THE

MYSTERY OF ELIAS G. ROEBUCK

AND OTHER STORIES.
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BY

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THE

MYSTERY OF ELIAS G. ROEBUCK.

ROEBUCK told me this story one day as I sat in his studio in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs. I don't pretend to say whether the story is true or not, but I know that he believed he was telling the literal truth.

He was a tall, cadaverous American from one of the far Western States, and was totally uneducated, except for the most elementary branches taught in the district school of his native village. He had been a house- and sign-painter by occupation, and when he was nearly thirty years of age he came to Paris to study art, with the design of becoming a landscape painter. He was not in all respects the very worst draughtsman in Paris, but there was not the slightest doubt that he was the worst painter that ever spoilt canvas. The man had absolutely no sense of colour, and he was as devoid of imagination as a table of logarithms. We both drew at the same academy, where he used to sit next to me, and as we were
the only Americans in the place there was a sort of friendship between us. He was an honest, unassuming, simple minded fellow, and, with the exception of the delusion that he could paint, he was by no means wanting in common sense. I do not think that he had ever read anything in his whole life except the American newspapers and Galignani's Messenger, and as he did not know a word of French he never went to the theatre, nor to any place of amusement. He told me there was a great demand for oil-paintings in the Western States, and that he calculated that a year's work in Paris would enable him to defy the competition of the best painters of St. Paul's and Milwaukee. Indeed, he had already put in a bid for the job of decorating in fresco the walls of the new capitol of Montana, and he had put his price so low that he had every reason to hope that his bid would be accepted. "I'd do the job for nothing," he said to me, "rather than not do it at all, for it will be the biggest kind of an advertisement. If I get it, I'll bet you ten dollars that within five years I shall be doing so big a business that I'll have half a dozen journeymen working under me."

The students at the Academy liked Roebuck well enough, though they used to play a good many jokes on him. They decided that his name did not suit him, so they translated it into De Chevreuil. One
of them painted the De Chevreuil arms on the chair where Roebuck usually sat, and we all took to calling him De Chevreuil. I say all, but I ought to except myself, for being his fellow countryman, I declined to take any share in casting ridicule on the man.

Roebuck had begged me to come and see a picture that he had just finished, and to give my honest opinion about it. The picture was to be called "Sunset on the White Nile." It was about six feet by four, and he said it was the most important work that he had yet done. The fore-ground consisted of ten palm-trees of the same height, placed at exactly the same distance one from another. The back-ground contained two pyramids, two camels, and a sphinx, with three Arabs sitting around a camp fire, while through the middle of the canvas ran a broad ribbon of white paint which represented the White Nile.

"The boys are always saying that I ain't got no imagination," remarked Roebuck, as he unveiled this amazing production. "I rather calculate that you'll allow there's some imagination in that picture, seeing as I never saw one of the things that's on that there canvas."

"You're right in that," said I—"it's a work of pure imagination. There is nothing like it in Nature."

"I knew you would like it," said my friend. "But
now tell me where I can improve it. I want real square criticism."

"I don't think you could possibly improve it," I replied. "But let me sit down and just soak in the impression of it a little while. It rather takes me off my feet at present."

No! I was not ridiculing the poor fellow. I was trying to save his feelings, and to avoid telling any absolutely unnecessary lies. I had told the truth when I said that he could not improve the picture. My present hope was that I could by some means avoid saying anything more about it.

"Let's talk about something else for a little while," said I, as I took up one of Roebuck's pipes and filled it. "Who says you haven't any imagination?"

"All the chaps at the Academy," he replied. "I don't mind, for it isn't true. Isn't dreaming imagination?"

"I suppose it is."

"Well, then, I'm just chock full of imagination, for I dream all night long. And dreams come true, too, sometimes," he added. "A mighty queer thing happened to me not long ago that convinced me of that, though there was something in it that I can't explain."

"Tell me about it," I cried, catching at the possibility that here might be the means of leading him to forget my promised criticism of his picture.
"Have you ever been at Rouong?" asked my friend. I told him that I had once spent several days in Rouen.

"I went down to Havver last week to see Weatherby off in the *Normandie*, and on the way back I stopped over night at Rouong, for they told me that there was some swell architecture there, and, if painting don't pan out as well as I think it will, I may take to architecture myself. I took a hack at the churches, and such, and in the evening I started out for a walk through the town.

"Now there is a dream that I have had ever since I can remember. I dream that I'm in an old European city, though I never seem to know the name of it. Somewhere in that city there is a small open square, with two streets leading out of one end of it. They start pretty close together, and then widen apart like the sides of a V.

"One of these streets—the one to the left—is a wide, modern street, pretty well lighted, and with a good many people in it; but the other street is narrow and dark. The houses have sharp gabled roofs, and the upper stories project over the lower. There are no street lamps in it, except one or two that are a long way apart and give mighty little light. The street hasn't any side-walks, and there is a gutter down the middle of it, and more smells to the square inch than there is in Chicago. I've
looked up this street a hundred times in my dreams, and I'm always afraid to go up it. It looks as if there couldn't be any one in that street except robbers and murderers, and it's my belief that most all the houses are empty."

"I understand the sort of street you mean," said I, as Roebuck paused. "There are several of them in Doré's illustrations of the Contes Drolatiques. You've seen the book sometime, and there is where your dream comes from."

"Never heard of the book or the pictures before," replied Roebuck; "besides, I've been dreaming about this street ever since I was a kid, and we didn't have no pictures by Doré nor anybody else out in dad's shanty in those days.

"Now when I was in Rouong this time that I'm telling you about," resumed Roebuck, "I walked along down one street and up another without paying any attention to the direction I was taking. By-and-by I got into a part of the town where the houses were particular old, and where there didn't seem to be but very few inhabitants. All of a sudden I came to an open square that was as familiar to me as Lincoln Avenue in Montanopolis.

"It was the very place that I had dreamed about so often. There were the two streets leading out of one end of it. The big street was lighted up, and there were people here and there in it, but the small
street was just as dark and deserted as I had always seen it. There wasn't a soul in it, and the blackness and silence of it frightened me.

"Just then a woman came towards me, though I didn't notice where she came from. She was middling well dressed, and, to my mind, looked like a lady, though I know I ain't much judge of ladies. I was standing looking at the narrow street, and wondering if I was awake or dreaming, when the woman walked straight up to me and says, 'You are an Englishman, are you not?'

"Now I knew well enough that I wasn't an Englishman, but I couldn't see as I was called upon to set the woman's mistake straight, so I just said, 'Well, supposing I am. What then?'

"'Why,' said she, 'then you will help me. I am an Englishwoman in terrible distress and danger. My sister is here, lying very ill in a house where I believe the people are thieves and murderers. I implore you come with me and help me to take her away!'

"'Why don't you get a policeman?' I replied. 'That's what you want. If you say so, I will find one for you.'

"'For Heaven's sake, no!' said the woman. 'There are reasons why that would ruin everything. If you are the brave man you look to be, you will come with me. If not, we are lost.'
"'I'll come, ma'am, if you insist upon it,' said I, 'though I tell you in advance that if there is any fighting to be done you'll have to count me out, for I haven't got my revolver, and I'm not a fighting man anyway.'

'She said there wouldn't be any call for me to fight, and that, as soon as it was seen that she had a man with her, she and her sister would be allowed to go. She said it would be better if I was to follow a short way behind her, instead of walking by her side. That suited me well enough, so the woman went on walking pretty fast, and I came along about two rods behind her.

'I tell you it gave me a chill to go into that narrow, dark street. You see I had been afraid of it for going on to twenty or twenty-five years. Besides, the place was cold, for I don't believe the sun ever got down into it, the houses were so high and so close together. Nobody met us, and I didn't see the least sign of life in the street. We went, as I should judge, pretty near an eighth of a mile, and the only street-light we passed was an oil lamp hung out from one of the houses on an iron bracket.

'The woman stopped at the door of a house on the left, and waited for me in the shadow. When I came up she said, 'Take my hand, for there isn't any light, and the stairs are long.' I took her hand, and it was small and warm. I remember thinking at the time
that she couldn't be a ghost, or else her hand would have been cold. Not that I believe in ghosts as a rule, but in that sort of street a man might have believed in almost anything. We went up two flights of stairs where it was as dark as Egypt, and then we came to a door where the light shone through the chinks. The woman knocked, and, without waiting for an answer, opened the door, and we went into the room.

"It was a great big room with queer, old-fashioned furniture, and not much of that. In one corner there was a figure in armour standing, leaning on its sword. The chairs and sofas were covered with elegant velvet, but it was threadbare, and in places hung in rags. The tables had had their legs gilded when they were new, but the gilding was mostly gone, and the marble slabs were stained and cracked. There were two tall candles burning on the mantelpiece, where there was an old-fashioned clock that said it was twenty minutes after eleven, though probably it lied.

"'Sit down,' said the woman, taking off her hat and throwing it on a chair. I noticed then that she spoke with some sort of foreign accent, and it came into my mind that she wasn't English after all.

"'Where is your sister?' I asked.

"She burst out laughing. 'My sister! Oh, you shall see her presently. Meanwhile sit down and be comfortable.'
"This made me pretty mad, for I was now sure that she hadn’t any sister, and that she had brought me into a trap. I didn’t stop to ask myself what her motive was, though for the life of me I can’t see any point in laying a trap for a poor artist. What I had to do was to get out of that room and that street as soon as possible. So I said, ‘That’ll do, ma’am. You can’t play any game on me,’ and I turned to the door. Just then two men burst into the room, making as much noise as a lot of medical students coming into a sick-room to see an operation. One of them was a big, red-faced fellow, who was sure enough an Englishman. He even had top-boots, such as men used to wear in Hogarth’s time, though I don’t pretend to know when that was. The other man was smaller, but a deal wickeder looking, and I judged that he was a low-class Frenchman.

"The big man had a drawn sword in his hand, and as soon as he was in the room he called out to the woman, ‘I have caught you at last, and I’ll attend to you when I have killed this scoundrel!’ The woman shrieked, and fell on her knees. The man paid no more attention to her, but came towards me cursing like an alderman, while the other man kept crying out, ‘Down with him! Down with him!"

"Now comes in what is to me the queerest part of the whole business. Considering that I wasn’t armed, and considering that neither of the men had
a pistol, what I ought to have done was clear enough. Any man brought up as I was in a community where rough-and-tumble fighting was the national amusement, as you might say, would have thrown the first thing that came handy into the big man’s face, and then knocked him and his companion down before he could have used his sword. But I didn’t do anything of the sort. I sprang into the corner of the room where the figure in armour stood, and snatched the sword that it had in its hand. Then I put my back against the wall and pulled one of the marble-topped tables in front of me, and said very quietly to the man, ‘Unless you beg this lady’s pardon and mine on your knees, I shall do you the unmerited honour of killing you.’

“Did you ever know me talk like that? Did any sane American ever sling language in that way unless he was in a theatre? What you would have expected me to say, being as I am a man of ordinary common sense, would have been to tell the man to ‘git, or I’d make him.’

“Well, the big man came on, and for the next five minutes we had some of the prettiest fencing you ever dreamed of. I told you I had never had a sword in my hand before, yet there I was, fencing as if I had been at it all my life, and I felt just as confident that the fellow’s sword would never touch me, and that I should kill him, as I ever felt of
anything since I was born. Good gracious! how I did enjoy that fight! Presently the man stopped to get his breath, and I bowed very polite to him, and said that perhaps his comrade would take his place while he was resting. However, the little man didn't seem to hanker after fighting, and he kept in the background, and confined himself to telling the other to cut my heart out, which was an easy line of policy for him.

"We went to fencing again, and I could see in the man's eye that he was getting frightened. This time, however, I didn't waste any time in airs and graces. Before we had fenced two minutes I ran him clean through the body, and he was dead before I could fairly draw out my sword. Then I turned and bowed to the woman—not as a free and independent American citizen bows, but after the style of some ridiculous French dancing-master—and saying to the smaller man, 'Fellow! open the door, and hold the light!' I walked out. The man did as I ordered him, but before I had gone down the first flight of stairs the door was shut, and I was in darkness again.

"I climbed down slow and cautious, holding my sword in my hand with the point in front of me. Suddenly there was a gleam of light, which instantly disappeared. I knew what it meant. Some one had opened the door of the room where we had been
fighting, and had shut it again. Probably the little man had plucked up courage to pursue me and stab me in the dark.

"I waited where I was, with my back up against the side of the house, for I calculated that if the man was following me he would keep hold of the banisters. After a bit I distinctly heard some one coming down the flight above, but making hardly any noise. The man had evidently taken off his boots, which would help him to move faster than I could, besides preventing him from making any noise.

"I waited, hardly allowing myself to breathe, till I judged he was close to me, and then I lunged with my sword. I felt the sword-point strike him and pierce deep into him. There was a yell, and the man fell heavily on the stairs, while his sword went rattling down to the bottom.

"I wasted no more time with him, but drawing out my sword, I wiped it as well as I could in the dark on the inside of my coat. It seemed to me that those stairs had been multiplied since I climbed them—which of course they hadn't been—and that I would never reach the street again. However, I came to the bottom at last, and out into the street. Not a soul was to be seen. I ran at the top of my speed down the dark street, till I came to the little open square. I made a few more turns and found
myself in a well-lighted and crowded street, where I soon picked up a cab and got back to my hotel, carrying the sword hid under my overcoat.

"The next morning I did my level best to find the house where I had been that night, but I couldn't find it, though I walked till I was dead tired. Then, thinking that I had better get out of Rouong before the police should hear of the affair, I took the noon train to Paris.

"Now you are a clear-headed man, and I want you to explain this thing to me. I swear to you that every word I have told you is the literal truth. I know the first thing you'll say, so I'll tell you in advance that I hadn't drunk a thing that day except water. You know yourself that I never touch this beastly sour wine, and I don't believe there is any decent whisky in all France."

"My idea," said I, "is that you dreamed the whole thing."

Roebuck got up, and, unlocking a closet, brought out an old-fashioned rapier. "There," said he, "is the sword I brought away with me. I couldn't very well dream solid steel and brass—could I?"

I looked at the weapon. On the hilt was a coat-of-arms partly obliterated with rust. I rubbed it with my handkerchief until it was so plain that it could readily be perceived. It was the arms of the De Chevreuil family.
I gave the sword back to my friend, calling his attention to the coat-of-arms, which he had not previously noticed. "If you were really a De Chevreuil," I said, "this would have been the sword of one of your ancestors. Go to some doctor who has made a study of heredity, and tell him the whole story. Perhaps he can explain it, but I am very sure that I can't."

I left Paris the next day for a month in Switzerland, and when I returned I found that Roebuck had gone to America. I have never heard of him since. Often after he had gone I thought of going to Charcot, and telling him the story just as Roebuck told it me, and asking him if there was any theory by which he could explain it. But, of course, I never did anything of the kind, and now Charcot has gone where he is done with theories.
THE MAN WHO WAS EMPEROR.

There are few things more annoying than to meet a man whose face seems familiar to you, but whom you cannot positively identify as an acquaintance. If he is really some one whom you know, and you refrain from speaking to him, you feel that you are guilty of a rudeness. If, on the other hand, you address him, and then find that he is a total stranger, you are exasperated at your own stupidity. My fellow-passenger in the train from Paris to Marseilles made the first hour of the journey very uncomfortable for me. I was almost sure that I knew him, but I could not possibly recall when and where I had met him. We were alone in the compartment, and I could not decide whether to ignore his existence or to pretend to recognize him. Only the previous day I had warmly greeted a man on the Dover boat, whom I thought I knew, and found that I had impressed a bad-tempered stranger with the conviction that I was a "confidence man."

By-and-by a happy thought struck me. I would
enter into conversation with my fellow-passenger in such a way that he might either think that I had recognized him or that I was merely a genial and conversationally disposed person. The plan worked well. The man was evidently pleased that the silence was broken, and before very long we were talking as familiarly as if we had been old acquaintances. His very first remark showed that he was an American, and I soon found that he was a shrewd, intelligent, though quite illiterate man. As it happened, I had passed several months in his native town in Massachusetts, and he lost no time in telling me that he had been for many years foreman of the locomotive engine works to which the town owed its prosperity.

Now that I was certain that we had never met before, I said to him that his face had seemed so familiar to me that I had almost mistaken him for an old acquaintance.

He smiled grimly. "A good many people have said the same thing to me," he remarked. "Have you ever been in Russia? No? Well, at any rate, you've seen the illustrated papers. I have something in my grip-sack that I'll show you."

So saying, he opened a large Gladstone bag, and handed me a miniature in a magnificent frame set around with diamonds. I knew it at once. It was the portrait of the Czar Alexander II.

"You just cast your eye over that," said my
companion, "and you'll save why my face looks sort of familiar to you."

I looked from the portrait to the man, and the likeness was startling. Indeed, if my companion had worn a full beard, he would have resembled the dead Emperor more closely than one twin ordinarily resembles another.

After expressing my wonder at the extraordinary resemblance between the man and the portrait, I asked the American how it happened that he carried the Czar's miniature in such an expensive setting.

"That there picture," he replied, "was given to me by Alexander himself, and I could tell you a little story about it that might interest you some. You think I look like the Emperor? Well, so I do; but more than that, I was Emperor of Russia myself for five days, and could have sent Alexander to Siberia if I had wanted to."

There was not a suggestion of a smile on the man's solemn face, and, absurd as his assertion was, I was almost inclined to believe it. I begged him to go on with his story, and he readily consented. This is what he told me.

"Our firm in Springfield, Massachusetts, built a lot of engines for the St. Petersburg and Moscow Railroad, and as the manager was anxious that the engines should be properly handled, he sent out American engineers to drive them, and he had me go along in
charge of the lot. When we put the engines on the line the Government was so pleased with them and me that they made me a first-class offer to stay on as a sort of head engineer, and I accepted it. I was seven years in Russia, and got to like the country and the people—that is, after I had collared the language. They are a good-hearted lot, the Russians, though they are the most ignorant people on the face of the earth. They don't get their ignorance as our folks do, by reading rubbishy newspapers, but they have a natural-born talent for ignorance which can't be beat. We tried our best to train Russian engineers, but I never saw one that I would trust with an express engine.

"In those days the Nihilists were working away at the Emperor, trying to kill him in all sorts of scientific and unscientific ways. As you know, they got him at last, and I sometimes think it must have been a comfort to him when he heard that last bomb burst, and knew that his troubles were over. If those Nihilists hadn't been Russian, they would not have been so ignorant as not to know that the kindest thing they could do to the Emperor was to kill him. All those years that he lived in constant expectation of being killed were the worst torture that ever a man was put to. Alexander was a good man, and a brave man, but he had nerves, and the strain the Nihilists kept on his nerves beat the rack clean out
of sight. Do you happen to remember the attempt of the Nihilists to blow up the Emperor's train just this side of Moscow, the year before he was killed?"

"Of course I do," I replied. "I remember, too, that his life was saved by the engine-driver who—"

"The engine-driver only did his plain duty," interrupted my companion. "He'd have been a low-down hound if he had acted any different from what he did. I was that there engine-driver, for the superintendent always had me drive any train that the Emperor might be travelling by. I had a close call that time, but I got off with a broken finger, and thought very little about the thing until, a day or two afterwards, I was sent for to go to the Palace. Alexander had somehow got it into his head that if it hadn't been for me the Nihilists would have gathered him in—which wasn't strictly true. However, he sent for me, and of course I went.

"I'm a republican myself, and I don't as a rule care much for emperors and such; but a republic would be as ridiculous in Russia as a sealskin ulster in Central Africa. Besides, Alexander was a first-class man if he was an emperor, and I'd have taken his part against the Nihilists every day in the week. I and the Chief of Police, who was showing me the way, passed eight sentries and a couple of hundred soldiers on our way from the front door of the Palace to the room where we found the Emperor, and the
last thing before we entered the room was that I had to stop and be searched from head to foot for concealed weapons and dynamite, notwithstanding that the Emperor himself had sent for me, and the Chief of Police was with me. That's the way the Russians understand orders. If St. Nicholas himself, that they think so much of, had come down straight from heaven, they'd have searched every feather in his wings for dynamite bombs, the same as they did me.

"Alexander was sitting alone by a writing-table in a small room with windows high up in the wall, covered with heavy gratings. The room was well enough as far as furniture went, but it was about as gloomy as a jail, which was really just what it was. The only way in which the Emperor could keep clear of the Nihilists was by locking himself in his Palace. Even then he couldn't feel sure that his cook or his waiter or his washerwoman might not be a Nihilist, who would contrive to poison him, or that his Chief of Police might not find it to his advantage to join the Nihilists instead of fighting them.

"When the Emperor knew who I was, he came straight to me, took me by both hands, and kissed me twice. I always hated to see men kissing one another, but somehow I could have kissed Alexander then and there. He told me that I had saved his life, and that he wanted to show his gratitude to me.
THE MAN WHO WAS EMPEROR.

He wanted me to come and live in the Palace with him, for he said that he knew he could trust me, being an American. Says I—

"'B'gosh! your majesty is right there. Darn all manner of Nihilists!'

"Now, I wasn't hankering to live over a powder-magazine, much less inside of the Emperor's Palace, which I felt sure would be blown up sooner or later. But I did feel mighty sorry for Alexander, and wished I could do him a good turn. He made me sit down, and we talked for a half an hour, when he happened to look at a mirror that was opposite to where we were sitting, and he sort of smiled. It was a pretty sick smile, and showed that he had had mighty little practice in smiling, but, as far as it went, it was genuine.

"'Did any one ever tell you,' said he, 'that you look like me?'

"'I've been hearing that ever since I came to Russia,' I replied. 'However, it ain't my fault, and I don't mean any disrespect by it.'

"'If you had my beard,' said the Emperor, 'there isn't a man in the whole police force that could tell us apart, except by our clothes. Isn't that so, Smithski?'

"By Smithski I mean the Chief of Police. He was a Pole, and I could never rightly get the hang of his name, so Smithski is what I used to call him for short.
"The Chief took a good look at me, and said that if it were not for the beard and the noble expression of the Emperor's face, it wouldn't be an easy job for any ordinary policeman to tell him and me apart.

"When I looked at the Emperor I couldn't see any particular noble look about him. I did see, however—what had been troubling me ever since I came into the room—a haggard and hunted look that went straight to my heart. As I looked at him, and thought of the horrible life he led, I had an idea, and I spoke out without any reflection—

"'See here, your majesty,' I said, 'I ain't no Russian subject, but I'm a white man, and I hate to see you looking so tired and unhappy. You need a vacation, the worst way. You want to go somewhere where nobody will know you, and you can wear old clothes and smoke a pipe comfortable. Now, I tell you what I'll do with you. I'll take your place long enough for you to get a little rest. You cut off your beard and put on a pair of blue spectacles. You have our friend Smithski here bring a false beard for me, and a suit of your last year's clothes. I'll put them on and play emperor, and take all the shootings and blowings up the Nihilists can furnish, while you take a week off and pull yourself together. Your nerves are in a bad way, and I don't wonder at it. All you want is a little
rest and change of occupation, and I'm showing you how to get it.'

"That idea of mine just hit the Emperor where he lived. He took to it amazingly, and brightened up at once. Of course, he knew that if I meant to play any game on him, such as holding on to the crown when I had once got a grip of it, he and his friends could upset me without much trouble. But he seemed to know that he could trust me, and then, perhaps, considering how awfully sick of emperoring he must have been, he would have been glad to change places with me for good. Anyway, it was settled that I should be emperor for a week, and Alexander sent at once for Robinsonoff, the Prime Minister, and Jonesevitch, the Court Doctor, and told them what he meant to do. They and Smithski were the only persons who were let into the secret, and they all agreed that my plan could be carried out without any danger of discovery.

"I slept in the Palace that night, and in the morning Smithski brought me a false beard and a suit of the Emperor's everyday clothes. He trimmed my hair and darkened my eyebrows—having, like all Poles, a sort of genius for the barber's trade—and when he got through I wasn't sure whether I was myself or Alexander. There was one thing that I didn't particularly like. In order to keep me out of sight, it was given out that the Emperor—which
was me, you understand—was suffering from an attack of gout in the hands. So Smithski tied my hands up in cloths, which accounted for my not being able to sign state papers, and also kept my hands, which were considerably bigger and browner than Alexander's, out of sight. I could use my hands pretty well, except for filling a pipe, and of course I had too much sense to make any objection to having them tied up.

"I didn't see Alexander when I came downstairs to the breakfast-room, and Smithski told me that he had left the Palace early, dressed like an English traveller, and had gone to the best hotel in St. Petersburg, where he had left him drinking pale ale and talking broken Russian to the chambermaid.

"'He's going to paint this town red, and don't you forget it!' said Smithski. 'It's the first time he's had an outing, and he won't waste any time.'

"For the next four days I didn't have much to do except to eat and smoke, and read. Robinsonoff and Jonesevitch came to see me every day; but, like Smithski, they wouldn't hear to my going outside of the Palace, even to take a turn in the back-yard. Considering that I was a man accustomed to an outdoor life, this was rather hard, but you can't be an emperor without paying the price for it.

"The only stroke of public emperoring that I did in those five days was receiving the Afghan envoy.
He insisted on seeing me at once, and as neither of us could understand a word of the other's language, Robinsonoff thought that the interview couldn't do any harm. There was an interpreter who translated for the envoy and me, and I made the envoy comfortable by promising to do everything he wanted. I agreed that Russia should send an army through Afghanistan into India, and that after India was conquered the Afghan king should have all the new territory he wanted. I knew all the time that I might possibly get Alexander into a scrape by this agreement, but, as I couldn't sign any papers, it would always be open to him to say that the Afghan envoy was a liar, and that no such promise had ever been made to him.

"Except that I had to stay in the house, I had a tip-top time while I was emperor. The food was first class, though the Court chemist used to analyze it every day so as to prevent it from being poisoned, and I was always afraid that he'd accidentally leave some of his chemicals in the butter or the coffee, and poison me worse than the Nihilists could have done it.

"Jonesevitch, who was a good fellow if there ever was one, used to have his dinner with me, and after dinner we used to lock the door and have a smoke together. I always put on Alexander's crown for a smoking-cap, though I can't say it was particular comfortable. Still I meant, while I was emperor,
to get as much enjoyment out of the situation as was possible, and I'd have worn that crown if it had been twice as heavy. I hunted out the Emperor's sceptre, which for some reason or other he never used, and I found it made an excellent tobacco-stopper. If you could have seen me after dinner, with my crown tilted over one ear, sitting with my legs on the dinner-table, and telling Jonesevitch anecdotes of railway life, you would have seen that emperors are only human after all.

"The fifth day of my reign I made up my mind that I must have a breath of fresh air, no matter what the consequences might be. So I got up early and slipped out a back window in the dining-room, and made my way into the back yard. It was as big as a park, and was full of old trees and thick shrubbery; and I was out of sight in them in a few minutes. I was congratulating myself on my luck in getting out of the house without being seen when a fellow sprang out from among the shrubbery, and went for me with a big knife.

"I was pretty active in those days, and as strong as a horse. I caught the fellow's arm before he had time to strike, and in no time at all I had him on his back, and was sitting comfortably on his legs.

"'Now,' said I, 'if you don't mind, we'll have a little friendly conversation. Suppose you tell me
who you are, and what made you take to knifing inoffensive emperors?'

"For answer he made a long speech about the rights of man, the wickedness of tyrants, and all that sort of thing. I let him talk till he ran out of breath, and then I said—

"'Considering you've got all that off your mind, you ought to feel easier. I understand well enough that you're a Nihilist, and have been reading an awful lot of Radical rubbish. But I want to know what particular injury I have done you that you should want to murder me?'

"'You sent my poor old father to Siberia,' said he. 'Your police seized him because a man, whom they said was a Nihilist, stopped my father in the street and asked him the time of day. My father was as innocent as a child, and he was a weak old man, seventy-seven years old.'

"'What is your father's name, and when was he arrested?' I asked. He gave me the particulars, and then I said, 'I'll have this thing seen into, and if you are telling the truth, and I think you are, I'll have your father brought back and set at liberty at once. The police make mistakes sometimes, but I can't see as that is any reason for sticking knives into me.'

"The fellow didn't thank me, and didn't say a word until I asked him what his occupation was—when he wasn't engaged in emperor-killing.
"'I am a machinist,' he said, 'but I have been out of work for a year, and am starving. Nobody will employ me, because I am watched by the police.'

"'You go down to the railroad machine-shop next Monday,' said I, 'and ask to see the manager. He'll find out what you can do, and will give you a billet.'

"'And you're not going to hang me?' exclaimed the chap.

"'My dear friend,' said I, 'you're an awful fool just now, but that's mainly because you're young. There's the makings of an honest workman in you, and I ain't going to waste you by hanging you. You just give up Nihilism and go to work, and by the time your father gets back here, you'll wonder how you ever took up such a trade as trying to stab decent men just because they happen to have the misfortune to be emperors.'

"My man kissed my hand and cried like a child. He swore that he would be the most faithful subject I had, and I could see that he meant it.

"'That's all right,' said I, getting up, and telling him to do the same. 'Here's some money for you to live on till Monday. Now get yourself out of this yard as soon as you can, for the Chief of Police may put in an appearance any minute, and I've mighty little influence with him.'

"I turned to go back to the house, when Smithski
ran up to me, looking as frightened as if he had just stepped on a percussion bomb.

"'A great misfortune has happened,' said he. 'The Emperor has been arrested by a stupid detective, who mistook him for a Nihilist. He was kept in jail all last night, and I've ordered him to be brought before you at once.'

"'I don't see anything in that to worry about,' said I. 'If I know Alexander, he will take it as part of the fun, and won't blame you a particle.'

"'But you don't know what a dreadful place the prison is for an Emperor to pass the night in. His majesty can never forgive me for letting him be put in such a place. I shall lose my office, and be sent to prison myself before I am an hour older.'

"'You're all right, Smithski!' said I. 'It will do the Emperor good to know by experience what prisoners have to suffer. You just bring me two blank pardons, and I'll straighten the thing out for you.'

"Smithski brought me the blanks. I used one of them to make out a pardon for the father of my young Nihilist, and the other one I filled in with Smithski's name, making it a full pardon for his negligence in letting Alexander be arrested.

"'Am I emperor, or am I not?' I asked Smithski, as I gave him the two pardons.
"'My orders are to obey you in everything, precisely as if you were Alexander himself.'

"'Then those two pardons will hold water,' said I. 'If Alexander pitches into you, just you show him your pardon, and you may be sure he won't go back on anything signed by me. As for the chap named in the other pardon, you fetch him back from Siberia, and hand him over to me at the machine-shops in double-quick time.'

"Smithski was an intelligent man, and he saw that if I backed him he would come out all right. He thanked me warmly, and just then Alexander was led in handcuffed between two big policemen with drawn sabres.

"'Take off his handcuffs, and then leave the room!' said I to the policemen.

"'If your majesty pleases,' said one of the policemen, 'the man is a dangerous ruffian, and your majesty's life will not be safe if his hands are freed.'

"'Obey my order instantly!' said I, as savage as you please. I was fast getting to feel like an emperor all through, and in another week I'd have been as proud and as arbitrary as the best of them.

"As soon as the police had gone, Alexander dropped into a chair and laughed as nobody had ever laughed before in that gloomy old Palace. Smithski chipped in with his apologies the moment
the Emperor gave him a chance, but Alexander told him that what he needed to apologize for was the disgraceful condition of the prison, and that he was glad he had had an opportunity to know just what sort of a place it was. Then he asked me what I had done in the line of active emperoring, and laughed a little more over my promises to the Afghan envoy. As to the pardon of the Nihilist's father, he said he was quite satisfied that I was right, and if I had pardoned a dozen Nihilists he would have stood by me. I wished then that I had done so, for though I hate a Nihilist, it's my belief that Siberia is a little too crowded with them.

"Alexander said that he had had a bang-up time, and felt like a new man. He said he had never enjoyed himself so much since he came to the throne, and that if it wasn't that his conscience wouldn't allow him to shirk his duty, he would pay me any salary I might ask for taking his place permanently. However, he knew well enough that I would never consent to any such arrangement. I'm not the sort of man to decline a big salary, but there isn't money enough in the world to induce me to be Emperor of Russia for more than a week.

"I was getting ready to say good-bye to the Emperor when he turned to Smithski, and told him that he was removed from the office of Chief of Police, and that he might consider himself under
arrest. Smithski was knocked all in a heap, but presently he remembered the pardon I had given him, and pulled it out and handed it respectfully to Alexander.

"'What's this?' said the Emperor to me, for he saw that the pardon was signed in my handwriting.

"'Smithski's a good fellow,' said I. 'I was afraid your majesty would come down on him a little too hard, and so I furnished him with a pardon. I hope you'll do me the favour of not upsetting what I did during my reign.'

"Alexander looked serious for a moment, and then he laughed. 'Very well,' said he, 'I'll keep Smithski in office on condition that he puts my prisons in decent order without a moment's delay.'

"Well, I haven't any more to tell you, except that two days after I left the Palace, Alexander sent me that portrait of himself as a keepsake. I never saw him to speak to again, for I went back to Springfield a few months after I was emperor, and the very next year the Nihilists gathered poor Alexander in. It's always been a great consolation to me that I was the means of giving him five days of genuine pleasure, and if it would bring him back I would be willing to be emperor again for another five days, and I can't say more than that."
THE LAST OF THE "FLYING DUTCHMAN."

I had been spending the summer in a very-much-suburban cottage on the road between London and Portsmouth. At the time I was temporarily out of dogs; my collie, who was of a foolishly confiding disposition, having allowed himself to be stolen, and my Irish setter having been shot by a neighbouring farmer on suspicion of sheep. As a consequence, I was the especial delight of tramps, who visited me daily to beg a little something to help them to reach their innumerable relatives at either Portsmouth or London. Most of the male tramps were ostensibly sailors, as befitted the road over which they were tramping. Now, for my sins, I had been a sailor in my early youth, and I took pleasure in exposing the falsity of these pretended seafaring tramps. It was only necessary to ask them some easy question of elementary seamanship, to discover that their whole knowledge of the sea had been gathered from the transpontine drama. During the entire summer only
one of the dozens of tramps who begged me to assist "a poor sailor," knew anything whatever about a ship. Why a sailor, whose instincts might be supposed to lead him to wander over land as well as sea, should so seldom be a tramp, and why, on the other hand, so many bricklayers should, in spite of the quieting influence of bricks, take to the road, are mysteries which some one ought to try to solve.

One morning the maid came to me and said that there was a tramp at the kitchen door who wanted breakfast, and seemed a decent sort of man. It was unusually early in the day for a tramp to be actively engaged in business; and thinking that it might be my duty to encourage early rising in tramps as well as in myself, I went to the kitchen door to see the man. He was a middle-aged, grizzled, weather-beaten and honest-looking fellow, poorly dressed, but by no means in rags. When he saw me he said good morning, and asked if I would be so good as to give a sailor a bit of bread. Now, a man may look honest and weather-beaten and still not be a sailor. The cabman, for instance, often has a weather-beaten look, and occasionally has the air of an honest man. So I tested my tramp by saying, "If you are a sailor you can tell me what would be your first order if you were going to tack a full-rigged ship?"

"Well," he replied, "I might tell the man at the
wheel to keep a good full, and I might sing out, 'All hands 'bout ship.' Is that what you mean, sir?"

It wasn't precisely what I meant, and the man might have learned his answers from a penny dreadful of the so-called sea-story class, so I asked him one more question. "You're right enough so far; but what would you do next?"

"Why, I'd sing out, 'Raise tacks and sheets. Leggo your bowlines fore and aft, and——"

"That'll do," I said. "Come in and have some breakfast, and tell me how a decent sailor-man like yourself comes to be tramping."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said the man, availing himself with alacrity of my invitation. "It's like this, sir. I was paid off at Portsmouth ten days ago. There was very little coming to me, and that little didn't last long. Then I tried to get a ship, and couldn't; so I started for London, being pretty sure of finding a ship there, leastways providing the whole bloomin' docks isn't full of Dutchmen, waiting to ship for nothing a month, and offering to advance a month of it themselves."

Not to dwell further on my first half-hour with a genuine sailor-tramp, I will merely say that, after he had made his meal, I gave him some tobacco, and sat out in my ten-by-twelve-foot garden with him for a friendly smoke.

"How long have you been a sailor?" I asked.
"Thirty years," he replied. "I've been four times round the world, and six times round Cape Horn. I've been whaling for three years in the Arctic seas. I've fought in four general engagements while I was in the Royal Navy, and in a dozen pretty stiff fights when I was in the Peruvian Navy. I've held a mate's certificate for the last ten years, but I haven't had a mate's berth more than a year in all that time. But you know how it is yourself, sir, and what following the sea amounts to nowadays. I've had thirty years of it, and now I'm a bloomin' tramp."

"But you've seen a good deal of the world."

"Yes, sir; I've seen a lot of different docks, and drunk a lot of different drinks, if that's what you mean. I never saw nothing, however, that was worth going out of England to see."

"Not even the sea-serpent, or the Flying Dutchman?" I asked, with a vague idea of saying something light and cheerful.

The man looked at me curiously. "No," he continued, after a moment. "I can't say as I ever saw a sea-serpent—that was a regular able-bodied snake; but I won't say as I never saw the Flying Dutchman."

"Then you have seen him!" I exclaimed. "Tell me all about it."

"I'll do anything you like, sir," he replied, "after the handsome way you've treated me; but I know
you won't believe me. It's a sight of years since I knocked off telling that story. Everybody as heard it said as I was a bloomin' liar. You may be good enough to take it alongside, but you'll never histe it in. But it's the living truth, sir, that I've seen the Flying Dutchman not once, but twice; and what's more, I'm the last man that ever saw him; and what's more, no man will ever see him again."

The man was so much in earnest that it was evident there was a story somewhere about him; and I pushed the tobacco-pouch over to him, and told him that if he could tell a story more improbable than those told by the average tramp, I should greatly like to hear it.

He began. "It was somewhere in 'eighty-four or 'eighty-six that I was on a yachting cruise aboard a big six-hundred-ton yacht that you probably know of—the Wings of the Morning. I was second mate of her, and her owner was a Mr. Nelson. They did say that he was one of the richest men in England. I've done a good deal of yachting aboard steam-yachts in my time, and the most discontented people I ever come across were the yacht owners. You see, when a man gets bloomin' rich all his friends expect him to take to yachting, and he's got to do it. Most of them hate it, but they can't help themselves. I was once on a yachting cruise with an old gentleman who was sea-sick every blessed minute, except when
we was lying in dock. More than that, he was afraid of his life, and every time we met any weather worth speaking of he made sure he was going to be drowned. But you should have seen him when friends came down aboard the yacht to see him. Then he'd tell them that there was nothing he loved so much as the sea, and that he felt as if he really couldn't live ashore no more. That's the way with most of the rich men that begins yachting at fifty or sixty. They are fairly drove to do it by public opinion, and I actually knew one of them to bribe his captain to cast the yacht away—after he was out of her, you understand, and in a place where there wasn't no chanst of anybody's being drowned.

"Mr. Nelson wasn't exactly of this sort. He was really fond of yachting, though he didn't have much nerve, and was always a little afraid of his yacht. Snakes were what he hated most of all, and the sight of one would make him go on the sick list for days. Once, at Bombay, a snake-charmer came aboard; and when Mr. Nelson saw the snakes, he dropped on the deck as if he had been shot dead. But he treated his men well. All hands got about double the wages that were paid at the time on deep-water ships, and the grub was something amazin', Jack getting dinners of four courses, with a table, and a clean cloth, and a boy in uniform to wait on him. If that sort of thing could have lasted, sailoring would have been
about the best trade a man can turn his hand to, instead of being the worst.

"We had been on a voyage to Bombay and Ceylon, through the Canal, and we were returning by way of the Cape. We had stopped at Capetown for a few days, and got pretty sick of it; for, next to Sarah Lone, it is about the meanest place in Africa, and you can't say worse than that. About 33° 20' south latitude, we overhauled a vessel that was lying becalmed, there not being a breath of breeze at the time, though the glass was going down, and I was looking for more wind in the course of the next twenty-four hours than we should be wanting. Our course brought us within hailing distance of the stranger, and we saw that, though she was a full-rigged ship, with stump t'gallant masts, she was built like a regular old Dutch galliot, such as they used to build by the mile and saw off in lengths. When I was young you'd see a galliot every now and then lying in London docks; but it's many a year since I've seen or heard of one.

"There was something the matter with the Dutchman—more than merely being a Dutchman—for she had hoisted her ensign at half-mast. At least we judged that it was her ensign, for it hung like a rag, and you couldn't make out, even when she rolled, whether it was an ensign or the old man's spare shirt. She hadn't had a coat of paint for so long that you
couldn't tell what her original colour had been, and there wasn't a cloth in any of her sails that wasn't patched till it looked like one of my old mother's bed-quilts. When she heeled over you could see the barnacles and grass clinging to her bottom. Her standing rigging was chafed and grey, as if it hadn't been tarred since it was first set up, and rattlins were missing in a dozen places. Irish pennants were flying all over her. You couldn't make out the name on her stern, and if she had any number or house-signal she didn't show it. Her yards were squared, and her sails were slatting against the masts, as the swell, coming from the suthard and steadily increasing, made her uneasy, being as she was, of course, without steerage way on her.

"Mr. Nelson ordered the engines to be stopped, and said he would send a boat aboard the Dutchman to see if there was anything the matter with her. It was sent in charge of the boat, with four men to pull her; and the nearer we came to the stranger the more I wondered at her. I could see about a dozen heads looking at us over the rail; while on the high poop there was an old man with a big glass under his arm, who looked just like one of those Dutchmen that you've seen, I don't doubt, at the theatre in *Rip Van Winkle*—the chaps with tall pointed hats that are deaf and dumb, and drink blazin' good gin. One of the men says, 'I'm damned if she ain't the
Flying Dutchman!" and, to tell the truth, I was beginning to think so myself; but I says to him, 'If that's the Flying Dutchman she's doubled the Cape, which is just what she can't never do. A lot of flying there is about her! She'd fly about a knot and a half an hour with a hurricane astern of her.' You see, sir, I didn't want the men to get a notion that they'd seen the genuine Flying Dutchman; for, if they did, they'd be discontented for the rest of the voyage.

"We pulled up under her main channels, and I watched my chance to climb aboard, for the Dutchmen hadn't manners enough to put a ladder over the side. I told the men to wait for me in the boat; and glad I was that I had done so the minute I reached the deck, for there was no mistake about her being a mighty scary craft to board. The old man with the glass, who I judged was the captain, came to meet me, and made a mighty polite speech in what I suppose was Dutch. At any rate, it was a language that I couldn't understand a word of. So I says that I was very much obliged to him for his politeness, and would he please to say what was the matter, and what he wanted.

"Well, he talked a lot more of his outlandish lingo; and then, having a bit of chalk in my pocket, I chalked up our position, at noon the day before, on the side of his deck-house, and says, 'Is that what you're wanting to know?' But he shook his head.
Then I walked for'ard, and looks into the harness cask, which was pretty nearly full, showing that the Dutchman wasn't out of provisions. There were four water-casks lashed amidships, and the bung of one of them out, and the men were going to it and drinking from time to time, so there was no want of water. Then I took a look at the pump, which was more like a town-pump than a pump fit for a Christian sea-going vessel; and I laid my hand on it, and asked the captain if there was anything wrong thereabouts. He shook his head again; and, to make sure, I picked up the sounding-rod, which was there convenient, and sounded the well myself, finding no more water in her than there ought to have been. All this time the crew were standing at a respectful distance, watching me, but never saying a word of any sort. They weren't particular old to look at, averaging, as I should judge, from thirty to fifty years of age, barring a boy, who might have been fifteen or sixteen. The captain, the men, and the boy looked as if they had just been to the funeral of all their friends and relations, and never expected to see a bit of baccy or a glass of rum for the rest of their nat'ral lives. I'm not easy scared; but there was something in the look of that hooker and her crew that made me anxious to get out of her as soon as possible.

"I was beginning to say to the captain that I couldn't see as anything was the matter with him,
and that if he'd give me the name of the vessel we'd report her when we arrived in London. But he interrupted me; and, taking me by the arm, led me on to the fo'c'sle, where he took up the end of a hawser that was coiled at the foot of the foremast; and, holding up the end as if it was a length of hose, he pointed it at the yacht, and then waved his arm towards the norrard. I saw then what he wanted. He wanted us to tow him; but he didn't say for how long, or what he was ready to pay. Being in a hurry to get back to the yacht, I says to him, 'If so be as you're wanting a tow, I'll report the same to Mr. Nelson, and I don't mind telling you that he's just that soft-hearted that he'll probably do it, though in his place I'd not waste my coal on any Dutchman.' The captain bowed very polite, and I will say that he showed no signs of being offended at the freedom of my language, which was probably because he didn't understand it. So I shook hands with him—and his hand was as thin as a skeleton's, and made my blood turn cold—and then I gets aboard my boat, and tells the men to give way with a will. I saw they were uneasy, and so I said, 'She's running short of provisions, and the captain wants us to tow him out of this calm. That don't look much as if he was the Flying Dutchman. Old Vanderdecken don't like steam, for he's never been sighted by a single steamer since steam was invented.'
"This notion didn't seem to have its effect; for the men said nothing, and I could see plain enough that they had made up their minds that the stranger was the Flying Dutchman and nobody else.

"Well, to make a long story short, Mr. Nelson said, as soon as I had made my report, that he would give the Dutchman a tow; so we dropped down close to her, and got her hawser aboard, and started on our course again. It was like towing a meeting-house against a gale of wind. What with her square bows and her soul bottom, it was about all we could do to drag her. We towed her from about noon till sunset, when, a breeze having sprung up from the south, and the glass still dropping, our captain prevailed on Mr. Nelson to cast the Dutchman adrift, and the last we saw of her she was standing to the nor'ard with a fair wind, and everything set that would draw."

"And you believe that she was the Flying Dutchman?" I asked.

"I'm sure of it, sir!" he replied; "though how she got around the Cape at last is more than I or you can tell. But just consider what sort of a craft that Dutchman was, and what sort of men there were aboard of her; and then remember that the very night we cast her adrift it came on to blow a living gale of wind, so that before morning we had to heave the yacht to, and while we were doing of it she shipped
a sea that swept her decks clean of everything, and carried overboard two of the men who were in the boat with me when I boarded her, and you'll see that she couldn't have been anything else except Vanderdecken's craft."

"It does look that way," I said. "But you told me you had seen her twice. Tell me about the second time."

"So I will, sir," replied the tramp. "The gale I was telling you about held for about thirty-six hours, and then we had pleasant weather with strong southerly breezes. We came along up the coast, touching at Sarah Lone and Madeira, and reaching home without anything happening worth speaking of. The yacht was laid up, and we were all paid off; and for the next four years I was in the cattle trade between London and New York. But one day I met Mr. Nelson on Tower Hill, and he invited me into a public-house to talk over old times, he never having a bit of stuck-up pride about him, though he was worth his millions.

"Well, we talked of one thing and another, until it came out that he was going on another yachting cruise, and did I want to go along as second mate? Nat'raly I did, for yachting is a sight better than cattle; and I agreed to go, without asking where or for how much. Mr. Nelson noticed this, and said, 'You don't ask where we're bound for this time?'"
"'And I don't much care,' said I, 'providing of course it ain't Vera Cruz, or some other beastly place where there ain't no holding ground for the yacht, and you can't get anything but yellow fever ashore.'

"'Did you ever hear of the Sargasso Sea?' says Mr. Nelson.

"'Certainly, sir,' says I.

"'Well, there's where we're going,' says he, 'only I expect you to keep it a dead secret. And I'll tell you why we're going there. You see this Sargasso Sea is a sort of eddy in the Atlantic, and everything that is adrift and don't sink gets into this eddy sooner or later, and stays there. No vessel ever enters the Sargasso Sea of her own accord. If she is a sailing vessel she keeps away so as not to get becalmed, and if she is a steamer she similarly keeps away because she is afraid of fouling her propeller among the weed and drift that covers the Sargasso Sea. No man, so far as I can find out, has ever been to the centre of that sea, and come back again.'

"'What should any one want to go there for, sir?' I says.

"'Because it is there that we should find every derelict that has been adrift on the Atlantic for the last thousand years, barring, of course, all such as have gone to the bottom. There's Spanish plate ships there; and there's Atlantic liners there. The
middle of that there sea will be as crowded as London docks, and there's millions of pounds of treasure, not to speak of salvage, waiting for the man that takes a steamer there and back again.'

"'The Sargasso Sea suits me well enough,' said I. 'I can't say as I expect to find a fortune waiting for me there, but I'll go there or anywhere else with you, sir, and the sooner the better, for I'm dead sick of carting cattle across the Western Ocean in those old waggons that I've been in for the last four years.'

"Well, to get along with my story. About the middle of July two years ago come this summer, I sailed from London as second mate of the *Wings of the Morning*. Nobody except the officers knew where we were bound, and they didn't say much about it among themselves, for, to tell the truth, we didn't believe that there would be anything in the middle of the Sargasso Sea, except more gulf weed than our propeller would like to be mixed up with. When we reached the northerly edge of the Sea we slowed down and stood directly to the southward, taking every pains not to foul the propeller, for the weed was middling thick. At night we shut off steam and let her lie quiet till daylight, for there was hardly a catspaw of wind stirring, and next to no swell. In this way we worked her along for a week, and it was the hottest week I ever saw. I used to think that the Persian Gulf was the hottest place this side
of the next world; but the Sargasso Sea is hotter, and it has a smell of rotting seaweed that is enough to turn the stomach of an ostrich, or of a sailor in the fokesell of one of Smith and Jones’s Australian liners.

"The driftwood was getting more and more plentiful as we went along, and we had passed two derelicts, one of which was bottom upwards, and the other was waterlogged, and about daybreak on the seventh day we sighted what looked like a regular fleet of ships. We was then just in the heart of the Sargasso Sea, and, as Mr. Nelson had said, all the derelicts for a thousand years had got together there. They lay as close, and closer, than ships in a crowded dock. They had fouled one another in all sorts of ways. The jib-boom of one would be poked through the main rigging of another, and you'd see three or four ships lying side by side as if they were lashed together. I counted thirty-two vessels, big and small, in that there fleet, and this didn't include all of them by any manner of means. Mostly they were dismasted, but there were several of them that had their spars all in place, and their sails hanging ragged and rotten from the yards. There were steamers there too, and I saw one big iron liner that had been given up as missing years before. You'd know her name if I told it, but I ain't a-going to, for the sake of those as had friends aboard of her. Her bows were stove in as if she had been
in collision with the ice, but otherwise she looked all right: and the paint on her funnel showed plain enough for me to know what line she had belonged to, even if I hadn't known the ship herself, which I did, having once been bos'én aboard of her.

"As I was saying, these ships lay all together, grinding slowly against one another, though not enough to do any real damage, there being no swell to speak of, owing partly to the weed and wreckage of all sorts that was tangled together, and covered the water as far as you could see. I never could understand how we escaped losing all the blades of our propeller, not to speak of breaking the shaft, but somehow nothing of the kind happened to us. There was a sort of steam rising from the weed as the sun warmed it, and there were more turtles, and swordfish, and big sunfish, and such showing on the surface where the weed had parted a bit, and left patches of clear water, than I ever saw at once in any part of the world.

"When Mr. Nelson came on deck and saw the fleet of derelicts he was delighted, and could hardly wait till after breakfast, so anxious he was to board some of them. He ordered the biggest of our quarterboats to be launched, and as soon as the mate came on deck, at eight bells, he left him in charge of the yacht, and he and the captain and I and six men started to pull for the nearest of the wrecks.
"It was hard work forcing the boat through the weed, but after a while we came pretty near to a ship that somehow looked familiar to me. All of a sudden it came to me that she was the identical Dutchman that we had towed four years before, and that I had always believed to be the Flying Dutchman herself. I saw Mr. Nelson was meaning to board her, so I said nothing. There was no mistaking her when we were close to her, only she was more rotten and forlorn-looking than ever. Her masts were all gone, and her bulwarks were smashed, and she had a list over toward the wreck that was lying close against her on her starboard side.

"We made the boat fast in her mizzen-chains, and all hands except one climbed aboard. The deck was lying at an angle, as if she had heeled over before a smart breeze, and it was covered for the most part with a nasty bluish slime, that was as slippery as slush, and wasn't exactly like anything that I had ever seen before. Her bulwarks being gone on the starboard as well as the port side, you could step from her to the next wreck, that was waterlogged and lying so low that her deck was almost awash. I noticed the same slime on the deck of this other wreck too, and I wondered if we should find it on every other wreck that we might board.

"The deck of the Dutchman looked pretty much as it did the first time I boarded her. There was
little or nothing littering the deck, as you would have expected there would have been; and, barring an old shirt that was lying in the scuppers, just where the break of the poop began, the deck was as clean as if it had just been swept, excepting, of course, that beastly blue slime.

"'We'll have a look at her cabin,' says Mr. Nelson. 'She looks to me like a Dutchman, and there probably isn't anything aboard her that would be worth salvage. All the same I want to find out her name.' With that he started to go down the companion-way, when the rotten steps broke under him, and the captain and I caught him just in time to save him from breaking his neck and being choked as well. 'That won't do,' said he, when he got his breath again. 'But we'll have a look down the skylight anyhow.'

"It was easy enough to cast the skylight adrift; and after we had given the foul air time to escape a bit, we all looked down into what had been the saloon, as we would call it nowadays. On the deck, close to a big table, lay a bundle of clothes; and a little further lay the identical pointed hat that I had seen the captain of the Dutchman wear. We didn't need to ask what that bundle of clothes meant, for the shape of it would have told the story, even if bits of bones picked white by the rats hadn't showed in places. We were just turning away, Mr. Nelson
looking pretty white, when one of the men sings out, 'For the Lord’s sake, what's that?'

"I looked at the man, and saw that he was badly scared. He was looking across to the waterlogged wreck that lay on our starboard side. Climbing slowly and clumsily aboard this wreck was the strangest animal that any sober man ever dreamed of. Its neck was at least forty feet long, and was exactly like a tremendous snake. It had a crocodile's head, with jaws that could have taken in a whole ox, and teeth that would have bit clean through a ship's mainmast. As it dragged its body out of the water I saw that it had flippers instead of legs, and that it was something half-way between a whale and a lizard in shape. Its colour was a light lead colour, such as the Yankee men-of-war used to be painted when they were blockading the Southern ports, and the same nasty bluish slime that was on the deck of the Dutchman was dripping from the beast's neck as it swung around, looking for what it might see.

"It took about thirty seconds for us to take in what I have just told you, and then the beast saw us, and opening its jaws, started to come aboard the Dutchman. We didn't wait for him. The men were in the boat before any one had time to give an order, and Mr. Nelson had dropped in a dead faint. The captain and I lowered him into the boat, and I snatched up the old shirt that I told you was lying
in the scuppers, for I didn't want to leave the wreck altogether empty-handed; and I followed the captain into the boat, and we shoved clear of the wreck just as that horrible snake's head showed itself where the rail ought to have been. It watched us for a few minutes, and I never was gladder than I was when the beast seemed to give up the idea of following us, and we saw the head disappear again. The men worked as if they were mad to get back to the yacht, and though Mr. Nelson came to in a few minutes, he kept his eyes shut, and kept moaning, 'For God's sake get out of this at once.' No sooner were we aboard the yacht than the engine was started, and we made our way as fast as we dared to towards the open sea, and reached it without any disaster. Mr. Nelson had lost every bit of his nerve, and all he cared for was to get out of the Sargasso Sea and back into blue water as fast as the yacht could carry him.

"I told you I picked up an old shirt just as I left the wreck. I found as soon as I touched it that there was something middling heavy wrapped up in it, and I unrolled it when I got aboard the yacht. It was that very same glass that the Dutch captain had under his arm when I first saw him walking his quarter-deck. It was small and old-fashioned, and the copper was black with verdigris, but I could easy enough make out the name that was engraved on it."
"What was the name?" I asked, as the mate paused.

"On that there glass," said the mate solemnly, "engraved in Dutch letters which were near enough like English letters for me to read them, was the name 'Vanderdecken,' and the date '1648.' What do you make of that, sir?"

"That either you saw the Flying Dutchman,—or you didn't," I replied.

"Just so, sir. What you mean is that either I have told you the truth or I have been lying. Well, I don't blame you, sir! I don't expect anybody to believe that yarn, and that's why I very seldom tell it. But for all that it's the gospel truth."

Was the man a liar, a lunatic, or simply one who had seen a little more of the wonders of the sea than falls to the lot of other men? I confess I am not prepared to answer. Are you?
STARKWEATHER'S CIRCULAR HOTEL.

I was sitting on the verandah of a Lucerne hotel trying to believe that it is cooler in Switzerland, with the thermometer at eighty degrees, than it is in London with the thermometer at sixty-five degrees, when an American seated himself beside me, and, with a view to opening a conversation, remarked—

"This seems to be a middling good hotel."

"The Swiss hotels are the best in the world," I replied.

I really thought so at the time, for it was my first visit to Switzerland, and the landlord had not yet presented his bill.

"Guess you hain't ever seen our American hotels?" said the American.

I admitted that I had never been in America.

"If ever you stop at a first-class American hotel you won't think much of these foreign hotels. I was a hotel-keeper myself for forty years, and I ought to know something about the business. I came to
Switzerland when I was a young man, just to pick up new ideas about hotel-keeping, but they weren't lying around very thick. Of course the Swiss can beat the world in charging extras in a bill, but that ain't what a hotel-keeper should aim at. I was looking for new and valuable ideas, and I only found one, and that was by accident."

"What was that?" I asked, for I saw that the man wanted to talk, and there was no reason why I should not gratify him.

"I'll tell you all about it," said he. "I went straight through Switzerland, putting up at all the best houses, and one night I arrived pretty late at a town somewheres near Geneva. I don't just remember the name of it, and I told the waiter, who was the only person visible, that I wanted a room looking on the lake. He tried to make me take a room on the other side of the hotel, but when he found that I wouldn't have it at any price, and that I was determined to go to another hotel unless he could give me the sort of room I wanted, he showed me a good large room on the second floor, with a balcony from which I could have jumped straight into the lake.

"This room—it was Number II—suited me down to the ground, and I sat out on the balcony and had a last cigar before I turned in. It was a square room, with three windows in front, and the floor was made
of some sort of cement, that was as smooth as glass. It had the usual furniture, a single iron bedstead, a chest of drawers, a washstand, a table, a sofa, and half a dozen chairs. I undressed, putting my clothes on the sofa, and my travelling bag on the table. I was particularly sleepy that night, and I hadn’t been in bed five minutes before I was sound asleep.

"When I woke up the next morning, my first thought was of the lake, and I got up to have a look at it before dressing. I have been considerably astonished several times in my life, but I was never so astonished before or since as I was when I looked at my room. It was about half the size that it had been when I went to bed, and there was only one window in it instead of three. I pulled open the curtains and looked out. There wasn’t any balcony, and there wasn’t any lake to be seen. Right in front of my window was a big mountain, that was so near the hotel that it shut out all the scenery—just as Mount Blank does at Chamounix. I turned round and took another look at the room. The furniture was all right, just as it had been when I went to sleep, and my clothes were lying on the sofa just where I had put them. My bag, too, was standing on the table, and on the edge of the chest of drawers was the stump of my cigar that I had put there the night before.

"I sat down on the sofa and tried to think the
thing out. I had gone to bed in a big room with three windows looking out on the lake, and now the room was a small one with only one window, and that looked out on the mountains. I hadn’t drank a drop of anything except coffee and water the day before, so I knew that I had gone to bed sober. I don’t dream once in a year, and besides, no man can dream a room down to half its size, and dream the lake of Geneva clean out of sight. I began to think that my mind was going, for I had been trying to learn German, and, according to my idea, it’s a sort of language that is mighty weakening to the mind. The more I thought the matter over the less I could account for what had happened, so I partly dressed, and then rang the bell for the waiter.

"The waiter came before the bell had stopped ringing, and said, ‘If you please, sir, the hot water will be ready in a moment.’ These Swiss waiters think that every man who speaks English wants nothing here below but hot water, and wants it all the time.

"‘I don’t want any hot water,’ I said. ‘What I want to know is how I came to be in this room.’

"‘If you please, sir,’ he replied, ‘you arrive last night at the eleven hours, and you go at the bed immediately. Is not the room sufficient? It is of our best.’

"‘The room is all very well,’ I said, ‘but last night
it was twice as big as it is now, and it looked out on
the lake. Do your rooms generally shrink up in the
night, or do you draw the lake off after people have
gone to bed?"

"The waiter smiled weakly.

"'I am sorry, sir,' he said, 'but we have no other
room. The lake is on the other side of the house—it
is always there. But most people, when they come
to Switzerland, ask for mountains. We have the very
best quality of mountains.'

"Just then a thought struck me. I went out into
the corridor and looked at the number of my
room. It was number 12. Right opposite to it was
number 11.

"'Now, see here,' I said to the waiter. 'I went
to bed in number 11, and this room is number 12.
I want this thing explained, and I want it explained
now.'

"'If you please, sir,' said the waiter, who was
beginning to look a little frightened, 'it is impossible
that you could have gone at the bed in number 11.
That is the room of an old lady, the Princess Woronzoff.
The princess is always here in the summer,
and you shall observe at this moment her Highness's
boots outside of her Highness's door.'

"There was a pair of boots, evidently belonging
to a woman, outside of the door of number 11. I
could have sworn that there wasn't any old Russian
princess in that room the night before—though, to be sure, I hadn't looked under the bed, and the fact that she was in number 11 that morning, made the thing more mixed than it was before.

"I sent the waiter away, for I didn't care to have him think me an escaped lunatic, and after I had finished dressing, I went downstairs and saw the landlord. I couldn't get the least satisfaction out of him, for he stuck to it that I had been shown into number 12 when I arrived at the hotel, and that I must have dreamed that the room had three windows and a balcony looking on to the lake.

"I couldn't understand the thing then, and I don't quite understand it now. However, I decided that a hotel where you went to bed in one room and woke up in another, wasn't the sort of hotel for me, so I paid my bill, and took the train on to the next town.

"I was puzzling my brains over this affair, when all of a sudden the idea of a revolving hotel came into my mind. You know as well as I do, that the travelling public always wants the front rooms in a hotel. Take this hotel, for instance. Everybody wants a front room, where they can see the lake, and everybody that has a back room feels more or less discontented. What is wanted is a hotel where all the rooms are front rooms, and the way to manage this is to build a hotel that will revolve, say, once a
day, and so give every room the same view that every other room has.

"I had this idea in my mind for a matter of thirty years before I ever carried it out. You see it needed a lot of capital to build a revolving hotel, and I couldn't find a partner who had any confidence in the scheme, and who would risk money in it. But I never gave the idea up, and when I had made a pretty big pile at hotel-keeping in various parts of the States, and was about ready to retire from business, I resolved to build my revolving hotel, and make it the biggest success of my career.

"I was a good while selecting a site, and finally I decided to build it on the seashore, about twenty miles below San Francisco. There was the sea on one side and the mountains on the other, and it was hard to say which offered the most attractive view.

"I got a first-class architect, and a first-class engineer, and told them what I wanted, and set them to work, it being understood that they were to say nothing about the peculiar features of the hotel until after it had been opened to the public. The workmen were all either Greasers or Chinamen, so they were safe enough not to talk about the scheme, and, strange as it may seem, the newspapers which mentioned that 'our distinguished fellow-citizen, Silas D. Starkweather (that's me) was putting up a first-class
seaside hotel,' never caught on to the fact that it was going to be a revolving one.

"The way in which the revolving business was worked was this. The hotel was a big, square, frame building, with a courtyard in the middle, and it was built on a great iron platform, something like the turn-tables that you see in railway stations. This platform revolved on about fifty pairs of wheels, and was set in motion by a small steam engine connected with the platform gear by cog-wheels. I had the platform covered with asphalte, so that it wouldn't make a noise when any one walked over it, and I planted a hedge all around the edge of it, with the intention of concealing from the general public the fact that it was anything else except a circular sort of garden.

"I don't know what the hotel and platform weighed, though the engineer could have told me, if I had asked him. I do know, however, that when the engine was started up gently, and the house began to revolve, there was no more jar than there generally is when a man walks across the floor of an upstairs room. I expected to revolve the hotel every night after the guests were asleep, and I calculated that this would have a considerable effect in increasing the receipts at the bar. You see, a stranger who didn't know that the hotel revolved, would be mightily astonished to wake up in a room looking out on the mountains,
when he could swear that he had gone to bed in a room looking out on the sea. Naturally he would think that he was getting into a bad way, and would swear off at once.

"Then he would see me, and discover that he was all right, and that the hotel had turned round in the night; and this would be such a relief to his mind that he would order champagne for all his acquaintances, and drink about four or five times his usual allowance. In fact, that was just the way it worked, as a general rule, though there was one man who was so frightened when he found that the landscape had, so to speak, swung round in the night, that he rushed downstairs in his night-shirt and drowned himself, which was what I call sheer foolishness.

"However, I am going too fast. I opened the hotel the first day of July, and it was about half full for the first week, and everybody except the man who drowned himself was delighted. 'Starkweather's Grand Circular Hotel' was what I called it, and I advertised that every room had a view of all parts of the horizon. People used to stay up to see the hotel revolve, which took place every night at exactly two o'clock, and they all agreed that the absence of any vibration to speak of was a triumph of mechanical skill. The engine was powerful enough to move twenty times the weight of the hotel, but we worked it so slowly that it took a good half-hour
to swing the building through half a circle, and by that means we reduced the vibration to next to nothing.

"The hotel had been opened about ten days when I got a despatch from Professor De Hopkins, saying that he would arrive the next night with a gang of personally-conducted tourists. You have heard of the Professor, I presume, for he comes to Yurrup every now and then. He don't profess anything except the personally-conducted business, and his name is plain Hopkins without the 'De.'

"Well, I hustled round and got the necessary number of rooms ready, and by the time that De Hopkins and his gang arrived, dinner was ready, and a band of music was playing on the platform. The gang consisted mostly of school teachers, and preachers, and such. They all wanted rooms looking on to the sea, and those who had to take the back rooms were considerably discontented, and said that an advertisement which pretended that every room had the same view as every other room might be good business but it wasn't good morals.

"I kept cool, and told them if any one was discontented with the view from his window the next morning he needn't pay his bill. That suited them perfectly, except that some of the people that had front rooms wanted to change for back rooms, so that they could put in a claim to be discontented,
and get rid of paying a bill. It's my belief that the average personally-conducted tourist is better pleased at getting a reduction in his bill than he is with anything that he sees while he is travelling.

"My engineer who had charge of the engine that turned the platform, was a perfectly competent man so long as he was sober. At least that was the character that he had from his last place, and as he told me that he had signed the pledge, I calculated to keep him until he broke it, and then to send him about his business. The night that the De Hopkins gang arrived, I woke up about four o'clock in the morning and found that the hotel hadn't been revolved. This made me pretty cross, for I supposed that the engineer must have overslept himself, and I got up and dressed, calculating to wake the fellow up, and make things lively for him. When I got down to the engine-room there he was sure enough, fast asleep and snoring.

"When I managed to get him waked up he was in a nasty temper, and, as I afterwards discovered, though I didn't notice it at the time, far from being sober. There was a full head of steam on the boiler, and when I ordered the engineer to start up the engine, and turn the hotel without another minute's delay, he just made a jump for the lever, and pulled it wide open. The platform started with a jerk that was like a middling-sized California earthquake, and
the engine settling down to its work, whirled that hotel round at least ten times as fast as I ever intended it should move.

"As I told you, we used to turn the platform so slowly and carefully, that there was hardly any perceptible shaking. To move it round through half a circle, generally took a good half-hour, but this time the platform made an entire revolution in about five minutes, and the speed kept increasing owing to the fact that the weight of the hotel made it act as if it was a fly-wheel, and by the time the thing had made three revolutions it was flying round at the rate of about one revolution a minute.

"Of course, every soul in the hotel, as well as every Mexican and Chinese servant, was awakened by the jerk the hotel made when the engine was started, and the shrieks and yells that came from that house were enough to make a cat's blood run cold. Every blessed tourist made a rush for outdoors, without waiting for any such foolishness as dressing. The professor did have the presence of mind to put on his top-hat, for he was bound to keep up his dignity no matter what happened, but he was the only one who thought of dressing for the occasion. You see, everybody supposed that an earthquake had let itself loose, and in those days California had about as imposing earthquakes as you can find anywhere, though of late years newspapers have multiplied
to such an extent, that earthquakes have become scarce.

"When De Hopkins and his gang reached the verandah, and saw that the whole earth was sailing round the hotel at about ordinary railway speed, they were as anxious to stick to the hotel as they had been a minute before to leave it. It seemed to them the hotel was the only part of creation that hadn't taken to revolving, and naturally they concluded to stay where they were. Some of the women fainted, and some shrieked for the landlord, as if a landlord could turn an earthquake on or off to suit his guests. There was one old preacher who stood up and gave out a hymn, but nobody sang it except himself, and it didn't slow down the engine a particle. As for the men, they held on to anything they could clutch, and watched the sea rushing round the hotel in full chase of the mountains.

"They didn't look very long, however, for presently the motion of the hotel, and the queerness of the spectacle of the revolving earth, made the whole gang deathly sea-sick. Men, women, and children just dropped on to the floor of the verandah and tried to die, and it's my belief that if at that moment the earth had opened and swallowed them they would have been thankful. I've crossed the British Channel in the worst sort of weather, but I never saw any sea-sickness that could be named in the same day with
the sea-sickness of the De Hopkins gang. It made me begin to feel a little queer myself, and I'll back my stomach against any stomach in the whole British or American navy.

"What was I doing all this time? Well, I was standing where I could heave in some good strong language at that engineer, every time his engine came round to where I was standing. I threatened him that if he didn't stop her instantly I would shoot him in his tracks; but he knew that this was all foolishness, for if I had had my pistol with me of course I should have shot without waiting for idle formalities. By-and-by the man began to feel a little sick himself, and so he shut off the steam and put on the brake, and when he had finally brought the hotel to a stop, he dropped off the engine, and sneaked into the woods, where he could die all alone, like the selfish hound that he was.

"Then I turned to and went to work to pacify my guests by assuring them that the earthquake was over, and wouldn't return, and that if they would fill themselves up with the champagne that I was about to offer them, they would get over their sea-sickness almost immediately. Gradually they were persuaded to listen to reason, and, after I had served out four dozen and a half of my best champagne, the guests managed to get to their rooms and dress. But nothing could induce them to stop in that hotel an
hour longer than was necessary, and by ten o'clock that morning the last one had started for San Francisco. Of course, nobody paid me anything, but I was only too glad to get off without being sued for damages. In the course of the following night the hotel took fire and was burnt to the ground. I never knew how the fire originated, but I always suspected that the engineer knew something about it, though he never called on me and offered to explain.

"I never rebuilt the hotel, for the reason that I suspected that my luck had begun to turn, and that the sooner I retired from the hotel-keeping business the better. All the same, I maintain that the idea of a revolving hotel was a mighty good one. Some day these Swiss hotel-keepers will get hold of that idea, and build all their hotels in accordance with it. Then the travelling public will give them all the credit for the invention, and not a soul except you and me, and the surviving members of the De Hopkins gang, will remember that Starkweather's Circular Hotel was the first revolving hotel that the world ever saw, and that it pretty near revolved the souls out of sixty-three personally-conducted tourists, including Professor De Hopkins."
JOHNSTON'S ADVENTURE.

I know this story is true, for Johnston told it to me himself, and he has not imagination enough to invent an untruth. That is the reason why he failed both as a journalist and a politician, and has now become a writer of thoughtful and didactic novels. It is a pursuit for which he is admirably adapted, and he naturally feels rather proud that he is producing books which are "literature," and not books which only amuse and interest the reader.

We had been speaking of the passion of the Americans for economizing time, and I mentioned that Americans frequently carry in their pockets cards bearing sententious inscriptions designed for the reproof and instruction of bores and other wasters of other people's time.

Johnston smiled grimly and said, "I know all about that. A friend of mine who had been in Chicago brought me a specimen card with the words 'I am deaf and dumb' printed on it. He told me that if you should attempt to enter into conversation with a fellow-passenger in a Chicago tram, he
would very probably present you with the card in question, as a delicate hint that he wanted to be left in peace.

"'I am going down to Warwickshire to-morrow,' I said," continued Johnston, "'to spend a few days with Scoble, and I'll take this card with me. If some one insists on talking to me when I am reading my paper, I'll try what handing him the card will do.' You see, I was rather pleased with the idea. Those Americans are always inventing clever things, and I thought that this system of checking conversation might prove to be just the thing to satisfy a great public want.

"You remember Scoble, no doubt. Good-hearted old chap; a little dull and tiresome, perhaps, but honest and sincere as a man can be. By the way, why is it that when you say that a man is honest and sincere you always mean that he is rather tiresome? It's like saying of a girl that she is a person of the most admirable character. When a man says that, you know that the girl must be painfully ugly. However, that hasn't anything to do with my trip to Warwickshire.

"I took the train at Euston, travelling second-class; for in those days the third-class carriages were wholly given up to third-class people. There was nobody in my compartment, and for a moment I hesitated about getting into it, lest some solitary woman, or
some drunken or crazy man, should take the compartment and bring upon me those varied dangers of which a nervous traveller is always thinking. Sure enough, just as we were about to start, a woman, who had very nearly missed the train, got in with the help of the guard—for the train was already slowly moving. It was, of course, too late for me to think of changing my carriage, and I therefore buried myself in my newspaper, and tried to think that all would go well.

"My fellow-passenger was a fine-looking woman of about thirty. The heat of the day and the excitement of catching the train had given her a florid colour, and I could see that the desire of condemning the weather and exposing the wickedness of cabmen was strong within her. When a woman is travelling and something goes wrong with her, she feels an imperative necessity of confiding her grievance to the first available person, no matter who that person may be. I saw that this woman was on the point of speaking to me, and not knowing who she was, or what her intentions might be, I was frightened. I know very well that I am absurdly nervous when shut up with a strange woman, but I cannot help it. The companies ought to put on carriages for men only, or else provide trustworthy companions for unprotected male passengers.

"Presently the woman caught my eye, and said,
'I beg your pardon, but will you tell me the exact time? My cabman must have taken a full hour to drive from South Kensington to Euston Square, and I'm perfectly sure he must have been drunk and taken the wrong road. Cabmen are such a nuisance, and there is no redress, you know. As for driving to a police-station, no lady likes to do that, and even when she does, it's very little satisfaction she gets. Only the other day a friend of mine——'

"But here I handed the woman the Chicago card which I had received the day before.

"She read it, and then said, 'Oh, indeed! So sorry. Pray excuse me,' and then relapsed into silence, while I resumed my newspaper, and congratulated myself on the efficacy of the American plan of dealing with railway bores.

"It is true my conscience did give me an occasional twinge, for the distinction between telling a lie and handing a person a ready-made lie printed on a card was not very perceptible. I asked myself whether in giving the woman a card with the words, 'I am deaf and dumb' I had not been guilty of lying, as certainly as I should have been if I had told her the same thing in so many words. However, I was so rejoiced at getting rid of my fellow-passenger's importunities that I decided to postpone all examination into the moral qualities of my act until arriving at the end of my journey."
"At Willesden Junction another passenger got in. This time it was a young lady who was evidently expected by the elder lady, for the latter had filled the entire carriage window with her buxom form, and waved a frantic handkerchief, from the moment that the train drew up at the station. The two ladies kissed each other after the manner of their sex, and immediately engaged in earnest conversation. At first the younger lady spoke in a rather low tone of voice, so as to avoid making me a listener to the conversation; but the other remarked in a loud tone, 'Oh, you needn't mind that man. He's stone deaf, and dumb besides, so we can talk just as if we were at home together.' The new-comer looked rather curiously at me, and then the two began to discuss family affairs.

"The train was not to stop again before reaching Rugby. Already the two women had spoken of things which they would never have mentioned in the presence of a stranger whom they imagined to be capable of hearing them. What they would next say in their fancied security no one could foresee. I found myself an involuntary eavesdropper, without the possibility of withdrawing from the painful situation. If I were to warn the ladies that I could hear perfectly well everything that they were saying, what would they think of my conduct in carrying about with me the false statement that I was deaf and dumb? They would undoubtedly take me either
for an unusual kind of lunatic, or for some new kind of criminal, and in either case I should be in a terrible predicament. And then the new-comer was so pretty, so gentle, and such a thoroughly nice girl in appearance, that I could not bear to annoy her by saying, 'I'm not deaf and dumb, and I've overheard everything you have said.' No, I couldn't do that, and there was evidently nothing left for me to do except to try to distract my attention by doggedly reading, so as to overhear as little as possible of the conversation.

"By-and-by my attention was aroused in spite of myself by hearing the elder lady mention my name. 'You see,' she said, 'I had to come down to-day because John has asked that tiresome Johnston to spend a week with us, and of course it wouldn't do for me to be away.'

"'But, auntie,' said the other, 'how do you know that he is tiresome, if you have never seen him?'

"'I know it, for one thing, because John's friends always are tiresome. It does seem as if he deliberately selected the most stupid men he could find and asked them down to Greencroft, just to make life a burden to me. And then, my dear, for another thing, I've tried to read this detestable Johnston's books. Anything more stupid and silly you can't possibly imagine.'

"'Is he young or old?' asked the girl.
"'I'm sure I don't know. He isn't married, for no woman would marry such a tiresome person.'

"'Who knows but what I shall marry him myself?' replied the young lady. 'I like dull people and people whom nobody else likes. What will you give me, auntie, to take him off your hands while he is at Greencroft?'

"'I'm sure I should be awfully obliged to you,' replied the aunt. 'He couldn't possibly have come at a more awkward time. I wanted to stay in town until Monday, and then I wanted to begin house-cleaning. Instead of that I have to come back today, and of course there can be no house-cleaning until this Johnston goes. Goodness only knows when he will go, for I feel convinced that he is one of those persons who never know when they are in the way. By-the-by, he may be in this very train, though I rather think he would take the ten o'clock train.'

"So I was actually travelling in the same carriage with Scoble's wife and niece, and the former was dreading my arrival at her house and looking upon me as a tiresome nuisance. What would she say when, on reaching Greencroft, she should find that the man whom she had supposed to be deaf and dumb was the undesirable Johnston himself, and that he had overheard all her remarks regarding him? Of course it was now utterly impossible that I should
either go to her house or disclose my identity to her in any way. I would get out at Rugby, where we were to change for Greencroft, and would wire to John that I had been recalled by important business, and must postpone the pleasure of meeting him and his wife until some other day. But then there was my portmanteau, which was in the van and labelled for Greencroft. I could not afford to abandon it, for in it was the manuscript of a story that I had promised to finish that week, and I had taken down with me for the purpose of finishing it. No! I must go on to Greencroft, rescue my portmanteau, and run the risk of meeting John on the platform. I could, however, escape from Mrs. Scoble and her companion at Rugby, by getting into another carriage. We should be at Rugby in an hour, and I must endure that hour as best I could.

"The two ladies talked on, but happily seemed to forget the existence of the unfortunate Johnston. Once Mrs. Scoble came to the window where I was sitting, to point out something to her niece, and the swaying of the carriage nearly threw her on my lap.

"'That poor man seemed dreadfully frightened,' said the niece, after her aunt had returned to her seat. 'He seemed to think you were going to sit down on him.'

"'He does seem a timid Miss Nancy,' said the aunt. 'I don't quite like his looks, though. Some of those
mutes have terrible tempers. He is certainly pain-
fully ugly, isn't he?'

"I did not hear the niece's reply to this compli-
ment; but Mrs. Scoble continued, after another
glance at me: 'There is a sneaky, dishonest look
about the man. I shouldn't be the least bit afraid
of him; but I shouldn't be surprised if he were the
sort of man that would carry off one's bag or one's
umbrella, and then pretend it was a mistake if any
one caught him at it.'

"Things were growing more and more pleasant.
I already knew that Mrs. Scoble regarded the
Johnston whom she supposed she had not seen as
a nuisance; and now it appeared that she suspected
the Johnston whom she had seen of being a sneak
thief. Luckily, we were nearly due at Rugby, and I
should soon be able to see the last of my unconscious
tormentors.

"Just then the elder lady began one of those
nervous and hurried searches for her purse which
women when travelling are so prone to make. I
certainly do not blame them. If I did not know
where my pocket was or whether, in case I should
discover the way to it, I should find anything in it,
I should doubtless make half-hourly searches for
my purse, and exhibit a good deal of agitation in
the process. Mrs. Scoble found the entrance to
her pocket after prolonged investigation, and then
announced, with much alarm, that her purse was missing. "There are nearly thirty pounds in it, my dear, beside my railway ticket! I am perfectly sure I had it in my pocket after I got into the train."

"'Perhaps it is in your bag; or you may have put it into your bosom,' suggested the niece.

"Mrs. Scoble denied that either of these alternatives was possible; but nevertheless she searched every place in which a feminine purse could by any possibility have concealed itself, without the least success.

"'It is gone!' she finally exclaimed; 'and I am sure that fellow in the corner picked my pocket when I was looking out of his window.'

"'He could not have done that,' replied the niece, 'for I was looking at him at the very time, and he never once took his hands or his eyes away from his newspaper.'

"'My dear child! Do you suppose you are quick enough to watch the motions of a professional pickpocket? That man has my purse, I am perfectly sure of it; and I shall give him in charge the moment we get to Rugby.'

"It was clear that I must bolt from the carriage the instant the train reached the Rugby platform, and before a policeman could be called. The train was already slowing, and I hastily gathered up my rug and umbrella, and prepared to move toward the door.
"'No, you don't, my man!' said Mrs. Scoble, rising, and taking possession of the door by the simple process of thrusting half of her ample person through the window.

'I saw at once that the game was up. I could not drag her out of the way, and she would never let me pass unless I were to pass into the arms of a policeman. I sat down again with the calmness of despair, and awaited the coming of the constable, whom Mrs. Scoble's excited gestures had summoned.

'‘That man has picked my pocket,' said Mrs. Scoble, as soon as the policeman opened the door. 'Search him, and you'll find my purse in his possession. It is marked "A. D. S.," and has four five-pound notes, two sovereigns, and some change in it, beside my ticket.'

'What do you say to this?' the policeman asked me, evidently impressed with the certainty of my guilt.

'Simply that it isn't true,' I replied. 'I know nothing of the lady's purse, and I can easily convince you that I am a respectable person.'

'My goodness!' exclaimed my accuser. 'Why, the fellow isn't deaf and dumb after all! Constable, he pretended to be deaf and dumb. That shows what a scoundrel he is!'

'You'll have to come along with me,' said the constable. 'You'd better come quiet, for there's no
good making a row. You'll have to come along too, madam, and make a charge against him.'

"I rose up to follow the policeman, and my foot struck against something that was lying on the floor of the carriage. I stooped and picked it up. It was the missing purse.

"'Is that your purse, madam?' I asked, as I held it up. 'You must have dropped it when you were looking out of my window.'

"'Oh, I dessay!' replied the constable. 'Of course you didn't drop it yourself when you found you were caught! Come along, now, and don't try no games on me.'

"'Wait just a minute!' said the niece. 'Auntie, I know you dropped it. I remember now you had it in your hand when you went to the window, and it was your left hand, and the man couldn't possibly have touched it.'

"'Are you sure of that, miss?' asked the policeman.

"'Perfectly sure. The gentleman is in no way to blame, and I'm sure you won't think of arresting him. Auntie, do say you know it is a mistake. Think how cruel it is to make an accusation unless it is certainly true.'

"Mrs. Scoble opened her purse, and found its contents undisturbed. 'I am afraid,' she began, 'that there is a mistake, and that the man did not take the purse. Still, I do think——'
"' Very well, ma'am. Then I understand you don't make any charge?' asked the constable.

"'None whatever,' hastily exclaimed the niece. 'We are very sorry to have troubled you.' Then, turning to me, she added, 'And I am sure we are awfully sorry that you were put to the least annoyance.'

"I thought annoyance was rather an inadequate term, considering all the circumstances; but I was so delighted with my escape, and the way in which the girl had come to my rescue, that I said, and fancied at the moment that I meant it, that it wasn't of the slightest consequence.

"'Why did he tell us he was deaf and dumb? That's what I should like to know!' said the still implacable Mrs. Scoble.

"'I wouldn't advise him to play that game any more,' said the policeman, severely. 'Let me tell you, sir, that if you travel under false pretences, you needn't be surprised if you find yourself in trouble. You'll have to give me your name and address, in case anything more comes of this.'

"I gave him my address as soon as I could get away from the carriage, and at the same time I gave him a surreptitious five shillings, and asked him not to give my name to Mrs. Scoble. Then I got into a third-class carriage at the very head of the train, and prepared to run the final risk of meeting my friend John Scoble at the Greencroft station. I
knew that if he saw me I should either have to go with him to his house, or to tell him the whole story. He was one of those exasperating men who always insist upon having everything fully explained; and I knew that he would not be contented with my mere assertion that business made it imperative that I should return at once to London. As for going to his house, I felt that I should infinitely prefer to go to jail. To meet his wife after she had said that I was a nuisance, and stupid, and looked like a sneak thief, would have been bad enough; but to meet her after she had tried to have me arrested for picking her pocket was more than the bravest of men could have dreamed of doing. If I could only avoid Scoble, and so get back to town unrecognized, all might yet be well. My only regret would be that I could not properly thank that noble girl who had stood between me and the policeman.

"I saw Scoble on the platform as the train drew up at Greencroft; but he did not see me, for I had concealed myself behind the curtains of the carriage. I watched him until his back was turned, and then sprang out and bolted into the cloak-room, which was close at hand. I had hoped to remain there until Scoble had left the station, but was disappointed. The porter in attendance, finding that I had no particular business with him, immediately suspected me of designs upon the property under
his charge, and told me that I must not stay in the cloak-room. I tried bribery, but the action only confirmed his suspicions, and he roughly ordered me to go about my business, or he would have me arrested.

"There was still one more chance. If Scoble should happen not to see me emerging from the cloak-room I might gain the shelter of the refreshment-room, where, of course, no sane person would dream of looking for me. When I came out on the platform again, Scoble was nowhere to be seen, having escorted his wife and niece to the carriage, which had been waiting just outside the station. I made a dash for the refreshment-room, and, turning up my coat-collar and pulling my hat down over my eyes, I frantically began to eat sandwiches, trusting that no one could recognize me in that improbable occupation.

"I stopped in that harbour of refuge for fully fifteen minutes, and ruined my digestion for life, as I am now convinced. Then, feeling sure that the coast must be clear, I went out on the platform and walked directly into the arms of Scoble, who was waiting for the next train, under the impression that I must have missed the one in which I actually came.

"'Why, here you are, after all!' he exclaimed. 'Where on earth have you been?'}
"I murmured something about a telegram that I had just received calling me back to London; and then, seeing that Scoble was standing in open-mouthed amazement, I pulled myself together enough to say that I must go instantly back to town. 'It's a matter of life and death, you know,' I added. 'I just wired that I would take the next train.'

"'Who's ill? What's the matter? Let me see the telegram,' cried Scoble.

"I made a pretence of looking in my pocket, and then replied that I had lost the telegram, but that it was from my uncle, who had died suddenly.

"'He died suddenly, and then wired to you!' said the stupefied Scoble. 'I must see that telegram. Come along to the office, and they'll give us a copy of it.' So saying, he dragged me to the telegraph office, and asked to see the message that I had just received.

"'What name, sir?' asked the operator.

"Scoble told him that it was 'Johnston.'

"'No telegram has been received here to-day for any party of that name,' replied the operator.

"'But here is Johnston himself,' exclaimed Scoble. 'He received it not fifteen minutes ago, and has been sending an answer.'

"'Never saw the gentleman before,' said the official coldly. 'Never gave him no telegram, and never received none from him.'
"'Johnston!' cried my friend, 'what does this mean? Have you gone stark mad?'

"'I'll write and explain as soon as I get back to town,' I replied. 'I can't tell you now. The blow is so awfully sudden. Don't take any notice of me. I am subject to this sort of thing.'

"'He's subject to have his uncle die suddenly, and then wire to him!' said my friend, calling upon the universe in general to help him grapple with this amazing statement. 'Johnston! You're not well. Come straight home with me, and I'll send for the medical man.'

"What I might next have said I have no idea, for a new misery overwhelmed me. The niece had returned, and was standing looking in bewilderment first at me and then at her uncle. Suddenly she took in the full meaning of the situation, and, after saying to me, 'Is this Mr. Johnston?' burst into uncontrollable laughter.

"There never was anything so contagious and irresistible as that laugh since the world began; and the flash of the girl's mischievous eyes would have made John Calvin smile even in the act of burning a heretic. I could not help it, but in another moment I found myself joining in the girl's laughter, while Scoble stood and gazed at us with an almost frightened expression.

"The niece was the first to speak. 'Uncle,' she
said, 'there has been a mistake that would have been perfectly awful if Mr. Johnston had not been a real humourist, and seen the funny side of it. Auntie has driven home, for she could not wait any longer, and we will all three walk home together, and you shall know all about it.'

"I hesitated for a second, and then said to myself that I would meet fifty aunts sooner than say goodbye to the niece before I had convinced her that I was not always stupid, and that I could sometimes be other than a nuisance. I not only walked home with her, and faced the dismayed and repentant aunt, but I stayed my full week at Greencroft. When I came away I was engaged to be married, and had already begun to call Mrs. Scoble 'aunt,' partly to show her that I bore no malice, and partly by way of emphasizing the triumph that the man whom she had called stupid had won."
"P'TITE MÈRE."

Nature, spelt with a capital N, means any place where a man can wear a blue flannel shirt and dispense with coat and braces. There are many men who believe that they have a profound love of Nature, when they really have nothing more than a yearning for flannel shirts. To have a genuine love of actual Nature, to understand the glances of the meditative river and the quarrelsome rapid, to know what the voice of the wind says and to comprehend the subtle hints that the cloud-shadows convey, to grasp the meaning of the spray of sunshine that filters through the forest leaves and lies in bright dew or larger drops or big splashes of light on the moss and the pine needles, require education and experience and mental capacity which ninety-nine of every hundred of self-proclaimed lovers of Nature lack. The men who love the actual Nature, and have clasped her in their arms, warm and palpitating with life, are shy of talking about her. They leave that sort of thing to those to whom
a lonely forest and a blue flannel shirt are equally devoid of anything that is sacred.

Gilbert Fulton imagined that he loved Nature, but he deceived himself. He loved the freedom of the woods, but not the woods themselves. It was good to get away from the starched collars and dress coats of civilization, and to live for a time in flannels and solitude. The feeling that he was absolutely alone and self-dependent gave him a sense of superiority to other men which he could not feel when he was with them. Though he did not know it, egotism had a large share in sending him on his annual wanderings in the Canadian forest.

One summer Fulton had taken his canoe to the head of one of the rivers that flow from the north down into the St. Lawrence. Three lumbermen had carried the canoe and its cargo, and when it was launched on the Batiscan they left Fulton to pursue alone his projected trip down to the mouth of the river. He was thoroughly accustomed to his boat, and was an accomplished woodsman. Nevertheless there was a good deal of danger in his attempt to descend a tortuous and rapid stream. If the recent rains had given sufficient depth of water in the rapids, the canoe might reach its destination. If not, Fulton would find himself cast away in a virtually impassable forest, with small chance of ever making his way back to civilization.
His first day's journey showed him that the stream was at nearly half flood, and he made his way without accident down long stretches of rapids where there was an average depth of from four to five feet. The river, however, was full of boulders and ledges of rock, some of which were above the surface while others were invisible, though their situation was generally betrayed by the small whirlpools just below them. These rocks were so numerous that it was at times very difficult to find a practicable channel, and frequently Fulton found it necessary to leap overboard in order to float the stranded canoe, or to keep her from capsizing. Near noon of the second day the canoe struck on a sunken rock in the middle of a fierce rapid, and as Fulton sprang overboard his foot slipped on the rocky bottom of the river, and the bones of his right leg snapped just below the knee.

The canoe, which was built of stout basswood, remained firmly fixed on the rock where it lay, and Fulton with infinite pain managed to scramble into it, and lay for some time in a faint. When his senses returned, the full peril of his situation was before him. He could not manage his boat, and he could not leave it. There was no prospect that any help would come to him, and without it he must die of starvation. He cursed the folly that had led him into this terrible trap. What an idiot he had been
to undertake so mad a journey, when he might have remained peacefully at home! What was Nature to him, that he should sacrifice his life for the imaginary pleasure of travelling alone in the wilderness! The turmoil and roar of the rapid shaped itself into words, as it will often do in the night when a man sleeps by its side. "You must die! You must die! You must die!" it seemed to say, with ceaseless iteration. The sharp pain of his broken limb was dominated by the horror of dying alone and by the most frightful of deaths.

Fulton was not a religious man. The forest had never spoken to him of its Creator, as it speaks to men who really know Nature and love her. For once, however, he prayed earnestly. He did not pray with any real belief that there was any one who would hear and answer him, and the words that he repeated were to him little more than the charm that a superstitious savage might have used. The only prayer that he could remember was the one at the beginning of the Communion Service,—the one containing the petition "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts." It was hardly appropriate to his situation, but he had learned it by heart when he was a child, and it suddenly came back to him now. Over and over again he repeated the words, imploringly, passionately, but all the time despairingly.

He had not thought of the heat of the day so long
as he had been occupied with his boat; but now, as he lay on his back with his face to the cloudless sky, he began to find the blaze of light and heat intolerable. His head ached fiercely, and even in his hopeless situation the dread of sunstroke came upon him. He dipped one hand over the gunwale, and threw water over his head and chest. For a moment it was a relief, but presently he found himself shivering as with a chill, though his head was as hot as ever.

Suddenly he cried at the top of his voice "Au secours!" and continued to call with a rhythmic regularity that soon became almost mechanical. All the time he knew that the chances that any one would hear him were not more than one in a thousand; but he felt himself going mad, and the sound of his own voice was better than the monotonous and unbroken sound of the rapid. Soon his parched throat made his voice hoarse. It grew weaker, and after a while he was silent with exhaustion. His eyes were closed in order to lessen the glare of the light reflected from the pitiless sky. He lay motionless and silent, as if he were already dead.

How long he had thus been lying he could not have told, but he was finally aroused by a slight jar, as if something had struck the canoe. He opened his eyes. Close alongside was another, a birch canoe. A young girl was standing erect in it, holding it
firmly against the rush of the water by a pole which she pressed against the bottom of the river.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, in the French of the Canadian habitant, "you are not dead. What is the matter? Why did you call for help?"

"I have broken my leg!" Fulton replied. "For God's sake don't leave me, or I shall die here."

"Be easy," said the girl; "I shall not leave you, but I must think what is to be done."

She stepped into Fulton's canoe, and sat down holding her own canoe by the gunwale to prevent it from drifting away. Presently she said, "There is only one way. We must go down the rapid so that I can get you ashore. Keep quiet and trust to me."

Fulton was feeling by this time excessively weak. He simply murmured "Thank you." He saw the girl cast off her own boat and, taking the paddle in her hand, step overboard and float the canoe with a vigorous push. Then she climbed deftly in again, and he saw that she understood what to do and had the courage to try to do it. He closed his eyes again, and fell to repeating the prayer "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts," for he knew that he was still in imminent peril, and that if the canoe was capsized in the rapid he was a dead man.

The rapid must have been several miles long, for although the speed of the current was terrific it was a long time before smooth water was reached.
The girl managed the canoe with a skill which showed that she was a true daughter of the wilderness. She knew at a glance where the channel lay, and she could read perfectly the surface signs that only one expert in running rapids ever comes to know. At last the swift, uneasy motion of the boat ceased. The roar of the rapid began to lessen, and then the canoe touched the shore with a gentle shock. The girl leaped out and secured it. "You must wait here for a moment," she said, "until I have a bed for you. I shall not be long." So saying, she picked up Fulton's hatchet and left him.

Now that the danger of a solitary death by starvation was gone, Fulton's courage ought to have returned to him. But the pain in his leg, the aching of his head, the thirst that was beginning to be a torture, and the nausea that prostrated him, made him weaker and more incapable of courage than he had been while stranded in the rapid. Fortunately he had not long to wait for the girl's return. She brought with her a collection of rude splints, and she hunted among Fulton's traps until she had found material of which to make bandages. Then, standing in the shallow water by the side of the canoe, with her woollen petticoat turned halfway up the leg to escape the wet, she proceeded to set the broken leg with infinite tenderness of touch, and yet with a thoroughness which few surgeons could have
excelled. This done, she took Fulton in her arms as easily as if he had been a child, and carried him to where she had made a bed of pine branches covered with one of his blankets. Then she gave him some water with a dash of brandy from his flask, and told him to go to sleep while she should make him a "lean-to" and prepare supper.

Sleep was out of question, so much pain was the man suffering; but before the "lean-to" or shelter against the rain was finished, Fulton was in a high fever, and babbling with a delirium. Either the seeds of the disease had been lurking unsuspected in his system, and the time for their development had arrived, or the shock which he had sustained had brought on the fever which had now fastened on him. Whatever may have been the cause, the effect was sufficiently pronounced, and it was ten days before Fulton was conscious of his surroundings.

He awoke early one morning, wasted, weak, but sane and free from pain. He found himself lying under a rude shelter open on one side and commanding a charming view of the river on the bank of which the shelter was built. In a quiet pool that was close at hand he saw the gleam of white shoulders and the shadow of floating hair. The girl was swimming in the pool, unconscious that he was watching her. The sun was about three hours' high, and the shade in which Fulton lay was cool and
dewy. A squirrel was chattering and scolding from a limb above Fulton's head, and a field-mouse was rustling amid the dead leaves close behind him. There was no song of birds to be heard in the forest, for the hour of the morning concert was long since past. The noise of the rapids was little more than a distant musical murmur. For a moment Fulton could not remember where he was, but suddenly it all came back to him. A girl had rescued him and brought him to this resting-place. She was a good girl, he thought, and a drowsy sense of happiness floated over him.

It was odd that the pain in his leg had so suddenly ceased, and a fear came to him that the limb had mortified. He moved his arm in order to push down the blanket and look at his leg, but he found that he hardly had strength enough to lift his hand. He saw, too, that his arm was strangely thin. Just then the girl appeared beside him, and with a cry of joy said, "At last you are better."

"What has been the matter with me?" he asked, and his voice sounded to him as if it came from afar.

"You have had the fever, but it is gone now," replied the girl, taking his hand. "Your hand is quite cool. Don't try to talk. I will bring you some broth, and in a day or two you will be stronger."

"It is you who have saved me," said Fulton. "Tell
me your name, and put your hand here where I can kiss it."

She told him that her name was Jeanne; and then, instead of giving him her hand, she bent down and kissed him on the lips. "Go to sleep, my boy," she said, as she drew the blanket around his shoulders. "You belong to me now: I am your p'tite mère, and you must do what I say."

She was small and slight of figure, like most of the French Canadian girls, but he had had reason to know that she had the muscular strength of a man. Her features were regular, and instead of the repressed, silent look of the eyes, so common with girls of her class, her eyes were bright and soft, and spoke of tenderness and passion. Her hair, loosened after the bath, hung in black clouds below her waist. She apparently only wore two garments, a chemise and a petticoat, the latter of red flannel, much worn and stained. A glance at her feet showed that she had worn shoes seldom if ever. Fulton saw that she was unusually pretty, and she seemed so much at home in the woods that the fact that she must be of extremely humble origin did not force itself on his attention.

There is no aristocracy in the wilderness. There a man is reckoned at his worth, and the externals of his life are not considered. Judged by the customs of civilization Jeanne was an ignorant little savage.
In the woods her strength, her skill, her kindliness, were the only qualities to be considered. "There is no one like her," said Fulton to himself; "I can never repay her for what she has done."

Days passed. The sick man grew slowly better, except that his strength did not return as rapidly as it should. Ten days after the fever left him, he was still lying on his pine bed, unable to rise. He suffered no pain, and his leg was now well knit together; but either because the food that he ate was unsuited to him, or because of some hidden reason, the weakness clung obstinately to him. Jeanne gave him trout, wood-pigeons and squirrels, for she was expert with both gun and rod, and could cook as well as the best hunter in Canada; but Fulton could do little more than taste the dishes she prepared. He was uneasy about the girl, for he could not see what was to be the end of her abandonment of home, made as it had been without explanation, and for the sake of a stranger.

She readily told him her history. She lived with her father alone in a house near the place where he had met with his accident. There were no neighbours within a hundred miles. Her father was a trapper, and once a year he carried his skins to Quebec, leaving her entirely alone during his absence, and returning with enough whisky to last him, with what he considered moderation, until the next season.
When he was sober he treated her with careless indifference; when drunk he beat her. She had never seen another woman in her whole life, so far as she could remember, and the few men whom she had seen were of the same class as her father. She had never learned anything except the lore of the woods, and had never been baptized, nor spoken with a priest.

"What will your father say when you go home?" asked Fulton.

"When I go home?" she repeated. "But I am not going home. I am going with thee. Besides, how could I go home? One cannot force a canoe up the rapid, and there is no path through the woods. My boy must not be silly. It is necessary that he should get strong and come away from here: that is all that belongs to him."

"It is true that I must get away," said Fulton fretfully. "I shall never get strong here. Can't you take me down the river to some settlement?"

"That is the way we must go, unless we stay here for ever," said Jeanne. "Canoes have gone down to the end of the river, where there is a town, but then the water was higher than it is now. But thou art right; we must try it, and now that the leg is mended we will start at once."

So it was settled that in the morning Jeanne would try to take her patient down the river. It was not an
easy trip for a man who was quite helpless, for in all probability the canoe would be repeatedly capsized, even if nothing worse should happen. But the dense primeval forest was absolutely impassable, and the path down the rapid which Fulton had passed could not be retraced.

All that afternoon Fulton watched the girl preparing, in the intervals of other occupations, for their departure. She covered the bottom-board of the canoe with a soft bed of pine, and she stowed Fulton's cargo in such a way that the bow of the canoe would be much higher out of the water than the stern. She sang over her work in the strong, slow, nasal manner of the habitant. "What a pity the child is so hopelessly ignorant!" thought Fulton; "otherwise it might be possible to think of marrying her."

At night Jeanne slept under the lean-to between the sick man and the open side of the shelter. She seldom spoke after throwing herself on the pine branches, but fell asleep as quickly and soundly as an animal. This night, however, she was wakeful, and after a little she said, "My boy, art thou awake?"

"Yes, little mother," Fulton replied, giving her the name that she had once given herself when claiming her patient's obedience.

"Thou knowest I have never been down the river; and we may lose our boat on the way, and die. This place is surely a comfortable one. Why
should we leave it? Thou wilt be well after a while, and then we can build a house and live here for ever."

Why should he not do it? For a moment the idea did not seem an impossible one, but in another moment he saw that he should go mad with ennui if he attempted to live as a trapper in the depths of a Canadian forest. To be sure, he had gained an insight into nature as he lay on his sweet-scented bed in the open which he had never before had. He felt that he was a better man than he had been when he first launched his canoe on the river. Possibly the daily sight of Jeanne's innocence of heart had purified his own eyes. But what she proposed was clearly impossible.

"Little mother," he said, "thou knowest that I get no stronger. Unless I can get to a doctor, I shall die. Take me down the river, and then we will think of the future."

She bade him good night, and was silent. Long into the night he lay thinking of the future. What was he to do with the girl in case they succeeded in escaping together? She had saved his life. Of that there could be no question; neither could there be any doubt as to the devotion with which she had nursed and cared for him. And now she seemed to think that he belonged to her, and evidently never for a moment dreamed that they would be parted.
What could he do? He might marry her; but in that case how could he possibly introduce her to his friends? and what would his family say to this unkempt savage? To marry would mean the abandonment of civilization on his part—the sinking to the girl's own level. It was impossible. If he were going to marry her, he might as well accede to her proposal of stopping where they were and abandoning the world altogether.

Then there remained but two courses. He might reward her with money and send her back to her father. Yet he knew that she would look upon the money as an insult, and upon his conduct as a heartless and brutal abandonment of her. Could he reward her in this fashion for what she had done for him? He swore that, come what would, he would not do this.

The third course was to take the girl as his mistress, and live with her until one or the other should tire of it. This seemed feasible; for Jeanne knew nothing of the laws of morality, and would unhesitatingly consent to any arrangement that would keep them together. A month ago few scruples would have restrained Fulton, but now he saw things more clearly. He remembered how he had first seen the girl looking in his face as he lay fainting in his canoe, and how the sight of her had kindled hope in his despair. And then there came to him once
more the words of the prayer that he had been using during those miserable hours when death stood watching for him: "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts." "By Heaven," he thought, "if I do this child an injury, there will be no hell hot enough for me."

He slept little that night, and in the morning Jeanne saw that he seemed paler and weaker than ever. She hastened her preparations for the canoe voyage, and before the heat of the day had fairly begun she was paddling down the river, with Fulton lying on a bed of pine sprays in the bottom of the canoe.

The water was much lower than it had been when Fulton first embarked on the Batiscan, and it was falling daily. This of course made the rapids more difficult and dangerous than they would have been in time of flood. Jeanne knew nothing of the route, except that if she could follow it long enough she would finally come to a town. At the head of each rapid she would stop the canoe and study carefully the most promising channel, and then, with the skill of an old boatman, she would guide the little craft through the boiling waters. The journey lasted a week, and many times a day it was necessary that Jeanne should leap overboard into the shallow water to save the canoe from capsizing. Some of the rapids could not be run, on account of the shallowness of
the water and the prodigality with which rocks were strewn even in the deepest channels. Through these rapids Jeanne waded, holding on to the stern of the canoe. The water seldom came above her knees, but it was bitterly cold, and the rocks bruised her sadly. Her feet were blue with cold, and bruised and cut with stones, when she climbed into the canoe at the foot of a rapid; and the bottom-board, where she crouched with the paddle in her hand, became stained with blood.

There was abundance of tinned provisions in the canoe, for Jeanne had not ventured to use these while Fulton was delirious, but had depended upon the fish and game that she provided. At night she drew the canoe ashore, and as it was nearly flat-bottomed, it made a comfortable sleeping-place for the sick man. In spite of the hard work and the always present danger—for the canoe was the only means of escape from the wilderness, and its loss would have been fatal—Jeanne was always bright and gay. No mother could have been more tender to her charge, and no wife more loving. Fulton slept much of the time, for he was too weak to talk, and the motion of the canoe lulled him to sleep. He had learned to put complete faith in P'tite mère, and looked to her for everything, as a child looks to its mother.

On the seventh day they reached the town near
the junction of the river with the St. Lawrence. Jeanne made the canoe fast just above the town, at a place where a road approached close to the stream, and then went in search of an inn, a doctor, and a waggon. She found all of these, and before long Fulton was lying on a comfortable bed, and the doctor had assured him that his recovery would be rapid. The innkeeper looked with suspicion at the wild figure of P'tite mère, but the doctor, at Fulton’s request, arranged that the girl should be accepted as his nurse, and should remain with him.

That evening Jeanne sat by the side of Fulton’s bed, but she did not hold his hand as she was accustomed to do, and for the first time since he had known her Fulton saw that she was sad.

“What is it, P’tite mère?” he asked. “You ought to be gay, now that we are safe at last.”

“I have seen other women to-day,” the girl replied. “They are beautiful, and wear such wonderful clothes. And they look at me as if I was a beast. I think you will be ashamed to let them see you with me.”

“How could I ever be ashamed of you, who have been so brave and good?” said Fulton; but, in spite of himself, there was the ring of insincerity in his voice, and Jeanne felt it.

“You cannot help it,” she continued. “I wish we had been drowned in the river. No, it is not true! I am glad you are not drowned, but I do not like to
have you ashamed of me. You loved me up yonder, and I am afraid you will not love me here."

"I should be a brute if I did not love my *P'tite mère*, who has saved my worthless life," returned Fulton. "I tell you what we will do. You shall go for a year to a convent in Quebec, and there the good sisters will make you like the women you saw to-day. Would you not like that?"

"Will you come too?" asked Jeanne.

"That would be impossible," answered Fulton. "Men are not admitted to convents."

"Then I will not go," said Jeanne. "I could not leave thee for a year, and I know very well that they could never make me like the other women. If thou art not ashamed of me, we can be married to-morrow, and I will be always with my boy."

She waited for the answer with a smile on her lips and an eager look in her eyes. Fulton knew not what to say. He could see no way out of the *impasse* into which he had brought himself. Finally he said, "I think I am too tired to talk any more now. To-morrow we will speak of this again. Now I must try to sleep."

Jeanne's face fell. The eager look died out of her eyes. She said nothing, however, but quietly arranged the pillows, and, saying good night to Fulton, slipped out of the room. Later in the night he awoke suddenly. There was no light in the room, but he
could have sworn that some one was standing beside his bed.

"Is that you, Jeanne?" he asked.

"It is I," she replied. "I could not sleep without kissing thee. Forgive me for being so foolish."

She bent over him, and took him in her arms. She drew his head against her bosom, and held him for a moment. Then she kissed him—first his lips in a long, passionate kiss, and then his forehead.

"Good night, my boy," she murmured; and he was alone in the dark.

The next morning Fulton was surprised to find the wife of the innkeeper bringing in his breakfast.

"Where is Jeanne—my nurse?" he asked.

"She has run away—vanished," said the woman. "This morning we found her room empty, and she had not slept in her bed. She was a wild creature, and I suppose she has gone back to her woods."

Three days later the body of P'tite mère was thrown up by the river, some twenty miles below the town.
I was young, in perfect health, broad-shouldered and athletic, an art student, and living in Paris. I imagine that I must have been very happy, though I was undoubtedly painfully short of money. The latter circumstance compelled me to dine at a cheap restaurant in the Latin quarter, where the food was of doubtful origin, and the wine a shameless impertinence. However, I had the digestion of an ostrich, and the appetite of a schoolboy, and the restaurant seemed to me a fairly satisfactory place. I was surprised one evening, when I was dining in my small way, to find two Americans sitting at a table next to the one which I always occupied. They were evidently not art students, and their appearance did not indicate that they were in financial difficulties. Why in these circumstances they should patronize Mère Picard's restaurant was something of a mystery.

Presently I became aware that one of the Americans was endeavouring to explain to the
waiter, in the French of Chicago, that he was not satisfied with his bill. I thought it only civil to suggest to a fellow-countryman in linguistic difficulties, that I would take pleasure in acting as an interpreter. He thanked me profusely, and when I had convinced him that his bill was quite right, he asked permission for himself and his friend to join me at my table over our after-dinner cigars.

The man with whom I had spoken was tall and thin, with a closely shaved face, and an eager, hatchet-shaped, cat-like cast of countenance. His companion was a much smaller man, with black hair and eyes, and black chin whiskers. He was well dressed, so far as the quality and cut of his clothes were concerned, but he was plainly one of those unfortunate men whose clothes can never be made to fit, and whom Nature designed to be the prey of the ready-made clothing merchant. In his shirt front the man wore large diamond studs, and his watch-chain was immensely heavy, and hung with a profusion of seals, rings, and other ornaments. His companion treated him with a curious mixture of servility and familiarity, both of which were apparently accepted with equal indifference. I thought I had seldom seen a more disagreeable-looking person. It was not merely that he was hopelessly ugly, but there was that in the sallow colour of his coarse skin, and the furtive look of his eye, which
inevitably suggested that he was physically and morally diseased.

"I reckon we'd better introduce ourselves," said the tall man, "and then we'll be quite comfortable. Might I go so far as to ask your name?"

I told him that my name was Norris.

"Then, Mr. Norris, let me introduce you to Mr. Silver—Mr. James H. Silver, of Nevada. You must know him well enough by reputation. Mr. Silver, let me make you acquainted with Mr. Norris. I can't tell you just where Mr. Norris hails from, but he's an American from way back, as you can see for yourself."

Mr. Silver and I bowed solemnly to one another, and he held out his hand to be shaken. I found his hand unpleasantly cold and moist, and dropped it as soon as possible. I knew perfectly well who Silver was. His reputation as an American millionaire, who had accumulated his enormous fortune by gambling on the stock market with loaded dice, had long ago reached Europe. As I looked at the miserable little villain I was quite certain that I would not accept ten times his wealth, at the price of accepting his physical and moral deformities.

"Come to think of it," said the tall man, "I haven't introduced myself. I hope, sir, you will excuse me. Here is my card, and I'm delighted to make your acquaintance."
The card was large and thick, and bore in printed capitals the following inscription:

ELEAZAR M. HOLT,

PRACTICAL MAHATMA.

No. 418, Rue de Berlin. Office hours from 10 to 12.

As soon as I had read the card Mr. Holt gravely shook hands with me, and remarked, "Now we'll have something to drink and enjoy ourselves. It's a comfort to meet somebody in this outlandish town who can speak the American language."

I had heard vaguely of Mahatmas, Theosophy, and Occultism, but I had never taken the slightest interest in the subject. However, I did not wish to seem unsocial, and so, merely for the sake of saying something, I asked Holt what a practical Mahatma might be.

"Well," replied the man, "you know those fools of Theosophists pretend that when a man has spent his life in learning to be a Mahatma, he ought never to use his knowledge except to precipitate idiotic letters, and such-like nonsense. Now, I don't agree with them. I'm a plain business man. I studied to be a Mahatma, and when I got my degree I went to practising, so as to earn a living. Wouldn't I have been a fool to have spent seven years in Thibet, studying night and day, and never seeing as much
as the outside of a whisky bottle, if I had meant to keep my knowledge to myself, and never do anything with it? Sir! I'm no such person, and don't you forget it."

"Then you have really been in Thibet?" I asked.

"I went through the regular five years' course at the Central University of Thibet," replied Holt, "and I took a double first in Magic, ancient and modern, and in Applied Occultism. Then I took a post graduate course of two years more in Astral Chemistry. Why, sir! when I left the University they made me a first-class offer to stay as Professor of Magic, and Demonstrator of Astral Chemistry, but I said, 'Excuse me!' I'd had quite enough of Thibet; and as for the resident Mahatmas, they were a lot of old fogies, and I couldn't stand their society at any price. So I came here to Paris and put out my shingle as the only practising Mahatma in Europe. I'm going to close my office temporarily, however, for Mr. Silver wants my whole time, and when he wants a thing he generally gets it."

"Are you studying magic?" I asked of Silver.

"Yes, sir," he replied. "That is, I'm studying one particular branch of it. I can see that it may be made very useful in my business."

"He is learning to separate his astral body from
his natural body," said Holt. "He thinks it will come in handy in his Wall Street operations."

"I don't think I know what an astral body is," I remarked.

"I can tell you what it is in a very few words," said Holt. "You've got a physical body, haven't you? That's plain enough. Well, underneath your physical body is your astral body, which looks exactly like your physical body, but isn't subject to the laws of matter. For example, you can lie down on a sofa and send your astral body to Thibet. It'll reach there in half a second, see everything you want it to see, and come back again at any time you may fix. That's the way the Mahatmas are carrying out their scheme of University Extension. Once a week one of the Professors of the Central University of Thibet sent his astral body to London, and instructs a class of Theosophists. I don't approve of the scheme myself, for if a man wants to be a Mahatma he ought to go through the regular University course. This smattering of magic that you can learn by taking up the University Extension plan will do a man more harm than good."

"Can Mr. Silver set free his astral body and travel wherever he wants to go?" I asked.

"Well, not quite yet," replied Holt, "though he will be able to do it in a very short time. Meanwhile, I make the separation for him. I separated his
astral body from his physical body no longer ago than yesterday, and he went to New Orleans, attended to some important business, and was back again in Paris in two hours. You can see for yourself how useful this power would be to a practical man. And yet old Koot Humi, who is the President of the Central University, and one of the best Mahatmas now living, says that nobody ought to exercise the power. That's what I call darned foolishness."

"Do you mean to tell me," I asked, "that you could set my astral body free and send it wherever I might want to go?"

"There's nothing in the world easier," said Holt. "See here. You're a gentleman, and you've done us a good turn. Just come round to my office tomorrow, say between two and three o'clock, and I'll have your astral body out of you so quick that it'll take your breath away."

"Thank you very much," I replied; "but I don't care to have my breath taken away. I might not get it back again."

"Oh, that was only a figure of speech. I'll guarantee that it won't do you a particle of harm, and it shan't cost you a cent, either. I'll do the thing as a sort of friendly service, you understand. Then you'll begin to see what a big thing this Mahatma business can be made in the hands of a competent practitioner."
The man amused me by the enormous impudence of his pretensions. It occurred to me that it would not be a bad idea to take him at his word, and put his pretensions to the test. Of course he was a liar, and it would be a pleasure to prove him to be such.

"I accept your offer with pleasure," I exclaimed. "To-morrow, at half-past two, I will be at your office, and will have my astral body extracted, if that is the correct expression. Do you use anaesthetics, or is the operation painless?"

"Absolutely painless," he returned. "You simply sit down in a chair and are hypnotized, as you would call it. The process is rather a pleasant one, and is perfectly safe, unless there is an excess of electricity in the air."

"What harm does electricity do?"

"Just this. The astral body is made up of what you might call condensed negative electricity. Now, the electricity in the air is positive electricity, and the two things are antagonistic. If a thunderstorm comes up while you are in your astral form, the lightning will strike you, no matter if you are covered with lightning rods and insulators, and the instant an astral body is struck by lightning it is dissipated, and never can be got together again. You remember what I say, and if ever you are out in your astral form and see signs of electricity in the air, you bolt
for home and get into your physical body without losing a minute's time.

"Why," continued the Mahatma, reflectively, "I knew a man when I was in London who went down to Brighton one hot Sunday in his astral form, and was foolish enough to take a shock of electricity from a machine that a fellow was exhibiting on the pier. Between the time that the shock took to enter him through one hand and pass out through the other the man totally disappeared. There was nothing left of him except the plate of his false teeth, which was indiarubber."

"What became of the man's physical body?" I inquired.

"Well, that remained insensible, as the doctors called it, for three or four days, and then his friends allowed that it was dead, and buried it. If they had only known it, they could have kept that body alive by feeding it, for perhaps the next forty years, though it would never have waked up from its state of unconsciousness. However, the man's friends did what they thought was right, and considering that the man's life had been heavily insured, I can't say that I blame them. By-the-by, I don't mind saying that I am the first man to discover the danger of letting the electric fluid get at an astral body. Those Theosophists don't know anything about it yet, and if they keep on fooling round in their
astral bodies in a country that is full of electric machines and electric lights, they'll get into difficulties. But it's none of my affairs. They have the impudence to say that I'm an impostor. All they care for is to receive precipitated letters. Let any one of them get a precipitated letter that nobody has paid any postage on, and he is perfectly happy, no matter whether there is anything in the letter worth reading or not. They're like a lot of children. Nothing whatever practical about them."

"Maybe," said Silver, with a dull, joyless smile, "Mr. Norris considers you an impostor."

"Of course he does," cried Holt, gaily. "I wouldn't give much for him if he didn't. My rule has always been—'never believe a thing till you can't help it.' Now, if Mr. Norris will only come for half an hour to my office, he'll have to believe in what I've been telling him, for he won't be able to doubt the evidence of his own senses."

"Oh, I'll come," I exclaimed. "I'd like to see what my astral body looks like when it has been extracted." So saying, I rose to go, and as I did so I noticed that Silver was looking with some little admiration at my athletic figure. "Poor little devil!" I said to myself. "What a curse it must be to be so weak and ugly. I can almost feel sorry for the little scoundrel."

The Mahatma accompanied me to the door, leaving
Silver still seated at the table. "My friend Silver," he said to me in a low tone, "is a most remarkable man. I don't know whether money is any object to you or not, but if it is you can make all you want by getting on the right side of Silver. He can give you points about dealing in stocks that will make you a rich man in twenty-four hours. It's because he's that kind of a man that I've given up my practice here, and agreed to travel with him for the next three years."

"I don't gamble," I replied shortly.

"Well! well!" said Holt, "I only mentioned it to you in a friendly way, in case you should want to make a pile—and make it mighty easy. Good-bye till to-morrow, and be sure and be at my place before three o'clock."

Now, as I have said, I did not believe for one instant in anything that Holt had said. And yet there was something unusual about the affair. The two men were evidently sober, and neither of them seemed to be crazy. Why, then, had Holt taken the trouble to talk all that nonsense about the University of Thibet, and astral bodies? Why had he asked me to come to his room? He could hardly mean robbery, for I certainly did not have the air of a man of wealth; and, besides, Silver was evidently his confederate, and Silver never robbed people except in Wall Street. Why had Holt urged me to come
and be the subject of a miracle which neither he nor any other man could possibly perform? Had I been an older man I should, of course, have kept away from Holt's office, and thought no more about him; but, being young and reckless, I wanted to see what the fellow could possibly mean, and so at half-past two the next day I found myself at No. 418, Rue de Berlin.

There was no indication of any office in the house, but the concierge told me that an Englishman named 'Olt lived on the entresol. I made my way upstairs, and rang at the door on the first landing. It was opened by the Mahatma himself.

"Glad to see you," he exclaimed. "Now I call this real friendly. I'm just on the point of giving up this place, and have no servant, so I'll have to ask you to excuse the condition of my office. However, I've a chair for you, and that's about all you'll need. So saying, he showed me into a bare, carpetless room, furnished only with three chairs and a small writing-desk. One of the chairs was already occupied by Silver, who had, as it seemed to me, a look of painful expectation—very much as he might have looked had he been waiting in the outer room of a dentist's office.

"Here's our friend Mr. Norris!" said the Mahatma, cheerfully. "He's come to take a little promenade with you in the astral form."
Silver put out his damp, cold hand, and said "Good morning," in a mechanical sort of way.

"Now, Mr. Norris," said the Mahatma, "let's have a clear understanding. You want to have your astral form released from your body for a few minutes, just to convince you that the thing can be done. I'll do it, and I pledge my professional reputation that there is no pain or danger about the operation, and that just as soon as you want to go back to your body you can do so. If you're the least afraid, now's the time to back down."

"I am not afraid," I answered rather testily, "for I don't believe there is any such thing as an astral body. Still I'm here to be convinced, and, if you please, we'll get to work at once."

"You're quite right not to believe without evidence," said Holt. "I always told my pupils when I was a tutor at the University, 'Never believe anything merely because I tell you it is so.' Now, those English Theosophists will believe anything that Koot Humi tells them, and they don't even know that there is any such person as the old gentleman. All they have to go upon is that Madame This, or Mrs. That, says that she has a precipitated letter from old Koot. That's what I call weak-minded. But we're wasting time. Just sit down on that chair next to Mr. Silver, and fix your eyes on mine. Mr. Silver, you're to accompany Mr. Norris on his little outing, so
just draw your chair a little nearer to me, if you please."

Silver complied with the request, and the Mahatma stood in front of us with his eyes fixed on ours, and began the attempt to hypnotize us.

I said to myself, "So this fellow is nothing but a common magnetizing quack, after all!" I had more than once been hypnotized, and had no fear of the process, so I waited unconcerned to see if the Mahatma's attempt would be successful.

I was just beginning to be drowsy when I was startled to see a mist gathering around Silver, which rapidly condensed into a body in all respects precisely like that of the little millionaire. The original body of Silver remained in the chair, apparently in a profound sleep, and was regarded with evident contempt by its astral companion. I was about to say to the Mahatma that I would have no more of the experiment, when a drowsiness that I could not resist came upon me. My eyes closed, and my consciousness melted away. Presently I was aware that I was on my feet again, and was looking down at a duplicate of myself that was sleeping calmly in the chair.

"There you are!" said Holt. "Never knew an astral body to come out of the shell so easy before. How do you feel?"

"A good deal astonished," I replied, "and singularly light."
"You'll get used to that in a few minutes," said Holt. "Put your foot down gently when you walk, and try not to float, for it would attract too much attention in the street. Now, Mr. Silver! If both of you gentlemen are ready, we'll take a little walk."

"How about leaving our bodies here?" I asked. "Will they be quite safe?"

"Perfectly safe," said the Mahatma. "There is no one in the apartment except ourselves, and I shall lock the door when we go out. When I have half a dozen people undergoing this experiment at the same time, I generally give them checks for their bodies, so as to avoid any mistake; but that isn't necessary between friends, and when there is only two of you."

Going downstairs, I found it extremely difficult not to yield to the tendency to float from the top to the bottom. My feet refused at first to cling to the earth, and when we reached the side-walk Holt was obliged to take my arm in order to steady me. In a few minutes, however, I succeeded in adjusting myself to my new conditions, and began to enjoy the sensation of airy lightness.

I knew that the Silver who was walking beside me was only a sort of ghost; but there was nothing in his appearance which differed in the slightest degree from the other Silver. Neither could I distinguish any difference between my astral and my
physical bodies, except that the former was much the lighter. Even my astral clothes were the exact duplicates of those which my other body was wearing, and the astral watch, penknife, and pipe, which I found in my pockets, were precisely like those which I ordinarily used.

"Well!" said the Mahatma. "Did I tell you the truth, or didn't I?"

"You told the truth," I answered—"that is, unless I am dreaming. I have felt this same sensation of lightness in dreams."

"The astral body often leaves the physical body when you are asleep, and takes excursions here and there," said Holt. "It returns before you wake up, then you imagine that what you seem to recollect is nothing but a dream. There is more in dreams than most people imagine, and I'd like to have you read a lecture on dreams that I delivered at the University the last year that I was there."

"This astral body of mine—if it is an astral body," I remarked, "seems exactly like myself. How does it happen that there are astral clothes? Look at that sleeve! There is the identical place where I burned it with my pipe this morning. I begin to think that this is my real self, and that the thing I left in the chair is the astral body."

"Do you see that lamp-post?" asked the Mahatma. "There is nobody in sight just now, and I'll take the
chance of our being seen. Just oblige me by walking straight into that lamp-post as if there was nothing there."

I did so, and found that the lamp-post offered no obstacle to me whatever. I passed directly through it, or rather, it seemed to pass directly through me.

The Mahatma smiled triumphantly. "Now you see," he exclaimed, "that your astral body is immaterial. You want to be very careful never to go into a crowded street when you are in the astral form, and never to run against any one. If you do, it will be discovered that you are immaterial, and there will be no end of a row. Why, Mr. Silver here, the first time I took him out was run into just in front of that house over yonder by a child rolling a hoop. The kid and the hoop went right through him, and the kid set up a yell that alarmed the whole neighbourhood. I wish I could have heard that child trying to convince its mother that it had run right through the middle of a gentleman!"

The Mahatma laughed loudly at the reminiscence, and even the taciturn Silver chuckled.

"Where shall we go?" asked Holt. "I shouldn't advise any long excursion, considering that this is your first outing. When you get a little more accustomed to the thing, you and Mr. Silver can take a run across to Japan some evening, or you might step over to Chicago, and see how the grain
market looks. I propose that this morning we go into the Parc Monceaux, and walk around where it is quiet for half an hour or so. You want to get thoroughly accustomed to your change of weight."

I assented to his proposal, and we had just reached the corner of the Boulevard, when I heard a rumbling sound that, as I now believe, was caused by a heavy cart.

"That's thunder!" cried the Mahatma, with a frightened look. "Stop till I look at my electrometer." So saying, he took from his pocket a small instrument that resembled in appearance an aneroid barometer, and glanced at its dial. "Why, the air is full of electricity!" he exclaimed. "We must get back to the office instantly, or I won't answer for the consequences. Mr. Silver, you go on ahead and open the door. I'll help Mr. Norris along."

Silver went on rapidly in advance, and I followed with the Mahatma. He seemed excited and alarmed, and protested that he could not understand how he could have forgotten to consult his electrometer before taking Silver and myself into the street.

"However," he said, "we shall probably reach the house before the electricity increases to the point of extreme danger, and another time I promise you that you shall not go out in your astral form unless the weather is in a perfectly safe condition."

When we reached the office we found the body of Silver still in the chair where we had left it; but, to
my intense surprise and horror, Silver had taken possession of my own body, and was standing by my chair with a smile of triumph on his face. Before I could say a word the Mahatma cried out that he saw a flash of lightning.

"Jump into Mr. Silver’s body this instant, if you value your life," he cried to me. "We will arrange it all right just as soon as the thunderstorm is over."

"But I don’t want that contemptible body," I cried. "Give me my own body this instant, or—"

"Or what?" asked the Mahatma. "How are you going to help yourself? Now, just be sensible! Mr. Silver has, in his hurry, jumped into your body by mistake. You can’t remain in the astral form without the utmost danger. You get into Mr. Silver’s body for an hour or two, and then it will be safe for you to exchange with him, and have your own body back again. I warn you that every minute you stand here you run the risk of being dissipated."

There was clearly nothing for it but to follow the Mahatma’s advice. With great difficulty I managed to force myself into the vacant tenement of Mr. Silver. It was much too small for me, and squeezed me horribly about the chest. No sooner was I once more incarnated, than I turned to Silver and expressed my opinion of his stupidity, as I deemed it, in language that was very far from polite,
Silver made no reply, and as soon as I ceased speaking he went out of the room. Then the Mahatma said, with perfect coolness—

"We've played a little game on you, Mr. Norris! My friend Mr. Silver wanted your body, and as he knew you wouldn't sell it, we had to get it by strategy. Mr. Silver is prepared to pay you handsomely for your body, on condition that you don't make a row. I might as well tell you that it won't do us any harm if you do kick, for no one will believe a word you say about the matter, and the only result will be that you will find yourself in a lunatic asylum. Me and Mr. Silver have an engagement at this hour, and so I'll trouble you to take yourself off."

What could I do? Violence was out of the question, for Holt could have broken every bone in the wretched little body in which I was encased with the greatest ease. I saw that I was beaten. I had fallen into the hands of a pair of scoundrels, and they had perpetrated an unheard-of outrage upon me. I had no money with which to bribe the Mahatma, and an appeal to the police was, as he had said, quite out of the question. I walked out of Holt's office without another word, and going into the little garden in front of the church of the Trinity, sat down to think of any possible remedy for my misfortune.

I was disgusted to notice how little space my body occupied on the bench where I had seated myself,
and how thin and ugly my legs looked as they were stretched in front of me. Mechanically I thrust my hand into my pocket, and it came in contact with something unfamiliar. I drew it out, and found that it was a heavy, old-fashioned purse. It flashed across me that possibly Silver might have left something valuable in his clothes, and I opened the purse eagerly. It proved to contain fully three thousand francs in paper and gold. Pleased with this discovery, I made an examination of my other pockets, and presently made a discovery that put me at once into the best of spirits. I had found a bank-book on Rothschild's bank, showing that a very large sum was on deposit there; and, what was at least of equal value, I found a draft on the same bank, made in New York, for the sum of one hundred and fifty-three thousand francs. I knew now that I had Silver at my mercy. The man in giving me his cast-off body had unwittingly given all his ready money, and possibly all his other property. Nothing was more certain than that Silver, who had long ago sold his soul for money, would be glad to sell me my own body back again for the money which I now had virtually in hand. My course was plain. I would draw out a hundred thousand francs of the villain's money, and would then consent to take back my own body on condition that I should keep the money. Should Silver refuse to agree to this, I would threaten
to draw out all the money deposited in his name at Rothschild's, and then to go to New York and take possession of all his property in America. There could not be the slightest doubt that the man would accede to my terms.

I sprang up as quickly as my feeble legs would permit, and called a cab. I drove straight to the bank, where I was welcomed with a good deal of servility by the cashier, who evidently knew Silver well.

"I have called," I said, "to cash this draft. I will take a hundred thousand in cash, and will leave the remainder on deposit. I shall have to sign my name with my left hand, if you don't mind, for I am suffering to-day from rheumatism in the other hand."

The cashier protested that any signature of Mr. Silver's would satisfy him, and accordingly I endorsed the draft with my left hand. The cashier was in the very act of paying me the money when Silver and the Mahatma entered. Silver had evidently discovered the blunder he had made, and had rushed to the bank with the vague hope of preventing me from drawing the money.

"Don't pay that man!" Silver cried to the cashier. "He is an impostor."

I paid no attention whatever to Silver, and the cashier, supposing him to be a lunatic, told him
that if he did not at once leave the bank the police would be called in.

Silver was on the point of making some further protest, but Holt, who had preserved his coolness, dragged him away. As I went out of the bank I found the pair waiting for me in the street. Silver at once rushed up to me, and informed me that I was a thief.

"And you?" I asked. "You were a thief when you stole my body. Now that I am compelled to wear your despicable body, I propose to have the money that belongs to it. I venture to say that the money comes into my possession far more honestly than any money ever came into your possession!"

"Take my advice, Mr. Silver, and don't quarrel with this gentleman," said the Mahatma. "He's got the drop on you, and you can't help yourself. Mr. Norris is a gentleman, and a very intelligent one. I don't believe there will be any difficulty in getting him to compromise this matter if we discuss it in the right spirit. Anyhow, we're not going to gain anything by making a row."

"I am quite willing to talk business with you," said I, "if you will abstain from threats and bad language. If you will agree to my terms, the matter can be arranged; but, I warn you, I shall expect to be well paid. I have been treated infamously, and I am entitled to heavy damages."
"Just so!" exclaimed the Mahatma. "I said Mr. Norris was an intelligent man."

"I am now going to Bignon's to dine," I continued. "If you will call there in an hour, I shall have finished dinner, and shall be ready to talk with you. In the mean time, Mr. Silver, let me advise you to avoid all excitement. That body of mine which you are wearing just now suffers from valvular disease of the heart, and any excitement may bring about a fatal result."

I drove to Bignon's, and ordered a dinner that would be certain to astonish the stomach of Mr. Silver. I knew from the appearance of Silver's lawful body that he was a prey to dyspepsia, and it struck me as a particularly happy idea to bring about a monumental indigestion in the scoundrel's stomach.

I had not quite finished my dinner when Silver and the Mahatma entered the room where I was dining in solitary grandeur. I invited them to sit down and take a glass of wine. Holt accepted cheerfully, but Silver sat scowling at me and at his companion. He did not remain silent long, however. As I was in the act of helping myself to Burgundy, he cried out—

"For Heaven's sake don't drink that Burgundy! It is deadly poison to my stomach."

"I don't see what you have to do with your stomach
just at present," I replied. "It belongs to me, and I propose to treat it as I see fit."

"I am here to get it back again," said Silver, "and not to drink wine and amuse myself. On what terms will you agree to exchange bodies again, provided mine is not completely ruined by your abominable treatment of it? You said you would consent to exchange, provided I agreed to your terms. Let me know what they are at once."

"My terms are these," I replied. "I will change bodies with you on condition that I retain the hundred thousand francs which I now have in my pocket, and that you pay for this dinner."

"Never!" cried Silver. "The man is mad. Mr. Norris, your proposal is simply extortionate."

"Call it what you choose," said I, ostentatiously helping myself to pâté de foie gras. "You have heard my terms. Take them or reject them, as you see fit. I admit that this body of yours is disgracefully ugly, but I am willing to wear it for the sake of coming into the possession of the fifty millions of dollars that I am told you have invested in New York. If you think my original body, with its valvular disease of the heart and its inherited tendency to cancer, is worth fifty millions, by all means keep it."

"I will give you fifty thousand francs," said Silver, "and change bodies this instant; but, I implore you,
don't put that paté into my stomach. It's nothing less than murder."

"I said a hundred thousand francs," I replied. "I keep the offer open for ten minutes longer. After that I shall have to decline to have any further dealings with you." Then I heaped my plate with walnuts, and Silver groaned, as if the pangs of indigestion had already seized upon him.

"Now look here, Mr. Silver!" exclaimed Holt; "I have something to say in this matter. If you don't get your money back, who is to pay me for all the time and trouble I have spent in teaching you magic? Accept this man's terms at once. They are the best you'll get, and in the circumstances I don't consider them exorbitant."

Silver grumbled, swore, and entreated, but I was inflexible, and before the ten minutes were up he had consented to my demands. Giving the finishing touch to his stomach with a large glass of champagne, I told the Mahatma that I was ready to exchange bodies. He immediately proceeded to hypnotize Silver and myself, and in a very few minutes I had the inexpressible delight of finding myself once more in my own comfortable body.

"Now that we have finished our business," I said to the two scoundrels, "I must request you to leave the room at once. I trust that this will be a warning
to you both not to try your little game of stealing bodies a second time."

I was about to continue my moral exhortation, when it suddenly occurred to me that the hundred thousand francs that had a moment before been in my pocket, were now safely in Silver's pocket. I had been so inconceivably stupid as to permit myself to be tricked a second time. For once I completely lost my head. I sprang at Silver and took him by the throat, demanding that he should instantly give me my money. He made no reply, possibly because he was on the verge of asphyxia, and I was dragging him toward the window, with a vague idea of threatening to throw him into the street, when somebody hit me a tremendous blow on the back of the head. Of course my assailant was the Mahatma, and I imagine that his weapon was the favourite one of the American footpad—a sand-bag. I went down as if I had been shot through the heart, and instantly lost consciousness. When I came to myself I was lying on a sofa in the room where I had dined, and a waiter was standing over me.

"It is time for monsieur to wake up," he remarked. "It is late, and we are just going to close."

"Where are the two—my friends?" I asked.

"They went away hours ago," the waiter replied. "They said that monsieur was a little sleepy, and that he could not be disturbed."
My head ached frightfully, but I could not discover that the skull was broken. With the help of the waiter I regained my feet, and in a few moments felt able to go home. The waiter called a cab, and on inquiry I found that Silver had paid for the dinner—doubtless in order to make sure that I should not be disturbed until he and his confederate should have time to escape. I drove at once to my lodgings and went to bed. I was quite well in the morning, and the first thing I did after breakfast was to go to the Rue de Berlin and inquire for Holt. The concierge informed me that he had left Paris without giving any address. I have never seen or heard of him since.

I know the explanation which every reader will give to this story. It will be said that I drank too much wine, fell asleep on the sofa, and dreamed the whole story of my experience with the Mahatma. I might accept this explanation were it not for the fact that the next day, when I examined my pockets, I found in them, in addition to several trifles of my own, a card-case belonging to Silver, a pipe which I had never seen before, and three letters—of no interest to me, except for the fact that they were addressed to "James Silver, care of Eleazar M. Holt."

Did I dream these things into my pocket? If so, the sort of dream which can transfer material objects
from one man's pocket to another man's pocket is, it seems to me, rather more wonderful than the feat which I hereby solemnly assert the Mahatma Holt performed, when tricking me into an exchange of bodies with his confederate.
A DARWINIAN SCHOONER.

"YOU'RE quite right, sir!" said the mate. "As you say, a man can't follow the sea for twenty or thirty years without meeting with a good many things that he can't explain, and that no living landsman will believe if you waste your time telling him about them. Once I came across a schooner that was manned by monkeys. There wasn't a soul aboard of her except monkeys, from the captain down to the Jemmy Ducks, and those monkeys had fitted out that there schooner and gone a piratin' in her. What's the good of my telling that to any man ashore? I don't believe there's a man, except he's a sailorman, who would believe it if I took my Bible oath of it. And yet I saw that schooner with my own identical eyes; and what's more, I was aboard of her in company of those monkeys for eight mortal days, so I know what I'm talking about.

"It happened about ten years ago, or may be twelve—I don't keep any private log-book, and I can't always remember when—just when—anything did happen. However, I was second mate at the
time of a brig—the *Jane G. Mather*—bound from London to Ryo Jenneero with a general cargo. The captain’s name was Simmons—‘Old Bill Simmons’ we used to call him, seeing as he had a younger brother, Jim Simmons, in the Mediterranean trade. He wasn’t a bad sort, and the brig was a middling comfortable craft, barring that she was so overrun with rats that you couldn’t turn in at night without battening down your blankets over your face to keep them from trimming your nose down to what was their idea of a ship-shape nose. We were strong-handed, having eighteen men all told before the mast, besides two mates and a bosen.

“We made a good run as far as the Line, and then we had baffling light winds and calms for the next three weeks. We were in about five degrees south, and Cape Saint Roque bearing five hundred miles west, when we sighted this schooner that I’m telling you about. I came on deck that morning at eight o’clock, and the first thing I saw was a schooner under full sail about a mile to windward of us, there being at the time a light breeze from the south, and not much more than enough to keep steerage way on the brig. The schooner was acting in a very curious sort of way. Her sheets were hauled flat aft, and every little while she’d come up in the wind and shake for a minute, and then she’d pay off on the other tack. Sometimes she’d lie close to the
wind, and then again she'd fall off till she had the wind nearly on her quarter.

"'Either she's lost her rudder, or all hands have gone to breakfast and left her to shift for herself,' said I to the mate, after looking at the schooner for a little while.

"'She's deserted, that's what she is,' said the mate. 'We sighted her at daybreak this morning, and I've been watching her pretty close. There ain't a soul aboard her, according to my idea. Well! I'll turn in now, and I expect she'll run into us before eight bells if we don't keep a sharp look-out.'

"About two hours later the captain came on deck, and I could see that he took a good deal of interest in the schooner. The breeze had died out by this time, and there wasn't hardly breath enough to fill the schooner's sails. She lay not half a mile from us, and we could hear her booms creak as she rolled with the swell that was setting in from the eastward. It was clear enough that she wasn't deserted, for we could see a lot of niggers, as we supposed, moving about her decks, though there was nobody at the wheel. All at once the old man says, 'Mr. Samuels! we'll board that schooner and see what is the matter with her. Take the port quarter boat and four men, and find out what she means by yawing all over the South Atlantic. Tell the captain that this ain't no Ratcliffe Highway, nor no Playhouse Square, and a
decent schooner ain't no right to be staggering drunk at this time of day.'

"Old Bill was always fond of his joke. Once he towed the cook overboard for fifteen minutes, because he would put too much salt in the grub. You see he thought the man would get enough salt in his system while he was soaking astern of us to make him remember to use less of it in his cooking. But it didn't seem to do no good, and it pretty near drowned the cook.

"Well, I sung out for the men to clear away the boat, and then we pulled over to the schooner. When we came close to her I saw that she hadn't any name on her stern nor anywhere else, and that what we had taken to be niggers were nothing less than big monkeys—baboons was their correct rating, I believe. Nobody had the manners to heave us a line, but we had no trouble in boarding the schooner. The monkeys were crowded together, watching us over the rail, but keeping as grave and quiet as a lot of man-of-war's men. On the quarter-deck, all alone by himself, was an old white-haired monkey, that we took to be the captain, as he afterwards proved to be. He was sitting on the skylight, and was a great sight too dignified to be seen watching us.

"We made the boat fast, and all hands of us climbed aboard the schooner. The monkeys fell back quite respectful as we came aboard, and I could see that
they were a pretty dispirited-looking lot. The deck was all in a litter, and there was nobody at the wheel or on the look-out. At first I didn't understand that the schooner was manned entirely by monkeys, so I went straight into the cabin to see if there were any signs of white men, or even niggers aboard her. The cabin was as neglected as the deck, and there wasn’t a soul below. So I came on deck again, and after telling one of the men to have a look in the fokesell, to see if there was anybody there, I went up to the old white-haired monkey and says,—

"'We came aboard to see if you wanted anything. If so be as you are the captain of this schooner, perhaps you’ll tell me if you need a navigator, or a carpenter, or anything of the sort?'

"The monkey didn’t say a word, but he bowed as polite as if he was a Frenchman. Meanwhile the other monkeys had gathered in a circle around us, and were whining in a mournful sort of way. Just then the man who had searched the fokesell came up and said that there wasn’t a soul aboard of her except the monkeys, and that they were half dead of thirst. There were a couple of full water-casks on deck, beside one that was empty. When the monkeys saw that I was going to knock the bung out of a cask they went wild with joy, and even the old white-haired chap condescended to follow me, though he didn’t chatter, and didn’t show any especial interest
in having the cask broached. You should have seen those monkeys go for that water! The poor beasts must have been for days without a drop, and not one of them had sense enough to knock a bung out, though they knew the casks were full of water. There were provisions enough aboard the schooner, for I had seen a bread barge more than half full of good pilot bread in the cabin, and I knew that there must be plenty more where that came from.

"'I'm thinking, sir,' said one of the men to me, 'that thishyer'll be a salvage case.'

"'Right you are,' said I—'that is, if the captain takes that view of it. We'll go back to the brig and report now, and if so be that he wants this schooner to be carried into Ryo, there won't be much difficulty about doing it.' You see the man—'Liverpool Dick' was his name—had been in two or three ships with me, and was as good a man as they make. So I could talk a little freer with him than a second mate can generally talk with the men.

"When I told old Bill Simmons that the schooner was deserted except for monkeys, and that she was in first-rate condition, provided he wanted to carry her into port, he said that if I wanted to take six hands and navigate her into Ryo I could do so.

"'Enough said,' said I. 'I'll get my sextant and dunnage and be aboard the schooner before a breeze
comes up. I suppose you won't mind letting me have Liverpool Dick? He'll make a good enough mate for me.'

"'Certainly,' says Old Bill. 'You'll probably beat us into Ryo, and we'll pick you up there. However, you'll have just to shove the schooner along, for if we do get there first I can't wait for you, and I'll have to ship another second mate and half a dozen men. You know what owners are, yourself. They can take a moderate-sized lie alongside sometimes, but it's a mighty hard job to get 'em to histe it in.'

"It didn't take me very long to get back aboard the schooner. I had Liverpool Dick with me, and three middling good men, and three Rainecks that Old Bill was glad to get rid of. We all turned to and cleaned the decks up, and the breeze gradually freshening from the eastward, we slipped on our course, and by night we had clean dropped the Jane G. Mather. Dick and I chose watches. I gave him three men, and I took two, and the odd man was put in the caboose and told to cook, though he swore he had never cooked so much as an egg since he was born. We managed to get some sort of a supper about six o'clock, and the first watch on deck falling to Dick, I turned in feeling pretty comfortable.

"The monkeys hadn't said a word since we took
charge of her. They saw what we meant as soon as we came on board, and they turned out of the fokesell and left it to the men of their own accord, which showed that they knew the difference between sailors and monkeys. The old white-haired chap that was in command of them bunked by himself in the lee of the caboose, and the rest of them curled up under the weather rail about amidships, and were as quiet as you could wish. They all came aft at eight bells, so the mate told me, as much as to say that they were waiting for orders; but, getting none, they went to sleep again by the time I came on deck.

"The next day, the breeze holding fair, and there being nothing to do except to let her go along comfortable, I overhauled the whole schooner, searching for her papers, and not finding them. Dick and I talked about it, and I made up my mind that she had been carrying a cargo of monkeys—for she had little else in her except ballast—and that her people had got panic-struck about something and had deserted her. I found one or two curious things, though. She had a big rifled gun lying down on the ballast, and about fifty breech-loading rifles stowed away here and there, where nobody would be likely to see them. Then she had two boats, and it didn't seem likely that a schooner of her size would carry more than two. If so, how did her people get
away from her without a boat? I couldn’t understand it, and no more could Dick.

The monkeys behaved well for the first two days. They were always on hand for their grub, which we served out to them regular; and they never grumbled—at least, not so far as we could understand. The old monkey captain would now and then come and walk the quarter-deck with me, never venturing any remarks, but just meaning, as I supposed, to show that there was no hard feeling. But the third day, Dick comes to me, and says, ‘It’s my opinion, sir, that there’s mischief brewing among them chaps.’

‘Why so?’ says I.

‘Well,’ says he, ‘they have been doing a lot of talking on the quiet among themselves, and the old man’s got something on his mind, for he’s altogether too bloomin’ sweet-tempered this morning. He’s laid into two or three of his people with a rope’s end, and then he’s been walking the deck with me, and bowing and grinning as much as to say that he considers me as much his superior as if I was a post-captain in the royal navy. I advise you to keep a bright look out and keep your weather eye liftin’ while you’re on deck to-night.’

‘Why, what do you suppose they mean to do?’ I asked.

‘What are they here for? Tell me that,’ says Dick. ‘This schooner wasn’t never deserted by no
crew. She sailed out of port with nobody but these 'ere monkeys aboard. That's my explanation of the thing.'

"'Where were they bound to?' asks I. 'And what did they go to sea for?'

"'They were going a-piratin', that's what they were doing,' says Dick. 'That's why she ain't got no name; that's why there ain't no papers of no kind aboard her; that's why she's in ballast; that's why she's got that big gun aboard, and all them rifles; that's why she's so strong-handed. Why, what do you think the old man dropped last night while he was a-calking in the lee of the caboose? He dropped thishyer knife, sir; and when a monkey takes to carrying a knife like that he means business, and you can just lay your last mag on that.'

"It was a long clasp-knife, with a sharp blade, made for stabbing and for nothing else. I didn't like the look of the thing; but I told Dick that his notion about the schooner having sailed with nobody aboard her but monkeys was rubbish. 'You saw for yourself,' said I, 'that they couldn't sail the schooner.'

"I saw that they didn't want to sail her for some reason or other,' says he. 'As to their not being able for to sail her, I have my doubts. Early this morning the man on the look-out went to sleep, and one of those monkeys, maybe the old man himself,
went forrard and trimmed in the head sheets. The wind had hauled round till, as you see now, it is pretty near abeam of us.'

"'If they know that much,' said I, 'we'll turn 'em all to, and make 'em do the rest of the work this voyage.'

"'Well, you'll see, sir,' said Dick, 'there's something in the wind, and we'll know what it is before long. I'm going to speak pretty plain to the old man—that is, if you don't have no objection.'

"'None in the world,' says I. 'You might ask him where his papers are, and perhaps he'll tell you.'

"The next day Dick told me that he had had a long conversation with the monkey captain, and told him that we had our suspicions of him.

"'It stands to reason,' said Dick to the monkey captain, 'that you don't like having the command took away from you; but it was done for your own good. You're a passenger now, and all you've got to do is to conduct yourself as such. There's been altogether too much chin going on among the lot of you lately, and you'd better put a stopper on it just where you are. You needn't hope to catch us napping, and if you try any mutinous games you're bound to get the worst of it. Do you savey that now?'

"The monkey grinned and bowed, swearing, as you might say, that he never had no intentions of no kind; and then he went forrard and took it out
in cussin' his own people, as was quite right and natural.

"That very night, some time in the middle watch, I woke up, being in my bunk, and, being a very light sleeper, I heard somebody moving in the cabin; and thinking that one of the men might be trying to steal one of my rum bottles—for there was a dozen of heavenly rum in the pantry—I slipped out and had a look. The lamp was burning, and there was the monkey captain stealing out of the cabin with a big chart, that I had marked her position on, under his arm. I sung out to him, and he dropped the chart, and took to smiling and ducking as respectful as you please.

"'I won't have none of this,' I said to him. 'You go forrard where you belong, and the next time I catch you here into irons you go.'

"He didn't say anything, but he looked pretty mad, and slunk away without doing any more bowing.

"I told Dick about the affair when I relieved him at eight bells, and asked him what he made of it.

"'It's plain enough,' said he. 'Those fellows mean to seize thisyer schooner, and the old man wanted to know just what our position is. Have you got a pistol with you, sir?'

"I told him I hadn't.

"'Then,' said he, 'my advice is that you load half a dozen of them rifles, and keep 'em where we can
lay our hands to 'em if they're wanted. Those chaps mean bloody mutiny, and they'll begin before very long.'

"I didn't much like the look of the thing myself. What did that monkey want with the chart? I told myself that, being a natural thief like all his sort, he just stole the first thing that came to hand when he got into the cabin; but why did he steal a chart when there was a bottle of rum standing in the rack on the table, with the cork already drawn?"

"When a monkey carries a big, bloody-minded knife, and comes into the cabin at night to steal a chart, there is something wrong; and I began to be half of Dick's opinion that there was a mutiny brewing."

"However, the next twenty-four hours the monkeys were as quiet as could be. The monkey captain was full of his smirks and bows, and didn't seem to remember anything about his having been caught in the cabin the night before. He brought me and Dick a box of cigars that he had found somewhere—and good cigars they were too!—and his general idea seemed to be to make us believe that he was our best friend, and was ready to do anything to please us. The other monkeys kept watching him, and when they caught me or Dick or any of the men looking at them they'd grin as affable as a boarding-house keeper that comes down aboard an incoming ship a-looking for boarders."
"Another queer thing happened that morning. When we hove the log, the monkey captain came aft and watched us, and tailed on to the log line to help haul it in, as though he was anxious for a chance to show his good will.

"'He's got our position yesterday from the chart,' says Dick, 'and now he's going to depend on dead reckoning till he can get another chance at the chart. I wish I knew as much about navigation as he does. I'd get a second mate's certificate and get out of the fokesell the next time I get to London.'

"Now it did seem impossible that a monkey should know navigation, but it did look as if this particular monkey knew what charts and log lines are for. The man at the wheel told me that he'd seen the monkey looking into the binnacle to see what course she was steering more than half a dozen times, and it was the opinion among the men that he was the devil himself. However, nobody could help noticing that when the monkey captain's back was turned the rest of the monkeys kept up a low conversation among themselves, and it was easy to see that they had something on their minds.

"'I'd give a good deal to understand the lingo of them chaps,' says Dick to me. 'It's my belief that they know they're nearing the Brazil coast, and that they mean to take possession of the schooner by the time we sight land. I wish I had a pistol with me;
though I don't doubt they're intelligent enough to understand what a belaying pin says when it hits 'em over the head.'

"We were about two days' sail from Ryo, according to my calculation—that is, of course, if the wind held—and I was coming round to Dick's opinion that the monkeys had some sort of traverse that they calculated to work, though I couldn't chime in with his notion that they fitted out the schooner and meant to go on a piratical cruise. After thinking the thing over more than a hundred times I came to the conclusion that the schooner had been to the west coast of Africa for slaves. That was why she was in ballast, and why there wasn't any name on her stern, nor any papers of any sort to be found aboard of her. I said so to Dick, but he wouldn't agree with me.

"'That's all very well so far as it goes,' says he, 'but it don't account for her being manned by nobody except monkeys. How did they get possession of her? That's what I'd like you to tell me.'

"'Suppose she was lying in the river, waiting to take her cargo of slaves aboard, and suppose all hands got blazing drunk, and suppose the shippers sent aboard a cargo of monkeys instead of niggers. How does that strike you?' said I.

"'What's become of the crew?' asked Dick.

"'Why, when they got sober and saw the monkeys
they thought they had the horrors, and they all tumbled ashore to get more rum, or perhaps to get a little quiet sleep in the barracoon.'

"And the monkeys, seeing their chance, got up the anchor and made sail on her and carried her clean across the Atlantic! Seems to me, sir, that your story is about as tough as mine, and has got too many twists and turns in it. No, sir, I stick to my first opinion. This schooner was fitted out by monkeys, and no men never had anything to do with her, except perhaps to build her. Well, I'll go below now, and if you should want me on deck in a hurry just knock on the deck over my bunk. I shall turn in all standing, and I'll answer your call about as quick as you can make it.'

"I had no occasion to sing out for the mate during that watch, for the monkeys were as quiet as lambs, and slept all curled up together, every man Jack of them taking a turn with his tail around the neck of the next one. It was an unseamanlike way of proceeding, for if there had been a sudden call of 'All hands!' it would have taken those monkeys ten minutes to cast themselves loose. But I suppose they got their ideas of seamanship from the Brazilians, and what could you expect of them?

"The next day was Wednesday. I remember it because it's my lucky day, though at one time it didn't look as if there was much luck about the day
on that particular occasion. I noticed that every
now and then one of the monkeys would lay aloft,
for all the world as if he was looking out for land;
and if you'll believe it, sir, one of them finally saw
land, and reported it to the monkey captain before
any one of us white men saw it. I saw the fellow
come down from the cross-trees and go up to the
old man and say something, and then, after getting
his orders, he went and told the rest of his people,
and every one of them went forard and began look-
ing for the land, and chattering as if they were
amazing glad that the voyage was most over.

"The wind dropped about noon, and we were
pretty near becalmed for the next twenty-four hours.
I was getting anxious for fear that the Jane G. Mather
would reach Ryo before we did, in which case, as
the captain had said, he wouldn't be able to wait for
us, and I would lose a mighty good berth as second
mate. At twelve o'clock I turned in, telling Dick to
knock on the deck in case he should want me; and,
remembering what he had said the night before about
turning in all standing, I thought I would do the
same, not knowing but what the calm might be
followed, as it often is in those latitudes, by a
sudden squall that might be more than the schooner
wanted.

"I was sound asleep, and dreaming that I had
come into a big fortune and had bought a big farm,
stocked with elephants and codfish, somewhere down in Devon, and was going to raise cigars ready made, when Dick hammered on the deck with his boot heel, and woke me in a hurry. There was a tremendous row going on over my head, and my first idea was that we were going to be run down by one of those big French liners that are for ever running into other people along the South American coast; but before I could get on deck I heard Dick cursing and the monkeys snarling, and knew that he was having a fight with them. So I caught up a couple of rifles, which was about all I could carry, and was on deck inside of five seconds. The first thing I saw was that there was nobody at the wheel, and that Dick was backed up against the weather-rail and fighting with all hands of the monkeys. They were jumping on him with their naked hands and feet, and trying to tear him limb from limb, and he was laying into them with a belaying-pin as if he was mate of an old-time Black Ball packet breaking in a crew of packet rats. So far as I could judge the fight was a pretty equal thing, and Dick was keeping his end pretty well up. He had laid out half a dozen of the monkeys, but for all that they were full of pluck, and their captain, who kept a little on the outskirts of the shindy, kept encouraging them, and keeping them up to their work.

"I didn't wait many seconds before I got to work.
I put a bullet through the monkey captain first of all. Then I fired promiscuous like into the middle of the muss; and then, using the rifle as a handspike, I let them see that I didn't intend to allow no nonsense aboard of my schooner. They didn't stop to argue. Some of them went overboard; some went aloft; some laid out on the jib-boom; and the rest tried to hide wherever they could. In less than a minute the decks were cleared, and things were quiet again.

"It seems that the monkeys had made a sudden attack on Dick when he was least expecting them, and for a little it looked as if he might lose the number of his mess.

"'You see, sir,' he said, 'it's just as I told you. Them devils has tried to seize the schooner; and I will say this for 'em, that they did it in a way that showed a good deal of savey.'

"'Are you hurt?' I asked; for I could see that there was blood on his face.

"'Only a bite or two, and a few scratches. Nothing of any account,' he replied. 'You see, they didn't have any arms. If they'd had knives like the one the old man dropped, it would have been all day with me. They'd have cut me into fine slices before you could have got on deck.'

"'Where are all the men?' I asked. 'Where's the man at the wheel?"
"'He's gone overboard, sir,' said Dick, 'with his throat tore open. One watch of them monkeys attended to him while the other watch was trying to do the same for me. The rest of the men is hiding in the fokesell, according to my idea, and I'll just take a handspike and go and have a talk with 'em.'

'I went along with him, and we found that the hatch had been clapped on and made fast, so that not a man in the fokesell could get on deck. All the men were below, including the man who had been on the look-out, and who had jumped down to rouse the rest of the men when he saw what the monkeys were up to. The men were mighty glad to be released, for there wasn't any air coming into the fokesell except when the hatch was off, and the night was a middling hot one. In about an hour more they would all have been suffocated, which is probably what the monkeys were expecting.

"Of course it was all hands on deck for the rest of that night, for we didn't know what new game the monkeys might try; but we heard nothing of them until daylight. About eight bells in the morning watch we got a slant from the eastward, and before noon we were in the harbour of Ryo.

"The monkeys kept out of sight, so far as they could, until we were close in with the shore, when they all went overboard; and when they reached the
land they bolted for the woods. Dick was not in favour of letting them go, but said they ought to be put in irons and tried for mutiny and murder, but I told him it would save a lot of trouble for us to be well rid of them before handing the schooner over to the consul. I called the men aft, and told them that the least said about the monkeys the sooner we'd get our salvage money; and they all swore they wouldn't say a blessed word about it. No more they did. We told the consul that we picked up the schooner derelict, without a soul aboard of her; and he took our depositions, and did the usual thing in such cases, which, as you know without being told, was to keep us waiting for our money for the best part of a year, and then pay us about a tenth of what we ought to have had, saying that the rest had been used up for expenses. Oh! I don't blame him. It wasn't his fault; but that's what always happens when one of these 'ere Admiralty courts gets its lines made fast to a salvage case.

"Nobody ever found out who that schooner belonged to, or where she had sailed from, or what her name was, or anything about her.

"What is your opinion, sir? I've given you the straight facts. There was a schooner manned by monkeys, and nobody else. How did it happen? That's what I never found out, and what nobody ever will find out, in my opinion. I don't expect you to
believe the yarn, though it's gospel truth. I never found but one man who believed it, and it turned out that he was a lunatic at the time, though he was generally supposed to be only what they call a philosopher."
A CONDENSED GHOST.

My friend Professor Bruyn was one of the leading chemists of the day. He had discovered two new metals, and had written several articles showing that Christianity was a delusion unworthy of the attention of an intelligent man. Consequently he was held in great respect as a scientific person, and his views on political questions were regarded, by those holding similar views, as being extremely valuable. But, although he rejected religion, Bruyn accepted ghosts, and had no doubt whatever of the existence of Mahatmas. This belief, however, he kept mainly for private consumption, and the general public had no idea that he believed in anything. With me he talked freely, for although we had been at the University together, we nevertheless continued to be firm friends. Every Saturday night I used to step across to Bruyn's laboratory, which was quite near my lodgings, and spend the evening in scientific conversation, tempered with tobacco. While I did not, and do not, believe in ghosts, I was always interested in Bruyn's theories and statements as to his ghostly experiences, and the
coolness and certainty with which he insisted that he had nearly as much knowledge of ghosts as he had of acids and alkalies occasionally staggered me.

Bruyn lived a few miles out of London, in a quiet Surrey village, where he had his chief laboratory, and conducted most of his investigations. His London laboratory was a much smaller affair, and was attached to the lecture-room where he delivered his lectures. His country house was an old one, and, according to him, simply swarmed with ghosts. He maintained that every old house harbours ghosts, although not one in ten thousand is ever visible. "You'll never find either mice or ghosts," he one day remarked, "in new houses. They seem to dislike everything that is new. On the other hand, the walls of houses that are, say, seventy-five or a hundred years old, are full of them. I have tests by which I can detect the presence of invisible ghosts, and I have by this means proved that forty or fifty ghosts come out of a single hole in the wainscoting of my bedroom every night. They are nearly all old ghosts, you understand. A ghost is usually visible so long as it is only a year or two old, but it gradually becomes more and more attenuated as it grows older, until it finally becomes completely invisible, and its presence can only be detected by delicate chemical tests."

"Why don't you publish the results of your researches into ghosts?" I asked.
"Because I don't want to be considered a lunatic by all other chemists. I mean, however, to prepare a paper on ghosts, which will be published after my death. By-the-by, you shall edit and publish it if you please, provided, of course, you are not a ghost yourself by that time. I can assure you it will make a sensation."

Bruyn scarcely ever came to my lodgings, and I was accordingly a good deal astonished when one evening he called on me, accompanied by a servant whom I had never before seen. It struck me that there was something rather odd about this servant, who glanced into my drawing-room before seating himself in the hall to wait for his master, but I thought no more of it at the time.

Bruyn was looking worn and somewhat haggard, and I asked him if anything was the matter. He assured me that he was quite well, and had only dropped in for a friendly chat, and, of course, I made him welcome. He filled up his pipe, and after smoking in silence for a few moments, said, "Do you remember that story in the 'Arabian Nights' where a fisherman uncorks a bottle, and a cloud of vapour rushes out of it, which presently condenses into the shape of an Afrite, whatever that may be?"

I told him that I remembered the story, and that I was rather surprised to find that he was addicted
to reading so unscientific a work as the "Arabian Nights."

"That story is the true record of a scientific fact, the knowledge of which has been lost for ages, but which I have rediscovered. I read the story one day when I had nothing better to do, and it gave me the hint which has led to the greatest discovery of the age. That unknown Arabian writer knew that ghosts are purely gaseous, and can be liquefied under pressure. That Afrite was simply a ghost that had been liquefied and imprisoned in a bottle. When the fisherman opened the bottle the pressure was removed, and the Afrite resumed its gaseous form. Solomon was evidently a chemist, and was acquainted with Papin's Digester, or some apparatus of the same general nature. He had discovered how to condense ghosts, and the bottle that the fisherman found sealed with Solomon's seal had been filled in Solomon's laboratory. The Biblical legend which says that Solomon was the wisest of men probably had a very substantial basis of truth."

"If ghosts consist merely of gas, as you say they do, why don't you liquefy a few?" I asked. "Liquid ghosts, put up in bottles, would have an immense sale, especially about Christmas time. 'Try our bottled ghosts at ten shillings the dozen!' Why, you could make a fortune by bottling and selling ghosts, and then, in course of time, you would be
made a baronet." I said all this thinking it a rather nice bit of sarcasm; but Bruyn answered me by taking out of his pocket a bottle which he placed in my hand.

The bottle was of the size technically known as a four-ounce bottle, and was apparently made of block tin, or, at all events, of some whitish metal.

A piece of thick but perfectly transparent glass, about an inch in diameter, was let into the lower half of the bottle, and the mouth was hermetically closed, apparently by a process of welding. There was, however, a tube, with a valve and stop-cock arrangement, running through the neck of the bottle. As for the contents, as they were visible through the glass, they consisted of about a tablespoonful of a colourless and viscid fluid of about the consistency of treacle in cold weather.

"What is this?" I said, looking from the bottle to Bruyn. "A bottled ghost?"

"Precisely," he replied. "That bottle contains the ghost of an Irish Informer who was shot from behind a hedge a year ago. His ghost came to my house, which is very popular with Irish ghosts, and when I caught him he was fully six feet high. He liquefied under a pressure of about two atmospheres more than is required to liquefy carbonic acid gas. As you see, he is now reduced to the dimensions of a tablespoonful, but if you were to turn the stop-cock
and release him, he would almost instantaneously resume his natural size and form."

"This is wonderful!" I exclaimed, more than half-believing what Bruyn so solemnly told me. "Tell me all about it."

"I have often told you," replied Bruyn, "that my house is full of ghosts. New and visible ones are constantly coming to the house. I have caught most of them, but others will come to take their places, so that the supply is not likely to fail."

"So this is really a liquefied ghost?" I said, staring at the bottle. "If you can liquefy a ghost, why can't you go further and solidify one? Then you might put them up as tabloids."

"That is what I hoped to do," he answered, "and I supposed that if I could convert a ghost into a solid substance, that substance would be an exact replica of the ghost when in the flesh. But a little reflection will show you why this is impossible. You cannot convert a ghost into a body any more than you can convert the body of a man into the three-story brick house in which he died. It is perfectly easy to solidify a ghost, provided you use the requisite amount of pressure and cold. I have repeatedly done it, but the experiment is really of no value. So long as you have your ghost in a bottle, and can preserve him indefinitely in that
condition, it is of no consequence whether he is a liquid or a solid."

"Tell me how you succeeded in bottling your ghost," I asked. "Of course, you use a bottling machine?"

"I had an immensely strong glass receiver made in the shape of a bell glass, such as we use for collecting gases, and I converted a part of the floor of my bedroom into a pneumatic trough. I ought to tell you, by the way, that, although a ghost can pass through porous stone or moderately thick wood, it cannot pass through glass. This is not merely because glass is denser than wood, but because it is a non-conductor of electricity, and in some way, which I confess I do not understand, ghosts have a peculiar association with electricity. For instance, they all come out whenever there is a thunderstorm, and I have seen half a dozen at a time in my room during a magnetic storm, when the aurora was active. But, as I was saying, I suspended my receiver from the ceiling of my room in such a way that when a ghost passed under it I could drop it over him and imprison him. The next thing was to place him in the compressing machine—one which I made myself, and which is a great improvement on Papin's. As soon as I liquefied the ghost I transferred him to a bottle and hermetically sealed it. That is all. You see that it is a very simple process."
"Does the process hurt the ghost at all?" I inquired.

"I fancy not, but it is of no consequence if it does. Sentiment cannot be allowed to stand in the way of science. I have had ghosts protest in the most violent manner against being liquefied, but, of course, I could not allow their prejudices to interfere with my experiments. Moreover, it is really a great advantage to a ghost to be liquefied and preserved in a bottle. It prolongs his ghostly existence by precisely the length of time that he is kept in the bottle. I have an American Protectionist ghost in a bottle in my laboratory. Suppose that he is kept for fifty years, what a curiosity he will be! Whereas, if I had not caught him, he would become completely dissipated, that is to say, would cease to have any visible existence, in the course of three or four years at furthest."

"It may be very interesting," said I, "to have a collection of bottled ghosts, but what practical use can you make of them?"

"That, my friend, is a very stupid question. What practical use can you make of liquefied carbonic acid gas? Yet the success of the first man who liquefied it was of immense value to science. It is my part to prove that ghosts can be liquefied. Some one else will find a practical application of the discovery. It would be possible, perhaps, to run a small motor with condensed ghosts. If you can keep up the
supply of bottled ghosts, you can utilize their expansion when released from pressure in the same way that the gas-engine utilizes the expansion caused by the repeated explosion of gas-jets."

Bruyn had much more to say on the subject, but I need not repeat it. I had never known him to be so talkative before, and at times he betrayed an irritability which I had never before noticed in him. Once or twice I wondered if he had been dining too freely, but I knew that he was the most abstemious of men, and I dismissed the idea as soon as it had occurred to me. About ten o’clock he went away, leaving the bottled Irish Informer with me as a present, but begging me under no circumstances to risk letting the ghost escape. On the doorstep he turned, and said, "Oh! in case anything should happen to me, I should like to have you publish my discovery. You can support your statements by showing the liquefied ghost that I am leaving with you. As for the other bottled ghosts in my laboratory, the chances are that my executors would throw the bottles away without troubling themselves to find out their contents."

Of course I promised that I would comply with Bruyn’s wishes, and, thanking me warmly, he went away with his attendant. The next day I learned from a paragraph in the Morning Post that "the eminent chemist, Professor Bruyn, whose mental condition
had for some time past given much uneasiness to his friends, had been sent on a long sea voyage under charge of a physician." The news, though startling, did not surprise me, when I recalled Bruyn's unusual manner the night before, and his conversation concerning bottled ghosts. There could not be a doubt that my poor friend was mad, and that his alleged discovery of the liquefaction of ghosts was purely a hallucination.

Bruyn never returned from his long journey, but died suddenly while passing through the Red Sea. His cousin, who was his only heir, took no sort of interest in chemistry, and I presume disposed of Bruyn's bottles, whether full or empty, to the junk man. At any rate, Bruyn's bottled ghosts, if he really had any in his laboratory, disappeared.

As for the bottle which Bruyn had given me, I put it away on a shelf of my library, and forgot its existence. Nearly a year after my poor friend's death I remembered the bottled ghost, and determined to investigate it. The colourless viscid liquid was still in the bottle, and I wondered what the substance could be that Bruyn in his madness had assumed to be a liquefied ghost. The stop-cock turned with some little difficulty, but I found that I could open it, and, placing the bottle on my desk, I turned the stop-cock to its furthest point. In an instant the imprisoned air rushed out with tremendous
force. I kept my eye fixed on the square of glass, and could see that the liquid swelled and flashed into vapour as the pressure under which it had been kept was removed. In its turn the vapour rushed out of the stop-cock precisely as the Afrite must have rushed out of Solomon's bottle. Instead, however, of assuming the form of a ghost—which I supposed to resemble the human form—the vapour, in a vast and formless cloud, filled the room. It was cold and suffocating, and had moreover the most intolerable smell that I had ever smelt. My cat, who had been sleeping peacefully on the rug, howled dismally, and tore round the room as if she were mad, searching for some way of escape. As for myself, I tried to reach the door, but fell in a fainting fit before I could find it.

When I came to myself the vapour had totally disappeared, having found its way out through a broken pane of glass, which had evidently been broken by the cat. The empty bottle stood on the table, and the horrible nauseating stench still lingered in the room. I threw open all the windows, and hurled the bottle into the middle of the street. Then, by dint of sprinkling carbolic acid liberally on the carpet, I succeeded in partly suppressing the stench, but it was days before the last trace of it disappeared.

Was Bruyn right, and was the vapour that I released from the bottle nothing more nor less than a
ghost? Frankly, I do not venture to decide this question. I ought, of course, to have opened the bottle in the presence of some scientific man, who could properly have investigated the thing. As to one point, however, I am sure. Either the bottle did contain the ghost of an Irish Informer, or else Bruyn had succeeded in discovering a gas giving forth the most tremendous and intolerable odour ever known in the annals of chemistry.
HOBSON'S PATENT PRESIDENTS.

The first time I saw Hobson he was sitting on the verandah of a South American hotel, with his feet on the rail in front of him. The hotel was within a stone's-throw of the presidential palace. This will perhaps enable some of my readers to identify the town in which the palace and the hotel were situated, but for reasons which will presently be obvious I do not care to mention its real name. Call it, if you choose, the capital of the republic of Orizaba. One South American republic is so much like another that their respective names are of little consequence.

I assumed from Hobson's appearance that he was a Yankee, but when the waiter brought me my coffee I asked him who the man was.

"That," replied the waiter, "is Don Obeson. He is an American of the North, and he has feet so large that if he does not often place them higher than his head all the blood in his body runs into them, and then the man faints. It is curious, but
I am told that all his countrymen suffer from the same malady."

"What is he doing here?" I asked.

"He is in the employ of the Government. He lives at the palace, and is secretary, or perhaps physician, to his Excellency. Who knows precisely! But he is a good devil."

Just at that moment I heard the rumble of carriage-wheels, and the clatter of hoofs, and presently a carriage, escorted by a troop of horse, drove past the hotel. Its sole occupant was a man in military uniform, who sat stiffly upright, and bowed mechanically, first to the right and then to the left. Some of the people in the street cried *Viva el Presidente!* but the greater part simply contented themselves with lifting their hats. As the carriage disappeared around a corner I heard a shot, and a wreath of smoke curled upwards from a window of a house.

"Shooting at him again," remarked Hobson, with an air of amusement. "Well, it pleases them and it don't hurt him."

"Is the President often shot at?" I asked.

"Oh, they generally take a shot at him every time he goes out to drive, but so far nobody has gathered him in. Most amazin' poor marksmen these South Americans."

Hobson was silent for a moment, and then he said, "What do you think of the President's manners,
sir? Do you consider that he is too stiff? Some folks do."

I replied that there did seem to be something wooden in the mechanical way in which the President bowed.

"Wooden is hardly the word," said Hobson, with a curious chuckle. "No, sir. There's mighty little wood about him. That stiff manner of his is military drill. He's been a soldier all his days, and he always carries himself as if he had swallowed a ramrod."

"You know him well?" I asked.

"Well, fair to middling. I've a berth in the palace, and see him frequently. My name is Hobson, and I'm from the States. You're English, I calculate."

I admitted that I was English, and Hobson proceeded to question me strictly as to the frequency with which the Queen and members of the Royal family are shot at. He seemed disappointed when I convinced him that shooting at monarchs and princes was not, as yet, an English custom. He remarked, sadly, that "there didn't seem to be much enterprise in England," and bidding me good-day made his way toward the palace.

Three months later my wanderings brought me to Valparaiso, and there, sitting on the hotel verandah, with his feet at least a foot higher than his head, sat Hobson. He knew me at once, and greeted me warmly. He happened to be the only English-
speaking person in the hotel, and although I knew next to nothing of the man, I was on the whole rather glad to see him. We dined at the same small table, and after dinner Hobson mentioned in the course of conversation that he had just managed with much difficulty to make his escape from Orizaba.

"What was the matter?" I asked. "I thought you had a Government position there."

"So I had," he replied, "and that was just where the trouble came in. We had a revolution there a month ago, and the shooting was pretty lively. Everybody connected with the late Government was stood up against a stone wall and shot at by a platoon of soldiers. That's what would have happened to me if I hadn't contrived to give them the slip."

"I didn't suppose that a South American revolution was quite such a serious affair," I said.

"Well, so it isn't as a general rule, but there were circumstances connected with this particular revolution that were peculiar. I don't mind if I tell you what they were, and I calculate that you'll be some surprised when you hear the whole story.

"Do you remember," he continued, "my asking you what you thought of the President, that day he drove past the hotel? You said, if I don't mistake, that he had a sort of wooden look."

"I believe I did," I replied.
Hobson laughed.

"I told you that there wasn't any wood about him, and that was the level truth. That there President that you saw that there day was made of steel, barring his face, which was wax. I made him myself, so I ought to know about him."

"Do you mean to say that the man I saw driving in the state carriage was only a steel figure?" I cried.

"That's just what I do mean to say. He was one of 'Hobson's Patent Presidents,' and he was the only President Orizaba had for eight months and a half. Though I say it who shouldn't, he was the best President that any South American republic has had for the last fifty years."

Hobson relit his extinguished cigar, and then resumed his confidences.

"As you know," he said, "a South American president never holds office more than two years. Before the end of that time either he is shot by the opposition, or he bolts to Paris with the treasury. Paris, they tell me, is full of presidents at this identical moment, and every one of them carried off the treasury when he went out of office. Now these republics are mighty poor, and if a president could manage to hold on to his office for four or five years without being shot, he could then go to Paris with double the amount of money that he generally takes with him. I was thinking over this
thing one day when it occurred to me that a shot-
proof figure that should do all the outdoor business
of a President, and take all the rifle and pistol shots,
would be just the sort of thing that South America
needs. So I set to work and invented my patent
President, a figure made of steel, and full of first-class
works, set in motion partly by clockwork, and partly
by electricity. President Rodriguez of Orizaba was
the first man I showed my invention to, and he, being
a remarkably intelligent man, was delighted with it.
He had just elected himself President, and the
opposition were bent on shooting him. Then again
the treasury was empty, and there was no prospect
that it would be in condition to be taken to Paris
under three good years at least. Now Rodriguez
was a brave man, and cared mighty little about being
shot at. He told me that, according to statistics, it
took at least fifty shots to hit a president, and of
those that did hit not more than one in twenty ever
proved fatal. I think he rather enjoyed the fun of
being shot at, just as old Castilla enjoyed it. Why
one day Castilla comes home after a long drive and
he says to his Secretary of State, 'It's a week since
a single shot has been fired at me. This want of
interest in public affairs is the curse of our country.'
But all the same, Rodriguez wanted to hold office for
three years, and bolt with a good fat treasury, so he
saw the advantage of not exposing himself to the
accident of being hit with a bullet. He made a contract with me to furnish my figure with a face exactly like his, and to live in the palace and keep the thing in order. He gave me good wages, and his cigars were prime. I have known a lot of fellows that were a good deal worse than Rodriguez.

"Well, in a short time I had my patent President in working order. There were only two men beside Rodriguez and myself who knew the secret. These were the Archbishop of Choloma, who was the President's brother—and a first-rate old chap he was—and Don Antonio something or other, I disremember his exact name, who was the President's private secretary. Every day my patent President used to go out to show himself in his carriage. The Secretary generally sat on one side of him, so that by touching a wire he could make him give a military salute when the carriage happened to meet with a general, or an admiral, or a foreign minister, or such. At other times the patent President would drive out alone, except for his footmen and guards, and then he simply bowed, first to the right and then to the left, just as you saw him doing the time you and me were in Orizaba together.

"There was rather more shooting going on at that time than the rules of the game allowed, for the Vice-President, who was a pushing and energetic man, wanted to get his chief out of the way and
step into his shoes. But after a month or two the shooting perceptibly slackened down, and the Vice-President looked mighty discouraged. My patent President was hit at least two dozen times, but of course it didn't do him no harm; and the story got round that his brother, the Archbishop, had given him a saint's bone that would prevent a sixteen-inch shell from penetrating through the President's clothes. When this got to be generally believed, people shot at him only once in a while, and then more from force of habit than with the expectation of doing any good. One day, however, a rifle-bullet struck him square in the face, and, the face being of wax, the bullet naturally passed clean through it, and killed a trooper on the off side of the carriage. The Secretary was in the carriage that day, and he had the presence of mind to lay the President down in the bottom of the carriage, and drive for home for all the horses were worth.

"Of course I was called in to repair the President, and I wondered at the time that Rodriguez himself did not come to see his wounded representative. However, Rodriguez did not show up that day, nor any other day, and I never saw him again.

"When the figure was in working order the Archbishop came to me and says—

"'My son, you're a blamed clever fellow, and that's a fact!' or words to that effect."
"'All right,' says I; 'what would your reverence be driving at? Speak up, for I'm a plain man, and I can't understand your round-about Spanish ways.'

'What I want,' says he, 'or rather what his Excellency wants—is that you should make some improvements in your miraculous figure so that it can take his Excellency's place at receptions.'

'Does he calculate that I can make the figure speak?' I asked.

'Not at all,' says the Archbishop. 'I have given out that the President's tongue was shot away the other day, and that he cannot speak under any circumstances. Now your figure could hold receptions just as well as his Excellency, provided you could make it shake hands. Can you do it?'

'Of course I can,' I said. 'Give me a little time and I'll add a hand-shaking attachment to the thing which would satisfy a Yankee politician.'

'Well, I set to work and brought that figure to such a state of perfection that it would stand up at one end of the reception-room, and, in addition to bowing for all the world like a genuine Spaniard, it would shake hands like a Christian every time the Secretary, who stood on its right hand, pressed an electric key with his foot. The Archbishop was delighted, and he told me that Rodriguez had given orders that my salary was to be raised, which accordingly it was. About a week later we had an official
reception, and everybody who was anybody came to it and shook hands with the President. They were mighty sorry, so they said, that the noble President should have been wounded in such a way that he couldn't talk, but they hoped that the Archbishop would soon pray him out of the difficulty. The Vice-President was there too, and he was as gloomy as a fellow with a first-class indigestion. Nobody had the least suspicion that the patent President wasn't Rodriguez himself, and I was proud of my work when I saw the way the thing had succeeded.

"Things went along about as usual in the palace for the next six months, and it was during this time that you were in Orizaba. Long before the end of that time my suspicions were aroused. I never saw Rodriguez, and I felt pretty sure the man was dead. Meanwhile, my patent President was filling his place in first-class style, and the New York newspapers, which my brother used to send me, frequently spoke of the great superiority of the President of Orizaba to the general run of South American presidents. There was one newspaper chap who came here to interview the President. He didn't succeed in seeing him, but he wrote a long letter, saying what a handsome man the President was, and how intelligently he talked, and what a warm interest he took in the spread of the Gospel, and in the editorials in the New York Hemisphere. I remember in particular
a remark that this newspaper chap pretended the President had made to him: 'If you could see into my heart,' says the President, 'you would see nothing but love for my fellow-men.' Now I knew that if any one were to look into the President's heart, or what acted as a heart, all he would see would be a steel spring thirty-two feet seven inches long.

"I was sorry to think that Rodriguez was probably dead, but I couldn't help feeling proud of the way my patent President was governing the country. I made up my mind that I had made the greatest invention of the age, and that in the course of the next ten years every civilized country would adopt it. You see, although I called my figures 'presidents,' the principle of the invention was applicable to emperors and kings just as well as to presidents. You can see for yourself what a big thing it would be for the Tsar if he could hand over his duties to a steel figure, and let the Nihilists heave bombs at it, and give poison to it all day long. That would make the Nihilists contented, and wouldn't do Alexander a particle of harm. I was on the point of resigning my place at the palace, and starting on a tour of the principal capitals of America and Europe with a view to the general introduction of my invention, when one evening the Archbishop comes to me looking pretty badly scared, and saying that he wanted my advice in a very important matter.
"'What is the trouble now, your reverence?' I asked.

"'It's just this,' said he. 'I can trust you, and so I'm going to tell you that my poor brother is dead. In fact, he has been dead for some time.'

"'For about eight months, I reckon,' said I.

"'Eight months and three days,' replied the Archbishop. 'He died of heart disease the very day that your wonderful figure was shot through the cheek.'

"'And of course your reverence had excellent reasons for keeping dark about your brother's death.'

"'The very best of reasons,' said he. 'The Vice-President is, as you know, an unbeliever, and a hater of the Church. He has openly said that if he were President he would seize all the Church property, and turn the clergy out of the country. This would certainly have happened had it been known that my brother was dead. It was my duty to save the country from such a calamity, and I took the only way to save it.'

"'But how did you manage when it was necessary for the President to sign a state paper?' I asked. 'My patent President is good at governing, but he can't write a single word.'

"'That was easily managed,' said the Archbishop. 'My handwriting is remarkably like my brother's, and there was so much at stake that I felt justified in signing papers with his name. But that is not
what I wanted to say. The President of Cotopaxi has sent word that he is coming here to-morrow to confer with General Rodriguez concerning the disputed boundary between Orizaba and Cotopaxi.'

"'That is middling awkward,' said I.

"'Awkward!' says the Archbishop. 'Awkward is no name for it. Just see what it involves. If the President of Cotopaxi isn't allowed to see our President he will consider himself insulted, and will go home and declare war at once. In that case, unless your wonderful figure can be made to mount a horse and lead the army, there will be a revolution at once. The people won't have anything to do with a President who doesn't take the field in time of war.'

"'I haven't the least doubt,' said I, 'that my patent President would be a great sight better general than half the generals that fought during the Civil War in the States, but it wouldn't be possible to make him manage a horse. No, your reverence! You'll have to give up the idea of having the President show himself at the head of the army.'

"'That is what I supposed,' said the Archbishop. 'Well! in that case there is nothing for it but to let the President of Cotopaxi have an interview with your patent President, and I'm afraid the interview won't be a success.'
"I knew very well it wouldn't be a success, for a steel figure that can only bow and shake hands isn't any more fit to discuss a boundary question than is an ordinary international commission. However, there was nothing for it but to oil the President's works, and to fill up his batteries, and take the chances. I set to work at once, and put him in first-class order. Then the Private Secretary and the Archbishop and I carried him into the audience room, and made him sit down at a small table. We calculated to tell the President of Cotopaxi that General Rodriguez couldn't speak on account of the loss of his tongue, and couldn't stand on his feet on account of an attack of paralysis. It was just possible that the Cotopaxi chap would believe this. If he didn't, why then there would be big trouble.

"The next day the President of Cotopaxi arrived an hour before we had expected him, and consequently there was no one to fire a salute in his honour—the soldiers being all occupied with their noon nap. The Archbishop met him, and he was shown into the audience room where I was standing on one side of my President, and the Private Secretary was standing on the other. Old Cotopaxi was a man of about sixty years of age, and about as nervous and bad-tempered as they make 'em. However, he said he was very sorry to see His Excellency
in such a suffering condition, and after shaking hands with him he sat down at the table, and unrolling a map began to parade his views about the boundary question. My President bowed from time to time, and the Cotopaxi chap thought he was getting along swimmingly, when suddenly a cannon was fired just under the window. You see the guard had waked up, and the captain had ordered them to fire thirty guns in honour of the distinguished visitor. Now old Cotopaxi was a brave man, as most South Americans are, but, as I said, he was a very nervous man. When he heard that gun he sprang up in such a tremendous hurry that he upset the table. The edge of it hit my President across the chest, and knocked him backward. It all happened so quick that neither I nor the Secretary had the presence of mind to catch the President. The consequence was that he struck the stone floor with his head, and lay there with his legs sticking up straight and stiff into the air. This wasn't the worst of it. Whether there was a flaw in the President's neck, or whether somebody had been tampering with it, I never knew; but whatever was the reason, the fall caused the President's head to break loose, and it rolled half-way across the floor. For about a second the President of Cotopaxi was evidently horrified. Then he grasped the situation, and a madder man you never saw. He
tried to say something to the Archbishop, but he couldn't speak, and so, after waving his hands above his head as if he was calling on the thunder to strike us, he rushed out of the room, mounted his horse, and galloped off.

"The Archbishop sat in a chair the picture of despair. About a dozen generals and cabinet ministers and servants and such had run into the room, supposing that the Cotopaxi chap had assassinated our President, and of course they weren't very long in taking in the situation. I knew there was no time to be lost, so I quietly slipped out, and in half an hour was on my way to the frontier disguised as a Franciscan monk. That afternoon the Vice-President seized the palace, and arrested every one of Rodriguez' friends. The next morning most of them were tried by court-martial and shot, the Archbishop among the number. I never liked the Vice-President, but I will say that when it came to conducting a revolution he was no slouch.

"That's the story of my experiences in Orizaba, and here I am, waiting for the next boat to Panama, and with just money enough to pay my passage. I calculate to try Europe next time. I shall take half a dozen patent emperors and kings with me, and I don't doubt that I can introduce them there. There's a fortune in that invention of mine, and I'm bound
to have it. Well, if you feel that you must be going, we'll just have a glass of Chartreuse for luck. Much obliged to you for listening to my yarn. It's done me a lot of good to have a square talk with a white man."
THE FATAL EARS.

This story was told to me by a fellow-passenger on board a Royal Mail steamer. I cannot positively assert that it is true, but the man was a serious, slow-speaking North Briton, who seemed to be entirely incapable of inventing even the mildest falsehood. Indeed, his apparent truthfulness, if it was assumed, would have stamped him as an actor of marvellous ability. For my part, I have not the slightest doubt that he told the truth.

"At the time this happened, sir," he began, "I was the mate of a blockade-runner that carried cotton from Charleston to Nassau, and brought back all sorts of things such as the Southerners were short of. We used to calculate that one successful run would pay the owners about three times the cost of the vessel, and the Clyde, which was a mighty lucky boat, must have coined money, for she made nine passages before the Federals sunk her. She was a small iron steamer of about six hundred tons that had been built to run on the Clyde. Naturally, she
wasn't exactly fitted for to grapple with a hurricane, but we never met any heavy weather during the time I was in her.

"The captain's name was Johnston, and he said he was a Nova-Scotian. But I never believed him. He was a Yankee, if there ever was one. Most times he'd speak as good English as me or you, sir, but now and then he'd forget himself, and talk Yankee till he'd make your ears buzz. Of course, he wasn't going to admit that he was helping the enemy that his people were at war with, and, besides, he had to pretend to be an Englishman in order to be master of an English ship; but for all that he was nothing more than a cold-blooded Yankee who wanted money, and would stop at nothing to get it. I don't know as I had anything particular against him. He always treated me well enough, and I will say that a better sailor and braver man never walked. Blockade-running was a mighty ticklish business, and the captain of a blockade-runner had to have nerve. If you was to size a man up according to the amount of nerve he carried, all I can say is that Captain Johnston would have had to give time allowance to any man I ever knew. One queer thing about him was that he was fond of talking about being a humane man, and treating everybody with kindness. But I never saw the time when he was ready to practise what he preached."
I don't mean as far as concerned the men, for he used to say that the only true kindness you could show a sailor was to teach him to know his place, which he mostly did with a belaying pin. But I never saw any signs of the captain's kindness to anybody, and it's my belief that he would have let his own father drown—provided the old man and a cotton bale had been overboard at the same time, and only one could have been picked up.

"Well, one night, when we were all ready to leave the dock at Charleston, the captain came aboard with a passenger. It was the first time we had ever carried a passenger, for the old man calculated that a passenger took up as much room as a cotton bale, and was worth a good deal less. This chap must have paid pretty handsome before Johnston consented to take him, but there he was, and Johnston told me that he was to sleep in my room, and was willing to pay me fifty dollars for the privilege. I didn't make any objection, and it wouldn't have done any good if I had; besides, I wanted that fifty dollars, though I never saw a penny of it. The passenger was a little cadaverous-looking chap, that might have deserted from a graveyard, and when I looked at him he struck me as being remarkably over-sparred about the head. Looking at him again when he took his hat off, I saw that his head was about the usual size, but that he had the most
enormous pair of ears that any man ever carried, unless it was the Chinese giant. I didn't particularly like the chap's appearance, and I concluded that he'd done something that made him amazingly anxious to get away from Charleston, or else he wouldn't have been willing to pay Johnston the money that his passage must have cost.

"We dropped down the bay that night, feeling our way with the lead, for it was as dark a night as they make, and of course there were no lights in the lighthouses. We got safely across the bar, and went creeping down the coast at quarter-speed, showing no lights whatever, and taking our chances of piling up on a sandbank. We could see the blockaders in the offing, and counted the usual number of them, which was satisfactory, for we knew them all, and there wasn't one of them that could do more than twelve knots, while the Clyde was good for fifteen. All Johnston was ever afraid of was that the Federals might wake up some day and send a fast boat down to Charleston that would stand some chance in chasing a blockade-runner.

"None of the Federal boats sighted us, and when we had put about ten miles between us and the most southerly of the fleet, we starboarded our helm, pulled the throttle wide open, and let her go. We had all our lights carefully covered, but the nearest blockader saw the reflection from our funnel, and it
wasn't long before we noticed that she was after us. However, that didn't disturb us any. There wasn't any moon, and we felt certain that the Yankee couldn't catch us. The only thing that made me in the least anxious was that the glass had been going down for the last twenty-four hours, and I wanted to get into Nassau harbour before it should come on to blow, the *Clyde* being, as I have said, not fit for heavy weather.

"I promised to let the passenger know when we were clear of the blockaders," said Johnston, 'and I'd like it if you would go below, Mr. Ford, and tell him that one of the Yankees is in chase of us, and will probably overhaul us. The man's paid his money, and he is entitled to good treatment.'

"I knew that if the passenger was nervous he wouldn't be pleased to hear that we were chased. However, that wasn't my business. 'Very good, sir,' said I, 'I'll just step down and tell him how things are. What do you make him out to be?' You see, Johnston and I used to talk quite familiar, seeing as neither of us had any one else to talk to.

"'It's my opinion,' said Johnston, 'that he's a low-lived, dirty Federal spy, who has just saved his neck by getting out of Charleston.'

"'Then he wouldn't mind being captured by the Yankees!' said I.
"'That's so!' said Johnston. 'Come to think of it, he can't be a spy, for he is terribly afraid of the blockaders. Most likely he's murdered somebody—a woman, for choice—he hasn't the pluck to murder a man.'

'I found the passenger—I didn't know his name then, and I don't know it now—sitting on the edge of the lower berth, and looking as a man might look who had been sea-sick a week, and then ordered on deck to be swung at the yardarm of a blubber-boiling whaler.

'What is the news, Mr. Mate?' says he. 'Do you think we shall be captured?'

'Not this time,' said I. 'There ain't a blockader within ten miles of us, and in an hour more there won't be one above the horizon.'

'Is this really true?' said the man. 'For Heaven's sake, don't deceive me.'

'Look out of the port-hole,' says I. 'That light you see is the nearest of the Yankees, and she'll never be nearer than she is at this minute.'

'The man tried to look out and see the light, but somehow he didn't seem able to find it. So what does he do but jam his head through the port-hole, and look all round the northern horizon. When he had satisfied himself that I had told the truth, he started to draw his head back, and then he found out his mistake. You see, his head and the port-
hole made a pretty tight fit, and he'd had a good deal of difficulty in squeezing his head through it; but now, when he tried to get it back again, his ears acted like the flukes of a lily iron, and stood out so wide and stiff that they held him fast with his head outside of the ship. I wasn't noticing him particular at the time, for I was looking for my pipe, and I didn't at first hear his voice, but after a bit I made out that some one was hailing me in a sort of distant and smothered voice, and I began to understand that the passenger was singing out for help.

"'What's wrong with you?' says I. 'Why don't you pull your head in, and say what you want to say like a Christian?'

"'I can't get my head back,' says he; 'I'm caught in a trap. For mercy's sake help me, or else call the captain.'

"'There ain't no captain required,' says I, 'and if there was, he's on the bridge, and wouldn't quit it for no passenger. You brace your feet and arms against the ship's side, and give a good strong pull and you'll fetch clear.'

"He did so, but he couldn't start his head, and he said that the pain was fearful. 'It's my ears,' says he, 'that's holding me. If it wasn't for them I could manage it.'

"'What do you want with ears like those?' says I. 'I was wondering when I first clapped eyes on
you how you managed to carry those ears in a gale of wind without capsizing. They're suited for a man of about four times your tonnage, and even he would only carry them in light breezes—that is, if he was a careful man.'

"I don't want to hear about my ears," says the passenger. 'I want to know what I am to do. I can't stay here till we get into Nassau.'

"No more you won't," says I. 'The old man would impute your head sooner than take this ship into Nassau harbour with such a head sticking out of a port-hole. Let me take a pull at you, and see what I can do.'

"With that I got a good hold of the man around the middle, and hauled away till he sung out that I was killing him; but I couldn't see as I had started his head the least bit in the world.

"Just then the cabin-boy came below, and told me that the captain wanted to see me on the bridge. We hadn't set the watches yet, for we always kept all hands on deck till we were clear of the blockaders, and as it was getting towards eight bells I supposed that the old man wanted me to take the midnight watch.

"As soon as I put my head out of the companion-way, I saw what was the matter.

"The blockader that was chasing us had either gained on us or had been trimming her lamps, for
her light was brighter than it had been when I went below.

"'They've had the blasted impudence to put a new ship on the station,' says Johnston, 'and she's overhauling us so fast that she'll begin firing at us before morning. Heave our deck-load over at once, Mr. Ford, and send the engineer to me.'

"We had about ten thousand dollars' worth of cotton bales on deck, but we didn't lose a minute in getting them overboard. I heard the old man tell the chief engineer that he must get at least two more revolutions out of her, or burst his boiler.

"By the time she was relieved of her deck-load, the engineer had got his safety-valve lashed down, and had hove a lot of paraffin into the furnaces, and she was tearing along at a rate that was bound to leave the Yankee behind—that is, if our boilers and engine could stand the racket.

"When we couldn't make out that the Yankee was gaining, though she held her place astern of us without falling back an inch, I told Johnston what was the matter with the passenger, and you never saw a madder man. He was always mighty particular about the appearance of his ship, and if ever he caught an Irish pennant flying anywhere, he would find the man that he judged would serve to be responsible for it, and lay him out with a belaying-
pin. The idea that his ship should be disgraced by having that passenger's ugly head rove through a port-hole was more than he could stand, and the language he used about that chap's conduct was something wonderful.

"It was then close on to one o'clock. The port-watch was sent below, and, leaving the second mate on the bridge, Johnston and I went below to see the passenger. He was still in the same position, and Johnston, after relieving his mind for about ten minutes, sent for four men, and ordered them to haul away till they hauled the man's head clear.

"The men hauled with a will, but after the passenger had fainted dead away, Johnston saw that it was of no use, and sent the men on deck again.

"'I'm not going to be beat by any man's sulky obstinacy,' says Johnston. 'I'm master here, and I'll allow no heads outside of my port-holes. Mr. Ford, when daylight comes you'll send a man over the side in a bow-line to seize that fellow's ears close to his head, and to empty a slush-bucket over him. You might give him a little breakfast, for I don't want to have any man treated unkindly aboard this ship. If you can't pull him clear with his ears seized down and his head slushed, I'll have the carpenter cut his ears off before we get to Nassau.'

"With that, Johnston went to his room and turned in, and I did the same. The second mate had orders
to call the captain in case the blockader should seem to be gaining on us; but Johnston knew that there couldn’t be much alteration in the relative position of the two ships before eight bells, and he wasn’t the man to lose his sleep when there wasn’t any necessity for it.

“When I went below at four o’clock the blockader was hanging astern of us in just about the same place, and when I came on deck again at eight o’clock she was still sticking to us without having gained or lost anything during the night.

“I had a man seize the passenger’s ears close down to the side of his head, as the captain had ordered, and I also saw to it that his head and neck were well slushed. The man was in low spirits, as was natural but he revived after I had lowered some brandy to him, and seen that the sailor poured it into the right mouth. Then I sent the carpenter down below with two hands and orders to pull the man’s head clear, if it could be done without unshipping it. I was in hopes that this time the passenger’s troubles would be over, but the carpenter came back after a few minutes, and reported that if I wanted to get the man free without losing his head I must try some other plan.

“I had done all I could do, so I waited till Johnston came on deck, and asked him for further orders.
"Johnston went to the side, and hailing the man, asked him in a mighty polite way if he'd be so very kind as to take his head in, and quit making his ship ridiculous in the way he was doing.

"The passenger seemed cheered up a little by Johnston's friendly tone, and asked him if he would order the carpenter or the engineer, or somebody, to cut away the plates around the port-hole, and so make it large enough for him to draw his head out.

"Then Johnston said that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to satisfy the least wish of any passenger, but if anybody thought that he, Johnston, was idiot enough to make a breach in the side of his ship just at the time that a cyclone was coming up, that man was altogether the biggest variety of combined idiot, and thief, and off-scouring of the earth that ever insulted a decent ship by boarding her in a state of drunkenness in order to escape being arrested for murdering his mother. I don't mean to say that those were Johnston's exact words, but they will give you a sort of general idea of the discouraging way in which he talked. He wound up by telling the passenger that he would give him just one hour more to take his head out and close the port-hole, and if at the end of that time he hadn't obeyed orders, his ears would be cut off, and his head would be driven back with a handspike."
"By this time a swell began to set in from the south'ard, and the *Clyde* naturally began to roll a little. Now she was so low in the water that she didn't need to roll more than about ten degrees to put her port-holes under water. I was going to point out to Johnston that if the swell was to increase, the chances were that the passenger would be drowned, when all of a sudden our engines stopped. Something had got overheated, and the engineer stopped her to give the machinery time to cool off.

"I don't suppose we were lying there over half an hour, but considering that the blockader was coming up hand over fist, at the rate of fifteen knots an hour, it seemed as if it was three or four hours before we started up again.

"Of course, neither Johnston nor I thought of the passenger while we were lying still and watching the Yankee growing bigger and bigger. Similarly, of course, the ship rolled a good deal more after the engines were stopped than she did while she was under way. The long and short of it was, that after we had been going ahead again at full speed for an hour or so, and it was plain that the blockader wasn't gaining, I happened to think of the passenger, and went to see how the rolling of the ship had affected him. His head was out of the port-hole as usual, but he was as dead as if he had been drowned a thousand years ago by Noah himself.
"The next morning the blockader was out of sight having lost us during the night; and, by another piece of good luck, we got into Nassau before the cyclone, whose swell had reached us, caught up with us.

"We had to tear the inside of my cabin pretty well to pieces, for Johnston said that he owed it to the memory of the dead man to treat his remains with respect, and not to use any barbarous measures in disposing of them. So we cut the rivets of the plate that was used for a port-hole, and hove the man overboard with the plate still round his neck as a sinker.

"The next voyage we found out that the chap was a murderer, as Johnston had suspected. He had poisoned his wife, and, consequently, drowning was too good for him. However, he has always served as a warning to me against wearing ears four sizes too large; and when my first little boy was born, and his ears seemed to me to be a misfit, I used to rub them every day till they got down to the proper size. That's the only time I ever knew of a man who managed to get his head through a port-hole, and, so far as the man was concerned, I feel easy in saying that it was a failure."
LOUISE.

I had always maintained that Oswell was a man of genius, and that he was wasting his time and his abilities in the hack work of daily journalism. He lived only a few doors from me, and I had frequent opportunities of preaching to him from the above text. In time my sermons had their effect. Oswell began to write short stories, and these were soon recognized as among the best short stories of the day.

At first he insisted that his success as a story-writer was a mere fluke; but he gradually came to perceive that he had found his true vocation. He abandoned journalistic work and shut himself up in order to write a novel. He was at all times an extremely industrious and hardworking man; but, as he became more and more interested in his novel, he worked almost incessantly, and I saw very little of him. One evening, just after dinner, he came into my office, where I usually took my after-dinner cigar, and said—
"Doctor, I have come to consult you. I think that I am either insane already, or in immediate danger of becoming insane."

"I can assure you at once that you are not in the least danger of insanity," said I. "When a man is sane enough to know that he is insane, he is perfectly sane."

"That is rather too much of a paradox to be convincing," he replied. "Wait till you hear what I have to tell you. You will then find either that I am insane, or that the age of miracles has returned."

"Take a cigar first," said I, "and let me assure you that you have the eye and the temperature of a particularly sane and healthy man. However, let us hear what you have to say."

"You know, of course," began Oswell, "that about six months ago I undertook to write a novel for Peters and Sons, and to deliver the manuscript on the first of May next. That gave me only eight months in which to do the work, and as I was anxious to do something that would attract attention, I have been hard at work ever since."

"Now you know I have never been a conceited ass, whatever other varieties of an ass I may have been. But I assure you that I have been doing good work. I have a plot that is absolutely new, and I have done my very best to make my characters live men and women."
"Have you succeeded in that?" I asked, as Oswell paused, and seemed to be at a loss what to say next.

"Altogether too well, at least in one instance," he replied. "It is that very fact that brings me here. Can you imagine an author writing of a girl so long and so intently that he finally falls in love with her?"

"Anything is possible provided it is sufficiently idiotic," I replied.

"Of course, of course," he answered hastily. "I know that it was idiotic, but for all that the girl grew to seem so absolutely alive to me that I ended by loving her. In the first place, she is more beautiful than any woman whom you or I ever saw. I made her, and I ought to know. By-the-by, did you ever try to see in imagination the face of the heroine of any novel—without the assistance of an artist, I mean? Try it, and you will find that it is impossible. You may say to yourself that the girl has eyes and hair of such a colour, that her mouth is small or large, and that she has any sort of nose you choose. Do your best, and you cannot make a mental portrait that will be visible to you. The utmost you can do will be to perceive that the girl is either short or tall, plump or thin. Her face will be for ever hidden from you."

"Admitting all this," said I, "what has it to do with your heroine?"
"Only this, that long before I saw her, her face was perfectly familiar to me, even her changes of expression and tricks of manner. Of all the flesh-and-blood women whom I have known there is not one whom I can see in memory half as clearly as I could see Louise. It was not merely her wonderful beauty that fascinated me. There was a charm about her that I cannot define; but that to me was irresistible. And then I could not but love her for her nobility of character. Doctor, I tell you that a better, more sincere, more fearless, more high-minded, more noble woman never lived. No man who knew her could have helped loving her, and who could ever know her as well as I, her creator? Now do you think I am insane?"

"I think you are very lucky in not being a married man," I replied. "If there was a Mrs. Oswell, Mademoiselle Louise would seriously complicate things."

"But," urged Oswell, "does what I have said shake your faith in my sanity?"

"Not in the least. Haven't I always maintained that you are a man of genius, and as such you have a right to indulge in little eccentricities? If that is all you have to tell me, I shall still continue to insist that you are sane."

"That is not all. What would you say if I told you that I had actually seen Louise with my own eyes?"
"I should say that you had been working too hard, and needed a rest. Seeing spectres is by no means a rare result of overwork. It does not mean that the man who sees them is insane, but that there is some slight insanity—in other words, derangement—of the optic nerve or the retina. If you have begun to see spectres, you will, if you keep on working, hear voices before long. Even then you will not be insane. But take my advice, and knock off work for two or three months, and you will find that Mademoiselle Louise will vanish."

"I am not sure that I want her to vanish, even if that were to be the price of my sanity. But let me tell you how it is that she appears to me. Perhaps you will change your mind as to the spectral theory.

"About two months ago I was working at my book one evening. It must have been about ten o'clock. If you remember, my desk stands in the centre of the room, and there is a mirror directly opposite to it. I happened to lift my eyes and I saw a woman's figure reflected, as I thought, in the mirror. I looked hastily around, but there was no woman in the room. I looked again at the mirror, and saw the woman so plainly that I recognized her as Louise, in spite of the fact that both her face and figure seemed filmy and semi-transparent. She was looking at me, and I thought I could perceive a
smile on her lips. I sprang to my feet and went towards the mirror, but the vision suddenly dis-appeared.

"After satisfying myself that the door was shut, and that it could not be opened from the outside without a key, I sat down again at my desk, a good deal startled. I did not for an instant suppose that the vision was anything but an hallucination, due either to overwork, or, perhaps, to indigestion. So, after having convinced myself that it was a matter of no consequence, but that it would be wiser to do no more work that night, I put out my lamp and went to bed.

"The next night I glanced several times at the mirror as I was working, but it showed me nothing except my own face. After a while I got up, intending to rest myself for a few moments by walking up and down the floor. There, directly in front of me, at the other end of the room, I saw Louise.

"This time the vision seemed much less filmy and unsubstantial than it had seemed the first time that I saw it. Still either the figure or the air of the room between it and me wavered as heated air wavers, and I could distinctly see that the outer edges of the woman's dress were transparent. I had no sensation of fear. How could I have had when I saw before me a woman whom I knew so completely, and whom I loved? I went towards her with
outstretched arms, and with a cry on my lips. This time she did not immediately vanish. I seemed to be nearly touching her, and almost on the point of clasping her in my arms, when she melted away, and I found myself alone again."

"There is a steamer to the Cape next Saturday," I said, as Oswell paused again. "Take it, and don't put pen to paper for the next six months."

"Since that night," continued Oswell, without noticing my interruption, "I have seen Louise every night. Gradually her figure has taken more and more of the apparent solidity of actual life. She approaches close to me, and sometimes she puts her arms about my neck. I cannot feel them, but I can see them. I put my arms around her, and I clasp nothing that is tangible. It is only to the sense of sight that she is perceptible.

"She does not speak, but she understands what I say. In her eyes and her expression there is all the vivacity that an actual woman could show. That she loves me there cannot be a shadow of doubt. I can look through her eyes down into her soul. She stands by my desk while I write, and knows without reading it what I am writing of her. Between us there is the most perfect communion of thought. As I said, she is intangible, but for all that, our souls have kissed one another."

The passion in the man's voice startled me. For
the first time I began to think it possible that he was really insane. However, I had, through long experience, gained some little reputation in the treatment of nervous disorders, and I felt reasonably sure that whatever hallucinations Oswell might have his brain was as yet free from disease.

"Oswell, old man," I said, "there is nothing in the world the matter with you except overwork. Your spectre will disappear as soon as you have given yourself a long rest. Go to the Cape, or, better still, round the world. You'll come back another man. Stay here and work as you have been working, and I won't answer for the consequences."

"You still insist," said Oswell, "that Louise is what you call a spectre and not a visible spirit?"

"Certainly I do. There cannot be the least doubt as to the young person's composition. I have in my library records of a number of cases of men who have been temporarily haunted by spectres. You may read them if you choose."

"I wish I could convince myself that you are either right or wrong. I know that Louise exists and is visible to me; but at the same time I have a constant fear that she does not exist, and that I am a prey to an insane delusion. Can you understand how a man can fully believe and fatally doubt at one and the same time?"

"You are an amateur photographer, if I remember
rightly,” I said. “Now with the help of your camera you can easily prove whether Mademoiselle Louise is real or spectral. Have your camera ready the next time she shows herself, and make a photograph of her. If she is substantial enough to impress the retina of your eye, she is substantial enough to impress a photographic plate. If you find nothing on the plate after developing it, you will be convinced that your spectre has no objective existence. Am I not right?”

“Thank you,” said Oswell. “I accept the test. But what will you say if I am able to bring you a photograph of Louise? Would that shake your faith in your theory?”

“There will be time enough to discuss that question when you bring me the photograph,” I replied. “I have no fears as to what the result will be. Take your passage for the Antipodes, and in the mean time I’ll give you a draft that may be of use to you, though complete cessation from work is the one thing that you need.”

I did not see Oswell the next day, and I felt sure that he stayed away because he did not want to admit that the photographic test had proved me to be in the right. However, on the day following he burst into my office early in the morning, and I saw from his look that something more than usual had happened.
"Well?" I said. "Sit down and tell me what your spectre thinks of photography. I am afraid that she doesn't approve of it."

"Look at that," said he, handing me an unmounted photograph that was as yet hardly dry.

I looked at it and saw the photograph of a young woman, who, I don't hesitate to say, must have been more beautiful than any woman since Helen of Troy.

"That is Louise," said Oswell. "I photographed her yesterday afternoon, and this is the result. Now what do you think of our test?"

"What do I think?" I said. "I think, or rather I know, that some one is playing a contemptible practical joke on you. Your spectre is more real than I supposed she was—that is to say, she is just exactly as real as Pepper's ghost. I was right in the first place when I said that I could see no signs of mental derangement about you. We'll unearth the young woman who poses as a ghost in your room, and find out who her confederate is. You needn't quit work, after all."

"I know perfectly well how Pepper's ghost is produced," replied Oswell. "It would be an absolute impossibility to produce it in my room. Besides, where in London or elsewhere is the woman who could pose for that photograph? Do you imagine that she could exist without being famous the world over for her beauty?"
I argued with him warmly and at some length, for I was, of course, confident, now that I had seen the photograph, that he was the victim of a trick. But it was impossible to shake his conviction that Louise, as he called her, was the visible projection of his creative thought.

Other patients beginning to arrive, I was forced to dismiss him, and he went away, promising me that in a day or two I should make a thorough inspection of his room.

I went to see him the next afternoon. As he said, it did not seem possible, in view of the situation and furniture of his room, that even the cleverest trickster could have produced, without detection, the figure of the woman whose photograph Oswell had made. I felt myself completely baffled, though I still believed that the apparition was capable of explanation as the work of a practical joker. Oswell, now that the last shadow of doubt as to the character of his beautiful visitor had faded from his mind, seemed curiously silent and thoughtful.

As I left him he made a remark which did not strike me particularly at the time, but which I afterwards remembered. He said that Louise had assured him that in the other world they would be always together, and that the sense of her intangibility would no longer trouble him.

For the next three days I was absent from London,
having been called away to the North for a consultation. On the morning of my return I was shocked to read in the paper that Oswell had committed suicide.

I went immediately to his rooms and found that the report was true. The coroner's inquest had already been held, and a verdict had been found to the effect that he had committed suicide by taking cyanide of potassium—a chemical which he sometimes used in his photographic operations.

Nothing could be found of the book upon which he had been working, but from the presence of ashes in the grate it was plain that he had been burning papers. He had no relatives and few friends, and in a very short time London had forgotten that such a man ever existed.

I alone knew that he had gone voluntarily to his death, in the hopes of joining the woman whom he believed his brain had created.

Of the absolute truthfulness of Oswell it is impossible for me to entertain a doubt. I should, of course, believe that his "Louise" was merely the result of a mental hallucination, were it not for the photograph. With that evidence before me, how was it possible for me to doubt that there was some degree of objective reality in the vision? On the other hand, the explanation which he gave of the matter was certainly incredible. I often think of
Oswell's remark, that he believed and doubted at one and the same time. I believe that "Louise" was born into visibility by the intense action of Oswell's brain, and I believe that this explanation is both incredible and impossible—a circumstance which goes to support my theory that a man can believe with one lobe of his brain something that the other lobe utterly rejects.
BROWN'S WIDOWS.

Nearly every American city possesses an ornamental cemetery. The city itself may be monotonous and gloomy, but the cemetery is bright and attractive. Americans seem to think that people have no time to admire what is picturesque or beautiful while they are alive and there is money to be made by attention to business. When, however, they reach the leisure of the grave, they are able to appreciate beautiful landscapes and artistic tombstones, and accordingly the surviving relatives see to it that their dead are laid to rest among trees and flowers and the ablest efforts of American stone-cutters.

I was visiting the cemetery of a populous western city, and the keeper of the cemetery was escorting me through the place, and pointing out the tombs of what he called "our leading corpses." Presently we came to a grave provided with two tombstones, and the keeper requested me to note that each tombstone purported to have been erected "To the Memory of James Brown, Esq., by his Sorrowing Wife." On
one stone the sorrowing wife was described as "Jane" and on the other as "Eliza."

"There's a rather sing'lar story connected with that there grave," said the keeper, "and I don't know but that you might find it some interestin'."

I assured him that I should be delighted to hear it, and accordingly he told me the following narrative of the late Mr. Brown and his two widows.

"Thishyer James Brown was one of our leadin' citizens in his day," began the keeper. "He kept the Eureka saloon down in Twelfth Avenue, and he was alderman of his ward, and Grand Commander of the Knight Templars, and a whole lot of things besides. About a year before he died he got a divorce from his wife Jane Brown, and married a young woman from Chicago by the name of Eliza Something or another. Those were the two wives that are supposed to have put up the two tombstones, and they gave me more trouble than any two women ever gave me before or since. To tell the truth I haven't got out of the woods yet.

"Two years ago Jim Brown died very sudden. The coroner's jury made out that he died by accident, but I have my own opinion about that. When you find a man lyin' behind his bar, with the back of his head cut open, and a broken decanter lyin' alongside of him, you may say, if you want to, that he accidentally hit himself with the decanter, but you can't get many
people to believe it. The fact was, there was an election comin’ off just about that time, and Jim’s party didn’t want to have the affair inquired into for reasons of their own.

“Well! Jim had a first-class funeral, one of the biggest funerals this town ever saw, and we calculate that we can get up a more attractive funeral here than they can in Chicago or New York. The harmony of the proceedings came near being disturbed by the dispute between Mrs. Jane—the first wife, you remember—and Mrs. Eliza, the second wife, as to which should ride next to the hearse. Mrs. Eliza said that, seein’ as she was the actual wife of the deceased at the time of his death, she had the right to be chief mourner, and was entitled to all the privileges of such; but Mrs. Jane allowed that she’d been the wife of the remains a good many years before the other wife ever saw him, and she held that the bulk of the mournin’ belonged by rights to her. However, the parson, he calmed the two women down, and proposed, as a compromise, that Mrs. Eliza should ride with him in his one-horse buggy next to the hearse, and that Mrs. Jane should follow in a two-horse barouche with a driver in livery. Everybody said that nothing could be fairer, and the women agreed to the compromise when they found out that they couldn’t keep up their dispute without depriving the public of a funeral that a
good many people had come ten or twelve miles to enjoy.

"The next day, at about nine o'clock in the morning, Mrs. Jane came down to the cemetery with a basket full of flowers, which she proceeded to plant on the dear departed's grave. It made a very pretty show when it was done, the flowers being mostly roses and white lilies, with violets sprinkled in between. When Mrs. Jane had got through, she says to me, 'Well, I reckon that the remains will know now who was his real wife. He won't find that hussy goin' to no expense about his grave now that she's got his money, and is lookin' out for a new husband.' But that very afternoon up drives Mrs. Eliza, with about twice as many flowers as the previous wife had planted. When she saw what Mrs. Jane had done, she turned as red as a peony, and settin' down her basket, she turned to and pulled every blessed one of Mrs. Jane's flowers up by the roots, and told me to give 'em to the pigs. Then she set out peonies and forget-me-nots and sunflowers and such till the grave looked like a first-class horticultural exhibition.

"'Some people have a lot of impudence,' she says to me, as she was goin' away. 'That creature has no more right to fool round this grave than a total stranger would have. It would be a pretty state of things if every man's divorced wife were to
undertake to mourn for him. A nice place this cemetery would be, with from two to six wives mournin' for every man that is buried here!'

"With that she marches away with her head in the air, and I could see that she was as determined a woman, after her style, as Mrs. Jane was in her way.

"The next mornin' Mrs. Jane comes down to see how her flowers were getting on, and when she saw what Mrs. Eliza had done she was the maddest woman I ever saw, and I haven't been married for goin' on forty years without knowing how mad a woman can get. She just yanked those flowers up and trampled on 'em as if they were so many snakes, and lays in a fresh stock of lilies and roses and plants them on the grave, talkin' to me all the time about Mrs. Eliza in a tone that must have made the corpse congratulate himself that he was in no danger of gettin' mixed up in the trouble—that is, of course, provided he heard her remarks.

"By this time the boys had got wind of what was goin' on, and they took a heap of interest in it. They knew that Mrs. Eliza wasn't the sort of woman to knock under to anybody, and they calculated that there was goin' to be a long and exciting struggle. Bettin' was just about even, with, perhaps, trifling odds on Mrs. Jane, owin' to her havin' shot one of her earliest husbands, and having thus established a
character as a determined and courageous woman. Of course Mrs. Eliza came round to the cemetery that afternoon, and, of course, she pulled up Mrs. Jane's second batch of flowers, and planted a new lot of peonies and sunflowers. That stone wall yonder was just lined with the boys, who gave her a cheer when she appeared, and pretended they were all on her side, though at least half of them were bettin' on the other woman. But that's just the way with our boys. Sport is what they go in for, and they'd rather lose a bet any day than not have something exciting to bet on.

"Well, things went on this way for about a week, neither side gaining any clear advantage, but the flower dealers makin' money out of the situation hand over fist. About the end of the week, Mrs. Jane comes to me and asks what I would charge to dig up the remains and bury them quietly in another part of the cemetery. At first I objected to taking any hand in the matter, but she showed me that it was the only way to prevent strife and hard feeling, and I agreed with her that it was a pity that Jim couldn't be left at peace in his grave without having two women quarrellin' over it every day. So I finally agreed to her proposal, and that night I and a couple of Chinamen dug Jim up and planted him again over in the north-west corner of the cemetery —there where you see the statue of the girl hangin'
by her feet from a trapeze. By-the-by, that is a wonderful statue, and it was erected in memory of a girl that used to do the trapeze act, and was killed by a fall while the circus was giving a performance here. She was mighty popular with the boys, and they just chipped in and ordered a first-class marble statue and erected it over her grave.

"The day after I had removed Jim, Mrs. Eliza came down as usual in the afternoon and pulled up Mrs. Jane's flowers, and planted her own, remarkin', as she generally did, that she was prepared to plant fresh flowers every afternoon for the rest of her natural life, and she guessed, seein' as she was ten years younger than that creature, she'd outlive her, and come out ahead in the matter of decoratin' Jim's grave.

"The public were considerably astonished to find that Mrs. Jane didn't show up in the cemetery the next morning. She came down, however, in the afternoon, at the time that Mrs. Eliza generally came, and of course the two met. Mrs. Eliza was astonished to find that her flowers hadn't been pulled up, and she natually thought that Mrs. Jane had thrown up the sponge. But Mrs. Jane was as lively as ever. She sat on the fence with the boys and kept on makin' sarcastic observations to Mrs. Eliza. She said that she calculated to take a rest for a few days before resuming the sad pleasure of mournin' at the tomb of the deceased, but when she got good
and ready she would astonish Mrs. Eliza more than she had ever been astonished in the whole course of her life. Then she made observations about peonies and sunflowers, mentioning that they were the very flowers that the remains had always hated, though of course his last wife hadn’t been well enough acquainted with him to know his tastes. There wasn’t a day for the next month that Mrs. Eliza didn’t come down every afternoon to water and attend to her flowers, and every time she found Mrs. Jane there in the very best of spirits. It seemed to amuse Mrs. Jane mightily to see Mrs. Eliza ornamentin’ the grave where Jim wasn’t, and she took so much pleasure in seeing Mrs. Eliza wasting her time and flowers that she gave very little attention to the grave where I had planted Jim accordin’ to her request. But though Mrs. Jane didn’t know it, Mrs. Eliza was right all the time—that is, after the first week. For I saw that I had done a middlin’ risky thing in movin’ remains from one place to another without the authority of the directors, so I just dug Jim up again, and put him back in his old grave without, of course, saying anything to Mrs. Jane about it. So Mrs. Eliza was right after all, and the boys, considerin’ that Mrs. Jane had threwed up the sponge, settled their bets, and I supposed that things were about to quiet down for good and all.
"There was where I was mistaken. Mrs. Jane felt that her little game of movin' Jim over to another part of the cemetery was too good to be kept to herself, and one day she gives Mrs. Eliza to understand that she was wasting her attentions on an empty lot. Mrs. Eliza came to me about as mad and about as violent as a woman ever gets to be, and there wasn't anything for me to do but soothe her down by tellin' her that the remains had been moved for a short time in order to put some improvements into Jim's old tomb, but that he had been brought back again and was resting as sweetly as ever in his original grave. The woman didn't believe me. She said she knew perfectly well that I was lyin', and that I was in league with that hussy to do her out of her rights as a lawful mourner. So she went away and brought an action against me for violatin' the sanctity of the tomb, and claimin' big damages for what she had suffered in her affections.

"Then Mrs. Jane, hearin' that I had said Jim had been moved back, and wasn't any longer in the north-west part of the cemetery, came down and insisted that I should tell her the truth. I did so, and she believed me, for she went straight down to Lawyer Post and had him sue me for obtainin' money under false pretences. You see she had paid me a little something for the expenses of movin' the
remains, and it was this money that she was now tryin' to get back. There is nothing a quarrelsome woman enjoys as much as a lawsuit, and the two widows having each a lawsuit on their hands, paid very little further attention to Jim's grave. My own idea is that neither of them felt quite sure where the remains actually were, and consequently they didn't feel like wastin' flowers in what might prove to be the wrong locality.

"Mrs. Eliza's suit came on to be tried first, and the Court ordered that Jim should be dug up once more, just so as to settle beyond any question where he actually was. First they dug up the grave in the north-west corner, but, of course, they didn't find him there. Then they dug up the original grave, though I told them it was all nonsense, for it stood to reason that Jim must be there, he not bein', as they had found out, in the other grave.

"Well, they dug and dug, and finally they found out that there weren't any remains of any kind in that grave. Nobody was more astonished at this than I was. What had become of Jim I couldn't imagine, and I don't know to this day, though I sort of believe that one of the women had carried the remains off in the night and put them where she could have a sure thing, so far as mournin' without being interruped was concerned.

"It began to look as if both women were goin'
to win their suits against me, and my lawyer advised me to compromise. I don’t think either of the women would have consented to compromise if it hadn’t been that by this time both of them were engaged to be married, and they were naturally beginnin’ to lose their interest in Jim. So it was arranged that they were to take a sum of money down in place of damages, and that the suits were to be discontinued, I payin’ the costs. It cost me considerable before I was through with the thing, but my lawyer told me that if the women won their suits, the damages would be heavy, most of the jury having had bets on Mrs. Jane when the trouble began, and having paid them under the impression that Mrs. Eliza had won. Of course they felt a little hard towards me for my share in the affair, and would have been glad of a chance to get square with me.

"One of the compromise measures was that I was to put up a tombstone at each end of the grave at my own expense, and that one was to be considered Mrs. Eliza’s tribute to the deceased, and the other Mrs. Jane’s tribute. That is how it came round that there are two tombstones to that grave, and most folks that come here to see the cemetery notice it, and want to have me explain it, which, of course, I always do, though it is middling dry work. It does seem a waste of good things that there should be two tombstones over a grave that is as empty as
a missionary's flask, while there are lots of respectable and deserving remains in this cemetery that haven't got so much as one small tombstone. However, that don't concern me. What I'm interested to know just at present is whether the directors are going to persist in their threat to hold me responsible for the disappearance of Jim's remains. If they do, I shall have to hustle round and find some remains that don't happen to have anybody belonging to them, and put them in Jim's grave. That ought to satisfy the directors, if they are reasonable men. You see I don't want to lose my berth here if I can help it, for it's one that brings a man well before the public, and it's a pleasant one, all things considered. You'll find excellent beer, sir, just across the way from the cemetery gate. Well, considerin' how sociable we've been together I don't like to refuse your invitation, so I'll just step over and sample the beer with you.
THE PURPLE DEATH.

Last winter I occupied a small villa in one of the towns of the Italian Riviera. To me it is a very delightful little town—partly, because it is extremely picturesque and, partly, because it is as yet almost unknown as a health-resort. You can live there without constantly hearing the cough of the consumptive, and when you do meet an occasional foreigner, he does not instantly begin to discuss the condition of his bronchial tubes, or to inquire as to the state of your own lungs.

Thank Heaven! my lungs and bronchial tubes are perfectly sound. My only trouble is insomnia, and it was for this that I sought the perfect repose and stillness of my sleepy little Italian town. There was but one other foreigner in the place, so I was told; and as I was assured that this foreigner was phenomenally strong and well, and was, moreover, a German, and hence presumably unable to converse with a man wholly innocent of any knowledge of the German language, I did not find fault with the fact
that he was to be my next-door neighbour. I saw him in his garden a day or two after my arrival, and was struck by his singular resemblance to the portraits of Von Moltke. Although he looked to be at least seventy years old, he was tall, and straight as an arrow, and his face, which had something of the firmness and rigidity of sculpture, was that of a man in perfect health and of an indomitable constitution. Even if I had not already heard him called "the Professor," I should have known him at first sight as a man of culture. Intense thought and unremitting labour had chiselled those clear-cut features. I made up my mind that, instead of avoiding him, I should like to make his acquaintance, and I found myself hoping that he could speak English, or that, at all events, I could understand his French.

Twice during the first week of my residence next door to the German I saw after midnight a light in his garden, and heard the sound of a spade. It is one of the advantages of insomnia, that the patient learns to know the things of the night as well as those of the day. Had I been able to sleep as soundly as other people, I should never have noticed this mysterious midnight lanthorn or had my hearing sharpened sufficiently to note and identify the sound of a spade. What was the professor doing at so late an hour in his garden? Clearly, he could not have been engaged in gardening or ditching. Even a
German philosopher would not be capable of getting up at one o'clock in the morning to plant cabbages, or to improve the drainage of his garden. The only plausible explanation of his conduct was that he was engaged in burying something which he had reason for burying secretly. I knew that he lived absolutely alone, without a single servant. Hence, he could not be a murderer, who made a practice of burying his victims at night. Then, again, he was a scientific person, and, of course, had no money for safe-keeping in the earth. The third time that I saw my neighbour's lanthorn in the garden, I discovered that I had an object in life, which was to find why he dug in the earth at an hour when, as he supposed, all his neighbours were asleep.

The mystery solved itself a few days later, and proved to be disappointingly simple. The arrival at my neighbour's door of a hamper of rabbits, and another of guinea-pigs, showed me at once that he was engaged in studies which involved the death of numbers of those unhappy little animals. Of course, when his guinea-pigs and rabbits had fulfilled their mission in life, it became necessary to bury their remains; and the professor wisely performed this task at midnight in order not to offend the prejudices of those curious people who believe that vivisection is merely a form of vice in which inhuman men indulge purely for recreation. I had seen the pro-
fessor, and I could have sworn that he was a kindly and gentle man. If his guinea-pigs and rabbits were cut down in the prime of life, I felt sure that they died in the interests of humanity, and their fate gave me no pain.

My acquaintance with the professor—whom I will call Professor Schwartz, for the reason that it was not his name—grew up gradually. We began by exchanging polite commonplaces over the garden wall, and I found that he spoke English perfectly. We were both methodical in our habits, and were accustomed to smoke in our gardens every afternoon at about the same hour. Gradually we passed from the discussion of the weather to more interesting themes, and, finally, the professor accepted my pressing invitation to come and inspect a plant growing in my garden, of the name of which I was ignorant. When I returned his visit, I accidentally discovered that, like myself, he was a devotee of chess. That put the finishing touch to our acquaintance, and we fell into the invariable habit of playing chess, every evening, from seven to nine.

I found him extremely interesting. He was a physician, though he had long since ceased to practise medicine, and had devoted himself, so he told me, to the study of bacteriology. He was, moreover, a man of wide culture; and there seemed to be hardly any subject of which he had not a more
or less thorough knowledge. But what charmed me in the man was his kindness of heart. His philanthropy was not bounded by any of the limitations of race or creed. The sufferings of the poor touched him profoundly, whether they were Germans, Italians, or Frenchmen. His love for animals was unmistakable, in spite of the fact that he daily inflicted tortures on the unfortunate subjects of his experiments. I had a collie, between whom and Professor Schwartz a deep affection sprang up, and the man was never so happy as when the dog sat by him with its head resting on his knee. There is no reason why I should hesitate to say that Professor Schwartz came, in time, to be sincerely attached to me, for there can be no doubt of the fact. I wondered that such a man should live so completely alone; but once, when I spoke of the matter to him, he gravely replied that a man should live for the benefit of others, and that his studies were of much more importance than his pleasures could possibly be.

One day, my collie came into my room, evidently suffering the greatest agony. He was swelled out to twice his ordinary size, and he had hardly sufficient strength to drag himself to my feet, where he lay moaning. My first thought was of my neighbour's medical skill, and I rushed over to his house, and implored him to come to the aid of the poor dog. The man came instantly, bringing with him a
huge bottle of some disinfecting fluid, and showing an agitation which surprised me in one who had spent so much of his life as a practising physician. The dog was dead when he reached the room where I had left him, and the professor instantly poured the entire contents of the bottle over the carcass, and then sent me for his spade. When I returned, he carefully removed the dog's body to the garden, and buried it, exercising the greatest care not to touch it, except with the spade. Then he went to his house, bidding me remain in the room where the animal had died, and when he returned he disinfected the room and everything in it with chemicals that caused a thick but entirely respirable smoke. To my inquiry as to what was the matter with the dog, he merely replied that the animal had been poisoned, and asked me if I had seen the dog digging in his garden. I had seen nothing of the kind, but I saw that the professor suspected that the animal had dug up the remains of some guinea-pig or rabbit that had died of an extremely infectious disease. This explained the elaborate care with which disinfectants had been used, though I could not but think that my friend had been unnecessarily alarmed.

I had been acquainted nearly two months with this mild and lovable vivisectionist, when one evening our conversation fell upon Anarchism. The usual bomb had just been exploded in Paris, and
I was expressing a good deal of indignation at the miscreants who did such things.

"The Anarchist means well," replied Professor Schwartz; "but he is hopelessly stupid. He attacks the wrong people, and he uses absurdly inefficient weapons."

"What do you mean by saying that he attacks the wrong people?" I asked.

"Just what I say," he replied. "The Anarchist wants to kill men who have money—capitalists, and small or great shopkeepers, and employers of labour. These are the very people who are most necessary to the existence of humanity. If the Anarchist tried to kill labouring men, he would be working for the emancipation of the race from poverty and misery; but he cannot see this."

"I hardly see it myself," said I. "Do you mean that the true way to lessen suffering is to kill the sufferers?"

"Yes and no," said Professor Schwartz. "My dear friend, listen to me. All the poverty on this earth is the result of over-population. Why does the Italian labourer work for two francs a day, and spend his whole life in a state of semi-starvation? The Anarchist says that the labourer is oppressed by the capitalist. That is rubbish. A man works for two francs a day because there are so many workmen that the price of labour is wretchedly low."
Halve the number of workmen, and you would more than double the wages of the remaining ones. The same thing is true of the men in this town who make a miserable living by raising vegetables. Each man has a little morsel of ground, and he can hardly raise enough to keep himself from starvation. Reduce the numbers of these small proprietors one-half, and you would double the amount of land which each one would cultivate, and thus double their aggregate incomes."

"That sounds very mathematical," I answered; "but I haven't that sublime confidence in figures that I had when I was younger."

"Any man who sees things as they are must admit," continued the professor, disregarding my interruption, "that the world is horribly over-populated. If a pestilence should sweep off two-thirds of the workmen in Europe, the survivors would be able to live in comfort. Now, the Anarchist doesn't see this. He would kill off the capitalists—the very men who employ labour, and make it possible for labourers to live. I, on the contrary, would not harm a single man who has money to pay to others, but I would remedy this fatal over-population—an evil which grows worse and worse every year. Your English Malthus had a glimpse of what was coming, but he did not foresee what the remedy would be."
"Then, there is a remedy?" I asked.

"Yes. Did I not tell you that the remedy is to reduce the working population? The man who discovers how to do this most swiftly and effectually will be the greatest benefactor this world has ever known."

It rather amused me to hear this man, whom I knew to be gentle and tender-hearted, actually insisting that about one-half of the population of the globe ought to be murdered; but I thought little of it at the time. I knew how fond some men are of propounding bold and startling theories, which they themselves would be the very last to dream of carrying into action. Here was a man, whose business in life had been to heal the sick, and so to prolong the existence of the weakest specimens of the human race. And now he was saying that the extermination of millions of healthy, vigorous men was the one thing that the world needed! It was another illustration of the inevitable bee which, sooner or later, gets into the bonnet of every scientific man.

I have said that Schwartz lived completely alone. A man in good health can do this, but if he is taken ill he soon finds that he must depend on the help of others. One afternoon Professor Schwartz did not appear in his garden, and when I went to his house, in the evening, he did not come as usual to open the
door. Suspecting that he was ill, I went to the side of the house, where I knew his room was situated, and called to him. He answered, but without showing himself at the window. He was not quite well, he said, but assured me that he would be able to see me the next day, and that in the mean time he should want no assistance. He would not consent to see me; and I went back to my villa somewhat uneasy, and half determined to break into Schwartz’s house the next morning in case he still refused to open the door.

That extreme measure, however, did not prove to be necessary. When I called at his house in the morning, he opened the door, and invited me to come in. He was looking wretchedly ill, but he assured me that his attack was over, and that there was not the slightest cause for uneasiness. He took me into his library, and tried to converse with his usual ease. The attempt was a failure, and I saw that, besides being weak from the effect of his illness, he was both preoccupied and troubled. Finally, I asked him to tell me frankly what was the matter, and to permit me to be of any service that might be possible.

He remained silent for a little while, and then he said—

“My dear friend, I have made up my mind to trust you. My illness has shown me that it is no
longer safe for me to keep my secret absolutely to myself. I shall die suddenly, and possibly very soon. In that case there must be some one who will know how to prevent the catastrophe which would otherwise happen to this pretty little town, where I have spent so many happy hours. Give me your word that what I shall tell you shall remain a secret so long as I live."

I gave him the desired promise—rashly, as I now know, but without dreaming of its nature.

He rose from his chair and told me to follow him into his laboratory. There was nothing remarkable in the appearance of the place. I had once before seen the laboratory of a bacteriologist, and it closely resembled Professor Schwartz’s laboratory, except that the fittings of the latter were rather more elaborate and complete. On one side of the room was a series of shelves filled with carefully-sealed glass tubes, containing what I assumed to be gelatine. Schwartz called my attention to these, and said—

"If you should find me dead, or dying, some day, I want you to take every one of these tubes, break them one by one in a bucket full of the liquid which you will find in yonder glass jar, and then bury the contents of the bucket, glass and all, in the earth not less than four feet deep. Do this with the utmost care, making sure not to break a single tube
except under the surface of the liquid, otherwise I cannot answer for your life. You perfectly understand me?"

"Perfectly," I said; "and I will promise to carry out your wishes. The tubes, I presume, contain the microbes of various diseases."

His face lightened up with a glow of enthusiasm. "They contain the microbes of diseases," he replied; "but the diseases are nearly all new. They are inventions of my own, and some of them are infinitely more deadly than any disease known to the medical profession. You remember the death of your dog? The poor fellow died of a disease which is absolutely new, and which kills in less than six hours. If that disease were once introduced into any city in the world, it would spread so rapidly that in a week the place would be depopulated."

"I do not understand what you mean by newly-invented diseases," said I. "How is it possible for a man to invent a disease?"

"Allow me to sit down," said the professor, "for I am too weak to remain standing. The answer to your question is very easy. Certain diseases are produced by certain microbes, and hitherto bacteriologists have confined themselves to trying to discover the specific microbe of each disease, and to find a remedy that will kill the microbe without killing the patient. No one but myself has ever
tried to develop the deadly powers of known microbes. Look at that tube numbered 17. It contains the microbe of typhoid fever, but I have cultivated it until it will produce the disease in twenty-four hours after the microbe is taken into the system, and will kill the patient infallibly in twelve hours more. That is only one of a dozen similar successes that I have obtained. Then I have crossed different microbes, or rather cultivated them together, so that they have become capable of producing a new disease, partaking somewhat of the character of each of the diseases which the same microbes, if cultivated separately, would produce. It was I who invented, in this way, the present variety of influenza, by crossing the microbes of malarial fever with those of pneumonia. I was living in St. Petersburg at the time, and I accidentally dropped the tube containing the germs of influenza. Some one must have found it and opened it, for when the influenza broke out I instantly recognized it as my own invention."

"I have always heard," I ventured to remark, "that the influenza is a disease which has appeared in Europe several times during the present century."

"There have been epidemics of a disease called influenza," he replied, "but they differed from the present one. They lacked the symptoms of malarial poisoning, which are characteristic of my own influenza. I have always been very sorry that I lost
that tube, for an epidemic of influenza can do no possible good, and does great harm. But to come back to what I was saying before we spoke of influenza. Look at tube number 31. It contains microbes that will produce a disease having some of the characteristics of hydrophobia, and some of those of dropsy, while it also has symptoms which are entirely new. It was one of the earliest of my new diseases, and would certainly be very efficacious, should it ever become epidemic. I have, however, invented other diseases which are far superior to it. Here is a tube," he continued, taking it almost lovingly in his hand, "which contains my chef d'œuvre. The microbes are a cross between those found in the venom of the tuboba, the most deadly of all known serpents, and those of the Asiatic plague. By the way, I am the first man to discover the existence of microbes in snake-venom. I call the new disease which these crossed microbes produce the 'Purple Death,' for the reason that the body of the person who is attacked by it becomes purple before death. It kills in less than thirty minutes, and there is no remedy which has the slightest effect upon it. As to its infectious qualities, it is the king of all diseases. If I were to break this tube while we are in this room together, you and I would be dead within an hour, and from this house the infection would spread so rapidly that in two days, at furthest, not a human
being would be left alive in this poor little town. Think what would happen were we Germans to use these microbes in our next war with France. A single bomb filled with the Purple Death, and thrown within the lines of a French army, would render a battle an impossibility. Before six hours were over there would not be left in an army of four hundred thousand men survivors enough to bury the dead!"

The man's eyes sparkled with pride. His weakness had almost vanished while he was talking, but suddenly he sank back on his chair, and feebly begged me to assist him into the other room.

When he was lying on the sofa, and had somewhat regained his strength, I asked him what possible good he expected to accomplish by adding to the number of diseases which already afflicted humanity.

"I have told you," he said, "that I am a philanthropist, only, unlike other philanthropists, I have intelligence and, I hope, the courage of my convictions. You have heard me say that all the poverty and misery of the world are due to over-population. Well, I have there in my laboratory the remedy for this evil. I can, with merciful swiftness and with absolute certainty, reduce the population of Europe to a half, or a third, of what it now is. I have only to take my Purple Death, and scatter the teeming gelatine on the side-walk of the most crowded street
of your London. It will dry quickly, and under the trampling of hundreds of feet it will become pulverized, and the particles will float in the air. That very day the physicians will find themselves in the presence of a disease wholly unknown to them, and against which medical science can achieve nothing. In a few days London will be silent. The working-classes and the poor will be dead, and everyone who can possibly fly from the stricken town will have fled. When the pestilence has spent its force we shall hear no more of the unemployed workmen in London. There will be more work than workmen can be found to do, and the very street-sweepers will receive wages that will permit them to live almost in luxury.

"Or, say that I wanted to decrease the population of Berlin. I simply place some of that gelatine in an envelope, and send it through the post to the head workman in some factory. He opens it, and the Purple Death breaks out among the workmen. Nothing can stop it until it has run its course. Of course, a percentage of capitalists and employers of labour will fall victims to the disease, but its ravages will be chiefly confined to those who have not the means to escape from the city. Did I not tell you that the Anarchists select the wrong victims, and that their favourite dynamite is absurdly ineffective in comparison with the weapons that I can use. Now
you see that I told the truth. Man, the lives of half Europe are in my hands!"

I made no reply. The vastness of the man’s horrible scheme stunned me. I had not the least doubt that he spoke the truth, and I had promised to remain silent while his devilish project was carried out.

Presently he resumed—

"I do not want my weapons to fall into hands that would use them ignorantly. That is why I have asked you to destroy every one of those deadly tubes in case I should die without having been able to destroy them myself. I made the discovery yesterday that I may die at any minute, and I am physician enough to be sure of what I say. If I should find myself dying, and should have the time and strength to act, I should set this house on fire, and blow out my brains. So, if you should happen to find my house burning, you will take no measures to check the flames. But I fear that I shall not have the time to do this myself, and so I rely on your help."

"How long since you invented the Purple Death?" I asked.

A troubled look passed over Schwartz’s face. "Nearly two years ago," he replied.

"Why have you delayed to use it?" I asked, a sudden hope that the man was not quite so mad as he seemed to be, springing up within me,
"As yet it has killed no one, beside the guinea-pigs, except your dog," he replied. "The dog must have been digging where the guinea-pigs are buried, and so contracted the disease."

"But why have you not carried out your scheme of depopulating the world during these two years?"

"My friend," replied the professor, "I am not so strong as I believed myself. The truth is, I have lacked the courage to begin the work. I have been like a surgeon whose nerves will not permit him to perform a painful operation, although he knows that it is the only means of saving the patient's life. But I shall delay no longer. I may have very little time to live, and, besides, now that I have told you all, my secret is no longer safe. Oh, I do not for an instant doubt your word, and I have perfect confidence in your friendship, but when a secret is known to more than one person it is no longer a secret. But I will have more courage. In another week I shall be as well as ever, and then I will begin the work of redeeming the world from poverty. Now I must ask you to leave me, for I must try to sleep. By-the-by, you will find a duplicate key of my door hanging on a nail in the hall. Take it with you, and don't hesitate to use it in case of necessity."

I left the professor, and returned to my house, in a most unenviable state of mind. I had not the slightest doubt that what he had told me was strictly
true. Granting that the man was mad—and surely no sane man could have calmly proposed the murder of hundreds of thousands of unoffending men—still the death of my dog was sufficient evidence that Schwartz's claim that he had invented microbic poisons was true. I had given him my word to remain silent. If I kept my promise I should be accessory to the crimes which he unquestionably meant to commit. If I betrayed him, I not only broke my word, but I made it certain that either he would be condemned to a madhouse, or would be sent to the gallows. I could not determine what it was my duty to do, and I spent a night of more terrible anxiety than any criminal ever spent who knew that the gallows awaited him in the early morning.

All night long, and far into the next day, I ceaselessly debated the question what ought I to do. Towards noon, not having yet heard any sound of life in my neighbour's house, I took the key, and, entering, went up to his bedroom. He was lying in bed, with the bedclothes drawn up close to his chin, and I spoke to him, but he did not answer. When I touched his forehead I found that he was dead and cold. He had evidently died soon after going to bed, for the body was already perfectly rigid.

I did not lose a moment in destroying the tubes in his laboratory. I placed them carefully, one by one,
in a bucket filled with the disinfecting fluid which he had shown me, and broke them with a blow of a marble pestle. When this was done, I carried the bucket into the garden and buried it deep with its contents. I should then have been ready to send my servant to notify the authorities of Professor Schwartz's death had it not been for one thing. The tube containing the Purple Death was missing from its place on the laboratory shelf, and I had been totally unable to find it. So long as this remained above ground, all that I had done was comparatively useless. Doubtless the tube would be found by the officers whom the Syndic of the town would send to search the apartment, and take charge of the dead man's effects. Then it would be broken, purposely or accidentally, and the frightful consequences that Schwartz had predicted would be inevitable.

I searched every corner and cranny of the house without finding the tube. Finally I began to hope that the professor had himself destroyed it, fearing that he was near his end, but that he had been unable to destroy the rest of his poisons. Comforting myself with this solution of the mystery, I went to his bedside to smooth the bedclothes before sending for the police, and in so doing I found the Purple Death clasped firmly in his hand!

It was impossible to loosen the dead man's grasp, and, after vainly making the attempt, I gave it up,
fearing to break the tube in the effort. I called my servant, and told him to go first for the village doctor, and afterwards to notify the police, and then I sat down to await events.

The doctor arrived promptly, and proved to be a very intelligent man. I told him the whole story that the professor had confided to me, with the exception that I did not hint at the use to which the dead man had proposed to put his terrible inventions. The doctor found no difficulty in believing what I told him, and it evidently gave him a profound respect for his deceased confrère. He agreed with me that it would be dangerous to meddle with the tube which the corpse clasped in its rigid hand, and promised me that even if an autopsy should be necessary, he would see that the tube remained undisturbed. I think he was a little shy of coming too closely in contact with the body, lest the professor should have died of one of his new diseases. At any rate, he decided to accept my theory that Schwartz had died of heart-disease, and persuaded the Syndic that an autopsy would be quite superfluous.

Professor Schwartz was buried within twenty-four hours, with the Purple Death still in his right hand. The police were easily persuaded that it contained some holy relic, and that it would be impious to meddle with it. When the funeral was over, I left
the place as soon as I could pack my boxes, and surrendered the lease of my villa. I have never seen it since, and never want to see it.

On my way back to England I passed through Berlin, where I went to see an eminent bacteriologist, and asked him how long microbes inclosed in a tube containing gelatine would retain their vitality. His answer was, "For ever, so far as is at present known." That answer has poisoned my whole life. Six feet underground, in the grave of Professor Schwartz, lies the Purple Death, waiting until the day when the cemetery will share the fate of all cemeteries, and be cut up into building lots. Then the tube will be exhumed and broken, and the pestilence that is to sweep away the teeming millions of Europe will begin its work. Sooner or later, this is morally certain to happen. I have sometimes thought of exhuming the coffin of Professor Schwartz, and searching for the fatal tube, but to do this would be to invite the catastrophe which I dread, for in all probability the tube has become unsealed by this time. My only hope is that an earthquake will some day bury the cemetery too deep for any spade to reach the grave of my poor mad friend.
GHOST ISLAND.

I HEARD a chap lecturing one night at the Sailors' Home in Sydney, who said that there was no more land to be discovered, and that every blessed island in the Pacific had been sighted by somebody and marked on the Admiralty chart. If that chap had gone to sea instead of going to the university, he would never have made such a ridiculous mistake. Why, according to my reckoning, there's hundreds of islands in the Pacific that no white man has ever seen. If you look at it you will see that it stands to reason that this is so. Vessels trading in the Pacific take their regular courses. Leaving out the island traders—and even they never go out of the regular track—the rest of the vessels navigating the Pacific keep to the regular routes and never dream of knocking about here and there to see what they can find. There are thousands of miles in the Pacific where no vessel ever comes, and what's to prevent there being hundreds of islands that white men have never seen? Why, I helped
to discover an island myself, through being cast away on it, which no man ever saw before or since. When I tell you that this island was inhabited entirely by ghosts, you may perhaps believe me, having been a seafaring man yourself; but if I was to tell the cold truth about it to any ordinary landsman, he’d tell me that either I was a bloomin’ liar or a bloomin’ lunatic. Some day that island will be discovered again, and its position found; and then you’ll know, if you’re living at the time, whether I’m speaking the truth or not.

I was a young fellow in those days, not more than eighteen, or maybe nineteen, and I was before the mast in a trading schooner out of Sydney. There were six of us, all told, in the fo’c’sle, besides a captain, a mate, and a cabin-boy. I don’t count the cook, for he was a Chinaman; and if you had to eat what he cooked you wouldn’t have counted him either. I had shipped as ordinary seaman, and the schooner being a fairly comfortable one, and the work light and the grub good, I didn’t care where we went or how long the cruise lasted. You see I was young, and that was the reason why I was contented. The older a man grows the more it takes to content him. I don’t doubt but that Methusalem and those old chaps who lived a thousand or two years grumbled every blessed minute they were awake. Nothing less than the whole earth and all the whisky on it
would have contented them. Whereas a young fellow, with threepence-worth of tobacco and a half-pint of anything that is fairly good to drink, will be as happy as they make 'em.

I don't know where we went that cruise, barring that after we had been about six weeks out of port we were in sight of the Fiji Islands. We didn't touch there, however, and four days afterwards we lost the schooner. We were jogging along one pleasant night, with nobody awake except the man at the wheel, and perhaps the man on the look-out—though the chances were that he was caulking somewhere, according to the usual custom. As for the officer of the deck, whether it was the mate or the captain, he regularly went to sleep on the settee alongside of the cabin skylight, unless the weather was bad or threatening. There was very little wind that night, but there was a good deal of swell setting in from the norrard; and in the middle watch—I being below at the time—the schooner struck on a reef and broke her back. It was just as if the sea had picked her up and dropped her on the reef on purpose to break her back, though more out of mischief than malice. As you know, sir, there are times when the sea is wicked and times when it is only skylarking. Of the two, give me the first. A sailor can always take precautions against an angry sea, but no man can foresee what it will do when it begins to skylark.
It was the mate's watch on deck; and the captain, who was asleep in his bunk, came on deck almost as soon as she struck, and was just in time to follow the mate and the man at the wheel overboard. There was only one sea that broke over the wreck, and that one carried all three men overboard, and we never saw any one of them afterwards. It was clear enough that the schooner would break clean in two in a very short time, and then in all probability each end of her would slip off the reef and sink; so we men got out the boat and abandoned her. By this time it was light enough for us to see that there was an island close at hand, and that we had piled up on a barrier-reef. There was a small opening in the reef a short distance away, and we pulled for it, passed into the lagoon, and landed on a nice sandy beach.

Our captain had been a mighty good navigator, and I make sure that if there had been any such island laid down on the chart he would have kept clear of it. So I knew as soon as we had got ashore that we had discovered a new island, and such proved to be the case. Well, there we were, seven souls and a Chinaman, with nothing in the world except the clothes we stood in, and not knowing whether there would be anything to eat or drink on the island or not. Not having anything else to do, we all turned in and went to sleep—not so much because we needed sleep as because we wanted to feel that
we needn't turn out at eight bells. We slept till pretty late that morning, and then all hands started out to explore the island and search for water.

It was a middling good-sized island, with a tall peak amidships and a little stream of fresh water about half a mile from the beach where we landed. There were berries and breadfruit and cocoanuts in plenty, and we saw at least a dozen turtless in the lagoon or scuttling down the beach. So it was clear that we were not going to starve. We didn't, however, find the least sign that the island was inhabited, and on the whole that pleased us. Natives are all very well when you can select them to order; but ready-made natives don't always fit. They may be cannibals, and they may be chaps that remember having a lot of their relations kidnapped by white men, and in such case they are apt to be unpleasant.

Some of the men had matches with them, and we knew that we could start a signal-fire whenever we wanted to; but nobody was in any particular hurry to leave the island. What with having nothing to do, and your grub served out to you whenever you wanted it, the place seemed enough better than the schooner's fo'c'sle. There was only a plug and a half of tobacco among us, which was certainly misfortunate; but we divided it fair, and agreed that we would chew it first and smoke it afterwards. The Chinaman had some opium in his clothes, which we
found while searching him for tobacco. We weren't going to encourage any such heathen vices; so we confiscated the opium and set the Chinaman at work to roast turtles' eggs, so as to divert his mind.

Did you ever happen to sleep in the open close to a running stream? If you did you know how the water begins to talk and mutter and whisper as soon as you turn in. At first you are dead sure that people are talking in a low tone close aboard of you, but when you turn out to look for them you find that it is nothing but the gurgling of the water. What is curious about it is that though you know the sound is made by the water and not by human beings, your fancy gets the better of you just as long as you lie awake. I slept once for pretty near a month 'longside of a stream when I was lumbering in Canada, and for the first week I turned out four or five times every night, being ready to swear that I heard men talking just outside of the tent.

Well, the first night we slept on the beach we heard voices all around us. We were all lying in a row, and I was at one end of it. Next to me was a chap we called Lord Palmerston. I don't remember whether he had that name when he joined the schooner, or whether it was given to him after he came aboard. Anyhow, it don't matter. He was a regular cockney, and as full of talk as a magpie. We had no sooner quieted down than the voices
began. I said to myself that it must be running water, though I knew the stream was a long way off; but the muttering and whispering seemed so near and so particular human that I had just made up my mind to rouse out the other chaps, when Lord Palmerston pulled me by the shirt-sleeve and says, "My Gawd, Tom! Listen to that. They're gettin' ready to rush us. What hever shall we do?"

"Lie still, you blatherin' idjit!" whispers the next man—Bennett was his name, and he was a ticket-of-leave man. "Mebbe they haven't seen us yet. All the same, get your knives ready, everybody." I sat up for a minute, and the voices stopped, and I couldn't hear anything except the water, for this time I was sure that I heard running water. So I sung out to the men that if they'd get on their feet they'd find that the whispering would stop. They did so; but though they admitted that it had stopped, and that they could hear something in the distance that might be running water, nothing could convince them that they hadn't heard real voices. "They wos a torkin'," said Lord Palmerston, "not ten feet from my starboard hear. Don't try for to tell me that it's nothing but water. Water cawn't come arf a mile and 'it a man on the 'ead with a club; and that's wot is goin' to 'appen to us if we don't keep a bloomin' good look-out."

"You can take all night on deck if you want to,"
says I, "but I'm going to sleep, and the man that wakes me up will be sorry that he wasn't brained quiet and comfortable by cannibals."

But no sooner had I laid down again than the voices commenced, and I was almost sure that I could make out words in English that they were saying. I argued with myself for a while; but the cold perspiration was breaking out all over me. The voices seemed to come nearer, and I jumped up and sung out to the men to follow me. My idea was, of course, to rush on the natives, provided there were natives on the beach, instead of waiting for them to attack us.

I don't suppose a man of us had been asleep; for we were all on our feet in an instant, and we gave a whoop and rushed up the beach as if we were bound for Ratcliff Highway after a six months' voyage with five months' good wages in our pockets. There was nothing to be seen or heard except the little waterfall away off in the bush. Lord Palmerston swore that what I said was the sound of water was the voices laughing at us in the distance; and the other chaps seemed to be of his opinion.

Having, as I said, matches with us, I proposed that we should build a fire and tell off one man to do sentry-go, while the rest of us turned in. This pleased the men, and there being drift-wood handy, we had a fire going in a few minutes, and Lord Palmerston
went on the look-out, and we all turned in once more.

This time the voices didn't come back; which satisfied the men, they being a precious ignorant set. But it worried me more than ever; for if the sound had really been made by water, it ought not to have stopped just because we had started a fire. However, I fell asleep after a bit, and there was no more disturbance that night. Lord Palmerston—who was to call some one to relieve him in about two hours—sat down on the sand about the time we had settled down to snore, and he dropped off to sleep and was asleep when the rest of us turned out in the morning.

We talked the thing over that day, not having much else to talk about, and everybody agreed that we had been frightened at nothing. We made a fresh search in the bush for about a mile from the beach; but we couldn't find the least sign of anybody, Christian or native. So the next night we didn't take the trouble to build a fire or to put a man on the look-out—that is, not at first. But there wasn't much sleep for us that night. The voices began just as soon as we got good and ready to sleep, and, if anything, there was more of them than there had been the first night. We lay and listened for a little while, and then Lord Palmerston sits up and says—
"Boys, I know wot this is; the 'ole bloomin' hisland is full of ghosts."

"Ghosts be damned!" says Bennett.

"They mostly is that same," says Dublin, a big Irishman who had been in the prize-ring and had his nose stove in.

The notion that the voices were made by ghosts took amazingly. At first I didn't believe it, not being one who had much confidence in ghosts; but the more I thought of it the more probable it seemed. The rest of the men never doubted it for a minute, and they all came closer to one another, and didn't show the least disposition to go to sleep.

"Why ain't there anybody on this hisland?" says Lord Palmerston. "Because the horignal natives has been and eat one another up. It's their ghosts as is walkin' the beach nights; and I'd give somethin' handsome if they wos live cannibals instead."

"What's good for ghosts anyhow?" asked Bennett.

"Does any one happen to know?"

"There's Eric," says Lord Palmerston. "He's next door to a Finn, and perhaps he knows. Bear a hand, Eric, and tell us what the Finns does when ghosts makes 'emselves too familiar, and they wants to show 'em the door."

"I'm no Finn," says Eric; "I'm a Norwegian."

"That's near enough," says Lord Palmerston. "You know more about ghosts than the whole bilin'
of us, and you're goin' to give us the office, or it'll be the worse for you."

"I've always been told," says Eric, "that pepper's the best thing to clear ghosts out of a house. You sprinkle pepper everywhere, particular where there is any holes in the wall. It'll make the ghosts sneeze, and they're built so light that sneezing breaks 'em all up. A ghost can't sneeze without carrying away his head. At least, that's what our people says."

"Wot's the good of talking about pepper?" says another man. "Why don't you tell us to use ile and vinegar and Cheddar cheese? Where's pepper to come from on this island?"

"Snuff is good too," continued Eric. "My grandmother told me——"

"That'll do," says Lord Palmerston. "We don't want no more out of you. A man who'll tork of baccy on a desert hisland where there ain't but one plug for siven men, ain't a man whose judgment I respecks."

"I don't hear voices no more," says Bennett. "Let's put a man on the look-out, and turn in."

There wasn't any man who was willing to go on the look-out alone, so two men were told off for that duty, and the fire was started again, and we were comfortable once more.

Some time in the middle of the night I was woke
up sudden, just as though somebody had sung out "Eight bells!" down the fo'c'sle hatch. The fire had died out, and the two look-outs were sound asleep about a yard away from us. The voices were hard at it, talking and cussin' as I judged from the tone of 'em, and I fancied more than once that I could make out the outline of figures that moved soft and rapid along the beach. I raised myself up to a sitting position; but I couldn't see anything and the talking stopped short. This time, however, I didn't hear the sound of the water; but I did hear, as clear as I ever heard an order given at sea, the sound of some one laughing low and scornful somewhere in the bush.

"We'll get away from this cursed island to-morrow if there's a sea that the boat can live in," says I to myself. "I've had enough of it; and I'll take the chance of starving in the boat or landing among cannibals." I couldn't see as it would do me any good to wake up the other men; so I pulled my cap down over my ears so as I couldn't hear the voices, and tried to go to sleep again. After about an hour, as I should judge, I dropped off. The next thing I knew I was waked up by some one steppin' on me. It wasn't a heavy tread; but it took me just on the breast-bone, and hurt me enough to wake me up as sudden as if I had been hit with a belaying-pin.

Of course I thought for a minute that one of the chaps had done it; but they were all asleep, and it
was clear that none of them had had any hand, or foot, for the matter of that, in it. I put my hand on my chest, and there was a little loose sand on my shirt, which wasn't there when I laid down. I got on my legs in half a second, and shook Bennett, and told him it was our turn to relieve the look-out. He and I walked up and down the beach till daylight, which wasn't very far off, and of course the voices didn't trouble us while we were on our legs.

In the morning I told the men what had happened to me, and at first they didn't believe me. Then Lord Palmerston remembered that he had been woke up by something brushing against his head, but being precious sleepy he had persuaded himself that he had been dreaming, and had thought no more of it.

"Is there any one of you misbegotten pagans as knows an Ave or a Pather Noster?" says Dublin.

"Wot's the good of rubbage like that?" answers Lord Palmerston. "Them sort of prayers is no good. The only thing as'll fetch a ghost is a Salvation Harmy band, a playin' hevery man hindependent on 'is hown 'ook, and there ain't no Salvation Harmy 'ere."

"It's long since I've said a prayer," says Dublin, "and I've clean disremembered all I ever knew. But it's my opinion that a few stiff prayers hove in by a priest who knows his ropes, would do a dale of good in this here category."
"I proposes," said Bennett, "that we leaves this blasted island this identical day. There ain't no rum here, and there ain't no baccy here, and 'stead of girls there's a gang of ghosts with no more manners than a seasick parson. What are we stoppin' here for, anyway? Is it because we ain't doing no work? Well! there won't be no work to do in a boat. The Trades is a blowing here, and all we have to do is to put her before the wind, and let her go till she rises some Christian island. I've had enough of ghosts. Gimme policemen by preference, and I can't say more nor that."

We all turned to and filled the boat up with cocoanuts and bread-fruits, and fresh water; and now that we had made up our minds to start we were in as big a hurry to get afloat as if we expected the island to founder under us. Before the sun was on the meridian we were afloat and pulling slow and easy for the opening in the reef. We had all got over our fright, and were in the best of spirits.

"I hope we haven't made no bloomin' mistake in deserting the island," said old Charcoal, leaning for a minute on the loom of his oar. "I don't believe in no ghosts except when I'm afloat. A ghost can go anywheres, can't he? Well, then, it stands to reason that no ghost would stop on an island like that, when he could go to London, and haunt some tidy public-house in the Highway."
Just at that minute there came a laugh from the shore that brought Charcoal up all standing. There was no running water about that laugh. It was as loud and shrill as a bosen's whistle aboard a man-o'-war. Dublin crossed himself; and Lord Palmerston, who was at the steering oar, sang out to the men to give way and began to curse in a general way, like a man who had gone suddenly mad. The laughing stopped short as suddenly as it had begun; but out of the bush came a long shriek, as if a woman was being dragged over the pavement by the hair by some one who had no right to take such a liberty with her. The men at the oars pulled as if they were pulling for a hundred-barrel whale, and not a soul spoke a word till we were clear of the reef. Then Lord Palmerston dropped in a dead swoon, and it took him a good half-hour to come round again.

We were picked up three days afterwards by a tea clipper; and after we got to London we separated, and I've never seen a man of the schooner's crew since. I don't know what the rest of the men may have believed after they got away from the island and had had a big drink once more; but I shall never doubt that we discovered an unknown island, and that that island was inhabited by about four hundred ghosts, more or less, of different styles and sexes.
A MODERN VAMPIRE.

George Matthews was unquestionably a successful man. He was not yet quite thirty years old, and he was the editor of a widely-circulated magazine. He had made a reputation as a writer of stories of singular power and originality, and had thereupon followed the example of many other successful writers by founding a magazine of his own. He was proud of his success, and happy in the independence of his position. It was now his turn to accept or reject manuscripts; and, instead of waiting for the slow decision of editors, and the slower payments of publishers, he printed his own stories, and drew his pay whenever he pleased. He was unmarried, and his income was much larger than his necessities. He was in perfect health, with the exception that his nerves were beginning to remonstrate against excessive smoking and the hard work of earlier years. This, however, was a small matter, and Matthews would not have changed places with any man in London.

He was sitting in his office one day when the
messenger told him that a lady desired to see him. He looked at her card and recognized the name of a writer whose stories were popular among a certain class of readers, and who had sent several manuscripts to him, all of which he had been compelled to reject. He felt that an unpleasant quarter of an hour was at hand, but he at once told the messenger to show the visitor in. He had expected to find her a middle-aged woman, either angular and acrid or stout and obstinate. To his surprise, Miss Vaughan was young and beautiful. Not only was she beautiful, but there was an expression in her large dark eyes that seemed to dominate him in a way wholly new to his experience. He could not quite understand the effect that she produced upon him, but he recognized that she was a woman who, if she asked a question, could not be met with an evasive answer. “If she asks me why I did not take her stories,” he swiftly thought, “I shall have to tell her the truth, and then, look out for squalls.”

“I do not want to take up your time,” she began, “and I know I have no right to question you; but you can be of great help to me if you will answer me a single question.”

“I shall be most happy to be of any possible service to you,” Matthews replied.

“I have sent you five stories, and you have refused them all. Now, I don’t for an instant doubt that you were right in so doing, but elsewhere I have found
no difficulty in selling my stories. Will you tell me why you did not take any of the five?"

For a moment Matthews was about to make the usual reply, that he had declined Miss Vaughan's stories partly because they were not quite the sort of thing he needed, and partly because he was so well provided with stories that he was buying scarcely any. But she was looking straight at him, and he could not take his eyes from hers or tell her what was essentially untrue.

"I declined them," he answered, "because they were commonplace in conception. You write remarkably well, for a woman, and if you had a story to tell, you would tell it in an unexceptionable way; but I have never found in any of your stories a plot that was fresh, or a character that was a creation. I hate to speak brutally; but you asked me for the truth, and you have it."

He had expected to see his visitor flush with anger, but she accepted his frankness with perfect serenity.

"I think you must be right," she said presently. "I have often felt that my stories were good hack-work, but nothing more. I see clearly what you mean. I know my plots are commonplace, and I have tried hundreds of times to invent one that would be new and striking, but I never succeed. Tell me: can I ever learn to create? You can do it, and that is the reason why your stories fascinate me."

"Thank you very much," replied Matthews. "I
wish I could help you, but I cannot see how that would be possible. I can only suggest that you try to look at things from a point of view different from that taken by all the rest of the world. Perhaps that will help you to find new ideas. But why are you dissatisfied? Your stories are in nearly all the magazines, and I am sure that where I have one reader you have ten. Is not your success enough to satisfy you?"

"Mr. Matthews," she replied earnestly, "I want to write something that I can be proud of. I want to get rid of this feeling that I am always just outside of the line of true genius, and cannot get within it. If I could write one story that you could not help calling great, I should not care if I never wrote another line. My own work seems so infinitely small when I read yours. You have shown me what is the matter with my stories. If I were to see you, and talk with you now and then, might I not get some glimpse of the way out of my miserable, commonplace, suburban-villa habit of mind?"

Matthews was still young enough to find flattery welcome, and flattery from a beautiful woman had the additional charm of novelty. Moreover, he felt that he had spoken to Miss Vaughan of her stories in a way that must have wounded her, however skilfully she concealed the wound. He answered her promptly and warmly.

"My dear Miss Vaughan, there is nothing that
would give me greater pleasure than to meet you frequently. I cannot believe that my poor conversational powers will be of any benefit to you; but if you will kindly permit me to call upon you, you will certainly be of very great help to a tired, and probably tiresome man."

She gave him her address, and went away. The quarter of an hour had been a very pleasant one to him. He said to himself that he had found at last a woman who could listen without anger to the sharpest criticism, and could, moreover, acknowledge its truth. Of course he would go to see her. Perhaps, after all, he might be of help to her. She was unquestionably clever, and her lack of originality must be the result of some false system of working, rather than of any intellectual deficiency.

A few days later Matthews called on Miss Vaughan. He had had a tiresome and unsatisfactory day. A story which, when he had first thought of it, seemed full of possibilities, refused to shape itself into a satisfactory ending. He did not like to abandon the story completely, and he would not put pen to paper until he knew precisely what he meant to write. He had spent hours in thinking intently on the subject, but without achieving any result. At last he resolved to dismiss, if possible, the matter from his mind for that day, and pass an hour with Miss Vaughan.

Before he reached her door the true ending of his
story flashed upon him, and with a light heart he met his new acquaintance. He was still more pleased by the warmth with which he was received.

The conversation was chiefly of literary matters: of books, authors, and methods of work. Matthews, finding himself suddenly thrust into the position of confidential adviser to a young and exceedingly handsome woman, was pleased with the situation. He gave her the best advice he could command, and even promised to read and revise her manuscripts. All the time, however, his own story forced itself upon his attention. He could not put it out of his mind. Several times, while Miss Vaughan was speaking to him, he forget to listen to her, so intently was he thinking of his own work. He was acutely conscious of this, and tried his utmost to confine his attention to what Miss Vaughan was saying. With this view he frequently fixed his eyes on hers, more intently than was quite in keeping with strict propriety; but, oddly enough, the more he looked at her, the more that impertinent story claimed his attention. When he rose up to take his leave he felt curiously tired, instead of rested. Doubtless it was the result of the annoyance which he had experienced earlier in the day, for it was certainly improbable that a call on an attractive and entertaining woman should have tired him.

A week went by. Matthews had not yet begun
to write his story, owing to a pressure of other work. He was, however, at last ready to begin it, and he had just seated himself at his desk for that purpose when he received a manuscript from Miss Vaughan. Regretting his rash promise to read her manuscripts, and wondering how he could have been so weak as to make it, he nevertheless resolved to read the manuscript at once, and so make an end of the matter. As he read page after page his astonishment steadily grew. The story was virtually the same one he had intended to write, and yet he could swear that he had not in the most distant manner spoken of it, or of any part of it, to Miss Vaughan. That they should both have hit upon the same idea, and that she should have carried it out essentially in the same way that he would have carried it out himself, was a marvellous coincidence. "After this," said Matthews to himself, "I shall never accuse any man of plagiarism." There could be no possible doubt that in this case the same story had occurred to two minds almost simultaneously. Miss Vaughan had written her story before Matthews had begun his own, and as a result it was clearly necessary that he should abandon all idea of treating the same subject.

He was also surprised to find that Miss Vaughan's style had greatly improved. This story was written with a masculine vigour which he had never found in her previous stories, and there were tricks of expression
which she had evidently caught from Matthews himself. He felt sure that she had been making a diligent study of his writings, and heartily wished that she had chosen to compliment him in some other way.

Of course he could not blame the woman because she had happened to think of a subject of which he had never spoken to her. She had written a good story, and she was entitled to all the credit for it. He at once wrote to her, accepting the story for publication in his magazine. He made no allusion to the resemblance between what Miss Vaughan had done and what he had intended to do. Any such allusion would have done no good, and could hardly have failed to annoy her.

During the next six months Matthews saw Miss Vaughan very frequently. A warm friendship sprang up between them. There was nothing of sentiment in this friendship. The man and the woman were simply comrades, united by common tastes and common interests. It soon became wholly unnecessary for him to revise his friend’s manuscript. Her stories were, as Matthews cheerfully acknowledged, quite as good as anything he had ever written, and their resemblance to the work that he had formerly done was startling. Three times the same coincidence of ideas occurred, and each time Miss Vaughan wrote a story which Matthews had intended to write. In every case the coincidence
between the written and the unwritten story was nearly perfect.

The first time this had occurred, Matthews had resolved never to speak to Miss Vaughan of any literary project of his own, and he had kept his resolution with the utmost fidelity. Yet three times the stories which he thought he alone had invented, were also invented independently and apparently simultaneously by his comrade. Once he ventured to speak of the matter to her, but it gave her so much distress that he was filled with remorse, and he hastened to convince her that he had been only joking. Surely it was not the woman's fault that she and he hit upon the same subjects. Surely she had as much reason to charge him with having appropriated her ideas as he would have had to charge her with having appropriated his own.

It was not long before Matthews found himself wholly unable to write. If his ideas flowed as freely as of old when he began a story, he presently thought: "What if Miss Vaughan is writing the same thing!" and the thought seemed to paralyze his imagination. He would sit for hours, gazing at his unspotted papers, and waiting in vain for the impulse which formerly had never failed to spur him on. Moreover, he felt habitually tired, and it was evident to him that his strength was failing steadily. He consulted a doctor, who told him that his disease was nothing more than a slight
weariness of the nerves, due doubtless to overwork, and that it need cause him no uneasiness.

Matthews could not feel confident that the doctor was right, for he was certain that he had not overworked himself at any time during the last three years, and that during the last few months, he had done hardly any work whatever. However, he took the doctor’s remedies; but they did him no good. His spirits as well as his health gave way. He became hypochondriacal, and life seemed a burden to him. Then his memory grew weaker, and in great alarm he went to an eminent specialist in brain diseases, expecting to be told that he was far advanced on the road to the madhouse.

This second doctor assured him that his brain was, as yet, perfectly sound, but that graver symptoms might at any time manifest themselves. Matthews was ordered to abandon all work, and to give himself as much diversion as possible. He smiled grimly to himself as he went away from the doctor’s office. How was a man in his condition of mind to divert himself? His life was in his work, and now he found himself unable to write anything whatever. Ideas still came to his brain, but they seemed to pass away again before he could shape them to any purpose. There may be men, thought Matthews, who can amuse themselves when they know that they are in danger of going mad or sinking into idiocy; but he
could not imagine the possibility that he should find amusement in anything.

That evening he spent with Miss Vaughan. She was as kind to him as she had always been, and sincerely solicitous as to his health. She urged him to go away from London, and to make a long journey; the longer the better. She said that the loss of his companionship would be a very serious loss to her, but that she was certain that what he needed was immediate and successive change of scene.

He said little in reply to her, but sat for the most part silent, wondering whether insane people were conscious of their insanity, and in what particular form insanity would come upon him. When he rose up to go he said—

"You are quite right in what you have said. I will take a long journey, and take it at once. We have been good friends, and if you would not mind giving me a first and only kiss I think I should begin my journey in better spirits."

She kissed him without hesitation and without pleasure. She was sincerely sorry the man was ill, and earnestly hoped that he would return in good health. After all, their intimacy might as well cease then as a little later, for she had made up her mind to marry in the spring, and it would then be necessary for her to forego Matthews' frequent visits. She went with him to the door, and shook hands warmly as
they parted. Then she went back to her writing, and Matthews walked down to Blackfriars Bridge and jumped into the river.

His body was never found, and his mysterious disappearance was a sensation in London for several days. His place was quickly filled by some one else, and in a year he was wholly forgotten, except by Miss Vaughan’s enemies. These never forgot to say that while Matthews was living Miss Vaughan wrote capital stories in precisely his own vein, but that from the day of his disappearance she never wrote a single story that was worth reading.

“What that means, my dear,” was the frequent remark of a particularly vicious old lady, “it is not very difficult to see.”

But Miss Vaughan’s enemies were wrong in so far as they meant to hint that Matthews had written the stories that passed under her name. They might have made an infinitely graver charge against her, had they known all the facts—a charge that would have been believed with readiness in the Middle Ages, but which the average man of the nineteenth century would scout as an impossibility. There is no reason to believe that she knew what she was doing during those days when Matthews’ mental powers were passing into her possession. Had she known it, she would have deserved the punishment which Mediæval superstition reserved for convicted vampires.
THE CAPTAIN'S WIFE.

"Speaking of women," said the mate, "no man respects women more than I do. My mother was a woman, sir; and I make no doubt yours was a woman, too."

I admitted that the mate's surmise was correct.

"Well, sir, having said what I have, you won't misunderstand me when I say that the one thing I can't stand is a woman aboard ship. I've been to sea with corpses, two or three dozen of 'em at a time—Chinamen, you understand, that were being sent home from 'Frisco to be buried. And I've made a long voyage with a ship-full of parsons, that insisted on holding prayer-meetings on the quarter-deck every fine day, and found fault with me every time I sang out to the man at the wheel, or gave any sort of an order. 'A gentleman, Mr. Smith,' says one of them to me one day, after I had called the watch aft to brace up the yards, while he was preaching, 'would wait till the sermon was over.' And I've sailed with drunken captains, and crazy captains, and all sorts of
crews; but what I say is, 'Give me corpses, and parsons, and lunatics, every day in the year, sooner than women.' A woman, when she's aboard ship, is either sick, in which case she expects the whole ship's company to do nothing but wait upon her, or she isn't sick, in which case she is interfering with everything, and getting in everybody's way."

"Yet there was a woman," I remarked, "a captain's wife, who took command of the ship when her husband died, and brought her into port."

"I've heard that yarn," the mate replied, "ever since I first went to sea, and I believed it once, when I didn't know any better. If you'll just overhaul your recollection, sir, you'll find that the same yarn is told of about twenty different ships, and you'll find, too, that you never saw a man who had met the woman, or who had ever known any man who had seen as much as the smallest Irish pennant flying from her bonnet. Where was the mate, and where was the second mate when this woman took command of the ship? That's what I'd like to know. And then the yarn goes on to say that the woman received a master's certificate after she reached port, though who gave a certificate to a woman who had never served as mate, and who hadn't a single blessed discharge to show, I never found out. No, sir, I can't hoist that yarn in, whatever you may be able to do."
"But to come back to what I was talking about. Were ever you shipwrecked in company with a woman? Well! you can be thankful you were not. It's bad enough to have to abandon your ship and take to the boats when you're a thousand miles from land, and your chance of being picked up is about one in a thousand; but if you have to take a woman in the boat with you it's just—I beg your pardon, sir, and I won't use language again. But it aggravates me to think of the experience I once had with a woman in a boat.

"I was mate of a big clipper ship in the China trade at the time I am telling you of. She was the Chariot of the Seas, and most likely you remember her. She was a smart ship, but about as uncomfortable a one as a man ever set foot aboard. The captain's name was M'Conigle, and he was a Scotchman, and he took his wife with him. I wouldn't have shipped if I had known that there was to be a woman in the cabin, but I naturally didn't find it out until we came to sail.

"The captain was about as hard and about as mean as they make 'em, so far as the crew were concerned, but I am free to say that he always treated me well, and was the most sociable man I ever sailed with. He'd walk the quarter-deck with me by the hour, and sometimes in the night, when it was my watch on deck, he'd turn out, it might be in the
middle watch, or early in the morning, and yarn away to me till I could hardly keep awake. What was curious, however, was that he had mighty little to say to his wife. Neither of them seemed to care a straw for the other, and at first I couldn't understand why he took her with him when he might have left her ashore.

"She was a handsome woman. There isn't any doubt about that, though I'll ask you to take my word for it, for I'm no hand at describing a woman. She was young, being, as I should judge, about twenty-five, and she carried more sail in the way of high spirits than any sober woman I ever knew. She was always laughing and singing, and making jokes with the captain and me, though she couldn't ever get a smile out of him. On the contrary, when she tried a joke on him he would look so grim that you couldn't have hoisted a smile out of him not even with the steam winch. I mistrusted the woman from the first. There was something reckless about her which you never find in a good woman. And then before we had been a week out of London she began making eyes at me—at least as far as I could judge.

"There isn't any doubt that the captain was jealous of her, though he didn't seem to care anything for her. He gave her very few chances to be alone with me, for which I was very much obliged
to him, for you know my opinion of women aboard ship, and I've told you that I mistrusted this particular woman. One day she and I and the captain were standing near the mizzen rigging, and she was leaning over the rail and singing a French song that sounded as if no decent woman ought to sing it, though, of course, I didn't know what the words meant, when a man on the maintop-sail-yard hailed the deck for something, and she turned round suddenly, and I saw that her face was wet with tears. Now, I call that suspicious. It's something like that old saying, 'When the rain's before the wind, then your topsail halyards mind.' When a woman sings and cries at the same time—that is, provided she isn't singing hymn tunes—look out for bad weather; at least that's been my experience, and I've seen considerable of women in my day.

"As you might suppose, I had very little to do with the woman. Of course, I treated her politely, she being a woman, and being also the captain's wife; but I never let her come to anchor alongside of me if I could help it. I couldn't help finding out, however, that she and her husband led a cat-and-dog life, and that she was about as miserable as a woman can be, in spite of her jokes and her singing. That made me all the more shy of her, for an unhappy married woman is more dangerous than a cargo of gunpowder. Wearing list slippers, and knocking off
smoking won’t help you any with her. I came
to the conclusion after a while that the captain had
brought his wife to sea because he was jealous of
her, and couldn’t trust her out of his sight—which,
of course, was foolishness.

“If you’ve been round the Horn, sir—as I make
no doubt you have—you know what a lot of nonsense
is talked about that corner. I don’t deny that you
are liable to get heavy weather off the Horn, but
I’ve never seen any such weather there as I’ve seen
in the Western Ocean. Going to the westward,
you are middling sure to meet with head winds
off Cape Horn, and you may be a long time getting
round the Cape, but coming to the eastward you
seldom have any trouble. Of course, when you
strike a heavy snowstorm and a gale of wind, and
know that the ice is all around you, it’s no sort
of place for a yachting trip, but it’s all in a day’s
work anyhow, and I never could see that there
was any reason for giving the Horn a specially bad
name.

“It so happened that when the captain judged
that it was time to put the ship to the westward, and
double the Horn, a heavy easterly gale came up,
with thick snow, and the glass falling, not quick, you
understand, but slow and steady. There was ice
in the neighbourhood, too, for we sighted two icebergs
to the southward of us about daybreak. Well, we
squared away before the gale, and the old man, he put every stitch on her that she could carry, and there we were, she logging a good fifteen knots, and the weather so thick you couldn't see half the length of the ship.

"There are some men, Mr. Smith," says the captain to me, "who would shorten sail, and try to keep a look-out for ice. Now, that isn't my style. I don't like ice any better than any other man does, but so long as I can't see it I don't worry over it. There is no good in keeping a look-out for ice when you couldn't see an iceberg till your flying jibboom fouled it, and if she's going to strike an iceberg, she'll do it under her topsails just as soon as she will with her topgallant sails. No, sir, my idea is, in weather like this, to give her everything she'll carry, and what she won't carry let her drag. If there's an iceberg in the road it won't get out of the way for us, and we can't get out of the way for it, so the only thing to do is to just slam the ship right through till we get clear weather again. Seems to me, Mr. Smith, that she'd carry the main royal. Anyhow we'll give it to her, and see what she does with it."

"I never was afraid to carry sail myself when there was any reason for it, and though I felt a little nervous, knowing that we might pile up on an iceberg any minute, I knew that the old man was right, and that he would have been a fool to have
wasted a fair wind. Well, we gave her the main royal, and owing to its being a new piece of canvas, and owing to our having set up our standing rigging the week before we came up with the Horn, she carried it, and went storming and wallowing on her course, with two men at the wheel, and nobody on the look-out; for the forecastle was a regular shower-bath, and all a look-out could have done would have been to hold on to something and try to wipe the brine out of his eyes.

"She was one of those ships where all hands are on deck in the afternoon, which is something I don't hold with, believing that you can get more work out of a crew if you give 'em watch and watch. Excepting the steward and the captain's wife, and the cook, and the men at the wheel, all hands were under the lee of the long boat, and the second mate was smoking in the door of the caboose. All at once the old man says, 'I'll go below now, Mr. Smith, and you'll call me if there is any change in the weather.' With that he started to go below, but on second thoughts turned and went forard. He had reached the caboose, and stood talking with the second mate, whose name was Ramsey, a good fellow and a good seaman, who had been shipmate once before with me, though I don't just now remember where, when there came a splintering crash as the flying jibboom struck an iceberg fair and square, and in another
second the ship struck with a force that threw me flat on the deck. Before I could pick myself up all three masts went, the foremost and mainmast going just below the futtuck shrouds, and carrying the mizen topmast to keep them company. There was a yell from the men when she struck, and then there wasn't a sound but the breaking of the sea on the iceberg, and the singing of the wind in the mizen rigging.

"I ran for'ward to see what damage had been done to the ship; but I didn't need to look twice to see that her bows were stove in below the water-line, and that she hadn't many minutes to float. Then I looked for the captain, and found him and more than half of the crew lying dead under the mainmast that had crushed them and the second mate as well. I told the men to clear away one of the quarter boats, and put a breaker of water in her, and then I jumped below, and got a bag of biscuits, and told the steward to bring anything to eat he could lay his hand on. I stopped in my room with an idea of getting my sextant; but I knew that was foolishness, and so I caught up a bottle of wine that happened to be in the room, and sang out for the captain's wife. I couldn't see anything of her, and thinking that she must be on deck by this time, I rushed up the companion way, and found her in the boat holding on to one of the falls, and ordering
the men to wait for me with a pistol in her right hand. About half the men were casting loose the other boat, and in less time than I am taking to tell you about it both boats had been lowered, and were lying on their oars a little astern of the ship, which had drifted clear of the berg, but was sinking fast. There were six men, besides myself and the captain's wife, in our boat, and seven men in the other boat. Each boat had a breaker of water, but all the provisions were aboard my boat, so I gave the others one of our two bags of biscuits, and telling them to keep within hail of us, we pulled away from the wreck so as to be clear of her when she went into her flurly. We lost sight of the other boat before we had been rowing ten minutes, and nothing was ever heard or seen of her afterwards.

"There was no use trying to land on Terra del Fuego, even supposing we knew what course to steer for it without a compass, and in a blinding snowstorm; for we were better off in the boat than we would have been on a desert island with nothing to eat except ourselves, and a lot of savages standing by to eat us. So I told the men we would keep on to the westward, and that as soon as we got into the Pacific we should have fine weather, and be sure to be picked up by somebody. There was rather more sea on than I liked, considering that we were in an open boat and running before it,
but I was afraid to hoist the sail because I didn't want to run into another iceberg. However, we had to keep steerage way on the boat, and to keep her out of the way of the following seas, so I put four men at the oars and told them to pull an easy stroke, just enough to keep the boat ahead of the seas, without trying to break the record by making a quick passage round the Horn.

"I don't think the captain's wife and I had spoken since the boat cast off. She naturally sat in the stern sheets with me, and she knew that her husband had been killed without my telling her about it. When we had shook ourselves down in the boat, and were beginning to be comfortable, I says to her: 'This ain't the sort of yachting trip that is suited to you, ma'am; but it won't last long, and we must just make the best of it.'

"'It's heaven compared with that ship,' said she. 'This is the first happy moment I've known since we sailed from London.'

"I didn't like her way of talking, considering that she had just lost her husband; so I only said, 'I'm glad, ma'am, that you are not afraid.' We didn't say any more for the next hour, and then she told me that she was used to steering a boat, and that when I wanted to sleep she would take the tiller. I tried her, so as to see if she told the truth, and found that she did; so I says, 'If you please,
ma'am, you and I'll keep watch and watch, for I don't care to trust the boat with any one of those chaps forard.' I don't know how she learned to steer, for I never asked her, but steer she could, about as well as you or me, sir!

"Towards night the snow stopped falling, and the weather cleared off beautiful. The wind went down, too, and I told the men that they might knock off rowing and turn in, and that the lady and I would look after the boat. You see I knew that the stock of provisions was mighty small, and that the more the men slept the less they would eat. Besides, there was no use in keeping at the oars when the boat would do well enough without them. We weren't trying to make any port, and our chances of being picked up were just as good lying where we were, as they would have been five hundred miles to the westward or nor'rard.

"It wasn't long before the men were asleep, and I was finding it pretty hard to keep my own eyes open. All at once the woman says, 'Your name is Tom, isn't it?'

"'That's what I was christened, and that's the name in my discharges,' says I.

"'My name is Mary,' she continued. 'I want you to call me Mary, and I'll call you Tom. It's too ridiculous for shipwrecked people to go on calling one another Mr. This and Mrs. That.'"
"'Very good, ma'am,' says I.

'And now, Tom,' said she, 'I want you to go to sleep. I'm not sleepy, and you are. I'll keep watch, and call you if anything happens.'

'I couldn't see why I shouldn't do as she said, so I just clasped my arms and shut my eyes, and was off in a minute. I slept for hours, and when I woke I was lying with my head in the woman's lap, though how it got there is more than I know.

'I started up and began to apologize; but she stopped me, and said, 'It was I that did it. Why shouldn't I try to make you comfortable? That's what women are for.' So I thanked her, and as the men were pretty well awake by this time, I served out biscuit and water, and after breakfast we stepped the mast and made sail on the boat, which left all hands at liberty except me.

'I'm not going to give you a regular log of every hour aboard that boat. We had pleasant weather for three or four days, by which time, I judged, we were fairly round the Horn, and so I put her head to the nor'ward. All that time we never saw a sail, and at the end of three days the biscuit was nearly all gone, so that we had come down to an allowance of about a square inch a day for each man. The men were grumbling, as sailors always will in such circumstances; they having no more sense than so many children, but so long as they contented themselves
with grumbling I didn't much mind, especially as I knew the woman had her pistol, while none of the men had anything but their sheath-knives.

"Mary and I had got pretty well acquainted during the three days. You can't sit next to a good-looking woman all day in an open boat, and sleep with your head in her lap, and have her sleeping with her head on your shoulder, without getting to know her middling well. As for her, she didn't make the least pretence of shyness. She began by telling me how she would trust me with anything, and how happy she was to be with me instead of being with her husband aboard the Chariot of the Seas. I don't suppose there is any harm in my telling you that she regularly made love to me, and, what is the most curious part of the whole thing, she really meant it. Why, she proposed to me that after we were picked up and reached port we should be married.

"'Thank you, ma'am,' says I, 'for your good opinion, but the fact is, I'm married already.'

"'But not to a woman that you have been cast away with in an open boat! That's as good as any marriage. Besides, I know you don't care for your wife, and if you don't care for me now you will in time. I never yet saw the man I couldn't make love to me.'

"'Excuse me, ma'am,' said I, 'but my wife's a good woman.'
"'And I'm not a good woman!' she cried. 'Of course I'm not; but I love you, Tom, and your wife doesn't love you.'

"Now, this is where the woman wasn't far wrong. My wife was a little too fond of taking the weather side of the quarter-deck, and she didn't make my home so comfortable that I hankered after it when I was at sea. She has been dead this many a year, poor woman, and I'm not doing her any harm in saying what I do. She was too good for me. I suppose that was what was the matter.

"After this little conversation that I've repeated, the captain's wife didn't say anything more about marrying me, but she was that gentle and affectionate to me that the devil himself couldn't have helped but like it. She would nestle up against me when she wanted to sleep, without caring a straw what the men might think; and once she told me to kiss her for good night, and I did it.

"The fourth day the men turned out stiff and hungry and savage, and after talking a little while among themselves one of them spoke up and said that they had resolved that I should serve out the bottle of rum that I had kept hid in the stern sheets, and that after that they would let me know what they intended to do. The bottle of port wine, or rum as they supposed it was, I had been keeping to give to the woman in case she, being weaker than
the rest of us, should show signs of giving out, and I didn't know the men had seen it. I told them it was not rum; but they said they'd judge of that themselves, and that the sooner I handed it over the better it would be for me and the woman.

"'You shall have it,' said Mary. 'Wait a bit, and I'll get the cork out!' So saying she turned her back to them, and was busy with the bottle for a minute before she handed it over to the men. 'I'm afraid,' she said, 'that it may not agree with you, considering how little you've eaten; but, if you insist on it, I suppose you must have it.'

'I asked her if she didn't want any of the wine herself, and if she had said 'yes,' she should have had it, or there would have been a fight. But she said she wouldn't touch it, and that she asked it as a particular favour that I wouldn't touch it either. I told her that there was a mighty little chance that the men would offer me any. Starving sailors don't go in very much for politeness. I told her, however, that I should like to have her pass me her pistol, for I might need it in the course of the day; but I was disappointed to find that she had accidentally dropped it overboard just as we left the wreck. However, the men supposed she had it still, which might prove of some use.

"But the pistol was never needed. Within half an hour after the men had emptied the bottle they
began to complain of terrible pains, and pretty soon they were all rolling in the bottom of the boat in agony. Before night every blessed one of them was dead, and Mary and I had hove them overboard. I smelt the bottle, and I smelt strychnine. How it got into the bottle I didn’t know, and I didn’t try to know. Mary didn’t have much to say about it; all she did say was, ‘Those men would have murdered us before to-morrow night if this hadn’t happened. They have only themselves to blame.’

"After that we were alone in the boat, and, considering there were only two of us, I was able to serve out enough biscuit every day to keep us from actual suffering, though, of course, we were always pretty hungry. Mary seemed as happy as a bird. She sang to me, and cooed around me, and did her level best to make me mad in love with her. Of course I liked it. Where is there a man who wouldn’t have liked it? But, all the same, I didn’t love her. There never was a time when I wasn’t afraid of her. I don’t mean afraid, as you or I might be of a junk full of Chinese pirates, but afraid as a man sometimes is in the dark. I was afraid of the dark that was in the woman’s soul, though I knew she loved me.

"Two days after we were left alone I went to the breaker to draw some water, and I found that it had nearly all leaked out. I couldn’t help making an exclamation, and Mary wanting to know what was
the matter, I had to tell her. I found the leak and stopped it, but there wasn't more than a gill of water left in the boat. For the first time since we left the wreck the woman seemed to grow serious, and she asked me several times how long a man could live without water, and how long we could make the gill of water last. I put the best face on it I could, but we were in a bad place, and there was no use in trying to conceal it.

"That night, after she had nestled on my shoulder to go to sleep, she put her arms round my neck and said, 'I'm not a good woman, Tom. You will always know that; but I want you to promise me never to forget that I love you as no other woman ever will, and that I would have been good for your sake.' I told her she was the best shipmate a man could possibly be wrecked with, and that I made no doubt that after we got ashore she would be as good a woman as ever stepped. She didn't answer, but after lying on my shoulder for an hour, she roused up and said that she couldn't sleep, and that she would rather take the tiller, and let me sleep. So I kissed her, and turned in, and what struck me as queer at the time was that she turned away her lips, and told me to kiss her on the forehead. She never said another word, and being more tired than usual, I slept sound till daybreak.

"When I woke up I was lying, not with my head
in Mary's lap, but on a pillow made of her petticoats, and the shawl she used to wear round her shoulders. But Mary was gone, and that's the last I ever heard of her.

"I understood in a minute what she had done. I had told her that one man might perhaps live on a gill of water for three or four days, and she had gone overboard, so as there shouldn't be but one mouth to be wet with that water.

"Yes! As I was saying, women are a nuisance at sea; but when I saw that poor woman's shawl and petticoats folded so careful under my head, and saw that she was gone, I wished that it had been me instead of her. I thought I was a middling decent man, and I knew she wasn't a good woman, but I never met another woman, good or bad, who would have done for me what the captain's wife did."
ITS OWN REWARD.

Mrs. Chalfant was a misunderstood woman, so two of her intimate friends constantly assured her; and as they were women in whose opinion as to other matters she had not the slightest respect, she implicitly believed them. Moreover, she constantly told herself that there was no one who really understood her, and she felt sure that she was a truthful woman who could not tell herself a lie. Being thus misunderstood she was lonely and wretched. Her husband was kind to her, and she conceded that he was a good, honest sort of fellow according to his lights; but she was perfectly certain that he had never known her as she really was, and that he was incapable of entering into the noble thoughts and lofty aspirations that filled her soul.

Mrs. Chalfant had married her husband under the delusion that she loved him. At the time, she never dreamed that he was incapable of understanding her, and in fact it had never occurred to her that there was any necessity that she should be understood. But gradually she found that she and her husband
did not think alike as to quite a number of things, and of course she saw that he must be wrong. The divergence between them began over a volume of Emerson's Essays. Mrs. Chalfant believed that she was a woman of excellent literary taste, and she held very pronounced views as to the writers whom she liked or disliked. John Chalfant was an author in a small way; that is to say he had written verses and stories which the magazines had published; and though he was a modest man in some respects, he had never the slightest doubt that his opinion as to any book was infallible. So when he told his wife that "Emerson's Essays" were windy nonsense, and she assured him that they were divine wisdom, a discussion began, which ended in something very nearly resembling anger on both sides. She had never thought much of her husband's stories, and his verses she always disliked, on the ground that they were rough in form and lacking in delicate sentiment; and when she found that he did not like Ouida, and cared nothing for Mrs. Browning, and actually said that George Eliot was tedious, and that Zola was a great moralist, she was compelled to believe that he was incapable of appreciating what was refined and noble, and was a man of essentially and hopelessly coarse tastes.

At the end of two years of married life the Chalfants had grown far apart. Mrs. Chalfant
thought her husband coarse and dull—a man wholly unfit to be the husband of a woman of rare genius and exquisite tastes; while he thought her silly and conceited, and each knew the other to be intolerant, and occasionally irritable. She saw but little of him, and found her chief pleasure in the society of the two or three women who accepted her at her own estimate of herself, and who flattered her and sympathized with her as a neglected and misunderstood wife. John Chalfant still wrote stories and verses, but he never showed them to his wife, well knowing that she despised them, and thought him a miserable pretender to authorship. And so a husband and wife who might have been happy together built up day by day a higher and broader wall of separation between them.

Chalfant had sincerely loved his wife, and their estrangement was a bitter grief to him. It was lightened, however, by the counter irritation of the wound to his self love which her contemptuous treatment of his literary efforts inflicted. There grew up in him a fierce desire to prove that he was not a mere writer of commonplace stories, and verses that were only the echo of Browning's verse. He determined to write a novel which even his wife must admire, for, in spite of the contempt which he felt for her critical judgment, it was her good opinion more than that of all the world beside which he
valued. He did write a novel, and as he wrote it in the fever of his wounded heart, he wrote a book that, for him, was an astonishingly good one. There was plenty of sentiment in it, for did he not want to prove that when his wife said that he was incapable of sentiment she utterly misunderstood him? Indeed many of the critics found that the sentiment too frequently degenerated into gush, but for all that the book was undeniably clever, and it made a hit. Chalfant had published it with the name of "Arthur Halleck" as the author, for he feared that it might be a failure, and in that case he did not wish that his wife should know that he had failed; and when its success was beyond all doubt, he delayed to make public his authorship of the book in order to enjoy a little longer the delicious feeling that he could in a moment, if he chose, prove to his wife that he was capable of writing a book that she could admire. For he had seen her reading his novel, and had seen the tears fall from her eyes. Moreover, when he had asked her, "What have you there?" she had replied, "A book that you would sneer at. I love it." Nothing that the critics had said had given John Chalfant the thrill of joy that this contemptuous remark of his wife gave him.

As she said, she loved the book, she felt that the author was a kindred soul. He, of all the world, was the man who was capable of fully understanding
her. What heaven it would have been had she married such a man instead of dull John Chalfant! No man could write such a book—so she said to herself—who was not pure, refined, sweet, and noble. She could lie at his feet, and acknowledge him as the one man whom she recognized as her superior. How perfect would be the communion of thought between herself and the unknown author should they ever be thrown together! They would love the same poets and the same novelists. If one loved a book the other would be sure to love it, and it would be impossible for him to laugh at anything that she admired, or to tell her that Emerson wrote rubbish, and that Ouida was not precisely Shakespearean.

She re-read the book until she knew it almost by heart. She grew to feel as if the writer had been known to her for years, and that he was the one man whom she could love with her whole heart. One day, in her loneliness, she yielded to a sudden impulse, and wrote him a letter. She told him how she admired him, and how sure she was that they two were capable of understanding one another. She wrote briefly; but, as she felt strongly, she expressed herself with a force and warmth that was something new to her. She signed the letter, which she had written in a carefully disguised hand, with an assumed name, and asked earnestly for an answer. Then, directing it to Arthur Halleck in care of his
publishers, she hastened to post it before she should repent the rashness of the step she had taken. In writing the letter she had no idea of doing anything inconsistent with what she considered her duty to her husband. She hardly thought that there would be an answer to it, and if there were, there could be no harm in it. In all probability she would never meet the man whom she so greatly admired, and even if she did, he would never know who had been his correspondent. The letter had been a relief to her at the moment of writing it. That was all that would ever come of it.

In due time John Chalfant received his wife's letter, but he had not the slightest suspicion that she had written it. He did not recognize the handwriting, and most certainly there was nothing in the enthusiastic admiration which the writer of the letter expressed, which recalled in the slightest degree his wife's habitual mental attitude toward him. He was greatly flattered by this unexpected tribute of praise, and he at once made up his mind that the writer was a woman of keen insight and wonderfully accurate judgment. She was capable of appreciating his book, while his wife, though she had said that she admired and loved it, had also said that it was a book at which he would sneer; thus showing that she lacked the power to perceive that the book was simply the best part of himself expressed in prose.
Chalfant carried the letter in his pocket for two
days, and read it at least a dozen times. He told
himself that he read it so often, not because it
praised his book, but because it was useful to him
as an acute and unbiased criticism. He could not
make up his mind whether he would answer it or
not, but at the end of the second day, he decided
that there could be no possible harm in answering
it; and that, indeed, he would be guilty of an
unpardonable piece of rudeness if he failed to thank
the writer for her kind and encouraging words. His
married life had, however, made him cautious; and
though he contemplated nothing more serious than
a cautious answer, he, in his turn, wrote in a hand
that he was sure no one would recognize as his own.

As he had hoped, though without acknowledging
it to himself, his letter was promptly answered. His
wife had been charmed by the tone and manner of
his answer. She was proud and happy at having
won the notice of so brilliant a man as Arthur
Halleck. There could be no question in her mind,
after reading the letter, that he was a gentleman.
The delicacy and refinement which she found, even
in his handwriting, were utterly unlike anything of
which John Chalfant was capable. The latter could
no more have written the letter than he could have
written the book to which it referred. Why should
she not enjoy the pleasure of a correspondence with
a man who was so capable of understanding her; so capable of treating her with the consideration which she deserved! Because she had made an unfortunate marriage, was that any reason why she should forego an innocent pleasure, a romantic acquaintance which could do no one any possible harm, and which could hardly fail to build up in her all those noble aspirations which already separated her from coarse and commonplace people! She resolved to give herself this strange and secret delight. Somewhere she had read of an unknown lady who for years carried on a correspondence with a great French author, to whom, although they never met, she became critic, friend, and helper. Why should she not be to Arthur Halleck what the "Inconnue" had been to the Frenchman? Here was a mission in life, and she had always felt that, with her wonderful endowments, there must somewhere be a mission waiting for her! Here was a path which promised to lead her into a bower more beautiful than that of Rosamond, and, moreover, free from any trace of the serpent of guilt! She wrote a long, glowing, enthusiastic, and almost affectionate letter, and when her husband came home that night he found her with a flush on her cheek, and a brightness in her eye, which contrasted sharply with the peevish languor of her usual expression.
It was not long before the correspondence thus begun became the chief delight of the man and the woman who carried it on. Chalfant, for the first time in his life, as he thought, had for a friend a woman who not only admired but understood him. His own home was dreary to him. His wife was in no sense a companion, much less a friend. He felt that she merely tolerated him, and, although, with the persistent loyalty of an honest man he still loved her—or, at least, he thought he did—he was rapidly growing to find his real happiness in the companionship of his unknown correspondent. Between them there was, as their letters proved to his complete satisfaction, the quickest and keenest sympathy. It was not merely that they were intellectual equals, but their souls were kindred to one another, and could meet and mingle, no matter what distance separated their bodies. He was not, perhaps, perfectly clear what this meant, but he knew that it was true, as soon as his fair correspondent had mentioned the fact in one of her letters. When he went back to his house at night he no longer felt that he was going home. He found his home when he sat down to write his daily letter to the Unknown.

Neither husband nor wife dreamed of wronging the other. How could the exchange of letters between two people who had never even seen one another wrong any one? And then it was certainly
the fact that since Chalfant had formed this strange intimacy, he and his wife seemed to jar upon one another much less than formerly. She was apparently far more contented than she had formerly been, and more tolerant of little things in her husband which had once never failed to irritate her. On his part, possibly because of some unacknowledged feeling of remorse, Chalfant was more than usually careful to please her, and the two frequently passed an evening together without inflicting anything more serious upon one another than the slight feeling of boredom, which, it is said, is not wholly unknown even in happy married homes.

But a man cannot go halfway, either in rationalism or intrigue, and stop there, unless he is intellectually or morally illogical. Chalfant, although he had never seen his correspondent, and she had never hinted at her personal appearance, except to say that she was still a young woman, had made up his mind that she was beautiful. At first he did not wish to see her, for he felt that the correspondence owed not a little of its charm to the feeling that he was writing to a woman whom he would never meet, but by the time that he had fallen in love with the Unknown, he knew that to see her was the most ardent desire of his life. He had not supposed that it was possible that he should burn his fingers, when he began to play with fire, and he was amazed X
and full of pity for himself when he found that he had burned them badly. The knowledge came upon him suddenly, and in the night, as he lay thinking of the last letter that he had received. He was alarmed and troubled. How was it possible, that he, a decent, honest, married gentleman should have fallen in love with some one who was not his wife? He said to himself that he would write no more letters, and would begin the very next morning to put the thought of his correspondent out of his mind. In the morning he wrote to her more warmly than ever.

After that the descent was rapid, for in all such affairs, the slope grows suddenly steeper towards the end. He told the Unknown that he loved her; and begged her to give him at least one meeting, so that the pressure of her hand might live in his memory. He had, in his earlier letters, omitted to mention that he was married, since there seemed to be no reason why he should thrust his personal affairs into a correspondence with a stranger; and, later on, he felt that to mention his marriage would be to strike a false note that would mar the exquisite harmony of the correspondence. Now, of course, it was too late to touch upon the matter, though he was firmly resolved to tell the Unknown, at their first and last meeting, of the barrier which must henceforth part them. The line of action which he marked out for himself was, he felt sure, a conspicuously virtuous
one. He would meet the lady; tell her that he loved her, but that he was married, and that they must never meet again. Then he would kiss her on the forehead, and they two would part for ever. This would be at once delightful, tragical, and moral, a skilful mixture of virtue and vice in just such proportions that the one would neutralize the other.

Mrs. Chalfant had finally decided that she was not in love with Arthur Halleck. She was charmed with his letters, and delighted with the relation in which they stood one to the other; but she was not the sort of woman who falls in love—except with herself. She would have preferred to prolong the correspondence indefinitely, without ever permitting it to lose its strictly platonic tone; but when her correspondent insisted upon seeing her, and hinted vaguely that unless he could meet her once and once only, something terrible must happen, she decided to meet him. After all, no harm would be done, for he would not know her name, and could not recognize her. She would lecture him gently for having broken the charm of mystery which had hitherto characterized their acquaintance, and would confide to him, what she had never previously thought worth mentioning, that she was a woman with a husband. While she was sincere in her regret that he had insisted upon meeting her, she could not wholly repress a natural curiosity to see the man with whom she had so long
corresponded, and she finally found herself looking forward with a good deal of eagerness and not a little fear to the meeting at the National Gallery which had been arranged between them.

She was to carry a rose in her right hand, and he was to carry a lily in his left hand, and they were to meet at precisely three o'clock before the Turner that hangs between the two Claude Lorraines. When Chalfant entered the room, just as St. Martin's chimes were sounding the hour, he saw a woman standing before the Turner with her back toward him. A thrill passed over him, for it came to him that she looked precisely as he thought she would, and that the closeness of their spiritual intimacy had made even the bodily aspect of the woman whom he had never seen familiar to him. He knew that it was she, for her right hand was hanging by her side, and in it was the rose. He walked quickly to her, and as she heard his footstep she turned to meet him—and they recognized one another.

At first each thought that the other had by some means learned of the rendezvous, and that each had been detected—the one by an angry husband, the other by an outraged wife. For a moment they remained looking silently at each other, and then the quick wit of the woman grasped, as she thought, the whole meaning of the situation. An intense relief was her first feeling, followed by delight at the
thought that it was her husband, after all, who had not only written the book that she loved, but who had devised the wonderfully romantic scheme of making love to his wife, and trying to win her heart by writing letters under an assumed name. She was just deep enough to see that her correspondent and her husband must be the same person, and just shallow enough to be pleased at what she assumed to have been his conduct.

"Dear old John!" she cried; "and so it was you, after all! I never supposed it was in you; but I did you injustice. You have won my heart a second time, and this time it will stay with you."

That was the end of John Chalfant's romance. Like an intelligent man, he accepted the situation, and wisely forbore to explain that he had never dreamed that his correspondent was his wife. They wrote no more letters to one another, but they lived in an intimacy and happiness which they had never known before. This was, of course, quite contrary to sound ethics, for they had undoubtedly mis-conducted themselves in the matter of that correspondence, and they ought to have been punished for it, whereas their misconduct led them into happiness. That is the trouble with any theory, ethical or political: facts will every now and then insist upon setting it at defiance.
TWO DONKEYS.

"You and I," said the mate, "can remember the time when British ships were manned by British seamen. Now they're manned by Dutchmen and Norwegians, and Dagos, and every style of cheap furriner. All the owners seem to think of is how they can get the cheapest men, and the cheapest grub, and the cheapest ships they can find. I wonder they don't try to find something even cheaper than Dutch crews. Since they don't seem to want sailors they might ship donkeys. Blest if a good White-chapel donkey wouldn't make a better sailor-man than half the men that are in British fo'c'sles. Speaking of donkeys, did you ever hear of One-eyed Thompson's donkey?"

I pleaded my ignorance of that eminent donkey, and asked the mate to give me the leading facts in the animal's career.

"It all happened years ago, when I was first going to sea; I was a boy aboard the Hendrik Hudson at the time. You probably recollect the ship. She was
one of the Black X packets that used to sail between London and New York—'turpentine ships' we used to call 'em, for they brought turpentine over from New York, and carried back Dutch emigrants and railroad iron. The *Hendrik Hudson* was a crack ship in her day, and the American newspapers called her a 'miracle of American skill.' She was only about nine hundred tons, but she was thought to be a tremendous big ship, and people used to come down to the docks in New York to look at her. Similarly, she was considered to be a fast ship, though it took a hurricane to get ten knots out of her. She was comfortable enough, though she always leaked from the day she was launched, and when I call a ship leaky I mean one that requires to be pumped out every watch. It used to take one hour out of every four to make the *Hendrik's* pumps suck, and that was in fine weather, too. When there was anything like a heavy sea, we kept the pumps going all the time. By the way, a curious thing happened to that ship. She had got to be about thirty years old, and was so rotten that you could stick a knife through her planking almost anywheres. Well, she went out of London with a heavy cargo of iron, and before she was clear of the Channel it came on to blow, and the ship straining heavily, the first thing her people knew was that the whole bottom had dropped out of her.

"As I was saying, I was a boy aboard her, and a
pretty hard berth it was, too. We were lying in the East River one day, having hauled out in the morning, and the crew were coming aboard, and they were the drunkest lot I ever saw. Sailors were mighty scarce in New York just then, and the only way a shipping master could get a crew together was to ship 'em one by one, and keep 'em dead drunk till he could put 'em aboard. The shipping master who brought off this lot was One-eyed Thompson, and he wasn't much worse than the rest of them, though he did have a mighty bad name. He came off with the last batch of sailors, and presently I heard the old man—Elkins was his name—pitching it to him hot and heavy. 'I want my crew,' said the old man; 'we're short-handed at the best, and here you have the cheek to come and tell me that you ain't going to bring off no more men, though you're one able seaman short. Now, I want that man. You've been and shipped him, and you've been and had his advance, and now you'll bring that man aboard before ten o'clock to-night, or the next time I come to New York I'll go to another shipping master, and never have no more to do with you of any kind or sort whatsoever.'

"Thompson went away pretty mad with the old man, and knowing that his chances of catching an able seaman that night weren't very good. His place was down in Water Street, and next door to him there was a man who kept a donkey in his back yard
that was always lifting up his voice and bewailing the hard times. Being, as I have said, pretty angry, Thompson wasn’t in a state of mind to be patient with the donkey, and when the animal began his remarks Thompson swore he would kill him the first chance he could get. All of a sudden an idea struck him, and he called his bar-keeper, and the two got a rope and climbed over the fence and gagged that donkey, and carried him into Thompson’s back kitchen. Then, after nine o’clock, Thompson goes down to the foot of Wall Street and hires a boat, and puts the donkey aboard that boat, and carries him off to the *Hendrik Hudson*. There was nobody on deck except the anchor watch, and he was pretty full of rum, so he made no objection to taking the donkey aboard and making him fast to the fore-stay. Thompson said that the captain was to be told, with Mr. Thompson’s compliments, that the donkey was the missing twenty-second sailor, and be d——d to you, meaning, of course, the old man.

“Well, the ship went to sea the next morning, and when the mates came to choose watches the donkey was chosen into the starboard watch, and the second mate set him to work. The donkey took to it as natural as if he had been to sea all his life, and he would walk away with the main brace, or tail on to the topsail halyards, and do about three times as much good heavy pulling and hauling as the best
man aboard. He got to know his duties in half the time that an average landsman making his first voyage would have done. When we were tacking ship he'd lay aft to lend a hand at swinging the main topsail, and then he'd back up to the fife-rail ready to help with the head braces. Just as soon as the head yards were braced sharp up he'd gallop forward to see if there was any call for him to help ride down the foretack. A more willing hand—or you might say hoof—you couldn't wish to see. There was never any hanging back, or any sogerin', about that donkey. You'd really think, to see him at work, that he liked it, but if you'd wait till it was his watch below, and then heard him grumble, you'd have seen that he was a genuine old shell-back. The carpenter knocked up a little shed for the donkey just abaft the foremast, and whenever he was on deck and heard eight bells strike, he'd make a straight wake for his bunk, and you'd see no more of him until four hours later.

"There was a chap in the starboard watch that the men turned out of the fo'c'sle the third day out of New York. What was the matter I never knew, or if I did know, I have forgotten. Perhaps the man had been caught overhauling another man's chest, or perhaps he was that ugly that he took away the men's appetite. I rather think that it was his ugliness, for he was about as ugly as a Hottentot woman."
His nose had been broke, and both his eyes were rove foul, and his lower lip had been cut away, and his skin was stained with one thing and another till he looked as if he had never washed since he was born. Very likely there was none of it his fault, but you know how it is when sailors take a prejudice against a man. It’s cruel hard on the man, even if he does deserve it; but no officer in his senses interferes, for it is the men’s business, and they have the say as to who they’ll have in the fo’c’sle and who they won’t have.

“Thishyer man, ‘Santy Anna’ they called him, had to sleep somewhere, and the donkey’s shed being middling warm, and being furnished with straw, he made friends with the animal, and shared his bunk. The two got to be as thick as thieves, and we used to call ’em the two donkeys. Many’s the time that I’ve seen the donkey lying on his side, and Santy Anna lying alongside, with his arm around the donkey’s neck, and both of them sleeping as comfortable as the Queen in a feather bed. They used to take their meals together, and Santy Anna would share his coffee with the donkey, who, being a natural born jackass, thought it was good to drink. The men would try to chaff Santy Anna about his chum now and then, but he’d say that the donkey was a sight better Christian than anybody else aboard that ship, and that he was glad to get quit of the
fo'c'sle and live with a decent beast, instead of them that would turn a man out to die of cold and wet, just because they didn't like his looks.

"When the men found that there wasn't anything to be made by chaffing the man they let him alone, and if it hadn't been for the donkey Santy Anna would have perished for want of conversation. A man may live without victuals, or drink, or even tobacco, for a reasonable length of time, but if he never has anybody to speak to he is bound to go mad. At least that's my way of thinking. Santy Anna, however, had all the conversation he needed. I've heard him conversing with that donkey through the whole of a dog watch, he making his remarks about this thing and that, and the donkey grunting now and then as if to say, 'I'm with you there, my hearty!' or just nodding with his ears and tail in an approving and sympathizing way.

"The Hendrik Hudson would have been a good enough ship if it wasn't that after the first week the rule was all hands on deck in the afternoon. There wasn't really work enough for the men to do, it being midsummer, and but for all that they weren't allowed to have watch and watch. Naturally, they grumbled, as any man would who knew he was treated particular blasted mean. I never could see what a captain expected to gain by depriving his men of watch and watch, which is the natural birthright of every man,
and is mentioned, as I’ve been told, in the Bible. All the work that needs to be done aboard a ship can be done without keeping the men on deck every afternoon, and trying to invent jobs to keep them out of mischief.

"It wasn’t very long before the donkey found out that he was being imposed upon. The first time it was his watch below in the afternoon, and he went to his shed to turn in, but was dragged out and set to work, he remonstrated, in a quiet and respectful way you understand, but plain enough to show the old man his opinion of his conduct. When he found out that it was going to be the rule to keep all hands on deck in the afternoon the donkey lost his spirits and became sort of sullen, and it was clear enough that he shared the feelings of the rest of the crew. There was nothing mutinous about him, and he’d do his work without openly grumbling, but he didn’t go about it in the old willing way, and though he’d obey any order that was given him, he’d take his own time about it. The mates used to cuss him considerably, but he paid no more attention to it than a man would have done, and when he was hit with a belaying-pin he would never say a word. Mind you, none of the men ever hit him, at least when Santy Anna was in sight. Now and then the donkey would get in the way of somebody, and would get shoved aside, but it wasn’t a safe thing for any one
to use violence to him. A man tried it one day by kicking the donkey in the ribs, and Santy Anna drew his knife, and would have stabbed the man if some of us hadn't caught his hand and wrenched the knife away. The mate heard the row and came to see what it was about. Santy Anna just said, 'That there animal is the only friend I've got on earth. He was good to me when the men drove me out of the fo'c'sle, and I'll allow no man to touch him without having to reckon with me.' The mate says, 'You're right, my man. Stand by those who stood by you, and if any man abuses your friend come to me, but don't go drawing knives, as if you were a Dago.' The men saw that the mate sided with Santy Anna, and they judged that it was best not to interfere with the donkey any more. He was a middling soft-hearted chap that mate, and I've seen him lick a man till he could hardly stand merely because the man had treated me or the other boy in a way that the mate thought wasn't quite right.

"Having made up his mind the crew were being imposed upon, the donkey swore that there shouldn't be any singing aboard that ship. Now, the men were as disgusted as he was, but still, considerin' how much a good song lightens up the work of pumping, and considerin' how much pumping there was to do aboard the Hendrik Hudson, the men kept on singing at the pumps, instead of pumping her out sullen and
silent, which is the general way of showing that you
don't consider that you are gettin' the proper kind
of treatment. The donkey let the singing go on for
a day or two, and then whenever the shanty man
gave tongue the donkey let himself loose, and brayed
till you couldn't hear yourself think. There was no
use in trying to stand up against it, and the men had
to give in and do their pumping without any singing
whatever. The officers didn't mind. It only amused
them, though pumping out a turpentine ship was
never an amusing business owing to there always
being a lot of crude turpentine adrift in her hold,
which kept getting into the pumps and choking them.
Whenever this happened, which was generally two
or three times every time we pumped her out, the
carpenter would have to get down into the well and
clean the turpentine out, while the mate or the captain
stood and cussed him for not doing his work quick
enough.

"By-and-by the donkey made up his mind that
he'd go on the sick-list. He refused to turn out, and
when the second mate sung out for him Santy Anna
said that the beast was too sick to stand on his legs.
The captain went and had a look at him, and had
a bucket of salts poured down the donkey's throat,
and then he ordered the men to haul him out and
set him on his legs. They had lively times hauling
him out, for he was lying with his heels close to the
door of his shed, and he kicked with a judgment that showed that his mind was all right whatever might be the matter with his body. However, Santy Anna went in and had a few words with him, telling him that it wasn't any use, and that if he wanted to please his friend he'd turn to. So the donkey let Santy hoist him on to his legs, and he came out on deck. But anybody could see to look at him that the poor beast was sick, and that there was no shamming about it. However, he had to do his work as usual, and Santy helped him through with it as well as he could, and when four o'clock came the two went to their shed, and Santy rubbed the beast's legs, and bathed his head, and crooned to him like a woman does to her baby, till the donkey fell asleep.

"In a week or so the donkey was all right again, though he was that thin that you couldn't hit him anywhere without jarring yourself by hitting a bone. Not that anybody did hit him except the mates; and, of course, Santy Anna couldn't object to this, the donkey being regularly shipped as an able seaman, and being entitled to a sailor's allowance. However, when the donkey got a blow from anybody, Santy would try to make it up to him afterwards by petting him and sympathizing with him. There is no doubt that the man loved the animal as much as a man can love anything, and the donkey
was equally fond of the man. One day, there being a heavy sea on, and Santy being busy on the weather side of the quarter-deck, he fetched away and rolled into the lee scuppers, and laid there for a minute, being properly stunned through knocking his head against a bit of ironwork. The donkey was leaning up against the deck-house amidships, waiting for orders, and when he saw what had happened he ran aft, slid across the deck to where Santy was lying, and picked him up by the hair. Then he let out a wail that would have waked the dead, and nothing would satisfy him until Santy put his arm round his neck and told him that he was all right.

"One night, Santy was going on the look-out, and he asked the second mate if he could have the donkey with him on the fo’c’sle head. The second mate said of course he couldn’t, and that one donkey was all the look-out that was needed. The weather was middlin’ thick, and Santy declared that the donkey had better eyes than any man in the crew, and would sight a sail or an iceberg before he could see it himself. But the second mate wouldn’t hear to it; supposing, of course, that if the man had his donkey with him, he would be paying too much attention to the beast and too little to his business. However, along about six bells, the donkey wakes up from a doze, and not finding Santy, goes on the fo’c’sle head to look for him. He had found Santy, and he was
standing with his muzzle shoved under the man's arm when the second mate comes forard and, finding his orders disobeyed, got angry, as any man would have done in his place. After cussin' Santy for a while, he ordered the donkey to go aft, and lent him a hand by twisting his tail. This was more, according to the donkey's opinion, than the shipping articles allowed, and he gave the second mate a rousing good kick on the shins. Now, this was open mutiny, and there was no excuse for it. The second mate was a man who never stood any nonsense, and he just caught that donkey by the hind legs, and being a strong man who could hold his own against half a dozen sailors in a row, he fairly hove the donkey overboard. The man at the wheel hearing the noise of a struggle forward, and hearing the splash that the donkey made in the water, sang out, "Man overboard!" and stood by to put his helm down whenever he should get the order. But the second mate sings out that it was all right, and turns to cuss Santy a little more. He was astonished to find that Santy wasn't there, and at that moment he hears another splash, and knows that the man had gone overboard after the donkey.

"Well, owing to having first sung out one thing, and then another, the men were a little bewildered, and it took about ten minutes to back the main-top-sail and lower a boat. By that time the donkey and
Santy were out of sight and hearing. The men rowed around in search for the missing pair, but they did not dare to go very far from the ship for fear of losing her altogether. Once they thought they heard Santy's voice, but it didn't come to anything, and after searching for half an hour they were hailed from the quarter-deck and ordered to pull back to the ship. On the way back the boat ran into something which proved to be the donkey and Santy Anna. The man was floating face downwards, and the donkey's teeth were fast in the man's hair, and both man and donkey were drowned and dead. Either Santy couldn't swim, or else he had the cramp. Anyway, it was clear enough that the donkey had tried to save him, and that the weight of him had dragged the donkey's muzzle under and drowned him. Santy had lost his life trying to save the donkey, and the donkey lost his trying to save Santy.

"The boat's crew cast the donkey adrift and brought Santy's body aboard, but it was so plain that the man was dead that the captain said it wasn't worth while trying to start his breathing works up again. So he was put into the donkey's shed for the rest of the night, and in the morning he was stitched up and hove overboard.

"That's the story of One-eyed Thompson's donkey, and every sailor-man who knew New York twenty-five or thirty years ago knows all about it."
PROFESSOR STEINMETZ'S WATCH.

It had always been understood that Frances Goodwin and I were to be married at some indefinite future time, although there had never been any formal engagement between us. She was an extremely pretty girl, and an unusually intelligent and good girl, but I never really cared for her until she became a reformer, and announced that she should always remain single in order the better to devote herself to the improvement of mankind. The moment that she seemed to be unattainable I discovered that I was deeply in love with her, and when I finally asked her to marry me her refusal made me miserable. She told me that she perceived many good qualities in me, but that I was without any lofty aims in life, and that even if she had not resolved never to marry, she could not possibly bring herself to marry a man who cared nothing for the various causes which she had at heart. It is true that I did not care for them, and I could not understand how a pretty woman, who might have enjoyed life thoroughly,
could give her whole attention to such tiresome fads as total abstinence, anti-vivisection, anti-opium, and anti-vaccination. However, it is not flattering to be told that you are a grovelling worldling, with an undeveloped soul, and an unenlightened conscience, and I was indignant as well as hurt by the way in which Miss Goodwin rejected me.

I left London the next day, and went to Switzerland. Why I went to Switzerland I do not know. Hundreds of Englishmen go there every year who, like myself, detest the place. I never climb, and a mountain seems to me to be about the most useless thing in Nature. There is nothing in Switzerland except natural scenery, and raw scenery has no attractions for me in comparison with those of a well-built, comfortable city. A Frenchman once informed me that there was a provision of the British Constitution which requires every Englishman to go once a year to Switzerland, and I am inclined to think he was right.

I found Lucerne choked by a crowd of tourists. Some day an international commission will compel Switzerland to widen its entrances and exits. At present both Lucerne and Geneva are much too narrow to permit tourists to pass in and out at the height of the season without danger. Fancy a panic taking place in Switzerland, say in August, followed by a frantic rush of people for Lucerne or
Geneva. There would be a crush at both of those places which would prove fatal to thousands of people. Such a panic might be brought about any day by an earthquake, or the discovery on the part of the Swiss hotel-keepers of a new "extra" to be charged on the bills of the travelling public. The simple truth is that Switzerland under its present management is inviting a terrible accident, and either it should be compelled to widen its doors, or it should be permanently closed.

I was fortunate enough to secure the last vacant room in Lucerne. It was at the very top of an undesirable little hotel, and was small and hot, but there were dozens of people who had arrived by the same train as myself, who were unable to obtain any shelter whatever, and I congratulated myself on my better fortune. I took possession of the room, and after locking the door, hurried down to the shore of the lake, where the cool breeze tempered the heat of the midsummer sun.

There was no one on the quay except a ragged boy, and a large and very obvious German, who was walking up and down smoking his pipe, and carrying a travelling-bag in his hand. Of course he wore spectacles, for no German is complete without those aids to vision, and the unfinished German whom Nature has turned loose on the world without spectacles is sure to be incomplete, morally and
intellectually, as well as physically. From the size and general appearance of the German I decided that he must be a philosopher, and was confirmed in this opinion when, a few moments later, he walked calmly off the quay, and disappeared under the water.

I hate to go into the water with my boots and clothes, but I saw that the German could not swim, and there was of course but one thing to do. I did not want to ruin my watch, so I handed it to the small boy to keep for me, and took a header into the lake. The German was an intelligent man, if he was a philosopher, and he remained perfectly quiet while I towed him into shallow water from which he walked ashore with his pipe still in his mouth, his travelling-bag still in his hand, and his serenity unruffled. The small boy had disappeared in company with my watch, and I never saw either of them afterwards.

"You're all right now," I said to the German, as he stood wiping his spectacles with a dripping pocket-handkerchief; "but if I were you I would get on some dry clothes at once. This lake water is too cold to be wholesome."

Of course I spoke in English. It is usually obstinacy that is at the bottom of a foreigner's persistence in speaking outlandish languages, and if you only insist upon speaking nothing but English
to him, the chances are ten to one that he will understand you. The German understood me at once, and replied in comparatively good English.

"I haf no hotel," he said. "The hotels are all distended. So I must myself under the sun dry."

"You can't do that," I said. "Come to my room, and I will find you some clothes until your own are dried."

The water of Lake Lucerne is icy even in midsummer, and the German's teeth were already chattering. He accepted my invitation, and merely stopping at the hotel bureau long enough to tell the landlord to send the police in search of my watch, I took my companion to my room, and in a few moments we were both in dry clothes. That is to say, the German had struggled into one of my shirts, and had wrapped his legs in a blanket, after vainly trying to force them into my trousers. With the aid of a glass of brandy, and a pipeful of my tobacco, he made himself comfortable, and was profuse in his thanks for the assistance I had given him, and in his sorrow for the loss of my watch.

"The service you have rendered to me is," he said "of little consequence, but you have rendered an inestimable service to Germany and Humanity. You have preserved a man of science and a philosopher, and in the name of Germany and Humanity I thank you." It would be tiresome to imitate his
German idiom and accent, and I therefore do not make the attempt.

"I knew you were a philosopher," I replied, "when I saw you walk off the quay."

"Ah!" exclaimed the German. "Then you, too, know something of philosophy."

"I read something of the sort when I was at the University," I answered; "but I thought it great rubbish."

"You read Kant, I suppose. You are partly right, my friend. There is a great deal of rubbish in Kant. And yet he had a beginning of an idea as to time, and I owe him some help toward my greatest discovery. You behold in me the first man to demonstrate that time is purely subjective."

"Glad to hear it, I'm sure," said I, perceiving that he was waiting for an answer.

The German arose, and picking up from the table, where he had left it, a small indiarubber bag, he drew from it a curious watch, which was nearly globular in shape, and somewhat bigger in diameter than an ordinary five-franc Swiss watch.

"It is with this that I demonstrate it," said the philosopher. "There is but one other watch like this in the world, and I made them both with my own hands. A watchmaker would have made it smaller, but he would have learned my secret. It is this watch that I propose to give to you, my dear young
friend, to replace the one you have lost. No, no! Do not be in a hurry. When you hear what this watch can do you will bless the day that you lost your own in saving the life of Professor Steinmetz. I do not give it to you because it is valuable in the market. That would be to insult you. I give it to you because it is the most characteristic memorial of me, the inventor. Now, listen, and you will be astonished. Time, my friend, is purely subjective. It follows, therefore, that it can be acted upon by a man’s consciousness. With my hand I can lengthen or shorten this pipe-stem, because it is objective. With my mind I can lengthen or shorten time, because it is subjective. You comprehend me?"

I nodded, more than ever confirmed in my opinion that philosophy is nonsense.

"Very good. Now, I have discovered that a man can make an hour six times as long as it generally is, or that he can shorten it to one sixth of its usual length. It is only for himself, you understand, that these changes are made. For example, you and I sit here one hour by that clock. To you the hour is the usual one; but to me, if I please, the hour may seem six hours, and whatever it seems to be it is, time being, as I have said, purely subjective. This watch is the instrument by which I can lengthen or shorten time. I will not explain the principle upon which it acts, for I am not yet ready to give my
discovery to the world, but I can show you how to use it. Observe this thumbscrew at the back of the watch. Turn it to the left as far as it will go—that will shorten your time so that an hour will become only ten minutes. Turn it to the right, and the hour will become six hours. After you have once turned the screw you cannot turn it again until it has done its work. Remember, too, that you must hold the watch in the palm of your left hand, and keep your eyes fixed upon it for several minutes after you have turned the screw. Take this priceless instrument, my friend and preserver. Besides myself, you are the only living person who has seen it. I, Professor Steinmetz, declare that this watch is the greatest invention that the world has ever seen."

I took the watch in my hand, but I must have had an incredulous expression, for Steinmetz quickly said—

"You do not believe me? Give me the watch for one moment, and I will convince you that I speak the truth. There—I have turned the screw so as to shorten the time. Now take it and look at it for a few moments. Then you will believe me."

I took the watch in my left hand, and gazed steadily at it in order to satisfy my companion. Presently he said to me, "That will do—now look at the clock." He seemed to speak with wonderful swiftness—faster than I had ever heard any man
speak before. I glanced at the clock that stood on the mantel. At the same time I noticed that it was ticking at a tremendous rate. The hands, instead of seeming to be at rest were moving visibly and steadily. The minute hand moved almost with the speed of an ordinary second hand.

"What have you been doing to the clock?" I asked; and, to my astonishment, I found that I was speaking with the same rapidity with which the Professor had spoken.

"Nothing," he replied. "Time, for you, my friend, is moving six times as fast as usual. That is all. Just to oblige me, walk across the room and back again."

I did as he requested, and although I knew that I was walking and not running, I seemed to move at a pace that would have distanced a bicycle driven at full speed. If I was not convinced of the truth of what the Professor had said, I was convinced that at any rate he had played some strange trick on me. I said as much to him, but he only laughed.

"Your hour is nearly up," he remarked, and presently you will understand the value of my invention."

As he spoke his words began to come more slowly, and presently I, too, was able to speak at my usual rate of speed. The clock had ceased to tick at express speed, and I perceived that the hands, which
had stood at two o'clock when I had first looked at the dial, now stood at three.

The German smiled broadly as I looked from the clock to him in bewilderment.

"Now you are convinced," said he. "I have been sitting here just one hour since you took the watch in your hand, but to you that hour has been only ten minutes. If you had turned the screw the other way you would have found the hour six hours long. By this time my clothes must be dry. Will you call for them, and I will try to get the five-o'clock train for Zurich."

Professor Steinmetz left me the watch and a most affectionate assurance of his gratitude. When he had gone I made another trial of the thing, to persuade myself that I had not been dreaming. Another hour flew by in ten minutes; and I could no longer doubt the truth of what the Professor had told me. I began to perceive that the watch was a gift of inestimable value. With it I could rid myself of unpleasant days and troublesome quarters of an hour; and, what was of vastly more importance, could actually lengthen my life six times beyond its normal length. Ah! if Frances had only said "Yes" instead of "No." I might then, with the help of the Professor's gift, have stretched every hour spent in her company into six. I could have had a honeymoon six months in length, and— But there was no
hope of that now. She was wedded to her fads, and I had no reason for wishing to lengthen a cheerless and loveless life.

That afternoon I went to a barber's shop to have my hair cut, and used my watch to shorten the ordeal. It seemed to me that I had hardly seated myself in the barber's chair before he had finished his task. His scissors fairly flew, and the rapidity with which he showered bay rum on my head, and dried my hair with a towel, was startling. I was delighted with this test of the practical usefulness of the watch, and returned to my hotel in better spirits than I had been since leaving London. The next morning I got up with a violent toothache. My bath in the lake had given me a cold, and it had concentrated itself in a tooth. The pain had kept me awake for nearly half the night, and by nine o'clock I was at the dentist's office. As I sat down to have the tooth extracted, I remembered my watch, and resolved to shorten the time of torture. I turned the screw, held the watch in my hand, and told the dentist to proceed.

Unfortunately I had turned the screw the wrong way, and the consequence was that the operation took just six times as long as it would have taken had Steinmetz never given me his watch. I did not at first understand why the dentist moved with such amazing slowness. It seemed to me that he occupied
at least two hours in "preparing the tooth," as he expressed it. Every movement of his lance was made as slowly as a cat steals upon a mouse, and when he finally turned to his instrument-case and produced his forceps, he occupied at least three minutes in bringing it from the case to the neighbourhood of my mouth, although the distance could not have been more than five feet. By this time I had grasped the painful fact that I had made a mistake, and had lengthened instead of shortened the time. It was too late to draw back, and I could not explain the circumstances to the dentist without convincing him that I was a lunatic. I venture to say that I suffered more—or in other words, longer—in that dentist's chair than any previous patient had suffered since the invention of the forceps. From the time that the first pull loosened the tooth in its socket until it was fairly out, was apparently ten or fifteen minutes, and the longer the dentist pulled the more intolerable became the pain. The apparent deliberation with which he drew that tooth would have filled a Spanish Inquisitor with envy. When at last the tooth was actually out, and the dentist smilingly remarked, with a pause of nearly a minute between each word, that "the tooth seemed to be a little sensitive," I would have answered him in the strongest language known to the British cabman, had I been able to speak fast enough to satisfy my burning
indignation. As it was, I said nothing, and left the office walking much as I had once seen a regiment march on the way to a funeral—at the rate of about a quarter of a mile an hour. It was not until some time after I reached my hotel that the hour, so unfortunately lengthened into six, came to an end, and time became to me once more what it was to other men.

Late that night a telegram was brought to my room. It contained the following obscure message, "If you are still of the same mind return.—T.G." For some time I studied it, wondering from whom it came, and what could be its meaning. Doubtless it had been intelligible when it left London, but it had passed through so many foreign offices that it had suffered considerable change. I had no correspondent with the initials "T.G.," but it suddenly flashed upon me that the "T" might be a misprint for "F," and that the telegram might have been sent by Miss Goodwin. With this clue I soon succeeded in translating it back into the original English. "If you are still of the same mind, return.—F.G.," meant that Miss Goodwin had discovered that she really cared for me, and had repented of her decision to remain single. My heart ought to have leapt up, I know that perfectly well; but, curiously enough, it abstained from any such gymnastic feat. I said to myself, that I was glad Miss Goodwin had come to her senses, and that I
must, of course, go back to London by the first train, after which I went quietly to sleep until morning.

During the long journey home I found Steinmetz's watch most useful. With its aid I reduced the apparent length of the journey more than half, and had I remained persistently awake, and used the watch uninterruptedly, I should, of course, have shortened the journey to one-sixth of the time allotted to it in the railway time-table. The speed with which the train ran when my watch was in use must have been about two hundred and forty miles an hour, but the carriage moved as steadily as if the train were running at its ordinary rate, and the landscape, although it hurried past the window at a speed never before experienced by any railway traveller, was not in the least blurred to my vision. I cannot explain the reason of this; but then, I cannot explain how the watch could lengthen and shorten time. Professor Steinmetz's explanation, based upon the hypothesis that time is purely subjective, meant nothing to me. It occurred to me, however, that Miss Goodwin would be able to explain the whole thing, if it were in the least degree explicable, and I resolved to give the watch to her as a wedding-gift.

My watch ceased its operation just before I reached Charing Cross, and I put it in my pocket, grateful to Professor Steinmetz for having made it possible for
a man to travel from Lucerne to London in a few hours, and without the slightest fatigue. I lost no time in driving to Miss Goodwin's residence, and as I knocked at the door she drove up in a cab.

"How fortunate I am to meet you!" she exclaimed, as we entered the house together. "I have been detained at Scotland Yard, and I have to meet a Committee of the County Council in half an hour. I had to come back to the house for some papers, or otherwise I should have missed seeing you."

"I came by the first train after receiving your telegram," I remarked.

"Yes; very kind indeed of you," she replied. "I reconsidered the subject after you had gone, and I saw that I had weakly shrunk from my duty."

"And you found that, after all, you did care a little for me?" I said, in what I meant to be an affectionate manner.

"Not at all," she replied. "Of course you know that I like you, for you have many estimable qualities, but, as I told you, they are all undeveloped. Now, it occurred to me, after I had declined to marry you, that perhaps it was my duty to develop the possibilities for good that will otherwise fail to influence your life. We are all prone to neglect the duty that lies at our door, and to devote ourself to more distant duties. The more I thought of the matter the more I was convinced that with my help you can become
a noble and useful man. I have therefore resolved to put my own wishes aside, and to undertake the task that has so clearly been allotted to me. So I sent you the message to return, if you still wished to marry me. Now we understand one another, and I will add that the prompt way in which you have returned fills me with hope for your future."

Of course I ought to have been overjoyed at Miss Goodwin's kind decision to marry me; but in point of fact, I found some little difficulty in replying with proper rapture to what she had said. When a woman refuses you because you are a grovelling worldling, without any lofty aims, it is sufficiently humiliating, but when she accepts you in order to redeem you from your degraded spiritual condition, it is still more humiliating. Miss Goodwin had decided to marry me as an act of philanthropy, and the prospect that for the rest of my life I should have to submit to the development of my nobler qualities naturally filled me with dismay.

However, I was allowed no time for reflection. Miss Goodwin rose up, and, saying, "You will, of course, accompany me to the Committee meeting," led the way to the cab. When we were seated, and the cab was on its way, I ventured to ask her what was the nature of her business with the committee.

"I am going," she replied, "to make an argument in favour of closing all the London railway stations,
on the ground that they are the resort of improper characters."

"May I ask what you mean?" I asked.

"Most certainly. I am pleased to have you take an intelligent interest in my efforts. Last week I happened to be at one of the largest railway stations, and I noticed the presence of two women who I am certain were disreputable. I went to the same station the next day, and spent nearly an hour walking up and down, but nothing came of it. Several men looked closely at me, but nobody spoke to me. So the next day I took stronger measures. I dressed myself in dinner costume, and then loitered for some time in the station."

"What was the result?" I asked. "I do hope you were not insulted."

"I am pleased to say, I was," replied my companion. "What else did I go there for? Unfortunately, however, it was only a policeman who insulted me. He told me if I did not leave the station he would arrest me. I left, but I at once made a complaint against him, and I intend to see that he is properly punished for daring to speak to me. Indeed, it was in order to press my charge against him that I was at Scotland Yard this afternoon. But here we are at last! Now, I wish you to listen carefully to all that is said, and to try to take an interest in this great reformatory measure."
I loved Frances Goodwin in spite of her fads. There was not the slightest doubt about that. At least so I said to myself, as I entered the Committee-room. Still I could not face the prospect of listening to a long speech made by Miss Goodwin on a preposterous subject. I lingered for a moment behind my betrothed, and producing the watch, turned the screw with a view to shortening the time. In my haste I once more made the mistake of turning it in the wrong direction, and, to my unspeakable dismay, I found when Miss Goodwin began her speech in favour of closing all the London railway stations, that I should probably have to listen to her for five or six hours.

She spoke with perfect self-possession, but of course with the exceeding slowness resulting from the lengthening of the time. I need hardly say that I could not admire her speech. On the contrary, I was angry because of the folly of the proposal which she advocated, and ashamed that she should make such an exhibition of herself. As she went on and on it became more and more evident to me that to be compelled to endure, not only Miss Goodwin's public speeches, but her private lectures designed for the development of my better nature, would be more than a mere man could endure. Luckily her voice was musical, and its tones gradually lulled me to sleep. Thus I escaped the greater part of her speech,
and by the time it was ended I was once more awake, and Steinmetz's watch had temporarily ex-hausted its powers.

Miss Goodwin had been so occupied with her theme that she had not noticed that I had fallen asleep. When I handed her to the cab I found that she was in the best of spirits, and full of confidence that the London railway stations would be closed in the interests of public decency. Her face was flushed with pride and pleasure, and as we drove homeward she remarked that my attention at the meeting of the committee had greatly encouraged her, and that she had little doubt that I should in time become an earnest reformer.

"Heaven forbid!" was my rather rude reply.

"Well, we must not be in too great a hurry," she calmly replied. "I feel sure, however, that I shall succeed in the task which I have decided to undertake. I shall be patient and persistent, and the day will come when it will be your greatest pleasure to speak in behalf of the sacred causes to which we will devote our lives."

"My dear Frances," I said. "I had better tell you at once, that, after we are married, I shall utterly decline to permit you to take part in any public meetings, and I shall refuse to undergo any sort of development. I may not be a desirable person, but such as I am I intend to remain, and all the advanced
women in England cannot make a reformer out of me."

"Do you really mean this?" she asked, sadly.

"Most certainly, I do," I replied. "No living woman shall develop me."

"In that case," she continued, "our engagement is, of course, at an end. I am very sorry on your account, for I firmly believe I could have made something of you, but you are free to take your own course."

We drove the rest of the way in silence. I bade her farewell at the door, and we parted on friendly terms. Miss Goodwin told me that she should always be glad to be of any real service to me, and that if I should at any future time find that I wished for something better than the husks of this world, she would gladly give me her sympathy and counsel. She certainly was an excellent girl, and I shook hands warmly with her as I left her.

That night a strange feeling of elation had possession of me. I could not understand it, for I had truly loved Miss Goodwin, and I ought to have felt, at least, as wretched as I had felt the first time she rejected me. Thinking that a music hall would be in consonance with my grovelling, earthly nature I went to the nearest place of the sort. Some one in the crowd about the entrance succeeded in picking my pocket, and Professor Steinmetz's watch was lost to me for ever.
Sometimes I think that the Professor spoke the truth about his watch. At other times I fancy that the act of gazing steadily at the watch had the effect of putting me temporarily into a hypnotic state, in which the Professor's original suggestions as to the shortening and lengthening of time became realities to me. However this may be, the watch certainly did its work on the various occasions when I tested its powers, and since its loss, I have often been in circumstances when I would have given a great deal could I have had it once more in my hand, and shortened the weary and unpleasant moments of my life.
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