When the Sun Stopped COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

THE ARGOSY

In This Number

1 Complete Novel

6 Serial Stories

8 Short Stories

and all hummers

JUNE

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Instead of being a well-appointed boudoir, however, the room was found to contain only a crippled sewing machine, some discarded furniture, and a large flowered dressing gown, which Mrs. Wonderman at once pronounced to be the property of "Uncle" Merridew.

Their landlord's misleading statement was therefore ascribed to a dry humor for which neither of the young pair had given him credit.

The neighbors learned, through the medium of one of the two smart servants whom Mrs. Wonderman had installed, that Mr. Merridew had decided at the last moment to rent his house, and as he was known to be eccentric and impulsive, this sudden change in his plans evoked little comment. The neighbors did not call, but other people did, and Mrs. Wonderman was supremely happy.

None of her new acquaintances knew Mr. Merridew, with the exception of one lady, who was much surprised to learn that her hostess considered him one of the kindest and most distinguished-looking men she had ever seen. She did not pursue the subject, and in the privacy of her family circle expressed some doubt as to Mrs. Wonderman's sanity.

Encouraged by their social success, the Wondermans decided to give a dinner party. The furnishings of the dining-room had been remodeled in accordance with Mrs. Wonderman's idea of the prevailing fashion—"Taking the stiffness out," she called it, and she was anxious that her friends should have an opportunity of admiring her taste.

Among other improvements, the portrait of Mr. Merridew, whose appearance, she said, always gave her the "creeps," had been removed from its place of honor and ignominiously consigned to the attic.

That dinner party had a most auspicious beginning. Everybody invited accepted, and nobody arrived late.

Mrs. Wonderman, radiant in a new dress, felt that she was looking her best, and Mr. Wonderman surprised himself by the easy flow of his conversation. The dinner was well cooked, and there were no embarrassing waits between courses.

The smart waiting maid had just removed the birds, and Mr. Wonderman was secretly telegraphing his congratulations to his wife, when he was startled to see the answering smile fade from her lips, her eyes dilate, and her features congeal in a look of horror. At the same time he became aware that the united gaze of his guests was concentrated on a point just behind his chair.

Turning hastily to ascertain the cause of this phenomenon, he found himself confronted by an elderly man of massive build, with a broad face heavily charged with blood, a fringe of gray whisker that fairly bristled, and small eyes, gleaming with a ferocity which the unhappy host attributed to mental affliction.

There was no mistaking those features or those eyes. Uncle Merridew had turned up, and, worst of all, he was evidently a homicidal maniac.

Mr. Wonderman's senses reeled under the shock of this apparition, but he instinctively rose to his feet, preferring to meet an onslaught in a standing rather than in a sitting position.

His feelings were much akin to those of a novice in the art of animal training on first entering the den of a ferocious beast, an illusion which was heightened by a movement of Uncle Merridew's lips, suggestive of gnashing of teeth, and an overture of rasping gasps, which the intruder was emitting in a desperate endeavor to control his voice.

Warily watching his foe, Mr. Wonderman heard behind him the rustle of a skirt and his wife's voice at his ear.

"Humor him as long as you can," she whispered, "while I ring up the police station."

She darted from the room, and her husband, with a sigh of relief, heard the telephone bell ringing excitedly.

"Won't you—won't you sit down and join us?" he asked diffidently.

Mr. Merridew, who had just succeeded in gaining his breath, suffered a relapse, and it was only after a hard struggle that he found his voice.

"What the devil are you doing here?" he roared.

"Doing here?" echoed Mr. Wonder-

man, bent upon getting as much time as possible.

"Yes, sir," cried the other, who, now that he had found his voice, seemed determined to make the most of it. "Doing here in my house. Are you aware that this is my house?"

"Your house? Oh—yes—certainly," assented Mr. Wonderman, mindful of his wife's admonition.

"Then, sir," shouted the enraged owner, striking the table such a crashing blow that the guests pushed back their chairs in unison, "I ask you once more: what are you doing here?"

In view of his previous admission, Mr. Wonderman found some difficulty in offering a satisfactory explanation.

"We—we thought you wouldn't mind," he said weakly.

This reply, so far from having a soothing influence, produced much the same effect as throwing a stick of dynamite into a burning house.

Mr. Merridew flung the last rag of self-restraint to the winds, and, regardless of the presence of the ladies, exploded in a burst of invective and profanity which revealed an amazing fertility of expression.

His attitude also became so threatening that Mr. Wonderman discreetly dropped his napkin over the carving knife and possessed himself of the handle.

The indignant man had just entered for the third time on a minute analysis of Mr. Wonderman's character and personal appearance when his eloquence received a rude check.

His arms, which he was brandishing wildly, were seized from behind, and, turning his head from side to side like an enraged bull, he found himself in the grasp of two blue-coated figures, who firmly admonished him to keep quiet.

Incensed beyond all bounds at this interference, he made a desperate effort to release himself, and for the next few minutes Mr. Wonderman's guests were treated to the sight of a wrestling match in which numbers and professional skill were pitted against blind, unreasoning fury.

In spite of his age, Mr. Merridew was no mean antagonist, and it was not till one of the policemen had administered several sharp raps on his head that a pair of handcuffs were snapped on his wrists and he was brought heavily to the floor, where he still kept up the struggle and continued to roar forth threats and maledictions.

"Better sit on his legs," suggested one of the guests, vigorously rubbing one of his own which he had incautiously ventured within the zone of conflict.

One of the policemen acting on this hint, Mr. Merridew was finally reduced to a state of quiescence.

"I'm sure I owe you a most humble apology," Mr. Wonderman said, addressing his astounded guests, "but the fact of the matter is, this gentleman is the uncle of our landlord. He is mentally unbalanced and has broken out of the asylum. He fancies he owns this house. Our landlord told us of his affliction, and asked us not to mention it. In justice to myself, however, I feel bound to explain. Shall I call up the asylum?" he asked, addressing the officers.

"They notified 'em from the station," replied one of the constables. "They'll be here before long with a straitjacket. Keep still, you"—this in response to a spasmodic movement of Mr. Merridew's legs.

Physical exhaustion had considerably subdued Mr. Merridew's frenzy, and he had listened open-mouthed to Mr. Wonderman's explanation.

"There is some extraordinary mistake here," he said, impressed by the other's tone of conviction. "I've never been inside an insane asylum in my life, though this sort of thing is enough to send a man there. I've just got back from Europe."

"That's what his nephew told us," said Mr. Wonderman in an audible aside. "'Supposed to be traveling in Europe,' were his words."

"I haven't got a nephew nearer than California," shouted the other. "Send for one of my neighbors to identify me, and get off my legs. D'ye want to stop the circulation?"

"Will you keep 'em still if I do?" asked the policeman dubiously.

Having received the desired assur-

ance, the officer went away, and returned in a few minutes with an elderly gentleman of a nervous temperament, who was so perturbed at finding his irascible neighbor handcuffed on his own premises that his assurances were slightly incoherent.

Mr. Merridew's identity having been finally established, he was freed from his manacles and assisted to a chair, where he at once assumed the functions of prosecuting attorney, and submitted Mr. Wonderman to a vigorous cross-examination.

The two policemen constituted themselves a bench of judges, the guests grouped themselves as a jury, and Mr. Wonderman increased the resemblance to an impromptu court of justice by filing his receipt and a carefully preserved copy of his advertisement as exhibits.

It was after a minute description of the gentleman who had leased the house that Mr. Merridew, with a look of horrified incredulity, held a hurried consultation with the bench, and one of its members was despatched to the telephone. He returned shortly, to say that the gentleman would be round in ten minutes, and the court took a recess and breathlessly awaited developments.

"Oh, thank goodness, everything will be explained now," cried Mrs. Wonderman, as a tall, dark gentleman, in evening dress, and wearing a double eyeglass, was ushered in.

The newcomer, with a surprised look, turned to Mr. Merridew for enlightenment.

"Worthington," said that gentleman, "what did you do with the key of this house which I asked you to take to the police station?"

"Key?" echoed Major Worthington in evident bewilderment.

"Yes, sir, key," insisted his interrogator. "Didn't you meet me outside the morning I started for Europe, and didn't you help me with my trunk, and didn't I give you the door key and ask you to take it to the police station and tell them to look after this house?"

"No," replied Major Worthington. "I don't know what you are talking about."

Mr. Merridew passed his hand across his brow in a helpless fashion, and looked for assistance to the constables.

"Be careful what you say, my fine feller," said one of the officers in a judicial tone. "We know you, and all about you."

Major Worthington's only reply was a look of haughty disdain.

"This man's name ain't Worthington," the policeman continued. "He's a card sharp and bunco man. We pinched him for a crooked bit of work three months ago, but we couldn't prove it."

"What the devil do you mean by this insolence?" shouted the incensed major.

"Don't you talk to me like that, or I'll arrest you," replied the policeman. "Jernyngham's your name, or one of your names. You was living at the Trumble House, but a couple of months ago we lost sight of you. Do you give him in charge?" he asked, turning to Mr. Merridew.

There was a rustle of expectancy in the jury box.

"Give him in charge?" cried Mr. Merridew. "Certainly not. Major Worthington has lived in the same house on Mansworth Street for ten years. He's a married man with children."

"I've known married men with children——" the policeman was beginning when he was interrupted by the entrance of the parlor maid.

"The 'sylum's just rung up, sir," she said, "to say as there's no one of the name of Merridew there. There's a gentleman of the name of Merriman, but he hasn't escaped. What shall I tell them?"

"Tell them to go to Hades," returned Mr. Merridew violently.

"Yes, sir," answered the parlor maid obediently, and vanished with great precipitancy.

Major Worthington now peremptorily demanding an explanation, a brief outline of the facts so far as known was laid before him, and the court resolved itself into a debating society, the policemen abandoning their judicial function and acting as umpires.

A resolution was finally carried that

some one bearing a strong resemblance to Major Worthington had wilfully and cruelly imposed on two unsuspecting young people, and the police were strongly recommended to take steps to bring the offender to justice.

A rider submitted by Mr. Merridew was rejected as being of unnecessary strength, and another, offered by an officious guest, that it would be well in future if Mr. Merridew would wear spectacles, was so coldly received by that gentleman, who was sensitive about his eyesight, that it was hastily withdrawn.

In view of the indignities inflicted on the rightful owner, Mr. Wonderman offered to vacate the house at once, but Mr. Merridew, in spite of his irascible temper, was not destitute of chivalry.

Of a combative disposition, he looked back on his encounter with the two policemen with a certain sense of enjoyment, and regarded his protracted resistance to superior numbers as a signal proof that age had only slightly impaired his pristine vigor. He first lectured his quondam antagonists sharply on the evils of being guided by first impressions, and then soothed their resentment by a largess which converted them at once into competitive eulogists.

To Mr. Wonderman, and especially to Mrs. Wonderman, whose pretty face and evident distress touched him, he extended an invitation to remain as his guests until the return of his wife and daughter, and was so masterful in his insistence that they could not do otherwise than accept it.

The intimacy thus established throve amazingly, and the young couple never found any cause to regret that they had once fallen victims to the wiles of the unscrupulous Mr. Jernyngham.

IV.

SEATED in a low wicker chair, on the broad piazza of a Florida hotel, Mr. Horace Jernyngham, now temporarily passing under an assumed name, drew a letter from his pocket and reread an extract.

"There is a big row on," wrote his correspondent, "over some man renting some other man's furnished house while he was away. The real man turned up at a dinner party and was arrested as an escaped lunatic. It got into the papers here and the police are busy. If you know anything about it, better lie low."

"Thank you, my discreet friend," Mr. Jernyngham commented. "I will take your advice. My stout friend's remarks must have been well worth hearing. My only regret is that I couldn't stay to see the finish."

A RAINY DAY.

THIS is my dream, to have you on a day
  Of beating rain and sullen clouds of gloom
  Here with me, in the old, familiar room,
Watching the logs beneath the flames' swift play
  Burst into strange conceits of bud and bloom.

The things we know about us here and there,
  The books we love, half read, on floor and knee,
  The stein the Dutchman brought from oversea
Standing invitingly beside your chair,
  The while we quote and talk and—disagree;

Rebuild the castles that we reared in Spain,
  Reread the poet that our childhood knew,
  With eyes that meet when some quaint thought rings true.
Oh, friend, for some such day of cheer and rain,
  Books, and the dear companionship of you!

Theodosia Pickering Garrison.

THE FOOL'S POCKET.*

BY W. BERT FOSTER.

The man who was missing, and the extraordinary spot in which he was finally found.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

THE story is told in the main by Benjamin Hubbard, an old man of seventy-five, senior partner in the law firm of Hubbard, Ayer & Waterhouse. They have charge of the affairs of the hero, Lynn Shepard, who, with his sister Lillian, have been left orphans. Lynn's father was interested in a mine out West, the Fool's Pocket, in which Lynn still has confidence, although it was reported to be worked out. He borrows money from the Gregorys, father and son, in whose store he works as a clerk, to go out and make a personal inspection of the mine. He finds it will pay to work it, but before he can do this he must obtain permission of the other partner with his father in the investment, Preston Shaw, who was a rascal and has mysteriously disappeared. If Lynn cannot start work within a certain period, covered by his loan from the Gregorys, his claim on it will revert to them. In this crisis, he learns that Preston Shaw's sister Mary is living in England with the Hawleys. Jethro Hawley had been associated with Shaw and Shepard in the mine deal.

Lynn sails for England, contrives to render a service to Hawley (son of Jethro), a blacksmith possessed of mysterious wealth and who claims that Mary Shaw is weak in intellect. Lynn, who passes under his first name, takes more than a keen interest in the daughter, pretty Bertha Hawley. She tells him strange tales about a diving bell, an unfinished invention of her grandfather, Driving one day with Bertha in her pony cart, Lynn is amazed to see Chris Gregory appear in an automobile. The machine frightens the pony, who backs the cart over a precipice. Wagon and horse go down, but Lynn snatches Bertha with one arm and clings to the branch of a tree with the other. But the branch has already started to break away from the trunk, leaving the two swaying above a horrible fate.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VILLAIN UNMASKED.

THE splitting tree trunk yawned slowly as its living appendage swung to and fro. In that moment life looked a very small thing to Lynn Shepard, for death came near, and in its presence all else was dwarfed.

Then he glanced again at the face of the girl who clung with him to the branch. Her eyes were closed and her lips moved.

This seemed to inspire him with hope. There was still a chance. God was on high, and in His eye a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without notice!

He turned his own face upward again, but not in appeal to the Omnipotent. It is given to woman to pray and man to work.

The chauffeur had joined Gregory and the stable-boy at the edge of the precipice. Lynn lifted his voice and shouted to them.

"Quick! Bind something about that tree—stop it from splitting! Find something, for God's sake!"

His words spurred Chris Gregory to action. He wore a long traveling coat; but beneath was a golf suit, the knickerbockers upheld by a leather belt.

He whipped off the belt, and in an instant had it fastened about the trunk of the elm just below the split. But that single strap looked a frail thing indeed to hold the tree trunk intact.

The chauffeur disappeared, and was back in a flash with a longer and heavier strap which he had carried in the boot of the auto. This went twice around the tree, and just as he got it buckled Gregory's belt parted with a loud snap!

But the heavier strap held. The gash stopped right there.

Quickly the two men slipped out of their coats and tied them together by the arms. This life-line was flung over the edge of the cliff to the endangered couple.

Lynn was all but gone now, for the girl was hanging upon him heavily,

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while her own hands slipped from the branch.

"Once more! Try again, for God's sake!" he breathed hoarsely.

She opened her eyes. The coat dangled within her reach.

She let go of the branch with one hand and caught the tail of the coat. Then she seized it with her other hand. Lynn's arm still helped sustain her.

"Cling with all your might!" he cried. Then: "*Haul up!*"

He felt her drawn out of his arms. His other hand sought the support of the branch just in time to keep its brother from slipping. And then, but half conscious, he swung there for another eternity—until the tail of the coat dangled in reach again.

"Grab hold!" a voice shouted from above, and he had never thought that Chris Gregory's tones would sound sweet to him!

A little later he lay on the side of the road, with Miss Hawley's face bending over him. Her eyes glowed, her lips trembled, and there were tears on her cheeks.

"God bless you, Mr. Lynn!" she murmured. "You saved my life!"

The perfume of her breath fanned his own lips. He forgot that anybody else was near for that second. His own eyes must have told her what lay deep in his heart.

"Oh!" she cried softly, and drew back, a blush mounting from her throat to where the dark hair waved over her temples.

"What's the matter—has he fainted?" demanded Gregory's voice, and then Lynn's view of Bertha's lovely features was blotted out by the form of the American.

"By Jove, old man!" Chris exclaimed. "*You're* all right. Wasn't that a narrow squeak, though?"

Lynn pulled himself together, sat up, saw the boy who had climbed down the declivity now coming up again with the wreck of one of Miss Hawley's baskets in his hand, and grinned feebly.

"He's broke 'is neck, missis; poor hold Mase ain't never goin' ter drag me 'n' you about town hany more. Hand all on account o' that hauto machine!" and the youngster spoke with feeling.

"The poor creature!" cried Miss Hawley, recovering her voice. "Are you sure he is out of his sufferings?"

"Dead has 'e can be, missis. Hand the cart all in flinders."

The chauffeur, who, with his coat and blinkers off, looked much more human, now advanced.

"I can't tell you how sorry I am for this accident," he said to Bertha. "And you, sir—I hope you are not injured?"

"I'll be all right when I get my wits together," Lynn replied. "Are you perfectly safe, Miss Hawley?"

"Thanks to you—and to our friends here who drew us up—I am all right," she replied, including all three young men in a glorious smile.

"You will let me drive you both home?" said the chauffeur. "That is the least I can do to make amends. My name is Orrin Levering. You, I believe, must be Miss Bertha Hawley, daughter of the—ah—iron-monger at Pebbleton?" he added, addressing the girl.

"I have heard your name, sir," she replied. "Yes, Mr. Jackson Hawley is my father."

"I was going to Padstow, so shall go right through Pebbleton. And this gentleman——"

"I am staying in Pebbleton," Lynn hastened to say.

He wanted to get around introducing Gregory and being introduced himself if he could. He saw trouble ahead of him, now that Chris had followed him to this corner of the world.

"My friend here, Mr. Christopher Gregory, of the United States, is touring this part of the country," Levering went on. "You are an American, too, I believe?"

"Why," exclaimed Chris, bursting into a laugh, "Lynn and I are old friends. Born and brought up in the same town—Garford, Connecticut. We came over together last month, but somehow we lost each other——"

Lynn broke in.

"Mr. Gregory speaks quite to the point," he said, having risen and taken the cap which the boy had found for him. "But Miss Hawley must be much shaken. Suppose we go right along?

Her father can send back for the cart if it is worth saving."

"You're right, Mr. ——?" Levering waited.

But Lynn was helping Bertha toward the auto and appeared not to hear.

"Shepard's his name," Chris said, and it seemed to Lynn as though he shouted the word.

But Bertha did not seem to notice, and Lynn was glad.

If he could only get Chris aside and try to fix the matter up with him! He felt desperate enough to choke the fool before they had gone a mile, however.

Bertha, Lynn, and the boy occupied the rear seat of the auto. Chris faced around half the time, talking to them. He was evidently greatly taken with Bertha's face. He could not keep his eyes off her.

"I shall remain overnight at Padstow, Miss Hawley," Orrin Levering said as they drew swiftly near the village of Pebbleton. "I am going there to attend to some of my father's business. Tell Mr. Jackson Hawley that I will call on him to-morrow, and stand ready to do whatever is right about that horse and cart. And I can only express again to you my sorrow over the accident."

The auto stopped before the Hawley premises and the boy and Lynn leaped out, the latter assisting Bertha to dismount.

"I'll drop in on you myself to-morrow, Miss Hawley," said Gregory with superb cheek, "and see how you are. I'll be over to see Mr. Shepard, any way."

He waved his hand gaily as the red machine sped away along the road. Lynn stood, flushed and angry, looking at the girl.

"What did he mean?" she asked him, her brows contracted, her eyes, whose penetrating qualities he had mentioned in his sister's letter, boring through him. "Is not your name Lynn?"

"It is. But it is Shepard also."

"Ah—Shepard Lynn?"

"No, Miss Bertha. My name is Lynn Shepard."

"But why—I do not understand. Why did not you give us your last name, sir? I do not understand it at all."

"I expected you *would* understand when you heard my last name. That is why I kept it to myself. My father was James Shepard."

"James Shepard—James Shep—— Why, the name *does* sound familiar to me." She looked away, her brows still knit in thought. "Yet I cannot place it."

"My father knew your grandfather in California, Miss Hawley," Lynn explained. "He had little to do with *him;* but James Shepard and Preston Shaw were partners in a mine called the Fool's Pocket."

"Ah!" she cried, flashing a glance at him. "I think I know now. You have come here to see Miss Shaw, then —Aunt Mary, as we call her? She sometimes tells us something about her brother, and how somebody tried to find him and attempted to force her——

"There! I remember more clearly now. The man's name *was* Shepard. And you are his son?"

"Yes."

"But why did you not come openly? Why did you deceive us by not telling your name? What do you suppose my father will say?"

"Your father would have known at once, I believe, what I came here for if I had told him my name."

"What is it you have come for?" asked the girl.

"My rights. Mine and my sister's. And Mary Shaw or your father can help us to them. But I do not know whether either of them will be willing to do so."

"Why, this is most strange, sir! Do you mean to intimate that father is withholding anything that is rightly yours?"

"Not exactly. Let me tell you, Miss Hawley. Not here, for there is not time. But do let me tell you before you form any opinion at all regarding my action."

"Can you not tell me briefly what you want?" she asked, tapping her foot impatiently on the ground.

"It is too long a story to be briefly explained," he declared firmly. "And, besides, I see your father coming this way now."

It was true. Jackson Hawley, in company with a tall man in blue clothes, was advancing along the road from the direction of the shops.

At second glance Lynn noticed that the man with the smith was evidently a sailor. His face was deeply tanned, while his long hair, which almost touched his collar, was sun and weather bleached.

The blue clothes were wrinkled as though they were more used to reposing in a sea-chest than to covering the long body of their owner.

"Why, it is Captain Englebock!" cried Bertha, turning from Lynn with a smile of welcome. "The Susannah must have got in."

The young man remained standing awkwardly while she went forward to meet her father and this stranger. He studied the captain as the three approached the gate.

Lynn remembered the tales he had heard regarding the foreign bark and her captain who visited Padstow, and likewise the accusations which Black Morgan had made against Jackson Hawley's character.

It was believed, evidently, by some of Mr. Hawley's townspeople that this stranger and his vessel carried on an illegitimate trade with foreign countries, and that the smith of Pebbleton was financially interested in the voyages of the Susannah.

Captain Englebock was a hook-nosed man, with keen blue eyes. He came of one of the northern European nations—Swedish or Danish. He was not over thirty-five.

"Mr. Lynn, Captain Englebock," said Jackson Hawley with great good nature as the group reached the young man. "Mr. Lynn was enabled to do me a great favor the other day. Saved my life—yes, sir! Actually he did.

"You remember that dog Morgan who went one trip with you at my recommendation? Well, he turned on me like a wolf down there in the shop, and would have brained me if it hadn't been for Mr. Lynn.

"Morgan is in jail now, waiting trial. It's where he should have been long ago. But I'm soft-hearted, you know, captain."

"Yes, yes, I know," said the captain of the Susannah, looking at Lynn sharply.

Then he mumbled something about being glad to meet the American, and shook hands.

"You'll come in to luncheon, Mr. Lynn?" asked Hawley.

"No, thank you, sir. I must go back to the inn."

He dared not look at Bertha. The master smith and the captain started up the walk. The girl lingered a moment.

"I will see you at seven just behind grandfather's shop," she said in a low voice, and then followed her father and his guest without another glance in Lynn's direction.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TRAIL OF THE MYSTERY.

LET me observe that all these matters, in such detail, are not drawn by me from that second letter which Lynn wrote us from Pebbleton. Lynn was far too modest to tell us so fully of that terrible adventure at the ravine.

My source of information, however, is quite as authoritative as Lynn's own words would have been. Lynn wrote us the bare facts; but we have since listened to those facts detailed most enthusiastically.

The end of that second letter is, however, vital to the story, and showed a determination which was formed in Lynn's mind after he left Miss Hawley, her father, and their guest at the foot of the garden.

He went back to the inn and completed the letter to me, sending it off before he kept his tryst with the girl at the riverside.

I see very plainly that, even if I am able to explain my withholding my real name to Miss Hawley, Chris will be over to-morrow and will queer me at once with Jackson Hawley. Hawley will be on his guard and will doubtless put the old woman on *her* guard. What I can do to-night I do not know; but I realize that but a few hours possibly remain for me to do *something*.

If the old woman was not so queer I would go to her and explain my position

and see if she would not help me to my desire. But I believe she is watched pretty closely by the family. I have not forgotten "the golden egg" matter.

On the other hand, I would tackle Jackson Hawley if I really knew where he stood in the matter. If I could once learn his exact place on the board I could then move properly. But until then——

I shall throw myself upon Miss Hawley's mercy. No harm can come of that, for I believe her to be too good and pure a woman to be a party to any wrongdoing, even of her own father.

I shall send this by post to-night. You will get it in a few days. Before you receive it the matter of whether or no we obtain our rights in the Fool's Pocket will be settled for all time, I suppose.

Then followed a message to Miss Lillian and the letter closed. It sounded rather hopeless towards the end, and I feared that it was more than the expected loss of the Fool's Pocket that troubled Lynn's soul.

He was desperately in love with this English girl, and he feared he had sacrificed all chance of winning her esteem by his deceit. The letter left both his sister and myself much perturbed.

And it was the last written word we received from him for many a long day.

Lynn could no more keep away from the Hawley premises until the hour which Miss Bertha had set for their interview than he could have kept from thinking of the young lady herself. And all the afternoon his mind passed like a shuttlecock from hope to despair.

But he wandered about the outskirts of the Hawley grounds for another reason, too. It had become a settled conviction in his mind that there was a fourth person who might be able to explain a part of the mystery which troubled him.

He put the situation to himself in this way:

Mary Shaw had been sent to England and given over to the care of the family of Jethro Hawley forty odd years before, when she was little more than a child. At that time Jackson Hawley was a baby (his sisters were all older than he), and his mother doubtless took the responsibility of the Shaw girl's care.

Preston Shaw's money sent Mary to this home, and Preston Shaw's money put the Hawleys on the road to affluence. Bertha might think that her grandfather was the founder of the family fortunes; but Lynn doubted it.

The older Hawley children had married, and in time the wife of Jethro died. The care of Mary Shaw had descended like a legacy to the son, and well had he fulfilled the trust. And, it appeared by the sly remark which the old lady had made, Jackson Hawley profited well by this legacy.

Preston Shaw would be an old man now if he were alive. Yet if not alive, Lynn had come to believe that he had left a trust fund, the interest of which only was paid into Hawley's hands at stated periods, and those payments continued only as long as the Pebbleton smith continued to give Mary Shaw the very best of treatment.

Then he came down to this Captain Englebock's connection with the case. The old men at Padstow had first told him of the captain and his ship.

As they related the story, the ship had been coming to Padstow for many years, but the present captain was the son of the man who was first skipper of the Susannah.

The Susannah seemed to arrive at stated intervals, and she entered the harbor for the sole purpose that her captain might visit Jackson Hawley. It seemed to Lynn that these Englebocks must be the means of communication between Hawley and the source of his great financial supply.

In other words, they must have originally brought the money for Mary Shaw's care from Preston Shaw, and now, if Shaw was dead, they must still disburse the trust fund which was expended for the old lady by Hawley.

For Lynn could not conceive that Hawley would care for Mary Shaw in such magnificence if the supply of her brother's gold was now shut off. He was not that sort of a man.

Therefore Englebock must know a good deal about the affairs of both the Shaws and the Hawleys which would benefit Lynn at this time. Once let him get the real set of the wind and he would know how to approach Jackson Hawley.

If it was so that Hawley could be benefited in any way by the reopening of the Fool's Pocket, Lynn desired to approach him from that side. *Then* there would be some hope of his getting what he wanted—an acknowledgment without going to law of the rights of his sister and himself to their father's half of the mine.

And so he hoped to fall in with Englebock. He had seen the Susannah's captain but a minute or two. He looked an ordinary seaman; perhaps a bit sullen, but more companionable in all probability over a friendly glass. And Lynn would have loved to pump him.

He wandered down one side of the estate—that nearest the village—and then followed the river path behind the big house. He saw nobody but the dogs, who ran down and fawned upon him, for they had come to consider him an old friend.

He felt like a spirit thrust forth from Paradise. He had been doubly welcome at the smith's house until a few hours agone. He heartily cursed Chris Gregory.

"Yet it would have to come some time. They would have to know—*she* would have to know," he thought.

He walked on till he came to the shed which sheltered old Jethro Hawley's invention. For the lack of something better to do, he went inside again and reexamined the odd-looking diving bell.

"It's a regular house," he thought. "I wonder if the thing could really be made to work—or, rather, one like it? What did Hawley ever do, now, when he went away from 'Frisco with Preston Shaw?

"He was not a man fit for any ordinary work. Could it be possible that he made something out of this submarine idea, after all?

"But if so, why was it never heard from? Who ever heard of the name of Jethro Hawley in the world of science? And why, if he became a successful man, did he not come back to his home and family again?"

He was turning away from the coffin-like box when he was rather startled by a cackling laugh which he recognized instantly. He glanced out of the shed and beheld the Shaw woman, in her short petticoat and high cap, with a cane in her hand, gazing in at the open door.

She looked like a picture of a witch which Lynn remembered used to be in a nursery book when he was a child. She laughed again when she saw him come out, and she raised her cane and pointed it at the iron tank.

"What do you think of it? What do you think of it, young sir?" she asked. "Isn't it a fine thing—isn't it fine?" She broke into a laugh again, adding, with apparent disgust, "Fool's Pocket—aye, that's a most excellent name of it!"

Lynn halted and stared at her. The old lady still muttered and shook her cane at Jethro Hawley's submarine invention.

"Is that the name of it, madam?" he asked politely.

"That's the name *I* give it, young man," she said tartly. "And a good one it is, I'll be bound. A fool built it, and fools have been junketing with it all these years. Aye, fools! *fools!*"

Her voice ended in an angry squeak. Lynn waited in surprise to hear what further she might say.

She came close to him and put a clawlike hand on his arm. She wore old-fashioned black lace mits which accentuated the leanness of her hands, and Lynn could not keep his eyes off that claw which clutched him.

"Young man," she said with solemnity, "how would you like to spend *your* life in a thing like that? Would you do it—say, would you?"

She grew animated, and her eyes sparkled.

"Haven't I named it well? If you feared the maunderings of a mad woman and hid yourself in a thing like that, you'd be a fool, and *that* would be the Fool's Pocket, eh? Then, haven't I named it right?"

"I think you have, madam," he replied soothingly.

"Yes. Any man of sense would say so," declared the old creature. "And think of the years—think of the years! He used to come and see me; but he never comes now.

"Still, I can't complain. Why should

I? Jackson is very considerate of me—very considerate!" Again her mouth took on its humorous curve and her eyes twinkled. "Oh, la, Jackson knows the goose that lays the golden egg!"

She walked away from him abruptly, chuckling as she went.

Lynn stood and stared after her. He knew that he was almost within touch of the solution of the problem which confronted him, and yet he dared not address a question to the old woman.

Cunning she had been years before when Preston Shaw was being searched for by Lynn's father; she was doubly cunning now. A question from him would fire her suspicion instantly. She might be peculiar, but she was not weak-minded.

Lynn was sure she had referred to her brother, despite her strange comments upon Jethro Hawley's invention. Preston Shaw used to visit her here. Probably after the representatives of Hoadley & Bellingham had given the woman up as too hard a nut to crack.

Was he yet alive? Might he not come again to see his sister if he was still in the land of the living?

And what had she meant by his fearing the "maunderings of a mad woman"?

Lynn's mind went back to the story of the Fool's Pocket mine as I had told it to him in my breakfast-room the morning he returned from the West. He recalled Preston Shaw's awful crime—he remembered the fate of the Mexican girl who had died at the stake beside Jim Shepard before rescue arrived.

Shaw had feared her. He had been in terror of what he called her "evil eye." As he left Shepard and this poor creature to their awful fate, her curse had rung in his ears—her prophecy was the last sound he heard as he hurried the gold-burdened pack-horses down the trail from Sander's Bar.

Jim Shepard had told him: "There won't be a dry hand's breadth of land in all God's universe on which you can hide from me!" and the woman had repeated this awful prophecy: "You shall live in fear of him all your life, and not a foot of God's earth shall offer you safety!"

To a superstitious man these railings must indeed have seemed prophetic. The greed of gold urged him to continue in his crime. But afterward the fear of what he had done, and the threats of his victims, must have had a withering effect upon Shaw's mind.

For nearly half a century he had hidden himself in some secret place, only venturing forth at long intervals to visit his only remaining relative. And now, having grown old, he did not come at all, but kept in touch with her through the medium of this Captain Englebock and his bark, the Susannah.

This Englebock held the clue. He was the intermediary link between the hiding man and Mary Shaw and the Hawleys. If he could get into the confidence of Englebock——

Lynn had paced the river bank, up and down before the old shed, while he thought these matters out. Time had passed unnoticed. He raised his eyes, and suddenly beheld Bertha Hawley coming towards him along the path.

Lynn could not go to meet her; he had suddenly lost his pluck. He had seen condemnation in her eyes when she left him at noon.

And her lovely countenance was very stern as she stopped before the young man. She began to speak without any formal greeting.

"I have given you a chance to explain yourself, sir, although I doubt if my father would wish me to meet any man in this way," she told him. "I am satisfied, however, that so brave a man cannot lack some measure of honor.

"Now, what have you to tell me?"

And Lynn Shepard, knowing that he had nothing to gain by keeping back a hairbreadth of his story, told it all. He related every particular of the discovery of the Fool's Pocket fifty years before, and of his own examination of the old claim a few months previous.

"There is surely a million sterling in that gold reef which I uncovered deep below the 'pockets' out of which Preston Shaw took *his* wealth," he said. "Half of it would, of course, belong to Shaw, or to his heirs if he is dead.

"My father is dead. I have no reason for pursuing Preston Shaw for the crime which he undoubtedly committed. All I want is my rights.

"I have inadvertently put myself in the power of those Gregorys. You can see how closely they watch me, when the son followed me even to this out-of-the-way place. They mean to keep me from fulfilling my agreement with them, so that they, and not my sister and I, will reap the reward of my labors on the old claim.

"I cannot break my word to them. I cannot hire money to pay their mortgage for the sake of saving myself. You can see that, Miss Hawley.

"No. In honor, but one course is open to me. The Gregorys and I agreed that if I found sufficient gold in the Fool's Pocket within one year to repay them the five thousand dollars they lent me, and a thousand dollars bonus, their claim was to cease. Otherwise my interest in the mine, and my sister's, must be signed over to them.

"The mere fact that if I fail in what I have come here to Pebbleton to do, the Gregorys will secure several millions on their pitiful five thousand investment, does not change the matter. I must be straight with them and keep my promise.

"If I wait to bring suit in the California courts to establish my father's claim to half the title in the Fool's Pocket, my year of grace will be gone long before the legal proceedings are really begun. The law moves slowly.

"All I desire is the acknowledgment of our right to half the Fool's Pocket. If Preston Shaw is dead, his sister is his heir. If she is adjudged incapable of attending to legal matters, your father is, I suppose, her guardian.

"An affidavit from her, or, in the latter case, from your father, is all I desire. And it is an act which will make the Shaw woman vastly wealthy, too.

"She loses nothing; your father loses nothing. But it is an act which will go far, I believe, towards eliminating the wrong which Preston Shaw did my father."

The young woman listened to him without comment, but he knew by the softening of her face that she appreciated his position.

"And this is why you did not tell us your full name when you came here?"

"I met you and Mr. Hawley unexpectedly. I had intended looking over the ground first before becoming acquainted with the family. And when this acquaintanceship began so strangely, I did on the impulse what seemed to me best."

"I—I cannot think too ill of you, Mr. Shepard," she observed thoughtfully. "I am too greatly in your debt—and so is my father. What *he* will say I do not know. He is a man of sudden temper."

"Perhaps if I can place this matter before him fairly, he will forgive my innocent deceit. I have really meant no harm. If he is Mary Shaw's guardian——"

"He is nothing of the kind. I can assure you of that, sir," Bertha hastened to say. "Aunt Mary is quite capable of attending to her own business—if she has any. What little I know of her relations to our family I feel perfectly free to tell you.

"She has been with us—or with grandmother before father married—since she was a young woman. Her brother, this Preston Shaw, has always amply supported her. And, as I understand it, he and grandfather were in partnership together in some foreign place.

"At least, when money used to come for Aunt Mary's support, there was always some for father which we all supposed came from grandfather. Why grandfather did not return home while grandmother was alive, we children never understood. It is easier to understand why he did not care to come *after* she died.

"But grandfather died some years ago. Whatever the business was that he and Mr. Shaw were engaged in still continues, for father has an interest in it. Captain Englebock——"

"Ah!" ejaculated Lynn.

She stopped and looked at him scrutinizingly. Her face slowly flushed and her eyes began to sparkle.

"Surely," she said haughtily, "you cannot believe what some of these old gossips have said about my father? I was told what Black Morgan accused him of the other day at Mr. Justice Maunders'."

"What!" gasped Lynn. "That he is a smuggler? Nonsense, Miss Hawley! Such an idea never entered my mind."

He spoke the more warmly because, in his secret soul, he would not have been so greatly surprised did the business of the Susannah prove to be something not exactly honorable. Morgan, he had heard Jackson Hawley himself say, had sailed one trip in the bark. There must have been some foundation for the fellow's tirade against the Pebbleton magnate.

"No," he went on. "But in my own mind I had decided that this Captain Englebock had something to do with this mystery. His coming here at stated periods——"

"It is true," the girl hastened to say. "Of course, we do not usually care to discuss our private matters. That is why people are so foolish. What they cannot understand they think must be wrong. Captain Englebock, as I understand it, comes from Mr. Preston Shaw——"

"*Comes* from him?" repeated Lynn.

She hesitated.

"If he is still alive," she finally said. "Or, if he is not, he comes from whoever carries on the business."

"But your grandfather is dead, you say. Who else could there be to manage Mr. Preston Shaw's affairs?"

"Now you get beyond my depth, Mr. Shepard," she returned with a little smile. "I told you I could not tell you much that you wish to know."

There was a step on the gravel behind them. They had been standing by the corner of the shed, and were so deeply interested in their conversation that neither had noticed the approach of a figure along the path. Now a voice startled them.

"Perhaps, Miss Bert'a, *I* could tell de gentleman what he would wish to know, eh?"

Lynn swung about as the young woman uttered a little cry. Captain Englebock stood beside them.

"De efening grows damp, Miss Bert'a," said the man quietly. "Shall I escort you to de house? If not, I will remain and explain to Mr.—Mr.—I did not catch de name? *I* will explain to him that which he is so curious to know, eh?"

Miss Hawley drew back, but hesitated to go. Lynn was speechless, for the man's voice and manner were commanding.

"Your father awaits you, Miss Bert'a," Englebock said again. "He sent me to find you. I can assure you that your friend will not be lonesome. He will favor me with his name again?" and the captain bowed to the American.

"It is Mr. Lynn," declared the girl faintly.

"Mr. Lynn Shepard," completed the young man firmly. "I shall be happy to talk with you, Captain Englebock."

"Ah!" exclaimed the captain. "Shepard! I suspected it. I am indeed come opportunely. Will you walk wit' me, Mr. Shepard?"

He turned abruptly, as though the girl had already gone. Lynn hesitated, looking at Miss Hawley. But he could not see her face in the dusk.

Almost instantly, too, she turned back toward the house, and there was nothing left for Lynn to do but to accept Englebock's offer.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRIEND OR ENEMY?

CAPTAIN ENGLEBOCK stalked before him along the riverside, setting his face toward Padstow. Lynn, who was above the middle height himself, found that he could not see over the other's shoulders.

The seaman was a tall, narrow man, with the symmetry of a two-by-four scantling. But he looked hard and bony—as though he would be a tough proposition to tackle without due study and forethought.

His recent manner and words, too, seemed to disprove Lynn's first judgment of the man. He was no ordinary seaman. And he had used a familiar air in speaking to Miss Hawley that had stung the younger man to the quick.

He resented this, and when Bertha was out of sight Lynn was first tempted to lay hold upon Captain Englebock

and demand an explanation. Yet, what right had *he* to take up cudgels for the daughter of Jackson Hawley?

He hastened his steps to overtake the skipper of the Susannah, but the latter did not glance at him until they passed through a gate which divided the Hawley property from the open common beyond. Then he turned and faced Lynn, but still walking along the path.

"You are, I understand, partly a guest of Mr. Hawley," he said, eying Lynn sternly. "Therefore I cannot make de quarrel wit' you on his land, eh? You understand me?"

"Oh, quite," said Lynn, growing rather chilly as to manner but very much heated as to temper. "We are out of his premises now. Do you wish to quarrel with me?"

"That depends," said Englebock. "I do not understand how you haf made yourself so friendly wit' Mr. Hawley—or his daughter. But stay! He said you had safed his life, is it not?"

"Mr. Hawley was too kind," returned Lynn. "Don't let my relations with him interfere with your desires, sir."

"But how he could accept the friendship of a Shepard—— You are the son, I presume, of James Shepard, the American, are you not?" he broke off to ask.

"You are making no mistake," Lynn told him, thinking it better to sweep away all doubts in the man's mind at once. "I am just the person whom you think me—Lynn Shepard, son of Jim Shepard, who was the partner of Preston Shaw in '49."

"Ah-ha! 'Tis so. And I overhear you trying to make Miss Hawley tell you somet'ing which you haf no business to know, eh?"

"I took no unfair advantage of Miss Hawley," Lynn said stoutly. "She knew who I was and what I wanted before she spoke one word herself."

"No, no! That cannot be possible!" exclaimed Englebock. "Do you mean to tell me that Bert'a knew that you come here to stir up trouble for a poor old man who has lived under a curse—under a curse, I say!—for more years than you and I are old, Mr. Shepard?"

"Then Preston Shaw is not dead!" burst from Lynn's lips.

Englebock frowned and stopped dead in the path. The two men had made a slight détour from the river-bank, and the path now followed the edge of a sand pit which here cut into the common.

Night was falling, and already the river was draped in shadows. One could not descry the opposite bank excepting for a light twinkling here and there in a farmer's cot.

They were alone on the waste land, and as Lynn beheld the working of the captain's weather-beaten face, he held himself ready for rough work. The blue eyes sparkled angrily, and he knew that it was in the man's heart at that instant to attack him.

"You know too much!" growled the captain at last. "You will not catch me again—no, sir! You will not make *me* tell as you did that foolish girl. What Jackson Hawley can t'ink of, I do not see. To take *you* into his house—into his family—— Bah! he is crazy."

"Not so crazy as you might think, captain," Lynn said lightly. "Mr. Hawley did not know my name—exactly. At least, he never suspected I was Jim Shepard's son. But that is not to the point——"

"It is very much to the point, sir," growled Englebock.

"You think so. But you are wrong. I have not come here to search out Preston Shaw or his heirs for any harm to them. I know the old man wronged my father greatly. But I only ask for my rights——"

"You t'ink to fool me, but you will not!" interrupted the other again. "You will not succeed. If Jackson Hawley is de one fool, I am not—no, sir!

"No! I will not listen to you, Mr. Shepard. It is de lucky t'ing I come here at dis time. I block your little game, see? You may fool a girl; you may fool an old fat-headed Johnny Bull, as you Americans call the English, eh? But you cannot fool *me*."

"No; you'll fool yourself," exclaimed Lynn in disgust. "If you will listen to me, Captain Englebock——"

"No, no!" cried the man angrily. "You shall not pretent—deceive—lie to me! No, no! I am not to be so treated.

"You are blocked. You can go no farder. See! *This* is your path—yonder. You do not return to Mr. Hawley's. I shall go back there myself and see what he has to say.

"For, let me tell you, if *he* contemplates playing de traitor——"

"Oh, you thick-headed ass!" muttered Lynn under his breath.

"How is that, sir?" exclaimed Captain Englebock, stepping hastily toward him.

Lynn stood on the extreme edge of the bank. He moved aside to avoid the angry captain, and his foot plunged through the thin sod as though it were a crust over a pit.

He stumbled to his knees. He heard Englebock cry out, and then, with a swiftness which deprived him of breath —almost of thought—he was plunged down the declivity.

As he rolled over and over he caught at some object which was likewise descending the bank. It was Englebock himself, and instantly, locked in a close embrace—for the seaman had seized him also—the two continued the awful descent.

A hundred feet intervened between the brink of the sand-bank and the bottom. It was not an ordinary fall. The edge of the bank had caved, and tons upon tons of sand and gravel were sliding with them down the slope.

Suddenly Lynn stopped. He was torn from the grasp of the other. He had not reached the foot of the bank, but something held him.

And then all about him the tumbling avalanche came. Like a flood the sand rose to his armpits—then over his shoulders—then to his nostrils.

The dust was smothering. He could not open his lips to shout for help. He stood upright in the slowly-advancing sand, unable to stir.

The sand slid down past him with deadly persistency. He felt it creep by his cheeks—tickling as drops of water might. Slowly—slowly it was covering him completely. Only by a trick of fate was he still enabled to breathe.

He could not struggle. His arms were held to his side as in a vise.

Nor could he cry out. Help might be passing at the top of the hill, but it was not for him. He had forgotten Englebock; he had forgotten everything but his own awful plight.

He saw a light twinkling across the river. He beheld a boat sweep slowly by. Moments passed like hours.

It became more and more difficult for him to breathe. The pressure on his chest was as though a great boulder lay there. The dust was sucked into his lungs at every gasping breath he drew!

Life could not endure long under these conditions. His brain was clear enough to tell him that.

It was flickering out without his having accomplished anything. Lillian would never gain her share of the Fool's Pocket. The Gregorys would reap the harvest. He had come clear across the ocean to perish miserably.

And Bertha Hawley! Thought of her passed through his mind like an actual pain. Never again to see her—to speak to her! She was lost to him before he had won her!

And then, as he sank into that state which precedes absolute coma, a sudden roaring filled his ears. A veritable burst of thunder shook the earth, and instantly the black river, the twinkling light in the cot on the other side, the deep indigo sky picked out by multitudes of twinkling stars, were shut out!

The avalanche started again. It poured over him and buried his head completely in the torrent of yellow grains. He was lost——

Then the awful stinging in his lungs —the terrible pressure on his chest—passed. The sweet night air was drawn into his nostrils. Not alone his head, but more than half of his body was free!

Instantly he fell over and drew one leg from the sand. The other followed it. The landslide had swept on to the foot of the declivity, and he was saved!

But as he scrambled upon his hands and knees over the still trickling sand he saw an arm and hand thrust up from the depths. He had seized it as he

might a stub or tree branch before he realized what it was.

"Englebock!" cried the American.

The man seemed completely buried —excepting for that appealing hand.

He seized the latter more firmly, and tried to draw the arm out. But the weight of the sand was too much; he could not start the body.

This discovery shocked his wits to life. They grew more active.

Englebock was buried under the avalanche which had swept on and left *him* free. How long he had been thus covered Lynn did not know; but surely life could not yet be extinct.

With that he went down on his knees and began to dig into the sand with might and main. He had nothing but his bare hands for scoops, and the sand was treacherous and filled in about him almost as fast as he scooped it out. But he persevered.

His nails were torn off, his fingers cut till they bled. He scarcely felt the pain in his anxiety to save the man below him.

He touched his shoulder. One arm was laid bare. He worked his hands beneath the prostrate body, and, getting a grip upon it, bent his back to the task of lifting Englebock out into the air.

Had another landslide occurred he would probably have been hurled, with his burden, to the foot of the hill and buried under such a mass of sand that a second escape would have been utterly impossible.

Lynn did not think of this. At least, it did not retard his exertions.

Slowly and painfully he drew Englebock to the air. His head and shoulders were completely out at last.

Then he rested and glanced up the slant to the summit of the hill. He was choked with dust, and every part of his body was in pain. Could he drag that burden up the bluff?

To go down the hill would be dangerous. At the foot was a great mass of soft sand, in which he would surely sink knee-deep and perhaps become wedged altogether. And he could not leave Englebock.

How he reached the plain above finally he could not have told; but reach it he did, and with the man who had fallen with him in his arms.

At the moment of the caving of the bank the two had been in a mood to leap at each other's throat; now one had risked his own life, and expended every ounce of his strength, in saving the other from death.

For Captain Englebock was not dead. Lying outstretched upon the sod, removed some distance from the crumbling edge of the bank, the body of the seaman began to give signs of returning life.

At first, when he got his own breath after the climb, Lynn had opened the man's shirt and felt for his heart. The tremor of that organ was scarcely perceptible.

The American stretched out the man's arms and worked them up and down as one would in resuscitating a drowned person. Soon the other gasped. Then Lynn knew that he was really saved.

He had time then to attend to his own injuries. And they were neither few nor slight.

His hands were cut almost to pieces, and the blood dripped from them continually. Although he had no broken bones, his body was racked with pain from the strain he had undergone.

His clothing was in tatters. He had flung aside his coat when he began digging Englebock out of the sand. His vest was a rag; his shirt had no sleeves; his trousers hung from his limbs as Robinson Crusoe's must have after his struggle in the surf.

But the peril which had menaced them caused Lynn to think but little of his appearance. When the seaman began to gasp he hurried to him and aided him in sitting up.

The man had a terrible coughing spell first of all; Lynn had already had his. The sand and dust had lacerated the lungs and bronchial tubes.

"What was that?" gasped the seaman at last. "Take me to the house —take me to the house."

He seemed too confused to be left alone.

"Well, come on and get on your pins," quoth Lynn, helping him up. "We're a pair of lame bucks, but where

one fails the other may make up to him. There you are!"

He almost lifted Englebock to his feet. The man was dazed. He leaned heavily upon the American's shoulder. They stumbled along through the darkness, managing to keep in the path, but neither at all sure of his footing.

Lynn had his arm about the seaman's waist. The latter threw *his* arm over the younger man's shoulder. To see them in this apparently friendly position, one would not have imagined how bitterly they had quarreled half an hour before.

Somewhere in the plantation behind the cottage and the shops the dogs met them with vociferous barkings, which quickly changed to whines of recognition when the dumb brutes reached Lynn. Behind the dogs came Jackson Hawley and one of his sons, evidently in search of Captain Englebock.

The captain was scarcely able to give a connected account of the accident which had so nearly overwhelmed him. And the account which Lynn gave was brief enough.

Later a more extended narrative was wheedled out of him by somebody whose coaxing proclivities I have found to be quite irresistible.

But he certainly was made much of that night at the Hawleys', and both he and Captain Englebock were put to bed, the one unable to return to his ship, and the other quite as unable to go to the inn. Jackson Hawley insisted upon calling a physician to dress Lynn's hands.

The latter, however, would have been perfectly contented had he been placed entirely under the care of the physician's assistant, who happened to be Miss Bertha. And the light in her eyes as she busied herself about him showed how she admired the young man for this further exhibition of courage.

Mr. Jackson Hawley became oracular when *he* spoke to the American. He had not before had opportunity of thanking him for his daughter's life, which, he declared, he felt that he received from Mr. Lynn as a gift with his own!

Nobody took the pains that night to tell him his mistake in Lynn's name. Perhaps, Lynn thought as he lay abed in the room assigned him, unable to sleep because of the pain in his hands, it might have been best to tell Hawley who he really was then and there, while the Englishman's heart was warm towards him.

He wondered how Englebock would look upon him the next day. Would their adventure make him a friend, or would he still continue to be an avowed enemy of Jim Shepard's son?

There was much depending on Englebock's attitude, and perhaps this thought as much as the pain kept Lynn awake far into the night.

CHAPTER IX.

DRIVEN OUT OF EDEN.

NATURALLY both of the guests of Jackson Hawley were belated in reaching the breakfast-table in the morning.

Mr. Hawley himself had bustled away to his shops, for he firmly believed with John Ploughman that the only successful man is he who "either holds or drives." Mr. Hawley kept close watch of his business, and of his sons and journeymen.

Lynn reached the table some moments before Englebock put in an appearance, so he had a word alone with Bertha, who was arranging a tray for Mary Shaw with her own hands.

"Some of the boys have been over to the sand pit," she told him, her eyes shining, "and have brought back your coat. They say they do not see how you could have dug Captain Englebock out. It was very courageous of you, and it would have been a dreadful thing if the captain had been killed."

"Our escape was quite providential," he replied. "I only hope that some other things will happen as providentially for me."

A shadow came over her face, and she glanced from the window.

"I see that Mr. Orrin Levering's motor wagon has just stopped at the shops, and his friend, that American, is with him. I—I wish now, Mr. Shepard, that I had told father myself the —the mistake about your name."

"I shall have to stand the brunt of

my own error," Lynn returned, flushing, and then Englebock entered and there was no further opportunity for conversation of a private nature.

The captain simply bowed to Lynn when he saw him, and replied to Bertha's queries about his health with much gravity. The American sought to read his face, but it was a mask which told nothing.

Had the two men been left alone Lynn would have sounded Englebock regarding his present feeling towards him. But he feared the worst from the man's silence.

Lynn had saved his life. He must know that. Yet he gave no mark of gratitude, nor did he display any more friendliness toward the younger man than he had when they first met.

Mrs. Hawley entered the room before Bertha removed the tray to Mary Shaw's apartment, and the breakfast began in a most funereal style. They were half through the meal before any interruption occurred.

Then Jackson Hawley fairly burst into the place, and, rather to Lynn's astonishment, he brought Chris Gregory with him.

The smith's face was very red, and his little eyes sparkled angrily as he stood just within the door and gazed upon Lynn. The latter knew at once that the storm was about to break, and, considering the state of mind in which Mr. Hawley appeared to be, the American was glad that Miss Bertha was not present.

"What is the matter, Mr. Hawley?" cried his wife, startled out of her usual complacency.

"I have brought a gentleman to breakfast—a friend of Mr. Orrin Levering," stammered the smith, evidently trying hard to contain himself. "Mr. Christopher Gregory, Mrs. Hawley. Captain Englebock, Mr. Gregory."

Then he turned his eyes again on Lynn.

"This gentleman you say you know?" he questioned the smiling Chris.

"Surest thing you know!" returned the other unabashed. "Mornin', Lynn! Heard you wouldn't keep still yesterday after that runaway, but had to save somebody else from difficulty. You'll be getting a medal for life-saving yet, old man," and he laughed fatly.

Jackson Hawley broke in with tense tone: "You call this gentleman Lynn now, Mr. Gregory. You called him by another name just a while back."

"Why," said Gregory with apparently the utmost innocence, "I told you Lynn Shepard and I were old friends. Brought up in the same town. Always known each other," and he cackled again.

But he did not look at Lynn while he spoke. There was something hard in that young man's face that was not pleasant to see.

"So he is Mr. Lynn Shepard, hey?" exclaimed the smith. "Will you explain this masquerade, Mr. Shepard?"

"I shall be pleased to," said Lynn, rising. "I endeavored to explain it to Captain Englebock last evening—was doing so, in fact, when that landslide carried us over the sand cliff. I am sorry that knowledge of my innocent subterfuge should come to your ears in this manner——"

"Innocent subterfuge!" repeated Hawley in disgust. "You have a very mild name, sir, for worming your way into my confidence."

"Pardon me," Lynn observed, standing very straight and leveling an angry gaze upon his host. "I have not wormed my way into your confidence—your present words show that. If I had your confidence, Mr. Hawley, you would not so quickly believe ill of my intentions."

"Do you mean to deny," cried Hawley, who was rapidly working himself into a passion, "that you came to Pebbleton under an assumed name, struck up an acquaintance with my family—even rode about the country with my daughter, by Heaven!—and all by keeping your right name secret?"

"You know well how I came to be known to your daughter and to yourself, sir," interposed Lynn.

"I know that chance played into your hands, sir!" declared Hawley. "And only for chance this morning I would not have learned what a villain you are."

"Have a care how you speak to me,

Mr. Hawley!" exclaimed Lynn furiously.

He strode forward. At that instant the breakfast-room door opened and Bertha came in.

Her eyes flashed from one to another of the group—her mother crying behind the coffee urn, Englebock's face, hard and expressionless, at the table, Chris Gregory grinning at one side, and the inflamed countenances of her father and Lynn Shepard.

She understood the situation instantly.

"Father—father!" she cried in a low voice. "I beg of you! Mr. Shepard is our guest."

"What!" roared Jackson Hawley, turning on her. "You knew this fellow's right name?"

"Mr. Shepard explained the entire matter to me yesterday," she said calmly. "He would have done the same to you had there been opportunity."

"Explained! What explanation can there be for a fellow's coming to a gentleman's house under an assumed name? Preposterous!"

"Don't, father, he is our guest."

"And you take up for him, do you, you hussy?" cried the smith roughly. "You'd give encouragement to a man who has come here to ruin your own father——"

He stopped, and his face went suddenly white. He had said too much, and even Englebock, from behind the table, was forced to utter a grunt of warning.

"I have meant nor wished you no harm," Lynn said, keeping in check his passion. "I have come, indeed, to ask a favor merely. But I was not sure of whom to ask the favor at first——"

"You'll get no favors from me!" exclaimed the smith. "I've seen quite enough of you, Mr. Lynn Shepard. I know your breed. Your father and his lawyers made us trouble enough years ago. Persecuting a poor woman, as they did, and trying to squeeze out o' her her own brother's blood! I know ye!"

"Father—for mercy's sake!" cried Bertha, seizing his arm. "Do you know what you are saying? How can you speak so to Mr. Shepard? He is your guest. And remember what he has done. He saved your life—think of that!

"And had it not been for him I would not be here now—I would have been dashed to pieces at the bottom of Adam's Hill."

Her father shook her off.

"Do you dare plead for him?" he cried again.

"Yes, sir, I dare," she said proudly. "And I plead for your own better nature against your worser self. You will be sorry for your words."

"Aye, I'm sorry that I ever brought a child into the world that would turn on me like this!" said her father. "You don't know what you are doing. You are beside yourself. This fellow has turned your head."

"No. He has not. But I know him to be a noble man. I do not believe him equal to smirching himself with the villainy of which you accuse him."

"What's this? What's this?" cried Hawley. "Dare you flout me to my face? What is this man to you?"

The shock of the question silenced everybody in the room for a moment. Lynn clenched his wounded hands. He could have struck the man in the face and felt no pain at that instant.

Bertha's countenance grew as white as the cloth which covered the long table. Her eyes dropped before her father's.

"He is my friend—he is your guest," she said thrillingly. "We both owe him our lives. Even Captain Englebock yonder has to thank him this morning that he is still alive."

She turned upon the seaman suddenly with a gesture of pleading.

"Captain Englebock," she cried, "speak for me. Do not let my father injure a man to whom we all owe so much. Remember that you are Mr. Shepard's debtor yourself."

Englebock rose slowly from the table. His face was like wood.

"I know all I have to thank Mr. Shepard for," he said harshly. "I know that I would not have been in danger at all had it not been for him. He would have cast me down that bank had not the bank itself given way and carried us both with it!"

Lynn gasped and turned his gaze upon the man. He could not for an instant believe his ears.

"There, d'ye hear that?" cried Hawley, his voice cracking. "That's your brave man—that's your courageous gentleman. What do you think of him?"

But Bertha did not even change color, for the flush had now come back into her face. The look of contempt she cast on Englebock should have withered that man where he stood.

"And would you believe that calumny?" the girl demanded. "Captain Englebock's reason for such falsehood I cannot understand. But it can bear no weight with any logical mind.

"If Mr. Shepard desired to throw him over the bluff, why did he injure himself—look at his hands!—and risk his own life further in saving Captain Englebock and carrying him to the top of the bank again?"

"Ah," growled Hawley, "who knows what he did? He has no witnesses. There is nobody to assure us what he did, nor how much he saved the captain. Anybody can say he has done a thing when there is nobody to see him."

"Be still, father!" the girl commanded. "Retain at least the semblance of justice."

She crossed the room to Lynn's side and laid her hands upon his arm.

"Remember, sir, that he is an old man, and that his temper has ridden away with him. He will be sorry——"

"Never!" roared Jackson Hawley.

At the same moment Captain Englebock swiftly reached Bertha's side and drew her roughly away from the American. At that the latter's rage escaped all bounds.

"How dare you lay your hand on that young woman?" he roared, wheeling on the seaman with all the devil in him looking out of his eyes. "What right have you to interpose yourself between us?"

"The best right in de worlt, sir!" exclaimed Englebock.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean to say, sir, dat this young woman is my affianced wife—her fader haf give her to me long before. Now you know me what I mean!" returned the captain.

Bertha uttered a little cry, and, falling back from the group, covered her face with her hands. Lynn's own features were like a ghost's. He did not look at her.

"Now, Mr. Lynn Shepard, will you get out of my house?" demanded the smith. "We have had quite enough of you—and we have had enough of these hifalutin' scenes. Begone, sir!"

Lynn stood an instant longer, as though he had not heard. Then he walked quietly toward the door.

The maid who had stood by and heard all this handed him his torn coat. He took it without seeing her.

Then suddenly, as he reached the door, his gaze fixed itself upon Chris Gregory. Instantly a flame leaped into his face, and his eyes glowed with a rage which made that fat young man tremble.

He said no word, but that look warned Chris not to cross his path again. It was a look that Chris would remember for many a day.

Hawley was too small a man, and too enraged, to let the young man go in peace, however. He followed Lynn out into the hall, breathing threats of vengeance.

He followed him out of the broad door and down the steps. He still pursued him through the garden and into the dusty road, where Lynn went, bareheaded and with the coat over his arm, but without a word.

The young man was stunned. He had been driven out of Eden. But more fearful to him than the flaming sword which guarded the gate was the revelation of Englebock's words.

His soul was withered. He had learned something to which the anger of Jackson Hawley was as a drop to the roaring sea.

Bertha Hawley was Englebock's affianced bride. Hawley admitted it. Bertha did not deny it. And not until he heard these words had Lynn Shepard known how much he loved the girl.

(To be continued.)

A PROBLEM IN ETIQUETTE.

BY EM DE BELL.

Showing how mere incidents by the way in life may loom up large in making momentous decisions.

BOSTON, JUNE THE TENTH.

MY DARLING BESS:

Natalie will be in New York on the twelfth—Natalie Blair. She is one of my best friends. Of course you have heard me speak of her often. I have already told her what a treasure you are, and she is a perfect dear, so I want you to know each other; you both are so bright, sweet, angelic, etc.

Can't you manage to call on her? She will arrive Wednesday night. You know that old train that pulls in from Washington—10:25. Will be in New York Thursday, at the Waldorf, and perhaps until Monday.

Now that is a dear, do try to see each other. My only regret is that I will not be present at the setting of two such jewels—or is it sitting?

Fondly yours,

MAUDE.

P. S. They are sailing from here for England and will not be back before the December holidays. This is what I am writing about particularly—I nearly forgot—Natalie is going to have a house party and wants to invite you. Think of it, a house party in Washington at Christmas, all the ambassadors, foreigners, evergreens, and things! I can scarcely wait. M.

If I had one friend that I would go greater lengths to please than another, it was Maude Knowlton, and if there was one young woman of whom I had heard more lovely things than any other, that girl was Natalie Blair. So with engagement book and pencil I sat down to cancel any affair which might prevent my calling on Maude's friend.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday—all full. After careful study and consideration I drew a dark line through an elegant automobile party, remembering the ambassadors, and inserted—Miss Blair, Waldorf, four o'clock. This was for Thursday, the only day I felt sure she would be there.

I fancied I looked rather stunning that afternoon as I gave a parting glance in the mirror. How fortunate! My new gown could never have come at a more opportune time, and my hat—a most enchanting dream. Candice gave my veils—I forget how many—just the proper touch.

This last performance must have taken longer than I realized, and I decided the quickest way to get to the Waldorf was to take a Broadway car to Thirty-third Street, which I did, hailing the first one that came along.

The conductor was shoving people out of the back, and crowds were surging ready to be jerked on. I thought I saw my opportunity and hurried to the front platform.

No sooner had I edged on than the conductor yelled out—"Let 'em off there," and I saw a pretty, blonde young woman in a lovely blue *voile* making frantic efforts to get out.

"Madam," she said, "you are on my gown."

I did not realize at first that I was the offender, but soon there was no doubt.

"Madam," she repeated in my ear, and I danced aimlessly to give her release, but to no effect—I heard a terrible r-rip. As I stopped to see where I could stand, her beautiful parasol to match, which she was still waving at the conductor, caught in my straw creation, and we were hopelessly mixed.

For an instant a panic seemed imminent, but disinterested parties soon came to our assistance.

It was an awfully warm day. The blonde was very mad, and I am sure I was far from smiling.

"Step lively there," the horrible conductor was screeching.

The blonde gave me a parting glare. I realized that my hat was at an absurd angle and there was no time to lose.

Under the stress of the moment I so far forgot myself as to resent her rudeness in these words:

"I hope you will know me when we meet again," and she retorted, greatly to the amusement of the entire car:

"Well, I certainly hope I won't."

But I had the satisfaction of seeing her, from the car window, gather up a handful of blue petticoat frill before she could proceed.

"The disagreeable thing," I said to myself.

At the Waldorf, after I had adjusted my several veils, smoothed my pompadour and straightened my collar, I felt in a more amiable frame of mind. I sent up my card, and sat pluming myself to cope with the perfections of Miss Natalie Blair.

Miss Blair was out.

How provoking! In the Turkish room I wrote her a note saying just how perfectly awfully disappointed I was, how I had looked forward to the great pleasure, and all Maude had said. How long would she be here? Perhaps even yet, etc., etc.

This I handed to the maid to be delivered, thinking, as I caught a glimpse of my perfect-fitting gown, it really was a great pity Miss Blair was out.

When I reached home, Candice brought me this card:

MISS NATALIE DELMORE BLAIR,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

"Why, how strange!" I turned it over:

Unexpectedly we are leaving this afternoon. I wanted so much to meet you that I rushed down. Maude has told me so many lovely things—I know we shall be the best of friends. We want you to join us in a little Xmas frolic—will write. *So* sorry to miss you.

N. D. B.

Well, that is too bad, but at any rate the ambassadors and evergreens, as Maude put it, seemed safe.

The maid was waiting for my hat and gloves.

I put down the card.

"Why, Candice, was this work-box here when Miss Blair called?"

"Oh, no, miss, I brought it in to tack Miss Blair's skirt while she was writing—the frill was ripped."

I had seated myself at the piano and began to strum idly, feeling very satisfied with things, after all.

I stopped suddenly. "Frill ripped."

It was as if the echo had just reached me. A cold chill ran down my back.

"Candice," I called loudly—she was just going out, "was that frill blue?"

"Yes, miss, the loveliest blue silk. She said a perfectly horrid woman stepped on it just as she was getting off the car—it was really too bad—such a pretty dress with parasol to match, and so becoming to her, being a blonde young lady."

"Blonde young lady—blue silk frill—parasol to match."

Great heavens!

"Candice," I said coldly, "I hope you mended it well."

"Oh, yes, mad'm, but it really was too——"

"Candice," savagely, "that will do."

Now the question is—would you or would you not go to the Christmas house-party?

WARM WEATHER REMARKS.

THE blacksmith is shoeing the flies,
His ardent son beams on a maid,
While the dry goods dispenser is muslin his dog
And the lamp chimney sits in the shade.
Society's damsel departs
To catch the fresh heir by the sea;
The heir with alacrity raises the wind,
The damsel's companion to be.
The baseball is frequently hot,
Quite 'orrid the dudish young f—l;
The poem of passion is dreadfully warm,
The editor only is cool.

A DESPERATE DEAL.*

BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS.

The astonishing device employed by a father in order to compass a certain marriage for his son.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

SIR PETER ARNOLD and Mr. Loftus Bond, bankers of London, are trustees for the estate of the late M. Henri Rougière, a Belgian, long resident in England. By his will he provides that his fortune, a vast sum, shall go to his only daughter, Marie, on her marriage, provided she does not marry her cousin, M. Alfred Rougière. His brother, Alfred's father, comes over from Belgium, determined to get hold of this money for his son. By representing to Marie that the bankers are interested in certain London hospitals, to which the fortune is to go provided she does not comply with the terms of the will, he gains her consent to wed a certain Mr. Bunker Hill.

By scanning the newspapers closely M. Rougière has learned of this Hill as a young man without friends, who has been knocked down in the streets by Lord Shumway's carriage and taken to a hospital to die. By telling the authorities that he is the young man's uncle, the Belgian has him removed to his hotel and made as comfortable as possible, and in due course acquaints him with his scheme for him to marry the niece in order that she may become a rich widow. The will, of course, says nothing about whether she shall marry Alfred Rougière or not, once she has married somebody else. So Marie is brought from her school to the hotel and married to the young man Hill, whom the doctors have declared cannot recover. Then she is taken back to Belgium by the Rougières, who have need of her money to recoup their fallen fortunes.

Alfred contrives to worm himself into the good graces of his cousin, the young widow, and late in June he is giving a farewell bachelor dinner at the château. Meantime Hill, taken away on Lord Shumway's yacht, has not died, and, returning to London, finds out through Messrs. Arnold and Bond the trick that has been played on Marie Rougière. He betakes himself at once to Belgium, arrives in the midst of Alfred's pre-nuptial festivities, and demands to see his wife. Alfred, very much frightened, requests him to call the next day and see his father, bows him out into what he makes the American believe is the *porte-cochère*, but which proves to be a strong room with an iron door, which is at once bolted from without.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT ONE CAN DO WITH A CANNON BALL.

THE emotions of Bunker Hill, when he found himself a prisoner, might almost, but scarcely, be imagined.

For a moment he stood still in the darkness and uttered a few words not usually spoken in polite society. Then he mentioned in his emphatic way what he would do to Alfred Rougière when he got hold of him.

But getting hold of Alfred Rougière was contingent upon getting free from the room in which he was himself locked up. He could see absolutely nothing save a glimmer of the night-light as it came through a little window some distance above his head.

He stumbled to the door that Rougière had locked, and tried it with his full strength, but without avail.

He swore under his breath, and as he turned to try another part he stumbled over a seat, and after recovering himself sat down to study the situation.

"Well, Mr. Bunker Hill," he said to himself, half aloud, "you are, so to speak, the most unspeakable ass that ever lived. You walk into the castle of a man you know to be an enemy, and not only offer threats, but permit him to lead you blindly into a trap. You owe it to yourself either to kill him or yourself."

But Bunker Hill had little thought of killing himself, and when it came down to the real point it was doubtful if he wanted to kill anybody. He never had, and his fresh American mind had no desire to feel the sensation of having slain some one.

But he considered.

Rougière had certainly locked him in there for a purpose. The thing to do,

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before he made an outcry, was to fathom that purpose.

Admitting that what Rougière had said was true, and that the older M. Rougière and Marie were absent, what then could be the object of Alfred?

At first glance it seemed that the only purpose could be to detain him. But what good would that do Alfred?

Hill did not know the castle, and did not know that certain portions of it were seldom entered.

Upon reconsideration, it appeared to him that perhaps it was Alfred's purpose to detain him in that place until M. Rougière should return, and a consultation between the two could be had.

In his rage he stumbled again to the door and banged it with his fist. The dull thud of solid oak was all the response he received.

He had matches in his pocket, and a revolver. He regretted now that he had not made good use of the latter. But he did not suspect such treachery as this.

And yet, as he reviewed the matter, why had he not suspected it? Being an open fighter himself, acts of this sort were foreign alike to his nature and his imagination.

"I'll know how to take the Rougières in future," he said to himself. "I'll kill them before I get through."

He lighted a match, and with the aid of its faint glimmer tried to examine the room he was in.

That part to which he had been directed by Alfred as giving on the porte-cochère was simply a paneled wall. But he did find a door leading into a larger apartment, in which, notwithstanding the use of matches, he became lost.

He fell over stools and iron rings and various relics of ancient days, until, weary and discouraged, he made his way back to the first room and found a long seat or bench, and on this he lay down to sleep.

"If," he said to himself, "that fellow wishes only to keep me till his father comes, I will have food. When the servant comes to feed me I will know what to do."

He slept on the bench soundly, for no fear of real danger had entered his mind. A trick had been played upon him, but that was all he realized.

When he awoke the sun was streaming in through the little window, and he found himself to be in a room about fifteen feet square, having two doors. He had entered by one, which was locked, and through the other he had gone and returned by aid of the match lights.

Rousing himself, he tried first the door Rougière had locked, and then, finding that still sound, walked through the other doorway.

He found himself now in a much larger room which he had known before, but the furnishings of it sent a chill to his heart.

Iron rings lay on the floor, and others were fastened to the walls. Peculiar machines were hung to the ceiling, and these he knew were ancient instruments of torture and death.

He listened for some sound to indicate the approach of a servant with food, but none came. Then, desperate because he realized that worse than he had thought was intended, he began a careful exploration.

There were three doors leading from this large room. One of these stood open, and he looked in.

It was a dark and gloomy dungeon, with every sign of having once been used for the torture of captives.

He shuddered and turned away from this, and entered another.

This led to a square room which seemed to be a sort of museum of weapons of ancient days. Halberds and crossbows hung upon the wall or were piled in confusion on the floor, with old guns, rusted and useless.

Spears of all kinds, bows of the most primeval type, chains and rings, and a collection of junk that might have been useful in war and torture years before, but now would bring a few cents a pound to a dealer in old iron.

The revolver he carried in his pocket was worth all the stuff he saw, and he grunted as he left the room.

The third door he then tried, but it was locked.

"Now," he said aloud, "I have struck the real thing. How shall I open this door?"

He shoved with all his might, but the massive portal did not yield. He stood and looked at it a moment and then went back to the collection of old weapons and curios.

After clawing over a pile of rubbish in a corner, he found three old-fashioned cannon balls of iron. They were each about all he could lift, but he fancied that in some way he could use them to burst open that door.

It was now evident to his mind that he had been locked in there to remain without food, and that was something Mr. Bunker Hill of New York was not inclined to do.

He stood and looked some time at a long, thin plank, without knowing just how he could use it. But in desperate need one thinks of things, and he dragged the plank out into the larger room.

He then examined all the rings and chains, and, having done some measuring, fastened a chain from one ring to another, making it pass the door. He stood the plank up on end, set it down inside the chain, and slid it backward, leaving the upper end resting on the door.

He next took up a cannon ball, gritting his teeth and grunting with the weight, and, exerting his great strength to the utmost, he drew back the upper end of the plank until it formed a semicircle, with the chain for the fulcrum. Then, holding the cannon ball carefully in front of the upper end, he let it go.

There was a tremendous crash as the ball struck the door and the plank followed it. The chain rattled, and the ball, after banging against the door, fell with a great clatter to the floor.

The door had not opened, but it seemed to have given a little, and Hill felt encouraged.

"That door can't stand any such bombardment as that," he said. "I'll do it again."

He readjusted the plank, picked up the cannon ball, and was using his strength to pull back the plank when to his amazement there came to his ears the sound of a key in the lock of the door.

He paused a moment. Whoever was at the other side seemed to be having difficulty, but after a time the door opened and a very old man appeared.

"Ha!" he said in French. "What does all this mean? You have ruined the lock."

"Have I? That is certainly a pity," said Hill, throwing down the cannon ball and removing the plank. "I'd like to ruin the whole confounded place."

"But how is this? That you should be in the dungeons strikes me as strange," went on the old man.

"It certainly struck me as being strange," said Hill.

"But how came you here? I do not understand."

"What are you?" asked the American.

Caution had come to him, and he did not wish to say too much.

"I am the keeper of the dungeons. But it is many years since they had a prisoner. I do not understand. It was not known that any one was here."

"Certainly not," said Hill. "M. Alfred Rougière gave a supper last night to his friends. Did you know that?"

"I heard that M. Alfred had a few guests."

"So he did, and we drank much wine. I was one of them. After the supper M. Alfred took us into the dungeons to see the ancient implements of war, and I fell asleep on a bench. I was locked in, and was now trying to let myself out."

The old man grinned in appreciation.

"My name is Pierre," he said. "Strange, though, for I am—well, you don't want to know what I am. You must be hungry."

"I am not exactly famished, but I could eat. The first thing is to see Alfred."

"But that is impossible. M. Rougière, Mme. Hill, and Alfred all left early this morning."

"What? M. Rougière—Alfred's father? And Mme. Marie?"

"Why, yes. That was why he gave the supper. They start for a long voyage, and after they return the young master and madame will be married."

"Did M. Rougière, the elder, and Mme. Marie sleep here last night?"

"They have slept here every night for six months."

Hill stared.

"How often do you open these doors?" he asked. "How often do you enter the dungeons?"

"I live in one. This is another part. But in this part where you were left I never go. It is now a year since I was there."

Hill nodded.

"Then if I had not made you hear me with that cannon ball I would have starved to death."

"Certainly, monsieur. It is most fortunate that you had a quick wit. I am slightly deaf, and would not hear you call or knock. But that cannon ball! Heavens, what a racket! It startled me."

"I am glad it did, and hope your nerves will not suffer," said Hill. "Here are a few francs. Permit me to offer them as something in the way of a reward for letting me out. I have some music and other things in the château. Can you direct me to that portion which is inhabited?"

"Oh, I will guide you. I am very old, and M. Rougière is so kind. I lost my wife and had no home, and M. Rougière offered me the place as keeper of the dungeons. Those old dungeons do not need a keeper, but M. Rougière is kind and wanted an excuse to keep me."

"Is M. Rougière so kind?"

"Ah, monsieur, he is a very good man. But Alfred! Ah, I fear for him."

"You may well," said Hill, when he thought of what he would do when he got his hands on Alfred. "Now, please, direct me to the living rooms."

Old Pierre led the way through other cellar dungeons and store-rooms, and finally ascended a staircase and opened the door. In the room to which he ascended there was a woman.

"Oh, what is this?" she cried, as the head of Pierre came up. "You! What has happened?"

"Why, one of the guests of M. Alfred last night, while being shown through the dungeons, went to sleep, and was locked in. But for a tremendous row he made I would never have known it, and he would have starved."

"Good heavens! Such a fate! And M. Alfred cannot be told now, for they have gone."

"Monsieur understands that. But there are certain things belonging to him in the château which he wishes to obtain."

"Monsieur certainly, after his terrible night, may have the freedom of the château."

"Where is Paul?"

"Oh, Paul! That aristocrat! He accompanied messieurs and madame."

Hill breathed freely. Paul was the only servant who had seen him.

"Then, monsieur, you are at liberty to go fetch your things. Do you know the château well?"

"Yes, I have been here several times," said Hill. "I can find what I want."

As a matter of fact, he did not know what he wanted. He did want information, but that seemed to be difficult to obtain.

"Where have M. Rougière and madame and M. Alfred gone?" he asked. "I knew they were about to start on a journey, but we were so jolly last night I forgot to ask where."

"Oh, that was a merry crowd," said the woman. "But no one here knows. It seems that madame is now done with her mourning, and wished to take a trip, somewhere, I think, on the Mediterranean. I do not know for certain."

"I heard she had purchased a yacht," remarked Pierre.

"Well, it does not matter," said Hill. "I will go get my things."

They permitted him to roam through the château, the woman signaling in the way servants have to her mates that he was all right.

He saw the dining-room, now clean and splendid, with no signs of the supper of the night before. He wandered through the salons, the galleries, and finally found himself in a room that compelled him to stand still.

It was without doubt a woman's apartment, and a woman of refined and elegant tastes. That elegance that comes of refinement and wealth combined was everywhere evident.

A faint odor of perfume was in the air, and daintiness sat royally upon everything.

"I am in my wife's room," said Hill grimly to himself. "And she is being carried away to escape me."

An elegant inlaid desk stood near a window. Upon it lay several books and papers, as though they had been gathered together for the purpose of being taken away, and then forgotten.

One was a Russia-leathered book which the American husband picked up and opened.

"Oh!" he said.

On the fly-leaf he found written the words:

Diary of Marie Hill.

His heart thrilled. She had used his name, then, this beautiful girl whom he had tried to serve in his last moments, as he supposed. She had called herself his wife—she *was* his wife.

He opened the book, and through a feeling of delicacy read nothing until he found a date that struck him as one that might lead to some discovery.

"I am in distress," so ran the entry. "I live with the handsome face of Monsieur Hill ever before me. I wonder always if he had proper care when the last moments came. Though I saw him but once, I feel that I could love him if he lived. I wish I could have been with him at the last. It would relieve this terrible feeling of doubt. Sometimes I wonder if, after all, he died."

Then farther on he found this:

"My uncle seems kind and good, but there is something in his manner I do not understand. He never chides me, he never objects to anything I want. All my whims are gratified. But—those cold eyes seem to hold something in them I do not understand.

"After all, I am more afraid of Alfred than of my uncle. He is almost always under the influence of wine. Last night he tried to kiss me, and I struck him and ran to my room. I cannot love him now. If only the image of that white face on the pillow would fade away! But will it ever? I fear not. I begin now to wish my husband had lived. My life at the château is not so pleasant. It is very lonely."

He skipped to the last.

"It is now June thirtieth. What a night—I shall never forget it! My heart is filled with misery, and yet I smile because I must. My uncle says my period of mourning is over. Mourning—for what? A dream! A chimera! A face I saw but once! But oh, what a manly face! I know that with my husband I could be happy. But that is not to be. I am to marry Alfred, and I shudder at the very thought.

"A drunken husband! A husband who has tasted all the evils of life. One who brings me not the first love of his life, nor the second, but perhaps the dregs left after a hundred *amours*. Oh, I wish now I had remained in London and permitted my fortune to go to the hospitals. Surely I could go as nurse. Anything would be better than this.

"I feel the irons of my uncle's eyes binding me more and more. He is kind, but there is a subtlety about him that terrifies me. I wish my husband was alive. He was an American, and would at least protect me, if he did not love me. And to-morrow we start for our trip in the Elfin. It was my only hope. I should have gone mad if I remained here.

"Perhaps some escape will appear—I pray God it may. I do not love my cousin—I despise him. God! If he ever saw this book he certainly would kill me. But I have no one to talk to, and my thoughts must in some way permit themselves to escape."

"Poor girl!" said Hill. "Poor little prisoner! I'll take good care he never sees this book, and I'll take better care he never marries you, my dear little girl. I begin to love you now, though I have seen you but once. Hanged if I don't begin to believe in thought telegraphy. We are beginning to love each other."

He took the diary and walked calmly out of the château.

CHAPTER XI.

A MEETING IN ALGIERS.

LIEUTENANT FOURNIER was sauntering along one of the principal streets of Algiers, with that swing and conscious air so characteristic of officers in that capital, looking now and then

into a shop, or at a woman who might or might not be pretty, according to the lieutenant's cultivated taste.

He suddenly stopped and a bland smile warmed up his features. For approaching him was a young man. This young man walked somewhat heavily, and paid little attention to any one.

"Rougière!" exclaimed the lieutenant, when the young man had come near him. "You in Algiers!"

"I might exclaim the same thing in regard to you!" cried Alfred, as he wrung the hand of the lieutenant. "I thought you were permanently stationed in Paris."

"It appears that permanency and I are strangers," said Fournier, with a laugh.

"But—has anything happened?"

"Why—as you see—I have happened. Oh, it was a trifle. You remember Noel?"

"Yes, perfectly. The snob!"

"That's just it. You see, Noel and I had words."

"But you always did have. You never agreed, you two. Was it about a girl this time?"

"What else could Noel and I quarrel about? But this time it was serious. We fought."

"A duel?"

"Indeed, yes. I, as you know, am an expert duelist, but the laws—oh, you know the laws as well as I do. Well, then, we had words in a café, and I struck him. He challenged me, for Noel never could be called a coward, whatever else he is, and we met. I wounded him. As punishment—I am here, as you see me."

"Not degraded in rank!"

"No, rather with something of a chance for promotion. It was really not that my superiors objected. But there was the law, and Noel is a civilian. Those civilians—they ruin Paris now. But come! We have not met for a long time. Saray's café is not far off. Let us go there and have a talk."

The two young men turned their steps in the same direction, and soon entered one of the most pretentious cafés in Algiers.

They sat down, on opposite sides of a table, and the lieutenant called for wine.

"Now," he said, as he leaned his elbows on the table and rested his chin in his palms, "tell me all about it. What the devil are you doing here?"

"Seeing things," replied Rougière.

"Seeing things! You come to Algiers to see things! Is not the absinthe of Paris strong enough for you?"

"Yes, it is strong enough," said Alfred. "But I am not in Paris. Things have changed for me."

"Changed? Have you had bad luck?"

"No, I have had particularly good luck."

Fournier studied Alfred for a moment before he spoke.

"Listen," he said. "For a man who boasts of having had good luck befall him, you are a strange creature. You are paler than I ever knew you to be before. You are nervous, and there is a queer look about your eyes."

"Oh, that is nothing. I have not been particularly well."

"Ah! That must be your good luck. You are singularly reticent about this good luck."

Fournier was not exactly the kind of man Alfred cared to speak to about a pure girl like Marie.

"Well—it is not yet public property. But I am engaged to be married."

Fournier laughed heartily.

"You! To be married! Come, that is excellent. Do I know the fortunate—the extremely fortunate—lady?"

Alfred winced at the sarcasm.

"No. It is my cousin, and she was brought up in London."

"Oh, that rich uncle who refused to lend you money to pay your debts?"

"Yes. His daughter."

"Does he know?"

"He may know, but he will say nothing."

"How is that?"

"Because he's dead."

Fournier looked at Alfred gravely.

"My friend," he said, "I drink to your good luck. But there is something on your mind. You do not love this cousin, but some one else."

"I love her well enough. She is very pretty and rich."

"Come, then! For Heaven's sake, why do you look so lugubrious? It is not like you at all. Is it that she does not love you?"

"She consents to marry me. That is enough, is it not?"

"Ye-es," said Fournier slowly. "Where is she? In Belgium?"

"No. In Algiers harbor."

"Drowned?"

"No: on a yacht."

"Oh! You are, then, traveling on a yacht, and Algiers is simply one of your ports. Now I begin to understand. By the way, what will you do with Lisette?"

"Let her forget me—or, well, I can tell better later on."

"Certainly you must be attentive to your cousin until you marry her. Is she young?"

"Yes, and a widow."

Fournier whistled impolitely.

"My father is with us," said Alfred.

"Oh! How long will you remain in Algiers?"

"Oh, that depends. It was my cousin's idea. She had spent six months at the château, enough to make any girl feel gloomy. She wished to see something of the world, and as she had plenty of money, we came."

"Then you are her guests?"

"Yes, you can put it that way. She insisted. She even purchased the yacht."

"You are indeed to be congratulated. I wish a young widow with plenty of money would fall in love with me. Now, then, since you are here, I must do something to make your visit pleasant, and I want also to see your fiancée. There is the ball night after next."

"What ball?"

"The governor-general's. Ever see a ball in Africa? Well, if you came to see things, that's the place to do it. Things of all kinds and descriptions. I must see about tickets. Are there any more in your party?"

"No. My father, Marie, and myself."

"Good! It will not be difficult to obtain three. Now what do you intend to do with yourselves? Where were you going when I met you?"

"Nowhere in particular. I wanted to stretch my legs a little."

"You have not, I suppose, because of this new love of yours, lost all interest in play?"

"I have not lost interest, but on board the yacht I do not have many opportunities."

"I know where, at this moment, a lively game is in session. What do you say?"

"I have but a hundred francs with me."

"Pooh! Am I not here to vouch for you? Come along. I have some time to spare myself."

So the two cronies, linking arms, sauntered out. And a man who had apparently been asleep at another table woke up, smiled, and shook himself. After which he walked to the telegraph office and sent a message. It ran:

BUNKER HILL, London:

Parties are here—will be here at least two days—governor's ball night after next.

LARKINS.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S BALL.

THE crash of the infantry band officially proclaimed the opening of the governor-general's ball. It promised to be a gorgeous affair from the very first.

One must, however, behold such a gathering to realize what it is. In America a throng is brilliant because it is composed of people of high position, wealth, or noted intellect. In London it is much the same, with a uniform now and then to relieve the monotony of the dull evening dress of the Anglo-Saxons.

At a palace ball there is brilliance indeed, but it is largely of the same variety, with an Indian prince or mogul to add a bit of Oriental splendor.

But this ball of the governor-general's in Algiers was a scene to be remembered.

Governors had had balls before this one came from Paris to introduce the régime of extravagance that had already made him famous on the Mediterranean. The infantry band was composed of a hundred pieces, and was located on a balcony out of sight from

the great ball-room, but where its splendid music could be heard alike in the palace and in the streets.

The scene outside was as picturesque as inside, but not so splendid.

Moors and Arabs, clad in their flowing burnouses, stood in groups to listen and to see. Sheiks and beys riding toward the palace on magnificent horses or richly-caparisoned camels, followed by attendants who would camp in the city until their masters were ready to depart, gave a caravan appearance to the streets.

Jews, Kabyles, all the heterogeneous elements of the population listened to the infantry band and commented according to their point of view.

"Some day it will not be so," said a Moor to his companion. "These Franks! Unspeakable! They do not respect their women! And such exhibitions! It is——"

"But let them spend their money yet a while," rejoined the other. "When they no longer bring money to Algiers we will kill them and govern our own country."

A carriage rolled by in which an officer in full uniform sat by the side of a richly dressed lady. Somehow she dropped her fan. It was a dainty bit of ivory and feathers, and she did not miss it.

The Moor who had spoken first thrust a spear through it and then spat upon it.

"He ordered my son shot," was the only comment.

Women peered from windows or lolled on housetops to hear the music. Many hearts in Algiers burned because of this—that they, too, were not in that world of dancing and music.

The governor-general and his wife were themselves as splendid as any one. The uniform the governor wore, the orders that glistened on his breast, the silver-hilted sword, made him a noted figure. His wife, many years younger, scintillated with diamonds.

The Bey of Tunis arrived, having landed from his little yacht clad in his gorgeous royal uniform and well attended. The brother of the Sultan of Morocco, Mohammed Bey, addressed in the European style as prince, was barbaric but magnificent in his display of jewels.

His black eyes lighted up when he saw the beautiful women. He excused the non-appearance of his brother, the sultan, on the very efficient grounds that his capital was at that time under siege and he could not leave.

Spanish officers from Ceuta, English officers from Gibraltar, Greeks, Italians, and Turks came in from all parts of their several worlds. It was bewildering. Yachts in the harbor sent in their English or American quota.

M. Rougière, entering this great assemblage that represented all the world, reveled in it. Black princes stalked proudly around with jewels in their sword-hilts that would pay the ransom of a king.

Alfred was in his element. To him this was not such a surprise, for nothing there was in the world could surprise Alfred. He had seen it all.

But Marie—her breath came short and fast. To her this was an entirely new world.

During her school life in London she had been but little in society, never to a great ball. During her six months' residence in the château she had been almost entirely without companionship, and her widowhood prevented invitations finding their way to her.

And now her first introduction, as one might say, to the world of pleasure was this grand ball of races.

Her beauty attracted everybody as she entered, leaning upon the arm of M. Rougière. Lieutenant Fournier met them.

"Rougière, introduce me," he said.

"Certainly. Marie, I present my old friend, Lieutenant Fournier, whom I found in Algiers, and who kindly obtained for us the tickets to this ball. Lieutenant, my cousin, Mme. Hill."

"I am pleased to meet madame," said Fournier. "I ask now for the privilege of at least two waltzes during the evening."

"Thank you," responded Marie, not knowing that it was she, and not Fournier, who was bestowing the favor.

"I must present you at once to the governor," went on Fournier.

The latter had not lived in Paris for

nothing. M. Rougière, much to his surprise, and somewhat to his chagrin, found himself quietly, but not the less surely, shoved one side. It was on Fournier's arm that Marie went to meet the governor.

"Bless my soul!" said the rugged old general to his wife as he saw them coming. "What a beautiful girl! Who is she?"

"I really do not know, but we shall certainly learn, for that irrepressible Fournier is bringing her."

Fournier, in graceful style, presented the party.

"It was for my friends, your excellency, that I asked for three tickets."

"And I assure you I did myself a greater favor by giving them than I did you," said the governor graciously.

The Bey of Tunis almost went down on his knees when he met Marie, and the brother of the Sultan of Morocco smiled as he pictured that lovely face in his own harem in Fez. But the thing was to get her there.

"These barbarians!" he said to himself as the party proceeded on their triumphant way. "If it were not for the Franks! Well, there are women in Morocco as lovely. She is not for me."

The ladies of the garrison made a pet of Marie from the beginning. She spoke their language, yet she was not French. Therefore they need not be jealous.

The Sheik Ibrahim stalked by, giving her a sly glance out of the corner of his eye. Sheik Ibrahim was a connoisseur in beauty. He knew that in all the region he ruled there was not such a girl as this young Belgian. He began to think.

When Sheik Ibrahim began to think, and especially when the subject of his thoughts was a pretty girl, there was usually, as is a common expression, "something doing."

But others claimed her attention.

The master of ceremonies now assumed command.

The first dance was the lancers. The procession past the governor was almost ended. At a signal the band changed from its brass to string, and the sets began to form.

"Really, Rougière," said the lieutenant, "I hate to do it, but under the circumstances I must permit you to dance first with Mme. Hill."

"That is extremely gracious of you," rejoined Alfred, with a rather exaggerated bow. "From your monopoly of her so far, I had begun to think that I was not to have the pleasure of speaking to her all evening."

"Well, I can be generous at times, you see," said Fournier, bowing to Marie, "even as in this case, when it hurts."

Marie smiled and blushed. Alfred led her into a set, and the picturesque dance began.

There were few dancers, the Moorish princes and Arabs and black rulers of men standing to look on.

This was not their way of dancing. Had it been around a pile of massacred foes, then they would show the barbarians how to dance.

"I cannot understand why the Caliph did not come," said the governor. "He usually attends all the receptions."

"The Caliph? Well, he went to Oran, as you know. Perhaps he has not returned," replied an attaché.

"I mistrust the fellow so much. He has evil in his eye. But his other spirit is here."

"His other spirit? I don't understand, excellency."

"That rascal Sheik Ibrahim."

"Oh, that plotter! Well, he is in good company now. He can't eat us."

The governor smiled, and received another who had come to pay his respects.

A waltz followed. A black dey from the interior had been following Marie with his eyes. He came forward and spoke in French:

"Will the beautiful one from the north deign to dance this with the dey of a black country?"

Marie was startled. He wore a diamond collarette, and there were rubies in his sleeves. His coat was plentifully covered with gold lace.

"Do you waltz?" she asked in surprise.

He smiled.

"Did you think because I was black

that I was a clown? I was educated in Paris."

"How strange Lieutenant Fournier did not introduce you! He presented almost everybody."

The black dey, who was handsome enough but for his color, twirled his mustache.

"The lieutenant and I—well, I will not speak, but will introduce myself. I am Dag El Rag, Prince of Fezzan. I am pasha, king, or what you like. But my title is supposed to be sultan."

"Then I am to dance with a real sultan!" said Marie, recovering from her embarrassment and smiling. "I thought sultans, when they wished to dance with a lady, ran up and knocked her down, dragged her by the hair, and then hired some one else to do the dancing."

Those in the immediate vicinity turned as the Sultan of Fezzan let out a ringing laugh.

"Excellent!" he cried with enthusiasm. "I like you. I might perhaps some day avail myself of your prescription, but I promise you that I shall never knock you down or pull your hair. As I already have three wives, I assume that you are not anxious to share their lot?"

"Three—wives!"

"Yes; we do that in our country. Are you familiar with Africa?"

"This is my first visit."

"Is the elderly gentleman your father?"

"No, my uncle. The other is my cousin."

Fournier, who really had Marie in charge for the evening, having usurped that place of responsibility, bowed haughtily to the sultan as he passed.

"Beg pardon," said the sultan. "I have to request from you, lieutenant, the permission to waltz with madame."

"If madame wishes," answered Fournier.

"I have consented," said Marie.

"But——" The lieutenant came close and whispered: "It is not considered proper for a young girl to dance with strangers without the permission of her escort."

Marie became the woman at once.

"Sir," she said, "I am not a young girl. I am married, and mistress of my own acts."

"Beg pardon, madame. I did not know," said Fournier.

Then as he went away chagrined, he twisted his mustache.

"By Heaven," he said, "I do not envy Rougière so much! She can take care of herself, that beauty!"

But he had his own dance with Marie, and then the governor himself, hearing her name spoken all over the place, honored her by taking her the first time he went on the floor.

He was not an ungraceful dancer, this rugged warrior, but he could not go through the entire dance. But—to go on the dancing floor with the governor-general! It settled Marie's status at once, and she was the queen of the ball.

During a lull, when the band was playing with brass instruments and there was no dancing, Fournier went to fetch Marie some refreshments. As he approached, he found Alfred and the Sultan of Fezzan speaking to her. M. Rougière was walking toward them.

"I have been counting noses," he said. "That is, the noses of nations. I find almost every one represented except America."

"Oh, there are several Americans here," said Fournier.

"Not officials."

"No, the consul will undoubtedly appear. Ah, here he comes now."

A tall, thin man, dressed in the conventional black of the United States representatives, entered and was well received.

"Heavens!" exclaimed Fournier. "Who is that?"

After the consul there entered a giant in the uniform of colonel of cavalry. Plain though his American uniform was as compared to some of those in the palace, yet there was a majesty about it and the way he wore it that made him stand out before all the others as a man of might and importance.

He was young and handsome. The chevrons on his breast, and a medal, spoke of bravery. The consul introduced him.

The governor-general took his hand

warmly. The princes and sultans and beys and deys flocked to meet him.

"I wonder who the deuce he is," said Fournier. "He doesn't belong to the consulate."

Alfred looked sharply. Fournier glanced at him. He was deadly pale, clutching at his throat, and his lips seemed parched and burning.

"What's the matter with you, Rougière?" asked the lieutenant. "Are you ill?"

"No—no—I am all right!"

"Lieutenant Fournier," said Marie, rising, "will you kindly introduce me to that splendid American?"

"With pleasure, madame. Come with me."

"No! No! I forbid!" interposed Alfred hoarsely.

"Sir," said Marie, "in public do you attempt to command me?"

"What the mischief is the matter with you, Alfred?" asked his father. "Let the girl alone."

"My God!" muttered Alfred to himself. "What will happen now?"

And he reeled to another room, where an attendant brought him some brandy to steady his shattered nerves. He had recognized the American colonel as Bunker Hill.

(To be continued.)

The Hawkins Hydro-Vapor Lift.

BY EDGAR FRANKLIN.

Something new in elevators, with a practical demonstration of what might be expected—and more—in their adaptability to business needs.

I MAY have mentioned that it was customary for Hawkins and myself to travel down-town together on the elevated six days in the week.

So far as that goes, we still do so; for it has come over me recently that any attempt to dodge the demoniac inventions of Hawkins is about as thankless and hopeless a task as seeking to avoid the setting of the sun.

For two or three mornings, however, I had been leaving the house some ten or fifteen minutes earlier than usual.

There had lately appeared the old uncanny light in Hawkins' eye; and if trouble were impending, it was my fond, foolish hope to be out of its way—until such time, at least, as the police or the coroner should call me up on the telephone to identify all that was mortal of Hawkins.

Three days, then, my strategy had been crowned with success. I had eluded Hawkins and ridden down alone, the serene enjoyment of my paper unpunctuated by dissertations upon the practicability of condensing the clouds for commercial purposes, or the utilization of atmospheric nitrogen in the manufacture of predigested breakfast food.

But upon the fourth morning a fuse blew out under the car before we left the station; and as I sat there fussing about the delay, in walked Hawkins.

He was beaming and cheerful, but the glitter in his eye had grown more intense.

"Ah, Griggs," he exclaimed, "I've missed you lately!"

"I hope you haven't lost weight over it?"

"Well, no. I've been busy—very busy."

"Rush of business?"

"Um—ah—yes. Griggs!"

It was coming!

"Hawkins," I said hurriedly, "have you followed this matter of the Panama Canal?"

Hawkins stared hard at me for a moment; then I gave him another push, and he toppled into the canal and wallowed about in its waters until the ride was over.

Unhappily, my own place of business is located farther down upon the same street with the Blank Building, where Hawkins has—or had—offices. There was no way of avoiding it—I was forced to walk with him.

But the suppressed enthusiasm in Hawkins didn't come out, and I felt rather more easy. Whatever it was, I fancied that he had left the material part of it at home, and home lay many blocks up-town. I was safe.

"Good-by," I smiled when we reached his entrance.

"Not much," Hawkins responded. "Come in."

"But, my dear fellow——"

"You come," commanded the inventor. "There's something in here I want you to see."

He led me in and past the line of elevators.

So we were not going up to his offices! We seemed to be heading for the cigar booth, and for a moment I fancied that Hawkins had discovered a new brand and was going to treat me; but he piloted me farther, to a door, and opened it and we passed through.

Then I perceived where we were. The Blank Building people had been constructing an addition to their immense stack of offices; we stood in the freshly completed and wholly unoccupied annex.

"There, sir!" said Hawkins, extending his forefinger. "What do you see, Griggs?"

"Six empty barrels, about three wagon-loads of kindling wood, a new tiled floor, and six brand-new elevators," I replied.

"Oh, hang those things! Look—where I'm pointing!"

"Ah! Somebody's left a packing-box in one of the elevator-shafts, eh?"

Certainly, more than anything else, that was what it resembled.

At the first glance it appeared to be nothing more than a crude wooden case about the size of an elevator car, standing in one of the shafts and contrasting unpleasantly with the other new, shining, polished cars.

"Packing—ugh!" snapped the inventor. "Do you know what that is?"

"You turned down my first guess," I suggested humbly.

"Griggs, what appears to you as a packing-box is nothing more nor less than the first and only Hawkins Hydro-Vapor Lift!"

"The which?"

"The — Hawkins — Hydro-Vapor—Lift!"

"Hydro-Vapor?" I murmured. "Whatever is that? Steam?"

"Certainly."

"And lift, I presume, is English for elevator?"

"The words are synonymous," said Hawkins coldly.

"Then why the dickens didn't you call it a steam elevator and be done with it? Wasn't that sufficiently complicated?"

"Oh, Griggs, you never seem able to understand! Now, a steam elevator —so called—is an old proposition. A Hydro-Vapor Lift is entirely new and sounds distinctive!"

"Yes, it sounds queer enough," I admitted.

"Just examine it," said the inventor joyously, leading me to the box.

There was not much to be examined. Four walls, a ceiling and a floor—all of undressed wood—that was about the extent of the affair; but in the center of the floor lay a great circular iron plate, some two feet across and festooned near the edge with a circle of highly unornamental iron bolt heads.

Beside the plate, a lever rising perpendicularly from the floor constituted the sole furnishing of the car.

"Now, you've seen a hydraulic elevator?" Hawkins began. "You know how they work—a big steel shaft pushes up the car from underneath, so that when it is in operation the car is simply a box standing on the end of a pole, which rises or sinks, as the operator wills."

"I believe so," I assented. "I think it's time now for me to be go——"

"That principle is fallacious!" the inventor exclaimed. "Consider what it would mean here—a steel shaft sixteen stories high, weighing tons and tons!"

"Well?"

"Well, sir, I have reversed that idiotic idea!" Hawkins announced triumphantly. "I have had a hole dug sixteen stories deep, and put the steel shaft down into it!"

It was about what one might have expected from Hawkins; but despite my long acquaintance with his bizarre mental machinery, I gasped in amazement.

"Now, then," pursued the inventor, "I have had a steel tube made, a little longer than the shaft, you understand."

"What! Even longer than sixteen stories?"

"Of course. The tube fits the shaft exactly, just as an engine cylinder fits the plunger. The elevator stands upon the upper end of the tube. We let steam into the tube by operating this lever, which controls my patent reversible steam-release. What happens? Why, the tube is forced upward and the elevator rises. I let out some of the steam—and the tube sinks down into the ground! That iron plate which you see is the manhole cover of the tube, as it were—it corresponds, of course, to the cylinder-head on an engine."

As the novelists put it, I stood aghast.

It overwhelmed me utterly—the idea that in a great, sane city like New York an irresponsible maniac could be permitted to dig a hole sixteen stories deep under a new office building and then fill up that hole with a shaft and a tube such as Hawkins had just described.

"And the people who own this place—did they allow you to do it, or have you been chloroforming the watchman and working at night?" I inquired.

"Don't be absurd, Griggs," said Hawkins. "I pay a big rent here. The owners were very nice about it."

They must have been—exceedingly so, I thought; nice to the point of imbecility. Had they known Hawkins as I know him, they would joyfully have handed back his lease, given him a substantial cash bonus to boot, and even have thrown in a non-transferable Cook's Tour ticket to Timbuctoo before they allowed him to embark on the project.

It would have been a low sort of trick upon Timbuctoo, but it would have saved them money and trouble.

"Well," Hawkins said sharply, breaking in upon my reverie. "Don't stand there mooning. Did you ever see anything like it before?"

"Once, when I was a child," I confessed, "I fell while climbing a flagpole, and that night I dreamed——"

"Bah! Come along and watch her work."

"No!" I protested. "Oh, no!"

"Good Lord, why not?" cried Hawkins.

"My wife," I murmured. "She cannot spare me, Hawkins—not yet."

"Why, there isn't the slightest element of danger," the inventor argued. "Surely, Griggs, even you must be able to grasp that. Can't you see that that is the chief beauty of the Hydro-Vapor Lift? There are no cables to break! That's the great feature. This car may be loaded with ton after ton; but if she's overloaded, she simply stops. There are no risky wire-ropes to snap and let down the whole affair."

"I know, but there are no wire ropes to hold her up, either, and——"

Hawkins snorted angrily. Then he grabbed me bodily and forced me along toward the door of his Hydro-Vapor Lift.

"Actually, you do make me tired," he said. "You seem to think that everybody is conspiring to take your wretched little life!"

"But what have you against me?" I asked mournfully. "Why not let me out and do your experimenting alone?"

"Because—Lord knows why I'm doing it, you're not important enough to warrant it—I'm bound to convince you that this contrivance is all that I claim!"

Oh, had I but spent the days of my youth in a strenuous gymnasium! Had I but been endowed with muscle beyond the dreams of Eugene Sandow, and been expert in boxing and wrestling and in the breaking of bones, as are the Japanese!

Then I could have fallen upon Hawkins from the rear and tied him into knots, and even dismembered him if necessary—and escaped.

But things are what they are, and Hawkins is more than a match for me; so he banged the door angrily and grasped the lever.

"Now, observe with great care the superbly gentle motion with which she rises," he instructed me.

I prepared for that familiar head-going-up-and-the-rest-of-you-staying-below sensation and gritted my teeth.

Hawkins pulled at the lever. The Hydro-Vapor Lift quivered for an in-

stant. Then it ascended the shaft—and very gently and pleasantly.

"There! I suppose you've trembled until your collar-buttons have worked loose?" Hawkins said contemptuously, turning on me.

"Not quite that," I murmured.

"Well, you may as well stop. In a moment or two we shall have reached the top floor; and there, if you like, you can get out and climb down sixteen flights of stairs."

"Thank you," I said sincerely.

"This, of course, is only the slow speed," Hawkins continued. "We can increase it with the merest touch. Watch."

"Wait! I like it better slow!" I protested.

"Oh, I'll slacken down again in a moment."

Hawkins gave a mighty push to the controlling apparatus. A charge of dynamite seemed to have been exploded beneath the Hydro-Vapor Lift!

Up we shot! I watched the freshly painted numbers between floors as they whizzed by us with shuddering apprehension: 9—10—11—12——

"We're going too fast!" I cried.

Hawkins, I think, was about to laugh derisively. His head had turned to me, and his lips had curled slightly—when the Hydro-Vapor Lift stopped with such tremendous suddenness that we almost flew up against the roof of the car.

That was the law of inertia at work. Then we descended to the floor with a crash that seemed calculated to loosen it. That was the law of gravitation.

I presume that Hawkins figured without them.

I was the first to sit up. For a time my head revolved too rapidly for anything like coherent perception. Then, as the stars began to fade away, I saw that we were stuck fast between floors; and before my eyes—large and prominent in the newness of its paint—loomed up the number 13.

It looked ominous.

"We—we seem to have stopped," I said.

"Yes," snapped Hawkins.

"What was it? Do you suppose anything was sticking out into the shaft? Has—can it be possible that there is anything like a mechanical error in your Hydro-Vapor Lift?"

"No! It's that fool of an engineer!"

"What!" I exclaimed. "Do you blame him?"

"Certainly."

"But how was it his fault?"

"Oh—you see—bah!" said the inventor, turning rather red. "You wouldn't understand if I were to explain the whole thing, Griggs."

"But I should like to know, Hawkins."

"Why?"

"I want to write a little account of the why and the wherefore, so that they can find it in case—anything happens to us."

Hawkins turned away loftily.

"We'll have to get out of this," he said.

He pulled at his lever with a confident smile. The Hydro-Vapor Lift did not budge the fraction of an inch.

Then he pushed it back—and forward again. And still the inexorable 13 stood before us.

"Confound that—er—engineer!" growled the inventor.

Just then the Hydro-Vapor Lift indulged in a series of convulsive shudders. It was too much for my nerves. I felt certain that in another second we were to drop, and I shouted lustily:

"Help! Help! Help!"

"Shut up!" cried Hawkins. "Do you want to get the workmen here and have them see that something's wrong?"

I affirmed that intention with unprintable force.

"Well, I don't!" said the inventor. "Why, Griggs, I'm figuring on equipping this building with my lift in a couple of months!"

"Are—are they going to allow that?" I gasped.

"Why, nothing's settled as yet; but it is understood that if this experimental model proves a success——"

But my cry had summoned aid. Above us, and hidden by the roof of the car, some one shouted:

"Hallo! Phwat is it?"

"Hallo!" I returned.

"Air ye in the box?" said the voice.

"Yes! Get an ax!"

"Phwat?"

"An ax!" I repeated. "Get an ax and chop out the roof of this beastly thing so that we can climb out, and——"

Hawkins clapped a hand over my mouth, and his scowl was sinister.

"Haven't you a grain of sense left?" he hissed.

"Yes, of course I have. That's why I want an ax to——"

"Tell that crazy engineer I want more steam!" bawled Hawkins, drowning my voice.

"More steam?" said the person above. "More steam an' an ax, is it?"

"No—no ax. Tell him I want more steam, and I want it quick! He's got so little pressure that we're stuck!"

We heard the echo of departing footsteps.

"Now, you'd have made a nice muddle, wouldn't you?" snarled the inventor. "We'd have made a nice sight clambering out through a hole in the top of this car!"

"There are times," I said, "when appearance don't count for much."

"Well, this isn't one of them," rejoined the inventor sourly.

I did not reply. There was nothing that occurred to me that wouldn't have offended Hawkins, so I kept silence.

We stood there for a period of minutes, but the Hydro-Vapor Lift seemed disinclined to move either up or down.

Once or twice Hawkins gave a push at his lever; but that part of the apparatus seemed permanently to have retired from active business.

"Shall we move soon?" I inquired, when the stillness became oppressive.

"Presently," growled Hawkins.

Another pause, and I hazarded again:

"Isn't it growing warm?"

"I don't feel it."

"Well, it is! Ah! The heat is coming from that plate!" I exclaimed, as it dawned upon me that the big iron thing was radiating warm waves through the stuffy little car. "Your Hydro-Vapor Lift will be pleasant to ride in when the thermometer runs up in August, won't it?"

Hawkins did not deign to reply, and I fell to examining the plate.

"Look," I said, "isn't that steam?"

"Isn't what steam?"

"Down there," I replied, pointing to the plate.

A fine jet of vapor was curling from one point at its edge—a thin spout of hot steam!

"That's nothing," said Hawkins. "Little leak—nothing more."

"But there's another now!"

"Positively, Griggs, I think you have the most active imagination I ever knew in an otherwise——"

"Use your eyes," I said uneasily. "There's another—and still another!"

Hawkins bent over the plate—as much to hide the concern which appeared upon his face as for any other reason, I think.

He arose rather suddenly, for a cloud of steam saluted him from a new spot.

"Well," he said, "she's leaking a trifle."

"But why?"

"The plate isn't steam-tight, of course; and the engineer's sending us more pressure."

His composure had returned, and he regarded me with such contemptuous eyes that I could find no answer.

But Hawkins' contempt couldn't shut off the steam. It blew out harder and harder from the leaky spots. The little car began to fill, and the temperature rose steadily.

From a comfortable warmth it increased to an uncomfortable warmth; then to a positively intolerable, reeking, wet heat.

I removed my coat, and a little later my vest. Hawkins did likewise. We both found some difficulty in breathing.

The steam grew thicker, the car hotter and hotter. Perspiration was oozing from every pore in my body. Sparkling little rivulets coursed down Hawkins' countenance.

"Hawkins," I said, "if you'd called this thing the Hydro-Vapor Bath instead of Lift——"

"Don't be witty," Hawkins said coldly.

"Never mind. It may be a bit unreliable as an elevator, but you can let it out for steam-baths—fifty cents a ticket, you know, until you've made up whatever the thing cost."

Bzzzzzzzzzz! said the steam.

"I'm going to shout for that ax again," I said determinedly. "Ten minutes more of this and we'll be cooked alive!"

"Now——" began the inventor.

"Hawkins, I decline to be converted into stew simply to save your vanity. He——"

"Hey!" shouted Hawkins, dancing away from his lever into a corner of the car and regarding the iron plate with round eyes.

"What is it now?" I asked breathlessly.

A queer, roaring noise was coming from somewhere. The Hydro-Vapor affair executed a series of blood-curdling shakes. From the edges of the plate the steam hissed spitefully and with new vigor.

"That—that jackass of an engineer!" Hawkins sputtered. "He's sending too much steam!"

For a moment I didn't quite catch the significance; then I faltered with sudden weakness:

"Hawkins, you said that this plate corresponded to the cylinder-head of an engine? Then the tube beneath us is full of steam?"

"Yes, yes!"

"And if we get too much steam—as we seem to be getting it—will the plate blow off?"

"Yes—no—yes—no, of course not," answered Hawkins faintly. "It's bolted down with——"

"But if it should," I said, dashing the streaming perspiration from my eyes for another look at the accursed plate.

"If it should," the inventor admitted, "we'd either go up to Heaven on it, or we'd stay here and drop!"

"Help!" I screamed.

"Look out! Look out! Hug the wall!" Hawkins shrieked.

A mighty spasm shook the Hydro-Vapor Lift. I fell flat and rolled instinctively to one side. Then, ere my bewildered senses could grasp what was occurring, my ears were split by a terrific roar.

The roof of the car disappeared as if by magic, and through the opening shot that huge, round plate of iron, seemingly wafted upon a cloud of dense white vapor. Then the steam obscured all else, and I felt that we were falling.

Yes, for an instant the car seemed to shudder uncertainly—then she dropped!

I can hardly say more of our descent from the fatal thirteenth story. In one second—not more, I am certain—twelve spots of light, representing twelve floors, whizzed past us.

I recall a very definite impression that the Blank Building was making an outrageous trip straight upward from New York; and I wondered how the occupants were going to return and whether they would sue the building people for detention from business.

But just as I was debating this interesting point, earthly concerns seemed to cease.

In the cellar of the Blank Building annex a pile of excelsior and bagging and other refuse packing materials protruded into the shaft where once had been the Hawkins Hydro-Vapor Lift. That fact, I suppose, saved us from eternal smash.

At any rate, I realized after a time that my life had been spared, and at once sat up on the cement flooring of the cellar.

Hawkins was standing by a steel pillar, smiling blankly. Steam, by the cubic mile I think, was pouring from the flooring of the Hydro-Vapor Lift and whirling up the shaft.

I struggled to my feet and tried to walk—and succeeded, very much to my own astonishment. Shaken and bruised and half dead from the shock I certainly was, but I could still travel.

I picked up my coat and turned to Hawkins.

"I—I think I'll go home," he said weakly. "I'm not well, Griggs."

We ascended a winding stair and passed through a door at the top, and instead of reaching the annex we stepped into the lower hall of the Blank Building itself.

The place was full of steam. People were tearing around and yelling "Fire!" at the top of their lungs. Women were screaming. Clerks were racing back and forth with big books.

Older men appeared here and there,

hurriedly making their exit with cash boxes and bundles of documents. There was an exodus to jig-time going on in the Blank Building.

Above it all, a certain man, his face convulsed with anger, shouted at the crowd that there was no danger—no fire. Hawkins shrank as his eyes fell upon this personage.

"Lord! That's one of the owners!" he said. "I'm going!"

We, too, made for the door, and had almost attained it when a heavy hand fell upon the shoulder of Hawkins.

"You're the man I'm looking for!" said the hard, angry tones of the proprietor. "You come back with me! D'ye know what you've done? Hey? D'ye know that you've ruined that elevator shaft? D'ye know that a thousand-pound casting dropped on our roof and smashed it and wrecked two offices? Oh, you won't slip out like that." He tightened his grip on Hawkins' shoulder. "You've got a little settling to do with me, Mr. Hawkins. And I want that man who was with you, too, for——"

That meant me! A swirl of steam enveloping my person, I disappeared.

For my only course had seemed to fold my tents like the Arabs and as silently steal away; only I am certain that no Arab ever did it with greater expedition and less ostentation than I used on that particular occasion.

THE SONG OF THE TRAIN.

A MONSTER taught
To come to hand
Amain,
As swift as thought
Across the land,
The train.
The song it sings
Has an iron sound;
Its iron wings
Like wheels go round;
Crash under bridges,
Flash over ridges,
And vault the downs;
The road is straight—
Nor stile, nor gate;
For milestones—towns!
O'er bosky dens,
By marsh and mead,
Forest and fens,
Embodied speed
Is clanked and hurled;
O'er rivers and runnels
And into the earth,
And out again
In death and birth
That know no pain,
For the whole world round
Is a warren of railway tunnels.
Hark! Hark! Hark!
It screams and cleaves the dark;
And the subterranean night
Is gilt with smoky light,
Then out again apace
It runs its thundering race,
The monster taught
To come to hand
Amain,
That swift as thought
Speeds through the land,
The train.

John Davidson.

IN THE DRAGON'S CLAW.*

BY FRANCIS Z. STONE.

The remarkable experiences of a Western editor, whose worst plight was by no means the charge of murder hanging over his head.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

HOLDEN, editor of the Santa Anita *Sun*, is on the verge of financial ruin, when Romeo Powers, a tramp printer, tells him that John Tolt is in town. He immediately seeks Tolt at the latter's hotel, where he finds him in consultation with J. H. Freeze, the man whose enmity has brought about the crisis in Holden's affairs. Morally, Tolt is under obligations to the editor, who was his partner in a disastrous mining venture. He reluctantly agrees to meet Holden at midnight at the depot, when the last train brings him back from a neighboring town. As soon as Holden leaves the hotel, Freeze cautions Tolt against the editor, and succeeds in tying up Tolt's funds. Holden gets a day's time by telling his creditors that he expects assistance from Tolt.

Markell, a friend of Holden, comes in from the desert and brings news of a strange movement among the Chinese. Holden goes to Louis, a Chinaman employed in a drug store, for information, and is warned not to print anything about the Celestials. To his surprise, Markell is alarmed at the warning, and asks him not to mention his name in the newspaper story of the Chinese movement. That night the editor is cautiously told by Louis that his life is not safe, but he arms himself and keeps his appointment with Tolt.

On the arrival of the train, Tolt tries to avoid Holden, who overtakes and upbraids him angrily. Just as peace is made between them, Holden is hooded by a blanket, and after firing wildly is rendered unconscious. When bystanders come upon the scene, Tolt is found murdered. Holden has disappeared.

So strong is the evidence of the latter's guilt that he is indicted after the inquest, and bloodhounds are put on his trail. Markell, who alone believes in his innocence, recovers the trail when the dogs have lost it, and is convinced by footprints that the editor has been carried off by the Chinese. Louis is summoned before the grand jury, but cannot be found.

Meantime Holden is carried to a great distance by his unknown captors, and finally finds himself at the bottom of a well so deep that the patch of sky at the top shows no bigger than a coin. And the bucket by which he was let down is not to be seen.

The editor contrives a kite, the sight of which attracts a bee-rancher, Zendavesta Smith, to the well. Smith has been searching for Holden with an eye out for the reward, and in his eagerness to capture him has himself let down in the bucket. But the rope breaks, and makes Zendavesta a prisoner in the hole along with Holden. Then comes an earthquake and opens a rift in the side of the well, which leads the castaways into a subterranean passage, where they find treasure and things more horrible. Finally emerging, they are just in time to rescue the Chinaman Louis from a grave in which he has been buried alive by his fellow countrymen, who are still on the watch. So bidding Smith and Louis remain in hiding, Holden makes a dash for it to obtain help, and succeeds in reaching the railroad and stowing himself away in a freight car. This turns out to be occupied by three tramps, one of whom is after the reward offered for his—Holden's—capture.

The editor bluffs them in the darkness by making a sound with his knife as if it were a revolver, and holds them at bay while one of the tramps is working to break the seal that has made them all prisoners in the car. When an opening is finally obtained, he bids them all clear out, then swings from the car himself, only to be felled by a blow from behind with a coupling pin.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOR BLOOD MONEY.

IT was the leader of the tramps who had felled Holden.

No sooner had his victim collapsed than the man uttered a low whistle. His companions issued from the gloom and stole up to him; if it had been light enough, the pallor of their faces and the trembling of their limbs might have been remarked.

The leader was pale, too, but from a mixture of greed and ferocity rather than from the fear which shook the others. Striking in the dark, he had taken no risk.

"Did you get him?" asked the Kid in a shaking voice.

"Dead easy. I knowed I could. Say, I've frisked him an' he ain't got no gun. He's got nothing but some chunks of lead. He was bluffin'."

What the tramp mistook, naturally

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enough in the darkness, for lead was gold from the leathern sack. He had not even taken the trouble to throw the bars away.

"Help me drag him under the car, an' we'll take a look at him to make sure he's the man I spotted him for," the leader went on.

With some hesitation and no assistance, the two laid hold and half-dragged, half-carried the unconscious form to a place between two cars, where the light would not be seen easily from the depot or the village.

Holden's assailant struck a match and lighted one of those short pieces of candle which the fraternity carry to illuminate the interior of closed box cars upon their travels. He sheltered the flame with the flap of his coat, and bent over the recumbent man.

The editor lay upon the broad of his back, arms and legs outstretched, eyes half closed, and lips slightly apart. His face was dead-white and smeared with blood.

Two of the tramps gazed at him with scared faces. But the other regarded him with hard, unflinching eyes.

"Say," said the Kid hoarsely, "you done it dis time, Punk! He's dead—dat's what he is."

"Sure t'ing," whispered the second. "Say, Kid, you an' me didn't have nuttin' to do wit' dis. You didn't oughter soaked him wit' no couplin' pin, Punk!"

"Youse mugs is bug-house!" protested the leader. "S'pose he was croaked, what can dey do wit' us? Didn't he pull a gun on us? All we got to do is to swear we soaked him in self-defense—mind dat, Baldy, an' you, too, Kid! If you two go back on me, it won't make any difference 'bout my gettin' clear, but I'll fix youse! But I don't t'ink dere'd be no trouble on account o' dis—he's de mug I seen advertised for on de tank, all right, all right."

"What we got to do is dis," said Baldy rapidly: "We leaves him here an' drills for San Mart'—dat's eighteen miles. Dere we makes a train for Los. Dey won't find him till mornin' an' dey won't be wise to who did it!"

"Dat's right!" assented the Kid eagerly. "Come on, Punk!"

The man addressed as Punk (which in the tramp's vocabulary means bread) stroked his bristly chin with a dirty hand and sucked his thin lips while his small, cruel eyes peered sidewise at one and the other alternately. Presently he straightened up and vented a great oath.

"Youse is tryin' to crawl, an' it don't go—see! I stays wit' dis mug if I has to, an' puts de trouble onto youse—youse run away an' I stayed—see? Dey'll get youse all right, all right! But dis mug ain't croaked for sure, an' if he lives to stretch hemp, dere's fifteen hundred reward. I got nerve enough to run a chance for dat."

"We ain't goin' to throw youse down," declared Baldy in a whining voice. "We wouldn't do dat nohow, Punk."

"Not on your life!" protested the Kid.

"Cut it out—cut it out! Hot air don't go wit' me! I'm dead wise to you cheap 'boes, see? Youse'll do what I say, becos youse is a-scared of me, see? Nuttin' else. Make a break for a get-away, an' I pipes for help an' puts up a song-an'-dance dat'll land youse in de pen."

"We'll stick," said Baldy.

"Course you will," returned the other contemptuously. "Dere's nuttin' else doin'. Now you two stiffs pick him up an' come along quiet."

The ascendancy of the older tramp over the others was complete. Either would have given anything he ever expected to possess rather than have taken up the body, but at the other's bidding they obeyed, whimpering.

Punk blew out the candle, and, crouching low, stole up the track between the cars.

They left the village and the station behind. Once a dog barked and they stopped, but the alarm came to nothing and they resumed their flight.

Perhaps a furlong had been traversed when the Kid stumbled and sank down, letting his end of the burden fall.

"I'm all in," he whimpered. "S'help me, I can't go no further—me back's bruk a'ready!"

Punk uttered a fierce imprecation and drew the razor he had recovered.

"Grab hold an' move on, or I'll open you up!"

He thrust the weapon, held with the back of the blade between the index and second finger, under the Kid's nose. The threat was no idle one; the march was resumed.

Staggering, stumbling, bathed in sweat from the unaccustomed toil, they proceeded another hundred yards, when nature gave out. The tramp is, as a rule, soft muscled and under fed; the pair were no exception.

It was apparent to Punk that they were really spent, for the Kid was hiccuping between gasps.

Being a leader of hoboes, it had never occurred to him that he could help, and save his men.

Punk's eye fell upon a hand-car vaguely outlined at the side of the track. It was a solution of the problem.

He gave his orders in a few words, and presently the car was on the track with Holden huddled against the upright support of the double lever.

"Now youse get behind an' push till we're far enough so's dey can't hear de pumpin'. Den we'll get on an' send her along for all she's wort'!"

There was a grade which made the running easy. Even if they had not recognized the sleeping village, any one of the tramps could have told by the descent that they were west of the San Gorgonio Pass.

After a quarter of an hour of pushing they manned the car and ran her with increasing speed through the darkness.

The leader had formed a plan before compelling the others to take up the body. The finding of the hand-car had changed his scheme somewhat, and a later circumstance had still further modified it.

But, as became a leader, he kept all this to himself. For the qualities which make for leadership are the same in trampdom as in the world of industry or finance. As he would have put it, he "kept them guessing."

Hardly a word was spoken, and that only to regulate the speed of the car, until they pounced down the long grade and across the bridge on the outskirts of San Martinez.

A mile or two away a few scattered lights marked the situation of the town; there was a smell in the air which came from the skirts of dawn. The night had turned.

"Hold hard!" ordered the leader.

The car came to a stop across the bridge. The men dropped their stiffened fingers from the levers and almost fell from the platform.

"Now lay him across de track."

"Say, youse is kiddin'!" exclaimed Baldy, in a frightened voice.

"Am I? Youse will find out pretty soon if I am. Plank him down now, in front of de car!"

The Kid began to cry.

"Don't do it, Punk," he begged. "Maybe he ain't dead yet, an' any ways, it'll wreck de train dat hits it! I ain't never done nuttin' like dat, Punk, an' I can't!"

"Say, it makes me dead weary to meet up wit' cheap stiffs like you two! If I didn't t'ink for youse, youse would be doin' time up in San Quentin inside a week. But I'm sick of furnishin' all de nerve an' all de brains! When youse has carried out my orders, youse can hit de pike, becos I'm t'rough wit' youse! But I'll put you wise for onct."

These words were uttered in a hoarse whisper. Punk sucked his lips for a moment and then explained himself.

"De trouble wit' you guys is dat you got no brains. Let youse do it, an' youse couldn't get away from nowhere, not if youse had money! If youse had 'a' had your way, you'd been pinched before daylight. For all youse know, we was spotted before dot side-door Pullman was sealed.

"Well, s'posen' dey found dis guy back dere, croaked, what happens? I gets away, but youse ain't wise, an' dey gets youse, an' I have to stay under cover. But we sticks him across de rails, a freight hits him an' den mixes up wit' de hand-car. Dey knows where de hand-car comes from, becos de section boss tells, so nachally dey t'inks dat dis guy swiped it an' maybe fell asleep runnin' down grade, or dat it got away from him an' he didn't have de nerve to jump. 'Course he's so mixed up after de freight bunts into him dat dey can't know he was croaked before dey

come together, see? Dat lets us out, besides savin' de county de expense of his trile. Say, I knowed he was crooked de minute I put my lamps on him, but I wouldn't put youse on becos you got no nerve an' you'd left him dere."

"It wasn't us dat soaked him!" whined the Kid.

"Don't you go for to make no cracks like dat!" snarled Punk, in an ugly voice. "Youse know me! I'm de boss of de road from Oakland Mole to de Jersey yards! Youse heard what happened to Flatcar Slim an' K. C. Red at Union Tanks! An' dey wa'n't de first. Are youse goin' to do what I say, or will dere be t'ree of you for de coroner stid o' one?"

The pair were so exhausted by their exertions, and so unnerved by the terror in which they held the leader, that flight was out of the question. As for fight, they were unarmed; neither did they belong to the class of tramps which fights.

That Punk had killed more than one man in the horrible duels that tramps fight with razors was a fact well known to them. Besides, the crime he had so recently committed and carried off so hardily increased the awe in which they held him.

So when he drew his weapon they did his bidding. White and whimpering, they laid the editor across the rails in front of the hand-car.

"Now that's done," he said at length, "I don't say anything to youse about keeping your faces closed, because if youse was to peep, de only safe place for youse would be de inside of de pen. Youse done de trick, an' I can prove it, if I has to. Now drill, an' if one of youse ever lets on to have seen me, he'd better crawl into a safe jail an' stay dere!"

The tramps set off up the track, staggering as they ran. Punk knew that his secret was safe so far as they were concerned.

He had so far involved them that they could not betray him without implicating themselves in the full measure of his guilt. And they would reason that with his superior cunning he would fasten the crime upon them while escaping himself.

As he stood gazing after the shadowy forms of the fleeing men, the far off rumble of an approaching train was heard, and the distant gleam of a headlight became visible. At his feet lay the editor, his white face discernible in spite of the gloom, and the back of his neck resting upon the steel rail.

CHAPTER XIV.

A CHANGE OF LUCK.

ROMEO POWERS' twenty-fourth semi-annual tour from Victoria to San Diego was crowded with incidents of a disagreeable nature.

There was a time when the tramp printer was the aristocrat of the road, recognizing no equal save the type of telegraph operator that became extinct after the great strike. The general introduction of the type-setting machine put an end to the typographical tourist as an institution.

It was gradually manifest to Romeo that the old order had indeed changed.

Here and there, like an oasis in the inhospitable desert that the world had grown, he found a welcome savoring of old times, but for the most part his reception was cold, if not hostile. He had been ordered out of composing-rooms in which, upon his entrance, work had been wont to cease; twice he had been arrested on the charge of vagrancy; collections were meager and grudgingly bestowed.

Worse yet, old comrades of the road were found working at the case, and these profanely held up to him the error of his ways while refusing to meet the assessment he levied.

He was classed with common hoboes, and to crown all, his garbled quotations and lame parodies met with sneers more frequently than applause.

In view of all this Romeo, after deep thought, came to a momentous decision. He abandoned the route he had developed as a provision for his old age, and headed for Arizona, where the last vestiges of the old West survive, following the trail of the gun-fighter, the "square gambler" and the camp-boomer.

Though it cost him a bitter pang to abandon the old road, there was com-

pensation in the spirit of exploration and adventure which his project awakened.

Tickling his vanity with pictures of the sensation that his departure would create, he turned Eastward, and at two o'clock in the morning boarded a freight train that was pulling out from San Martinez.

But Fate seemed wholly against him.

The train ran barely a mile to a siding and came to a stop with a clattering jar.

Romeo had squatted in a corner, his hands clasped around his knees and his head drawn into the collar of his coat. The shock when the train came to a standstill pitched him forward upon his nose, and as he was recovering himself the door slid noisily open, while the light of a railroad lantern illumined the shadowy interior.

Behind the lantern a hard, unshaven face glowered upon him like an embodiment of his destiny.

"Come out!" commanded a voice.

Romeo shuffled forward slowly, meanwhile groping in his fob-pocket with his thumb and forefinger.

"I got money," he said in a conciliatory tone.

In the old days such a statement had never failed to disarm the wrath of the most obdurate brakeman.

"Come out!" repeated the voice.

Romeo's world was tumbling about his ears.

"Say, I'll make it a half-a-dollar for the next division," pleaded the tourist.

"Not for ten, nor for twenty!" returned the man with the lantern. "There was thirty men fired off this road last month for takin' fares from bums, an' if I was back in the yard I'd have you pinched. Now git!"

Romeo was too slow to dodge the kick which accelerated his departure and sent him sprawling down the embankment. Picking himself up, he staggered away in the darkness, and presently the long freight train thundered past. He shook his fist at it and followed.

Just where he was going he did not know; his expulsion from the car had upset his plans to such an extent that he was for the present incapable of rearranging them. He had only one immediate desire, and that was for company —an attentive, if not a sympathetic ear into which he might pour the story of wrongs culminating in this final indignity.

Romeo knew that the tract of country lying between the tracks and an abandoned marble quarry a mile away was a favorite rendezvous for tramps. On winter nights when the annual movement was in progress it twinkled with their camp-fires like the bivouac of a brigade.

But the season was late, and not a solitary fire was visible. Still, he bethought him of a certain shanty formerly inhabited by the *zanjiro*, or ditch-tender, of a now dried irrigation canal, where he had once slept with two of his own craft.

There he would perhaps find society —in any event, a shelter against the chill which precedes the dawn.

The shanty was nearly hidden on three sides by a tangle of dried brush and vines that had grown rank with the waters of the canal and withered with their recession. It was half a mile from the tracks, in a cut between two hills.

Romeo approached it by walking up the dry ditch, but when he was within fifty feet he saw the flare of a match through the unglazed window.

It was not the discovery that the premises were already occupied that brought him to a halt—he had hoped for company. But not company of the type that had forestalled him.

His experience had made him familiar with every variety of the outcast, and he had more than once consorted with ex-convicts and trusted them in full fellowship.

But the man in the shanty, who was no other than Punk, had been marked "Dangerous" by nature. The shifty, evasive eye, the twisted mouth, the misfit features, the stealth and inharmony of movement which mark the congenital crook, were all present.

Punk struck another match when the first went out, and, appearing at the doorway—the door itself had long since gone to furnish fuel for transient tenants—bent over a form which rested with its back against the front of the shanty.

The white face was subjected to a scrutiny which lasted until the light went out. Then Punk seized the body by the collar and dragged it inside.

Romeo stood petrified with horror. He had recognized Holden.

Had the tramp then relented from the purpose which had driven his companions terrified up the track?

From the first Punk believed Holden to be alive, and during the trip on the hand-car he had convinced himself of the fact.

He frightened the others into helping him get the editor to a safe place, then forced them to lay him across the track that they might not only feel themselves accomplices in the murder but guilty of train wrecking as well.

This would insure their silence and flight, to the end that they could claim no share of the reward, which had been Punk's motive throughout.

It may be asked why Punk, whose aversion to labor has been noted, carried his prisoner half a mile up the dry ditch to the shanty, since, his companions having fled, it would have been an easy matter for him to have left him securely bound near the track while he went to San Martinez, notified the authorities, and claimed the reward.

The tramp acted as he did because, being a born thief, it was impossible for him to act in any other way.

The straightforward, obvious course he could not see, owing to the mental strabismus which afflicts his kind. His reasoning was founded on suspicion: he believed that all men were either actual or potential crooks.

If he went to the police with his capture, he had not the slightest doubt that they would throw him into jail and claim the reward themselves. He would have pursued that course in their place: his warped and distorted intelligence could conceive no spring of action except in the most sordid selfishness.

What he proposed to do in order to circumvent his natural enemies, the officers of the law, was to conceal his captive and then make terms with them through a lawyer. Greedy as he was, he never dreamed of securing the reward in full—it was merely a question of how good a bargain he could drive.

The deserted shanty was the safest place available for the disposition of Holden. He would do what he could to recover him, bind him hand and foot, gag him, and bury him under the floor.

Assured that the hut had no other occupants, he found a tin can, got water from the new ditch a hundred yards away, and, first binding Holden, went to work by the light of his candle.

Meanwhile Romeo Powers had rallied from the shock imparted by his discovery. At first he did not doubt that murder had been done, and that the tramp was hiding the corpse of his victim.

A horrible fascination held him; he could not have fled if his life had depended upon it.

When Punk left the shanty to bring water, Romeo stole up and hid himself in the brush which grew thickly about the place.

It was dark inside, but he lay down, pulling the dead vines and creepers over him.

Presently the tramp returned and lighted his candle. But before he went to work he fastened a piece of gunny-sack over the open window, which looked down the valley toward the track. The open doorway was masked by a hill, and there was little danger that a light would be observed from that direction.

There were many cracks and knot-holes in the board shanty, and through one of the latter Romeo commanded a view of the interior.

A great load was lifted from his mind when he observed that Punk was trying to resuscitate the unconscious man. But the suspenders, belt, and waist-strap which bound him, told their own story, and Romeo understood the situation at a glance.

The discovery did not alter his opinion of the tramp, for he had his own code. He was honest, and no bribe would have tempted him to betray a friend. His sympathies were always with the under dog.

He did not believe Holden guilty of the crime for which he had been hunted, but it must be confessed that he would have helped him had he been morally certain of his guilt.

Romeo knew, perhaps better than any one else, the overwhelming mass of public opinion that Holden must encounter if placed on trial.

He had, in common with all who live the life of the road, a deep distrust of the workings of the law in criminal cases. It was an article of faith with him that when the public demands reparation for a crime which has stirred it, the police furnish a victim who is too often a vicarious sacrifice.

He believed that Holden fled, not because he was guilty, but because he knew he would have no chance for his life if he stayed.

To appear in Santa Anita was to put his neck into a noose—indeed, there had been open talk of lynching.

If it was in his power to release the prisoner, Romeo would do it. It would be the first really criminal act of his life, but neither that phase of the matter nor a certain dingy heroism which it involved entered the little man's head. He acted upon impulse, according to his lights.

Holden opened his eyes and groaned. Punk bent over him with a scowl.

"Water!" gasped the editor.

The tramp held the can to his lips. He drank weakly.

"Now listen to me. Youse was too funny wit' dat fake gun an' I called youse, see? All youse has got to do is to keep quiet—odderwise youse'll get annuder t'ump on de block—youse is wort' jus' as much croaked as any odder way, see?"

"Oh, my head," groaned the editor.

"Never mind your block—dat'll be all right—but note what I tell youse about keepin' your mouth shut. Dere'll be a guy rubberin' when I tucks youse away in your little bed under de floor, an' he has de office (an order) to open up your pipes if you peep. I seen your mug a'vertised, an' I'm out for de stuff, one way or annuder. It says dead or alive, see?"

This last statement was a lie, but Punk threw it in for effect. It was lost, however, for nothing had any interest for Holden just then.

His head ached as though it would split—he was sick, dizzy, and pitifully weak.

When Punk proceeded to gag him with a dirty bandanna handkerchief which had recently adorned the tramp's own throat, he made neither protest nor movement.

Lifting a couple of loose boards, from which he had previously drawn the nails, Punk dragged the prisoner to the aperture and rolled him in.

There were eighteen inches of space between the floor and the ground. As he replaced the boards, he heard a feeble stirring beneath; beyond that there was no sign of life—the editor might, indeed, have been in his grave.

The tramp stepped to the door, and, blowing out the candle, looked upon the night, which was waning fast. In the east the darkness had already faded into the first dim streaks of dawn. He listened a minute, and then, entering the dry ditch, proceeded toward the tracks.

Whither the enemy had gone, Romeo did not know, but he surmised the latter's mission to be a quest for help among his own fraternity. Therefore it behooved him to act quickly.

Scrambling out from his cover, he entered the shanty, and, falling upon his hands and knees, groped for the loose boards under which the prisoner lay. He dared not light a match lest a backward glance of the enemy betray him.

"Mr. Holden!" he called cautiously. "Mr. Holden!"

Knowing the man was gagged, he did not expect an answer; he wished merely to acquaint the other with the fact that help was at hand.

A moment later he had torn up the loose boards and was struggling with the editor's weight.

Romeo was a little man, with age against him, while the editor was big of bone and long of limb. Raising him out of the coffin-shaped opening in the floor was an awkward business.

Staggering about in the gloom, tugging and panting, Romeo stepped on the end of one of the loose boards which happened to project over the hole. It shot up and fell with a slam like the report of a pistol.

Romeo's heart leaped to his throat. For a moment he stopped and listened, but, hearing nothing, his alarm sub-

sided. But he wadded another quid of fine-cut into his cheek, which already bulged like a squirrel's. He was an inveterate consumer of the weed, and when excited his capacity seemed without limit.

It was growing lighter. He took out his knife and cut the fastening which bound the prisoner, who had swooned again. As he was removing the gag Romeo looked up.

In the doorway stood Punk, with his razor heel down between the knuckles. The slam of the unlucky board had brought him back!

And Romeo was no fighter.

The little man never stood in greater peril of his life than at that moment. But for one thing Punk would have slashed him to ribbons at once.

He hesitated only because he did not know that Holden had lapsed into unconsciousness again, and he dared not risk it, since Holden would inform the police, who would be glad of any chance to ignore his claim to the reward.

But it would never do to allow the intruder to escape and carry his information to the authorities. Punk must get him away from the shanty and dispose of him, trusting to the prisoner's weakness to prevent his running off.

All this the tramp resolved during the moment he stood in the doorway.

Romeo dropped his eyes and peered about him for a weapon. There was none. The window was inaccessible. He was trapped.

The little man's jaw had dropped at the other's appearance. He had been, for the time, wholly unnerved. But the instinct of self-preservation sharpened his wits.

He raised his head and looked past Punk over the latter's shoulder.

"All ready!" he sang out, clapping his hand to his mouth.

Like a flash the tramp wheeled, presenting his back. With a bound Romeo was upon him; an instant later he was speeding down the dry ditch with a slashed and bleeding shoulder, while Punk cursed in front of the shanty, his hands groping blindly at his face.

For the little man had plastered him across the eyes with a quid of fine-cut tobacco.

In vain the tramp tried to pursue; he was not only sightless, but in such agony that when he stumbled and fell he could only roll upon the ground, alternately clawing at his face and digging his hands into the sand.

When his paroxysms had in a measure subsided, he managed to blunder to the new ditch, in the water of which he found further relief. But a good half hour had elapsed before he could think of aught but his sufferings.

Then, blinking and stumbling, he ran back to the shanty. His only idea now was to get the prisoner away from the vicinity, for it had grown quite light.

If he could only drive or drag Holden to the abandoned marble quarry, he would gain a respite in which to plan the next move. For he never questioned that the man who had freed Holden from his bonds would speedily return in the company of officers.

Entering the shanty, he shouted out a tremendous imprecation.

The bird had flown!

He tore up the floor. He ran crashing around the place through thorns and nettles; he scanned, with eyes that ached and smarted, the low sage-brush crowning the hills.

No living thing was visible save here and there a rabbit, frisking or browsing in the light of the rising sun.

It was impossible for him to fix his gaze upon any object for more than a second or two; then they swam in a blurr of tears. Otherwise he must certainly have overtaken the fugitive, who, in his weakness, could barely crawl.

Well it was for Romeo Powers that he did not fall into the hands of Punk; if curses bore weight, he must have been crushed flat under those launched at his head by the tramp.

He stood up, and raising his clinched fists above his head, frothed at the mouth with the vehemence of his anathemas, while the tears streamed down his cheeks from his bloodshot and swollen eyes.

Thus he failed to see two men who, drawn to the spot by his declamation, stole up the dry ditch and presently seized him from behind.

He fought like a trapped rat, and managed to draw his razor, but the blow

of a club numbed his wrist before he could use the weapon. A pair of handcuffs clicked and he was a prisoner.

His captors were officers from San Martinez.

"Now then," demanded one of them, "what have you done with the body?"

Punk shut his teeth.

"It's no use," pursued the speaker, stirring him with his foot as he lay where he had been thrown. "One of your gang tried to board a train out of the yards after you did the job. He lost his grip, and all that's left of him is up at the county hospital. He's peached, and we've got you dead to rights, Punk. You won't lose anything by making it easy for us by telling where you put Holden's body—you didn't leave it on the track, because we've looked."

The tramp sat upright.

"Body be blowed!" he said. "Dere ain't no body. De guy ain't no more croaked den what I am! I been holden' him for de re-ward. Say, if youse will stand in wit' me we'll whack up."

"It don't go," answered the officer with a hard smile. "Are you going to tell us where you planted him, or wait until we put you through the Third Degree?"

Nothing exasperates an habitual liar more than to be refused credence when he tells the truth.

He fumed, protested, and called down upon himself the most horrible afflictions in attestation of his veracity.

At length, against their better judgment, he half convinced them. After viewing the fragments of the bonds which had held the prisoner, they thought there might be something in the tramp's story after all.

And they began a search.

CHAPTER XV.

CAPTURED.

On recovering from his swoon, Holden found himself alone. It was when Punk lay rolling upon the ground.

The editor's ideas were hazy, and his head still throbbed, but the fixed purpose of getting back to Santa Anita which had upheld him throughout his flight still sustained him.

Staggering to his feet, he left the shanty and made off up the hill at the back. By the time the tramp could see at all, the fugitive had disappeared over the brow.

Left to his own devices, he must speedily have fallen into the hands of those officers who, acting upon the information afforded by the wounded tramp, were already hastening to the vicinity.

But no sooner did he appear among the sage brush at the top of the hill than Romeo Powers descried him. Making a détour, he intercepted the editor.

"Lie down, Mr. Holden!" he commanded. "There's a couple of cops coming down the track!"

"Is that you, Romeo? I'm so dizzy I can't see straight."

"Yes, it's me. But lie down, or you'll be spotted! Oh, you ought not to have headed back this way!"

"But I must get to Santa Anita—do you hear? I say I must!"

The little man pulled him down.

"You don't know what you're talking about," he said. "They'll convict you there, hands down. Your only chance is to lay low until the excitement has died out. If you hadn't skipped, something might be done, but as it is you haven't the ghost of a show.

"Say, I been down the line as far as San Diego, and everybody says you'll stretch hemp if you're caught. You don't know what you're up against. But you'd better be taken in Santa Anita fifty times over than in San Martinez, because the Fiesta is on, and the whole town is crazy drunk!"

"But I can prove my innocence!"

"If they get their hands on you in San Martinez, you won't have a chance."

"I'm going back if I have to crawl!"

"But you can't; you're too weak. Now I'll fix you up the best I can, Mr. Holden, and go back to town and rustle some grub and whisky. There's a chance that they won't find you where I'll stow you away, and if they don't, I'll come back after dark and set you going. The best thing for you to do is to strike over the range for Barstow and hit the Santa Fe. Come on!"

In his zeal he fairly dragged the edi-

tor along until they reached a short stretch of irrigation ditch—the remains of Mexican work, all but destroyed by time.

"When that tramp thinks things over, he'll hesitate to put the officers on until he knows where you are, for fear they will beat him out of the reward. And he won't be able to see very well for a while." Romeo chuckled. "Another thing, he won't reckon on your stopping so near the shanty; if he knows the ground, he'll head for the old marble quarry first."

While he talked, he covered the ditch artfully with sage brush.

The morning air assisted Holden's recovery; his head grew clearer, and he realized that in his present state it would be impossible for him to reach Santa Anita alone.

There was only one thing to be done. He must make Romeo his messenger to the sheriff. The country between was thickly settled, and open except for orange groves, whose straight rows of trees afforded little concealment for a fugitive who must keep moving. But by waiting until nightfall, he might get across the county line and surrender there.

The little man at first strenuously objected to the editor's program. He was, however, obliged to confess that the latter could not hope to remain long undetected in his present situation.

Then there was the Fiesta. He yielded to these considerations, and having made Holden as comfortable as the circumstances permitted, set off with the message.

Before entering the car from which he was so soon ejected, Romeo had laid in a supply of food for the journey, which he turned over to Holden. It was not much of a banquet—merely bread and cold bacon—but the fugitive, who was nearly starved, ate ravenously, and presently paid the penalty.

A fine dust sifted down from the withered sage brush that covered him, acrid and pungent. It filled his throat and nostrils, and his thirst, stimulated by the bacon and aggravated by this powder, waxed with the heat of the day.

The sun blazed, and the hilltops and valleys shimmered. Near the ground the air was dead and saturated with heat.

He lay choking. The blow inflicted by the tramp had broken his scalp, and a slight fever soon developed.

He strove to put aside the thought of water, which Romeo, with characteristic improvidence, had failed to provide. But it would not do; Nature claimed her rights—clamored for them.

His tongue was parched when he touched his dry lips. He pulled out a nugget of gold and tried to stimulate the salivary glands by mouthing it. For a while this afforded him a little relief, but it failed in the end.

A few hundred yards away there was water, and, what was worse, he knew it. If he could but wade into it up to the chin, and then draw it into himself until he was full to repletion, he thought he would willingly die.

Hours would pass before Romeo could return to help him to the county line where he had promised to meet Thatcher, the sheriff. Not until nightfall would it be prudent to venture forth, and before that he felt that he would be delirious with fever.

In the latter event, he was sure he would break cover and seek water without precaution. It struck him that it would be better to take the risk while he had his wits about him.

His brain was perhaps already affected, for he presently found himself crawling upon his hands and knees through the sage brush toward the canal.

The sun beat down upon his bare head; he was stifled by the clouds of vegetable dust which his progress through the sage brush raised. He was dimly conscious of a great shouting and the braying of a brass band afar off.

His heart beat hollow against his ribs. He had left his coat at his hiding-place, and his shirt sleeves were torn to ribbons.

Dirty, emaciated, smeared with blood, with eyes burning with fever, the *zanjiro* of the new ditch saw him as he dragged himself to the edge of the canal.

The *zanjiro* had been warned to keep a sharp lookout by the officers who had Punk in charge; they had gone to the

abandoned quarry, thinking possibly they might find their prey somewhere about the premises. The tramp they had taken with them.

At first the ditch-tender was doubtful if the wretch who was drinking the warm and brackish water with such avidity could be the notorious fugitive, but he took no chances. Revolver in hand, he ran to the spot.

When Holden looked up he found himself covered.

"Make a move an' I fire!" threatened the Mexican.

"I am unarmed, and too weak to lift a hand," returned the editor.

"Get up!" commanded his captor roughly.

Holden obeyed.

"Now you walk down the track. Slow, or I shoot!"

But the *zanjiro* soon saw that he had little to apprehend from his prisoner, who stumbled and fell half a dozen times from sheer exhaustion before the railroad was reached.

Bidding him keep his hands above his head meanwhile, he assured himself that the other was not armed, and then bound his wrists behind him with his neckerchief. Taking him by the arm, he half led, half dragged his captive in the direction of the town.

A road swung in beside the track and paralleled it for a furlong or two. Down it, in a cloud of dust, rode a brown-skinned Mexican in gala attire, bound for the Fiesta.

He was already well primed with *vino*, and could not have walked without lurching, though he sat his horse like a centaur.

His eyes fell upon the *zanjiro* and his captive. With a swirl of dust he lifted his horse up the embankment and jerked it back upon its haunches, the quivering forelegs inside the rail.

"Ha, *buenas dias*, Ramon! What have we here?"

"Fifteen hundred *reales*, no less! Brother of my soul, 'tis the accursed Gringo for whom they have vexed the land with dogs! I, Ramon Estudillo, *zanjiro* of the Siloam Ditch Company, a valiant man, and of Castilian lineage, overcame him of my own bravery, though my vocation is but to keep the waters free of floating weeds!"

"*Jesu Maria!* 'Tis a glorious thing and a marvelous! In thy honor shall be opened as many flasks of *vino blanco* as would overflow thy ditch! And I, even I, Pedro Morello, son of thy mother's cousin's stepfather, will aid thee to bring him in. This out of the love I bear thee, being of the same blood, and because of the honor thou hast won. Behold, I have the *riata* for the contest of the steers—with it I shall drag the Gringo in the dust at the tail of my horse!"

Now the ditch tender repented of his boasting. Above all things, being a Mexican, he wanted to lead his prisoner into the town alone in order that the glory of the exploit (for which he cared far more than for the reward) might be his alone.

"Nay, Pedro," he said. "It needs not the rope. That, in the state to which my prowess has reduced the accursed, would, I doubt not, speedily end him. Do you rather hasten and acquaint our friends with my coming, not forgetting my cousin Juana. Let there be wine ready."

The mention of wine afflicted the drunken vaquero with a sudden and overwhelming thirst. He waved his hand, and, putting spurs to his beast, galloped off, whooping, in the direction of the town.

The *zanjiro* shook Holden.

"Hasten!" he commanded. For his vanity starved for the banquet of applause of which he had just had a foretaste.

"Ha!" he exclaimed soon afterward. "See, they come to meet us!"

Holden raised his eyes and saw a straggling and disorderly crowd running toward them. There were pedestrians upon the railroad, flanked by horsemen in the highway.

"If it were any time but this," said Holden to himself, "I might have a chance. But if I do not have a rope around my neck within the next half hour, it will be because the day of miracles is not over!"

Indeed, he knew his people only too surely.

(To be continued.)

THE TURNER MONUMENT.

BY ALICE LUISE LEE.

As to the culminating phase of the borrowing habit.

SOME people have a perfect genius for being imposed upon. My husband has always said that I am gifted in that direction myself, and I have been uncomfortably suspicious that he told the truth. But it was left to the Turners to make my suspicions certainties.

Two episodes began about the same time for us in Mount Alva: the advent of the Turners and our ownership in a cemetery lot. From the first there was a close connection between the two because Mr. Turner had purchased the marble-yard and the family attended our church.

I saw them for the first time when they filed into their pew just ahead of ours.

I noticed that the wife and three daughters looked decidedly emaciated. I stepped on my husband's toe to call attention to their consumptive appearance, but was successful only in calling his attention to his corn.

As a physician's wife, I hold it is but natural that I should inform myself of the health of a newcomer at our church, because there are just doctors enough in Mount Alva for the churches to have one apiece, and it has come to be a religious principle with each church to employ its own doctor.

But don't think I was rejoicing at the Turners' pallor. Quite the contrary.

They were armored with a certain manner which would not permit a self-respecting physician to send in his account more than once, and as one after the other raised a thinly-gloved hand to her mouth and gave a series of little coughs, I had a vision of sundry future unpaid bills going to swell the already large number.

Of course, after service we introduced ourselves.

They were delighted beyond expression to meet another family of Turners. I did not share their enthusiasm. My conviction was growing that one family of the name was enough for Mount Alva.

Mr. Turner grasped my husband's hand with the unction of a long-lost brother. They immediately climbed their family trees as high as they could go, but found not one branch to which they could cling together.

Some way I was relieved. The Turners were very nice and ladylike—that is, all except Mr. Turner, and, although his manners were faultless, I was glad he did not belong to us.

Alas for the frailty of my ideas! I found there are more ways of belonging than being related.

It was not long before the Turners were fully launched in the church, contributing socially but not financially.

Mr. Turner was hurt at sight of a subscription paper. I found that out when I was collecting for the minister's salary.

He spoke of having seen better days when his generous soul reveled in large donations; of his humiliation at seeing his wife and dear ones reduced to poverty, and himself to the sordid and melancholy occupation of dealing in unremunerative tombstones.

He rolled his faded blue eyes up to the bell over the doctor's office door, and mentioned the fact that they were not strangers to tears. By way of illustration, he let a few fall. He remarked (so smoothly and adroitly that the words almost lost their sting) that if he coined money as easily out of other people's afflictions as a physician he could afford to be benevolent.

Whereupon I replied with my usual bluntness that he coined money out of the doctor's affliction, for his business represented the end of the doctor's gain!

These words he immediately construed into a reproach on his trade, and retired for a season behind his handkerchief. My conscience pricked me for my words to such an extent that on the subscription paper afterwards I wrote his name, and opposite it "One dollar, pd."

I did not tell the doctor, but he noticed, forcibly at times, that his coffee was not sweet enough for a month.

Then the subject of our new monument came up.

When the doctor decided to locate at Mount Alva, I rejoiced because of the beauty of the cemetery. I have always had a leaning toward beautiful graveyards, and a partiality for fine monuments.

I selected the lot myself, a little lot, for there would be but two to lie in it, on the summit of the ridge overlooking the town. It can be seen from our south window.

I spent hours there, summers, trimming the hedge and cutting the grass. I grew to love that spot, until the doctor used to remark that he knew where I had been because I wore my "graveyard face," meaning I was particularly cheerful.

I could scarcely wait for a monument to be put on that lot. I had one all planned in mind, a plain, slender shaft of granite. The only drawback to the plan was the cost of a granite shaft, no matter how slender.

But on the twentieth anniversary of our wedding-day the doctor laid the price of a monument in my lap. He remarked that it was a cheerful wedding present, and it was.

I wore my "grave-yard face" for days.

In using that money I determined to surprise the doctor by my business sagacity. The air of Mount Alva had proved a poor tonic for consumptives, and the doctor had already, figuratively speaking, laid the base of that monument in attendance on the Turners.

Now, I reasoned, why not employ Mr. Turner and deduct their unpaid bill? The first part of my reasoning worked like a charm—but not the last part.

He called the day after the monument was in place. I sat beside the south window, pretending to sew, but, in reality, gazing at the slender shaft which crowned the ridge of the cemetery and ornamented our little lot.

I knew what he had come for the instant he opened the office door and walked into my sitting-room. I hardened my heart.

I thought of the elegant black silk gown his wife had appeared in the previous Sunday, and of the new broadcloth suit which had adorned his comely proportions. I determined he should pay his bill. But he did not.

When he left he carried with him not only all my money, but two glasses of my best quince jelly and two bottles of cod liver oil from the office—the latter was better, he explained, than he could get at the drug store.

I can't tell just how it happened. There was a tale of woe and want which caused me to weep into the garment I was mending. I felt heartless when he explained that Mrs. Turner had purchased the elegant black silk to be laid out in, and, pending the time of laying out, was getting a bit of actual wear out of it, while the black broadcloth he had bought especially to mourn in.

I could see for myself, he said, that the time appointed for his mourning was not far away, and it behooved him to be prepared!

It chanced that Mrs. Turner got almost all the wear out of that dress before it was put to its original purpose. She also, incidentally, wore out the doctor and me.

Being of the same name and sitting so near them in church, and being such congenial spirits, so said the Turners, we seemed like members of their own family. This was an unfortunate circumstance for us, because it led the Turners to borrow nearly all our transportable possessions and—climax of borrowing—one which was not transportable.

This is the way the dreadful climax was reached. The day after Mrs. Turner died her husband appeared to me as I sat in the south window. His "time of mourning" had come, and he was simply dissolved in grief.

He had come to beg a great favor, a favor not for himself, but for his dear

departed—the loan of our cemetery lot! Might he not lay his angel wife under the shadow of our monument until such time as he could raise enough money to take her back to her old Iowa home?

He had noticed, such were the inscrutable dealings of Providence, that there was every likelihood of the lot's being unoccupied by its owners for years. For this dispensation we ought to be thankful and loan a bit of the ground to such as had not been kindly dealt with.

I loaned it.

When the doctor heard my story he whistled hard, and went to the barn. He has done that for twenty years when he has wanted to say unbecoming words to me. As though it were not painful to me to have my dear lot desecrated by strangers!

I felt so badly that I could not go to the funeral, and in the south window turned my chair that I might not see the granite shaft.

Still, even the doctor softened a little in the matter when the youngest Turner followed her mother in less than a month—and followed her to our lot, too, pending the time they both should be taken West.

I became positively mellow in the matter when a cold snap carried the second daughter to our lot in four months. And when the third and last child died and rested beside the others, the doctor himself headed a subscription paper with which I burdened myself.

I remember the snow was deep that week, and I had a cold, but I traveled miles with the paper.

People gave liberally, because they all knew of our unfortunate connection with the Turners. Many gave with the express understanding that Mr. Turner would use the money to send the present inhabitants of our lot to Iowa.

He received the money with thanks and blessings, and sent West the only member of his household that had escaped our lot.

The blow fell on us unexpectedly one morning at the breakfast table. A neighbor flew in and exclaimed wildly, did we know what use Turner had made of his gift money?

I arose and ran to the south window, expecting to see men with spades and pickaxes at work on the ridge. I was recalled by the neighbor's voice.

I remember every tone now. Mr. Turner had departed for the West, bag and baggage, on his *wedding tour!* He had kindly left to Mount Alva his debts and reputation, and to us his defunct family—but not his future address.

There on the ridge lies our lot. In the midst stands the stately shaft bearing the single word "Turner." Grouped at its foot are three of the name.

There is room for just one more grave, and the doctor says that as soon as he can find "the rascal" that vacancy will be filled!

BEFORE HER MIRROR.

I PAUSE before her mirror and reflect—
(That's what the mirror does, I take it, too)
Reflect how little it has known neglect,
And think, ah! Mirror, would that I were you.

She has no secrets that *you* do not know,
You and this crescent box of *poudre de rose,*
And even these long curling-irons can show
Much evidence of use, yet naught disclose.

Here when she smiles *you* know it is her teeth
She's putting to the test ere she depart
For the gay revel on the lawn beneath,
Or moonlight ramble that may break a heart.

Here she may blush until she, red as wine,
Knows that her triumphs have not ceased to be.
Here when she frowns (and looks still more divine)
You know, wise Mirror, that she thinks of me.

Tom Hall.

BY THE ENEMY'S WILL.*

BY BURFORD DELANNOY.

The fearsome experiences of a new tenant, involving the strange solution of a dark mystery.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.

A LONDON lawyer, who tells the story, hires a set of rooms in Raymond Buildings. One night he hears a key turn in the lock, and while he sits in the shadow a young woman enters and starts to open his desk. The occupant of the room thereupon takes a hand in the proceedings and accuses the woman of being a thief. She seems dazed at her position, and in spite of himself the young lawyer is somewhat touched at her evident distress. She starts to explain, but before she can finish she sinks into a swoon and remains unconscious so long that the lawyer goes in alarm for a doctor.

The physician is of a suspicious nature, and thinks the worst of the man who has summoned him under such singular circumstances. On seeing the girl, whom the lawyer has taken the precaution to lock in his rooms, he declares at first that she is dying, but she rallies under some powerful stimulant, and then, recognizing the lawyer, shrinks away in terror. The next day the lawyer goes out to post some important letters, and returns to meet the doctor on the doorstep and find, when they enter the bedroom, the girl dead with a dagger driven into her heart.

The lawyer is charged with the murder, but when it seems that through the circumstantial evidence he must be adjudged guilty, he is cleared by means of the speech he addresses to the jury. Returning to his rooms in Raymond Buildings, he is horrified by a call from a man who announces himself as "The father of the girl you murdered."

The lawyer is convinced that the fellow is mad. In fact, it is not long before he finds himself bound to a chair and then the man drops dead before him.

Managing to wrest himself loose, the lawyer is confronted by the problem of what to do with the body. Just freed by the skin of his teeth from the charge of committing one murder, it is scarcely likely that a jury will be so lenient a second time.

He finally decides to carry the body to the roof and drop it into the court, some houses further down. He is about to do so, when he is startled by the appearance on the roof of Zairbeni, a strong woman performing at the Hippodrome, whom he has met in the course of business and who has wished to marry him. Now, unless he does marry her—remembering that a wife cannot give evidence against her husband—she threatens to tell of his efforts to dispose of the dead man.

He gives in and they are married, but he proposes to leave her at once. This she will not hear to, and then admits without scruple that it was she who drove the dagger into the girl's heart, through jealousy. The lawyer, horrified, resolves to deliver her over to justice, when she calmly reminds him that a husband cannot testify against his wife.

Then he discovers that she has deposited the body in the rooms of one Kane, another solicitor in Raymond Buildings, but who has happened to be in Manchester at the time, so suspicion cannot fall upon him. Kane calls in a friendly way upon the man who has just become Zairbeni's husband, and suggests that for their joint satisfaction they engage the well-known detective, Watson Ward, to ferret out the mystery for them. What can the other do but agree, although his heart fails him when he remembers the paper he has found in the dead man's coat, a coat which he has concealed under two loose boards in his rooms just before his fellow-lawyer calls.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SPEAKING THE TRUTH.

A HANSOM cab quickly carried us to Watson Ward's chambers. During the time we were driving there, we did not talk very much: I was too full of serious thought.

Remembrance of the coat, remembrance of what I had taken from the pocket of it just as Kane had knocked at the door, was strong upon me.

I was anxious, very anxious, to read through those papers.

It seemed to me that they threw a light on the mystery of the murdered girl's visit.

The horrible fear was that, even assuming that they did, in what better position should I be?

I should not dare to say that I had found them in a coat which belonged to the deceased—the man found in his shirt sleeves in Kane's rooms. The in-

**This story began in the January issue of* THE ARGOSY. *The five back numbers will be mailed to any address on receipt of* 50 *cents.*

quiry would naturally result: how came you possessed of them?

For all that, I was very anxious to have the interview over. To get back from the detective's chambers, enter my own rooms, and finish what I had only started to read.

That little had outlined a big prospect. And that, too, when I had really begun to doubt the springing eternal quality of hope.

The cab stopped; we entered Watson Ward's office. Were lucky in finding the great detective within, and were shown into his presence within a very few minutes after our arrival.

Watson Ward was as much unlike the story-book detective as it would be possible to picture him.

Perhaps his face was trained to serve as a mask. Any way, there was on it a blank look; the eyes in it were apparently of the unseeing kind.

It is as well to say, though, that but little escaped them. I had proof of that later.

Kane set the conversation going: told his story. The detective listened to it, almost without a word of interruption, certainly without a word of comment. The recital at an end, he said:

"You have told me very little more, Mr. Kane, than I had gathered from perusal of the accounts in the newspapers."

This was not very encouraging. It had the effect of bringing an unusually sober look into Kane's face. He answered:

"Well, apart from the cat, there is very little more to tell you. I think that was about the only thing the police missed."

"And now," said the detective, turning to me, "your story. That is likely to prove more interesting, if you tell the whole of it."

There was such significance in his last words that I started—a movement not unobserved by my questioner. He continued:

"What do you mean to tell? Or do you propose to continue with me on the line you adopted at your trial?"

Again I started. This time the movement made the lower half of the mask wreathe into smile shape as the detective observed:

"Of course I know there was something behind that defense—if one can term it so—of yours. And I suppose my natural curiosity, a thing with which I seem to overrun, was what made me take such an interest in your particular case.

Surprised beyond measure to hear him speak so, I inquired:

"You—I hardly know whether I should thank you for your interest—you read, I suppose, all about my case in the papers?"

"No. I can't say I did."

"No!"

"I was present in court. I heard the whole of the trial for myself."

"You—were—in—court?"

"Precisely. I heard, too, that very able speech of yours. It is rather late in the day to congratulate you on it. I have attended a few murder trials in my time, but I don't think I ever heard a man speak so well."

"What did you mean then——"

"By asking you if you were determined to continue on the same lines? Well, I meant that perhaps I was the only man in court who detected the false ring in that speech of yours."

"False ring!"

"Yes. The something behind! Remember, coming to a private detective is not like going to the regular police. It is not part of my business to bring malefactors to justice.

"You come to me, and I tell you plainly whatever you tell me I receive in the same way that a priest receives a confession: no soul ever hears from my lips what my ears take in. I don't want to force you for one moment; I don't want even to suggest that you should tell me the truth, if you don't want to. But if I am to undertake this case, it will be solely on condition that I am in possession of the whole facts. Tell them to me——"

"And then," interrupted Kane—he who had been an attentive listener—bending forward eagerly, "you will undertake it?"

"I don't even say that; I don't like association with failures. There may be something in the case which may baffle

me as much as it baffled the regular police. I may be able to see that at once, and if so, I shall not embark on it. So that I won't answer you yet, yea or nay, until I have seen your respective suites of rooms.

"Show me those—tell me the truth before we start to see them—then, cognizant of all facts, I shall be in a position to make up my mind, and I will tell you whether I will undertake the solving of those problems for you or not."

There was a moment's silence. Watson Ward seemed to make it, so that the words he had uttered might receive due consideration. Then, turning to me, he said:

"Please quite clearly understand that I know you are absolutely innocent of the death of the girl who was found in your rooms."

Large-sized was the breath of relief I drew. Surprising as I found it, it was comforting, that utterance of his—very.

"Perhaps when I tell you that I am quite sure of that, it may induce you to break the seal of silence which was on your lips in court. The objection you had to open them then may vanish. There, no doubt, every one seemed against you; there, practically every man believed you guilty. That is not so now. Come, what is your mind? Do you want my services or not? What do you intend doing?"

"Tell the truth."

"That is good. I say so because, apart altogether from this being a business matter, my curiosity was whetted by what occurred in court."

"Yes?"

"You see, I noticed that in your speech you glossed over a point, and—don't mind my saying it—you acted a lie."

Clever brain behind that mask! The only soul in all the crowd of sufficient perspicacity to note my duplicity.

"I wondered what the weak spot could be. But I was not handling the case, therefore I was powerless to grasp it. Still, my curiosity has continued, and apart—as I have said—apart from the business aspect of the affair, I shall be glad to have it gratified.

"When a man is on trial for his life, it is usual for him to bring forward every point that may tell in his favor. For some reason you kept something back. I detected the falsity in your voice; and I have been curious to know the nature of it. Now you're going to tell me how and why, aren't you?"

"Yes. You may be surprised to hear me say that the theory of the prosecution was more reasonable than the actual truth."

"Distinctly novel!"

"For that reason, I thought it wise to accept their theory, rather than tell what would unquestionably have looked like a piece of invention."

"You sharpen still more my curiosity."

"The foreground of the picture, drawn by the prosecution, was my meeting with the girl, and the taking her home with me to my rooms the night before the murder."

"Yes. And of course—true or not—there was possibility in the suggestion."

"The jury were trying me for murder. There was the possibility—nay more, the almost certainty—that had I told them how the girl really came to my rooms, they would have thought me lying and discredited me. Hence my leaving them to believe the story which the prosecuting counsel told."

"I see that. Moreover, the prosecution could prove no motive for the crime, no ill feeling on your part. And there was the interval of the whole day before the murder was committed."

"That is so. That was why, when I spoke to the jury, I picked up the threads which counsel conducting the prosecution had left."

"From which I gather," said Watson Ward, eying me narrowly, "that you did not bring the girl into your rooms at all?"

"I was sitting in my chair—dozing, I believe—any way, not quite as alert as a waking man should be. It was dark. Both my doors were closed; the outer and the inner. I was roused from the reverie into which I had fallen by the sound of a key rattling in the outer lock."

"A key? Oh, that is it?"

"At first I thought my imagination was playing me a trick. But there came

to my ears a squeak of the hinge of the outer door. I recognized it in a moment —it had long needed oil. Before I had quite realized that that couldn't be imagination, another key was inserted in the lock of the inner door."

"Two keys. This grows interesting!"

"I knew then that I was not sleeping, dreaming, or imagining. Indeed, the rattling of the second key made me very wide awake indeed. So much so that I did not frighten the burglar away by any movement, but determined to see the thing through. I lay back in my chair in the darkness, awaiting developments."

"An act of wisdom, I think—under the peculiar circumstances."

"The door opened. Closed again. Then my ears were startled by the rustle of a dress: a woman's dress. She came into the room in which I was sitting in the darkness."

"Stumbling? Or after the manner of a person knowing her way?"

"That she knew her way was evident by her movements. She struck a match, and in its light I saw—for the first time in my life—the girl I was subsequently accused of luring into my chambers and murdering."

Watson Ward remained silent a full minute after I had ceased speaking. Then he summed up all I had told him in the trite words:

"Truth is stranger than fiction."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DETECTIVE TOUCHES THE SPOT.

THERE is the possibility that Kane did not believe what I had said. Any way, he seemed to wear a disbelieving look.

That troubled me little. Because it was plainly evident that Watson Ward did believe, and if he handled the case with a belief in my innocence as a basis of his methods, I felt that the future might yet be tinted rose color.

All the fear I had felt about consulting the great detective vanished.

"I am rather a believer in the power of truth," said Watson Ward, "but, after all, I can't help saying I'm inclined to think you acted wisely in abstaining from telling it on this occasion."

"And now," interpolated Kane, "that explanation having been given you, what do you say about undertaking the case?"

As if his answer depended on the time, Watson Ward pulled out and consulted his watch. A glance at the open page of his diary, and he said:

"I have an appointment here in just two hours from now. Raymond Buildings isn't twenty minutes by cab, is it? Shall we go?"

That was a sample of his succinct style of talking and action. Kane was prompt in answering.

"Decidedly! I am awfully glad you are able to come at once."

"It is as well perhaps," responded Ward grimly, "seeing that at the present time you've a dead body—more or less—on the premises."

That was a speech which accorded well with Kane's humor; he laughed heartily. Perhaps Watson Ward was a believer in phrenology, and had observed Kane's humor bump!

In a few minutes we were being driven back to Gray's Inn. The cab stopped at number three, and all of us went up to Kane's suite of rooms.

This was the first time I had been in them.

The arrangement of the flat was similar to that of my own. Through the open door of what corresponded to my bedroom, I noticed a flight of wooden steps leading up to the skylight, similar to those in Zairbeni's rooms.

I assume that they were so placed by the builders in case of fire; I do not know. It was a peculiar fact that they were absent from my own rooms.

After casting his eyes about the room, Watson Ward slowly mounted the ladder-like steps and handled the body of the cat which lay on the roof. He never spoke once during his examination, and we did nothing to disturb him in his investigations.

He was some minutes at the scuttle, and we assumed that he was endeavoring to decipher the initials on the bell. We did not see the cat ourselves. When he came down, Kane said to him:

"Well, is the cat of any help?"

"Will be, possibly," the detective answered. "It was a cat which was attached to the household of a well-to-do man."

The unexpected answer caused us to look up, wondering how he could possibly have gathered that. Kane was more impulsive than I. He blurted out:

"You found that out?"

"Not a very difficult thing to do," the detective answered. "The bell is of solid silver; the silk which goes round the neck is a band—the yellow band—which encircles a bundle of cigars; the cigars were of a very expensive brand. The inference is obvious."

He shrugged his shoulders as he ceased speaking, as if his deductions were such as a child might have made.

"Now," he went on, "show me the room in which the man's body was found. Take me to it direct—from here—where we're standing."

Kane led the way, slowly followed by Watson Ward; the latter with his eyes bent on the ground. A minute's inspection seemed to satisfy him.

"And now the room in which the cat was found."

"Oh, just facing you," said Kane, "there. This desirable flat is not a mansion where you can lose yourself."

He pointed as he spoke to the room leading out of the one in which we were standing.

"When you found the cat in the room was this door closed or open?"

"To the best of my recollection, both doors were open. They usually are."

"Now as to other tenants—your neighbors. Which of you gentlemen has lived the longest in these buildings?"

"Oh, I have lived here practically all my life," replied Kane. "I am looked on as the genuine Oldest Inhabitant."

"Then you are more likely to know the nature—the character of the tenants. Is there a well-to-do man living along this block?"

"Two or three, so far as I know."

"Just give me their names."

Kane rattled them off. He seemed to know all the tenants in the place.

Ward made a note of them in a little book he carried in his pocket. As he did so, Kane spoke:

"That story about the keys of the rooms of number one doesn't furnish a clue to the incident which occurred in my rooms."

"Why?"

"Well, I admit the possibility of duplicating keys in that——"

"More than possibility," said Watson Ward, turning to me with a smile. "Our friend here showed them to us—tied together with a piece of string."

"Exactly. But he explained that when he took possession of his rooms he didn't change the locks on his doors. He received the keys from the steward of the Inn and was content. There are a dozen ways by which other persons could have obtained duplicates to fit his doors."

"That's so."

"Well, it is not so in my case, I took the precaution, despite the fact that members of my family had preceded me here in occupation, of putting on Bramah locks, and here is the key of the two doors."

He tapped his finger as he spoke. There was a ring on it, and hinged into it was a key which he displayed. He continued:

"Now, unless an impression of this key was taken when I was asleep—and very soundly asleep—there can be no key in existence like it. That ring never leaves my finger, night or day."

Watson Ward wore an amused smile at the earnest manner in which Kane was speaking of his precautions—and his evident pride in them. At length he said:

"Well, what does that go to show?"

"Show! Why, that my door wasn't opened with a key. And I am given to understand that a Bramah lock is about the most difficult thing in the world for a cracksman to pick."

"So far," said Watson Ward, still smiling, "I don't think I have suggested that your lock was tampered with or your door opened."

"What? I say, how then could the body have been put in here?"

"Let me rather tell you how it could not have been put here."

"Yes?"

"It wasn't brought through the door."

"Not? I take it you don't believe in spiritualism—how then?"

"Through the skylight."

CHAPTER XXX.

DEDUCTIONS.

In possession of some of the facts, or supposing myself to be so, I was but little astonished at the theory put forward by Watson Ward.

What I lacked in the way of exhibition of surprise was made up for by Kane. At the detective's statement that the skylight had been used, he blurted out:

"My dear sir, that's impossible!"

Kane's impetuosity did no harm. Simply brought about a new edition of that amused smile of Ward's.

Seeing it, Kane continued:

"I'll soon prove that to you!" Plainly he was annoyed. "Come with me."

He walked triumphantly into the room in the roof of which was the skylight. We, of course, followed him.

"Do you see that padlock?" he inquired. "That was so rusty from want of use that I had to drop a quart of oil into it before I could turn the key to open the skylight when I put that cat outside!"

He let this off as one would explode a rocket, expecting astonishment at its outburst. But it failed—like a damp firework—of its effect.

As Kane ceased speaking, Ward's lips shaped as before its delivery. It was an irritating smile to Kane, evidently, for he continued with some heat:

"My dear Mr. Watson Ward, at least pay me the compliment of not thinking me an ass of the thistle-eating type! Moreover, there's not only my testimony; there's that of the police!"

The creases round the detective's mouth deepened. I noticed that they generally did when there was any reference made to the regular police.

Evidently Watson Ward's opinion of the intelligence of the force was not a very high one.

"I told the police just what I have told you about the locks and key. They at once went to the only means of entrance—apart from a ladder—and examined the skylight. There were cobwebs on it, actually leading from the glass itself to the frame-work, and they tried in vain to get the padlock open! What do you say to that?"

"Nothing."

"Ah!" Kane laughed triumphantly. "I thought I should convince you!"

"But you haven't."

"No!" The laugh came to a speedy termination. "Not——"

"I have told you that the body was brought through that skylight. It was. I will tell you more; about the person who carried it. It was a very strong, big, muscular man who carried the body into your rooms."

"My dear sir——"

"Now, come, Mr. Kane, rid yourself of the belief that I am romancing, if you can. And accept my theory—for what it is worth, if you like—that the skylight was used."

"But, my dear sir, let me tell you——"

"No, don't." The detective looked at his watch. "Time is a thing which there is no profit in wasting. Don't think me rude, but you did not bring me to hear your opinion, did you? I am under the impression that you want mine.

"I have asked you about a wealthy man living in this block of buildings who would be likely to smoke very expensive cigars, and you have given me the names of three gentlemen. I have those in my book. Let us sift them. We have perhaps got a little nearer. You can help perhaps a step further. You know these men? Tell me, which of them is of strong, big, muscular build?"

"Not one of them," Kane answered promptly; adding: "I know them all."

That would have been sufficient to disconcert an ordinary man. But Watson Ward disconcerted would have been a curiosity worth notice.

"Very well then," he spoke complacently, "then we must look further afield."

With that he turned to me and asked: "You, I suppose, don't know such a man as I have described?"

A negative answer was ready to my

lips. But I scarcely forgave myself the lie—for it was a lie.

Watson Ward was right, absolutely right, except in one small particular—the sex of the person who had carried the body on to the roof.

The strong, muscular individual was known to me—Zairbeni.

What puzzled me was how the detective could possibly have found out as much as he had done. I felt a certain constraint, did not like to ask him. But Kane was more inquisitive, or perhaps not so sensitive.

"You make your assertion, Mr. Ward," he said, speaking with a note of reluctance in his voice, "in such a way that you convince me."

"Rather a sudden change that. Extremes are dangerous, you know——"

"I've faith in you," interrupted Kane. "And therefore, although it seems opposed to what little common sense I possess, I believe you."

"Come!" Ward spoke good humoredly. "That's cheering, now! I don't meet with that blind, beautiful belief of yours every day."

"Well, as I possess it," answered Kane, "tell me now, how have you found out what evidently the police missed finding?"

"The police," said Ward, "perhaps do not look so closely into matters as they might. I have found it pays me to cultivate the habit of observation. I have so accustomed myself to it that it has become second nature. I noticed little things in my superficial examination of these rooms, and they convinced me that not only was the body carried through the skylight, but by a very strong, muscular man."

"You're a regular Sherlock Holmes!"

"Oh, don't say that, please." The detective affected dismay. "Were there a veritable Sherlock Holmes, and he carried his story-book methods into every-day life, he would go bankrupt on his failures—would score a hundred defeats to one victory. The power of observation is priceless; but it must be grafted on common sense. That is the real tree of knowledge, and only then it flourishes."

"But really now, Mr. Watson Ward, how did you discover this? Tell me—I am as full of curiosity as a monkey is of mischief."

"I arrived at it by simple deduction. When I stood on those steps to examine the cat, I was standing, as it were, in the frame of a picture—the frame of the skylight. To an observant man there were things to view all round.

"Naturally I examined that skylight; what I saw of the frame-work made me investigate further. Then I saw that—despite the fact that the padlock was so rusty that you had to oil it, and the intelligence of the police had found cobwebs spun from frame to glass"—the detective's smile came to the surface again—"I saw that some singularly muscular person had stood as I stood——"

"You could tell that!"

"Yes. Because not only the skylight, but the frame on which it was hinged—on which it rested, and to which it was padlocked—had been ripped up from its base—which is practically the roof itself."

"Is—it—possible!"

"Quite—with a very strong person handling the thing to be lifted."

"There might have been more than one man! Eh? In that case your theory wouldn't hold water, Mr. Ward, would it?"

The detective smiled at Kane's suggestion. He seemed to have a way of brushing aside objections in that simple fashion.

"Quite true," he answered. "If there had been room for more than one man! But the manner in which the woodwork had been ripped up, taken in conjunction with the proximity of the chimney stack, showed me clearly that not more than one person could work in that direction at a time."

"I see."

"When the strong, muscular man had completed his task, before he went away he replaced the padlocked framework he had lifted. There again his strength came into play: he forced it back into the position in which he had found it so cleverly that, if you hadn't opened the skylight yourself, I should never have discovered his handiwork."

"But how then——"

"The framework is solid, heavy

wood. With the additional weight of the skylight it would be far too heavy for any one ordinary man to lift it. Two protruding nails—projecting from freshly splintered wood—drew my attention to what had happened. These two nails hadn't gone home into their own old holes when the frame and light were pressed back."

"I—see."

Kane's eyes were wide open—as well as his ears. His admiration of the detective's methods made him slow of speech.

"That showed me something else. Though I am bound to admit it is a conclusion that might be reached by more than one route."

"What?"

"The time when the body was carried in here through the skylight."

"Time! You don't surely mean to tell me you have found that out, too?"

"In a measure—yes. It was dark."

"Why, this beats—do you mean to —any way, Mr. Ward, nothing seems dark to you. But how can you possibly know that?"

"Because, whoever did come here with the body was a very careful person; one anxious to cover up his movements. Could he have seen, he would not have been likely to leave those projecting nails to give his work away. It would have been so easy—had there been light—to have put them back in their proper position."

We looked up at the skylight. Its solidity made Kane, shaking his head, say:

"It must have been a strong man, indeed!"

"Yes."

Then suddenly turning round to me, Ward said, in what I took to be a voice full of significant meaning:

"To judge from your present physique, you must at some time have gone in extensively for athletics. Didn't you?"

Fear got hold of me. Was he going to accuse me of having carried the body on to the roof? Could this man with the human mask, who was so full of observation and deduction, have found that out, too? I literally shook in my shoes.

My blood seemed to run cold, and I was filled with dread.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE POCKETS OF THE COAT.

It was true; I had gone in extensively for athletics as a youngster—and later. Indeed, had always been an advocate of physical culture and an admirer of feats requiring an exhibition of its results.

That may serve as an excuse, if one be needed, for my having been drawn to Zairbeni.

Whether I betrayed any of the feelings which Watson Ward had excited in me by his question I do not know. It would have been impossible to read on that screen of a face of his any outward sign of observance of my fear.

Quite cheerily he said:

"Well, we have got through your rooms; quite finished with them. Now let us go over to your friend's chambers."

There was nothing for it but for me to lead the way. I did so, full of an indescribable dread. We came out of the one building and entered the other. Ascending the flights of stairs, I opened the doors of my suite one after the other.

When I had done so, I stood there in the hall-way, waiting for my visitors to enter and pass on. Watson Ward said to me:

"I am a collector of curiosities—a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles."

"Yes?"

"Those two keys, joined by the piece of string, are the ones the dead woman handled, aren't they? Do you mind my taking possession of them?"

How could I object? I said as much, and he put them in his pocket.

It never for a moment occurred to me that he would now have the run of my chambers. We all entered; the door was closed.

"We were successful with one skylight," said the detective genially. "As Mr. Kane might remark: it let in daylight. Now let us see what there is enlightening about yours."

He desired to see the bed-room; I at once led the way to it.

"M-m. A difficult thing to reach," he said, standing beneath the light and looking up. "You have not steps here like your friend?"

"No."

"As it can't be reached, I think we can dismiss this room from our investigation: any way, for the time being."

Relief! That word is a long way from describing the extent of my sensations. It had been the one thing I most feared: his examination of my skylight.

Having seen the other, I imagined he would insist on seeing this one.

"And now"—he put his hand on my shoulder while he looked me squarely in the face—"I want you to believe in my honesty."

"Honesty!"

"Yes. I am more a thief catcher than a thief. Do you grasp that?"

"I hear what you say," I answered, taking courage from his genial smile; "but for the life of me I can't understand."

"Well, I want you to leave me in your chambers alone."

"Alone!"

"Yes. You see I may have little observation methods of my own, which I don't want to give away. I don't want a rival in my own line."

He said this with an irrepressible twinkle of merriment in his eyes. It showed that he was not to be taken at his word—or, rather, that the word was to be taken with a seasoning of salt. It was equally evident that he wanted to have the place to himself.

After all, it only seemed a reasonable requirement. Besides, as I ran over in my mind the contents of each room, I knew there was nothing he could see which could in any way link me with the dead man who had been found in Kane's chambers.

Whatever he might find in any way connected with the girl need not trouble me. For that murder I had been acquitted. A man cannot in this country be tried twice for the same offense.

"Quite plainly, Mr. Ward," I said, trying to put a good face on the matter, "you mean you want us to take our departure, and leave you——"

"Like," interposed Kane, "the last rose of summer, blooming alone."

"You've hit it," the detective answered, "precisely. I do. I am more plain than polite perhaps, but most practical. Have you any objection?"

"What objection"—there was nothing else for me to say—"could I have?"

He still kept his hand on my shoulder, and I seemed to feel a kindly pressure from it; not the usual grip that a detective would be likely to give a man suspected of murder. I derived quite a lot of comfort from the contact.

"You see," he said, "I am engaged here on a sort of double-barreled task. If I can pull both triggers successfully, it will be as good as killing two birds with one stone. You are in one of the barrels, you know. Perhaps by being left to myself here, I may be able to find clues which others have missed. Something which will indicate the reason for the girl's coming here, and account for the manner in which she died."

He meant kindly all he said; meant it to be confidence inspiring; but my hopes rather fell when he spoke so.

Because I knew how the girl had died, and I knew that the woman who had killed her was—in the eyes of the law—my wife.

I knew, too, perfectly well that if I told why I married her, there must come to light my handling of the man's body. That would be bad. I could give no possible, acceptable explanation of what had occurred.

No. This was again an instance where it would be better to conceal truth. I was a strong man, of athletic build, a fact Ward had noticed. I should be accused of having carted the body from my own rooms and of putting it in those occupied by Kane.

If that charge were made how could I possibly hope to disprove it? I was not fool enough to think I could.

What would be the result of my accusing Zairbeni? Waste of breath. No, fiction must continue to be my trump card.

"How long," inquired Kane, "do you propose spending in these rooms, Mr. Ward?"

"Oh"—the detective looked round—"probably half an hour, or less."

"Well, come away and smoke a cigar

in my chambers," said Kane, addressing me, "and we will come back here to your place in thirty minutes."

There was nothing for it but to agree. On the road I had taken there was no room to turn back.

We went out, leaving Watson Ward alone; went into Kane's chambers; smoked like chimneys for the ensuing half hour.

We were full of talk as well as smoke —or rather Kane was—during that time of waiting. He had unbounded confidence in Watson Ward, and what had occurred in his chambers largely increased that admiration.

"My dear sir," he said to me, "if he's half as successful in finding clues in your rooms as he has been in mine, I believe that the whole mystery will be solved quicker than you can peel a pear."

Myself, I did not think so. Because the absence of a ladder from the skylight would, I thought, prevent Watson Ward from endeavoring to examine it.

I had not taken the correct measure, did not know the astuteness of the man. The knowledge was to be mine later.

At the expiration of the appointed time, we relighted cigars, put on our hats, and walked to my rooms. Watson Ward had heard our ascending footsteps; was waiting with the door open for us.

We entered.

"Well?" inquired Kane eagerly the moment we were inside. "Have you found anything?"

"I can't say that my search has proved altogether fruitless."

"You think," continued Kane perseveringly, "that you will be able successfully to probe this matter? Is that what you mean?"

"Well"—with a smile—"you see I always think that, or I should never undertake a case. I explained to you before, with me it is a matter of principle: my predilection for success; my dislike at being linked with failures."

Then for the first time I spoke. Since our return I had been terribly anxious to hear what he had found out, and yet reluctant to ask.

"You think," I said tentatively, "that in this case, from what you have discovered, you will not be linked with failure?"

"That's so. I imagine that there will be no very great difficulty in boring to the bed-rock of this affair."

"You don't mean to tell us then," said Kane, the note of disappointment loud in his voice, "what you have found?"

"Well now, I have shown you so many of my methods, haven't I? I'll let you know all later! And—as the conjurers say—show you just how it's done!"

"When?"

"Well, I need to pick up another link or two to complete my chain. Then I will write to you to come and see me. Now I must hurry back to keep my appointment. You have nothing more to say to me?"

"We shall hear from you?" replied Kane, still disappointed. "You will write?"

"Undoubtedly. Good-by."

He shook hands with both of us. I was rather glad he did do so with me. Had he suspected me of murder he would scarcely have gripped me by the hand as he did.

I instinctively felt that he was not that kind of man, and was comforted by it.

The shades of evening were falling. I had a few more minutes' conversation with Kane—declined his invitation to dine at the Holborn—and then I was what I sorely needed to be: alone.

My first act was to shut both doors; to shoot the bolts so that they could not be opened by the possessor of any keys. Then I determined to finish the reading of the paper I had found in the pocket of the coat, the starting of which had so excited me.

Down on my knees, I turned back the carpet, lifted the loose board, put my hand in and drew forth the coat. Felt in breast pocket, side pocket, tail pockets. No papers!

On oath I could have sworn I put the papers in the breast pocket. I felt again, but they were unmistakably not there. Neither were they in any of the others.

To my horror all the pockets were empty!

There was no doubt about it, the papers were gone!

CHAPTER XXXII.

REALIZATION OF FEARS.

By the next morning's post there was brought to me a letter from Watson Ward. It did not begin with a frigid and formal "Sir," but in it he "My dear'd me."

I experienced a vast amount of relief from that very simple fact.

Unless he was playing some deep double game—and I did not suspect him of that—it was evident that he was inspired by a friendly feeling toward me.

Certainly, had he considered me guilty of murder he would not have been likely to address me so. He had evidently discovered nothing to make him regret the friendly hand-clasp at parting. The letter read:

Will you come and see me this afternoon? I shall be in after two till four o'clock. I told you that I disliked to be linked with a failure, and you may be pleased to hear that in this case I consider myself in conjunction with success.

I have found out what your friend Mr. Kane instructed me to find out, and that little theory of mine about the trigger and the two barrels seems like going off. (That sounds closely allied to one of Mr. Kane's jokes!) I told you that you were in one of the barrels, and I have not pulled the trigger of that one fruitlessly.

What I have to say concerning you cannot fail to interest you. Do not bring Mr. Kane with you. He is instructing me, and I will make my report to him in due course—yours is more a side issue. Meanwhile, rest assured of my earnest wishes for your welfare.

I am, my dear sir,

Yours very truly,

Watson Ward.

If I read that letter once I read it a dozen times. Tried hard to read between the lines, but never once succeeded in doing so.

He said so much and yet so little. But the dominating note of friendliness in it was what pleased me.

What was it he could have to say "which could not fail to interest me"? What did he know? What had he found out?

If he had discovered my connection with the disposal of the dead man's body, how was it that he wrote me in the friendly strain he did? The whole letter was incomprehensible.

He had "found out what Mr. Kane had instructed me to find out." If so, then the detective's ability bordered on the miraculous.

Regret assailed me very keenly—that I had not made a clean breast of it to Mr. Ward. But the success attending my previous concealment of the truth, and the fear—the not knowing what use he would make of my confession—had thwarted the desire to which his friendly attitude had given birth.

Outwardly, he was everything that was friendly; but I was not ignorant of the reputation he bore of being a merciless man in the pursuit of clues.

Besides, there was a reward offered for the elucidation of the mystery. In addition to the money there would be a big reputation for the man who cleared it up.

Both these items were likely to appeal to a private detective, and they made me think—on reflection—that I had acted wisely in keeping a still tongue in my head.

The friendliness might be a portion of the disguise in which he garbed himself—even as his face was a mask.

The afternoon came, and I was punctual in finding my way to Watson Ward's chambers.

I had started with eager feet, but they lagged a little as I reached my destination: so many doubts dogged my heels.

When I entered the outer office and heard that the detective was out, I felt something as the man with an aching tooth feels when he learns of the dentist's absence. Some one was before me inquiring for Watson Ward, and the clerk was saying that he had suddenly been called into the country.

On the point of accepting that as an answer to my unspoken question, I was turning on my heels with intent to leave the office—relieved in one sense, disappointed in another.

The clerk saw my movement and called after me.

"One minute, sir, please."

Surprised that he should call me, then thinking that he wished to take note of my name, I turned my head, answering inquiringly:

"Yes?"

"Excuse me a moment, sir, please; Mr. Watson Ward left a letter for you. If you will kindly wait, I'll give it to you in half a minute."

There was nothing for it but to turn back at that. The clerk, having noted the message which the other caller wished to leave, that interview terminated.

The visitor went away, and the clerk turned to me.

"This way, sir."

He spoke briskly as he moved toward an inner door. As I reached it he paused for a moment, said apologetically:

"You see, sir, Mr. Watson Ward's at home this afternoon to you only."

I smiled—understanding then. We walked to the end of a passage; the clerk opened another door.

Entering, I found Watson Ward in smoking jacket and slippers, reclining in a lounging-chair.

"Well!" he exclaimed cheerily on seeing me. "You got my letter, I see. Sit down; make yourself comfortable there. Try one of those cigars; you'll find them palatable; a wealthy client of mine sent me a big case of them, as a—so his letter said—token of his appreciation of my services in a case of his."

Taking the offered cigar I lighted it, and sank into the chair indicated.

This was evidently the detective's private room, where, apparently, he did not usually transact business. It was fitted up comfortably, indeed luxuriously. Was in striking contrast to the desk and stool severity of the office part of his suite, through which I had been ushered.

Somehow I augured well from the cigar and admission to this sanctum. Even as straws show the direction of the wind, so did the weed convince me now that Watson Ward's feeling toward me was one of amity.

"Well," he said, "I suppose after receiving my letter you are filled with curiosity to know what it is I have found out?"

"I couldn't very well be otherwise than consumed with it!"

"Quite so. Curiosity! Human nature's full of it. But in your case, you have good ground for being even more than curious."

"What have you discovered?"

There was no resisting the asking of that question. If he really had not found out anything against me, I wanted to be put out of the misery of thinking he might have done so.

"Discovered?" he said. "Oh, many things. Do you know, I am inclined to think that in this interview of ours I shall startle you a little?"

"Startle me?"

"Yes—more than you think."

"Why me personally?"

"Well, because you are personally so mixed up in what I have found out."

Breathing became difficult for me. My old fears—despite the cigar and the sanctum—were returning. I said:

"Tell me."

"Well," he answered, "to take the last part of the matter first. I do that because I was instructed by Mr. Kane chiefly to find out how the body came into his room——"

"Yes."

"Well, I have found that out."

"You have!"

Leaning over in my chair, I almost rose to my feet, so great was my eagerness to ascertain how much he knew.

"The body was carried along the roof and brought therefrom into his rooms through the skylight."

"Yes, yes," I could not help impatiently interrupting. "You told us as much as that when you were in Kane's chambers."

"Precisely." The detective was leisurely flicking the ash from his cigar as he spoke. "But I didn't tell you that I had found out who the man was who carried it on to the roof."

White—very white—I must have grown just then. I knew that it was with difficulty I could shape words to say:

"You—found—that—out?"

"Precisely," answered Watson Ward quietly. "He was carried out of your room, through your skylight, by you yourself!"

A whirlpool! That is what I seemed to be sitting in the middle of—a whirlpool. A whirlpool of walls and ceiling. All the room went swimming round and round and round.

It was the realization of my fears!

(To be continued.)

THAT RUN TO HELENA.

BY JARED L. FULLER.

An engineer's tale of a trip on which he took long chances.

"YOU can lead the horse to water, but you cannot make him drink," is a mighty true saying, if a trite one.

And that starts me on the story of Jed Oliver, son of the president of the O. K. & G. before that road fell to the level of a mere branch of the trunk line.

Railroading used to run in families, as does a love of the sea. I used to hear it said that "so-and-so has more salt water than blood in his veins, and he's *got* to go to sea. His forebears were sailors."

Same with railroading. Show some kids the model of a locomotive, and their fingers'd itch till they got it apart and put it together again. A railroad yard had more attraction for them than a circus ground.

But it wasn't so with Jed Oliver. I could have told the old man how it was years before he found it out himself.

Young Jed came down to ride with me on the General Custer (in those days engines were given names same's boats are, and every big-wig in the four quarters of the globe was represented in the O. K. & G.'s round-houses), and all the way from the Junction to Powersport Jed sat up on the fireman's bench, pulling the bellrope once in a while as my helper told him, and expatiating grandly on the scenery.

"The scenery's good enough," said I; "but look at the roadbed. Ain't she a beaut? The coaches go over it like they was on rockers!"

"Um—yes," says he. "See the purple of those distant hills, Danny—and the browns on the lower slopes. It's fine!"

And him a boy only sixteen then.

Did he turn out an artist? Yah! Didn't I tell you he was old Oliver's son —Mason Oliver, who made money with both fists, even in his sleep? The boy couldn't go far wrong, though he didn't have a streak of railroading in him as wide as a razor-edge.

No. The old man drove him from one department to the other—from the offices to the shops, from the shops to the round-house, from there to holding a ticket punch, and then back to the offices. There wasn't a smell of railroadin' about him.

So Jed Oliver became a broker—'r something like that. Sort of a reckless, dare-devil kind of a life that is. You're rich to-day, and down to your socks and last paper collar to-morrow.

I was in young Jed's office once, when I took a lay-off from the old General and got to town. They have little machines there that spit paper tape out of 'em, and every time one of them little things goes *tick-etty-tick* it means a hundred dollars, one way or another, to the fellers who speculate. Or so Jed told me.

But he had time to enjoy the landscape all right, I reckon; and you bet he made money. The old man had a sneaking little pride in him already, though far be it from him to show it, when something happened in the brokering business that they call a "panic."

It's like what would happen along this branch if a big mogul engine should run wild at a time when the despatcher's chart was full.

Mebbe you know something about the brokering business? Been one yourself? Well, you *don't* look very prosperous, that's a fact. Then you'll know what I mean when I tell you young Jed Oliver was short on a stock that there seemed to be a big run on —"Nipper," they called it.

He said it was a big railroad stock, and that he had contracted to deliver to some man at Helena a bunch of this "Nipper" stock—I don't know how many thousands' worth, but mor'n I'd want to lose out of a month's pay—when he didn't have a smell of the stock about him.

Fool trick, wasn't it? But they tell me that's what them brokers do right along. So? Hum—no wonder you went broke, mister.

Well, to get down to cases.

Jed Oliver come down to me as the General Custer was standing under the shed at Acramack, a clean hundred miles from Helena, and he was some excited. I'd just backed down, and my stoker had tackled the General to the one o'clock express.

We had a baggage, mail, parlor, smoker, and two day coaches to our tail—a strong train for the run, when you consider the grades.

Jed had just dropped off the Junction train, having been up that erway to get the certificates of the stock he was short on. He knew a man who had 'em, and he'd taken up a certified check representin' more of his capital than he cared to talk about, and got the stock.

"I must have these in the office at two:thirty to the second," says young Jed to me, "or I'm a goner."

Not meaning that he'd be entirely up the spout. But the old man had only given him so much to make good on, and if he didn't deliver the stock he'd sold, he'd be posted in the stock exchange. I caught on that it would be a bad thing for him if he didn't get to Helena in time to reach his office at half after two, and I liked Jed.

"You leave it to me," said I. "Your Uncle Danny'll see you through all right—if the General keeps the rails."

"Do this for me and you'll never be sorry, Danny," says he, and went back to the parlor car.

An hundred miles in an hour and a half isn't so much. Well, it may not be now, but it was in those days—and over that road. And he'd got to have five minutes to spare, sure, when we came into Helena.

There were two stops. Old Oliver had put the express on a schedule that looked fine on paper; but every man, down to the last wiper in the roundhouse, knew that we weren't expected to keep up to that schedule.

I had a minute to spare, and I ran up-stairs to the despatcher's office.

"Larry," I said, "give me right of way to-day in fact as well as theory. If there is a freight or accommodation gets on my time, I'll ram 'em."

And I told him why.

He promised to send orders ahead to hold anything off my schedule, and I had little to worry me then but the weather. And that was nasty as could be. I don't remember a run when the conditions looked worse for making good time than it did that day.

It had rained a good part of the week, and the hollows were steaming, while more than one bad washout had been reported along the line. The trackmen had had all the forenoon to repair these, however; but it was what might come yet that troubled me as the General Custer pulled our tail out of Acramack.

You're from the East, I take it? Well, the sort of runs we have out this way are some different from what you're used to, eh?

They tell me even the fast trains there stop at about every pair of bars. On that run to Helena there was one stretch of thirty miles where you couldn't spot a house bigger'n a trackman's shanty. Make time? Well!

But the confounded mist on this day—pretty near a fog it was—hampered me some. I didn't dare let the old General out same as I ought. Not at first.

All the time I was expecting the mist to thin out, you see, so't the track would be plain. I didn't care to ditch the express, even to save the credit of Jed Oliver.

But when we pulled in at Harriman's, a run of twenty miles, and my watch told me it had taken twenty-seven minutes, I didn't need Jed to remind me that we'd never do it in the world at that rate.

He was some white-faced, was the boy, but there was a down-grade not far ahead, so I encouraged him.

"We'll make it if iron holds together," I said, and I snapped the train out of Harriman's to a tune that must have made the passengers sit up and take notice.

Bill Carney, the conductor, came to the front of the baggage car and shook his fist at me while we descended the Freshwater grade. Gee, it was a wonder I didn't drop a car on one of those curves!

And the Freshwater valley, after you've dropped down the grade into it, isn't free of corners, either. Take it altogether, the old branch made pretty near a crescent in crossing the valley—a sort of a grapevine twister that looked pretty on the way-map, but killed time terribly.

Up on the north was a mining country—Ellis Creek, Noman's Lode, the Creeper Bonanza, and all those second-class holes in the ground. The miners had banked up Ellis Creek into a big reservoir so as to have water over the dry season, and that puddle was full.

I'd been afraid of it for several days; and when I saw that I was flagged at Becham's Crossing, just after we got down into the valley, and sighted the operator standing on the platform waving a paper, I bet with myself what it was.

Either the reservoir had already given way and swept the bridge at Ellis from the foundations, or she was likely to go any minute.

The last guess was right, and I owed myself a bag of fine-cut.

"Danger of reservoir dam bursting. Run half time to Ellis Creek."

That was the order I got. We'd only slowed down to get the despatch; I wouldn't stop and sign for it, and the General Custer was forging ahead again.

I thought of young Jed sitting back there in the parlor car and what depended on his getting into Helena with that "Nipper" stock, and I just let the wire drop out of the window of my cab.

There might be a chance of our getting across the creek in time if the fireman still shoveled the coal into her and I coaxed the machine along at the best lick possible; but if we slowed down to Ellis Creek—twenty miles it was—there'd not be the ghost of a show for young Jed to meet his engagement.

Taking chances? Well, I suppose so. Every railroad engineer takes them—and pretty nearly every time he goes out on his run, too. Jed had taken chances in his business, and it was a narrow squeak if he pulled through; I was taking a chance to help him.

And he was watching things pretty close, for there he came crawling over the tender when we were not more than five miles out of Becham's, and dropped down behind me in the gangway.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Reservoir is likely to burst at Ellis," says I. "We gotter get there first before the bridge sails off. The General Custer's a good engine, but it can't jump a forty-foot crick."

"What were your orders?" he asked, eyeing me narrowly.

"He knew how sharp his old man was after a fellow who disobeyed.

"No orders at all," I said kinder glibly. "But you leave me alone, and we'll git ahead of that freshet."

"Well, if we don't," said he, "I'm a gone coon. But don't you forgit your duty, Danny. There's two hundred passengers, beside me, aboard."

Like his cheek! Me, that had been driving an engine when he was in pinafores.

"You hustle them passengers into the forward coaches," says I. "If there's any chance of our getting over Ellis Creek ahead of the deluge, we'll do it."

He saw my point and nodded. Then he went back and tackled Carney, and although Bill was the pig-headedest chap that ever wore brass buttons, he knuckled under to the president's son.

They drove the passengers like sheep into the smoker and parlor car, while the old General was eating the way along that grapevine curve across the valley. Five miles below the crossing I got a glimpse of the dam in the foothills.

By that time the mist had risen and it looked to me as though somebody had whitewashed the whole front of that dam. I knew what it meant; the water was flooding over it, and it was only a

question of moments before the embankment crumpled up and let down the "drink."

We weren't in any danger where we were, for only half a mile out of Ellis station, where the ore was shipped, the road dipped down into the lower level of the valley. It was through this deeper cut the water would pour when it was released.

I got a red flag just before the pitch into Ellis, but I ran the risk of it's meaning something beside the expected flood, and kept on. We were then switching around curves like a woman trailing her skirts on a ball-room floor. We were smoking along now I tell you!

The tableland was grown to wood for the most part; but just before the tracks dove down into the creek gut a plain view of the hills above and the dam opened on our sight. And I tell you it was something to shake a man, 'specially as the old General was steaming plumb into the face of what was coming.

For there was the water bursting through the dike in half a dozen places —we could see it as plain as plain! My stoker give a yell and dropped down on to the step of the gangway.

I don't blame him much for wanting to jump, but if we got across the bridge I'd need him to pitch coal into the General if we were to reach Helena in time.

I swung myself down off my seat and grabbed Jake by the collar.

"Stay into this or I'll have your life!" says I, threatening him with his own shovel.

He crumpled up and I jumped for the lever again. We were pitching down the grade, and the General swayed from side to side like a boat in a heavy sea.

We made so much noise ourselves that we couldn't hear the dam burst. But the sound must have been something remarkable.

It looked, as I glanced up the valley, as though the embankment had been blown up. One instant those spouts of water poured through the holes they'd found; the next breath the whole dike crumbled away and a solid front of water—white as snow it was and forty foot high—bore down the creek bed.

Of course it spread out some; but the force with which it traveled seemed to keep it in a high, solid wave. And the distance from the dam to the spiderlike bridge over the creek at Ellis looked a mighty little way.

Down grade as it was, I let the old General have every ounce of steam there was in her. I've wondered since if the drivers really did keep the rails. The road-bed was especially good here; but my teeth were nigh about rattled out, we went so fast.

We struck the lower level and shot on toward the bridge. There was a short curve here, and I dared not slow down for it. I had to run the risk of snapping off the train's tail.

And, by Jove, we did just that! As the General Custer's pilot overlapped the edge of the bridge I glanced back and saw the two empty day coaches doing a grand somersault turn down the embankment into the water.

Afterward I learned Jed Oliver had smashed the coupling behind the smoker and so lightened the train; but at the moment I expected to see other cars dragged down by the weight of the day coaches.

And lucky it was we lost those same two cars. As I'm a sinner, I felt the spray from that wall of water in my face as we shot across the bridge!

The flood stood up there, far above our heads, and the train seemed to shoot right across its face. The smoker (the last car) was flooded with the falling crest of the wave, and the last trucks had scarcely left the bridge when, glancing back, I saw the entire structure caught up by the flood and twisted into a shapeless mass of steel girders and frayed cables!

I guess I couldn't believe we were out of the grip of that deluge—not for a minute. Then I saw Jake standing there, white-faced under his grime, and open-mouthed, and I took it out of him.

"Get to work!" says I—or words to that effect, and with some more trimming; and he began to give the General coal again like mad.

We didn't stop until we made the other ridge and came to Brandon. It was 2:05 then, and we had eighteen miles to run to Helena, but down grade.

The Brandon agent was for having us stop for orders; but I wasn't taking orders just then. I'd got away from the despatcher—who thought me some miles the other side of the smashed bridge—and there was still a fighting chance to win out for young Jed.

"Will you keep on, Danny?" he asked me.

"Might's well be killed for an old sheep as a lamb," says I. "But you'll have to make good for those two cars, I reckon, with your daddy."

So we went on, and for the first time in the history of the O. K. & G. the express came into Helena on time. The General poked his pilot under the Helena shed at exactly 2:25, and craning my head out of the window of the cab, I saw Jed Oliver make a flying leap from the parlor car step and run for the street.

He made his office with the stock on time, if that's any satisfaction. But next morning I was up on the carpet before Mason Oliver, and what he said to me before he told me to go and have my time made up was a caution to cats!

Lose my job? Sure! Discipline must be maintained.

But do you see this watch? Open the back and see that date engraved there. That's the date the General Custer made that run to Helena.

The O. K. & G. directors got wise to the time we made, and that was the beginning of changes on the old road that put it ahead. And when the new schedule was made up I got the best run of all.

Hired me over again? Sure; but mebbe the reason old Mason Oliver did it was because young Jed cleaned up a tidy little sum out of that stock business of his, and bought into the O. K. & G. heavily. Young Jed wasn't a man to forget a friend.

FORCED INTO SOLDIERY.*

BY GARRETT SWIFT.

A story of a good deed which brought about a train of extraordinary experiences in the land of the Sultan.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE INN AT ORLITZ.

WE continued to hear the shouts, now drawing nearer and growing louder.

"Do you think they will discover us?" asked Adria.

"No," I said, "I do not. The old hermit has been here too many years to be mistaken. As I judged the situation, the band has gone as far down the road as we could have gone, and now are returning and beating the forest to find us. Leave it to the hermit."

We sat there, clasping hands, and suddenly heard the gruff voice of Michael.

Michael, we knew, cared nothing about finding us; he had set us free. But to save himself from suspicion he must, of course, show some enthusiasm in the search.

"How, old man!" he said. "We are in search of two strangers who were our guests and left us last night, carrying with them much gold and silver."

"Is this so?" asked the hermit. "I am sure I have not seen them."

"Oh, we'll find them," said Michael.

"Two men?" inquired the hermit.

"No. A man and a woman."

Michael spoke loudly. I thought he did it more for the effect it would have on Alexandro's warriors.

"Such is my belief and my religion," answered the Syrian, "that if a man and woman came to my cave and asked for shelter I would give it to them."

"That I know full well. But in this

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bare hole what shelter could you give a woman? We have been as far as Orlitz, and they have not been there."

"Is Orlitz still safe?" asked the hermit.

"From us. One can never tell when the Osmanlis will sack it. Anything is good now for an excuse to kill."

"I trust this trouble will soon be over," said the hermit.

"Over! This trouble over! Not while Turkey is Turkey. Well, we must go on. We must find those two."

We heard the clank of swords and the tramp of feet, and soon the hermit returned to us.

"That was Michael, the fellow who set you free," he said.

"Yes, we recognized his voice."

"I fancy from his manner he was not anxious to find you. But if Alexandro knew the truth, poor Michael's head would roll on the ground. I think you had better remain till night."

We slept some during the day, the old hermit keeping a close watch for intruders. At night we had a substantial meal.

How the old fellow managed to live so well I could not imagine. I had always associated with such hermits the idea of continual fasting and want of comforts.

But Schryada was not one of that kind. We had roast fowl and vegetables, rice and coffee.

"How do you manage to obtain food?" I asked.

"I gather it. I have firearms, and shoot what meat I need. In my trips to Orlitz and other places I buy what I wish."

"Then you have money even in this place."

He smiled and shook his head and gave no explanation.

As darkness came on I felt a reluctance to leave the hermit, but I felt that we must be on our way. He brought from one of his secret storehouses two rifles, with the ammunition for both.

"You are going out into the world with your lives to be defended," he said. "Take these. May the Almighty bless you and guide you safely to your destination. I shall watch over you. If you are in trouble I shall know it."

"Do your eyes penetrate the darkness and see all that happens in Turkey?" I asked.

He answered merely with his inscrutable smile.

At dark we left him, and, following his advice, took the road to Orlitz.

"Orlitz," he explained, "is a Christian village. There you will find Syrians, Greeks, and a few others, all Christians, with a number of Jews. You will be received with favor. Tell not who you are or what your mission is. Say that you are missionaries. That is the best recommendation you could have in Orlitz. There are missionaries there."

Leaving the cave, we took the little winding road and pushed on as rapidly as possible. When we reached the foot of the mountain we saw the campfire of some soldiers.

Not knowing what to expect from them, we made a détour through the woods, and thus escaped notice.

It was midnight when we reached a small village on the highway. It seemed to be asleep, as all such villages are.

We entered by way of a little turn in the road, past an inn that showed no hospitality, and took our way toward a light we saw in the distance. We reached the light and found it to be a lantern hung outside a small inn kept by another Syrian, as we judged him from his name.

The light seemed to bid us welcome, and I knocked at the door. There was no answer, and I repeated the summons.

Finally a window was cautiously opened and a head thrust out.

"Who are you at this time of night?" was the demand.

"We are missionaries, and have lost our way," I answered. "We met the good hermit Schryada, and he told us of your inn."

"He did!"

The head was withdrawn, and in a few moments the owner of it opened the door.

"Are you friends of Schryada?" he asked.

"We are. The hermit has entertained us in his cave. But we were in haste to proceed. Can you give us two rooms for the night?"

"Indeed, that I can do," he said.

"For friends of Schryada I will do all that is possible. Will you eat?"

"No, we had a hearty supper at the cave. We thank you."

"Take your rifles to your rooms," he said. "There are Turkish soldiers about. Several Christian villages have been attacked. We are waiting."

"But the village is dark. I thought everybody was asleep."

"No," he said, shaking his head. "No one is asleep in Orlitz this night. But if there is an attack, I will awaken you. Come, I will show you to your rooms."

Adria was given a small but decent room, and I, immediately across a little hallway, was placed in a chamber that would be about as large as a closet in an ordinary house. But it had a bed, and that was all I wanted.

"Are you afraid?" I asked Adria when the landlord had gone.

"No," she replied, "I am not afraid, but somehow I seem to know that the night will not be spent peacefully."

In the light of the lantern the man had left us she seemed to be pale.

"Fear nothing," I said. "Go to bed and sleep. I will take my bed from my room and place it across your door. No one can disturb you without first waking me."

"That gives me a feeling of security," she answered. Then she kissed me, and the door was closed.

In a short time I was prone upon a portion of my bed before the door of her room. My rifle was grasped in my right hand as I dozed.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEFENSE OF NUFET'S INN.

It would not be truthful to say I slept. But I did fall into a semi-conscious state, in which brigands, Turks, Pashas, and other elements of Turkish life were entangled.

Perhaps I rested thus for an hour or two, my bed being a rude straw mattress thrown on the floor of the hall.

Whatever the length of time, it did not seem long before I was startled by a shout that rang through the inn and awoke Adria, who, secure with me as the guardian at the door, had fallen into a refreshing slumber.

I leaped to my feet and grasped my rifle. For a moment thereafter all was silent. Then a tremendous hubbub began.

I groped through the gloomy hall to where the tumult seemed greatest, and found the proprietor of the inn gesticulating wildly with his servants.

Two lanterns furnished the insufficient light they had, and from appearances one could not make out whether the affair was a riot or a gathering of vociferous friends.

"What is the trouble?" I asked.

"Trouble! Oh, this is worse than trouble!" groaned the inn-keeper, whose name was Nufet. "This is death."

"That is the vortex of trouble for some. Who says it is death?"

"Who says? Mashallah! Is that a good word for a Christian?"

The man laughed in a manner that proved he was beside himself with fear.

"Is it an attack?"

"An attack! It is a massacre."

"Oh, come. I don't see it."

"The man killed by lightning never sees the bolt."

"But where is the attack? Who makes it?"

"Turks! Turks! Turks!"

He wrung his hands, and a more helpless individual claiming the title man I never saw.

"But where?"

"In the village. Hark! Do you not hear rifles?"

I went to a near door and listened. I could hear shooting in the distance, but there was nothing to indicate that a battle was being fought in our immediate vicinity.

"There is some kind of a fight," I said. "But it certainly is not near us."

"Near us! It is too near us! I have seen these raids before this. In twenty minutes a hundred Turks will be shooting us."

"Well, then, what are you going to do?"

"Do! Do! That is what I am thinking."

"You don't seem to be thinking to any good purpose. If you are sure the

Turks will come here, let us get a band together who will fight."

"Fight! Fight! But we are Christians."

"Are you?" I asked, surveying the cowering, cowardly group. "The Lord must be proud of you."

I turned and walked back to the door of Adria's room. After a loud knock I heard her voice.

"Is that you, Frank?"

"Yes. Are you ready to come out?"

"I am awake and dressed. I hear shouting. Come in and tell me what it is all about."

I opened the door. The girl stood near the window of her room with her rifle ready for instant use.

"It is said that the Turks have attacked the village," I explained.

"That is what I thought it was," she said calmly. "Are there many?"

"Everybody here is too demoralized by fear to know anything," I answered. "Nufet, the proprietor of this grand establishment, who is a Christian, is wringing his hands in terror, and doing nothing to defend his place."

"I know," she said. "They will crouch and cower and then tell of the great excess of numbers that overcame them. I suppose a dozen wild brigands are attacking the village and could be defeated in ten minutes by twenty determined men."

"I believe you, Adria. But where are we to get the twenty determined men?"

"Well, I'll be one, and you are worth three, so that's four. If the innkeeper will be another, that's five. We ought to get fifteen others."

"Is this Paris education?"

"No, this is common sense. The world is filled with horrible news of villages being sacked and robbed and the people tortured by bandits or Turkish soldiers. Do you think that a company of soldiers could sack a town if the inhabitants fought like men?"

"But the men are mostly in the army. The women——"

"Nonsense! I am a woman. If I could not fight better than the average man in Turkey I would—well, I'd be ashamed."

"And do you insist on fighting?"

"If this inn is attacked I shall fight till my last—no till next to my last cartridge is gone. Then—we will say good-by."

"You are a heroine. Then come! Let's get the crowd in order."

The wildly gesticulating throng seemed frightened by our appearance. Adria and I each carried a rifle, and she, in her peasant's garb, seemed as dangerous as a fighting man.

In fact, not one of the group knew she was a girl.

"What will you do?" asked Nufet, rubbing his hands together and glancing with apprehension at our rifles.

"You fool!" I said. "We are going to defend this inn. Have you no guns?"

"Yes, we have guns."

"Then why not get them out and defend your homes?"

"But the Osmanli?"

"Nufet, you are either a fool or the biggest coward I know. Now get your guns and let us stand together and defeat these Turks."

"But they cannot be defeated."

"Well, you are the limit. A few women from my country could teach your men courage. Get the guns."

"Alas!"

"Cut out your alas! Get the guns!"

Nufet looked at me a moment in dumb surprise. I had clubbed the rifle Schryada had given me, and stood as if ready to batter out what little brains he had.

"I will," he said sullenly, and left.

Shortly he returned with half a dozen miserable old rifles that had not been used in years and were about at the end of their period of usefulness when they had been in service.

"Now get your men," I ordered him.

"They are coming! Listen!" he cried. "Who will fight?"

"All!" shouted the group.

Nufet flung the rifles on the floor and fled. We saw his portly and manly form disappearing through a doorway leading to some hiding-place he had beneath the level of the ground.

The others, about six in number, turned to flee in like manner.

"Stop or I will kill you all!" I shouted, aiming my rifle at the one nearest the door.

"Ah, *effendi*, do not shoot! We are Christians!" cried one.

"Well, if you don't take these rifles and do some fighting you'll all go to your Heavenly reward," I said, now too angry to be choice of speech. "Get that coward Nufet out of that cellar. Load these guns. If I catch a man among you running away, I'll shoot, and I can shoot straighter than the Osmanlis."

"We will! We will!" they cried.

One, who was a Syrian like Nufet, rushed to the cellar and returned with the innkeeper, trembling in every limb.

"Here, you!" I said. "We are going to defend this place. Do you intend to help, or do you want to be shot now?"

"Oh, *effendi*, I—But what will you do?"

"Shoot you if you don't lend a hand. Understand that, my friend?"

"But we are men, and can run and hide. If there were woman to protect!"

"Have you no wife?"

"Yes, but—she is old—it will not matter."

"This," I said, turning to Adria, "is what is called Christianity in the East."

"Such cowards!" she cried. "Tell them I——"

"No," I said, "we are all men here, and we will fight. Now get those guns ready for action. Do you not hear the attack coming nearer?"

"Yes," said Nufet. "That is why I am afraid."

There was a young Jewish traveler who sold rugs, and he seemed the bravest of the lot. He picked up a rifle and looked at it.

"These are loaded," he said. "I will stand by you."

A Persian, too, traveling with two camels, so he told me, picked up a rifle and looked down the barrel to see if it was ready for use. A kick at the old lock would soon have proven to his satisfaction that it was.

A Greek took up another and picked at the lock, with the result that an explosion occurred, sending a bullet so near Nufet's head that that martyr fell upon his face and began to pray.

Truly, if it had not been for the fact that I had Adria to think of, this would have been to me a most ludicrous scene. There was scarcely a man in the crowd brave enough to take a gun and face the Turks I knew were coming, for I could hear the firing.

"If what Schryada told us is true," said Adria, "why do the Turks attack a peaceful village?"

"To make it unpeaceful," I answered. "That is the only reasonable explanation, but we have no proof that what Schryada said was true."

The roars and shouts of men outside suddenly became very audible.

"Bar the doors!" I ordered.

Nufet seemed to sink into himself. The others accepted me as their leader.

The doors were barred, and they stood waiting for orders.

"Take a window—two to each, and shoot any man with a gun, for such are on no peaceful errand to-night."

I did not care if I killed a hundred Turks. Adria's life was in my keeping.

I reasoned that any measure was justifiable if it prevented her from falling into the hands of the Turks.

The Jew, who was the foremost among the group, leaped to a window. A moment later I heard his rifle.

"Have they come?" I asked.

"I saw one and fired," he replied. "I am not going to wait till they come."

"There you are," I said to the group. "There is a man. You fire at any man you see with a gun. If all the other inhabitants of Orlitz are like you, you won't hit a villager because they will be in their cellars hiding."

"Come," said the Jew. "I see several. It is time to fight."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE END OF THE BATTLE.

ADRIA stood by my side at a window. The Jew, true to his first evidence of courage, was blazing away with his old rifle. Nufet, waking up to what might almost be called courage, joined him.

I peered into the darkness, and as I saw a man run from one cover to another, I fired. There was a howl.

Rifles were fired toward us, too, but none took effect, except to bring cries of terror from Nufet and the Persian.

Adria, I truly believe, was the coolest person in the inn. Calmly she stood at

the window and fired as she saw any one at whom to aim.

The rear was guarded by some of the others, and it seemed to me that the attacking band was a small one, and now the onslaught had concentrated round Nufet's inn.

I hoped to see the men of the village come to our assistance, but none did.

"This is what will be called a terrible battle to-morrow," I said. "Why, two dozen men of this village, if they were brave enough, could drive out these marauders. But they are skulking in cellars to find safety."

Adria's answer was to fire.

Then for a time there was no one to be seen, and the firing ceased. Nufet was for congratulating ourselves that we had vanquished the enemy.

"Don't be so quick about the congratulations," I told him. "You are as fast to stop a fight as you are slow to enter one. Those fellows are only planning. We must remain right here and be ready for a worse attack."

"The cowards," said the Persian, whose teeth were chattering in terror. "Why do they not come out and fight?"

"That is about the least favor they could do you," I told him in disgust.

I wanted to show him the courage of a woman, but dared not speak of Adria being in disguise.

"Hush your noise," said the Jew. "It will be an attack by fire. See?"

From behind a building there came two men with torches. They made a rush, and I fired at the foremost.

He fell, but groped away, leaving his torch in the street. The other, missed by the Jew, came on. He flung his torch, and it struck the front of the building.

"What is this? A wooden building?" I asked Nufet.

"This is a modern inn," he answered from the corner.

"Fireproof, elevators, and all," I said, and Adria laughed.

It was a miserable affair at best. So far from modern was it that I wondered that Nufet even knew the word.

The torch fell to the street without doing any harm, and the one who threw it fled to shelter.

"Is this a wooden building?" I asked again.

"No, it is made of clay."

"Well, they can't set fire to mud," I said. "Now get ready to give a volley to the first one who shows himself. Don't be afraid. They can't see us, and we can see them. Here come three with torches. Let go!"

Four rifles blazed out, and one Turk fell. Away went the others, dragging his body with them, and from the band there came a shout that Allah was Allah and Mahomet was the prophet of Allah.

No one cared particularly about the truth of this, but kept a close watch on the point from which they had all been appearing.

"Look!" I cried. "They are moving."

We could see them slouching from one house to another in the rear. Where the owners of those houses were it was impossible to tell. Probably hiding somewhere under the floor.

"Shall we fire?" asked the Jew.

"No, not unless they attack. We do not wish to take life unnecessarily."

The Turks slunk away, and for a time all was quiet. We remained at our posts, and Nufet became very brave again.

"I knew they could not enter this inn," he said boastfully.

"Oh, you knew!" I rejoined. "Well now, let me tell you what I know. I know that if you didn't have brave men here to-night to defend your inn, it would by this time be sacked and you probably dead. I also know that if you don't get us coffee and liquor at once I'll pound your head."

"Yes," he said with eagerness. "I'll go."

"Funny," remarked the Jew. "That kitchen must be a safe place."

While Adria and I were smiling at this observation, we heard the patter of feet on the street, and put our guns out of the window, ready to shoot.

Two people, a man and a woman, came rushing up.

"Oh, let us in," cried the man. "This is the only safe place in Orlitz."

"All Orlitz would be safe if you had some men in it," I said. "Where is your rifle?"

"I left it home, fearing I would be killed if the Osmanlis saw me with it."

"Brave man! Do come in. Nufet, let the hero enter. For it is such as he that will defend Orlitz to-night."

Nufet had just appeared with some liquor. The frightened woman who entered gulped some down, and fell shuddering in a faint on the floor. The man stood waiting for his.

"Get a gun and make ready to fight!" I said.

"But—but we came for shelter."

"I'll give you shelter!" I told him angrily. "I never saw so cowardly a lot of fools as there seems to be in Orlitz. Now get a gun, and if you don't stand up and fight when the time comes I'll shoot you myself."

Shudderingly he took a rifle.

"Are you one of the Christian population?" I asked.

"No, I am Islam."

"Well, I am glad," I said. "I would dislike to know that all the cowards were Christians."

"You must not be too harsh," put in Adria. "They have been persecuted so long."

The opinion of the newcomers that the inn was the safest place in Orlitz proved to be shared by many. Others came running, some with rifles and others with spears and swords, and soon the tavern was crowded with defenders.

"You could have driven the Turks out of Orlitz," I said to one.

"Yes, but we had no leader. We will fight now," he answered.

We heard a shout that seemed to promise an attack, and I ordered Nufet to lock the door.

"Oh, wait!" said Adria. "See these people!"

A man and woman came rushing to the door. They were quite aged, yet the man was firm and bore a rifle.

Upon entering, in the feeble light of the lantern Nufet carried I saw that he was white-haired, as was the woman with him. He was a handsome man, and she had once been a handsome woman.

"May we join your forces?" asked the man. "I heard there was a brave little band making a stand at Nufet's inn, and we rushed with the rest to join you. Where are the Turks?"

"They slunk away, but I think we shall have another attack soon."

"Let them come," he said grimly. "I have taught Christ to these people, my wife and I have suffered much in Europe and Asia, and great sorrow has been ours. But the Lord does not call for martyrs at the hands of these devils, and I shall fight to defend my wife."

"Glory halleluiah!" I shouted. "Give me your hand! I wanted another real man. Now then, you cowards, get together and stand ready! If anybody hides I'll shoot him. Here they come!"

And come they did, with "Allah Ill Allah, Mahomet Ressoul Allah" screamed from every throat.

"Fire!" I commanded.

The Turks, seemingly amazed at the increased amount of firing, halted.

"Again!" I shouted. "We've got them now!"

Once more the Jew, the white-haired man, and Adria and I let fly our charges, and some of the others followed us. The Turks, now cowed by our display of force, turned away and ran down the street.

Suddenly there was a tremendous outcry. Torches flashed. Cries of rage and pain could be heard. A terrible rifle firing was kept up continuously, but not at us.

"Down with the Osmanlis!" came a cry, and I knew the voice for Alexandro's.

"Down with the tax-gatherers!" came another shout, and I knew our friend Michael was in the field.

It was soon over. The bandits, overcoming by superior numbers and courage their opponents, soon had them either wounded or captured, and probably both.

The attack on Orlitz was over, and I thought of the hermit Schryada.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MISSIONARY'S PRAYER.

NUFET managed to get some coffee going round by the time the firing had ceased.

"I tell you," he said boastfully, as he handed a cup to the Jew who had fought so bravely, "I knew they could not sack this house. I have kept them off before."

"You! You keep them off!" was the reply. "You wouldn't stand up before two children."

"Oh, I know how to fight."

"Hurry up," I said. "I want some coffee, and so do these other people. We saved your inn for you, now get us some refreshment."

"I am now upon that errand," said Nufet blandly, and he proceeded about it in his leisurely way.

"Do you consider us out of danger now?" asked the white-haired man.

"Yes, sir, I think with the cessation of firing the Turks have gone out of business. I know those bandits, and they are very thorough in their work."

"I should much regret any loss of life," he said. "But I am glad that God has spared us, and He uses His own methods in His work."

"The losses in these bloody affrays in the East are much exaggerated," I explained. "I don't suppose a life has been taken in Orlitz to-night."

"No, I suppose not, but that was due to the courageous stand you made here, and the arrival of the bandits. Let us, however, not forget our debt to Him who has preserved us. Let us pray."

The white-haired man looked noble, almost sublime, as he stood with his flowing snowy locks falling to his shoulders. Every person present, and there was a motley horde, respectfully listened.

"Our Father," he began, "we bow before Thee to-night in thanksgiving. Thou hast once again shown Thy mercy and hast brought us through danger and into safety. Accept our thanks, O Lord, for this exhibition of Thy love and care for those who are Thy children. Let the light of the true word be spread in this land that these things shall come to pass no more. It is in Thy teachings that we learn to spare our fellows and turn our minds to ways of peace.

"And now, let this, our daily prayer, ascend to Thee, and even in the evening of our lives let the petition sent up from the hearts of my faithful companion and myself be answered ere we part from earth. Let Thy blessing fall upon us in our work, and permit us, O Lord, once more to gaze upon the features of that one whom Thou gavest, and who hath now been lost to us since infancy. O Lord, day after day for seventeen years we have sent up this prayer, and yet have learned not the dwelling place of the Greek Gironda, nor if he and our child are still alive——"

"Father! Mother!"

The cry came from Adria with a tempestuous outpouring of emotion. The old man paused, for in the young peasant with me he could have had no thought of finding a woman.

The missionary turned and gazed, while his wife, staring with eyes that grew brighter, rose beside him.

"Henry!" she said. "Henry! Let us be careful what we do."

"Who are you?" asked the man, and his voice quivered.

"I am Adria Morton," she answered. "Gironda is dead, and told me—before——"

She could say no more, but flung herself into the arms of the missionary's wife and wept with her.

"This amazes me," said the missionary, turning to me with a puzzled expression. "Is your companion a girl?"

"Yes, and she has adopted the peasant's dress as a measure of safety. Are you Henry Morton?"

"Yes, that is my name. You know the story?"

"Gironda told it to me as he was dying. Adria and I have had some rough experiences, and escaped only a few hours ago from those same bandits that saved us from the Turks. My name is Frank Webb. I am delighted, of course, at the way things have turned out to-night, but would never have expected to meet you in Europe. Gironda said you were in Armenia."

"Yes, we have been in many places, a spirit of unrest keeping us forever moving and inquiring, searching, for the Greek to whom we gave our child for safe-keeping. We trusted him, but for years we have believed he was false to the trust. We could not find him."

"He was a rich merchant of Salonika. Adria inherits all his wealth."

"Do you tell me this? My girl a rich woman?"

"Rich, I should say, to compare with one worth millions in America."

"But Gironda was poor."

"He made much money in Salonika."

"Father!"

Adria had left her mother and advanced to the old man. He broke down, and with a sob clasped her to his breast.

"Our prayer at last is answered!" he cried. "The Lord God has watched over you and over us, and now has again brought us together. This is indeed the hour we have been praying for for so many years."

"Say, what is this little scene?" asked the Jew, who did not understand the English that was used.

"This, my valiant friend," I said, "is the reunion of daughter and parents after seventeen years."

"Tell us about it. All these people know the missionary and love him. Tell them the story."

So, as well as I could, I rehearsed the tale of Adria, and had an audience that hung upon my words with every breath.

"This is a fairy tale," said the Persian. "I seem to dream. We have a battle, then a domestic scene. Well, here is more coffee. It is well to celebrate such an event."

The interest in Adria's case was such that no one thought of time, and the dawn found us all still at Nufet's inn talking about the strange circumstance of the meeting of Adria and her parents.

"It is daylight," said Mr. Morton, pointing through the open door at the growing dawn. "We have had no sleep, and all must be weary. Let us go to our homes. The Lord has preserved us."

They dispersed, in twos and threes, and finally the missionary started.

"You, Mr. Webb, must accompany us. I do not know the exact state of affairs between you and my daughter. I trust and believe it is honorable."

"It could be nothing else," I told him. "I have learned to love your daughter, and believe she thinks well of me."

"Father, I love him," said Adria. "He has been good and kind and brave. But for him, with Gironda dying in that mosque, and the bandits, I do not know what I should have done. Certainly, it would have been worse for me, and I might have—might have—killed myself."

"But we will not talk of that," he said. "Let us go to our home and there we can talk the matter over. Mr. Webb, I look upon you then as my son. Come with us."

We went to the cottage occupied by the missionaries, enjoyed a breakfast, and then a sleep.

After that it was the same old question. what to do, where to go?

"To my mind," said Mr. Morton, after I had told him the conversation with Schryada in the cave, "this hermit is more than half right. Certainly your position is peculiar. But I am not without influence at Constantinople, and perhaps my presence at Salonika will not injure you. Your mines are at Moglena, and your home Salonika. Let us go there first."

"My interests are at Salonika until I can see just what I possess," said Adria. "Gironda owned a house there, and that is now mine."

"I fear nothing," said Mrs. Morton, who sat constantly with her arm around Adria. "And I want to see my daughter in her own garb."

"Let us waste no time. We will brave the pashas in their lair," said Mr. Morton with a laugh.

I never saw two such happy people, nor three, including Adria, but I think the old people, who had prayed incessantly for seventeen years for this meeting, showed the greatest buoyancy.

They were not troubled with the fears that beset Adria, who confided to me that she dreaded what Achmet Bey might do when we reached Salonika.

"My darling, with your father and me to guard you, you need not fear Achmet Bey," I answered.

"It is not so much that. But what will he do to you?"

"Let's go and see."

It did not take long for Mr. and Mrs. Morton to pack their few belongings. The railroad was again running, and at Mitziska we took the train.

We arrived in Salonika to find the city quiet. We went first to Gironda's house, only to find it closed. The servants had left, fearing what might be expected to those who remained faithful.

We discovered a saddler near by who had been intrusted with the care of the house, and he at once admitted us, and

sent members of his own family to wait upon us until we could complete the quota of servants the place demanded.

"Let us visit Mahmoud Pasha," said Mr. Morton. "We can gain nothing by delay."

"Father, be careful!" Adria cautioned him.

"My dear child," said Mr. Morton, looking at her fondly, clad now as she was in the ordinary garb she had brought from Paris, "I have traveled from Erzeroum to Orlitz, have been in Sofia, and Belgrade, have visited many pashas and valis, and am here yet. Fear nothing."

We went together to the palace, and upon announcing our names were admitted to the presence of Mahmoud Pasha.

The Vali of Macedonia was sitting cross-legged as usual, smoking his *chibouk*. His little eyes twinkled when he saw me.

"Excellency," I said, "I have returned, and take pleasure in presenting my friend Effendi Morton, a missionary in your province."

"I am pleased to meet the *effendi*," said Mahmoud calmly. "How did you find your mines?"

"My mines? I have not been near my mines since you released me from prison to go learn who was the leader of the revolt against the Sultan."

"Is that true?" he asked, with an effort at surprise. "And did you learn?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

"The Sultan."

Mahmoud Pasha stopped smoking a moment and looked at me, then at Mr. Morton. His face was a perfect blank. One could not tell what was behind the little pig-like eyes.

"I think it is about over anyhow," he said. "The Powers have modified the intended reforms, and I think we shall have peace. Have you met the Greek Gironda and his daughter?"

"Gironda is dead, and his daughter is Adria Morton, daughter of the *effendi*. I want to know what my status is to be in Salonika. Am I safe from persecution?"

"Persecution? Persecution?" repeated Mahmoud Pasha, resuming his pipe. "There is no persecution here. Effendi Morton is equally safe. I know his name well. You will remain and develop your mines, of course."

"Yes, and expect to marry Adria. I wish protection for her from Achmet Bey."

"That," said Mahmoud," is easily granted. Achmet Bey is dead."

"Dead! How was he killed?"

"Be satisfied without too many questions. Achmet Bey is dead, peace will soon reign again, and your mines and your persons are safe. Do you believe me?"

"Yes."

"Yes," added Mr. Morton.

Mahmoud bowed and smiled, and we returned to Gironda's house.

There Mr. Morton united Adria and me in marriage, and there we are all four living still, and I am happy to say that Adria's fortune, with the increasing prosperity of my mines, enables us to enjoy the good things of life, as well as permit Mr. and Mrs. Morton to use ample wealth to promote the growth of Christianity in Turkey.

Among our friends we count Mahmoud Pasha, and I have never pressed him for an explanation of Achmet Bey's death or perfidy to me. There are things better left alone, and as we are happy, I am content.

THE END.

A GRAMMATICAL ERROR.

THE Boston maid refused his hand
Because he knocked, and she
Inquired, "Who is knocking?" and
He answered, "It is me."

RUMBLE'S RHEUMATIC REMEDY.

BY MASTERS B. STEVENS.

Detailing the surprising outcome of an attempt to hold up a firm of patent medicine manufacturers.

THE fat man was Rumble. He, with three companions, had just finished the best dinner afforded by the dining car of the "Transcontinental," and now, having lit their cigars—all except the thin man, who drew forth a Turkish cigarette instead—they were leaning back in calm enjoyment, with occasional glimpses at the landscape out of the windows.

Suddenly there came into the picture a long sweep of level country, and along the pike which paralleled the railway ran a high board fence resplendent in a coat of whitewash.

Rumble had been almost overcome by an after-dinner lethargy, but when he saw the fence, he straightened up, threw back his shoulders, and called the attention of the others to the sign upon it.

"Rumble's Rheumatic Remedy," repeated several times, was the first simple announcement; then, having presented the article, the signs proceeded to sound its virtues.

"It Is Good," the black paint upon the white fence said—but not satisfied with this, "It Is Best" soon came boldly into view. "Use It," "Use It," "Use It," was repeated for half a mile, it seemed; and the whole ended, in letters larger and blacker than the rest—as if to take the place of an orator's peroration—with the blazoned lettering, half announcement and half command: "Rheumatic Remedy. The Best Rheumatic Remedy. Use It! Use It! Remember! Rumble's!"

The thin man sneered.

"A pleasing adornment of the landscape."

The barbed shaft of satire passed harmlessly by Rumble.

"You bet," he replied; "shows that 'there's something doing,' as we say in Chicago."

It was evident that Rumble wanted to talk. He was obliged to talk when Rumble's Rheumatic Remedy happened to be mentioned.

Rumble was the Rheumatic Remedy, and the Rheumatic Remedy was Rumble; they were twin brothers of commerce—and Rumble himself was dark and squat, like the bottles which held the Remedy.

"Want to hear how it happened?"

It was evident to all present that Rumble intended to tell the story whether they cared to hear or not. Rumble was like a bottle of the Remedy which had been unduly heated; there was a mighty effervescence going on inside, and the cork was bound to fly.

Two of Rumble's companions bowed pleasant assent; only the thin man spoke:

"You headed the African exploring party which discovered the wonderful root, I suppose?"

Again the fat man was impervious to the thin man's satire.

"African root, fiddlesticks," Rumble responded brazenly. "The stuff is made right in our laboratory in good old 'Chic.' but it's none the less all right for that. Our signs, of which you have just seen a sample, but which could as well be seen where the Japs are fighting the Russians—for they girdle the earth—tell nothing but the truth when they say that Rumble's is the v-e-r-y b-e-s-t, the only rheumatic remedy on earth."

Rumble settled himself more easily in his seat as he continued:

"It was twelve years ago—or will be in a day or two—that I stood on the corner of G Avenue and State Street in Chicago with one dollar and a quarter in my pocket and no immediate prospect of getting more. I was trying to practise law—and I was sleeping on a lounge in my office and burning *Congressional Records* to keep warm. Eat? Well, I had a stout leather belt, and hadn't used quite all the buckle holes.

"Well sir, I stood there on that corner, with the snow drifting into my shoes—they were low-quarters, and I had no overcoat, either—looking in at the radiance of a large, red globe, such as apothecaries display. Seemed to kind o' warm me up.

"That was the first time I ever paid any attention to rheumatic remedies. I saw a placard in the window advertising one, and the thing went on to say that a reward of one hundred dollars would be paid for any case which the stuff didn't cure.

"My resolution was taken on the instant. I went inside and bought a bottle, paying my last dollar for it, and taking care to get the guarantee form. That was simply a printed slip, but after a good deal of kicking, the druggist certified in writing on the back of it that he had sold me the medicine, and that I had bought it with the distinct understanding that the reward offer was *bona fide*.

"Did I have the rheumatism? Well, not bad—but I did have a touch of it in one arm, the result of exposure, and it bothered me a good deal. Got so bad sometimes that I couldn't sign a check for my office rent.

"But of course a man wouldn't spend his last dollar to cure a trifling ailment like that. Not at all. I had a scheme. I intended to use the medicine, declare it had not cured me (I had no idea that it would) and then demand the hundred plunks.

"Fake offer? Why, of course it was, and I knew it. But suppose, when they refused to pay the reward, I should enter suit?

"I was a lawyer, remember, and suit wouldn't have cost me a penny—and imagine the lot of bad advertising I could have given them! Would they stand for having it declared in the public prints that I, Rumble, a reputable attorney, had brought suit against them because they had not fulfilled their contract of cure? I was betting my last dollar that they wouldn't."

"Blackmail," escaped in a whisper from the thin man, with the smoke of his cigarette.

"Have you ever been hungry?" Rumble inquired, turning on him sharply.

But nothing could long ruffle his serenity, and he continued:

"Well, I went home—to my office-residence, that is—threw Volume XXI into my rusty old heater (the weather was bitter cold; I had started on Volume X only the day before) and took a big dose of the medicine.

"And the blamed stuff cured! At least the pain in my arm disappeared, and after I had taken the whole bottle, it didn't come back.

"But I wouldn't give up—that's never been Rumble's way. There was an old colored porter in my building—old Uncle Jim, we called him—and Uncle Jim had the rheumatism so bad that his hands looked like birds' claws. In the mean time, I had won a suit in a justice court, (What? Yes—the lawyer on the other side was sick), and had collected a fee of three dollars.

"I went back to that drug store, bought another bottle of the stuff, took the guarantee as before, and commenced work on Uncle Jim. Ought to have started on him in the first place.

"My persistence was rewarded. The old darky smacked his lips every time I gave him a dose, but it didn't do his 'rheumatiz' a bit of good.

"I was just about to make my demand for the reward (in the name of Uncle Jim) when I happened one evening to go into the store where I had bought the medicine. Went in to warm up, to tell the truth"—with a look of defiance toward the thin man.

"While I was there, I got to thinking how strange it was that the medicine had cured me so quickly and completely and hadn't benefited Uncle Jim at all—and while I was thinking, my eyes roved around to the shelf from which I had seen the clerk take the bottles.

"I noticed that where my bottle had stood, there was a broad stain on the shelf, and that just above it was an open pipe, still dripping with a brownish, viscid liquid. And then I remembered that my bottle had been very much stained—that it seemed to have been at some time opened and then recorked.

"A clue? It looked mightily like it to me, and I've never made a study of deductions, either.

"I hatched a pretense to visit the upper floor, which was used as a laboratory, and I found out what it was that had dripped from the pipe into my bottle. I grew enthusiastic—I grew extravagant; I bought still another bottle of that rheumatic remedy, and with it I mixed a generous proportion of the ingredient which I had accidentally discovered.

"I fed old Jim on it for a week, and at the end of that time he was just like a colt that has been on grass all summer—his fingers straightened out, and he capered around like a boy. Before that, he had always called me 'Captain'; suddenly he raised me in rank to 'Colonel,' and told me that I reminded him of 'his old marster, ol' Jedge Bledsoe, down in good ol' Kaintucky, yessir.' That was the highest compliment Jim could pay to any man.

"But, gentlemen, when I went up into that dark and dingy laboratory—right then and there—Rumble's Rheumatic Remedy was born—and from out of that darkness a bright star of hope was arising for those who had suffered and despaired."

Rumble wrote the circulars for his company, and although in this instance he had ascended to figurative language, he had not by any means reached the heights which he had attained in his literary-commercial productions. They were gems admittedly.

Around them he had thrown the mysticism of far-off Africa (as hinted by the thin man), and as a means for discovering the root of which the compound was supposed to be made, he had woven in a touching love story concerning the princess of some unexplored section of the continent, and an explorer who had become lost and had wandered to her domain.

It was said that old maids who read the story bought a bottle of the medicine whether they had the rheumatism or not.

But sentiment, outside of circulars, was wasted, so Rumble continued:

"Of course I gave up all idea of entering suit for a paltry hundred dollars. Instead, early one morning I went to the office of Simpkins—he was the president of the company that made the medicine; I got to him at last through an army of office boys and clerks, and opened fire without delay.

"'I used one bottle of your medicine,' I told him, 'and it cured me.'

"I expected that he would show some emotion—might possibly fall on my breast, or at least grasp me warmly by the hand.

Nothing of the kind. He merely looked me over with a fishy eye and said:

"'The advertising division is on the top floor; you should go there.'

"'But I tell you it *cured* me,' I responded. He did seem a little surprised at this, but merely repeated his former directions and called an office boy to show me the way.

"Now, a hint to Rumble is enough. I had often wondered how these fellows got their testimonials—and I thought that I had found out.

"Simpkins didn't believe I had been cured—at least, he didn't care whether I had been or not; he thought simply that I had come in to sell him a testimonial. Of course I hadn't gone there with any such idea—I was out for bigger game—but I began to see that there might be some money in it for me, and just at that time I needed the money badly to aid me in my main project.

"I followed the boy—a grinning kid he was, 'bout sixteen—and I soon found out that my surmises were correct.

"'They'll give you twenty-five bucks,' the kid said, as we labored up the stairway together.

"I inquired why prices varied.

"'Why, if you had side-burns, and some sort o' uniform—'pleece, you know, or fireman—they'd give you a hunderd. Them's the best kind—pictures shows up good in de papers.'

"That boy proved to be a second Elijah. I signed a stereotyped testimonial form, had my picture taken—in the act of throwing away a pair of crutches—and received twenty-five dollars.

"Guess none of you fellows has ever been as hard up as that, eh? But I had to have the money, and if you'll listen a little longer, you'll see why. I did it in pursuance of my policy—the 'never give up' policy of Rumble.

"What did I do with the five V's?

Bought an overcoat. One of those great, heavy, long overcoats, that, with your shoes shined, will make you look dressed up, even if your shirt is hanging by one string. Of course my shirt wasn't—I had two strings. Then I was ready to interview Simpkins again, and I went back the day after my first visit.

"I told him I knew his medicine was a fake, and that he knew it. He scowled at me. I told him about the bottle I had bought—but I didn't tell him where I had bought it—mentioned that it had been left open, and that something—the Great Something, gentlemen—had dropped into it; something that, added to the ingredients already in the medicine, would make a compound that would cure rheumatism, surely and without fail.

"He declared that they were doing the biggest business in the country, and making barrels of money.

"But I pointed out how much more could be made if he had a medicine that would really cure; a medicine that in itself would create a demand—advertising hardly necessary—household word—babies cry for it—all that, you know. And I wound up by demanding—yes sir, demanding—that when the use of my formula was begun, the firm be changed into a corporation, and that one-forth of the entire stock be issued to me.

"No, I don't guess I needed any nerve food along about that time. But even if I didn't have on a whole shirt, I had on that big overcoat, and it gave me lots of moral support. Besides, I *knew* I had a good thing.

"But I couldn't budge him. Naturally. Not on the first try. Didn't expect it. But never give up, you know.

"I went back to my office and prepared an advertisement something like this: 'Rumble's Rheumatic Remedy. A Company for the Manufacture of this Remedy is Now Being Formed. Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars has Already Been Subscribed—Confidently Believed an Annual Dividend of Ten per cent will be Paid—Come Quick so you Won't be Crowded.'

"Oh, I tell you I turned out a ripsnorter; what I have quoted is simply a rough draft from memory, and does not do justice to the beauty of the original, as they say in the picture catalogues.

"Who subscribed the twenty-five thousand dollars? Why, I did. Nothing wrong about that, was there? If a fellow can't subscribe to his own company, whose can he subscribe to?

"But I didn't expect to sell the stock. Of course not—but I wanted to make Simpkins think I could—and he rose to the bait like a cat-fish.

"Asked me to come to see him.

"I got busy, arranged with a friend for desk-room in his office for a day or two, and then sent word to Simpkins that I was very much engaged, but that if he wanted to see me he might call at my suite of offices in the Highscraper Building. Of course I realized that my old hall room wouldn't have impressed anybody.

"Simpkins came all right, and I received him in the atmosphere of soft carpets, pictures on the walls, ting-a-lings, roll tops, and all that.

"And my overcoat. I should be an ingrate if I should fail to give that concealer of my sartorial defects due credit. I didn't take the coat off—that would have been disastrous—threatened with grip you know; and as I sat in front of that big mahogany desk, I tell you I made a pretty good front.

"What! Pasadena already? And you boys want to get off and see the geysers? Hot water instead of hot air, eh?

"Well, there's not much more to tell, any way. Simpkins sulked a little, but Rumble had his hooks into him, and he just had to come. That old laboratory over the drug store was the beginning of Rumble's Rheumatic Remedy, and of the success of Rumble—a success that I may say has relieved the anguish of thousands, has made the lame to walk, the halt to run, and proved a boon indeed to poor humanity; see Circular G-133."

So pleased was Rumble with his tale, and his manner of telling it, that he concluded with a smile at his own expense.

The thin man had been listening intently; and now as he threw away his cigarette and leaned forward to make the inquiry, his face was fox-like:

"And—er—er—Rumble, I say, what was it that dripped from the pipe?"

It was the fat man's turn. He yawned, and, looking not at the thin man but out of the window, he said:

"Funny how I always get sleepy after a meal. Guess I'll just go to the other coach and take a little snooze."

And Rumble rumbled off to the parlor car.

THE WIDOW AND THE AGENT.

BY RUTH NETTLETON.

A story of house hunting, in the course of which two people found that for which they had not been looking.

MRS. FISBY'S blood was leaping with the intoxication of the hunt, and she ascended the front steps of the thirteenth house with an elasticity that caused the patient little agent who accompanied her to groan aloud.

"I have a sort of feeling in my bones that this is going to be the one I want," said Mrs. Fisby with conviction, as the agent's latch-key admitted them to a spacious vestibule, lately rejuvenated by a fresh coat of blood-red kalsomine.

"This is one of our handsomest houses, madam," the agent assured her as the long hall, papered in a design of enormous flaming poppies, came into view.

Mrs. Fisby gave an exclamation of delight.

"My land, ain't that pretty? I always did like color, and plenty of it," and the lady planted her stout person between the folding doors that led into the parlor and took in the combined effect of hall and vestibule.

"They don't match very well, I must say, but if you look at 'em separate they're all right. Folks used to say that about me and Mr. F., me being big and him little—about your size, I should say, and I always did——"

Here the agent broke in timidly, his small voice faint with hunger and fatigue:

"I don't want to hurry you, madam, but as it is now four:thirty, and there are five more numbers on the list, I would suggest that we continue to look over the house."

Mrs. Fisby stopped short in her discourse, and eyed her small companion with real consternation.

"Well, forevermore! If I haven't kept you going since nine o'clock this morning without a bite. We might's well open up the lunch here as anywhere, I guess. I daresay the pickles are all soaked up in the sandwiches by this time, too. Here"—to the agent's astonishment she produced from beneath her cape a generous package—"you open this up and set it out on the stairs there while I just run over the house a little—I can eat easier if I get my mind settled."

A picnic with a strange lady in an empty house had never come within the agent's experience heretofore, and he stood for a moment holding the lumpy package irresolutely; then he turned to the stairs, as he was bidden, and began to unwrap the lunch in a dazed fashion.

Meantime Mrs. Fisby flitted ponderously from room to room, exclaiming over the scroll-work which adorned the back parlor mantel, the glass-doored china closet built into the dining-room wall, and various contrivances in the kitchen which took her fancy.

She ascended to the second floor by the back stairs, and went into ecstasies over the new porcelain bath-tub with a water-lily design painted around the top, and the stationary wash-stands which supplied each of the four bedrooms with water, and had also been the source of malaria fever to the former tenants of the house, had she but known it.

By the time she was ready to return to the first floor again the agent's native politeness had succumbed before the irresistible appeal of a fat ham sandwich, and he had just taken an enormous bite when he became conscious that Mrs. Fisby was gazing down at him over the

banisters. He chewed rapidly and guiltily.

"Oh, that's all right!" called the good-natured lady from above, "I could see your appetite was as sharp as a razor when you first clapped eye on that package—try a pickle with it," and she descended creakingly to a seat at his side.

"If I'd had my covered basket and some red napkins with me, I could have made it look a lot tastier, but the boarding-house woman hadn't anything better than brown paper to offer. Oh, thanks! Ain't that real nice of you—silk, too!"

The little agent had drawn a beautifully folded silk muffler from his breast pocket and laid it elegantly across Mrs. Fisby's alpaca lap. She smoothed it out with one of her plump hands, and the agent felt a sudden impulse to smooth the plump hand in turn.

"Now, I call this real cozy!" said Mrs. Fisby as her sharp white teeth bisected a sardine. "The ham you're eating come from one of the last hams I took down from the smoke-house previous to selling my place up in the country. Me and Mr. F. used to get away with more of those hams to the winter!"

"It's very delicious," mumbled the agent.

Mrs. Fisby speared another sardine with her hat-pin and resumed utterance.

"Well, I haven't told you yet that I'll take the house on the spot and pay my first month's rent now. Sixty-five dollars seems an awful lot to pay—it won't hurt your feelings for me to say so since you say you ain't responsible for the price set. Any way, I can pay it easy, for Mr. F.'s life insurance money comes in regular, and I can get most all I put in back out of those rooms.

"I shan't take any women to be forever wanting to use the kitchen and plastering wet handkerchiefs all over the windows—no, sir! I want men. I'm more used to 'em, and I kind of know their ways and what they like. I'm going to fix the back parlor for my room, and just make that whole up-stairs look homelike and tasty for six or eight helpless men that ought to have homes of their own.

"Me and Mr. F. got this all planned out before he passed away. He was a real thoughtful man. I declare, you do remind me of him in your manners.

"She gave the muffler, on which her repast was spread another little pat, and the agent, to his horror, felt himself blushing crimson.

The luncheon demolished, Mrs. Fisby carefully collected the crumbs in the extemporized lunch-cloth and laid it in a corner of the stairs.

"It's got a little bit greasy, so I'll wash it up, and you can stop and get it sometime—or ask your wife to call for it," she said, with a bewitching smile.

The agent swallowed and essayed to speak, but thought better of it and said nothing. Mrs. Fisby counted out six tens from a roll of bills.

"You count 'em too, please," she said, handing them to the agent. "Mental arithmetic ain't my strong point, and me and Mr. F. always did this way—first I counted, then he went over it to see that there wasn't anybody going to get cheated!"

"It's quite correct, I'm sure, without going over it," murmured the agent gallantly, as he put the bills in his pocket and handed Mrs. Fisby the keys of the house.

His business with the lady was evidently over for the time being, but now that she had given up walking him to death, he found himself strangely loath to relinquish her society. He went slowly over to the parlor mantel and took down his hat.

A happy thought came to Mrs. Fisby, and she innocently picked up a candy box that had more recently contained hard-boiled eggs.

"You might take this to your wife," she said sweetly; "it'd be sort of handy to keep hair-pins in."

"I—I haven't any wife, thank you," stammered the agent.

"Well, if that don't beat all!" laughed Mrs. Fisby. "A nice looking man like you, and getting bald at that!"

The agent blushed and became decidedly uneasy.

"Perhaps you haven't ever been in

love, though. Now me and Mr. F., we fell in love at first sight."

They were in the vestibule now. The agent opened the front door and nervously put on his hat.

"My land!" cried Mrs. Fisby, "if you ain't just the image or Mr. F., now you get your hat on!"

During the next week the agent found it necessary to make several calls upon Mrs. Fisby. He was fairly driven to it, partly by an awakened conscience concerning certain imperfections in the house which he usually neglected to mention to a prospective tenant, and partly by a more insistent force which was doubtless responsible for the state of his conscience.

The third time he came he brought with him several dozen neat little rubber stoppers, and insisted upon plugging the drains in the stationary washbowls, explaining as mildly as possible that this precaution was necessary if she wished to keep live roomers.

The fact that he might have told her this before she hired the house never occurred to her, and with cheerful alacrity she assisted him in his task of inserting the plugs. The two front bedrooms were already taken, and he noticed many little comforts that made them homelike and showed a woman's care and taste.

In one room a pair of gaily embroidered slippers lay on the floor at the foot of the bed.

"Yes," said Mrs. Fisby, with open pride, "I see you're looking at those slippers with an envious eye, as they say in books. I made 'em. Mr. F., he liked those slippers, too. I told Mr. F. the very day he passed away that I was going to do them up careful, and he needn't fear mortal man would ever set foot in them again, but that nice boy who took this room didn't have a slipper to his name, and I just said to myself, 'There's Mr. F. up there, harping on his harp and not caring a penny whether anybody's wearing his old slippers or not, and I'm just going to make that poor boy comfortable.'"

As she talked there was such a beautiful, motherly look upon Mrs. Fisby's face, and her brown eyes grew so soft that the little agent had the temerity to take her hand. Tender, unaccustomed words clamored for utterance.

"My dear—my dear—ahem! Mrs. Fisby!" he said, and then a mighty panic seized him and the golden moment was lost.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Fisby shyly.

The agent swallowed hard, then a way of escape opened before him.

"What I was about to say," he answered in matter-of-fact tones, as he produced a small green can from his pocket, "was, that if you will sprinkle this powder thoroughly in the corners of your sink and along your pantry shelves you will have no further trouble with—that is—of the sort you mentioned a short time ago."

"Oh, but wasn't it real thoughtful of you to bring it!"

Mrs. Fisby took the can gratefully and gave the bold fingers that still grasped hers a faint pressure. "You did speak about it so delicate, too—just like Mr. F. He was *that* refined—he never would call a spade a spade!"

Beside Mrs. Fisby on a slippery horsehair sofa that sank in recklessly toward the middle, the agent now spent a blissful but uneasy half-hour.

He made no further attempt to put his feelings into words, but by judicious allusions to the condition of his lonely heart and fireside (a hall bed-room radiator), he called forth Mrs. Fisby's ever ready sympathy, and when he finally took his departure he was entirely satisfied that the lovely widow was his for the asking.

The next afternoon the equinoctial set in. Just as the little agent was starting homeward from the office to the bleak comforts of his boarding-house he was overtaken by a messenger-boy with a note for him.

The rain was falling heavily, and he had no umbrella, so he put the bright pink envelope in his pocket to be opened as soon as he should get home. He reached shelter at last, wet to the skin, and in his haste to get into dry clothes he entirely forgot the note.

He ate a soggy dinner, and then, huddled close to the luke-warm radiator, he prepared to spend a dismal evening alone in his little room, while the wind

and rain rattled the window, and the solitary gas-jet swayed and flickered in the draft from the loose casement.

He finally dozed off in his chair and dreamed that he was again sitting beside Mrs. Fisby in her warm parlor, and that a mammoth diamond sparkled on the white hand he held in his own. A sub-conscious uneasiness began to disturb his dream as the hand was withdrawn from his clasp and pointed at a pink object on the floor.

He awoke with a start, and made a dive for his overcoat, which hung drying on the back of a chair. Yes, there in the pocket was the pink note, still unread.

It gave off a faint, familiar perfume, which thrilled the little agent's olfactories, and he sniffed it blissfully as he opened the envelope:

WEDNESDAY, 5 P.M.

MR. B. F. JONES,
Agent for Carr & Little,

SIR:

I write this standing on a chair. I cannot at this instant form any definite idea of how long it will continue to float, but it is my earnest wish that it will continue to do so till I get this written.

I am calm now and shall try to remain so, though it was not without a strange feeling of alarm that I saw my best roomer float out the front door clinging to a twenty-eight dollar sofa. I do not now have any hopes that he will ever bring it back.

Even as I write these few lines a pillow goes floating by me—it cost me five dollars. I did not try to grasp it, but if an umbrella comes my way I shall try to get that.

Will you kindly tell me why you had the shingles and boarding taken off the roof? Rafters are real useful in their place, but will not keep out the rain. You ought to see my carpets. The colors were not fast, and it looks as if your kalsominers had been here and upset their pails all over the place. The next storm that occurs, if I live through this—which I hope I will—I shall move into the park and take it straight. It will at least be a whole lot cleaner than this mess.

I shall expect your firm to pay for the carpets.

Still floating, yours respectfully,

MRS. EUGENE AMOS FISBY.

P. S.—Do not hurry yourself on my account. There is nothing left to spoil.

The agent dropped the letter, and sat for a moment staring blankly at the wall.

He had committed an inexcusable blunder, and the situation came over him with full force, making him turn alternately hot and cold. The carpenters had struck when that job of repairing the roof was half finished; the place could not be seen from the street, and he had entirely forgotten it. He was responsible for the disaster which had resulted both to Mrs. Fisby's property and his own rosy hopes.

The burlesque picture which the unfortunate lady had drawn of her plight would have greatly amused him had it not been for his own culpability in the matter; as it was, he took the whole letter seriously, and visions of Mrs. Fisby, floating helplessly upon the surface of a weltering flood with nothing but the cane seat of a chair between herself and drowning, spurred him on to action.

Desperately he seized his wet shoes from the radiator and drew them on, their soles sizzling with heat. Twenty minutes found him at the scene of devastation.

The front door of Mrs. Fisby's residence stood open, and a sluggish yellow river flowed gently out across the porch and down the steps. He entered and explored the lower rooms of the house, but found no signs of life in any part of it.

The hall and parlor floors were under water; water dripped and trickled through the banisters from the hall above, and gusts of wind came swirling down the stairs, putting out the agent's matches as fast as he could light them.

With much groping and stumbling in the dark he found his way up two flights to the attic. Here, under a sound place in the roof, stood Mrs. Fisby, with skirts well reefed, holding a kerosene lamp.

The rain pelted all about her. The dull night sky loomed black above the rafters.

"Well, this is a great note!" shouted Mrs. Fisby as the agent halted blinkingly in the doorway. "Why didn't you wait a little longer about coming, and

what do you mean to do now you *have* come, I'd like to know?"

Evidently the lady did not intend to come down from the height of sarcasm attained in her letter.

The agent's tongue clave to the roof of his mouth.

"Hurry up and do something, can't you? There ain't a man here. The only one that was home went for a carpenter and never came back," continued Mrs. Fisby in awful. clarion tones.

"Well, have you turned to salt?" she asked, with biting scorn, as the guilty cause of all the havoc remained immovable, his feet clamped, as it were, to the floor.

But the agent made no sign—he was doing some strenuous thinking.

Suddenly he became a new man. He waved his arms in the air.

"Stay there with the lamp till I come!" he cried, and the sorely tried woman found herself again alone with "water, water everywhere," and the sudden unpleasant consciousness that her hair was unspeakably straight and straggling over her face in damp wisps.

The agent soon returned with four table leaves.

"Give me a boost," he panted, and with the aid of Mrs. Fisby's stalwart "boosting" he caught and swung himself up to a rafter.

He threw one leg over the beam and balanced himself precariously but triumphant.

"Now hand me a board!" he ordered, in masterful tones.

Undertaking to cover a large area of naked rafters with four table leaves seemed to Mrs. Fisby something like trying to dam the Mississippi with a tooth-pick, but her faith in the little agent had returned with his assumption of command, and she cast all anxiety and apprehension from her as she clung to one of his feet, the only portion of his anatomy still within reach.

Suddenly the foot gave a frantic kick, nearly upsetting the lamp in her other hand.

"I had to let go of you!" she shouted. "I couldn't hold on any longer. Are you all right up there?"

She was answered by a slipping, sliding, clutching sound that made her heart leap into her throat—then a faint yell arose from beyond the edge of the roof.

The agent had unexpectedly taken a short cut to the ground, three stories below.

* * * *

He recovered consciousness in the course of time, and with careful nursing the broken leg and ribs were made whole again.

In Mrs. Fisby's front parlor on a luxurious spring couch which would fold in three places the injured man lay for six weeks. The ruined carpet was hidden from his remorseful gaze by a skilful arrangement of rugs, and his nurse was the soul of forgiveness and tender devotion.

"I didn't ever expect to fetch out this suit again for such a purpose," said she one morning, as she opened a box from which the odor of moth balls arose with overpowering might. "I did my best to get Mr. F. to let me bury him in it. I always think a Prince Albert looks so refined for a man to be laid out in, but Mr. F. was just dead set that he wanted a shroud.

"Why, the very day he passed away I spread out those two burying outfits on the bed and says, 'Now, Mr. F., take your choice once and for all time,' and he stuck to his old idea of the shroud, so I gave up as graceful as I could, for I was that disappointed, and put away the Prince Albert. It never did fit him very good, but you ain't quite so wide in the shoulders.

"Whew, how it smells! Well, forevermore! If here ain't his Grand Army button right in the lapel. Ain't it a special Providence you didn't have a Prince Albert? I knew I'd use this suit up some way.

"Land, I ain't got dressed yet, and the minister due in an hour, and all those roomers'll be filing in here and you all fixed up smart in your chair and me still in curl-papers! Have you got the ring safe in that pill-box? Don't lose it, for goodness sake. When me and Mr. F. was married——"

"Go put on your wedding dress and let Mr. F. go to thunder!" roared!" the agent.

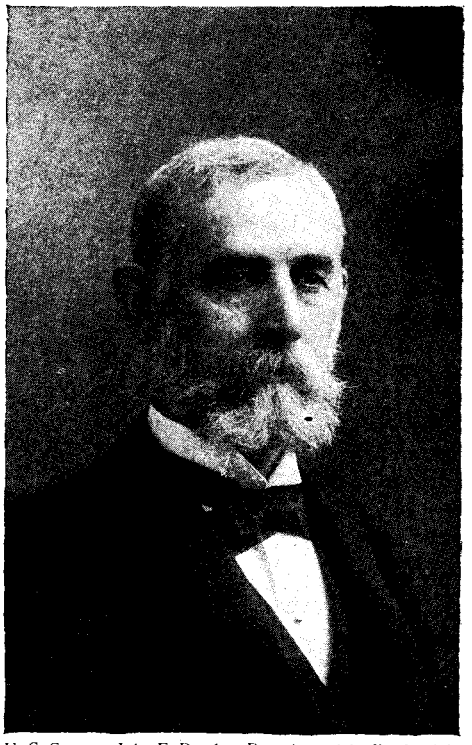
The Story of a Great Success.

BY HERBERT S. HOUSTON.

Photographically illustrated by Arthur Hewitt.

THE industrial awakening of America is the most impressive fact of modern times. It is likewise the most cheering. Never before did mankind have an opportunity to lift itself up under democratic conditions of freedom. And that uplift has been stupendous, great in achievement and full of hope. With it has come a spread of well-being among the masses of people that is unparalleled. Naturally, both as cause and effect of that well-being, have gone thrift, industry, and home protection. And life insurance, in large degree, has been the immediate and active agency for spreading these constructive forces. The Prudential, in particular, has stood for the broadest possible application of the insurance idea and it has risen to greatness on that as a foundation.

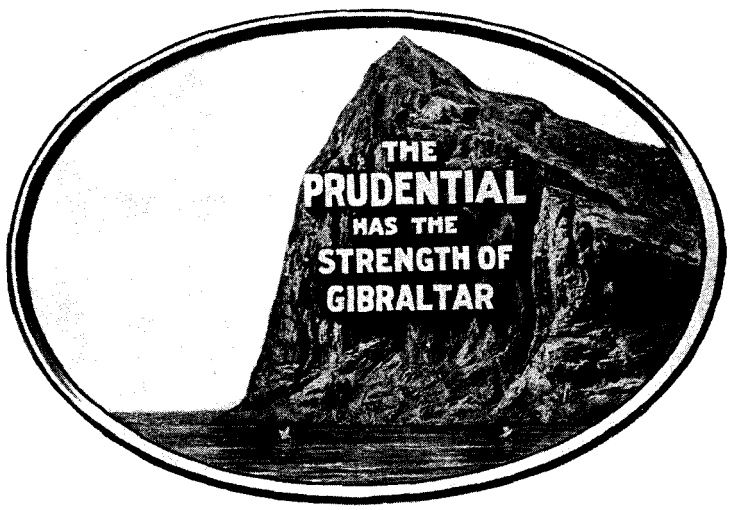
Ten years after the close of the Civil War—a period so recent that its history has scarcely been written—the Prudential was established in Newark. As if foreknowing the great rock to which it would grow, it began its foundation in a basement office. It was like the beginning of the New York *Herald* by Bennett, the elder, in a basement on Ann Street. But it would be an idle play with words to make a basement office the real foundation of the Prudential. It was something much deeper down than that—nothing else than the bed-rock American principle of democracy. The Prudential applied the democratic principle to life insurance. As Senator Dryden, of New Jersey, the founder of the company, has said: "Life insurance is of the most value when most widely distributed. The Prudential and the companies like it are cultivating broadly and soundly among the masses the idea of life insurance protection. To them is being carried the gospel of self-help, protection, and a higher life."



U. S. Senator John F. Dryden, President of the Prudential.

And what has been the result of the democratic American principle worked out in life insurance? In 1875 the first policy was written in the Prudential. At the end of 1903 there were 5,447,307 policies in force on the books of the company, representing nearly a billion dollars. The assets in 1876 were $2,232, while twenty-seven years later, in 1903, they were more than 30,000 times greater, or $72,394,759.80. This is

a record of growth that is without precedent in insurance and that is hard to match in the whole range of industry. The rise of the Prudential to greatness reads like a romance in big figures, but, in fact, it is a record of business expansion that has been as natural as the growth of an oak. The corn crop of the country seems too big for comprehension until one sees the vast fields of the Middle West, and then it appears as simple as the growth of a single stalk. So with the Prudential. To say that, in ten years, the company's income grew from something more than $9,000,000 a year to more than $39,000,000 last year is amazing as a general statement, but when made in relation to the broad principles on which that growth has been based, it becomes as much a matter of course as the corn crop. There is no mystery about it; but there is in it, from the day when the principles were planted in Newark until these great harvest days, the genuine American spirit of achievement, strong, hopeful, and expansive.



The Prudential Insurance Company of America is a national institution. It was founded to provide insurance for the American people on the broadest possible basis consistent with strength and safety. It does not write insurance abroad. In the fullest sense it has worked out the democratic idea of safe insurance for the great masses of the American people. It has adjusted its policies to American conditions; it has based its dividends on the earning power of American investments; it has placed its premium rates on the American tables of vital statistics; in a word, it was intended to be and it has become an insurance company for the American people. And they have met the Prudential's broad American principles with a broad American support, and, as a result, the company's marvelous growth has come as naturally as the full ear on the stalk. But, as the full ear is always on a stalk that has been cultivated, so, too, the growth from the Prudential's principles has come through their spread by an organization that is a marvel of efficiency.

And right here is the most stirring chapter of the Prudential's rise to greatness. Just as Grant and Lee organized their armies, or as Kouropatkin and Yamagata plan their campaigns in Asia, so does the Prudential work out its national insurance propaganda. The company's organization is essentially military. It is a wonderful combination of big grasp and outlook with the most painstaking thoroughness and system in details. And, as is always the case in every organization that throbs throughout with intelligent energy, there is a man at the center of it. This man has a constructive imagination lighting up a New England brain. To business prudence there is added the large vision which sweeps the horizon for opportunity. Naturally, to such a vision the application of the democratic idea to insurance was an opportunity of the first magnitude. When seen, it was grasped and developed. The Prudential was founded. In the most careful way, its idea was tested, just as the Secretary of Agricul-

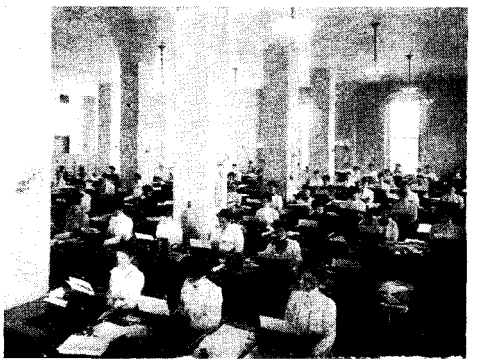
ture tests seeds at the government's experiment farms. Here was where prudence kept the large vision in proper focus. Gradually the idea took root and grew. Year after year the Prudential added to its number of policy holders. And all the time the company was working out a more liberal basis for its democratic idea. But each time a more liberal policy was offered, it was fully tested. "Progress with strength," is the way President Dryden describes the company principle of growth—the results, clearly, of vision and prudence. At the end of ten years of this method of growth, the company reached the point where, it was believed, insurance could be safely offered for any amount with premiums payable on any plan, either in weekly installments or at longer periods. Within the five years, 1886 to 1890, inclusive, the company's assets increased nearly fivefold, from $1,040,816 to $5,084,895, and the amount of insurance in force from $40,266,445 to $139,163,654.

The Prudential had found itself. The idea of democratic insurance had been fully tested and adjusted to the needs and conditions of the American people. Then, with a boldness which only large vision could have quickened, the plan was formed to make the Prudential's idea known in every section of the country. Gibraltar was chosen as the symbol of the company's strength, and advertising—the telling of the Prudential idea to the people—was begun. At that time insurance advertising was a sea as unknown as the Atlantic when Columbus set sail from Palos. But, with a map of the United States for chart and a live idea for compass, the Prudential took passage in nearly every important magazine in the country, and thus safely made port in millions of homes. As the insurance idea was carried broadcast in this wide publicity, it was followed up by the well-drilled army of Prudential agents.

Again it was vision and prudence, and again the result was "progress with strength." The Prudential grew into a place of foremost importance, known in every part of the world. The printed announcement—always attractive and suggestive—had never gone ahead of men bearing the insurance message until sent by the Prudential, and this conjunction marked the epoch in business in which advertising and personal endeavor should be used as complementary forces.

The Prudential publicity is accompanied by wise promotion from a field force of over 12,000, some of whom have been with the company for over a quarter century, working in almost every State of the Union.

There is no place where one feels the greatness of the Prudential quite so much as in the vast granite piles which have been raised for the company's home buildings. They rise above the Jersey meadows as Gibraltar does above the sea, a convincing witness, surely, to the growth and to the strength of the Prudential. But they are not a cold, gray rock, but a living organism throbbing from vital contact with millions of policy holders. There are now four of these great buildings, all occupied by the company. In one of them is the Prudential's publishing



Section of one of the Typewriting Rooms.

plant, which, in equipment, surprising as this may seem, is equal to that of almost any publishing house in the country. Millions of booklets, two publications for the company—one, "The Prudential," with a circulation of more than two millions—and the policies are all printed here, besides no end of commercial printing for the home office and for the district agencies. The big composing-room, the press-room with its eighteen presses, the bindery with its folding, cutting, sewing, and numbering machines, are models of cleanli-

ness and light. But, for that matter, all the buildings are as spick and span as a man-o'-war. There are subways, well lighted, under the streets, connecting the different buildings. In every way there has been, in the arrangements, a conservation of energy and time to produce economy and efficiency in carrying on the company's vast business. As indicating how vast that is, the mail coming to and going from the Prudential is nearly as large as for all the rest of Newark, a city with more than 250,000 population and of great industrial importance. The mailing department is really a big city post-office. And in all the departments one gets the feeling of size that comes in the enormous government buildings at Washington. And it is as a national institution that the Prudential always fixes itself on the mind—its fundamental idea of democracy in insurance, its nation-wide organization for spreading the idea, its essentially American spirit throughout, all make the company worthy of its name, the Prudential Insurance Company of America.

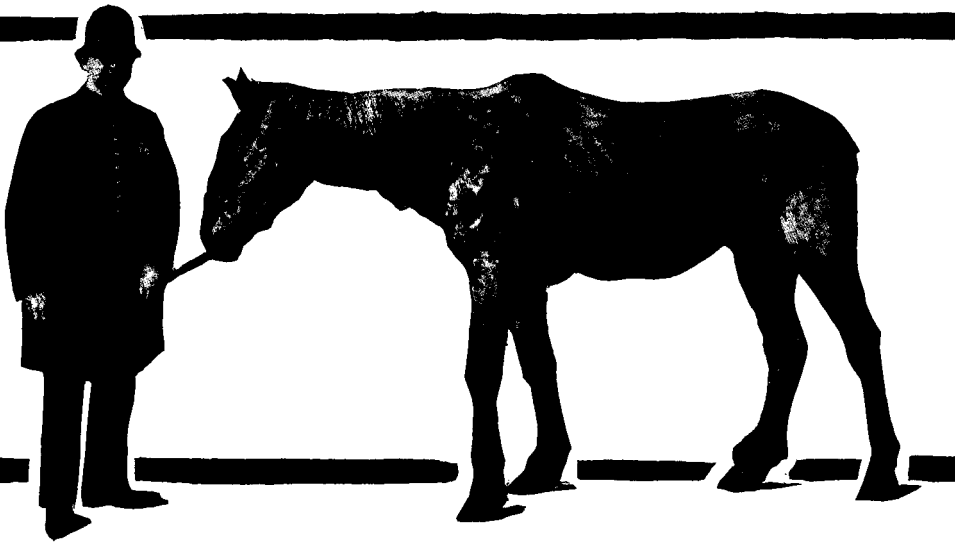
To-day the Prudential is paying over 300 claims a day, or about forty each working hour. On many policies settlement is made within a few hours by the superintendent of the district; on the large policies a report is sent immediately to the home office and settlement authorized by telegraph. And on over 45 per cent. of the claims more money is paid than the policy calls for. From the beginning the Prudential has followed lines of great liberality, whether in dealing with the family where the policy is kept in the bureau drawer or with the estate of the millionaire.

It would be interesting to describe the broad activities that hum in the great buildings at Newark, but they would more than require an entire article themselves. So, too, with the equipment and furnishings of the buildings which, in the way of complete adjustment to their particular work, are probably unequaled in the world. For example, in the actuarial department is a card machine, invented by the actuary of the company, which can do all but think. But many of these things, in miniature, will be seen by the thousands who go to the World's Fair at St. Louis. They will find in the Prudential's exhibit in the Palace of Education a fine model of all the buildings, and also the fullest data concerning life insurance that have ever been brought together.

But the last word about the Prudential is not told at any exposition. It is found in the 5,500,000 policies which form a stupendous exhibit on the value of life insurance in developing thrift, safe investment, and home protection in a nation. Of course, such an exhibit could never have been possible if the Prudential had not worked out safe policies that would adequately meet the broad needs of the American people.

View of Group of Prudential Home Office Buildings.

It is Accident or Disease Only that puts Horse Hair on the Market



Not a Pleasant Thought to Dream Upon. Did You Sleep on a Hair Mattress Last Night?

Mr. N. PASHKOW is a mattress *renovator*, of Newark, N. J. He issues a circular booming his method and its necessity. He probably knows his business, and he says: **"Hair is animal matter and is continually decaying. It is not healthy to sleep upon a mound of decayed animal matter"**—all of which is very true. It explains why more than 200 people a day order an

Ostermoor Mattress $15. Express Prepaid Anywhere

Each OSTERMOOR mattress is built—not stuffed. In all respects practically un-wear-out-able, retaining its shape and elasticity under all sorts of conditions and hard usage. Hand-laid sheets of downy softness, each of the full size, are carefully compressed into the tick. The OSTERMOOR Patent Elastic Felt is purity itself, germ-free and vermin-proof. OSTERMOOR mattresses *cannot* get lumpy, never need renewing: an occasional sun-bath is all they require. The tick can be taken off and washed whenever soiled.

SIZES AND PRICES	
2 feet 6 inches wide, 25 lbs.	$8.35
3 feet wide, 30 lbs.	10.00
3 feet 6 inches wide, 35 lbs.	11.70
4 feet wide, 40 lbs.	13.35
4 feet 6 inches wide, 45 lbs.	15.00

All 6 feet 3 inches long.
Express Charges Prepaid.
In two parts, 50 cents extra. Special sizes at special prices.

30 Nights' FREE Trial

Sleep on the OSTERMOOR thirty nights free and if it is not even all you have hoped for, if you don't believe it to be the equal in cleanliness, durability and comfort of any $50. hair mattress ever made, you can get your money back by return mail—"no questions asked."

Send for Book, Mailed Free

Our 96-page book, "The Test of Time," not only treats exhaustively the mattress question, but also describes and illustrates (with scores of pictures), OSTERMOOR Cushions and Pillows, for Window Seats, Cozy Corners, Hall Benches and Easy Chairs; Boat Cushions, Carriage Cushions, Church Cushions—we have cushioned 25,000 Churches. It is an encyclopædia of comfort and good taste—may we send it? Your name on a postal will do. It costs us 25 cents, but you are welcome to it—even if you send from curiosity alone.

Look Out! Dealers are trying to sell the "just as good kind." Ask to see the **name** "OSTERMOOR" and our trade-mark label, sewn on the end. Show them you can't and **won't** be fooled. It's not *Felt* if it's not an *Ostermoor*. Mattresses expressed, prepaid by us, same day check is received. Estimates on cushions and samples of coverings by return mail.

OSTERMOOR & COMPANY, 110 Elizabeth St., New York

Canadian Agency: The Alaska Feather and Down Co., Ltd., Montreal

POWERFUL FOOD

That can lift A man Out of Bed

Disease cannot successfully attack people if their food and habits are right.

When one has stopped growing and lives mostly indoors it's high time to stop greasy meats or half cooked starchy food, much white bread, soggy vegetables, etc., etc.

It's worth trial to simplify the diet, get well and keep well.

Say Breakfast and Lunch on a little fruit (preferably cooked and very little sugar),

Dish of GRAPE-NUTS and Cream,
Slice of whole wheat bread and butter,
Cup of Postum Food Coffee,
One or two soft eggs and
NOTHING ELSE.

You are liable to "feel like a lord" in a day or two. "There's a reason" for GRAPE-NUTS food is a power for brain centres and body.

Have a try and tell yourself.

Get the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in each pkg.

We are sending Regal Shoes to all parts of the world

Hard to Fit —?

Maybe you think you're hard to fit?

Well, we are now supplying over **300,000** satisfied Mail-Order customers who thought *they* were, too.

The perfect system of the Regal Mail-Order Department insures you as perfect a fit as you could secure by stepping into one of the 72 Regal stores, trying on the shoes, and choosing from the 147 Regal styles.

The Regal Mail-Order Department has a stock of 90,000 pairs,—more shoes than most companies sell in a year. Your order is taken in charge at once by an expert mail-order salesman, who has fitted thousands of customers by mail. Your shoes are shipped the same day your order is received. You take no risk. Shoes exchanged or money refunded, on request.

Send a postal for the famous Regal Style-Book, and let us keep you posted on shoe styles and tell you the whole mail-order story.

For the convenience of thousands of our Mail-Order customers, we have established five sub-stations throughout the United States, where Mail orders may be sent if customers have not sufficient time to wait while sending order to Boston. Customers should send their orders direct to Regal Mail-Order headquarters, if possible.

"JAP"

A new and special design faithfully reproduced from an expensive custom-made model. Pronounced "Flat-Iron" effect in extension soles, but not too extreme.

Style A431—Illustration shows Oxford, Blucher Cut, made of Finest Quality Waxed Calfskin, Medium-Heavy Extension Sole, High Military Heel.

Style B431—Blucher Oxford, exactly as illustrated, except made of Selected Russet Leather, Full Extension Sole of Medium-Heavy Weight, and High Military Heel.

Regal Shoes are delivered, carriage prepaid, anywhere in the United States or Canada, Mexico, Porto Rico, Hawaiian and Philippine Islands, also Germany and all points covered by the Parcels Post System, on receipt of **$3.75** per pair. (The extra 25 cents is for delivery.) We are prepared to furnish special low shipping rates to any part of the world. Samples of leather and any information gladly furnished.

If you are planning to visit the Exposition at St. Louis, write for our special map which covers both the city and the Exposition grounds and buildings. We have prepared similar maps of every city where there is a Regal store. Any of these maps will be sent free for the asking.

Women's Regal Shoes are made in all the latest styles. Sold only through our Mail-Order Department and in our exclusive women's stores.

22 Regal stores in New York City. 6 Regal stores in Boston. 4 Regal stores in Philadelphia. 72 Regal stores in United States and England.

REGAL SHOE COMPANY, INC., Mail-Order Dept., 509 Summer Street, Boston, Mass.

SUB-STATION A—Cor. Geary and Stockton Sts., San Francisco. SUB-STATION C—618 Olive St., St. Louis.
SUB-STATION B—103 Dearborn St., Chicago. SUB-STATION D—631 Canal St., New Orleans.
SUB-STATION E—6 Whitehall St. Viaduct, Atlanta.

London Post Depot. 97 Cheapside, London, England.

REGAL

THE SHOE THAT PROVES

Suit Made to Measure $12

Suit Case Free

Fine All-Wool Tailor-Made Cashmere or Worsted Suit.

Your Choice of a variety of colorings and weaves, and all the newest patterns just from the woolen mills. We direct special attention to the fabrics. The cloth is specially woven from new, high grade wool; it is close woven and the wool is full of "life," so that the cloth is elastic and the garments will hold their shape. Before cutting into the cloth for each suit, the suit pattern is thoroughly shrunken. Our cutters are first-class workmen, who incorporate into the suit the latest style and take into account the various little differences in build each man possesses. The suit is lined throughout with "Bullis" serge, and the sleeve linings are of the celebrated "Fowler" silesia. All trimmings are the very best, and buttonholes are hand finished. The pants pockets are made of strong drilling, and all the findings are such as only can be secured in the high grade merchant-tailor article. Our measure and order blank will enable you to take your own measurement accurately, and a perfect fit is guaranteed. We are manufacturers, importers and custom tailors, and guarantee our $12.00 suits to be equal in wear to the best suits you can obtain from your local dealer for Twenty Dollars, while in style and fit our garments are incomparably superior to any but the product of high-priced city tailors.

FREE Suit Case

In order to establish customers throughout the United States we are giving on the first order received from any one person, a handsome suit case, which we use to ship the suit. The suit case that goes with each suit is most presentable and would cost in your local store from $3 to $5.

A trial is all we ask. You run no risk in ordering from us, as we guarantee absolutely a perfect fit. We do not ask you to pay for the goods before seeing them. We send them by Express C. O. D., with the privilege of examination at Express Office, and if the suit is not satisfactory in fabric, finish or fit, you need not accept it; it will be returned to us at our expense. The suit shown in the picture is our No. 217, and is a sensible, becoming suit to most gentlemen. The price is $12.00. It is entirely new, out of the ordinary and very stylish. Samples of cloth that make up nicely in this style are shown in our new catalogue, which contains styles and samples varying in price from $12.00 to $20.00. Our catalogue and

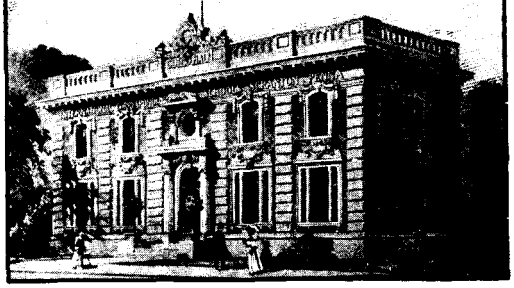
Samples of Cloth Free

will be sent you the very day your request for same reaches us. Remember, we have no agents, no branch stores, and no connection with any other clothing concern. Our business has been established 40 years. Write to-day for samples. Address

Meyer Livingston Sons, Dept. 7, South Bend, Ind.

Reference: Citizens Nat'l Bank, South Bend, Ind.

Seek Success



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You can qualify for promotion or more profitable occupations; young people can qualify to commence work at better salaries than if they started without training. **Courses cost from $10 up. Text books furnished free.** (*$100 forfeit to anyone failing in our Drawing Courses that studies as directed.*)

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HAIR TONIC

is the best HAIR RESTORER known. It is also a positive DANDRUFF CURE as well as a most excellent HAIR DRESSING. The sweet and refined odor which it leaves in the hair makes it a toilet luxury. 4 oz. bottle, **50c.** 8 oz. bottle, **$1.00.**

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A Positive Relief for

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and all afflictions of the skin. Delightful after shaving. Removes all odor of perspiration. SAMPLE FREE.

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Something New **MENNEN'S VIOLET TALCUM** Something Exquisite

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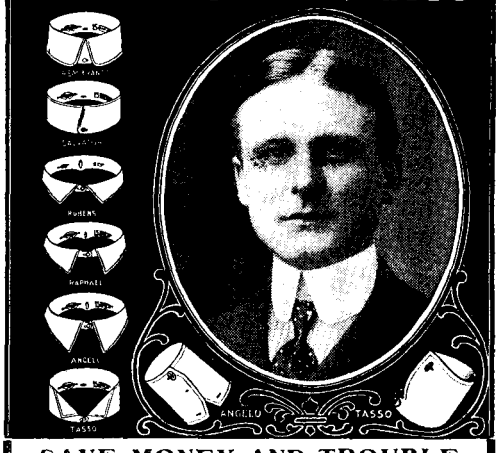

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Made of French Briar.

A CLEAN, SWEET SMOKE

All the nicotine and dust stop in smoke chamber A-A. The inner bowl can be lifted out and pipe cleaned while lighted, as illustrated below.

Openings so arranged that smoke passes around bowl before entering stem, thus burning tobacco evenly and insuring a cool smoke.

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Straight or bent Amberoid bits - - - - .50 each
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First Quality French Briar

Straight stem, Amberoid bit - - - - .75 "
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Selected French Briar

Straight stem, 2½ in. **genuine** amber bit - $2.00 "
Curved stem, " " " " - $2.00 "
(Case $1 extra)
Curved stem, 3 in. **genuine** amber bit - $2.50 each
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Fancy French Briar

Fine Morocco case, 2½ in. **genuine** amber bit, straight stem, - - - - - $3.50 "

Extra bowls for 50c. and 60c. pipes 20c. each; all others 25c. each; every pipe warranted.

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Black and White

When you write it with a

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The Indelible Pencil that

Writes Black and Copies Purple.

Writing everlasting—the **one** pencil for **many** uses. Sold by stationers, with or without nickeled point protector. *Dixon's Pencil Guide*, INDEXED BY VOCATIONS, tells you the right pencil for your use.

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Pocket Size, 10c ea. Family Size, 25c ea.
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Cured Without Medicine

New Method Discovered for Drawing Out Rheumatic Acid Poisons—So Successful That the Makers Send It to Anybody.

Free on Approval—To Try

Don't take medicine—there's a better way to cure rheumatism. It is through the soles of the feet. Being nerve centers, they not only contract disease, but they also expel it. Through the large foot pores the great new discovery, Magic Foot Drafts, reach and cure rheumatism in every part of the body by drawing out and absorbing the pain-causing acid poisons. They cure after everything else fails. No other remedy ever made such a record, or cured so many cases considered incurable.

Magic Foot Drafts are so sure to cure that the makers are sending them, to everybody who writes, to try without paying a cent. You simply put them on and wear them. Then if satisfied with the benefit received, send one dollar. If not they cost you nothing. You can see that this is proof of their merit. If cured one dollar is little to pay. Write today to Magic Foot Draft Co., 655 Oliver Bldg., Jackson, Mich.

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For Face Treatment at Home

The results from this wonderful scientific invention are simply marvelous. It cures all cases of pimples, blackheads, eczema and skin eruptions, cleanses the pores and makes the skin clear plump and youthful.

Removes Wrinkles

absolutely and creates a smooth, healthy fine grained skin. The Hydro-Vacu is highly endorsed by physicians and dermatologists, and is so simple that any lady can use it at home.

Special Offer

For a limited time only, that every lady may obtain one, the Hydro-Vacu will be sent with complete instructions for one-half regular price. Full information sent free.

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$10 DRESSES ANY MAN

Complete from
HEAD TO TOE
In Latest Style.

FREE SAMPLES and MEASUREMENT BLANKS.

To introduce direct to the wearer our custom tailoring we will *make* the first ten thousand suits in 1904 made to measures sent us for only $10 and give the following *complete outfit* **FREE**, actually **$28** value for only **$10** and nothing to pay till after you receive the suit and free outfit and find it just as represented. Send us your name and postoffice address, and we will send you **Free Samples of Cloth**, 5-foot tape line and measurement blank for size of Suit, Hat, Shirt and Shoes.

A GENUINE CHEVIOT SUIT

made to measure in the latest English Sack Style, well made and durably trimmed, such a suit as some tailors charge **$20.00**

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Pair stylish Lace Shoes, *new queen last* .	**2.50**
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Neat Silk Four-in-Hand or Bow Tie . .	**.50**
Pair fancy Web Elastic Suspenders . .	**.50**
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Thousands of American citizens pay daily for this $28.00

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REFERENCE: First National Bank, Chicago; Capital, $12,000,000.

RESTORES EYESIGHT

SPECTACLES A THING OF THE PAST

"Actina," A Marvelous Discovery That Cures All Afflictions of the Eye and Ear Without Cutting or Drugging.

A marvelous discovery has been made by that Scientist and Inventive Genius, Prof. W. C. Wilson. He has invented a restorer known as "Actina," through which all afflictions of the eye and ear, such as blindness, granulated lids, cataracts, sore eyes, deafness, etc., are cured without cutting or drugging. It is a simple contrivance, known as the Actina Pocket Battery, and through it the patients cure themselves in the privacy of their own homes. It not only abolishes the butcheries and torturous methods practised by oculists and aurists, but at the same time perfects a positive and lasting cure.

General Alexander Hamilton, Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson, N. Y., highly recommends "Actina."

Mr. F. W. Harwood, Springfield, Mass., says that "Actina" cured him of deafness of nine years' standing.

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A party of prominent citizens have organized a company known as the New York and London Electric Association, and they have given this method so thorough a test on hundreds of cases pronounced incurable and hopeless that they now positively assure a cure. "Actina" is sent on trial postpaid. If you will call or send your name and address to the New York and London Electric Association, Dept. 123B, 929 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo., you will receive, absolutely free, a valuable book—Prof. Wilson's "Treatise on the Eye and on Diseases in General," and you can rest assured that your eyesight and hearing will be restored, no matter how many doctors have failed.

The Guaranteed Suspenders

The **strongest** and **lightest**—made from elastic webbing of highest grade—**no buckles, no metal** rivets, no pulleys—nothing to rust, nothing to wear and tear the clothing. Smooth and slick and clean in every part. **Adjustable calf skin ends** back and front—our own invention, and the only good new thing in suspenders since "galluses" first came in—make them fit smoothly, without a wrinkle—they will not slip off the shoulder once they are properly adjusted.

WARRANTED ONE YEAR

Get a pair of **REX SUSPENDERS** for 50 cents, **at your dealer's**, or by mail postpaid. Put them right on and give them the hardest wear you know how for 365 days (or 366 if it's leap year)—if there's a break, or a tear anywhere, in all that time, send them to us and we will return free, postpaid, a complete new pair.

If you want full wear, full comfort, full satisfaction for your suspender money, insist on getting the **"REX."**

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I MAKE HAIR BEAUTIFUL.

No Two Scalps Require the Same Treatment.

Free Examination. A physician studies your bodily ailments before he gives you medicine. A microscopical examination of your hair will reveal the cause of your scalp infection. Send me fresh combings, to-day, and I will tell you, free of charge, what ails your hair and scalp, and what treatment you need.

Premiums. **Beautiful hair in middle age is at a premium.** If your hair is healthy now, it can be kept so; if not, I can make it healthy and beautiful. My special remedies will preserve it and insure a youthful appearance.

INSURE YOUR HAIR

I MAKE SICK HAIR WELL, INSURING IT AGAINST FALLING OUT.

Accumulative Benefits. Your hair is an index to your age. My individual treatment **positively eradicates dandruff, stops falling hair, and prevents baldness. As long as any life remains in the follicles of the hair, new hair can be grown.** Your hair can be saved to extreme old age.

Non-Experimenting. I have studied Hair and Scalp diseases over thirty years in France and United States, and **have cured difficult cases where others have failed. I am not experimenting. My book 15, on Hair and Scalp,** sent on receipt of 2-cent stamp for postage. Send fresh combings by return mail to-day,

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without a cent deposit and allow **10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL** on every bicycle. Any wheel not satisfactory *returned at our expense.*

HIGHEST GRADE **$8.75 to $17**
1904 MODELS Coaster Brakes, Hedgethorne Puncture-proof Tires and best equipment.

1902 and 1903 MODELS, best makes, **$7 to $12**

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The ORIGINAL and only Puncture-proof and Self-healing Tire made. Nails, tacks, and glass will not let the air out. Positively will not become porous. Strong, durable, resilient. Greatest thickness where needed (see G in illus.) Examine—"feel of it." Sent C. O. D. anywhere, subject to examination—no deposit asked; but we pay express only when cash accompanies order. State diameter of rim and size tire wanted. CATALOG FREE. State & Lake Sts.

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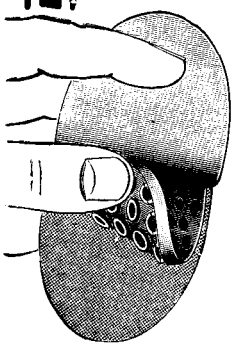
Locomotives, freight cars, street cars, cabs, and even ice wagons have springs. Certainly you ought to give your own frame work as much consideration. Heel-cushions serve exactly the same purpose—they absorb the jar and save wear and tear.

You'll find yourself adopting a livelier walk if you wear Heel-cushions inside your shoe.

The whole under-surface of your heel presses evenly into the velvety softness of Heel-cushions, instead of upon one small, hard spot. That's where the comfort comes in.

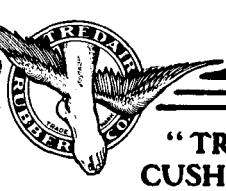


Tired heels mean tired body. Heel-cushions take the weight off the heels.

Heel Cushions increase the height.

Sent by mail postpaid on receipt of 25 cents per pair.

Special styles for women.



"TRED-AIR" CUSHION HEEL

You know rubber tires are put on cab wheels mostly to save wear and tear on spokes, rims, axles and springs. The whole business lasts longer.

Your backbone is of more value than many cabs. Yet you hump along with solid leather heels on stony city pavements as if you could get a new spine at the blacksmith shop.

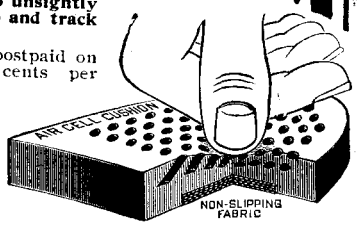
Thirty-five cents invested in a pair of Tred-air Rubber Heels will give you more out-door pleasure than you have had since you quit going barefoot.

They can't slip—wet or dry, ice or mud, the patent treading-surface clings. (And it outwears the shoes, for it's tougher than raw hide.)

Lighter than other rubber heels, and more springy, because of purer rubber and the patent air-cell construction.

NO DIRT—No unsightly holes to pick up and track mud and dirt.

Sent by mail postpaid on receipt of 35 cents per pair.



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are combined in the
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Do you know the added pleasure of
Up-to-date Cycling?

Any Catalogue mailed on receipt of a two-cent stamp.

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FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Write for names of hundreds of delighted customers. Make $50 to $50 weekly. Do business at home or traveling, all or spare time, selling Gray outfits and doing genuine gold, silver, nickle and metal plating on Watches, Jewelry, Tableware, Bicycles, all metal goods. Heavy plate. No experience, quickly learned. Enormous demand. No toys or humbug. Outfits all sizes. Everything guaranteed. Let us start you. We teach you FREE. Write today. Address,

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ALL volumes of THE ARGOSY previous to the beginning of the monthly form, April, 1894, are out of print. The remaining volumes, all neatly bound in cloth, are veritable treasure houses of entertaining fiction. 75 cents apiece plus 25 cents postage, except Vols. XVIII to XXIII, inclusive, which cost $1.00, plus 30 cents postage.

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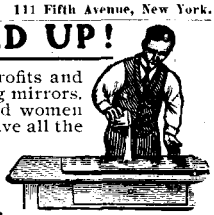

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WAKE UP to the fact that the cigar with your exact degree of aroma, taste and appearance may be brought to you all transportation charges paid, affording you at all times

A Saving of 50%

of ordinary retail prices.

We have eliminated all of the in-between profits and expenses and sell our entire product

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As manufacturers we insure to you exact uniformity and are in close touch all the time with the personal preferences of each of our customers.

Our variety is so great that we **guarantee to please** every taste.

Our factory, of which we invite inspection, is a model of sanitary cleanliness. Each brand is made by expert workmen in the same way all the time.

Wake up and make up your order to-day, as any delay is an injustice to your pocket-book and your perfect satisfaction.

For 75c we will gladly send you an assortment of 12 cigars, each separately wrapped and described, showing four varieties of 10c and two-for-a-quarter values; or for 50c an equal showing of High Grade 5c and 10c values.

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WAKE-UP to the modern, up-to-date method of business; to the fact that it is wholly unnecessary after a cigar is produced for you to pay the profits, commissions and expenses of the jobber, the salesman or the retailer, all making a total of 50% extra expense which comes directly from your own pocket with every cigar you buy in the old way.

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Our guarantee is broader than that—we say that if, for any cause whatever, any cigars are unsatisfactory which we may ever ship you, you are entitled to and will cheerfully receive

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for the full purchase price, regardless of how many cigars you have smoked to find out that they did not suit you.

Thousands upon thousands of customers are using the brands we list here and find them exactly right.

Make up your order now.

	Box of 12	Box of 25	Box of 50
Piconcios, 4½ in. Conchas,	**$1.00**	**$1.75**	
Balmetto, 4⅞ in. Puritanos,	**.90**	**1.65**	**$3.25**
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La Medalla, 4½ in. Conchas,	**.70**	**1.25**	**2.50**
Fedora, 4¾ in. Londres,	**.60**		**2.00**

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"Both the El Premier and the La Medalla are fine; too much cannot be said in their favor."
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PICTURE No. 4

PICTURE No. 1

PICTURE No. 2

THE "AMERICAN GIRL PICTURES" are a series of five charming drawings of the loveliest types of that fascinating personality—the modern American girl.

As drawings, they are distinctly different from anything else that has been done in this line. They possess that exquisite touch—that rare quality of sweetness and character—that makes you feel at once that you are looking at a person and not at a picture.

These beautiful pictures are published with the idea that every American woman will wish to possess them, and that, by sending complimentary copies to the purchasers of our brand of Borax, ever after the pictures would be associated with *Pure* Borax. By this method our product would be made known in a pleasant way in the homes of American women everywhere. That this surmise is true is indicated by the thousands upon thousands of requests we have already had for these pictures.

It should be understood that the pictures are got up as elaborately as if they were to be sold through art stores, and that they are in every way representative of the modern engravers' art. They bear no advertising matter whatever.

The size of the pictures is 14 x 19 inches, and they are published on fine heavy plate paper for framing. They are pictures that will make a charming addition to a drawing-room, library or den.

We will send, carefully packed, a fine large reproduction of any of the series to any lady who will send us a box top from a pound box of "20-MULE-TEAM BRAND BORAX" (which can be bought at any grocery or drug store) and four (4) cents in stamps to cover cost of mailing. Indicate by number the picture you wish, and address "Department P, Pacific Coast Borax Co., New York City."

In passing, it may be well to say a word about Borax. The usefulness of Borax is not limited to the kitchen and laundry; the wise American girl has Borax in her bath, in her shampoo and on her toilet table. Borax water is the best cosmetic in the world. Try it a week and see how fine the texture of your skin will become, and how rosy your cheeks.

One secret of the wonderful value of Borax throughout the house is because it softens the water. Water has to be soft to clean well, whether it is used in the toilet or house cleaning. And by adding a little Borax to the water you soften it and double its power to cleanse and purify.

Get Pure Borax, use it everywhere you use water, and you will know what real hygienic cleanliness is.

To avoid adulterations, order "20-MULE-TEAM BRAND." At drug and grocery stores.

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