

GOLDEN ARGOSSY

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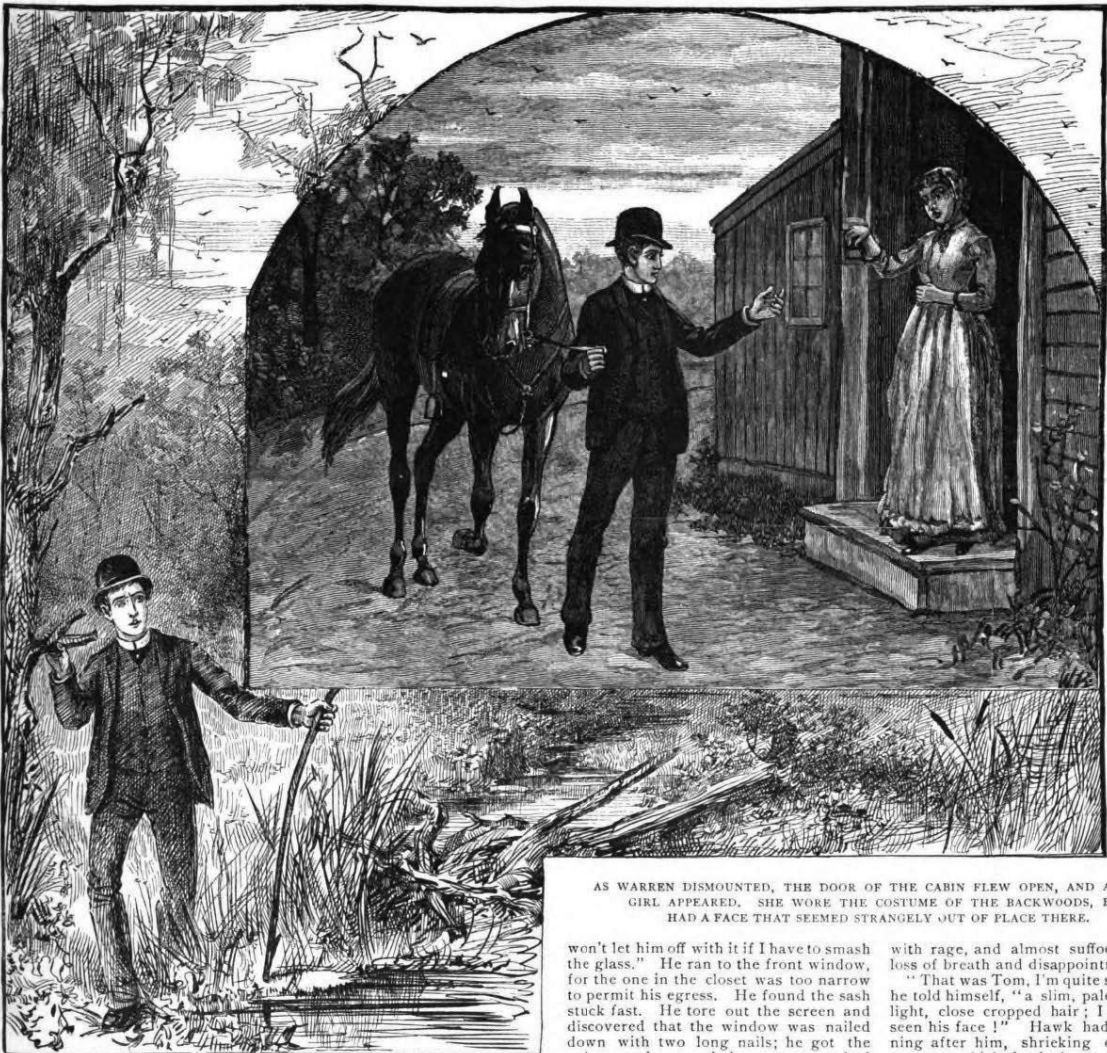
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AS WARREN DISMOUNTED, THE DOOR OF THE CABIN FLEW OPEN, AND A YOUNG GIRL APPEARED. SHE WORE THE COSTUME OF THE BACKWOODS, BUT HAD A FACE THAT SEEMED STRANGELY OUT OF PLACE THERE.

WARREN HAVILAND, THE YOUNG SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

By ANNIE ASHMORE,

Author of "Who Shall be the Heir?" etc., etc.

CHAPTER IV. A LONG CHASE.

FURIOUS at the discovery of Hawk's treachery, Warren tried another door in the room. It led him into a sort of closet fitted up with book shelves; the closet had a long narrow window which

opened on the side of the house, and by pressing his face flat against the glass he could see a saddled horse standing on the grass. Mr. Hawk was holding the bridle and beckoning imperiously to some unseen person.

"What does this mean?" thought Warren. "It's treachery, anyhow, and I

won't let him off with it if I have to smash the glass." He ran to the front window, for the one in the closet was too narrow to permit his egress. He found the sash stuck fast. He tore out the screen and discovered that the window was nailed down with two long nails; he got the poker, and, nerved by rage, wrenched out the nails in half a minute, flung up the sash, and leaped through to the ground. The clang of iron hoofs smote his ears as he alighted. He dashed round the corner of the house, leaped over a paling, and came face to face with Mr. Hawk, who was staring after the retreating horseman with an exultant grin. "Tom! Cousin Tom!" shouted Tom in his desperation, as he sped after the rider across a plowed field.

But the rider never looked round; increasing the pace of his horse to a flying run, he left Warren far behind, reached the pole fence, horse and rider rose lightly in the air and sailed over it, and vanished. Warren stood still, trembling

with rage, and almost suffocating from loss of breath and disappointment.

"That was Tom, I'm quite sure it was," he told himself, "a slim, pale boy, with light, close cropped hair; I wish I had seen his face!" Hawk had been running after him, shrieking out remonstrances which he had not listened to. He came up now, panting and pulling a long face of concern, in which his little eyes sparkled with malicious glee.

"Why have you sent my cousin away?" demanded Warren, without concealing his indignation.

Caleb Hawk continued to pant speechlessly till Warren repeated his question still more hotly, when he made shift to gasp out—"Don't I tell you that's not your cousin? How could it be Tom?"

"Not my cousin!" echoed Warren in astonishment; "who was he, then?"

"If you had condescended to ask that at first, you wouldn't have had such a wild goose chase," taunted Hawk. "That was Gib West, a neighbor's boy, who told me

he had met Tom a few minutes ago, pegging away along the road, he wouldn't say where; so I sent Gib after him. And if you'll have the goodness to wait a little in my office, I daresay Tom will be here soon."

"Mr. Hawk, why did you lock me into your office?" demanded Warren, bluntly. He did not believe a word the money lender said, and fairly asked to put him to confusion.

"Oh? Do I hear you aright?" cried Hawk, with an astonished look that he strook his hands together, and stamped about as if smitten with sudden dismay. "That lock's bound to be the death of me; this is the third time it has played that trick! Kept me locked in for half a day once; clicks into place of itself, you understand; so sorry, ha! ha! that could you have thought!"

"I thought it best to get out at the window," retorted Warren, interrupting the glib flow of eloquence. "And now since I am out, I'll not trespass on your hospitality again, but go to meet my cousin. Good evening, sir," and he moved off.

"Stop, my dear fellow, I beg, one moment only," cried Hawk in a real panic now. "You won't get hold of Tom that way; in fact I—I—rather suspect Tom must have meant to avoid you. He has his own secrets, ever since a black bordered letter came for his father, and he opened it." Warren, already at some little distance, stopped to listen to these rather halting explanations; he felt a conviction that Hawk was trying to make up a case that would not compromise himself, and that would throw the whole responsibility upon the absent Tom, and he wondered whether that was his reason for sending Tom out of the way.

"He has been afraid of every stranger that approached the house ever since that time," continued the money lender, eagerly pouring out his version, "and he must have seen you coming. But Gib will bring him back, never fear."

"I won't trust Gib, thank you," said Warren, dryly, not to be mollified at any price. "Good-bye again." And he set off running at his best pace, till he reached the fence at the same spot where the fugitive had sent his horse over it, vaulted it nimbly in his turn, and followed the hoof prints along the dusty road.

Looking back once he saw Hawk running back to the house with coat tails flying.

"I wonder if he'll venture to give chase and try to stop me," thought the boy defiantly. "Well, let him try it; I would enjoy thrashing him uncomprehendingly, the little sly weasel!"

Spinning round a corner he came upon old Tony, leisurely returning with his empty stable to his own stables.

"Did you meet Tom Fenwick?" asked Warren, while the old man stared at his panting and disheveled passenger.

"Guess I did, racketin' along on Hawk's best beast. What's up?" grinned he. Sure of his sympathy, Warren told him Hawk's trick to get his skin out of his way. Tony did not disappoint him; grumbling out a number of strange oaths which were more comical than profane, he turned his team in a hurry, bade the boy "pile in," and bore him at racing speed to a well to do farm house, which, he explained, was the home of Widow Locke, with whom he had left Warren's valise, and who was expecting him to be her guest that night.

"You kin hire as good a beast here as you want," concluded the old fellow, grinning delightedly. "An' ef I was you, I'd jest run Tom down an' git that lawyer chap's scheme out'n him afore I gaeit up. I tell ye Hawk's a hog, an' he'll do ye ef ye ever so obliged to you for warnin' me," said Warren, "for he might have thrown dust in my eyes if I hadn't been on my guard; and I'll take your advice too, if Mrs. Locke can let me have a horse."

The result of this decision was that in ten minutes more Warren was soaring along the strange country road on the back of a powerful animal, in full pursuit of his fugitive cousin Tom, grimly resolved to hunt him down if it took a week. And the longer he ruminated over his experiences with Hawk, the more certain he was that fraud and treachery were meditated with regard to that lock.

If Mr. Fenwick had really died insolvent, what had Hawk to fear from such a tardy creditor as Mrs. Haviland? Nothing; then Mr. Fenwick must have left money for the repayment of the loan, and Hawk was trying to embezzle it. Was Tom in the plot? Was Cousin Tom a rascal? Warren felt cold and sick as he put the question to himself.

The gruff voice of old Tony seemed to answer in his ear:

"Mind I tell ye, Hawk's a hog, an' he'll do ye ef he kin."

"I won't believe a word he said about Tom," thought the boy. "I'll find him and judge him by what he says himself. I'll believe no evil of Aunt Dora's son at the word of a pitiful trickster like Lawyer Hawk."

Hour after hour he rode along, and ever a clear trail was before him; those whom he asked never failed to answer, yes, a lot, all his own age rode by on a large roan horse half an hour ago."

Every step took him further north, and into a wilder and more uninhabited country; he never knew when he crossed the State line, and inhaled the foreign taint of Canada. That night he rested at a lonely inn, where they told him the young horseman had hired a fresh animal, leaving his own. As they had no other to supply Warren with, he was forced to remain for the night; but dawn saw him in the saddle again, and the next settlement ten miles off gave

him the trail as clear as before. Tom had stopped there all night, and pushed on with the peep of day. He was an hour ahead.

All that day the pursuit lasted, and Warren was pressing deeper and deeper into the vast lumber woods of New Brunswick. The habitations grew ever fewer and farther apart; and still his Cousin Tom fled before him.

"What strange secret can he be hiding from me?" marvelled Warren, "and how shall I influence him to confess it to me?"

CHAPTER V. THE MCDADE CABIN.

ON the evening of the second day Warren drew up his weary horse before a tumble down slanty on the road side. He had been told a dozen miles back that McDade's was the only house he would find within the next score of miles, and wretched as it looked, he felt obliged to put up there when he saw the lateness of the hour, and the fatigue of his animal.

The moment he dismounted, the rickety door flew open, and a young girl appeared. She was attired in the costume of the backwoods, but had a face that seemed strangely out of place there.

"Do you want father?" queried she. Smitten dumb by the vision, Warren only nodded. Then she raised her clear voice and called: "Father!"

A man appeared behind her, yawning and rubbing the sleep out of his eyes. A giant in height, lank, long nosed, red skinned, it seemed hard to believe that he was the parent of the girl who had dropped her eyes beneath Warren's astonished gaze.

The moment his eyes rested upon her hero and his horse, he seemed to wake up with a start, and pushing past his fair daughter, strode to the horse's head, and began to lead him to the ruinous barn which stood across the road.

"Wait a moment," said Warren, laying his hands on the bridle to detain him, "did you see a young fellow, about my age, riding a black horse, pass here an hour or so ago?"

As he spoke, Warren was aware of the knowing glance which passed between father and daughter.

"His beast's in my barn now," replied McDade unexpectedly.

"And is he stopping here tonight?" cried Warren, eagerly.

"No he ain't, he struck through the woods for the lumber camp at Storm Rock, ten miles or so from here," was the disheartening reply.

"Is he coming back tomorrow?" pursued Warren.

"No, he ain't; he's to stop that awhile," replied McDade; "an' I'm to git his horse back where he belongs. Any more questions?"

"Can you put me up here tonight, and guide me to the lumber camp in the morning?" asked Warren.

"I kin do both, for pay," said the giant stolidly. Then, raising a stentorian shout—"Moll, git supper, an' look sharp about it." And Moll straightway vanished.

Warren accompanied his host to the barn, for he never left the comfort of his horse to a hireling when on the road, and saw a black animal munching green hay in the next stall to that in which his own was put.

He plied McDade with questions concerning Tom, but the man was morose, and made little response save a grunt now and again, as he rubbed down, fed and littered Warren's tired horse. This done, he led his guest to the house, kicked tactfully, directed his efforts at the supper on the table with his bat on, and stared unwinkingly at him till Moll appeared with the supper of corn bread, fried pork and barley coffee.

While Warren dispatched the humble fare with the appetite of a traveler, he tried to draw his host into conversation, but finding him hopeless taciturn, directed his efforts at his hostess, who, after exhibiting some astonishment at his civility in taking any notice of her, answered all his remarks about the country with intelligence, while her singularly attractive face brightened up more and more with animation and pleasure.

Presently, while they two were laughing amicably together over something comical, Warren caught the father's eyes resting on the girl with a scowl. The next instant Moll herself noticed it, and became as dumb as her parent. The rest of the meal passed in silence, McDade, holding his food into his capacious mouth with stolid indifference, his daughter busy and entertainer, Moll looking preternaturally grave, and Warren wondering at the pair.

About eight o'clock McDade led his guest up the ladder in the corner of the kitchen to the loft, where Warren slept soundly, despite the noise.

He was awakened about dawn by the voices of his host and hostess raised in loud discussion, and springing up, dressed in a hurry and started down the ladder to find the pump, as the luxury of washing appearances had been omitted in his chamber. The dispute went on with unabated force, neither of the disputants noticing him on the ladder.

"It's a shame, father, and I won't have you do it!" cried Moll, her cheeks flushing and her dark eyes flashing. "I don't believe he's what you say. Does he act like a—"

Hold your tongue, will yer, gal?" roared McDade, shaking his vast fist at her. "Cause he soft sallowed yer last night, yer ready for to give us away, ar yer? But you better keep yer mouth shut—"

"I must speak, father!" retorted the valiant Moll.

"Must yer? I'll see 'bout that!" snarled the father; and Warren, seeing him stoop for a billet of wood, bounded forward just in time to sweep the girl aside as it went hurrying across the step when she was about to follow.

"Don't try that again, Mr. McDade!" he cried, indignantly. "That would have felled her to the floor."

Both father and daughter stared as if confounded by his interference; at length McDade growled out:

"No body need be so cheeky, young fellow; I lets nobody meddle in my business, an' don't ye forget it."

"It's my business, too, and I'll never stand by and see a woman abused as long as I have fists to protect her with," retorted Warren, meeting the fierce little optics of the man with a blenching. After trying to glare him down a minute, McDade turned off with a queer, lowering grin.

"All right, cap'n, jest as you say; if it hurts yer feelin's the way Moll an' me arguies about her feller—a bad lot, I tells yer, wench—why, then we'll not say no more about it till the next time. Breakfast, Moll; fly round, now!"

The girl had uttered no word of thanks, but as she hurried about her work, and afterward as she served the rude breakfast, Warren noticed that ever and again she stole a strange, wistful glance at him, when her father was not looking; but that worthy was vigilant to prevent any communication between the two, public or private, and to the last, though the girl hovered around him with that disturbed, frightened look on her strange face, she said no word to Warren, for her father kept too close.

CHAPTER VI. RETRIEVED.

WHEN they were ready to start, McDade plunged into the dense forest opposite his abode, and led Warren along a family traced path, which the latter felt sure he could never distinguish alone. After an hour or so of steady tramping, his guide began to diverge on this side and that to look at his rabbit traps, as he gruffly explained, picking up his game till he had a respectable bag slung by the heels over his shoulder.

Warren confessed to himself that these gyrations had completely turned him round, when McDade came to a halt on the edge of what seemed to be a wide, natural clearing, dotted with bushes.

"Yer don't want me foolin' away my time no more, young man," quoth he, bluntly; "an' spon' ye do, I ain't a goin' no further. Yer game's yonder, an' I warn ye to name no names who sot ye on their track. Right across the open, an' through that garp in the woods, t'other side, ye'll come plump on the camp. Ta, ta! Good luck to yer—ye blamed, sneakin' spy!"

The words were uttered in a lower tone, as the fellow darted out of sight, but Warren heard them, and they added to his startled amazement at this sudden desertion.

"What does the man mean?" thought he, hurrying after his recent guide, and he shouted his name loud enough to be heard a mile off; but McDade neither answered nor repared. "This is a queer business!" mused the boy, ceasing his useless search in the fear of losing the clearing. "Why did he not tell me at first that he would not come all the way with me? What was that he said? That 'my game' was yonder, and I was an etc. spy? Was it I / the girl who was in the morning? What made them look so knowing when I arrived? In short, what sort of natural enemy do they take me for? However, his directions were clear enough. I'll push on to the camp."

Dismissing his disquieting perplexities for the time, Warren set forward across the open, his eyes fixed on the gap in the woods, which was his landmark. The ground sloped downward as he went on, the grass grew low and lush; and presently he entered a plantation of alder bushes which grew far above his head, hiding his goal from him every now and again. Suddenly he discovered that the ground was wet and slippery; then water began to ooze forth under every pressure of his foot.

"This is ugly walking," muttered he, doing his best to pick his way. "It's a queer sort of short cut to the camp, if it's a path at all, and if McDade wasn't lying to me all the while. What was it that girl in the morning told me to do, if it was I they were talking about? Uch! I wish these bushes were not so thick and tall!"

He could not repress an increasing anxiety, for the sense of treachery was growing, too, but he pressed on through the difficulties of his way manfully; though his courage took a grimmer turn as the difficulties increased.

Finding himself struggling in a miniature archipelago of mossy hummocks and black water, he tried to retrace his way to firmer ground, and discovered that he had completely lost his bearings. For the moment he was clear of the alders, he scanned the horizon of tree tops, or, if a steel blue scum floated, and myriads of long legged insects danced in the broiling sunshine.

His heart was throbbing quickly; the close, moist heat was overwhelming. It seemed many hours since he had entered that dreary swamp.

Choking with thirst, he tasted the water, but rejected it with disgust. Its warm, rapid, piny flavor was sickening.

On again, keeping his eyes on the somber line of trees which faced him, on through thick and thin, resolved at any cost to reach the firm ground. Suddenly the ground quakes under him, one foot sinks to the knee, and he only saves himself from plunging into the fatal quagmire by throwing himself backward on the wet moss. Up he struggles again—his foot is clotted by the adhesive mud like a fly's in molasses—he almost leaves his boot behind before he can drag himself free.

Taught caution, he cuts a stout stake from an alder bush, and tries the way before him, crossing and recrossing his own tracks countless times; but at last he leaves the screening bushes behind him, and sees the forest line a few hundreds of feet off. With a shout of joy he breaks into a run; his eyes are dim and dizzy, the sodden plain seems to heave before him like waves of the sea, but he reaches the firm dry ground under the blessed shade, and falls down exhausted.

How long had he been wandering about that swamp? How, he knew by the height of the sun; and while thinking about it, and gathering up energy to continue his tramp, he fell asleep, and pursued his perplexities in his dreams.

When he awoke the slanting rays of the sun were peering under his umbrella of pine branches; he sprang to his feet, astonished beyond measure.

"Surely I bewitched today," he muttered, looking anxiously around; "when have I ever slept in daylight before? And, great Scott! how hungry I am!"

He started off in the direction he believed would bring him to the gap, skirting the swamp all the way. After about a mile's warm walking he found a break in the wall of trees, and joyfully turned into it.

"He said just through the gap, and I'd come plump on the camp," thought the boy, trotting through a gradually thinning tract of young trees, which he led him to a blueberry barren. "No camp yet."

He crossed the barren. A wall of trees confronted him at the other side. He turned back till he was at the swamp again, skirted it further round, and came upon a chain of swamps, yet more impassable!

Back again the other way—new disappointments, new efforts, failure always.

Night was closing in, gray and hushed around him, when the boy stood still, gazing about on the desolate scene. And his brave young face was pale and weary, his high heart was heavy with despair.

"He has betrayed me," he murmured, bitterly. "Why did I trust him? I am lost in these pathless wilds—lost!"

His weary limbs bent under him. He fell to the ground, burying his face in his hands. That acute pang which can cow a brave spirit among his heartstrings now—the wild dismay—the panic of the lost, but suddenly he shook it off; he raised his dim eyes heavenward, and said: "Nothing happens by chance, mother always says." He mused. "God is always behind, directing all. My part is not to despair. I will keep on trying. I will never give up as long as I have sense and strength to walk."

He rose and continued the journey. Seven days and seven nights Warren Haviland wandered in the labyrinth of swamps, barrens and pine trees; seven days and nights of gradually failing effort, nobly persevered in to the end; seven days and nights of hunger, thirst, and bodily and mental anguish; and then, with brain reeling, sight dim, and limbs bending under him, he fell down at the base of a great rock, worn out, and a solemn peace descended upon his tortured spirit.

"Am I dying?" mused he, straining his feeble eyes to see the cloudless evening sky; "but I have done what I could. I have not rebelled. Now I give up; if I am to be saved, God must do the rest."

And with his mother's name upon his lips he drifted into that weird border land betwixt life and death to which the spirit flies at times to await dissolution.

(To be continued.)

A RAILROAD JACK OF ALL TRADES.

A RAILROAD on which it is absolutely impossible for the train men to strike against the officers is to be found in Cass County, Ohio. It is called the Cincinnati, Hocking Valley and Huntington Railroad, and its peculiar features are thus described by the Chicago Herald:

It is only ten miles in length, and was organized and built mainly by John Karshner, a wealthy farmer. When the road was built he sold the crops of his farm for one year and bought a locomotive, which he called the John Karshner. Then he had built a combination passenger and baggage car. He has been operating the road for two years.

At first he employed a conductor and a freight agent, and followed the customs of larger roads. But being an active man, though over seventy years of age, he soon dispensed with all superfluous services, and now he combines within himself the entire list of railroad men, from owner and president to freight agent, freight conductor, brakeman, baggage-master, mail and express agent and even as news agent. He sells no tickets; has no running arrangements with other roads; has no running accounts for freight or passengers; express; everything is cash. He does not require a bookkeeper, nor even a clerk.

[This story commenced in No. 261.]

The Cruise of the Dandy.

BY OLIVER OPTIC.

Author of "The Young Pilot of Lake Montebello," "Always in Luck," "Every Inch a Boy," "Young America Abroad Series," etc.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE CAPTURE OF THE SARANAC.

AT the moment when Spotty reached the cabin door, Captain Gustoff was looking to see where the Dandy was, and he did not notice what had happened to the key, which the late prisoner had thrown into the lake. Captain Gustoff could not find it in the key, and for this reason he could not very conveniently release Luke Spottwood.

"Open the door!" shouted the latter, angrily, for he had been nursing his wrath for fully five minutes.

"I can't open it," replied Captain Gustoff, going to one of the open windows.

"Break it down, then!" replied Luke.

"I think not," added the captain, displaying his ivory at what he regarded as a very absurd proposition. "What have you done with the key?"

"What have I done with it!" exclaimed Luke, fiercely. "You locked the door on the outside, and ask me what I have done with the key?"

"I did just what you told me to do; and I haven't had the key since I locked the door. But the Dandy is down upon us, and if you want to keep out of her way, it is time something was done," answered Captain Gustoff.

"Go ahead, then!" replied Luke, apparently choosing the less of two evils. "Keep out of her way! Do you know who is running her?"

"I don't know; but I dare say Spotty can tell you," replied the captain, as he hastened to the pilot house.

Spotty did not wait to hear anything more from Luke, but followed the captain. The boat was started again, and the Dandy was still half a mile astern of her.

"What's going to be done now, Captain Gustoff?" asked Spotty.

"I don't know any more than a child unborn. Mr. Spottwood chartered the Saranac for three days, and of course he can go anywhere he pleases in her," replied the good natured captain.

"I always obey orders without asking any questions."

"Luke may go anywhere he pleases, but it doesn't follow that I must go where I don't please," added Spotty. "You seem to be helping him carry me off, whether I want to go or not."

"Not a bit of it! I didn't invite you on board, or into the cabin. But when I got ready, I cast off the fasts. If you wanted to go on shore, I shouldn't have prevented you from doing so. It was nothing but one of Luke's practical jokes, to pay you for the one you played off on him," said Captain Gustoff, laughing.

"I don't think you understand the situation at all," answered Spotty. "You will find in the end that it is a serious matter, and no joke. Luke will take my life, if necessary, to accomplish a certain purpose he has in view. He intends to compel me to do what I have no intention of doing."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Captain Gustoff, but without abating his usual grin. "I don't understand it so."

"I didn't suppose you did," added Spotty.

"I have another key that will fit the cabin door," replied the captain, as he took a bunch of keys from a nail in the pilot house. "If you will steer a couple of minutes for me, I'll go aft and let Luke out, and we will fix up this business."

"If I steer at all I shall run for the Dandy," replied Spotty.

"That wouldn't be just the thing, when Luke told me to run away from the Dandy. I'll stop her for a minute while I run aft and open the door."

Captain Gustoff suited the action to the word. He rang his gong, and then waited a moment for the boat to lose some of her headway. Taking the keys, he went aft. He unlocked the cabin door and went in. Spotty considered it his duty to look out for his own interests, and he had followed the captain. As soon as the latter entered the cabin, Spotty was seized with an impulse to lock the door, and make a prisoner of him. He did it in the twinkling of an eye.

When he had done the deed, he did not deem it advisable to wait for the result of his stroke of policy. He hastened to the pilot house and rang the gong to start her. Obeying to the sound, the boat started. In a moment the new pilot rang the speed bell. The Saranac began to cut through the water at her usual rate.

But Spotty did not deem it incumbent upon him to carry out the programme of Luke, whatever it may have been, and he put the steamer about, and headed her in the direction of the Dandy. Before she was fairly on her new course, Spotty heard the voice of Captain Gustoff, whose lungs were evidently in better condition than Luke's had been when he tried to make himself heard.

But Spotty took no more notice of the call than the captain had of Luke's.

Less than two minutes the Dandy was with-

in hail; and in two more they were alongside each other. Captain Hawke discovered that Mr. Winggold, the steamboat inspector, who was an old pilot, was at the wheel of the Dandy. Mr. Paul Spottwood was with him, and there appeared to be several men on board.

"What do you all of you called Mr. Spottwood, from the hurricane deck of the Dandy."

"It is another trick of Luke's," replied Spotty. "Both he and the captain of the Saranac are locked in the cabin."

"Mr. Winggold indulged in a laugh, and then led the way with his friend, the owner of the Dandy, on board of the Saranac. The inspector seemed to be in a very jovial mood, while the owner looked very sober, not to say serious.

"So you have captured the Saranac, Spotty?" laughed the inspector.

"I don't think the engineer understands the situation at all, or he would not have opened his voice," replied Spotty.

"I will go aft and see Captain Gustoff," said Mr. Winggold, as he left his friend with Spotty.

"Mr. Spottwood, I fear I shall never attend to my business while Luke is around. I must tell you all about what has passed between him and me. I don't understand what he desires to accomplish, but he will pursue and worry me as long as I am about here," said Spotty, as soon as he was alone with his employer.

"Luke?" queried Mr. Spottwood. "I hope you have not been too intimate with him. I came down to the steamer with Mr. Winggold, who was going down to Tonnington to spend the winter, but you were not to be found. Tom had seen you on board of the Saranac. He was sure Luke meant to do you harm; in fact, he knew more than he chose to tell. Winggold called several men, and we started after you."

"If you had not I don't know what might have happened to me," replied Spotty; and he proceeded to relate what had occurred on board of the Saranac.

"But why does Luke pursue you in this manner?" asked Mr. Spottwood. "I do not see what connection or relation he can have to you, Spotty. I think you have not told me all that has happened between you and him."

"I have not, not a tenth part of it. I have hardly time to do it now, for it is a long story. I have a couple of articles of jewelry which Luke wants; and I believe he would take my life to get them," added Spotty, with energy.

"You astonish me, Captain Hawke. What can he want that he wants?" asked the owner, with a look of wonder.

"The articles are a diamond ring and a child's locket. He says they belonged to his mother. He broke into the cottage at Gildwell and tried to obtain them. I followed him over to Tonnington."

"How did you find that the robber was Luke, Spotty?"

"I did not know it was he the first time I saw you. He came again the same night, and I shot him through the hand while he was trying to break into my sleeping room."

"Merciful Heaven! Is it possible?" exclaimed Mr. Spottwood.

"When I had the captain and Luke locked into the cabin, I had a good mind to run for the vicinity of Gildwell, and hand your nephew over to the deputy sheriff as a housebreaker; but I did not think it would be right for me to do this without first consulting you, as I am in your employ."

"I should not wish to have him arrested as a felon, though I am afraid he will soon come to that," replied the owner, with a long sigh.

"But my life is in danger while he is at liberty; or at least, until the mystery of what he pursues me for is solved."

"I can make nothing of it from what you have told me, and I have only informed you now to be too intimate with my nephew, for he is not a young man of good habits. But I have never supposed him capable of a deliberate crime, like breaking into a house," added the owner.

"It was only to obtain the two articles that he broke into the cottage at Gildwell, not for the plunder he might have obtained, for he took nothing," Spotty explained.

"So much the worse, it seems to me, for him. But what are these articles which Luke desires so much?"

"A ring and a locket. The ring belonged to my mother, and so did the locket, but I wore it when I was a little child."

"Why should Luke want these things?" asked Mr. Spottwood.

"That is a mystery to me, as it was to Mr. Hawke," replied Spotty, who never spoke of the fugitive from justice in any other way.

"Do you mean your father when you say Mr. Hawke, Spotty?" asked the owner.

"Yes, sir."

"I concluded to let the prisoners out of their cage," said Mr. Winggold, coming forward at this moment. "I thought their health might suffer for the want of fresh air."

A moment later Captain Gustoff came into the pilot house, followed by Luke. The former wore his usual smiling countenance, but Luke had a hang dog expression, which showed that fear was uppermost in his mind.

"I think we need not remain on this boat any longer," said Mr. Spottwood, as he moved towards the Dandy. "You had better take your place in the water, Spotty."

"Hold on a minute, Spotty," interposed Luke. "I want to speak to you before you leave."

"I don't want anything more to do with you, Mr. Spottwood," replied Spotty.

"But I have something more to do with you," added Luke, savagely. "In the first place, if you say a word to my uncle about what has passed between you and me."

"I am sure I will. I have said it already," interposed Spotty. "I want you to understand that I am not afraid of you, if you are bigger than I am."

"Spotty, you have made me desperate. I have a revolver in my pocket this time. You will give me those things, or you will not live to see another Sunday," added Luke, in a low and fierce tone.

Spotty hastened on board of the Dandy.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MR. SPOTTWOOD'S SAD NARRATIVE.

LUKE'S threat was a terrible one to a boy of sixteen, but Spotty did not seem to be alarmed, though he probably would if the circumstances had been favorable to his execution. As it was, it showed to what a state of desperation the villain had worked himself up.

The captain of the Dandy followed Mr. Spottwood and Mr. Winggold to the pilot house of his own boat.

One of the volunteers on board of the Dandy cast off the lines which had secured the two steamers together, and Spotty rang the gong. The boat began to move, and the captain inquired of the owner where he should go. He was directed to run for Plattsburg, as the volunteers must be landed.

As soon as the boat was under way, Spotty told all the incidents connected with the attempted robbery of the cottage at Gildwell, with the story of the cruise of the Dandy while conveying Mr. Hawke to the northern end of the lake. Luke listened with the trip had not been known to his hearers before. Mr. Spottwood asked a great many questions, which brought out all Spotty's relations with the banker, and the history of his mother.

"Then Mr. Hawke was not your father, Spotty?" said Mr. Spottwood, after all the revelations had been made to him.

"He informed me himself that I was not his son; but Luke insists that he is my father," replied Spotty.

"But what can Luke know about your father?" asked Mr. Winggold, who at the owner's request had remained to hear the story of the first of the night.

"He certainly knows something about our family, though how much he knows, or how he learned it, I cannot say," answered Spotty.

"The fact of his wanting the ring and locket, or even his knowledge of their existence, shows this."

"It is certainly very strange," added Mr. Spottwood, looking at Mr. Winggold as though he expected him to solve the mystery.

"I can see neither head nor tail to the matter," replied the inspector.

"I wonder if those two portraits of my wife and Mrs. Hawke have any connection with the matter," added Mr. Spottwood, as he proceeded to explain the meaning of his remark to his friend.

"This is as great a mystery as Luke's connection with the ring and the locket," said Spotty.

"I should like to see those two portraits," added Mr. Winggold.

"I will do so to Tonnington with me to-night, and you shall return as early as you wish in the morning in the Dandy," suggested Mr. Spottwood.

"I think I will do it. I am very much interested in this mystery, and perhaps we can get at it before morning," replied the inspector. "I think we should hurry up this business until we have the meaning of it."

"That is just my view; and we must do it for Spotty's sake," returned the owner.

"You are very kind, sir; and I had no right to expect so much from you," replied Spotty, with much feeling. "I would have spoken to you in the first of the matter if I had dared to do so. I was afraid I might lose my place if I continued to be bothered by Luke as I have been."

"I hope you did not take me for a heathen, Spotty," said the owner, very kindly.

"I did not want to trouble you with my affairs. You were good enough to say that you would look into this matter for my sake. I have not told you what Luke said to me as I was leaving the Saranac."

"What did he say, Spotty? You have no father or mother now, and you must regard me as your father as far as you are willing to do so; at least so far as advice and sympathy are concerned. Do not be afraid to tell the whole truth."

"I am not afraid to tell the whole truth. Luke is your nephew, sir; and for this reason, I have not been willing, till it seemed to be absolutely necessary, to say anything that might implicate him in wrong doing," confessed Spotty, with a closely repressed expression of his employer.

"That need make no difference. Luke is my only relative now; and if he conducted himself properly—but no matter about this. I shall not shield him in any wrong that he has done, or may do. What did he say to you, Spotty?"

"He told me I had made him desperate, and that he would never forgive me. Then he said that I must give him those things, or I should not live to see another Sunday," replied Spotty.

"That was certainly plain talk, though it may

have been an idle threat, intended only to intimidate a boy," said Mr. Winggold. "At any rate no one has a right to use such language, and Luke ought to be held responsible for it. It will be well for Captain Hawke to keep out of the rascal's way."

"That is what I desire to do; but he will not keep out of my way. If I had known that he was on board of the Saranac, I should not have left the Dandy today," added Spotty, as he rang the speed bell, for the steamer was by this time approaching the wharf.

"If we are to unravel this mystery tonight, I think we ought to know more about the articles which Luke desires so much that he is willing to take a human life in order to obtain them," suggested the inspector.

"I think we had better see them," added Mr. Spottwood. "Where are they, Spotty?"

"I put them in a bank here in Plattsburg for safe keeping, asking the cashier, who is a good friend of mine, not to deliver them to any person except myself; and not even to do so on a written order; for I know that Luke would not hesitate to forge my name on a paper for this purpose," replied Spotty, as he rang to stop her.

In a few minutes more the Dandy was fast to the wharf. Mr. Spottwood and the inspector went ashore, promising to be on board for the trip to Tonnington in the course of an hour. It was only two o'clock in the afternoon, and there was time enough for the passage before dark.

Spotty locked the door of the pilot house and went to the bank, to the engine room. He had heard nothing particular about the voyage of the captain in the Saranac; and the whole story had to be told. When this was done, Spotty went to the bank and obtained the precious memorials of his mother, which he was careful to secure in a pocket inside of his vest.

On his return to the boat, he saw the Saranac off Cumberland Head. She appeared to be standing off and on, as though she was waiting for something.

The owner and his friend soon came on board, and the Dandy started up the lake. Both of the gentlemen preferred the pilot house to the cabin, and Spotty had the company all the way. Mr. Winggold asked Spotty if he had the articles of jewelry with him, thinking he might have forgotten them in the exciting events of the day. The captain took the package from his pocket, and exhibited it to the owner and the inspector. It was still sealed up, as the cashier received it.

"I think we will not open it till we get to the house," suggested Mr. Spottwood, to which Mr. Winggold agreed. "Perhaps these articles may throw some light on the remarkable resemblance in the two portraits now at Tonnington."

"May I ask where you were married, Mr. Spottwood?" inquired Spotty, diffidently.

"Certainly; I hope you will ask any question you desire. I was married in New York city."

"I think you said there was something sad about your life," added Spotty.

"Very sad. I first saw my wife at a concert. She was as beautiful as you see her in the picture at my house. I obtained an introduction to her. Our acquaintance ripened into friendship, and then into affection. She was an angel, Spotty, though I did not know it till it was too late to repent," added the owner, the tears starting in his eyes. "We were married in 1861."

"In 1861, a son, who resembled you name of John, from my father who died two years before, was born. I was supremely happy with my wife and boy at Tonnington."

"Four years after my marriage I had a difficulty with my throat, and my doctor said I must spend the winter in a warmer climate. I went to Europe, and I found that I was soon settled at a hotel in Nice. There were many gay people there. My wife was a beautiful woman, and I fancied an English earl of about her own age was more attentive to her than the occasion warranted. I say that I fancied it; for I am sure that neither the earl nor Mrs. Spottwood was guilty of the slightest indiscretion."

"But I was in ill health, and I was unreasonable; I knew it now to my sorrow. In a word, my wife and I fell out. She was gentle, calm, and resolute. She refused to insult the earl at my bidding, though she declined to see him any more. The result was that one day I missed my wife and child. For many days I tried to find her; but after a week of diligent inquiry, I was satisfied that she had taken a P. & O. steamer for India. I was amazed at this step, but I followed her in the next ship. I found that my wife and child had landed at Colombo, in Ceylon. I had never heard her speak of relatives or friends in India, and I wondered that she had come to this distant part of the world."

"I soon found that she had taken another steamer for Bombay. On my arrival at that city I learned that the steamer had been lost in a hurricane, and that all the passengers had perished. My wife and child were buried in the ocean, and I was never forgiven."

Mr. Spottwood groaned in anguish as he finished his narrative; and nothing more was said till the Dandy arrived at the wharf at Tonnington.

(To be continued.)

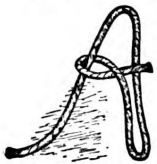
PRIDE.

BY DAVID WASSON.

COULD one ascend with an unheard of flight,
And skyward, skyward without limit soar,
As if the pinion of a god he wore.
Till earth were left a dwindling star, whose light
Flew faint upon his track; at last his height
All height would vanish; there in deeps of
space
Were neither upper nor inferior place:
Distinction's little zone below him quite.
Oh! happy dreams of such a soul have I,
And softly to my heart of him I sing,
Whose seraph pride all pride doth overwing,
Soars unto meekness, reaches low by height,
And, as in grand equalities of the sky,
Stands level with the beggar and the king.

Ropes and Knots.

BY LIEUTENANT W. R. HAMILTON.



GREAT many boys in reading the sea stories in THE GOLDEN ARGOSY see such terms as "splicing cables," "taking a round turn," a "half hitch," a "running bowline," and so on, and

wonder perhaps just what they all are, and how they are all made.

They are the nautical terms for the various methods of tying and fastening ropes to each other, and to hooks, timbers, and beams; and though they seem easy when we watch a sailor making use of any of them, I will venture to say that few people without experience can accomplish even the simplest knot properly at first trial.

Though I am not a sailor, yet soldiers are obliged to make use of ropes and cables so much, that I am going to tell you how many of these knots and fastenings are made.

And first of all let us see how a rope itself is made. Ropes and twines are composed of a vegetable fiber. Hemp is the one generally used, except for the larger ropes, when the fiber of the East India plantain, called Manilla, is employed. These fibers, or threads, after being dried, are then attached to a revolving disk in a machine. The operator picks up a handful, and drawing it out between the hands, fixes one end of the yarn to the disk, which is then set in motion, and twists the fibers rapidly. More and more of the threads are fed to the machine, after the first few yards are made and wound around a reel. The process is then automatic; as long as fiber is supplied the machine, it takes up a certain amount, which is graduated to a nicety, and twisting it first, winds it up on the reel, until the required length of yarn is made.

A number of yarns, from two to any number, depending on the size of the rope to be made, are then by another machine twisted rapidly together from left to right, and stretched. These are called strands, and, after the stretching, three or more strands are twisted around one of their number, and in opposite directions to it. This is done with great regularity and firmness. The strands are laid or twisted with the sun, that is from right to left, when they are three or four in number. Where they are nine in number, they form cables, and are first made

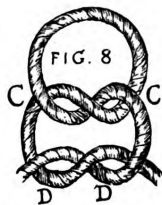
yarns, so that altogether the rope has 333 yarns. If the rope has three or four strands only, it is termed a hawser laid rope.

When you read in stories of an eight inch cable or a four inch hawser, it does not mean that the rope is eight or four inches in diameter, but eight or four inches in circumference. The reason for this is that it is almost impossible to get a squarely cut end of a rope to measure the diameter. The end always frays out more or less, but the circumference remains practically the same.

Now since we know the strength of each thread or yarn, we can easily calculate the strength of ropes of different sizes, and so if we ever have weights to lift or pull, if we know the amount, we can tell always just what size rope to get to hold it. Cables are made up to 27 inches in circumference, but such large ones have to be made to order, and it is rarely that they are found of over 18 inches circumference at the ship chandlers'. A rope of 1 inch circumference will hold a weight of 540 lbs.; 1 1/2 in., 1200 lbs.; 2 in., 2000 lbs.; 2 1/2 in., 3300 lbs.; 3 in., 4800 lbs.; 3 1/2 in., 6400 lbs.,

around a log of wood so that the rope will be entirely around it, it is called a *round turn*. Thus Fig. 3 represents a round turn, and it must be carefully noted that the ends of the rope pass each other, or that there is one place on the log A where there are two layers of rope. This is necessary in order that the rope may go entirely around it.

A *hitch*, when applied to ropes, means the using of a single rope by tying or fastening on itself, in such a manner that it will easily become unfastened. A *knot* is distinguished from a hitch. It implies fastening a rope on itself or another rope, in such a manner that it will not come unfastened easily. The simplest of all hitches is the half hitch, shown in Fig. 5. It is made by taking the end, and passing it over the standing part, and bringing it up through the bight B. If you have a rope that is used as a guy or supporting rope, and you wish to fasten the end of it securely, say to a beam, take a round turn around the beam, and then put two half hitches in the rope, shoving the hitches close to the turn. Two round turns and then two half hitches will be even more secure.



SOME OF THE MOST USEFUL KNOTS.

4 in., 8600 lbs.; 5 in., 13,500 lbs.; 6 in., 18,200 lbs.

Now look at Fig. 1. It is a hawser laid rope, A, B, C, being the strands. It is laid with the sun; that is, holding the rope perpendicular to you, the strands are twisted as the hands of a watch move, by a right hand motion. The strand C is loosened and frayed, and shows the yarns, each of which is composed of fibers or threads. Fig. 2 represents the cable laid rope. It will be noticed that each of the three ropes, A, B, C, of which it is made run in a direction contrary from the strands of each rope, or against the sun.

Now if in Fig. 1 we suppose the rope to be fastened at E, then the other end of the rope is called the free end and that part that is towards the fastened end is called the *standing part*. Any part of the rope that is not the end is called the *bight*, and if the rope is doubled over or bent, the loop thus formed is called a *bight*. Thus in Fig. 1, the part E E is the bight, and in Fig. 5 the part B is a bight.

It is absolutely necessary to learn these distinctions properly, in order to thoroughly understand the directions for making knots.

Now suppose we take any ordinary rope of three strands. If we pass it

If we wish to secure a rope to a hook in the wall, so as to sustain some weight, we make a *Blackwall hitch*, Fig. 9. We make a bight and pass it over the hook, so that the center of the bight is against the back of the hook. The free end rests in the bight of the hook, and is held there, or *jammed*, by the standing part. The friction, if properly jammed, is sufficient to cause the rope to hold considerable weight.

A clove hitch (Fig. 7) is also used to lift or drag weights a short distance. It is made by passing the end of the rope around the beam, and then over the standing part, then around the beam again, and up under the standing part. In all these hitches, the great thing is to make them quickly so that the rope will lie nicely. They all of them by slacking up on the standing part can be undone instantly and without trouble.

The simplest and most practical of all knots, and one used daily by every boy, is the *square knot*, Fig. 8. It is just the thing to use to tie up a bundle securely. To make it we take the ends one in each hand and make a loop, then cross the ends under the standing part. This forms the overhand knot (C, C, Fig. 8). Take the ends and cross them again on the same side of the standing part on which they

came up. Pass the ends round each other, bring them through the bights D D. If the ends should be crossed on the sides of the standing part opposite which they came, the knot formed is called a *granny*. The square knot is also called a reef knot.

Fig. 11 represents a Bowline knot, used to form a tight grasp around a beam, and one which can be quickly and easily unfastened. It is made by passing the rope around the beam, then taking the end in the right hand, and the standing part in the left. Lay the end over the standing part, and hold it with the right hand. With the left make a bight of the standing part over the end part. Then take the end down under the lower standing part, over the cross, and then through the bight.

A very secure knot in lifting heavy beams is the *Fisherman's Bend*, Fig. 10. It is made by taking two turns around the beam, with the end of the rope, then carrying it around the standing part, then passing it under both turns, then over the second, and then under the first.

If we should be lifting a heavy weight and wished to shorten the rope without cutting it or diminishing the strain on it, we make a *sheepshank*, Fig. 6. We first make two long bights in the rope so that they will overlay one another, and then take a half hitch over each bight with the standing part next to it.

One of the best and simplest means of joining two ropes quickly is by the *Weaver's knot*. It is made by passing the end of a rope through the bight of another, round both parts of the other and up under its own part.

Fig. 4 represents the Sailor's knot. It is made by passing the end of a rope under the bight of another, then over the standing part and under the end, then over the end and under the bight of the second.

There are many other knots also used, but the foregoing are the principal ones. The next time I will tell you how to apply the knots and hitches practically, in lifting weights, beams, barrels, etc., making lashings and splicings. These are things that every boy ought to know, as there are many occasions in life when the knowledge is very useful to him.

(To be concluded.)

"L" ON GOLD COINS.

MOST of our readers have probably noticed the tiny letters found on many coins, which are mint marks denoting the place where the pieces were struck. It seems that on some gold coins a mark with a different significance may be found. It is the letter "L," and its meaning is explained in the subjoined paragraphs taken from the *Missouri Republican*:

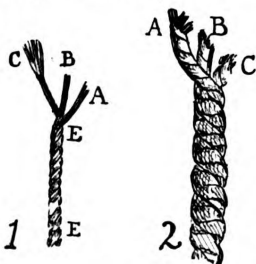
A statement that will probably cause some bank tellers to open their eyes was made at the United States Sub-Treasury recently. Two hundred thousand dollars in gold coin was deposited by the local banks into the Treasury. Treasurer Shultz busied himself all of that day weighing the coin, and when he footed up yesterday he found a shrinkage of \$3,210, caused by light weight.

Long circulation caused this loss, but it very seldom happens in such a large amount. When the coin is sent from the mint it is overweighted 1-2 to 1 per cent of its value, which allows so much loss in wear and tear while in circulation. When it fails to come up to the standard weight it is refused by the United States Treasury, but before they pass it from their hands it is marked with an "L" on the face, which signifies light weight, and also is meant to prevent its circulation among the people for its full value.

It is said that there are great quantities of light weight gold coins in circulation, and the bank teller frequently comes in contact with them. He is supposed to be well posted in the various grades of money in circulation, but notwithstanding his experience a light weight slip in on him now and then. Gold coin is very difficult to handle, and in nearly all cases where it is deposited in large quantities a loss in weight can be looked for.

It has been several months, though, since such a loss in weight as that in this last deposit has been sustained. Some time ago an amount about as large as \$3,200 was sustained on gold coin deposited by the local banks. This deficit, it seems, made the teller more strict in accepting the coins, and depositors were more careful, resulting in few light weight coins being presented. Encountering little trouble for some time, it seems the tellers have relaxed their vigilance, and the light weight coins slipped in on one of them.

One of the Treasury clerks busied himself all day stamping the "L" on the coins, which were then sent to the banks.



FIGS. 1 AND 2.—HAWSER AND CABLE.

by twisting three ropes of three strands each, with the sun, and then twisting the three ropes around each other against the sun. Thus a cable laid rope of eight inches circumference is made up of nine strands, each of which has thirty seven

SMALL SERVICES.

BY W. WORDSWORTH.
Small service is true service while it lasts;
Of friends, however humble, scorn not one;
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the ling'ring dewdrop from the sun.

[This story commenced in No. 267.]

Under Fire;

OR,

FRED WORTHINGTON'S CAMPAIGN.

By FRANK A. MUNSEY,

Author of "Afloat in a Great City," "The Boy Broker," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XIX.

BEFORE JUSTICE PLUMMER.

FRED stared at the sheriff in blank amazement at the terrible charge now brought against him.

"I am charged with setting fire to John Rexford's store?" he said.

"Yes."

"And you say Mr. Rexford makes the charge?" demanded Fred, in great excitement.

"Yes, he makes the charge," replied the officer in a manner that was extremely irritating to our young hero.

"I don't know what it means," answered Fred.

"You know the store was burned, I suppose?" said the sheriff, sarcastically.

"I do, sir; but what has that to do with me?"

"That question is one that must be answered by the court. My duty is to see that you appear there for trial."

"When will the trial be?" asked Fred, pale and depressed.

"At two o'clock this afternoon you must appear before Justice Plummer."

"Can I remain at my work till then?"

"No; you must go with me."

"Is it necessary for me to go to the lockup?" asked Fred, shrinking with natural repugnance from such a place.

"It is, unless you can furnish surety for your appearance at the trial."

"If I promise to be there, isn't that enough?"

"I should not be doing my official duty to let you off on your promise," answered the sheriff.

"I would rather stay with you until two o'clock than to go to the lockup."

"My time is worth too much to waste. I have a great deal of official business to attend to," said the officer; and after a pause, added, "but if you were to give me five dollars, cash down, I think I could fix it for you."

"I haven't so much money with me, but I promise to pay it to you."

"I should prefer the cash," Fred went to Mr. Farrington, accompanied by the sheriff, to try and borrow money enough to make up the five dollars, and to ask advice.

His kind employer took him a little at one side and spoke low, so the officer could not hear him. After getting the facts of the arrest, and asking a few questions, which were answered satisfactorily, Mr. Farrington advanced to the sheriff and said:

"I am surprised, Mr. Coombs, that you should try to scare this boy into paying you five dollars, with the threat of taking him to the lockup. If you had a better opinion of you than this," he added, emphatically.

Officer Coombs hung his head and colored. He lost the official bearing with which he had so impressed our young friend.

"I am responsible for his appearance at the trial," he at last answered, in defense of his position.

"Very well, that is no reason why you should take advantage of an innocent boy who knows nothing of the law. I will go surety for him, and will be present at the trial. If you want me to give a bond for his appearance I will do so."

"It would be right to have the bond, but I will not ask it from you. I have faith in you, you see," said the sheriff, trying to win back his good opinion by a bit of flattery.

Mr. Farrington shrugged his shoulders. Turning to Fred, he told him to go to his work, and promised that at the appointed time he would accompany him to the trial.

Of course Fred had to tell his parents at noon what had happened. They were alarmed at first, but so grave a case, but became calm, as they felt sure they could prove that Fred was at home the night of the fire.

"I think the tide will turn now, Fred," said his father. "You have had more than your

share of ill luck, but I am proud of you that you stand up under fire like a man."

"I hope it has, father, and I am glad of your approval. This charge, though, seems to be one of malice."

"It does seem so; but we can tell at the trial whether it is or not."

Justice Plummer was a middle aged man, with a kind, intellectual face. He spoke slowly and thoughtfully. When our hero entered he greeted him in a kindly way.

"I am sorry to see you here, Fred," he began, "and I hope no evidence of guilt will be found against you. Though I feel a friendly interest in you, it is my duty, as you know, to decide the case impartially."

"I know it is, judge," replied Fred, "and I think the evidence will prove my innocence."

Mr. Rexford now came in with his lawyer, Mr. Clarence Ham, a young man noted for his eloquence.

Mr. Rexford was sworn as a witness, and deposed that he had strong grounds for believing his store was burned by an incendiary, and that he had reasons for suspecting Fred Worthington as the guilty party, though he admitted that he had little or no real proof to sustain this belief.

He gave his evidence upon the facts that led him to think the store was maliciously burned. Sheriff Coombs added his testimony upon this point.



FRED'S TRIAL BEFORE JUSTICE PLUMMER.

point. These facts having been already given, need not be repeated.

"This testimony gives no absolute proof that the store was burned by an incendiary," said the judge.

"But I submit that the circumstances—the facts, if you please—lead to that conclusion," put in attorney Ham.

"To be sure they give rise to a strong suspicion that it was, but unless we get further testimony to this end, the court cannot hold the prisoner for trial."

Mr. Rexford now gave his testimony, showing why he suspected Fred of being the guilty party.

This being simply a hearing before a justice, Mr. Farrington was allowed to serve Fred in the place of a lawyer.

"You say," said Mr. Farrington, addressing the witness, "you thought at the time you discharged Fred Worthington from your employ that some sort of revenge would follow. Will you kindly state why you thought so?"

"His manner indicated it."

"In what way, please?"

"He was very saucy and impudent."

"In what manner was he impudent?"

"He threatened me."

"Simply because you informed him you wouldn't need his services longer?"

"Well, yes, that is about it," answered the witness, hesitatingly.

"The court would like to know the exact facts," said Judge Plummer.

"I shall endeavor to give them," answered the witness.

"Then please state in what way he threatened you," said Mr. Farrington.

"It was in his manner. I had to conciliate him to save trouble. I was absolutely afraid of him."

"In what way did you conciliate him?"

"By modifying my statement."

"What was your statement?"

"It was something about his taking money from my drawer."

"You charged him, then, with stealing?"

"Not exactly."

"This was the point, however, that you modified?"

"Yes."

"Did that satisfy him?"

"Well, yes, it seemed to," admitted the witness, reluctantly.

"Then, Mr. Rexford, your testimony shows that Fred Worthington did not complain at being discharged, but at a statement which you had no right to make. I judge he simply acted as any proud spirited boy would have done."

John Rexford grew fidgety.

"Was there any other cause for his being impudent?"

"No."

"No question of settlement, I suppose?"

"Nothing worth speaking of," answered the witness, growing very nervous.

"As it may have some bearing upon this case, you will please state what it was."

Mr. Farrington had a whispered consultation

"In your testimony, Mr. Rexford, you said Fred Worthington impressed you at the time of his discharge with the idea that he would do you some subsequent harm. Was that impression founded upon his attitude of self defense?" asked Judge Plummer, in his slow, thoughtful way.

"No, sir; not that."

"Will you state, then, what caused you to form such an opinion?"

"Of course I could not tell his thoughts, but the deep study he seemed to be in convinced me that he was revolving in his mind some plot to be revenged on me for discharging him."

"This cannot be considered as evidence," replied the judge. "His thoughts might have run upon an entirely different subject."

CHAPTER XX.

THE JUDGE'S DECISION.

THE testimony so far had very little weight, and really told against the merchant more than it did against our young friend.

The track in the sawdust, however, which was measured, and which was found to be the same size as Fred's shoe and of the same general shape, was very good evidence, and being testified to by both Mr. Rexford and the sheriff, went far toward bringing our hero under suspicion of having committed the crime.

The merchant's lawyer grew eloquent upon this point, but his spread eagle style failed to impress the quiet, thoughtful judge to any great extent.

The testimony for the prosecution now being all in, Fred was put upon the stand, and testified that he was at home the night of the fire, had been at home all the evening, and was in bed when the cry of fire was sounded.

"How long had you been in bed?" asked attorney Ham.

"About two hours, I think," answered Fred.

"Are you sure about this?"

"I can't say it was exactly two hours, but I know it was not far from nine o'clock when I retired, and it was about eleven when the alarm of fire awoke me."

"Were you asleep when the alarm was started?"

"I was."

"I have no more questions at present to ask the witness," said the lawyer to the judge.

"I have one I would like to ask the witness," said Mr. Farrington, and then addressing Fred, said:

"John Rexford testified that you threatened to make false statements about his business if he kept the money due you. Is this true?"

"I object to this question," said attorney Ham, who had learned the merchant's great desire to avoid further testimony upon this point. "It has no bearing upon this case."

"It does have a bearing upon the case, and I have a special reason for wanting an answer to my question," replied Mr. Farrington.

"The witness may answer," said the judge.

"Your honor," put in Ham, "I protest against bringing in the private business of my client, which has no relation to this case."

"This case is entirely one of circumstantial evidence," replied the judge, "and being such, it is important that we get at the facts regarding the boy's character. The witness will answer the question."

"No, sir, it is not true."

"Did you make no threat whatever?"

"When he said he would keep my money, I told him it was a mean trick, but not much meaner than I had seen him play upon his customers."

"What reply did he make?"

"He asked me if I meant to insinuate that he cheated his customers."

"And you replied?"

"I said I did."

"What followed?"

"He threatened to have me arrested."

"And what did you say to that?"

"I replied that I would like to have him do so, for I could then tell some things about his methods that would make a stir in this village."

"This, then, is the threat you made?"

"Yes, if you call it a threat," answered Fred.

"Mr. Rexford's testimony does not agree with yours upon this point," said the judge. "Was there no statement about any special custom which Mr. Rexford considered false?"

"There was a reference to one or two matters," replied our young hero, evasively.

The merchant now looked pale and wretched. His crooked business methods were about to be made known, and such a disclosure, coming right upon the loss of his store, was crushing to him.

"You will please state one of them," said the judge.

"I would prefer not to," said Fred.

"Why do you hesitate?" asked his honor.

"Because I do not wish to reveal matters about my employer's business that should be considered confidential."

"It is honorable in you to be so considerate of your former employer, and especially as he is now trying to establish a case against you. As you are only a boy, I consider it but right that you should advise me to show, if you can, that you do not threaten to make a false statement regarding his business. Such proof would aid your case and show well for your character."

Fred hesitated, thinking what he ought to do. Mr. Rexford took advantage of the pause, and asked if he would be allowed to speak a word upon this point before it was carried farther. As no objection was raised by the defense, he said:

"I must acknowledge an error in my testimony regarding Fred's threat of a false statement. I was so wrought up over the matter that I hardly understood the exact language, but now I have heard his testimony it all comes back to me. His statement was essentially true."

This was an unexpected turn for matters to take. It was, however, less surprising to Fred than to the judge, and to those drawn by curiosity to the trial. The reason for Mr. Rexford's retracting was very evident, and caused many a significant glance, and here and there an exchange of opinions upon the matter in an undertone.

Though humiliating, it was, nevertheless, a fortunate move for the merchant, and he was lucky to get out of his own trap so well.

Fred was looked upon at first by the villagers present as being without doubt guilty, but now they began to have some reservation for him; and as the tide turned in his favor it set against the merchant, till at length our young friend was the more popular of the two.

Fred's father and mother both corroborated his testimony upon the point of his being at home all evening on the night of the fire, and stated that he retired to bed at about nine o'clock.

They were questioned by lawyer Ham as to whether Fred could have left the house and returned, unknown to them, between the hours of nine and eleven o'clock, when the fire was probably set.

Their testimony upon this point evidently satisfied Judge Plummer, but Fred was innocent of the charge John Rexford had brought against him, for after carefully going over the testimony on both sides, he said:

"I find nothing in the evidence that would tend to place suspicion upon Fred Worthington, who is charged with maliciously burning John Rexford's store. The testimony for the prosecution has no real weight, while that for the defense is strong, indisputable evidence, that removes all doubt as to the boy's whereabouts during the two hours when the fire must have been set, if it was set at all. I therefore discharge the accused, as no evidence has been offered that would justify the testimony for the prosecution turning to our hero with a friendly smile, he added: "Fred, you can go. It is clear that you are innocent of the charge made against you."

"I thank you sincerely," said Fred, with an expression of true gratitude.

"Before you go, Fred, I wish to congratulate you upon the way you conducted yourself during this trial," said Judge Plummer, taking him by the hand. "Placed under fire as you have been, but few boys would have displayed the manhood you have shown."

Our young friend was profoundly moved at these kind, reassuring words, coming as they did from one who had the power to hold him for a grave crime.

Fred's parents were very happy at the outcome of the trial, and at Judge Plummer's complimentary remarks to their son—their only child. But scarcely less gratified than they was Mr. Farrington. He not only felt a pride in triumph over the one who had injured him, but a genuine satisfaction and pleasure that Fred should be cleared of all suspicion in this case.

John Rexford was defeated, dissatisfied, miserable. He had injured himself, and helped his discharged clerk, who he still thought had something to do with the destruction of his store. He now quickly withdrew from the place of the trial before any one could approach him to intensify his misery by questions upon the various points of evidence.

CHAPTER XXI.

A TALK BETWEEN TWO GIRLS.

MATTHEW DE VERE and Tim Short had compromised matters with Jacob Simmons so that all immediate danger was passed. They were comparatively easy on this point, as a little more time had been granted them in which to pay the balance promised him; yet they did not feel entirely secure.

Fred's arrest on the charge of burning the store meant more to each of them than a mere gratification at seeing him humbled and perhaps punished. If they had been sure he would be convicted of the crime, doubtless they would have been happy indeed. The case meant so much to them that they attended the trial, and their discomfiture at the result—at seeing Fred vindicated and honorably discharged—was more than will be imagined.

They left the place of trial together, and had a long private discussion, which seemed not entirely satisfactory.

"Meet me in the pines tomorrow noon, Tim," said De Vere as he left him, wearing a troubled look—almost one of fear.

Aside from these troubles, Matthew was far from happy. He had tried to learn the cause of Nellie's manner toward him the last time he saw her at school. He could not understand what had brought about the change in her, but that there was a change was beyond doubt, and the fact irritated him.

He had not seen her for nearly a week, for she was at home sick. She took a severe cold of Nellie's manner toward him the last time he saw her at school. He could not understand what had brought about the change in her, but that there was a change was beyond doubt, and the fact irritated him.

There was a doubt of this, however, and he clung to the doubt tenaciously, for his regard for Nellie was very strong, and his friendship in this direction was of a finer nature, and possessed more honor than he seemed capable of showing in any other way.

Fred readily accepted the reply to his letter to Nellie, and yet he hoped almost against hope, as it seemed to him, that she might acknowledge its receipt in some way. If only a word, and that one of criticism, he felt that it would be much more welcome than nothing.

Little did he realize how near he came to receiving the coveted letter, for he was actually writing, and was one that would have given him great pleasure.

Nellie wrote the letter in the evening, before the fire, and intended mailing it the next morning; but when morning came she found herself too ill to leave the house, so her letter remained unmailed.

Two days passed; then came the report of Fred's arrest. The report made her cheeks burn. She condemned herself for having written the letter, and while the shock was fresh upon her she destroyed it. And as it lay in the waste basket, torn into little pieces, she looked at it and felt almost sorry she had been so hasty; yet, even so, though she had dared not acknowledge it to herself, that he had the letter, guilty or not guilty.

She took his note from her pocket, and read it again, then buried her face in her hands in deep thought.

She was interrupted by Gracie Bernard, who ran in and spend a little time with her.

"Oh, isn't it good news?" she exclaimed, in her animated, girlish way.

"Isn't what good news?" asked Nellie, curiously.

"Why, the result of the trial. Haven't you heard of it?"

"Has he been acquitted?" asked Nellie, eagerly.

"Yes."

"No, I had not heard of the result," she replied, blushing as she realized the interest she had shown. "I only learned of the trial a few minutes ago."

"I'm glad he was proved innocent. I think it was shameful to bring such a charge against him," returned Gracie.

"He has been unfortunate," replied Nellie, refraining from an expression of her own feelings.

"Yes, he has; but I do not believe any of the charges against him. Father said that Mr. Rexford was confused and embarrassed at the trial. All came out about Fred's discharge and the missing money."

"Was it favorable to Fred?"

"Yes, Mr. Rexford had to retract his own testimony, and acknowledge that Fred was right."

"Did they learn anything about the missing money?"

"No; but father said there was no proof that Fred took it, and no good reason for thinking so. You know I told you when the report first started that I did not believe it was true."

"I know," replied Nellie, with evident sympathy, her eyes, and thinking of the reference to this fact in Fred's letter to her.

"Dave told me a few days ago," continued Gracie, "that Fred thought nearly all of his friends had turned against him, and that he felt terribly hurt about it. I know I have not turned against him, and I shall write and tell him so; then he will know he has one friend at least."

"He already knows it," said Nellie, in a slightly bitter tone.

"Why, how can that be, and what leads you to think so?" asked Gracie, with surprise.

"I mean—probably he knows it. Dave might have told him," replied Nellie, with evident embarrassment at the fact she had unintentionally disclosed, and her inability to explain how she came by this information without making reference to Fred's letter to her.

Gracie looked puzzled, and after a pause, said: "Yes, possibly he knows it, but I wish to be sure of it, and as I have no opportunity of seeing him now he is at work in the factory. I will write the letter and mail it to him. It can do no harm."

When Nellie had been left alone she could not resist referring once more to that part of Fred's letter that spoke of Gracie's friendship. This, and the fact that she was intending to write him a friendly, encouraging letter, troubled Nellie. She was very glad that he had been found innocent, that he had merited the praise of the judge, and yet she felt depressed that another should feel so happy over it. If only she had learned the news from some other source, or if Gracie had shown some indifference, she would have felt delighted.

Why this should trouble her she hardly knew,

but that it did so was certain. She wondered if Gracie would say anything about her in the letter she would write to Fred. "I am afraid she will," Nellie said to herself. "I wish I had shown more sympathy for him, and I wanted to so much. But why should she be so happy over his triumph? The idea of her writing to him to tell him of her friendship!"

These thoughts annoyed Nellie, and she felt—yes, we may well confess it—a little jealous of her friend Gracie.

(To be continued.)

WE SHALL KNOW AT LAST.

I THINK we shall know, shall know at last, All that was strange in the past, Shall one day know, and shall happily see That the sorrow and joys, that with tears and sighs We vainly endeavored to flee, Were angels who, veiled in sorrow's guise, Came to us only to bless. Maybe we shall kneel and kiss their feet, With grateful tears, when we shall meet Their unveiled faces, pure and sweet, Their eyes deep tenderness. Maybe we shall see their gains and losses We may not always count aright. The rough bars of our heavy crosses May change to living light.

[This story commenced in No. 264.]

Luke Walton;

OR,

THE CHICAGO NEWSBOY.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.,

Author of "The Young Acrobat," "Bob Fortune," "Ragged Dick," "Luck and Pluck," etc.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HAROLD'S THEFT.

THE next morning Mrs. Merton, escorted by Luke, went to make some purchases in the city. Mrs. Tracy went out also, having an engagement with one of her friends living on Cottage Grove Avenue. Harold went out directly after breakfast, but returned at half past ten. He went up stairs and satisfied himself that, except the servants, he was alone in the house.

"The coast is clear," he said joyfully. "Now if the key only fits." He went into his aunt's sitting room, and, not anticipating any interruption, directed his steps at once to the small table, from a drawer in which he had seen the key. There would have been no pocketbook. He tried one key after another, and finally succeeded in opening the drawer. He drew it out with nervous anxiety, fearing that the pocketbook might have been removed, in which case all his work would have been thrown away.

But no! Fortune favored him this time, if it can be called a favor. There in plain sight was the morocco pocketbook. Harold, pale with excitement, seized and opened it. His eyes glistened as he saw that it was well filled. He took out the roll of bills, and counted them. There were five ten dollar bills and three fives—sixty five dollars in all. There would have been more, but Mrs. Merton, before going out, had taken four fives, which she intended to use.

It was Harold's first theft, and he trembled with agitation as he thrust the pocketbook into his pocket. He would have trembled still more if he had known that his mother's confidential maid, Felicie Laquer, had seen everything through the crevice formed by the half open door.

Felicie smiled to herself as she moved noiselessly away from her post of concealment.

"Master Harold is trying a dangerous experiment," she said to herself. "Now he is in my power. He has been insolent to me more than once, as if, forsooth, he were made of superior clay, but Felicie, though only a poor servant, is not, thank Heaven, a thief as he is. It is a very interesting drama. I shall wait patiently till it is played out."

In his hurry Harold came near leaving the room with the drawer table open. But he brought himself in time, went back, and locked it securely. It was like shutting the stable after the horse was stolen. Then with the stolen money in his possession he left the house. He did not wish to be found at home when his aunt returned.

Harold had sixty five dollars in his pocket—an amount quite beyond what he had ever before had at his disposal—but it must be admitted that he did not feel as happy as he had expected. If he had come by it honestly, if, for instance, it had been given him, his heart would have beat high with exultation, but as it was he walked along with clouded brow. Presently he ran across one of his friends, who noticed his discomposure.

"What's the matter, Harold?" he asked. "You are in the dumps."

"Oh, no," answered Harold, forcing himself to assume a more cheerful aspect. "I have no reason to feel blue."

"You are only acting, then? I must congratulate you on your success. You looked for all the world like the knight of the sorrowful countenance."

"Who is he?" asked Harold, who was not literary.

"Don Quixote. Did you never hear of him?"

"No."

"Then your education has been neglected. What are you going to do today?"

"I don't know."

"Suppose you visit a dime museum?"

"All right."

"That is, if you have any money. I am high and dry."

"Yes, I have some money."

"They went to a dime museum on Clark Street. Harold surprised his companion by paying for the two tickets out of a five dollar bill."

"You're flush, Harold," said his friend. "Has anybody left you a fortune?"

"No," answered Harold, uneasily. "I've been saving up money lately."

"You have? Why, I've heard of your being at theaters, playing billiards, and so on."

"Look here, Robert, I don't see why you need trouble yourself so much about where I get my money."

"Don't be cranky, Harold," said Robert, good humoredly. "I won't say another word. Only am glad to find my friends in a healthy financial condition. I only wish I could say the same of myself."

There happened to be a matinee at the Grand Opera House, and Harold proposed going. First, however, they took a nice lunch at Brockway and Milne's, a mammoth restaurant on Clark Street, Harold paying the bill.

As they came out of the theater Luke Walton chanced to pass.

"Good afternoon, Harold," he said. Harold tossed his head, but did not reply.

"Who is that boy—one of your acquaintances?" asked Robert Greve.

"He works for my aunt," answered Harold. "It is like his impudence to speak to me."

"Why shouldn't he speak to you, if you know him?" asked Robert Greve, who did not share Harold's foolish pride.

"He appears to think he is my equal," continued Harold.

"He seems a nice boy."

"You don't know him as I do. He is a common newsboy."

"Suppose he is, that doesn't hurt him, does it?"

"You know what I mean. You don't think a common newsboy fit to associate with on equal terms, do you?"

Robert Greve laughed.

"You are too high toned, Harold," he said. "If he is a nice boy, I don't care what sort of business a friend of mine follows."

"Well, I do," snapped Harold, "and so does my mother. I don't believe in being friends with the rag, tag, and bobtail of society."

Luke Walton did not allow his feelings to be hurt by the decided rebuff he had received from Harold.

"I owed it to myself to act like a gentleman," he reflected. "If Harold doesn't choose to be polite it is his lookout, not mine. He looks down upon me because I am a working boy. I don't mean always to be a newsboy or an errand boy. I shall work my way upward as fast as I can, and in time I may come to fill a good place in society."

It will be seen that Luke was ambitious. He looked above and beyond the present, and determined to improve his social condition.

It was six o'clock when Harold ascended the steps of the mansion on Prairie Avenue. He had devoted the day to amusement, but had derived very little pleasure from the money he had expended. He had very little left of the five dollar bill which he had first changed at the Dime Museum. It was not easy to say where the money had gone, but it had melted away, in one shape or another.

"I wonder whether Aunt Eliza has discovered her loss," thought Harold. "I hope I shan't show any signs of nervousness when I meet her. I don't see how she can possibly suspect me. If anything is said about the lost pocketbook, I will try to look as innocent as possible."

Harold did not stop to think how mean this would be. Self preservation, it has been said, is the first law of nature, and self preservation required that he should avert suspicion from himself by any means in his power. He went into the house whistling, as if to show that his mind was quite free from care.

In the hall he met Felicie.

"What do you think has happened, Master Harold?" said the French maid.

"I don't know, I'm sure."

"Your aunt has been robbed. Some money has been taken from her room."

CHAPTER XXX.

LUKE WALTON IS SUSPECTED OF THEFT.

HAROLD was prepared for the announcement, as he felt confident his aunt would soon discover her loss, but he felt a little nervous nevertheless.

"You don't mean it!" he ejaculated in well counterfeited surprise.

"It's a fact."

"When did Aunt Eliza discover her loss, Felicie?"

"As soon as she got home. She went to her drawer to put back some money she had on hand, and found the pocketbook gone."

"Was there much money in it?"

"She doesn't say how much."

"Well," said Harold, thinking it time to carry out the programme he had determined upon, "I can't say I am surprised."

"You are not surprised!" repeated Felicie, slowly. "Why? Do you know anything about it?"

"Do I know anything about it?" said Harold coloring. "What do you mean by that?"

"Because you say you are not surprised. I was surprised, and so was the old lady, and your mother."

"You must be very stupid not to understand what I mean," said Harold annoyed.

"Then I am very stupid, for I do not know at all why you are not surprised."

"I mean that the boy Aunt Eliza employs—that boy, Luke—has taken the money."

"O, you think the boy Luke has taken the money?"

"Certainly! Why shouldn't he? He is a poor newsboy. It would be a great temptation to him. You know he is always shown into Aunt Eliza's sitting room, and is often there alone."

"That is true."

"And of course nothing is more natural than that he should take the money."

"But the drawer was locked."

"He had some keys in his pocket very likely. Most boys have keys."

"Oh, most boys have keys. Have you perhaps keys, Master Harold?"

"It seems to me you are asking very foolish questions, Felicie. I have the key to my trunk."

"But do newsboys have trunks? Why should this boy Luke have keys? I do not see."

"Well, I'll go upstairs," said Harold, who was getting tired of the interview, and rather unaccustomed to Felicie's remarks and questions.

"As Felicie had said, Mrs. Merton discovered her loss almost as soon as she came home. She had used but a small part of the money she took with her, and not caring to carry it about with her, opened the drawer to replace it in the pocketbook."

"To her surprise the pocketbook had disappeared."

"Now the contents of the pocketbook, though a very respectable sum, were not sufficient to put Mrs. Merton to any inconvenience. Still no one likes to lose money, especially if there is reason to believe that it has been stolen, and Mrs. Merton felt annoyed. She drew out the drawer to its full extent, and examined it carefully in every part, but there was no trace of the morocco pocketbook."

"She locked the drawer, and went down stairs to her niece."

"What's the matter, Aunt Eliza?" asked Mrs. Tracy, seeing at a glance, from her aunt's expression, that something had happened.

"There is a thief in the house!" said the old lady, abruptly.

"What!"

"There is a thief in the house!"

"What makes you think so?"

"You remember my small work table?"

"I have been in the habit of keeping a supply of money in a pocketbook in one of the drawers. I just opened the drawer, and the money is gone!"

"Was there much money in the pocketbook?"

"I happen to know just how much. There were sixty-five dollars."

"And you can find nothing of the pocketbook?"

"No; that and the money are both gone."

"I am sorry for your loss, Aunt Eliza."

"I don't care for the money. I shall not miss it. I am amply provided with funds, thanks to Providence. But it is the mystery that puzzles me. Who can have robbed me?"

Mrs. Tracy nodded her head significantly.

"I don't think there need be any mystery about that," she said, pointedly.

"Why not?"

"I can guess who robbed you."

"Then I should be glad to have you enlighten me, for I am quite at a loss to fix upon the thief."

"It's that boy of yours. I haven't a doubt of it."

"You mean Luke Walton?"

"Yes, the newsboy whom you have so imprudently trusted."

"What are your reasons for thinking he is the thief?" asked the old lady, calmly.

"He is often alone in the room where the work table stands, is he not?"

"Yes; he waits for me there."

"What could be easier than for him to open the drawer and abstract the pocketbook?"

"It would be possible, but he would have to unlock the drawer."

"Probably he took an impression of the lock some day, and had a key made."

"You are giving him credit for an unusual amount of cunning."

"I always supposed he was sly."

"I am aware, Louisa, that you never liked the boy."

"I admit that. What has happened seems to show that I was right."

"Now you are jumping to a conclusion. You decide without any proof, or even investigation, that Luke took the money."

"I feel convinced of it."

"It appears to me that you are not treating the boy fairly."

"My instinct tells me that it is he who has robbed you."

"Instinct would have no weight in law."

"If he didn't take it, who did?" asked Mrs. Tracy, triumphantly.

"That question is not easy to answer, Louisa."

"I am glad you admit so much, Aunt Eliza."

"I admit nothing; but I will think over the matter carefully, and investigate."

"Do so, Aunt Eliza! In the end you will agree with me."

"In the meanwhile, Louisa, there is one thing I must insist upon."

"What is that?"

"That you leave the matter wholly in my hands."

"Certainly, if you wish it."

"There are some circumstances connected with the robbery which I have not mentioned."

"What are they?" asked Mrs. Tracy, her face expressing curiosity.

"I shall keep them to myself for the present."

Mrs. Tracy looked disappointed.

"It is important to me, I may think of something that would help you."

"If I need help in that way I will come to you."

"Meanwhile, shall you continue to employ the boy?"

"Yes; why not?"

"He might steal something more."

"I will risk it."

Mrs. Merton returned to her room, and presently Harold entered his mother's presence.

"What is this I hear about Aunt Eliza having some money stolen?" he asked.

"She is true. She has lost sixty-five dollars."

"Felicie told me something about it—that it was taken out of her drawer."

Mrs. Tracy went into particulars, unconscious that her son was better informed than herself.

"Does aunt suspect any one?" asked Harold, uneasily.

"She doesn't, but I do."

"Who might it be?"

"That boy, Luke Walton."

"The very one I thought of," said Harold, eagerly. "Did you mention him to Aunt Eliza?"

"Yes; but she is so infatuated with him that she didn't take the suggestion kindly. She has promised to investigate, however, and meanwhile doesn't want us to interfere."

"Things are working round as I want them," thought Harold.

CHAPTER XXXI. WHO STOLE THE MONEY?

IF Mrs. Merton suspect any one of the theft? This is a question which will naturally suggest itself to the reader.

No thought of the real thief entered her mind. Though she was fully sensible of Harold's faults, though she knew him to be selfish, bad tempered, and envious, she did not suppose him capable of theft. The one who occurred to her as most likely to have robbed her was her recently returned nephew, Warner Powell, who had been compelled to leave Chicago years before on account of having yielded to a similar temptation. She knew that he had used up for money, and it was possible that he had opened the table drawer, and abstracted the pocketbook. As to Luke Walton, she was not at all affected by the insinuations of her niece. She knew that Mrs. Tracy and Harold had a prejudice against Luke, and that this would make them ready to believe anything against him.

She was curious, however, to hear what Warner had to say about the robbery. Would he too try to throw suspicion upon Luke in order to screen himself, if he were the real thief? This remained to be proved.

Warner Powell did not return to the house till five o'clock in the afternoon. His sister and Harold hastened to inform him of what had happened, and to communicate their conviction that Luke was the thief. Warner said little, but his own suspicions were different. He went up stairs, and made his aunt a call.

"Well, aunt," he said, "I hear you have been robbed."

"Yes," Warner, I have lost some money," answered the old lady, composedly.

"Louisa told me."

"Yes; she suspects Luke of being the thief. Do you agree with her?"

"No, I don't," answered Warner.

Mrs. Merton's face brightened, and she looked kindly at Warner.

"Then you don't share Louisa's prejudice against Luke?" she said.

"No; I like the boy. I would sooner suspect myself of stealing the money, for you know, Aunt Eliza, that my record is not a good one, and I am sure Luke is an honest boy."

Mrs. Merton's face fairly beamed with delight. She understood very well the low and unworthy motives which influenced her niece and Harold, and it was a gratifying surprise to find that her nephew was free from envy and jealousy.

"Warner," she said, "what you say does you credit. In this particular case I know that Luke is innocent."

"You don't know the real thief?" asked Warner.

"No, but my reason for knowing that Luke is innocent I will tell you. The money was safe in my drawer when I went out this morning. It was taken during my absence from the house. Luke was with me during this whole time. Of course it is impossible that he should be the thief, therefore."

"I see. Did you tell Louisa this?"

"No; I am biding my time. Besides, I am more likely to find the real thief, if it is supposed that Luke is under suspicion."

"Tell me truly, Aunt Eliza, didn't you suspect?"

"Since you ask me, Warner, I will tell you frankly that it occurred to me as possible that you might have yielded to temptation."

"It would have been a temptation, for I have but twenty-five cents in my pocket. But even if I had known where you kept your

money (which I didn't), I would have risked applying to you for a loan, or gift as it would have turned out to be, rather than fall back into my old disreputable ways."

"I am very much encouraged by what you say, Warner. Here are ten dollars. Use it judiciously; try to obtain employment, and when it is gone you may let me know."

"Aunt Eliza, you are kinder to me than I deserve. I will make a real effort to secure employment, and will not abuse your confidence."

"Keep that promise, Warner, and I will be your friend. One thing more: Don't tell Louisa who has passed between us. I can at any time clear Luke, but for the present I will let her think I am uncertain on that point. I shall not forget that you took the boy's part where your sister condemned him."

"Louisa and Harold can see no good in the boy; but I have observed him carefully, and formed my own opinion."

Warner could have done nothing better calculated to win his aunt's favor than to express a favorable opinion of Luke. It must be said, however, in justice to him, that this had not entered into his calculations. He really felt kindly towards the boy whom his sister detested as sly and artful, and liked him much better than his own nephew. They say blood ing upon Warner as a poor relation, had not thought it necessary to treat him with much respect or attention. He had a better heart and a better disposition than Mrs. Tracy or Harold, notwithstanding his early shortcomings.

"Who could have been the thief?" Warner asked himself, as he left his aunt's sitting room.

"Could it have been Harold?"

He resolved to watch his nephew carefully, and seek some clue that would lead to a solution of the mystery.

"I hope it isn't my nephew," he said to himself. "I don't want him to follow in the steps of his wicked uncle. But I would sooner suspect him than Luke Walton. They say blood is thicker than water, but I confess that I like the newsboy better than I do my high-toned nephew."

"Have you made any discovery as to the theft, Aunt Eliza?" asked Mrs. Tracy, as her aunt came in at the evening repast.

"Nothing positive," answered the old lady, significantly.

"Have you discovered anything at all?"

"I have discovered who is *not* the thief," said Mrs. Merton.

"Then you had suspicions?"

"No definite ones."

"Wouldn't it be well to talk over the matter freely with me? Something might be suggested."

"I beg your pardon, Louisa, but I think it would be well to banish this disagreeable matter from our table talk. If I should stand in need of advice, I will consult you."

"I don't want to obtrude my advice, but I will venture to suggest that you call in a private detective."

Harold looked alarmed.

"I wouldn't bother with a detective," he said.

"They don't know half as much as they pretend."

"I am inclined to agree with Harold," said Mrs. Merton. "I will act as my own detective."

"Save for the compliment to Harold, Mrs. Tracy was not pleased with this speech of her aunt."

"At any rate," she said, "you would do well to keep a strict watch over that boy, Luke Walton."

"I shall," answered the old lady, simply.

Mrs. Tracy looked triumphant. It was clear, she thought, that Mrs. Merton was coming to her view of the matter.

Warner kept silence, but a transient smile passed over his face as he saw how neatly Aunt Eliza had deceived his astute sister.

"What do you think, Warner?" asked Mrs. Tracy, desirous of additional support.

"I think Aunt Eliza will get at the truth sooner or later. Of course I will do anything to help her, but I don't want to interfere."

"If she did, she would have no chance of finding out whether he was guilty or not."

"That is true. I did not think of that."

"Warner is more sensible than any of you," said Mrs. Merton.

"I am glad you have changed your opinion of Harold," said Mrs. Tracy, sharply.

She was now beginning to be jealous of her scapegrace brother.

"So am I," said Warner, smiling. "At the same time I don't blame aunt for her former opinion."

The next morning Harold was about leaving the house, when Felicie, the French maid, came up slyly, and said to him, "Master Harold, may I have a word with you?"

"I am in a hurry, said Harold, impatiently.

"It is about the stolen money," continued Felicie, in her soft voice. "You had better listen to what I have to say. I have found out who took it."

Harold's heart gave a sudden thump, and his face indicated dismay.

(To be continued.)

AN ELONGATED JOKE.

A GOOD natured traveler fell asleep in a train a short time ago, and was carried a few miles beyond his destination. "A pretty good joke this, isn't it?" said he to a fellow passenger. "Yes, a trifle too far fetched," was the rejoinder.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We are always glad to oblige our readers to the extent of our abilities, but in justice to all only such questions as are of general interest can receive attention. We have on file a number of queries which will be answered in their turn as soon as space permits.

M. M., Louisville, Ky. See reply to E. E. S.

E. E. S., Cleveland, O. Consult our advertising columns.

J. R., West Troy, N. Y. No premium on the quarter of 1888.

E. J. J. C., New York City. No premium on the quarter of 1883.

G. H. P., New York City. No premium on your Massachusetts Continental bill of 1786.

E. H., Mt. Vernon, N. Y. We expect to publish an article on taxidermy in a week or two.

B. B., Covington, Ky. There is no charge made for entering a paper at second class rates.

A. D. P., Natick, Mass. Submit rubbings of your coins to some dealer to ascertain their value.

G. W., Philadelphia, Pa. "The Boy Brother" will not be included in MUNSEY'S POPULAR SERIES.

B. A. F., Nashua, N. H. We do not deem it advisable to assist our readers in the organization of secret societies.

GEORGE R. PERRY, 21 Lincoln Place, South Brooklyn, N. Y., would like to correspond with editors of amateur papers.

W. H., Louisville, Ky. If your story is good enough, we would be quite willing to pay you for it in the manner suggested.

E. M., Brooklyn, N. Y. Your coin is a Brazilian piece worth about five and a half cents. There is probably no premium on it.

E. K. H., Columbia, Dak. If your silver half dime is without the arrow points, and is well preserved, it is worth ten cents.

A. J. W. We know nothing of the society you mention, and therefore cannot advise you. You fail to send enough particulars.

N. D. W., Leonardsburg, O. No premiums on any of your coins except the half cent of 1680, which, if in good condition, is worth two cents.

A. W. M., New York City. For information concerning West Point, read Chapter VIII of Lieutenant Hamilton's military instruction articles in No. 237.

J. M., Greenville, Ill. To obtain a position as postal clerk at a railroad, get the congressman of your district at Washington to use his influence to get you the appointment.

A. B., Troy, N. Y. To play the game of logomachy you try to build, with certain given letters, as many words as possible, especially odd ones, containing prize letters, such as q, z, k, etc.

WILLIAM T. MURPHY, 544 Hudson St., New York City, will like to hear from boys from 12 to 14 and 4 ft. 7 in. to 5 ft. 2 in. in height desirous of joining Company B of the Franklin Cadets.

ARGOSY READER, Washington, D. C. I. We will mail you a copy of the book, "Adventures of Tad," post paid, on receipt of the price, \$1.25. 2. "Albatross in a Great City," from No. 17 to No. 188.

R. NESHER, 1315 Vine St., Philadelphia, Pa., would like to hear from boys between the ages of 13 and 18, and over five feet in height, who would wish to join him in forming a military company.

A. H. M., Fall River, Mass. Address the Lawrence Scientific School, connected with Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., for full information on the subject of a civil or mining engineer course.

PRESCHER, Princeton, Kan., informs BUCKSKIN that there is more game to be found in northeastern Wyoming than in other parts of that territory and Montana. For a Punch and Judy show write to one of the athletic goods houses.

R. W., Philadelphia, Pa. 1. No premium on any of your coins except the half cent of 1680 and which, if in good condition, are worth respectively three cents and five cents. 2. Yes, the common postmarks are the sort traded off by collectors.

W. E. B., Piermont, N. Y. For method of making a rubber hand stamp, see No. 241. 2. We have no premium list at present. Fifty cents cash commission is allowed for securing a new three dollar yearly subscriber to the ARGOSY.

J. F. McG., New Haven, Conn. Although we have stated many times in this column that there is no premium on the five cent nickel without the word "cents" on the reverse, the ARGOSY is constantly gaining so many new readers that we here repeat it for their benefit.

T. B. P., Brooklyn, N. Y. Planchette is, we believe, named after a Frenchman who invented it. The explanation of the apparent mystery attending the writing lies, without doubt, in the fact that the holder of the board unconsciously moves it so as to sensibly answer the questions he propounds.

ETHEL, 1. It is extremely difficult to fix on the origin of such customs as the leap year privileges of the fair sex, April Fool's day observances, and the like. They are the outgrowth of many years—in some cases of centuries. 2. Use burnt cork to darken the eyebrows, and rouge to redden the lips for amateur theatricals.

PECK'S BAD BOY, Albion, Mich. 1. Yes, most certainly it is necessary that an architect be well up in mathematics. 2. The length of time an apprentice must serve in an architect's office depends, of course, upon his abilities and capacity for improving by the practice he gets. The salary ranges from \$5 per week at the start upwards to \$25 and \$30. 3. No, we should not last in architecture among the so called crowded professions.

L. W., Chicago, Ill. 1. See announcement on editorial page of No. 251 regarding a possible sequel to "The Boy Brother." 2. Edward S. Ellis writes under his own name. 3. The circulation of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY is larger than that of any other weekly of similar character. 4. The island of Guernsey is in the British Channel, 28 miles from France and 62 from England, and has a population of about thirty thousand.

DEERFOOT, Pittsburgh, Pa. 1. Yes, Mr. Ellis is living. 2. See editorial page of No. 260 for list of ARGOSY authors. 3. The boy who is curing and dropping a ball will be described in an article on a baseball which we hope to publish in an early spring number. 4. No, Bolivia has no sea coast. 5. Peru, Bolivia, and Venezuela are in South America, and almost all of the Central American countries are what may be termed second rank republics.



The subscription price of the ARGOSY is \$2.00 per year, payable in advance.
 Club rate.—For \$2.00 we will send two copies for one year to separate addresses.

All communications for the ARGOSY should be addressed to the publisher.
 Subscriptions to the ARGOSY can commence at any time. As a rule we start them with the beginning of some serial story, unless otherwise ordered.

The number (whole number) with which one's subscription expires appears on the printed slip with the name.
 Renewals.—Two weeks are required after receipt of money by us before the number opposite your name on the printed slip can be changed.

Every Subscriber is notified three weeks before the expiration of his subscription, and, if he does not renew at once, his paper is stopped at the end of the time paid for.
 In ordering back numbers include 5 cents for each copy. No returned manuscript will be returned unless stamps accompany it for that purpose.

FRANK A. MUNSEY, PUBLISHER,
 21 WARREN STREET, NEW YORK.

THE SOUTH POLE.

ONE of the most interesting portions of the globe, and certainly the least known, is the southern polar region. So vast is this unexplored tract, that the French geographer Reclus has stated that the moon might drop into it without our being aware of the fact.

It is not strange that the Australians, who live so comparatively close to the unknown region, should desire to find out something more about it; and they are proposing to send out an exploring expedition during the present year, with orders to spare no effort to reach the pole itself. The result will be awaited with interest; for while previous expeditions have almost always accomplished little or nothing, and though the difficulties to be surmounted are generally supposed to be still greater than those that surround the north pole, yet the task is not an entirely hopeless one. Indeed, we may be sure that the perpetual challenge to man's enterprise offered by the unpenetrated barriers of antarctic ice will be taken up again and again till the quest is accomplished, and man's foot has rested upon both the northern and the southern extremities of the earth's axis.

THE KEY TO SUCCESS.

"How did he manage to do it? What is the secret of his success?"

These questions are often asked concerning a man who has achieved great things in business or professional life. Aspiring youths, discouraged men, everybody in fact, is eager to possess himself of the talisman that will win such golden rewards.

The query was once put to old Commodore Vanderbilt, who, as is well known, rose from the position of ferryman to the presidency of one of the greatest railroad systems in America.

"Secret?" he exclaimed. "Why there is no secret about it. All you have to do is to attend to your business and go ahead."

There it is in a nutshell. Concentrated energies and a continual pressing on to higher and better things. No time lost in vain wishes for other people's talents or opportunities, nor resting on one's oars to serenely enjoy conquests already made. Excelsior should be every boy's motto. It will be found to be in many cases the key to success.

The subscription price of The Golden Argosy is \$3 a year, \$1.50 for six months, \$1 for four months. For \$5 we will send two copies, to different addresses if desired. For \$5 we will send The Golden Argosy and Munsey's Popular Series, each for one year.

COURTING DANGER.

WE wish we could imbue every one of our readers with the conviction that reckless daring is not bravery. To be the last of a party to leave the track in front of an advancing locomotive, to spring for a ferryboat after she has started out from the slip, to reach over a precipice for a hat or handkerchief that has blown down just out of reach, such exhibitions of courage partake more of bravado than they do of heroism.

A sad instance in point is furnished by the fate of a man at Poughkeepsie who recently fell a distance of eighty three feet, from the scaffolding of the new bridge now in course of construction across the Hudson. The wind was blowing very hard at the time and the men had decided to

quit work as soon as a new bent had been properly braced. But when it had been hauled up the gale was so severe that all but one man beat a hasty retreat. He, however, determined to run the risk and make an effort to fasten the timbers in place.

He ran forward to adjust it, was struck on the head by the swinging beam and met the fearful death already described.

GOOD NEWS FOR SKATERS.

LIKE most other manufactured metal articles, skates have been both improved and cheapened in recent years. Our forefathers used to pay five or ten dollars for the "high Dutch" skates with wooden foot pieces, which they fastened on their feet with a multiplicity of leather straps. When the patent clamped and extension skates were introduced, their superiority to the old fashioned articles was manifest, but they were at first quite expensive, the cheapest grade selling at about three dollars.

The cost of manufacturing has been gradually lessened, till at the present time a good pair of new style skates can be bought as low as sixty cents. In a year or two the level of prices is pretty sure to be lower still, as most of the patents on the improved mechanism of the popular steel shoes are about to expire.

Thus in skates we find an illustration of the tendency of modern methods to constantly produce better and cheaper articles. The American boy of the period, as he speeds over the glassy surface of lake or river, may reflect that advancing civilization has bestowed upon him advantages unknown to the boyhood of his ancestors.

"THE MYSTERY OF A DIAMOND."

THE NEW NUMBER OF MUNSEY'S POPULAR SERIES.

THE February number of MUNSEY'S POPULAR SERIES is now out, and is fully as attractive as any of its predecessors. It is entitled "The Mystery of a Diamond." Its author, Frank H. Converse, is a great favorite with the readers of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY, and this is one of his very best stories.

The scene is laid at Burton, on the New England coast. Among the summer visitors is the wealthy Mrs. Stanhope, the owner of a magnificent diamond cross, which mysteriously disappears in the confusion caused by the running away of her team of horses. Roy Cole, one of the Burton boys, has his own idea as to the whereabouts of the missing jewels; and after some clever detective work he finds them where the thief had concealed them. He is about to return them to the owner, when they are spirited away from him in a very singular fashion.

The story is so full of action that we cannot here review the rest of its plot. We should recommend all our readers to get the book itself, which can be ordered at any newsdealer's, or will be sent post paid from this office on receipt of the price—25 cents.

PUBLIC OPINION.

HERE are a few more samples of the many kind letters which the ARGOSY receives each day from its friends all over this broad country.

320 GARDEN ST., HOBOKEN, N. J., Jan. 27, 1888.
 I have taken almost every weekly paper published, but have never found any to equal yours. Only last Saturday when I was standing with a few of my friends, the conversation drifted to the question of the best weekly paper published. After a pretty big argument, the only one who was against the ARGOSY gave in.

I think one of the wisest things done was the publishing of "Under Fire," over again.

C. HALSTEAD TERRY.

COWAN, TENN., Jan. 24, 1888.
 I cannot express my regard for THE GOLDEN ARGOSY too highly. I would not have it absent from my house for double its cost.

P. L. WILLIAMS.

AVENUE O, between 10th and 20th Sts.,
 GALVESTON, TEX., Jan. 22, 1888.
 I could not do without THE GOLDEN ARGOSY. It is a valuable paper to me; I watch the letter carrier regularly every week, and receive my paper with joy.

GUS OFFERMAN.

LOCK HAVEN, PA., Jan. 16, 1888.
 I have been a weekly purchaser of your valuable paper for over a year. I think it is the best of its kind printed. My brothers and I can hardly wait from one Saturday to the next for it to come.

TARENTUM, PA., Jan. 14, 1888.
 I buy the ARGOSY every week at the stationer's, and if I should attempt to express my opinion of it I should miserably fail, for words would not do justice to your splendid paper.

JAMES W. KNOWLES.

THOMAS NAST,

The Famous Cartoonist.

THOMAS NAST is undoubtedly the most celebrated and successful of American humorous artists. He has exercised a good deal of influence upon the times in which he lives. For many years his pencil has been a living and moving power in politics. Though a foreigner by birth, he is an American by education and a sincere patriot in sentiment.

The weapons he has wielded have been in good hands. Amid the strife and confusion of political campaigns he has always been the champion of reform, and the uncompromising foe of corruption and misgovernment.

He is the son of a musician in the Bavarian army, and he was born in 1840, at Landau, in Rhenish Bavaria. Six years later his parents emigrated to America, landing in New York.

They were poor, but young Nast, who had very early shown taste for drawing, persevered in studying art in spite of many difficulties and the opposition of his parents. Except six months' training with the artist Kaufmann, he had little teaching, but he advanced so quickly that when he was, fifteen years old he obtained a situation in the late Frank Leslie's publishing house.

We find the following account of Nast's first application for employment related by James Parton in his work entitled "Triumphs of Enterprise:"

"Being remarkably short for his age, and of a boyish expression of countenance, the publisher looked at him with astonishment.

"What, my boy," said he, 'so you think you can draw well enough for my paper, do you?'

"I would like to try," said the youth.

"Well," rejoined Mr. Leslie, 'you shall. Go down to the Hoboken ferry, and bring me a drawing of the scene just as the boat is coming into the dock.'

"This was putting the lad to a severe test. Mr. Leslie has since told me that he had no expectation of the 'little fellow's' doing it, and gave him the job for the purpose of bringing home to his youthful mind the absurdity of his application. The young artist repaired immediately to the ferry house, where he at once proceeded to the performance of the difficult task assigned to him. He struck boldly, however, upon the paper, and produced a sketch, which, though far from correct, abounded in those graphic and vigorous touches so needful in popular illustrations. Mr. Leslie saw at a glance its merits and defects, and at once made a place for him in his establishment, at boy's wages of five dollars a week."

The young artist now devoted all his energies to self-improvement. After his day's work was over, he would study far into the night, leaving only four or five hours for sleep. At the risk of injury to health and eyesight, he kept this up for three years, during which his name began to become known in the artistic world. Then he gave up his position with Frank Leslie, and worked independently, with such success that in 1860 he had saved enough to make an extended European trip.

His experiences abroad were diversified and interesting. He was commissioned to make sketches of the famous battle between Heenan and Sayres; then, turning southward, he witnessed some more deadly fighting, being with Garibaldi in South Italy, and taking part in the sieges of Gaeta and Capua. He visited France, Switzerland and Germany, and was in Europe

about twelve months before he sailed for New York.

Sketches made during his travels had been contributed to the illustrated papers of this country, France and England; and the artist intended to continue treating the same subjects after his return to America. But the outbreak of the Civil War supplied another and a more engrossing theme for his pencil. It was at this point that he began the work with which his name is especially identified—the long series of allegorical cartoons which have so often proved to be powerful forces in the field of politics.

But this was not his only work. Besides cartoons, he produced several more ambitious compositions with the brush. One of them, "The Union Advance Arriving at a Plantation," depicting an incident of Sherman's march to the sea, was exhibited at the National Academy of

Design in New York. Another was "The March of the Seventh Regiment down Broadway."

Mr. Nast never did better service than in gibbeting the principals of the so called "Tweed ring" in bitter and telling caricature. His pencil was an effective aid to the forces which put an end to that period of misgovernment in New York; indeed in some respects it was the most powerful of all, for one of the miscreants is said to have declared that he didn't care a straw for all the papers said of him, as most of his adherents couldn't read, but those pictures, whose meaning every one could see at a glance, they hurt him badly.

Though still in the prime of life, Mr. Nast does but little newspaper work now. He is spending the present winter in an extended Western tour, passing through Colorado to California and Oregon, and delivering a few lectures by the way. A successful newspaper artist has a lucrative profession, and industry and thrift have made Mr. Nast wealthy. He has a handsome home at Morristown, New Jersey.

The famous cartoonist is somewhat short and stout in figure, but his face is refined and intellectual. His eyes are keen and penetrating, his features finely cut, his hands and feet small.

RICHARD H. TITHERINGTON.

ACTION.

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Too much rest is rust,
 There's ever cheer in changing;
 We tire by too much trust,
 So we'll be up and ranging.

GOLDEN THOUGHTS.

The time is never lost that is devoted to work.—Emerson.

ALL is but lip wisdom which wants experience.—Sir Philip Sidney.

VIRTUE, if not in action, is a vice; and when we move not forward we go backward.

The hypocrite would not put on the appearance of virtue if it was not the most proper means to gain love.—Addison.

Ah! When shall all men's good be each man's rule, and universal peace lie like a shaft of light across the land?—Tennyson.

Light as a gossamer is the circumstance which can bring enjoyment to the conscience which is not its own accuser.—W. Carleton.

The heroes of mankind are the mountains, the highlands of the moral world. They diversify its monotony; they furnish the water shed of its history.—Dean Stanley.

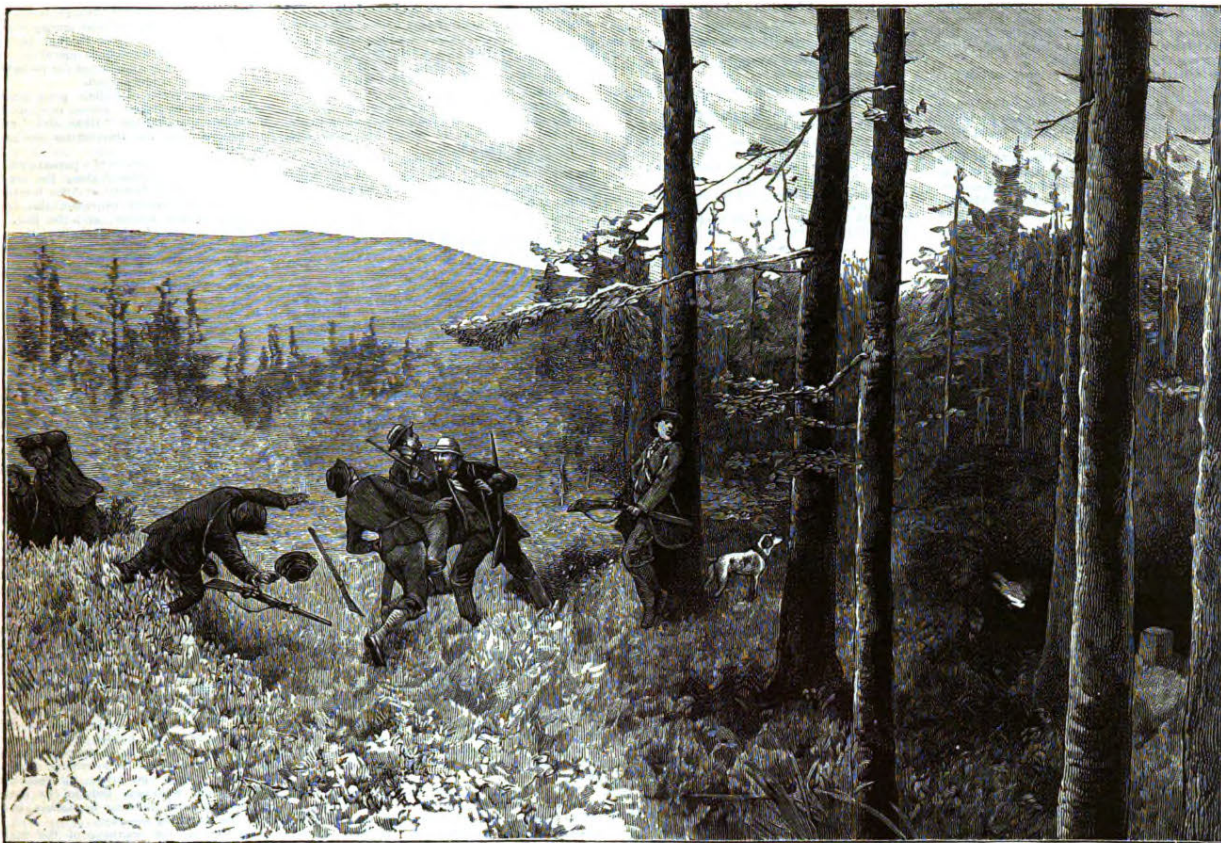
The proportion of genius to the vulgar is like one to a million; but genius without tyranny, without pretension, that judges the weak with equity, the superior with humanity, and equals with justice, is like one to ten millions.—Laurier.

Whoever considers the study of anatomy I believe will never be an atheist; the frame of man's body and the coherence of his parts being so strange and paradoxical that I hold it to be the greatest miracle of nature.—Lord Herbert of Churbury.



THOMAS NAST.

From a photograph by Sarony.



SUDDENLY A SERIES OF SHARP REPORTS CAME FROM THE TOPS OF THE TALL PINES.

Death in the Treetops.

BY GEORGE H. COOMER.

"**H**URRAH for the biggest old grizzly in the mountains—here we go for him!" I cried, as we started out from our mining camp, near the Little Colorado River, for a day's hunt.

We were seven in number—all of us stout, sunburned fellows, and all save one accustomed to the hardships of a life in Arizona. That one was a lad from Maine named Tom Granville, who had been with us but a short time, but to whom I had already taken a fancy for his quiet and pleasant manner. He was a tall, awkward youth, but intelligent and not afraid of work.

His inexperience made him the victim of some practical jokes; but however keenly he may have felt such impositions, his good nature remained unruined. Our men believed that the smooth spoken young chap had no great spirit; but though he may have guessed their thoughts, he made no attempt to convince them to the contrary.

There was not a particle of "brag" about him. He had hunted in Maine, he said, but had never killed anything of much consequence. In speaking of grizzlies, he remarked that he should like a chance at one, but should wish to have a tree at hand in the meantime, as he had heard that those sharp nosed fellows were hard to kill.

His dread of the Indians, who were at that time troublesome in Arizona, he took no pains to conceal. It never occurred to him that he ought to use any bravado in talking of them, or to pretend that he cared nothing for his own scalp.

On the day before we set out for the hunt, however, a slight incident happened which inspired in every one a respect for Tom's marksmanship, whatever may have been thought of his "greenness" in a general way. He was inspecting his rifle just outside the tent, when, high above our camp, there flew a solitary wild pigeon. Instantly we heard the sharp crack of the Winchester, and with the report the swift winged bird fell to the earth like a stone. Such a feat with a single ball was remarkable indeed, and our veteran gunners were filled with surprise as they witnessed it.

"There, young man," cried Percy Rawson, one of the number, "you may take my hat! I shan't try to beat that shot."

One of two, however, growled enviously, and attributed the success to accident; but Tom merely smiled good humoredly as he put away his rifle, leaving them to think what they pleased.

We scattered rather widely upon the hunt, in

order to increase the chances of success. But, for my own part, I was unable to get a shot at any large game; and as I heard no firing from the others, it seemed probable that they, too, were having only their labor for their pains.

At length I fell in with Tom Granville and we tramped on together. Tom had killed nothing. He had seen a few deer at a distance, but it had been impossible to get near them.

As we continued our course, others of our party were occasionally seen to right or left, but there was not a single rifle report far or near.

"We shall do a wonderful day's work, I guess," said Tom, ironically. "Why, I thought a fellow could pick up a wagon load of deer in this country, by just tramping out a mile or two!"

Before I had time to answer, he stopped suddenly and ducked his head behind a ridge.

"Down!" he cried. "Keep out of sight!" Creeping to his side, and peering through the dry grass upon the ridge, I saw two deer feeding in an open space nearly half a mile distant.

We were calculating the chances of getting at them, when Tom made a new discovery.

"No use," he said; "we're too late. Some of our fellows are after 'em from the other side."

Sure enough, from our high position, we could see two of our companions trying to get a shot at the animals.

Just as Tom spoke, however, the deer raised their heads as if in alarm. Then they bounded away from some distance from us in passing. One of them was a buck and the other a doe.

I felt a strong disappointment at seeing them swerve from the course on which they had started; and as they came opposite our position, being sixty or seventy rods off, and going, as they were, with the speed of the wind, the thought of firing at them did not once enter my mind.

But Tom Granville rose upon his knees, and his rifle was thrown up to his face. Was it possible that he intended to shoot?

"Crack!" sounded the small bored Winchester, and the superb buck, leaping into the air, plunged heavily along the earth.

"Crack!" once more, and the beautiful doe went tumbling over and over with her own impetus. Then she lay motionless, stretched at full length.

Both animals were stone dead, with their dun bodies lying only a few rods apart; and quickly

running to the spot, we waited for the coming up of our two companions who had witnessed the feat, and whose admiration of it was unbounded.

Presently the remainder of our party joined us, so that the seven were once more together. But the last three had very disagreeable intelligence. They had discovered unmistakable signs of Indians—and such a discovery was sufficient to give us uneasiness.

It was now necessary to be careful in our movements, as we might at any moment come suddenly upon some hostile band. However, we concluded to hunt for a while longer, as Tom's success had fairly crazed us. So, after hanging the two deer upon a tree and eating our dinner, we again started out with shouldered guns, while a short tailed white dog, owned by one of the men, went scurrying away before us.

This time we kept well together; but turn where we would, there was only disappointment. It was impossible to approach a deer without alarming it, and as to bears, we discovered no trace of one.

At length we saw directly in our path a beautiful growth of young cedars, the tops of which were thick and heavy, while the tall, straight trunks were so small in diameter that they seemed as if inviting one to climb them.

"What a pretty grove that is!" said Percy Rawson.

"Yes; I'd like to have just such a one at home," responded Caleb Allen. "What a place for a picnic!"

We walked on towards the thicket, hoping to make some fortunate discovery upon the other side of it.

Tom Granville was a few yards in advance of the rest, and upon arriving at the first tree he came to a halt, leaning his back against the trunk as if tired. The dog, running on a little beyond him, stopped and commenced sniffing with his nose in the air, as if scenting a raccoon or other game among the foliage overhead.

I remember that there were three of us close together, and three others a little behind.

Suddenly from the treetops there came a number of sharp reports—"crack! crack! crack!" followed by a succession of startling yells.

I felt a slight sting in the breast, and then a surprising weakness which caused me to fall, utterly unable to support my own weight. I have since wondered if my sensations may not have been like those of General Braddock when he was wounded at the Monongahela.

One of the three men behind me fell at the same time, but unlike myself, he fell never to rise—he was killed dead on the spot.

Caleb Allen, Percy Rawson and two others sprang off at a full run, as they saw no chance

of returning the fire with effect; so that there remained no one near me except the dead man and Tom Granville.

A stir among the cedar boughs told that the red miscreants were about coming down to scalp the dead and wounded and pursue the flying. I think the actions of the dog had caused them to fire sooner than they otherwise would have done; but be this as it may, the intervening branches probably prevented them from shooting at the men who were running.

He had now turned with his back to a tree, and pressing his body close against it, he stood wholly motionless.

A stir among the cedar boughs told that the red miscreants were about coming down to scalp the dead and wounded and pursue the flying. I think the actions of the dog had caused them to fire sooner than they otherwise would have done; but be this as it may, the intervening branches probably prevented them from shooting at the men who were running.

Never had my own hair appeared more precious to me than when I heard the yelling monsters in the act of descending the trees. And what could Tom Granville be thinking of that he did not run for his life?

All at once I saw his trusty rifle gleam as he clapped the breech up to his face. There was a steady, deadly aim—then "bang!" it spoke. The report was followed by a sort of "scratchy" sound on the tree trunk, and next a dead, heavy "clump" on the ground.

I knew that Tom could fire sixteen charges from his repeater without reloading; and now I saw his purpose. There might not be sixteen Indians, but whether less or more, he would thin them out terribly before any of them could get to the ground alive from their height of forty feet.

Then "bang! bang! bang! bang!" almost as fast as one could count, rang out the Maine boy's rifle; and for every "bang!" there was a stretched "clump!" as a body fell to the earth.

The redskins were nine in number, and six of them were killed in their attempt to descend. A seventh was shot just as he reached the ground; while the remaining two succeeded in making their escape.

Our four companions had halted upon hearing Tom's rapid firing and seeing him apparently still unharmed; but the affair was so quickly over that they had no opportunity to assist him.

My own wound was now attended to, after which the poor fellow who had fallen by the fire of the savages was buried in a shallow grave, which was dug with knives and stakes and protected by a pile of stones. I was then placed on a litter of cedar boughs and so conveyed to camp on the shoulders of the stout miners.

It is probable that the Indians who had fired upon us had seen us at some distance, and sup-

posing that we would keep a straight course for the little thicket, had climbed into the trees to await us; when the fear that the dog had scented them caused them to hurry matters and commence the attack before we were ready.

My wound proved a severe one, and it was long before I recovered.

Our men broke up their mining camp, which had never been very profitable at the best, and retired to safer quarters, taking me along with them.

It is needless to say that the fame of Tom Grinville spread like a prairie fire. He was homed not only by the miners but by all others.

His modesty, however, remained unchanged, and he was the same simple, unaffected youth as before.

He has since, as I learn, become wealthy; but whatever his success in life, I feel sure that it has been justly earned.

THE STORY OF A SNOW BIRD.

Snow birds are welcome visitors when the landscape is bleak and drear, pleasing reminders of their cousins, the robins and swallows of sweet scented spring and balmy summer. The *New York Evening Sun* tells a pretty story of how a lady living on one of the up town streets of the city, was remembered by one of these little winter cheerers to whom she had been kind.

A year ago when the streets were covered with frost, a little snow bird, which appeared very weak and hungry, was noticed by Mrs. A. sitting on a sprig of the grape vine at her window. Going for some crumbs of bread she raised the window softly, brushed the snow from the top of a flower pot, and sprinkled the crumbs upon it for the bird. The next day it came back and found its breakfast there. The third day Mrs. A. was sitting at the window. After waiting for an hour or more for her to go away the bird at last ventured down on the flower pot and ate his morning meal.

Each day for a week after that when the bird came for his breakfast he found the lady at the window. A week more and he ate from her hand. Before the winter was over the bird would hop into the room, if the window was left open, and after flying around and often nestling on Mrs. A's shoulder, he would go out again as bright as a snow bird, and then, remembering her little arctic pet of last winter, she opened the window. The bird at once flew into the room and perched upon the back of her chair. When she looked up and saw when it was first tried on, was the little thread of gold around his leg.

A NEW KIND OF BELL BOY.

SIXPENCE, postmarks, coins and autographs are common enough in the way of "crazes," but a boy with a passion for bells is something of a novelty.

Johnny Martin is the office boy of a San Francisco firm, says the *New York Sun*, and has a great liking for bells, and he never tires listening to them. It is a positive mania with him. Some weeks ago he sent a type written letter on the letter head of the firm to a well known manufacturer in New York State, asking the price of bells, particularly large church bells, weighing from 25,000 to 30,000 pounds. In reply he received a circular and price list, and a polite letter, and he never tires listening to them. He read the prices with interest, saying that he thought they were too high, and he could do better in San Francisco.

The bell manufacturer sent their best salesman to California, with instructions to secure the contract at any price, and a few days ago he walked into the San Francisco house, and courteously asked for Mr. John Martin. No one knew him until the agent showed the letters, and then the bookkeeper said: "That must be our Johnny." It was. He was called in and confessed to the man. He was wroth, and determined to get the instant discharge of the lad, but the firm said "No." They said a boy who could write such good business letters was the kind of a boy they wanted, and they promoted him. He says that when he gets rich he is going to build a church, and hang in it the biggest bell that this Eastern firm can cast.

THE SPARROW'S RESCUE.

Some dudes have a heart above cloths after all. A Boston item in the *New York Sun* tells how a sparrow found a friend in one of the genus the other day:

A bird got into the globe of an electric lamp just before the hour for turning out the gas, and didn't seem to know enough to get out. A little crowd assembled to see what would happen when the current was turned on, but before the catastrophe arrived an elegantly dressed man accompanied by a lady walked up. When he saw the situation he handed his cane to his companion, pulled off his kid gloves, climbed the slippery pole, to the great detriment of his good clothes, and, putting his hand within the lamp, released the bird, which flew away. The crowd applauded, and the gentleman went home for good clothes.

A GRATEFUL SON.

TEACH ME, "John, what are your boots made of?"
"From leather."
"Where does the leather come from?"
"From the hide of the ox."
"What animal, therefore, supplies you with boots and gives you meat to eat?"
"My father."

A PUNSTER'S DEDUCTION.

"RICHES take unto themselves wings and fly away," said the teacher. "What kind of riches mean?" And the smart boy at the foot of the class said he "reckoned they must be ostriches."

AT MOONRISE.

BY SIDNEY ALEXANDER.

How hushed and quiet the gaunt poplars spring
Beside the lake,
Where the song weary thrush, head under wing,
Is nestling half awake!
The warm gray lights of evening linger there
Or gently pass
Along the dappled water, and the air
No voice nor music has.
Low on the night's marge yonder, a big moon,
Cleaving the blue,
Comes up and silvers the broad shades which soon
The bats flit darkly through.
And visions, born of fancy and the night,
Glide to and fro,
Move with dream feet amid the solemn light,
And softly come and go.

[This story commenced in No. 266.]

THE Lost Gold Mine.

By FRANK H. CONVERSE.

Author of "Van," "In Southern Seas," "The Mystery of a Diamond," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FAREWELL TO BONANZA RANCH.

COLONEL LAMONTE was one who was always ready both to welcome the coming and speed the parting guest.

The former he had done most heartily, and not only that, but our friends' brief stay at Bonanza ranch had been made both pleasant and profitable. Everything that could be done for their future comfort had been seen to by the colonel himself, who insisted that he could never do enough to repay them, and particularly Rob, for all they had done.

"Remember," he had said at parting, "I shall expect you two boys to make your way directly to New Orleans on your return, no matter what fortune you may meet. My doors are always open to you. Indeed you will have to come—to redeem your 'collateral'."

So the final hand shakes and good wishes were exchanged. And then, by way of speeding the parting guests, the colonel had sent Doris, with Hethering as her escort, to accompany them on horseback as far as an isolated bluff known as the Indian mound, some half a dozen miles distant in the direction the party were to take.

Only one of the number seemed to object to this arrangement, not in words, but in look and action. And of course this was the Honorable Guy, who, sticking closely at Miss Doris's side, seemed doing his best not only to prevent Rob from making himself agreeable to her, but also to make himself somewhat disagreeable in his manner toward Rob.

Rob, who had ridden on the other side of Doris for some distance, found that Hethering was not only doing this last, but even seemed to be trying to find a pretext to quarrel.

So with a word of apology to his fair companion, Rob pressed forward a little and was joined by Chip.

"If I wanted to kind of say good by to a young lady," began Chip in a confidential undertone, "pears to me I'd rather not do it before a crowd—specially if one of 'em was sorter down on me."

"That's my case," frankly returned Rob, "but I don't very well see how I can help myself."

"If me and the young lady was hossback," calmly remarked Chip, "and we had the two fastest critters in the crowd, I'd give her an invite to a race—say as far as the Injun mound yander—that's what I'd do."

With a wink of prodigious meaning, Chip then allowed his pony to drop to the rear beside the one ridden by the Honorable Guy.

"Say, Hethering," he observed in a mysterious undertone, "let your hoss fall back alongside the burro, there's somethin' I want to say to you private, before you leave."

Now though young Hethering by no means relished Chip's free and easy address, he was not without his natural share of curiosity.

"Well, what is it?" he said as the two slackened their pace and allowed the others to draw ahead.

"Ever you hear of a Lord Chippendale anywhere in London?" asked Chip with the same mysterious air.

"Lord Chippendale—why yes—what do you know about him?" was the surprised response. "I suppose you wouldn't hardly believe me if I was to tell you he was a relation of mine, and I was named for him—Edward Plantagenet Chippendale Forest," calmly responded Chip.

The Honorable Guy, who had read of stranger things in fiction, was staggered. Chip had given the name of the British peer with glib accuracy, and the air of mystery which he had spoken assisted the illusion.

"It—it can't be possible," gasped the Honorable Guy, staring very hard at the speaker's sunburned face and twinkling gray eyes.

"What can't be possible?" was the innocent query.

"Why, that you are, as you claim, a relative of Lord Chippendale," returned Hethering.

"Course it can't; why, who said I was?" said Chip, with an air of seeming astonishment.

"You did just now," indignantly answered young Hethering.

"I didn't either. I only told you I suppose you wouldn't believe me if I said I was, and seem's though you didn't," retorted Chip, with an exasperating chuckle. "I was called after him, though," he added grinning. "The folks saw the name in an old London paper when I was a bit of a kid, and—"

The Honorable Guy, I regret to say, though usually one of the best behaved fellows in existence, lost his temper at being thus made the victim of a vulgar sell.

"Confound your impudence," he exclaimed angrily, "take that." And he cut short Chip's further speech by lashing out at him with his leather riding quirt.

Chip easily avoided the blow, and, being by the time quite a horseman, kept backing his pony rapidly as young Hethering urged his own toward him, in a vain attempt to give the young rascal a sharp cut or two.

But the good natured grin on Chip's sunburned face quickly dispelled the young man's short lived anger. And then for the first time he began to think of the rest of the company.

Wheeling his horse sharply round, the Honorable Guy uttered an exclamation of dismay not unmix'd with wrath.

The burro, whose long ears appeared at intervals in front of the top of the loaded pack saddle, was nodding peacefully along a few paces behind Bunyap's mustang, both being some little way in advance.

And far away in the distance, two riders side by side were speeding onward toward the Indian mound, at a pace which though probably exhilarating to themselves, was maddening to poor Hethering, whose pony was anything but swift.

"Guess they're trying a race," comely remarked Chip, who was secretly hugging himself at the success of his stratagem.

"No use tryin' to keep up with 'em, Mr. Hethering," said Bunyap, who perhaps was not so oblivious to the state of things as his quiet visage might imply. "They sure out when they passed that Chiquita an' Miss Lamonte's hoss was goin' to try titles, and they'd wait for us to the foot of the Injun mound."

With a very ill grace Hethering submitted to the inevitable; while Rob and Doris, having put their horses at full speed, were making the most of their limited time.

"Well," said Rob, with a great sigh, as they finally drew rein under the shadow of the grassy mound, "perhaps—and probably—this is the last ride you and I shall ever have to gether."

"I don't know why," returned Doris, in a low voice. "But her dark eyes were bent downward as she spoke, and if he could have looked into them he would have seen that they were suspiciously moist."

"Oh, well, when we meet again, if—if we ever do," observed Rob, with affected lightness, "you'll have married an English lord, or the nephew of one, if everything I hear is true."

Doris blushed very prettily.

"Perhaps I am too young to speak of such things," she said, "but I suppose I know what you mean. And I shall never do as—as—other people are planning."

And something in his earnest gaze deepened still more the color in her cheeks.

"It's awfully hard to bid you good by, Miss Doris," said Rob, in rather melancholy tones. And just then Chiquita, his mare, sidled up against her equine companion, and the two began rubbing noses in a very suggestive manner.

What further passed is best known to the two themselves. Rob did not find it so hard to say good by, though, after all was said. But when ten minutes later the remainder of the party came up, Rob and Doris, several feet apart, were conversing gravely on the subject of the probability of a very rainy season throughout Southern California and Nevada.

The farewells were of the briefest kind. Rob raised his hat politely to Miss Lamonte, whose eloquent eyes said more than many words. Young Hethering nodded gloomily to the trio, and muttered something about "pleasant journey," after which the two wheeled their horses and took the back track towards the ranch.

Chip leaned back in his saddle and laughed at something of which he seemed to be thinking, till his ear tips were purple. Bunyap, who had alighted to tighten his saddle girth, smiled in his usual dry fashion.

But Rob took advantage of the momentary halt to get his violin from the luggage on the pack saddle. A moment later the breeze bore to the ears of Doris and young Hethering its faintly pathetic strains blended with the words of an old song, of which in Rob's fine tenor the refrain alone was distinguishable:

"Good by, sweetheart, good by!"

And because, in acknowledgment of the farewell, Doris turned and waved her hand for the last time, young Hethering sukked all the way back to the ranch, which shows how the green carried over the atmosphere that they seemed not over twenty five miles distant, when in fact the twin peaks of Armagosa and Don Prato, which are the gate posts at the entrance to the dreaded Death Valley, were nearer a hundred miles off.

But as yet the way led through fertile valleys and plains lying between and among the lesser hills. Sage hens scuttled through the undergrowth, curlews uttered their querulous cries on the uplands, and the chatter of the piebald magpie was heard on every hand.

The dense green of buffalo grass alternated with patches of red sandstone, or spots barren of verdure marking the "alkali sink," more to be dreaded than the treacherous quicksand of the shore.

Now and then evidences of a passed civilization were seen. For scattered along the trail were—not the ruins of Indian or Aztec temples and dwellings, but empty provision tins, soles of brogans, broken bottles, and the like. Here and there lay the bleaching skull of the almost extinct buffalo, or of antelope and pronghorn slain by some passing hunter.

Such, with occasional variations, was the scenery and surroundings through which they passed day by day for almost a week. And then, on a cloudless morning in midsummer, they began their journey through Death Valley.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THROUGH DEATH VALLEY.

DEATH Valley! The very name is suggestive.

Imagine if you can a weary waste of far reaching, ashy hued desert, bounded on either hand by ranges of impassable mountains whose sides are almost barren of vegetation.

More than two hundred feet below the sea level extends this arid expanse, which is believed with good reason to be the bed of a vast inland sea that ages ago mingled its waters with those of the great Pacific.

The thorny cactus is the only growth from the salty alkaline plains. No water is found at any depth, no mountain streams find their way through channels in the parched sand.

The sun beats down with the terrible intensity of the tropics upon those who venture into its seldom trodden recesses. And from season to season no breath of wind cools the burning furnace heat of this shut in desert of the West.

Occasionally one of the boxes of oxen, with rusty wheel tires and the iron work of emigrant wagons, whose wood has become tinder and dry rot. More terribly significant is the sight of a bleaching skull half hidden in the ashy soil.

Four days of never to be forgotten suffering from heat, from thirst, from stifling dust which fills nostrils, eyes and lungs, till breathing is torture, from weakness induced by excessive perspiration, and blinding headaches brought on by the scorching sun rays.

And then as the morning of the fifth day dawned, their aching eyes were gladdened by the far away sight of a break in the desert waste, which began yawning between distant ranges of undulating hills.

And it was full time. The water keg only contained a few sips of warm, brackish fluid. The animals were half starved and parched with thirst. Their chief sustenance during the four days' journey had been from occasional patches of wiry, grass growing in the parched sand. The alkali sinks that were encountered from time to time. Water had been doled out in scanty allowance to man and beast alike.

"I'd like some of the fellers at home that think going in search of a gold placer is all funny business to jest try one day of this sort of thing," growled Chip, wiping the accumulated perspiration and dust from his face for the tenth time that morning.

"Well, the worst of it's over," responded Bunyap, cheerfully; "and if the animals hold out till night, we'll camp alongside runnin' water, or I lose my guess."

"Water," repeated Rob, as the miasmatic vapors began dissolving in the rays of the rising sun; "water, why—"

But without completing the sentence he rubbed his eyes and stared fixedly at a strange object seemingly not a pistol shot ahead.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Chip. "Why, there's—a—vessel afloat in some sort of a big lake! Water! I should say so!"

"Bunyap himself seemed startled out of his usual equanimity."

"I ain't so sure of the water," he said, hesitatingly, "but the vessel's that sure enough, and Jake Patch wasn't lyin' after all!"

Neither Rob nor Chip waited for his concluding speech, whatever it might signify. At the alluring sight they dashed ahead as fast as their horses would carry them. Even the patient burro, which was trained to follow like a dog, pricked up its long ears and started on after them at a rapid trot. And Bunyap himself, whose wary horizon had steadily and gradually faded into a dim outline and disappeared entirely, like the baseless fabric of a vision!

Disappointment was swallowed up in amazement, which in the case of Chip himself was not unmix'd with a shadowy fear.

Rob, who had been offered up on the optical illusion known as the mirage, so common on the plains, could account for all but the appearance of the vessel hundreds of miles from the seaboard. As nearly as he could trace its outlines, he was insensibly reminded of a picture he had

somewhere seen representing a Spanish galleon of at least three centuries ago.

"What does it mean, Bunyap?"

"It means what book learned folks call 'mirage' for one thing," was the reply. And then in his own rude way Bunyap went on to explain to bewildered Chip that such appearances were due to certain atmospheric conditions. Distant objects that were really miles below the horizon line were projected above it, and seemingly within easy distance.

"But the ship is what bothers me most," said Rob.

"'Tisn't it's kind of a shore flyin' Dutchman," suggested Chip, who had read the well known story of Captain Vanderdecken.

"Two year or more after Travers got into camp, and his big find was known about," responded Bunyap. "Jake Patch, with three others, started in for a prospect in the same direction. Jake an' an Irish chap was the only ones ever came back, nigh dead at that. But Jake told me after he got well an' strong, that sometimes to the west of where we be, nigh as I can locate, they see a curi's lookin' wreck—not in any meager bizness, but layin' out on the alkali, so they saw it all plain. Larry swore it were Noah's ark. Jake, he didn't know what to make of it. But bein' a man who'd read considerable, he be by the build that it were such a craft as sailed the seas two or three hundred years ago. Howsoever, when the pair of 'em tried to get alongside, it was no use. For fifteen or twenty rod on every side there was just a salty crust coverin' a reg'lar taste of alkali that would swelter up a wagon train an' give no sign. So they had to give it up. An' I callate we've seen the reflection of that identical vessel our own selves this very mornin'."

"Yes, but how came it here?" demanded Chip.

"They say that hundreds of years ago it were all inland sea from the Calumet Gulf clean up through the Armagosa to nigh the Nevada line," returned Bunyap. "An' some thinks the Spaniards sent their ships over for the gold that they plundered away from the natives all up through New Mexico an' Arizona. And if that's the fact, which ain't unreasonable, why like enough that ol' ship layin' here a cargo aboard that's with all the gold we'll bring from the El Dorado—we find it."

On toiled the light through the blinding dust and nearly intolerable heat toward the desired haven.

The glare of the sunrays on the grayish white of the plain was all blinding. The air itself seemed to quiver and dance, so that even the distant hillsides appeared to tremble before their aching vision, bringing on a feeling not unlike seasickness.

But every mile brought them nearer the distant dark green slopes which rose on either side of Miner's Pass—the northern end of the entrance to the Armagosa Valley, and before nigh the exhausted trail reached the belt line of verdure dividing the desert from the fertile uplands of the southern spur of McLary's Range.

CHAPTER XXV.

AN ADVENTURE IN THE NIGHT.

THE camp was made by a brawling stream that owed its icy coolness to the snows of the mighty peaks that towered in the distant west. Its waters swarmed with mountain trout, which bit at salt pork or smoked herring with perfect impunity. The air itself seemed to quiver and dance, so that even the distant hillsides appeared to tremble before their aching vision, bringing on a feeling not unlike seasickness.

I should hardly dare tell how many trout and how much broiled mutton was washed down with tins of strong black coffee that evening by the blazing camp fire. And the animals, who had come from the stream till it seemed as though they would burst, did equal justice to the short rich grass that grew in lush profusion on every side.

The solemn night stillness was only broken by the dismal cry of coyotes or the occasional howl of a mountain wolf, attracted by the smell of the cooking venison.

For some reason Bunyap seemed to be peculiarly uneasy on this particular evening. Two or three times he caught up his rifle and stole outside the circle of light thrown by the blaze, giving no explanation on his return further than that he was getting "nervous" in his old age.

"I almost wish I'd built a 'masked fire' inside of a blaze that can be seen nigh a mile," he said abruptly, on his return from one of these spasmodic trips.

"Why, I thought you said there wasn't anything more to be feared from the outlaws," returned Rob drowsily, as he lay wrapped in his blanket by the fire.

"I did say so, an' no more there ain't," was the unsatisfactory and ungrammatical response. But whatever it was that caused his uneasiness, Bunyap kept it steadfastly to himself.

It was Chip's first watch, and after Bunyap had snuggled himself down very near Rob, the young fellow began his round, making the circle of the firelight his limit.

"Old Bunyap smells somethin' in the wind," muttered Chip. "I wonder if it's Injuns." And now that there was a possibility of encountering the red man in his native wilds, the prospect did not appear nearly as exciting as it had been in reality about such things. In fact, Chip began to realize that it was one thing to picture himself aiming a loaded weapon at a human being, yet quite another to do it, excepting in the purest self defense. Then he began to wonder

about the gray wolves that he occasionally heard snarling in the darkness. What if one of them ventured within range—ought he to shoot?

Thus far Chip's shooting had been confined to smaller game—jack rabbits, sage hens, and the like. In fact, with the exception of two or three antelope and the mountain goat, game had been very scarce in the sections through which they had passed.

"I'd like to have a wolfskin to take back with me just to show the fellows in New York that I could shoot," was Chip's thought.

Filled with these and similar reflections, he paced to the opposite side of the fire, upon which he had tossed some of the wood collected to replenish the blaze during the night.

A shaft of light shot far out into the darkness, at the further extremity of which Chip saw his chance. Or rather he saw an indistinct form close to the ground, which, however, seemed to be moving from rather than coming within the radius of the cheerful glow.

Moved by a sudden impulse, Chip threw his double gun to his shoulder, and, aiming hastily at the moving object, let drive with the right hand barrel, which was loaded with heavy BB shot.

A yell that almost drowned the reverberating report awhile the echoes. Simultaneously the dark object resolved itself into a human form, which, springing about two feet in the air, clapped his hands behind him with even a louder repetition of the yell than at first!

Bunyap and Rob were on their feet in an instant. The prospector pitched forward in the dark, but did not fall. He had been assailed by the Apache, the party would have been killed as they sat round the fire, or surprised and slain in a sudden onrush.

At least, so Bunyap felt confident, which of course gave confidence to the others. But for the rest of the night only "cat naps" were in the order of the day.

For the next day, Rob and Chip, while Bunyap himself stood guard over the animals, lest an attempt be made to stampede them.

Nothing of the kind occurred, however, and on the following morning our three friends took up their line of march through Miner's Pass into the heart of a wild but fertile country.

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Taking the leaning sandstone column for his guide, Chip pressed onward, keeping the sharp-eyed kind of a lookout on every side. If he did not meet with a buffalo, why there was a chance of a shot at some sort of large game to a dead certainty; but his hopes were centered on the former possibility.

It surely sounded like it was—the tramp of fourfooted animals in a deep ravine on the right, inclosed by thickly wooded hills. Nothing but the tread of a moving herd of buffalo could produce a like sound. Chip's excited fancy even detected the peculiar clinking of hoofs and horns peering to a drove of bison.

His first thought was to ride rapidly back and announce the glad tidings to Bunyap and Rob. Then he thought how he might cover himself with glory could he only steal unobserved upon the mighty game, and, by a well directed shot behind the fore shoulder, bring one to the ground all alone to himself.

Hastily dismounting, Chip hobbled his mustang with the lariat at his saddle bow, according to Bunyap's teachings, leaving the animal to crop the rich grass at his leisure. For Chip had read and heard enough to realize that an inexperienced hunter on an untrained horse would stand very poor chance with a herd of buffalo. But almost any one might shoot one from cover. That is, if they had good luck.

The gradually descending approach to the entrance of the ravine was flanked on either side by sandstone cliffs, worn into the most fantastic shapes by the action of the elements. And as Chip, whose heart was beating furiously against his better judgment, moved forward with his gun at half cock, he saw that the ravine itself was the entrance to a valley of great extent.

Louder and more confused sounded the noise of the trampling hoofs. Faster and faster beat Chip's heart, as conscious of the rapid approach of the quadrupeds, he dropped on one knee behind a boulder.

(To be continued.)

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We have in file a number of exchanges, which will be published in their proper order as they come in.

William J. Heaney, Southport, Conn. Vol. V of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY, for Vol. II or III.

James M. Street, 52 Stearns St., Cleveland, O. A keyed clarinet, for any volume of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY.

E. Bassett, 1023 Prospect St., Cleveland, O. A foot power scroll saw, for a pair of fencing tools and mauls.

E. H. Wendell, 117 West 15th St., New York City. A pair of No. 10 Eureka all clamp roller skates, for electric goods.

A. S. Abrahams, 136 East 160th St., New York City. A self-inking press, with 50 tons of type, for a pair of ice skates.

John Bensinger, Emlenton, Pa. Fifty foreign stamps, for Nos. 200, 213, 216, 228, and 231 of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY.

Harry Stanley, Box 36, Amesbury, Mass. A pair of skates and a book on pitch cutting, for Gaskell's compendium.

M. G. Addison, 240 Bridge St., Brooklyn, N. Y. A box of water colors, with brushes, crayons, etc., for a set of No. 10 Eureka all clamp roller skates.

P. France, 1502 Gough St., Baltimore, Md. A pair of No. 9 all clamp ice skates, nearly new, for a magic lantern with slides.

Guy S. McCabe, 38 Monroe Ave., Columbus, O. A Prize Demas lute, valued at \$6, for a banjo, a guitar, or a good telescope.

Matthew Fitzpatrick, 630 Harrison Ave., Boston, Mass. "Now or Never," by Optic, and other books, cost \$4, for a press.

R. Hearsey, 46 Lafayette St., Baton Rouge, La. A magic lantern with 12 slides, with 4 tons of type and outfit, for a camera.

Christopher T. 1003, 30 St., Corning, N. Y. A specialty note for an E flat cornet, valued at \$2.50, for a flute or fife of equal value.

T. E. Moritz, 142 East 80th St., New York City. A two-handed saw, 2 ft. 5 in. high and 4 ft. 10 in. long, valued at \$7, for a banjo.

C. M. McMichael, 205 East 113th St., New York City. We would like to correspond with stamp collectors with a view to exchanging.

H. J. Burnell, 208 Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill. A pair of No. 10 Indian clubs, or an autoharp, for a set of boxing gloves in good condition.

H. D. McCandless, 7 Sherman Ave., Allegheny, Pa. A magic lantern with 24 slides, in good order, for Vol. III of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY.

E. J. Davies, 1 Newkirk Place, Camden, N. J. Fifty hundred U. S. and foreign stamps, for the first 50 of MINSEY'S POPULAR SERIES.

Arthur C. Todd, 452 West 57th St., New York City. A large knee sled, as good as new, for books by Castleton or other standard authors.

Ralph Perkins, 208 6th St., South Boston, Mass. A magic lantern with 12 slides, and an ebony line, both valued at \$3, for a good small press.

James E. O'Hara, Hagerman St., Tacony, Pa. About 100 foreign stamps, for reading matter, and a bracket saw, for a pair of roller skates.

W. H. Moore, Box 60, Detroit, Mich. A press, a pair of roller skates, and a pair of ice skates, for a bracket saw or a Weeden upright engine.

C. T. Rogall, Ada, O. A telegraph instrument, with best steel lever key, and a 14 Novelty press, for a small self-inking Rotary press.

Frank Rowley, Box 148, Marshall, Mich. Three books, twenty large and other coins, all valued at \$3, for a set of good boxing gloves.

Thomas H. Williams, 128 East 123d St., New York City. A Bonanza hand press and type, valued at \$3, for a pair of No. 10 or 10-1/2 ice skates.

Milton Boulard, 142d St. and College Ave., Mott Haven, New York City. A pair of nickel plated skates, for a game of steep slope or base ball.

H. Ackerman, Jr., 7 Nassau St., New York City. A small typewriter, a silver mounted piccolo, and a 10 foot bow sleigh, for a 30 or 38 bracket banjo.

Luther Murray, 41 North Salina St., Syracuse, N. Y. A small card press, with 5 tons of type, valued at \$4, for a violin and bow of equal value.

Maud C. Bingham, McGrawville, N. Y. would like to correspond with readers of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY who collect coins or valuable curiosities.

J. O. Wilson, 147 Vanderbilt St., South Brooklyn, N. Y. A pair of all clamp nickel plated roller skates, with extra wheels, for a pair of ice skates.

Arthur G. Morris, St. Mark's School, Southboro, Mass. "Mink Curtis," for No. 3 of MINSEY'S POPULAR SERIES.

Charles J. Gunderson, 633 Minnesota Ave., Sioux Falls, Dak. A pair of all clamp nickel plated American club ice skates, for a complete telegraph outfit.

M. M. Blanchard, 182 Pleasant St., Concord, N. H. A pair of 10-1/2 American Acme skates, nearly new, for Vol. I, II, III, or IV of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY.

F. Irving Bond, 263 Sumner Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. A collection of U. S. and foreign stamps, for a good pair of binoculars with case and shoulder strap.

W. C. Merchant, 403 Laurel St., San Antonio, Tex. Stamps, coins, specimens of stone from the Alamo, and other curiosities, for stamps, coins, and curiosities.

T. E. Constant, 522 East 143d St., New York City. A pair of nickel plated roller skates, for a telegraph key and sounder that can be connected with a battery.

Frank Praena, 117 Main St., S. E., Minneapolis, Minn. A nickel plated hand scroll saw, in good condition, with 12 saws, for printing material, script type preferred.

C. A. Keyte, Brunswick, Mo. A 4 draw telescope, a magic lantern with 12 slides, 1100 U. S. and foreign stamps, 3 arrow heads, 2 spear heads, and 350 tin tags, for a watch.

Charles R. Davis, 237 Dean St., Brooklyn, N. Y. "The Life of Napoleon," by De l'Arche, two large volumes, with 500 illustrations, for a volume of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY.

Walter T. Borden, 206 Irving Ave., Bridgeton, N. J. A Favorite card press, with type, etc., for books of the "Tattered Tom Series," MINSEY'S POPULAR SERIES, or others.

J. H. Goodby, Jr., 616 North Granger St., Saginaw, Mich. A book printed in Paris in 1864, in good condition, for foreign postal cards or complete volumes of philatelic papers.

Joseph Crowell, 2727 Logan St., Chicago, Ill. Nos. 238 to 257 of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY, for 20 previous numbers, with 12 tin tags, 133 varieties, for one of the first 4 volumes.

Walter Edge, Box 46, Pleasantville, N. J. Two hundred and twenty five different postmarks, for 75 different stamps; and 800 different postmarks in a book, for 250 different stamps.

Ernest Smith, Rocky Hill, Conn. "The Hart's Boys," cloth bound, "The Pickwick Papers," paper bound, and other reading matter, for Vol. IV or V of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY.

George Reifner, 3138 Wolfe St., Baltimore, Md. A pair of No. 11 Acme club skates, a file, 25 different tin tags, 30 flags of different nations, and books, for a self-inking press and outfit.

D. A. Crowley, 45 North Moore St., New York City. A postmark, for every U. S. stamp, or for every square cut envelope stamp, 3 postmarks, for every Argentine Republic stamp.

Harry O. Jones, 231 Steele St., Jamestown, N. Y. Three hundred and fifty different tin tags, and 30 different paper tags, for U. S. stamps, or any stamps except those from Europe.

George Cretors, Xenia, O. "The Mail Carrier," for a German dictionary; "The Red Eric," for a French dictionary; "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," for a Latin dictionary.

Edmond Well, 215 East 64th St., New York City. A New Rogers scroll saw, with patterns and saws, for a pair of Raymond extension ice skates, or a magic lantern. City offers preferred.

A. M. Scheider, 187 East 64th St., New York City. "Tom Brown's School Days," by Gulliver's Travels, valued at \$2, for a pair of No. 10 or 10-1/2 Acme ice skates. City offers preferred.

Wm. A. Grieb, 328 Grove St., Milwaukee, Wis. Five books, 250 foreign authors, valued at \$1.50, for Vol. III or IV of THE GOLDEN ARGOSY, for a magic lantern or printing outfit of equal value.

Richard Brady, 146 Adams St., Brooklyn, N. Y. "The Young Captain," "The Sandalwood Trader," "Rob Roy," and "The Prince of Wales," bound in cloth, for a set of boxing gloves or fencing foils.

Fred Haas, 320 North Lumber St., Allentown, Pa. A 3 1/4 by 4 1/4 photo camera, with material for making photographs, for a hand inkling press, cheap or less than 3 by 4, and at least one font of long type.

George F. Sendall, 80 Front St., Brooklyn, N. Y. A Gem camera with outfit, a small press, a Weeden upright engine, a pair of ice skates, a double magnifying glass, 300 cards, all valued at \$12, for a 2 by 5 or 2 1/2 by 4 photo camera complete.

Albert Browne, 1205 Franklin Ave., New York City. Dickens's Christmas stories, "Uncle Nat," "Sketches of Life at Sarawak," and "Grey Hawk," for "Tom Sawyer" and "Plank and Plane," or two books by Verne or Castleton.

J. W. Deeds, Box 60, Grinnell, Iowa. Nine pounds of new type, with figures, spaces, and a violin and bow. A stylographic pen, a Morse telegraph sounder, with alphabet, and a Jewell hand inkling press, for a 1-1/2 by 2 for a Waterbury watch or all the above articles, for a good silver watch.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

BY FRANCIS QUARLES.

No man is born unto himself alone.
Who lives unto himself, he lives to none.
The world's a body, each man a member is
To add measure to the public bliss.
Where much is given, there much shall be re-
quired;
Where little, less.

IN PATAGONIA.

BY CAPTAIN HENRY F. HARRISON.

"NO news? Of what, Pedro?"
Pedro, who was very black, with kinky wool curling tightly over his uncovered head, grinned good naturedly. He was a compound of negro and Argentine Republic Indian, speaking fragmentary English indifferently well.

"My master not understand. No guanaco—Injun call 'em *gouas*."
Juan did not mind that. Had he not come all the way from Port Santa Cruz, where his father was consul, in company with Pedro, one of the most skillful hunters and guides on the Chico River, on purpose to hunt the ostrich in his native lair? Or if not to do the hunting, to see Pedro do it.

"Bueno," gayly responded Juan, whose father was English, while his mother was born in Lima, "bring on the ostriches, Pedro."
But several matters had to be attended to before this consummation could be reached. Pedro, who had just come in from reconnoitering the valley at the entrance of which they were camped, had a healthy appetite, and must first surround a couple of pounds of steak from the *guanaco* that Juan had shot the day before. And of course the brewing of *mate* tea must be attended to. For the *yerba mate* is food, drink and stimulant to the South American, especially to those who follow out of door pursuits.

But breakfast was ended, and the two were soon in the saddle. Juan was armed only with a revolver in the holster. Pedro carried what he termed a *rheimbola*—proudly claiming the merit of the invention.
For in South America, and especially the upper Patagonian districts, both the *guanaco* and ostrich are hunted almost universally with the *bolos*, or balls. These consist of two round lumps of lead, or circular stones, around which *guanaco* leather is tightly sewn. One of these is securely fastened to either end of an eight foot thong. When three are used they are joined to a common center by shorter thongs. The natives, who are skilled in their use, swing the *bolos* about their heads two or three times and launch them out at the animal or ostrich they are pursuing on horseback. The thongs twist themselves about the legs or neck of the game, very effectually preventing further progress. Then the hunter's long knife does the rest.

A novice attempting the *bolos* for the first time is very apt to come to grief. In fact, the chances are that he entangles himself and not the game. And if he escapes without a hearty thump from one or both of the *bolos*, he may think himself lucky.
Pedro's so-called invention was different. In fact it was a rawhide whip with short handle, such as is used with cruel effect by drivers of ox wagons in South Africa; only the lash itself was rather longer and terminated in a small leather ball.

"I wish we might run 'cross *guanaco*," was Pedro's remark as the two rode forward over the grassy undulations, broken here and there by clumps of incense and thorn bushes.

For the *guanaco* to the South American is invaluable. A sort of mountain goat in appearance, its flesh is eaten, and the wool woven into ponchos, which in Chili command a good price. The hide itself is used for the covering of native huts, for clothing, and shoes. The sinews furnish a substitute for thread, while the skin of the neck, when properly dressed, is twisted into lassos, bridles, or thongs for the *bolos*. The native peasant describes this valuable and interesting animal by saying that he has "the neigh of a horse, the wool of a sheep, the neck of a camel, the feet of a deer, and the swiftness of the evil one."

But the *guanaco* may be found at almost any time, while the ostrich requires far more searching for, and when found is by no means easy of capture.

And as Pedro rode on beside Juan, keeping his sharp eyes roving continually from side to side, he explained to his companion some of the

differences between the South African ostrich and those of the Patagonian districts. These latter are much smaller, and their plumage bears no resemblance to that of the bird of the other continent either in abundance or value. While the South African ostrich runs with outstretched wings to aid its speed, the South American variety keeps its wings closely folded against the body in flight. The former will outkick a mule, the latter have no such vicious propensities; and so on.

The valley which the two had entered was characteristic of the country. On either side were snow capped mountains, from whose summits the chilly winds swept downward with great force, even though it was then midsummer in Patagonia. Open glades in which were lagoons swarming with wild fowl—black swans, brant and teal among them—extended to the base of the mountain slopes at the left. On the right rose detached hummocks, tree crowned hills, and well wooded mountain ranges.

"There be ostrich!" exclaimed Pedro. Urging his horse forward with a yell, he dashed on in rapid pursuit of what to Juan looked not unlike an abnormally sized turkey.

Both horses were of the tough Chilean breed,

The obstacle was a full grown puma crouching in the grass, at the sight of which Juan's horse had stopped so suddenly as almost to unseat its youthful rider.

In North America the puma is known as the cougar or American lion, and excepting in the more unfrequented parts of the northern and western frontiers is not often encountered in these days.

But the South American puma bears an unpleasant resemblance in some respects to a lioness rather than a lion. And an angry lioness is not the most pleasant animal in the world to encounter, especially if the person encountering happens to be a young fellow of sixteen or seventeen, with little or no experience in hunting dangerous game.

Juan had abundance of courage, and no sooner had he pulled himself together in his saddle than he drew the revolver from his holster, cocking it at the same time with his thumb.

Aiming between the glaring eyes of the crouching beast, whose huge frame was quivering like that of a cat previous to its spring on an unwary mouse, Juan touched the trigger.

"Click!" The hammer fell on the edge of a defective cartridge.

The leaden *bola* crashed in the puma's skull as though it had been pasteboard. The savage animal fell to the ground. A convulsive shiver ran through its frame, the limbs trembled an instant, and the puma was dead.

With the slain ostrich hung over the front of his saddle, Pedro came up at a rapid gallop.

"*Santa Maria!*" The biggest puma been killed in Santa Cruz Valley dis many day!" was his astonished exclamation. And subsequent measurements showed that Pedro was right. From the tip of the nose to the base of its tail the puma measured four feet nine inches, and the tail itself was full two feet in length.

The skin, properly dressed, now forms one of the rugs in the library of the consul at Port Santa Cruz. He is very fond of telling of Juan's exploit, and I heard the story I have here narrated from his own lips.

THINKING A HOLE THROUGH A BOARD.

To think a hole through a half inch board may seem to be an impossible triumph of brain power over matter, but the feat has actually been done. It is one of the curious tricks that

can be performed by means of the marvelous mechanisms of modern electricians.

"I can make you think a hole through a half inch board," was the rather startling remark made to a reporter of a New York paper.

The speaker was Edward Weston of Newark, New Jersey, one of the leading experts in electricity in the world.

Mr. Weston has fitted up in the rear of his place in Newark a laboratory for the purpose of scientific experiment and research. Entering the physical department, he produced two thermopiles. A thermopile is a device for generating electricity direct from heat, the application of which at once excites an electric current in the thermopile.

"Now," said Mr. Weston, "I will connect two of these thermopiles by this wire. They are connected in opposition, so that as long as the same amount of heat is applied to each they will neutralize each other, and there will be no electric current to run this electric motor, which is in the circuit. But if one is heated more than the other the greater current will overpower the lesser, to use a commonly understood way of expressing the result, and a current will pass to the motor."

"I place one thermopile in this dish, surrounded by water, which I keep exactly at the normal temperature of the blood—98.5 degrees. Of course that would excite a current, but I neutralize that current by placing the other thermopile in contact with your temple. You see, the two thermopiles now counteract each other, since the same degree of heat is applied to each. Now, take a problem in mechanics and solve it. Are you ready?"

"All right. Now suppose you drop a stone down a coal shaft and hear it strike bottom in five seconds, how deep is the shaft?"

It is hardly necessary to say that the reporter struggled with that problem with an energy born of despair.

Suddenly he was aware of a buzzing in the motor. It began to spin faster and faster until he lost interest in the problem, when it began to slacken speed.

"Ah!" said Mr. Weston, "stick to your mechanics or you deprive the motor of power. You must keep up your mental exertion if you want to bore that hole."

Thus adjured, the reporter once more struggled with the mechanical and algebraic difficulties of the case. As his brain wrestled with the problem, the temperature of his head increased, and the thermopile in contact was, of course, heated above its twin. As this difference in temperature generated an electric current, which current ran the motor, it was evident that the latter was being driven by the reporter's efforts to solve the problem. And as the motor, with a loaded fly wheel, carried a fine drill on its axis, the piercing of a piece of wood by the drill was easily accomplished, long before there was the least prospect of the depth of the coal shaft being discovered.

Thus Mr. Weston had literally kept his promise of making the reporter "think a hole through a half inch board."

A CRUSKY MAN'S OPINION.

A NEW ENGLAND man has just had a patent granted him for an electric switch. The particulars are not given, but it looks as if the future of the small boy was very discouraging.



PEDRO DREW BACK HIS ARM FOR THE CAST OF THE BOLA.

about thirteen hands high, swift and sure footed.

Like most boys in South America, Juan had learned to ride almost from the time he had been hoisted into a saddle by one of the family servants.

The ground was rough and broken, alternating between rolling grass land and stony uplands. Only a skilled rider could have kept his saddle—only a sure footed steed could have held the course at the mad gallop.

There were five ostriches in the feeding flock. Pedro had singled out the largest, and succeeded in turning it from the drove, which skurried in different directions.

Letting loose the whip thong which he had held clasped to his short wooden handle, Pedro, as he began nearing the speeding bird, threw his arm backward.

The supple thong of twisted ostrich sinews executed a semicircle in the air, and then straightened out directly in front of the speeding steed.

The leaden ball at the end curved about the neck of the ostrich, which, uttering a stifled "pi-pi," fell to the ground. Checking his well trained steed with a touch of the bridle rein, Pedro sprang from his saddle to secure his prey.

I regret to say that the inhuman practice of breaking the neck of the Patagonian ostrich is always resorted to by the successful hunter. I should pity the person who undertook to pursue a like method with a full grown ostrich of the South African breed. It would be a question as to the breakage—whether man or bird would come out best.

But Juan did not have an opportunity of witnessing the closing scene in the drama.

Entirely unexpected to himself, he had encountered an obstacle in the way.

Now Juan had of course made amateur attempts at throwing the lasso and flinging the *bolos*, but with very ineffectual results. He had seen Pedro noose the neck of an upright bottle at one cast while in full gallop. He had looked on with admiring envy while a half naked Indian stopped a *guanaco* in full flight, by a cast of the *bola* which covered nearly twenty five yards. On one horn of the hide covered saddle hung a coiled *lazo*, on the other the *bolos*; both for show rather than use.

"G-r-r-r!"

The angry snarl of the puma, whose tail was moving gently to and fro in unison with the quivering of its frame, caused Juan's horse to settle back on his haunches with a suddenness which threw the rider's pistol from his hand.

In emergencies one thinks quickly—that is, a cool, clear headed person does so. Luckily Juan by nature and inheritance was both.

Snatching the coiled thong of the *bolos* from his saddle horn, he swiftly wound the slack of one end about his hand. As the puma launched itself for the spring, Juan drew back the four or five feet of leather thong, very much in the manner of a "rough" of olden time preparing to strike a blow with a slung shot.

As the fierce animal sprang forward and upward, Juan struck downward with all his force.

It was a chance blow, but all the same it proved effective.

DUTY AND CHARITY.

BY W. WORDSWORTH.

The primal duties shine aloft—like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless;
Are scattered at the feet of man—like flowers.

[This story commenced in No. 270.]

Mr. Halgrove's Ward;

OR,

LIVING IT DOWN.

By TALBOT BAINES REED,

Author of "Reginald Cruden," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XI.

WILDTREE TOWERS.

JEFFREYS spoke truly when he wrote to Mr. Frampton that he did not know and did not care where he was going next.

When he awoke in his heathery bed next morning, he lay indolently for a whole hour for no other reason than because he did not know whether to walk north, south, east or west. He lacked the festive imagination which helps many people under similar circumstances. It did not occur to him to toss up, nor was he aware of the value of turning round three times with his eyes closed and then marching straight before him. Had he been an errant knight of course his horse would have settled the question, but as it was he was not a knight and had not a horse. He had a dog, though. Why shouldn't Julius take the responsibility and out the Gordian knot?

"Which way are we going, Julius?" inquired the dog's master, leaning up on his elbow, and giving no sign which the dog could possibly construe into a suggestion.

Julius was far too deep an animal not to see through an artless design like this. But for all that he undertook the task of choosing.

He rose from his bed, shook himself, rubbed a few early flies off his face, and then, taking up the bundle in his teeth, with a rather contemptuous sniff, walked off in the direction of the North Pole.

Jeffreys dutifully followed; and thus it was that one of the most momentous turns in his life was taken in the footsteps of a dog.

Let us leave him, reader, tramping aimlessly thus o'er moor and fell and hill and dale, leaving behind him the smoke of the cotton country and the noisy shriek of the railway, and losing himself among the lonely valleys and towering hills of Westmoreland—let us leave him, footsore, hungry and desponding, and refresh ourselves in some more cheery scene and amidst livelier company.

What do you say to this tempting looking abode marked in the map as Wildtree Towers, standing in a park of I should not like to say how many acres on the lower slopes of one of the grandest mountains in the Lake country of England?

We have the storyteller's latchkey and invisible cap. Let us enter.

We find ourselves in a snug little boudoir, furnished and decorated with feminine skill and taste, and commanding through the open French windows a gorgeous view down the valley.

Two ladies, one middle aged, one young, are sitting there as the footman enters. The elder, evidently the mistress of the mansion, is reading a newspaper; the younger is dividing her time between needlework and looking rather discontentedly out of the window.

It is quite evident the two are not mother and child. There is not the slightest trace of resemblance between the handsome aquiline face of the elder, stylishly dressed woman, and the rounder and more sensitive one of her quietly attired companion. Nor is there much in common between the frank eyes and mock demure mouth of the girl and the half imperious, half worried look of her senior.

"Tell Mr. Rimbolt, Walker," says the mistress, as she puts down her paper and moves her chair up to the tea table, "and Master Percy that tea is served."

A handsome gentleman, just turning gray, with an intellectual and good humored face,

strolls into the room in response to Walker's summons.

"I was positively nearly asleep," he said; "the library gets more than its share of the afternoon sun."

"It would be better for you, dear, if you took a drive or a walk, instead of shutting yourself up with your old books."

The gentleman laughs pleasantly and puts some sugar in his tea.

"You are not very respectful to my old friends," said he. "You forget how long we've been parted. Where's Percy?"

"Walker has gone to tell him."

"I think he is out," said the young lady; "he told me he was going down to the river."

"I consider," said Mrs. Rimbolt, rather severely, "he should tell me what he is going to do, not you."

"But, aunt, I didn't ask him. He volunteered it."

"Fetch your uncle's cap, Raby."

Raby's mouth puckers up into a queer little smile as she obeys.

Walker appears in a minute to confirm the re-

people invisible by painting them with invisible paint! H't, ha! He invited me to let him try it on me!"

"He'd try it on me," chimed in Raby.

Several hours pass, and still Master Percy does not put in an appearance. As Mrs. Rimbolt's uneasiness increases, half a dozen servants are sent out in various directions to seek the prodigal. It is an almost daily ceremony, and the huntsmen set about their task as a matter of course. No one can recollect an occasion on which Master Percy has ever come home at the right time without being looked for. If the appointed hour is four, every one feels well treated if his honor turns up at five. Nor, with the exception of his mother, and now and then Raby, does any one dream of becoming agitated for three or four hours later.

When, therefore, just as the family is sitting down to dinner at half past six, Walker enters radiant to announce that Master Percy has come in, no one thinks any more about his prolonged absence, and one or two of the servants outside say to one another that the young master must be hungry to come home at this virtuous hour.



THE CONSPIRATORS STOOD JUST OUTSIDE THE SHED AND THE TRAMP HEARD ALL THAT PASSED BETWEEN THEM.

port of Master Percy's absence. "He's been gone this three hours, mum."

"Let some one go for him at once, Walker. I get so terrified when he goes off like this," says the mother; "there's no knowing what may happen, and he is so careless."

"He has a safe neck," replied the father; "he always does turn up. But if you are so fidgety, why don't you send Raby to look after him?"

"If any one went with him it would need to be some one who, instead of encouraging him in his odd ways, would keep him in hand."

"Oh," says Raby, laughing, "he wouldn't take me with him if I paid him a hundred pounds. He says girls don't know anything about science and investigation."

"He is probably right," observed Mrs. Rimbolt, severely.

"Certainly, as regards the science he practices," said her husband. "What was it he had in hand last week? Some invention for making

hastily taking stock of the bill of fare.

"How goes the invisible paint, Percy?" asks his father, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Used up," replied the boy, solemnly. "I'm sure it would answer. I painted Hodge with it, and could scarcely see him at all from a distance."

"I believe you paint yourself," says Raby, laughing, "and that's why the men can't find you."

Percy is pleased with this, and takes it as a recognition of his genius. He has great faith in his own discovery, and it is everything to him to find some one else believing in it too.

"If you like to come to the river tomorrow I'll show you something," says he, condescendingly.

"It links the paint into fits!" "Raby will be busy in the village tomorrow," says the aunt, adding, "I wish you'd play somewhere else, dear. It makes me so uneasy when you are down by the river."

"Play!" says Percy, rather scornfully; "I don't play there, I work!"

"I fear you are neglecting one sort of work for another, my boy," says Mr. Rimbolt. "We never got through, Virgil yet, you know—at least, you didn't. I've been through three books since you deserted our reading."

"Oh, Virgil's jolly enough," replied the boy; "I'm going to finish it as soon as my experiments are over."

"What experiments?"

"Oh, it's a dodge to—I'll show it you as soon as it's finished. It's nearly done now, and it will be a tremendous tip."

This is all that can be extracted from the youthful man of science—at least, by the elders.

To Raby, when the family retire to the drawing room, the boy is more confidential, and she once more captivates him by entering heart and soul into his project and entreating to be made a party in the experiments.

"I'll see," says he; "but mind you don't go chattering!"

At the top of the stairs, on his way to bed an hour or so later, he shows a dismally round

"I say, wake me at six, will you? and leave my waterproof and top boots on the hall table; and, I say, tell Mason to cut me half a dozen strong ash sticks about a yard long; and, I say, leave a hammer and some tins on the hall table too; and tell Appleby to go by the early coach to Overstone and get me a pound of cork, and some whalebone and some tar. Here's five shillings to pay for them. Don't forget. Tell him to leave them at the Lodge before twelve, and I'll fetch them. Oh, and tell Raby if she wants to see what I was telling her about she had better hang about the Lodge till I come. I'm sure to be there somewhere between twelve and four."

We have changed the scene once already in this chapter. Just before we finish let us change it once more, and, leaving beautiful Wildtree and its happy family, let us fly to a sorry, tumble-down, desolate shed five miles away, on the hillside. It may have once belonged to a farm, or served as a shelter for sheep on the mountain slopes. But it now scarcely possesses a roof, and no sign of a habitation is anywhere visible.

The night has come on rainy and dark, and a weary tramp with his dog has been thankful to crawl into its poor shelter and rest his limbs.

The wind has risen and howls dismally round the shed, breaking every now and then through the loose planks, and stirring up the straw which carpets the place. But the traveler is too weary to heed it or the rain which intrudes along with it, and crouches with his dog in the darkest corner, curls himself up in true tramp fashion, and settles down to sleep.

He has lain there two hours or more, and the mountain storm begins to abate. The dog has been uneasy for some time, and now in the midst of a peal of thunder awakens his master with a rough yap. The sleeper sits up for an instant. It is not the thunder that has disturbed the dog, nor is it thunder that the tramp listens to close at hand. It is the sound of voices, either inside the shed or just outside it.

Not a strange, thing, perhaps, in a storm like this, for two wayfarers like himself to seek shelter—and yet the tramp seemed startled by the sound, and signals to the dog to lie down and hold his peace.

"Will it do?" says one voice; and the tramp perceives that the speakers are standing outside the shed under the shelter of the projecting eaves.

"No. No good. Too well looked after, and the people about the wrong sort."

"There's a pile o'wag there—heaps."

"Know that. Better wait till the family are away."

"There's a child—isn't there?"

"A boy—fourteen—only child."

"Might work in that way; eh? Git a trifle for him; eh?"

"A thousand, and no questions asked. It's settled."

"It is! Why didn't you say so? How are you going to do it?"

"Never you mind. Corporal and I have worked it out. It will be done tonight. Moon's down at ten. You be here at midnight and have your hay cart handy. Corporal and I will bring him here. We know where to find him in daylight, and can keep him quiet in the woods till dark."

"What then? Who's to keep him?"

"Wait till you've got him."

"Are you sure they'll go a thousand for him?"

"Probably two. Sheer off now, and don't forget twelve o'clock."

The footsteps move away through the wet heather, and the tramp, waiting motionless till the last sound has faded away, draws a long breath and curls himself back into his roost.

But not to sleep—to meditate a campaign. "Julius," says he to the dog, who appears to be fully alive to the brewing storm, "you and I will have to stop this business. There'll be three to two, unless the boys fight too. We must be here at eleven and tackle one of them before the other two come. What do you say to that?" Julius looks only sorry the business is not to begin at once.

Then the tramp and he go carefully into the plan of their little campaign, and as soon as day dawns go out for a walk, Julius taking care before quitting the shed to acquaint himself with the scent of the two gentlemen who had lately sheltered outside.

The tramp spends a quiet day on the mountain, reading Homer and admiring the view. Towards nightfall he descends to Overstone and spends a few of his remaining pence in a frugal meal. Then, as the moon dips behind the shoulder of Wild Pike, he betakes himself, with the faithful Julius close to his heels, to the shed on the mountain side.

CHAPTER XII.

A BOLD CAPTURE.

PERCY RIMBOLT rose promptly when Walker, according to the boy's orders, knocked at his door at six o'clock the next morning.

The storm of the night which had disturbed Jeffreys and his dog five miles away had not spread so far as Wildtree, and the early summer sun was already hot as he stepped forth with his waterproof over one arm and a dozen ash sticks under the other in the direction of the river.

Percy plodded on a couple of miles down the stream, considerably beyond the park boundaries, till he reached Rodnet Bridge, under which the mountain torrent poured its waters. Just below the bridge, among the trees which crowded down to the water's edge, was a little hut used by the Wildtree keepers for depositing their baskets and nets, but now appropriated by the young heir of Wildtree for far more important purposes. It was here, in fact, that during the past two days he had conceived and begun to put into practice, the never before heard of invention of a machine for enabling a swimmer to swim up stream at the rate of eight to ten miles an hour!

He had been provident enough to bring some sandwiches in his pockets (provided at the last moment by the kindly landlady of the inn), and the strength of these labored half the morning. It would puzzle me to explain on what scientific principle the wonderful apparatus was laid down, what mixture between the wing of a bird, the tail of a fish, and the screw of a steamer it embodied. I never was good at mechanics, and certainly not at Rodnet. The sandwiches were such as it is given but to feed to follow.

Suffice it to say that by eleven o'clock the structure had reached a critical stage, and stood still for want of the cork which Appleby, one of the men, had been charged to procure.

The day was hot, and an hour at least must elapse before the machine could return from Overstone. Percy therefore improved the shining hour by a dip in the clear stream, with whose depths he was evidently familiar. He made no attempt, pending the completion of the machine, to oppose the swift current, but diving into it from the bridge, allowed himself luxuriously to be carried down into the shallows a hundred yards below, and without even the trouble of swimming. This refreshing performance ended, he returned to the hut and dressed.

He was in the act of locking the door preparatory to his journey up to Kennedy's Lodge, when a sack was suddenly thrown over his head from behind, and the next moment he found himself pinned to the ground in the clutches of two men.

Before he was well aware of what had happened, his feet were tied together and his arms firmly lashed to his sides. The sack was lifted from his mouth, but not long enough to enable him to shout, for a gag was roughly forced between his teeth; and then, while one of his captors held his head, the other bandaged his eyes so completely that, had he not known it, he could not have told whether it was midday or midnight.

Thus, in almost less time than it takes to narrate it, in broad daylight, and on the borders of his own father's estate, the unfortunate Percy was made captive without so much as being able to give an alarm or to see the faces of his assailants.

He was deposited comfortably on the floor of his own hut, by the side, oh, cruel fate! of his own machine, and there left to work out any number of problems which might occur to him during the next six hours; while his custodians, having carefully padlocked the door, retired to a respectful distance among the trees, where they could smoke their pipes in peace, and at the same time keep an eye on the approaches to their young ward's dungeon.

It did not take Percy many minutes to convince himself that any attempt to struggle or extricate himself from his bonds would be labor thrown away. His captors were evidently well up to their business, and there was no wriggling out of their neatly tied bonds. Nor did the onslaught which the boy made with his teeth on the gag result in anything but disaster. It loosened at last the gag, and gave him during the remainder of the day considerable pain in some of the others. As to his eyes, he rubbed his forehead and the side of his head on the floor in the hopes of shifting the bandage,

but all in vain. He got it over his ears as well as his eyes for his pains, and could scarcely hear a sound.

After this he lay still and meditated somewhat as follows: "I'm up with the machine! I wonder if Appleby will come to look for me? What an ass Kennedy will be if he tells him not. Perhaps Raby can come. What good could she do? That cork would have finished it up beautifully. I expect it's all smashed up now, I felt something go when I was rolling over. I wonder if it's some of the Rugby fellows come down here for a lark. It can't be any of our men. Coolidge looking me up here with my own key. Of course no one will think of looking in when they see it locked. They know I keep it locked and couldn't lock myself in. I wonder how long I'll live here? I suppose a fellow would starve in about two days. Anyhow this beastly gag will spoil the shape of my mouth forever. I wish I could get to sleep to pass the time. There's twelve o'clock striking at Overstone Church. Appleby will have left the things up at the Lodge by now, and perhaps Raby will be hanging about. Hang that fly on my nose!"

Here the captive was obliged to roll over on the irritated member and roll it on the floor in order to dispossess the cowardly tormentor. "I wonder if that machine would have worked after all! The job would be to make it feather under water. I should have had to get some cog wheels. Bother it all, who on earth is it has come and stuck me here? I don't see what good it will be to them. Of course they'll be looking all over the place at dinner time, and that humbug Walker is sure to pretend to be jolly active. They'll make up their minds I'm drowned. Mother's sure to say it's that. What a time the fishes will have while they're dragging! Then that old genius Kennedy will tell them it's all a mistake. Of course they'll be wasn't to let any one come down below the bridge. That'll all tell. Then I suppose, after giving me plenty of time to go off the hook, they'll look in here. Heigho! they won't notice the machine. Wretched machine! I'm sick of it. Hello, what's that?"

It might be anything. It might be his captors coming to peep in and see that he was safe; it might be Appleby returning sulkily from his errand; it might be a rat accustomed to have the run of the place, and resenting the present unwarrantable intrusion. Whatever it was, it was not a rescue, and poor Percy consequently felt very uninterested.

As the day went on the sun slanted its rays cruelly through the little skylight on to the spot where he lay, and the flies, attracted by the rare chance, swarmed in under the door and through the cracks to make merry with their defenseless victim. Had the sun been seven times as hot, or the flies ten times as numerous, he would have preferred it, for it would have shortened his misery considerably.

When at last the sun got across the window and left him in peace, he was scarcely in a position to appreciate its mercies.

Not long after the distant Overstone chimed had sounded for his breakfast (about the only unfettered portion of him) leaped to his mouth as he heard his name called in Raby's voice outside. Nor was his the only heart which that cheery sound caused to palpitate. The two watchers in the wood above heard it and prepared to descend at a moment's notice should the girl display any undue curiosity as to the contents of the hut.

But she did not. She was used to seeing it padlocked, and to listening in vain for an answer to her call. Percy was evidently absent, probably waiting for her up at Kennedy's lodge. So she hurried back. As soon as she had disappeared, the two men put their hands into their pockets.

"If they've begun looking for him we'd best cheer off, Corporal."

"That's right," replied Corporal—"at once." Whereupon they descended from their perches, and, having looked carefully up and down, unlocked the dungeon door.

The prisoner was lying so still and motionless that for an instant they had their misgivings as to whether the gag had not been a trifle too much for his respiration. But a moment's examination satisfied them the boy was alive, much to their relief.

The sack was once more brought into requisition, and turned out to be a good deal larger than it looked, for it was found quite roomy enough to accommodate the whole of the person of Percy Rimbolt, who in this dignified retreat quitted the scene of his labor on the back of one of his captors. The hat having been once more carefully padlocked, the party traveled at least a mile into the depths of the lonely woods, where at least there was no lack of shade and seclusion.

Percy was deposited somewhat unceremoniously on the ground and left in the sack (with just sufficient aperture in the region of the nose to allow of respiration) for some hours more, unless by the kindness of his custodians, except when he was tempted to move or roll over, on which occasions he was sharply reminded of his duty to his company by an unceremonious kick.

"I'd sooner have been in the hut," meditated he, after a specially vigorous repetition of this polite attention. "I can't make out how I'm hanging on so long. I ought to have been smothered or choked hours ago by rights. Raby might have tried to get in or look in. Of course, she wouldn't guess what was up; girls never do! There'll be the usual score for me going on now, I suppose. No one will look up

here—in this vile sack. Fancy coming to this—a filthy potato sack! What would mother say? I don't much care what they're going to do, only if they are going to eat me or kill me I wish to goodness they'd begin! My arms and legs are sore with having, they're so jolly cramped. It must be nearly eight o'clock. Just twelve hours since I ate those sandwiches. I wonder if I shall hear eight strike tomorrow morning?"

Here the poor fellow, despite an admonitory kick from without, rolled over on to his back and groaned as best he could behind and round the gag.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESCUE.

SOME time later—it may have been an hour or two, or only five minutes—Percy was as awake as a conversation taking place outside his sack.

"Risky," said one voice. "More risky not to do it," said the other. "What use would he be if he was a dead up? Besides, how are we to carry him all that way?" "All right, have it your way," said the other, surlily.

Then Percy was conscious of some one unceremoniously opening the mouth of the sack and uncovering his head.

"Young fellow," said the gruffer of the two voices, "do you want your throat cut?"

Percy shook his head in mild deprecation of such a suggestion, and said one of the voices: "Do you want your tongue cut out?"

"Once more Percy disclaimed any consuming anxiety in that direction.

"Then you won't move a step or speak a word unless you're told. Do you mark that?" The boy nodded; he did mark it.

"Give him a drink," said one of the voices; and the other, to his relief, the gag was taken from his mouth, and he felt himself hauled out of the ignominious sack.

"A drink!" he gasped. "There he goes; I said he'd do it. Clap the gag on again."

Poor blindfolded Percy could only wave his hands appealingly. He would sooner have his throat cut than feel that gag back between his teeth. His captors let him off this once, and one of them untied the cords about his legs. He was too cramped to attempt to make any use of this partial liberty, even had he been so minded, and sank down half fainting to the ground.

"Give him a drink," said one of the voices; and in a moment or two he felt a cup of delicious water held to his parched lips, reviving him as if by magic. A few coarse pieces of bread were also thrust between his lips; these he swallowed painfully, for his jaws were stiff and aching, and his teeth had almost forgotten their cunning. However, when he felt that he was not being felled, and would gladly have slept upon it for an hour or two had he been allowed.

But this was no part of his captors' programme. They had not relaxed his bonds to indulge any such luxurious craving. Overstone Church had already sounded eleven, and they were due at an hour at the mountain side.

"Get up and step out," said one of them, pulling the boy roughly to his feet.

"All very well," said Percy to himself, as he stumbled forward on his cramped limbs; "they'll have to give me a leg up if they want me to go the pace. Where are we going to next, I'd like to know."

"Come, stir yourself," said the man again, accompanying his words by a rough shake.

Percy responded by toppling over on his face. He who knew the way to swim against stream ten miles an hour was just now unable to walk half a dozen paces on solid ground.

"Get up and step out," said the man again, growling the boy roughly to his feet.

The bare mention of that sack startled poor Percy to his feet. If he might only have spoken he could so easily have explained the trifling difficulty which prevented his "stepping out." As it was, all he could do was to struggle forward bravely for a few more paces and then again fall. The men seemed to perceive that there was something more than mere playfulness in this twice repeated performance, and solved the difficulty by clutching him one under each arm, and materially assisting his progress by dragging him.

Any of Percy's acquaintances would have been greatly shocked had they been privileged to witness this triumphal midnight progress across the moors; his dragging legs feebly trying to imitate the motions of walking, but looking much more like kneeling, his head dropping forward on his chest, his shoulders elevated by the grip of his conductors under his pinioned arms, and his eyes bandaged as never a blind man's buff could bind them.

It was a long, weary march, that; but to Percy it was luxury compared with the morning among the flies on the hut floor. His conductors settled into a jogging trot, which the light weight of the boy did not much impede; and Percy, finding the motion not difficult, and on the whole something, dropped off into a half-drowse, which greatly assisted in passing the time.

At length, however, he became aware of a halt and a hurried consultation between his captors.

"Is he there? Whistle!"

Corporal gave a low whistle, which after a second or two was answered from the hillside.

"That's all right!" said the other, in tones of relief. "See anything of the cart?"

Corporal peered round in the darkness.

"Yes—all right down there."

"Come on, then. Keep your eye on Jim,

though—he's a mighty hand at going more than his share."

"Trust me," growled Corporal. Then Percy felt himself seized again and dragged forward.

In about five minutes they halted again and the whistle was repeated.

The answer came from close at hand this time.

"All square?" whispered Corporal.

"Yes!" replied a new, indistinct voice—"come on."

They had moved forward half a dozen steps more, when Corporal suddenly found his head enveloped in a sack—a counterpart of his own—while at the same moment the other man was borne to the ground with a great dog's fangs buried in his neckcloth.

"Hold him," called Jeffreys to the dog, as he himself applied his energies to the subjugation of the struggling Corporal.

It was no easy task. But Jeffreys, lad as he was, was a young Samson, and had his man at a disadvantage. For Corporal, entangled with the sack and unprepared for the sudden onslaught, staggered back and fell; and before he could struggle to his feet, Jeffreys was on him, almost throttling him.

It was no time for polite fighting. If Jeffreys did not throttle his man, his man, as he perfectly well knew, would do more than throttle him. So he held on like grim death, till Corporal, half smothered by the sack and half choked by his assailant's clutch, howled for quarter.

Then the other time Jeffreys felt decidedly perplexed. If he let Corporal go, Corporal, not being a man of honor, might turn on him and make mincemeat of him. If, on the other hand, he called the dog off the other man to hold Corporal, while he bound him captive, the other man might abuse his opportunity in a like manner. The boy saw that Jeffreys was too much harassed to take any part in the encounter. What could he do?

After turning the matter over, he decided that Julius was the most competent individual to settle the business. The dog was having a very easy time with the abject villain over whom he was mounting the guard, and could well undertake a little more than he had at present on his hands.

"Fetch him here, Julius," called Jeffreys, giving Corporal an additional grip; "come here, you fellow, along with the dog."

The fellow had nothing for it but to obey; and in a couple of minutes he was lying across the body of Corporal, while Julius stood over him both.

"Come here, boy," called Jeffreys next to Percy; "let me take off those cords."

Percy groped his way to him.

"What are you going to do with me?" he gasped.

"Loose you; and if you're half a man you'll help me tie up these brutes. Come on—watch them, Julius. Why you're blindfolded too, and how frightfully tight you're corded!"

"I've been like that since twelve o'clock."

A few minutes sufficed to unfasten the captive's arms and clear his eyes.

"Now you," said Jeffreys, indicating the topmost of Julius's captives with his toe, "put your hands behind your back."

The fellow obeyed hurriedly; he had had quite enough of Julius's attentions already to need more.

Jeffreys and Percy between them lashed first his wrists together, and then his elbows tightly to his sides. Then they secured his feet and knees in the same manner.

"He'll do—let him go, Julius," and prisoner No. 1 was rolled over to make room for No. 2 to undergo a similar process of pinioning.

It was fortunate that the bay cart below, of which and its owner Jeffreys and Julius had already taken possession at their leisure, had been liberally provided with cord, or their supply would have been inadequate to the strain put upon it.

At last, however, Corporal and his friend were as securely tied up as they themselves could have done it, and dragged into the shed. It was pitchy dark, and they neither of them at first perceived a third occupant of the tenement in the person of their fellow conspirator, who was lying bound like themselves on the floor, where for an hour at least he had been enjoying the sweets of solitary meditation.

"Julius," said Jeffreys, when his three guests were duly deposited, "you'll have to watch them here till I come back. Hold your tongues, all of you, or Julius will trouble you. Watch them, good dog, and stay here."

"Now," said he to the boy, when they found themselves outside, "what's your name?"

"Percy Rimbolt."

"Where do you live?"

"Wildtree Towers, five miles away."

"We can be there in an hour. We may as well use this cart, which was meant to drive you in another direction. Can you walk to it, or shall I carry you?"

Percy, as one in a dream, walked the short distance, leaning on his rescuer's arm. Then, deposited on the soft hay, too weary to trouble himself how he got there or who this new guardian might be, he dropped off into an exhausted sleep, from which he was only aroused by the sound of his parents' voices as the cart pulled up at the door of Wildtree Towers.

(To be continued.)

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