"

"Yes. What is it?" asked Pen, sitting up.

The door opened slightly.

"Isn't this letter for you, sir? The name on it isn't yours, but when I showed it to Mrs. Buet she said it belonged to you. She said you had told her to give you all letters with this name——"

"What's the name?" cried Pen, rising quickly and coming to the door.

"I can't read it, sir. I don't read well, and——"

"Let me see it," exclaimed Pen, fairly snatching at the letter in his eager haste. He bent so as to catch the light of the window on the envelope.

"Yes, yes, this is mine. Thank you, Mary," he said, and as the girl shuffled away, Pen tore open the letter with trembling fingers, and ran his eyes rapidly over the contents.

Three minutes later he had on his hat and coat, and was hurrying down stairs. All traces of weariness and despondency had disappeared. His step was firm, quick, and elastic, as he walked briskly along toward Broadway.

In a few minutes he reached the book store of Clarke & Davis. He passed the main entrance and entered the hall door at the side, where he took the elevator to the second floor. Then he asked for Mr. Davis, and was shown into that gentleman's private office by a small boy, who recognized him as a former salesman down stairs and stared at him curiously.

Mr. Davis was not in his office at the moment, being occupied somewhere in the book store below, so Pen had an opportunity to look about and examine the quarters just being fitted up for the publication offices of the new magazine that Messrs. Clarke and Davis expected to introduce to the public at an early date.

In about five minutes Mr. Davis returned, and Pen and he were together for nearly half an hour. The interview was evidently a momentous one to Pen, for when he came out, his usually pale face was flushed with excitement, and his eyes were bright and sparkling.

So absorbed was he in his thoughts that as he entered the elevator he almost walked into the arms of Mr. Clarke, who was coming out.

Pen drew back shyly, apologizing as he did so, while Mr. Clarke bruskly pushed his way past him with the barest glance of recognition.

His bruskness, however, was entirely lost on Pen, who stepped briskly into the elevator, and, when the ground floor was reached, hurried out to the street, carrying

**The first 21 chapters of this story appeared in the March, April, and May issues of* THE ARGOSY, *which will be forwarded to any address on receipt of 30 cents.*

his head proudly, apparently above all snubs or slights.

As he passed the entrance to the book store, he paused a moment, debating whether to go in and have a talk with Carl Moran.

His decision, however, was quickly made.

"It won't be pleasant to go in there," he said. "I can talk with Carl tomorrow—and I want to tell mother first of all."

So merely stopping long enough at the doorway to motion to Carl Moran, who was busy with a customer, and to tell him to call around at his room without fail the next day, Pen hastened home and wrote his weekly letter to his mother.

There must have been a great deal to tell, for though Pen wrote fast and continuously, over an hour had passed, and it was dinner time, when he had finished.

Meantime an interesting interview had been taking place between Messrs. Clarke and Davis in the latter's office.

When Mr. Clarke passed Pen, he was on his way to resume a conversation with his partner that had been interrupted some time before.

As he entered the office he found Mr. Davis busy over a pile of manuscripts such as every mail now brought to the editorial rooms of the new magazine.

"I saw that young fellow Rae leaving your office as I came up," said Mr. Clarke.

"Yes," answered Mr. Davis with a smile. "Sit down. I want to tell you something——"

"I hope he hasn't been worrying you for a position or a recommendation, or anything of that kind," continued Mr. Clarke.

"No," responded Mr. Davis, looking up quickly. "Why should he?"

"Oh, I meant to have told you I discharged him on Thursday."

The smile died away on Mr. Davis' lips.

"You—you discharged him!" he repeated.

"Yes—packed him off—and a good riddance too. Didn't he tell you he had left?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Davis. "Now I think of it, he did tell me he was no longer here. He said, 'Of course you know I have left the store,' but I didn't know, so I didn't say anything. Why haven't you told me?"

"It was only four days ago—and it was of little consequence, anyhow. I'm engaging and sending away clerks like that frequently. What's the use of bothering you with such details?"

"And why was Rae discharged?" asked Mr. Davis.

"Absolutely no good. We gave him a month's trial, and he didn't amount to a row of pins. He made only one good sale, and he offset that by losing us possible customers by his stupidity. Then, to cap it all, he took nearly a whole week off for a trip to Boston without saying so much as a word to me about it. That was too much for me, so I discharged him last Thursday. You didn't give him a recommendation, did you?"

"No, I tell you he didn't come to ask any favors," answered Mr. Davis with an annoyed expression.

Then for a few minutes he sat looking thoughtfully out of the window.

At length his face began to clear, and finally a smile crept into his lips as if the affair had taken on a humorous aspect.

"Clarke," he said, "you know that story that was sent to the magazine by a writer named Daniel Darr?"

"Certainly," answered Mr. Clarke; "the story we decided on as the leader with illustrations in the first number of the magazine."

"Yes. And you remember we both read it and selected it out of nearly a hundred others as the strongest, truest, and best piece of literary work, we had seen in a long time?"

"Yes."

"And you remember we agreed that the workmanship on it betokened a new writer of rare promise, and that we ought to do something to secure his future work?"

"Yes."

"So that when we found among our manuscript a poem also from his pen equally good, we decided not only to accept both the story and the poem, but to write to the author and secure an interview with him with an eye to future plans?"

"Yes, that's what I have just come up to see you about," answered Mr. Clarke.

"Well, Clarke," said Mr. Davis, turning and looking his partner straight in the eye, "I have just had an interview with Daniel Darr."

Mr. Clarke stared blankly back for an instant, not comprehending the full meaning of Mr. Davis's words. Then suddenly it all flashed upon him, and he sank into a chair.

"What!" he exclaimed in amazement, "you don't mean to say——"

"I mean," said Mr. Davis, "that 'Daniel Darr' is the pen name of Mr. Pennington Rae, and the young man you discharged last Thursday for incompetency is the author of the manuscript that we have accepted as the leading story for our magazine."

CHAPTER XXIII.

A DREAM FULFILLED.

At about half past ten that night Mrs. Rae sat by the little center table in the front room of the cottage at Wilton, sewing and softly humming to herself. On the lounge near by sat Will Rae, reading a newspaper.

In this manner a quiet evening had passed away, and now, as the half hour struck, Mrs. Rae gathered up her sewing materials and rose from her chair. As she

did so a thick envelope fell from the basket that rested in her lap.

"Why, there is that last letter of Pen's," she exclaimed, as she caught it up. "I have been looking for it ever since Thursday. I never thought of my work basket."

Mrs. Rae slipped the letter into the drawer where its fellows were.

"And that reminds me," she went on, "that I had a dream about you and Pen last Wednesday night."

"What was it?" asked Will, looking up sleepily.

"You remember I got Pen's letter Wednesday evening. Of course I knew then that all was right with him, and that there was no cause for being anxious, so I went to bed in the best of spirits. That was no doubt what shaped my dream. I thought that you and I were here in this room, you sitting on the sofa as usual, and I somewhere on this side of the table, when suddenly the curtain there by the door parted and Pen stood in the doorway, smiling and nodding to us. Before I could inquire what brought him there, Pen leaned forward and said, 'I've good news for you, mother.'"

"Is that all?" asked Will after a pause.

"I think so—at least, it's all I remember."

"Well, there's nothing unusual about that."

"No. It was merely an echo of my feelings at the time. I don't know that I should have remembered it but for this letter's calling it to mind."

Mrs. Rae had reached the piano in her movements about the room, and, as she finished speaking, she sat down before the instrument, and softly ran her fingers over the keys, rambling aimlessly through oddly shifting harmonies that finally gave way to the sweet, simple measures of the Bohemian Chant.

Several minutes had elapsed, and Will had resumed his reading when he was startled by a quick exclamation from his mother, and the music abruptly stopped.

Will dropped his paper and started up. His mother's hands had fallen from the keyboard and she was gazing with a frightened expression straight in front of her.

Following the direction of her eyes, Will looked toward the door that opened into the hall.

The portières had parted and *Pen stood there in the doorway* smiling in at them.

For a few seconds neither Will nor his mother could utter a word. At first even Will, sturdy as he was, thought he must be a victim of hallucination; but this was quickly dispelled when Pen, quite too plainly in the body to disturb one's mind long, stepped into the room and burst out laughing.

"Why it really *is* Pen!" cried Mrs. Rae running forward and embracing him.

"What did you think it was—a ghost?" laughed Pen as he kissed his mother.

"I scarcely know—you startled me so," she answered. "We were speaking of you only a minute ago, when almost at mention of your name, in you came. It was so strange—so like my dream."

"What dream?"

Mrs. Rae told Pen. When she had finished Pen laughed again.

"What a coincidence! There's magic in it," he said. "Remember that, in the future, you have only to take one of my letters, wave it three times around your head, repeat the necessary words, and presto! the curtains part and in I walk."

"I wish it were so," answered Mrs. Rae, smiling, though still a little nervous; "but, tell me now, is my dream quite true? Have you good news for me?"

"Good news and bad," said Pen, "but it was the good news that brought me home. I was writing you a letter late this afternoon, but the more I wrote the more impossible I found it to express all I wanted to say. It was during dinner that the idea suddenly occurred to me, 'Why not go home for a day or so?' I hurried through and, looking up a time table, found that there was a train leaving the city at eight o'clock and reaching Wilton Junction at ten. That settled me, so I packed a valise in twenty minutes, hurried down town and caught the train."

"How did you get over from the junction?" asked Will.

"I walked over," answered Pen. "I found the front door unlocked, so I thought I would give you a surprise,"

"And you did—a greater one than you thought," said Mrs. Rae, drawing him to the sofa where she sat down beside him. "And now tell me, dear, what brought you home? What is the good news?"

"First let me get rid of the bad news," responded Pen. "I have lost my place at the book store."

"What was the matter?"

"I was discharged by Mr. Clarke on Thursday."

"On account of your absence?" asked Will quickly.

Pen turned and looked at his brother.

Will's face flushed. The words had slipped from him impulsively and without a second thought.

"Why—why were you discharged?" he stammered struggling to conceal his annoyance at the slip.

"I was not considered competent, and Mr. Clarke——"

Mrs. Rae laid her hand on Pen's arm.

"Your 'absence,' Pen?" she said, interrupting him. "What absence?"

"Oh, nothing mother," answered Will. "I misunderstood——"

Mrs. Rae looked sharply from one of the boys to the other.

"You are keeping something back from me," she said. "Will told me nothing of any absence of yours, Pen. What does it mean?"

There was an awkward pause, neither of the boys daring to speak for a minnte. Then Pen's finer wits, which served him well when stirred by extraordinary circumstances, came to the rescue.

"I am glad Will did tell you nothing of it, mother," he said. "It was done with the best motives, for it spared me, and it would have done you no good to tell you. However, since so much has been said I don't mind telling you more."

Will glanced warningly at his brother, but Pen knew the delicate ground he was treading, and went on confidently.

"During the last week I have been absent from the store a good deal, thinking more of my private matters than of the business of the firm. Naturally Mr. Clarke resented my neglect of my work, and so finally on Thursday told me I must go. He said that I was unsuited for the position of a salesman anyhow, and as I seemed to care more for my private affairs than for his business, I was of no value to him, so I had better look around for another place."

"And Mr. Clarke was right, Pen," said Mrs. Rae gravely. "You had no business to slight your work. You had a good chance there in the book store, and you should have made the most of it. By your 'private affairs' I suppose of course you mean your writing—which is all right. I want you to go on with that, but it should be in your own time."

"You are perfectly right, mother, and if I get another place I shall be very careful not to neglect my work," answered Pen, while both he and Will breathed easier, the danger point now being passed; "but it's over as far as the book store is concerned, and I am out of a position. So much for that. Now let me tell you the good news."

Then in tones that fairly trembled with delight he narrated the events of the afternoon—the receipt of the letter from Mr. Davis, his interview, and the acceptance of his manuscript.

"And to end it all," Pen finished with a glow of pride on his face, "Mr. Davis told me that he wanted me to show him my future work, and suggested my trying a longer story that might be suitable for publication in serial form—so, how is that for a happy surprise?"

"You have no surprises for me, Pen dear," answered Mrs. Rae as she slipped one arm about her son's neck. "I knew we should be proud of you some day."

The gentle brown eyes were moist and dim, and the lips trembled in happiness as she kissed Pen.

It was a memorable three days that Pen spent in Wilton—his first vacation since he left home nearly half a year before. During that period Pen made few visits, spending most of his time at home, reading and writing a little, but resting for the most part, and talking to his mother of his future work and the ambitious plans he had in view.

Mrs. Rae, in the first happiness of having Pen with her again, urged him to remain at home and devote himself to literary work exclusively.

"It is so quiet here," she said, "and you can write without disturbance or distraction of any kind."

But Pen wisely decided against that. He had learned so much in the city—so much that had helped him directly in his work, that he could not afford to give it up.

"It will be time enough later for quiet," he said. "What I need now is to be stirred up and urged on. I need the electricity of city life, and I need the great panorama that spreads itself before me there every day. It stimulates and instructs me. I am learning, learning valuable facts all the time. And then, aside from all such considerations, it is important to success in my literary work that I should be right there in the city where the great magazines and papers are published, so that I can be in touch with the men who make them. I must try to obtain some sort of regular literary work—a position of an editorial character if possible, so that I can be near the literary men and learn from them."

"But suppose you can't get a position?" said Mrs. Rae.

"Well, I can pay my expenses for a time out of the money my story and poem will bring me, and while I can afford it, I will cling to the city in the hope of finding a place. My contributions will be a good introduction to future work, and they may lead to something permanent."

"Pen's right, mother," said Will. "The city is a mighty good school for him, and he is learning fast. You can see how much it has taught him already—both about other people and about himself."

The point had not been lost on Mrs. Rae. She had been quicker even than Will to note these little signs of improvement in Pen, and she saw the wisdom of his choice.

Pen had decided to return to the city on Thursday afternoon. About noon on that day he set out for the post office to see if any letter had come from the city for him. On the was he met 'Lias, who was hobbling into a shop with an express package.

As Pen had seen 'Lias several times during his visit, he was about to pass on with a nod and word of greeting when the old darky stopped him.

"One minute, Mist' Pen—one minute," he said, dropping his package on the pavement. "Can I hev jes' one wud?"

Pen paused while 'Lias came close to him.

"Bin lookin' fo' a chance fo' a wud wid yo', Mist' Pen, ever sence yo' kum home, but yo's always at de house wid de missy wen I call, so I never ketch yo'."

"What have you to say to me?" asked Pen, looking curiously at the darky.

'Lias lowered his voice.

"Never fin' out nuffin' bout—'bout dat

matter I tole you of—dat letter, Mist' Pen?" he asked.

"No, 'Lias," answered Pen; "I called at the address given on the envelope, and found the gentleman had left the city. However, about two weeks ago, I met him by chance——'

"Yo' met him—yo' say yo' met him?" exclaimed 'Lias, looking up.

"Yes, but he could tell me nothing," responded Pen shortly.

"But dat letter, Mist' Pen."

"It's something of a story, 'Lias, and I don't care to go into it, for it led to nothing."

"Nuffin?"

"Absolutely nothing."

The old darky scratched his head.

"Well, I t'ought suah yo' could tell me suffin', Mist' Pen, when yo' kem home, but it seems yo' cahn't."

"No. There is nothing to tell."

"Den, Mist' Pen, I kin tell yo' suffin'."

"What?" asked Pen quickly.

"I done see Mist' Rae again, Mist' Pen.'

"When—and where?" exclaimed Pen.

"'Bout week after yo' leave home. Mist' Rae pass de Junction agin—goin' West dis time."

"Tell me about it. Did you see him near by? Did you speak to him?"

"No, Mist' Pen. He was on de 'spress train dis time—de Western ves'bule train. Dat train am a flyer, yo' know, Mist' Pen, and don't stop nowhar."

"How did you see him, then?"

"It happen jes' dis way, Mist' Pen. Me an' Rosie was standin' by de track neah de watah tank down beyon' de station wen de limited Western 'spress kum 'long. As de train went by I looked after it an' dere on de back platform stood Mist' Rae."

"Are you sure?"

"Oh, yeah, suah. I know him quick enuff. He stan' dere on de platform, an' his face kep turned towa'd Wilton. He stood jes' so, lookin' over towa'd our little hill. He never see me, He never budge. He jes' stan' so, while de train go whirlin' on West. I watch de train whiz down de track, an' de back platform get smaller an' smaller, an' Mist' Rae, he keeps fadin' an' fadin' away, but he stan' dere jes' de same, lookin' all de time over here towa'd Wilton. Far as I could see I watch him, an' he stan' dere fadin', fadin' away till dere's jes' a black speck on de track—den dat gone. Dat's all I see of him, Mist' Pen."

Pen listened to the old darky's words with the closest attention, but made little comment when he had finished.

"There is nothing to be done, 'Lias," was all he said; "nothing but to forget the matter completely—you understand?"

"I understan', Mist' Pen. I dun don't say nuffin'."

The old darky touched his ragged hat and took up his package again, while Pen went on his way.

At the post office he found a letter that had been forwarded to him from his New York address. The envelope bore the imprint of Messrs. Clarke & Davis.

As Pen opened it, a slip of paper dropped from the inside and fell to the floor. Scarcely noticing this in his haste to read the contents of the letter, he unfolded the sheet in his hand and glanced quickly over it:

"Inclosed please find our check—in payment for your contributions to our magazine——"

These were the words that caught Pen's eyes, and there he stopped.

Quickly stooping, he snatched up the slip of paper that lay on the floor at his feet.

It was a check for one hundred dollars.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN ADVENTURE AT MIDNIGHT.

THAT afternoon found Pen once more in New York, but under very different circumstances from those attending his first arrival half a year before. He was now, for a brief season at least, independent, and to one of Pen's proud and sensitive nature such a condition was most grateful.

The money he had received for his contributions was enough to satisfy his modest needs for some weeks to come, and it left him with plenty of leisure to continue his literary work.

Of this opportunity Pen was resolved to make the most. He had many ideas for future work, all more or less promising—and then there was that serial story that Mr. Davis had suggested, and the great play, upon which he had been at work off and on for two months, and which only needed a few finishing touches now to complete it.

But with all these plans for literary work, Pen felt the necessity of bestirring himself constantly and keeping his eyes open for a fixed position of some kind—some position of an agreeable and congenial character, and one that would be in keeping with the dignity of a "young man of letters," as Pen now laughingly chose to call himself. Bob Lecky had as usual hit the nail on the head when he said to Pen in his homely but sensible way, "A ten strike here and there may be well enough, but there's nothing like a steady job."

Accordingly Pen set himself to searching for a "steady literary job."

One of the very first things he determined to do, now that he had the time to spare, was to call at the offices of the two weekly papers to which he had sent his poems, and learn the fate of his contributions. In a few days, therefore, after his return to the city he presented himself at the editorial rooms of the *Weekly Home Herald*, situated at the top of a dingy old building on Pearl Street.

When he stated his errand he was shown into a small, badly aired, badly lighted

box of an office where sat a forbidding looking female, impatiently sorting over newspaper scraps and clippings. She was thin, angular, and of an uncertain age that must soon give way to certainty.

"Is this the editor?" asked Pen, removing his hat and advancing hesitatingly.

The woman turned sharply, brandishing, as she did so, a pair of shears fully a foot long. Pen started and drew back while the woman adjusted her eyeglasses more firmly and fastened him with a stare.

"I am one of the editors. What can I do for you?" she asked in a high, nasal voice.

Pen told of his contribution, and his failure to hear from it.

"A poem?" asked the woman, looking him over pityingly.

"Yes, ma'am," answered Pen, almost apologetically.

"Did you inclose return postage?"

"No—I didn't think of that. Was it necessary?" asked Pen.

"Necessary!" snapped the woman. "How much do you suppose it would cost in postage to send back all the manuscripts we get here and can't use?"

"I—I am sure I don't know," answered Pen.

"Very well. It would eat up all our profits."

The woman snapped her shears viciously two or three times, and shifted the newspaper clippings on the desk before her in an impatient manner as if she were playing a losing game of solitaire.

Pen felt very uncomfortable, and for a moment scarcely knew what to say.

"Have you any—any recollection of my poem?" he managed to ask at last.

"Not the least. We get hundreds of poems. If you had sent return postage you might have got it back long ago, but as you didn't, I don't know what may have become of it. We can't be responsible for manuscripts unaccompanied by postage."

"I should like to have it back, if you cannot use it," said Pen rising, so as to close the uncomfortable interview. "Would it not be possible for me to get it now?"

"It would be impossible for me to look for it now," answered the woman sharply. "If you want to leave your address, I will have it looked up in due time—though, remember, I can't guarantee."

"I understand," put in Pen quickly, so as to cut short another onset. "All I ask is that you will kindly look the matter up for me and send the manuscript back when you find it. Here is my address—and here is the necessary postage."

Pen placed one of his cards on the desk, and beside it a postage stamp—then he bowed himself quickly out.

The woman said nothing, but glared at the postage stamp before her. Had it not been a particularly sturdy stamp it must surely have wilted under that glance and stuck to the desk for protection.

At the office of the second journal Pen fared much better, but the result of his visit was no more gratifying.

He was received courteously by a pleasant old gentleman, who on learning his errand, immediately had his store of manuscripts overhauled, and before long brought forth Pen's poem.

"Sorry," he said, "but we could not use it. It is not quite in our line. Better try some other paper with it. The work is good, but we print very little poetry, and what we do print is usually clipped. Sorry to have to decline it, but I have no doubt you will find a place for it elsewhere—good afternoon."

And the old gentleman pleasantly bowed him out.

This was somewhat of a set back for the "young man of letters," and Pen felt a return of his old fit of the blues as he slowly retraced his steps up town.

It was, therefore, a genuine relief to meet Carl Moran at the corner of Broadway and Tenth Street, and to be able to pour into his sympathetic ear an account of his discouraging experiences.

Carl stopped him before he was half through.

"Come around to Fourier's with me," he said, "and we'll have a nice little *table d'hote* dinner together—only fifty cents—and then we can talk things over at our ease. It's early now, just six o'clock, and we can take plenty of time to our dinner—then when that's over you can go with me to my room and spend the evening looking over my books. I have several new and rare ones."

This caught Pen's fancy completely, accordingly off the two boys went together to Fourier's, where they remained at dinner until nearly eight o'clock.

By that time Pen's affairs had been thoroughly aired and his feelings quite relieved, so when he and Carl set off for the latter's room, all thought of the blues had been banished, and the "young man of letters" was once more himself.

He passed a pleasant evening with Carl, examining and discussing the many attractive books laid out before him, and it was after eleven o'clock when Pen finally parted from his host and set out for home.

Carl lived some distance over on the east side, and at this hour of the night the neighborhood was a quiet and unfrequented one. Pen crossed Second Avenue and entered Nineteenth Street. The block seemed quite deserted, but just as he was approaching Third Avenue he saw a slim, girlish figure, wrapped in a cloak and hood, come tripping down the front steps of a dwelling house, and set off at a brisk pace up the street ahead of him.

She passed Third Avenue, and Pen, who was not far behind her, noticed as she left the avenue that she quickened her step.

The reason for this he quickly discovered. Close in by the house he noticed a

shadow gliding along. As his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness of the street, after the dazzle of the avenue lights, he made out the figure of a man not ten feet behind the girl, creeping stealthily on after her, and gaining at every step.

They were quite alone. The houses were dark and silent; the street empty—except for those two figures ahead, the slim one of the girl hurrying along faster and faster, and the heavier figure following close behind. Confident that something was wrong, Pen hastened forward.

The two figures in front passed under a lamp post, and Pen then saw that the man was well dressed and carried a heavy cane. It was also evident that he was under the influence of liquor, for he swayed and stumbled as he walked.

At this moment he reached the girl's side and spoke to her. With a startled exclamation, she turned from him and ran forward. The man pursued, and in a few steps again came up with her. This time he addressed her more boldly, and caught her by the arm. With a stifled scream, she shook herself free, then staggered half fainting against a tree.

The man laughed in an insolent manner, and was once more approaching her, when Pen came up. Stepping quickly before the girl, he faced the man, and pushed him back.

"What business have you to annoy this young lady?" he exclaimed.

The man retreated a step or two, and stared stupidly at Pen.

"That's my business, not yours," he cried with an oath, and the next instant he raised his cane and aimed a terrific blow at Pen's head. Had his sight been true Pen would have played a sorry hero's part in the scene—perhaps his last part—but the cane narrowly missed his head and fell on one shoulder, where his thick overcoat partially broke the blow.

As it was, the shock brought him to his knees, half stunned. As he sank down, he heard the young girl behind him scream again, this time in fear for him.

He recovered himself quickly and staggered to his feet. His teeth were tightly clenched, his face pale and set, with the expression it had worn when he fought his fight with Harold Fisk.

Before the man could repeat his assault, Pen dashed at him and struck him in the face. The man fell back unsteadily, and dropped his cane. Pen closed quickly with him before he could regain the stick, and pressed him back across the pavement to the steps of the nearest house, where the man fell heavily.

Then Pen was about to strike him again, when he noticed that the man was really too tipsy to be very dangerous, and, accordingly, he let him go rolling down and off the steps on to the pavement. Pen then caught up the cane and stood over him.

"Now get up and clear out," he said, "or I will hand you over to the police."

The man made no further resistance. He was growing more muddled every second, and Pen's attack and the shock of his fall on the steps had taken all the spirit out of him. He rose as quickly as he could—first on his hands and knees, then unsteadily up to his feet, and finally made off up the street, reeling from side to side, and cursing to himself.

Then for the first time Pen turned to the young girl, who was still leaning against the tree. Her hood had fallen back from her head, revealing a sweet face, pale with fear. Her hands, which were tightly clasped together, were still trembling as she stood there, too nervous to move.

"It is all right," said Pen to her, reassuringly. "You will not be molested any more. Do you live near by?"

"Only a few doors above."

The tones were soft and sweet, with a pleasing Southern accent.

"I will see you safely there," said Pen.

The girl's gray eyes gazed at him anxiously.

"You are not hurt?" she asked.

"Oh, no, not in the least," he answered.

Pen felt it necessary to offer his arm, for the girl seemed still too nervous to walk steadily. Timidly she let her right hand rest on Pen's elbow, and so in silence the two walked the short distance to the house where the young girl lived. At the steps she paused.

"I don't know how I can possibly thank you, sir," she began.

"I will see you safe inside," put in Pen politely, and he accompanied her up the steps to the door.

Just as Pen was about to ring the bell, the sound of voices came from inside the door, and an instant later it was thrown open, revealing a group of three people in the vestibule.

Two of these, an elderly gentleman and a lady, were evidently the host and hostess, bidding a guest good night. The third, the guest, was a gentleman about forty years of age, who stood with hat in hand and his back toward Pen.

As the door opened and the light from the hall shone out upon the young girl on the steps, the old lady uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Why, Bertha!" she cried. "Is that you? We were just going to send for you."

The gentleman whose back was toward the door turned quickly at these words, and Pen now for the first time saw his face.

It was Mr. Austin Terry.

CHAPTER XXV.

PEN MAKES NEW FRIENDS.

PEN stepped forward with an exclamation of pleasure and surprise.

Mr. Terry shot a quick glance toward him.

"Why, Pen!" he cried, astonished in his turn. "What are you doing here?"

"Just what I was going to ask you, sir," laughed Pen, as they clasped hands. "I thought you were somewhere in Japan."

"I was summoned suddenly home—only reached New York today," answered Mr. Terry. Then turning toward the old lady and gentleman behind him, he went on:

"This is a curious coincidence. I didn't know you were acquainted with my young friend Rae."

The old lady smiled.

"Nor are we," she said. "This is our first meeting. Bertha, dear, introduce your friend to us."

The young girl laughed nervously.

"I would, auntie," she said, "but I don't know his name. He is not a friend—I mean I only met him but a few minutes ago——"

"Why, Bertha, what do you mean?" exclaimed the old gentleman, taking her by the arm. "You look frightened and pale. What is the matter? What has happened? Come into the parlor at once and take off your things—and you, too, Mr. Terry, and your young friend."

All entered the hall, while the old gentleman helped Bertha off with her cloak. Pen was watching her closely, and it seemed to him that he had never seen a face and figure so pleasing.

She presented a charming picture as she stood there under the gaslight, with her face half in the shadow. Evidently she had been attending a fancy dress party, for she wore a gypsy's costume, combining gaily colored fabrics with numerous little trinkets of brass and silver on her neck and wrists, while her hair, quite unconfined, fell in wavy folds about her neck and shoulders, framing most attractively the pale, olive face with its pretty, regular features, and its great, serious gray eyes.

Pen had at first taken her to be a young lady of at least nineteen or twenty, but he now saw that she was considerably younger—certainly not over sixteen.

To save all embarrassment, she hastened to tell her aunt in rapid, breathless sentences what had occurred on the street, and of the service Pen had rendered her.

"It was all wrong, I know, auntie—my coming home alone—but there was no one there to bring me. Dr. Gray, who had promised to take care of me, was summoned unexpectedly away to see a sick man, and I thought no harm could come to me if I ran home quickly. It's only a little over a block, you know, so I told the Grays I would go by myself rather than wait for an hour or so till you sent for me. I hadn't gone half a block before that awful man began to annoy me, and—oh, dear, I don't know what I should have done if this young gentleman hadn't come up. I am sure I—I——"

The young girl broke down from sheer nervousness as the scene came back to her.

"There, there, Bertha, dear, it's all right," said the old lady, taking the girl in her arms and holding her tight. "You are badly upset, and no wonder. A night's rest and you'll be all right again. Don't be nervous. Sit here a minute on the sofa, while I thank this young gentleman as he deserves——"

"Whom, by the way, Austin has not yet introduced," continued the old gentleman, coming forward to Pen, and taking the hand that Mr. Terry had left disengaged.

"This young man is Pennington Rae—you have both heard me speak of Mrs. Rae," said Mr. Terry, addressing the old couple.

"Oh, many times—we almost know Mrs. Rae now, don't we, Clara?" said the old gentleman.

"Yes, indeed—and this is really her son!" exclaimed the old lady. "And it is you that have done us this great service—God bless you for it," and with swimming eyes, she leaned over and pressed her lips to Pen's forehead.

"Pen," said Mr. Terry, "this is Mr. and Mrs. Robert Craig. They are two of the oldest and best friends I have in the world. I am very glad to make you acquainted with them—and especially under such favorable circumstances."

"This must not be our only meeting," said Mr. Craig cordially, gripping and shaking Pen's hand. "Any friend of Austin Terry's is our friend, and the service you have rendered us tonight makes us always your debtor. We must know more of you. Perhaps some day we can in part repay you——"

"Don't think of that, Mr. Craig," exclaimed Pen. "Be assured I feel favored in having had the good fortune to be of assistance to the young lady."

Mr. Craig laughed pleasantly.

"There, Bertha," he said, "is a pretty speech for you—and after all the rest he has done for you, too. Come and thank Mr. Rae and tell him we shall always be delighted to see him here whenever he likes to call."

Bertha rose half shyly from the sofa and came forward.

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart," she said in her soft tones. "I shall never forget what you have done for me—and I shall be just as glad as uncle to have you come to the house as often as you can."

She held out her hand, and her gray eyes looked straight into Pen's. He felt his face flush as his hands met her cool, slender fingers.

His presence of mind was completely gone. A graceful speech would have been the neat thing then, and, no doubt, had the scene occurred in one of Pen's own stories, his hero would have framed the

speech quite readily. But to Pen himself even a lucid, grammatical sentence now seemed impossible.

He managed to stammer out his thanks in a few faltering words, feeling, while doing so, that he was lucky to find words at all.

Then Mr. Terry came to his relief, by suggesting that the hour was late, and they had better leave.

"I will call soon, and bring Pen with me," he said, as they bade Mr. and Mrs. Craig and Bertha good night.

"Do," answered Mrs. Craig. "Why not bring him next Sunday evening when you come as usual to supper?"

"Good—how about that, Pen?" asked Mr. Terry.

"With pleasure," answered Pen, his eyes still on Bertha.

A moment later the two friends were on the street.

"Of all strange happenings this is the strangest—that I should meet you at the door of the Craigs'," said Mr. Terry.

"You were about the last one I expected to see anywhere about here," answered Pen. "Are you back in New York for good and all?"

"For a while at least. How are things going at the office?"

"I haven't been at the *Herald* office for a long time," answered Pen. "I left there way back in the summer."

"Bless me! I didn't know that," exclaimed Mr. Terry. "I haven't been to the office yet—got back so late today I didn't think it worth while starting in there. What has happened? Tell me all about yourself."

Pen briefly narrated the story of his experiences since Mr. Terry's departure, omitting nothing except of course the events relating to his Boston trip.

"Well, well!" said Mr. Terry, when Pen had finished. "What a time you have been having! And so you are really a full fledged literary man, eh? Well, Pen, I congratulate you with all my heart. I knew you had the stuff in you, and that it only needed a little experience and knowledge of the world to bring it out. That story in the new magazine will be a capital beginning for you, and I hope you will add new laurels rapidly. You are right, however, in not resting solely on your pen for a livelihood. There are very few men who can make a living exclusively out of literary work. You must find some fixed position. I'll see if I can't do something for you. This is my corner, so I must leave you now, for it is very late, and I have a lot of unpacking to do. Suppose you come around to my rooms tomorrow night, and we'll talk matters over. I can give you a number of useful introductions, and perhaps one or other of them will lead to something. Can you come?"

"Yes, sir," answered Pen promptly, his heart beating happily as he thought of all the bright possibilities that Mr. Terry's return opened up to him.

"Very well—good night, then," said Mr. Terry, and he was about to turn away, when Pen stopped him.

"One thing more, Mr. Terry. Do you know, in the confusion of introductions tonight no one mentioned Miss Bertha's last name. I have been wondering whether it was Craig, like her uncle's."

"No," answered Mr. Terry, "she is the daughter of a brother of Mrs. Craig. Her name is Lalor—Bertha Lalor."

"Lalor!" exclaimed Pen.

"Yes, do you recognize the name?"

"It is the name of a very nice gentleman I met while a salesman at Clarke & Davis's. Could he be related to her? Who is her father?"

"His name is Francis Lalor," answered Mr. Terry.

Pen uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"That was his name," he said.

"Mr. Lalor travels almost all the time," continued Mr. Terry; "and accordingly I have seen very little of him—only met him casually once in a while. Bertha I have known well, of course, for she has had her home with the Craigs for several years. Bertha's mother was a Southern woman, and Bertha was born and grew up in South Carolina. About four years ago her mother died. Then her father brought her north, and put her under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Craig, who have no children. Bertha is attending school here in the city. When she is old enough, and has completed her education, her father expects to take her abroad for a course of travel with him. There's the whole story. Now take a hint from me, Pen, and don't fail to make the most of the friendship of these people. You will find them as good and true as gold."

"I am sure of that from the little I have seen of them tonight," answered Pen; "and I fully intend to improve the acquaintance. It has been a lucky evening for me all through—a lucky ending to an unlucky day."

As Pen walked home that night his mind gravitated with persistency about one single object—a pale faced gypsy girl with great gray eyes.

Multitudinous and varied as his thoughts and emotions were, they found expression in simply two propositions: first, that never in his life before had a young girl completely abashed and put him to confusion with a look; and second, that never before had he met a young girl who pronounced the word "house" as if it were spelt *hoose*.

It had not occurred to him hitherto, but, now that he came to think of it, was not that the right way to pronounce "house"?

He tried it. No, it did not sound right as it came from *his* lips. But then, what of that? It was right when *she* said it—of that he was very sure.

Before Pen went to bed that night he had finished four stanzas of a new poem.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PEN AS A DRAMATIC CRITIC.

PEN took the manuscript of his play with him the next evening to Mr. Terry's apartments, and confided to him his ambition to make a name for himself as a dramatist.

Mr. Terry smiled and shook his head.

"The way of the dramatist is hard in these days, Pen," he said. "Managers are flooded with plays by aspiring young writers, and there is precious little chance of your ever getting your play read, to say nothing of seeing it produced. A successful play is a great money maker, and many able and clever authors are struggling for a chance at the prize, but managers know that the risk is equally great, so, rather than take any chances with the work of young American writers, they prefer as a rule to reproduce foreign plays that have proved their worth by their success abroad. They find it safer. However, far be it from me to discourage you. Suppose you leave your play with me and let me read it over."

"That's exactly what I want you to do, Mr. Terry, if you will be so kind," answered Pen; "and please give your honest opinion, for I intend to stand by it. If you say that you think it would not be worth while for me to submit it to a manager, I will waste no more time on it."

Accordingly Pen left the play with Mr. Terry, who promised to give him a frank opinion of it in a few days.

"In the mean time," said Mr. Terry, "you might go around and see several of my friends on the newspapers. I have here four letters of introduction to men of influence on their respective papers. Any one of them might be able to offer you a position; or, if not that, they might at least guide you toward something. I have told them in my letters what you have done and are capable of doing, so if they can offer you anything, it will be of a character that will be suitable to you. You don't want a reportership I suppose."

"No, sir," answered Pen with a smile. "I think I might as well own that I am not up to that work."

"Pity, too, for it's great work to sharpen one's faculties of observation—but never mind, every one learns his own way. Now here is a particular friend of mine, this Mr. Travers, on the *Press*. Suppose you go see him first of all. If anything can be done for you there, he will do it readily I know."

Pen took the hint and early the next morning went down to City Hall Park to the offices of the *Press*. He found Mr. Travers, and the latter, after reading his letter of introduction through, greeted him pleasantly, and thought the matter over for a few minutes in silence. Then he got up, and, excusing himself, left Pen alone for nearly ten minutes, while he held a whispered consultation with a gentleman who sat in an adjoining office.

When he returned he said to Pen.

"Have you ever done any dramatic criticism?"

"No-o, sir," answered Pen hesitatingly. "at least not for newspaper publication, I have written a few dramatic criticisms just as an exercise for myself—that is all."

Mr. Travers passed over this ingenuous reply without comment.

"If you would like to make an experiment of it here, we might try you on a single performance," he said.

"I should like to try by all means," responded Pen eagerly.

"It is a little unusual, but things are being changed here just now, and there is a chance for a new man in the dramatic department. We are willing, on the strength of Mr. Terry's letter of recommendation, to give you a trial. Of course, as you have never done any regular work of this kind, we do not know whether you are suited to it or not, so it will have to be purely an experiment. We will let you try one of the opening performances next Monday night, and see how it results. If all goes well, it may lead to something—that's the most we can say just now."

"It is quite all I could expect," answered Pen gratefully. "Can you tell me what performance I am to criticise?"

Mr. Travers shook his head.

"No. It does not come within my authority to assign the dramatic work. You will hear from our editor some time Monday. He will inclose tickets, and direct you where to go. Suppose you leave your address with me."

Pen wrote his name and street number on a card, and, thanking Mr. Travers for his kindness, took his departure in the best of spirits—hopeful and eager for the coming test of his powers as a dramatic critic.

On the following Monday afternoon, he received two tickets for the Fifth Avenue Theater, with a brief note directing him to attend the opening performance of Miss Fanny Davenport in a new play.

Scarcely able to curb his impatience, Pen busied himself about his room for an hour or more before dinner, reading over his old attempts at dramatic criticism and the various dramatic notices he had clipped from time to time from the papers, and that seemed to him models of style. Then he ate a hasty meal, and, shortly afterward, set off for the theater, accompanied by Carl Moran, little realizing what was in store for him.

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

E. J., Brooklyn, N. Y. See reply to second query of C. L. B.

C. L. M., Bluffton, Ind. If in good condition, the cent of 1800 is worth from 5 to 25 cents.

C. D. and C. O., Iowa City, Ia. Oliver Optic's real name is William T. Adams, and he lives in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

M. K., New York City. No premium on the half dollar of 1807, 1808, 1825, or 1837, nor on the three cent piece of 1852 or 1853.

CAPTAIN KIDD, Rochester, N. Y. 1. No premium on the gold quarter eagle of 1836 2. Consult a doctor about the removal of pimples from the face.

G. O. E., Alleghany, Pa. Yes; we give a year's subscription free to any one who procures five new yearly subscribers for THE ARGOSY. See reply to S.

L. L. M., San Francisco, Cal. All weekly numbers of THE ARGOSY are out of print. The last of that form was No. 590, issued March 17, 1894.

C. L. B., New York City. 1. There is no premium on the English half farthing of 1840. 2. Your Philadelphia newspaper of 1816 may be valuable, but you would probably have some difficulty in finding the person who would wish to buy it.

G. R., Boston, Mass. Commodore Vanderbilt was 62 years, 7 months, and 7 days old at the time of his death, and William H. Vanderbilt died at the age of 64 years and 7 months. The oldest living member of the family is Cornelius Vanderbilt, aged fifty.

L. S. A., San Francisco, Cal. "The Trials and Triumphs of a Young Reporter" was not by Alger, but by Earle E. Martin. It has not been issued in book form. It began in Vol. XVII of THE ARGOSY, and ran through four numbers of the monthly form, Vol. XVIII.

S., Pittsburgh, Pa. 1. We hope to print a story of college life some time during the present year. 2. No premium for obtaining new subscribers is given until five have been sent in; then the agent is allowed twenty per cent commission on each one that he has procured or may thereafter procure.

Q. Y. Z., New York City. 1. No premium on the half dollar of 1814. 2. No. Fanny Crosby, the hymn writer, was not born blind. 3. The road running diagonally through the block between West 86th and 87th Street is doubtless the relic of an old farm lane, and has, so far as we know, no particular historical association.

W. F. A., Hoboken, N. J. Russia had a fashion of keeping in commission a number of old wooden ships after her new ones were built, which may have at one time given her apparent naval supremacy. The present respective naval ranking of the nations of the world is: England, France, Italy, Russia, Germany, and the United States.

G. D., Chicago, Ill. 1. No, you cannot get bound Vol. XVIII in Chicago without paying the cost of transportation, which is only 30 cents by mail. 2. Yes, you can get Vol. XIX bound uniform with Vol XVIII, except for a slight difference in color, and at the same price, $1. 3. Without knowing the age or tastes of the boy, it would be difficult for us to name the ten best books for his library. Suppose our readers write us what they consider the ten most helpful books in their possession, not forgetting to give their age. 3. Max O'Rell's real name is Paul Blouet.

F. W. G. B., New York City. 1. No premium on the dime of 1842, nor on the half dime of 1838. 2. The serials in Vol. XV were: "Always in Luck," Oliver Optic; "Ben Bruce," Arthur Lee Putnam; "The Bonniewood Boys," Joseph Grant Ewing; "The Captain of the Polly," Clarence C. Converse; "Chester Rand," Horatio Alger, Jr.; "The Doom of McGregor's," Henry L. Parsons; "The Hermitage Tangle" and "Jasper Fearing." Judson Newman Smith; "In Alaskan Waters," W. Bert Foster; "In the Grasp of Another," Matthew White, Jr.; "One Boy in a Thousand," Arthur M. Winfield; "On Winding Waters," William Murray Graydon; "Reuben Stone's Discovery," Edward Stratemeyer; "The Test of Fortune" and "The Young Journalist," Matthew White, Jr.; "Tracked Through Russia," William Murray Graydon; "Will Dalton's Pluck," Louis O. Shilling.

C. W. R., Baltimore, Md. The serials in Vol. XVI were "The Aldermont Factions," Henry S. Parsons; "Ben Bruce" and "Cast Upon the Breakers," Arthur Lee Putnam; "The Coast Guard," G. W. Browne; "Comrades Three," J. W. Davidson; "The Cruise of the Dandy," Oliver Optic; "The Fate of Horace Hildreth" and "Jasper Fearing," J. N. Smith; "Fred Acton's Mystery," George King Whitmore; "The Hetherington Fortune," Annie Ashmore; "In Alaskan Waters," W. Bert Foster; "In the Grasp of Another," and "A Publisher at Fifteen," Matthew White, Jr.; "The Lone Island" and "The Treasure of Wild Rock Island," E. E. Youmans; "The Markham Mystery," Rowley Brooks; "Tracked Through Russia," William Murray Graydon; "Victor Vane," Horatio Alger, Jr. The serials in Vol. XVII were "A Bad Lot" and "A Rolling Stone," Putnam; "Belmont," W. D. Moffat; "Brought to Book," Annie Ashmore; "Checkmate," William Liebermann; "The Coast Guard," Browne; "The Cruise of the Dandy," Optic; "A Curious Companion," a World's Fair Story, George King Whitmore; "The Diamond Seekers," Graydon; "Horace Hildreth," Smith; "Kit Cummings' Sloop," Charles F. Welles; "Lester's Luck" and "Rupert's Ambition," Alger; "Lloyd Abbott's Friend" and "A Publisher at Fifteen," Matthew White, Jr.; "The Lone Island" and "A Mystery of the Forest," E. E. Youmans; "The Markham Mystery," Rowley Brooks; "Trials and Triumphs of a Young Reporter," Earle E. Martin; "Under a Cloud," J. W. Davidson; "A Mountain Mystery," W. Bert Foster.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

THE EMBROIDERED PURSE.

IT may generally be set down as a dangerous feat in mental athletics to leap at conclusions. It is certain that the French doctor who figures in the incident herewith recorded will not again permit himself to indulge in such a performance.

A very eminent physician had cured a little child of a dangerous illness. The thankful mother turned her steps toward the house of her son's savior.

"Doctor," she said, "there are some services which cannot be repaid. I did not know how to express my gratitude. I thought you would, perhaps, be so kind as to accept this purse, embroidered by my own hands."

"Madam," replied the doctor roughly, "medicine is no trivial affair, and our visits are only to be rewarded in money. Small presents seem to sustain friendship, but they do not sustain our families."

"But, doctor," said the lady, alarmed and wounded, "speak—tell me the fee."

"Two thousand francs, madam."

The lady opened the purse, took out five bank notes of 1,000 francs each, gave two to the doctor, put the remaining three back in her purse, bowed coldly, and departed.

HER STUMBLING BLOCK.

THE ways of some people are past understanding, under certain circumstances. They may be perfectly sensible and consistent under ordinary conditions, but strike them in their one weak point and they become utterly foolish and incomprehensible.

A kind hearted young lady who is always doing good in one way or another, and is a tireless worker in the charities, had a hat which she was planning to trim over to do for everyday wear, when a woman called at her home, and, with tears streaming from her eyes, told how poor she was, and what a hard time she had to get along. The young lady had nothing else to give her, and offered to make the hat over for her if she would accept it, thinking she herself might manage to do without it.

The poverty stricken woman took it, tried it on her head before a glass, and then returned it to the young lady—who, by the way, is one of the prettiest and most tastefully, though not richly, attired girls in the town—with the remark:

"No, miss, I will not take it, thank you. They are wearing small crowns this year."

CONCERNED FOR THE VIOLETS.

CAUSTIC comment has often been made on those women of fashion who coddle pet dogs while there are so many neglected children in the world. Walter Savage Landor (from whom Dickens drew his character of *Boythorn* in "Bleak House") carried this love of animals so far that it even extended into the vegetable world; he hated to see an old tree felled, and shrank from plucking a rose. But he often handled his fellow men somewhat roughly.

On one occasion he collared his man cook and flung him out of the window. Then, suddenly remembering on what *bed* the man would fall, the flower loving poet exclaimed, "Good heavens! I forgot the poor violets!"

OUR HERITAGE FROM ROMAN SWINDLERS.

SOMETIMES we find the most interesting stories bound up in the derivations of words.

When Rome flourished, when her fame was spread the world over, when the Tiber was lined with noble palaces built of the choicest marbles, men vied with one another in the construction of their habitations. Skilful sculptors were in request, and immense sums of money were paid for elaborate workmanship.

The workmen, however, were then guilty of practising deceitful tricks. If, for example, they accidentally chipped the edges of the marble, or if they discovered some conspicuous flaw, they would fill up the chink and supply the deficiency by means of prepared wax. For some time the deception would not be discovered; but when the weather tested the buildings, the heat or damp would disclose the wax.

At length, those who had determined on the erection of mansions introduced a binding clause into their contracts to the effect that the whole work from first to last was to be *sine cera*—that is, "without wax." Thus we obtain our word *sincerity*. To be sincere is to be without any attempt on our part to mislead, misrepresent, deceive, or impose on another; to be, and appear to be, what we are; to say what we mean, and mean what we say.

POLITE HOUSE BREAKERS.

WE are told by the proverb that there is honor among thieves, but in Japan there appears to be a courtesy toward those they rob that we do not find extended in our part of the world.

Three men broke into a dyer's house while he was away, and gently asked his mother how much money there was in the place. She answered that there were just twenty seven yen and eighty four sen. The robber laughed, and said, "You are a good old woman, and we believe you. If you were poor, we would not rob you at all. Now, we want only a couple of kimono and this"—laying his hand on a fine silk overdress.

The old woman replied, "All my son's kimono I can give you, but I beg you will not take that overdress, for it does not belong to my son, and was confided to us only for dyeing. What is ours I can give, but I cannot give what belongs to another."

"That is quite right," approved the robber, "and we shall not take it."

QUEER RESULT OF AN EXPERIMENT.

WHAT strange beings we are; how odd we do not ourselves realize until somebody investigates us!

M. Flournoy, of Geneva, recently devised a novel experiment for testing the limits of human intelligence. He arranged a series of common articles of all sizes, and requested his class to put them in order of weight. The weight of all was really exactly the same, but only one student discovered this fact. The majority placed a small leaden weight first and a large wooden basin last.

The ordinary mind, apparently, ranges the weight of objects in inverse proportion to their size. Only when the eyes are shut does a true appreciation become possible, showing that the sensations of innervation, by which we should be enabled to tell when the support of different objects calls forth the same expenditure of energy, do not properly exist.

SOME JAPANESE STUMBLING BLOCKS.

ENGLISH is a language it is difficult for foreigners to master in one respect: the pronunciation. This is on account of the numerous exceptions to the rules. But these drawbacks are quite cast into the shade by the intricacies surrounding the definition of words in the Japanese tongue.

Begin with cooked rice, *meshi*. When eaten by a child it is called *mama*. In speaking to another person of eating rice you call it *gozen*. As a merchant sells it, uncooked, it is *kome*, and as it grows in the field it is *ine*. So a carpenter's foot, or *shaku*, is about twelve inches, but a tailor's is fifteen. A *kin* or pound of beef is fourteen ounces, of flour twenty one, of sugar over thirty. The *ri* or mile varies in different provinces, and on the Fujiyama ascent half a *ri* is marked a *ri*, because it's so much harder work going up hill!

A MERE MATTER OF ACCENT.

IF the delicate shadings in Japanese words are difficult ones to remember, as made evident in the foregoing item, the Chinese tongue is still more intricate in ways that are villainously subtle. The author of a book called "The Real Chinaman," tells some entertaining anecdotes that very forcibly illustrate this fact.

Once, at his own dinner table, he called the attention of his Chinese butler to some little item that was lacking from the table and directed him to supply it. The butler appeared puzzled, asked if the article named was desired, and, on being assured that it was, disappeared, and presently returned, bringing upon a tray the kitchen poker, an iron rod some three feet in length, knobbed at one end and sharpened to a point at the other. Apparently he believed that the host was about to brain one of his guests, but that that was none of his business, and the poker was gravely presented to his master, who had simply placed an aspirate where it did not belong.

On another occasion the author's cook was ordered to arrange for a large evening reception, and, to lighten his labors, was told that he might buy a hundred "lady's fingers" at the confectioner's. Two hours after the order was given the cook entered the legation riding on the shaft of a Chinese cart, dismounted, entered the office, and reported that he had searched that section of Pekin, but had been able to secure only sixty four "lady's fingers." He was informed that the number bought would answer, and was then asked why he had hired a cart.

"To bring them home," he replied.

"But could you not carry them?" was the next question.

To this he replied, "Of course not; they weigh from five to six pounds each."

An inspection of the cart showed that the master had become the disgusted owner not of sixty four tiny strips of sponge cake, but of sixty four fresh ox tongues. A wrong tone of voice had done the mischief.

WHY HE DID IT.

WERE we not assured that all readers of THE ARGOSY are above the age at which they are likely to be curious about matters which are exceedingly trivial, we certainly should not print the subjoined story.

Professor Royce, of Harvard College, has a son, Theodore, who is not yet old enough to have made known whether he will be a genius or not, but the peculiarities of that tribe are his. One day the boy, who was then about eight years old, was watering the lawn in front of his father's house in Cambridge just as James Russell Lowell happened to pass by on his way to Professor Norton's, a little further along. The boy turned the hose on Mr. Lowell, and, despite his expostulations, drenched him from head to foot, so that he had to go to Professor James' house near by and get an entire change of clothing

When Professor Royce heard of this he was naturally very indignant, and took Theodore severely to task. "I don't see how you could have done it, Theodore. What reason was there in doing such a thing as that?" he said.

Theodore looked gravely at his father and said, "There was every reason in the world. I was extremely desirous of knowing how a poet would behave under such circumstances."

CLEVER CRITICISM.

HAPPY the man who can swathe cutting comment in a compliment.

Once the poet Rossetti asked the well known artist Whistler, how he liked a sketch he had made for a picture.

"It has good points," was the answer; "go ahead with it."

A few weeks later he inquired how the picture was getting on.

"Doing famously," answered Rossetti; "I've ordered a stunning frame for it."

Some time later Mr. Whistler saw the canvas, framed, but still virgin of paint brush or paint.

"You've done nothing to it," said Mr. Whistler.

"No," replied Rossetti; "but I've written a sonnet on the subject, if you care to hear it."

When the recitation was over, Mr. Whistler said, "Rossetti, take out the canvas and put the sonnet in the frame."

QUALITIES THAT WIN.

WHAT ONE BOY DID, OTHERS MAY DO.

THIRTY six years ago a boy was born into a family of Smiths residing at Dowagiac, Michigan. He was named William Alden, and was sent to the public school till he was twelve years old; then he had to relinquish his grasp on the ladder of learning and take up the serious battle of life.

He became a cash boy in a dry goods store, then a little later, made himself independent of employers by striking out in Grand Rapids as a seller of popcorn and newspapers. But he was not the sort of boy to neglect any possible opportunity for self improvement, and presently we find him a page in the Michigan Legislature.

Here he found the chance to follow his bent and began to study law. Of course he had many difficulties with which to contend, but he persevered, mastered them all, became a fine orator, and grew to be one of the best known men in his native State, which last fall sent him to Washington as one of its Congressmen.

THE BOY WREN.

THE name of Sir Christopher Wren is indissolubly linked with St. Paul's Cathedral in London, whose designer he was. This was the work which crowned him with the fame of being England's greatest architect.

But Wren was a prodigy in youth, as in maturity. Oughtred, the first mathematician of his day, declared in the preface of his great book that an ingenious boy, "Gentleman Commoner at Wadham," had enlarged the science of astronomy, statistics, and mechanics by most brilliant discoveries. This was Wren at the age of fifteen. A year before that he had taken out a patent for an instrument to write with two pens at the same time. In the same year he was appointed demonstrating assistant on anatomy at Surgeons' Hall.

HIS MAGIC WAS PERSEVERANCE.

WILLIAM MATTHEWS, the author of that famous book, "How to Get On in the World," contributed to a recent number of the *Golden Rule* an article, in the course of which he related this story, as told to him fifty years ago by an old man in Maine who had accumulated a fortune of about a million dollars. The point of it was that there is always the opportunity to succeed; it only needs grasping in the right manner—and sticking to it.

"About fifty years ago," he began, "there was a poor boy in Maine, whose father, once independent, had lost most of his property by indorsing notes for friends. He lived in a log house. The boy used to pick strawberries and other fruits, and carry them two miles to a country village, where he sold them at three cents a quart.

"One day a firm of traders, thinking he had a turn for business, asked him how he would like to be one of their clerks. His eyes sparkled at the proposal, and on his saying that he would like the place, he was taken into the store. His salary for the first seven years was forty dollars a year and board. For the next two years he received one hundred dollars a year and his board. At the end of the nine years' clerkship, his employers took him into copartnership. How much money do you suppose he had at that time laid up?"

"Well," Mr. Matthews replied, "if he had resembled some clerks that are employed today, he probably, if he could have got credit for such a sum, would have been about fifteen hundred dollars in debt."

"Why," said the merchant in a tone of triumph, "that is precisely the sum which he had laid up in clean cash. And now, if you don't believe the story, I will tell you who the boy was. *He was your own father*, and I was one of the firm that employed him as clerk and finally took him into copartnership.

"Of course he kept his money turning over. He fished at night in the Kennebec—caught and sold salmon, and dickered with the farmers, etc., etc. But he never neglected his employers' business. He dressed well, and always had a handsome extra suit of clothes to go a-courting in. He was my partner for thirty years, and the only one I did not lose money by."

WHAT A BIG CITY'S MAYOR HAS TO DO.

IT may be a big honor to be the mayor of a great city like New York; it certainly requires no little self sacrifice of one's inclinations to fulfill all the duties of the post. Mayor Strong's salary is $10,000 a year, and this is what he does to earn it:

Colonel Strong lives in the regulation four story and basement brown stone house, in Fifty Eighth Street, just off Fifth Avenue. What distinguishes it from hundreds of its counterparts is a couple of ornamented gas lamps at the base of the front stoop. This is the one external honor allowed the mayor of New York. At the city's expense he can have lamps of any design placed on his doorstep. The city doesn't foot the gas bills, however.

Since Colonel Strong became mayor he has been getting up earlier in the day than he did when he was just an ordinary bank president. Then he rose at half past eight. Now he gets up at seven o'clock. He is down at the breakfast table at half past seven, where he spends an hour eating a little, but reading a great deal.

He reads the newspapers as religiously as the city editor of a great daily, and it is half past nine before the mayor has thoroughly digested his breakfast and all the news of the day. Then he bundles himself up and walks

over to the Fifty Eighth Street station of the Sixth Avenue "L."

At the office in the City Hall he finds his secretary, Mr. Hedges, waiting for him with a mass of mail matter sorted out into two piles. One represents the grist from the crank mill, which is speedily torn up and thrown in the waste basket. It will not be answered; but, unlike other great men, the mayor likes to know what even the cranks are talking about. He believes that even fools can sometimes give out wisdom.

The other pile of letters represents the mail matter which requires serious attention The mayor and Mr. Hedges retire to a private room, leaving a constantly growing crowd of callers. The letters are carefully gone over, and the mayor tells what kind of an answer each should get.

Leaving his secretary to dictate to the stenographer, the mayor re-enters the big room, takes his seat at the big desk, and then he is ready to hear what the callers have to say.

The mayor has kept statistics of the objects of these callers in visiting him, and he finds that out of twenty, thirteen want places at the public crib; four come to advise him how to run the various departments of the municipality, while the remaining three have legitimate business in the mayor's office Two of the three are reporters in search of news. That leaves one man in twenty who comes to see the mayor on genuine municipal business.

One by one the callers are disposed of. The mayor is a quick worker, and with a few well directed questions discovers what the visitors are after.

It is half past twelve when all the callers are got rid of, and then the mayor's luncheon is served in the private room by a near by restaurateur. The mayor has found that he can't spare the time to go out for it. He eats lightly, and is back at his desk at one o'clock, attacking the half hour's accumulation of callers.

Usually, in the afternoon, there is some board meeting to attend to, like the armory board, the board of electrical control, or the board of apportionment, the sinking fund commission or any of the numerous commissions of which the mayor is a member. Chiefs or members of the various departments come in during the afternoon to talk over city business.

At four o'clock the mayor begins the task of going over the mail received during the day and dictating the answers. It is not often that he is able to get away from his office earlier than five, which brings him home in good time for six o'clock dinner.

Four nights in the week the colonel has to attend some function as a penalty for being mayor It may be a dinner, a fair, a lecture, a political or club meeting, or some purely social matter. Mayor Strong does not care much for going out. He says he can get more pleasure out of a quiet evening at home than out of anything else, but as mayor he is not his own master.

BRAVE CUSTER AND HIS MEN.

IT will be nineteen years on the 25th of this June since the battle of the Little Big Horn was fought, and although every one of the three hundred white men who took part in it was slain, still all won that fame which mankind loves to mete out to unflinching bravery. In speaking of the conflict, the *Detroit Free Press* says:

The personality of one man makes it appear less like a defeat than a victory. As the event contributed to history recedes in the past, it becomes a more heroic and patriotic element in the annals of the country. And the generations of the future must regard with admiration the intrepid commander who surrendered only to death.

As near as it can be estimated, it was an army of 5,000 Indians, mostly Sioux, who wiped out of existence General George A. Custer's brave battalion of the Seventh Cavalry. Every white man who went into the fight laid down his life on the field. All were brave men, who left families to mourn them, and whose loss is still deplored both by their families and the country they were serving, but Custer was the idol of the nation.

He possessed those qualities of dash and daring which won him military renown of a brilliant and enduring kind, and he was beloved by every member of his command. Michigan claimed him as her own—although he was born in Ohio—and took a special pride in the honor accorded to her soldier hero.

When the news came of the awful result of the battle on that beautiful Sunday in June, the whole nation went into mourning. It was not a battle, but a massacre, though the little band of three hundred men fell fighting desperately with overpowering numbers Not one was left to tell the story. The bodies of all the slain were found with the exception of Lieutenant H. M. Harrington, who was supposed to have been captured by the Indians, but this is doubtful. Some horses survived, among them Dandy, General Custer's war horse, which was not ridden by him on that fatal field. His favorite Vic was killed with him.

A remarkable story is current among the Indians that on the spot where Custer fell a strange plant grows, bearing a small, blood red flower, shaped like a heart. The leaves, they say, are of a saber form. The Sioux are afraid to touch this awesome tribute of nature, which doubtless has a correct botanical classification, but which to their superstitious minds is a direct miracle.

THE GROCER'S BOY WHO BECAME A MULTI-MILLIONAIRE.

ON every side we find them—examples of boys who have risen. Pluck, energy, perseverance; these are the qualities that have won against all obstacles.

Russell Sage! Can you look at the gray haired man now and picture him as the "boy" for a grocery establishment? Yet such he was. It might have been back in 1830 when Russell was a boy about a grocery. The grocery belonged to his brother, and the boy was of great value, because he could be depended upon to carry the baskets safely and to hurry back for the next commission. That was in the city of Troy, and there are people in that town now who can remember the tall, lanky lad as he then looked.

"Great industry, strict honesty, a saving propensity, and a wife of the right sort were the things that made Sage," is what his friends say. Whatever may be the criticisms upon Russell Sage, there must always be the admission that he is democratic and never forgets how hard he had to work as a boy.

THE WORLD OF SCIENCE.

OLD RECORDERS OF TIME.

THE modern time piece, with its marvelous accuracy and complicated mechanism, is taken as a matter of course by so many of us that we do not often stop to consider to what curious devices men were indebted for the time of day before the birth of mainsprings and pendulums. Of these the best known to us is the sun dial, but astronomers of today have discovered many other contrivances in use by the ancients, even the obelisks and pyramids of Egypt having been used to tell time.

The sun dial was simply a fair weather clock, and, in England, would be useless more than half its time. To remedy this, the Egyptians conceived a plan of measuring time by water, which was an improvement in being always available, but was less trustworthy than sunlight.

The water clock was a jar of water with a hole in the bottom, from which the water escaped. A small boat floated on the surface, from which a projecting oar pointed to the hours figured on the sides.

Yet another advance was made in the due measurement of time when Egypt invented the hour glass. This still remains to us as the special type of old Father Time himself. We now simply know it as an egg boiler; in which humble sphere it still retains its usefulness. Like the water clock, it needs occasional attention; though we may say the same of a watch that calls for daily winding.

Every school child knows that the great King Alfred marked his time by fire, instead of by water or sand, using candle clocks of four hours each. Six of these candles went to the day. It seems that we also owe the invention of lanterns to King Alfred's candle clocks. Finding that unruly winds would sometimes blow his candles out, and so defeat their purpose, Alfred surrounded them with thin sides of horn, and so made the first lanterns.

HOW THE SEA IS SOUNDED.

THE "bottomless sea" is rapidly becoming an expression of the past. The civilized maritime nations of the world have for several years made a careful study of deep sea sounding, and the result is a collection of tables and charts that show the greater part of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to have been carefully and accurately fathomed. The outcome of such an investigation is a priceless addition to the knowledge of the human race, not only for the statistics secured, but by reason of the revelations in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; and the apparati used in the experiments are remarkably interesting and ingenious.

A ship regularly engaged in deep sea sounding usually has the sounding machine mounted at the after end, and when about to sound is brought to a standstill with the stern to the sea. The stray line, with the sounding rod and sinker attached, is placed over the guide pulley and carefully lowered to the water's edge, the register is set to zero, and the deep sea thermometer is clamped to the sounding line; a seaman is stationed at the friction line which controls the velocity with which the wire is unreeled, another at the brake, and a third on the grating outside to handle the sinker and instruments, and to guide the wire as it passes overboard; a machinist is at the hoisting engine, and the recorder takes a position for reading the register.

When the sinker is let go the vessel is maneuvered so as to keep the wire vertical, and the friction line is adjusted so as to allow it to descend from seventy to one hundred fathoms per minute. The instant the sinker strikes the bottom, which is unmistakably indicated by the sudden release of the wire from strain, the reel is stopped by the friction line and brake, and the recorder notes the number of turns of the reel.

In an hour this messenger of man's ingenuity makes its excursion through five miles of watery waste to the abysmal regions of perfect repose, and brings to the light of day the soil with which the rain of shells of minute infusorial organisms from the upper waters has been for ages mantling the ocean's floor. Here and there a giant peak rising from these sunless depths lifts his head to see the sky, and the dredge and trawl tell us that along his rugged sides, and on the hills and plains below, and even in the inky blackness and freezing cold of the deepest valleys, there is life.

MANUFACTURED GEMS.

AN analysis of the elements composing precious stones has resulted in a series of experiments for their manufacture, which have been partially successful. Complete success in such a direction could hardly be viewed as an advantage except from a scientific standpoint, and would undoubtedly be regarded with strong disfavor by dealers in gems. At present it seems as if our grandchildren would have to invent some new means of personal adornment unless they can tolerate more tranquilly than we the reproach of wearing imitation gems.

Rubies are now made by artifice. They are just as handsome as the genuine ones, and, if it comes to that, it can hardly be said that they are not genuine, inasmuch as they are of the same material. The only difficulty in the way of their manufacture for market is that people do not want them, regarding them as counterfeit. On that account jewelers will not sell them, for they can be distinguished as artificial by the microscope.

Of course rubies are today the most valuable of all precious stones, far exceeding the dia-

mond. A gem as big as a pea, of the first quality and of the true pigeon blood color will fetch $1,000. Rubies are crystallized corundum, which is oxide of aluminium. Sapphires are of the same material. They also are imitated with success in the laboratory.

The process most commonly employed in the manufacture of rubies is to fuse together small ruby "sparks," which are cheap enough, by means of electricity. This work with rubies and sapphires has been done by Fremy and Feil in Paris. Only a few months ago a German chemist named Traube succeeded in producing beryls artificially, employing a roundabout process too elaborate to describe. Before long, emeralds, which are merely green beryls, will be manufactured. To obtain the proper green color is not a matter of serious difficulty.

ABOUT ARGON.

THE discovery of a new ingredient in the atmosphere was the scientific sensation of the spring. But important as all scientists regard this find they have as yet failed to assign to it any useful properties. The pure atmosphere up to the time of the discovery of argon was thought to be composed only of unequal parts of nitrogen, oxygen, and a small per cent of carbonic acid. Dr. Stokes, of the chemical laboratory of the geological survey, has this to say of the new element:

"I believe that I express the sentiments of nearly every chemist in the country when I refer to the discovery of argon as the greatest scientific disclosure of the century. Although the credit of the work is due both to Lord Rayleigh and Professor Ramsay, Rayleigh actually detected the new constituent first. Rayleigh was weighing nitrogen as it appears in the common atmosphere. He afterward weighed nitrogen which he manufactured artificially. He found that the atmospheric nitrogen was the heavier in the proportions of 230 to 231. Lord Rayleigh then called into consultation Professor Ramsay, an eminent English chemist.

"Argon is a colorless, transparent, gaslike air. It has been liquefied and solidified by Professor Olszewski, of Austria, the world's greatest authority on low temperatures. This was accomplished by submitting the argon to a heavy pressure and a low temperature at the same time. It first becomes a liquid, when it is colorless, like water, It afterwards forms in crystals resembling ice. Its boiling point is 180 degrees below zero in the centigrade scale. All of this shows that it has properties differing materially from those of nitrogen."

Lord Rayleigh, who was formerly known as the Hon. J. W. Strutt, is a man of middle age. He is professor of experimental physics at the University of Cambridge. Professor Ramsay holds the chair of chemistry in the University College, London.

It is the general opinion that Rayleigh will get the $10,000 prize offered by the Smithsonian from the fund given in 1891 to that institution by Thomas G. Hodgkins, of New York State, to be devoted "to the increase and diffusion of more exact knowledge in regard to the nature and properties of atmospheric air, in connection with the welfare of man."

KITES AS LIFE SAVERS.

KITE flying has resulted often enough in various interesting discoveries and experiments, but not until very lately has it seemed feasible to employ so erratic an object as a kite for any practical purpose. That it may be so used, however, has been demonstrated by the experiments of T. W. Davis with the kite as a life saver.

The propelling power of the kite was exhibited at Arverne, Long Island, in the summer of 1892, when two young gentlemen from New York applied it to a wagon constructed for the purpose from special designs. They found that the kite could be steered 45 degrees off the wind and the wagon 45 degrees further to the windward, so that with a breeze blowing directly off shore or on shore the wagon could be made to travel up and down the beach.

The same experiment applied to a canoe resulted satisfactorily, and the remarkable tractional and steering powers of the kite led to its trial in carrying out life lines. A mile of rope was wound on a reel and carried to South Brother Island. A loop was made in the forward end, and twenty feet back of this was attached to a 32 pound wooden buoy. A seven foot kite was raised. When about 400 feet had run out, the flying lines were cut. One was immediately fastened to the loop at the end of the mile rope; the other was also fastened there after being drawn in so as to direct the kite to a pier on Riker's Island, five eighths of a mile distant, and not directly to leeward. Then the kite was let go, and the buoy was dragged down the beach and went scudding through the water at a rapid pace, dashing the foam about it.

The next step was to try it from a boat for the purpose of sending a life line ashore. The lightship at Brenton Reef was selected as the scene of operations, notwithstanding the fact that it is a mile and a half to the nearest land, which is Brenton's Point.

After being launched the kite was deflected to an average of 40 degrees by shortening one string. The aim could be taken with the greatest nicety by means of this device. The buoy was passed overboard, and the line run out, and, to the great satisfaction of all on board, the kite was seen to shoot straight forward through the strong cross current of an ebbing tide, beaching the buoy twenty yards to the eastward of its aim.

BICYCLING IN THE SNOW.

STILL they come—new uses for the bicycle. The latest is the "wheel sled," invented by a man in Lübeck, Germany, and it is intended to be to the ordinary bicycle what the sleigh is to the carriage.

It consists of a handsomely formed sled, between the runners of which is set a wheel provided with spikes, over which wheel the rider is seated. It is guided by the pedal and handle bar, as in the case of an ordinary bicycle. The spikes, or teeth, catch in the ice as the wheel revolves. The wheel, above the upper half of which is a leaden or tin cover to keep the dirt and ice from flying against the rider, runs on ordinary bearings between the prongs of a fork-like piece of steel connecting the sled's runners. The brake and handle are attached to the wheel.

A strong spring keeps the wheel in proper position, forcing it upon the ice. Another spring, with a handle, is so arranged that the rider can raise the wheel when it is not needed —in descending a hill, for instance.

FLOATING FUN.

HIS HAPPY THOUGHT.

OLD jokes are constantly cropping up in new settings, showing that the elementary factors which go to make up humor are, after all, limited in number. People are more apt to laugh at that with which they are partially familiar than at something so bizarre as to require study to understand. Here is a German version of an old acquaintance:

Muller meets his friend Nagel at the Turkish bath. Each is troubled with a gouty foot, and has been ordered massage by his doctor. During the operation Muller cried out lustily with pain, while Nagel maintained a stolid composure, greatly to Muller's astonishment, who afterward asked him,

"How could you stand the rubbing so quietly? Didn't it hurt you atrociously?"

"Nothing of the kind," smilingly replied Nagel. "I simply held out my healthy foot."

BRAINS AND THE BUCKET.

THERE is as much philosophy as fun in the Irishman's reply, printed below, which, of course, does not detract from the humor of it.

A man was seen, one hot summer day, laboriously turning a windlass which hoisted a bucket of rock from the shaft. There was nothing remarkable about the man except his hat, the crown of which had been cut in such a manner that the hot sun beat upon his bald head continually. Some of his companions had recommended this as sure to produce a luxuriant head of hair.

After watching the man toiling and grunting at his heavy labor for a while, a clergyman who was passing said with concern,

"My friend, why don't you cover up your head? This hot sun will affect your brain."

"Brain, is it?" said the man, as he gave the windlass another turn. "Be jabers, and if I had any brains d'ye think I'd be here pullin' up this bucket?"

THE "ORIGINAL" BIRTHPLACE.

WHEN you send a man to Coventry after this yon will donbtless remember that the town is distinguished for other reasons than as the place to which all bores and unfortunates are mentally consigned.

Ellen Terry, the great English actress, was born in old Coventry, England, but as to the exact spot there appears to be some difference of opinion.

One house in that place sports a brass plate bearing the legend, "This is the birthplace of Miss Ellen Terry." Directly opposite is another house displaying a similar plate, stating that, "This is the original birthplace of Miss Ellen Terry."

IT WOULDN'T INTERFERE.

EVERYBODY has heard of the intricate questions propounded in civil service examinations, though many of the stories connected with them are doubtless fabrications or else sadly exaggerated. All the way from Australia comes the story of a young candidate for a position in one of the government departments. Finding himself confronted by the question, "What is the distance from the earth to the sun?" and not being possessed of the necessary information, he wrote in reply:

"I am nnable to state accurately; but I don't think the sun is near enough to interfere with a proper performance of my duties if I get this clerkship."

He got it.

HIS WIFE'S ANSWER.

IN "Quaint and Curious" this month we have something to say relative to jumping at conclusions. The habit of taking things for granted, perhaps, has caused as much trouble in this world of ours as any other one thing.

Mr. Greymore had a telephone fitted between his private house and his office, and one day his old crony Grubber called in to see him.

Greymore asked him to dinner, and then stepping to the telephone, sent this message to his wife: "My dear, I am bringing our friend Grubber home this evening. Have a nice little dinner ready." Then turning to Grubber, he said, "Come here and hear what she says. I'll bet she'll tell you what she's got."

But the answer that came to Grubber's expectant ear was—"If yon bring that bald headed, hungry old bore home, you'll repent it."

They changed their minds, and dined at a restaurant.

HARD TIMES.

IT is no less than a child's duty to honor his father and mother, and filial pride is commendable—always, we were about to say, but there are, alas, fathers and fathers.

"Won't yon please give me a few pennies, mum?" said a ragged little girl to a charitably disposed lady, the other day. "My father can't go out nights any more, by the doctor's orders, and so he can't earn any money."

"Can't go out nights?" returned the lady. "Why, my dear child, what is your father's business?"

"He's a burglar, mum, and before he was taken down with a cough we used to live beautifully."

SOMEBODY TO KICK TO.

"WHAT'S in a name?" asks *Juliet* scornfully. But a certain member of the colored race is evidently not inclined to agree with the heroine of Shakspere's play, at any rate not where the title of an office is concerned.

"I sut'ny am got er fine situation at de present time," quoth Mr. Erastus Pinkney. "I'se

next in 'pohtance ter de head waitah in de leadin' restaurant."

"G'way! What am yoh title?"

"I's de head listener."

"Nebber hyahd ov no sech pusson."

"Dat's 'cause yoh is behin' de times. When ebbah er customer kicks, he's gotter hab somebody ter kick to, ain' he?"

"Shoo."

"Well, de perprietor ain't got time ter ten' ter 'em all, ner de cashier ain't, ner de head waitah ain', so dey sen' 'em ter me. An' I listens ter 'em."

FOUND IN THE WOODS.

WE must admit that the teacher's description was perhaps a little more obscure than it might have been, but we should scarcely think that calculated to inspire the answer it received.

The other day at the teachers' association a class of children, aged from five to nine years, were given an exercise in phonics. The teacher had received correct answers to descriptions she had given of trees, woods, etc., and then thought she would describe a brook.

"What do we find running through the woods, moving silently on the ground, with but little noise?" she asked.

For a long time the little ones were quiet, and then a hand was raised.

"Well, Bessie, what is the answer?" the teacher questioned smilingly.

"Tramps," piped out the little one.

SHE THOUGHT SHE KNEW.

HERE is another bit from the school room. This time the instructor is wholly exonerated, is she not?

A teacher in one of the lower grades of a city school was endeavoring to impress on her pupils the fact that a plural subject takes a verb in the plural.

"Remember this," she said: "girls are, boys are; a girl is, a boy is. Now do you understand it?"

Every hand in the room was raised in assent.

"Well, then," continued the teacher, "who can give me a sentence with girls—plural, remember."

This time only one hand was raised, and that belonged to a pretty little miss.

"Please, ma'am," she said, with all the assurance of primitive reasoning. "I can give a sentence: 'Girls, are my hat on straight.'"

WHERE THE STATIONERY CAME IN.

MANY of our readers have doubtless heard of the man who went to the seaside for change and rest, and reported, when he reached home, that the waiter at the hotel got his change and the landlord secured the rest. Here is a somewhat similar story but with a city hostlery for its target.

A Scotch gentleman visited New York recently, and put up at a certain hotel to which he had been recommended. He, however, soon discovered that their charges were exorbitant, and he determined to change his quarters. He asked for his bill, in order that he might "square up." The precious document was soon forthcoming, and he critically examined it in presence of the obliging waiter.

"Ah! what's this, my man?" suddenly exclaimed he. "Stationery, ten cents! Why, I've had no stationery."

The waiter, pointing to the sheet on which the bill was made out, said, with smiling countenance,

"Beg pardon, sir, but I guess you've got it in your hand."

NO MIDDLE GROUND.

WE are now at the season of the year when many readers will be able to appreciate out of their own experience the two sides of the dilemma confronting the man who has many trains to catch.

"I can't tell you," said the experienced suburbanite, in reply to the question of his new neighbor, "when the next train goes, but I can tell you what your chances of catching it are."

"What are they?" inquired the new neighbor eagerly.

"Well, if you run as hard as you can," said the experienced resident, "you'll have fifteen minutes to wait, and if you merely walk you'll find the train just pulling out."

"PUDDIN' ENDS."

"HOW big is a piece of chalk?" is a phrase frequently employed to designate things whose size it is difficult to estimate. The victim of the decision recorded below would doubtless like to have legal opinion on the length of "puddin' ends."

Sailing vessels in the Australian trade frequently carry only one or two passengers, who share the saloon with the captain and chief officer. Aboard one vessel recently there was only one passenger, and the captain and mate generally contrived to get the most and best of what was on the table. One day there was a pudding, with sweetmeats in the middle.

"Do you like puddin' ends, sir?" asked the captain.

"No, I don't like puddin' ends, sir," replied the guest.

"Well, me and my mate, do," said the captain, cutting the pudding in two, and putting one half on the mate's plate and the other on his own.

THE AGE OF TURNING ON THINGS.

WHO knows but Ben may be an unconscious prophet after all, and that the mother of *his* little boy may be able to do what he asked of his own mother?

Little Ben lives in a new house, one of the most modern of modern houses, where light, water, heat, and other things are all to be had by turning a knob or touching a button. He lives in a state of perpetual marvel over these things, and the other night, when suffering from a headache, the little fellow, said to his mother, who sat beside him, "Please turn on the dark, mother; my eyes hurt me."

WITH BOTH FEET.

MAKING disparaging remarks about anybody or anything at a social function is always dangerous, to say nothing of its being in bad taste.

"You're not a cousin or anything like that of our fair hostess, are you?" asked a guest.

"No; nothing of the sort."

"Well, did you ever attend such a stupid affair in your life?"

"Ye-es, a good many. I—I'm her husband, you see, and I have to."

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

In our next issue we shall begin the publication of a new serial by Edward S. Ellis. It is a stirring story of hunters' life in the Rocky Mountains, and abounds with just that sort of adventure in which boys revel. The hero is a very attractive fellow, but we are not certain whether Ra-lo-no, who comes upon the scene a little later, will not divide with him the honor of being prime favorite. Ra-lo-no—but Mr. Ellis will tell you all about him in the story.

BRICK BY BRICK.

STAND out in the street and gaze up at some of the tall office buildings, now so plentiful in our cities. How far above the sidewalk is the topmost brick in the mason work? Suppose you had fixed your eyes on that very spot while the foundations for the structure were being dug, and anticipated the time that brick could be put in position. Would it not have seemed very far off?

And yet, when once the walls were started, it was not so many days before they rose to the height your eye had measured off. But it was no magic of a night's growth that did it. Brick by brick the task was accomplished, each brick small in itself, but uniting with one another to form the towering structure of ten, twelve, or fifteen stories.

Some of the duties which now and then confront us in life appear so arduous as to be quite beyond our strength. But if you had told your builder to put in place his brick under the window ledge of the fifteenth story before the first was built, he could not have done it immediately. He could never have done it if he had sat down and thought over the difficulties of the deed. But one thing he could do; he could start in to build up to it, brick by brick.

When you pass from one floor to another of your home, you do not do it with a single leap. You ascend one step of the stairway at a time. Thus even in such a homely incident of your daily life you may find encouragement for a faltering courage when confronted by an apparently herculean task.

THAT BOUND VOLUME SALE.

THE special offer of bound volumes of THE ARGOSY at extraordinarily low rates is still open. See advertisement on third page of cover. But the stock on hand is so low and the terms of the sale so attractive that this will doubtless be the last call. No one who has been wavering in the slightest degree about making a file of this magazine should neglect this opportunity.

You will note that some of the volumes are actually placed as low as *fifty cents*. Think of it! Only half a dollar for over 350 pages, each twice the size of this, of neatly bound long and short stories, special articles, pictures, biographies, and a vast amount of attractively arranged miscellaneous matter! Read the advertisement carefully, decide which books you want, and send for them without delay, or you may find that the last of the very ones you wish have been sold.

A SEARCHER OUT OF STUPIDITY.

THE wizards of the retort, the crucible, and the magic wire, are hard after us. In the scientific department of the University of the City of New York there is an instrument endowed with an astonishing power. It will separate stupid people and bright ones into two separate groups without calling upon them to write a line or utter a word.

It is called a chronoscope, and is a means of measuring the speed of mental and nervous action. The tests applied have to do with the time required to comprehend the nature of colors, odors, sounds, or pin pricks, the results being registered by the pressure of a button.

Really, at this rate, school teachers will have to lay in a new supply of dunce caps, or else backward pupils must bestir themselves. With stupidity searched out and held up to censure by machinery there will be no place on which he who hopes to get along with a smattering of knowledge, may obtain a foothold.

THE ALL CONQUERING WHEEL.

ALL the tendencies of the age seem bent on doing away with the horse. Steam has long since displaced the stage coach as a means of transit from city to city; the trolley wire and the cable have almost completely banished the horse from association with the public vehicles in our streets; and now the bicycle threatens to dethrone him as the luxurious means of gaining pleasure from swift motion in our parks and speedways.

During the past year cycling has made tremendous strides in public favor. The women have taken it up in sober earnest, and so charmed have they become with

the joy of wheeling that the innovation has already passed beyond the narrow confines of a fad.

For years past horseback riders have been accorded the privilege of separate routes through the parks in our great cities. This honor is now being extended to the bicycle, although, as befits the more enduring nature of the steed of steel, on a much more liberal scale as regards space. The bicycle path from Brooklyn to Coney Island was recently completed, and now, at the suggestion of the New York *Tribune*, efforts, which ought most surely to succeed, are being made to convert the surface covering of the old Croton Aqueduct into a similar route for wheeling. Running for forty miles through the most enchanting scenery the Hudson valley affords, such a path would furnish cyclers with the finest roadway for the purpose in the world.

And it is to be hoped that, with this viewpoint for superb landscapes thrown open to them, those who are addicted to that odious and unhealthful stooping pose, will straighten up to take in the beauties to be seen on every hand.

THE OLYMPIC GAMES AGAIN.

WITH England and America gone wild, almost, over athletics, it is small wonder that the influence thereof has penetrated to the more sedate countries of the Continent. And, appropriately enough, Greece, the early home of the completely developed man, is the first to respond to the awakening.

After an interregnum of something like fifteen hundred years, it is now contemplated to revive the Olympic Games on the plain of Elis. A meeting has been held in Athens, under the presidency of the Duke of Sparta, the heir to the Grecian throne, and a program arranged for a grand international athletic tournament to be held some time during 1896. It is to be hoped the scheme will be carried out. The directors can be assured of possessing one novel feature at least, which will make this Olympiad thoroughly unique compared with its predecessors: the bicyclists.

If the ghosts of the old Greeks could be present at next year's games, what a wondrous sensation would creep through their shadowy forms as they beheld men—yea, and women, too—flashing past them on apparently winged steeds!

The prospect of a revival of these contests of physical prowess on old Greek soil will inspire fresh interest for Virgil in our young students and the fifth book of the Æniad will come to possess for them a fascination not usually looked for in literature of the school room.

TACT.

NEVER speak of a rope in a family who has lost a member through hanging. This is the time honored definition of our subject. But it is a virtue that may be widely applied, and as much tact may be employed in saying the right thing as in leaving unsaid the wrong one.

Tact may be likened to the lubricating oil that causes the machinery of our social relations with one another to run smoothly. The lack of it is almost always due to thoughtlessness, seldom to malice, although the poor victim may be inclined to think differently.

A man had invited a friend out to supper. The guest looked about for a certain condiment he desired, and not seeing it on the table, remarked, "There isn't any mustard. is there?" "Why, no, there isn't any mustard," replied the host, whose thoughts were wool gathering at the moment, and who did not realize that his answer might cause his friend to feel that he had been very presuming to hint at the absence of something from the board that ought to have been there.

WHAT THEY THINK OF IT.

IT would seem that our readers had long since exhausted all variety in the forms of expressions in which to couch their opinions of THE ARGOSY, but the subjoined letters prove that the end has by no means yet been reached.

A NO. 1.

181 WEST 101st ST.,
NEW YORK, April 3, 1895.

I have been reading THE ARGOSY for the past few months, and I find it an A No. 1 juvenile magazine. I have read other magazines, but none of them comes up to THE ARGOSY. To say the least, I think it the best magazine published in the country.

ROBERT B. CALDWELL.

LEADS ALL OTHERS.

1245 E ST., S. E.,
WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 8, 1895.

I can hardly find sufficient words with which to express my opinion of your valuable magazine. I have subscribed to many magazines and papers, and as a boys' magazine I think THE ARGOSY leads. I admire most the stamp page, Floating Fun, and stories such as "The Young Salesman" and "The Quest of the Silver Swan."

WM. A THORNTON.

CLEAN AND DELIGHTFUL STORIES.

ETNA, N. J., April 15, 1895.

I bought a copy of THE ARGOSY, and I am justified in saying that it is one of the finest magazines that I have ever seen. The stories are clean and delightful. It gives me pleasure to hand you herewith $1 for a year's subscription, to begin with the number for May, 1895.

JOHN ACKERMAN, JR.

BEATS ALL OTHERS.

1206 EAST GENESEE ST.,
SYRACUSE, N. Y., Feb. 13, 1895.

I think your ARGOSY is the most interesting magazine I have ever read, and I have read a good many. I can't find words that will express my admiration of it. It beats all others.

CLIFFORD H. CLAYSON.

STAMP DEPARTMENT.

STAMP collectors are devoting a good deal of attention to newly discovered United States "varieties." In addition to the 12 cent purple of 1870, the difference in which is in the formation of the figure 2 of the denomination, the 7 cent and 15 cent issues of 1872 have likewise been discovered to possess varieties.

A new variety of the current 2 cent stamp has also been found. It is in the ornament in the upper corner. In some the horizontal shading lines extend through the frame of the triangle, and in others the triangle is plain, not being shaded.

The day of the international postage stamp is apparently far distant. It would prove an inestimable boon to travelers, and in the remitting of small amounts from one country to another, but the impossibility of fixing a uniform price will be an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the adoption of such a stamp. For instance, where £1 in British money will purchase ninety six 2½d stamps, the denomination requisite to carry a letter from that country to another, the same amount would buy 97 French, 102 German, and about 110 Italian stamps answering the same purpose. A firm having a large business to transact by mail could hardly be blamed under these circumstances did they take advantage of this, and so while other countries would get the money, poor England would have to do the work.

A special postal card in honor of Bismarck's eightieth birthday was issued by the German government last April, of which thousands were disposed of as mementos.

On the 1st of May, at the opening of the Industrial Exposition of Alsace and Lorraine, fifty thousand special postal cards, bearing a 1 mark stamp, were also issued.

The long expected new series of adhesives from Mexico have at last made their appearance, having been issued to the public on April 2. The workmanship is not particularly good, the ink on some of them giving a blurred look, but the pretty and original designs are a welcome change from the conventional numerals or heads.

There are just thirteen denominations in the set—which indicates that our esteemed southern neighbor is not superstitious. The designs and colors are as follows: the 1 centavo green, 2c carmine, and 3c yellow brown, showing a native letter carrier on foot; the 4c vermilion and 12c olive, a postman mounted on a broncho, driving a burro laden with mail bags; the 5c ultramarine bears a statue of Montezuma; the 10c rose lilac, 15c bright blue green, 20c brown lilac, and 50c violet, a mail coach; and the 1 peso brown, 5p rose. and 10p deep blue, the modern locomotive and mail car.

In the death of the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, philately has lost one of its stanchest devotees. The young prince spent years in philatelic research, and although but nineteen at his demise, he had nearly completed an exhaustive work on the postal issues of Russia. His book would have doubtless been a desirable addition to current philatelic literature, as avenues of information closed to the ordinary investigator were open to him. He was the possessor of a magnificent collection, and a member of the Philatelic Society of London.

Close upon the announcement of the Portuguese government's intentions to issue a new series of stamps in 1897, to commemorate the discovery of the East Indies, comes the news that the little kingdom has decided not to wait so long to dazzle philatelic eyes. It is said on good authority that a Jubilee issue will be brought out during the present year, commemorative of the birthday of St. Anthony of Padua. If this issue proves a success financially (something which cannot be claimed for Portugal's previous attempt in this line) that of 1897, previously contemplated, in all likelihood will be forthcoming as well.

The efforts of financially feeble countries to fatten their revenues at the expense of stamp collectors, by these speculative issues, are creating a storm of indignation and protest among philatelists the world over.

It has been suggested that a committee of well known experts, stamp collectors and dealers, such as Stanley Gibbons of London, Senf of Germany, and Mekeel or Scott of the United States, be formed for the purpose of deciding on the admission or non admission of new countries and new issues to philatelic lists. In case of stamps palpably issued for speculative purposes, the same should be condemned, and excluded from all reputable dealers' albums and catalogues. This, and the determination of collectors not to invest in such rubbish, would go a long way toward discouraging a systematic form of swindling which is distressingly prevalent.

Our friend signing himself D. H. T. may remove the grease spots from his stamps by painting the stains with spirits of turpentine and pressing between blotters. After repeating several times, the stamps should be laid between blotters and pressed with a warm iron.

Another good way is to mix calcined magnesia with benzine to a paste, and rub the mixture on the spot for about a minute. When it dries the powdered magnesia may be readily brushed off, and the offending grease spots will be found to have disappeared.

From time to time the novice in stamp collecting, and even he who has long since passed the initial stages of his hobby, will find items of real interest anent the same in the newspapers and the various copies of philatelic periodicals which he may receive as sample copies or by regular subscription. Many of these items are well worth preserving, and every young collector will find it advantageous to keep some sort of a scrap book for this purpose. When classified, such as definitions, recipes, new issues, etc., they will make an interesting, and at times perhaps decidedly useful, volume of stamp lore.