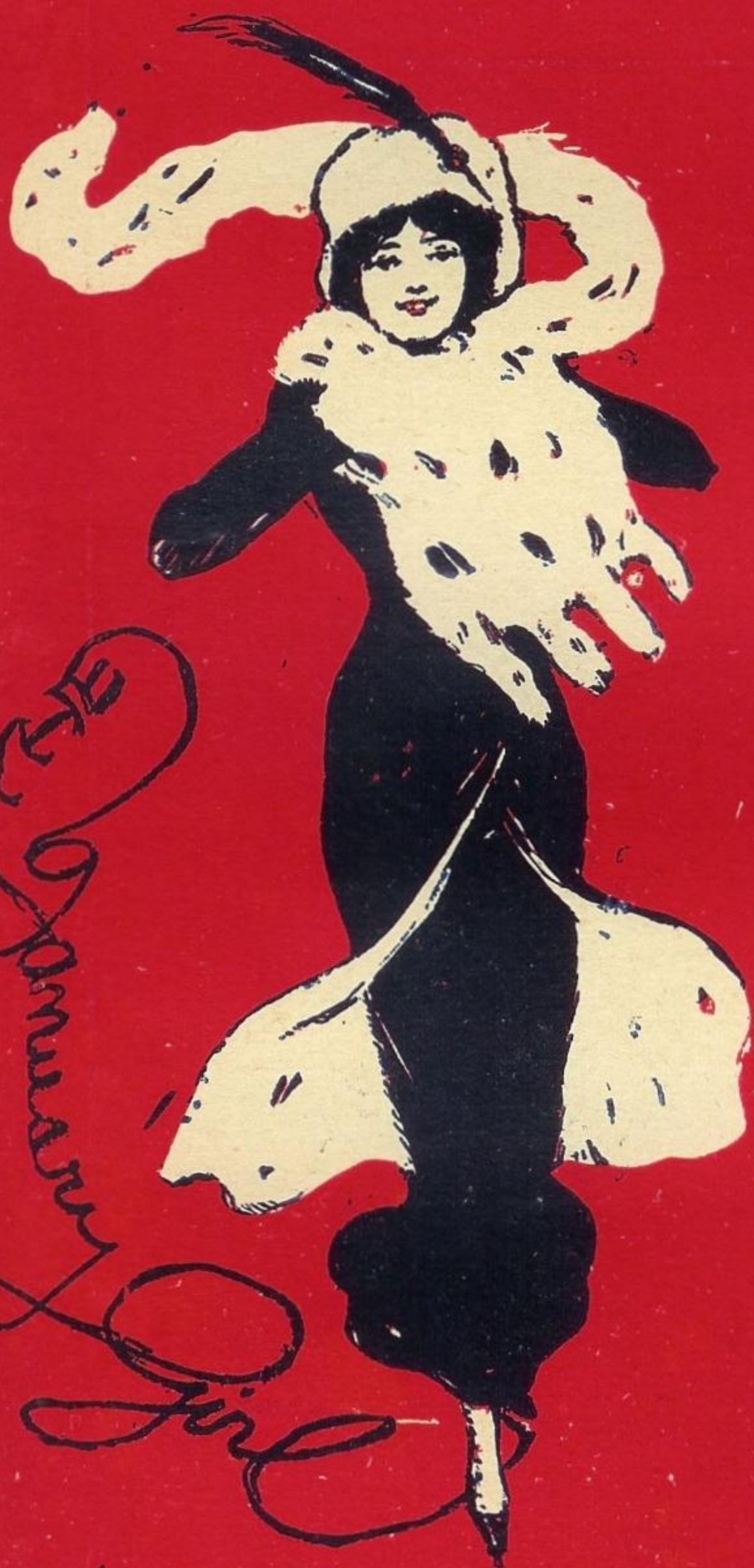


Weekly Tale-Teller



COMPLETE TALES.

The Adventures of
Mr. Banyard

By MAX RITTENBERG

The Pigeon's-Blood
Rubies

By HEADON HILL

One New Year's Eve

By ELLIOTT O'DONNELL

The Dagger

By OLIVER GAY

Gaining the Whole
World

By W. DOUGLAS NEWTON

Storm

By J. KENDRICK WYNNE

Thanks to Theodora

By LESLIE THOMAS

The Magazine for a
Happy New Year.



ARE YOU ANXIOUS

to become a **Steward on a Liner**, a **Prison Warder**, a **Chauffeur**, a **Bank Messenger**, or a **Hospital Nurse**? Do you wish to join the **Canadian Police**, the **Cape Mounted Rifles**, the **Life Guards**, the **Hong Kong Police**, or the **Metropolitan Police**? Would you like to know how you can go to sea in either the **Royal Navy** or the **Merchant Service**? Do you want to become a **Sanitary Inspector**, or an **Inspector of Weights and Measures**, or a **Factory Inspector**, or are you anxious to appear **on the Stage**? These callings are very different, are they not? but you will find full particulars of each and of many others in "**Smart Hints**." The advice there given is plain and practical and in every instance has been specially written by those who have earned their living in the special callings dealt with. Therein lies the value of this unique work. There are many other ways of wage-earning described in its pages besides those mentioned above, together with an article on **Prospects in Other Lands**, dealing with **South Africa**, **Australia**, the **Australian Gold Fields**, **New South Wales**, **New Zealand**, and **Canada**. A list of **Emigration Societies** is given, with full particulars as to fares, etc., while there are some specially useful hints as to what should be taken for use on a voyage by a third class passenger. All who think of **Crossing the Sea** should read this. If you are interested in any of these subjects you should send six stamps to **The Publishing Manager, "Smart Hints" Office (G.P.O. Box No. C69), 2 & 3, Hind Court, Fleet Street, E.C.**, for a copy of

SMART HINTS,

(20th THOUSAND),

The Finest Book of Reference in the World.



Weekly Tale=Teller

The Adventures of Mr. Banyard.*

By Max Rittenberg.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce Mr. Banyard to you. He is a gentleman whose adventures deserve to be followed with interest, and I venture to predict he will make many friends during the six weeks he is to stay with us. In introducing him I also present his creator, Mr. Rittenberg, who thus makes his first appearance in the "Tale-Teller." Of all types of stories the humorous is the most difficult to secure, and the humour which is never vulgar or offensive is the most rare of all. But you will find it here, I can assure you, and know you will be ready to appreciate it.

I.—A Honeymoon in Ostend.

WHAT the juice am I to do?" thought Mr. Banyard dolefully.

Five minutes ago he had been perfectly certain that the number of his bathing-box was 94, but No. 94 had proved to be tight-closed when he tried to re-enter it from the Ostend waves. "Allez-vous-en!" cried some indignant voice when he had hammered at the door.

Then he tried 84, and 104, and 74, and 74 had been opened to him by a lady who had preceded her husband out of the water.

Had it not been for Mr. Banyard's professional experience at Overend and Remington's, he might have been shocked at the scantiness of the lady's costume. His professional eye, however, was noting that it was a straight-fronted model of size twenty-one inches, with attachments of—when a hairy arm yanked him round the neck from behind and cast him into the waves.

"Cochon!" hissed the lady's husband, and slammed the door of bathing-box No. 74 at him.

"What the juice am I to do?" thought Mr. Banyard dolefully. He
No. 88.

had lost his box; he had left his eye-glasses there—for one can't go bathing in glasses—not to mention the rest of his attire. His wife of one week only was waiting for him upon the "digue," probably with impatience, and his French was rudimentary.

The door of No. 74 opened, and the bearded Belgian appeared at the threshold.

For a moment Mr. Banyard had a wild hope that he was going to apologise for having taken the box in mistake. But no; he merely aimed a dirty towel at the shopwalker and again slammed the door at him. Judging from the sounds inside the box there appeared to be a quarrel in progress between husband and wife.

"Serves him jolly well right!" thought Mr. Banyard angrily. "I'll make him jealous, see if I don't."

After a while a lady's hand waved at him from one of the windows of 74, and he felt a trifle comforted in spirit. But there was still the problem of finding his rightful dressing-place and clothes.

So he clutched at one of the men on

* Cinematograph and all rights reserved by Author.

The Adventures of Mr. Banyard

horseback, who pulled the boxes in and out of the waves, and said, "J'ai perdjou mong box."

These men, in the height of the bathing season, are much too busy for explanations. They merely hold out their right hand with a gesture of international significance. This man promptly held out his hand.

But Mr. Banyard, in his present attire, had no trouser-pocket nor small change.

"Gr-r-rh!" said the man on horseback, or words to that effect, and jerked on his horse.

Mr. Banyard began to search dispiritedly for his box. If it wasn't 94, 84, 104, or 74, what the juice was it? Inspiration! It must have been 49.

Shortsightedly he searched for 49, and found it finally amidst the jumble of bathing-boxes at the water's edge. The door opened to his hand and he went in. A man's clothes—civilised English clothes—were there right enough.

But they were not *his* clothes. So he sat on the steps of the box, shivering, and waited for someone to come along and claim them.

Nobody came.

The waves began to rise round the box.

A man on horseback pulled it farther up the sands.

Then Mr. Banyard made a bold move. "By Jingo!" said he. "If he's taken my clothes, I'm dashed if I don't take his! Serve him jolly well right. 'Sides, the wife will be getting 'ratty' if I keep her waiting much longer."

Behold, then, some five minutes later, Mr. Banyard striding over the sands in a check suit of passable fit, swinging somebody else's cane jauntily in one hand. Without his eye-glasses it was difficult to distinguish faces at a distance, but he thought he recognised Jessie on the digue, and waved a hand to her as he started to ascend the incline to the promenade.

Then a hand was laid on his shoulder.

"Go away," said Mr. Banyard, thinking it was a vendor of picture postcards.

"But no, my friend," was the reply in English of a Continental brand.

Mr. Banyard turned and peered at the man. He was soberly dressed and had an air of authority about him.

"Who the juice are you?" inquired Mr. Banyard.

The man passed him over a card: "Leverrier, of ze police, at your service."

"I don't want you."

"No, my friend, but I want you."

"Here, look here," said Mr. Banyard, "are you trying to be funny?"

"Opkinson, I want you. Come," said the detective, deftly slipping an arm, jiu-jitsu fashion, inside the shopwalker's.

Mr. Banyard struggled unavailingly to free himself.

"Here, lemme go!" he panted.

"My name's not Hopkinson—it's Banyard; everyone knows that. You just ask in the silks at Overend and Remington's. Oh, dash it, I wish I had my glasses—or you just ask my wife."

"Which wife?"

"Mrs. Banyard, of course—who d'you think?—Jessie. Dash you, lemme go!"

"Now, my friend 'Opkinson," said the detective, "if you struggle you make a crowd. Allons, zat is not pleasant. Come quietly, or I put on ze 'andcuffs."

Indeed, a crowd of idlers was already beginning to gather upon the digue. Amongst them Mr. Banyard caught sight of the hairy Belgian and his wife, both in cycling costume. Mr. Banyard recognised her by the twenty-one-inch waist. Also he noted with his professional eye that her cycling knickers must have required at least two and a quarter yards of double-width material.

"Cochon!" hissed the hairy Belgian, rushing down the incline to shake a fist in Mr. Banyard's face. "Tu crois m'faire cocu!"

"Already he has three wives," whispered the detective to the Belgian in his own language. Up the incline rushed the latter to fling the news in his wife's face. "Already he has five wives, that pig of an Englishman!" he cried.

By Max Rittenberg

But his spouse merely laughed, and said, "Oh, là-là!"

* * * * *

Apparently Hopkinson of the check suit was "wanted" for bigamy and attempted arson. So Mr. Banyard gathered from his captors when they had him safely in the *gendarmérie*.

An accusation of arson might have left him cool, but to be accused of bigamy—he, Mr. Banyard, a model of respectability, on his honeymoon—was beyond the limit of human patience.

"Here, look here!" said he angrily. "What d'you think I'd want to commit bigamy for? I'm in the silks at Overend and Remington's. I'd good as lose my place for a thing like that. D'you think I'd be such a silly fool? He ran off with my clothes. Oh, dash it! I wish I had my glasses! My name's not Hopkinson—it's Banyard; any fool would know that. You just ask my wife."

"Where is she?" asked the detective, with ulterior motive.

"On the parade, of course, waiting for me. Here, lemme go!"

"What does she look——"

"She has a blue dress on, if you mean that."

"Which is your 'otel?"

"Hotel d'Angleterre; it's just round the corner. He ran off with my clothes, I tell you. He's got my glasses, too. Why the juice don't you collar hold of him?"

But just as a *gendarme* started off for the Hotel d'Angleterre, into the *gendarmérie* rushed Mrs. Banyard, frantic with anxiety about her missing husband.

"I've lost him! I've lost my husband! He's drowned or murdered! Oh, why did we ever come over to Ostend?" she cried.

"Does monsieur call 'imself Banyard?" asked the detective.

"Yes, of course. Have you got the murderer?"

The detective dramatically threw open a door. "Behold, then, monsieur your 'usband," said he.

With a cry of emotion Jessie wrapped herself round Mr. Banyard's neck and hugged him tight.

The detective looked on sardonically. When the embraces began to subside, he asked her how long she had been married.

"Only a week. It's our honeymoon. Oh, what a honeymoon!" was the answer, disentangled from a mixture of tears and laughter.

"Madame Banyard," said the detective, with professional pride at his astuteness, "ze evidence you 'ave just given will be of ze great importance. Know, zen, zat monsieur your 'usband is already twice married; wiz you zat makes ze tree times."

"How dare you?" flared the indignant Jessie. "How dare you?" and boxed his ears lustily.

Never before had detective Leverrier had his ear boxed by a lady. He staggered back, and rushed out of the room to bring up reinforcements. Over his shoulder he called: "Wait one instant, and to prison you go, all ze both!"

He had left the door open, and Jessie pulled her husband by the arm. "Quick! Let's run home before he gets back. We'll pack up and leave at once. Oh, this hateful Ostend!"

Now, Mr. Banyard, as before inferred, was not at that period in the state of normal coolness and urbanity in which he inquired of his lady customers, "And what can I have the pleasure of showing you, madam?" On his own ground—near the street door, in the silks department—he would have been ready for any emergency, but here, in a foreign environment, within a few yards of a prison door, wrongfully accused of a most improper crime, with his wife of one week only liable to be torn from his side and sent to another prison cell—well, Mr. Banyard lost his head and flew after a phantom safety into the Rue Flamande.

Which was very imprudent.

* * * * *

A small boy gave the alarm.

A *gendarme* gave chase.

After him came the detective.

Then came the crowd, magically collecting like butter in the churn.

Jessie darted into the Hotel d'Angleterre like a rabbit into a burrow, but

The Adventures of Mr. Banyard

Mr. Banyard—I raise my hat to him—gallantly drew off the pursuers from his wife by continuing on down the Rue Flamande.

It is a long, narrow street, and it ends on the quays of the local shipping harbour. Mr. Banyard ran on, on, on, without a clear idea of how it was going to end. Perhaps he had a vague notion of escaping over the harbour swinging bridge to the railway station. Panting, he arrived at the open space by the quays just as the swinging bridge began to move slowly outwards to give passage to a tug.

"What the juice am I to do?" thought Mr. Banyard, exhaustedly. "It's all U.P., that's what it is!"

But in this he was wrong. It was not all U.P. Providence, garbed as the lady of bathing-box No. 74 and riding a bicycle, was at hand. Mr. Banyard recognised her by the two and a quarter yards double width. On the cycle by her side he recognised the hairy husband.

"Cochon!" hissed the latter at him. Apparently it was his favourite figure of speech.

But Providence, with a tenderness of heart for the panting fugitive—or perhaps desirous of provoking a jealous husband—jumped off her bicycle and pressed it into Mr. Banyard's hands, with a "Vite! Montez donc!"

Mr. Banyard did not waste precious moments on polite ceremony. Jumping on, he found the pedals and dashed for the swinging bridge, just getting over in time.

Three seconds later the hairy Belgian dashed for it too, with a terrific bump as his cycle negotiated the gap between bridge and quayside. But he got over.

After them, shouting and gesticulating, came the *gendarme*.

The detective.

Some mongrels.

The crowd.

* * * * *

It is an established fact that if you draw a chalk-line on the floor, and put a fowl with its beak on the chalk-line, that fowl will only move in the direction chalked out for it. This is at-

tributed to hypnotic suggestion, or auto-hypnosis, or something of that order.

In the case under consideration the chalk-line was the line of Ostend's electric coastal tramway, which has its terminus, as perhaps you know, just on the other side of the swinging bridge.

The fowl was Mr. Banyard.

He followed it over the big canal bridge and out into the country. After him scorched the husband of the twenty-one-inch waist, swearing great scalding oaths. And presently an electric car, with the *gendarme*, the detective, and the lady of the bathing-box on board—a "special," with right-of-way over all common cars—skooshed after them in the distance.

The cycle was three sizes too small for him, and his knees were in danger of bumping his chin, but Mr. Banyard pedalled on like a Bath Road champion. Not for him to question why—his but to keep the metals and ride on till Doom was ready for its Giant Cement.

Out past Ostend's mean suburbs, out by the golf-links of Le Coq, scaring dogs, chickens, and farmside cats, scorched cycle No. 1, pursued by cycle No. 2, and, gaining steadily on them, by the electric special.

Mr. Banyard's heart began to thump like a marine engine.

"I'm dashed if I can keep this up much longer," thought Mr. Banyard. "What the juice am I to do?"

A turn of the road showed him that he was running into a small seaside townlet—a place of wooden villas, gaily decked out in red and green for the allurements of summer visitors. Wenduyn is its name.

As he reached it the electric special, skooshing up behind him, clanged out a brazen warning, and Mr. Banyard, like a frightened fowl, turned sharply off the line of the metals, up an incline that led to Wenduyn's digue, and on to the promenade itself.

And as he did so, Providence on his side, he ran plump into a man who was wearing his own tourist suit. Riding a yard or so behind, the hairy Belgian ran into the two of them and spilled them on the ground.

By Max Rittenberg

"Hopkinson!" shouted Mr. Banyard, with mingled joy and anger, clutching at the man in the tourist suit. "What the juice d'jou mean by stealing my clothes?"

"Pig of an Englishman!" shouted the Belgian, in his own tongue, clutching at Mr. Banyard. "So first you would try to steal my wife and now my bicycle!"

Up rushed the detective, the *gendarme*, and the lady of No. 74.

"Who is zis?" asked the detective, assuming command and pointing to the man in Mr. Banyard's clutches.

"It's him! It's him!" was Mr. Banyard's joyful answer. "It's Hopkinson! He's got my clothes! You can see he's Hopkinson—any fool could see that!"

The detective looked at the man keenly, then studied a paper from his pocket-book, then advanced to the shopwalker with outstretched hand.

"Monsieur Banyard," said he generously, "you are right. Permit me to shake ze 'and of a brave and gallant gentleman. Nevere, nevere 'ave I seen such a splendid ride!"

"Don't mention it, old man," replied Mr. Banyard, meeting generosity with generosity and taking the outstretched hand.

"But my bicycle!" shouted the

hairy Belgian. "He tried to steal it!"

"Be silent, thou!" interrupted his wife. "The bicycle—it is mine."

"Accuse him, then, thyself."

"That brave man! Never of my life!"

"Here, look here," said Mr. Banyard hospitably: "don't let's quarrel. You and your wife come and have a bit of dinner with me and my wife. Venney diney, vous comprenny?"

"Sacrré nom d'un nom!" hissed the Belgian about an inch and a half away from Mr. Banyard's face. "Jamais!"

"Oh, là-là! Tu es jaloux!" mocked his wife.

"Jealous? I? Art thou in thy senses to imagine that I could be jealous of a ninny who has not even hair to his face? Bah! Clémence, at once we ride away."

But as the couple rode off the lady of the twenty-one-inch waist waved a dainty hand in most friendly fashion to Mr. Banyard.

"When I tell the wife about all this," reflected Mr. Banyard, "I don't know that I need mention much about her."

Next Week: "Between the Devil and the Deep Sea."

THE VIKING'S NEW YEAR.

*Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer!
Even—heathen yet—the savage Dane
At lol more deep the mead did drain;
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew;
Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes deck'd the wall,
They gorged upon the half-dressed steer,
Caroused in seas of sable beer;
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnawed rib and marrow-bone;
Or listen'd all, in grim delight,
While Scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.
Then forth in frenzy would they hie,
While wildly loose their red locks fly,
And dancing round the blasing pile
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.—SCOTT.*

Storm.

By J. Kendrick Wynne.

Mr. Wynne is always a strong writer, and here you find him at his strongest. The story in itself is so horrible that commonplace treatment would have made it revolting, but Mr. Wynne is never commonplace; thus he has given us a touch of sunshine amid the storm, and the grip and warmth of real human interest throughout.

I.



TYLECOTTE tossed his palette down on to the rubbish-littered top of an old sea-chest that stood against the studio wall, and, walking to the window, looked out over the grey, white-flecked waters and weed-covered rocks.

He ceased work only because the light was bad, heavy clouds covering the sky and bringing down upon land and sea a premature dusk.

Tylecotte was a tall, spare man with a strong, determined face, black hair, and dark eyes with a queer light at the back of them that hinted at some strong emotion held in check; chafing, struggling to be free, yet ever firmly and relentlessly curbed. One could not help feeling that should that hidden force break loose it must convulse the man, and, in one's ignorance, wonder.

There was a sombre strength about the picture on which he had impatiently turned his back.

Storm!

There were few painters living who could depict storm as did Lewis Tylecotte. Once he had painted calm sunsets and moonlight peace, but now it was always storm—storm, and something more.

A man expresses himself in his work, unconsciously, perhaps, but inevitably.

On the canvas was shown a grey sea, with great white breakers rolling in upon high black rocks that stemmed their impetuous advance. In the foreground a wave had already broken into a foam of wrath, and, in falling back to gather itself for another vain onslaught, met an oncoming breaker and tossed high in wild confusion. And the black rock, wet and glisten-

ing, frowned down impregnable upon the lashing waters, while stooping sea-fowl flouted the angry wave-crests.

Revolt! Anger that would have been magnificent save that in its impotence it degenerated into rapid fury. And it was something of this vain revolt that raged at the back of Tylecotte's eyes.

Over at St. Laze, a few miles down the coast, lived Hilda Moore. She was a painter because she loved the wild beauties of land and sea, and the clear blue depth of the sky that was reflected in her eyes. So she painted upon canvas what she loved to look upon, and the joyful enthusiasm with which she did her work gave it strength.

When Tylecotte and Hilda Moore were together they found the world a very wonderful place, while when they were apart an essential force was lacking in their lives.

Yet he must not speak the words that sprang to his lips when she was beside him. Neither might he take to himself any credit for his restraint, because somewhere, though none of his present friends suspected the fact, Tylecotte had a wife.

He had been a young art student in London when he met her, and had married her because he thought her very beautiful. It must have been quite three months before he discovered that his wife was a thief whose crimes had been more remarkable for their treachery than their daring.

They had parted, he allowing her an ample income. It was eight years since he had seen her, and nearly three since he had heard of her.

So Tylecotte's love for Hilda Moore must be kept in subjection, yet it raged in its confinement even as the

By J. Kendrick Wynne

sea raged against the rocks, a vast force in prison.

The bungalow where Tylecotte lived, seeing no one except the woman who came daily to attend to his needs, stood on a high bank surrounded by tamarisk. There was a path below the bank, on the edge of a ten-foot cliff, and then shingle, rocks, and sea. On either hand long, low headlands, like a giant's arms outstretched, formed a wide bay.

The tide was now low, and reaching far out into the sea was a reef of rock which at high tide was a dark shadow under shallow water. It now rose rugged and ugly, brown with a smother of seaweed save where it was blue-black with clinging mussels. It was Tylecotte's habit to fish from the end of the reef for the bass that came into the surf to feed, and in the deep, cavernous pools he would hunt for lobsters and crabs. Such were his simple diversions; and from the end of the reef one could see the lights spring into being under St. Laze Head.

He took a long bamboo with a hook at the end of it from a corner of the studio, and swung a fishing-basket over his shoulder.

A few minutes later he was picking his way between the broad, brown bands of seaweed, and now and again leaping a narrow gulley that crossed the reef, till he found firmer footing where the clinging mussels roughened the rocks.

In a little while he was climbing the far end of the reef, on the seaward side of which was a deep pool running far back under a shelving roof of rock till it was lost in black shadows. Clambering down to the brink of the pool, Tylecotte splashed the hook-end of his pole into the still water, and a score of small fish flashed in panic to their weedy covert. He pushed the hook far into the dark recesses of the rock, and moved it gently till he felt a tremor of life vibrate in his hand. He then withdrew it cautiously, and out of its obscure abode came a large crab, its claws angrily clutching at the bamboo. A few seconds later Tylecotte held it powerless, its red-brown back

in the palm of his hand, while it clicked its claws fiercely together and bubbled at its door-like mouth. He dropped it into the basket and again drove the pole under the rock, groping about till he thought he felt the movement of life once more.

No crab adorned the hook this time, but—what the deuce had he got hold of?

At the end of the bamboo was something that looked like a round stone with a slime of weed about it. Tylecotte lifted it on to the rock and, loosening it from the hook, stooped and picked it up. Next moment he almost dropped it in his astonishment.

He was holding in his hand a human skull!

He stared at it with a feeling half of fascination, half of repugnance.

A skull was no curiosity in the neighbourhood, where ancient British burying-grounds were not uncommon. But how came this skull at the end of the reef? Doubtless, he reflected, when there was flesh upon these bones the reef had been a grassy headland, long since worn away by the encroaching waters. A curious sense of mystery enthralled him as he looked at the grim relic. He must keep it as a curiosity.

A little tongue of water crept between his feet, gently stirring the smooth surface of the rock pool and warning him that the tide was rising.

It was now nearly dark. He turned involuntarily towards the west, where the lights of St. Laze now glowed warm and ruddy through the autumnal haze.

Over yonder were men and women laughing and gossiping in idle content! No; over there was one woman, and perhaps her face was set towards the sea.

He stood still with the skull in his hands, staring at the red home-lights in the distance, while a sudden sense of his desolation chilled him. Then he turned and hastened homeward over the rocks, about which the waves were splashing, while the waters surged strongly through the narrow gullies.

In his studio Tylecotte lighted a lamp, and, clearing the skull of the

Storm

slime of weed, examined it closely. It was crusted in parts with tiny rock barnacles. The lower jaw was missing, but in the upper jaw a number of teeth still remained—small, white, even teeth. Suddenly Tylecotte started, and bent closer over the grim object in his hand.

One of the teeth was tipped with gold.

Was it the custom of the ancient Britons to gild their teeth? he wondered.

On the mantelpiece stood an old clock of dark wood inlaid with lighter wood. On the arched top of this clock Tylecotte balanced the skull, and there he left it.

It was never far from his thoughts during the next few days. When he had forgotten it for a little while his attention would be suddenly drawn towards it in one way or another. There would come to him a curious feeling that somebody was watching him intently, and turning his head suddenly he would look into the eyeless sockets of the skull. Again, the ticking of the clock would seem to become unduly, almost aggressively, loud, and on looking round he would see, not the face of the clock, but the faceless bones of the skull.

It began to get on his nerves. One morning, while he was working, his attention was three times distracted in a few minutes by the sensation of watching eyes.

It was then that the impulse came to him to take the skull, and send it bowling and leaping over the rocks back to the sea from which it had come.

But he did not do so.

One morning he received a letter from his friend Garth, of St. Laze, accusing him of deserting his friends. On an impulse Tylecotte laid aside his work, and, disentangling his bicycle from a corner of the studio, started with energy to pump up the flabby tyres.

II.

Tylecotte's spirits rose as he sped swiftly along lane and high road, through sleepy, white-walled villages,

and on through moorland wilds, now catching a glimpse of the sea, now spinning along between heather-clad tors; and as the sun was weakening in the west he coasted down the long hill into St. Laze.

Garth's florid, genial face and boisterous welcomes affected him pleasantly, and it was good to feel the friendly grip of a man's hand after weeks of solitude.

"So we've managed to drag you out of your lair at last, old man. Louie said you wouldn't turn up. Come in, and I'll lead you to her in triumph."

"By the way," said Garth presently, "there is a 'hit up' at the club to-night. A dance—impromptu affair. Do you care to come, or would you rather be quiet? The Moores will be there and—oh, everyone!"

Garth handed his cigar-case and watched Tylecotte's face.

Tylecotte selected a cigar without apparent emotion.

"Thanks," he said. "I should like to be there."

The St. Laze Arts Club consisted of a single large room, open to the rafters and crossed by heavy beams. Small, square windows looked down on to the water that washed the granite wall on which the wooden structure was built.

To-night the beams were hung with fairy-lamps, beneath which were gathered a throng of men and women who had drifted to the sleepy little fishing town from all parts of the British Isles, and even from across the Atlantic, bound together by the common link of painting. The hum of conversation sounded merrily to the accompaniment of clinking coffee-cups, and already the smoke of cigarettes streaked the air.

Tylecotte and Hilda Moore were together, hardly conscious of the throng about them. Hilda was tall, with a grace of poise and figure that told of a free life in the open. As she talked to the man who looked down at her, her eyes bright and her cheeks slightly flushed, she was a picture of magnetic vitality. Her hair was very dark, with a warmth of hue that hinted of auburn.

A few minutes later the piano in

the corner sounded, and presently Tylecotte was steering Hilda through the press of the dance, longing the while to be with her out of doors in the open, yet well knowing that wisdom was not in harmony with his wish.

He danced with half a dozen different partners before they came together again.

"I wish someone would open the windows," said Hilda, fanning herself.

Tylecotte glanced round the room and up at the skylight.

"They are open—every one," he said. "What do you say to a breath of fresh air on the pier?"

"It would be delicious," said Hilda. "And we can talk there. Let us go."

So they descended the wooden stairs and took their way through the narrow, roughly-paved streets till they came to the stone pier.

They walked to the end, and Hilda leaned upon a granite capstan, inhaling the soft sea-breeze that blew in their faces.

"Delightful!" she murmured.

The night was very still, the fishing village had gone to sleep, and the white cottages were in darkness. The square windows of the club alone glowed ruddy on the night, and through them came the sound of music over the water. Out to sea a lighthouse streaked the black, polished waters with pale fire that gleamed and died and gleamed again.

"Why have you kept away for so long?" asked Hilda suddenly. "You know that we like to see you. Do you like being always alone?"

"I have my work," said Tylecotte evasively.

"Yes, of course; but"—there was the faintest trace of petulance in her voice—"but do you care for nothing else?"

He almost laughed at the unconscious irony of the question.

"Yes," he answered; "but you know one has to concentrate on one thing if one means to be any good."

"Are you painting another of those splendid seascapes? They remind me of magnificent tragedies."

"I would gladly exchange and be

able to paint as you do," he said, recalling her heather-clad slopes glowing with warmth and colour. "You paint life and freedom, while I——"

"Yes?" she said expectantly, watching his face.

"Oh, I paint things as I see them," he laughed.

She was silent. His absurd constraint puzzled her, for she was not unconscious of his feelings towards her. He, too, was silent, while his thoughts fled swiftly to his lonely studio and pictured it clearly in every detail of its desolation. There, perched upon the clock, was the skull that was always watching him, and it was watching him steadily—*now*. A keen sense of horror gripped him.

He turned to the girl at his side, and her presence drove away the eerie feeling that had stolen over him. He seemed to stand between life and death. A word, and he believed that she would come to him.

He set his teeth as a man does to endure physical pain. The water rippled faintly on the steps of the pier, and Hilda's shoe tapped softly on the stones. Twice the lighthouse cast its pale streak upon the water, and he did not speak.

Then, ere he knew it, he was telling her the story of his life. It came harsh and broken from his lips, and as Hilda heard she knew that his tragedy was hers also, though they had only met and talked as friends.

Yet when he ceased abruptly she gave to him in few words the quiet, warm sympathy of a comrade.

A little later they returned to the crowded room, where the fairy-lamps showed warm patches of colour in a blue haze of cigarette smoke. Hilda's arm pressed against his almost imperceptibly for a moment, and then dropped to her side. As her touch left him he felt that a link had broken.

Next day he returned to his solitude.

III.

Back again at his studio, with no companions but his thoughts and his work, Tylecotte tried to kill the

Storm

former with the latter, but they merged and became one.

Again he painted the sea—the constant mirror of his moods. But now the storm had gone, and the waters stretched in a soft, unbroken swell into the distance, grey save where a shaft of light, slanting from behind a cloud, streaked them with a livid gleam. There was no stir of life upon the waste. Not a gull fluttered in the air, and the sullen peace of the waters told that even the wind was still.

It was a portrayal of creation incomplete, inadequate.

And stronger and stronger as he worked grew the impression of the watching eyes. It was so perpetual now that he rarely glanced at the skull, except when there came to him the idea that someone was on the brink of laughter. He half expected to hear a sudden ripple of mirth behind him, and had he done so it would have been almost a relief.

The skull alternately repelled and fascinated him. He fell to speculating as to whom it had once belonged; when there were bright eyes in those now empty sockets, behind which the light of intelligence had gleamed; when the small, white teeth, with their impertinent speck of gold, had flashed through parted lips that could whisper and smile and kiss.

It is not well for a man to live alone when pleasant thoughts are forbidden fruit—when his brain is active and his imagination strong. Tylecotte never went to the reef now nor watched the lights of St. Laze glow ruddy through the mist. He walked moodily along the cliffs, covering more miles than he dreamed of; frequently forgot to eat; and during a whole rainy week got soaked to the skin. Then the rain ceased and a great gale raged along the coast, when the rocks vanished under white cascades, the breakers boomed upon the shore, and the shingle ground sullenly in the surge.

Clots of jellied foam as big as a man's head quivered on the grass or flew high in the whirl of the wind.

Late, very late, that night Tylecotte stood outside his studio. He

staggered under the force of the gale, and yet it could not cool his fevered head. To breathe hurt him, and despite the heat of his body he shivered as with cold.

He stood watching the white lather of foam glimmer below him through the dark, while the wind came reveling over the water, shrieking an exultant song of sunken wrecks out there in the blackness. The salt spray drenched him where he stood, and a branch of wet tamarisk clawed his burning face like a drowning hand.

He turned into the studio at last, and forcing the door back upon the wind lit a lamp and sat down. Doors and windows rattled, the light wavered, and the cocoanut matting floated upward from the floor. Tylecotte sat very still, because he was vaguely conscious that it was wise to remain so, for he did not know what he would do if he got up. The storm made monotonous music in his ears, and a ship's rocket, sounding faintly out at sea, seemed to be a very proper accompaniment and did not rouse him.

Twice more the rocket boomed and he did not stir, but turning his head slowly looked at the skull.

The flickering lamplight cast strange shadows in the sockets, really wonderfully like eyes—steadfastly watchful eyes.

He was not conscious of getting up, yet presently he found himself leaning against the chimneypiece, holding the skull in his hands.

He stood thus in a dream, and presently it seemed that his fingers were lost in a soft mass of red-gold hair, and that two eyes, like pale blue fire, looked into his from a face of child-like beauty—beauty that had spoiled his life.

He remained very still under the spell of that lovely, upturned face, while a voice began to speak with a soft melody that lulled him deeper into his dream.

The voice welcomed him as the man who could see, who had rent the veil of reason and looked into the eyes of truth. There was a mockery in its mellow music, a honeyed irony in its tender tones as it murmured a strange

By J. Kendrick Wynne

story in his ear. It told of a ship that had struck and gone down out yonder where the breakers roared upon the reef, and of a woman who had sunk and been drowned in the depths. A pang of horror and pity clutched the man's heart as he looked down into the eyes of the wife of whom the tale was told, and yet who told the tale, and who, ending, laughed.

"Dear, how hot your head is!" murmured the drowsy voice, and it seemed that there were flames about his brow. "Come, cool it where the waters have the cold blue of the iceberg. I will show you the caves where tall white lilies bud, and, blooming, break into snow-white flakes of foam. Come to the cool caves of silence, deep, deep down under the spirit of storm. Come——"

* * * * *

A little band of men, on their way home from the wreck of a French barque a few miles to westward, were fighting their way against the wind in the grey dawn.

Suddenly from the high bank on their right a man jumped down in their path, staggered forward, and sprang over the low cliff on to the shingle below. They drew back for a moment and stared at the strange figure that pressed knee-deep into the surf. One at least of them had seen and recognised the face of Tylecotte, and even in that swift glimpse had realised that things were not as they should be with him.

"Come 'ee on, lads!" he cried hoarsely. "It's clean daft he do be. We shan't let 'un drown."

Tylecotte pressed fiercely on, as to some urgent goal—on till he met the great curve of a breaking wave that lifted him and bore him backward into strong hands that gripped and held him. His captors swayed and staggered in the surge, but maintained their ground, and something round and yellow-grey dropped from Tylecotte's grasp and was swallowed up in the foam. He swung the men who gripped him back to the length of his long arms for a moment, and his chest bowed out in his efforts to shake off their hold. Then, as they

closed in upon him again, his neck strained forward towards the sea and a dry, strangled voice came from between his parched lips.

"Let me go to her—let me go——"

"Don't 'ee be foolish, my dear," said one of the men, as though speaking to a little child, and they drew him back to where a mess of froth and weed marked the limit of the tide.

But Tylecotte's face was still set towards the sea, and his glazed eyes seemed to follow something that moved over the water. And the men who held him, pursuing the direction of his gaze, saw what may have been a wisp of spray whirled up and twisted in the wind that carried it to the head of the reef, where it was lost in the boiling surf. But they shivered as they looked, for they were men of a fanciful race.

* * * * *

The doctor found Tylecotte suffering from pneumonia, and as Hilda Moore had once been trained as a nurse, and as the doctor knew a capable woman when he saw one, he was glad that she should tend his patient. Garth and his wife also took up their quarters at the bungalow—Garth because there were times when Tylecotte had strange ideas as to what was good for him, his fevered body yearning for the white waters of the reef.

And in his delirium Tylecotte said all the things that he had taken great trouble not to say when he had his senses, so that Hilda became fully aware of his affection for her. He talked much nonsense besides of white lilies that bloomed in sea caves which he thought would give him comfort.

Once when the doctor was present he leaned towards Hilda, and said very gravely:

"It was out yonder she died, when the *Spartan* went down two years ago—out there on the reef."

He stretched out his arm for a moment, and then it dropped limply with its own weight. The doctor's fingers dropped lightly on his wrist, and he gave the patient some stuff out of a bottle.

"It's a curious thing," said the

Storm

doctor quietly when Tylecotte slept, "but there was a woman on board the *Sparton* when she struck. I remember there was a fuss about it at the time, because the boat was not licensed to carry passengers."

Hilda strove hard for Tylecotte's life, and by-and-by he came to his senses, very weak and surprised, and babbled no more of love and lilies.

And of the things that he had said he heard nothing; but when he was getting strong Mrs. Garth, perhaps urged by curiosity, mentioned the wreck of the *Sparton* and the woman who had been on board when she went down. And while she spoke there seemed to float across Tylecotte's mind a story that he had been told a very long time ago, by whom he could not remember. The story took such firm hold upon his mind that when he was

strong enough to get about again he sought out and found the sole survivor of the *Sparton*. What he heard led him to make further inquiries, and he subsequently learned that the wife who for so long had been to him as dead had indeed died two years ago.

There came to Tylecotte a great horror of the bungalow and of the reef. Sometimes he would wonder what had become of the skull that had once stood upon the clock, but he was glad that it had gone.

One day he turned his back upon the grey solitude and went to St. Laze, where was the woman who had kept death at arm's length on his behalf, and who held the warmth and colour of life in her keeping. And he found her waiting for him.

THE END.

THE SCOTS NEW YEAR.

New Year's Day, the great national festival, is a time of family expansions and of deep carousal. Sometimes, by a sore stroke of fate, the year's anniversary falls upon a Sunday, when the public-houses are inexorably closed, when singing, and even whistling, is banished from our homes and highways, and the oldest toper feels called upon to go to church. Currant loaf is now popular eating in all households. For weeks before the great morning, confectioners display stacks of Scots bun, and full-moons of shortbread adorned with mottoes in peel or sugar-plums, in honour of the season and the family affections. "Frae Auld Reekie," "A Guid New Year to ye a'," "For the Auld Folk at Hame," are among the most favoured of these devices. Can you not see the carrier, after half a day's journey on pinching hill roads, draw up before a cottage in Teviotdale, or perhaps in Manor Glen among the rowans, and the old people receiving the parcel with moist eyes and a prayer for Jock or Jean in the city? For at this season, on the threshold of another year of calamity and stubborn conflict, men feel a need to draw closer the links that unite them; they reckon the number of their friends, like allies before a war; and the prayers grow longer in the morning as the absent are recommended by name into God's keeping.

—STEVENSON.

The Pigeon's-Blood Rubies.

By Headon Hill.

This is a detective yarn concerning a jewel robbery, just as so many other detective yarns have been before it, and doubtless will be in the time to come. But Mr. Hill is a past-master in the art of writing this kind of fiction, and his denouement comes as a surprise. Even a hardened old reader like myself did not guess what the explanation was, and to keep me in the dark is something of a feat on which I can honestly congratulate Mr. Hill.



WHEN Lord Tintagel was shown into my office in the Strand, I knew before he opened his mouth what business had brought him. All the world had been made aware through the daily press of the robbery which, four days earlier, had deprived Lady Theo Wymark, while a guest at Tintagel Towers, of her celebrated "pigeon's-blood" rubies.

His lordship entered my plainly-furnished bureau with the assured dignity of a great nobleman who was also one of the wealthiest men in England. Tall and rather spare of frame, with aquiline features and a general air of haughty aloofness, he was patrician to the finger-tips, though perhaps, for a peer who could not be much over forty, he was a trifle old-fashioned in the pomposity of his manner.

"You are Mr. Zambra?" he said in his high-pitched tones, elevating his eyebrows a little. "I wish to consult the principal of the detective agency in person—not a subordinate."

"I am Sebastian Zambra, my lord," I replied, motioning him to the client's chair. "In what way can I serve your lordship?—though I think that I can guess."

"That is not improbable," he said as he sat down in a stately fashion, draping his frock coat in correct folds about his knees. "Those infernal newspapers think that they are omniscient nowadays, and they lead everyone by the nose. That is why I am here. They have led the police by the nose, with the result that the lady who has been robbed of her jewels under my roof is likely to

lose them altogether. I desire to enlist your—er—trained acumen, Mr. Zambra, to counteract the crass incompetence—the blind folly—of the official executive."

I shot an unobtrusive glance at my visitor. His last words were uttered with a growing heat that somehow clashed with his natural repose. Was this warmth entirely due, I wondered, to a chivalrous anxiety for restitution to be made to his guest, or was there some underlying current of feeling? In other words, did his annoyance at the failure of the police spring from disappointment that they had not arrested some particular individual, and, if so, was his disappointment due to a knowledge of guilt or to personal antipathy?

I put to him a tentative question, covering, as I hoped, all the points. "Possibly," I said, "your lordship has a cause of suspicion which has been withheld from the police-officer in charge of the case?"

For some reason my interrogatory seemed to disconcert my noble client. He hemmed and hawed a little in a manner I could not as yet understand, for he could hardly wish to bring the robbery home to some person whom at the same time he desired to shield.

"No," he finally replied. "I think that the police are in possession of all the available information. My complaint is that they have not made use of it—have gone off after the red herring trailed across the scent by the newspapers."

I remembered that the press theory was that the rubies had been stolen by a professional criminal, probably from London, who had gained access to the mansion during

The Pigeon's-Blood Rubies

the evening while the house-party were all downstairs playing bridge or billiards. From a cursory perusal of the accounts I had been inclined to take this view myself, with the addition that there had possibly been collusion by one of the servants.

"Then I am to understand, my lord, that you are of opinion that the thief did not come from outside—was, in fact, resident at the Abbey either as a guest or servant," I said, bending forward and inviting his confidence with a significant glance.

He fidgeted a little under my gaze, and I thought that I discerned a twitching of the nostrils. Somehow he reminded me of a thoroughbred horse resenting the touch of the spur from an under-bred jockey.

"I had better tell you the story of the night," he said stiffly. "And it will not be necessary to dwell upon details which I see that you have gathered from the published accounts. Broadly, you will have learned that Lady Theo Wymark, on going up to her bedroom an hour after midnight, discovered that the rubies, which, according to her careless custom, she had left upon her dressing-table, were gone, that she raised an instant alarm, and that the police were telephoned for.

"Naturally, as a host, I assumed charge till the arrival of the police. At the moment of the alarm I was in the hall bidding good-night to the men of the party, among whom was Mr. Wymark, Lady Theo's husband. After instructing my butler to send the telephonic message, and to go round the house and examine all the windows and doors, I accompanied Mr. Wymark to his wife's room and heard her story, which, as the reports are fairly accurate, I need not repeat. It tallied with that of her maid, who was present, and who had been present when the discovery was made. On taking off the jewellery which she had worn during the evening to put it away, Lady Theo had found that the case had been rifled."

"She was greatly distressed?" I hazarded.

"She was nearly hysterical." Lord

Tintagel frowned at the reminiscence, and his brows took a still deeper crease as he added: "I could wish that her husband had treated the matter more seriously, but he is an irresponsible creature who thinks it funny to turn everything into a joke. Not quite a gentleman, I fear, and only tolerated because the fortune he made on the Stock Exchange enabled him to marry an earl's daughter. However, I did my best. I insisted that nothing should be moved in the room till the police had seen it."

"A wise precaution on your lordship's part," was my comment.

"Yes, but it—er—bore no fruit," came the testy rejoinder.

"You have reason to believe that your order was not obeyed?" I hinted.

My visitor fell to ruminating, stroking the nap of his glossy hat. "I will not commit myself," he replied after a lengthy pause. "Of course I did not myself make an exhaustive examination of a bedroom occupied by a lady guest."

"When the police came, you again visited the room, and to all appearances nothing had been moved?" I asked, and he answered with quite a show of eagerness that that was so.

What was I to make of this curious blend of reluctance and keenness? To my trained experience it seemed clear that my noble visitor was not perfectly frank with me, but what was it that he was keeping back? Reviewing rapidly my questions and his answers, I came to the conclusion that he had noticed something on his first visit to Lady Theo's room, which he had expected would furnish the police with a clue, but that though the clue had still been there when they arrived, they had failed to grasp its significance. Yet, if this was so, why on earth should he want to call me in to remedy the official failure, and allow me to remain in the dark as to the object, whatever it was, that had aroused his suspicions?

It is a rule of mine, and one to which I owe much of my success as a detective agent, never to undertake a case when, at the initial interview, I have reason to think that a client is

not giving me his full confidence. I was not going to break that rule because the present applicant was a peer of the realm and good for any fee I chose to ask him. I tried a chance shot.

"Before I go into this, my lord, you will have to tell me what it was you saw in Lady Theo Wymark's bedroom which ought to have inspired the police and didn't," I said bluntly.

My shot hit the mark plumb centre. The dignity of Lord Tintagel dropped from him as by magic. He stared foolishly at me, and in his confusion began to smooth the nap of his hat the wrong way. Then with an effort he pulled himself together, covering his confusion with an unnaturally hearty laugh.

"You are too sharp for me, Mr. Zambra," he said. "I had hoped that you would find that out for yourself, but if it is a condition I suppose that I must satisfy you, though it goes against the grain to—er—inculpate a gentleman who was, and is, also my guest. When I went up to the room on the raising of the alarm I saw, lying under the dressing-table, a silver cigarette-case which I recognised as the property of Captain Cyril Meade. It was still there when I took Inspector Reynell to the scene of the robbery."

"Who had been in the room during the interval?" I asked.

"No one," his lordship replied. "I had it locked up, and placed another room at Lady Theo's disposal."

"And you are sure that the inspector noticed the cigarette-case?"

"He cannot have helped doing so. It was—er—fairly conspicuous. I was not present when he searched the room, as I thought that he would have a better chance if he was left to himself."

I glanced again at the applicant for my services, and noticed about him a certain air of satisfaction and relief, as though he was glad that I had dragged from him the vital detail which he had withheld. There was nothing inconsistent in this. It was quite conceivable that he might have been loth to take the initiative

in accusing a man with whom he had been on sufficiently friendly terms to invite him to his house, and that at the same time he might rejoice that, in spite of these hospitable instincts, he had been forced into a disclosure which justice demanded of him. Yet there were points in the case, based as much on his behaviour as on his narrative, which puzzled me, and I do not like being puzzled.

"Very well, my lord, as you have given me a clear lead I will take up the matter," I said. "It will be necessary for me to come down to the Abbey, and I had better not come in my proper capacity. Can you suggest any pretext which will give me the run of the house and enable me to meet your guests? A very short visit ought to be enough for my purpose."

He favoured me with a prolonged scrutiny, as though to assure himself that I was presentable. "Come as the managing clerk of my solicitors, Partridge and Partridge, of Lincoln's Inn," he replied at last. "I can say that your business makes it necessary for you to dine and sleep at the Abbey. I travelled up by the night mail in order to consult you, and am going back in an hour's time. When will you come down?"

I replied that I would go by the same train but in a different compartment; and so it was arranged—also that while at the Abbey I was to be known as "Mr. Wallace."

* * * * *

That evening at dinner I had my first opportunity of meeting Lord Tintagel's house-party in full assembly. The moment I entered the drawing-room I saw that they were much too casual and frivolous, a lot to speculate on my personality, and I was further helped in the preservation of my *incognito* by being told off to "take in" an elderly spinster who was stone deaf—the aunt and duenna of a merry, sloe-eyed maiden who seemed to be in great request. It was not till later, in the billiard-room, that I learned that this girl was the rich Miss Carstairs, the best hunted heiress of the last London season.

If my noble host and client had been stately in my dingy office, here

The Pigeon's-Blood Rubies

in his own splendid banquet-hall—you couldn't call it a mere dining-room—he was truly magnificent. All traces of the nervousness which I had discerned earlier in the day had vanished. His manners were those of an emperor who demands, but at the same time knows how to concede, deference to all who may be entitled to it. Easily and gracefully, yet always with a note of aloofness, he did the honours of his table to what in the depths of my mind I designated a "scratch pack." And it was the more wonderful because, as a bachelor, he had no hostess to help him.

In calling the guests at Tintagel Abbey a "scratch pack," I do not mean that they were ill-bred or disreputable. On the contrary, they were most of them of good family and social position. But they belonged, with some notable exceptions, to the smart set—a set with which Lord Tintagel was well known to have nothing in common. In vulgar parlance, I began to smell a rat in the motive which could have been strong enough to ask this gay and irresponsible crowd to the Abbey. It was possible that in that motive, if I could hit upon it, I should find the key to the puzzle.

For during the interval between my arrival and dinner I had assured myself that the thief had not come from outside, but had been an inmate of the house. And, by judiciously pumping Tompsett, the confidential butler, I had come to an equally sure conviction that none of the servants were implicated, all their movements being accounted for during the hours when the robbery must have been effected. The guilty party was to be looked for among the chattering, laughing folk in whose company I was enjoying an excellent dinner.

Naturally I paid particular attention to the man at whom, with so much apparent reluctance, Lord Tintagel had pointed an accusing finger, as well as to the victim of the unknown depredator. The late owner of the pigeon's-blood rubies may be dismissed in a sentence. Lady Theo Wymark was a raw-

boned, shrill-voiced, ostensibly-rouged, middle-aged woman who might safely have a gentleman's cigarette-case found in her apartments without having unkind things said about herself in connection with it. Captain Cyril Meade, the suspect, does not merit a much longer description.

He did not look like a thief. Young, well-knit, and possessed of good looks of the square-jawed manly type, he was every inch the soldier. And I had not studied him for long before I observed that his fearless grey eyes rested often and wistfully on the piquant face of pretty Miss Carstairs.

It was not till later in the evening, in the billiard-room, that I made the acquaintance of Mr. Anthony Wymark, Lady Theo's husband, and "Tony" to his intimates. At the end of a pool he put away his cue and sat down beside me on the lounge whence I had been watching the game. He waited till a new game had been started before he addressed me, and then he made me jump.

"Spotted the thief yet, Mr. Zambra?" he chuckled under his breath.

Concealing my chagrin, I turned and looked at him—a plump little fair man, with a twinkle in each of his shrewd eyes. "I am too modest," I said in an undertone. "If I had thought that there was the remotest chance of my being recognised I should have altered my appearance."

"You would have done a silly thing if you had," Mr. Wymark replied. "I am the only one likely to recognise you—saw you in court over that Temperly affair, don't you know. I am also the only one possessed of really valuable information as to the chap who prigged my wife's rubies."

"Then where do I come in?" I said. "For I presume that you have given your valuable information to the police?"

"Never you mind," rejoined the little man. "I'm not telling you anything yet, and I'm not telling you anything at all unless you come to

me before you take your results to that inspector man and advise him whom to arrest. See? If you take my tip and confide in Tony Wymark you won't perhaps make a sensational success, but you'll save yourself a considerable set-back. I didn't steal the things myself, if that's what you're thinking."

The clack of the billiard balls drowned our voices, and I decided to pursue the opportunity. "I will promise not to do anything in a hurry," I half assented to his proposition. "But without trenching upon that exclusive information of yours, Mr. Wymark, I should like to get a few general particulars from you—details, I mean, which I can quite easily extract from the servants, but which I should prefer to get from you."

He did not answer all my questions by any means, but he shed quite a lurid light on the reason for our noble host's rather mixed house-party. It seemed that Lord Tintagel, following the precedent of solemn, pompous men who have escaped matrimony till late middle-age, had cast elderly eyes of longing on a girl young enough to be his daughter. The amused opinion of the smart people whom he had invited was that they owed their entertainment to Lord Tintagel's desire to show his ancestral seat to the object of his adoration, not having the pluck to ask her and her chaperon alone. It was expected that he would take advantage of the visit to lay his coronet at her feet.

"At the feet of Miss Carstairs," I remarked quietly.

Tony Wymark favoured me with a glance of simulated disgust. "I didn't mention any names," he replied. "But, by jingo, I believe you've hit the trail. I mustn't be seen chinning with you any more."

He strolled away and joined a group at the other end of the room, leaving me free to slip out and make my way to the pantry of Mr. Tompsett, the butler. I should have to get from him certain facts at which Mr. Wymark had shied. Passing through the great vaulted

entrance-hall, I caught a glimpse of Lord Tintagel describing with ponderous gallantry to Miss Carstairs the family portraits that adorned the walls, while from one of the bridge tables near the huge open fireplace Captain Meade was annoying his partner by inattention to his cards.

I found Mr. Tompsett enjoying a glass of port in his cosy sanctum, and was at once invited to join him. In my earlier interview with this excellent retainer I had gathered the impression that he had been apprised by his noble master that I was a detective, and that he had to some extent been primed with what he was to say to me. He was a large, loose-jointed man of sixty, who had caught something of his employer's manner.

We had two glasses of port, and then I suddenly poked him in the ribs.

"Now, Mr. Tompsett," I said, "you have already whitewashed your domestic staff. Let's sort the guests over a bit. Which of those bright butterflies of fashion lifted Lady Theo Wymark's rubies?"

"Really, Mr.—er—Wallace," he began, affecting a spluttering indignation beneath which I perceived that he hailed the opening with eagerness, "I am at a loss to—"

"Oh, stow that," I cut him short. "And don't call me Wallace. My name is Zambra—a fairly well-known name, as you will admit. His lordship left me the discretion to disclose myself to anyone likely to be useful, and I am sure that you can be of assistance."

He gave me a sly smile. "But what a question to ask!" he responded. "If I had known who stole the rubies there would have been no call for your services, Mr. Zambra. I know no more than Adam."

"No, but you can help to find out," I persisted. "What I am chiefly concerned with is the movements of the people in the house—whether any of them, and if so who, left the billiard-room or card tables to go upstairs during the evening of the robbery?"

Mr. Tompsett pursed up his lips

The Pigeon's-Blood Rubies

and scratched his chin, affecting to consider. "I can remember one," he said. "Captain Cyril Meade. I was serving coffee in the hall, and noticed him on the grand staircase. Two for the matter of that," he added, repeating the sly smile. "Though you wouldn't count the other, I suppose, Mr. Zambra, since it was his lordship himself."

"They went upstairs together?" I asked.

"No; Lord Tintagel went up first—directly after they left the dining-room. But I only mentioned him so as to be accurate. Captain Meade went up half an hour later."

"Thank you, Mr. Tompsett," I said warmly. "I believe that you have given me a very useful clue, confirming a suspicion that already existed. I must return to the billiard-room now, if I am to keep up my character of a harmless solicitor's clerk received on sufferance amongst the quality."

But it was not to the billiard-room that I at first bent my steps, after exchanging winks with the portly butler. My business took me to the upper regions of the mansion, and I reached them by way of a secondary staircase which I had located before dinner, thus avoiding the entrance-hall, whence my ascent would have been observed. My goal was the august lair of my noble client—to put it plainly, Lord Tintagel's bedroom—my only fear was that his lordship's valet might be there, waiting to put his master to bed. But a little reconnoitring reassured me, and, tip-toeing into the magnificent apartment, I found myself alone with my own devices.

* * * * *

It was an hour later when I descended the grand staircase. The bridge players were still hard at it in the hall, but among the guests themselves a slight shuffling of the pack had taken place in the interval. Lord Tintagel was seated at one of the card tables, and Miss Carstairs was nowhere to be seen. I went on into the billiard-room, and was greeted by Tony Wymark with a mischievous grin. As luck would have it he was not playing.

"Well?" he said, as he made room for me on the lounge at his side. "Have you come to claim my assistance before reporting your discovery to Inspector Reynell? I can see that you have made one."

"I don't stand in need of your assistance," I replied. "I have got down to bed-rock without it, Mr. Wymark. But we can't talk in this crowd—come somewhere else."

Finishing his whisky and soda, he led the way through a glass door opening into a vast palm-house. As we entered two shadowy figures flitted out by another door leading back into the drawing-room. We both recognised them—Miss Carstairs and Cyril Meade.

"A bit of a coincidence, eh?" chuckled Tony.

"I don't take your point," I said quietly.

"Oh, come! don't keep it up with me," was the rather irritable reply. "You have got it up for Captain Meade, I know. You have been posted up about the cigarette-case, and have found out that he went upstairs that evening?"

"I have found something better than that, Mr. Wymark," I retorted. "I have found your wife's rubies. Allow me to restore them to you."

And taking from my pocket the necklet of splendid gems I gave it into his hand. How they gleamed and sparkled even in the dim light of the great conservatory!

"Well, I'm hanged!" Tony exclaimed when he had mastered his astonishment. "So you have pulled it off after all. I wasn't going to put you on the scent unless you had been misled by the clue to Cyril Meade."

"You would have submitted to the loss of the jewels rather than make a fuss?"

"We shouldn't have lost them for long," rejoined Mr. Wymark. "He would have sent them back anonymously when he found that the little gun he had loaded up for Meade had missed fire."

"But would it have missed fire?" I asked. "That is the one point not clear to me—why the police did not

pursue the matter of the cigarette-case found in your wife's room. You heard of that?"

"Heard of it!" laughed Tony. "Inspector Reynell isn't a Zambra, but neither is he quite a fool. He didn't pursue the clue because I knocked the stuffing out of it directly he showed me the case. It was my own property, my friend. There's nothing to incriminate anyone in a man's cigarette-case being found in his wife's bedroom. I didn't tell the inspector that I had lent the case to Cyril Meade—for the good reason that its being found there proved to me that Cyril was the real victim, rather than the author, of the robbery. Here are the facts."

And he went on to relate that on the evening of the robbery, having two days before lent Captain Meade his cigarette-case, he had reminded him of the loan. The young officer had blamed himself for his forgetfulness and had insisted on going up to his room to fetch it. On his return to the billiard-room he had announced that he could not find it, though he was sure that he had left it on his dressing-table. Wymark had told him not to worry, as it was certain to turn up, and had thought no more about it till the inspector, after searching the room, had questioned him about the case.

Wymark had at once suspected that the case had been placed there by someone who believed that it belonged to Cyril Meade, in order to implicate him in a theft which was due to a desire, not for plunder, but to bring a rival to disgrace. More than that, he had a pretty shrewd notion as to who had taken the case from Meade's dressing-table before visiting Lady Theo's room. He conferred with his wife, and disgusted as they were with such an act of treachery to a guest, they made allowance for the vagaries of an elderly lover, and they decided to keep their suspicions to themselves unless Cyril Meade was accused.

Not being informed that the case had ever been in Cyril's possession, the inspector had never connected him with the robbery, but on my

appearance on the scene their apprehensions had been revived, as they guessed that I would have been apprised of the false clue.

"Hence my warning to you," Tony concluded. "But it does not seem to have been needed. You had spotted the culprit already."

"Yes," I replied. "I had gained a certain impression at our first interview. It was confirmed by observation of Captain Meade at dinner, and by your subsequent revelation of our host's matrimonial hopes. I fancied, too, that Tompsett had been primed to tell me of the captain's visit to the bedroom floor when he went to fetch your case."

"Where did you find the things?" asked Wymark after a pause.

"I searched his bedroom because I did not think he would risk bringing them downstairs to hide, with the lower rooms full of people. The rubies were behind the register of the empty grate."

"The old fox!" chuckled Tony. "I should like to let him down without a scandal, though he ought to be made to feel a bit sick."

"I'll tell you how," said I.

* * * * *

When I came down to breakfast next morning the long table was crowded with a laughing, chattering, throng, and Lord Tintagel was doing the honours in regal style. He gave me a nod and a sharp glance of inquiry as I took my seat next Tony Wymark, but I flatter myself that my face told him nothing in return. Tony was already busy with a devilled kidney and took no notice of me. Of Lady Theo there was as yet no sign, but a minute later she sailed in, bubbling with excitement. A good actress was lost in her.

"Oh, you dear people! Oh, Lord Tintagel! How shall I ever forgive myself for upsetting you all?" she gushed. "My rubies were never lost at all. I have just found them in my writing-desk, where I must have locked them up instead of in the jewel-case as I thought. Wasn't it stupid of me!"

A chorus of congratulations went

Dougal Talks about 1911

up, in which Lord Tintagel's voice was drowned, though I could imagine that his stately periods were less convincing than usual. He avoided my eye, and suddenly looked ten years older. Fortunately, before he was called upon to make himself heard individually, a diversion occurred.

Cyril Meade was speaking. "As

good news is the order of the day," his manly tones rang out, "let me add another item. Sybil Carstairs has consented to grace a certain graceless captain in the Coldstreams by accepting his most unworthy hand."

"The hand that *didn't* prig the rubies," murmured the irrepressible Tony in my ear.

Dougal Talks About 1911

To W. Harold Thomson.

Dougal is always worth reading, and I have seldom liked him better than in his present vein. Read it, and you should find food for serious thought about the New Year and the Old even while you smile.



WHEN I heard that Dougal was waiting for me in the study, I put down my book at once, and rose.

"If anyone else should call while he is here," I said, "you might just ask them to wait, will you?"

I had no wish to be interrupted in my short New Year talk with the shepherd.

As I entered the room I saw him standing with his back to the fire and staring down at Bob the collie who lay at his feet, and from whose wet, shaggy coat a suggestion of steam was rising slowly. The shutting of the door roused Dougal, and he strode forward to meet me with hand out-held.

"A guid New Year," he said "an' mony o' them."

I would that more of the wishes that are expressed at this time were spoken in a tone as sincere as Dougal's.

"And a good New Year to you," I returned as I gripped his hand.

After a moment or two we moved towards the chairs on either side of the fire. Dougal indicated the dog with a jerk of his large thumb.

"I couldna help him comin' in," he explained, "an' onyhow he's less trouble here than he would ha' been outside. He'd ha' roared hisselt tae

bits if I'd left him on the steps. But a' the same, I apologise for his bein' here. He's no' a lap dog, ye ken, or ee'd have a lot o' tricks an' be able tae get up an' shake yer hand. But—if ye'll pardon me for gettin' poetical—he's sort o' shakin' hands wi' ye in his hert."

I glanced at Bob, and thought that I saw the tip of his tail move slightly—as though to corroborate his master's remarks.

"I don't doubt that," I said, "for Bob's a friend who never changes. But now, sit down, Dougal, and give us your crack. How are things with you, eh?"

He laid his cap upon the fender and seated himself with quite unnecessary care in the big arm-chair.

"Things," he said, "is jist much the same as they were afore. At a time like this, ye see, there's no' much doin', an' there's nobudy wantin' tae do it. I mean onything in the nature o' work. There's some high jinks goin' on of course; but then it's New Year an' there's a lot o' folk in the village as havena been here since this time last year. D'ye mind," he tilted his head a little to one side and regarded me reminiscently, "hoo last New Year you an' me met up at the end o' Loch

Vennacher an' had a bit talk about nineteen hunner an' ten?"

I nodded.

"Of course," I told him. "I was thinking of that talk only yesterday. It doesn't seem so long ago either, and now—why, here we are at the beginning of nineteen hundred and eleven!"

Dougal shook his head. "It's an awfu' thing," he remarked soberly, "the way the time flees by. B'jings! ye meet a man one day, maybe, as is goin' away for a couple o' months, an' afore ye've time tae be sure that he's really oot of sight, ye're shakin' hands wi' him again, an' sayin' 'How d'ye do!'"

Bending forward, I picked up the poker and began to stir the coals.

"That's so," I agreed; "and now that nineteen hundred and ten is gone, Dougal, what'd'you think about it—looking back?"

He mumbled something; stared at the fire, then at me.

"Mr. Ness," he said, "despite what a lot o' learned folks say, I think it's a dash silly game tae start lookin' back on a day like this. A lot o' things happened in nineteen ten no doot, but at the moment o' speakin' it's no' nineteen ten we've got tae worry aboot but nineteen eleven. There ye are! Dinna think aboot the twelve months as is gone—think aboot the twelve months as is waitin' ahead. Mon, but it's a gey solum business when ye come tae consider it in a sober spirit. A year looks a wee, wee while when ye take a keek back at it; but it's anither thing when ye look forward at it. Mind ye, there's a terrible lot o' things can happen in a year, an' that's why I took a bit walk up here tae wish ye luck. If everybody wishes ye well as sin—as sin—dam'd! I've lost the word."

I suggested "sincerely."

With dignity he nodded his thanks.

"Ay, that's it—sincerely. Well, as I was sayin' when ye interrupted me, if everybody wishes ye well as sincerely as I do, then nineteen eleven'll be a flamin' fine time for ye."

I did not answer him for a moment

or two; I was gazing into the fire. Then:

"Dougal," I said, somewhat slowly—for both he and I are wont to get uncomfortable if anything in the nature of a compliment passes between us—"I think that you are the sincerest, honestest man I know. And because of that and because—well, I suppose just because you're Dougal, I'd rather have your good wishes at the beginning of a year than the good wishes of almost any other man I know."

Dougal growled rumblingly into his beard and buttoned his coat only to unbutton it again.

"I'm no' wantin' tae be rude," he told me, frowning very sternly at a lump of coal which I was trying to turn with the poker, "but a' the same I'd like tae say that I think that was a daft speech o' yours. I'm sure! A budy canna say a simple wee wish wi'oot hein' called names an' made tae feel kind o' ashamed o' himsel'."

"But," I protested, "I never called you names, Dougal. I only said——"

"Oh, a' right," he broke in, "we'll let it pass. I wished ye well at the beginnin' o' last year, I wish ye well at the beginnin' o' this year, an' I'm sure I hope as I'll wish ye well at the beginnin' o' next year, though that's ower far away yet tae trouble aboot."

He sighed, and bending forward began to fondle Bob's ears with a kindly hand.

"When the New Year comes round," he went on thoughtfully, "I canna help wonderin' what's goin' tae happen in it. Three hunner an' sixty-five days, ye'll note, lyin' spread oot one after the ither for you tae walk through, an' ye canna jink one o' them—onless, of course, ye jink a' the succeedin' ones as well. Mon, what a lot o' meeting an' guid-byes there'll be in that procession o' days! Ye'll make new friends like enough, an' like enough ye'll say guid-bye tae some auld ones. It's an onpleasant subject—the guid-bye caper. I wish I hadna said onything aboot it; but sometimes at night when I'm sittin' havin' a bit draw at my pipe

Dougal Talks about 1911

by the fire, I get rememberin' the lads as I used tae hob-nob wi' long ago. There's gey few o' that crowd left for me tae hob-nob wi' noo. Some went tae work in the toons; some o' them are away ower the sea in Australia an' America an' them heathen places, an' some o' them—"

He raised his head suddenly, and I thought that I heard him sigh.

"I don't know why on earth," he said, "ye wanted tae get me started on that sort o' haverin' talk. I said a wee while back that at New Year time a budy should look in front o' him, and no' ahint. That was true, too. When ye get lookin' ahint ye, then as likely as no' ye'll start tae get sentimental, an' that's a silly sort o' thing for a grown-up man. What's the use o' snivellin' ower the days that are gone? The days waitin' ahead'll be every bit as guid—ay, an' maybe a long way better. I wouldna be surprised. It's mostly in a man's own hands—nut that I'm wantin' tae preach. By no means whatever."

"There's such a thing as luck," I reminded him cautiously.

He nodded as he rose from the chair and picked up his cap.

"There is," he agreed, "an' there's such a thing as pluck. But," he paused, wagging his head dubiously, "here's a tricky thought for ye: Does the luck maybe no' come first?"

Not quite understanding him I put a question.

"Do you mean," I asked, "that good luck when it comes to a man gives him courage that he might otherwise not have had?"

"No, no, no, ye're aff the track! What I mean is, is a man no' lucky tae be plucky? It's a caution o' a thought that!"

"It's deep," I admitted gravely.

He stirred the slumbering Bob gently with his foot.

"It's so dash deep," he responded, "that I'm no' going to think about it ony more. I'm going tae get along the road now. I'm goin' tae say 'A guid New Year' a few times afore I get movin' hame. D'ye ken," he looked at me sideways as he has a pleasant trick of doing, "the better I like the budy I'm speakin' too, the harder I find it tae put my wishes into words. Now supposin' I met somebudy awfu', extra-special nice, I'd like tae say more than 'A guid New Year.' I'd like tae say something like this: 'I hope as nineteen eleven'll be a better year for you than ony year that ye've ever known yet. I hope ye'll have always plenty o' friends round ye, always plenty o' sunshine about ye, an' a fair road tae walk on: always plenty o' health an' happiness an'—an' love an' that.' That's what I'd like tae say; but no, nut me! I'm ower auld, I'm afraid, tae start lettin' mysel' go."

He moved to the door then, and I looked around for my boots.

"One moment," I said, "I'll come to the gate with you."

THE YEAR THAT'S AWA'.

Here's to the year that's awa'!

We will drink it in strong and in sma'!
And here's to ilk bonnie young lassie we lo'ed,
While swift flew the year that's awa'.

Here's to the sodger who bled,

And the sailor who bravely did fa';
Their fame is alive though their spirits are fled
On the wings of the year's that's awa'.

Here's to the friends we can trust,

When the storms of adversity blow;
May they live in our song and be nearest our hearts,
Nor depart like the year that's awa'.—DUNLOP.

The Dagger.

By Oliver Gay.

Here is a yarn about a mystery in a different vein from Mr. Gay's usual stories. It is a far cry from his adventures in the Wild West and in wilder New Guinea, and is doubly interesting as showing him in another mood.



HE thing was getting beyond a joke. First of all, I noticed it when sitting in the garden waiting for Yvonne.

I had been away from home for a long time, and Yvonne meant for me not only Yvonne, but my own beloved people. Her family was an old family in our part of the Border, as, I had always understood, was mine.

But it is not of Yvonne I would write. It is of the Dagger.

I saw it first as I sat waiting her not improbable coming through the garden. It was January. The year was quite usual, so that there were still three Jacobite roses in the bush opposite me, looking out at me and telling their old story.

I tapped with my oak stick in the gravel, and there I saw, drawn there, the Dagger. Somehow it seemed familiar. That, you must understand, was the first time I became alert at seeing it. I began then to wonder where I had seen it before. And then—yes, I was almost positive. I rose and wandered through the shrubbery to the next seat, and looked in the gravel there. Feet had passed since the time I seemed to remember—my mother's, Yvonne's, Yvonne's mother's, oh, lots of feet doubtless—and the gravel was a little disturbed. But, yes, there was a Dagger drawn there as with the end of a walking-stick, and drawn deeply too, and very neatly done.

There was another seat—a stone one—where we seldom sat now despite the queer January; for though a coat oppressed one, there was a distinct raw chill that got into one's bones in the mild days and evenings.

I looked at the gravel there. Yes, there was the Dagger sign again!

This stone seat looked down on what

we called the Wilderness, a place where was a pond set round with rushes and willows and unkempt grass, and in the middle of it is a tangled islet. When we were young we used to punt out to the islet, and play "Swiss Family Robinson" there—Yvonne's brother (now in the Scots Greys), my brother (now gone from this planet), Yvonne, and I.

I looked down on that little pond that lay sad and gloomy with its vestiges of what had been water-lilies a few short months before. It was a bit depressing on that grey, heavy day. I noticed a bush wave on the far side, and thought how that sight would have thrilled us once when we played there; thought how we would have stalked the bush, and, creeping forth, set to flight—a blackbird belike, and called it the phoenix. Ah, me! The days that were! Then a step sounded behind me, and I turned—and there was Yvonne. Ah, me! The glorious present!

Yvonne, I thought, looked a little perturbed. We fell in step and wandered round the garden. For my part, I was thinking how good it was to be home; and then I looked at her again, and—yes, she was, I was sure, troubled about something.

"I wish," she said, "that it would come really winter."

"It would be more seasonable," I said.

Strange how commonplace one's words can be when one's heart is full to overflowing of love—love of one's land, of home, of a brief glimpse of it, the very brevity, the knowledge that we must go again, making the moment there all the more sacred.

"A little sun, a little frost," said Yvonne, "would buck one up."

"Do you feel run down?" I asked.
"You don't look it."

The Dagger

Her looks never pity Yvonne.

"I don't know," she said. "I feel something in the air. I am not usually like that."

"No, you are not a nervous woman."

"Yet I feel that," she said, "and your coming to," she added.

"Why?" I said. "Don't you believe in me? Are you not happy?"

"Happy and sad," she said. "I can tell you now that I love you. But I feel—oh, I do not know! I feel afraid."

"Afraid?" I asked.

"Yes, afraid," she said, and looked round to the bushes.

Then I also felt something very like fear.

"Of what are you afraid?" I said.

"I am afraid I shall lose you—lose everything."

"You shall never lose me," I said.

"For the hundredth time, Yvonne, you are far, far too good for me; and having won you—you shall never lose me!"

She walked slowly, looking on the ground.

"No," she said, "no, it is not that I think. When you speak so I feel it is not that. But something seems hanging over us—I know not what. But I am afraid."

She looked round to the Wilderness and shuddered.

"If it would only snow," she said, "and freeze over, and be more seasonable!"

Then I looked round just as we passed from sight of the hollow and the pond, and I saw—or thought I saw—or was it but a survival of the imagination of youth?—a form stealing out from behind the bush that I had seen to move—a furtive, stealthy form. But I would not look again for fear of making Yvonne more timid. I had never seen her like this before.

That afternoon, as the grey of the close came, there came also cold; it grew colder and colder. Also the wind veered and came biting out of the east, so that the fires were piled up, and burned brightly now in the cold air. There were a few guests with us, and we had a jolly time.

They began talking about old names; then we got on to names of families. I wondered why, in my interest in Yvonne, I had never thought what was the meaning of her surname. Delay was her surname.

"It is really a French name," said Mrs. Delay.

"What was the original form?" Cousin George asked; but he asked, I thought, as if he knew already.

"De la Haie," said Mrs. Delay.

I at once saw that what fascinated me in Yvonne was her blue blood. A surname such as that implies a wondrous ancestry.

"De la haie," I said—"of the hedge! What a glorious name!" And I imagined all sorts of things of how the ancestor had come by his name. "Do you know its history?" I asked.

"No," said Mrs. Delay, "I do not know its origin. I only know that our family came to the Border in the Stuart times, and changed their name later to its present spelling."

"But why change what was so beautiful? Why change the spelling?" I asked.

Mrs. Delay seemed perturbed. She shrugged, and seemed at a loss for reply.

I was sitting near the long front window. The heavy blind was drawn, but I heard a curious scraping sound outside. Somehow a feeling of dread, of something happening, something unknown—just such a dread as Yvonne had spoken of that very afternoon—gripped me.

I saw that Mrs. Delay had no more to say, and when the conversation changed I slipped out of it, and soon found opportunity to slip quietly out of the room also. I felt impelled to discover the cause of that scraping sound outside.

I went into the hall and to the front door, and opening it I was met by chill wind and driving snow. We had been granted the "seasonable weather" at last. I turned back and put a coat on, and went out to the now white lawn. The lights of the house shone out and cast their oblongs and squares here and there on the white that lay in the darkness and made

things visible, though the stars were all snowed out.

I walked along to the window and stood observing, calculating, wondering.

No tree was near enough to scrape so as to make that noise. Then I saw that the snow had drifted a film on the glass, and on that film I saw a sign. It was again the Dagger, or sword, done very carefully, and the shape of blade and hilt was just the same as I had seen it in the gravel.

"This," thought I, "is not a practical joke. It is something deeper than that."

On returning I met George in the hall. He has a way of slipping away from assemblies. A little of gathering together with his kind goes a long way with him.

We went to the smoke-room, and by luck or by intuition I struck a clue.

"I say, George."

"Yes?"

"Why, do you think, did Mrs. Delay freeze up—try to change the subject—when we spoke of why her family left France?"

"Oh, it's a story," said George, and he knew all about it.

"You know?" I asked.

"I'm very much interested in these things," said he. "You are a queer fish! You seemed just wakening to-night to an idea that there had been people before you on the earth—that you had forefathers."

"How do you mean?"

"I mean when you got so enthusiastic about Delay and De la Haie."

"Yes?"

"Well, I always have been interested in names of families. Now I'll tell you about the De la Haie family—at least, a bit back. I won't tell you when the surname originated; can only guess of some valorous knight by the last ditch, under the shelter of the last hedge, victorious. Assuredly a few generations ago a feud sprang up between the De la Haie family and a Corsican family."

I started, for I had read of Corsican revenge and feud, and I thought of the Dagger. But the thing was ridiculous!

"Yes!" I said.

"Well, the De la Haie people sometimes had the best of it; sometimes the others had. Sometimes the Corsican family turned tail, gave up the feud for a spell. But they loved feuds, carrying them on from generation to generation. A reasonable person would say, 'Oh, let bygones be bygones! What have I to do with your great-great-grandfather?' So, at least, thought the De la Haie family. It was not that they lacked grit; but they were thinning, and their adversaries were increasing. They came over here then. The Stuart cause gave a good excuse, at the meanest way of looking at it. That was honourable enough. A queer thing I find is that Mrs. Delay's grandfather went over to France and fought a duel there and killed his man. The man he killed was of the Corsican family. I like to think of that somehow. It showed the De la Haie spirit."

"But you tell me that you don't believe in feuds."

"Oh, well, I suppose I don't; but, hang it all, there is something fine about going back like that to let 'em see he wasn't afraid! I have delved out so much. But come to the library and I will show you."

I was interested then, and, rising, I accompanied him to the library.

The blinds were not drawn, and when he switched on the electric light I saw our reflections in the window, against which the snow clung, with a sudden shock. I was getting nervous for some reason.

George took down a book on heraldry, and turning the pages with the dexterity of a man who knows his way about in the leaves, he showed me the De la Haie coat of arms. I saw the hedge then, or what was, I supposed, meant for the hedge. It might have been a railing or a tooth-comb. And on either side was a lily. Then I knew to what to liken Yvonne. She stood like a lily. She gave me the idea always of a thing held up in poise by a wonderful spirit within. When she died, I thought, she would bow and die like a flower, not collapse like a creature slain.

"That is the De la Haie—or, alas! the Delay. Now"—and George

The Dagger

turned the pages and found what he sought—a shield with three daggers and "*Toujours*" beneath.

"*Toujours*," I thought. "I wonder why so, why *always*? I say," said I, turning to George, "this is a fascinating business."

But though I was wondering what the word signified, that was really a subconscious thought. The dominating thought was more gripping—for the shape of these daggers I knew!

My mother sent for us then to see if the ladies' society had wearied us; and so we returned to the drawing-room, I not regretfully, despite this apparent clue, for Yvonne was there.

There was enough of distraction in the drawing-room. We had a very homely, very happy evening—a kind of immortal evening—one of those evenings that we record in our memories with a special mark.

Late at night, or very early in the black morning I should more rightly say, a servant came and whispered some words to my father, and he went away quietly, controlling the sudden look of apprehension on his face.

I felt I must follow, and did so.

Then I found that, on going round to see that all was safe, one of the servants had come upon a man lying in the fallen snow, and all flecked over with the driving flakes. As I told you, the cold had come suddenly, with almost, to us, Arctic severity, after the very genial weather.

The man had been carried in. He had fallen in the garden, it would appear, near the house, or had lain down in the lee of a bush, and he was dead.

And as we stood silent and wondering, a sound of wheels came outside the door.

The approach of the vehicle had been quiet because of the snow, and when the door was opened a gentlemanly, reserved man gave his card. He had come from Scotland Yard.

The body of the dead man had been carried to a couch in shadow, and the Scotland Yard man did not see it. He began his tale—a plain tale. He had come to introduce two gentlemen from an asylum for the insane in Paris, a doctor and a warder.

A patient had escaped from that

place, and a strangely interesting patient—a man with one idea—a man who went about asking people their names and pondering over them. One patient, an Englishman named Hay, he had set upon. This, by the way, was told us later by the doctor. At once all were bidden to enter. The Scotland Yard man told how the patient had escaped the Parisian detectives, who had been told of his flight from the asylum. But they had traced him to St. Malo. Then Scotland Yard had got to work. He had been "clued" to Southampton, to London, here. And everywhere he acted sanely enough. But everywhere, when he put up at hotels on his way, he had spent all his evening reading over the visitors' book.

I listened to the whole thing with wonder—listened how he had gone to Carlisle, then to Edinburgh; how it had been discovered that there he was studying family names and Border family traditions.

"Pardon my distraction," said my father, "but a very distressing thing has just happened here. A man has been found dead—I suppose of the sudden cold or of fatigue. He has just been brought in. I fear I seem to follow your narrative in a manner somewhat distraught."

"Excuse me," I said, turning to the detective. "You say that your man has been traced to our station?"

"He took a ticket for it," said the detective. "We were fortunate in making up on him—gaining ground. You see, he was spending days at libraries hunting up for his foible—hunting for names that bore any resemblance to the name of De la Haie. He had some——"

"Doctor," I said, "will you look at ——"

But at the same moment the detective's eyes brightened.

"Can we see this body?" he asked.

We all moved back to the rear of the hall. James turned on the light there.

The doctor said, "That is he," and knelt and felt the man's heart.

"Yes, he has been dead, I should say, two hours or more," said he. Then he rose, and in a very queer

voice said, "He was a very interesting patient."

I remember all that affair very distinctly because, newly home from wandering, and telling myself about the beauty of the people of our old Border families, and considering how Yvonne was the very essence of all their charm, I was now to have a shock. You see, I married a Frenchwoman, after all. Funnier still, Cousin George tells me that my people

came from France also, a little earlier than the Delays, or De la Haies; and he has all the facts down in black and white. Perhaps that is one of the causes that brought Yvonne and me together. I hate saying farewell to my theories, and really there is an explanation for everything.

But we shall hear no more of the old feud, I am sure. This of which I have been telling you is the last of it; and he was off his head, poor fellow!

Thanks to Theodora.

By Leslie Thomas.

This is a delightful comedy about a very charming lady who was a matchmaker and a born diplomatist—as all very charming ladies are.

WELL, Harry, is Frank Silworth coming for the New Year?"

Henry Woodburn passed the letter across to his wife.

"Apparently, yes. But read it, Theo. He says he'd rather not if the Wyldes are here, and you can explain."

"So I can." She smiled. "Poor Frank! Clarice Wyldes been thrown at his head all the season. I chaffed him about it in town, I remember. It's her mother's fault, you know, and she's made it too obvious. He and Clarice detest meeting one another now. Still, she doesn't arrive till Sunday night. He could go back by the evening train if he liked."

"Of course. I'll write to-night and tell him so. Let me see, it's on Tuesday he leaves for the Cape, isn't it?"

"Yes. Mind you insist, Harry, that we must see him again before he goes."

As her husband left the room Mrs. Woodburn returned to her own correspondence.

"Dearest Theo,—Can you possibly put me up, and put up with me, for a few days? I don't want to stay in town just now. Could I

arrive on Sunday evening and stop till Tuesday or so?"

The third sheet was signed "Yours affectionately, Kitty," and the inevitable postscript followed: "Do have me, please!"

Mrs. Woodburn leaned back, wrinkling her pretty brows, and gazed out across the beautiful grounds of "Heronmere," their country house. She had guessed pretty accurately the state of affairs between Kitty Mansergh and Frank Silworth, but this she could not understand.

"Till Tuesday or so." But Frank Silworth was leaving England on Tuesday for a year at least. That could only mean one thing—she wished to avoid him. They had evidently quarrelled.

"And he'll just miss her. What a pity!" murmured Mrs. Woodburn regretfully. Then she began to write:

"A friend of yours, Mr. Silworth, is coming for the week-end, but intended to leave on Sunday. However, I may possibly persuade him to stay longer."

"That will give her a chance," she reflected, more cheerfully. "They're both very foolish people, and I've a good mind not to interfere."

Thanks to Theodora

This was not strictly true. Six months of marriage had only served to strengthen Mrs. Woodburn's match-making proclivities.

She finished her letters presently and sat thinking. Then suddenly she clapped her hands and walked along to the library. A new "Bradshaw" lay on the table, but the old one had not yet been thrown away. She turned to corresponding pages in each and compared them closely.

"Yes, it's altered," she commented triumphantly, "and I'm sure Harry doesn't know."

A smile spread over her face as she carried the current number to her boudoir. Later in the afternoon she sought her husband.

"Tell Frank he might catch the 7.30 train on Sunday, Harry. That would get him to town by eleven. And remember he *is* to come."

"I should think so, indeed! What did you say, Theo? 'Can't take any risks'?"

"I was talking to myself, dear," declared Mrs. Woodburn rather confusedly.

The next morning brought a telegram:

"If Mr. Silworth leaving before I arrive, all right. You must not tell him I am coming. Promise."

"KITTY."

Mrs. Woodburn shook her head half despairingly.

"Little silly!" she muttered, and wrote her reply:

"He is determined to go by 7.30 train. Expect you eight o'clock."

"THEODORA."

The humour of this message was not apparent, yet she regarded it amusedly.

* * * * *

Mr. Frank Silworth had by no means proved a social acquisition to the house-party. Nothing his host and hostess could devise served to banish his excessive gloom for more than half an hour at a time. Other guests began to eye him curiously.

Mrs. Woodburn rallied him in vain. He would admit nothing.

"By the way, have you met Kitty Mansergh in town lately? I haven't seen her for some time."

"Indeed? I thought you were great friends."

"So we are. But you haven't answered my question."

"I beg your pardon. Have I met — Oh, well, I may have done, you know, at dances and places. One runs across so many people that one can scarcely remember them all."

"Stubborn!" commented Mrs. Woodburn under her breath. "You're sure you must go to-night?" she queried casually.

"Yes, really. You see, Mrs. Wyld —"

"Oh, I almost wish we'd asked her for next week instead."

"Awfully good of you to want to keep me, anyhow."

Presently his hostess excused herself and summoned Hilton, their chauffeur, to her room. There she gave him certain instructions which doubtless caused him considerable surprise, although he betrayed none.

"Go in the car, please, and see about it at once. Every cart and conveyance in the village; there can't be very many. And if anyone has a spare horse that is to go, too."

"Very good, madam."

"The owners are simply to say they are in use. They mustn't mention my name. And—bicycles, Hilton?"

"I'll get them out of the way, madam."

"But there are some in the house here."

"Three, madam. One is the butler's—Mr. Bent's, but the front wheel's buckled."

"Good! And the others?"

"Well, there's mine, madam, and Smithers, the footman, has——"

"I'll send him to Longhill, too. Take the valves out of your tyres and —er—lose them, Hilton." The chauffeur bowed. "Now listen. Before six o'clock the car must be out of order."

"I quite understand, madam."

"But you must be able to repair the damage in time to meet the evening train from town. I'll leave all details to you."

At half-past six Hilton begged leave

to speak to Mr. Woodburn. He was summoned to the library. Mr. Frank Silworth waited restlessly by the window.

"Do you mean to say you can't take Mr. Silworth to the station?"

"Afraid not, sir. I'm very sorry." Silworth turned.

"Never mind, Harry; I'll get there somehow. Under three miles, isn't it? And the train goes at 7.30, I believe you said." He picked up the time-table. "Hullo! This is last month's. I suppose there's no alteration?"

Harry Woodburn stepped to his side.

"Sure not to be. Theo, isn't the new 'Bradshaw' in yet?" After a delay it was discovered and brought. "Now, then—good gracious, Frank, I'm awfully sorry!"

"Why, what——"

"That train's an hour earlier on Sundays now. Yes, to-day's the second of the month."

Mrs. Woodburn turned aside.

"I made the mistake," said Mr. Woodburn. "It's my fault entirely."

"My dear Harry, do you mean to say it has already gone—that I can't catch it?"

"It—it seems so. Really, I apologise. You see——"

"I can't stop, anyhow," declared Mr. Silworth desperately. "Where's the nearest junction?"

"Longhill. But that's fifteen miles. A nasty road, too—over the moor."

"There's a train at nine; that's the last. I could do it in the car, if you'll please——"

"But the motor's broken down."

"So it is. But can't you let me have something else? Anything on wheels."

"It sounds rather ridiculous, but I'm afraid we've nothing. Just got rid of our dog-cart, you see; going to get a small 'runabout' instead. And our touring car's at the maker's, being upholstered."

"A bicycle, then."

"Ah, yes, that's easy."

But upon inquiry bicycles proved to be out of the question. Mr. Silworth fumed.

"In the village, though, surely——"

Mrs. Woodburn faced them quickly.

"Yes, yes; I'll send a servant at once."

"No, please. I'm putting you to no end of trouble. I'll go myself and come back for my luggage."

He left the room hurriedly.

"A stupid mistake of mine, Theo," remarked Mr. Woodburn regretfully. But his wife had slipped away.

Half an hour later Mr. Silworth was back again. His hostess, on the lookout, met him in the hall.

"This is extraordinary! There scarcely seems to be a conveyance or vehicle of any sort left in the neighbourhood."

"Oh, dear! What will you do? Please stay; that will be best."

"Oh, I did manage to find just one—a little governess-cart and a pony—at the inn." Mrs. Woodburn started. "I'll have my things brought down at once, if you don't mind. Just about catch that train."

He disappeared. Mrs. Woodburn stepped out and spoke to the man from the inn. A coin changed hands; he nodded and grinned. When Frank Silworth returned with his host she was patting the pony's neck.

"Good-bye! I do wish you'd stayed, though. We shan't see you for ever so long. A pleasant voyage and good luck at the Cape! A year, isn't it?"

"May stop longer," replied Mr. Silworth, relapsing into gloom again. "Good-bye!"

"Au revoir!" Mrs. Woodburn cried. Amid a chorus of farewells he drove off.

* * * * *

The butler waited.

"Well, Bent, what is it?"

"Hilton's back again, madam, and wants your instructions."

"Why, hasn't he brought Miss Mansergh, or Mrs. Wylde, or——"

Mrs. Woodburn showed some alarm. The evening train from town should have arrived an hour ago.

"No, madam."

"They haven't come?"

"The train hasn't, madam. At least——"

Thanks to Theodora

Harry Woodburn hurried up.

"What do you mean, Bent? Is there anything wrong?"

"An accident, sir, Hilton was told. But only to a goods train, madam; don't be alarmed. The 'down' line's blocked, though, and it appears the passengers can't get past Longhill Junction. Hilton wishes to know, sir, if he shall drive there."

"Yes, certainly, Bent. How unfortunate! Tell him to start at once."

Mrs. Woodburn laid a hand on her husband's arm.

"No, there—there isn't any necessity for that, Harry."

"My dear Theo, how are they going to get here?"

"There are plenty of conveyances. I—I happen to know that."

"If you can laugh, Theo, I suppose it's all right."

"Yes, dear, and I'll explain later on."

An hour or so afterwards Miss Mansergh and her maid arrived in a nondescript kind of trap. Mrs. Wylde and her daughter were also on the way, she explained; but being only slightly acquainted with them, and not knowing they were also bound for "Heronmere," she had not joined them. Her tone was so expressive as she mentioned Miss Wylde's name that Mrs. Woodburn immediately suspected the truth.

"But, Theo dear, how was it you knew about the accident so soon?"

"I didn't, Kitty."

"But you sent all those carts and things to meet us. Why were there so many, by the way? When I came out of the station people were trying to hire them, but they all said they were engaged. I went up to one of the men, though, and directly I mentioned your name he said you'd sent him and asked me to get in. I—I can't quite understand."

"They were there for another purpose altogether," returned Mrs. Woodburn indistinctly. "Wasn't it lucky?"

Miss Mansergh, still puzzled, agreed. Then she seemed to have a question to ask, but found some difficulty in putting it.

"Who—who's staying here, Theo?"

Mrs. Woodburn mentioned some names. "And Mr. Silworth, too."

"But you said he would have gone. Theo, you promised not to say I was coming!"

"And I didn't, Kitty. Besides, he tried to go—started off to Longhill to catch a train, but—but the driver lost his way on the moor, so he had to come back again. Now he's in bed."

"In bed?"

"Neuralgia," explained Mrs. Woodburn carelessly. "At least, he said so. I happen to know it was an excuse. He doesn't want to meet Miss Wylde."

"Doesn't want to meet her?"

"Kitty, please don't echo *everything* I say."

"But—but——"

"I really believe you've been imagining some nonsense about her and Frank Silworth. Haven't you?"

"I heard——"

"Perhaps Mrs. Wylde has been spreading rumours. There's no foundation for them, Kitty, anyhow. Clarice is a dear girl, but she disapproves of her mother's schemes. In fact, she dislikes poor Mr. Silworth very much."

"Dislikes him? Really?"

"Loathes him," affirmed Mrs. Woodburn gravely. "They can't bear the sight of one another, so he's gone to bed. Come along up to your room, darling. He won't worry you if you don't wish to see him. He'll be off by the first train in the morning."

"W-will he?"

"Yes, he told me so. He was quite furious at having to stay. I complimented him upon his manners. Now, mind you come downstairs as soon as you can. I've arranged a special supper party in honour of you belated travellers."

Outside in the passage she deliberated for a few moments, then descended and wrote a note:

"Are you in love with anybody? If so, please recover from your neuralgia and come down to supper. Urgent. "T. W."

To the butler she instructed:

"Here, Bent, please take this at once to Mr. Silworth's room."

Half an hour later she met the recipient hastily descending the stairs. In the distance she caught sight of Miss Mansergh's figure.

"I got your message, but I couldn't quite— What on earth did you mean, Mrs. Woodburn?"

"Oh, I wanted your company, that was all. H'sh! You must take somebody in to supper for me."

She led him forward determinedly, but when he saw Kitty Mansergh he stopped and drew away. The girl, too, rose, lifting her chin. They strove to appear unconscious of one another's presence.

Mrs. Woodburn's love of mischief suggested a plan.

"Ah, here's someone. Allow me to introduce you, or have you met before? Mr. Silworth—Miss Mansergh."

For a moment no one spoke. Mrs. Woodburn's lips quivered, then parted in a ripple of mirth.

The others glared. She eyed them appealingly, laughing still, and gradually moving away. In spite of themselves their glances met. Suddenly they discovered they were laughing, too.

Mrs. Woodburn promptly vanished round a corner.

When he heard his wife's explanation Harry Woodburn in his turn was mightily amused.

"But those carts and things—what made you choose Longhill?"

"I had to send them somewhere, Harry, and what more natural place than the junction? They were to wait there till ten and then drive back again."

"And do you mean to say that confusion about the time-tables—"

"I changed them—yes. Wasn't it a splendid scheme? I was determined to keep him in the house somehow till Kitty arrived, you know."

"Well, Theo, I hope, after all this scheming, your matchmaking will turn out a success."

"It has," affirmed Mrs. Woodburn triumphantly. "Look, here they come!"

Miss Mansergh and her escort hesitated when they saw that they were observed.

"How's your neuralgia, Frank?" Mrs. Woodburn laughed merrily at his discomfiture. Kitty Mansergh hurried forward.

"I must ask you, Theo. Those carts—was it because you wanted —"

"Kitty, I confess it was."

"I mean, did you—"

"Yes, I did—whatever it was." She faced them happily. "Now, what have you to say to that?"

Miss Mansergh flashed a glance over her shoulder at Mr. Silworth, who waited. Then she turned to her friend again and whispered.

Harry Woodburn clapped Silworth on the shoulder. His wife beamed upon them all.

"Poor Mrs. Wylde! But I'm so glad, dears! What about Tuesday, though—the Cape?"

"Oh, I needn't stop more than six months, I'm sure," stated Mr. Silworth rapidly. Kitty Mansergh blushed.

"And, Theodora," she murmured, "you're a darling!"

NEW YEAR WEATHER SIGNS.

*If New-Year's Eve night winds blow south,
It betokeneth warmth and growth;
If west, much milk and fish in the sea;
If north, much cold and storms there will be;
If east, the trees will bear much fruit;
If north-east—flee it man and brute.*

—A VERY OLD RHYME.

Gaining the Whole World.

A Complete Novel.

By W. Douglas Newton.

You will find this a very human story, and one that is surprising—considering it has been written by a man—by the sympathetic insight into a woman's soul that it displays.

CHAPTER I.

THE CALL OF AMBITION.

EWINS CARRYL stared venomously out of the window on to that stunted, drab street that so adequately represented the stunted, drab suburb.

"My God!" he cried, "don't I want to get away from all this? Don't I? I want to break free of it, expand. I'm so dead sick of it. It's dreary. It's mean. There's nothing big in it. And I mean to be big—big."

The girl in the chair beside him stirred uneasily. She felt chilled. This moment was not so glowing and wonderful as she had dreamed it. She wondered whether she had been fair to dream it would be; she wondered if such moments really were extraordinary apart from romance.

Carryl gave her no attention. He had turned, and he had proceeded with his talking. The uninspiring exterior, limned by that thread-curtain-draped window, fretted him. He took his mind from it and did his talking, walking. His hands were waving a good deal in the air and to the ceiling in an eminently characteristic mode.

"We'll tear away from it, you and I, and we'll go away and we'll work—work—work tremendously. I know I can do it. I feel I can do it. There are big things in me, Grace, and they're only waiting for the chance to get out. With you I'll get that chance. Don't you feel that, Grace? Don't you?"

The girl looked up at him with a tender, dwelling glance.

"Yes, dear, yes, I do feel it very much," she told him. Her voice had a wistful inflection which corresponded with something, not alto-

gether happy, in her eyes. If he had been paying her greater attention he might have thought that she was asking for something for which a woman finds it impossible to plead, or to go without. But he did not notice. He was not in a condition to notice or to give; he was far too full of this great thing that was going to happen, of this great future that was about to open—for himself.

"Of course you feel it," he jerked on. "Of course you do; you always do understand me. That's the splendour of you, Grace, you understand me—astonishingly."

She looked up to him with an entreating raillery; the light playfulness in her voice was tinged with something deeper and more supplicating.

"Is that *all*—my understanding?" she asked.

Ewins faced her with a flurry of enthusiasm.

"All!" he cried; "all! Why, of course it is; and it's everything, I can tell you. It's invaluable to a man—invaluable—to be thoroughly understood. I can't tell you how much a man appreciates that. And that is what I felt this morning."

He turned from her and went up the room and down again in savage strides.

"This morning was the last touch, y'know, the last straw. I couldn't stand it any longer. You know exactly how I'm served at home; you know how I'm placed. Well—well, this morning was the last straw. It was the worst of any."

The girl's hands clasped and unclasped softly; she was quite reposed, but the nervous motion of her fingers showed the strength of her emotions.

"Oh, Ewins," she breathed, "another——"

"Another row? 'Gods, yes; and a bitter one. We had our vices and our virtues overhauled thoroughly. They pointed the finger of fat, bourgeois scorn at me; mouthed the old, damned silly, unoriginal things; asked me what was to become of me; told me I was lazy; asked me if I ever intended to settle down and work for a living—a living, b'God—they call humping over a dull desk in a miasmatic kennel called an office *living!* They told me that meddling with test-tube and stinking fluids was all right as the pastime of a boy, but for a man—— Oh, my God!"—he came and stood by her at the window—"how crass people can make one suffer!" he groaned.

The girl put out her hand and laid it softly upon his arm.

"Dearest," she said, "you must remember that they have done a great deal for you—spent a great amount of money upon you——"

"Money!" the man burst in. "Money! You're not going to talk about money, are you, Grace?"

"No, dear," she said; "but I am trying to look at the matter as your aunt and uncle look at it. From your point of view they cannot comprehend——"

She had meant to say more, but the man caught up the suggestion she put forward, and raced off again with it as his cue.

"Yes, that is it," he cried, "they do not comprehend. They are hide-bound, business-bound, something-in-the-City-bound. They are not capable of comprehending—they never will be—and I'm sick to death of un-understanding. I've come to the limit. I can't put up with it any longer. I decided that this morning."

"Yes?"

"And so I came straight here—to you."

"Yes?"

"You understand—you always do, you always have, you always will." Ewins Carryl swung to the limit of the room and back again, facing her. "And you *did*," he finished.

He stood for a moment looking,

transfixed by his great ideal, over her head.

"So now we can tear ourselves free, go away from all this annoyance, and work. We will be married as you agree, and we will live our own lives our own way, and we will go away from this ignoble town and this stultifying suburb into the peace and serenity of the country. We will take a cottage, a tiny one——"

"A pretty one," urged Grace, catching his hand; "a pretty one under a hill, and with flowers and trees and climbing green things about it; and little low rooms with leaded windows, and one of them all for you and your experiments and acids and balances and retorts—only it must be near the porch, for I want to sit in the porch and look out upon the world and sew and be near you, near you; it will be very sweet, Ewins."

"It will be wonderful!" cried out her affianced. He stood to full height, and stretched his long arms in a gesture of exultance. "We should be able to do—there is the scholarship, three years still to go at forty pounds a year. Hekking is to give me all his oil analysis at a retainer of thirty-five pounds. I have already done any amount of technical writing, and, unfretted and unfettered, could do any amount more. We should have over a hundred pounds a year for three years, and before that time is out my alkali researches should be finished. And, after that, fame, riches—— Oh, yes, it will be wonderful. It will need a little care, a little roughing, but you will not mind that——"

"Oh, my dearest! I *mind!*" broke in the girl. She looked at him; her face was wistful and tender with great love; there were happy tears in her eyes.

"I knew you would not. Besides, a hundred pounds is a lot in the country. We will do—we will do, you see. It will be wonderful—you and I, freedom and the work."

The girl made a quick gesture. She got to her feet and stood looking out of the window, but she did not do this to observe the passers; she would

Gaining the Whole World

have looked anywhere that might have hidden her face.

"The *work*?" she said a little bitterly. "Always the work, Ewins. Is there nothing else?"

The man broke off in the full flood of his exultance to look at the girl quickly. He had the air of a man who was meeting some new and curious phase of the feminine mind, an emotion of a species notoriously meteoric. His agile mind sought, and partially at least found, the meaning of her petulance at once, and he strode to her side hurriedly and put his arm about her slim shoulders.

"Of course, dear," he said in his brisk manner; "there are plenty of things else. Only you and I and the work—well, the three seem inextricably commingled—three in one, you see. It is our life, and the work is to mean everything, you know, dear, to us, everything."

"So it seems," said the girl, but half won; "everything."

"What else could there be?" said he.

"There *is* love," spoke Grace softly.

"Of course," answered Ewins, "there is love." And at his commonplace answer the girl turned to him impulsively, and looked up into his

face with devouring, greedy eyes, the greedy, loving eyes of love.

"Oh, you do love me, Ewins?" she besought. "You *do* love me?" She hid her face in his coat. "For, if you do not, I don't know what might happen. I love you so, dear—I love you so. Say you love me, Ewins. Say it."

"My dearest," cried her affianced in a shocked voice, "my dearest, I have asked you to be my wife."

"But say it, say it," she insisted. "Please, Ewins, please—please say it."

A sudden flame stirred the man's spare frame—a quick-come leap of fire.

"Grace," he cried thickly, "Grace, my girl—oh, I love you—I love you!" He gripped her fiercely to his breast with that painful strength that a woman adores.

Grace's face, glowing with the colour of happiness, looked up into his.

"Oh, you dear," she breathed, "oh, you dear! And we will always be like this, always—you and I and love."

"Yes," echoed Ewins, "always—you and I and love," and he added, in an afterthought, "and the work."

. CHAPTER II.

THE GROWING RIFT.

They went down to the cottage in three months—married. It would have been three weeks if Ewins had had his way, for his consuming impatience sought to overbear even the discussion of such vital points as trousseau and adequate preparation.

"My dear," he said once, "my dear, I don't think we will be married ever. Your exploring of shops and purchasing of fripperies is eternal, interminable. The days you spend so seem to be endless."

She turned a happy, rosy face to him: the woman who cannot be happy over a trousseau is—is—isn't a woman.

"Oh, my dear boy," she chided him, yet happy in his impatience, "these

things take time. There is a lot to do, and a lot to get, and a lot to prepare. You wouldn't have me come to you unprepared."

"Yes, I would," he jerked. "I'd have you come just as you are; and, as for time—time—why, I'd marry you to-morrow if you'd agree."

Grace bent over and pinched his cheek softly.

"Ah," she cried, "but you're a greedy person, in much too much a hurry."

"I am," he cried. "Good Lord, I am. I'm absolutely aching for it. I want to get to work—God—"

The cottage was at Walton-on-the-Naze. It stood up, four-square to the wind and the sea, just outside that

tiny, cosy place on the cliff-path to Frinton. The cliff dropped away from the doorstep in a long sweep to the water-edge. The railway ran behind it. There were fields all round and about, away to Frinton one side, away to Walton the other, and behind, over the rail-line stretching flat and wide and free for miles, to a long, low range of hills that possibly was Harwich. It was a dear spot, and quiet and lonely. A man could be at ease and at freedom here, and could work unfretted and uninterrupted.

And Ewins worked.

There was a room that looked out over the sea, and that was looked into most of the day by the sun, so that it was light and bright and fit always for labour. Here he had his tubes and his retorts, his shelves of bottled chemicals, glittering and shining in the light, his books and his writing-materials, his laboratory sink and his "stink-cupboard," his batteries and cells, and all the rest of the complex and curious paraphernalia of chemistry tools. And in this room and among these instruments he would labour, going to them at the earliest hours of the day, leaving them at the latest hour of the night, engrossed and wrapped and obsessed by them and their cult to the extinction of all other worldly considerations. Meals sometimes lured him out, but not always. Only sheer, human exhaustion could bring him, heavy footed and staggering, from the laboratory to the dull, animal-like refreshment of sleep.

And Grace, as she had dreamed, sat in the porch of this house and looked out upon that swinging, lyric, moving world that was the sea. There were no flowers or climbing things about the cottage, and but one or two trees, and the porch was not near Ewins as he worked, for he worked on the first floor; but she had to sit somewhere, and in the porch and overlooking the sea was very pleasant—and it was also part of her dream, so she sat in the porch.

She had not always sat there. When they had first come here she had sat, with her husband, in the long, airy laboratory—the porch,

although she desired it, was so far away. She had sat at the window so that she could look upon both Ewins and the sea, and she had had a little table put there to hold her sewing and her letter-writing materials and her books. When household duties were done here she would come and, sitting at the window, would watch her husband at his work or the sea at its tumbling. She was happy in the intimate proximity, and glowing with the deep, shy thought that the stimulus of her presence was an undoubted factor in the progress of "the work."

She lived many happy days in this way—and, indeed, it was not until many weeks after marriage that she realised her glowing dreams were *but* glowing dreams—that she, far from stimulating the progress of the work, merely hindered it.

The certainty of this came to her abruptly. She wanted to be with Ewins so much herself that it seemed but natural that he must want to be with her. After all, they were lovers who had only just been married. But soon she came to see that this was not the case. Ewins did not want her in the room with him when he was working. It was a beautiful fancy, no doubt, on her own part, but it was purely on her own part. Ewins fidgeted when she came into the room; he was irritable and uneasy while she was in the room; he was exceedingly glad to see her go.

At first it had been unbelievable, ungraspable. She could not conceive for a moment that this might be a permanent state of his mind—rather, say, a passing fancy, an attack of nerves. So she was passive under that first outbreak of fidgety irritation, as a sweet and serene woman knows how to be. She feigned not to see the tiny outburst of spleen, and test-tube crumbling, and the book banging, that sprang into being at the advent of herself into the laboratory and while she continued to stay there. But in the end she saw the truth, and, bowing to its inevitableness, she took her scanty belongings from the place and established herself in the porch.

Gaining the Whole World

Ewins acquiesced in this decision with a ready affability that was, in itself, stabbing in its unconsideration. He stood and watched her as she collected the trifles, and his attitude was one of non-committal irritation, a mood that was ready to assume the censorious at a moment's notice.

"I am going to take my things down to the porch," she said to disarm criticism, and also with a faint longing that he might be perturbed at her going.

"That's right," he said; "I have wondered why you had not done so previously. Before we were married I remember you were anxious to sit in the porch—overlooking the world."

Grace bit her lip as he spoke. She could have cried out at this additional pain, and from the fact that she had brought it upon herself. What he remembered was true enough, but the pain lay in the fact that he had remembered only that. She had spoken of other lovable things in connection with the porch that she would he had remembered better. She bent her glossy head over her business of removal, striving to screen emotions she felt certain were depicted too tellingly upon her face, and when she spoke again she carefully avoided that point.

"I have just discovered the porch," she said with an affectation of lightness. "It is a delightful spot, with glorious views."

"And better air," interjected her husband. He had knelt down before a desk and was trimming a Bunsen

lamp. "The air of this room isn't the sweetest. So many chemicals about and experiments going on make it decidedly stuffy."

"Oh, but I don't mind it," said Grace quickly.

Ewins Carryl stood up and blew out a match.

"It does you no good," he said. "You'll be better in the porch; it's much fitter and nicer."

"I shall miss my share of the work," Grace murmured softly.

Ewins made a gesture of quick impatience. He had something decisive to say on that matter, it appeared, but he checked himself and said again:

"The porch will be much more fitted. It is more natural to your sex. You mustn't be cooped up. Your birthright is air—the light and the fine views and the air. Come now, I will help you with your table. You will start your reign as the queen of the porch." He came across and helped her with the little table. "And hurry—I have some special work on hand; I want to get into it."

And Grace bit her lip again and grew silent as they took the things downstairs. It had affronted her not a little to observe the facile manner in which her husband had utilised the suggestion of her health's good to gain his end. She knew too little of the sex as yet to realise that a man always gets what he wants by urging that it is for someone else's—his womankind's—good.

CHAPTER III.

A WOMAN ALONE.

So through the first year of "the work" Grace was no longer an occupant of the workroom or a stimulant to her husband's labour. She was no longer "of" the work. Ewins had no use for her, or the work had no need of her. She had merely to keep house for him, to stand between him—his work, that is—and the galling, irritating pettinesses of life. He was to absorb himself in his work, and she was to stand by and see to it that

no intrusive or disturbing grits of worry should get into the delicate mechanism of his labours and cause stoppage and confusion among the active, whirring cogs of thought.

Grace recognised these things, quelling any bitternesses that might arise at such reflections. She told herself that this undoubtedly was her part in the glories of "the work," and that, while Ewins did his allotted portion, it was hers to minister to his

wants and to be careful that the burning flame of his enthusiasm was not damped by inadequacy of corporal treatment or sustenance. So she performed the duties of her household with the exquisite circumspection of a good housewife. She fought her thoughts and loneliness with the most excellent of weapons—good hard work. Her home was a model and an epitome of consummate wifeliness.

But, even in this, Ewins was blind to her acts for his comfort. He did not have occasion to notice her excellence, for he passed all his days in the laboratory; indeed, he merely ventured out for meals, sleep, and a daily walk—taken much against the grain on the count of health—over the fields to Frinton, St. Osyth's, or the Naze. He merely found that the wheels of life ran smoothly oiled, and he did not trouble to reason why. He would grunt out a few preoccupied words at the hurried meals, or as he passed her sitting in the porch. Little more. He had not time or thought for praise or approval or commendation. And that is a thing which hurts. A "well done" now and then is a blessed thing—even to the willing mind.

In the life of extreme loneliness that Grace led, such negligence weighed heavily upon her spirit. When the household work was finished for the day, and she could go to the porch and sit there looking out over the sea, a great dreariness at the emptiness of her life beat in upon her and pressed her soul to earth. Everything—her life, her hopes, her desires—reflected the great emptiness of her heart, and there were times when she would ask herself why Ewins had married her at all, until one day it came to her that a wife might be a cheaper, more settled investment than a housekeeper.

After that she had never asked herself the question; the answer was too horrid. But she formulated in her mind the definite truism that Ewins had married her—that he had found her more worthy than any other woman, and the mere fact of his doing this—of asking her to be his wife—proved his love, and with this

pathetic article of faith she was content to live. After all, when the work was done—the work that he was doing for her quite as much as himself—then she would come into her own.

So they lived on for a year, and into the next year, pacing their monotonous round—sleeping, waking, eating, working, dreaming, sleeping; sleeping, working, dreaming, sleeping—until life was a tedium.

And then, after they had been at Walton seventeen months and Ewins's first book had been published, Arthur Eyres came into their lives.

* * * * *

Ewins Carryl brought Arthur Eyres to the house one day after one of his daily walks, the visitor walking with him, a big, warm man, walking firmly on his feet, like destiny.

Ewins trotted at his side, exhibiting the greatest affability, and when he came to the gate that opened on to the path leading porchward he called out, waving his hand gaily to Grace:

"Here is a good fellow come all the way from Colchester in his automobile to see me, Grace," he cried, and he hustled Arthur Eyres up the flagged path. "He has been moved by 'Alkaloid Reagents'"—Ewins's book was "Alkaloid Reagents"—"and he has come to tell me so in person. His name is Mr. Arthur Eyres. Mr. Eyres is no mean chemist himself. You have read some of his articles no doubt in the *News*. No—" And then he added, as though in afterthought: "Oh, Mr. Eyres, this is my wife, Grace."

Arthur Eyres looked up in surprise. He glanced at the young, sweet, and tranquilly beautiful woman before him, and contrasted her with the untidy, laboratory-obsessed, self-centred Ewins Carryl. He looked at the singular loneliness of the house, and he permitted himself the indiscretion of an incredulous query.

"Your wife?"

"Oh, yes, my wife. Don't I look married, old and sober enough to

Gaining the Whole World

have a wife?" He laughed in a good-humoured way, as though to say, "I am rather pleased than offended," and continued: "Grace, can you get us something to eat? Mr. Eyres has motored all the way down from Colchester. Oh, I said that before, I remember—still, he is hungry. That is the truth I meant to convey. I rescued him from a group of stupid people who were trying to tell him where I lived, and where there was a place to get food, since the season hasn't thought of starting yet. Two questions were more than the inhabitants could answer sanely at once. Mr. Eyres' state was horrible, and—well, you get us some food quickly, my dear."

He turned his back upon his wife, dismissing her from his thoughts at once. He spoke enthusiastically to Eyres.

"And after we will go upstairs to the laboratory. I have some curious and interesting experiments in empyreuma to put before you—exceedingly interesting experiments, and quite new ideas. I think you will find them surprisingly new. They and others—oh, many others—are to go into the new book. That new book is to be a great event—a splendid event. It will surprise even those who found 'Alkaloid Reagents' particularly good. It will surprise even the big people. It will make me. That is what I am aiming for above all things, and the book will assuredly make me; it will place me at the top. I am not over-confident—oh, no—but I know that I have a good thing; I know the power that is here." He thumped his chest and glared at his visitor with inspired eyes.

That night he took the trouble to come out and sit in the porch with Grace and to talk a good deal. Mr. Eyres was, it appeared, really a somewhat important sort of person.

"He's rather an influential F.R.S., but in a worldly way. He's not actually a chemist, not in the true sense, being little better than a clever dilettante; but he is a man super-

abundantly rich, who yet finds time for careful—and, as I say, clever—laboratory research. He is a rich man who is also a serious—at least, on occasion—student. It is a very good thing that a rich man should be so, for chemists are not always rich men. He has made himself thoroughly useful to the council in many ways. They are beholden to him; he is, in fact, an influence, you see. I'm not a time-server, of course, but one can't be wholly blind to the uses of influence in this world. Eyres should be useful; he appears to have taken to me; we must be amiable to him—I and you."

"I?" gasped Grace.

"Yes; he does not seem to be vitally interested in the work, and I am, though he said it was very pleasant to know of a brother chemist so near his home. He gave me to understand that he would often drive over in his car—a mixed pleasure. He is under the impression that we are lonely here. Absurd, isn't it?"

Grace could only smile at him in a vague, non-committal way. She had not the heart to tell him the truth. Ewins, of course, noticed nothing; he went on speaking.

"He said that he thought you might be a little lonely; asked me if that was not so. Of course, I told him the truth."

"Did you?"

"Naturally. I said that I was sure you were not; that you led a full life; you had your duties and your own preoccupations—looking out over the sea, for instance; you loved that, I told him—that you were as much wrapped up in the work as I; that I was always here. Still, I fancy he'll make that an excuse to come over, and it is as well to humour him. It is worth while cultivating him. He can do a lot for me and the work." He rose to return to the laboratory. "I daresay that you'll be able to find a way of keeping him engaged so as I shall not be interrupted unduly."

Grace looked at her husband's departing back with astonished eyes.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN FATE HAD SPOKEN.

Arthur Eyres made good his word. He came over to the lonely house on Walton cliff frequently. As Ewins Carryl had said, the pursuit of serious chemical study was not a wholly absorbing preoccupation in him.

He was well content to stay outside the laboratory if Ewins showed disinclination to have him in, so that Grace found it no great difficulty to keep him chatting in the porch by her side whilst her husband stayed aloft in undisturbed labour.

Even, it seemed, the engaging dilettante was more than satisfied with this state of things, and came over from Colchester more often than not to share company with Grace Carryl rather than with the chemist and the absorptions of chemistry. He seemed to find peculiar satisfaction and delight in these uninterrupted intercourses with the soft and gentle little woman, and well able to manufacture sufficiently proper excuses for not disturbing Ewins in order to indulge in them.

He came to be quite a fixture in the porch, discussing, admirably and charmingly as a well-read cosmopolitan can, a thousand seen or read-of topics without the slightest touch of chemistry in them. Chemistry, after all, was but a fraction of life to him, and not an important fraction.

Ewins Carryl was not at all displeased at this trait.

"An incorrigible dilettante, you see, Grace," he would exclaim. "Chemistry is just a hobby with him. He likes to dabble and experience some of the sensation of erudition it imparts. But really he is far happier talking commonplace with you. He thinks I am a little dull, of course."

Ewins chuckled, and Grace looked at him in some surprise.

"A little dull?" she exclaimed. "How?"

Her husband chuckled again.

"He is under the impression that I think the attraction of me—the chemist and the aura of chemistry about this house—is the sole magnet

that draws him here. He does not fancy for a moment that I am not at all deceived; that I understand quite that it is these pleasant, gossipy moments with you that our shallow young friend values more than all the chemistry in the world. He likes companionship, does Mr. Arthur, not chemistry."

He rubbed his hands together and again chuckled. Grace looked at him with eyes in which astonishment, the sudden light of a revelation, horror, and mystification at this clever man's dulness commingled indescribably. Being a woman, she had seen, if only vaguely, all of what Ewins Carryl only partially saw, and she was wondering who, after all, deceived her husband most—Arthur Eyres or Ewins Carryl.

But the revelation that the careless-spoken word had brought out of mere vagueness, the revelation of Arthur Eyres's real state of mind towards her, suddenly burst upon her mind with a forcible power. Her whole sex abruptly rose up in arms at the threat of unspeakable danger. Ewins was still saying: "It is your chatter he enjoys, not my erudition," and he was rubbing his hands at the cleverness of his own discovery.

"I wish he would not come," said Grace slowly.

The savant stopped in his promenade and his hand-rubbing. He chuckled afresh.

"Ho! ho!" he grinned. "Don't you like his chatter then? Don't you like our young friend?"

And Grace said very quietly:

"No."

Ewins Carryl laughed outright.

"What a blow to our young friend's vanity!" he laughed. "He comes and sits with you, and exposes all the fine flowers of his mind, and—and you are bored."

Grace looked up at him queerly.

"Yes; and I wish he would not come. I do not want him to come. Don't you think, Ewins, that it would be better——"

"Oh, nonsense!" he interrupted.

Gaining the Whole World

"Let him come. It gives him some satisfaction—and then he's so useful. He has already done a lot for me. I am rising, rising; he will be able to do so much more—a great deal. Let him come."

"But I do not want him to come," urged Grace.

"Piff! Nonsense!" cried Ewins.

"I do not want him to come here any more."

Ewins Carryl looked at his wife with exasperation.

"Don't be silly, Grace!" he cried.

"I do not want him to come."

Grace went to her husband and caught him impulsively, her fingers gripping his coat nervously. "Please, dear, it is not necessary for him to come, and I do not like it. Can't we go along as before, without him? Is it necessary—"

Ewins Carryl disentangled himself with impatience; the stupid whims of women made him angry. Because she did not like this fellow, she was going to keep him away, upset everything. He was exceedingly angry.

"You are exceedingly thoughtless, Grace!" he cried harshly. "You vex me! Really you make me very

annoyed! Keep Eyres away! Truly you are selfish! Haven't you any thought for me? Don't you consider that I, the work, have some call upon you? Arthur Eyres is most useful—I have told you often enough—he has helped me a good deal, and will help me a great deal more. And you—you would upset all our projects of advancement just because the whim takes you, just for a casual dislike of a companionable, good-natured, if rather stupid, fellow. I'm astonished at you, Grace, and vexed—yes, very vexed—I am really! Don't speak to me of this again; and don't be so ill-judged as to put Eyres's back up. He will be most useful to me with the people who count, especially during the next few months. You disappoint me, Grace."

And Grace sank back in her chair and said no more, but a sense of unstemmable, fatalistic governance beat in upon her.

It seemed impossible that a weak woman like herself should be able to fight the implacable ordering of destiny, when Fate, through the mouth of her husband, seemed to have spoken.

CHAPTER V.

THE CALL OF LOVE.

As Ewins bowed to the deafening applause following his little speech of thanks and sat down, he was conscious of a definite sensation of disillusionment. All seemed so empty, wordy, and unsatisfying.

Yet this was the culminating moment of his life, his labours, and his fortunes.

Since the conversation with Grace recorded above, events had progressed with the immutable impulse of destiny.

The work had gone on in almost ceaseless and feverish activity; Grace had continued to see Eyres, and Ewins and the work had reaped the reward that such intimacy with the rich, influential dilettante was bound to bring. Ewins Carryl's name and fame had grown in the eyes of those people who counted most in London,

and Eyres, no less than the excellence of the chemist's work, had been the cause of this.

Eyres, in touch with all the big men, had kept Ewins's merits well to the fore, and Ewins had followed up such advertisement with good work and excellent articles and pamphlets.

Then the book had come out, and the already-prepared public had received it with generous applause. That it was worthy of applause goes without saying. It was, indeed, a startling and epoch-making work in experiment and discovery. Ewins Carryl jumped at a bound into the front ranks of chemists.

Honours came to him thickly. Societies, royal and endowed, showered praise and rewards and good feelings upon him. Lectures were demanded, medals bestowed,

money-grants voted. Finally he must come up to town to be crowned by the attentions and the medal of the Royal Society itself, and to undertake the pleasant negotiations for a valuable lectureship in an old and classic university.

He was at once an honoured, famous, and affluent man. The goal of ambition was reached.

Only now he was disappointed. Here in the reception hall of the Royal Society, with that august body's address and medal in his hand, he was filled with a sense of disillusionment. All was empty and unsatisfying in his soul; the applause, the warm praise, the hearty congratulations were valueless.

He sat there, through all this good-fellowship and praise, only anxious to get out of it all and away; he had lost the savour of enjoyment. For some curious reason he experienced the feeling that, after all, he had been only weaving ropes of sand; that all this acclamation was but veneration, not for him, but for the work he had accomplished; that the man was ignored and the unsentient fruit of his mind only considered.

He sat there heaped and hidden with the richness of his rewards—and very lonely. He saw but his intellect appraised and applauded—and his humanity, his warm, yearning manhood ignored.

He saw all these things with poignant agony, and he yearned to be quit of this cold and intellectual temple. His warm humanity woke in this atmosphere that had naught to do with humanity, and cried to be free and away. He realised that in a most human life it was the tender, human intercourses of natural life and affection that counted most; that in this life we lead, sooner or later, it is the heart and not the intellect that is to give the most joy and comfort. Here was he realising that later, perhaps, than sooner.

He wanted warm love and tenderness for his manhood—not the chilly praise of his machine-like intellect.

And he was realising with a singular vividness that the only way, the

only just manner in which he could obtain that love and tenderness and comfort, was through her who, before all earthly things, had a right to administer that love and comfort—his wife.

The thought went through him like a sword of pain, and, under the sting of it, he could not be contented until he had torn himself away from this house of unsatisfying coldness to go to his comfort—his wife.

She was at Walton waiting for him. He had asked her to come up to town to witness his triumph, but she would not; she preferred to stay quietly at home.

She had been a little strange of late—Grace—so that he had not pressed the matter; she might have been annoyed, petulant, disagreeable. He wished he had pressed the matter now. It would have been an excellent thing to run off post-haste to her and tell her all these thoughts he had been thinking during the meeting; to tell her that it was thought of her that had been uppermost all through that orgie of his victory—not the victory—that in spite of all his honours, the honour of being her husband was the one that moved him most. He would have dearly loved to do this. It would be fitting. Still, he caught the last train to Walton, cutting a learned conversazione to hurry off to her.

All the way in the train his thoughts dwelt ever lovingly upon these points—how he had gained the whole world and found her, in spite of all, the sweetest reward in it. He would tell her all this, and tell her, too, that now he would make reparation for those three years of neglect.

He saw very keenly now that those three years had been ones of neglect. He cursed his vile selfishness, but he did not allow it to blind him. He had neglected her cruelly, but—but now he would make up. He had now come to his senses, and he would amply, richly make up.

He sat back in the carriage of the whirling train and allowed his soul to be harrowed with the exquisite poignancy of his awakened love for

Gaining the Whole World

Grace. He did love her now, wondrously, mightily. He had loved her always, but this devil-sent, hateful, selfish absorption had blinded him. This ugly gluttony for empty glories had led him astray. Well, he knew their worth now. He knew how to appreciate the just values of life now. He knew just how he stood to Grace, dear Grace, who had been so loving, so unselfish, and so patient. Well—well, by God's help, he would make it up to Grace now! By all that was lovely and holy he would show her that it was worth while loving. All the penned, dammed-up love of three years rose swamping through his soul. He was alive, throbbing, bursting with love.

He leaped from the train and from the station, and ran round to the left, taking the cliff path. He had to run, the spur of his great love was pricking him on. He *must* run—run!

He ran past the few prim villas and the building plots and on to the open cliff and to home. Love was tingling and dancing hot-foot in his veins; speed was too slow to take him to Grace—he ran and ran.

He dashed by the lightning-smitten tree and the decrepit cowhouse that stood by his home, and through the gate and up the path to the door. His senses were singing. He had come home, really home—and for the first time.

He flung open the door and shouted aloud in the sheer excess of his joy.

"Grace!" he shouted. "Grace!"

Grace! Grace! It is I come home—I, your husband—really your husband—and come home! Grace! Grace!"

But nobody answered him.

The house was dead and empty and silent to his impassioned call. Nobody answered him—there was nobody there to answer him!

Grace had gone!

There was a little note on the table—a tiny, tender little note reflecting all her sweet womanhood. It told him everything. She had gone with the man he had brought into the house; the man he had thrust upon his wife; the man whom he had forced her to use for his own advancement—Arthur Eyres. She had gone from him because she was tired of emptiness and loneliness and lack of love, and Arthur Eyres had given her what the woman in her yearned for—fullness of life, love.

So she had gone.

"You have gained the whole world," she wrote. "You have everything that you want. I have nothing—not even love—and a woman so wants love. It is her life. You will be happy in your honour; have kindly thoughts of me; I did so want love, Ewins."

Ewins Carryl sat down upon the nearest chair. He was a crushed man. He had gained the whole world, Grace wrote; yes, but he had suffered the loss—and the loss outweighed the gain.

THE END.

AN OLD-WORLD NEW YEAR.

On the first day of this month [January] will be given many more gifts than will be kindly received or gratefully rewarded. Children, to their inexpressible joy, will be dressed in their best bibs and aprons, and may be seen handed along streets, some bearing Kentish pippins, others oranges stuck with cloves, in order to crave a blessing of their god-fathers and godmothers.—"MERRY OBSERVATIONS ON EVERY MONTH" (Published in Queen Anne's Reign).

One New Year's Eve.

By Elliott O'Donnell.

I wonder how many of you have read Mr. O'Donnell's volumes of ghostly lore? He has published a good many of them, the latest being quite the creepiest collection of weird anecdotes that I have ever read. And he assures me all the experiences which he records are absolutely true, a fact which makes me marvel greatly at his courage.



Y friends the Munsters invariably invite one at a moment's notice. Last year, for example, they sent me an invitation to spend the New Year with them, and I received it on December 29th—a hopelessly short notice for a busy man like me. I accepted solely because I have a special regard for the Munsters, who, where I am concerned, are specially privileged. If they were to telegraph for me to join them in Yokohama I should cheerfully comply (so long as they paid my fare).

Munster was one of my earliest public-school chums; indeed, we "took to one another" the moment our eyes met, and, in spite of periodical quarrels, have remained bosom friends ever since.

Mrs. Munster is intellectual and pretty, and more beside—she is thoroughly genuine and kind-hearted. She nursed me through a bad attack of pneumonia, and insisted on helping me in monetary matters when I was desperately hard up; hence I am under everlasting obligations to Mrs. Munster, and would do a very great deal to show my gratitude.

If the Munsters have a fault—if fault you can call it—it is that they are extremely matter-of-fact—the exact opposite to me. There is not a tittle of imagination, romance, or mysticism in their nature; they ridicule—or rather they did ridicule—the very idea of ghosts. That is why they took a house that had long been reputed "haunted." It was a fine old country place and the rent was small, which is a matter of consideration to most people in these days of pauperising Budgets.

Worcestershire is a delightful county, with its sweeping meadows

and stately elms, its ivy-clad churches and crumbling mansions, the latter pregnant with historic associations. Indeed, all that is characteristic of ideal, rural England is to be found in Worcestershire.

Of course, most people would say this county is at its best in summer, but I prefer it in the winter—on a winter's evening, when the dales and hills, white with snow, glimmer in the moonlight, and through the diamond panes of some mediæval mansion—typical of Worcestershire—comes the welcome radiance of roaring Yuletide logs. I love to feel the keen north wind bite my cheeks, and to listen to its far-distant murmurings swelling into a mighty roar as it rushes through quaking spinneys and hurls itself with frantic fury against the quivering walls.

It was just such a night as this when I left London and, after a quick run in one of the delightfully cosy Midland carriages, arrived at Worcester. There I was met by the Munsters' motor and whirled away in luxury through winding lanes and along broad and undulating roads. Their house, which is close to Powick, is a fine specimen of Elizabethan architecture. At an angle of the massive wall enclosing the outer grounds frowns a huge, ponderous gate, riveted and studded with iron bolts and surmounted with jagged, iron spikes. On our approach this gate, worked by mechanism (invisible from without), slowly swung open, and, on our passing through, closed with a sonorous clash. A run of a hundred or so yards then brought us within sight of the house—a long, rambling, lichen-covered building of many gables and countless chimneys, fronted by a vast lawn that was, in its turn, terminated

One New-Year's Eve

by a spinney of gigantic oaks and elms.

As we rolled up to the entrance the front door opened and Munster came out to greet me.

"We have a man staying with us, O'Donnell," he said, as he led me into the study, "who is a fearful ass, and, between ourselves, I want to play him a practical joke. I met him in town at a literary club, where he poses as a 'star'—one of those dreadful creatures who invariably spread themselves out in front of the fire and monopolise all the conversation. As he is a tenth or fifteenth cousin of my wife's, however, I felt constrained to invite him down here—indeed, he almost made me do so. He arrived four weeks ago with a veritable mountain of luggage, and, in spite of the most brutal hints on our part to go, is here still, and here, as far as I can see, he intends to remain ad infinitum."

"What's his name?" I inquired.

"Melton Redvers," Munster replied.

"What, the writer of those love shockers—those Emma Jane's tit-bits in the *Piccadilly Magazine*?"

"The very same, and he is reputed to be making at least ten thousand a year from them!"

"And you want to get rid of him by a practical joke?"

Munster nodded.

"Of the nature?" I inquired.

Munster laughed.

"Oh, we want you to decide that," he said. "We are depending entirely on your resourceful faculty, which has never failed us yet."

"You must not count on me too much," I said rather drily, "as I fear what little brain I have has almost entirely dried up under the strain of the last few months' work. However, I will do my best, and when I've seen Redvers perhaps I shall get an inspiration."

At dinner I sat opposite Redvers, and so had an excellent opportunity of studying him. He bragged incessantly about his work—how he held the record for quick writing, which is quite conceivable, as his stuff is such abject twaddle; how he could give So-and-so points in his own particular

line, which was practically every line as there was nothing apparently he had not written about; and how So-and-so and So-and-so was no good at all—a perfect ass; indeed, if there was one thing above all others in which Redvers excelled it was in running other people down, a privilege he claimed presumably on the grounds of being a "star."

After dinner, when the ladies had retired, I drew Redvers into conversation, and from a close observation of the man's eyes and general demeanour deduced that he was naturally a coward and that he could very easily be frightened.

He knew the house bore the reputation of being haunted. Supposing I was to assume the rôle of ghost. Would that scare him away? I rather thought it would.

I was deliberating thus when we rejoined the ladies in the drawing-room, and as Redvers as usual sought to monopolise the attention of everyone present, I was fortunately able to indulge my preoccupation with impunity all right. For my part, I did not think that the house *was* haunted. As a rule, I can detect the presence of the Unknown in a house at once by a Something, both in the atmosphere and in the shadows; here there was nothing.

The house being Elizabethan naturally suggested an Elizabethan ghost; and Munster, thinking this a capital idea, said that if I would undertake to put all my vast knowledge of ghosts into practice and dress up as one, he would undertake to get me a suitable costume.

Now, although I have—as my recent articles in a Sunday paper show—over and over again come in contact with materialised phenomena I had never impersonated one, nor should I have dreamed of doing such a thing in order to delude a psychic, as in my opinion no one who has ever seen a genuine spirit would be deceived by a sham one. With Redvers, however, who scoffed at ghosts and was a perfect ignoramus where the superphysical was concerned, I felt absolutely safe—I was sure I could take him in.

Consequently, I arranged with Munster that he and I should take part in a ghostly drama, presumably the re-enactment of a crime perpetrated in Elizabethan days, exactly on the stroke of midnight—an hour, by the way, when real ghosts seldom appear. Mrs. Munster was to make a terrific crash with a croquet mallet at the panel of Redvers' door, upon which Munster, pursued by me, was to come flying down the corridor. I was to chase him round Redvers' room, which was to be illuminated from without by limelight, Mrs. Munster working the apparatus, and the death scene emphasised by the most blood-curdling groans, was to take place in the passage. We did not for an instant expect Redvers would make any attempt to follow us, but, and in the event of his doing so, we had a place of concealment all ready at hand. Munster ordered the clothes from a well-known theatrical wig-maker in Bedford Street, and we rehearsed our parts—even to the banging of the door—most carefully when Redvers was out of the house, the servants of necessity being "in the know."

Everyone kept the secret most admirably, and not the slightest suspicion of what was in store for him could have entered Redvers' head.

Meanwhile, he had been making himself more and more objectionable. He seemed to regard the house entirely as his own, and appeared to be labouring under the delusion that it was a great condescension on his part to be there. He was invariably late for meals; behaved in the most autocratic way in the library, demanding silence whenever it pleased him to work, and talking "nineteen to the dozen" whenever he saw anyone else busy; whilst he bored Mrs. Munster to death with repetitious anecdotes of his life and passages out of his "penny dreadful" pot-boilers. He was, in every sense of the word, odious—unpopular even with the servants. The eventful night came, and after dinner, by mutual agreement between the Munsters and me, we began to talk "ghosts," vying with one another in tales most calculated to harrow the feelings of Redvers and reduce him to

a thoroughly "nervy" condition before retiring to bed.

I cannot exactly remember what story I related, but I know it was one of my most thrilling, and that I narrated it with all the earnestness and melodramatic intensity that I could assume.

At first Redvers laughed satirically, then in his usual manner he attempted to "break in" with one or two of his accustomed anecdotes; then, perceiving his failure in this, he lapsed into a sullen and contemptuous silence, emphasised now and then by loud yawns; and, finally, when it was barely eleven, he signified his intention of going to bed. An hour later, in breathless silence, the Munsters and I crawled along the corridor to our allotted places.

It wanted two minutes to twelve. Mrs. Munster was fingering the mallet and we anxiously awaiting the signal to commence, when something went wrong with the limelight apparatus and we were plunged in pitch darkness, and on Munster lighting a candle, that, too, mysteriously went out. I then felt for the first time in that house the presence of the superphysical. Something—something at present absolutely enigmatical—but something that was unmistakably hypernatural—was now with us, and I wondered if it had come to watch our feeble attempts at mimicry.

I have said that the Munsters did not believe in ghosts, but I think I omitted to mention the fact that they had absolutely no idea as to what form the alleged haunting of their house was supposed to take. Neither had I.

FREE TOILET SOAP.

The proprietors of the well-known Oatine toilet preparations are giving away for a limited period tablets of Oatine toilet soap absolutely free. They are doing this to introduce and popularise this well-known toilet soap, which possesses many special qualities.

Being manufactured from the purest materials, it contains no alkaline properties, and, as in all the Oatine preparations, the base from which it is made is the healing essence of the finest oats, long recognised as an excellent complexion specific. Besides the tablet of Oatine toilet soap, the Oatine Company send a dainty toilet outfit containing a trial size of seven different Oatine preparations, together with a full size 2d. Shampoo Powder. Readers sending 3d. in stamps (3d. stamps preferred), to the Oatine Company, 360D, Oatine Buildings, Mermaid-court, London, S.E., to pay the cost of postage and packing, will receive these articles by return.

One New-Year's Eve

Consequently, my first thought on feeling the sudden proximity of the occult was, what will it be like?

For some seconds after the candle went out there was a significant silence, and then Mrs. Munster called out, in a low voice:

"Fred, I feel so queer! Can you come to me for a moment?"

"I'm coming!" Munster replied, his voice shaking. "I must go to her," he whispered, "though, to tell you the truth, I don't know how I shall get there as I feel uncommonly strange. My teeth are chattering."

He left me, and I heard him groping his way towards her in the darkness. The clock then struck twelve—big, hollow, booming notes that seemed to well up from the very bowels of the earth.

A deep, a preternaturally deep, hush followed, and then a door in some far out-of-the-way part of the house slammed. This was succeeded by the sounds of hurrying footsteps—the light tapping of a woman's high heels and the heavy clumping of a man's boots. Up the stairs they came, accompanied by a lurid glow of light. At first a head—a mass of rippling yellow hair—then a forehead, low and white, and then two big, staring china-blue eyes, ablaze with all the terror of a cruel and ghastly death.

The woman—or rather girl, for she could not have been more than twenty—was clad in a rich gown of silk brocade, a stomacher blazing with diamonds and other precious stones, and a surcoat of blue velvet bordered with ermine. Her slender and swan-like neck was encircled with a carcanet of gold set with emeralds, from which a single and almost priceless emerald depended. On her feet, which were tiny, were a pair of very high-heeled white satin shoes ornamented with scintillating golden buckles. A more strikingly beautiful and richer costume I had never seen. At the sight of her pursuer my blood froze. He was a hideous creature. Standing fully six-foot-six, his big, brutal body was surmounted with a huge head crowned with a mass of long, coarse black hair that fell in un-

combed ringlets over his forehead and about his ears.

His features were large and ill-shaped, his brows black and bushy, and his eyes—dreadful. In their slit-like recesses, illuminated with a phosphorescent glow, I read all the worst passions that can defile a man. He was attired in a very much mud-bespattered suit of buff-coloured cloth, and carried in one of his hands a knotted stick.

It was difficult at first to understand why he did not catch the fugitive at once until I noticed that one of his legs was dripping with blood and that he ran with an effort. Panting and gasping, his very breath full of pent-up oaths, he hurled himself past me, and I watched him racing down the corridor after his victim.

Seizing hold of the handle of Redvers' door she darted in, the ruffian staggering after her. There was a muffled curse, the sound of a falling body, a loud crash, and the figure of the girl reappeared, a glittering stiletto in one of her hands, on the tapering fingers of which a dozen precious stones flashed fire. As I stared at her in fascinated horror our eyes met. Her pupils were glassy and expressionless, though her lips smiled. Gliding noiselessly forward she approached the Munsters, who stood rooted to the ground with fright. When about a yard from them she suddenly melted into air, and we saw her no more, the entire tragedy being but the work of a few seconds. Though it was absolutely real in the grimness of its details, yet there was a something in the luridness of the accompanying light, as well as in the movements and facial expressions, that excluded the natural and pronounced the superphysical. Moreover, the icy coldness and sickly fear were totally unlike any symptoms that the material produces. The house was now perfectly still with a stillness that was quite usual for that time of night, and although I listened very intently I could catch no sounds. Convinced now that the demonstrations were over, and that it was in all probability the purport of our presence there that

had called them into existence, our rehearsal of a pseudo tragedy had, so to speak, awakened the echoes of a real one—one that had taken place in centuries long past, and which had undoubtedly given rise to the rumour that the house was haunted. Convinced, then, now that the real ghosts had gone, I moved from my post to join the mock ones, who were still huddled together by Redvers' door.

Never, never shall I forget their almost comical look of terror, and although I was still very shaky myself—as, indeed, I always am after seeing an apparition—I could not help laughing. Their eyes positively rolled to and fro in their heads, like billiard balls, whilst the knocking of their palsied limbs kept time with the chattering of their teeth.

"Wasn't it aw-aw-awful!" Mrs. Munster gasped. "F-Fr-Fred and I nearly died with—with fr-fright! Do go and see how Mr. Redvers is. Poor man, he must have had a dreadful time!"

Fully expecting to find our victim reduced to a state of utter imbecility, if not actually dead, we entered his room, quaking with fearful anticipations. Judge, then, of our astonishment—our unmitigated, unparalleled astonishment—when before us in the bed, sleeping as serenely and soundly as if there wasn't a ghost within a million miles, lay Redvers, an expression of intense satisfaction all over his detestable features. Recognising that it was a clear case of "the biter bit," we left him there in peace. R.I.P.

CONCERNING OURSELVES

[Letters in connection with this page should be addressed "The Editor," WEEKLY TALE-TELLER, 2 and 3, Hind Court, Fleet Street, London, and should have the words "Concerning Ourselves" on the corner of the envelope.]

A HAPPY New Year To All! That is my greeting to each who scans this page, and it is meant to ring with double heartiness to those of you who have learnt to look on our TALE-TELLER as a friend. Indeed on second thoughts I will add to the old-world wish and give you a toast to drink with a "three times three," as you would drink to "Auld Lang Syne." Here it is:

"When this New Year is old may you still read this page—may I still write it—and may TALE-TELLER have trebled its present circulation."

I suppose we all make good resolutions at the beginning of the year, most of them unfortunately destined to be forgotten, some of them becoming paving-stones along the downward path, and just a few being adhered to bravely. It is a gloomy and pessimistic sentence to write for the New Year, but, after all, though we ring bells and drink healths and welcome the first foot, a New Year's birth, like any other landmark of time, has a solemnity and a sadness of its own which somewhat jars on gaiety. One is afraid to look forward, often one is loth to look behind, and so—well, we hide whatever ache lies at the back of our minds and wish each other a Happy New Year with such certainty that there seems no room to doubt its absolute joy.

Not so many years ago there were plenty of quaint old customs used to usher in the New Year. Here in London they are uncommon, but I wonder if they are observed elsewhere—perhaps some of my friends in remote country districts will write to tell me.

"First footing" I know is observed more or less seriously in many places, but are the other old customs kept up anywhere? For instance, do men rise early to see the dawn? Because if on January 1st the rising sun is ushered in with red clouds it denotes many robberies within the year, and strife and debates among the great ones of the land. We eschew politics here in TALE-TELLER, but in view of the recent election and its results I am obliged to add that really New Year's Day, 1911, ought to dawn red. I am writing this some time before the event, so whether it will do so or not remains at the moment to be proved.

One of my very early New Year memories concerns an old superstition. The first of January that year—never mind the exact date, indeed I could not tell it if I would—was ushered in by a great storm which swept all the Eastern coast, and before the dawn had broken the boom of a warning gun came out of the darkness telling of a

Concerning Ourselves

ship in distress—calling for brave men to go to her aid.

Thank God that is a call British seafaring folk never hear in vain, and all the men and half the women of the hamlet went crowding to the beach to give what help they might. Among them was an old chap, coxswain of the life-boat, who lighted a huge lantern to guide him through the mist and murk. If only he had lighted it in the garden it would have been all right, but the wind was strong, so he lighted it in the "house place" and bore it over the threshold into the gloom.

His old wife, watching from their lattice window, went into hysterics, and it was her screams which rang in my childish ear and made me sit up in my bed (our house was across the road and some distance from her cottage) listening in a cold perspiration of terror to her lamentations, which were punctuated by the boom of the gun at sea.

It would have been bad luck to carry ashes or dirty water out of the house on New Year's Day, she wailed, but to take a light out over the threshold meant death. I remember she screamed the word three times, "death—death—death," and it was only a little later that men passing under my window whispered that the ship which had called for help had disappeared—in sight of land, almost in reach of help, she had gone down on that New Year's morning, leaving but broken wreckage to tell of her fate.

There was a big trench dug in the "church garth" to make one grave for the bodies that came ashore, but those poor fellows did not fulfil my old lady's "warning." It was in the autumn that the coble in which her husband sailed capsized in a squall off Flamborough Head, and when they brought her the news she heard it dry-eyed. She knew it, she said; had he not taken a light out of

the house on New Year's Day, and was not that a certain sign that death would cross the threshold within the year?

That is a tragic New Year's picture, yet all my memories are not so sad. I can recall wonderful feasts in which "peppercake," otherwise gingerbread, played a part accompanied by cheese, and New Year presents were far too important to be forgotten.

And here is a quaint story which shall end my chat this week, one that has a humorous side, though I am by no means sure as to its moral. I take it from the "Statistical Account of Scotland," published in 1795, and would remind you that statistics are generally considered the same as figures, and that figures cannot lie. The story, too, has the authority of the Church, for it is told by the minister of Tillicoultry.

There was a collier named William Hunter, he says, who had lost the use of his limbs through rheumatism, and had been confined to his bed for more than a year. On Handseel Monday some neighbours visited him, bringing "a great quantity of new ale full of balm," which he drank till he became very intoxicated, "and in consequence" (the words are the minister's, not mine) rose the next morning completely cured.

This number of TALE-TELLER is published on Handseel Monday (that is, the first Monday in the New Year), but I should not advise any of you to try Mr. Hunter's remedy, least of all for his complaint. I told you, to begin with, that the story was not very moral, and as for its truth—of that I leave you to judge for yourselves.

The Editor

A NEW YEAR SONG.

(Three Hundred and Forty Years Old.)

*The next to this is New-Year's Day, whereon to every friend
They costly presents in do bring, and New-Year gifts do send.
These gifts the husband gives his wife, and father eke the child,
And master on his men bestows the like with favour mild.
And good beginning of the year they wish, and wish again,
According to the ancient guise of heathen people vain.
These eight days no man doth require his debts from any man.
Their tables they do furnish out with all the meat they can;
With marchpaynes, tarts and custards great, they drink, with staring eyes,
They rout and revel, feed and feast, as merry all as pyes:
As if they should at th' entrance of the New Year hap to die,
Yet they would have their bellies full and ancient friends them by.*

—BARNABY GOOGE.

In order to make sure that you will obtain the "Weekly Tale-Teller" regularly, please go to your newsagent without delay and order the next issue. Also do not forget that the "Weekly Tale-Teller" is on sale at all the railway bookstalls throughout Great Britain.



One Penny Weekly.

Now on Sale.

A LONG COMPLETE NOVEL,

ENTITLED

New Year Dreams.

By SYDNEY ENGLISH.

Answers to Correspondents.

FOOTSTEPS TO HAPPINESS

A weekly feature, dealing with all petty trials and troubles of life.

Superb Coloured Postcard Given Away.

Ask for

CHRISTIAN NOVELS

Publishing Offices.

2 & 3 Hind Court, Fleet St. London, E.C.



MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

All Advertisements for this column must be addressed to ALFRED FATES & CO. Advertisements Contractors, 134, Fleet Street, E.C.

SUPERIOR Secondhand Clothing Bargains. Catalogue, stamped addressed envelope.—"Madame," 240A, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.

BE YOUR OWN MASTER, and get all you earn. Make Money in the Drapery Remnant Trade. Experience unnecessary. Write for Free Guide which tells you all about it.—Cochrane's Dress Warehouse, Victoria Bridge, Manchester.

GENERAL SERVANT WANTED at once; must have good references; good outings; two in family; wages £12.5 4; South London; from country preferred.—Write Box 14, c/o Hates & Co., Advertising Agents, 132, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

GOODS ON CREDIT.—Pay monthly instalments after delivery. Boots, Suits, Cosumes, Overcoats, Furs, Jewellery, Blankets, Macintoshes, Cycles, Watches, Musical Instruments, Household Goods; everything supplied; state wants.—Credit Supply Warehouse, Exchange Buildings, Norwich.

ALL PRETTY GIRLS

command admiration. "Rosella Cream" is the latest invention in beauty-giving products. A very quantity speedily produces a charming healthy complexion. Use "Rosella Cream" only, the very best beauty cultivator in the world. Sold in tins 1s 6d & 1s. FREE—A trial tube of "Rosella Cream," a 5d. sample of powder, and our beauty book to all who enclose 3d. stamps for postage, etc.

ROSELLA CO. (Dept. P), 297, Holloway Rd., London, N.

There
are
none
"JUST
AS GOOD"

For Indigestion



Of all Chemists, or post free 14 stamps.
G. Whelpton & Son.
4, CRANE COURT, LONDON, E.C.



FREE—Absolutely Free. This 12st. Gold Medal 12st. Ring. We make this offer to introduce new list. All we ask is to send name, address, and P.O. for 12d. to cover cost of engraving your initial and postage.
SIMS & MAYER (Dept. 14),
Walter House, 40 to 422, Strand, W.C.

WEEKLY TALE-TELLER

Advertisement Scale of Charges.

Per Page (ordinary position) ... £5 0 0
Pro rata to one-eighth page.
Per Inch (ordinary position) ... 0 7 6

Mr. FREDERICK SIMMS, Advertisement Manager,
WEEKLY TALE-TELLER,
2 & 3 Hind Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

PRIZES FOR EVERYBODY

(January.)

On return for 24 of these coupons.

I have introduced this paper to my friend. (Friend's Name and Address.)

.....

.....

.....

24 Coupons MUST BE SENT. Readers who forward only one Coupon waste stamps, as no notice can be taken of their communication.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE



TO TAKE

BEECHAM'S PILLS.

Printed by HAYMAN, CHRISTY & LILLY, Ltd., London, E.C., and Published by HARRY SHUREY, The Proprietor, 2 & 3, Hind Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.—Jan 7, 1911.

All communications with reference to Advertisements in this or any of our Publications to be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, 2 & 3, Hind Court, E.C. *Sole Wholesale Agents for the Colonies*—GORDON & GOTCH, London, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth (W.A.), Wellington (N.Z.), Christchurch (N.Z.). *South African Agents*—THE CENTRAL AGENCY, Ltd.