

THE ARGOSY

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Trials and Triumphs OF A YOUNG REPORTER.

BY EARLE E. MARTIN.

CHAPTER I. IN THE SANCTUM.

"See here!" exclaimed Bob White, as he threw down the newspaper he had been reading, and glared upon his companion.

"Well?" asked the other.

"It will never do for you to slander lawyers, Grant Dudley! You know as well as I do that few things compare with the law. As for the newspaper business, you ought not to mention the two in the same breath."

The young fellow who sat in the editor's chair in the farther corner of the office, laughed at this declaration. White and he were good friends; and he had learned to make allowance for some of his companion's assertions.

"I shall take two breaths," he replied. "Really, White, you lawyers are amusing. For instance—"

"None of your instances!" retorted Bob White, who was beginning to be a trifle ruffled at the satire of his companion, the young editor.

"If you persist," laughed Grant Dudley, "the court will rule out all instances. But as I was saying, lawyers are enough to make one laugh."

"So you say!"

"Suppose a trial is held over a horse. One lawyer proves that since a horse is a quadruped, and a mule is a quadruped, therefore a horse is a mule. His opponent will thereupon assert that a horse is not a quadruped, but a beast of burden; and since a camel is a beast of burden, and a horse is a camel."

"The newspaper man would say the horse is a camel, without so much as trying to prove it!" retorted Bob White. "But I say, you are trying to lampoon—"

"No, I am not," answered Grant, as he leaned back in his editor's easy chair. "Only a few minutes ago you were criticising newspaper men at a great rate; and I merely wanted to show you that other people beside editors are imperfect."

"I'll admit that we're all imperfect," interposed White, who secretly saw that he had been getting decidedly the worst of the argument.

"If you are willing to admit that journalism is as good a profession as law, I'll admit that law is as good as journalism."

"Done," answered Bob White; and he picked up his newspaper from the floor. "Really, I was half in jest in what I said about newspapers."

"And I assure you that I hold no grudge against lawyers in general and you in particular."

Peace was once more restored between the two friends, whose love for their chosen lines of work had led them into more than one heated discussion.

"If you will wait until I have finished this paragraph," suggested Grant Dudley, "I will go over to Sue McPherson's with you, and we will talk over that reading circle work you suggested."

"All right," answered the young student of law, and he once more buried himself in his newspaper.

Grant Dudley reached out to a book shelf at his side, and drew down a compendium of law, in which he proceeded to hunt up some reference to the subject he was discussing on paper.

Ten minutes before the young lawyer and the young editor had been warmly debating their life callings. The lawyer was now reading industriously from a newspaper; and the servant of the printing press was searching rapidly through the pages of a law book.

Bob White looked out of the windows once or twice at the falling rain.

here he was, first assistant to Mr. Philip Street, proprietor of the Sa'lem "Tribune."

But the reality was not entirely rose colored. For instance, on this particular day, few things had gone right in the office of "The Tribune."

Early in the morning Mr. Street had trotted hurriedly out of the sanctum, without deigning so much as a word as to his intentions; and he had not returned. It was now past three o'clock in the afternoon.

The news columns were remarkably innocent of what should be their chief feature, considering that this was the last day before the paper went to

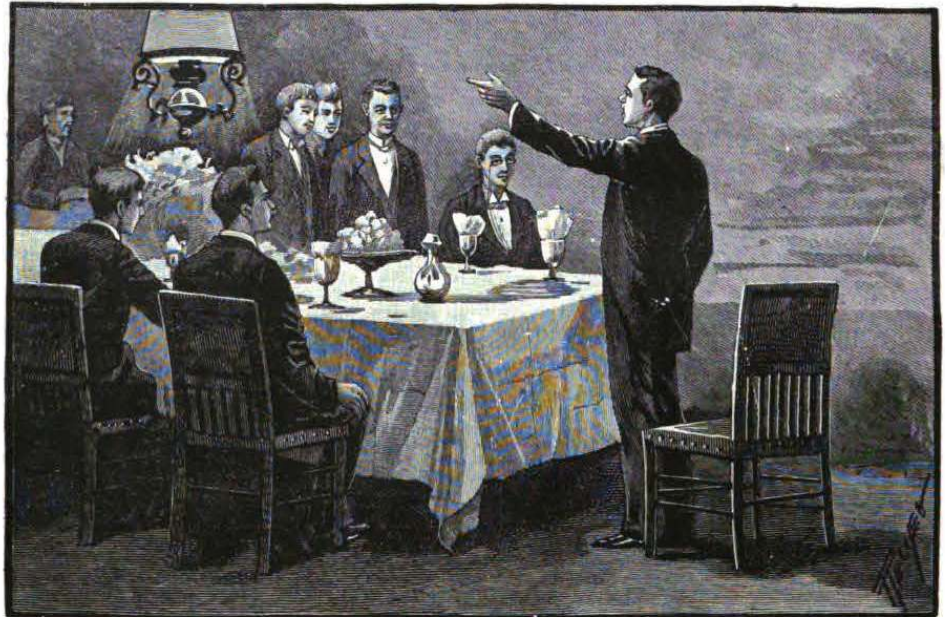
"Oh, 'most anything. Try some chat on law versus journalism," drawled White, with a twinkle of the eye.

"Good," responded the young journalist. "The very thing!"

With these words Grant Dudley went at his task with a new vigor. He was determined to finish his work, and go out with White before it should be time for him to examine the final page proof sheets of "The Tribune."

"The field of law and the field of letters," he began to write.

But before he had finished his first sentence, the door which led into the composing room was opened; and a



HE SEEMED TO SEE HIMSELF AS HE HAD STOOD UP BEFORE HIS CLASSMATES AND RESPONDED TO THE TOAST: "THE PRESS."

"Will it never cease?" he asked himself, and then turned again to his reading.

Grant Dudley wrote down a few sentences on the yellow paper before him. Then he leaned lazily back in his chair.

For some unaccountable reason, his thoughts did not seem to come with any degree of ease. That is to say, the thoughts came easy enough, but they were not the thoughts he wanted to call forth and apply to the work in hand. It seemed impossible to fasten his mind on the present.

It dwelt on his work all right, but in a way that did him no practical good. He seemed to see himself in imagination as he had stood up before his schoolmates at their class dinner the previous June and responded to the toast, "The Press."

They all knew his great ambition was to be an editor, but then it had appeared to him like a dream that would never be more than that. And

press. Added to this, Mr. Street had had some trouble with an advertiser, who had withdrawn his regular half column notice.

This unexpected event, coming early in the afternoon, had left Grant Dudley with another vacancy to fill, another seven hundred words to write; and as he was a boy who did his literary work in a conscientious manner, seven hundred words, coming at the end of a hard week and a hard half day, meant a good deal of brain cudgeling.

"Where can Mr. Street be?" he pondered. "I hate to go to press without his being here; but it will have to be done if he doesn't return soon. The inside pages should be locked in the forms by this time. It's too bad that Smith should have taken out his ad just at this time. What shall I fill that space with?"

"What can I write an interesting half column about, White?" he suddenly asked his friend.

small and lanky figure appeared on the threshold.

"Say, Mr. Dudley, Mr. Brown, he wants to know when you look for Mr. Street back; and he says he's got to be in a whoopin' big hurry, or it's goin' to be night here pretty soon," said the apparition.

"All right, Jim, tell Mr. Brown I'll be out in two or three minutes."

The door closed behind Jim, the office devil; and Dudley again dashed away at his half column task.

When he had written about three hundred words, he gathered up the written pages, intending to finish the article later; then he followed the apprentice into the printing room.

Matters were in confusion in the composing room as well as in the editor's office. Several galleyfuls of type were awaiting their turn at the make up stone, although Brown the foreman was working diligently away, placing the display headings in their proper positions, and arranging and

balancing the paragraphs as they would appear in the printed paper.

"Where's Street?" Brown asked briefly of Dudley.

"I don't know," said Grant. "And I'm worried. He left the office this morning without a word. There is something strange about it."

"We won't need that half column after all," added Brown a moment later, as he scanned the empty holes still left in the pages, and then looked at the type still standing in galleys. "The paper's a little over-set. You will have to read page proofs if Street doesn't come in a jiffy."

Just then a printer came in with a proof of the second, third, sixth and seventh pages, the pages first put upon the press.

Dudley spread them out before him across the top of some type cases, and looked rapidly but carefully down every column.

"This is all right," he soon said.

The creaking of machinery announced a few minutes later that the cylinder press was busy with the first side of "The Tribune."

Grant Dudley found that there would be nothing more for him to do for at least half an hour, when the outer forms would be made ready; and he went back into the little editorial room.

Bob White was still sitting there, poring over the newspaper files which were kept in the office.

"There is nothing more to be done for half an hour, I find," said Grant to Bob; and he reached for his mackintosh which hung on the hat rack at one side of the room.

"Shall we go to McPherson's then?" asked White.

"Yes," answered Dudley; "and then I can hurry back here and finish my work before supper."

But the two boys were destined not to go to McPherson's, for at that moment a little fat man, breathing very hard, as if he had been in a prodigious hurry, rushed into the editor's office, and hurried to the iron safe which stood partially concealed in one corner.

It was Mr. Street.

He was on his knees in an instant beside the iron box, and fumbling nervously for the combination.

"A to X to M," said Mr. Street, unconsciously and aloud.

After a moment of suspense, the door of the safe was swung back; and Mr. Street delved quickly into the interior.

What was the object of this sudden search the boys could not imagine. Dudley seriously doubted if Mr. Street knew that he and White were present.

"Mr. Street," he started to say; but the journalist paid no attention to him.

Instead he dragged forth a bundle of documents and laid them on his table. Hastily undoing the tape which bound it, he sorted rapidly through the pile.

Then he darted back to the safe, brought forth another bundle of papers and searched it. A third time he repeated this remarkable performance; and it was evident that he had not found the object of his search.

"It is gone!" he cried, and would have fallen, had not Bob White sprung forward and caught him in his arms.

After this exclamation Mr. Street closed his eyes and knew no more. With some difficulty, for he was a heavy man despite his low stature, Bob White succeeded in placing him down upon the office floor.

Meantime Dudley rushed into the composing room for a cup of water, and summoned Mr. Brown from his work at the forms. Together they hurried back to the office.

Just as they reached the door, Mr. Street moved restlessly and opened his eyes in a vacant stare.

"It is gone!" he moaned.

CHAPTER II.

A STRANGE STORY.

"What in the world?" exclaimed Mr. Brown, as he stopped short in the doorway, and gazed at the prostrate form of his employer.

Neither of the boys answered the question. It is doubtful if Mr. Brown really expected an answer.

That something very serious was the matter the foreman felt sure.

Quickly untying the string he took off his apron; and with Dudley's mackintosh, he formed a tolerably soft pillow.

Raising the man's head gently, he placed the improvised pillow beneath it.

"Dampen a handkerchief, and lay it upon his forehead," directed the foreman; and Dudley did as he was bidden.

The treatment seemed to have no effect, for the body of Mr. Street lay perfectly still.

"We must get a doctor," said Bob White, with sudden energy, as he seized his hat. "I'll run for Dr. Sales."

"Yes, do; and tell him to hurry. Mr. Street may die at any moment!" replied Dudley.

The young law student carefully turned up his trousers, for fastidiousness was his failing; then he dashed out into the rain on his mission of mercy.

When he was gone the foreman, who had been casting a keen survey about the room, turned suddenly to Grant and asked:

"How did it happen any way?"

Grant was well aware that some mystery surrounded the sudden illness of Mr. Street; but of what nature the trouble was, he was at a complete loss to discover.

Beginning with Mr. Street's hasty departure from the office early in the morning, he related for the foreman's benefit the entire circumstances.

"Well, I declare," exclaimed Mr. Brown. "But you had better get those papers out of the road before the doctor or any one else gets here. They are private, I suppose, or they wouldn't be in the safe."

"Sure enough; I will attend to it," said Dudley.

He collected the papers on the desk and picked up the two or three which had fallen to the floor.

While he was gathering these the foreman hastened back to the composing room to finish the few minutes' work remaining there before the edition of "The Tribune" would be complete for the press.

"Shall I say anything of Mr. Street's illness in the paper?" Dudley asked himself with true reporter's instinct for news.

He determined to go to the composing room, and put the query to the foreman, who could answer almost any question about a newspaper.

"No; don't say anything, Dudley," replied Mr. Brown. "There is a mystery about this matter; and I have a theory—"

Just then the office door opened; and Dudley heard Dr. Sales and Bob White enter the editor's sanctum.

Ashamed that he was not found with the sick man, he hurried back.

"Hm!" remarked the doctor, after he had made a rapid but careful examination of the patient.

Dudley and White looked anxiously at each other as the physician bent over the still form of the editor. They were awaiting his verdict. Would it be life or death?

But the doctor did not deign to give any information on the subject.

"Has he had any sudden fright?" he asked as he looked at Dudley with penetrating eye.

His keen perception saw that there was something which lay back of the case as it presented itself to him.

Dudley determined that he would not reveal the fact of Mr. Street's search through the safe. Whatever the strange event might mean, it was no matter for common public comment; and Dudley decided that he would tell Dr. Sales nothing whatever about the mystery.

Grant cast a significant glance at Bob, and said to the doctor:

"No, sir; not that I know of. He came into the office this afternoon in a great hurry. He seemed to be greatly excited; and it was scarcely a minute before he fell and Bob caught him."

Dr. Sales had seen the look which passed between Dudley and White.

"Hm!" he said wisely, as doctors do.

"Is it likely to be anything serious, Dr. Sales?" asked Dudley.

"Can't tell yet. Must get him to his room and to bed. One of you secure a conveyance."

Once more Bob White turned messenger boy, and posted off to a neighboring livery stable. Ten minutes later a carriage drew up to the curb before the office of "The Tribune."

Under the skillful direction of Dr. Sales, the two boys and the foreman, who had come back from the composing room, picked up the prostrate body of the editor, and carried it carefully to the waiting conveyance.

"Don't say anything about this, doctor, please," urged Mr. Brown; "at least, not for a few days."

Dr. Sales cast a keen look of curiosity and suspicion upon the foreman, and the party started through the rain on its way from the printing office to the Hanover House, where Mr. Street had a suite of rooms.

[The proprietor of the hotel was thoroughly alarmed when he saw the boys carry in the body of the publisher. Death meant the loss of a boarder.]

However, he soon discovered the state of affairs; and he hastened to provide a cot on which to carry Mr. Street to his apartments on the second floor.

When the sick man lay upon his bed, Dudley looked at his watch. It was five o'clock, and the room was growing dark. He lit the gas.

Then he sat down to await the opinion of Dr. Sales after he had made a more careful examination of the patient than had been possible while he lay on the printing office floor.

At last the physician spoke.

"I fear that this is more serious than I had supposed at first. Mr. Street will not be conscious for several days; and I do not believe that he can work for several weeks. I thought some one must have struck him; but there is no mark of a blow; and his condition must have been caused by sudden fright."

Bob White looked at Dudley and Grant looked at Bob.

For several weeks! What was to become of the newspaper if its mainstay and support was removed?

"But 'The Tribune'—"

Dudley started to speak as he thought of the newspaper's fate, when Dr. Sales cut him off with:

"Run it yourself. Show the world in Salem what you are made of."

Grant Dudley's heart jumped at the suggestion. Editor of "The Tribune" in reality!

He had many a time longed to be the actual and responsible head of a newspaper, instead of an assistant editor merely; and now the untoward illness of his employer had caused his wish to be realized.

The doctor was soon ready to leave. He made some arrangements for the nursing of Mr. Street. Dudley agreed to sit up with the sick man until one o'clock; and Bob White said he would watch during the remainder of the night.

By morning the hotel keeper promised to have arrangements made for a permanent nurse whom the doctor recommended.

White left with Dr. Sales, saying he would bring back the medicine the doctor prescribed. The hotel keeper went down stairs, saying that he would send Grant his supper presently.

When Grant Dudley was left alone, he sat for a few minutes and looked steadily at Mr. Street. That very

morning they had worked together in "The Tribune" office. Now it seemed doubtful if the older man would ever work again.

The patient appeared to be breathing harder; and Grant was really frightened lest a change for the worse was approaching.

Presently Mr. Street stirred restlessly; and then he opened his eyes.

There was not that wild and vacant stare which characterizes the gaze of a delirious man. His eyes showed that he was conscious.

"Well," he said feebly. "Why, is that you, Dudley?"

"Yes," answered Dudley. "Are you better?"

The sick man looked at him steadily for a moment as if trying to collect his thoughts.

"Oh, yes," he said. "I remember now. Did I fall? How did you get me here?"

"We brought you in a carriage," responded Dudley. "But you had better not talk, Mr. Street. You are very weak."

"I am strong enough; I suppose though that I've had a congestion of the brain or something very near it."

"The doctor says you will have to rest for several weeks," responded Dudley, who hoped that his employer would stop talking.

But Mr. Street's mind seemed as clear as it had ever been. He was as self possessed as he had been distracted earlier in the day.

"No; I am able to talk," he replied, as he threw his hand across the coverlet. "Come here; I have something I want to tell you."

And then he began a most remarkable story.

"You do not know, Dudley, but it is true that I have a bitter enemy in this town. When I came here, I myself did not know that he was on the face of the earth; but after I had bought 'The Tribune,' I discovered to my sorrow that this enemy was one of the established men of the town."

Mr. Street talked in a very low tone.

"My enmity with this man dates back to a time when I, by a foolish act as a young reporter, committed a deed which may yet send me to the State's prison. This act, I say, was done with honest motives; but the law looks at the outward appearance. If I had what the law calls my just dues, perhaps I would now be wearing a convict's stripes."

"Oh, do not say that, Mr. Street," interposed Grant Dudley.

"Perhaps I shall yet be a convict. Doubtless I shall. Only one thing has kept me from the penitentiary since I have been here in Salem; and that reliance, in which I trusted firmly, is now gone. I held a written confession of this enemy of mine to a deed more foul than that which blackens my own record."

"And—pardon me," said Grant, so eager was he to hear the rest of the story.

"This paper has successfully cowed my enemy. He knew that the slightest attempt to ruin me would ruin him instead. But this afternoon a circumstance arose which caused me to suspect that something was wrong. I went to the safe, and the paper was—missing."

"We can find it, perhaps."

"Oh, no; the confession is gone—stolen. That sheet of paper has stood between me and a prison cell for ten years; and it is gone. Against my enemy I have not a single weapon. I am at his mercy," and the editor groaned as he thought of his disgrace.

"Have you no witnesses to help you?" Dudley ventured to ask.

"No; there is nothing but the scrap of paper. It was an odd case which led to this whole thing," continued Mr. Street. "I will tell you the whole story; and I want you to help me. Grant, if I can not escape, I will die first."

"One night when I was a reporter

in Cincinnati, my city editor sent me out on an assignment. It was a dark and dismal night."

Mr. Street began to breathe more heavily as the excitement of the narrative preyed upon his strength, his voice had grown a little weaker.

"My path led me into a suburb a few miles from the city, where I was to—"

With a gasp the journalist fell back upon his pillow, unconscious; and Dudley sprang up, fearing the worst.

What was the story which Mr. Street had attempted to relate? And who was the mysterious enemy? What was the scrap of paper?

One might as well have asked the questions of the rain now falling in the darkness outside. So far as Mr. Street was concerned, it was destined to be weeks before he was able to tell his strange tale.

CHAPTER III.

WAS IT AN APPARITION?

Grant Dudley was as brave a young fellow of eighteen as the town of Salem afforded. In the high school he had the reputation of steady nerve and a cool head.

This he shared equally, it is true, with Bob White; and in many a class tradition, the boys divided honors.

But it certainly was enough to shake the nerves of the most stout hearted to see a man gasp and shudder, and then shut his eyes, to all appearances a corpse.

A sudden fear chilled Grant Dudley's heart, as the editor of "The Tribune" closed his eyes and ceased to speak.

"Is he dead?" he involuntarily exclaimed, springing to his feet, and bending over the form of Mr. Street.

He reached out his hand, and grasped the wrist of the journalist.

The man's pulse was beating firm and strong; and Grant Dudley felt that his worst fears were not confirmed.

But he was sure that if the editor's mind was so weighed down by some secret whenever he was conscious, he would soon pass away.

The mental strain and the apparent remorse of the editor were past comprehension. They seemed to be more than the man could possibly bear.

Grant Dudley was assured that all danger was past for a few moments; and he decided to go at once for the physician.

Just as he was on the point of starting, he heard footsteps on the stairway, and knew that Bob White was returning with the medicine which the physician had prescribed.

As Bob tiptoed into the room, he saw at a glance, although the light of the rainy evening was fast fading, that something unusual had occurred in the sick man's chamber.

Grant was standing beside the bed as white as a ghost.

"What has happened?" asked Bob, in a subdued voice. "Is he dead?"

"No; not dead," answered Grant, relieved that his friend was back, and that he was not left alone in the room.

Bob White wondered what the matter was. He put the medicines on the mantel shelf, and sat down in the editor's easy chair.

Grant found no difficulty in giving Mr. Street the medicine which Dr. Sales had prescribed.

After he had done this and noted the time—it was half past six—he drew up a chair before the empty grate, and said to Bob:

"He was conscious a while ago."

"What!" exclaimed Bob in amazement.

Grant proceeded to tell of the strange event. As best he could, he related, in the editor's own words, the mysterious story of the unknown enemy and the missing scrap of paper.

The boys sat for half an hour, talking in a low tone.

Grant lit the gas, and ate his sup-

per which the hotel keeper had sent up stairs.

Both Grant Dudley and Bob White were deeply interested. Never before had such an exciting chain of events stretched across their lives as this eventful day had brought forth.

When Grant Dudley left home early in the morning for the office of "The Tribune," when Bob White arose from the breakfast table and set out for the office of lawyer McPherson, neither dreamed that they would soon be watching in the Hanover House over the unconscious body of Mr. Street, and puzzling their heads over his past history.

"What will mother say?" suddenly asked Grant, remembering that he had sent no word home regarding his whereabouts.

"Sure enough," echoed Bob White; "and I've forgotten to tell my own folks of what has become of me. I'll go around by your house, and then I'll go home and take a little nap. I'll be here before midnight. If 'The Tribune' is to depend on you, Grant, you'll want all the sleep you can get."

Thus saying Bob White closed the door softly after him, and walked rapidly down the hallway of the Hanover House.

A feeling of loneliness came over Grant Dudley as he heard the receding footsteps of his friend grow gradually fainter.

It seemed to him that his vigil with the sick man would be a long and lonely watch.

Varied were the thoughts that chased each other through his fancy as he sat alone in the room with Mr. Street. His brain busied itself with the strange problems which suggested themselves concerning the secret of the editor.

What was the crime whose exposure the journalist feared?

Who was the enemy?

These questions Grant Dudley asked over and over again, as he sat and watched the hours of the evening drag wearily away.

Oh, that the editor had retained consciousness until some fact, some clue, however slight, had been revealed!

"I must solve this; I must save Mr. Street and 'The Tribune,'" Grant said over and over again; "but I have no footing on which to stand while I work."

That Mr. Street was a wrongfully accused man, and that he would help him to escape from the clutches of his dreaded foe, Grant Dudley had fully determined.

But the problem over which he puzzled did not serve to make the hours slip away with any rapidity. They seemed to drag, drag, drag.

Nine o'clock struck at last from the town clock; it seemed to be almost a day later before the strokes of ten sounded.

The excitement of the afternoon had proved to be something of a strain on Grant Dudley; and as the clocks of Salem crept slowly on past ten, he grew sleepy. He was nodding painfully, in fact, when Bob White returned.

Bob kept his promise as he always did, and returned rather early in the evening. It was twenty minutes of eleven when he entered the room.

"Well, I can stay the rest of the night," said he. "I've taken a nap of two hours; and Mr. Treador says he'll send up a cot so that if I get sleepy, I can lie down. You must go home, Bob; there will be lots to do tomorrow, and you need rest. Treador says he's got a telephone message from Summit City that a professional nurse will be down early in the morning."

"I hate to go and let you stay here the rest of the night," responded Grant. "It doesn't seem right. If it wasn't for the fact that this matter of Mr. Street's illness ought to be kept a secret, I wouldn't hesitate a moment to call in help."

"No; we mustn't let people find out about this. Brown was right when he cautioned the doctor. And I've enjoined your folks and mine and Mr. Treador. The mystery—"

Bob White paused; and Grant Dudley echoed:

"The mystery."

Then he went on:

"It is a mystery indeed. I've been thinking over it all the evening; and I can find neither head nor tail, trace nor clue."

"Yes; that is what worries—"

"What was that?" interrupted Grant in a whisper of alarm.

Bob White turned instinctively to the window toward which Grant looked.

"A face at the window, as sure as I live!" exclaimed Grant.

"No?," answered Bob with incredulity. "I saw nothing at all."

"It disappeared as I looked."

"Both of the boys were struck with a feeling of fear. What had Grant Dudley seen?"

If they had caught some one peering in at a window on any other night, the two boys would not have been alarmed unduly; but the apparition, coming at this particular time, affected them strangely.

"The enemy?" suggested Bob White, as the two still stood looking toward the window at which Grant fancied he saw a face.

"Quick! Come!" said Grant Dudley, grasping his companion by the arm. He opened the door, and both boys stole quickly out into the hall.

They had no definitely formed plan. Grant felt sure that he had seen some one at Mr. Street's window; and he determined to discover if possible who it might be.

"Whoever he is," thought Grant, "he knows something about Mr. Street and his secret."

Thrilled by a hope that perhaps the face at the window was that of Mr. Street's enemy, Grant Dudley rapidly formed a plan for the discovery or capture of the man.

A veranda ran all around the Hanover House; a broad, roomy veranda with a flat roof. All the windows of the second floor opened out upon this roof.

Grant's plan was for one of the boys to climb out upon the porch, while the other went below to guard the rear, and prevent the enemy from escaping by leaping to the ground.

"You must watch closely, and if he jumps from the veranda, light on him," said Grant to Bob, as the boys held a hurried conference in the corridor of the hotel. "I'll get out of that window around the 'L' of the building, and will creep around the corner of the house and surprise the man. Watch lively and I believe that between us we can catch him."

Bob White bounded down the stairs, and passing through one of the lower halls, he opened the door cautiously and crept out upon the lawn which borders the Hanover House.

Hiding himself behind the shrubbery, he crouched low, and awaited the startling developments which he hoped would take place upon the roof of the veranda.

Meantime Grant had found a heavy walking stick in the upper hall and with this grasped firmly in his hand, he noiselessly raised the window which opened from the end of the hallway at the rear of the hotel.

His maneuver was hidden by the projecting wing of the hotel, and Grant believed that he would succeed in surprising the enemy.

He straightened himself up, and made ready for the assault.

Clinging closely to the walls of the building, he advanced carefully around the corner, straining his eyes for a glimpse of the midnight prowler.

It was very dark, but Grant searched minutely every part of the roof.

As he walked around the veranda, a dim figure on the lawn darted to

the side of the building. It was Bob, ready to receive the unknown enemy in case Grant persuaded him to descend.

But Bob White might as well have been asleep on the cot which Mr. Treador, the hotel keeper, had promised to send up to him.

For Grant Dudley made the complete circuit of the roof without finding any one lurking there.

"It was only my imagination," he said, as he lowered himself by the hands and dropped lightly from the veranda, to ask Bob if he had met with better success.

"There was no one," said Bob. "At least I didn't see any one. You must have dreamed it. Better go home and get to sleep."

"All right," responded Grant Dudley; "but I must get my mackintosh. I was sure I saw some one; but I'll confess I'm getting sleepy, and it may have been a dream after all."

Was it an apparition?

Asking themselves the question, the two friends returned to Mr. Street's room, Bob opened the door; and there a scene presented itself which drove all thoughts of sleep out of Grant Dudley's mind.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 58.]

THE DIAMOND SEEKERS;

OR,

The Mystery of the Five Peaks.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON,

Author of "Under Africa," "In the Name of the Czar," etc.

CHAPTER XIX.

PIETER ASKS A STRANGE QUESTION.

The narration of his story worked Fulke up to a high pitch of excitement, and almost the instant he finished the strain brought on a reaction; he turned deadly pale, and his head fell back on the pillow of dry grass.

Pieter quickly stirred a few drops of brandy in some water, and the stimulant had a prompt effect. Fulke pulled himself to a sitting posture, and declared that he was all right except for a strong sensation of drowsiness.

"Don't talk unless you feel thoroughly able," said Pieter excitedly. "I was deeply interested in your story, my lad. So you are not a real live English lord after all, but only the Honorable Fulke!"

"Well, I like you all the better for it, my lad, if you won't think I'm talking treason. Tuft hunting was never in my line. You see I'm a pretty stout believer in the equality of man. If your trip to Africa is due to your uncle Bertram I almost feel as if I owed him a debt of gratitude. You can stick by us for the term of your natural life, if you say the word, and together we'll roam the seas and the land.

"Don't worry about money. I have plenty for all of us, and it may be that we'll go back to the coast laden with treasure. You're one of us now, and here's my hand on it."

"And mine," exclaimed Clegg. "Don't think of parting from us, Fulke. If we get these diamonds—and there is little doubt but we will—we intend to travel all over the world in the best yacht that money can buy. You shall have an equal share in the treasure. That is a settled fact, so don't try to argue the question."

"My dear friends, I can't tell you how grateful I am," said Fulke, rather huskily, as he clasped the hand of each in turn. "I hope our parting may be far distant, and when it does come it won't be my fault. I admit that I should like to go back

to England some day, especially if I had enough money to live in the right way, and to pay my old debts. I won't return until I can remove the shadow from my name."

"You will see the old place again, never fear," replied Pieter, heartily. "And if you want my candid opinion on the matter, lad, I think in one way you were foolish to leave it. You have no doubt caused your guardian great distress, and probably your uncle as well. And now they believe you are dead."

"You interpreted that advertisement wrongly, as likely as not your uncle had repented of his misdeeds, and was anxious to find you and make up. Or possibly your guardian was at the bottom of it. It had nothing to do with police affairs, I'll stake anything on that."

"I feel you are right," answered Fulke. "I have often thought the same thing myself. Mr. Dandridge may have inserted the advertisement. Grigson & Dare have been our family solicitors for many years, and they are probably his as well. As for my uncle being anxious to make up, that is out of the question. I am sorry to have caused my guardian so much trouble, but it can't be helped now."

"That's true," assented Pieter. "No use in crying over spilt milk. It will all come right some day."

"And now I want to ask you a question, Fulke—a rather peculiar one, but I know you will overlook it. Is there absolutely no doubt of the present Lord Melgrave's identity? Was it your uncle Bertram himself who returned from Africa?"

Fulke stared at Pieter in a curious way, and then laughed softly.

"I was just trying to make sure that you were in your proper senses," he said. "Yes, my uncle Bertram is the genuine article, no doubt of it. He was recognized by more than one old friend, and he conversed freely on his early life at home. Witness his hatred of my father and grandfather. That alone is convincing proof. But why did you ask the question?"

"For no particular reason at all, my lad. I merely was curious to know whether you or any one else had ever entertained the faintest suspicion of your uncle's identity. Stranger things than that have happened. However, your answer thoroughly satisfies me."

"Yes, uncle Bertram's identity is clear enough," remarked Fulke, in a reflective way. "And talking about that reminds me of something I wanted to say—of a little incident that I omitted from the narrative of my adventures with the slave gang."

"Just before John Japp gave the word to push me off he made Maghull bring him the card case that was sticking out of my pocket. I heard him utter a startled cry as he read the name out aloud, and the next instant he yelled to Maghull to stop me. It was too late then, for the limb was out in the current."

"Japp swore like a trooper, and promised fifty pounds to the man that would save me. It was a hopeless case, of course, and I was out of sight before the Arabs could make a start. I omitted telling you this before, for the reason that it concerned no one but myself. It puzzled me at first, but I think I can see through it now."

"By the Great Mogul, lad, is this true?" exclaimed Pieter, springing to his feet with excitement. "Do you mean to say that Japp repented of his murderous purpose when he discovered who you were? There is a mystery here—a deep mystery."

"Not a very deep one," replied Fulke smilingly. "Japp spoke of an old companion—leader he called him—who used to be with him, but was tempted by gold to return to England. That is the very expression he used. I firmly believe that my uncle was the man referred to."

"According to his story his entire exile was spent in slavery among savage tribes, but very likely he was associated in some dark dealings with this very John Japp, and chose to conceal the truth. To that extent there may be a mystery, but I don't suppose it would be to my advantage to unravel it."

"I am not so sure of that," replied Pieter gravely. "I would like to have a brief interview with this man Japp, and perhaps the chance will come. I had another theory in mind when you mentioned this, but since you speak of Japp's old leader going back to England I find it won't hold water."

"No doubt your supposition is correct. John Japp and your uncle have been acquaintances, and probably much more than that. For your sake I should like to penetrate the mystery, but I don't see my way clear to do it. It will be useless to question Carimoo, for your uncle had left Africa before the negro met John Japp."

"Japp's sudden desire to spare your life may have been prompted by his former intimacy with your uncle, but at the same time there may have been a deeper and stronger motive. Perhaps he did not even guess at your identity, but supposed the card case to be the property of your uncle. He would naturally wish to know how you obtained it."

"I will enlighten him on that point if we ever come together again," said Fulke, "but I confess that I am not anxious for a meeting."

"Nevertheless John Japp will certainly cross our path in the future," replied Pieter, "and under no pleasant circumstances, since the diamond mountain is a bone of contention between us. I hope that bloodshed may be averted, but unhappily I fear the worst. It is the more important therefore, that we lose no time in pushing on. We must strain every nerve to get through the mountains in advance of the Arabs."

"Go to sleep now, my lad, and recruit your strength for what lies before you. It is near morning now, and you shall not be disturbed until evening comes again. Then, if you are able, we will break camp and make a night journey."

"Don't worry about that," replied Fulke. "A good sleep will make me as well as ever. I'll take your advice, and turn in right away."

Fulke's example was speedily followed by the others. When the sun rose twenty minutes later all were slumbering but the Ashantee sentinel.

The camp was protected from the fierce rays by an overhanging ledge of timbered rocks, and the weary men slept serenely until late in the afternoon.

Fulke woke in excellent health and spirits. The lacerations on his shoulders were healing, and beyond a slight stiffness he felt quite himself again.

A plentiful meal was eaten, and shortly before sunset the little band crossed the torrent by a fording place that Carimoo had discovered that afternoon, and marched swiftly on through the then deepening gloom of the pass.

Pieter was confident of reaching the open country before Japp and his party, for he presumed—and very naturally—that the Arabs would be in no great haste, since they believed that Fulke was dead and that his friends had turned back to the coast.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FOREST OF WALGARA.

Carimoo's knowledge of the path failed him neither by night nor day, and he pushed on at a speed which his companions found difficult to emulate.

After marching for a period of nearly twenty four hours, broken only by brief stoppages for rest and food, the little band issued from a narrow defile about four o'clock in the af-

ternoon, and saw with heartfelt joy the open country before them. They had safely passed the great barrier of the Kong Mountains.

A few undulating foothills dropped down to a level plateau cumbered with granite boulders and tall spear-grass. A mile or two across this lay the edge of a vast forest—a forest that stretched illimitably in all directions, and looked like a huge green sea with its rolling surface of gigantic vegetation.

From the midst of this—as it seemed—and eighty or ninety miles to the northwest five conical mountain peaks were stamped in dark purple against the pale evening sky.

As the little party came out from the shadows of the mountains and gazed on the wonderful scene, Carimoo began to dance about on the grass and utter excited cries, extending both arms toward the forest and the quintette of conical peaks.

When he was able to speak coherently he explained the cause of his excitement.

His home was in the great forest, midway between the Kong Mountains and the five peaks; and one of the latter was the diamond mountain—the magnet which had drawn the travelers on through hardship and peril.

Further questioning made Carimoo's information more explicit. He declared that the great sea of vegetation, which was called the Forest of Walgara, was endless, and abounded with wild animals.

The distance to the villages of his own people he estimated at fifty miles. From there it was equally far to the diamond mountain, which was the central one of the five peaks, and was slightly taller than its neighbors.

When all eyes had sufficiently admired the slender, purple cone, and Pieter had trained his glasses on it with a vague hope, perhaps, of catching the sparkle of the diamonds that were supposed to stud its side, Carimoo turned, and pointed eastward to a narrow black strip that was visible on the granite face of the cliff, six or eight miles away.

That, he said, was the mouth of the other pass, and Pieter and his friends found their pleasant dreams of wealth rudely broken in upon by this stern fact. They had forgotten the serpent that was in their Eden, and John Japp and his cruel band of Arabs immediately became a subject of grave discussion.

There was really but little danger to be apprehended. The Arabs were probably in the heart of the mountains as yet, and it would be an easy matter to keep ahead of them.

"The rascals won't be at a loss to know which way to go when they catch a glimpse of those fine peaks," said Pieter. "You remember that the map had five little dots on it, and the central one was marked with a cross. Japp will readily interpret the meaning of that, and will push straight across the forest."

"No doubt," assented Fulke, "and in pretty much the same direction as ourselves. However, we can get reinforcements from among Carimoo's people."

At this point the negro eagerly explained that his friends would be only too glad to wipe Japp and his band off the face of the earth, provided they had the white men to aid them with their guns.

"My people no have shoot-irons," he said. "They much 'frad Arabs make 'em slaves. You help 'em, den they fight hard."

Pieter shook his head at this blood-thirsty solution of the problem.

"I won't stain my hands with a deed like that," he replied, "though the wretches don't deserve a better fate. To my mind the best plan will be to hurry on to the native villages, and then send messengers to warn Japp that he and his band will be utterly

exterminated unless they forego their intention and turn back. If he persists in his course he must take the consequences."

As no one had better counsel to offer, Pieter's suggestion was approved. It was decided to camp immediately, and enjoy a good night's rest before pushing on in the morning.

That powerful friends were near at hand was a pleasant thought. None doubted that Carimoo would be received with open arms by his people, and that they would extend a hardly less eager welcome to those who had brought the long lost prince back.

So with light hearts the evening meal was eaten, and the weary men slept peacefully through the dark watches of the night.

Soon after daylight they were crossing the plateau, catching an occasional glimpse, above the spear grass and boulders, of the five clustered peaks guarding the horizon.

Then came the verge of the forest, and a chill seemed to strike every heart as the little procession left the sunlight behind and plunged into a gloom that at first was even deeper than the dusk of eventide.

Their awe and amazement grew with every step. Ah! it was a strange and mystical place, that forest of Walgara. It was gigantic, incomprehensible.

The travelers were more and more bewildered as they marched on that day through the dim solitude. Without a compass they must have been hopelessly lost.

It was like a journey through a new world, for even Pieter had neither seen nor heard of anything similar in the course of all his wanderings.

No pen can fittingly describe the weird and awful loneliness, the density of the foliage, and the impenetrable gloom.

Carimoo led the way with light step, and the others followed in single file.

For mile after mile the appalling silence was broken only by the drop of a leaf, the murmur of some hidden rivulet, or the humming of insects.

There was no sign of life, not even the chatter of a monkey or the cry of a parrot, save at long intervals. Then was heard the heavy footstep of an elephant, or the grunt of a wild boar, or perhaps the lighter touch of some smaller animal.

Overhead rose gigantic trees to a height of two and three hundred feet. Under these were others of less size, and still smaller ones beneath them.

Last of all these was the jungle. Ah! what a jungle it was! At times it was impossible to see two or three yards ahead.

For two days the little band pushed on through these dreary solitudes, making painfully slow progress, and getting never a glimpse of the sun. When they camped at night they kept huge fires blazing, and had in addition a hedge of prickly-thorn bushes, for wild beasts were fierce and abundant. The supplies were all gone now, and nuts and berries took their place. About mid afternoon of the third day, when between forty and forty five miles of the forest of Walgara had been crossed, a strange noise, very faint but continuous, was heard far in the distance.

The sound grew louder as the travelers went on, though all were at a loss to determine its origin.

Carimoo was mysteriously silent as he nimbly led the column forward. But the perplexed look on his face was lightened at times by a gleam of satisfaction, and he showed a feverish desire for speed that left his companions in the lurch more than once.

"The sound is coming nearer," said Pieter, "and it begins to have a familiar ring to my ears. I took it to be the roar of some torrent at first, but I don't think so now."

"What is it, then?" asked Fulke. "I'll stake anything that human throats are making that noise," interposed Clegg. "I hope Carimoo's friends are not having a battle." "Yes, those are the yells of human beings that we hear," exclaimed Pieter. "Not a doubt of it. I don't believe a battle is in progress, though every now and then I can distinguish an odd sound like a trumpet blast. It won't take long to reach the spot at this rate. See what great strides Carimoo is making, and how eagerly he parts the grass and vines." "I smell smoke," Fulke cried suddenly. "I am sure of it." The others sniffed the air, and quickly agreed with him. "This may prove a bad business if the jungle is on fire," said Pieter. "And yet it seems too green to burn. Ho! Carimoo, do you smell the fire? What does it mean?"

The negro turned excitedly around, and waved his hand. "Come quick," he cried, "me show you big sight soon. You hear um yell?" Then he pushed on at greater speed than ever, heedless of the lacerating brambles and spear grass.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN THE FACE OF DEATH.

With considerable curiosity, and not a little fear, the others followed the negro as best they could. The odor of fire became stronger, and occasionally a misty wreath of yellow smoke could be seen curling among the tree tops.

The uproar in front was now deafening. Shriill cries poured from scores of human throats, and stranger sounds were mingled with them—harsh trumpet blasts, and a sullen noise like the roar of a mighty torrent.

Pieter tripped over a vine, and measured his length on the ground. Fulke and Clegg aided him to rise, but instead of pushing on, all three stood still. The Ashantees also halted, and seemed inclined to drop their loads and flee.

"I don't like the looks of this thing," said Pieter. "The jungle ahead of us is alive with savages, and they are howling like a troop of wild beasts." "They're aving a big fight up yonder," exclaimed Raffles. "Like as not they'll make mincemeat of us."

"There, Carimoo is out of sight," cried Fulke. "What shall we do?" Just then the negro thrust his bushy head from a clump of grass twenty feet in front, and wildly beckoned the party to come on; his face fairly shone with joy.

"Carimoo knows what he is about," exclaimed Pieter. "I'll trust him." He hurried forward with his companions at his heels, and Kalcall's vigorous threats induced the Ashantees to follow.

Guided by Carimoo's bobbing head the party rushed on for twenty yards. Then a glimmer of light shone through the matted foliage, and all of a sudden the jungle fell away on the edge of a rippling brook. Beyond was a stretch of tall grass, with here and there a tree or rock sticking up.

The recommencement of the forest on the farther side could scarcely be seen for volumes of dense yellow smoke, through which red flames flashed angrily.

Half stupefied by the deafening outcry—the origin of which they did not suspect as yet—the little band followed Carimoo to a knoll of high ground, from whence a plain view could be had over the top of the tall grass.

Here they huddled in a group, staring with dumbfounded wonder at the scene outspread before them.

The open stretch of withered herbage was probably a mile square, and bounded on all sides by the great forest. In the very center was a circular ring of fire, a quarter of a mile in diameter.

Inside of this, through the screen of smoke and flame, a herd of elephants could be seen dashing to and fro in mad affright. Outside the circle were hundreds of naked blacks, brandishing spears and yelling like a pack of fiends.

Pieter whipped out his glasses, and trained them on the scene.

"I thought so," he exclaimed. "This is a rare sight—one that few if any white travelers have ever seen. Some native hunter located these elephants in their hiding place, and summoned all his neighbors to the spot. They then simultaneously fired the grass, so as to make a circle of flames.

"The sport is nearly ended now, for the elephants have discovered that escape is impossible. Soon they will make a rush through the fire, burning and blinding themselves in the attempt. Then the blacks will spear dozens of the unfortunate brutes."

Even as Pieter spoke, the stampede and slaughter began. Maddened by the crackling of the flames, and half suffocated by smoke the poor brutes charged recklessly through the ring of fire.

As they emerged, burned and blinded, they were ruthlessly speared by the bloodthirsty crowd.

It was a horrible and yet a fascinating scene. The little group of spectators strained their eyes to catch every detail.

In response to Carimoo's urgent gestures they followed him across the brook, and thence twenty yards or more to a clump of rocks that surmounted the jungle grass. There was room on top for all of the party, and from here a much better view could be had.

The slaughter was still being actively prosecuted. The hoarse screaming of the negroes rose above the trumpeting of the elephants.

That part of the chase which led toward the rocks was quickly lost to view, owing to the density and height of the grass in the immediate foreground. Herein was an element of danger, as the travelers were destined presently to learn.

Meanwhile they simply stared at the interesting sight, forgetful of all else.

No one observed Carimoo. The negro's huge bulk towered from the highest point of the rocks. He stood like a bronze statue. A spear was uplifted in one hand, and his breath came quick and short from his parted lips. His eyes gleamed and snapped like living coals.

"Some of the elephants are being chased this way," observed Pieter. "Look; you can see a commotion in the grass here and there."

"I am more interested in those negroes," replied Fulke, who was standing next the Hollander. "Will they prove friends or foes?"

"They skip around so lively that I can't get a focus on them," answered Pieter. "Here, take a peep for yourself. Your eyes are better than mine."

Before he could hand the glasses to Fulke his foot slipped, and he very nearly plunged headforemost from his perch. He recovered his balance, but only at the cost of the glasses. They slipped from his hand, struck the rocks, and bounded off into the jungle grass.

"Hold on, I'll get them," cried Fulke. "I saw just where they landed."

He gave his rifle to Pieter, and swung nimbly down from the rocks. He advanced ten feet or more, and then bent over the matted ground.

After searching industriously for several minutes he straightened up, and held the glasses over his head.

Just at that instant there was a loud crashing and trumpeting, and out from the tall grass burst a gigantic elephant.

The brute was in a spasm of pain and fury. His hide bristled with spears, and from every wound blood was dropping. He spied Fulke, and

charged straight at him with a ferocious snort.

For a brief instant Ashantees and white men alike were fairly petrified by the lad's danger. They uttered cries of horror.

The sound roused Carimoo from his abstraction, and he saw the fate that threatened his young master. Like a flash he leaped far out from the rocks, and landed lightly on his feet.

In less time than it takes to tell he was beside Fulke, who was half stupid with fear.

The maddened elephant was now within a dozen feet of him. Carimoo shoved the lad behind him, and boldly confronted the brute with his frail spear.

"Run! run!" yelled Raffles and Clegg in one breath.

"Back to the rocks, both of you," thundered Pieter, as he lifted his ponderous rifle to his shoulder, and took hasty aim.

The next instant a trumpet blast of fury mingled with the tremendous report. When the smoke lifted Fulke was seen to be well on his way toward the shelter of the rocks. The elephant still rushed on, though with a staggering gait that showed him to be grievously wounded.

Now was Carimoo's chance, had he chosen to take advantage of it. But the negro probably misunderstood the situation. He lingered to launch his spear, deaf to the shouts and entreaties of his friends.

The weapon sped truly, and pierced the advancing brute in the fore shoulder. Carimoo wheeled around and dashed for the rocks. But his foot tripped, and he plunged headlong into the grass with such force as to vanish almost entirely from sight.

Pieter was on the alert, and up went his rifle again.

Crack! This time the ball reached a vital part. The elephant reeled, swung broadside, and toppled over with a dull crash on the very spot where Carimoo had vanished an instant before.

The little group on top of the rocks were horror stricken by the sad tragedy—the full meaning of which none could as yet comprehend. They only knew that they had lost a brave friend and leader.

The Ashantees burst into walling lamentations.

"Poor fellow!" cried Pieter. "It is all up with him. He is crushed to death."

"And just when he was nearly safe," added Clegg.

"The brute 'as mashed 'im flat as a pancake," muttered Raffles. "Is heart was in the right place if he 'ad a black skin."

Fulke had witnessed the disaster from the base of the rocks. With tears streaming down his cheeks he turned back and ran around and around the dead elephant, frantically wringing his hands, and calling Carimoo by name.

"It's no use, lad," shouted Pieter. "After such a mountain of flesh falling on him the poor fellow can't have an unbroken bone in his body. Come back, quick! You don't know what danger may be lurking in the grass."

Fulke reluctantly obeyed, and his companions aided him to clamber to the top of the rocks.

Before a word could be spoken the little party had something else to think of than the poor negro's fate. Half a score of savage looking black fellows who had evidently been following the dead elephant, emerged from the grass at a distance of thirty feet.

For a moment they stared with undisguised wonder at the white men and their dusky Ashantee followers. Then, with ferocious yells of rage, they let fly a shower of spears.

So swift and unexpected was the attack that it permitted no time for dodging. Clegg uttered a gasping cry

of agony, and reeled backward into Fulke's arms.

One of the Ashantee porters fell dead, pierced from breast to back by a long shafted spear.

With another burst of yells the negroes swarmed toward the rocks.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 586.]

A Rolling Stone.

BY ARTHUR LEE PUTNAM,
Author of "No. 91," "A Bad Lot," etc.

CHAPTER VII.
WREN BECOMES A GOOD SAMARITAN.

The sailor's companion, if he saw Wren following him, attached no importance to it. It was merely a boot-black, and bootblacks were plenty in the lower part of the city.

But Wren was not a common boot-black. He was gifted with shrewdness and penetration.

Presently he heard the sailor's new acquaintance say, "Wouldn't you like a drink, Jack?"

"Yes," answered the sailor eagerly. "All right!"

He led the way into a miserable grocery, and Wren stood guard outside. Now he felt sure that the sailor was in danger.

It was the purpose of his companion to get him drunk and helpless, and then robbery would be easy.

It was not easy, however, to tell what to do. He was himself new and inexperienced in city ways.

But luckily he saw a policeman turning the corner. He ran up to him and communicated his suspicions.

The average policeman would have paid no attention to Wren's appeal, but this one, a young man under thirty, had passed a few years on board ship in early life, and still had sympathy for men of his old profession.

Wren had scarcely finished speaking when the two came out of the saloon. The sailor staggered even more than before, and clung to his companion for support.

The officer stepped up to the pair. "Jack," he said, "do you know this man?"

"Of course he does," replied the other quickly. "He is my cousin."

"I didn't ask you, Jack, do you know this man?"

"I am your friend," suggested the "crook."

"He is my friend," stammered Jack. "He acts like one. Did he give you a drink?"

"Yes," hiccupped the sailor. "He's a—a good feller."

"You see," said the adventurer.

"Look here!" said the officer sternly. "I understand your game. You have been getting this poor fellow drunk in order that you may rob him. Clear out, or I'll arrest you!"

Looking in the officer's determined face the rascal felt that it was a command not to be disregarded.

"Now where do you live?" asked the officer.

Jack fumbled in his pocket and produced a card bearing the name John Staples, and below it an address on Waverly Place.

"Have you any money with you?"

The sailor pulled out a roll of bills, and was about to hand them to the policeman.

"No, put them back, and don't give them to any one. Who do you live with?"

"My sister."

"My boy," said the officer turning to Wren, "if this man is left to himself he will be robbed. Will you undertake to get him home? Do you know where Waverly Place is?"

"Yes, sir."

"I was a sailor once myself and I sympathize with him. There are plenty of land sharks ready to rob him. Get him home and advise his sister to secure his money, and not let him carry it around with him. If she



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A GARDEN PARTY OF DOGS.

Over in England some feline enthusiasts have been arranging for an assemblage of cats of noble lineage, and out in California there took place last month a garden party at which the guests were all dogs. This was held in honor of the fourth birthday of one of the canines.

The participants were all freshly brushed and combed, decked out with crisp ribbons and one of them actually arrived in her carriage—a baby's perambulator.

The table was set on the lawn, covered with a damask cloth, and provided with plates piled with chopped meat. There were chocolate creams and cocoanut cake for dessert. The liquid portion of the feast was furnished in the shape of a saucer of milk at each place.

Now all this may seem very silly, and yet even from this garden party of dogs, there is a lesson for some one. The accounts of the affair state that all expected the "bow wows" to make a dash for the estates and squabble for the largest pieces. But they did nothing of the sort and as one reporter remarked "were much better behaved than the majority of human species of tender years."

WATER AS AN ILLUMINATING POWER.

On the 25th of January the first practical test was made of a power fed by one of the world's most famous sights. On this date the gates that admit some of the impetus of Niagara Falls to the wheels of a paper mill, were raised, and successful proof established of the fact that the mighty cataract can be harnessed and forced to furnish man with practical assistance as well as aesthetic joy.

The formal opening of the new system of power will not take place until June 1, when the event will be celebrated with due ceremony. The contract of the paper mill calls for 6,600 horse power. The cost is to be eight dollars per horse power a year. This is way below the ordinary charges, but then nowhere else does nature put her shoulder so generously to the wheel.

But Niagara will probably not long remain unique in this respect. It has been proposed to use the current of the river Bosphorus, which flows with great swiftness between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, to drive dynamos that shall light by electricity the whole city of Constantinople.

SOME VALUABLE CHAIRS.

There is a young woman in England who has a trick, or what she herself calls a science, by which she can overcome the force exerted by the strongest man. She carries about with her a stout wooden chair, which money cannot buy. Upon it she has

lifted almost every prince in Europe, sometimes half a dozen of them together.

The Czar of Russia is the strongest man she has ever met, and even he could not hold himself to the floor when this frail woman gave a toss to the chair he sat in. She says that it is all a matter of angles, but the theory she does care not to give.

The most valuable chair from a money point of view is owned by the Shah of Persia. It is solid gold, and is inlaid with precious stones. About a year ago it was discovered that some of the stones had been stolen. The Shah ordered that the keeper of the palace should discover the thief, or be beheaded. He discovered him. The thief's body was carried through the streets of Teheran on a pole.

The Earl of Radnor owns an arm chair which cost originally two hundred thousand dollars. It is made of steel and the artist was thirty years in making it. It was presented to the Emperor Rudolph II of Germany by the city of Augsburg about the year 1576.

Lately some chairs which had been owned by famous people, turned up in an auction room. Shakspeare's chair was sold for \$630, and Sir Walter Raleigh's for ten dollars.

PATRICK HENRY'S FAILURES.

Patrick Henry was a country boy of such uncouth appearance that when he went up to the bar to be examined John Randolph at first refused to consider him at all. Henry had tried farming, and had made a wretched failure of it; then he spent some time in a country store, but measuring out molasses and selling calico and tape was a terribly irksome business to the young man.

He was a failure, his friends and neighbors said, a man who did not know enough to farm, or keep a grocery store. But words never felled him. He could always make people think his way, when he had a chance to talk to them.

At last, he concluded that the law was what he was destined for. Some idea of his brilliancy may be found in the fact that he studied all the law he knew in five weeks! Of course he knew almost nothing, but he so dazzled his examiners by his plea for himself, that they let him pass upon his promise to continue studying.

John Randolph, who had at first refused to look at him, shook his hand and said:

"Mr. Henry, if your industry be only half your genius, I argue that you will do well and become an ornament and an honor to your profession."

It was the old case over again of the round peg in the square hole. Patrick Henry as a farmer and a grocer was simply a lumberer of the earth. As an orator and a patriot who could incite men to deeds of valor, his place was among the great.

RUNNING DOWN A RESPONSIBILITY.

There was a great railway accident in England last summer because one train was behind time. After weeks and months of investigation the man who was responsible was censured and discharged.

He was an electrician who was receiving a salary of \$5,000 a year. It was his business to see that the watches which the company gives to all of its employes, were looked after, and put in order at stated intervals.

This duty he had neglected. The conductor's watch was slow, the train was wrecked and many lives lost. And it was proven to be all the fault of the prosperous man asleep in his London home at the time.

When the young Prince Imperial of France was killed in Zululand sev-

eral years ago, all the hopes of a great party in France were blasted, and probably the history of Europe changed. It was shown that his death was due to the dishonesty of his saddle makers in London, who had used imitation leather for one of the straps, the strap had broken, and the young prince was left, on foot, among savages.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes says that in bringing up a boy, one ought to begin with his grandfather, because there are a great many traits which if they had been crushed out then, would never come down to the grandson.

It might be a good idea for every boy to remember that he is at the beginning of a great many things, and that the smallest neglect of any one duty, the least dishonesty, may change everything in the world.

Upon every one rests a responsibility to his fellow men as well as to himself.

The New Explorers.

BY LIEUT. JOHN LLOYD.

If you have the spirit of adventure and are strong and capable, and can prove yourself able to be useful in a small party where every man is selected because of this quality, you may have an opportunity to risk your life either on a North or South Pole expedition.

Mr. Robert Stein who has been for eight years connected with the Government Geographical Survey, is going up to the west coast of Enderbore's Land to make a survey as far as man can travel. Young men with rugged constitutions and scientific educations will go with him.

The party will land near Cape Tennyson, at a point which is sighted once a year by whalers. If Mr. Stein should take you with him, and at the end of a year you had had enough of ice and snow and ingloo and blubber and pemmican, you can hoist a flag down on Cape Tennyson and a boat will come and take you off, but Mr. Stein expects to stay and go on and on, until all that void unwritten country is mapped.

A permanent house will be erected, which will be a waiting point for all future parties. The house is to be built upon scientific principles, being made cold proof by packings of magnetite. From here a chain of stations will be made.

It has long been a theory of the men who believe in the slow and sure method, that the only way to ever reach the open Arctic Sea is by moving slowly along from station to station, always knowing that ten or twenty miles behind there was a warm house, with plenty of food and comfort.

At each of these stations five men are to be left. One to carry on scientific explorations and the others to hunt and keep up the place. A telegraph wire could easily be carried from one of these stations to another.

It may be that by that time the telephone will be entirely perfected. Think how it would sound for the telephone bell to ring in the Argosy office, and in answer to the "hello" to hear: "Have just sighted the open Polar Sea. Northwest passage assured."

Not one of Mr. Stein's hunters will go out without a note book, an aneroid, and a theodolite, and probably a kodak. Mr. Stein's stations will be one hundred miles apart, and every five men will have an area as large as the State of Kentucky to wander over, and there will probably come back some of the largest stories of big game ever heard. It was always Buffalo Bill's ambition to go after walrus that weighed two tons.

This party expects to make many wonderful additions to science. They are going to investigate, for one

thing the phenomenon of the Aurora, which has never been fully understood.

While Mr. Stein is away, trying to swing the pendulum against the North Pole, (and if you do not know why he wants to do that, it would make a very interesting half hour for you to read all about it in the encyclopedia), there is a young doctor who lives in Brooklyn who is just as anxious to go exploring in the other direction. Dr. Fred A. Cook was the surgeon who went with Lieutenant Peary across Greenland in 1891-2, and who spent last summer in the upper part of Greenland.

Dr. Cook is going to purchase a small steam whaler such as are used up about New Foundland. He is looking for exactly the same sort of men who are the object of Mr. Stein's search; but the curious part of it is, that every man who has anything to be done, is looking for exactly the same thing: young, healthy, clever, honest men, with energy and determination and love of enthusiastic work.

Dr. Cook will leave New York next September, because the seasons in the South are the reverse of those in the North, and the months of December, January and February make the best period for land explorations in that region.

Dr. Cook's party will go directly to the Falkland Islands, and from there they will go to Louis Philippe Land, and on down as the ice will let them.

Dr. Cook's experience has taught him what his party will need. Their clothing will be made of reindeer skins, and so will their sleeping bags which are long cases with the fur inside. A man gets into one of these bags, and pulls down the flap at the top, which is something like an envelope flap, and there he is, snug and warm for the night.

The underclothing of the men will be made of the skins of birds. This is worn by the Greenlanders and it is of a wonderfully soft and velvety texture. Dr. Cook has collected almost enough of these skins to outfit his whole party.

He also brought back from Greenland, Esquimaux dogs, to drag his sledges. Upon these sledge journeys alcohol will be used for fuel, and pemmican for food.

Pemmican is a preparation of dried and ground meat and fat, and only needs to be mixed with water to be ready to eat. The greatest objection to it is its expense. It costs seventy five cents a pound, but is the most nutritious and portable of foods.

The great fear of the old time explorers, those of Dr. Kane's day, was scurvy. This dreadful disease comes from a lack of fresh food and acids. They used to call a sailor who went to the Arctic regions a "juicer" because he drank lime juice every day to ward off this disease. It also attacks men who have been snowed up in mountains and mining camps for any length of time.

They tell a story in the West, of a Mexican who made his way into a mountain camp one March day with two small casks of vinegar lashed to the back of a donkey, and who so every drop of it for an ounce of scurvy per pint. But nowadays canned vegetables are so easily carried that there is no fear of scurvy.

Dr. Cook is going to take fourteen men in his party, and they will devote themselves particularly to the study of fossils and to that of any animals and plants which may be new.

The South Pole has not received a tithe of the attention that has been bestowed on the North. This is because there is a very very long sea voyage before exploration can begin. There is a theory that there is a complete ice cap over the South Pole, and this, too, Dr. Cook wishes to investigate.

SOWING AND REAPING.

Sow truth, if thou the truth would'st reap;
Who sows the false shall read the vain;
Erect and sound thy conscience keep;
From hollow words and deed refrain.
Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;
Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rocks and moor,
And find a harvesthome of light.
—Yankee B.ade.

Old Tonga's Leopard.

BY PAUL C. SCHAFFER.

I have seen many men who penetrated into the interior of the Dark Continent simply for a love of adventure and hunting, who have returned with thrilling incidents to relate than those which happened to me when I was in the Zambesi country, something like ten years ago.

Not that I went for any such reasons as those given above, but on a very peaceful mission indeed, and that is why I contrast my experience with that of those other men I have known.

I knew a Major Parsons once—an Englishman, of course, for few men of other nationality would strike into the interior for the mere love of adventure; a Portuguese would go for slaves, a Dutchman for ivory, a Yankee to "dicker" with the unsophisticated natives; but the darkest parts of this darkest of lands, are strewn with the bones of Englishmen who, simply to gratify a longing for a life of adventure, or for hunting, have penetrated beyond the lines of civilization to fall a victim to the ravages of that terrible scourge "the coast fever" or "jungle fever," or to the rapacity of unfriendly blacks.

But speaking of Major Parsons, he had been "up country" more times than he could count, and although he had shot any amount of big game, he had never had an adventure worth the repeating, whereas I, who went up the great river for the simple purpose of gaining a knowledge of the botanical productions of the country, and to gather a huge case of specimens of the same (certainly a most peaceful occupation, you must admit), crowded enough incidents of an adventurous nature into a few weeks, to last an ordinary human being a lifetime.

The society which had commissioned me to collect these specimens was most generous in the matter of expense; but from long experience I have found it advisable, in other than really hostile countries, to have as small a party as practicable. Therefore I took no other European with me, my men being all blacks except my head man, who was an Arabian named Mohamed.

Just as the majority of Irishmen are named Patrick, so the majority of Turks and Arabs seem to be called Mohamed with a national fondness for the respective cognomens that is easily explained in either case.

Mohamed was as low browed and snaky looking as most of his race, and it was suggested to me (by interested friends) that this same man was suspected of having dealt in "contrabands" (i. e., slaves) more than once.

But to my mind, Mohamed was a good deal like a singed cat—better than he looked.

We journeyed up the river by boat for several weeks, and at one of the river towns I picked up an old fellow by the name of Tonga, in place of a man who had deserted.

Desertions, I found, were so common on such a trip as this, that if the whole crowd deserted in a body, it was hardly worth mentioning. No dependence can be placed upon the blacks at all, for as a usual thing, they will only go about so far from their native villages.

Old Tonga, however, was a faithful old fellow and I took him with me, despite the fact that he had a traveling companion whom, personally, I considered objectionable. This was a leopard—not quite full grown—which he assured me was perfectly tame; but it was the most untrustworthy looking beast that I ever saw.

I noticed that some of the blacks even gave it a wide berth as it lay curled up at

the old man's feet, and Mohamed fairly hated it.

In India one sees the hunting leopard or cheelah, very frequently about the bungalows of the native princes; but the African leopard is a rather different sort of a beast, and I could not help thinking, occasionally, as I saw his green gold eyes watching some temptingly fat ducky paddler, that old Tonga's leopard was not so tame that his natural desires were not still rampant within him.

Tonga himself was a native king—without a tribe. Once he had been over a powerful village of blacks far away from the Zambesi country, but the Turks had fallen upon the village, as they had upon so many thousand villages, and destroyed

Whether the person was light or dark I did not know, and I was at my wits' end to know whether the Arab had been talking with one of my blacks in secret, or had gone to the spot to meet some confederate, with ill intent toward my expedition.

I began to believe that perhaps Mohamed was not strictly single hearted after all; but I was wise enough to show no suspicion of the fact.

I said nothing to him at all about the stranger I had seen prowling about, but I sounded Tonga and made out that the blacks were far from contemplating mutiny under the leadership of the scoundrel.

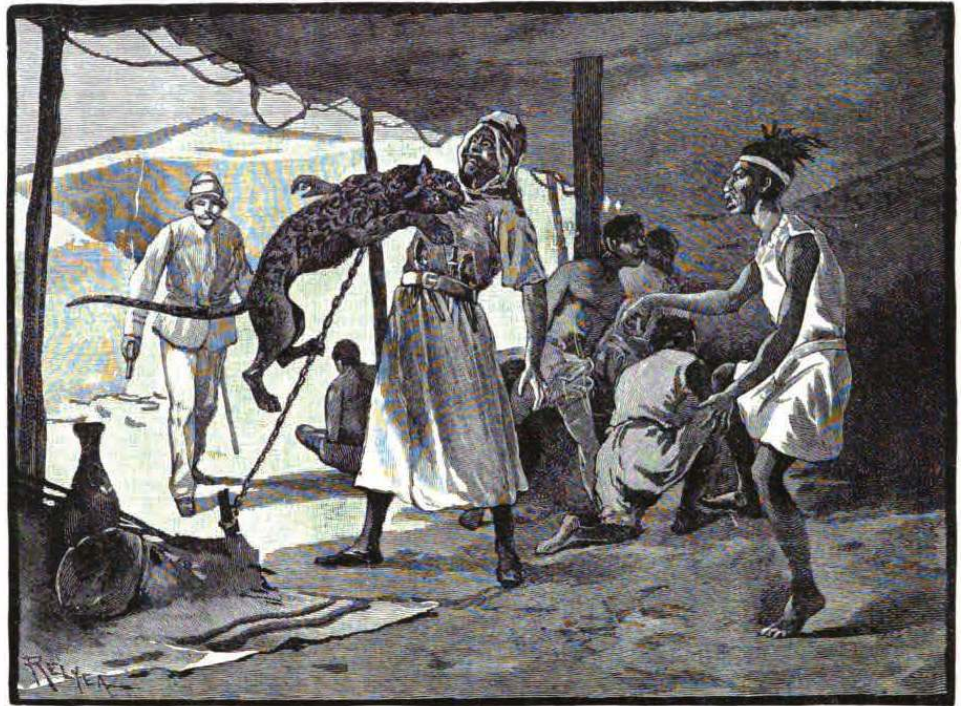
In fact, they all distrusted him, fearing

most, he was willing enough to end it in a battle with his sworn enemies, the slave traders.

I made a shrewd guess that an attack from the Arabs would follow my exposure of Mohamed's treachery, and in this I was correct. Instead of going further that day, we fortified the camp (it being situated remarkably well) and I armed the blacks and told them in a few curt words what they might expect.

They were undeniably frightened—more so, without doubt, than they would have been had the enemy been the wildest tribe of cannibals in the interior, and I couldn't blame them.

Old Tonga was my interpreter and I told him to assure them that there was to



URGED ON BY OLD TONGA'S CRIES, THE HUGE CAT LEAPED STRAIGHT INTO THE AIR AND SEIZED THE TREACHEROUS ARAB BY THE THROAT.

or taken captive every man, woman and child of the tribe.

The old man himself had been released by the British government several years after, and knowing that he no longer had any kindred or people to govern, he did not try to return to his native land, but had stayed near the river, having been guide or "packer" to several small expeditions into the interior before I picked him up.

Between him and Mohamed it was a case of "Love me, love my dog." Mohamed would have killed the leopard in a moment had he dared, and knowing this Tonga took a violent hatred for the Arab.

Perhaps, too, he had some deeper cause of dislike, for he told me one day that he had "seen Arab-man before," and I made out that the old chief believed Mohamed to have been the party that years previous had attacked his own village so far away.

This hardly seemed possible to me, and then, one Arab is as much like another as are two pleas from the same pod.

Yet I could not help being suspicious of the fellow when, after being a week on our land journey, I saw him conversing with some stranger, just on the edge of the evening, near the grove in which we had encamped.

Men do not appear in such a lonely place as that without some cause, and I knew that my eyesight had not failed me, although, when I approached Mohamed the second figure had disappeared.

that he was in league with some of his slave trading brethren, and proposed delivering them up to the slave catchers.

This in itself would, usually, have been sufficient to cause a desertion of the whole crowd had it not been for the fact that only Mohamed himself and old Tonga had ever been in the country we were now traversing, and the blacks feared to leave me.

I watched Mohamed closely and although I did not catch him conferring again with the unknown man I discovered him one morning tampering with my ammunition. I carried in my baggage some cheap guns with which to arm all the blacks should occasion require, and I found that he had almost ruined the shells which I had purchased to use in these weapons.

That settled it, and he knew it, too. I kicked him out of the tent and gave him two minutes to pick up his duds and get out of sight, and he did not stop to make excuses.

In any other case I should have hesitated, no matter how serious the circumstances, before I turned a lone man out into such a wilderness; but I was pretty sure that the festive Mohamed had friends within a few miles and well knew how to reach them.

Of this, however, I said nothing excepting to old Tonga. The old chief was full of fight, for he hated Arabs with all the strength of his soul, and knowing that his existence in the world would be short at

be no surrender to the Arabs—that it was to be a fight to the death, in fact, and that the man who sought to escape from the camp, would be shot down, without mercy, by my own weapon, though he might escape the bullets of the slave dealers.

This effectually nipped in the bud any idea the blacks may have had of running away, and after the camp had been surrounded by a thorn fence, constructed under the able directions of Tonga, the men behaved well enough during the season of waiting for the Arabs to appear.

And they did appear, but not in such numbers as I had feared.

There were not more than a score of the scoundrels, and Mohamed himself, unless I was greatly mistaken, was at their head.

But we were so well prepared for him and the blacks behaved so well, that after an exchange of a few shots which did no damage to either party, he called off his men.

During the skirmish I noticed that old Tonga kept the leopard by him all the time, its chain being attached to a peg driven into the earth.

Much to my surprise the great cat did not seem to fear the shouts and firing of guns, as might naturally have been expected, but seemed eager to break its bonds and fly at the enemy.

In fact, two or three times during the fracas, when the foe seemed about to charge our barrier, I caught the old chief

In the first place he was pretty sure that Jack was still hidden somewhere in the vicinity and that Ossinike had not yet appeared to demand him at the hands of Captain Ericson.

Probably the old chieftain was among his brethren farther along the bay, preaching his new doctrine and instigating them to leave their homes and their white neighbors and follow him. When he had gathered his followers he would return for Jack.

The smugglers did not as yet suspect the vicinity of any of Jack's friends, unless, indeed, Indian Joe persisted in his belief, stated the previous evening to Captain Ericson; but Indian Joe was six or seven miles down the bay, keeping a fruitless watch upon the small boat which he had discovered the day before.

While Tom was swallowing the last few crumbs of his lunch, the crackling of a stick in the bushes farther up the hill aroused him. Sticks do not break without help from some outside influence, and this stick, Tom was sure, had snapped because some one had placed a foot upon it.

He sprang up, seized his rifle, and made his way into the bushes in the direction of the sound.

A few steps brought him to the edge of a small open patch and the first object that caught his eye was the figure of a roughly dressed man standing at the further end of the open space. The stranger carried a rifle and, to judge from the condition of his dress, was a most disreputable character. His back was toward Tom, however, and he could not see his face.

With a great curiosity to behold the features of this strange individual, the lad commenced to skirt the edge of the cleared space, but keeping himself carefully concealed in the brush.

Before this object could be accomplished, however, the man moved away, turning his steps toward the extremity of the point of land which formed the western shore of the narrow inlet, and Tom was forced to drop in behind him, doggedly determined to find out what his business was in the vicinity.

The man kept straight on in the same general direction as Little Net had taken. As he progressed he quickened his pace and Tom was put to it to keep him in view. Once they passed by an opening in the woods through which Tom caught sight of a log house below them; but he could not stop to investigate that just then.

The stranger kept on down the hillside, almost running at times, and evidently desirous of gaining a certain spot before somebody else arrived there.

Suddenly he reached a narrow lane with trees on either side, which seemed to lead up from the water. Here he halted, keeping himself hidden behind a basswood tree, his eyes turned toward the bay below.

Tom worked carefully around until he was in a position to see too. And what he did see surprised him.

Walking nonchalantly up the lane from the water came Dan Cheney, carelessly whistling to himself and armed with nothing more formidable than a tin bucket. Evidently he was totally unconscious of the presence of anybody but himself in that neighborhood, but Tom was in a position to assure him that he was wrong.

The latter glanced hastily at the strange man behind the basswood tree and saw to his anxiety that the fellow had raised his rifle and that its muzzle was pointed fairly at the unconscious Dan's breast. Tom was where he could plainly see the man's finger trembling on the trigger and he raised his own rifle, determined that he should fire first, if there was any shooting done in that vicinity.

CHAPTER XVI.

DAN CHENEY DOES SOME SCOUTING ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT.

After landing Tom that morning, the little catboat, on whose stern the

name "Mohly" was rudely painted, was steered at once between the islands of the archipelago in an easterly direction.

The major and Dan Cheney, comfortably ensconced in the standing room, allowed her to skim along before the fresh breeze for at least fifteen miles, before they again came into the open bay.

On their way they met no other boats, but at one point saw considerable smoke arising from one of the larger islands, which Dan pronounced as marking the position of an Indian encampment. When the catboat ran into the bay she was the only craft in sight.

The major and his companion got out their fishing paraphernalia, and, to prove that they were in no hurry to come to moorings off the mouth of the inlet in which the Jeannette lay (should any inquisitive person be viewing their movements from the highlands of the northern shore), they dropped anchor twice and tried the fishing ere the catboat finally lay to off the inlet and just opposite the western point.

Fortunately for the plans of the two Americans, the fish bit readily here and if fishing had been their only object in gaining this position they would have been amply satisfied.

Occasionally they shifted the boat's position, but try as they might, they could not see farther up the inlet than the high promontory before mentioned, nor did they discover a single person on the heavily wooded shore.

While they were eating an early lunch, however, Dan's sharp eye caught sight of something between the bushes which he declared to be a house.

So confident was he, although the major could see nothing, that he rummaged out a field glass from the cabin and, lying flat down on the stern seat, so that his eyes only were above the boat's rail, he examined the object long and earnestly through the glass.

"That's a house, just as I told ye, major," he said at length, "an' I'm going to have a closer look at it."

"How?" demanded the major.

"Just you haul up the anchor, and get me in to shore. I'm sick of drinking this half-bolled lake water and if there's a house there, there's probably a spring or a well somewhere near it. I'll see if I can make a raid. If there's nobody at home, why all right."

The major, who was quite as anxious as Dan to do something instead of lying idle, made no objection to the plan, and the catboat was sailed to the shore at a point where the high bank sloped down directly to the water.

Armed with a pail, Dan leaped ashore and the major pushed off a trifle and anchored to await his return.

Cheney was a cool fellow who always had his wits about him—one of those men whom nothing seems to "phase"—and he climbed up the steep path in the direction of the house (although it was out of sight) as carelessly as though it was his own property he was approaching.

Just around a turn in the path which shut the water out of view, at a point from which one corner of the rude structure could be seen, Dan was brought to a sudden halt by a command delivered in a most harsh and unpleasant voice.

"Stop there!" said the voice. "What do you want?"

Dan looked up and saw confronting him and looking particularly black and wicked, the muzzle of a long, old fashioned squirrel rifle, and behind the rifle was one of the oddest human beings he had ever seen.

The apparition was dressed in unmistakable male attire, but the face which peered out from beneath the flapping brim of the disreputable felt

hat was undoubtedly that of a woman.

Her gray, tangled locks hung in confusion about her thin sunbrowned face, and over the greasy collar of the butternut coat which hung from her shoulders. A dirty red flannel shirt was visible beneath the coat and the trousers were blue, faded, and ragged. Her feet were bare and browned, like her face, to the color of old mahogany.

Her face, too, was crossed by innumerable wrinkles, like the cracks upon an old china plate; but despite the look of extreme age which this, and the hooked nose and toothless gums, gave her, her eyes were sharp and piercing as a hawk's, and there was not a doubt in Dan's mind that she was looking at the very button on his coat where she proposed to send her bullet did he not immediately obey her command.

"What do you want?" she repeated, as Dan did not answer the question as first put.

"My good woman, I mean you no harm—" Dan began, in a conciliatory tone, but the old hag interrupted him.

"I know ye don't, 'cos why, ye can't," she said grimly. "An' I ain't a 'good woman'; I'm 'Old Nance,' an' a bad customer for any feller like you. State your business and then skip."

The words and tone were so greatly at variance with the usually accepted character of a member of the sex that, had Dan not seen her face, he would have certainly thought her a man.

But he was not a person to scare easily.

"Very well then, I will say 'Mrs. Nance,' if that pleases you better," he said and again she interrupted him, evidently enjoying, in a grim way, the embarrassment she was causing.

"How d'ye know I'm a missis?" she demanded.

"Oh, I could never believe that a lady of your personal attractions would go through life lone and forlorn," responded Dan, with cool impudence.

He seemed so little afraid of the weapon in her hands, that it rather staggered the old woman, and she simply snarled viciously at this remark.

"Don't you be too smart, young man," said she.

"You do me too much honor," replied Dan coolly, "I'm not young; I'm forty five—not a day less. And now, old lady, if you'll just put down that rifle—which may go off and shoot me if ye ain't careful—I'll go along up to this house I see ahead here and get some water. There's a well or a spring there, ain't there?"

"You keep away from that house, d'ye hear?" cried the woman, as Dan calmly walked toward her.

"What's the matter with the house?" demanded Dan. "Got 'the fever' there? I'm not going to hurt it. I've got tired of drinking that blood warm lake water and I want something cooler."

"You keep away from there," reiterated the enraged female, still barring the path.

"Isn't there a well there?"

"No—yes. But don't you go there," she cried angrily.

"Why, what is there in it?" demanded Dan, still cool as zero. "D'ing something there ye don't want folks to know about? Is it a still, or are you makin' 'the queer'?"

The woman, black as she was, flushed vividly at this.

"Don't you be afraid, old lady," Dan continued in a pacifying tone. "I don't care what you've got there. Me 'n' my friend are here on a fishing and hunting trip—we're not revenues. Come, show me where the well is, that's a good woman."

Old Nance was completely astounded by his coolness, and really lowered her rifle as he came nearer.

"We don't want nobody snoopin' erbout here," she muttered, half cowed by his stronger will. "Lake water's good 'nough for the likes of you."

Dan laughed lightly. He knew that he had conquered her now and that, unless something should turn up, he might have it all his own way.

He pressed on toward the house, Old Nance remaining close at his side. A few rods further and he had a view of the whole dwelling.

It was a very comfortable log structure, with two small windows, plastered with mud. Not a sign of life appeared about the premises. A few yards to the right of the door a hog-head was sunk in the ground and this was evidently the well.

Old Nance planted herself directly in front of the cabin door and watched him with a vicious scowl as he filled his bucket from the well.

As he did so Dan glanced around the corner of the house and saw that the building was only about ten feet deep and not more than twice that in length. Probably it contained but two rooms; perhaps not more than one.

It hardly seemed possible that the boy of whom he was in search could be hidden there; yet why did the old hag keep such a sharp guard over the place?

"Well, goodby, mother," he said, carelessly, starting for the shore again. "You see I didn't want anything but some water, and I won't trouble you again for that."

"You'd better not," she said surlily, "I want see the last of ye, I do."

Yet she followed him down the lane, as though determined not to see the last of him until he had left her premises.

"There surely is something in that cabin," muttered Dan, "and I'll bet a cookey that it's that young Hardwick."

But as we know, Tom Peterson, the other "scout," thought very differently.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEREIN OLD NANCE EVINCES STRANGE EMOTION.

Dan walked briskly down the path and waved his hand to the major when he came in sight of the catboat.

Right before him and at the left of the path grew a clump of tall bushes, and, as he approached these, his quick eye caught sight of a bit of paper waving very mysteriously from the branches directly in a line with his face.

He was as quick to think as he was to see, and suspecting that the paper was placed there for him by Tom Peterson, he carelessly reached out his arm and closed his hand upon it as he passed.

Old Nance was so far behind him that she did not see the little occurrence, and Dan went on unmolested and safely boarded the boat with his pail of spring water.

Then when the boat was pushed off and well out into the bay, he unclosed his hand and smoothed out the crumpled bit of paper. On it was written in Tom's bold hand:

Dear C.—
In one hour's time land on west side of this ridge and cut a fishing pole, leaving me another stock of grub. I shall not come aboard to-night. Am on track of Jack's hiding place. Tom.

Meanwhile Tom Peterson, having seen Dan take the note from the bush, turned his attention to Old Nance again.

He had been far more surprised than had Dan to discover that the oddly dressed sentinel was a woman, and after having obtained a look at her face he did not wonder that Net had so frankly stated her hatred of the creature.

When Dan had departed in the catboat Tom followed the old woman back toward the log house, for, as he very sensibly argued it, if Old Nance was in the habit of prowling

about the promontory at all hours it would be safer to watch her movements than to run the risk of falling in with her unexpectedly and be "covered" by that long squirrel rifle.

Tom knew well that he could not counterfeit Dan Cheney's boldness if he had to look down that ugly barrel.

"I reckon," thought he, still keeping within the bushes, and with one eye fixed on the old woman, "that she was the man I saw on 'tother side of the ridge yesterday. When I heard Ericson tell that Frenchman that Old Nance was always scouting 'round, I should have taken it more to heart. Just good luck instead of good management that I didn't run up against her. I was looking for a petticoat, and didn't expect her to be dressed this way. I s'pose. And so that creature is that child's only companion. Poor little Net!"

At that instant there was a tramping in the bushes at the right and Tom crouched down upon his knees, peering out along the path.

Old Nance did not seem greatly disturbed by the sound, but halted and turned toward the point from which it came. In a moment, four men broke cover and halted when they saw the old woman.

Rolf Ericson was one; the other three were French Canadians, and low browed, ruffianly looking fellows they were. All four were heavily armed.

"Hollo, Nance!" the leader exclaimed. "What's going on? Who's that come ashore? One of the boys saw them land from the outlook and we came right over."

"Nobody but a fule of a fisherman," snarled Nance, evidently still in a bad temper over her recent visitor. "Ye hain't got nothin' ter fear from him. All he wanted was water."

"Wasn't there enough water out there for him?" demanded Ericson, with a wave of his hand toward the bay. "The lake ain't drying up, is it?"

"He wanted somethin' better than lukewarm water, I s'pose," returned Nance crossly. "He was a sassy feller."

"How came he to land here for it?" argued Ericson suspiciously.

"Said he saw the house from the lake," snapped the old woman.

"I don't believe it," announced the smuggler. "That shanty can't be seen from the lake."

One of the men here interrupted him and said something in French.

"Is that so? Why didn't you tell me of it before?" demanded Ericson in anything but a pleasant tone. "If there is a place on the water from which the house can be seen I'll either rip the old shanty to pieces, or else find a way of hiding it effectually."

"You can go back, boys. Pierre, tell the skipper to clear a place just under the forward hatch for that load we expect tonight."

"Confound those fishermen, any way," he added in a growl to himself. "The canoes can't get in as long as that boat stays out in front of the inlet. Are you sure that fellow didn't suspect anything, or didn't come ashore for any special purpose?"

Nance scowled darkly. "Don't you s'pose I know my business, Rolf?" she demanded, while the three Canadians went back toward the head of the inlet. "He was a fule—that's all."

"All right, old woman," responded the man carelessly. "How's everything up to the house?"

"All right, 'ceptin' the gal. She's gone and hurt her foot—so she says—an' can't hardly step. Come back from 'tother place on a crutch. Says the bank caved with her."

"Guess it did," responded Ericson. "I saw the place as I came along."

"When is the schooner goin' to sail?" Old Nance asked, as she moved

on up the path with her companion at her side.

"Tomorrow night. It's going to be a hard day for the boys tomorrow, though, for I've had to signal the canoes to keep out until night, because of that fishing craft. I wish there wasn't a fish in the whole bay."

They went out of hearing then, for Tom dared not follow them close enough to hear further.

He did move up nearer to the cottage, however, and saw them both go in. They stayed only a moment, and upon coming out Ericson prepared to depart by the way he had come.

Tom was still too far away to hear their conversation, but he could see them plainly, and Old Nance seemed pleading with the man for something.

Her rifle leaned against the house and both her skinny hands were clasped over Ericson's arm.

What the subject of the conversation was Tom could not guess, but it was evident that Old Nance was deeply in earnest. The tones of her voice trembled and her frame shook all over as she clung passionately to the smuggler's arm.

At length Ericson broke away, a fearful scowl upon his face.

"Come, stop this whining," he exclaimed roughly. "Don't act like a fool because you know how."

"Do it for my sake, Rolf," begged Old Nance, in a trembling voice.

"For your sake! bah!" and he turned on his heel and walked rapidly away.

Tom watched the old woman curiously and was surprised to see her sink down upon the low door stone and bury her face in her hands. He would not have believed that she could show such emotion, for it was plain that she was weeping.

Only for a moment did she betray this weakness, however, then rising, she wiped her eyes with the ragged sleeve of the coat and picked up her rifle.

Tom again became her shadow and mounted the hill at her heels. He was becoming an adept at this business and really enjoyed the peril it entailed.

At the first opening they reached, Old Nance halted and looked out over the lake. Doubtless she was gazing at the catboat and evidently something in the little vessel's movements troubled her.

Tom had little doubt what it was. The hour was almost up and if Dan Cheney and the major obeyed his request they would be running around the promontory about now and landing on the opposite shore.

Old Nance hurried up the steep hillside almost at a trot, for she seemed to possess a wonderful energy for so old a person, and a woman at that.

On the summit of the ridge Tom had a look at the catboat himself. It was bowling merrily along under the stiff breeze and in a few moments rounded the extremity of the promontory and approached the shore.

Tom would have given a good deal had Old Nance been on the other side of the ridge, for he wanted five minutes' conversation with his father and Cheney.

But the old woman had no intention of letting the catboat get out of her sight. She pursued a crooked but swift course down the hillside and finally halted in the midst of a clump of trees as the bow of the boat touched the bank and Dan sprang ashore.

Tom took up a position where he could watch both her and his friends, and awaited developments.

Dan proceeded at once to select a straight hickory sprout and cut it down, as though a fishing pole had been his sole object in coming ashore; but Tom marked the spot well, being confident that near it he should find the package of food he had asked for and perhaps a note from Dan or the major.

Having cut the pole, Dan at once embarked again, and the catboat came about and sailed out into the lake. Old Nance, evidently convinced of the peaceable intention of the two fishermen, went back over the summit of the rise, leaving Tom to examine the spot where Dan had landed to his heart's content. And he was not disappointed in his expectations.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TOM WALKS INTO DEADLY PERIL.

Besides the butt of the pole which Dan had left standing, Tom found a lot of food wrapped in an old newspaper and this he clapped into his knapsack.

Underneath the package was a folded note and this note contained one line only, written in very painful characters. Evidently Dan Cheney was unused to the pen.

"My guess: Jack prisoner in cabin.—D. C."

This statement rather astonished Tom. He had seen nothing about the log house to lead him to suspect such a fact for a moment, and he didn't believe it now.

Dan Cheney might be a pretty sharp fellow, but Tom was sure that for once he was mistaken. There wasn't room enough in the cabin for three people and the smugglers wouldn't be likely to put Jack Hardwick under the care of one crazy old woman and a little girl.

"If that's your guess," he muttered, cramming the slip of paper into his pocket, "you've guessed wrong. Jack Hardwick is somewhere near the head of the inlet, where they're loading the schooner, and the next thing I'm going to find out, is where."

With this determination, he started back up the hillside, but in a direction which would bring him to the summit of the ridge, some distance back from the bay.

He pushed his way through the thickets, being careful to cross no open spaces on his line of march, and in half an hour reached the heights.

Instead of at once descending the other side and thus reaching the path upon which he had had the adventure with little Net in the morning, he tramped briskly along the summit of the ridge, keeping a course directly inland.

The top of the ridge was more thickly wooded than its sides and he therefore pursued his way with comparative ease.

He was well shielded from all points of the compass, however, and kept his eyes wide open as he walked, for he had no intention of being "spotted" by any of the smugglers. Remembering Ericson's remark to Old Nance that one of his men had seen the landing of Dan Cheney from "the lookout," Tom wondered where that "lookout" might be.

Quite probably it was a spot high above the surrounding territory, that a sharp watch on the bay might be kept.

Ericson had also said something about "signaling the canoes" and Tom peered searchingly at every height about him in the hope of discovering some clew to the position of the smugglers' lookout. He was well enough acquainted with the ridge on which he stood to be sure that that was not the situation of the signal station.

The most promising point seemed to him to be the high, abrupt promontory that cut the inlet nearly in two and hid the broad inner basin from the bay. The top of that height was heavily wooded, however, and revealed nothing of a suspicious nature to his most searching glances.

Coming in sight of the schooner, and necessarily of the whole inner basin, Tom halted and carefully scanned the Jeannette herself, the shores of the basin, and the huge masses of rock and boulder, piled one

above another, at the northern extremity of the inlet.

On the Jeannette all seemed to be busy. The fleet of canoes which had entered the basin the afternoon before, were not all unloaded yet, but by the way in which the crew of the schooner were working it seemed probable that they soon would be. A tackle and falls had been fixed to a portable boom and the packages of merchandise were being raised from the canoes and lowered quickly into the schooner's hold.

"Now, there's one thing, and that's a fact," thought Maester Tom, as he surveyed this scene, "it will be rather dangerous for me to go fooling about the head of the inlet in broad daylight. Unless I want to stop a bullet I'd better keep away from there until dusk, and, as I may have to be up all night, I think the most sensible thing for me to do will be to seek out some sheltered place and take a little snooze."

With this intention he pushed his way carefully down the ridge a little way and found just the place he wanted in the middle of a clump of low branching spruce trees. Here he lay down, with his gun in the hollow of his arm, and shortly dropped to sleep. It was sunset ere he awoke.

Tom was used to roughing it and he did not mind the hardships of this scouting expedition in the least; in truth he rather enjoyed them; but he could not help worrying over Jack and longed to locate his prison to a certainty, and then set about getting him free.

There was no way of knowing how soon Ossinike might come for his nephew, and once in the hands of the Indians it would be doubly hard for Jack's friends to rescue him.

Tom left the place of his temporary camp with the intention of discovering just where Jack Hardwick was held prisoner before another sun rose, and making sure that his rifle was all right and his hunting knife loose in his belt, he started in a bee line for the head of the basin.

Not that he expected to get into a fight, or that he would not have been afraid in such a contingency; but Tom had been taught to always prepare for the worst and thus be ready for it if it should come. He had every expectation of stealing upon the smugglers unawares, discovering their rendezvous, and escaping without betraying his presence; but there might be a slip up, and for that he prepared.

He kept well back from the shore of the basin, but within sight of it, and quietly worked around to a point nearly opposite the Jeannette.

She lay at anchor a couple of cable lengths from the shore and her crew seemed to have finished their day's work. Probably they were in the forecabin discussing supper, along with the Canadian and half breed canoe men.

The fleet of canoes lay around the larger vessel or were drawn up on the beach.

Nowhere within sight was the first sign of a habitation and had the schooner and the canoes not been in the basin, the neighborhood would have seemed as wild and deserted as any other portion of the shore of Manitoulin Bay.

The sun having now disappeared behind the high ridge the surface of the basin was being rapidly hidden by shadow. Already objects upon the high promontory, which jutted out into the inlet, and the shore upon that side, were hardly distinguishable.

Tom had established himself between two huge boulders at the base of the gigantic pile of rocks, and was safely hidden from both the water and the shoreward side. Yet he was a little startled to hear a sudden step behind him steadily approaching his place of concealment.

Evidently the person was going toward the water and would pass, perhaps within arm's length of his

A LOUD SUIT.

He was a swaggering Englishman,
And he wore a swaggering suit,
Which was plaid a gorgeous one,
Before which all stood mute.
He went unto Niagara,
And looked upon its flow,
And said: "I thought it grander—
I think it rather slow."

Then, as he hitched his trousers,
He adieed: "I don't think
'Tis as noisy as I thought it."
"Though I'm right on the brink,"
"Why man," replied a Yankee,
"While watching him askance,
"Take off those howling breeches,
And give the falls a chance."
—New Orleans Picayune.

IN THE LAND OF HELLO.

Did you visit the World's Fair last summer,
and while there did you see the Bell Telephone exhibit? There was a "Central" on show, with eight to ten girls busy receiving messages from the Fair grounds circuit. Whether you saw this or not, you will be interested in the description of the way in which the system is managed, described as follows in the Boston "Herald":

How many telephone subscribers know that happens when they ring up "Central," for a connection and get it, or get the unsatisfactory answer "busy" instead. Yet, if they did know and did understand the various operations required to join the lines together, the method of determining whether a line is busy or not, the function of a "ring off" signal and other like matters relating to the handling of their wires in an exchange, they would be in the best possible position for getting the best results from their telephone service.

The subscriber frequently forgets that he really part and parcel of the telephone system and must do his share of the operation.

There are many popular fallacies about the telephone exchange. One of these is about "ringing up" central.

"Central" is not "rung up" at all. In "central" there are no tinkling gongs, as at a subscriber's office.

When you turn the crank of your bell the current that you send out from the little dynamo machine within the case actuates a small lever that moves a little shutter, one of a series of little holes, surmounted by the contact of the little shutters discloses a number and intimates to the operator that a subscriber has called.

The operator, sitting in front of a vertical structure of wood and metal, pierced with any thousands of little holes, surmounted by tiers of little electric shutters, picks up a case tipped peg, resting upright in its socket in a small projecting shelf, pushes it into one of the little holes, depresses a lever, and is ready to take up a connection.

Before you take a connection is any further on, the appliances with which the operator is provided to enable her to do her work should be inspected.

What is her work? To answer the calls of subscribers, to make connections between their wires and to ring up subscribers.

She must have a telephone outfit to talk with. It is not anything like a subscriber's set. The operator's telephone set must be on duty all the time, so she has a transmitter suspended from cords so nicely counterbalanced that she can adjust it with a touch to the exact level of her mouth and she has a ear, watch-shaped receiver, which is held ways to her ear by a shining metal clasp resting over the head.

This leaves both hands free for action, and she finds plenty to do with them.

On the little shelf in front of her, are three rows of appliances. One row is of connecting keys attached to long flexible cords.

Each cord contains a pair of wires, and is a peg at either end; the pegs are held upright in their sockets in the shelf by counterweights.

The next row is of little levers called listening bells—one for each pair of pegs—by which the operator switches her telephone in or out of the connecting cord.

The third row consists of little buttons, called ringing keys, that serve for ringing up subscribers—one button for each peg. The operator, then, on seeing a shutter pop, picks up one of a pair of pegs, or plugs, and pushes it into a little hole in the switchboard, pressing down also the listening key corresponding to the cord she has used.

That puts her telephone set in communication with the subscriber who has called. On setting the number she picks up the other peg of the pair and, searching out the hole corresponding to the number wanted, taps with the tip of the plug on the rim of it. She is waiting for her caller.

The subscriber called for may already be connected with some one else at another part of the switchboard, and it would be a telephonic solecism of the worst kind to join three subscribers' lines together.

If the line is already engaged, the operator gets no signal, and she pushes the plug firmly into the hole.

The two subscribers' lines are then joined together by means of the cords and pegs. The operator "rings" up the subscriber called for by pressing one of the little buttons called ringing keys, and if the first subscriber has also left his telephone she "rings him up" also.

The ringing key is the operator's substitute for the subscriber's bell. It is connected to a circuit, running all through the switchboard, which is kept constantly supplied with current by a small dynamo that is always going.

When both subscribers have attended, and have begun communication, the operator raises her listening key and cuts herself out of current.

"Busy" and "ring off" are two terms quite familiar to the telephone subscriber. The first he scoffs at and the second he sometimes neglects. A word about them.

In a large telephone switchboard each subscriber's line has a connecting point in a number of different places. There may be from ten to forty separate points, at which connection can be made with any given line.

It is estimated, then, that when an operator has made a connection between two lines, all the other operators should be able to ascertain that fact.

For instance, A and B are connected by an operator. While they are talking other operators may get calls for either A or B, or for both. But if they were to make those connections both A and B and all the rest would get very angry.

They could make them easily enough, because every operator can reach every line in the switchboard. But they don't make them because they try every line before completing the connection, and if the line is already connected to another a sharp click will sound in the operator's head telephone when she taps the peg on the rim of the little hole.

The source of the click is a battery that is connected to the lines running through the switchboard, when the connection is put up. This very ingenious arrangement is called by telephonists the "busy test."

Whenever a connection is made at any part of the switchboard, the "busy test" is applied to both lines by the battery attached to the connecting cords. The lines are thus protected from assault at every other point at which a connection might be made.

The medium by which all these wonderful things are done is called the multiple switchboard, which, as its name implies, is a multiplication of switchboards. It consists of so many sections joined together, and every subscriber's line is connected to a point in each section.

Three operators work at each section, and each operator has a certain number of subscribers to attend to; she can also reach every other line in the switchboard. If there are 3,000 subscribers served by an exchange, there are 3,000 connecting points in a section, which measures a trifle less than six feet long. The sections are joined together in one continuous switchboard.

An entire switchboard for an exchange of 3,000 subscribers measures about 150 feet in length. An operator attends to the calls of from forty to sixty subscribers, and makes on an average from 800 to 900 connections daily.

An exchange of 3,000 subscribers requires a force of from seventy five to eighty operators.



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A MATTER OF DOUBT.
He was in a sad plight when they brought him into the house, shivering from an involuntary ice water bath in the skating pond.
"Johnny!" exclaimed his mother, aghast.
"Where have you been?"
"The boy was silent."
"Why don't you answer?"
"O-cause, mother, I can't exactly say."
"Why not?"
"O-cause, I d-dunno whether I've b-been skating or s-swimming."—Washington Star.

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