

THE ARGOSY

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IN A SOUTH AMERICAN JUNGLE.

BY OWEN HACKETT.

FOUR men were clustered around a smart fire at which a large water fowl was roasting on the spit. A Brazilian jungle was the scene, bordering one of the great streams of the South American continent.

The men, who appeared to be Spaniards by their features, were singularly silent over their morning meal in the early dawn. Their countenances seemed dejected, their appetites dull. Something was wrong.

At last, one who had been picking at the leg of the bird fresh from the fire, suddenly tossed the half denuded bone into the pool on the border of which they were reclining and exclaimed:

"I dreamed of it, last night!"

His companions turned their eyes toward him and one asked indifferently:

"What?"

"That beast of the river, that cayman who seems to haunt us like a fate—"

"But I maintain it is not a cayman as you think, Pedro," broke in another. "I do not know whether to think it a better or a worse omen that by its great size it cannot but be a jacare which, as you know, is not thought to be as savage or voracious as its smaller brother, the cayman."

"Be it cayman or jacare, the word is no great matter nor do I fear any beast of its kind," responded Pedro, involuntarily placing his hand on the butt of the magazine rifle beside him. "But it is a bad omen, Garcia, that this ugly twenty foot monster should have followed us for three days. And do you note how he has always thrust his ugly snout, with its dull gray eyes, out of the water at us just as we have been sitting down at meals?"

Insensibly each cast a sudden look toward the reed fringed pool and then glanced rather sheepishly at the others to see if his sign of fear had been noted. Each except one who had been but an indifferent listener, and whose, tall wiry frame, his air of easy repose, and his keen and swiftly observing eye gave him an air of dignity and command.

At this point he shifted his position and seemed about to speak, when the superstitious Pedro continued:

"Let him be as gentle as a lamb, say I, but the sight of his scaly body is a poor grace before meals. It takes my appetite away, I confess; and how can a man live and work without—"

"Enough! said the leader, rising impatiently from the ground and disclosing fully six feet of height, a broad chest and shoulders and, by the manner of his action, great bodily strength. "Let us hear no more of this foolish talk. The river abounds with the cayman and the jacare. You have seen three of them—"

"But, senior," put in the third member of the party, who had not yet spoken, "I saw his tail sweep through the water when he paid us his first

visit twenty miles down the river; and again last evening as he splashed into the stream from this very spot I saw that same long tail again—both times with a nick as big as my hand in the finny part near the tip as if a part had been torn out."

"It is the same if you will, Antonio. What then?" responded the senior. "He smelt our supper three nights ago. Evidently, he knows good living when he scents it," and the senior's eye twinkled. "What wonder then that he follows us? Has he not always disappeared at our least movement?" Here Pedro impatiently shrugged his shoulders, but respect for his leader kept him silent.



THE MEN RUSHED WILDLY TO THE BANK. THE MUD HAD OBSCURED THE WATER AND NOTHING COULD BE DISTINGUISHED.

"Besides," continued the senor, "we are not children. We are here to meet dangers and overcome them."

As he paused Pedro could not restrain himself.

"But mark, senor, how I have seen this monster in my dreams. Surely you will not deny the omen. It means the beast will get his supper one of these fine evenings—it will be a blessed deliverance if it be not I, who have dreamed of him."

"Enough, Pedro!" responded the senor, in a tone of some severity. "Exercise proper precaution, and be not like a child afraid of the darkness."

The senor moved toward the bank and focusing his glass on a point directly opposite, said in a voice of quiet command:

"Launch the boat; we make for the promontory yonder today."

Then as his companions gathered up their arms and trappings the senor swept the river closely with his glasses, first up stream, in which direction they were from day to day working their way, and then down the river whence they had come.

It happened that Pedro, the dreamer, saw the slow sweep of the senor's glass stop as they traversed the lower stream, and, glancing in the same direction, he thought he discerned a small black speck in the middle of the river fully a mile away.

As the senor was about to put the glasses back into the case, Pedro laid his hand upon them with

"Pardon, senor, by your leave."

He, too, then leveled the glasses at the floating speck and gazed steadily for some seconds. The other two had drawn near. Pedro silently handed the glasses to Garcia and proceeded towards the boat. Garcia after looking passed them as silently to Antonio, and without a word they were returned to the senor.

A certain awe of their leader seemed to keep them silent, but they had all seen the muzzle of a jacaré protruding from the water as he slowly swam up the river toward them.

The sun still streamed upon the tangled bank when toward evening the boat had returned laden with the gay plumed spoil of the ornithologist whom his companions called the senor. The fire had been lighted again and already fragrant odors were wafted in the air as the spitted game was hungrily lapped by the flames.

Exercise, the excitement of the shoot and the rich and varied sights of the tropical wilderness had served to dispel the gloom of the morning. The party were indeed quite brisk and jovial and bantered one another right merrily as each attended to his little detail of the preparation for supper.

Excepting the leader; he was always grave, and this evening he seemed particularly thoughtful. After silently pacing backward and forward he had pushed through the grass to the brink of the pool where he stood slowly handling the long hunting knife in his belt and gazing in deep meditation toward the huge lilies that spread their great corollas, still open, over the surface of the water.

He heard the voices of his companions close at hand, but he did not heed their banter.

"By the way you sniff the air, good Pedro, it would seem you had an appetite at last," Antonio was saying. "Wait; I will show you how a good Christian with a clear conscience can eat."

"A few poor birds," said Garcia, "will be but meager fare after your long fast, my Pedro. Pity we cannot roast for you a fine fat jacaré steak."

"Joke if you will," responded Pedro in the best of good nature. "It

would take a tougher hide than a jacaré's to dull the edge of my appetite tonight."

"The senor does not seem to be in a mood for supper," observed Antonio.

"When have you ever seen him eat a fair meal?" rejoined Pedro. "He is like the camel I have heard of, which they say lives on air for weeks."

Then, as all was ready, Pedro turned toward the bank and called out cheerily, "Come, senor, to supper! Let us tempt you with a second joint, rich with fat and spiced with the taste of the fire."

The senor slowly turned, swept a cloud of thought from his brow, and was about to reply, when a cry of agonizing horror came from Pedro's lips. The others turned and stood transfixed. They saw all in an instant a long black muzzle, with great wide jaws rise from the lily pads; they heard the loud snap as the protruding jaws crashed together, and like a flash the senor was torn from the bank to disappear in the depths of the placid pool.

The men rushed to the bank. The mud had obscured the water. Nothing could be distinguished. Almost at the same instant the pool was violently agitated as if a terrific struggle were going on in the murky depths. Then a reddish tinge began to overspread the surface. It was blood! Thirty seconds had not passed.

A hoarse cry came from the throat of Pedro.

"I dreamed it! But I, too, will take a hand!"

With one sweep he drew the long flashing knife from his belt, and with that same hoarse cry plunged out of sight into the bloody pool that was still furiously thrashed.

The two hearts on the bank stood still; the men did not breathe. They saw the fury of the waves subside; then, with a spasm of mingled joy and dread they saw a head appear.

It was Pedro's!

"Help!" he gasped. He seemed to move with difficulty. He was sinking again.

Garcia plunged in waist deep. With his left hand he grasped that of Antonio who was now prone on the bank; with his right he reached out and clutched by good chance the collar of Pedro's shirt just as his head had sunk from view.

In Garcia's grasp Pedro's head was again above the surface and he could breathe. But why was it so hard to drag him to the bank? An instant later the reason was plain.

The exhausted Pedro's hand was tightly clutching the inanimate form of the senor.

An instant later both were prone on the bank, Pedro struggling for breath, the senor motionless, rigid, his right hand still grasping with a death-like grip the long hunting knife that they had last seen in his belt as he turned at the sound of the call to supper.

A glance at the body made Antonio and Garcia exchange quick looks of inquiry—not a drop of blood dyed the muddy white garments of the senor, not a wound appeared to mark his body.

"Unhurt? Then he is drowned!" gasped Antonio.

"Quick, fall to!" breathlessly cried Garcia. "We will save him yet!"

How they worked! Even Pedro, recovering, took a hand. They rubbed and rolled and manipulated the limp body; forced spirits between the white lips and pressed their ears close to the bare breast of the senor for the sound of a heart beat.

Exhausted and hopeless they at last stopped.

"It is useless! The dream is fulfilled," exclaimed Garcia.

But Pedro, listening for the faintest throb, shouted:

"He breathes!"

"Like magic they were reanimated. They began again. It was true the senor breathed, his eyes opened, his breast heaved with one great inspiration; his eyes rolled wildly, and his right hand and arm made a weak movement as if he still grasped a knife and sought to strike a foe.

An hour later Garcia and Antonio stood at the edge of the pool gazing at the body of a huge jacaré floating away on its back with the current, disclosing a great gaping gash in the throat of the monster.

They turned silently as Pedro rose from bending over the senor, who, rolled in his blanket, lay motionless on the ground.

"He sleeps," said Pedro.

"And yonder beast, too, sleeps and by your hand, Pedro," rejoined Garcia.

"You are wrong. If we have jacaré steak for breakfast it will not be of my carving."

"How was it?" asked Antonio with keen interest.

They seated themselves near the sleeping form, not without Pedro giving a last touch to the blanket wrapping the senor.

"As I make out, for the senor was too weak to speak many words, standing on the bank with his hand upon his knife he felt a shock and knew nothing but that he was in the muddy water, blinded and suffocated."

"'Tis true. It was all like a flash of lightning," said Antonio.

"If he has no wound," continued Pedro, "it is because the monster almost missed his prey. The torn leg of the senor's trousers makes all clear."

"The quick mind of the senor never fails him. He felt the slimy body of the monster against his own. One blind sweep of the knife—he knew no more."

"I, too, saw nothing in the murky water but something white on the bottom. I grasped it—you, my comrades, did the rest. I thank you."

Silently they gazed out at the dark object floating away in the twilight.

"You will not dream tonight, Pedro," said Garcia.

"Indeed I will. I will dream of a good square meal."

"But the omen was not quite fulfilled, thank Heaven," mused Antonio. "There was no reply."

A touch made Pedro turn. The senor was not sleeping. His hand was feebly thrust toward Pedro, who grasped it. The senor only said:

"You spoke like a child, my Pedro—you acted the man."

STENCIL FUN.

A WEEK or two ago THE ARGOSY made editorial mention of a strange signboard to be seen in an Albany park. Here are two others to keep it company, clipped from an exchange.

The wall of a gentleman's house near Edinburgh some years since exhibited a board on which was painted the following threat:

ANY PERSON
ENTERING THESE ENCLOSURES
WILL BE SHOT AND PROSECUTED.

An eccentric old gentleman placed in a field on his estate a board with the following generous offer painted thereon:

I WILL GIVE THIS FIELD
TO ANY MAN
WHO IS CONTENTED.

It was not long before he had an applicant.

"Well, my man, you are a contented fellow?"

"Yes, sir; very."
"Then why do you want my field?"

The applicant did not wait to reply.

"TAPS."

The strenuous day is past;
The march, the fight;
The bugle sounds at last:
Lights out. Good night.

The sky is white with stars;
The tent gleams white.
Tir'd captain from the wars,
Sleep through the night.

Sleep till the shadows take
Their endless flight;
Until the morning breaks.
Good night. Good night.

—Hartford Courant.

[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 XXXIV.

A DIPLOMATIC REPORT.

AMERICAN LEGATION, PEKIN, CHINA.

AUGUST —, 1884.

TO THE HONORABLE THE SECRETARY
OF STATE, WASHINGTON, D. C.,
U. S. A.

SIR:

CONCLUDING FACTS IN THE CASE OF
THE "CHINESE CONSPIRACY."

I HAVE the honor to submit the following information as the results of my personal investigation in the above case. Since my last letter, certain facts strongly bearing on the matter have transpired. Your instructions per cable of the — inst. have been fully carried out, and I have made the most strenuous efforts to ascertain the extent of the French complicity, but I must confess that, as yet no positive proofs are in my possession, although personally I believe the complicity existed.

I am heartily glad to see that my recommendation as to Ensign Dalton has met with your approval. He is in truth more sinned against than sinning and a more peculiar position for one to be placed in has yet to be found. The negotiations between the young naval cadet, Lawrence Coleman and the Chinese Government were entirely unofficial, and were in no way connected with this Legation, as you directed.

As I have stated before, the young officer was in possession of certain information concerning the mountain stronghold of the Wong-si-ko band, a clique of daring robbers which the home government have tried to suppress for years. He offered to trade this knowledge for the permanent release of his brother officer and, after due deliberation, it was accepted. I am pleased to say that the officials here acted promptly on the information and have exterminated the band. Kai, their agent, was publicly executed yesterday, and certain persons in high positions will meet a like fate in a short time. Of the rattle, over ninety have been captured and also put to death. The Monastery of Ling-hi has been razed to the ground and the guilty priests are now in custody awaiting sentence.

The government is in possession of a statement sworn to by one of the ringleaders, who turned State's evidence. I could not obtain all the details and, in fact, I wish to place on record the extreme reticence of the officials in this capital in regard to the case. However, if the cause of this secrecy is due to their desire as I suspect, to fasten the guilt (or instigation) on the proper authorities before making the details public, they cannot be blamed. I have managed, nevertheless, to obtain the following

information, which I respectfully submit.

When Ensign Dalton was a youth living at Foo Chow, he became intimately acquainted with a young native of high family. This friendship increased as both lads grew older, and when young Dalton went to the Naval Academy, Ching Lu, his native friend, accompanied him to make a tour of the United States. From this simple intimacy sprang the misfortune which only stopped short of the ensign's ignominious death. As time rolled on it brought a commission to Dalton in the American service and a high government position to Ching Lu, that of Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, or its equivalent in this empire.

Meanwhile two events had taken place, events having an ultimate bearing on the facts in the drama. They were the growth of an insignificant band of robbers to a clique of daring and unscrupulous villains, many of whom occupied high provincial offices, and the outbreak of the French affair in Tonquin. The result of the increase of power in the Wong-si-ko band was, that from petty robberies they aspired to treason and its greater pecuniary reward. Their leaders were given to understand that if they could supply proofs to interested parties that the Black Flags of Tonquin were in the pay of the Chinese Government, it would insure a repelation of their guilty coffers, or words to that effect.

Also, if they could involve a certain foreign country in complications with the Empire, thereby aiding said interested parties in their own negotiations from the increased pressure it would bring to bear on the Chinese Government, the largess would be doubled. The bait was golden and it was worth striving for, so the chiefs of the league set about earning it. Their knowledge of even minute details, concerning local affairs enabled them to select their tools at once. The intimacy of Ensign Dalton with Ching Lu was known and they concocted a plan to elicit the desired information from the latter by means of the friendship.

It will not be necessary to explain the many preliminary moves in the game. It seemed as if an unseen power turned everything the way they desired. A resistless pressure was needed to compel the American ensign to obey their wishes—it came in the easy capture of his father and the resultant threat of death to the parent if the son did not work for them.

They wished to send the officer to Peking, where he could communicate with Ching Lu—he was sent by the American government to carry secret dispatches to the Minister.

They required a strong excuse for fomenting trouble between the Empire and the United States—it was placed in their hands by the sending of another officer—young Coleman—with the ensign, and now here is where the subtlety of their nefarious plot became more apparent.

The native, Kai, who conducted the scheme, was a man of extraordinary fertility of resources. At first, not having evolved his later plan, he tried to kill the naval cadet in the harbor of Foo Chow, then endeavored to accuse him of attempted murder on board the steamer *en route* to Shanghai, but as both attempts failed he had him kidnaped and sent to the mountain stronghold of the band. However, he first robbed him of certain ciphers and sent them, spotted with blood, to Consul Monroe, together with an explanatory note (inclosed document, numbered IV). It was a shrewd move and, as we are aware, had a good chance for success. With far seeing ingenuity, he did not kill the young officer but held him to

use as a hostage in case the plot was discovered.

But all great plans as well as little ones are liable to failure from insignificant causes, and this was no exception. Through a deserter from the Foo Chow branch of the clique, Hong Li, the Tsan-fu of that city, became cognizant of the plot, but without proofs. He warned your consul, but for several unavoidable reasons the warning was disregarded. He then followed Dalton and Kai to Peking, arrested them outside the city and defeated the conspiracy.

The daring escape of Naval Cadet Coleman from the stronghold, his subsequent connection with the affair, and his noble conduct in regard to the father of Ensign Dalton are facts already brought to your notice in my previous report. I shall continue to give the diplomatic details of the case my closest attention, and will report progress from time to time.

I am, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

ROGER R. RUSSELL,
E. E. and M. P.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CONCLUSION.

"WHAT time did you say they were going to open fire, Monroe?"

"At two o'clock, admiral."

"Well, it is only one now; an hour yet. Egad! you will see a picture when that fleet of war ships commences operations. Look at that grim monster over there flying the signals at her mizzen. That's the Dugay. Ah! what a pity we haven't such craft."

"Too expensive, sir; too expensive. I cannot say that I approve of maintaining a costly navy. It is a deplorable waste of good money. Diplomacy should be our bulwark. A corps consisting of statesmen, sir. Thoroughly capable of proving by incontrovertible logic the wrong standpoint of the other party in every argument. That is—"

"Ha!"

"Did you speak?"

The admiral stared at him in silent contempt for a minute, and then burst out: "Diplomacy, eh? Statesmen? Yes; the diplomacy of a sixteen inch gun and the statesmanship contained in a ton of steel. You would talk with smooth words, and would, point out the logic of your argument, eh? Blessed Farragut! what manner of man is this?"

"Now, Hewett, I—"

"Logic!" thundered the admiral, stamping up and down on the deck. "Yes, the logic of a ram on the bow of a ten thousand ton cruiser. Oh, yes; we want a bulwark of long sentences and oily phrases, do we? Egad! Monroe, I—I—" the doughty warrior ended the sentence with a series of expressions not unlike the distant rattle of musketry.

"Come, come, admiral," expostulated the consul, taking the old officer by the arm and walking towards the cabin door. "Your arguments are too forcible for me, and the way they are put leaves no room for dispute, speaking in a literal sense. Let us retire to a more private place, as I have several matters to discuss with you."

As they disappeared in the interior, Lawrence, who was standing at an open port near by talking with Charlie, turned with a laugh and remarked: "The admiral has a telling way in his method of arguing. What he lacks in proof he makes up with delivery. But I say, old boy, this looks like business, doesn't it? There goes the Volta into position. I wish we were a little nearer so we could see

the effect of the shots. Ah! look at the swarm of men on the Arsenal wall. Take this glass; it is better."

"Thanks; I see them now. What a foolhardy idea it is of the authorities here, trying to fight the French fleet. They don't stand the ghost of a show. I admire their pluck, however. Say, Larry, if they had a lot of those fellows like that guide of ours, and the French tried to land, they would meet with a warm reception."

"Yes; but you see, there is no necessity for landing. All they have to do is to stand off and knock the rickety walls of the fort about their ears. The French won't have much difficulty in defeating the small navy the Chinese have here. You mark my words, it won't take an hour to sink the whole fleet. But, speaking of that guide reminds me that I had a long talk with Dalton yesterday. You know he and his father sailed for San Francisco last night?"

"No! is that so? Why, it was rather sudden, wasn't it?"

"Well, he received the acceptance of his resignation by cable, and left immediately. I saw them off and, I tell you, the poor fellow is awfully cut up. The old man suspects something too, I believe, although he didn't say anything."

"I wish I had known about it," replied Charlie regretfully. "But, you see, we were so busy getting ready to come on board here, that I worked almost all night. So he has gone. Well, I don't suppose there was any other way out of it? His resignation was the only course left for him."

"Yes; it was the proper thing to do," continued the midddy with a sigh. "He couldn't possibly have remained in the service after being engaged in that business. Do you know, I believe he was asked to resign by the Department. They understood the circumstances and did not want to court-martial him, so it was decided to ask him to leave, as the best plan for settling the whole affair."

"What did he have to say?"

"Oh, he explained a great deal I did not know before. We withdrew to his stateroom and he thanked me and all that, then he pointed out how he had tried to prevent me from going on the trip. Do you remember that time when I was attacked in this harbor, and I thought they were thieves?"

"Yes; and it was a mighty close shave, by the way."

"As near as I have ever had in my life, with the exception of that affair on board the junk. What a lucky thing it was, the presence of torpedo boat No. 39 that night. I'll never forget her commander; he was kindness itself. Well, Dalton said it was Kai who tried to kill me. He told the ensign he would and Dalton looked for me all night to warn me."

"By the way, what about that affair on the Tartar Khan?"

"Oh yes; that is another thing he explained. Kai had followed him on the steamer and sent a note in the cabin for him to come forward. Hong Lu, the man with the scar, was playing cards with Dalton at the time, so he excused himself for a moment and went on deck. He met Kai just where we were sitting and had a row with him. The confounded scoundrel said he would kill me any way, so the ensign, carried away by passion, stabbed him."

"Then Hong Li must have known about it all the time when we went into the stateroom and spoken to Dalton."

"Certainly he did, but it wasn't his game to say anything then. He was watching for proofs of the treason and didn't want Dalton to know who he was, do you see?"

"Well, he is a mighty slick native, any way."

"Yes, and it was he that gave you the note on the steamer," rejoined the midddy.

"Is that so? Well, I could never make out whether it was Hong Li or Dalton. I had an idea for a time it was the latter, but then subsequent events did not bear it out. However, there is one thing I must say; the ensign treated me pretty shabby that night."

"You must not forget, Charlie," admonished Lawrence, turning and placing his hand on Travis's shoulder, "that Ensign Dalton was struggling under a great trial. Remember what it meant to him, old boy, and judge the poor fellow with the charity I know you possess. It was his father's life, Charlie—his father's life." The midddy looked through the open port for a moment, then, as he resumed, his voice was somewhat clearer: "He tried his best to keep me from harm, but what could he do more than he did. I think—"

Boom!

"There goes the first gun. The bombardment has commenced," exclaimed Travis, and they hurried aft to the poop to get a better view of the battle.

The decks were thronged with refugees from the "bund" and, as the sound of the first shot echoed through the ship, they were speedily joined by officers from below decks, sailors from odd nooks and corners, and soon every conceivable opening was filled with wonder stricken faces enrapt at the awful sight before their eyes.

The old admiral bustled out of his cabin and, taking a commanding position on the bridge, forgot his immediate surroundings and sniffed the smoke of battle, and tossed his grizzled head in pride of profession and roared strong adjectives in the very ecstasy of joy.

The thunder of modern artillery mingled with the feeble expostulations of antiquated weapons; the din of strife filled the air with a clamorous noise until the very echoes wearied of their duty, and the rattle of small arms and the spiteful grind of machine guns, heated in the fray, surged and fell on the wavering breeze.

But what more fitting time to write the word "finis" than now, when the roar of conflict furnishes a period for the end of the chapter; and then there is another reason, reader—the story is told.

THE END.

THE LONG FACED MAN AND THE LOW NECK CLAMS.

A GREAT man cannot be expected to know everything. He usually has some special line in which he excels and out of it he flounders in deep water. Nevertheless when caught over his head his well trained mind enables him to save himself with a quickness of repartee that not seldom turns the laugh. The Chicago *Tribune* furnishes an anecdote in point, told of himself by an ex-governor of Wisconsin.

The governor was at a clambake in New Jersey, and, after dinner, was called upon for a speech. "I started off by saying that I had eaten some of my low neck clams that I wasn't in the least sort of condition for speech making. At that moment a long faced old man, directly across the table, scowled at me, and said, in a stage whisper: 'Little neck clams, little necks—not low necks.' I paid no attention to him, and went on with my remarks. After dinner he followed me out of the hall. 'You are from Wisconsin, ain't you?' he asked. 'Yes,' I answered. 'You don't have many clams out there, I reckon?' 'Well,' said I, 'we have some, but it's a good way to water, and in driving them across the country their feet get sore and they don't thrive very well.' He gave me a look that was worth a dollar and a half. 'Why, man alive!' said he, 'clams ain't got no feet.' He turned away, and shortly afterward approached one of my friends and said, 'Is that fellow governor of Wisconsin?' he inquired. 'Yes,' 'W-a-a-l,' said he, 'he may be a smart man in Wisconsin, but he's a good deal of a fool at the seashore.'"

HEARD IN THE VISION.

"NOT what we give, but what we share,—
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his aims feeds three
Himself, his hungering neighbor and me."
—LOWELL'S "Sir Lancelot."

On Two Ends of a Drawbridge.

A BICYCLE STORY.

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.

"H I, yi, here comes one of 'em now!" and an Inscott small boy capered wildly over the village "green," from which point the Centaur Bicycle Club was to start that morning on a short tour.

"It's the captain himself," proclaimed another enthusiastic urchin, as the glittering machine swiftly and noiselessly approached, with Harry Goldent in the saddle.

Scarcely had he dismounted on the grass by the liberty pole than his brother Frank came shooting up, bending to his pedals with such a curve to his back as caused Harry to call out to him: "Save your steam, Frank, for hills, head winds, and sandy roads. You'll need every ounce of it before we finish our fifty mile run tonight," and, as he spoke, the young captain glanced down at the prize cyclist between his spokes, won that spring in an amateur "dash," and which was to answer as a sort of timekeeper for the club's tour.

But now the inspiring notes of a bugle rang out and the next instant Bugler Fred Markham, in his olive suit, glided up to the rendezvous and gave his friends a cheery good morning.

"Couldn't ask for a finer day, could we?" he cried gayly, as he dismounted and ranged himself in a line with the Goldents, ready for the start, which was set for eight o'clock, sharp.

Will Drake was the next arrival, very conspicuous in a white flannel rig, which he declared was a fine preventive of "headers," as fears of the results in such a costume tended to make one think twice before trying a reckless feat once.

"Hallo, I'm glad Roy's on hand promptly with his money bag," exclaimed Fred, as Treasurer Barnes and his brother Al, both looking very neat in brown corduroy with caps to match, wheeled into line. Then, he added, leaning over to tap Roy lightly on the back, "Sure you won't lose that precious purse, in case of a tumble?"

"Don't worry about that, my dear fellow," returned the other reassuringly. "The club's funds are buttoned up inside my shirt, in a special pocket mother made for me last night, so—"

"Time!" called out Captain Goldent, and each man took his stand at the side of his machine, in the proper position for mounting.

"Off!" was the next command, and with a simultaneous push the six nicked machines, all high wheels, moved out from the crowd of cheering small boys, their riders taking the saddle at almost one and the same moment.

The club's destination was no particular town, but the limits of the tour had been set at two days, and the captain's ambition was to score fifty miles the first day.

"I don't see why we can't," he had often observed. "That east road has splendid long stretches, where it's as smooth as a board. And then it's more fun, I think, to keep going on, and not know exactly where we're to stop for dinner or the night, until we come to the end of our stint."

For two or three hours after the start it seemed as if even seventy five miles would not be an extravagant distance to cover before nightfall, for the weather

was not too warm, and the roads truly in superb condition.

"I'm afraid something terrible's getting ready to happen to us," remarked Frank, as they finished their twenty fifth mile before noon. "You know there's always a calm before a storm."

"Oh, don't turn croaker, Frankie," put in his brother. "I do believe, though, that you'd rather meet with a disagreeable adventure than ride the day out smoothly, with the fifty miles tacked to your record before sundown. And now for dinner."

"But where'll we get it?" Will Drake wanted to know, staring about him at the open country with a comical look of despair.

"Oh, that's just the prime novelty of my plan of running by distances and not by towns," replied Harry enthusiastically. "Now just see what a delightfully primitive state of mind we're in; no 'cut and dried' hotel to reach and put up at on the specified second."

"But how about the gnawing state of another portion of our anatomy?" hinted Fred, with a meaning gesture.

"Why, are you hungry?" returned the captain, as if the idea of such a commonplace sensation had quite escaped his official brain.

"Oh, let's keep straight on," put in Al. "We're sure to come to a village of some sort before very long. We're not in the wilds."

So this, being the only suggestion forthcoming, was acted upon and the Centaurs kept on adding more miles to their record.

They had wheeled for some distance as best they could over a heavy road, when they came to a river, spanned by a drawbridge. Roy had halted a little way back to oil his machine, and reached the draw just as the latter was being opened for the passage of a sailboat.

"Go on; I'll catch up to you!" he shouted to his friends, but, as they had already gained the opposite bank, probably none of them heard him. However, that did not matter much, as Roy enjoyed the distinction of being able to keep up a spurt longer than any of them.

It took the boat some time to beat up and worm her way through the opening, and meanwhile the others sped on, glad to find a decent road again. Moreover, this was not the first time during the tour that Roy had been left behind, for something of an obstinate nature appeared to have infused itself into his machine, which had required oiling, or screwing tighter here or unscrewing there, off and on all the morning. However, he was, as has been said, always prompt in catching up with the rest, so now not one of the five proposed waiting for him, none of them having noticed the opening of the draw. Looking behind one is not a favorite feat with wheelmen.

But after the lapse of ten minutes or so, Al rode up beside Harry, and asked if he could imagine what was keeping his brother so long.

"Let's run back a little to meet him," returned the captain. "Perhaps he's had to trundle his machine on account of another accident."

But when they had run over half a mile to the rear, with no sign of Roy to greet them, a troubled expression stole over their faces.

"Where can the fellow be?" muttered Frank.

Fred was about to suggest that he might have taken a "header" and rolled, wheel and all, into some ditch out of sight, when Al's presence reminded him of their relationship, and he said instead: "At any rate, wherever he is, he's got plenty of money to pay for help if he needs it."

"That's so," broke out Harry; "and, as a consequence, we haven't any! Why,

fellows, we must find him, or we'll have to go without our dinner after all, no matter how many towns we come to. Perhaps he turned off some branch road by mistake. Don't you remember our passing a narrow one? Let's explore it."

And they did, but equally in vain, and after another ten minutes' wheeling, a halt was called to consider the situation.

The recollection of the fact that the missing Centaur was well provided with cash was a consolation to the rest in one respect certainly, but how they were to get along themselves without a portion of the same, was a puzzling question. It was now nearly two o'clock, and, as they had all eaten an early breakfast, it may be imagined that their appetites had by this time become very emphatic in asserting their claims to attention; and not far distant lay a good sized town, promising to afford them a very substantial hotel dinner, if only they, in turn, could afford it.

Resting his chin on the saddle of his machine, Captain Harry began as follows: "I acknowledge, fellows, that the possibility of such a scrape as this occurring, is chiefly my fault, for you know it was my pet theory not to have a fixed destination, in which case Roy would have known exactly where to find us."

"And I take to myself the blame for our present penniless condition," hastily put in Fred, "for it was I who proposed that the treasurer of the club should continue to be practically such on the tour. I thought it would be such a nuisance, you know, for each of us to have to carry a pocketbook, when one could do it just as well, and pay all the bills without coming around to collect every time."

"And now," continued Harry, "the next question is, what are we going to do about it?"

"Suppose we telegraph home for enough money to board and lodge us till morning?" Will ventured to suggest. "You know we could pay it back to our fathers as soon as we found our treasurer."

"Oh, I wouldn't like to do that," returned the captain. "We may fall in with Roy at any minute, you know, and besides, I think it is too late to get a money order from Inscott today."

"What do you suggest we do, then, Harry?" asked Fred, looking into his bugle, as if he wished that by placing it to his lips he could draw out of it something more substantial than sound.

Goldent remained in an attitude of deep thought for an instant or two, and then looked up to say gravely: "Do you fellows remember the drawbridge we crossed about an hour ago? Well, you know we rattled over it pretty lively, but I think I caught a glimpse of a sloop or schooner not very far off. Now, it is possible that Roy was detained by the opening of the draw for that boat, so I move we ride back there and find out what we can about it."

This was received as a very sensible suggestion, and with regretful glances towards the town of plenty, the Centaurs remounted their steeds and took the back track once more.

They covered the three miles to the river in about twenty minutes, only to ascertain from the bridge tender that Roy had been delayed a long time, and then had gone on like the wind.

"And of course he kept straight ahead, and we missed him by taking that branch road when we came back! Oh, why didn't some of us think of the bridge before?" and the young captain looked thoroughly disgusted.

"What'll we do next?" inquired practical Frank. "Is it possible there isn't a cent among the five of us?"

No, not one cent, as a careful turning

inside out of a dozen or more pockets made manifest, for nearly every suit was new, and all stray pennies had been left behind with the old clothes.

"I'd suggest that we start for home," said Will, "if I didn't feel as if I couldn't pedal another inch without replenishing my supply of fuel. But I say, look there, the man's going to open the draw again, and I move that we get on the Inscott side at any rate."

So machines were hastily trundled over and stacked, while their riders, quite worn out, lazily hung over the railing and watched the progress of the advancing schooner.

On she came, tacking against the wind, and now she bears down upon the bridge in such a course that instinctively the young cyclists glance towards their wheels, as if meditating flight. But suddenly she falls away on another tack, and the next minute comes swooping down again, this time so far in the opposite direction that c-r-a-c-k! bang she goes into the draw itself, and then sails on, leaving all the damage behind her.

"Hallo," cried Frank, "if she hasn't lamed the old thing so they can't get it shut again! I'm jolly glad we're on the home side."

"Oh, are you?" exclaimed Fred pointing excitedly across the open space. "Look, isn't that Roy tearing down the road yonder?"

It was indeed, and two minutes later the hungry Centaurs and their moneyed treasurer were staring and screaming at one another in serio-comic helplessness.

"Get the man to ferry you over in his boat!" shouted Harry, making a trumpet of his hands.

"But we can get a better dinner on this side," answered Roy in the same fashion. "So why can't you have him bring you fellows over here?"

The bridge tender, however, settled matters by announcing that he'd have to row himself off in the boat right away to report damages, and had, therefore, no time to waste.

"There'll be a whole parcel of boys and rowboats around here," he added, "as soon as I tell 'em at the village what's happened," and he began to climb down into his skiff.

But the Centaurs had no notion of waiting for their dinner any longer than was absolutely necessary, and as it would take less time to transport one boy than five, they authorized their treasurer to offer the man fifty cents for the immediate transfer of himself and wheel to the Inscott shore.

Negotiations were successfully conducted on this basis, and at last the club was a unit again.

"Where now?" asked Al, after mutual congratulations and explanations.

Captain Goldent pointed towards the west, where clouds were beginning to gather, and answered: "Along by the shore to the village, where the bridge tender's gone. We can manage to get a bite of something there to freshen us up, and then I move we start for home, for I'm pretty certain we'll have rain tomorrow, if not before."

"I'm going to stick to Roy through thick and thin," announced Will as they set out.

And they all followed his example. The little village on the river bank supplied them with milk, sandwiches and cheese to break their fast, and after a short rest they mounted and started for Inscott, in a race with the brewing storm. The latter, however, was kind enough to place the wind at their backs, and after a most exhilarating run, the Centaurs reached home in time to escape a drenching.

And so the tour, if short, was also "sweet," in the sense that everything had turned out for the best after all.

EDUCATION.

Behold! this is the use of education: That print may be perpetual recreation; Each one no more a dull, unthinking elf. But every man good company for himself. Food to the body, blessing to the mind. To comfort, help, inspire and bless mankind.

—JAMES B. WIGGIN.

[This Story began in Number 456.]

A DEBT OF HONOR.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

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

CHAPTER XX.

SCIENCE VERSUS STRENGTH.

EVER Gerald felt rather alarmed when he saw the two contestants facing each other. Ben who reached a height of six feet one, towered above his small antagonist as the spire of Trinity Church towers above surrounding buildings. A difference of six inches makes the difference between a tall man and a short one. Why is it that a man of six feet looks double the size of a man of five, though in reality only one fifth larger? It is an ocular deception which affects every one, but is not readily explained.

"If you want to back out, you kin do so," said Ben good naturedly.

"What an' spoil our fun?" demanded the old man. "No, stranger, it won't do to back out now."

"I have no intention of backing out. Mr. Peters," said Noel Brooke firmly.

"That's right! I like your pluck," said the old man in a tone of relief, for he feared he would lose a spectacle which he expected to enjoy. He would have felt as badly disappointed, as the visitors to Jerome Park if the races should be postponed.

Noel Brooke had taken stock of his long limbed adversary, and the result was that he felt encouraged.

Ben had long arms, very long arms, but his figure, though muscular, was loose jointed, and his motion indicated that he was slow. Now rapidity of movement is a very important thing in a contest such as was to take place between these two.

"Mr. Peters," said the Englishman, "may I trouble you to give the signal by saying 'Ready.'"

"Ready!" shouted the old man eagerly.

Ben began to move his arms in a snail-like way common to those who are untrained in the art of fighting, and advanced with the utmost confidence to the fray. If he had hit straight out his blows would have gone above the head of his antagonist, which was rather a disadvantage, though not so great perhaps as that under which Noel Brooke labored in being so short. It seemed to Ben, therefore, that he had better throw his long arms around his puny opponent, and, fairly lifting him off the ground, hold him helpless at his mercy.

"I won't hurt him!" thought Ben magnanimously.

But somehow his palm miscarried. Noel Brooke skillfully evaded the close embrace which would have settled the fight then and there in favor of Ben, and skipping, first to one side, then to the other, rained in a shower of blows

upon Ben, one of which took effect in his jaw, and drove him staggering back discomfited.

It may safely be said that never were three men more amazed than Mr. Peters and his two sons.

There stood Ben, actually staggering as if on the point of falling, while the Englishman, calm and unruddied, stood in an easy position watching for the next move.

Old Mr. Peters rose from the ground in his excitement.

"Pitch into him, Ben!" he shouted. "Ain't you ashamed of bein' beaten back by a little chap like that? Where's you're pluck? Are you goin' to let a little undersized Britisher do you up afore your own father and brother?"

"No, dad, I'll be eternally walloped if I will. Look out, there! I'm goin' to

"He knows how to fight, he does!" he said.

"Why, he ain't half as big as you, Ben! Ain't you ashamed of yourself?"

"No I ain't," said Ben in a sulky tone. "If you think it's so easy to tackle him do it yourself. He's a reg'lar steam engine, he is!"

"Will you try it again, Ben?" asked Brooke in a friendly tone.

"No, I won't. I've had enough." His father was carried away by his angry excitement.

"I didn't think one of my boys would disgrace me," he said bitterly. "You've told me to tackle him myself, and I'll be whipped if I don't do it."

"You'll be whipped if you do, dad," said Ben. "If I can't lick him you can't."

"We'll see," said the old man, grit-



WHILE THE LANDLORD WAS BANTERING MR. BROOKE, A SALLOW MAN WITH SHIFTING EYES LISTENED ATTENTIVELY.

smash yer. Look out I say! Here I come."

"All right! I'll look out," said Noel Brooke calmly.

Ben stood a poorer chance now than before, for his unexpected defeat, and the raillery of his father, made him angry and reckless of consequences. He rushed at Brooke in an impetuous pell mell manner which was utterly reckless and exposed him to attack, and which would have given his opponent a great advantage even if he had been less skillful.

Ben was excited, and Noel Brooke was not. Moreover, the tourist now thoroughly understood his advantage, and awaited the onslaught in calm confidence. Again he succeeded in avoiding the close hug by which Ben intended to paralyze and render him powerless, and took the opportunity to get in a couple of sledge hammer blows, one of which took effect on Ben's chin.

It was too much for him.

Like a tall poplar he swayed for a moment, and then, falling backward, measured his length upon the ground.

"Why, Ben!" exclaimed his father in angry amazement, "what's got into yer? Hev you been drinkin'? Why you can't fight more'n an old cow! To be floored by a little chap like that!"

Ben rose from the ground slowly, looking dazed and bewildered.

"Stranger, I'm goin' for yer!"

"Wait a minute, sir," said Brooke quietly. "I don't mean to fight you."

"You're afraid, be you?" sneered the old man.

"You may put it that way if you like, but I'm not going to raise my hand against a man old enough to be my father."

"I don't ask no odds on account of my age. You'll find me young enough for you."

"Perhaps you are right, for I couldn't fight with any spirit against you."

"You've only licked Ben. Now you want to crawl off."

"No; if your other son cares to meet me I'll have a set to with him."

"Come, Abe, there's your chance," said the old man, addressing his eldest son. "Just stand up to the Britisher, and let him see that he can't lick the whole Peters family."

"All right, dad!" said Abe, rising and standing up a full inch taller than his younger brother. "The stranger's a good fighter, but I reckon he can't down me."

He was tall, muscular, and with no superfluous flesh. It looked to Gerald as if his friend would find it a hard job to vanquish this backwoods giant.

"Wal, stranger, how do you feel about it?" asked Abe, as he saw Brooke ap-

parently taking stock of his thews and sinews.

"I don't know," answered the tourist. "I had a hard job with your brother, but I think I'll find it harder to tackle you."

"Ho, ho! I think so too. Wal, dad, give the signal."

Ben and his father seated themselves as spectators of the coming encounter. It may seem strange, but Ben's good wishes were in favor of the stranger. He had been defeated, and if Abe were victorious he knew that he would never hear the last of it. But if Abe, too, were worsted he would have a very good excuse for his own failure. The father, however, felt eager to have the presumptuous Briton bite the dust under the triumphant blows of his eldest son.

Abe was not as impetuous or reckless as Ben. Indeed, had he been so naturally, Ben's defeat would have made him careful.

He approached cautiously, and at the proper time he tried to overwhelm Brooke with what he called a "sock-dolager." But Noel Brooke had a quick eye, and drawing back evaded the onslaught which fell on the empty air. Before Abe could recover from the recoil the tourist dealt him a heavy blow beneath his left ear which nearly staggered him.

Ben laughed gleefully, and rubbed his hands.

"Now you see how 'tis yourself, Abe!" he cried.

"Shut up!" growled his father. "Don't you go to crowin' over your brother. He's all right. Just wait!"

Abe's rather sluggish temperament was angered by his brother's derisive laugh, and he too lost his head. From this time he fought after Ben's reckless fashion, of course laying himself open to attack—an opportunity of which the tourist availed himself.

When five minutes later Abe measured his length on the turf, Ben got up and bending over his prostrate brother said with a grin: "How did it happen, Abe? An accident, wasn't it?"

"No," answered Abe manfully. "I reckon the stranger's too much for either of us."

"Try it again, Abe!" said the old man in excitement.

"No, I've had enough, dad. I shan't laugh at Ben any more. I can't best the Englishman. I might try the boy."

"No, thank you," said Gerald laughing. "You could fight me with one hand."

This modest confession helped to restore Abe's good humor, and he shook hands with his adversary.

"You're a smart 'un!" he said. "I didn't think you had it in you, I didn't by gum. But there's one thing I can beat you in—and that's shootin'."

CHAPTER XXI.

HITTING THE BULLSEYE.

"I HAVE no doubt of it—you can beat me at shooting," said the Englishman. "I can aim pretty fairly, but I don't believe I can equal you."

"Let us try!" proposed Ben eagerly. "Very well," rejoined Brooke, "if you'll lend me a rifle. Mine is not a good one."

"All right; I'll lend you mine," said Ben.

A board was placed in position, and with a piece of chalk a circular disc was roughly outlined with a bullseye in the center.

"Now," said Ben, handing his weapon to Noel Brooke, "lemme see what you can do!"

Brooke fired, striking the disc about two inches from the bullseye.

"That's good!" cried Ben. "Now I'll show you what I can do."

He raised the rifle carelessly and struck the disc an inch nearer the bullseye than the tourist.

"I've beat you," he said gleefully. "And I'll beat you, Ben," added Abe. He raised the rifle, took careful aim, and struck the bullseye.

"That's the way Americans shoot," said he. "We don't give in to any body in shootin'."

"You've both beaten me," said Brooke good naturedly, "and I expected you would."

"You shoot pretty well for an Englishman," said Abe magnanimously. "I reckon you'd be called a crack shot in England?"

"Well, I have a pretty fair reputation there."

"Don't you want to shoot, kid?" asked Ben, turning to Gerald.

"I wouldn't mind," said Gerald with alacrity.

"Kin he shoot?" asked Abe, turning to the tourist.

"I don't know. I never saw him try it," answered Brooke.

Indeed, Noel Brooke awaited the result with considerable curiosity. He had never heard Gerald speak of his rifle practice, and had no idea whether he was skillful or not. The fact is, however, that in the three years Gerald had lived with his father in Colorado he had had large experience in hunting, for it was upon this that the two depended largely for their supplies of food. Gerald had a quick eye, and steady hand, and he had practiced a good deal by himself, being ambitious to gain skill with the rifle. He had succeeded so well that as soon as the second contest was proposed he was anxious to enter, but felt rather bashful about suggesting it himself. When, however, Ben mentioned it he accepted at once.

"You kin use the rifle, kid, can you?" asked Abe a little doubtfully.

"Yes, a little."

"We can't expect too much of a boy like you, but you'll learn after a while." Gerald smiled inwardly, and determined to give the brothers a little surprise.

He raised the rifle to his shoulder, and when quite ready he let fly.

The bullet struck the bullseye, a little more exactly, if possible, than Abe's. "There was a shout of surprise."

"Why, he's hit the bullseye!" exclaimed Ben, running forward to examine the target.

"So he has!" cried Noel Brooke joyfully, for he was delighted by his young companion's unexpected success.

"It's an accident!" said Abe jealously. "He couldn't do it again?"

"Can you?" asked Brooke, turning to Gerald.

"I don't know. I think so."

"Then have a second trial."

The board was reversed, a second disc was drawn, and the three marksmen prepared to repeat their shots.

"Shoot first, kid!" said Ben.

"No, I'm the youngest, I would rather follow."

"I won't shoot this time," said the tourist. "It's no use. You can all beat me."

The shooting took place in the same order. Ben did about as well as before, but Abe, though coming nearer, failed this time to hit the bullseye.

"Now it's your turn, boy!" he said.

A minute after there was another shout of surprise.

A second time Gerald had hit the bullseye, thus making the best record.

"You ain't a Britisher, be you?" asked Abe, mortified.

"No, I am a native born American, and proud of it," returned Gerald.

"You'll do, then! Hurrah for the stars and stripes!" shouted Abe. "The Amerikins kin shoot, you must admit, stranger."

"Yes, I am willing to admit it," said Noel Brooke with a smile, "especially as it is my friend Gerald who has come out first."

Later on Mrs. Peters and Bess, who had completed their household work, came out and joined them.

Mrs. Peters was astonished when she heard that the Englishman, who was two inches shorter than herself, had defeated both her tall sons.

"Why," she said, "I didn't think you could handle me."

"I don't believe I can, Mrs. Peters," said Noel Brooke modestly.

"I'm with you there!" put in her husband. "There ain't many men that's as tough and gritty as Sal Peters."

Mrs. Peters listened to this high encomium with complacency.

"And the boy there beat Abe and Ben in shootin'" continued Mr. Peters.

"I reckon he couldn't beat me!" said Mrs. Peters.

"The fact is the old woman is the best marksman in the lot of us," explained Mr. Peters. "She's got a sharp, keen eye, even if she is forty nine years old."

"Does Miss Peters take after her mother?" inquired the tourist.

"Miss Peters? Oh, you mean Bess. No, she'll never make the woman her mother is."

"I should hope not if I were going to marry her," thought Brooke.

Before ten o'clock all the inmates of the cabin were asleep. It may readily be supposed that first class accommodations were not provided. Gerald and his friend were shown to a bed in one corner, where they threw themselves down without undressing. But neither of them was inclined to be fastidious. They were thoroughly fatigued, and were soon oblivious to all that passed around them.

Noel Brooke, though a sound sleeper, was easily aroused. About midnight he started suddenly, and lifted his head as a noise was heard outside. It was a whinny from one of the horses, that were tethered to a tree at the rear part of the cabin. The horse was evidently frightened.

"Gerald!" exclaimed Brooke, shaking his companion energetically.

Gerald opened his eyes and asked drowsily, "What's the matter?"

"The horses! Some one is meddling with them. Get up at once!"

Gerald comprehended instantly, and sprang to his feet. Both he and the tourist were out of doors like a flash, and ran to the rear of the cabin.

Two cowboys wearing large flapping sombreros, had untied the horses, and were leading them away.

"Hold on there!" exclaimed the Englishman. "Leave that horse alone!"

The cowboy who had sprung upon the horse turned and greeted him with derisive laughter.

"Mind your business, stranger, and get back to your bed!" he answered, "I've got use for this horse."

The other, who had Gerald's horse by the bridle, also sprang upon its back.

"That's my horse!" called out Gerald angrily.

"It's mine now!"

"I wish I had my rifle!" said Brooke in excitement, "I would soon stop these thieves!"

This incautious speech betrayed the

fact that he was unarmed, and made the two thieves feel secure.

"Good by, strangers!" said the first cowboy. "Your horses will be taken care of. You ain't no cause to worry."

They turned the horses' heads and prepared to gallop away, though the poor animals, recognizing the voices of their real masters, seemed reluctant to go.

"If Mr. Peters and the boys were only awake," said the tourist, "they would manage these fellows."

But help was near at hand after all.

"You just get off them animals, or I'll shoot!" cried a stern voice.

The two cowboys turned quickly, expecting to encounter a man, but instead saw only a tall, gaunt woman in a white night dress, with her long, disheveled hair hanging down her back.

"Go back to bed, you old witch!" shouted the thief contemptuously.

If he had known Mrs. Peters better he would have hesitated before speaking in this strain, and above all he would have felt it prudent to get out of the way.

She took no time to parley, but raising a rifle which she carried at her side, aimed at the foremost ruffian, and an instant later a sharp pain in his shoulder told him he had been hit. With an imprecation he dropped to the ground, and his companion, striking Gerald's horse sharply, prepared to seek safety in flight, leaving his companion to his fate. But Mrs. Peters was ready for him, too. A second shot struck him in the leg, and he slid off the horse.

By this time Peters and his two boys showed themselves, roused by the sound of firing.

"What's up?" asked the old man.

"Two hoss thieves are down!" answered Mrs. Peters.

"Hoss thieves?"

"Yes; they was makin' off with the strangers' hosses. I've given 'em a hint not to come round here agin."

The groans uttered by the two fallen men confirmed her statement.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE STEAMER ROCK ISLAND.

THE horse thieves struggled to their feet, and stood apprehensively, but defiant, facing the old man who eyed them with stern and threatening glances. They were too much disabled to think of escaping.

"Why, you poor contemptible hoss thieves!" ejaculated Peters, "what have you got to say for yourselves?"

The two men looked at each other, but the right words did not seem to occur to them, for they remained silent.

"Serves you right to be tripped up by a woman! You ain't men, you're sneaks!"

The thieves turned their eyes toward Mrs. Peters, who, tall and gaunt, stood looking on with her thin gray hair floating down her back.

"She ain't a woman! She's a witch!" said one of them bitterly.

"You'll have to answer for that to me!" cried Ben, and with a stride he struck the man with his huge fist, and prostrated him.

"Dad, shall we string 'em up?" he asked, turning to his father. "He's insulted mother."

What Mr. Peters would have said is problematical, but Noel Brooke interposed earnestly, "No, no, Mr. Peters, let them go! They're both wounded, and that will be punishment sufficient."

"Just as you say, stranger! It's your hosses they tried to steal."

"But they insulted mother," insisted Ben.

"Let 'em go!" said Mrs. Peters contemptuously. "They'll remember the old witch for some time, I reckon!"

The men looked as if they would like to strangle her, but they were prudent enough to keep their mouths shut.

"Now scoot!" exclaimed Peters in a threatening tone. "If I ever catch either of you within a mile of my cabin, I'll shoot you down like dogs."

The two thieves waited for no further hint, but helping each other as best they could struck into the woods.

"Mrs. Peters," said the tourist, turning to his hostess, "I feel very much indebted to you for your prompt action. But for you Gerald and I would be forced to walk till we could secure fresh horses."

"You're welcome, strangers," responded Mrs. Peters, coolly reloading her rifle. "I ain't enjoyed myself so much for six months."

And indeed the old woman appeared to be in high spirits. The adventure, which would have terrified most women, only exhilarated her.

"I reckon we'd better be gettin' back to bed!" said Peters. "Gettin' up at midnight is too early risin' for me."

His feeling was shared not only by members of his family, but by his guests, and all betook themselves to bed again, and in half an hour were sleeping peacefully. The rest of the night passed without adventure, and at seven o'clock the next morning they sat down to breakfast.

As they were about to start on their journey Noel Brooke tendered a ten dollar bill to his hostess.

"Mrs. Peters," he said, "allow me to offer you a slight gift in acknowledgment of your kindness and of the signal service you did us last night."

"I don't understand all your high words, stranger," said the old lady as with a look of satisfaction she pocketed the money, "but I'll be glad to see you again any time. You're one of the right sort."

"Thank you, Mrs. Peters."

So amid farewell greetings the two rode away.

Two months later Gerald and his English friend found themselves on a river steamer floating down the Mississippi from Davenport to St. Louis. They had kept on their way west as far as Salt Lake City, then struck up to the northwest, without any particular plan of proceeding till they reached the Mississippi. They had once been in danger of capture by the Indians, and once by highwaymen, but had on both occasions been fortunate enough to escape.

Noel Brooke had become more and more attached to his young secretary, whom he not only found an agreeable companion, but intelligent and an eager learner. He had voluntarily given him oral lessons in French and German, so that Gerald was able to make use of both languages to a limited extent.

At Davenport Mr. Brooke learned that the steamer Rock Island, would start at ten o'clock the next morning on her way down the river to St. Louis and New Orleans, and on the impulse of the moment he decided to take passage.

"I have heard so much of the Mississippi," he said to Gerald, "that I should like to see something of its shores. How will that please you?"

"I should like nothing better," said Gerald eagerly.

"The boats are running pretty full," said the landlord of the hotel. "You may not be able to secure a stateroom."

"We will try at any rate," rejoined the tourist. "If we don't succeed we can wait till the next boat. Our time is not of great value."

"Ah," said the landlord, "that is where you have the advantage of me. You rich Englishmen are not obliged to

turn time into money like us poor landlords."

Noel Brooke laughed.

"I sometimes wish I had to work for a living," he said. "I am inclined to think that I should enjoy life more."

"In that case," remarked Gerald with a smile, "suppose you exchange places with me."

"Would you give me a place as private secretary?" asked the tourist.

"Yes."

"My dear Gerald, envy no man the possession of money. You are young and healthy, and with an excellent prospect before you. You will be happier than if there were no necessity for your working."

"I believe you, Mr. Brooke, I was only joking."

While the landlord was bantering Mr. Brooke upon being a rich Englishman, a dark whiskered man, with a sallow face and shifty eyes, listened with apparent interest. He watched Noel Brooke with a scrutinizing glance, and listened attentively to what he said.

When Brooke decided to board the steamer this man settled his bill and followed him to the boat. At the office the tourist found that a single stateroom was vacant, No. 37, and he secured it.

It contained two berths, an upper and lower.

"You may take the upper berth, Gerald," he said. "I shall avail myself of my privilege as an older man to occupy the lower."

"All right, Mr. Brooke. It makes no difference to me."

The man who had shown such a suspicious interest in Mr. Brooke managed to jostle him a little in going on board the steamer.

"Excuse me," he said. "Are you going down the river?"

"Yes," answered Brooke coldly, for he did not like the man's appearance.

"How far shall you go? To St. Louis?"

"I presume so."

"I shall probably get off at St. Louis myself. Ever been there before?"

"No, sir."

"It's a nice city. I may be able to show you around."

"Thank you, but I should not like to give you the trouble."

"No trouble, I assure you. Is that your brother with you?"

"No, it is a young friend."

Later on, while Mr. Brooke had gone off to smoke a cigar, the stranger sought out Gerald.

"Are you English, like your friend?" he asked.

"No, sir. I am an American."

"I didn't quite catch the gentleman's name."

"Mr. Brooke."

"Oh, I've heard the name before. I presume he is a rich man."

"I never asked him," answered Gerald, displeased with his companion's curiosity, which he considered ill bred.

"Well, at any rate, you must have money to travel around with him."

"I am his private secretary."

"You don't say so? Is it a soft snap?"

"I don't understand."

"I mean it is an easy job?"

"I do not complain of its duties."

"Where have you been traveling?"

"In Colorado and Utah."

"All expenses paid, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then it is a soft snap. I am a business man, a traveler for a Chicago house."

"Indeed!" said Gerald, who felt no interest in his companion or his business.

"My name is Samuel Standish. How long are you going to travel with Mr. Brooke?"

"I can't tell, sir."

"When you get out of a job, call on me at No. 114 North Clark Street, Chicago."

"Thank you, sir."

"You look like a smart fellow. I will recommend you to my firm."

"You are very kind, sir."

"Don't mention it."

Mr. Samuel Standish walked away, and directly afterwards a stout gentleman walked by.

Gerald started in surprise, for in the new comer he recognized Mr. Bradley Wentworth.

(To be continued.)

TRAINING FOR FOOTBALL.

BY AN EX TEAM CAPTAIN.

JUST now the road from the college to the field is peopled with boys of all physical degree in "shorts" and "sweaters." The foul lines bordering the diamond are almost obliterated, and the marker is slowly trailing out the goal lines. Football is the game, now that the autumn has fully come; and the boys from all the classes are cutting recitations for yet a little more time to get in trim; for, in a week these scrub teams will be made up, from which probationary candidates will be selected for the "varsity" team. Already some of last season's coaches are coming down to the field every day, watching keenly the raw and ungainly mass of green material for signs of promising strength, speed or dexterity.

The large schools that prepare for Yale, Harvard and Princeton, all have their football teams, so that, when the boys come up to college they need not be taught the game, its rules and its intricacies; but what was brilliant in play at school is crude at college oftentimes, and training, practice and regimen under the eyes of the veterans are necessary to turn out the finished specimen who is to defend the fame of his *alma mater* in the inter-collegiate contests. He will then be in a condition of maximum strength as to every muscle: he will have been taught the fine points of sprinting; he will have lungs in that perfect condition that is meant when "good wind" is spoken of; besides his judgment and eye will have been disciplined and quickened, and all the faculties will be under complete control. With all this, perfect grace comes naturally.

At last a professional "varsity" eleven is elected, composed of those former team men who remain, and the pick of the new men regardless of class, who, for preliminary practice are pitted against the "field," that is, against the remaining mass of aspirants. These heavy practice games, so well calculated to show up the player in all his strength or weakness, indicate numerous changes and substitutions in the men, some of the selections proving incapable, and some of those composing the field showing up in far superior form to some who have been selected for the eleven.

The eleven players and the half dozen substitutes being finally decided on, regular training at once begins. First, smoking and drinking are forbidden. The eating is prescribed and the hours of rising are regulated, and special hours are set for special kinds of exercise and practice.

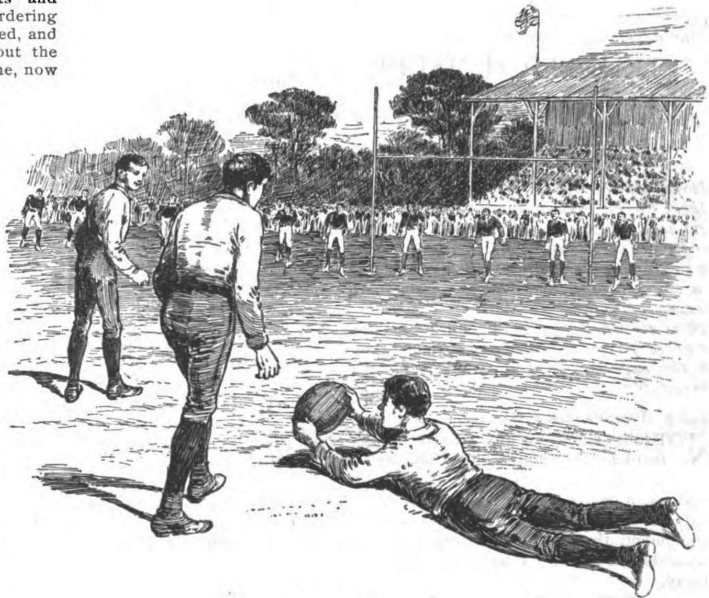
At those colleges where football is one of the famous sources of their popularity, the faculty or governing body are very accommodating to the mighty

men of the pigskin, granting leave at hours necessary for practice and looking with leniency on some of the classroom deficiencies that result from over attention to the game. Thus the trainers are enabled to work their men at proper intervals during the day, and study and exercise are alternated in a way quite beneficial to both mind and body.

There are three leading requisites for the game of football: strength, speed, endurance. For the perfection of the general muscular strength, the team is worked in the gymnasium on all the devious and intricate apparatus with which a modern hall of athletics must be filled. The strength and solidity of the loins, thorax and arms are needed, offensively and defensively, for rushing, blocking and tackling, and the various apparatus

There is always a star kicker on the team who trains most carefully of all for the kicking. When the touchdown is made, the ball brought out to the line and held just an inch above the ground by the placer, stretched out at full length, then this star kicker is called upon to prove his value—he must kick the ball between the posts and over the bar or miss a chance to add two points to the score.

Most often this kick is made from some spot not in front of the goal posts, but to one side at a sharp angle. The placer has put himself in position, prone on the ground; the star kicker steps out from the line; he must get his toe under the small end of the ball to be accurate, and the ball must be held with its longer axis exactly in the direction it is to go;



AFTER THE TOUCHDOWN.

used serves to develop every muscle in turn to the fullest performance of its purpose—a development that as a whole must be symmetrical to be perfect.

How we all rise up in our seats as one of the half backs, with ball tucked snugly under his arm, crashes and leaps and dodges through the swarm, first to this side, then to that, and finally, sailing free as a bird, makes toward the sturdy waiting back, outstripping the whole pack at his heels. This speed has been specially trained for by sprinting on the "hundred" and the "two twenty" cinder stretches (100 and 220 yards.)

Long distance running on the cinder path and cross country are indulged in for endurance and wind. Each division of the team has more or less special practice suitable to its particular branch of work in the game. The rushers are usually found to be up to all the fine points of wrestling, though if they are seen to be pounding the bag in the "gym" the general public must not be allowed to believe that they bring this practice into play in their matches.

The lighter half backs, who are all good hurdlers, have extra training for drop kicking, with the wind, across it and against it, and at the goal posts at every angle; and for punting for distance and for quickness, both standing and on the run.

The ham backs, who are usually fond of hammer throwing and shot putting, have more to do with the resounding punt than the graceful drop kick.

he sights the ball and the goals, moves his hand as a signal and the placer aims the ball a little more to one side or higher or lower; right at last—the star takes three rapid steps to the ball—a sharp kick, a streak of pigskin curving right between the posts and over the bar—thousands roar with delight, and the first goal of the championship game is scored.

A CALLING FOR KICKERS.

A KICKER is usually considered to be a very objectionable person and of no use whatever in the world, but the man with legs strong enough to kick literally may find something to do in England. This strange occupation is thus described by a traveler, who is quoted in the *New York Tribune*. He says:

"The 'legger' in an English canal tunnel has a hard time of it. I went through two canal tunnels this summer. The canals are just the width of one of the small barges used, and but very little higher than the board which runs from the alleged cabin to the tow line pole. As it is impossible for a horse to tow the barge, the animal is led around or over the hill, and a legger lies on his back on the board referred to, and, raising his legs from his hips, pushes the boat along by pressing on the dilapidated roof of the tunnel. As I sat and watched the man in this unnatural position, I felt the depth of human misery had been discovered at last. The work is arduous, the light very bad, the atmosphere almost fetid, the labor degrading, and the effect almost equivalent to making a man a cripple. Yet the most the 'legger' can make is seventy five cents a day, and when traffic is light or there is ice on the canal he makes little or nothing. The old jail treadmill was bad enough in all conscience, but this is a thousand times worse.



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Our next new serial, to begin next week, is

TRUE TO HIMSELF;

OR,

ROGER STRONG'S STRUGGLE FOR PLACE.

By EDWARD STRATEMEYER.

Handicapped by misfortunes which befall his father, Roger Strong has an up hill row to hoe. How he accomplishes the task is told in his own words, and in a manner that cannot fail to enlist the reader's intense interest. "True to Himself" is a story replete with exciting incidents and stirring episodes. Its hero is a boy of pluck, such as all other boys admire, and in his struggle for place passes through experiences which call for the exercise of this quality in the most marked degree.

TRESPASSING IN THE CLOUDS.

NOT long since the gay city of Paris, which furnishes so many novelties for all the world, was visited by what was to the Parisians a most astounding novelty. The inhabitants were startled at this visitation of a phenomenon that had never before overtaken the city, and a universal "Why?" was the question of the day.

The scientists desired no better opportunity to show their capabilities in tracing from effect to cause and in extracting from science the answer to the general question. It is seriously claimed by the meteorologists that the Eiffel Tower was the cause not only of the waterspout, but also of a change in the climate of the city, which seems to have occurred of late.

The change so claimed is due to the fact that this prodigious structure, penetrating the region of the clouds, where the electricity mainly makes its home, attracts the dreaded fluid from all points of the compass. The presence of extraordinary electric currents in the atmosphere results in frequent and violent aerial disturbances. Hence Paris is perturbed by the possibility of its brightness and beauty being marred by a London climate.

It is certain that the past summer in the neighbourhood of the French capital has been the reverse of its usual geniality, but few fair days being recorded for the whole season. And it is corroborative of the claim of the Parisian savants that in a few other places, also, history records permanent changes in the character of the elemental visitations dating from the erection of spires and other tall, slender structures.

MAN RIDING.

THE sight of a diminutive woman carrying on her head a bag of paper scraps of comparatively enormous size is a reminder that in many places on the globe beasts of burden are superseded by men of burden, with special reference to the transportation of man by man.

The mountains of Ecuador are traversed by travelers sitting in chairs strapped to the backs of the porters. The ash strewn cone of Mount Vesuvius

may be ascended in the same way. The swiftest transit in the streets of Japan is to be had in a palanquin that is suspended from poles borne on the shoulders of rapid running porters. Explorers in Africa are not unused to bridging the swarthy shoulders of the natives in fording the streams, and it will not be forgotten how the famed Sindbad acted in this capacity for quite some time.

To some people the sensation of riding upon one of their own kind must be not altogether pleasant; they feel a certain repugnance as though it were aiding to degrade a human being to the level of the beasts. But it is only one form of honest and honorable toil.

MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE.

ON our last page this week will be found the announcement of the first issue of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE, that publication being a successor to the periodical so well known as MUNSEY'S WEEKLY. MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE will prove far more attractive to the readers of THE ARGOSY than its predecessor could hope to be. The October number contains no less than six complete stories—one of them a full novel. When we add that this is written by William Murray Graydon, whose "With Cossack and Convict" is now running in these pages, we need say nothing more to convince our readers that in this one feature alone they will obtain more than their money's worth.

But the other features are both varied and noteworthy, while the illustrations, press work, and general get up of the magazine are of the highest excellence. The price is 25 cents a number, or \$3 per year. Clubbed with THE ARGOSY both publications \$4.00.

Be sure to get the first issue, now ready.

MEANT FOR USE.

IT is interesting to note the adaptability of the human system to circumstance, environment or habit, or the partial failure of faculties, that are not much called into use.

Dwellers in rural districts—on the mountains particularly—accustomed to viewing long reaches of country can distinguish objects, as any one can ascertain by test, much further than those who live in cities. The streets are narrow; the sight is bounded by the house across the way; our optic nerves unexercised, become impaired, and hence we use a glass when we sit in the twelfth row at the opera, while our country cousin can distinguish the stray piebald calf three quarters of a mile up the road.

Instances of modern impairment of the frame and faculties are many, but the most common is that of the boy who never studies, never thinks, never works; he might have been the brightest of them all with his natural intelligence, but an idle brain has made a useless one—he is the booby of the school.

A STRANGE USE FOR THE THEATER.

A TYPICAL rushing, scurrying American was recently heard to say that he went to the theater to think over his business. He never saw the play or heard the opera in a way to enable him to tell after the performance what it was all about. While the curtain was up, the lights streaming, the band blowing and scraping and drumming, and the players singing, this singular man attained complete oblivion to all else but the business matter he desired to consider. In no other place could he secure such concentration of mind.

This seems to be one of the most curious of mental phenomena. How men can resist the attraction to the eye and mind of the light, color, and motion of the stage is not comprehensible.

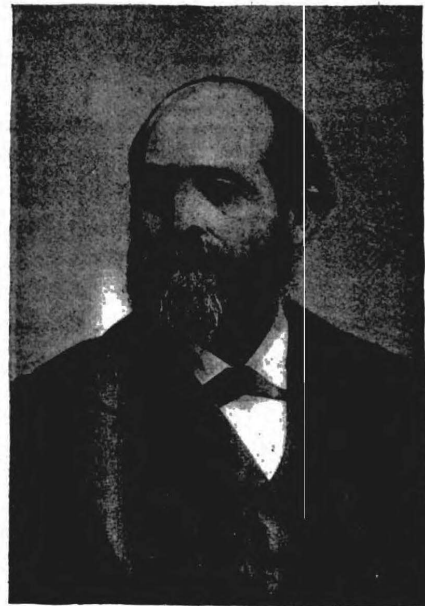
When we were boys and went to the circus a locomotive could not have drawn our attention from the clown to that jack-knife trade of the morrow; and even now, when our gray hairs are fast multiplying under the cares and heavy stresses of life, the majority of us visit the playhouse for just the opposite reason to that which draws thither this very singular business man.

RICHARD P. BLAND,

CONGRESSMAN FROM MISSOURI.

GRIT is always admirable; it is that quality which has inspired so many of the men prominent in the country's history to secure education, wealth, and exalted station by their heroic efforts unaided by influential connections or the power of money. This is the reflection that follows a reading of the career of Richard Parks Bland, Member of Congress from Missouri.

Born near Hartford, Kentucky, August 19, 1835, his best gift was his descent from good old Virginia stock, through both father and mother, for from this descent must have come in large measure the fine courage



RICHARD P. BLAND.

From a photograph by Bell, Washington.

with which he assumed and fulfilled the onerous duties, that early misfortune cast upon his youthful shoulders. His most noted ancestor was Theodorick Bland, prominent in the annals of the Revolution.

When he was but seven years old his father died and his mother passed away when he was fourteen. A younger brother remained—Charles C. Bland—and a sister; another brother had died at a very early age.

When the parents were no more it devolved upon the two boys to educate themselves and their sister, for their parents had been poor and had left no means.

Approaching manhood's estate the quest for opportunity and prosperity took the subject of our sketch to California, where he stayed for four years. From there he went to Virginia City, Utah, but left here in 1860 to join an expedition under Colonel Jack Hayes against the Pi Ute Indians.

The next year he commenced to practice law at Virginia City, Nevada, and before the year was run his personality had brought him into sufficient prominence and popularity to attract political preferment. He was elected County Treasurer of Carson County, and he held this office until Nevada was organized as a State. Then, in 1865, he removed to Missouri, opening a law office at Rolla, where the two brothers were again united in a working partnership. But it was not until 1869 that he found the neighborhood that should hold him permanently and witness his steady advancement to a higher and more congenial level. Lebanon, Missouri, claimed him from that time as its most prominent lawyer.

In 1871 he was elected to the Forty Third Congress, as a Democrat, and the honor has been confirmed at each succeeding election. His talents have impelled Congressman Bland to be one of the most active members of the House and his long term of service there has made him one of the most experienced.

His national reputation rests principally on theories of currency. He is the author of the Bland Silver Bill, giving unlimited coinage to the standard silver dollar; he introduced the bill and secured its passage in the House, but the Senate amended it so as to limit the coinage of the silver dollar to not less than two million nor more than four million dollars per month.

He cast off bachelorhood in 1873, marrying a daughter of General E. J. Mitchell. At fifty nine years of age Congressman Bland is at the full of his intellectual powers and remains an influential member in the House of Representatives.

JUDSON NEWMAN SMITH.

GOD'S LAMPS

Lo! at the setting of the sun,
When darkness steals upon the light,
God lights his lamps, and one by one
Hangs them upon the dome of night.
—Philadelphia Ledger.

[This Story began in Number 460.]

WITH GOSSACK AND CONVICT.

A TALE OF FAR SIBERIA.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON,

Author of "Under Africa," "The Rajak's
Fortress," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO CONVICTS.

THE transition from utter darkness to light was so sudden that for a few seconds Donald's eyes were blinded. Then the face of his enemy took shape through the yellow haze—a horrible face, grim, smooth shaven and wrinkled with terror and ferocity.

"Where are you, Valbort?" cried the fellow savagely. "Be quick or we are lost."

"Hold him tight, I'm bringing the knife," answered a voice close by.

Donald looked in that direction and saw another man approaching swiftly—a desperate looking fellow with a matted black beard. He had but one arm, and in his hand he carried a lighted fragment of candle, while a gleaming blade was stuck between his clinched teeth. His body was bent forward to avoid touching the low roof overhead, but as he reached the scene of the struggle he straightened up and dropped the knife deftly into his companion's hand.

Donald uttered a sharp cry as he saw the blade lifted for a fatal stroke, and made one last effort to escape. Then he closed his eyes and waited. One—two—three seconds passed, but the dreaded blow did not come. The knife was poised in air and the would-be assassin was staring at Donald with an expression of bewilderment on his face.

"I've made a mistake, Valbort," he muttered in a low voice. "This ain't one of the guards, after all. Where did the fellow come from? He's a convict like ourselves—look at his clothes."

Without further words he thrust the knife into his pocket, and taking hold of Donald—who was much surprised at this new turn of affairs—he helped him to his feet.

"Who are you?" he demanded. "And how did you get here?"

"Yes, how did you get here?" echoed the one armed man, drawing closer and scanning Donald from head to foot.

They spoke in Russian, of course, but Donald understood them readily. He had quite recovered from the shock by this time, and moreover had a pretty clear idea of the situation. The gray convict garb ornamented with yellow diamonds of cloth left no doubt as to the identity of his companions.

"I am a prisoner, like yourselves," he answered cautiously. "As to how I got here, you are the best ones to answer that. The floor of my cell gave way and dropped me into this place. It was no fault of mine, I assure you."

The one armed man uttered a hasty exclamation, and standing on his toes he

held the candle as high as he could reach.

"The fellow tells the truth, Lavroff," he said. "I can see into the cell quite plainly. The ground must have been very soft to cave in. The tunnel is fully three feet beneath the surface."

Lavroff took the candle from his companion and made a survey for himself.

"You are right, Valbort," he said. "We have dug the tunnel too far to one side. It won't make much difference, though, except that we dare lose no more time. This cell overhead is in that small building which lies close to the stockade. I did not know until now for what purpose it was used. The guards won't be likely to enter it until morning, but the light of the candle may be seen outside. I had better lower it."

Lavroff handed the candle to his companion—who quickly moved a few yards

scare. Our nine companions are waiting in the *Kamera* for us to return with the good news. By now they are growing impatient, so we must make haste. Our plan is to swim across the river Tom and escape to the desolate country which lies south of the prison. At this time of year there will be food in plenty in the forest, and our chances of ultimately reaching Russia are good. You will go with us of course?"

Donald did not reply at once, and his perplexity must have been visible on his countenance, for Lavroff and Valbort drew close to him with ill concealed suspicion, and the latter's hand strayed to the hilt of his knife.

Donald was mentally measuring the chances, and though little disposed to seek freedom in company with such men as these—who were desperate criminals beyond a doubt—he knew that no alter-

the little party of three crept forward in the darkness. They stumbled through the loose heap of earth that Donald had brought with him in his fall, and then had to bend low, for the tunnel was less than four feet high, and about three feet in width. It must have been a truly herculean task to excavate this passage and Donald was conscious of a feeling of admiration and awe for the men who could overcome such obstacles in their pursuit of freedom.

The end of the tunnel was soon reached, and judging from the close proximity to the stockade of the building in which Donald had been confined, but little remained to be done.

"Stand where you are and make no noise," directed Lavroff. "It can't be more than midnight and we have plenty of time to carry out our plans."

He commenced to dig with savage strokes, and for five minutes nothing was heard but the dull plunk of the clods of earth as they gave way beneath the knife and fell to the floor of the tunnel.

"Lavroff is a terrible man," whispered Valbort in Donald's ear. "Do you want to know how he cheered us when we were working on the tunnel? He told us to imagine that every knife thrust we made was a blow aimed at the heart of the government officials, or at the Czar himself. Ah! how the men toiled when they heard that! It was a noble sight. Night after night that delusion cheered them on. Not one of them but wished it was a reality!"

Donald shuddered, but made no reply, and when Valbort accidentally touched him he shrank back with repugnance.

All at once the digging ceased and a tiny streak of pale light shone into the tunnel.

"Through!" muttered Lavroff. "Be cautious now. This is the critical time."

With soft touches he pared away the earth until the little hole had expanded to the size of a dinner plate. Through it could be seen the surface of the river reflecting a few stars in its clear depths, and the cool outer air surged in and mingled with the hot atmosphere of the tunnel.

Lavroff thrust his head carefully out for an instant and then drew it back.

"All promises well," he whispered; "not a sentinel is in sight on the stockade overhead, and the water is close by. Make haste now, Valbort, and tell our companions that the moment has come. Bid them be cautious and leave the *Kamera* one at a time. The least noise will alarm the guards in the corridor and all will then be lost."

"I will see to it that no mistake is made," said Valbort, and with quick, noiseless strides he vanished up the passage.

It seemed to the anxious watchers left behind that but a moment had passed when the dull tread of approaching feet was heard—and such was in reality the case.

The new comer was Valbort. His speed increased as he neared the end of the passage, and he ran violently against Donald who in turn was thrown upon Lavroff.

"What is wrong!" cried the latter. "Do you bring bad news?"



"CAPTAIN ROSNY, WHO HAS BEEN SHOT? NOT SERGE MASLOFF?"

along the passage—and then, turning to Donald he said: "I beg your pardon for handing you so roughly. Under the circumstances I was justified, for I took you to be one of the guards who had broken through the roof. You gave me a bad scare, and on that score I think we are about even. You are a political prisoner, are you not?"

Donald inclined his head. He was by no means disposed to make a confidant of these fellows.

"Well," resumed Lavroff, "we can talk about that matter later. You look like a good fellow, and I have no fears that you will betray us. Fate brought you here by caving in the floor of your cell, and fate evidently wills that you should escape with us. You are welcome to join us, but I warn you that there will be severe hardships to endure. It has taken myself and ten companions a month of hard labor to dig this tunnel. It runs from yonder prison building to a point in the steep bank of the river on the outer side of the stockade. We managed to loosen a board in the floor of our *Kamera* and thus go under the building where there is a narrow space. Last night, just before dawn, we arrived within two feet of the river bank, if our calculations are correct. Valbort and I were just hurrying to cut away the last crust of earth when you tumbled in on us and gave us a bad

native existed, that his refusal meant instant death.

"I can't draw back now," he said to himself. "The only thing possible is to go with them. It is a splendid opportunity after all, and one that I may never have again. If their daring plan succeeds I need not remain with them long. I will escape at the first chance and try to reach some town where I can tell my story to the highest official there. The fact that I surrendered of my own accord will cause an investigation of my case and make me a free man again."

This line of reasoning—which passed through Donald's mind in much less time than it takes to tell—quite converted him to the plans of his companions. His misgivings vanished and every nerve thrilled with excitement at the thought of breathing the pure air of freedom again.

"I will gladly go with you," he answered in a tone which instantly dispelled the doubts of the two convicts.

"Good!" muttered Valbort and Lavroff in one breath. The latter placed himself in front of Donald and the former stepped behind, thus sandwiching him between the two—a precaution which they perhaps deemed wise, and which Lavroff still further strengthened by drawing his knife and holding it in his hand in plain view of Donald.

Then the candle was blown out and

"The worst has happened," gasped Valbort in tones of agony. "Our absence has been discovered and the guards are in the *Kamera*. Look! they have found the tunnel. Do you see the flash of their lanterns?"

Valbort was right. At the extreme end of the passage a yellow glow was visible. The guards had torn up the flooring and were about to enter the tunnel in search of the two missing convicts.

"Our companions are lost," cried Lavroff with a terrible oath, "but there is yet time to save ourselves. We could accomplish nothing by going back. Keep up your courage and follow me."

He sprang with both hands at the thin crust of earth surrounding the hole, and tore it away until the gap was wide enough to admit his body. He wriggled through into the outer air, followed closely by Donald and Valbort, and all three plunged down the steep bank and over the stretch of smooth gravel toward the water's edge.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FIGHT ON THE SHORE.

AS has been stated before, Andre Dagmar left St. Petersburg on the 30th of May. With plenty of money at his command the long journey to Irkutsk was not greatly to be dreaded—save for the decree of banishment it entailed—and after reaching the termination of the railway he traveled so rapidly by means of constant relays of horses, as to arrive at the city of Tomsk on the evening of June 19th—only a few hours before Donald Chumleigh met with the strange adventure related in the preceding chapter.

One degrading feature was attached to Andre's sentence: he was compelled to report his arrival to the military authorities at various places along the route. In conformity with this order, therefore, he went directly to the Tomsk forwarding prison, and was agreeably surprised to find in the person of the commandant, Captain Rosny, an old friend. A desire to learn the latest news from the capital caused Captain Rosny to unbend from the stern demeanor he should have assumed under the circumstances, though at the same time he believed the breach of duty which had brought his visitor under the displeasure of the Czar to be a very slight one.

He received Andre cordially and insisted that he should be his guest over night—an invitation which was gratefully accepted.

After dinner Andre and the captain went to the latter's apartment in the prison office and enjoyed a long and confidential chat over their cigars and wine. Andre answered all questions concerning the light gossip of St. Petersburg, and soon felt quite at his ease, for Captain Rosny had too much tact to sound his guest on unpleasant topics.

The hours went by unheeded and at last the captain rose and stretched himself sleepily.

"Past one o'clock," he said. "How time does fly in congenial company. It is long since I have spent such a pleasant evening. Shall we retire, my friend?"

"Yes," replied Andre, "I should prefer to do so. I am anxious to make an early start in the morning. The sooner I reach Irkutsk the better."

"Yes, that is true," assented Captain Rosny gravely. He pulled his military cloak about his shoulders and was just reaching for his hat, when a commotion was heard outside, and quick footsteps approached the building.

"Something is wrong," exclaimed the

captain. "It is a strange time of night for an alarm." He hurriedly snatched up his sword, and that instant the door was flung open and a very excited Cossack appeared on the threshold.

"Two convicts are missing from section 18," he shouted breathlessly. "The mouth of a tunnel is visible under their cell. It was just discovered in time to prevent the escape of the rest."

"Who are missing?" demanded Captain Rosny.

"Lavroff and Valbort the Nihilists." "They must be retaken at all hazards," cried the captain. "Spread a general alarm and send the guards into the tunnel at once."

The Cossack vanished and Captain Rosny turned to Andre.

"Do you want to see a little excitement? Then come with me. I have an idea that we can intercept these men if they have escaped by a tunnel. I feel just in the humor for a chase tonight."

He darted from the room without waiting for a reply, but Andre followed at his heels. A chance of proving his loyalty to the Czar was not to be despised.

They ran swiftly across the prison yard. At this time of night none but the guards were awake. Here and there a Cossack glided past in the gloom and shouts were heard at a little distance. Barely twenty yards separated the prison office from section 18, the building from which the convicts had made their escape. It was surrounded now by a group of Cossacks, but Captain Rosny did not stop. It was the exit of the tunnel and not the mouth that he wished to find, and his unerring instinct guided him aright.

A moment later he reached the stockade and mounted agilely to the platform that extended along the whole length a few feet from the summit. Andre climbed quickly to his side. None of the guards were at this particular point, but several were within a short distance, looking out toward the river with rifles in their hands. The night was dark and it was impossible to see far through the gloom. The outline of the shore was visible, and the steep bank that sloped from the base of the stockade to the beach.

Andre and the captain stood motionless, peering down from their high perch and straining both eyes and ears. Their patience was rewarded by a crunching footstep on the gravel and then a faint splash.

"Come on! There they are," whispered the captain eagerly. He threw himself over the stockade and clung for an instant to the sharpened beams; then he let go and striking the top of the bank rolled over and over to the bottom, passing the very exit of the tunnel in his descent. Andre accomplished the drop more lightly, and sprang to his feet unhurt.

Captain Rosny was lying close by, groaning with pain.

"Don't stop to help me now," he cried as Andre ran toward him. "I have hurt my back in the fall, but not seriously I think. Pursue those scoundrels. They are taking to the water. Don't let them get away."

At that moment the alarm gun in the prison yard thundered out its heavy charge, and the echoes seemed to shake the very ground.

Andre turned and ran swiftly down the beach. He saw two dim objects striding through the shallow water, but he failed to see the figure crouching on the very edge of the shore, until he was right upon it, and then it was too late.

Lavroff—for it was he—suddenly straightened up and flung himself upon Andre with the ferocity of a tiger, knife in hand. Down they went on the

sand and pebbles, Lavroff uppermost. As the gleaming knife rose and fell Andre threw up his right arm and caught the sharp blade between his fingers. It cut him to the bone as Lavroff twisted it in his effort to tear it loose, but he held tight in spite of the cruel pain, knowing that his life depended on it.

"Help! Help!" he cried feebly. The Cossacks up on the stockade heard the cry but they were too far away to render aid. Captain Rosny heard it, too, but he was lying helpless on his back.

Donald Chumleigh and Valbort were by this time wading breast deep in the water. Before them was the deeper, swifter current, and beyond that the farther shore, which meant freedom and life. They were both good swimmers and could easily reach it.

"Come on!" cried Valbort, "or you will be caught. Each man for himself."

He plunged into the deeper water and struck out vigorously for the opposite shore with his one arm. Donald hesitated and turned partly around. He had heard Andre's pitiful appeal for help and his soul revolted at the thought of seeing murder committed before his eyes and making no effort to prevent it—though he knew that interference would mean recapture and the destruction of all his hopes. No selfish motive entered his heart at that moment. His only desire was to save Lavroff's unhappy victim.

He turned and waded rapidly back through the shallowing water.

"Come on, you fool," cried Valbort who misunderstood his companion's object, "you can't help him. Lavroff is able to take care of himself."

But Donald was already out of hearing. A few strides brought him to the beach and with a single leap he was at the scene of the struggle. Lavroff had just torn the knife from Andre's mangled fingers and was about to plunge it into his victim's breast, when his arm was firmly seized, and the next instant he found himself lying on his back.

He was on his feet at once with a snarl of rage, and turning this time on Donald who had failed to follow up his advantage he struck savagely at him with the knife.

The sharp blade entered Donald's breast, and he dropped limply on the sand.

Lavroff turned and ran at Andre, who had by this time regained his feet, but before he could reach him a flash of light lit up the gloom and half a dozen Cossacks swarmed through the exit of the tunnel and came leaping down the bank waving their lanterns and shouting hoarsely.

"There he goes," cried Andre. "Don't let him escape."

Lavroff flung the knife away and dashed into the river. He made desperate headway through the shallow water, but his figure was still in bold relief when the Cossacks reached the edge of the shore.

"Crack! crack! crack!" rang the rifles. Lavroff plunged forward with a cry of agony, and lay motionless on the water.

Then the current caught the body and whirled it swiftly out of sight and reach.

The Cossacks watched it vanish and then turned up the beach, holding their smoking rifles downward.

Captain Rosny tottered forward to meet them, leaning on Andre's arm and gritting his teeth with the pain of his sprained back.

"You did that well," he said. "One convict has paid the penalty with his life, and there lies the other. What is the matter with him? Dead?"

The Cossacks gathered about Donald and made a hasty examination. "He is not dead yet," said one of

them, "but he will surely die. He has been stabbed in the breast."

By this time the alarm had become wide spread. Lights were flashing along the whole front of the stockade, and more Cossacks hurried to the spot, some coming by way of the tunnel, and others from the angles of the wall.

Andre tore out the lining of his coat and wrapped it about his lacerated hand.

"Are you wounded?" asked Rosny anxiously.

"Not much," replied Andre, who was feeling faint from loss of blood. "I got hold of that rascal's knife blade and had to stick to it."

"You must have surgical attendance at once," said the captain. "Wait a moment and I will go with you. I want to see which of the two convicts we have here."

He limped through the crowd of Cossacks followed closely by Andre, and bent over the still unconscious prisoner. He started back with a gasp of amazement.

"Why, this is neither Lavroff nor Valbort," he cried sharply. "*It is Serge Masloff! How did he get here?*"

CHAPTER X.

BY ORDER OF THE CZAR.

THE instant that Captain Rosny uttered the name of the famous Nihilist he repented his rashness.

He remembered the strict secrecy which his orders enjoined upon him concerning this mysterious prisoner, and to hide his confusion and his error—if that were possible—he turned sharply on the Cossacks.

"Take this man to the hospital at once," he commanded. "Don't delay an instant."

Four soldiers picked Donald up and moved rapidly down the beach toward the angle of the stockade.

"Now search for the other convict," he added. "It is Pierre Valbort who has escaped. This foolish blunder may permit him to get clear away. He can hardly have reached the other shore yet, so if you make haste you may overtake him after all. And sound another alarm so that the country people may be on the lookout."

This latter order was quickly transmitted to the guards on the stockade, and in a short interval the night echoed to the boom of the cannon.

By this time two boats filled to the gunwale with armed Cossacks were putting off from shore.

Captain Rosny watched them disappear in the gloom, and then turned to Andre, who was close behind him.

"Valbort can't get far," he said. "He wears the convict garb, and has only one arm—a sure identification. But what is the matter?" he added anxiously. "You are badly wounded. Don't try to deny it."

Andre's appearance seemed to confirm the captain's words, for he was deathly pale and swayed from side to side.

"It is nothing," he replied. "I am only a little faint. Loss of blood, you know. It will soon pass off."

Captain Rosny glanced at him keenly. He knew that such agitation must spring from a deeper cause than the shedding of a little blood, but before this dim suspicion could formulate in his mind, a dozen more Cossacks swarmed from the exit of the tunnel and reported a discovery they had just made—the caving in of the cell where Donald had been confined.

This was a satisfactory explanation of the mystery that had been puzzling Captain Rosny, and after giving a few more orders relative to the pursuit of Pierre Valbort he started back to the prison leaning on the arms of two stalwart Cossacks, for now that the excitement

was past the injury to his back began to assert itself.

Andre followed behind with a firm step. He was now outwardly composed, but his brain was dizzy with a whirl of emotions. He had heard Captain Rosny's alarmed cry: "This is Serge Masloff," and he knew that the man who had saved him from the assassin's knife and received the fatal blow in his stead was none other than his brother Paul.

In his heart indignation and remorse were struggling for the mastery. The dead ashes of the old brotherly affection had been rekindled.

"It was Paul who brought all this disgrace upon me," he reflected bitterly. "His conduct was vile and without excuse. He sacrificed me to accomplish his own base ends. My worst enemy could not have done more. But tonight Paul has shown remorse for his treachery, and has probably atoned for it with his life. He was far out in the river when Lavroff sprang upon me with the knife, and when I cried for help he recognized my voice and came back—came back voluntarily from the freedom that was almost within his grasp. And now he is dying, stricken down by the knife that was intended for me. Is not this a fitting atonement for his crimes? Yet my lips are sealed—doubly sealed, for in silence lies my only hope of future restoration to rank and honor, and, besides, the promise to my father is sacred and I dare not break it."

With such conflicting emotions as these Andre's heart was torn as he followed Captain Rosny around the stockade, and when he passed through the prison gates he had resolved on a desperate expedient. If Paul was mortally wounded, he would reveal all to Captain Rosny and beg permission to see his brother, that he might at least assure him of his forgiveness before he died. "Rosny is a good fellow," he reflected hopefully. "He won't deny such a request, and all that I tell him he will hold in strict confidence."

The interior of the prison was in a state of great excitement when the little party entered. Soldiers were hastening to and fro, and a squadron of Cossacks, mounted on small, wiry ponies, galloped by on their way to join the search for Pierre Valbort.

Captain Rosny and Andre went straight to the hospital—a long, low building that stood near the gates. They entered the operating room and Andre was surprised and relieved to find it empty.

"Where is the prisoner that was brought in a moment ago?" asked Captain Rosny.

The surgeon in charge motioned toward the rear door.

"I have put him to bed," he said briefly. "He can be removed to his cell in the morning. There is nothing wrong with him but a slight wound on his breast and an abrasion of the rear part of the head caused by falling on a sharp stone. It was that which produced unconsciousness. He made a narrow escape though, for the point of the knife struck a rib instead of piercing the lungs."

"I'm glad to hear that," said Captain Rosny. "I have lost two convicts tonight—one dead and one missing. I am confident that the fellow will be caught though. It is only a question of time. And now here are two more cases for you—not serious ones I hope. Please attend to my friend first."

The captain waved his hand toward Andre, who was at once taken in charge by the surgeon. The wounded hand was washed, sewn up and skillfully bandaged—an ordeal which Andre stood without flinching.

"The hand will be stiff for some

time," said the surgeon, "but you will have the complete use of it after a while."

Then he turned to Captain Rosny and after a brief examination reported a few painful bruises of the back that would necessitate a rest of at least a week.

"That prevents me from helping to run down Pierre Valbort," said the captain grimly. "Another time I shall think twice before dropping from that stockade. Come, Andre, let us get some sleep before daylight—if that is possible after the night's excitement."

In Captain Rosny's case it was quite possible. In spite of the twinges of pain caused by the injured back, he fell at once into a deep slumber. This blessing was denied Andre. Even his intense physical weariness and the soft bed the captain had given him, could not subdue the thoughts that kept his mind awake. He felt all the old time affection for his brother. He could not drive it from his heart, hard as he tried. He knew that Paul was only slightly injured and that his life was yet before him—a life of misery in the terrible Siberian mines. An ardent desire seized Andre to save him from this fate, and yet he felt, and chafed under his own impotency. The honor of his family and his own future prospects forbade him to think of such insane things. It must be so—there was no alternative. The memory of Paul must be forever rooted out of his breast.

At dawn Andre fell asleep from exhaustion and slept until noon. He woke somewhat refreshed, and after a light breakfast went to the prison office where Captain Rosny, who had preceded him, was propped in an easy chair with soft cushions against his back.

The captain was in a bad humor, and not without cause. Pierre Valbort had not been recaptured, and it was feared he had escaped to the dense forests that lay south of Tomska.

Andre made a cautious inquiry about his brother, but Captain Rosny refused to discuss the recaptured convict beyond making the simple statement that he had been removed to an isolated cell that morning. He was quite willing to speak of the nine unfortunate companions of Lavroff and Valbort, however, whose attempt to escape had been frustrated.

"Their former sentences," he said to Andre, "have all been altered to imprisonment for life at the mines."

"And if Valbort is caught what will be done with him?" asked Andre.

"He will be shot," replied the captain sternly. "That is the regulation penalty, you know. These others are liable to the same fate, but the authorities are inclined to be merciful."

"The authorities? Then you have already been in communication with St. Petersburg?"

"Ah—yes!" said Captain Rosny reluctantly, and then he added briskly, "Come, Andre, let us talk of more pleasant things. Help yourself to a cigar. You will find them of exceptional flavor. A friend sent me them from Odessa."

Andre took the proffered cigar and smoked with evident appreciation. The captain lit one, too, but even its fragrant influence failed to suggest any agreeable topics for conversation. He was chagrined no doubt by Pierre Valbort's escape, and as for Andre—he was in no mood to discuss anything. He smoked pensively as he looked through the window into the dreary court yard. He knew he ought to be far on his way to Irkutsk by this time, yet he hesitated to suggest his departure. It would be wiser to go, but inclination prompted him to stay.

All at once the silence of the room was broken by a dull, heavy sound—a

sound that Andre recognized as the simultaneous discharge of a number of rifles.

Captain Rosny started slightly and then blew out a great cloud of smoke that completely hid his features.

"What was that?" demanded Andre sharply.

There was no answer, and he repeated the question.

"It was nothing," replied Captain Rosny, "nothing at least that can interest you. The death sentence has been carried out on one of the convicts."

Andre sprang to his feet in such haste that the chair was overturned and went to the floor with a crash. His face flushed redly and then turned pale as ashes.

"Captain Rosny," he cried appealingly, "who has been shot? Not Serge Masloff?"

The captain dropped his cigar in surprise, and looked speechlessly at Andre.

"Yes," he said after a brief pause, "Serge Masloff has been shot by order of the Czar."

(To be continued..)

UNCLE SAM'S GROWING NAVY.

OUR boys without doubt evince great interest in our rapidly growing navy. And it is a gratifying fact that they do. Everything that tends to foster pride in native land is a distinct gain in these prosaic and practical times. The New York Sun takes a peep into the future and tells some bits of information which will doubtless forestall numerous queries from our readers.

Although our war ships under construction are habitually delayed beyond the times specified in their contracts, yet even with the allowance which must be made for delays, as shown by unvarying experience, it is quite certain that there will be a goodly addition to the navy during the war.

We shall have, to begin with, the Monterey, now under construction at the Union Iron Works. She was launched some time ago, and her contract calls for her completion next June. She is to pay penalties for non-completion at the rate of \$50 a day during the first three months, \$100 a day during the next three, and \$200 thereafter. The only thing likely to delay her would be a lack of armor, and with the great Pittsburgh works thus supplementing the Bethlehem, less apprehension is felt on that score. The 12 inch guns for the vessel will no doubt be built on time. The Union Iron Works are also constructing cruiser No. 6, a very fine vessel, which, however, is only to be completed in 1893, and also the battleship Oregon, which is to be finished in the latter part of that year.

Coming from the Pacific to the Atlantic yards, we find that the five great vessels undertaken by Cramp & Sons in Philadelphia are all due only in 1893. These are the fast cruisers No. 12 and No. 13, the former known as the Pirate; the battle ships Indiana and Massachusetts; and the armored cruiser New York. The last named, which might be launched in the coming winter, is to be completed Jan. 1, 1893.

At the Columbian Iron Works are cruisers No. 9 and No. 10, which will be launched probably during the present autumn. Their hulls and machinery are well forward, and their contract calls for their completion next May. The fact that this establishment was so far behind on the little Petrel may create a doubt in regard to the completion of these larger vessels, but they will probably be ready next year. The penalty on them is \$50 a day for the first three months, with \$50 for the following three months, and \$75 for the next six months, which would undoubtedly cover all delays.

In the Harrison Loring Works in Boston is the third vessel of the class just mentioned, cruiser No. 11, of 2,000 tons, which is also to be completed next May, under the penalties already spoken of. She is to cost \$61,500 more than either of her sister ships, which would allow margin for delay, and she is somewhat behind them, but will probably be completed in 1892.

At the Bath Iron Works are gunboats No. 5 and No. 6, which are to be completed next April. They are to be launched in the autumn, and the machinery is so far advanced that there is very little doubt of their being ready next summer at all events. The same Maine shipyard is at work on the ram for harbor defense, but she is not to be counted upon for next year.

In the Government yard at Brooklyn are the Maine, the Puritan, the Terror, and the Cincinnati; while at Norfolk are the Raleigh, the Texas, and the Amphitrite; the Monitor is at New England. Of these vessels those that can probably be counted

upon for next year are the Cincinnati and the Raleigh, and possibly the Maine. The two former are to be ready for launching during the coming autumn; the Maine was launched several months ago.

Taking these vessels together it will be obvious that the coming year will see a noteworthy addition to our navy, and when the great review of 1893 is held in New York harbor there should be a fine fleet of modern craft to represent the United States.

A SPLENDID SPURT.

WHAT boy is there who doesn't like to fool with a hose? Imagine then what a circus the genus could have with a stream of water that out of a 2 1/2 inch nozzle spurts into the air a distance of 160 feet. There now exists such a stream, but it comes not from a hose but out of a wonderful artesian well, recently sunk in South Dakota, and about which the *South Dakota Dakotite* prints some interesting facts.

The artesian well on the Valley Stock Farm continues to attract great crowds of people. And well it may, for it is really the wonder of the age. Following the tests made recently the cap was removed, and through a nozzle a 2 1/2 inch stream of water was shot up into the air a distance of 125 to 140 feet. The direct course of the stream was greatly interfered with by the cross beams and braces of the derrick. With a 2 1/2 inch stream of water a 2 1/2 inch stream would be sent 160 feet into the air. So great is the pressure that pine boards six inches wide and one inch thick, used as stays and braces on the derrick, fifty feet above the mouth of the well, were broken by the force of the water. While the nozzle was on, the derrick, which is seventy five feet high, was almost hidden from view by the spray and jettings of the stream.

Later in the evening Mr. Weston, manager of the well, who has charge of the drilling, removed the 2 1/2 inch nozzle and placed upon the pipe a 4 inch one. Immediately a stream 4 inches in diameter shot up nearly 70 feet, deluging everything in its descent. This was accompanied by a deep roaring sound, and frequent sharp reports resembling the discharge of a rifle were heard. This stream, as well as the smaller one, struck the walking beam and broke much of its structure.

The amount of water that flows from the well is tremendous, being estimated at from 8,000 to 10,000 gallons per minute. Even at the lowest figure enough pours out of the well to furnish every man, woman and child in the State of South Dakota with at least four gallons of water every twenty four hours. As to the pressure, that has not been fully ascertained, but from tests already made it is known to be considerably more than 300 pounds to the square inch. With a fair test it is likely to reach 228 pounds. The pressure has steadily increased for the last three days, and may exceed the above figures.

The well is now 96 feet deep, and as soon as machinery has arrived, the work of reaming the hole to eight inches in diameter, making it an eight inch well from top to bottom, will be prosecuted. The water is soft, clear, and pleasant to taste. It is flooding the low places in the vicinity, and, although the ditches have been dug to carry it into the Jim River, acres of water may be seen in every direction. Without doubt this is the greatest artesian well in the world.

MORE HORRORS FOR RUSSIA.

WHILE we in America are enjoying an era of great prosperity, with bountiful crops and bright trade prospects, Russia is entering on a dread season of famine. Some faint conception of what the horrors of this are may be gained from a letter written to the *Moscow Gazette* by a clergyman, who dates his communication in the province of Kazan:

"Those who live in towns can hardly form an idea of all the terrors of the prevailing distress among the rural population. We residents in the country have opportunities of seeing it at our own doors in all its terrible power. It is sad to watch the sight presented by an ordinary sick person, but it is far more unbearable to look on at hungry, famine stricken and starving people. In my parish there are individuals who have gone without bread for two or three weeks together, and are endeavoring to nourish themselves upon grass and leaves of trees. When they get hold of a morsel of black bread they do not eat it themselves, but give it to their small children."

In passing through one village this priest found sixteen persons in the last stages of enfeeblement and exhaustion from hunger. One woman of this number soon after succumbed to starvation. The village numbered 145 houses, and in only twenty were the peasants eating their usual food. The distress seems to be as great in other villages of the same district. From other reports which are to hand it appears that there is much distress extending among the peasantry at the prospect before them.

THEIR MOTHER.

My boy sat looking straight into the coals, From his stool at my feet one day, And the firelight burnished the curly head, And painted the cheeks with a dash of red, And brightened his very eyes, as he said, In his most confidential way:

"Mamma, I think, when I'm a grown up man, I shall have just two little boys."

I smiled—he was six—but he did not see, And I said: "Why, yes, how nice that will be!

But if one were a girl, it seems to me, It would add to your household joys."

"Well—yes," reflectively, "that would be nice.

And I'll tell you just what I'll do. I'll name one Robbie, for ma, you know."

Then the bright eyes shone with a deeper glow.

"And there's just the two of us now, and so, I'll name the girl Annie, for you."

"But how would their mother like that?" I asked.

"Do you think that she would agree For us both to have names while she had none?"

With the mystified, puzzled look of one Wholly befogged, said my logical son,

"Their mother! Why, who is she?"

—Good Housekeeping.

[This Story begun in No. 453.]

NORMAN BROOKE;

OR,

BREASTING THE BREAKERS.

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.,

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

CHAPTER XXVIII.

I HAVE A STRANGE ADVENTURE AT MRS. COLEMAN'S.

"MRS. COLEMAN feels very nervous over it, and has changed her mind about having the thing done two or three times since you have been here. So you mustn't think it strange if she seems a little flighty."

This much the maid confided to me as we went up stairs. She evidently believed that I knew exactly what I had come for. I thought I did myself until a few minutes before.

On reaching the second floor the girl led the way to the front room. Here I found an old lady sitting in a rocking chair with a cat in her lap, on which the tears were dropping unrestrainedly. Although the old lady's face was much wrinkled and the hand with which she stroked the cat trembled as if with palsy, she was dressed in silk, very heavily laden down with trimming, while her ears, wrists and fingers sparkled with diamonds.

"Ah, so you have come to kill my poor Floral!" she exclaimed, as soon as she caught sight of me. "How cruel of you!"

This was a cheerful greeting, and I was about to say that I had not come to kill anybody, when the old lady suddenly rose to her feet, hastily deposited the cat on the chair in which she had herself been sitting, and then catching the maid by the arm, hurried her out of the room, calling back from the doorway: "Please have it over with as quickly as possible."

Have that over with? This was the question I put to myself when I was left alone. Who was Flora? Could it be the cat? I glanced down at the animal, as she lay asleep in the handsome chair. She was a many looking beast, and judging from what little I knew of the feline tribe, appeared to be very old. Probably she was sick and suffering, and it was thought best to have her killed, so her mistress had sent to the drug store to have the deed done in a scientific manner. And the new clerk, hating to do it, had palmed the commission off on me.

I wondered if I was expected to administer the dose with my own handkerchief? I had strong objections to doing this, as I felt that I could no longer afford to throw away any portion of my wardrobe. Besides, what if it shouldn't be the cat? I had better find out for certain before I began operations. There was a canary bird hanging in the window; that might be the doomed creature, for all I knew.

I walked to the door, opened it and called through the hall: "Mrs. Coleman!"

No answer. I stepped to the rear room and knocked on the door, but there was no response. Clearly there was no one but myself on that floor.

I descended to the parlor, but that apartment, too, was empty. So was the dining room in the rear. There seemed to be nothing left for me to do but keep on to the kitchen.

I groped my way down the basement stairs, and at last emerged into the kingdom of the cook. That personage, a very portly female, was standing with her back to me, chopping something in a wooden bowl. She made so much noise in this process that my voice, asking for Mrs. Coleman, could not be heard above it. So I walked across the room and tapped her on the shoulder.

With a fearful shriek she dropped the chopping bowl and almost fell back in my arms.

"Excuse me," I said, "but can you tell me whether it is the cat or the canary bird that Mrs. Coleman wants killed?"

"*Mon Dieu, mon Dieu!*" was all the response I got, while the woman leaned back against the table and kept her hand over her heart.

She was a French woman, and although I had studied the language a little, I did not feel that I was equal to carrying on a conversation in it. But I did manage to scrape together enough words to inquire whether this mistress of the lower regions understood my English, to which I received an emphatic "*Non, non.*"

"Here's a pretty pickle," I thought, "That old lady and the maid must have gone off to be out of the way when the deed was done, and now how am I going to find out who is to be the victim?"

The cook evidently looked upon me with considerable suspicion. Indeed, I felt that she doubted whether I had any right to be in the house at all. When I turned to go up stairs again she followed me closely, and when we reached the parlor floor I am pretty positive she would have insisted on showing me out of the front door had not Mrs. Coleman and the maid at that instant come in by it.

"And is it all over?" exclaimed the former, hurrying to meet me. "How did poor Flora die? Calmly?"

"I—I am very sorry!" I stammered, "but Flora isn't dead yet. Indeed, I don't know which Flora is, the cat or the canary bird."

"And did you come away and leave them in the room together?" fairly shrieked the old lady. "Annette, fly this instant," and so great was Mrs. Coleman's agitation that she could no longer keep her feet, but sank down on the marble top of the hat rack in a regular tremor.

"I'm very sorry," I repeated, but had got just so far when the old lady cut me off with: "You said that just now, and besides that won't bring Dick to life if Flora's eaten him. Annette, Annette, what report?"

"It's all right, ma'am," called down the maid, to my infinite relief. "Flora had only got as far as the chair under Dick's cage."

"More by good luck that good management on your part, young man,"

snapped the old lady at me. "Now go up and do your work."

I felt that the fifty cents that had been given me for the job was a hard earned half dollar, especially as I had not the courage now to ask for a cloth with which to administer the chloroform. I wondered if I ought to tell Flora's mistress that I was a complete novice at the art of killing cats. But perhaps if I did she would make a fuss at the drug store and the new clerk would lose his place; and I knew too well what this meant to willingly subject a fellow being to the ordeal through which I had myself passed and which now faced me again. Besides, it could not be so very difficult to kill a beast—if I had been given leave upon to cure one, that would have been an altogether different matter.

So I went up stairs again, and Annette having shut me in the room, taking the precaution this time to carry the bird cage out with her, I seized the cat, recklessly dumped half the bottle of chloroform into my handkerchief and held it tightly over the animal's nose till she ceased to struggle.

"What will Cameron say when I get back and tell him of this?" I wondered, and the thought that now I had some one with whom to talk over my experiences was the one thing I believe that kept my spirits up in this trying period.

"Your cat is dead, madam," I said when I arrived down stairs again, "and here is the rest of the chloroform."

"Take it away; I don't want to look at it, nor you either," exclaimed the old lady peevishly, and I lost no time in putting the front door between us.

I was going to drop the bottle in the gutter, then I reflected that perhaps some child might pick it up and poison itself, so I concluded to keep it for awhile. I might have taken it back to the drug store, but I was not anxious to see that clerk again; besides, it was out of my way, and I had been absent over an hour now. So I stuffed it in my pocket and walked hurriedly across town to the Hudson River waiting room.

Yes, there were Cameron and the small boy, sitting exactly as I had left them, the boy still asleep.

"Hasn't the father come yet?" I asked.

"No; did you find anything?" returned Cameron.

"No, but I earned this," and I held up the half dollar.

"How?"

"By killing a cat. Come, let's all three go to lunch on it. I'll explain while we're eating."

"But I don't know whether the boy will go or not and give up waiting for his father," objected Cameron.

"He can't stay here forever, though," I returned. "We can leave word with the boy at the news stand that we'll come back," and as I went off to do this, I felt like the father of a family.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A TRIP INTO THE COUNTRY.

THEY say that misery loves company, and it was certainly true that since I had fallen in with Dale Cameron in reduced circumstances, my own unhappy situation had not caused me half the anxiety that I had experienced when the outlook had not been anything like as dark. For one thing, I was rejoiced on Cameron's account. It seemed just as if his downfall had sobered him; that is, made it impossible for him to give way again to his appetites.

But what were we going to do with the small boy? This was a problem that now began to press most emphatically for a solution. When I returned from leaving the message at the news stand

he was awake and readily consented to go with me, when assured that Cameron was to come too. So I led the way to a bakery on Third Avenue, where we had tea and two buns apiece, all for twenty one cents.

Cameron had left his boxes at the news stand in the station, and when we returned there the boy told us that nobody had as yet appeared to claim Archie.

"But here's the first edition of the evening papers," he added. "Perhaps there'll be something in here about him."

We each took a sheet and began hurriedly to scan the pages.

"Here we are, I guess," I exclaimed presently, and read aloud the account of a youngish appearing man who had been run over by an express wagon on Broadway about eleven o'clock that morning. He was picked up unconscious, and taken to the Chambers Street Hospital. "We ought to go down there at once and investigate," I added.

Beckoning Cameron over to the stand I showed him the item, and he agreed with me that we ought to find out all we could about the man.

"Shall we take Archie with us?" I inquired.

"We'll have to. He won't stay here without us, I'm sure," and Cameron smiled in a queer way as he spoke. I never saw a fellow so changed as he was.

We told the boy that we were going off with him to help him find his father, and started immediately.

"I'll pay the fares down," said Cameron. "Besides I know where the hospital is and you don't."

It took us about half an hour to make the trip, and when we arrived I left Cameron and the boy walking up and down the sidewalk in front of the building while I went inside to make inquiries. I did not know what report we might get and it was thought best that the child should not be present.

"I see by the papers that a gentleman who was run over by an express wagon was brought here this morning," I said to the man who answered my ring.

"Yes," he replied, "but he is not here now."

"Where is he then?" I exclaimed, rather surprised.

"A friend, who, it seems, saw the accident, came here and insisted on taking him to his home," was the reply.

"Was he able to walk?" I asked.

"Oh, yes. His brain seemed to be affected the most. He was dazed and appeared not to know what had happened to him."

"What was his name?" I inquired next.

"Boyd."

"Did he say anything; about a little boy he had with him here in New York?"

"No, as I tell you his brain was all muddled and he said very little."

I then explained why I had called, but the man could not aid me in deciding whether or not Mr. Boyd was Archie's father.

"Hold on a minute!" I exclaimed. "I'll run out and see if the boy recognizes the name."

I found Cameron and his charge watching a street vendor, and when I inquired of Archie if he was Archie Boyd, he clapped his hands and cried out: "Yes, I'm Archie Boyd. Have you found my papa?"

"I hope so," I answered, and hurried back into the hospital to ascertain where the friend of the injured man had taken him.

"It's somewhere out in Jersey," was the response, "near Paterson. Wait a

minute and I'll see if I can get you any closer directions."

He returned presently with the information that the name of the gentleman who had taken Mr. Boyd off was Schlessinger and that he lived at a little place called Fairlea Park on a branch of the Erie.

On rejoining Cameron I proposed a council as to what we had better do.

"Are you certain this is the boy's father?" Cameron wanted to know.

"No, I'm not positive," I returned. "But you heard what he said when I asked him if his name was Boyd."

"But he said the same thing up at the Grand Central," objected Cameron, "and then we thought he meant simply Archie boy."

"I wonder how much the fare out to this place is?" I remarked.

"We can easily find out," responded Cameron. "The ferry is just at the foot of this street. We'll walk down there now."

Excursion tickets were thirty two cents apiece, single fare, twenty cents, the agent told us, on hearing which we took seats to debate again over what we had better do.

"Neither you nor I have anything to tie us to New York," observed Cameron, "and lodging ought to be cheaper out in the country than here, so I propose we go."

"Done," I exclaimed, springing to my feet, and purchased three single tickets on the spot.

This would be my first trip into the real country since I had come to the metropolis and notwithstanding the peculiar circumstances under which it was to be made, my heart beat quicker at the thought of getting out among the trees, and exchanging the pavement for grass. We found that a train would start at 5.05, so we had but little time to wait.

As we stood among the crowd on the forward end of the ferryboat I wondered if any of the many people about us would guess at our real situation. Since his shave Cameron looked as well—and better—than any young man on the boat while my new dress suit valise lent dignity of itself to the party, as Cameron put it.

"Who knows what will come of this experience for us both, Brooke?" he observed, as the pleasant west wind blew refreshingly in our faces.

Aye, if I had known what it held in store for me, I think I should have been tempted to jump overboard and trust that some boat bound back to New York would pick me up. But there was no warning of what was to come, and hope seemed to grow in our breasts as we were borne further and further away from the great city.

The ride on the train took us through a charming section of country after we got beyond the Newark meadows. There were woods close up to the track, gurgling streams and broad rivers with high banks, and at about the prettiest spot of all the brakeman called out "Fairlea," and we hastened to alight.

There were many handsome carriages in waiting to convey cottage residents to their houses, and recollections of Lynnhurst came to me with almost overpowering force. From the station agent we learned the situation of the Schlessingers, which was about half a mile distant.

"Do you remember having been here before?" Cameron asked Archie.

"No, I don't," replied the boy, "but it's nice, isn't it?" and he trotted along on the grass in childish forgetfulness of his grief for a while.

The Schlessinger abode had been described to me as quite the most pretentious mansion in the neighborhood, and it was indeed very handsome, and stood

in the midst of grounds most beautifully kept.

We turned in at the stone gateway and walked up the curving driveway to the front door. In response to my ring a man servant in livery appeared.

"Can we see Mr. Schlessinger for a min—," I began, when to my utter surprise the man snapped out "Nobody can see Mr. Schlessinger," and slammed the door in our faces, leaving us there looking at one another blankly.

CHAPTER XXX.

A WINDFALL AT FAIRLEA.

"WELL, that's about equal to a slap in the face," remarked Cameron, as we came to a standstill in the driveway to consider the situation. "What do you suppose is the meaning of it? If you and I looked to be 'on our uppers,' as I believe we are, I could understand the thing. But as yet I flatter myself that we appear pretty decently respectable."

"Where's papa?" Archie wanted to know at this point. "Why don't we go in and see him?"

"We will pretty soon," Cameron answered him. Then turning to me, he added: "Perhaps the butler took us for newspaper reporters come to find out details about the accident. Suppose we adjourn to the next door neighbor's and see what we can pick up there?"

We proceeded to act on this suggestion at once, and retracing our steps to the road turned in at the gateway immediately adjoining that of the Schlessingers'.

"You be spokesman this time, Cameron," I said as we reached the piazza, and accordingly he lifted the highly polished brass knocker.

A maid servant soon appeared, and Cameron plunged straight into the subject in hand by inquiring what was the matter at the Schlessingers'.

"Oh, sir, haven't you heard?" exclaimed the girl, and her face lighted up at the idea of having an opportunity to tell the news.

"Well, we've heard something that rather surprised us," rejoined Cameron, "but it didn't satisfy our curiosity one bit. What's the great piece of news?"

"Why, Mr. Schlessinger's son Philip forged a check or something yesterday and ran away. Ain't it dreadful? And they are such a nice family."

"But didn't Mr. Schlessinger bring a sick gentleman home with him some time today?" Cameron went on.

"A sick gentlemen?" exclaimed the girl excitedly, "I didn't see nothin' of it, but maybe I was in the kitchen, an' that's on the other side of the house. Was he a friend of yours?"

"No, but we wanted to find out about him. This little fellow here has lost his father and we think that possibly this Mr. Boyd may be he. Now I suppose you are on intimate terms with the servants next door, so if you can manage to find out for us whether this Mr. Boyd has missed a child you will be doing a great service. They think we're newspaper men and won't answer anything we ask."

"Yes, I'll do that with pleasure," responded the girl. "And when will yez be here again to find out?"

"Well, we'll go off and get dinner now somewhere. By the way, can you tell us where we can find a hotel hereabouts?"

"I can that," was the prompt reply. "Ye see this road that runs straight across here? Well, keep on that till ye can't go any further for the fence, then turn down and ye're right at the Beech-tree Inn."

"All right; thank you," returned Cameron. "We'll be back again after supper."

"Why couldn't we have done all this

with the Schlessinger's servants?" I inquired as we walked away. "If we'd gone to the back door we might have fixed matters right away."

"I suppose it was because we didn't think of it. But what do you say to our going to the Beechtree Inn for supper? The name sounds pretty swell, though, so I imagine the prices are rather stiff."

"But I guess there's no other hotel in the place," I rejoined. "And we must eat."

"Yes, I'm awfully hungry," broke in Archie.

He was tired, too, poor little chap, and dragged heavily on my hand. Cameron noticed this, and stooping down swung him up to a lofty position on his shoulder. Then we started off for the hotel, where we arrived within ten minutes.

We were agreeably disappointed in the appearance of the house. Instead of being a Queen Anne structure, as we had anticipated from the name, it was a long, low, rambling building, painted white, and evidently quite old. But it was very prettily situated on the top of a hill, and there were some magnificent old beech trees scattered about the grounds.

There was a group of young people gathered beneath one of these, and as we approached them we heard loud and exciting talking.

"It's a burning shame," a boy about fourteen was declaring. "I think if a prest—t whatever you call 'em, can't keep his engagements he's no business to make 'em. Sending a message at the last minute that he can't come when it's too late to get anybody else! My birthday party will be a flat failure!"

This speech gave me a sudden idea.

"Keep right on to the hotel; I'll join you in a minute," I said to Cameron, and then stepping in among the group of boys and girls, I took off my hat and began:

"I beg your pardon, but were you wishing for a magician?"

"I should say we were," exclaimed the boy who had been expressing his grievances. "Why, do you know where we can get one?"

"Yes, right here," I replied with a smile, tapping myself on the chest.

"Oh, how splendid!" exclaimed one of the girls enthusiastically. "Can you really take live hens out of old gentlemen's hats and put rabbits in boys' pockets?"

"I'm afraid I can't do all that without materials," I replied. "But I can do a good deal with a handkerchief, a hat and an accommodating audience."

Feats of legerdemain had been one of my hobbies in the old days at Lynnhurst, and now it had suddenly occurred to me that I might be able to turn my attainments in this direction to account. The children hailed the proposition with acclamation and within ten minutes I had been borne off to have an interview with the father of the boy who was to have the birthday party, and he agreed to give me ten dollars for entertaining the company in the parlor of his cottage for that evening.

"Well, you're an A. No. 1 fellow to travel with when a man's dead broke," exclaimed Cameron when I told him. "I wish I could help you, but I'd be so amazed by the wonders myself that I wouldn't be the least bit of use. Right after tea I'll walk back with Archie and see if our friend next door has anything to report."

We enjoyed our supper hugely. The promise of the ten dollar bill built me up wonderfully. Not only would the money itself come in very handy, but the possibilities suggested by this prestidigitator business were bright with hope.

As soon as we left the table I was taken possession of by the Farrington's

—the people who were to have the party and who resided in the only cottage attached to the hotel—and borne off to inspect the room where I was to make my first appearance as a professional entertainer. Cameron and Archie started for the Schlessingers' at the same time. From what we had been able to find out at the table we felt pretty sure that Mr. Boyd was the man for whom we were looking. So our minds were considerably relieved with respect to Archie.

However, after I started in earnest on the work of the evening I forgot all about him and everything else. As might be expected I was obliged to keep my mind close down to my task and was rewarded by hearty applause for every trick. The children were delighted, and after the performance was over Howard Farrington came up to shake me heartily by the hand and declare that I must spend the rest of the evening at the cottage as his guest. His father and mother joined him in the invitation, including Cameron and Archie in it.

I went over to the hotel to see if they had returned, but could find no signs of them. Feeling sure now that Archie had been restored to his father and that Cameron had been invited to stay at the Schlessingers' and look after him, I returned to the cottage. Here I spent the rest of the evening most enjoyably in dancing and conversation, with refreshments to furnish a pleasing break in the programme.

The Farrington boys—there were two of them, Howard and Allan—seemed to have taken a great fancy to me, and were quite anxious to know how long I was going to stay at Fairlea. I had engaged a room at the hotel, and pretty well tired out, repaired to it about half past twelve.

I was very anxious to hear from Cameron, but felt that I could wait till morning, so I soon fell asleep, and knew nothing more till I was awakened by a tremendous pounding on my door.

"What is it?" I called out sleepily. "Who wants to get in?"

"Open in the name of the law!" was the startling answer.

(To be continued.)

ABOUT ACCIDENTS.

It would be worth a good deal to a man if he could foresee an accident that threatened to befall him, for in that case, of course, he would stand a good chance of avoiding it. While such premonition is of course unattainable, a writer in *The Forum* tells us that a good deal has been done towards tabulating the kinds of accidents to which certain classes of people are especially liable. And these tabulated statements contain not a few surprises.

The collection of large groups of facts about accidents which has been made necessary by the development of accident insurance has made a contribution to one department of social science that is by no means uninteresting. For instance, it is a curious fact that a man is much more likely to lose his left hand than his right hand, or his left eye than his right eye; statistics show, too, that when a man insures himself against accidents he thereby greatly diminishes the risk of accident—and this is probably explained in this way: when a man's attention is called to a danger, he fixes his mind on it, and thereby consciously or unconsciously makes unusual effort to avert it.

It therefore happens that a man is more likely to be a victim of an accident of a kind that he never thought of, than of the kind against which he insures himself. A man, for instance, who handles sharp tools will insure himself against an accident from the use of them, and the first thing he knows he will be drawing pay from an insurance company for an injury done by getting a cinder in his eye. Not only are such odd and curious facts as these brought to light by the development of accident insurance, but a great many important groups of facts which bear upon the habits of men and the development of civilization. For instance, accidents are much more common in the sparsely settled portions of the country than in the densely settled portions, and they happen more frequently in the middle of winter and the middle of summer than in the other seasons of the year.

A FAIRY TALE.

We sat on the fence's topmost rail
As the sun sank in the west,
And told each other some fairy tale
Which, when young, we loved the best
And the long grass rustled at our feet;
Perhaps in the grasses green,
TITANIA, and her courtly suite
Listened, unseen.

The twilight gathered—the fields grew dark—
The night let her curtain down,
The stars came out—each tiny spark
Like the jewel of a crown.
The fair moon shown in the heavens above,
And beneath its glory pale
A maiden smiled, for she thought my love
A fairy tale.

DIAMONDS FROM AFAR.

None will dispute the supremacy of the diamond as the most precious of minerals, and a discovery recently made in Arizona will tend to give these brilliant stones an even higher value. To be sure the supposition is rather a wild one—because diamonds were found in a meteor to claim that all diamonds were brought to earth in this manner—but here are the bases on which some scientific men who recently assembled in Washington rest their assertion, as detailed in the Boston Transcript.

The place whence these diamonds were obtained is known as the "Crater," because it looks like one; being a circular hollow one hundred feet in depth, three quarters of a mile wide, and surrounded by a wall of rock so steep that the bottom is strewn with the skeletons of animals which have got in and been unable to climb out again. Nevertheless, it is not of volcanic origin, as is proved with certainty by the fact that there is no lava, obsidian—volcanic glass—or other volcanic product in the neighborhood. What was it then that made the crater? Geologists say that it was formed by the impact of a single gigantic meteor, which at some time in the past struck the earth and buried itself out of sight, leaving a hole which has since been partly filled up, surrounded by a wall of rock that was forced out of place. Imagine what a big one it must have been to leave a cavity three fourths of a mile in width where it hit this planet. The huge mass of iron of which it was composed is there yet, of course. Perhaps it is not sunk too deep to render mining for its material unprofitable.

That one which contained the diamonds, however, has opened an absorbing subject for speculation. It proves that there are diamonds in other worlds than ours; but also it points to many other important conclusions. The diamonds of the famous Kimberly mines, which at present produce almost the entire world's supply of these gems, are all found at the bottoms of just such craters as the one described in Arizona. It is believed that these craters, so called, were formed by the impact of great meteors, because there is no other conceivable way in which they could have been made, and for other reasons geological. Then it must be inferred that probably all the diamonds of the world were brought to this terrestrial sphere by meteorites. In other words, these precious jewels are not native to the earth, but have been fetched hither with the dust of other stars. That accounts for the manner, hitherto deemed unaccountable, in which they are scattered everywhere through drift of all sorts, having apparently no birthplace or definite relation to other minerals.

Some scientists go so far as to assert that diamonds, like coal, which is so nearly of the same chemical constitution, could not possibly come into existence without previous vegetable growth to generate their material. For this reason they infer that the finding of the gems in the meteorite demon-

strates that there must have been vegetable life, at least at events, in the place whence the meteorite came. If there was vegetable life there, it is a fair presumption that there was animal life also. All this may be untrue, but it affords the first guess glimpse that has ever been obtained into the greatest problem that mankind has ever attempted to handle—namely, the question whether life exists in other worlds than ours. From the philosophical point of view, the fact cannot but be taken for granted in a universe in which the sun is merely an inferior star of the fourth magnitude. Nevertheless, some absolute evidence on the point would be extremely satisfactory.

"KIN HEAR A MILE W'EN YOU HOLLER."

ALMOST everybody has heard the story of the little girl, who being taken into the country for the first time, was greatly surprised, not to say a trifle shocked, to find that milk was taken from an animal that looked something like a horse instead of from a tin can. Here are two fresh anecdotes of first impressions of this order, culled from an exchange.

A party of city children had just returned from a fortnight at Glens Falls. "I seen a cow," shrills one little girl. "Cows has horns, and lets down milk, and hooks you when your hair is the same color as hers." "Pooh!" says the handsome Italian boy back of her. "Pooh! they don't neither." The girl turns a look of calm scorn upon him. "I seen the cows, and you didn't see she responds; and the boy feels the force of the argument from experience, and retires.

They talk breathlessly and with eager enthusiasm, not only those who are just home, with their experiences fresh upon them, but those who have to go back a year or two for what they tell. It is wonderful how sharply and clearly the details are preserved. "Wot de country is like is dis," says a smart, red haired Irish boy, spreading his arms, while the look of one who wishes to give an accurate and careful impression, comes into his sunburned, freckled face; "dere's de whole world an' it's green, an' dey ain't no houses, an' you kin hear a mile when you holler, 'cause it's so still. An all de streets is dirt an' soft, an' de birds sings, an' dere's cherries on the trees." A pastoral, surely, that you and I might wish to have written in so few words and with so true a touch!

THE FIRST UMBRELLA.

OUR readers have doubtless heard the rumors regarding the possible revival of knee breeches as part of evening dress for gentlemen. The matter has been talked of for some years now, and yet nothing has come of it. And doubtless for the simple reason that no one could be found bold enough to be the first to introduce the innovation. For the first steps in everything are always difficult to take. Look at the indignities experienced by the man who carried the first umbrella in a civilized country.

The oft told tale of the introduction of the umbrella into England, is one of the least features of its interesting story, says the *Clothier and Furnisher*. Mr. Jonas Hanway, the distinguished philanthropist and founder of hospitals, was the chosen instrument of fortune. In his early days he was a great traveler, and visited not only the principal sights of Europe, but pushed his way far into Asia, voyaging through India and Persia to the confines of Chinese Tartary. It was of course, therefore impossible that he should have escaped being impressed by the importance attached to the umbrella in the far Orient. It was about the year 1750 that he made his memorable sally into Cheapside with the outlandish contrivance which proved upon him the derision of the populace, and upon that eventful occasion it proved quite as useful in warding off defunct felines, over ripe eggs and assorted vegetables, as diverting the shower against which it was opened. Hanway's been other than a man of character the Christian world might have

waited another half century for the price-less boon bestowed upon it, but, as it was, he stuck to that umbrella for thirty years finally dying in 1786, full of honors and with the satisfaction of leaving his cherished dad master of the situation. A small street near the British Museum now bears his name.

The antiquity of the umbrella is undisputed. Various have been the speculations as to its origin. Some say that the introducing of leafy branches into a sort of bower first suggested it, as the fig leaf of father Adam got the first mighty impulse to the clothing trade. Others, that the nomadic tent was the only natural prototype of what so strongly resembles it in miniature.

It was once thought legitimate to employ any one of a number of queer mechanical devices in umbrellas, so that some of the inventions which appeared in France about a hundred years ago were very amusing from a present day standpoint. The folding umbrella was one of them. Its rod was a hollow tube containing a strong spiral spring, which pressed upon an inner rod, to the top of which the stretchers were attached. By pressing a trigger in the handle the spring was released and the umbrella flew open, being returned to a folded condition by means of cords to be pulled, running along the outer rod or cylinder.

For years umbrellas were made of only such materials as existed, and consequently most unsuitable substances. Its covers soaked up moisture, and in drying cracked or rotted, its whalebone ribs became brittle, and its stick was a ponderous club, tiring to hand and arm.

HE WAS AN ASKER.

Shakspeare says that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but this is a principle that is not capable of universal application. Give a dog a bad name and hang him, runs the adage, which was evidently borne in mind by the domestic who figures in the following anecdote, related by Mrs. Andrew Lang, wife of the English poet:

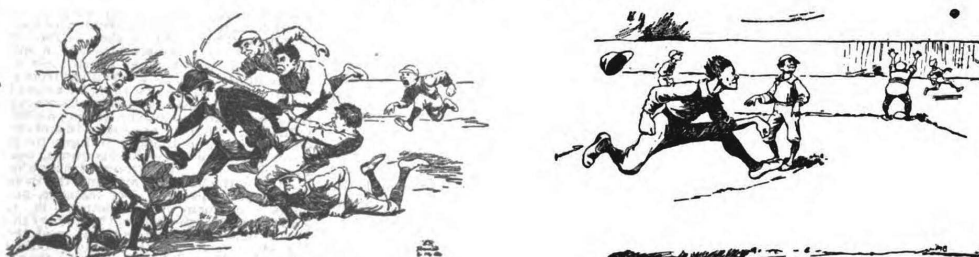
"In the days of my childhood, a friend of my own was informed by a favorite housemaid, what she wished to give warning, as she was going to be married. 'Indeed,' said the lady, 'and what is your future husband?' 'Please, 'm, he's an asker.' 'A what?' 'An asker.' 'I don't understand. What does he do?' 'Well, 'm, he goes about the streets, and if he sees any one coming along that looks kind, he well, he just stops 'em and asks 'em to give him a trifle, and he makes quite a comfortable living that way!' 'Do you mean a beggar?' 'Well, 'm, some people do call it that; we call it asker.'"

EDISON'S PERSEVERANCE.

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," is an axiom that in its application is by no means confined to the efforts of children to overcome obstacles in the path of learning. Some of the most renowned achievements in the realms of science and invention have been compassed only after repeated failures. Note, for instance, Edison's experience with his electric light, as related by a contemporary:

The story of the great trial of patience he had with the making of the first carbon lamp will show what obstacles he encountered. The carbon of this first lamp was made of a spool of Clark's thread. Edison and his assistant worked two nights and days to produce the carbon, and then started with it to the glassblower's house. As they set it down it broke. They at once returned to the laboratory and made another one, and with it returned to the glassblower's den. As it was deposited on the bench, a jeweler's screwdriver rolled down and broke it. They turned back a third time, and, after an exhausting day, they completed a carbon and managed to get it inserted in the lamp. The receptacle was exhausted of air and sealed, the current turned on, and for the first time the light sprang out in all its beauty.

SHAKSPERIAN BASEBALL.



"The game is up!"—*Cymbeline*.

"A hit, a very palpable hit!"—*Hamlet*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INQUIRER. Our new size ARGOSY Binder will hold a year's numbers.

P. J. S., Millwaukee, Wis. No; we do not offer prizes of that description.

W. C. H., Yuba City, Cal. No; the money must be sent all at once to take advantage of our club rate.

P. D. P., Camden, N. J. We refer you to the Scott Stamp and Coin Company, 12 East 23d St., New York.

R. S. F., New York City. Mr. Moffat's baseball serial, "The Crimson Banner," appeared in Vol. X, price \$2, bound.

F. H., Newark, N. J. We do not know where tattooing is done, nor would we care to publish the information if we did.

C. E. E., Brooklyn, N. Y. A short article telling how to make a tent appeared on page 580 of No. 297, Vol. VI, now out of print as a separate issue.

J. E. P., York, Me. 1. We cannot make any announcement on this point. 2. Yacht designer Burgess was about forty years old at the time of his death.

E. T. B., Jr., Paterson, N. J. MSS. intended for publication should always be written on one side of the paper only.

J. P. H., Bath Beach, N. Y. "Van," by Frank H. Converse, has been issued in book form. We can mail it to you on receipt of the price, 25 cents.

J. A., Jr., Washington, D. C. We hope to print all the stories named in the present volume. You will notice that three have been already placed.

R. N. W., S. P. S., N. H. 1. Yes, "Van" has been published in book form, and we can mail it to you on receipt of the price, 25 cents. 2. No. 286 happens to be still in print, price six cents.

W. E. B., Washington, D. C. Read the offer carefully and you will observe that it is stated that the extra papers can be bought either of a newsdealer, or procured from us. We thank you for your words of praise for THE ARGOSY.

IRA, Philadelphia, Pa. 1. We now have in stock a binder made especially for the present size of THE ARGOSY. Price 60 cents, postage 12 cents. 2. No. 3. We can send you indexes to the last eight volumes on receipt of a two cent stamp for each one.

H. S., New York City. The prize books are given only to those who sell a number of the paper to some one else—one book for each paper sold, and in all cases the requisite sum for postage must be sent to this office.

H. X., Jacksonville, Fla. A young man who has received a high school education ought to be smart enough to pass an examination for West Point so far as the mental requirements are concerned. You would doubtless be permitted to dispose of your time as you wished until you began your career as a cadet.

ARTHUR BLAISDELL, Salem, N. J. 1. Due announcement will be made of forthcoming attractions. 2. Very rarely, if ever. 3. "On the Border" has not been placed yet. We hope to begin "A Split in the Club" in No. 469. 4. A portrait and sketch of Edward S. Ellis appeared in No. 395, price six cents. No biographies of the other writers named have been published. 5. The serials written by William Murray Graydon for the paper in question were "Over Africa," "The Head Hunters" and "The Fall of the Soudan."

G. B., New York City. 1. Vol. XII contains 260 pages, quite a respectable sized book. 2. The size of the volume does not make any difference in the cost of binding. Our price for doing this is in each and every case \$1.50. 3. There is no reduction made to those buying back numbers, unless copies for three months, a half year or a year are ordered at one time. 4. We insert title page and index in volumes sent us to be bound. 5. Yes, you can send the dollar in a postal note, or, by the safest method of all, a money order.

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CHOLLY—"Well, you see, ole fel', I've been ill, an' couldn't carry it myself. Of course I couldn't think of coming out on the avenue without it, so I hired a cane bearer. Same as men used to have armor bearers in olden times, doncher know?"

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"Yes. It was very badly played, too."
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"Every one of the actors seemed to have forgotten his lines."—*Truth.*

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"BROWN, do you know why you are like a donkey?"
"Like a donkey?" echoed Brown, opening wide his eyes. "No, I don't." "Do you give it up?" "No, do." "Because you're better half as stubborn as itself." "That's not bad." "Ha, ha! I'll give that to my wife when I get home." "Mrs. Brown," he asked as he sat down to supper, "do you know why I am so much like a donkey?" He waited a moment expecting his wife to give it up. She looked at him commiseratingly as she answered: "I suppose because you were born so."—*Exchange.*

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HE was looking at a typo Piling letters in his stick, And each one seemed to fall in line So gracefully and slick. "That's easy work," he muttered, "I could do it well. If I only had half a chance And could the boxes tell." The typo bade him try his hand; "O'erjoyed the stick he took— He set one line—it's standing yet— In Brays' L'his sort o'E look."

—*Montreal Gazette.*

A FEARFUL OMEN.

MRS. SQUALLS—"Oh, George, arise instantly. I fear something terrible is going to happen to baby."
MR. SQUALLS—"What's the row?"
MRS. SQUALLS—"He has fallen into a quiet, natural sleep."
MR. SQUALLS—"For Heaven's sake! Telephone the doctor."—*Minneapolis Journal.*

A MERE FRACTION OF THE WHOLE.

JONES and his son took the boat for Long Branch. "I never would have believed there was so much water," observed the young hopeful, gazing seaward from the iron pier. "And, observe, my son," said his father, "that you see only what's on top."—*Judge.*

BRIGHT PROSPECTS.

"DOCTOR, how am I coming on? Do you think there's any hope?" said a very sick man to Dr. Blister.
"Your chances are the best in the world. The statistics show that one person in ten recovers," replied the doctor.
"Then there is not much hope for me?"
"Oh, yes, there is. You are the tenth case that I have treated, and the other nine are dead. I don't see how you can help getting well if the statistics are to be relied on."—*Texas Siftings.*

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MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

The following notice appeared in MUNSEY'S WEEKLY in the issue of the 18th of August:

MUNSEY'S WEEKLY will be issued hereafter in magazine form. The name will be changed to MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE. It will be published monthly. Subscriptions to the Weekly will be filled by the Magazine.

The first number of the Magazine will be the October issue. It will be for sale on all news stands on or about October first.
MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE will publish no continued stories. All matter will be complete in each issue.

HERE IS A PARTIAL LIST OF CONTENTS:

Vera Shamarin, by WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON. This is a novel of Siberian exile—
are subjected to in that land of cruel despotism. It is a whole novel and is complete in one issue.

An Accidental Romance, by MATTHEW WHITE, JR., is a story of the Adirondacks, in which an entirely unique situation is portrayed. The story is cleverly told and represents the best work Mr. White has yet done.

A Daughter of the Desert is a clever sketch of Western life, by THOMAS WINTHROP HALL, showing the solitude of the plains, and revealing the passions of the human heart.

A Modern Princess is a story of Newport—a clever romance of summer life hand-
gather with two others (six in all—one a complete novel), and the following special articles, will make the October issue of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE a publication of the best grade. Here are the special articles:

Snap Shots in Central Park, with ten illustrations of the finest grade, is
are rare bits of art which show to advantage the most beautiful parts of the park. Another
equally popular article is entitled,

The Museum of Natural History. This article is also fully illustrated,
many of the queer things it contains.

Horseback Riding is cleverly treated in text and picture.

Cornelius Vanderbilt is the head of New York's greatest moneyed family, is pic-
tured with an admirable portrait and a clever pen.

THE BEECHER STATUE, THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF NEW YORK, THE
DRAMA, POETRY, LATEST BOOKS, AND EDITORIAL ETCHINGS—all these subjects
find a place in the October issue of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE and many of them are embellished with
illustrations. You cannot well afford to miss MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE for October. It will interest
you—it will interest your mother and father. Order it from your newsdealer. If he has sold
his supply ask him to get it for you or you can send twenty five cents to the publisher and you
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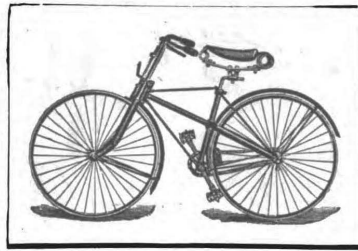
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