

A red rectangular box with a thin white border is centered on the cover. From each corner of the box, several thin red lines radiate outwards, creating a sunburst or starburst effect. The background of the cover is a textured, light brown fabric.

Short Stories

SHORT STORIES

A MAGAZINE OF FACT AND FICTION

VOLUME VI.

APRIL-JUNE, 1891

THIS MAGAZINE IS PLANNED TO COVER THE
STORY-TELLING FIELD OF THE WORLD, AND
ITS SELECTIONS WILL BE OF THE BEST PRO-
CURABLE IN ALL THE VARIOUS LANGUAGES

"Were I called upon to designate that class of composition which should best fulfil the demands of high genius—should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—I should unhesitatingly speak of the short prose tale. The novel is objectionable from its length. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself of the immense force derivable from totality."—EDGAR ALLAN POE.

NEW YORK
CURRENT LITERATURE PUBLISHING CO.
30 WEST 23D STREET

COPYRIGHTED, 1891.

THE CURRENT LITERATURE PUBLISHING CO.

INDEX TO VOLUME VI.

Antique, An	Laws, Civil and Canon ...	85
Aunt Clem's Reception.....	Anna Vernon Dorsey.....	56
Availability.....	Ida Baccini.....	257
Bass-Viol of Abelsberg, The....	P. S. Rosegger.....	189
Big Lie, The.....	George Gilmore Simms....	226
Buster, The.....	J. Whit Marcy.....	303
Captain's Cat, The.....	Elizabeth Cavazza	4
Companionship.....	Turgenieff.....	55
Complicated Case, A.....	E. C. Waggener.....	160
Convict Ship, The.....	New York Sun.....	342
Cooked Trout, The.....	Ed Mott.....	337
Coup de Grace, The	Ambrose Bierce.....	138
Coyote.....	J. A. Breckons.....	262
Dreeing Her Weird.....	Anna Vernon Dorsey	164
Drowned Man, The.....	Guy de Maupassant.....	194
Eliza, the Nihilist.....	Pall Mall Budget.....	284
El Numero Trece.....	José Selgas.....	27
Experiment in Hypnotism, An...	London Truth.....	165
Fantasia	E. E. Steinmetz.....	299
Fate of the Laughing Pig.....	Geo. Alfred Townsend....	91
First Love.....	Angelo Peace.....	291
First Visit, The.....	Elizabeth Cavazza.....	200
Found.....	A. H. Lewis ("Dan Quin")	184
Four Dreams, The.....	Emile Zola.....	176
God's Light.....	Olive Schreiner.....	279
Golampians, The.....	Ambrose Bierce.....	304
House and the Brain, The.....	Lord Lytton.....	103
Idyl of the "H T," An.....	"Dan Quin".....	5
In the Stretch.....	Warren R. McVeigh.....	323
Inconsolable Widow, The.....	La Vie Parisienne.....	46
Julius Roy's Dream.....	Ernest Rhys.....	148
Knouted.....	George Moore.....	10

Leisure Burglar, The.....	A. Rudolph Federman.....	280
Little Chapter of Life, A.....	Acton Davies.....	300
Little Gold Nugget, The.....	Haddon Chambers.....	41
Magic Shadow, The.....	Arthur Crouch Quiller....	185
Mazarro's: A Study in Thrift....	Giovanni Verga.....	86
Mr. and Mrs. Hannibal Hawkins..	Belle C. Greene.....	292
My Dog and I.....	Marie More Marsh.....	39
My Margaret.....	Boston Globe.....	269
Mystery of the Sea, A.....	J. D. Jerrold Kelly.....	63
North and South.....	Alphonse Daudet.....	1
Petrel and The Black Swan.....	Cornhill Magazine.....	201
Petro's Anthem.....	Clyde Fitch.....	20
Pirate's Cave, The.....	Nelson Ayers.....	324
Pleasure.....	Olive Schreiner.....	137
Poor Dog Pierrot.....	Guy de Maupassant.....	310
Precipitate Lover, A.....	E. C. Waggener.....	263
Reforming the Major.....	R. L. Ketchum.....	62
Rescue, The.....	D. B. Waggener.....	225
Sentenced.....	Marie More Marsh.....	193
Sentinel, The.....	En Afrique.....	341
Separation.....	Anna H. Smith.....	347
Sobbing Pines, The.....	Charles F. Lummis.....	220
Stephen Purcell.....	William H. Maxwell.....	348
Suicide, The.....	T. L. Masson.....	73
Sunshine.....	Daniel Stimson Knowlton..	175
Sweet Hour of Prayer.....	William Wallace Cooke....	219
These an' That's Wife.....	Arthur Crouch Quiller....	333
Thrown Away.....	Rudyard Kipling.....	315
Treasure in the Pit, The.....	Paul Grant.....	74
Under the Cebia.....	Alfred Balch.....	26
Unnamable, The.....	Nouvelle Revue.....	102
Vict'ry's Divorcement.....	Octave Thanet.....	209
Voice of Nature, The.....	W. C. Morrow.....	208
Waving Red Legs, The.....	J. W. Gally.....	144
When Will Prevails.....	Ingodeegi Howadeez.....	18
Widow Gamberti, The.....	The Countess Lari.....	129

SHORT STORIES

A MAGAZINE OF FACT AND FICTION

Vol VI. No. 1. *This magazine is planned to cover the story-telling field of the world. Its selections will be of the best procurable in all the languages.* APR, 1891

NORTH AND SOUTH *

In the North to the border of Niemen had come a little Creole of fifteen years, pink and white as an almond-flower.

She came from the country of humming-birds and the wind of love brought her.

Those of her isle said to her:

“Do not go.”

“It is cold on the Continent.”

“The winter will kill you.”

But the little Creole did not believe in winter, and knew cold only as she had taken it in sorbets; then again she was in love and had no fear of dying.

So, behold her landing above there, in the fogs of Niemen, with her fans, her hammock, her mosquito nets, and her gilded cage full of the birds of her country.

When old father North saw coming this flower of the isles that the South had sent him in a ray of sunlight, his heart was moved with pity, and as he knew that the cold would make but one mouthful of the child and her humming-birds, he quickly lighted a great yellow sun and clothed himself with summer to receive her.

The little Creole was of course deceived; she took this heat of the North, brutal and heavy, for an abiding warmth; that eternal black verdure for the verdure of spring, and hanging her hammock in the park between two Norway pines, she fanned and swung herself all day long.

“But it is very, very hot in the North!” said she, smiling.

Nevertheless, something disquieted her. Why, in this strange land, had the houses no verandas? Why these thick walls, these carpets and heavy hangings? Why these great china stoves and heaps of wood piled in the court-yards, and

* French of Alphonse Daudet: E. C. Waggener: For Short Stories.

these fox skins, double mantles and furs that slept in the depths of the armoires? What did it all mean?

Poor little one—she was soon going to learn.

One morning, on awakening, the little Creole felt herself seized with a terrible shiver. The sun had disappeared, and from the sky, black and low, which seemed in its night to be approaching the earth, fell in flakes a down white and silent as under the cotton-trees.

Behold, the winter! The wind whistled, the stoves roared. In their gilded cage the humming-birds sang no more. Their tiny wings—blue, red, ruby, and sea-green—remained stiff and motionless, and it was sad to see them pressing one against the other, benumbed and puffed by cold. Below there, in the park, the hammock shook, full of frost; the trees were clad in a garb of glass and the little Creole was ill and could no longer go out.

Crouched in the corner by the fire, like one of her birds, she passed her time regarding the flame and making sunshine with memories. In the great luminous chimney she saw again her beautiful country, the wide sunny levees, the brown rustling sugar-cane; the cornfields floating in a golden dust; the evening siestas, the starry nights, the flaming fireflies, and millions of little wings that droned among the flowers and in the lacy meshes of the mosquito nets.

And while she dreamed thus before the flames, the winter days succeeded each other, always shorter, always blacker. Every morning they found a humming-bird dead in the cage; soon there remained but two—two wisps of green plumes bristling one against the other in a corner.

That morning, too, the Creole herself was unable to rise. Like a Mahonnais felucca caught by the northern ice, the cold held and paralyzed her. All was gloomy, the chamber sad. Frost covered the glasses with a thick grayish curtain. The city seemed dead, and through the silent streets the snow-plough groaned dismally.

In her bed, to divert her mind, the Creole polished the spangles of her fans, and to pass the time regarded herself in the shining mirrors from her home, all fringed with great Indian plumes.

Always shorter, always blacker, the days of winter succeeded each other.

Under her white curtains the little Creole languished and

faded away. That which saddened her more than all else was that from her bed she was unable to see the fire. It seemed to her that she had lost her country a second time. From minute to minute she would cry aloud:

“There *is* a fire burning in this chamber?”

And they would answer:

“But yes, *petite*, the chimney glows like a furnace. Don’t you hear the wood crackle and the pine-cones pop?”

But alas! she was too weak to lift her head, the fire too far away; she was able to see nothing and this made her despairing. . . . Well, one night as she lay there pensive and pale, her head at the edge of the pillow, her eyes turned always toward that beautiful but still invisible flame, her friend approached her and took up one of the Oriental mirrors that strewed her bed.

“Thou wishest to see the fire, *mignonne*?” said he. “Eh bien! wait!”

And dropping to his knees before the logs, he sought to send her by the glass at least a reflection of the magic flame.

“See you it now?” he cried.

“No.”

“And now?”

“No, not yet.”

Then, suddenly receiving full in her face a jet of light that wrapped her like an embrace—“Yes! yes!” cried the little Creole, “I see the light now!” and smiling she died, with two little points of flame in the depths of her eyes.

ETCHINGS: THE CAPTAIN'S CAT.*

Captain Gennaro di Roccabruna adjusted his *boutonnière* of Russian violets. He was handsome, rich, and unattached—except to his white Persian cat, Mlle. Lili. By the way, where was Lili? The orderly, after aiding his captain to dress, was dismissed for the night, and probably had let her slip out of the door with him. But she would return; she liked her basket with quilted lining, her dish of cream, the morsels which, at table, she would arrest midway to the captain's mouth, tapping his wrist with her velvet paw.

“My beautiful cat, with the faithful little heart!”

Then the odor of violets recalled him. He was to visit, that evening, the opera-box of Countess Olga, at the San Carlo.

“Remember! At ten minutes past nine Baron Gerace will present himself, and the place will be no longer at my disposal,” she had said. Her smile and the violets from her bouquet had won the assent of di Roccabruna. Now he doubted. He foresaw that he should succumb to the charm of the Russian, pale and brilliant as snow, with sea-green eyes.

The captain knew she expected the offer of his hand. However, a promise to a lady! And he descended the stairs. The carriage was ready. The pavement gleamed with recent rain. As he passed a balcony Lilli leaped upon his breast, with muddy paws that starred with black his shirt-front! He dismissed the carriage. Good luck to Baron Gerace!

“Lili, you are my destiny!”

She sat beside him on the sofa; cleaned her fur, ate cream while he held the dish, then played with a sprig of catnip. He thought how Countess Olga revelled in a cigarette. Lili, her weed finished, reclined with delicate coquetry against a cushion; her green eyes soft with sleepiness, her paws crossed over her heart, expressed and invited devotion. She purred tenderly; her claws drew in and out as if weaving a charm.

“Dear Lili,” said the captain, “you were right. A cat suits me better than a wife.”

He caressed her swansdown head. She started, curled herself upon his hand, and scratched and bit him viciously. He shook her off, laughing: “Quite the Countess Olga—without her milliner's and jeweller's bills! My dear Lili!”

* E. Cavazza: For Short Stories.

AN IDYL OF THE "HT"*

It is sunset at the HT ranch.

Four or five cowboys sit gloomily about, outside the ranch house, awaiting supper.

The Mexican cook has just begun his fragrant task, so a half-hour must elapse before these Arabs are fed.

Their ponies are turned into the wire pasture, their big Colorado saddles repose astride the low pale fence which surrounds the house, and it is evident that their riding is over for the day.

Why are they gloomy? Not a boy of them can tell. One is from Princeton, too. They have been partners and *compañeros* and "worked" the HT cattle together for months, and nothing ever came in misunderstanding or cloud. The ranch house is their home, and theirs has been the unity of brothers.

A week ago a pretty girl, the daughter of one of the owners, came to the ranch from the East. She was protected in this venture by an old and gnarled aunt, watchful as a ferret; sour as a lime. Not that the pretty girl needs watching; she is indeed in every move propriety's climax. No soft or dulcet reason woos her to the West; she comes on no love errand. She is elegantly and profoundly tired of the East, that is all, and longs for western air and western sights. She has been at the HT ranch a week and the boys have met her, every one. The meeting or meetings were marked by awkwardness as to the boys, utter indifference as to the pretty girl. She met them as she met the ponies, cows, horned toads, and others animals, domestic and indigenous to Eastern New Mexico. While every cowboy was blushinglly conscious of her, she was purely and serenely guiltless of giving him a thought.

Before this pretty girl came the boys were friends and the calm tenor of their relations with each other had never a ripple. She was not there a day before each drew himself insensibly from the others, and a vague hostility shone dimly in their eyes. It was the instinct of the fighting male animal aroused by the presence of the pretty girl. She, however, proceeded on her daily way, sweetly unconscious of the sentiments she awakened.

* O. H. Lewis (Dan Quin): Kansas City Star.

Men are mere animals; women are, too, for that matter, but they are very different animals from men. The effort the race makes to be other, better, or different than beasts fails. It always failed; it will always fail. Civilization—culture—is the veriest veneer and famously thin. A year on the plains cracks this veneer—this shell—and leaves the animal exposed. This is by the expanding growth of all that is animal in a man; these attributes of the physical being fed and pampered by a plains existence.

The dark, vague, impalpable differences which cut off each of these creatures from his fellows and inspired him with an unreasoning and unmeasurable hate had grown with the brief week of their existence. A philosopher would look for trouble soon on the HT.

"What did you go take my saddle for, yesterday, Bill?" said Jack Moore to a boy by the name of Bill Watkins.

"'Cause I allows I'll ride it some," said Watkins. "Thought it might like to carry a high-grade cow-puncher, once."

"Well, don't take it no more," said Moore, moodily, ignoring the gay insolence in the reply. "Leastwise, don't come a-takin' of it an' sayin' nothin'. You can *palaver Americano*, can't you? When you aims to ride my saddle agin, ask for it; if you can't talk, make signs, an' if you can't make signs, shake a bush, but don't go to Injunin' off no saddle of mine no more."

"Whatever do you allow is liable to happen if I takes it agin to-morry?" inquired Bill in high scorn.

Bill was of a more vivacious temper than Moore.

"You takes it agin an' I mingles with you a whole lot, mighty prompt," replied Moore in a tone of obstinate injury.

These boys were brothers in affection before that pretty girl came, and either would have gone afoot all day to lend his saddle to the other. Going afoot, too, is the last thing, let me assure you, a cowboy will do.

"Well, don't you fail to mingle none," said Bill, with cheerful ferocity, "on account of its being me. I crosses the trail of the short-horn like you, over on the Panhandle onct, an' puts him in the fire an' has plenty of fun with him."

"Stop the play now, right yere," said Tom Rawlins, the HT range boss, who was sitting close at hand. "You all spring trouble 'round yere an' I'll be in it. Whatever's the

matter with all you people, anyway? You're like a passel of sore-'head' dogs for more'n a week now. You're shorely too many for me to *sabe*, an' I cl'ar gives you up."

The boys started some grumblin' reply, but the cook called them to supper just then, and, one animalism becoming overshadowed by another, they forgot their rancor and vague animosities in thoughts of supplying their hunger. Toward the last of the repast Rawlins arose, and going to another room began overlooking some entries in the ranch books.

The pretty girl did not eat at the ranch table. She had little banquets in her own room. Just then, she was in her room and began singing in a low tone some tender little love song that seemed born of a sigh and a tear. The boys at supper heard her, and their resentment of each other's existence began again to flame in their breasts and burn deeply in their eyes. None of these savages was in the least degree in love with the pretty girl, either. They might have become so, all or any of them.

The singing went on in a cooing, soft way that did not bring you the words—only the music.

"What I says about my saddle awhile back, I means," said Moore, finally, turning a dark look on Watkins.

"See yere!" said Watkins in an exasperated tone—he was as vicious as Moore—"if you're p'intin' out for a war jig with me, don't fool 'round none for reasons, but jest let 'er roll. Come a-runnin', an' don't bother none with ceremony."

"A man don't have to have no reasons for crawlin' you none," said Moore. "You're fair game, you are. Any one's licensed to chase you 'round jest for fun an' exercise."

"You can gamble," said Watkins, confidently, "any man as chases me 'round much will regard it as a thrillin' pas-time. He won't get fat at it, none whatever."

"As you all seems to feel that a-way," said Moore, "I'll step out an' shoot with you right now."

"Well, I'll shore go you," said Watkins.

They arose and stepped out at the door. It was gathering dark, but it was light enough to shoot by.

The other cowboys followed in silence. Not one said a word in comment or interference. They were grave and serious, but passive. It is not good form to interfere with other people's duels in the Southwest. The pretty girl was

still singing, and the strains fell softly on the ears of the cowboys. Every one, whether onlooker or principal, felt inspired with a licking pleased anticipation of the blood to be soon set flowing. Nothing was said of distance. They separated to about forty paces and turned to face each other. Each wore his "Colt's 45," the loosely-buckled belt letting it rest low down on the right hip. Each threw down his big hat and stood at apparent ease, with his thumbs caught in the pistol belt.

"Shall you give the word, or me?" said Moore.

"You give it," said Watkins. "It'll be a funny passage in American history if you get your artillery to the front any sooner than I do, then."

"Be you ready?" asked Jack.

"Shore."

"Then—go!"

"Bang! bang! bang! bang!" went both pistols together, and with a rapidity not to be counted. Moore got a crease in his left shoulder—a mere wound to the flesh—and Watkins fell with a bullet in his side. Rawlins, the range boss, came running out. He understood all at a look. Hastily examining Moore, he discovered that his hurt was nothing serious. The others carried Watkins into the house.

"Take my pony, saddled at the fence, Jack," said Rawlins, "and pull your freight. This yere man's goin' to die."

"Which I shorely hopes he does," said Jack, bitterly. "I'll go, though. I ain't got no use for none of these yere he-shorthorns around the HT."

So he took Rawlins's pony, and when he stopped riding in the morning it was no marvel that the poor pony hung his head dejectedly, while his flanks steamed and quivered. He was almost one hundred miles from his last corn, and cooled his nervous muzzle as he took his morning drink in the *Rio Pecos*, a stream far to the west of the HT.

* * * * *

"Some shooting scrape about their saddles, miss; that's all." So reported Rawlins to the pretty girl.

"Isn't it horrible!" shuddered the pretty girl in reply.

The next morning the pretty girl and her gnarled and twisted aunt paid the injured Watkins a visit. This sight so affected the other three cowboys that they at once saddled and rode away to the northwest to work some cattle over on

the Ocate Mesa. They intended to be gone three months. They looked black and forbidding as they galloped away.

"It's a pity Jack Moore ain't no better pistol shot," said one, as the picture of the pretty girl visiting the wounded Watkins arose in his mind.

"That's whatever," assented the others.

The pretty girl was full of sympathy for the stricken Watkins. It occurred to her, too, that his profile was clear and handsome. He was certainly very pale, and this stirred the depths of her feminine nature. She and her aunt came to see the invalid every day. Once the pretty girl said she would bring him a book to read and while away the hours, which seemed shod with lead.

"I can't read," said Watkins, in a tone of deepest shame. "I never learned. I should like to read, too, but there's no one to teach me. So that settles that," and the rascal expressed a deep sigh.

Watkins lied. It was he who was the Princeton man. He said afterward that this lie was the only real good work he ever did in his life.

So the pretty girl came every day and gave Watkins a reading lesson, while the gnarled aunt read a book and watched them through the open door.

"By the way," said Watkins one day, "where's Moore?"

"Why?" asked the range boss, to whom the question was put.

"You tell him," said Watkins, his eyes beginning to gather rage, "that when I get out I'll be lookin' for him with something besides a field glass."

"Oh, no!" said the pretty girl, rising and coming toward his couch. Her tone showed great disturbance and fear at the thought.

As he gazed at her, the look changed in his eyes. Hate for Moore gave place to something else.

"No," he said at last. "Tell him it's all right, Rawlins."

The pretty girl thought him very noble.

Watkins was out in five weeks and could go about the ranch. One night Rawlins thought he heard a pony in the yard and arose to remedy the matter. As he stepped out a couple passed him in the moonlight. It was Watkins and the pretty girl. The caitiff's arm was around her.

KNOUTED: A STORY OF SIBERIA *

Mme. Ardloff was a slender, blond-haired little Parisian who once used to dance lightly in the ball-rooms of the Champs-Élysées, and chatter gayly of the things of the boulevard; but she now no longer felt interest in anything. Paris was to her a vanished dream, Siberia an unchanging reality. Nine months out of every year of blank, mournful snows, white silence, extending from horizon to horizon; then a brief respite, when the fields caught flower, and color rushed through every valley and over every hill, and insects buzzed in the green underwood of the steppes—such is Siberia.

She had married Count Ardloff, the Governor of Tobolsk, to save her father from ruin; but this child of the asphalt thrived but poorly in the desert, and her husband saw, and with fierce anger, that she could not endure her present life; saw there was nothing in common between them but the chain of marriage by which he held her.

“Scratch the Russian and you will find the Tartar.” Nothing can be more true. Primitive races can but ape the sentiments and refinements of feeling which make bearable our lives, and Count Ardloff could not pass the gulf—the impassable gulf—the gulf made by centuries of civilization which lay between him and his wife. He could hold her to his bosom, but even then she seemed nearer to Vanca, a young Polish officer, than to him.

And yet no friendship could be purer; they were merely exiles who talked of their distant homes, their lost friends, and their abandoned dreams.

But such sentiments are little understood in Siberia, and ugly little rumors concerning Mme. Ardloff and young Vanca had begun to be whispered—the end of a phrase hissed slightly and a concluding smile turned somewhat serpent-wise—that was all.

Count Ardloff watched and waited, as suspicious and fierce as a wildcat.

He was a man about fifty, his beard was strong and gray, and he stood like a Hercules. Five years passed in Paris had lent him a disguise which, in his ordinary moods, perfectly enabled him to hide his Tartar character, and when

* George Moore: Collected Sketches.

she married him the bright French girl little thought that a few glasses of champagne or a slight contradiction would transform the elegant gentleman on whose arm she leaned into a savage Cossack.

Now a fierce gleam shot from his eyes as they fell upon his wife, who, lying back in her easy-chair, sat languidly listening to Vanca's clear voice. It mattered not to the count what they were saying. He did not stay to consider whether they were planning an elopement or talking of the emperor. He merely hated her for appearing to be so intimate with one of his officers. She belonged to him; she was his property—a property he had acquired because it had pleased him to do so. What, then, did she mean by thinking of or concerning herself about any one else?

These were the count's thoughts as he took the cards that had been handed to him and shuffled them through his strong fingers. Some eight or a dozen gentlemen in the uniform of the Russian army were grouped around him, a lady sat at the piano, and couples were seated under the greenery of the exotic plants with which the recesses of the room were filled. There was not much conversation, the interest of the company being apparently centred in the count. Every now and then some one passed across the room and, after watching the cards for a few minutes, would cringingly murmur some words of adulation. Every phrase began or ended with "Your Excellency" and was rounded off with a bow.

But the count paid very little attention to his flatterers. When he had finished dealing, as he threw down the last card, he glanced again where his wife was sitting.

As she listened to the young Pole her attitude grew more and more abandoned. He spoke to her of his past life, of a lost love; and the accents of regret with which he narrated his experiences reminded her of how she had suffered similar deceptions, of how her aspirations and glad visions had, like his, perished. They spoke of those sad, eternal truths which each pair of lovers fancy they alone have discovered, but which have moved all past generations, as they will doubtless move all those which are coming to birth, till man's soul has ceased to be what it is.

So absorbed were Vanca and Mme. Ardloff in the contemplation of the past that they were only so much conscious of each other as each helped the other to realize their separate

lives. The outer world had faded from them, and in the insinuating emotion which drew them together she leaned her hands over the edge of the chair, and, following the movement instinctively, he took up the glove she had laid down and played with it.

At this sign of intimacy the count's eyes flashed vindictively and he called to his wife impatiently:

"Marie, will you order some champagne?"

Without answering she told Vanca to ring the bell. Instantly rising, he complied with her request, and then, forgetting he had not returned the countess her glove, stopped to speak to a friend. His friend tried to warn him with a look, but before a word could be said the Pole had walked across the room, still twirling the fatal glove in his fingers.

He did this with a certain nonchalance that would have angered a better-tempered man than Count Ardloff. A grim scowl passed across his face and he whispered something to an aide-de-camp who stood near him.

The officer left the room.

It was a terrible moment, full of consternation and silence, but before the unfortunate Pole had time to realize his danger two Cossack soldiers entered the apartment. The company gave way before them, withdrawing into groups and lines. Vanca had his back turned to them and he still wrapped the fatal glove round his finger. He stood as if lost in reverie, scanning a marble bust of the countess.

At last the stillness of the room awoke him and, as the Cossacks were about to seize him, he turned. His frightened eyes met theirs; he started back precipitately, but with a quiet movement the soldiers laid hands upon him. In a low voice the aide-de-camp said:

"You are arrested by order of His Excellency."

Dazed and bewildered, Vanca pushed the soldiers from him and, stretching forth his hands, appealed to the count.

"How is this, Your Excellency?" he cried wildly. "I am guilty of nothing. There must be some mistake."

Count Ardloff stood, broad, tall, and vindictive, with the light of the lustre shining full on his high, bald forehead; an iron-gray beard concealed the lower part of his square face.

Vanca made one more appeal and then stopped puzzled.

Mme. Ardloff arose, pale and trembling, but her husband motioned her away.

The guests remained in rows, still as the figures of a frieze, and at a sign from the officer, with a movement of shoulders the Cossacks forced the Pole from the room.

The scene was very short.

Immediately after the count spoke of indifferent things and glasses of champagne were handed round. Mme. Ardloff stared vacantly, unable to collect her thoughts, till, suddenly seeing the glove which Vanca had dropped, the reason of his arrest dawned upon her and she trembled violently, and so agitated was she that she could scarcely say good-by to her guests. The count, however, dismissed them rapidly, speaking all the while of the summer, the number of convicts that had escaped from the mines, and the emperor.

When husband and wife were alone the count picked up the glove and handed it to the countess with an ironical smile, and, without alluding to what had happened, said that it was very late and advised her to retire to her room.

She obeyed without answering.

She knew something horrible was going to happen and, stupefied with fear, she mounted the staircase. He stayed behind to give an order and, mastering her fears, she listened.

He was talking in the hall below to his aide-de-camp, and she heard him say that Vanca must be at once degraded to the ranks, and her heart beat with joy at the prospect of his escaping with so slight a punishment. Her emotion was so great that she did not catch the next phrase, and when she heard again her husband was telling his officer to have all in readiness, that he would be at the barracks at nine next morning.

There was something strange in this, and Mme. Ardloff went trembling to her room. The shadows seemed livid and the lamp burned luridly, and, oppressed with the horrors of the evening, she sat in the silence, afraid to go to bed.

Through the frozen window-panes she could see glistening the wide snows of the Siberian winter. Wearily she asked herself why she had been condemned to live in these impassable deserts. The howl of a dog broke the stillness of the night, and it sounded in her excited mind like the last dying cry of some poor one unjustly done to death. What was to become of Vanca? Why could not she save him? Save him! Was there need for that? Starting to her feet, she strove by an effort of will to rid herself of her terrors. Then, shaken with forebodings and regrets, she undressed;

but a hundred fancies assailed her imagination and gave life to the figures on the tapestry, to the shadows on the floor, and white, like a ghost in a tomb, she lay in her large bed.

Sleep fled from her until at last she fell into a deep, dreamless torpor, from which, toward morning, she was awakened by a heavy tramping of feet in the corridor. A moment after her husband entered. He was attired in the Russian military cloak and his hand was on his sword.

"Get up," he said impatiently. "I want you to come out with me. I have ordered the sledge."

"Why should I get up at this hour? It is only just daylight and I am very tired."

"I am sorry you are tired, but I want you to come to the barracks."

Remembering the order she had heard given overnight, Mme. Ardloff turned pale at the mention of the word barracks. Twenty times she felt an indefinite desire rising up within her to throw herself into his arms and beg of him to be merciful; but he looked so implacable that her courage died away, and she feared that any interest she might show for Vanca would only further prejudice his chance of escape.

Wrapping her long blue-fox fur mantle around her, she told him she was ready. He looked to see if she had forgotten anything. Her handkerchief lay on the table, and as he handed it to her his attention was attracted by a flacon de sel volatile.

"You may want this," he said, and slipped it into her pocket.

"What do you mean?" she said, turning suddenly. "Are you going to murder me?"

"To murder you!" he replied, laughing cynically; "what nonsense!"

And half pushing her before him they descended the staircase. She tried several times to resist him, but he got her into the sledge.

"To the barracks," he cried to the coachman, as he sat down beside his wife and arranged the rugs.

During the drive neither spoke a word. His face was clouded in a sort of sullen moodiness, and terrified she looked down the dazzling perspectives of the outlying streets. The barracks were situated at the further end of the eastern suburb. The horses cantered briskly and soon a large building

appeared. It stood alone; all round stretched the white expanse of the steppes; and the sledge passed a large gateway into the barrack square, which had been cleared of snow.

The officer who was waiting to receive them helped the count to descend. Mme. Ardloff was told to remain seated.

Immediately after a trumpeter blew a call and a file of men marched to within a few yards of the sledge and formed themselves into a double line.

"Front rank, quick march!" cried the officer. When they had gone eight paces he cried "Halt!" and then gave the order, "Right-about turn!"

Vanca was then led forth. He walked between two soldiers. He was naked to the waist and behind came the executioner. He carried in his hand the barbarous knout and over his shoulder dangled its seven cruel lashes.

In Russia an officer of the army cannot be flogged, but he can be degraded to the ranks in twenty-four hours. This is what happened in the present case. Vanca was now a common soldier and was waiting to receive the fifty lashes to which he had been sentenced.

And the fashion of administering the knout in Russia is as follows: The condemned man is forced to walk between two soldiers; before him, holding a sword pointed at his breast, is an officer, who steps backward with a slow and precise pace, which regulates the strokes which the executioner administers. So terrible are the loaded thongs, armed at the end with sharp iron hooks, that at the tenth or eleventh blow even the most robust fall fainting to the ground. Sometimes, however, the executioner is merciful and kills the victim outright, but more often he is forbidden to strike with his full force and the mangled being is carried to a hospital and cured of his wounds, and this is repeated until he has received his full punishment.

Such is Russia—and for Vanca all was now prepared; the soldiers stood in line, the executioner twirled his lashes, only an officer to lead the way remained to be appointed. It was for Count Ardloff to do this.

He looked around; there were half a dozen men standing around him, any one of whom he might have chosen. As he glanced from one to the other, his attention was attracted by a man who, from a doorway at the other end of the barrack-yard, was eagerly watching.

"Who is that man?" asked the count.

The man was called. It was Vanca's brother.

"What are you waiting about the doorway for?"

"I was waiting to see if your excellency would pardon my poor brother," replied the Pole.

"Pardon your brother," said Count Ardloff, with a bitter sneer; "I will show you how I pardon. Draw your sword and lead the way, and take care you don't walk too fast."

After one deep, questioning look, which told him that the Russian meant to be obeyed, he broke his sword across his knee and said, as he hurled the pieces scornfully aside:

"Do with me as you will, but I will not serve a country inhabited by barbarians and governed by fiends."

Even the Cossacks exchanged glances of sympathy, and had they known the whole truth it was not improbable that they might have revolted. Suffice to say that for a moment Mme. Ardloff feared for her husband's safety. But his fierce brutality dominated his soldiers, and the elder Vanca was manacled and a heavy guard placed over him.

The scene that presented itself was this: Two files of soldiers, Count Ardloff commanding, stern and implacable; one brother half-naked and bleeding, the other in irons; a pale woman with agony written in her face, wrapped up in furs; and a pair of horses munching in their nose-bags, unconscious of aught else.

The officer took another step back; the seven thongs whistled in the air and again tore into red furrows the lacerated flesh. As Vanca staggered forward, his face convulsed with pain, his eyes fixed on Mme. Ardloff, and they asked with a terrible eloquence, "Oh, why did your beauty betray me?"

Her hands were clasped, and in her emotion, having lost all power of utterance, she strove to send forth her soul to tell him how innocent she was. Then another blow fell, and the blood squirted horribly and the flesh hung ragged. It was sickening, and from sheer horror and nausea Mme. Ardloff fainted. But it was her husband's intention that she should witness to the end the revenge he had so carefully prepared, and thrusting his hand in the pocket of her mantle he produced the bottle of sal volatile. With this he quickly restored her to consciousness, and then she heard him saying:

"Awake! awake! for I wish you to see how I punish those who insult me."

Vanca had now received nine strokes. He was but a raw mass of quivering flesh. Hopeless and faintly, like one in a nightmare, Mme. Ardloff strove to speak, until at last the words long denied her rose to her lips, but they came too late, and, mad with pain, the tortured man, with a whirling, staggering motion, precipitated himself on the drawn sword and fell to the ground a corpse.

This was unexpected. There were hurried words and a trampling of feet, and a deep silence, but Mme. Ardloff remembered little. The imprecations the elder brother hurled after her as she was driven away sounded dim and indistinct in her ears during the long days of delirium which followed this double tragedy, for on arriving home she saw her husband make out the order for Vanca's transportation to the mercury mines.

She pleaded and prayed wildly, but the count only smiled grimly in reply to her hysterical supplications. It seemed to her that the heavens should fall to crush, that the earth should open to receive so inhuman a monster. She raised her hands, she screamed madly, her thoughts danced before her, faded, and then there was a blank; and during several weeks, for her, Time stood still.

Slowly her senses returned to her; slowly—through a dim mist, through a heavy torpor that held her powerless and inert—they returned to her, and with them came the ghastly remembrance of a terrible crime. The subject was never alluded to. The affair was hushed up; but time could neither blot nor tear this cruel page out of Mme. Ardloff's life.

Her only consolation was the certainty that no pain was in store for her greater than she experienced when, years after, in a ballroom at St. Petersburg, Count Vanca, an old man with long white hair and a life's sorrow on his face, said to her:

“Madame, I hope your children are very well.”

WHEN WILL PREVAILS*

When he, the last of those whom men call Buddha, was on earth, he paused, one day, beneath the leafage of a wide-branched tree, to counsel men and maids assembled there; and while he spoke it strangely happened that a rush of rain, from out the west, fell roundabout while yet the sun was shining unobscured.

So large and limpid, pure, was every drop, the people, smiling, caught them in their hands and cried.

“Behold!”

“A rain of pearls!”

“A rain of pearls, indeed,” the Buddha answered them, then putting up his open palms, he caught some drops which sifted through the glistening leaves, and lo! they all became real pearls the instant of his touch.

“A miracle!”

“Rain turned to pearls!”

The concourse wildly shouted.

“Nay, friends; no miracle,” the Buddha made reply; ‘twas done but by our will—thy will and mine. The human will, unless spurred on by selfishness, is ever mightier than a drop of rain—ay, mightier far than any soulless thing. But even now, had you, so moved by greed, said, ‘Buddha, turn these drops of rain to pearls, and give us them that we are thus made rich!’ my power had failed, and these fair gems had ever been but drops of rain and no thing else.”

Thus speaking, tossed he then the pearls about, and those they fell upon were so much awed by Buddha’s words they scarce put up their hands to clasp the treasure fast.

“But, Buddha,” said a man whose face showed puzzled wonderment, “may no man have his will in anything?”

“If what he wills be willed aright. For men, and not for man, was this earth made and all that it contains. If one

* *To the Editor of Short Stories—Respected Sir:* Herewith I send you, as a gift, a little tale of him who stands in Thibet, my far-distant home, as Christ stands here in this fair land of yours—a tale of Buddha. If I, a stranger in a stranger’s market-place, have offered gift too slight, I pray you I may be forgiven. But if, O Sahib, you can print my story, then will I feel that all this world is kin, and race and color are not marks for blame.

With most profound salaams, your servant ever,

INGODEEGI HOWADEEZ, ex-Thibetan.

man, for himself, shall crave such things as heaven meant for all, his willing is in vain. But if, not thinking of himself, he wills for others what would profit him, the thing he wishes straightway comes—as much, too, for himself as for his fellow-men. 'Tis self alone which thwarteth self. To pine for no thing, selfishly, is surest way of wooing things to come."

That night, within her bower, alone, a maiden wept hot, and bitter tears.

"The Buddha cannot err," she moaned, "so since I know I love my lover selfishly, how can I, willing hence to keep him, fail to lose him?"

"Nay, say not so, sweet soul," then softly spake a voice; and starting up, dismayed, the weeping one was clasped within her lover's arms, he having stolen to her unawares.

"*Thou* hast no cause for grief. Unselfish is thy love, for thou dost give and take love for my sake, as much as thou dost give and take it for thine own. Ne'er think it selfish more. And see—all truly, too, the Buddha spoke, for he did say that what one wills for other than himself prevails; then must our love prevail, since each doth will it so for both. And as no twain can grant this world a greater boon than love, when love *is* love, that which we so do give is made unselfish since it profits all as well as one. So dry thy tears—thou hast no cause for grief."

And then again were liquid drops made gems.

Her lover's kisses turned the maiden's tears to pearls of love

LITTLE PETRO'S ANTHEM *

Petro was alone in the great city of the New World. The man who had brought him across the broad ocean, so far away from sunny Italy, had deserted him, and now the woman who had let his master their lodging told him money was money and she could keep him no longer for nothing. He thought the grief in his heart would burst it; neither voice nor tears would come; he gave one look around him and then went out, bareheaded and empty-handed.

He was a very little fellow, with short, dark curls clustered about a sadly sweet face, with large, deep eyes that told you his story without need of words.

On the doorstep Petro sank, his head in his arms, and so for a long time he remained without moving. A small, sorry-looking kitten, coming inquisitively along the hall, was stopped in her way by this little heap of humanity. She paused a moment, and then made a gentle dab at it with her paw; not attracting his attention, she became more bold, and brushed by the little shoulder, softly purring, with that dumb look of sympathy in her eyes which raises the animal so near to the human being. But Petro did not move. Then puss, still purring, climbed upon his arm, crept underneath his wrist close to his drooping head, where, curling up, she nestled. Petro lifted his head and saw her; took her up in his arms—to her great discomfort—held her tight to his breast, and burst into tears.

“Ah! mio piccolo,” he sobbed, “vieni sul mio cuore” (Ah! my little one, come to my heart), and rocked himself to and fro on the step. By degrees he became calm and softly sang, under his breath, snatches of melody his mother had sung over her flower stall in that dear far-away land. And later, when a coming crowd of noisy boys threatened his peace, he gathered the kitten miscellaneously into his arms, and starting up, trudged on, straight ahead—anywhere.

* * * * *

In a large church an organist was sitting, dreaming, at the organ. It was late in the afternoon of a busy day; the stained glass was growing deeper tinted; only one window showed clearly, and that was in line with the sinking sun.

* Clyde Fitch: Boston Traveler.

Besides, the colors in this window were lighter—against a pale blue sky the figure of the Good Shepherd in a robe of white, holding a small ewe lamb tenderly in his arms. It stood out from the surrounding dimness and gloom, and even caught the eye of the tired man at the organ. "Beautiful window," he murmured half-aloud, and then with a sigh ran his fingers over the keys, running one familiar strain into another, or composing out of his own mood through his finger tips. And the melody stole through the great church, sweet and lovely, filling the shadowy nave and aisles and chancel—stole away down to a tiny figure standing awe-struck just inside the doors, and filled his little heart to overflowing.

Petro had heard in the street outside the faint sound of the organ, and, hungry for the music he loved, had dared to push between the half-closed doors into the church. There, opposite the window of the Good Shepherd he stood, rapt and motionless, with the kitten clasped tightly in his arms and bathed in the soft colors that fell upon him; he seemed a reflection of the sun-illuminated figure in the memorial window.

Petro was drawn nearer and nearer to the music, and slowly and softly he went up the long aisle, his head barely reaching to the top of the old-fashioned pews. Only once he stopped to rearrange the kitten, which was slipping down and had been for some time in imminent danger of death by suffocation; then he went on. A great longing came to him to sing, and, as if in answer, the organist commenced to play something familiar to the child. It was only an "Ave Maria" often sung, but it was the same Petro had sung in the little church at home, the same he had heard in the great cathedral, and suddenly he opened his lips and sang again:

"A-ve Mar-i-a! A-ve Mar-i-a!
O-ra pro-no-bis"—

on to the end. He let his arms fall and freed the kitten! How his heart beat! how his breast swelled as he sang, with two big tears ready to fall from his full eyes.

The organist had half-turned, startled at the first note, but had continued playing, fearing the singer would stop when he did. The child, however, seemed unconscious of his surroundings, singing in his clear, sweet soprano through the last repetition:

"A-ve A-ve Mar-i-a"—

and then he stood motionless, hands clasped, eyes wet, behind the organist.

The man drew him toward him, and his own voice was not of the strongest as he asked who had taught him to sing.

"My mother, in Italy, before she died," Petro said, with a faint smile, which touched the musician inexpressibly. He had picked up English quickly after his arrival in America, and now could speak it well, and he answered a few questions about his short life earnestly and quietly.

The organist was impressed strongly by his story, and ran his fingers over the keys of the organ for a few minutes without speaking, trying to think of some way to help him. He could not himself offer him a home, for his own household was already crowded; but he would take him back with him for the present until some other plan could be determined on.

He had made up his mind already that Petro should sing in the choir at Easter.

It was when they started to leave the church that Petro remembered puss. In great distress he commenced an arduous search for her, and she was finally found at the foot of the pulpit fast asleep. The organist was much amused at this, and said he should tell the rector of the effect of his pulpit even upon dumb animals. He himself did not at first see the need of taking the kitten with them, but Petro wished it so strongly that he consented. At the end of the aisle, where he had stood when he first entered the church, Petro paused. It must have been the simplicity of the window that attracted him. He had seen much more splendid ones in his own art-perfected country. Perhaps he could understand this figure better than those magnificent mitred and sceptred figures of the stained glass and painted frescoes in his birthplace.

"That window is in memory of a little boy," said the organist, "a little boy like you. The Lord took him up into his arms and his mother is left here alone, and she gave that window in memory of him."

Tears came into the child's eyes.

"Has he him so?" he asked, pointing to the window, and then, without waiting for an answer, he added: "But Petro, he is alone and his mother. He has so."

His fingers closed tightly about the hand of the organist and they passed on out through the porch.

Petro's new life was very strange to him, but he grew

more and more accustomed to it, and tried to show his gratitude in a bashful, boyish way. He won the hearts of all the family, and the organist's wife even pleaded to keep him with them until he grew old enough to care for himself. He was one of those little souls a true woman loves to guide and foster. They had both watched him closely at first, for it was not a little dangerous, this taking a strange child into one's home; but the boy in a short time disarmed them of all suspicion.

Every day he went with his new friend to the rehearsal and made friends in a quiet, odd little way among the other choristers.

So the few days before Easter passed quickly by. Rumors of his protégé and his beautiful voice the organist purposely started, hoping to excite an interest which might lead to something, and in his heart he had an especial hope, of which, however, he said nothing.

"Not-with the old-leav-en, neither the leaven of mal-ice and wick-ed-ness."

The sunshine through a golden window beneath him made a radiance about him, and, with the scent of the lilies on the altar, floated over the boy like incense, while he sweetly finished—

"But-with the un-leavened bread-of-sin-cer-i-ty, sincerity and truth, sincerity-and-truth and truth!"

And the chorus seemed to catch the words rapt in their beautiful music, and shouted them in grander, mightier strains to all the church, the earth, the sky!

The day of the great feast came with its music and flowers and gladness, and Petro thought he had never been so happy as he stood in his white robe, at the end of the first row of the choristers, ready to sing—alone. He was not frightened. The organist had trained him well, and the boy was unconscious of everything save the music. He was to sing the first of the special anthems, and the last of the preceding responses had been said. He watched for the signal, and when it came he only clasped his hands a little tighter under his cotta, and lifted his head and sang:

"Christ our Pass-o-ver is sac-ri-ficed for us."

His eyes were fixed on the window where the Good Shepherd held the lamb in his arms; it helped him to understand, and the words came to the listening congregation with won-

derful tenderness and meaning. As he finished, burst from the throats of all the white-robed singers the repetition:

“Therefore, there-fore let us keep, us keep, us keep, the feast!”

An echo of the last words died away from the lips of the boys, and the voices were hushed as, first softly, then rising clearer and higher, Petro sang again.

There were many tearful eyes turned toward the little chorister when he had finished, and the organist gave a loud sigh and said, half-aloud to himself: “Ah! that voice was not given him for nothing.”

His eyes wandered over the crowd of familiar faces, all earnest and wondering now, toward a little woman who sat underneath the window where Petro once had stood.

She sat quite still, her eyes fixed longingly on the boy, who was standing, motionless as she, with his lips parted and his head thrown slightly back. She could see his little breast still heaving, while in her own ears and heart there seemed to ring again:

“Sacrificed for us, for us, for me,” she added; “sacrificed for me. Let us keep the feast—the feast—ah! how?” she asked, and drew the heavy black veil she wore over her face and sank down upon her knees.

After service question after question was asked and answered about Petro, and the organist was content and waited.

The next morning's mail brought him a letter which he seemed to have expected; it was a square envelope with a small black seal upon it.

“From Mrs. Holland,” he said, in answer to his wife's look of inquiry, and reading, added: “It is as I hoped.”

In a few moments more he started to go out. His wife helped him on with his coat.

“I am so glad,” she said, “and so happy. You're always helping some one, and me most of all, you dear boy!” She was leaning up to fasten the top button of his coat; he bent down and—interrupted her. Then he laughed.

“Boy! boy at forty-two. What'll I be at eighty?”

“Still a boy; always a boy to me.”

Late that same day he and Petro went into the library by themselves, and there he asked the little fellow how he would like to live with a dear, kind lady, who would care for him and love him as if she were his own mother.

"Does she sell flowers?" Petro asked.

"No," answered the organist, smiling, "but she buys them. She is not poor; she lives in a large house, with beautiful things about her; a piano"—the boy's eyes were sparkling.

"Oh!" he exclaimed—then suddenly his eyes grew sorrowful—"would I have to leave you?"

His friend explained to him how it was impossible for them to have him with them always, although they wished to, and should always love him. But this lady was kind and good. She had lost a little boy like Petro and was lonely. She had heard him sing and had seen him, and she wanted him to come and live with her and try to love her.

Petro finally consented. He bade the family a rather tearful good-by, and left with them, for remembrance, the one thing of his own he had been fond of, his only possession, the kitten.

* * * * *

"This is your little Italian singer," said the organist to Mrs. Holland, and then he went away and left them together.

Returning later and going in unannounced, as he had been asked to do, he instinctively stopped a moment in the doorway of the room where he had left his charge.

"My other mother sang them to me," Petro was saying, slowly and sweetly, "and now Petro will sing them to you." And, listening, his friend heard him singing some Italian flower songs; they were the same he had sung to the kitten the day he wandered into the church. He stood by the lady as he sang, leaning against the side of her chair; and when he had finished she clasped him in her arms, and he, standing up on tip-toe, reached his little hands about her neck and laid his cheek against hers.

The organist turned and went out, closing the door softly behind him.

ETCHINGS: UNDER THE CEBIA *

From the great brassy arch above the sunlight poured in waves of heat which throbbed and quivered. The lizards, bright-eyed, brown-bodied, agile, ran about or sprang on some lurking insect, crunching it between their sharp little teeth with a clicking sound. A dark face showed itself for a moment between the tall canes, standing motionless in the heat, and the polished circle of the muzzle of a rifle glanced.

* * * * *

A single canoe comes up the edge of the river. In the bow and running backward as he poles is a tall, lithe, brown-skinned figure in a cotton kilt. Squatting in the stern is a girl of sixteen, steering. Swiftly the frail craft shoots up to the landing and there is a puff of smoke: the man falls over sidewise as the canoe, caught by the current, is whirled down the stream. The wounded one floats away struggling feebly, while splashes far and near show the black caiman have scented food. There is a desperate and hideous struggle as the mailed snouts clash, tearing it.

* * * * *

Beyond the canes and under the ceiba tree, against which a rifle leans, a man is eating supper by a speck of fire. Above him a hammock swings. Back there in the bush a haggard but dry-eyed girl is creeping along, noiselessly, steadily, carefully; noting everything, pausing to listen, coming surely, slowly! He is a fool who sleeps when a girl of the Indian blood knows her heart is dead.

The guttural humming of the tree-frogs forms the bass of the myriad-voiced chorus of the tropic night, and the hammock swings gently to and fro. The mosquito-net is strangely like a shroud. A shadow steals out from the darkness. A knife hovers for a second and then is driven surely home. A single gasping groan is followed by a slow drip, drip—the brown ants will have a feast—

And the red eye of the fire looks on,

* * * * *

In the morning, under the ceibia, a girl sits with covered head. In the open the bright-eyed lizards run and spring. Overhead a buzzard circles slowly under the clear blue sky.

* Alfred Balch: For Short Stories.

EL NUMERO TRECE *

Simon Campallano was born on the 13th of December, 1813.

He was the thirteenth son, and all his brothers died one after the other, and the last one expired on Simon's thirteenth birthday.

When he arrived at the age of discretion and pondered on these arithmetical problems in connection with his family, he conceived an aversion toward the number thirteen, although afterward, with the carelessness of youth, he succeeded in dispelling that gloomy superstition from his mind.

His parents did not leave him richly endowed with worldly goods, therefore he determined to seek his fortune in Madrid and leave his native place forever. His education had been very commonplace, but he was quite prepossessing, though not very handsome. However, he knew enough to make his way in the world. He was lively, frank, and enterprising, and endowed with that energetic, audacious spirit which is a sure aid to success. He was determined to become a rich man, and his glowing imagination made him fancy that he would grasp the prize as soon as he stepped his foot in Madrid.

As he had some money he quickly made friends on his arrival at the capital, and commenced a new life which suited him well. In fact, Madrid even seemed small compared to his glowing aspirations, but he felt quite satisfied with his lot. Three roads to fortune were open before him: Literature, politics, and commerce.

He considered that it was too late to venture into a literary calling, and a political career suited him better. As for a commercial position, his naturally impatient disposition could not brook the thought of commencing life as a simple clerk. But after due reflection he came to the conclusion that there was nothing so desirable in life as to be rich, so he made up his mind to take the commercial chance.

However, all his castles in the air came tumbling to the ground, like a lot of houses built of cards. Notwithstanding he could not believe that his star of good fortune was eclipsed, though everything he undertook failed. It seemed as though fate were really against him.

Suddenly it occurred to him that the number of the

* Spanish of José Selgas : Mary Springer : For Short Stories.

house where he was living was 13, and that fatal number brought to his mind all that had happened to him in connection with it, so he attributed all his bad luck to the unlucky figures which had so overshadowed his destiny. Therefore he changed his residence. But he bought a lottery ticket in which that number did not enter, as though defying his enemy and to try whether his ill-luck was really due to that cause.

At last the day of the drawing arrived, and nervous and trembling with anxiety, he looked at his ticket and discovered that fate had proved propitious to him. It was not a very large sum, yet it made him feel that he had conquered his dreaded antagonist.

However, that did not seem sufficient proof, so he bought another ticket, No. 12, but this time the largest prize was drawn by No. 13.

For some time he was completely prostrated by this blow, and did not dare to undertake any new schemes. At every turn No. 13 appeared like a ghost before him, defeating his hopes and frustrating his plans.

His friends noticed that he was taciturn and morose and that he often talked to himself. But after a while, with the elasticity of youth, he finally recovered his spirits. There is always some ray of light which sheds its beneficent beam on the young, dissipating the fantastic shadows which sometimes cloud their minds.

What had happened to Simon? He had seen a pair of black eyes, audacious and beaming with fun, capable of dissipating any sorrow; smiling red lips, two cheeks like roses, and a beautiful slender figure, as straight as a reed. This beautiful creature was the personification of joy and was full of mirth and mischievous as a sprite. Simon could not help noticing that she gave him sweet glances and smiled on him with favor. Therefore he began to grow animated, like a flickering wick newly fed with oil. He became a new man and more hopeful as a new horizon opened to his view, while he said to himself:

“Yes, Mariana is really a treasure, for she has youth, beauty, talent, and is good-natured. She belongs to a good family, and she has an uncle in America who is a millionaire and an old bachelor as well. He will doubtless make Mariana his heiress, which will make her as sweet and toothsome as honey on rose-leaves.”

While he summed up all her attractions, he rubbed his hands gleefully, with the satisfaction of a man who has found the road to fortune.

"Very well," he said to himself, winking one eye. "I shall have a fine residence, a good table, a carriage, everything that is nice, and—an adorable wife. It will be wonderful good luck for me, but I shall live through it. As I am not ambitious I can get on with that."

So he began to make eyes at Mariana, which pleased her so much that she laughed whenever she found herself alone, enjoyed at the thought that Simon was in love with her.

There was no obstacle to hinder their happiness; but as they were expecting their uncle from America, Simon insisted that they should await his arrival in order to obtain his approval, and get married then, as the millionaire was virtually the head of the family. Mariana laughed at Simon's earnestness and desire to please her uncle.

"Very well," she said. "It is very good in you to show him such consideration, but he will feel surprised at your asking him for what is not his to give away."

"You are beside yourself," replied Simon, "to think of getting married without paying any regard to your uncle; but I do not feel so well acquainted with him to treat him with such discourtesy."

On the eve of the day that Mariana's uncle was expected Simon went to Mariana's house, and as soon as he entered he became aware of a great commotion in the family. He felt anxious, but Mariana's merry-laugh reassured him, while she exclaimed:

"We have a letter from my uncle!"

So saying, she placed this document in his hand.

"MY DEAR SISTER:—I hasten to write to you, because bad news travels fast, and I wish to set your mind at rest. We were shipwrecked off Tenerife and the sea has swallowed up our vessel and all the cargo. We have been saved, though some of the other passengers were drowned. All my wealth has disappeared in the bottom of the ocean. I do not regret it for myself as much as for your daughter, for those millions were intended for her dowry. But we must be resigned. God gives and he taketh away. I know that you will feel consoled for this loss when you know that my life has been spared. We can live on what property I still have left. All that I care for now is to see you once again.

"YOUR AFFECTIONATE BROTHER."

Simon read the letter with a trembling voice, but when he

found that it was dated the 13th of the month he became deathly pale, and sank into a chair, entirely overcome.

Mariana's laughter froze on her lips as she saw Simon turn as pale as a corpse.

That fatal number again come forward to injure him. It left its dark fastnesses at the most unexpected moment, in order to snatch from his grasp the happiness he longed for in the possession of Mariana's dowry and of her hand as well. A million which was just about to fall through the chimney, as it were, melted away like smoke—lost at the bottom of the sea. Farewell to a fine establishment, a good table, carriages, and all that made life enjoyable. No. 13 was on hand to defeat his hopes!

And Mariana? Well, her eyes were as bright as ever, her cheeks were as fresh and rosy with the beauty of youth; the joy of her heart was stamped on her smiling lips, and her graceful form still bore itself proudly, undaunted by the vicissitudes of fortune. She lost nothing of her beauty on losing her uncle's millions. She was the same as ever, and laughed as merrily as though nothing had happened, while her appetite continued to be good and she slept as peacefully as a child.

However, Simon thought that the wreck was a bad omen, and determined to renounce her love, for they were both poor. He might live comfortably alone, but if they were married they would have to endure a life of privation.

"She is beautiful, and can find a man who will give her wealth. But I must give her up, though she is so precious to me," he said.

He began to avoid her and seldom went to see her, but he could find no pretext for breaking off with her, because she always received him with smiles.

Sometimes she would chaff him, calling him the Knight of the Rueful Countenance and laughing merrily at his taciturnity. She tried to cheer him up by her caresses and the perpetual joyousness of her spirits, but it was a thankless task, for he remained unmoved, as though turned to stone.

It was necessary to come to a final understanding, but it was difficult to bring it about. Any other woman would have elicited one by complaining of his neglect, and as one word brings on another, that would have caused a total rupture. However, Mariana was always kind and affectionate.

Finally Simon determined to end it all by writing to her, and after several attempts he composed the following letter:

“MARIANA:—There are some impenetrable secrets on earth. Everybody has a destiny of his own. Mine is fatal to me. I am pursued by misfortune. Wherever I go, I carry bad luck and disaster. Let us forget each other, for it cannot be otherwise. Any further explanation would be useless.
“Your unfortunate
SIMON.”

He sent off the letter, and received this answer:

“I have read your letter and felt inclined to cry. Yes, the tears came to my eyes. But afterward I reflected deeply, for your letter seemed like an enigma, and I was resolved to decipher it. But how stupid! It is evident that we ought to forget each other, for it could not be otherwise. Therefore I wiped away my tears and burst out laughing. I had read your mind. Well, let us forget each other. There is no need for further explanations. Very well. Our love is shipwrecked, like my uncle’s treasures. Let us have patience to bear it all. I found out to-day that he was bringing me a fabulous amount—the sum of three millions!

“Affectionately,

MARIANA.”

When Simon finished reading this letter he was beside himself with rage. He threw it into the fire, and while the flames consumed it, in the ashes he saw the fantastic shape—13. He started back with fear, for it seemed to dart out in every direction, from the wall, from the carpet, and dance all over the room. Finally he closed his eyes and fell back crying: “That fatal number will be the death of me!”

In 1833 the press had not yet acquired great power, and public opinion stumbled at every step like a child beginning to walk. At that time family events took place unchronicled and the daily journals did not enjoy the privilege of proclaiming them to the world. People were allowed to be born, get married, and die unnoticed.

Thus it occurred that an approaching marriage of a beautiful girl was kept quiet, and was only known to her immediate circle of friends. Yes, Ernestina Albamonte was going to get married. She was tall, fair, pale, with a melancholy countenance; had blue eyes and a sad smile; and her brow was crowned with long flaxen curls, while she was the beautiful of a heroine of that romantic poetic school, almost ghostly, which like a pall was just commencing to darken the rich, untrammelled, and exuberant genius of the Spanish muse. In the midst of the great tumult produced by our political regeneration, poetry seemed only to find its inspiration within the tomb. It seemed as though the first breath

of freedom had awakened the poetic genius of that day, making it gloomy and dreadful, so that it sought for inspiration in everything that was gloomy and dull.

Ernestina was the very personification of romanticism, and perchance deemed it to be her duty to typify the visions of that dreadful literature. Her languid air, her sweet, faint voice, made it appear as though she only deigned to walk on the earth, for she belonged to a higher sphere.

However, she possessed all the advantages of wealth, and everything to make her life cheerful. She was an only daughter, and her father idolized her.

She had many suitors. Some sought to win her love by imitating melancholy sonnets to her, while others threatened to shoot themselves or poison themselves on account of her cruelty in repulsing them. However, Ernestina remained unmoved. All her suitors appeared commonplace and prosaic, and none came up to her ideal.

Her father was not sorry, for he was in no hurry to have her get married. Therefore he was willing she should continue to dream of the enchanted prince who would come some day to awaken her heart. He did not know that Ernestina had already found a lover, while she deemed that his only mission in this vale of woes was to adore her.

He was pale, with long hair and sad eyes, which gazed adoringly at her. They soon interchanged loving vows and letters full of ardent protestations and loving promises, in which love and death were jumbled together promiscuously. They met secretly, either at her latticed window, or in the garden in the moonlight, or in the deserted walks of some park, under the rustling leaves and amid the first shade of night. Their passion even carried them so far as to meet several afternoons in the quiet cemetery. Ernestina's equipage awaited outside while she entered the graveyard, followed by her duenna, who kept making the sign of the cross in amazement at her folly. Leaning against a willow-tree, her melancholy lover was waiting for her. Ah, that was the very height of romanticism!

Señor Albamonte was unaware of the existence of such a troubadour, or that he had laid siege to his daughter, but her rejected suitors all vowed vengeance on their more fortunate rival, who was Simon Campallano himself!

They all determined to challenge him to fight a duel with

each in turn. So they said to him one day: "We have come to let you choose either to renounce Ernestina's hand or to fight with us all."

"All of you?" exclaimed Simon. "And who are you, pray?"

"We are thirteen," they replied.

"Thirteen of you!" he cried, full of fear. "13—alas! that fatal number still pursues me!" Turning toward them with resignation, he replied:

"Very well; I will fight with you—one and all."

That same day the duel took place, and Simon was brought home with his arm pierced by a sword-thrust, while he kept murmuring all the time: "Alas! alas! 13!" That was all that was lacking to render Ernestina's love more romantic and devoted. She seemed to feel Simon's wound in her own arm while it enhanced his value in her heart.

Her first impulse was to rush to his bedside and minister to his wants herself, and repeat her vows of eternal love, and swear to end her existence at his side if he were to die, so that their corpses might be united in death. But she was obliged to observe the conventionalities of a society too commonplace to appreciate the sublimity of her sacrifice; therefore she had to remain at home.

However, he was rapidly getting healed, so she decided to live for him, as it was no longer necessary for her to die for him, and avenge herself on his cowardly enemies by marrying him at once. Matrimony did not seem to her to be a romantic finale. However, the circumstances which attended it, made it somewhat more interesting; therefore she determined to take this final step.

So she attired herself in a fitting garb, arranged her tresses carelessly, and proceeded to her father's room.

"You are not tyrannical, father," said Ernestina.

"What makes you say that?" he asked, greatly astonished. "You know that your will is my law since your mother died. You are rich and can satisfy all your whims, and I shall not oppose you. Are you dissatisfied with your dressmaker? Do you want a new dress? Do you want a new equipage? What do you want? Tell me, my dear."

"Oh," said she, lifting her eyes to heaven, "prose, nothing but prose all the time, which may satisfy commonplace minds, but not me."

"What is the matter, then?" asked her father.

"Just fancy what it may be," said Ernestina.

"It is not easy, my child, to imagine what the whims of a petted daughter may be. Ah, don't get angry if I call them whims. What else are they?"

Finally Ernestina said with a deep sigh:

"It ought to be called a strong passion."

"Passion!" repeated Señor Albamonte, looking at her attentively. "What do you mean by a passion?"

She raised her eyes in surprise. She could not understand that there could be any one in the world who did not know what a passion is. But she did not know how to explain herself clearly, so she said:

"Passion is something which is felt but cannot be explained. It is two minds in one; it is the very existence of our souls. Alas! to love is to die!"

"Heigh-ho! I am as much in the dark as ever," remarked her father.

"Ah," she said, "have you never loved?"

"Certainly," answered her father. "I loved your mother as the apple of my eye, and we were very fond of each other, but her mind and mine were never alike. We rarely agreed, and if I said nay she said yea. Consequently I don't know what you mean."

Ernestina shrugged her shoulders with disdain, for her own father did not understand her.

"Come," said he, "explain yourself."

"I am in love," said she resolutely.

"Are you sure of it?" inquired her father.

"Oh, yes! If you take me away from him I shall die."

Her father rubbed his forehead and pushed back his smoking-cap, looking quite perplexed.

"So you are in love; does he love you also?"

"Madly," she replied.

"How long since, my child?"

"For a very long time, a very long time. Yes, we loved each other before we ever met."

"Who is he?"

"A young man," replied Ernestina.

"I presume that you have not fallen in love with an old man. What is his name?"

"What difference does it make?" exclaimed Ernestina. "We love each other and only death can separate us. Shut me

up in a convent, take me to the farthest end of the world, and I shall still love him. My soul will fly away to seek his, and the breeze will bring his sighs to me; the light of day his glances; and I shall read his vows in the stars at nightfall. I shall never belong to any other man. You are my father, but you ought not to prove a tyrant."

"No, my young lady," replied Señor Albamonte, "and there is no need of so many words to tell me that you want to get married and have already chosen the one you wish to marry. I knew it would happen sooner or later. But why should you shut yourself up in a convent or bury yourself alive? I have always intended to allow you to marry when you choose to, but we must observe the conventionalities of society. Let that happy mortal come forward to ask for your hand, and we will then talk over the subject."

"Promise me that you will not refuse him; for it would be his death-blow and I would quickly follow him to the grave."

"Well, I give you my word not to do so," said her father.

A few days after Simon came to the house, and the affair was happily settled, so Simon left the house with his head erect, feeling proud and happy.

Señor Albamonte did not appear to feel dissatisfied, either, as he paced up and down his room.

"It is true that he is not well known and is not as rich as Cræsus," he reflected, "but he seems to be a sensible young man, and may make a good husband. I was not very wealthy when I married, but nevertheless my poor Cecilia, who was very rich, fell in love with me, we were married, and were very happy. He may dispel Ernestina's romantic notions, and may make her happy."

So the preparations for the wedding went on.

Simon considered that he had foiled No. 13 at last, although it had cost him a duel. However, by that he had won Ernestina's hand. Her hand would be a shield against fate, and protect him from the fantastic power which pursued him. O joy! he would be rich at last, for Ernestina was very wealthy, while her fortune was so secure *it* would never suffer shipwreck.

Ernestina desired a quiet wedding, and Simon agreed with her, for he did not yet feel quite sure of his prize. They were married quietly, and only the priest, their witnesses, and the notary were present when they signed the marriage con-

tract. Ernestina wrote her name with a languid air, and then heaved a sigh; while Simon, with a firm step, went up to the table, signed his name, and then breathed freely, as though now he were sure of his happiness. As they had no Gothic chapel, the marriage ceremony was performed in the boudoir, which was richly adorned with white satin draperies.

Ernestina was so pale that she looked more like a corpse than a bride, though a beautiful corpse, it is only fair to add.

After the wedding Señor Albamonte issued invitations for a dinner-party of twelve covers, in order to present his son-in-law to some of his friends. He was well received by all, who congratulated him on his good-fortune. When Ernestina entered the room radiant with beauty, they all crowded around her, to praise her loveliness. Her father was impatient for his dinner, so they all filed into the dining-room.

While Ernestina was eating her soup her maid came in and whispered to her.

"Oh, certainly, let her come in," said the bride aloud. Then turning to one of the servants she said: "Place another cover here."

The maid went off, and a merry peal of laughter was heard in the next room.

"I recognize that voice, and we are indeed fortunate," said Señor Albamonte. "Joy itself comes to surprise us. We had forgotten to invite her, and she with a smile on her lips comes to ask for an explanation of our neglect."

Ernestina then stood up and warmly welcomed Mariana, who had just entered the dining-room.

As she kissed her Mariana exclaimed:

"This is not right. We have been life-long friends, and you have gotten married, and now your friend has to beg for a place at your table. However, we have never understood each other thoroughly, for your fancy is always roving, while I never go beyond my depth."

Ernestina smiled, while Mariana continued:

"I hope that you will be seated. I shall do the same, for I see you have a place ready for me."

"Yes, yes, the joy of Madrid shall sit at my side," exclaimed Señor Albamonte. "We have committed an oversight, but you have kindly forgiven us."

Mariana looked at Simon. Her expression changed a little and she lowered her eyes while she said:

"Ernestina, I wished to surprise you, and as you did not invite me, I invited myself. I do hope that you will overlook it, though your friends must be astonished at my coolness."

"How charming she is!" exclaimed Albamonte. "She makes excuses when we are the ones to blame."

Then the conversation became general, and Mariana's merry laugh resounded above all the rest.

Simon had not known that she was his wife's friend, and the appearance of the millionaire's niece seemed to freeze the blood in his veins; but he overcame his feelings, though he avoided meeting Mariana's eye.

Suddenly Señor Albamonte exclaimed:

"My dear Simon, I must present you to this young lady as a member of our family. My son-in-law, Mariana."

Simon trembled from head to foot; the fork fell from his hand, while he made a deep bow.

Mariana returned his salutation, but could not repress a peal of laughter.

The dinner passed off very gayly, until a lady happened to whisper something into her neighbor's ear very mysteriously.

"What is the matter?" inquired Señor Albamonte. "No secrets are allowable here, so I insist on knowing what it is and having my share in the fun."

"We were only talking about a superstitious notion," replied the lady.

"Very well, it comes just in time. Let us hear what it is."

"It is all nonsense," exclaimed the other lady. "I am sure it is, though there are people who believe in such things. However, I don't think that they ought to interfere with our appetites nor gayety."

Her words only piqued their curiosity still more.

"Well," she resumed, "I have counted the guests and found out——"

"What?" they all asked.

"That there are 13 people at the table."

Her words were received with shouts of laughter, while all expressed their different opinions on the subject.

Soon after Ernestina made a motion, and all left the table. Simon had to make a great effort to leave his seat; his body felt heavy, the lights danced before his eyes, while a cold chill penetrated his veins. No 13 filled his mind with gloomy forebodings.

Time went on, as it always does with the careless indifference of one who has seen everything and is never astonished at any occurrence whatsoever

The married couple's life was very monotonous. Ernestina devoted the most of her time to her toilette, to the theatres, or society. She was always pale, languid, and romantic, for romanticism, which was very fashionable in those days, seemingly the outward garb of her soul, was indispensable to her.

Simon had disappointed Señor Albamonte's expectations. Instead of dispelling Ernestina's romantic notions, he seemed to share them. He seldom spoke, loved to be alone, and lived within himself, while his friends remarked:

"Oh, yes, now that he is rich he looks over our heads. Just set a beggar on horseback, and you know the result."

It was a very cold winter, and pneumonia was very fatal. Ernestina caught that dreadful disease as she was coming out of the theatre, and in spite of the prompt attendance of the most skilful physicians in the city, she quickly succumbed in the flower of her youth and beauty.

"Pneumonia!" cried Simon with his face distorted with grief. "No, science is at fault. An implacable hand, a fatal number has killed her. We had 13 people at the table at our wedding-feast!"

All who heard him say this thought that grief had driven him wild.

Señor Albamonte was inconsolable.

Simon was left a widower, and poor, for all his wife's property reverted to her father. He fled from the house and disappeared from society forever.

"Did he die?"

"No!"

"Is he still alive?"

"Yes. He has been confined in an insane asylum for some years past, where he is known as No. 13."

MY DOG AND I*

Look right into my face with your honest brown eyes, old fellow, and cock up your funny little ears and listen, for I am going to talk to you about yourself, and if you're half so human as you look you will enjoy that, Doggie. Do you remember how you came to us? No, of course you don't; so I will tell you. Somebody stole you somewhere, you rascal!—a great, rough-looking man—and he brought you into Jack's office and said that you were a thoroughbred rat-terrier puppy, and that he would sell you for five dollars. Jack remembered that I was ill, and the days were long, and he thought that you might amuse me, and so he bought you.

He brought you home in his overcoat pocket. You were very tiny and we all thought that we never had seen so little a dog, and Jack told us that the man who sold you to him said that you were three months old, and that you never would at any time in your life weigh more than seven pounds, for you were a thoroughbred.

Seven pounds and a thoroughbred, mind you!

And here you are so large and heavy that I can scarcely lift you, you dear old mongrel, you!

You had such a queer little round head, with blue eyes and wrinkled little ears all folded close up to your head, and you just lay still and blinked, and somebody said that you seemed stupid for three months old.

Then I felt in your mouth and I found that you had no teeth at all, and I knew that you weren't three *weeks* old, you baby.

I put you down on the bed and your little curling toe-nails caught in the blanket, and you sprawled about on your weak, wabbling little legs until you cuddled up by my neck and went to sleep.

Of course you've forgotten, but I haven't; for when one is ill the days seem terribly empty; and you were something to think about, you know, and I watched your development with great interest.

This is the way you grew to be a great dog. Your blunt little nose gradually lengthened into that long, slender muzzle that you are nestling into my hand. Those silly, useless-

* Marie More Marsh : Chicago Times.

looking things on each side of your head unfolded into the saucy ears that you are listening with now. Your eyes turned from baby-blue to brown, and grew earnest and expressive. Your wrinkly, puzzled-looking forehead became smooth, and your foolish little tail that had always stuck straight up in the air learned a language which I soon understood.

A slow wag expressed sympathy, a gentle rap-rap showed contentment, a wild, double-quick motion meant extreme joy.

Through all those days of suffering you knew when I felt the worst. When hope seemed folly, and encouragement idle words, your eyes would look so steadily into mine, and your tail would wag very slowly, and your little warm tongue would lick the tears away, you faithful little beast.

I remember I was glad when you shed your puppy teeth, for then we could guess somewhere near your age.

But that was ever and ever so long ago, old fellow, and you are beginning to get gray about the ears now, and so am I; and we don't care to have people guessing at our ages now—do we, Doggie?

But we are very happy if we are growing old—you, and Jack, and I. Bright days are here at last.

The weariness and pain are gone, and health and strength have come instead.

Many are the pleasant walks we three take through the woods and fields. Only you don't run as fast as you did, nor chase every living thing that you see.

You follow right at our heels now, and Jack and I keep closer together than we used to; and somehow I hope that we shall always be near together—we three—so that when—

Why, Doggie, you're fast asleep!

And Jack—what,—crying?

THE LITTLE GOLD NUGGET *

It was given to Effie to take care of. It was not a great prize, for it weighed only seven ounces; but it represented the only result of a strong man's toil for many weeks, and, as nuggets go, it was considered by no means a bad "find."

John Archer decided that the nugget would be safer in his little daughter's keeping than in his own. There were thieves and lawless men at this new gold rush, as at all new gold rushes, and they would know of his prize. They would probably try to annex it. They would search all sorts of cunning hiding-places in the neighborhood of his tent; they might even creep into the hut at night, to feel under his pillow and among his rough bedding for the yellow earth that folk hate each other for. If he caught the thief he would shoot him, but better not to run the risk of losing his treasure. And so he gave it to Effie to put in her old work-box. The thieves of the T— diggings would be too cunning to think of examining such an improbable hiding-place.

"You must take great care of it, darling," said John Archer. "It is for your mother." And Effie stowed the little nugget away in a corner of the old work-box—which had been her mother's—under the cotton and the socks she was darning for her father. She felt duly weighted with the responsibility. She knew that this yellow earth was of great value, for her father, leaving her mother, who was very delicate, with some friends in Brisbane, had come a long, weary way to find it, and she had seen his sorrow, his despair, as day after day he had eagerly worked with pick and spade, without finding what he sought.

Having hidden the little nugget away, Effie came out of the hut to look round and see if any one was near who might have seen her. No. No one was near who might have seen her—only Billy the black—King Billy, the Aboriginal monarch, who loved rum and tobacco, and who was chopping some firewood for her. King Billy evidently had not seen, for he was wielding the axe with quite exceptional vigor; and if Billy had seen it wouldn't have mattered very much, for Effie trusted him.

* A tale of the Australian gold diggings. By C. Haddon Chambers.
In *Oak Bough and Wattle Blossom*.

This little girl's reason for trusting King Billy, the black, was somewhat strange, and is worthy of being recorded. She trusted him because she had been kind to him.

But Effie was only twelve.

As the child stood in the broad light, her tumbled hay-hued hair kissed and illumined by the bold rays of the sun, and her round, trustful blue eyes shaded from the glare by two little brown hands, watching King Billy at his work, a flock of laughing jackasses alighted in a neighboring gum-tree and set up a demoniac cachinnation. What made the ill-omened birds so madly merry? What was the joke? Effie's trust? Billy's gratitude? They failed to explain; but their amusement was huge and sardonic.

"Drive them away, Billy," cried Effie, and the obedient king dropped his axe and threw a faggot of wood at the tree, which stopped the laughter and dispersed the merry-makers.

"Billy tired now," said the black, grinning—"too much work—plenty wood," and he pointed to the result of his labor.

"Yes, that will be enough, thank you. You're a good boy. I'll give you some tobacco."

"Billy's thirsty."

"Then you shall have some tea."

"No tea. Rum."

"No, Billy. Rum isn't good for you."

"Good for miners; good for Billy."

"No, it's not good for miners," said Effie, emphatically; "it makes them fight and say wicked things."

"Makes black feller feel good," declared Billy, rolling his dusky eyes.

This last argument was effective. Effie went into her hut—her father had returned to his work—and poured a little spirits from John Archer's flask into a "pannikin." Billy drank the spirits with rolling eyes, smacked his lips, and then lay down in the shadow of the hut to sleep.

The long afternoon passed very slowly for Effie. Her few trifling duties as housekeeper were soon done. The little hut was tidied, and the simple evening meal prepared; and some hours must pass before her father returned. How could she pass the time? She had only two books—a Bible and a volume of stories for little girls, which she had won as a prize at school in Brisbane. But she was too young to appreciate the first, especially as the type, being very small, it was

difficult reading, and she had grown beyond appreciating the stories for little girls, having known them by heart three years before. She would like to have slept. Everything around her suggested and invited the siesta—the steady heat; the brightness of the light without the hut; the distant murmur of miners' voices which came from beyond yonder belt of wattle gums; the monotonous hum of the locusts in the forest; the occasional fretful cry of a strange bird, and the regular snores of the fallen king who slumbered in the shade of the hut. Even the buzz of the annoying flies assisted the general effect and brought drowsiness.

To remain still for a few minutes would have meant inevitably falling asleep. Effie felt this, and remembered the little gold nugget. If she slept, some thief might come and take it. And so she put on her hat, and, forsaking the seductive cool and shade of the hut, went out into the brightness and heat.

Archer's hut stood on the edge of the valley, over against the foot of the blue, heavily-timbered hills. About fifty yards distant from it, hidden among the trees, was a high moss-grown rock, at the base of which Effie had discovered the smallest and sweetest of natural springs. Thither the child ran—looking back often to see that no one approached the hut in her absence—to bathe her face. In a few minutes she returned, drying her face in her apron, and shaking her wet hair in the sun. No one had come; but King Billy was now awake, and was slouching lazily off toward the bush. Effie laughed as she saw him—his great head bent forward, and his thin, narrow shoulders bowed. She laughed to think of his laziness, and that he should look so tired after such a very little wood-chopping.

She was still laughing at King Billy as she opened the old work-box to take another peep at the yellow treasure, and to make quite sure that the heat hadn't melted it away. And it was quite slowly that the laugh died from the pretty eyes and mouth—quite slowly, because of the moments it took to realize and accept a misfortune so terrible—when she lifted the coarse socks and looked and saw no little gold nugget—saw nothing. Then horror and great fear grew in the blue eyes, and pale agony crept over the childish face and made it old, and the poor little heart seemed to stop beating.

Effie said nothing, and made no cry; but she closed her

eyes tightly for a moment, and looked in the box again. No, it was no illusion; the little nugget was not there—the first gold her father had found, which had been intrusted to her care, which was to have been taken to her mother—it was gone. She put down the box, quite quietly, and walked out into the day; but the sun was shining very strangely and mistily now, and the blue sky had grown black; and the trees seemed to move weirdly; and the locusts had ceased humming from fear; but the strange bird was somewhere near, shrieking brokenly, "What will father say? What will father say?"

But as the child stood there, despairing, her sight grew clearer, and she saw a black figure among the trees, and she was conscious of a pair of dusky eyes watching her through the leaves. Then only she remembered, and she knew who had done this cruel thing. King Billy! And she had been kind to him. Effie suddenly burst into passionate sobbing. The black figure still hovered among the trees, often changing its position, and the dusky eyes still peered through the leaves. And the laughing jackasses flew down to the old tree again, and laughed more madly than before—laughed at Effie's trust—at Billy's gratitude!

* * * * *

It was ten o'clock, and darkness and quiet reigned in John Archer's hut. Over among the tents behind the wattle gums a few gamblers and heavy drinkers were still awake, and their voices, raised in anger or ribald merriment, might occasionally have been faintly heard from the hut. But Archer, who had sown his wild oats, was a true worker; and he had his little daughter, for whose sake he had built the hut away from the noisy camp.

Archer had come home late and weary, as usual, had eaten his supper, and gone to rest without, to Effie's intense relief, speaking of the little gold nugget. The child was afraid to speak of the loss, and she was not without vague hopes that a beneficent providence would restore the nugget during the darkness, and save her from this great trouble.

For this she prayed very earnestly before she lay down to sleep. Or did she sleep at all that night? She never quite knew. But she thinks that it was then that she first experienced that terrible, purgatorial condition which is neither wakefulness nor sleep, when the body and mind are weary

enough to bring the profound sleep which they require, but which the brain is too overlaid and too cruelly active to allow; when dreams seem realities and realities dreams. It must have been a dream when she saw something small and yellow float through the tiny window on the ghostly silver moonbeams. And yet, when, having closed her eyes, she opened them again, it was still there hovering about in the darkness—less bright now, and with a pale yellow halo. But it faded quite away; it was a cruel, mocking dream.

Then was it a dream when the old curtain, which divided her corner of the hut from her father's, moved near the ground—bulged slightly toward her? It would be curious to see, and she lay still. From under the curtain seemed to come a thin arm, and slowly, cautiously, after the arm a head with a great shock of hair. And the moonbeams just touched a face—I think they kissed it, though it was black, for they found in a black hand the little yellow object which had floated in the first dream.

It was all so real, so beautiful, that the child lay still, scarce daring to breathe, lest the vision should melt away; and when in her dream came the voice of her father, with the words, "Speak, or I'll fire," her lips refused to open.

But it was no dream when the shot came, and the Black King rolled over on the earth, dead, with the little gold nugget he had come to restore pressed in the death-agony against his heart, where, too, was a little gold.

And the laughing birds in the old tree, startled from their sleep by the shot, laughed once more, wildly and madly, at Billy's honesty; but there was bitterness in their merriment, for their master, the devil, had been cheated of the soul of a Black King:

THE INCONSOLABLE WIDOW *

IN THE MONCEAU PARK DISTRICT.

Time, 2 P.M. Place, a small room next to madame's bedroom. Madame's husband has died during the night, and early in the morning madame summoned, by numerous telegrams, the various persons who appear. She has not obtained her mourning, and wears an old evening dress of black satin embroidered with jet, with a waist improvised out of a black lace scarf. Everything is indifferent to her. She is cast down. She speaks in sighs, replies in onomatopes; but she was so much attached to her husband and their married life was so exemplary that she wishes to give him a splendid funeral. She undertakes the whole business herself. In spite of her grief she accepts the services of nobody, but decides to attend to the whole affair.

The Widow [stretched upon a long chair supported by numerous cushions, to the dressmaker. She is hardly audible; her voice is like one long wail]—Whatever you wish and anything you wish. You know better than I do what I want. Only I would like to have one of the dresses as soon as possible; say to-morrow morning. I can't bear to see myself in this one. The last time that I wore it [she sobs] it was at the bal de l'Opera with my poor husband. [She takes her pocket handkerchief and wipes her eyes.] We had dined with the Lalgarades, and we decided to go to the bal de l'Opera. I even had on this mantilla. Now, won't you let me have the dress to-morrow morning?

The Young Person from the Dressmaker—Certainly, madame. We can try on the corsage this evening.

The Widow—I don't feel strong enough for that. It will fit well enough.

The Person from the Dressmaker [after a few moments' hesitation]—How about the sleeves? Shall they be tight-fitting or wide? [Seeing that she does not reply.] The sleeves?

The Widow—Ah, yes, the sleeves. [She sighs.] He couldn't bear to see me with leg-of-mutton sleeves. Everything you do will be well done, provided I haven't got to trouble myself with it.

The Person from the Dressmaker—We might be able to follow the last measurements in the dress *vieux paon* that fitted so well.

The Widow [with a far-off look in her eyes]—The dress *vieux paon*.

* La Vie Parisienne : N. Y. Sun Translation.

[Enter the waitingmaid. The Young Person from the dressmaker retires.]

The Waitingmaid—They have sent from the liveryman. The messenger wishes to know if madame can receive him.

The Widow—Let all the persons to whom I have sent telegrams this morning come in. It isn't M. Mulhtropcher?

The Waitingmaid—No, madame, it is one of the employees of his house.

The Widow—Let him come in. I am glad it is not Mulhtropcher. I prefer to speak to people who have not known my poor husband.

[Enter the employee of Mulhtropcher.]

The Person from the Liveryman—Madame—

The Widow—Are the carriages at your place?

The Person from the Liveryman—They have just arrived. We will drape the coupé for the day after to-morrow.

The Widow—I know nothing of what is done, and I must depend entirely upon you. You prefer the coupé to the landau? He liked the landau so much; it was after his design.

The Person from the Liveryman—The coupé should follow. It is the vehicle that is used.

The Widow—He never went into it. He detested to be shut up. Nothing but the most abominable weather could induce him to return with me from the opera. He only liked his phaeton. You will have very thick crape upon the lanterns, will you not, so that the lights can scarcely be visible?

The Person from the Liveryman—Can we not also put crape inside on the windows? That is very much the fashion in England now.

The Widow—Crape inside on the windows? Oh, certainly, then we won't have to meddle with the blinds. I like that better. I must say that I have always been shocked at seeing a carriage with the blinds lowered following a hearse.

The Person from the Liveryman—We can also drape the inside of the carriages with black satin.

The Widow—Can you have it finished day after to-morrow?

The Person from the Liveryman—Certainly, madame. We will only attend to the draping. Plain black satin. The interior of the carriage seen through the crape on the windows makes an extraordinary effect.

[The employee salutes profoundly and retires. The waitingmaid brings in another person who looks more like an

attaché of the English Embassy than the clerk of a great livery-tailor's establishment.]

The Widow—Monsieur——

The Person from Mr. Sutton—Madame, I have come from Mr. Sutton.

The Widow—I want to ask what I ought to do for the liveries during my mourning, and for the funeral of my husband.

The Person from Mr. Sutton—For the coachman, a black overcoat and black trousers. For the others, the coat, waistcoat, trousers black, white cravats.

The Widow—But during the first year?

The Person from Mr. Sutton—Trousers black and cravat white. Aiglets in black linen. Powder can only be resumed at the end of the year, when they put on white gloves.

The Widow—Then for the ceremony black gloves of course? Glossed or plain?

The Person from Mr. Sutton—Glossed. The family only wear black suède.

The Widow—Please be good enough to arrange with the coachman and my steward.

[The person from Mr. Sutton retires. The waitingmaid ushers in another gentleman, completely dressed in black with a great overcoat, eminently appropriate.]

The Widow [recognizing her picture framer]—It is you, yourself! You have learned of the misfortune that has fallen upon me, and I requested you to come to me. It will be necessary to wrap the large portrait of my husband by Bonnat in a veil of crape, quite simple, as simple as possible.

Picture Framer—With a few bouquets of immortelles?

The Widow—Oh, no! No immortelles; there would be too much of Victor Hugo about that. I will have at the foot of the portrait a large cushion, the full length of the frame, and a phoenix at the right and left. It will also be necessary to remove the two or three water-colors, you know; the large one which is over the piano especially. They are a little too cheerful. I was at a funeral lately, and in the house everybody was looking at the picture of a little woman, completely naked, getting carried up into the clouds by a big, savage butterfly. You will put the water-colors in the little room, which will be closed after to-morrow. I will only keep open the drawing-room salon and the gallery.

Picture Framer—Madame also spoke about a frame.

The Widow—In a few days. You will go to Mr. X. [She dries her eyes.] He is making a sketch of my poor husband. You can arrange with him.

[The picture framer retires. The waitingmaid brings in one of the workmen from madame's shoemaker.]

The Widow [to the waitingmaid]—Bring down two pairs of shoes; the last that they made for me. [To the shoemaker.] I must have a pair of shoes immediately. I have no mourning shoes. Dark kid, eh?

The Person from the Shoemaker—Oh, no, madame. For heavy mourning we only employ dark suède.

The Widow—Very well, dark suède. You will also please blacken the soles. I know nothing so ugly or so shocking as to see yellow soles when one is in heavy mourning with one's feet on the cushions. [The waitingmaid comes back with two little pairs of shoes in her hand.] You will perform the same operation for these two pairs. [The shoemaker goes out. Enter the corset maker.]

The Person from the Corset Maker—I beg a thousand pardons, madame, for being late, but at the present moment Madame Leoty is absent, and I have to take her place. I have come to say to madame how much we feel—I telegraphed immediately to madame—madame needs something.

The Widow—I want one corset immediately. You can make the others at leisure. I haven't one suitable at present. Of course, it must be black. I would wish to have a plain, dull stuff, and above all things no satin, nothing that is loud. It is so troublesome to hear the noise of the new corset when one is weeping.

The Person from the Corset Maker—Yes, madame, I understand perfectly, and I will put in it, as we always do, little pieces of elastic for sobs.

[She retires and the maid comes back.]

The Widow—What is it now?

The Waitingmaid—Madame, it is the photographer. He is here with his apparatus. Shall I show him into monsieur's room?

The Widow—Tell him to come and speak to me. I have not the courage to go into the room of my poor husband. I would be afraid to trouble Mr. X., who has been kind enough to let me have a last souvenir

[Enter the photographer.]

The Widow—Monsieur, they will conduct you into the room of my husband. You will find Mr. X. there at his bedside. I want you to catch the last impression of his features for me. I am very much obliged to Mr. Nadar. I know that this is altogether outside of the usage of his house.

The Person from Mr. Nadar—He places himself entirely at your disposal.

The Widow—I would wish a few proofs. The bust, natural size, for the family, and then the others smaller, and the bed complete. When the drawing of Mr. X. is finished, I will want you to photograph that also, very pale.

The Person from Mr. Nadar—A proof upon ivory?

The Widow—Just so. My maid will now show you the room while there is still light.

[The photographer retires.]

The Widow—I'm completely exhausted! One could not imagine all that there is to do! [She uses her little flask of lavender salts. There is a knock.] Who is there?

The Waitingmaid—Madame, it is the rector's assistant. He says that madame wrote to the rector.

The Widow—I wrote to the rector? Do you remember that I sent a dispatch to the rector? Ask him to come up. My poor husband often said to me, "If I die before you, neither the march of Chopin nor the air of Stradella——"

[Enter the assistant minister.]

The Person from the Rector—Madame——

The Widow—Monsieur, be good enough to sit down. I am so sorry for having troubled you. It was to the organist, rather, that I had to speak.

The Person from the Rector—Madame, if I could——

The Widow—You will see him before the ceremony?

The Person from the Rector—I will see him at once. He is at this moment in the church, where the artists of the opera who are to sing at the service are rehearsing.

The Widow—I will be extremely obliged to you if you will tell him not to play Chopin's funeral march nor to have the air of Stradella sung. My poor husband could not bear them. He made me promise——

The Person from the Rector—Nothing easier. We can replace the march of Chopin by that of Beethoven.

The Widow—Neither could he bear that. He was an officer, and every time that one of his comrades was buried——

The Person from the Rector—Generally these marches—
The Widow—That's just the reason.

The Person from the Rector—We have a religious march of Ambrose Thomas, less known, but which pleases generally.

The Widow—Ambrose Thomas was his *bête noir*. He only came in time for the ballet of "Hamlet," and, indeed, very often we gave up our box at the opera. [After a moment's reflection.] There was one thing that he adored, and that is the march which is found in the "Wanderer" of Schubert.

The Person from the Rector—?????

The Widow—You don't know it! It is magnificent. I have it here in the volume of Peters. [She rises and goes over to the music case.] Here it is. You will show it to the organist. As it is very short, he can, by seeing it beforehand, make a paraphrase. [She hunts through the volume, turns down a leaf, and hands the book to the abbé.]

The Person from the Rector—As for *Pie Jésus*, to replace the air of Stradella, which is certainly a little known, we have some from Faure.

The Widow—From Faure! My dear sir, what did my poor husband ever do to you? That would be a posthumous penance, and altogether too severe. [She considers for a moment.] What he adored above all things was the *Danse Macabre*, the *Adieux de l'hôtesse Arabe*, by Bizet. He was never tired of hearing it. Every time that I went to the piano the *hôtesse Arabe* and *Carmen* were his two passions. Of course, I know that for a *Pie Jésus*—say to your organist that I will depend upon him. But nothing from Thomas or Faure. In old music let him search through Mozart or Berlioz, Schuman or Wagner. Of course, you understand, Monsieur l'Abbé, that at such a moment as this—

The Person from the Rector [rising and carrying off the volume of Peters]—Madame, I will communicate your instructions.

The Widow—Accept all my apologies for the trouble I have put you to. [He retires.] That is an inspiration from heaven. Just fancy if they had played the march from Chopin and sung the air of Stradella!

[The Waitingmaid enters.]

The Widow—What is it now?

[The waitingmaid, seeing madame in tears, does not dare to speak.]

The Widow—What do you want?

The Waitingmaid [still embarrassed]—They have sent from the undertaker. The employee says that madame wrote this morning to come without delay.

The Widow—Oh, yes. Let him come up. Haven't they also sent from the florist's?

The Waitingmaid—Yes, madame; the messenger is below, and is also waiting.

The Widow—There is not enough light. Bring the lamps, and let them come up.

The Waitingmaid—Both together?

The Widow—Yes, I have to speak to them together. I wonder why I did not receive a reply to the dispatches which I sent to Cannes and to Trouville. [Enter the florist and a young man sent from the undertaker.]

The Widow [to the waitingmaid]—Are there no dispatches?

The Waitingmaid—There are so many that I didn't dare—

The Widow—Bring them to me. I am expecting two. [To the florist.] Have you received my dispatch? You will have time enough. It is for the day after to-morrow.

The Person from the Florist [taking a dispatch from his pocket-book]—Seventeen crowns.

The Widow—Yes, each servant must send a crown. They will charge them to me, but each servant and the porters must send crowns. Of course they must not all be alike.

The Florist—Tea roses and marguerites. Marguerites among the tea roses. [The waitingmaid brings in the dispatches to her mistress, who reads them with emotion.]

The Widow—Ah! here is the reply from Cannes. The gardener of my villa telegraphs to me that the mimosas are in blossom. Therefore you need not put in any mimosas. I will have an enormous crown of them sent by my people, and on a ribbon, printed in silver, the words: "To Our Excellent Master." [She reads another dispatch.] This is from my villa at Trouville. They will also send me a crown of hortensias and gloires de Dijon. That will make nineteen crowns, two of them of extraordinary size sent by Cannes and Trouville. How will you manage to carry them?

The Person from the Undertaker—We must have wagons. We generally count six crowns for a wagon, but as those from Cannes and Trouville will be enormous we can put them in two little separate wagons.

The Widow—And the wagons, how are they to be?

The Person from the Undertaker—Quite simple, draped in black; upon the hearse one cross, from you, about as long as—— [The widow weeps.] All in mauve orchids.

[The waitingmaid brings in another dispatch. The widow reads it and bursts into tears.]

The Widow—The stearine factories send me their condolences and announce the coming on the day after to-morrow of two deputations from the establishments and two immense crowns, to be carried by twelve of the oldest employees [she weeps], and the other by twenty-four [she sobs]—little orphans. The engineers will also send their private crowns. I think about a dozen wagons—don't you think so, sir?

The Person from the Undertaker—There will be time enough if madame——

The Widow [to the florist]—Won't you be kind enough to look into the glass house and see if there are two phœnixes fine enough to place before the portrait of my husband, on each side of the cushion of violets? If not, you can send me two to-morrow, and as high as possible; won't you, please? [The two gentlemen go out. The widow again takes the dispatch sent from the factory, and again reads it attentively. It is 7 o'clock.]

The Chambermaid [entering]—Madame, Miss Camilla wishes to know if she can present her respects to madame. It was impossible for her to come sooner.

The Widow—Let her come in. I can't understand why I'm not dead. [The young person enters.]

The Young Person from the fancy linen store—Desiring to come myself and personally tell you how much my mistress is concerned for the trouble which has come upon you——

The Widow—It is dreadful. Nobody could have foreseen such a catastrophe. I haven't energy enough for anything. You have received my note? You will send what I will need for to-morrow; you know what I want better than I do.

The Young Person—Precisely, but I wish to ask——

The Widow—To ask me anything! Everything that you do will be done well. I have absolutely nothing to put on in the matter of mourning linen.

The Young Person—It is already ordered. Everything will be in black cambric, with a little Chantilly lace, very simple and no higher than that.

The Widow—But the ribbons—Bear in mind that I must not have anything loud.

The Young Person—All the ribbons for heavy mourning are in *peau de soie*. [After a moment's hesitation.] Now for the linen for half-mourning? Madame would do well to look out for that beforehand.

The Widow—The half-mourning! How can you speak to me of half-mourning? Can I ever quit the deep mourning of misfortune? [She weeps.]

The Young Person—I know it, madame; I never had a doubt of it; but I have not succeeded in making myself understood. I mean the linen for half-mourning that is worn after the first six months. It is in white cambric with a Chantilly border. If I spoke of it to madame it was because the work is so delicate, and in order to have it done as I would wish to have it done for madame it would take at least six months. I hope you will pardon me—

The Widow—I can count upon a dozen or two of pocket handkerchiefs for to-morrow?

The Young Person—Certainly, madame, you will have a dozen to-morrow morning; we will work all night. [She salutes and retires.]

The Widow [alone]—Who next? I'm dead! It seems to me that I have something else. Oh! my goodness, what was I going to do? [She gets up and runs to the writing-table.] I forgot to notify the Grandmenils of the death of my husband. I gave them my box for this evening, and now they might easily suppose that I only gave it to them because my husband was dead. Seven o'clock! Well, a messenger must carry it. [She writes.]

The Footman enters—Madame, dinner is now ready.

The Widow [without turning round and continuing her writing]—I will be down in a moment. I'm writing a letter. Tell monsieur to commence without me.

[The footman remains nailed to the floor. Madame, becoming aware of her absent-mindedness, falls back on her chair, bursts into tears, then takes the photograph of her husband, before her in a little frame, and covers it with kisses.]

ETCHINGS: COMPANIONSHIP*

I was sailing from Hamburg to London in a small steamer. There were two passengers, myself and a little female monkey of the Tustiti race. A Hamburg merchant was sending her as a gift to an English correspondent of his. She was bound by a slender chain to one of the benches of the quarter-deck, and struggled and squealed like a bird. Every time that I passed near her she stretched out to me her black, cold paw, and looked at me with her almost human eyes sadly.

I took her paw and she soon ceased to squeal and struggle.

We were in the midst of a full calm. The sea was outstretched like a motionless lead-colored cloth. It appeared not to be large; a dense fog had lowered itself upon us, even enfolding the tops of the masts, blinding and wearying the sight with its slimy darkness. The sun hung, like a dark red stain, amid these shadows, with a strange, mysterious glow.

Long straight furrows, like the folds of a heavy silken fabric, ran from the bow of the steamer, widened and widened, finally levelled themselves and, trembling, disappeared. The beaten foam was churned under the wheels which broke the waters uniformly; it became white as cloth cleft into meandering waves, swallowed up by the darkness.

A bell at the helm, ringing ceaselessly, sounded a lament more tiresome than that of the monkey. Now and then a dog-fish came to the surface, and after a few leaps he went under the troubled waters again.

And the captain, a taciturn man with a bronzed and gloomy face, smoked his short pipe and spat angrily into the sea. He spoke, grumbling short words. It was, perforce, necessary to turn to my only companion on the voyage—the monkey.

I placed myself near her. She ceased to shriek and again stretched out her paw to me.

The motionless fog enwrapped us with a narcotic dampness, and immersed in the same unconscious meditation we remained beside each other as if we were dearest friends.

I smile now, but at the time I had very different feelings.

We are all children of the same mother; and I was glad that the poor animal was tranquillized, relying upon me as trustfully as upon a blood relation of its own.

*Senila of Turgeneff: E. C.: For Short Stories.

AUNT CLEM'S RECEPTION *

In the parlor, where the open coffin rested on a bier, the women folk gathered, conversing of the virtues of the deceased in hushed whispers, and predicting that "Clementina would miss that sweet, sweet creature now she was gone."

To Betty, sorrowing alone in her own room, came Mammy Lar, announcing that her aunt was waiting for her at the top of the stairs to descend and go with the funeral *cortège* to the graveyard. Her aunt, a tall figure, clad like herself in a black *crêpe* veil that hid her face, took her hand and they descended together.

The ceremony was conveyed to Betty in a series of vivid impressions, for, as is often the case, the sense of grief was temporarily forgotten and blunted by the break in its monotony and the exciting presence of a crowd.

Betty felt the clinging dampness of the air as, still holding her aunt's hand, they passed directly behind the bier into the yellow grass of the garden. Through her veil the day looked darker than before as they stood by the open grave, while Dr. Wells in his white surplice read the impressive burial service. Half-ashamed at her own distraction, the words fell unheeded on her ear.

She saw the lowering sky that seemed to cling to the dull earth, the turbid waters below the bank, and, in the foreground, barren trees and naked flowerstalks; even the matted chrysanthemums, discolored with mould, and one pallid rosebud that clung to its stem and shivered in the wind that blew, chilling the bare heads of the men, and sending into the group around the grave swirls of rustling leaves.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory," read Dr. Wells.

Suddenly Miss Clem's hand on hers tightened and tightened in a grasp that almost caused her to cry aloud with pain.

She looked aside at her aunt, and, through the thickness

* From "Betty, a Last Century Love Story," by Anna Vernon Dorsey. United States Book Co. Elizabeth Vaughn, an orphan girl, lives during the Revolutionary War on an old Maryland homestead with two maiden aunts. Aunt Barbara is the gentle housekeeper, while the masculine Miss Clementina, in coat and jack-boots, manages the farm. The story opens with the burial of Aunt Barbara who had been found dead in her bed.

of the two veils, saw that gaunt face set and rigid, with eyes that glared from under knotted brows, pained and frantic.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

Again the clasp tightened as if her hand were in an iron vise. The pained blood numbed her arm and settled like a weight on her heart, and a double blackness hid the world.

"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes."

Through the mist of pain clouding her senses came the sound of falling earth on the coffin lid, a wild whirry of wind as a few heavy drops pattered on the dry leaves.

Still clasped in that cruel bondage they walked to the house and Betty felt herself ascending the stairs. At the second landing she was free, staggering and sinking upon the step, while her aunt, veiled and silent, moved away.

"Aunt," called Betty.

The tall figure looming in the hall above did not stay.

"Leave me in peace," she cried, disappearing into her own room.

Anxious to escape from the approaching storm, carriage after carriage rolled off and the crowd rapidly departed.

The rain lasted for several days, shutting out, like a veil, all save the garden and near view of the meadows, with their rows of pointed haystacks over which blindly driven gusts swept, beating on the roof over Betty's head at night, and trickling from eaves with a monotony that was like a voice singing to her in a language she could not understand.

During the days that followed the funeral Miss Clem did not appear, and there was little occupation for Betty save to endeavor to interpret this same unceasing murmur that followed her as she went from room to room.

She sat in the parlor two evenings after the funeral, curled up in a big arm-chair. One of the silver sconces of the mirror was lighted, blending with the deeper glow of the logs throughout the room. She was worn out with grief, and resting in a reaction of emotion that left her tranquil. Love seemed far away. Still, weary in mind and body as she was, it was good to think of Tom her sweetheart alive and strong, somewhere in the night, loving her.

From blissful oblivion she was roused by a noise in the hall. Starting up, flushed and half-conscious, she saw the door open. On the threshold stood her aunt, a fantastic figure,

clad in a short green silk in the fashion of twenty years before, with huge hoops displaying red, high-heeled slippers. Her skinny, yellow neck was bare, and a tall head-dress covered with lace adorned her hair. She waved a peacock-feather fan to and fro, beckoning to some one in the hall where there was nothing to be seen, except Mammy bearing a candle, the light of which fell on her bright kerchief and dark face contorted in making signs that Betty, half-dazed, could not understand.

"Enter, friends," said Miss Clem, waving to the supposititious persons. "Rise, girl, and courtesy to the guests. Here are your father and mother and Mr. De Courcy, who have come to spend the evening with us."

Her aunt was insane! This was the solution of the convulsive grip at the funeral.

With stern dignity, her eyebrows knotted and expression wild, Miss Clem motioned the imaginary guests to be seated.

"Converse with thy parents, child. I will sit here and speak to Bentley De Courcy, for it is long since I have seen him. Was it yesterday or years ago?"

Fear settled on Betty like a weight, a burden that would not be shaken off. Feeling stifled and faint, she sank back in a chair. Mammy stood beside her rubbing her hands.

"You mus' humor her, honey. You mus' humor her."

"What's that you say?" demanded Miss Clem, quickly.

"I wuz jes' tellin' Mars Edward how well he's lookin'. Seems lak I ain't seen him fur a long time."

"Yes, but, Mammy," said Miss Clem in a sharp whisper, "do you mark the blood on Mr. De Courcy's forehead, where the horse hoof trampled his head—his bonny yellow hair that used to be my pride?"

"Don't go, don't leave me," said Betty as Mammy moved toward the door.

"Yer got to humor her. Don't be afraid, chile, she won't hurt yer. I'll stan' outside de do'."

The firelight flickered on Miss Clem's grotesque figure, throwing it into bold relief against the background of a shadowy corner, where there was vaguely defined the back of a straight damask chair, toward which, as she played with her fan and spoke, she occasionally glanced uneasily.

"You must excuse my sister Barbara," she said, looking around apologetically, "she cannot see you to-night. I do

not want her to hear me, but the truth is she's sitting over there in that corner. She's just dead and not used to it yet, poor silly thing, as we have been for so long. I have asked her repeatedly to come out, but to no avail."

Betty's attention became fascinated on this one spot. In her over-wrought state of mind the idea haunted her that in the chair sat her Aunt Barbara, looking as when she had last seen her, with waxen bandaged face and half-closed eyes. The moments passed like hours.

How long it was she never knew, but at length Miss Clem, having finished her whispered discourse with Mr. De Courcy, began to address the company in a voice that changed and ran through the gamut of feeling.

"You ask me," she said, "news of the world you have been hid away so long from, thinking that you must have forgotten. Well, I will tell you, but in confidence, for you must know that it is only we—you who are dead, and I whom they call crazy—that see clearly how all things are tending. First, you ask me what is this life. Harken! The world is an island set in space, and above and below and around is a mystery none can fathom. In the midst of this, coming into being, are the atoms called men who are born blind—purblind. Ay, listen! This miserable little spot which may be effaced at any moment is swarming with blind, human worms, biting and crawling over each other, and burrowing in the slime whence they are generated.

"These worms are all mad about ambition or pride, and call themselves this or that pompous, lying name. Then they disappear and are seen no more, and the others keep blindly scratching and biting—and they are all mad—mad—mad!" She gave a short laugh. "You know I was always given to thinking of these fantastic subjects—always whimsical. What droll talks we used to hold in the old times! I mind me of one evening we sat in the gloaming. The bats were flying over the meadows. Honoria had on her knee a sweet babe, and I was happy, for you were there, Bentley, and you loved me. Who says that he did not love me? Yes, grizzled and ill-favored as I am, I too have had my hey-day of youth and folly.

"'We will all meet again to visit the one that survives,' said I, for I was a mad-cap girl given to vagaries—and we are all here! Then, when Bentley rode away I walked with

him to the hedge and bade him farewell. He held my rose to his lips as he rode off, never to come again—never—for the next day they found you on the road with your skull crushed. O God! O my God! what I went through then, for each of these countless human lives has a capacity for enduring pain that is not gauged by its insignificance and shortness of duration, but can be infinite. Oh, but had I the power equal to my will, the earth would crack to its base, and the stars, flashing with fire, would tear on in a mad dance of death. On, on! faster, faster! How they wail and cringe, these pitiful atomies! On, on, little world, into the calm of the bottomless abyss of annihilation!" She paused a moment.

"No, you never came back, my love. In the long nights I used to creep out and lie in the grass where we parted, and look up to the stars waiting for you. I was an uncommon fool when a girl. Sing? Ay, that will I, though I am hoarse."

The keys of the harpsichord jangled under her touch. She hesitated a moment and began to play a lively dancing tune, changing abruptly into minor chords, as she began to sing with a cracked voice:

"' How far have ye come, my love,' she said,
 ' Through the rain and cold and night?
 Damp are the curls on thy bonny head,
 And thy cheek is wan and white;
 But like glow-worms on their earthy bed
 Do thine eyes with love shine bright.

"' Why have ye tarried so long,' she said,
 ' Since the night you rode away?
 The years have come and the years have sped;
 I am grown so old and gray;
 And the lips you kissed then, fresh and red,
 They can but mumble and pray.'

"' I come from out on the hill,' he said,
 ' Where the snake and ground-rat dwell;
 They held me fast in my chilly bed;
 I could not come to thee well;
 The light in mine eyes is the light of dread
 Lit from the fires of hell.'

"Ay, 'tis the light that burns within us all, smouldering in the ashes of youth."

The door opened and Mammy entered bearing a waiter. "I thought the company mought like some 'freshment," she said, passing the waiter to the imaginary guests. "Now, Marse Edward, yer take some er dat cordial. It's mighty

good. Miss Honoria, yer'll relish dat rusk. Honey," she whispered to Betty, "take two or free pieces." Betty shook her head and looked at her with white, supplicating face. She felt that she must have grown old in the eternity that had passed. Mammy was equal to the emergency.

"Laws sakes! Is yer all gwine home dis soon? Yer'll have a mighty bad night."

Miss Clem went through a profuse courtesying and leave-taking, following Mammy, who held a candle, into the hall.

"Still sulky, Barbara?" she called out. "Will you, then, stay there all night? Good-by."

Betty shuddered and walked backward out of the room, her eyes fixed on the corner. They moved up-stairs, a strange procession, Miss Clem majestic in her finery, Mammy bearing the candle, and Betty, with pale face, peering into the blackness. When they came to the open door of her own room she crept in, shutting and bolting it behind her.

Undressing herself and crossing the room, she caught the reflection of her white-robed figure in the mirror. She stood trembling, unnerved, the unceasing voice of the rain mocking her with elusive cadence. There was a sound of footsteps coming down the hall, stopping at the door. It was Bab, who was lonely in the parlor, and had come to her.

"Lemme in, honey," said Mammy's voice. "What yer doin', standin' hyar in yo' bare feet, chile? Yer want ter ketch yer def er cold? Jump inter bed, an' lemme tuck yer in."

The relief of the kind, human voice was too much. Betty threw herself on the bed in a sort of nervous chill, where she could shed no tear, but lay cold and trembling.

"Dere now, honey, be quiet. She's bin dis way off 'n on, ebber since Marse De Courcy died. She'll git over it in a day or two, an' be all right agin. Don't yer tell nobody, Miss Clem; nebber let no one know it. Plenty dese yere pore white trash bin axin' me, but I nebber tells 'em nuffin. If she wuz fifty times crazier 'an she is, she's Miss Vaughan, better'n any they low-lived selves. Dere now, pore little lam'."

Then Mammy, still patting the bedclothes, began to rock to and fro in her chair, crooning a plantation hymn:

" De stars in de elements am fallin',
De moon shall turn inter blood,
But the chillun ob de Lord
Am comin' home ter God.
Blessed am de name ob de Lord."

ETCHINGS: REFORMING THE MAJOR *

The major had been "having 'em" again; and we boys who had held nightly vigil, turn-about, at the old fellow's snake-haunted and rodent-besieged bedside, were pretty well tired out, and swore that the next time the old reprobate got into his present condition he might go to—the hospital.

Such unimportant affairs as having to bail the old major out of the lock-up, and to hustle around and take up a collection to pay his "drunk and disorderly" assessment, we didn't mind at all. But we felt that when a man has the tangles once and doesn't profit thereby, but keeps getting 'em he needs a reminder that radical reform on his part is the only thing which can satisfy the outraged feelings of his friends.

So, as we sat in front of the hotel one evening—it was in Leadville that the major's latter years were spent (declining years they were not, for he never refused)—having heard the report of the physician, who pronounced the major perfectly convalescent and said he could come down-stairs the next day, we were discussing plans for enforcing or otherwise inducing reformation on the part of the bottle-scarred veteran.

One plan after another was rejected, when, by luck, we saw a knot of small boys coming along the walk, eagerly investigating something one of them was carrying. Brice caught a glimpse of it, and in another instant a small boy was happy in the possession of a two-bit piece, and Brice, with a small striped snake in his hands, was unfolding a scheme to us.

The next day was Sunday, which, I regret to say, was always passed in drinking, poker-playing, and other iniquitous pastimes. We were playing cards, and the major, clothed in his right mind, was in the game. Drinks were ordered, and the tray was placed on a small table near the major, who was intent upon his cards. On the tray were the drinks—and a small striped snake under the influence of chloroform.

The major looked at the tray and his eyes bulged; but he did not faint, nor yell, nor swear off. He merely picked up the snake and a glass of whiskey, and remarked mournfully: "Stripesy, I am grieved to see you in such company—it might demoralize you. I'll remove temptation from your path."

And so he did—to the last drop in the glass.

* R. L. Ketchum: For Short Stories.

A MYSTERY OF THE SEA*

The narrative of the "Rainier's" wreck is in one mysterious incident unparalleled in the history of sea misadventure.

Pathetic as are the usual tales of ocean disaster, of peril, suffering, and heroism, this one is signalized by the claimed operation of an occult agency which foretold and, to a slight degree, aided the final rescuer.

The value of the evidence depends, of course, upon the credibility of the witnesses and their object in uniting upon the same testimony. One of these is Mr. Humphreys, mate of the ship and an officer of unchallenged reputation; another is his wife, the daughter of the "Rainier's" master, Captain Morrison, and the remainder are seamen who could gain nothing by agreeing to lie persistently in a matter which did not affect their material interests, and who told their common experience with a frankness and earnestness no cross-examination could tangle.

The indirect evidence rests upon the careful examination made at the time and place by the officers of an American man-of-war. I have questioned a number of these gentlemen, and they agree that the story was confirmed in its essentials by all the white people found on the island of Ujea, and that the voyage of the captain and his part of the crew as described by the so-called Spirit of Libogen was verified when these mariners were subsequently found at Jaluit.

The narrative is given largely in the mate's own language. I have made a few changes in its order and have condensed the preliminary story, leaving it unhampered by his descriptions of shipboard life and of the island and people of Ujea. I have no theory to advance, not even the hackneyed one that here, as often before, the connecting link is left unexplained and coincidences are mistaken for causes. Nor have I any purpose in view save to give a favorite latter-day service yarn a wider publicity than it has hitherto enjoyed.

* * * * *

On the 12th of August, 1883, the American merchant ship "Rainier," Bath built and of 2,000 tons burden, took her departure from the Delaware capes bound for Kobe, in Japan. Thirty-five days out the line was crossed, and in due time,

*J. D. Jerrold Kelly: New York Herald.

when the forty-fifth degree of south latitude was reached, she was hauled to the eastward for the long run of six thousand miles across the Indian Ocean.

Upon the 144th day out, about three in the afternoon of the 3d of January, an island supposed to be Lae, one of the Marshall group, was raised on the port bow, and a few hours later it bore abeam, distant eight miles by cross-beatings. As this marked a turning-point in the course the captain went below, laid down his position on the chart, and then said to the mate: "The course is now north-west and we are at least clear of the islands, with nothing to trouble us until the shores of Japan heave in sight."

"The night," writes Mr. Humphreys at this part of his narrative, "had grown dark, and the moon having set as eight bells struck, there seemed to be an impenetrable darkness, and the bright, twinkling stars had only commenced to show themselves in the far-off sky. The watch was mustered and relieved at eight bells, two men were sent on the top-gallant forecabin for lookouts, and the first officer took charge of the decks. As he walked aft he found the captain on deck with a telescope trying to penetrate the gloomy darkness. Two bells struck and the ship was staggering along under a heavy press of canvas. The captain and mate stood on the weather quarter when one said to the other:

"That white ridge ahead looks like breakers."

"At the same time the lookout's cry was heard:

"Breakers ahead! Breakers ahead!"

"It was a terrible cry, and one that every man in the ship heard, for they came on deck in an instant. The captain gave the order to the wheelman to 'Hard a-starboard!' The first and third officers jumped and let go all the port braces, but it was too late! The ship was in the midst of the breakers, and with a heavy crash struck on a coral reef.

"Orders were given and executed without delay and without confusion. Yards were laid aback with the hope the ship might back off with the assistance of anchors and hawsers out astern, but the heavy seas striking against her stern like trip-hammers and the crashing of timbers gave evidence that the 'Rainier' was a doomed ship; and to look at the seething mass around, with the seas rolling on board, it presented rather a gloomy prospect of any one being left to tell the tale.

"As daylight approached the scene presented was a dismal

one. As far as the eye could reach in either direction could be seen a line of breakers, while in the dim distance a few small knolls of land appeared. As the sun showed itself above the horizon white sails appeared in the far distance, which on near approach proved to be canoes swarmed with dusky natives coming down inside the lagoon, which is more properly called atoll. Coral reefs are called atolls, and are generally round or of an elliptic form and always have one or more deep entrances. This atoll was thirty miles long, in the shape of an ellipse, and was about five miles or so across from one line of surf to the other. Inside was deep water, except now and then when a coral tree would grow up to the surface and spread out its branches like a palm leaf. The reef where we landed was not dry, but had only a few inches of water at extreme low tide, but at high tide it was over a person's head. We were fortunate enough to land at low tide.

"The canoes were made fast to the coral, and the natives came to the inside surf-line and commenced to shout and gesticulate, which sent a chill of terror to the unfortunate mariners clinging to a wreck that soon must go to pieces."

Every effort was made to establish communication with the shore, and finally, by the employment of a line travelling on a hawser, the boats, stores and crew were sent clear of the reef into the smooth lagoon. By this time the day was nearly spent, and as the island, undistinguishable from the ship, was ten miles distant, the king determined to make sail for home.

"After many orders and much gesticulating the large mat sails were hoisted, and each canoe took a boat in tow, the king taking the captain's boat. Away they sailed with great speed and soon the tops of trees could be seen. These gradually increased in size, until the canoes and boats reached an island, which proved to be about three-quarters of a mile long and one-quarter of a mile wide, and was called Ujea. It was covered with cocoanut trees to the water's edge, presenting on near approach to the eyes of the anxious shipwrecked people a tropical paradise. It did not take long to dispel the illusion, for men, women, and children could be seen running down to the edge of the water watching our arrival.

"All the inhabitants of the island soon gathered to view the white Kanakas, as they termed the shipwrecked people. They seemed the most surprised at seeing a woman, the females closely looking at the captain's daughter, feeling her

cheeks and long hair, and gazing intently at the clothes she wore, which were of the New York style of a few months previous. Mothers presented their children and all the savages seemed to admire the pale-faced damsel.

Several days were idled away in recovering from the bruises and excitement of the wreck and in building huts; but nimble-fingered as Jackie is at most things, he was a poor hand at this, and was glad to trade a shirt or a pair of tarry trousers for the three hours' labor by which the deft natives could make a shelter out of cocoanut branches and coral grass. In the mean time the captain determined to seek assistance, and when the men were rested he hauled out the long-boat and made her ready for what at the fairest chance would be a dreary and perilous journey. A volunteer crew offered itself, the boat was soon in as good condition as circumstances allowed, and on the 10th of January, the second mate in charge, she sailed on her quest for help.

The captain's instructions were to hug the wind and if possible to reach a white man's trading station which was said by the natives to be three hundred miles distant. If the wind blew too strong the second mate was to run before it to Oulan Island, and if no aid could be found there he was to shape a course for Ascension and thence to China, which would then bear west-south-west, distant three thousand miles.

The ten days following the long-boat's departure were bitter, with strong winds and rough seas; and the captain, who was ailing and fretting over the loss of his ship and the discomforts of his daughter and crew, commenced to build a schooner. Chance threw in his way a stout timber, but the carpenter's tools were imperfect and the "Rainier" had broken up so fast that little could be taken from her. Still, so valorously and skilfully did all hands work that by the middle of March the boat was sparred, rigged, and provisioned, and on the morning of the 17th all hands mustered early to see the departure of the "Ujea," as they had called her.

"Having been speechless for so many weeks, and having no use of his hands, and as his legs were getting numb," continues the mate, "the captain determined to make a desperate attempt to reach some place where assistance and medicine could be obtained, for Mrs. Humphreys and many of the men had been sick for some time. He decided to sail for Jaluit, one of the Marshall Islands, in the Rawlic group, three hun-

dred miles away, as the king had said, 'White Kanaka belong Jaluit, plenty, plenty.' From seeing a whiskey bottle we concluded it must be one of the many trading stations of the South Sea Islands.

"The king's son and one of the natives had consented to go in the schooner to act as interpreters should it stop at any of the islands lying in their course. So when the day came farewells were said, hands were clasped, and the captain and Will Jackson stepped on board the canoe, followed by Lila Bucho and his servant. The canoe was then shoved into deep water, the sail hoisted, and proceeding rapidly down the lagoon before the wind was soon lost to sight."

* * * * *

Life on Ujea was dreary enough, and privations and heart-weariness broke the white men's health and destroyed their belief in any hope of rescue. Then, too, the natives began to show signs of hostility, and as there were no longer presents to give and the strangers were dependent upon the Kanakas for their daily cocoanuts and bread fruit, dissatisfaction ripened into mischief. The mate therefore determined to fit out the two quarter-boats and leave the island. These preparations were watched curiously by the king, and finally Humphreys confessed his intention. The next evening Noma, one of the king's wives, came to the door of the white man's hut with a message from the chief.

"In the native dialect and a little pigeon-English which Mrs. Humphreys had taught her," writes the mate, "she informed me that Libogen had come to the island and wanted to talk with me, and the king had sent for me to come to his house. Previous to this time the king had often spoken of Libogen, and at one time had said: 'White Kanaka belong to Libogen.' When I asked what he meant, he said: 'So long time, Libogen speak king one night. King take canoe, go down reef, and find too big canoe all broke. Plenty white Kanakas. S'pose king no good to white Kanakas. Bumby man-of-war come and bum-bum king. So he go down reef one morning and see big canoe all broke. He get white Kanakas. So white Kanakas belong Libogen.'

"So to Libogen we must owe the assistance of the natives in landing through the heavy surf, as no island could be seen from the ship, and what had brought the natives down the lagoon at that early hour was hitherto a mystery to us all.

On further inquiry I found that all their movements on any journey by canoe were governed by a spirit called 'Libogen,' who had died in the house in which we lived (formerly the king's 'palace'). Whether it was a woman or child I could not find out, but Libogen was some human being whom they all worshipped, and whose spirit still came at times to visit the king and his family, and these were the only ones who could converse with the spirit. The body of Libogen had been buried on a small island twenty miles down the lagoon, and no person was ever allowed to land there except the king and his family. After giving me this information I asked the king to tell me when Libogen came again, as I would like to talk with her, but not being a believer in spiritualism, I thought no more about it until the king sent for me.

* * * * *

"On our arrival we found the third officer and the seven sailors gathered near the door, and also many of the Kanakas, listening with sober, long-drawn faces to the mysterious talking of an invisible spirit. The king beckoned us to come in, and we were seated by him in the centre of the house, surrounded by the members of his family, who took but little notice of our arrival, as they were greatly interested in the spirit's conversation.

"The king continued talking with the spirit for some time, and the voice could be distinctly heard, first in one part of the house, then quickly changing to the opposite side, now overhead, and again alongside of me. With my slight knowledge of the language I could distinguish some of the words spoken. The voice sounded or spoke in the tone of a whistle, and was fully as mysterious as it was wonderful. After a little time the king said: 'Libogen would speak to mate.' So I gave the king to understand that I wanted to know what had become of the second mate in the long-boat, and of the schooner in which the captain had sailed away with thirteen of the crew, and if we were ever going to be rescued.

"The king asked my questions, and the spirit told him *that the second mate had been picked up near an island called Pornipette, and that Captain Morrison had arrived in the schooner at Jaluit, but he was sick and could not come; that all the schooners were away, but the captain was all right, and in one week a schooner would come to the island; that the captain would send a schooner as soon as one could be got, but in two weeks a big*

schooner would come and the second mate would come, and we would all be rescued. Libogen said the steward, who had died, was buried on Ujea, but that his spirit was with her.

“The conversation lasted some time, and when finished I was told to say ‘Good-night, Libogen,’ which I did, and was answered by ‘Good-night, mate,’ in as plain English as I could speak myself. Mrs. Humphreys was asked to do the same and was plainly answered, ‘Good-night, Emma.’

“Such wonderful information was more than my brain could conceive to be true, and the days of the following week seemed a lifetime. Slowly they passed until Saturday night came, and we all anxiously waited the morrow with wavering faith. During the evening the king drifted down to the house, as was his custom every evening, to get a few whiffs of my pipe of oakum, as our tobacco had given out many weeks before, and a smoke of oakum or dried leaves was a luxury. True I had a little tea which had been wet with salt water and dried, but this I was saving to give the king to smoke in payment for bread fruit and cocoanuts.

“The king seated himself on the floor and I refilled the pipe with oakum and gave it to him. After smoking a few moments he said:

“‘Libogen speak, to-morrow schooner come.’ To this I replied, ‘Libogen too much lie. No speak true.’

“‘No! no! no!’ said the king; ‘to-morrow come, sun finish and schooner come. Libogen no lie, always speak true.’

“It must be remembered that all kinds of craft seemed a schooner to the natives, since having seen our schooner built and sailed away. No doubt it was the largest vessel many of them had ever seen.

* * * * *

“Sunday morning came at last, and saw ten watchers eager for some signs of deliverance from their island prison. The hours dragged slowly and the sun was nearing the western horizon. Anxious eyes had grown dim with watching, when a shout was heard from one man to another the whole length of the island. The king, who was standing near me, shouted, ‘Schooner come! Libogen no lie!’

“The island was aroused, and the shouting and yelling were indescribable, the natives running this way and that in confusion. Quickly grasping my glass I started for the other end of the island off which the sail had been seen, and with

long strides, followed by the rest of the crew, soon reached a point where a sail could be dimly seen bearing down on us.

“With my glasses I could distinguish a curiously-built craft with a large three-cornered sail, and on near approach could see the many naked savages with which the vessel swarmed. I made up my mind immediately that our deliverance might be from life, but not from bondage, and determined to return to my hut and arm the crew with the rifles which we had and to hold out for our lives as long as possible. But my fears were quickly allayed by the king, who said, ‘Never mind. Kanakas no hurt mate.’ So I returned to inform the anxious Mrs. Humphreys that our deliverance had not yet come.

“The first part of the spirit’s prophecy had proved true, and the following Sunday was the day set by Libogen for the second mate to come in a schooner and rescue us. The week dragged slowly, and the weather, which had been fine and pleasant with a strong breeze, now became hot and disagreeable, and, it being the change of the monsoons, the rain came down in torrents. The mosquitoes crowded in swarms, seemingly bent on eating us up. Having no shoes we were obliged to hang our feet out of the door in the rain to keep the mosquitoes off, and then to fan the rest of our person to be able to live in peace. Our misery was nearly complete, and if deliverance came not on the morrow hope was akin to despair.

“During the evening Mrs. Humphreys was patching a morning-gown with a piece of bed-ticking, the gown resembling Joseph’s coat of many colors, while the third officer and myself were enjoying the luxury of a smoke of tea, prognosticating what the morrow might bring forth, when suddenly Mrs. Humphreys started up exclaiming, ‘I hear a gun!’ In a few moments a native came running to the hut, saying, ‘Schooner come and bum-bum,’ but hearing no more sounds we concluded it was all imagination and lay down to sleep.

“The morning dawned, and with it drizzling rain and hot, sultry weather, and the prospect seemed a gloomy one even though assistance might be near, as a fog surrounded the island, so thick that even the reef could not be seen, though only a short distance away.

“Toward eight o’clock the fog lifted a little, and I was seated at the door talking with the third officer, looking out on the dreary waste of water, when—boom!—the sound of a big gun came across the water, and the island was astir.

“I had previously given each man a station so that a system of communication could be had from all points of the island. I immediately sent out the men, with orders to report anything that might be seen, as the gun must have been from a ship in distress or else assistance was near. Hardly had the men started when another boom came rolling along, and apparently not far distant, and soon after the shout came from one man to another until it reached our little hut—that gladly welcome shout which pen fails to describe—‘Sail-ho! Sail-ho!’ With the hail came two of the men, who reported a large vessel off the south-west end of the island under fore-and-aft sails and apparently passing by. There was no time to lose if such were the fact, and the natives who were fast gathering helped us launch the boat, and in a short time four men were pulling me rapidly down the lagoon.

“We were obliged to pull for some distance down the reef before a safe crossing could be found, as the surf ran so high and washed with such force against the coral reef. As soon as a safe place could be seen the boat was headed for the reef and all hands jumped into the water and pulled the boat over the reef, ready to launch her through the surf as soon as a chance was offered. With a loud hurrah the boat was shoved into the surf, we jumped in, and quickly grasping the oars, with a few bold strokes the boat was clear of the breakers and we were pulling for a large vessel which came to view around the point some three miles away.

“Soon we could discern that the vessel was under steam and all sail had been taken in. The Stars and Stripes were floating at the peak, and on near approach the first face I could distinguish among the many crowding her rails was that of our old second mate, W. H. Dhroné.

“Hardly had the boat reached the side of the unknown ship when the commander shouted from the bridge:

“‘Is Mrs. Humphreys alive and well?’

“‘Yes,’ was the answer, ‘but the captain has sailed away in a schooner which we built a month ago, and no news from him as yet. One man, the steward, we have buried, and there are ten of us now on the island.’

“‘Come alongside,’ was the reply, and as we glided alongside a rope was thrown. We made this fast to the boat, and grasping a ladder which had been hung over the side, I leaped from the bobbing craft and quickly reached the deck, where I

was warmly greeted by Commander McCormick, who grasped my hand and said:

“Welcome on board of the American man-of-war “Essex,” sent by the United States government to rescue the crew of the wrecked American ship “Rainier.””

* * * * *

The stories of the long-boat and of the schooner are interesting enough to deserve a place for themselves. But space forbids and it may be added as the tag to the drama. But the second mate's boat was picked up eleven days out, and after its crew had suffered greatly, by the British bark “Catalina,” Captain Williams, bound from Australia to Saigon, Cochin-China. The rescue was made as Libogen had revealed, near an island called Porporette, of which they had never before heard. Upon their arrival at Saigon they were sent to Hong Kong, and as a result of their report the United States steamer “Essex,” then protecting American interests at Shameen, was ordered to Ujea. With the customary diligence and efficiency of this ship on that famous cruise, she sailed immediately after coaling at Nagasaki.

On the 12th of April the “Essex” arrived off Ujea and fired the signal-gun heard by Mrs. Humphreys. The next day, Sunday, just two weeks from the date of Libogen's promise, the mist lifted and the gladdened watchers heard the guns and saw the flag of home and of rescue. And as predicted the second mate was on board.

There is no time to tell the wanderings of the captain's schooner, but Mr. Humphreys, in concluding this part of his narrative, says: “I leave the reader to judge if the spirit of the departed Libogen had spoken truly or not. I am no spiritualist, but the within facts are true ones, and I must believe what I have seen, for all that the spirit told came true. What the spirit told in regard to the captain's being sick and unable to come to our assistance we found to be true on our arrival at Jaluit, and that a schooner had been sent to our assistance manned by a crew of natives.” All this relating to the captain's schooner was told on board the “Essex” before she sailed for Jaluit, and all the alleged circumstances were found to be true when she arrived there. These are the facts in the case, and this is a queer yarn, is it not?

ETCHINGS: THE SUICIDE *

I go down-stairs softly and enter the bath-room. No one is there. All is quiet. It is just twelve o'clock. I turn on the water softly, muffling its fall with a towel, and find that it still runs warm. I leave it running and creep up-stairs to my room. Everything has been put carefully in its place. My papers have all been arranged and lie neatly tied up on my desk. All is ready. I softly undress and put on my bath-robe, leaving my clothes in a pile in the corner. I take nothing with me but my penknife, the point of which I have sharpened. I creep down-stairs again to the bath-room. The water is still running. It is still warm. The zinc tub is nearly full. I turn the water off and listen. All is quiet as before.

I do not hesitate. First I find the artery in my left thigh. I pinch it between my thumb and forefinger, and with the sharp blade of the knife I cut it—*quick*—there, it is done. Then I repeat the operation with my right thigh. The pulse comes next. It is quite painful, but I do not mind. I have nerved myself to it, and it is really easy. Now I sink into the water. The sensation is not unpleasant. I rather like it. But I must not allow myself to think. I have resolved to do this. I have done it, and now I must not regret. No, I must not think. Look, the red blood is beginning to color the water. Little currents of it eddy in and out. Yes, I am beginning to feel a little weaker, but I must not think. No, I must not think. And yet—ah, the fly! Where did he come from? Does the little fellow know what I am doing? Buzz! buzz—why does he not move? I must brush him away. He bothers me. But I must not raise myself out of the water. No, I must die. Die! Did I say die? Yes, so I must. But I must not think. How red the water is. My blood! Can she see it? Will it come to taunt her? O God! The pain at my heart has gone. I am sleepy. She is here! She is bending over me. She sees the red blood. She reaches out her hand to save me. It is too late. The fly is bigger. He is monstrous. He is a cloud. He envelopes me. Oh, the noise. But it grows fainter. It stretches away. I am going now. The waves on the ocean roar. They stretch over me. They crush me. They carry me down—down—

* T. L. Masson : For Short Stories.

THE TREASURE IN THE PIT*

It was in the very thick of the cotton-picking season. The crop was large and the planters were driving ahead to gather it before any misfortune befell it.

The members of the Order of the Chosen Sons of Identity had an entertainment at the Bush Arbor Meeting-house. The society was wealthy—for the members got from fifty cents to one dollar a day picking cotton; a large sum in the country. In giving their entertainment the Chosen Sons of Identity were assisted by the Daughters of the Golden Reaper. A large crowd attended, as it was Saturday night and they had all day Sunday in which to rest.

The entertainment was a great success, owing to the good management of Silas, the chief grand sachem (or lambkin, as he called it) of the order. Merriment reigned when old Juba entered the house and applied for membership to the order.

Old Juba was a strange negro tramp whom Mr. Sam Rodgers had hired in the great dearth of cotton pickers, and whom the regular plantation hands viewed with suspicion and distrust, and his claims for membership were scouted by Silas.

"You wanten be a Chosen Son ob Identity? How you gwinter git iny identification, I'd like ter know? No, no, you identify cotton; dat's all de identification you kin do!" said the chief grand lambkin superciliously.

The crowd roared with laughter, but the mirth of the company ceased when old Juba, unmoved by their jeers, began to tell them that a spirit had appeared to him and directed him to go in search of buried gold, and he wished their aid.

"De sperrit lead me yere," cried the old man, "frum a fur place. He say tuh me, 'Go, Juba,' and I go. 'Go hunt fer a branch dat run norf and souf, de spring ob which rises outer a tupeler gum; foller de branch till you git tuh tree poplars, den foller till you come tuh clump ob sweet-gums on de fur side, dere halt an' dig!'"

Old Juba's manner had altered, his head was thrown back, his eyes fixed, and his voice assumed a sing-song tone like a kind of rude intoning. The supercilious grin vanished from the face of the chief grand lambkin, and the crowd listened in speechless awe to this revelation.

* Paul Grant: Atlanta Constitution.

"Eh! my Laud!" muttered they, as he ceased speaking, "dat's Marse Sam Rodger's spring branch!" "I knows de tree poplars," "An' de clump ob sweet-gums," cried one and another of the company. The entertainment broke up and the negroes followed old Juba as he went out to cut a witch-hazel divining-rod by the light of the moon.

Sunday morning a long procession of superstitious negroes accompanied Juba till he halted at the clump of sweet-gums and began to try to locate the spot where the gold lay buried. Shutting his eyes, the old man whirled round and round with the divining-rod held at arm's-length, till at last it bent a little and seemed to indicate a particular spot. The crowd eagerly notified him of the fact, and Juba, opening his eyes, proceeded to measure off the ground for about twenty feet. This was all they could do Sunday, so they returned to the Bush Arbor Meeting-house and profitably spent the day preaching about the "findings of the spirit."

Early Monday morning they all marched up to the planter's house and asked permission to dig for gold. Mr. Rodgers was greatly surprised at the request, for he thought they were all out in the field picking cotton.

"Dig for gold down by the sweet-gum trees! No, indeed! Take yourselves off to the cotton field—that's the place to gather gold."

"Dere's seventeen an' a half bushels buried dere," cried Juba, "an' I's willin', suh, tuh 'vide wid you, w'en we git it."

"I expect you are, but there is no gold there."

"It wuz buried dere fo' hundud years ago, so de sperrit says."

"Well, the spirit lies. This country wasn't settled one hundred years ago. But there is gold in the cotton field; go back and pick it out."

But the excited negroes refused to budge, and at last Mr. Rodgers was forced to compromise. They might dig for a week; at the end of that time, if they found no gold, they must stop and go back to picking cotton. They left him fuming and fretting, but as misery loves company, he was consoled by the fact that the negro hands of his neighbors struck work also to take part in the digging for gold, a large sum being offered them if they found it.

Accompanied by his followers, Juba proceeded to lay off the spot where the hole was to be dug; it must be done with suitable ceremonies, "or," said he, "de ebil sperrits will 'sturb

us." He accordingly drew a line around a space some twenty feet square for excavation. "Now I want," said he, "de black tail ob a red rooster."

Silas had become so impressed with the great sum of seventeen and a half bushels of gold that he forsook for the time being the greatness of the office of chief grand lambkin, and was now a most earnest gold seeker.

"Run, Titus," said he to his son, "an' pull out Marse Sam's game-cock tail."

Titus departed, not very willingly, for the cock was fierce and hard to catch.

"Now," said old Juba, "nobaudy mus' say a wud w'ile I lay off de lines."

The crowd watched him breathlessly as he, with great dignity and a garden pick, proceeded to mark off the spot.

"He got dat line crooked," muttered a bystander.

Old Juba stopped. "Who dat spoke?"

Profound silence.

"Ef I knowed who dat spoke, I'd chop 'em down wid disher pick!"

The crowd looked reproachfully at the speaker, who slunk away.

"Now," said Juba, "way dem fedders?"

They were probably on the rooster, but no one spoke. A runner was dispatched to tell Titus to hurry up. The messenger found Titus skulking about Mr. Rodgers's horse-lot, trying to drive the rooster before him.

"Dey say come quick wid dem fedders," said the runner.

"Dey better come git 'em demselves, den. Disher rooster spises a cullud pusson wusser'n pisen, an' he'll spur you quicker an' nuttin'. You better stop trowin atter disher rooster. Ef Marse Sam ketch you a-chunkin' him he'll lay his buggy whip ober you 'fo' you know way you stan'."

The two now drove the bird into the lock of the fence, where, armed with their hats, they made a rush at him. The angry cock flew at the runner, who ran, but Titus made a grab at the coveted treasure and the bird flew away leaving his tail behind him. The two now returned in triumph to the gold seekers.

Old Juba seized the feathers. "Now," cried he, "w'ile I bun dese yere fedder, you all kin tek it by tun to pray. Each man pray so long as a fedder bun; wen it bun out, dat pusson

mus' een. Many prayers is a great discouragement tuh ebil sperrits, an' so is bu'nt fedders."

Silas, chief grand lambkin, was first called on, and in some trepidation he began to pray and his feather to burn. "O Laud, we beseech thee tuh perfect us frum dese yere ebil sperrits, we, dat's found disher great treasure, so dat ef we ain't sole all we had to buy it, leaseways we's lef all Marse Sam Rodgers's cotton a-wastin' in de fiel' tell we find——"

"Stop, suh," said Juba, "yo' fedder dun out. Nex' one."

Israel, one of the Chosen Sons of Identity, began: "O Laud, we baig ob dee help agin dese ebil sperrits; let us not waste our time liker we waste Marse Sam's cotton dat's a-sheddin' ober de groun' liker ontimely snow——"

"Yo' fedder dun bun," cried Juba. "Annuder one try."

By the time the rooster's tail had been consumed, some fifteen or twenty most flourishing prayers had been nipped in the bud. Some of the feathers being longer than others, of course affected the length of the prayers which all were anxious to make. So it fell to the lot of Eli, the last man, to speak only while the last and shortest feather burned. In great excitement he began. "O Laudy! Laudy!" he cried, as his feather began to fiz, "Lau-u-dy!"

"Dey, it dun bun!" broke in old Juba.

"Chuh!" muttered Eli, crest-fallen. "I nebber had no showin'; dat leetle tail fedder wunt wuth talkin' 'bout. Tain't nuttin' but pen fedder, nohow."

"It smell," said Juba, "an' mek sperrits swink."

In case these fragmentary petitions were not successful, old Juba supplemented them by muttering divers incantations against evil spirits uttered in words of his own invention.

The opening ceremonies being now over, the negroes commenced digging, and made the dirt fly. No sooner was one man exhausted than another took his place from the ranks of the anxious by-standers. As they got deeper they rigged up a bucket and sweep and lifted the earth with great speed. While they dug old Juba continued the fight against evil spirits by borrowing a Bible from Silas, which he set on a pile of old horseshoes, after opening it and laying a white stone across a page, and he pretended to read in a muttering voice as they dug.

Silas led the diggers; he had been seized with a thirst for gold, and every time he threw out a shovelful of dirt he looked

anxiously for the coveted treasure. Under his lead the Chosen Sons of Identity did mighty deeds of valor. As he worked his imagination took fire, and——

“Inny goule yit, Silas?” asked an outsider anxiously.

“Not yit,” said Silas, “but terrectly hit’ll begin tuh shine. I ’lows at least tuh git a bushel, an’ when I does, de cotton fiel’ ’ll know me no mo’. I gwinter buy Marse Sam fas’ hoss an’ buggy an’ dribe roun’ same liker I wuz w’ite. I’ll draw de reins ober Flyin’ Bess an’ say, ‘Git up, suh!’”

At the mere idea of this grandeur, Silas burst into joyous laughter, and without thinking he spat, for he was a great tobacco chewer. Old Juba looked up from the Bible he was pretending to read.

“Dey now! you gone an’ spit. Wha’ you spit fuh? Spit-tin’ is a great encouragement to ebil sperrits—git outer dat hole suh, an’ git ’way frum yuh.”

Silas sorrowfully arose and retired crestfallen, and another man, with an empty mouth, took his place.

As Silas retired from the scene he made a vague effort to establish his present social status. “I wuz a man who ’peared tuh be himself, an’ not anudder pusson.” He shook his head, he failed to recognize himself, and he went over that statement. “I wuz a man who ’peared tuh be himself, an’ not anudder pusion, dat I knows fer a fac.” Here he met his wife, who had been the witness of his disgrace.

“You used tuh be de lam-kin! Now you’s kin’ ob nuttin.”

Overwhelmed by this cutting remark Silas slunk away.

Old Juba now formulated a new set of rules and regulations under which they were to act. They were not to speak while at work, not within a certain distance of the excavation, neither should they chew tobacco. They were to work night and day, nor could they stop work during the time allotted them, lest it cause the evil spirits to overpower the good spirits under whose guidance he acted. These evil spirits had it in their power to remove the gold at any time they might gain the ascendancy.

All of this information the negroes implicitly believed, and day after day the work went on. After digging some ten feet they struck a bed of rock, and now their progress was slow, but they stuck to it, nor could any one persuade them that it was impossible for buried gold to be hid in solid rock.

“De sperrits tell us dig,” said they, and dig they would,

while the fast-opening cotton shed and wasted. It seemed to the exasperated planters more than they could stand.

The weather was hot and sultry, storms had been frequent in the vicinity, and they lived in constant dread that their time would come next and their crops be ruined. A cyclone also had visited the adjoining county and blown people and houses about in a lively manner. The terrible reports of its havoc had set the negroes wild. Those who were not interested in the gold-digging were full of terror of the cyclone, and wished to stop work and go to digging cyclone pits—that is, the wicked ones were—the more pious insisted that it would be resisting the will of the Lord.

Chief among these was Aunt Bina, Mrs. Rodgers's nurse. This godly woman maintained the extreme sinfulness of taking precautions against the convulsions of nature, as they were instruments of the Lord's vengeance, and should be so received.

While the negroes thus wasted their time and their employers' crops, the planters fumed and fretted. As for Sam Rodgers, he used more ugly language than he had in a twelve-month. He was, moreover, much provoked by the disfiguration of his pet game-cock, and he attacked Silas and his son Titus, whom he found disconsolately lounging about the horses lot.

"Who pulled out the tail of my rooster? If I could find the fellow I'd lay my buggy whip over him."

"I dunno nuttin' 'bout it," said Silas. "I think too much ob myself tuh bodder wid rooster—'specially game-cock, which is a vice ob Satan an' nuttin' fer me, a Christian man an' de chief gran' lambkin ob de Chosen Sons ob Identity, tuh meddle wid."

"Silas," exclaimed Mr. Rodgers, "I never suspected you before, but I believe in my soul that you and Titus had something to do with it."

"Me, Marse Sam!" cried Titus, as Silas stood dumb and conscience-stricken. 'Fore Gaud I nebber tetch dat rooster; he'll spur you ef he git a chance. He too 'spise a cullud pusion fer me tuh fool wid 'em. He's better 'an a watch-dog in de chicken coob. De moment you try tuh git in he crow."

"What! have you been trying my chicken house?"

"Laud! no, suh! nebber t'ink ob sicher thing. I only try de do' tuh see, jis' by way ob' speriment. I year de niggers say so, so I tried, not dat I'd demean myself tuh steal, an' leastways yo' chickens, Marse Sam. But fo' Gaud jes' as I

put my han' on dat do', dat rooster riz up an crow, coo-coo! go-go-go! jes' same as he could talk."

"Well, now his tail is gone he don't crow."

"No, suh; seems like all his pride in life is gone!"

Mr. Rodgers, having heard of Silas's downfall, determined to make use of him in overthrowing old Juba. The chief grand lambkin was now an altered man. As he stated it, "he was now nowhar." While he was in this forlorn condition. Mr. Rodgers unexpectedly came to his relief by offering him two dollars to break up the gold-digging fever.

"There is no gold down there in that bed of rock," said Mr. Rodgers. "That old darkey is crazy, and you negroes are a pack of fools to believe him."

Silas smiled in silence. He did not believe Mr. Rodgers, but still he thought it would be a good plan to run off old Juba and get the gold in the pit himself, and at the same time recover his lost prestige as chief grand lambkin.

Mr. Rodgers was a waggish man, so he took great pleasure in preparing Silas and Titus for the parts they were to play. Accordingly, at midnight the gold diggers, who were working in profound silence, were startled by strange sounds and groans that proceeded from the woods. Two tall, white phantoms, each supplied with two heads adorned with fiery eyes and mouths, appeared, followed by another that looked like a gleaming skeleton.

"Who meddles with my gold?" the apparations cried.

"Laud hab mercy!" cried the negroes, and began to fly.

Old Juba leaped up.

"Somebaudy's bin a-spittin'!" he yelled. "An' so an ebil sperit."

"Juba-a! Juba-a! I come atter you!" cried a hoarse voice.

With another wild yell Juba fled, followed by the mob of frightened negroes.

"Now I'll get my cotton picked," said Mr. Rodgers, and he went to bed with a contented mind.

But with daylight the negroes' courage returned, and they swarmed about the pit full of excitement. In the bottom of it was found a paper, on which was written: "I have taken the gold and left you the hole."

Curious to see how matters were progressing at the gold diggings, in the afternoon Mr. Rodgers took his wife for a stroll and walked in that direction. Aunt Bina accompanied

them with the baby. He was a big fat fellow, more than a year old and quite a load for the old woman, but she doted on him and thought him a wonder of the earth.

The day was hot and oppressive. A strange sultriness filled the atmosphere.

"We'll have a shower before long," said Mr. Rodgers. "It's so close."

This observation started Aunt Bina off as she walked behind with the baby. She had long wished to get Mr. Rodgers's opinion concerning the discussion which raged between her and the cyclone-pit diggers. Now was her opportunity.

"Marse Sam," said she, "don't you think it wrong tuh run frum de Laud?"

"Yes, I do."

"You does? Why does you?"

"Because it is a useless waste of time; you can't get away, you know."

"Well, den, aint a-diggin' ob cyclone pits wrong?"

"I don't know. What makes it wrong?"

"Why, it looks tuh me liker tryin' tuh go agin de will ob de Laud. Ef de Laud wuz minded tuh 'stroy you by a cyclone, wouldn't it seem liker flying in his face, ur runnin' frum Gaud, tuh go dig a cyclone pit an' hide frum him?"

"I don't know," said Sam. "I don't think I'd spend my time digging a pit, but if there was one handy, I think I'd jump in if there was a cyclone about."

"But didn't you jis' say you wouldn't run frum Gaud?"

"Well, I don't, only from the cyclone."

"Well, ain't dat agin his will tuh 'stroy you by a cyclone?"

"If 'twas his will to destroy me by a cyclone, it would overtake me before I could reach the pit; and if it was his will that I should escape, I'd get there ahead of the cyclone."

"Ki! Marse Samuel! dat ain't de way tuh talk. It mus' be eder right ur wrong tuh jump in de pit. Now, I blebe it's wrong."

"Then I'd keep out," said Mr. Rodgers.

"Yes, suh, dat's jis' what I's gwinter do; de Laud bein' my helper. I's gwinter stan' right up an' say, 'Yere, Laud, yere's me, suh.'"

In the mean time the crowd of negroes about the gold pit were in a state of great excitement, which was artfully lashed to fury by Silas, anxious to recover his influence. Old Juba

seemed dazed. All he could do was to remark, time and again:

“Sumbaudy spit! Sumbaudy spit!”

“Huccum de ebil sperrits obertu’n us so, w’en Juba had de Bible?” queried Israel.

“He trow way de Bible,” said Silas contemptuously. “See way de ebil sperrit stomp ’em?” and he pointed to the marks of Mr. Sam Rodgers’s boot-heel, where he had accidentally trodden on the book.

“Ef he hadn’t hab trowed ’way de Bible no ebil sperrit could hab got de gole,” urged Silas. “All ob you hab had yo’ wuk fuh nuttin’, ’sides losin’ yo’ dollar a day pickin’ Marse Sam’s cotton. You’s bin yere a week, an’ you’s got nuttin’ tuh show fuh it but disher big hole in de groun’ an’ anuder in yo’ pockets.”

This artful speech roused the crowd to fury. Propositions to hang Juba by the more excited, or to beat him by the milder men, were freely expressed.

Old Juba made but one defense.

“Sumbaudy spit!” he muttered. “Sumbaudy spit!”

As the day went on, the near approach of Sunday and the fact that there was no week’s wages to buy supplies caused them to wax hotter and hotter. The Chosen Sons of Identity formed themselves into a band of regulators, and, each armed with a hickory, they seized upon Juba and were about to give him an unmerciful beating when a sound, an awful sound, smote upon their ears.

“’Tis de ebil sperrits!” yelled Juba.

The sound came nearer. The trees began to wave and bend, then to crash, as they were uprooted and hurled to the earth.

“A cyclone! a cyclone!” screamed Silas, and leaped into the pit, followed by the others.

Mr. Rodgers and his family were still sauntering down the road, and Aunt Bina was still declaring that she would never run from the Lord, when that sound smote upon their ears and an awful sight appeared to their eyes. Far away across the great cotton field could be seen a strange-looking sight—a gigantic inverted cone, whether of aggregated dust or descending clouds the beholders had no time to decide. It approached with a fearful velocity and with an awful sound that terrified the boldest. As it passed, everything fell prone

to earth; trees, fences, houses disappeared. It seemed death incarnate; the fell destroyer visible!

"My God! it's a cyclone!" cried Rodgers, appalled. "Run for the gold diggers' pit! Run, Laura! Don't faint!" as his wife staggered. "Run, Bina, run!"

But Aunt Bina needed no urging. Throwing the fat baby to her shoulder, she darted ahead of Rodgers and his wife and flew like the wind.

"Not fer myself, Laud," she screamed, as she ran, "not fer myself I ain't a-runnin' frum you, but 'tis disher chile, Marse Sam's baby, I's 'sponsible fer!"

Indifferent to the crowd in the pit, Rodgers hurled himself and his wife in. Aunt Bina was already there; she had lit on the back of Silas. The next second, with its fearful whirring and moanings, the cyclone swept by. The three sweet-gums were uprooted and fell across the pit, shutting them all securely in.

In five minutes the strange storm had swept by and all was calm and still, save for a shower of rain.

But in the improvised cyclone pit hubbub reigned; groans, cries, prayers rent the air till Mr. Rodgers commanded silence. They were packed like sardines in a box, so that they could not move. It seemed strange that they could make so much noise.

After some consultation, Israel, who was tall and slim, mounted the back of Silas, who was very broad, and after many struggles and failures managed to scramble out between the branches of the trees. Finding an axe hard by he chopped a hole among the limbs, through which they all finally succeeded in escaping after a rude ladder had been improvised for them to ascend on.

While these preparations were going on the imprisoned crowd indulged in some lively passages. Silas could not refrain from twitting Aunt Bina by asking how she came there in the pit.

"I cum yere," said she boldly, "kase I bleegeed ter fetch Marse Sam's baby. You think I gwinter 'low Marse Sam's baby tuh be knocked tuh pieces?"

"I thought you wuz one dat wouldn't run frum Gaud, an' yere you cum plud-de-junk in disher hole. Please Gaud, ef I hadn't scrouged tuh one side you'd hab knocked my head off."

"You t'ink I gwinter tek de 'sponsibility ob disher chile an'

'low inyt'ing tuh happen tuh it? No," cried she, hugging up the fat baby, "mammy loves her boy!"

"Hit's all bery well 'bout de chile," pursued Silas, "but how, I wanter know, you gwinter answer tuh de Laud fer runnin' frum him? He ain't a-gwinter tek no sicher 'scuse as dat. He'll say, 'You truffin' runaway nigger.'"

"Silas, hold your tongue!" said Mr. Rodgers, coming to the old woman's rescue. "I thank God Aunt Bina could run like a deer-hound, or my child would have been killed."

"And the Lord will say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'" cried Mrs. Rodgers, weeping.

"Dey, now! what you got tuh say tuh dat?" cried Aunt Bina triumphantly.

"I shu', Miss Laura," said Silas, "I bery glad Aunt Bina sabe de chile; Gaud knows I'd ha' resked my life fer it myself. Aunt Bina bein' in a position ob 'sponsibility an' truss, does right tuh run; 'tain't as a nuss I's discussin' her duty, but as a sinner wedder she should run frum Gaud."

By this time, between faith and duty, Aunt Bina was in quite a maze, but Mr. Rodgers cut the matter short.

"Nobody can run from God, for he is everywhere, so it's a waste of time to try and hunt a place where he isn't, but it's perfectly right to run from a cyclone."

When the prisoners were released they saw that a clean road one hundred feet wide had been cut through the cotton field and the woods, as far as the eye could reach, by the cyclone in its awful march.

"My friends," said Mr. Rodgers, as he looked around, "perhaps it was a lucky thing that you dug this pit, else we all might have been swept into eternity. And our lives are the treasures that we found in that hole."

That night Juba disappeared.

By times Monday morning the hands were in the field gathering in the remainder of the cotton crop.

ETCHINGS: AN ANTIQUE*

One Morning a hungry poor Man, begging his Alms from Door to Door, did at last epy very good Chear at a Cook's Houfe, whereat his Mouth began to water; and the Spur of his Stomach pricking him forward, he made as much Hafte towards the Place as his feeble Feet would give him Leave. Where he was no sooner come, but the pleafant Smell of the Meat and Sauce did catch such hold of the poor Man's Nofe, that (as if he had been holden with a Pair of Pinfers) he had no power to pafs from thence, until he had (to ftay the Fury of his raging Appetite) eaten a Piece of Bread which he had of Charity gotten in another Place. In the eating whereof his Senfe was so delighted with the frefh Smell of the Cook's Meat, that tho' he did not lay his Lips to any morfel thereof, yet in the End his Stomach was so well fatisfied with the Smell thereof, that he plainly acknowledged to have gotten as good a Breakfast as if he had there eaten his Belly full of the beft Chear. Which when the Cook had heard, he in hafte fteps forth to the poor Fellow, lays hold on him, and in a choleric Mood bids him pay for his Breakfast. The honeft poor Man, amazed at this ftrange Demand, could not tell what to fay. But the Cook was fo much the more earnest, by how much he perceived the good Man to be abafhed at his Boldness, and did so cunningly cloak the Matter, that in the End the poor Man was contented to refer the Deciding of the Controverfy to whatsoever perfon fhould next pafs by that Way, and abide his Judgment. Which Thing was no fooner concluded, but by and by cometh to the Place a very natural Fool and notorious Idiot. All the better for me, thought the Cook; for more he doubted the Sentence of a wife Man than of a fool. To this aforefaid Judge they rehearfed the whole Fact; the Cook complaining, and the other patiently confeffing, as before. To conclude, this Natural perceiving what Money the Cook exacted, caufed the poor Man to put so much Money betwixt Two Bafons, and to fhake it up and down in the Cook's Hearing. Which done, he did award, that as the poor man was fatisfied with the Smell of the Cook's Meat, fo the Cook should be recompenfed with the noife of the poor Man's Money.

* From "Laws Ecclefiaftical, Civil, and Canon." Dublin, 1793.

MAZZARO'S: A STUDY IN THRIFT*

The wayfarer going along the Biviere di Lentini, stretched out there like a space of dead sea, and the sere stubble of the Plain of Catania, and the orange trees, always green, of Francofonte, and the gray cork trees of Resecone, and the lonely meadows of Passaneto and Passinatello, if he should ask, in order to divert himself from the weariness of the long dusty road, under the sky hazy with heat, at the hour when the bells of the litter ring sadly in the immense country, and the mules hang their heads and their tails and the driver of the litter sings his melancholy song in order not to let himself be overcome by the sleep of the malaria: "Whose is this land?" would have the answer—

"Mazzaro's."

And passing near a farm as large as a town, with store-houses that seem like churches, and hens in flocks sitting in the shade by the well, and women screening their eyes with their hands to see who was going by: "And this?"

"Mazzaro's."

And on and on, while the malaria weighed upon your eyelids, and the barking of a dog aroused you suddenly, passing by a vineyard that was endless and spread over hill and plain, motionless, as if the dust lay heavy on it, and the keeper of the vineyard, stretched face downward upon his gun, raised his drowsy head and opened one eye to see who it might be—

"Mazzaro's."

Then came an olive grove thick as a wood where the grass never sprouted, and the harvest lasted until March. They were the olive trees of Mazzaro. And toward evening, when the sun was setting as red as fire and the country was veiled with sadness, there were met the long lines of the ploughs of Mazzaro going slowly homeward from the field, and the oxen wading the ford heavily with their muzzles in the dark water; and there were seen in the distant pastures of the Canziria, on the rough slope, the immense whitish patches which were the flocks of Mazzaro; and there was heard the shepherd's whistle echoing in the gorges, and the bell now ringing and now silent, and a lonely song lost in the valley.

All property of Mazzaro.

* Italian of Giovanni Verga: E. Cavazza: For Short Stories.

It seemed as if Mazzaro owned even the setting sun, and the chirping locusts, and the birds that went with short flights to hide behind the furrows, and the cry of the horned owl in the woods. It seemed as if Mazzaro were spread out all over the earth and one walked over his body. Instead of that, he was an ugly little man, said the driver of the litter, that you would not give a penny to look at; he had nothing large about him but his paunch, and no one knew how he filled it, for he ate nothing; the truth was, he was rich as a hog; but he had a head that was a jewel, that man.

Indeed with his jewel of a head, he had accumulated all those possessions, where formerly he used to come to dig or prune, or reap, from morning to night; in the sun, the rain, the wind, without shoes to his feet or a rag of an overcoat; everybody remembered having given him kicks behind, the same persons who now called him "your excellency," and spoke to him with cap in hand. But not for this had he grown proud, now that all the excellencies of the place were his debtors; and he said that "excellency" means poor fellow and bad payer; he still wore a cap, only it was of black silk, it was his only grandeur, and latterly he had even come to put on a felt hat, because it cost less than the silk cap. He had possessions as far as he could see, and he was long-sighted—everywhere, to right and left, before and behind, on mountain and plain. More than five thousand mouths, without counting the birds of the sky and the animals of the earth, that ate upon his land, and without counting his own mouth that ate less than any; he was contented with two-pence worth of bread and a bit of cheese, swallowed in hurry and haste, standing, in a corner of the storehouse large as a church, in midst of the dust from the grain so that one could not see, while the peasants emptied the sacks; or on top of a straw-stack, when the wind swept over the frozen country, at sowing-time, or with his head inside a basket in the hot days of the harvest. He did not drink wine, he did not smoke or use tobacco, although his plantations along the riverside produced tobacco with large leaves, as tall as a boy, such as sells at ninety-five *lire*. He never had had any woman to support but his mother, who had cost him twelve *tari* extra, when he was obliged to have her carried to the graveyard.

It was that he had thought and thought, again and again, what property means, when he went without shoes to work

on the land that was now his own; and he had experienced what it is to earn three *tari* a day, in the month of July, to keep the back bent for fourteen hours, with the overseer on horseback after you, that takes you with his whip if you straighten up for a moment. For this, he had not let pass a minute of his life that was not employed in getting riches; and now his ploughs were numerous as the long line of crows that arrive in November; and other lines of mules, that seemed endless, carried seed for sowing; the women who crouched in the mud, from October to March, to gather his olives, were countless, as countless as the magpies that came to steal the olives; and at the time of the vintage whole villages gathered about his vines, and as far as singing was heard, in the country, it was for the grape-gathering of Mazzaro. At harvest the reapers of Mazzaro seemed like an army of soldiers; to maintain all those people, with biscuit in the morning and bread and bitter orange at breakfast, and the luncheon, and the *lasagne* in the evening, there was needed money by handfuls, and the *lasagne* were dished in bread-troughs as large as tubs. So now, when he rode behind the line of his mowers, with whip in hand, he did not lose one of them from sight, and kept repeating, "Bend to it, boys!"

He had his hands in his pockets the whole year long, spending, and for the mere territory the king took so much that it threw Mazzaro into a fever, every time.

However, each year all those storehouses large as churches were filled with grain so that it was necessary to raise the roofs to contain it all; and every time that Mazzaro sold the wine, it took more than a day to count the money, all in silver pieces of twelve *tari*, for he would not have dirty paper money for his goods, and went to buy the dirty paper only when he had to pay the king, or other persons; and at the fairs, the herds of Mazzaro covered the whole field and crowded the roads, so that it took half a day to let them pass, and the image of the saint, with the band of music, had to change their road and yield the way to him.

All this property he had earned for himself, with his own hands and head, with losing sleep at night, with taking fevers from the malaria, with labor from dawn to darkness. When one is like that, it means that he is made for property.

And also property was made for him, so that he seemed to draw it like a loadstone, because property will stay with him

who knows how to keep it, and does not waste it like that baron who had been formerly the master of Mazzaro, and had picked him up, homeless and naked, in the field for charity, and had been master of all those meadows and all those woods and all those vines and all those flocks; who, when he came riding on horseback into his lands with men behind him, seemed like the king, and they prepared for him a lodging and dinner, for that simpleton, so that every one knew the hour and the moment in which he was to arrive, and they did not let themselves be caught with their hands in the bag!

"That man is bound to be robbed!" said Mazzaro, and burst out laughing when the baron gave him kicks behind, and rubbed his back with his hands, murmuring "Let simpletons keep at home," and "Property does not belong to him who has it, but to him who knows how to get it."

He, on the contrary, after he had gotten riches, certainly did not send word whether he were coming to look after the reaping or the vintage, and when, and how; but he appeared suddenly, on foot or riding his mule, without his men, with a piece of bread in his pocket; and he slept beside his sheaves, with his eyes open, and his gun between his legs.

In this way, little by little Mazzaro became master of all the baron's property; and the latter parted first with the olive grove, then with the vines, then with the pasture, and then with the farm and finally with his palace itself, so that a day did not pass in which he did not sign a legal paper, and Mazzaro put below his worthy X mark. The baron had nothing left but the stone shield that formerly was over his door, and it was the only thing that he had not been willing to sell, saying to Mazzaro, "This only, of all my property, will not do for thee." And it was true; Mazzaro did not know what to do with it, and would not have paid twopence for it.

"This is a fine thing, to have the fortune that Mazzaro has!" people said; and they did not know what it had taken to grasp that fortune; how many thoughts, how many fatigues, how many falsehoods, how many perils of going to the galleys, and how that head that was a jewel had worked day and night, steadier than a mill-stone, to get riches; and if the owner of a neighboring field persisted in not giving it up to him, and wanted to take Mazzaro by the neck, he had to find a stratagem to constrain the owner to sell, and make him fall into the trap, despite of the distrust of the peasant

nature. He would go and boast, for example, of the fertility of a landrent which did not even produce lupines, and succeeded in making the poor fellow believe it to be a promised land, so that he let himself be induced to hire it, as a speculation, and afterward lost his rent, his house and his field which Mazzaro took—for a piece of bread. And how many annoyances Mazzaro had to bear! The *mezzadri* who came to complain of the bad years, the debtors who sent their wives in a procession to tear their hair and beat their breasts, conjuring him not to put them into the road, by taking away their mule or their donkey, for they had nothing to eat.

“Do you see what I eat?” he would reply. “Bread and an onion! And I have storehouses brimful, and am master of all this property.”

And if they asked for a penny he answered that he had none.

And indeed he had not. For he never kept twelve *tari* in his pocket, it took so many to make all that property profitable, and the money entered and passed out of his house like a river. Moreover he did not care for money; he said it was not property, and as soon as he put together a certain sum, he at once bought a piece of land; because he wished to succeed in having as much land as the king has, and to be better off than the king, for the king cannot sell it or call it his own.

One thing alone grieved him, that he was beginning to grow old, and he must leave the earth behind him. This is an injustice of God, he thought, that after having worn out your life in gaining property, when you have succeeded in getting it, so that you would like more, you have to leave it! And he would remain for hours seated on a basket, with his chin in his hands, looking at his vines that grew green before his eyes, and the fields that waved with heads of wheat like a sea, and the olive groves that veiled the mountain like a cloud; and if a half-naked boy passed in front of him, bent under his burden like a weary ass, he would thrust his stick between the boy's legs, for envy, and murmur: “Look who has length of days! that fellow who has nothing!”

So that when they told him that it was time to leave his property, in order to think of his soul, he went out into the court-yard like a madman, staggering, and went about killing his ducks and turkeys with blows of his stick, and screamed:

“My property, come along with me!”

THE FATE OF THE LAUGHING PIG*

Behind John Brown's Mountain in the valley called Sample's Manor, or Maple Swamp, lived the plain Dutch farmer, Cadmus Zittle, in a nice house of hewn logs, near his almost as imposing hog-pen.

There was a range of low wooded mountains in the rear of the narrow valley, also, and this, cutting off the drainage, made the land low and wet, so that the Antietam Creek could not relieve it behind nor Israel's Creek assist it from before; and its only funnel was toward the south, where some little streams fell away through brambles and ravines into the deep moat of the Potomac River. Hence the farmers in Sample's Manor got little but pasturage and cordwood, and their hidden district and unworldly simplicity caused Captain John Brown to come among them and lay his plots for the strange raid on Harper's Ferry.

I forget whether it was before or after that great event that Cadmus Zittle's farm in Sample's Manor produced first a little boy and then the Laughing Pig.

The little boy's name was Pye Zittle. He was the second to be named Pye, for the first of that name had died; and his elder brother was called Lum Zittle; these names taken from their family connections. All the Zittle people were Winebrennerians, and went to the Bethels or churches of that sect regularly to hear the preachers proclaim against slavery and alcohol and in favor of baptism and the washing of feet.

Lum Zittle was a "professing Christian" when he was hardly yet a little boy, but Pye Zittle was a dreamer, who walked by himself and fed the wild rabbits and talked to the hogs as they rooted in the woods.

His brother Lum regarded this fondness for the hogs as bad taste, if not carnal-mindedness. Lum's only field pet was a beautiful calf, almost as clean and obedient as himself, which he called "Trine." This calf was fed so well that it was the fattest thing about the place, except the laughing hog, which we are presently to see.

"Pye," said Lum one day, when his vagrant brother came in from the woods, where Pye and the lean pigs had been seeking the shade together, "of what were you made?"

* George Alfred Townsend: Pittsburg Bulletin.

Pye looked down at his not very tidy clothes and answered: "Dirt."

"No, brother Pye. The Scriptures say you were made of clay—not dirt. Some time the hogs out there in the woods, when the nuts and mast grow scarce, will turn and eat you up. What will become of you then?"

"I will be sausages," answered Pye reflectively. "Then I can hear what the griddle says when it sizzles. Then I can curl up and be greasy and keep warm."

"O brother!" exclaimed Lum, "what monstrous stories you tell, pretending to hear dumb animals talk! Why don't they talk to me?"

"You don't git down among of 'em," replied Pye absently. I do. They can't eat me, brother Lum, because I goes and fetches of 'em nuts that ain't fell, and grapes that's dryin' on the bramble tops. They wouldn't eat me that's huntin' food for 'em, would they?"

"Hogs and swine is the same thing, pore, ignorant, triflin' Pye! And didn't the devils in the Scripture run into the swine, and the swine down the steep place into the sea?"

"Did they?" asked Pye wistfully. "What was the sea like, Lum? Would a hog take me off thar to sea if I was to git onto his back? Would he drownd me? I reckon he would fetch me back ef I told him I would git him some more mast!"

"You can't tell a hog anything, brother, any more than you can talk to Trine, my fatted calf. What does *it* say?"

"I b'leeve it say *amen*, Lum, just like you do up at bethel. It think it say *b-a-a*, but it sound to me like *amen*!"

Lum went his way seriously, and prayed that brother Pye might die rather than grow up a scoffer.

But farmer Cadmus Zittle loved his idle little boy, who could not work in the fields like his industrious brother Lum. Pye said his head hurt him when he planted corn or potatoes after the plough, and there was something about his throat that made his voice twang pitifully to his father's ears when Pye called:

"Pop, mayn't I knock off and go in the woods and see my pigs?"

"Yes, go my leetle boy," old Cadmus would tenderly remark, "and tell your pappy all they say to-night, Pye."

So when the darkness fell upon the long, narrow, humble valley between the rolling forest mountains, and the firewood

roared in the stove or crackled in the chimney, Lum would come in from grooming his precious calf and would take up the sermons and works of Bishop Winebrenner, who called his church "she," and who said "she" was full of visibility, unity, sanctity, universality, and perplexity, and Lum would ask Pye if he could remember these five "primary attributes" in order.

"No, brother Lum, but I cotch a snake for our lame barrer pig to-day, and he say, 'Pye, how good you is to me!'"

Then Pye would rattle off to his parents all the conversations and legends of the pigs, rabbits, squirrels, crows, and cocks, as he dreamed or believed them to be, until his weak little throat would grow sore upon that tired chord and he would fall asleep with his papa's hand in his, and never see that his papa's eyes were full of tears.

"Dot dear leetle boy," old Cadmus Zittle would say to his wife. "He talks so wid dem peegs."

As the little boy grew older he also grew queerer, and school hurt his head as much as methodical work; the sing-song of the boys and girls, all kicking their feet as they "learned by heart," made Pye sick, and he barely learned to read, while brother Lum went to the head of the class and could outspell the schoolmaster, especially on such long words as *unregenerate* and *verisimilitude*. When Lum would leave the school his fat calf, Trine, would come and join him and they would walk along the road together, one as clean and demure as the other, while Pye would be racing the pigs, almost as careless as they and calling them all by names personally, and his hair would be out through his cloth cap and his trousers worn through at the knees.

"Oh, dot leetle boy," old Cadmus would remark to see them coming, "dem peegs do love him so."

One day the old sow, Snooky, came in from the mountains with a litter of many pigs she had found out there, somehow, and among them was one pig with twice as much squeal to him as any of his brothers and sisters; he would go off squealing "Weak! weak! weak!" at any provocation whatever, and kick up his little white feet, and run his nose in the ground, and turn a somersault.

Old mother Snooky would reprove him with a deep grunt which sounded like "Strong! strong! strong!" but the little scamp would run up and take hold of one of her teats and suck

and giggle and squeal with the milk running out of his mouth: "Weak! weak! weak!"

Old Snooky would turn and kick the little wretch over, protesting again: "Go long! Go long! Strong! strong! strong!"

"*Weak! weak! weak!*" would come the cry of the mischief-making pig, as he would fall over and among the whole litter, tumbling them this way and that: "We, weak! we, we, we—we-e-eak! weak! weak!"

"Pop," cried the twanging throat-voice of the younger son, "won't you give me that little bad pig?"

"What would you call him, my boy Pye?"

"Call him Wick," says Pye. "That's what he says his name is."

"Present, *wick*; past, *weak*; perfect participle, *wicked!*" spoke insinuatingly aloud the good brother Lum.

"Yaw, my dear little boy," old Cadmus spoke, "I will give you dot triflin' peeg; and my best boy, Lum, you may pick one out, too, and have its tail to fry dis Christmas a year."

"I don't like dirty pigs," Lum observed; "I'll take the best calf, if you will let me."

So each brother had his request fulfilled, and Pye was allowed to bring his little pig into the house at nights, and it would curl up on Pye's breast when he had worn out telling the talk of little pigs, and dirty ducks, and gobbling turkeys, and would almost twitter at the little boy's ear:

"Weak! weak! weak!"

"Oh, dot little peeg," Cadmus Zittle would sigh, in sympathetic pain; "he talk about dot leetle boy dat loves him so!"

The pig Wick was a roving creature that gave its mother no other pleasure than eating all she would supply him, and then disappearing until dinner or dark.

"Strong! strong! strong!" old Snooky would lecture him as he came up at daybreak, dingy and dirty, and held out his snout, like a plate, for refreshments.

"Weak! weak! we-we-weak!" would be the murmur of the pig underneath her, trying to apologize and eat together. After finishing the repast Wick would dart off in the field and muddy the ditch for Lum's fatted calf, and run to Pye in a shocking state of squalor; but Pye would go off with it to the woods, and there they would scratch and squeal and play together till the old zinc bell in farmer Zittle's yard would be heard ringing for dinner or supper.

"Dot leetle boy," Cadmus Zittle would fondly say, "live all day long wid dot leetle peeg!"

Lum Zittle had almost resolved to preach the Gospel when he should grow up, and therefore the Winebrennerian bishop came to the house to visit the family and get a subscription in provisions or cash.

Lum wanted Cadmus, his father, to give the bishop the little pig, Wick, and let it be taken off in the bishop's buggy, but Pye went and told Wick to be very well-behaved that night, or he might be roast pig for the bishop when that large feeder should drive home to Pennsylvania.

Therefore, when all the family was assembled that night to hear the bishop explain what "she" was—meaning the church he had founded out of his own head—Pye sat with Wick all cleaned and washed in his arms and heard the lesson from the Scriptures as the pig nodded with lines of good-humor all through its snout and little, half-closed piggy eyes.

Perhaps the bishop had been told of Pye's dangerous weakness for pig company, for he commenced to expound the parable of the Prodigal Son.

This was quite a new story to Pye, who was a poor listener in meetings, and did not know Abraham from Simon Peter.

The lamp was dim and the fire flared, and the bishop pushed up his spectacles and recited the tale he had started to read.

"Beware," said he, "of the Prodigal Son and the swine," looking at Pye and his pig.

"Weak! weak! weak!" hooted Wick sleepily, and the calf rubbed its nose against the main window, to know what was going on. "The Prodigal Son," continued the bishop, "would fain have filled his belly with husks that the swine did eat."

"Hogs won't eat husks," corrected Pye candidly.

"Them hoags did, sir. The Scriptures says it! Them was the Prodigal Son breed of hoags, ringtailed and perverse, kivered with headstrong bristles, stuffed with indigestible husks, and ravenous as the enemies of the church for *she*; but *she* will stand! *she* is not cast down. Never do you fear for *she*!"

The prodigious bishop had risen to his feet and was addressing the little boy, Pye, who sat with his pig in his arms, wondering whom the bishop was going to fight.

"Amen!" called Lum, to encourage the bishop

"Ba-a-a-a!" said the good calf outside the window.

"Weak! weak! weak!" chuckled the little pig in its dreams.

"Oh, dot little boy," spoke humbly Cadmus Zittle; "he talk so wid dot little peeg!"

The bishop liked argument, especially with those who could not reply, and he analyzed the parable of the Prodigal Son with fierceness.

"He was a younger son, ah-h-h! There you will find the enemies of *she*! Not the settled, well, overlooked, hefty elder sons. Absalom, *he* was a younger son! Jacob, *he* was a younger son! All perverse against *she*, ah-h-h!

"And the Prodicle took his sheer of the property in *goods*. Greediness, ah! Tried to start a business, may be—a store, or a scheme, or a shebang, ah!

"He went into a *far* country—Pennsylvany, or Fergeenia, or West Fergeenia, was too nigh for such an enemy of *she*; he must go to Illinoy, or Kinsas, or North Keerliny, ah!

"A famine came along, ah! *that* socked it to him. His fowls went down then. He jined a citizen of that other country who was in the feed business, and mark you, he kept *hoags* for a living. What a fall was that! He fell away from *she*, and now the hoags was his family! 'No man gave unto him;' the hoags had to have the corn. He would fain have filled his belly with them husks."

"But he didn't do it, though," piped in Pye; "we give our old husk mattress to the hogs, and they wouldn't eat it."

"Weak! weak! weak!" critically from Wick, the pig.

"Think of him off thar," emphasized the bishop, "after all his opposition to *she*; worse than a hired man; worse than a nigger; worse than a tramp! All for his wandering perversity. What did he say to them hoags? How could they amuse him? He, a-perishin' off thar, without railroad facilities to git home: Did he mourn? Did he groan? Did he grunt with them pigs?"

Here the pig, called Wick, slipped out of Pye's arms and fell on the bare floor, and ran in and out, squealing, and something in the method of the squeal arrested brother Lum's attention.

"That pig squeals like mockery, bishop!" cried brother Lum.

"It do! It do! It raises its feeble voice against *she*. It must be possessed of a devil!"

The calf Trine here called *ba-a-a* so loudly and ran away in the moonlight so strangely that the little pig's queer behavior affected all but Pye with the easy superstitions of the country.

"Drive him into the fire, where he belongs, ah!" cried the bishop. "He scoffs at me—and *she!*"

Brother Lum took up the rock crowbar from the corner and made a pass at Wick, who dodged it and ran into farmer Zittle's lap and there squealed with merriment, "Weak! weak! weak!"

"It's laughing, pop!" cried Pye; "Wick and me often laughs together, but he was never as funny as now."

The pig, indeed, was shaken with interior emotion, and could not even squeal, so well did it counterfeit a laugh. Pye laughed. Farmer Zittle laughed. His wife and the bound-boy laughed. Everybody laughed but the bishop and brother Lum.

"Weak, weak, weak, weak! We-we-we—oh, we, weak, weak!"

"Let the bishop baptize the mocking pig!" exclaimed brother Lum. "Let him take it away and bake it for his dinner!"

"No, no," the farmer Cadmus Zittle cried, and his dirty little boy, Pye, took the pig in his arms. "Dot peeg he love dot leetle boy. Dot bishop make dot peeg laugh. Dot fatted calf make nobody laugh. My good boy, Lum, you gif dot calf to dot bishop—dot calf dot say 'amen.'"

Lum begged the calf off, which caused the bishop and him to fall out, and the pig went out to the sheds and told all the poultry to roost high, as there was a bishop abroad and praying. But Pye spelled out the parable of the Prodigal Son for himself, and felt the greatest interest in that great traveller who had gone away from home in style and walked back on so weak a stomach. He talked it over to Cadmus Zittle at the fireplace, who reflected aloud:

"Dot leetle boy might be dot Prodicle Son some day and go away from fader. I would soon miss dot leetle boy, but the peegs would gif him their food. He loves dem leetle peegs."

As time went on Pye grew thin and long, like the pigs that ran in the woods—those cleanly wild pigs, only half-domesticated into slops and bad manners!—and his favorite pig took the name first of the "Laughing Pig" and next of the "Laugh-

ing Hog." The boy was asked to do no work, for the doctor had pronounced him sick, and Wick often put his snout between Pye's legs and looked up, saying, as of Pye's condition:

"Weak! weak! weak!"

But often the pig would make Pye merry by its good-for-nothing, time-killing ways and the tricks it played on everybody. The fatted calf was kept in a continual baby ba-a-a at Wick's impositions, and the hog would lie in the road on Sundays and go away to camp-meetings unbidden, and do pretty much as it pleased, till one day a farmer from the Antietam went past with a wagon-load of distiller's mash, which he had taken to fatten his bulls for market from the Catoctin Valley distilleries.

The wagon splashed out a little of the mash. The hog ate it and set up a sound like its mother, Snooky, of—

"Strong! strong! strong!"

You see, the pig had changed his voice with growth, as the little boy could never do.

"Gim me some more," grunted Wick, the pig, "then I'll tell you all about the Prodicle Son!"

Pye begged a bucket of the mash from the man, and he and the hog went down into the clean ditch and sat and had a talk. The hog ate all the mash and was full of confidential information.

"Pye," remarked the hog, shaking with laughter and holding to the ground with all his four toes, "my ancestor left the far country with the Prodicle Son. That's why I laughed so when the bishop murdered the parable a-tellin' of it. Weak! weak! weak!"

He swayed his bristly chin and showed his curved tusks as he shook with laughter.

"Wick," cried Pye, "I believe you are boozy."

"No. Strong! strong! strong!" Wick became very serious. "The fact was that the Prodicle 'joined himself to a citizen out thar,' as it says, who had a 'stillery, and the job was too seductive, so he took us hogs for his share and tried to fatten us with the mash; but Lor' bless you! he was too entertaining. We just shook all the fat off our bones a-laughing at his jokes. He kept us lean with laughing, and might as well have tried to tickle us fat."

Wick now took a roll on the ground and emitted the sounds of "Ho! ho! ho! haw! ho! ha!"

"He had been everywhere," said Wick at length, getting up on his hindquarters, dog fashion, and gesturing with one forepaw in the double-sightedness of the boozy. "The Prodicle had heard every story between Bagdad and Rome, and he used to tell 'em to us. They represented half his daddy's fortune. He had been with actors and show people, billiard-sharps and diviners; with gladiators and whomsoever wanted his money and could make him laugh. And all that investment was at last for the benefit of us hogs.

"Weak! weak! weak!

"However, when the Prodicle started to go, my grand-daddy thought to himself, 'if I can't hear no more jokes, I might as well be dead!' So he started after the Prodicle to be his dog and bear him company. Hundreds of miles they went, and slept in barns and graveyards and ruined cellars, but my grand-daddy could root and the Prodicle could beat people, and so they took no cares along and lived by the way. The hog picked up some tricks from the Prodicle; he could pretend to be dead, could make a speech in hog Latin, could go around with a pole like a trained bear, and he could dance a little. Whatever made men laugh touched their hearts.

"And so, when they came in sight of his father's house, they were both awfully poor. My grand-daddy's anterior toes were worn off so short that all his four toes were square on the ground. The Prodicle had no uppers to his shoes to give him corns. But they stood before the gate and sang 'Hard Times,' and the first thing they knew the old man came out and called the Prodicle in for a dance, and my grand-daddy got all the evening milk that was saved for the fatted calf.

"Oho! strong! weak! weak! strong!

"Don't begrudge your youth for carelessness, as you never will get it when you grow old.

"We have been a great breed of pigs, and call my Prodicle ancestor my grand-daddy; but, Pye, we careless hogs beat the census of everything. In ten generations one old Prodicle sow hog will have six millions of offspring, not counting half a million that die. Laugh and grow fat is our motto."

Here the Laughing Hog made an idiotic gesture with both paws and rolled off its balance into the ditch.

"Wick," remarked Pye, as the Laughing Hog staggered into the pen that night, "what are you going to do about next hog-killing time?"

"Dream of sausage, like you, Pye! Ho! ho! Strong! strong!"

"I wonder what makes all dat noise in de hog-pen to-night?" exclaimed Cadmus Zittle, rousing up. "Maybe a bear is in dere."

"No, pappy," replied little Pye from his trundle-bed; "it's only the Prodicle Son's hog, that eat the sour mash and got boozy."

"Dot leetle boy," Cadmus whispered to his wife, "I think he go like dot Prodicle Son to the far country, too. But he loves de pore hogs."

Yes, the little boy's voice was pitched very high, and so was his little heart that had a rheumatism in it, so that his pains grew long, and little pleasure did he have but in recounting what the pigs and rabbits said; and the Laughing Hog, left more alone, grew mighty fat, so that it laughed with several double chins, and had so many dimples you could hardly see its eyes. When brother Lum and his now well-grown calf went by, the Laughing Hog would sit up and laugh at them, and flap one ear, and say to Pye:

"It's a pore sausage the veal makes, and the good he-calf that keeps over Christmas. Ho! ho! Weak! weak! weak!"

Farmer Zittle's fowls died from the cold that winter. The doctor said Pye must have fresh meat, and the farmer killed the lovely calf, which affected brother Lum as persecution. So he waited to be revenged upon the Laughing Hog.

The winter grew colder and snow lay long upon the mountains, and Christmas came like something old and delayed. Pye's little voice said to his papa one night, in a high, strained, but cheery key:

"Me and Wick's coming from the far country. We's Prodicle breed, dear pop!"

"Why, sonny," said farmer Zittle, "Wick's favorite sow has got leetle peegs for next year. Dey is all laughing peegs."

"If I come home," says the fiddle-string voice, "my hog must come in, too, pop."

"Yaw, Pye; we all love dot laughing peeg."

The next morning Pye was a little out of his head with the laudanum he had been given for his heart, and strange colors like iodine were in his eyes, coming and going as the light of waving trees in wells.

"I want to see my hog," he said. "Something ails my hog. He don't laugh to-day."

The familiar screams of butchering morning at the hog-pen came in, with laughter mixed.

"What's that?" piped Pye. "I heard my old hog laugh. He's screaming now, 'Pye! Pye!' Don't you hear him?"

The noise from the hog-pen suddenly ceased; the little boy's eyes glazed as he listened, and his last words were:

"Weak—weak—weak!"

"Father, we stuck the Laughing Hog by mistake," spoke Master Lum, entering the dwelling.

"Oh, dot leetle boy!" the farmer said. "He couldn't live without dot peeg, mother; we haf no Prodicles now."

Yes, little Pye was dead and Wick was also gone. No laughter was known at Cadmus Zittle's house till one day the sausage of the Laughing Hog was brought upon the table.

They ate it, and all began to laugh.

"I know dot pork and sausage now," old Cadmus cried in joy and tears together; "it is my dear son's peeg. Dem Prodicle breed is what makes people laugh."

"Father," cried Lum, "you never laugh for me!"

"Hush, my good son," the farmer said; "dot leetle boy he love dem peegs so much; I miss dot leetle boy."

ETCHINGS: THE UNNAMABLE*

Hours succeed to hours; I go on and on, as in a dream, descending from the dunes into the valleys, then climbing again over the dunes to again descend, and I advance, proud of my strength, firm in my courage, defying the sand, defying the sun, defying thirst, and even death itself!

The sun declines toward the earth, setting in glowing colors. Behold me in the immensity of a plain which stretches out arid and reddened by the twilight glow. Between the vast horizons infinite solitude in infinite silence.

I stop, struck to the heart. Nothing attenuates the solitude; not an insect, not a leaf, not a cloud, not a breath. No movement in sky or earth, in the giant immobility of space. A silence absolutely even—terrifying.

In the enormous silence I hear my arteries beating with vibrant and hurrying shocks; it is the song of my life which is troubling the Nothing, it is the labor of my flesh which is blaspheming the Uncreated, and now Fear—abject, hideous Fear—gnaws my vitals.

My blood leaps quicker; its metallic rhythm deafens me, troubles me, drives me wild. I feel death approaching, a cowardly death from fear. But I am crushed under the monstrous silence palpitating with the Unnamable. I cannot flee.

Now life is escaping me. From the bottom of my heart I call upon God, imploring Him: "Lord! help me in my distress. Send a bird, a wind, or a thunderbolt to break the mortal silence, or I succumb through terror of Nothing."

Suddenly there rises upon the air an intangible sound. I listen anxiously. The sound increases. It is like a rising song. It grows stronger, it approaches.

O Omnipotence of God! It is a fly, a common little black insect but its frail wings fill with their buzzing and their life the immense plains of solitude.

It approaches; it lights upon my arm. Throbbing with anguish and holding my breath, I raise my hand slowly, slowly over it and it is a prisoner.

My little captive buzzes between my fingers.

The sound of its life has conquered the silence and the solitude; I am no longer alone, and I am—saved.

* *Legends of the Sahara*: Nouvelle Revue: H. B.: For Short Stories.

THE HOUSE AND THE BRAIN *

Famous Stories—The Old Time Favorites.

A friend of mine, who is a man of letters and a philosopher, said to me one day, as if between jest and earnest: "Fancy! since last we met, I have discovered a haunted house in the midst of London."

"Really haunted?—and by what? ghosts?"

"Well, I can't answer that question; all I know is this—six weeks ago my wife and I were in search of a furnished apartment. Passing a quiet street, we saw on the window of one of the houses a bill, 'Apartments Furnished.' The situation suited us; we entered the house—liked the rooms—engaged them by the week—and left them the third day. No power on earth could have reconciled my wife to stay longer; and I don't wonder at it."

"What did you see?"

"Excuse me—I have no desire to be ridiculed as a superstitious dreamer—nor, on the other hand, could I ask you to accept on my affirmation what you would hold to be incredible without the evidence of your own senses. Let me only say this, it is not so much what we saw or heard (in which you might fairly suppose that we were the dupes of our own excited fancy, or the victims of imposture in others) that drove us away, as it was an indefinable terror which seized both of us whenever we passed by the door of a certain unfurnished room, in which we neither saw nor heard anything. And the strangest marvel of all was, that for once in my life I agreed with my wife, silly woman though she be—and allowed, after the third night, that it was impossible to stay a fourth in that house. Accordingly, on the fourth morning, I summoned the woman who kept the house and attended on us, and told her that the rooms did not quite suit us, and we could not stay out our week. She said, dryly, 'I know why; you have stayed longer than any other lodger. Few ever stayed a second night; none before you a third. But I take it they have been very kind to you.'

"'They—who?' I asked, affecting a smile.

"'Why, they who haunt the house, whoever they are. I don't mind them; I remember them many years ago, when I

* By Edward George Bulwer: Lord Lytton.

lived in this house, not as a servant; but I know they will be the death of me some day. I don't care—I'm old, and must die soon anyhow; and then I shall be with them, and in this house still.' The woman spoke with so dreary a sadness, that really it was a sort of awe that prevented my conversing with her further. I paid for my week, and too happy were I and my wife to get off so cheaply."

"You excite my curiosity," said I; "nothing I should like better than to sleep in a haunted house. Pray give me the address of the one which you left so ignominiously."

My friend gave me the address; and when we parted, I walked straight toward the house thus indicated.

It is situated on the north side of Oxford Street, in a dull but respectable thoroughfare. I found the house shut up—no bill at the window, and no response to my knock. As I was turning away, a beer boy, collecting pewter pots at the neighboring areas, said to me: "Do you want any one at that house, sir?"

"Yes, I heard it was to be let."

"Let!—why, the woman who kept it is dead—has been dead these three weeks, and no one can be found to stay there, though Mr. J—— offered ever so much. He offered mother, who chars for him, £1 a week just to open and shut the windows, and she would not."

"Would not!—and why?"

"The house is haunted; and the old woman who kept it was found dead in her bed, with her eyes wide open. They say the devil strangled her."

"Pooh!—Mr. J——. Is he the owner of the house?"

"Yes."

"Where does he live?"

"In G—— Street, No.——."

"What is he?—in any business?"

"No, sir—nothing particular; a single gentleman."

I gave the pot-boy the gratuity earned by his liberal information, and proceeded to Mr. J——, in G—— Street, which was close by the street that boasted the haunted house. I was lucky enough to find Mr. J—— at home—an elderly man, with intelligent countenance and prepossessing manners.

I communicated my name and my business frankly. I said I heard the house was considered to be haunted—that I had a strong desire to examine a house with so equivocal a repu-

tation—that I should be greatly obliged if he would allow me to hire it, though only for a night. I was willing to pay for that privilege whatever he might be inclined to ask. “Sir,” said Mr. J——, with great courtesy, “the house is at your service, for as short or as long a time as you please. Rent is out of the question—the obligation will be on my side should you be able to discover the cause of the strange phenomena which at present deprive it of all value. I cannot let it, for I cannot even get a servant to keep it in order or answer the door. Unluckily the house is haunted, if I may use that expression, not only by night, but by day; though at night the disturbances are of a more unpleasant and sometimes of a more alarming character. The poor old woman who died in it three weeks ago was a pauper whom I took out of a work-house, for in her childhood she had been known to some of my family, and had once been in such good circumstances that she had rented that house of my uncle. She was a woman of superior education and strong mind, and was the only person I could ever induce to remain in the house. Indeed, since her death, which was sudden, and the coroner’s inquest, which gave it a notoriety in the neighborhood, I have so despaired of finding any person to take charge of the house, much more a tenant, that I would willingly let it rent-free for a year to any one who would pay its rates and taxes.”

“How long is it since the house acquired this character?”

“That I can scarcely tell you, but very many years since. The old woman I spoke of said it was haunted when she rented it between thirty and forty years ago. The fact is, that my life has been spent in the East Indies, and in the civil service of the Company. I returned to England last year, on inheriting the fortune of an uncle, among whose possessions was the house in question. I found it shut up, and uninhabited. I was told that it was haunted, that no one would inhabit it. I smiled at what seemed to me so idle a story. I spent some money in repairing it—added to its old-fashioned furniture a few modern articles—advertised it, and obtained a lodger for a year. He was a colonel retired on half-pay. He came in with his family, a son and a daughter, and four or five servants; they all left the house the next day; and although each of them declared that he had seen something different from that which had scared the others, a something still was equally terrible to all. I really could not in

conscience sue, nor even blame, the colonel for breach of agreement. Then I put in the old woman I have spoken of, and she was empowered to let the house in apartments. I never had one lodger who stayed more than three days. I do not tell you their stories—to no two lodgers have there been exactly the same phenomena repeated. It is better that you should judge for yourself, than enter the house with an imagination influenced by previous narratives; only be prepared to see and to hear something or other, and take whatever precautions you yourself please.”

“Had you never a curiosity to pass a night in that house?”

“Yes. I passed not a night, but three hours in broad daylight in that house. My curiosity is not satisfied, but it is quenched. I have no desire to renew the experiment. You cannot complain, you see, sir, that I am not sufficiently candid; and unless your interest be exceedingly eager, and your nerves unusually strong, I honestly add, that I advise you *not* to pass a night in that house.”

“My interest *is* exceedingly keen,” said I, “and though only a coward will boast of his nerves in situations wholly unfamiliar to him, yet my nerves have been seasoned in such variety of danger that I have the right to rely on them—even in a haunted house.”

Mr. J—— said very little more; he took the keys of the house out of his bureau, gave them to me, and thanking him cordially for his frankness, and his urbane concession to my wish, I carried off my prize.

Impatient for the experiment, as soon as I reached home, I summoned my confidential servant—a young man of gay spirits, fearless temper, and as free from superstitious prejudice as any one I could think of.

“F——,” said I, “you remember in Germany how disappointed we were at not finding a ghost in that old castle, which was said to be haunted by a headless apparition? Well, I have heard of a house in London which, I have reason to hope, is decidedly haunted. I mean to sleep there to-night. From what I hear, there is no doubt that something will allow itself to be seen or to be heard—something, perhaps, excessively horrible. Do you think, if I take you with me, I may rely on your presence of mind, whatever may happen?”

“Oh, sir! trust me,” answered F——, grinning with delight.

“Very well, then; here are the keys of the house—this is

the address. Go now—select for me any bed-room you please; and since the house has not been inhabited for weeks, make up a good fire—air the bed well—see, of course, that there are candles as well as fuel. Take with you my revolver and my dagger—so much for my weapons—arm yourself equally well! and if we are not a match for a dozen ghosts, we shall be but a sorry couple of Englishmen.”

I was engaged for the rest of the day on business so urgent that I had not leisure to think much on the nocturnal adventure to which I had plighted my honor. I dined alone, and very late, and while dining, read, as is my habit. I selected one of the volumes of Macaulay's Essays. I thought to myself that I would take the book with me; there was so much of healthfulness in the style, and practical life in the subjects, that it would serve as an antidote against the influences of superstitious fancy.

Accordingly, about half-past nine, I put the book into my pocket, and strolled leisurely toward the haunted house. I took with me a favorite dog—an exceedingly sharp, bold and vigilant bull-terrier—a dog fond of prowling about strange ghostly corners and passages at night in search of rats—a dog of dogs for a ghost.

It was a summer night, but chilly, the sky somewhat gloomy and overcast. Still there was a moon—faint and sickly, but still a moon—and if the clouds permitted, after midnight it would be brighter.

I reached the house, knocked, and my servant opened with a cheerful smile.

“All right, sir, and very comfortable.”

“Oh!” said I, rather disappointed; “have you not seen or heard anything remarkable?”

“Well, sir, I must own I have heard something queer.”

“What?—what?”

“The sound of feet pattering behind me; and once or twice small whispers close at my ear—nothing more.”

“You are not at all frightened?”

“I! not a bit of it, sir;” and the man's bold look reassured me on one point—viz., that, happen what might, he would not desert me.

We were in the hall, the street door closed, and my attention was now drawn to my dog. He had at first run in eagerly enough, but had sneaked back to the door, and was

scratching and whining to get out. After patting him on the head, and encouraging him gently, the dog seemed to reconcile himself to the situation, and followed me and F—— through the house, but keeping close at my heels instead of hurrying inquisitively in advance, which was his usual and normal habit in all strange places. We first visited the subterranean apartments, the kitchen and other offices, and especially the cellars, in which last there were two or three bottles of wine still left in a bin, covered with cobwebs, and, evidently, by their appearance, undisturbed for many years. It was clear that the ghosts were not winebibbers. For the rest we discovered nothing of interest. There was a gloomy, little back-yard, with very high walls. The stones of this yard were very damp; and what with the damp, and what with the dust and smoke-grime on the pavement, our feet left a slight impression where we passed. And now appeared the first strange phenomenon witnessed by myself in this strange abode. I saw, just before me, the print of a foot suddenly form itself, as it were. I stopped, caught hold of my servant, and pointed to it. In advance of the footprint as suddenly dropped another. We both saw it. I advanced quickly to the place, the footprint kept advancing before me, a small footprint—the foot of a child; the impression was too faint thoroughly to distinguish the shape, but it seemed to us both that it was the print of a naked foot. This phenomenon ceased when we arrived at the opposite wall, nor did it repeat itself on returning. We remounted the stairs, and entered the rooms on the ground floor, a dining parlor, a small back parlor, and a still smaller third room that had been probably appropriated to a footman—all still as death. We then visited the drawing-rooms, which seemed fresh and new. In the front room I seated myself in the arm-chair. F—— placed on the table the candlestick with which he had lighted us. I told him to shut the door. As he turned to do so, a chair opposite to me moved from the wall quickly and noiselessly, and dropped itself about a yard from my own chair, immediately fronting it.

“Why, this is better than the turning-tables,” said I, with a half-laugh; and as I laughed, my dog put back his head and howled.

F——, coming back, had not observed the movement of the chair. He employed himself now in stilling the dog. I

continued to gaze on the chair, and fancied I saw on it a pale, blue, misty outline of a human figure, but an outline so indistinct that I could only distrust my own vision. The dog now was quiet. "Put back that chair opposite to me," said I to F——: "put it back to the wall."

F—— obeyed. "Was that you, sir?" said he, turning abruptly.

"I!—what?"

"Why, something struck me. I felt it sharply on the shoulder—just here."

"No," said I. "But we have jugglers present, and though we may not discover their tricks, we shall catch *them* before they frighten *us*."

We did not stay long in the drawing-rooms—in fact, they felt so damp and so chilly that I was glad to get to the fire up-stairs. We locked the doors of the drawing-rooms—a precaution which, I should observe, we had taken with all the rooms we had searched below. The bedroom my servant had selected for me was the best on the floor—a large one, with two windows fronting the street. The four-posted bed, which took up no inconsiderable space, was opposite to the fire, which burned clear and bright; a door in the wall to the left, between the bed and the window, communicated with the room which my servant appropriated to himself. This last was a small room with a sofa-bed, and had no communication with the landing-place—no other door but that which conducted to the bedroom I was to occupy. On either side of my fire-place was a cupboard, without locks, flush with the wall, and covered with the same dull-brown paper. We examined these cupboards—only hooks to suspend female dresses—nothing else; we sounded the walls—evidently solid—the outer walls of the building. Having finished the survey of these apartments, warmed myself a few moments, and lighted my cigar, I then, still accompanied by F——, went forth to complete my reconnoitre. In the landing-place there was another door; it was closed firmly. "Sir," said my servant, in surprise, "I unlocked this door with all the others when I first came; it cannot have got locked from the inside, for——"

Before he had finished his sentence, the door, which neither of us then was touching, opened quietly of itself. We looked at each other an instant. The same thought seized both—some human agency might be detected here. I rushed in

first, my servant followed. A small, blank, dreary room without furniture—a few empty boxes and hampers in a corner—a small window—the shutters closed—not even a fire-place—no other door but that by which we had entered—no carpet on the floor, and the floor seemed very old, uneven, worm-eaten, mended here and there, as was shown by the whiter patches on the wood; but no living being, and no visible place in which a living being could have hidden. As we stood gazing around, the door by which we had entered closed as quietly as it had before opened; we were imprisoned.

For the first time I felt a creep of indefinable horror. Not so my servant. "Why, they don't think to trap us, sir; I could break that trumpery door with a kick of my foot."

"Try first if it will open to your hand," said I, shaking off the vague apprehension that had seized me, "while I unclose the shutters and see what is without."

I unbarred the shutters—the window looked on the little back yard I have before described; there was no ledge without—nothing to break the sheer descent of the wall. No man getting out of that window would have found any footing till he had fallen on the stones below.

F—, meanwhile, was vainly attempting to open the door. He now turned round to me, and asked my permission to use force. And I should here state, in justice to the servant, that, far from evincing any superstitious terrors, his nerve, composure, and even gayety amid circumstances so extraordinary, compelled my admiration, and made me congratulate myself on having secured a companion in every way fitted to the occasion. I willingly gave him the permission he required. But though he was a remarkably strong man, his force was as idle as his milder efforts; the door did not even shake to his stoutest kick. Breathless and panting, he desisted. I then tried the door myself, equally in vain. As I ceased from the effort, again that creep of horror came over me; but this time it was more cold and stubborn. I felt as if some strange and ghastly exhalation were rising up from the chinks of that rugged floor, and filling the atmosphere with a venomous influence hostile to human life. The door now very slowly and quietly opened as if of its own accord. We precipitated ourselves into the landing-place. We both saw a large, pale light—as large as the human figure, but shapeless and unsubstantial—move before us, and ascend the

stairs that led from the landing into the attics. I followed the light, and my servant followed me. It entered, to the right of the landing, a small garret, of which the door stood open. I entered in the same instant. The light then collapsed into a small globule, exceedingly brilliant and vivid; rested a moment on a bed in the corner, quivered and vanished. We approached the bed and examined it—a half-tester, such as is commonly found in attics devoted to servants. On the drawers that stood near it were perceived an old, faded silk kerchief, with the needle still left in a rent half repaired. The kerchief was covered with dust; probably it had belonged to the old woman who had last died in that house, and this might have been her sleeping-room. I had sufficient curiosity to open the drawers; there were a few odds and ends of female dress, and two letters tied round with a narrow ribbon of faded yellow. I took the liberty to possess myself of the letters. We found nothing else in the room worth noticing—nor did the light reappear; but we distinctly heard, as we turned to go, a pattering footfall on the floor—just before us. We went through the other attics (in all four), the footfall still preceding us. Nothing to be seen—nothing but the footfall heard. I had the letters in my hand; just as I was descending the stairs I distinctly felt my wrist seized, and a faint, soft effort made to draw the letters from my clasp. I only held them the more tightly, and the effort ceased.

We regained the bedchamber appropriated to myself, and I then remarked that my dog had not followed us when we had left it. He was thrusting himself close to the fire, and trembling. I was impatient to examine the letters; and while I read them, my servant opened a little box in which he had deposited the weapons I had ordered him to bring; took them out, placed them on a table close to my bed-head, and then occupied himself in soothing the dog, who, however, seemed to heed him very little.

The letters were short—they were dated; the dates exactly thirty-five years ago. They were evidently from a lover to his mistress, or a husband to some young wife. Not only the terms of expression, but a distinct reference to a former voyage, indicated the writer to have been a seafarer. The spelling and handwriting were those of a man imperfectly educated, but still the language itself was forcible. In the expressions of endearment there was a kind of rough, wild

love; but here and there were dark unintelligible hints at some secret not of love—some secret that seemed of crime. “We ought to love each other,” was one of the sentences I remember, “for how every one else would execrate us if all was known.” Again: “Don’t let any one be in the same room with you at night—you talk in your sleep.” And again: “What’s done can’t be undone; and I tell you there’s nothing against us unless the dead could come to life.” Here there was underlined in a better handwriting (a female’s), “They do!” At the end of the letter latest in date the same female hand had written these words: “Lost at sea the 4th of June, the same day as——”

I put down the letters, and began to muse over their contents.

Fearing, however, that the train of thoughts into which I fell might unsteady my nerves, I fully determined to keep my mind in a fit state to cope with whatever of marvellous the advancing night might bring forth. I roused myself—laid the letters on the table—stirred up the fire, which was still bright and cheering—and opened my volume of Macaulay. I read quietly enough until about half-past eleven. I then threw myself dressed upon the bed, and told my servant he might retire to his own room, but must keep himself awake. I bade him leave open the door between the two rooms. Thus alone, I kept two candles burning on the table by my bed-head. I placed my watch beside the weapons, and calmly resumed my Macaulay. Opposite to me the fire burned clear; and on the hearth-rug, seemingly asleep, lay the dog. In about twenty minutes I felt an exceedingly cold air pass by my cheek, like a sudden draught. I fancied the door to my right, communicating with the landing-place, must have got open; but no—it was closed. I then turned my glance to my left and saw the flame of the candles violently swayed as by a wind. At the same moment the watch beside the revolver softly slid from the table—softly, softly—no visible hand—it was gone. I sprang up, seizing the revolver with one hand, the dagger with the other. I was not willing that my weapons should share the fate of the watch. Thus armed I looked round the floor—no sign of the watch. Three slow, loud, distinct knocks were now heard at the bed-head; my servant called out, “Is that you, sir?”

“No; be on your guard.”

The dog now roused himself and sat on his haunches, his

ears moving quickly backward and forward. He kept his eyes fixed on me with a look so strange that he concentrated all attention on himself. Slowly he rose up, all his hair bristling, and stood perfectly rigid, and with the same wild stare. I had no time, however, to examine the dog. Presently my servant emerged from his room; and if ever I saw horror in the human face, it was then. I should not have recognized him had we met in the street, so altered was every lineament. He passed by me quickly, saying in a whisper that seemed scarcely to come from his lips, "Run—run! it is after me!" He gained the door to the landing, pulled it open, and rushed forth. I followed him into the landing involuntarily, calling to him to stop; but, without heeding me, he bounded down the stairs, clinging to the balusters, and taking several steps at a time. I heard, where I stood, the street-door open—heard it again clap to. I was left alone in the haunted house.

It was but for a moment that I remained undecided whether or not to follow my servant; pride and curiosity alike forbade so dastardly a flight. I re-entered my room, closing the door after me, and proceeded cautiously into the interior chamber. I encountered nothing to justify my servant's terror. I again carefully examined the walls, to see if there were any concealed door. I could find no trace of one—not even a seam in the dull-brown paper with which the room was hung. How then, had the *THING*, whatever it was, which had so scared him, obtained ingress except through my own chamber?

I returned to my room, shut and locked the door that opened upon the interior one, and stood on the hearth, expectant and prepared. I now perceived that the dog had slunk into an angle of the wall, and was pressing himself close against it, as if literally striving to force his way into it. I approached the animal and spoke to it; the poor brute was evidently beside itself with terror. It showed all its teeth, the saliva dropping from its jaws, and it would certainly have bitten me if I had touched it. It did not seem to recognize me. Whoever has seen at the Zoölogical Gardens a rabbit fascinated by a serpent, cowering in a corner, may form some idea of the anguish which the dog exhibited. Finding all efforts to soothe the animal in vain, and fearing that his bite might be as venomous in that state as in the madness of hydrophobia, I left him alone placed my weapons on the table, seated myself, and recommenced my Macaulay.

Perhaps, in order not to appear seeking credit for a courage, or rather a coolness, which the reader may conceive I exaggerate, I may be pardoned if I pause to indulge in one or two egotistical remarks.

As I hold presence of mind, or what is called courage, to be precisely proportioned to familiarity with the circumstances that lead to it, so I should say that I had been long sufficiently familiar with all experiments that appertain to the Marvellous. I had witnessed many very extraordinary phenomena that would be either totally disbelieved if I stated them, or ascribed to supernatural agencies. Now, my theory is that the Supernatural is the Impossible, and that what is called supernatural is only a something in the laws of nature, of which we have been hitherto ignorant. Therefore, if a ghost rise before me, I have not the right to say, "So, then, the supernatural is possible," but rather, "So, then, the apparition of a ghost is, contrary to received opinion, within the laws of nature—*i. e.*, not supernatural."

Now, in all that I had hitherto witnessed, and, indeed, in all the wonders which the amateurs of mystery in our age record as facts, a material living agency is always required. On the Continent, you will find still magicians who assert that they can raise spirits. Assume for the moment that they assert truly, still the living material form of the magician is present; and he is the material agency by which, from some constitutional peculiarities, certain strange phenomena are represented to your natural senses.

Accept, again, as truthful the tales of Spirit Manifestation in America—musical or other sounds—writings on paper, produced by no discernible hand—articles of furniture moved without apparent human agency—or the actual sight and touch of hands, to which no bodies seem to belong—still there must be found the MEDIUM or living being, with constitutional peculiarities capable of obtaining these signs. In fine, in all such marvels, supposing even that there is no imposture there, must be a human being like ourselves, by whom, or through whom, the effects presented to human beings are produced. It is so with the now familiar phenomena of mesmerism or electro-biology; the mind of the person operated on is affected through a material living agent. Nor supposing it true that a mesmerized patient can respond to the will or passes of a mesmerizer a hundred miles distant, is the response less oc-

casioned by a material being; it may be through a material fluid—call it Electric, call it Odic, call it what you will—which has the power of traversing space and passing obstacles, that the material effect is communicated from one to the other. Hence all that I had hitherto witnessed, or expected to witness, in this strange house, I believed to be occasioned through some agency or medium as mortal as myself; and this idea necessarily prevented the awe with which those who regard as supernatural things that are not within the ordinary operation of nature, might have been impressed by the adventures of that memorable night.

As, then, it was my conjecture that all that was presented, or would be presented, to my senses, must originate in some human being gifted by constitution with the power so to present them, and having some motive so to do, I felt an interest in my theory which, in its way, was rather philosophical than superstitious. And I can sincerely say that I was in as tranquil a temper for observation as any practical experimentalist could be in awaiting the effects of some rare, though perhaps perilous, chemical combination. Of course, the more I kept my mind detached from fancy, the more the temper fitted for observation would be obtained; and I therefore riveted eye and thought on the strong daylight sense in the page of my Macaulay.

I now became aware that something interposed between the page and the light—the page was overshadowed; I looked up, and I saw what I shall find it very difficult, perhaps impossible, to describe.

It was a Darkness shaping itself forth from the air in very undefined outline. I cannot say it was of a human form, and yet it had more resemblance to a human form, or rather shadow, than to anything else. As it stood, wholly apart and distinct from the air and the light around it, its dimensions seemed gigantic, the summit nearly touching the ceiling. While I gazed, a feeling of intense cold seized me. An iceberg before me could not more have chilled me; nor could the cold of an iceberg have been more purely physical. I feel convinced that it was not the cold caused by fear. As I continued to gaze, I thought—but this I cannot say with precision—that I distinguished two eyes looking down on me from the height. One moment I fancied that I distinguished them clearly, the next they seemed gone; but still two rays of a

pale-blue light frequently shot through the darkness, as from the height on which I half believed, half doubted, that I had encountered the eyes.

I strove to speak—my voice utterly failed me; I could only think to myself, "Is this fear? it is *not* fear!" I strove to rise—in vain; I felt as if weighed down by an irresistible force. Indeed, my impression was that of an immense and overwhelming Power opposed to my volition; that sense of utter inadequacy to cope with a force beyond man's, which one may feel *physically* in a storm at sea, in a conflagration, or when confronting some terrible wild beast, or rather, perhaps, the shark of the ocean, I felt *morally*. Opposed to my will was another will, as far superior to its strength as storm, and fire, are superior in material force to the force of man.

And now, as this impression grew on me—now came, at last, horror—horror to a degree that no words can convey. Still I retained pride, if not courage; and in my own mind I said, "This is horror, but it is not fear; unless I fear, I cannot be harmed; my reason rejects this thing; it is an illusion—I do not fear." With a violent effort I succeeded at last in stretching out my hand toward the weapon on the table; as I did so, on the arm and shoulder I received a strange shock, and my arm fell to my side powerless. And now, to add to my horror, the light began slowly to wane from the candles—they were not, as it were, extinguished, but their flame seemed very gradually withdrawn; it was the same with the fire—the light was extracted from the fuel; in a few minutes the room was in utter darkness. The dread that came over me, to be thus in the dark with that dark Thing, whose power was so intensely felt, brought a reaction of nerve. In fact, terror had reached that climax, that either my senses must have deserted me, or I must have burst through the spell. I did burst through it. I found voice, though the voice was a shriek. I remember that I broke forth with words like these—"I do not fear, my soul does not fear;" and at the same time I found the strength to rise. Still in that profound gloom I rushed to one of the windows—tore aside the curtain—flung open the shutters; my first thought was—LIGHT. And when I saw the moon high, clear, and calm, I felt a joy that almost compensated for the previous terror. There, was the moon, there, was also the light from the gas-lamps in the deserted, slumberous street. I turned to look back into the room; the

moon penetrated its shadow very palely and partially—but still there was light. The dark Thing, whatever it might be, was gone—except that I could yet see a dim shadow—the shadow of that shade against the opposite wall.

My eye now rested on the table, and from under the table (which was without cloth or cover—an old mahogany round table) there rose a hand, visible as far as the wrist. It was a hand, seemingly, as much of flesh and blood as my own, but the hand of an aged person—lean, wrinkled, small too—a woman's hand. That hand very softly closed on the two letters that lay on the table; hand and letters both vanished. Then there came the same three loud knocks I had heard at the bed-head before this extraordinary drama had commenced.

As those sounds slowly ceased, I felt the whole room vibrate sensibly; and at the far end there rose, as from the floor, sparks or globules like bubbles of light, many-colored—green, yellow, fire-red, azure. Up and down, to and fro, hither, thither, as tiny Will-o'-the-Wisps, the sparks moved, slow or swift, each at its own caprice. A chair (as in the drawing-room below) was now advanced from the wall without apparent agency, and placed at the opposite side of the table. Suddenly, as forth from the chair, there grew a shape—a woman's shape. It was distinct as a shape of life—ghastly as a shape of death. The face was that of youth, with a strange, mournful beauty; the throat and shoulders were bare, the rest of the form in a loose robe of cloudy white. It began sleeking its long, yellow hair, which fell over its shoulders; its eyes were not turned toward me, but to the door; it seemed listening, watching, waiting. The shadow of the shade in the background grew darker; and again I thought I beheld the eyes gleaming out from the summit of the shadow—eyes fixed upon that shape.

As if from the door, though it did not open, there grew out another shape, equally distinct, equally ghastly—a man's shape—a young man's. It was in the dress of the last century, or rather in a likeness of such dress (for both the male shape and the female, though defined, were evidently unsubstantial, impalpable—simulacra—phantasms); and there was something incongruous, grotesque, yet fearful in the contrast between the elaborate finery, the courtly precision of that old-fashioned garb, with its ruffles, and lace, and buckles, and the corpse-like aspect and ghost-like still-

ness of the flitting wearer. Just as the male shape approached the female, the dark Shadow started from the wall; all three for a moment wrapped in darkness. When the pale light returned, the two phantoms were as if in the grasp of the Shadow that towered between them; and there was a blood-stain on the breast of the female; and the phantom male was leaning on its phantom sword, and blood seemed trickling fast from the ruffles, from the lace, and the darkness of the intermediate Shadow swallowed them up—they were gone.

And again the bubbles of light shot, and sailed, and undulated, growing thicker and thicker and more wildly confused in their movements.

The closet door to the right of the fire-place now opened, and from the aperture there came the form of an aged woman. In her hand she held letters—the very letters over which I had seen the Hand close; and behind her I heard a footstep. She turned round as if to listen, and then she opened the letters and seemed to read; and over her shoulder I saw a livid face, the face as of a man long drowned—bloated, bleached—seaweed tangled in its dripping hair; and at her feet lay a form as of a corpse, and beside the corpse there cowered a child, a miserable, squalid child, with famine in its cheeks and fear in its eyes. And as I looked in the old woman's face, the wrinkles and lines vanished, and it became a face of youth—hard-eyed, stony, but still youth; and the Shadow darted forth, and darkened over these phantoms as it had darkened over the last.

Nothing now was left but the Shadow, and on that my eyes were intently fixed, till again eyes grew out of the Shadow—malignant, serpent eyes. And the bubbles of light again rose and fell, and in their disordered, irregular, turbulent maze, mingled with the wan moonlight. And now from these globules themselves, as from the shell of an egg, monstrous things burst out; the air was filled with them; larvæ so bloodless and so hideous that I can in no way describe them except to remind the reader of the swarming life which the solar microscope brings before the eyes in a drop of water—things transparent, supple, agile, chasing each other, devouring each other—forms like nought ever beheld by the naked eye. As the shapes were without symmetry, so their movements were without order. In their very vagrancies there was no sport; they came round me and round, thicker and faster and swifter,

swarming over my head, crawling over my right arm, which was outstretched in involuntary command against all evil beings. Sometimes I felt myself touched, but not by them; invisible hands touched me. Once I felt the clutch as of cold, soft fingers at my throat. I was still equally conscious that if I gave way to fear I should be in bodily peril; and I concentrated all my faculties in the single focus of resisting, stubborn will. And I turned my sight from the Shadow—above all, from those strange, serpent eyes—eyes that had now become distinctly visible. For there, though in nought else around me, I was aware that there was a WILL, and a will of intense, creative, working evil, which might crush down my own.

The pale atmosphere in the room began now to redden as if in the air of some near conflagration. The larvæ grew lurid as things that live on fire. Again the room vibrated; again were heard the three measured knocks; and again all things were swallowed up in the darkness of the dark Shadow, as if out of that darkness all had come, into that darkness all returned.

As the gloom receded, the Shadow was wholly gone. Slowly as it had been withdrawn, the flame grew again into the candles on the table, again into the fuel in the grate.

The whole room came once more calmly, healthfully into sight.

The two doors were still closed, the door communicating with the servants' room still locked. In the corner of the wall, into which he had so convulsively niched himself, lay the dog. I called to him—no movement; I approached—the animal was dead; his eyes protruded; his tongue out of his mouth; the froth gathered round his jaws. I took him in my arms; I brought him to the fire; I felt acute grief for the loss of my poor favorite—acute self-reproach; I accused myself of his death; I imagined he had died of fright. But what was my surprise on finding that his neck was actually broken. Had this been done in the dark?—must it not have been by a hand human as mine?—must there not have been a human agency all the while in that room? Good cause to suspect it. I cannot tell. I cannot do more than state the fact fairly; the reader may draw his own inference.

Another surprising circumstance—my watch was restored to the table from which it had been so mysteriously with-

drawn; but it had stopped at the very moment it was so withdrawn; nor, despite all the skill of the watchmaker, has it ever gone since—that is, it will go in a strange, erratic way for a few hours, and then come to a dead stop—it is worthless.

Nothing more chanced for the rest of the night. Nor, indeed, had I long to wait before the dawn broke. Not till it was broad daylight did I quit the haunted house. Before I did so, I revisited the little blind room in which my servant and myself had been for a time imprisoned. I had a strong impression—for which I could not account—that from that room had originated the mechanism of the phenomena—if I may use the term—which had been experienced in my chamber. And though I entered it now in the clear day, with the sun peering through the filmy window, I still felt, as I stood on its floor, the creep of the horror which I had first there experienced the night before, and which had been so aggravated by what had passed in my own chamber. I could not, indeed, bear to stay more than half a minute within those walls. I descended the stairs, and again I heard the footfall before me; and when I opened the street door, I thought I could distinguish a very low laugh. I gained my own home, expecting to find my runaway servant there. But he had not presented himself, nor did I hear more of him for three days, when I received a letter from him, dated from Liverpool, to this effect:

“HONORED SIR:—I humbly entreat your pardon, though I can scarcely hope that you will think I deserve it, unless—which Heaven forbid!—you saw what I did. I feel that it will be years before I can recover myself; and as to being fit for service, it is out of the question. I am therefore going to my brother-in-law at Melbourne. The ship sails to-morrow. Perhaps the long voyage may set me up. I do nothing now but start and tremble, and fancy it is behind me. I humbly beg you, honored sir, to order my clothes, and whatever wages are due to me, to be sent to my mother’s, at Walworth—John knows her address.”

The letter ended with additional apologies, somewhat incoherent, and explanatory details as to effects that had been under the writer’s charge.

This flight may perhaps warrant a suspicion that the man

wished to go to Australia, and had been somehow or other fraudulently mixed up with the events of the night. I say nothing in refutation of that conjecture; rather, I suggest it as one that would seem to many persons the most probable solution of improbable occurrences. My belief in my own theory remained unshaken. I returned in the evening to the house, to bring away in a hack-cab the things I had left there, with my poor dog's body. In this task I was not disturbed, nor did any incident worthy of note befall me, except that still, on ascending and descending the stairs, I heard the same footfall in advance. On leaving the house, I went to Mr. J——'s. He was at home. I returned him the keys, told him that my curiosity was sufficiently gratified, and was about to relate quickly what had passed, when he stopped me, and said, though with much politeness, that he had no longer any interest in a mystery which none had ever solved.

I determined at least to tell him of the two letters I had read, as well as of the extraordinary manner in which they had disappeared, and I then inquired if he thought they had been addressed to the woman who had died in the house, and if there were anything in her early history which could possibly confirm the dark suspicions to which the letters gave rise. Mr. J—— seemed startled, and after musing a few moments, answered, "I am but little acquainted with the woman's earlier history, except, as I before told you, that her family were known to mine. But you revive some vague reminiscences to her prejudice. I will make inquiries, and inform you of their result. Still, even if we could admit the popular superstition that a person who had been either the perpetrator or the victim of dark crimes in life could revisit, as a restless spirit, the scene in which those crimes had been committed, I should observe that the house was infested by strange sights and sounds before the old woman died—you smile—what would you say?"

"I would say this, that I am convinced, if we could get to the bottom of these mysteries, we should find a living human agency."

"What! you believe it is all an imposture?—for what object?"

"Not an imposture in the ordinary sense of the word. If suddenly I were to sink into a deep sleep, from which you could not awake me, but in that sleep could answer questions

with an accuracy which I could not pretend to when awake—tell you what money you had in your pocket—nay, describe your very thoughts—it is not necessarily an imposture, any more than it is necessarily supernatural. I should be, unconsciously to myself, under a mesmeric influence, conveyed to me from a distance by a human being who had acquired power over me by previous *rapport*.”

“But if a mesmerizer could so affect another living being, can you suppose that a mesmerizer could so affect inanimate objects; move chairs—open and shut doors?”

“Or impress our senses with the belief in such effects—we never having been *en rapport* with the person acting on us? No. What is commonly called mesmerism could not do this; but there may be a power akin to mesmerism, and superior to it—the power that in the old days was called Magic. That such a power may extend to all inanimate objects of matter, I do not say; but if so, it would not be against nature—it would be only a rare power in nature which might be given to constitutions with certain peculiarities, and cultivated by practice to an extraordinary degree. That such a power might extend over the dead—that is, over certain thoughts and memories that the dead may still retain—and compel, not that which ought properly to be called the SOUL, and which is far beyond human reach, but rather a phantom of what has been most earth-stained on earth, to make itself apparent to our senses—is a very ancient though obsolete theory, upon which I will hazard no opinion. But I do not conceive the power would be supernatural. Let me illustrate what I mean from an experiment which Paracelsus describes as not difficult, and which the author of the “*Curiosities of Literature*” cites as credible:—A flower perishes; you burn it. Whatever were the elements of that flower while it lived are gone, dispersed, you know not whither; you can never discover nor re-collect them. But you can, by chemistry, out of the burnt dust of that flower, raise a spectrum of the flower, just as it seemed in life. It may be the same with the human being. The soul has as much escaped you as the essence or elements of the flower. Still you may make a spectrum of it. And this phantom, though in the popular superstition it is held to be the soul of the departed, must not be confounded with the true soul; it is but the eidolon of the dead form. Hence, like the best-attested stories of ghosts or spirits, the thing

that most strikes us is the absence of what we held to be soul; that is, of superior emancipated intelligence. These apparitions come for little or no object—they seldom speak when they do come; if they speak, they utter no idea above those of an ordinary person on earth. American spirit-seers have published volumes of communications in prose and verse, which they assert to be given in the names of the most illustrious dead—Shakespeare, Bacon—heaven knows whom. Those communications, taking the best, are certainly not a whit of higher order than would be communications from living persons of fair talent and education; they are wondrously inferior to what Bacon, Shakespeare, and Plato said and wrote when on earth. Nor, what is more unnoticeable, do they ever contain an idea that was not on the earth before. Wonderful, therefore, as such phenomena may be (granting them to be truthful), I see much that philosophy may question, nothing that it is incumbent on philosophy to deny—viz., nothing supernatural. They are but ideas conveyed somehow or other (we have not yet discovered the means) from one mortal brain to another. Whether, in so doing, tables walk of their own accord, or fiend-like shapes appear in a magic circle, or bodyless hands rise and remove material objects, or a Thing of Darkness, such as presented itself to me, freeze our blood—still I am persuaded that these are but agencies conveyed, as by electric wires, to my own brain from the brain of another. In some constitutions there is a natural chemistry, and those constitutions may produce chemic wonders—in others a natural fluid, call it electricity, and these may produce electric wonders. But the wonders differ from Normal Science in this—they are alike objectless, purposeless, puerile, frivolous. They lead on to no grand results; and therefore the world does not heed, and true sages have not cultivated them. But sure I am, that of all I saw or heard, a man, human as myself, was the remote originator; and I believe unconsciously to himself as to the exact effects produced, for this reason; no two persons, you say, have ever told you that they experienced exactly the same thing. Well, observe, no two persons ever experience exactly the same dream. If this were an ordinary imposture, the machinery would be arranged for results that would but little vary; if it were a supernatural agency permitted by the Almighty, it would surely be for some definite end. These phenomena belong to neither class;

my persuasion is, that they originate in some brain now far distant; that that brain had no distinct volition in anything that occurred; that what does occur reflects but its devious, motley, ever-shifting, half-formed thoughts; in short, that it has been but the dreams of such a brain put into action and invested with a semi-substance. That this brain is of immense power, that it can set matter into movement, that it is malignant and destructive, I believe; some material force must have killed my dog; the same force might, for aught I know, have sufficed to kill myself, had I been as subjugated by terror as that dog—had my intellect or my spirit given me no countervailing resistance in my will."

"It killed your dog! that is fearful! indeed it is strange that no animal can be induced to stay in that house; not even a cat. Rats and mice are never found in it."

"The instincts of the brute creation detect influences deadly to their existence. Man's reason has a sense less subtle, because it has a resisting power more supreme. But enough; do you comprehend my theory?"

"Yes, though imperfectly—and I accept any crotchet (pardon the word), however odd, rather than embrace at once the notion of ghosts and hobgoblins we imbibed in our nurseries. Still, to my unfortunate house the evil is the same. What on earth can I do with the house?"

"I will tell you what I would do. I am convinced from my own internal feelings that the small unfurnished room at right angles to the door of the bedroom which I occupied, forms a starting-point or receptacle for the influences which haunt the house; and I strongly advise you to have the walls opened, the floor removed—nay, the whole room pulled down. I observe that it is detached from the body of the house, built over the small back yard, and could be removed without injury to the rest of the building."

"And you think, if I did that——"

"You would cut off the telegraph wires. Try it. I am so persuaded that I am right, that I will pay half the expense if you will allow me to direct the operations."

"Nay, I am well able to afford the cost; for the rest, allow me to write to you."

About ten days afterward I received a letter from Mr. J——, telling me that he had visited the house since I had seen him; that he had found the two letters I had described,

replaced in the drawer from which I had taken them; that he had read them with misgivings like my own; that he had instituted a cautious inquiry about the woman to whom I rightly conjectured they had been written. It seemed that thirty-six years ago (a year before the date of the letters) she had married, against the wish of her relations, an American of very suspicious character; in fact, he was generally believed to have been a pirate. She herself was the daughter of very respectable tradespeople, and had served in the capacity of a nursery governess before her marriage. She had a brother, a widower, who was considered wealthy, and who had one child of about six years old. A month after the marriage, the body of this brother was found in the Thames, near London Bridge; there seemed some marks of violence about his throat, but they were not deemed sufficient to warrant the inquest in any other verdict than that of "found drowned."

The American and his wife took charge of the little boy, the deceased brother having by his will left his sister guardian of his only child—and in event of the child's death, the sister inherited. The child died about six months afterward—it was supposed to have been neglected and ill-treated. The neighbors deposed to have heard it shriek at night. The surgeon who had examined it after death, said that it was emaciated as if from the want of nourishment, and the body was covered with livid bruises. It seemed that one winter night the child had sought to escape—crept out into the back yard—tried to scale the wall—fallen back exhausted, and been found at morning on the stones in a dying state. But though there was some evidence of cruelty, there was none of murder: and the aunt and her husband had sought to palliate cruelty by alleging the exceeding stubbornness and perversity of the child, who was declared to be half-witted. Be that as it may, at the orphan's death the aunt inherited her brother's fortune. Before the first wedded year was out, the American had quitted England abruptly, and never returned to it. He obtained a cruising vessel, which was lost in the Atlantic two years afterward. The widow was left in affluence; but reverses of various kinds had befallen her; a bank broke—an investment failed—she went into a small business and became insolvent—then she entered into service, sinking lower and lower, from housekeeper down to maid-of-all-work—never

long retaining a place, though nothing decided against her character was ever alleged. She was considered sober, honest, and peculiarly quiet in her ways; still nothing prospered with her. And so she had dropped into the workhouse, from which Mr. J—— had taken her, to be placed in charge of the very house which she had rented as mistress in the first year of her wedded life.

Mr. J—— added that he had passed an hour alone in the unfurnished room which I had urged him to destroy, and that his impressions of dread while there were so great, though he had neither heard nor seen anything, that he was eager to have the walls bared and the floors removed as I had suggested. He had engaged persons for the work, and would commence any day I would name.

The day was accordingly fixed. I repaired to the haunted house—we went into the blind, dreary room, took up the skirting, and then the floors. Under the rafters, covered with rubbish, was found a trap-door, quite large enough to admit a man. It was closely nailed down, with clamps and rivets of iron. On removing these we descended into a room below, the existence of which had never been suspected. In this room there had been a window and a flue, but they had been bricked over, evidently for many years. By the help of candles we examined this place; it still retained some mouldering furniture—three chairs, an oak settle, a table—all of the fashion of about eighty years ago. There was a chest of drawers against the wall, in which we found, half-rotted away, old-fashioned articles of a man's dress, such as might have been worn eighty or a hundred years ago by a gentleman of some rank—costly steel buckles and buttons, like those yet worn in court-dresses—a handsome court-sword—in a waistcoat which had once been rich with gold-lace, but which was now blackened and foul with damp, we found five guineas, a few silver coins, and an ivory ticket, probably for some place of entertainment long since passed away. But our main discovery was in a kind of iron safe fixed to the wall, the lock of which it cost us much trouble to get picked.

In this safe were three shelves, and two small drawers. Ranged on the shelves were several small bottles of crystal hermetically stopped. They contained colorless volatile essences, of the nature of which I shall only say that they were not poisons—phosphor and ammonia entered into some of

them. There were also some very curious glass tubes, and a small pointed rod of iron, with a large lump of rock-crystal, and another of amber—also a loadstone of great power.

In one of the drawers we found a miniature portrait set in gold, and retaining the freshness of its colors most remarkably, considering the length of time it had probably been there. The portrait was that of a man who might be advanced in middle life, perhaps forty-seven or forty-eight.

It was a remarkable face—a most impressive face. If you could fancy some mighty serpent transformed into man, preserving in the human lineaments the old serpent type, you would have a better idea of that countenance than long descriptions can convey; the width and flatness of frontal—the tapering elegance of contour disguising the strength of the deadly jaw—the long, large, terrible eye, glittering and green as the emerald—and withal a certain ruthless calm, as if from the consciousness of an immense power.

Mechanically I turned round the miniature to examine the back of it, and on the back was engraved a pentacle; in the middle of the pentacle a ladder, and the third step of the ladder was formed by the date of 1765. Examining still more minutely, I detected a spring; this, on being pressed, opened the back of the miniature as a lid. Within-side the lid was engraved, “Mariana, to thee—Be faithful in life and in death to ——.” Here follows a name that I will not mention, but it was not unfamiliar to me. I had heard it spoken of by old men in my childhood as the name borne by a dazzling charlatan who had made a great sensation in London for a year or so, and had fled the country on the charge of a double murder within his own house—that of his mistress and his rival. I said nothing of this to Mr. J——, to whom, reluctantly, I resigned the miniature.

We had found no difficulty in opening the first drawer within the iron safe; we found great difficulty in opening the second; it was not locked, but it resisted all efforts, till we inserted in the chinks the edge of a chisel. When we had thus drawn it forth, we found a very singular apparatus in the nicest order. Upon a small, thin book, or rather tablet, was placed a saucer of crystal; this saucer was filled with a clear liquid—on that liquid floated a kind of compass, with a needle shifting rapidly round; but instead of the usual points of a compass were seven strange characters, not very unlike those

used by astrologers to denote the planets. A peculiar, but not strong nor displeasing odor, came from this drawer, which was lined with a wood that we afterward discovered to be hazel. Whatever the cause of this odor, it produced a material effect on the nerves. We all felt it, even the two workmen who were in the room—a creeping, tingling sensation from the tip of the fingers to the roots of the hair. Impatient to examine the tablet I removed the saucer. As I did so the needle of the compass went round and round with exceeding swiftness, and I felt a shock that ran through my whole frame, so that I dropped the saucer on the floor. The liquid was spilt—the saucer was broken—the compass rolled to the other end of the room—and at that instant the walls shook to and fro, as if a giant had swayed and rocked them.

The two workmen were so frightened that they ran up the ladder by which we had descended from the trap-door; but seeing that nothing more happened, they were easily induced to return.

Meanwhile I had opened the tablet; it was bound in plain red leather, with a silver clasp; it contained but one sheet of thick vellum, and on that sheet were inscribed, within a double pentacle, words in old monkish Latin, which are literally to be translated thus: “On all that it can reach within these walls—sentient or inanimate, living or dead—as moves the needle, so work my will! Accursed be the house, and restless be the dwellers therein.”

We found no more. Mr. J—— burnt the tablet and its anathema. He razed to the foundations the part of the building containing the secret room with the chamber over it. He had then the courage to inhabit the house himself for a month, and a quieter, better-conditioned house could not be found in all London. Subsequently he let it to advantage, and his tenant has made no complaints.

SHORT STORIES

A MAGAZINE OF FACT AND FICTION

Vol. VI. No. 2. *This magazine is planned to cover the story-telling field of the world. Its selections will be of the best procurable in all the languages.* MAY, 1894

THE WIDOW GAMBERTI*

The regiment had been expected since the morning.

In the villages remote from the great centres, where life goes on calm and even as the mechanical movement of a well-regulated clock, the passage of the troops is always an important event. The peasants even, naturally penurious, do not complain of the slight expense and inconvenience that the military guests bring for a day into their houses; and be it noted that it is not a patriotic feeling nor affection for the sons of others which animates them; but it amuses them to pass the evening in listening to the adventurous tales and the jokes of the barracks of some soldier that is rather a chatter-box, especially if he is from the South. There are fine things to be heard, you may believe me!

That day the young serving-women had done their daily tasks in the quickest way and with various distractions; the workwomen busy near the windows had often raised the curtains to see better an officer, come to prepare the lodgings, who since dawn had galloped up and down through the town, satisfied, no doubt, with attracting all the feminine glances.

It was a cold day in the beginning of April. The winter, which all had believed to be definitely over, by a malignant caprice or to play a bad trick on its enemies was come back again; and the icy white mantle covered the earth anew, and shone magnificent under the sun, of the first spring days.

"What a fine thing that the sun is out, so they will be cheerful when they arrive!" thought the girls, while they blew upon their reddened fingers to warm them, and listened with beating hearts whether the wind brought from afar some sound of a trumpet or trampling of horses.

* Italian of Countess Lara : E. Cavazza : For Short Stories.

to foot to make sure that he was worthy of such a place. Then he added:

"Fortunately, you have but few steps to take, because the Palazzo Gamberti is almost opposite here. That house, you see, where there are so many lights. . . ."

The officer went toward the house pointed out to him. It was an antique building of rich and elegant style—a pearl among lentils in comparison with the other houses.

"She must be a lady, and no mistake!" said Terbiani to himself, not only at seeing her home, but also at the aspect of the servant that came to open the door.

"The signora marchesa is at the villa di Givioso," said the domestic, showing the lieutenant into a drawing-room furnished in antique brocade, where a great fire was crackling merrily in the porphyry chimney-piece. The servant added:

"If the *signor tenente* wishes to read, on that table are the newspapers, in that book-case some books. . . . If the *signor tenente* wishes that I should prepare him some tea or coffee . . . that I bring him some liqueurs . . ."

"No, thank you . . ." replied the officer, absent-mindedly.

"Perhaps the *signor tenente* would like to go to bed?"

"No, no, thanks," repeated Terbiani. "I never go to bed before midnight."

This last phrase was uttered in the hope that the marchesa would come home before that hour.

"Here is an apartment kept as I like to see one, and a domestic worthy to be the envy of many a master!" was the mental approval of the officer as he stretched himself in a wide, low, and deep arm-chair before the glowing fire.

He opened a newspaper, read without understanding a syllable the leading article, which was upon the foreign policy; then, little by little, he forgot his reading; he began to watch the flame that arose in tongues, blue, golden, red, and ended by absorbing himself in a thousand dreams more luminous, strange, many-colored, and capricious than the flame itself . . . they lasted until the moment when the marchesa in person entered the room, a little after ten o'clock.

She was much prettier, to look at her closely, than Terbiani had judged her at first sight.

"Welcome, lieutenant," said the lady, with the ease of a perfect woman of the world. "I have just met, at my mother's house, one of your companions, and from him I

learned that you were here; so I'm come home in great haste to fulfil the duties of hospitality."

The young man bowed deeply, at once subjugated by those bright eyes that looked mischievously at him and by the subtle smile of those red lips which addressed to him words so gracious—without suspecting, poor fellow, that he himself was the cause of that mirth held within bounds only by exquisite politeness.

In fact, that indiscreet Bompane, informed by chance a few moments after his arrival at Givioso of the existence and perfect health of the Marchese Gamberti, had not been able to restrain his hilarity; and invited to explain it by the family into which he had been received, he had related the change of the billet of quarters, the enthusiasm and the matrimonial hopes of Terbiani.

Such was the true motive of the ready return of the marchesa, who, delighted with the opportunity which presented itself for the exercise of her wit and her good-humor, had hastened to come to take her part in the little comedy.

"Do not let my presence hinder you from retiring, lieutenant," said the lady with coquetry. "You must feel a great need of rest after this fatiguing day's march in the snow.

And he, gallantly:

"O signora, there is no weariness that could make me renounce these moments of your charming conversation."

"As to the charm of my conversation," she said, laughing, "permit me to make you observe that you are not yet in a position to judge of it. As for me, instead," she quickly added, determined to appear coquettish, "it seems too good to be true to chat with a person who does not belong to my family and whom I do not see every day. I assure you that one has quite enough of solitude after a whole long winter passed in this forsaken little place!"

"I can believe it, signora marchesa. But why condemn yourself to this seclusion?"

"Ah, this is it: the physician has known how to persuade my family that this rest was absolutely necessary for me; and I have preferred to subject myself to the doctor's advice rather than to the scenes of tender reproach that my refusal would have provoked. At all events I have gained the color of a peasant; for it seems that to be bored is good for the health. You can't imagine the impossible length of a winter

day in this place and how hard it is to occupy the endless hours that compose it."

"I understand, oh, I understand!" repeated the young man, pulling his pointed mustache.

The dialogue, thus begun, ran successively over the whole ground where it could be carried by a man and a woman of good society who meet for the first time. They talked of literature, art, society, and discovered that they had several mutual friends at Rome, Milan, and Naples.

The marchesa, pleased with the affair, which was moreover very harmless, and reassured by the fact that her husband would return the very next day, permitted herself some phrases, enough to lead on any man.

"Ah! I wish they would send me every day an officer to entertain!" she concluded, offering to Terbiani her slender little hand. "I have been so well amused this evening!"

In saying these words she was perfectly sincere.

As to the lieutenant, he was in the fifth heaven.

"Really, this is absolutely what is wanted for me," he thought as he sank between the fine linen sheets, perfumed with orris, that had been prepared for him. "Pretty, elegant, witty; certainly of good family and with money. What a nose like a hunting-dog I have had, eh? Now it is a question of manœuvring well. To-morrow I will develop my plans."

And he went to sleep, dreaming of his good fortune.

On awaking, he found an invitation from the Baron Corati di Givioso for a breakfast, followed by a fox-hunt.

"I'm going ahead under full sail!" exclaimed the young man, rubbing his hands. "This breakfast and this hunt, to-day, are what is wanted for my manœuvres—of love, not war."

No sooner said than done. So far as depended upon himself, Terbiani profited as much as possible by the situation, to the great amusement of the Corati family and the pretty Marchesa Gamberti.

When, after a day passed mostly in the open air, amid noise, but in more than one place worthy to elicit sentimentality, the marchesa found herself again before the fire, in the drawing-room of the previous evening, she was acquainted with Terbiani as few other women had been, for he had related to her during those hours the life, death and miracles of himself, wishing—repeated the worthy fellow—that she should have, in regard to him, neither illusions no delusions.

Then he dilated, with melancholy reflections, upon the weariness and emptiness of bachelor existence.

The marchioness, of course, listened with patience and goodwill, full of encouragement to these propositions, rather verbose, but of an irreproachable morality.

"And I suppose that the conclusion of all this is that you are thinking of marriage," she said, looking at the clock on the mantelpiece. The train that brought home her husband was just then entering the station, and that phrase seemed to her suited to hasten the denouement of the comedy.

"Precisely, marchesa. The difficulty is, however, that I am very exacting in this matter, without any right to be so."

"I am not of your opinion, lieutenant, as to your right," said the lady, with perfidious candor. "And I should undertake willingly to discover some perfection of a little girl who would call herself happy to become Signora Terbiani . . ."

"Do you believe it possible?" asked the young man with southern ardor; and he added, hesitating a little: "This encouragement, marchioness, offers me the opportunity to ask you . . . to ask you . . . since you say . . ."

Steps were heard in the anteroom; she interrupted him:

"Ah, I see that my sister Lucia has greatly pleased you!"

"Oh, certainly . . . certainly . . . the signorina Lucia is one of the most charming ladies; that can be seen. . . . But as I have only seen her beside a sister . . . yourself."

"Her sister has been married for fifteen years, my dear lieutenant. She is already an old wife and an old mother," the marchesa said, laughing.

At that point the door opened, and there appeared a handsome man, tall and powerful of person, followed by two boys with fresh, rosy faces, in travelling costume. All three flung themselves upon the neck of the marchesa without even perceiving the presence of the poor lieutenant, stupefied, turned to stone, more immovable and mute than a statue.

"The Marchese Gamberti, my husband," the lady presented him, after having returned the family effusions. "Lieutenant Terbiani, an officer we have the good-fortune to entertain."

"I am rejoiced to make your acquaintance, lieutenant," declared with high-bred courtesy the Marchese Gamberti.

"Now," said the pretty lady with an indescribable smile which she was unable to repress, a smile that curled slightly the corners of her mouth—"now come, lieutenant, let me

present you to the marchesa, Widow Gamberti, mistress of the house and my mother-in-law."

So saying, she went toward an old gentlewoman, all wrapped up in a hooded cloak of silk and lace, who followed the marchese and the boys.

The word *widow* had been slightly emphasized on purpose, but Terbiani, who had not yet regained the use of speech, bowed profoundly, without even appearing to comprehend the scene. And neither the best wines of the dowager's cellar nor the hospitable kindness of the marchese availed to give him back his presence of mind and his good-humor.

"My love, your lieutenant is rather a dismal bore!" observed the Marchese Gamberti when he found himself alone with his wife, in the intimacy of their own room.

"Rather, he was very brilliant," the marchesa assured him, bursting into laughter. "But it was the arrival of all you others that made him change his mood. Fancy, at the moment you entered he had launched forth into no less than an offer of marriage. He wanted me—really me . . . yes, I please him . . . as it appears."

And gayly, while she loosened the thick braids of her heavy dark hair, she told the whole story in detail, and by what able manoeuvres she had managed the comedy to bring it to a denouement just at the instant when her husband—her dear, adored husband—would arrive.

The story was long, so that the Marchese and Marchesa Gamberti were still asleep when the regiment went away the next morning.

The snow had melted, like the hopes of poor Terbiani, and folds of whitish mist floated sadly here and there over the plain, like tattered gauze.

It was lugubrious, this departure before daybreak in that gray and frosty April morning.

"Well," asked Lieutenant Bompane mischievously, "when is the wedding with your beautiful widow to take place?"

"Wedding! I shall never marry!" replied Terbiani with a tragic air that wished to appear scornful. "I only wanted to make a little closer acquaintance with that brunette, and I have played a little bit of sentimental comedy. . . . The
' keep me from matrimony! Women are too perfidious."

After this, he added with a sincere sigh:

as the waves."

ETCHINGS : PLEASURE *

It was in the early morning.

She walked upon the flower beds.

And the sweet rich scent arose ; and she gathered her hands full of the fragrant blossoms.

Then Duty, with his white clear features, came and looked steadily and sternly at her.

Then she ceased from gathering, but she walked away among the flowers, smiling, and with her hands full.

Then Duty, with his still white face, came up to her again, and looked at her.

But she—she turned her head away from him.

At last she saw his face.

Then she dropped the fairest of the flowers she had held, and walked slowly and silently away.

Then again he came to her.

And she quivered and moaned and bent her head low, and turned with sorrow to the gate.

But as she went out she looked back at the sunlight on the faces of the flowers, and wept in anguish.

Then she went out.

And the gate shut behind her forever.

But still in her hand she held of the buds she had gathered, and the scent was very sweet in the lonely desert.

But Duty followed her.

And once more he came and stood before her, with his still—white—death-like face.

And she knew what he had come for.

She unbent her fingers and let the flowers drop out, the flowers she had loved so, and walked on without them, with dry aching eyes.

Then for the last time he came.

And she showed him her empty hands.

Hands that held nothing now.

But still he looked.

Then at length she opened her bosom and took out of it one small flower she had hidden there, and laid it on the sand.

She had nothing more to give now, and she wandered away, and the gray sand whirled about her.

* Olive Schreiner : In " Dreams."

THE COUP DE GRACE *

The fighting had been hard and continuous—that was attested by all the senses. The very taste of battle was in the air. All was now over; it remained only to succor the wounded and bury the dead—to “tidy up a bit,” as the humorist of a burying squad put it. A good deal of “tidying up” was required. As far as one could see through the interspaces of the forest, between the splintered trees, lay wrecks of men and horses. Among them moved the stretcher-bearers, gathering and carrying away the few who showed signs of life. Most of the wounded had died of exposure while the right to minister to their wants was in dispute. It is an army regulation that the wounded must wait; the best way to care for them is to win the battle. It must be confessed that victory is a distinct advantage to a man requiring attention, but many do not live to avail themselves of it. Those of the vanquished party forego it altogether; their patience is without reward.

The dead were collected in groups of a dozen or a score and laid side by side in rows while the trenches were dug to receive them. Some, found at too great a distance from these rallying-points, were buried where they lay. There was little attempt at identification, though in most cases the burying parties being detailed to glean the same ground which they had assisted to reap, the names of the victorious dead were known and listed. The enemy’s fallen had to be content with counting. But of that they got enough; many of them were counted several times, and the total, as given in the official report of the victorious commander, denoted rather a hope than a result.

At some little distance from the spot where one of the burying parties had established its “bivouac of the dead” a man in the uniform of a Federal officer stood leaning against a tree. From his feet upward to his neck his attitude was that of weariness reposing; but he turned his head uneasily from side to side; his mind was apparently not at rest. He was perhaps uncertain in what direction to go; he was not likely to remain long where he was, for already the level rays of the setting sun struggled redly through the open spaces of

* Ambrose Bierce : San Francisco Examiner.

the wood, and the weary soldiers were quitting their task for the day. He would hardly make a night of it alone there among the dead. Nine men in ten whom you meet after a battle inquire the way to some fraction of the army—as if any one could know.

Doubtless this officer was lost.

After resting himself a moment he would follow one of the retiring burial squads.

When all were gone he walked straight away into the forest toward the red west, its light staining his face like blood. The air of confidence with which he now strode along showed that he was on familiar ground; he had recovered his bearings. The dead on his right and on his left were unregarded as he passed; an occasional low moan from some sorely-stricken wretch whom the relief parties had not reached, and who would have to pass a comfortless night beneath the stars, with his thirst to keep him company, was equally unheeded. What, indeed, could the officer have done, being no surgeon and having no water?

At the head of a shallow ravine, a mere depression of the ground, lay a small group of bodies. He saw, and swerving suddenly from his course walked rapidly toward, them. Scanning each one sharply as he passed, he stopped at last above one which lay at a slight remove from the others, near a clump of young trees. He looked at it narrowly, the crimson light suffusing it and fringing its confused outlines with fire. It seemed to stir.

He stooped and laid his hand upon its face.

It screamed.

The officer was Captain Lewis Marriner, of a Massachusetts regiment of infantry, a daring and intelligent soldier, an honorable man. In Captain Marriner's regiment were two brothers named Searle—John and Francis. Francis Searle was a sergeant in Captain Marriner's company, and these two men, the sergeant and the captain, were devoted friends. In so far as disparity of rank, differences in duties, and considerations of military discipline would permit, they were commonly together. They had, indeed, grown up together from childhood. A habit of the heart is not easily broken off. Francis Searle had nothing military in his taste or disposition, but the thought of separation from his friend was disagreeable; so he enlisted in the company in which Marriner was second

lieutenant. Each had taken two steps upward in rank, but between the highest non-commissioned and the lowest commissioned officer the social gulf is deep and wide, and the old relation was maintained with difficulty and a difference.

John Searle, the brother of Francis, was the major of the regiment—a cynical, saturnine man between whom and Captain Marriner there was a natural antipathy which circumstances had nourished and strengthened to an active animosity. But for the restraining influence of their mutual relation to Francis, these two patriots would doubtless have endeavored to deprive their country of one another's services. At the opening of the battle that morning, the regiment was performing outpost duty a mile away from the main army. It had been attacked and nearly surrounded in the forest, but stubbornly held its ground. During a lull in the fighting Major Searle came to Captain Marriner. The two exchanged formal salutes and the major said:

“Captain, the colonel directs that you push your company forward to the head of this ravine and hold your place there until recalled. I need hardly apprise you of the dangerous character of the movement, but if you wish you can, I suppose, turn over the command to your first lieutenant. I was not, however, directed to authorize the substitution; it is merely a suggestion of my own, unofficially made.”

To this deadly insult Captain Marriner coolly replied:

“Sir, I invite you to accompany the movement. A mounted officer would be a conspicuous mark, and I have long held the opinion that it would be better if you were dead.”

The art of repartee was cultivated in military circles as early as 1863.

A half-hour later Captain Marriner's company was driven from its position at the head of the ravine with a loss of one-third its number. Among the fallen was Sergeant Searle. The regiment was soon afterward forced back to the main line, and at the close of the battle was miles away. The captain was now standing at the side of his fallen subordinate and friend.

Sergeant Searle was mortally hurt. His clothing was deranged; it seemed to have been violently torn apart, exposing the abdomen. Some of the buttons of his jacket had been pulled off and lay on the ground beside him, and fragments of his other garments were strewn about. His leather

belt was parted, and had apparently been dragged from beneath him as he lay. There had been no very great effusion of blood. The only visible wound was a wide, ragged opening in the abdomen. It was defiled with earth and dead leaves. Protruding from it was a lacerated end of the small intestine. In all his experience Captain Marriner had not seen a wound like this. He could neither conjecture how it was made nor explain the attendant circumstances—the strangely-torn clothing, the parted belt, the besmirching of the white skin. He knelt and made a closer examination. When he rose to his feet he turned his eyes in various directions as if looking for an enemy. Fifty yards away, on the crest of a low, thinly-wooded hill, he saw several dark objects moving about among the fallen men—a herd of swine. One stood with its back to him, its shoulders sharply elevated. Its forefeet were upon a human body; its head was depressed and invisible. The bristly ridge of its chine showed black against the red west. Captain Marriner drew away his eyes and fixed them again upon the thing which had been his friend.

The man who had suffered these monstrous mutilations was alive. At intervals he moved his limbs; he moaned at every breath. He stared blankly into the face of his friend, and if touched screamed. In his giant agony he had torn up the ground on which he lay; his clinched hands were full of leaves and twigs and earth. Articulate speech was beyond his power; it was impossible to know if he was sensible to anything but pain. The expression of his face was an appeal; his eyes were full of prayer. For what? There was no misreading that look: the captain had too frequently seen it in eyes of those whose lips had still the power to beg for death. Consciously or unconsciously, this writhing fragment of humanity—this type and example of acute sensation—this handiwork of man and beast—this humble unheroic Prometheus was imploring everything, all, the whole non-ego, for the boon of oblivion. To the earth and the sky alike—to the trees—to the man—to whatever took form in sense or consciousness, this incarnate suffering addressed its piteous plea. For what, indeed? For that which we accord to even the meanest creature without sense to demand it, denying it only to the wretched of our own race. For the blessed release—the rite of uttermost compassion—the *coup de grace*. Captain Marriner spoke the name of his friend: “Frank, Frank, do

you not know me?" He repeated it over and over without effect until emotion choked his utterance. His tears plashed upon the livid face beneath his own and blinded himself. He saw nothing but a blurred and moving object, but the moans were more distinct than ever, interrupted at briefer intervals with sharper shrieks. He turned away, struck his hand upon his forehead and strode from the spot. The swine, catching sight of him, threw up their crimson muzzles, regarding him suspiciously a second, and then with a gruff concerted grunt raced away out of sight. A horse, its foreleg splintered horribly by a cannon-shot, lifted its head sidewise from the ground and neighed piteously. Marriner stepped forward, drew his revolver, and shot the poor beast between the eyes, narrowly observing its death-struggle, which, contrary to his expectation, was violent and long; but at last it lay still. The tense muscles of its lips, which had uncovered the teeth in a horrible grin, relaxed; the sharp, clean-cut profile took on a look of profound peace and rest.

Along the distant thinly-wooded crest to westward the fringe of sunset fire had now nearly burned itself out. The light upon the trunks of the trees had faded to a tender gray; the shadows were in their tops, like great dark birds aperch. The night was coming and there were miles of haunted forest between Captain Marriner and camp. Yet he stood there at the side of the dead animal, apparently lost to all sense of his surroundings. His eyes were bent upon the earth at his feet; his left hand hung loosely at his side, his right still held the pistol. Suddenly he lifted his face, turned it toward his dying friend, and walked rapidly back to his side. He knelt upon one knee, cocked the weapon, placed the muzzle against the man's forehead, turned away his eyes, and pulled the trigger. There was no report. He had used his last cartridge for the horse. The sufferer moaned and his lips moved convulsively. The froth that ran from them had a tinge of blood.

Captain Marriner rose to his feet and drew his sword from the scabbard. He passed the fingers of his left hand along the edge from hilt to point. He held it out straight before him, as if to test his nerves. There was no visible tremor of the blade; the ray of bleak skylight that it reflected was steady and true. He stooped and with his left hand tore away the dying man's shirt; rose and placed the point of the sword just over the heart. This time he did not withdraw

his eyes. Grasping the hilt with both hands he thrust downward with all his strength and weight. The blade sank into the man's body—through his body into the earth; Captain Marriner came near falling forward upon his work. The dying man drew up his knees and at the same time threw his right arm across his breast and grasped the steel so tightly that the knuckles of the hand visibly whitened.

By a violent but vain effort to withdraw the blade the wound was enlarged; a rill of blood escaped, running sinuously down into the deranged clothing.

At that moment three men stepped silently forward from behind the clump of young trees which had concealed their approach.

Two were hospital attendants and carried a stretcher.

The third was Major John Searle.

THE WAVING RED LEGS*

Many hundred years ago, when the Shoshone people was a great nation, our fathers and their children, numerous as the spills upon the pines, lived in a fine country beyond the high mountains, where we now see the red sun throwing his gold arrows over the walls of the morning. It was a noble land. I will show you the story of it upon the cliffs of the deep cañon, where our fathers carved it. Great plains in that land, like the sheets of the white man's picture-paper, unfolded right and left from the silvery threads of many rivers. Even slopes, longer and wider than the eye can shoot, drove the little flowery valleys up into the high hills of the morning and the evening; and the antelopes followed the little valleys, while the "heap too much buppalo," like the shadow of the storm-clouds, moved slowly over the slopes, or wandered by the rivers in the shelter of the willows. It was very much a good country for our people, because there was plenty to eat; and, O white man! plenty good to eat makes a big heart.

Not from the east there came, not from the west there came, not from the south there came, but from the north—the cruel north, where the wild wind wails through the trumpet of ice—there came a host of long spears and long legs, and drove our fathers out of the beautiful land into the barren mountains—this high, dry, and horrible land, where we, their poor children, now live on mice, bugs, and wild seeds.

There was not always full plenty in that fine place, because sometimes the Storm-spirit, being angry, gathered the cold clouds into his belly, and then blew through the valleys and around the hills, till all the good game but the antelope ran away south, to the fire-hills, to get warmer.

Once, when the game had been blown away for many weeks, my oldest father did a wonderful thing. He was a fool. All the men who do wonderful things are fools. Those who do nothing but common things are only common people. It is a fearful thing to be a fool; so much is demanded of fools, and so little is credited to them, until after they are dead, by common Shoshones. But my first, furthest-back father was "a heap too much, alle-r-time big fool." His name was Bending Willow—"all same me;" my name is Bending

*J. W. Gally: The Argonaut.

Willow. "White man call me alle-r-time Pike." This father of mine was such a fool that he did not believe in old stories any more than he did in new stories. It was by that that our chief men found out he was a fool. He did not believe in evil spirits, nor in good spirits, nor in ghosts, nor in omens, nor in witches—from which the women and the preachers made out he was a horrible fool. After that all the nation soon decided he was a fool; and they passed a law driving him out into the mountains.

In the mountains, my father, finding it very easy to secure food and shelter for one man, and being a born fool, and because he was a fool, went to studying the ways of animals and plants and fish. If he had been anything but a fool, he would have gone and asked the old women and the big medicinemen about such things.

He used to tell his children, when he chanced to meet any of them in the hills, that he had "heap fun" playing with the antelope.

At last, once, as I have said, when the evil spirit had blown away all the good game from the slopes of the great valley for a long time, the chief men came into the mountains to catch antelope, or rats, or anything fit to eat. But the antelope were so shy they could not get near them.

Yet, even while the wise men were eating the nasty rock-rats, there came word to them: "Lo! the fool—the great fool—lives among the rocks upon the abundance of fat antelope."

Then the wise men sent one very wise man—a half-brother of my father—to talk to my father, and find out how he got his antelope meat.

"I shoot it with bow and arrow," said my father.

Then the wise man rubbed his own nose—his own nose, because there was no other nose present but my father's; and he would not rub my father's nose, because my father's nose was a fool's nose. A wise man never rubs a fool's nose.

"Your arrows must be swift and your bow strong."

"Must they?" said my fool father.

"Yes," said the wise man.

"So be it."

"You are a fool!"

"And you, my half-brother?"

"Let me see your bow and arrows."

"I am a fool. I will give you my best arrows and bow."

Away went the wise man, glad to have the arms which brought down the shy game. But after some hours he returned to my father's "wicki-up" in a great rage—for he was a wise man—and throwing the arms into the fire whereon my ancestor was broiling fat antelope, shouted:

"Thou liar—as well as fool!"

"Wherefore this burst of wisdom, O wise brother?"

"You said I could kill antelope with the arms you gave me."

"Did I? Pardon me. I am a fool."

Then the wise man of the Shoshones grew furious at my parent, because the smell of the broiling antelope made his heart big. And my father smiled in his own palm, as he squatted at the fire, and said, as he turned the meat over on the coals:

"I gave you the best."

"You did?" said the sneering wise one.

"There are my arms. Look! There is none better among them. And, when you have seen for yourself, squat—my supper is broiled—and eat."

When the wise man's heart softened with the good grease of the fat antelope, he became sweet on my father, knowing that all fools are tender-hearted, and proceeded to describe how his family suffered for want of better food; and went on and on, begging and bewailing, as wise men do when their pompous, petty, traditionary wisdom sends them to an original fool for advice. And at length my father agreed to show him, on the very next day, how to kill fat antelope.

"But," said my father, "the manner of it is so like the folly of a fool, that I hope, for the sake of the good name of the family, you will not practise it yourself. It would be better if you laid the blame of it upon me."

"Let me know, and I will think," said the wise man.

"To-morrow," said my father; and gave his relative a haunch of antelope to take home to his family.

On the morrow, early, my father sighted, in the middle of the flowery little mountain vale in front of his door, a herd of fine fat antelope. He said to himself, "It is well!" Then he painted his legs red—and waited.

Soon the wise feet were heard coming rapidly to the fool's door.

"How-how!" said my father. "Come in, and—paint your legs red."

“Wha-a-t!”

“Paint your legs red.”

“Paint!”

“Yes.”

“Red!”

“I thought,” said my father, “you would not be a fool.”

“Yes, yes—anything! Give me the paint.”

So then, very soon, my most ancient father and his wise relative walked out into the little valley, with their legs painted beautifully red.

When they had walked near enough to be noticed by the antelope, “Now,” said my father, “let us here lie down upon our backs in the grass, and stick our pretty red legs up in the air.”

They did so.

“When I wave my legs, you wave yours.”

“Yes.”

“When I cross my legs, you cross yours.”

“Yes.”

“All right. Here we go!”

By-and-by the wise man saw the antelope walking slowly across the valley toward the red leg-ation.

“Now,” said my father, “the antelope will come up very close to these legs—then shoot, and shoot fast.”

So they did.

And presently the wise man went home with plenty of meat—and a fool’s advice.

After many days, the fool could hear from the few Shoshones, who hardly halted as they passed his “wicki-up,” of the great, wise invention of his half-brother—in the matter of killing antelope. And the wisdom of it went abroad upon every trail. Then my father sat, in the evening, at his own door, and cried to the owl:

“Alas! how poor are the thoughts of a fool!”

My half-uncle became a great man in the nation—a very great man; and on his tomb, to this day, if one were there to point it out, are painted two naked red legs upside down, and his family is known as the *Waving Red Legs*.

JULIUS ROY'S DREAM*

It was Saturday night—an unruly night of wind and rain in late December; and as Julius Roy stepped from the book-seller's door where ill-luck had driven him to sell his last volume, the discomfort of the wet streets might well seem the completing touch to his intolerable misfortunes. Youth, romance, a certain worldly opportunity, a sufficient physical grace, a very pretty wit, and, above all, the hope, the supreme ambition of the poet; he had staked them all in his ten years' play with the great gamester of London—and lost. He had seen them go, it was true, without taking the loss very seriously, hiding with a passing jest what small emotion their disappearance caused him, finding it always easy to believe in the speedy turn of fortune. But now that the game was played out, the jester's guise was somewhat out of keeping with the part of distressed poet; he could no longer flaunt the cap and bells in the face of opportunity with the old gayety.

The situation, in truth, was become desperate; for London, itself, having won everything from him, was, like other gamesters, grown tired of the loser. For the first time Julius thoroughly believed in misfortune, losing the vague optimism which, as much as anything, had helped to confuse the issues of success and failure in the past. Clearly the end was at hand! He knew it beyond a doubt as he passed into the rain, with the consciousness made more evident, as it seemed, by the dark line of the houses opposite, by the tower of a church at the end of the street, by every shadow and wet gleam of light in the gloomy spaces of the night.

With the imagination itself cowed, a great loneliness possessed him as he returned homeward. The drenching rain kept him reminded very unpleasantly indeed of the minor circumstances of his ill fate—his wet clothes, his tired nerves, the wretched shelter to which he hastened out of this wretched night. With such aching thoughts uppermost, he emerged at length by the stately portico of St. Martin's Church upon the open space of Trafalgar Square. Here, as he paused in some dismay, marking the fierce drive of the rain across the unsheltered pavements, it occurred to him how often in jolly moods of youth he had paused here, at the very heart and

* Ernest Rhys: Macmillan's.

centre of London, to take a yet deeper breath of ambition. One such time he remembered specially—an afternoon of May some years ago, when youth and romance were boisterous in his blood. Then, the spring breezes charmed the smoke out of the air, and the sun shone gallantly upon the endless stream of life pouring by. The recollection brought out the hopelessness of the present moment in all its force, as he stood half-hesitating at sight of the storm before taking courage to go on. At length, in sheer impotence of will, finding it easier, as one does at such times, to continue in a route already begun than to decide upon a new one, he crossed the roadway and descended the steps into the centre of the square. As he did so, the lights in a club-house opposite, now that he was in a reminiscent mood, reminded him of the time when he used to go with Jack Momus to the Olympic Club, where his dear friends, who had since found it convenient to forget him, must even now be sitting down to their Saturday night's accustomed feast. It struck him as a diverting idea that there was nothing to prevent his marching into the club as of old, there to startle the Olympians where they sat at meat by proposing the historical toast, "Our Noble Selves."

But this absurd fancy was interrupted in the middle of the square by a furious gust of the storm. He was already wet through, for his thin coat did not hide very courtly underwear; and this fresh outburst drove the rain spitefully into his face, down his neck, through every seam in his worn-out clothes. It is not wonderful that with this he lost patience, and broke involuntarily into a bitter curse, of the gracious Olympians, of the damnable cruelty of London, of the monstrous tyranny of earth and heaven! Regaining his self-possession, and smiling with a sense of his little temperamental weaknesses of the kind, when a second outburst of the storm followed he bent his head with the necessary courtesy of the broken reed, and, so stooping, discovered a friendly red gleam of light which struck along the wet pavement to his feet. This gleam, which came from the red lamp of a chemist's shop at the other side of the square, gave him a singular thrill of comfort, as if the cordial and narcotic drugs on the chemist's shelves, whose effect he had so often proved upon nerves and brain of old, had passed something of their virtue into its red light. It was indeed a cordial to the fancy, making him think of the light of a fire and again

of the gleam of wine. At once the old roustering instinct moved in his heart. Though it was the end of the play, once more let him drink a cup of sturdy defiance to fate. Once more let the god-like wine light him into the heaven of the imagination—the only heaven there is for weak men! With this there came to him the thought of a quiet old-fashioned tavern in Fleet Street, the Three Friars, which knew him well. He half-turned as he thought of it, recoiling from the misery of the night and of the inhospitable garret to which he hastened. Why, indeed, should he go on there? But again he remembered his wretched appearance, and suddenly a new and fantastic whim seized him. In his lodging there still lay the half-worn-out remnant of the dress-suit in which he had been wont to appear on past Saturday evenings, and, forgetting in what a plight of decay it was, he eagerly seized the idea of once more decking himself out in it. Then, in defiance of these last indignities of fate, he would return for yet one more carousal. In this taking he set off homeward with a will, passing quickly enough now along Pall Mall and across the park to his lodging in one of those slums which Providence, by way of joke, ordains in London behind every royal palace.

As became a distressed poet, the lodging to which he presently ascended by a dark and fusty staircase was a crazy garret, which, when he had struck a light, was shown to be quite of the type approved by misfortune. Here the only part of the little furniture which he could claim was a dilapidated leathern trunk, out of which he proceeded to throw in reckless haste a medley of old papers and old clothes, singing to himself various snatches of songs, sad and merry by turns, as he carried on by the light of a candle this strange resurrection. At length he brought to light in this way a crumpled and dusty garment, which proved to be a dress-coat in a lamentable state of decay, and this was followed by other portions of the same attire. Nothing daunted, he shook these free of their dust and tenderly stroked them out to their original shape; and so attiring himself, managed to effect at length in his appearance a burlesque semblance of respectability. As he finished this doubtful act of grace, a scattered bundle of manuscript, that lay at his feet where he had thrown it in emptying the trunk, caught his eye. One slip of paper he particularly noticed, and stooped to pick it up—a rough draft, as

it proved, of some old love-verses. He had been singing the moment before a sufficiently profane drinking-song, and as he conned the verses over he fitted the lines to the same tune and began to troll them out with incongruous effect:

Here I must write, what may never be shown you,
Till all is past—romance and its grace!

Here the candle flickered down, whereupon, thrusting the verses hastily in his pocket, and seizing his wet coat and hat, he beat a retreat, leaving the floor strewn with much litter of the kind.

In spite of his altered appearance there was not much suggestion of festivity in this figure that descended the stair quickly, and came out again into the flattering twilight of the street-lamps. A broken form, with pale face strongly marked by thought and bitter experience, with long dark hair and unkempt thin black beard; it was not so much a man as a shadow—though perhaps a shadow that suggested a great light. However, Julius was full now of his escape from the bitter pressure of actuality and lost sense of his misfortune. As he paced hurriedly back, keeping now to the more frequented thoroughfares, his pulses seemed to expand again in the thought of the solace that awaited him at the Three Friars—the gleam of the heart, the gleam of the wine!

In this mood he kept his way until he reached the Strand, when, in approaching a theatre there of many associations, he noticed a well-appointed carriage and pair with a familiar crest on its panels drawing up a few yards in front of him. Ah, well he knew! There rode the one woman for whom as much as for anything under the sun he had sold his poet's birthright. Silvia! She it was, in truth, who had first lured him into those pleasant by-ways of the world, essaying which he had lost both what they seemed to promise and what his boyish ideals had before her coming shown to him. How well he remembered it all!—her grace and beauty, her kind mysterious eyes, with that quick seductive glance, the sweet red of her lips, the curve of her cheeks, the coil of her dark hair, the fragrance of her whole presence! Ah, heavens! what had he lost?

As the carriage stopped, and he saw the pompous footman dismount to open the carriage door, Julius turned away, thinking of his own dingy coat and hat. But then, remembering that not even the best friend of the other Julius Roy

of ten years ago, not even Silvia herself, could recognize him now—bearded, unkempt, beaten out of shape and dignity by long misfortune and to-night's storm—he was suddenly led to turn back. He reached the carriage just as she stepped out, draped still, as it seemed to him, in the same soft, exquisite way which of old used to so charm his eyes. At this glimpse of the Paradise of old, seen from the Inferno to which he had fallen, he pulled his hat further over his brows, and then, moved by some unaccountable impulse, thrust out involuntarily a trembling hand. She saw—quick as ever to see, darting the old inscrutable glance of her dark eyes toward him, and seeming in that glance to read all. So, hardly pausing, swift as thought, she drew a crimson flower from the recesses of the soft silken shawl that draped her bosom, and, dropping it in his outstretched hand, was gone. There he still stood, overwhelmed, trembling at this last coincidence of fate; and then, looking at the flower in his hand, he rallied himself and passed on.

As he went it seemed to him that a thrill of life passed into his chilled veins from the rare and perfect blossom that he carried. Ere he had gone far the stimulus of the whole episode had so wrought upon him that he quite forgot his surroundings and began to sing aloud on his way, so as to amuse not a little the passers in the street. His voice had still something of its youthful freshness left, however, and sounded pleasantly enough above the Saturday night's noises, so that an unfortunate girl, against whom he brushed in his preoccupation, half-changed with startling effect the unwomanly oath that was springing to her lips for the blessing of the Virgin Mary—"The Holy Virgin save your black soul this very night!"

But this again recalled him to a sense of his surroundings. He stopped singing, and looking back at the utterer of such profane benedictions, returned a step, and gave her what small money he had had from the bookseller earlier in the evening. A few moments more and he had reached the retired court in Fleet Street which leads to the Three Friars.

The host of the Three Friars was of a comfortable figure—one to stoutly maintain the standard of physical resistance against the forces that war with mankind; one to drive the pains of disease and the chills of death to a distance by his robustious, well-clad proportions. He happened this evening

to have come to the door to look out at the storm as Julius reached the entrance to the court and paused under its narrow archway to shake off the wet and make himself look as reputable as might be. So advancing, our would-be roysterer caught sight of this noble witness to the good cheer within, as a ship's captain catches sight of a friendly beacon in a mirk night at sea. Julius saluted him, indeed, with a certain precipitancy, as if he and the Three Friars and all hope of salvation with them might vanish if word were not quickly spoken. And in truth any inn-keeper but this might well have regarded such a guest with suspicion—meanly dressed under the weather, as, in spite of his little precautions, Julius must still seem. But the master of the Three Friars had not kept open house, so to speak, in the very heart of Bohemia for thirty years or more, without becoming tolerant of the outward guises of the curious people who inhabit there. Roy, moreover, in spite of his sins, still bore the marks of grace; the native distinction of the gentleman was not all gone. To-night, too, he carried the flower that Silvia had given him—so obviously a flower of great price that it might well serve as a talisman to win him any and all opportunity. At any rate, either the flower or some former recollection of Roy's features took effect, if anything more were needed than the fact that here was a traveller seeking shelter from the storm; and the master of the house returned the greeting with unction.

“Sir, it's not a night for a dog to be abroad! You will find a good fire within!”

It sounded comfortably in Roy's ears, and sent him in, with already a sense of restoration, to the long, low room, with the gleam from its antique fire-place striking along the sanded floor and illumining ruddily the tables where so many famous vagabonds had feasted since Goldsmith first drank there a cup to fortune. Julius entered, looking with a keen relish round the familiar small scenery of the room—bench and table and fireside, and dingy walls adorned with old prints and pewter tankards, and even an old leathern bottle or two. He thought of the storm without, and chose with some deliberation of perfect comfort a seat within the near range of the fire. There he set himself to consider, with epicurean satisfaction, the resources of larder and cellar, which from old experience he knew to be choicely stocked. It was true he had no money, but it was not the first time that he had sipped

to-night on the credit of to-morrow. So, having laid aside his wet coat and hat and procured a preliminary draught of the old ale for which the Three Friars was famous, wherewith to further rally his faint pulses, he settled himself comfortably in his corner. Sitting there, as the perfume of the flower in his hand filled him with a hundred old associations, he laid it tenderly before him on the white cloth which old David, the waiter, had spread for his supper.

It was a wonderful flower, perfect in form and color, crimson at heart, fading almost to a sea-shell's pink at the end of its petals, somewhat as the flush had been wont to come and fade away of old on the cheeks of her whose last gift it was. But the fragrance was more wonderful still, reminding him of he knew not what—a faint mingling of heliotrope and wet violets and other scents that she had been used to love. As he looked into its petals, the spell of the romance that had then so filled his life with fragrance took more and more hold upon him. Snatches of the rhymes even, rhymes written to her, most of which had long gone the way of all such amorist's conceits, began to run in his head. One especially, a piece written to her when the end had come, kept recurring fragmentarily, until he remembered that it was the piece rescued from the litter of his trunk an hour ago. He drew the paper out of his pocket forthwith, and conned it through with the old feeling with which it had been written still strong upon him.

Here I must write what may never be shown you,
 Till all is past—romance and its grace—
 And but the knowing how I could have known you,
 Shall call up love's torch-light too late in your face.

Too late! my dear lady of rhymesters!

Ah, starry-eyed, shall this sorrowful passion
 But burn on out when love is so deep?
 Why should I try then to sing poet-fashion?
 Far better be silent, far better asleep!

Asleep, if to dream—no Hamlet's misgiving
 Shall still make me fear it! Ah, only to dream
 That we far away in some dreamland are living
 And your eyes are alight there, the stars that they seem.

The reverie to which these lines led was broken by the re-appearance of David with supper. But now that it had come, the magnificent intentions of the feaster palled upon his starved palate. He was barely able to taste the unctuous viands,

and was glad to turn instead, with that finer appreciation which is of the imagination rather than the appetite, to the generous quality of the old wine which David had been careful to bring at the right moment. Afterward, when the table was cleared, and only the bottle in its basket, and the last glass of the red wine that gleamed so pleasantly in the firelight remained, when again the past began to creep stealthily upon the present in his fancy, his brain turned gradually drowsy. When the good inn-keeper presently entered the room, feeling dull in the lack of his usual customers on this dreadful night, and thinking to pass a jovial word or two with his solitary guest, he saw that our frail roysterer had fallen asleep, his head sunk in his folded arms upon the table, while one hand, extended slightly, held out the crimson flower as if offering an alms to oblivion.

But the oblivion was hardly of the kind that the master of the Three Friars was likely to imagine.

It seemed to Julius, half-consciously giving himself up to the sensuous fumes of sleep, that after a while some one came to his side and touched him on his elbow. This, it seems natural enough to find, was the pompous footman who had made part of the little comedy of the carriage at the theatre-door. And now, behold! he bore in his hand a flower which he gave to Julius with an officious air of mystery, and then was gone again. Well might Julius recognize the flower and follow! In a moment he had passed out by some unusual exit, and felt the chill night air on his cheeks, as he perceived a stately carriage with two horses drawn up here in a narrow street that was like no street, surely, ever known in London. From the carriage, as the footman opened the door for him, Julius saw a welcoming hand stretched out to him, and caught the glance of well-known eyes, and the gleam of soft silk and lace, and a sudden fragrance—the same fragrance still of the mysterious flower. It did not need the voice, which said simply “Julius” in the well-known way, half of remonstrance, half of raillery, to tell who this might be. Words failed him in reply as he entered the carriage, and sank back on the seat at her side, while there succeeded the sensation of being whirled rapidly through the streets of a dark and unknown city. More than once he wished to speak to his companion during this strange ride, but he could not summon up words, and could only glance at her from time to time with a sense as

of heaven entered. She, too, was silent, she whose wit was so restless of old; and he saw that her cheeks were paler, and the mysterious eyes still more mysterious and more sad than they used to be.

When the carriage stopped Julius found, as they dismounted, that they were at the foot of a wide flight of steps leading to a spacious colonnade. Ascending here, his companion leaning lightly upon his arm, when they had heard the carriage rapidly driven away, and had reached the marble terrace above, she made him turn around to discover an open plain far below, with the dim line of streets and houses faintly displayed that told of some great city there, while beyond all was a space of sea. But they turned now along the colonnade to find a lofty doorway which must be, he knew, the door of a theatre, though the building was like no theatre that ever was, since the days when the Greeks first curtained off the open air with marble. A sense of desertion hung about the empty colonnade and the great doorway, and when Julius knocked at its immense panels the echoes repeated themselves in a way that singularly startled the silence. On the door's opening, it showed only an apparent darkness within, and the half-discerned shape of some departing usher. But they found it light enough to make their way up a wide staircase and along a circular corridor, and so through a little doorway into a balcony which overhung the auditorium of an immense theatre. In the whole interior there was only the faintest light, and as Julius hastened to place a chair for his companion, the half-darkness and the air of desertion made him feel as once long ago when, a child, he had been shut into a church one evening at dusk with a playmate, a little girl for whom he had a childish romance, when love and fear had held a doubtful struggle in his mind. So Silvia, too, when he was about to take a seat somewhat distant, stretched out her hand as that little companion of old had done, and drew him to a chair at her side. Then she motioned toward the stage, and he turned to look.

There, too, all was gloom; but as the heavy curtain now rolled up, a solitary figure could be seen in the foreground enveloped in a long dark cloak, from which it proceeded to disrobe itself. At this Julius was filled with an utter astonishment, for dimly seen as all was, he recognized at a glance, under the guise of a young man in a fantastic and somewhat

funereal Elizabethan costume, the form, the familiar attitude, the gesture of the young Julius Roy of other days, who was to fire London and the whole world with his song. The scene in which his counterfeit presentment thus appeared was laid before a wide and lofty gateway whose massive portals were closed, and to these he advanced as if to enter. With this, the sense of an unknown fate, whose secret the gates kept, so grew upon Julius where he sat watching his stage-shadow, that he forgot he was not alone, and stepping from his seat sank on his knees at the balustrade and gazed down with intense curiosity on the stage below.

In the phantasmagoria that ensued, it would need the lost pen of Roy himself to tell all that passed, dimly set forth, dimly seen, as in some ballet of shadows. In this ghostly play the scene was always the same at the dark gateway, and the chief actor was always the phantom of Julius Roy. This shadowy protagonist returned again and again in different disguises to seek entrance at the gates, but always in vain! Meanwhile dim troops of other figures, types of comedy and tragedy fantastically mingled, passed continually to and fro. At last, returning in yet another, a sorry old man's disguise, the baffled hero made a last attempt to force his way in, and failing, sank back, reeled and fell to the ground, lying there a darker blot upon the stage before the dark gates.

Then, greatly disturbed at this ominous conclusion, Julius all at once remembered Silvia, and how in his absorption in the play he had neglected her. But she was no longer in her place, and looking hastily around, he saw that the door leading from the balcony was open. At once he hurried through it into the corridor, while an excitement that he could not at all control seized his pulses; for this untimely disappearance ten times enhanced the fateful impression of the play. Traversing the corridor rapidly, he came at its end to a steep and narrow staircase, and plunging down this incontinently in his haste, so burst open a little door at its feet—to find himself, much to his confusion, upon the stage of the theatre itself. Here pausing, as he looked round at its empty stretch of dusty boards, and at the familiar stacks of scenery lying in disorder at the wings, it was a moment before he noticed that the gateway, before which the late presentment of his ill-fated other self had taken place, was still standing in the background, though the prostrate figure was gone. Crossing

to it, he was reminded as he went of the time when certain plays of his writing, all variations of the same theme, were being much rehearsed on just such a stage as this—and, alas! little performed afterward. On reaching the gate he was not now surprised to find that its apparent adamantine strength was only lath and canvas; but it did not yield nevertheless when he tried to open it, and he was nervously debating what to do next in pursuit of his lost companion, when a light footstep within made his pulses leap. He at once set to knocking eagerly; and in a moment the gate was thrown open and disclosed that the footstep was no other than hers. It was Silvia, indeed, who stood there, smiling—smiling a little reproachfully, he thought. Then, with one of her mysterious glances, whose meaning he had studied too well of old not to understand to-night their every look, she bade him follow her as she turned, throwing her shawl lightly over her head, and led the way and what was unexpected—the stage beyond the gates was transformed by this into a small court-yard open to the sky, where the night wind was fresh and even fragrant after the dusty odors of the stage; and the court-yard in turn conveyed itself into the outer colonnade of the theatre, whence Julius could see again, far below, the seaward plain and its city beneath the stars. It was to this city evidently that she was leading him, for she did not pause, but moved on toward its distant streets in silence. The dark outline of her form a little before him, as she hastened on, was what he chiefly cared to notice, as he followed well content through dark and endlessly descending ways, that brought them at last in the centre of the city, to a house of palatial effect in a great square. Here she paused a moment, and then, approaching its noble portico, turned beneath it with a gesture as of invitation and welcome to him. As Julius approached she softly forced the door without difficulty, and so held it a moment for him to enter.

And now the end was come. In the entrance hall there hung a small lamp, and this Silvia detached from its chain, and with it lighted the way up the wide staircase of the house. This brought them in turn to a noble chamber, which seemed to be hospitably prepared for noble guests, if only by the superb vase of flowers standing in its centre. These flowers, as Julius saw when she held up the lamp and proceeded to attach it to the chain hanging from above, were of

a crimson hue; and as their fragrance reached him a hundred things were made clear. For, as he turned now to take Silvia in his arms, he saw how on her breast one of these flowers added to her beauty its crimson circlet and exquisite fragrance, where it lay there half-hidden amid the white lace which bordered her silken bodice.

It was thus, on this winter's Saturday night which ended a forgotten poet's career, that the half-shaped swan-song in his tired brain changed its tune and became an Epithalamium.

* * * * *

Saturday night indeed was about over.

It was on the stroke of twelve.

But still the one guest at the Three Friars sat there asleep, his head sunk in his arms upon the table, the crimson flower in his outstretched hand.

Said now mine host, who grew somewhat concerned at this unseasonable stay.

"David, wake up my poor gentleman there! Twelve o'clock, Sunday morning, it's high time he went home! Tell him the week's out. Lord help the man, there are more Saturday nights to come!"

But they failed to make the belated roysterer hear.

They could not wake him, then nor afterward.

It was the last dream of Julius Roy

A COMPLICATED CASE *

I have the honor to present to you, first, Mon. Florentin Barloch, professor of mathematics, *École Centrale*.

Second, Mme. Florentin Barloch, better half of the mathematician Mon. Florentin Barloch.

Two conjoints, faithful, honorable, and loyal.

So faithful and loyal that they were unable to arrive at living comfortably together and were suing for divorce.

* * * * *

It was nearing evening.

The professor entered his house and sought his wife.

He found her—

In the act of being clasped by the arm of another.

“Death and perdition!” thundered the faithful, honorable, and loyal Barloch. And seizing his revolver he made ready to kill the culprits and to blow out, immediately afterward, his own brains, as in similar cases the conveniences exact.

But the culprits rebelled.

“Stop!” they clamored simultaneously.

“Wherefore stop?” demanded Barloch.

“The divorce is granted!”

“You think so?” queried the husband, becoming thoughtful.

“Sure of it!” responded they.

“Bah. . . . But in that case—yes, it is only right . . . monsieur,” pursued the husband, politely bowing, “madame, my wife that was, I beg your pardon! I regret to have troubled you! . . .”

And he went out, confounding himself with excuses.

* * * * *

Some minutes later, however, Florentin Barloch had a suspicion. As he never trifled with a point of honor, he made inquiry.

Alack-a-day! the result was deplorable. Barloch saw himself forced to return and throw himself upon his wife and his wife’s lover.

“What do you wish, monsieur?” demanded they, seeing him re-enter.

“To avenge my honor. You have dishonored me!”

“Impossible!”

* “La Vie Moderne”: E. C. Waggener: For Short Stories.

"It is so, I tell you!"

"But—the divorce?"

"Was pronounced at 3:50 o'clock this P.M., yes. But your lover embraced you at 3:45 P.M. That clock on the mantel there and the one on the corner both marked 3:46 o'clock as I climbed the stairs. You see, then, that I am dishonored. Which was to be demonstrated!" roared the professor of mathematics, in tragic tones.

And again he prepared himself to avenge his honor.

* * * * *

But once more the culprits started.

"Stop! stop!" they cried.

"And why?"

"The clocks are slow!"

"You think so?"

"Yes, ten minutes. Stay, we'll prove it."

And proved it was, effectively.

"In short, since thus it is," pursued the resigned husband, "I renew my excuses . . . monsieur! madame! . . ."

And he withdrew, saluting to the ground.

* * * * *

But one is not a professor of exact sciences for nothing. Florentin Barloch had a new suspicion.

Then he betook himself to the tribunal where the divorce had been granted, and thence to the clockmaker's. It was many leagues distant from his house, that tribunal, in the direction of the east.

Barloch returned to his home his hair bristling on his skull.

"Shuffle and equivocate longer thou shalt not!" exclaimed he, making straight for the accused, whom he had left under surveillance in his absence. "Once for all, I tell you you have deceived me. Rascals!"

"Truly?"

"It is indisputable. *The clock of the tribunal was slow!*"

"How much?"

"Six minutes and a half! Then——"

"Well, well—then?"

"Follow carefully my reasoning. . . . Then, I say, allowing the clock on the mantel there and on the corner the admitted hour, 3:45, plus 10 minutes slowness, equals 3 o'clock and 55 minutes, the exact hour at which was given the embrace with which I reproach you. Is it not so?"

"Yes," assented the others, dumfounded and mixed.

"Very well, then. Allowing for the clock of the tribunal below yonder as the hour of the divorce's granting, 3 o'clock and 50 minutes, plus 6 and one-half minute's slowness, we have 3 o'clock, 56 minutes and 30 seconds as the true hour of the decision's rendering. Then——"

"Well?"

"You dishonored me one minute and thirty seconds *before the decree was announced.*"

"Horrible! Horrible!" cried the two accused, preparing to give up the ghost, while Florentin seized anew his avenging revolver.

* * * * *

But at the instant he was going to fire Mme. Barloch uttered a cry.

"A word! one word!" implored she.

"Say it, madame!"

"The hour here is not the same as that of the tribunal. It is necessarily some minutes slower."

"Why?"

"Because we are west, of course."

"It is true."

"Calculate that slowness."

And the three people, wife, husband, and lover, with fluttering hearts and hands, seized a geographical map, traced the longitude of the tribunal and the longitude of the house, calculated the difference as affecting the time, and found it by the card to be one minute and a half.

All three of them uttered a cry of dismay.

It was the husband, more and more perplexed, that first recovered himself.

"One minute and a half's difference," said he; "then the judgment and the embrace were given at one and the same time! Gods and goddesses! What a situation!"

And leaning their brows upon their hands, all three of them began to meditate upon their grave and complicated case.

* * * * *

All at once the husband raised his contracted features.

The two culprits, with despairing mien, in turn raised theirs.

"How much time," demanded Barloch sternly, "did that embrace consume?"

"Hum-m! Well, put it at three minutes!"

“Three minutes!” growled the professor of mathematics in a ferocious voice. “What can be clearer? One minute and a half lawful, one minute and a half unlawful, leaving out of consideration the moments expended in suing for the favor, for it is not conceivable, madame, that you granted a hug without *some* expostulation.

“Three whole minutes, then, covering the time consumed and one minute and a half, the difference between the lawful and unlawful period, divided by two constitutes the dishonor.

“I am then one-half dishonored! I shall be forced to kill you one-half and to half blow out my brains immediately.”

“Oh, shame! oh, sorrow! Half kill us, half blow out your brains!” clamored the half culprits frantically.

And their teeth began to rattle in their heads like castanets.

“Precisely. Just reflect upon it!” resumed the husband, whose eyes were popping from his head with a strange expression. “I shall be forced to cut your necks just half in two, to divide you longitudinally with impartial exactness, to relieve you of an arm, a leg, an ear, an eye, the half of the mouth, the nose, the brow; half of the trunk, the stomach and bowels; or failing that, to separate you laterally, head from the heels, legs from the torso, heart from the—Oh! the drudgery, the drudgery of it!” cried he suddenly, his face convulsed and a yell like the yelp of a puzzled dog breaking shrilly from his lips, “the drudgery of it all!”

“Oh! Oh!” responded the others, with answering cries to his frenzied howl, “the drudgery of it all for 90 seconds of dishonor!”

The struggle between matter, morals, and mathematics lasted all night long. It was the same when morning dawned.

Summoned by the servants the police came; summoned by the police the doctors ran; summoned by the doctors the scientists flocked from far and wide.

Groaning, crying, computing, deducting, and comparing, without a break the struggle went on.

* * * * *

It goes on still behind the walls and iron bars of the Bicêtre Asylum, where still the wife, the lover, and the husband work honorably, and loyally upon their terrible and unsolvable case.

ETCHINGS: "DREEING HER WEIRD"*

The old house stood, as gloomy as the poplars that encircled it—gaunt witches in a magic ring.

It had been the shell of generations of her ancestors.

She was beautiful, like the wide-eyed, white-bosomed ladies who smiled from the mildewed walls. They had fluttered, jewelled and brocaded butterflies, long ago; but Poverty was *her* step-mother and Solitude her companion.

In winter she read books yellow with age, like the faded roses between their pages. She always sat alone at her window, her thoughts in the bodiless Past, as aërial as the smoke fading against the cold, blue sky.

She loved best of all the spring nights when the starlight brought musings faint as perfume to her heart.

But with her thirtieth spring she awoke, and her pale, un-kissed lips cried out, in the words of the book she had just read, "I myself am my own Heaven and my own Hell. This room and my thoughts are my own prison cell. I will be loved and escape from myself." But an inner voice answered, "You will return, here, to your doom."

She went forth into the world and was loved. Her body was worshipped for its beauty. She lived in material sensations and men said, "She is an animal with neither heart nor soul." No thought came to her in the joy of the moment, save sometimes one of triumph at having escaped the horror of the old life. But with age came loss of health and beauty and power, and one day they brought her back, ill, to the old home. She awoke from the dreamy peace of convalescence to the pitiless glare of a winter noonday in her own room, where nothing had changed.

Then she was aware of a wraith-like form that moved about. Sometimes it sighed and walked around wearily, a gray Shadow in the chilly sunlight. The woman in the bed cried: "I have seen you before. Come here that I may know you."

The Shadow drew near, so that their faces met as It said: "I have been long waiting for you here. You are dead."

They gazed deep into each other's eyes.

And the Shadow entered the heart of the woman for she saw that her Hell was—her own lost Self.

* Anna Vernon Dorsey: For Short Stories.

AN EXPERIMENT IN HYPNOTISM *

Canon Cruthall had always been a sceptic on the subject of mesmerism; and when a new development of that science, under the name of hypnotism, came under public notice, he regarded it with equal incredulity. The fact was that the canon was an exceptionally strong-minded, matter-of-fact person, over whom no mesmerist had ever been able to exercise the smallest influence. And he was led by this circumstance to jump at the unreasonable conclusion that an effect which could not be worked upon himself could not, by fair means, be worked upon other people either. Of course, he admitted that there were certain weak-minded beings, out of whose imbecility the so-called mesmerists manage to make good capital. But he did not believe that any man of average intelligence and determination could be induced so much as to lift his little finger merely because some one else willed that he should.

The canon did not keep those opinions to himself, or even confine them to private conversation. On the contrary, he attacked hypnotism vigorously in the columns of a leading monthly magazine, and entered into a spirited controversy in the *Times* with an eminent professor of the science. This brought his name before the public and won him considerable notability. Indeed, "Have you read Canon Cruthall's letters on hypnotism?" became quite a stock conversational opening at dinner parties and dances.

But it was not for the purpose of getting himself talked about that the worthy divine had entered the lists against the promoters of the fashionable science. He acted purely from conscientious motives. For believing, as he did, that there was some trickery or collusion at the bottom of all successful hypnotic experiments, he thought it his duty to publicly denounce the imposture. And he registered a vow that, should fortune ever give him the opportunity of exposing any of these hypnotic humbugs, he would eagerly embrace it. While this determination was still strong upon him, he went down into the country on a visit to his friend Lady Joyce, who had got together a large number of people at her house in Clay-shire. Among them, as luck would have it, was a young

* London Truth.

barrister, Jack Perkins—an ardent advocate of hypnotism, and himself a hypnotist of no slight capacity. His name, indeed, was not yet known to the general public, but in private circles he had acquired a great reputation by his successful experiments.

The first night, at dinner, after the ladies had withdrawn, one of the gentlemen started the subject of hypnotism, and Jack Perkins took the opportunity of relating some wonderful experiences in that line. Most of his hearers expressed considerable interest in his tales, but the canon sat silent, with an incredulous smile upon his face. This Perkins observed, and turning to him said:

“You seem sceptical on the subject, Canon Cruthall. At least, I know you are, for I have read your letters in the *Times*.”

“I certainly am,” answered the canon.

“But tell me, now, why do you not believe in it?” questioned Perkins.

“Because,” replied the canon, “that mysterious influence of mind over mind which the science—so called—presupposes has yet to be satisfactorily established. I know that all the mesmerists and hypnotists who have tried their hands upon me have failed utterly. And I, therefore, believe as I myself have experienced.”

Perkins half-closed his eyes, and regarded him steadily for some seconds. Then he said:

“I can see you would be a difficult subject. But look here, if some one—myself, for instance—were to hypnotize you into doing something against your will, would you believe in the science then?”

“Of course, I should,” was the reply. “But the condition is never likely to be fulfilled. Come, I challenge you to try your most potent spells upon me!”

Perkins stroked his chin and looked reflective.

“You must give me time to think over it,” he answered. “And I promise that in the course of a day or two, I will try an experiment upon you.”

“Very well,” rejoined the canon. “When you’re ready, I am.”

“You must let us all witness the experiment, Perkins,” struck in the host.

“By all means,” answered Perkins. “And I am prepared to stake my reputation as a hypnotist on the result of it.”

"Don't be rash," observed the canon, with a confident smile. "For I assure you you are very unlikely to succeed."

"We shall see," returned Perkins quietly.

Soon afterward the gentlemen joined the ladies, and nothing further was said upon the subject that night.

Next morning, as the canon was out by himself in the garden—he was an early riser, and always took a stroll before breakfast—he met a man, looking like a servant, who touched his hat respectfully, and stopped, as if wishing to accost him.

"Well, my man, what is it?" inquired the canon, with benign condescension.

"I beg pardon, sir," began the man, in an apologetic tone, "but I thought I'd just take the liberty of speaking to you. Do you know who I am, sir?"

"Can't say that I do," replied the canon, "unless you are one of the footmen."

"I'm Mr. Perkins's valet, sir," was the answer. "But I came into the dining-room after dinner last night to help hand the coffee, and I heard some of that conversation between you and him about hypnotizing."

"Yes, yes," put in the canon encouragingly. "What of it?"

"Why, sir," went on the man, lowering his voice to a confidential pitch, "he knows, as I know, that this here hypnotism is nothing but humbug. And I calls it downright wicked of him to go on deceiving folks by it, as he does."

"You are aware, then," demanded the canon, with evident interest, "that he has recourse to trickery in carrying out his experiments?"

"I am, sir," was the emphatic reply. "And I am also aware that he and his friend, Mr. Jolliffe—you know who I mean, sir?" (the canon nodded) "are hatching a plot, sir, by which they mean to circumvent you, and make you appear to have been hypnotized."

"How will they manage that, I wonder?" rejoined the canon, rather scornfully.

"I cannot tell you, sir," the man replied, "because I have not yet learned the details myself; but I know that my master and Mr. Jolliffe are going to discuss their plans to-night in my master's bedroom, and I thought that you might, perhaps, wish to overhear their conversation."

"That would be rather a difficult matter, would it not?" asked the canon.

"Why, no, sir," the man answered, looking carefully round him and dropping his voice to a yet lower pitch, "I don't think it would. In fact, I could easily put you in the way of doing so. There's a place in my master's room, sir—a sort of old wardrobe—where you could remain concealed with perfect safety, and from which you could not fail to catch every word that was said. Now, if I was to place you there, sir, before master came up-stairs——"

"No, no," interposed the canon with dignity. "I really could not stoop to that, my man."

The valet looked disappointed—even rather hurt.

"Well, sir," he rejoined, "of course you know what's right much better than I do. At the same time, I should have thought that, as my master and his friend were playing such a mean trick upon you, it was quite fair for you to play a counter-trick upon them. However, as I said before, you know what's right, and I shouldn't, of course, presume to try and persuade you."

With that he turned on his heel and began to move away.

"Stay," cried the canon quickly. It had occurred to him, while the man was speaking, that this opportunity of showing up the humbug of hypnotism was not, after all, one to be lightly thrown away. "Perhaps I was hasty in my reply. I should like time to think over what you have told me."

"Very good, sir," answered the other, turning round and touching his hat. "When will you let me know your decision?"

"If you will come to my room just before dinner this evening, I will do so then," replied the canon, "and—and—" (drawing a sovereign from his waistcoat pocket, and pressing it into the valet's far from unwilling hand), "I'm much obliged to you for your information."

The fellow received the gratuity with profuse thanks and a well-satisfied smirk. Then, uttering a polite "good-morning, sir," he walked away, and left the canon to continue his constitutional alone.

The greater part of that day the worthy divine spent in trying to decide how to act. On the one hand, the prospect of being in a position to baffle Perkins's little dodge and to show up the trickeries of hypnotism was excessively tempting; on the other, the meanness of such eavesdropping and the risk of being found out in it was decidedly repelling.

Urged by these conflicting considerations, the canon found it so hard to make up his mind that at five o'clock in the afternoon he was still undecided. But when the scales are poised even, the merest trifle will incline the balance to one side. And that trifle, in the present instance, took the form of a few casual remarks made in the drawing-room at tea.

"I say, Perkins," Sir Alaric chanced to observe, "have you determined how to hypnotize the canon yet?"

"I think so," Perkins replied, with a smile of easy confidence. "Before this time to-morrow, I shall make the experiment; and, what is more, I feel sure I shall succeed."

"Upon my word, you almost make me tremble," said the canon, assuming a careless, jocular tone. But inwardly he thought to himself, "The boastful humbug! I will go to his room to-night and overhear his little plot, and then we'll see what a fool we shall make him look when he tries his tricks on me to-morrow."

So when, shortly before dinner, Jack Perkins's valet came to the canon's room, the latter said decidedly: "I have made up my mind, my man, to follow out your suggestion, and go to Mr. Perkins's bedroom this evening to overhear his conspiracy against me, provided you can assure me that what you have told me is true, and that there is no appreciable risk of discovery involved."

"I can assure you of both, sir," answered the man, emphatically. "The wardrobe of which I told you is an unused one, and nobody ever goes near it. Then you see, sir, as to getting away again, you're merely to wait till Mr. Perkins is in bed and asleep, and then you can slip out and back to your own room as easy as anything."

"Very well," said the canon, who had now lost sight of every other consideration in his eager desire to floor Perkins, and to gain a strong handle against hypnotism. "I will come up early to bed to-night. Do you be here about eleven o'clock, and then you can conduct me to your master's room. Mind, if all turns out right, I will make it well worth your while."

"Thank you, sir," returned the valet. "I'll not fail to be in waiting for you here at eleven o'clock."

That evening seemed to Canon Cruthall to drag terribly; but at length eleven o'clock came, and he managed, on the plea of a headache, to escape up-stairs from the smoking-room.

The valet had not omitted to keep the appointment, and was ready for him.

"You had better take off your shoes, sir," he said in a low voice, "as I have done; for then we shall be able to move more quietly."

The canon immediately kicked off his pumps and stood in his stocking-feet.

"Now," continued the other, "we had better go to Mr. Perkins's room at once, as there is no saying how soon he may come up-stairs. Begging your pardon, sir, it will be safer not to bring a candle. There is less chance of our being seen if we go in the dark."

"True," the canon answered, setting his candlestick down on the table. "Lead the way, then, and I will follow."

Without speaking another word the man conducted him along the dimly-lighted passage, up one flight of stairs and into a bedroom at the top of them.

"Here," he whispered, drawing back a large curtain in one corner of the room, "is the place of concealment. Just step behind this and I'll arrange it all right on the outside."

Canon Cruthall did as requested. It was not exactly a wardrobe, but a sort of recess, with pegs at the back for hanging clothes upon and a large curtain in front.

"Now, sir," said the valet in a low voice, when he had drawn the curtain across again and carefully arranged its folds from the outside, "just you stop quiet inside there, sir, and you'll be as safe as a church. I must not remain here longer now, for my master may come up at any moment."

Thereupon he quietly withdrew, leaving the canon ensconced behind the curtain. The latter peered cautiously out. By the dim light, which struggled in from the landing through the half-closed door, he could just see the outlines of the larger pieces of furniture and nothing else. To tell the truth, now he was there, he did not feel particularly comfortable. What a very sorry figure he should cut, if by any chance Perkins were to find him behind that curtain.

Perhaps it would be wiser after all (his nervousness prompted him) to slip out quietly now, and make his escape before Perkins came up. It would be an ignominious retreat, certainly; but was not the present case one in which discretion was likely to prove the better part of valor?

He had fully made up his mind to carry out this resolve—

and had, indeed, half-emerged from behind the curtain—when he heard a step on the landing. With nervous haste he darted back into his place of concealment, just before the door was pushed open, and somebody entered the room with a light. For some minutes the canon stood there as quiet as a mouse, scarcely daring to breathe; but when he had sufficiently recovered from his fright, he ventured, though with extreme caution, to peer round the edge of the curtain. As he did so, he saw, standing in front of the dressing-table, not Perkins, not Jolliffe—nor, indeed, any male being whatever—but a handsome, smartly-dressed young woman, in whom he immediately recognized his hostess's attractive maid.

A thrill of intense surprise, mingled with decided uneasiness, shot through him when his eyes fell upon her. What did her presence here mean? Was it the case that, in trying to ferret out one scandal about Perkins, he had accidentally happened upon another? Alas! no such luck. One glance around the apartment showed him how erroneous was the supposition. For not only was there a total lack of that luxurious furniture with which Lady Joyce always indulged her guests, but also, from the numerous articles of feminine toilet and apparel which were scattered about, the chamber was evidently a woman's. Yes; the truth was too plain. He had been put—whether by accident or design—not into Perkins's room, but into—the lady's maid's.

As this conviction forced itself upon him, it sent a cold shock of horror to the canon's heart, and brought out great drops of sweat all over his brow. What an awful predicament! That he, a respectable married man and a dignitary of the church, should be lying concealed in a servant girl's bedroom! If she were only old, or ugly, or both, it would not be quite so bad, for then people might believe the true explanation of his presence; but as it was, if he were discovered there, they would put the very worst construction on the matter. What was he to do? Try to effect his escape noiselessly when her back was turned, or boldly emerge from his hiding-place, confess the truth to her, and pledge her to secrecy? The first of these courses was hardly possible; while if he attempted the second she would probably scream out and bring up the whole house before he had time to explain himself. No! Only one line of action was feasible—namely, to remain quiet in his place of concealment, and effect his

escape when she had gone to sleep. It was, indeed, possible that she might not retire to rest just yet, but might go downstairs again to her mistress's room. How devoutly he prayed she might!

But that fond hope was soon crushed by the young woman's carefully locking the door, sitting down on the bed, and proceeding to take off her boots. She then walked to the dressing-table, and, after surveying herself in the glass, began leisurely to divest herself of her frock. When next the canon peered round the curtain he saw her standing before the glass and letting down her hair, in a *déshabillé* costume of white bodice and petticoat.

"Good gracious!" he groaned inwardly, mopping the cold perspiration from his forehead. "The longer I stay here, the more will appearances condemn me if I am discovered. And yet I can do nothing else. By heavens! if I once get safely out of this hobble, I'll never, never play the spy again!"

After letting down her hair about her shoulders, the maid next proceeded to brush it. What an age she seemed over the process! The canon could, of course, hear every stroke of the brush distinctly, and he thought that she would never have done.

"Good Lord!" he soliloquized ruefully, "if she takes all this time over each step of her toilet, I shan't get a chance of escaping before daybreak!"

At the end of what seemed to him a very long interval he again ventured to peep round the curtain, hoping that he might see the maid just getting into bed. But nothing of the sort met his eye. She had not advanced further in the work of disrobing, and was still admiring herself in the glass.

"Deuce take it!" muttered the canon under his breath. "How frightfully women dawdle over their undressing; I had always heard so, but never realized it entirely until to-night."

While he was yet watching her, she picked up from the bed the dress which she had taken off, and began to move with it straight toward his corner of the room. An overwhelming sense of horror, far worse than any that had gone before, suddenly seized upon the luckless canon. She was going to hang that dress up in the very recess where he was concealed!

The conviction was but too well founded. A moment later the curtain had been drawn aside, and the canon stood

exposed to view. With a cry of terror at the sight of him, the maid dropped her dress to the floor and started back; while, on his part, the canon was too much paralyzed by dismay, for the moment, either to speak or move. Before he could recover himself or attempt to explain his presence, the girl had rushed to the door, unlocked it, and, flinging it open, had begun to scream for help at the top of her voice.

The canon's desperation can hardly be conceived—certainly not described. He was positively frantic. He tried to make his escape from the room, but the girl, who was standing in the doorway, turned upon him and struck at him when he approached her.

"Get back—get back, you gray-haired monster!" she cried. "You shall not escape—no! They shall all see your wicked villany! Come to insult and—and—wrong a poor servant girl! And you a clergyman. Shame on you, you immoral old wretch!"

She had scarcely finished this wild speech, interspersed with frequent sobs, before the steps of several people were heard hurrying up the stairs, and in another minute most of the gentlemen in the house and not a few of the servants had congregated round the door of the maid's room. The sight of the girl, standing there half-undressed, with dishevelled hair and flushed cheeks, and of the canon inside her chamber in his stocking-feet, seemed to tell the story pretty plainly. And when the unfortunate man advanced toward Sir Alaric, who was foremost on the scene, and began to protest his innocence, his host sternly cut him short:

"Thank you, Canon Cruthall," he said sarcastically. "We need not trouble you for an explanation. The truth of this pretty little business is patent upon the face of it."

"But I assure you—I assure you, upon my most solemn word of honor," pleaded the luckless canon, ready to sink through the floor with shame and mortification, "that—that—"

"Pardon me, canon," interposed Jack Perkins, suddenly stepping forward, "but I see that you are confused and overcome; and I do not wonder. Let me undertake your explanation for you. Canon Cruthall wishes to assure you, gentlemen, that to within five minutes ago he did not know where he was or what he was doing. I am ready to indorse the truth of the statement. For" (pulling out his watch) "it is now barely five minutes after twelve, and I willed that

the hypnotic spell which I have exercised over him should last exactly till midnight."

Loud exclamations of surprise broke from his hearers' lips at these words, and Sir Alaric exclaimed:

"Is this the experiment you promised us, then, Perkins?"

"Yes," replied Perkins quietly. "I willed that the canon should pass an hour concealed in the lady's maid's bedroom. I must beg your pardon, Clara" (addressing the maid), "for the fright my experiment has caused you; and yours also, canon, for having placed you in such an equivocal position. But I felt that to put the genuineness of the experiment beyond dispute, I must influence you to do something which you would have died rather than have done voluntarily. I have no wish to crow over a vanquished opponent, but I ask you, what do you think of the reality of hypnotism now?"

Long before Perkins had finished speaking, the canon had seen clearly through the whole clever hoax. But he set his moral and social good name so far above his reputation as an anti-hypnotist that he was thankful enough for the means of escape which Perkins's unblushing falsehoods afforded him, and he answered, with profound emphasis:

"I assure you, gentlemen, that my sceptical views about hypnotism have been once and forever extinguished by this most marvellous experiment!"

* * * * *

Perkins's wonderful success over Canon Cruthall—a man whom all the leading lights of the sciences had utterly failed to influence—soon became the talk of society; and the young hypnotist's public reputation was made by it. He had plenty of genuine skill in that line, but, knowing that with a strong-minded, sceptical man like the canon, trickery alone could produce the necessary result, he had had recourse to the ingenious device related above. The canon had done just as Perkins had reckoned in saving his moral character by giving his assent to the falsehood. Perhaps he might have acted differently if there had been time to reflect, but, on the spur of the moment, he had eagerly grasped the only escape that seemed to offer. And when he had once publicly set his seal to the deception, he could never afterward repudiate it.

ETCHINGS: "SUNSHINE"*

"Ah! you did not know he died?"

A mist seemed to cloud the light in the speaker's eyes as he continued, half to himself, half to me.

"Why should you, indeed? Years of roving in India have little in common with New England."

He brushed back the prematurely gray hair from his forehead with a weary movement of his hand.

"Yes—he died.

"Have you noticed the immediate obliteration of the ray of hope from the light-house as the flash disappears? or the immensity of the blackness after the vivid lightning flash? Such was my heart when as suddenly it lost its Sunshine.

"For we called him 'Sunshine.' His eyes, his hair, his face, bespoke the joyous light of day, failing which night comes, heavy, relentless.

"How long ago, you ask? It matters not. 'One's first-born never comes again' is what the heart throbs ceaselessly. The ebbing tide ebbs forever: it is another which replaces it, never the same."

He paused, went to the window, and leaned far out.

"Ah! the clouds have vanished; thank God!"

He peered into the sky long and earnestly, and I did not utter a word to interrupt his reverie.

"Do you see that star there," he said at length, "there near the chapel spire, somewhat apart from the rest, not large, yet clear as crystal and sparkling so winningly?"

"That is 'Sunshine.'

"See it smile! Sunshine—Sunshine—I'm listening. Music of the spheres? Yes! Can you not hear it, sweetest of all music? He is telling of the joys of the sky—of the raptures of Paradise—of the peace of perpetual day. He is reaching his dear little arms to me, calling to me, beckoning to me, always beckoning, always—

"Yes, Sunshine, my own Sunshine, I hear—I'm coming—"

A gasp, a fall, and he that was in darkness had found light, so long in dawning, yet so welcome.

And the little star seemed to me from that night to shine with a double brilliancy.

* Daniel Stimson Knowlton : For Short Stories.

THE FOUR DREAMS*

The evening shades were falling over a deserted battle-field. The victory was won, and four soldiers, camped in a lonely corner, were enjoying a tardy meal, seated on the grass in front of a large fire, before which a few slices of lamb were cooking. The red light cast a strange shadow around, and the pale flicker revealed many sleeping their last sleep. The soldiers were laughing boisterously, scarce noticing the glazed eyes fixed on them. The day's work had been severe, and the living were resting, not knowing what the morrow might bring. Death and night were spreading their wings over the blood-stained earth, where terror and silence were standing side by side.

Their feast ended, Gneuss began to sing. His deep voice sounded hoarse as it fell on the desolate and mournful air. The song, so joyous on his lips, echoed but a sob. Astonished at the strange accents, he began singing with redoubled ardor; when a piercing cry, issuing from the shadows, disturbed the little group.

Gneuss, with a troubled expression, said to Elberg:

"Go see which corpse is awakening."

Elberg went, armed with a sword and a lighted torch. His companions could just perceive the outline of his form as he bent over the dead, but he soon disappeared.

"Clerian," said Gneuss, after a silence, "the wolves are about to-night. Go look for our friend."

And Clerian went, and was in turn soon lost in the darkness. Gneuss and Flem, tired of waiting for the return of the wanderers, rolled themselves in their cloaks and lay down by the smouldering embers. Their eyes were just closing, when the same dreadful cry rent the air. Flem rose, walked silently to the spot from whence issued the sound, and was soon lost in the gloom.

Gneuss sprang to his feet, terrified at the sight of the black gulf where the agonized gurgle rang. He threw a few dried leaves on the burning logs, hoping that the brightness would dissipate his fears. The flame rose, shedding its light in a ghastly red circle on the ground. In this circle the shrubs looked unreal, and the dead seemed roused by invisible hands.

* A curious little story written by Zola before he became famous.

Gneuss's terror increased; he shook the lighted branches and stamped out the flames. As the thick shadows fell around him once more, he shuddered, fearing to be again overtaken by the death-shout. He could not rest. He sat down, then rose again to call his companions, but the sound of his own voice made him shrink, and fear that it had attracted the attention of the surrounding corpses.

Suddenly the moon appeared, and Gneuss trembled to see it shedding its pale beams over the battle-field. Night no more concealed its horrors. The plain, strewn with dead and dying, seemed to extend under the shroud of white light, and this light seemed to give an unearthly touch to the scene. Gneuss, now thoroughly roused, wondered whether he could ascend the mountain and extinguish the pale night torch. In his excitement he thought the dead must rise and speak to him, now that they could see him so plainly. Their perfect calm was terrible; and, expecting every moment to be overtaken by some dreadful catastrophe, he closed his eyes. But, as he was standing there, a strange heat touched his left heel. He stooped, and saw a thin rivulet of blood flowing past his feet, leaping over the stones, and causing a gay murmur. It came out of the shade, meandered in the light of the pale moonbeams, then fled and returned to the darkness, like a snake in its tortuous windings. Gneuss could not remove his eyes from the tide of flowing blood. He saw it swelling slowly and visibly getting larger; the rivulet became a peaceful stream that a child could have easily leaped over; the stream became an ever-increasing torrent, bursting over the ground and throwing up a red foam on all sides; the torrent became an immense flowing river.

The river was ever carrying away the dead, but a cold shiver ran over him as he saw that it was supplied by the blood running from their wounds.

Gneuss kept moving backward from the ever-increasing tide; he could no longer distinguish the opposite bank, and the valley was changed into a lake.

Suddenly he was stopped in his course; a cluster of rocks impeded his flight. He soon felt the waves leaping round his knees, and the dead drifting on, insulting him in their course, each one of their wounds becoming a blood-stained mouth to scoff at his fears. The dreaded sea, ever increasing, now touched his waist. He made a final effort by clinging to the

cracks in the rocks; but alas! the rocks gave way, and the tide covered his shoulders. The moon, pale and sad, watched this sea where her rays were not reflected. The light floated heavenward; this immense sheet of shadowy and clamorous blood seemed to be the entrance to some great abyss. The waves, ever ascending, touched and covered with their red foam the lips of the tortured Gneuss.

* * * * *

At dawn, Elberg returned. He woke Gneuss, whom he found sleeping, with his head pillowed on a stone.

"Friend," said he, "I was lost in the shrubs, and sitting down to rest at the foot of a tree, sleep overtook me, and my soul was troubled by strange visions, the remembrance of which disturbs my waking thoughts.

"The world was in its infancy; the sky was one eternal smile. Earth, a virgin still, was basking in May's rich sunbeams; each blade of grass was ripening and surpassing in beauty the finest oaks; the trees were bursting into gorgeous leaves and fruits totally unknown to me. The sap was ever flowing through earth's deep veins, and in its abundance wafted into the recesses of rocks and gave them life.

"The horizon rose, calm and smiling, in the distance. Nature, waking from its sleep, as a child, knelt and thanked God for His light; it spread out its arms toward heaven to give praise for its songs and perfumes, so graceful and so sweet that my mind was overwhelmed with the divine impression. Earth, gentle and prosperous, engendered without pain. Fruit-trees sprang out of every corner, the roads were hedged with fields of ripe corn, where to-day plains of thistles and thorns would rise. The air was not laden with the weight of human sorrow. God was alone, working for His children.

"Man, like the birds, fed on food sent by God, gathering fruit on his way, drinking the water from the cooling spring and sleeping under a shelter of leaves, whose lips seemed to shudder at the sight of flesh, not knowing the taste of blood, relishing only the dew-sprinkled and sun-ripened fruits.

"So man remained innocent, and his very innocence anointed him king over all living things. Earth had assumed a new touch of purity, and was cradled in supreme peace. Birds fled no more at the sight of man to far-stretching forests; all God's creatures lived together under one law—goodness.

"I was walking with them, enjoying their perfect nature,

and feeling myself growing stronger and better. I felt the delicious breeze so pure after the laden breath of earth.

"As the angel of my dream watched beside me, my eyes strayed to a forest. I saw two men following a narrow, shady path. The younger took the lead, singing gayly, and smiling at the beauty all around; now and again he turned to smile upon his companion, and the smile made me guess that they were brothers. But the lips and eyes of his companion did not respond; he followed the youth with a look of hatred.

"I saw him cut down a branch and make it into a rough club; then he hastened his step, fearing to lose sight of his victim, and hiding his weapon behind him. The young man, who had been resting, rose at his approach, and kissed him.

"They set out once again on their walk. The day was drawing to a close. The youth hurried on, as he perceived in the distance the sun gradually sinking behind a hill. The man thought the youth was trying to escape, and lifted his club. His young brother turned with a happy speech on his lips; the club felled him to the ground, crushing his face, from whence gushed a stream of blood.

"The first blade of grass it touched shuddered, and shook the drop upon its mother earth; earth trembled and was startled; a great cry of repugnance was wrung from its breast and the sand in the road turned into a foaming red current.

"The scream from the wounded youth seemed to scatter God's creatures far and wide; they fled into the deep and dark places, the strong attacking the weak. I saw them in the gloom, polishing their hooks and sharpening their claws. The great work of the brigandage of creation had begun.

"Then the eternal tide passed before me. The sparrow flew at the swallow; the swallow in its turn seized the gnat; the gnat sucked the blood from the corpse. From the worm to the lion was one great insurrection. Nature, touched at this sight, was convulsed. The pure lines of the horizon were effaced, the dawn and sunset gave forth blood-stained clouds, the rippling of the waters seemed one prolonged sob, and the leaves of the trees fell faded to the ground ere they bloomed."

* * * * *

Scarcely had Elberg finished his tale when Clerian appeared, and, seating himself between his two companions, said to them:

"I know not whether what I saw was a reality or a dream, the vision was so like the truth, and the truth so like a vision,

“My steps led me along a road that encompassed the earth; it was studded with towns, and crowds followed its course. A stream of red froth flowed onward, and my feet were soon blood-stained. Careworn, I wandered on amid the mass of human beings, increasing as we went, and cruel sights met my gaze. Fathers offering their daughters in sacrifice to some avenging god, the fair heads bent under the touch of steel, and fainting at death's kiss. Trembling maidens seeking death to escape from hateful kisses, the tomb alone shrouding the virginity. Women dying under passionate caresses, one crying bitterly on the brink of the river that had carried away her love; another killed in her lover's embrace; the blow was a death-knell to him, and, locked in each other's arms, they soared heavenward.

“Men vainly seeking liberty and peace that were unattainable here below. Everywhere footprints of kings were marked with a crimson blot: one walking in the road stained by his brother's blood; another enjoying his crown at the cost of his subjects' lives; and still another wading in God's blood; and the people, standing back and letting him pass on, would say: 'A king has passed this way.'

“Priests massacred their victims, and, open-mouthed, over their bleeding entrails, pretended to read therein heaven's secrets. Swords were hidden under their priestly robes, as they preached warfare in the name of God, and, at the sound of their voices, each man turned to slay his neighbor, thinking thereby to glorify his Maker. The intoxicated mass of human beings was hurrying hither and thither, a crushed and seething crowd, brandishing its naked weapons without mercy and felling innocent souls to the ground. A craving for massacre fell on the raging populace. Its cry rang furiously on the still night air until the last drop of blood was trampled from out the seething wounds, and men cursed their victims for dying so quickly.

“Earth drank unceasingly of the blood-red stream, and seemed insatiable and gluttoned over the dregs.

“I hurried on, wishing to lose sight of my fallen brothers, but the road lay interminable before me, while the crimson tide drifted ever onward. Darkness increased until I could see the barren plains, the forsaken rocks, the mountains towering to the skies, the valleys becoming great gulfs, the stones turning into hillocks, and the furrows into yawning abysses.

"No sign of life was there, no green thing visible; nothing but rocks, desolate rocks, whose summits, barely touched by the wavering light, made the gloom appear more terrible in this valley where the road led, and where my footsteps echoed in the deathly silence.

"A sharp turn brought me to a ghastly sight. Four mountains, leaning heavily forward, formed a basin. Their sides, straight and stiff, like the walls of a cyclopean city, formed in their centre an immense well, and this well, where the stream terminated, gradually increased the thick and tranquil sea that rested so peacefully in its bed of rocks, giving a purple hue to the clouds.

"I knew that this abyss must receive the blood of the murdered; that drops from each wound had gone to swell the surge of this flowing sea."

"Stop," said Gneuss. "The torrent I saw this night went to feed that cursed lake."

"Struck with terror," continued Clerian, "I stepped to the brink, and saw that the tide nearly reached to the summit of the rocks. A voice from the abyss spoke to me: 'The river is ever increasing, and will continue until it reaches the utmost heights; then it will overflow into the plains, the mountains will give way, and tired earth will soon be covered and flooded. New-born babies will be drowned in their fathers' blood.'"

"The day is at hand, friend," said Gneuss; "the waves were high last night."

* * * * *

The sun had risen ere Clerian had finished his tale. The trumpet was sounding to rally the scattered troops.

The three soldiers arose, and, shouldering their weapons, moved away, casting a last, lingering look at the fire—when Flem appeared, foot-sore and travel-stained.

"Friends," said he, "I know not whence I come, so rapid has been my flight. Long hours did I wander, till the noise of my footsteps rocked me gently, and I fell into a strange and restless sleep, never slackening my speed till I came to a lonely hill. The sun poured down upon it and scorched the ground, while I hurried on to attain the summit.

"As I fled a man appeared, toiling up the path; a crown of thorns was on his head, a heavy burden on his back, drops of blood were standing on his forehead, and his tottering steps could scarcely reach their goal.

"I grieved to see his agony, and I waited for him. He was carrying a cross; and I saw by his crown and purple robes that he was a king, and I despised him, and rejoiced over his sufferings.

"Soldiers followed him, hurrying his faltering steps. At last, when they came to a stand-still on the highest pinnacle of the mountain, they divested him of his garments and nailed him to the cursed tree. The victim smiled sadly as he stretched out his hands and crossed his feet ready for the murderous deed. He turned his face heavenward; tears flowed slowly down his cheeks—tears which he felt not, and which were lost in the resigned smile on his lips.

"The cross was soon erected, and then the weight of the martyr's body enlarged the wounds and broke his bones until he shuddered again and again, and sought strength from above.

"The sight riveted me to the spot, and as I looked I said: 'That man is no king.'

"Then, in my great pity, I cried to the soldiers to kill him.

"A linnet perched on the cross was singing a sad strain, that caught my ear and made me think of the weeping virgin.

"'Blood is feeding the flame,' said the linnet, 'blood colors the flowers, blood shades the clouds. I alighted on the earth and my claws were stained, and as I touched the trees my wings grew crimson.

"'I met a just man and followed him, and having bathed in a pure spring, I thought to find rest on his shoulder from the wickedness of earth.

"'My only song to-day is a sob on Golgotha's Heights for one who carried me safely through many dangers. He came to purify, and he is doing it with the crimson tide from his own wounds.

"'O Jesus! I cry, when shall I find Thy brother to take me under his sheltering wings? Ah! when shall Thy son come to wash my wings in Thy sprinkled blood?'

"The victim listened to the linnet's song. Death was hovering over him, but his look was one of gentle reproach; a serene and hopeful smile passed over his face.

"Then, with an unearthly shout, he gave up the ghost; his head sank, the linnet fled, the sky darkened, and the earth trembled.

"I still ran on and on in my sleep; dawn had come, the

valley awoke, smiling under the morning mists. The rain on the preceding evening gave a fresh touch to the green leaves, but the road was still hedged with the thorns that had impeded my course the night before. The same hard stones stopped my way as the snakes hissed out their warning note. The just man's blood had flowed in vain for the world.

"The linnet passed on its way, telling its tale as it went:

"In vain have I sought a cleansing stream to wash my blood-stained wings. Look at earth! it is no better for the sacrifice, and I have only to record the burden of one more murder.'"

* * * * *

The clarion now rang loudly.

"Friends," said Gneuss, "we are driving a wicked trade; our sleep is disturbed by the phantoms of those we have slain. My rest, like yours, was disturbed by a ghastly nightmare. I have been massacring for thirty years, and am tired of it. Let us leave our brothers, and go into the country together and till the ground. I know of a valley where the ploughs are idle for want of hands."

"Such is our wish," replied his companions.

The soldiers buried their weapons, bathed in the cooling stream, and, arm in arm, they started on their new road.

ETCHINGS: FOUND*

Chuck! Crash! Rattle!

The Cinnabar mail comes swinging down the canyon. The six horses—wheel, swing, and lead—wear the air of thought common to old stagers. Only one passenger; a slender girl.

Very beautiful she has been in a happier time. To-day her sweet face is sorrow-bitten. In the wistful depths of her eyes one sees the look of hunger which comes when hope lies starving. Eight years and no word. The canyon seems the home of gloom. At long intervals some stout sunbeam writes its shifting signature on the floor. The stage labors and creaks over the shelvy rocks. The driver whistles as he fumbles his six reins. The trace-chains rattle and the straps strain as the horses surge in the six collars.

“Throw up your hands!”

Two faces appear in the bushes at the side—one unmasked and reckless. Their eyes are as bright and accurate as the cold barrels of the Winchesters along which they glance.

At the voice the girl gives a little startled cry of joy.

“Chrish—sh—sh—sh!”

The brake is set to the wheels by the foot of the driver and the coach stops. Without a word or look he clasps his hands above his head. He is old and wise. Drivers who fight or bear witness never live out half their days. Not so the two Wells-Fargo guards. They glide to the ground and open fire. The undaunted hold-ups are no whit behind.

“Bangity! Bang! Bang! Bang!”

The canyon is a cloud of smoke, through the deep folds of which flashes and leaps the incessant Winchester. Now the excited girl springs from the stage in the very course of the bullets. A half sob, and she crushes forward like a flower. The misguided lead of the reckless one has torn through her tender, faithful breast. The smoke still gathers and the bullets whiz. The sanguine rifles still speak cheerfully.

At last it is over—the outlaws win. A wind comes down from the sighing pines and drives away the smoke. It shows the reckless one gazing dumbly at the pulseless form of the girl.

“Alice!” he whispers, “Alice!” and bending gathers her to his breast and kisses her face, now white and cold as snow.

* A. H. Lewis (Dan Quin): For Short Stories.

THE MAGIC SHADOW*

Once upon a time there was born a man-child with a magic shadow.

His case was so rare that a number of doctors have been disputing over it ever since and picking his parents' histories and genealogies to bits, to find the cause. Their inquiries do not help us much. The father drove a cab; the mother was a charwoman and came of a consumptive family. But these facts will not quite account for a magic shadow. The birth took place on the night of a new moon, down a narrow alley into which neither moon nor sun ever penetrated beyond the third-story windows—and that is why the parents were so long in discovering their child's miraculous gift. The hospital student who attended merely remarked that the babe was small and sickly, and recommended the mother to drink sound port wine while nursing him—which she could not afford.

Nevertheless, the boy struggled somehow through five years of life, and was put into small-clothes. Two weeks after this promotion, his mother started off to scrub out a big house in the fashionable quarter, and took him with her: for the house possessed a wide garden, laid with turf and lined with espaliers, sunflowers, and hollyhocks, and as the month was August, and the family away in Scotland, there seemed no harm in letting the child run about in this paradise while she worked. A flight of steps descended from the drawing-room to the garden, and as she knelt on her mat in the cool room it was easy to keep an eye on him. Now and then she gazed out into the sunshine and called; and the boy stopped running about and nodded back, or shouted some fresh discovery.

By-and-by a sulphur butterfly excited him so that he must run up the broad stone steps with the news. The woman laughed, looking at his flushed face, then down at his shoe-strings, which were untied: and then she jumped up, crying out sharply: "Stand still, child—stand still a moment!"

She might well stare. Her son stood and smiled in the sun, and his shadow lay on the whitened steps. Only the silhouette was not that of a little breeched boy, but of a little girl in petticoats; and it wore long curls, whereas the charwoman's son was close-cropped.

* Arthur Crouch Quiller: *The Speaker*.

The woman stepped out on the terrace to look closer. She twirled her boy round and walked him down into the garden, and backward and forward, and stood him in all manner of positions and attitudes, and rubbed her eyes. But there was no mistake: the shadow was that of a little girl.

She hurried over her charing, and took the boy home for his father to see before sunset. As the matter seemed important and she did not wish people in the street to notice anything strange, they rode back in an omnibus. They might have spared the haste, however, as the cab-driver did not reach home till supper-time, and then it was found that in the light of a candle, even when stuck inside a carriage-lamp, their son cast just an ordinary shadow. But next morning at sunrise they woke him up and carried him to the house-top, where the sunlight slanted between the chimney-stacks: and the shadow was that of a little girl.

The father scratched his head. "There's money in this, wife. We'll keep the thing close; and in a year or two he'll be fit to go round in a show and earn money to support our declining years."

With that the poor little one's misfortunes began. For they shut him in his room, nor allowed him to play with the other children in the alley—there was no knowing what harm might come to his precious shadow. On dark nights his father walked him out along the streets; and the boy saw many curious things under the gas-lamps, but never the little girl who inhabited his shadow. So that by degrees he forgot all about her. And his father kept silence.

Yet all the while she grew side by side with him, keeping pace with his years. And on his fifteenth birthday, when his parents took him out into the country and, in the sunshine there, revealed his secret, she was indeed a companion to be proud of—neat of figure, trim of ankle, with masses of wavy hair; but whether blonde or brunette could not be told; and, alas! she had no eyes to look into.

"My son," said they, "the world lies before you. Only do not forget your parents, who conferred on you this remarkable shadow."

The youth promised, and went off to a showman. The showman gladly hired him; for, of course, a magic shadow was a rarity, though not so well paying as the Strong Man or the Fat Woman, for these were worth seeing every day,

whereas for weeks at a time, in dull weather or foggy, our hero had no shadow at all. But he earned enough to keep himself and help the parents at home; and was considered a success.

One day, after five years of this, he sought the Strong Man, and sighed. For they had become close friends.

"I am in love," he confessed.

"With your shadow?"

"No."

"Not with the Fat Woman!" the Strong Man exclaimed, with a start of jealousy.

"No. I have seen her these three days in the Square, on her way to music lesson. She has dark brown eyes and wears yellow ribbons. I love her."

"You don't say so! She has never come to our performance, I hope."

"It has been foggy ever since we came to this town."

"Ah, to be sure. Then there's a chance: for, you see, she would never look at you if she knew of—of that other. Take my advice—go into society, always at night, when there is no danger; get introduced; dance with her; sing serenades under her window; then marry her. Afterward—well, that's your affair."

So the youth went into society and met the girl he loved, and danced with her so vivaciously and sang serenades with such feeling beneath her window, that at last she felt he was all in all to her. Then the youth asked to be allowed to see her father, who was a retired colonel; and professed himself a man of substance. He said nothing of the shadow: but it is true he had saved a certain amount. "Then to all intents and purposes you are a gentleman," said the retired colonel; and the wedding-day was fixed.

They were married in dull weather, and spent a delightful honeymoon. But when spring came and brighter days, the young wife began to feel lonely; for her husband locked himself, all the day long, in his study—to work, as he said. He seemed to be always at work; and whenever he consented to a holiday, it was sure to fall on the bleakest and dimmest day in the week.

"You are never so gay now as you were last autumn. I am jealous of that work of yours. At least," she pleaded, "let me sit with you and share your affection with it,"

But he laughed and denied her: and next day she peered in at him through the keyhole of his study.

That same evening she ran away from him: having seen the shadow of another woman by his side.

Then the poor man—for he had loved his wife—cursed the day of his birth and led an evil life. This lasted for ten years, and his wife died in her father's house, unforgiving.

On the day of her funeral, the man said to his shadow: "I see it all. We were made for each other, so let us marry. You have wrecked my life and now must save it. Only it is rather hard to marry a wife that one can only see by sunlight and moonlight."

So they were married; and spent all their life in the open air, looking on the naked world and learning its secrets. And his shadow bore him children, in stony ways and on the bare mountain-side. And for every child that was born the man felt the pangs of it.

And at last he died and was judged: and when interrogated concerning his good deeds, began—

"We two——"

—and looked around for his shadow. A great light shone all about; but she was nowhere to be seen. In fact, she had passed before him; and his children remained on earth, where men already were heaping them with flowers and calling them divine.

Then the man folded his arms and lifted his chin.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "I am simply a sinner."

There are in this world certain men who create. The children of such are poems, and the half of their soul female. For it is written that without woman no new thing shall come into the world.

THE BASS-VIOL OF ABELSBURG *

In the gloomy garret of the tavern at Ober-Abelsberg, among other dusty, rusty, and worm-eaten reminders of the past, lay an old brown bass-viol. No one knew whence it came, the year of its birth was a mystery.

In past years the bass-viol had occasionally given a sign of life. If a bat fluttered by or a mouse ran over the strings it would begin to chatter, like a talkative woman, to tell stories of the past and to sing songs of the bright days of its youth. Later it would only grumble a little when the wind shook the roof, but when the mice gnawed off all the strings it lay silent and uncomplaining in mould and dust. Immediately beneath this deserted garret was the dancing-hall. There the pipes piped and the fiddles squeaked till all the dogs in town howled in anguish and the ears of the dancers were pierced through and through by the sharp shrill tones. And no one knew how near lay the means of softening this discord with a good deep bass note!

Now, the roguish little red-tails love to build in old lumber, and so it happened that a musical couple chose our silent forsaken bass-viol for a home. This circumstance drew the attention of mine host's little Friedel—an enthusiastic ornithologist—to the old instrument, and one day, amid clouds of dust and angry remonstrances from the red-tails, the boy pulled the old ruin from its resting-place and dragged it down the attic stairs. The Abelsbergers regarded the bass-viol as a gift from heaven. The joiner came and repaired the broken case, the school-master with his great spectacles came and put in new strings, and lo! at the next yearly fair, amid the tones of the pipes, sounded the deep voice of the venerable instrument, as a worthy accompaniment to devout hymns of praise to the patron saint.

It was a new-awakened life, and there was great rejoicing in Ober-Abelsberg.

As is the usual custom at these fairs, the way lay from the church directly to the tavern and up to the dancing-hall, and of course the bass-viol went along, too. If his Reverence finds it possible to drink wine from the chalice in the morning and from the tankard in the afternoon, it cannot be too

* German of P. S. Rosegger; Grace Isabel Colborn: For Short Stories.

difficult for such a venerable bass-viol to play hymns in the morning and waltzes and quadrilles in the afternoon. And as in the church it had breathed out its soul in devotion, so in the tavern the strings sent forth such gay and joyous tones that the pastor himself could scarce refrain from joining in the dance. So it went on for several years, the bass-viol serving in church choir and dancing-hall, until at one very jolly wedding the bride, dizzy from the wild dance, sank down upon the old instrument and crushed in its back. Then it was laid aside for a year or two, until the Abelsbergers, missing the bass tones, brought out their old friend and patched it up again, and again there was great rejoicing.

Now there came a time which far-seeing men called great and full of promise, but which nevertheless turned many a quiet village into Bedlam. In such a place in ordinary times one could find plenty of good, honest workmen, a few cross officials, a fat priest or two, and perhaps an occasionally thin sexton or pious Sister of Charity, but now there were only "Liberals" or "Clericals." No other distinctions were made, and if, for instance, the "Liberals" had been masculine and the "Clericals" feminine, the matter might have been easily settled; but it was war between friend and friend, between father and son, between husband and wife, between priest and burgomaster, and—between church and tavern.

One would imagine that the venerable bass-viol, as common property of both parties, might be a point of neutrality; "au contraire," as the more cultured put it, it became a very bone of contention. The school-master did not play in the choir now, so the new choir-master—who not only served the Clerical banner, but even carried that banner himself—sent to the tavern for the bass-viol. But the inn-keeper commenced to grumble—"the bass-viol belonged to the Liberals; the joiner mended it and the joiner was Liberal; the school-master put in the strings and the school-master was Liberal now; it was found in the tavern, so the tavern was its home, and the tavern was Liberal. So the bass-viol, bow and all, was Liberal."

Next Sunday the pastor had no text from Holy Writ to expound; the bass-viol was his subject. He began cheerfully:

"Years ago, when the bass-viol was discovered, it was looked upon as a gift from heaven, therefore it was Clerical. Its voice was first heard in the church, and the school-master who first played on it in church and tavern was Clerical at that

time. And if the bride who sat on the bass-viol and broke its back was not forgotten, he would call to mind that that bride was now the wife of the sexton. And if he, the pastor, finally asserted that the instrument was originally made for the church, no one in town could prove the contrary, so the bass-viol was Clerical and belonged to the Clericals."

A very clear argument, but unfortunately there was not a Liberal in the church. The Liberals sat in the tavern and sang drinking-songs to the accompaniment of the bass-viol.

One evening, however, the chaplain thought to himself, "actions speak louder than words," and to prove the truth of this saying he stole into the tavern under cover of darkness and took away the bass-viol.

The affair became animated at once. The Liberals went to the district court and entered a complaint against the pastor, accusing him of appropriation of the property of others.

"Nonsense!" answered the court. "A whole community in arms about an old bass-viol! Go settle it among yourselves." And the Liberals took the bass-viol back to the tavern.

Then the Clericals went to the dean and protested against this invasion of their territory. The dean advised them to go to the bishop, but in the mean time to take back the bass-viol. Then the instrument again disappeared from the tavern.

This time the Liberals went to the county court. "Don't be silly," was the answer; "break up the old thing."

"But it is not the bass-viol we care about!" said the Abelsbergers; "it is a question of right—of honor!"

But the court would not hear them, and so they stormed the rectory and carried away the bass-viol.

Now the Clericals were furious and went to the bishop. "My dear friends," said the bishop, "you must be firm. If they have the bass-viol they will take the organ; if they get the organ they will take the choir, and before you know it they will take the church from over your heads. I am sorry that I can do nothing for you, but you must stand manfully for your rights."

"Stand manfully for your rights." That meant taking the bass-viol out of the tavern and hiding it in the rectory.

When this was discovered, the Liberals, in all the smartness of black coats and white cravats, appealed to the supreme court. But their story had gone before them and they were not even admitted. So they resorted to deep strategy, bribed

the keeper of the rectory cows, who in turn bribed the cook, and got from her the key of the store-room. The next day as the pastor and chaplain, sunk in prayerful reverie, wandered past the tavern, mingled with the sounds of ungodly mirth within they heard the well-known voice of the bass-viol.

Then they held a grand party meeting and prayed to the Holy Ghost for wisdom, and when they had thus prayed for wisdom they held consultation and decided unanimously to send a deputation to the holy father, that the head of the church himself should confirm their right to the bass-viol.

The Liberals held a grand party meeting also, and strengthened themselves with the noble juice of the barley, and thus strengthened they held consultation and the decision was: "If they go to the pope we will go to the emperor!"

So the two deputations set forth, the one toward Rome, the other toward Vienna. The poor old bass-viol stood in a quiet corner of the tavern, and was sad at heart over all the silly quarrel of which it was the innocent cause; a quarrel which divided the household against itself and threatened the prosperity of the community. It often sighed for the quiet days in the deserted garret, the peaceful little birds who made their home in its broken case.

It was about this time that a band of gypsies came into the village to beg and steal and make music for those who would be merry. Among them was one old fellow, with more wrinkles in his face than you could count, but with coal-black hair and beard. He took the bass-viol from its lonely corner and played. The Abelsbergers listened in astonishment, for they heard for the first time of what a bass-viol was capable.

The wisest nodded their heads and remarked sagely: "There is good ground for the bass-viol war of Abelsberg."

The wild music fired their blood, and before they knew it men and women, Liberal and Clerical, were dancing together in wildest confusion. The old gypsy's thin fingers pressed the strings, and in his hand the bow drew forth weird, bewitching strains that none could resist. Great were the drinking and dancing that night, and the gray dawn found most of the Abelsberger men and women, Liberal and Clerical, in all sorts of undignified positions just where they had fallen.

The gypsy band has disappeared, and whatever may have been the decision of pope and emperor, the bass-viol has not been seen in Ober-Abelsberg since that memorable night.

ETCHINGS: SENTENCED*

She had been feeling out of sorts for a long time, not really ill, but languid and tired. She had tried this remedy and that one to no avail, and her friends advised her to go to a certain celebrated doctor. "He will tell you plainly," they said, "what is really the matter with you." So she went.

The doctor examined her.

He told her plainly what was the matter.

"You have heart disease. You may live a year—you may die to-morrow," he said.

That was plain enough, wasn't it?

Yet somehow she did not seem to understand it. She wondered if she was stupid, the words had so little meaning to her.

As she walked to her car she was so painfully alive to other impressions that she wondered why she could not comprehend the doctor's words. She said them over, counting them on her fingers—thirteen—thirteen was an unlucky number.

A servant was emptying a pan of potato-parings into an alley, and she noticed that the parings were thick, as though they had been wastefully peeled. One note of a piano somewhere near jarred harshly—she could tell the very key—middle C. It sounded as though a pin had fallen in, and she wondered whether the people would get it out themselves or send for a piano-tuner. A man who passed her looked ill—she wondered if he had heart disease. The car which she took was full; she noticed a pretty bonnet and she wondered if she couldn't make one like it. Then she said to herself, "What is a bonnet to you? You've got to die." She noticed what ugly ears a girl next her had; her own were like little pink shells—but what of that? She must die. A clergyman in the corner was carrying his Bible in his hand. She remembered that she had never read the Bible much. She must begin now and read all that she could, for that might show her how to get ready to die—she was sure that she couldn't be ready, and she wondered how one felt when one was ready.

Why, this was her street! The conductor had stopped for her.

She got off the car as one in a dream, and then she went calmly into the bookstore on the corner and bought a Bible, that she might prepare herself for death.

* Marie More Marsh: For Short Stories.

THE DROWNED MAN *

Every one in Fécamp knew the story of Mother Patin. She had certainly not been happy with her man, had Mother Patin: for her man used to beat her, when he was alive, as they thresh the wheat on the threshing-floors.

He was master of a fishing-smack, and had married her, long ago, because she was pleasant, although she was poor.

Patin, a good sailor but brutal, frequented the drinking-shop of old Auban, where he drank regularly every day his four or five little nips, and on days of luck at sea, eight or ten, or even more, just according to how good he felt, as he said.

The drink was served to patrons by old Auban's daughter, a brown girl good to look at, and who drew custom by her pleasant manners solely—for no one had ever hinted a word against her.

Patin, when he came into the shop, was content with looking at her, and his conversation was polite, the civil remarks of a decent fellow. After he had drunk his first glass of brandy, he began to find her more attractive: at the second, he winked his eye at her: at the third, he would say, "If only you liked, Mamzelle Desirée—" without ever finishing his sentence: with the fourth, he tried to catch her by her skirts, to kiss her; and when he went as high as ten, her father brought him the other ones.

The old wine-seller, who was up to all the tricks, sent Desirée round among the tables to stimulate the orders; and Desirée, who was not her father's daughter for nothing, flitted in and out among the customers, joking with them, with a laughing mouth and a snapping eye.

What with drinking his little nips, Patin became so used to the face of Desirée, that he kept thinking of her even out at sea, when he was casting his nets, far out, windy nights and calm, nights of moonlight and nights of cloud. He thought on her, gripping the helm in the stern of his boat, while his four comrades were sleeping, their heads on their arms. He saw her, always smiling, pouring him the yellow brandy with a swing of the shoulder, then saying as she went:

"There! Does that suit you?"

* French of Guy de Maupassant: Frederic Hart Wilson: For Short Stories.

And at last, keeping her thus in eye and mind, he was seized with such a longing to marry her that, unable to fight any longer against it, he asked for her hand.

He was well off, owner of his boat, of his nets, and of a house at the foot of the hill on the Reserve, while old Auban had nothing. So he was received with enthusiasm, and the wedding came off at the earliest possible day, both parties wishing to hurry matters for different reasons.

But, three days after the marriage, Patin was utterly unable to conceive how he could have thought Desirée different from any other woman. Well, he must have been a fool! to tie himself up with a girl without a cent who had bewitched him with her rum, for sure, liquor that she'd put some filthy charm into for him.

And he swore, up and down the tide, breaking his pipe between his teeth, abusing his outfit; and having cursed copiously in all the customary terms at everything he could think of, he spit forth the rest of his choler on the fish and the lobsters taken, one by one from his nets, never throwing them into the baskets without an accompaniment of scolding and bad names.

Then, home again, having within reach of tongue and hand his wife, old Auban's girl, it was not long before he was treating her like the lowest of the low in his speech. Then, as she heard him resignedly, used to that sort of thing already from her father, he grew exasperated at her silence: and, one evening, struck her. After that, their life was frightful.

For ten years they talked of nothing else on the Reserve but the thrashings Patin gave his wife, and his way of swearing at her whenever he addressed her. He swore, in fact, in an individual style, with a richness of vocabulary and a sonority of organ equalled by no other man in Fécamp. From the moment his boat appeared at the entrance of the harbor, coming back from the fishing, they awaited the first volley he would launch, from his deck to the jetty, as soon as he saw the white cap of his helpmeet.

He stood up in the stern, steering, his eye ahead or on the sail, when the sea was high, and, spite of the preoccupations of the narrow and difficult channel, spite of the waves from the deep that piled up in it like mountains, he sought to make out, among the women waiting for the fishers under the spray of the surges, his own, old Auban's girl, the jade!

Then, when he saw her, for all the clamor of the waves and wind, he turned out on her a string of abuse, with such a strength of throat, that every one laughed, although they were honestly sorry for her. Then when the boat came in at the quay, he had a way of discharging his ballast of civilities, as he called it, all the while unloading his fish, that drew around his tying-up place all the rascallions and loafers of the port.

It came out of his mouth, sometimes like cannon-shots, short and awful, sometimes like peals of thunder that rolled out for five minutes such a hurricane of objurgations, that he seemed to have in his lungs all the storms of heaven.

Then when he was off his boat, and found himself face to face with her, in the middle of a crowd of idlers and fish-women, he fished out of the bottom of his hold a whole new cargo of insults and abuse, and escorted her home with these, she in front, he behind, she crying, he shouting.

Alone with her, the doors shut, he struck her on the slightest pretext. Anything was enough to make him lift his hand, and once begun he never stopped, casting then in her face the real grounds of his hate. With each slap, with each thump, he vociferated: "Ah! ye penniless wench! ah! ye ragged, hungry jade! A pretty thing I did the day I ever washed my mouth with the rotgut of your thief of a father!"

She lived, poor woman, in a state of incessant terror, in a constant tremble of soul and body, in affrighted expectation of outrage and blows. And this lasted for ten years. She was so timorous that she would grow pale when talking to any one, and she thought of nothing save the beatings hanging over her; and she had become lean, dry, and yellow.

* * * * *

One night, when her man was at sea, she was awakened suddenly by that wild beast's growl which the wind makes when it comes on like a hound unleashed! She sat up in bed, alarmed: then, hearing nothing more, lay down again; but almost at once, there came a bellowing in her chimney that shook the whole house, spreading throughout the entire heavens as if a herd of maddened cattle were rushing through space, snorting and lowing.

She rose, and hastened to the harbor. Other women were coming from every direction with lanterns. The men flocked out, and all watched, lighting up in the night, on the sea, the foaming white-caps of the summits of the waves.

The storm lasted fifteen hours. Eleven sailors did not come back, and Patin was among them.

They found, on the Dieppe coast, the wreckage of the "Young Amelia," his sloop. They recovered, down by Saint-Valery, the bodies of his sailors, but never found his. As the hull of his boat seemed to have been cut in two, his wife for a long time waited in dread for his return: for if there had been a collision, it might have happened that the colliding vessel picked him up and carried him to foreign parts.

Later, little by little, she grew used to the idea that she was a widow, still trembling each time that a neighbor woman, a beggar, or a travelling peddler came in on her unexpectedly.

One afternoon, about four years after the disappearance of her husband, she stopped before the house of an old sea-captain, lately dead, whose furniture was being sold.

Just at that moment, they were putting up a parrot, a green parrot with a blue head, who looked at all the people with a disturbed and discontented air.

"Three francs!" cried the auctioneer, "a bird that can talk like a lawyer, three francs!"

A friend of Madame Patin nudged her. "You ought to buy it, you that are rich," said she. "It would be company for you: it's worth more than thirty francs, that bird. You can always sell it again easy, for twenty or twenty-five!"

"Four francs, ladies, four francs!" repeated the man. "He sings vespers and preaches like a curé. He's a phenomenon—a miracle!"

Madame Patin laid ten sous more, and they gave her, in a little cage, the bird with his hooked beak, which she carried off.

She hung him up in her house, and as she opened the wire door to give him some water, she got a peck on the finger which cut the skin and drew blood.

"Ah! he's ugly," said she.

Nevertheless she gave him some corn and hempseed, and left him preening his feathers and watching out of the corner of his eye his new house and his new mistress.

The day was beginning to dawn, next morning, when Mother Patin heard, unmistakable and distinct, a voice, strong, sonorous, rolling, the voice of Patin, crying:

"Will ye get up, ye slut!"

She was so frightened that she hid her head under the sheets, for every morning aforetime, as soon as he opened

his eyes, her dead husband used to shout in her ear these words, which she well remembered.

Shaking, rolled in a ball, her back bent before the blow she expected, she muttered, her face hidden in the pillows:

“O Lord, there he is! O Lord, it's him! He's come back! O Lord!”

Minutes passed: no further sound broke the silence of the room. Finally, trembling, she raised her head, sure that he was there, waiting, about to strike.

She saw nothing, save a ray of sunshine coming through the window, and she thought:

“He's hidden, for sure.”

She waited a long time, then, a little reassured, thought:

“I guess I must have dreamed, he don't show himself.”

She was closing her eyes again, when there burst out, right in her ear, the raging voice, the voice of thunder of the drowned man, vociferating:

“Blank to blank to blank, to blank, will you get up, you ——!”

She leaped out of bed, forced by her instinct of obedience, her whipped woman's impulse to obey, that moves her still after four years, and will always move her, and will forever respond to that voice! And she spoke:

“Here I am, Patin: what is it?”

But Patin answered not.

Then, distracted, she looked about her, examining everywhere, in the wardrobe, in the chimney, under the bed, finding no one. Finally she fell on a chair, desperate with misery, convinced that only the soul of Patin was there, near her, come back to torment her.

Suddenly she thought of the garret, which one could get into from the outside by means of a ladder. For sure, he was hidden there to surprise her. Captured by savages somewhere, he could not get away any sooner, and now he was back, wickeder than ever. There was no mistake about it, the sound of his voice was enough.

She asked, lifting her face toward the ceiling, “Are you up there, Patin?”

Patin did not reply.

Then she went out and, in fear and trembling, her very heart shaking, she climbed the ladder, opened the trap-door, looked, saw nothing, went in, searched, and found no one.

Sitting down on a truss of hay, she commenced to cry; but while she was sobbing, pierced by a poignant and supernatural fear, she heard, in the room below her, Patin talking. He seemed less in a rage, more easy, and he was saying:

“Dirty weather! Hard wind! Dirty weather! I’ve had no breakfast, damn it!”

She sang out through the ceiling:

“Here I am, Patin! I’m going to make your soup. Don’t be mad, I’m coming!”

And she came down again, running.

There was no one there.

She felt herself as faint as if death had touched her, and she was starting to flee for help to the neighbors, when the voice cried, right in her ear:

“I’ve had no breakfast, damme!”

And the parrot in his cage looked at her with his little round eye, sly and wicked.

She, too, looked at him, dismayed, murmuring:

“Ah! it’s you!”

He began again, wagging his head:

“Wait, wait, wait, I’ll teach you to skulk, I will!”

What passed in her mind? She felt, she realized, that it was he, sure enough, the dead man, who walked again, who came back hidden in the feathers of this bird to torment her once more, to swear, as before, all day, and bite her, and shout at her to bring the neighbors and make them laugh at her. She rushed on the cage, opened it, seized the bird which, defending himself, tore her flesh with beak and claws. But she held him with all her strength, with both hands, and throwing herself on the ground rolled upon him with the frenzy of a mad woman, crushing him, making of him a shred of flesh, a little soft green thing that no longer moved, no longer spoke, hung limp; then wrapping him up in a towel, as in a shroud, she ran out, in her chemise, barefooted, to the edge of the quay, which the sea was lapping in little waves, and, shaking the cloth, she let fall into the water the little dead thing that looked like a handful of grass: then she came back, threw herself on her knees before the empty cage, and, upset completely by what she had done, besought pardon of the good Lord, sobbing, as if she had committed some frightful crime.

ETCHINGS: THE FIRST VISIT*

Everything was false in the drawing-room where Giorgio entered for the first time—false luxury, false comfort, false good-humor. The title of baroness worn by the mother was worth just as much as her great diamond earrings. But the beauty of the girl bloomed insolently—true and real. Her sixteen years sang their divine song throughout her being; the laughter of her red lips showed teeth made to bite all fruits. Nothing in her was fictitious—the slim foot, the hair of pale gold, her agile young shape, the early-developed curves of the bust. Only her superb health had laid upon her cheeks the inimitable rose-tint of youth.

She spoke in an insipid manner, as did her mother; but she talked much less than the latter, limiting herself to smiles and looks. And her confident gaze already saw the future, of which she could not doubt; the mad caprices satisfied; the gold and the jewels that would come to her, the enjoyments, all the pleasures of wealth springing about her footsteps.

April was beginning; the fresh perfumed breeze came through the open window. She looked at the roofs of the neighboring houses, the blue sky, and, farther beyond, at all that awaited her. Then she looked again at Giorgio, pretending to ignore his perturbation.

Having said all that was needful for a first visit, he took his leave. She accompanied him, in order to open for him the door of the anteroom. With head slightly bent, the beautiful girl observed him fixedly, and meanwhile her little hand—ringless as yet—forgot itself within his, almost melted into it. He raised it to his lips, and prolonged a kiss upon it. She seemed to him like a personification of the spring that was triumphing out-of-doors. Searching with her taper fingers amid the laces of her gown, she drew from her bodice a bouquet of violets, moist with the warmth of her skin, and offered them to him, while with the other hand she hastened him, shutting the door behind him.

But the fragrance evoked was not that which was expected, and the revealing sensation quickly and thoroughly brought back his ideas from dreams to reality.

Those violets smelled of—cheap perfumery.

* Italian of Luigi Gualdo: E. C.: For Short Stories.

"PETREL" AND "THE BLACK SWAN"*

"Sail ho!"

Never, surely, did the cry fall upon more welcome ears, save and except those of men becalmed in a boat upon the open sea. For twelve weary days and nights had we, the officers and men of H. M. ship "Petrel" (six guns, Commander B. R. Neville), been cooped up in our iron prison, patrolling one of the hottest sections of the terrestrial globe, on the lookout for slavers. From latitude 4° north to latitude 4° south was our beat, and we dared not venture beyond these limits. Our instructions were to keep out of sight of land and try to intercept some of the larger vessels which, it was suspected, carried cargoes of slaves from the — coast. The ship, the sea, the cloudless sky; there was nothing else to see, nothing else to think of. Work, study, play even, were alike impossible in that fierce, scorching heat. If you touched a bit of iron on deck it almost burned your hand. If you lay down between decks covered with a sheet, you awoke in a bath of perspiration.

"Sail ho!"

The man, in his excitement, repeated the shout before he could be hailed from the deck.

"Where away?" sang out the captain.

"Two points on the weather bow, sir," was the reply.

That phrase about the "weather bow" was a nautical fiction, for there was no wind to speak of; and what there was was nearly dead astern.

"Keep her away two points," said Commander Neville; and the order was promptly obeyed.

In a few seconds the news had spread through the ship; and the men clustered on the bulwarks, straining their eyes to get a glimpse of the stranger. Even the stokers, poor fellows, showed their sooty faces at the engine-room hatchway. Of course the stranger might be, and probably was, an innocent trader; but then she might be a slaver; and golden visions of prize-money floated before the eyes of every man and boy on board the "Petrel."

We did not steam very fast, as of course our supply of coal was limited; and it was about two hours before sundown

* Cornhill Magazine.

when we fairly sighted the stranger. She was a long three-masted schooner, with tall raking masts, lying very low in the water. All her canvas was set; and as a little wind had sprung up, she was slipping through the water at a fair pace.

"She looks for all the world like a slaver, sir," remarked Mr. Brabazon, the first lieutenant, to the commander.

Neville said nothing, but his lips were firmly compressed, and a gleam of excitement was in his eyes.

"Fire a blank cartridge, Mr. O'Riley," said he to the second lieutenant; "and signal her to ask her nationality and her code number."

This was done; and in answer to the signal the schooner slowly hoisted the American colors.

"She has eased away her sheets, and luffed a point or two, sir," said the quartermaster, touching his cap.

The captain merely answered this by a nod.

"Put a shot in your gun, Mr. O'Riley," said he. "Lower your hoist and make a fresh hoist demanding her name."

This was done, but the American took no notice.

"Fire a shot, Mr. O'Riley—wide, of course," said the commander.

Again the deafening report of the big gun sounded in our ears; and we could see the splash of the shot as it struck the water about fifty yards from the schooner. Immediately a flag was run up, then another, and another; and we saw that she was not giving us her code number, but was spelling out her name, letter by letter—"The Black Swan."

"Just look that up in the U. S. Merchant Registry," said the captain to the first lieutenant. And in half a minute he had reported—"No such name, sir." This was something more than suspicious. And the wind was rising.

"Hoist the signal for her to heave to!" cried Commander Neville. "Take a boat and a half a dozen hands, Mr. O'Riley," he continued; "board her, inspect her papers, and come back to report. If her papers are not in order," added he, "you may search for slaves; but if they are you had better do nothing further. You know it is clearly set down in the Protocol that we are not entitled to search the hold if the papers are in order; and there have been complaints lately against some over-zealous officers, who have got into trouble in consequence. So be careful. But keep your eyes open. Note any suspicious circumstances, and come back and report."

Before Lieutenant O'Riley reached the ship he saw that everything about her had been sacrificed to speed. Her spars, especially, were unusually heavy for a craft of her size.

The British officer was received by a little, thin, elderly man wearing a Panama hat, and speaking with a strong Yankee accent.

"Produce your papers, if you please," said O'Riley. They were handed out at once, and seemed to be perfectly regular.

"What have you got on board?" was the next question.

"General cargo—dry goods, and so on."

"Why isn't your name on the Register?"

"Ain't it now? Well, I guess it must be because this is a new ship. We can't put our name on by telegraph, mister."

"Just tell your men to knock off the hatches. I want to have a look at your cargo."

The skipper shook his head.

"I've been delayed long enough," said he, "and have lost a great part of the only wind we've had in this darned latitude for a week."

"I'll do it myself, then!" cried O'Riley.

"Not now, sir; not with six men, while I have fifteen. You have no right to search the hold of a respectable merchantman and disturb her cargo. Do you take me for a slaver, or what? Ef you must have the hatches up, send back to your man-of-war for a larger crew, so as to overpower me, you understand, and you may do it with pleasure. But I guess there'll be a complaint lodged at Washington, and you folks in London will have to pay for it. That's all, mister. I only want things fair and square, within my treaty rights."

And having delivered himself of this long speech, the Yankee skipper turned on his heel.

Of course O'Riley could only return to the "Petrel" and report all this to his commander. "I'm convinced she is a slaver, sir," said he in conclusion.

"But you have no evidence of it; and you say the papers were all in order."

"Apparently they were, sir."

"Then I'm afraid I can do nothing," said the commander. And to the deep disgust of the whole ship's crew, the order was given for the "Petrel" to return to her course.

All that night, however, Commander Neville was haunted by a doubt whether he had not better have run the risk of a

complaint and a reprimand, rather than forego the overhauling of so suspicious-looking a craft; and in the morning a rumor reached his ears that the cockswain, who had accompanied Mr. O'Riley to "The Black Swan," had noticed something about her of a doubtful nature. The man was sent for and questioned; and he said that while the lieutenant was on board, the boat of which he was in charge had dropped a little way astern; and that he had then noticed that the name of the vessel had been recently painted out, but that the last two letters were distinctly visible. And these letters were LE, not AN.

"The scoundrel said she was a new ship!" cried the commander. "'Bout ship!"

"We can't possibly catch her up, sir," said the first lieutenant dryly.

"I don't know that, Mr. Brabazon," answered Neville. "There has been hardly any wind; and we know the course she was steering. She could not expect to see us again; so in all probability she has kept to that course. By making allowances we may intercept her. I am convinced of it."

The hope of again encountering "The Black Swan," faint as it was, caused quite a commotion in our little world. The day passed without our sighting a single sail; but when the morning dawned Lieutenant Brabazon was forced to own that the commander's judgment had proved better than his own. By the greatest good luck we had hit upon the right track. There, right in front of us, was the American schooner, her sails lazily flapping against her masts.

"Full speed ahead, and stand by!" shouted the captain down the engine-room tube.

"Signal to her to heave to, and if she does not obey, fire a shot right across her bows, Mr. O'Riley," continued the commander. "Mr. Brabazon, you take a boat and thirty men well armed. Board her, and have her hatches off at once. You'll stand no nonsense, I know."

"All right, sir," cried the lieutenant, an active, somewhat imperious officer, of the *Civis Romanus sum* type. He had been unusually disgusted at his commander's decision to leave "The Black Swan" without searching her; and he was delighted that a more active policy had been begun.

"I say, Brabazon," whispered the commander to him, as he was going over the side, "you know I'm stepping a bit

beyond bounds; and I'm just a little anxious. If she turns out to be a slaver, as we suspect, step to the taffrail and wave your handkerchief, will you?"

"I will, sir; I'm certain it will be all right," cheerfully responded the first lieutenant.

A tall, slim, youngish man, in white linen, received the British officer, as he set foot on the deck of "The Black Swan."

"I am at present in command of this craft, sir," said the young American. "The skipper is not fit for service just at present. We had a visit from you two days ago, I think. Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes, I want you to take off your hatches," said the lieutenant sharply.

"Well, sir," began the Yankee, "I guess your demand is beyond your treaty powers."

"I know all about that. I must have the hatches off."

"And you are detaining me and overhauling my cargo on no grounds whatever——"

"Will you do it at once?" broke in the British officer.

"I repeat, *on no grounds whatever*; will cause an international difficulty, and may bring remarkable unpleasant consequences to your captain. Now——"

"Off with your hatches!" cried the lieutenant.

"Sir!"

"If you don't, by George, I will!"

"You know clearly what you're doing, sir?"

"I do."

"And you know the risk you run?"

"I do. No more palaver. Off with them at once, or I'll break them open."

Further resistance was useless. The thing was done: and the moment the first hatch was raised the sickening effluvium that issued from the hold proclaimed the truth. Nearly three hundred slaves were packed between decks, many of the poor creatures standing so close that they could not lie down.

With a look of speechless contempt at the young mate of the schooner the lieutenant walked to the side of the ship and waved his handkerchief. That instant a loud British cheer rang over the water, given by the blue-jackets, who could be seen clustering in the rigging like bees.

"I told our skipper judgment would overtake us," said the Yankee. "Say, mister," he added in another tone, "seeing

that the game's up, suppose we have a glass of iced champagne down-stairs?"

The lieutenant hesitated. To drink with the mate of a slaver! But—iced champagne!

Slowly he moved toward the companion-way. "I don't mind if I do," he said at length; "and you may as well bring up your papers with the drinks, for I shall carry them on board the 'Petrel.' Of course you understand that you are my prize."

And having set a guard at the hatchways, the lieutenant descended the cabin stairs.

The iced champagne was duly forthcoming, and under its genial influence Lieutenant Brabazon began to feel something like pity for the young man who had been so early seduced into the paths of crime. Probably he had a mother or a sweetheart somewhere in the States, who imagined that he was already on his way home, whereas, now his character was ruined, even if he escaped a long term of imprisonment.

This feeling was strengthened, as he saw that his companion was gazing mournfully at his glass, without speaking a word. At length the young man lifted his head.

"Say, mister, what'll they do to me, do you think?"

"I can't tell. Of course, you know that what you have been engaged in is a kind of piracy?"

"No!"

"I believe so. Cargo and crew are confiscated, of course. What they will do with you I can't tell."

"They won't hang me, will they?"

"Probably not," said the lieutenant; "but let this be a warning to you. You see what it is to wander off the straight course, and hanker after forbidden gains. Lead an honest life in future, when you are released from custody. Avoid vicious companions— But what's this?" he cried, as his eye fell on an empty scabbard hanging on the wall. It looked very like a United States service sword-scabbard, and immediately the thought darted through his mind that this hypocritical young Yankee (who had been pretending to wipe away a tear as he listened to the lieutenant's good advice) had been doing something worse, or at least more heavily punished, than running cargoes of slaves.

The British officer looked round the cabin. A U. S. Navy cap was lying on a plush-covered bench.

"Ah! you've been having a brush with an American man-of-war!" cried Lieutenant Brabazon. "You will have to tell my superior officer how you came into possession of these articles. I must place you under arrest!" And, bitterly regretting that he had sat down to table with the fellow, the British officer rushed on deck.

"Quartermaster," he cried, "bring up a guard of four men, and take this man," pointing to the Yankee, who had followed him on deck, "to the 'Petrel.' If he tries to escape, shoot him at once!"

The quartermaster advanced to seize the prisoner; but before he reached him he involuntarily stopped short. A roar of laughter sounded in his ears. The American mate and his companions were shrieking and staggering about the deck; even the crew of the slaver were, every man Jack of them, grinning from ear to ear. The lieutenant was dumfounded.

"Excuse me, sir; but the joke was too good," said the Yankee, coming forward and holding out his hand. "I am the first lieutenant of the United States war-ship 'Georgia,' in command of a prize crew on board this vessel, taking her to — to have her condemned. We seized her yesterday. Hearing that you had been on a visit to her the day before, and had gone away without doing anything, I couldn't resist the temptation of taking you in. Hope you don't bear malice? Let's finish that magnum of champagne."

It was evidently the best thing to be done; but the lieutenant was not a first-rate companion on that occasion.

"Give my respects to your commander," called out the United States officer, as his guest went down into his boat, "and advise him from me not to be so jolly particular another time. And I'll try to take your kind advice and sail a straight course in future!" he cried, as her Majesty's boat shot away for the last time from the side of "The Black Swan."

ETCHINGS: THE VOICE OF NATURE *

My mother was consumed with a fever, and whether sane or delirious she constantly begged for water.

"No," said the iron physician; "that would kill her."

So she tossed and suffered in great agony, always crying for water. The nurse and my father having broken down, it was my turn to watch one night. My mother was very low. When full quiet had fallen on the house she called me softly to her bedside.

"My son," she said, "my sweet boy, my face and hands and temples are burning up! Bring me a pitcher of water with a little ice in it."

"O mother, dear, I was told not to! You might drink, and that would kill you."

"Drink, my son? I wouldn't touch a drop! You know your own mother would not lie; and then, I want to live to see my boy grow to be a big man. Why, I really don't want to drink now, my little sweetheart! I wouldn't drink a drop if I were in an ocean of water. I want merely to cool my temples."

I brought the water and set it on a little table at her bedside; but I thought it prudent to watch her, for her mind was wrong from the burning fever.

Sure enough, she did not try to taste the water, but merely cooled her hands and face with it.

When it became late she called me to her and kissed me, and said I was her brave knight, and declared I was the dearest boy in the world, and that she was quiet and wanted to sleep, and that she wanted me to lie on the lounge and rest a little while.

I did so.

When I awoke the next morning the doctor and other people were standing at the bedside.

A great fear overcame me.

I glanced at the pitcher.

It was nearly empty!

I sprang to the bedside, and my happy mother caught me in her arms and smothered me with kisses.

She was well in a week, and then she bought me a gun, a bicycle, a pony, and a gold watch all at once.

* W. C. Morrow : For Short Stories.

VICT'RY'S DIVORCEMENT*

The Temples' cook was from the country, and it was the surprise of Mrs. Temple's southern life that she was such a good cook.

She explained it very lucidly: "Laws, I know a heap on'y I done furgot it!"

Evidently, at some period in her life, she had cooked for a table of some pretensions. Every now and then, a most unexpected accomplishment would sail into our admiration. Thus, once she broke out: "My marster! Mis' Temple, fo' de lawd, dat ar cream sass er yourn, dat ain't noways diffrent to my ole missus' white sass 'cept like you all don' putt no cream in yourn. But ye cripses de butter jes de same."

Another time, "Scallop isters? I pintedly kin, Mis' Temple. Allers done scallop de isters fo' ole Miss."

Indeed she suggested a number of new viands to Mrs. Temple—generally from the frying-pan, but toothsome and delicate.

She brought her only child with her, a slim, brown lad of fourteen, who waited on table better than we feared from his first appearance, at which he brushed the crumbs off with the hearth broom into the dust pan. He was his mother's pet and, considering that fact, a marvellously good darky, almost industrious and the best-tempered boy in the world.

We were not long in discovering Aunt Victory's history. One evening, we found her at the smallest kitchen table, with Reme and the slate, plainly getting a lesson.

"Why, Aunt Victory, can you read?" said Mrs. Temple.

"Yes'm," with a smirk of modest pride, while Reme added, "Maw, she kin read a right smart. I learned her."

"How nice! Then you can read the Bible?"

Up went Aunt Victory's braids in a toss: "Laws, Mis' Temple, I's outer de Bible an' inter de newspapers!"

"And I writes fo' the newspapers," says Reme with an indescribable air of haughtiness.

"He does so," said his mother. "Ain't you never seen de Mosaic Temple?" We admitted our ignorance. "Well, he does write reg'lar fo' dat."

* Octave Thanet and Lura N. Brown : N. Y. Herald.

"And you like it?"

"Yes, ma'am, I like living in the city. But maw likes the country better."

"Yes'm, yes'm. You all got mighty gran' house yere, but gimme de kentry!"

She was one of those nut-brown Africans that have hair long enough to braid; to-night, her head was covered with a red bandanna, drawn out square-cornered back of her ears, giving her a queer resemblance to the sphinx. Flinging herself forward on the table with a supple, sinuous motion that few negroes get too old to use, she let her head fall into the open palm of one hand, above the bent elbow; and as she talked this sphinx-like head rolled in her hand like a ball in a cup. "Oh, de kentry wid de wavin' fiel's an' de red birds dat comes a peck-peekin' at de winder an' de darkies a snatchin' cotton, an' sech a heap er room! Oh, de kentry am so pleasurable! I'se timersome in de city, got t' cyar' Reme longer me if I goes out in de night. But in de kentry, I rents my little fyarm an' I's got my two mules Mis' Carrol give me. Las' year we uns did make five hundred dollars. Done so! When I paid out t' de sto' dar ben hunderd an' fifty-five dollars comin' t' me."

"An' it all ben stole!" interrupted Reme in a lugubrious tone.

"Nev' you mine 'bout dat, Reme Sanders! Dat come longer havin' no purtecter, dat huccome dat."

A more sullen look than I had ever seen on Reme's handsome brown face answered this speech. He pushed back his chair, muttering something about going to the office, quite with the white man's air; and so smuggled himself out of the lesson or further conversation. Rather to our surprise his mother made no effort to detain him.

"My, my!" she gurgled in the negro fashion, swaying herself to and fro, "dat boy caynt b'ar a word 'bout me needin' a man t' look out fo' me! Now he are gone off rarin' no me; an' wont have a word t' say fo' a whole day. He's tempered jes' like he paw; sulls twel he gits ober it."

I asked Aunt Victory if Reme's father was dead. "Laws, no," said she. "Has he left you?" said Mrs. Temple.

"He has dat."

"And doesn't Reme want you to let him come back?"

Aunt Victory rubbed her right ear against her right shoul-

der with a coquettish gesture; and for the first time I realized that, according to African notions, she was a pleasing woman. "Well, sir! why, Miss Freddy, 'taint my ole man, Reme 'jects to, 'cose not! Hit am de torrer gentleman."

We were too used to negro morality to either feel or show any particular surprise. But it seemed decent to inquire whether the departed husband was divorced from her. No, of course he was not; that was why she had come to the Rock—as the Arkansans call Little Rock.

"I gwine get a divorcement fo' fo'ty dollar de lawyer man say," she explained, "done guv 'im t'irty dollar a'ready. Den I go back t' de kentry. I pintedly does rave t' be in de kentry agin."

"But it's such hard work, Victory!" I suggested, loath to see a promising cook depart.

"Hard wuk! Taint nuffin t' de stove wuk. Gimme my hoe an' my row an' I'se happy. An' laws, Missy, it do peat like I caynt breve in dis yere shut-up town. Ain't no sunshine yere. I does love de sunshine. All culled folks jes' natchelly drinks up de sun."

It was easy to learn her story when she was in such a mood. Sitting at ease, alone with us, in the kitchen (for Manda, the chambermaid, was at a colored ball), she poured out her whole humble tragedy.

The ole Miss who had "raised" her and taught her to cook, had died. After her death, she married a negro and they went to "making a crop" on the plantation. This negro, Lige by name, accepting her picture, was a very decent man. "Yent never seen de like er Lige t' wuk. He raise de bigges' crap on de place an' he cyar so much mischief wid i' too, I does jes' be laffin, all de time. An' he done ben pintedly kind t' me, I says dat fo' him, an' nev' did fault his vituals. Allers so proud er my cookin' w'en we all has a festival or a log rollin'! Yas'm, we did give a festival onct an' made ten dollars." Perhaps I should explain that negro festivals are purely private affairs, wherein hospitality is exercised at a profit instead of expense, since the thrifty host sells the refreshments, after which is dancing at less pious houses and games at the houses of "professors."

At log rollings, however, the dinner is provided by the host. The log rollers clear the ground of felled trees, which they collect in heaps, for burning.

As Victory's memory recalled the days of her past domestic joys and social triumphs, we could see that she was moved.

"Yeas'm, Lige nev' did give me ha'sh wuds. Nev' did raise his hand agin me"—so she continued, rocking her supple body to and fro—"onlies' ting I have agin his behavior, den, ben he did be so fond er coon an' possum huntin'. Mos' de onlies' time I ever given him a pintblank hard time ben de time he 'sisted on gwine 'possum huntin' an' whilst he ben gone dat boy, my fustis chile, ben bawn. Oh, I tell ye, Lige he was struck by dat! He did jes' cry out loud; an' he name dat baby Remorse, he did, kase t' bar 'im in mine allus, an' he didn't go 'possum huntin' fo' a terrible long spell, not twell I say I kinder cravin' 'possum meat, myself. Oh, he did ben a good man t' me. I'se sorter highstrung an' feery an' w'en de stove didn't bake right, or it rain, wash-day, or my fingers git so numb pickin' cotton dat I caynt sew like I uster, why, I does be sorter ill like; but, laws, he jes' laff an' coax it outer me. Den de torrer two chillen come an' die." Her face changed and quivered. "He ben mighty kind to me, dem times," she said. For a little space she was silent, then with a hardening of her mellow voice she went on.

"We got on fine fo' a spell. Me an' Lige, we uns done ben raised by white folks—we aint no niggers. We done wuk hyard an' 'sess a heap o' goods, an' live so happy an' feel so proud—not biggoty, jes' hones' proud—twell—My Lawd!" a look of anguish keen enough to startle us, came over her face while the swift flow of her words was broken by a sudden sob and she covered her face with her hands and screamed, "O my Lawd, he lef' me! He done taken up wid a nigger 'oman!"

Then just as suddenly, she lifted her head, dried her eyes, and said: "But by'n-by Lige he get tired o' her. He ben raised by white folks, an' he come a beggin' back to me to take 'im in!"

"And you took him back?" asked Mrs. Temple.

The sphinx-like head was reared again with indescribable pride. Victory's grandfather was an African prince, she told us, once, and I can well believe her.

"Me taken him back! Mis' Temple, I ben raised by white folks. He leff me fo' a black nigger; I never take him back!"

"But how did he happen to do such a wicked thing?" said Kate Temple.

"How I know!" sullenly, "she live down de ribber, whar he go 'possum huntin', an' she gayly young ting an'—an' dey call her mighty harnsome; an', some way, she 'tice him off. He been too shamed come nigh me; but he sen' wud dat he give me de mules an' ever'ting, cep' only hunderd dollars he have at de sto'. An' so he light out. But he nev' did git no satisfaction livin' wid her. She cudn't no mo' cook a meal o' vituals dan she cud match me pickin' cotton, an' she taken t' goin' on mighty bad wid torrer niggers; so dey pahted an' Lige came straight t' me. Mist' Thompson, he say Lige done make mighty sho' he git me back. Huh—Huh!"

I somehow inferred from her conscious air that Thompson was the other man in the case. I asked her and she admitted that he was; "he was a mighty pleasant, good man," a preacher with a gift for prayer and all the sisters admired him.

I said: "But didn't it ever occur to you, Victory, that Mr. Thompson might be a prejudiced witness against Sanders?"

"How dat, Missy?"

"He wants to marry you himself, you know; mightn't he tell lies about Lige?"

"No'm. He's a plumb good man. Dar aint no sich prayin' like his'n in de kentry. He done hab a revival er 'ligion sence he come."

"But hasn't he another wife somewhere?" said Kate, who has cynical notions about negro pastors.

"Dat jes' Reme's meanness!" declared Aunt Victory vehemently. "Brer' Thompson swar t' me dat jes' de talk o' dem ornery, pusillanimous niggers in Dogtown, dat wudn't give nuffin t' de chu'ch. Me an' Reme, we give five dollars. Dat Reme, he is a good boy, but I'se consarned about him, kase he won't go t' meetin's nur t' chu'ch nur nuffin an' says dat Mist' Thompson ain't a mor'l man. He is prejudeced, dat all, Mis' Temple. Dat story 'bout Sal Miller aint got wud o' truff in it. She got t' swar dat ar baby on somebuddy, an' so she taken po' Brer' Thompson dat aint skacely pahted lips wid her. He say he skacely seen her. Aint nare critter 'cept Reme Sanders does believe it. An' he believe anyting on earth agin Brer' Thompson. I knows Reme; he jes' aimin' de plumb w'ile, git me take his paw back!"

"But could you? Would he come?" said my artful friend.

Victory's great eyes flashed. "He done come ev'ry month, ober t' see me frum Newport, in de cyars, an' walk out six

mile, fo' seben months pleadin' wid me!" said Victory, "look like he aint 'jectin'."

"Don't you think you could forgive him?"

Victory's handsome face hardened again. "De fust time I say t' him, 'Lige Sanders, I ain't gwine take you back fo' my husband twell de sun drop! You git outer my house!' Dat how I talk t' him. An' he go off mighty down, wid Reme. Nex' time, I says, 'I don't want no wuds wid ye, Mist' Sanders.' But I let him come in speak wid Reme, kase he did set a heap o' store on Reme, an' Reme on him. An' byme-by he got t' stayin' longer an' den Reme wud hab him stay t' dinner. An' Mist' Thompson say he make his braggs er dat, an' say I ben turnin' my mine t' him. Dat rile me. But de las' time w'en he come, he done shaved his beard an' look so like de Lige I married dat"—she flung out a clinched hand to strike her breast furiously—"something hot come up, dar, mindin' me o' all dem times t'gedder an' de li'le dead chillen an' all, an' I ben fair choked. So I hilt my haid mighty bovisish like, an' marched outer de house, nev' passin' a wud wid him. An' de nex' day I done rent de house an' all t' Brer' Thompson fo' him an' norrer culled man wot batches t'gedder, t' keep twell I come back, an' I drewed out my money dat I got leff t' de sto'; an' I come on yeere. I done prommus Mist' Thompson I git a divorcement fum Lige."

"And promised him, I dare say, to marry him afterward," said I.

But Victory drew herself up, proudly, "No'm, I doesn't go so easy. I only done prommus git divorcement fum Lige. I show Lige I don't nebbber furgive him!"

We both surmised that it was more anger against the erring Lige than love for Thompson (whom we unreasonably disliked) that was at the bottom of Victory's motives.

From this time our sympathies were entirely with the husband. Reme declared that Thompson stole his mother's money. He knew about the hiding place. "She wouldn't tell me where she hid it," says Reme with indignation, "but she owned up she told him."

There had been suspicions of Thompson, it appeared, in regard to some church moneys that were in his hands. Oh, yes, Reme admitted, he had paid the money back, but not until after they had lost their little hoard.

"I knows maw, she sets store by paw, still," said Reme, "but this fellow talks so smooth he's fair bewitched her. I did write to paw where we ben, and I'm hopin' he'll git round. I sent him all the money maw let me keep out my wages and my grips."

The grips, I suppose, were Reme's tips, which he received on various occasions.

"Maw'll git her divorcement in two weeks, she says," Reme went on gloomily, "and she lows to go back t' the country right straight, but I aint going with her if you all will keep me."

Reme's prediction came true. With a profusion of thanks for our kindness, Victory gave us warning. She was going back in three weeks to her own house. We couldn't complain as far as we were concerned, especially as she had hunted up a new cook of great gifts in sauces and salads (according to her former employer), neat, industrious, indeed lacking little of perfection except a good temper.

Reme, on this official confirmation, as it were, of his fears, became a walking statue of gloom. It was at this period that he broke a Royal Worcester plate and three cut-glass wine-glasses, all of which, of course, just slipped from his hands while he "wasn't doing nothing." His misery over the wreck was such that Kate hadn't the heart to scold him.

He came to us later and begged Kate not to take any money out of his wages, due the next day.

"Maw she said you'd keep 'most all," he whimpered, "cause they're the nicest kind of dishes and cost a terrible sight, she says. But if you'd please not this month, I'll sure work for you, all next month."

Kate reassured him. She wasn't going to take his money, but why was he so anxious to have the wages this month?

Then Reme confessed that his father was in town, and so was Mr. Thompson.

"And Thompson, he's all fixed up," cried Reme, "out of our money. In a black preacher coat and a silk hat. Oh, he looks mighty fine. But paw does look pint-blank gashly. You see, Mrs. Temple, he did ben sick ever sence he went home the last time, and the house where he ben burned down and he lost his good clothes and ever' cent er money, and now he's come here, all ragged, aimin' to git some work and some clothes and make it up to maw. And I don't want

maw t' see him all in his rags, and Thompson strutting round in his high hat. So I was reckoning I'd buy him some clothes."

We sympathized with Reme, but as it turned out our sympathy came to naught.

Either Victory's lawyer got the divorce sooner than he expected, or Victory, herself, found the money sooner; anyhow, a few evenings later, Kate came to me to say that Thompson was calling on Victory. I at once wanted to look at a new experiment in puddings, left in the "cold closet," to reach which one must pass through the kitchen.

True enough, there sat a smug-faced, six-foot negro, gleaming all over, in a black broadcloth, with a gorgeous gold watch chain and dazzling linen.

Victory would not let us pass without introducing him.

It was at this moment that there came a timid kind of half-hearted knock at the door.

Victory opened it and absolutely staggered back, "My Lawd! Lige!" she screamed, "whut's got ye?"

Lige indeed it was, and a forlorn spectacle than he presented is difficult to picture. He looked sick and wretched and his clothes were no better than rags. What a contrast to the resplendent Thompson!

"Yes, Vict'ry, it's me," said poor Lige, "I know I aint fit t' come t' see ye in sich close, but I did wanter see ye so bad!"

All Victory said was, "Mymy! mymy! Lige!"

By this time—for half unconsciously Victory had opened the door—Lige had shambled into the circles of light. He saw Thompson. As if by magic, his humility was rent from him; his limp form straightened, head erect and eyes burning, he shook his fist at the preacher.

"You black nigger! is you darin' come 'twixt me an' my wife?"

Manda, who was on the other side of the table, an admiring listener to Brother Thompson's eloquence, jumped up with a scream.

"You hush!" said Victory quietly, "don't ye be skeered up, Mandy, he won't do no harm!" She turned herself to Lige with actual dignity, "Who you ta'kin' 'bout, Mist' Sanders? Not me. I aint no wife er yourn. I got my bill o' divorcement dis very day."

Lige gasped. The tears rose to his eyes.

"Onyhow, she aint aimin' to demean herself to a low-down, trampin' nigger like you," said Thompson, from his glistening height of broadcloth, "Miss Vict'ry lows t' become the bride of a gentleman in the perfession——"

A swift blow from Lige's fist knocked the rest of the sentence out of time.

Like a tiger, Lige flew at the white shirt bosom and the gorgeous watch chain. But, weakened by illness, he was no match for the brawny preacher who knocked him half across the kitchen.

Manda tittered.

"Stop!" cried Mrs. Temple, "Victory! stop!" Heeding her no more than the wind, as Lige, bleeding but undismayed, dashed again at Thompson; Victory, herself, flung the dish towel tight over Thompson's unsuspecting head, pulling from behind with such force and fury, that, thus harassed in the rear, he made a misstep and all three went down together, under Lige's onslaught.

"Git you' razor, Lige!" shrieked Victory. "You let my husband 'lone or he cut you wid a razor!"

I believe that it was quite as much the bewildering effect of Victory's conduct as Mrs. Temple's commands that sent a calm on the turmoil.

Thompson crawled to his feet and glared at Lige, also on his feet, flourishing a razor, while Victory panted, supporting herself by the table, and Mandy called on the police out of the dining-room door, as if they were hidden up-stairs.

Reme's appearance at this moment rather helped the confusion, since he supposed the house to be afire, and ran to the water faucets.

"What does all this mean, Victory?" Kate demanded, as soon as she had suppressed Mandy.

"Hit mean dat I aint gwine hab no black nigger sass my husband!" answered Victory, "Mist' Thompson, sah, I bids you good-day, fo' eber mo'. An' I b'liebes ever' word Reme done tell me gin ye," she cries spitefully.

"I shall have to ask you to leave, too," added Kate.

In vain Thompson begged Victory to think of the past and her promises.

"I didn't prommus you nary," cried Victory in high wrath; "I nev' said like I'd marry you; I said I'd git a

divorcement fum Lige; an' a big fool I ben t' do it; but I done it."

"Maybe," snarled the goaded Thompson, "you didn't prommus you'd never take Lige Sanders back fo' your husband——"

"Well, I aint taken him back," came the reply, with a toss of Victory's head and a roll of Victory's eyeballs; "fo' de Lawd, I gwine marry him fresh. Dat whut I gwine do!"

"Lawd bless you, Victory!" cried Lige, "I sho' did reckon you turn me loose, w'en ye see me in dem po' ragged cloes an' him so fat an' sassy."

"Yes, on de money he stole from us!" shouted Reme, who was for having his oar in the matter.

"Lige you a fool sho'!" retorted Victory; "aint I jes' ben had my hairt turned t' ye longer dem po' cloes de minnit I seen ye, ye did look so distressed! An' w'en he begun a pickin' on ye, looked like I cudn't bar de sight er him."

"Oh laws, Vict'ry!" gasped Lige.

Thompson gave his former mistress a murderous glance; but he fished his hat from under the table, and muttering a kind of apology to Mrs. Temple went out with Mandy.

Perhaps Mandy consoled him. Kate and I thought it well to follow his example, by ourselves. There is nothing more to say except that on the following Wednesday Aunt Victory baked her own wedding cake.

ETCHINGS: "SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER"

"Stand back! You can't come in here."

"I *will* go in!" and a woman with bedraggled skirts, unkempt hair, and eyes dimmed with dissipation forced herself past Jim Baker and stood in the bare and desolate room where "Gentleman George" lay dying.

"Called 'im 'Gentleman George' 'cause he was so refined like," Jim had explained to a fellow-miner; "always used nice words. He fell down the shaft at the Golden Eagle a while ago, an' his jig's up. His mind's wanderin'. Hear 'im."

"Katie—sister Katie—love you? Oh, I idolized you! Yes, I was guilty of idolatry and I broke the sternest of the Ten Commandments, so God has visited this punishment upon me. When *he* betrayed you, my love for you made me a fiend. I followed his trail like a blood-hound. I had the devil in my heart. I found him and—well, he is dead and I soon will be. God be merciful to us both—and to Katie, sister Katie—God help her." Gentleman George paused and then continued: "Can't some one sing something? I would like to hear one of those old hymns my mother used to sing with Katie."

The wretched woman knelt by the bed and took Gentleman George's hand in hers, and then in a low voice she sang:

"Sweet hour of pray'r, sweet hour of pray'r,
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known."

The dying man lay calm and still, with his eyes closed. The woman at his side, fallen and debased, was a woman still, and her eyes filled with tears and her voice choked as she continued:

"Sweet hour of pray'r, sweet hour of pray'r,
May I thy consolation share
Till from Mount Pisgah's lofty height
I view my home and take my flight.
This robe of flesh I'll drop and rise
To seize the everlasting prize——"

She stopped. Her feelings overcame her and she burst into tears. Gentleman George opened his eyes. Although rapidly dimming, they distended with surprise. "Kate!" he whispered, and the woman at his side, with a cry of anguish, kissed lovingly the cheek that was already pallid in death.

THE SOBBING PINES *

Of the six distinct branches of the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest, each branch with its own strange language, its little city, republic, and even its own variations upon the fundamental customs of the whole race, the Queres branch is by far the most numerous, counting in all nearly 4,000 souls.

There are five Queres villages scattered along the valley of the Rio Grande; but the largest of the pueblos are Acoma and Laguna, fifty miles west of the river, on the lofty plateaus which slope from the shoulders of noble Mount San Mateo. Laguna, which lies directly on the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad, is very new for a Pueblo city, having been founded within two hundred years; but Acoma, its mother town, is of unknown antiquity. Far from the sight of curious travellers, this wondrous sky city of the Queres dreams upon the level top of a vast island of solid rock, whose cliff walls beetle five hundred feet above the pretty valley.

These people have many curious legends and stories of heroes of their tribe, which have been handed down from father to son for generations, and to which the boys and girls of the tribe to-day listen with as great awe and belief as the children of civilized nations listen to the wonderful, heroic deeds of history.

Among the folk-lore heroes of whom every Queres boy has heard is Ees-tee-ah Muts, the Arrow Boy. He was a great hunter and did many remarkable things, but there was once a time when all his courage and strength were of no avail, when but for the help of a little squirrel he would have perished miserably.

On reaching manhood Ees-tee-ah Muts married the daughter of the Kot-chin (chief). She was a very beautiful girl and her hunter-husband was very fond of her. But alas! she was secretly a witch, and every night when Ees-tee-ah Muts was asleep she used to fly away to the mountains, where the witches held their uncanny meetings. You must know that these witches have dreadful appetites, and will eat almost anything, and that there is nothing in the world of which they are so fond as boiled baby.

Ees-tee-ah Muts, who was a very good man, had no sus-

* Charles F. Lummis : San Francisco Chronicle.

picion that his wife was guilty of such practices, and she was very careful to keep him in ignorance of it.

One day, when the witch-wife was planning to go to a meeting, she stole a fat young baby and put it to cook in a great tinaja (earthen jar) in the dark inner room. But before night she found she must go for water, and as the strange stone reservoir at Acoma is a laborious half-mile from the houses, she would be gone some time. So as she departed with a bright-painted tinaja upon her head she charged her husband strictly, on no account to enter the inner room during her absence.

When she was gone Ees-tee-ah Muts began to ponder what she had said, and he feared that all was not well. He went to the inner room and looked around, and when he found the baby cooking he was grieved, as any good husband would be, for then he knew that his wife was a witch. But when his wife returned with water he said not a word, keeping only a sharp lookout to see what would come.

Very early that night Ees-tee-ah Muts pretended to go to sleep, but he was really very wide awake. His wife was very quiet, but he could feel that she was watching him. Presently a cat came sneaking into the room, and whispered to the witch-wife:

“Why do you not come to the meeting, for we await you?”

“Wait me yet a little,” she whispered, “until the man is sound asleep.”

The cat crept away, and Ees-tee-ah Muts kept very still. By-and-by an owl came in and bade the woman hurry. And at last, thinking her husband asleep, the witch-wife rose noiselessly and went out.

As soon as she was gone, Ees-tee-ah Muts got up and followed her at a distance, for it was a night of the full moon, and the path was silvered by its light.

The witch-wife walked a long way till she came to the foot of the Black Mesa, where was a great, dark hole, with a rainbow in its mouth. As she passed under the rainbow she turned herself into a cat and disappeared within the cave. Ees-tee-ah Muts crept softly up and peered in. He saw a great firelit room full of witches in the shapes of ravens and vultures, wolves and other animals of ill omen. They were gathered about their feast and were enjoying themselves, eating, dancing and singing and planning evil to mankind.

For a long time Ees-tee-ah Muts watched them, but at last one caught sight of his face peering in at the hole.

"Bring him in!" shouted the chief witch, and many of them rushed out and surrounded him and dragged him into the cave.

"Now," said the chief witch, who was very angry, "we have caught you as a spy and we ought to kill you. But if you will save your life and be one of us, go home and bring me the hearts of your mother and sister and I will teach you all our ways so that you shall be a mighty wizard. Lose no time, but go at once."

Ees-tee-ah Muts hurried home to Acoma and killed two sheep, for he knew, as every Indian knows, that it was useless to try to escape from the witches. Taking the hearts of the sheep he quickly returned to the chief witch, to whom he gave them. But when the chief witch pricked the hearts with a sharp stick they swelled themselves out like a frog. Then she knew that she had been deceived, and was very angry, but pretending not to care she ordered Ees-tee-ah Muts to go home, which the frightened hunter was very glad to do.

But next morning when Ees-tee-ah Muts awoke he was not in his own home at all, but lying on a tiny shelf far up a dizzy cliff. To jump was certain death, for it was a thousand feet to the ground; and climb he could not, for the smooth rock rose a thousand feet above his head. Then he knew that he had been bewitched by the chief of those that have the evil road, and that he must die.

He could hardly move without falling from the narrow shelf, and there he lay with bitter thoughts until the sun was high overhead.

At last a young squirrel came running along the ledge, and seeing him, ran back to its mother, crying:

"Nana! Nana! Here is a dead man lying on our ledge!"

"No, he is not dead," said the squirrel-mother when she had looked, "but I think he is very hungry. Here, take this acorn cup and carry him some cornmeal and water."

The young squirrel brought the acorn-cup full of wet cornmeal, but Ees-tee-ah Muts scorned it, he would not take it, for he thought:

"Pah! What is so little when I am fainting for food?"

But the squirrel-mother, knowing what was in his heart, said to him:

"Not so, nan-kee-ne [friend]. It looks to be little, but there will be more than enough. Eat and be strong."

Still doubting, Ees-tee-ah Muts took the cup and ate of the blue cornmeal until he could eat no longer, and yet the acorn-cup was not empty. Then the young squirrel took the cup and brought it full of water, and though he was very thirsty he could not drain it.

"Now, friend," said the squirrel-mother, when he was refreshed by his meal, "you cannot yet get down from here, where the witches put you, but wait, for I am the one that will help you."

She went to her store-room and brought out a pine cone, which she dropped over the great cliff. Ees-tee-ah Muts lay on the narrow ledge as patiently as he could, sleeping sometimes and sometimes thinking of his strange plight. Next morning he could see a stout young pine tree growing at the bottom of the cliff, where he was very sure there had been no tree at all the day before. Before night it was a large tree, and the second morning it was twice as tall. The young squirrel brought him meal and water in the acorn-cup twice a day, and now he began to be confident that he would escape, with the help of the squirrel-mother.

By the evening of the fourth day the magic pine towered far above his head, and it was so close to the cliff that he could touch it from his shelf.

"Now, friend man," said the squirrel-mother, "follow me!" and she leaped lightly into the tree. Ees-tee-ah Muts seized a branch and swung over into the tree, and letting himself down from bough to bough, at last reached the ground in safety.

The squirrel-mother came with him to the ground and he thanked her for her kindness.

"But now I must go back to my home," she said. "Take these seeds of the pine tree and these pinon nuts which I have brought for you, and be very careful of them. When you get home give your wife the pine seeds, but you must eat the pinons. So now, good-by," and off she went up the tree, and disappeared from his sight.

When Ees-tee-ah Muts had come to Acoma and climbed the dizzy stone ladder and stood in the adobe town, he was very much surprised. For the four days of his absence had really been four years, and the people looked strange. All

had given him up for dead, and his witch-wife had married another man, but still lived in the same house, which was hers. When Ees-tee-ah Muts entered she seemed very glad to see him, and pretended to know nothing of what had befallen him. He said nothing about it, but talked pleasantly while he munched the pinon nuts, giving her the pine seeds to eat. Her new husband made a bed for Ees-tee-ah Muts, and in the morning very early the two men went away together on a hunt.

That afternoon the mother of the witch-wife went to visit her daughter, but when she came near the house she stopped in terror, for far up through the roof grew a great pine tree, whose furry arms came out at doors and windows. That was the end of the witch-wife, for the magic seed had sprouted in her stomach, and she was turned into a great, sad pine that swayed above her home, and moaned and sobbed forever, as all her pine children do to this day.

ETCHINGS: THE RESCUE*

It was a by-street, opening from one of the main thoroughfares. Running about in turbulent excitement were men, women, boys and girls, and even little children. Sharp cries flew back and forth, like the screams of night-birds, and rag-clad arms waved and beat the air and pointed—all in one direction.

I stopped at the corner—what was it all about?

Behind me, clattering down the thoroughfare, I heard an engine coming, the peals of its gong mingling with the rattle of its horses' feet upon the stones. It whirled around the corner and into the little street.

It was a fire, then! I followed.

The house was doomed—I saw that at a glance.

No matter—it is an old den—let it burn!

But it may be a *home!* I hadn't thought of that. I drew nearer to the cordon of officers, pushing my way through the motley crowd that gazed upon this domestic tragedy. I was looking for the people of this burning house.

I saw them—a little group of father, mother, and child—a girl of eight or ten. It *was* a home—I knew it!

Meanwhile the threads of flame have broadened into sheets. Streams of water hurl themselves upon the near-by houses—the firemen have given up the den.

Suddenly there is a shrill, plaintive sound from a child's voice, the little girl's.

"I must save her!" are the words she utters, and before the father's restraining hand can reach her she rushes through the police line and disappears in the burning house!

"After her!" shouts the fire-chief, trumpet in hand.

A fireman dashes across the street and into the dense vapor.

A breathless, painful interval! Then a great shout goes up, over the tops of the houses, for the fireman has come back into the street, bearing the body of the girl! I can see that she presses to her breast something wrapped in a whitish cloth.

The brave man puts the little girl into her father's arms—the bundle she has been holding falls to the ground!

See! it has life—it moves!

What of the girl—will she live?

God only knows. But she has saved her—kitten!

* D. B. Waggener: For Short Stories.

FAMOUS STORIES: THE BIG LIE *

From Harper's Magazine: Copyright, 1870, by Harper & Bros.

The day's work was done, and a good day's work it was. We had bagged a couple of fine bucks and a fat doe; and now we lay camped at the foot of the "Balsam Range" of mountains in North Carolina, preparing for our supper. We were a right merry group of seven—four professional hunters and three amateurs, myself among the latter. There was Jim Fisher, Aleck Wood, Sam or Sharp Snaffles *alias* "Yaou," and Nathan Langford *alias* the "Pious."

These were our *professional* hunters. Our *amateurs* may well continue nameless, as their achievements do not call for any present record.

There stood our tent pitched at the foot of the mountains, with a beautiful cascade leaping headlong toward us, and subsiding into a mountain runnel, and finally into a little lakelet, the waters of which, edged with perpetual foam, were as clear as crystal.

Our baggage wagon, which had been sent round to meet us by trail routes through the gorges, stood near the tent, which was of stout army canvas.

That baggage wagon held a variety of luxuries. There was a barrel of the best bolted wheat flour. There were a dozen choice hams, a sack of coffee, a keg of sugar, a few thousand of cigars, and last, not least, a corpulent barrel of Western usquebaugh, vulgarly "whiskey," to say nothing of a pair of demijohns of equal dimensions, one containing peach brandy of mountain manufacture, the other the luscious honey from the mountain hives.

Supper over, and it is Saturday night. It is the night dedicated among the professional hunters to what is called "The Lying Camp."

"The Lying Camp!" I exclaimed to Columbus Mills, one of our party, a wealthy mountaineer, of large estates, whose

* By William Gilmore Simms, LL.D. Republished by special permission of Harper & Bros. William Gilmore Simms was born in Charleston, South Carolina, the 17th of April, 1806, and died the 11th of June, 1870—the above story being printed in Harper's Magazine for October of the same year. Dr. Simms has the reputation of being one of the most prolific writers of America. His best-known works are a series of Revolutionary and border romances, published in eighteen volumes. He was a great hunter and fisherman, and all his work is breezy of camp and out-door life.

guest I have been for some time. "What do you mean by the 'Lying Camp,' Columbus?"

The explanation soon followed.

Saturday night is devoted by the mountaineers engaged in a camp hunt, which sometimes contemplates a course of several weeks, to stories of their adventures—"long yarns"—chiefly relating to the objects of their chase and the wild experiences of their professional life. The hunter who naturally inclines to exaggeration is, at such a period, privileged to deal in all the extravagances of invention—nay, he is *required* to do so! To be literal, or confine himself to the bald and naked truth, is not only discreditable, but a *finable* offence! He is, in such a case, made to swallow a long, strong, and difficult potation! He cannot be too extravagant in his incidents, but he is also required to exhibit a certain degree of *art* in their use; and he thus frequently rises into a certain realm of fiction, the ingenuities of which are made to compensate for the exaggerations, as they do in the Arabian Nights and other Oriental romances.

This will suffice for explanation.

Nearly all our professional hunters assembled on the present occasion were tolerable *raconteurs*. They complimented Jim Fisher by throwing the raw deer-skin over his shoulders; tying the antlers of the buck with a red handkerchief over his forehead, seating him on the biggest bowlder which lay at hand; and, sprinkling him with a stoup of whiskey, they christened him "The Big Lie" for the occasion. And in this character he complacently presided during the rest of the evening; till the company prepared for sleep, which was not till midnight, he was king of the east.

It was the duty of the "Big Lie" to regulate proceedings, keep order, appoint the *raconteurs* severally, and admonish them when he found them foregoing their privileges, and narrating bald, naked, and uninteresting truth. They must deal in fiction.

Jim Fisher was seventy years old, and a veteran hunter, the most famous in all the country. He *looked* authority, and promptly began to assert it, which he did in a single word:

"Yaou!"

"Yaou" was the *nom de nique* of one of the hunters, whose proper name was Sam Snaffles, but who, from his special smartness, had obtained the farther sobriquet of "*Sharp Snaffles*."

Columbus Mills whispered me that he was called "Yaou" from his frequent use of that word, which, in the Choctaw dialect, simply means "Yes." Snaffles had rambled considerably among the Choctaws, and picked up a variety of their words, which he was fond of using in preference to the vulgar English; and his common use of "Yaou" for the affirmative had prompted the substitution of it for his own name. He answered to the name.

"Ay—yee, Yaou," was the response of Sam. "I was *afeard*, 'Big Lie,' that you'd be hitching me up the very first in your team."

Sam Snaffles swallowed his peach and honey at a gulp, hemmed thrice lustily, put himself into an attitude, and began as follows.

I shall adopt his language as closely as possible; but it is not possible, in any degree, to convey any adequate idea of his *manner*, which was admirably appropriate to the subject-matter. Indeed, the fellow was a born actor.

The "Jedge" was the *nom de guerre* which the hunters had conferred upon me, looking, no doubt, to my venerable aspect—for I had travelled considerably beyond my teens—and the general dignity of my bearing.

"You see, jedge," addressing me especially as the distinguished stranger, "I'm a-telling this hyar history of mine jest to please *you*, and I'll try to please you ef I kin. These fellows hyar have hearn it so often that they knows all about it jest as well I do my own self, and they knows the truth of it all, and would swear to it afore any hunters' court in all the county, ef so be the affidavy was to be taken in camp and on a Saturday night.

"You see then, jedge, it's about a dozen or fourteen years ago, when I was a young fellow without much beard on my chin, though I was full grown as I am now—strong as a horse, ef not quite so big as a buffalo. I was then jest a-beginning my 'prenticeship to the hunting business, and looking to sich persons as the 'Big Lie' thar to show me how to take the track of b'ar, buck, and painther.

"But I confess I weren't a-doing much. I hed a great deal to l'arn, and I reckon I miss'd many more bucks than I ever hit—that is, jest up to that time——"

"Look you, Yaou," said "Big Lie," interrupting him, "you're gitting too close upon the eternal stupid truth! All

you've been a-saying is jest nothing but the naked truth, as I knows it. Jest crook your trail!"

"And how's a man to lie decently onless you lets him hev a bit of truth to go upon? The truth's nothing but a peg in the wall that I hangs the lie upon. A'ter a while I promise that you shan't see the peg."

"Worm along, Yaou!"

"Well, jedge, I warn't a-doing much among the *bucks* yet—jest for the reason that I was quite too eager in the scent a'ter a sartin *doe*! Now, jedge, you never seed my wife—my Merry Ann, as I calls her; and ef you was to see her *now*—though she's prime grit yit—you would never believe that, of all the womankind in all these mountains, she was the very yaller flower of the forest, with the reddest rose cheeks you ever did see, and sich a mouth, and sich bright curly hair, and so tall, and so slender, and so all over beautiful. O Lawd! when I thinks of it and them times, I don't see how 'twas possible to think of buck-hunting when thar was sich a doe, with sich eyes shining on me.

"Well, jedge, Merry Ann was the only da'ter of Jeff Hopson and Keziah Hopson, his wife, who was the da'ter of Squire Claypole, whose wife was Margery Clough, that lived down upon Pacolet River——"

"Look you, Yaou, ain't you getting into them derved facts agin, eh?"

"I reckon I em, 'Big Lie.' 'Scuse me; I'll kiver the pegs *direct-lie*, one a'ter t'other. Whar was I? Ah! Oh! Well, jedge, poor hunter and poor man—jest, you see, a squatter on the side of a leetle bit of a mountain close on to Columbus Mills, at Mount Tryon, I was all the time on a hot trail a'ter Merry Ann Hopson. I went thar to see her a'most every night; and sometimes I carried a buck for the old people, and sometimes a doeskin for the gal; and I do think, bad hunter as I then was, I pretty much kept the fambly in deer meat through the whole winter.

"Well, jedge, though Jeff Hopson was glad enough to git my meat always, he didn't affection me as I did his da'ter. He was a sharp, close, money-loving old fellow, who was always considerate of the main chaince; and the old lady, his wife, who hairdly dare say her soul was her own, she jest looked both ways, as I may say, for Sunday, never giving a fair look to me or my chainces, when his eyes were sot on

her. But 'twan't so with my Merry Ann. She hed the eyes for me from the beginning, and soon she hed the feelings; and you see, jedge, we sometimes did git a chaince, when old Jeff was gone from home, to come to a sort of onderstanding about our feelings; and the long and the short of it was that Merry Ann confessed to me that she'd like nothing better than to be my wife. She liked no other man but me.

"Now, jedge, a'ter that, what was a young fellow to do? That, I say, was the proper kind of incouragement. So I said, 'I'll ax your daddy.' Then she got scary, and said, 'Oh, don't, for somehow, Sam, I'm a-thinking daddy don't like you enough *yit*. Jest hold on a bit, and come often, and bring him venison, and try to make him laugh, which you kin do, you know, and a'ter a time you kin try him.' And so I did—or rether I didn't. I put off the axing. I come constant. I brought venison all the time, and b'ar meat a plenty, a'most three days in every week.

"Well, jedge, this went on for a long time, a'most the whole winter, and spring, and summer, till the winter begun to come in agin. I carried 'em the vension, and Merry Ann meets me in the woods, and we hes sich a pleasant time when we meets on them little odd chainces that I gits hot as thunder to bring the business to a sweet honey finish.

"But Merry Ann keeps on scary, and she puts me off, ontill, one day, one a'ternoon, about sundown, she meets me in the woods, and she's all in a flusteration. And she ups and tells me how old John Grimstead, the old bachelor (a fellow about forty years old, and the dear gal not yet twenty), how he's a'ter her, and bekaise he's got a good fairm, and mules and horses, how her daddy's giving him the open-mouth incouragement.

"Then I says to Merry Ann:

"'You sees I kain't put off no longer. I must out with it, and ax your daddy at onst.' And then her scary fit come on agin, and she begs me not to—not *jist yit*. But I swears by all the Hokies that I won't put off another day; and so, as I haired the old man was in the house that very hour, I lef Merry Ann in the woods, all in a trimbling, and I jest went ahead, detarmined to have the figure straight, odd or even.

"I was jubious; but I jist bolted into the house, as free and easy and bold as ef I was the very best customer that the old man wanted to see."

Here Yaou paused to renew his draught of peach and honey.

“Well, jedge, I put a bold face on the business, though my hairt was gitting up into my throat, and I was almost a-gasping for my breath when I was fairly in the big room, and standing up before the old squire. He was a-setting in his big squar hide-bottom'd arm-chair, looking like a jedge upon the bench jist about to send a poor fellow to the gal-lows. As he seed me come in, looking queer enough, I reckon, his mouth put on a sort of grin, which showed all his grinders, and he looked for all the world as ef he guessed the business I come about. But he said good-natured enough:

“‘Well, Sam Snaffles, how goes it?’

“I said to myself:

“‘It's jest as well to git the worst at onst, and then thar'll be an eend of the oneasiness.’ So I up and told him, in pretty soft, smooth sort of speechifying, as how I was mighty fond of Merry Ann, and she, I was a-thinking, of me, and that I jest come to ax ef I might hev Merry Ann for my wife.

“Then he opened his eyes wide, as ef he never expected to hear sich a proposal from me.

“‘What!’ says he. ‘You?’

“‘Jest so, squire,’ says I. ‘Ef it pleases you to believe me, and to consider it reasonable, the axing.’

“He sot quiet for a minit or more, then he gits up, knocks all the fire out of his pipe on the chimney, fills it, and lights it agin, and then comes straight up to me, whar I was a-setting on the chair in front of him, and without a word he takes the collar of my coat betwixt the thumb and forefinger of his left hand, and he says:

“‘Git up, Sam Snaffles. Git up, ef you please.’

“Well, I gits up, and he says:

“‘Hyar. Come. Hyar.’

“And with that he leads me right across the room to a big looking-glass that hung agin the partition wall, and thar he stops before the glass, facing it and holding me by the collar all the time.

“Now that looking-glass, jedge, was about the biggest I ever did see. It was a'most three feet high, and a'most two feet wide, and it had a bright, broad frame, shiny like gold, with a heap of leetle figgers worked all round it. I reckon thar's no sich glass now in all the mountain country.

"Well, thar he hed me up, both on us standing in front of this glass, whar we could a'most see the whole of our full figgers from head to foot.

"And when we hed stood thar for a minit or so, he says, quite solemn like:

" 'Look in the glass, Sam Snaffles.'

"So I looked.

" 'Well,' says I, 'I sees you, Squire Hopson, and myself, Sam Snaffles.'

" 'Look good,' says he; '*obzarve* well.'

" 'Well,' says I, 'I'm a-looking with all my eyes. I only sees what I tells you.'

" 'But you don't *obzarve*,' says he. 'Looking and seeing's one thing,' says he, 'but *obzarving*'s another. Now *obzarve*.'

"By this time, jedge, I was getting sort o' riled, for I could see that somehow he was jest a-trying to make me feel redickilous. So I says:

" 'Look you, Squire Hopson, ef you thinks I never seed myself in a glass afore this, you're mighty mistaken.'

" 'Very well,' says he. 'Now *obzarve*. You sees your own figger, and your face, and you air *obzarving* as well as you know how. Now, Mr. Sam Snaffles—now that you've hed a fair look at yourself—jest now answer me, from your honest conscience, a'ter all you've seen, ef you honestly thinks you're the sort of pusson to hev *my* da'ter.'

"And with that he gin me a twist, and when I wheeled round he hed wheeled round too, and thar we stood full facing one another.

"Lawd! how I was riled! But I answered, quick:

" 'And why not, I'd like to know, Squire Hopson? I ain't the handsomest man in the world, but I'm not the ugliest; and folks don't generally consider me at all among the uglies. I'm as tall a man as you, and as stout and strong, and as good a man o' my inches as ever stepped in shoe-leather. And it's enough to tell you, squire, whatever *you* may think, that Merry Ann believes in me, and she's a way of thinking that I'm jest about the very pusson that ought to hev her.'

" 'Merry Ann's thinking,' says he, 'don't run all fours with her fayther's thinking. I axed you, Sam Snaffles, to *obzarve* yourself in the glass. I telled you that seeing warn't edactly *obzarving*. You seed only the inches; you seed that you hed eyes, and mouth, and nose, and the airms and legs of a

man. But eyes and mouth, and legs and airms, don't make a man.'

"'Oh, they don't,' says I.

"'No, indeed,' says he. 'I seed that you hed all them; but then I seed thar was one thing that you hedn't got.'

"'Jimini!' says I, mighty confused. 'What thing's a-wanting to me to make me a man?'

"'Capital,' says he, and he lifted himself up and looked mighty grand.

"'Capital,' says I; 'and what's that?'

"'Thar air many kinds of capital,' says he. 'Money's capital, for it kin buy everything; house and lands is capital; cattle and horses and sheep, when thar's enough on 'em, is capital. And as I obzarved you in the glass, Sam Snaffles, I seed that *capital* was the very thing that you wanted to make a man of you. Now, I don't mean that any da'ter of mine shall marry a pusson that's not a *perfect* man. I obzarved you long ago, and seed whar you was wanting. I axed about you. I axed your horse.'

"'Axed my horse!' says I, pretty nigh dumfounded.

"'Yes; I axed your horse, and he said to me, "Look at me. I hain't got an ounce of spar' flesh on my bones. You kin count all my ribs. You kin lay the whole length of your airm betwixt any two on 'em, and it'll lie thar as snug as a black snake betwixt two poles of a log-house." Says he, "Sam's got *no capital*. He ain't got any time five bushels of corn in his crib, and he's such a monstrous feeder himself that he'll eat out four bushels, and think it mighty hard upon him to give *me* the other one." Thar, now, was your horse's testimony, Sam, agin you. Then I axed about your cabin, and your way of living. I was curious, and went to see you one day when I knowed you waur at home. You hed but one chair, which you gin me to sit on, and you sot on the eend of a barrel for yourself. You gin me a rasher of bacon what hedn't a streak of fat in it. You hed a poor quarter of a poor doe hanging from the rafters, a poor beast that somebody hed disabled——'

"'I shot it myself,' says I.

"'Well, it was a-dying when you shot it, and all the hunters say you was a poor shooter at anything. Your cabin had but one room, and that you slept in and ate in, and the floor was six inches deep in dirt. Says I to myself, says I, "This poor

fellow's got *no capital*; and he hasn't the head to git *capital*:" and from that moment, Sam Snaffles, the more I obzarved you the more sartin 'twas that you never could be a man ef you waur to live a thousand years.'

"A'ter that long speechifying, jedge, you might ha' ground me up in a mill, biled me down in a pot, and scattered me over a manure heap, and I wouldn't ha' been able to say a word.

"I cotched up my hat, and was a-gwine, when he said to me, with his derved infernal big grin:

"Take another look in the glass, Sam Snaffles, and obzarve well, and you'll see jest whar it is I thinks that you're wanting.'

"I didn't stop for any more. I jest bolted, like a hot shot out of a shovel, and didn't know my own self, or whatever steps I tuk, tell I got into the thicket and met Merry Ann coming toward me.

"I must liquor now.

"Well, jedge, it was a hard meeting betwixt me and Merry Ann. The poor gal come to me in a sort of run, and hairdly drawing her breath, she cried out:

"O Sam! What does he say?'

"What could I say? How tell her? I jest wrapped her up in my arms, and I cries out, making some violent remarks about the old squire.

"Then she screamed, and I hed to squeeze her up, more close than ever, and kiss her, I reckon, more than a dozen times, jest to keep her from gwine into historical fits. I telled her all, from beginning to eend.

"I telled her that thar waur some truth in what the old man said; that I hedn't been keerful to do the thing as I ought; that the house *was* mean and dirty; that the horse was mean and poor; that I hed been thinking too much about her own self to think about other things; but that I would do better, would see to things, put things right, git corn in the crib, git 'capital' ef I could, and make a good, comfortable home for *her*.

"Look at me,' says I, 'Merry Ann. Does I look like a man?'

"You're all the man I wants,' says she.

"That's enough,' says I. 'You shall see what I kin do, and what I *will* do. That'es ef you air true to me.'

“And she threwed herself upon my buzzom, and cried out:
“‘I’ll be true to you, Sam. I loves nobody in all the world so much as I loves you.’

“‘And you won’t marry any other man, Merry Ann, no matter what your daddy says?’

“‘Never,’ she says.

“‘And you won’t listen to this old bachelor fellow, Grimstead, that’s got the “capital” already, no matter how they spurs you?’

“‘Never,’ she says.

“‘Sw’ar it,’ says I, ‘sw’ar it, Merry Ann, that you will be my wife, and never marry Grimstead.’

“‘I sw’ars it,’ she says, kissing *me*, bekaize we had no book.

“‘Now,’ says I, ‘Merry Ann, that’s not enough. Cuss him for my sake, and to make it sartin. Cuss that fellow Grimstead.’

“‘O Sam, I kain’t cuss,’ says she; ‘that’s wicked.’

“‘Cuss him on my account,’ says I—‘to my credit.’

“‘Oh,’ says she, ‘don’t ax me. I kain’t do that.’

“Says I, ‘Merry Ann, if you don’t cuss that fellow some way, I do believe you’ll go over to him a’ter all. Jest you cuss him, now. Any small cuss will do, ef you’re in airnest.’

“‘Well,’ says she, ‘ef that’s your idee, then I says, “*Drot his skin*,” and drot *my* skin, too, ef ever I marries anybody but Sam Snaffles.’

“‘That’ll do, Merry Ann,’ says I. ‘And now I’m easy in my soul and conscience. And now, Merry Ann, I’m gwine off to try my best and git the “capital.” Ef it’s the “capital” that’s needful to make a man of me, I’ll git it, by all the Holy-Hokies, if I kin.’

“And so, after a million of squeezes and kisses, we parted; and she slipt along through the woods, the back way to the house, and I mounted my horse to go to my cabin. But, afore I mounted the beast, I gin him a dozen kicks in his ribs, jest for bearing his testimony agin me, and telling the old squire that I hedn’t ‘capital’ enough for a corn crib.

“I was mightily let down, as you may think, by old Squire Hopson; but I was mightily lifted up by Merry Ann.

“But when I got to my cabin, and seed how mean everything was there, and thought how true it was all that old Squire Hopson had said, I felt overkim, and I said to myself, ‘It’s all true. How kin I bring that beautiful yaller

flower of the forest to live in sich a mean cabin, and with sich poor accomydations? She that had everything comforting and nice about her.'

"Then I considered all about 'capital;' and it growed on me, ontill I begin to see that a man might hev good legs and arms and thighs, and a good face of his own, and yit not be a perfect and proper man a'ter all. I hed lived, you see, jedge, to be twenty-three years of age, and was living no better than a three-year-old b'ar, in a sort of cave, sleeping on shuck and straw, and never looking a'ter to-morrow.

"I couldn't sleep all that night for the thinking and obzarvations. That impudent talking of old Hopson put me on a new track. I couldn't give up hunting. I knowed no other business, and I didn't hafe know that.

"Well, jedge, as I said, I had a most miserable night of consideration and obzarvation and concatenation accordingly. I felt all over mean, 'cept now and then, when I thought of dear Merry Ann, and her felicities and cordialities and fidelities; and then, the cuss which she gin, onder the kiver of 'Drot,' to that dried-up old bachelor Grimstead. But I got to sleep at last. And I had a dream. And I thought I seed the prettiest woman critter in the world, next to Merry Ann, standing close by my bedside; and, at first, I thought 'twas Merry Ann, and I was gwine to kiss her agin; but she drawed back and said:

"'Scuse me. I'm not Merry Ann, but I'm her friend and your friend; so don't you be down in the mouth, but keep a good hairt, and you'll hev help, and git the "capital" whar you don't look for it now. It's only needful that you be detarmined on good works and making a man of yourself.'

"A'ter that dream I slept like a top, woke at day-peep, took my rifle, called up my dog, mounted my horse, and put out for the laurel hollows.

"Well, I hunted all day, made several *starts*, but got nothing; my dog ran off, the rascally pup, and, I reckon, ef Squire Hopson had met him he'd ha' said 'twas bekaise I starved him. Fact is, we hedn't any on us much to eat that day, and the old mar's ribs stood out bigger than ever.

"All day I rode and followed the track, and got nothing.

"Well, jest about sunset I come to a hollow of the hills that I hed never seed before; and in the middle of it was a great pond of water, what you call a lake; and it showed like

so much purple glass in the sunset, and 'twas jest as smooth as the big looking-glass of Squaire Hopson's. Thar wan't a breath of wind stirring.

"I was mighty tired, so I eased down from the mar', tied up the bridle and check, and let her pick about, and laid myself down onder a tree, jest about twenty yards from the lake, and thought to rest myself ontill the moon riz, which I knowed would be about seven o'clock.

"I didn't mean to fall asleep, but I did it; and I reckon I must ha' slept a good hour, for when I woke the dark had set in, and I could only see one or two bright stars hyar and thar, shooting out from the dark of the heavens. But ef I seed nothing, I haird; and jest sich a sound and noise as I hed never haird before.

"Thar was a rushing and a roaring and a screaming and a splashing in the air and in the water as made you think the universal world was coming to an eend.

"All that set me up. I was waked up out of sleep and dream, and my eyes opened to everything that eye could see; and sich another sight I never seed before. I tell you, judge, ef there was one wild goose settling down in that lake thar was one hundred thousand of 'em. I couldn't see the eend of 'em. They come every minit, swarm a'ter swarm, in tens and twenties and fifties and hundreds; and sich a fuss as they did make; sich a gabbling, sich a splashing, sich a confusion, that I was fairly confusterated; and I jest lay whar I was, a-watching 'em.

"You never seed beasts so happy. How they flapped their wings; how they gabbled to one another; how they swam hyar and thar, to the very middle of the lake and to the very edge of it, jest a fifty yards from whar I lay squat, never moving leg or arm. It was wonderful to see. I wondered how they could find room, for I reckon thar waur forty thousand on 'em, all scuffling in that leetle lake together.

"Well, as I watched them, I said to myself:

"Now, if a fellow could only captivate all them wild geese—fresh from Canniday, I reckon—what would they bring in the market at Spartanburg and Greenville?' Walker, I knowed, would buy 'em up quick at fifty cents a head. Forty thousand geese at fifty cents. Thar was 'capital.'

"I could ha' fired in among 'em with my rifle, never taking aim, and killed a dozen or more at a single shot; but what

was a poor dozen geese when thar waur forty thousand to captivate?

“What a haul ’twould be ef a man could only get ’em all in one net! Kiver them all at a fling!

“The idee worked like so much fire in my brain.

“How can it be done?

“That was the question.

“‘Kin it be done?’ I axed myself.

“‘It kin,’ I said to myself; ‘and I’m the very man to do it.’

“Then I got up and tuk to my horse and rode home.

“And thar, when I had swallowed my bit of hoe-cake and bacon and a good strong cup of coffee, and got into bed, I couldn’t sleep, thinking how I was to git them geese.

“But I kept nearing the right idee every minit, and when I was fast asleep it came to me in my dream.

“I seed the same beautifulest young woman agin that hed given me the encouragement before to go ahead, and she helped me out with the idee.

“So in the morning I went to work. I rode off to Spartanburg, and bought all the twine and cord and hafe the plough-lines in town; and I got a lot of great fish-hooks, all to help make the tanglement perfect; and I got lead for sinkers, and I got cork-wood for floaters; and I pushed for home jist as fast as my poor mar’ could streak it.

“I was at work day and night for nigh on to a week making my net; and when ’twas done I borrowed a mule and cart from Columbus Mills thar—he’ll tell you all about it, he kin make his affidavy to the truth of it.

“Well, off I driv with my great net, and got to the lake about noonday. I knowed ’twould take me some hours to make my fixings perfect, and get the net fairly stretched across the lake, and jest deep enough to do the tangling of every leg of the birds in the very midst of their swimming, and snorting, and splashing, and cavorting. When I hed fixed it all fine, and jest as I wanted it, I brought the eends of my plough-lines up to where I was gwine to hide myself. This was onder a strong sapling; and my kalkilation was, when I hed got the beasts all hooked, forty thousand, more or less—and I could tell how that was from feeling on the line—why, then, I’d whip the line round the sapling, hitch it fast, and draw in my birds at my own ease, without axing much about their comfort.

“’Twas a most beautiful and perfect plan, and all would ha’ worked beautiful well but for one leetle oversight of mine. But I won’t tell you about that part of the business yit, the more pretickilarly as it turned out for the very best, as you’ll see in the eend.

“I hedn’t long finished my fixing when the sun suddenly tumbled down the heights, and the dark begun to creep in upon me, and a pretty cold dark it waur. I remember it well. My teeth begun to chatter in my head, though I was boiling over with inward heat, all jest coming out of my hot eagerness to be captivating the birds.

“Well, jedge, I hedn’t to wait overlong. Soon I haired them coming, screaming fur away, and then I seed them pouring, jest like so many white clouds, straight down, I reckon, from the snow mountains off in Canniday.

“Down they come, millions upon millions, till I was sartin thar waur already pretty nigh on to forty thousand in the lake.

“Well, thar they waur, forty thousand, we’ll say, with, it mout be, a few millions and hundreds over. And Lawd! how they played, and splashed, and screamed, and dived! I calkilated on hooking a good many of them divers, in pretickilar, and so I watched and waited, until I thought I’d feel of my lines; and I begun, leetle by leetle, to haul in, when, Lawd love you, jedge! sich a ripping and raging, and bouncing and flouncing, and flopping and slashing, and kicking and screaming, you never did hear in all your born days!

“By this I knowed that I had captivated the captains of the host, and a pretty smart chaince, I reckoned, of the rigilar army, ef ’twan’t edactly forty thousand; for I calkilated that some few would get away—run off—jest as the cowards always does in the army jest when the shooting and confusion begins; still I reasonably calkilated on the main body of the rigiments; and so, gitting more and more hot and eager, and pulling and hauling, I made one big mistake, and, instid of wrapping the eends of my lines around the sapling that was standing jest behind me, what does I do but wraps ’em round my own thigh—the right thigh, you see—and some of the loops waur hitched round my left arm at the same time.

“All this come of my hurry and icitement, for it was burning like a hot fever in my brain, and I didn’t know when or how I hed tied myself up, until suddenly, with an all-fired scream, all together, them forty thousand geese rose like a

great black cloud in the air all tied up, tangled up—hooked about the legs, hooked about the gills, hooked and fast in some way in the beautiful leetle twistings of my net.

“Yes, jedge, as I’m a living hunter to-night, hyar a-talkin’ to you, they riz up all together, as ef they hed consulted upon it, like a mighty thunder-cloud, and off they went, screaming and flouncing, meaning, I reckon, to take the back track to Canniday, in spite of the freezing weather.

“Before I knowed whar I was, jedge, I was twenty feet in the air, my right thigh up and my left arm, and the other thigh and arm a-dangling useless, and feeling every minit as ef they was gwine to droop off.

“You may be sure I pulled with all my might, but that waur mighty leetle in the fix I was in, and I jest hed to hold on, and see whar the infernal beasts would carry me. I couldn’t loose myself, and ef I could I was by this time quite too fur up in the air, and darsn’t do so, onless I was willing to hev my brains dashed out and my whole body mashed to a mammock.

“Thar I was dangling, like a dead weight, at the tail of that all-fired cloud of wild geese, head downward, and gwine, thè Lawd knows whar! to Canniday, or Jericho, or some other heathen territory beyond the Massissip, and, it mout be, over the great eternal ocean.

“When I thought of *that*, and thought of the lines giving way, and that on a suddent I should come down plump into the big sea, jest in the middle of a great gathering of shirks and whales, to be dewoured and tore to bits by their bloody grinders, I was ready to die of skeer outright. I thought over all my sinnings in a moment, and I thought of my poor dear Merry Ann, and I called out her name, loud as I could, jest as ef the poor gal could hyar me or help me.

“And jest then I could see we waur a-drawing nigh a great thunder-cloud. I could see the red tongues running out of its black jaws; and ‘Lawd!’ says I, ‘ef these all-fired infarnal wild beasts of birds should carry me into that cloud to be burned to a coal, fried, and roasted, and biled alive by them tongues of red fire.’

“But the geese fought shy of the cloud, though we passed mighty nigh on to it, and I could see one red streak of lightning run out of the cloud, and give us chase for a full hafe a mile; but we waur too fast for it, and, in a tearing passion,

bekaise it couldn't ketch us, the red streak struck its horns into a great tree jest behind us, that we had passed over, and tore it into flinders in the twink of a musquito.

"But by this time I was beginning to feel quite stupid. I knowed that I waur fast gitting onsensible, and it did seem to me as ef my hour waur come, and I was gwine to die—and die by rope, and dangling in the air, a thousand miles from the airth!

"But jest then I was roused up. I felt something brush agin me; then my face was scratched; and, on a suddent, thar was a stop put to my travels by that conveyance. The geese had stopped flying, and waur in a mighty great con-flusteration, flopping their wings as well as they could, and screaming with all the tongues in their jaws. It was clar to me now that we had run agin something that brought us all up with a short hitch.

"I was shook roughly agin the obstruction, and I put out my right arm and cotched a hold of a long arm of an almighty big tree; then my legs waur cotched betwixt two other branches, and I rekivered myself, so as to set up a leetle and rest. The geese was a-tumbling and flopping among the branches. The net was hooked hyar and thar; and the birds waur all about me, swinging and splurging, but onable to break loose and git away.

"By leetle and leetle I come to my clar senses, and begun to feel my sitivation. The stiffness was passing out of my limbs. I could draw up my legs, and, after some hard work, I managed to onwrap the plough-lines from my right thigh and my left arm, and I hed the sense this time to tie the eends pretty tight to a great branch of the tree which stretched clar across and about a foot over my head.

"Then I begun to consider my sitivation. I hed hed a hard riding, that was sartin; and I felt sore enough. And I hed hed a horrid bad skeer, enough to make a man's wool turn white afore the night was over. But now I felt easy, bekaise I considered myself safe. With day-peep I kalkilated to let myself down from the tree by my plough-lines, and thar below, tied fast, warn't thar my forty thousand geese?

"'Hurrah!' I sings out. 'Hurrah! Merry Ann; we'll hev the "capital" now, I reckon.'

"And, singing out, I drewed up my legs and shifted my body so as to find an easier seat in the crutch of the tree,

which was an almighty big chestnut oak, when, O Lawd! on a suddent the stump I hed been setting on give way onder me. 'Twas a rotten jint of the tree. It gave way, jedge, as I tell you, and down I went, my legs first, and then my whole body—slipping down, not on the outside, but into a great hollow of the tree, all the hairt of it being eat out by the rot; and afore I knowed whar I waur I waur some twenty foot down, I reckon; and by the time I touched bottom I was up to my neck in honey.

“It was an almighty big honey-tree full of the sweet treacle, and the bees all gone and left it, I reckon, for a hundred years. And I in it up to my neck.

“I could smell it strong. I could taste it sweet. But I could see nothing.

“Lawd! Lawd! From bad to worse; buried alive in a hollow tree with never a chaine to git out! I would then ha' given all the world ef I was only sailing away with them bloody wild geese to Canniday and Jericho, even across the sea, with all its shirks and whales dewouring me.

“Buried alive! O Lawd! O Lawd! ‘Lawd save me and help me!’ I cried out from the depths. And, ‘Oh, my Merry Ann!’ I cried, ‘shill we never meet agin no more?’ ‘Scuse my weeping, jedge, but I feels all over the sinsation, fresh as ever, of being buried alive in a bee-hive tree and presarved in honey. I must liquor, jedge.”

After refreshing himself with another draught, Sam proceeded with the story of his strange adventure:

“Only think of me, jedge, in my sitivation! Buried alive in the hollow of a mountain chestnut oak! Up to my neck in honey, with never no more an appetite to eat than ef it waur the very gall of bitterness we reads of in the Scripters!

“All dark, all silent as the grave, 'cept for the gabbling and the cackling of the wild geese outside, that every now and then would make a great splurging and cavorting, trying to break away from their hitch, which was jist as fast fixed as my own.

“Who would git them geese that hed cost me so much to captivate? Who would inherit my ‘capital?’ and who would hev Merry Ann? and what will become of the mule and cart of Mills fastened in the woods by the leetle lake?

“I cussed the leetle lake, and the geese, and all the ‘capital.’

"I cussed. I couldn't help it. I cussed from the bottom of my hairt when I ought to ha' bin sayin' my prayers. And thar was my poor mar' in the stable with never a morsel of feed. She had told tales upon me to Squaire Hopson, it's true, but I forgin her, and thought of her feed, and nobody to give her none. Thar waur corn in the crib and fodder, but it warn't in the stable; and onless Columbus Mills should come looking a'ter me at the cabin, thar waur no hope for me or the mar'.

"O jedge, you couldn't jedge of my sitivation in that deep hollow and cave, I may say, of mountain oak. My head waur jest above the honey, and ef I backed it to look up, my long ha'r at the back of the neck a'most stuck fast, so thick was the honey.

"But I couldn't help looking up. The hollow was a wide one at the top, and I could see when a star was passing over. Thar they shined, bright and beautiful, as if they waur the very eyes of the angels; and as I seed them come and go, looking smiling in upon me as they come, I cried out to 'em, one by one:

"'Oh, sweet sperrits, blessed angels! ef so be thar's an angel sperrit, as they say, living in all them stars, come down and extricate me from this fix, for, so fur as I kin see, I've got no chainece of help from mortal man or woman. Hairdly onst a year does a human come this way, and ef they did come how would they know I'm hyar? How could I make them hyar me?' I knowed I prayed like a heathen sinner, but I prayed as well as I knowed how; and thar warn't a star passing over me that I didn't pray to soon as I seed them shining over the opening of the hollow; and I prayed fast and faster as I seed them passing away and gitting out of sight.

"Well, jedge, suddenly, in the midst of my praying, and jest after one bright, big star hed gone over me without seeing my sitivation, I hed a fresh skeer.

"Suddent I haird a monstrous fluttering among my geese—my 'capital.' Then I haird a great scraping and scratching on the outside of the tree, and, suddent, as I looked up, the mouth of the hollow was shet up.

"All was dark. The stars and sky waur all gone. Something black kivered the hollow, and, in a minit a'ter, I haird something slipping into the hollow right upon me.

"I could hairdly draw my breath. I begun to fear that I was to be siffocated alive; and as I haird the strange critter slipping down I shoved out my hands and felt ha'r—coarse wool—and with one hand I cotched hold of the ha'ry leg of a beast, and with t'other hand I cotched hold of his tail.

"'Twas a great b'ar, one of the biggest, come to git his honey. He knowed the tree, jedge, you see, and ef any beast in the world loves honey, it's the b'ar beast. He'll go to his death on honey, though the hounds are tearing at his very haunches.

"You may be sure, when I onst knowed what he was, and onst got a good grip on his hind quarters, I warn't gwine to let go in a hurry. I knowed that was my only chance for gitting out of the hollow, and I do believe them blessed angels in the stars sent the beast, jest at the right time, to give me human help and assistance.

"Now, yer see, jedge, thar was no chance for him turning round upon me. He pretty much filled up the hollow. He knowed his way, and slipped down, eend foremost—the latter eend, you know. He could stand up on his hind legs and eat all he wanted. Then, with his great sharp claws and his mighty muscle, he could work up, holding on to the sides of the tree, and git out a'most as easy as when he come down.

"Now, you see, ef he weighed five hundred pounds, and could climb like a cat, he could easy carry up a young fellow that hed no flesh to spar', and only weighed a hundred and twenty-five. So I laid my weight on him, eased him off as well as I could, but held on to tail and leg as ef all life and etarnity depended upon it.

"Now I reckon, jedge, that b'ar was pretty much more skeered than I was. He couldn't turn in his shoes, and with something fastened to his ankles, and as he thought, I reckon, some strange beast fastened to his tail, you never seed beast more eager to git away, and git upward. He knowed the way, and stuck his claws in the rough sides of the hollow, hand over hand, jest as a sailor pulls a rope, and up we went. We hed, howsomdever, more than one slip-back, but, Lawd bless you! I never let go. Up we went, I say, at last, and I stuck jest as close to his haunches as death sticks to a dead nigger. Up we went. I felt myself moving. My neck was out of the honey. My airms were free. I could feel the sticky thing slipping off from me, and a'ter a good quarter of an

hour the b'ar was on the great mouth of the hollow; and as I felt that I let go his tail, still keeping fast hold of his leg, and with one hand I cotched hold of the outside rim of the hollow; I found it fast, held on to it; and jest then the b'ar sat squat on the very edge of the hollow, taking a sort of rest a'ter his labor.

"I don't know what 'twas, jedge, that made me do it. I warn't a-thinking at all. I was only feeling and drawing a long breath. Jest then the b'ar sort o' looked round as ef to see what varmint it was a-troubling him, when I gin him a mighty push, strong as I could, and he lost his balance and went over outside down cl'ar to the airth, and I could hyar his neck crack, almost as loud as a pistol.

"I drewed a long breath a'ter that, and prayed a short prayer; and, feeling my way all the time, so as to be sure agin rotten branches, I got a safe seat among the limbs of the tree, and sot myself down, detarmined to wait tell broad daylight before I tuk another step in the business.

"And thar I sot. So fur as I could see, jedge, I was safe. I hed got out of the tie of the flying geese, and thar they all waur, spread before me, flopping now and then, and trying to ixtricate themselves; but they couldn't come it. Thar they waur, captivated, and so much 'capital' for Sam Snaffles.

"And I hed got out of the lion's den—that is, I hed got out of the honey-tree, and warn't in no present danger of being buried alive agin. Thanks to the b'ar, and to the blessed, beautiful angel sperrits in the stars that hed sent him thar seeking honey to be my deliverance from my captivation.

"And thar he lay, jest as quiet as ef he waur a-sleeping, though I knowed his neck was broke. And that b'ar, too, was so much 'capital.'

"And I sot in the tree making my kalkilations. I could see now the meaning of that beautiful young critter that come to me in my dreams. I was to hev the 'capital,' but I was to git it through troubles and tribulations, and a mighty bad skeer for life. I never knowed the vally of 'capital' till now, and I seed the sense in all that Squire Hopson told me, though he did tell it in a mighty spiteful sperrit.

"Well, I kalkilated.

"It was cold weather, freezing, and though I had good warm clothes on, I felt monstrous like sleeping, from the cold only, though perhaps the tire and the skeer together hed

something to do with it. But I was afeard to sleep. I didn't know what would happen, and a man has never his right courage ontill daylight. I fou't agin sleep by keeping on my kalkilation.

"Forty thousand wild geese!

"Thar wan't forty thousand edzactly—very fur from it—but thar they waur, pretty thick; and for every goose I could git forty to sixty cents in all the villages in South Carolina.

"Thar was 'capital!'

"Then thar waur the ba'r.

"Jedging from his strength in pulling me up, and from his size and fat in filling up that great hollow in the tree, I kalkilated that he couldn't weigh less than five hundred pounds. His hide, I knowed, was worth twenty dollars. Then thar was the fat and tallow, and the biled marrow out of his bones, what they makes b'ar's grease out of, to make chicken whiskers grow big enough for game-cocks. Then thar waur the meat, skinned, cleaned, and all; thar couldn't be much onder four hundred and fifty pounds, and whether I sold him as fresh meat or cured he'd bring me ten cents a pound at the least.

"Says I, 'Thar's capital!'

"'Then,' says I, 'thar's my honey-tree. I reckon thar's a matter of ten thousand gallons in this hyar same honey-tree; and if I kain't git fifty to seventy cents a gallon fur it thar's no alligators in Flurriday.'

"And so I kalkilated through the night, fighting agin sleep, and thinking of my 'capital' and Merry Ann together.

"By morning I had kalkilated all I hed to do and all I hed to make.

"Soon as I got a peep of day I was up and on the look-out.

"Thar all around me were the captivated geese critters. The b'ar laid down perfectly easy and waiting for the knife; and the geese, I reckon they were much more tired than me, for they didn't seem to hev the hairt for a single flutter, even when they seed me swing down from the tree among 'em holding on to my plough-lines and letting myself down easy.

"But first I must tell you, jedge, when I seed the first signs of daylight and looked around me, Lawd bless me! what should I see but old Tryon Mountain with his great head lifting itself up in the east! And beyant I could see the house and fairm of Columbus Mills; and as I turned to look a leetle

south of that, thar was my own poor leetle log-cabin standing quiet, but with never a smoke streaming out from the chimbley.

“‘God bless them good angel sperrits,’ I said, ‘I ain’t two miles from home!’ Before I come down from the tree I knowed edzactly whar I waur. ’Twas only four miles off from the lake and whar I hitched the mule of Columbus Mills close by the cart. Thar, too, I had left my rifle. Yet in my miserable fix, carried through the air by them wild geese, I did think I hed gone a’most a thousand miles toward Canniday.

“Soon as I got down from the tree I pushed off at a trot to git the mule and cart. I was pretty sure of my b’ar and geese when I come back. The cart stood quiet enough. But the mule, having nothing to eat, was sharp’ning her teeth upon a bowlder, thinking she’d hev a bite or so before long.

“I hitched her up, brought her to my bee-tree, tumbled the b’ar into the cart, wrung the necks of all the geese that waur thar—many hed got away—and counted some twenty-seven hundred that I piled away atop of the b’ar.”

“Twenty-seven hundred!” cried the “Big Lie” and all the hunters at a breath. “Twenty-seven hundred! Why, Yaou, whenever you telled of this thing before you always counted them at three thousand one hundred and fifty!”

“Well, ef I did, I reckon I was right. I was sartinly right then, it being all fresh in my ’membrance; and I’m not the man to go back agin his own words.

“Well, jedge, next about the b’ar. Sold the hide and tal-low for a fine market price; sold the meat, got ten cents a pound for it fresh—’twas most beautiful meat; biled down the bones for the marrow; melted down the grease; sold fourteen pounds of it to the barbers and apothecaries; got a dollar a pound for that; sold that hide for twenty dollars; and got the cash for everything.

“Well, I kin only say that a’ter all the selling—and I driv at it day and night with Columbus Mills’ mule and cart, and went to every house in every street in all them villages—I hed a’most fifteen hundred dollars safe stowed away onder the pillows of my bed, all in solid gould and silver.

“But I warn’t done. Thar was my bee-tree. Don’t you think I waur gwine to lose that honey; no, my darlint. I didn’t beat the drum about nothing. I didn’t let on to a soul what I was a-doing. They axed me about the wild

geese, but I sent 'em on a wild-goose chase; and 'twan't till I hed sold off all the b'ar meat and all the geese that I made ready to git at that honey. I reckon them bees must ha' been making that honey for a hundred years, and was then driv out by the b'ars.

"Columbus Mills will tell you; he axed me all about it; but though he was always my good friend, I never even telled it to him. But he lent me his mule and cart, good fellow as he is, and never said nothing more; and, quiet enough, without beat of drum, I bought up all the tight-bound barrels that ever brought whiskey to Spartanburg and Greenville, whar they hez the taste for that article strong; and day by day I went off carrying as many barrels as the cart could hold and the mule could draw. I tapped the old tree—which was one of the oldest and biggest chestnut oaks I ever did see—close to the bottom, and drewed off the beautiful treacle. I was more than sixteen days about it, and got something over two thousand gallons of the purest, sweetest, yellowest honey you ever did see. I could hairdly git barrels and jimmyjohns enough to hold it; and I sold it out at seventy cents a gallon, which was mighty cheap. So I got from the honey a matter of fourteen hundred dollars.

"Now, jedge, all this time, though it went very much agin the grain, I kept away from Merry Ann and the old squire, her daddy. I sent him two hundred head of geese—some fresh, say one hundred, and another hundred that I hed cleaned and put in salt—and I sent him three jimmyjohns of honey, five gallons each. But I kept away and said nothing, beat no drum, and hed never a thinking but how to get in the 'capital.' And I did git it in.

"When I carried the mule and cart home to Columbus Mills I axed him about a sartin farm of one hundred and sixty acres that he hed to sell. It hed a good house on it. He solded it to me cheap. I paid him down, and put the titles in my pocket. 'Thar's capital,' says I.

"*That* waur a fixed thing forever and ever. And when I hed moved everything from the old cabin to the new farm, Columbus let me hev a fine milch cow that gin eleven quarts a day, with a beautiful young caif. Jest about that time thar was a great sale of the furniter of the Ashmore family down at Spartanburg, and I remembered I hed no decent bedstead, or anything rightly sarving for a young woman's chamber:

so I went to the sale, and bought a fine strong mahogany bedstead, a dozen chairs, a chist of drawers, and some other things that ain't quite mentionable, jedge, but all proper for a lady's chamber; and I soon hed the house fixed up ready for anything. And up to this time I never let on to anybody what I was a-thinking about or what I was a-doing until I could stand up in my own doorway and look about me, and say to myself, 'This is my "capital," I reckon;' and when I hed got all that I thought a needcessity to git I took 'count of everything

"I spread the tittle-deeds of my fairm out on the table. I read 'em over three times to see ef 'twaur all right. Thar was my name several times in big letters, 'to hev and to hold.'

"Then I fixed the furniter. Then I brought out into the stable-yard the old mar'—you couldn't count her ribs *now*, and she was spry as ef she hed got a new conceit of herself.

"Then thar was my beautiful cow and caif, sealing fat, both on 'em, and sleek as a doe in autumn.

"Then thar waur a fine young mule that I bought in Spartanburg, my cart, and a strong second-hand buggy, that could carry two pussons convenient of two different sexes. And I felt big, like a man of consekence and capital.

"That warn't all.

"I had the shiners, jedge, besides—all in gould and silver—none of your dirty rags and blotty-spotty paper.

"I hed a grand count of my money, jedge. I hed it in a dozen or twenty little bags of leather—the gould—and the silver I hed in shot-bags. It took me a whole morning to count it up and git the figgers right. Then I stuffed it in my pockets, hyar and thar, everywhar wherever I could stow a bag; and the silver I stuffed away in my saddle-bags, and clapped it on the mar'.

"Then I mounted myself, and sot the mar's nose straight in a bee-line for the fairm of Squaire Hopson.

"I was a-gwine, you see, to surprise him with my 'capital;' but, fust, I meant to give him a mighty grand skeer.

"You see, when I was a-trading with Columbus Mills about the fairm and cattle and other things, I ups and tells him about my courting of Merry Ann; and when I telled him about Squaire Hopson's talk about 'capital,' he says:

"'The old skunk! What right hez he to be talking so big when he kain't pay his own debts? He's been owing me

three hundred and fifty dollars now gwine on three years, and I kain't get even the *intrust* out of him. I've got a mortgage on his fairm for the whole, and ef he won't let you hev his da'ter, jest you come to me, and I'll clap the screws to him in short order.'

"Says I, 'Columbus, won't you sell me that mortgage?'

"'You shill hev it for the face of the debt,' says he, 'not considerin' the intrust.'

"'It's a bargain,' says I; and I paid him down the money, and he signed the mortgage for a vallyable consideration.

"I hed that beautiful paper in my breast pocket, and felt strong to face the squire in his own house, knowing how I could turn him out of it. And I mustn't forget to tell you how I got myself a new rig of clothing, with a mighty fine overcoat and a new fur cap; and as I looked in the glass I felt my consekence all over at every for'a'd step I tuk; and I felt my inches growing with every pace of the mar' on the high-road to Merry Ann and her beautiful daddy.

"Well, jedge, before I quite got to the squire's farm, who should come out to meet me in the road but Merry Ann, her own self. She hed spied me, I reckon, as I crossed the bald ridge a quarter of a mile away. I do reckon the dear gal hed been looking out for me every day the whole eleven days in the week, counting in all the Sundays. In the mountains, you know, the weeks sometimes run to twelve, and even fourteen days, specially when we're on a long camp-hunt.

"Well, Merry Ann cried and laughed together, she was so tarnation glad to see me agin. Says she:

"'O Sam! I'm so glad to see you! I was afeard you had clean gin me up. And thar's that fusty old bachelor Grimstead, he's a-coming here a'most every day; and daddy, he sw'ars that I shill marry him, and nobody else; and mammy, she's at me too, all the time, telling how fine a fairm he's got, and what a nice carriage, and all that; and mammy says as how daddy'll be sure to beat me ef I don't hev him. But I kain't bear to look at him, the old grisly.'

"'Cuss him,' says I. 'Cuss him, Merry Ann.'

"And she did, but onder her breath—the old cuss.

"'Drot him!' says she; and she said louder, 'and drot me too, Sam, ef I ever marries anybody but you.'

"By this time I hed got down and gin her a long, strong hug, and a'most twenty or a dozen kisses, and I says:

“You shan’t marry nobody but me, Merry Ann; and we’ll hev the marriage this very night, ef you says so.’

“Oh! psho, Sam! How you does talk!’

“Ef I don’t marry you to-night, Merry Ann, I’m a holy mortar, and a sinner not to be saved by any salting, though you puts the petre with the salt. I’m come for that very thing. Don’t you see my new clothes?’

“Well, you hev got a beautiful coat, Sam; all so blue, and with sich shiny buttons.’

“Look at my waistcoat, Merry Ann. What do you think of that?’

“Why, it’s a most beautiful blue velvet.’

“That’s the very article,’ says I. ‘And see the breeches, Merry Ann; and the boots.’

“Well,’ says she, ‘I’m fair astonished, Sam. Why, whar, Sam, did you find all the money for these fine things?’

“A beautiful young woman, a’most as beautiful as you, Merry Ann, come to me the very night of that day when your daddy driv me off with a flea in my ear. She come to me to my bed at midnight——’

“O Sam! *ain’t* you ashamed!’

“‘Twas in a dream, Merry Ann; and she tells me something to encourage me to go for’a’d, and I went for’a’d, bright and airly next morning, and I picked up three sarvants that hev been working for me ever sence.’

“What sarvants?’ says she.

“One was a goose, one was a b’ar, and t’other was a bee!’

“Now you’re a-fooling me, Sam.’

“You’ll see. Only you git yourself ready, for, by the eternal Hokies, I marries you this very night, and takes you home to *my* fairm bright and airly to-morrow morning.’

“I do think, Sam, you must be downright crazy.’

“You’ll see and believe. Do you go home and get yourself fixed up for the wedding. Old Parson Stovall lives only two miles from your daddy, and I’ll hev him hyar by sun-down. You’ll see.’

“But ef I waur to b’lieve you, Sam——’

“I’ve got on my wedding clothes o’ purpose, Merry Ann.’

“But *I* hain’t got no clothes fit for a gal to be married in,’ says she.

“I’ll marry you this very night, Merry Ann,’ says I, ‘though you hedn’t a stitch of clothing at all!’

“‘Git out, you sassy Sam,’ says she, slapping my face. Then I kissed her in her very mouth, and a’ter that we walked on together, I leading the mar’.

“Says she, as we neared the house, ‘Sam, let me go before, or stay hyar in the thick, and you go in by yourself. Daddy’s in the hall smoking his pipe and reading the newspaper.’

“‘We’ll walk in together,’ says I, quite consekential.

“Says she, ‘I’m so afeard.’

“‘Don’t you be afeard, Merry Ann,’ says I; ‘you’ll see that all will come out jest as I tells you. We’ll be hitched to-night ef Parson Stovall, or any other parson, kin be got to tie us up.’

“Says she, suddently, ‘Sam, you’re a-walking lame, I’m a-thinking. What’s the matter? Hev you hurt yourself any way?’

“Says I, ‘It’s only owing to my not balancing my accounts even in my pockets. You see, I feel so much like flying in the air with the idee of marrying you to-night that I filled my pockets with rocks, jest to keep me down.’

“‘I do think, Sam, you’re a leetle cracked in the upper story.’

“‘Well,’ says I, ‘ef ’so, the crack has let in a blessed chaince of the beautifullest sunlight! You’ll see! Cracked, indeed! Ha! ha! ha! Wait till I’ve done with your daddy! I’m gwine to square accounts with *him*, and I reckon, when I’m done with him, you’ll guess that the crack’s in *his* skull, and not in mine.’

“‘What! you wouldn’t knock my father, Sam!’ says she, drawing off from me and looking skeary.

“‘Don’t you be afeard; but it’s very sartin, ef our heads don’t come together, Merry Ann, you won’t hev me for your husband to-night. And that’s what I’ve swore upon. Hyar we air!’

“When we got to the yard I led in the mar’, and Merry Ann she ran away from me and dodged round the house. I hitched the mar’ to the post, took off the saddle-bags, which was mighty heavy, and walked into the house stiff enough, I tell you, though the gould in my pockets pretty much weighed me down as I walked.

“Well, in I walked, and thar sat the old squire smoking his pipe and reading the newspaper. He looked at me through his specs over the newspaper, and when he seed

who 'twas his mouth put on that same conceited sort of grin and smile that he generally hed when he spoke to me.

“‘Well,’ says he, gruffly enough, ‘it’s you, Sam Snaffles, is it?’ Then he seems to diskiver my new clothes and boots, and he sings out, ‘Heigh! you’re top-toe fine to-day! What fool of a shopkeeper in Spartanburg have you tuk in this time, Sam?’

“Says I, cool enough, ‘I’ll answer all them illigant questions a’ter a while, squire; but would prefer to see to business fust.’

“‘Business!’ says he; ‘and what business kin you hev with me, I wants to know?’

“‘You shall know, squire, soon enough! and I only hopes it will be to your liking a’ter you l’arn it.’

“So I laid my saddle-bags down at my feet and tuk a chair quite at my ease; and I could see that he was all astare in wonderment at what he thought my sassiness. As I felt I had my hook in his gills, though he didn’t know it yit, I felt in the humor to tickle him and play him as we does a trout.

“Says I, ‘Squire Hopson, you owes a sartin amount of money, say three hundred and fifty dollars, with intrust on it for now three years, to Dr. Columbus Mills.’

“At this he squares round, looks me full in the face, and says:

“‘What the Old Harry’s that to you?’

“Says I, gwine on cool and straight, ‘You gin him a mortgage on this fairm for security.’

“‘What’s that to you?’ says he.

“‘The mortgage is overdue by two years, squire,’ says I.

“‘What the Old Harry’s all that to you, I say?’ he fairly roared out.

“‘Well, nothing much, I reckon. The three hundred and fifty dollars, with three years’ intrust at seven per cent, making it now—I’ve calkilated it all without compounding—something over four hundred and twenty-five dollars—well, squire, that’s not much to *you*, I reckon, with your large capital. But it’s something to me.’

“‘But I ask again, sir,’ he says, ‘what is all this to you?’

“‘Jist about what I tells you—say four hundred and twenty-five dollars; and I’ve come hyar this morning, bright and airly, in hope you’ll be able to square up and satisfy the mortgage. Hyar’s the dockyment.’

"And I drewed the paper from my breast-pocket.

"'And you tell me that Dr. Mills sent you hyar,' says he, 'to collect this money?'

"'No; I come myself on my own hook.'

"'Well,' says he, 'you shall hev your answer at onst. Take that paper back to Dr. Mills and tell him that I'll take an airy opportunity to call and arrange the business with him. You hev your answer, sir,' he says, quite grand, 'and the sooner you makes yourself scarce the better.'

"'Much obleeged to you, squire, for your ceveelity,' says I; 'but I ain't quite satisfied with that answer. I've come for the money due on this paper, and must hev it, squire, or thar will be what the lawyers call *four closures* upon it!'

"'Enough! tell Dr. Mills I will answer in person.'

"'You needn't trouble yourself, squire; for ef you'll jest look at the back of that paper and read the 'signment, you'll see that you've got to settle with Sam Snaffles, and not with Columbus Mills.'

"Then he snatches up the dockyment, turns it over, and reads the 'signment, writ in Columbus Mills' own handwrte.

"Then the squire looks at me with a great stare, and he says, to himself like:

"'It's a *bonny fodder* 'signment.'

"'Yes,' says I, 'it's *bonny fodder*—rigilar in law—and the titles all made out complete to me, Sam Snaffles; signed, sealed, and delivered, as the lawyers says it.'

"'And how the Old Harry come you by this paper?' says he.

"I was gitting riled, and I was detarmined, this time, to gin my hook a pretty sharp jerk in his gills; so I says:

"'See, I've got my wedding-breeches on. I'm to be married to-night, and I wants to take my wife to her own fairm as soon as I kin. Now you see, squire, I all along set my hairt on this fairm of yourn, and I detarmined, ef ever I could git the "capital," to git hold of it; and that was the idee I hed when I bought the 'signment of the mortgage from Columbus Mills. So, you see, ef you kain't pay a'ter three years, you never kin pay, I reckon; and ef I don't git my money this day, why—I kain't help it—the lawyers will hev to see to the *four closures* to-morrow!'

"'Great God, sir!' says he, rising out of his chair, and crossing the room up and down, 'do you coolly propose to turn me and my family headlong out of house?'

“Well, now, says I, ‘squire, that’s not edzactly the way to put it. As I reads this dockyment’—and I tuk up and put the mortgage in my pocket—the house and fairm are *mine* by law. They onst was yourn; but it wants nothing now but the *four closures* to make ’em mine.’

“And would you force the sale of property worth two thousand dollars for a miserable four hundred dollars?”

“It must sell for what it’ll bring, squire; and I stands ready to buy it for my wife, you see, ef it costs me twice as much as the mortgage.’

“Your wife!’ says he; ‘who the Old Harry is she? You once pertended to have an affection for my da’ter.’

“So I hed; but you hedn’t the proper affection for your da’ter that I hed. You prefar’d money to her affections, and you driv me off to git “capital!” Well, I tuk your advice, and I’ve got the capital.’

“And whar the Old Harry,’ said he, ‘did you git it?’

“Well, I made good tairms with the old devil for a hundred years, and he found me in the money.’

“It must hev been so,’ said he. ‘You waur not the man to git capital in any other way.’

“Then he goes on: ‘But what becomes of your pertended affection for my da’ter?’

“‘Twan’t pertended; but you throwed yourself betwixt us with all your force, and broke the gal’s hairt, and broke mine, so far as you could; and as I couldn’t live without company, I hed to look for myself and find a wife as I could. I tell you, as I’m to be married to-night, and as I’ve swore a most eternal oath to hev this fairm, you’ll hev to raise the wind to-day and square off with me, or the lawyers will be at you with the *four closures* to-morrow, bright and airy.’

“‘Dod dern you!’ he cries out. ‘Does you want to drive me mad?’

“By no manner of means,’ says I, cool as a cucumber.

“The poor old squire fairly sweated, but he couldn’t say much. He’d come up to me and say:

“‘Ef you only did love Merry Ann!’

“‘Oh,’ says I, ‘what’s the use of your talking that? Ef you only hed ha’ loved your own da’ter!’

“Then the old chap begun to cry, and as I seed that I jest kicked over my saddle-bags lying at my feet, and the silver Mexicans rolled out—a bushel on ’em, I reckon—and O

Lawd! how the old fellow jumped, staring with all his eyes at me and the dollars.

“‘It’s money,’ says he.

“‘Yes,’ says I, ‘jest a few hundreds of thousands of *my* “capital.”’ I didn’t stop at the figgers, you see.

“Then he turns to me, and says, ‘Sam Snaffles, you’re a most wonderful man. You’re a mystery to me. Whar, in the name of heaven, hev you been? and what hev you been doing? and whar did you git all this power of capital?’

“I jest laughed, and went to the door and called Merry Ann. She come mighty quick. I reckon she was watching and waiting.

“Says I, ‘Merry Ann, that’s money. Pick it up and put it back in the saddle-bags, ef you please.’

“Then says I, turning to the old man, ‘Thar’s that whole bushel of Mexicans, I reckon. They’re monstrous heavy. My old mar’—ax her about her ribs now! she fairly squelched onder the weight of me and that money. And I’m pretty heavy loaded myself. I must lighten, with your leave, squire.’

“And I pulled out a leetle doeskin bag of gould half-eagles from my right-hand pocket and poured them out upon the table; then I emptied my left-hand pocket, then the side-pockets of the coat, then the skairt-pockets, and jist spread the shiners out upon the table.

“Merry Ann was fairly frightened, and run out of the room; then the old woman she come in, and as the old squire seed her, he tuk her by the shoulder and said:

“‘Jest you look at that thar.’

“And when she looked and seed, the poor old hypercritical scamp sinner turned round to me and flung her arms round my neck, and said:

“‘I always said you waur the only man for Merry Ann.’

“The old spooney!

“Well, we were married that night, and hev been comfortable ever sence.”

That was the end of Yaou’s story.

SHORT STORIES

A MAGAZINE OF FACT AND FICTION

Vol. VI. No. 3. *This magazine is planned to cover the story-telling field of the world. Its selections will be of the best procurable in all the languages.* JUNE, 1891

AVAILABILITY: A STUDY IN JOURNALISM *

At first, when she came out of her house, she walked quickly, with flushed cheeks and eyes sparkling with an unaccustomed light. A slight breathlessness made her delicate chest pant a little; and her pale lips, which the distress of an aneurism kept habitually compressed, murmured strange, interrupted words.

"Will this story take?" she muttered. "I have put into it so much soul, so much passion! I cried over it as I wrote, I remember; and when I came to the place where Lea dies in her grandmother's arms, the sobs choked my throat, as if it had been a question of a real fact! But"—and the girl's step became slower—"but will it please him? They say he is so stiff, so severe in the way of art! There, why should it not please him? The professor has read it and is delighted with it. . . . A professor as strict as he is! Oh, if they would take it, if they would print it in the newspaper! If"—the cheeks of the young girl flamed—"if they would pay me well! How much? Fifty lire? That would be too much. Let us say forty, or thirty. . . . Poor mamma! Obligated to go out with nothing over her dress-waist in this cold weather! I wouldn't even take home the money. . . . I would go at once to Forti's, in the Piazza della Signoria, to buy a new-market ready made. There are pretty ones for twenty-five lire! Imagine mamma in it!"

The young girl smiled with a knowing air. But she soon became anxious again. She had arrived.

She must enter without loss of time, for at eleven o'clock the lesson in Italian literature began at the high school of the Majistero, and woe to whomever was absent!

* Italian of Ida Baccini: E. Cavazza: For "Short Stories."

The great door, with its handsome plates of shining metal, was open as if it expected her.

Over the top was the famous sign at which she had so many times looked with infinite longing:

EDITORIAL OFFICE OF THE *CREPUSCOLO*.

She entered, mounting the stairs slowly and looking doubtfully ahead. What should she say when she went in? In the first room, the professor had told her, were the editors, all men, all young! And in a little separate parlor, he, the chief editor, the handsome man with the short auburn beard, the mocking smile, that she had looked at so many times, furtively, through the window-blinds. She must take courage, turn the door handle with a firm hand, and enter. Enter with reserved manners, as became an honest girl, but frank and natural. Then, after all, she was not going into those rooms from a bad motive, from vanity or coquetry! She was going to sell her work, to give a proof of her love for her dear little old woman. . . . Oh, for shame! She had been capable of hesitating so much! She could think so much of herself, of her sensitiveness of a timid child! She turned the door-handle and entered with a firm step, saying: "Good-morning." At first, near-sighted as she was and blinded by the smoke of the cigarettes, she only perceived, at the end of the room, a large table with several men seated around it writing.

They all raised their heads, and one of them, a very young man with large, weary eyes, went attentively forward to meet her.

"The chief editor?" asked Annina, with a thread of voice.

The editorial staff began to write again, dissimulating an equivocal smile, fortunately unnoticed by the girl.

"He will be here in a moment," replied the young man. "If you will wait for him . . ."

And as Annina looked around her, frightened, he added hurriedly, preceding her:

"Come into the chief editor's room, it will not be so cold there." And he opened the door of a little parlor, richly furnished, where in the fire-place was crackling a beautiful, lively flame.

The young man made a low bow, then returned to his task of cleaning up the correspondence, saying to himself,

"Where the deuce have I seen that little face and those pleading eyes?"

No one permitted himself the slightest comment in regard to the morning visitor. They had seen others, very unlike her.

* * * * *

The young girl, meanwhile—whose breath had constantly grown shorter—looked around her with ingenuous admiration. How warm one felt in that beautiful little room with a carpet on the floor and heavy plush curtains at the window! And to think that all those furnishings, all those expensive trifles, one could earn them by work with the pen, inventing beautiful romances, writing poems, making critical articles upon fine books, foreign and Italian. Oh, if she could succeed in all that! Then mamma . . .

The door opened softly, and Anderni, with a glass in his left eye, entered with a free movement, placing on the writing-table a great packet of letters and newspapers.

"In what can I be of use to you?" he then asked of the young girl, who had risen precipitately at his entrance.

"I came," she said, trembling and growing still paler, "I came . . . by the advice of my teacher of Italian literature . . . Chevalier Vallani . . . I have written a story that might, if you think best, find a place in your . . . beautiful newspaper . . . in the appendix, of course . . ."

Anderni was not bad-hearted, but that morning he felt ill-disposed and irritated. His uncle had refused him the two thousand lire which he absolutely could not do without, considering the severe necessity of his trip to Berlin.

The girl who stood before him was rather plain, pale as a ghost, and badly dressed; no doubt she belonged to the inhuman phalanx of women who write romances and wear mourning as to their finger-nails. Auff! All her hopes must be crushed, at once and at a blow.

"I am sorry," he answered slowly, tearing open nervously the envelopes of the letters and the wrappers of the newspapers. "I am sorry, my dear young lady, but the *Crepuscolo* has pigeon-holes full of stories which perhaps it will never publish. Yours—excuse me, what is it about? How is it entitled?"

The young girl felt her throat compressed as if by a hand of iron, and blamed a hundred times over the hour and the moment in which the idea had come to her of presenting her-

self to that discourteous man; yet, since now there was no turning back:

"It is a moral story," she stammered, "a story where it is shown . . ."

"That virtue is its own reward?" asked the journalist, laughing, while he began to make notes in regard to the letters which he was arranging in an elegant letter-file. "The theme could not be more amusing. And the title, please?"

"*The Last Love*," murmured the unhappy girl, in a spent voice. "Believe, signor, that I have written it with soul . . . with feeling. There are none of the usual descriptions of things . . . not honest . . . as are too much the fashion nowadays. . . . But you will see that in my story there is truth from the first to the last page, and . . ."

"I am perfectly convinced of what you tell me, dear young lady," said Anderni absent-mindedly, without noticing the visible physical sufferings that changed her pure little face. "But, you see, yours is just the sort of story that does not suit a newspaper . . ."

"Then you take away every hope from me?" said the girl, swaying, placing instinctively her hand upon her heart.

"For pity's sake, don't talk in that sentimental way! We will see if some other time. . . . These young ladies! All with the mania to write, while so many hands are needed in trades . . . in woman's work! . . . Moreover . . ." He could not continue. The young girl stretched her arms toward him as if in search of aid, stammered one word—only one—the first that we learn as babies: *Mamma!* And turning quickly, she fell stiff upon the same divan where, a few minutes before, she had dreamed of comfort for her poor old woman.

Anderni gave a stifled cry and rushed to her. The poor girl breathed no more; her eyes were wide open, glazed, and her lips contracted.

"Quick!" he shouted, opening the door. "Quick, a physician!" All the staff hastened into the little sanctum, and the young man with the weary eyes ran to the girl, raising her poor lifeless head upon his shoulder.

"She is dead," said Adolph Levis, after having felt her pulse. "At any rate, I will run for the doctor."

"She is dead! she is dead!" they all exclaimed, shaking their heads. Only the young man with the tired eyes did

not speak, but busied himself with composing decently the dress and damp hair of Annina.

"Come!" cried Anderni, turning to Fabio Leoni, the reporter of the *Crepuscolo*. "Don't stand there spellbound before the girl. Take this manuscript and send it to the composing-room. It would be better that you should take it there yourself. Have it set up at once, with a paragraph about it. Tell the facts briefly . . ."

And as Fabio Leoni remained dazed, looking at the girl!

"Look here!" cried the chief editor, agitated, convulsed. "This girl has brought me a work of hers, *The Last Love*, and has died while handing it to me. Do you take in the importance of this fact? It is a solemn, mysterious thing. We must get out a double edition of the paper. You can announce the story at once as a refined, honest thing, destined to interest our fair readers . . . but make haste—the deuce! Ah, here is the physician! Doctor! . . ."

* * * * *

All gathered again around the corpse, and the word *aneurism* passed from one mouth to another.

"It is necessary to inform the coroner and the *Misericordia* at once," said the doctor, beginning to write.

All returned, more or less affected, into the editorial room to prepare the number which was to come out at noon. Only the weary-eyed young man stayed, unobserved, to contemplate the dead girl. Oh! at last he recollected. The little waxen face that was before him resembled that of his only sister, dead of consumption a year before, when he had gone on to the *Crepuscolo* at fifty lire a month.

* * * * *

The brethren of the *Misericordia* came, in midst of a crowd of idlers who wished to learn what the facts were. But no one knew, not even a poor little old woman in Via Panica, who had heard the three strokes of the bell of the charitable company, and had crossed herself with devotion, praying for the peace of whomever, at that moment, was dying, perhaps alone, on the street, unknissed.

ETCHINGS: COYOTE*

The dawn was just breaking when Joval, the hunter, took his rifle from the pegs over the bunk-house door and said:

"I want the coyote that has been howling all night."

He walked through the horse corral and across the hay meadow to the foot of a ridge half a mile away.

Here he dropped upon his hands and knees and climbed slowly and cautiously to the top, where he could look into a little valley beyond. He pushed his rifle noiselessly across the branches of a sage-bush, aimed, and fired.

* * * * *

The coyote had howled mournfully all night, but as dawn approached his spirits revived, and he left the ridge facing the ranch and trotted briskly through the long grass, beaded with dew, over a stony hill, fringed with sage-brush, to a deep gulch, where his breakfast, the remains of a yearling calf, lay partly covered with earth which had rolled down the gulch side. Breakfasted and satisfied, he went back over the stony hill, through the meadow grass, and reached again the little valley behind the ridge where all night long he had howled so dismally. Now he is happy. He pushes back and forth, first on one side and then on the other, through the bunched grass to smooth the long fur of his gray-and-white coat, lying quiet at times to listen with alert ears to the chirp of the birds, the lowing of the cattle walking to the creek, and the chatter of the prairie-dogs in their village on the barren flat below the end of the ridge. Away off in the forest he knows a cool sheltered place deep under wild-rose bushes on which tender, sweet-tasting young buds are beginning to grow. He is on his feet in an instant ready to go there. What is that? Has something touched him? A warm damp substance floods his white breast. The grass-bunches whirl about him until he is dizzy. He snaps at them with keen teeth. What! has night come again? It is dark and he howls, loud and mournfully at first, but dropping off into a weak and smothered snarl.

* * * * *

"Yes," said Joval, the hunter, as he threw down a bloody skin in front of the bunk-house door, "it's as handsome a coyote as I ever saw. I got him in the second valley."

* J. A. Breckons: For "Short Stories."

A PRECIPITATE LOVER *

Young, brave, intelligent, Ferreol's principle of life was to be astonished at nothing. To weak and common souls belonged the emotion of surprise, and he did not worry, as the ancient Gaulois, lest the heavens should fall upon his head.

Moreover, he lacked for nothing, was well off in the goods of the world, burned his candles from start to finish, joked at the past, laughed at the future.

At Paris he encountered Angele. Charming Angele! He loved her and told her so. She listened. He pressed her. She resisted. He insisted. She mentioned marriage.

Logical even with himself, he was not astonished.

Angele was good as pretty.

Why not marriage?

"Have you a family?" said Ferreol to her.

"A father, yes."

"Where is he?"

"Brest."

"What doing?"

"Refitting vessels."

"I go at once, then," said Ferreol calmly.

"Wherefore?"

"To demand your hand of monsieur your father. It is thus with me always. For to-morrow, nothing. Consider, buy. . . . I love you, you love me. . . . You do love me—
hein?"

"Yes."

"Good! The train leaves at eight this evening. At eleven to-morrow I land at Brest. Thirty minutes later arrive at the dock. See your father. Ask him the question, receive consent, at three P.M. resume the train, and day after to-morrow, at seven in the evening, say to you, 'Angele, thou art mine!'"

She blushed, smiled coyly, and softly murmured:

"Go, then!"

Ferreol took a fiacre to more quickly reach the station; the driver was drunk.

It did not astonish him.

In the waiting-room his valise was stolen.

* *La Vie Moderne*: E. C. Waggener: For "Short Stories."

Nothing astonishing in that.

In the wagon of the train one Englishman alone occupied all the four corners—the first with his person; the second with his glass; the third with his umbrella; the fourth with his Baedeker.

Ferreol was not astonished at this, either.

Then the train ran off the track. Pooh! child's play!

Ferreol had his nose half-broken.

Ridiculous obstacle!

Briefly, with missed connections and many hours' delay, it was not till the third day after his departure from Paris that Ferreol debarked at Brest, and swift as a startled zebra threaded his way through the Rue de Siam.

"The ship refitting shops?"

"Rue de Penfeld, third building to the left."

Ferreol was totally ignorant of the geographical identity of the Penfeld, but a man like him makes no demand for explanations. Straight before him he plunged as if he knew it like A B C—turned toward Saint-Sauveur, struck the Gabon gate, rebounded upon the Madeleine, cannoned against the Château, saw on a street-lamp "Quai de la Penfeld," and divining that he was on the right road at last, took it.

Yes, took it at top speed to make up for lost time; scraping his shins on chains and tarred ropes, tripping himself up with links and anchors, receiving thumps and bumps from bales and boxes—to presently halt before a building on which, in black letters on a tobacco ground, was the magic word:

Refitters.

This chance astonished him no more than all the rest. Before him was a door. He knocked, entered, perceived a gloomy hall, a dingy camp-bed, on that camp-bed a sailor smoking a cob pipe. Hairy, tarry, weather-beaten—a type of the old sea-wolf.

"Monsieur Kenezek?" said Ferreol civilly.

"Not in."

"Where is he, then?"

"At work, of course."

"Where, I say?"

"Yonder; or maybe below."

And the sailor designated with his thumb a vague topography, some distance away.

"Eh bien! then I'll go and find him at work."

"Thou, my chicken?"

"Why not?"

"It would be——"

"Bah! no phrases! Speak to Monsieur Kenezek I must, on business that admits of no delay, and I *will* speak to him at once, if I have to go to the bottom to do it."

The sailor rose instantly, shifted pipe and quid from right to left, and cried out admiringly:

"Thou too, then, art of the craft, my chicken?"

Ferreol comprehended nothing, but his principles dictated his answer.

"Parbleu! yes," said he, turning with decision.

"Come on, then, I'll show you myself. Two steps away only, but you'll dress yourself here."

Dress himself, and here? Any one but Ferreol would have let escape him at least a gesture of surprise. But he—never! After all, to present himself to a future father-in-law, perhaps it was more expedient to assume a black coat.

"So be it!" replied he.

The sailor moved a step to the door, but stopped thoughtfully, turned, unhooked from the wall a greasy placard, and with a mumbled "No humbug this, you see!" began to read and to question Ferreol as follows:

"You are not in a state of intoxication, you?"

"I!" said Ferreol indignantly; then restraining himself—"no, not even a glass of water in the stomach."

"And—more than an hour since you've eaten?"

"Three hours, precisely."

"You are not in a perspiration?"

"Dry as a fish-bone."

"And your health is good?"

"Sound as cast-iron."

"Nerves and temper calm and equable?"

"As a clam at high water."

"Good! All as it should be!"

And replacing the placard on its nail, the sailor wheeled and threw open the door of a cell to the left.

"Hurry!" said he; "begin; undress yourself!"

Ferreol, up to this date, had asked no one in marriage, but sharp as he was, he had never supposed that this act—important, it was true—would be accompanied by such formalities.

One of those, however, whom nothing amazed, he did not flinch, but proceeded to strip himself.

Decidedly obscure in this closet, Ferreol was reduced to conjectures, smell, and feeling; still, it was distinctly an under-vest, drawers, and shoes that the sailor drew from a locker and laid before him.

"With these," said he, "you can defy the perspiration."

"In truth I can!" said Ferreol, covering himself with the articles, which exhaled a singular odor of mingled tar and salty grass-wrack. Upon which the other added to the costume a vest and breeches with feet and jacket of thick water-proof stuff, and bidding him be seated, assisted him with the skill of a retired *valet de chambre* to lace the great shoes, put on the breeches, thrust his arms, one after the other, into the sleeves of the jacket, and to slip his neck into a leathern colarette that exactly adapted itself to his shoulders.

On his back then he placed a cushion, and on that again a metal pelerine that resembled a cuirass, reciting by rote meanwhile, after the fashion of the corporal's manual:

"Push each button of the pelerine into the corresponding hole of the collarette. Adjust the copper valves and turn the screw-nuts. Close the latter till the joining of garments, pelerine," etc.

It was long, but Ferreol was patient and said only:

"You are sure I shall find Monsieur Kenezek there?"

"Certain sure," responded the sailor with a grin; "he can't get away." Adding contentedly, "Nothing but the helmet lacking now; *that* we'll put on yonder."

And followed by Ferreol, he tucked under his arm a sort of elongated ball in a leather envelope, and took up the march for the front.

Ferreol's costume reminded him as he scanned it of the *camisole de force* used upon criminals. Never before, he told himself, had a condemned seen the headsman bearing his head under his arm while leading a victim to the scaffold. A strange lover's travesty, which he must bear with patience.

Presently, turning to right and left, they reached a jetty advancing into the bay some ten to twenty metres. At the end of it the round crown of a building, from which, at a shout from his conductor, came running a second sailor, who placed himself without a word behind Ferreol's back.

"All ready?" said the first.

"All ready," responded Ferreol.

"You see the slate and the pencil hung to your side?" queried the other again.

"Slate and pencil both," assented Ferreol amiably.

It was the last word he spoke.

Click! clack! rattle!

The helmet was over his head, bolted to his shoulders, the screw-nuts hard and fast.

Parbleu! at last a flash of enlightenment! Blinded, stifled, one single instant nature rebelled against his principles. Too late, however, and protestations inopportune.

For now he felt himself lifted, carried a pace, suspended in space; then a strange sensation of cold mounting from feet to waist and from waist to shoulders.

He opened wide his eyes and through the helmet's "peepers" saw a fish flit past him.

Preliminaries decidedly not commonplace!

He continued to descend with relative rapidity. Soon the sandy bottom was under foot, and there before him a monster with huge head and enormous eyes, who advanced to meet him, seized the slate at his belt and began to scratch upon it. Ferreol, whose head buzzed like a sawmill, stooped and read:

"I am Kenezek; who are you?"

The moment was solemn. Ferreol drew a long breath, to which the complaisant pump above him lent itself willingly, then with full lungs and grateful soul reflected.

This was Kenezek! This *scaphandrier* of the sea, upon whom depended the happiness of his life. They must come to an understanding somehow. A sea-diver as a father-in-law was not inadmissible.

The situation had grown unique.

He seized the pencil and took *his* turn at the slate, awkwardly at first but still succinctly.

"I am Ferreol," responded he; "live at Paris; income ten thousand livres; love Angele, your daughter, and have the honor to ask of you her hand in marriage!"

There was a growl under the father's helmet, and he wrote on the slate anew:

"Marry her if you like. I——"

"Consent?" cried Ferreol ardently, at once ravished and uneasy at the reply.

"Consent? Yes," pencilled Kenezek; "good riddance, too. But quick begone—begone, I say; I've work to finish!"

Ferreol delightedly sought to kneel before the paternal scaphandrier, but his inflated clothes held him erect. That act of respectful homage was forbidden him.

Meanwhile, seeing him hesitate, Angele's father repeated his order, but Ferreol, not knowing what to do in order to mount, and not hurrying enough to suit his temper, he pulled five times, according to the rules, the cord of recall, and Ferreol shot aloft like a rocket through a company of scuttling dorades.

"If I'd been you," said the sailor, who received him and to whom he benevolently proffered a glass of rum, "I'd have waited ten minutes. Kenezek quits work, you know, every day at five o'clock."

Ferreol looked at his watch. Ten minutes to five.

"No," said he, "a man like me never waits a minute."

And he promptly returned to Paris—

"To marry the charming Angele?"

No. Fifty-odd hours late in returning, the charming but impatient Angele had married the other fellow.

And Ferreol was not surprised at that.

MY MARGARET*

The New Englanders are a people of God, settled in those which were once the Devil's territories. . . . The Demons might impose the Shapes of Innocent Persons in their Spectral Exhibitions upon the Sufferers.—Cotton Mather, "Enchantments Encountered."

It was late in the afternoon of the 19th of August, 1692. The great red ball of the sun was already disappearing behind the hills, and in Salem village the shadows were lengthening and the cool breeze of the evening was playing with the leaves and making the asters and marigolds in the green little gardens shake their drowsy heads as if they liked not the gentle disturbance.

A strange calm rested on the little town. Here and there in the street were small groups of good men talking in low, hushed tones and casting fearful glances into the deepening shadows. An occasional passer-by would stop, attracted by some word, and soon be deep in the conversation.

"Ay, it was a terrible sight, not to be forgotten," said one old man, stooping to brush the dust from his bright shoe-buckle.

"And the Evil One will have it out of us, methinks," chimed in another. "'Tis said he watched the prisoners all the while, and I myself have seen strange things this day."

"How, Giles!" "What now! Tell us!" and the crowd drew closer around the speaker.

"At least," continued the latter hastily, "Robert Sherryng-ham saw a great black man, when the prisoners were on the scaffold, standing by the magistrates and making signs to Amy Duny, and when the last moment came a black dog ran out from under the gallows and three crows flew over our heads, cawing dismally.

"The black man smiled and spoke to Judge Crowningshield Peabody. Ay [noticing the incredulous expression on his hearers' faces], and the judge started and reddened.

"Robert drew as near as possible to them, but the stranger was gone, and the judge appeared ill at ease, and on his forehead was a red spot."

"Hold thy peace, Giles!" exclaimed a young woman standing near. "Do you not know that the red spot is the

* A tale of the Salem witchcraft: Boston Globe.

mark of the Evil One? Surely Judge Peabody is not in his unholy service. Guard your tongue better or it may go hard with thee."

"I speak only what I know," said the man. "At the court yesterday, when the judge began to speak leniently, methought, toward the prisoner, a black man suddenly arose from the crowd and held up his finger warningly. All around sprang up to take him, but he was gone and could nowhere be found, and after that the judge seemed silent and disturbed, and when the prisoner was condemned he hastened to sentence her, so old Goody Corwin will hang."

"Hush, Giles," said a man who had joined them but a moment before, "you must not speak thus of the magistrate. The Evil One himself may hear you, and then——"

"But Giles is right," broke in a new voice. It was the voice of a man who had hitherto kept aloof, and appeared to take but little interest in the talk. "Only last night I was coming over the high road from Boston, and as I drew near the burying-ground I saw a dark form coming out from thence and hastening on before.

"It was a man wrapped in a long dark cloak, with the hood drawn over his face. He hurried along the side of the road, and I lost sight of him, but not till I knew it to be the magistrate."

"What's that? What's that?" rang out a fresh, clear voice. "How say you of his honor the judge? I'll have no slanderers speaking of him."

All drew back from the beautiful young girl who stood in their midst. She was slight in stature, but exceeding fair and of a sweet dignity of carriage.

"What say, Goody Cole?" she demanded of an old woman who stood looking at her with baleful eye.

"Ay, Margaret How; pretty doings these of your fine lover," muttered the crone. "Who is it creeps out at midnight to the Black Man's Swamp? Who is it talks with the Evil One and sends old women to be hanged? Ah! ah! pretty things for a fine lover to do!"

"It's false! You shall pay dearly for this speech, dame," cried the young girl, starting forward with clinched hands.

"But Robert Sherryngham saw him," ventured old Giles, "and there's curious happenings this day. Besides, they say the judge has the red mark on his forehead."

"Ah, Giles, believe it not. 'Tis not for Judge Peabody to have business with such things. It is his duty to rid the land of these demons sent by the devil to dwell in the bodies of some wicked persons. Begone, now, and talk no more in this manner, for should the magistrate hear of it it would go hard with you all."

Margaret How walked slowly away in the gathering twilight. As she turned to go the old crone shook her skinny fist at her and muttered:

"Bide your time, my fine lady; we'll see who lies."

With flushed face and with an angry blaze in her eyes Margaret How walked quickly away.

Soon she turned into a gate and went more slowly up the garden path leading to a house of somewhat larger proportions and of a rather grander architectural style than its neighbors.

The times were very much disturbed. It was rumored that the Evil One, or the Black Man, as he was familiarly called, was angry, and determined to drive away the colonists from his old possessions.

Strange stories flew thick in the air of midnight meetings in the old swamp, of certain old women to whom the powers of witchcraft had been given by his majesty. Cattle were seized with unknown diseases and ran headlong into the sea. Children were tormented by old witches.

It was said that Rich and Baker, coming home late one night through Sewall's woods, had seen one of the midnight meetings, where dark forms sat around a horrid feast of red flesh soaked in blood, while a tall man of vast size stood in the midst with an open book, from which he was reading names, some of great men, magistrates, honored in the whole colony.

Dark rumors were afloat as to the frequenters of these midnight orgies, and it was whispered that if all were known some men in high places would be brought low. Indeed, that very day had witnessed the execution of Rev. George Burroughs and four old women, accused of practising a most damnable witchcraft.

A great dread hung over all the colony, and the feeling of uncertainty as to where the hand of justice would next fall served only to increase the general fear.

When Margaret How first heard the rumors and whisper-

ings about her lover, her impulse had been to deny it indignantly.

That he, the judge of their majesties' Court of Oyer and Terminer in the Province of Massachusetts Bay, should be leagued with the Evil One was not only incredible, it was absurd; and so, when she had thus overheard the idle talk of a group of ignorant townspeople, she had spoken sharply on the impulse of the moment.

Now, as she went slowly through the old garden, where the late summer flowers sent a sleepy perfume on the evening air, she thought more seriously of it. A belated bee, loaded with the result of his day's labor, buzzed and hummed among the closed petunias and the thyme.

The stillness of the summer twilight had settled over the earth and the evening breeze was laden with dew.

As Margaret drew near the house she pondered deeply the things she had heard.

Could it perhaps be true?

A blush of shame came to her neck and face as she thought thus faithlessly of her lover. Of course it could not be.

He was the most prominent man in the province, and determined to root out the horrid curse of the devil and to save the land from ruin and despair.

On the other hand, the great Cotton Mather had preached in the meeting-house last Sabbath and said:

"An army of devils is broke in upon the place which is the centre and the first-born of our English settlements, and not only in the aged and those of wicked life has their power been shown, but even have they been permitted to hook two or three scholars into witchcraft, and then by their assistance to range with their poisonous insinuations among ignorant, envious, and discontented people."

Some power outside of herself seemed to turn her thoughts into a sombre channel. She had been taught in the strict Puritan manner, and to her the Evil One and all his wickedness were terrible realities.

Horror-stricken at the news of the breaking out of witchcraft among her very neighbors, she regarded all the torments to which they were exposed, and even their death, as but a just retribution for their sin at the hands of God.

And so, when the full meaning of the charges against Judge Peabody dawned upon her, though her heart said, "Believe

it not," and her soul recoiled from the thought, yet something seemed to say, "It may be so, it may be so."

Through the wide-open door of the house she saw her mother standing beside a small table, pouring tea for a gentleman who was there.

In an instant Margaret's gloomy thoughts were gone. With light steps she entered the room.

It needed not words to say who was there, for the glad light in her eyes and a little tell-tale flush spoke too plainly.

"The judge has been waiting for you, my daughter. You come late," said Mme. How.

"I stopped to listen to an idle tale of old Giles," replied the girl. "He was full of strange signs and omens, and foretells trouble for us. I fear the scenes of this day have turned his head."

"I am sorry you were not here earlier, for the judge has something to say to you, I think."

"It matters not," said that person, rising to go. "I merely wished to give you this curious box, which my brother has received from London, on the *Standish*. Will you walk down the garden path with me, Margaret?"

Without a word she turned and went out with him; and Mme. How looked after them with a smile of deep content.

"Why so silent?" said he, as they reached the gate at the entrance. "'Tis not like my Margaret to be in such a mood."

"I cannot tell; a strange oppression seems to rest on my heart, and I think much of those unfortunate people who have this day received the reward for their crimes."

"Think not of such things, dear. That is the part of men now. 'Tis but just that witches should feel the hand of God, and not for us to pity," and stooping over her he kissed her forehead.

As he did so Margaret noticed with a thrill of dismay a small spot of burning red on his brow, half-concealed by a lock of brown hair.

"I must go back," she said quickly.

"I would I might be longer with you," said the man; "but it grows late and I have much business in these days. Good-night, dear. God be with you."

He walked rapidly away, and soon his retreating figure was lost in the darkness. Margaret How turned and went back to the house with thoughtful face and slow step.

The next evening Margaret was at the house of Samuel Phillips, a magistrate of the province.

Polly Phillips, his daughter, and she had always been friends, and frequently a day was spent in each other's company.

The Phillips house stood at some distance from the village and off the main highway, so that in order to get to it it was necessary to pass through a corner of Sewall's woods.

An old legend says that this territory was once a special stamping-ground of the Prince of Darkness, and often the belated traveller might have met the Black Man in the gloomy recesses of the place. Here, in the early days, the Indians had held their secret conclaves. Stories of this sort had given the place rather an unsavory reputation, and it required a strong courage to take this way from the Phillips house at any very late hour.

However, on this night it was necessary for Margaret to go home after the shadows had fallen, while the August crickets were chirping lustily.

The magistrate was ill and unable to go out, and though she was urged to stay, Margaret, who had a stout little heart, determined to go alone. Polly Phillips went with her as far as the beginning of the woodland path, and then turned to go back with the laughing remark: "Beware of the Black Man."

Margaret smiled and went bravely on. As she entered the woods the gloom deepened; light, fleecy clouds half-obscurd the rays of the moon and cast weird shadows in the way. Deeper in the forest the mournful hoot of an owl and the cries of night-birds cast a strange spell on the air.

Suddenly she stopped and drew back. Her heart almost ceased its beating, for there in the path ahead was a tall figure hurrying on before. It was enveloped in a long black mantle, with the hood drawn over the face.

Once it stopped and turned a quick look backward, and as the moonlight coming through the leaves fell on the half-concealed face, Margaret, with a little gasp of frightened astonishment, seemed to recognize the face of Crowningshield Peabody.

It was only for an instant.

The figure hurried on. For a moment she stood there, terrified and trembling; then, with a wave of returning courage, went after it.

At the darkest spot in the whole tangle of wood and underbrush it disappeared. As Margaret approached this place a great owl screeched over her head, and then, for the first time, she noticed at some distance from her the red light of a heap of burning brush. She kept on toward this, but suddenly she stopped again, rooted to the ground and frozen with fear.

There in the clearing was a great crowd of shrouded forms. In the midst of them stood a tall, swarthy man of gigantic proportions, holding in one hand a book and in the other a horn of some liquid.

Near him was the form of one she knew well, none other than that of the judge, but how different from the noble gentleman known in Salem village.

His face was distorted with fear, and he twitched his hands nervously as he cast a cowering glance at the dismal forms. The Black Man (for it was the Evil One himself) poured some of the liquid from the horn on the fire as it died down, and immediately it sprang up again, burning with a bluish light, changing to a lurid hue.

At the same time the shrouded forms cast aside their mantles and began a wild chant, moving about the flames in a slow dance. With a shudder Margaret seemed to see there many old women of the village, and here and there among them men of high station, pillars of the church.

On the forehead of each one of them was the spot of burning red, which glowed in the darkness like the hideous eye of some fabled monster. The dance grew wilder as the Black Man poured more of the magic liquid in the fire, then it gradually became slower and slower until it stopped.

Opening the book the Evil One began to read. Margaret would have cried out with fear, but her parched tongue refused to obey her will, and she stood there motionless.

Some invisible force seemed to hold her back, and as the reading went on she gazed as one in a dream. The sound of the words at first conveyed no impression to her mind. It seemed like a senseless jargon, devoid of meaning. Soon, however, the words came with awful distinctness to her bewildered brain.

“And I do agree to give my soul to the Powers of Darkness forever and ever.

“And I do agree to do all such works as shall be imposed

upon me by the prince, my master, until such time as my soul shall be required of me."

For a long time the reading went on thus, until it ended with these words:

"And in return for all these powers and benefits, I do agree to deliver up my soul to the Prince of Evil, and from this there shall be no escape unless I do deliver up to him one pure and spotless soul, upon which condition only shall mine be freed."

As the reading ceased the fire burned lower, and all the shapes bowed down and cried, "We are witnesses!"

Then, as if with a mighty effort, Crowningshield Peabody started forward and cried in a loud voice, "Silence! In the name of God, I deny the bond!"

And he would have gone away, but with a gesture the Black Man held him fast, and again the dark forms bowed down and cried:

"We are witnesses!"

"I tell thee, Crowningshield Peabody, that name is powerless to help thee now. One pure and spotless soul I have or else will thine be required of thee," and the dark forms cried:

"We are witnesses!"

With a cry of despair the unfortunate man hid his face in his mantle.

With fast-beating heart and quick-drawn breath had Margaret gazed on this scene. As the words of the bond came to her ear with such startling clearness she had formed a sudden resolve, and when she heard her lover's despairing cry, overcoming the invisible ties which held her, she burst through the crowd of shrouded forms and stood at his side.

"I will give my soul for thee," she said. "Give me the bond." With a quick movement the judge placed himself in front of her and pushed her back.

"Nay, Margaret, you know not what you do. Back!"

"Stop!" commanded the Black Man. "Your soul for his, my lady? Surely a good exchange. Sign the bond."

And hurling the judge aside with his mighty arm, he offered her a reed dipped in red liquid.

Half-dazed and with only one thought—to save him for whom she would willingly give her life—and not understanding fully what she did, she signed the book.

As she did so a great clap of thunder came from the dark-

ened sky above. With a smile of the utmost tenderness she turned to her lover with outstretched arms, and then—a piercing shriek! There, where he had been, stood now a grinning skeleton.

The dark forms had disappeared, and from the sky great drops of rain began to fall. Margaret fell heavily to the ground, and lay there fainting.

In the early part of September, soon after the events just described, a large crowd had gathered in the meeting-house at Salem. Old Giles was there, and with him stood Robert Sherryngham and some others. In low tones they talked and kept turning eager glances toward the door.

“I saw her yesterday at the court,” said Giles. “She was wondrous sad and methought a little out here,” tapping his forehead significantly.

“Ay,” said Robert Sherryngham, “and she babbled strangely of the Black Man and the book. She said, ‘I signed it for him! I signed it for him!’ ’Twas near the Black Man’s Swamp they found her.”

“And is it true, Robert,” asked one of the bystanders, “that she grievously tormented the little children of Goodman Richards?”

“I know not. Hush—they are coming.”

A sudden silence fell on the assembly as the door opened and there entered the men of the jury. Then came the high sheriff and then Mr. Matthew Hutchinson, the judge who was to preside at this sitting of their majesties’ Court of Oyer and Terminer.

When all were seated, a deep hush came over the people as there entered, attended by two sheriffs, a fair young girl. She walked proudly and with erect head.

When all was ready, Rev. Dr. Noyes, minister of Salem, made a very pathetic prayer.

“Grant, O most merciful God,” he prayed, “that we may be delivered from all the works of darkness; that the power of evil may not overwhelm us; and we beseech Thee to have mercy on Thy servant, that though her soul be black with the damnable sin, she may yet find favor in Thy sight.”

When the good man had finished the judge arose, and, adjusting his long black robes, said:

“Margaret How, prisoner at the bar of justice. You have been accused by these good men of the most fearful crime of

witchcraft; that you have given your immortal soul to the evil spirit has been proven in this honorable court, and for this has your name been blotted out of God's book, and it never shall be put in God's book again.

"For this it is necessary that you shall die, for the protection of ourselves, our children, and for the safety of all of God's people in this province. Therefore, in accordance with the decree of their most august majesties, and in accordance with the decree of the governor and council of this province, I do sentence you to be taken on the 6th day of October next and hanged by the neck until you are dead."

On the evening of the 6th of October, when the law had claimed one more victim to be added to the vast number of innocent old women, educated men, and even black dogs who were executed, Judge Crowningshield Peabody died, and there were not lacking those who said that, while the law had made a mistake in killing an innocent maiden, yet the devil had taken his just dues.

* * * * *

In after-years Cotton Mather attempted to explain the case of Margaret How by saying that the devil had deceived her, and had imposed the shape of her lover on her in order to entrap her, for the demons might impose the shapes of innocent persons in their spectral exhibitions upon the sufferers.

ETCHINGS: GOD'S LIGHT *

"And God said, Let there be light. And there was light."

* * * * *

One by one the clouds lifted, and the dense drooping veils of mist were slowly withdrawn.

The great mountains became visible, clearly defined against the heavens' ethereally faint blue.

Eternal snow lay frozen white upon them, and their cold, high peaks seemed very far away. But one wide bar of luminous gold lightened their slopes toward the east; and in that warm and tender haze the hard snow melted, and the purple violets opened into bloom.

* * * * *

Two dark figures of men advanced into the light.

They had climbed for many hours.

They had seen the radiance from afar.

Now they entered it together.

They were brothers in their common lot and creed, but as they stepped into the golden glory their brows grew heavy with distrust and wrath.

"What doest thou here?" said the one—

"The Light is mine!"

"Nay, fool," said the other, "thou liest—

"The Light is mine!"

And the evil frown deepened on their faces, and they forgot their brotherhood and fought; fought with a merciless blind fury for every inch of that wondrous light that was not theirs; fought till the violets on the turf sickened and died in the torrent of blood that was shed.

But suddenly between them a Shadow fell.

And the Shadow's name was Death.

Then those contesting twain shrank from each other's grasp in fear, and covering their eyes they fled swiftly.

And the Shadow went with them.

And their blood sank into the cool brown earth.

And the violets bloomed again.

* * * * *

And God's Light lay still upon the mountains.

* Olive Schreiner: *Missionary Magazine*.

THE LEISURE BURGLAR *

"Sir," said the warden, "perhaps you would like to see our Mr. Forrest."

"Mr. Forrest?" I inquired.

"Why, yes!" he said in surprise. "Have you never heard of our Mr. Forrest? No? Why," he continued, rubbing his hands together exultingly, "he is a man the likes of which I wager you will not find in another prison in these States!"

"You are proud of him, eh?"

"Proud of him! Proud of him! Well, now, you may believe it. Ah, I tell you, sir, he is none of your common everyday sort of scamps. No, indeed, not he! He is a gentleman, every inch of him. But you would like to see him?"

"Certainly," I answered, "if he be as interesting as you would make out."

"And more so, sir, I assure you," he said enthusiastically.

"Where do you keep him?" I inquired.

"We set him at work in the library, and a good man he is there, too."

And leading the way, he brought me to the door leading to the library. Pausing a moment, he leaned over to me and said:

"Sir, if you can you must get him to tell you of his last piece of work. A very artistic thing it was; and bold, too. He's in for five years."

And he opened the door. Sitting at a table reading some paper was a very pleasant, affable-looking gentleman. When I say gentleman, I mean that he could not possibly be taken for anything else. His looks, his bearing, the courtly manner in which he rose to greet us as we entered, and the cheery smile with which he recognized our introduction, stamped him at once as one born a gentleman; and that he was well educated and possessed of an intellect far above mediocrity was apparent before I left.

The warden leaving a moment later to attend to his duties, we spoke casually on several topics, I avoiding any mention of the fact that he was there as a prisoner, and wondering how he ever came to commit the crimes—for I had found that his last crime was not his first one, but that all his life

* A. Rudolph Federmann: St. Paul Pioneer-Press.

he had been a burglar and had, until the present time, successfully eluded the search and vigilance of the officers—which had brought him into his present position and given him the unenviable reputation he enjoyed; for when at last I did bring myself to the point, and somewhat timidly broached the topic, his interest at once heightened, and instead of appearing downcast and shame-faced, he rather bristled somewhat with pride, and I found no difficulty in inducing him to give me a detailed account of the piece of work at which he was caught.

* * * * *

“I had abstained from any work for over half a year, owing mostly to the onerous duties imposed upon me by society; but my desire increased until I could restrain it no longer, and one night on a sudden impulse I set out, taking with me but a few tools, which I carried in my pocket. It was early, very early, not later than ten o'clock; while operations are usually most successfully conducted between three and four or five.

“However, I did not have the patience to wait, but immediately began looking about for some house whose appearance was prepossessing. By half-past ten I had found my house and fixed upon my way of ingress, which was to be at a window facing south near the ground. I waited impatiently for the people to retire, which they did slowly. Finally the only person still up was a man, evidently the man of the house, who was smoking a cigar and reading a paper. I stationed myself at a tree and waited, looking at my watch from time to time, and muttering imprecations on the man for keeping me so long in the cold—it was near winter and some snow was already on the ground.

“Soon I saw that the man was getting sleepy, and finally, with a yawn, he threw away his cigar, laid down his paper, and taking his lamp with him, went to another room. Changing my position, I saw the light reappear on the west side, he having, to the best of my calculation, passed through a room adjoining the room where he first was, and from that into his bedroom. Soon the light went out, and waiting about half an hour for him to get drowsy, I went to work.

“I had no trouble with the window, and opening it lightly crawled into the room. Right ahead of me I saw a stove, by the light of which I saw that I was in a little recess used for

the placing of flowers, which had now been removed. As it was yet much too early to begin work, I sat down on a chair which I found conveniently near and waited. The room was comfortably warm, the fire giving a cheery glow, and I soon found myself growing drowsy. Remembering the cigars my host was smoking, I went to the table, and to my delight found thereon a box, some of which I immediately appropriated. They proved to be a very good smoke, and I contentedly resumed my former occupation of gazing at the coals. As fast as one cigar was used up I would light another, and I believe that I must have smoked some twenty or thirty cigars that night. And to that, and that only, can I attribute the fact of my being here. But that comes later.

“As I sat there noises on the streets grew less and less, and soon all was silent, except the ticking of a clock in the room in which I was sitting. I heard the old timekeeper strike twelve in slow, sombre tones, and then one. I began to be interested in the beat of the pendulum and unconsciously constructed rhymes that I repeated to myself. Then I noticed that every few minutes it would lose a beat, followed by two close together, then lose another. As the time went on this irregularity increased, and I came to the conclusion that my host had forgotten to wind his clock.

“As I had already acquired an affection for it, I went up to the mantel on which it stood, and opening the door felt inside for the key. This I soon found and began winding, the noise of which caused echoes to ring over the whole room. However, I was not to be deterred, and finished my self-imposed task and again sat down.

“The fire was getting low and the room chilly, and I thought I might as well proceed to business. Taking a little bull's-eye from my pocket I lighted it and looked about the room. Nothing there that I wanted. There were six doors leading into it, and these I tried. The first one led to the kitchen, the second to the sitting-room, the third to the cellar, the fourth to the pantry, the fifth to the upper part of the house, and the sixth, through which my host had gone, was locked. The key was left in the hole, and taking out my pinchers, I opened it and looked into what was evidently the parlor. Going in, at the further end of the room was a door to the right, and peering into this I gazed upon the head of the house, snoring like a good fellow. I took up his pants

and rifled them, getting about fifty dollars. Seeing a sort of a box at the foot of the bed, I tried that, but it refused to open. After some delay I got it open and looked over its contents. There was only one thing there I wanted, and that was an old-fashioned portmanteau, which was locked. I slit this open with my knife and found a comfortable roll of bills, about three hundred dollars. You see, I had been very lucky. In fact, I always was, never entering a house but what I made enough to pay expenses.

"After hunting through the bureau, in which I found nothing worth confiscating except a clean collar—mine was dirty, and I changed it for a clean one which just fitted me—I left for the other wing of the house. Here I found a number of females, and not wishing to disturb them, I returned to the dining-room and looked about for the silver. Although I searched assiduously, I could find none, and went up-stairs.

"At the head of the stairs was a little hallway, running north and south, and entering the first room at the right, I looked upon the sleeping countenance of the eldest son—I guess. I went through him to the extent of fifty, and going out and relocking the door, I made my way to the other rooms, all of which I found to be unoccupied. The last room I entered was very cozily furnished, and I sat down on the bed a moment to rest.

"Well," he resumed, "I don't know how it was. I suppose I was struck by the brilliant thought that I would take a little rest before I went, so I undressed and went to bed.

"When I awoke I found a nice little coterie of officers in the room, and I was pleasantly requested to reassume my habiliments and take a walk with them, which I did to their satisfaction. When I ended I was in a place for the detention of criminals, and a few weeks later found myself in my present commodious quarters, where I will probably stay some time, for I am informed that when my present sentence has expired a new charge will be brought up, and after that another, and so on for I don't know how long."

"ELIZA" THE NIHILIST*

What was I to do? Never was a woman placed in such a pitiable condition. I had been brought to Russia by an English sewing-machine company to run their machines at an agency of theirs in — Street, in St. Petersburg, where a handsome shop had been taken.

One blustering cold day, toward the close of October, I found the shop-door closed, and learned to my dismay that our agent had disappeared, and the machines had all been seized for rent and debts.

What was to be done?

All the money I had in the world was about equivalent to three pounds. What was due to me I had left in our agent's hands, and I felt sure it was lost. I thought of everything in the twenty-five minutes which elapsed between my heart-breaking when I found the shop-door closed and my rapid walk to my lodgings.

Fortunately my room had been hired for the month, and had been paid for in advance. I had at least a roof over my head for a few weeks. An idea suddenly struck me. I had been making an evening dress on the machine for a Russian lady who spoke English. She had some idea of buying a machine. In order to hasten with the work, I had taken to my room the body of her dress, and having a machine there had sewed at it of nights. That machine I would certainly keep; it would go very little toward the payment of the debt the agent owed me.

I hurried home. Perhaps there was a letter with some money in it. There was nothing. I must find the lady, but how? She had left no address. She had hardly spoken to me. I thought I had heard her say that she would come again, and I believed she had fixed on this very day. There was but one chance in a thousand. I must stand in the street and wait until she appeared. I hastened back and took up my position near the shop. I scanned every woman passing by. It was bitterly cold and raw, and the wind chilled me; I was faint with anxiety. Suddenly a carriage drove up, a footman opened the door, and a lady, elegantly dressed, alighted. I tore across the street—it was the Russian lady.

* E. V. S.: Pall Mall Gazette.

With my heart in my mouth, I told her my pitiful story and begged her to help me. If she wanted a servant, would she only try me? I had a sewing-machine, and would make her dresses for nothing if I could only stay with her until I could write to my people at home; they would send me money and I could get back to England.

"And my dress—am I to lose it?" the lady asked impatiently.

"Not all of it. The skirt is in the shop; the body is in my room, almost finished."

It seemed to me dreadful that in my agony she should talk about her dress.

"Where do you live?" she inquired abruptly.

I told her.

"Get into the carriage," she said.

I did so.

When we were off the main street she stopped the carriage, got out with me, and we walked to my lodgings. I opened the door. On the table was her dress body. It did not seem to interest her. She picked it up, however, glanced at it a moment, then threw it down on a chair and examined the sewing-machine.

"How long would it take me to become proficient in working this?" she inquired, as she sat down before the machine and tried the pedals.

"Two weeks—perhaps less."

"Would it disfigure my hands?"

She took off her gloves, showed her well-cared-for hands, her fingers glittering with rings.

"Your beautiful hands would hardly be spoiled."

"Well, then, give me a lesson at once—at once. I will pay you for your trouble."

She sat down, and under my instruction worked for an hour. She was wonderfully clever with her fingers, and seemed to seize the peculiarities of the machine at once.

"At this rate of progress, madam, you would become quite a good workwoman in ten days," I said approvingly.

She made no reply, but worked away for another half-hour.

"It is not so tiresome, after all," she said, "but I have had enough for to-day. To-morrow I will call, and you will then take the machine to pieces, and show me how it must be put together again. You will oblige me very particularly by not going out to-day. I have to thank you for your patience."

Keep my visit silent. I hope you have learned that in Russia it is better to keep a quiet tongue. Do not return to the shop. Pray take this for my first lesson," and she placed on the machine table a piece of gold.

I felt very much inclined to kiss her. She looked cold and haughty, but my heart was so full of thankfulness that, overcoming somewhat the awe I felt, I ventured to take her hand in mine and put it to my lips. She did not withdraw it.

"Poor child," she said; "you do not look more than twenty, and, at your age, to be in such trouble! This must be a hard experience for you. Good-by until to-morrow."

She gazed at me steadfastly, as if she would look me through, and then bowing, left me.

Next morning early there was a low knock at my door. I opened it, and a woman plainly dressed entered. She did not say a word. She placed a bundle she held in her hand in a chair, and at once went to the machine and commenced sewing.

"You will kindly forget the lady of yesterday, and know me as Elise simply, or rather, as Elise is French, we will say Eliza. I want to learn your trade. It is a whim of mine. Do you think that in a month I could earn my bread this way? I offer you a partnership. I can find the funds. The contents of the shop will probably be sold out, and you will be able to buy one of the machines for me. Now, will you take this one apart?"

I had not a word to say. I brought a wrench, a screw-driver, an oil-can, and loosened the working parts of the machine. She took the oil-can and bent over the machine, studying it. I noticed that she touched with her white fingers all the grimy parts, until her hands were soiled.

"It is by no means so complicated as a revolver," she said.

I made no comment as I put the working parts together. She was very silent, working incessantly on some coarse material she had brought with her. I sat near her—teaching her what to do. She worked on until it was past noon.

"Is it not time now to eat something?"

"It is," I replied; "will madam partake of my simple meal?"

"Madam! I am Eliza—and you say your name is Mary. Mary, I shall be very glad to share your food with you, if you will let me. If you have not enough for two, I will go out and buy what is wanted. What shall it be? I dare say I

can shop better than you. Will you lend me your shawl, your furs, and your overshoes?"

Before I could say a word she had them all on. Then she laughed for the first time and courtesied to me.

"Sister Mary, Sister Mary," she cried in great glee, "our copartnership begins from to-day. I am to be capital and you brains. Little sister, good-by. I shall not be gone more than a quarter of an hour."

I was so astonished as to be speechless. In a trice she was back, loaded down with packages. She had a loaf of bread, a piece of cheese, a pot of preserves, a breast of smoked goose, and some salted cucumbers.

"I got a samovar, but it was too heavy for me to carry. The man I bought it of will bring it here at once. It is second-hand, but as good as new. I see you have a teapot. My only two extravagances were some good soap and a pound of the best tea. Come, let us eat. I can arrange anything. I am to wait on you."

In a day I learned to love that woman. All the haughty, proud manner was gone. She waited on me. She was up first in the morning. She was always busy. The porter of the house evidently mistook her for one of the two girls who had been in the employ of the sewing-machine company, for one or the other of them had often been in my room. Some small extra compensation was given him for the new lodger. She never spoke save in English, and her coming to me had been so mysterious that I felt quite certain the porter was entirely ignorant of her condition.

Certainly it worried me a great deal. More than once I ventured to ask for an explanation, but Eliza would place her hand on my mouth so that my speech was interrupted. It distressed me to see how hard she worked, for I felt sure that this new life was hurting her. I could see that from her pallor. If anything more than another made me feel sorry, it was for her beautiful hands. She seemed to take infinite pains in spoiling them.

"They are filthy—horrible," she would say, "and still I think I care for them more than I should. If I could only get a thick, red, rough skin on them!"

As she said, the owner of the shop was only too glad to sell me a machine. Eliza furnished the money. Work came to us in a mysterious way—left down-stairs with the porter.

By-and-by a fashionable dressmaker, who made dresses for the Court ladies, sent for me and gave me work. As what we had to do was well sewed, and we were always prompt, in less than three weeks we were doing a good business. My companion, save for the daily purchases made in the immediate neighborhood for food, never went out. No one called on her; she never received a letter. A few days over the month had passed, when one morning, as I was running up a seam in a piece of cloth, my needle struck something. It was a piece of paper.

"It is for me, Sister Mary," said Eliza.

She took the bit of paper, held it to the stove, appeared to read something, and then opened the stove door and burned it. I did not question her. She worked on cheerfully all day, chatting on different subjects.

That night, when we were in bed, taking me in her arms, she said:

"Poor Mary, your troubles, your anxieties, are now over. To-morrow, early, apply for your passport. It will cost you to go from here to London, say £30. I wish it could have been more, but you will have altogether £300, which, after deducting your travelling expenses, will leave you some money to begin your life with again. For me—who have learned to love a singularly honest and simple-minded woman—you shall have this ring," and she slipped on my finger a ring; "but don't wear it; the diamond might betray me. So far, Mary, you have run no risk; but next week you might be ruined forever, for you have harbored——"

I was speechless with terror.

"Only a woman," she continued, "whose own life—or the life of any one else who stood in her way—she would care no more of taking than a cook would of wringing a chicken's neck. Do not be shocked, Mary. I shall sleep as sweetly to-night as if death did not threaten me. My story, as far as relates to you, is soon told. It became necessary for me a month ago to disappear. The simplest chance in the world threw you in my way. Had you been of any other nationality than English I would never have trusted you. You might go out, Mary, and sell me, Judas-like, for a sum of money which would make you rich for life."

I clung convulsively to her and bade her be quiet.

"Through my veins, child, there runs the best blood in

Russia; but every drop of it I will shed for the cause. Thank heaven for your lowly estate. You must go away to-morrow, and now good-night."

I begged her to come to England with me. She said:

"No, my place is here. I should be useless there."

Then she complained of lassitude, and presently went to sleep. I looked at her, her face pillowed on her arm, breathing as calmly as an infant, and thought her the loveliest woman I had ever seen.

Next morning, out of a package of some rough material, she produced, as if by magic, a roll of notes which, without counting, she handed to me.

"Later in the day there ought to arrive some furs for me, for poor Mary must not get cold. Now away with you."

Her old manner had returned.

"Get your passport. Go by Bremen to England, or the ice will delay you. Do not wait."

Still I was irresolute.

I could not bear to leave her.

I sobbed as if my heart would break.

Then she knelt to me and implored me to go. At last I consented.

My passport was given to me at the police headquarters without a word.

I returned to our room. As I stood at the landing the cheerful clatter of the machine was heard. Eliza was bending over her work singing some plaintive air.

"Is it all right?" she asked, very quietly. "See, your furs have come. They are very beautiful, and so warm."

"I have permission to leave."

"Thank God! See my work. I think I could do now without you."

"You do not love me, Eliza," I cried.

"Not love you—my sister! I loved my husband—he was shot. I loved my only child; in the agony of my grief—because his father was killed—he sucked poison from my breast and died. After them I love you best."

Then, for the first time, she burst into a paroxysm of tears.

"It is because I love you—that I might be your death."

As she wrung my hand, she felt the ring on my finger.

"Off with it. You wore your mittens at the police-office! If they had seen it! Quick, let me hide it."

She took off my shoe and hid the ring in my stocking.

"Should you ever marry, sell the ring or the stone in it, and you will not be portionless. Now off with you. I have made a bundle for you. The rest of your things you will give me. Here is a photograph of yours—you will let me keep it?"

She took me by the hand, gave me one long kiss, closed the door on me, and I never saw her more.

My trip home was without a single incident. My dear mother comforted me. Still there was some vague feeling of dread. My mind wandered, in spite of all I could do, toward my room companion. Picking up a newspaper when at home, some two weeks after my arrival, I read in the telegraphic dispatches:

"ST. PETERSBURG, Dec. 23.—An arrest of great importance has been made. One of the chief actors in the Nihilistic plots, a Russian princess, was taken, but only after she had killed one of the police. Disguised as a sewing-machine woman she had hitherto baffled the detectives."

ETCHINGS: FIRST LOVE *

I had not long left off baby-talk, when I felt a tickling in my little heart. In common speech it would be called love. At nine years old? Why not. What about Dante and Beatrice? Great men often love early—genius lights the fire in the heart.

I, then, loved madly a girl older than myself, about sixteen; and kept concealed my tender passion. But she encouraged me, appearing at her window as I went by on the way to school with my older brother. I decided to make her a declaration in explicit terms. I often tried to speak, but my voice choked; I took to signs, but felt as if paralyzed. Finally the spark of genius suggested a letter! Ignorant of the existence of "The Complete Letter-writer," I wrote a page that occupied me nearly a week. But 'twas a masterpiece. I had even fished out from a drama the famous phrase: "To see you and not love you were not human!"

* * * * *

One fine day, my brother being ill, I went alone to school. Passing under her window, I showed my letter to my beloved. Not in the least disdainful, she let down a basket and drew it up, then waved me her hand and smiled. Also, she signed for me to come next day for a reply. There was no doubt. My love was returned, and I anticipated the delights of a first interview in the moonlight, and my fancies raised me to the height of her coral lips. That day I felt capable of conquering the world, and looked down on my school-mates.

Who can tell my suspense? But at last the longed-for hour arrived. At the adored window I beheld her ready for love's emprise. Down came the basket of my heart, bringing me the desired pledge of love. I approached, and holding my breath, plunged my hands into the basket and drew out—four boiled chestnuts and a baker's roll!

The fatal receptacle disappeared in air. I was left with my shame. Mechanically I went to school, still holding squeezed in my hand the hateful luncheon.

Later I ate it, from spite and hunger.

That evening I found my love-letter under my pillow.

I could not imagine how it came there, until a year later, when my older brother married the girl of my affections.

* Italian of Angelo Pesce: E. C.: For Short Stories.

MR. AND MRS. HANNIBAL HAWKINS*

Mr. Hawkins he left the app'intin' of our weddin' day to me, and I set it for a Sunday. When you come ter think on't, there don't seem ter be many days suitable for gittin' married in. You see Monday's washin' day, an Tuesday's ironin' day, and of course nobody would be married a Friday; and Saturday's bakin' and cleanin'-up day, so there's only Wednesday and Thursday left, and mother'n me wanted that much time for extry odds and ends of work, and to "turn round" in, as you might say. So I set it a Sunday mornin' before fust service.

Now, to begin with, I must tell you that Mr. Hannibal Hawkins, the man I was goin' ter marry, was what you'd call odd, terrible odd, so that, although we'd been keepin' comp'ny tergether for some time, and I'd had every chance ter git acquainted, yet I felt mor'lly certain that it would be a good while 'fore I'd know him all through. Not but what he was a likely man—more tew, for he was a church member in good and reg'lar standin', and he alwers had the name o' bein' a good husband to his fust wife, and a good pervider and all that; but, as I said, he was odd.

Wall, he came over the Saturday mornin' before the weddin,' so's ter be "on hand," he said, and kinder dew for me and mother. We hadn't no men folks in the house 'cept Caleb Jones, the hired help, and he wa'n't much dependence at sech a time.

It was 'bout eight o'clock in the forenoon when Mr. Hawkins 'rived, and an hour or tew later I got a letter from his daughter Car'line.

It was marked private, and read thus:

DEAR MISS ROBBINS [that's me, Ruth Ann Robbins, ye know]: I write to caution you about par. I feel awful 'fraid the clo'es he's took ~~with~~ him to be married in ain't right. All to once he was struck with one o' his *odd streaks*, and insisted on packin' his bag himself, a thing he never done afore in his life, and the Lord only knows what he put into it; I don't. You must look him over real sharp 'fore he goes in where the folks be. I'm sorry I can't come to the weddin', but I cut my bangs yesterday, and got 'em so short that I look jest tew hijeous for anything. I've cried myself most sick, I'm so disapp'inted, and par says I'm silly ter stay away on ac-

* Belle C. Greene: The Portfolio.

count o' the bangs; but I can't help it; I'd ruther die than go and show myself sech a fright to all them folks—so there 'tis! I send you my love, and I hope everything will go off well. With respect,

CAR'LINE HAWKINS.

P. S.—I'm afraid par has took *odd boots*. Lookout for him.

I laughed when I read that letter; it didn't trouble me much of any. Thinks I ter myself, "He is old enough to pack his own bag, 'less he's a gump and a fool, and if he is a gump and a fool the quicker we find it out the better!" I felt the wust because Car'line wa'n't comin' to the weddin'. It worried me to think she was so silly 'bout them bangs.

Wall, come Sunday mornin', when it was time to dress ourselves, Hannibal took one room and I another and we begun. I'd just got my hair all down, when Hannibal hollered tew me, and said he:

"Ruth Ann! I wish you'd bring in your needle and thread and dew a little job o' sewin' for me. I find my vest is all split out behind, though goodness knows how it come so. I never wore it but once in my life. It's a bran'-new one."

I thought then of Car'line's letter, and when I see the vest I knew in a minute that he'd took the wrong one, but I sewed the old thing up, as well's I could—a pretty-lookin' vest it was to be married in—and went back to my room feelin' a good deal distarbed and anxious.

His next perdickeermunt was wuss yet. This time he spoke to me so kinder quick and sharp, that I knew it was somethin' serious. I was jest puttin' my dress over my head, but I didn't stop to half button it up; I hurried in ter see what was the matter now. When I opened the door, there stood Hannibal in the middle o' the room, lookin' down perplexed like and inquirin' at two old boots—you couldn't call 'em a *pair*, for I knew the minute I set eyes on 'em that they both belonged to one and the same foot! They both had a round nob stickin' up conspickewous where the big toe went, and another great bulgin' one for the toe j'int. I hadn't never noticed anything peculiar 'bout Hannibal's feet before, but them two boots did look curis enough, and they looked kinder wicked and knowin' somehow, as if they was enjoyin' themselves!

I laughed—I couldn't help it, but Hannibal didn't even smile. He turned to me, and said he:

"Do them two boots look right to you?" Then he tried

on one, and that was well enough, he put on the other, and—wall, you can imagine how it looked! Of course the nobbs and bulgin's come in the wrong places, and the hull foot was hind side afore and wrong side tew, as you might say! He took 'em off and revarsed 'em, but still they continnered ter disagree and look wicked at one another. He squared 'em up tergether as square's he could, and says he:

"Ruth Ann, I believe them boots is *odd!*"

"Ondoubtedly they be, Hannibal," says I, "and they *look odd*; but how do they *feel*? Can you wear 'em? That is the question."

"I don't care a continental how they *feel*," says he, awful savage, "I'll wear 'em if they kill me; but I dew wish they didn't *look* so like the—the evil one!"

I felt like death, but I knew we'd got to make the best of the sitiuation, so I says:

"Oh, I guess they won't be noticed. But you must be sure and set with your feet on the floor and drawed well back under your chair, and you mustn't on no 'count cross your legs; or, if you dew, be sure and have the *right foot* on top."

Then I had ter leave him. I was all worked up, but I managed ter finish my toilit with mother's help, and *when* I was dressed I went into the spare chamber where the couples that was goin' to stand up with us was waitin'. I found them all right, and finally Hannibal was ready, and him and me locked arms and perceeded down-stairs, follered by the others. Cousin Tripheny and R'yal Hunt come fust, then 'Mandy Plympton and John Ray, then Cousin Seraphine and 'Siar Chase; there was six of 'em, and they made a noble 'pearance, tew.

Jest as we got on to the stairs and Hannibal and me was most to the bottom, all of a sudden he claps his hand to his head and whispers:

"Ruth Ann, I must go back a minute; you wait right here."

"No, Hannibal," says I, pullin' him along, "you can't go back—how it would look!"

"But I tell ye I must and I *will!*" says he, jerkin' away and turnin' back.

The percession stood stock-still on the stairs, and fust one, then t'other whispered down ter know what was the matter, and the folks in the parlor began ter peak out and buzz. I concluded as long's I couldn't be married without Hannibal,

I might as well go and look after him. Thinks I ter myself, "Who knows but he means ter put an end to his miser'ble *odd* existence!" So when he rushed up the stairs and pitched head fust into his room, I wa'n't fur behind. And what did I see that great silly dew but make a dive fer the lookin'-glass and go through with the motions of *brushin' his hair*, deliberate and arnest, as if—wall, as if he'd *had* some hair! For he's most as bald as a bed-post, and what hair he's got lays down of its own accord as slick as grease, all times! *I wus mad*. I snatched the brush away and grabbed his arm.

"Hannibal Hawkins!" says I, firm and determined, I tell ye; "Hannibal Hawkins! you come down-stairs with me this instant; I've had enough o' your oddity fer one day! I've bore all I can or will, and when we're married I'll take some o' this nonsense out on ye, or I'll—*I'll see!*" says I.

He glared at me as if he never'd seen me before, he was so 'stonished, but I hauled him back down-stairs, and we all went into the parlor at last and took our places in front of the minister. But it did seem as if delays and hitches was to be the order of the day, for jest as we got all ready ter begin, the minister was called to the door on important business that kep' him ten minutes or so, and there we stood in the middle o' the floor lookin' at one 'nother and feelin' awk'ard enough.

Among the folks I invited to the weddin' was old Aunt Betsey Griffin, deaf as a post, and settin' beside her was old Mis' Potter, and Mis' Potter'd lost her mind, in a measure, as it were. I knew it would please 'em both ter come, so I invited 'em. Well, while we was waitin' for the minister and the room was still as the grave, all of a sudden Mis' Potter turned to Aunt Betsey and screamed into her ear loud enough to wake the dead:

"Who did you say our Ruth Ann is goin' ter marry?" And Aunt Betsey screamed back jest as loud, though Mis' Potter ain't deaf a mite:

"*Mr. Hannibal Hawkins!*"

Mis' Potter nods her head contented, and sets and rocks for about a minute; then she leans over and screams again:

"What did you say his name was?"

Aunt Betsey tells her, and she nods and rocks as before, but her poor old head can't hold but one idee to once, so she hollers a third time, and says she:

"What did you say *her* name was?" and Aunt Betsey answers patient and loud:

"Ruth Ann Robbins!"

Everybody was laughin' by this time, and I don't know how long them poor creatur's would ha' kep' our names goin' back'ard and for'ard if the minister hadn't come in jest then and put an end to it.

The ceremony perceeded along smooth and proper till Hannibal undertook ter find the ring to put on my finger. Then there was trouble. He fumbled fust in one pocket, then another, took out a cigar, a little box o' matches, a toothpick, a penknife, a horse-ches'nut that he alwers carries for rheumatiz, and several other things—took 'em out one to a time, looked at 'em thoughtful and inquirin', and put 'em back agin. Finally he dove into some place and took out a little wad o' paper, and all our sperits revived. That looked more like, but when he ondid it, out rolled a dozen or more sugar-coated pills on to the floor! He let 'em roll and tried agin. This time he fished out a small card that 'peared ter have some writin' on it. (I found out afterward that he'd writ down on that card where he put the ring, for fear he'd forgit, jest as he had.) When he'd read the card, what did he dew but stoop over deliberate and pull off one o' 'em dretful boots and shake the ring out o' the toe on't! Then he put his boot back on, and straightened himself up as carm as if it was customary and common for bridegrooms to carry the ring in the toe o' their boots, and, takin' my hand, slipped the ring on to my finger as graceful as you please.

Wall, I was thankful when it was all over, you'd better believe! It hadn't seemed a mite as I expected. I supposed that the thought of the great responsibility I was assumin', and one thing a' nother, would lift my soul and make me feel dretful sollum and pious, but I declare to man, I didn't think o' nothin' from beginnin' to end but jest Hannibal's *odd boots* and *odd actions*! So little does it take to keep a woman's mind from soarin'.

After the ceremony we had cake and coffy passed round, and then as the bells was a-ringin' we perceeded to the church. It wa'n't but a few steps, jest acrost the common.

And we walked up the broad aisle tergether, Hannibal and me. I a-leanin' on his arm, lookin' my best, and he his'n, with everybody's eyes upon us! I tried not to feel proud, but

it was a happy moment for me, I tell ye. And when we set down in the old pew where I'd set ever sence I was a baby, mother on one side, Hannibal on t'other, and me in the middle, it seemed awful pleasant, somehow; seemed as if I never loved the old church so well. Not that there's anything nice or harnsome 'bout our meetin'-house in Craney Holler; it's almost a barn compared ter city churches, but it had one recommend. It was surrounded by natur', whose God we had come to adore. The great winders was wide open and I could look out on to the common, all green and wavy with maples, then away off acrost the medders, and up, up to the woody hill-tops that touched the blue canopy o' heaven.

Oh, how can anybody that lives in the country ever lack for religious privileges? God is so nigh everywheres in natur', and He speaks through her so plain and so direck! Why, if I could git the time, if I hadn't so much housework ter dew and one thing a' nother, I'd make a practice o' goin' out every day, as reg'lar as I say my prayers, to some beautiful, sollum spot, a purpose ter commune with my Maker through natur'. In no other way can we git so near to God.

As I said, it seemed uncommon pleasant to me in meetin' that Sunday mornin'. The horses stompin' in the sheds didn't seem ter disturb me as usual, and the chirpin' of the birds and the dronin' of the crickets through the drowsy air sounded awful nice and soothin'. Inside, the house was full of good, old-fashioned smells. Patigony mint and boys' love and tanzy and cammomile; for all the old ladies, and a good many of the young folks, had a bunch o' one or the other, and perhaps a sprig o' green caraway seed ter munch away on, in case they's inclined to be sleepy.

I looked down to where dear old Squire Brown set in his pew in front o' the pulpit—asleep and noddin' so quick he was—and I noticed that one hand wisely supported his head, in order ter keep on his red wig o' hair. But he wa'n't alwers so careful, for I remembered how nigh he often come ter losin' on't, and how, one Sunday, it did actewally slip clear off'n his bald pate, and how he jumped and clapped his hand to his head, and all the young folks laughed, and some o' the old ones. Even Parson Lamson jest barely saved himself by a timely sneeze!

Strange that all this should come back to me so on my weddin' mornin', but it did, and a good deal more, and I had

a hard tussle bringin' myself into a proper frame o' mind to 'tend to the service.

Mother alwers had a him-book to herself, on account o' seein' better, ye know, so Hannibal and me we looked on tergether, and I had the proud pleasure o' hearin' him sing for the fust time. He's got a most powerful voice, and his *expression* does beat all! Everybody was lookin' at him. Why, he acted it all out so, as you might say! When he struck a high note he riz up to his full statur', balanced himself kinder teenterin' on his toes, stretched up his neck, rolled his eyes 'way inter the back part of his head, and *sech* a tone as he fetched—high—oh, *terrible high!* and on the contr'y, when he sung a low note, he jest scrooched all down inter his stummuck and chist, and somethin' rumbled 'way down in his insides, low—oh, *terrible low and sollum!* I think his "*low A*" was the very lowest one I ever heerd! His singin' was sartinly imposin', and I know it imposed on everybody that heerd it. As for me, I felt so excited and lifted up by it, that I kep' awake all through the sermon, didn't even nod once, and was right on hand ter rouse up mother and Hannibal in season for the doxology. Then come the benediction, and we walked out tergether as we come in, with everybody lookin' and admirin' and envyin'. And I tried ter realize that I was married, and that this was my weddin'-day, but somehow I couldn't; it all seemed like a dream.

ETCHINGS: FANTASIA *

Kreisler donned his little red cap and Chinese dressing-gown and seated himself at the instrument, and his friend extinguished all the lights, so that the company sat in darkness.

Kreisler struck a full chord in A^b major, in the bass, pp, with raised dampers, and as the tones died away murmured:

"What rustles about me so strangely, so wondrously? Invisible pinions are fluttering to and fro. I swim in a perfumed sea. But the odors gleam in a mysterious tangle of flaming circles. Gentle spirits are they, whose golden wings beat in transcendently glorious tones and harmonies."

A^b minor mf.

"Ah! They bear me into the land of endless longing! But when they seized me they woke the pain which rends my breast in its efforts to escape."

E major chord of 6th. Ancora più forte.

"Stand, thou steadfast, my heart! Break not at touch of the scorching ray which has pierced my breast! Arise, my brave soul!—mount and move in the Element which gave thee birth, which is thy home."

E major chord of 3d forte.

"They have given me a glorious crown. But the diamonds in it owe their sparkling light to the thousands of tears I have shed, and the gold is ruddy with the flames which consume me. Courage, Might, Confidence, and Strength needs he who is called to rule in the spirit realm."

C major chord of 3d fortissimo.

"But let us in wild bacchantic joy dance over the open graves—let us revel and shout—those down there hear it not. Heisa!—The Devil is coming with trumpets and drums."

C minor semper fortissimo.

"Know ye him not? Know ye him not? See! he is clutching at my heart with his glowing talons! He is masked in a hundred disguises. Wild Huntsman—Concertmeister he is throwing smiffen among the strings to keep me from playing."

Kreisler—Kreisler—be a man! Seest thou lurking yonder a grim spectre, with red glowing eyes, stretching out his bony claws from his tattered cloak? See how his bald smooth skull shakes under its crown of straw! It is *Insanity*.

* Hoffman's "Kreisleriana": E. E. Steinmetz: For Short Stories.

A LITTLE CHAPTER OF LIFE *

Nobody knew where she had come from or anything about her beyond the fact that the stage which brought the weekly mail over the mountain to Rougemont late on Saturday night had dropped her and her tiny burden at the door of the little French inn. She wanted a room, she told the old woman who came in answer to her knock—not the best one, she could scarcely afford that, and she shouldn't mind how small it was, so long as she and her baby might have it quite to themselves.

Old Marie mumbled as she hobbled along before: "Mon Dieu, but what a child it is! And so pretty, too! Where's her husband?"

Then as she held the door of the room open and the young woman passed in, her sharp old eyes noticed that she wore no wedding-ring. Marie shrugged her shoulders significantly, then hurried down-stairs to inform her colleagues of the fact. As for the young woman, once the door was closed she laid the baby down upon the bed and walked to the bureau, upon which stood a lighted lamp. She raised her left hand and looked at it closely. Directly below the knuckle of her third finger the flesh had been compressed and reddened, but both the marks and color were now gradually dying away.

"By this time to-morrow every trace of it will have gone. As far as looks go, it will be—exactly—as though I never—had any ring at all."

The curé called the next day. He was an old man and had seen queer things even in that quiet place, but he believed in her instinctively. "You must take me on trust for a little while," she said to him in her gentle way, when she caught his eyes wandering to her hands. "It doesn't matter what you call me—Brown, Jones, or Robinson—anything. I was married a year ago, but it doesn't matter to whom. That's why I've come here. I wanted to get somewhere where neither my baby nor I need be known by her father's name."

She was English, but she spoke French excellently, and her pretty face and manners won his sympathy.

As he was leaving he called Marie to one side and pressed a coin into her hand.

* Acton Davies: N. Y. Evening Sun.

"That's for you, Marie—on one condition. You must see to it that they all call her madame."

"Mais, Monsieur le Curé——"

"Enough, Marie! Do as I bid you now, and say no more about it."

The days went by, but none of the village people came to see her. They never "called" in that vicinity; they were far too primitive for that. But, nevertheless, had things been otherwise than as they supposed, they would have soon shown her, after their own fashion, that she was a welcome guest. One day the curé came and found her knitting upon a long, white, fleecy cloud.

"Look!" she cried, holding it up for him to see. "Isn't it pretty? Tell your people—all of them down in the village there—that if they will pay me I will make them clouds and mittens and all sorts of things far prettier than they have ever seen. I don't ask them to know me; I only want to earn my living."

So the curé told them of it, and put in a word parenthetically upon the little mother's behalf. "Go and see her," said he. "She can't harm you. It's lonely for her up there all alone, and you older women could help her so much with the baby."

But the good people would have none of her; if she worked well they would pay her well, but with her they would have no fellowship.

One night about two months later old Marie came hobbling down to the curé's house and told him madame was ill. When he came to her she handed him the envelope in which she kept her slender earnings. On the envelope she had written the name of a well-known pawnbroker in the city, forty miles away. "There's just enough," she said. "I have counted it. Take it to him yourself or send it by some one whom you can trust and who will lose no time. They will give you a little box with my ring inside it—my wedding-ring, you know. I had to pawn it to pay our fare on the stage the night we came. Even if I'm not here when you get back you must put it on my finger and show it to them for baby's sake. My name and the date of my marriage are written inside of it."

The curé waited to hear no more. He caught up her hand and kissed it. "I will go myself," he said.

It was snowing that night when he drove away, and all through the day that followed the snow continued to fall. Early the next morning the curé returned. Marie met him at the door, and he saw at once that she had been crying.

"Madame is dead," she said. "She died just a little while after you went away."

She led the way into the room where they had laid her in a plain pine-board coffin. Some of the villagers had gathered there as well as the curé's servant, Paul. "Paul!" cried the curé, "ring the church bell, and when they ask you what has happened tell them that you ring for a marriage, a burial, and a christening all at once. Tell them also that the curé wants them here."

The cracked old bell rang out on the frosty air, and the people, startled by the unusual sound, hurried to the inn. They crowded into the little room, men and women, and stood there in awed silence as the curé took the cover off the little card-board box. A plain gold ring lay inside of it, and he held it up between his finger and thumb so that all of them might see.

"Look!" he exclaimed, as he read the inscription on the inside of the ring. "Here is her marriage certificate and her Christian name: 'Rosie—September 20th, 1884.' If any of you do not believe me, come and look for yourselves."

There was a dead silence throughout the room as, after waiting for a moment to see if any one would reply, he walked to the coffin, and lifting the little cold, white hand, he slipped the ring upon her finger. "See how it fits," he said; "you must all call her madame now."

Presently he spoke to them more in the tone which he was accustomed to use in the pulpit.

"On Sunday the child shall be christened. We will name her Rosie after her mother and Rougemont after our village. You know best whether you owe anything to her or not," he continued, pointing toward the coffin. "But in case your conscience pricks you, Paul will stand at the church door after the christening to receive what you may wish to give."

And that's how it happens that just at the entrance of the graveyard, where they laid madame, there stands a plain white marble slab. There are only three words on it:

"ROSIE FUT BONNE."

ETCHINGS: "THE BUSTER" *

"He bucked me off a cut-bank, and
When I came to time,
I was going down the trail on the
Ogalalla line!"—

lilted the gay voice of the buster, as our ponies shacked along down the big coulee of the Moccasin—Tony the horse-wrangler, and the foreman on his gaunt buckskin, Dick Hallett and myself riding next, and the buster, on his favorite pinto, bringing up the rear.

"Say, boys, won't you come and go?" ran on the song. Then as the men in the lead rounded the butte, some one cried, "Good God! look there!" In a flash we were all gazing.

Just below in the bend of the river, against a background of the Cœur d'Or foot-hills, nestled the group of snug ranch buildings, in one of which all the household loves were known to preside over Dick Hallett's wife and three-year-old baby; and leading down to it, the gray slope of the hill, mottled with sage-brush and gay with cactus blooms and the tall spikes of the yucca; but the sight which curdled the blood and paled the face lay just at our feet, where, upon a prairie-dog hummock, sat Hallett's little golden-haired baby, and within easy reach of her dimpled fingers, its loathsome head erect, its tail slowly sounding the death signal, a huge "rattler" raised its body into a graceful coil.

"Good God!" gasped each man of us in his turn as the full horror of the situation burst upon him.

I glanced at poor Hallett, who seemed paralyzed into absolute helplessness, and indeed we were all in the same condition, for we knew that to attack the reptile would be merely to precipitate the destruction of the child. Shoot we could not, for the creature was raising its hideous coil between us and its victim, and a shot aimed at it must inevitably strike her.

And then—as we gazed in impotent agony—a sudden clatter of hoofs smote our ears, a man on a pinto flashed past us to the fatal spot, a bend from the saddle, an arm stretched out and the baby swung lightly from the ground—saved!

And as her father pressed her wildly to his heart, the "buster" remarked: "She's all right, but where's the whiskey? I've got a fang as long as a branding-iron in my arm."

* J. Whit. Marcy: For Short Stories.

THE GOLAMPIANS*

From my former account of the Golampians, their civilization (to call it so), their morals, manners, and customs, I necessarily omitted much that is of interest to the foreign observer; nor can I hope now to supply more than a small part of it. They are so extraordinary a people, inhabiting so marvellous a country, that everything which the traveller sees, hears, or experiences makes the liveliest and most lasting impression upon his mind, and the labor of a lifetime would be required to relate the observation of a year. The utmost that I can hope to do is merely to glance at those matters in which the Golampians most conspicuously differ from our own people and in which they are therefore least worthy.

With a fatuousness hardly more credible than creditable, the Golampians deny the immortality of the soul. In all my stay in their country I found only one person who believed in a life "beyond the grave," as we should say, though as the Golampians eat their dead they would say "beyond the stomach." In testimony to the consolatory value of the sublime doctrine of another life, I may say that this one believer had in this life a comparatively unsatisfactory lot, for in early youth he had been struck by a flying stone from a volcano and lost a considerable part of his brain.

I cannot better set forth the nature and extent of the Golampian error regarding this matter than by relating a conversation which occurred between me and one of the high officers of the king's household—a man whose proficiency in all the vices of antiquity, together with his service to the realm in determining the normal radius of curvature in cats' claws, had elevated him to the highest plane of political preferment. His name was Gnarmag-Zote.

"You tell me," said he, "that the soul is immaterial. Now, matter is that of which we can have knowledge through one or more of our five senses. Of what is immaterial—not matter—we can gain no knowledge in that way. In what way, then, can we know of it?"

"By report, for example," I replied.

* Some account of a most extraordinary people: Written by Ambrose Bierce for the San Francisco Examiner.

"Ah, but you do not understand my question," he went on with a smile of superiority which I found singularly irritating. "I said how can *we* know: the pronoun includes all mankind—the man who reports, as well as him to whom the report is made. The reporter, having only the same five senses as we, can himself have no knowledge to report."

Perceiving that he did not rightly apprehend my position, I abandoned it and shifted the argument to another ground. "Consider," I said, "the analogous case of a thought. You will hardly call thought material, yet we know there are thoughts."

"I beg your pardon, but we do not know that. Thought is not a thing, therefore cannot *be*, in any such sense as the hand is. We use the word 'thought' to designate the result of an action of the brain, precisely as we use the word speed to designate the result of an action of a horse's legs. But can it be said that speed exists in the same way as the legs which produce it exist, or in any way? Is it a thing?"

I was about to disdain to reply, when I saw an old man approaching, with bowed head and apparently in deep distress. As he drew near he saluted my distinguished interlocutor in the manner of the country, by putting out his tongue to its full extent and moving it slowly from side to side. Gnarmag-Zote acknowledged the civility by courteously spitting, and the old man, advancing, seated himself at the great officer's feet, saying: "Exalted sir, I have just lost my wife by death, and am in a most melancholy frame of mind. He who has mastered all the vices of the ancients and wrested from nature the secret of the curvature of cats' claws can surely spare from his wisdom a few rays of philosophy to cheer an old man's gloom. Pray tell me, exalted sir, what I shall do to assuage my grief."

The reader can perhaps faintly conceive my astonishment when Gnarmag-Zote gravely replied:

"Commit suicide."

"Surely," I cried, "you would not have this honest fellow procure oblivion (since you think that death is nothing else) by so rash an act!"

"An act which Gnarmag-Zote advises," he said coldly, "is not rash."

"But death," I said, "death, whatever it may be, is at least an end of life. This old man is now in sorrow almost

insupportable. But a few days and it will be supportable; a few months and it will have become no more than a tender melancholy. At last it will disappear, and in the society of his friends, in the skill of his cook, the profits of avarice, the study of how to be querulous, and the pursuit of loquacity, he will again experience the joys of age. Why for a present grief should he deprive himself of all future happiness?"

Gnarmag-Zote looked upon me with something like compassion. "My friend," said he, "guest of my sovereign and my country, know that under any circumstances, even those upon which true happiness is based and conditioned, death is preferable to life. The sum of miseries in any life (here in Golampia, at least) exceeds the sum of pleasures; but suppose that it did not. Imagine an existence in which happiness, of whatever intensity, was the rule, and discomfort, of whatever moderation, the exception. Still there is some discomfort. There is none in death, for (as it is given to us to know) that is oblivion, annihilation. True, by dying one loses his happiness as well as his sorrows, but he is not conscious of the loss. Surely a loss of which one will never know and which, if it operate to make him less happy, at the same time takes from him the desire and capacity for happiness, cannot be an evil. That is so intelligently understood among us here in Golampia that suicide is very common, and our word for sufferer is the same as for fool. If this good man had not been an idiot he would have taken his life long ago."

"If what you say of the blessing of death is true," I asked smilingly, for I greatly prided myself on the ingenuity of my thought, "it is unnecessary to commit suicide through grief for the dead, for the more you love, the more glad you should be that the object of your affection has passed into so desirable a state as death."

"So we are—those of us who have cultivated philosophy, history, and logic; but this poor fellow is still under the domination of feelings inherited from a million ignorant and superstitious ancestors—for Golampia was once as barbarous a country as your own. The most grotesque and frightful conceptions of death, and life after death, were current; and now many of even those whose understandings are emancipated bear upon their feelings the heavy chains of heredity."

"But," said I, "granting for the sake of the argument which I am about to build upon the concession"—I could

not bring myself to use the idiotic and meaningless phrase, "for the sake of argument"—"that death, especially the death of a Golampian, is desirable, yet the act of dying, the transition state between living and being dead, may be accompanied by the most painful physical and most terrifying mental phenomena. The moment of dissolution may seem to the exalted sensibilities of the dying a century of horrors."

The great man smiled again, with a more intolerable benignancy than before. "There is no such thing as dying," he said; "the 'transition state' is a creation of your fancy and an evidence of imperfect reason. One is at any time either alive or dead. The one condition cannot 'shade off' into the other. There is no gradation like that between waking and sleeping. By the way, do you recognize a certain resemblance between death and a dreamless sleep?"

"Yes—death as you conceive it to be."

"Well, does any one fear to go to sleep? Do we not seek it, court it, wish that it may be sound—that is to say, dreamless? We desire occasional annihilation—wish to be dead for eight and ten hours at a time. True, we expect to awake, but that expectation, while it may account for our alacrity in embracing sleep, cannot alter the character of the state that we cheerfully go into. Suppose we did *not* wake in the morning, never did wake! Would our mental and spiritual condition be in any respect different through all eternity from what it was during the first few hours? The man who loves to sleep yet hates to die might justly be granted everlasting life with everlasting insomnia."

Gnarmag-Zote paused and appeared to be lost in the profundity of his thoughts, but I could easily enough see that he was only taking breath. The old man whose grief had given this turn to the conversation had fallen asleep and was roaring in the nose like a beast. The rush of a river near by, as it poured up a hill from the ocean, and the shrill singing of several kinds of brilliant quadrupeds were the only other sounds audible.

I waited deferentially for the great antiquarian, scientist, and courtier to resume, amusing myself meantime by turning over the leaves of an official report by the minister of war on a new and improved process for extracting thunder from snail slime.

Presently the oracle spoke.

"You have been born," he said, which was true. "There was, it follows, a time when you had not been born. As we reckon time, it was probably some millions of ages. Of this considerable period you are unable to remember one unhappy moment, and in point of fact there was none. To a Golampian that is entirely conclusive as to the relative values of consciousness and oblivion, existence and non-existence, life and death. This old man lying here at my feet is now, if not dreaming, as if he had never been born. Would it not be cruel and inhuman to wake him back to grief? Is it, then, kind to permit him to wake by the natural action of his own physical energies? I have given him the advice for which he asked. Believing it good advice and seeing him too irresolute to act, it seems my clear duty to assist him."

Before I could interfere, even had I dared take the liberty to do so, Gnarmag-Zote struck the old man a terrible blow upon the head with his mace of office. The victim turned upon his back, spread his fingers, shivered convulsively, and was dead.

"You need not be shocked," said the distinguished assassin coolly; "I have but performed a sacred duty and religious rite. The religion (established first in this realm by King Skanghutch the sixty-second of that name) consists in the worship of Death. We have sacred books, some three thousand thick volumes, written by inspiration of Death himself, whom no mortal has ever seen, but who is described by our priests as having the figure of a very fat man with a red face and wearing an affable smile. In art he is commonly represented in the costume of a husbandman, sowing seeds.

"The priests and sacred books teach that death is the supreme and only good—that the chief duties of man are assassination and suicide. Conviction of these cardinal truths is universal among us, but I am sorry to say that many do not honestly live up to the faith. Most of us are commendably zealous in assassination, but slack and lukewarm in suicide. Some justify themselves in this half-hearted observance of the law and imperfect submission to the spirit by arguing that if they destroy themselves their usefulness in destroying others will be greatly abridged. 'I find,' said one of our most illustrious writers, not without a certain force, it must be confessed, 'that I can slay many more of others than I can of myself.' There are still others, more distinguished for

faith than works, who reason that if A kills B, B cannot kill C. So it happens that although many Golampians die, mostly by the hands of others, though some by their own, the country is never wholly depopulated."

"In my own country," said I, "is a sect holding somewhat Golampian views of the evil of life; and among them it is considered a sin to bestow it. The philosopher Schopenhauer taught the same doctrine, and many of our rulers have shown strong sympathetic leanings toward it by procuring the destruction of many of their own people and those of other nations in what are called wars."

"They are greatly to be commended," said Gnarmag-Zote, rising, to intimate that the conversation was at an end. I respectfully stood on my head while he withdrew into his palace spitting politely and with unusual copiousness in acknowledgment. A few minutes later, but before I had left the spot, two lackeys in livery emerged from the door by which he had entered, and while one shouldered the body of the old man and carried it into the palace kitchen, the other informed me that his Highness was graciously pleased to desire my company at dinner that evening. With many expressions of regret I declined the invitation. The fact is, my own cook had, I knew, a fine fat babe in the oven.

POOR DOG PIERROT *

Madame Lefèvre was a country widow—one of those half peasants covered with ribbons and furbelows, who speak incorrectly and put on airs in public, who try to conceal under an absurd and much-bedecked exterior an ignorant and sordid nature, much as they hide their large red hands under gloves of écru silk.

She had for a servant, a good and simple country girl named Rose.

The two women lived in a little house with green blinds, on a highway in Normandy, in the heart of the Caux district. As they owned a strip of garden in front of the house, they raised a few vegetables. Now it happened that one night some one stole a dozen or so of onions. As soon as Rose discovered the theft she ran to tell madame, who came down in her woollen skirt.

It was a terrible event. Some one had been stealing; stealing from Madame Lefèvre. And if they had stolen once they might do so again.

And the two frightened women examined the foot-prints, talked the matter over, and imagined all sorts of things.

"See, they came across there. They stepped on the wall, and jumped into the border." They were very much alarmed about the future. How could they sleep in peace now? The news of the theft spread. The neighbors came, and surmised and discussed in their turn, and the two women explained their ideas and observations to every new-comer. One of the farmers gave this piece of advice—"You ought to keep a dog."

That was certainly true. They ought to have a dog if only to give the alarm. Not a big dog. Heavens! What could they do with a big dog? He would eat them out of house and home. But a little fellow who would bark.

As soon as they had all gone Madame Lefèvre debated for a long while over this idea of a dog. She found, on thinking it over, a thousand objections to the plan, being especially deterred by the thought of large bowls of dog's food, for she belonged to that class of economical country-women who always carry a few pennies in their pockets to give in osten-

* French of Guy de Maupassant: Cordelia B. Browne: For Short Stories.

tatious charity to wayside beggars, and to put in the Sunday collections.

Rose, who was fond of animals, brought up her arguments, and defended them cleverly, and it was finally decided that they should have a dog, a very little dog. So they began a search for one, but could find nothing but huge creatures, with appetites that were frightful to think of.

The grocer at Rolleville did indeed have a little one, but he wanted two francs for him, to cover the expense of having raised him. Madame Lefèvre declared that she was willing to feed a dog, but that she certainly did not intend to buy one.

One morning the baker, who knew everything that went on, brought with him in his care a queer little fellow animal with very short legs, a crocodile's body, a fox's head, and a trumpet-shaped tail that was as long as his whole body and ornamented with a tuft. One of his customers wanted to dispose of him. Madame Lefèvre thought that this dirty cur who cost nothing, was very fine, and Rose embraced him and asked what his name was.

"Pierrot," answered the baker.

He was installed in an old soap box, and they offered him some water to drink. He drank it. Then they gave him a bit of bread. He ate it. Madame Lefèvre grew uneasy, but thought to herself "After he is used to the house we can let him run, and he will find plenty to eat when he roams about the country."

They did let him run indeed, but that did not prevent his being starved. He never barked except to demand his dinner, but on those occasions he certainly barked furiously.

Any one could come into the garden with impunity. Pierrot ran to greet each new-comer, and kept absolutely quiet.

But in spite of that Madame Lefèvre became used to the animal. She even grew fond of him, and would give him occasionally with her own hand, bits of bread dipped in gravy.

But she had never thought of a tax, and when eight francs were demanded of her—eight francs indeed—for this puppy who did not even bark, she was ready to faint from the shock.

It was immediately decided that they must get rid of Pierrot. But nobody wanted him. All the neighbors for miles around refused him.

Then they decided, for lack of any other resource, to make him "eat clay."

Dogs people wanted to get rid of were made to "eat clay."

In the middle of a plain near by there was a sort of hut, or rather a thatched roof built over the ground. That was the entrance to the clay pit, where a deep shaft was sunk to a distance of about sixty feet, leading into a series of long mining galleries. This quarry was entered only when clay was wanted. The rest of the time it served as a cemetery for condemned dogs, and often in passing the opening, one might hear plaintive howls, desperate barks, and pitiful cries.

The dogs of the hunters and shepherds fled in terror from this moaning hole, and on bending over it, one noticed a horrible smell of decay.

Terrible tragedies took place in its gloom. When a dog had been there for ten or twelve days, sustained only by the remains of his predecessors, a new animal perhaps larger and stronger would be suddenly thrown in.

There they were, alone, starving, with shining eyes. They watch each other, follow each other about, hesitating and anxious. But hunger drives them on. They attack each other, and after a long struggle, the stronger eats the weaker, devouring him alive.

When it was decided to make Pierrot "eat clay," an executioner was sought.

The road-mender asked ten sous for the job. That seemed absurdly high to Mme. Lefèvre. A neighbor's son offered to do it for five sous, but that was still too much, and Rose having suggested that it would be better to take him themselves for fear he might be warned of his fate on the road, it was settled that they should go together at nightfall.

They gave him, before starting off, a good soup well seasoned with butter. He drank it to the last drop, and as he was wagging his tail with content, Rose put him in her apron.

They hurried quickly across the plain, feeling like thieves. Before long they reached the clay pit, and Mme. Lefèvre bent over it to hear if there were any other dogs there. No, there were none. Pierrot would be alone. Then Rose, who was crying, kissed him and threw him into the hole, and they both listened eagerly. They heard first a dull sound, then the pitiful heart-rending cry of a wounded animal, then a succession of little cries of grief, then the desperate appeals and supplications of the dog who was begging for life with his head raised toward the opening.

He yelped, oh! how he yelped! They were seized with remorse and terror and a wild unreasoning fear, and ran away as fast as they could go. As Rose was the more nimble of the two Mme. Lefèvre was obliged to call "Wait for me, Rose, wait for me."

The night was passed in frightful nightmares. Mme. Lefèvre dreamt that she was seated at dinner and about to eat her soup when, as she took the cover from the tureen, Pierrot, who was inside, jumped out and bit her nose. She woke up and thought that she heard him still yelping, then listened and found that she was mistaken. She fell asleep again and found herself on a long interminable road, along which she was walking. Suddenly she saw a basket in the middle of the road, a farmer's large basket evidently abandoned, and she was very much afraid of it.

In spite of her fear, however, she opened it, and Pierrot, who was curled up inside, seized her hand and would not let go, and she rushed away in desperation, with the dog still hanging from her hand by his clenched jaws. She rose at daybreak and hurried frantically to the clay-pit.

He was yelping, yelping still; he had been yelping all night.

She began to sob and call him a thousand pet names, and he answered with all the tender tones which his voice could command.

Then she wanted to see him again vowing to make him happy to the day of his death, and hastening to the man who had charge of the clay pit, she told him her story.

The man listened in silence until she finished, and then said:

"You want your dog? It will cost you four francs."

This was such a shock to her that her grief was immediately forgotten.

"Four francs! You wouldn't know what to do with so much money.

"Four francs indeed!"

"Do you think that I am going to take my ropes and cranks to the pit, put them up, go down there with my boy, and get bitten by your beast of a dog for the pleasure of giving him back? You needn't have thrown him in," said the man.

And she went off in high dudgeon.

Four francs! What an idea!

As soon as she reached home she called Rose and told her of the man's demands. Rose, who was always submissive,

repeated, "Four francs! That is a good deal of money, madame. But," added she, "couldn't we throw the poor dog something to eat, so that he wouldn't die there?"

Mme. Lefèvre consented with delight, and they started off again with a great piece of buttered bread.

They cut it up into mouthfuls, and threw them to Pierrot one by one, talking to him meanwhile, and as soon as he finished one piece he began to yelp for the next. They came again at night, and after that once a day, for some time.

One morning, just as they threw in the first piece, they heard a loud barking in the pit. There were two of them! Some one had thrown in another dog, a big fellow.

Rose called "Pierrot!" and Pierrot barked and barked. Then they began to drop the food to him, but every time they did so they heard a tremendous scuffle, and then the pitiful cries of Pierrot, as he was bitten by his companion, who, being the larger, was eating everything.

In vain they specified—"that is for you, Pierrot." Pierrot evidently got nothing.

The two women, completely at a loss, looked at one another, and Mme. Lefèvre said sharply:

"I can't possibly feed all the dogs that are thrown in there. We must give him up."

And she went away, overwhelmed at the idea of all these dogs living at her expense, even taking what remained of the bread, and eating it as she walked along. Rose followed her, wiping her eyes with a corner of her blue apron.

THROWN AWAY*

To rear a boy under what parents call the "sheltered life system" is, if the boy must go into the world and fend for himself, not wise. Unless he be one in a thousand he has certainly to pass through many unnecessary troubles; and may, possibly, come to extreme grief simply from ignorance of the proper proportions of things.

Let a puppy eat the soap in the bath-room or chew a newly blackened boot. He chews and chuckles until, by and by, he finds out that blacking and Old Brown Windsor make him very sick; so he argues that soap and boots are not wholesome. Any old dog about the house will soon show him the un wisdom of biting big dogs' ears. Being young, he remembers and goes abroad, at six months, a well-mannered little beast with a chastened appetite. If he had been kept away from boots, and soap, and big dogs till he came to the trinity full grown and with developed teeth, just consider how fearfully sick and thrashed he would be! Apply that motion to the "sheltered life," and see how it works. It does not sound pretty, but it is the better of two evils.

There was a boy once who had been brought up under the "sheltered-life" theory; and the theory killed him. He stayed with his people all his days, from the hour he was born till the hour he went into Sandhurst nearly at the top of the list. He was beautifully taught in all that wins marks by a private tutor, and carried the extra weight of "never having given his parents an hour's anxiety in his life." What he learnt at Sandhurst beyond the regular routine is of no great consequence. He looked about him, and he found soap and blacking, so to speak, very good. He ate a little, and came out of Sandhurst not so high as he went in. Then there was an interval and a scene with his people, who expected much from him. Next a year of living "unspotted from the world" in a third-rate depot battalion where all the juniors were children, and all the seniors old women; and lastly he came out to India, where he was cut off from the support of his parents, and had not a soul in the country to fall back on in time of trouble except himself.

Now India is a place beyond all others where one must not

* Rudyard Kipling: "Tales From The Hills."

take things too seriously—the midday sun always excepted. Too much work and too much energy kill a man just as effectively as too much assorted vice or too much drink. Flirtation does not matter, because every one is being transferred and either you or she leave the station and never return. Good work does not matter, because a man is judged by his worst output and another man takes all the credit of his best, as a rule. Bad work does not matter, because other men do worse, and incompetents hang on longer in India than anywhere else. Amusements do not matter, because you must repeat them as soon as you have accomplished them once, and most amusements only mean trying to win another person's money. Sickness does not matter, because it's all in the day's work, and if you die another man takes over your place and your office in the eight hours between death and burial. Nothing matters except home furlough and acting allowances, and these only because they are scarce. This is a slack, kutcha country where all men work with imperfect instruments; and the wisest thing is to take no one and nothing in earnest, but to escape as soon as ever you can to some place where amusement is amusement and a reputation is worth the having.

But this boy—the tale is as old as the hills—came out and took all things seriously. He was pretty and was petted. He took the pettings seriously, and fretted over women not worth saddling a pony to call upon. He found his new free life in India very good. It does look attractive in the beginning, from a subaltern's point of view—all ponies, partners, dancing, and so on. He tasted it as the puppy tastes the soap. Only he came late to the eating with a grown set of teeth. He had no sense of balance—just like the puppy—and could not understand why he was not treated with the consideration he received under his father's roof. This hurt his feelings.

He quarreled with other boys, and, being sensitive to the marrow, remembered these quarrels, and they excited him. He found whist, and gymkhanas, and things of that kind (meant to amuse one after office) good; but he took them seriously too, just as seriously as he took the "head" that followed after drink. He lost his money over whist and gymkhanas because they were new to him.

He took his losses seriously and wasted as much energy

and interest over a two goldmohur race for maiden ekka ponies with their manes hogged, as if it had been the Derby. One half of this came from inexperience—much as the puppy squabbles with the corner of the hearthrug—and the other half from the dizziness bred by stumbling out of his quiet life into the glare and excitement of a livelier one. No one told him about the soap and the blacking, because an average man takes it for granted that an average man is ordinarily careful in regard to them. It was pitiful to watch the boy knocking himself to pieces, as an over-handled colt falls down and cuts himself when he gets away from the groom.

This unbridled license in amusements not worth the trouble of breaking line for, much less rioting over, endured for six months—all through one cold weather—and then we thought that the heat and the knowledge of having lost his money and health and lamed his horses would sober the boy down and he would stand steady. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred this would have happened. You can see the principle working in any Indian station. But his particular case fell through because the boy was sensitive and took things seriously—as I may have said some seven times before. Of course, we couldn't tell how his excesses struck him personally. They were nothing very heart breaking or above the average. He might be crippled for life financially and want a little nursing. Still, the memory of his performances would wither away in one hot weather, and the shroff would help him to tide over the money troubles. But he must have taken another view altogether and he believed himself ruined beyond redemption. His colonel talked to him severely when the cold weather ended. That made him more wretched than ever, and it was only an ordinary "colonel's wiggling!"

What follows is a curious instance of the fashion in which we are all linked together and made responsible for one another. The thing that kicked the beam in The Boy's mind was a remark that a woman made when he was talking to her. There is no use in repeating it, for it was only a cruel little sentence, rapped out before thinking, that made him flush to the roots of his hair. He kept himself to himself for three days, and then put in for two days' leave to go shooting near a canal engineer's rest house about thirty miles out. He got his leave, and that night at mess was noisier and more offensive than ever. He said that he was "going to shoot big

game," and left at half-past ten o'clock in an ekka. Partridge—which was the only thing a man could get near the rest house—is not big game: so every one laughed.

Next morning one of the majors came in from short leave, and heard that The Boy had gone out to shoot "big game." The major had taken an interest in The Boy, and had, more than once, tried to check him in the cold weather. The major put up his eyebrows when he heard of the expedition and went to The Boy's rooms, where he rummaged.

Presently he came out and found me leaving cards on the mess. There was no one else in the anteroom.

He said: "The Boy has gone out shooting. Does a man shoot tetur with a revolver and a writing case?"

I said: "Nonsense, major!" for I saw at once what was in his mind.

He said: "Nonsense or no nonsense, I'm going to the canal now—at once. I don't feel easy."

Then he thought for a minute, and said: "Can you lie?"

"You know best," I answered. "It's my profession."

"Very well," said the major; "you must come out with me now—at once—in an ekka to the canal to shoot black buck. Go and put on shikar kit—quick—and drive here."

The major was a masterful man, and I knew that he would not give orders for nothing. So I obeyed and on return found the major packed up in an ekka—gun cases and food slung below—all ready for a shooting trip.

He dismissed the driver and drove himself. We jogged along quietly while in the station; but as soon as we got to the dusty road across the plains he made that pony fly. A country bred can do nearly anything at a pinch. We covered the thirty miles in under three hours, but the poor brute was nearly dead.

Once I said, "What's the blazing hurry, major?"

He said quietly: "The Boy has been alone, by himself for—one, two, five—fourteen hours now. I tell you, I don't feel easy."

This uneasiness, of course, spread to me, and I helped to beat the pony.

When we came to the canal engineer's rest house the major called for The Boy's servant; but there was no answer. Then we went up to the house, calling for The Boy by name; but there was no answer.

"Oh, he's out shooting," said I.

Just then I saw through one of the windows a little hurricane lamp burning. This was at four in the afternoon. We both stopped dead in the veranda, holding our breath to catch every sound; and we heard inside the room the "brr—brr—brr"—of a multitude of flies. The major said nothing, but he took off his helmet and we entered very softly.

The Boy was dead on the charpoy in the centre of the bare, lime-washed room. He had shot his head nearly to pieces with his revolver. The gun cases were still strapped, so was the bedding, and on the table lay The Boy's writing case with photographs. He had gone away to die like a poisoned rat!

The major said to himself softly: "Poor boy! Poor, poor devil!" Then he turned away from the bed and said: "I want your help in this business."

Knowing The Boy was dead by his own hand, I saw exactly what that help would be, so I passed over to the table, took a chair, lit a cheroot, and began to go through the writing case, the major looking over my shoulder and repeating to himself: "We came too late! Like a rat in a hole! Poor, poor devil!"

The Boy must have spent half the night in writing to his people, to his colonel, and to a girl at home; and as soon as he had finished must have shot himself, for he had been dead a long time when we came in.

I read all that he had written and passed over each sheet to the major as I finished it.

We saw from his accounts how very seriously he had taken everything. He wrote about "disgrace which he was unable to bear"—"indelible shame"—"criminal folly"—"wasted life," and so on; besides a lot of private things to his father and mother, much too sacred to put into print. The letter to the girl at home was the most pitiful of all; and I choked as I read it. The major made no attempt to keep dry-eyed. I respected him for that. He read and rocked himself to and fro, and simply cried like a woman without caring to hide it. The letters were so dreary and hopeless and touching. We forgot all about The Boy's follies, and only thought of the poor thing on the charpoy and the scrawled sheets in our hands. It was utterly impossible to let the letters go home. They would have broken his father's heart and killed his mother after killing her belief in her son.

At last the major dried his eyes openly and said: "Nice sort of thing to spring on an English family! What shall we do?"

I said, knowing what the major had brought me out for: "The Boy died of cholera. We were with him at the time. We can't commit ourselves to half measures. Come along."

Then began one of the most grimly comic scenes I have ever taken part in—the concoction of a big written lie, bolstered with evidence, to soothe The Boy's people at home. I began the rough draft of the letter, the major throwing in hints here and there while he gathered up all the stuff that The Boy had written and burnt it in the fireplace. It was a hot, still evening when we began, and the lamp burned very badly. In due course I got the draft to my satisfaction, setting forth how The Boy was the pattern of all virtues, beloved by his regiment, with every promise of a great career before him, and so on; how we had helped him through the sickness—it was no time for little lies you will understand—and how he had died without pain. I choked while I was putting down these things, and thinking of the poor people who would read them. Then I laughed at the grotesqueness of the affair, and the laughter mixed itself up with the choke—and the major said that we both wanted drinks.

I am afraid to say how much whiskey we drank before the letter was finished. It had not the least effect on us. Then we took off The Boy's watch, locket, and rings.

Lastly, the major said: "We must send a lock of hair too. A woman values that."

But there were reasons why we could not find a lock fit to send. The boy was black-haired, and so was the major, luckily. I cut off a piece of the major's hair above the temple with a knife, and put it into the packet we were making. The laughing fit and the chokes got hold of me again, and I had to stop. The major was nearly as bad; and we both knew that the worst part of the work was to come.

We sealed up the packet, photographs, locket, seals, rings, letter, and lock of hair with The Boy's sealing wax and The Boy's seal.

Then the major said: "For God's sake let's get outside—away from the room—and think!"

We went outside, and walked on the banks of the canal for an hour, eating and drinking what we had with us, until the moon rose. I know now exactly how a murderer feels.

Finally, we forced ourselves back to the room, with the lamp and the Other Thing in it, and began to take up the next piece of work. I am not going to write about this. It was too horrible. We burned the bedstead and dropped the ashes into the canal. We took up the matting of the room and treated that in the same way. I went off to a village and borrowed two big hoes—I did not want the villagers to help—while the major arranged the other matters. It took us four hours' hard work to make the grave. As we worked, we argued out whether it was right to say as much as we remembered of the burial of the dead. We compromised things by saying the Lord's prayer with a private unofficial prayer for the peace of the soul of The Boy. Then we filled in the grave and went into the veranda—not the house—to lie down to sleep. We were dead tired.

When he woke the major said, wearily: "We can't go back till to-morrow. We must give him a decent time to die in. He died early this morning, remember. That seems more natural." So the major must have been lying awake all the time, thinking.

I said: "Then why didn't we bring the body back to cantonments?"

The major thought for a minute:

"Because the people bolted when they heard of the cholera. And the ekka has gone!"

That was strictly true. We had forgotten all about the ekka pony, and he had gone home.

So we were left there alone, all that stifling day, in the canal rest house, testing and re-testing our story of The Boy's death to see if it was weak in any point. A native turned up in the afternoon, but we said that a sahib was dead of cholera, and he ran away. As the dusk gathered the major told me all his fears about The Boy, and awful stories of suicide or nearly carried out suicide—tales that made one's hair crisp. He said that he himself had once gone into the same valley of the shadow as The Boy, when he was young and new to the country; so he understood how things fought together in The Boy's poor jumbled head. He also said that youngsters, in their repentant moments, consider their sins much more serious and inefaceable than they really are. We talked together all through the evening and rehearsed the story of the death of The Boy. As soon as the moon was

up, and The Boy, theoretically, just buried, we struck across country for the station. We walked from eight till six o'clock in the morning; but though we were dead tired, we did not forget to go to The Boy's room and put away his revolver with the proper amount of cartridges in the pouch; also to set his writing case on the table. We found the colonel and reported the death, feeling more like murderers than ever. Then we went to bed and slept the clock round, for there was no more in us.

The tale had credence as long as was necessary, for every one forgot about The Boy before a fortnight was over. Many people, however, found time to say that the major had behaved scandalously in not bringing in the body for a regimental funeral. The saddest thing of all was the letter from The Boy's mother to the major and me—with big inky blisters all over the sheet. She wrote the sweetest possible things about our great kindness, and the obligation she would be under to us as long as she lived.

All things considered, she was under an obligation, but not exactly as she meant.

ETCHINGS: IN THE STRETCH *

Some person standing on the corner dropped his red silk handkerchief. The old car-horse started, his drooping ears went up into the air, his one eye brightened, and his shoes cut sparks from the rocky road-bed. Away he went like an arrow, pulling his side partner (a feeble old lady), the conductor, the car, and its wondering occupants after him.

Then he ran down a brewery wagon, two old women, and finally dashed past a barber's post and through the plate-glass window into the barber's shop.

As he lay there with a thousand ugly and bleeding wounds in his old sides he grew reminiscent, and his liquid eyes, fast becoming glassy, beckoned me to his side.

"Do you remember the famous Pearl Stakes?" he asked. "Do you remember the day? The beautiful sky; the soft grassy field—such a field; the beautiful ladies—such ladies. God bless 'em. Do you remember the field? Echo and Rameses the favorites? The money was all on them. But do you remember the little colt, the ugly little colt that attracted no attention at all in the march?

"Do you remember that start?

"Echo in the lead.

"Rameses in the homestretch.

"Then do you remember that cry?

"'See the colt!'

"'The colt wins!'

"Ah, do you remember that!

"The odds 150 to 1—write your own ticket!

"Do you remember that colt? That *was* me. Do you remember the Lampasas Stakes? Do you remember Colomos, how he won in a gallop? That *was* me. Say, do you remember that race against time, the record—eh—the record Colomos made? The king of the turf—that *was* me. Do you remember the head-lines, 'His leg broken'? That *was* me.

"Ah, the days that are no more.

"Do you see a damphool of a car-horse, who doesn't know enough to forget the past and to let by-gones be by-gones?

"That *is* me."

And Colomos turned wearily on his side and bled to death.

* Warren Ratcliffe McVeigh: For Short Stories.

THE PIRATE'S CAVE*

"No," my companion assented, as he took his fragrant Havana from his lips, and blew a great cloud of smoke from his mouth and nostrils. "No, I am not so old as I look."

He looked old, and yet young. His hair, his eyebrows, the delicate mustache that curled youthfully around the corners of his mouth, even his eyelashes were as white as snow, while around his eyes and on his brow were graven heavy lines as by the chisel of time; but his cheeks were round and flushed with ruddy health, and his figure showed lithe and muscular through his well-fitting suit.

"In fact," he continued, "I am scarcely forty."

"But you are gray," I remarked, interrogatively.

We were alone in the car, and had been for hours; and our conversation, begun in self-defense against ennui, had gradually drifted from mere platitudes, and distant general topics to almost familiar personalities.

"Sometimes a man turns gray in one day," he replied, communicatively, turning his sharp black eyes full upon me.

"I have heard of such cases," I returned, "but I never met one."

"Well, I am one," he said, sententiously; then after a long pause, which I took care not to break, feeling sure of an explanation to follow. "I hardly ever speak about it, I never think about it when I can help myself, but I feel strongly reminded of it to-night." And he turned in his seat, and tried to peer out through the dripping window, against which a howling blast was driving a furious sleet as we whirled along through the inky midnight. "It was such another night as this, and just such a spirit-ridden gale."

I cast a quick, nervous glance at the black pane and hitched an inch nearer to the speaker, who meditatively paused to knock the ashes from his cigar, and continued:

"It was some ten years ago, and I was at Bay St. Louis, on the coast of Mississippi, about a bit of idle business, looking up some old grant. You know that some of the earliest settlements in the United States were made there, and one day, sauntering and smoking along the shore of the sound, I came to a place where an old brick wall protrudes from the

* An old-fashioned ghost-story. Nelson Ayers: New Orleans Picayune.

bluff bank. The bank is some twelve or fifteen feet high, and the wall juts out as though built into the solid earth at least ten feet below the surface, and exposed to view by the washing away of the earth around it by the waves, although at that time the water was at least six feet below the bottom of the wall, as nearly as I could make it out. The wall was crumbling with age, and marked as though by fire; and bits of broken tiles and bricks were scattered along the sands. On the other side of the drive that skirts the bluff, amidst ample but neglected grounds, is a large old-fashioned rambling mansion, untenanted and uncared for. As I stood gazing at the wall, and idly speculating how it ever came to be built thus underground, and almost in the sea, an old negro stopped on the road above me, and peered curiously over the bank.

“‘Hello, uncle,’ said I, ‘whose place is this?’ with a comprehensive wave of my hand toward the mansion. ‘Dis am de Frelsen place, sah,’ he answered politely. ‘And what’s this?’ I queried, pointing to the wall. The old man’s face assumed a half-frightened look, as he replied with a mysterious lowering of the voice, ‘Dat am de cave, sah.’ ‘I don’t see any cave,’ I said carelessly. The old darky hobbled closer to the edge of the bluff, and directed my attention to a small brick-arched opening in the bank, nearly choked up with broken brick and dirt. ‘Dat’s it, sah.’

“‘Well, what’s in there?’ I said. He shut his lips tight, and shook his white wool slowly and impressively. A quarter of a dollar, backed by a pull at my pocket flask soon opened his mouth, and he launched off into a long rambling story of Spanish pirates, and horrible murders, and hidden spirit-guarded treasures, to all of which I listened incredulous. ‘An’ nobody’s neber bin able to git into dat hole funder nor a few feet, an’ nobody can’t lib in dat house fur de sperits an’ de groanin,’ he concluded. I shrugged my shoulders and continued my stroll, but presently I found myself again before the cave, peering curiously into its narrow opening, and pondering the old negro’s weird tale. He evidently believed in it profoundly himself, and his faith shook my incredulity. There seemed to be a certain verisimilitude in a tale of pirates and hidden treasure; as I stood on this lonely shore and looked out over the Spanish main my curiosity was aroused to the possibilities of the place.

"I was young and nerry, fond of adventure, and above all, poor. The longer I pondered the story, the stronger hold it took upon me; to make a long story short, midnight found me there again, provided with a dark lantern, a pair of revolvers and a good knife, determined to possess any treasures that the cave contained. I soon made a way through the débris that choked the entrance, and uncovered the mouth of a brick-arched tunnel about two feet high. I crawled cautiously in on my hands and knees, and a short distance brought me to the brink of a pit. A brief examination showed that this was but four or five feet deep, and that from its bottom the tunnel, slightly enlarged, continued in the same direction as above. I carefully let myself down, and crawled onward, though with considerable difficulty, as the bottom of the pit was damp and slimy, and the tunnel bore marks of having been recently filled with water. It sloped gradually upward for some distance, and then as gradually downward. Presently I thought I heard the sound of gurgling water. I stopped and listened. What, if this dark subterranean passage should be suddenly flooded, as it seemed not long ago to have been, I should be drowned before I could drag myself out. I listened attentively, but no further sound broke the tomblike stillness; and stimulated by the vision of the pirate's gold, I cautiously advanced; a few feet further brought me to water indeed. The tunnel dipped gradually into it, and by the light of my lantern I could see beyond that the water reached to within a few inches of the top of the tunnel. I stopped to consider, and began planning to retrace my way and procure some assistance, and a pump with which to clear the further way, when a faint but distinct sound reached my ears, that almost made my heart stop beating. It was a human groan coming apparently from the passage before me. Was it spirits? I dismissed the idea instantly, I did not believe in spirits. Could it be some wild beast? It seemed hardly possible with this water before me. Was some fellow-being here in distress? As I deliberated, the groan was distinctly repeated. All my dare-devil nature was aroused at once. I grasped a cocked revolver in one hand, fastened my lantern to my hat, and crawled rapidly forward into the water. The tunnel grew slightly higher as I advanced, so that I could get along on my knees without the assistance of my hands, and the groaning became more

distinct and more agonizing, as from some human being in mortal pain.

I shouted aloud: "Hallo! who is here?" and hurried on as fast as I could with my head and shoulders barely above water. Presently the tunnel ended in a blank wall, and I found myself at the bottom of a sort of well, with the groans coming directly from over my head. A few inches above me the well opened out in cavernous darkness. I stood in water half-way up my thighs. A moment I hesitated, and suddenly felt the water rising rapidly about my waist. I was dreadfully alarmed, and springing desperately upward clutched the edge of the well, and after a few ineffectual struggles, during which the water continued rising about me, I succeeded in climbing out into what I afterward discovered to be a low, vaulted, circular chamber, about twenty feet in diameter. I say afterward discovered, for just as I succeeded in gaining the level floor of the chamber a deafening burst of hideous laughter, mingled with unearthly shrieks and yells, pealed in my ears, and before I had time to cast a glance about me I received a stunning blow upon the forehead that stretched me senseless on the floor."

Here the speaker paused to lift his luxuriant snow-white hair, and disclosed a ghastly scar over his left temple. "I have never been able to satisfy myself," he continued, "whether I struck my head against some obstruction, though I could find nothing afterward likely to inflict such a wound, or whether the blow was given me by a spirit. For though I did not believe in the existence of ghosts or spirits before that, I have never doubted since. But I have never known a case, except my own, of spirits offering physical violence to any one.

"I have no idea how long I lay unconscious. It must have been some hours, I think, and when at last I came to my senses I beheld the most extraordinary sight of my life, something that will not be forgotten to my dying day. A soft light filled the vaulted apartment, and two stalwart figures, richly dressed in the curious costumes that we see in pictures of the sixteenth century, were seated on rough stools in the middle of the floor, drinking wine from huge silver goblets out of a cask that stood near, and apparently playing at dice.

"Two or three others, in meaner garb, stood respectfully

around. I seemed to hear a conversation between the two principal figures in Spanish, but their voices were too low for me to catch distinctly anything that was said, especially as my acquaintance with the language was rather limited. They seemed to be discussing some absorbing topic, and in no very amicable mood, for the manner of the elder one particularly was very abrupt and haughty. Presently the younger of the two, a coarse-featured, brutal-faced man, broke out into an uncontrollable rage. He dashed his goblet on the floor and cried: 'Te doy saber, viejo. I let you know, old man, that your daughter is not my equal, nor you yourself.' The other, a gray-mustached, noble-visaged old cavalier, sprang to his feet and drew his rapier quick as a flash. 'Dog! dare you speak thus of me?' he cried. The ruffian sat still, and with a supercilious smile made a sign with his hand, and instantly the attendants sprang upon the old man, disarmed and bound him in the twinkling of an eye and threw him to the floor at the other's feet.

"'Now you look like a grandee of Spain, Don fool!' sneered the villain. 'Your gentle blood is too good to be mingled with mine, is it? Your pretty daughter is too good for me? You shall learn now that one outlaw's blood is no better than another's, and that gentlemen do not defy the throne of Castile and Leon to be domineered by any one, least of all by a Don jackass who gives himself airs on his lordly birth. I am lord now of you and of your ship and of your treasures and of your daughter. Do homage, kiss my foot!' and with that he gave the prostrate figure a cruel kick in the face. Then followed a scene of bloody brutality that I had never dreamed of as possible. I cannot describe it. I grew sick to think of it. Every imaginable indignity and torture that cold-blooded villain, assisted by his too willing tools, heaped upon his helpless victim.

"I was petrified with fear and horror, or I should have attempted to interfere, although I knew that it was but a ghostly tragedy, but I could not move. I could not utter a sound, could only lie as in a trance and watch the horrible spectacle as the old man was literally flayed alive. He uttered no plea for his life, and at first maintained a stoical silence under his sufferings, but as he gradually grew weaker groan after groan was wrung from his pallid lips, and I recognized the sound that had greeted me as I advanced in the

tunnel. Finally, tired with his brutality, the ruffian gave his now insensible victim the coup-de-grace, and his attendants threw the body into the hole by which I had entered the cave, now almost full to the top with water. In so doing they brushed close to me, and one of them actually set his foot upon or through me, for I did not seem to be at all in the way. I did not feel him, and none of them noticed me in any way. Suddenly I was alone and in Egyptian darkness. For a long while I lay in horror-stricken silence, waiting and watching for the return of the vision, but nothing further appeared, and as my nerves grew quieter a sense of my own dangerous predicament grew upon me. Here I was prisoner in an underground dungeon, with no outlet but that water-flooded tunnel. I rose to my feet and groped my way around the chamber, examining the wall carefully with my fingers. It was a substantially built brick vault about four feet high at the sides and seven in the middle, with no break in the wall anywhere that I could discover. I went round and round it again and again, several times narrowly escaping a fall into the pit, but all without result. I sat down with my back against the wall to consider the situation, and my reflections were far from enviable. I was a prisoner safe enough. It would be impossible to dive through that water-choked tunnel, and there was no other way out. Would the water subside again sufficiently to permit my passage, I wondered, and when. Before I was starved to death? I had heard of men living several weeks without food, and here was water enough, at all events, more than I wanted. I groped my way to the pit and tasted the water. It was unpleasant to taste but might support life. I sat down again and began to feel more hopeful, when a thought occurred to me that made the cold perspiration start from my brow. I should be asphyxiated. The place was hermetically closed. The oxygen would soon be exhausted and I should be slowly stifled. Already I seemed to find difficulty in breathing. I gasped hard for breath, sprung to my feet and again fruitlessly felt all over the bare brick wall.

“At length, by a great effort of will, I calmed myself and sat down, resolved at least to meet the fate that I had courted with calmness and courage. How long I sat thus I cannot tell, probably several hours. Gradually I became conscious of a faint sound like the roar of a distant gale; then I fancied

that I could hear the plunge of breakers upon the shore, and this grew more and more distinct until I could plainly feel the earth tremble with the violence of the waves. At least it was a comfort to feel that I was not so deeply buried that no sound from the outside world could reach me. I listened a long while and perhaps fell into a doze, for I felt a torper steal over me, which I mentally attributed to asphyxiation, and I dreamily wondered how long I should be in dying, and whether the death was painful.

“Suddenly I was aroused by an indefinable sense that I was not alone. There was a presence near me, something not to be seen but felt. Presently I was moved by a mysterious impulse to write. I took out my note-book and pencil and laid my hand on the paper, when, with no volition on my part, rather against my will, my hand began writing rapidly. It seemed as though another mind was in possession of my arm, and I began trying to read what was written, judging by the motion of my fingers, for I could see absolutely nothing. I soon found that the writing was in Spanish, and finally made out the word ‘sword’ and then ‘tinder-box’ and then ‘behind you.’ The motion of my fingers ceased, and I began to feel carefully of the wall against which I sat. I soon found rather a large smooth surface close to the floor, evidently of some other substance than brick, and as my hand passed over it a strong, involuntary impulse came over me, and I pushed it with all my strength. It slowly yielded, and I found a square opening some fifteen inches wide. I groped within, gradually pushing my head and shoulders through, and presently my hand touched something metallic. I picked it up and felt of it. It was round and flat, evidently a box. I drew back and managed to open it, and inside I found a flint, steel, and tinder. In a moment more my lantern, which I found on the floor of the cave, was lighted. I next examined my notebook. Written in a dainty feminine hand, in Spanish, I read:

“‘Stranger, for the love of the blessed Virgin, take the luckless gold from this accursed place and deliver me from my bondage. I am chained by this treasure to a spirit that I loathe and a place that I detest; and my father suffers torments worse than purgatory these hundreds of years. Set us free by taking the gold. You will find a sword with which you can easily dig through the top of the vault, and a tinder-box in the treasure vault behind you. Be in haste, lest Bernardo return and interrupt you. Take all the gold for the peace of

DONA MARIA VEREZ.’

"I opened the square door again and looked in. I saw a low vault, say five feet deep, in which was piled more gold than I had ever seen in my life, oaken boxes and kegs overflowing with gold. Piles of rotten bags from whose rents the gold slipped down in yellow heaps on the floor, solid ingots of gold and silver heaped together in confusion. Here was treasure indeed. I stuffed my hungry pockets as full as they would hold; then picking up a short thick sword that lay among the treasure, I returned to the larger apartment and attacked the brick vault over my head. In a short time I had dislodged several of the bricks, when suddenly a large piece of the vault caved in, and I barely saved myself from being buried in the débris by springing out of the way.

"A sudden gust of fresh air swept around the cave, and the wild howling of the winds and the roar of the breakers became more distinctly audible. I clambered over the pile of bricks and dirt and, by the help of a couple of benches which I found in the cave, managed to drag myself out of the hole. I found myself in a large apartment walled and floored with brick, which I perceived to be a sort of cellar under the large house of which I have spoken. After a few minutes' deliberation I set to work, with what material I could lay hands on, to cover and conceal the hole by which I had ascended and my task was yet incomplete, when such a howl of rage and fury as I had never heard came from beneath my feet. My first thought was that the spirits had returned and were bent on avenging their plundered treasure.

To say that I was terrified poorly expresses my feelings.

In an instant I had burst open the frail wooden door of the cellar and was in the open air.

A terrific storm was raging. The wind blew a hurricane, driving before it blinding sheets of rain. The spray from the breakers was dashing clear over the house, though it stood at least fifty yards from the shore. The lightning glared in one incessant flash, and the crash and roar of the thunder was awful. But high above the uproar of the elements rose the unearthly screams and yells behind me, and without pausing a moment I flew from the place as fast as my legs could carry me, and ran till I fell exhausted with fatigue and fright.

When at last I reached my boarding house I found that I had been twenty-four hours in the cave.

My hair was as white as it is now, and it was a week before my nervous system had recovered from the shock sufficiently to permit me to walk."

The speaker paused with the air of one who has finished his tale, and proceeded to relight his extinct cigar.

"And the treasure?" I suggested at length.

"Oh," he rejoined, "it was not long till I had a trim yacht anchored off the shore, manned by trusty fellows, and I managed to get the treasure aboard her unobserved. I have never had to work since. But," he added after some moments, "I would not undergo that experience again for all the gold that Spanish buccaneers ever handled."

"And did the spirits allow you to take it unmolested?" I asked, anxious to hear his reply.

"No," he said, "no; I had trouble enough, but I had to keep faith with the unhappy girl that saved my life. I would have died rather than leave a real."

"Have you heard from her since?" I asked curiously.

"I can't talk about that," he replied, "or I shall give myself away, I am writing her life."

THESE-AN'-THAT'S WIFE *

In the matter of 'These-an'-That himself, public opinion in Troy is divided. To the great majority he appears scandalously careless of his honor, while there are just six or seven who fight with the suspicion that there dwells something divine in the man.

To reach the town from my cottage I have to cross the Passage Ferry, either in the smaller boat, which Eli pulls single-handed, or (if a market-cart, or donkey, or drove of cattle be waiting on the "slip") I must hang about till Eli summons his boy to help him with the horse-boat. Then the gangway is lowered, the beasts are driven on board, the passengers follow at a convenient distance, and the long "sweeps" take us slowly across the tide.

It was on such a voyage, a few weeks after I settled in the neighborhood, that I first met 'These-an'-That.

I was leaning back against the chain, with my cap tilted forward to keep off the dazzle of the June sunshine on the water, and lazily regarding Eli as he pushed his "sweep." Suddenly I grew aware that by frequent winks and jerks of the head he wished to direct my attention to a passenger on my right—a short, round man in black, with a basket of eggs on his arm.

There was quite a remarkable dearth of feature on this passenger's face, which was large, soft, and unhealthy in color; but what surprised me was to see, as he blinked in the sunlight, a couple of big tears trickle down his cheeks and splash among the eggs in his basket.

"There's trouble agen up at Kit's," remarked Eli, finishing his stroke with a jerk, and speaking for the general benefit, though the words were addressed to a drover opposite.

"Ho!" said the drover; "that woman agen?"

The passengers, one and all, bent their eyes on the man in black, who smeared his face with his cuff, and began weeping afresh, silently.

"Beat en blue las' night, an' turned en to doors—the dirty trollop."

"Eli, don't ee——," put in the poor man, in a low, deprecating voice.

* Arthur Crouch Quiller : *The London Speaker*.

"Iss, an' no need to tell what for," exclaimed a red-faced woman who stood by the drover, with two baskets of poultry at her feet. "She's a low lot; a low trapesin'——" (she used a word not of the drawing-room). "If These-an'-That, there, wasn' but a pore, ha'f-baked shammick, he'd ha' killed that wife o' his afore this."

"Naybours, I'd as lief you didn' mention it," appealed These-an'-That, huskily.

"I'm afeard you'm o' no account, These-an'-That; but samsodden, if I may say so."

"Put in wi' the bread, an' took out wi' the cakes," suggested Eli.

"Wife!—a pretty loitch, she an' the whole kit up there," went on the market-woman. "If you durstn't lay finger 'pon your wedded wife, These-an'-That, but let her an' that long-legged gamekeeper turn'ee to doors, you must be no better 'n a worm—that all I say."

I saw the wretched man's face twitch as she spoke of the gamekeeper. But he only answered in the same dull way.

"I'd as lief you didn' mention it, friends—if 'tis all the same."

His real name was Tom Warne, as I learnt from Eli afterward, and he lived at St. Kit's, a small fruit-growing hamlet two miles up the river, where his misery was the scandal of the place. The very children knew it, and would follow him in a crowd sometimes, pelting him with horrible taunts as he slouched along the road to the kitchen garden out of which he made his living. He never struck one; never even answered; but avoided the school-house as he would a plague; and if he saw the parson coming, would turn a mile out of his road.

The parson had called at the cottage a score of times at least, for the business was quite intolerable. Two evenings out of the six, the long-legged gamekeeper, who was just a big, drunken bully, would swagger easily into These-an'-That's kitchen and sit himself down without so much as "by your leave." "Good evenin', gamekeeper," the husband would say in his dull nerveless voice. Mostly he only got a jeer in reply. The fellow would sit drinking These-an'-That's cider and laughing with These-an'-That's wife, until the pair, very likely, took too much, and the woman without any cause broke into a passion, flew at the little man, and drove him

out of doors, with broomstick or talons, while the game-keeper hammered on the table and roared at the sport. His employer was an absentee who hated the parson, so the parson groaned in vain over the scandal.

Well, one fair-day I crossed in Eli's boat with the pair. The woman—a dark gypsy creature—was tricked out in violet and yellow, with a sham gold watch-chain and great aluminium ear-rings, and the gamekeeper had driven her down in his spring-cart. As Eli pushed off, I saw a small boat coming down the river across our course. It was These-an'-That, pulling down with vegetables for the fair. I cannot say if the two saw him, but he glanced up for a moment at the sound of their laughter, then bent his head and rowed past us a trifle more quickly. The distance was too great to let me see his face.

I was the last to step ashore. As I waited for Eli to change my sixpence he nodded after the couple, who by this time had reached the top of the landing-stage, arm in arm.

“A bad day's work for *her*, I reckon.”

It struck me at the moment as a moral reflection of Eli's, and no more. Late in the afternoon, however, I was enlightened.

In the midst of the fair, about four o'clock, a din of horns, beaten kettles, and hideous yelling, broke out in Troy. I met the crowd in the main street, and for a moment felt afraid of it. They had seized the woman in the tap-room of the “Man-o'-war”—where the gamekeeper was lying in a drunken sleep—and were hauling her along in a Ram Riding. There is nothing so cruel as a crowd, and I have seen nothing in my life like the face of These-an'-That's wife. It was bleeding, it was framed in tangles of black, dishevelled hair, it was livid; but, above all, it was possessed with an awful fear—a horror it turned a man white to look on. Now and then she bit and fought like a cat; but the men around held her tight, and mostly had to drag her, her feet trailing, and the horns and kettles dinning in her wake.

There lay a rusty old ducking-cage among the lumber up at the town hall; and some fellows had fetched this down, with the poles and chain, and planted it on the edge of the Town Quay, between the American Shooting Gallery and the World-Renowned Swing Boats. To this they dragged her, and strapped her fast.

There is no need to describe what followed. Even the virtuous women who stood and applauded would like to forget it, perhaps. At the third souse, the rusty pivot of the ducking-pole broke, and the cage, with the woman in it, plunged under water.

They dragged her ashore at the end of the pole in something less than a minute. They unstrapped and laid her gently down, and began to feel over her heart, to learn if it were still beating. And then the crowd parted, and These-an'-That came through it. His face wore no more expression than usual, but his lips were working in a queer way.

He went up to his wife, took off his hat, and producing an old red handkerchief from the crown, wiped away some froth and seaweed that hung about her mouth. Then he lifted her limp hand, and patting the back of it gently, turned on the crowd. His lips were still working. It was evident he was trying to say something.

"Naybours," the words came at last, in the old dull tone; "I'd as lief you hadn' thought o' this."

He paused for a moment, gulped down something in his throat, and went on—

"I wudn' say you didn' mean it for the best, an' thank you kindly. But you didn' know her. Roughness, if I may say, was never no good wi' her. It must ha' been very hard for her to die like this, axin' your parden, for she wasn' one to bear pain."

Another long pause.

"No, she cudn' bear pain. P'raps *he* might ha' stood it better—though o' course you meant it for the best, thankin' you kindly. I'd as lief take her home now, naybours, if 'tis all the same."

He lifted the body in his arms, and carried it pretty steadily down the quay steps to his market-boat, that was moored below. Two minutes later he had pushed off and was rowing it quietly homeward.

There is no more to say, except that the woman recovered. She had fainted, I suppose, as they pulled her out. Anyhow, These-an'-That restored her to life—and she ran away the very next week with the gamekeeper.

THE COOKED TROUT*

"If thuz one thing I like better'n another," said the old settler, "it's the eatin' of a trout arter it's cooked."

"Arter it's cooked?" remarked the squire, evidently astonished. "Wall, major, ye don't mean to 'siniwate ez y'd eat a trout 'fore 'twere cooked, do ye?"

"I 'siniwate nothin,' b'gosh!" replied the old settler, warmly, "I 'siniwate nothin'. I don't meanter say ez I'd eat a trout raw, but I do meanter say ez I've eat a-many a one, an' so hev you, an' ev'rybody else ez hez eat 'em at all hez eat a-many a one which was s'posed to be cooked, an' was so considered, but which wa'n't cooked, b'gosh, no more'n a juicy steak is cooked w'en it's fried, an' fried in store lard at that, an' fried 'til ye can't tell whuther it's a cut o' beef or a hunk o' liver. That's w'at I meanter say, squire, so it is."

"Wall, major," said the squire, "I dunno whose cookin' yer cuttin' at, but I *do* know that w'en it comes to cookin' a trout my Betsey kin——"

"Yes, b'gosh," interrupted the old settler, and his face grew red, "your Betsey, an' my M'riar, an' somebody else's Jerusla, thinks they kin cook a trout, an' mebbe they kin. It hain't their fault if they can't, 'cause they can't help the bes' part o' the trout bein' gone by the time it comes inter their han's. But the bes' part o' the trout *is* gone, all the same—an' even if it wa'n't, they can't cook a trout anyway, an' I'll give the reason fur why. They don't go at it right. In the fust place, w'en they git hold o' the fish, even if it hain't been out'n the creek a day or so, layin' with its innards out an' their place took up by a han'ful or so o' salt, our women folks goes to work an' souses the trout in water, washes it all off, rips it open an' cleans it, an' then souses the inside of it 'til it looks like a piece o' bob veal. Then, b'gosh, w'at does they do but roll it in flour 'til ye can't tell whuther it was a trout or a durn or'nary sucker that ye fetched hum, an' then, no matter if it weighs two poun'—w'ich, o' course, ez a matter o' fact, th' hain't much danger o' it's doin' nowadays, if ye stick to the truth—no matter if it weighs two poun', slap! it goes inter a fryin' pan with pork,

* Ed. Mott: Collected Sketches.

an' thar sizzles an' sizzles, an' snaps its juice all over the stove, an' gits hard on the outside an' stays half raw on the inside, an' smells more like a sassage w'en it's put afore ye ready fur chawin' than it does like the sweet-scented, quiverin', sparklin' thing ye draw'd out'n the eddyin' pool jist at the foot o' the swift bend in the brook, whar the alders nods an' the elms throws their dancin' shadders. An' thar's another reason w'y Betsey or M'riar or Jerusha can't cook a trout, 'cause half o' the cookin' of a trout is in the ketchin' o' it.

"I'll tell ye, squire. Yer campin', fur instance, fur a day or two on yer fav'rite creek. Ye've got in thar late in the arternoon, 'cause on 'yer way out ye'r traped a good piece out'n yer way to see how the signs o' woodcock is, an' whuther the ol' hen pheasants hez had proper luck with their hatchin,' an' to kinder skin yer eye over the prospec's o' deer, an' to mebbe take a peep 'long the swamp edges fur a b'ar or so a-wallerin'. Wall, ye git to yer campin' place late in the arternoon, an' by the time ye git things in shape yer too tired to let the trout know ye've come, an' so ye bunk in on yer bed o' new-cut hemlock boughs, an' 'fore ye've heerd the whipperwill call twicet, settin' out jist beyent yer cabin ez he is, an' makin' the stillness seem deeper with his noise, ye sling yer arm up over yer head, an' whoop! b'gosh yer asleep! W'en ye wake up in the mornin' the sun is jist a-thinkin' o' gittin' up, an' it'll be half an hour yit 'fore ye kin say good mornin' to him. The trees is full o' birds a-singin'; thuz a sassy red squirrel chatterin' in the big chesnut tree down in the holler; the breeze comes down from the mountain back o' ye an' fills ye full o' new life; the leaves trembles and shakes, an' drops little showers o' silver that'll glitter, by an' by, when the sun sees 'em; ye can't see the brook, but ye kin hear it shoutin' from beyent the stretch o' hemlocks; ye look aroun' an' swell yer lungs, an' say—

"'B'gosh, this is nice, an' I hain't a bit tired no more.'

"Then ye dig yer fire place a foot deep an' ez wide ez ye want it. Ye dig it right in the mossy spot, at the foot o' the old rock, jist a step from the cabin. Then ye build a fire o' hard wood an' keep her goin', 'til by the time ye've got yer flies tied on an' ev'rything in shape fur goin' over an' tacklin' the brook, ye've got a foot deep o' the cleanest, red-hottest ashes ez ever glowed an' waited fur to be used.

"Ye find the creek jist right, an' w'ile yer lookin' it over, a green-winged fly drops on the water, an' it can't struggle hard enough to keep the ripples from bearin' it along, till it circles roun' the edge o' the big rock that sets in the brook jist b'low ye, lookin' proud o' the moss that kivers it, an' seemin' to say, 'Don't ye wish ye war me, settin' here in the shadders, an' the creek a kissin' of ye, an' allus singin' to ye, day in an' day out, an' never gittin' tired o' it? Don't ye wish ye war me?'

"The green-winged fly circles roun' the edge o' the proud ol' rock. Ye see a flash in the water, an' thuz a foamy place in the pool fur a secon' or so. The green-winged fly is gone.

"'A-ha!' ye say. 'If ye'll take mine that way, ol' feller, yer my meat.' An' ye drop yer flies way below the rock an' dance 'em up along it. Whiz! He took the leader, an' it's in his jaw. Give him line! Keep him away from that ol' root thar, on t'other side the creek! Whew! See him come out o' that water! He's a good un, b'gosh! Thar he goes fur tide, like a steam ingine! Foller him quick, if he leads ye a mile! Hol' on! Hol' on! He's comin' back agin! Reel in yer line, an' don't hol' yer rod so low. Straighten her up! Straighten her up! Thar! Now let him worry hissful a spell in that deep hole. Keep him head up. He's a game un, but he's a goner. Now he'll foller yer line ez ye reel him in. Gentle with him, fur he'll give another kick w'en he sees ye. Thar he comes. Now yer net! A—ha! He's yourn'! Lay him in the dewy grass. Don't put yer hans' on him. Sniff the savor of 'im. Nothin' like that grows on plant or tree, nor kin they make it with the balm o' flowers.

"Wall, squire, havin' ketched yer trout ye look at him a minute ez he lays thar in the grass. The sun hez got up, meantime, an' is peepin' down at him through the openin's in the leaves, makin' his gold an' crimson to glisten an' sparkle agin. Then ye run yer finger under his gill an' carry him to the cabin. Ye lay him lightly on the moss, keepin' yer han's off'n him. Right by the cabin thuz sweet fern a-growin', an' ye kin smell it. Mebbe thuz a clump or so o' spice-wood. If th' is, all the better. Ye pick some fern, or spice-wood, or both, an' lay it by the trout. Then ye take a piece o' clean brown paper an' ye kiver it with the fresh butter that Betsey made, an' which is in the little stone

jar that ye sunk in the spring at the edge o' the alder thicket last night. Ye kiver the paper thick with the butter, an' ye sprinkle pepper an' salt on it. Then ye wrap the trout in it, jist ez it come from the lake a quarter hour ago. Then ye wrap a little o' the sweet fern or spice wood leaves about the paper, wrap another brown paper over the hull, an' bury yer trout clean to the bottom o' the red-hot ashes. Then ye go to the creek an' take a soothin' ol' wash, arter which ye take that little flat bottle o' your'n an' walk over to the spring an' tamper with it gently. By the time ye come back an' cut yer bread an' set yer table, ye kin think o' onkiverin' yer breakfast. W'en that trout comes out from the ashes, an' ye take his wrappin' off, he looks so much like he did the minute he come out'n the water, that ye can't hardly think he's dead an' cooked. An' thar's his nat'ral smell, sweet an' penetratin' w'ich the ferns kep' from wastin' away. Ye take yer sharp knife an' cut him open in the belly. Thar's his innards all shriveled up in a leetle wad, an' they come all out together, an' yer trout's ez clean inside ez kin be, an' none o' his nat'ralness is missin'. Ye take him up, lay him on birch bark, if ye kin get it, if not, on yer platter, with fern all aroun' him, an' then w'en ye eat him yer eatin' a trout that's cooked, b'gosh 't'lmighty, an' it's me that says it!"

ETCHINGS: THE SENTINEL *

To sleep for him was treason! Nevertheless, squat on the floor of the shelter tent, hot as a drying stove, his legs bent under him as a tailor sews, and plunged in foggy somnolence, he regarded, vaguely whirling before him, the well-known images of all he loved. That which he saw? Ah, certainly he saw not, far beyond there, along the horizon, the thorny thickets shake, as if a monstrous serpent glided between the stems of the shrubbery. No, no, he saw not that long, sinuous file of crawling Bedouins, belly to earth, bronzed skins scarce showing a trace on the yellow sands, their hands clutching their gun-stocks, their eyes bent on the tent of the sentinel and the tiny fortress whose sleep they spied upon!

That which he saw? Eh? It was fresh emerald verdure descending in waves the mountain slopes; it was flashing streamlets dancing and shivering under a fringe of grasses—it was lads and lassies in short skirts and—

Bang! Bang! *Halloa!* Qui vive?

Ha! the Bedouins close in on the tent now, with gleaming yataghans and white teeth showing between red, grinning lips! The blood of the sentinel makes but a bound.

To sleep for him was treason!

"*Halloa!* *Halloa!* You others, above there!"

He stands erect now, straight and tall; aims, fires; down a grinning Bedouin goes. Another, still another, a fourth, a dozen! *Morbleu!* a hot affair, one man to fifty!

And always, as he fights, springing from side to side like a wolf harassed by dogs, his eyes turn anxiously to the wall above, and blood and brains, under the blows of his clubbed gun, spurt from the split skulls, like water from a fountain.

Suddenly, all together, the loop-holes fill with bluish smoke; the sergeant makes a sortie!

Then what a flight! Flying like chaff and running, the black rascals! like the wind skimming the ground!

But he, the sentinel, on the reddened earth, retaining with his hand the entrails that come from his larded flanks, scorched by the sun rays, crazed with thirst, his gun bent and broken beside him, lay rattling out the last agony.

To sleep for him was no longer treason!

* E. C. W.: For Short Stories,

THE CONVICT SHIP*

In these days in England, when a prisoner receives a sentence to prison it means fair living, a moderate daily task, letters and visits now and then from friends.

In former years, before penal colonies were abandoned, transportation meant everything that was vile, vicious, and horrible. A man would have done better to die before going aboard the ship which was to convey him to Australia, and a great many did commit suicide. It meant, in every sense of the word, that the man was to be used as a dumb brute of the lowest order. He was to be underfed, overworked, kicked, cuffed, flogged, and driven to some overt act for which he could be shot down. The idea was to strike terror to the heart of the criminal classes, but it acted just to the contrary. Although the courts inflicted the severest sentences, crime steadily increased. I did not set out to discuss the policy, however, but to tell you an adventure.

When fifty or more convicts were ready for Botany Bay the government would hire a sailing vessel to transport them. I have seen them go in fifties; and I have seen 215 on board of one ship. A transport ship was fitted up between decks as a prison, the space being divided off by iron gratings, and every twenty men were in charge of a captain—one of their own number. The lot were in charge of a surgeon appointed by the government to go with the ship. In all matters affecting the convicts every man on the ship was bound to obey the surgeon. The crew had muskets and cutlasses dealt out to them, and a certain number had to stand guard as the various gangs were brought on deck to be exercised. If the surgeon was a thorough man he got his "consignment" through in good order, but if he was not, there was sure to be an outbreak of malignant type which sometimes carried off half the lot. I knew one ship to lose forty-seven convicts out of sixty-five, and with them eleven of the crew.

The ship "Silver Queen," Captain James, had contracted to carry out 128 Botany Bay convicts, and this was my second year aboard of her as an apprentice. A day or two before we left England I reached my fifteenth year, and was a pretty solid lad for my age. As I remember the lot, about fifty

* Good Stories of the Present Day: N. Y. Sun.

were sentenced for manslaughter, the same number for robbery and burglary, and the others were made up of forgers, embezzlers, incendiaries, and so on. There were two in the lot who had escaped from the Bay and finally found their way back to be recaptured. Taken as a whole, the lot was said to be the worst one ever sent out, and the ship carried an extra officer and four extra hands. The prison part took up one-half of the space between decks. Every morning and evening, when the weather would permit, twenty men at a time were allowed to come up for ten minutes' exercise.

Boy-like, my sympathies were with the convicts. No matter what they had done, the idea that they were going off to a living death settled the matter with me. The discipline of the ship was very strict, but I found several opportunities to show my good will. When on duty below I passed them tobacco, gave them the news from above, and winked at their disobedience of rules. Every convict gang had its leader. The leader of this one was a man named Harry Small—one of the escaped Botany Bays who was being returned. He was a quiet fellow, intelligent and crafty, and when he saw that I leaned his way he one day asked me for pencil and paper. I gave them to him, and he wrote a note which I afterward delivered to a sailor before the mast. I did all this out of pure sympathy, having not the slightest idea that there was any wrong in it.

Nothing whatever occurred on the voyage to the Cape of Good Hope. All the officers were agreeably disappointed in the behavior of the convicts, which was so exemplary that not a man had been flogged or imprisoned in the black hole. I heard our captain say that it was almost as fine as making a regular voyage out. I said nothing whatever occurred. I meant among the convicts. It afterward transpired that there was an excitement among the crew forward. The sailor to whom I had delivered the note had secretly declared to his mates that the surgeon had predicted an outbreak of fever after leaving the Cape. The consequence was that seven of them deserted at Cape Town, and the same number of new hands were shipped. I could never see where the sailor had any hand in it, but we certainly lost by the exchange. We lost seven Englishmen, while those who filled their places were Portuguese and half-breed Dutchmen, and as dirty a set as you ever saw aboard a ship.

In leaving the Cape we stood to the southeast for a hundred miles, and then laid the course straight for Point Davey, on the southernmost end of Tasmania Land, this course being only two points from due east. In this run, clear across the Indian Ocean, we should pass a hundred miles to the south of the island of St. Paul. That and Amsterdam island are the only two within 500 miles of the course.

I was on guard below for four hours every other day. On each occasion Small asked me for the run of the ship. I could nearly always give it to him, as I heard it from some of the officers. We had been out a week when he asked me about the island of St. Paul. I had an old chart on which it was put down as uninhabited. He asked how close we would run to it, and that I find out, if possible, when we were at the nearest point. Had I been older I should not have been deceived. I was only a lad—and a green one at that—and, as I told you before, I felt a deep sympathy for the convicts.

It was on a Tuesday night that I overheard the captain say to the surgeon that if the wind held we should be opposite St. Paul by noon next day. The wind did hold, and at ten o'clock next forenoon I went on duty below, and at once gave Small the news. It was just an hour later when a fight broke out among the men, and there was a row to disturb the whole ship. The orders of the officers were set at defiance, and, as a consequence, when they did succeed in commanding obedience, it was deemed best to do some flogging to overawe the convicts. Four men who were supposed to be ringleaders were singled out, the entire lot were mustered on deck, and pretty soon No. 1 was lashed up to the gratings for punishment. The first blow struck was a signal, and every convict uttered a shout and sprang for a weapon. It was a complete surprise to the officers, but it was quickly seen that there was also a conspiracy. Not one of the seven new sailors would fire a shot, and the guns of four or five others were found to have been tampered with. The fight lasted about ten minutes, during which time the surgeon, first and second mates, and three hands were killed. In return they killed seven of the convicts. I had no hand in the row. At the very first go-off some one struck me in the neck and knocked me flat and unconscious.

Well, as I said, the thing had been done by the time I got my senses back, and the convict gang was wild with exulta-

tion. The rougher portion demanded that every one who was not with them should be butchered, but Small and his three or four lieutenants put them down. I think the first idea of the convicts was to go ashore at St. Paul, having previously scuttled the ship, but this gave place to another plan. The third mate or bo'sun agreed to cast in his lot with the convicts. The captain, carpenter, sailmaker, and six or seven hands got no choice. The long boat was lowered, provided with sail, oars, food and water, and the men I have named were sent adrift without being harmed. By a pocket compass which one of them carried they steered a course for the island and landed there two days later, but were on it six months before being taken off. I wanted to go with them, but Small refused me permission, saying I had been so kind to him that he felt it his duty to reward me. All the others also spoke very kindly to me, and I had the mortification of realizing that I was the cat's paw by which they had taken possession of the ship.

As soon as the long boat had left us and the dead had been thrown overboard, Small called all the people together and made a speech. He appointed his officers, stated that he proposed to steer to the north, and that every one aboard could consider himself a pirate and be hanged to him. The men cheered again and again, and by an hour after meridian everything was running smoothly. Small enforced the strictest discipline, and the two or three convicts who growled about it were knocked down with promptness and vigor. I was assigned to the cabin to wait on the captain, and our cook and steward had to do duty as before. Small knew something of navigation, and he had some smart sailors with him. He had a whole ocean to himself, and the chart showed him that the nearest land to the north, after passing St. Paul, was the Chagos Archipelago, in the Indian Ocean.

For the next twelve days little happened of interest. Then one day, about noon, we sighted a Dutch brig on her way out from Java. The sailmaker had manufactured a very fair piratical flag, and this was immediately run up and our course changed to cut the stranger off. When signalled to heave to he lost no time, being scared half to death. He had a crew of seven men, and no resistance was offered. Small sent a boat load of armed men to take possession, and, as it happened to fall calm soon after the crafts drifted together, they

were lashed in that position for the next thirty hours. The brig was full of coffee and spices. Small took what he wanted out of her and then scuttled her, while her crew were sent adrift in their own yawl.

During the next two weeks we sighted only two sails and they were far distant. I think it was on the twenty-ninth day after the capture of the ship, and we were well up to the Chagos, when a sail was made out on our port quarter. This was about 9 o'clock in the morning, and a man sent aloft declared her to be an Indiaman. The regular track of those vessels was to the west of Madagascar, up the Mozambique Channel; but this one might be going to call at some of the Eastern islands. No sooner was her character made out than all was rejoicing and excitement on board our ship. The arms were got out, grog served to the men, and everybody was impatient for the Indiaman to come on. She came pacing along at a good gait, the wind being fair, and she was within half a mile of us when Small hoisted the black flag and signalled her to heave to. This was hardly accomplished when a dozen men cried out in chorus that the stranger was not an Indiaman at all, but a corvette, and a moment later she flew French colors and began to drop her gun-port covers.

For the next five minutes confusion reigned supreme on our decks. Then Small hauled down the black flag and hoisted the English colors and dipped them in compliment, but the Frenchman could see over a hundred men running about on our decks, and he knew that something was wrong. He came racing up, and passed us close enough to hail and ask what was the trouble. Small answered him that we were an emigrant ship, and that the black flag was a joke.

The corvette ran ahead, luffed up, and fired a gun for us to heave to. Small ordered all sail to be set, but the men were hardly aloft before the corvette sent a solid shot over us and brought Small to his senses. As soon as our headway was checked an armed boat's crew came aboard, and the fact that we were a convict ship was at once apparent. Half our number were transferred to the corvette, and twenty-five Frenchmen put aboard of the "Queen," and thus convoyed the latter returned to Cape Town. The cook, steward, and myself were exonerated from all blame when put on trial, but Small and five others were hanged, and every other man whose sentence had been less than life had it extended.

ETCHINGS: SEPARATION *

She sent them all away, begging to be left alone with him this one night—possibly the last.

Outside the rain had been falling heavily, and the steady drip, drip from the eaves sounded like the slow fall of heavy tear-drops from eyes unaccustomed to weep.

Inside, where Death was waiting to enter, the silence of death already reigned; the only sound being the faint, irregular breathing of the sick man.

Beside the bed sat the sorrow-stricken wife, motionless, her wan face bent over the still form, unconscious of fatigue, of passing hours, her heart, her soul absorbed in an intense longing that he might look at her, speak to her, once more.

Oh, what dread loneliness had already begun to enwrap her! Oh, what a wide gulf of separation seemed already to open between these two, who for ten happy years had scarcely had one thought, one desire, apart from each other.

The dim light from the shaded candle brought out the haggard, death-like features, pinched and changed with suffering. The long dark lashes lay upon the marble cheeks.

Did an eyelid flicker? Is he rousing at last?

“O God!” she prays, “grant me one more smile from the dear face; one last glance from the loving eyes; one word—one blessed word—from the closed lips, to be treasured up like gold in the dark days to come!”

No—he has not moved. He sleeps still.

Her breath grows short and hurried; her heart beats painfully. Is it her fancy, or has the face before her grown more ghastly? Does she only imagine that the breathing has changed, or is it really growing fainter?

The watcher leans forward until her head rests beside that on the pillow. She listens intently—then, suddenly, a shrill scream brings the watchers, to the bedside.

Two senseless bodies are lying there—one will never rouse again to suffer or to enjoy; but the other, alas! must awaken soon to realize the keen anguish of a heart rent in twain; a vine robbed of its support; a soul that has known the brightest and best companionship earth could give, left to wander through the remainder of life's journey desolate and alone.

* Anna H. Smith: For Short Stories.

FAMOUS STORIES: STEPHEN PURCELL*

An Irish Tale of Love and Adventure

What says the married woman? You may go:
 Would she had never given you leave to come.

—*Antony and Cleopatra.*

In the spring of 1796 Stephen Purcell was entered a fellow-commoner in the Dublin University. He was just eighteen—a fine, strapping lad, with an athletic frame, a black eye, hair dark as ebony, and a rich flush of health and vigor coloring a cheek brown as a gypsy's. He was then five feet eleven inches "without his shoes;" and his foster-brother, who accompanied him as valet, boasted "his master had an inch or two to grow before his height would be upon his head!"

Purcell would have been popular in any college, but he was the man particularly adapted for that of "the holy and undivided Trinity." The heir presumptive to a rich uncle, his allowance was most liberal. His rooms, on the first floor of a best building, were comfortably furnished, his servants wore handsome liveries, he kept two horses and, after commons, gave the best wine procurable in Dublin.

Thus far circumstances, rather than character, might have gone to secure Purcell the popularity he enjoyed; but Stephen was calculated by nature to be distinguished. He was a spirited and generous youth, well tempered in his cups, and in a row, which was then the common event of every evening, he was brave as a lion, and as his best man, Jack Dillon, added, "mighty handy with fist or cudgel." Purcell kicked football, wrestled well, jumped the haha, and hurled as if he had been born south of the Shannon. No wonder if, in a year's residence, he became the pet of the university. He was even respected by the republicans and tolerated by the few Romanists he knew, who on divers occasions, from personal regard to the host, had actually submitted to drink "the glorious memory" in his apartments.

In one thing Stephen Purcell was remarkable. He was a zealot in politics, a devoted supporter of king and constitu-

*By W. H. Maxwell. This story is the most celebrated of "the old favorites" with educated Irishmen. It fairly jumps with adventure, and treats of those stirring days in Dublin on the eve of the Irish Rebellion.

tion, an uncompromising Orangeman, and the favorite leader of all those who professed ultra-loyalty.

The rebellion was on the eve of breaking out, and the classic courts of Alma Mater bore the appearance of a military post. The college corps was in its zenith, and for strength and discipline held a proud place among the numerous armed associations which the exigency of the times had called into existence. In this honorable body, exclusively composed of gentlemen, Purcell bore the rank of sergeant. The king, no doubt, possessed many a more experienced defender of his crown and dignity, but a more devoted soldier and servant than Stephen Purcell never wore a shoulder-knot.

The times had become awfully interesting, the conspiracy was matured, and the government was prepared for an immediate explosion. It was ascertained that the arrival of a celebrated leader in the metropolis was momentarily expected, and that event would be the signal for the insurgents to rise and take the field. Fresh proofs of imminent and deadly treason were hourly discovered. It was disclosed by a treacherous leader of the rebels that the day for a simultaneous insurrection throughout the kingdom had been appointed, and that many infernal plans of private assassination were on the tapis. The mail coaches were to be intercepted after they had quitted the metropolis, and their non-arrival was to be a signal that the rising had commenced, and that the remoter districts should take the field. In the city the lamp-lighters were corrupted: the public lamps were to be extinguished by the traitors; and while universal darkness overspread the streets and favored the plans of the insurgents, the rebel drums were to beat, and the yeomanry, as they hurried to their alarm posts, were to be cut off in detail before they could unite with their comrades. Added to these reports, the frequent discovery of pikes and fire-arms proved that a deadly preparation was going forward, and the sun of each succeeding day was expected to rise upon a scene of slaughter.

While the disaffected impatiently awaited the arrival of the chief conspirator in the city, the government was employing every possible means to discover his retreat. In vain every engine in its power was set to work; public researches and secret espionage failed; and a reward of one thousand pounds, with assurances of unbounded patronage, was offered to the

fortunate person who should denounce and apprehend the celebrated Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

The unfortunate nobleman we have named was a descendant of the Geraldines and uncle to the present Duke of Leinster. From having borne arms with distinguished reputation in the British army, he became a dangerous and deadly enemy to the state. It was said that he was a disappointed man—a professional slight had irritated him against the government beyond the possibility of being propitiated; another officer had been preferred for promotion to himself. He left the service in disgust and repaired to the French capital, where a close intimacy with the leading Jacobins and a marriage with the daughter of the Duke of Orleans confirmed his bad feelings toward the English government and his dislike to monarchy in any form. His talents were considerable, his popularity unbounded. The dignity of his birth, joined to a just reputation for military skill, made him an idol with the republicans, who had unanimously appointed him their leader, and only waited his appearance in the metropolis to direct the explosion of that extensive conspiracy which was to overturn the existing order of things.

Indeed, the city of Dublin presented a melancholy spectacle of fear and preparation. Had it been blockaded by a hostile force, there could not have been more anxious apprehension discernible in the capital than it everywhere presented. The entrances from the suburbs were barricaded and, night and day, jealousy guarded; the bridges had their respective pickets; the streets were regularly patrolled and the doors of every house bore the names of the inhabitants on a placard; arrests of suspected persons occurred hourly; a discovery of concealed weapons became frequent; rumors of an intended descent from France added to the public alarm, while assassination on one side and military executions on the other rendered the internal state of the Irish capital frightful and portentous.

It was late in the evening of the 1st of March that Stephen Purcell, who had dined in Merrion Square, was returning to his chambers in the university. The peril of the times had superseded much of that attention usually paid to dress, and the costume of the young collegian, although several titled personages had been guests at the table where he dined, was the simple uniform of a non-commissioned officer. But the

three chevrons on his arm, which denoted his subordinate rank, were dear to the youth, and regarded by him with as much pride as if they had been the aiguillettes of a staff-officer. His uniform, made to fit his shape with studied accuracy, displayed a form moulded for activity and endurance. His light-infantry wings rested on a pair of broad and muscular shoulders; the sash bound a waist which required no assistance to compress it; a bayonet was suspended in his belt; and reckless of danger and confident in youthful strength, and a bold heart, he sauntered leisurely down Grafton Street, humming an Orange ditty as he passed along.

It was a calm and lovely night. The drums had beat the tattoo, and the hour was past when any but the military and police were permitted to remain in the streets. A proclamation had been issued by the chief magistrate of the city, cautioning the citizens to keep within their houses after a stated hour, that the troops might be unimpeded in their operations in the event of the expected insurrection occurring during the night. These orders were directed to be rigorously enforced, and, unprovided with the password and countersign, few would venture to traverse the streets after evening drum.

The gallant sergeant had passed the provost's house when, at a short distance from him, a woman's scream was heard. Concluding that the cry was from one of those wretched outcasts whose drunken quarrels so frequently disturbed the town, it passed unnoticed; but again the scream was repeated, and Purcell hurried to the centre of the street, before the college gate, where a woman struggled in the grasp of several watchmen, who insisted on removing her to their guard-house. The fellows who held the female were intoxicated, and the young collegian would have avoided what appeared a common street-brawl had not the tone of the female's voice and the language uttered in her alarm appeared at variance with her appearance, as well as inconsistent with her being, at this late and unsafe hour, a wanderer in the public streets.

"For the sake of heaven, let me pass! You mistake me—indeed you do. Will you injure an unprotected woman?"

"How tinder she is, Barney! Grab the bundle; we'll try if there's anything under the cloak;" and as he spoke he laid hold of a small parcel, which the prisoner appeared most anxious to retain.

"Hold!" said Purcell. "What is the matter? Who is this you have stopped?"

"Who the devil are you?" was the reply. "Come, pump it, young man, or by the crass of Christ we'll stick ye in the crib along wid the lady."

But, neither intimidated by threats nor numbers, the student threw the fellow aside, while the poor girl sprang forward, and clinging wildly to his arm, exclaimed: "Stranger, God bless you! Will you save me from these savage men?"

There was no time allowed for reply; the watchmen, who were numerous, hemmed in the solitary stranger, who seemed, on his part, determined upon fierce resistance as he drew his bayonet and with a deep imprecation warned them to keep off. At the moment two men in uniform came up, and one of them exclaiming in mock heroics, "My comrade's voice! I can protect thee still!" unsheathed his weapon, and calling on his companion to draw, sprang into the crowd and ranged himself beside the protector of the alarmed female. "Stephen, I knew thy voice," continued the new ally. "How now? whose mare's dead? what's the matter?"

"The matter, a simple cause of quarrel enough—watchmen and a woman." Without stopping to comprehend anything farther, the friend of Purcell, called to his companion: "'Out with thy rapier, boy;' away, varlets! 'Draw, Bardolph, cut me off the villain's head; throw the quean in the channel.'"

"Stop, Jack, let's avoid a row, if possible;" and the guardians of the night having fallen back, seemed far from anxious to commence hostilities.

'Who is the gentle Desdemona?'—(hiccup). "'Is she a spirit of health, or goblin damned?'—I beg her pardon; 'be her intents wicked or charitable'—for, by-the-by, Stephen, we cannot be too particular—(hiccup). Let's overhaul Rosalind in the guard-room. Treason is abroad in linsey-woolsey, and treachery meets you (hiccup) under the cover of a callimanco petticoat"—(hiccup).

"Ha! ha! ha!" returned the first speaker; "what a pass are we not come to! Has this poor girl a double-barrelled blunderbuss in her pocket, with a plan to surprise the castle in the paper cases of her housewife? For shame, Jack; let me speak with her apart."

"'Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my side wear steel?'"

exclaimed the corporal, for such rank Jack Middleton bore. "But (hiccup) thou art 'mine antient'—I mean serjeant, (hiccup)—and I obey thee."

"Will you protect me?" said the poor girl, in tones of agonizing distress. "Oh! yes, yes; you will—you can."

The deep pathos of her voice and her evident agitation assured Purcell that the young woman was very different from that which the late hour and strange circumstances of their meeting had first led him to imagine.

They had now removed some distance from the watchmen, who still lingered near the place, as if irresolute as to what future course of proceeding they should adopt. The young protector addressed his companion: "Lady, what tempted you to venture through the city at this dangerous and unseasonable hour of the night? Surely the business must have been urgent. Speak fearlessly, our conference is on honor; speak—was it love? I cannot believe Jack Middleton's suspicions, that your wild excursion has treason for its object."

"Neither suspicion is true, stranger. I rest my hopes on you; you must, for you can, save me. Your influence over these fearful men was paramount, and the others obey you as a leader; your acts and words are those of a high-minded and honorable soldier. Look at me beneath yon lamp, and say whether my appearance warrants the imputations of the savage persons from whom you have delivered me. I have been imprudent—mad—but God knows I am not the guilty thing they have insinuated."

Stephen Purcell's curiosity was excited. They approached the light, and throwing aside the coarse gray cloak which concealed her person, features of striking beauty and a figure of sylph-like elegance were presented to his view. The dress beneath the homely disguise she had assumed was both rich and fashionable, and Purcell was thoroughly persuaded that she was far removed from that class of life and society which the extraordinary time and place of their meeting had originally led him to infer.

"You say truly, lady. I can liberate you from your present danger, certainly; but I free you from one difficulty only to expose you to others equally imminent—that is, unless your home be in the immediate vicinity of this place. If I ventured to a distance I should be detained by the guards, who suffer none to pass without the countersign."

"Then I am lost, indeed!" she murmured in a voice of hopeless anguish. "My home is in a remote part of the city. O stranger, *can you not save?*—*can you not protect me?* What would bribe you? Your dress and manners make a pecuniary offer an insult; yet what can secure your protection?"

Stephen Purcell was but twenty. He was alone with a woman, young, beautiful, and perfectly in his power, and was commencing that jargon of love which men will sometimes use, when an appeal from his lovely suppliant arrested it.

"Stranger, I am at your mercy. I cast myself on you for protection. Save me from insult by others and spare me from it in yourself."

Purcell hesitated. Again he led her to the light—again he removed the hood which concealed her features and gazed upon her beautiful countenance. Her bright blue eyes were filled with tears, her lips trembled with apprehension; and terror, far from dimming her surpassing beauty, had made her loveliness more exquisite and irresistible. She did not oppose his scrutiny. The effect upon him and his course of conduct was immediate: he replaced the cloak and hood respectfully. "How beautiful!" he murmured. "Lady, fear nothing; with my life I will guarantee your safety." Then calling to his companion, who was standing at some distance, he whispered to him and left the unknown female in his custody.

This movement was far from satisfactory to the lady: she would have followed him had not the gallant corporal peremptorily, but gently, opposed it. Although tolerably drunk, he was perfectly alive to the charge he had undertaken of being her protector. "Cheer up!" he muttered, while a frequent hiccup impeded his speech deplorably. "Fear nothing, Dulcinea del Toboso! Courage, most incomparable princess! thou lady of the bleeding heart! Jack Middleton, an unworthy coporal of the third company, is 'your own true knight, by day or night, or any light,' as the bard of Avon has it. Stephen Purcell is thy Magnus Apollo, and Stephen Purcell is my approved friend—ergo, sun, moon, or star shall not get a glimpse of thy charms till Stephano returns. He's as true game as ever man relied upon. On Sunday fortnight I was caught alone by half a score of cuckoldy citizens, who had just been *lallopped* within an inch of their lives by a few of our lads who were on the ramble. Gad! they twigged me, and had commenced prompt payment for past civilities

upon my poor carcass, when honest Stephen flew to my relief and bestrode me like a Colossus; and there I lay, safe on my mother earth, till the boys came to the rescue. Purcell's skull was laid open by a paving-stone, and from heel to head he was as black as your own eye. 'Keep off!' he exclaimed fiercely to a watchman who had approached nearer than Middleton considered prudent—'Keep off! or, by the foot of Phaeton, I'll put four inches of as bright steel in your bread-basket as ever came from a cutler's.' "

After a painful absence of some minutes Purcell returned. He removed the gray mantle from the shoulders of his fair *protégée* and replaced it with a light military cloak; then exchanging her hood for a velvet foraging-cap, he gave those discarded articles of dress into the charge of Jack Middleton, who took his leave and left them together.

"Lady, we are alone. Whither shall I conduct you? I have got the necessary password and countersign."

"Heaven be praised!" she gratefully replied; "I live near Thomas Street. Will your password bring us thither?"

"We'll try it;" and he continued with a smile, "The reputation of the Liberty is anything but complimentary to its loyalty. On any other night I could have conducted you without delay to your destination, for I am tolerably well known to the police and military; but the information of this evening is such as called for double vigilance, and no one, whether he be in uniform or not, will be permitted to keep the streets without the countersign. You of course, lady, are unacquainted with the cause of these additional precautions. It is known that the arch-traitor, Lord Edward, is actually in the city. One thousand pounds are on his head, and every effort of the government is strained to insure his arrest. By heaven! I will give the reward and this left arm from the shoulder to him who will bring me *vis-à-vis* to this rebel peer!" And the deep drawing of his breast showed how desperate was his hostility toward the devoted nobleman.

"Do you know his lordship personally?" said the female in a timid voice, as they passed the equestrian statue of the third William, which stands in College Green.

"No, I never saw him; but I have every mark of his person so deeply registered in my memory, that if I met him in Kamschatka I could challenge the traitor and tax him with his double perfidy as a soldier and a subject."

While he spoke, the fierce and vindictive feelings which blazed forth alarmed his companion, who trembled as she clung to him for protection. He remarked it and continued: "Fear nothing, my fair friend. I trust his presence in the city will but hurry on events. Let the traitors rise—we shall crush them! If they hesitate, ere a week passes their leader's head shall top some pinnacle, and lesser villains in hundreds shall dangle from the lamp-posts!"

The female shuddered. "Who goes there?" cried the sentinel in advance of the castle-gate. "A friend," was the reply. "Advance, friend, and give the countersign."

Purcell dropped the lady's arm for an instant, and communicated with the sentinel in a whisper. "Pass on," said the soldier; "all's well." In the middle of High Street a cavalry patrol approached them. The officer rode out and challenged them. "Halt! who goes there?" Purcell left the flags and conversed in an under-tone with the dragoon. "Good-night!" he said; "you dine with us on Friday, Stephen—forward!" and the party rode off. They crossed the corn-market, and after repeated interruptions from the sentries at length reached Thomas Street in safety.

"We part, my kind and generous protector. How shall I prove my gratitude?"

"Let me conduct you home."

"Impossible!"

"Tell me, then, your name, your residence, and suffer me to inquire for you in the morning."

"Alas! I cannot. I have not the power; and believe me, the knowledge would not serve you."

"Let the proof be with me," said the youth passionately.

"It cannot be," she answered, with some emotion. "In better times we may renew our acquaintance; but now, fortune and circumstances beyond control alike forbid it. Give me your address: the name of my preserver shall never fade from the recollection of her who is bound for life to bless him."

Purcell gave his card.

"And now," continued the unknown, "as there is danger in even a momentary delay, ask me for any proof of my gratitude, and it shall be freely, heartily given."

"It is hard, lady, to part with you thus," said the student with considerable warmth; "but I submit. Let me conduct

you, for your own safety's sake, to your home, and I shall not unauthorizably repeat my visit."

"No, no, no; I am on the very point of leaving you."

"Then be it so, lady; I shall not urge my request. I have been serviceable to you, but I shall not be importunate. Farewell! one kiss, and probably we part forever!"

As he spoke he passed his arm round the waist of the unknown female; but, starting from him, she exclaimed, "Ask it not," and pressed a ring upon his finger.

The student drew himself up to his full height, and carelessly returned the gem while he coldly remarked: "You mistake me, lady; I am no mercenary. Keep your ring: farewell! God bless you!"

The unknown one paused, irresolute. Next moment, in a tone half-reproachful and half-jestingly, she added:

"Foolish boy! Must you, then, have a choice? Be it so: the kiss or the ring; but be advised and choose the latter."

"Forgive me, lady, if I reject your counsel;" and placing the ring gently in her hand, he bent his lips to hers, which were not withdrawn from his salute.

"Are you in security? Do not dismiss your guard rashly."

"*I am now in perfect safety.* For my sake keep this ring, but as you value me follow me not. Assuredly we shall meet again, and I may yet render good service for the debt I owe you," she said, and sprang from his side into a deep and covered alley. No lamp was there to light it, and dark and narrow as it was, in a moment no trace of his companion was visible. Purcell lingered for a time about the place. He carefully observed the opening of the alley, and having noted the numbers of the houses at either side, determined, happen what would, to visit the spot again; and with this resolve he slowly retraced his steps toward the university.

When he reached his chambers his servant was gone to bed and the fire extinguished. He struck a light, and for the first time remarked the extraordinary beauty of the ring which the unknown one had placed upon his finger. It was a brilliant of large size and exquisite lustre. From it his eye turned to the bonnet and cloak which Jack Middleton had left upon his table. The one was coarse and considerably worn; the other of common materials and vulgar fashion. How inexplicable! the value of the gem so much at variance with the coarseness of the dress. A strange mystery involved

this unknown female. Stephen mentally retraced the night's adventure from its commencement to its close, summed it all up in one deep sigh, undressed, went to bed, was restless, and dreamed of diamond rings, straw bonnets, and the incognita of Thomas Street.

He slept longer than usual; and when his servant awoke him, he produced a sealed parcel which had been left early that morning in the rooms by a porter. Purcell impatiently opened it. He found his cloak and foraging-cap, neatly folded up, and a little billet, in beautiful Italian characters, returned him thanks for his protection on the preceding night, and expressed a hope that he had found no difficulty in getting home, as the streets had been unusually disturbed. The note was written on embossed paper: the language, the folding, the seal, were all expressive of good taste, elegance; but the billet bore neither address nor signature. His eager inquiries were unattended with any information. The old college-woman knew nothing, but that "she had received it from a man, who delivered it and went away. She asked no questions—why should she? She had other things to mind, God help her!" etc., etc.

Purcell had indulged in the hope that the return of his cloak might lead him to some knowledge of the fair one who had worn it the preceding night; but now that chance of discovering her had failed. He sat down, professedly to breakfast, but soon lost himself in a reverie over the tea-cup. After an hour's rumination he sprang up, fidgeted about the room, took half a round of the park, came back, dressed, ordered his horse, and rode off toward the Liberty.

No one knew the city better than Stephen Purcell; there was not a division of the town which had not been the scene of some odd adventure or wild exploit. For two long hours he traversed every street adjacent to the place where the fair one vanished. He pushed through courts and alleys where a horseman had seldom ventured, discovered lanes only known to washerwomen, back passages to breweries, tan-yards, dyeing-houses, and the endless variety of appurtenances belonging to the busy multitude who inhabit that mixed abode of penury and opulence; and after a tiresome research returned, "a sadder," but not "a wiser man."

Evening came. For a wonder, the student was alone; and seated at a window which overlooked the college park, he

drank his wine in unsocial solitude. The daily papers were on the table, but their alarming columns were disregarded, and one fair object excluded all other thoughts. After mature deliberation, Stephen at last concluded that he was in love! and what the devil else could ail him? He kissed the ring, reread the billet, examined the bonnet, and for the first time detected "Ann Brady," badly written in the lining.

Had he now discovered the unknown one? "Ann Brady!" Pshaw! the letters were like hedge-stakes; and could that beautiful hand, which he had pressed last night at parting, indite villanous characters like those? No, no; she was as much Ann Brady as he was Prester John! He sprang from the table in a frenzy, strode for five minutes up and down the room, and unable to control his impatience, determined once more to visit the place where, under such mysterious circumstances, he had lost sight of his handsome incognita.

As a preparatory step Purcell laid aside his uniform and assumed the jacket, trousers, and straw hat of a sailor. Doubtless he chose these habiliments for disguise, but nevertheless he selected a most becoming one. No dress shows a well-made man to more advantage. Stephen had probably ascertained the fact, and in his frequent rambles he adopted this as a favorite costume. Perilous as the times were, he carried no secret weapon on his person; a well-tryed blackthorn, a vigorous arm, and a stout heart were his protectors; all else he left to fortune; and having obtained the password for the night, he bent his course toward the Liberty.

It was now dark, and the night threatened to be inclement: the wind was rising, the dust whirled round in eddies, presently large drops of rain fell, and the appearances of a coming storm increased. Purcell walked quickly forward. The sign-boards creaked, the windows rattled, the sentries kept within their boxes, the lamps gave an unsteady and flickering light; and when the young college-man reached the alley in Thomas Street, the rain fell in torrents.

The entrance of the alley was covered over, and there the student paused to consider what course he should pursue. The severity of the night and the peril of the times had cleared the streets of passengers, and no one was abroad but the pickets. No hour could be more favorable to examine the place without observation, and Stephen Purcell went carefully on.

The alley was extremely narrow; some wretched houses rose at either side, and their ruinous exterior and the poles and cords suspended from the upper windows for drying linen showed that their occupants were of the meanest order of the community. At the bottom of this passage there was a wall of extraordinary height with a small wicket-door. Judging from appearances, the space within was a garden, for the tops of trees were visible: a brass plate was on the door, but the dim light prevented him from reading the name.

A passage running parallel with the wall extended to the left, and in that direction several large-sized and lofty chimneys rose above the other buildings. From these appearances, Purcell concluded that an extensive brewery, or some such building, was contiguous.

Except that the rain splashed heavily from the house-tops and the wind came roaring in hollow gusts through the confined passages, there reigned around a death-like stillness. The public lamps had not then been extended as far as this remote and cheerless district; a solitary light emitted its feeble rays at a considerable distance, and directed by its irregular flashes, which scarcely pierced the dense atmosphere, the collegian approached the spot.

He reached, with some difficulty, a lone and ruinous dwelling. The light which guided him shone through the crevices of the window-shutters, and Purcell ascertained that the house was a tavern of the lowest kind, or, as was more probable from its loneliness, a flash receptacle for vagabonds and stolen property. Here, however, he might glean some information. The severity of the night made any shelter desirable, and after a moment's irresolution he struck the door and boldly demanded admittance.

His knock was thrice repeated before any one noticed it from within. At last a coarse voice demanded his name and business. "He was a stranger and wanted some refreshment." After much whispering and a considerable delay the door was cautiously opened.

Nothing could be more wretched than the interior of the mansion. A filthy counter was covered with pewter measures and foul dram-glasses, and the atrocious smells, combined of spilt liquors and the smoke of bad tobacco, were overwhelming to any organs but those of the *night-birds* who infested this infernal *cabaret*. Purcell was conducted by the

host into an inner apartment, where, in a boxed recess, sat four men of very villanous presence.

Bold and reckless as the student was, he would have retreated had escape been practicable, but the outer door had been jealously closed the very moment that he passed it. No choice remained but to wait patiently for a favorable opportunity to retire. The host, in anything but an encouraging tone, demanded what he would please to drink, and the college-man, assuming as much indifference as he could, in a rough voice asked for a pot of porter.

Every eye was bent upon the stranger by the ruffian group in the remote box, and their conversation was indistinct and confined to cant and whispers. The pseudo-sailor to all appearance discussed his porter at his ease, but he was very far from being comfortable; and as he stole a side-glance at his companions in the corner, he clinched his blackthorn stick beneath the table and collected his strength and courage for the struggle which he concluded would be inevitable. Meantime two of the party left the room, not, however, without bestowing, as they passed, a most ominous side-glance on the unsuspecting sailor—as he seemed to be. They whispered earnestly for a few minutes with the landlord, then leaving the house, the door was carefully locked after them.

Purcell, after some little delay, resolved to ascertain whether he would be permitted to leave the house without opposition. He suspected that he should be waylaid by the villains who had left the room; but they were but two, and, without, he thought his chances of escape were better than if he waited an attack within. Purcell in resolve and acting was equally prompt: seizing the pewter measure, whose contents were but lightly diminished, he struck upon the table, demanded what the reckoning was, and flung a shilling to the host. The landlord lifted the silver, and with a meaning look observed, as he handed the change, that "porter had but one price—he was in an honest house—did he mean any offence?"

Purcell easily perceived his object. He suited his answer accordingly, and rising from the table made a step or two toward the door; but the landlord manifested decided reluctance to lose his guest. "What hurry was he in? He knocked loud enough to get in; nobody wanted him; if people had pains, people should have profit. Was he to be disturbed for a shabby pint of porter? Not he. The night, too, was as

bad as ever: the rain was falling in bucketfuls, and there was a *fresh hand at the bellows*," as he expressed the increasing storm, which came moaning through the broken windows and shattered doors.

The student had anticipated the result and determined to force an egress before the return of the absent ruffians, whom he naturally suspected to have left the house on no good errand. The fellows in the corner arose while the landlord was speaking, but at the instant a knock was heard at the door, followed by a low and peculiar whistle. "All is right, boys," said the host to the "ruffians twain;" and leaving the room, Purcell heard the front door open.

"Now or never!" the student muttered between his teeth, and springing into the tap-room, attempted to rush into the lane. The landlord immediately threw himself across, but with his left hand Purcell knocked him down, and unhurt by a blow levelled at him with a bludgeon by a ruffian without, he leaped over the prostrate host, and followed by the remainder of the gang, fled toward the narrow alley which had conducted him to this villanous den.

Of escape he now had little doubt; the first movement was the perilous part of the attempt, and it had succeeded. Once in the narrow alley, he might bid defiance to his pursuers, and if he gained Thomas Street he should be within call of the picket. One of the party gained upon him: Purcell slackened his pace, allowed the villain to come up, then turning with amazing quickness, felled him to the earth; and rushing forward with increased speed, left his pursuers easily. His escape was gallantly managed, and the alley was beside him. Proud of his bold adventure, he sprang into the dark entrance, and found himself in the grasp of several men, who disarmed him in a twinkling, bound his arms with a cord and his eyes with a handkerchief, and in a deep determined whisper told him to be silent or his life should be the penalty.

Daring as Purcell's spirit was, his heart throbbed almost to bursting, and he gave himself up as a lost man. Doubtless he had fallen into the hands of the same gang, of whom the villains in the flash-house were a part. Irritated by his escape, the blows they had received would be fearfully revenged, and his murder was inevitable. Could he make any effort at a fresh escape? Alas! no. His hands were pinioned, and he could not even see the number of his enemies. Could

he but loose the ligature that bound his arms he would attempt to rescue himself: if he failed, he might as well perish here as be slaughtered in that haunt of murder from which he had but just escaped. He strove to free his hands; the effort partially succeeded, the bandage slackened sensibly, when one of his captors perceived his design. "By the God of heaven!" said a voice in a deep and fearful whisper, "if you but move tongue or limb a dozen daggers shall meet in your heart!" And as he spoke, a smart prick of a keen weapon made the student wince. "Ha! hast thou feeling, fellow? Be still, or——"

While this passed, others of the party held a hurried kind of consultation. "Bring me the lantern," said the voice of one who appeared to influence the rest. The order was obeyed, the prisoner found the heat upon his face, and the stream of light penetrated through the folds of the bandage. They were scrutinizing his countenance, for next moment the leader muttered, "By —— he is a spy! his face and dress are not in character, and see—a military stock is on his neck. Harken!" and a strong arm shook Purcell's shoulder; "you have not two minutes' life if you palter with us for a moment. Who—what are you? What brought you hither? Speak."

The prisoner paused: to conceal his name was useless, and he avowed it.

"A college-man here, and at midnight! Your errand?"

"A woman."

"A woman! Pish! you are a spy."

"I am not, by Heaven!"

"The proof."

"Should I be here unarmed and alone?"

"Who was the person you came here to meet?"

"Excuse me, I cannot tell, for I really don't know her name. If I did, I would not tell you."

"Fair enough. Do you know S——, and F——, and B——?" and he mentioned several college-men.

"I do."

"Describe them." The prisoner did so accurately.

"How are we to know that you are Mr. Purcell?"

"Look at my watch: my crest and cipher are on the cases."

The watch was examined, and its value added an additional evidence as to the veracity of the captive.

"You must be removed for a short time from this place;

and further, you must remain a close and silent prisoner. Do you agree?"

"I have no other choice. Give me my blackthorn, five paces' law, and you shall have a different answer."

"This confirms his identity," said another. "Purcell, I have heard, is brave and daring, and this proposal is a bold one."

"Remove him," said the first speaker. "If he submits, use him like a gentleman; if not, you have efficient means to silence the loudest tongue. Don't spare them."

Instantly Purcell was lifted from the ground; a door opened—he believed it was the small one in the wall; he was carried inside and then desired to walk between his conductors. The smooth gravel beneath his feet and the smell of the plants and flowers, rendered more powerful by the evening's rain, confirmed his suspicions. Finding he was not returned to the infamous den from which he had escaped, the captive's *hardiesse* revived. He was brought into a house, unbound, unhooded, carefully locked up, and left in total darkness.

An hour passed: the rain ceased, the wind died away, and with the suddenness of a summer tempest the fury of the elements subsided as rapidly as it had been raised. The moon shone out, the sky resumed its placid blue.

Purcell profited by the light to examine the place of his confinement, and from implements in the corner and a quantity of earthen flower-pots on the benches he conjectured that the place of his confinement was a gardener's house. His next thoughts were turned upon escape. The window was but indifferently secured by iron stanchions, and with a spade which he found among the tools he commenced his operations silently. In a few minutes a bar fell from the window and proved the success of his exertions. He worked with redoubled energy: a second one yielded, and the opening would soon be sufficiently wide to allow him to force his person through it, when a noise interrupted him, a door jarred at a little distance, a light glimmered, footsteps approached, the key turned, and a stranger stood before him.

If Purcell had formed an idea of encountering the rigid features of a stern jailer in those of his new visitor, he was wrong. The person was a steady, sober-looking citizen, advanced beyond the meridian of life, and perfectly opposite to anything the captive expected to have seen. His dress was plain but respectable, and being unattended and without

weapons, to guess at his "intents" from his looks, they were most "charitable." The fallen bars and broken casement did not escape his observation, and he smiled as he viewed the prisoner's handiwork.

"Upon my word, Mr. Purcell, you have not been unemployed. Had I delayed my visit I should have been minus a window and a prisoner. Come, sir, your captivity is at an end; and I hope you will forgive an infringement on the liberty of the subject as perpetrated this night upon your person. Your incarceration, sir, originated in a ridiculous, but, you will probably confess, a natural mistake. The fact is simply this. I am a trader, and must acknowledge that occasionally I admit and dispose of certain commodities which may not have contributed their regulated quota to the king's exchequer. Such was the case to-night. You were unluckily in the way, and your disguise, the very strange place you chose to visit on such a night and at such an hour, caused you to be suspected by some wild hands which this dangerous traffic makes necessary, and your detention was the consequence. Had I been there the thing could not have occurred; your parole of honor would have been a sufficient guarantee. Am I pardoned for having been, though inadvertently, a party to your arrest?"

Purcell looked grave as he thought on the peril his wild visit had exposed him to; but it was over, and it was just the kind of adventure he loved to recollect. He took the citizen's extended hand.

"Really, Mr. Downing," for as such the visitor had announced himself, "the fault was all my own. I came here on an errand as wild as bootless, and if I have paid the penalty of my indiscretion, my punishment was trifling, being limited to an hour's meditation in a garden-house. There was one gentleman who appeared to me the principal performer; he was not only liberal in threats, but thought it advisable to give me a foretaste of the pleasure of being poniarded. I certainly hold myself his debtor to the amount of a broken head. However, the account must stand over for the present. By Saint George, if we ever clear scores he shall have the principal with honest interest. But I fear I have done some damage."

"Never mind, Mr. Purcell, never mind—we shall easily repair the window. Your exercise must have given you an ap-

petite: supper is ready, and I will introduce you to my wife and a few friends. But if my question be not impertinent, might I inquire what brought you to the extraordinary place where my people met you?"

The student had predetermined to keep the secret of his midnight ramble to himself. He hoped to establish himself in the citizen's good graces; an acquaintance with his family would be locally important, and might facilitate his discovering the name and residence of that mysterious fair one whose beauty had so nearly proved disastrous to him. "And was there, then, anything singular in my being a wanderer in the place your friends found me?" said the college-man, with an inquisitive smile.

"Indeed there was. It is an outlet from the more populous parts of the town. Its extreme loneliness, though contiguous to the busier streets, renders the few dilapidated dwellings it contains a favorite and secure receptacle for thieves and vagabonds. In daylight it is unsafe for a well-dressed passenger to be seen there, and at night none but felons or the police would venture within its infamous precincts. You were apparently pursued, they told me, when your flight was so unexpectedly interrupted."

"I was;" and Purcell related the particulars of his escape. The citizen shuddered. "Your life, had you failed, was not worth a farthing's purchase. My blood runs cold when I think of the danger you were exposed to. Good God! sir, what brought you there?"

The question was a shrewd one. Purcell hesitated; but, considering the latitude allowed in love and war, he determined not to stick too closely to the truth. "He shall know," thought the college-man, "the true cause of many of my adventures and a multitude of my mishaps, but as to facts I shall not be over accurate." And accordingly he gave Mr. Downing a most confused narrative of an appointment at the theatre and a very minute description of a short woman with black eyes, white teeth, and a chinchilla muff and tippet; gravely concluding with an inquiry from the citizen whether he had the pleasure of an acquaintance with any lady whose dress and charms were similar?

"Not I, truly," said Mr. Downing, with a good-natured smile. "Not I: some abominable courtesan. Women of depraved habits, they tell me, are often seen there. There is

a flash-house in that haunt of infamy, a place where robberies are planned and where thieves meet to divide or dispose of plunder. Good God! what an escape! Come along, sir. My concerns here are very extensive. The back of my garden opens by a wicket-door into this hopeful labyrinth of lanes and passages. Preserve us! what an escape!"

So saying, he led Purcell through the garden: they entered a neat shrubbery and flower-knot, then passing into a conservatory, the citizen introduced his new acquaintance to a large and comfortable dwelling.

Within there was an appearance of wealth and display, with a total absence of anything bearing an air of fashion. Mr. Downing led the way to a spacious eating-room. There a table was laid with eight or ten covers, and several of the guests were assembled round the fire. They were all plain, inelegant business-looking personages; and when the student was presented to them by the host, a smile of peculiar meaning was visible on the countenances of part of the company. Whatever caused the circumstance, it did not escape the observation of the pseudo-sailor.

Between the feelings and characters of the members of the Irish university as they existed thirty years ago and as they appear at present there is a striking difference. Then the alumni of "the undivided Trinity" were chiefly sons of the nobility, members of the House of Commons, country gentlemen of estate, and men of liberal professions: few of those of the mercantile classes were found. Now the case is reversed. At the former period, with a very few exceptions, the students had arrived at manhood before their college course had closed. Previous to the rebellion the students of Trinity College were proud, overbearing, and aristocratic. They looked down upon the citizens as persons of inferior birth and ungentlemanly tastes and habits, and accordingly many a *raid* was made from the college upon the city; and in return, the students received personal mementos from the hands of the irritated burghers.

Purcell's was a noted name as a leader of those dreaded and desperate youths. Many an assault and battery had he inflicted and endured; and now, smarting from a recollection of his imprisonment, in perpetrating which he suspected the group round the fire to have been principals, his pride took fire at the imaginary insult which their meaning look con-

veyed; and determined to seize the earliest opportunity to resent it, he turned his back contemptuously upon the company, and employed himself in examining certain portraits of Washington, Lucas, and Dean Swift, which, in gloriously-gilt frames, hung from the walls of the apartment.

From those similitudes of patriotism the student's eye wandered round the room. It was well lighted, the furniture expensive rather than well chosen, the carpet rich, the side-board loaded with plate, and all that he saw attested the wealth of the proprietor.

His further observations were interrupted. A door opened and some one came in, whose entrance caused a sensation among the company. "Mrs. Downing" was repeated in different keys from the fire-place. "It's the old boy's help-mate," said Purcell, "some awful antiquity in brown bombazine and laced furbelows;" and with affected ignorance of the lady of the house being present, he continued, with studied indifference, to admire the patriots upon the wall and occupy himself with an accurate survey of the dull features of the once celebrated Doctor Lucas. There was a whispering at the fire; a light step crossed the room. "Here comes old bombazine," muttered the student; and turning slowly round with determined nonchalance, within two paces his eyes encountered those of a young and beautiful woman. Heavens and earth! there stood the cause of all his anxiety and danger—there stood the unknown one!

If the student's astonishment was great at this unexpected meeting, the effect upon his fair incognita was positively electric. The blood rushed to the surface, and one deep blush covered her from the brow to the bosom; for a moment she did not raise her eyes, and when she did, it appeared she had resolved to reject all previous acquaintance with her visitor. She returned his confused compliments with a low and formal courtesy, and muttered some disjointed excuses for the unavoidable absence of her husband.

Her husband! Gracious heaven! Was she then married? and by that solitary word the student's air-built castle was overthrown. The pang of deep disappointment gave way to pique. Had she really forgotten him? Her blush said "No." Then she was ungrateful; and in one short day his services were forgotten. Purcell's pride was wounded. In a low voice he apologized for his dress: "Had he anticipated the

honor so unexpectedly conferred upon him, the honor of being presented to Mrs. Downing, he should have been more suitably attired; but people would occasionally be found in dishabille. Till to-night he had never known its advantages, for he observed that the memory was discarded with the dress."

While he spoke, the lady's varying color showed that she was not insensible to his reproaches. She raised her eyes—they met the student's; and in a moment he could have knelt at her feet, and supplicated pardon for harboring a thought or expressing a word that could disquiet her. Suddenly she exclaimed: "You are hurt, sir: there is blood upon your breast." Purcell turned his eyes carelessly to the spot. His shirt was slightly spotted. He smiled. "The wound is not incurable. As a worthy friend of mine would express it, 'Tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church-door.'"

"Let me recommend you to have it examined. Allow me to show you to a dressing-room;" and with a look which bade him follow her, she took a taper from the sideboard and left the supper-room.

As they ascended the stairs the lady of the house looked cautiously round. No one was visible. She pointed to a chamber and in a rapid whisper said:

"What madness have you now been guilty of? Good God! Downing told me your escape from murder was nearly a miracle. Ah! Mr. Purcell, why did you come here? But fate, which threw you so opportunely in my way, seems determined that our acquaintance, so singular in its origin, shall continue. My husband knows the particulars of my late adventure, but is ignorant of my preserver's name. Let it remain so: we never met before—remember that. I see you have not displayed the token of my gratitude: never let that ring be seen. Be guarded, be silent, have eyes and ears, but affect to have neither. I must leave you. Ring the bell, and anything you require will be brought to you." She pressed her fingers to her lips, smiled, and next moment he heard her return to where the guests were assembled.

When the student entered the chamber to which his hostess had conducted him, he was surprised at the very elegant arrangement of the room. It was a lady's boudoir, and the pure and classic taste evinced in its furniture and decoration formed a striking contrast to the wealthy, but vulgar, display so apparent in the rest of the mansion. There was a harp, a

piano, and other musical instruments, and a large collection of written and printed music filled the stands. Books, magnificently bound, were disposed in rosewood cabinets, and several fine specimens of sculpture adorned the mantel-piece.

Among some paintings of exquisite beauty, one little portrait attracted the student's undivided admiration; it was a likeness of the lovely occupant of the chamber. Purcell gazed upon it with rapture. There was the deep blue eye—that bright, that speaking eye; there, too, was the rich profusion of chestnut ringlets; the Grecian nose; the full red lip that concealed teeth of pearl-like whiteness—and he had pressed that lip! And with that thought came the maddening recollection that she was *another's*. Good heaven! could that lovely girl have wedded the elderly and homely person he had seen? Did that young beauty bloom for one whose years and habits rendered the existence of mutual attachment an impossibility? What could have caused this sacrifice? There was some hidden secret involving this ill-assorted union, difficult to comprehend. His musing was interrupted: a heavy step approached and Mr. Downing entered.

“I ask your pardon, Mr. Purcell: my neglect must appear unpardonable. Madeline tells me you are wounded; let me look at it.”

“A scratch, sir, a mere scratch!” and baring his breast, the student discovered that the skin had been slightly punctured. “Pshaw! sir,” he continued, “your lady's bodkin would make a deadlier wound;” and taking some sticking-plaster from his host he covered the scar, and buttoning his jacket, followed Mr. Downing to the supper-room.

Purcell was placed beside the lady of the house. Opposite to him a man was seated whom he had not previously observed: he was introduced as Monsieur de Chattelain. His dress and demeanor were grave, and from his general look the student concluded that he was some priest or physician. But his manners were very different from those of the other guests; his address was courtly and commanding; his conversation lively and intelligent. Before the meal was over Purcell felt himself irresistibly impelled toward the agreeable foreigner, and forgetting the remainder of the company, his whole attention was engrossed by Madeline and the intelligent person beside her. At a late hour he took a reluctant

leave, and with unfeigned delight accepted Mr. Downing's warm invitation to visit his house frequently.

Love had already made wild work in Purcell's heart. Madeline, the beautiful Madeline, occupied his thoughts and haunted his dreams. A colder character might have taken timely alarm, and avoided the danger of encouraging a growing passion for one whom fortune had placed beyond the possibility of his possessing. But the student's ardent disposition was insensible to the peril of his situation. Therefore each day produced some apology for repairing to Downing's house, and as the mercantile avocations of the host occupied his time with little intermission, unfortunately for Stephen Purcell, his interviews with Madeline were long and alone.

Madeline was the orphan daughter of an officer in the Irish brigade. She was educated at an English convent in Normandy, and after the revolution had broken out had the misfortune to lose her father, who fell in the battle of Arcola. The temper of the times made the existence of any religious community in France impossible. That of Sainte-Geneviève was dispersed and the inmates obliged to seek a shelter in another kingdom. Madeline's father had once been in the Duke of Orleans's household, and in her distress she applied for protection to the daughter of that prince, who had lately married the gallant and unfortunate Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

Madeline was an inmate of Lord Edward's family when Mr. Downing, with others of the Irish delegates, had an interview with the French authorities at Hamburg. There Madeline and he accidentally met. Downing was opulent and respectable, an enthusiast in politics, and one for whom Lord Edward had a high personal regard. Struck with the charms of the beautiful and unprotected orphan, the trader forgot the disparity of years, and conceiving that wealth would atone for other disadvantages, he declared his admiration to its object and pressed his suit with ardor. Seconded by the powerful interference of his noble friend, Madeline's objections to a union in which her heart was perfectly unconcerned were removed, and Downing returned to Ireland the husband of the beautiful boarder of Sainte-Geneviève.

A year passed over, and Downing's thoughts became absorbed in the ruinous politics of the times. His vanity might have been gratified by being the husband of one so lovely and accomplished as Madeline; but love was not a leading

passion, and those hours which a younger husband would have allotted to domestic enjoyment, were consumed in prosecuting a conspiracy to overthrow the Irish government. Madeline felt no disappointment at the change; in fact, it was rather a relief. No pledge of love had blessed her heartless marriage, and too young to feel anything but friendship for one so much beyond her in years and so opposite in taste and habits, she employed her uninterrupted leisure in the exercise of those elegant arts she had acquired from the sisterhood of Sainte-Geneviève. Music and painting were her resources; and as the trader furnished her with unbounded means for collecting all that was rare and expensive, Madeline's boudoir and drawing-room became repositories for every elegance in the arts. With such opposite pursuits Downing and his wife seldom met but in society. Their apartments were separate, and their intercourse rather resembled that of a child and parent than the warmer intimacy of wedded life.

Gratitude and affection toward her quondam protector, Lord Edward, continued unabated in Madeline's breast. The delicate and generous attention she had experienced in her destitution and the frequent opportunities which, while a member of his family, she had possessed of seeing and estimating the chivalrous traits of character of that gifted but unhappy nobleman, had made a lasting impression. She, too, had imbibed much of the enthusiasm of the day, and the wild and delusive romance of liberty had seized upon a young and fervid imagination. Her protector was coming to Ireland, the hero and liberator of his country. Ardently, then, did the beautiful enthusiast enter into her husband's plans for sheltering the noble leader of the conspiracy; and by frequent instances of firmness in danger, with the ready resources of a woman's wit, she proved that the secret of Lord Edward's concealment had been intrusted to one well worthy of this proud but dangerous confidence.

On the night of Lord Edward's arrival in the city, Madeline had brought him the disguise he afterward assumed. Many untoward circumstances delayed her, and she was returning after executing her perilous errand, when her arrest before the college gates occurred. Purcell's timely interference saved her from the consequences of detection, and formed the basis of a future intimacy deeply disastrous to both.

Meanwhile the attempts of the executive to discover the

retreat of the rebel leader were unsuccessful. Rewards and espionage produced no disclosures calculated to lead to his detection. De Chattelain sometimes joined the student during his constant visits at Downing's; and, delighted with his spirited and entertaining acquaintance, Purcell's admiration of his talents and information momentarily increased. The foreigner appeared singularly uninterested in the passing events which engrossed the thoughts of all save himself, but signified unfeigned astonishment at the success with which the chief conspirator evaded the incessant efforts of his enemies.

The result of Purcell's daily interviews with the beautiful Madeline may be easily conjectured. He became the victim of a deep and devouring love; an unaccountable change in habits and disposition was remarked by his companions; the parade was deserted; in the commons hall he was never seen; and he now avoided the nightly carousals of the wild youths of the university, where but lately he had been the presiding spirit. In his chambers he was seldom found, and his most intimate friends were totally astounded at the marvellous and sudden change in Stephen Purcell.

With pain Madeline remarked the progress of the student's passion. She rightly judged that a character so ardent and impetuous was ill adapted to struggle against a growing attachment, which, if not subdued, would assuredly terminate in their mutual misery. She would have avoided him, but her husband, for political purposes, encouraged his visits; and Madeline was thus prevented from adopting the only salutary course of conduct she could pursue. Her suspicions were soon confirmed: an incident at one of their private interviews hurried the student's feelings beyond control, as he flung himself at her feet and in a wild and unconnected rhapsody owned how desperately and hopelessly he loved her.

She fled from him; he would have detained her, but she broke from him and retired to her chamber to seek relief in solitude and tears. She wept for the frenzied passion of her unhappy lover; but, alas! Madeline might weep for herself! She, who had wedded without a sentiment beyond respect, had learned, too late, how dangerous it is to trifle with the heart. Hers had been hitherto untouched, but now, when to love was criminal, she for the first time felt there was a being for whom, had her will been free, she would have declined a diadem!

Purcell for a while remained powerless as a statue. Madeline was gone—gone forever! His insane disclosure had insulted her beyond the chance of being appeased. All was over! He took a last look at the boudoir he should never again enter; and his eyes resting on the likeness of the beautiful wife of Downing, he took it from the wall, placed it in his bosom, rushed down-stairs, and left the house that held the woman whom he idolized.

Evening came; in a state of melancholy abstraction he paced his cheerless chamber; "he took no note of time;" his servant spoke to him, but he was unheard or unheeded. He put a note into his master's hand, but there it remained unopened. Casually, Purcell's eyes turned on the address; it was the handwriting of Madeline. He hastily broke the seal and read the following words:

"Purcell, farewell!—we meet no more! Your honor, and my peace of mind, require this from both of us. I alone am blamable. What I had reason to suspect, I should have prevented; and, by adopting a course now unavoidable, I should have spared some suffering to you, and much unavailing misery to myself. Break off all intimacy with Mr. Downing. Write to him—tax him with disloyalty—and make this, or any other plea, a pretext for declining his farther acquaintance. I would confess the truth to him, and save you the trouble I impose; but it is enough that I should suffer, without including him in a misfortune of which I have been the sole cause. Fare thee well! that blessings here and hereafter may attend you, is the prayer of

MADELINE."

The student read the billet over and over, and then, with an effort of extraordinary self-possession, he calmly wrote the letter it demanded. He dispatched it by his servant, and then relapsing into his painful reverie, remained with folded arms "gazing on vacancy." Night came on; a tap was heard at the outer door; a person entered, stood for a minute in silence at the student's side, then striking his absent friend upon the shoulder, Jack Middleton's well-known voice addressed him:

"In the name of deep tragedy, I conjure thee. What, ho! Stephano! art thou alive, man? or has aught occurred to

" 'Deprive your sovereignty of reason,
And draw you into madness?'"

"Jack," said the student mournfully, "leave me. I am company for none but a maniac. I am wretched, Jack."

"Pshaw! Stephen, nonsense. What the devil has happened? Some mishap; but surely we can remedy it. Have you

been——” and looking earnestly at his friend, he mimicked the rattling of a dice-box.

“No, no, no; 'tis here and here,” and Purcell pressed his heart and head convulsively.

“In love, by the shade of Mark Antony! Ha! ha! ha! and is Stephen Purcell turned to a mewling schoolboy? He cries because Chloe will not consent to drop into his arms like an overripe medlar. Would she not have thee without the parson's benison? 'O most pernicious woman!' Come, make me thy confidant, and 'by the simplicity of Venus' doves' we'll have her, though we commit a burglary.”

“Ah, Jack, my case is desperate!”

“Then take the remedy that never failed, wine—wine—wine! You have deserted your friends; some say you are getting mad; others that you are turning traitor. Come along, the lads are waiting. Without you there has been 'a gap in our great feast.' Where's that? Oh, Macbeth—'a gap in our great feast.'” And Purcell allowing himself to be led off without resistance, Jack Middleton continued favoring him with excellent advice and quotations from his darling Shakespeare until they reached the guard-room, where his presence was hailed by a cheer of welcome.

Purcell had eaten nothing since morning, and he drank with avidity the wine pressed upon him by his friends. The fever of his mind rendered him unable to endure a debauch; his vision failed; his brain burned; and to the surprise of his companions, he fell upon the floor insensible.

His fall was ascribed to intoxication; but fortunately a medical student present, attributing Purcell's supposed inebriety to a different cause, had him carried to his chambers and remained during the night beside his bed. His ravings confirmed the student's suspicions, and the morning found him feverish and exhausted. Farther assistance was promptly administered, and after a confinement of a few days, Purcell recovered sufficiently to enable him to move about the park.

No tidings of Madeline reached him since they parted. Indeed, that silence was natural: her letter prepared him for a separation; and doubtless she had striven and perhaps succeeded in forgetting him. His spirits left him; his once rude hue of health faded from his cheek; he became nervous and wretched; but the while the traces of mental anguish on his countenance were supposed to proceed from bodily

indisposition, and none but Jack Middleton and his medical attendant guessed that his ailment was "a mind diseased."

The former seldom left his friend alone; and on the night of the 17th of May he entered Purcell's rooms so closely muffled up as for a time rendered his recognition difficult. "Are we alone, Stephano?"

"We are. My servant is gone to Harlow's library."

"Lend me your ear, Stephen. We leave this ere midnight on a secret expedition—Lord Edward is betrayed!"

"Betrayed! is it possible?"

"True; we are certain of success; and before the clock strikes one the traitor will be a prisoner or dead. You must come with us. Half a dozen of the lads are selected for the work, and, good Stephano, thou art one."

"I?"

"Yes, *you*. Are you unwilling? Oh, we can fill your place readily."

The student's face reddened.

"Nay, Stephen, I but jested. Come, arm yourself; we go disguised; pistols are the thing; a great-coat conceals them."

"Where is the place, Jack?"

"Some nook off Thomas Street; but we have a guide."

Purcell's nerves jarred as Middleton named the street; but an irresistible impulse urged him to visit again the neighborhood which had proved so fatal to his peace. Taking a case of pistols from a drawer, he examined their flints and primings, and having secured them in a waist-belt, put on a watch-coat and accompanied his companion.

It was striking ten o'clock. Middleton led the way to an apartment within the guard-room, where the party, consisting of four students and a civil officer, were already waiting for them. The plan they were to pursue was simple: a servant had disclosed Lord Edward's retreat and would admit them privately into the premises by a back entrance, while soon after the house and neighboring streets would be surrounded by a military force. The chosen few who were to arrest the rebel chief were to be admitted an hour before the larger body should appear, as troops moving at a late hour in that direction might cause an alarm and frustrate the attempt. It was known that Lord Edward was desperate and well armed. Aware of the certainty of his fate should he fall

into the hands of his enemies, his intention of never being taken alive was no secret. To arrest him, therefore, was a service of no small peril, and to a limited number of the college corps, men of active habits and established courage, the dangerous duty was assigned.

Two hackney-coaches conveyed the party to the end of Thomas Street; then alighting, they followed the police officer in silence and approached the spot which to one of them had already been pregnant with adventure. At the entrance of the well-remembered alley the guide paused, looked anxiously round, and next moment plunged into the gloomy passage. Middleton and his companions followed, and with amazement Purcell saw their leader tap at the little wicket, which instantly opened and admitted them into Downing's garden.

He who had unclosed the door held a short parley with the officer, and immediately after retired through the garden. The guide briefly informed them that they were to remain in concealment until he ascertained the proper time for conducting them into the house. He would communicate with one of the party, who should be posted near the dwelling. After a slight discussion this duty was intrusted to Purcell, and directly the man returned, led the student through the flower-knot, and concealed him among some shrubs beneath the windows of Madeline's boudoir.

While the student vainly strove to collect his wandering thoughts, a taper gleamed from the casement above. A figure crossed the stream of light—was it Madeline? A conservatory nearly reached the window, and by the aid of a flower-stand Purcell imagined he might gain the casement. What were his impulses for doing so he could not tell; but he made the attempt, and succeeded without noise or difficulty.

He would have scarcely recognized the apartment. The paintings were taken down, the instruments and book-cases removed, and any furniture that remained was apparently in great disorder. The whole had an air of neglect and desolation. Madeline was not alone, for De Chattelain stood beside her, and both were busy in tearing letters and destroying written papers. The task was soon over and the foreigner left the chamber.

Madeline continued standing at the table. She appeared anxious and thoughtful: the light, as she moved aside, fell

upon her face, and the cheek and lip which so lately showed the flush of health were now wan and colorless. Purcell's heart throbbed painfully. There she stood—the being whom he prized above all earthly things. There she stood, unconscious of impending danger. Could he know that peril was so near, nor warn her of the coming storm? Would it be manly? would it be honorable? Time pressed—he hesitated—the struggle was short—loyalty gave way to love, and he gently tapped upon the casement.

Light as the signal was, Madeline started. A human face, at that late hour, peeping at the casement, alarmed her. She was about to fly from the room, when her name murmured in a low but well-remembered voice prevented it. She approached, threw the sash open, and Purcell sprang into the chamber and threw himself at her feet.

Both were for a moment silent, till Madeline, bursting into tears, exclaimed:

“Is this honorable? Is this generous?”

“Madeline,” said the student, in deep emotion, “I come to save you. Even now the house is being surrounded, and treachery has already admitted a part of your enemies to the garden.”

“Their visit is too late, and my husband is far beyond pursuit. He sailed three days since for America.”

“And left *you* behind him, unprotected, Madeline!”

She colored deeply as her eyes fell upon the carpet.

“The urgency of the case did not allow me time to accompany him. Your party came hither to arrest him?”

“No, Madeline; there is another——”

“*Another!*”—and her face grew red and pale in quick succession.

“There is——”

“Who?”

“Lord Edward.”

“Merciful God! Am I betrayed?”

“You are. Phillips is a villain.”

“I feared him. Purcell, will you save me a second time?”

“*None shall harm thee*, Madeline.”

“For myself I have no fears—I am a woman; but my friend—Purcell, save him! save him!”

“Alas! I cannot; escape is impossible, and resistance to my companions were worse than madness.”

"Purcell—dear Stephen—on my knees I supplicate your mercy."

The student raised her gently. "Madeline," he said in a voice of poignant agony, "if life would serve you, mine is freely at your disposal; but my honor and my allegiance alike prohibit me from abetting the unhappy man's escape."

But Madeline again was at his feet. "Purcell, you loved me; you swore it and I believed you. *By that love* I conjure you——"

"Stop, Madeline, stop! I will be anything for you but a traitor."

"Purcell, I will never outlive the destruction of my benefactor—my more than father. I was desolate—I was homeless—he saved—he sheltered me; and if I cannot save him I will die with him." Her eye lightened as she spoke, and Purcell trembled as he marked her resolution. Madeline observed his changing countenance. "Hear me, dear Purcell, hear me but one moment;" and again her soft voice burst forth in earnest and touching entreaty—"Save him and I will be thy slave forever!"

"Madeline, tempt me not."

She took his hand—she called on him by every term of endearment.

"Madeline," exclaimed the student, "I am nearly mad! Hear me;" and the rest he whispered in her ear.

"*I will, so help me heaven!*" was the reply.

Love succeeded over duty. Purcell seized a pen, wrote the parole and countersign, clasped her to his bosom convulsively, and as he pressed her lips he muttered: "He is safe; but I am lost!" Then leaping through the window, took his station where the false domestic had posted him, among the evergreens.

Directly the light vanished from the casement of the boudoir. "She is gone," said the student, "to complete the treachery I have commenced. O Madeline, what have I not fallen to! Who would believe that Stephen Purcell should sink into a felon, and his once vaunted honor become a reproach to his family and name? Madeline, this I have done for thee. I have won thee, but fearful was the price thou cost me."

His soliloquy was interrupted, and the betrayer stood beside him.

"You are waiting," he said, in a low whisper: "all's right. Lord Edward, or, as they call him here, M. de Chattelain, has retired to his sleeping-room. He never undresses, but merely throws himself upon the bed; he will be asleep directly. Move the party quietly hither, and I will come for you presently."

Purcell summoned his companions and without noise they were posted in the appointed place, and Phillips was not long absent.

"He sleeps," said the traitor, in a deep low voice; "his taper is extinguished. I have listened at the door, and the chamber is as still as death. His pistols lie upon the dressing-table, and a double-bladed dagger is always beneath the pillow. I will lead you to the room. If the door is fastened, burst it open with this sledge, rush in, throw yourselves promptly upon him, and he will be unable to reach the pistols or use the dagger."

In breathless silence the party were conducted through the hall. They ascended the stairs. Pointing to a door, the traitor whispered: "That is the room." The officer softly tried the lock. The bolt turned easily. "Be sudden, boys!" Next moment the door flew open. Middleton and his companions sprang fearlessly in and threw themselves across the bed. "Lights!" cried several voices, and two dark lanterns were unclosed; the bed was encompassed by the party—but it was unoccupied!

"Hell and furies!" exclaimed the leader—"more light; search every spot, my lads; see—the bed coverings are tossed; some one was lately here, and our man is not far off." The chamber was examined; it bore, indeed, evident signs of being but lately deserted, but of Lord Edward there was no trace whatever, although a silk nightcap was on the pillow, and a dressing-gown of foreign fashion proved that the chamber had been his.

The informer was astonished. A quarter of an hour had scarce elapsed since he lighted the rebel chief to his apartment; he saw him close the door. Every spot, every article of furniture was minutely examined — Lord Edward was gone!

The party were bewildered, when the march of a military body was heard without, and the order to "Halt and extend to the right and left," proved that they were the expected

soldiery. Immediately the commanding officer entered and demanded: "Where is the prisoner?"

"The prisoner?"

"Yes. Is he not in custody?"

"In custody?"

"Why the devil do you bandy words with me? Is not Lord Edward arrested?"

"No; he is not here."

"Not here!"

"'Tis true, colonel."

"The man you sent to bring up the detachment told me——"

"*We sent no man!*"

"What! sent no one? Then is there treachery at work. A person met us in Thomas Street, and stated that you had despatched him to bring us to your assistance."

"And did you let him pass?"

"Undoubtedly; he had both parole and countersign."

"Describe him."

"Low-sized, dark clothes, gentlemanly address."

"Lord Edward, by heaven! There is a traitor among us; but let us lose no time, and we may yet trace him."

Instantly the house was abandoned, but rapidly as the pursuit was made it was unavailing. The pickets and sentries were closely questioned, but no one answering the description given of the rebel chief had passed them. Deeply chagrined at their failure, the military retired to their barracks and Purcell and his companions to the university.

A note from Madeline next day requested that, to avoid suspicion, the student's visits for a time should cease, and prudence induced him to accede to the wish expressed in her letter. Two days passed. Early on the third morning a message from Madeline came. On the preceding night Lord Edward had been arrested, and Downing's house and property set on fire by the military and entirely consumed.

He found her at an obscure hotel, and there learned the particulars of Lord Edward's capture. He had been taken at a feather-dealer's in Thomas Street, in which, after a desperate resistance, the principal assailant was killed and the second wounded beyond a hope of recovery. The rebel chief received a pistol-shot in the struggle, and expired in Newgate a few days afterward.

Downing's house had been a second time visited by the

military. In an adjacent timber-yard a large quantity of pikes were unfortunately discovered; the premises were instantly fired and the whole burned to the ground.

Madeline was in the deepest distress; the destruction of property to an immense amount appeared a trifling loss compared to the death of her friend and benefactor. She had narrowly escaped the fury of the excited soldiery, and a small box containing cash and jewels was with difficulty rescued from the destroyers of her home.

"I am now desolate, *truly desolate*," she said, as the student strove to comfort her: "deserted by a husband, bereaved of a dear and faithful friend—oh, where shall I look for protection?"

"To *me*, Madeline; you are mine; you swore it, and misfortune unites us: henceforth our destinies shall be the same."

The interview was long and agonizing. Madeline at length consented to leave Ireland with her lover, and that evening, under the assumed name of Tennison, they took possession of apartments at a hotel in Dawson Street.

If ever excuse could be offered for a deliberate violation of conjugal faith, there might be some apology for Madeline's. She was a helpless and deserted stranger, alone in the world, and abandoned by him whom the laws of God and man had constituted her protector. She was loved by a being young and ardent as herself. Under other circumstances she might have combated the temptation that assailed her; but a perilous series of calamities beset her. *She fell*—yet poor Madeline, while obnoxious to censure, was not undeserving of pity.

Jack Middleton, when acquainted with the fatal step taken by his imprudent friend, was at first overpowered with astonishment and dismay; but Madeline's exquisite beauty won upon his versatile imagination. He discovered that men were mad from the earliest times, and instanced the cases of Romeo, Mark Antony, and other very excellent personages who had all fallen victims to "the witchery of woman." As the act was irrevocable, Jack urged the student to lose no time in leaving Ireland. Accordingly, Purcell wrote exculpatory letters to his family, arranged his pecuniary affairs, and having procured the necessary passports, prepared to leave the city for Belfast, whence he ascertained that he could obtain a passage to the Continent.

Travelling, owing to the disturbed state of the country,

was necessarily insecure; but Purcell had little apprehension of the danger. Accompanied by the beautiful partner of his flight, he bade adieu to his faithful companion, and on the memorable evening of the 23d of May left Dublin in the Belfast mail.

On that night the insurrection broke out. A simultaneous rising was expected to take place throughout the kingdom, and the signal to the remainder of the disaffected to know when the capital was in arms had been notified to the leaders of the malcontents.

The Belfast mail, protected by its customary guards and an escort of a few dragoons, reached the domain of Santry, which at that time bounded the great north road with its lofty and ivy-covered wall.

There were no passengers that night excepting the student and his mistress. The latter was unusually dejected, and Purcell endeavored to dissipate her melancholy. "Lean upon my bosom, Madeline; it is a faithful one," said the romantic youth. "There, my sweet one, thy image is enshrined. In another land, love and happiness shall be ours. Courage; danger is over. *Am I not with thee?* and what can now be apprehended?"

"Stop!" cried a hundred voices; and instantly the carriage was checked as the leaders' breasts came against a strong barrier which had been laid across the road. Madeline shrieked as Purcell threw down the glass and called on the driver to proceed.

"It is impossible," was the reply; "the road is totally blocked up."

"Stop!" thundered a voice from the park wall. "*Sur-render or every soul shall perish!*"

Purcell, brave as a lion, leaped from the coach and rushed forward to remove the obstruction; the dragoons discharged their carbines and the guards fired on the assailants. Instantly a stream of musketry was returned from behind the wall. From the opposite ditch, the barrier, before, behind, shots were heard. The dragoons fell; the guards were disabled; still Purcell, regardless of the heavy fire that blazed around him, labored with desperate intrepidity. A portion of the barricade gave way: he was calling to the guards to be steady, when his eyes turning upon the carriage, he saw Madeline in the act of springing out. That moment she gave

a piercing shriek. "*I am murdered!*" she feebly uttered, and fell dead upon the road.

With a thrilling cry Purcell bounded to the spot: he raised her in his arms; she was dead! the ball had passed through her heart. Next moment a blow from behind felled him to the earth and laid him beside that beautiful being who but just now had been all life and loveliness.

* * * * *

Five weeks elapsed before Purcell's memory returned. He woke as if from a fearful dream. He found himself surrounded by his family, and his faithful friend Middleton had seldom left his side. His recovery was long doubtful, and when able to bear a journey he was ordered to leave Ireland, to try the milder influence of a southern climate. He went, *but never returned!* Yearly Jack Middleton received a letter from him, and he soon after mentioned that he had assumed another name and joined the army of the Rhine.

By degrees Purcell's story faded from the recollection of the world, and it was generally stated that he died broken-hearted and in obscurity. None, save *one*, knew that the Count de Florival, the favorite aide-de-camp of Napoleon, a grand cross of the Legion of Honor, and colonel of the cavalry of the Guard, was the unhappy lover of *Madeline Downing*.

