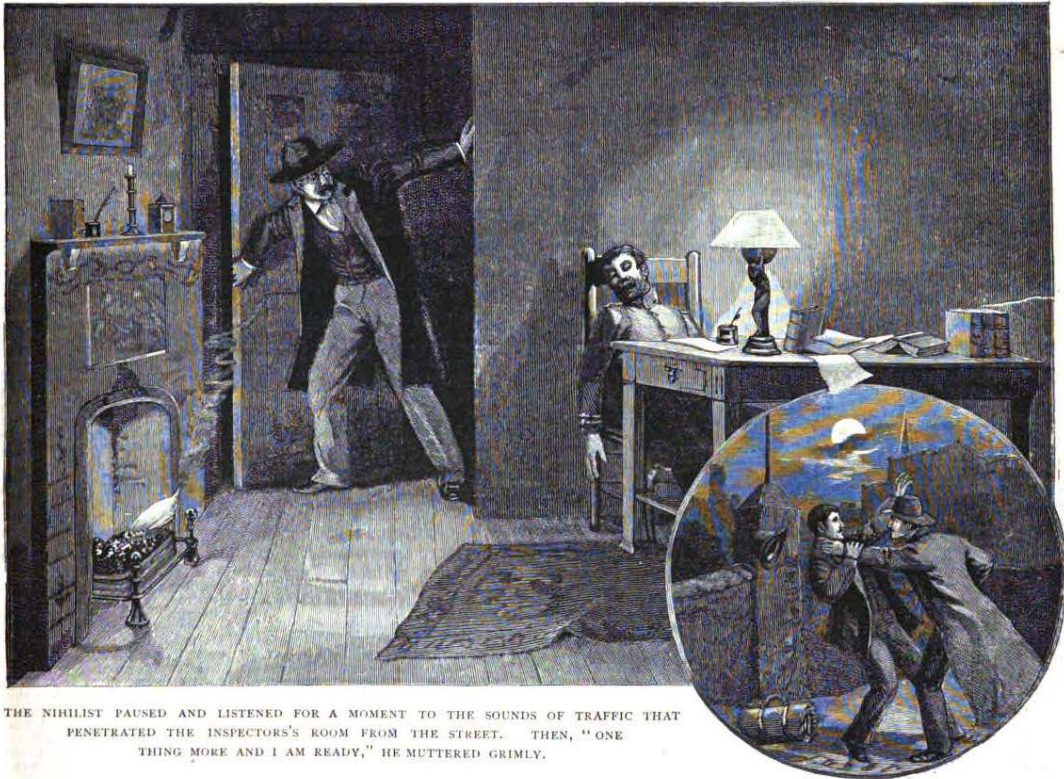


THE ARGOSY

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THE Nihilist paused and listened for a moment to the sounds of traffic that penetrated the inspectors's room from the street. Then, "one thing more and I am ready," he muttered grimly.

WITH COSSACK AND CONVICT. A TALE OF FAR SIBERIA.

By WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON.

Author of "Under Africa," "The Rajah's Fortress," Etc.

CHAPTER I.

A SACRIFICE OF HONOR.

ON the morning of the 10th of April, 1890, Captain Andre Dagmar was breakfasting in his apartments on the second floor of No. — Nevskoi Prospekt. He was seated at a small table which held a steaming samovar, a slice of broiled fish, caught that very morning in the Gulf of Finland, a plate of hot rolls, and a silver cigarette case blazoned with monograms and coronets. From the window at his side he could look down into the main thoroughfare of the Imperial City of St. Petersburg, that splendid boulevard which extends for two miles from the Moscow railway terminus to the banks of the Neva.

Captain Dagmar was a sturdy, well built young man, twenty four years of age, with handsome patrician features, light blue eyes, light hair, and a soft mustache and beard of the same color. He was the eldest son of Count Vasily Dagmar, a captain of the Imperial Guard of Cossacks, and (this in confidence,) an under secretary to Colonel Jaroslav, the chief of the dreaded Third Section of police—three attributes which accorded to Captain Dagmar a high place in the social circles of St. Petersburg.

Suddenly a servant entered from an inner apartment and handed his master a paper which still bore the fresh odor of the presses.

"Ah! the *Chronicle!*" exclaimed Captain Andre. "It is late this morning, Sasha. No, thank you, I want nothing now," and as the servant retired the captain tipped back his chair and spread out the paper upon his knees.

"Has anything happened, I wonder, during my brief absence?" he muttered. "Hardly, though, for the colonel would have notified me—Hullo! what does this mean?"

The front legs of the chair slipped heavily to the floor, and the ruddy flush on Captain Dagmar's cheeks faded swiftly away, leaving in its stead an ashen pallor. For an instant he gazed fixedly at the printed columns, which had suddenly become blurred by the trembling of his hands, and then in a low, surprised voice he read aloud:

"The famous Nihilist, Serge Masloff, who was concerned in the recent dynamite plot and in the publication of the revolutionary journal, the *Free Press*, has at last been located in the city and the police are confident of arresting him before evening."

Captain Dagmar tossed the paper on the table.

"The time has come," he muttered. "It has come at last—and yet I knew that this end was inevitable. Unhappy man! He has brought this all on himself. He refused all advice, all warning."

The captain placed a cigarette between his teeth, and without lighting it, rose to his feet and began to pace the room nervously. No alarm was visible on his face, but rather an expression of keen sorrow—a touch of sympathy for this misguided Nihilist,

Serge Masloff, who was to be arrested that very day.

"A person is waiting without to see you. I told him you were at breakfast, but he will take no denial."

The door opened noiselessly and Sasha was standing on the threshold in a deprecating attitude.

"Who is it?" demanded Captain Dagmar half angrily. "Did he give you his name or card?"

"No, sir, I requested him to do so, but he refused."

"Well, send him away," said the captain. "No, stop, send him in, Sasha, at once. I can spare him a moment."

As Sasha hurried off Captain Dagmar hastily composed his features, and drew his dressing gown closer about him—for he had not yet made his toilet.

A moment later the caller who would not be denied entered the room. He was a man of about the captain's own build, genteelly dressed in a dark suit. A heavy mustache shaded his mouth, and his eyes were hidden by a pair of blue goggles.

"Well, what is it?" demanded Captain Dagmar sternly. His manner was now composed and without a trace of agitation.

Without replying the stranger turned and slipped the bolt of the door into the socket. Then facing Captain Dagmar again, he deftly removed his heavy mustache and his goggles, revealing a smooth shaven face and a pair of light blue eyes.

"Paul—my brother!" gasped the captain, staggering backward and leaning on the table for support.

"Yes, it is I, Andre," replied the man with a grim smile. "Paul Dagmar, your brother—but better known as Serge Masloff, the Nihilist."

A brief pause ensued, and then Captain Dagmar pointed to the paper lying on the table.

"Have you seen that?" he demanded hoarsely. "You must know that the police are on your track—that you will be arrested before the close of the day. Are you mad that you come here at this hour of the morning?"

"I came for help," replied Paul bitterly. "You alone can save me. I knew that you were expected home last night and I should have been here sooner—but circumstances prevented."

"I can do nothing," protested Andre. "I warned you in time, but you gave my words no heed. Now it is too late. You must abide by the consequences of your folly."

"But supposing that the power to aid me was in your hands, would you not use it, provided that no harm could come to you?"

"That is a futile question," replied Andre. "I refuse to discuss it."

"It is not a futile question," said Paul. "You can save me if you will. Listen, and I will tell you all, but don't interrupt me, for the time is very short. That paragraph in the morning paper is true. Some one has played traitor, and the police not only have proofs of everything that I have done, but they have discovered where I am and the city will be ransacked from end to end before nightfall. Russia is too hot to hold me, and I want to get away to England or America. If you will aid me in this, I will give you nothing more to do with the revolutionary party—that in future I will lead a blameless life. No—don't interrupt me. You can help me, and you must. Write a note to Colonel Jaroslav informing him that the bearer is going to Berlin for a passport, and I will instruct him to issue a clean passport in the name of Nicholas Pashua. It is now ten o'clock and in two hours I will be on the way to the frontier. This plan is absolutely void of danger either to you or to me. The railway stations are all closely watched, but my disguise is perfect—and besides, who would dare question the signature of Colonel Jaroslav? None would ever know that Nicholas Pashua was Serge Masloff, nor will my escape ever be brought home to you. In a free country I will lead a different life, and the world will never hear of me again."

With various emotions depicted in his face, Andre Dagmar had listened to this passionate speech, and now with an expression full of horror and despair he paced to and fro across the room thinking now he would make an answer. Suddenly he turned on his brother so

fercely that the latter cowered and shrunk back as though fearing a blow.

"Are you not satisfied," he cried, "to have driven our mother into the grave with a broken heart and bowed down our father with sorrow? And now you demand a last sacrifice—my honor. How can I ever hold up my head and fulfill the obligations of my high office, if I do this thing? I will not speak of the risk, which I assure you is not inconsiderable. You ask me to be a traitor to the Czar who has ever honored our family. Do you wonder that I hesitate to do a favor to his greatest enemy?"

"But think of the consequences if you refuse," cried Paul. "I shall be arrested and hung in the public square—without even the formality of a trial—or at the best sent to Siberia for life. And I think too of the publicity. Many will surely discover that Serge Masloff is in reality Paul Dagmar, the son of the illustrious Count Vasily, and brother to Captain Andre Dagmar of the Imperial Guard. Where will be the boasted honors of our family then? Those who know hesitate to do a favor to his greatest enemy?"

"Enough!" said Andre in a hoarse, changed voice. "Heartless wretch that you are, I must still remember that you are of my blood—that you are my brother. I will do what you ask, and may God forgive me and you! I consent to this sacrifice, and you to keep your promise—to lead a better life in that far country which will become your home."

Andre's voice failed him. He sat down at a small desk and began to write hastily, while Paul stood silently by his side, gazing on him with time-dimmed his false mustache and goggles.

At last Andre rose with a sealed and folded paper in his hand.

"Here is the order for the passport," he said in a low voice. "That stamp on the outside will take you to the guard, and give you an audience with the inspector. I need not caution you to be discreet."

Paul took the paper and put it safely away.

"I can't thank you as you deserve," he said with much emotion, "but I appreciate it all the same. I will keep my promise, be assured of that. And now I must go. Farewell, Andre, and God be with you."

With a quick motion Andre threw his arms about his brother and kissed him on the lips.

"Farewell, Paul," he murmured, and then tearing loose he threw himself into a chair by the table and buried his face in his arms, not hearing the opening and closing of the door, nor the footsteps that grew fainter and fainter as he passed into the night.

Andre is thinking of those long ago days when Paul was young and innocent, and the sharer of his boyish sports. We will leave him there alone with his sorrow while we relate as briefly as possible, to the better understanding of his tale, the sad misfortune of the Dagmar family.

None in all the vast Russian empire were held in greater esteem by the Czar than Count Vasily Dagmar, and his forefathers before him. The family was an old and illustrious one, rich in titles and great marriages, were at that time much rarer than they are now, but the couple were devotedly attached to each other, and all went well.

Andre Dagmar was born in the spring of 1866, and Paul just two years later.

Of Andre we need not here speak. It has been shown to what social and military prominence he attained. His character was estimable and above reproach.

But Paul, even at an early age, was wild and wayward.

Possibly he inherited some vicious trait from far remote ancestors—a case of heredity that was not so uncommon. At all events this was the only conclusion possible at the time.

The lad showed a decided passion for low company, and ran away from home and from school on numerous occasions.

At the age of seventeen he suddenly became convert to socialist principles, and talked in a manner which hor-

rified the count. In spite of every effort to save him the lad now went from bad to worse, and finally it became known that he had actually joined the revolutionary party. Count Vasily now disowned his younger son, forbidding the family to hold any communication with him or ever to mention his name.

A year later the countess died of a broken heart, and from that time the count was a changed man, though he still kept up his social relations and hid as far as possible the grief that was gnawing at his heart.

Paul Dagmar meantime sank deeper in his chosen career of crime, and at last, young as he was, became a recognized leader of the Nihilistic party under the name of Serge Masloff. His identity was known to not more than one or two persons outside of his brother Andre, and for several years previous to the opening of this story Count Vasily knew nothing whatever of the son he had disowned.

But Andre knew, and in spite of all he still cherished in secret an affection for Paul—an affection he had known first in early childhood when the brothers shared their sports. Andre took advantage of his connection with the Bureau of Police to keep informed of all Paul's movements, and the two had many secret interviews.

Now, as has been shown, his career had been cut short, and the imminent danger of arrest had prompted him once more to seek his brother.

Let us see what strange and almost incredible things resulted from that interview in Captain Dagmar's apartments.

CHAPTER II.

CRIME AND ESCAPE.

THE Nevskoi Prospect was astir with busy life when Serge Masloff left his apartment and stepped into the apartments of Andre Dagmar.

With the utmost fearlessness the Nihilist strode along through the crowd, keeping one hand pressed against his breast where the precious document safely reposed, and occasionally letting his other hand stray to his hip pocket as though something of value was concealed there as well. Finally he turned into a quieter street, and at once quickened his pace. Under the ugly blue goggles his eyes were gleaming with satisfaction, and as he walked a certain strange expression to his features in low mutterings that were barely audible to his own ears:

"I have succeeded far better than I dared to hope," he said. "Nothing can thwart my purpose now. Before evening all Russia will ring with my name, and I will be at times to mask my feelings to the reach of the police. As for Andre—sooner or later his part in the affair will be discovered. Poor fool! It is hard that he should suffer. And yet I hate him, the accursed aristocrat! I have always hated him, I think. How difficult was it at times to mask my feelings—and yet it was necessary to retain his favor and good will. But this ends it now. We shall probably never meet again, and yet I am resolved that this exile shall be only temporary. Some day, when the storm blows over, I will return and complete the work that is unfinished."

The approach of several gendarmes caused Serge Masloff to cut short his self-communing, and when those dreaded individuals had gone by he turned into another street, and hurriedly converted to socialist principles, and talked in a manner which hor-

with a stuccoed front. On the first floor was a baker's shop and adjoining the entrance to this was a doorway through which a dark staircase was visible. On the upper floor of this dwelling were the private offices of Colonel Jaroslav, the decorated inspector of the Third Section of Police.

A man in civilian dress, who was lounging carelessly outside, stopped Serge Masloff at the entrance, but at the sight of the stamped document which the latter promptly produced, he quietly motioned him to enter.

Masloff briskly ascended the staircase, and on reaching the narrow hall above he was confronted by a second guard upon whom the document had the same effect.

"Is not your name Feodor?" asked Serge.

"No," replied the man. "It is Ivan."

"Ah, I was mistaken then. You resemble a friend of mine. And how soon can I see the inspector?"

"In a short time, I think. Wait here. I will return at once."

Ivan, who was fearful as his word. He disappeared through a door at the end of the hall and came back in less than two minutes.

"The inspector will see you now," he said. "Go right in." Serge Masloff calmly entered the room and closed the door behind him. The apartment was in the rear of the building and was so dimly lighted by one side window that a lamp was burning on a large desk covered with papers and writing material. Behind the desk, facing those who entered, was Colonel Jaroslav, the man who was feared and hated by all the Nihilists in Russia. He was fifty years of age, with stern, hard face, steel gray eyes, and a closely cropped beard. He wore a full uniform, and a single diamond glittered on a finger of his right hand.

In the room was in keeping with the inmate, void of furniture save a few chairs and a couch. It was dark and cheerless, with bare, grimy walls, and through the gloom a small door was visible against the rear wall.

When Serge Masloff entered the inspector looked sharply up from his writing.

"Well, what is it?" he demanded coldly. "Be quick, for I am busy this morning. You come from Captain Dagmar, I believe."

"Yes," replied Serge, "I have the honor to bring you this," and stepping up to the desk in the full glow of the lamp he laid down the document.

He stood there motionless while the inspector opened the paper and glanced over the contents, nor did his calm bearing afford any indication of the storm of feeling that were surging through his mind.

Colonel Jaroslav read Andre Dagmar's letter to the end, and then, with a brief glance at Serge, but no word of dreaded questioning, he quietly reached for a stamped sheet of paper and began to write, his eyes never leaving the desk.

Serge felt greatly relieved, though he had confidently expected nothing else. Captain Dagmar's place in the Bureau of Police was no insignificant one, and a request for a passport over his signature could arouse no suspicion in the mind of Colonel Jaroslav.

So evidently thought the inspector. It was quite a natural thing for Captain Dagmar to be sending police spies on secret missions, and, as it so happened, the Bureau of Police were even then trying to effect negotiations with their countrymen who had fled to America.

Colonel Jaroslav must have supposed that this affair was connected with that very matter, for without the least hesitation he covered the paper before him with writing, and placed it, carefully folded, in an envelope.

"Well, what do you want," he said, with a careless glance at Serge. "A passport to Berlin in the name of Nicholas Pashua. It will take you through without questioning. You must make haste if you wish to take the noon train. By the way, is your errand connected with the Romanoff affair?"

As this last question left the inspector's lips Serge Masloff had stepped forward and taken the passport in his left hand.

"Yes," he replied, leaning over the desk. "It is the Romanoff affair," and as he spoke his right hand shot swiftly from behind his back, firmly clasping a

short black object with a round top, and a second later it fell with crushing force on Colonel Jaroslava's forehead.

The stricken man threw up his arms with a low moan and sank downward until his feet protruded from under the desk, and his head rested on the back of the chair. A shudder passed through the muscular frame and then all was still. The eyelids dropped and a tiny stream of blood trickled down over them and lost itself in the iron gray beard.

Without a trace of remorse Serge Masloff looked on his murderous work. So confident was he that his victim was dead that he made no further examination.

"It is well," he muttered, as he put the precious passport in his pocket. "The poor wretches in Siberian mines are avenged. And now for escape—that is the most important thing. I shall not breathe easy until the train is writing me and I am in the rear."

Serge Masloff's first move in this direction was a daring one. He walked to the hall door and, pulling it open about an inch, called distinctly, "Ivan!"

"Yes, your honor," came the reply from the head of the staircase.

"Allow no one admittance this morning, Ivan," continued Serge in a harsh stern tone that was an admirable counterfeiter of Colonel Jaroslava's voice. "I shall be occupied with this visitor until past noon—possibly later. See that my orders are carried out."

"Yes, your honor," said the unsuspecting Ivan, "your command shall be obeyed."

Serge quietly closed the door again—not taking the precaution to lock it—and walked over to the desk. Without even glancing at the body of the inspector, which remained in the same attitude, he hastily opened the drawers and picked out a few documents which he stowed away in his pocket. A photograph, turned face upwards, met his eye, and with a half start and a low exclamation of surprise he took possession of this also. Then he stepped to the side of the chair and coolly thrust his hand into the pocket of the inspector's trousers. A smile broke on his face as he drew out a short brass key, and he glanced significantly toward the narrow door in the rear wall. The meaning of that door he knew well, and through it lay his only hope of escape. It was a private exit from the building intended only for the inspector's use, and none but he carried a key to it.

"One thing more," muttered Serge, "and I am ready." He paused and listened for a moment to the sounds of traffic that penetrated the dingy room from the street. Then he took from the desk the letter that Captain Dagmar had given him, and the iron bar with the knob and the key in the end—the weapon that had struck the murderous blow. This latter he put back in his pocket, all bloody as it was—for he knew well that the passport he bore would call for no search of his person—and then, with the letter in his hand, he stepped to the side of the room where a fire of coals was smoldering in an open grate.

He tossed the paper down on this, watched it slowly blacken with the heat, and then, fearing to delay longer lest he should miss his train, he strode to the narrow door, and with a turn of the key flung it open.

A slight draft of cold air entered the room, and catching the half consumed letter, whirled it off the fire and dropped it gently at the very feet of the inspector.

But Serge Masloff did not see this. A sudden panic seemed to have taken hold of him, a horror of the room and its ghastly contents. He stepped through the door, closed and locked it, putting the key in his pocket, and then he went his way down the dark steep staircase thrusting out his hands nervously to prevent a fall.

He reached the bottom and traversed a long, narrow hall. A door, bolted from within, gave access to a private alley, hedged in by massive brick walls between which, in the dark, a strip of blue sky was visible. The alley terminated in a great iron gate. Here the key was called into need again, but before using it Serge Masloff put his blue goggles in his pocket and added to his black moustache a false beard of the same color.

Carefully locking the iron gate behind him he pushed on through a dirty, squalid street, encountering none but a few beggars, and a moment or two later he entered a more important thoroughfare which led him in a short time to the Nevskoi Prospekt. Here he sought a clothing bazar, and purchased a long cloak of light material—for the weather was unusually cool even for April—which he paid for from a purse that seemed to be well stocked with rubles and banknotes. Then he hailed a drosky that happened by, and was driven rapidly away.

At five minutes to twelve o'clock Serge Masloff—now Nicholas Pashua—was deposited at the Warsaw terminus, and promptly on the stroke of noon the Berlin Express whirled out of the station on its long journey to the Russian frontier.

CHAPTER III. LEFT BEHIND.

AT two o'clock in the afternoon of the same day on which occurred the events related in the foregoing chapter, Donald Chumleigh purchased a through ticket to St. Petersburg on the Berlin railway station, and was shortly shown to a sleeping berth in the Warsaw Express, by an obsequious porter who walked ahead of him carrying his valise and bundle of wraps.

As Mr. Chumleigh is destined to be dealt with in the further narration of this story but brief space need be given him at the present time. He was an American—a resident of Philadelphia—and was about to visit Russia after an absence of twelve years. Mr. Chumleigh's parents were both dead, his mother having died five years before and his father two years later. In his early life Mr. Chumleigh, senior, had resided in St. Petersburg, where he conducted a large and profitable mercantile business. There Donald was born, and there he lived until he was ten years old, when his parents, who were even then elderly people, returned to America and settled quietly down in the city of Philadelphia.

Donald's education had been begun in the Russian capital—where by the way he learned to speak the language fluently—and on his return to the United States he was first put in care of a tutor, then sent to a preparatory school, and finally to one of the leading American colleges, from which he graduated with high honors at the age of twenty-one. During these years he kept up his knowledge of the Russian language by constant study, and, whenever possible, by conversing with those who spoke it. Little did he dream of the disastrous and yet fortunate part it was destined to play in his after life.

At the age of twenty-two years of age, tall, well built, with light hair and moustache, ruddy cheeks, and a pleasing, attractive face. He was a fitting type of the better class of young Americans, generous, open hearted, and possessing a broad knowledge of the world, acquired partly from his reading, and partly from his travels, which during the past year had been confined to his own country.

His father's death and his subsequent coming of age had placed him in possession of a fairly comfortable income, and now, after a few weeks spent in London and Paris, he was going to St. Petersburg to see the home of his childhood, which he still remembered clearly, and to visit several old friends of his father. It was his intention to return to America in the fall and devote himself to the study of law, for which he had a decided taste. His income was sufficient to make him independent, but he felt that a life of idleness would be uncongenial to him.

One little incident in his past life must not be omitted here, though Donald himself has long since forgotten it, and indeed, never did regard it of much importance, even at the time of its occurrence. It was in the summer of 1887, when Donald was just about completing his sophomore year at college, that he was summoned home by what proved to be the mortal illness of his father, who was then seventy-five years of age. He had been stricken by paralysis, and when Donald arrived late in the evening his power of speech was almost gone. But he recognized his son, instantly and beckoned him to his side.

"The package!" he muttered brokenly. "Take care—of it. Look in the secretary—the top drawer. Your name is on it."

Those were the last intelligible words that Mr. Chumleigh spoke. He died twenty-four hours later, and when, during the subsequent week, Donald and his guardian had occasion to open the secretary—which stood in an apartment adjoining Mr. Chumleigh's bed room—no packet was to be found, nor did a thorough search reveal its presence in the house.

Suspicion fell on the butler, a middle aged man with a smooth shaven face, and dark eyes and hair, who had been in Mr. Chumleigh's employ for six months previous to his death. His nationality was not known, but he gave his name as John Martin, and though his appearance was far from prepossessing, he was always a faithful servant, and moreover he came to Mr. Chumleigh with excellent recommendations.

John Martin chanced to be in the sick room on the night that Mr. Chumleigh spoke of the package, and two days later he disappeared leaving not a trace behind him. Donald was convinced that in some manner something had been secreted and abstracted the packet. He caused a search to be made, which at first proved unavailing, but nearly a month later it was learned that a man answering to the description of John Martin had taken passage from New York to Liverpool shortly after Mr. Chumleigh's death.

Donald allowed the matter to drop and gave it no further attention. He believed that the package contained something of monetary value—such as a note or check, or perhaps something in the nature of family heirlooms, jewels, as likely as not. Whatever the contents, they certainly were worth stealing at all events, for at the time of John Martin's disappearance nearly a month's wages were due him.

But Mr. Chumleigh's property, which went to his son without reserve, was of ample dimensions, and so the possible financial loss incurred by the theft of the packet did not cause Donald any distress.

Three days after the death of Mr. Chumleigh the following paragraph appeared in one of the leading New York dailies:

It was rumored at the Russian Legation today that Pierre Valbort, one of the most prominent nihilists of St. Petersburg, had nearly been shot in the city last evening by one who knew him well and recognized him in spite of a complete disguise. Investigation failed to confirm the rumor.

This paragraph did not meet Donald Chumleigh's eye, nor, had he chanced to see it, would he have dreamed for an instant that it could have any possible connection with the lost packet.

So much for Donald Chumleigh's personal history. Now let us follow him on his journey from Berlin to the Russian frontier. Although much fatigued—the result of a round of sight seeing in the German capital during the past few days—he did not go to sleep but propped himself comfortably by the window and sat there all afternoon watching the flat, monotonous landscape pass which the express train sped swiftly. About nine o'clock in the evening he fell asleep, and did not wake until the train reached the vast frontier station of Wirballen an hour after midnight. Here a change of cars and a short interval of waiting were necessary.

In company with other travelers he entered the brilliantly lighted terminus, which was crowded with people of various nationalities, all clamoring for refreshment in a babel of tongues. The buffet was laden with bottles of wine, cases of *vodka* and brandy, dishes of caviare, raw herrings, pickled fish, salted cucumbers, and countless other viands.

Donald contented himself with a slight lunch, and passed into the adjoining waiting room, where his luggage was overhauled and his passport viewed by the custom officers. He knew that in less than half an hour the St. Petersburg train would be ready, but a sudden and overpowering drowsiness proved more than he was able to cope with, and he was swooning away in a corner of one of the hard benches.

As soon as the St. Petersburg train

was made up the railway porter summoned the waiting travelers, and in the rush that ensued Donald was unnoticed. With a sharp clanging of bells and a rumbling of the train moved swiftly out of the terminus.

Five minutes later Donald woke up with a start and was angry enough to quarrel with his own shadow when he discovered what had taken place during his brief nap, though he little dreamed then of the fatal consequences that were to result from his carelessness.

Repressing a strong desire to knock down the porter, he inquired when the next train left, and on being informed that none would start until nearly noon of the following day, he gathered up his traps and left the station with the intention of finding a hotel—if Wirballen could boast such a luxury.

He entered the gloomy street—lit by a cheerless row of gas lamps—and looked round for a conveyance. Only one was in sight, a rickety baggage covered carriage on four wheels. It was backed up against the curb, and close by, leaning against a convenient post, was the driver. His shabby attire harmonized well with his vehicle, and when Donald approached the man he detected a strong odor of *vodka*.

"Carriage, your honor?" asked the Russian huskily.

Donald hesitated a moment. He could not afford to be particular, for this was the only conveyance at hand. "Can you take me to a good hotel?" he asked.

"Certainly, your honor," replied the man, making an effort to stand straight. "I'll take you to Hotel Moscow—best place in Wirballen, only charge you two rubles."

"All right," replied Donald. He tossed his luggage into the carriage as the fellow opened the door for him, and was about to step in himself when his attention was arrested by the steady tramp of feet. As he turned half round ten men wearing the uniform of the Russian police strode down the pavement, and after a keen glance at Donald they passed into the station.

"They're after some poor rascal," muttered the driver.

Donald, however, paid but little attention to the circumstance.

He sprang into the carriage and closed the door, and a moment later the vehicle was rumbling up the deserted street. It had not proceeded more than twenty yards when half a dozen mounted Cossacks dashed by, and as Donald leaned forward to get a better view of what they were he saw the flashing lights of a train as it rolled into the terminus from the direction of St. Petersburg.

For nearly half an hour the carriage turned in and out through a succession of gloomy streets, and at length Donald began to grow impatient to watch the train as he saw the flashing lights of a train as it rolled into the terminus from the direction of St. Petersburg.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE STRANGER AT THE BRIDGE.

WE must return for a brief interval to Serge Masloff. He occupied a sleeping berth in the rear coach of the Berlin express, and during the long ride from St. Petersburg he

Wep't none of the time, for his passport gave him a sense of perfect security, and he believed himself as safe as though he were already in Paris.

About midnight—knowing that Wirballen was not many miles distant—he slipped on his coat and sat by the window. For the first time a vague feeling of danger oppressed him, and when he tried in vain to back off and feel the train at length began to slacken speed in a locality which Masloff recognized by certain landmarks as the outskirts of Wirballen, he forced open the window by his side with a trembling hand and leaned out.

It was well for him that he did so. Less than one hundred yards ahead the track was crossed by one of the suburban streets—a fact which was indicated by a glimmering row of gas jets—and at the point of intersection stood a man waving a red lantern, the light of which shone faintly on a group of horsemen drawn up by the side of the track.

Like a flash Serge Masloff comprehended the situation, incredible as it seemed. His crime and escape even his real identity were known to the police, and now they were stopping the train on the outskirts of Wirballen—as is often done in such cases—so that his arrest could be effected secretly.

He did not pause to think what error could have led to his destruction. It was not until long afterward that he remembered the letter he had tossed so carelessly on the fire. He knew that he had blundered somewhere—that the Cossacks waiting for the appearance of the train were acting on the signals flashed over the wires from St. Petersburg, and as desperate situations require desperate action—he squeezed hurriedly through the window of the coach, clung by his hands for an instant, and then dropped.

The train was still moving but he landed unhurt by the side of the track, and rising to his feet, plunged at once into the friendly gloom, hearing behind him as he ran a shout from some one on the coach he had just left—probably one of the trainmen.

A moment later the long line of coaches came to a full stop, and after a brief interval of silence the furious clatter of hoofs echoed on the hard ground. All doubt was now gone. The Cossacks had discovered the daring escape of their intended prisoner, and were separating to search the vicinity.

Serge Masloff ran swiftly away from the track for a distance of fifty yards or more, and then turned sharply to the left, hoping to check the Cossacks' pursuit. The stratagem was successful. He crouched low as half a dozen Cossacks dashed by, and then ran on toward the distant lights of the town, for he knew that in Wirballen lay his only safety. He had intended there who would hide him for a time—if he could only find them.

Several times the scattered horsemen came very close, but he covered half a mile without detection, and finally gained the edge of a deep ravine through which flowed a shallow stream. He plunged down into the bed of this without hesitation, and followed its course toward the town, now wading breast deep in the water, now scrambling through the growth of bushes that lined the foot of the steep bank.

This breathing spell gave him an opportunity to think over the situation, and his heart sank at the gloomy prospect that faced him. He knew that the police would scour the surrounding country and search Wirballen high and low for such a famous criminal as Serge Masloff. Even now he was penned up like a rat in a trap, and unless he could find some one to befriend him and offer him a hiding place he must surely be caught.

But the chances were terribly against him. At this time of night he could not find the few men whom he knew in Wirballen—he did not even know their addresses. He dared not go to the railway station, for he was well aware that it would be closely watched, and he did not believe that the police, as has been already shown, the authorities took the extra precaution of sending gendarmes and Cossacks there to meet the incoming train, in case the signal to stop on the outskirts should be given. Moreover—the police, suitably disguised—could not hope to cross the frontier

without a passport. The one he had in his possession now was useless.

The prospect was black as midnight. Speedy arrest and punishment stared Serge Masloff in the face, and he inwardly anathematized himself for the stupidity—though he knew not what it was—that had thwarted his plans.

The prospect was black as midnight when the two banks of the ravine gave place to built up walls of masonry—a sign that the stream was approaching the limits of the town. Beyond him he could see the shadowy outlines of several bridges, and the distant glimmer of street lamps. He knew that he would not get so far, so he cautiously waded to the first bridge and climbed to the top of the wall by means of the cavities in the stones. He sat there for a moment in the shadow of the parapet listening to the distant clatter of hoofs that came from the street in front. For the present he was safe. The Cossacks had failed to track him.

All at once the rumble of wheels was heard coming closer and closer. The fugitive peered over the top of the parapet to see the approaching carriage. He smiled grimly when the carriage struck the other end of the parapet, and when the horse tore from the shaft and ran madly up the road he followed the animal with his eyes until it vanished in the gloom.

He saw Donald Chumleigh climb out of the wrecked carriage with his valise and wraps in his hand, and that instant an idea so daring as to be little short of madness flashed into Serge Masloff's mind.

"The man is a traveler," he muttered aloud. "I wonder if he has a passport!"

Quick as the inspiration seized him he rose to his feet, circled round the end of the parapet, and walked swiftly over the bridge towards the carriage. To Donald the appearance of this stranger was a welcome sight. He was sleepy and tired and wanted to reach a hotel, but he did not know where to find one, nor could he rely on the intoxicated driver for information. His pressing need banished the customary sense of prudence which under other circumstances would have asserted itself at meeting a stranger in this lonely spot and at such an hour.

As the man drew near Donald was favorably impressed by his appearance. He was of about the same build as himself and neatly dressed—though the fact that his clothes were wet escaped Donald's observation in the semi-darkness.

"I have met with an accident," said Donald. "My stupid driver seems to have lost his way. I am an American, and was passing through Wirballen on my way to St. Petersburg. I was so unfortunate as to miss my train. My driver is trying to find the Hotel Moscow, but I don't believe he knows where it is. Can you guide me to it? I am sorry to trouble you at such a time of night, but my need is very urgent, for I am a stranger here."

"Yes," said Masloff briefly. "I think I can assist you. But you speak the Russian tongue very plainly for an American—pardon me for saying so."

"I learned it years ago," replied Donald candidly. "I lived in St. Petersburg at one time. My name is Chumleigh—Donald Chumleigh."

At the mention of this name Masloff started violently. He tried to speak, but though his lips moved no words came. Donald did not observe the stranger's agitation.

"Yes," said Masloff briefly. "I think I can assist you. But you speak the Russian tongue very plainly for an American—pardon me for saying so."

"I learned it years ago," replied Donald candidly. "I lived in St. Petersburg at one time. My name is Chumleigh—Donald Chumleigh."

brings the horse back in a reasonable time," he said. "I am afraid to trust him again, though he appears to be sober enough now."

"I will gladly do you that service," replied Masloff.

He came a step nearer and then paused. The driver was out of sight and hearing by this time, but the silence of night was disturbed by vague noises that seemed to come from different directions—a soft pounding like the distant patter of hoofs.

"There seems to be quite a commotion in the town," remarked Donald, "and something unusual must be going on."

"Yes," said Masloff in a low voice, "you are right. Something is the matter."

He glanced uneasily up and down the street, and then made a sudden rapid movement toward Donald—a movement so menacing in its nature that the latter instantly suspected some foul design on the part of the stranger, and tried to escape by dodging around the carriage.

Too late! With an agile bound Masloff had his victim by the throat. Donald uttered one low choking cry, and then he was hurled backward against the parapet of the bridge.

(To be continued.)

LIFE'S PRECIOUSNESS.

LIFE is too short for any bitter feeling; Time is the best avenger, if we wait; The years speed by, and on their wings we have no room for any little hate.

This solemn truth the low mounds seem revealing That thick and fast about our feet are stealing.

Life is too short.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

[This Story began in Number 450.]

THE CHINESE CONSPIRACY;

OR,

A Naval Cadet's Adventures in the Celestial Empire

BY ENRIQUE H. LEWIS,

Author of "The Adventures of Two Naval Apprentices," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXX.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

LAWRENCE seized the rifle, but before he had time to aim it, a cheery voice called their names and Mr. Dalton stepped into view followed by a native clad in the rough blue farming costume used in the interior districts of the empire.

"Hey! Lawrence; Charlie; where are—Ah! on the alert, eh? No need for that now, I am glad to say. I found my friend and he is delighted to be of any service to us. He sent this cooly to show the way to one of his farmhouses, only a short distance from here."

The old man's face was wreathed in smiles and he bustled about from one to the other in a fatherly way delightful to see.

"What about the trouble with the natives? Any signs of an uprising?" asked Lawrence, rather anxiously.

"No; it has not reached here yet; but I am sorry to say that we are not entirely clear from those rascally thieves yet," replied Dalton gravely. "Their influence is very great in this neighborhood, and from what my friend told me, I believe that our best plan will be to lose no time in leaving this vicinity. I have made all arrangements to set out just as soon as it is dark, but now we will go with this man to the house I have spoken of."

"What about a guide?" suggested the middle, as they started from their late hiding place.

"He has provided a trustworthy man who knows the mountain roads like a book. He will see us as far as Changteh, and after that we shall have to manage for ourselves."

"I suppose we can get something to eat at this place?" ventured Charlie, with an eye to creature comforts.

"Great Scott! Are you thinking of food?" exclaimed Lawrence, pretending to be highly indignant, although to tell the truth, his own internal economy had begun to draw up a protest some time before. "You will be able to get food spontaneously until nightfall," replied Mr. Dalton; "and, another thing, we will attend to that

shoulder of yours. A few 'sanki' herbs placed on the wound for a couple of hours ought to be sufficient to give you relief."

"I think he prefers a few 'herbs' of another class placed in his mouth," laughed the middle. "Charlie will stand all the lead outside without much complaint, if you only keep him well fortified in his central citadel."

"There is more truth than poetry in that remark," acknowledged Travis, returning his friend's merry glance. "But people differ, some live on such a steady diet as plain beef and bread, while others require the more solid food of love. As the canny Scot says: 'Every de'il Mun roe his ain canoe—see the point?' and Charlie laughed heartily at his atrocious pun.

The shot told and Lawrence suddenly became absorbed in a view of the far distant crags above them. Mr. Dalton looked from one to the other in wonder, but asked no questions. He was glad to see so much gaiety, something he had been a stranger to for a month. Care was taken by the little party to keep within the shadows of the trees and, as an extra precaution, the men who had been invited to give a helping in case of a chance encounter threatening.

After a walk of several miles, he returned to the rest and, receiving certain instructions from Mr. Dalton, disappeared in the brush. The old man explained that he wished to see everything clear before venturing into the farmhouse, and for that reason he had dispatched the guide ahead.

Presently the native reappeared and beckoned them to follow. They were still in the wood, but it had grown less dense, and an occasional open space, showing evident marks of the axe, indicated the vicinity of the town. The last half mile had been in a downward direction and in many places the ground became quite level. A few scattered tea trees, scraggy and uncultivated, disputed the spots with divers patches of corn, no less disreputable in appearance, and after passing through some a trifle larger the party saw a primitive building in front of them.

It was not a very palatial mansion. A goody share of the walls was formed by the slope of the mountain, against which it was constructed. In fact it seemed to the middle very similar to the aboriginal "dugouts" he had seen among the Indians in New Mexico, although in the present case bamboo formed the material, and moreover had the ground become quite level. A few scattered tea trees, scraggy and uncultivated, disputed the spots with divers patches of corn, no less disreputable in appearance, and after passing through some a trifle larger the party saw a primitive building in front of them.

"This is only a shelter for the farm coolies," explained Mr. Dalton, as they approached, "but it will answer our purpose just as well as a house in the town."

"Better than the ground became quite level. A few scattered tea trees, scraggy and uncultivated, disputed the spots with divers patches of corn, no less disreputable in appearance, and after passing through some a trifle larger the party saw a primitive building in front of them."

"Oh, we can manage that much, and furthermore, I have obtained a couple of big pistols with plenty of ammunition from my friend. They might come in handy."

"That reminds me of my revolver," remarked Charlie with a frown. "Those sons of Bael stole it, confound them, together with everything else I had."

By this time the entrance to the cabin was reached and the first thing followed by the native, who, first, however, carefully scrutinized the surrounding country from an elevated spot above.

The interior consisted of only one room, dimly lighted by several small horn windows let into the roof. Of furniture there was none save two common bunks and a few odds and ends scattered about, such as a broken stool, a pile of skins in the corner, and the inevitable Joss in his gaudy shrine, which latter can easily be classed among the *larses* and *penates*. The absence of adornments did not affect the party; they were all glad to sit down on the hard beds and revel in temporary ease.

The cooly busied himself in preparing a simple meal of rice and dried vegetables which he cooked over a fire outside the door. The eyes of all three watched him with keen interest, and, be it acknowledged, the coming repast was not criticised from a qualitative standpoint.

After the meal was completed Charlie's wound was dressed, and the party settled down for a comfortable time until night. They slept by turns, as it was considered

best for one to remain on watch in case the robbers had managed to face them. Mr Dalton dispatched the native to his friend at noon, stating that all had reached the hut in safety and were prepared to set out at dark.

Their present quarters were some distance from frequented roads, and the afternoon waned without alarm. About sundown the Chinaman returned, accompanied by two others, one of whom Mr Dalton greeted as his friend. He was a benevolent faced native, dressed in modest garments, and, by his mode of salutation and the use of the Christian "*Ping-an*" (Peace be with you), proclaimed that he was a convert of the missionary party.

The other man was introduced as the guide, and Lawrence looked curiously at the future leader of their destinies. He was a typical mountaineer—stalwart framed, with a bold and rugged face, and clad in the loose fitting costume of the tribe. To the middle, who had only been accustomed to the diminutive natives of the coast, this Celestial giant was a revelation, but, withal, pleasing and of good promise.

Another meal was partaken of with relish, and a quantity of rice for consumption during the first part of the journey was packed in convenient parcels. Then each and every one of the three bade a hearty good by to their kind host, and tried by word and action to show their appreciation of his timely aid. Mr Dalton promised to communicate with him when they had reached the coast and, with much waving of hands and God speeds, they left him standing at the door of his farmhouse, grateful for the opportunity to befriend fellow men.

It was rapidly growing dark; already the course of their journey, leading by forests of mountain pines, was deeply shaded, and the party stepped on to a hanging, heaving the numerous snares of rotten trunks and treacherous soil. No conversation was indulged in save an occasional word in undertones, and when at last the guide led them to a well paved road, they returned deep thanks for the mercy.

Through the night, until the small hours gave luminous warning of the sun's near approach, the native trudged on. Now following the winding course of a mountain stream, or at sundry moments venturing on beaten paths for greater speed, then climbing the steep and rugged side of some Titanic mountain until poor Charlie gasped and groaned in anguish of spirit, and at last, on restful period! he led his tired followers to the rustic sylvan glade where they hugged the stretch of leafy carpet in blissful repose.

Little need of further description. One day followed another, bringing no peril greater than those befalling all travelers. They halted at stated intervals for the proper storage of human necessities, and rested in the shade of the cool sylvan glades of man, and under the skillful direction of their guide, at last reached a spot at the edge of a sandy plain, from which could be seen, in the fading rays of the setting sun, a score of sparkling points—the tiled roofs of Changteh. Then he left them and retraced his way, laden with the grateful applause of the party.

Mr Dalton felt at home. He knew the environs of the city fairly well, so he took the lead and in good time discovered the banks of the Yuen where it makes its tribute to Lake Tungting. A close search of several hours, made longer by the darkness, at last brought them to the place where Charlie said he had left the launch. It was a likely spot, a short distance from the river's mouth, and showed shrewd judgment in selection, but to the utter dismay of the party it bore on its placid bosom no sign of the boat, and, when Charlie tuned his voice in anxious hail, he received answer only in mocking echoes—it was gone!

CHAPTER XXXI.

"IT IS THE PALOS."

"WHAT ON earth shall we do now?" asked Charlie in tones of the deepest distress and amazement. And he voiced the combined feelings of all three. They were dumfounded; disappointed beyond measure at finding the launch, their objective point and hope for many a weary mile, gone from their moorings.

"Are you certain this is the place?" questioned Lawrence eagerly. "May be it is farther along the shore?"

"No; this is the little cove. I know it from that island out there," pointing to a

black smudge against the star lit sky a short distance away; "it partially hides the lights of Changteh. It was just that the trees are bushy that I left it. Que couldn't have started for Shanghai. He had the most positive orders to wait twenty days for me, and it has only been twelve up to this evening."

"Probably he was compelled to leave on account of the supposed disturbances among the natives, as you mentioned in the cave?" suggested Mr Dalton.

"That might be," replied Charlie reflectively. "Although I don't think he would desert me even in that case. He is a very shrewd Chinaman, and it would take an overwhelming force to drive him away from here. But nevertheless the fact remains that he is gone, and we are almost as badly off as before. The question is, how are we going to reach the coast?"

Since arriving in the vicinity of Changteh they had been very careful to avoid all natives, from fear that the rumors of an uprising had proven true. Of course, occasional meetings with the inhabitants of the rural districts had taken place, but in each case both parties to the encounter beat a hasty retreat, a not very surprising fact considering the extremely warlike appearance of the three foreigners. Lawrence still retained his rifle, and the others were armed with ancient pistols of a caliber and size formidable enough to strike terror into the hearts of all beholders, including those handling the weapons.

They were still uncertain as to whether they would be molested in the cities, and as an experiment might lead to fatal results they preferred the ignorance to the experience. Mr Dalton had tried on one occasion to elicit the desired information from a lonely native met that very evening, but all the answers he received was in the shape of prayers for mercy, interposed with much Buddhist ceremonies. Their former guide, the mountaineer, did not have any better success with previous inquiries, but he ascertained enough to make it extremely probable.

"I wouldn't care if we had our feet on the deck of the American Eagle," said Charlie with a sigh. "There are two good revolvers and a shot gun in her cabin, and enough ammunition to last a week."

"Well, what had we better do?" queried Lawrence, turning from a regretful contemplation of the empty waters before him. "Standing here won't take us to the coast."

"As you are probably aware, I have business acquaintances in Changteh. How would it do for me to try and see some of them?" remarked Mr Dalton suggestively, "I might—"

Lawrence placed his hand on the old man's arm in instant warning. He had heard a suspicious noise in a mass of underbrush a couple of yards to the right. It sounded like the crackling of dry twigs, rendered plainly distinct by the silence of the night. After giving the warning he cocked his rifle and crept softly towards the spot, followed by the rest. But the click of the lock preceded him, and to their surprise a shrill voice came from the bushes: "Hi, Master Travis, Master Travis; it's me—Ope!"

"By the—!" Charlie did not complete his exclamation, but, rushing ahead, hauled out a Chinese boy from the black shadows, and led him in triumph to his companions.

"This is Ope, the servant on the launch," cried the delighted youth. "Glory to goodness! we'll learn something now," then turning to Ope he asked in rapid tones: "Where is the American Eagle and Que? Why aren't they here to meet me? Quick, before I eat you!"

The threat did not alarm the boy very much, but he answered with sufficient rapidity to satisfy their impatience: "She hiding two, tee mile away. Come!" The laconic youth abruptly turned and marched off, almost passing out of sight before his astounded audience understood what he meant. However, Charlie quickly explained and they followed closely on the heels of their new guide. As they went along Travis tried to find out the why and wherefore of the launch's removal, but only received the oft repeated answer "Ask Que," to every question.

For several minutes, then striking inland a short distance, suddenly turned to the left past a paddy field, and silently conducted the wondering party to where, snugly moored in a narrow creek, lay the object of

their devout hopes—the steam launch American Eagle.

The Chinese lad bade them halt for a moment, then, creeping down to the water's edge, called out several times in a peculiar dialect. Not receiving an immediate answer, he picked up a pebble and cast it with unerring aim against the brass smokestack. It struck with a sharp clang, and the expectant watchers saw a man rush out of the cabin in hot haste.

Ope lost no time in explaining, and in a very few seconds the figure on the after deck jumped into a small sampan riding astern, and pulled to the shore. It required two trips to transfer the entire party, but when at last all were encased in the little boat, its four walls held a very happy crowd. Charlie immediately pointed out the ladder to the obedient Ope and directed him to bring forth its wealth of eatables. All the curtains were drawn down and the lamp lighted; then, while they feasted, Travis questioned Que between enormous mouthfuls.

"What made you shift from that other place? Give me some more bread, Ope; er—yes, and how about the native trouble around—bread! you yellow cat; what are you grinning about? Ah! just to think that we have ham again. It makes one feel like a Christian. How much coal have you, Que? When can we get away from here? Where's Peke? His foot (bite) have we (bite) remaining in the (bite) locker?"

The grave faced Chinaman silently waited until Charlie's mouth was so full that he could ask no further questions, and then replied in his usual quick, jerky fashion: "Two day ago, bad men, thieves, Wong-si-ko, came wanted to steal Melican Eagle. Had fight; licked 'em; moved launch. Peke sleep, sleep all the time. Hab plenty grub left." He stopped and waited for more queries.

"Thieves of the Wong-si-ko band here?" exclaimed Charlie, looking gravely at the others. "Ah! I'll wager they came to see about us. Did they ask any questions?"

"No time; fight allie while; took ten, twenty minutes to lick 'em. Shoot one in neck, him dead. Took launch away and lidde pretty quick."

"It's a pity you didn't shoot them all in the neck; but you haven't said whether the natives along the river are in revolt against the foreigners; how is that? And how much coal have you?"

To the first question, Que replied that some few rows had taken place further down and also that those living in Changteh and adjacent cities had moved to the coast as a precaution, but the government was actively engaged in quelling the riots and a clear passage to Shanghai was now possible. As for coal, he had enough to take them to Wuchang, where more could be obtained.

"When we will start tomorrow, as sure as the sun shines," exclaimed Charlie, rising from his seat at the table, and executing an impromptu jig in the limited space near the door. "Whoop! No more trouble, Larry; a free passage to Shanghai. Shake hands, Mr Dalton; that's it, a good grip. All hands around—Ope, trot out your Joss and let him look upon the three happiest Americans that ever stepped in shoe leather."

"Just restrain your exuberance until we reach the middle of the lake, Charlie," said Lawrence, laughing heartily at his friend's antics nevertheless. "I have no stomach for another bout with the gang tonight. I would much rather enjoy a good sleep on board in peace and quietness."

It was considered good advice, and they speedily retired to sweet repose, only interrupted by much dreaming of the morrow and its impending joys. Que and Ope kept watch and watch until the cold gray light of the coming day proclaimed the hour of departure. Peke was aroused with much difficulty, but when his leaden eyelids were at last pried open, he started a fire in the little boiler in short order.

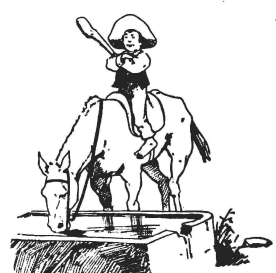
The sun was just showing an inquisitive ray above the far horizon when the American Eagle emerged from the friendly seclusion of the creek and shaped a course for the distant Yangtze-kiang. Lawrence and the rest were up betimes, and, standing on the after deck, saw the low shores of the lake fade away, unregretted.

various merchants were returning one by one to their different homes, and long before Nanking was reached trade had resumed its usual peaceful channels.

At the latter city each fitted himself out in garments more befitting the eyes of civilization, so when at last the launch arrived in sight of Woosung the Familiar, the group of three on her deck looked not unlike a returning pleasure party, which shows that appearances are deceiving, and in this case a delusion of the first water.

As they neared the city, Lawrence remarked a vessel riding at anchor some distance from shore. Something about the trimness of her upper rigging, quick to catch the nautical eye, attracted his immediate attention, and, as he looked, he saw with conflicting emotion the stars and stripes floating from her mizen gaff. A second glance revealed certain distinguishing marks here and there; the decided rake of the fore topmast; an individuality about the slinging of the boats, and other innumerable signs by which one learned in the lore can name a vessel while yet only a confused mass of marine architecture to the landsman.

"It is the *Palos*," he said, and so it proved. (To be continued.)



I. TOMMY starts for a ride and stops at a roadside trough to water his horse.



II. Tommy thinks he is taking a pretty long drink.



III. The horse still refusing to give up, something else gives way, giving Tommy a scare.

A DOUBTFUL HERO.

BY H. F. CHANDLER.

"BUT we don't have equinoctial storms any more. At least not on the twenty first. They've gone out of fashion along with William Tell, Pocahontas, and other old timers. So you see there won't be the least bit of danger."

"Thus Ned Wilford pleaded with his mother for permission to go off on the schooner yacht Mischief with the Felt boys, who wanted to make a little run from Shoreham around to Shelter Island and back. The Mischief was a "perfect beauty," as Ned enthusiastically described her. She had run into Shoreham the night before from an extended cruise, and created quite a stir among the guests at the Bluff House.

Inside of half an hour Ned discovered that he had gone to school one winter with Percy and Louis Felt, and the result of the renewed intimacy was the invitation which was just now giving Mrs. Wilford so much concern.

"If Mr. Felt was going along," she said, "it would be different; but the idea of you three boys going off alone." "Alone! Oh mother," broke in Ned. "Don't I tell you that the Mischief had a crew of fourteen people, and as for its being any safer with Mr. Felt along, why he doesn't know any more about sailing a boat than he does of running a railroad to the moon. Captain Irving is as cautious as a grandmother, so there isn't a particle of danger, and we'll be back day after tomorrow."

Ned was the only boy, indeed the only male in the family, for his father had been dead many years, and for this reason his mother found it hard to refuse him anything he asked for. Hence when the trim gig belonging to the Mischief pulled out from the landing place in front of the hotel, Ned was seated in the stern seats next to Percy Felt, looking perfectly happy.

Among those gathered on the little pier to see them off was Clarence St. Clair. Mr. St. Clair was the exquisite, the beau, the leader of the Shoreham summer colony Four Hundred. Or at least he was all this in his own opinion. If dancing was mentioned he was immediately reminded of a most elegant ball he had attended once at the Casino in Newport; if horses were the subject of conversation he always had some story to tell about a wonderful runaway adventure in which he had saved an arrow from one to three lives and narrowly escaped losing his own; and as for yachting, it would be difficult for the Bluff House people to keep track of the number of times he had cruised to Bar Harbor, Bermuda, Halifax, and other remote points, on board boats which were "perfect floating palaces."

"Mr. St. Clair doesn't look to be twenty," Fanny Wilford observed one day, "and how he can have got all these experiences into his short life, passes my comprehension."

"Oh, that's easily enough accounted for," said Ned. "You know imagination can cover the whole earth in a second of time."

On the Felts' arrival St. Clair had worked hard to get into their good graces, rushing to get chairs for them on the piazza, offering to procure their mail, and seeking to bestow other attentions on the yacht owner's family, the cause for which was perfectly obvious to all, while the effect was directly the contrary to that which he hoped to produce. The Felts resented his officiousness as intrusive, and snubbed him unmercifully, and when he heard that Ned, whom he had persistently ignored as only "a small boy," had been invited to take a trip

in the Mischief, his cup of bitterness was full.

He stood there now on the pier with folded arms and knitted brows, looking out fixedly straight past the yacht to the point where sea and Sound joined.

"I think we are going to have a storm," he remarked, suddenly turning around and addressing himself to Mrs. Wilford. "You know the equinoctial is about due now."

The color left Mrs. Wilford's cheeks for an instant, and she was about to reply, when Fanny, thrusting her hand through her mother's arm, drew her quickly away.

"The hateful wretch," she exclaimed. "He knows you're anxious about Ned. He just said it to make you feel bad. I shan't ever speak to him again."

It seemed as if Miss Fanny would not have an opportunity to address Clarence St. Clair whether she wished to or not. After the departure of the Mischief he held himself aloof from everybody, made a point of going in to meals when there was no



"IF I ONLY HAD ANOTHER OAR!" SPOKE UP ST. CLAIR.

one else at his table, and endeavored in other ways to show that he was offended.

But nobody minded this and it is probable that Clarence St. Clair would have completely faded out of the recollection of the Wilfords had it not been for the breaking out of a big storm on the afternoon of September 22.

This was the day the Mischief was expected back, and nearly all the morning Fanny and her mother had paced back and forth on the long piazza, keeping an eager gaze seaward. But although they saw many sails, none of them turned out to belong to the trim yacht whose reappearance they were so anxiously expecting.

It was blowing hard from the north at breakfast time, and before noon the wind veered around partly to the east, and it began to rain in fits and starts, scarcely more than mist. The Felts had gone over to Milton, and were not expected back till the following day, so Mrs. Wilford and Fanny had no one to share their keen anxiety.

Of course their friends at the hotel assured them that there was not the least danger with so large and staunch a yacht as the Mischief. Still these were but words, words which could not be heard out there on the piazza, unless shouted, for the whistling of the gale as it increased in force with each passing minute.

At last it was no longer possible to remain outside, so the harassed looking mother and daughter adjourned to the parlor, where they sat by one of the windows looking out on the water through the long afternoon.

"Oh, they certainly couldn't have started, or they'd have been here long

before this," said Colonel Yard. "Captain Irving probably knew that the storm would soon break, and has dropped anchor in some snug harbor between this and the Manhattan. So make yourself perfectly easy about Ned, Mrs. Wilford."

Nevertheless, Ned's mother did not make herself perfectly easy. Although she said nothing about it, she felt that if the Mischief had come to anchor in some such snug harbor as the colonel had described, her boy would certainly have sent her a telegram announcing the fact.

At length it grew so dark that nothing was to be seen from the window except now and then the white spray dashed up over the cliffs.

Then Mrs. Wilford and Fanny went up stairs to their room, and when their gas was lighted Mrs. Wilford stepped across the hall to Ned's apartment just opposite. She lighted the burner here, and turned down the cover of the bed just as if she expected him to come in at any moment. Then through misty eyes she gave one look around the true boy's room, with its

"Oh, Miss Fanny," he exclaimed, "I was looking for the oars. What are you doing here?"

"We want to see for ourselves," the girl replied. "Show us where the yacht is."

"Come!" he said, and dashed off into the darkness, closely followed by Mrs. Wilford and Fanny.

It had stopped raining, but the wind was still blowing a gale. Both the women were hatless, but they thought of nothing, cared for nothing but the schooner which the next moment burst on their view as they rounded a point of rocks. She was strutting wildly on the waves, her masts clearly outlined against a bright spot in the sky where the moon was striving to break through. It seemed as if nothing could save her.

There was a boat hauled up on the shore almost at their feet.

"Can we do nothing but stand here and see them drowned before our eyes?" groaned poor Mrs. Wilford. "Oh, why do you not see some one come to help them?"

"I am here," spoke up St. Clair, "and if I only had another oar—" "But why didn't you bring two?" cried Fanny, almost fiercely. "I'll run and get another. I know just where they are."

She disappeared, and St. Clair, with a queer look on his face, turned to Mrs. Wilford.

"I can't wait till she comes back," he said. "It will be too late then. If—if you will go up to the house and send somebody down to come out with the other boat I will go out now and see what I can do with one oar."

But Mrs. Wilford had already started off. She met Fanny half way from the hotel. The watchman was with her, also two men from the stables.

"Quick," cried the half-distracted lady. "You may be in time to give him the other oar yet."

But when they reached the beach the boat was gone, and they could just see it tossing on the waves like a cockleshell.

"That ain't the Mischief!" suddenly exclaimed one of the stablemen. "That's the old Fairy broke loose from her moorings down to Green's."

"Not the Mischief!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilford, with an eager catching of the breath. "Then—then Ned isn't on board of her?"

"Certainly he ain't, mum," retorted Pat. "There ain't never no body aboard of the old tub now."

"But Mr. St. Clair?" went on Ned's mother. "What will become of him?"

This was indeed a serious matter. With only one oar it would seem that he could do nothing in such a sea.

"And look," cried Fanny at this moment, "the boat's upset now!"

It was true, and the next moment the overturned craft was washed up at their feet.

St. Clair's fate was now almost known for a certainty, and the Wilfords went back to their room, leaving the men to patrol the beach for the rest of the night watching for the brave young man's body. For that he was brave everybody now freely admitted; and when the next morning's sun rose Clarence St. Clair was regarded as a hero.

The Wilfords felt terribly about the affair. A telegram was received from Ned at breakfast announcing that the Mischief had cast anchor during the storm off a port without a telegraph office.

"How we misjudged that poor young man!" sighed Mrs. Wilford, and even the prospect of Ned's speedy return did little to lighten her spirits.

"Think what a shock the news will be to his family!" she said.

The Fairy had gone to pieces on the rocks, and from down a swarm of townspeople had gathered on the beach to catch what they could of the pieces that came ashore.

Tommy Gray and his chum, Bert Faskins, were among the earliest of the hotel people on the scene. But they soon got tired of poking about the beach, so Tom proposed that they explore a cave he had observed in the rocks one day.

"But somebody's in there," exclaimed Bert, who in his eagerness had rushed in first. "Why, it's Mr. St. Clair, and he's sound asleep."

"No, he's—" Tommy spoke in an awe struck whisper, and was about to add the word "dead" when all doubt in the matter was set at rest by a tremendous snore which St. Clair gave.

But I thought he was drowned last night," Bert went on. "They're up in his room now hunting for the address of his people. We'd better wake 'im up and tell him about it, hadn't we? Do you know, Tom, I shouldn't be a bit surprised if he never went out in the boat at all. Just wanted to make people believe he had."

And this was just the idea that a good many people at the Bluff House had when St. Clair appeared there, supported on either hand by the two small boys. But he had a wonderful story to tell of his experience in the boat and his miraculous washing ashore completely exhausted.

Mrs. Wilford could do no less than thank him for his heroic attempt to save, as he supposed, her son, praise which he received unblushingly, declaring that it was nothing.

"Which it certainly was," Ned declared stoutly when he came back and heard the story. "Wait till I see him and ask him a few questions."

But this opportunity never came about, as Mr. St. Clair left Shoreham very suddenly that very day.

"You see his falling asleep and being discovered just spoiled things," Ned explained. "If it hadn't been for that you'd have seen him walking in here looking like a drowned rat and able to fix his story to suit himself instead of Tommy Gray and Bert Faskins."

HOW TO FAIL AS AN INVENTOR.

The great demand of the age is for practical men. Theory by itself is of little avail with the present generation. It is the combination of theory and practical demonstration that wins. This is especially true in the line of inventive work, and it is to the lack of this union that the *Inventive Age* attributes the crushing of the hopes of so many who hope to reap fortunes through the agency of the patent office.

For example, a man who knows nothing of the practical work of steam engineering may invent and patent a device in that line which will appear to him and other non-professionals to be a great advance on the existing methods for generating or utilizing steam, but which will be condemned by the most competent judges. In all kinds of machinery the same cause is a prolific source of disappointment. The thing invented may be very ingenious, may have cost a vast deal of mental labor, and may attest the intellectual superiority of the inventor; but if it be deficient in practical utility, if its introduction will not be profitable to those for whom it is intended, it goes to the lumber yard or oblivion. Persons who are utterly ignorant of gunnery frequently invent something in that line, but they very rarely attain success. The same rule holds good in all the industrial arts, including agriculture, mining, manufactures, ship building, and railroading. Brilliance of intellect and originality in conception are offset by lack of practical knowledge.

JUDGING FROM EXPERIENCE.

"The time has come," said Jenkins's wife, "when woman may forsake the light ephemeral things of life and take up the heavy subjects."

And her husband rejoined, wearily, "Are you going to bake bread?" — *Washington Star.*

CONTENTMENT.

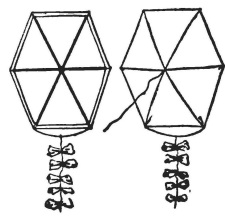
If all our lives were one broad glare
Of sunlight, clear, unclouded;
If all our paths were smooth and fair,
By no soft gloom enshrouded;
If all life's flowers, were fully blown
Without the sweet unfolding,
And happiness were rudely thrown
On hands too weak for holding—
Should we not miss the twilight hours,
The gentle haze of sadness?
Should we not long for storms and showers
To break the constant gladness?

KITES,

HOW TO MAKE AND FLY THEM.

BY ELLIOTT SHAW.

KITE flying is an old fashioned pastime, but one that is pretty nearly as popular with the boys of the present generation as it was in the time of Ben Franklin, and long before that. Most country lads know how to build a kite and send it soaring aloft to the clouds. Their city cousin flies kites, too, but his are seldom home made. He buys them for a few cents in a toy store. Even in crowded New York hundreds of kites rise into the air in a breezy afternoon in April or September. Indeed some years ago the Aldermen found it necessary to pass an ordinance for the regulation of kite flying. Kites gyrating in busy streets had caused several runaway accidents, while in some parts of the city the telegraph wires had become entangled with the relics of kite tails, which in weather diverted the electric currents. Consequently kite flying in the streets was prohibited under penalty of arrest and fine. But there are fields and vacant lots in the upper part of the city, and, best of all, there are the roofs. The roofs of the big apartment and tenement houses that rise high in the air and catch the full force of the breeze, give the New York boy his favorite kite flying ground.



THE HEXAGONAL KITE, FRONT AND BACK.

The city boy's first kite is generally a very small and simple affair. It is made of three light strips of wood—two of equal length and the third somewhat shorter—tied together in the middle so that their ends form the points of a hexagon, or six sided figure. Around these ends a cord is strung as tightly as possible, and upon this framework is pasted a piece of colored paper. A string weighted with little bunches of paper, and attached to the lower end of the kite, forms the tail; and with a few yards of twine tied to the center of the frame the toy is complete. Kites of this kind are made in large numbers, and are sold in the smaller toy stores of New York for a cent apiece. They are only twelve inches high, and of course their powers of flight are extremely limited. Fourteen, sixteen and eighteen inch kites are also made and sold for from two to five cents.

Larger and stronger kites, however, can be bought—thirty and even thirty six inches high. These can be flown to a considerable height, and in a good breeze will pull hard enough to satisfy most boys. They need a heavier tail to keep them steady, and this gives the owner a chance to amuse himself by affixing to his kite all sorts of oddities. Kites may be seen with long and slim tails, with short and heavy tails, with one tail or with several tails. A round ball—country boys sometimes substitute a pumpkin—may be tied to the kite. As it ascends the string will become invisible and the ball will seem to be following the kite as if by some mysterious attraction. Then there is the lighted lantern, which may be

used with weird effect in flying a kite at night, making people in the neighboring streets pause to watch the antics of what seems at first sight to be a new kind of star or meteor in the heavens.

The six sided or hexagonal kite is not the only sort that may be found in the stores. A great many Japanese kites are sold. They are really Japanese, being actually imported from the far East, where they can be made much more cheaply than here. They are generally brightly colored, and made in fantastic shapes—imitations of eagles or owls predominating. They have no tails, and are held steady in the air by having, on each side, broad balloon shaped wings that act as a sort of parachute. These Jap-



THE ENGLISH KITE.

anese kites made a fortune for the merchants who first brought them to this country, a good many years ago. They were something new, and sold like the proverbial hot cakes. Now the novelty has worn off and they are less popular, for the old fashioned kites can beat them as high and steady fliers.

The "fin" kite is a variety that has only recently been introduced. Some ingenious inventor hit upon the idea of applying to a kite the device that has proved so valuable an addition to the sailing qualities of the Yankee yachts—the centerboard. He made a diamond shaped kite, and upon the lower part of its face built a keel that extends straight out for several inches. This projection gets a sideways hold upon the air, and keeps the face of the kite turned full against the wind, so that it goes up to the full extent of the string and stays there without "diving" like the tailed kite. The fin kite may or may not become popular. Its chief fault is the fact that it works too well. That is a curious statement, but there is a reason for it. Part of the fun of kite flying lies in the irregularity of the kite's flight—its headlong leaps and frantic dashes through the air, and its varying strain upon the hand that holds the string. The centerboard kite indulges in no such antics. It goes straight and stays up almost motionless.

The English boy's kite is generally of a different shape from any... vogue here, as will be seen from the accompanying illustration.



THE FIN KITE.

It is rounded at the top, and tapers to a long sharp point at the bottom. We are inclined to think that, though notable fliers can be built on this plan, yet it has the disadvantage of being harder to adjust in the matter of tail weights, and more uncertain in its flight than the six sided kite.

The best and biggest kites, and the ones that give most pleasure to their owners,

are not those bought in the stores, but the home made ones. Most country lads, indeed, would never think of buying a kite. They would be almost as likely to hire some one to fly their kites, as to build them. The country boy's kite is no one cent, twelve inch affair. It is often as tall as its possessor, and its construction may give him a good day's work or more. He uses the greatest care in selecting the three sticks for the frame and whittling them down to the requisite degree of lightness without destroying their strength. Then comes the tight binding of the sticks together, and of the string around their ends; then the papering, and addition of extra thicknesses to strengthen the corners. Next he makes the "belly band," which consists of a series of strings, running loosely across the face of the kite from each corner to the opposite point, and meeting at about the center. At the intersection of these he affixes the kite string. Last of all comes the tail, and when this is fastened on the kite is ready to be tried.

Now comes the crucial test of the kite maker's skill and judgment in the adjustment of his belly band and tail weights. When carried to the open field where the trial is to take place, the kite may take to soar. The tail may be too heavy, or the string may not be fastened to the right point on the belly band. It is sure to be pulled down a dozen times to have some slight alteration. Finally the owner is satisfied, and the kite is let out to the full extent of the string. If the breeze is a stiff one it will pull like a horse, and it may take the united efforts of two or three boys to keep it from flying off into the clouds, to come down somewhere in the next county.

HOW WE GROW.

WHAT makes us grow? Why do we stop growing? What is the reason some people are tall and others short? These are all questions of perennial interest, and are answered in part by a recent article in the *New York Times*, from which we make a few extracts.

The mechanism of nutrition constitutes an important factor in the problem of growth. As a mill requires water to propel its wheel, as a locomotive must be supplied with steam in order to go, as a galvanic battery depends upon the current of electricity for its power, so the body demands force in order to perform its varied functions. Every part of the body requires a special apparatus exists for reducing food to the proper consistency, so that in the fluid condition of blood it may be conveyed to every part of the system. This is the alimentary canal, which extends through the entire body, has special appliances for grinding, moistening, separating and chemically altering the food.

Sacs, or glands, are distributed along the digestive tract, the secretions from which are essential to the process of growth. Thus in the grinding performed by the teeth, saliva is poured out, lubricating the food for swallowing, and converting the starchy portions into sugar. In the stomach the juice secreted by the follicles covering the walls of this organ performs a similar function, changing the food into a pulpy substance; further on in the intestines, the various juices, including the bile, severally act, and, at this point, the absorption of the canal is conveyed by milk chutes called lacteals, to the thoracic duct, a vertical pipe, that ascends along the back, and empties its contents into a vein near the heart.

From the amount of food directly absorbed the veins of the stomach and small intestine are in products which make muscles and nerves. From this region the blood, collected by a special system of veins, is carried to the largest gland of the animal body—the liver. In this organ performs various functions, such as secreting bile and sugar, and some that are not well understood. The blood from the liver is conveyed by a special current, and also that which supplies the tissues of the liver, is all returned directly to the heart. The immediate factor in the stoppage or growth seems to be the hardening of the bones, particularly the long bones, through the secretion of lime. But this is probably a more incidental factor. The use of medicine of food, excessive physical exercise, cold or some other force affecting the general system. Among the recipes given for checking the growth of children is that of anointing the backbone with the fat of bats and moles. This is said to have the effect of hardening the cartilage, and thus preventing growth. The practice of using the medicine of the weight of jockeys, is another means employed for checking development. It is said that the same articles have been used for the horrible practice of feeding infants on sour curd instead of milk.



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THE ART OF LISTENING.

A BOSTON contemporary calls attention to the fact that, judging by the expression of countenance, more people enjoy talking than listening. How is it in your own experience? Which do you prefer to do yourself?

It is said that there is as much art in being a good listener as in making of one's self a good conversationalist. Certainly there is nothing more annoying than talking to a person who, you suddenly discover, is not paying the least attention to what you are saying. If speech is silver, and silence is golden, then close attention as a listener should surely rate at even a more precious figure.

THE MEASURE OF A BOY.

EVERY boy wants to be as good as his fellows. We mean in height, build, and general appearance. As a rule, nobody likes to be singular—to be picked out in a crowd and commented on. This is as it should be, and when correspondents ask us to give them "the measure of a boy" we feel that they have a desire to measure well as men, both as to body and mind.

Perhaps as good a standard as any for the bodily measurements of boys are the requirements of the training ship Minnesota for its recruits. These we herewith reprint:

AGE.	HEIGHT.	WEIGHT.	CHEST MEASURE.
14 to 15	4 ft. 9 in.	70 lbs.	26 in.
15 to 16	4 ft. 11 in.	80 lbs.	27 in.
16 to 17	5 ft. 1 in.	90 lbs.	28 in.
17 to 18	5 ft. 2 in.	100 lbs.	29 in.

A NEW PHASE OF SPELLING REFORM.

AN attempt is now being made to obtain a uniform spelling of geographical names among civilized nations throughout the world. Those who have not traveled extensively, and whose reading has been confined to their mother tongue, may be surprised to learn that some of the best known countries and towns have their names spelt in various ways, according to the language of the country in which mention of them is made. For instance, what we know as Vienna is Wien to its own citizens, while the country of which it is the capital is not Austria, but Oesterreich. London to the Frenchman is Londres, and poor little Switzerland has to divide herself into two appellations even to her own countrymen.

To her German population she is known as Die Schweiz, while her French citizens always speak of La Suisse.

What is to be done in this case is a matter of some doubt, but it certainly seems that in the other instances each locality should be known everywhere by the name its own people gave it. At present Germany is more careful on this point than any other nation.

OUT OF PLACE SIGNBOARDS.

HAVE you never had a cold shiver run down your back when on a biting winter's day you passed a drug store and caught sight of a neglected summer sign staring at you from the doorway, informing the public in letters coated

with snow that "ice cold Arctic soda may be obtained within."

Invert the conditions and fancy then the sensations of the penurious wayfarer, seeking for lodgment on a stifling evening, and beholding this legend blazoned on the walls of the tenement he had selected:

"Heated rooms, 50 cents a night."

Such was the sign that actually hung during the past summer in front of a Brooklyn lodging house.

Another signboard that is not so much out of place as it is ridiculous in its wording, is one that can be seen in a park in Albany. "Stray dogs prohibited" it reads, and one at once asks himself if the authorities expect worthless curs to turn back of their own motion on seeing it.

PLEASANT WORDS FROM OUR READERS.

THE new form of THE ARGOSY has brought us letters of the heartiest commendation, a few of which we print herewith:

FLORENCE, ALA., AUG. 24, 1891.
The design that you have got up this week for THE ARGOSY makes it in my opinion the nicest and the cleanest paper that I have ever seen. The size is just right and the type appropriate. "A Debt of Honor" is very fine.
A. B. N. S.

NORWOOD, N. J., AUG. 24, 1891.
I congratulate you on the new dress of THE ARGOSY, as it shows that you are prospering and progressing.
F. M. S.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., AUG. 23, 1891.
I am much pleased with the size of the pages and the new heading.
R. S.

NEW YORK CITY, AUG. 24, 1891.
Friends and self highly pleased with new form of THE ARGOSY. It can't be beat.
F. J. A.

RENTED UMBRELLAS.

DOUBTLESS many of our readers have noticed the little blue announcements of the United States Umbrella Providing Company. They are placed in barber shops, cigar stores, hotels and other similar resorts, and the agent inside will give you an umbrella on presentation of a ticket showing that you are one of the subscribers. This umbrella you may keep till the shower is over, or, in fact, as long as you please. You can return it to any of the offices of the company and receive back your ticket, which is of course much easier to carry around than an umbrella would be.

The idea is that whenever a sudden storm arises you have but to drop in at one of the stations, present your card and go on your way rejoicing.

The effectiveness of the scheme would seem to lie in the ability of the company to have stations enough, for of course a man's membership is of little value to him if he gets drenched while hunting up a place where he may exchange his ticket for an umbrella. And by the way, we wonder if the company have thought to provide every picnic ground with one of their branches. We can think of no spot where they would prove more useful.

APROPOS OF MOSQUITOES.

FROM the fact that our experiences with mosquitoes are always confined to the summer months we are accustomed to feel that entire immunity from the pests is only to be purchased by emigration to a northern clime. It is therefore a matter of surprise to read that Labrador's one great plague is mosquitoes.

Speaking of mosquitoes, it seems that the most efficacious remedy for the sting is, after all, one of the simplest things in the world. A well known chemist declares that by making a lather over the bitten part with a piece of soap and allowing it to dry, one may be sure of obtaining almost instant relief.

This is almost as simple as the scheme of permitting Mr. Mosquito to gorge himself with your blood, when he will fly off, taking his sting with him. At least so it has been asserted, but—well it doesn't require so much courage to try the soap cure, and besides it gives you the satisfaction of making a jab at your persecutor, even if you don't hit him.

ALBERT H. OVERMAN,

A REPRESENTATIVE AMERICAN MANUFACTURER.

THERE is no royal road to success, and no precise and infallible instructions can be given to the ambitious boy who would carve his way to the front in public life, in a profession, or in business. Yet much that is helpful may be learned from a study of the careers of those in whose footsteps he fain would follow. From almost every one of them some hint may be gleaned that will guide him toward the difficult path of advancement.

Take, for instance, the case of Albert H. Overman,



ALBERT H. OVERMAN.

the well known bicycle manufacturer, whose portrait appears herewith. His life story illustrates the especial value of two qualities—patience in waiting for the right opportunity to embark on an independent career, and prompt determination in taking the tide that leads to fortune at the proverbial hour of its flood.

Mr. Overman was born in Fulton County, Illinois, on the 21st of March, 1850. In his youth he had none of the advantages of wealth, and he began his business life at the very bottom of the ladder in the publishing house of Jansen, McClurg & Company, in Chicago. In its employ he remained for many years. But the limited range of promotion open to him in such a position did not satisfy the young man's aspirations. He was content, however, to wait patiently for a favorable moment to strike out for himself, and meanwhile to acquire a thorough business training by careful attention to duty.

In 1881 Mr. Overman saw his opportunity in the manufacture of bicycles, at that time a new and struggling industry of little profit and uncertain prospects. With rare foresight he predicted the immense development that it has now attained, and to which his own efforts have in no small degree contributed. He needed capital, and it was no easy matter to procure it for an enterprise that seemed visionary to most conservative capitalists. Fortunately, General McClurg, one of his former employers, had enough confidence in Mr. Overman to give him substantial aid, and the Overman Wheel Company was at length successfully organized with its originator as a president and director of its operations.

To establish this new industry Mr. Overman went to Chocoma Falls, near Springfield, Massachusetts—thus reversing the advice of Horace Greeley and the historical course of the star of empire. Within ten years the enterprise has, in the face of commercial rivalry of the very keenest, grown to a high degree of success and gained a wide reputation. Of its progress the energy and business ability of its president have been the inspiring cause.

Mr. Overman resides in the city of Springfield, where, in spite of his close attention to the manufacturing interests he controls, he finds time to devote to religious and benevolent work of various kinds. He takes an especially deep interest in the welfare of the young, to whom he is always ready to give kindly advice drawn from his own experience as a self made man.

[This Story began in Number 456.]

A DEBT OF HONOR.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.,

Author of "Ragged Dick," "Tattered Tom," "Luck and Pluck," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

GERALD LANE lives with his father, who is a consumptive, in a lonely cabin among the mountains of Colorado. Feeling that his end is approaching, Warren Lane confides to his son that one of the reasons why he has buried himself in this out of the way spot is because of the treatment accorded him by one Bradley Wentworth, who was a fellow clerk with him when they were both young men in Seneca, Illinois. Their employer was Wentworth's uncle, from whom Bradley had great expectations. But in a weak moment he forged a check for five hundred dollars, and on the eve of discovery came to Lane with a plan to keep the matter from reaching his uncle's ears, thus endangering all his future prospects.

If Lane would go away at once, thus allowing it to be supposed that he, Lane, had committed the forgery, Wentworth promised to pay over annually to Mrs. Lane the sum of \$500, and furthermore agreed that when his uncle died and he came into the property, he would make over to Lane \$2000 additional.

In response to repeated pleadings Lane finally consented to do this, first, however, making Wentworth sign a paper explaining the nature of the whole transaction. Time passed, and although the five hundred dollars a year was paid for a while, yet when Wentworth's uncle died and Bradley inherited a fortune of \$300,000, he refused to keep to the terms of his agreement with Lane. The latter's wife died, and his life clouded by the undesigned suspicion that had been cast upon it, he sought to seclude himself from his fellow men.

For his son's sake, however, he kept up a correspondence with Wentworth, endeavoring to compel him to pay this debt of honor. Wentworth finally comes out to see him, and endeavors to compromise matters by offering Lane a thousand dollars for the paper he holds. But to this Lane will not consent, and dies while his visitor is there. Wentworth makes the same offer to Gerald, but the boy, too, refuses, holding out for the full sum, and Bradley goes home, declaring that, as his friendship has been declined, his enmity, in its full force, will be given instead.

Gerald is left alone, with only the land upon which the cabin stands for his inheritance, and as yet no plans for the future. But he has scarcely had a chance to feel lonesome when a British tourist, Noel Brooke, happens along on a pedestrian jaunt. Gerald provides him with a supper, and after some conversation, Brooke engages the boy at a generous salary to accompany him on his journey through the country as a companion.

While they are at breakfast the next morning Gerald is surprised by the appearance at the cabin of a man leading a boy by the hand,

"Don't think we require it," said Gerald courteously. "The slight favor we have done you gives us no right to ask your confidence."

"Still you look friendly and I am glad to tell you about myself. I am, as you will judge from my appearance, a working man, and have ever since I attained my majority been employed in woolen mills. The last place where I was employed was at Seneca, in the factory of—"

"Bradley Wentworth?" asked Gerald quickly.

"Yes. Do you know him?" inquired the stranger in surprise.

"Yes; he has been making me a visit here. If you had come here twenty-four hours earlier you would have seen him."

course I asserted my innocence, but no one believed me. The proof was held to be too convincing. I was brought to trial, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. That imprisonment," he continued bitterly, "has shadowed all my life since. Of course I could not get back to the factory where I had been employed, and I went to another State. I was left in peace for ten months when one of my old fellow workmen made his appearance and told the superintendent that I had served a sentence of imprisonment for theft. I was summoned to the office, informed of the charge, and had to admit it. I was instantly discharged. To assert my innocence was of no avail. 'You were found guilty. That is enough for us,' said the superintendent.

after month passed and I began to congratulate myself, when one unlucky day Haynes again made his appearance. He tried to extort money from me, but though I had some, I refused to bribe him. He went to Mr. Wentworth and denounced me. I was discharged unceremoniously, though I told him my story and appealed to his humanity. Then at last, in my despair and anger, I lay in wait for Haynes, and gave him an unmerciful beating till he roared for mercy."

"Good! good!" exclaimed the Englishman, clapping his hands, "you served the scoundrel right."

"I always think of it with pleasure, though I am not a revengeful man."

"Were you arrested?" asked Gerald.

"Yes, but I escaped with a fine which I paid gladly. I am glad to say when it got out that Haynes had dogged me so persistently none of the men would associate with him, and he was obliged to leave the factory."

"I wish I had been Mr. Wentworth," said Brooke. "I would have retained you in my employ even if you had been guilty in the first place. I don't believe in condemning a man utterly for one offense."

"I wish more men were as charitable as yourself," said John Carter, for this, as he afterwards informed Gerald, was his name.

"But how did you happen to come to Colorado?" asked Noel Brooke.

"I was tired of persecution. In fact I had been employed in so many factories, all of which were now closed against me, that I decided to earn a living some other way. I had a little money left, and I traveled westward. I came to Colorado because it was a new country, and there must be something here for an industrious man to do. It has been rather hard on poor Oscar," he added with an affectionate glance at his son. "For latterly my money gave out, and we have more than once gone hungry, as we would have done today but for your kindness."

He was about to rise and leave the cabin when Gerald stopped him.

"Wait a minute, Mr. Carter," he said.

"I have an arrangement to propose."

Carter regarded him with a glance of inquiry.

"I have made an engagement to travel with my friend, Mr. Brooke," Gerald went on, "and this cabin will be untenanted. If you are willing to occupy it you are welcome to do so. You will be sure to find some employment, and if not you can hunt and fish. What do you say?"

"What can I say except that I am grateful? I am not afraid that I can make a living for myself and Oscar, and I shall not live in constant fear that Clifton Haynes will find me out and expose me."

"I wish he would happen along about this time," said Noel Brooke. "I should like nothing better than to get a chance at the fellow. One thrashing isn't enough for him."

"I think you would make thorough work with him, Mr. Brooke," said Gerald laughing.

"I would try to at all events," rejoined the Englishman.

"If you want any certificate attesting



"I CAN'T TAKE YOUR HAND, JAKE, YOU HAVE DONE ME TOO MUCH HARM."

"Then I am glad I was delayed."

"Why? Has he wronged you?"

"I don't know whether I can rightly say that, but he has treated me without mercy. Let me explain. Fifteen years ago I was employed in an Eastern factory. Among my fellow workmen was one I thought my friend. We were so intimate that we occupied the same room at a factory boarding house. All went well. I received excellent wages, and had money laid by. My companion, as I soon found, was given to extravagance, and frequently indulged in drink, so that he found it hard work to make both ends meet. Then he began to borrow money of me, but after a time I refused to accommodate him any further. He earned the same wages as myself, and I felt that he ought to maintain himself without help as I did.

"The result of my refusal was to make him my enemy. He said little but looked ugly. Though I did not expect it he schemed for revenge. One day a pocket-book containing money was missing from an adjoining room. A fuss was made, and a search instituted, which resulted to my utter dismay in the pocket-book being found in my trunk. It contained no money, but a couple of papers which attested the ownership. Of

"I had to leave the factory. I found employment elsewhere, but was hounded down again, and by the same man. But before denouncing me, he came to me, and offered to keep silent if I would pay him a hundred and fifty dollars. I raised the money, but the treacherous scoundrel did not keep faith with me. He went to the superintendent, and told him all, exacting that the source of the information should not be divulged. So I was sent adrift again, knowing very well, though I couldn't prove it, that Clifton Haynes had betrayed me."

"Why didn't you thrash the scoundrel?" asked Noel Brooke indignantly.

"It would only have increased the prejudice against me," answered the visitor wearily.

"Well," he continued, "I needn't prolong the story, for it is always the same. I went from one factory to another, but this man followed me. When we met he had the assurance to demand another sum of money in payment for his silence. I had no money to give him, nor would I have done so if I had, knowing his treachery. The result was that again I was discharged. A year ago I went to Seneca, and obtained employment from Mr. Wentworth. Month

CHAPTER XIV.

A VICTIM OF INJUSTICE.

THE man who stood before Gerald was dressed like a mechanic in a working suit somewhat the worse for wear, but he had an honest, intelligent face that inspired confidence. He had an anxious look, however, as if he were in some mental trouble.

"Good morning," said Gerald courteously. "Won't you come in and share our breakfast?"

On hearing this invitation the boy's face brightened up.

"You are very kind, and I accept thankfully," said the father. "Oscar and myself are both hungry, for we have eaten nothing since one o'clock yesterday."

"Come in then," said Gerald hospitably.

"I ought perhaps first to explain how I happen to be here in such a plight."

"I shall be glad to hear your story, and so will my friend, Mr. Brooke, but you must breakfast first. Then you will feel probably in much better condition for talking."

Though Gerald and his guest had eaten heartily there was enough left for the two new arrivals, and it was very evident that both thoroughly enjoyed their meal.

"I hope I haven't taken up your time," said the visitor as he pushed back his chair from the table. "And now, as in duty bound, I will tell you my story."

AN ARCTIC CRUSOE.

BY W. BERT FOSTER.

"CAPTAIN Benson, may I go ashore with the men?" asked Bert Ormsby.

"Certainly, my boy, if you wish to," and Captain Benson spoke rather obsequiously. But then, it wasn't every craft in the Alaskan sealing trade that had the son of a government official aboard. And as it was at the time a crisis in the seal fishery question it behooved the captain to treat his passenger considerably, for Colonel Ormsby, Fred's father, was then at Sitka as a representative of the United States Government in the matter.

Captain Benson's vessel, the Sea Dart, had been coasting along the Alaskan shores, north of Baranoff Island and between Cross Sound and Mt. Fairweather, for a week. Having touched at Sitka on his main mission, he had taken Fred aboard at the colonel's request, as the Sea Dart expected to return to the town again inside of a fortnight or three weeks.

Fred, who had spent most of his life in New York, was of course greatly interested in the seal question, and so that he had accompanied his father, and as the seal question was occupying his father's mind in one way Fred was interested in it in another. He wanted to see the seals hunted and the sailors prepare the skins and blubber.

This morning, however, coming upon deck he saw something on shore that interested him more than the seals on the rocks which were occupying the sailors' attention. It was a glacier, and although he had passed both the Davidson and the Muir glaciers on his journey to Sitka, he had never been so near one of the great ice rivers before.

This was a small one, but it had the general appearance of one which he had seen at Takou Inlet. Before its foot, on the very edge of the ocean, was crowded a mass of gravel and rocks, collected and pushed forward by the gradual movement of the glacier. At a glance it appeared to Fred that he could approach and examine the front of this glacier because, unlike nearly all the others he had seen, pieces were not continually breaking off and falling into the sea.

So having obtained the captain's permission, and armed with his hammer, with which to knock a few geological specimens from the rocks, Fred boarded the boat which first left for the shore, the captain's little terrier, Grip, accompanying him.

The shore, as far as the eye could see, both north and south of their place of landing, was covered with great black ledges and bowlders, while the rugged cliffs rose to a considerable height a few feet back from the water. Fred wondered at the appearance of the glacier, while the men, with the officer in command of the boat, went off in the other direction toward the place where a herd of seals were sunning themselves on the rocks. Fred obtained a few specimens for his cabinet, and finally reached the narrow ledge of rocks and earth at the foot of the glacier.

The ice was of a dull white color, and seamed and broken in countless places. The general face of the glacier was perpendicular, in some places the upper portion, although at present it lay lower. In one spot, however, a great mass had broken off and lay at the foot, leaving a partially slanting path to the summit.

It might be difficult and perhaps dangerous to ascend it, but Fred at once conceived a great desire to do so, and no one being present to say him nay he began the task. After considerable work with the sharp end of his hammer head in cutting steps in the ice, he was successful and stood upon the top of the glacier. Grip, too, after whining and crying although at present that for a moment, scrambled up after him.

The surface of the glacier was broken and full of crevasses, while great bowlders and masses of ice were scattered over it. It was evident that at no very distant time the river of ice had been in motion, although at present that motion had ceased. From the glacier Fred climbed to a narrow ledge of rock, and from thence, passing through a cut between two cliffs, he reached a wide plateau from which he could view the

sailors who had just then attacked the seals.

From the summit of the cliff Fred watched the battle, for some of the old seals will turn on their enemies with more courage than discretion. Finally all but the dead seals escaped, and the boats were brought up and the work of transporting the seals from the rocks to the ship was begun. Fred still had plenty of time for his ramble before descending, for there had been many more seals dispatched than could possibly be carried by the two boats to the Sea Dart in one trip. All the men went with the load, and Fred, with Grip at his side, continued along the summit of the cliff.

High, snow clad peaks arose, sometimes even above the clouds, inland, while the great ocean broke with sullen roar below him. The Sea Dart, gracefully rising and falling, on the even swells about half a mile from the shore, was the only vessel in sight. Now and then a great iceberg, either propelled by the wind or by some under current,

orders. It was quite evident that their danger had been discovered and that they were seeking to avert it by making sail and getting the Sea Dart under sufficient headway to escape from the iceberg.

But it was too late. The great mountain of ice was coming down with the wind, and its lofty cliffs shielded the vessel from the breeze. The sails hung useless as in a dead calm. There was no help for the doomed vessel.

Fred stood on the cliff speechless—frozen with horror at the impending catastrophe. Suddenly a dull, crashing report reverberated through the air, and the turrets and towers of the ice castle toppled over into the sea. The water was thrown mast high in white, froth capped waves, and the fated ship was hidden beneath a deluge of water and falling ice.

The sea birds, startled from their nests in the cliff by the terrific crash, rose in the air with discordant screams. A groan burst from Fred's lips as the Sea Dart was carried down by the berg,



FRED STOOD THERE, FROZEN WITH HORROR AT THE IMPENDING CATASTROPHE.

would drift slowly past, hiding the ship from his sight for a little. With a few sea birds flying about the cliff, uttering discordant cries, the scene was indescribably lonely.

One of the great ice mountains, fantastically fashioned into some slight resemblance of a castle, with towers and irregular cornices, niches and turrets, drew Fred's attention particularly, as it slowly drifted toward the Sea Dart.

"I declare, what can Captain Benson be thinking of to let that berg float down so near him?" Fred asked himself anxiously, as the great mass of ice continued to approach the Sea Dart. "The ship isn't under a bit of headway so far as I can see. Suppose it should calve* as old Bill Thompson says they do sometimes. It would be a close shave for them all."

But at that moment Captain Benson and the first mate were together in the cabin while all the others on board had crowded to the rail to assist in unloading the small boats. It is a true saying that "familiarity breeds contempt," and ever present danger is sometimes looked upon as no danger at all. The presence of the huge iceberg was unnoticed as it approached the Sea Dart.

Thinking that something like the above was the condition of affairs Fred Ormsby gazed at the vessel and the iceberg, now so near each other, with increased apprehension. Suddenly there was a commotion on the deck of the vessel. He could see the men running about as though obeying hastily given

* When a small berg breaks off from a larger one old sailors call it "calving."

orders. The birds returned to their nests and the sullen murmur of surf was all that broke the silence. Still he stood gazing hopelessly off across the deserted expanse of water. Without food, weapons, or even a compass, how could he ever escape from this lonely, isolated shore? His father might send a search party for him, but if none of the Sea Dart's crew had escaped how would the colonel know where to send? He sank down on the rock and for a time gave up to despair.

Miles to the north was Behring Bay with its fort and trading station; but it would be utterly useless to attempt to reach it. To the south a long stretch of rocky coast and Cross Sound separated him from Baranoff Island and Sitka. If he went inland he would be totally un-

familiar with the country and might wander for months among the barren rocks and glaciers.

"Come, Grip, we'll go down to the beach," he said, glad even of the companionship of the intelligent little-terrier.

He scrambled down the rough path and wandered aimlessly along the shore, looking seaward for some trace of the wrecked vessel. But what little wreckage there was upon the water was invisible from the rocks. He walked to the place where the seals had been killed. A number of dead ones lay on the beach where the sailors had left them.

"They may be very useful to me if I have to stay here long," thought poor Fred.

Not far back from the shore, almost hidden by an overhanging cliff, he espied an opening which proved, upon examination, to be a large and airy cave. The sandy bottom of the cavern was perfectly dry, showing that the water did not usually rise to this refuge. To the cavern he dragged the carcasses of the seals, and finding a little dry driftwood and seaweed, he kindled a fire, and then he gave the terrier a bit of seal for his dinner, and mindful of the small number of ship biscuits he had brought with him from the Sea Dart he tried roasting a few strips of the meat over the flames for his own eating.

But it was so abominably strong and greasy that he had to give it up. The blubber cut from the carcass, however, kept his fire blazing all the afternoon.

The time was passed until darkness in the performance of these self imposed duties, interspersed with trips to the top of the cliff, and a constant gaze out at sea for some sign of a rescue.

No healthy boy can go all day on a ship biscuit and a half without being hungry, however, and by night Fred tried to eat seal flesh again with a little better success.

During the afternoon Fred had skinned one of the seals and had dried the skin before the fire, so when he finally became sleepy he wrapped himself in this scanty covering, with his feet toward the fire, and tried to make himself believe that he was warm. He was not very successful in deceiving himself, but was restless and wakeful all night, replenishing the fire now and then with chunks of seal blubber.

But at length he dropped off to sleep and did not wake till he felt a hand on his shoulder and a voice calling his name. His eyes flew open and he looked up with the expectation of seeing a polar bear, or some other wild creature, nosing him over, when who should be bending over his hard couch but Captain Benson himself.

"Here he is, men, here he is!" shouted the captain, and Fred sat up to see a group of the oily tars at the door of the cavern, all wearing the uniform of Uncle Sam's navy.

"Hello, my young Robinson Crusoe," exclaimed the lieutenant in command of the party, entering the cave. "How do you like camping out by yourself on this coast?"

"I don't like it," returned Fred, making his way into the open air, and still rather in doubt as to whether it was a dream or reality.

Lying less than half a mile off shore was a small cutter flying the United States flag, and drawn up on the beach was a cutter guarded by a sailor.

"How did you find me?" asked Fred. "I thought all hands were lost when I saw that berg strike the Sea Dart, Captain Benson."

"One question at a time, my lad," returned the captain, leading Fred toward the boat, while Grip barked and capered about them like mad. "Poor cooky and Mr. Sherwood were lost in the wreck, but the rest of us clung to the damaged boats and spars, and all finally crawled upon a ledge of one of those bergs. We were on the seaward side of it, so you couldn't see us, and sat there like so many penguins till the cruiser Jamestown, vander, picked us up just before nightfall."

Four months later when he arrived home his adventure was all very fine to relate to his friends, and provoked a good deal of admiration; but Fred had no desire to go again through the experience of being an Arctic crusoe for even so short a time.

IT NEVER PAYS.

It never pays to foster pride,
And squander wealth in show;
For friends thus won are sure to run
In times of want and woe.
The noblest worth
Of all the earth
Are gems of heart and brain—
A conscience clear,
A household dear,
And hands without a stain.

[This Story began in No. 453.]

NORMAN BROOKE;

OR,

BREASTING THE WHITEKITS.

BY MATTHEW BREEKE, JR.,

Author of "My Mysterious Fortune," "Eric
Dane," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

NORMAN BROOKE, whose father and mother died in his infancy, has been brought up by his uncle, Mr. James Adams, a wealthy merchant in Lynn, Mass., near Boston. Norman is preparing to enter Harvard in the fall when his uncle, who has been traveling abroad, returns to Lynn after a railroad accident in Switzerland. After the funeral Norman ascertains from the family lawyer, Mr. Kinchley, that Mr. Adams' business affairs are very much involved, and also learns for the first time that his own father had a mortgage on him. It is arranged that Mrs. Adams and her daughter Edna go to live with the former's brother in Cincinnati, while Norman starts for New York to take a position obtained for him by Mr. Winkler with Angus Tick, dealer in furs and sports. On the Fall River boat he has rather a peculiar adventure with a young man, Dale Cameron, who, finding that Norman is not a boarding house, recommends one where he is himself staying in Forty Third Street. On reaching the office Norman finds that Mr. Tick expects him to perform services of him—a sort of watch dog over the other clerks, who are all very young and full of life. He is sent out to lunch with two of them—Larkin and Rich—who already begin to show their hostility to the new comer.

After rather a trying first day Norman goes up town to Mrs. Mack's boarding house to which he has been recommended. He meets a most cordial welcome is given to him by Cameron, who suggests a walk after dinner to the office, and the "white kit" room, where Norman declines to drink, but Cameron takes too much and has to be assisted home by Norman. Larkin and Rich, who are the two, report the matter at the office, and Norman is rebuffed for keeping bad company. Cameron seems to want to attach to him, and Norman is very interested in the great city. One night while thinking over his dismal prospects in Bryant Park he falls in with a young man, Powers King, who is also in a position and is well liked desperate. In reply to a question Norman tells where he was employed and King decides to go there and try for the place. He does not get it, but Mr. Tick suggests his going for another job, which he does obtain. Meeting Norman afterwards King calls him his mascot and asks him to do anything for him. Norman consents and is led off to what he finds to be a gambling house, from which he makes his escape as speedily as possible.

One afternoon in Central Park he falls in with Clair La Farge, a wealthy blind boy, who eventually takes him for a companion and a salary. Meeting Norman thinks his troubles are over when Mr. Willingham, the financial agent of the La Farge family, and Norman, seated on the balcony, over hears him tell her that he—Brooke—is not a proper person for Clair to associate with, and that he could be got rid of at once. The voice sounds familiar, and yet Norman cannot remember where he has heard it before.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONFRONTED BY THE PAST.

I WITHDREW to the other end of the balcony, out of hearing of the voices in the parlor, and dropping my head between my hands, thought hard in the endeavor to associate that man's tones with the time and place when I had heard them before. But both eluded me.

Then I tried to get at the solution of the mystery in another way. What had I done, I asked myself, that would cause this stranger to have such a poor opinion of me? But at this stage of my reflections I heard Clair calling me again.

"Norman," he said, putting his head out of the dining room window. "Alice is going to sing, and I want you to hear her. Come into the parlor; besides, you will meet Mr. Willingham. Remember what I told you.

My heart was beating rapidly. What would be the result of my presentation to Miss La Farge's lover? Would my suspicious enemies denounce me then and there and create a scene? What would be the effect on Clair? Perhaps I had better avoid the meeting.

But it was too late now. I had already stepped in from the balcony and Clair was leading me out through the hall and into the drawing room. Besides, if anything had been said to

Willingham about my being brought in and I should back out now, would it not be taken for an open avowal of fear on my part?

The electric burners had been turned on in the parlor and Miss Alice was already seated at the piano, while a gentleman was by her side arranging the sheets on the music rest.

"Mr. Willingham," began Clair, "allow me to introduce my friend, Mr. Brooke."

The man turned and I came very near uttering a cry of amazement, for I recognized the fellow at once. It was the man who had run against me that night in the gambling den.

He gave me the same scrutinizing look he had then, and kept his hand close by his side. We each bowed and then Willingham turned back to the piano, while I led Clair off to a sofa on the farthest side of the room. I was glad indeed, aside from my desire to hear her, that Miss Alice began to sing then. I wanted a chance to think, and if Clair had begun to question me as to my opinion of his future brother in law I don't know how I could have replied.

So this was to be the crime with which my foe was to charge me—my presence in a gaming house. Well, why was it not as bad for him as myself to be seen there, and how could he state the one fact without admitting the other? Besides, I had seen him rise from a seat at the table, and I had been merely standing in the doorway when he ran against me.

But on the other hand, ran my swift reflections, was it necessary for him to say that he had seen me in the place? Would it not be sufficient for him to tell Mr. La Farge that he had noticed me coming out of it? I could not deny the fact that I had been in there, and what good would explanations do me? I had but to put myself in Mr. La Farge's place to realize—

"Isn't that beautiful, Norman, and don't you think Alice has a fine voice?"

The song was finished. Clair had vociferously applauded, and was puzzled by my silence.

"Yes, I do think it was wonderfully clear and sweet, Clair," and I made a great effort to concentrate my mind wholly on the encore which was now to be given us. "For," as I told myself, "this is the last evening I shall ever spend here."

Where should I go? What—but I forcibly broke off these gloomy forecasts, and paid such close attention to the song that at its conclusion I was enabled to show myself fully as appreciative as a proud brother could desire.

"As a reward of merit we must let them have the parlor to themselves now, Norman," Clair whispered to me. So we said good night and withdrew to his sitting room, whither his aunt followed us and remained chatting for a few minutes. As soon as she had withdrawn,

"Well," began Clair eagerly, "what do you think of him?"

"I think he is very handsome," I answered.

"Yes, I have always heard that," he said, "but do you like him?"

"He doesn't like me," I replied impulsively. Then starting up and extending over the blind boy with a hand on either shoulder, I went on earnestly, "Clair, do you trust me fully? Remember you have only known me a very short time. Would you believe my word against another's—against one who may be closely connected with you?"

"I believe everything you tell me, Norman," he answered, looking up in my face with those great eyes of his which it seemed hard to believe were sightless. "But why do you talk this

way? What has Mr. Willingham done?" and the handsome eyes began to flash ominously.

"I don't think he likes me," I answered after an instant's consideration. "He may try to injure me and perhaps will succeed, but if I can feel that you believe in me in spite of all, I shall have a great deal to console me."

"This is awful," exclaimed the boy. "Won't you tell me what it all means? You know if you don't I may think the worst."

"I will, Clair," I said, with sudden determination. "I may not have the opportunity later," and, beginning at my meeting with Powers King in the park that night, I related the whole history of my connection with that misguided young man—related it up to the point where he asked me to take a walk with him. And here I came to a pause. What would be the effect on Clair if I were to tell him that I had seen his sister's future husband at the gaming table? Ought I to mention the fact except in self defense?

I hesitated irresolute. "Go on, Norman," begged Clair, shaking me gently by the sleeve. "Where did he take you?"

I saw now that I had gone too far to stop, and I must finish the story. Perhaps I could do so, after all, without incriminating Willingham. I hurried on and told how I found myself in a den of gamblers, how King lost all the money he had had advanced to him, and how he had rushed out of the place to drown himself in the river.

"But you didn't stay, you didn't play, Norman?" murmured Clair. "No, I came away at once," I answered, "and Mr. Willingham saw me, and that is the story about me he is going to carry to your father tomorrow," and I added what I had heard on the balcony.

"That won't make any difference," declared the boy. "I believe he is a gambler himself. I never did like him."

"Hush, hush," I implored him. "You mustn't say that. He will think I have prejudiced you against him, and that will only make the case against me worse. I will explain matters to your father just as I have done to you. I wish I had done so before. I wish I had done so before."

But I could not go back and change the past; all that was possible was to look forward as hopefully as might be to the future. Clair declared at first that he would get the carriage and drive down to the office in the morning as soon as his father reached town, but I begged him not to do this and pointed out that to move first in the matter would only make matters worse.

"I'll have a chance to make my defense soon enough," I added.

And sure enough, the next day when we came back from the station where we had gone to see the two sisters off for Newport. I found a dispatch awaiting me.

"Norman Brooke," it read. "Come down to my office at once," and was signed J. K. La Farge.

"I told you I'd have an opportunity soon enough," I said to Clair, trying to conjure up a smile.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ADRIFF AGAIN.

I PUT a morning paper in my pocket when I started for Murray Street.

I regarded my position as already lost to me, and my heart was heavy indeed as I turned to the sadly familiar Want columns. But agencies seemed to be the principal openings, and from bitter experience I knew that these were no openings at all for me.

However, I marked a notice calling for a dry goods salesman, and another asking for a collector, failing to note at the time that they were both to be applied for at the same address. Then the train halted at Park Place and I betook myself to the extensive premises of La Farge and Co.

I could not help but contrast my anticipations on the present occasion with those that had possessed me when I made a similar call just a week previous. And this change had been brought about by that chance meeting with the man, now dead, in Bryant Park. What pebbles sometimes turn the current of our lives!

Mr. La Farge had a visitor when I arrived at the store, and I was obliged to wait twenty minutes before I could see him.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Brooke," he said when I was admitted, but neither extended his hand nor invited me to be seated. "Do you know why I have sent for you?" he went on, after the briefest possible pause.

I wished that he had not begun the conversation by asking this question. I felt positive I did know why he had sent for me, but yet it seemed a weakness on my part to be compelled to acknowledge it. However, I was bound to tell the truth, so I answered, "I believe, sir, that you have heard something that has prejudiced you against me."

"You are right," he returned quietly. "I have been informed that you are a frequenter of resorts where no true gentleman would care to be seen."

"I understand you perfectly, sir," I replied, trying to speak as quietly as he did. "I went to the place not knowing it was a gambling house, and came away as soon as I found out how I had been deceived. I played no game and staked no money."

Mr. La Farge gave the slightest possible shrug to his shoulders.

"How long have you known that I knew about this?" he asked, as if trying to determine how much time I had had in which to get up my defense.

"Since last evening," I replied.

"Hum-m," he murmured, interlocking his hands and tapping the middle finger of each against his knuckles. Then, after an instant, he added, "It seems odd, doesn't it, Mr. Brooke, that as soon as you obtain a position you are placed in an embarrassing situation by being seen in bad company? You remember the story you told me of the cause of your dismissal from Mr. Tick's?"

Although the incident was not likely soon to be effaced from my memory I had failed to regard it in the light in which Mr. La Farge now presented it to me. There was certainly a coincidence in the matter, a coincidence that, I could see, was very far from being in my favor.

I remained silent, and after waiting for two minutes to give me an opportunity to answer, the china merchant went on: "So this is your defense, Mr. Brooke; you deny the indictment *in toto*?"

"I do not deny being at the house," I rejoined. "That would be useless, even admitting I should be willing to attempt it, for Mr. Willingham actually ran against me as he turned to leave the room."

"To leave the room!" exclaimed Mr. La Farge, looking up suddenly from the idle figuring he was doing on a pad in front of him. "Am I to understand from that, Mr. Brook that Mr. Willingham was also in the house?"

I bit my lip and hesitated for an instant. I had not meant to reveal the fact. It seemed too small and mean, too much like trying to include my enemy in my own downfall.

"I did not wish you to understand it when I spoke," I responded finally.

"Then it is true," he persisted, and a troubled look came into his face.

"Yes," I replied, and then closed my lips firmly, determined to say no more.

"That is all," he said after an instant. "I believe I gave you a check for the gallery in advance, so there is nothing coming to you. And—and I would rather you would not see Clair again. If you will tell me where to send I will arrange to have your things forwarded to you."

"This was a keen thrust, and I felt it. Besides, it placed me in rather an embarrassing position. What address should I give him? I did not want to go back to Mrs. Max's, and I knew of no other place.

Noticing this hesitation on my part, and perhaps correctly divining its cause, Mr. La Farge reached forward and tapped a bell, saying, "On the whole, it will be better for you to go up now and see to getting yourself moved."

"Then to the office boy who answered his summons," I said. "Edward, ring for a messenger, if you please."

"You can call for your things between four and five this afternoon," he said, turning to me, and taking this as a dismissal, I withdrew without another word.

I felt positive that the note he began to write even before my back was turned was to Clair, making an appointment with him somewhere, so that the boy should be out of the house while I was there. My only consolation was that I had had that talk with Clair the evening before. I could at least experience the satisfaction of knowing I had put matters in their true light before him.

But the pressing question of the moment was what I should do with myself. It was now nearly one, so I must find a sleeping place, and which trunk could be sent, before four. I took an Elevated train up town, and after an hour's search found a hotel on the European plan, where I engaged a room for a dollar a day, with the privilege of getting my meals there or elsewhere. I began by eating my lunch in the restaurant, and then, as I still had some time to spare before I was due at the La Farge flat, I determined to look up the position offered to a dry goods salesman.

On reaching the address given I stood on the pavement waiting for a sign. This was certainly no dry goods store. Then a blue sign caught my eye.

POSITIONS OF ALL SORTS PROCURED.

HELP FURNISHED IN ALL BRANCHES.

The advertisement had emanated from an intelligence office.

"I don't want any of that," I told myself. "I'll try for that post of collector I marked."

But now in referring to it again, I discovered that it, too, was also a notice sent out by the employment bureau. I knew that I should have to pay a commission, whether I procured a situation or not. I went away and walked up town to the La Farges where I arrived just at four. The housekeeper admitted me, and as I had anticipated, there were no signs of Clair. I finished my work as rapidly as possible, and by a quarter to five I had my meals there. I walked through Fifty Eighth Street after it, feeling pretty blue. It seemed as if it did no good to look for situations in the paper, and ten chances to one even if I did find one that promised well, I could not secure it owing to my lack of references.

"I'm making up now for the good times I used to have in Lynnhurst," I reflected drearily. "Into every life some rain must fall. It seems to me though that I am having a perfect deluge."

"Look out there!" This exclamation in a shrill boyish voice burst on my ear, and at the same instant I felt myself pulled violently backward. Then a hansom cab dashed around the corner so close to me that the hub almost grazed my knee.

I turned to see who had done so friendly as to pull me out of harm's way, for absorbed in my reflections I had not heard the approach of the vehicle on the asphalt pavement—and was amazed to discover nobody but two small boys near me. The oldest could not have been more than thirteen, while the other was some four years younger. They were dressed very neatly, and gave

every evidence of belonging to well to do families.

My surprise can be imagined, then, when to my "Much obliged," the older one said: "We're awfully glad we could do it, for perhaps you'd like now to give us a chance to get something to eat."

CHAPTER XXIV.

NEW TROUBLE COMES.

"YOU boys hungry?" I exclaimed, adding, impulsively, "why don't you go home and get something to eat?"

I saw the younger boy's lip tremble at this suggestion, but the older said nothing, only looked grave, and taking the other by the hand, started to move away.

Dismal as were my own prospects, I could not bear to see the two youngsters go off this way, especially after the service they had rendered me.

"I'm hurrying to make my pocket I drew out a dime and hurrying after the two, touched the taller one on the shoulder.

"Here," I said. "I didn't mean to refuse you. It only struck me as odd that."

I stopped suddenly, for when the boy turned and saw the ten cent piece in my outstretched hand, he drew himself up as haughtily as a thirteen year old youngster can, and folding his arms, replied: "We are not beggars. We only accept invitations to dine."

"Oh," I exclaimed, completely taken back with surprise.

This was certainly a queer pair. What could be the meaning of the mystery? Were they playing a game on me? I realized that in the present speculative state of my finances I could ill afford to entertain company at dinner, but the boys had undoubtedly done me a service, and if they asked to be rewarded for it to the extent of something to eat, I felt that it would be niggardly in me to try to do so.

"Come along to my hotel, boys," I said then. "We'll all have something to eat."

"You're a gentleman," exclaimed the taller boy, and putting out his hand, still with that grave look on his face, he shook mine heartily.

We had now reached Fifth Avenue, down which I turned.

"Do you live on this street?" asked the younger boy, looking up at me with something like awe in his glance.

"Oh, no, indeed," I replied. "I live in a very small room in a very plain house."

"Perhaps—maybe it wouldn't be convenient for you to have us eat with you," put in the other boy quickly.

"Oh, here's plenty of room at the table," I answered. "And now won't you tell me where you live?"

The smaller boy started to answer, but I noticed that the other pinched his arm as he himself replied: "We don't live anywhere now. We are knights, you know."

A sudden idea struck me.

"Boys," I exclaimed, turning quickly around on them, "you have run away from home. Come, don't deny it, but tell me where it is, and let me take you back there. That will be the greatest favor I can do you. You're brothers, aren't you? You look alike."

When we had first started out to walk together, the smaller boy had put his hand in mine. Now the other one, without looking at me, tried to draw him away, but he clung tight, and I at once put my other arm around his shoulder. We were just passing the cathedral, and fearful lest a crowd might collect if we had a scene there on the avenue, I turned my steps toward the entrance to the great white church, whispering to the older boy, "I'll keep his head turned away. Come, we will go in here and talk the matter over."

They did not resist and the next minute we were in the solemn stillness of the big building. I drew the boys into a quiet corner, and the influence of the place, with the afternoon coming in tempered rays through the stained glass, the sight of the imposing altar and the impressiveness of the vaulted roof—all this seemed to combine to melt those small boys' hearts as April sunshine does a belated snow storm.

In ten minutes the older had told me their little story how their father, who

was a prosperous lawyer in Brooklyn, had gone off and got married two weeks before and was to bring his new wife home that morning. How the boys had felt they wouldn't like her, and had resolved to run off and try to get to their mother's sister, who lived in Cleveland.

"We only had thirty five cents," he went on to explain, "and Tad was so hot and thirsty in the middle of the day that we spent all that for ice cream and soda water. We haven't a penny now, but he did not expect to get clear to Cleveland without any money?" I asked.

"Oh, we didn't expect to go in the cars," was the answer. "We knew we'd have to walk, and then we could rake up or pull weeds for the farmers and other people along the road and earn our meals."

"Or save people from being run over by a cab horse," I added with a smile.

"But come, you'll let me take you right home now, won't you? It's nearly dark past five. What time do you have dinner?"

"Generally at half past six. I don't know what time the new Mrs. Brinton will have it."

I ignored this last, and finding that they were on Columbia Heights, and that very far from the ferry, led the way to the nearest Elevated station and started off with them.

I had forgotten all about my own troubles during the last half hour, and now had no chance to think of them if I wanted to, the boys kept up such a lively chattering.

"You must come all the way with us," said Rex. "I want you to see papa and tell him that—that we weren't doing anything wicked when you found us. We don't want to get left out here till they were safe on the inside of the home front door, and then thinking to make them more contented with their lot, I told them that I had neither father nor mother, nor even a step-parent."

"I wish we were in the hands of some house in Brooklyn and a sweet faced little woman opened the door at the very first tinkle of the bell, and gathered both boys into her arms, I felt homesick indeed.

This feeling was in fact so strong with me, that I dared not walk, but in the confusion of the reunion, hurried away without being noticed. Besides, I was anxious to get back. I was not sure that my trunk had been attended to properly at the hotel, and then there was a threatening bank of clouds rising in the west. Before I reached the New York side of the river the threat had been fulfilled, and a deluge of summer rain broke over me.

I was drenched through in an instant, and got wet twice again before I finally reached the hotel, changed my clothes and got my dinner, but my head began to burn before I had finished and I knew that I had caught cold.

The next morning I could scarcely turn on my pillow. My head felt as if there were weights in it, and there was a prickly sensation in all my limbs. I lay there for hours, it seemed to me, helpless, and then I heard some one try the door; the chambermaid, I supposed, wanting to make the bed.

I called out feebly, "Wait a minute, I'll see if I can open the door."

Painfully I got out and crawled along the floor. I had just strength to turn the key and get back to bed, where I must have fainted, for the next thing I knew I was lying there with an Irish maid regarding me pityingly, while a grave looking man with gold rimmed eyeglasses stood by my side feeling my pulse.

"Um, pretty sick," I heard him mutter.

"Who is he?" Got any friends?" "He just came yesterday with an Irish girl, but at this point I broke in with,

"What's the matter?" And the weakness of my own voice startled me.

"The matter is that you're in for a spell of sickness," I'm afraid, answered the man, who was doubtless the physician connected with the hotel. "Would you like to send home for your friends?" "Home! That a mockery the word seemed to me now! And friends! What friends had I except Aunt Louise and Edna, and I knew they could not afford to come clear from Cincinnati to nurse me.

I shook my head, and the effort seemed

to unnerve me again. At any rate I lapsed into a state of semi unconsciousness. I was dimly sensible of the doctor and the girl talking together, and then of somebody else coming into the room. I heard the word "money," and again I tried to get up, but I had been so long if it had been struck down, and I realized that I was helpless.

(To be continued.)

FACT IN FICTION.

READERS of "The Chinese Conspiracy" will be especially interested in the following newspaper item sent in a dispatch from San Francisco to the Associated Press during the latter part of August: "Advices from Shanghai are stating that a gang of 500 armed pirates are creating havoc in the province of Wenchow. Their progress through the country has been marked by the most cruel and cold blooded crimes. Villages have been burned by them when hospitality was refused, and the inhabitants slaughtered. Their object seems to be to capture the people and hold them as ransoms. They have already seized the grandson of a wealthy old man living near Wenchow. The gang has been traveling southward. The consul at Wenchow took such measures as were in his power for the protection of the residents."

WEALTH NOW WASTED.

ECONOMY is wealth, and many of the most valuable of modern inventions are those by which some product formerly wasted has been put to profitable use. Fortunes have been made from the waste products of petroleum refineries; cotton seeds, once regarded by the pickers as nothing but a nuisance, have been turned into a mine of utility and wealth; and now a Pittsburg Journal comes forward with the suggestion that the elderberry, now considered as a noxious weed, might with a little cultivation be made to produce a palatable crop of fruit.

The elderberry crop in the Northern States is always large, for the tree is never blighted by frost. The ordinary species, *Sambucus racemosa*, is generally considered by the farmers as a pest, and editors of agricultural papers consider it a periodical duty to inform farmers regarding the best time to cut the shrub so as to prevent its spread, but last year, when fruit was an utter failure in many districts, thousands of trees were cut down, and the elderberry was not to be despised as a food product, and it was learned that when properly cooked it is an excellent substitute for apples, pears, peaches, cherries, etc.

Despite the ignominy with which it is treated, the elderberry continues to flourish in its native wild state, and would seem to make its proper appellation the "humbleberry." When mixed with some other fruit, it loses the rank taste that makes it objectionable to some palates, and is said to be very healthy food. Connoisseurs say the wine made from it has not only medicinal properties, but, if skillfully made, is very palatable.

As it grows spontaneously in Pennsylvania in sufficient quantity to supply the present wants of the world, some might make a ten strike by putting it on the market in a shape that would command a price.

The suggestion that the elderberry might be made a profitable article of commerce is not far fetched. Some of our most luscious fruits were long ago lost, and it is felt in almost every household, were scarce fruit in human food centuries ago, and cultivation has made many of our best known alongside the cultivated varieties.

There is evidence that the sense known as taste is hereditary. Fifty years ago man could not eat raw tomatoes from the start with avidity, and as an article of commerce they fill more space than any other single vegetable commodity, aside from wheat.

The taste for parsnips is generally an acquired or inherited one, and yet they have become an important article of diet, and yet the vegetable seems to have been but partially domesticated, for if allowed to grow spontaneously, it is so full of seeds as to be poisonous as in its originally wild state, and is no longer fit for any known use except as a medicine.

If some one will cultivate the elderberry until its flavor rivals that of the strawberry he will have conferred upon humanity a boon which makes the additional blade of grass grow.

A HOLIDAY.

A breezy down, wide stretch of glittering sea, An azure sky with fleecy cloudlets flecked, A streamlet glancing bright through grassy lea, And tangled hedgerow with wild roses decked.

[This Story began in Number 451.]

THE DEERSKIN TALISMAN.

A TALE OF MEXICAN TREASURE. BY GILBERT CAMPBELL.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE ANT HILL IN THE RAVINE.

THE ravine which had been spoken of was now reached, the blasted pine tree at the entrance affording sure indication of its position, and, followed by Joe and Lopes, the boys rode slowly into it, leaving their escort on guard at the mouth with instructions to let no one pass.

In parts of Mexico is found a very large species of ant, from an inch to an inch and a half in length, with a pair of mandibles with which a bite can be given which causes great pain. These ants attack any beast that may cross their path when they move, as they sometimes do, from place to place, and large snakes as well as small quadrupeds are frequently attacked and devoured by them.

"It is Cifuentes," whispered Bob. "We cannot leave him to this awful death." "I guess, young master, you can't help the poor crittur," replied Joe. "He's past our help, and if you take my advice you'll clear out of this at once. Ants are skeary things, and they'll be on to us next."

Lopes remained behind. They had hardly reached their escort when the heavy report of the Spianard's gun was heard, and in a few seconds the Tigreiro rejoined them. Both looked at him inquiringly. "His earthly troubles are over," said the Spianard.

In silence the brothers rode to the camp and rejoined their sister.

CHAPTER XXVII. A LAST FAREWELL.

AT an early hour the next morning the camp was struck, and the children of the Sun escorted the White Prince and his brother to the gates of Puebla. Great was the astonishment of the Corregidor, the Alguazils, and all the civil authorities of the city at the advent of so strange a cavalcade, and greater by far was the astonishment of Don Rafael Mosefa, the Hebro-Spanish banker, at being asked to take charge of all the treasure.

All night long his clerks were kept at work, estimating its value, weighing it, and putting it to every test that human ingenuity could suggest; and large was the profit he made when he handed over bills for the value of the treasure to the brothers, drawn upon well known banking houses in Boston.

The white-headed chief had signified to Arthur that the children of the Sun would not halt within the walls of the pale faces, but would form their camp some two miles from the gates of the city, where, at the rising of the moon, they would be glad to take a farewell of their prince.

With a glad heart Arthur promised that he would be there, for, as a fact, though he was grateful for the honorable spirit that had led the savages to conform to the orders of their ancient Cacique, and to hand over the treasure to him as designated, yet he was weary of their fulsome adoration and of the foolish respect which they paid to him upon all occasions.

It was then with a light heart that, after bidding his brother and sister good evening, and accompanied only by Indian Joe, who insisted upon being one of the farewell party, he mounted his horse and rode off through the city gates in the direction of the rising moon.

A brisk trot of half an hour brought Arthur and Indian Joe to the camp. The Indians had picketed their steeds in a semicircle, and each man had immediately in front of his horse lit the fire over which he had roasted the maize cakes, which composed his simple refreshment.

The old chief was waiting as Arthur and his companion rode into the circle. "The Prince honors his servants by his attendance; the Sacred Warrior" (for so the Indians had been accustomed to designate Indian Joe) "is also welcome."

"Well, chief," said Arthur, "I have come to take a most grateful farewell of you all, and to express, in the deepest sense that I can, my gratitude for your kindness and honorable feeling in handing over to me the treasure of which the Cacique made me the heir."

"Hush, hush! Prince," answered the old Indian, "these are not words that should come from your mouth; we could but obey the words of the Cacique and the prophets; but come, certain ceremonies have to be gone through, and then the children of the City of the Sun and the White Prince will part forever."

As he spoke he led the way to the center of the semicircle, where a rude altar had been erected, upon which a small fire burned. A sound was then heard like that of a bugle, and every warrior started to his feet and stood to his arms.

In another instant a wild figure with its right arm swathed in bandages rose from behind the altar; an attendant stood upon his left hand, bearing in his arms a young kid with its feet tied together. "Why, it is Otan Hari, the priest," exclaimed Arthur in surprise, as he recognized the new comer. "Going to knife Master Bob?" queried Joe. "Hush!" said Arthur, "he is going to speak; let us listen to what he says."

He told them that their watch was over and their duty fulfilled; that now they could return to their families and abandon the land of the pale faces: that the treasure was now lost to the children of the Sun, and in proof thereof he would extinguish the fire and bid them all speed on their way.

As he spoke he plunged, with his left hand, the knife into the breast of the kid, and with the gushing blood quenched the fire upon the altar. Hardly had he done so than every Indian vaulted to his saddle, and headed by the old chief, rode past Arthur, and, lowering their spear points in token of salutation, passed away into the shades of night, and, silent as specters, disappeared from view.

In ten minutes Arthur and Joe were alone. But little more remains to be told. Arthur and Bob returned with their sister to their native New England town, where they repurchased their old homestead and proceeded to make a mansion of it which was the wonder of all the country side.

There is a tall old man, with a grizzly scar upon his head, who spends his days about the house, with no particularly defined duties, but who is treated with the greatest respect and affection by the whole family. He is already wonderfully conversant with the habits of every furred and feathered creature in the vicinity, and is an authority in the village, where he astonishes the minister and the schoolmaster with some of the wild events that have occurred in the life of Indian Joe.

Lopes, the Tigreiro, could not be prevailed upon to accompany the brothers to the States. Munificently rewarded for his services, he has, with the mules and pack animals of the Tigreiro, started a transport agency, which bids fair speedily to make him a very wealthy man.

And now, having led our heroes through storm and tempest, let us leave them to enjoy the pleasant sunshine of life, feeling sure that in their hands a thoroughly good use will be made of THE TREASURES OF THE CACIQUE.

THE END.

A FORCED ACCEPTANCE.

I STOOD beside her in the surf, Beneath the moonlit skies; She met my eager questioning With a faint, downward gaze. "Say, darling, shall this hand be mine— My own for aye and aye?" Were those salt tendrils in her eyes, And that paltry spray of foam? Then suddenly she turned on me An anguished look of woe, And wildly shrieked, "Oh, take my hand, A crab has got my toe!" —Louisville Courier Journal.

WHAT IS BENEATH THE SURFACE?

"As solid as the earth," is an expression which one frequently hears used. But how solid is the earth? All of us know now that the planet on which we live is a sphere whirling through space, but concerning the material out of which this sphere is composed not so much is known. Says the Boston Advertiser:

A question of considerable importance to scientists, and one about which there has long been a great difference of opinion, is the question as to the composition and temperature of the earth's crust. This subject has recently attracted the attention of the American scientists, but the conclusions which have been drawn from the investigations into this subject have been almost as diverse and many as the scientists who have conducted the inquiries. However much may be known about the earth's crust today, it is certain that much more remains to be discovered before any reliable data can be secured which may settle the question under dispute.

It has been deemed probable by many commentators on the question that much might be learned from deep boring with a diamond or other drill capable of yielding a sample for examination, but it should be remembered that the deepest boring which has been made up to the present time was under that at Schladbach, near Leipsic, and that the drill sank little further than 5,740 feet from the surface, while geologists claim to be able to find on the earth's surface any strata which must have lain at one time 30,000 feet below. The borings near Leipsic, so far from settling the disputed question in regard to the composition and temperature of the earth's crust, seem rather to have set afoot a multitude of new guesses which have apparently merely the

merit of novelty to commend them to serious consideration. Yet it seems that the time should be able at hand when modern science should be able to settle some of the questions in regard to the characteristics of the earth's crust. Is the interior of the earth a pent-up reservoir of super-heated gases or a whirling sea of molten metals? Or is it, as at least one eminent English scientist asserts, an almost impenetrable solid? How thick is the world's crust? Is it but a minute or two of time, or a thousand? How hot is it at any great distance below the surface of the earth? Is it merely too great to allow the existence of any forms of animal life, or is the heat, as some assert, as intense as that of the sun itself? These and many more questions will remain for the next generation to solve and explain as it can. The task will be at least an interesting and presumably not an easy one for future scientists.

CORRESPONDENCE.

C. W. H., Brooklyn, N. Y. No premium on the cents of 1831 and 1832. C. P., Washington, D. C. See advertising pages for prices of bound volumes of THE ARGOSY.

F. M. S., Norwood, N. J. Vol. XII. will be bound separately, and we hope to have it ready shortly.

A READER, Red Wing, Minn. We will sell you the photographic camera and outfit for one dollar, post paid.

R. M. E., Mauch Chunk, Pa. We can supply you with the numbers of Vols. VIII and IX you want on receipt of the price, ten cents each.

S. E. M., Washington, D. C. We will mail you the first four numbers of Vol. VII on receipt of the price, forty cents, which may be sent in postage stamps.

C. A. L., Chicago, Ill. "Hettie's Captive" is a very creditable work for a first effort, but strives to gain admittance to the columns of THE ARGOSY must be more than creditable—they must be of the very best.

F. J. A., New York City. The average depth of the lower part of the Pass River is 54 feet; of the North River, 34 feet. 2. The largest of our completed war vessels is the Chicago, registered at 4,550 tons.

A. S., Chicago, Ill. The index for Vol. XII is now ready and will be mailed to you on receipt of a two cent stamp. Ponce de Leon's reputation was tarnished by the severity with which he governed the island of Porto Rico.

G. H. T., Hamilton, Ont. Your George II coin is evidently some commemoration taken. For value of this as also of the Jamaica coins you mention, you may apply to a dealer, as we cannot undertake to give ratings of foreign coins.

J. M. Jr., Brooklyn, N. Y. 1. Edward S. Ellis is now writing a series for THE ARGOSY. Yes, his "Arthur Helmut" and "Check 2134" are to be issued in book form. 2. It is possible that we shall print another serial by the writer named.

J. B., R. A. H., W. C. P. and G. W. R., New York City. Your communication has been received. We appreciate the suggestions you make and shall give them careful consideration. As our constituency is so large and tastes are so varied, we are obliged to exercise keen discrimination in our desire to please all.

C. T., Brooklyn, N. Y. 1. Certainly, if you call for the camera we deliver it to you without exacting any charge for postage. 2. No time has been set for the publication of "The World's History." You can take the wrinkles out of the paper by passing a hot iron over them. 4. Mr. Alger has written upwards of a hundred stories. 5. We will bind Vol. XII for you for \$1.50.

B. R., Chester, Neb. 1. The Bloody Assizes was the name given to decrees of Lord Jeffreys, Chief Justice of the King's Bench in England, in 1265, against three hundred persons to be whipped after giving them but farcical trials, and had nearly a thousand others sent as slaves to the West Indies. 2. The price of Vol. VII of Nebraska, according to the census of 1895, is 1,058,010.

J. M. and C. L., Cincinnati, O. "Mattoon," in "Brad Mattoon," is pronounced exactly as it is in the Bible, and being read the same as in moon. 2. None of the half dollars you mention are rare. See article on coins in No. 457. The price of Vol. VII, bound, is \$2. Queen Victoria has reigned fifty four years. William I became King of Prussia in 1861, Emperor of Germany in December, 1870, and died in March, 1888.

MILITARY MATTERS.

All boys of 15 feet and over wishing to join Co. A, 3rd Regiment, National Cadets, call on, or address, Capt. Pierce J. Hayden, 666 Broadway, New York.

I Lost

My confidence, was all run down and unable to work—in an extreme condition of debility when told that Hood's Sarsaparilla was just what I needed. As

A Drowning Man

grasps at a straw I decided to try this medicine, and to my great surprise from the first day I began to improve. By the time I had finished my second bottle I had regained my health and strength, and from that day I can say I have been perfectly well. I have recommended Hood's Sarsaparilla to my friends, who I know have been benefited by it.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Is indeed peculiar to itself in that it not only helps, but it cures." H. C. PIDCOCK, 49 Delevan Street, Lambertville, N. J.

Secret of the Heart—
Is the Joy of Birds.
Makes Canaries Sing
Makes Home Happy.
Restores Caged Birds
to health and song.

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Relished by Mocking
and all other Birds.
Sold by Druggists.
BIRD FOOD COMPANY, No. 400 N. 3rd St., Philadelphia, Pa.

ONLY \$5. DELIVERED FREE

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Cut this ad. out and send to us and we will send the WATCH, CHAIN AND KEY to you by express, O. D. Full express charges prepaid by GUY with privilege of PAID BY EXAMINATION. If you do not find it all and even more than we claim leave it and you are not out your time. If not perfectly satisfactory pay us the express and return our Cash Price \$5.00 and take the watch. No such bargain ever offered before. A Genuine Gold plated Watch warranted in every respect. Case beautifully engraved. (Cut show both back and front of watch.) Ring case with back cap to protect from dust. Crown, bezel and centre are all accurately made. The movement is the finest American style, SWISS MADE AND STEEL SET. REGULAR JEWELRY, quick make, instant balance, jewels and engraving, full plate, beautifully finished, polished, adjusted & warranted an accurate time keeper. A Gold screw is sent with each watch.

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GOLD MEDAL, PARIS, 1878.

W. BAKER & Co.'s
Breakfast Cocoa

from which the excess of oil has been removed, is **Absolutely Pure and it is Soluble.**

No Chemicals

are used in its preparation. It has more than three times the strength of Cocoa mixed with Starch, Arrowroot or Sugar, and is therefore far more economical, costing less than one cent a cup. It is delicious, nourishing, strengthening, EASILY DIGESTED, and admirably adapted for invalids as well as for persons in health.

Sold by Grocers everywhere.

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A FRUITLESS REQUEST.

Mrs PRIM—"I am getting up, in the—er—interest of decorum, a subscription to send light flannel shirts—'outing' shirts, you know, to the tropical savages."
SKIFF (in low rolling thunder tones)—"Madam, don't you know that I'm interested in a STARCH factory?"

HARTSHORN'S SELF-ACTING SHADE ROLLERS

Beware of Imitations.
NOTICE OF AUTOGRAF ON LABEL OF THE GENUINE

Stewart Hartshorn

THE HIRED GIRL.

"I SUPPOSE you have an easy time of it now that you have got a servant girl. What time do you get up in the morning?"
"At seven o'clock."
"And at what time does your girl get up?"
"At 7:15."
"Gracious! Why do you get up before she does?"
"To call her."—New York Press.

Tired all round—the wagon wheel.—Baltimore American.

HIS APPETITE UNIMPAIRED.

BOY (with basket)—"Please, mum, give me some dinner for my poor, sick father."
KIND LADY—"Look here, I've been giving you dinner for your sick father for two weeks, and I saw him yesterday in the street, and he is no more sick than I am."
BOY—"Yes, mum, he isn't sick any more, but he eats just the same as ever."—Texas Siftings.

A WHOLE SETTLEMENT.

GEORGE—"What will your father settle on the man who marries you?"
MILLY—"All the rest of the family, probably, George."—Brooklyn Life.

—THE—

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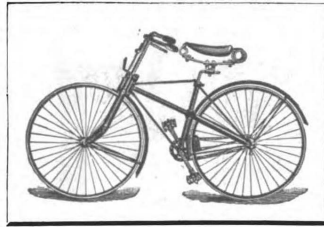
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