

# THE ARGOSY

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## THE WRECK OFF STACOMB.

BY OWEN HACKETT.

I.

IT all happened as a result of the summer boarder custom, which Mrs. Share was so set against.

"You don't seem to realize, mother," said Rube, "the material advantage that this summer boarder movement is bringing with it. I confess, I don't know what I should do if we took lodgers our-

selves; but for every new boarder in the neighborhood, this bit of land is worth just so much more money, and some day —! well, we needn't look too far ahead, I suppose!"

"For a boy, who has never been to Boston, you do talk in the greatest way," laughed Mrs. Share, good naturedly, and a little admiringly too, I should judge, for she gave the bushy head of her son a few little taps that were certainly not in reproof.

"I, for my part, do not like to see this quiet and beautiful spot overrun with strangers; it seems like profaning some sacred place to allow its beauty to be marred by blotches of wide striped flannel and outrageous staring artificial flowers from the great hot city."

Mrs. Share was quite right, too, as to the sentiment of it all. Captain's Head was certainly a beautiful spot. The low lying sandy coast to the southward here took its first rise and in the Head showed the first indication of what soon became the granite cliffs of Maine.

From the beach rose a succession of rocky eminences; the furthest back from the shore was the

Head, and this was the highest point of the coast, from the top of which one could look straight out to the eastern ocean where there was nothing but that still, solemn world of sky and sea that was so beautiful and so dreamy on fair days; so dreary and melancholy on those stormy, dull gray days of mist and curling, wind churned waves. On the north the rocky promontory fell sheer down to a placid bay, majestically calm, excepting when the gale whistled direct from the north. On the other side of this bay was Cliff Harbor, a dull, lazy, decaying seaport. In a year the railway might be there bringing with it the capitalist and "improver" to build hotels and casinos and merry-go-rounds on the lovely bay close to the Head.

Mrs. Share was left by will and testament of her husband, Captain Zacharial Share, all of that highest promontory known as Captain's Head, the snug and homely (but so picturesque!) homestead nestling behind the shelter of its highest point, and the grassy westward slope down to the sandy beach of the bay, with quite a piece of that shore that is now a water front valued at a million.

Visitors to the neighboring houses all wended their way to the Head, for there was the shore view of the district. Intruders were not always kept away from the homestead by the stout fence and heavy swinging gate. One in particular was forced one day from burning thirst, after a romp on the heated seashore and the climb back up the rocks, to push back the gate and beg a dipper of water from the old fashioned well.

She did not beg in vain; she asked for water and got, instead, a cup of veritable nectar—fresh, cool, creamy milk offered without the slightest show of impatience, though the hand that gave it was all covered with the flour in which it had been plunged when the intruder appeared at the kitchen window.

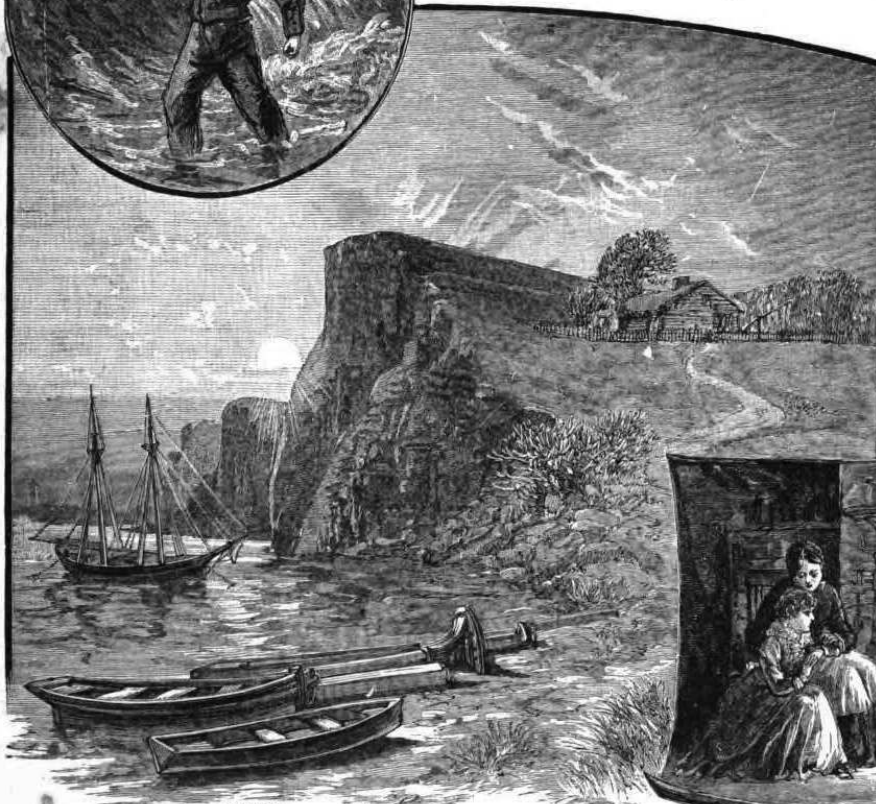
The flushed face there was that of a girl of fifteen—beautiful then, I am told, and, indeed, I know she was, by a picture of her taken about that time.

She drank her cup of milk with a grateful little sigh of relief and enjoyment and then said:

"Oh! if you *only* knew how good that is, you wouldn't mind being bothered," glancing around at rolling pin, and dough and tin molds and floury arms; "and I am *so* sorry to have troubled you."

"No bother at all, my dear," answered Mrs. Share, who seemed to be gathering equal enjoyment from the sight of such a fresh and pretty young face, "but I hope you won't mind taking a chair and resting yourself a bit; you look so tired and flushed."

"Can I?" cried the visitor, "I'd like to, and I won't



SHE SAT RESTING HER ACHING HEAD IN THAT MOTHERLY LAP AS THE SUN BROKE THROUGH THE CLOUDS.

“speak a word, if you'll go on with your work. I'd so like to see how it is all done. You're making bread, I suppose, and I don't know the first thing about that or, indeed, anything of what people call housekeeping.”

“The bread is in the oven, my dear, and this is cake that I'm making now. You may stay as long as you please, and the more you talk the better, for, I'm sure,” and here the two hands which had again been plunged into the pasty mass stopped, and the good housewife turned to scrutinize again the girlish face, “I'm sure you won't talk as silly as most of the—strangers that come this way.” She was going to say city folks, but this stranger was evidently one of them, and that term would have been a little too personally specific for true courtesy.

So the pretty visitor stayed; and when at last the cake was put into the oven and preparations for dinner were commenced, behold, a miracle! the city visitor was asked to stay and break the hot bread, concerning the mysteries of which she had been so interestedly inquiring about; and the hostess meant the invitation, too—that was clear!

But the young lady had to go, else her people would be anxious about her, but,

“If you will let me come again—tomorrow, perhaps—really, I can't say how I would like it!” and, as the gate swung behind her airy form, bounding down the grassy slope toward Cliff Harbor, Mrs. Share remained at the doorway looking long, and a little longingly, after the city visitor.

“Humph! I thought you detested city folks,” said Rube, with a malicious twinkle in his eye, when he heard the story of the visit that day.

“City folks! so I do!” retorted Mrs. Share, with considerable asperity. “But don't ‘city folks’ me, sir, when you're speaking of her! I don't care if she's lived in town a *thousand years*—” (“Whew!” whistled Rube at this)—“she's no more one of your airy, fashionable, nonsensical cified people than—than *you are!*”

Thus began the acquaintance between the “exclusive” Mrs. Share and the “artless” town girl, which was to be a grateful experience to all concerned.

## II.

“I MAY not be home till late this evening mother,” said Rube, as he was about starting away at six o'clock on the following morning.

“Why, Reuben! I wanted you to meet the young lady today. I think she will consent to stay to dinner, and I was in hopes that—”

“I don't like to see such a beautiful spot overrun with strangers,” quoted Rube with his teasing twinkle of the eye. But,

“No, no,” he cried, when he saw his mother's startled, even grieved look; “I was only teasing, mother! The fact is, I arranged with the men to set the nets today in a new place, just for an experiment; it's way up beyond Stacom Point, and I don't see how I can get back before three o'clock with last night's catch;” and with a kiss and a hug Rube bounded down to the shore.

When Captain Share had amassed enough to make him a rich man for those parts, and had invested his savings in what came to be known as “Captain's Head,” he gave up the life of an East Indian skipper. He bought a tidy schooner, instead, and turned fisherman, satisfying thus his salt water cravings and making a little money besides to pay running expenses and furnish every reasonable comfort to his family. His land he made nothing on; he saw in that a fair fortune for those

he might leave behind him, not then, but in the future, and he was content.

He set his nets and sold his catches when he pleased, and lived what he considered the life of a lord. When at last he went to that Haven of havens, his son found honorable, if humble, work where his father had left off. And so, he was captain of the Priscilla, master of a fishing crew and a slender young pillar of the Commonwealth at the age of sixteen; a youth of intelligence, fair schooling and an amount of energy which, in busier scenes, would push him to the fore. His thirst for knowledge was insatiate, his taste for reading absorbing and his memory infallible; and these qualities had already served to give him a general education that mere book learning would never have provided.

Though he was not present at that day's dinner, for which the pretty visitor did really stay, and though he was at bottom a little backward at submitting himself to the scrutiny and criticism of a city girl, Rube had to meet her eventually, and had to admit to himself by and by that he was very glad of it. During that summer, though she and her friends were staying at the Reames', half a mile away, the Shares' was her headquarters from the day she was first initiated into the mysteries of cake baking. Nor did her lessons stop there. So marked seemed to be her domestic tastes, that she was not satisfied until Mrs. Share would give her permission to come over to help cook and bake and “do up” and dip a little into all the various departments of housekeeping; until, at the end of the summer, she declared that Mrs. Share had made her quite a marriageable girl, and her future husband (said she, in all ingenuousness), whoever he might be, owed her kind friend a colossal debt of gratitude.

And Rube of course learned all about her. There was not much to her history. The boy, who had a way of turning things over in his mind, thought he saw a little pathos in her strange attraction toward his mother, their humble home and their homely way of living—the attraction of a tender, womanly nature for all those subtle, indescribable things that are summed up in the dear, sweet word “home”—she an orphan, living with worldly people in the glittering, conventional town, amid all those things that money always reaches out to buy, lacking all those things that money so often crowds out.

Miss Hepworth—Miss Virginia Hepworth—was her name. She was a native of Boston, the daughter of wealthy parents, people of culture and refinement, both dead this two years.

Martin Everett Dunscombe, her father's partner (they were a firm of stock brokers) was her guardian and his executor. As such, he had taken Virginia to live with his family while she pursued her education; and he had in his hands her whole fortune, many thousands of dollars, to be invested and accounted for when she arrived at the age of twenty.

Her guardian was a man of probity and prominence, wealthy in the estimation of the world; but if the truth were known, wealthy only as his ventures and speculations turned out as his judgment foretold.

There had been some exciting times on the Stock Exchange during the previous year; fortunes greater than his were estimated to be, had crumbled into nothing, and no one but himself knew how airy had been the fabric of his own finances at one time. But that crisis had been weathered; markets had turned, and today he was richer in prospect than ever before.

The struggle, though, had told on

him. Change of scene, of air, cessation of business, were what the doctor had prescribed, and so it was that Cliff Harbor came to know Mr. Dunscombe and his family.

The acquaintance between the heiress and the Shares had ripened into a friendship long before the three short summer months were spent—a friendship that would have been unaccountable as between people moving in such widely different spheres, were it not for the utter loneliness of spirit that possessed the confiding nature of Virginia, living in a circle of cold, unsympathetic, worldly people—people of fashion, walking through a life of hollow social forms. The society of the Shares, true, honest, good hearted folks, tactful, though uncultured, and free from all affectation—this was a happy change for Virginia, as welcome and refreshing as the salty breezes from the bosom of the wild Atlantic.

Here she could trust herself to act as her own honest nature dictated; and she could venture to talk freely, as she often did, without fear of her words and her affairs passing from tongue to tongue, like an electric message.

When they were speaking once of her financial concerns, Rube ventured the remark that it was risking a great deal to trust to one man in these days one's whole fortune, without check or hindrance.

Quick as a thought Virginia turned on Rube a flashing, almost angry, glance, that made him flush as if he had uttered a mean remark; then, however, the look melted into a smiling expression of perfect confidence and conviction as she replied:

“Yes, you are right, Reuben; it is risking a good deal. But you do not know Mr. Dunscombe. He is worldly, engrossed in his affairs, and perhaps un-sentimental; but he is a man of the strictest honor. In handling my fortune he may risk it, in so far as it is subject to his judgment; but I know this—He would risk his own before he would take any chances with another's, and he regards a trust with such scrupulousness, that I believe he would sacrifice all he possessed if necessary in order to be true to such a trust. No, no! I have no fear on that score.”

Rube was hardly convinced by Virginia's expressed conviction. He had seen more or less of Mr. Dunscombe—a polished, perfectly dressed gentleman, of rather stiff demeanor and so self contained as to be entirely noncommittal as to any outward indication of his true character. He had happened in on the Shares on one occasion with his wife and daughter, really with the purpose of ascertaining what sort of people his ward was so engrossed in. Seeing nothing that was unfavorable, he had let the intimacy remain un-molested. The female members of the family had all the affectation and pride, though apparently none of the vulgarity, that Mrs. Share so detested in the summer boarder, and so, there was no mutual affection between the two households, and the Shares saw but little of the broker's family.

So the summer wore away, and at last Virginia and her country friends were forced to take a regretful farewell to meet again—when?

“Next summer, surely!” Virginia had exclaimed. “The family will not come to Cliff Harbor next year, I hope; for that would mean that Mr. Dunscombe was again in danger, and that, I trust, will never again be the case. But remember, I am practically my own mistress, and I shall surely find a chance to run down while they are at Newport or Berkshire, or one of those horrible fashionable watering places, which I simply detest!”

And when she had gone, both mother and son felt as if *something* had dropped out of their life; and Rube began to think of some things that had before only vaguely suggested themselves to him—matters that this young lady of education and refinement, grace and sensibility had alluded to at times, in casual conversation, and which, now that he had time to think, came back with striking force.

Principally, the question of the future. Rube was comfortably fixed for life; his self imposed business provided every comfort he desired and gave him work enough to occupy his mind and fill his time; some day, even, if so inclined, he did not doubt that Captain's Head could be turned into a fortune. What more could he want?

Something he did crave. He was not dissatisfied—he was simply not satisfied. What was it? Searchingly did he cross examine himself and reason with himself until he finally got his answer.

The time had come when Rube, like all thoroughly manly fellows, felt that masculine desire to *do something*, to see and feel something, *anything*, spring into life, take shape, grow, increase under his own hand—some life work, some contribution to the general sum of achievement—a craving that belongs to all active minds, that constitutes worthy ambition—an impulse of human vitality that has released the world from barbarism.

And Virginia was responsible for this; she had come to this sleepy, decaying place like an inspiration from an outer, moving, vital world.

“What *can* you do, Reuben?” was his mother's query, when this was being discussed. “I would be fearful of you, if I thought this was mere restlessness; a mere wish to see the world and leave your quiet and innocent home. I know my boy too well to believe that, however. But what can you do?”

“I do not know. But this I do feel; I've got a head and brains in it. I am not making the best use of those brains. At my age I ought to know more; with a broader education I am *certain* the inspiration for some worthy work will find me out—something a little higher and better than halting fish out of the deep sea.”

And throughout the inclement winter they discussed the problem in many ways, and Rube found means to learn much more, by reading and study, than he had ever systematically acquired before in an equal length of time.

## III.

IT was early April, and what proved to be the last expiring throes of an unusually hard winter vented itself in a storm of fearful severity. After raging for two days, the vicious hail ceased and the wind abated one morning, and Rube, well muffled up, started down from the Head shoreward, to see how the lighthouse on the point and old Si Busby, the lighthouse keeper, had weathered the gale.

As he descended the successive headlands that protected Cliff harbor from the wrath of the ocean and the north-east winds, the heavy gray canopy of mist and cloud seemed to rise higher and higher from the water and the dull, muffled roar of the angry waves seemed to grow clearer and more sonorous, betokening a lightening of the atmosphere.

At last he reached the long, low strip of sand that ran far out to sea, and which was at its end marked by the slender and battered old lighthouse that had stood sentinel there for nearly half a century. Just as he was hailed by Busby, who stood with telescope in hand on the balcony around the “cage,” Rube suddenly espied, tossing and

tumbling in the breakers, an object that made him stop.

"Hi, there, my hearty!" answered Rube. "Glad to see you've weathered another one. What's this I see out yonder?"

"Pears to be summat in the shape of a trunk, Rube. She's been a blowin' this 'ere way fom Stacombe or thereabouts. Ef this 'ere weather 'd on'y thin out some, I cal'late to see suthin' up that away. 'Praps yo'r young eyes c'n do better'n mine."

"All right, Si. Just wait till I get a hand on this thing."

The trunk seemed to be playing fast and loose with the shore, tumbling and rolling in on the breakers and being dragged back again by the receding surges. Rube plunged in the seething waters up to his knees and grasped it when it was thrown a little higher than before and, finding it not so heavy as he had thought, he lifted it to his shoulder and struggled up through the sand to the lighthouse platform. Just as he had deposited his burden there, the voice of Si called down:

"Hey, Rube! Come up, quick! She be a liftin' a bit, an' there be suthin' or other up to the pint."

Rube entered the tower and sped up the winding steps; emerging on the balcony, he took the glass from Si's hand and leveled it at Stacombe Point. At that moment the clouds broke to the northeast and a ray of sunshine shot down upon the far away waters that dashed and boiled in great foamy masses over the rocks that pushed their dark heads above the waves.

A glance was enough! Rube handed the telescope back to Si.

"There's a brigantine on Bull's Head Rock! Take care of that trunk for me. I'm off to get the Priscilla out! There may be lives to save up yonder." And down the stairs he bounded, up and over the slope, where he stopped only an instant to say good by to his mother, then down to Cliff Harbor, where the schooner lay and where he beat up a crew of hardy seamen, and he was off for Stacombe Point within an hour, in the teeth of the northeast gale.

Mrs. Share had watched the struggling craft through the captain's old battered telescope until she disappeared behind Cliff Harbor point, and had returned then to her sewing with a little inward prayer, when an unaccustomed "Whoa!" sounded at the gate.

She recognized the voice of Abe Plimscott—taking supplies to the lighthouse after the storm's blockade, of course. She was on the point of rising to see what he might want of her, when the door was burst open; a cloaked and befurred girlish figure rushed in and with wide open arms threw herself down beside the astonished housewife, with her head in her friend's lap and her hands clasping her around the waist.

"What—where—my dear Virginia!" was all that Mrs. Share could gasp.

"I had to come! I couldn't help it! I had to get away! I felt as if I should die if I couldn't rest, away from it all; and this is the only place I felt I could come!"

The creaking of the old country wagon died away as it painfully gained the top of the Head, and within the house all was silence as the beautiful creature from the far away world of turmoil and strife rested her head peacefully in that humble lap.

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The thunders of a panic began to fill the air of the financial world in January. Mr. Dunscombe, heavily loaded on a falling market, saw ruin staring him in the face. Every nerve was strained by his firm during January and early February to raise funds to carry

their load, in the hope of a turn of the market.

It was on February 12; every resource was exhausted; a decline of a fraction of a point would wipe them out forever, and make one of the most enormous of the many recent failures. All that day Mr. Dunscombe, till then smilingly bearing his firm's load of fearful anxiety, acted queerly—as if in a dream. The next day he was missing. He was traced to Montreal; there all track of him was lost.

Amid the jargon of financial phrases with which the situation was explained, Virginia understood only this—that all sign of her fortune seemed to have disappeared with her guardian, he was looked upon as an embezzler and she was penniless.

The Dunscombes were fairly crazed with their trouble; sympathy and comfort they could neither give nor accept. Stunned, bewildered, helpless, Virginia was seized with a longing to flee to some place where she could quietly, peacefully think it all out. And this is how it came about that she sat resting her aching head in the motherly lap of the captain's widow as the sun broke through the leaden clouds on that April morning.

It was thus she sat late that afternoon, when the door was flung open and Reuben, panting for breath, cried out:

"Such news, mother! The wreck —" and stopped at the sight of Virginia. He was stupefied. For an instant he really thought she had been conjured thither, as in the fairy tales. At such a moment, too! And Virginia—to her the appearance of Reuben completed the peaceful and homelike circle she had been longing for. She sprang up, a glad welcome in her eyes, and, so artlessly as to seem perfectly natural at the moment, she threw her arms about his neck and imprinted a hearty kiss upon his cheek. Long afterward they laughingly recalled the ingenious act.

"But, Virginia!" cried Reuben, after the first few words of greeting. "A brig, the Minerva of Halifax, bound for New York, has gone to pieces on the rocks off Stacombe Point; on the beach with part of the crew, cast up from one of the ship's boats that put to shore I have just taken your guardian, raving in the delirium of fever."

"Mr. Dunscombe! he is found? Thank Heaven! Where is he? Quick! we must go to him!"

"I have left him at Dr. Benton's. He is being cared for. But what does it all mean?"

As Virginia hurriedly donned her wraps she explained the circumstances of the last month. Just as they were about to depart for Dr. Benton's the creaking of Mr. Plimscott's wagon was heard again, returning from the lighthouse. Again it stopped at the gate as Reuben and Virginia crossed the garden on their way to town.

"Si asked me to bring this 'ere trunk over to you, Rube. Shell I drop 'er here or take 'er over to town?"

Virginia's eye fell upon the trunk, appearing above the side of the wagon. The end was toward her; on it were painted the letters, "M. E. D."

"Reuben! Look! It is Mr. Dunscombe's trunk!"

#### IV.

THE wild mutterings of the broker's delirium, together with the circumstances recounted by his ward and the professional knowledge of the doctor, made this plain: Mr. Dunscombe's mind had given way under the terrific strain, and he had been subject to the hallucination that conspirators were pursuing him to deprive him of something of great value. Over and over again his vague words told ap-

parently, of his efforts to hide from their search, this—what? His fortune? Probably that; though Virginia had understood that he, too, was penniless.

Yet, singularly, when the trunk that had been saved after its voyage on the curling waves, was opened, its principal contents were found to be stocks and bonds of gilt edge character, to the amount of many thousands of dollars.

Was it really so, people asked? Had he, indeed, gathered together at the end all that he could, and decamped, leaving his partners to bear his share of their joint liabilities, while he dishonestly saved out a fortune for himself?

In Reuben's inexperience it did not attract his notice that these securities were all made out in Mr. Dunscombe's name as "Executor."

And then came another startling turn to the exciting tale. When the Dunscombe family came down to Cliff Harbor on Virginia's summons, it appeared that the market had turned, had mounted steadily upward, relieved at last from one of the most gigantic "bearing" conspiracies of modern times; and the firm of which the broker was at the head had cleared off at a profit!

This was the wonderful news that greeted the invalid, when, weeks afterward the clouds cleared away from his mind and he awoke, weak but sane.

Then gradually the mystery was explained. Well had Virginia judged when she said that Mr. Dunscombe would lose his own before he would jeopardize a trust!

When the first dangers of the panic appeared, and Mr. Dunscombe saw that the financial world was likely to be storm swept, his first act was to reinvest every penny of his ward's fortune that was not in absolutely safe securities. So heavily did this trust weigh on his scrupulous mind that, when he broke down, it was this trust that became the subject of his hallucinations; it was these securities that he gathered together, and it was for the preservation of these that he fled from the phantoms of his heated brain. It was these that filled the fotsam trunk, and it was Virginia's fortune that Reuben had rescued from a watery oblivion.

I wish space would let me tell more of Reuben and Virginia, and the homestead on Captain's head; and of how Cliff Harbor changed, and grew in time under the presiding genius of Reuben Share.

These events happened years ago. Some of you may be acquainted with the lady who signs herself Virginia Share and her husband, the eminent lawyer of Boston and member of Congress. If so, this tale may hint at the inspiration that started Reuben Share on his upward career.

#### KILLED, NOT CURED.

THE temptations of a bright mind to deliver a witty remark on the spur of the moment are so great as sometimes to overstep the strict limits of courtesy. The cleverness must excuse the fault. This was the case in this anecdote from *Figaro*, freely translated from the French.

Alexander Dumas, the younger, dined one day with Dr. Gistal, one of the most popular and eminent physicians in Marseilles. After dinner the company adjourned to the drawing room, where coffee was served. Here Gistal said to his honored guest:

"My dear Dumas, I know you are a capital hand at improvising. Pray oblige me with four lines of your own composing here in this album."

"With pleasure," the author replied. He took his pencil and wrote:

For the health and well being of our dear old town  
Dr. Gistal has been anxious—very.

Result: The hospital is now pulled down.

"You flatterer!" the doctor interrupted, as he was looking over the writer's shoulder. But Dumas went on:

And in its place we have a cemetery.

#### THE PARSONS WIFE.

SHE'S a winsome little critter,  
But looks kinder tired like,  
Just as if she'd got life's bitter  
While its sweet went on a strike;  
But she hustles among the weemin',  
Runs the young folks' circle, too,  
Till it sometimes has the seemin'  
'Sif she'd all the work ter do.

Parson Brown is sorter lazy—  
Guess she writes his sermons fer him,  
Fer when she was sick, them days he  
Hed no sorter sense inter him.  
When the twins got in their cradle  
She had time ter help him out;  
Then you oughter heered him ladle  
Red hot truths at sin an' doubt.

An' she bakes an' does the moppin',  
Keeps six children clean an' sweet,  
Washes, irons, without stoppin',  
An' looks all the time so neat!  
An' I says to my Marlar,  
Thet Mrs. Brown'd be reely blessed  
When she come to go up higher,  
Where the Lord 'll let her rest!

—Truth.

[This story began in Number 414.]

#### DIRKMAN'S LUCK.

BY WILLIAM D. MOFFAT,

Author of "Brad Mattoon," "The Crimson Banner," "The County Pennant," etc.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

SOME BOYISH GOSSIP.

"WELL, that's a queer dodge!" exclaimed Mark, standing still, and peering through the night after the retreating figure.

Suspecting that something was wrong, his first impulse had been to follow the man, but a second thought corrected this.

"What good could I do?" he asked himself. "I don't know anything about the lay of the land, and would only get lost. No, I've got myself into trouble enough this past week. I'm not taking any more chances. I'll tell the colonel about it and see what he says."

But the colonel was not in when Mark reached the house. Herbert was sitting up waiting for him.

"Father went down town and won't be back until late," said Herbert, laying down a book he was reading when Mark entered the library.

"I'm sorry for that," answered Mark. "I wanted to tell him of something queer that happened on my way back."

"What was it?"

Mark related his experience. "What sort of a limp did the fellow have?" asked Herbert.

"Something like this," and Mark took several steps in imitation of the figure he had seen.

Herbert burst out laughing.

"Oh, I know that walk, well enough. That was old Decatur, the ducky we spoke about this afternoon. He is Mr. Lewis's gardener, an old, crippled, lazy nigger. He's no use any more, but Mr. Lewis has had him a long while and doesn't feel like turning him off."

"Well, what could have been the matter with him?"

"Why, he's more than half crazy. He's always doing queer things, but nobody round here pays any attention to him. He was probably scared when he heard your footsteps behind him. He's an awful coward, especially after dark."

"Then you think there was no mischief going on?"

"Oh, no. He's perfectly harmless—but tell me quick, how did you make out with Mr. Lewis?"

Mark smiled.

"I got the position."  
"Good for you!" exclaimed Herbert, extending his hand and giving Mark's a hearty shake. "I'm mighty glad of it. Did you have any trouble?"

"No, not much after the ice was broken. Things went rather hard at first, though."

Mark then repeated the substance of his interview with Mr. Lewis.

"Phew!" exclaimed Herbert. "That was a pretty close shave, wasn't it?"

"Yes. If it hadn't been for that fire I wouldn't have stood the ghost of a show. Now why did that make such a change in him?"

"Oh, Mr. Lewis likes grit of any kind, and you showed the grit that was in you the night of the fire—now there's no use shaking your head. I know what I'm talking about—"

"Do you know," interrupted Mark, "I couldn't help thinking Mr. Lewis must have been an athlete some time. His figure is so strong."

"An athlete? Well, I guess so. Why, he was captain of his football team when he was in college, played on the baseball nine and was a fine oarsman, too. They used to fairly worship him at Belmont College, and his name used to figure in all the newspapers as one of the best athletes in the country. He is the president of the Medford Athletic Club."

"Have you got a club here?"

"I should say so. In baseball, football or tennis our teams can knock out the county. We have a mighty nice clubhouse out near the other end of town. I'll take you there in a day or so and show you the place. I'm a member."

"I'd like to see it. I've never been in a clubhouse in my life," said Mark.

"Several times I've gone past the door of the Manhattan Athletic Club in New York, and I've wanted like fury to get a peep inside. They have a grand new building now, and it looks mighty well."

"Yes, so I've read," said Herbert, "and I'm such a crank on sports, that, when I go to New York, the Manhattan Athletic clubhouse will be one of the first buildings I'll want to visit. Our place, of course, isn't as fine as that, but it's mighty nice all the same."

"Does Mr. Lewis go in for athletics any more?" asked Mark.

"Oh, no. He's given that all up, but he keeps up his interest in it just the same. He's the heart and soul of the club, and a mighty popular man."

"I shouldn't have thought that exactly," said Mark. "I mean he's so eccentric I should think some people wouldn't get along well with him."

"Oh, he's had spats with lots of people, but it always comes out all right. Everybody knows how to take him now. He's a remarkable man in more ways than one. He's a brilliant man, a fine scholar, and one of the most successful lawyers in this part of the State. No one can help respecting him, and as soon as one finds out how square, and generous and kind hearted he is, one is bound to like him. It is funny though to see how he gets along with some of his neighbors. Now there's father, for instance, who is quick tempered and flies up before you know it. Mr. Lewis and father are all the time squabbling, especially about politics. When they get started, great Scott, how they do make the fur fly! They rip each other up the back and down the front, and try to tear out all the stuffing. It's great fun to hear them—father red and perspiring, and Mr. Lewis flashing his gray eyes around and shooting out little short sentences that sting like bullets. Then when they both have had enough, they quiet down, light cigars, and get very chummy—laughing and joking as if they never had a difference. There isn't a better pair of friends in town than Mr. Lewis and father. They like variety, that's all."

"Speaking of smoking, what a fiend Mr. Lewis is for pipes and cigars," said Mark. "I must have seen twenty pipes hanging around his room, while the air was simply thick enough with smoke to lift you off your feet."

"Yes, he got in the habit of smoking pipes one year when he was in Germany, and it has grown on him ever since."

"I hope he doesn't keep his office full of smoke. I couldn't stand it."

"You can rest easy there. He makes a rule of never smoking at his office."

"How does he get along without it?"

"Well, he gnaws on an unlighted cigar most of the time, and gets some satisfaction that way. I've known him to go into court chewing a cigar. I suppose it's hard for him to keep his rule sometimes, but once he makes up his mind it is best to do a thing he sticks to. That's one of the things that makes people respect him."

"Why is it he never got married?" asked Mark. "From what I saw of his house I should say he needed a wife mighty badly. Everything is topsyturvy."

"Well it suits him so. He knows how to lay his hands on what he wants at any time, and I guess he would feel kind o' lost if anybody should set things in apple pie order."

"Still it must be mighty lonesome in that big stone house," said Mark. "I should think he would want company."

"Yes," answered Herbert slowly, "and I'm sure there are times when Mr. Lewis thinks so, too, but he'll never get married, that's certain."

Mark looked at Herbert questioningly.

"I mean that that big stone house has a story. Mr. Lewis built it a long while ago and had it all ready for his wife—that is for the woman he was going to marry. But she died very suddenly—so suddenly that he never knew of it until the telegram came telling him she was dead. It was a terrible blow to him, and he has never entirely got over it. I'm sure he will never marry. You see he is fifty now."

The two boys sat in silence for several seconds.

"Jerusalem! I didn't know it was so late—after eleven," exclaimed Herbert, looking up at the clock over the mantel.

"I don't think we had better wait any longer for father. Let's go to bed."

"I'm agreeable," answered Mark. "I can hardly keep my eyes open now."

"Well, I'm awfully glad you have got a start so soon," said Herbert as they went up stairs. "We'll get you settled in no time now, and before another week has gone you'll feel quite at home."

"It seems almost too good to believe," responded Mark. "I'll have to sleep on it, and perhaps by morning I can get used to it."

"It was certainly good luck this time," said Herbert.

"Dirkman's luck," added Mark with a smile.

"All right, call it so if you want. I congratulate you, and hope it will keep up."

"Then you think there is nothing wrong about that ducky I saw tonight," said Mark as the two boys parted company to go to their separate rooms.

"Oh, no," answered Herbert decidedly. "I wouldn't think twice about it. There's no use trying to account for that crazy ducky."

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

MARK VISITS THE MEDFORD ATHLETIC CLUB.

THE colonel was as much pleased as Herbert when Mark, on the following morning, told him of his success.

"You got along with Lewis very well, all things considered," said the colonel.

"From your account I can see that he must have been in one of his cranky moods, and your success with him argues well for the future. You needn't fear any trouble now. When are you to set to work?"

"Next Monday."

"Good. That will give you a day or so to get settled."

"Yes, sir, and that's something I want to ask your advice about. Where can I get lodgings? I'd like some nice, home-like place, and yet, you see, I can't afford to pay very much—"

"I've fixed that all right," broke in the colonel, cutting him short. "The Otises have a room to spare, and I asked Miss Betty if she would be willing to take you as a boarder. She consented gladly, and if you would like to live with them you have only to move in."

"Like to!" exclaimed Mark enthusiastically, "why, there's nothing I would like better."

"All right. She will let you have the room and board for four dollars a week. She didn't want to charge you anything at first, but—"

"It's entirely too cheap," answered Mark, "and when I can pay more I will."

"Well, she won't worry about that," said the colonel. "Miss Betty said she could get the room in order for you tomorrow night. As tomorrow is Saturday, that will enable you to start a new week with them. How will that do?"

"Splendid. I can move in any time—the sooner, the better. All the moving I have to do is to put on my hat and go over."

"Very well. I thought you would like the arrangement. The Otises will make their house a home for you in every sense. For my part I am glad to see you settled among such good people."

One of the first things Mark did that morning was to write a letter to his friend Reuben Cross—a long, happy letter, narrating his various experiences since his arrival at Medford, and thanking Mr. Cross heartily for steering him toward so kindly a port. Of those who had befriended him he wrote in glowing terms, especially the colonel, whom he described as "the salt of the earth."

After lunch, Mark, glad of a chance to see more of Medford, set off with Herbert for the post office.

Medford was a beautiful, old-fashioned town, and glimpses of its well shaded streets, its neat yards and quaint old houses charmed Mark. Colonel Morgan's residence was on the outskirts, but not a great distance from the business center, and a short walk brought the two boys into the main thoroughfare, appropriately called "Elm Street."

In a few moments they had reached the post office.

"Take a walk further down," said Herbert, when Mark had mailed his letter. "I'll show you something of the town, and then we can go out to the Athletic Club. There will be some football playing on the grounds at four o'clock."

"Good, I'd like to see the place," answered Mark. Accordingly the boys continued down the street, Herbert pointing out such objects as he thought would interest his companion.

"There is Mr. Lewis's office," he said, indicating a large and handsome stone building close by the post office.

Mark looked at it in surprise.

"What, that big place?"

"No, not the whole of it. His offices are on the second floor."

"Oh, it's a regular office building."

"Yes. It is called the Hamilton Building, and is owned by the Medford Citizens' Bank. The bank offices fill the ground floor."

Mark looked with curiosity and interest at the building which was to be the scene of his first efforts in business.

While he was looking Herbert nudged him.

"See there," he said, pointing to a

grocery store a short distance away. "There's where you might have been at work."

"Oh, is that Mr. Weeks's store?"

"Yes, and there comes Mr. Weeks too," said Herbert as a small, fat, and rosy man, white haired and spectacled, came out of the store and took up an apple from a basket that stood outside.

As the boys approached, Mr. Weeks turned and said something to a stout, red faced Irish woman who had followed him to the door.

"Mercivul' eavens, but thim apples is dear, Mistur Weeks."

Mark and Herbert looked at each other. Then both burst out laughing.

"Do you recognize that?" asked Herbert.

"Well, I guess so. That's 'Kathleen Mavourneen'."

"The same. Look at her trying to beat old Weeks's prices down."

Kathleen's efforts were not meeting with success. That was plain from the resolute shake of Mr. Weeks's head, so Kathleen pushed her way out among the baskets.

"All right fur you, Mistur Weeks," she said. "I kin make me stummick wait till I ketch one uv the farmers along the road. I'll buy me apples uv him," and, grapping her basket more tightly, Kathleen waddled off.

"Well, I guess she can afford to wait a good while," laughed Mark. "Look at her waist measure."

When the boys had walked about a quarter mile further, they came upon a large open field, fenced in.

"These are our grounds," said Herbert, opening the gate. "We have had them fixed up lately, and they are in mighty good condition now. We expect to play our regular fall game with the Roxbury team in about four weeks, and we play them this year on our grounds."

The field was quite empty, none of the team having arrived.

"Do you play?" asked Mark, as they approached the large clubhouse at the opposite corner of the field.

"No. It's too all-fired rough for me. I tried it for awhile, but I sprained my ankle and gave it up. My game is tennis—there's something I won at our spring tournaments."

Herbert showed Mark a medal dangling from his watch chain.

"First prize!" exclaimed Mark, gazing admiringly at it.

"Yes—pretty, isn't it! As I am on the executive committee of the club, and did the buying of the prizes before the contest, I found myself well suited with mine after it."

They had now reached the piazza of the club building, and were entering the door when they were met by several fellows coming out, among them a strongly built young man of about twenty-one, clad in football jersey and knickerbockers, and carrying a football under his arm. He nodded to Herbert as they passed.

"That's Baker, our captain, and crack player. He's a college fellow—graduated from Belmont last June, and was on the team there for four years. He is one of the finest half backs in the country. You'll have a chance to see him play later."

At sight of the footballist Mark grew very much interested.

"I wish I could play football," he said.

"Do you play?" asked Herbert.

"Oh, I've been out with the school-boys often on Saturday afternoons kicking ball around some vacant lot in Harlem, but I've never had a real good game. I'd give anything for a chance."

"Well, we can go out on the grounds and kick around with the other fellows before the team begins to play, if you want to."

"I would like to."

"All right. We'll take a walk through the clubhouse and then go out. They clear the field at twelve, so as to let the team play its regular practice game with our scrub eleven, but we can have a half hour of fun before that."

The tour through the clubhouse was a perfect delight to Mark. He had never seen anything like it before, and everything, from the baths and bowling alleys in the basement up through the reception and billiard rooms, the gymnasium and tennis room to the dining parlors and roof promenade at the top, pleased and interested him.

Mark had had little chance for sports and amusements in his life, and possessing a boy's genuine love for athletics, he found in the various appurtenances of the club an indescribable attraction. The different departments with their handsome furnishings, in which every conceivable taste of the sporting man found means of gratification, seemed to him to form a completely equipped athlete's paradise.

"Jiminy crickets!" he exclaimed. "This place must have cost a lot of money. How many members have you?"

"About five hundred," answered Herbert. "The clubhouse was built with money subscribed by older gentlemen of the town, and not by club funds. We couldn't have stood it. There are quite a number of wealthy gentlemen living in and around the town, so we got them interested. We made them honorary members, and they built this nice house for us—see?" and Herbert winked.

"They like it, and use it as a social club—there is no other club in town—while we, well it's nuts for us."

"Aren't they playing out in the field now?" asked Mark, whose ear was alert for the first sound of the football.

"Yes—sounds like it. Come on out, and let us make sure."

#### CHAPTER XIX.

##### MARK PLAYS A GAME OF FOOTBALL.

THE field was scattered with players in football costumes of various styles and colors. Among them it was easy to distinguish Baker by the Belmont college suit which he wore—dark blue jersey and stockings. Players and spectators were mingled together on the field, kicking the ball back and forth, or standing in groups talking. There were three footballs flying in various directions, so Mark and Herbert found no lack of occupation.

Almost the moment they stepped on the field one of the balls plumped straight into Herbert's hands.

"Here, make a try for goal," he said, passing it to Mark and pointing to two posts some distance away.

Mark dropped the ball, and catching it neatly with his foot, drove it straight and true to the mark.

Herbert started.

"By George!" he exclaimed, "you do pretty well for a beginner."

"Oh, I could always kick," said Mark. "I took to it naturally."

"Say, Bert, who's your friend," said a chipper young fellow behind Herbert. Herbert told him.

"Oh, he's the fellow who was in the barn, eh? Cæsar! I want to meet him—Gee whiz! look at that drop kick! Another goal."

"I'll introduce you," said Herbert. "Here Mark, this is a friend of mine, and one of the B. O. S. I want you to know him—Teddy Binks."

"Oh, yes—the neophyte," answered Mark, shaking hands.

"S-s-h!" exclaimed Herbert warningly.

Mark could say but a few words, for he was too eager to take advantage of

the little time left before the game. So off he ran in a minute and was busy punting and kicking drops.

Each time he drove the ball into the air some one of the bystanders looked at him as if wondering who he was. Many questioned Herbert, and soon nearly all knew that it was the boy who had taken so prominent a part in the Otises's fire.

"Come, Curry, get your men in place," cried Baker from the other end of the field. "It's time now. Here, fellows, get off the field," he added to the outsiders near him.

Curry, who was captaining the scrub team, looked around him.

"I can't begin yet, Baker," he called back. "I'm a man short. Atkins isn't here."

"Well, what's the difference—go ahead without him."

"Oh, no. I want a full team."

"Well, pick up somebody out of the crowd, then. I want to get to work." Several bystanders called to Curry; "Take that new fellow."

Curry approached the place where Mark and Herbert were standing.

"We want one man on our side," he said. "Will you play?"

Mark's eyes sparkled.

"Yes indeed—though I don't know the game very well, and I'm in no condition. I'd get winded if you put me in the rush line."

"Oh, that's all right. You can play full back. You won't have hard work there, and about all you'll have to do is to kick. I know you can do that for I've been watching you."

"All right. Got an extra jersey I can wear?"

"There are plenty of spare canvas jackets in the club house. Hurry up and slip one on."

With Herbert's help, Mark soon had on a jacket and was tightly laced up.

When he returned to the field the game had already begun, so, following Curry's direction, he ran back to a position behind the halfbacks on the scrub team.

The game being merely practice, was of no especial interest either to players or spectators, but to Mark it was a red letter event. His body was fairly tingling with excitement as he moved back and forth, watching every movement of the ball. Being only partially familiar with the game, he felt somewhat uncertain at first, but he picked up points every minute from the actions of the players and the decisions of the referee, and gained confidence rapidly.

During the first half Mark had little to do. A few long kicks were all he had to relieve his excitement. But in the second half the scrub team began to weaken and go to pieces. The rushers of the regular team came through frequently, and Mark was kept busy. By several terrific rushes Captain Baker pushed the scrub team back to their goal line, and a touchdown and goal were secured. This was followed almost immediately by another. This was deemed quite a matter of course, for the regular team always made a large score against the scrub, and thus far it had never allowed the latter to win a point.

Points were now rapidly gained by the regular team till the score stood 26 to 0. This represented six touchdowns, from which only one goal had been kicked by Hardy, the regular full back. As most of the touchdowns were made quite close to the goal posts, there was no excuse for this record, and expressions of disapproval became quite frequent on the part of the bystanders. Baker was very much annoyed.

"You've got to take a brace, Hardy," he said, after the last miss in kicking for goal. "You're getting worse every day."

Hardy scowled and walked back to his place.

A few minutes later, when the playing was in the middle of the field, the ball was passed to Baker, who, by a brilliant run, passed the scrub rush line, and plunging ahead, tore his way past the two half backs. He had now advanced forty yards against all opposition, and the crowd was cheering him lustily. Mark was the only one left, and Baker was avoiding him by veering off to the right. By the time that Mark got within ten feet of him, Baker had the lead and was flying down towards the goal with an open field before him.

Here was Mark's chance. He had the advantage of being fresher than Baker. On the other hand, Baker had the lead, and was quick and light on his feet.

Realizing how precious every second was, Mark tore recklessly after his opponent. In ten yards he had gained perceptibly. Gathering encouragement from this, he exerted himself still more. Foot by foot he was gaining. At the twenty five yard line he was only five feet behind, and the cries of the bystanders greeted his ears.

"Go it! Go it! You've got him! Bully for you!"

This spurred him on faster. Fifteen yards from the goal he had gained another foot. Ten yards from the goal he could almost touch Baker. There was not another second to spare. Baker was close upon the goal line. Then Mark, summoning all his energies for one last endeavor, gave a leap and lit fairly on Baker's shoulders, clasping him tightly with arms and legs. Plunging forward, Baker fell heavily, rolling over and over on the ground, with Mark clinging tightly to him, until the rest of the team came pouring down in an avalanche of arms, legs, and bodies on top of them. Mark had cut off Baker's charge just at the five yard line. A loud shout and clapping of hands went up from the crowd.

"Good for the youngster! Dandy boy! The prettiest tackle of the year! Bully for the canvas-back!"

Meantime the players were disentangling themselves. When Baker was freed, he rolled over, and, sitting up, gave Mark a long stare.

"Well, who are you?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, he's a discovery I made in the crowd," answered Curry with a laugh.

"Well, he's a blamed good one, that's all," said Baker, jumping to his feet.

"Time!" called the referee.

The second half being over, the ball was not put in play, and Baker walked off with it under his arm.

While Mark was on the way to the house to change his clothes, several of the players approached and congratulated him on his play.

"Well, you had to wait a good while for it, but you got a glorious chance to distinguish yourself at the last!" exclaimed Herbert Morgan, running up to him enthusiastically. "You'll make a dandy football player if you keep at it."

"Couldn't you come out and play with us every day?" asked Curry.

"Why, yes," answered Mark. Then he thought of his work. "I don't know, though, whether I can," he went on. "I expect to begin work in Mr. Lewis's office Monday, and I don't know what my hours will be. If I can get off I'd like to come out every day."

"Oh, if it depends on Mr. Lewis, he will let you have an hour at noon," said Curry. "Why, he takes more interest in the team than anybody else in the club. You can come tomorrow anyhow, can't you?"

"Oh, yes."

"All right; I'll look for you."

Curry turned away.

As it was almost dinner time, and they were some distance from home, Mark

did not wait to make acquaintances, but hurried through his toilet and set out with Herbert.

"I suppose I'll be as stiff as a poker tomorrow morning, but I'll come out and play if I can't bend my knees," he said. "I never had such sport in my life."

"I don't wonder you like it—you're just made for it," answered Herbert. "We'll make a crack player out of you before long."

"Why, I only made one play today."

"I know, but you have the right stuff in you. All the fellows around me were saying that. If you'd had a chance to do some kicking you might have made a better show today, but as it was, it was easy to see what you're made of."

On reaching home, Herbert stepped into the library, while Mark went up stairs to brush up before dinner. On coming down he found Herbert standing in the hall, looking serious.

"Well, here's news!" he said, as Mark approached him.

"What is it?"

"There was a robbery in town last night."

"A robbery!"

"Yes. Mr. Turner's jewelry store on Elm Street was broken into, and a lot of silver and jewels stolen."

Mark gave a long whistle.

"Jiminy crickets!" he exclaimed. "That's a nice night's work. Have they any idea who did it?"

Herbert shook his head.

"Not the ghost of an idea. It was a mighty slick job—no fool's work."

"Wasn't there another robbery a little while ago?"

"Yes, about two weeks ago, and one a short time before that. It's getting mighty serious, and the worst of it is they haven't been able to strike a clew of any kind. Either Amberg and his men are infernally stupid or the burglars were tricky, slippery cracksmen—"

"Herbert," exclaimed Mark, hastily interrupting his companion, "I'm positive that man I saw last night had something to do with this robbery. Think how queer he acted. Confound it, I wish now I had followed him."

"Followed whom?" asked Colonel Morgan, who at this moment came to the door and heard Mark's last words.

Mark recounted his experience of the night before. The colonel listened attentively.

"It certainly seems very suspicious," he said, "and perhaps your adventure may supply a clew. Are you sure it was Decatur?"

"No, sir. I never saw the ducky."

"Are you sure it was a ducky at all?"

"No, sir. I was not close enough to see his face."

"But the walk, father," said Herbert. "Show him how the fellow walked, Mark."

Mark limped off a short distance in imitation.

"There's certainly no mistaking that," said the colonel, "but what under the sun that old, half silly ducky could have to do with this robbery I can't understand. It shows every evidence of having been committed by skilled burglars, and Decatur—why, Decatur hasn't sense enough to come in when it rains." "Yet why should he have run away from me?" asked Mark.

"Well, it's the nearest thing to a clew we have found yet," answered the colonel, "and I'll see what there is in it. I'll go over and talk with Lewis at once. You need not wait dinner for me."

With his usual prompt action, the colonel seized his hat and made off.

(To be continued.)

UP TO THE MARK.

SHE—"The man I marry must be handsome, brave and clever."

HE—"How fortunate we have met!"—Truth.

## SLEEP.

SEEEP lulls the heart and puts to rest  
The weary cares of day,  
Earth's sweetest, dearest boon, and best,  
Wearing the smiles of May.

When sleep steals on there falleth peace  
And calm from out His skies;  
All life's unrest she maketh cease,  
And drieth tearful eyes.

Who would not woo her gentle breath  
Upon the eyelids down,  
Alike forgetting life and death,  
Earth's sunshine or its frown?

—Boston Transcript.

## OUT WITH THE DUCKS.

BY VANCE HARCOURT.

"WAKE up, Dori!"  
"Oh, let me sleep a little longer." And the great, fat fellow rolled over on his side and blinked his eyes drowsily. He saw three indistinct figures moving about the dark room, and was on his feet in an instant. "Hello!" he said, stretching himself, "is it two o'clock already?"

Some one lit the gas and revealed a table, upon which a modest lunch had been spread the night before. Thereupon the four sat down and vied with each other in seeing who could get through first.

"Is it two o'clock?" echoed one. "Of course it is. Didn't you hear the alarm clock? Well, you're a pretty hunter. It would take a cannon to wake you."

"You needn't talk, Jim," returned Dori. "You never shot anything yet that wasn't sitting. If I couldn't get more than you I'd sell out."

"Oh, dry up, boys!" good humoredly said Dug, who exercised a restraining influence over his younger companions. "Take your guns and let's get out of this. Are you sure you haven't forgotten anything?"

They rose from the table and gathered up the guns and ammunition, which gave the room the appearance of an arsenal. Then they filed out of the house cautiously, in order not to awaken the other inmates.

The sky gave every indication of a beautiful day. The moon rode high in the heavens, and the myriad stars glittered coldly down at them. When the door of the stable was opened, Snap, Dug's pointer dog, rushed out and frantically jumped up and down in anticipation of a day of good sport. His joy was short lived, however, for, when the little Indian pony was hitched to the light spring wagon, Dug bade Snap retire to his corner, and closed the door upon him, saying:

"I'm sorry for you, old fellow; but you'd only be in the way."

As they drove off Snap began to howl dismally. The little pony felt his oats and bowed merrily up the road. It was well that he was in such good spirits, for he had ten miles to go. The destination of the four was the ice ponds—a famous place for water birds—and it was their intention to have a crack at the ducks.

Jim drove, with Dori at his side. Back of them sat the older and more experienced Dug and Billy. They were attired in corduroy breeches, and canvas jackets, and cartridge vests. All but Dori wore the regulation hunting cap. Instead, he had a green colored one of home manufacture, of which he was very proud, because he thought it was becoming to his fat visage.

In the buoyancy of their spirits they made merry with song. Occasionally a window would fly hurriedly up and a night capped head would be thrust out in bewilderment at the pandemonium they created. The voluble Dori and Jim entertained their quiet hearers on the back seat with accounts of what they would accomplish before the day was over.

"If a flock of duck comes over me," said Dori boastfully, "I'll bet I get four of 'em." And raising an imaginary weapon to his shoulder, he puckered up his lips and emitted a gurgle suggestive of the report of a gun. "Bang—two fall! Bang—there go three!"

"Oh, of course," said Billy sarcastically. "How well he does it! You make me tired, Dori. Wait until the day's over before you begin to blow."

"You'll see," muttered Dori with joyous reflection; "you'll—see."

The ice ponds, which numbered four, were from forty to sixty acres each in extent. They were artificial, and a goodly crop of ice was harvested from them each year. In the autumn they were flooded with water that was drawn off in the spring. They were a favorite resort of the feathered tribes in their migration north and south.

After putting up the pony at the barn of a friendly farmer, they prepared to make their blinds and to set out their decoys. Dug and Dori chose an upper pond, and Billy and Jim a lower. It was still dark and a mist hung over the ponds. Occasionally they heard a low whistler go over their heads; then, again, the whistle of a passing flock of ducks—sweet music to the sportsman's ear—caused their hearts to beat violently; a muffled and querulous quack—quack—quack came from every side.

Screened from sight, with guns in hand and ready to do execution, Dug and Dori waited anxiously for the coming day. Slowly the mists faded and a chill gray light dawned. Suddenly four sharp reports in quick succession rang out upon the still air.

"They got ahead of us this time," said Dori, nervously clutching his gun.

"Sh! Lie low!" warned Dug. "The flock they shot are coming to our decoys."

Swiftly and gracefully they came along. As they circled swiftly around, preparatory to alighting, Dug muttered:

"Now!"

"Wait till they settle," Dori whispered.

"All right!" returned Dug softly.

By this time the ducks had settled among the decoys. Raising their guns cautiously, the boys counted "one—two—three," and fired. The flock rose, leaving two victims struggling in the water. Arising from their knees, the boys discharged their second barrels into their midst, and one fell to Dug's aim. With a rueful face Dori looked at his breechloader, as if it were to blame for his miss.

"Just my luck!" he muttered.

They had hardly reloaded and settled themselves when Dug exclaimed:

"Mark north!"

Dori looked in the direction he was told and saw a flock of nine butterballs flying about one hundred yards to the left of them. Suddenly they spied the decoys and changed their course. When they were sufficiently near, the young hunters let fly at them. Two fell to Dug's first barrel, while Dori missed again. Each brought down one on the second.

The five remaining winged their flight to the lower pond, where Billy and Jim were waiting to give them a warm reception. Dug and Dori watched them in their course.

"They've lit among the decoys," excitedly whispered Dori.

Bang—bang—bang—bang! went the guns, and the five butterballs, unharmed, circled around the pond and again lit among the decoys.

"By jolly! they've missed again!" muttered the disgusted Dori.

"Look out!" cried Dug, and thus warned, Dori brought his gun to his shoulder in a twinkling. Each dis-

charged a double volley at a sprig tail that was speeding before the wind at the rate of sixty miles an hour, but without effect. A moment later and Billy and Jimmy emptied their barrels at the daring adventurer, but he had run the gauntlet successfully.

"Well," mused Dori sadly, "it's easy enough to say 'here comes a sprig tail,' but there's precious little time to shoot before it goes."

The ducks came in thick and fast for about four hours, and then the flight ceased. The boys had varying luck, bagging bluebill, redhead, butterball, teal, widgeon and pintail. Finally, with appetites sharpened by exercise, they all proceeded to a little knoll some distance off, where, under the shade of a chestnut tree, they made preparations to eat their lunch. Each had contributed his share of the edibles, so quite a variety of good things formed the repast. They were just beginning to fall to when Farmer Barr was observed walking quickly toward them. Somehow he had a happy faculty of always being near at lunch time.

"Saw your hoss in the barn," he said, with a familiar grin, "an' thought I'd just take a run over 'n see how you were makin' out. Keep on eatin', boys, keep on eatin', and don't mind me. What's the new fangled cake ye have over there? Jelly cake, eh? Well, it looks darned good, anyhow. Oh, much obliged, Dug? Don't mind if I do take a piece." And he ate the slice Dug handed him with avidity. Choking down the last morsel, he continued, with a critical glance at the trophies of the day: "You fellows seem to be doin' purty well considerin'; but duck huntin' nowadays ain't a circumstance to what it was years ago. 'Pon my word, the ponds used to be so full on 'em ye couln't see a speck o' water. I've known 'em to be piled on one another two or three feet deep an' the air black with 'em too! Used to take my old musket and load her up with 'bout twelve hunks o' lead an' fire into 'em with my eyes shut. You ought to ha' seen it rain ducks! I call to mind that I killed fifty four—no, it *wasn't*, it was only fifty two—at one lick. But it can't be done now—it can't be done now," eying the cake dreamily. And with the sincere opinion that "he took the cake," Dug handed him the remainder, and the old man hobbled off to his plowing.

"Fifty two ducks, with twelve pieces of lead, wasn't so bad, was it?" said Billy reflectively. "But the old man ought to be more consistent when he's spinning yarns."

Looking around they missed Dori. While Farmer Barr was dilating upon his wonderful exploit, he had spied a flock of yellow legs in the air, and, watching them alight in a low, marshy piece of ground some distance off, he had cautiously reached for his gun and sneaked away unnoticed. His absence remained a mystery to the three until a brother sportsman came along and began a friendly converse with them.

"Funny thing happened to me a few minutes ago," he said, laughing heartily. "I was looking around the farm when I saw a few yellow legs 'light on that swamp yonder, and I lost no time in going after them to knock a few over with my gun. There was a big, fat fellow who saw me, and he puffed and blowed to get the first crack at 'em. Perhaps you've seen him today. He wore a green cap, which he'd sweated so that the coloring had all come off and lay in streaks over his face. He looked so funny that I couldn't help snickering to save my soul. When he found I was laughing at him he ordered me off the grounds. 'This is my pa's farm,' says he, as peart and sassy as you please, 'and he don't allow no trespassing.'

'Oh, he don't?' says I to him. 'So this is your pa's farm, eh?' 'Yes,' says he to me cheekily, 'and you'd better get off before he sets the dog on you.' 'Oh, had I?' says I to him. 'Well, if your pa owns this farm, then I must be your pa. And one of the first things I've a mind to do is to give you a good, square licking!'

During this recital tears of merriment streamed down Dug's face, Billy's jaw ached from excessive jollity, and Jim rolled over the ground, all doubled up with merriment. With a grin the stranger went on:

"You ought to have his face *then*. It actually turned from green to red. Without another word he sneaked off, and I began to get in my work on the snipe."

Bidding them good by, he reached for his gun and sauntered leisurely off, while the three, too much exhausted to laugh more, looked at each other with wan smiles.

"Moral—don't fib!" said Dug sententially.

"Oh, won't we have the laugh on him?" cried Billy.

"He'll never hear the last of it," declared Jim.

They waited some time for Dori to return, and, as he did not put in an appearance, they gathered up their traps and returned to the farm where the pony was put up. They were not surprised to find Dori before the antique pump, busily engaged in washing the green from his face.

"Hello, Dori!" exclaimed Billy; "how's your pa's farm getting along?" "You won't set your dog on us, will you, if we trespass on it?" asked Jim piteously.

Dori scowled as he looked up.

"Oh, give us a rest!" he growled. "You think you're smart, don't you?"

But it was a long time before he heard the last of his escapade.

The pony was taken out and quickly harnessed, and away they rode homeward. You may be sure that they ate their supper that night with the keen relish that such manly sport imparts, and, when they finally retired, it was to achieve in Dreamland the triumphs of the hunt.

## CHAT ON ATHLETICS

## THE WALK.

BY JUDSON NEWMAN SMITH.

"HOW to walk," in the athletic way, is an inquiry that might be expected from one of those peculiar quirkers who seem to sit up nights to invent questions that may mean anything except any one thing. Lest readers suppose that I am going to attempt to make them letter perfect in the art of walking, I want to refer them to the general title of these articles: it is only a chat with, perhaps, some useful points.

THE ARGOSY, the colleges, XIXth century teachers of the young—in short, all wise people—are in favor of athletic exercises for boys and girls, within salutary limits. They are thus in favor because such exercises promote grace and strength, make growing children into strong, well formed, men and women, with brighter minds and with constitutions better able to bear the assaults of illness when they must come.

Walking is the least graceful of the standard track athletic sports; it is also, perhaps, the most wearing and tearing. But as a method of athletic exercise for the preservation of general health and the development of moderate strength walking on the road is one of the very best possible practices.

Road walking should be done regularly, above all; this applies not alone

to walking, but to every form of exercise. Even a mile a day at a fair pace will save some years perhaps in one's life; the mile should be done in 14 minutes or less, according to the walker's stature, and at such a pace almost all of the muscles of the body are brought more or less into play and in time acquire hardness, relatively as walking uses them. Mainly, the lungs are toughened, the circulation stimulated and the blood further purified by the life giving oxygen in the open air.

Walking thus, with the shoulders well back, the chest expanded, the head held high, the body swinging free and the ball of the foot forcing the walker ahead at every step with an elastic stride—walking thus for one hour every day will make any one extremely unpopular with the doctors.

This style of walking in its perfection is free and graceful and distributes strains over most of the muscles in proper proportions; track walking (racing) is the reverse—it is stiff, unnatural, unpleasant to the eye, jarring to the body and wrenching to a large number of muscles. For these reasons, contrary to the true purposes of athletic sports, walking has fallen from popularity largely and appears much less frequently on the programme of athletic sports.

In my opinion, E. P. Weston (almost forgotten today) was almost the father of track walking, in this country at least. His long walks against time and competitors created much interest here and were the progenitors of those six day "go as you please" matches which at one time set the country wild. Then walking became exceedingly popular and the athletic clubdom began to take shape; walking races were only second to the run in frequency on the programme, and every other schoolboy was continually spraining his triangular shoulder muscles in frantic efforts to emulate the queer motions and the speed of the walker.

In the "walk" the toe of the rear foot must remain on the ground until the heel of the forward foot is planted, hence the term "heel and toe." If this rule be infringed the walker is disqualified for "running." This requirement, coupled with the endeavor to attain speed, in the best and freest walking results in that peculiar motion at the junction of the spine with the pelvis, known as the "hip motion," which can only be appreciated when seen, and in some walkers is ludicrously developed; the queer "upper cut" motion of the arms necessary to aid in swinging the body forward over the center of gravity is also a grotesque and unnatural feature of speed walking. If added to these the walker mistakenly endeavors to propel himself with legs unbent at the knee joints, he will succeed in making himself as amusing a spectacle as is possible in athletic sports and will be paying for the glory of a prospective medal with large drafts on future strength and health. The proper motion or "style" to adopt is the one best suited to the individual. There are no rules for this branch of the sport.

Just as in long distance running and sprinting, fast walking is a special physical aptitude. The shortest standard distance is one mile. The athlete who begins to cultivate his talent for this sport should proceed in the same manner suggested in a previous article for distance running: he should strengthen himself in an all round manner; he should secure by practice as much freedom of motion as possible, first for shorter distances at a moderate speed, gradually attaining the desired distance and still at moderate speed for wind and primary enduring power, and lastly practicing his distance at a gradually increasing pace.

Granted that he becomes a fairly speedy walker, he may expect to last two or three years, and then will find that he breaks down or slows up to be passed by later aspirants. If his constitution is very robust, he will last longer; if weak, not so long.

Besides the mile, the standard walking distances are three and seven miles. The world's amateur records are:

1 m., F. P. Murray (Am.), 6 m. 29.3 s.  
3 " " do 21 " 91.5 s.  
7 " H. H. Curtis (Eng.) 52 " 28.2 s.

Walking has always been more generally popular and the records higher in England than in America; in fact in that country it is almost nationalized, and, if it holds its own there, while its vogue decreases here, it may in time become more so, as the continental countries have never practiced it to any marked extent.

From a publication some five years old I take these unique heel and toe records, which, as far as I know, have not been surpassed:

The greatest distance covered in 24 hours is 127 miles and 120 yards, by William Howes in London, England, in 1878;

The greatest distance walked without a stop, 121 miles, 385 yards, by C. A. Harriman, at Truckee, California, in 1833;

The six day record is 531 miles, by George Littlewood at Sheffield, England, in 1882.

An anecdote of earlier amateur walking days will not be out of place to finish a "chat" on walking:

In 1879 W. H. Purdy was the amateur champion mile walker of America, in the time of 6 minutes 48 3/4 seconds. He was popular in New York, the arena of his achievements, for other reasons than his ability; he was handsome, graceful and a good fellow. He had one peculiarity that made his performances the most intensely exciting events I have ever witnessed in the department of walking; apparently he had no heart. To explain, in handicap events, he was, of course, always the scratch competitor. He usually stepped out at the word "go," and easily passed all competitors, except oftentimes some dark horse with a good handicap, who would keep very well ahead of the scratch man. Suddenly Purdy would become discouraged and stop; his friends would go wild and make the air ring with their cries of "Go on, Purdy!" "Brace up, man!" "Don't quit—you've got him beat," and so forth. Purdy would reconsider the matter, and, starting briskly on again, would recover all he had lost by his momentary halt, and more too. But still there was a great gap, and perhaps he would stop again, only to yield to the acclamation of his friends and continue. He would finish by beating his man.

If Purdy could thus beat all comers even after stoppages, we boys naturally began to think that he could beat the world. We began after a while to hear rumors of a walker in Boston by the name of E. E. Merrill, who was said to have made great time and to be the coming champion. We smiled and assured each other that he could not beat our Purdy, and when he came to New York to compete in the championship games in 1880, we felt greatly elated, and went down in great crowds to see our Purdy walk away with the Bostonian upset.

The new comer's appearance was not prepossessing; that fact did not tend to decrease our contempt for him. The race started. It was the most intensely exciting walking contest I ever saw or ever will see.

The New Yorker forged ahead; then the Bostonian passed him and gained a

lead of about twenty five yards; the other, by wonderful spurts, caught him only to fall behind again. This happened several times. Then, horror of horrors! Purdy stopped. The howl that went up could be heard out in New York Bay. He went on! And how he did walk! Why he all but caught his man and then fell back again. Three times did he stop, twice getting close behind the leader after going on, but the third time he stopped for good. Merrill won the championship hands down in 7.04, which was 15 1/4 seconds slower than Purdy's champion record of the year previous.

We firmly believe that even when our man had stopped the second time and almost caught the other afterwards, that he still had the race if he had only not lacked heart.

I well remember how, on the way home, Purdy stood almost alone in the bow of the boat, the picture of discouragement, while we reviled him in whispers. Our idol was shattered!

#### NEW BLOOD WAS SECURED.

NOT always are the blatant, swaggering people the most solid, and many a man conceals millions under a plain and well worn waistcoat. Read, for instance the *Atlantic Constitution's* anecdote:

Among the early railroads built in the United States was a little line about twenty miles in length. For many years it was run in a cheap and one locomotive, one engineer, and two or three freight cars. Finally a new general manager was appointed. He had not been in office but a week when he sent for the one lone conductor, who had held the position ever since the road was built.

"I would like to have your resignation," said the general manager, when the conductor appeared.

"My resignation?" exclaimed the conductor, in astonishment.

"Yes, sir; yours."

"What for, pray?"

"Well, I want to make some changes and get new blood in the line," was the general manager's reply.

"I won't resign," answered the conductor. "Then I will be compelled to discharge you, a step which, for your sake, I had hoped I would be saved from taking."

"A young man, you will not discharge me. I own a controlling interest in the stock of this railroad, and elect the president and board of directors. I shall have you fired."

The old conductor did really own the majority of the stock, and, as he said, put in his own board of directors and president.

#### NATURE'S COLORING.

PERHAPS some of our keen young observers have already noticed the natural law which, the *St. Louis Republic* says, governs the coloring of flowers.

A florist makes the assertion that a blue rose is among the impossibilities, but, while an explanation of this curious fact may be equally impossible, he fails to mention a very interesting law which governs the coloring of all flowers. A knowledge of this law would save many flower growers hours of unavailing and foolish hope. The law is simply this: The three colors, red, blue and yellow, never all appear in the same species of flowers in their natural state; any two may exist, but never the third. Thus we have the red and yellow roses, but no blue; red and blue verbenas, but no yellow; yellow and blue in the various members of the viola family (as pansies, for instance), but no red; red and yellow gladioli, but no blue, and so on.

#### THE SCIENCE OF WAR.

THE extract which follows has been going the rounds of the press of late. Besides being of some interest, it is particularly pertinent as another indication of the lengths to which the war departments of the world are going to reduce killing to the point of an exact science—in other words, to a dead certainty.

Experiments are in progress in England with what a military paper calls "a curious cavalry contrivance," which consists of a repeating rifle or carbine, attached to the horse and fired from the saddle by his rider. The principle of the invention is very simple. A thin metallic girth holds the rifle in such a way that the muzzle projects between and just in advance of the horse's forelegs. It can be fired by the trooper's left or bridle hand, thus giving him his sword hand perfectly free. One would naturally think that the horses would shy to such an extent as to render the contrivance impracticable. Such has not been the case, however—the horses not being at all disturbed, after a brief experience, by

the detonation. A special bearing-rein is used to prevent the animal from lowering his head within the range of the rifle.

At present a Colt repeating rifle is used and the whole contrivance is somewhat rude in its details. Captain W. F. Peel, its inventor, hopes to develop it to the point of utilizing a Maxim self ejecting rifle that can be elevated or depressed from the saddle. If the invention comes up to the expectation of the inventor, a regiment of cavalry can clear its front before charging, or while advancing at speed keep down the fire of the force opposed to it. Horses will spit fire as they advance, realizing the picture of the war horse in Job, for the neck of the animal will be clothed with thunder.

#### PERFECT PICTURES REPRODUCED.

A READER OF THE ARGOSY sends us the following communication. Amusing devices of this kind are gladly received and published for the benefit of our readers:

To reproduce a printed picture from papers or books place the picture face downward on the paper which is to bear the reproduction. Then, using a lead pencil (soft preferred), rub on the back of the picture a good coating of lead. A transfer will be found on the paper.

ALFRED H. WETHERLY.

It may seem to the experimenter as if the lead went through the paper to make the second picture. It is not so; the duplicate is a transfer of the printing ink. A pencil is used for the rubbing because it is so even and velvety and so little likely to tear the picture.

#### PRIMITIVE AND PATIENT.

THE United States consuls in foreign countries are often called upon by their government to furnish reports on the manufactures of the country in which they are stationed, or on the political or judiciary systems, etc., etc. The *Detroit Free Press* takes the appended description of the Chinese primitiveness and patience from one of these consular reports, treating of the manufacture of salt in the Celestial empire.

Holes about six inches in diameter are bored in the rock by means of a primitive form of iron drill, and sometimes a period of forty years elapses before the coveted brine is reached, so that the work is carried on from one generation to another. During this time the boring, as may be imagined, scores down to an immense depth. When brine is found it is drawn up in bamboo tubes by a rope working over a large drum turned by bullocks. The brine is evaporated in iron cauldrons, the heat being supplied by natural gas, which is generally found in the vicinity of the salt wells.

#### TWO CELEBRATED LADIES OF FICTION.

IN Sheridan's famous old comedy of "The Rivals" one of the chief characters is Mrs. Malaprop, whose humor consists in the unctuous way in which she permits the most frightful bulls to trip off her tongue. The comedy is popular still, and will survive as long as the stage remains. Our late American humorist, B. P. Shillaber, has made immortal the name of Mrs. Partington in a fictitious character of similar tendencies. Pleasantries like the following, from the *Leviston (Me.) Journal*, are in imitation of these celebrated personages.

A certain Maine woman who had plenty of dollars, but a very hazy idea of English, returned from a visit to New York last week. Said she to a friend:

"Oh, I had such a perfectly lovely time, everything was so *convenient*, you know. We stopped in a house where we rode up to our room in a *refrigerator*, and I always had my washing done at the *foundry*, right there in the house. It was awful nice. Then there wasn't no stove and no clutter in the rooms. There was one of these *legislators* right in the floor and the heat poured right up through."

"How did it happen that you came back so quickly?"

"Oh, well, you see, Sairy didn't have no appetite. I had the hardest work to get her anything that she could *realize*. Honestly, when I got her home she was almost an *individual*."

Perhaps it was this woman's husband who said that "Hen Peters got killed this morning, and the *Cone* has just gone out to hold an *insect* on him."

#### BEAUTY MARRIED.

TOM—"You say you don't think Miss Bright pretty?"

JACK—"That was my impression when I first spoke to her."

TOM—"When was that?"

JACK—"The other evening when I begged her pardon for stepping on her train and tearing off two yards of it."—*Yankee Blade*.

#### PARTINGTONIAN.

MISS ROCKS (an heiress).—"Do you really and truly love me, count?"

COUNT POPPENHEIMER—"Love you, schveet creature? I analyze you!"—*The Humorist*.



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#### ELEPHANT LABOR.

THERE are ostrich farms and rattlesnake farms; there are black cat ranches and chicken ranches and once upon a time there was a camel ranch, we believe, in the West. The field of cultivation within the animal kingdom is to be further extended, we are told by the papers.

A gentleman proposes to start an elephant ranch in California. He is reported as saying that the elephant as an article of food is superior to horse. He may be right; we are not prepared to dispute that point. But the tender and juicy elephant steaks he speaks of must at least have a very deep hiding place, so to speak.

But the gentleman's main use for the bulky elephant is to train it for hard work; he hopes to teach him to pick oranges and to be able to hire his animals out to growers to perform this and various other tasks.

The elephant is at once the most powerful and most intelligent of animals and, if not unusually bad tempered, it is one of the most tractable. It is used in the East to perform a variety of work and does it with great patience and a degree of intelligence almost human. The Western gentleman, therefore, has good precedents for his endeavor to obtain cheap labor from the elephant.

*The Argosy at Three Dollars for two years is less than three cents a week. See standing notice at the head of this column.*

#### USEFUL AND ORNAMENTAL.

LIKE the fragments of wreck cast up after the storm has subsided, so the Christmas anecdotes have been coming in.

We have heard of some good lady living in a city flat who gave her husband as his Christmas present a pair of porcelain ornaments for the mantel.

Another went further and gave her expectant head of the family a fine damask table cloth.

But the most suggestive and pointed gift we have yet heard of is that of the mistress to her maid servant—an alarm clock.

#### THE EYES OF THE WORLD ARE UPON US.

WHEN England had lost in fair fight one of her largest colonies, it is not to be wondered at if she was averse to acknowledging that any good could come out of those lands, forcibly rebelling and alienating themselves from her direction and advice.

For a long time England thus refused to see that America was a country fermenting with activity and enterprise, the standard bearer of modern progress amongst the nations of the world.

This is the state of affairs that makes possible the following pleasantries from one of our comic papers:

"What are you reading?"

"Bryce's 'American Commonwealth.'"

"Who is he?"

"James Bryce! Why, don't you know, he is the first Englishman who discovered America."

The book and the joke were brought to mind by

some questions from readers on points involved in the process of the electing of Presidents; and we are reminded to recommend to one and all the purchase and perusal of this remarkable work by a professor of Oxford University. It is a political history and analysis of America of the most thorough, broad and lucid kind, completely explanatory of the workings of National and State machinery—a compendium of knowledge that every American should possess.

The learned author, you observe, discovers that America is well worth the attention of the world.

The price of Munsey's Magazine is \$3 a year. But to any reader of The Argosy who will send us \$2 for a year's subscription and \$2 additional—\$4 in all—we will send both Argosy and Magazine for one year.

#### MUNSEY'S FOR FEBRUARY.

THE current issue of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE contains matter to suit all tastes. Those fond of travel will enjoy the article on Berlin, by William Horace Hotchkiss, with its wealth of illustrations, showing the picturesque portions of the Kaiserstadt on the Spree. Then lovers of the weird and curious will read with keen interest Mr. Reed's story entitled "The Last Man of a Nation," to which the pictures lend additional charm.

One of the most important papers in the February issue is that on the Episcopal churches and clergymen of New York. There are views of the most prominent churches of this faith in the metropolis, together with portraits and brief biographical sketches of their rectors. This contribution is not only of special interest to all Episcopalians and New Yorkers, but possesses not a little value as a reference guide to those contemplating a visit to the country's biggest town. In continuation of the series on "Famous Artists and Their Work," we have an article on Sir John Millais, while another biographical paper is furnished by Mr. Munsey in his sketch of Stephen B. Elkins, the new Secretary of War.

In fiction, besides a plentiful supply of short stories, there is the complete novel—a regular feature of MUNSEY'S—which this month is by Matthew White, Jr., and bears the title "The Affair of Morris Davidson." It is a singular story of a psychological nature, in which a popular novelist figures as one of the leading characters.

MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE is published on the first of each month, and costs 25 cents a copy, or three dollars a year. Ask your newsdealer for the February number.

#### WARRING ON THEIR KIND.

QUITE in the tenor of that old saying, "Set a thief to catch a thief," is the ultimate modern practice in regard to agricultural insect pests. When other means of exterminating a devastating bug seem to fail, the naturalist begins to search for something else that is the bug's natural enemy.

It is thus in regard to the gypsy moth which in recent seasons has committed in its caterpillar state such widespread depredations down East. Investigation has shown the existence of several kinds of flies or ticks that lay their eggs on the body of the gypsy moth—some without injury to the moth, others killing it by stinging at the moment of depositing their eggs. Then others have been discovered who engage in preying on the moth's eggs and some ants, too, there are that carry off these eggs to their storehouses for future food.

Whichever parasite is found to commit the most widespread damage amongst the gypsy moths, that one will be cultivated to wage a war of extermination.

On the same theory the English sparrow was introduced to these shores to kill off a pestiferous worm. The mongoose was imported in Australia to decimate the hares which had multiplied to an enormous extent; and many other like experiments have been made with varying degrees of success. The latest development of the idea is the cultivation of insect parasites as described above.

#### AMOS J. CUMMINGS,

CONGRESSMAN FROM NEW YORK.

THE life of Congressman Amos J. Cummings is like a biographical tradition of olden times, and demonstrates that the passing away of those times did not put an end to the possibilities of poor boys getting to the top.

Amos J. Cummings was born at Konkling, Broome County, New York, in 1842. His father and grandfather were clergymen, his father being also the publisher of a denominational newspaper. The printing office had a strong attraction for young Amos, and



AMOS J. CUMMINGS.

he taught himself to set type when he was so small that he had to stand upon a big candle box to reach the case.

When he was not yet thirteen years old young Cummings left the school which he had been attending at Newark, New Jersey, and began his hard working and wandering career as compositor and journalist, visiting in his travels every State in the Union.

In 1857 he went to Nicaragua with Walker's filibustering expedition, and was among those captured by Commodore Davis, on the Quaker City. Then he returned to New York, and was fortunate enough to secure a place as substitute compositor in the *Tribune* office.

When the war broke out he left his case to go to the front as a volunteer, with the Twenty Sixth New Jersey regiment, and he returned with the rank of sergeant major, to again work at the case. He heard of an opening in the editorial room of the *Tribune*, and went to see the manager. The scantiness of his wardrobe had compelled him to wear his soldier's uniform, with an old blue army overcoat and cavalry boots. The military buttons had been taken off his jacket and cloth buttons substituted, which made his appearance a little peculiar, to say the least of it.

However, he was appointed for a week on trial, to edit the weekly edition of the *Tribune*. His work chiefly consisted in boiling down the week's news from the daily *Tribune*, and it was done well enough to gain special praise from Horace Greeley.

For two years Mr. Cummings managed the *Weekly Tribune*. He was afterwards city editor of the *Daily Tribune*, but left that paper for a higher and more remunerative position on the *Sun*, where he has from that time taken a prominent place on the editorial staff. He is well qualified by experience and observation, and is a ready and forcible speaker and writer. He is a fine looking man, with a resolute face, and easy and dignified manners.

Mr. Cummings was elected to Congress in 1886, and was re-elected to fill the place of the late S. S. Cox, and again as a member of the fifty second Congress.

He is overwhelmingly popular with the laboring classes—especially, of course, the typographers. He has always been very friendly to organized labor, and some of his early difficulties arose from his adherence to that cause through good and evil reports.

Mr. Cummings has, we hope, many years of activity and usefulness before him. Whether he elects the journalistic or the political field, his honorable record for the past shows that he may rise still higher in the future.



BE NOBLE.

Be noble! and the nobleness that lies  
In other men sleeping, but never dead,  
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own.  
—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

(This Story began in No. 47.)

LUKE FOSTER'S GRIT:  
OR,  
THE LAST CRUISE OF THE  
SPITFIRE.

BY EDWARD STRATEMEYER,  
Author of "Richard Darr's Venture," "True  
to Himself," etc.

CHAPTER VII.

ON BOARD THE SPITFIRE.

AS I have said, I was tumbled into the black hold, and the hatch was closed over me. Luckily I fell upon a pile of loose sailing, so my fall was broken and did me no harm.

But I was so completely bewildered by what had taken place that for a moment I did not know what had happened. Then I gradually became wide awake, and realized that I had been entrapped on board the vessel, which was probably short of sailors.

I had read of men who were thus pressed into the service, but never dreamed that such a thing could occur so close to the great metropolis, and in broad daylight.

Who my captors were or where they were taking me was a mystery. For an instant I thought the affair might be my uncle's work, but soon dismissed that idea as being too dime-novelish altogether.

With some difficulty I rose to my feet, but the motion of the vessel, as the sailors got her under way, was too strong for me, and I was forced to lie down.

The place was intensely dark, and even after my eyes became accustomed to the blackness, I could see little or nothing. On all sides not a light was to be seen, and overhead only a single streak of brightness around the hatch was visible. I was indeed a prisoner, and must make the best of it.

I crawled about the hold for quite a while, looking everywhere for a place to escape, but none came to view. Meanwhile I heard the creaking of the blocks as the sails were being hoisted, and the tramp of the sailors as they hurried around obeying orders. I could hear the murmur of voices, but try my best, could not make out a word of what was being said.

Presently, by the motion beneath me, I knew we were fully under way. The cargo below me groaned as it shifted an inch or two this way and that, and for an instant I was alarmed lest a case of goods should by some chance break loose and crush me. But nothing of the kind happened, and after a while all became comparatively quiet.

I knew not what time of the day it was, but judged it must have been about the middle of the afternoon. How much longer would my captivity last?

If I could have found something with which to do so, I would have climbed up to the hatch, or shoved it open. But nothing was at hand, and the opening was fully five feet above my head.

The air in the hold was stifling, and soon I breathed with difficulty. I longed

for a drink of water, and wondered how long I could stand being in the place should those on deck forget I was there.

But those on deck had not forgotten me, as I soon saw. Presently the hatch was raised, letting in a flood of sunshine, and then a man's head was bent low. "Below there!" he called out. "Let me out," I replied. "Will you be easy if we do?" he went on.

"That all depends. Why was I brought on board?" "Because you belong here." "Belong here!" I ejaculated. "I don't belong to this vessel." "Well, that's what I was told; I don't know anything about it myself. Here, catch the rope and I'll haul you up."

As the sailor spoke he lowered a piece of heavy rope. Thinking anything would be better than remaining in the hold, I complied with his request, and a moment later stood upon the deck of the vessel.

As I came up, a man, whom I took to

This question astonished me in more ways than one. First, because I had not signed papers with any one, and second, because Lowell was the name of one of the men I had overheard talking in the lumber shed in the morning. Was it possible I had been kidnaped upon the same ship the two had been discussing? "I don't know what you mean," I replied. "I don't know Lowell, and never signed any papers."

"Nonsense. Lowell!" "Aye, aye, sir!" And the same man I had seen upon the dock in Brooklyn came forward. "Isn't this Luke Foster that signed with you yesterday?" "Aye, captain."

I was more astonished than ever. How had they come to know my name? "So you see there is no mistake," went on the captain, turning to me. "Now I want you to go forward with Lowell. He'll show you the ropes. Come, step lively. We allow no skulking on board the Spitfire. You've signed

I walked forward, but my mind was in a whirl. Never before had I been so completely taken in. Surely this was escaping from the law with a vengeance!

"Who owns this boat?" I asked, as we reached the forecastle. "Captain Hannock. She's just as good a two masted schooner as sails, is the Spitfire; so you have no reason to complain."

"Where are we bound?" "On an eight months' cruise, up the Down East coast, and then to England." "An eight months' cruise! What a time to stay on shipboard! But perhaps I might escape before the end of the period."

"What's the first landing?" "New Bedford." "That was not so bad. If I could leave the vessel at that place I could easily find my way up to Boston, and a sojourn in that city would just suit me. All trace of my going there would be lost, and it was not likely that my uncle would look for me so far from New York."

"Here's your bunk, and here's some old clothes to put on," went on Lowell, as he pointed the things out. "You had better save your good clothes for shore. Knocking around the ship will wear them out in no time."

"What am I to do on board?" I asked, as I surveyed the greasy shirt and trowsers with some dismay. "Learn to do your duty as a foremast hand. If you obey orders and don't kick up any muss you'll have a first class time of it," was his reply.

I was somewhat doubtful of the truth of this statement, but as nothing was to be gained by refuting it, I bit my lips and said nothing.

"You can take your time about changing your clothes," went on Lowell. "There ain't much to do at present. When it storms is the time all hands work lively, for their own sake as much as for the sake of any one else. When you're in working rig come to the bow, and I'll give you a pointer or two about how to tackle things."

With these words the boatswain—for such Lowell was—left me to myself.

CHAPTER VIII.

PHIL JONES.

I FOUND the forecastle of the Spitfire a dark and rather unwholesome place. The ventilation was bad, and the smell of tar and oakum was so strong that for a moment I had to turn away to catch my breath.

Luckily my bunk was close to the doorway, so I had the best light the place afforded. Close to me was a chest, and upon this I sat down to think.

It would be hard to express my feelings at this moment. Had I gone on board the Spitfire of my own will I would not have considered the matter as bad. True, I had no great fancy for a life on the ocean wave, such as most boys are supposed to cherish. I knew that at best it was little better than a dog's existence.

"Hello, there!" I looked up. A boy several years younger than myself stood near me. He was thin and pale, and his eyes had a frightened look.



"I DIDN'T SIGN ANY ARTICLES," I BURST OUT, IN DEEP ANGER AT THE WAY I WAS BEING TREATED.

be the captain, came towards me. He was a tall, lank individual, with a red beard and hair. The look on his face was a sour one, and it was easy to see that he was not of a kindly nature.

"Hello, my hearty!" he exclaimed. "So you're up at last. Had quite a nap, didn't you?" "Why was I brought on this ship?" I demanded.

"Why was you brought on board? Well, now, that's a mighty good one, smash the toplight if it isn't." "You have no right to bring me on board," I went on. "And I want you to put me ashore at once."

The captain gave a scowl. "See here, youngster, I don't allow any one on board to speak to me in that fashion. You've got to keep a civil tongue in your head."

"Why was I brought on board?" "Because you belong here." "I don't belong here." "Oh, yes, you do." "I'd like to know why. I never saw or heard of this vessel before."

"Come now, that's a good one. Didn't you sign papers with Lowell yesterday morning?"

articles, and you've got to abide by the deed."

"I didn't sign any articles, and if he says so he lies!" I burst out, in deep anger at the way I was being treated. "It is true my name is Luke Foster, but how you came by it I don't know."

"Well, you're on the book, and that's all there is to it. Perhaps you were drunk when you signed, but I have nothing to do with that."

"I don't drink," I replied, and such was and is a fact. "This is all a put up job."

"Hold your tongue!" cried the captain. "Hold your tongue, or I'll crack your head open with a marlinspike! I don't allow any one to talk back to me. Lowell, take him forward."

"Come along," said the sailor. "If the old man gets his dander up it will be all day with you," he added in a whisper.

For a moment I stood irresolute. I had a momentary idea of jumping overboard and swimming for liberty. But land could be seen fully a good half mile away, and no vessels of consequence were near, so I was forced to give such a course up.

"Who are you?" I asked.  
 "I'm Polly Jones," he replied.  
 "Polly Jones," I repeated. "That's a girl's name."

"Taint my right name. They used to call me Phil at home, but the sailors all call me Polly here, because they say I act like a girl."

"What do you do on board?" I asked with some curiosity.

"I'm the cabin boy and the cook's help. What are you?"

"I don't know what I am yet. I didn't come on board of my own free will."

"You didn't?" Phil Jones's eyes opened to their widest. "You don't look like a sailor."

"Come down here," said I. "I want to have a talk with you."

The cabin boy gave a sharp look about the deck and then hurried into the forecabin.

"I don't want Captain Hannock to see me down here," he explained. "If he did he'd thrash the life out of me."

"Is the captain such a hard man?"

"Is he? Just you wait until something goes wrong and you'll find out quick enough. See here," the cabin boy bared his arm and exhibited several bruises that made me shudder, "he gave me those day before yesterday, just because I wasn't spry enough to suit him."

"He must be a brute!" I exclaimed. "He shall not treat me like that, I can tell you."

"I'd like to see some one stand up against him," said Phil. "None of the men dare to do it."

"What makes you stay on board?"

"I have to. Captain Hannock has charge of me until I'm twenty one."

"He is your guardian?"

"Yes."

"He ought to treat you better. Did you ever try to run away?"

"Once, while we were at Baltimore. But Lowell caught me, and the captain nearly killed me when I got back. I could have got away, only I had no money."

"Doesn't the captain allow you anything for your services?" I asked, at the same time wondering if I would be paid for what I was called upon to do.

"Not a cent. To tell the truth he even takes away what the passengers—if we have any—give me."

"He must be mighty mean," said I.

"If you've any money you had better hide it," went on the cabin boy. "Taint safe here."

"Thank you, Phil, I'll take your advice. I've got four dollars and a half, and I don't want to lose it."

As I spoke I felt in my pocket to make sure that the amount was still safe.

To my chagrin the money was gone! I must confess that I felt quite angry when I discovered that my hard earned savings had been taken from me. To be sure, four dollars and a half was not a large sum, but it had been my entire capital, and I had calculated upon doing a great deal with it.

"What's the matter?" asked Phil Jones, as he stood by, watching me turn my pockets inside out to make sure that there was no mistake.

"My money is gone!" I exclaimed. "I have been robbed."

"Where did you have it?"

"Right here, in my vest pocket."

"You're foolish to carry it loose. Any one could take it from you," said the cabin boy, with a knowing shake of his head.

"I didn't take every one for a thief. Who do you suppose took the money?"

"The captain or Lowell. He's only boatswain, but the two work hand in hand."

I had already surmised this from the conversation I had overheard. The two were well mated, and no doubt the

sailor was the captain's ready tool on all occasions.

"What are you going to do about it?" asked Phil curiously.

"Get it back if I can," I replied with determination. "I'm not going to be fleeced in this manner."

"You'd better let it go," said the cabin boy, with a grave shake of his head. "You'll only get yourself into trouble, and it won't do a bit of good."

Phil Jones's advice was good, and I would have saved myself considerable trouble by following it.

But I was angry, and, as a consequence, did not stop to count the cost.

I searched my other pockets, and soon learned that everything I had had about my person was gone, including the letter from England. No doubt it was through this letter that Captain Hannock had found out my name.

## CHAPTER IX.

### UP LONG ISLAND SOUND.

THE loss of the letter worried me even more than the loss of the money. In the exciting events that had transpired since I had received it I had forgotten the writer's name and his address. I remembered the name was something like Noddington, and that the address was a number in Old Fellows Road, but that was all.

This was deeply to be regretted, for I had expected to put myself into immediate communication with my father's friend, having any reply addressed to the post office of the place I might be then stopping at.

But now this scheme could not be carried out. To send a letter haphazard would probably do no good.

I was so worked up over my discovery that I left the forecabin without taking the trouble to don the clothing Lowell had pointed out to me. I looked around the deck, and seeing the boatswain at the bow, hastened towards him.

His brow contracted when he saw me. "Why didn't you put on the suit I gave you?" he demanded.

"Because I first wanted to speak to you," I returned. "What have you done with my money?"

"Your money? I haven't seen any money," he returned coolly.

By his manner I could easily tell that his statement was untrue.

"I had four dollars and a half and some letters in my pockets," I went on. "I want them back."

"Why you good for nothing landlubber!" he roared. "Do you mean tawsay I'm a thief?"

"Well, where's my money?"

"How do I know? Come, do as I ordered you to."

And he shook his fist at me savagely. "I want my stuff and I'm going to have it," I went on, as stoutly as I could.

"You're going to obey orders, that's what you're going to do," he cried. "I take no back talk from any one."

"If you don't give up that money I'll have you arrested as a thief the first time I get the chance," was my reply; and I meant just what I said.

"You will, will you?" he roared. "Just wait till I get a rope's end and we'll see who is boss here."

I was somewhat startled at his words, but I stood my ground. Lowell ran to the starboard side of the schooner, and presently returned with a stout rope some three feet long.

"Now are you going to do as I told you?" he asked, as he advanced towards me.

"Don't you dare to touch me!" I cried. "If you do you will have to take the consequences!"

"Don't talk to me!" he cried. "Just wait till I tan your back for you!"

He swung the rope's end over his head, and brought it down with all force. I sprang aside, and received the blow squarely on my shoulder. Had I not done so the rope would have cut my neck deeply.

"You big coward!" I cried; and the next instant I gave him one strong blow from the shoulder that sent him staggering against the rail.

I do not know to this day how I came to deliver that blow as I did. Perhaps it was that my temper was at its highest, and I put all my force into it. I was surprised at my own power.

But if I was surprised Lowell was more so. The rope's end fell from his hand, and his face took on a sickly green color. A number of the sailors who had seen my action gathered around in amazement, and one of them winked his eye in a most knowing manner.

"I'll have your life for that!" yelled Lowell, as soon as he could recover.

"Don't you come near me," I replied. "I'll flay you alive!"

"No, you won't. I'm not used to such treatment, and I won't stand it."

I stood my ground, and for a moment the boatswain did not appear to know what to do next.

"Catch him from behind, Crocker," he said finally, addressing the sailor I had seen with him in the lumber shed. "I'll give him a lesson he won't forget as long as he remains on board the Spitfire, or else my name ain't Lowell."

Crocker advanced upon me to do as he had been ordered. Evidently he did not relish the job, for he came on slowly.

Not to be caught in this manner I sprang aside, and retreated rapidly towards the stern of the schooner. I did not know anything about the vessel, and finally found myself near the cabin, and face to face with Captain Hannock.

"Here, what's the row about?" he demanded.

"I want Lowell to give up the money and letters he took from me," I replied; and a moment later the boatswain came up.

"He won't mind orders, captain," he exclaimed.

"You've got to mind orders while you're on board, Foster."

"Well, perhaps I will if I'm treated fairly," I replied.

"You'll be treated fair enough, never fear. If Lowell has anything of yours I'll get it and keep it for you until you need it. Now go forward, and do as you are told."

For a moment I hesitated. This was not a very satisfactory settlement; but evidently it was the best I could get, and so I retired.

"Bully for you!" whispered Phil Jones, as he passed. "My, how you did pitch into him!"

I went back to the forecabin, and after some consideration put on the clothing Lowell had given me. It fitted fairly well, and after I had given the trousers several hitches I felt somewhat at home in them, and then went on deck.

(To be continued.)

## AFRAID TO CONFESS HIS FEARS.

THE bright or amusing sayings of little children are put into a separate department by the *Philadelphia Times*, and here is one of them that shows a very ingenious mind in a very young head.

Fred was sent by his mother on an errand. In a few minutes he returned, his face pallid with fear.

"Why, Fred," said mamma, "what made you come back so soon?"

With a forced smile Fred answered. "There's a dog on the sidewalk. The beautifullest, great big black dog you ever saw. I thought I would come back and tell you to let nurse go with me and take sister Nellie, so she could see the dog, too."

## THE BRIGHTER SIDE.

WHAT will you and I be doing  
 When the dew decked grass of May  
 Jewels earth with fairy touches,  
 And the flowers 'long our way  
 Bloom and perfume all about us,  
 As they only do in May?

Think not that the future holds  
 Only heartaches for us here,  
 And that pleasure can't be found  
 All about us everywhere—  
 Peace and joy for honest effort,  
 'Steard the bitter burning tear.

Then, oh! brother, take new courage,  
 Look not on the darker side;  
 You may find a silver lining  
 To the clouds which now betide,  
 And your path, by murm'ring waters, 's  
 Leading toward the other side.

—The Inter-Ocean.

[This Story began in No. 415.]

## BATTLING WITH FORTUNE.

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.,  
 Author of "Norman Brooke," "On Steeds of Steel," etc.

## CHAPTER XIII.

AT SHELDON, BRIGGS & CO.'S.

WHEN Russ was informed that he must go to Philadelphia in search of Hubert Cantrell, it was on the tip of his tongue to say that he did not see how he could possibly do any more than could be done by wire. But he reflected that it was not his place to argue the matter. So he simply replied:

"Very well, Mrs. Kirkpatrick, I will do my best."

The footman appeared at this moment to announce luncheon, and during the meal the old lady talked almost solely of Hubert. From her words it might have been thought that he was a great favorite of hers, and had always been such. He was, it seemed, the only child of her youngest sister, who had married a man ten years younger than herself without a penny to his name. Her fortune had sufficed to support them while she lived; but at her death Mr. Cantrell had gone into all sorts of wild extravagances.

"And I suppose he has sent Hubert on to try and get more out of me," concluded Mrs. Kirkpatrick. "But he will be disappointed. Not one penny of mine shall he see—not one penny."

Russ fully expected his commission to proceed to Philadelphia would be recalled. But after an instant the old lady went on:

"Find Hubert and get him to renounce his father. Then he can come back here with you and we can all live happily together."

"But," Russ ventured to hint, "what if he refuses to renounce his father? Shall I bring him back any way?"

"No, but keep your eye on him and let me know. I think there is a two o'clock train on the Pennsylvania you can take. That will bring you into Broad Street station in time to call at Briggs & Sheldon's office before closing hour. You must then see the book-keeper, who was absent when Mr. Briggs sent the dispatch. Have you ever been in Philadelphia?"

"Oh, yes," replied Russ. "And you want me to stay till I find Mr. Cantrell? In that case I must take my valise."

"And I will send on your trunk if you need it. Here is fifty dollars. Send for more when you want it."

As it was already past one, Russ found himself obliged to hurry. There was no time to let his family know of his departure. As he rushed out of the house, however, he saw Jack Stebbins just coming out of his own. He beckoned to him.

Jack joined him on the instant. "I'm going to Philadelphia on a detective trip," explained Russ rapidly.

"If you get a chance drop round to our house and tell them about it, will you, please? I'll write tomorrow."

"All O. K.," responded Jack. "But a detective trip? I don't understand."

Russ explained briefly as the two hurried along in the direction of the Elevated station.

Jack emitted a long, low whistle of astonishment.

"Well, that's a neat sort of job," he commented. "To persuade a fellow to throw over his own father! How do you like this Cantrell?"

"Much better than I expected to. But here's a train coming I must catch. Good by. Can't say just when I'll be back."

Russ was fond of travel, and if it had not been for the undercurrent of anxiety in his mind about his father and the family fortunes, he would have enjoyed very much the change of scene his odd commission afforded him. As it was, all the mind he thought he could spare from the business in hand was back in New York wondering how his father was feeling, hoping that Margaret would not find it necessary to carry out her intention regarding Mrs. Penniman's children, and fearing that after all some stern self denial must be practiced by those he loved so much.

"And Hal Stewart!" he suddenly recollected. "I must keep a watch out for him in Philadelphia. If I am detained there over Monday it will be a little awkward about his coming to the house, I am afraid."

As the train drew near its destination Russ turned his attention back to Hubert Cantrell.

"Ten chances to one," he told himself, "the fellow is still in New York. I'd better get a time table as I go out of the station and find the earliest train I can take back."

He saw to this after he reached Broad Street, and then hurried off to Sheldon, Briggs & Co.'s office, for it was already almost dark. He found the number without any trouble, but had some difficulty in locating the part of the building in which was the particular firm he wanted. Suddenly happening to glance downward, he saw the name on the windows of the basement office.

He descended the steps and entered the room, in which three people were busily at work over their desks.

"I should like to see Mr. Briggs for a moment or two," began Russ, addressing himself to the gentleman nearest the door.

"He is at your service," returned that individual with a smile.

"I am from Mrs. Kirkpatrick," went on Russ. "I came to make further inquiries about Mr. Cantrell. I telegraphed you about him."

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Mr. Briggs, looking a little surprised. "Well, as I said in my reply to that, I know nothing at all about him. However, our bookkeeper, who saw him, is here now. Miss Wallace," he added, turning to the young lady who sat at the tall desk adjoining his own, "will you please tell this young man what you know about the fellow that called here the other day wanting a position."

"But I don't know anything about him, Mr. Briggs." The young lady smiled as she halted in her rapid work with the pen to glance up at Russell and then down at her employer.

"Oh, I don't want to find out about his character or anything of that sort," interrupted Russ. "I merely want to know where I can find him."

"Ah, he's wanted 'very particular,' as our friends on the force say," remarked Mr. Briggs significantly.

"No, no; I don't mean that," Russ hastened to explain. "It's a relative of his who is very anxious to see him

and she hasn't his address. And as he wrote a note on an envelope belonging to the firm, I thought you might know it."

"Oh, I remember now," exclaimed the bookkeeper. "He didn't want a position for himself, but for some friend of his. I gave him the envelope so that he might have our address. He thought he might like to canvass for us."

"Then if he brought the envelope over to New York with him, you probably haven't heard from the other fellow," said Russ.

Miss Wallace shook her head.

"No, not yet," she replied.

Russ stood there irresolute for an instant, uncertain which way to turn next. Then, as a sudden thought occurred to him, he inquired: "Have you a Philadelphia directory, and may I look at it?"

"Certainly," and the young lady pointed to the shelf on which the book reposed.

"Thank you," said Russ, and stepping over to the volume he became absorbed in running his finger down the columns of "Can," in search of "Cantrell." He did not turn around when he heard the door open and close, and had just taken out his pencil and memorandum book preparatory to making a list of the Cantrell's who lived in the Quaker City, when the bookkeeper stepped up behind him and whispered: "One moment, if you please."

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### A PHILADELPHIA DUDE.

RUSS could not imagine what Miss Wallace, the bookkeeper, wanted when she addressed him in such quiet tones. But he soon ascertained.

"Here is the gentleman Mr. Cantrell sent, talking to Mr. Briggs," she went on.

Russ turned quickly and saw a fellow who reminded him so strongly of Churchill Webb, that for the instant he thought it must be Churchill himself. But a second glance revealed a tiny golden mustache on the upper lip, and then Russ realized that it was the duds which each displayed in his dress and bearing that caused the similarity.

"What, a book agent!" the stranger was exclaiming in response to some remark of Mr. Briggs's. "Of course I wouldn't do such a thing. Did Cantrell wish to insult me?" and without another word the young fellow turned and walked out of the office.

"Hello! I must catch him. Good by, much obliged," cried Russ rather incoherently, and he dashed after him.

He caught up with the dude three doors away and touched him on the arm.

"I beg pardon," he began, "but I believe you are a friend of Mr. Hubert Cantrell's."

"No, no friend of his at all after his treating me in this style," and the other fished around in his pocket for an instant and then pulled out a monocle, which he fixed in his right eye, and proceeded to survey the young New Yorker through it with cool intenness.

Russ had never believed it possible he could feel so much like a bunco steerer. Before he collected himself sufficiently to explain further, the dude dropped his glass and started to go on. Russ put out his hand and clutched the sleeve of his overcoat.

"I merely want to know if you can tell me where I can find Mr. Cantrell," he said, thinking that now, if ever, he was earning the salary Mrs. Kirkpatrick paid him.

"Look here?" exclaimed the other sharply, "are you going to let up on this? Or did Bert put you up to this piece of business. If you don't—"

The fellow stopped suddenly here. He had been regarding Russ attentively in the light of an electric lamp, under which they had now stopped. Something in his dress and bearing evidently arrested his attention and the cutting speech he was about to make.

"Are you a friend of Cantrell's?" he asked suddenly.

"No, that is, I am acquainted with him," replied Russ. "And I am very anxious to find him."

"Owe you anything?" went on the other.

"No, not a cent," Russ answered with a smile. "I want to find him with his aunt, Mrs. Kirkpatrick."

"What, you don't say so!" cried the dude, on whom the name seemed to make a deep impression. "Are you Mrs. Kirkpatrick's son?"

"No, I am—well, her private secretary, I believe she calls it;" rejoined Russ with another smile. "She has sent me on to Philadelphia to find Hubert Cantrell, and I believe you are the man to help me do it."

"But how did you find me?" the other wanted to know.

"Pure chance," and Russ briefly explained about Sheldon, Briggs & Co.'s envelope.

"The rascal!" broke out the Philadelphian. "I happened to mention the other day that I wouldn't mind getting into some nice business where the hours weren't too long, and when he met me on Chestnut Street the next afternoon he told me to call in at Sheldon, Briggs & Co.'s and they had the gall to offer me a book agency!"

"I suppose Mr. Cantrell thought you could make your own hours in that line," laughed Russ. "But now about your friend, or foe, whichever you prefer? Where does he live?"

"Come with me, and I will take you right there."

"Oh, thank you; you are very kind," said Russ. "But I don't want to put you to any trouble. I know the city pretty well, so if you will only tell me the street and number you need not put yourself out any further."

"Oh, not putting myself out at all, not at all," returned the other, and linking his arm in Russell's as if they were old friends, he turned him down Twelfth Street.

"Is it far from here?" inquired the New Yorker.

"Oh, no, not very. Now tell me about Bert's aunt. Isn't she very rich?"

"I believe she's quite well off," answered Russ. "Has her nephew spoken of her often to you?"

"Oh, now and again, yes; but I have heard of her outside of that. I understood that she and Bert were not on friendly terms. It seems strange that she should send after him. Does she intend to make him her heir?"

"I can't say anything as to that," answered Russ cautiously.

"Has she any family?" was the next question.

"No."

"Then you and she live in that great house all by yourselves, with the servants, of course?"

"Yes."

"It must be a soft snap. That's the kind of hours I'd like."

"Would you?" laughed Russ. "They never end. You're never off duty. I imagine you didn't think of that part of it."

"N—o, but I'd be willing to run the risk. I say, though, step in here with me a minute, if you don't mind."

They had reached Chestnut Street, and the dude had halted in front of a gentlemen's furnishing goods store. Russ raised no objections to entering, and the other walked up to a clerk whom he seemed to know very well and

asked to be shown a puff necktie he pointed out in the case.

"Do you think that pretty?" he said, holding it up for Russ to inspect.

"Yes, I do," answered the latter, who noticed that the salesman seemed rather uneasy.

"All right, I'll take it. Two dollars, it is, I believe. Just have it put on my bill."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Rittner," said the clerk, "but Mr. Belmont says we are not to charge anything more for you till the bill that was sent in last October is paid."

When Russ heard what was coming he turned away, and walking to the center of the store, where some dressing gowns were displayed on a table, affected to be examining them. He imagined Rittner would be embarrassed.

But to his surprise the fellow came straight over to him, and taking him by the lapel of his coat, said in a persuasive tone: "Can't you lend me seventeen dollars? It's very annoying to have these things come up. My next quarter's allowance is due next month, and then it will be all right. Mrs. Kirkpatrick has supplied you with funds, I imagine. This is part of your expense account," he added meaningly.

#### CHAPTER XV.

##### A GENTLEMAN OF ELEGANCE.

HAD Rittner suddenly drawn off and dealt him a blow on the side of the head Russ could not have been more astounded than he was by this demand for money. The dress and appearance of the fellow had led him to suppose that he was very well to do. Then the intimation that the loan of the seventeen dollars was to be set down on Mrs. Kirkpatrick's account as an expense item gave him so much subject for thought that for as much as a whole minute he made no reply.

No one took any notice of them. Another customer had come in and claimed the salesman's attention. Rittner had spoken in a low tone and now stood close in front of Russ, still holding him by the lapels of his coat.

"Come now, you'll oblige a fellow, won't you?" he went on, when the minute was up. "If you don't," he added, with a smile, "no address of Hubert Cantrell. You see I mean business."

Russ wished it were possible for him to consult his employer. He had some thought of asking Rittner to come with him to a telegraph office and wait till he could receive an answer to a message. But then he reflected that this would be foolish; he recollected now that the old lady had told him to spare no expense. Besides, if he could be taken at once to Cantrell's home and put in communication with him, he need not remain away over night. Hotel charges would thus be saved.

"I'll do it," he said suddenly, and put his hand in his pocket.

"You're a brick," ejaculated the other. "If we were both Russians I'd embrace you on the spot."

"Now there's one condition," went on Russ, as he began counting out the money. "There must be no more of this. Let's come down to plain facts: if I pay you this seventeen dollars, you are to put me in communication with Hubert Cantrell?"

"Correct," rejoined the Philadelphian. "We'll proceed there at once. It's not far from here on Tenth Street."

Rittner walked over to the counter again with a grand air, demanded a duplicate bill in full, including the new scarf, and while this was being made out chatted with Russ about the Prince-Albert coat he was going to have made and the difficulty he had in getting col-

lars to suit him. When the money was paid and the receipt handed over, they hurried off down Chestnut Street to Tenth, Rittner stopping on the way to purchase a package of cigarettes at a cigar store.

He offered one to Russ, but the latter declined with the announcement that he did not smoke. He felt like adding: "It would be better for your health"—the fellow was deathly pale—"if you saved your money to pay your bills," but reflected that it would probably be a waste of breath.

It was by this time almost six o'clock, and Russ began to feel hungry. But at present he saw no prospect of dinner. They turned down Tenth in the direction of Walnut Rittner chatting volubly all the while about his clothes, the theater and the dancing parties he attended. He had already asked for Russell's name and announced that he would certainly come to call upon him when he visited New York.

"But here we are," he said presently, halting before one of the odd half-million or so of red brick, white marble stoop houses for which Philadelphia has become famous. He rang the bell and when the servant answered it, asked: "Is Mr. Hubert Cantrell in?"

"I don't know. You can go up to his room and see if you like."

"Come on," said Rittner, and he led the way up to the third story.

A knock on the door of a room at the end of the front hall brought no response, but the door of the room adjoining was opened on a crack and a soft voice inquired: "What's wanted?"

"Oh, Mr. Cantrell," replied Rittner, "can you tell me where Bert is?"

"He has gone to New York," was the reply. "If—if you will excuse my dressing gown I will be glad to have you come in."

"I have a young gentleman with me—Mrs. Kirkpatrick's private secretary—who wants to see Bert very much."

The door was thrown wide in an instant.

"Where is the private secretary? Let me shake him by the hand. Will he condescend to enter my humble quarters?"

Russ found himself confronted by an exceedingly handsome gentleman, so young looking that he found it hard to believe he was Hubert Cantrell's father till he recollected what Mrs. Kirkpatrick had told him about her sister's husband being considerably her junior.

"I am glad to meet you, Mr. Cantrell," he murmured while that gentleman was shaking his hand with great gusto.

"I am honored, honored," responded Cantrell senior, who had evidently been lying off on the lounge reading a paper covered book.

The room was in the greatest disorder. Clothes lay strewn about in every direction. There was not a chair but had something on it.

"Pray be seated," went on the host, picking up a corduroy jacket from the sofa and giving it a toss into the corner. "And did Hubert arrange it all right with his aunt? Of course, of course, or you would not be here. I presume you have come to try and persuade me to come over to New York also. It will be a strain, a strain, to give up this city, fraught with so many associations to me, but what will not one do for his child's sake?"

Mr. Cantrell drew a handkerchief from the pocket of his dressing gown, then, perceiving that it was not immaculate, he rose hastily and went to the bureau, from which he extracted a clean one, which he shook out of its folds with a flourish and then proceeded to wipe his eyes. Rittner sat in the corner on a chair piled up with trousers, taking in

the scene with the most breathless interest.

As for Russ, he felt that the hardest part of his task still lay before him. He must tell Mr. Cantrell that he was not to be included in the amnesty extended to his son. However, he must first find out that son's present whereabouts.

"What is Mr. Hubert's present New York address?" he asked, ignoring the other's insinuations.

"Why, did you not just come from him?" demanded Mr. Cantrell.

"But I told you he came here to find Bert," interposed Rittner from his corner.

Bert's father drew himself up, folded his arms for an instant in high tragedy attitude, then extended one hand and with a forefinger pointed to the door.

"This is a family affair, Mr. Rittner, I believe," he said.

And Rittner arose and walked out without a word.

"Now, sir," went on the owner of the apartment advancing upon Russ almost threateningly, "what do you mean by ignoring me so completely in this matter?"

(To be continued.)

#### TO THE RESCUE.

A MOTHER'S love, celebrated in poetry and song, but above all in our own experience, is not confined to human beings. We publish many anecdotes of the care and affection of animals for their young, but here is one from the *Banning Herald*, which is prettier far than any we have seen for a long while.

Last Sunday we were driving up the Water Canyon, and as we turned a bend we saw a doe and a young fawn drinking from the stone ditch.

As our approach the animals were startled, and in attempting to turn and run the poor little fawn lost its balance and fell into the ditch.

The water runs swiftly and in great volume up there, and, of course, the fawn was carried down stream. The mother deer seemed to lose all fear of us, and ran along the edge of the ditch trying to reach her offspring with her head.

Suddenly she ran to the edge of the floating fawn for some little distance. She plunged into the ditch with her head down stream and her hindquarters toward the fawn. She braced her fore feet firmly in the crevices of the rocks to resist the rush of waters.

In a second the fawn was washed up on its mother's back, and it instinctively clasped her neck with its fore legs. The doe then sprang from the ditch with the fawn on her back. She lay down and the baby deer rolled to the ground in an utterly exhausted condition.

We were not more than thirty feet from the actors in this animal tragedy, but the mother, seemingly unconscious of our presence, licked and fondled her offspring for a few minutes until it rose to its feet, and the doe and the fawn then trotted off up the mountain side.

#### THE POET CAME DOWN TO EARTH.

The spectacle of the dignified poet laureate of England down upon his knees cleaning carpet with feverish haste is as amusing as it is anomalous. The *Chicago Herald* tells the story in this wise:

Apropos of home cleaning manipulations, we are all aware that new milk is a sovereign remedy, if immediately poured over spilt ink on any woollen or cotton fabric. Lord Tennyson once went through an experience over which his grandchildren still delight to make merry. Some dear old friends of his, absent for some years in Paris, returned suddenly for good to England, and among the first to call upon them in London was Tennyson himself. The worthy pair were "not at home," and the poet asked for permission to write them a few lines of welcome before calling again. Conducted to the drawing room Tennyson wrote his little note and was rising to depart when his sleeve, catching the lid of the inkstand, turned over the whole contents on a beautiful white Persian carpet covering the floor.

"New milk!" cried the distracted laureate. And the house maid flew to do his bidding. Poet and maid now went down on their knees together, pouring milk right and left, rubbing with towels and handkerchiefs until not a trace of the tell tale fluid remained. When all was over Tennyson hastily snatched his hat and, pressing some money into the maid's hands as for dear life, whether those two old friends are aware of what befell their Persian carpet on that famous afternoon is to this day a mystery. Anyhow Tennyson appreciates their reticence.

#### HUNKUM HILL.

I USED to gaze on Hunkum Hill

And think it very high,  
And one of nature's mighty props  
That helped uphold the sky.

One day I toppled up its side

And stood upon its top,

And then I learned the sky must rest

Upon some other prop.

And there I saw it just beyond,

Another hill much higher,

Its summit mingled with the sky

All fused with sunset fire.

"That hill's a button on the earth,"

Said I to little John,

"The great sky spreads its buttonhole

And there it hitches on."

One day I climbed this other hill,

And found with heavy heart

The button and the buttonhole

Were very far apart.

But there against the crimson west

Another hill was seen,

A mighty spangled cushion where

The big sky loved to lean.

And so I've kept on climbing hill

From busy day to day,

But from the topmost peaks I find

The sky is far away.

In spite of many tumbles, still

This sermon I would preach,

Life's greatest fun is grasping for

The things we cannot reach.

—*Yankee Blade.*

[This Story began in Number 60.]

## A SPLIT IN THE CLUB;

OR,

RALPH MORTON'S MUTINY.

BY EDGAR R. HOADLEY, JR.,

Author of "The Cruise of the Bianca," "One Boy's Honor," etc.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

RALPH ASKS SOME QUESTIONS.

JUST as Ralph Morton and his companions on the Stars and Stripes felt sure that the Spanish officer had seen the lockstrings leading from the two cannon into the fore-castle, a lucky accident occurred.

They were expecting to hear some inquiry from the Spaniard concerning the odd arrangement of the guns, followed by a demonstration from Captain Mauzum and his men, when the man who was carrying the lantern let it drop. The light was instantly extinguished by the fall, but the lantern itself was not injured.

"No matter," remarked the officer carelessly; "I could see that they are pretty pieces, but rather large ones for you to carry."

He walked aft as he spoke, but the reaction was so sudden that Ralph and his friends could not say a word. The Spaniard could not fail to notice their pale faces, by the light of the lantern near the standing room, but he no doubt attributed it to the unusual experience of being boarded by armed men from a man of war.

The sailor with the lantern followed him aft, and when he had relighted it they stepped to the rail to depart.

"Pardon the intrusion," repeated the officer; "and let me again thank you for the information you have given me. *Bon voyage.*"

He and his men sprang into their boat, and in a moment were pulling back to their ship.

It was fully two or three minutes after the boat left before Ralph or his companions said anything. They scarcely changed the positions in which the officers had left them. They watched the small boat till it reached the side of the huge vessel, and was dropped to her quarter to be hoisted into position. They heard a hoarse voiced officer giving orders, then the sound of a gong, followed by the speed bell, and the steamer moved off into the darkness.

"Whew! I'll tell you what's the mat-

ter, fellows, that was a little the most ticklish situation I ever was in," exclaimed Ralph, drawing a long breath of relief; "and I've got enough of it."

"So have I," added Barry Oakes, in disgusted and tremulous tones. "I wonder what's coming next."

Before they had time to speculate on the matter, Captain Mauzum stepped on deck, followed by his men.

"Good boys," said the insurgent, stepping close to Ralph; "you did well, though at one time I thought you were going to give us away."

"And I would have done so, had it not been for these," responded Ralph candidly, feeling no satisfaction from praise of an act he was forced to do, and pointing to the cannon as he spoke.

"Exactly," smiled Captain Mauzum. "That's why I put them in that position. You see I understand you pretty well."

"Surely you wouldn't have discharged those guns," observed the sailing master skeptically, though he had already shown his belief in the other's assertion that he would do just this thing.

"Wouldn't I?" queried the captain, in tones which were emphatically affirmative. "That young officer will never realize how near death he was when he approached those cannon."

"Well, what are you going to do next?" asked Ralph.

"I shall run into Buffalo Bayou for the present, and perhaps get those stores from Bayou City you have ordered."

"They will not be delivered to any one but me," Ralph declared, with satisfaction.

"Then we'll take you along."

Ralph was in doubt about this, for he was determined to do nothing to forward the other's mission, unless he was absolutely compelled to do so in actual fear of his life. He was about to ask how the other was going to do it, if he objected, but decided not to discuss the question till the time came.

"Captain Mauzum, I would like to ask you a few questions," he said instead, as he thought of several matters connected with the insurgent, which he and his companions had discussed, and on which they wanted more light.

"All right, fire ahead; when you come to those I don't want to answer I'll tell you so."

"Well, in the first place, you will remember that, when you explained how you got left at Morton's Cove the morning we sailed for Galveston, you said you had been to see your men off to that city by rail. As your men did not go there by rail, but in the hold of this schooner, that was not the true explanation."

"No; I went to see if I could not engage the services of another man who lives near Otter Point, as I was not satisfied with only three."

"Do you mean Joe Zaraga?" interposed Ralph, who remembered the man as a lazy, thieving halfbreed, who lived in a "dugout" near the Point.

"Yes; one of my men knew him; but he was not at home. I really did lose my way in coming back to the Point."

"Why were you so put out because you missed coming over with us?"

"Because I intended to seize the schooner between Morton's Cove and Galveston, and you would never have sailed in the regatta."

"I'm glad you got left," laughed Ralph.

"I'm not sorry now, for I would have been a little ahead of time and might have met the Spaniard in broad daylight; besides, I enjoyed the race. I will add something you do not know or suspect—if you had given me the wheel going into the race I would have run the schooner out then and there. As it was, you showed me it was another lucky thing that I didn't, for I couldn't have

escaped as you did, as the tide was then only half ebb, and the schooner could have followed me."

As the reader knows, those on the *Ulysses* were not aware of anything wrong on the schooner till after that time, and consequently the pursuit would not have been begun so promptly as it had been.

"You must have been considerably surprised when you saw us start for the Gulf and seize the other fellows," observed Ralph.

"I should say I was, especially as I was just about to give the signal for my men to come on deck and do the same thing."

"Then your offer of a thousand dollars and other big sums was equally as fictitious as the real destination of your cargo?" continued the sailing master.

"Not exactly; if you are willing to assist in getting the stuff aboard the *Independencia*, the two hundred and fifty are still yours; or, failing in this, if you will join us in running it to Cuba, you shall have the thousand. This is generous in me, when you consider I will do one or the other any way without you."

"No, sir, thank you; not for two hundred and fifty thousand," returned Ralph decidedly.

"Then you'll have no one to blame for your situation but yourself, and will get no pay for it."

"I guess we can stand it. Now another question—wasn't the *Stranger* deliberately wrecked on Lagoon Island?"

"Not exactly."

"Well, wasn't the hawser with which the *Ulysses* was towing you cut by one of your crew?"

"No; I cut it myself."

"What in the world did you do that for, if it was not with the intention of being thrown on the island?" pursued Ralph, surprised at the other's candid reply.

"After our hawser had been taken aboard the steamer, we feared she was a revenue cutter, and decided to take our chances without her, considering what we had on board. We had no other hawser, and knew she could not get one to us in such a heavy sea; we did not realize we were so near the island till too late. Fortunately we were thrown high and dry, and decided to save our cargo."

"Thanks; that will be interesting information for Captain Andy. But one more question—What are you going to do after you leave Bayou City?"

"That's a question I can't answer—it depends."

This ended the interview.

The boys were returned to the hold, and the hatch replaced. Ralph repeated, for the benefit of Manly, what had occurred on deck and the information he had gleaned.

The schooner was immediately got under way again, and for several hours nothing was heard but the swish and gurgle of the water as it rushed by her side planking. None of the yachtsmen thought of sleep, though they were all tired, and the darkness of the hold was gloomy and depressing in the extreme.

At last, the rattle of the anchor chain was heard, and the noise of rushing water ceased. They had come to moorings, no doubt in or near Buffalo Bayou.

The hatch was thrown off, and the work passed for Ralph.

The latter readily guessed what was wanted of him, and ascended the stanchion determined to refuse the insurgent's demands.

"We are going off in a boat to get the stores, Mr. Morton, and you are going with us to ask for them," said Captain Mauzum.

"You'll never get them if you wait for me to ask for them," declared Ralph de-

fiantly. "I don't move a step from this schooner."

"Seize him," cried the captain to his men.

Before they could reach him, Ralph sprang backward to the rail. He looked hurriedly about him, and stepped on the bulwark, determined to get overboard if necessary.

"If you move another inch I'll shoot you," declared the insurgent captain, leveling his revolver at Ralph.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

##### A DARING STRIKE FOR LIBERTY.

RALPH hesitated for a moment, as he gazed straight at the shining barrel of the insurgent's revolver. He knew Captain Mauzum was as determined to carry out his mission as he was to do something to thwart it, and that the Cuban was thoroughly in earnest when he declared that he would shoot, if he (Ralph) made another move.

In the briefest fraction of time the daring yachtsman then glanced hurriedly about him. He noticed for the first time that a dim light was shed about them, as if from a moon in its quarter. Looking to port, he saw the dark line of the low lying shore, and a light blazing high above it. He instantly recognized the latter as the beacon in the lighthouse at the entrance to Buffalo Bayou, and being to port and ahead of the schooner, it told him they had not yet entered the bayou.

Then he gave a look at the surface of the water lying between the schooner and the shore. Its width did not appear to be more than a couple of hundred yards, and his decision was instantly taken.

"All right," responded Ralph, in tones of surrender, and bounding forward as if preparing to descend from his position.

For the briefest moment the captain lowered his revolver, but it was long enough for Ralph, and was just what he wanted.

Straightening up, and turning like a flash, he sprang overboard.

Captain Mauzum's revolver cracked instantly; in fact, it was fired so promptly that its discharge seemed to be simultaneous with Ralph's daring leap, and it was hard to believe the latter was not hit.

The captain and his men rushed to the rail and peered into the water in the immediate vicinity, but nothing could be seen of the bold and reckless fellow.

"Into the boat, quick," cried Captain Mauzum, "one of you remain on board, to see that the fore hatch is fast, and guard the prisoners."

He sprang into the small boat which had been lowered and brought alongside, in readiness to take them ashore, and two of his men followed him. They grasped the oars and pulled hurriedly around to the side where Ralph had disappeared.

Meanwhile the latter, though he had heard the shot from the captain's revolver whistle over his head, was uninjured. He instantly dived and swam under the water, as far as the supply of air in his lungs would permit him.

When he came to the surface he floated on his back for a moment, with his face barely out of the water, instead of immediately striking out for the shore.

Ralph did this for several reasons. In the first place, he wanted to regain his breath to prepare for his swim ashore, and then, he told himself, it was probable the insurgents would think he had been hit, and had gone to the bottom, if he made no noise and did not reveal his whereabouts. And, finally, if they did not think so, he desired to hear or see, what steps they would take to recapture him.

When the captain gave the order to take to the boat, Ralph concluded it was time he was making the best of his opportunity, and he struck out vigorously for the shore. But he had overlooked the probability of the small boat being in the water and ready for service, and had not calculated on the pursuit being begun so promptly. He was, therefore, considerably surprised and startled to see the boat dart around the stern of the schooner the next moment.

"There he is; give way, men, and we'll soon catch him," cried Captain Mauzum, as he espied the black shape of Ralph's head, and the rising and falling of the latter's arms as he made long and lusty strokes for the shore. "Hold on there, Morton; it's no use; we'll catch you before you can make a landing."

Whether he believed him or not, Ralph did not desist from his efforts. He evidently still believed there was a chance of escape, and was determined to improve it.

But, despite his best efforts, the boat rapidly gained on him, as he could plainly see by turning his head a very little. He confidently expected that the insurgent would again resort to his pistol, and was a little surprised that he had not already done so. This was what occasioned him considerable uneasiness, and caused him to look back more than he would have done otherwise, thereby losing some valuable moments.

"Hold on there, I tell you, Morton," repeated the captain a little impatiently. "You might as well give up and save your breath."

Ralph made no response save to make an extra spurt and glance hurriedly over his shoulder. He was just in time to again see the shining barrel of the insurgent's revolver, and he instantly dived, and swam under the surface for a considerable distance.

But no shot followed, as he had expected, for Captain Mauzum was no doubt confident of securing his prisoner without resorting to such an extreme measure. That his confidence was well founded was shown when Ralph came to the surface again and found the boat only a few feet from him.

A few more strokes of the oars and the captain grasped him by the collar, giving him a vicious shake as soon as he had him fast.

In spite of Ralph's struggles, Captain Mauzum, with the assistance of one of the men, hauled him into the boat. He was panting and almost breathless, and they quickly fastened his hands together with a piece of rope.

"That was a very foolish venture, Mr. Morton," remarked Captain Mauzum as they deposited him in the bow, and a piece of sail cloth was thrown about his shoulders. "Your daring is worthy of a better cause, like ours, but I thought you were too sensible a young man to make such an attempt."

"I'm satisfied, if you are; I wanted to get away," repeated Ralph spasmodically, as he regained his breath.

"No doubt; but you see you didn't, and you'll have to adopt different tactics to do it while I'm around. Are you ready to go along to get those supplies now?"

"In this condition?" queried Ralph, indicating his wet garments. "They will suspect something if they see I have been overboard."

"That can be plausibly explained by simply saying you accidentally slipped over the side," suggested the captain, and he gave the order to give way again.

The boat was headed toward the entrance to Buffalo Bayou, which was a little to the left of the lighthouse. Captain Mauzum was evidently satisfied that his prisoner would do as he had

been requested, though the latter had not yet expressed his willingness to obey.

"Very well, just as you say," responded Ralph carelessly, "but I tell you it's liable to arouse their suspicions. If anything goes wrong you can't blame me."

"We'll risk that; but wouldn't the supplies be delivered to me on your written order?"

"They might," replied Ralph slowly, (though he had given positive instructions that they should only be turned over to him in person) as he revolved a scheme in his mind to get word to the government authorities as to their situation and their whereabouts.

"But suppose I refuse to write such an order," he added suddenly, with an assumption of further defiance.

"You won't refuse; you know it would be just as easy for me to write it and sign your name, and it would serve the same purpose, as it isn't likely these country merchants would notice it wasn't your writing."

"Oh, very well," responded Ralph, as if recognizing the force of the other's reasoning, though he was equally certain the difference in the writing on the order would be noticed and questioned.

"I will write it."

"All right; and while the men go up to the store we will remain in the boat," concluded the captain.

The boat passed through the narrow channel to the entrance to the bayou, and after twenty minutes of steady rowing was moored to the dilapidated wharf in front of the straggling town.

A lantern was produced from the bottom of the boat and lighted. A pencil and a piece of paper, together with a small note book to write on, were handed to Ralph by the captain, and the yachtsman proceeded to frame the necessary order by the dim flame of the lantern.

"Pshaw!" he exclaimed, apparently before he had finished, as he crumpled the piece of paper in his hand; "what's the use? I'll go along and get them myself. It'll be all right, and will arouse less suspicion than a note would."

"Now you're acting sensibly," returned the captain, as the pencil and book were returned to him. "I thought that was the best plan all along."

Ralph was nervous and excited, though he did not show it. Instead of the order, he had written a message revealing the condition of affairs on the schooner and the insurgent's intention, of carrying her and her crew to some point of rendezvous near the western end of the island of Cuba, and intended, at all hazards, to put it into the hands of some one at Bayou City. He momentarily feared Captain Mauzum would demand the scrap of paper he held crumpled in his hand.

It was with some relief and exultation then that he saw the captain climb ashore without another word.

One of the men, who was to remain with the boat, unfastened Ralph's hands, and the latter clambered up to the dock.

The three then started toward the collection of stores and houses near at hand, Captain Mauzum keeping close to Ralph, and the insurgent sailor bringing up the rear.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

##### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE POSSESSION OF LA LIBERTAD.

BRANDON and Pilot Dull were thoroughly startled by Uncle Dick's scheme to capture the *Libertad*, but they resolutely promised to stand by him.

This interview was only the first of many which followed, as opportunity offered, before all the details of action were finally decided upon.

Meanwhile the steamer proceeded steadily on her way under sail, and as she was favored with clear weather and a strong breeze, she made very good progress. Several days passed, and she was approaching the vicinity of Cape Catoche, before Uncle Dick decided that everything was ripe for carrying out his desperate undertaking.

It was in the darkness and silence of night that he proceeded to put in effect his plan of operations. The attempt seemed rash, but he was prepared to lose his life or capture the steamer; that was the only alternative.

It was Captain Erben's watch on deck. The mate and the chief engineer were asleep in their berths in the cabin.

Brandon and Pilot Dull, at a signal from Uncle Dick, stepped from their berths, into which they had entered fully dressed, and joined the ranchman in the cabin, where they received his final instructions.

Uncle Dick then stepped quickly to the mate's stateroom, followed by Brandon. Without awakening the sleeper, he handed out the mate's revolver to Dull, and without losing any time he clapped a gag, made of a piece of wood and some marline, between the officer's teeth, at the same moment seizing his hands, which Brandon quickly ironed. They thus left him secure and closed the stateroom door behind them.

The work had been done silently and well, and Captain Erben continued to pace the quarter undisturbed by a sound.

They then turned their attention to the engineer, who was in a stateroom directly across the cabin from that of the mate. Brandon had provided himself with another pair of shackles from a supply they had found in a locker in the cabin.

The engineer was also gagged and secured quickly and without disturbance. His revolvers, and those taken from the mate, were distributed among them, Uncle Dick taking two and the others one each.

Brandon and Dull then retired to their stateroom, to remain out of sight till they were summoned, and Uncle Dick went on deck.

The steamer was not far from Cape Catoche, the most northeasterly projection of land on the coast of the Peninsula of Yucatan, around which, and in an almost due southerly direction, was the Gulf of Honduras, her destination. The navigation in the vicinity was difficult, among the cross currents and numerous reefs, and thus furnished the ranchman the means of carrying out a portion of his plan.

Captain Erben was pacing up and down the deck well aft, and the watch consisted of one man at the wheel, one stationed as lookout on the forecabin and three others who were about the deck somewhere.

"Ah, Mr. Morton," began the captain; "what's the trouble?"

"Nothing; I just woke up and thought I would take a turn on deck," replied Uncle Dick, giving a yawn and stretching his arms as if he had just got out of his berth. "I see the wind still holds good—an unusual run of good weather," he added.

"Yes; but I look for a change in the next few hours," responded the insurgent captain.

"You will soon be up with Cape Catoche, I believe. Will you be able to pass the Cape before the weather changes?"

"Hardly, I fear."

"Let her go free a bit, Captain Erben; you are too close to the cape. I have been in these waters before and I know," suggested Uncle Dick.

"We have plenty of offing," replied the captain briefly; and then to the wheelman: "How's her head?"

"South east by east, sir."

"Keep her so. I tell you it's right, Mr. Morton," he went on.

"Well, of course this is not my vessel, and I'm not responsible for her, but I'm an older sailor than you, Captain Erben, and if you want to clear Cape Catoche and have plenty of sea room in thick weather, two points to the east will do no harm. You just look at the chart and you will see that I am right; I left it open on the cabin table."

And Uncle Dick led the way from the poop to the cabin, followed by the captain.

A passageway about five yards long led from the deck to the cabin, with a door at each end. Uncle Dick stopped at the first door, after the captain had passed through, and closing it he picked up an iron belaying pin which he had previously placed there.

The insurgent captain went ahead to the cabin, where the chart lay open upon the table, and commenced to figure and manipulate his dividers.

"Captain Erben!" came the voice of the ranchman the next moment, low, but quick and decided.

The captain of the steamer turned at the sudden and peremptory exclamation of his name. He was clearly astonished at what he saw, but not a shadow of fear came into his face.

Brandon and Dull stood on either side of him with leveled revolvers, while Uncle Dick towered over him in the rear, his arm upraised and the heavy iron pin clutched in his fingers.

"This steamer shall never go to Honduras, but back to the United States, where she belongs," declared the ranchman, in a low, but hard, determined voice.

He did not strike, and no further demonstration was necessary. Captain Erben made no move to resist, and only gazed from one to the other in silence. He no doubt would have said something had time been given him, but Uncle Dick instantly thrust a gag in his mouth. Then Brandon and Dull bound him hand and foot, and he was bundled into a berth and the stateroom door locked.

Three out of fifteen of those on board, and the ones most to be feared, were thus disposed of. They all, not excepting Uncle Dick, drew a breath of relief at their success. It was fortunate they had a breathing spell, for Brandon was trembling with excitement, and it took several minutes to calm himself sufficiently to proceed. His older companions were more familiar with daring and perilous ventures, and though their pulses may have beat a little faster, they appeared calm and determined.

There was still the watch on deck and the men below to be secured.

The Libertad had accommodations for her crew of a kind not unusual, but still not very common. Their quarters were not in the forecabin, but in an oblong house on deck with windows in the sides and a door at one end. From the top of the cabin, which took up the whole breadth of the steamer at the stern, there was a companion ladder on the starboard side leading to the deck at the waist, while a similar ladder at stern end led down to the deck near the wheel, which could also be reached directly from the cabin by the passageway already referred to.

In the space behind the cabin was the wheel, which was raised on a platform so that the wheelman could see clear of its top. Near this was a small hatch leading to the lazarette, a small supplementary hold abaft the cabin, in which were kept supplies, coils of rope and extra running gear. Nothing that was done on this part of the deck could be seen from the waist, and vice versa, except by the wheelman, who was elevated above the level of the cabin roof.

Uncle Dick came out of the rear door of the passage alone, and stepped over to the lazarette hatch. He looked about him, and, as he suspected would be the case, he found the three men in the watch standing and lounging near.

"Get out that coil of inch and a half rope—Captain Erben's orders," said the ranchman, as he kicked the covering off the hatch and pointed below.

Suspecting nothing, the men sprang down into the hold without demur. They were no sooner in than Uncle Dick clapped on the hatch again and fastened it with hasp and toggle.

They were neatly trapped in full view of the wheelman, who, though considerably astonished, did not permit the proceeding to make him forget his duty, and he remained at his post.

Before he could give an alarm, if he had been inclined to, Uncle Dick showed his revolver and said: "If you utter a sound or make a move I'll blow your brains out!"

He then called to the lookout man, the last of the watch on deck, to come aft. The man came over the top of the cabin, and when he reached the foot of the after ladder he was met by the ranchman with drawn revolver.

"Will you help navigate this steamer back to the States?" demanded Uncle Dick.

"No, I will not; I'm Cuban."

"I don't care if you are. Will you call the watch then?"

"Yes, I will do that," and he did it with a vengeance, shouting out an alarm in Spanish.

But the next instant he was laid low by a blow from the butt of the ranchman's revolver. He was then bundled unceremoniously, and in an unconscious condition, into the lazarette to join his three companions. Uncle Dick replaced and fastened the hatch cover and stood guard over it.

Meanwhile the men below, seven in number, who had been aroused by the lookout's alarm, came tumbling on deck.

Uncle Dick called to his two confederates, and in a moment Brandon and Dull were beside him. It looked as if the latter part of their undertaking was going to be the most difficult, and their capture of the steamer promised not to be as bloodless as they had hoped it would be.

(To be continued.)

#### DOGS OF WAR.

It seems that there have been many warrior dogs and some, according to a French exchange, that have been famous.

For instance, there was Bob, the mastiff of the Grenadier Guards, which made the Crimean campaign with that gallant corps; and Iso White-paw, Pette Blanche, a brave French ally of Bob, that made the same campaign with the 16th of the line and was wounded in defending the flag.

Apothe, Moustache, was entered on the roll of his regiment as entitled to a grenadier's rations. The barber of his company had orders to clip and comb him once a week. This gallant animal received a bayonet thrust at Marengo, and recovered the flag at Austerlitz. Marshal Lannes had to his neck by a red ribbon.

Corps de Garde, a Norval among dogs, followed a soldier to Marengo, was wounded at Austerlitz and perished in the retreat from Russia.

The Sixth of the Guard had a military mastiff named Misere, which wore three white stripes sewn on his black hair.

We have also to name Pompon of the 48th Bedouins, the best sentry of the baggage train; Loutoute, a Crimean heroine, Mitraille, killed at Inkerman by a shell; Moflio who saved his master in Russia, and was lost or lost himself, but found his way alone from Moscow to Milan, his first dwelling place.

The most remarkable, however, was an English harrier named Mustapha, which went into action with his English comrades at Fontenoy, and, we are seriously told, remained alone by a field piece after the death of the gunner, clapped the match to the touchhole of the cannon, and thus killed seventy soldiers; and it is further added that Mustapha was presented to King George II. and rewarded with a food pension.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

F. E. F., Washington, D. C. No premiums.  
F. J. F., Troy, N. Y. Not published in book form.

D. A., Nyack, N. Y. The numbers are in print at 10 cents each. The story is not in book form.

D. C. D., Grand Rapids, Mich. Deafness would undoubtedly disqualify for the Military Academy.

F. M. S., Norwood, N. Y. Violin strings are made of gut—the G string being wound with wire, the other three unwound.

H. W. H., North East, Pa. Currier and Ives, New York City, may be able to supply pictures of some of the new war ships.

B. A., Cadiz, O. 1. Vol. XIII ends with No. 248 (Febr. 20) and contains six months' numbers. 2. Express charges must always be paid by the purchaser.

S. W. D., New York City. Tin plate is now manufactured in this country. See samples in the front windows of the Republican newspapers of the town.

ARTIFICIAL GEM, Lowell, Mass. There is an editorial in No. 478 which we must recommend to your perusal. Decidedly THE ARGOSY is "Not In That Line." We thank you for your good wishes.

J. P. C., Buffalo, N. Y. The serials carried into Vol. XII of THE ARGOSY are preceded by synopses that tell the stories from the first chapters. Not all end in that volume. 2. The binder is made to fit the paper.

F. F. H., Brooklyn, N. Y. You live in a large city containing good book stores. There are the places where you might inquire. We are always ready to help our readers to good books. The anomaly of "comic poetry" is hardly in line.

CORRESPONDENT, Indian Orchard, Mass. Do not fail to read the editorial entitled "A Target for Questions," in No. 471. This will be found to contain all the information at our disposal on the subject of "How to Raise Peanuts."

F. A. B., Worcester, Mass. 1 and 2. Only binders for the current size of THE ARGOSY are sold by us. 3. No. 313 and subsequent numbers are in print and are 10 cents each. 4. The editors write the editorials, which, we trust, interest you.

A. R. G., Phila. A volume of THE ARGOSY now consists of 46 numbers (six months). The other information may be gleaned by a little figuring back from the number on the current issue. See editorial in No. 471, entitled "A Target for Questions."

CADET, New York City. By thorough study within the required lines for Annapolis, why should you not be able to pass? We cannot conceive. As for the physical deficiency mentioned, that can be fixed by the expenditure of a little money and endurance.

C. H. C., Ogdensburg, N. Y. 1. We will give you a copy of "Afloat in a Great City," by Frank A. Munsey, for one new yearly subscription and 15 cents for postage, etc. 2. The author never mentioned his first book to us. A biography and portrait of Mr. Ellis appear in Vol. VI. 3. THE ARGOSY first furling its sails to the breeze in 1839. 4. We make our announcements on the editorial page.

J. R., New York City. 1. For a complete curriculum of the West Point Military Academy address the registrar of that institution, or write to your Congressman. 2. The Philadelphia City Hall will be 377 feet high, including the statue that surmounts the tower. Perhaps, though, the tallest building proper, will be the Chicago Odd Fellows' building, described on the eighth page of No. 465.

W. C. A., Chicago, Ill. The Supreme Court of the United States is, as the name indicates, the highest court in the land. Before it come cases that affect the nation, its chief purpose being to construe disputed meanings or bearings of portions of the Constitution. It consists of a Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices, appointed for life. The height of ambition is one of two things—to be President or to sit on the Supreme Court bench. Do not fail to read the editorial in this issue entitled, "The Eyes of the World are Upon Us."

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"Did it hurt?"  
"Nope. She was so mad she didn't wait for me to git me ear muffs off."—*New York Press.*

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IV.

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"I am trying to recoup my losses," was the reply.—*Washington Star.*

THOSE ANGEL HANDS.  
"WHY, the baby is getting his father's hair," exclaimed Aunt Sue energetically.  
"Yes," replied Uncle George, "I notice that it's papa's bald spot is getting bigger."—*Epoch.*

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Yours truly,  
HANK WHITE.

Ready Monday, February 1.

# Munsey's Magazine

FOR FEBRUARY.

Berlin, The City of the Kaiser, By WILLIAM HORACE HOTCHKISS; This is a singularly attractive descriptive paper on Germany's capital, a city but little known to Americans compared with Paris and London, but which possesses a vast number of attractive features all its own, as the illustrations to this article will amply testify.

The Episcopal Church in New York, by R. H. TITHERINGTON. The most widely known churches in the metropolis are those belonging to the Episcopal denomination. St. Thomas's, St. Bartholomew's, Trinity, Grace—everybody has heard of them and all will be interested in the pictures of them which accompany this article, as also in the portraits and sketches of some of the most eminent rectors, including Bishop Potter, Drs. Dix, Brown, Huntington, Greer, Parker Morgan, Rainsford, Heber Newton, Ritchie and Dean Hoffman, of the Seminary.

The Last Man of a Nation, by V. Z. REED. A unique account, with appropriate pictures, of the sole survivor of a tribe of Pueblo Indians.

Stephen B. Elkins, by FRANK A. MUNSEY. A biographical sketch, with portrait, of the new Secretary of War.

Sir John Millais, by C. STUART JOHNSON. An account of this famous English artist, with reproductions of some of his most celebrated paintings. The Complete Novel is:

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