

THE ARGOSY

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1893

A Home in the Suburbs.

BY JAMES F. DEMERRET.

"There, I wish you'd just look over that list, Carl, and make yourself familiar with it," and Mr. Howard Jameson placed a small blank book before his nephew and returned to his own desk on the opposite side of the little office. "They're all bad houses—houses I can't let, or at least, that have not been let for three months and more," he continued, "and I want you to look them up and find out what the matter is with them. Let me tell you that this real estate business is not all pie."

"You don't own all these, do you, uncle?" asked Carl Hapgood, a tall, well-made young fellow of eighteen or nineteen, opening the book and glancing swiftly over the array of streets and numbers.

"Oh, no; but I own some. It is the business of this agency to let houses, however, and it's a bad showing if we can't find tenants within three months. Our clients begin to take their business elsewhere. Why, there's one house on that list that hasn't been occupied a month in seven years; but I own that one myself."

"Seven years!" exclaimed Carl. "What's the matter with it? Which one is it?"

"There it is at the top of that page," said Mr. Jameson, stepping across to Carl's desk again. "Been tenanted seven years!"

"Why, how is that? It reads well!" declared his nephew. "Nice suburban residence; ten rooms; two acres of cultivated land; small fruits and shade trees, No. 17 Fourth street Elmwood. What's the matter with it?"

"That's what I don't know," declared his uncle. "I bought that place of old Judge Casey nearly eight years ago. The tenants who occupied it then were named Cummin, and they had hired it of the judge very low. I made some repairs and raised the rent to compare with that of like places in the neighborhood, and the Cummins moved out. I had several tenants within the next year and they all left just about as soon as they go in."

"But what was the trouble?" "Why, they all declared that there was something wrong about the place—that they heard strange noises and such stuff."

"A haunted house!" cried the interested nephew.

"That's what they call it," growled Mr. Jameson. "Fools—fools, every one of 'em!"

"And you don't mean to say that such stories as these have kept the place untenanted all these years?"

"But I do," declared his uncle. "I'd sell out for a song today if I could. The place is being eaten up by its taxes. It's an old house and been neglected so long now that it won't let any way. I got so tired of fixing it up for every new tenant and then having them get out inside of a week, that I've done nothing to it for the last three years. In fact, I haven't seen it but once within that time myself."

"It must be in pretty bad shape," said Carl ruminatively. "Without any one to take care of it."

"Oh, well, the last time I was out there it was not very bad. The front yard is overgrown with weeds and bushes and the house needs reshingling and painting. But the fruit trees and garden in the rear are cared for by the man next door, who looks out for the place in a perfunctory way, for the use of the land

and what he can make off the fruit on it."

"I'd like to see the place. I've never had the pleasure of seeing a 'real' haunted house."

"See it! You can have it for seven hundred dollars—the land's worth that," exclaimed Mr. Jameson, in disgust. "Those ignorant fools out there declare that pulling down the house and building a new one wouldn't stop the 'spirits,' as they call 'em, and I don't know but they're right. At least, I've never had the temerity to try it."

"You tempt me to put a portion of my little patrimony into this 'suburban residence,'" Carl declared, laughing. "If it is really haunted it ought to rent still better to the right party. What a place for a medium!"

Mr. Jameson growled audibly. "You'd better take a look at it first and talk with the neighbors before you buy it," he said.

"Well, I declare, uncle, I believe I will look at it. I'll get Alf Williams, and we'll run out and see it."

alone at the homestead in Massachusetts. But Carl had remained until his academic course was finished and then, with his particular friend, Alfred Williams, had come to the city to "hew out his place" in the business world.

Alf had obtained a position in a lawyer's office (his father was well

to the office for him and together they took the horsecar for Elmwood.

"You would naturally look for haunted houses in a section connected with the city by nothing but horse cars," Carl remarked as they sped along their way at the astonishing rate of three or four miles an hour. "Electrics, or cables would scare the ghosts away."

They found Fourth Street a pleasant, well-shaded highway—just the place for a country home. The houses were respectable, and far apart, there being generous grounds about them all. The house which bore such an

unenviable reputation, was all that Mr. Jameson had said.

It was a solidly built structure, of a style greatly admired forty or fifty years ago, and its appearance was quite in keeping with its bad name. The front yard—lawn, beds and paths—was overgrown with weeds. One or two of the shutters were loose and probably flapped dismally when the wind blew; and here and there a pane of glass was broken where the small boys had taken shots" at them with pebbles from the middle of the road.

The house sat some distance back from the street, so that all its wretchedness was not visible through the branches of the fir trees that stood in a solemn rank along the front. About every other picket of the fence was missing, and all the others were broken. Carl pushed open the sagging gate and they stepped inside and approached the door.

Not without some difficulty were they able to make an entrance, and then it was by the side door. The interior of the house was in rather better condition than the exterior, although the plastering had fallen away in places where the rain had leaked in and weakened it. Otherwise it would cost but a small sum, so Carl decided, to repair the place.

Upon going out to view the rear premises they espied a lank limbed, lazy looking individual, with a face like a hatchet for sharpness, leaning over the fence which separated the deserted premises from the next place on the west. The man's face was decorated with straw colored

whiskers, he held a pipe in his mouth, and was dressed in a conglomeration of faded blue jumper, faded red shirt, and faded green trousers.

The fence, by the way, had every appearance of having been removed piecemeal for firewood, for only the posts and string pieces now left. "Shades of Moses and Aaron!" murmured Alf, in an awestruck voice. "Will you notice those trousers, Carl? Brilliant grass green they were in their day, without a doubt."

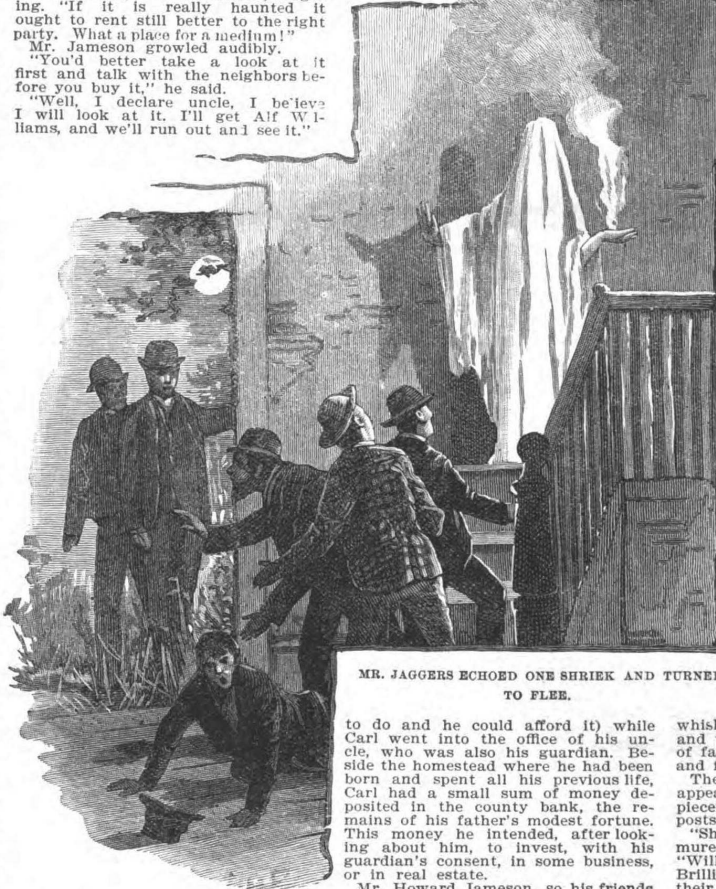
Where the aforesaid articles of clothing were made, then, he certainly showed an astonishingly bright shade of green.

"I shall dream of those pants," Alf declared and just then the individual who owned them—or at least we will presume he owned them, as he had them on—addressed the two young men.

"Sa-ay," he drawled "What 'I yeow want 'round here?"

"Who are you?" retorted Carl, prying himself a Yankee by answering the question by propounding another.

"Wal, my name's Cummin, an' the city chap that has the lettin' of the



MR. JAGGERS ECHOED ONE SHRIEK AND TURNED TO FLEE.

"All right. And I tell you what I'll do," said Mr. Jameson. "If you let it I'll give you the first quarter's rent cash down."

"I'll take you!" responded Carl laughing. "And I wager I'll rent it within the week."

Mr. Jameson smiled doubtfully and returned to his desk once more.

Carl who had come to the city but recently to fill the position of clerk in his uncle's real estate office, went on with the examination of the list of "bad houses." His parents were both dead, his father having passed away the year before, leaving him

to do and he could afford it) while Carl went into the office of his uncle, who was also his guardian. Beside the homestead where he had been born and spent all his previous life, Carl had a small sum of money deposited in the county bank, the remains of his father's modest fortune. This money he intended, after looking about him, to invest, with his guardian's consent, in some business, or in real estate.

Mr. Howard Jameson, so his friends said, played at being a real estate agent. He had no need of a larger income than he already possessed; but he was an active man and the business of buying, selling, and letting property on commission gave him something to do to occupy the time which otherwise might have dragged. He was a bachelor, lived in a fine house "up town," and rather enjoyed the presence of his nephew in his office, and in his otherwise dull home.

His chum being relieved from his arduous duties of delving over ponderous sheep-covered books at the early hour of two, Carl went around

old Casey place hires me ter look out f'r it," replied the hatch-faced individual, taking the pipe from his mouth and spitting into the currant bushes.

"Oh, then it's all right," said Carl, advancing. "I am Mr. Jameson's clerk—here is his card. So you are Mr. Cummin, eh?"

"That's my name; Silas Cummin." "The old place has pretty well gone to ruin, hasn't it?" Carl asked studying the fellow sharply.

"That it has—an' well it might," returned Mr. Cummin, dropping his voice to a lower key and looking over toward the house. "Sa-ay, ye been inside?"

The young men replied affirmatively. "Didn't see nothin' did ye?"

"Nothing out of common." "No, they never do first erlong," said Mr. Cummin, shaking his head dismally. "They think it's all right till arter they git in. Then they begin."

"Who are 'they'?" asked Alf. Silas shook his head as though the identity of 'they' was beyond his knowledge.

"You don't mean to say that you believe in these ghost stories, do you?" Carl demanded.

"I wouldn't step foot inter that 'ere house, if I knowed 'they was millions there—yes sir, millions—fur the pickin' up!" declared Mr. Cummin solemnly.

"But let's see; you used to live here, didn't you?" asked Carl.

"I did, sir; ten years I lived there. But that was 'fore the old judge died. An' they do say," here he dropped his voice to a whisper and looked about as though fearful that the supernatural visitors, who made the old house their headquarters, might hear him, "they deu say that the ole man a-ha'n'tin' of it himself."

"What for?" asked Carl, suppressing a smile with some difficulty. "I thought Judge Casey was a very harmless old gentleman."

"Wal—he was," returned Mr. Cummin slowly. "But I have my reasons fur believin' that he's a bit uneasy in his grave. You see, this 'ere was his ole homestead an' he no business ter sold it as he did. Why here was me—lived here ten years an' paid fifty good, hard dollars ev'ry year fur the ole place; an' what did the judge deu but up an' sell it just 'fore he died. It was a shame—that's what it was—f'r what did the feller that bought it do—your Mr. Jameson—but raise aour rent ter three hundred dollars! Why, 'twas abominable!"

"Yes?" said Carl thoughtfully. He began to see something beneath Mr. Silas Cummin's apparently innocent story. Evidently the former tenant of the Casey place still felt injured because of the necessity which had forced him to leave the old house. He looked across the fence at the tiny brown cottage which Mr. Cummin now occupied and saw that it was a much less desirable place than the larger house.

"Then the old judge up an' died," went on the former tenant, ruminatively, "an' right off these began ter be queer actions erbout the haouse. Nobody could stay there a month. Why, I couldn't be hired ter step fut inter that door."

"Well, Mr. Jameson thinks some of repairing the place and letting it again," Carl said quietly. "We'll hope that the ghosts have all disappeared by this time."

Mr. Cummin seemed quite disappointed to hear of this determination on the part of the owner of the Casey place.

"No good'll come of it," he declared, with another shake of his head. "Ghosts never leave a haouse when they once git a hol' on it."

The two friends walked away, Alf almost convulsed with mirth and Carl strangely thoughtful.

"That chap is more fun than a box of monkeys!" Alf declared, as they swung themselves aboard the returning horse car. "Did you ever see such a character outside of a book?"

"I believe he's an old fraud," Carl replied, decidedly, and then refused to say anything further.

He remained decidedly uncommunicative all the way back to town and Alf finally left him, at the door of Mr. Jameson's residence, in disgust.

"I'll undertake to let that place for you, uncle," Carl said to Mr. Jameson that evening, "providing you'll agree to make such repairs as may be necessary about the premises. It seems like a pretty good place."

"But you don't want to buy it?" asked his guardian, laughing quietly.

"I'm not sure," responded Carl shrewdly. "How long will that offer you made me this morning—seven hundred dollars—stand open?"

"A week," responded Mr. Jameson promptly.

"Well, I'll see," said Carl thoughtfully, and went off to his own room in a brown study.

A day or two after their visit to the "haunted house," as Alf Williams persisted in calling it, he and Carl were sitting in the latter's office. It was late in the afternoon, Mr. Jameson had already gone, and Carl might have gone himself as far as any expectation of further business for the day went; but Alf and he often spent an hour or two in the cozy office while the darkness came softly down upon the city and the electric lights like brilliant stars, began to flash out below them in the streets.

"Haven't let the Elmwood house yet, have you?" asked Alf, as the conversation began to lag.

"No; no progress so far," Carl began. Then he broke off as the door opened and said:

"Good afternoon, sir. What can I do for you?"

The open door admitted four individuals—the first a man well past the prime of life, the other three evidently his sons, all well grown boys from fifteen to twenty years of age. There was an air about all four which showed them unaccustomed to city life and ways and as soon as the elderly man spoke Carl put them down at once as Westerners.

"I reckon this is the real estate office, isn't it?" asked the man, advancing a pace into the room.

"Yes, sir; what can I do for you?"

The man adjusted a pair of spectacles with great care and from a worn leather wallet produced a small slip of creased paper—evidently a clipping from a newspaper.

"It's this here Elmwood house—we've come about, sir," he said, passing the slip to Carl.

It was an advertisement of the "haunted house" Carl had caused to be inserted in the dailies.

"I reckon," pursued the visitor, "that such a place as that would be just our figger. We've come lately from Ioway an' mother—that is, Mrs. Jaggars—don't like the city none too well. Naow, this place in the—er—suburbs," he added, referring to the slip which Carl had handed back to him, "oughter just suit her. We'd like ter see it."

"You may, and I'll accompany you with pleasure," responded Carl, with business-like promptness. "I suppose, however, that you won't care to go out so late in the day as this?"

"That don't make a particle of difference to us," returned Mr. Jaggars. "Me an' the boys took a bite to a restaurant an' if it's all the same to you, we'll go out now. We've started out to find a house an' have been huntin' all day; but we're bound to find one if we can. All the other houses didn't pan out anythin' like their advertisements said. I hope this will, young man."

"We certainly have not overestimated the value of the property in our advertisement," replied Carl. "Let me tell you first, however, that the house has not been occupied for seven years and that it is greatly out of repair; its owner will make any repairs you wish, however, and put the place in first class condition."

"That's handsome," said the Westerner. "Let's be goin'."

"You'll come, Alf?" suggested Carl, as the whole party fled out and he locked the office door.

"Oh, yes, I might as well," replied that obliging youth, and they hastened down to the street and up two or three blocks to the Elmwood car route.

They had the box car to themselves, and Mr. Jaggars related much of importance in his family history to his appreciative audience of two, while his three long-legged, stoop-shouldered boys remained bashfully silent. The two chums learned that Mr. Jaggars had become wealthy by land speculations and had come East at the urgent request of "mother" and "his darters" to "try to be somebody."

Alf whispered "Codfish," in Carl's ear, but the latter was more amused than he was disgusted at Mr. Jaggars' desire to "be somebody."

At the corner of Fourth Street they left the car and plunged into the shadow of the great elms which lined the avenue. It was now past seven and it would of course be too dark to examine the interior of the house without a light.

"We'll stop at the house this side and borrow a lamp," said Carl as they neared the old Casey place. "Cummin is the man's name, and he has had care of the property since the last tenant moved out."

They halted at the door of the little brown cottage which looked so shabby beside the other residences on the street. Mr. Cummin himself answered their summons. He started when he saw Carl and his companions and seemed extremely displeas'd at the thought of any one looking at the Casey place. Yes, he'd lend them a lamp—or rather his wife would—but, he warned 'em, he warn'd 'em; no good would ever come of a-lettin' of the old place.

He ushered the whole party into the kitchen where a slatternly, cragged-out looking woman was getting supper. Cummin took her in; the cist for a few moments and closed the door; evidently he had been explaining the visitor's business to her, for when she returned to the kitchen she stared at them with apparently lively interest.

Cummin put on his hat at once and muttering something about having to go out for a while, he hastily departed, leaving his spouse to prepare a lamp with which the house hunters could examine the interior of the Casey place.

"She's mortal slow," Mr. Jaggars whispered to Carl, and truly it did seem as though Mrs. Cummin occupied a great deal of time in filling and cleaning the lamp.

"You'd better not light it till you git inside," said Mrs. Cummin, as they departed, and as the wind was stirring quite briskly Carl decided that this was good advice.

They went around to the side door "Why, the door's open," said Alf. "Did we leave it so the other day, Carl?"

Before his chum could reply Mr. Jaggars and his boys crowded into the hall. At that moment there was an appalling noise from above and the whole party, for a few seconds, halted in their tracks. A series of blood curdling groans rent the air and they could plainly hear the rattle of a heavy chain across the floor above.

"What's that?" gasped Mr. Jaggars.

In reply to his question the groans rose to a hoarse shriek and an unearthly bluish light suddenly illuminated the scene. There, upon the first landing of the stairs, stood a tall, sheeted figure, one pallid hand outstretched in warning!

Mr. Jaggars echoed the shriek with one which exceeded it in volume and turned to flee, tumbling over his youngest son in his mad endeavor to get away.

"Oh Lord!" he groaned, "let's get out of here!" and in a twinkling he

with his three boys at his heels, rushed through the open door and dashed madly to the street.

It must be confessed that Alfred Williams was close behind them and his chum was not many lengths in his rear. Mrs. Cummin's lamp was dropped and forgotten in the stampede.

But when they reached the gate, Carl did not go on after the others, and upon going bravely back to his rescue Alf found him convulsed with hysterical laughter.

"What are you laughing at, you—you idiot!" exclaimed the greatly excited Alf, a little ashamed of his own fright. "Wasn't it awful?"

"Ye—yes, it was a awful funny!" gasped Carl, struggling to calm himself. "It was awful funny. I don't say, however, that I should not have been frightened if it hadn't been for the fact that I saw a good four inches of Mr. Silas Cummin's green pants appearing below that sheet!"

"I—I wish you would kick me, Carl," remarked Alf, after a short silence, and then they walked on after their terrified companions.

"I'll take you up on that offer you made me about the Elmwood house, uncle," Carl said, later that same evening.

"Well, Carl, I don't know as I ought to let you do it," said Mr. Jameson doubtfully. "I want to get the house off my hands, that's a fact, but as your guardian—"

"Come over on this side of the room where my guardian won't hear about it—as they say in 'Mikado' to the Lord—high—everythin'—else," said Carl, laughing and drawing his uncle from his chair. "Now, the real estate agent, Mr. Jameson, will sell me that place for seven hundred dollars, won't he? And to ease the conscience of my guardian, let me assure him that I have already found a tenant for the place, when it is repaired."

"Some one who is not afraid of ghosts?" asked his uncle.

"Some one who is not afraid of ghosts—now, whatever his fears might have been in the past."

"Then the place is yours," responded Mr. Jameson, with a sigh, and he went back to his paper.

The following morning Carl made another trip to Elmwood and finding Mr. Silas Cummin working in the garden back of the Casey place, the proceeds of which he had so long enjoyed, he entered into a long and earnest conversation with that individual. When he went away Mr. Cummin looked undeniably scared, as a man should who saw (with his mind's eye) the prison doors yawning before him, and when, late in the afternoon, a load of lumber and fence pickets arrived from the city with a peremptory command from the new owner of the Casey place for Mr. Cummin to mend the demolished fences, Silas obeyed the edict without a word of opposition.

In time the house and grounds were put in perfect repair and the new tenants—name of Jaggars, if you please—moved in. It is very noticeable that the Western land speculator and his nearest neighbor are not good friends and if you want to get Mr. Hiram Jaggars fairly mad, just mention ghosts to him.

PREMONITIONS DIRE.

Interested Passenger (on shipboard)—"For a man who has never been to sea before you seem to have got the theory of navigation down pretty fine."

The Other Passenger (suddenly growing pale)—"Yes, but I'm afraid I'm not—going to keep it down!"—

"Chicago Tribune."

THAT SIGN OF HONOR.

The Tailor—"Surely you don't mean that you want this coat made with a great hump of wadding in the back? Why, you'll look like a hunchback!"

The Customer—"Hush! I'm a member of the Young Man's Bicycle Society and I'm a candidate for the presidency of it."—"Chicago Record."

A SONG FOR THE FALL.

They are tuning their lyres for autumn—the poets with rhymes replete, And we hear the cane at the grinding, and the juice that is dripping sweet! And they're hinting at woods emblazoned with banners of gold and green, And the shoky homes where the maidens in dimples and dough are seen. And they'll sing of the candy pullings, where the heart of the young man speaks And glows like the rose that glistens on the maiden's answering cheeks, And the great oak logs are crackling, and the hearth has a ruddy glow, And the Georgia potato roasteth in ashes as white as snow!

—Atlanta Constitution.

[This Story began last week.]

Checkmate.

BY WILLIAM LIEBERMANN.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTOR AND THE CONSTABLE.

Morning found Ralph in the woods, searching for a convenient tree amid the branches of which he would be reasonably safe. He soon found one to his taste, and climbed easily into it, and was pretty well hidden from all comers, though he could see all that was going on below.

Verily Adolphus Jones, A. B., had he understood what he was about, for Ralph carried with him the materials for a good breakfast, and a pocket edition of the boy's poet, Walter Scott, provided by Mr. Jones for his physical and mental sustenance during the somewhat wearing time, he would be compelled to wait in his hiding place.

To be in the woods, on a beautiful summer morning, with Scott's "Marion" or "The Lady of the Lake" for companion, what more can a boy ask? No wonder that the morning slipped by unnoticed, while the fire of the old legends worked itself into Ralph's veins. Far seeing Adolphus Jones! A. B.! Ralph saw nothing, heard nothing, till Marmon's stormy career was done. The searchers passed, and repassed almost beneath him, but he did not see them. They shouted to each other through the woods, but he did not hear them. The drone of bees, the whirr of the crickets, the rustling of the trees, today made no impression on him. He was with Marmon!

But the story came to a close, and as the strain of interest released him, he shut the book with a sigh of satisfaction, and looked about him. No one was near, and he became dimly conscious, though he had not noticed at the time, that the searching party had given up looking for him in this direction, as Adolphus had said they would.

He glanced toward the sun, and saw from its position that it was past midday.

He climbed down, though not without some difficulty, for he found on his return from the realm of absorbing romance that he was thoroughly stiff from his cramped position. He was soon stretched, however, and prepared to go on.

After about half an hour's walk he heard a voice calling for help, and running forward found a gentleman struggling with a tramp. Ralph seized a stick the tramp had dropped, and struck him a blow on the head which laid him senseless.

"Thanks, my boy! Only don't be so vigorous next time. You might have killed the fellow."

The greeting was odd, but there was no mistaking the hearty grip the gentleman gave Ralph as he shook his hand.

"I'm Dr. Sherwood. Perhaps you've heard of me. No? Well, it's no matter. We'll just trice this fellow up and then leave him to come to. He's not hurt."

The doctor had stooped and examined the cut Ralph had made, and was now rapidly unwinding the rope that served to keep the tramp's

clothes from falling to pieces, and had soon tied his hands and feet with it.

"What are you going to do with him, doctor?" asked Ralph.

"John Varley, the constable, is due along this road in a few minutes, so I'll just pin my card to this gentleman, stand him up against the side of the road and let Varley take him in."

The doctor meanwhile brought water from the little stream that trickled along the side of the road, and bathed the tramp's face. It was probably the first water the man had felt for months, and the strange sensation rapidly brought him around.

The doctor and Ralph were just going to lift him up, to stand him against the tree, and the doctor was explaining his programme to the man, when the sound of wheels was heard.

"Ah, there's Varley," said the doctor, "we'll stop him and explain."

In a moment that important official drove up with his cart.

"Here Varley, I've got a prisoner for you," said the doctor.

"What, another! Some one told me there was a feller caught yesterday, burglar feller," and Varley growled as he thought of the double honor his visit to his daughter had lost him. Two prisoners in twenty four hours! And there hadn't been a prisoner in the village for two years.

"What's he'd been doin' doc?"

"He wanted a quarter, and when I refused him, he tried to take it by force. He is a big fellow or I should have just dusted things with him."

The doctor was small, but powerfully built. "But he was mad, and was going to dust things with me, when my young friend here came up and knocked him down with his own club. Take him with you and I'll appear against him tomorrow."

"Be you a stranger in these parts?" asked Varley turning to Ralph. "Yes? Well, I just guess you'll have to come with me as a witness," he went on, anxious to arrest some one and redeem his lost reputation.

But the doctor, very much to Ralph's relief, protested loudly against such an arrangement, and promised to be responsible for Ralph's appearance when he was wanted.

"He'll stop with me tonight," said he, and would not listen to Ralph's protests. So the tramp was put into the cart, and the three walked slowly back toward the village.

"Ye ain't heard nothin' of the burglar feller, have yer, doctor?" asked Varley.

"No, but perhaps our young friend here may know."

"No, that is—I've heard nothing today. I've been in the woods since early dawn, and was so interested in my book that I did not notice the time passing till I finished, and that was only a few minutes before I met you, Dr. Sherwood."

"Ye said not today. Did ye hear anythin' yes'day?"

"Some one was arrested yesterday on a charge of stealing valuable papers from a lady living near the village, but I don't think it was the right person."

"Oh, ye don't. An' mayhap ye don't mind saying why ye don't?" asked Varley, who was feeling distinctly unamiable.

But just here the road to the doctor's house branched from the main road, and the conversation was carried no farther.

The doctor and Ralph walked on some distance, the doctor talking pleasantly all the way, till they came to the house. It was a pretty and well kept house, and the doctor seemed not a little proud of it, as he ushered Ralph through the gate.

CHAPTER V.

RALPH MEETS GRACE HERNDEN AND MAKES A RESOLVE.

The chief doctor in the district, and that district including many well to do families, Dr. Sherwood was by no means badly provided with this world's goods. He was not old,

scarcely forty five, and yet had no inconsiderable practice. He had succeeded his father, and so was in favor with the older families, and his skill and good nature made him a prime favorite with all whom he came in contact.

He had married well, and had one child living, a girl of fifteen. Mrs. Sherwood was a confirmed invalid, and she and her daughter were constantly seen driving about the country in their little low pony carriage, and were as constantly welcome and as popular as the doctor himself.

Ralph was duly presented to Mrs. Sherwood and her daughter, and to May Sherwood's friend Grace Hernden, and her mother. This Mrs. Hernden, they soon learned, was the lady who had been robbed, and Ralph listened eagerly to what she had to say about the theft.

Ralph himself was not usually shy, but he felt himself blushing crimson as Dr. Sherwood gave exaggerated accounts of the encounter with the tramp, and Ralph's part in it. But Mrs. Sherwood soon put him at his ease, and before they went to dinner, Ralph felt quite at home. He had told the doctor as much of his story as he thought necessary, reserving all mention of his imprisonment.

At dinner, Ralph found himself seated next to May Sherwood, and directly opposite Grace. Both girls were pretty, and perhaps it was only that arrangement at dinner which made him conclude Grace was the prettier. She being opposite to him, he could notice closely, while his neighbor, May, he could not observe without seeming to be rude.

So it happened that many times during that dinner he looked across the table, more than once catching Miss Grace observing him, and causing her to drop her eyes and blush; and before the dinner was over he was firmly convinced she was the prettiest, and nicest girl he had ever met.

Of course Dr. Sherwood's adventure, and Ralph's share in it, were fully discussed, and Mrs. Hernden said banteringly, when the subject was talked out:

"Since you seem to be so handy at capturing evil doers, Master Walpole, you might help me catch the thief that stole my papers yesterday."

What could Ralph say? He had just decided Grace was the prettiest girl he had met, and he knew her eyes were upon him at that moment. Like a true knight, he undertook the quest in solemn earnest, though Mrs. Hernden had intended only jest.

So he turned the project over and over in his mind, and resolved that it would be best for him to explain everything to the doctor and Mrs. Hernden, and trust to the chance that he would be believed. He had some hopes, too, that Mrs. Hernden might recognize the thief, and be able to assure him that she did not suspect him.

He lost no time in carrying out his idea. Dr. Sherwood was ready enough to listen and advise.

"You were foolish, my boy, to run away," he said, after Ralph had told him all, "but I ought not to complain, for you wouldn't have been at hand to help me if you had stayed in jail. But I think it's all right, for Mrs. Hernden is certain she would recognize the person she suspects. I'll go and call her." And Ralph was left alone in the doctor's study.

Mrs. Hernden, when she heard Ralph's story, at once set him at rest.

"You needn't be a bit afraid," she said, "you are not in the least like the young man I feel sure took the papers. Dr. Sherwood will arrange that tomorrow, so you won't be troubled at all. It was unfortunate you ran away, for it would make people believe you were the real thief and you may have a little annoyance."

"Would you mind telling me about the papers?" asked Ralph, thinking of his contemplated quest.

"Why, no," said Mrs. Hernden,

amused that he should take her just in such earnest. "It was about one o'clock yesterday when I got home from making a call. As I drove up the road I noticed a stranger, apparently a gentleman, coming out of the gate leading to my house. Naturally, I stopped the carriage, and asked if he wished to see me. 'No, thank you,' he said; 'I had mistaken the house and wished to ask the way,' and he told me he was looking for Judge Hunter's. I told him how to get there, and he thanked me, and went on.

"I thought no more about him till two hours later, when I missed the papers. Then I asked the girl about him, and she said she hadn't seen any one like him, and no one had asked her the way to Judge Hunter's. So I felt sure he was the thief. I drove right over to Judge Hunter, and he had seen no such fellow, and knew of none. And then Mr. Jinks said he thought he knew where to find the thief. I suppose he meant you."

"Did he take anything else?" asked Ralph.

"No, only the papers. And they are only private papers, letters, and old accounts of no use to any one but me. I suppose he had no time to see what he had stolen, and thought they were valuable. I don't care so much about the thief if I can only get back the papers."

"What was he like?"

"About twenty two years old, with light stubby hair, blue eyes with gold spectacles, a gray suit, and tan boots," said Mrs. Hernden, mixing up the man and his dress indiscriminately. It was the exact description of Adolphus Jones.

Ralph debated in his mind if it would not be better to tell all about Jones, but again his ideas of the methods of mythical heroes of innumerable boys' stories, outweighed his common sense, and he decided to follow up Adolphus Jones, A. B., after the manner of the chief detective in the detective stories; and he held his tongue, and was again launched on a useless current of adventure.

But the doctor was more matter of fact than Ralph, and solved the question of Ralph's journey by announcing he would himself write to St. Louis, explaining the matter, and Ralph should stay with him in the meantime.

So Ralph returned to the parlor, and felt proud of himself as he thought of what he was going to do, all for the sake of Grace Hernden—whom he had met only an hour ago, and might not meet again. Poor fellow, he was only one of the many, and a boy is easily sent off on a wild goose chase for the gaining of the approving glance of a bright eye, "which profeth him nothing."

The girls were planning an excursion for the next day to Gadsville, where there was to be a sort of county fair, at which there were to be some athletic contests, wherein May's cousins were to take part. Ralph was delighted at the idea of accompanying them, and attributed his pleasure to the thought that he was to spend a day in Grace's company, while the truth was, he was a true boy, whose mind ran on athletic pursuits. And so he went to bed, and dreamed half the night that he had carried off all the prizes in the contest of the morrow, and woke up, thinking he had dreamed of Grace all night.

CHAPTER VI.

A SUDDEN FALL FROM A HIGH ESTATE.

"You'd better start without me, girls," said the doctor. Ralph can drive you, and I'll meet you there."

The party had been about to set out for the fair, when the doctor was sent for to attend a patient, and not wishing to keep the young folks from their pleasure, he decided they had better go without him.

"Here, jump in, Ralph," he went on, "and show the girls what you know about driving!"

So Ralph took the reins, and was

so nervous at the idea of driving with the girl with whom he concluded he was in love, that he began by trying to drive through the unopened gate. But he soon calmed down, and all went well.

What a thing it is to think one self in love! Ralph never knew what the country he drove through was like, and many a time turned the wrong way because May told him which way to turn, and he had ears for none but Grace. But Grace always put him right. And yet if he had carefully turned it over in his mind he would soon have seen that the only cause of his preference was that arrangement at the dinner table, and that had he sat next to Grace and opposite May, May would have been to him the prettier, the more lovable; for this youngster really thought himself in love.

Perhaps, too, the girls were partly to blame for his delusion, for every word he spoke was received with eagerness for more, and many were the protestations, at the end of the drive, that the time had passed "Oh! so pleasantly!"

But the storm comes after the sunshine, and to Ralph it came in the form of the green-eyed monster, jealousy. On the fair grounds May introduced her cousins, Harry and Will Burton, and Ralph noticed that Harry dangled conveniently around Grace.

It is part of the inconsistency of love to dislike others for liking what you like yourself, and Ralph and Harry disliked each other at first sight, each because he saw the other liked Grace Hernden.

"He thinks a great deal too much of himself. I'd like to take some of it out of him," was Ralph's reflection, as he glanced at Harry.

"He puts on a lot of airs for a fellow nobody knows anything about," was Harry's thought, as he glanced at Ralph.

What they said was not quite the same.

"What are they going to do?" asked Ralph. "What are the events?"

"Not much for us fellows," said Harry, a little discontentedly; "most of it is horse racing and trotting for the farmers. We have a few races and an archery contest. Do you shoot with a bow?"

"I use to, last year."

"Would you like to shoot in this match?" asked Harry, with an inward gleam of mischief, as he thought of the certainty that Will would take the archery prize.

"I have no bow."

"I'll lend you one; and a suit, too, if you want to join any of the races."

"I should like to, if Miss Grace and Miss May would excuse me."

"Oh, Grace and May won't mind, would you, girls?" said Harry. And Ralph, noticing the familiar address, made a mental vow he would yet square up accounts with this obnoxious cousin.

So the girls were installed under the care of Mrs. Burton, and Ralph and his new acquaintance went to find if it were yet possible to enter the races.

They had no trouble in making the necessary arrangements, and Ralph was assigned a place in three events, two races, and the archery contest. Both Ralph and Harry were inwardly chuckling over the discomfiture of each other, for Ralph was a splendid runner, and no mean shot with the bow, while Harry felt confident of his own power to win both races, and of his brother's skill in archery.

During the trotting matches, the boys were too much interested in their own affairs to take much interest in anything else. Each was reserving himself for the coming contest, and when it came, each was so busy watching a certain spot in the stand, where Mrs. Burton sat, that they both paused a second before starting, and were the last in the race.

It was a short dash, and from the beginning Harry had the best of it.

He quickly passed those who had beaten him at the start, and was soon a long way ahead of the rest, winning easily, Ralph not being even a third.

One of the evils of success is that it does not foster sympathy, and Harry was openly triumphant over his victory. As for Ralph, he would have taken his defeat philosophically but for that particular spot on the stand, where he saw two handkerchiefs waving at Harry. So he felt miserable, and spiteful enough, and took no interest in the things of the world till the last race was called.

This was a longer run, covering over two miles, and it needed little skill to discern after the first half mile that the real race lay between Harry and Ralph. For the first mile Harry kept just a few yards ahead, and all Ralph's spurts seemed useless to reduce that lead. Each time as he passed the grand stand, he saw only one face, and each time he set his teeth, and made another spurt.

At last he began to gain ground. As the last quarter was reached, he was almost up with his opponent, and was congratulating himself. But he looked too much at that face on the stand, and almost tripped up, losing what ground he seemed to have won. Of course he won, however—the heroes of stories of this kind always win in the end—and Harry was in his turn discomfited.

And so it was with the archery match. Ralph shot carelessly at first, each shot coming nearer and nearer the bullseye, till his last one landed plumb in the center.

But he did not take the prize, having scored a draw with Will Burton, and then withdrew. As he was not jealous of Will, and rather liked him,—he would rather have liked Harry but for the jealousy—he was contented to show he could make the best shot, and let his opponent take the prize.

Then they went back to the girls, who had been telling Mrs. Burton and her daughter Bessie all about Ralph's adventures with the tramp. And so Ralph was the hero of the hour, and the center of an admiring group.

Pretty soon he knew about every one in the neighborhood worth knowing, and had invitations to visit more people than he could well remember the names of. And in the midst of his triumph, a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder, and John Varley's harsh voice broke in:

"Say, youngster, if you've got through doin' the grand here among decent people, where you don't belong, I'll guess I'll take you back to the jail you slipped so neatly, where you do belong!"

The effect of Varley's words was striking enough to please even that dignitary. Involuntarily the people around Ralph fell back from the supposed criminal.

Grace was the first to speak. "I don't believe a word of it," she said, "he doesn't belong in jail."

"That's just where he do belong, miss, 'n' I just got him in time to stop him from elopin' with you 'n' Miss May!"

Of course Grace blushed and held her peace at this astounding statement; and Ralph recovered from his astonishment to ask Varley where Dr. Sherwood was.

"Never you mind, Dr. Sherwood. You just come right along with me." Ralph turned to Grace.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "It's all right; I shall be set at liberty as soon as Dr. Sherwood comes. It's all right."

"I'm sure it is," said Grace, and May chimed in: "We'll just go right back and find papa."

Harry didn't feel so sure about it, and was secretly pleased at his rival's apparent downfall, the more so that Dr. Sherwood's absence made it possible for him to drive May and Grace back to Dr. Sherwood's.

So Ralph bade good by to his new acquaintances, assuring them it was

all a mistake, and would soon be cleared up. And back to Porson's Hollow they drove, Harry and the girls in one wagon, and Ralph and Varley in the other.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 565.]

Belmont;

OR,

MARK WARE'S COLLEGE LIFE.

BY WILLIAM D. MOFFAT,

Author of "Dixman's Luck," "Brad Mattoon," "The Crimson Banner," etc.

CHAPTER XXII.

CINCINNATUS ROGERS' TROUBLE

Mark stood a moment in surprise, staring at Rogers. In that brief space of time the latter caught sight of Mark, and immediately his manner changed. He drew his hands quickly out of his pockets, and thrust the soft hat, which he had been grasping in one hand, upon his head. Then he came forward in an embarrassed, awkward manner.

"Why, hullo, Ware!" he said. "Hullo, Rogers. What on earth are you doing down here at this hour?"

"Well, I had some things I kind o' wanted to think over by myself, so I came out here where I wouldn't be disturbed. You see I haven't any room in the college. This is my room down here. Here's where I come at noon in warm weather to eat my lunch, and—"

"But what are you doing up in the college at this hour? Why aren't you at home?"

Rogers' face clouded slightly. He came up close to Mark.

"It is queer, I know, Ware. I suppose it seems kind o' crazy to you—my coming 'way out here at night; but I have something on my mind, something that worries me like blazes, and I—well, I thought this would be a good place to think it all over."

Mark watched Rogers anxiously while he was speaking. Anything like worry or anxiety was the last thing in the world Mark ever would have associated with the easy-going, good-natured Yankee, and Rogers' evident distress surprised and disturbed him. His sympathies, always keen for a fellow in trouble, were fully aroused.

"Excuse me, Rogers, please, for intruding on you," he exclaimed. "But I was curious and—all that you know—" Mark hesitated.

"Oh, yes, I know," answered Rogers. "But now I'm here, can't I do something—can't I?"

"No," interrupted Rogers. "It's something a fellow has got to fight out alone. It's very kind of you to offer—it's mighty good of you—mighty good; but, but—well, there are some things, you know, we don't care to talk about—"

"Don't say another word—I understand," said Mark quickly. Then slipping his arm through one of Rogers' he went on. "But you must not stay out here any longer—the nights are damp, and you'll catch cold. Come right up to my room."

"Oh no," said Rogers, drawing back, "I don't want to bother you."

"Better nothing—come right along. Why, you can't be thinking of going 'way out to your home at this hour of the night."

"No!—no!—not that—I couldn't do that, tonight," exclaimed Rogers so quickly that Mark looked at him curiously.

"Then what's the matter with spending the night in my room?" he asked. "Well, there's Morgan, and—"

"Herbert is out of town, so there's plenty of room, and no trouble. Come on, old fellow."

Rogers hesitated a moment, and then allowed himself to be led up to Mark's room.

Thoroughly respecting Rogers' reticence about the matter that was troubling him, Mark made no further inquiries, but set himself to making

his classmate comfortable, and cheering him up.

Though the hour was late neither of the boys thought of going to bed. They sat there talking of one thing and another until nearly midnight, first on football matters, then other college interests, till it seemed as if every subject they had in common must be exhausted.

During all this Mark talked away briskly and brightly, while Rogers responded slowly in brief answers, waking up to interest at times, but always relapsing into an abstracted mood that baffled all Mark's efforts to dispel. At length there came a pause in the conversation.

"It must be quite a trip for you to come in to college every morning and go out at night," said Mark after a long silence.

"Oh I don't mind it—I'm used to it," answered Rogers. "I've always lived on the farm."

"How far out is it?"

"Two miles. In bad weather I always ride in and out, but clear days I like the walk."

"Do you know, I like walking," said Mark. "I've a great notion to walk out with you some afternoon."

Rogers moved a little uneasily.

"Guess you wouldn't find it worth your walk," he said. "You see, we're plain farming people, and we don't put on much style—"

"Why, great Scott, you don't think I have cheek enough to invite myself to visit you! I merely meant to walk out and back, just for the exercise," said Mark.

"Oh, that's all right, I couldn't have you come out without inviting you in. Mother would never forgive me. She'd never let you go without stopping a while and taking a glass of milk, or cider, or something. That's her way, you know."

"And a mighty good way," answered Mark with a smile. "I wouldn't mind that at all."

"Well, if you really think you'd like to I'd be glad to have you come out with me. Mother likes company. She get's lonesome out there all day without me."

"Are you the whole family?"

"No. There's my brother, Sam. He looks after things around the place. But mother has always been used to having me near by, and now she sees mighty little of me—first thing in the morning and last thing at night, that's all. I tell her it's all her fault—she would have me go to college."

"Why, didn't you care to go to college?"

"Oh, yes," answered Rogers slowly. "but I wasn't sure I would make much of a success with books. I told mother that I would be a good sight more use on the farm, but she wouldn't listen to it. You see, mother is a mighty smart woman—had a college education herself and done a lot of reading. She was set on my going into college, so I told her I would do my best, and I did. I got in without conditions just on the strength of my public school preparation and the help mother gave me. She kept me right at it and used to go over my books with me. Then when my preparation was all solid, she came in with me, and together we went to see the 'old governor' about examinations. The 'old governor' was a friend of ours, and he arranged everything. Without him I wouldn't have come to college at all."

"Why, how was that?" asked Mark.

"Well, you see college is rather expensive—and there isn't much money in farming, you know, so I said to mother in the beginning: 'My place is on the farm here looking after you. If you're bound to have me go to college I'll do it on one condition, that it don't bring you in for any expense.' Well, she thought that over a while, and then she came in and saw the 'old governor.' The result was she got for me one of the scholarships, so then I couldn't say anything further. I suppose you know what the college scholarships are—"

"Oh, yes," answered Mark quietly. "I am a scholarship student myself."

CHAPTER XXIII.
CONFIDENCES.

This simple statement of Mark's seemed to stagger Rogers. For a moment he stared at his host in utter amazement, his eyes and mouth wide open.

"You—you, a scholarship student!" he exclaimed. Then looking around the room he went on: "Why, I—I thought you and Morgan were both wealthy."

"Herbert is—I am not," answered Mark. "I room with him because we are chums, and his father wanted us to be together. I couldn't have come to college but for Herbert's father."

Mark then told Rogers something of his life: how he had once lived in New York; had lost his parents and almost penniless had tramped his way out to Medford; had there found a home with the Otises; had made numerous friends and secured a position in the law office of Mr. Clark Lewis; how, finally, through the influence and assistance of Colonel Morgan he had been enabled to come to college.

It was a confidence that Mark, under ordinary circumstances would never have dreamed of opening. He was usually very reticent about his own affairs. But his interest in Rogers had drawn him out.

He was very fond of Rogers. He recognized in the big, rough country boy, many noble and manly qualities, and he admired him sincerely. He was determined to become better acquainted—determined to make a good friend of him. Now seemed to be his chance. Rogers was in trouble of some kind. Perhaps he could help him.

While Mark had been talking on indifferent subjects he had watched Rogers closely, and noticed how worried and distressed he seemed. The thought had suddenly occurred to him: "Perhaps if I tell him something of myself it may draw him out. If I show confidence in him I may win his confidence."

Acting on this impulse he had at the first opportunity in their conversation, spoken quite freely of himself. He was gratified at the effect this seemed to have on Rogers. The latter listened attentively, and watched him with growing interest throughout the narrative.

"So there, you see," said Mark in conclusion. "I'm little better off than you."

"Well, if that ain't strange—and I thought all the time you were one of the wealthy fellows of our class."

"Appearances don't always count, you know."

"No, I suppose not," said Rogers, relapsing into thoughtful silence.

Mark watched him a moment and then determined to make a straightforward move.

"Have money matters anything to do with—your trouble, Rogers?" he asked hesitatingly. Then he hurried on. "What I want to say is, if they have, I think perhaps I might be some help. I have a little money. It isn't much—just what I could save last year to meet some of my college expenses, but I don't need it all now. If—"

Rogers stopped him.

"No,—no—" he exclaimed. "You couldn't help me—at least I wouldn't let you. I can't tell you how much I thank you, but I couldn't let you help me."

"Then it is a money trouble," said Mark.

"Yes, I don't mind telling you that much," answered Rogers. "And—and, since you've told me so much about yourself, I don't mind telling you something more. I shall have to leave college."

Mark sat up straight with a start.

"Oh say, Rogers, you can't mean that! Why, think of all you lose!"

"Think of it! I've been thinking of it all the afternoon and evening—but

that's the least of all the trouble. I could give up college easy enough if that was all, but it isn't. It's the trouble out home that's worrying me. Here's the whole thing in short: Two years ago crops and things went wrong and we needed money. Our place was mortgaged to get it. I supposed from what mother said to me that the interest was being paid and everything going smoothly. Today I find out for the first time that back interest is due for a year.

"Here I've been at college spending part of the little money we have on books while that debt has been running up. It's a mighty hard man that holds the mortgage, and he told me today he would foreclose and sell us out. There's the fix we're in. Do you wonder I couldn't go home tonight? Mother doesn't know of it yet, and—and I haven't the courage to break it to her."

"Your mother doesn't know of it?" exclaimed Mark curiously, "and a mortgage, too—why, how is that?"

"Of course she knows of the mortgage, but she doesn't know that the interest is unpaid. That is the part I—I can't exactly tell you about. There isn't much business about mother—and—and things have gone all wrong. I never knew of it till today. The only thing for me to do now is to leave college and try to find some way to meet that debt."

"How much is it?" asked Mark, thinking of his limited savings.

"About four hundred dollars in interest alone."

Mark shook his head. He could be of no assistance, that was plain.

"There ought to be some way out of it," he said. "Have you talked with the 'old governor'?"

"No, I couldn't do that," answered Rogers. "He has already helped me in several ways. I have gone to him several times when I needed money. I didn't want to ask mother, and I knew I could pay the governor back by doing work in the summer. I couldn't ask him for more."

"When does the—when will you have to make a settlement?" asked Mark.

"If we don't settle up within this month, the mortgage will be foreclosed on the first of May—just the season for moving," added Rogers bitterly.

"Don't talk that way, old fellow," exclaimed Mark. "It sounds dreadful. There must be some way to solve the difficulty. Don't be discouraged. There's nearly a month to plan in."

"Yes, nearly a month, but that seems a mighty short time to work out a problem like this. It beats all Euclid and algebra. I don't dare to tell mother how bad it is. It would break her heart. I've got to work it out alone—somehow."

Mark was puzzled and confused. He hardly knew how to answer Rogers, for it was plain that the latter was holding something back—something he was unwilling to talk about.

How was it that Rogers' mother knew nothing about this trouble? How was it that Rogers himself knew nothing of it till this late day? How had these difficulties accumulated while both, the most deeply interested parties, were ignorant of them? Mark could not understand it—and, not understanding it, he scarcely knew what suggestion to offer. He would have done anything to help Rogers, but there seemed to be absolutely no way to render assistance.

"Well, old fellow," he said, "after a few moments' thought. 'It does look mighty bad, I must say, and I sympathize with you with all my heart. I wish there was some way I could help you. I have very little money myself, but I have wealthy, influential friends, and perhaps I can do something for you—I mean to try.'"

"No!" exclaimed Rogers. "If I had thought of that I wouldn't have told you anything. It was only after you told me about yourself and I found that you knew what trouble was that I spoke about my affairs. I couldn't take any assistance from you—it's too

much like charity. What claim have I on you or your—"

"The best claim in the world," exclaimed Mark warmly. "The claim that any good friend has on another when he is in trouble."

"Thank you for that," answered Rogers. "It does me good. But as I said, this is something I must work out alone."

Mark was absolutely baffled. He could say no more. Rogers seemed determined to shoulder his own load in silence, and Mark could not help admiring him for it.

"Well, here's one thing I can do anyway," he said, changing his tone. "I can give you a good night's rest. I'll fix you comfortably in my room, and I'll take Herbert's for the night. Promise me now you'll go to sleep and won't worry. Perhaps by tomorrow morning things will look brighter."

"All right—goodness knows I'm tired and ready for bed," said Rogers, rising.

"And promise me another thing," said Mark. "If you see any way that I can help you, you'll let me know."

"Yes, Ware, I will," answered Rogers earnestly, shaking Mark's hand. "And I thank you with—all my heart." Each word came out slowly and fervently.

A moment later and the two had parted for the night.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

Mark's first thought the next morning was of Rogers, and he hurried out of bed the moment his eyes were open, to see how his guest had slept. The bed in the adjoining room was empty. Rogers had gone.

While Mark was puzzling over this sudden departure his eyes fell on a note pinned fast to the pillow. It ran as follows: "Please forgive me for slipping away. I made up my mind early this morning that I ought to go home, and I didn't want to wake you up to tell you so. Thank you a thousand times for your kindness. I will never forget it. Rogers."

Mark tore up the note slowly.

"Well, I suppose that virtually closes the chapter as far as I am concerned—and I suppose after all, it's just as well, for what could I do? Nothing but sympathize.

"It's awful," he added to himself a few minutes later. "I thought I knew what trouble was, but here's a fellow no older than I carrying a load big enough to crush a man. Poor old Rogers!"

He was thinking of the matter while dressing, and during all the morning, at breakfast, at chapel, and during the quiet hours of the Sunday afternoon.

"Fight it alone if you choose, old fellow," he said to himself several times. "All the same I'm going to keep an eye on you, and perhaps I can help you in spite of yourself."

But a week more now remained before the spring vacation. During this time Mark received no word from Herbert. No doubt the latter's time was pretty thoroughly taken up.

The glee club made an extensive tour and was on the go all the time. That would leave little chance for letter writing. So Mark explained Herbert's silence, though he could not help experiencing a slight feeling of disappointment. It did seem as if Herbert might have dropped him just a line or two, if only to let him know that everything was going well with him.

The weather was now warm enough for out door life. Baseball, tennis, and boating drew groups of enthusiasts to the ball field, the courts, and the river. Others, more lazily inclined, spent their leisure hours on the campus, loitering about on the benches and grass, playing mumble-peg, reading, or chatting.

It was on a Friday afternoon, the last day of the term, that a group of about a dozen freshmen sat around one of the old cannons, taking things easy, and enjoying the last hour of

one of the most beautiful days of the spring. Among them, side by side, sat Mark and Rogers, the former telling of his first experience in a single shell on the river, while the latter sat silently whittling a piece of wood. Since that eventful night Rogers and Mark had seen each other daily, but nothing had been said about the trouble. Once only Mark had asked his classmate how things were going, and Rogers had made simply the brief response: "Oh, as well as could be expected, thanks."

From the way he spoke, Mark gathered that affairs had not bettered in the least, and his heart fairly ached as he noticed the sad little smile with which Rogers answered him.

"I'll not torture him with questions," Mark had resolved then and there. "If I can help him, well and good—until then, I'll keep my mouth shut."

He said no more, therefore, but kept with Rogers as much as circumstances permitted, and endeavored in every way to convey to him his feelings of sympathy and good will. Rogers carried himself in his accustomed good humored, easy manner, and none of his classmates except Mark were aware what an effort it cost him to do so.

At this moment several of them began teasing and poking fun at him, and old "Cincinnatus" responded in his slow, nonchalant way as if nothing in the world could ruffle him.

During the mingled exchange of jokes and laughter Bobby Barlow suddenly exclaimed: "Say, boys look at that guy over there! How's that for a distillery!"

Everyone looked in the direction indicated. A dirtily dressed man of middle age, with a battered hat pulled down over his eyes, was staggering along the long walk on the opposite side of the campus.

"Jerusalem, what a jag!" exclaimed Tracy Hollis, as the drunken creature gave a lurch to one side. "It must have taken a week for him to gather all that."

"What does the old brat want on the campus anyhow?" said another of the group. "Some one ought to fire him out into the street, double quick—where's proctor Murray, I wonder."

"Let's give him a shout," exclaimed Bobby Barlow, and with that several of the boys called out in unison:

"Hey there, get out of here, you old tramp!" The man paused and balancing himself unsteadily, gazed stupidly across the campus at the boys. Then he raised his hat with difficulty and waving it over his head gave a feeble, maudlin sort of a cheer that set several of the boys off into shouts of laughter.

"Good heavens!" cried Rogers in a tone of voice that fairly alarmed Mark.

"What's the matter?" he asked, turning towards his companion.

Rogers said nothing but sprang to his feet, his lips set and his face quite pale.

Mark was the only one to notice this strange conduct. The other boys were busy shouting and laughing at the besotted creature across the campus, who stood there, waving his hat and swaying backward and forward in a silly, drunken fashion that seemed to some of the group irresistibly comical.

Mark watched Rogers closely and saw him clench his fists as if in absolute agony; then hurry away across the campus. Impelled by an irresistible curiosity, Mark rose and followed him.

"Here, where are you going, Cincinnatus?" called several of the boys.

Rogers paid no attention but hurried on, straight for the drunken man, who had now replaced his hat, and was staggering along up the walk toward the college buildings. As he walked unsteadily past the college offices, proctor Murray, who was standing just inside the doorway, suddenly caught sight of him, and hurrying down the stone steps, seized him roughly by the collar.

"Judgment!" cried one of the boys

across the campus, as proctor Murray caught the man.

"Striker out!" answered Bobby Barlow, and the crowd laughed again.

It would have gone pretty roughly with the dazed and besotted creature, for proctor Murray had a summary way of handling such intruders on the campus, but at this moment Rogers came up. The proctor had dragged the man about fifty feet, just around the corner of the building, when Rogers hurried to his side.

"Don't, Murray!" cried Rogers, as the proctor gave his prisoner a rough shake. "Can't you see who he is?"

The proctor paused and looked closely at the man's face.

"My goodness, Dick!" he exclaimed. "I didn't notice. Here, let me take him into my room where he won't be seen."

"No," exclaimed Rogers. "Give him to me."

"But what will you do with him? You can't take him along the streets—there are your classmates, boy—you wouldn't want them to see—"

"Give him to me," repeated Rogers. "I have my carriage and the horse hitched around back of the college offices. I'll take him home with me."

The proctor glanced quickly around. They were now out of sight of the group of boys on the front campus. Mark was the only observer—an unwilling one now, but held to the spot as if powerless to move.

"All right, my boy," said proctor Murray. "Let me help you."

"No, I don't want any help. I can manage him," replied Rogers. Then thrusting his arm under that of the man, he drew him firmly along and a moment later passed around behind the college office building.

Mark stared in speechless amazement after their retreating forms. The whole truth was beginning to dawn on him—the trouble that Rogers would not speak of—it was all becoming clear. As proctor Murray turned away Mark stopped him.

"Tell me," he said hardly knowing how to ask the question, "Is that—is that Rogers—Rogers' father?"

Murray nodded slowly. "Yes—God pity him—and God pity the boy, too," said the proctor feigning. "It's a terrible thing for him—a terrible thing. Think of having to own that for a father—and right before his classmates, too. They didn't see it all, I hope."

"No," said Mark, looking back. "They could see nothing here. I'm the only one who saw—and I know a good deal about Rogers already."

"It's a bad business—bad—bad—the way that man has gone to pieces," went on the proctor, shaking his head sadly. "Six years ago there wasn't a likelier man around Belmont than Ben Rogers—and now, well, I hear that even his farm is mortgaged to old Hank Martin, the keeper of the tavern where Ben spends most of his time. I hope it isn't true, for Hank is a mighty mean man in money dealings, and I wouldn't like to see Ben in his clutches, if only for his wife and family's sake."

Then the proctor walked slowly back toward his office.

Mark hurried away to his room. He felt absolutely sick at heart, and wanted to be alone.

Once in his room, he threw himself down on the sofa for a long time. The scene he had just witnessed came back to him again and again, laden with the saddest significance. Rogers' silence about his father, his failure to explain why his mother knew nothing of the trouble threatening her—it was all clear enough now. That staggering, drunken creature explained it all.

It was he who had brought on the trouble, he who had mortgaged the farm, and he who had squandered the money that was to have paid the interest, probably deceiving both mother and son till the man who held the mortgage pressed them, and the whole truth came out.

And this was Rogers' trouble. Mark felt a lump gather in his throat. He

swallowed it with a gulp, and sprang up.

"My mind is made up," he exclaimed aloud. "I'm going to meddle in something that may be none of my business. I'm not going to wait any longer. Tomorrow the term closes and I go home to Medford. Tomorrow night I'm going to have a talk with Mr. Lewis."

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 568.]

A Bad Lot.

BY ARTHUR LEE PUTNAM,

Author of "Ben Bruce," "Cast Upon the Breakers," "Number 91," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XII.—Continued.

BERNARD MEETS A FRIEND OF HIS FATHER'S.

The next day Bernard kept his appointment. He had been in the hotel—now torn down—but five minutes when his acquaintance of the day before made his appearance.

"By the way," said he. "I forgot to tell you my name."

"I thought of that after we parted," said Bernard.

"It is Alvin Franklin. There is a tradition in our family that we are related to Benjamin Franklin. I can't certify to it, but I hope it is true. Here is my card."

"Thank you, sir. I should have remembered it without a card, but I will keep it."

"Referring to my conversation with you yesterday I have made some inquiries of my business acquaintances."

"What did you learn, sir?"

"That his reputation is not of the best. He is not a man who is above suspicion, but he takes care to keep within the law. In fact, as far as I can learn, he is a tricky man."

"I hope that will never be said of me, Mr. Franklin."

"It could never be said of your father. He was as straight and honorable a man as ever lived."

"I am proud to hear you say so," said Bernard, flushing with pleasure.

"I may be a little hasty, but I can't help feeling that in some way Mr. McCracken has wronged you?"

"In what way, sir?"

"I think he has not accounted to you for property your father placed in his hands."

"The same thought came into my mind, Mr. Franklin, but I did not wish to suspect my guardian with nothing to go upon."

"He seems to be just the man to cheat an orphan. A man who is dishonest in one way is likely to be dishonest in another."

"Even if it is so I suppose I have no way of proving it."

"Probably not. If there were any proofs of the trust reposed by your father, Mr. McCracken would be likely to destroy them. I will think over the matter, and if I can hit upon any course that would benefit you I will let you know."

Bernard and his new friend talked further of his father. It was a delight to the boy to meet some one who had known the parents of whom he could scarcely remember anything. All that Mr. Franklin had to say of the elder Brooks rounded out to his credit, and this was naturally gratifying to his son.

When they parted, Bernard asked, "Shall I mention to Mr. McCracken meeting you?"

"I think not—at present."

But chance ordered otherwise.

When Bernard was drawing his handkerchief out of his side pocket after supper, he twitched out the card, which fell to the floor.

Mr. McCracken's sharp eye detected it.

"What is that?" he asked.

"A card."

"Of course. What name is on it?"

"Oliver Franklin."

"Who is he? Is it a man you know?"

"Yes, sir. It is an acquaintance of my father."

"When did you see him?"

"Today at the St. Nicholas Hotel."

"Did he talk to you about your father?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he say, and how did he happen to know him?"

Bernard answered this question, but did not think it necessary to speak of the money which his father was said to have left.

Mr. McCracken made no comment, but did not seem pleased. When Bernard went up to bed, he said to himself, "I must get the boy out of the city. This man may tell him too much."

CHAPTER XIII.
PROFESSOR PUFFER.

Three days later Mr. McCracken said to Bernard at the breakfast table: "Well, I have secured a position for you."

"Indeed, sir, what is it?" inquired Bernard with interest. "Is it in the city?"

"No; did you particularly wish to live in the city?"

"No, sir; as long as the position is a good one and is likely to lead to something, I am not particular."

"You are a sensible boy. Let me say, then, that my friend Professor Puffer—Ezra Puffer—perhaps you have heard of him, requires a boy of fair education as secretary and literary assistant. Though he has never seen you, he will take you on my recommendation."

"But, sir," said Bernard, considerably amazed, "am I qualified to be literary assistant to a professor?"

"As to that, I don't think anything will be required beyond the ability of a fair scholar. You have a fair education, I take it."

"Yes, sir."

"You know a little Latin and French, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"And write a good hand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I have no doubt you will suit my friend Puffer."

"Of what is he professor?"

"I can't tell you exactly, but I believe he is interested in antiquities. By the way, he is going to Europe. I suppose you won't object to going with him."

"No, I shall like it," said Bernard in a tone of satisfaction.

"I thought you would. How soon can you be ready?"

"Whenever you wish."

"Professor Puffer will sail tomorrow in a packet ship, and I have promised to take you on board. He is so busy making preparations that he cannot call here."

"I should like to make his acquaintance before I start."

"Why?" asked Mr. McCracken sharply. "Can't you accept him on my recommendation?"

"I hope he isn't like Mr. Snowdon."

"You will find him to be a gentleman. Is that satisfactory?"

"Oh yes, sir. Don't imagine I want to make trouble. Only I had a little curiosity in regard to him, that is all. Have you any idea how I shall be employed?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I can't give you much idea. Your labors will be light, and you will have a chance to see the world. Upon my word, young man, you are very fortunate. If at your age I had such an opportunity I should have been delighted. If, however, you would prefer to go back to the care of Mr. Snowdon, I won't object to gratifying you."

"Oh, no, I am quite satisfied," said Bernard hastily. "I shall certainly prefer Professor Puffer. What is his appearance?"

"I should say that he was about my age. He has but one eye, the other having been destroyed by an accident when he was a young man. I think the other eye is weak, and it is probably for this reason that he requires a secretary."

"Very likely, sir."

"You can pack your valise today, and tomorrow morning I will take you to the vessel."

Mr. Stackpole had left the city, and Bernard did not have an opportunity of seeing his father's old friend Oliver Franklin, so that he was unable to inform either of his departure for Europe. He was sorry for this as he looked upon both as friends, and would like to have had their good wishes.

Somehow he never looked upon his guardian as a friend. The information he had received from Mr. Franklin, moreover, had excited in his mind a suspicion as to Mr. McCracken's honesty.

However, he was to have an opportunity of supporting himself. Mr. McCracken had told him that Professor Puffer would pay him twenty-five dollars a month, besides his board and traveling expenses, and this he rightly considered as an unusual salary for a boy of his age.

About nine o'clock the next morning he started with Mr. McCracken for the ship Vesta. It lay at a North River pier, and half an hour or less brought them to it. It was a ship of fair size, but as Bernard knew very little about ships of any kind—he had never been on one—he was not in a condition to judge on this point.

They boarded the ship, and Mr. McCracken addressed the second mate, whom he knew slightly.

"Is Professor Puffer on board?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; he is in the cabin."

"Thank you."

They proceeded to the cabin where they found the professor. He was a short, rather stout man, with a red face, scanty hair, and a green shade covering the lost eye.

Mr. McCracken went up and shook his hand.

"Professor Puffer," he said, "I have brought Bernard Brooks, your new secretary. I hope he will prove satisfactory."

Professor Puffer turned his glance towards Bernard whom he examined attentively. Then he said in a deep bass voice: "I have taken him on your recommendation." Mr. McCracken. You know what I want. If you say he will suit me I have no doubt he will. Young man, I hope we shall get on well together."

"I hope so, sir."

"Has your guardian acquainted you with the details of your engagement?"

"He hasn't told me exactly what I will have to do."

"You will learn in good time," said the professor with a wave of his hand.

"Whatever the duties are I will try to give you satisfaction."

"All right!"

"You can look about the vessel, Bernard," said Mr. McCracken. "While the professor and I have a little conversation."

"All right, sir, I shall be glad to do so."

So Bernard walked about the ship and watched with interest the preparations for departure. It was all new to him, and he could not help feeling elated when he reflected that he was about to see something of foreign countries, while at the same time earning his living.

He was obliged to confess that Professor Puffer did not come up to his expectations. In fact, he looked like anything but a literary man or professor. Bernard had imagined a tall, slender man, with a high intellectual brow, a pale face, an air of refinement and cultivation, and a quiet manner. Professor Puffer was quite the reverse. He looked more like a sailor, and his red face seemed to indicate that he was not a member of a total abstinence society.

"I never in the world should think that he was a professor," reflected Bernard. "However appearances are not always to be trusted, and he may be very intellectual, though he certainly does not look so. I do hope we shall get along well together."

He was interrupted in his reflections by the appearance of Mr. McCracken on deck.

"I shall have to say good by, Bernard," said his guardian, "as the vessel is about ready to start. I hope you will be a good boy and give satisfaction to Professor Puffer. If you do not, you cannot expect me to do anything more for you."

"No, sir, I won't. I thank you for procuring me the situation. I will try to justify your recommendation."

"All right! Well, good by." It might have been supposed that Mr. McCracken would have shaken hands with Bernard now that he was about to go away to a distant point and for an indefinite time, but he did not offer to do it, and Bernard on the whole was glad to have it so. He felt a physical repulsion for Mr. McCracken which he could not explain, and preferred to dispense with all signs of friendliness.

He felt rather relieved, too, when Mr. McCracken had left the vessel, and he had seen the last of him for a time at least.

The preparations for departure continued. The sailors were busy, and soon the vessel left her wharf, and was towed out into the stream. Bernard watched the shipping in the harbor, the ferryboats darting here and there, the Jersey shore and later the spires and warehouses of the great city on the other side of the river. He rather wondered why he did not see Professor Puffer, but that gentleman had gone below.

At length Bernard thought it time to inquire the whereabouts of his employer. The steward led him below, and pointed to the door of a stateroom. He knocked at the door, and did not at first have a reply. A second knock elicited an indistinct sound which he interpreted as "Come in."

He opened the door and saw the professor, lying in the lower berth in what appeared to be a stupor.

"Don't you feel well, Professor Puffer?" asked Bernard.

"Who are you?" returned the professor with a tipsy hiccup.

"This, with the undeniable smell of liquor, and a whisky bottle on the floor, showed clearly enough what was the matter with the professor."

Bernard was shocked. He had always had a horror of intemperance, and he regarded his corpulent employer with ill concealed disgust.

"I am Bernard Brooks, your new secretary," he answered.

"That's all right! Take a drink," returned the professor, trying to indicate the bottle.

"No, thank you. I am not thirsty," said Bernard.

"Give it to me then."

Much against his will Bernard handed the bottle to his learned employer, who poured down the small amount that was left in it.

"That's good!" he ejaculated.

"Have I got to occupy the room the room with a man like that?" thought Bernard with disgust. "I hope there are very few professors like Professor Puffer."

CHAPTER XIV.

SOME OF THE PASSENGERS.

Bernard had always cherished high respect for literary men and professors, though it must be confessed that he did not venerate Professor Snowdon. To find Professor Puffer an inebriate was certainly a shock to him. Still he remembered that Burns had been intemperate and that Byron loved gin, and that in spite of his taste for whiskey Professor Puffer might be a learned man.

The next day the professor was sober, partly perhaps because his supply of drink had given out. Bernard resolved to get better acquainted with him.

"Professor Puffer," he said, after breakfast. "I am ready to begin work whenever you please."

"All right! Have you been sick?"

"No, sir."

"I thought perhaps for the first

three or four days you might be affected."

"I thought so, too, as I am not used to the sea, but I haven't had any trouble yet, so that I can go to work any time you desire."

"I shan't undertake to do any work on the ship, Mr. —, what is your name?"

"Brooks. My name is Bernard Brooks."

"Just so. I shall remember after a while."

"I am very much obliged to you for giving me a situation when you don't know any more of me."

"Oh, Mr. McCracken spoke for you. A sharp man is Mr. McCracken."

"I dare say he is, but I don't know much about him."

"Don't you?" asked the professor, showing some interest. "Isn't he your guardian?"

"Yes, sir, but I have never spent much time with him."

"Has he charge of much property of yours?"

"He says I have no property."

"Ha, indeed! As a rule guardians are not appointed unless there is property."

"He was a friend—that is, an acquaintance of my father."

"How long has your father been dead?"

"Ever since I was five years old."

"Now it occurred to Bernard to ask some questions."

"Mr. McCracken told me you were interested in antiquities."

"Yes—antiquities."

"Have you written any works on the subject?"

"Yes, several," answered the professor with some hesitation.

"Have you any of them with you?"

"No."

"I thought I should like to look them over if you had, and it might help qualify me for my duties."

"I have no doubt you will answer my purpose," said the professor, yawning, as if he did not feel much interest in the subject.

Bernard was rather disappointed. He wished the professor would talk to him on his specialty, as it would be interesting and instructive.

"Are we going to stay abroad long?" he asked.

"My plans are not fully formed," said the professor. He gave the impression of not caring to talk on the subject, and Bernard took the hint, and ceased to question him. He found time hanging heavily on his hands, as he appeared to have no duties and thought it might be interesting to make some acquaintances on board the ship.

There were ten passengers besides Professor Puffer and himself. The first he became acquainted with was a thin, sallow faced man who wore green glasses. What he was Bernard could not conjecture, but soon learned.

He was standing forward looking out at the white capped waves when a voice accosted him. "Young man, are you bilious?"

Opening his eyes in surprise, Bernard recognized the sallow faced passenger.

"I don't think I am," he answered.

"I am Dr. Felix Hampton," said his new acquaintance. "I have discovered a medicine which will effectually cure biliousness."

"Indeed, sir! You will be a public benefactor in that case."

"True, young man, I feel that my work is a great one. Thousands will bless my name. I am going abroad to introduce my medicine in Europe. There must be thousands of bilious cases in London alone."

"I presume you are right. Shall you establish yourself in London?"

"I cannot give myself to any one country. I shall endeavor to sell an interest in my medicine to some responsible party who will push it in Great Britain. Who is the red faced man you are traveling with?"

"Professor Ezra Puffer."

"What is he professor of?"

"I don't know, sir. I believe he is interested in antiquities."

"Is he bilious?"

"I haven't known him long enough to tell."

"Would you mind recommending my medicine to him?"

"I think you had better do so yourself. I don't know anything about the medicine, you know."

"Is he your father?"

"No, sir."

The idea of being the son of Professor Puffer was quite repugnant to Bernard, and he answered promptly.

"You may be bilious without knowing it. If you will come to my stateroom I will give you a teaspoonful of the medicine without charge."

"Thank you, sir. I don't care for it. If I were sick I would make up my mind to buy medicine, but I feel perfectly healthy. Do you use it yourself?"

"I did, but now I am entirely cured of the insidious disease."

It struck Bernard that Dr. Hampton was singularly unhealthy in appearance, but this he kept to himself.

As he walked to another part of the deck he was accosted by a bright, healthy looking man of perhaps thirty five, with a rosy face and a quick, alert manner.

"I see you have been talking with Dr. Hampton," he said.

"I didn't know that was his name."

"Did he ask you if you were bilious?"

"Yes, and offered me a dose of his medicine without charge."

The other laughed. "He made me the same liberal offer. Neither you nor I look like bilious cases."

"I should think not."

"The doctor himself looks like a victim of liver complaint. Are you traveling alone?"

"No, sir, I am traveling with Professor Puffer."

"A short man with a red face."

"Yes."

"A friend of your family?"

"I never saw him till I met him on the ship."

"You called him Professor Puffer. What is he professor of?"

"I believe he is interested in antiquities."

"He seems to me more interested in liquor. But I must apologize. I should not speak so of your friend."

Bernard laughed.

"I am not sensitive on the subject of my friend, or rather my employer," he said.

"Your employer?"

"Yes, I am his secretary, and I believe I am to assist him in his literary labors."

"Then I suppose you will become a professor of antiquities also."

"Perhaps so," assented Bernard with a smile.

"For my part, I don't care much for antiquities. I am more interested in the present than in the past. I am a buyer for a Boston house, and my name is Nelson Sturgis. How may I call you?"

"Bernard Brooks."

"Professor Brooks?" asked Sturgis with a smile.

"Not yet," laughed Bernard.

"Suppose we take a little promenade. I make a practice of walking two hours daily on ship board in order to get my customary exercise."

"I shall be glad to join you, Mr. Sturgis."

As they were walking they had an opportunity to witness an amusing meeting between Professor Puffer and Dr. Hampton.

As Professor Puffer emerged from the cabin the sallow faced man approached him with the stereotyped question, "Pardon me, sir, but are you bilious?"

"What the dickens do you mean?" demanded Professor Puffer, glaring at the doctor.

"No offense, sir, but I think most persons are bilious."

"You look a good deal more bilious than I."

"No, sir, you are mistaken. I have cured myself of liver complaint by Dr. Hampton's celebrated liver tonic. I am Dr. Hampton."

"Are you? Well, your appearance doesn't speak very well for your remedy. My liver is perfectly regular."

"I am glad to hear it, sir. I was speaking to your secretary a short time since, but he doesn't think he is bilious. A boy of his age wouldn't be apt to know. I will make you the same offer that I did him. I will give you a dose of the tonic free gratis, and you may find that it will benefit you."

"Is there any whisky or brandy in the tonic?" asked Professor Puffer with sudden interest.

"No, sir, not a drop. You may rest assured that it is a strict temperance medicine."

"Then I don't want any of it, sir. Temperance is a humbug. Are you a temperance man?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am not. Good morning."

Dr. Hampton's next interview was more satisfactory. Among the passengers was a thin, maiden lady, of uncertain age. She was beginning to suffer seasickness when Dr. Hampton approached her.

"Pardon me," he said, "but you look bilious."

"I fear I am," she answered in a hollow tone. "I feel dreadfully."

"I thought I could not be mistaken. Shall I relieve you?"

"Oh sir, if you only could."

"I can. A bottle of my celebrated liver tonic will make a new man—I mean woman of you."

"Bring me some, please, for in a few days I feel very sick."

Dr. Hampton produced a small bottle from his pocket. "This is it," he said. "A dollar please."

The maiden lady drew a dollar bill from her pocket, and the doctor producing a spoon administered a dose. The result was magical! The lady rushed hastily to the side of the vessel, and was relieved of her breakfast.

"I feel better," she gasped.

"I knew you would," said the doctor, and he put the bill with a smile of satisfaction into his pocket.

(To be continued.)

AN UNAPPRECIATIVE MOOD.

"Ha, ha," said the jovial man, as he slipped an acquaintance on the back, "I'm glad to see you. I have one of the funniest stories on record and you are just in time."

"I don't care for it," was the candid reply. "You see, there is often a pathetic side even to humor. I have just been out with my architect, and he showed me three of the funniest stories I ever saw. If I hadn't been paying for them, I'd have laughed myself silly."—"Washington Star."

HER IDEA OF AMUSEMENT.

The other morning the Saunterer happened to meet Katy on the street. "Good morning, Katy," said the Saunterer.

Katy made a courtesy.

"The top of the mornin' to ye," she answered.

"Where have you been this morning, Katy?"

"To the cimetry, yer honer, and oh! it would amuse yer to see how the place has grown!"—"Boston Budget."

TAKING PRECAUTIONS.

"What the deuce are you doing right on the top of that tree, Mike? Don't you see that it's being cut down?"

Mike—"Yes, your honor: the last time ye had a tree cut down it fell on the top of me, and, begorra, O'll be safe this time."—"Tid Bits."

THE TIME FOR DISAPPEARING.

The Inconceivable Narrator—"That reminds me of a good story."

His Intended Victim (vanishing through a door—"That reminds me of an engagement."—"Chicago Record.")

BOASTING OF A POOR MEMORY.

Hicks—"What a memory Sticker has! Don't you envy him?"

Wicks—"Not at all. I have no memory at all, myself; the consequence is I am a general favorite. Ev'rybody likes me. A man can tell me the same story a dozen times in a week, and I am just as good a listener the last time as the first."—"Boston Transcript."



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Madison Square, South,
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A DEFINITION OF CHARACTER.

The other day we came across a phrase which we wish could be kept constantly in the mind of every boy and young man starting out to make his own way in the world. It was this: "Character is what we are when we think we are not watched."

What sort of employes are business men constantly on the lookout for? Those that they can trust. And the boy who does not work as well when he is left to his own devices, as he does when the chief's eye is on him, is not a boy to be trusted.

Make your employer's interests your own. This is the way to ascend the ladder that leads to success. Don't have your mind so fixed on outside matters—social engagements, theaters, athletics or the like—that you only divert it to business as a matter of necessity and because you might lose your place and the salary that enables you to indulge in these pleasures if it should be found out that you were inattentive.

Remember that character is a structure that, when you find you have made a mistake, you cannot pull down in a night and build again on different lines. Yet, on second thoughts, you can start to do this, but your associates will for many weeks, perhaps years, refuse to see anything but the ugly outlines of the original building. It is all important to start right in the first place.

MORE ABOUT THE NOVEMBER "MUNSEY'S."

"An English Prince on a German Throne" is the title of a timely illustrated article in the new number of "Munsey's Magazine." It tells the story of the Duke of Edinburgh's heirship of the dukedom of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

Beautiful pictures accompany the paper on "Modern Artists," and there are views and portraits in the interesting story of "Russia and Her Rulers."

The cover portrait this month is an exquisite picture of Caroline Miskel, now playing in "A Temperance Town" at the Madison Square Theater, New York. Of this cover idea of "Munsey's," the Lewiston "Evening Journal" says: "It is one of the most fascinating achievements of the printer's art."

THE DISCONTENT OF THE RICH.

Money has been the subject of conversation during the year now near its end more frequently than any other theme. The difficulty so many people have experienced in getting hold of this indispensable commodity has been the cause of this oft recurring mention of "filthy lucre." For the most part, the lack of it has been taken good humoredly, and many a penny has been turned by the professional joke writer, who perhaps was the only one among us who saw the silver lining to the cloud of depression. But as we scent a pun in the air, we had perhaps better pro-

ceed at once to what we started out to remark, which was that riches are by no means essential to happiness.

Of course a man must have enough on which to live comfortably and be certain of keeping the wolf from the door, or else his peace of mind is destroyed, but when we say riches, we mean wealth in the sense that it is spoken of when millionaires are alluded to. It seems to be the habit to envy these men, but if money is worth only that which it is able to procure, then the men who have the most of it are the last mortals on earth to be envied.

Look about at the moneyed men in your circle of acquaintance. Do their faces wear the most contented expressions? No, if our own experience counts for anything.

Harassed, worried, badgered by the one and that, never sure of the sincerity of any one who professes a regard for them—is it any wonder that men of wealth live lives of anxiety and foreboding?

No, no, if you want to find the happiest people in this world, go among the middle classes, and pick out the men and women who are conscious of duty done, and here you will see the undisguised smile of a contented spirit which alone in this world of mischance and change, can confer happiness.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

For the present the price of back numbers of Munsey's Magazine has been reduced to 10 cents each. You can now procure a complete file from the beginning—October, 1891—at this rate.

This is a splendid opportunity to start a file which cannot but prove not only highly entertaining in the present, but will become really valuable as property as the years roll round.

YOUR TEN FINGERS

When you have visited a menagerie has the thought ever occurred to you of what a distinguishing characteristic man's hands are to him? The king of beasts is a pigmy beside ourselves so far as power in one direction goes. His ability is all destructive; man's is constructive.

The pyramids of Egypt, the Church of St. Peter at Rome, the Cologne cathedral, the Brooklyn Bridge, the Ferris Wheel—all these stupendous things have been put together by man's ten fingers. Is it not a wonderful thought?

Think of the Liberal Arts building at the World's Fair in Chicago, with its mighty arches, spanning hundreds of feet. No giants were employed in their adjustment. To be sure, machinery itself was the outcome of men's hands.

The perfected printing press, that takes in at one end the white paper, and turns it out at the other, printed, sometimes in several colors, and all folded ready for the reader—this is marvelous, but is it any more so than the hand of man which can paint a Raphael's Madonna or put together the same press?

Cherish the power you possess at the ends of your ten finger tips, and see to it that you never put this precious gift to unworthy uses.

BORROWED TROUBLE.

Borrowing is a custom that has little to commend in it, least of all when it is trouble that is taken possession of in this way. If it deprived anybody else of it for the time being, there might be something to be said in its favor, but it is usually the future that is asked to loan the commodity.

A man is getting along all right. Business is good, his home is a happy one, he has apparently all that heart could wish for, and yet it is this very fact that sets him to borrowing something that nobody wants, least of all himself, for he is not accustomed to it.

"Everything is prospering so with

me," he reflects, "that I fear it cannot last. How easy it would be, for example, for that bank president, in whose charge are most of my funds, to turn villain and rob the institution! Then there are diseases lurking all around. It would be the simplest matter in the world for Tom, or Lulu, or Jack, to catch some of them and be taken from me!"

And so it goes on, and he worries so about ills that he does not possess that he gives himself no opportunity to enjoy his blessings.

But there is still another way of borrowing trouble. Suppose there is a possibility of some piece of misfortune befalling you. Your mind dwells on this, turns it over so that all its unpleasantness is hideously apparent and made so realistic that you really imagine the blow has fallen. It is an even chance that it does not fall at all, and when the crisis has passed and the evil thing has not come upon you, there is the consciousness that you might have spared yourself many an uncomfortable day, and perchance sleepless night.

The Camel from Several Points of View.

One of the most popular diversions in the famous Midway Pleaisance of the Chicago Exposition last summer, was camel riding. These camels, eight or ten of them, were in the Streets of Cairo exhibit, and shouts of laughter came from the spectators as the unaccustomed American was pitched this way and that while the ungainly beasts regained their footing after kneeling down to receive their load.

But if a ride on the hump of these "ships of the desert" is a tough experience, it is only in keeping with the animals themselves, whose powers of endurance are almost beyond belief. They can travel forty miles a day, bearing a load of 400 pounds on their back, and can keep this up for two weeks if necessary without water. Not only can they go this length of time without drinking, but they are able to exist for long periods without food as well.

And camels are by no means slow travelers either. Possessed of twice the carrying power of the ox, they are able to get over the ground at a very fair rate of speed. Indeed, there is a breed called the Timbuctoos, used only as couriers, that cover 800 miles in eight days. These are fed every night, their nourishment consisting of grain or dates.

As the cable and electric roads in our American cities are taking the place of horse power, so in South Africa and Australia is the camel displacing the bullock as a beast of burden. There are now in Australia five camel lines, as they are called, on which two thousand camels are used daily. These two countries are much more successful with this hump backed steed than was the United States, which, as far back as 1857, made a determined and official attempt to domesticate the camel on our Western deserts.

Now and then, young men who have been born since the war, fall in with a wild camel in the waste places of Arizona or Nevada, and are inclined to rub their eyes and fancy that they must be having a sort of Arabian Nights experience. But the specimen is only the remnant of the drove of seventy-five that were imported from the Levant thirty six years ago.

It was on the 3d of March, 1853, the last day of his term, that President Millard Fillmore approved the bill passed by the Senate, appropriating \$30,000 to purchase and import camels into the country. This was long before the days of the Pacific Railroad, and the object in view was the transportation of army supplies across the alkali plains of the West.

The gentleman to whom fell the task of carrying out the will of the

government in this rather odd enterprise, was none other than Jefferson Davis, at that time Secretary of War, and later President of the Confederate States. Under his instructions the naval storeship Supply was put at the service of the camel expedition, which left New York in May, 1855.

Major Wayne, who was in command of the unique expedition, entered upon his task with all zest, stopping at both London and Paris in the effort to learn all he could about the animals he had been sent to purchase. For America had heard that the English and the French had made much use of the camel in their Eastern possessions.

From information gathered by the major, we learn that the difference between the camel and the dromedary is one of speed merely, the dromedary being the faster, and therefore more generally used as a message bearer, leaving to the camel the more prosaic duty of burden carrying. As to the one hump and two hump distinctions, it appears that this is a matter of class, the Bactrians having two humps and the Arabians one.

Arriving in Egypt, Major Wayne was graciously allowed to purchase two camels at Alexandria, although he had been informed by letter from the Khedive that it was contrary to the laws of the country to sell these animals for use outside of it. Not only was this exception made in favor of the great Western Republic, but the expedition received a present of six dromedaries from the Pasha's stables.

It seems, that at that time the cost of a camel varied all the way from fifty to \$130, although the price of a dromedary sometimes ran up as high as a thousand dollars. But in one way or another the herd of seventy five were finally obtained, brought to Texas, and placed in the charge of the Arabs, who had been engaged for a year by Major Wayne to care for the animals in their new environment.

If things had turned out as it was hoped they would, the sights to be seen in the Far West today might have had an oriental tinge and camel riding in the Midway would not have been the novelty it was at the Columbian Fair. But the immigrant camels did not take as readily to certain new conditions as do immigrant hippos. These new conditions may be summed up in the one word—roads.

Before these camels, that had been collected with so much official dignity and pains, could be put to practical use, the Iron horse had linked the Atlantic with the Pacific and proved a competitor there was no outstripping. The camels' occupation was gone, they were suffered to wander away to die eventually, or else linger on by ones and twos to turn up at some later day and dazzle a younger generation who had never heard of their existence.

The reason why the camel can go for such long periods without food is to be found in its hump. In this it stores its food, which it can absorb again when no other substance is at hand. As to water, the first stomach of the animal is provided with cells capable of carrying several quarts, to be drawn upon when needed.

GOLDEN THOUGHTS.

Manners carry the world for a moment, character for all time.—A. Bronson Alcott.

The man who talks much about himself will always have a tired audience.—"Ram's Horn."

How shall we behave on great occasions if we are weak in little ones? Less arguments and more work will make a person better off.—"Texas Siftings."

Many a man's tongue shakes out his master's undoing.—Shakspeare.

Gold is the fool's curtain, which hides all his defects from the world.—Feltham.

THE STAR OF TRUTH.

Get but the truth once uttered, and 'tis like
A star new born, that drops into its
place.
And which, once circling in its placid
round,
Not all the tumult of the earth can
shake.

—James Russell Lowell.

Was It Chance?

BY HORACE G. SMITH.

Jack Brayton told me this story when he came East last winter to visit his old friends, see something of New York, and ultimately to carry off the prettiest girl in our set to grace his "Wild Western" home.

When Jack first went West "to look about him," and before he had fully decided to make that wild and woolly country his future home, he went to work on Fred Everleigh's ranch (Fred was an old friend of his father's) with the purpose of learning the business of stock raising. After a couple of years spent with Everleigh, he bought the Silver Bullet Ranch; but that has nothing whatever to do with this story, for the occurrences he related to me, and which I now here repeat, took place during his cow punching experience at Everleigh's.

The boys who worked for Everleigh were about the average sort of chaps that one meets on a stock ranch—some well educated Eastern fellows, who had come West like Jack "to look about them;" a few who had been born and brought up in the country, or emigrated there early, and a few more who were doubtless renegades from other States, for one mustn't be too particular whom he hires for herders in the West. But altogether, Everleigh's crowd were rather above the average in point of respectability.

Besides these several classes of individuals, whom Jack laughingly referred to as "the happy family," there was a young Mexican—hardly more than a boy in fact—called Miguel. Being the only "Greaser" on the ranch, Miguel naturally had rather a hard time of it; but he was devoted to Everleigh (or seemed to be) and the treatment of the other herders could not drive him away.

Miguel was a dark skinned youth, with jet black eyes, straight hair like an Indian, (in fact, there may have been some Indian blood in him; many of those Mexicans are mixed up in like manner) who, when he mounted a horse, seemed part of the animal itself, so naturally and easily did he ride. He took care of the horses which Everleigh himself rode, did the errands of the ranch, and otherwise made himself useful.

To the average ranchman's mind "Greaser" is a term synonymous with "thief," for the American of the West has had such ample experience in the matter of Mexican honesty that all are looked upon alike. Everleigh, however, regarded Miguel as a faithful assistant and would listen to nothing against the boy, although some of the herders seemed very desirous of getting the youngster into trouble.

If a pipe was lost or a jack knife mislaid, some one would be sure to suggest Miguel as the cause of the disappearance of the articles, and if any of the rougher fellows on the ranch became angry with him the boy would have to listen to the vilest kind of abuse. Everleigh wouldn't allow it if he was about, but the boys wouldn't play the sneak and tell him when he wasn't there to hear, and so suffered these indignities in silence.

A time came, however, when there was a case brought against the young Mexican which Everleigh had to listen to, and it came about in this way: The overseer, Bill Smollet, went down to Tombstone one day and drew three hundred dollars from the bank for Everleigh. Coming home about supper

time he forgot all about the money for the moment and tossing his coat (in the pocket of which he had placed the money in an old wallet) on a bench in the washroom, he went in to supper.

A few minutes later Miguel came in and, after remaining some time in the washroom (presumably to wash up) sat down to supper. Later when Bill went into the office to give Everleigh the money, greatly to his surprise the wallet had disappeared.

At first Bill was scared over the loss of the money, and then he gave way to a choice string of profanity which, upon investigation by Everleigh and Jack, who happened to be present, was caused by the certainty in Bill's mind that Miguel was the thief. Smollet, although filling the position of overseer of the ranch, had always been one of the boy's fiercest enemies and at first Everleigh thought the accusation the result of mere spite.

Bill's story was so circumstantial,

proportions and his influence with the owner, sullenly obeyed.

The route to that part of the range on which the cattle were grazing took the trio along the Tombstone road for four or five miles and then the trail branched off into the low hills on the south. Near this spot Bill Smollet rode into a thicket at one side and at once reappeared bearing a jug of liquor. Evidently he had hidden it there the day before and that was his reason for being so anxious to go out to the range upon this occasion.

Fred Everleigh was very strict about the use of liquor by the men and had he known of this flagrant disobedience on Smollet's part, would have discharged the overseer at once. Jack knew what would be the immediate result of the introduction of this liquor supply among the rough fellows on the range. He had been present at several such orgies already, and was more than half convinced that it was his duty to inform Everleigh of the matter.



THE ANIMAL THREW JACK OVER HER HEAD.

however, and the evidence pointed so strongly to Miguel, that Everleigh called him in and examined him. The Mexican denied all knowledge of the money and despite Smollet's loud accusations both Everleigh and Jack were strongly inclined to believe the boy. But nobody else had been in the washroom after Bill came in but Miguel, and there the case stood.

"We'll wait to see what turns up," Everleigh said at last. "I'm not going to accuse the boy on such flimsy evidence as this."

"Flimsy evidence!" cried Smollet angrily; "I call it a clear case. If I had command here I'd string the little rascal up until he squealed and told us where he'd hid it."

"That will do," said Everleigh sharply, and Bill slammed out of the office just about bursting with rage. He was an ugly fellow when he was roused, especially when in liquor, and it was quite evident to both Jack and the ranch owner that he had been drinking while in town.

Everleigh did nothing about the loss of the money that night and very early the next morning, as previously arranged, Jack and Miguel started for the range, Smollet accompanying them to take orders to the herders already there. Bill treated Miguel as meanly as he dared all the way, but the boy heard his taunts in silence, although it made Jack's blood boil to hear the fellow. Finally he told Bill to drop the subject as he had heard the boy badgered all he proposed to, and the overseer, who rather feared young Brayton, both because of his physical

Miguel always had a harder time when the men were drunk and upon this occasion, at sight of the jug, the boy actually paled with fear. He knew the lawless natures of the men far better than did Jack.

Three miles or so from the Tombstone trail they found the herders' camp and to increase Jack's uneasiness the men gathered there proved to be the roughest and hardest of the crowd. They came eagerly to meet the overseer, and it was quite evident that the jug had been expected.

Jack tried to persuade two or three of the best natured fellows to let the stuff alone and go back to the herd, but he might just as well have sought to turn a pack of kites from their feast. They were fairly crazy for the liquor and it looked like a race to see who could get drunk the quickest.

Miguel, of course, came in for his share of abuse, and when the crowd was in that delightful state known as "about half shot," Smollet be-thought himself of the trouble over the money on the evening before, and loudly declared his suspicions of the poor little Mexican.

"Burn me ef that hain't jest what I been 'spectin'" cried Tom Murray, the biggest and one of the ugliest in the crowd. "That comes o' havin' a dirty Greaser erbout hyar with respectable men."

"Doughter string 'em up—ev'ry last one of 'em," another added.

Miguel looked at Jack in sudden fear. The men were drinking heavily and all of them had their eyes bent

upon him most ferociously. Jack Brayton was his only friend and he did not realize the gravity of the situation.

"String him up—that's what!" yelled Bill, staggering toward where the Mexican boy was at work among the pots and kettles.

"No, no," cried a young fellow who, up to this time had been un-demonstrative. "Le's give him a fair trial 'n' then string him up."

"Bully for you, 'Najah," falling in with the plan. "I'll be sheriff," he added, making a grab for the boy and catching him by the shoulder. "I'll be sheriff an' you fellers kin bring on yer court."

Jack here began to interfere. "Let the boy alone, Tom," he said sharply. "You fellows have got altogether too much drink down to know what you're about. Come, drop him, I say."

"I'll drop you!" Murray exclaimed, with a fierce oath. "We won't have no interference from such a white livered chap as you," added the fellow called 'Najah, threateningly. "A man 'at feels himself too good ter drink with us had better clear out."

"You scamp, you!" exclaimed Jack, who has a temper of his own and could never be accused of a lack of bravery; "get out of my way or I'll give you something that will lay you by longer than this spree's liable to."

He tried to force his way into the circle to rescue the boy, but two or three of the half tipsy fellows pulled him back. Quick as lightning Jack wound the lash of his "bull-whip" around his waist and struck out with the short thick handle of the weapon.

'Najah went down before the first blow like a log, and another fell back howling and rubbing his arm, but they were too many for him, and tearing himself away he ran over to the horses and leaping upon his own, sped away down the trail. A volley of curses and even a pistol shot or two followed him, but they only served to urge him faster.

He was thoroughly alive to Miguel's danger now. The anger of the drunken crowd would be vented upon the defenseless boy and what might they not do ere he could reach the ranch and arouse Everleigh and the other men?

He spurred his horse more and more swiftly until, just as he rounded the clump of bushes at the junction of the trail where Smollet had hidden the jug of whiskey, the animal stumbled, plunged forward, and threw Jack clear over her head.

"Kate! I declare I wouldn't have thought that of you!" Jack exclaimed, leaping up little the worse for his tumble, and gazing seriously at the mare who had recovered herself and now stood quietly by. "You never—by all that's lucky, what's this?"

He fairly shouted this out in delight and dropping upon his knees seized an object which lay half hidden beneath a stone. It was a brown leather wallet, filled to bursting with bank notes. The wallet Bill Smollet had lost!

He was in the saddle again in an instant and tore back over the trail toward the herder's camp. He was not a moment too soon, for the whiskey crazed crowd, having finished their mockery of a trial, had already placed Miguel, crying and praying for mercy, beneath a tree with a lariat around his neck.

"Here's Brayton! What does he want now?" shouted somebody.

"Would you murder the boy?" Jack cried, waving the wallet over his head. "The money's found. I found it just where Bill dropped it in the trail when he hid that jug yesterday. He never took it to the ranch at all!"

"It's found? That settles it, I reckon."

'Najah declared. "That clears the Greaser, boys."

"But it don't clear Bill," growled Tom Murray. "What'd he wanter say he kerried the money up ter the ranch for, ef he didn't?"

"Guess we'd better have a lynchin' arter all," some one suggested, pleasantly.

In spite of the whiskey he had imbibed Smollet's face fairly turned pale.

"We'll have nothing of the kind," said Jack sharply, leaping from his horse, "but we will have some fun of another kind. Bill Smollet," he added, stepping toward the overseer, and rolling back his cuffs, "you did your prettiest to get Miguel into trouble. Now I'm going to give you a little the worst thrashing you ever had."

And knowing Jack's temper and Jack's muscle, I think very likely that he was as good as his word. But he did not allow the matter to drop there. He went to Everleigh at once and related the whole story and the overseer, Tom Murray, Najah and two others were told to get out of the State at once.

They went.

[This Story began in No. 566.]

Under a Cloud;

OR,

OGLE WENTWORTH'S FATHER

BY J. W. DAVIDSON,

Author of "Comrades Three," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN ACCUSATION.

Making his way out of the crowd Mr. Green went at once to the mill, still holding the pencil in his hand. His thoughts were in a terrible tumult, and he could scarcely as yet realize that the boy, who had done his work so faithfully, could be so devoid of honor.

And yet how plainly the proof stood out before him.

As he entered the mill office, Ogle looked up surprised at the strange expression on the face of his employer.

"Where is the fire?" he asked, but Mr. Green made no reply. Instead he merely held out the pencil.

Ogle's eyes fairly started from their sockets.

"Where did you find that?" he gasped, his face white and drawn.

"The fire was near where you live, and the men carried the things out into the street," said Mr. Green, his voice sounding harsh and cold.

"Among them was a trunk which was dropped in the street. The cover came open, and this pencil was among the contents. Do you know who put it in the trunk?"

Ogle trembled. The stern eyes of Mr. Green were upon him; for a moment he could make no reply; then he said faintly:

"I did, but—"

"That is enough," interrupted Mr. Green. "Now another thing. Last Sunday, or some time between Saturday night and Monday morning, the money drawer in this office was robbed of between fifteen and sixteen dollars. Among that money were two counterfeit half dollars dated 1856. Today Mr. Quigley brought the two worthless coins to me and said they were paid to him on the Fourth, one by you and one by Caleb Dodge. Do you remember seeing either of these before?"

As he spoke he held out the two fateful pieces of money.

Ogle stared at them, and then said huskily:

"I did pay half a dollar to Mr. Quigley, and it was a new, bright one, but I got it of Caleb Dodge."

Mr. Green laughed.

"That is just what Caleb said—you gave him the one he paid to Mr. Quigley. Which am I to believe?"

"Did Caleb Dodge tell you that?" demanded Ogle indignantly, forgetting for a moment the matter of the pencil. "I am telling you the truth."

The boy did bear an appearance of truthfulness, but Mr. Green shook his head doubtfully.

"How do you explain the hiding of the pencil?" he said sternly. "If it

were not for that I might have some confidence in your story."

Poor Ogle! He saw how utterly powerless he was, and he made no reply.

"Here are your wages for the week," said Mr. Green. "You may go home, and, if I want you any more I will send for you."

Ogle raised his head proudly, his face white as death, his eyes set and determined.

"I did not steal your pencil and I did not rob your money drawer," he said defiantly. "Some day you will know the truth."

He turned and walked out of the office, Mr. Green still holding the six dollars in his outstretched hand. A pang went through the heart of the man. What if he had acted too hastily, and the boy were really innocent!

He took a turn or two about the office, and then stopped suddenly.

"What a brute I am!" he muttered. "I had forgotten all about the fire. I wonder if this boy's home was really destroyed."

Going out hastily he locked the door, and then proceeded to the scene of the fire. He found that the flames were under control, and the home of the Wentworths had escaped. Under his direction the humble furniture was put back into the rooms again, Mrs. Wentworth saying as the job was completed:

"We have so much to thank you for, Mr. Green, that it's no use for me to try. Ogle will pay you back some day."

Something seemed to rise up in Mr. Green's throat and choke him, so that he could scarcely make reply. Stammering a few incoherent words, he turned away.

He had seen nothing of Ogle, and the pale face and grateful eyes of the woman rose up reproachfully before him as he thought of the boy.

"Poor woman," he said pityingly, as he hurried along, "what a shock it will be to her when she finds how guilty her boy has been."

But somehow, in spite of his reasonings, grave doubts as to the culpability of Ogle began to creep into the mind of the man, and before he reached home he had half repented of his hasty action.

The following morning he went down to the office a little earlier than usual, but Ogle had not arrived. Half an hour passed away, and still the boy did not come.

Mr. Green grew uneasy, and began walking restlessly about the room. At length he heard some one at the door. Turning quickly he met Mr. Richardson.

"Ah," said the latter, with a smile, "in early, I see. Where is that young prodigy this morning? I have some work for him to do."

Mr. Green flushed painfully. "He hasn't come yet," he said, and then he remembered his parting injunction to Ogle.

"I—I—that is—I told him not to come any more till I sent for him," stammered Mr. Green, growing confused under the searching gaze of the architect.

"And why did you tell him not to come till you sent for him?" questioned Mr. Richardson slowly. "I have a right to know," he continued, as Mr. Green hesitated.

The latter drew a long breath and fidgeted uneasily before he made answer. Then he said desperately:

"I would rather be flogged than say anything about it, but, as you say, you have a right to know."

In a few words as possible and in a hurried manner he related what the reader already knows, adding at the conclusion of his recital:

"I think I was altogether too hasty. Perhaps the boy is innocent, as he claims to be."

Mr. Richardson shook his head slowly. "You must not let your heart run away with your head," he said. "The chances are ninety nine to one that the boy is guilty. At least, that has been my experience with boys. I should scarcely dare

take him now, for if he would betray you he would me. It's a great pity, a great pity."

"I can't see it in that light," replied Mr. Green firmly. "The impression grows stronger with me each moment that I was altogether too fast, and that there is something about this matter that I do not understand. I think I will walk around to his home."

He rose to his feet as he said this, and was about sallying forth, when the architect said testily:

"You will have your trouble for your pains. I have tried the same thing to my sorrow. I must leave town this afternoon, and have a lot of business to attend to first."

"Business may attend to itself," replied Mr. Green sharply. "I will not be absent long."

He quitted the room with a quick, nervous step, while Mr. Richardson drummed impatiently upon the desk before him.

"After he has been victimized as many times as I have, he will not be so confiding," he muttered, looking anxiously up at the clock. "Ah, here he comes back now."

The door opened and Mr. Stanton entered.

"How are you getting along?" he asked. "Where's Green?"

"Doing the good Samaritan act," replied the architect. "It seems that this talented office boy of yours has been helping himself to a little change from the till, and your tender hearted partner, after having the matter clearly proven to him, has gone to see if black isn't really white and if twice two doesn't make five."

Mr. Stanton had listened in amazement. "I don't understand you," he said, as the other paused. "Please explain."

"I don't believe I can remember half of it," returned Mr. Richardson. "As I understand it, Mr. Green found that the money drawer in this office had been tampered with, and some of the money, which he could identify, was known to have been expended by the boy. Other evidences of his culpability even more convincing than this exist, and yet Mr. Green is so fearful he has done the boy an injustice that he forsakes the most pressing business in order to investigate the matter and prove the infallibility of his senses."

"It's too bad," said Mr. Stanton. "The fact is, I didn't have much confidence in this boy from the first. It was Green's idea of having him here."

"We'll have to wait till he gets back," replied the architect, settling back in his chair, and half closing his eyes.

Mr. Stanton was not so resigned. Rising to his feet, he paced impatiently about the room, glaring now and then at the clock.

CHAPTER XVII.

A WANDERER.

When Ogle Wentworth crossed the threshold of the office it seemed to him that the brightness of his life had gone out forever. With uncertain, wandering steps he made his way along the street, scarce knowing whether he was going.

It was fully two hours before he could summon sufficient resolution to return home. When he did so, he found that the fire in the next building had been wholly extinguished, and only a few persons remained on the scene.

Among these was Caleb Dodge, and for an instant Ogle felt an impulse to accuse him of falsehood in telling Mr. Green what he did. But he crushed it back and entered the house.

He found his mother and sisters still laboring under great excitement. At first they did not notice the hopeless look on Ogle's pale face.

"My son," said Mrs. Wentworth, as he came into the room, "we have had a very narrow escape. How thankful we should be that our home has been spared! Did the architect speak to you about learning that business today?"

"Mother," replied the boy solemnly, and she noticed at this moment how pale and wretched he looked. "I have no hopes of anything. I have lost my job."

"What do you mean?" she asked, staring at him in open eyed astonishment. "I don't understand you!"

The two girls looked anxiously at Ogle, and their mother, while the boy said bitterly:

"It means, mother, that Mr. Green has discovered the hidden pencil and thinks I stole it, and then he says I robbed him."

It was some moments before Mrs. Wentworth could find her voice, and when she did it was broken with sobs. "My poor boy," she said, taking his pale face between her hands and looking pityingly into his eyes. "I am so sorry for you. But surely this matter can be explained. Mr. Green is not an unjust man."

"You need sympathy more than I do," returned Ogle. "As far as I am concerned I can make my living, but what will you and Mabel and Gracie do?"

"We will get along in some way," said the woman, striving to put on an appearance of composure she was far from feeling. "It looks dark now, I know, but I hope something will happen to explain this to Mr. Green."

But Ogle could not view the matter in any sort of a hopeful light. He sat with his head bowed in his hands, his young heart torn with conflicting emotions.

It was a gloomy evening, and by and by the two little girls crept away to bed with sorrowful faces, leaving Ogle and Mrs. Wentworth alone.

"Mother," said the boy, low and earnestly. "I want you to tell me all about father. Please don't refuse me."

There was a look of anguish in the woman's face that touched the boy deeply.

"I would not ask you," he continued, as she sat in silence, "but it seems as though I must know."

"Ogle," said Mrs. Wentworth at length, laying her hand upon the boy's arm, "I will tell you all I know concerning the fate of your father. He was a quick tempered man and very stout and powerful, ready to quarrel on the slightest provocation and sure to repent of it as soon as the trouble was over. We lived on a little farm and your father used to work out winters and in the spring he would go on the stream river driving. The most of the time we were quite happy, though your father's passionate ways brought him into a great deal of trouble."

The woman paused, rocking herself to and fro, as her thoughts went back to the olden time. Then she continued:

"Often he would get into a dispute, and a few words would lead to blows. Then he would promise never to give way to his hasty temper again, and perhaps a week or a month would pass by with no trouble to speak of. But one night, ten years ago last spring, he committed a deed which I did not think it possible for him to do.

"For two years we had been saving all the money we could to buy a piece of land adjoining our little farm, and when your father came out of the woods we had enough excepting twenty five dollars, which he intended to earn river driving. The money, a hundred and seventy five dollars, was in that old black trunk in our sleeping room and—"

"The trunk I put the pencil in," interrupted Ogle.

"Yes," she replied, "the very same. Not a great way, only a few miles, from where we lived your father was at work, and one night, late in April, some one rapped upon the door. I got up, dressed myself and answered the knock.

"As I opened the door your father, his face covered with blood, dashed in and went straight into the bed room and opened the trunk. I had no idea what he was about, but stood holding the light in my hand, till I

saw him take our little hoard from its resting place. "Phillip, what are you doing?" I asked, and with an oath he turned toward me. I tried to stop him, and then he struck me full in the face.

"I fell insensible, and for days I had no consciousness of anything. When I came to my senses, they told me that your father had had trouble with one of the men, had struck him in such a way that he had fallen into the water and was drowned, and had then died."

The woman's voice sank to a low, agonized whisper, and her eyes seemed to burn into the brain of the boy, as he listened to the wretched story of his father's guilt.

"Have you ever heard from him since?" he asked chokingly. "Do you know where he went to?"

Mrs. Wentworth shook her head. "No," she said wearily. "I know nothing whatever about him. For a year after he went away, I didn't want to hear from him or see him. I did get one letter about six months after he robbed and struck me, but I didn't open it. I knew it was from him, and I looked at the postmark, saw where it was from, and put it in another envelope and sent it back. I wrote on the letter he sent me that I never wanted to see him again or to hear from him. I know I was wrong, but it's too late now."

The woman bowed her head in her hands and sobbed.

"Don't cry, mother," said Ogle pityingly. "I don't blame you, but I'd like to see father. He wasn't all bad. Do you think he was?"

"No," she replied quickly, "he was always kind to me till that night, but it seemed as though all my love for him had turned to hatred. I was worse than he was, for I know he must have repented. Now you know why I have coaxed you and commanded you never to fight with the other boys. It fills me with horror."

They sat in silence for some little time. Then Ogle said gently:

"You have been a good mother to me, and I will try to be deserving. Mr. Green thinks I am guilty, but I know I am not."

She pressed her tear wet cheeks to his, saying softly:

"Poor boy, it seems as though my sin was visited upon you. Ever since I sent back that letter with its heartless message, everything has gone wrong with us, and sickness has eaten up our little property. But now, when Mr. Green gave you this chance and then the architect talked as he did, I thought the clouds were broken."

She pressed him close to her, and he sat quite still for a moment, then he said in a firm, decided tone:

"Mother, I'm going to find father." She looked at him incredulously.

"What can you do?" she asked, taking his brown hands in her thin, white ones. "You have no money, no experience, no friends"—the last word bitterly—"and the world is so wide and heartless."

"I'll find father," he said, rising and straightening his sturdy figure. "I know he's sorry for what he did, and I'll find him." Then his voice sank down to a whisper. "What was the name of the man he—of the man that was killed?"

The woman shuddered. "Artwright," she replied. "Clark Artwright."

"Did you ever see him?" asked Ogle, in a tone strangely calm.

"No," she replied, "but they told me he was an unprincipled man, and one with whom your father would never associate, if he could avoid it. Do you remember how your father looked?"

"Not very plainly," replied Ogle. "It's most ten o'clock, mother. We ought to go to bed."

He clasped his arms about her neck, and kissed her over and over again.

"Poor mother," he said, patting her cheek. "I don't believe your troubles will always last."

"No," she answered, with the faintest possible attempt at a smile. "they

will end, as far as this world is concerned, before a great many years."

"Don't talk that way, mother," he said, his brown eyes full of tears. "Good night."

He kissed her again, and then Mrs. Wentworth opened the door into the other room, and, stepping softly in, closed it behind her.

Ogle was alone. He turned the light low, and sat silent and motionless for nearly an hour. Then he arose and tiptoed to the door through which his mother had passed. He opened it a trifle.

The room was dark, and the breathing of the occupants could be heard, soft and regular.

"They are asleep," he muttered. "I couldn't say good by to mother, but I don't know when I shall see her again."

He took all the money he possessed and placed it upon the table, and then stole silently out of doors, a wanderer upon the face of the earth, with not a cent in his pockets, and no earthly friends to whom he could look for help.

A strange feeling came upon the boy, as he looked up at the stars, which glimmered like spots of silver. It was not a sense of freedom, nor yet was it one of weakness. It was as though something besides his own strength was upholding him. A feeling of serenity, a feeling of refuge, even though his head was without a resting place.

"I will find my father," he said manfully, as he trudged away in the silence of the night. "How glad mother will be!"

He came to the bridge which spanned the river and leaned over the railing. How bright the stars looked shining up at him from the dark waters below.

A terrible temptation came upon him to cast himself down into the black depths, and end his wretched life.

"It looks like another heaven," he muttered shudderingly. "What uses it for me to live?"

CHAPTER XVIII. SEARCHING FOR OGLE.

Mr. Green was feeling very uncomfortable as he walked toward the dwelling place of Ogle Wentworth. At one moment he would hurry along at a pace that threatened to throw him into a fit of apoplexy; then he would stop, undecided whether to go on or not.

He wiped the perspiration from his heated face and muttered to himself: "I don't see, for the life of me, how this boy can be innocent. Everything points to his guilt, but—"

He hurried on again, as though striving to get away from his unpleasant thoughts.

Thus alternately, he at length came to the little home which had come so near being consumed the preceding day.

For a moment he hesitated. Then he rapped upon the door. Mrs. Wentworth, her face fairly livid opened it.

When she saw who her visitor was, her eyes grew suddenly bright with anger.

"Why do you come here?" she demanded. "Have you not done enough already?"

Mr. Green was completely dumb-founded. In his confusion he could not utter a syllable for a moment. Then he stammered:

"My good woman, I have only done what I thought was right; I—"

She interrupted him passionately. "Only what you thought was right! Was it right to call the poor boy a thief, when he was as innocent as a babe? Is that what you call justice? But he is gone now."

There was such a hopeless sound to the woman's voice at the last that the heart of the man almost ceased to beat.

"Is he dead?" he gasped, grasping the side of the door to support himself.

"I do not know," she replied. "This morning he had gone, but he took no money with him. The twenty dollars you gave him as a prize in

school and the ten dollars he won on the Fourth of July were here on the table. If you think he stole your money, here is the fifteen dollars you lost, and you have your pencil back."

Her voice had a harsh, metallic sound as she held the money toward him. With something akin to a shudder he drew back.

"Have you made inquiries?" he asked falteringly.

"Yes," she replied bitterly. "I went to a good many people, but most of them laughed at me, and advised me to whip him when he returned."

"I will do what I can," said Mr. Green, turning away. As he passed along the street with uncertain steps, a voice accosted him.

"Ah, Mr. Green, how do you do? Queer freak of this Wentworth boy's, wasn't it? I'm glad you acted as promptly as you did. He's probably hiding in some outbuilding."

The tone and words grated upon the feelings of Mr. Green, as he looked up and met the crafty eyes of Mr. Quigley. The clammy hands of that gentleman were slowly caressing each other and a feeling of loathing took possession of Mr. Green, as the schoolmaster continued:

"This Wentworth woman seems to think the whole town should start up en masse and search the country for the sake of a scapegrace boy, whom we are well rid of. He will probably turn out as badly as his father did."

What could Mr. Green say or do? He realized that the fact of his sending Ogle home had in some way become food for the village gossips, and he felt that he was hedged in by circumstances. So, with scarcely an intelligible reply, he turned away from the pedagogue, who looked after him with a malicious leer upon his ill favored face.

"I'm glad he got tripped up," said Josiah. "Perhaps it will teach him a lesson."

As for Mr. Green, he made his way to the mill office in a frame of mind not to be envied, totally oblivious of the fact that pressing business was awaiting him. As he opened the door and walked in, he found Mr. Stanton walking the floor impatiently, while the architect still sat in a listless attitude.

"So you are back at last," said Mr. Stanton testily. "It's about time we proceeded to business."

"Business?" repeated Mr. Green. "Oh, yes, you mean the plans for the mill. I cannot do anything on that today; I have something of more importance to attend to. This Wentworth boy has disappeared."

"Well, what has that to do with us?" returned Mr. Stanton. "If he had disappeared some time ago, we would have been none the worse."

Mr. Green drew a long breath, and then for the first time Mr. Stanton noticed the look of horror on the face of his partner.

"It may seem a matter of no moment to you," said Mr. Green severely, "but to this poor woman in her humble home it is a question of the life or death of her boy. I have a presentiment that his body will be found in the canal or river. He took no money with him. I am going to see that the body is searched for."

All Mr. Stanton's arguments to the contrary were futile, and, as Mr. Green left the office, he turned to Mr. Richardson.

"I don't see as we can do anything till this lunatic gets back to his senses," and the architect replied philosophically.

"Well, what can't be cured must be endured. I guess I'll take a turn out of doors, and see them drag the canal."

There was quite a ripple of excitement in Mill City when it became noised around that the river was to be dragged.

A crowd collected on the shore and watched the men employed by Mr. Green as they searched in the black water. Guilford Stanton was among them, and somehow an uncomfortable feeling took possession of him as

he heard a shout from the men in the boat.

"We've found something," a hoarse voice shouted, and then he saw them drawing in their grapnels carefully.

The crowd pressed down to the water's edge, and gazed eagerly at the searchers.

At this moment a voice sounded close to the ear of Guilford.

"If Ogle is drowned you may thank yourself for it."

He turned quickly. Caleb Dodge was standing beside him.

"I wouldn't be in your shoes for a thousand dollars," continued Caleb. "If it were to find Ogle, I'm going to confess everything."

"Don't do it," said Guilford, finding his voice at last. "It wouldn't do any good. Have a little mercy."

"How much mercy did you have?" retorted Caleb. "You'd let me drown, but Ogle, poor fellow—"

He was interrupted by a loud shout from the excited throng on the shore. The men in the boat were lifting something black out of the water.

"See, they've found Ogle," cried Caleb, while Guilford nearly sank to the ground in terror. "And there's Quigley. He isn't rubbing his hands together."

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 567.]

A Curious Companion.

BY GEORGE KING WHITMORE,
Author of "Frid Acton's Mystery," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVI. NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA SHAKE HANDS.

"This is a pickle with a big P. Whatever am I to do now?"

It was quite out of the question for Max to sit down and try to calmly think out a means of escape from his embarrassing position. In the first place there was nowhere to sit, and in the next there was such a hubbub of sounds from the Midway and so much hurrying to and fro on about him, that undisturbed deliberation would be very difficult of attainment.

And here he was, on the very borders of the Fair grounds, that enchanted territory towards which his face had been set all summer, only to realize now that he was unable to enter in.

"But I must have fifty cents about my clothes," he reflected, and retiring within the doorway of a drug store, he proceeded to take account of resources.

Yes, he had more than half a dollar. He could muster four dimes and five nickels—sixty five cents.

"Shall I expend all but fifteen of that," he debated, "to get within the gates? Of course I will," he suddenly exclaimed, to the astonishment of a clerk who was watching him. "I'll go to the Pennsylvania building. All surely ought to know enough to look for me at our State home, and hesitating no longer, he walked across the street, laid down fifty cents and passed through the turnstile into the greatest exposition the world has ever seen.

He had a handstachel and an umbrella with him. He wished that he might dispose of these, but could not afford to check them.

"Who knows but I'll have to feed myself for the entire day on that fifteen cents," he mused.

Turning resolutely away from the allurements of the Midway on his left, he walked along toward the Woman's building till he met one of the gorgeously uniformed Columbian Guards.

"Can you tell me the shortest way to reach the Pennsylvania building?" he asked.

"Take the Intramural at Midway and get off at Mount Vernon, but don't ride in the last car."

Before replying that he couldn't afford to ride in any of the cars, Max's curiosity prompted him to inquire what awful fate awaited him who in-

trusted himself to the end of the train.

"Oh, nothing serious," laughed the guard, who was a very pleasant young fellow. "Only you wouldn't be able to get out at Mount Vernon on account of the shortness of the station platform there."

"Thank you," said Max, adding under his breath: "It gives one a fellow feeling to hear of something else that is short."

Then he called aloud: "Can't I get there by walking?"

"Oh, yes. Just keep to your left when you strike the Women's Building, and go on, holding California, Colorado and South Dakota on your left, till you strike Minnesota. Then turn sharp to the right, pass Missouri, and there you are at the reproduction of Independence Hall."

"If there is anything left of me after going through all those states," laughed Max, as he started off.

He forgot for the time being his financial plight. The untold palaces which he could see on every hand, the glimpses of the lagoon with the darting electric launches and stately gondolas, the plants and flowers on every side, with the holiday crowds flowing back and forth—all this took complete possession of his senses and held him captive till he found himself facing the big clock in the tower of Pennsylvania which pointed to half past twelve and carried to his soul the consciousness that he was faint for want of food.

"But never mind," he reflected. "Al is sure to be here. Or if he isn't, he has registered and put down the name of the place at which we are to stop."

The piazzas were crowded with people eating their lunch out of baskets and boxes they had brought along with them. But in spite of this counter attraction there were still enough people left in the main corridor, around the Liberty Bell, to make approach to the registry book a matter of patient waiting one's turn.

And when Max at last reached the goal of his hopes, Al's name was not to be found, although he looked back as far as he dared with that line behind him. At last he hastily wrote his own name, putting down in the column assigned to Chicago address:

"Don't know. Will Allerton Hall please write here the name of our hotel?"

Then he hurried away, before he should see the next man smile at the strange entry confronting him.

But where should he go? He came to a standstill between the handsome building of New York and the Art Palace. He was growing hungrier and hungrier.

To be sure he had fifteen cents, but if he spent that for food now, he would have nothing with which to buy his supper, which undoubtedly he would want as insistently as he did his dinner now.

"What if Al has gone back to the railroad station and is waiting for me there?" he said to himself. "Fifteen cents would just take me there. But if I shouldn't find him, there I'd be, without a cent to get anything to eat with. Why can't I think of the name of that flat?"

But he had never particularly charged his memory with it. It was a place Al had heard of, and as he was to pilot the expedition, Max had not troubled his head with any of the details.

Mechanically he walked on again, as he did not wish to attract attention to himself by standing stock still in the middle of the path while he looked into vacancy and tried to force his brain to think of what he wanted it to. Soon he found himself on the lake front, and turning to the left, presently came to a spot where there was a strip of sandy beach, at the extreme north end of the exposition grounds.

Here he threw himself on the sand, determined to refresh himself by rest if he could not do so by nourishment. "And this is what I have been looking forward to for so many months," he murmured.

At that instant he was startled by something striking him in the back of the head. It did not hurt, for it was only a straw hat.

He turned quickly and was in season to grasp it as it was about to skurry off into the lake.

"Thanks ever so much," said the owner, as he received it from Max's hand. "That's a warning for me to rig my trolley," and he proceeded to unwind the guard cord and affix it to his buttonhole.

He was young, perhaps a year younger than Max. He stood there, looking off into the lake after he had secured his hat, and then suddenly dropped to a seat on the sand beside the Harristraw boy.

"This is the most comfortable spot I've found today," he said, with a sigh of content. "I tell you, it just wears a fellow out tramping through these buildings. We've been doing the Liberal Arts this morning and it's about done me. What State are you from? Excuse my asking, but out here it's a great lark, I think, to touch elbows with all the Union."

"Pennsylvania," answered Max, who found his new acquaintance very diverting.

"Shake!" exclaimed the latter, extending his hand. "We're both Middlers then, for I'm from New York. Haven't we got the crack building though?"

"I haven't been in it. It's quite pretty on the outside, but it doesn't mean as much as Pennsylvania's."

"Oh, that's all right. Each fellow ought to stick up for his own State. But you mustn't miss seeing our ball room. It's a stunner. Been here long?"

"Only about an hour."

"Then you haven't seen much. I've been here two days and we're going to stay a week longer."

"Are you from New York City?" asked Max, thinking it only fair that he should take his turn at asking questions.

"Yes, but I've just come from out in New Jersey where we live in the summer. Are you here by yourself?"

"Yes and no. I'm by myself now because I've lost the friend I came with."

"Is he a young fellow like you?"

"Yes, about my age. Why, have you seen him?" exclaimed Max eagerly.

"No, not that I know of. I was only thinking what a lark you two boys could have together; only need look at the things that interest you, and don't have to dawdle over embroidery and doll's clothes with a lot of women as I do. I've only got off now because they're dead tired out and are resting, at the New York building before we go to lunch."

CHAPTER XVII.

A WORSE PHASE OF A BAD SITUATION.

Max hoped he didn't look hungry when his companion spoke of going to lunch.

"Do you take your meals in the grounds?" he asked.

"Yes; all of them but breakfast. We're sampling the different restaurants, you see, as part of the exhibits. But I must be skipping back to duty now, or I'll be disgraced by having my people calling out my name all over the grounds. So long. Hope you'll find your friend."

The chatty New Yorker rose from his comfortable position with a sigh and walked slowly back into the heart of the State buildings. Max little realized how useful a message bearer he might prove to be if he had only thought it worth while to try to communicate with Al through him.

As it was he merely said "Good by" and then resumed his contemplation of Lake Michigan. Christopher Columbus, the whaleback steamboat, was just passing.

Max had read about her and under other circumstances would have taken great interest in looking at her "in the real." But now the only thing that was real to him—painfully real, was the growing hunger that possessed him.

"I'll have to spend that fifteen cents, that's all there is to it," he finally decided. "I may find Al before supper time."

He rose and began walking along the lake front toward the Manufactures building. He had read, or some one had told him, of lunch counters in this where the prices were very reasonable.

When he finally arrived at the mighty structure, he did not tarry to admire its vastness, but circled about till he discovered one of the Wellington restaurants, where he invested his entire capital in a bowl of bouillon and a hunk of bread.

"There, I feel better now," he exclaimed when he had finished.

He walked through the biggest exposition building ever put together and came out on the Court of Honor, which held him transfixed for an instant with its beauty.

"Oh, Al, where are you?" he murmured. "Why are we not seeing this together?"

Whether should he turn next? There were things that he wanted to examine, of course, on every hand, but he dared not do much tramping about for the sake of mere sightseeing, fearful lest he should make himself too hungry for a supper he was by no means certain of getting.

Suddenly he espied a vacant seat on a bench along the edge of the Basin. He hurried across the path and took possession of it.

A band had come into a music stand close by. Open air music at least was free, and as Max listened to the playing of the first selection, he felt that he had struck the first luck of this memorable day.

Nevertheless, he realized with a pang that he was doing nothing to help himself out of his serious dilemma, although, to be sure, he kept his eyes fixed intently on the crowds that went surging past, on the chance of spying Al among them. He had determined to go back to the Pennsylvania building by and by to find out if his singular entry in the registry book had borne any fruit, although he placed but little hope in it.

Next him on the bench were a mother and her boy, a little fellow of about five.

"Come, Morris," the mother said for about the third time, "we must really be going now if we want to see anything more."

"But I can't see anything any way," objected the little fellow. "Somebody's always in the way."

"We're going to the Transportation building now though," continued the mother, "I'm sure you want to look at the railroad cars."

"I would if I was as big as you and could see over the people's heads," returned the boy.

"I'm very sorry, Morris," said his mother. "If I was strong enough I'd carry you. We might hire a chair, but that wouldn't be sufficiently high."

An idea came into Max's head as he overheard this conversation. He wondered if he had "nerve" enough to carry it out.

He determined not to stop and think it over, but to make the plunge at once.

"Excuse me, madam," he said, turning to the lady and taking off his hat, "but—but I am looking for something to do to earn my supper. If you like I'll go to the Transportation building with you and carry your boy on my shoulder."

"Oh, mamma, do let him. That'll be splendid!" exclaimed Morris.

But for a minute the lady did nothing but stare at Max in astonishment. Then she said:

"You want something to do to earn your supper? It strikes me the fifty cents you paid to get in the grounds would have given that to you."

Max felt that he was flushing to the roots of his hair. This was worse even than he had anticipated.

"But I hoped to meet my friend somewhere in here," he explained. "He has all my money. We became

separated from each other down at the railroad station."

"Oh, mamma, do let him take me," pleaded the boy again.

"How much will you charge?" went on the lady.

"A quarter an hour," answered Max, thinking it well to be business-like.

"Very good. I will try you. Of course you need not carry Morris till we reach the building."

The three started off, and Max soon found that his companions knew a great deal more about the grounds than he did. When they reached the Golden Gateway he picked Morris up and placed him on his shoulder.

He was a sturdy little chap and no feather weight. Max told himself that his quarter would be fairly earned. There was a great crowd surging up and down the aisles of this favorite building. Morris would have been able to see scarcely anything had he been on the floor.

But poor Max's back began to break under its unwonted burden. Finally he could endure it no longer, and stopping, asked Morris to stand for a moment on the railing of an exhibit, and transfer himself to the other shoulder.

The mother put up her lorgnettes and viewed this proceeding with stern displeasure.

"I hope there is no danger of your dropping the boy," she said severely.

"No, ma'am," replied Max meekly. He wanted to add defiantly: "I'd like to though," but the thought of his supper, for which he was all the while acquiring a keener appetite, restrained him.

"I wonder how much longer my hour lasts?" he asked himself.

He could not look at his watch as in addition to Morris he had his satchel and umbrella to hold, and there were no clocks within his range of vision.

Presently they reached the exhibit of the American line of steamers—a section of a palatial steamship, four decks high. To go through this, Max was obliged to dismount Morris, but the boy clung tightly to his hand.

He was a nice little fellow, and appeared to have taken a strong fancy to his bearer.

"What's your name?" he asked, as they were looking in at one of the staterooms.

"Max."

"Well, Max," went on the small boy, "don't you think it would be great fun if you and I were going away across the ocean to Europe together in a big ship like this?"

Before Max could make any answer there was a scream just behind them. A woman had fallen down the stairs and struck a child in her descent.

Crowds are always eager for a panic. One seized this crowd now.

Somebody cried that the ship was on fire; another added that an exit by the upper deck and the gallery of the building was the quickest means of escape.

A stampede was immediately made in this direction. Max and Morris were caught in the current and whirled along with it.

Morris' mother, who had seen the woman fall and darted forward to try and save her, was swept in the opposite direction by another mass, intent on getting out by the way in which they had entered. Thus it was not long before mother and son were widely separated.

Max and Morris were in the gallery of the Transportation building before they could resist the movement of the crowd. Then it did not take them long to discover that the third member of their little party was missing.

They tried to retrace their steps at once, but this was impossible while such a steady stream of humanity was pouring the other way. At last, when they were able to descend to the spot where they had last seen Mrs. Spdyke, there was no sign of her.

They descended to the main floor, looked eagerly in every direction, but in vain. Morris behaved very well, only clung tighter to Max's hand.

"But what am I to do now?" thought poor Max. "Not a cent in my pocket and a small boy to look out for."

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHAT AL WAS DOING.

When Al and Gladys Moreland hurried out of the Union Station, the former was sure that Max was just behind them. But his companion was so terrified at the idea of Shillings following her that she thought of nothing else but getting away from him.

"If I can once throw him off the track," she murmured breathlessly, "I ought to be safe from him in a big city like this."

There was a line of cabs standing along the curbstone.

"Can't we take one of these quick?" said Gladys. "I'll pay for it. Tell him to drive anywhere so that he starts at once."

Al seized the knob, threw open the door, handed his companion in and then calling to the driver to start immediately and take them to the Auditorium, sprang in himself.

"Where did you tell him to go?" asked Gladys as they started off.

"To the Auditorium. It was the only place I could think of in Chicago on the spur of the minute," and Al laughed.

But nevertheless he felt a little uneasy about Max.

"What is the Auditorium?" inquired Gladys.

"A hotel, a theater and a little of everything, I guess."

"How far is it?"

"I confess I don't know. Perhaps I'd better ask the driver."

"No, no; don't do that. He might pull up the horse and give that man a chance to catch up. But there's your friend. I forgot all about him. What will he think? What will he do when he finds us gone?"

"Oh, he'll wait around the station and I'll go back for him by and by," replied Al with a confidence he was far from feeling.

In fact the more he reflected on the situation, the more disturbed he became. He knew Max's restless disposition. It would be just like him to go poking about the city, trying to find his lost chum, and then how would they ever find each other?

"If you don't mind," he added now, "when we get to the Auditorium I'll leave you in the ladies' parlor of the hotel, and then take this cab right back to the station. I'll get Max, come back here, and then we can all go up to the Fair grounds together. And oh, yes, there are our trunks. I've got to go back to the station any way to see about them. If you will give me the check for yours now, I shan't have a chance to forget it."

"Oh, yes," and Gladys started to open the little bag she carried.

Then she hesitated and looked at Al doubtfully.

"But what is going to be done with my trunk after you get it? I'm sure I don't know where I am going."

"I thought it was decided that you come to the place where Max and I are going to stay. It is called the Edgerton Flats, and is very near the Fair grounds."

"But—will it be proper?"

"Oh, I guess that can be fixed all right. It was a Mrs. Edgerton who sent me the circular. We can explain things to her and she can chaperone you. It isn't as if it was a regular view. Look there, isn't that a pretty view? That must be Lake Michigan."

But Gladys had only begun to admire it when the cab stopped and Al realized that they must have reached their destination. He escorted his companion into the ladies' reception room, after telling the driver to wait for him, then returned and set out again for the Union Station.

"I do hope Max has had sense enough to wait there for me," he reflected.

But, as the reader knows, whether it was due to a lack of sense on Max's part or not, there was no Purdy to be found about the building.

"He's gone to our stopping place then," was Al's conclusion, and after ordering their trunk and Gladys's sent there, he dismissed the cab and took a street car back to the Auditorium.

When he took out his purse to pay the driver, he realized that he had Max's money along with his own.

"The poor fellow can't travel far away," he mused.

Three quarters of an hour later he and Gladys were interviewing Mrs. Edgerton in the parlor of the neat brick structure in which her apartments were situated.

"No, there's no young man been here inquiring for you," she replied in response to Al's eager question.

"Where is the fellow then?" Al could not help exclaiming.

"Oh, dear, I'm afraid I've brought all this trouble on you," interposed Gladys, sinking down into a discouraged attitude on the sofa. "I wish I'd never wanted to come to the Fair."

"Please don't say that, Miss Moreland," Al pleaded. "Max is certainly old enough to take care of himself. He may be here at any minute."

But after Al had gone to his room and taken a bath and Gladys had retired to hers to rest, and the two met again in the parlor by appointment to go to a neighboring hotel for lunch, Max was still among the missing.

"Perhaps he couldn't wait and has gone into the Fair grounds, Al hastened to suggest, when he noticed the lines of worry on the young girl's face. "After our lunch we will go in and hunt him up, if you like."

"Oh, by all means," exclaimed Gladys. "I feel so responsible for this separation."

It was not a very enjoyable luncheon for either of them. In spite of his reassuring words, Al could not keep out of his mind the thought of the almost penniless condition in which Max must find himself.

"Still, he ought to have small change enough to bring him out here," he tried to reassure himself by reflecting.

Lunch over, they walked to the nearest gate and entered the exposition grounds.

"I suppose it's like hunting for a needle in a haystack to hope to meet Max here," Al remarked. "Still, there's a chance of our running against him."

But it is the unexpected that happens. They were crossing the bridge to the Wooded Island, to give Gladys a glimpse of the Rose Garden on their way to the Peristyle, when Al came face to face with Arthur Seagrave.

The latter made no attempt to avoid the encounter. On the contrary he stopped, extended both arms with a smile as though to bar Al's way and then put out one hand as he exclaimed cordially:

"I've been hoping I'd meet you all the morning."

One look into that face, the cordial grasp from that hand, and Al's confidence in the man was restored as firmly as though it had never been shaken.

"And I'm awfully glad to see you," he said heartily. "Allow me to introduce Mr. Seagrave, Miss Moreland."

Seagrave lifted his hat and then asked:

"May I join you for a little while?" "Certainly," replied Al. "You can help us find Max. We've lost him."

"Yes, it's perfectly dreadful, Mr. Seagrave, and all my fault," interposed Gladys. "I got frightened at something down at the station and dragged Mr. Hall away so fast that poor Mr. Purdy was left in the lurch and we haven't seen him since."

"And you are out looking for him now?"

"Yes. Is there any place in the grounds where lost people can go to find each other?"

"Have you tried the Bureau of Public Comfort?"

"No, not yet," answered Al. "I don't believe he thought of that. I'm sure I didn't till you spoke of it. We were bound for the Peristyle and the

Court of Honor. He and I talked more about that part of the exposition than any other, and so I thought we should be more apt to run across him there than anywhere else."

They did not run across him, as the reader knows, although during the playing of the band the two Harlequin boys were separated from each other only by the Grand Basin, Al and his party being seated on the south side, while Max was forming the acquaintance of the Opdykes on the north.

When the concert was over, Seagrave proposed that they take a ride around the grounds on the Intramural which they did, alighting at the South Loop and proceeded to the Marine Restaurant for dinner.

"I should be perfectly happy if only Max were with us," said Al, as they took seats at a table on the upper piazza, affording them a fine view of the Fisheries, the lagoon and the Wooded Island.

"Oh, you'll probably find him at your boarding place when you get back there tonight," returned Seagrave.

But they didn't. Leaving Gladys, who was tired out, to go to bed, Al accompanied Seagrave to the large hotel near by where the young Philadelphia was staying. His worry over Max had completely driven from Al's mind the developments in the Beechwood murder case affecting Seagrave that had come to the surface after the latter's departure from Harlequin.

They were talking about the missing one in the hotel office, when a boy of about fifteen, standing near them, struck in with: "Have you lost a friend in the Fair?"

"Yes, in or out of it I don't know which," answered Al. "Why, have you seen him?"

"Well, I was lying on the beach this morning with a fellow who had lost track of his chum. He was from Pennsylvania."

"That's Max sure!" exclaimed Al.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 560.]

Kit Cummings' Sloop.

BY CHARLES F. WELLES.

CHAPTER VIII—(Continued).

IMAEAD CHASES THE SWAN.

Finally, when Williams turned to look back, which he often did, I's features could be plainly seen and they were scowling and threatening.

"Run me down, and I'll make it hot for you," he yelled, when the vessels were within speaking distance, but the boys answered never a word.

They were too engrossed in the excitement of the moment.

As they drew closer Imaead seemed to rush with increasing speed upon the flying Swan, as if to ride completely over her.

For the past few minutes the boys had glanced anxiously at the sky.

A storm was coming up.

"We must overtake her before it breaks," said Kit. "Take the wheel, Darby. I'm going to board the Swan."

Darby took the wheel and Kit went forward and stood at the bow.

"He's going to jump aboard the Swan," thought Darby, "and he can do it. We are right upon her now."

This was indeed Kit's plan.

Eager to recover his money, he took no thought of the danger and audacity of facing single handed—for Darby could not help him—his strong and desperate enemy.

When at the forward end of the sloop he found the Swan's stern directly under him, and also that the wheel was lashed and the skipper not visible.

He prepared to leap upon the Swan's deck.

Just then the cabin door opened, and Williams appeared, holding a rifle.

"He won't dare shoot," said Darby to himself in a half scared whisper,

as he saw it. "My stars! He's fired!"

The skipper had raised the rifle; then followed a flash and a report.

"And there goes Kit!" cried Darby, in an agonized voice, as he saw his friend disappear over the bows. "He has shot him. And he is going to shoot again. But what can he be shooting at? He is aiming up toward the masthead."

Another puff and report together. Then came something that made Darby jump, and almost took his breath away.

With a rattle and roar, down, like an avalanche, rushed Imaead's big mainsail.

In another minute her mast was bare and a huge mass of canvas lay spread over the deck.

Darby barely escaped being covered in the ruins.

The mainsail had been drawn in nearly flat so that the boom hung over the cockpit, and the canvas all lay on the deck.

Had the sheets been out and the sail gone over the sides, the sloop would have been swamped.

Dismayed at the accident, Darby crawled from under the mass of cloth that covered the cockpit, and gazed after the Swan.

She was fast forging ahead.

As he looked he saw a tableau melodramatic in its theatrical resemblance.

On the Swan's deck lay Kit, and over him stood Williams with the rifle in his hands, pointed at Kit's head.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WRECK ON THE ROCK.

"This is a pretty kettle of fish," thought Darby, as he surveyed the fallen mainsail. "I know now why he aimed so high. He was shooting at the halyards for this very purpose. I knew he had a reputation as a crack shot, but never would have thought he could have done this. He did it though, and now to remedy the disaster if I can."

He had fastened the wheel and the sloop was keeping her course under the jib.

He looked towards the shore, about half a mile distant, and then at the sky, which was growing more threatening each moment in its foreboding of a storm.

"There is a sheltered cove behind those rocks ahead. I will put for it, but I must hurry before the storm breaks. It won't be long, either, from the looks of things."

So the sloop was headed for a promontory some distance away.

The wind was dying down, and the sloop made poor headway. At last, however, she glided into a small but secure harbor between the rocks.

He had often been there before and knew the place well.

He allowed the sloop to run up against the sand at the innermost point of the harbor, which was quite long, and threw over the anchor.

Black rocks towered above on either side.

A sudden darkness began to overspread all, accompanied by perfect quiet, which was shortly broken by a roar and shriek of elements turned loose, and through the darkness of the cove Darby saw masses of white spray scudding along out on the black waters of the Sound.

The storm had broken at last.

Darby could see the water whipped into foam and hear the wind howl over and around the rocks above him. But at the sloop's anchorage all was quiet.

Darby felt grateful that in the sloop's precarious condition she had reached a safe shelter in time.

But he thought anxiously of Kit. "The Swan hadn't time to make an anchorage when I saw her last. She will have to scud before the gale, but Williams is a good skipper, and can doubtless take her through."

The darkness of night settled over all, a driving rain began to pour down, and Darby crawled under the fallen canvas into the cabin.

"A cosy place to spend the night in," thought he.

So it was. The cabin was small, but tastefully furnished, and showed that its owner possessed a love for the beautiful and artistic.

The berths on each side looked inviting with their elegant and brilliant coverings; the gilt nails that studded, like myriads of stars, the beautifully painted ceiling, sparkled in the rays of the handsome cabin lamp; the floor was softly carpeted, and at the forward end of the cabin stood an ornamental little stove, glistening with polished nickel plate.

Darby stretched himself on one of the berths.

"This is immense," he muttered, dreamily eyeing the cabin lamp hanging from its half dozen chains, the glass pendants musically tinkling as it swung gently back and forth. "Kit can afford to be proud of his sloop. She's at the top notch for speed and this cabin's the snuggest place under cover. I wish I knew through where Kit is. This is a bad gale to be out in. More boats than one will be wrecked tonight—the Swan perhaps among them. My stars! Hear it rain."

The rain was beating fiercely in gusts upon the deck and sail of the sloop, and around the rocks the wind howled and shrieked.

Hour after hour passed and Darby lay listening to the storm, as the sloop idly rocked on the waves, until at last he fell asleep to the endless tattoo of the beating rain.

When he awoke all was quiet, save for a gentle lapping of water outside. Darby crawled up on deck.

"Still cloudy," was his comment, as he looked at the sky, "but the storm has passed."

Going below again he examined the lockers and from what he found among the commissary stores made a pretty good meal of cold provender.

Once more he went above. "Now to splice those plaguey halyards," he grumbled, looking at the severed pieces. "Thank goodness I know how."

The severed pieces were dangling from their blocks on the mast, but uncasting the lower ends of the halyards he ascended the wire shrouds and pulled the severed ends down with him to the deck, and attached them to the gaff after removing the short ends from the latter and splicing them to the deck ends of the halyards.

This was a slow and tiresome job and it was some time before he was done.

"Now to get out of here, and hunt up Kit," he thought. "I must turn the sloop's head around."

This, too, was a tiresome job, for he had barely room, the work was heavy and his clothes were still so wet that they hindered his movements.

"Now to get the mainsail up," was his next thought.

The sail was heavy enough when dry, and was much more so now, water soaked as it was.

Inch by inch, by tremendous tugging the gaff crawled up the mast.

Darby was completely fatigued when the gaff was in place and the halyards belayed.

The tide was on the ebb, and casting loose the sloop, he managed to get her down to the inlet's mouth, where the breeze caught her and she began to forge ahead.

The water was rough, the sloop's wet mainsail did her no good, and she was inclined to roll.

"What a blow that was," thought Darby. "The Sound is rougher than I have seen it for a long, long time. The waves are like big hills. There's not a sail in sight."

On and on went the sloop, laboring, rolling and rearing, now up, now down—seemingly the only vessel afloat on all that wild waste of black, heaving waters, but all the time Darby kept his eyes open and about him.

"Hello! What's that?"

Something across the tossing waters to starboard, where they dashed against a huge black cliff, captured his attention.

"It's the hull of some vessel," said Darby, "but her mast has gone clean over."

He steered for the distant object and soon came up off her stern.

There she lay; the hull of a good sized sloop; the forward and midship part out of water and wedged behind the cutwater between two rocks; her long bowsprit intact and streaming with fallen cordage.

Her mast had been snapped short off and carried away.

Complete silence hung about the dismantled craft.

Larby was curious to know what loat it was and where from.

"Run smack on the rock," thought he. "I won't get too close, but there may be some one yet on board, though it isn't at all likely."

"Boat ahoy!" in a stentorian voice. No reply.

"Abandoned sure as fate, and crew all drowned probably. They never could have made a landing on that shore. The rocks go straight up from the water's edge."

He again examined the dismantled wreck, and suddenly burst out with a cry of astonishment.

"Kit is lost! She is the same boat!" With a trembling hand he steered Imahed well around the craft and came up before the bows.

"Yes, yes," said Darby, his excitement seemingly intensified. "She is the same boat. Kit where are you.

On the bow of the silent wreck glittered coldly the word—Swan.

CHAPTER X.

THE WRECK OF THE SWAN.

Kit made the leap safely from Imahed to the Swan, but fell in a heap when he landed.

He saw Williams fire, and wondered if he was being shot at, but it was too late to recall the jump.

Hearing the noise of the falling mainsail, he turned to see the cause, and on again facing about towards Williams found himself gazing into the rifle's muzzle.

"Lay still and yer all right," roughly ordered Williams, "but if ye move I'll shoot ye quicker'n scat."

He drew some small cordage from his pocket, and suddenly pouncing upon Kit bound him hand and foot.

"What do you mean by this?" demanded Kit hotly.

"Just keep still. Yer will find out quick enough," and lifting the boy up he carried him into the cabin and laid him in a berth. Then he left without a word, and Kit was alone with his unpleasant thoughts.

The cabin was dark; the cords pained, and his sloop's predicament made him uneasy.

Vainly he attempted to unloose his bonds; the more he tried the tighter they became.

"Confound such luck," he muttered. "How is this thing going to end. My, how dark it's getting—and there—it's come!"

He heard a loud hissing, roaring sound outside, and the sloop gave a sudden lurch and roll that nearly threw him from the berth.

Then he felt her dive and spurt ahead, could feel her reel and shiver, and hear the sails and cordage strain and groan.

"The gale has struck us at last," he cried, with a trace of excitement. "And here am I—shut up here like a prisoner—am a prisoner in fact. How I wish I was on deck now."

But bound hand and foot he could only lie and listen.

He could hear the wind shriek, the waters seethe and hiss, and the rain pound in gusts above him as the sloop scudded along before the gale.

Minute after minute passed while Kit lay and listened to the howling elements.

Suddenly, in the midst of the tumult, came a sound that chilled him with horror; no scream or shriek, but a loud resounding crash as of timbers grinding and splitting.

Then followed another, seemingly from above him, a noise heard above

the beating of wave and wind and rain.

"The sloop has struck," cried Kit, "and the mast has gone over. Oh, I must escape from here."

In a frenzy of eagerness he tore and bit at his bonds, but vainly. He could not sever them.

"I must free myself," cried he. "The Swan will soon break to pieces and I'll be drowned if I cannot get loose."

A mass of spray burst in upon him, drenching him, and looking up he saw Williams standing before him, well bundled and streaming with water.

Whipping out a knife, the skipper quickly cut the bonds that secured the prisoner.

It was no time for words—a giant's voice could not have been heard in that tumult.

Kit followed Williams out of the cabin.

The scene was a wild one. The rain beat in his face like hail; the spray flew over and about him and blinded him, and the sound of the wind and the breakers drowned all else.

Louder than the roar and shriek of the wind could be heard the awful thundering sound of the waves breaking against the rocks, which, towering grim through the spray and rain, Kit could see were not far away to starboard.

The waves were breaking over the Swan and she was enveloped in a cloud of spray, so Kit could not see how large were the rocks she had struck upon, but he saw she was tight and fast, though shaking and trembling under the strain of the heavy seas.

He felt a hand on his arm, and turning saw Williams, who motioned him to take one end of a boat that stood bottom up on the deck.

Between them both the boat was safely lowered into the water, and held by ropes.

Williams seized one of the two oars fastened to the deck, while Kit did likewise, and dropping into the boat they cast it loose.

"She'll be swamped sure," said Kit, tugging lustily at his oar, as they pulled away from the fated Swan. "The rain and water will sink us before we are fifty yards away, and even should we manage to reach the shore we couldn't land. We'd be beaten to death on the rocks. This is the worse fix I was ever in."

Williams was working his oar like a giant, but human efforts seemed to be of little use.

The Swan could not be seen through the blinding storm, but Kit kept an anxious eye to the left, where from a line of white at the base of the massive cliffs, came a momentary increasing roar as the breakers beat on the rocks with a loud booming sound of deadly warning.

Suddenly a huge cloud of spray flew over the two boatmen, and Kit saw a line of rocks to their right over which the water was breaking.

It acted as a breakwater and the waters which the boat was now riding were smoother.

Encouraged by this Kit renewed his efforts at the oars, and the boat crawled along the ledge or rocks increasing in height meanwhile, shielding them from the force of the wind and waves.

Higher grew the rocks until they ended abruptly where they joined the massive cliffs on the mainland.

The waters were now tolerably quiet, but it was growing so rapidly dark that Kit could not see where they were going, but he suddenly discovered that their little journey was ended, for he felt the boat grate on the sandy bottom and then stop.

They both stepped out on the beach, upon which Williams tossed the anchor.

Then Kit saw his dusky form in the darkness stoop over the boat, next a match flickered through the gloom, and a moment later the skipper with a lighted lantern, which he had taken from a locker in the boat, strode

away in the darkness, ordering Kit to come along.

Kit thought it best to do so. Following the bobbing light he was led in under the rocks through a natural passageway, or fissure, until he found himself in a tunnel-like passage completely walled in, flat under foot and rounded above.

"This is funny," thought Kit. "I never knew before that there were any caverns in cliffs around here. Where is he taking me anyway?"

But he followed without asking a question until Williams stopped at what Kit, to his surprise, saw was a door.

It was also furnished with a lock, the key to which the skipper seemed to possess, for he took a large one from his pocket which unlocked the door.

He pushed it open, and Kit, at his direction, passed through, filled with curiosity.

By the dim, flickering lantern's light he saw he was in a small cavern in the rock, with a rounding top and sides.

Kit, lost in wonder, gazed about him.

The comparatively level floor was covered with fine sand, and resting on it were a rough table and some chairs. An old trunk in one corner also attracted his attention.

Curious to know why the place had been so fitted up and why he had been brought there, he turned to ask the skipper, but then stopped.

Upon the table stood a lighted candle, but Williams and his lantern had vanished.

Moreover the door was closed. Kit tried to open it. It was locked.

(To be continued.)

THE BIG APPETITE OF BIRDS.

For all the poet frequently chooses the bird as the subject of his sentimental songs, this same feathered warbler is a most pronounced glutton.

Quoting the late J. G. Wood, the celebrated writer on animals "Animal Friends" says that if a man could eat as much in proportion to size as an insectivorous bird, he would consume a whole baron of beef for his dinner. The robin, for instance, is a most voracious insect eater. It has been calculated that to keep a robin up to its normal weight a daily amount of animal food is required equal to an earthworm fourteen feet in length. Taking a man of average weight, and measuring, bulk for bulk, with the robin, Mr. Wood tried to calculate how much food he would consume in twenty four hours, if he ate as much in proportion as the bird. Assuming a Bologna sausage to be nine inches in circumference, which would be about in proportion to the man as the earthworm is to the robin, he found that the man would have to eat sixty seven feet of such sausages in every twenty four hours.

HIS INTRODUCTION.

"There is a young country boy staying at our boarding house," writes a correspondent, "who is a perfect little gentleman in his way. The other day he brought his sister in to dinner and gave her a general introduction somewhat as follows: 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is my sister.' Then he electrified the gathering by continuing, 'My sister, these are ladies and gentlemen.' Whereat the ladies and gentlemen present were highly delighted.—'Tit-Bits.'

A CHILL FOR REGGIE.

She—"You know, Reggie, that girls are being called by the names of flowers now, and my sister suggested that I should be called Thistle."

Reggie—"Oh, yes, I see; because you are so sharp."

She—"Oh, no; she said it was because a donkey loved me."—Boston Globe.

CRUEL.

The Debutante (aside)—"How many verses shall I sing?"
The Professor—"Do you want an encore?"

The Debutante—"Of course."
The Professor—"One."—Boston Budget.

rus Among the Crockery Ware.

ull in a china shop," has long been a signifying misplaced energies, but ng ago it served in Philadelphia as a statement of fact. The "Times" of ity printed a description of the incirrom which we make an extract.

place in front of which the beast had d has an awning over the sidewalk, the f which bear the sign:

CHARLES McNEAL.

CHINAWARE AND CROCKERY.

oked at this, and possibly remember- at, according to tradition, no self- bull could find a better place to work rfluos energy, ran in.

store has on each side, running al- is full length, a counter, while the is occupied by a series of long tables, ast night groaned under pyramids of common and uncommon fruit dishes, ue pickle platters, cake stands and on-bull-proof articles.

McNeal, the proprietor, was in the back hen the bull came in, and hearing the noise caused by the falling of a stack, which the intruder had overturned swish of his tail, advanced to investi- a trouble.

with the bull, backed up by a cosmopol- id, which lingered about the doorway. ll glared and kept on swishing his tail, gave him no real pleasure, and cost Neal on an average of \$2.75 for each The proprietor did not know what to his face showed it. A lady who peered the corner of the door cried:

"Cross to him!" McNeal, who is a veteran, having served Eighth Pennsylvania Cavalry, adopted gestication, and said:

"out of here!" bull lurched in a highly suggestive -loss, \$6—and McNeal fled to the of his private office. The bull seeing on to mangle tried to turn around, but ce was too narrow. His flank struck a toilet pitchers. Loss, \$12.

he resumed his former position and e a lot of flat irons. They tumbled and were not injured. A lot of soup hich broke their fall were seriously in- He then raced to the back of the store, commotion almost gave Mr. McNeal

nervous prostration, he being engaged in calculating the amount of damages by the size of the noise. A lot of wicker baskets, which were piled in a most enticing position, just so that a breath would blow them over, his bulksip walked as carefully around as though it had been a sickly calf that he had a paternal interest in.

The left side of the store was by this time wrecked, and the bull wanted to get over to the right side, where he saw a most promising field for his talents.

Try as he would, however, he could not turn, and at this stage of the game Policeman Calhoun, of the Sixth district, who a few days ago made a gallant capture of an escaped canary bird for a lady fair, made his way into the store, and taking the beast at a disadvantage and by the tail, twisted.

The result brought tears to the eyes of the listening McNeal. A center table went over in the ensuing jump—loss \$30—but the bull had a chance to turn around.

Calhoun had not calculated on this, but the bull wasted no time. Calhoun fled, the enraged animal bellowing and butting where the policeman carries his pistol, and so they came out of the store.

There Bates was waiting and the bull was lessened. In a few minutes the bull was in a more cheerful frame of mind and resumed his triumphant march to a death in Jersey.

A FREAK INDEED.

Stranger—"I wish an engagement."
Museum Manager—"What is your specialty?"
Stranger—"I went to the World's Fair and haven't spoken to a single person since my return about my experiences."
Museum Manager—"You're engaged at \$500 a week."—Brooklyn Eagle.

A DISTINCTION.

"I want to introduce you to Mr. Sadscaan," said the hostess.
"Oh, yes?" replied the young man, "he is one of our leading literary lights, isn't he?"
"No; he is one of our heavies."—Washing- ton Star.

WHO WANTED THE CHANGE.

"Did you go to your old doctor about your case?"
"Yes."
"Did he say you needed change?"
"Pooh, no; he said he did, and wanted to know if I had any with me."—Chicago Inter- Ocean.



Mr. Thomas Farrenkopf

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WHY THE DOCTOR WAS CHEERFUL.

Jones—"How d'ye do, doctor? You're look- ing cheerful. There must be a great deal of sickness."
Doctor—"No; but the football season has begun."—Detroit Free Press.

A SAMPLE OF CANADIAN WIT.

An enterprising hosier has announced a new button which he calls "The Old Maid's Wedding." Why? you ask. Because it never comes off. —Toronto Mail.

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