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AMERICAN MAGAZINE

FOR 30 YEARS

LESLIE'S MONTHLY

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THE
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FOR 30 YEARS LESLIE'S MONTHLY

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Stewart Edward White

Mr. White always puts his knowledge of the world outdoors and his sincere love for it into everything he writes. In The Mystery, beginning in this issue, Mr. White collaborated with Samuel Hopkins Adams, but all through the exciting story you will recognize Mr. White's vivid portrayal of nature and of nature's men as clearly as in The Blazed Trail, The Forest, etc.

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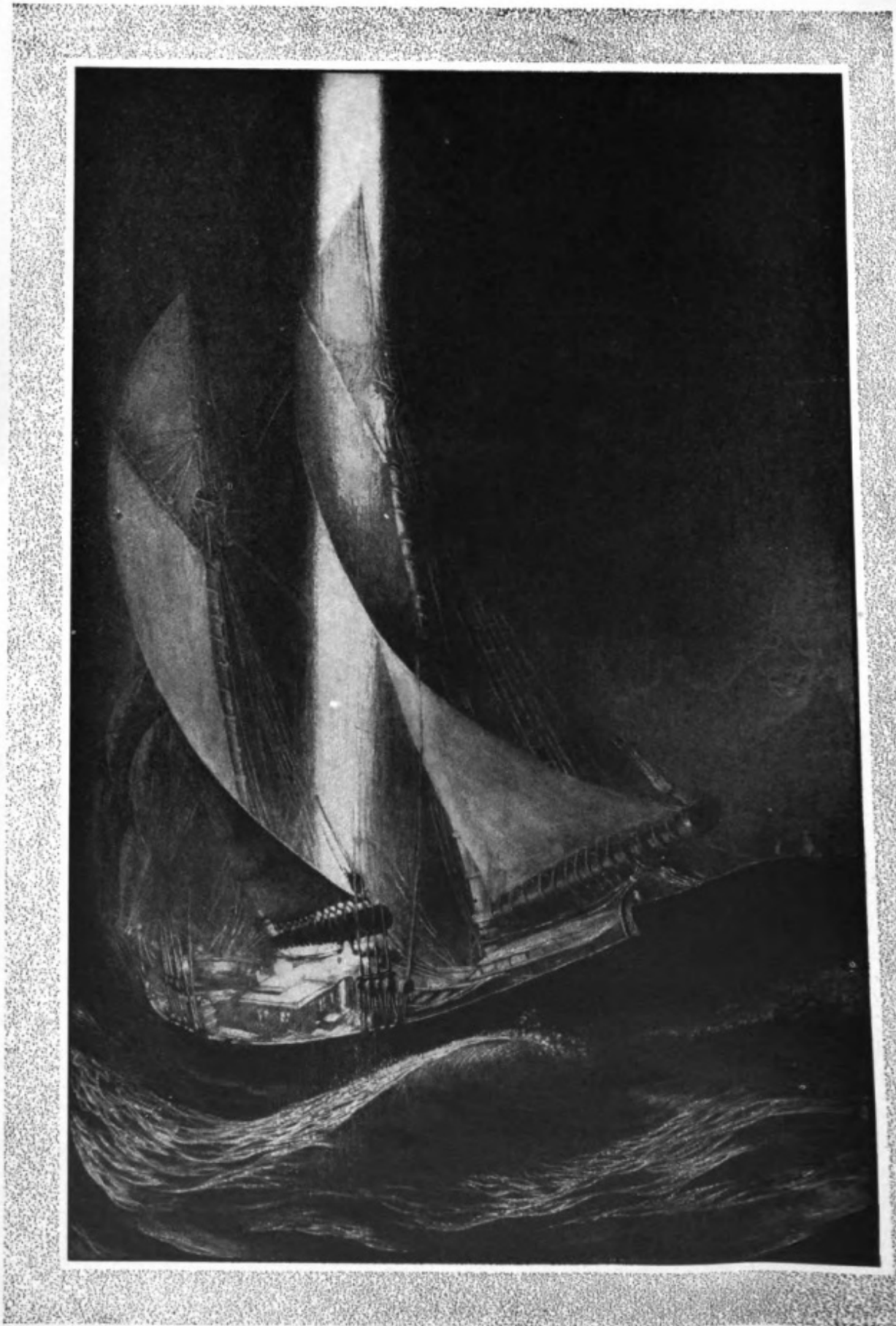

Drawn by John Boyd *Illustrating "The Myste*

The splendor of that terrific celestial apparition

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AMERICAN ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

VOLUME LXII MAY, 1906 No. 1

Purged by Fire

The Training and Life of New York Firemen—A Great City Department where the People get what they Pay for and the Men Earn their Pay

By Harvey J. O'Higgins

AUTHOR OF "THE SMOKE EATERS"

ONE summer afternoon not long ago, fire broke out in an apartment house on West 65th street in New York city. There was a "three-alarm" fire already burning in 59th street; and to fight it all the engines and trucks in the entire district had left their houses. Firemen had to be summoned to the 65th street fire from distant parts of the city; none arrived for twenty minutes. Before they came, two women, cut off from the fire escapes, had to jump from a third-story window to the sidewalk, after several policemen and many volunteer life-savers had made desperate and vain efforts to force their way upstairs to the third story through the smoke. And when the first fire engine swung whistling into the street, the building from the second story to the roof was burning like a bonfire; and the impassable stairs were choked not only with smoke but with flames.

Yet the men of that first engine company, having quickly "stretched" their hose line, dragged the nozzle unhesitatingly into the smoking doorway and disappeared in the "stifle" from which the policemen had retreated, gasping, ten minutes earlier. A truck crew, with hooks and axes, came on the run, in a scattered line that followed into the doorway like a rush of skirmishers. Another engine company dragged in another line of hose through the same impossible doorway. A second and a third crew of truckmen followed to support them. More engine companies, connecting with hydrants further down the street, carried in more hose. Some extension ladders were raised to reach the walls beside the upper windows, out of touch of the flame; but no one mounted them. All the men disappeared, without haste and without shouting, in the choking reek of the stairway. And none came back out of it. The fire continued to burn, apparently unchecked, licking out from the windows into the belch of the "steamers" that hummed and panted busily

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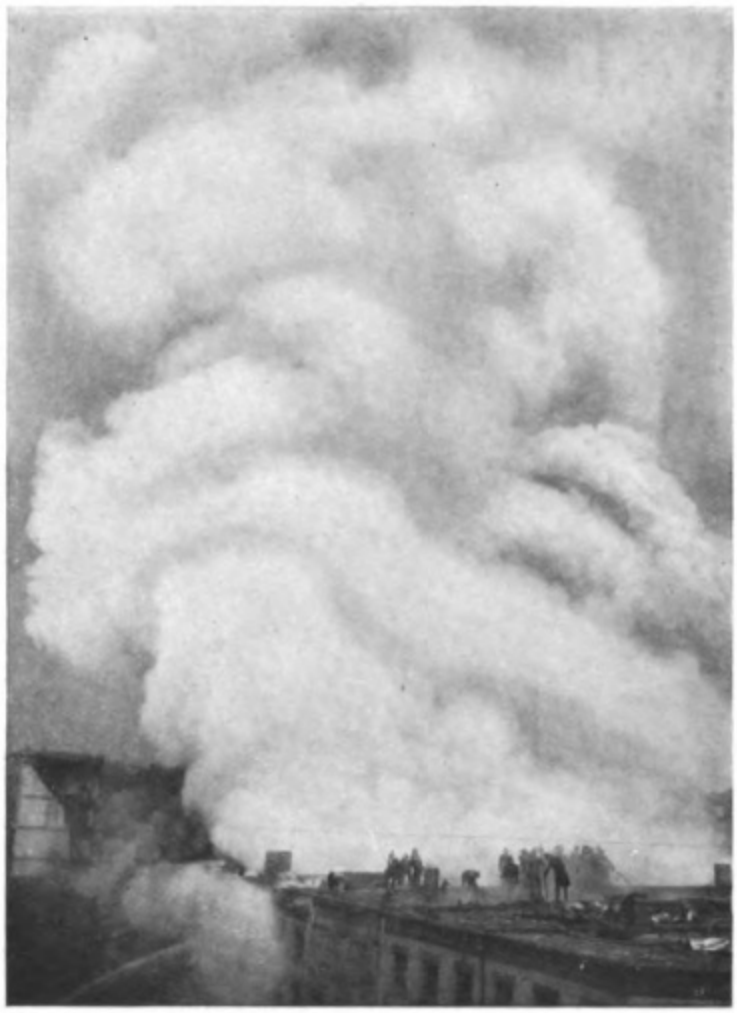
in the street; and the frightened spectators on the neighboring roofs, watched, fascinated, the stony face of that furnace into which at least thirty men had gone to obvious suffocation and what seemed cer-'ain death.

same results as before followed more slowly; and the flames in the stories above him began to weaken, obscured in the smoke that poured up through them to the burning roof.

Of the thirty firemen who had entered



Taking the Enemy in the Rear

While they were still waiting for the beaten retreat of the "blue shirts," the spray of a hose-line spat out of a second-story window through the flames. A moment later, an axe-man could be dimly seen there, chopping down the burning woodwork of the window frame and throwing it into the street. When he had done, the room was dark and the smoke in which he had worked was white with steam. Five minutes later, he reappeared—this time at the window from which the women had jumped—busy at his work. The the doorway, he was the only one whom the spectators saw during the hours that the fight continued. Other companies drew up hose to the tops of adjoining houses and played their streams on the roof. In the court at the rear of the building another attack had its base. But of the men who had gone in the front door none reappeared until darkness had fallen and the fire was giving out its last flickers. Then all those men, scorched, blackened and very tired, came trailing out with their hose—coughing and spitting,

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A Water Tower in Action

With an inch and an eighth line and a single engine attached, a water tower will throw 250 gallons of water a minute; with six engines, 1,500 gallons.

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The Toronto Conflagration at Night

their eyes bloodshot, the grime on their faces streaked with sweat—and proceeded to uncouple and pick up their lines without so much as looking back at the blackened shell of the building they had left.

They were young men, wiry and small. They did not even wear rubber coats—much less the blue uniforms of parades. They looked like plumbers' apprentices in helmets and hip boots. They piled the hose in the "tenders," climbed up on top of it and started back to their engine houses in the silence of men who had a long way to go and were late for supper.

Now that unnoted fire and the way in which it was subdued contain the whole story of the New York Fire Department. It is not a fire brigade that takes prizes at tournaments. The men look undersized and insignificant on parade. Their apparatus is not the most modern in the world. And they do not attack a blaze after cracking their heels together, saluting their officers and making an exhibition drill of taking their hose out of a wagon, as the German military companies do. But in ability to handle dangerous fires, in daring, endurance and resourcefulness there does

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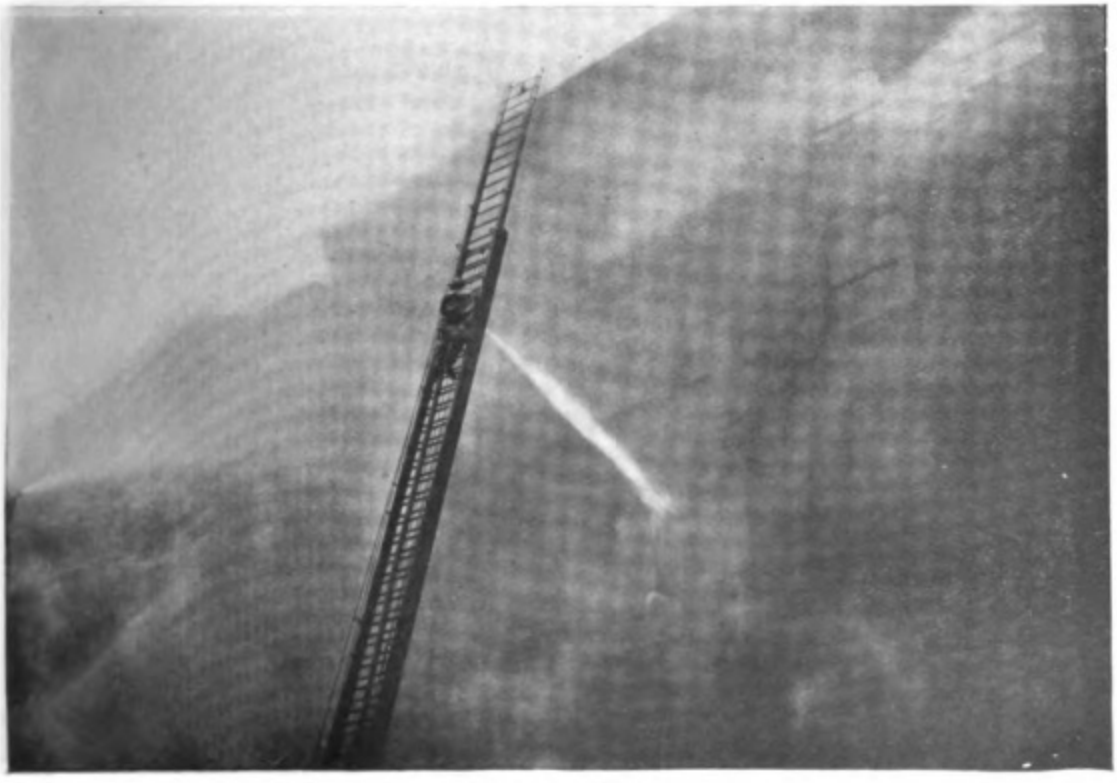
Chief Croker of New York at a Four-alarm Fire

Croker never expects his men to go where he will not go himself. Recently he ordered Deputy Chief Kruger to lead a company of men over the roof of a burning building to a point where a line could be operated effectively. "The roof won't stand it, sir," answered Kruger. Without a word, Croker rushed to the roof of the next building. The crowds below watched him cross and as he reached the further parapet the building caved in with a roar. Croker drew himself up on the parapet and shouted simply: "You are right, Chief! more pressure!"



Ladder Work

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Still Pumping

not seem to be a fire force to equal them.

And the reasons for this are simple. The Fire Department of Greater New York—now employing 3565 men—is the largest and the busiest* in the world; and it has the hardest of fires to fight.

The houses on Manhattan Island are so crowded together that in the tenement district of the Tenth Ward, for example, there are 400,000 persons living on a square mile; the blocks are rabbit warrens done in brick; and the firemen cannot isolate a blaze in these and fight it from ladders, through windows, from the street, after the easier methods of the firemen in less congested cities. They must "fight, from the inside, out," as they explain. They must close with their enemy—as they

* *The Attorney Street Hook and Ladder Company "rolled" to 1200 fires in 1905.*

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did in that 65th street fire—and sweep it before them, up the stairs, out the windows and through the roof. It follows that the men must needs be physically perfect, able to endure heat and suffocation, to "eat smoke" as they say, to be "reg'lar salamanders." And to a daring that seems foolhardy, they must unite great caution, an incredible quickness and every wile and instinct of resource, so that they may outwit an enemy that is forever laying ambuscades and springing traps.

Similarly, "little old New York," having no room in which to spread out, has grown upwards in high buildings. The firemen have to make frequent use of scaling ladders, life lines and life nets, in order to achieve those spectacular rescues which have filled the Roll of Merit until it is almost a muster roll of the department. The men have to be trained and hardened to their work like gymnasts. They have to acquire the undizzied cool-headedness of bridge workers at great heights. They have to be lean and muscular, temperate and—in the downtown districts—young.

They are all these things by virtue of a system of probation, examination and training that weeds out the unfit before they arrive at the pay roll. The applicant for enlistment, after passing his civil-service examination, is put to school at Fire Headquarters and at the same time assigned to one of the busiest downtown companies. He works with scaling ladders and life lines under the eye of an instructor who has ways of unexpectedly trying his nerve; he works in line with veteran "salamanders," fighting fire under the eye of an officer who pushes him to the limit of endurance; he is summoned by the department physician to undergo physical examinations that note any change in his condition consequent upon the strain of this rigorous training. At the end of a month, if he has not developed a weak heart, or otherwise proved himself unfit, he is enrolled as a fourth-grade firemen at a salary of $800 a year; and he begins the life of a soldier who is on active duty night and day for six days in every seven, in a campaign that is never ended, in a warfare that fights 11,000 battles in New York every year, kills only 7 firemen per annum, but injures 375 and allows for each man in the service a yearly average of 40 days in the hospital.

Naturally no political "grafter" is eager to dedicate himself to such work. Every officer, from the chief down to the youngest lieutenant, has to rise from the ranks through a series of civil-service examinations that check his every step. And in the midst of all the corruptions of Tammany Hall, this department, continually purged by fire and tried by danger, has remained a monument of efficiency and public-spirited self-sacrifice.

The men who compose it are of the same breed as the men of the police force. They are, for the most part, Irish: not because there is any prejudice against the other nationalities—for the fire department has rarely more applicants than it needs to fill up its ranks—but perhaps because this life of dangerous irresponsibility, this Donnybrook fair with death, this adventurous and obscure service of the modern soldier of fortune, appeals to the wild blood of the Hibernian. The difference between the reputations of the police and the firemen is the result of the different circumstances in which the men work. The fireman is not assailed by the temptations of corrupt corporations from above and the hush-money of protected vice from below. He has a clean enemy, and he fights a clean fight.

He begins as a "fourth grade" fireman at a salary of $800 a year; by a mandatory provision of the city charter he is advanced one grade in rank and $200 in salary for each year of his service thereafter until he becomes a first grade fireman earning $1400 a year; and the law requires that these advancements be given him without regard to his record or to the wishes of his superior officers. But to rise above the position of a first grade private, he must pass a difficult civil service examination that takes account of his record at Fire Headquarters as well as his replies to the questions of the Civil Service Board; and when he passes this examination, he is put on the "eligible list" from which promotions are made by the Fire Commissioner, but only on the recommendation of the Chief. Similar examinations and a similar procedure mark his progress from lieutenant to captain, from captain to battalion chief, and from battalion chief to deputy chief and to the final chief of department. The actual power of promotion is therefore in the hands of the Chief,

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subject to the veto of the Commissioner; but the ratings which make promotion possible are the work of the Civil Service Board; and this complicated machinery of advancement does everything to counteract the influence of politics, of official preference, of all but the force of native merit in the man. It is a system that has the self-evident fault of tending to keep down the unlettered but much experienced fireman who is "short" on theory but "long" on practice; but in these days of declining illiteracy, it works less injustice than it did when it was first applied to the service.

It is reported—outside of the department—that the present Chief, Edward Croker, rose to his position on the influence of his uncle, Richard Croker, the deposed "Boss" of Tammany Hall. But anyone who knows the man and his work must doubt the report. He has no more diplomacy than a bull. He has antagonized all the political Fire Commissioners who have been in authority over him. He has persecuted the amateur politicians under him with a personal spite. He is engaged in perpetual quarrel with the other civic departments because the police are not on their beats to turn in prompt alarms or the hydrants are not sufficiently numerous or the water pressure is low. His subordinates say he is "fire crazy." He is the hardest working man on the force. He is brave beyond question. He sacrifices his home life and his personal comfort to the duty of attending, night and day, every dangerous fire in every part of Greater New York. And if he ever had any political influence, he has long since lost it in his fight with the politicians to make and keep his department what he thinks it ought to be.

The ideal of service which seems to drive him is as evident among his men; and yet it seems to be unconscious. It is certainly never voiced. If the driver of a hook and ladder truck, going at full speed to a fire, has to make a choice between endangering the life of a citizen in a collision and endangering the lives of the ten men on the side steps of his truck, he unhesitatingly sacrifices the men: he drives his horses into a pillar of the elevated road, into a lamp post, even into the stone front of a house, to avoid colliding with any vehicle that may get in his path, or even to avoid the danger of running down a bewildered pedestrian who seems unable to save himself. Scarcely a day passes that the New York papers do not briefly record such an incident. If you ask a fireman why he does such things, he will ask you profanely: "What the —— am I paid for?" That is as near as he ever comes to the truth of the matter. To call him a hero is, in his eyes, to make him absurd. Nothing can induce him to talk, for publication, about a rescue which he has made or a danger which he has escaped. "The boys 'd guy me to death," he says. That is the reason why the bravest work of these men goes unrecorded. It is done, for the most part, where no newspaper man can see it; it is reported briefly by the captain of the company and noted on the official records that are kept at Fire Headquarters.

Their own accounts of their performances —when they can be persuaded to give any —are never more than amusing. "She was a baby hippotaymus," a fireman said disgustedly of a German woman whom he had saved from the top-floor window of a burning tenement house. "She weighed three hunderd tons, an' when I tried to let her down to Jimmy on the ladder she bit me ear." An old captain who had retired full of honors, was asked to recall the worst fire he had ever been in; after solemn reflection, he replied: "It was down in a basement bowling alley on Eighth Avenue. The walls were packed with sawdust, to deaden the noise. And the smoke was so thick you couldn't breathe in it for a minute. It was *the worst!* And it didn't even get into the papers—if you want to write it up." When one of the most famous "heroes" of the department was retired on account of his injuries, a fellow of his company was asked for anecdotes. "Him!" he said. "The least said about him the better. He was bug-house. He was no good. I've seen him jump out the readin' room window, on the top floor upstairs here, an' catch the telephone pole, on a bet o' fifty cents. He was a fool." A veteran of the Roll of Merit, plagued to talk of his work, replied plaintively: "Here I am living and eating and sleeping fires, day in and day out, till I feel as if I'd go off my nut. And you come in and want to talk about it! Say, let's forget it. Sit down

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here—will you?—and tell me a funny story." A fireman, after a narrow escape from death on a burning staircase was asked if he had been "scared." "Scared!" he answered. "Don't yuh think I got good sense? O'course I was scared. What the ———!" A grateful woman whose husband had been saved from death by a hook-and-ladder man, visited the injured fireman in the hospital and tried to make him tell her the whole story of the "thrilling" rescue. "And what did you say to him when you wanted him to jump?" she asked. The fireman blushed. "Well, ma'am," he apologized, "I was in a hurry, an'—an' I wouldn't hardly like to say."

When they come to talk of their methods of work, they are more communicative. And contrary to the accepted opinion of the outsider, they are more afraid of smoke than of fire. Where there is a strong blaze there must be a strong draught of air to feed it; and it is not heat but suffocation that kills the "salamander." The pipeman boasts that he will go anywhere behind his nozzle; for, in the densest "choke," he has a way of getting a little air that comes out with the stream of water. While the men of the engine company sweep the flames along before them, the truck men make "smoke vents" through doors and windows, ceilings and roofs, develop the fire and bring it into the open. Continually as they "vent" closed rooms and let the air in upon accumulated gases, there are explosions which the men call "back drafts," and these are deadly if they catch the firemen unprepared; for they blow back upon the crews a blast of living flame that overpowers the streams and fills the lungs with a killing "scorch." At the first puff of the backdraft, the men throw themselves face down on the floor, and wait, holding their breath, until the currents reverse and return with some breathable air. They are led into danger by their officers; and the officer is responsible for the safety of his men. He is required to know the strength and construction of every building in his district; and the men depend upon him to warn them back from falling walls or to save them before a floor collapses under them. They say of the Chief, proudly: "He never sends us where he won't go himself." And they tell how he ordered a crew to carry a line of hose over a weakened roof, and when the captain suggested that the roof would not hold them, he ran out on it himself to test it. It fell just as he caught the further parapet; he called back "You were right, captain," and hurried away to bring up another company.

They learn by experience the ways of their enemy and cut into the heart of a fire with a sure instinct for what is the root of its strength and what is merely accessory flame and the smoke that conceals its real progress. They go about their work as a business, and talk of it as such. They consider themselves well paid for it. They are so far from wishing any public recognition of their "heroism" that they even resent their newspaper notoriety. They find their work hard and look forward to the time when they shall be able to retire on half pay and be comfortable. "When I get out o' here," a lieutenant said, "d'yuh know what I'm goin' to do? I'm goin' to get a job as special policeman at the ball grounds. I ain't seen a baseball game since I come in the department. What d' yuh think o' that?"

In short, the F. D. N. Y. is what it is because it is a department of "professionals," carefully picked, slowly trained, and kept up to the highest point of efficiency by the continual test of active service. It is clean of the corruption of politics by the same virtue of necessity. The heroism of the men is merely the common devotion of good workmen to their work; and in these days of civic maladministration and the despair of honesty in public service, here is a standing rebuke to pessimism and a standing proof of the nobility of the rank and file of humanity when protected from the commercialism that is diseasing the democracy and enfeebling the national life.

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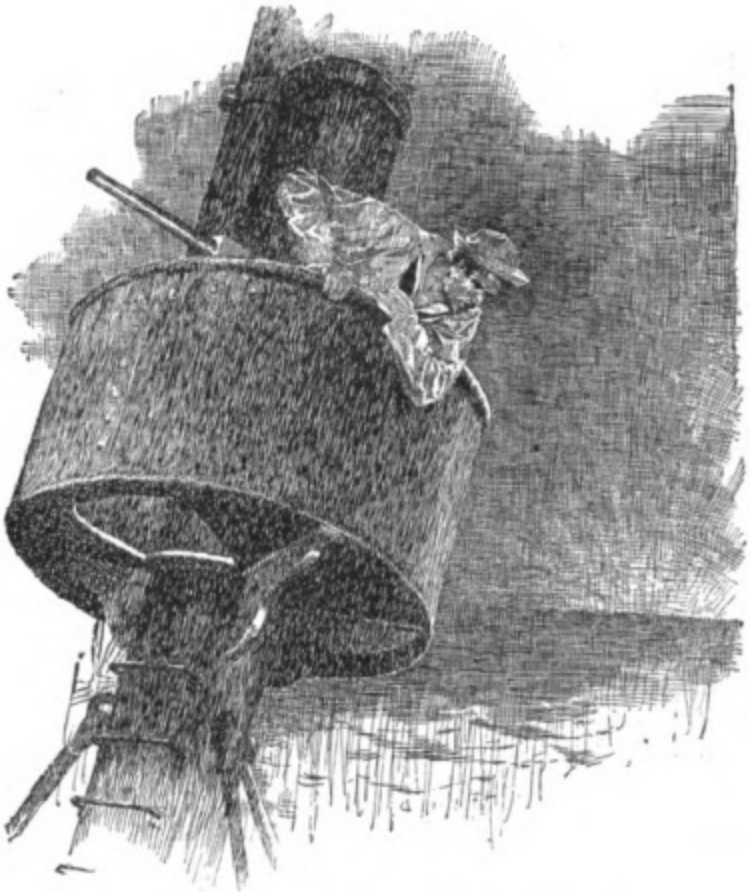

Light-ho! Two points on the port bow"

The Mystery

PART I. THE SEA RIDDLE

By Stewart Edward White* and Samuel Hopkins Adams

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL CRAWFORD

THE late afternoon sky flaunted its splendor of blue and gold like a banner over the Pacific, and across its depths the trade wind droned in measured cadence. On the ocean's wide expanse a hulk wallowed sluggishly. Half a mile to the east of the derelict hovered a ship's cutter, the turn of her crew's heads speaking expectancy. As far again beyond, the United States cruiser *Wolverine* outlined her severe and trim silhouette against the horizon.

In all the spread of wave and sky no other thing was visible. For this was one of the desert parts of the Pacific, three hundred miles north of the steamship route from Yokohama to Honolulu, five hundred miles from the nearest land, Gardner

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Island, and more than seven hundred northwest of the Hawaiian group.

On the cruiser's quarter deck the officers lined the starboard rail. Their interest was focussed on the derelict.

"Looks like a heavy job," said Ives, one of the junior lieutenants. "Those floaters that lie with deck almost awash will stand more hammering than a mud fort."

"Wish they'd let us put some six-inch shells into her," said Billy Edwards, the ensign, a wistful expression on his big round cheerful face. "I'd like to see what they would do."

"Nothing but waste a few hundred dollars of your Uncle Sam's money," observed Carter, the officer of the deck. "It takes placed charges inside and out for that kind of work."

"Barnett's the man for her then," said Ives. "He's no economist when it comes to getting results. There she goes!"

Without any particular haste, as it seemed to the watchers, the hulk was shouldered out of the water, as by some hidden leviathan, its outlines melted into a black, outshowering mist, and from that mist leaped a giant. Up, up he towered, tossed whirling arms a hundred feet abranch, shivered, and dissolved into a widespread cataract. The water below was lashed into fury, in the midst of which a mighty death agony beat back the troubled waves of the trade wind.

Only then did the muffled double boom of the explosion reach the ears of the spectators, presently to be followed by a whispering, swift-skimming wavelet that swept irresistibly across the bigger surges and lapped the ship's side, as for a message that the work was done.

When Barnett, the ordnance officer in charge of the destruction, returned on deck, Carter complimented him.

"Good clean job, Barnett. She was a tough customer too."

"What was she?" asked Ives.

"The *Caroline Lemp*, three-masted schooner. Anyone know about her?"

Ives turned to the ship's surgeon, Trendon, a grizzled and brief-spoken veteran, who had at his fingers' tips all the lore of all the waters under the reign of the moon.

"What does the information bureau of the Seven Seas know about it?"

"Lost three years ago—spring of 1901—got into ice-field off the tip of the Aleutians. Some of the crew froze. Others got ashore. Part of survivors accounted for. Others not. Say they've turned native. Don't know myself."

"The Aleutians!" exclaimed Billy Edwards. "Great cats! What a drift! How many thousand miles would that be?"

"Not as far as many another derelict has wandered in her time, son," said Barnett.

The talk washed back and forth across the hulks of classic sea-mysteries, new and old; of the *City of Boston* which went down with all hands, leaving for record only a melancholy scrawl on a bit of board to meet the wondering eyes of a fisherman on the far Cornish coast; of the *Great Queensland*, which set out with five hundred and sixty-nine souls aboard, bound by a route unknown, to a tragic end; of the *Naronic* with her silent and empty life boats alone left, drifting about the open sea, to hint at the story of her fate; of the *Huronian*, which, ten years later on the same day and date, and hailing from the same port as the *Naronic*, went out into the void, leaving no trace; of Newfoundland captains who sailed, roaring with drink, under the arches of cathedral bergs, only to be prisoned, buried, and embalmed in the one icy embrace; of craft assailed by the terrible one-stroke lightning clouds of the Indian Ocean, found days after, with their blinded crews madly hauling at useless sheets, while the officers clawed the compass, and shrieked; of burnings and piracies; of pest ships and slave ships, and ships mad for want of water; of whelming earthquake waves, and mysterious suctions, drawing irresistibly against wind and steam power upon unknown currents; of stout hulks deserted in panic although sound and seaworthy; of others so swiftly dragged down, that there was no time for any to save himself; and of a hundred other strange, stirring and pitiful ventures such as make up the inevitable peril and incorrigible romance of the ocean. In a pause Billy Edwards said musingly:

"Well, there was the *Laughing Lass*."

"How did you happen to hit on her?" asked Barnett quickly.

"Why not, sir? It naturally came into my head. She was last seen somewhere about this part of the world, wasn't she?" After a moment's hesitation he added:

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"From something I heard ashore I judge we've a commission to keep a watch-out for her as well as to destroy derelicts."

"What about the *Laughing Lass?*" asked McGuire, the paymaster, a New Englander who had been in the service but a short time.

"Good Lord! don't you remember the '*Laughing Lass* mystery,' and the disappearance of Prof. Schermerhorn?"

"Karl Augustus Schermerhorn, the man whose experiments to identify telepathy with the Marconi wireless waves made such a furore in the papers?"

"Oh, that was only a by-product of his mind. He was an original investigator in every line of physics and chemistry, besides most of the natural sciences," said Barnett. "The government is particularly interested in him because of his contributions to aerial photography."

"And he was lost with the *Laughing Lass?*"

"Nobody knows," said Edwards. "He left San Francisco two years ago on a hundred-foot schooner, with an assistant, a big brass-bound chest, and a ragamuffin crew. A newspaper man, named Slade, who dropped out of the world about the same time, is supposed to have gone along too. Their schooner was last sighted about 450 miles northeast of Oahu, in good shape, and bound westward. That's all the record of her that there is."

"Was that Ralph Slade?" asked Barnett.

"Yes. He was a free-lance writer and artist."

"I knew him well," said Barnett. "He was in our mess in the Phillipine campaign, on the *North Dakota*. War correspondent then. It's strange that I never identified him before with the Slade of the *Laughing Lass.*"

"What was the object of the voyage?" asked Ives.

"They were supposed to be after buried treasure," said Barnett.

"I've always thought it more likely that Prof. Schermerhorn was on a scientific expedition," said Edwards. "I knew the old boy, and he wasn't the sort to care a hoot in Sheol for treasure, buried or unburied."

"Every time a ship sets out from San Francisco without publishing to all the world just what her business is, all the world thinks it's one of those wild-goose hunts," observed Ives.

"Yes," agreed Barnett. "Flora and fauna of some unknown island would be much more in the Schermerhorn line of traffic. Not unlikely that some of the festive natives collected the unfortunate professor."

Various theories were advanced, withdrawn, refuted, defended, and the discussion carried them through the swift twilight into the darkness which had been hastened by a high-spreading canopy of storm-clouds. Abruptly from the crow's-nest came startling news for those desolate seas: "Light-ho! Two points on the port bow."

The group of officers stared in the direction indicated, but could see nothing. Presently Ives and Edwards, who were the keenest sighted, made out a faint, suffused radiance. At the same time came a second hail from the crow's-nest.

"On deck, sir."

"Hello," responded Carter, the officer of the deck.

"There's a light here I can't make anything out of, sir."

"What's it like?"

"Sort of queer general glow."

"Can't you describe it better than that?" called Carter.

"Don't make it out at all, sir. 'Tain't any regular and proper light. Looks like a lamp in a fog."

"Not unlike the electric glow above a city, seen from a distance," said Barnett, as it grew plainer.

"Yes, but the nearest electric-lighted city is some eight hundred miles away," objected Ives.

"Great Heavens! Look at that!" shouted Edwards.

A great shaft of pale brilliance shot up toward the zenith. Under it whirled a maelstrom of varied radiance, pale with distance but marvellously beautiful. Forsythe passed them with a troubled face, on his way below to report, as his relief went up.

"The quartermaster reports the compass behaving queerly," he said.

Three minutes later the captain was on the bridge. The great ship had swung, and they were speeding direct for the phenomenon. But within a few minutes the light had died out.

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A schooner comporting herself in a manner uncommon on the Pacific

"Another sea mystery to add to our list," said Billy Edwards. "Did anyone ever see a show like that before? What do you think, Doc?"

"Humph!" grunted the veteran. "New to me. Volcanic, maybe."

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CHAPTER II.

THE LAUGHING LASS

With the falling of dusk on June the 3d there were tired eyes aboard the *Wolverine*. Every officer in her complement

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had kept a private and personal look-out all day for some explanation of the previous night's phenomenon. All that rewarded them was a sky filmed with lofty clouds, and the holiday parade of the epauletted waves.

Nor did evening bring a repetition of that strange glow. Midnight found the late stayers still deep in the discussion.

"One thing is certain," said Ives. "It wasn't volcanic."

"Why so?" said the paymaster.

"Because volcanoes are mostly stationary, and we headed due for that light."

"Yes; but did we keep headed?" said Barnett, who was navigating officer as well as ordnance officer, in a queer voice.

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Edwards eagerly.

"After the light disappeared the compass kept on varying. The stars were hidden. There is no telling just where we were headed, for some time."

"Always some electricity in volcanic eruptions," said Trendon. "Makes compass cut didoes."

"Are there many volcanoes hereabouts?" somebody asked.

"We're in 162 West, 31 North, about," said Barnett. "No telling whether there are or not. There weren't at last accounts, but that's no evidence that there aren't some since. They come up in the night, these volcanic islands."

"Just cast an eye on the charts," said Billy Edwards. "Full of E. D.'s and P. D.'s all over the shop. Every one of 'em volcanic."

"E. D.'s and P. D.'s?" queried the paymaster.

"Existence Doubtful, and Position Doubtful," explained the ensign. "Every time the skipper of one of these wandering trade-ships gets a speck in his eye, he reports an island. If he really does bump into a rock he cuts in an arithmetic book for his latitude and longitude and lets it go at that. That's how the chart makers make a living, getting out new editions every few months."

"But it's a fact that these seas are constantly changing," said Barnett. "They're so little travelled that no one happens to be around to see an island born. I don't suppose there's a part on the earth's surface more liable to seismic disturbances than this region."

"Seismic!" cried Billy Edwards, "I should say it was seismic! Why, when a native of one of these island groups sets his heart on a particular loaf of bread up his bread-fruit tree, he doesn't bother to climb after it. Just waits for some earthquake to happen along and shake it down to him."

"In any case," said Barnett, "such a glow as that we sighted last night I've never seen from any volcano."

"Nor I," said Trendon. "Don't prove it mightn't have been."

"I'll just bet the best dinner in San Francisco that it isn't," said Edwards.

"You're on," said Carter.

"Let me in," suggested Ives.

"And I'll take one of it," said McGuire.

"Come one, come all," said Edwards cheerily. "I'll live high on the collective bad judgment of this outfit."

"To-night isn't likely to settle it, anyhow," said Ives. "I move we turn in."

All night the officers of the *Wolverine* slept on the verge of waking, but it was not until dawn that the cry of "Sail-ho!" sent them all hurrying to their clothes. The quarter deck was soon alive with men who were wont to be deep in dreams at that hour.

They found Carter, whose watch on deck it was, reprimanding the look-out.

"No, sir," the man was insisting, "she didn't show no light, sir. I'd 'a sighted her an hour ago, sir, if she had."

"We shall see," said Carter grimly, "Who's your relief?"

"Sennett."

"Let him take your place. Go aloft, Sennett."

As the look-out, crestfallen and surly, went below, Barnett said in subdued tones:

"Upon my word, I shouldn't be surprised if the man were right. Certainly there's something queer about that hooker. Look how she handles herself."

The vessel was some three miles to windward. She was a schooner of the common two-masted Pacific type, but she was comporting herself in a manner uncommon on the Pacific, or any other ocean. Even as Barnett spoke, she heeled well over and came rushing up into the wind, where she stood with all sails shaking. Slowly she paid off again bearing away from them. Now she gathered full headway, yet edged little by little to windward again.

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"Mighty queer tactics," muttered Edwards. "I think she's steering herself."

Captain Parkinson appeared on deck and turned his glasses for a full minute on the strange schooner. Then he ordered the signal flags up. Signal after signal was disregarded by the stranger, but at length, hastened by a flaw of wind that veered from the normal direction of the breeze, she made sharply to windward, as if to heave to.

"Ah, there she comes," ran the comment along the cruiser's quarter deck.

But the schooner, after standing for a moment all flapping, answered another flaw, and went wide about on the opposite tack.

"Derelict," remarked Capt. Parkinson. "She seems to be in good shape too, Dr. Trendon!"

"Yes, sir." The surgeon went to the captain, and the others could hear his deep, abrupt utterance in reply to some question too low for their ears.

"Might be, sir. Beri-beri, maybe. More likely smallpox if anything of that kind. But *some* of 'em would be on deck."

"Whew! A plague-ship!" said Billy Edwards. "Just my luck to be ordered to board her." He shivered slightly.

"Scared, Billy?" said Ives. Edwards had a record for daring which made this joke obvious enough to be safe.

"I wouldn't want to have my peculiar style of beauty spoiled by smallpox marks," said the ensign with a smile on his homely, winning face. "And I've a hunch that that ship is not a lucky find for this ship."

"Then I've a hunch that your hunch is a wrong one," said Ives, quietly, "she looks to me about the build of the *Laughing Lass.*"

A buzz of electric interest went around the group. Every glass was raised; every eye strained toward her stern to read the name as she verged into the wind again. About she came. A sharp sigh of excited disappointment exhaled from the spectators. The name had been painted out.

"No go," breathed Edwards. "But I'll bet another dinner—"

"Mr. Edwards," called the captain, "You will take the second cutter, board that schooner and make a full investigation."

The cruiser steamed up to within half a mile of the aimless traveler, and the small boat put out. Not one of his fellows but envied the young ensign as he left the ship, steered by Timmins, a veteran bosn's mate, wise in all the ins and outs of seaways. They saw him board, neatly running the small boat under the schooner's counter; they saw the fore-sheet eased off and the ship run up into the wind; then the fore-sail dropped and the wheel lashed so that she would stand so. They awaited the reappearaece of Edwards and the bosn's mate when they had vanished below decks, and with an intensity of eagerness they followed the return of the small boat.

Billy Edward's face as he came on deck was a study. It was alight with excitement; yet between the eyes two deep wrinkles of puzzlement quivered. Such a face the mathematician bends above his paper, when some obstructive factor arises between him and his solution.

"Well, sir?" There was a hint of effort at restraint in the captain's voice.

"She's the *Laughing Lass*, sir. Everything ship-shape, but not a soul aboard."

"Come below, Mr. Edwards," said the captain. And they went, leaving behind them a boiling cauldron of theory and conjecture.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEATH SHIP

Billy Edwards came on deck with a line of irritation right-angling the furrows between his eyes.

"Go ahead," the quarter deck bade him, seeing him aflush with information.

"The captain won't believe me," blurted out Edwards.

"Is it as bad as that?" asked Barnett smiling.

"It certainly is," replied the younger man seriously. "I don't know that I blame him. I'd hardly believe it myself if I hadn't ——"

"Oh, go on. Out with it. Give us the facts. Never mind your credibility."

"The facts are that there lies the *Laughing Lass*, a little weather-worn but sound as a dollar, and not a living being aboard of her. Her boats are all there. Everything's in good condition, though none too orderly. Pitcher half full of fresh water in the rack. Sails all O. K. Ashes of the galley fire still warm. I tell you, gentle-

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men, that ship hasn't been deserted more than a couple of days at the outside."

"Are you sure all the boats are there?" asked Ives.

"Dory, dinghy, and two surf boats. Isn't that enough?"

"Plenty."

"Been over her, inside and out. No sign of collision. No leak. No anything, except that the starboard side is blistered a bit. No evidence of fire anywhere else. I tell you," said Billy Edwards pathetically, "it's given me a headache."

"Perhaps it's one of those cases of panic that Forsythe spoke of the other night," said Ives. "The crew got frightened at something and ran away, with the devil after them."

"But crews don't just step out and run around the corner and hide, when they're scared," objected Barnett.

"That's true, too," assented Ives. "Well, perhaps that volcanic eruption jarred them so that they jumped for it."

"Pretty wild theory, that," said Edwards.

"Pestilence don't work that way"

"No wilder than the facts, as you give them," was the retort.

"That's so," admitted the ensign, gloomily.

"But how about pestilence?" suggested Barnett. "Maybe they died fast and the last survivor, after the bodies of the rest were overboard, got delirious and jumped after them."

"Not if the galley fire was hot," said Dr. Trendon, briefly. "No; pestilence don't work that way."

"Did you look at the wheel, Billy?" asked Ives.

"Did I! There's another thing. Wheel's all right, but compass is no good at all. It's regularly bewitched. Never saw the like."

"What about the log, then?"

"Couldn't find it anywhere. Hunted high, low, jack-and-the-game; everywhere except in the big, brass-bound chest I found in the captain's cabin. Couldn't do anything with that.

"Prof. Schermerhorn's chest!" exclaimed Barnett. "Then he was aboard."

"Well, he isn't aboard now," said the ensign grimly. "Not in the flesh. And that's all," he added suddenly.

"No; it isn't all," said Barnett gently. "There's something else. Captain's orders?

"Oh, no. Capt. Parkinson doesn't take enough stock in my report to tell me to withhold anything," said Edwards with a trace of bitterness in his voice. "It's nothing that I believe myself, anyhow."

"Give *us* a chance to believe it," said Ives.

"Well," said the ensign hesitantly, "there's a sort of atmosphere about that schooner that seems uncanny."

"Oh, you had the shudders before you were ordered to board," bantered Ives.

"I know it. I'd have thought it was one of those fool presentiments if I were the only one to feel it. But the men were affected, too. They kept together like frightened sheep. And I heard one say to another:

"'Hey, Boney, d'you feel like some one was a-buzzin' your nerves like a fiddle-string?' Now," demanded Edwards, plaintively, "what right has a jackie to have nerves?"

"That's strange enough about the compass," said Barnett, slowly. "Ours is all right again. The schooner must have been

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so near the electric disturbance that her instruments were permanently deranged."

"That would lend weight to the volcanic theory," said Carter.

"So the captain didn't take kindly to your go-look-see?" questioned Ives of Edwards.

"As good as told me I'd missed the point of the thing," said the ensign flushing. "Perhaps he can make more of it himself. At any rate, he's going to try. Here he is now."

"Dr. Trendon," said the captain appearing, "you will please to go with me to the schooner."

"Yes, sir," said the surgeon, rising from his chair with such alacrity as to draw from Ives the sardonic comment:

"Why, I actually believe old Trendon is excited."

For two hours after the departure of the captain and Trendon, there were dull times on the quarter deck of the *Wolverine*. Then the surgeon came back to them.

"Billy was right," he said.

"But he didn't tell us anything," cried Ives. "He didn't clear up the mystery."

"That's why," said Trendon. "One thing Billy said," he added waxing unusually prolix for him, "was truer than maybe he knew."

"Thanks," murmured the ensign. "What was that?"

"You said 'Not a living being aboard.' Exact words, hey?"

"Well, what of it?" exclaimed the ensign excitedly. "You don't mean you found dead ——?"

"Keep your temperature down, my boy. No. You were exactly right. Not a living being aboard."

"Thanks for nothing," retorted the ensign.

"Neither human nor other," pursued Trendon.

"What's the man mean?"

"Food scattered around the galley. Crumbs on the mess table. Ever see a wooden ship without cockroaches?"

"Never particularly investigated the matter."

"Don't believe such a thing exists," said Ives.

"Not a cockroach on the *Laughing Lass*. Ever know of an old hooker that wasn't overrun with rats?"

"No; nor anyone else. Not above water."

"Found a dozen dead rats. No sound or sign of a live one on the *Laughing Lass*. No rats, no mice, no bugs. Gentlemen, the *Laughing Lass* is a charnel ship."

"No wonder Billy's tender nerves went wrong," said Ives, with irrepressible flippancy. "She's probably haunted by cockroach wraiths."

"He'll have a chance to see," said Trendon. "Captain's going to put him in charge."

"By way of apology, then," said Barnett. "That's pretty square."

"Captain Parkinson wishes to see you in his cabin, Mr. Edwards," said an orderly, coming in.

"A pleasant voyage, Captain Billy," said Ives. "Sing out if the goblins git yer."

Fifteen minutes later Ensign Edwards with a quartermaster, Timmins, the bosn's mate, and a crew, were heading a straight course toward his first command, with instructions to "keep company and watch for signals;" and intention to break into the brass-bound chest and ferret out what clue lay there, if it took dynamite. As he boarded, Barnett and Trendon, with both of whom the lad was a favorite, came to a sinister conclusion.

"It's poison, I suppose," said the first officer.

"And a mighty subtle sort," agreed Trendon. "Don't like the looks of it." He shook a solemn head. "Don't like it for a damn."

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECOND PRIZE CREW

From some unaccountable source in that realm of the heaven-scouring trades, a heavy mist swept down upon the cruiser on June 5th, thickening as it approached, until presently it had spread a curtain between the war ship and its charge. The wind died. Until after fall of night the *Wolverine* moved slowly, bellowing for the schooner, but got no reply.

"Probably doesn't carry any fog horn," said Carter bitterly, voicing a general uneasiness. "No log; compass crazy; without fog-signal; I don't like that craft. Barnett ought to have been ordered to

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blow the damned thing up, as a peril to the high seas."

"We'll pick her up in the morning, surely," said Forsythe. "This can't last forever."

Nor did it last long. An hour before midnight, a pounding shower fell, lashing the sea into phosphorescent whiteness. It ceased, and with the growl of a leaping animal, a squall furiously beset the ship. Capt. Parkinson came from his cabin and went on deck.

"Parky looks as if Davy Jones was pulling on his string," observed the flippant Ives to his neighbor.

"Worrying about the schooner?" said Forsythe. "Hope Billy Edwards saw or heard or felt that squall coming."

"Oh, it will be all right," said Carter confidently. "The wind's moderating, now."

"But there's no telling how far out of the course this may have blown him."

Barnett came down, dripping.

"Anything new?" asked Dr. Trendon.

The navigating officer shook his head. "Nothing. But the captain's in a state of mind," he said.

"What's wrong with him?"

"The schooner. Seems possessed with the notion that there's something wrong with *her*."

"Aren't you feeling a little that way yourself?" said Forsythe. "I am. I'll take a look around before I turn in."

He left behind him a silent crowd. His return was prompt and swift.

"Come on deck," he said.

Every man leaped as to an order. There was that in Forsythe's voice which stung. The weather had cleared somewhat, though scudding wrack still blew across them to the westward. The ship rolled heavily. Of the sea naught was visible but arching waves; in the sky they beheld again, with a sickening sense of disaster, that pale and lovely glow, which had so bewildered them two nights before.

"The aurora!" cried McGuire, the paymaster.

"Oh, certainly," replied Ives with sarcasm. "Dead in the west. Common spot for the aurora. Particularly on the edge of the South Seas, where they are thick!"

"Then what is it?"

"It's electrical anyway," said Carter. "The compass is queer again."

"Edwards ought to be close to the solution of it," said Ives. "This gale should have blown him just about to the centre of interest."

"If only he isn't involved in it," said Carter, anxiously.

"What could there be to involve him?" said McGuire.

"I don't know," said Carter, slowly. "Somehow I feel as if the desertion of the schooner was in some formidable manner connected with that light."

For perhaps fifteen minutes the glow continued. It seemed to be nearer at hand than on the former sighting; but it took no comprehensible form. Then it died away and all was blackness again. But the officers of the *Wolverine* had long been in troubled slumber before the sensitive compass regained its exact balance, and with the shifting wind to mislead her, the cruiser had wandered by morning, no man might know how far from her course.

All day long of June 6th the *Wolverine*, baffled by patches of mist and moving rainfalls, patrolled the empty seas without sighting the lost schooner. The evening brought an envelope of fog again, and presently a light breeze came up from the north. An hour of it had failed to disperse the mist, when there was borne down to the war ship a sound of flapping as of great wings. The flapping grew louder—waned—ceased—and from the look-out came a hail.

"Ship's lights three points on the starboard quarter."

"What do you make it out to be?" came the query from below."

"Green light's all I can see, sir." There was a pause.

"There's her port light, now. Looks to be turning and bearing down on us, sir. Coming dead for us," the man's voice rose —"close aboard; less'n two ship's lengths away!"

As for a pre-arranged scene, the fog-curtain parted. There loomed silently and swiftly the *Laughing Lass*. Down she bore upon the greater vessel until it seemed as if she must ram; but all the time she was veering to windward, and now she ran into the wind with a castanet rattle of sails. So close aboard was she that the eager eyes of Uncle Sam's men peered down upon her empty decks—for

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A man who was a bit of a mechanic was set to work to open the chest

she was void of life.

Behind the cruiser's blanketing she paid off very slowly, but presently caught the breeze full and again whitened the water at her prow. Forgetting regulations, Ives hailed loudly :

"Ahoy, *Laughing Lass!* Ahoy, Billy Edwards!"

No sound, no animate motion came from aboard that apparition, as she fell astern. A shudder of horror ran across the *Wolverine's* quarter deck. A wraith-ship, peopled with skeletons would have been less dreadful to their sight than the brisk and active desolation of the heeling schooner.

"Been deserted since early last night," said Trendon hoarsely.

"How can you tell that?" asked Barnett.

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"Both sails reefed down. Ready for that squall. Been no weather since to call for reefs. Must have quit her during the squall."

"Then they jumped," cried Carter, "for I saw her boats. It isn't believable."

"Neither was the other," said Trendon grimly.

A hurried succession of orders stopped further discussion for the time. Ives was sent aboard the schooner to lower sail and report. He came back with a staggering dearth of information. The boats were all there; the ship was intact—as intact as when Billy Edwards had taken charge—but the cheery, lovable ensign and his men had vanished without trail or clue. As to the how or the wherefore they might rack their brains with guessing. There was the beginning of a log in the ensign's handwriting, which Ives had found with high excitement and read with bitter disappointment:

"*Had squall from northeast,*" it ran. "*Double reefed her and she took it nicely. Seems a sea-worthy, quick ship. Further search for log. No result. Have ordered one of crew who is a bit of a mechanic to work at the brass-bound chest till he gets it open. He reports marks on the lock as if somebody had been trying to pick it before him.*"

There was no further entry.

"Dr. Trendon is right," said Barnett. "Whatever happened—and God only knows what it could have been—it happened just after the squall."

"Just about the time of the strange glow," cried Ives.

It was decided that two men and a petty officer should be sent aboard the *Laughing Lass* to make her fast with a cable, and remain on board over night. But when the order was given, the men hung back. One of them protested brokenly that he was sick. Trendon after examination reported to the captain.

"Case of blue funk, sir. Might as well be sick. Good for nothing. Others aren't much better."

"Who was to be in charge?"

"Congdon," replied the doctor, naming one of the petty officers.

"He's my coxswain," said Capt. Parkinson. "A first-class man. I can hardly believe that he is afraid. We'll see."

Congdon was sent for.

"You're ordered aboard the schooner for the night, Congdon," said the captain.

"Yes, sir."

"Is there any reason why you do not wish to go?"

The man hesitated, looking miserable. Finally he blurted out, not without a certain dignity:

"I obey orders, sir."

"Speak out, my man," urged the captain kindly.

"Well, sir: it's Mr. Edwards, then. You couldn't scare him off a ship, sir, unless it was something—something—"

He stopped, failing of the word.

"You know what Mr. Edwards was, sir, for pluck," he concluded.

"*Was!*" cried the captain sharply. "What do you mean?"

"The schooner got him, sir. You don't make no doubt of that, do you, sir?" The man spoke in a hushed voice, with a shrinking glance back of him.

"Will you go aboard under Mr. Ives?"

"Anywhere my officer goes I'll go, and gladly, sir."

Ives was sent aboard in charge. For that night, in a light breeze the two ships lay close together, the schooner riding jauntily astern. But not until morning illumined the world of waters did the *Wolverine's* people feel confident that the *Laughing Lass* would not vanish away from their ken like a shape of the mist.

CHAPTER V.

THE DISAPPEARANCE

When Barnett came on deck very early in the morning of June 7th, he found Dr. Trendon already up and staring moodily out at the *Laughing Lass.* As the night was calm the tow had made fair time toward their port in the Hawaiian group.

"Evidently there's something criminal in her record," said Barnett frowning at the schooner astern. "Otherwise the name wouldn't be painted out."

"Painted out long ago. See how rusty it is. Schermerhorn's work maybe," replied Trendon. "Secret expedition, remember."

"Um-ah; that's true," said the other thoughtfully. "It's quite possible."

"Captain wishes to see both of you gentlemen in the ward room, if you please," came a message.

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Below they found all the officers gathered. Capt. Parkinson was pacing up and down in ill-controlled agitation.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we are facing a problem which, so far as I know, is without parallel. It is my intention to bring the schooner which we have in tow to port at Honolulu. In the present unsettled weather we cannot continue to tow her. I wish two officers to take charge. Under the circumstances I shall issue no orders. The duty must be voluntary."

Instantly every man, from the veteran Trendon to the youthful paymaster, volunteered.

"That is what I expected," said Capt. Parkinson quietly. "But I have still a word to say. I make no doubt in my own mind that the schooner has twice been beset by the gravest of perils. Nothing less would have driven Mr. Edwards from his post. All of us who know him will appreciate that. Nor can I free myself from the darkest forebodings as to his fate and that of his companions. But as to the nature of the peril I am unable to make any conjecture worthy of consideration. Has anyone a theory to offer?"

There was a dead silence.

"Mr. Barnett? Dr. Trendon? Mr. Ives?"

"Is there not possibly some connection between the light which we have twice seen, and the double desertion of the ship?" suggested the first officer after a pause.

"I have asked myself that over and over. Whatever the source of the light and however near to it the schooner may have been, she is evidently unharmed."

"Yes, sir," said Barnett. "That seems to vitiate that explanation."

"I thank you, gentlemen, for the promptitude of your offers," continued the captain. "In this respect you make my duty the more difficult. I shall accept Mr. Ives because of his familiarity with sailing craft and with these seas." His eyes ranged the group.

"I beg your pardon, Capt. Parkinson," eagerly put in the paymaster, "but I've handled a schooner yacht for several years and I'd appreciate the chance of—"

"Very well, Mr. McGuire, you shall be the second in command."

"Thank you, sir."

"You gentlemen will pick a volunteer crew and go aboard at once. Spare no effort to find records of the schooner's cruise. Keep in company and watch for signals. Report at once any discovery or unusual incident, however slight."

At ten o'clock of a puffy mist-laden morning a new and silent crew of nine men boarded the *Laughing Lass*. There were no farewells among the officers. Forebodings weighed too heavy for such open expression.

All the fates of weather seemed to combine to part the schooner from her convoy. As before, the fog fell, only to be succeeded by squally rain showers that cut up the vista into a checkerboard pattern of visible sea and impenetrable grayness. Before evening the *Laughing Lass*, making slow way through the mists, had become separated by a league of waves from the cruiser. One glimpse of her between mist-areas the *Wolverine* caught at sunset. Then wind and rain descended in furious volume from the southeast. The cruiser immediately headed about, following the probable course of her charge which would be beaten far down to leeward. It was a gloomy mess on the war ship. In his cabin Capt. Parkinson was frankly sea-sick; a condition which nothing but the extreme of nervous depression ever induced in him.

For several hours the rain fell and the gale howled. Then the sky swiftly cleared, and with the clearing there rose a great cry of amaze from stem to stern of the *Wolverine*. For far toward the western horizon appeared such a prodigy as the eye of no man aboard that ship had ever beheld. From a belt of marvellous, glowing gold, rich and splendid streamers of light spiralled up into the blackness of the heavens. In all the colors of the spectrum they rose and fell; blazing orange, silken, wonderful, translucent blues, and shimmering reds. Below, a broad band of paler hue, like sheet lightning fixed to immobility, wavered and rippled. All the auroras of the northland blended in one could but have paled away before the splendor of that terrific celestial apparition.

On board the cruiser all hands stood petrified, bound in a stricture of speechless wonder. After the first cry, silence lay leaden over the ship. It was broken by a scream of terror from forward.

(*To be continued*)

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The Finger Tips of Allah

By Broughton Brandenburg

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE FRENCH COMMANDANT OF THE DISTRICT OF BISKRA

DEEP in the yellow bosom of the Sahara there are spots where a man may live and find scant food and drink, but I am about to write of the last outpost of civilization, the final footprint of the modern, not on the edge, but thrust into the desert itself, the beautiful, scantily-memorialized oasis of Biskra.

The political geography that draws dotted red lines in the ministry of foreign affairs says that it is Algeria, and that the territory is French, but if I had my way it would be only Biskra, Heart of North Africa.

To begin with, Algiers is not one of the way stations of the beaten path, and to seek Biskra one must start from Algiers. The French have tried to build a railroad up through the region by the way of Constantine, and have half-heartedly endeavored to make the worn-out materials and rolling stock of the French provincial roads overcome the obstacles of nature in the rough country where the desert begins. By all means go by the way of Constantine (there is no other way to go,) and stay in Biskra as long as possible, for it is worth one journey, but no more.

There is one incomparable view, and that is when approaching from Touggourt, the nearest oasis, just at dawn after a still night. Perchance the moon, almost full, a luminous, white disk of great size, is receding into the purple abyss of the as yet unlit west. On one hand lifts the serrated and seamed ridges of the Mohonneihe, and on the other and to the rear is the stretching desert sand and the hills it cannot subdue. On the ridges rests lightly a growing flush, blending exquisitely with their purples, lavenders and grays.

Like the sudden rising of the curtain on the opera the flood of sunlight pours over the hills, and one beholds the green nest of Biskra before him, embowered in the hills, and half hiding its jumble of sun-bleached houses with the spreading fronds of its date palms and orange trees.

Immediately to the east there lies a rocky waste that marks the bed of the occasional torrent when rain does come and the hills hurl down the flood on the plain below. On its hither bank are rough mounds that indicate where once the ancient Biskra stood, in the days when the Arabs came out of the East and dispossessed the autochthons. Where the grave of the elder city ends the poorer part of the new Biskra begins, the earth-built structures appearing at a distance to be a part of the rock scheme. Gradually the hewn stone and the tile structures assert themselves, until at last, when the eye rests on the quarter immediately about the residence of the Bashaga, the chief holding authority both from the French and Arabs, there is no doubt but that one looks at a town. More it cannot be called as, in the terminology of the theatrical booking agent, its extreme drawing population is not six thousand. The fully advertised reappearance of Mahomet would not provoke a greater concourse.

The initial signs of life the traveler will see are odd-moving figures in white out on the waste of rocks beyond the old city. At first glance they seem to be rocks, but a closer look will show them bending, rising from kneeling positions to full height, and genuflecting. They are heads of families from the town praying to the East.

The few horses in the caravan begin to neigh, the camels to cough, choke and grunt and lift their bobbing heads. From the

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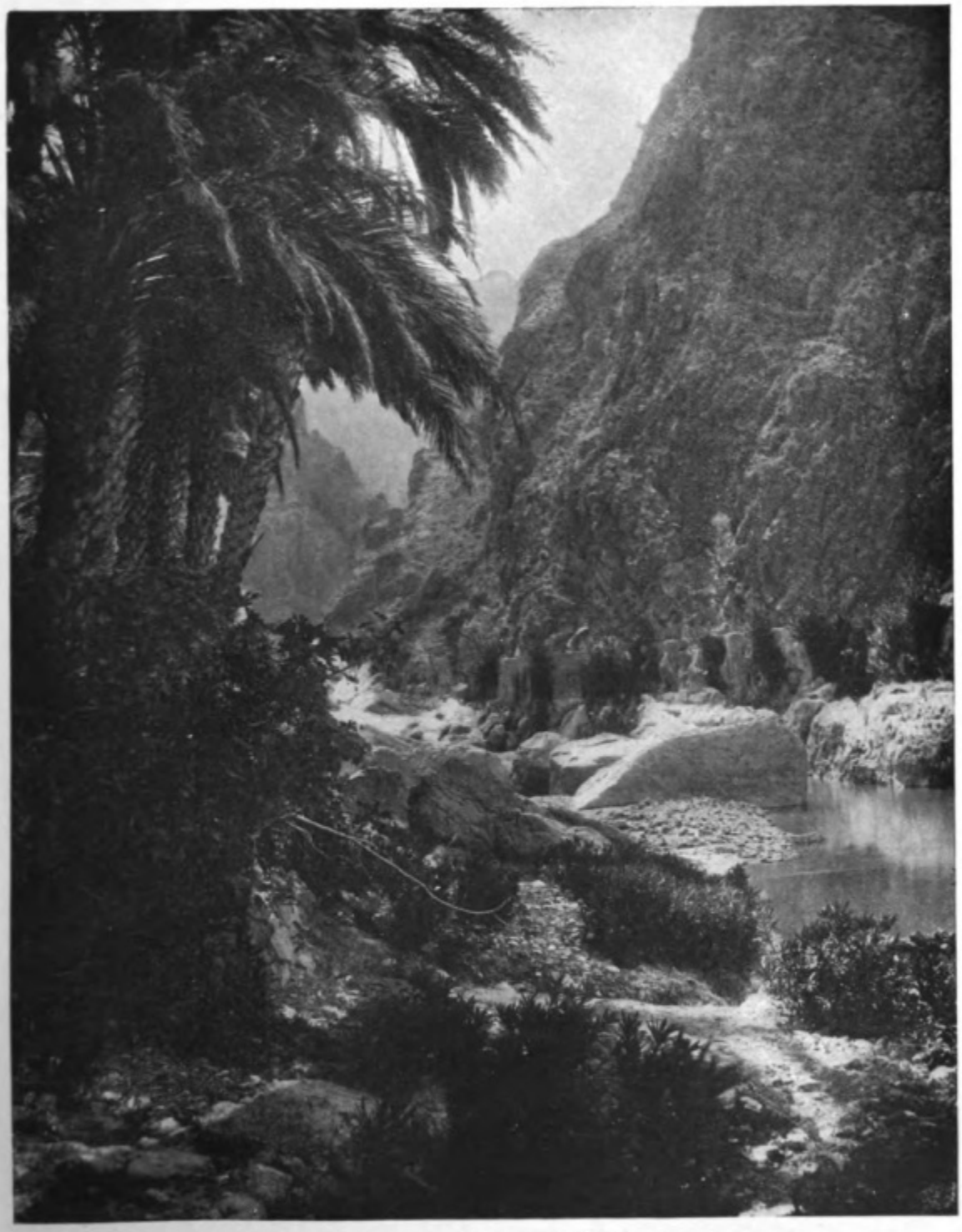

A gorge on the edge of the desert

nearer side of the town there come answering sounds. The first one distinguishable is the shouting of boys at play. The worshippers are returning. One of them carries under his arm a great roll of matting and a veritable tablet library of skin-covered slabs inscribed in Arabic. At the confines of the town the noisy boys gather around him, after profound salaams, and by the time the caravan reaches the spot, he has selected a palm tree, has spread the mat, producing an ominous rod from within it. The boys have slipped off their shoes before squatting on the mat, as it is

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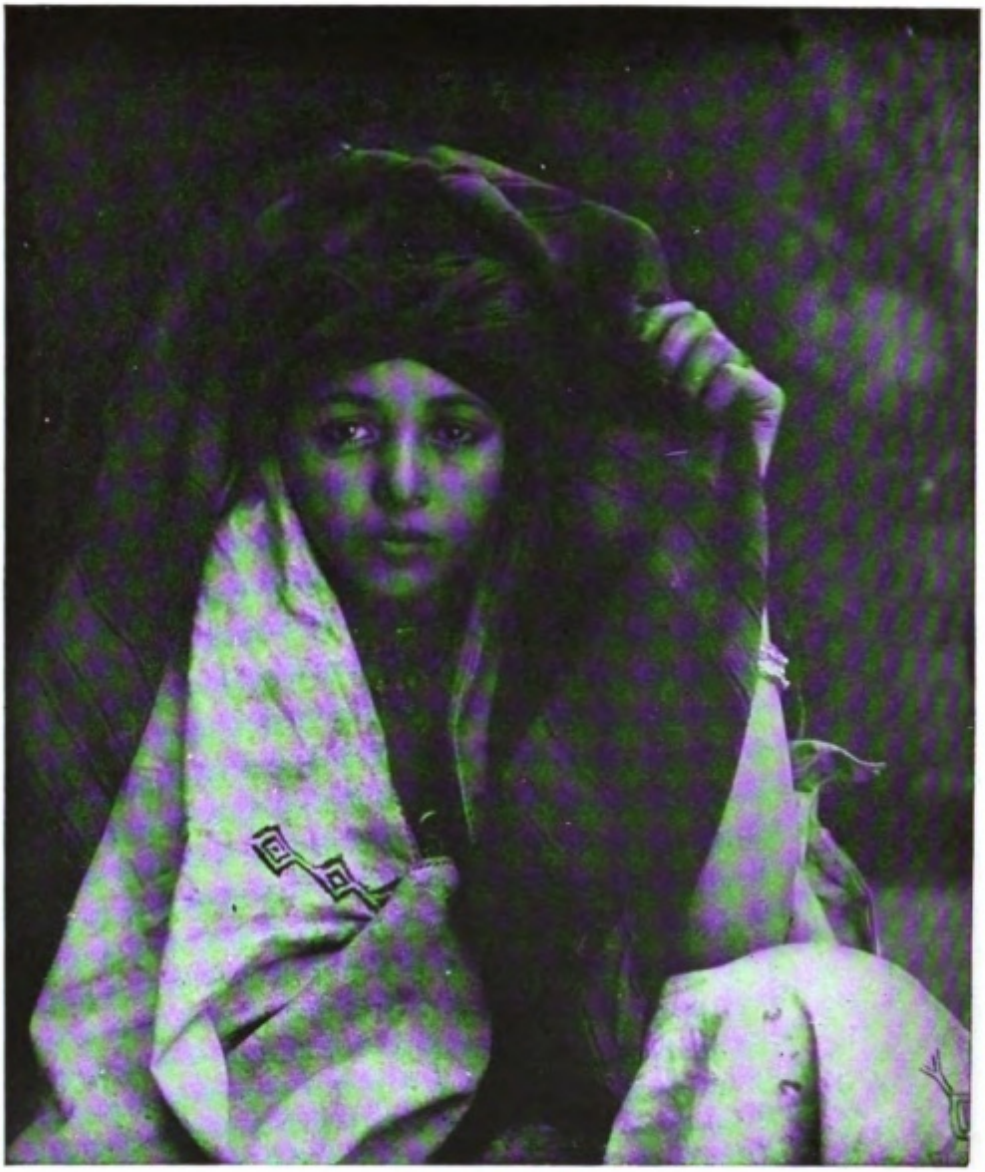

A maid of Islam

Fortunate is he who sees a Bedouin woman of any position unveiled.

now sacred territory and school has been taken up.

Queer little chaps they are, in their tattered cotton clothes, conning over sections of the Koran, the majority wearing *fez*, some few the burnouse of the Bedouin. The schoolmaster's spectacles are opaque with grease and date juice, and worn on the tip of his nose so as not to interfere with his vision. In that he displays a common idiosyncrasy among Moslem pedagogues. They must wear spectacles, but not to look through.

Winding around the little artificial pool, on the bank of which the school sits, the caravan plunges into one of the narrow streets, nothing more than a slit between dividing walls. The arrival in Biskra is accomplished, and the caravan disintegrates. The date-laden beasts turn aside at some dividing point and are lost in the compound of the merchant who buys the fruit. The wool-bearers vanish down another by-lane and the Bedouin outriders stop before the door of a repairer of arms.

There is a longevity in the *khan* or *patio* style of architecture of habitations which is puzzling, to say the least. The modern cottage, or villa with a lawn, is a legitimate evolution of the ancient castle with a terrace, but why half of the civilized world should cling to the style of walling-in dwell-

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A desert bride

About her waist is the traditional broad plate of gold, silver and turquoise, usually an inheritance of great age and rare workmanship.

ings, stock-shelters and grounds, is more than I can understand. In former centuries of complete lawlessness, protection from robbers was a real reason, but over all southern Europe, western Asia, northern Africa, Mexico, Central and South America, one finds the persistent *khan* and *patio* without excuse. Biskra streets are a maze of nearly blank walls, uselessly inclosing the real life of the town. These walls are largely of sun-dried mud bricks with holes in the upper reaches to accommodate rafters, as the houses within utilize the outer wall in the economy of their structure. By reason of the quality of the material, great catastrophes sometimes occur, with heavy loss of life and property. The holy men when praying for rain qualify the invocation by asking for not too much. A really heavy shower, such as rarely occurs, melts the mud walls, the houses fall down and the streets become rivers of mud, while the irrigating canals are filled up, the water pools ruined and misfortune rules in general. Sandstone, which can be easily worked, is abundant, convenient and durable, yet the Arab clings to mud.

The reliefs to the blankness of the walls are doors, of very old wood as a rule, very

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The garden of Eden with the desert on every side

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On the rock wastes beyond old Biskra, the heads of families may be seen praying to the East

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carefully preserved, as the scant timbering of a house often costs as much as the whole remaining structure. A look into one of these reveals the life within.

A sluggish stream of water wanders through the grounds in a clay-lined ditch. This is the day of the week in which this particular street has its share of water turned in to fill the pools and cisterns. A loud-voiced representative of the Bashaga is exercising his small authority over the people of the place, driving them away from the gate that admits the water, while they beseech him to allow it to run a short time longer.

On the banks of the pool the maternal head of the so-called slave family that serves the house-owner is beginning the important operation of making the *kuss-kuss*. Her eldest daughter is dutifully bringing the water while the mother kneads the maize meal with an infinite slowness. It seems that by her mere finger-work the Arab woman can get a toughness into the *kuss-kuss* which no Australian bush-baker might ever achieve for his product.

While one compound will be seen to be wretched and ill-kept, the quarters for the servants thrown down and mere tent-like pretences of shelters erected, the next will be truly a garden of beauty. Around the pools and along the ditches exquisitely-shaped palms nod in the slight breeze that comes from without the walls. There are stretches of soft sheep-grass, and the life of the inmates has a different complexion entirely.

In preparation for a wedding, the bride's hands and feet are steeped in henna

All this is a question of individual character as shown in the number of palms. Every man's wealth is accounted by the number of palms he possesses, for the fruit of the palm is the one great source of revenue of the region. The palms of Biskra, with a little wool from the sheep, a few hides from the Bedouin horses, produce the staples that can be exchanged for the gold that will buy silks and cottons, arms and tobacco, and what very few other things are essential to the life that goes on unchanged from generation to generation.

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Not quite unchanged, for while the French Protectorate, backed up with the presence of French officials with a handful of soldiers, has had little real effect on the lives of the people, it has greatly reduced the price of wives. A law was put in force with the full support of the Bashaga and all the minor chiefs, that no man should have a harem with more than two wives in it, and the law of supply and demand beginning to act at once, the market price of brides declined with great rapidity.

Bedouin women

Under the French Protectorate no man may have more than two wives.

In fact many men who have never owned a bit of property and have rarely had anything but copper money in their hands are possessed of a full complement of helpmeets. The paternal government hoped to better the condition of the common people, but results of recent years may lead to a repeal of the law, inasmuch as the increase in population bids fair to surpass the possible resources of the region.

By rendering the harem relatively unimportant the strict Mohammedan laws concerning women appearing veiled in public have been encroached upon, for in Biskra, where religious observance reaches its most intense form, more women of all classes are to be seen unveiled than in any like community of northern Africa. Of course, one is very fortunate to see a woman of the aristocracy unveiled, for at the first glimpse of an approaching European, even the little girls of the poor are accustomed to snatch corners of their head-shawls across their faces.

There are some beautiful symbolisms in the marriages, though they fit very poorly with the conventional Romeo and Juliet ideals. The age of wedding for the girls is about twelve, sometimes less and sometimes more, and the preliminaries are entirely a business matter conducted with much ceremony. After a definite contract is made it is then that the bride is permitted to see and talk with her future husband, if at all. The time of the wedding is set and the date invariably falls on a Monday or Friday evening. The night before, the bride's hands and feet

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The school of the desert—the rod is not spared and the Koran is learned never to be forgotten

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are steeped in henna with which are stained the nails of all women who make any pretense at keeping up appearances.

When the day comes on which the bride is to go to the house of her husband she is arrayed in a rich gown, on her arms and ankles are bracelets, and about her slender little waist she wears a corded girdle holding in place a broad plate of gold, silver and turquoise, usually an inheritance of great age and rare workmanship. These plates cannot be bought for many times their intrinsic value. The spangled bride's veil is cast over her head and she is led to the door by her parents and given over to a company of joyous friends and hired musicians and celebrators who parade through the streets beating the raw hide tambourines and cymbals, dancing and shouting, flanked by miserable beggars beseeching backsheesh in the name of the bride though she never receives one penny.

So the tumultuous pageant winds its way to the house of the groom, where the happy child takes off the girdle and plate, gives them to her husband with a deep obeisance, the ceremonies are recommenced followed by feasting and merry-making that lasts as long as the bridegroom keeps his purse open.

It is odd to find in a little community of a few thousand souls almost shut off from the influences of the rest of the world, the usual Mussulman type of mendicancy developed in such a high form. The beggars of Biskra are the most persistent, numerous and versatile by comparison that one will find anywhere in the East. If in an unguarded moment one gives a wretched creature a copper as he droops apparently dying on the edge of one of the street irrigating ditches, and then enters a house or a place of business, he will find when he emerges a solid phalanx of beggars lined up to assail him with appeals in the name of Allah and Mohammed, and hair-raising curses if their demands are not heeded.

They see in every Bedouin funeral a harvest. Whatever the faults of the

Dancers entertaining a halted caravan

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The evening meal

The houses are half fortress, half burrow

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"Ask and ye shall receive" is also a doctrine of Islam

With sandstone within reach, the Bedouin clings to sun-dried brick

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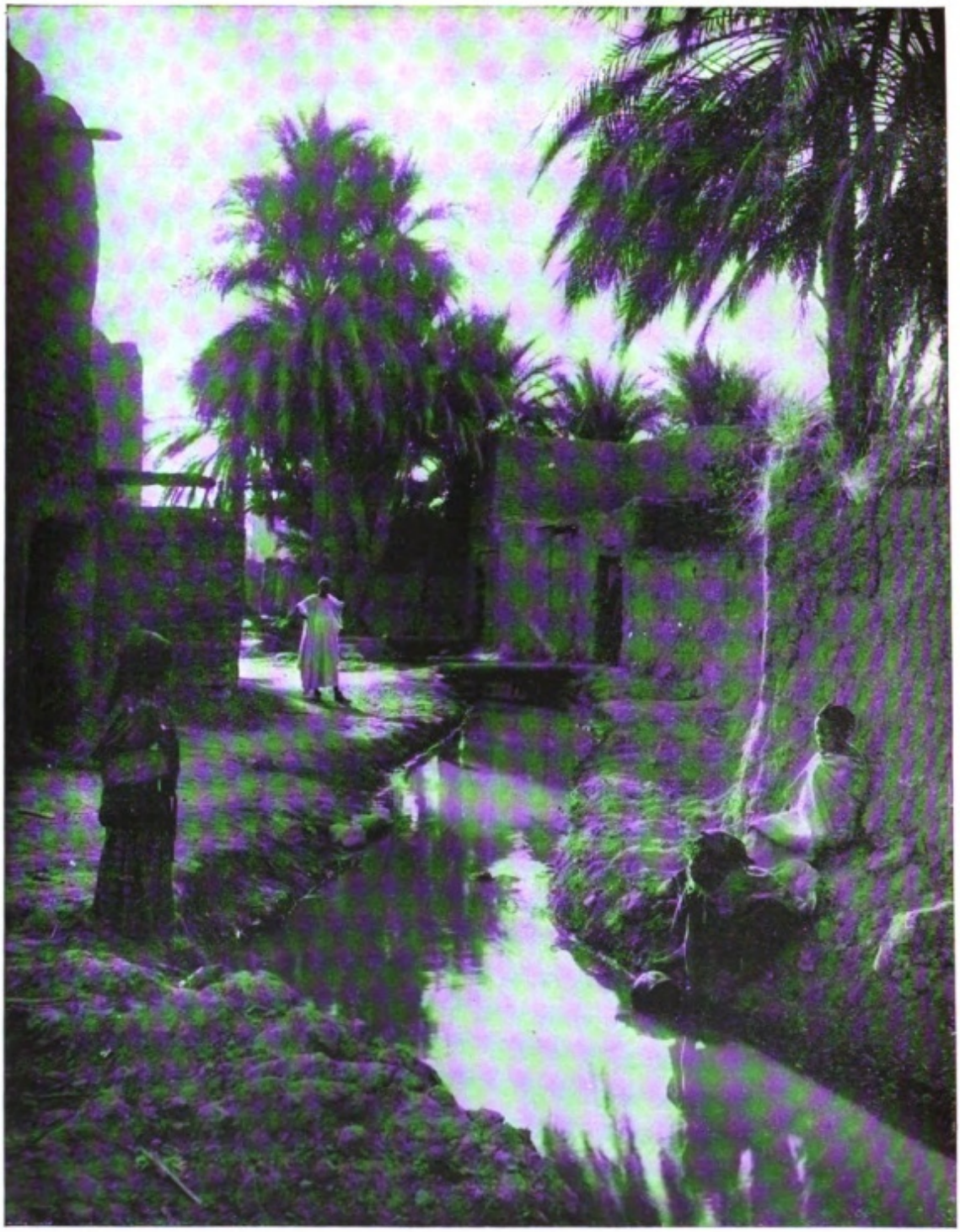

The waters of contentment

Bedouin may be, the grim dweller within the desert is not lacking in grief for the dead. When in some of the camps by the outlying oases a human soul flickers out, the remaining clay is carefully prepared in the best robes, is bound on a horse, and the entire tribe sets out on foot for Biskra, wailing as they go, and singing high-pitched nasal funeral hymns, that drop away into quavering minors.

It is a moving sight to see such a procession coming through the gorge of the Mountains of the Rosy Cheek, the white line winding among the rocky walls which

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echo the mournful sounds. Runners have gone on ahead, and long before the first of Biskra is seen songs of sorrow and wild cries will be heard from the direction of the town. A troupe of professional mourners clad in red and yellow, tatterdemalion mendicants and idle populace, appear crossing a ford, and the grief of the approaching tribe breaks out anew. The two columns meet and join. The booming of the tambourines redoubles, wild and weird rise the cries breaking into the doleful chants. Slowly the procession moves on to Biskra where a company of solemn faced small boys forms in front of the horse on which the body is bound, and sing the mellow, resounding passages of the Koran incessantly until the grave is reached, filled and closed.

There are two seasons of the year when Biskra is in the full flood of its life. One is the spring festival called the Mutton Feast ordinarily, and the other is the merry-making following the end of the Fast of Ramadam and during the fair. Then there is a great temporary bazar opened up, there are feats of riding and shooting, the traveling dancers appear, one wonders from where, and there is feasting, eating, drinking and general gaiety.

The Fast of Ramadam is variable in the calendar, and cannot be called annual. During the time it lasts nothing can pass the lips of a true believer except after sunset. This is very severe on the poor people who go on with their work sometimes in weather of awful heat, yet will not touch a drop of water. When the weary day is almost done one can see them begin to gather in the street beside the irrigating ditches. In one hand is an earthen drinking vessel, in the other a cigarette and a match. Patiently they stand and wait. The sunset gun rings out from the military headquarters, the cigarettes are popped into their mouths, lit and deeply inhaled—then they drink.

I Wonder Why !

By Owen Oliver

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARY SIGSBEE KER

I WONDER why the fairies never come to our house! I wonder why they live in "Once Upon a Time!" I wonder why the train doesn't go there! I wonder if they are as tall as I am, now I'm seven, or only a little big, like I used to be! Aunt Stella says I might have been one if they hadn't forgotten my wings, and she calls me her "fairy boy." I wonder why!

Aunt Stella couldn't be a fairy, because she is grown-up. If she lived in "Once Upon a Time" I s'pect she would be a lovely princess. Sometimes I make believe she is, and I am her little page. If I were a page I should be a knight some day, and wear shining armor, and have a long, sharp sword to fight for her and kill the wicked giant who wants to take her away. Giants always want to steal princesses, don't they? Aunt Marie calls Mr. Hardy the giant. I wonder why!

I shouldn't have known that he was a giant, if Aunt Marie hadn't told me, 'cause he is only as big as father, and he doesn't look dreadful, and he never says "fee-fi-fo-fum," only talks like a man. I don't think he is a very naughty giant, 'cause I know he doesn't cook little boys and eat them on toast. I asked him and he told me when he came here the other day, and I sat on his knee, like I always do. He said some giants didn't mean to be bad, but people were frightened of them 'cause they were "big men in the city."

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Told Carlo all the fairy stories I know

"They aren't so big at home," he said, "or when they come to *your* house, and they don't want to hurt people, and they would be ever so good to a princess. I hope *you* aren't afraid of me, fair boy."

"No," I said, "I'm not afraid of you a tall. I like you. But are you *really* a giant, Mr. Hardy?"

He looked at me and smiled as if something was hurting him, and he didn't want any one to know.

"I don't believe I am really a giant," he said, "but you musn't tell any one. There aren't many giants in these days—or princesses, either, but your Auntie is really a princess. I wonder who the prince is going to be!"

I told him that Aunt Marie called Mr. Desmond the prince, and he made a noise as if he wasn't well. I wonder why!

Mr. Desmond looks as if he might be a prince, and Aunt Marie says he is the handsomest man she ever saw. *I* think he is only an enchanter in disguise, who wants to bewitch Aunt Stella, 'cause he always tries to make me go away. He gave me a little push the other day, when Auntie wasn't looking, and Carlo growled at him. I have told Carlo all the fairy stories I know, and I'm sure he understands, though he can only bark and can't talk. I thought perhaps he was a prince that a wizard had bewitched, and some day he would turn into a lady or a man, but Auntie says they never do it now. I wonder why!

I don't believe Aunt Stella thinks Mr. Desmond is a prince, because she draws herself up stiff when he talks to her, and she won't listen to something that he wants to say to her. I wonder why!

I asked her what he wanted to say the other day, when Aunt Marie was there. Aunt Stella says she didn't know; but Aunt Marie laughed a funny laugh that wasn't a proper laugh really.

"Don't you know the story that your lovely princess comes out of, fairy page boy?" she said. "Come and sit on my knee and I'll tell you."

I went and jumped on Aunt Marie's knee, and Aunt Stella waved her arms, as if she was pushing something away, and said: "Don't, Marie!" She often says that when Aunt Marie says things. I wonder why!

Aunt Marie laughed again and stroked my hair. She is a nice aunt, and I like her, too. I do not think she is a princess, but she knows lots of stories.

"Once upon a time," she said, "in the land where fairies live, there was a very beautiful princess. Her name was Star. She was just as beautiful as a star, and just as cold." She stared at Aunt Stella as if she meant her.

"Aunt Stella isn't cold," I said. "She's *ever* so warm. You put your hand on her face and try."

"This was quite a different princess," Aunt Marie said. "Her name wasn't Stella, but Star. *She* had a warm face, too. It was her heart that was cold—*freezing* cold, fairy page boy."

"Did it hurt her?" I asked.

"I don't know. She didn't say, and you can never know what is hurting other people's hearts, or if they have any."

"Have *you* got a cold heart, Aunt Marie?" I said, and she laughed the funny way again.

"My heart is too hot," she said, "like—oh, like the kitchen fire! That hurts, too! But the princess' heart was quite cold. I don't suppose it hurt *her*, but it hurt other people very much. She had a father and mother—*they* were the King and Queen, of course—and a sister—"

"I s'pose she was a princess, too?" I asked.

"Oh, no! She was quite an ordinary girl; rather a tiresome, worrying girl, the princess thought."

"I s'pect she was a wicked sister, and jealous of the princess."

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"No. She wasn't that. She *wasn't* —*was* she, Stella?"

Aunt Stella shook her head. "No, dear. She wasn't a wicked sister, and she wasn't jealous. She was a very dear woman, but she did not understand. None of them did."

"She understood that the princess's heart was cold," Aunt Marie said. "You oughn't to marry any one if your heart is cold to them, you know, fairy page boy. So the funny sister wanted the princess to marry whoever could warm it. That was right, wasn't it?"

"Not if he was an ogre or an enchanter dressed up, or a wicked uncle in disguise. He might be, mightn't he?"

"Of course he might; but he wouldn't have deceived the princess. She was very clever, and could see through disguises as you and I can see through a window. Besides you always know if any one makes your heart warm. There's no disguising that. Well, two people wanted to marry this lovely princess, a giant and a prince. The prince was handsome and he loved the princess very much, and he would have warmed her heart if any one could."

"But suppose he couldn't, Marie?" Aunt Stella said. She seemed quite 'cited about the story.

"She wouldn't let him try. You see, fairy boy, the prince was very poor and the giant was very rich—so rich that he could buy sweets four times a day. He said to the princess: 'Marry me, and I'll give you a carriage, and a castle, and rings on your fingers—and bells on your toes.'"

"Are you *sure* he said that, Marie?" Aunt Stella wanted to know.

"He mayn't have *said* it," Aunt Marie told her, "but it was quite understood. I don't blame him, for he was a good sort of giant, and I think he liked the princess very much. She was a *very* beautiful princess, fairy boy, and easy to like, but her heart was so *icy* cold. She was poor, for a princess, and she wanted carriages and castles and all those sort of things that warm your body but not your heart."

"She ought to have them, if she was a princess," I said. "Oughtn't she, Aunt Stella?"

I saw him kiss Aunt Stella

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Once upon a time

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Aunt Stella didn't answer me. I wonder why!

"But suppose she could only get them by marrying a giant?"

"A bad giant," I asked, "who ate little boys?"

"No-o. He was not a bad giant. He was rather nice to little boys, and I don't think he would have been cruel to the princess, but he couldn't make her heart warm. Would you want a castle and a carriage if they made your heart cold, fairy boy?"

"I should like a haunted castle," I said, "and a ghost that didn't make *too* much noise, and I should *love* a horse to ride on. Does a cold heart hurt much?"

"Not while it is frozen; only when it thaws. If *your* heart was cold you wouldn't like Aunt Marie, or even your princess auntie—Auntie Star."

"You mean Auntie Stella, don't you?"

"Yes, I mean Aunt Stella. Did I say Auntie Star? How stupid of me! They're *quite* different persons, of course. Well, if your heart was cold you wouldn't like us, and then we shouldn't be so fond of you. Nobody would. You wouldn't like that, would you?"

"No," I said. "If nobody didn't like me I shouldn't have any one to play with, should I? And the princess wouldn't, would she?"

"Worse! She'd always have to play with some one she didn't like. If the princess married the giant she'd always have to live with him, and her heart would ache, and ache, and *ache!* Oh, Stella! You *know* it would! So her funny sister wanted her to marry the prince instead."

"Why did she want her to?"

"Because he was the nicest prince that ever was."

"Then why didn't the funny sister want to marry him herself?"

"Why?" Aunt Stella asked. "*Why*, Marie?"

Aunt Marie jumped, as if a pin had stuck into her, and nearly dropped me off her knee.

"He didn't want *her*," she said. "You *know*, Stella, and it's *cruel* of you. He wanted the princess. The funny sister, with the hot, burning heart, wanted them both to be happy, and—and she'd get used to the burning, she thought, and—and that's all, fairy boy."

"And *did* the princess marry him?" I wanted to know; but Aunt Marie put me down and ran out.

"Ask your Auntie Stella," she said. "If there's anyone can make her heart warm, it's *you*, fairy boy."

I went and hugged Auntie Stella (she wasn't cold at all!), and asked her to tell me the rest of the story, but she said she didn't know, and she didn't believe any one did, and it wasn't a real true story. People are always making mistakes about princesses, she said, and she knew one whose heart was very, very warm to her fairy page boy. Perhaps there was a giant who could have warmed it, if he hadn't thought it was too cold to try. So he only offered her a castle and a carriage that she didn't want at all, and she had said that she wasn't for sale. And then he got cross with her, and she didn't care. And now we would go for a walk, and that was ever so much better than telling fairy tales.

We went down the lane, and over the plank across the brook, and when we came to the seat under the big tree, we sat down. I wanted Auntie to tell me some more fairy tales, but she said they had all gone out of her head. I kept asking her to think them in again, but she couldn't, and then Mr. Hardy came along and sat down beside us. I asked him to tell me a *true* fairy tale, but he said he had grown too old to believe them, but perhaps he would if *I* told him one.

"I'll tell you one Aunt Marie told me," I said, "about a princess like Aunt Stella, and a giant, and—"

"No, no!" Auntie said. I wonder why! And he and Auntie tried who could stare hardest at one another.

"It's a story that *has* to be told some time, Miss Stella," Mr. Hardy said, "and your fairy page boy has told me little bits of it already,—I think the rest of it would hurt me less, perhaps, if it came from him. Will you let him tell me about the beautiful princess? And the giant?"

"May I, Auntie?" I asked, and Auntie bent down and kissed me.

"You may tell him, dear," she said. "It is his own fault if he believes."

"Once upon a time," I told him, "there was a princess. Her name was Star, and she was pretty, like Aunt Stella. Do *you* think Aunt Stella is like a princess, Mr. Hardy?"

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"I think your aunt *is* a princess," he said, "and there was never another."

"Oh, yes!" I told him, there was! "There's four in one book that mama gave me. But *this* princess had a *freezing* heart, and it freezed her all through. Aunt Stella isn't freezed at all. You feel her hand. It's *dreadfully* warm."

"She has not seemed very cold to me," he said, but he didn't feel her hand. I wonder why?

"There was a giant who wanted to marry her; a good giant like you. Would *you* like to marry a princess, Mr. Hardy? If she was like Aunt Stella, I meam?"

Auntie said I was talking nonsense, and we had better go, but Mr. Hardy said it wasn't nonsense to him, and he would like to marry a princess, if she was like Aunt Stella, and if her heart was just a little warm to him. So I went on with the story.

"The giant said he'd give her a castle and carriage if she would, but they didn't know if he could make her unfreeze, and a prince wanted to marry her too, and—and I don't remember if she wanted to marry the prince. Did she, Auntie?"

"*Did* she, Miss Stella?" Mr. Hardy asked. "Stella? *Did* she?"

"In the story she did," Aunt Stella said. "But it is Marie's story, not mine, and she doesn't know the end of it."

Mr. Hardy caught hold of Auntie's hand. I expect he wanted to see if it was cold or warm, so that he would know if her heart was.

"Do *you*, Stella?" he asked. "*Do* you?"

Auntie got very red, and tried to pull her hand away, but he wouldn't let her. It made me laugh, 'cause they looked so funny.

"I expect she refused both," she told him, "the prince because she didn't care for him, the giant because—because a princess isn't to be bought with a giant's wealth, Mr. Hardy. Let me go, please."

"But suppose he offered her—a giant's love?" he asked. "Can you tell me the end of the story then?"

I was listening to hear if she remembered the end of the story, but Mr. Hardy said he would give me a pony if I could find a dozen blackberries. So I ran to look for them. When I came back I jumped from behind the tree, and I saw him kiss Aunt Stella! I wonder why!

I wonder why Aunt Marie wasn't cross when Aunt Stella told her that she was going to marry the giant because he had made her heart warm. I wonder why they hugged one another, and laughed and cried! I wonder why Aunt Stella is going away from us to live at Mr. Hardy's house! I wonder why Aunt Marie says that a prince's sweetheart is happier than a princess! I wonder why everybody seems so pleased! It makes me feel pleased too! I *wonder* why!

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On The Deep-Lake Trail

By Harrison Jewell Holt

Astir at the break of dawn,
And up with the rising sun,
A hasty fry from the brook hard by,
The pack rolled up, one glance at the sky,
And the day's march is begun.

A rythm of feet and brain,
With the senses all in tune
To the birch-tree's sheen 'mid the far-off green,
The gush of the brook, the jay-bird's scream,
And the scent of the woods in June.

A bed of boughs beside the trail
Beneath a whispering pine,
The camp-fire bright, the star-lit night,
And the inward peace of an awed delight—
Such a life is mine.

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"What worries me is who sent it"

That Pup of Murchison's

By Ellis Parker Butler

AUTHOR OF "PIGS IS PIGS," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALBERT LEVERING

MURCHISON, who lives next door to me, wants to get rid of a dog, and if you know of anyone who wants a dog I wish you would let Murchison know. Murchison doesn't need it. He is tired of dogs, anyway. That is just like Murchison. 'Way up in an enthusiasm one day and sick of it the next.

Brownlee—Brownlee lives on the other side of Murchison—remembers when Murchison got the dog. It was the queerest thing, so Murchison says, you ever heard of. Here came the express wagon—Adams' Express Company's wagon—and delivered the dog. The name was all right—"C. P. Murchison, Gallatin, Iowa," and the charges were paid. The charges were $2.80, and paid, and the dog had been shipped from New York. Think of that! Twelve hundred miles in a box, with a can of condensed milk tied to the box and "Please feed" written on it.

When Murchison came home to dinner, there was the dog. At first Murchison was pleased; then he was surprised; then he was worried. He hadn't ordered a dog. The more he thought about it the more he worried.

"If I could just *think* who sent it," he said to Brownlee, "then I would know who sent it; but I can't think. It is evidently a valuable dog. I can see that. People don't send cheap, inferior dogs twelve hundred miles. But I can't *think* who sent it."

"What worries me," he said to Brownlee another time, "is who sent it. I can't *imagine* who would send me a dog from New York. I know so many people, and, like as not, some influential friend of mine has meant to make me a nice present and now he is probably mad because I haven't acknowledged it. I'd like to know what he thinks of me about now!"

It almost worried him sick. Murchison never did care for dogs, but when a man is presented with a valuable dog, all the way from New York, with $2.80 charges paid, he simply *has* to admire that dog. So Murchison got into the habit of admiring the dog, and so did Mrs. Murchison. From what they tell me it was rather a nice dog in its infancy, for it was only a pup then. Infant dogs have a habit of being pups.

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As near as I could gather from what Murchison and Mrs. Murchison told me it was a little, fluffy, yellow ball, with bright eyes and ever moving tail. It was the kind of a dog that bounces around like a rubber ball, and eats the evening newspaper, and rolls down the porch steps with short, little squawks of surprise, and lies down on its back with its four legs in the air whenever a bigger dog comes near. In color it was something like a camel, but a little redder where the hair was long, and its hair was like beaver fur—soft and woolly inside with a few long hairs that were not so soft. It was so little and fluffy that Mrs. Murchison called it Fluff. Pretty name for a soft, little dog, is Fluff.

"If I only *knew* who sent that dog," Murchison used to say to Brownlee, "I would like to make some return. I'd send him a barrel of my best melons, express paid, if it cost me five dollars!"

Murchison was in the produce business, and he knew all about melons, but not so much about dogs. Of course he could tell a dog from a cat, and a few things of that sort, but Brownlee was the real dog man. Brownlee had two Irish pointers or setters —I forget which they were; the black dogs with the long, flappy ears. I don't know much about dogs myself. I hate dogs.

Brownlee knows a great deal about dogs. He isn't one of the book-taught sort; he knows dogs by instinct. As soon as he sees a dog he can make a guess at its breed, and out our way that is a pretty good test, for Gallatin dogs are rather cosmopolitan. That is what makes good stock in men—Scotch grandmother and German grandfather on one side, and English grandmother and Swedish grandfather on the other—and I don't see why the same isn't true of dogs. There are numbers of dogs in Gallatin that can trace their ancestry through nearly every breed of dog that ever lived, and Brownlee can look at any one of them and immediately guess at its formula—one part Spitz, three parts greyhound, two parts collie, and so on. I have heard him guess more kinds of dog than I ever knew existed.

As soon as he saw Murchison's dog he guessed it was a pure bred Shepherd with a trace of Esquimo. Massett, who thinks

"If that isn't a Shepherd nose, I'll eat it"

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he knows as much about dogs as Brownlee does, didn't believe it. The moment he saw the pup he said it was a pedigree dog, half St. Bernard and half Spitz.

Brownlee and Massett used to sit on Murchison's steps after supper and point out the proofs to each other. They would argue for hours.

"All right, Massett," Brownlee would say, "but you can't fool *me!* Look at that nose! If that isn't a Shepherd nose I'll eat it. And see that tail! Did you ever see a tail like that on a Spitz? That is an Esquimo tail as sure as I am a foot high."

a calf-skin and one of these hair-brush door mats you use to wipe your feet on in muddy weather. He did not look like the same pup. He was long-limbed and awkward and useless and homely as a shopworn fifty cent yellow plush manicure set. Murchison began to feel that he didn't really need a dog, but Brownlee was as enthusiastic as ever. He would go over to Murchison's fairly oozing dog knowledge.

"I'll tell you what that dog is," he would say, "That dog is a cross between a Great Dane and an English Deerhound. You've got a very valuable dog there, Murchison, a very valuable dog. He comes of fine

And Brownlee pulled the trigger

"Tail fiddlesticks!" Massett would reply, "You can't tell anything by a pup's tail. Look at his ears! *There* is St. Bernard for you! And see his lower jaw. Isn't that Spitz? I'll leave it to Murchison. Isn't that lower jaw Spitz, Murchison?"

Then all three would tackle the puppy and open its mouth and feel its jaw, and the pup would wriggle and squeak, and back away opening and shutting its mouth to see if its works had been damaged.

"All right!" Brownlee would say, "You wait a year or two and you'll see!"

About three months later the pup was as big as an ordinary full grown dog and his coat looked like a compromise between

stock on both sides and it is a cross you don't often see. I never saw it and I've seen all kinds of crossed dogs."

Then Massett would drop in and walk around the dog admiringly for a few minutes and absorb his beauties.

"Murchison," he would say, "Do you know what that dog is? That dog is a pure cross between a Siberian Wolfhound and a Newfoundland. You treat that dog right and you'll have a fortune in him. Why, a pure Siberian Wolfhound is worth a thousand dollars, and a good—a really good Newfoundland, mind you—is worth two thousand, and you've got both in one dog. That's three thousand dollars' worth of dog!"

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In the next six months Fluff grew. He broadened out and lengthened and heightened, and every day or two Brownlee or Massett would discover a new strain of dog in him. They pointed out to Murchison all the marks by which he could tell the different kinds of dog that were combined in Fluff, and every time they discovered a new one they held a sort of jubilee, and bragged and swelled their chests. They seemed to spend all their time thinking up odd and strange kinds of dog that Fluff had in him. Brownlee discovered the traces of Cuban Bloodhound, Kamtchatka-hound, Beagle, Brague de Bengale and Thibet Mastiff, but Massett first traced the Staghound, Turkoman Watch-dog, Dachshund and Harrier in him.

Murchison, not being a doggish man, never claimed to have noticed any of these family resemblances, and never said what he thought the dog really was, until a month or two later, when he gave it as his opinion that the dog was a cross between a wolf, a Shetland pony and hyena. It was about that time that Fluff had to be chained. He had begun to eat other dogs and children, and chickens. The first night Murchison chained him to his kennel Fluff walked a half a mile, taking the kennel along, and then only stopped because the kennel got tangled with a lamp-post. The man who brought him home claimed that Fluff was nearly asphyxiated when he found him; said he gnawed half through the lamp-post and that gas got in his lungs, but this was not true. Murchison learned afterward that it was only a gasoline lamp-post, and a wooden one.

"If there were only some stags around this part of the country," said Massett, "the stag-hound strain in that dog would be mighty valuable. You could rent him out to everybody who wanted to go stag-hunting, and you'd have a regular monopoly, because he's the only stag-hound in this part of the country. And stag hunting would be popular, too, out here, because there are no game laws that interfere with stag hunting in this state. There is no closed season. People could hunt stags all the year round, and you'd have that dog busy every day of the year."

"Yes!" sneered Brownlee, "only there are no stags. And he hasn't any stag hound blood in him. Pity there are no Dachs in this state, too, isn't it? Then Murchison could hire his dog at night, too. They hunt Dachs at night, don't they, Massett? Only there is no Dachshund blood in him either. If there *was* and if there were a few Dachs—"

Massett was mad.

"Yes!" he cried, "And you, with your Cuban Bloodhound strain! I suppose if it was the open season for Cubans you'd go out with the dog and tree a few! Or put on snow shoes and follow the Kamtchat to his icy lair!"

Brownlee doesn't get mad easily.

"Murchison," he said, "leaving out Massett's dreary nonsense about staghounds, I can tell you that dog would make the finest duck dog in the state. He's got all the points for a good duck dog, and I ought to know for I have two of the best duck dogs that ever lived. All he needs is training. If you will train him right you'll have a mighty valuable dog."

"But I don't hunt ducks," said Murchison, "and I don't know how to train even a lap dog."

"You let me attend to his education," said Brownlee. "I just want to show Massett here that I know a dog when I see one. I'll show Massett the finest duck dog he ever saw when I get through with Fluff."

So he went over and got his shot gun, just to give Fluff his first lesson. The first thing a duck dog must learn is not to be afraid of a gun, and Brownlee said that if a dog first learned about guns right at his home he was not so apt to be afraid of them. He said that if a dog heard a gun for the first time when he was away from home and in strange surroundings he was quite right to be surprised and startled, but if he heard it in the bosom of his family, with all his friends calmly seated about, he would think it was a natural thing, and accept it as such.

So Brownlee put a shell in his gun and Massett and Murchison sat on the porch steps and pretended to be uninterested and normal, and Brownlee stood up and aimed the gun in the air. Fluff was eating a bone, but Brownlee spoke to him and he looked up, and Brownlee pulled the trigger. It seemed about five minutes before Fluff struck the ground, he jumped so high when the gun was fired, and then he started north by northeast at about sixty miles an hour. He came back all right,

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He sat down and talked to Fluff like an old friend

three weeks later, but his tail was still between his legs.

Brownlee didn't feel the least discouraged. He said he saw now that the whole principle of what he had done was wrong; that no dog with any brains whatever could be anything but frightened to hear a gun shot off right in the bosom of his family. That was no place to fire a gun. He said Fluff evidently thought the whole lot of us were crazy, and ran in fear of his life, thinking we were insane and might shoot him next. He said the thing to do was to take the shot gun into its natural surroundings and let Fluff learn to love it there. He pictured Fluff enjoying the sound of the gun when he heard it at the edge of the lake.

Murchison never hunted ducks, but as Fluff was his dog, he went with Brownlee, and of course Massett went. Massett wanted to see the failure. He said he wished stags were as plentiful as ducks and he would show Brownlee!

Fluff was a strong dog—he seemed to have a strain of ox in him, so far as strength went—and as long as he saw the gun he insisted that he would stay at home, but when Brownlee wrapped the gun in brown paper so it looked like a big parcel from the meat shop, the horse that they had hitched to the buckboard was able to drag Fluff along without straining itself. Fluff was fastened to the rear axle with a chain.

When they reached Duck Lake, Brownlee untied Fluff and patted him, and then unwrapped the gun. Fluff gave one pained glance and made the six mile run home in seven minutes without stopping. He was home before Brownlee could think of anything to say, and he went so far into his kennel that Murchison had to take off the boards at the back to find him that night.

"That's nothing;" was what Brownlee said when he did speak; "young dogs are often that way. Gun fright. They have to be gun broken. You come out to-morrow, and I'll show you how a man who really knows how to handle a dog does the trick."

The next day when Fluff saw the buckboard he went into his kennel and they couldn't pry him out with the hoe-handle. He connected buckboards and guns in his mind, so Brownlee borrowed the butcher's delivery wagon and they drove to Wild Lake. It was seven miles, but Fluff seemed more willing to go in that direction than toward Duck Lake. He did not seem to care to go to Duck Lake at all.

"Now, then," said Brownlee, "I'll show you the intelligent way to handle a dog. I'll prove to him that he has nothing to fear, that I am his comrade and friend. And at the same time," he said,

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"I'll not have him running off home and spoiling our day's sport."

So he took the chain and fastened it around his waist, and then he sat down and talked to Fluff like an old friend, and got him in a playful mood. Then he had Murchison get the gun out of the wagon and lay it on the ground about twenty feet off. It was wrapped in brown paper.

Brownlee talked to Fluff and told him what fine sport duck hunting is, and then, as if by chance, he got on his hands and knees and crawled toward the gun. Fluft hung back a little, but the chain just coaxed him a little, too, and they edged up to the gun, and Brownlee pretended to discover it unexpectedly.

"Well! well!" he said, "What's this?"

Fluff nosed up to it and sniffed it, and then went at it as if it was Massett's cat. That Brownlee had wrapped a beefsteak around the gun, inside the paper, and Fluff tore off the paper and ate the steak, and Brownlee winked at Murchison.

"I declare," he said, "if here isn't a gun! Look at this, Fluff, a gun! Gosh! but we are in luck!"

Would you believe it, that dog sniffed at the gun and did not fear it in the least? You could have hit him on the head with it and he would not have minded it. He never did mind being hit with small things like guns and axe handles.

Brownlee got up and stood erect.

"You see!" he said, proudly. "All a man needs with a dog like this is intelligence. A dog is like a horse. He wants his reason appealed to. Now, if I fire the gun, he may be a little startled, but I have created a faith in me in him. He knows there is nothing dangerous in a gun *as* a gun. He knows I am not afraid of it, so he is not afraid. He realizes that we are chained together, and that proves to him that he need not run unless I run. Now watch."

Brownlee fired the shot gun.

Instantly he started for home. He did not start lazily, like a boy starting to the wood pile, but went promptly and with a dash. His first jump was only ten feet, and we heard him grunt as he landed, but after that he got into his stride and made fourteen feet each jump. He was bent forward a good deal in the middle, where the chain was, and in many ways he was not as graceful as a professional cinder-path track runner, but, in running, the main thing is to cover the ground rapidly. Brownlee did that.

Massett said it was a bad start. He said it was all right to start a hundred yard dash that way, but for a long distance run —a run of seven miles across country—the start was too impetuous; that it showed a lack of generalship, and that when it came to the finish the affair would be tame; but it wasn't.

Brownlee said afterwards that there wasn't a tame moment in the entire seven miles. It was rather more wild than tame. He felt right from the start that the finish would be sensational, unless the chain cut him quite in two, and it didn't. He said

Instantly he started for home

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that when the chain had cut as far as his spinal column it could go no farther, and it stopped and clung there, but it was the only thing that did stop, except his breath. It was several years later that I first met Brownlee and he was still breathing hard, like a man who has just been running rapidly. Brownlee says when he shuts his eyes his legs still seem to be going.

The first mile was through underbrush, and that was lucky, for the underbrush removed most of Brownlee's clothing, and put him in better running weight, but at the mile and a quarter they struck the road. He said at two miles he thought he might be over-exercising the dog and maybe he had better stop, but the dog seemed anxious to get home so he didn't stop there. He said that at three miles he was sure the dog was overdoing, and that with his knowledge of dogs he was perfectly able to stop a running dog in its own length if he could speak to it, but he couldn't speak to this dog for two reasons. One was that he couldn't overtake the dog and the other was that all the speak was yanked out of him.

When they reached five miles the dog seemed to think they were taking too much time to get home, and let out a few more laps of speed, and it was right there that Brownlee decided that Fluff had some Grayhound blood in him.

He said that when they reached town he felt as if he would have been glad to stop at his own house and lie down for awhile, but the dog didn't want to, and so they went on, but that he ought to be thankful that the dog was willing to stop at that town at all. The next town was twelve miles farther on, and the roads were bad. But the dog turned into Murchison's yard and went right into his kennel.

When Murchison and Massett got home an hour or so later, after driving the horse all the way at a gallop, they found old Gregg, the carpenter, prying the roof off the kennel. You see, Murchison had knocked the rear out of the kennel the day before and so when the dog aimed for the front he went straight through and, as Brownlee was built more perpendicular than the dog, Brownlee didn't go quite through. He went in something like doubling up a dollar bill to put it into a thimble. I don't suppose anyone would *want* to double up a dollar bill to put it into a thimble, but neither did Brownlee want to be doubled up and put into the kennel. It was the dog's thought. So they had to take the kennel roof off.

When they got Brownlee out they laid him on the grass and covered him up with a porch rug and let him lie there a couple of hours to pant, for that seemed what he

The dog went right into his kennel

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wanted to do just then. It was the longest period Brownlee ever spent awake without talking about dog.

Murchison and Massett and old Gregg and twenty-six informal guests stood around and gazed at Brownlee panting. Presently Brownlee was able to gasp out a few words.

"Murchison," he gasped, "Murchison, if you just had that dog in Florence—or wherever it is they race dogs—you'd have a fortune."

He panted awhile and then gasped out: "He's a great runner; a phenomenal runner!"

He had to pant more and then he gasped with pride—

"But I wasn't three feet behind him all the way!"

Prisoners

A Novel

By Mary Cholmondeley
AUTHOR OF "RED POTTAGE"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE following morning the Bishop and Michael were sitting in the library at Lostford Palace. The Bishop was reading a letter, while Michael watched him sunk in an arm-chair.

Presently the Bishop thrust out his under lip and gave back the letter to Michael.

"Wentworth has dipped his pen in gall instead of in his inkpot," he said. "For real quality and strength give me the venom of a virtuous person. The ordinary sinner can't compete with him. Evil doers are out of the running in this world as well as in the next. I often tell them so. That is why I took orders. What do you suppose Wentworth suspects when he says Alington has suggested a discreditable reason for your being in the Di Collo Alto villa that night, and that he is not going to allow you to skulk behind a woman any longer. He will be here directly to extort what he is pleased to call 'the truth.' What are you going to say?"

"I don't know," said Michael. "That is the worst of me. I never know."

The Bishop frowned, and rubbed his chin.

"I see one thing," continued Michael, "and that is that it's all important that he should not break with Fay."

"That will be his first step—if he knows the truth."

"I am afraid it will, and yet—that's the pity of it, she will last longer than I shall, and he does like her—a little—which is a great deal for him. You don't believe it, but he really does. And he'll want her more than ever—when I'm gone."

The Bishop looked keenly at his godson.

Michael had never before alluded to his precarious hold on life. It was obvious that he was only considering it now in its bearings on Wentworth's future.

"Can a man who has grown gray looking at himself in the glass, and recording his own microscopic experiences in a diary, can such a man *forgive?*" said the Bishop. "Forgiveness is tough work. It needs knowledge of human nature. It needs humility. I forgave somebody once long ago. And it nearly was the death of me. I've never felt the same man since."

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"Wentworth will have his chance," said Michael. "It's about all we can do for him."

"We all know he says he can, but then he says such a lot of things. He dares to say he loves his fellow men. But I've never found that assertion coincide with any real *working* regard for them. There are certain things which those who care for others never say, and that is one them. The egoist on the contrary is always asserting of himself what he ought in common decency to leave others to say of him, only they never do. Wentworth actually told me not so long ago that he was intent on the service of others. I told him it was for those others to mention that interesting fact, and that nobody had lied about him to that extent so far in my diocese."

"He always says that there is perfect confidence between us," said Michael. "I've heard him say so ever since I can remember, and I've heard him tell people that I always brought him my boyish troubles. But I never did, even as a boy, even when I got into a scrape at Eton. My tutor stood by me in that. Wentworth never could endure him. He said he was such a snob. But snob or not he was a firm friend to me. And I never told him even at the first of my love for Fay. I somehow could not. You simply can't tell Wentworth things. But he has got it into his head that I always have and that this is the first time I have kept anything from him. If I only had Fay's leave to tell him! It is the only thing to do."

The door opened, and to the astonishment of both men, Fay and Magdalen came in. Fay looked as exhausted, as hopeless as she had done three months ago when Magdalen had brought her to make her confession to the Bishop in this very room.

She evidently remembered it. She turned her lustreless eyes on him and said, "Magdalen did not make me come this time. I have come of myself. Do you think, is there any chance, Uncle John, that God will have mercy on me again, as He did before?"

"Do you mean by God having mercy that Wentworth will still marry you if he knows the truth?"

She did not answer. That was of course what she meant.

She looked from one to the other of her three friends with a mute imploring gaze. Their eyes fell before hers.

"I have not slept all night," she said to the Bishop. "Magdalen stayed with me; and we came quite early because I had to come. Wentworth must be told. It isn't because Magdalen says so. She hasn't said so, though I knew she felt he ought to be told from the first. And it isn't because he's sure to find out. And oh! Michael, it isn't for your sake to put you right with him. It ought to be, but it isn't. But I can't let him kiss me any more, and not say. It makes a kind of pain I can't bear. It has been getting worse and worse ever since Michael came back, only I did not know what it was at first, and yesterday—" she stopped short shuddering. "He came to see me yesterday," she said in a strangled voice. "He was so dear and good, so wonderful. There never was any one like him. It is in my heart that he will forgive me. And he trusts me entirely. I can't deceive him any more."

The eyes of Michael and Magdalen met in a kind of shame. Those two who had loved her as no one else had loved her, who had understood her as no one else had understood her, saw that they had misjudged her. They had judged her by her actions, identified her with them. And all the time the little trembling "pilgrim soul" in her was shrinking from the pain of those very actions, was growing imperceptibly apart from them, was beginning to regard them with horror, not because they had caused suffering to others, but because they had ended by inflicting anguish upon herself. The red hot iron of our selfishness with which we brand others, becomes in time hot at both ends. We don't know at first what it is that is hurting us, why it burns us. But our blistered hands, cling as they will, must needs drop it at last. Fay's cruel little white hand had let go.

Michael took it in his and kissed it.

"Wentworth is coming here this morning," said the Bishop gently. "He may arrive at any moment. Stay here and speak to him. And ask him to forgive you, Fay. You need his forgiveness."

"I don't know how to tell him," gasped Fay, "I tried yesterday, and I couldn't."

"Let me tell him," said Michael, and

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as he spoke, the door opened once more, and Wentworth was announced.

He had got ready what he meant to say. The venomous sentences which he had concocted during a sleepless night were all in order in his mind.

Who shall say what grovelling suspicions, what sordid conjectures had blocked his inflamed mind as he drove swiftly across the downs in the still June morning, He meant to extort an explanation from his brother, to have the whole subject out with him once for all. He should not be suffered to make Fay his accomplice for another hour. His tepid spirit burned within him when he thought of Michael's behavior to Fay. He said to himself that he could forgive that least of all.

He had expected to find Michael alone, or possibly the Bishop only with him, the Bishop who *knew*. He was disconcerted at finding Magdalen and Fay there before him.

A horrible suspicion that Magdalen also knew darted across his mind.

It was obvious to him that he had broken up a conference, a conspiracy. His bitter face darkened still more.

"I don't know what you are all plotting about so early in the morning," he said. "I must apologize for interrupting you. I seem to be always in the way now-a-days. People are always whispering behind my back. But I have come over to see Michael. I want a few plain words with him without delay, and I intend to have them."

"That is well," said the Bishop, "because you are about to have them. We were speaking of you when you came in."

"I wish to see Michael alone," said Wentworth, stung by the Bishop's instant admission of being in his brother's confidence.

He looked only at Michael who, his eyes on the ground, was leaning white as death against the mantelpiece.

"Do you wish us to go, Michael?" said the Bishop.

"I wish you all to stay," he said, raising his eyes for a moment. His hand shook so violently that he knocked over a little ornament on the mantelpiece, and it fell with a crash into the fire-place. His voice shook too, but his eyes were steady. His great physical weakness, poignantly apparent though it was, seemed a thing apart from him, like a cloak which he might discard at any moment.

"I cannot say all I have to say before others," said Wentworth fiercely, "even if they are all his confederates in trying to keep me in the dark, all, that is, except Fay. We know by experience that she can shield a man who has something to hide even from his best friends. We know by experience that dust can be thrown in her unsuspecting eyes."

"You have been kept in the dark," said the Bishop with compassion; "you have not been fairly treated, Wentworth; you have much to forgive."

In spite of himself Wentworth was awed. He had s sudden sense of impending calamity. He looked again at Michael.

Michael's hand shook. His whole body shook. His lips trembled impotently.

Wentworth sickened with shame. His love was wounded to the very depths to see his brother like this, as it had never been wounded even by the first sight of him in his convict's blouse.

"I always trusted you," he said with a groan, putting up his hand so as to shut out that tottering figure. "I don't know what miserable secret you're keeping from me, and I don't care. It isn't *that* I mind. It is that—whatever it was, however disgraceful it was, you should have kept it from me. God knows I only wanted to help you. Surely, surely, Michael, you might have trusted me. What have I done that you should treat me as if I were an enemy? I thought I was your friend."

No one spoke.

"After all I don't know that I care to hear. Why should I care? It's rather late in the day to hear now what everyone knows except me, what I've been breaking my heart over, racking my brains over, as you well know, for these two endless years, what you aren't even now telling me of your own accord, what you have been persuaded to by this—this—" Wentworth looked at the Bishop, "this outsider, this middle man."

A great jealousy and bitterness were compressed into the words "middle man."

"You have got to hear," said Michael, and the trembling left him.

He turned towards his brother, still supporting himself with one hand on the mantelpiece. The two stern faces con-

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fronted each other, and Magdalen for the first time saw a likeness between them.

"I have kept things from you. You are right there," said Michael speaking in a low diffcult voice. "But I never intentionally deceived you till the Marchese was murdered. Long before that, four years before that, I fell in love."

Wentworth's heart contracted. He had always feared that moment for Michael, had always awaited it with a little store of remedial maxims. He had felt confident that Michael had never even been slightly attracted by any woman. How often he had said to himself that if there had been any attraction, he should have been the first to know of it. Yet the incredible truth was being thrust at him, that Michael had struggled through his first love without drawing upon the deep wells of Wentworth's knowledge.

"The woman I fell in love with was Fay. She was seventeen. I was nineteen."

The room went round with Wentworth.

"Fay," he said in blank astonishment, "Fay!" Then a glare of light broke in on him.

"Then it was her," he stammered, "not her maid as that brute Alington said, it was her—her herself that—"

"It was her I went to see the night I was arrested. I was deeply in love with her."

Michael paused a moment and then added gently, "She never cared for me. I did not see that clearly at the time, because I was blinded by my own passion. I have seen it since."

Wentworth made no movement.

"I decided to leave Rome. Fay wrote to me that I ought to go. I went to say good-bye to her in the garden the night the Marchese was murdered. While I was in the garden, the murder was discovered and the place was surrounded, and I could not get away. I hid in Fay's boudoir. The Duke came in and explained to Fay what had happened. It was the first I knew of it. Then, when they searched the house and I saw that I must be discovered in another moment, I came out and gave myself up as the murderer, because I could not be found hiding in Fay's rooms at night. It was the only thing to do."

Fay took a long breath. What a simple explanation it seemed after all. Why had she been so terrified. Wentworth could not blame her seriously now.

"I never tried to shield the Marchesa," Michael went on. "That was her own idea. I only wanted to shield Fay from being misconstrued. The Duke understood. He saw me hiding behind the screen, and tried to save me. He told me so next day. The Duke was good to me from first to last."

Wentworth turned a fierce livid face towards his brother.

"Have I really got at the truth at last?" he said. "How can I tell? The Duke could have told me, but he is dead. Did he really connive at your romantic passion for his wife? If I may venture to offer an opinion, that part of the story is not quite so well thought out as the rest, though it is excessively modern. Anyhow, he is dead. You tell me he saw you behind the screen in his wife's room at midnight, and felt no need of an explanation. How like an Italian. But he is dead, and you forced your love on another man's wife, though you own she did not return it, wormed yourself into her rooms at night, and then—*then*—yes, I begin to see a grain of truth among these heaps of lies—then when by an evil chance, an extraordinary stroke of bad luck, there was danger of your being discovered, then you persuaded her, the innocent inexperienced creature whom you would have wronged if you could—you worked upon her feelings, you made her into your accomplice, you persuaded her to hide you. You mean cur! You only sneaked out of your hole when escape was absolutely impossible. And so the truth, or some garbled part of it, is choked out of you at last. No wonder you were silent all these years. No wonder you would not speak. No wonder you let your poor dupe of a brother break his heart over your silence. Weak credulous fool that I have been from first to last. So help me God, I will never speak to you again."

The violent stammering voice ceased at last.

Fay shivered from head to foot, and looked at her lover.

Both men had forgotten her. Their eyes never left each other. Wentworth's fierce face was turned with deadly hatred upon his brother. Michael met his eye, but he did not speak.

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There was death in the air.

Suddenly as in a glass she saw that Michael was saving her again, was sacrificing himself for her a second time at enormous cost, the cost of his brother's love.

"Michael!" said Fay with a sob, "Michael, I can't bear it. You are trying to save me again, but I can't bear to be saved any more. I have had enough of being saved. I won't be saved. It hurts too much. I won't let you do it a second time. I have had enough of being silent when I ought to speak. I have had enough of hiding things, and pretending, and being frightened."

Fay saw at last that the truth was her only refuge from that unendurable horror which was getting up out of its grave again. She fled to it for very life, and flung herself upon it.

She took Michael's hand and turning to Wentworth began to speak rapidly, with a clearness and directness which amazed Magdalen and the Bishop.

It all came out, the naked truth; her loveless marriage, the great kindness of her husband towards her, her determination, bred of idleness and vanity, to enslave Michael anew when he came to Rome, his resistance, his decisiou to leave Italy, her inveigling him under the plea of urgency to come to the garden at night, his refusal to enter the house, her frantic desire to keep him, his determination to part from her.

There was no doubt in the minds of those who listened in an awed silence that here was the whole truth at last.

Fay looked full at Wentworth and then said: "He asked me why I had sent for him, what it was that he could do for me. And I said—I said—"Take me with you."

"No," said Michael, wincing as under a lash. "No, you did not. Fay, you never said that."

"You did not hear it, but I said it."

Michael staggered against the mantelpiece.

Wentworth had not moved. His face had become frightful, distorted.

"I am a wicked woman, Wentworth," said Fay. "I tried to make him in love with me. I tried to tempt him. I could make him love me, but not do wrong. And then I let him take the blame when he was trapped. I had trapped him there first. He did not want to come. I forced him to come. I let him spoil his life to save my wretched good name. He is right when he told you just now that I never loved him. The love was all on his side. He gave it all. I took it all, and I went on taking it. It was I who kept him in prison quite as much as the Marchesa. It was I who let him burn and freeze in his cell. A word from me would have got him out."

Wentworth laughed suddenly, a horrible discordant laugh.

They had rotted down before his eyes to loathsome unrecognizable corpses—the man and the woman he had loved.

Fay looked wildly at him.

"But you are good," she said faintly. "You won't, Wentworth, you won't cast me off like—like I did Michael."

He did not look at her.

He took up his gloves and straightened the fingers as his custom was.

"There is no longer anything which need detain me here," he said to the Bishop, and he moved towards the door.

"Nothing except the woman whose fate is in your hands," said the Bishop gently. "What of her? She deserted Michael because her eyes were holden. Now you can make the balance even if you will. But will you? You can repay cruelty with cruelty. You can desert her with inhumanity even greater than hers, because you do it with your eyes open, but will you? Is it to be an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth? She loves you and is at your mercy, as Michael was once at hers. You can crush her if you will. But will you?"

"Wentworth!" said Fay, and she fell at his feet, clasping his knees.

His face was as flint, as he looked down at her, and tried to push away her hands.

"Let him go, my child," said the Bishop sternly, and he took Fay's hands, and held them. "It is no use trying to keep a man who does not love you. Go, Wentworth. You are right. There is nothing to keep you here. In this room there are two people, one of whom has sinned and has repented, and both of whom love you and have spoken the truth to you. But there is no love and truth in you to rise up and meet theirs. You do not know what love and truth are, even

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when you see them very close. You had better go."

"I will go," said Wentworth, his eyes blazing. And he went out and shut the door behind him.

Fay's hands slipped out of the Bishop's, her head fell forward, and she sank down on the floor. The Bishop and Magdalen bent over her.

Michael looked a moment at her, and swiftly left the room. He overtook Wentworth in the hall, groping blindly for his hat.

"Come in here," said Michael, "I want a word with you," and he half pushed Wentworth into room leading out of the hall. It was a dreary little airless apartment with a broken blind, intended for a waiting room, but fallen into disuse, and only partially furnished, the corners piled with great tin boxes containing episcopal correspondence.

Michael closed the door.

"Wentworth," he said breathlessly, "you don't see. You don't understand. Fay loves you!" He looked earnestly at Wentworth as if the latter were acting in some woeful ignorance, which one word would set right. He seemed entirely oblivious of Wentworth's insulting words towards himself.

"I see one thing," said Wentworth," and that is that I'm not inclined to marry your cast-off mistress."

Michael closed with him instantly, but not before Wentworth had seen the lightning in his eyes; and the two men struggled furiously in the dim airless little room with its broken blind.

Wentworth knew Michael meant to kill him. The long scarred hands had him by the throat, were twisting themselves in the silk tie Fay had knitted for him. He tore himself out of the grip of these iron fingers. But Michael only sobbed and wound his arms round him. And Wentworth knew he was trying to throw him, and break his back.

Wentworth fought for his life, but he was overmatched. The awful murderous hands were feeling for his neck again, the sobbing breath was on his face, the glaring eyes staring into his. The hands closed on his throat once more, squeezing his tongue out of his mouth, his eyes out of his head. He made a last frightful struggle to wrench the hands away. But they remained clutched into his flesh, choking his life out of him. There was a thin gutteral sawing noise mixed in with the sobbing. Then all in a moment the sobbing ceased, he felt the hands relax, and then an avalanche of darkness crashed down on him, and buried him beneath it.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Down, very deep down. Buried in an abyss of darkness, shrouded tightly in a nameless horror that pressed on eyes and breath and hands and limbs.

At last a faint sound reached Wentworth. Far away in some other world a clock struck. His numbed faculties apprehended the sound, and then forgot it when it ceased.

At last he felt himself stir. He found himself staring at a glimmer of light. He would not look at it, and he could not look away from it. What was it? It had something to do with him. It grew more distinct. It was a window with a broken blind.

Some one close at hand began to tremble. Wentworth sat up suddenly and found it was himself. He was alone lying crumpled up against the wall where he had been flung down. He knew where he was. He saw the piles of tin boxes. He remembered.

He leaned his leaden throbbing head against the wall, and wave after wave of sickness even unto death shuddered over him. Michael had tried to kill him. His stiff wrenched throat throbbed together with his head. For a long time he did not move.

At last the clock struck again.

He staggered to his feet as if he had been called, and looked with intentness at a fallen book and upset inkstand. There was a quill pen balancing itself in an absurd manner with its nib stuck in the cane bottom of an overturned chair. He took it out, and laid it on the table. He saw his hat in a corner, stooped for it, missed it several times, and then got hold of it, and put it on. There was a little glass over the mantelpiece. A ghastly face with a torn collar was watching him furtively through it. He turned fiercely on the spy and found the face was his own. He turned up his coat and buttoned it. Then he went to the half open door and looked out.

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His ear caught a faint sound. Otherwise the house was very still.

A maid servant on her knees with her back to him was washing the white stone floor of the hall at the foot of the staircase. Another servant also with her back to him was watching her.

"Then it is early morning," he said. And he walked out of the room, and out of the house, through the wide open doors. A fine rain was falling, but he did not notice it. He passed out through the gates and found himself in the road. He stopped unconsciously, not knowing what to do next.

A fly dawdling back to the town from the station, passed him and pulled up, as he hesitated.

"Station, sir?" said the driver

"No, Barford," said Wentworth, and he got in. The fly with its faded cushions and musty atmosphere seemed a kind of refuge. He breathed more freely when he was enclosed in it.

As in the garden of Eden, desolation often first makes itself felt as a realization of nakedness. We must creep away. We must hide. We have no protection, no covering.

Wentworth cowered in the fly. He passed without recognizing them, all the old familiar landmarks, the twisting white road that branched off to Priesthope, the dew ponds, the half hidden lonely farm. He was in a strange country.

He looked with momentary curiosity at a weather-worn sign post which pointed forlornly where four roads met. It was falling to pieces with age, but yet it must have been put up there since the morning. He had never seen it before. He shouted to the driver that he had taken the wrong road. The man pointed with his whip to where, a mile away, the smoke of Barford rose among its trees. The landscape suddenly slid into familiar lines again. He recognized it, and sank back, confused and exhausted. The effort of speaking had hurt his throat horribly. Was he going mad? How could his throat hurt him like this—if it wasn't—if Michael had not—

He thrust thought from him. He would wait till he got home, till his own roof was safely over him, the familiar walls round him.

This was his gate. Here was his own door, with his butler looking somewhat surprised, standing on the steps.

He found himself getting out, and giving orders. He listened to himself telling his servant to pay the fly and to send word by it to his dog-cart to return home. Of course he had gone to Lostford in the dog-cart. He had forgotten that.

Then he heard his own voice ordering a whiskey and soda to be brought to him in the library. And he walked there.

The afternoon post had arrived with the newspapers and he took up a paper. But it was printed in some language unknown to him, though he recognized some of the letters.

How long had he been gone, an hour, a day, a year?

He looked at the clock.

Half past two. But this great shock with which the air was still rocking might have stopped it. He put his ear to it. Strange! It was going. And it always stopped so easily, even if the housemaid dusted it.

Was it half past two in the afternoon or in the night?

There was a band of sunshine across the floor, and outside the gardens and the down were steeped in it.

Perhaps it was day.

The butler brought in a tray and placed it near him.

"Have you had luncheon, sir?"

Wentworth thought a moment, and then said "yes."

"And will Mr. Michael return to-day, sir?"

Wentworth remembered some old, old, prehistoric arrangement by which Michael was to have come back with him to Barford this afternoon.

"No," he said, the room suddenly darkening till the sunshine on the floor was barely visible. "No, he is not coming back."

The man hesitated a moment, and then left the room.

Wentworth groped for the flagon of whiskey, poured out a quantity and drank it raw. Then he waited for the nightmare to lift.

His mind cleared gradually. His scattered faculties came sneaking back like defeated soldiers to camp. But they had all one tale of disaster, and one only, to tell. He must needs believe them.

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Michael had tried to kill him. Whatever else shifted that remained true.

Wentworth bowed his stiffening head upon his hands, and the sweat ran down his face.

Michael had tried to kill him, and had all but succeeded. Oh! if only he had quite succeeded. If only his life had not come back to him! He had died and died hard in that little room. And yet here he was still alive and in agony.

Michael first. That thought was torture. Then Fay. That thought was torture. The woman he had so worshipped, on whom he had lavished a wealth of love, far greater than most men have it in them to bestow, had deceived him, had been willing to be his brother's mistress.

Why had he ever believed in Fay and Michael? Had he not tacitly distrusted men and women always from his youth up? Had he not gauged life and love and friendship at their true value years ago? Why had he made an exception of this particular man and woman? They were no worse than the rest.

What was any man or woman worth? They were all false to the core. What was Fay? A pretty piece of pink and white, a sensual lure, like other women, not better and not worse. And what was Michael but a man like other men, ready to forget honor, morality, everything if once his passions were aroused? It was an old story, as old as the hills, that men and women betray each other. It was as old as the psalms of David.

Pah! what a fool he was to allow his heart to be wrung by what was only the ordinary vulgar experience of those who were so silly as to mix themselves up with their fellow creatures.

He had only himself to thank.

Well, at any rate he was free now. He was awake now. He was not going to put his hand in the fire a second time.

He was going abroad immediately. He would start to-morrow morning. In the meanwhile he would go and see somebody, call somewhere, be in high spirits somewhere with others.—They (*they* were Michael and Fay) would hear of that afterwards, would see how little he cared.

He seized up his hat and went out. But when he walked a few hundred yards he sank down exhausted on a wooden seat in the alder coppice overhanging the house, and remained there. The baby pheasants crept in and out, all around him. Their little houses, each with an anxious step-mother in it, were set at regular intervals along the grassy path. Only yesterday he had walked along that path with the keeper, and had thought that in the autumn he and Michael would be shooting together once more.

They would never shoot together again.

As the dusk fell he heard a sound of wheels. His dog-cart returning from Lostford no doubt. It did not turn into the court-yard, but came on up to the house. Wentworth peered down through the leaves.

It was the Bishop's dog-cart. He recognized the groom who drove it. To his amazement he saw Lord Lossiemouth get out. After some parley he went into the house.

Why should he have come?

Oh! of course, how dense he was. He had been sent over on an embassy by Magdalen and the Bishop. They wanted to hush up the fight, and bring about a reconciliation between him and Fay. He should be told Fay was making herself ill with crying. His magnanimity would be appealed to by that pompous prig. Well, he had had his journey for nothing. Wentworth saw his servants looking for him and hid himself in the coppice.

A couple of hours later he left the wood, and went down the steep path to the gardens. It was nearly dark now. Lights twinkled in the house. The lamp in the library laid a pale finger of light upon the lawn, through the open glass doors.

Wentworth went up to it, and then as he was about to enter, shrank back astonished.

Lord Lossiemouth was sitting there with his back to the window. Wentworth stood a long time looking at him. He was evidently waiting for him to come in. He sat stolidly on as if he were glued to his chair, smoking one cigarette after another.

At last he got up. Surely he would go now. He walked to the bookshelves that lined the walls, inspected the books, selected one, and settled himself with a voluminous sigh in his arm-chair once more.

Abandoning hope, Wentworth stole away across the grass as noiselessly as he had

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come, and disappeared in the darkness.

CHAPTER XXXV

Wentworth never knew how he spent the night, if indeed that interminable tract in which time stopped could have been one night. It was longer than all the rest of his life put together.

In later years, in peaceful later years, confused memories came to him of things that he must have seen then, but of which he took no heed at the time; of seeing the breath of animals like steam close to the ground; of stumbling suddenly under a hedgerow on a huddled sleeping figure with a white face, which struggled up unclean in the clean moonlighr, and menaced him in a foul atmosphere of rags.

And once, many years later, when he was taking an unfamiliar short cut across the downs, he came upon a little pool in an old chalk pit, and recognized it. He had never seen it by day but he knew it. He had wandered to it on a night of moon and mist, and had seen a fox bring down her cubs to drink just where that twisted alder branch made an arch over the water.

Wentworth sat by that chalk pit on the down utterly spent in body and mind hour after hour, till the moon which had been tangled in the alder stooped to the violet west with one great star to bear her company. Who shall say through what interminable labyrinths, through what sloughs, across what deserts his tortured mind had dragged itself all night. The sun had gone down upon his wrath. The moon had gone down upon his wrath.

The land was gray. The spectral horses moving slowly in the misty fields were gray. A streak of palest saffron light showed where the dim earth and dim sky met.

A remembrance came to him of a summer dawn such as this, years and years ago, when Michael had been dangerously ill, and how his whole soul had spent itself in one passionate supplication that he might not be taken from him.

* * *

A tender green, transparent as the light seen through a leaf in May, was welling up the sky. The tiny clouds floated in it like rafts of rose color upon a sea of glass.

* * *

A deep and bitter sense of injustice was growing within him with the growing light.

A hundred times during the night he had recalled in cold anger every word of that final scene in the library, his own speech, his own actions, his great wrongs, his unendurable pain.

And yet again it returned upon him, always with Fay's convulsed face and clinging hands, always with the Bishop's scathing words of dismissal. Their horrible injustice rankled in his mind, their abominable cruelty to himself revolted him. Hideous crimes had been committed against him, but *he* had done no evil, unless to love and to trust were evil. Why then was he to be thus thrust into the wrong, thus condemned unheard, cast forth with scorn because he had not obediently fallen in with the Bishop's preposterous demand on him to condone everything? *It was not to be expected of him.*

Suddenly the faces of the others watching him after Fay's confession rose before him, the Bishop's, Magdalen's, Michael's. He saw that they had not expected it of him either—not even Michael. Only in Fay's upraised eyes as she held him by the knees had there been one instant's anguished hope. Only in hers. And that had been quickly extinguished. *He had extinguished it himself.*

* * *

The little clouds turned to trembling flame. The whole sky flushed and then paled. A thread of fire showed upon the horizon. It widened. It drew into an arch. The sun rose swiftly, a sudden ball of living fire; and in a moment the smallest shrub upon the down, the grazing horses, the huddled sheep were casting gigantic shadows across the whole world.

A faint sound of wheels was growing clearer and nearer.

Wentworth saw a dog-cart coming towards him along the great white road. As he looked, it half pulled up and then stopped. A man got out and came towards him. The raw sunlight caught only his face and shoulders. He seemed to wade towards him waist deep through a gray sea.

Lord Lossiemouth again!

Lord Lossiemouth's heavy tired face showed sharp and white in the garish light.

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"I have been looking everywhere for you," he said, not ungently. "I waited half the night at Barford, and then went on to Saundersfoot station, and then to Wrigley. Your servants thought you might possibly have gone there. But you had not been seen there. Magdalen sent me to tell you you must go back to the Palace. Your brother is very ill. He had an attack of hemorrhage apparently just after you and he parted in the hall. I promised her not to go back without you. Shall we drive on?"

CHAPTER XXXVI

Michael was dying. All night Magdalen and the Bishop, with nurse and doctor fought for his life, vainly strove to stem the stream of blood with which his life was ebbing away.

He had been found by Lord Lossiemouth and a servant lying unconscious at the foot of the staircase in the hall. He had been carried into a room on the ground-floor. Everything had been done, but without avail. Michael was dying, suffocating in anguish, threshing his life out through the awful hours, in wild delirium.

He was in prison once more beating against the bars of his narrow window looking out over the lagoon. His hoarse strangled voice spoke unceasingly. His hands plucked at his wrists, and then dropped exhausted beneath the weight of the chains which dragged him down.

Magdalen would fain have spared Fay the ordeal of that vigil. But the Bishop was inexorable. He bade her remain. And shrunk away in a corner, shivering to her very soul, Fay listened hour after hour to the wild feeble voice of her victim, back once more in the cell where he had been so silent, where the walls had kept his counsel so well. She saw something at last of what he had endured for her, of what he had made so light.

At last the paroxysm passed. Michael pushed back the walls with his hands, and then suddenly gave up the struggle.

"They are closing in on me," he said, "I cannot keep them back any longer."

The contest ceased all in a moment. He lay back motionless with half closed eyes, his face blue against the white pillows. The blood had ceased at last to flow from his colorless lips. Death was very near.

He knew no one. Not the Bishop, not Magdalen, who kept watch beside him, listening ever for Wentworth's step outside.

In the dawn Michael's spirit made as if to depart, but it seemed as if it could not gain permission.

The light grew.

And with the light the labored breathing became easier. He stirred feebly, and whispered incoherently from time to time. He was still in his cell. Wentworth's name, the Italian doctor's rose to his lips. Thus after a pause he said suddenly,

"The duke is dead. She will come now."

There was a long silence. He was waiting, listening.

The Bishop and Magdalen held their breath. Fay knew at last what it is to fail another. She had failed Michael. Wentworth had failed her.

"Fay!" Michael said, "come soon."

She had to bear it, the waiting, the faltered anguish, the suspense, the faint reiterated call to deaf ears.

The Bishop got up from his knees beside Michael, and motioned to Fay to take his place. She went timidly to the low couch and knelt down by it.

"Speak to him," said the Bishop sternly.

"Michael!" she said.

He knew her. All other voices had gone from him, but hers he knew. All other faces had faded from him, but hers he knew. He looked full at her. Love stronger than death shone in his eyes.

"Fay," he said in an awed voice,—"at last."

She had come to release him, after the Duke's death, as he knew she would.

She leaned her white cheek a moment against his in speechless self-abasement.

He whispered to her,

"Have I served you?"

She whispered back, "Yes."

He whispered again, "Do you still love me?" The words were quite inaudible.

Again she said, "Yes."

Again a movement of the lips, but no sound.

He looked at her with radiant questioning eyes.

Again she murmered, "Yes."

It had to be like that. He had always known that this moment had to come. Had he not foreseen it in some forgotten dream?

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A great trembling laid hold on Michael and then a stillness of exceeding joy.

In the silence the Cathedral bells chimed out suddenly for early service. The sound of the bells came faintly to him as across wide water, the river of death widening as it nears the sea. It was all part of his dream. The bells of Venice were rejoicing with him, in this his blessed hour.

He was freed at last, free as he had never been, free as the seagull seen through the bars that could no longer keep him back. Useless bars, why had he let them hold him so long? He was out and away, sailing over the sheening water in a boat with an orange sail; in a boat like a butterfly with spread wings; sailing away, past the floating islands, past that pale beautiful grief of sea-lavender—he laughed to see it shine so beautiful—sailing away into a pearly morning, under a luminous sky.

The prison was far away now. Left behind. There was a great knocking at its gates, hurried steps upon the stairs, and a voice crying urgently through the bars.

But he could not stay to listen. He was too far away to hear. The voice was to him but like the thin harsh cry of the sea-mew wheeling near, blended in with the marvel of his freedom. He took no heed of it. He was afloat on the great sea-faring tide. Far away before him, but nearer, nearer, and yet nearer, the sea gleamed in trembling ecstasy.

"He does not know me. He does not hear me," said Wentworth, on his knees beside Michael, raising a wild desperate face to Magdalen. Was Michael's last look of deadly hatred to remain with him through life?

"Speak to him again, Fay," said Magdalen. "Tell him Wentworth is here."

Fay was still kneeling on the other side. The two lovers' eyes met across the man they had murdered.

"Michael," the tremulous voice whispered.

"Louder," said Wentworth hoarsely.

"Michael," said Fay again.

But Michael's face was set. He was sunk in a great rest, breathing deep and slow, deeper and slower yet, his long arms faintly rising and falling with each breath.

"Oh, Fay. For God's make make him hear," said Wentworth with a cry.

The Bishop and Magdalen standing apart looked at each other.

"He has forgiven her though he does not know it," he said below his breath.

Fay stooped down. She raised Michael in her arms, and laid his head on her breast, turning his fading face to his brother.

"Michael," she whispered into his ear, with a passion which would have cloven death itself. "Come back, come back and say one word to Wentworth."

Very near the sea now. Very near the great peace and light. This was the real life at last. All the rest had been a vain shadow, a prison where he had dwelt a little while not seeing that this great all-surrounding water which had seemed to hem him in was but a highway of light.

Who were these two with him in the boat? Who but the two he loved best! Who but Fay and Wentworth! They were all floating on together in exceeding joy. They were very near him. He felt them one on each side, but the light was so great that he could not see them. His head was on Fay's breast. His hand was in Wentworth's hand. It was all as in dim dreams he had longed for it to be.

Fay's voice reached him, pressed close to his ear, like the sound of the sea, held in its tiniest shell.

He opened his eyes and his brother's white face came to him for a moment, like sea foam, blown in from the sea of love to which he was going, part of the sea.

"Wenty!" he said, and smiled at him. And like blown foam upon a breaking wave, the face passed.

And like the whisper in the shell under the hush of the surge, the voice passed.

The shadow which we call life—passed.

THE END

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Retorts Courteous and Discourteous

The Best Wit of Congress

By John Elfreth Watkins

THE most pungent witticisms enlivening the debates of Congress are almost invariably blurted out quite upon the spur of the moment and very seldom rehearsed or jotted down in the prompting notes.

In such a great legislative body the juxtaposition of opposing factors offers ideal conditions for the generation either of brilliant wit or of bitter vituperation. It is when one party's side of either chamber becomes most surcharged with positive and the other with negative intellectual electricity, so to speak,—when the potential is highest, as in the severest thunder storm weather—that the brightest sparks snapping across the dividing aisle cause the atmosphere to thunder with loudest peals of laughter and applause.

The three most brilliant latter-day wits of the House of Representatives—Thomas B. Reed, of Maine; John Allen, of Mississippi, and Peter J. Otey, of Virginia—have lately passed out, the first and last named to the Great Beyond and Mr. Allen to private life.

"Tom" Reed rarely told stories, but produced them, and it has been said that he thought in epigrams. Mr. Allen was a master of satire and the success of his scintillations was largely due to his droll intonation—as was Reed's likewise—and to his serio-comic delivery. Mr. Otey was more of the *raconteur* and his accentuation, pauses and gestures in purely extemporaneous debate were as perfectly regulated as those of the trained comic actor who has profited by numerous rehearsals.

The Late Czar

Reed's first retort of note was delivered back in the seventies, at about the time when Conkling referred to him as "that cheerful young idiot from Maine." He uttered it after some interrupting member had asked him a question intended to confuse him but which he had answered with telling effect.

"And now, having embalmed that fly in the liquid amber of my remarks, I will proceed," said Reed, bringing down the house.

Once, when Breckenridge, of Kentucky, had paused in a speech of most mournful and lugubrious cadences, Reed convulsed the House by pretending to weep, and holding his handkerchief to his eyes, exclaiming aloud to Cannon, of Illinois, while the funereal tones of the orator still echoed in the hall:

"Joe, were you acquainted with the deceased?"

When minority leader, the big Maine man caused roars of laughter by this thrust at his political opponents:

"The present House has avoided its opportunities and shirked its duties and led a gelatinous life to the scorn of all vertebrate animals!"

Discussing some of the leaders of the opposition, Mr. Reed once exclaimed, after naming them:

"Neither of them ever says a word without subtracting from the sum total of human knowledge."

While Speaker, the great "Czar" had little chance to actively enter debate, but

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occasionally injected some poignant wit into his rulings.

Soon after Reed had made the innovation of counting a quorum from all members present, whether voting or not, a member most emphatically objected to being thus counted.

"Does the gentleman continue to stand there and persistently claim that he is not present?" asked the Speaker.

One of the most famous of Reed's retorts was made at the expense of Springer, of Illinois. The "Maine Giant" had just read one of Springer's own speeches in refutation of the latter's argument, just concluded. The Illinoian launched into philosophy upon the privilege of progressive thinkers to change their opinions.

"I honor them for it," he continued. "An honest man is the noblest work of God. As for me, Mr. Chairman, in the words of an eminent American statesman, 'I would rather be right than be President.'"

"The gentleman from Illinois needn't worry, Mr. Chairman," drawled Reed, "He'll never be ei—ther!"

But this one bit of repartee was not original with Reed. It had been delivered with telling effect in the early days of Congress in the midst of a war of words between two statesmen whose names history does not hand down along with the dialogue.

The speech of John Allen which most completely convulsed his colleagues was his valedictory in which he asked the Republicans, his political opponents, to erect a $20,000 fish hatchery in his native town of Tupelo, Mississippi.

"Why, sir, fish will travel overland for miles to get in the water we have at Tupelo," he said, addressing the Speaker. "Thousands and millions of unborn fish are clamoring to this Congress to-day for an opportunity to be hatched at Tupelo."

The Republicans of the House voted the appropriation thus won solely by the ready wit of their popular opponent. In thanking the House he stated:

"Mr. Chairman, I will sit upon the banks of this fish hatchery at Tupelo and have before me a practical demonstration of the truth of the old adage that 'a sucker is hatched every minute.'"

Referring to the Civil War and his part therein, as a confederate private, Allen said, in a speech before the House:

"General Albert Sydney Johnson and myself met Grant at Shiloh, and if General Johnson hadn't been killed and I hadn't got scattered on the evening of that day, there is no knowing what would have happened."

Addressing the House upon his advent to Tupelo, he said:

"Mr. Chairman, some thirty-one years ago one of the most prominent and brilliant young men of my State, having concluded his studies, and appreciating the importance of the town, settled there and afterward became a member of this body. What he has contributed to it, I leave for others to say. My modesty prevents me."

Lauding his beloved Tupelo to his colleagues, he excited the risibles of all, by this:

"Oh, if you could only stand upon College Hill in Tupelo, and see one of our sunsets! It is very near the center of the earth. You can stand there and look around and you will see the horizon just about the same distance from you in every direction. Such moons as we have down there!" he added with fine eloquence. "It is the only place in the South to-day where we have the same silvery, southern moon that we used to have before the war!"

One of the most mirth-provoking speeches of Otey was that in which he paid his respects to Reeder, of Kansas. Speaking of the latter's jokes, the Virginian said:

"They are as clear as a northwest Kansas blizzard, translucent as a block of granite, bright as midnight in a billy goat's stomach and as pointed as a steam hammer."

In a speech upon the last reapportionment bill Mr. Otey thus referred to the resolutions intended to reduce the representation of the South:

"They will not pass until the fishworm swallows the whale, not until the snail out runs the hare, not until Dutchmen stop drinking beer and not until the billy-goat butts from the rear."

Mr. Speaker

Presenting his compliments to Dolliver of Iowa, he once said:

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Congressman and Book Agent

"The gentleman from Iowa answers queries like the man who placed the saddle upon his horse hind side before. A bystander said, 'My friend, you have that saddle on hind side foremost.' The man replied: 'How do you know, sir, which way I'm going?'"

In another debate Mr. Otey informed the House that Dalzell, of Pennsylvania, reminded him of a tramp upon a country road who was parched with thirst.

"Seeing a well," said Mr. Otey, "he rushed up to it, and a lady wishing to refresh him asked if he wanted some water. 'I decline to be interrupted,' said the tramp. He began to pump for water, but no water came. He was forced to ask the lady if there was any water in the well. 'Oh, yes, plenty,' said she. The tramp continued to pump, and finally, getting no water, asked the lady, 'why, if there is plenty of water in the well, will no water come?' 'Because,' she promptly replied, 'the sucker is at the wrong end of the pump.'"

One of the most effective witticisms of "Uncle Joe" Cannon was an appeal to the House to settle down to work upon a bill under consideration.

"We had better transact a little public business, just to fool the people," said he, thereby convulsing the House.

One of the most telling oratorical blows ever landed upon the present Speaker was delivered by the late Amos Cummings, of New York, when Mr. Cannon was Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations.

"Why didn't you stand by the proposition which the House made at your instance?" asked Cummings, with bitterness. "Why are you backing down at the first fire? You are misnamed. You are no Cannon, you are a toy musket!"

During a debate where Bourke Cochran of New York had been persistently annoying Boutell, of Illinois, with questions, Boutell grew tired and remarked that Cochran reminded him of the following epitaph:

"Here lies the body of Robt. Gordon—
Mouth almighty and voice accordin'.
Stranger, tread lightly near this wonder:
If he opens his mouth, you are gone, by thunder!"

No greater uproar of mirth was ever caused in the house than that following the retort of Gibson, of Tennessee, to a Tammany representative from New York, the effervescent Sulzer.

"Look here, Mr. Seidlitz Powder," said the Tennessean by way of opening a sentence which was never finished.

During the bitter fight against "Reed rules" the House was thrown into convulsions by General Spinola who, pointing to the painting of the Siege of Yorktown, hanging in the hall, gravely accused Speaker Reed of counting the Hessians in the background of the picture in order to make up a quorum. The general always wore a tremendously high collar, so high in fact that Representative "Tim" Campbell tapped it one day with the ferrule of his cane and inquired, to the amusement of the House, "Is General Spinola within?"

In a debate over a Civil Service bill Champ Clark of Missouri addressed this question to Hepburn, of Iowa:

"I would like to know how you come to the conclusion that everybody on this side is in favor of the repeal of the whole business?"

"Simply because that would be wrong," shouted Hepburn, thereby bringing down the House.

In a parliamentary duel with General Grosvenor, Republican, of Ohio, over the responsibility for the financial panic of 1893, Representative Champ Clark, Democrat, of Missouri, declared that preparations for a bond issue were contemplated just before the close of Harrison's administration.

"I am ready to admit," retorted the combative General, "that the prospect of Democratic administration caused a panic. It always has and it always will, but, thank God, there is little likelihood of one being again inflicted upon the country!"

During the famous deadlock fight in the House, over the Civil Rights Bill, General Ben Butler favored a Sunday Session.

"Bad as I am, I have some respect for God's Day," replied Sam Randall of Pennsylvania.

Suavity from South Carolina

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Everybody's Friend

"Don't the Bible say that it is lawful to pull your ox or ass out of a pit on the Sabbath?" asked Butler. "You have 37 asses on your side of the House and I want to get them out of this ditch tomorrow. I think I am engaged in holy work."

"Don't do it," replied Randall. "I expect some day to see you in a better world."

"You'll be there, as you are here, a member of the lower House," flashed back the General, with telling effect.

During one of the early tariff debates the southern representatives pressed an amendment increasing the duty on molasses 100 per cent. *ad valorem.* Its object was to choke off the northern members and kill the bill. Representative Burgess of Rhode Island stoutly objected.

"Mr. Speaker," said Daniel of Kentucky, very acridly, "let the constituents of the gentleman from Rhode Island sop their bread only on one side in molasses and they will pay the same duty they do now!"

Oratory

Burgess was quick to reply, reminding the Kentucky member that established habit among a people becomes second nature.

"What would the gentleman from Kentucky think," he continued, "if I should offer an amendment that himself and his constituents shall hereafter have only a pint of whiskey for breakfast, instead of a quart?"

Kentuckians in those days, as now, were twitted about their conviviality and the mirth following the thrust of the gentleman from Vermont completely silenced his opponent.

An adept at repartee was the celebrated John Randolph, of Roanoke. Once, after he had addressed the House, several members rose and attacked him in succession.

Calmly rising, after they had finished, he replied in these words:

"Mr. Speaker, I am in the condition of old King Lear:

"'The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.'"

Representative Macon of North Carolina, one of the few men in public life who won the deep friendship of Randolph, was replaced by a member who assiduously sought to succeed not only to his seat, but also to the good graces of the great Virginian. Randolph snubbed the newcomer, however, and the latter finally sought revenge by bitterly assaulting him in debate. Randolph made no immediate reply, but in a few days observed, incidentally:

"Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of a remark of my friend, the Hon. Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina, the wisest man I ever knew, but," (and here he pointed to Macon's successor) "but, Mr. Speaker, whose seat in this House I am sorry to say is now vacant! vacant! vacant!"

No greater wit ever sat in Congress than the late "Sunset" Cox, of Ohio.

Speaking upon the tariff question Mr. Cox once said:—

"If the mother gives her child castor oil, she pours down 148 per cent. *ad valorem.* If the child does not enjoy the dose there is a 25 per cent. bowl as the recipient of the contents of its tender stomach; and though she 'wash it with nitre and take to it much soap, yet the iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord,' for the soap is taxed forty per centum. God help the child!"

One of the greatest uproars of laughter ever heard in the House was caused by a member from Colorado who made a motion "that Congress adjourn *sine die.*" This motion to adjourn the whole Congress and not the House only, caused a general outburst which surprised the Coloradoan. Not cognizant of his real error and suspecting that "*sine die*" was the wrong term to use he again arose, shouting:

"I move this House do now adjourn *bona fide!*"

At this there was an uproar and he bobbed up for the third time, shouting:—

"Mr. Speaker, I move that we just purely and simply adjourn."

No Rebates!

At another time, while arraigning a colleague,

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the same member, pointing his finger, uttered this peroration:

"And there he sits, Mr. Speaker, mute, silent, dumb."

"And he ain't saying a word," added "Tom" Reed who sat near by.

Less that excites the risib es is heard in the upper house of Congress. "Senatorial dignity" forbids the great freedom of debate allowed in the House. The wit of the Senate is usually sharp repartee bordering upon vituperation rather than the *reductio ad absurdum* method of debate.

Henry Clay had a poignant wit which he often employed cruelly. He and James Buchanan sat in the Senate as enemies. Once after Buchanan had replied to one of Clay's attacks upon the Democrats, the latter retorted:

"I made no allusion to the Senator from Pennsylvania. I was referring to the leaders, not the subordinates, of the Democracy."

"The Senator from Kentucky was certainly in error," replied Buchanan, "because he pointedly and repeatedly looked at me while he was speaking."

"I beg to say, Mr. President, that the mistake is the Senator's, not mine," rejoined Clay. "Unlike him, sir, I do not look one way and row another."

This was a cruel thrust at Buchanan who had a cast in one eye.

During a debate upon a bill for the purchase of Cuba, General Cass, of Michigan, made an elaborate speech supporting the measure on the ground that it was dangerous to the Republic to have the dependency of a foreign power so near to our shores. He was immediately followed by Senator John P. Hale, of New Hampshire.

"Consistency has always been a crowning jewel in the diadem of the Senator from Michigan," said Hale. "He favors the annexation of Cuba because its proximity as a foreign territory is a constant menace to our welfare, when every night of his life, when he is at home in Detroit, from the window of the room in which he sleeps he can throw a stone into the possessions of her Brittanic Majesty." Thus in two minutes did he utterly undo the effects of General Cass' three hours of eloquence.

I am Nothing: Freedom is All

The Personal Story of the Russian Revolutionist, Narodny

By Leroy Scott

I AM nothing. Personal success, happiness—they are nothing. Burning of home, prison, the Czar's bullet, Siberia—they are nothing. There is only one thing—only one thing—that Russia shall be free!"

I had asked how the Russian Revolutionist looks upon life, and thus answered Ivanovitch Narodny, a leader of the Revolutionists, now in America to ask the Free to help make free his broken people. The answer came in a voice low and passionless; sadness lay in the hollows of his thin face like an actual presence; his soft gray eyes gazed afar at visions of Freedom. Sad, dreaming, with white strained face, so quiet, so gentle—fifteen thousand roubles on his head, man of a hundred disguises, of a dozen names, defier of gendarmes and spies, dare-devil, flame-souled lover of the people; for me he summed up the leadership of the Russian Revolution.

He went on and told me the story of his life—told it in his halting week-old English which he had studied night and day that he might plead his people's need to the great heart of America. At times the voice quivered; at times the gray eyes threw fire; at times he laughed exultantly as he remembered triumphs over the Czar's officials. When he laughed his face was

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saddest; sorrow never left it, and his laughter was an emphasis, a startling underscoring, of his grief. As his voice rose and fell with the rise and fall of his story, I was hearing not only his voice, seeing not only his face; I was seeing houses burned, men driven in chains to Siberia, women and children murdered; I was seeing the faces, hearing the stories, of the countless other Revolutionists who also say, "I am nothing," who also say, "There is only one thing—that Russia shall be free!" And I retell the story here that you who read may see what I saw, feel what I felt.

The Baltic Provinces were a rich land of plains and valleys and mountains, of birches and pines, of villages and farms. In recent months they have been made a a broad waste. Upon them are the ashes of a thousand homes; into their soil has gone the blood of a thousand women and children; into their air have gone a thousand souls. The Czar, the "Little Father," has been restoring "peace" among his children.

In this region, in the Province of Esthonia, I was born. My home was a farm, and I grew up as a farm lad. At night, when I was a mere child, I often listened to the cautious talk of Freedom between my father and mother, for they too were Revolutionists. Centuries ago all the lands about the Baltic Sea were a great Republic, so Freedom remains there as a part of the soil, a part of the air. I was taught Freedom, I breathed it, my plow turned it from the earth. Freedom became my blood, my bones, my life.

One of the first instincts of Freedom is to be free in mind—to know. As a boy of sixteen (that was twenty years ago) I began to feel my ignorance, and the ignorance of the peasant lads who were my friends. But for peasants to attend schools for higher education, this the Czar does not allow. I thought much, and at length I said to my friends, "Let us make a 'Self-School', at which all shall be teachers, all pupils." They agreed. Each of us (there were fifteen in the group) privately studied one subject, and this he taught when we came together as a class. This was my first crime. We could all have been sent to Siberia. We knew we were guilty, so we met in secret—in the dead of night behind darkened windows. In summer the fields tired us so that when evening came we cared only for our beds. But on Sundays the 'Self-School' would steal away into the forest and spend the day beneath the pines.

Soon I was committing my second crime. I saw that all Russia was drunk, and to my boyish mind drunkeness seemed the cause of Russia's evils—its ignorance, its poverty, its misery. I did not then know, as I now know, that the people were drunk because it was the Czar's wish. The people must not think—on that rule stands the government of the Czar; and to keep the peasant from thinking the government encourages him to drink. At seventeen I became a temperance advocate—and thereby became a traitor, for I was opposing the Czar. I soon learned, however, that vodka was a child evil; that the parent evil was the political condition. I began to form societies to spread discontent. Two hundred of these societies—all shamming as temperance societies—I formed through Esthonia. Then I was found out. I eluded the officers that came to arrest me, and fled from my home. My life as a hunted animal was begun.

I disguised myself in a new name, and settled at Vira in the Province of St. Petersburg, where I became a writer of articles and plays. I was then twenty-two. In Vira I met a wise old general who had for a long time been attached to the court of the Czar—white-haired, but straight of figure, and in him the eternal flames of liberty. He grew to be my dearest friend, the father of my mind. I became a Revolutionist. He taught me military tactics and diplomacy, and educated me in political matters. He used to say to me, in a voice that quivered: "You must be prepared to be one of the leaders in the great revolt, and afterwards in the Republic. I am too old to help—but I shall work through you." And I would promise to work for the two of us.

After a time my fifteen friends of the 'Self-School' came to Vira. Once more we studied together, but now we studied not for self but for Russia. To help make Russia free—that became our profession. Each of us determined to fit himself for an expert part in the struggle for Freedom. One selected military tactics for his specialty, another the airship, another the

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the same member, pointing his finger, uttered this peroration:

"And there he sits, Mr. Speaker, mute, silent, dumb."

"And he ain't saying a word," added "Tom" Reed who sat near by.

Less that excites the risib es is heard in the upper house of Congress. "Senatorial dignity" forbids the great freedom of debate allowed in the House. The wit of the Senate is usually sharp repartee bordering upon vituperation rather than the *reductio ad absurdum* method of debate.

Henry Clay had a poignant wit which he often employed cruelly. He and James Buchanan sat in the Senate as enemies. Once after Buchanan had replied to one of Clay's attacks upon the Democrats, the latter retorted:

"I made no allusion to the Senator from Pennsylvania. I was referring to the leaders, not the subordinates, of the Democracy."

"The Senator from Kentucky was certainly in error," replied Buchanan, "because he pointedly and repeatedly looked at me while he was speaking."

"I beg to say, Mr. President, that the mistake is the Senator's, not mine," rejoined Clay. "Unlike him, sir, I do not look one way and row another."

This was a cruel thrust at Buchanan who had a cast in one eye.

During a debate upon a bill for the purchase of Cuba, General Cass, of Michigan, made an elaborate speech supporting the measure on the ground that it was dangerous to the Republic to have the dependency of a foreign power so near to our shores. He was immediately followed by Senator John P. Hale, of New Hampshire.

"Consistency has always been a crowning jewel in the diadem of the Senator from Michigan," said Hale. "He favors the annexation of Cuba because its proximity as a foreign territory is a constant menace to our welfare, when every night of his life, when he is at home in Detroit, from the window of the room in which he sleeps he can throw a stone into the possessions of her Brittanic Majesty." Thus in two minutes did he utterly undo the effects of General Cass' three hours of eloquence.

I am Nothing: Freedom is All

The Personal Story of the Russian Revolutionist, Narodny

By Leroy Scott

"I AM nothing. Personal success, happiness—they are nothing. Burning of home, prison, the Czar's bullet, Siberia—they are nothing. There is only one thing—only one thing—that Russia shall be free!"

I had asked how the Russian Revolutionist looks upon life, and thus answered Ivanovitch Narodny, a leader of the Revolutionists, now in America to ask the Free to help make free his broken people. The answer came in a voice low and passionless; sadness lay in the hollows of his thin face like an actual presence; his soft gray eyes gazed afar at visions of Freedom. Sad, dreaming, with white strained face, so quiet, so gentle—fifteen thousand roubles on his head, man of a hundred disguises, of a dozen names, defier of gendarmes and spies, dare-devil, flame-souled lover of the people; for me he summed up the leadership of the Russian Revolution.

He went on and told me the story of his life—told it in his halting week-old English which he had studied night and day that he might plead his people's need to the great heart of America. At times the voice quivered; at times the gray eyes threw fire; at times he laughed exultantly as he remembered triumphs over the Czar's officials. When he laughed his face was

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saddest; sorrow never left it, and his laughter was an emphasis, a startling underscoring, of his grief. As his voice rose and fell with the rise and fall of his story, I was hearing not only his voice, seeing not only his face; I was seeing houses burned, men driven in chains to Siberia, women and children murdered; I was seeing the faces, hearing the stories, of the countless other Revolutionists who also say, "I am nothing," who also say, "There is only one thing—that Russia shall be free!" And I retell the story here that you who read may see what I saw, feel what I felt.

The Baltic Provinces were a rich land of plains and valleys and mountains, of birches and pines, of villages and farms. In recent months they have been made a a broad waste. Upon them are the ashes of a thousand homes; into their soil has gone the blood of a thousand women and children; into their air have gone a thousand souls. The Czar, the "Little Father," has been restoring "peace" among his children.

In this region, in the Province of Esthonia, I was born. My home was a farm, and I grew up as a farm lad. At night, when I was a mere child, I often listened to the cautious talk of Freedom between my father and mother, for they too were Revolutionists. Centuries ago all the lands about the Baltic Sea were a great Republic, so Freedom remains there as a part of the soil, a part of the air. I was taught Freedom, I breathed it, my plow turned it from the earth. Freedom became my blood, my bones, my life.

One of the first instincts of Freedom is to be free in mind—to know. As a boy of sixteen (that was twenty years ago) I began to feel my ignorance, and the ignorance of the peasant lads who were my friends. But for peasants to attend schools for higher education, this the Czar does not allow. I thought much, and at length I said to my friends, "Let us make a 'Self-School', at which all shall be teachers, all pupils." They agreed. Each of us (there were fifteen in the group) privately studied one subject, and this he taught when we came together as a class. This was my first crime. We could all have been sent to Siberia. We knew we were guilty, so we met in secret—in the dead of night behind darkened windows. In summer the fields tired us so that when evening came we cared only for our beds. But on Sundays the 'Self-School' would steal away into the forest and spend the day beneath the pines.

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making of arms, another the army, another telegraphy, another the railroad, and so on. One of our number spent years in Paris studying cooking, and became a great chef, an artist. High government officials must have good cooks; The Revolution must have government secrets. He has helped much—very much.

Five years passed thus. I began to feel that the Russian Republic was too slow in coming. I wanted a quicker Freedom, and my desire builded a glorious dream: if a group had a large piece of land, made everything on that land they consumed, and lived there constantly, they could be free even though in Russia. With money I had earned by my writings and by an artificial millstone I had invented, I bought four hundred acres of land near Rappino, in my home province ot Esthonia. The land lay in a beautiful valley, from which sloped up mountains clothed in straight black pines amid which gleamed the white of birches. Through the valley ran a little river that paused to turn a grain mill, then dashed on. Here I and the families of twenty of my friends settled to make the glorious dream a glorious reality. We built our own houses, we made great plans for the future, we said, "This shall be 'The Happy Valley.'" Then—the Czar. The Little Father knows how to make his children miserable, and us, by his church officials, his tax-gatherers, his Cossacks, he made most miserable of all. At the end of the first year half the families left and settled in Siberia. Siberia was happier than our Happy Valley.

Eight years ago, while I was living in the colony, there was talk of a Republic, and I was so indiscreet as to send a letter to the proposed Minister of Finance regarding the issuance of bonds upon Free Russia. At two o'clock of Christmas night there came a pounding on the door of my one-room stone house, which I myself had builded, and which stood apart from the others in the edge of the forest. My hound sprang at the door, barking. I leapt from my bed. The police, my instinct told me.

"Who's there?" I called.

The answer was a Revolutionary countersign. I opened the door, and there stood a friend from St. Petersburg.

"Quick!" he cried. "The rooms of the Minister of Finance have been searched, and your letter found. The police are coming—there is not a minute!"

The telegraph is watched by the government, letters are opened by spies, so he had come the three hundred miles from St. Petersburg to warn me. Five minutes later I was running through the night over the crusted snow, my hound at my side. Now and then the dead stillness quavered with the mournful howl of a wolf—and I was thankful for the hound. Toward daybreak, at a little station, I caught a train that carried me to the German frontier. I had no passport, which is required to leave Russia, but five roubles excused me to the gendarme.

But I passed the Russian frontier only to fall into a new trouble. At this time, because of cholera in Russia, the importation of ham from Russia into Germany was forbidden. Now I had bought several sandwiches to eat upon the train, and when I entered Germany one remained uneaten. It was of ham. When I was searched by a custom officer this sandwich was found, and I was arrested on the spot charged with smuggling ham into Germany. I who was fleeing because I had plotted the overthrow of a royal dynasty, I was arrested because of a ham sandwich!

Two days later I was freed. I proceeded to Berlin where I remained for three months, writing for the underground press. Toward the end of this time I wrote back to Russia asking how many of my fifteen friends of the 'Self-School' had been arrested. This letter fell into the hand of the government, a Russian officer was at once dispatched for me, and I was trapped like a rat.

I was extradited, under a secret agreement between Russia and Germany regarding political prisoners, and lodged in the fortress of Peter and Paul in St. Petersburg. I was in prison, but I was not in prison; for the captive Revolutionist there exists only the idea that he has helped the people. Four years I awaited trial, which was postponed for "administrative reasons." Four years a cell was my home, old sour black bread, with warm water for breakfast, with cold thin potato soup at lunch, with more cold soup at supper was my food, the faces of guards at the wicket door my only faces. During this time I did not speak by word of

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mouth to a soul except the guards. But in Russian prisons speech is not only by the lips.

In the prison chapel there was a little booth for each prisoner, with a window through which he can see the priest and a little hole through which he gets air. One Sunday, at the beginning of my imprisonment, through the air hole of my booth was thrown a moistened wad of bread. From whom it came I do not know. Within it I found the Revolutionists' telegraphic code. From that time my walls had tongues; they told me, in their speech of raps, the stories and ideas of the prisoners in the cells about me, and they rapped back my story and ideas in answer. We grew close friends, I and these people beyond my walls. Foremost of my invisible friends were a robber, a monk, and a princesss. The robber was a very old man who had broken from prison five times. He told me through the walls stories of the government officials he had robbed; "I have robbed more officials than any other man," he said proudly. The monk had preached a free church, as I had preached a free government, and formed a new sect. He had dared think for himself and for this reason he is to-day still in prison. The princess—ah, she was most interesting of all.

The princess was of a family that for a thousand years has been among the highest and mightiest in Russia. Beside them the Romanoffs are grass of to-day. She was very beautiful, was only twenty-five when she entered prison, and had a voice that was made in heaven. She cultivated her voice in Berlin, Paris and Italy, and on completing her studies she became the leading soprano in the Imperial Opera at Moscow. Here her girlish beauty and wonderful voice quickly made her a great favorite. But it came to her, while her success was still fresh, that her gift did not belong to her—that, like the sun and the air and the sky, it belonged to all. She began to sing for the poor people in the cities and for the peasants in the little villages, giving them the glorious music their poverty had always forbidden them. She then began to see how poor their condition was, how oppressed they were. She began to think, and to think is to become a Revolutionist. Her husband was a high government official, and naturally he opposed her new beliefs. She had to choose, and rather than give up the people she gave up him, and threw herself with all her soul into the Revolutionary movement. Other leaders preached Freedom; she sang Freedom.

For a while her rank shielded her, but one night after she had sung the Marsellaise at a Revolutionist meeting, making the sobs leap from all, the police came for her. In course of time she was thrown into a cell beside me—and oh, she was a wonderful prison mate! When the guards were not about she would sing softly, yet so that we could hear, songs of the Revolution in that magnificent voice which had won the public of Moscow; and in the middle of the black prison night her voice would come softly through the walls, through the darkness, singing folk-songs, or airs from the opera, or thrilling hymns of Freedom. For almost three years it was so. Then she was claimed by that dread disease of the Russian prisons—tuberculosis; and one day, rap, rap, rap, there came through the walls this message:

"My strength is going—I can do no more for Freedom—I cannot bear the thought!"

I heard her glorious voice no more. She hung herself with her handkerchief.

Four years of prison dampness and of black bread and thin soup, so blanched, so thinned me, that a government doctor reported me a harmless wreck. I was tried, found innocent, and discharged to die. But I did not die. A few months in the little stone house in my beautiful valley, and I again had strength for the work of Freedom. I disguised myself in a new name—Ivanoff—and returned to the cause. Four years of agitation followed. I formed Revolutionary societies all through the Baltic Provinces—spoke at secret meetings for the working people—organized such meetings for other speakers.

There were crowds of twenty, of hundreds, of thousands—in private houses, in halls, always so secretly—in the forests with guards stationed about to give warning of the approach of officers. Four thousand peasants and workingmen have I seen at one of these forest meetings. The forests!—what have they not done for Russia's Freedom.

I was in the massacre of "Bloody Sun-

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day" in St. Petersburg in January of last year. It was then that the Little Father showed how he loves his children. He paved the streets with their bodies. He filled the gutters with their blood. The police learned of my active part and I fled to Narva, where I kept almost constantly to my room for several weeks. One night when I was fast asleep, there came a pounding at my door and a cry of "Open!" I heard the rattle of sabres. I knew what was without—gendarmes. There was not a moment to be lost, for the gendarmes began to beat down the door with their guns. I sprang from my bed, smashed the window with my bare hand and leaped out into the snow. I had on only a nightgown. It was cold, but I did not think of the cold; I thought only of the gendarmes. My room was near the edge of the town, and half a mile into the country was the house of a friend. Never before did I run as I ran to my friend's house—through the concealing night, disguised as a fisherman. I was carried across the gulf of Finland by a group of fisherfolk in their little sail-boat. From Finland I crossed to Berlin, where I lived until last October, when the general amnesty extended by the government made it possible for me to return to Russia.

The Revolutionists had long believed that it was the uniform the soldiers obeyed, not the man in it. If the soldier honored only the uniform, what possibilities for us! I determined to test our belief. I went to Kronstadt, where fourteen thousand marines were stationed, and with the aid of several of the non-commissioned officers who were my comrades, I prepared for the experiment. At two o'clock one night an officer in each barracks drummed the war alarm. The fourteen thousand marines sprang from their cots, leaped into their uniforms and seized their arms.

"To the streets!" commanded the officers.

The soldiers marched out. I was waiting before the barracks in a great false beard and in the uniform of a general which had been given me by my Revolutionary Father. At my command the soldiers fell into order, and I led them through the streets of Kronstadt to the fortress where were several soldiers under sentence to be shot the following day. The police and the gendarmes fled before us; the army officers, drinking and gambling in their clubs, rushed forth in wild fear;—and police, gendarmes, officers, joined in a stampede for the boats, on which they fled from the Island to St. Petersburg. Kronstadt was ours.

We reached the fortress and released the imprisoned soldiers. My experiment was a success. The soldiers obeyed only a uniform. It was enough.

"Back to the barracks!" I ordered.

I had roused the whirlwind, but I could not quiet it. One uniform among fourteen thousand soldiers was nothing. Those about me obeyed the orders of the uniform I wore, but beyond this circle my words were lost. For two hours I shouted vain commands. Then I went to my room, threw off my beard and uniform, and returned to the streets an ordinary citizen. The soldiers entered the deserted clubs of the officers, smoked their cigars, drank their wine, spread themselves in disorder through all Kronstadt. Thus it was for two days, the officers and the police looking fearfully on, as it were, from St. Petersburg. At the end of the two days the soldiers sobered down of their own accord, the officers and the police bravely returned, and Kronstadt was once more the Czar's.

Shortly after this, the Czar's Manifesto, filled with golden promises, was published. We were suspicious, but we thought there might be truth in the Czar's words. At least there was no longer need for secrecy. In the Baltic Provinces we talked openly of a representative government, of universal suffrage, of a Republic. Officialdom took fright and ran away. The priests and pastors, who are government officers, fled into the German provinces, and we made of their deserted churches temples of Freedom. We elected a president and other officers, we appointed our own police. For a month there was a Republic in the Baltic Provinces. It seemed that beautiful Freedom was at hand!

Toward the end of November two hundred and forty Revolutionist representatives from all over Russia came together in St. Petersburg to formulate and discuss plans that we would want carried out under the liberal rule we saw ahead. We made no attempt at concealment, for the Czar's manifesto had given us to believe we had

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freedom of speech; we had forgotten the Czar's government is just a lie. We met late at night in a large hall, situated, according to the Russian custom of building, in a yard enclosed by a high wall. The chairman had just called the meeting to order and had said no more than a dozen or two words, when suddenly there came from the rear of the hall the sharp slam of a closing door.

We all sprang up and looked about. Just inside the main door stood a man wearing a long gray coat brilliant with epaulets and gold buttons, a cockaded red-banded hat and high spurred boots, with a sabre swinging at his side—the chief of the St. Petersburg police.

"This meeting is under arrest," he remarked, in a quiet, cold voice.

While we gazed astounded at him four doors swung open and there entered some sixty policemen. They marched to the ends of the rows of seats, beckoned the representatives with their forefingers, and said very politely, "Please." That one word was all. But it was enough. The representatives saw they were trapped, saw escape was impossible. They came forward, were turned over to the soldiers who had appeared behind the police, and were led prisoners from the hall.

But I did not go with my friends. Day and night for fifteen years I have momently expected arrest. This has given me the instinct, the habits, of the hunted animal. One of my habits has been never to sit down at a meeting save beside a door or window through which I could leap. On this night I had obeyed the hunted animal in me, and with one friend I had taken a seat near a little side door. The instant I saw the Chief of Police I seized the arm of my friend and sprang through the door. We found ourselves in a narrow hall in which burned a single electric light. I smashed the bulb with my hand so that the police could not see to follow, and rushed through the hall into a room that I found to be the women's dressing room. In this there was a little window that gave upon a lower roof. We leaped down upon this roof, and from it jumped through the darkness two stories to the ground—I from one side of the roof, he from the other, thereby becoming separated. When I scrambled to my feet I discovered myself in the yard and among half a dozen soldiers. I was without overcoat and hat—a very suspicious figure; and having neither, I could not escape even could I get by the soldiers who surrounded me.

I jerked a card from my pocket—to this day I do not know what it was—and handed it to one of the soldiers. "Here is my card," I said rapidly. "I am a member of the Secret Police. One of these Revolutionists is trying to escape. I am after him. Quick! Give me your coat and hat!"

He automatically obeyed. I slipped on his coat and hat and to all appearances was a soldier of the Czar. I walked past the guarded gate of the yard, out into the street. Before me were thousands of soldiers. I saw my friends being brought down from the hall and put into black vans about which stood guards of Cossacks. I marched through my friends (all of that group are in prison to-day, save only myself and the friend that escaped with me) with the air of a soldier on a very important message, and pressed on through the mass of other soldiers that filled the street.

Then I hurried on to a railroad station to catch a train that I knew left St. Petersburg shortly after midnight.

At the station there was just one other traveler—a little furtive man in a coat whose sleeves fell far below his hands, whose tails almost swept the station platform and whose girth could have encircled him twice. He wore a silk hat that was constantly dropping to his chin, and his face was streaked with black lines. My curiosity roused, I drew nearer this odd figure, but as he saw me approaching in in my soldier's uniform he turned quickly to run away. The act brought his face for a moment into a sharper light. I was startled.

"Brunoff!" I called softly.

He paused, and glanced back. Sure enough, it was the friend who a few minutes before had leaped through the window with me.

When I had stopped laughing, and when we were settled in the train, he told me his story. On making his escape (he too was without overcoat and hat) he had hurried to the house of a huge-bodied friend, only to learn from the maid that the friend was out. Among us is the rule, "If you have a coat and your brother

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has none, the coat is your brother's." My friend rushed to the dressing room, seized the only coat and hat in sight, put them on, and then chanced to look into the mirror. The flame red hair and the flame red beard he saw there advertised his identity. Hair and beard must be dyed—but how? He had only seconds. Upon a writing table in the room he saw an ink-well. He dipped his fingers into the ink and ran them through his hair and beard. Then he clapped the big silk hat upon his head and hurried to the station. But he had applied too much of the hair-dye, and not applied it well, His hair and beard were alternate streaks of red and of a matted dripping black, and ink drops trickled down his face. And the great silk hat that at every jar dropped suddenly to the chin, eclipsing everything! Such a Revolutionist! It was a marvel he had not been arrested.

The arrest of these representatives was the end of our short dream of Freedom as a gift from the Czar. At once the Czar began the "pacification" of the Baltic Provinces. Soldiers and Cossacks poured in. Count Witte said, "I shall kill one in ten in the Baltic Provinces;" and of how well he kept his word you in America have heard only the faintest part. Thousands of homes were wantonly burned, often the homes of those who had taken no part in the brief Republic. My own beautiful valley was devastated, my own house razed to the ground. Of the thousand who were killed most were women and children. The husbands and brothers managed to escape, and the Czar's "peace," not to be denied, accepted the wives and sisters as substitutes.

During the "peace" massacres I made frequent trips from St. Petersburg to the towns and cities of the Baltic Provinces, to learn the state of affairs there and carry the story back to our leaders in Petersburg. A reward of fifteen thousand roubles had just been put upon my head, but I wore the uniform of a Commissioner of Criminals, and in this disguise I went freely among the men who were looking for me. Once I had to join in the search for myself. The things I saw during this reign of "peace" I can never forget; history cannot forget them, for they are written in fire and blood. I saw soldiers apply the torch to houses, and a little later I saw only ashes there. I saw wives shot down, children bayonetted. It was one vast murder of the innocent. Powerless to help, I looked upon the death of scores I knew. In one town I saw three friends, all teachers, tied together to one telephone post; I saw ten Cossacks take their stand a few paces away; I saw them raise their rifles; I saw the fire leap from their guns; I saw the brave heads of my comrades falling; I heard their dying "Oi!" Oi!" One of the three straightened up, despite the bullets in him, and cried out, "You may kill us, but our memory will take vengeance on you!" The next instant the guns flashed once more and he hung limp against the binding cords.

Yes, it was one vast murder!

The man that gave this last cry had a brother who is one of the chief revolutionary leaders, and last January, during these massacres, this brother was captured by five Cossacks and held in a little village in the Province of Pskov. A friend of mine learned of the capture, went to the Cossacks and offered a hundred roubles for their prisoner's release. But the Cossacks, seeing that their prisoner must be a man of prominence, demanded five hundred, and the friend came to St. Petersburg and asked my help. We raised the amount, and I returned with him to the little village. But in the meantime the Cossacks had discovered the government was offering three thousand roubles for their prisoner, so we were now met with a demand for thirty-five hundred. We quickly called a meeting of friends in the neighborhood, and after a long discussion we decided that Freedom needed the money more than did the Cossacks.

Toward midnight eight of us drove to the house (it was a sort of village prison and stood just outside the town) where our friend was held. It was bitter cold, the snow was falling heavily, a high roaring wind swirled the flakes blindingly about—an ideal night for our adventure. We drew up quietly behind the house and crept round to the entrance. There stood two of the Cossacks on guard. We leaped suddenly upon them, and threw over the head of each a large grain sack, the inside of which we had sprinkled with snuff. The snuff entered their throats and noses, they could only sneeze and cough—could not cry out. We bound them, then

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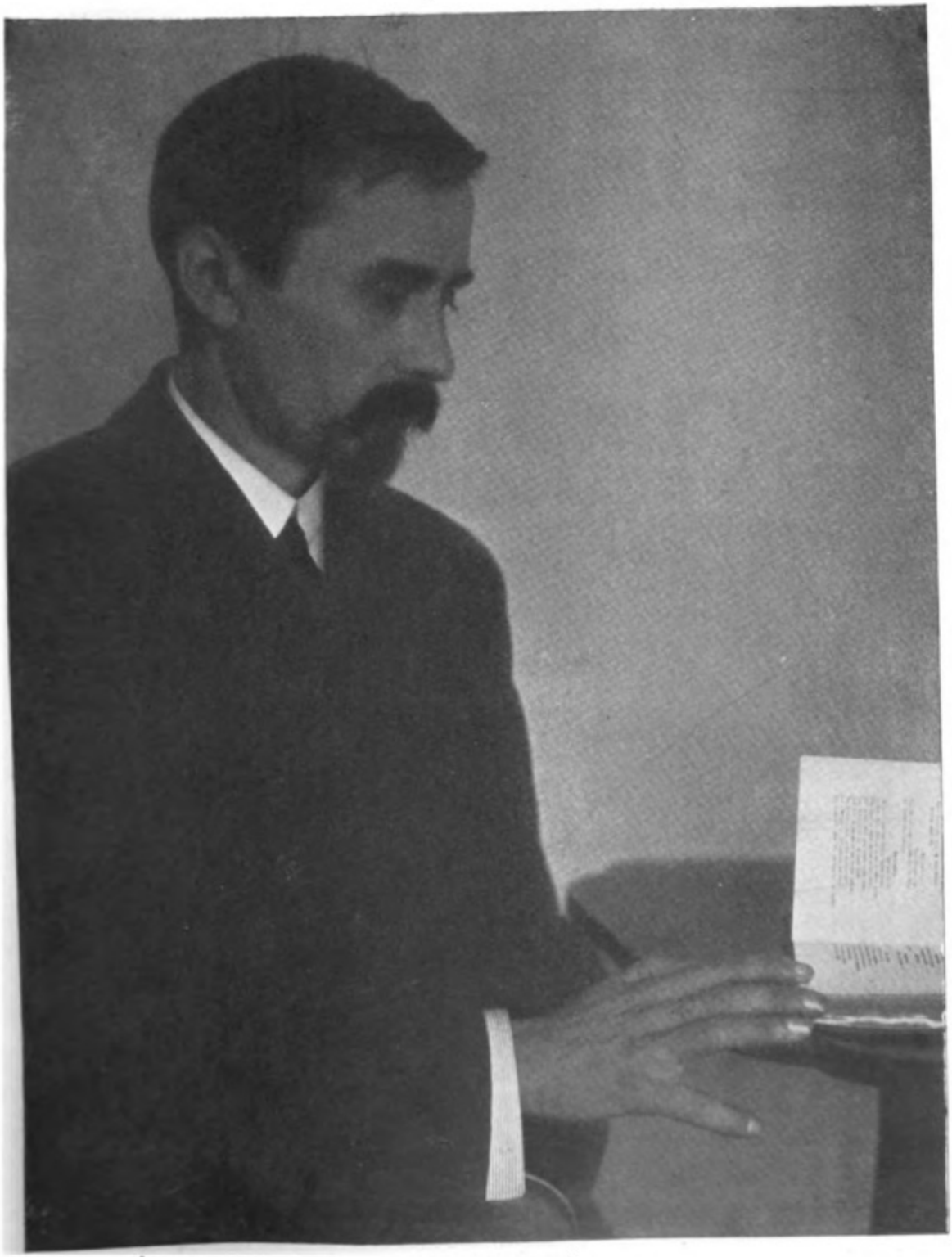

Ivanovitch Narodny

A fine type of the professional Russian revolutionist.

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softly entered the house. He found the other three Cossacks in bed. Before they could open an eye we were upon them, and in another minute they, too, were bound. We took our comrade from the cell, carried the five Cossacks into the same cell and locked them there. Then my friend and I hurried our comrade into the sleigh and galloped off through the furious night.

All night we drove, through fierce wind and stinging snow. At length the wind began to still, the snow to fall no more, the East to lighten. Soon all was calm—which was fitting, for this was the Sabbath morning—my last in Russia. For long we had driven through a thick forest, when suddenly we came into an open space, and before us we saw a picture that caused us to rein in our weary horses. Amid the open space stood a beautiful monastery—the monastery where lies buried the great poet, Pushkin. Into it moved groups of peasants, peaceful faced. From its steeple broke forth the peaceful Sabbath song of the bells. All about was the white peace of the snow. Above the mountains that crowded about the monastery, the morning sun was rising, serene and mighty—gloriously peaceful. Peace —everywhere peace! We sat minute after minute, without words, the tears running down our faces. Peace! Ah, my country! when will that peace be yours!

The next day we reached St. Petersburg. After three days and nights of talking the St. Petersburg leaders saw that to be free, as you in America are free, we must have help. So we decided that I was to come to America, and ask aid of the free for the enslaved. I escaped across the frontier in the sheepskin coat, in the sheepskin hat, in the stupid face, of a Finnish peasant; and here I am, at the beginning of my mission.

He ended. The glow faded from his gentle face: his sadness deepened. He was seeing the Unforgetable Miseries. Then the week-old English resumed, with desperate intensity: "I have been in this America one week, and already do I not speak the English language fluently!" The voice leaped up like a flame. "But I shall it learn! Then to American peoples will I speak the sufferings of Russian peoples. I will say, "Help us be free!" and they will help; they are rich—their hearts are great.

"Then—Oh, my Russia!—Freedom!"

Wu:—The Personality Behind the Chinese Boycott

By D. R. Marquis

WU TING FANG is the Chinese boycott. When I first read that there was the mischief to pay in China, a few months ago, I put it down to my old friend, Mr. Wu.

Wu Ting Fang's real mission in America was to find out all he could about Americans. Thus, the millions of questions which he asked, however impertinent they may have seemed, were always pertinent ones. Even while he was indulging in some subtle bit of mockery concerning a phase of American life, he was getting information. He was trying to size up the American character with the idea of finding out what the probable American attitude towards China would be in the future. And he was a whole anti-exclusion lobby, a whole press agency in himself, although he was always clever enough not to overtly over-step the bounds of diplomatic usage.

And it is in Wu Ting Fang's brain that the idea of striking the Americans through their pocket-books originated. He used to say, with a fine scorn of occidental pretensions to civilization, that the pocket-book was the only point about an American that was vulnerable.

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Wu Ting Fang: principal promoter of the Chinese boycott against American goods

I remember the first time that I ever interviewed the Chinese minister—the ungrateful man whom I made famous has likely forgotten it himself. A pamphlet concerning Chinese exclusion had been written and the city editor of the Washington paper on which I worked took it into his head that if Wu was not the author he was at least the inspiration, and had something to do with the distribution. If such were the case, Wu had committed a great breach of diplomatic courtesy; for the pamphlet was directly designed to influence the course of pending legislation; and it would be up to the Chinese minister to explain himself. I was sent down to the legation to get whatever story there was in it.

Wu came down the stairs holding my card in his hand.

"Are you an American?" he said.

I said I was.

"Then why have you stolen a European title?"

I humbly insisted that the name on my card, D. R. Marquis, was not a title but a name.

"No," he said, "you Americans are all alike, you are always pretending to be things that you are not." And always

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after that he called me, by turns, Duke, Marquis, Count, etc.

I had come to interview him, but Wu interviewed me.

"Are you a liar, Marquis?" he said.

I said that I was a liar, and that I was a pretty good liar, too, but that I could never hope to be considered so good a liar as an oriental diplomat.

"Why do you ask, anyhow," I added.

"Well, all newspaper men are liars," he said.

"It is a trick which we have learned from the diplomatic corps," I told him.

It seemed to make a hit with him, and that gave me the cue as to how to handle him.

"If you had not been a very clever liar yourself, you would not have written this thing," I said, and I pulled out the pamphlet against Chinese exclusion.

Wu lost his temper, "went up in the air," and for fully two minutes could not express himself in English. He flew round the room like a chicken, his pig tail waving in fury. But I suspected that he wasn't really so angry—that he only wanted to "run a bluff." Finally he calmed down, got a grip on white man's talk again, and asked:

"What makes you think I wrote it?"

"The arguments are exactly the same as those which you continually advance against the exclusion act," I said, "and they are put forth in the same way."

He denied the authorship, of course, and then said:

"Whether I wrote it, or not, do you not think the arguments are correct? Why should you be so superficial as to consider the point of authorship more important than the arguments, you newspaper man? What difference does the authorship make if the arguments are just —but you are all superficial—all Americans are superficial."

And then he added:

"You Americans are pigs."

I suppose he told me that about a thousand times during the period in which I knew him.

When I wrote my story I said very little about the pamphlet on Chinese exclusion. I described the interview, dwelling on the gyrations of the distinguished gentleman when I presented the pamphlet. The story was what newspapers call a "funny story," and it pleased the city editor. After that, Wu became my regular assignment, and in less than a month the Chinese minister appeared to be enjoying the interviews himself.

Wu was the most inquisitive and most cynical individual I ever knew. No phase of American life escaped him. His thousands of questions might seem at the moment to be entirely irrelevant, but all the time he was building up his estimate of the American character. He had a most genuine and most profound contempt for western art, morals, manners and institutions. He considered us graceless barbarians. He said that we had not learned how to live yet. He was more severe with us than Henry James and much more to the point. Our philosophies, he showed, had come to us from the East; and our religions as well; but we had perverted the spirit of both. Christianity was well enough, in its way, but we did not practice it. No, we were barbarians; our morality was a pretence, our liberty was an illusion, we had nothing but brutal strength. And we would wither and pass from the face of the earth in a few centuries, while China, that has lasted so many ages and seen so many young empires arise and die, would still exist. But this latter he did not believe himself, I think. For while he had a very genuine scorn for what he considered our barbarity, our uncivilized and uncultivated state of existence, he would not have thought us worth hating if he had not seen that we are strong. He feared and shrank from the terrible youth and virility of the occident even while he decried its barbarity. He was petulant that we should be so strong. In reality, he was here to study our exuberant young strength, and what it means to Asia. He found out that we do not know ourselves what it means to Asia, and he used to remark on that, too. He could not understand our professions of national morality; he disbelieved in their sincerity, and so, finding this country strong, and not an international bully, he put down our lack of aggressiveness to stupidity instead of to morality. And it seems to me that it is Wu's estimate of the American character which is guiding China in her relations with America to-day. Wu, in getting the boycott inaugurated, did nor in all probability think that it would

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lead to more serious trouble. He believed that the attack upon the American pocketbook would be sufficient to gain certain concessions; he saw us both stupid, as he called it, and mercenary, but he overestimated our cupidity as a nation. He thought the conscience—which he could not understand—and the cupidity would work together to prevent a war. We were strong and brutal, and insincere in our moral professions, he thought; but nevertheless we were so mercenary that this latter quality would outweigh the others and that we would yield to the Chinese in some things in order to save our commerce. But it appears that the racial feeling to which he appealed has got beyond him. The point which he was always wondering about, but of which he said nothing for publication—what the future attitude of this stupid America might be towards China—may be settled sooner than he believed.

It is not to be supposed that he made any of these points aforesaid for direct publication. He amused himself by talking freely to me, because he knew that anything he said in a personal conversation would not be "played up" in such a manner as to place him in a light in which no minister cares to be placed. The "jollies" he did not mind. And frequently I would print a serious interview in which he would give his side of the Chinese question. I think there was a tacit understanding to the effect that if I would occasionally quote him seriously and respectfully I had *carte blanche*, the rest of the time, to make as much humorous copy out of his personal eccentricities as I chose. He did not really care about that after he saw that the first two interviews did not kill him. There is nothing like catching a man unspoiled and training him how to be interviewed.

Wu speaks English very well, and is a confirmed punster. Once I ran across him in the Corcoran Art gallery, where I had been sent to write something about an exhibition of portraits by Hubert Vos, a noted Dutch painter of racial types. Vos had portraits of Chinese mandarins, Siamese notables, Japanese and Javanese gentlemen—a whole show of faces gathered from the ends of the earth. The painter was there himself, showing the Chinese minister about the hemicycle—an animated chorus of feminine art students—including several he-feminine art students in Windsor ties—forming a background. Wu paused before a portrait study.

"Who's that?" he asked.

"Li Hung Chang," said Vos.

"No, no, no, no," said Wu. "Not Li. It does not look like him."

"But," pleaded the painter, "it's only a study—and it's a three-quarters view."

"It does not look three-quarters like him," returned Wu, quick as a flash. And the Hollander wondered why the art students laughed—he never "tumbled."

Here is another instance of Wu's pursuit of an idea. One evening I was walking along Massachusetts Ave., near Rock Creek, with a young lady. Came paddling through the dusk several of Wu's family, and one of the interpreters, or secretaries, of the legation, with Wu bringing up the rear pushing a bicycle. He stopped to light his lamp, and noticed the girl and myself. It happened that he had met her a number of times in a social way. She asked after Madame Wu, etc. Finally Wu pointed to me with a puzzled look, and said:

"Are you married?"

We denied it.

"Umph! Engaged?"

Breathless denials.

Thought on Wu's part. Evidently here was some phase of American life rather new to him. How was it that this Marquis, whom he knew as an ordinary scrub of a reporter, should be walking about with this young woman whom he had met at various hifalutin functions? It puzzled him.

"What's the reason you don't get married then?" he asked us.

Which was rather embarrassing, as I hadn't known the young lady very long.

He got on his wheel and rode off a little way. Suddenly he turned round and rode back.

"Say, you people," he said, "there's a nice dark place to sit down over there on the bridge."

He was never satisfied until he had pried to the bottom of a situation. He was in America to pry out the meaning of situations. And generally the things which seemed merely impertinent enough when he said them, after reflection on your part, assumed more significance than that.

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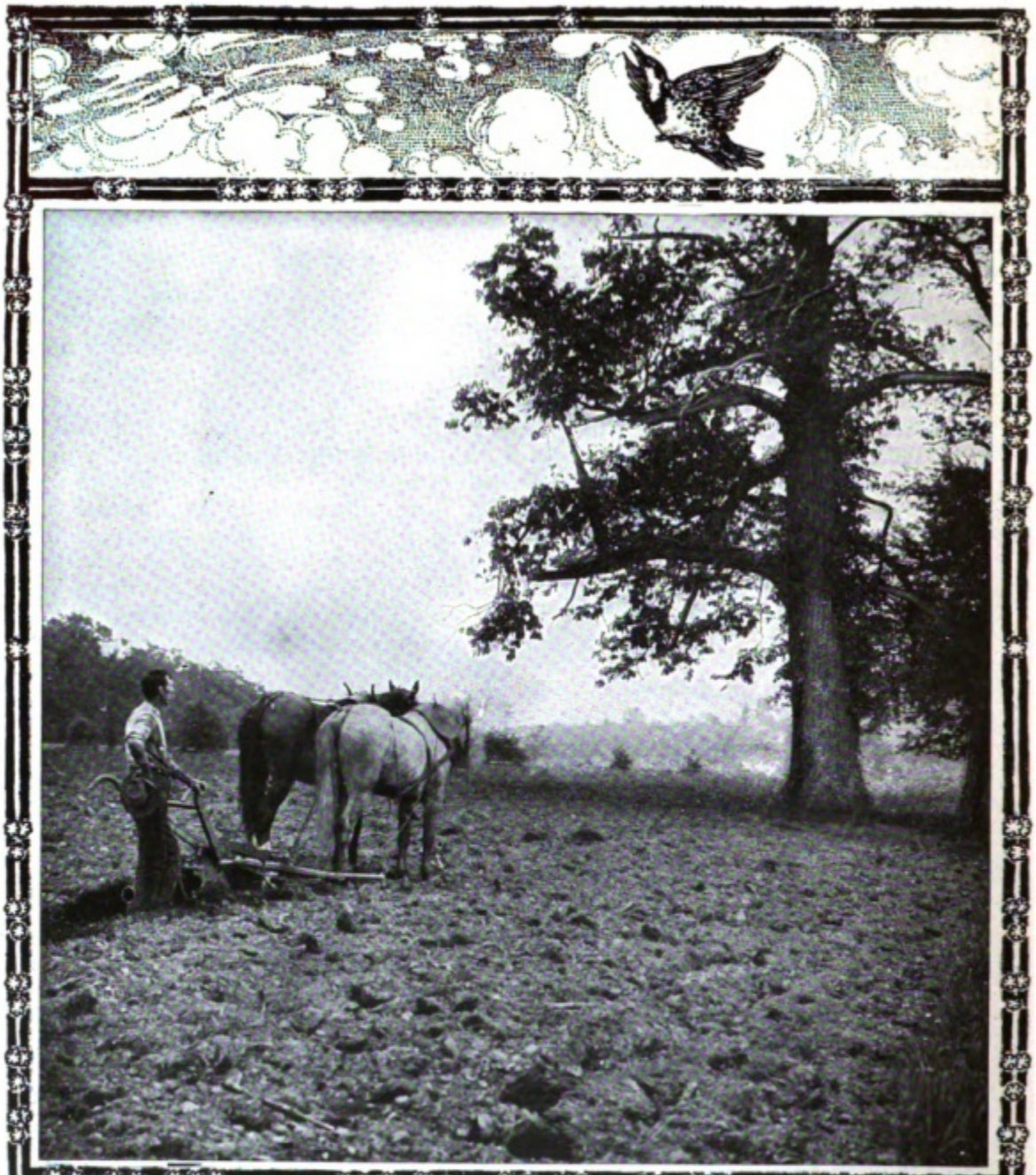

Pat and the Meadow Lark

By Fred Emerson Brooks

HELLO! and you're the meadow lark
That sings to me most every day
And stops me work and bids me hark
Wid ears and eyes both turned your way.

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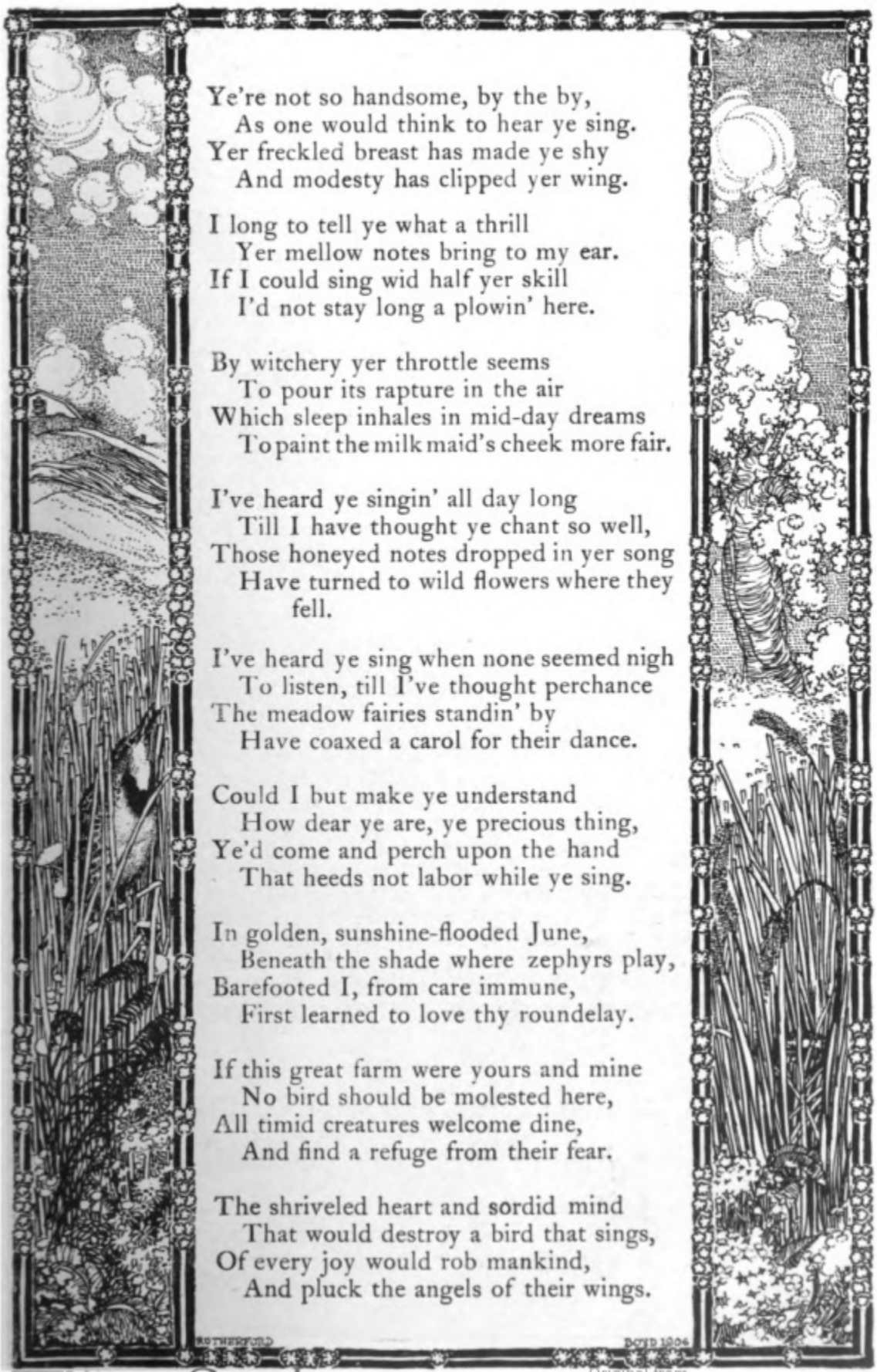

Ye're not so handsome, by the by,
As one would think to hear ye sing.
Yer freckled breast has made ye shy
And modesty has clipped yer wing.

I long to tell ye what a thrill
Yer mellow notes bring to my ear.
If I could sing wid half yer skill
I'd not stay long a plowin' here.

By witchery yer throttle seems
To pour its rapture in the air
Which sleep inhales in mid-day dreams
To paint the milk maid's cheek more fair.

I've heard ye singin' all day long
Till I have thought ye chant so well,
Those honeyed notes dropped in yer song
Have turned to wild flowers where they fell.

I've heard ye sing when none seemed nigh
To listen, till I've thought perchance
The meadow fairies standin' by
Have coaxed a carol for their dance.

Could I but make ye understand
How dear ye are, ye precious thing,
Ye'd come and perch upon the hand
That heeds not labor while ye sing.

In golden, sunshine-flooded June,
Beneath the shade where zephyrs play,
Barefooted I, from care immune,
First learned to love thy roundelay.

If this great farm were yours and mine
No bird should be molested here,
All timid creatures welcome dine,
And find a refuge from their fear.

The shriveled heart and sordid mind
That would destroy a bird that sings,
Of every joy would rob mankind,
And pluck the angels of their wings.

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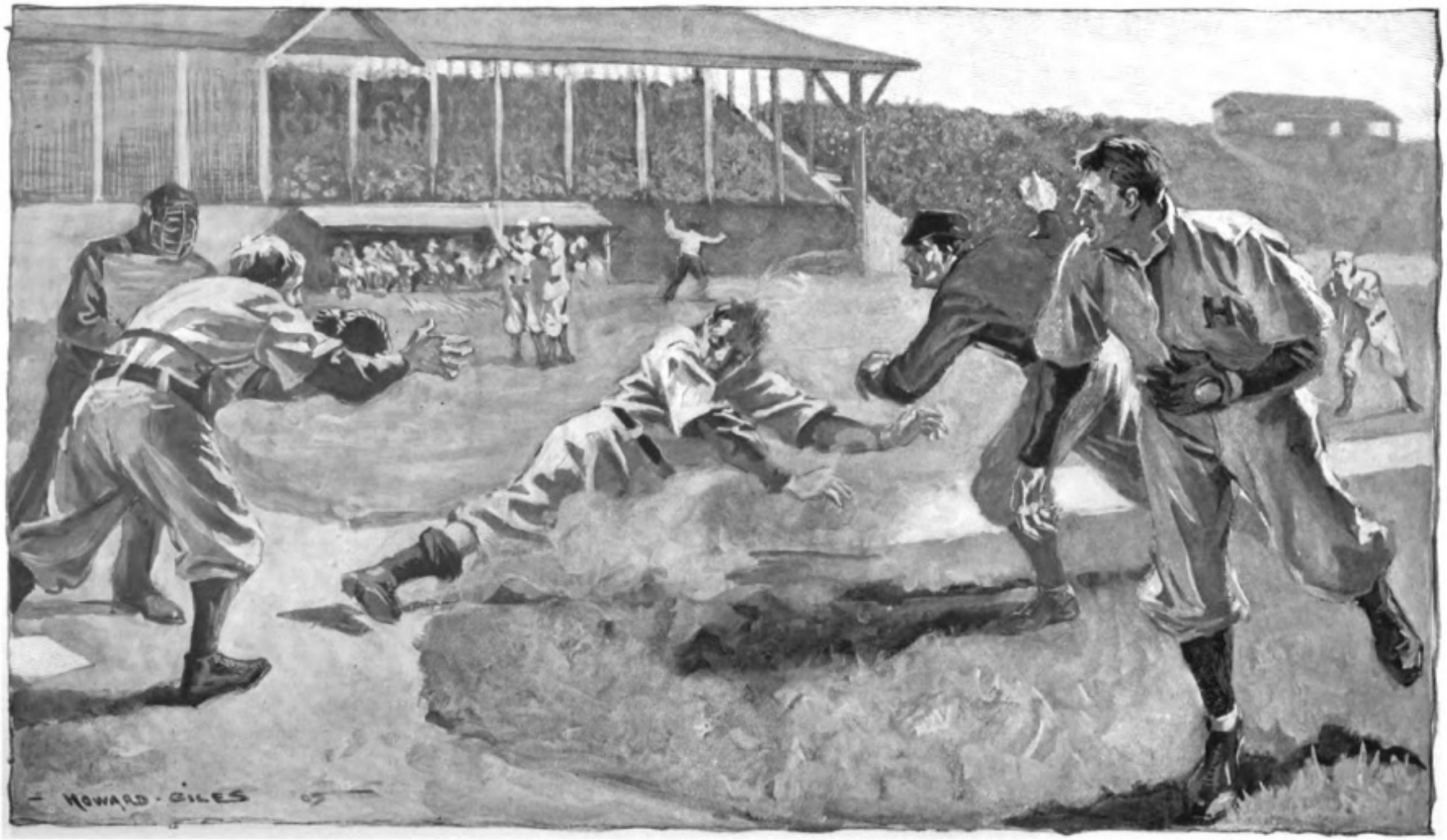

"Home, home!" . . . Yale scores once more

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In the Winning of the Game

By Edward Balmer

ILLUSTRATED BY HOWARD GILES

"BANNING!" Confidently it comes. "*Banning!*" Proudly now; and now as the cheer sweeps its volume into the mighty challenge of the thousands, "*Banning!*"

As though the explosion in the Harvard stands detonates latent mines, from the opposite side of the field the quicker, sharper Yale cheers crash back, and now—so suddenly that the heavy-breathing sigh of suspense seems the element of silence—a strange hush, stifling and oppressive, settles over the crowded stands. The first blue-stockinged player steps nearer the square rubber plate; behind him the crimson-clad catcher crouches quickly; but as he signals with his hand, a nervous laugh from the bleachers on both sides and the soft clatter of hand-clapping in the open air brings him erect again.

The umpire tears away the tinfoil and tosses out a clean white ball; the new shortstop drops back a foot or two imperceptibly; the freshman outfielder draws in eagerly and, suddenly recollecting himself, runs back again to his position. "Play ball!" Banning, the Harvard captain and pitcher, throws his weight from left foot to right, and as the right hurls the body ahead, his arm flashes forward still more quickly. "Strike!" The game is on.

It is more than baseball that the twenty thousand, packed into that blunt wedge about the diamond, have come to see; and the teams are met for more than a game. They have a hundred traditions to uphold, a thousand promises to fulfill; and over them all breathes the glory of the ancient rivalry and the pride of supremacy for Harvard or Yale. It comes to the fathers and mothers, with the sisters and little brothers who are down for the first class-day and commencement; it comes to the girls from home, from Wellesley or Smith or Vassar, though they know not one base from another; it comes to the most staid professors in their special reserved seats and to the little Cambridge muckers on the roof of the locker building far away; it comes with the hot glow of recollection to the seniors about to leave and with the burning eagerness of anticipation to the little subfreshman about to enter; to all the cheering undergraduates it comes; and to the alumni—the "grads" from Billy and Roger, back for their first reunion, to the gray-haired men who marched out of Harvard Yard over forty years ago when Lincoln called for volunteers—to all of them it comes, like a breath from the fountain of youth, and makes them as boys at college once more.

So the sum of all that makes the class day game—and makes its danger and excitement, too. For sometimes the realization of his great charge and responsibility comes to a new player, suddenly and sickeningly in the midst of a play, and his coolness and skill is forgotten. Then the panic spreads to the others who have never before undergone the strain of the class-day game, while the older players fight that panic doggedly, silently. Like a hidden and smouldering fire, it can not be fairly uncovered and fought openly, lest it burst forth more violently and sweep the whole team before it; so they fight the more desperately to "brace" the team before it is too late. For all the time the opposing team is piling up runs.

Knowing this the great crowds gaze down with the thrill of great hope and fear; for Yale has a veteran team—beaten last year, to be sure, but still a veteran team. But Harvard has six new men where the old "stalwarts" of last year stood; and two of these new men are freshmen, substituted at the last moment when the regulars were hurt. There are besides Gardiner in centre, Boughton in right field, and Banning, the captain and pitcher.

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That is Boughton at bat now, for Donnell, the first man up for Harvard, is out. The rightfielder hits and gains his base. Banning bunts and though he is thrown out at first his sacrifice has advanced Boughton to second base. Two are out and a hit can score a run, as Boughton is leading far from his base: but Gardiner's long, hard drive is caught brilliantly by Flanders, the Yale captain, in centrefield and Boughton cannot score. The inning is over.

And now like the first, inning after inning passes without score. Twice Yale gets a man to third base with but one out; but twice the Harvard infielders, playing in close, cut off the runners at the plate. Once, with but one out, Harvard filled the bases; but Yale, playing coolly and quickly, retired the side with a lightning double-play. Another inning is gone, and another, and still no score. Are those "green," almost untried infielders of Harvard to prove equal to the veterans of Yale? Can they keep up that steady, sure support of their captain? For if they can, Banning the unbeaten—dear old Banning, who for three years has never failed to win in baseball the supremacy Harvard lost on river and gridiron—Banning can surely win again. But wait.

The best batters of Yale, leading the batting list, are up. It is the seventh inning—the "lucky seventh." As the surface of the Yale stands rises suddenly and sways in rhythm with the blue flags breaking out higher above it, at first you seem to see rather than hear that the "Elis" are singing. Then the "Boola" comes, quickening, enlivening, inspiring; Harvard replies with the "On, on to Victory," of its *Marseillais;* and now as the deeper Harvard cheers end, the sharp, crackling "Brek-ek-ek-ek, C'ax, c'ax" breaks out in quicker accent as Yale cheers its players going to bat.

The crack of the bat hitting the ball; a roar; another cheer from Yale as Perry steps to the plate; another crack as the wood again strikes the leather; another roar—and look! Two Yale men are on the bases; Flanders, who gained first, when Norton, the Harvard short-stop, fumbled his grounder, is on second base now; and Perry, on the error by Kenton which advanced Flanders from first to second, is now safe on the first bag. You have seen Yale runners on the bases before in the game; and you have seen them put out by the steady, accurate work of those same Harvard infielders who are still before you. Why do you mistrust them now? No; it cannot be mistrust; it is only a little nervousness which makes the men all about you jump up suddenly and then throw themselves back in their seats where they reassure themselves in unconscious whispers. Perhaps, too, it is only a little natural anxiety which brings the Harvard coach to his feet and keeps him staring, motionless and rigid, till he recollects himself and drops back upon the bench. There *can't* be anything the matter, and yet—and yet there is a change.

But Banning—good old Banning who does not, who can not fail—he has the ball again. He seems intent upon studying the fresh batter who faces him, and Flanders leads further away from second base. The Yale runner is creeping almost imperceptibly further and further away toward third when the Harvard catcher snaps his hand to one side; and at the signal, Banning turns. With the flash and accuracy of instinct and practice, he has thrown the ball almost before facing about; and now he smiles with relief, for he sees that he has caught the Yale runner far off the base and that Norton and Kenton are ready to receive his throw. The put-out is sure, *sure*, when—the leather crashes through Kenton's nervous fingers. Norton, clutching frantically, only strikes the ball to deflect it and send it flying off between left and centre fields. The sure put-out is an error; and the Yale players stand now on third and second bases.

Again Banning, in the pitcher's box takes the ball and faces the batter. He can hear the movements about him as the infielders draw closer and the diamond begins filling up. In their new positions less than forty feet to each side, Banning knows that the first and third basemen are set, like springs, to jump at the crack of the bat. Nearer on each side and a little behind, he knows that his second basemen and short-stop are playing well up to get an infield hit in time to shut off Flanders when he runs in from third base. Always before—even in the other innings of this same game—when his men closed in about him, Banning had felt instinctively their strength and support, but nothing like that comes to him now. Only from the outfield, from far out where Gardiner and Boughton stand useless and unable to help him in that crisis, comes the stay and comfort of a prop in the struggle. Yet Banning, too, realizes that before those oldest team-mates can help him, Yale will have scored. But stop! Is he,

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Banning, the captain of the team, looking for aid? Is he waiting for help? Is he *afraid* to fight it out alone? Afraid?

"Strike!" He remembered, from the year before, that Larson never could hit those high incurves just clipping the side of the plate and up between the elbow and shoulder. "Strike!" Yes; that certainly was Larson's weak spot, and the ball had found it again. "Ball." Banning didn't really think that Larson would be fooled by that. It was thrown quite perceptibly too far to one side. "Ball." That was closer, but Larson guessed correctly that it would curve away from the plate." Strike! Three strikes! Out!" Right in the weak spot again. But why are they cheering that? It was merely his duty. He *had* to do it. What is he captain for? Anyway, it is only a beginning. Gladding is up.

"Strike!" Just a straight one, right over the centre of the plate, but all Banning's strength and "steam" was behind it. "Strike!" A high "drop" which just glanced on the edge of the bat, but Washburne, the catcher, held it. "Strike—three! Striker out!" Gladding hurls his bat angrily upon the ground as he goes back to the bench, but he might have known that last one was going to be a strike. Banning has no time or strength to waste on pitching extra balls. Gladding was not much of a batter, anyway.

Two are out and the infielders are dropping back to their old positions. They can play to throw the batter out at first base and need not worry about Flanders at third. But the fury of the struggle is upon Banning. Another batter faces him.

"Strike!" "Foul!"—the second ball pitched. It goes up and up. Now it is falling and Washburne is under it. It's easy for him; he *can't* miss it with that big glove. "Out!" Yet the first relief which comes in the realization that Yale is retired without a score, gives way at once to the former wilder passion. That last easy put-out on the foul robbed Banning; he feels robbed as a wild beast is robbed, which, when the lust of killing is aroused, finds his prey, but finds it already slain. The hot desire to combat, to overcome, is still unsatisfied. He is glad that it is his turn at bat.

"Crash!" It is not the ordinary sharp sound of the bat hitting the ball, but the deeper, longer reverberation as the wood meets the leather and holds it for the full duration of the powerful, swinging stroke. At the sound, the Yale outfields scarcely wait to note the direction of the ball, but are running desperately back. Already the ball flies over and past them. As Banning is nearing second base it is dropping to the ground; as he turns second they pick the ball up. They are relaying it in now as Banning turns third and tears on; but the ball, on the long throw to the plate, comes faster still. Boughton, in the coaching box, jumps and waves his arms frantically. "Hold third!" And as the Yale catcher, after receiving the ball, snaps it to third base, Banning dives back and is safe on the bag.

Gardiner is up and hits for a base, scoring Banning, and he himself going to second base as the Yale left fielder has thrown to the plate in the vain hope of cutting off the run. Hunter, the Harvard left fielder, is up and on a lucky "double" to right scores Gardiner and puts himself on second base. And now, as he leads off, he can score on a long "single." "Crack!" A single! A single! Washburne has responded nobly and knocked the ball just over the head of the second baseman. Hunter, having a good start, is going to try to score, and the play will be very close. He slides, he slides, and the throw to the plate is just a bit off. It's terribly close, but Hunter is safe. Harvard three; Yale, nothing. Washburne could get no further than first base; but now, Adams, on a pretty bunt, is thrown out at first base, as his sacrifice advances Washburne to second. It is the chance now for another double or even for another good single to score Washburne and clinch the game with four runs before the Yale pitcher recovers his control. Who is up? Kenton?

It is his chance now to "make good" and retrieve his errors of last inning—but that is the danger. Banning throws his arm over the freshman's shoulder as he rises from the bench. "Meet the ball, Ken. Meet it fair and hard, but don't slash at it. Just meet it, old man. Don't try for a home run; don't try to 'kill' it. All we want is a good single. Remember, now. Firmly, Ken. Firm."

"Foul!" For a moment Kenton remembers and the ball flies just outside the third base line. A few feet further in and it would have been a fair hit. "Strike!" He started then on a steady even swing, but at the last instant his eagerness overcame him and he slashed at the end of the stroke. Of course he missed. "Strike!" Slashing at it openly now, striking blindly and madly; and now as the Yale pitcher throws quickly to follow

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up his advantage, "Strike!" Kenton is out. And Norton—Norton more eager, more anxious after Kenton's failure—he, too, strikes himself out, and Harvard is retired for the inning.

To those cheering crowds in the crimson stands, exultant over the three earned runs, that failure of Kenton's and Norton's means but the loss of another chance to score. But Banning, as he sees his men only more anxious and over-eager after the inning at bat, knows the rest that it means—and the former fury of his play is gone. It was wasting his strength too much. He plays coolly now, carefully adapting his play to the peculiarities of the batters facing him in turn. One by one they go down before him; three times he strikes them out and yet no batted ball has tested that wavering support or found the weakness in the players about him. Yet he hears without pride or triumph the great cheer as the third batter strikes out. It is only the eighth inning. The ninth is to come. Harvard, in its turn at bat, cannot score again. It is the ninth—and again the head of Yale's batting list is up.

For those seconds as the captains grimly face each other for the last time, once more a strange stillness is over the field; yet, unlike that when the game began, it is not breathless and oppressive. You can hear the even, rhythmical respiration of the crowds; and now, without signal or demonstration, the great masses begin to rise. There is a rustle, the swish of skirts and the subdued scraping of men's feet. The twenty thousand are standing and still no sound. That is grander, more terrible than sound.

"Strike!" The crowd? Is it seated or standing? Is it silent or cheering? Banning does not know. "Strike!" Is Flanders, the captain of Yale, to fail to lead a ninth inning rally? Twice that steady swing, that cool stroke of the bat brings nothing. And now the ball flies toward him the third time; but swiftly as it flies, Flanders draws the handle of the bat nearer. A hand slips halfway down the stick. Not swinging the bat or even holding it firm to meet the ball, but just stopping the ball with the dull "u-un-und" of the leather against the stick loosely held, Flanders bunts. The ball is rolling with a slow spinning motion just inside the third base line, but the Yale player, without stopping to watch it, is off toward first base. He is halfway there when Warden, running up from third base, is upon the ball. He stoops for it; but as he stoops the spinning becomes a rolling motion and it swerves to one side. Warden shifts quickly, but brushes the ball with his foot, and though now he has it ready to throw, Flanders is safe on first base. "A hit! A hit!"

Perry is up. Again the right hand stealing away from the handle of the bat which the left holds loosely. Again that dull, deadening crunch of the stick, not batting, but merely stopping the ball. Again the sphere rolls slowly toward third base. Like a flash Perry is off toward first, but quicker—even before the ball was hit—Banning runs forward. Yet as he sees the ball rolling to one side, he falls back to avoid blocking Warden. Warden has the ball already while Perry is still far from first base; but Flanders, having had a long lead, is almost upon second. There can be no hope of cutting off Flanders now, but Perry can easily be put out—yet, look! Warden is throwing to second—to second when Flanders is already there. He's safe; both runners are safe; Perry is on first and Flanders on second. No outs.

Never mind the uproar of encouragement and exhortation from the Harvard side; never mind the pandemonium in the Yale ranks. Larson is up. "Foul—strike!" Larson, attempting to bunt, fouls the ball and under the rule a strike is scored against him. "Foul—strike!" Another unsuccessful bunt, but the intent is certain. Will Yale do nothing but bunt? They can't *hit*—they can't drive the ball out squarely. Only twice in all the innings before have they been able to do so; and in those innings when a hit meant a run, Banning had beaten them all and struck them out. He, Banning, had fought them all alone; and how are they getting the advantage now? By hitting? No; by merely stopping the ball—any one can do that, but with any kind of an infield it means a sure out—and by laying down those weak bunts, those "sacrifice hits" which advance one man only at the cost of another. Yet now they are not sacrifices, but hits—hits giving the runner his base; and why? Through fault of Banning's?

"U-un-und." That bunt is easier still. It is rolling, smoothly and gently, right into Kenton's hands. He couldn't get it better. To second! Throw it to second and then to first base; it's easily a double play. They can't fail now as they failed in the seventh—Kenton and Norton. No; for Kenton is even now reaching for the ball as it almost stops before him. Yet he juggles it; he juggles it

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nervously in his anxious hands. Perry, running down from first base, is passing—passing Kenton as he clutches the ball firmly at last. As it is half-scooped, half tossed to the base in that last instant, Norton shoots forward his hands to receive it. Perry hurls himself forward recklessly. He's on the base now; but hasn't Norton the ball? What's the matter with him? What is he stooping for? Ah, the ball—the ball. He has dropped it and it rolls in the dust at his feet. The bases are full and none are out.

"Banning!" Reproachfully it sounds to him. "*Banning!*" Beseechingly now; and now as the voices of those thousands rise in the extreme demand upon him, "*Banning!*"

Don't they see? Can't they understand? Don't they see that it is not he who fails and that the infield, his support behind him, is gone to pieces? Can't they understand that those bunts which are winning for Yale now would be fatal to the blue if the Harvard pitcher had any support at all? Can't they comprehend that those desperate tactics of Yale—those bunts which depend only upon the nervous uselessness of the Harvard infield—show how hard he has pressed Yale? Do they reproach him now and demand more than he has already done? Have they already forgotten those innings in this very game when he fought them all alone—and allowed no score? Have they forgotten the Princeton game and the Pennsylvania game only a few days ago, the Yale game last year, the year before, and the year before that? Have they forgotten all that he has won for them that they reproach him now because his support is gone? It all flashes before him and he burns hot with quick anger at the ingratitude of those fickle thousands.

As the experiences of a drowning man's life whirl before his eyes in rapid panorama, the events of his career come now to Banning before the next batter faces him. He remembers how, as a little freshman long ago, he worked all fall pitching for the batting practice of the "scrubs," till they took him on the big reserve squad—only to work him all the harder during those long winter months of work in the "cage." He remembered the first joy as the spring came and he was put in during the last innings of a practice game with Trinity; and how the "Crimson" the next morning said: "Toward the end of the game, yesterday, the new men were tried out, and Banning, a freshman, seemed not without promise." He remembered how much harder he had worked after that till, when Hamilton was sick and Stanton hurt his arm and they were saving another pitcher for another game, they put in "Freshman Banning" against Amherst. And then came the strange, strengthening joy as he felt he held the game from first inning to last, so that even the "Crimson" admitted that he had "made good," and the "Bulletin" (which goes to the graduates) even said that "Banning, of '00, showed better control than any one else so far during the year, and as far as could be judged from one game he seems the logical successor to Stanton, who graduates this year." Then the Pennsylvania game came; and when Stanton, whose arm was not yet in good shape, had to leave the game, they put Banning in—and he won. He remembered then the first Yale game, when with all the betting against him, the "freshman phenomenon" went in and won that, too. And then he recalled the boy's vanity, the "swelled head" which he got just after that, but which Dashell, the captain in his sophomore year, good old Dashell, knocked out of him and made him the Banning which the whole college came to respect and love—and depend upon. For he never failed.

He remembered how they used to speak of that in the big mass-meetings at the Union; how they used to calmly assume that, whatever the eleven or the track team or the crew might do, the nine would always win—and it did. Then after that game he pitched against Yale in his junior year, he recollected how not only the college papers but the Boston and New York dailies began talking about him so much that two National League men came up to him and tried vainly to lure him away. He remembered, too, how, when his father's plant was burned down soon after and he really was "hard up" and had to tutor for his support, the professional players came back and tempted him again—but he sent them away. Then, though he tried to keep that secret, it leaked out somehow and even the professors, who disliked "the disproportionate attention paid modern sports," forgot themselves and came down to see him play—and kept on coming. And then, in his senior year, he was made captain without a dissenting vote or even a smothered criticism; and half the college was cheering him outside during the election for they knew how it would come out. And that brought him down to the present game.

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He never knew, until that instant, how very much that game meant to him. It was not merely the last game he should play for Harvard—and that was hard enough to think about—but it was the last big game he should ever play, for he had decided, quite firmly and bravely in the face of big offers, never to go into professional ball. It meant the end of a great deal—the end of fairly and cleanly won pre-eminence in the sport which he had chosen. It was like putting away a faculty or an instinctive sense; it was almost like losing a part of himself. He had known, of course, that the end must come; but he had hoped that it would come as the climax and the logical conclusion of all that had gone before. It seemed only just that, having won under others for three years, he might cap it all with a victory by his own team in the last game before he gave up baseball forever. His father and mother, with his sister and little subfreshman brother—yes, and the Girl from Home—they and all the other friends who had come down for commencement were there for the first time to see him play. It was only just, only right that he should. But what is the matter? Has he lost? Is he losing?

Half-unconsciously he draws his belt tighter till the sweat-soaked garments stick with damp firmness about him and he digs his cleats deeper into the clay ground as he studies the batter. It is like him that, angered at the doubt in himself, he loses his resentment against the others. No, he will win; he must win; they can't throw the game away—they *can't*——

"U-un-und." A bunt; a bunt with all the bases full. Has Yale lost all reason? A bunt right in front of the home plate when all Washburne has to do is to pick it up and touch the plate to put out Flanders running in from third. But look; look! Warden, who was playing in close, darts forward impulsively. "It's Washburne's ball. It's Washburne's; leave it to Washburne!" But Warden, wincing under his errors of the moment before, does not stop till he crashes into the catcher; and as they both go down together, Flanders dashes past. A roar, shattering and inarticulate; for Yale—Yale has scored.

"Banning!" Like a rebuke it resolves from the tumult. "*Banning!*" Tauntingly now; and now as he hears the voices rise in the frenzy of scorn, "BANNING!"

Are they still blind? Have they lost all sense? Can he play for the whole team? Can one man be nine? He has not asked for extraordinary support or even for good support. He has taken the burden of the game upon himself and by preventing Yale from doing more than make those easy, those ridiculously easy bunts, he has asked his men only to pick up those gently rolling balls and throw them to the base. Will they give him no support at all? Can they do nothing? It is the panic, the awful contagious panic of the class-day game, the panic which, like a plague, strikes strong men to make them weak and worse than useless. Can't something, can't somebody brace the team? Can no one restore confidence? But wait. Whose duty is that? Is it Gardiner's or Boughton's, straining at the leash of the uselessness out there in the field? No; it is his, the captain's. And again forgetting his anger against the others as he finds the fault in himself, he faces the new batter boldly.

"U-un-und!" Another bunt rolls into the diamond and Kenton picks it up cleanly. "Home, home!" For Perry, running in from third, is still far from the plate. Washburne stands ready for the throw. "Yale. Yale! Ya——" Again it becomes vast and inarticulate, for the throw goes wild and Yale scores once more. Yale, two; Harvard, three—in the ninth inning, while Yale still has the bases full and none are out.

"Banning!" Do they despise him now? They had depended upon him, not upon the rest of the team, and the failure must be his after all. Yes; they are right. "*Banning!*" Wait. What is that thrill of inspiration which tingles in his veins? "BANNING!"

As if the sound had flayed him, the blood smarts and stings under his skin at the strange inspiration. Will he be strong and brave enough before them all to take upon himself the failure and the shame of the team that the others—his team, but without him—may win? No; it is asking too much and it is only a chance anyway. It is only a chance which his self-established disgrace could bring about; and it is not his fault if the game is lost. He will stay and keep his position while Yale bunts into that broken Harvard infield, tieing the score and then winning. Those crowds will understand when they recall and analyze the game upon cooler consideration, that it was the rest who failed, not he. They will remember

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with a thrill that heroic picture of the captain playing all alone, without the slightest support from his men, and keeping Yale from scoring until the last inning. Yes; they will surely remember that tragically heroic figure playing steadily on, while his support went to pieces behind him, and through no fault of his own, going down to his first defeat, doing all that he could to avert it. All that he could?

Another player faces him; but as Banning flushes with new anger at his hesitation to do the harder thing, he does not turn to the batter. Instead he steps slowly but resolutely from the box.

"Billings," he calls to the bench where the substitutes sit; "Billings; come in." And then quite simply and without display he turns to the men about him. "I've got to go out, fellows. They're on to me. I'm no good any more; I can't do anything with them. Billings 'll take my place. Go in and *win!*"

In the midst of that puzzled silence which alone greets him as he leaves the game, he hears, "Now, men, now! They've knocked Banning out. But now we got 'em; we got 'em; we *got* 'em now!" It is Boughton calling from right field—dear old Boughton who understands at once. He understands and has done all the rest that was needed. Look at that Harvard infield now.

"Crack!" It is a hard, vicious drive, quite unlike the easy bunt which Kenton fumbled only a moment ago; but now he handles the ball coolly. There is the comforting thud of the ball in the catcher's glove as Washburne gets the quick, accurate throw. Larson is out at the plate.

"Crack!" Another drive, harder than the one just before. Half way between third base and second it flies, but Warden—Warden the unsteady of the moment before—Warden jumps instinctively. He catches it in the fingers of his glove as he stabs his hand high above his head, and like a flash he throws the ball home. "Batter out and runner out at the plate." A double-play, accurate and perfect. Yale is out—out in the ninth inning, with 2 runs to Harvard's 3. Harvard has won.

From one side comes the quick, regular crack of the Yale cheer, cheering the team in defeat. From the other? That first wild, exultant cry of victory has died away, and in its place once more a strange silence—yet neither like the pall of suspense nor the stillness of anxiety. It is the whispering, subdued silence of uncertainty, but uncertainty only for the instant. Already the crowds begin to understand. It flashes upon those old players, jumping to their feet and staring down with incredulous admiration; it flashes upon the undergraduates beyond them; upon the subfreshmen further on, and even upon the girls beyond, comprehension flashes. Not spreading in a wave, but jumping from point to point, stand after stand, like letters in a monster electric sign when the current is turned on, blaze forth in comprehension. So that from the most learned senior explaining in heavy terms how "Banning chose the psychological moment to stop the panic and, by taking the blame of their errors upon himself, restored the necessary confidence to his team"—from him to the most happily ignorant little girl, who knows only that the Harvard captain somewhere and somehow saved the game, they all understand.

And now as Gardiner and Boughton, rushing in from the outfield, throw themselves upon their classmate, alternately punching him and hugging him to themselves, suddenly the great crowd surges forward jealously.

Like one man the hundreds in the stand furthest to the right have risen. "Harvard!" A thousand in the next stand are on their feet. "*Harvard!*" And now the marshals and cheer-leaders all about the field catch the beat and wave their arms to mark the next "*Harvard!*" It has reached the sections where the members of the Athletic Association sit and like a reverberation after that thunder the sound travels on, bringing that mighty mass to its feet, section by section. "Rah-rah-rah!" Unnoted as a metronome, when the musician has caught the spirit of his theme, they disregard those little waving arms trying to mark the time for them; for they cheer now with only the rule and rhythm of impulse and strong feeling. "Banning!" It is round to the Yale stands now. "*Banning!*" It is Yale itself which makes that sound mightier than all that have gone before.

Far away on the Charles River where the crew is training, the echo comes; the eight hold their oars till it becomes intelligible. "It's Banning," the coxswain says. "It's Banning. He's won for us again." And then because he did not know, he added: "They seem pretty glad about it, as if it was something unusual for him to win a game. They might have known they could depend upon him for it."

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Worlds Between

By Joseph Blethen

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLARENCE UNDERWOOD

TO the men, that club of six marriageable girls had increased in interest as the summer days raced by; but to five of the six girls who, from within the club itself, looked out upon a world of men the one engrossing question became: "Can a Desdemona be born under the stars and stripes?"

For how could a club of six girls contain a living, breathing, breathless puzzle of the heart without setting five of them into ecstasies of expectation over the dream-light in the eyes of that sixth? Mrs. Huntington, the chaperone, caught the thread of the unworded story and took stock of her flock. It was not Sadie Norton, whose quiet happiness in her engagement to Wallace Elliott had won her the name of Say Nothing; it was not Marion, whose mischievous coquetry outran them all; nor was it either of the three little blondes, Nicky, Bricky and Gricky, whose calling cards bore the names of Nickerson, Brickerton and Greig, who endlessly debated the question of which of the three was the tallest, and openly showed a preference for tall men. It must then be Lorraine, who, at twenty-five, had been in society three seasons; Lorraine, with her gentle manners, her tall, lithe form, her fair beauty, her rumored escape from many deeply planned conquests; Lorraine, with her deep sensitiveness, her power to choose among men, but who, at this moment, was apparently unaware of threatening fate.

Six girls and their chaperone must have their daily bread even if theirs is the daintiest club house in a Chautauqua Camp; for daily bread there must be payment, even though the Chautauqua Camp lies on an island nestling in a warm arm of Puget Sound. Six girls, trying their wings against the safe barriers of each other's common sense, may soften the puzzles of daily bread with the ready jest of youth; Mrs. Huntington, knowing they meant no disrespect for sacred things, suffered to stand by the ginger jar, where Marion, the irrepressible, had placed it, a card which bore an inscription that was Marion's idea of an appropriate grace for a Chautauqua club-house. Each girl upon taking her place at the table was supposed to point to it and nod.

"Most August Mr. Mikado," the card had read. "You are most undoubtedly the most bothersome brigand in our recollection. But, a cook being necessary even in a Chautauqua club house, we are honorably glad that you are an honorably passable cook. In our thoughtless moments we may yearn for a handsomer cook, a cook more easy in his manner and less Japanesy in his architecture, but in our hearts we know your honorably ugly face is best. Otherwise we might skip lectures and do unheard of things, oh, august Mr. Mikado. And we hope our presence here is honorably acceptable, most August-and-September Mr. Mikado, for we have each and every one of us placed our honorably necessary twenty-cents in the ginger jar."

Lorraine's rebellion, her fiery charge upon this card, its destruction in her quivering fingers, and her subsequent tearful apology to Marion had been the first alarming symptom. Then others .appeared.

The men who called on these girls were the young men who did things; they called because the girls were charming and capable. A girl who could be successfully officer of the day in a summer club would not stumble when love placed her in a home of her own. What wonder, then, that Lieutenant Heihachiro Yama, naval constructor in the

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service of the Emperor of Japan, in an American port to superintend the construction of a battleship commissioned from an American firm for the Royal Japanese navy, found his eyes drawn thereto?

Among the men Lieutenant Yama moved in the freedom of a seaport democracy. His mature face had won him the sobriquet of Pa Yama at their hands, only to be pushed on by the merciless, quizzing Marion to be Pyjamas. The Lorraine Second Rebellion had concerned this; and then the five girls had begun to think.

One evening each week was open house in this club. Dinner on these evenings was spiced with more than usual laughter in spite of Mr. Mikado's brigandish frowns. Then there was a dance or two, for it was well to set the blood going when the cool of a Puget Sound evening came creeping on.

Marion played a two-step with tantalizing zest, only to stop and declare: "Wish *man!* Wish waltz with tall man." Then Sadie Norton, the Engaged Girl, played a dreamy waltz till each girl glided to a corner. For a moment peace held them breathless over their dancing; anticipation lighting their eyes. For on these nights the puzzle was abroad. Lieutenant Pyjamas would come in full uniform, to bow to each one with his conscientious precision, to ask Mrs. Huntington, turning his "th" into "s," if he found her "to be in heals as usual," and then to sit in a corner with Lorraine and tell those earnest, dreamy folk tales of the little people just across.

Lorraine

And Lorraine? Was she beginning to care? Just beginning, without yet facing the fact that Othello may be Japanese, and Propriety an Iago? That was the puzzle of the club. That was Mrs. Huntington's one worry. That, she feared, would bring Lorraine to her knees, the first girl of her flock to cry out in prayer at the call of That Greatest of All.

"Fifteen minutes for experiences," declared Marion, dropping before the open fire. "Freshy, lower the lights."

The girls scurried to their favorite places, Mrs. Huntington rocking in the background, for she loved their very pranks. The freshman girls obeyed, and the club grouped about restless, eager, mischievous.

"As this is man-night we will tell our experiences with that honorably bothersome thing called man. Fraulein Gricky will tell us the story of her first sweetheart."

"Oh, girls, he was the cutest little Dutch boy! He wore wooden shoes; his name was Heinrich; and he had been eating sauerkraut. But he called me 'Liebchen' and we played post-office all one afternoon!"

"Order!" cried Marion, endeavoring to suppress the laughter. "Don't hurry over interesting places. We are studying one of the great mysteries, for while it comes in many disguises, it is always recognizable. The chair made the mistake of calling on a freshman who doesn't know the difference between love and lonesomeness. The chair will now turn to a real grown up. Who, better than an engaged girl, could expound on the mystery of a man? Say Nothing, you may say something."

The club wheeled on the complacent Miss Norton, who counterfeited a sigh, laughed over the eager faces about her, and then held her engagement ring to the firelight.

"See that sparkle? Much like any other diamond, of course, but the *only* light to the girl whose engagement ring it is."

Instantly the light of mischief went out, and in the eyes of five girls there burned the

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glow of That Greatest of All. Sadie Norton, seeing it, drew them all to her big heart:

"A poet says an engagement solitaire is a bit of the Great Throne, bringing a flash from the eyes of God; science says it is indestructible, unmatched, yet made out of the commonest substances of our beings. Suppose I say that a betrothal stone is the record of a new true love?—The first acknowledgment, and therefore never to be matched.—Indestructible, because it has become a seal on the girl's heart; a seal because nevermore is her heart entirely her own."

Mrs. Huntington brushed a tear away, and a skirt rustled as Lorraine went slowly to her feet. The girls, looking at her, unconsciously clothed her with the sweet romance of the words just spoken. Tall, fair, rounded; she made as if to speak. Then she turned away; then turned back to utter almost a cry: "But suppose it comes upon her before she is aware? Suppose it be unwelcome! Then, even against her will, it is more than a seal; it is a scar."

Then in the silence Lorraine crossed the room and went out of doors. The girls, laughing, but a moment since, now gasped at the revelation.

"Is it possible?" whispered the betrothed girl in surprise, her ring hand hidden nervously in her dress.

"The Lieutenant," whispered another, her eyes big with wonder.

"Pyjamas!" exclaimed Marion. "Oh, I'm ashamed of my jesting. I didn't mean to pull down the house. It's just as though a girl couldn't laugh without discovering a cry beneath it. What has Lorraine been thinking about to get interested in a colored man!"

"Oh, Marion! Don't be disrespectful. A well-born Japanese! He is as worthy as a full blood Spaniard, or Italian, or an American Indian."

"Well, there are none of them white men," retorted Marion.

"A Japanese gentleman may be everything that's lovely," said Sadie. "But that is not the point. Lorraine is the grandest type of American girl. There is no call for such a sacrifice. The American man is ready, and we must save Lorraine for him."

Off on the distant bay a launch screamed. "There are the gentlemen, Yama and all," said Mrs. Huntington. The girls arose from their places on the floor, shook out their skirts, snapped on the lights, and turned from romping to dignity.

"I am going after Lorraine," said Sadie.

Mr. Mikado, being the only servant the house afforded, admitted the guests. Lieutenant Yama was granted a deep bending. Poor Lieutenant Yama, on the occasion of his first visit to this club house, had conquered once and for all. Entering, he had been met by a most insolent stare from Mr. Mikado. Like a flash Yama's shoulders and head had gone up and back, and Mr. Mikado had been transfixed with a stare so commanding in its intentness that slowly his palms turned outward and he bent far forward. The girls had watched the scene with delight. Had Yama done nothing more he would have prospered with them as the only human being they knew who could bend Mr. Mikado.

Yama's eyes searched the room for Lorraine. There was an unmistakable look of disappointment in them. He turned to Mrs. Huntington: "Miss Langdon—er—she is in heals as usual?"

"Entirely so, Lieutenant. You may see for yourself," replied Mrs. Huntington, indicating the door where Lorraine and Sadie were entering.

Every girl in the room saw the light of love flash in Lieutenant Yama's eyes; every girl thought of the flash of Sadie's betrothal ring in the firelight; every girl thought of Lorraine's cry of "pity, pity." Was it, indeed, too late?

Out there on the beach, where the same Pacific that girdled Lieutenant Yama's island home was gently stirring, *whispering, whispering*, with a thousand tongues on the sand at her feet, Lorraine had faced a sudden struggle with her pride. Why had Sadie Norton's words not only swept her off her feet, but betrayed her into voicing a suddenly revealed truth? Could it be that she, Lorraine Langdon, had become more than properly interested in a Japanese? Her pride said *no*. She had been amused during the past few weeks. There had been summer dreams; that was all. She must arouse herself and be careful, or the girls, and perhaps Lieutenant Yama, might misunderstand. Thus her greeting of him was much more formal than usual, and again each girl understood. But the engaged girl was beyond mere thinking, she acted.

"Lieutenant Yama, I have not shown you my engagement ring. Come, I want you

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to tell me how lovers become engaged in Japan."

"Ha, ha, Miss Norton," said the Lieutenant, unconsciously uttering that soft monosyllable of his native tongue which sounds like a dainty, throaty laugh, but which really means *yes*. "I will tell Japanese custom. A cup of tea. Er—a writing —er—a betrossal scroll. I have been studying—er— the most excellent American way. It is—er—honorably much different. When American lover makes—er—humbly interesting declaration he must—er—honorably kiss his sweetheart. Am I unworthily correct?"

"Yes," said Sadie in despair, and for ten minutes each girl talked like a magpie. But no chattering could turn Yama's eyes from Lorraine. Sadie kept him as best she could till her fiancé came. Then Lieutenant Yama bowed and slipped away to Lorraine.

The beautiful girl was fully determined to be distant, but his appeal to "have conversation to semselves" was irresistible. And as he talked she seemed to hear the flutter of fans, to see dainty women in kimonas dwelling in paper houses in a land of daintily colored tissues, and to feel that this sturdy little mystery-man was treading lightly where an American foot would have awakened startling echoes.

"To-morrow is Sunday," said Lieutenant Yama. "I will come humbly in my canoe. There will be many canoes in the islands. I would unworthily press you to be in my undeserving canoe."

One more glorious, lazy, dreamy afternoon on the Sound with Yama! She would go and enjoy it to the last minute; listen to his voice, the dreamy stories of his far away home among the cherry blossoms. Then, when the sun had dipped behind the Olympics and the last canoe had come out of the islands, she would say good bye to Yama and her dreams.

While Yama was waiting breathlessly for her answer the door bell sounded.

Mr. Mikado, on answering the ring, was seen to bow low. Soft Japanese words were heard, and then Lieutenant Yama sprang to his feet.

"It is the honorable Japanese Vice-Consul," said he. "He is graciously asking for my unworthy self."

Mrs. Huntington hastened to make the Vice-Consul welcome. With his gold-bowed glasses, stiff black hair, sturdy figure and long coat he was the picture of dignity.

"I have humbly important message for the Lieutenant," said he. "I learned ssat he had come here and I followed hastily. Excuse my bossersome intrusion. It is—er—honorably necessary."

Then the club and the club's guests saw these two representatives of a wonderful people bow and bow again as they conversed in that soft, pattering echo from the Orient. When the lieutenant turned to address his friends in English it was with shining eye and proud bearing:

"My most august fasser, the Admiral Yama, is to arrive shortly with squadron—er—Japanese navy, you know, for launching of my ship. My friend, the honorable Vice-Consul, graciously informs me. The Admiral, my honorably very great fasser, will give reception on board. I shall be most unworthily indebted if all of you—er—will most unjustly come."

What a flutter of hearts as tea was served in honor of the Vice-Consul! What a light of pride in the glances Lorraine sent rioting among her sisters; Sadie, safe against the shoulder of her fiancé, shuddered: "Oh, Wallace, it is dreadful. Look at Lorraine's eyes. What chance has one girl for self protection against a whole fleet?"

Next day the coming visit of the Admiral was the topic of conversation in the Chautauqua camp, and the club house, where a Japanese lieutenant came to call upon a sweet American girl, became the center of interest. As the busy weeks rushed by, Lieutenant Yama came again and again. But Lorraine was careful, sharing him more and more with the club as a whole, till one night the girls declared open house in honor of the Lieutenant and the Vice-Consul.

The Vice-Consul told the club of the plans. The visiting fleet would lie off this very camp. There would be diplomatic visits between officers of the visiting fleet and officers of the North Pacific squadron of the United States Navy which was lying in the bay to receive the visitors; there would be endless firing of salutes; Old Glory and the Japanese colors would be everywhere entwined; then the launching; then an exchange of visits between the Admiral and his son; then departure of the visiting fleet, accompanied to sea by the American cruisers. The girls had talked it over by their fire; now Lorraine voiced their hopes.

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"If Lieutenant Yama would accept the use of our club house for his reception to Admiral Yama we would be honored."

Lieutenant Yama, trembling in the stress of his emotion, endeavored to thank the fair American girl. The Vice-Consul beamed through his gold-brimmed glasses, congratulated Lieutenant Yama and thanked everybody. Only the engaged girl felt ill at ease in the wave of happiness. In her mind flashed a vision of the Japanese flag as it would float from the club house roof beside Old Glory; the Japanese flag would be Yama and the stars and stripes would be Lorraine. "We are deliberately pushing her into his arms," said she to her fiancé. her. All night she tossed with that glint haunting her; all night she was at the very edge of prayer, fearing lest That Greatest of All had come into her heart.

Through the whole glorious Sabbath hour the canoe drifted on the calm bay. Lieutenant Yama was boyish in his suit of white; the American girl was dainty in a summer frock. The Oriental warrior spoke his love fiercely; the American girl's lips trembled under her graceful, shielding fingers. He, crouching in the stern, holding the idle paddle over the edge of the canoe, leaned ever so slightly toward her; she, sunk in deep cushions facing him, shrank ever so little from his burning eyes. A quick

"My fasser, may he not witness our betrossal?"

"He's a splendid fellow," said Wallace, looking at the sturdy little man who could build a monster battleship.

"Oh, Wallace! Don't think it! He's of another race."

Again that night Lieutenant Yama begged Lorraine to accept a place in his canoe for the following Sunday. Just for an hour with her alone that he might thank her, where none could hear; where he could control his rushing tumultuous gratitude, and where she would understand words meant only for herself. Lorraine yielded by ever so slight a droop of her pretty head, yet caught that in his eye which alarmed move by either would have capsized the frail craft. An unguarded word from her would have shattered this man's heart. She sought to balance her thoughts against the flood of words as delicately as he balanced the canoe.

"I am bossered by much most excellent American manners," said he. "I would humbly marry you. My fasser, Admiral to the august Emperor, comes; may he not witness our betrossal?"

The American girl dared not meet his eyes. A very real man had suddenly sprung out of the nameless unreality of an Oriental charm. The thorn in the rose that

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had been so charming now sank deep into her being. In every way he seemed clean, and good, and worthy; but deeper thoughts held the girl silent. Womanhood weighed this possibility in the balance, and was awed. This was not her destiny; this was come upon her without her choosing. She had been helpless; now there would be a scar.

"Are you sure so great an Admiral would be pleased with an American girl?" she heard herself ay. Then, as he leaned toward her with an eager affirmative lighting his face, she made a gesture of entreaty.

"Please, my dear f iend," said she. "Can you not see that even an American girl's heart is like a dainty paper house of your people? All the sacred things within are shielded less by a flimsy thickness of tissue wall than by the honor of those who guard it. My heart is a paper house. Do not crush it. Give me time to set the thoughts in the paper house to rights. The visitor, believe me, was not expected."

"But my excellent fasser comes to-morrow," persisted the eager Othello. "May I most unworthily come to-night to ask?"

Lorraine hid her bowed head in her hands and was silent. She could not deny this; if there must be a crushing of paper houses then a few hours was as good as a few weeks. But above all things he must spare her at this moment. The white, tapering, royal hands were eloquent in their gesture of helplessness. Lieutenant Yama drank her words and was silent; swept her with eager eyes and was silent; surrendered her at the end of his promised hour and was silent. What must a man do to win a fair American girl with such beauty as dazzled? He must think, think! And when he could think it he would go again. But not that night, nor the next, nor the next did he go, for those delicate hands before a fair girl's face had cut him; had wounded Lieutenant Yama, of the Royal Japanese Navy, who had spoken an honorable love.

Lorraine crossed the lawns to the club house. With no word for anyone she went to her room. Shoulders, on which the pride of maidenhood was wont to sit, drooped as she walked; lips, on which the smile of rose-gathering was wont to draw a cupid's bow, drew tight to hide a tremble. Five pairs of girlish eyes read the truth. Five girls came with questioning looks to Mrs. Huntington.

"Is it too late?"

"No, my dears. Lorraine is not for him. Her woman's heart has told her so. But we must help. Watch and wait. He will come again. Then we must help, for there is yet much danger."

Five girls tip-toed about in silence, their hearts in that locked room up stairs where at last youth knelt by her white bed, brought to prayer by that insistent Greatest of All.

Next day the Japanese fleet of three cruisers crept very slowly around the island and came to anchor off the very camp. Then there was booming of cannon as American ships welcomed Japanese, and the fleets of two nations saluted Emperor and President. Lorraine, standing on the edge of a bluff where she could see, felt each cannon shot pierce her heart, felt each glint of brass from those stately ships shame her, felt each waving flag to mean her conquest, felt that she alone must be the cost of all this display of power. Sadie, seeing her so, went to her and pressed her hand.

"Lorraine, sweetheart? You do not mean to do this?"

"No, no. I was blind."

"Desdemona did well to die; had she lived her eyes would soon have conquered her heart. You have eyes, Lorraine dear."

"Yes, yes. But why did she have to be Desdemona?"

"Perhaps to make American girls think that strong American arms are best to treasure a dainty creature like this. Look at that Japanese fleet; monster black things of power; wonderful; representing a great people. But look at that other fleet; white ships that bear white men—our men, sweetheart! Are we not safer with them?"

"Oh, I'll never marry. Never, never! It's too awful!"

"May we help you, sweetheart?"

"Oh, if you only could!"

Through that day a new light burned in Sadie's eyes. She sang softly as she worked, directing the decoration of the club house. At her bidding Lorraine moved here and there adding the very touches that would be the most welcome to Lieutenant Yama, putting into each act a thought of love that could not be, a hope for a sparing of pain that must be borne.

Then came the day of the launching, and after the roar of sound had heralded the event, Lieutenant Yama came with a launch and carried the six girls and Mrs. Huntington to the flagship of the Japanese fleet,

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where the Admiral received them. Admiral Yama's English was good, his appreciation keen. His pride in his son bubbled over into outspoken joy. He sent to his cabin for photographs of his wife, his home and his children. The Lieutenant, as a baby boy romping with other babies, was exhibited. But if this picture of Japanese babyhood was pretty even in Lorraine's eyes, yet did those eyes read therein a meaning for Lorraine alone.

An hour later the Admiral and his staff returned the visit, going to the club house with all the ceremony of naval etiquette. The dainty decorations implying subtle compliments to a visitor, the light that flamed in the son's eyes when the fair American girl was near, the very blond beauty of the charming girl herself, struck deep into the old Admiral's understanding. Shyly, when he could do it best, he spoke to his son in soft, low voiced Japanese:

"My son, you are honorably very successful in serving the august Emperor."

"I humbly bow, my gracious sire."

"You will win promotion."

"I am honorably at a loss for a fitting answer, oh, my best friend."

"Your thought, your life, your blood should always be for the august Emperor."

"I am only worthy humbly to try."

"Think, then, how it would seem to wed one of these. Beautiful as the fairest of flowers, the fairest one here is not of our blood. There are great maidens in Japan; high, fair, beloved of the Emperor. Think oh, my son, of the august Emperor's smile —and be careful."

"I bow, my honorably crushing sire."

Not once again that hour did Lieutenant Yama raise his eyes to the face they hungered to see. The Admiral returned to his ship, flags snapped from the signal yards, smoke poured from the great funnels, men swarmed to quarters, guns boomed, and then, slowly, majestically, the home squadron moved out by the island to take its way to the Straits that led to the sea, followed slowly by the visiting ships.

Lieutenant Yama, standing with a throng on the great veranda of the club house, with the flags of two nations snapping above him, watched these visitors with stirring thoughts. Come from his native land to honor a ship under his hand, they were now slipping away to return into that mysterious Orient. All the pride of his race flamed in him; all the honor of his position in that naval establishment shone in the poise of that well carried uniform. Suddenly he sprang forward, leaped to the balustrade, and brought his hand to his cap. On shipboard there was a roar of deep huzzas; the Admiral on the bridge of the Mikado's ship stood with hand to cap saluting his son. Sadie, true to her trust, had not allowed Lorraine a moment's danger from Lieutenant Yama. Now, in sudden delight of the Admiral's salute, she looked toward this girl of rare beauty, only to feel her own heart wrench, her own throat close tight, her own eyes go wide; Lorraine, looking with all her eyes upon this sturdy man of a sturdy race, was paying him in the moment of his honor the tribute of maiden love. Had he but turned his eyes to her in that moment, both the Lieutenant and Lorraine had been swept beyond all recall. Sadie, creeping toward the girl, took her hand and gently drew her from the very edge of things.

Color flashed back to color; cheer answered cheer; guns roared; whistles of an hundred hurrying, color-dressed merchant craft screamed farewell; but gradually the fleets drew away, and the watching ones turned within doors.

"You are to stay to tea," said Mrs. Huntington to Lieutenant Yama.

His thanks were genuine. There was a duty to perform, and after tea would be a good time for it.

Five girls chatted against time; Mrs. Huntington directed here and there, closing doors and windows, against the on-coming cool of evening, and fitting the great living-room chairs and cushions that all might gather before the fire in unspoken protection of one girl. Lieutenant Yama tasted his tea and sat holding the cup idly. Though Lorraine sat near, her own half-closed eyes dreaming, the Lieutenant saw her not. In this hour of professional triumph, his heart held one thought. "Think, oh my son, of the august Emperor's smile——and be careful."

Gradually the Lieutenant's drooping shoulders straightened; light glowed again in eyes that had blurred; firmly held lips spoke thoughtful words of gratitude.

"Miss Norton—er—might I honorably bosser—er—to see engagement ring again?"

Sadie Norton caught her breath in a little gasp. On her, then, was to fall the critical moment. She rose, marshalled her four patriots with her eyes, saw them rise and

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Drawn by Clarence Underwood

"Is it too late?"

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lead Lorraine and Mrs. Huntington away, found herself alone with Lieutenant Yama, and braced herself. In that rushing, eddying moment she tried in vain to recall the wording of Wallace's dear love-pledge to herself; all that her mind could picture was the tall, fair, innocent Lorraine looking her love at this sturdy, dark-skinned man out of an unknown and alien ancestry.

"An engagement ring—Lieutenant Yama—is the most distinctive badge of American womanhood," said she, in an attempt at self-control. At first her tone was low and hesitating. Then she got herself, and full and eagerly her words rushed forth with the zest of an inspiration:

"An engagement ring stands for love, Lieutenant Yama, because the American girl may freely give her heart to the man who wins her. It stands for security, because the American girl knows men, and, if she loves unwisely, goes unwedded rather than wear this pledge unwisely. It stands for equality, because the American man, when he places this badge of love on a girl's hand, is proud to let the world see the girl whom he holds to be his equal. See my ring, Lieutenant. Is it not beautiful? It means that Wallace loves me as an American—and that I shall be an American wife."

"Wallace—er—Mr. Elliott—is an American," answered the unhappy Lieutenant, speaking aloud a thought that overwhelmed him.

"The American gentleman," said Sadie, grasping at the suggestion in his words, "will think of this before he proposes marriage to the American girl: 'Do I love her as she is born to be loved; my equal, my companion? Can I be to her all that her free heart has learned to ask; her equal, her companion?' If he cannot answer this the true American gentleman will not press her to be his wife. He may even speak his love, for it is his right to speak it. But even if it scars her heart and breaks his own he must tell his love and depart.—That is why an engagement ring—when she does wear it—means so much to—the American girl,——Lieutenant Yama."

"It is manly to tell his unworthy love—and go away?" asked the Lieutenant.

"It is due her that he should confess it."

"And if—if she loves the humbly unfortunate man—but he has honorably blundered? If he—honorably must go away, may not his honorably most unworthy love—may not this most unworthy love break her heart?"

For a moment Sadie hesitated. For a moment Othello seemed worthy even of Lorraine. But only for a moment. Ah, poor Desdemona! Your love was a flash of That Greatest of All, yet it could not stand against misunderstanding. Sadie thought of the bristling old Admiral and of the photographs from his cabin. Her own womanhood rallied.

"Better break her heart, my very dear friend, and leave her in peace than poison her heart with a passion that it could not nourish."

Lieutenant Yama was silent till again he voiced a thought: "Excellent American girls have married honorably unworthy Japanese."

"Lieutenant, would your Emperor, seek an American for husband of his own daughter, a royal Princess?"

Lieutenant Yama, of the Royal Japanese Navy, came to his feet at the mention. His eyes snapped. He bowed, as he said: "I think—impossible."

With eyes looking calmly into eyes the daughter of the Republic answered the son of the Empire: "My friend, Lorraine is not a Princess by rank, for in this country there are no titles; but in her home, in her beauty, her pure heart, her sweetness, her love, she is the equal of your Emperor's daughter.—See, you are puzzled. But it is true. Would Lorraine, the American, be happy—in Japan?"

The sturdy man put out a hand and gently touched Miss Norton's white sleeve: "Permit me to ask one honorably impolite question. If Miss Langdon—did love—would you wish her to marry—Japanese?"

Face to face at last! With woman's tact Sadie Norton played woman's helplessness to defend woman: "Were Lorraine Langdon my own sister—I should much prefer that she marry an American."

Lieutenant Yama's eyes went down before the truth in the girl before him. He squared his shoulders, brushed his stubborn hair from his brow, and was ready.

"Please say to Miss Langdon I am humbly going away. And may I say honorably good-bye?"

Sadie went beyond the portières, sought out Lorraine and prepared her: "Sweetheart, be careful. He understands. His heart is broken, but he is a hero. You may trust him if you can control yourself."

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"I can." Her low voice was steady.

"Then go, dear, go. You owe it to him."

Lorraine went in to him, but not once did she lift her eyes. Never had the blonde girl seemed so dainty, so full of possible joy to his hungry heart, so much a real Princess. One thought only flamed in his mind: to depart as an American lover would depart.

"Miss Langdon—my battleship will soon be completed. Then most unworthily I am to have honorable promotion in Japan. I will go—now—to my battleship. When I asked you to marry me I most unworthily did not know so much as now. You are American Princess; I am Japanese sailor. But I know it is manly in America to tell girl my honorably unworthy love. I have learned that the man proves his love—er—by kiss. I wish honorably to prove I love you—then go away."

He stood a moment looking helplessly at this rare creature whose trembling hand went to her heart, but whose silence was consent. But he, too, trembled at the thought of touching so dear an object. She, understanding, brushed a tear from her drooping lids, and held her hands to him. He seized them and pressed them to his lips. But this American girl drew his hands to her pulsing throat, closed her all too eloquent eyes, and stood with royally lifted head, waiting. The man understood in a flash and pressed a kiss on those pure lips. To him it was an ordeal of honor; to the American girl it was a tragedy. He stood embarrassed; she fled to her room to weep scalding tears on a wound that would leave a cruel scar.

Those five girls and their chaperone had sat in hushed and dread suspense, just so far away as not to hear, not too far to err against propriety. They had heard the Lieutenant's tones, but caught no words. Then the silence, then a kiss, then flying feet and the rustling of skirts up the stairs, then a man's firm, rapid step out across the verandah and out of their lives.

One by one the five girls crept out into the big room, came to the fire and stood looking at the empty floor where the two had stood. They saw motherly Mrs. Huntington go up stairs and enter the suffering one's door. One by one the five girls sank down by the fire, the four younger ones huddled to Sadie with a common impulse. One by one their eyes went to the engagement ring; each read in its flash a message of purity; each felt within herself a new appreciation of love.

For a time there was silence. Then the engaged girl spoke, reverently: "Poor Lorraine!—So bitter—so bitter!"

Then silence again till Marion spoke. "Wish!" said she, impulsively. But no girl replied. Each caught in the implied desire an echo of her own thought. They waited for her to say it:

"Wish we were all little Miss Kimonos! Then Lorraine could marry her little Lieutenant Pyjamas. *Wish!*"

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Horns tooting like the steam-tram was running wild in the hotel yara

The Early Bird

By Henry M. Rideout

ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES PRESTON

"THE heathen Chinee *is* peculiar," observed the second officer. "See the ingenooity o' that feller at the winch, now."

On a white-hot deck, the coolies dodged and clamored. "Arrea!" they shouted, peering overside into the bumping *lorcha*. The chain ran down rattling, till they signalled the winch to stop, with yellow hands waving abstractedly, and a wail of "Abis!" Grunts and thuds rose out of the *lorcha* in a thin but pungent cloud of dust; then the watchers at the rail cried "Virra—virra—virra!" in frenzy, the chain clanked taut, and a giant slingful of brown gunny-bags swung inboard with a rush, poised over the black yawn of the hatch, twirled, and suddenly dropped out of sight, to the hollow iron music of the winch, and a polyglot scream of "Kubberdar—arrea—guar'n'aba'o!"

The winch-boy—an odd little aged Chinaman in a pastoral straw bonnet, with a sheath-knife sticking out, like a rudimentary tail-stump, from under his blue dungaree—had hardly exerted a muscle:—instead of the fuming, sweating tug which a white man gives the lever, he had laid on a calm hand and done the trick. Two bricks, lashed with rope-yarn at the proper point, swung below; and a "Hy-lam" coolie had scored one mechanical triumph over a Glasgow firm.

"Now that's ingenooity," said the second. He paused to kick a Bengali box-wallah down the ladder, and followed to cut his sampan loose. Shrieks of protest—"Oh zoolum!—Zubberdusti!"—rose and drifted astern over the glaring harbor.

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The second remounted, mopping sweat from under his pith helmet, and muttering —"black swine, chafing all the paint off my stanchions!"

"Ingenooity," he resumed. "That's what counts."

This he elaborated after tiffin, in Mac's cabin against the silent engines. We all smoked Mrs. Middleton's cheroots, scratched prickly heat, and cursed Chittagong.

"But American ingenooity's the most ingenious," he declared, patriotically. "What? Oh, Scots be hanged. Hoot, toot. Mean by it? Definition? Why, sure. I mean—er—that quality which—er —which promotes the general happiness with the least fuss to all concerned. There you are. Now let *me* talk." And here is the second's story:

Before I was in steam this way, I knocked round in oil-ships a spell, and fought some in the Philapeens, and 'fore that prospected considerable in Colorado and China and all over. Well, a crowd of us boys was sent up into Sumatra by some Dutchmen —Padang highlands, and way up in from Fort de Kock. We found some gold, and lots o' dengue fever. But the Dutchmen naturally didn't pay us as per contract, and we got back to Batavia with something over five hundred guilders between four of us, for all our wordly goods. We put up at the best hotel, and figured how long it would last.

We ought to moved out quick, but after the *bosque* things was so interesting in that little Dutch burg that we kept staying on. Seemed like a metropolis. And presently, what with circuses, and biographs, and mylords, and Duck-and-Dorises, and—and entertainments, we found that a conservative estimate left us 354 guilders in debt by the time the next boat sailed, a Chinese boat and deck passage at that. 'Twasn't altogether our fault. We'd have cleared out and been all right, I've always argued, if the King of Siam hadn't come over to investigate Buddhist ruins and paddy-growing. He was hot on modern improvements then: travelled in a yacht, a converted hooker that *was* improved some. He stopped at the same hotel, o' course, with a push o' courtiers and fifty-two wives, a full pack and him the little Joker. Everything blossomed out gay at once—one long state feast. O' course we stayed. The queens all wore silk knickerbockers, fifty-two of 'em: an interesting sight, a-floating round and pining at the windows. We stayed.

No prospect o' more money, or even jobs. The consul's one o' the whitest men in the East, and helped us a whole lot, but he didn't hold out any rosy delusions o' grandeur much more.

Finally, I remember, we all sat up late one night, loafing round in *sarongs* in the ground floor verandahs, and listening to tree-lizards a-calling 'To-kay, To-kay!' the way they do. It makes you thirsty if you like sweet wines. Well, about midnight we'd exhausted every project, and were knocking each other a good deal. All the King's wives had disappeared long ago, upstairs, and everything was dull, and we were peevish.

A full pack and him the Joker

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"I see a way o' financing ourselves, I think," says Sam Bird. "Perhaps." He was a big California boy, talked slow and lazy, a farmer-looking boy, but one of the best. "Don't go knocking this way. Wait till tomorrer or next day."

"Just what we been doing," snaps out Bassett. "Tomorrer, and tomorrer, and tomorrer, shifts into the lean and slippered pantaloon." (Bassett came from the Uni of Indiana or somewhere, and he knew Shakespere by the back:—little chap, big spectacles, thin face, and a nose as pointed as a lead pencil,—one more whittle and the point'd break: a little sharp nose and a little sharp voice through it.—No! *Not* Shakespere: Bassett!) "That's what you lazy Pacific Slopers are always saying," he tells Sam. "Tomorrer, manana, besok,—bad as these goo-goos."

I knew what Bird's game was, I thought, and said so.

"You're trying to sell those snake-skins to those two French epidermist men in Noordwijk. Saw you pervading round there. They ain't fools. Neither are we. You'll get twenty guilders—if you have luck. What's that, in our crisis?"

"Perhaps, was all I said," drawls this Sam Bird. "Don't get hot." And he leans back and smokes his *Paiacombo*, and looks up dreamy at the Royal Apartments windows in the second story, through the liana creepers. "It's taxidermatist, anyway."

"Don't you go figuring on any flirtation-motifs with the forty-second queen," says Bassett, following his glance. "That don't b'long honorable pidgin."

"This ain't romance," says Bird, quite disgusted. "You never see things as they are, Bass—always bookish. This is an awful cold proposition."

We allowed it was, too, and told him what we thought of him for rousing false hopes over a lot o' mangy snake-skins that wouldn't realize our fares to Tandjong Priok in a bullock-cart, let alone a *sado*. Bassett got real bitter about it.

"I begin to wish you'd left me behind at Bencoolen," he says.

"So do I," agrees Sam Bird, prompt and hearty.

"I'd 'a' married a nice native girl in a Sumatra wrapper," says Bassett, letting on not to hear, "and settled down in a nice little campong; plenty of rice, and nothing to do but sing the Koran at nightfall, under the bamboo tree. And here we are, beachcombers, in Batavia; and we'll starve to death, and the Dutch'll give our effects to their Orphans' Home, and—finish!"

Bassett came from Indiana

"No orphan would be grasping enough to want 'em," says Bird; "and no girl with good eyesight would ratify that first scheme." They went on to pass very low remarks, and got to be in earnest; and when Dan Towers, who'd been homesick for some time, said he'd never see Ashtabula, Ohio, again, and Bird said there was always compensations, we nearly had a fight; 'cause Dan really liked Ashtabula. Ain't it a funny world?

Well, we all got sore, and went to bed blue, in those small marble-sepulchre Turkish bath bedrooms, about two in the morning. Before daybreak I woke a little, and heard a thrashing round in Sam Bird's room next door, and then saw his kimono flapping 'cross the compound on his way back from the bath. I sung out, "Go to bed, idiot!" and rolled over to sleep.

Along dawn I woke again, and this time I heard a frightful fog,—strong men cursing, engines blowing off, and horns tooting,

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like the steam-tram was running wild in the hotel yard. I stuck my head outdoors—out popped all the others, Bassett's sharp beak, and old Dan's big frowzly nut, and a long line o' bullet headed Dutch planters all down the verandah, like horses looking out o' their stalls. And there under the big banyan tree, puffing and churning and emitting smoke, was a ridic-'lous little red motor-car. First one we'd ever seen in the East. A six-footer in white and a topi, bigger'n the machine itself, sat at the wheel jerking on them tell-tale-handle things, and writhing round.

When the sleep cleared out o' my eyes, I saw it was Sam Bird.

Bassett was always quick at sizing things up.

"He's gone off his head," says he, "Heat's been too much for him. Thought he acted queer last night."

We all yelled together: "What you up to?"

"She'll run all right," sings out Bird. To prove it, she backed through a wire fence into the banyan roots and gave up with a snort. Sam took a monkey-wrench and a spanner out of his pocket, pulled off his coat, and disappeared under the body there in the jungle.

We three ran out in our pajamas,—nice cool morning, all the birds just beginning to chirp up in the canary-trees, pink mists a-rising.

He was on his back under the machine, wrenching and pounding, and wouldn't say a word. You wouldn't believe the smell o' that cheap petrol stuff if you'd undergone it. She was a little tin French machine, crazy and falling apart with old age, but I could see she'd been scrubbed and polished like binnacles. Even kicking Sam's legs didn't make him come out till he finished. When he did his undershirt was all trickled over with black goo, and he was red as apoplexy, but grinning.

"She'll run!" he said, as if we'd been waiting weeks to hear that fact.

"Look here, you Native Son o' the Golden West," squeaks Bassett, very sharp, "explain yourself. What thing are you doing?"

"*Looks* like an otta-mobile, don't it?" says Bird, in a speculative kind o' way. "It *is*."

He began tinkering some more, and started to whistle a real catchy little piece. Bassett hauled at his shoulders, and shook

He was on his back wrenching and pounding

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Flattering with the hands like Jews

his fist under Sam's nose, fighting mad.

"What thing?" he was yelling. "What thing?" We were all talking at once, so loud that the manager appeared at his bed-room window in a towel.

This California boy, he pitched Bassett half way into the banyan bosque.

"There," he said. After tinkering a while more, he explained to me and Dan. "If you must know, I'm just taking a ride round 'fore breakfast. Dawn, beautiful dawn! Fresh and mild, and the little dickey birds a-wobbling their fresh little lays, and laying their fresh little eggs; and my! the sunrise through those cocoa palms! You wouldn't believe how a nature-lover enjoys a spin in his car this way."

"Sam, old man," I says, trying to speak kind, "whose is this obscene bundle o' scrap-iron?"

He became sensible all at once.

"Now look here, boys," said he, entirely business-like. "If anyone asks you, remember it's mine. Matter-o'-fact I'm hiring it by the day. But if any asks, don't forget it's mine. I'm a wealthy and eccentric young man. That's the line. Wealthy: eccentric."

"What!" squeals Bassett, bursting out through the vines. "Hiring? by the day? Boys," he turns to us, fairly crying, "it's our money, our funds, that this—this—vampire eats up and throws away, so's he can come wake us up 'fore daylight out of our warm beds—I mean cool beds." He took on fierce till we began to see it in his light, and then we all three went for Sam so noisy that he had to blow his horn continuous to keep from hearing us.

The manager sent a Java boy out to say that the gentlemen must make some quiet at once, or they might disturb His Majesty the King.

"I don't know about the head that wears a crown," allows Bassett, "but it must have laid some uneasy for the last half hour. You come down to my room and explain, Sam Bird," he says as we moved away. "There's a lot to be said yet."

Bird was still calm and unnatural. He took off the undershirt with the coal-tar front, threw it under the banyan, and buttoned up his jacket. Then he put on English and a Duke's drawl.

"No feah," says he, talking loud enough for a gallery. "I must be off for a spin in my caw. If you were properly attiawed, and did not behave like such a perfect rotter, I might have awsked you, dear boy." And he climbed back into the car.

"It's the heat's done it," says Bassett, while we rested in our long chairs. "Notice him throw me around? He couldn't 'a' done that with his normal strength. Go on yourself, Dan! I say he *is!* I know better. He's by the nut,—heat and fever and worry."

All of a sudden we thought so, too, when the horn bellowed like an Australian steer, and the car started out from the banyan, and came bumping down our way, laying a trail o' this axle-grease stuff

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all along the foot-path. Honk-onk-onk, goes the horn, and the rattle was like a steam-roller full of iron rods, and sich. Sam sat up dignified, steering round and round the compound full speed, slewing the corners, and doing a Judgment Day on the trumpet. You know the noise a fat woman's poodle makes when he breathes? That car was like an elephant suffering same way. There wasn't a piece o' silence left in Weltevreden. It was a pretty race, and when Sam, without slowing engines, dodged the pet orang-utan, (who'd come out into the road from behind the bath house suddenly) why, all the Dutchmen laughed, and so did the Javanese boys, and we cheered. It was such neat work, and the orang-utan looked so surprised. Heads began to show in the windows of the Royal Suite.

By this time the uproar was something awful, till Sam ported his helm and went boiling down the avenue again, out the gate, and we could hear distant honks afloating off past the Harmonie Club.

By breakfast-time he wasn't back. At table we had nothing to say except our friend was a wealthy and eccentric young man, with a passion for taking out his motor-car in the early morning. The manager had quieted down; apparently no complaints issued by Royalty.

When he came back, about nine o'clock, he left the car under the tree and came and had coffee in our verandah, acting like himself again almost.

"Now then," says Bassett, "make your talk. What's the game?"

"How much cash have we got?" asks Bird. "Two hundred guilders. Bueno: hand it over. Come on. Stop your staring. I know what I'm about. Nothing to lose. Give it here."

"What for?" we asks him. "Buying dog-carts, or going to Tosari for your health?"

"No," he says. "For the general good."

"What was this loco act of yours at daylight?", says Bassett. "We might 'a' been arrested over that, or asked to pay our bill—same thing."

"Oh, that," drawls Sam. "That was advertising. Wasn't sure what other time I might find him in, he's so busy."

"Look here at me," says Bassett. "Right in the eye. No, he looks rational. What thing *are* you doing? Advertising what?"

"Look out foreside," says Bird.

We looked. A little group of Siamese in silk knickerbockers—men, this time—were standing round the car, talking, and scooching down to look underneath. I began to see a light.

"Let him have the two hundred guilders, Dan," I says to Towers. He was treasurer.

We hadn't finished counting them over to him, before a soft and satiny Siamese chap came up and allowed politely that Phya Somebody—which means a lord—would like to speak with Mr. Bird for a moment. Sam made a smooth reply, and walked off with him, in a easy, usual sort o' way.

"Hm!" says Bassett. "I wonder now—that young grafter."

It seemed a long time before he came back, alone. He sat down and finished his coffee and toast, looking mournful and sheepish.

"Well, boys," he said at last, "to be honest with you, I'm disappointed. It hasn't turned out as I wanted. I had an idea o' selling this old thing to the King as a modern improvement. Well, gone futt. Silly idea, I s'pose. I'm sorry, boys."

Bassett and Dan Towers went right up in the air at that. The things those two said, I won't defile my speech with.

"Do you mean to tell us," said Bassett, very pale, "that we're stuck with that Old Curiosity? Have you bought it?"

"Not yet," said Sam, with a mischievous kind o' look.

"Not yet!" yelled Dan and Bassett, and both went up in the air again. I had to separate all three of 'em, and lock up Bassett in his room 'cause he insisted on locking Sam Bird up.

"Now to business," says Sam to me. "Come along. Oh, and bring those snake-skins."

I hopped up beside him on the seat, and we churned out into the road, leaving Bassett trying to break out the shutters, and Dan trying to say what he'd do if we come back without those Funds.

For the first time then I found how that poor old chariot really suffered. She groaned and puffed and shook and cried like a baby, and even then could hardly move out of her own odor. Sam was

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shouting but I only got snatches o' what he said. "At it for a week—taxidermatists . . . condemned her. . . junk-heap. . . their back compound. . . never before . . . learned it . . . two days!" Like that. All the rest was drowned, except when he bumped his nose against my ear and roared, "We'll come out top-side all right!" and another time—She'll hold together a full week, sure!" All this time we were ploughing a furrow o' natives and *kosong*-ponies right and left through Noordwijk.

Two blocks this side he slowed down, and made very heavy weather of it up to the taxidermatists' door. The two Frenchmen came out o' their shop—civilized-looking fellers they were—and Sam and they all began to talk Malay at once, wagging their heads and flattering with their hands like Jews. They laid it out how *chupput* she could *lari* a *kilometre*, and Sam didn't know how long a *kilometre* was, and when they tried to explain it in Malay it was worse than before. And Sam had to coin terms like "monkey-wrench-pooniah" to express his feelings toward the health o' her interior. By eleven o'clock they came down to fifteen hundred guilders.

Bird stood firm and stern for twelve hundred.

"Easy, Sam," I says. "I followed you blind so far, but I don't like this. Where's the one thousand!"

"Shut up," he says; then translates to the Frenchmen. "My friend is right. He is wise in these things, and says she won't last three days, and we'd have to send to Europe for the parts."

They weakened a little shrugging their shoulders just to show they didn't care, when they did.

"Twelve hundred," repeats Sam, "*and* the snake-skins."

Those reptiles may have turned the balance, for they really were all right, and we all knew it: only certain thing in the whole transaction. So at eleven-thirty, with one tremendous shrug, it closed at Sam's price. He paid down the skins and the two hundred guilders, promised the rest that afternoon, and we started back in our car. She broke down twice. Sam really looked worried then, but after a lot o' prying and crawling and hammering, off she limped again.

"Those Frenchmen threw her on the scrap-heap six months ago," he said. "Lying in an open-face go-down didn't do her a bit o' good. I studied her, though, *and* the situation." Close-mouthed chap, Sam was.

Next morning, he had a young Siamese courtier out with him, and that afternoon was teaching him to steer, while Dan Towers and Bassett sat bitterly computing how much this spectacle cost us per day. I didn't tell 'em she belonged to us: it saved trouble. Next day the same lessons went on, and the orang-utan took to the banyan, mastheaded till after dark. The third day, Sam didn't climb in at all, but the young Siamese did, and an older man in pale pink-and-green silks and a London helmet, and a servant up behind holding a gold umbrella over him. Just as she started, spitting smoke and sobbing—"Boys," drawls Sam Bird, "I told you I was disappointed the other day. I was, really. I meant to sell her to the King, but I only got a Lord. That's small game: still, the pay's just as much here,"—he slapped his pocket—"and there's five thousand guilders to the good, if she lasts till the Teung-Suey sails next Friday."

In our own private uproar we almost overlooked another one out by the gate. They were all yelling and standing up on the seat, and the car instead o' turning went hot-foot straight across the road and rammed the embankment. Gold umbrella, pinks and pale greens, whole outfit, shot over into the canal. Remember how the water looks in that little Dutch sluice? Like Bensdorp's Cocoa.

"I told him he steered erratic," Sam observes. "Anyway, it simplifies things. —I'll never know how long she would 'a' lasted.—Well, well.—They'll never know, either. . . . . Boys, I guess we better go fish 'em out. It would look kind o' more thoughtful."

That night at the demonstration in our verandah there were the five thousand guilders on Sam's table, still, in Javasche Bank notes.

"Well, Sam, what—what you going to do with it all?" says Bassett. He talked mighty meek and timid.

"Dan's treasurer," says Bird. "This is the Vampire Rescue Fund, Bass,—twelve hundred and fifty apiece, go as you please."

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"Boys, I guess we'd better go fish 'em out"

"Bird Banzai!" says Bassett. "You'll do. I'm sorry I said that Vampire, in a moment o' heat. Here's apologies."

"All right, my boy," says California. "How!—And now what's the next move, with all our money? What's the best city in the world to be wealthy in for a while?"

Some said Paris, some New York, and we nearly had another misunderstanding. Dan Towers was glum and wouldn't speak, even. So we decided to write votes on paper, and put 'em in my topi, and draw. First city to be drawn, we'd head for.

Bird drew for us, and held up the folded slip. "I kind o' hope Paris," he said. "Mind, though, we're bound, solemn."—Then he opened it.

He looked as if he saw a ghost. Then he laughed, and threw the paper on the table. Bassett stuck his nose into it and read off:

"Ashtabula, Ohio!"

In the compromise that followed we broke Dan Towers's long chair and two others, and cut him accidently over the eye. But he carried his point.

"Boys," he said, wiping away the blood, "I'm going home to be decent. You needn't see me further'n New York."

The second officer pitched his cheroot out of the cabin door, and meditated.—"Might 'a' been decent myself. . . . More you go about, the less you settle down. Humph! . . . But think o' the ingenooity o' that California Bird—a farmer-looking boy, too."

"Ah, ye spendthrifts," remarked Mac, the engineer, virtuously. "Wastrels and spendthrifts."

"We spent it all right," gloated the second. "'Cept fifteen guilders Dan Towers gave to a destitoot British subject begging at the docks. More'n you'd do.

"'God help any man,' says this old fool, Dan Towers, 'any white man that's stranded, specially in the East.'"

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MARGINALIA

A Literary Turn

By Judd Mortimer Lewis

IF you're a literary gent, oh, use a nom de plume,
Or fond mammas and proud papas will bring you to your doom;
When introduced Mamma will say, your hand held tight in hern,
"*So* glad! I have a daughter of a literary turn."

THEN rattle on, "She's *such* a child, a prodigy, we think;
Sometimes she sits up all night long and never sleeps a wink,
And writes---you ought to *see* her write—she writes to beat the band!
And *deep*---she writes whole reams of stuff no one can understand!

"AND then, of course, she sleeps all day. Now *wont* you come to tea
Some day, I'll have her read to you! I'm sure that you will be
Surprised. We are, her pa and me; her genius is a coal
To set the world a-burning! You'll meet a kindred soul."

OR you will meet a dad, who'll say, "Old chap, your stuff is great!
I go to sleep a-reading it! Now stand right here and wait---
I've got a boy here in the crush---somewhere---I fairly yearn
To have you meet; he's got, like you, a literary turn."

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AND so it goes; the ashman, the milkman, and the cook;
The motorman, conductor, each one, has read your book
And holds a pleasure for you. The world has folks to burn
Who have a bunch of children of a literary turn.

IF you're a literary gent, oh, use a nom de guerre,
Or you'll be treed, surrounded, where'er it haps you are;
Concealed in every hedgerow, by every tree and fern,
Are parents who have children of a literary turn.

A Gentlemanly Engineer

By S. H. Kemper

SOME of the boys had been discussing the use and abuse of profanity, and Michelson had advanced the opinion that violent bad language was often futile and unnecessary, and sometimes even coarse.

"The trouble with you, Michelson," said O'Hara, "is that you're so refined, with your white collar. You see things through the meejum of a complex and artificial civilization. It's the chaps in over clothes, like me and Millocker here, who understand the real value of the cuss word as a lubricant."

"Well, I'm a refined man too," said Millocker, resenting O'Hara's inference. "What you see about me that ain't refined?"

O'Hara regarded his friend doubtfully. "Oh, well—" he said, and yawned.

"Why, look here," Millocker insisted, "last week when I lost a bolt out of an eccentric strap and had to bring my engine down on one side and stopped over dead centre three times, I'm blanked if anybody

"Well, I'm a refined man too"

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heard me using any violent language while we was pinching her forward! And if that wasn't a test I'd like to know. Did you hear me saying anything unrefined, Harry?" He appealed to his fireman.

"Nothing that the situation didn't seem to demand, Mr. Millocker," the young fellow answered, grinning.

"Hook my pie and sandwiches"

"What you want to be refined for, anyway?" O'Hara asked contemptuously.

"Well, I am," said Millocker; "it ain't that I just want to be."

A few minutes later he emerged from a thoughtful silence with the remark, "You just ought to see me in my Sunday clothes!"

Millocker had a way of sticking to one train of thought long after everyone else had diverged, seriously working things out to definite conclusions. Presently he interrupted an air brake disquisition with animation.

"I tell you, fellows, I've got a whole lot of refined instincts. A man's way of talking ain't everything, and clothes ain't everything; you've got to have refined feelings. If you all will listen just a minute I'll tell you about something I done once, a little speech I made up right on the spur of the moment, almost impromchoo, as you might say. I bet you'll say it was a pretty refined idea!"

"I didn't know you had ever made a speech, Millocker," said Michelson with admiration.

"Well, I got kind of balled up when I went to say it," Millocker said regretfully; "you can't always make your refined ideas work. What I want to prove is that I've got 'em all right. It happened several years ago when I was running down on the M. V. and W. There was a fellow on the road—" Millocker hesitated a moment as if embarrassed. "I won't mention any names," he said. "This chap was just the meanest, dirtiest little beast that ever lived and breathed on this earth. It seems kind of unfair to say hard things about a man after he's dead and this fellow is dead now; but I've got to explain that he was uncommon mean and trifling or you won't understand. He had been a fireman but got kicked out of the brotherhood for some low trick he'd done, and after that he kept hanging round the shops and the yards, getting a job now and then as a laborer. Everybody about the railroad got to hate him so it's a wonder someone didn't hit him on the head with a wrench. He had what you might call a natural genius for stealing. He used to swipe the tools of machinists at work in the roundhouse; he'd swipe brass off the locomotives, and he wasn't above stealing an engineer's little can of valve oil if he got a chance, just for spite because he knew it was the most precious thing in this world to a plug puller. I've had him hook my pie and sandwiches out of my lunch basket when my back was turned for a minute. He hadn't a friend about the place, and when there was an accident in the roundhouse and he was killed, happening to be on an engine where he hadn't any business, no one was anyways afflicted.

"An undertaker took charge of the remains, wiring to the dead man's home for instructions. He came of very decent people a long way up the state. The next afternoon my conductor mentioned to me that the mother and a sister had come down on our train to take the body home. He said they seemed mighty helpless and pitiful. He'd had to look out for them a good deal, and that was how he came to talk with 'em and to find out who they were. They had told him they couldn't bear to have 'Charlie' sent home all alone; they had to come and take care of him. He was all they had in the world, they said. The conductor thought it pretty funny that they didn't seem to have the first glimmer of an idea what sort of chap 'Charlie' had been. It seemed to me that it showed one streak of half way decency in him that he had always wanted to stand well with those two, had managed to keep them in the dark as to the kind of fellow he was. The train they were to take going home left three hours after we got in, and the conductor said the two women expected to put in the time

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waiting at the undertaker's place. Well, when I was on my way to my boarding house the thought came to me what a dull time those two little women were going to have, and I began to try to think of some plan to make things a little pleasanter for them. So I went round to a florist's and sent a lot of flowers round to the undertaker's with a card saying they were from the lodge of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen the dead man had once belonged to. If there'd been time I'd of gotten 'em to make me up something real pretty, a life-sized coal scoop, maybe, done in little white flowers, with roses all round and the lodge number and the letters B. of L. F. picked out in violets; but there wasn't time. Then I steamed round to my boarding house and washed and dressed and while I was shaving I made up my speech."

Millocker sat erect and smote his knee with his fist. His sagacious gray eye lighted with enthusiasm.

"It was a son of a gun of a speech!" he said.

"Can you say any of it now?" Michelson asked respectfully.

"Why, sure. I began: 'Madam, I have been delegated by the Railway unions of this place to convey and express to you our condolences on the untimely death of your son whose tragic terminus has cast a weight of gloom over our midst.' I went on a bit like that, throwing flowers at that little sneak that had nearly broke my heart several times by swiping my lunch, and then I wound up with a piece of poetry. It said,

But we know he is happier dwelling in space
Over there on that evergreen shore!

"All the time I was dressing and then on my way 'round to the undertaker's place, I kept saying it all over and over to myself to get her running slick without any knocks or pounds or blows. I wanted to be mighty sure I got the poetry right, 'cause the first part of the verse is rather comic. It says:

'The death angel smote Alexander M'Crue
And gave him protracted repose;
He wore a red shirt and a number ten shoe
And he had a big wart on his nose.
But we know he is happier dwelling in space
Over there on that evergreen shore,
And his friends are advised that his funeral takes place
Exactly at twenty past four.'"

"How did the women like the speech?" Michelson asked.

"Didn't I tell you I got balled up when I went to say it?" Millocker said mournfully; "but say, it was a nice refined idea, now wasn't it?"

"But it was all lies," O'Hara objected.

"Well, what difference did that make if it had have made those two women feel better in their minds?" Millocker demanded. "Besides, it wasn't any more lies than things that are said and printed every day about people who have died."

"Tell us how you felt when you went to say it," Phil McCarthy suggested; "I never could see how anybody could make a speech, any way. It beats me how some of the boys can get up in lodge meeting and talk!"

"It was the funniest thing!" said Millocker. "I was feeling all right when the undertaker led me through his hall to the room where the two women were waiting. I had my speech all ready when he opened the door. The next minute I saw the mother and sister, and all of a sudden I felt like somebody had me by the throat. I couldn't have said a word to save my life. The undertaker introduced me. I'd told him to say I was a friend of Charlie's. And the two women came up to me, holding out their hands. They were such little women; why, their heads hardly come to my shoulder. They begun to cry softly and I stood there holding a hand of each.

"It was the funniest thing"

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Presently the young girl pulled her hand away, and then I took and patted the mother's shoulder; and I said, 'I want to help you; I want to help you if I can,' and I'd hardly of known my own voice. The mother is dead now but I never let on what kind of a man Charlie was, and my wife don't know to this day that her brother wasn't all she thought him."

Millocker looked at his watch and rose to his feet.

"Maybe I did get balled up when I went to say it, but it was a dummed refined idea, that speech. You can bet your life I'm a refined man all right!"

He went away toward the roundhouse while the boys resumed the inexhaustible subject of the Westinghouse Brake.

Ode To Affluence

By Harold Susman

(With apologies to Alexander Pope)

HAPPY the man whose wish and care
A million-dollar palace bound,
Content to breathe a millionaire
The year around.

Whose private cars, whose horses, yachts,
Whose autos, all one could desire,
Whose houses in a dozen spots
We all admire.

Bless'd who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
Who has just dined, and wined, and dined,
With people gay.

Who sails away across the seas
In search of constant recreation,
Whose slightest whim he may appease
With new sensation.

Thus let me live, much seen, much known,
Whatever is for sale, I'd buy,
Whate'er I wanted, I would own!
Oh me! Oh my!

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The Man with the Muck Rake

By Ellery Sedgwick

"Where was a Man that could look no way but downwards, with a muckrake in his hand: There stood also one over his head, with a Celestial Crown in his hand, and proffered to give him that Crown for his muckrake; but the man did neither look up, nor regard, but raked to himself the straws, the small sticks, and dust of the floor."—Pilgrim's Progress.

"The Man with the Muck Rake" he has been called and the name will stick like pitch. The yellow journals have made him and now he is making the magazines. There is nothing too base for him to follow; nothing too foul for him to exploit. He needs money and he is paid for the job. The soul of the circulation man is in him. Readers he must have, thousands of them, hundreds of thousands. Exaggeration, perversion, distortion, truths, half-truths, lies—he heaps them up, regardless of honesty, reckless of consequences, absolutely without thought of the enormous responsibility that is his.

I am no apologist for the times we live in. They are better times, perhaps, than the world has ever seen before, but they are full of spectacular wickedness in high places of business and of politics, just as they are full of the meaner sins of smaller men. There is no blinking the facts. Evil is here and we must face it and beat it back, but shall we Americans gulp down the food every scandal-monger throws to us and swallow it hook, bait and sinker? Shall every "exposer" be our prophet? Shall we prick up long ears at every ass that brays?

It is time to halt and to think soberly. The last two years have witnessed a political revival in this country such as comes but once in a generation, a revulsion against false leaders, as moral as any religious revival in time of great calamity. Roosevelt, Folk, Hughes, Deneen, Jerome, have led us. Shall we believe in the political creed which they without ceasing repeat: "Play the game hard, but play it square and make every man that plays it play it square too?" Shall we follow them or shall we besot ourselves with the nostrums of every yellow quack and then run hell-for-leather down the steeps of socialism, trusting to the Providence which watches over fools, drunkards and the United States that we shall one day strike bottom?

Socialism—that's where these leaders of the magazines and newspapers are headed for. The sentimentalist who looks to find there the Kingdom of Brotherly Love upon Earth, the honest man, hysterical with anger at the crimes of high finance, the brave fool spoiling for a fight, the good citizen who says to himself, "Where so much evil is, the whole must be swept away to let us build anew"—all alike are following the lead of the statesmen of the yellow press toward the ruinous experiment of straight-out socialism and the long dead level of prostrate energies that must follow it.

Continued socialism is unthinkable in the United States, but the bare experiment would cost us twenty-five years of progress. The sinister politicians, the hirers of the Men with the Muck Rakes, hounding their servants on to exposures each more prurient than the last, would not hesitate to make the people pay the awful price of their rise to a short-lived power. The righteous indignation of a great nation is being shaped to personal ends with a malignant selfishness of purpose as coolly calculated as any act in history.

The exposure movement among magazines began with sincerity of purpose. "The History of the Standard Oil Company" was a unique undertaking pursued with industry and a fair-mindedness wholly admirable. It is scarcely too much to say for it that it marks the starting-point of an immense and beneficial revolution. This was followed by a series of exposures of the revolting political conditions of cities and states which did magnificent work for the right until theories instead of facts began to dominate them and constructive pessimism came to be the ruling passion of their author. Then came Lawson turning state's evidence

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on his former accomplices, stirring up the people with a tremendous hurly-burly of proof and inference, denunciation, charge and counter-charge; still doing great good in setting men to thinking and supplying newspaper invective with a new standard to live up to. Futile, even puerile, as was the remedy Lawson proposed, the benefit of his work surpassed, perhaps, the evil that went with it. But of Lawson's imitators this cannot be said truly. In the breathless work of exposure there is no time, scarcely is there desire for the facts. Men are tried and found guilty in magazine counting-rooms before the investigation is begun. "What we want is hot stuff," says the Man with the Muck Rake; "what's the use of looking where we're not going to find it!" Everywhere he goes sniffing for evil. You find him in Panama smelling for twenty-four hours and then writing it up as the worst muck heap in two continents. You find him in Washington spending two weeks in preparation for a general onslaught on the senators, good, bad and indifferent. You find him nosing round the courts of justice and talking his reckless generalities of "fixed" judges and "juries owned by the trusts." It's all grist to his mill. Anything that can rouse unreasoning passion and sell his magazine. Always hoping for the worst, his hopes never fail him.

A country which is governed by public opinion is governed by the men who spread it. One of the most interesting phenomena of late years is the growth of the influence of magazines in the field formerly monopolized by the daily papers. Magazines entered the province of journalism with certain great advantages in the work of forming public opinion. They are not bound by party affiliations. They may select the questions which they think themselves qualified to treat. The intervals which elapse between their publication dates imply a deliberate and dispassionate investigation of the facts. With the advent of the magazines into the political and social arena began that "new journalism" from which the country has a right to hope much—the journalism which deals thoroughly with a question, accepting information only at first hand and sparing neither time nor expense to get at the facts. To-day that new journalism, just risen to the fulness of its strength, is already in danger. It found the country sick of commercialism and it has caught the virulent disease. Circulation, and the money and power that circulation brings, is fast becoming the aim and object of its life. No franchise stealing legislator, no insurance rascal stealing the money that belongs to widows and to orphans, does to his country more cruel injury than the editor who loses all sense of responsibility.

There are to-day three courses open to us as a nation. One is the course of Elkins and Aldrich in the Senate, of Rogers and Armour in the trusts, of Spencer and his ilk in the railroads. It is the course of obstruction to the declared will of the people, of impudent determination to preserve a system long since become intolerable. It is the course leading straight to destruction. There is another course which such men as these make us almost sympathize with at times, but which also leads to destruction. It is the course of Debs and of Hearst, of the yellow journals and the magazine heroes. It is the course of the abolishment of the government of our forefathers, the course at once of the visionary and the schemer, the course of Socialism.

And there is the third course. The course of the square deal. The course which lays down as its fundamental principle that the government shall not play the whole game itself, but shall see that the whole game is played fair and that the man who doesn't play fair is ruled off the field. It demands publicity, the vigorous enforcement of the law. It calls upon the nation for earnest and unsleeping support. It calls upon the new journalism to give the people honest facts, helpful suggestions, constructive ideas. This is the course that the American Magazine believes in to the core of it, and to emphasize which, it adopted the name it bears to-day. This is the course which in the end must prevail.

This is a republic of honest men. The business which earns bread and butter for most of us is honest business. One by one the gaunt, gray wolves will be hunted down. Even now the pack is thinning out. Our fathers fought their battles and won them. Where are the Whiskey Ring, the Star Route scandals, the Tweed Ring to-day? Those battles were won when the American people turned on intrenched rascals and drove them headlong out. To-day we are on a flood-tide of our own victories. Spurning the malicious attacks made on public confidence, which is alike the basis of business and the foundation of self-government, let us have faith in ourselves, faith in our institutions, faith in the Republic.

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Rebirth

San Francisco: 1906

By Percy Vincent Donovan

HEAR, as the prophet heard
After the shock and the blast,
The still small voice of the Word,
Clear to the soul at last.

"AFTER the earthquake, a fire,"
And after the Whisper, a song!
Courage, set your desire
On high, sing, and be strong.

TAKE heart of courage and know
You have not endured in vain
Lamentation and mourning and woe,
For you must be born again.

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Drawn by Herman Pfeifer *See "At Mediator's Place"*

The thick smoke pall that stung and blistered throat and lungs

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AMERICAN MAGAZINE

VOL. LXII, NO. 2 JUNE, 1906

At Mediator's Place

By Holman Day

AUTHOR OF "IN THE HONEST WOODS," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HERMAN PFEIFER

AMERICUS FILLMORE COPP came staggering along the carry trail, his canvas canoe turned over his head and shoulders, the hot June sun glinting on it as though he were some gigantic hard-shelled insect. Perspiration streamed down his good-natured face.

He was coming down river and had lifted out above Telos Jaws.

Angus Mult came toiling along the carry trail from down river. He had lifted out below the Hulling Machine. The sun beat upon the gum-patched bottom of his canoe. His thin face was sombre.

As they approached Mediator's Place, one from one direction, one from another, they heard the familiar tinkle of iron against stone and knew that Mediator was at his favorite task.

Mediator's Place is half way along the two-mile carry between Telos Jaws, coming down river, and the Hulling Machine Falls. On the slope of bank between Mediator's Place and the river is "Bloody Ground," or "Deadman's Strip." Some rivermen call the row of forty-seven graves by one name, some by the other.

Heaps of water-worn stones mark each grave. The rivermen have built the rude cenotaphs, piling on each grave stones

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enough to denote the age of the deceased—a stone for a year. One grave is marked wholly by white stones. The occupant thus distinguished is the only one in the grim purlieus of Deadman's Strip who died a natural death. The others were the toll of Telos Jaws and a story goes with each one—running the river gamut of a jam's king log that snapped ahead of time, to the swamping of a current-slewed bateau.

The half hundred victims of the Hulling Machine are not represented in the Strip. The Jaws spew into the dead water below something worth burying and it can be picked up.

The Mediator is an old settler. Old rivermen tell vaguely that the happenings that set him into believing that he had been divinely commissioned to act as mediator between the higher forces and man, and that he had a band of ten thousand spirits constantly about him to do his bidding, was the happening that sent him wandering away into the wilderness and was a domestic happening of the kind that twist men's wits awry and make of a home a taunt and a by-word. Perhaps that was why Deadman's Strip appealed to him. But on the Munsungan no one hinted, no one pried, no one flouted. It was a good place for a Mediator to locate in. All who came up the river camped on the carry with the Jaws roaring above them and the Hulling Machine growling below. All who came down the river camped on the carry, too.

There were the dead who camped there always.

There was the "Octagon," the Mediator's eight-sided log camp, representing months of his patient labor, for the corner chamferings of an eight-sided camp are not easily hewed. On its slab door was the writing:

"*Welcome to all who come in honesty and peace and fear of God. But all others are asked to pass on and leave me and my home to its solitude alone.*"

And there were not many nights when men did not snore under the split cedar of the Mediator's roof; there were not many days when men did not frizzle their bacon over the big fire that roared on his hearth. There were not many who failed to leave a little of their stores in the bare cupboard of the old man who indignantly refused money compensation.

Those who halted, going up and coming down, patiently listened to the Mediator when he read texts from a fat little Bible that he carried in his breast pocket. Each month he wrote out what he termed a "Mediatorial Bulletin." The wayfarers listened patiently to that, also.

He spent all his spare time with chisel and mallet, cutting texts into the rocks up and down the carry so that "the very stones might have tongues and speak," he explained.

The dead, the spirits, the living, plenty of smooth surfaces along the cliffs for his chisel, a daily dropping of a bit of pork or a pinch of flour into his porringer—the knoll at Deadman's Strip was certainly an admirable location for a Mediator.

Americus Fillmore Copp eased his galled shoulders from under his canoe when he came abreast the Mediator, and sat down on the craft.

"Wal, Mede," he remarked cheerily, slatting the sweat from his forehead with his forefinger, "how's she readin' to-day?"

The old man was kneeling on a ledge above the carry trail, face toward the cliff. He smiled amiably under his grizzled beard when he turned his head. A battered tin pail beside him on the ledge was filled with smouldering moss and dried fungi. The faint draught of air puffed the "smudge" around the Mediator's head and drove away the thronging blackflies.

"Is the spirit band makin' any private talk about this drought breakin'?" inquired Angus Mult sarcastically. He had just eased himself from under his canoe, nodding sourly at Copp. Copp was amiable. Mult was grim. His query had an infection of ridicule in it. He was a young man, tall, sinewy, high-colored, bold of eye and with a bit of a twist at the corner of his mouth that was not pleasant.

"The rain is blessed and falls alike on the just and the unjust," said the old man, blinking at them through the smoke. "But it is in the hollow of His hand."

"And twenty-three million feet of the Munsungan drive are in the hollow of this valley north of Telos," growled Mult. "If you were a rain-maker, Mediator, instead of a rock-chopper, and if your ten thousand spirit band knew how to push clouds, I could hand you a steady job from now until August."

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Drawn by Herman Pfeifer

He flung the brands to right and left

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"There is a comfort in Isaiah," returned the Mediator cheerfully. He pointed to the lettering on the rock.

"*And the Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul in drought and make fat thy bones.*"

Copp clawed at his tangled brown beard and laughed with a sort of a silly chuckle.

"Pretty well wowed up, be they—them d'rectors?" suggested Copp.

Mult glowered up sullenly at the sky. "I never knew before," he said, "that the boss of a drivin' crew was responsible for the infernal, blastnation sky stayin' dryer'n the

"Follow the cross—and hurry on"

The young man twisted his mouth with a still more satiric grimace and gnawed at the end of his black mustache.

"He will, eh! Well, you wouldn't think so if you'd been with me this trip when I told the directors of the Log Driving Association that the banks of this river between Upper Haymock and Telos, here, are jackstrawed with jill-pokes and that ev'ry shoal is cob-piled, and that as for more water, even the fish are learning how to walk."

bottom of a brass kittle turned upside down. Them directors pitched into me and snarled and growled and told me how it was when old Lem Guiou used to boss the drive for 'em. I can put hell'n' repeat into a drivin' crew but I can't squat juice out of anything like that."

He shook his fist above his head.

The skies bent over them with that hard,

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dry burnish that follows weeks of drought. At the horizon line earth and sky were welded by the sullen hues of smoke. The mountains, near and far, glimmered through the haze with dull, blue outlines. The nose sniffed acrid odors of burning forest.

"The fire wardens will be gittin' the next dose," said Copp, his face lengthening as he blinked into the dim distances.

"What's the nearest to Eagle settlement?" inquired Mult, with solicitude. The Mediator had resumed his chiseling.

"Nothin' right handy so fur. The nearest big one is on Hanson & West's Caribou brook operation, but it's only 'n the cuttin's up to now. Hows'ever, it's workin' east, and I'm goin' down for more men. There's a hundred gone in toward Indian pond, but they ain't goin' to be able to keep it away from the standin' timber unless"—he looked around the skies despairingly—"she rains."

"Unless she rains!" snarled Mult. "What in damnation have I ever done that this should happen to me the first year they gave me the drive?"

"And they gave me a range of townships a hundred miles long to patrol and are blamin' me for the fires that the cussed dude fishermen have set," growled Copp.

Both men sat on their upturned canoes and dug their moccasined toes into the mould of the trail.

"I reckon I'll camp here with the old man to-night," said Mult at last.

"There's nothin' for you to hurry about," replied Copp. "Wa'n't worryin' about your sister, was ye?" The question was simple, but there was a touch of malicious jest in Copp's tone. The high color of the young man grew ruddier. But he did not reply.

"I s'pose you bought 'em a weddin' present in the city, didn't ye?" pursued Copp waggishly.

The other glared at him so redly, so suspiciously and with such evident astonishment that the gossipy up-river man quailed for just a moment. But he promptly recovered his assurance, or seemed to.

"Privacy in fam'lies is all right, Angus," he cried, "and I ain't the one to stick my nose in, but—well, it's leaked out since you've been gone down river." He was grinning again.

Mult got up off his canoe and scowled down on the newsmonger.

"If you're tryin' to wepse some lyin' scandal about my sister in your mouth like hot puddin'," he gritted, "I tell you, Copp, I won't stand for it, even if it is a joke. I fixed one man once. I'm ready for another one."

"If for a girl to git engaged to be married to a decent, respectable chap and then to have the news git out is scandal, then it's more'n what I ever s'posed it was," returned Copp stoutly. "Your sister Beth is engaged to Clair Blynn, and she let on as much to my wife when Lize put it right up to her, and there aint a person in Eagle settlement but what knows all about it. *You* know it yourself—so what's the use of bluffin' your friends any longer."

Mult's jaw had dropped. He struck his palm against the front brim of his hat and tipped it up. His face was purple.

"You sit there and tell me that?" he roared.

"I do," replied Copp composedly.

"You're a liar!" The accusation was flung so hastily and so furiously that Copp sat staring at the man who leaned above him with upraised fist. The Mediator whirled from his work and sank back on his thin haunches.

"'And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the tongue among our members, that it——'"

"You can go on with your chip-chop, old man," shouted Mult. "This doesn't concern you. I say you're a liar, Ame Copp, and I'll——"

"I don't go out with far-sighted specs lookin' for trouble, the same as some folks do," said Copp slowly, "but when I meet it, face to, I claim my share of the road. If you want to fight me, Mult, because I have told you a straight piece of news, that I supposed you knew all about, then come on like a man. But don't you call me a liar again!" He drawled the last words and at the close set his teeth and put his big fists up.

But the other man, after regarding him a moment with an expression in which doubt mingled with rage, whirled with a curse and set himself under his canoe. He went toiling away up the carry path without a word.

"He acts as though he intended to save his muscle for some one else," muttered Copp, meditatively. "That's a queer thing," he went on, looking up at the Mediator, who was alternately surveying him

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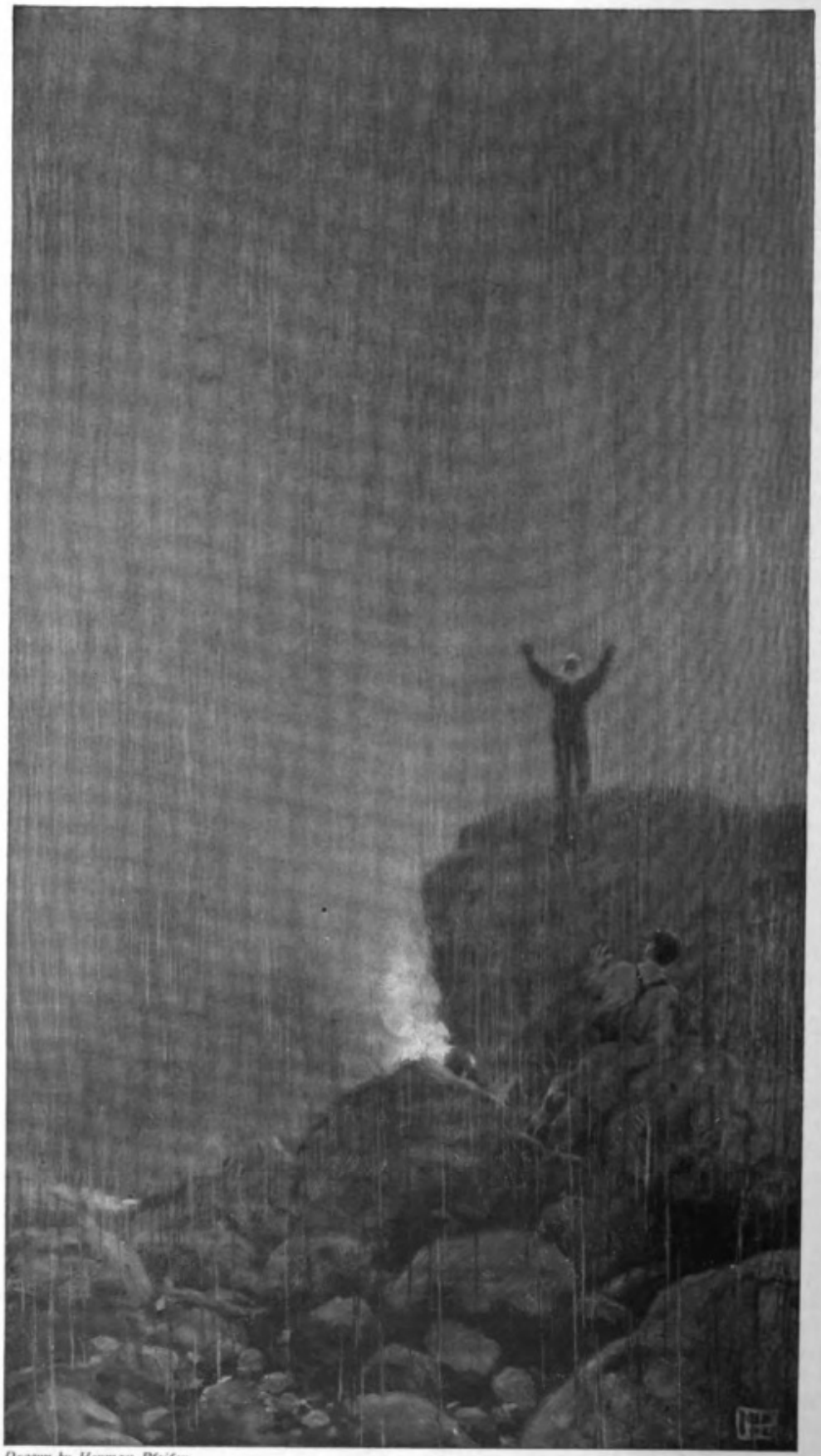

Drawn by Herman Pfeifer

"The rain, the rain, the blessed rain!"

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and the bottom of the receding canoe. "I reckoned that at last Beth Mult had picked out a man that would suit her brother. He has chased off everyone else that has dared to look at her."

Americus Fillmore Copp had known Mediator Marr of Deadman's Strip for a good many years, but he reflected as he gazed at him now that he had never seen on the wrinkled face such an expression as was creeping over it. Its bland serenity was replaced by uneasiness and alarm.

"Does he mean harm to his sister?" he asked.

"I don't reckon so," returned Copp. "He's prob'ly goin' home to put more cotton battin' round *her* and kill Clair Blynn, so I should jedge by signs. P'raps if the Grand Mucker of Pee-ru should come along with a bag o' di'monds and a golden crown, Angus Mult would think he was good enough to marry Beth. Clair Blynn ain't no dude nor no angel, but he's the cleanest man that ever come up-river to Eagle settlement, and Beth Mult ain't none too good for him."

"Who is this Clair Blynn?" asked the Mediator earnestly, his gaze fixed on the tossing canoe now disappearing around the cliff.

"The new surveyor for Hanson & West—twelve hundred a year now and more later, for his folks have money in those timberlands. I've never understood Angus Mult's way with his sister, Mediator." The fire warden's brow wrinkled.

"She's a pretty girl and a good girl and she's had a lot of attentions our way. What else could you expect? Young folks must be young folks. But that brother of hers has licked more'n a dozen decent fellers for beauin' her home and dancin' with her."

He stuffed tobacco into his pipe with fingers that trembled a little after his bold defiance.

"I'll own up that an only brother has a right to be boss over his sister in some ways, when she ain't got either father or mother livin'," he went on, resentment provoking flow of speech, "but this settin' up to be a tyrant over a girl that's clus' onto twenty-five and deservin' to have a good husband and settle down ain't my idea of brotherly love."

"She is a good girl, they tell me," said the Mediator, his voice quivering.

"Straighter'n a king spruce and with a heart sounder'n the center of a saw-log," returned Copp emphatically. He puffed at his pipe a little while and then raised his canoe upon his shoulders. He peered up at the old man from under its edge.

"There's trouble due in the Eagle settlement, Mediator," he said, "and it will arrive in the canoe that Angus Mult is polin'. I wisht your band of ten thousand guardeen angels wa'n't all in your head and locked in there at that. They'd find a good job waitin' for 'em up-river. Guardeen *angels* might be able to mess into fam'ly affairs. I reckon *we* ain't got no call to."

He went away down the carry trail.

The next day a bateau crew coming down river met the Mediator two miles above Telos Jaws. His leaky punt had stranded on a shoal where the river had swung him. His pole was broken, he was unconscious, and blood spotted his white beard about his lips.

They dashed water on him, gave him a sup from a black bottle and bore him back to the Octagon, with sundry surly counsels regarding the advisability of crazy old men staying at home where they belonged.

He did not reply. He did not explain. On his face remained that strange expression that no one had ever seen there before.

For two days after that he sat on his little porch and gazed up-river toward the cliff's edge where the carry trail snaked out of the birches. His pale, blue eyes, that for so many years had been filled only with the vague light of innocent delusion, now stared wide, as though he feared what was to come 'round that corner of the cliff. He seemed to have prescience of impending evil.

And yet it was not a spectacle that promised ill that at last came into sight along the trail.

A girl, tall, straight and athletic, swung ahead, sturdily bearing a pack, a forcing pole and canoe paddles. A man, stumbling under the load of a canoe, was close behind. Both were hurrying.

When the girl saw the old man on the porch she began to run.

"Mr. Marr," she gasped as she drew near, "you don't know us, but we are trying to escape from a great danger. It is close behind us. Won't you help with the canoe? My poor boy can go no further alone."

As the old man still sat there on the porch, staring at her with face as white as

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the white of his hair and beard, she broke into eager appeal.

"We are not doing wrong, Mr. Marr. You are a good man. I have heard all the rivermen speak of you. We are innocent and we are threatened with great danger. Won't you help with the canoe to the Hulling Machine? You *must* help us." She wailed this.

The man came up, stumbling and staggering under the canoe, rolled it off his shoulders to the ground and fell across it.

"Oh, my God, little girl," he gasped, "my heart seems bursting in me."

"You see," she almost screamed. She dropped the paddles and shook the Mediator's arm. "He cannot do any more. He has done already what would have killed three men. He is my true, brave boy. Come, come!"

While she clutched his arm and dragged at it she cast frightened glances up the trail, her face showing both exhaustion and bitter fear.

The Mediator slowly rose to his feet, holding to the side of his camp. He was yet weak from his cruel efforts on the river. But it was something more than physical decrepitude that had set his hands to fluttering in such pitiful manner. He stretched them out to her. There was appeal in the gesture, as though he had made a move to take her into his arms. She saw in his mien simply the pathetic declaration of his weakness.

She turned away from him and ran to the young man.

"Clair, I'll carry it myself. I *will* carry it."

She had thrown off her pack and was pushing him away from the canoe. But he resisted her, at first gently, then with determination that flushed his face. A moment before it had been pale and rigid with exhaustion.

"He has driven me to the limit, Beth. You know it. It ain't because I am a coward that I have run away from him. He may think different. Others may think different. But——"

"It's only the bravest men who are willing to fight self and conquer themselves at the word of a woman, Clair," she cried. "You have done that because he's my brother. We *must* keep on, Clair. It would be too horrible if he should overtake us."

She was again struggling with him over the canoe. But he grasped her wrists and held her away.

"I'm not coward enough to see you do that," he choked, for he was still panting for breath and his shoulders were pinched forward in his agony. He tried again to lift the canoe, but his cramped fingers refused to clutch and his arms, quivering as with palsy, were unable to straighten as he attempted to poise the craft over his head. He let it fall and turned to her, despair on his features at first and then grim resolve settling into the tense lines about his mouth.

"I'm only human, Beth. I've got a right to have you. Your brother doesn't own you. It's got to be settled sometime. I'll settle it here. I won't be chased like a dog."

"It will be horrible—horrible," she wailed. "He will come like a beast that's mad. I know him so well. There's no reason in him. When we are married he must listen. Oh, my boy, for God's sake come away—come away!"

But he resisted, dogged in his despair and impotence—for the moment merely a tortured animal at bay. He set his face upriver.

Again the girl ran to the Mediator and clutched him by his arms.

"There's going to be murder done here—murder!" she shrieked. "He's almost here. Why don't you do something? Why doesn't some one do something? Old man, don't you understand? It's my brother—and here is the man I love best in all the world! My brother, and my husband that is going to be! Oh, don't you understand?"

"You love him best of all the world? He's a good young man they tell me—a good young man. Do you love him best? It's a serious thing to be married. I know of those that have been married to their everlasting ruin."

The old man seemed to be maundering. He was fingering his throat with his fluttering hands and staring from the girl to the young man who stood there scowling upriver.

"But if he's a good young man maybe he——"

"Only a crazy man to look to in our awful trouble!" she moaned, whirling away from him. He pulled off his tall cap, threw it upon the porch and followed her. It may have been the taunt that stung him, it may have been consciousness of her

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pitiable helplessness and her terrible position between those two men; it may have been the sudden crystallization from the mist of the strange reflections and ponderings that had been stirring in the Mediator's dim mind during the days in which he had sat and meditated. However it was, the man that followed her to where the man stood at bay was no longer the simple old creature of delusions that the Munsungan had known so long.

Now that his grotesque cap was off, his waving, white hair gave him an air that awed them a bit. His face wore dignity and earnestness that transfigured him. A close observer would have seen more than the honest light of entire sanity in his blue eyes, but the fire in them sparkled with the flame of authority.

"You say that man of wrath is close behind you?" he cried. "Angus Mult, with legs like iron and arms like steel, is not to be outrun on this river, that he knows so well. There is one chance for you, young people. Follow me. I say, *follow me!*"

She grasped the young man by the arm and he followed. The Mediator led them into the edge of the woods and down the mouth of a trail.

"This is the Cameron trail," he said, "and it leads to the lake settlement. It would be the trail that he would take to pursue, if it was thought you had gone through the woods. Follow me!"

He thrust through a copse and they came after.

"I have not lived all these years here in these woods not to have my own trails," he said, pointing to a tree that was hidden from a person on the old trail. The tree bore a rude cross hacked into the bark to serve as a "blaze."

"There goes my trail to the lake settlement," he said. "It's five miles shorter and it dodges the big hills. Wait here."

In a few minutes he was back with them. He had brought their pack and a tin pail in addition.

"There's a bit to eat in the pail," he said; 'I make poor shifts at cooking and it may not be good, but it will help a little. Now hasten on. It may happen that I can turn aside the man of wrath who comes after. There are few who know my trail here. Remember and follow the cross—follow the cross!"

There was the reverent significance of the religious enthusiast in his tone as he spoke the last words.

They were attempting to stammer acknowledgment, but he checked them gently.

"Follow the cross—and hurry on."

He had that fluttering hand at his throat again.

"If—if——" he stammered, gazing at the girl with dimming eyes, "you wanted to leave something with me that I would never forget, you could——" He shuttled his wistful gaze at the young man and murmured, "I'm only an old man, you know, and I'd like to press my lips once on her bonny forehead."

She came to him swiftly, put her arms around his neck and kissed him, for the pathos of his loneliness and the mute appeal of his dim eyes touched her woman's heart. Then they hastened away, the woman following closely at the heels of her lover along the narrow trail among the trees. The Mediator went thrusting back through the copse, tears streaming down into his beard.

When he came to the canoe that they had left he tried to carry it out of sight, but it was too much for his strength, shattered since that day on the river. As he dropped it and straightened he saw a man come lurching around the bend of the trail up-river, canoe on his back.

The Mediator stumbled to his porch and sat down on it.

It was Angus Mult who came, and his eyes were bloodshot and he was breathing with the hoarse "sufflings" of a strong man near the end of his endurance. He threw his canoe from his shoulders and ran and kneeled beside the other craft.

"So you've got 'em hidden here, old man," he gritted. "They're in your camp, hey? You needn't lie to me. You were out tryin' to hide their canoe."

He stopped, for his breath seemed tearing at his throat as he gasped. Still on his knees, he began to roll back his sleeves from his wrists.

"Only a minute—a minute—a minute," he panted, gulping for air at each pause. "Then I'll at him. He stole her. But he's cornered."

He did not rise but pulled a short-muzzled rifle from his belt and laid it before him on the ground.

"That's if he tries to run. But him and me 'll meet like men—but he ain't a man. He's a dirty thief."

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The old man made no reply. His tears were gone and his eyes were hard under the tufts of white eyebrow.

The other leaned forward and panted on all fours like a dog, his mouth slavering, struggling to control his heaving lungs. At last he struggled up, stumbled forward a few steps, planted himself with legs astride and shouted,

"Come out, Clair Blynn, and settle with the man you've robbed."

Only the silence of the woods followed his cry.

"Once more. Will you come out in the open like a man?"

Again the silence.

"Then, damn you, take it as ye'll have it!" He started forward, but the Mediator rose and stood before his door.

"The writing on my door," said he, "welcomes only those who come in honesty and peace and fear of God. You can't come into my house, Angus Mult."

"Get out of the way, you old text drooler," roared Mult, advancing.

"You can't come into my house, I say." As he spoke the Mediator reached his hand inside the door and took from the deer-hoof hangers his heavy magazine rifle.

"It's my house and I say you can't come in."

"It ain't you I want, old man—it ain't you. But ye can't stand between me and the man I do want and not get hurt. Ye can't stand between me and my sister. D'ye hear me? This ain't your bus'ness."

"I'm not standing between you and your sister," returned the Mediator.

"So you're lyin' for 'em, as well as shieldin' 'em, be ye?" rasped the pursuer.

"Angus Mult, *you* look at *me* a moment!"

The tone was so tense, and the air of the old man standing there so imperious and so striking that Mult paused in spite of himself.

Out of the smoky heavens blew a roaring west wind. It fluttered the long, white hair of the Mediator like bannerets. His gaunt frame seemed to tower.

"Listen to me, Angus Mult. I am a clergyman of the gospel. You have never known that before, but I am. I abhor a liar as a traitor to God and man. I say I am not standing between your sister and yourself."

The other quailed before that commanding gaze only for a moment.

"But they are in there," he roared. "You wouldn't be guarding an empty cabin that way. You don't dare to deny that they are in there."

"What I deny is that I'm interfering in your family or standing between your sister and yourself."

"She's in that camp and I'll——"

"Listen, Angus Mult. You are talking of the girl called Beth Mult. She is not your sister. Do you hear me? By my hopes of heaven—the only thing left of all my hopes—by my faith as a clergyman, by the Lord Jesus who died to save me, that girl is not your sister. Therefore, Angus Mult, go on your ways and leave the child alone. Your demand for her is only the demand of the man for the maid—and the maid has chosen otherwise."

It was a stunning blow that the old man had dealt.

As he at first gasped to say something, Angus Mult's lips framed his accustomed ready retort, "Liar," but he did not utter the word. Something in the old man's mien and his solemn asseveration impressed, deterred, overawed the other's fierce anger. The next moment a frenzied, eager, wild hope that frightened him came into his heart. Yet somehow, after all, that hope had a familiar thrill in it.

"Angus," went on the old man, "it is the first duty of a good brother to give his sister to a worthy man whom she has chosen. You have not been willing. The Adam in you has spoken louder than your reason. You haven't known what was the matter with you. I pity you, my boy."

The instinct of the primordial man that he had not understood before, the feeling that he had struggled blindly against for all the years, the jealous, bitter protection of her, the mad rage that inflamed him when others wooed her—his untrained heart now began to have an understanding of it all. His soul still blinked dizzily in the dazzle, but he felt that the old man must be speaking truth. How else could he, Angus Mult, love the girl that they called his sister with such flaming passion that his hands itched to kill the man who was taking her away from him?

"I pity you, my son," quavered the Mediator. "I pity you and I understand. I loved a woman myself, once, and one came and took her away from me—but it was a bitterer cross to bear than yours. I haven't talked of it through all the years,

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Angus Mult, for the talking of it would have scorched my throat, just as the memory has been burning out my soul. Now believe that others than you have had to walk hand in hand with death in life. You and the others of the rivermen have called me crazy, Angus, and my poor wits are not what they were. I know it! But God has put aside the curtain of my darkness a little to-day—for my heart has been strangely stirred, Angus—strangely stirred! So I may say unto you, go and leave her. For your way with her ever after is but the way of a man with a maid, and she has made her choice."

Mult had not spoken, for this draught of truth had made him drunken, at the first.

Now he yearned madly for confirmation. The panting thing that had been hidden in his breast for all the years saw the honest light streaming on it at last and beat at the bars to be let out.

"You've got to prove it, old man," he cried, with a break in his voice like a squall of something wild.

"It can be proved," said the Mediator. His lips were as white as his beard. "The woman that your father, the 'handsome Lud Mult,' brought into the wilderness years ago was not his wife, Angus. It was another man's wife, and he had stolen her and her baby girl, because he was big and strong and handsome and the other man was not. And he stole his own little boy away from his own wife. And he came up here into the wilderness where folks are not ready with questions. Look at me, Angus. This is true!"

It was no skeptic on whom he bent his burning gaze. Angus Mult wildly and joyously reached out and grasped the knowledge to his heart as truth.

"Then no other man under God's skies shall have her but me," he roared. "You ain't got no right to keep me away from her, old man. No man has got the right to take her away from me. She's mine."

He was advancing to come in at the door of the camp. The Mediator brought his rifle up into the hollow of his arm.

"I say the girl has spoken and has made her choice," he said gravely. "You have no claim. I have given her to the man she loves."

"*You* have given her?"

"Yes, because I am the man from whom your father stole her and her mother. She is my daughter."

For a long time the two stood and stared at each other—the old man with serene authority replacing the trouble and anguish in his dim eyes; the young man with set teeth through which his breath came sibilantly, his lips slowly rolling away.

The only sound was the rush of the wind down the smoky skies. It drowned out even the dull roar of the Jaws and the grumble of the Hulling Machine, with their diminished floods.

Mult was the first to break the silence.

"She ain't goin' to be stolen from me," he yelled. "Nobody has loved her so long as I have. She is mine and ye've got to give her to me."

As he shouted, he suddenly dove forward and downward, threw his arms around the old man's legs and dragged him from the platform. They fell together on the ground. Mult was up first and roughly twitched the rifle from the other's feeble clutch. He whirled it above his head in both hands and flung it far into the woods. The next instant he was inside the camp, screaming hoarsely:

"Now it's man to man for her, Clair Blynn."

He raged around the dim interior, lighted only by the door and the cook fire on the hearth, groping wildly into the recesses of the upper and lower tiers of bunks.

Then he came stamping out of doors. He ran again to their discarded canoe and seemed to sniff at it with almost a canine eagerness. His keen riverman's eyes noted that the canvas under the cedar spreaders was still damp. The canoe had not been long out of the water. He turned his face toward the Hulling Machine. More than ever he displayed the canine characteristics now. He threw back his head and his nostrils dilated.

"Not that way without a canoe," he muttered.

With head bent forward he ran around and around the little clearing of the Mediator. The old man sat on the ground, where he had been thrown, watching him anxiously.

The ground was hard and dry after all the weeks of drought, but at the mouth of the Cameron trail, where the springs oozed at the foot of the big trees, he found the impressions of their feet—impressions faint

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and extending for only a little way until the soil became hard again.

He rushed farther down the trail to the other spring hole, whose existence he knew. He went down on his hands and knees and with nose to the ground examined every square foot of the trail.

He came roaring back into the clearing.

"So you've got 'em tucked away in some of your dodge holes in there, old man!" he yelled. "I know your tricks! You thought I'd chase away on the Cameron trail. Oh, no! Oh, no! I'm no man to be fooled that way. They haven't gone down the trail. I'm no man to go hunting for a needle in a haystack."

His frenzy and excitement made him gibber like a maniac.

"I'll show 'em! I'll show you! I'll have 'em out. And if they don't come out they'll get their hell on earth. I'll make it for 'em. He can't have her. By the gods, he can't have her. I'll see her in the torments of damnation first—and here's the damnation!"

He ran into the camp and rushed out with blazing firebrands from the hearth.

The wind was volleying down the valley like the huge draft of a mighty furnace. The woods were tinder. For miles back from the river the dry-kye of the earlier cuttings strewed the ground, scattered between pines and spruces of the younger growth, full of resin and smeared with sun-caked pitch. He flung the brands to right and left, letting the roaring wind carry them. He rushed back into the camp and brought out a tin pail heaped with live coals.

He sowed them among the trees and over the brittle tinder of a near-by blow-down—and the harvest sprang instantaneous; flames that grew and flourished in shredded streamers like herbage of hideous growth, fires that went flickering up pitch-covered trunks, roared into horrid bloom in the tree tops and scattered seeds of destruction that were borne down on the wind. New flames sprang up far ahead and blossomed and seeded ere the fires behind had overtaken them in their careering course.

The master of the mischief danced to and fro along the wall of the fire, screaming his summons to come forth.

The old man scrambled up, his woodsman's heart sick with the thought that came to him. He had sent the young couple away by the trail through the lowlands, by the trail that led through the blow-downs, by the trail bordered by dry-kye. It was the path that the racing conflagration would take, without friendly hill or cliff to interpose a shield.

A forest fire has its vagaries. Its flanks take unexpected swings. It halts, sometimes, and eats and eats as though it had found some dainty morsel. Sometimes it never stops even for swamps and watercourses.

The old man knew all the chances and realized all the uncertainties. It was a freakish foe that he must circumvent. But one thing was certain: the fire would follow the valley trail. Only a woodsman that knew every inch of that forest could strike his way from that trail to the high ground and find some recess in the rocks that might avail as place of refuge.

The Mediator knew his country.

He had seen and kissed his child that day.

After all the years the depths of his being had been stirred again by the love of his own. The horrible danger she was in filmed his mind once more.

A madman's zeal and strength replaced his weakness. He screamed and danced before the wall of fire with all the abandon the other was displaying. Then suddenly he dashed off under the shrouding pall of yellow smoke, made a detour around the blazing west confines of the conflagration and at last—blackened, scorched and half-blinded—found himself in the trail of the crosses, a figure that swept along in the sifting smoke like a shadow, following the trail almost by instinct.

He came upon them an hour later. The red glare of the flames was at his back and sparks were dropping around like rain. They had apparently abandoned hope. They had taken the trail ready to sink with exhaustion. Their red pursuer had now hunted them down. They kneeled in the shallow depths of a little watercourse, their arms about each other.

There was only a croak left in the old man's throat, but they obeyed his gestures. The watercourse led up the little hillside, and he left the trail and took it, stumbling over the stones of the brook that had been shrunk into pools that only half covered dirt-stained rocks.

They, in their bewilderment, had not dared to attempt to flank the fire. But the Mediator knew the way toward the high-

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lands. The night came down on them, while they struggled on, gasping for breath in that thick smoke pall that stung and blistered throat and lungs.

When they gazed from a shelf of the mountain the remote distances seemed like the expanse of some great city spotted with lights. It was here that the rush of the fire had already passed, leaving stumps blazing and stubs flickering. Nearer them the charge of the flames was furious under the spur of the wind.

"The wind will go down at sunset," the Mediator had gasped. But this night it continued. More than that, it changed, and in this there was despair. For the fire that had swung around the base of the wooded mountain now came roaring up and toward them in their faces. The other and older conflagration still ate on its steady and relentless course behind, backing slowly and opposing its wall of flames to them.

They were dragging the girl between them now, but they realized that they could not go on much longer.

"Any other time but in these days, when the Lord has withheld His waters from the face of the earth, I could take courage from that wind changing," muttered the Mediator. "Alas, the fountains of the sky are dried up and woe is to us all."

But now there was a shuttling of fierce white light above the smoke. The winds volleyed in their ears, but above the roar of them there came a booming report, that rolled among the hills hollowly.

"It is the voice of the Lord," choked the old man.

He went toiling up the steep slope. The man and maid dragged themselves behind him.

"It is the voice of the Lord and the glory of his visage," he muttered at each sheeting of the white light and the growing roar of the thunder.

"And that is the hand of God!" he fairly shrieked.

A bolt of lightning had come arching across the dun heavens and found its target on the crest of the mountain up which they were creeping. The awful yelp of its passing almost split their ears. The echoes that went jarring away shook the hills.

"It is the hand of God," cried the Mediator once more.

Flames sprang from a dry stub of tree that the lightning had riven. The new fires coursed along the parched and stunted growth on the summit, whipped by the wind, and rode on and ahead of the older and fiercer conflagration, whose food was snatched away from its jaws on the mountain top. Before their eyes, as they struggled upward, the great fire died. The red flaring of the new one lighted the heavens beyond the mountain down whose flank it went roaring and ravening.

At last they came out upon the blackened, hot expanse of the summit, that had been made safe for them so miraculously. The stifling smoke of the older conflagration, that was backing upon them at the foot of the mountain, drove down upon them in eddying currents of air. To right and left and all around raged the hideous saturnalia of the flames. But here in the cleft of the ledge to which they carried the fainting girl they were safe for a time, despite the menace of the flames deploying sullenly up the mountain.

Thirst parched and hunger gnawed, they gasped for air and their lungs seemed to be drying within them. But for a little while they were safe.

"It was the hand of God that smote here and made a way for us in this Red Sea of destruction," said the old man reverently, and he kneeled and began to give thanks.

It was not sleep that drowned out the senses of the young man, as he crouched in the crevice of the ledge, the girl's head on his arm. It was the stupor of collapse, of anæsthesis in that stifle. He had striven to stay awake to fan the smoke away from the face of the unconscious girl. He would have given his right hand for a draught of water to pour between her blackened lips. He swooned and fell beside her while he muttered this offer to Fate.

He did not know what hour it was when he revived. It was still black night. There was a queer roar all through the heavens and along the earth. The breath came pure in his nostrils. He eased his arm from under her head and dragged himself out into the open, holding by the side of the rock. Sheeting before the driving wind, guttering and gulleying and gurgling down the mountain slope, patting his face like fond fingers of the unseen, the waters of heaven met him as he issued.

In the sullen red glow of expiring fires

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he saw a figure kneeling on the side of the cliff. The sooty mask of the old man's face was streaked. His hair hung limply on his shoulders.

"'And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.'"

He quoted the passage solemnly, and then cried with the shrillness of hysteria:

"It's the rain, the rain, the blessed rain, my son! Bless the Lord for His mercies, and His love endureth forever."

He toppled forward in utter relaxation of body and mind. There was a smile on his face as the young man dragged him back to the shelter of the cliff, and he left him slumbering as soundly as an infant.

But it was the Mediator who left *them* sleeping when he arose at the first glimmering of gray. The clouds hung low and dragged their sodden draperies along the mountain tops. The rain still poured unceasingly.

The Mediator's chisel and little mallet never left the pocket of his frayed old coat except when they were in use. Now he drew them out and walked a little way down the mountain to where a cliff offered inviting expanse.

It was the familiar tinkle of iron against stone that led to him a man who had staggered all night along the hideous trail of his fire, weeping aloud and cursing himself.

The old man had his little Bible propped open under shelter of a stone and had set deep into the living rock these words:

"Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving, who covereth the heavens with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh——"

"You didn't find them!" wailed Angus Mult at his shoulder. "I have killed her. I didn't go for to do it, Mediator. She wasn't for me. I know it now. I've had a chance to think it over. And I've killed her! I've thought of it all the night. I tried to put the fire out, old man. Oh, I tried to put it out."

He held forth his blackened and blistered hands. His hair was singed. Red welts striped his cheeks.

"Hell was in me, Mediator. I'm always sorry afterwards. But it's always when it's too late." He broke into blubberings.

"It was that same word that your father sent to me, Angus Mult," replied the old man sternly.

He gazed long at the culprit who cowered there in the rain, and when at last Mult had lowered his eyes under the grave and rebuking regard, the Mediator began to talk. It was only at the end of his solemn arraignment of the man's unjust persecution of the innocent and helpless that he vouchsafed the information that the girl was not dead.

"She's alive?" roared Mult, staggering to his feet and coming toward the old man with outstretched arms and face working piteously.

"Yes, Angus Mult, she is alive," said a voice above them on the mountainside. "She is alive and so am I, and I'm here to meet you now as man should meet man, for that woman is mine and hereafter I shall protect her. Now what will you have of me? For I swear I'll not be run by you like a fox any further."

"She ain't mine any longer," faltered the spirit-broken Mult.

"It's her right to choose her man," he said, shuttling appealing glances between the two grave men. "I've found out some things. I'm sorry, and that's all I've got the language to say to you, Blynn. It's been bad, but you've got to make some allowances for a man like me that aint had nothin' else but her—and that didn't understand till——" a sob checked his words. "All is," he went on brokenly after a time, "I'd jest like to look at her once more and have her know that I'm sorry and ain't goin' to give her no more trouble? It ain't in me after what I've been through."

It was the Mediator who gently pushed the chosen lover from the path and led the way to the crevice in the ledge. He bent forward and looked in.

"She's still asleep—poor little girl," he whispered over his shoulder. "It has been an awful night for her, Angus Mult."

"And for me, Mediator! I don't reckon it's for me to wake her," muttered the man. "You can tell her how I come and how I went away, Mediator. You've got better language than I have. Tell her I come to realize at last. Tell her that I ain't all bad, and when I knew she had the right to have some one that she wanted I was man enough to give her up when I come to realize—when I come to realize."

He had pushed into the crevice and

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stood close to the Mediator, gazing over his shoulder into the gloom.

"I ain't had trainin' and I didn't take it like a real gentlemen that understood how to act in time o' trouble," he whimpered. "But I've been a man since I come to realize. Tell her that much!"

He pressed past the old man and kneeled suddenly and kissed her hand that lay limply outspread on the moss.

Then he went out into the rain and gazed up at the heavens.

"It looks like quite a spell of it," he said with piteous attempt to be matter-of-fact. The in-grained, simple anxiety to be "a man," his sole code of woods decorum had taken possession of him. "I reckon it's me for the drive now. There's nothin' like bein' busy, gents. I hope the little girl will get to the settlement all handy and right. It's only an easy ja'nt down the other side."

He pointed a wavering hand to the dull steel line of lake below them.

"Good day," he said brokenly.

"Wait for me down by the ledge, Angus," said the Mediator. "I'm going back to the river with you."

"There's the lake," said he to Blynn. "You can take your time as soon as she wakes up. There's the food in the little tin pail. Good bye to you and good luck."

He turned away, his face puckering with the grimace that precedes tears.

"One moment, sir!" hoarsely whispered Blynn. "I overheard some of your talk to Mult a little while ago. I think you haven't told us all—all that—well, I didn't hear anything definite, but I suspect that you are—are—something——"

"I am the Mediator," said the old man over his shoulder, moving away; "they say I'm a little light in the head. I'm the—Mediator."

Two men silent, their heads bowed, their faces grief-stricken, took their way together through the sodden forest, the rains beating against their faces.

Another man, with a smile on his face, sat at the mouth of the little cave and watched the slumbers of a girl who smiled back at him in her sleep.

The Mystery

By Stewart Edward White and Samuel Hopkins Adams

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILL CRAWFORD

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST INSTALMENT.—*The schooner Laughing Lass is encountered under sail, but deserted, by the U. S. S. Wolverine in the North Pacific. A crew under Ensign Edwards with bos'n's mate Timmins is put aboard. When she again appears she is again deserted. Previous to her appearance on each occasion, a shaft of light and brilliant glow are seen. A new crew of volunteers is put aboard. A storm separates the vessels; that night the light is seen for the third time. The Wolverine's company watch it in a silence that is broken by a cry forward.*

CHAPTER V.—CONTINUED.

THE quartermaster who had been at the wheel came clambering down the ladder and ran along the deck, his fingers splayed and stiffened before him in the intensity of his panic.

"The needle! The compass!" he shrieked.

Barnett ran to the wheel house with Trendon at his heels. The others followed. The needle was swaying like a cobra's head. And as the cobra's head spits venom, it spat forth a thin, steel-blue stream of lucent fire. Then so swiftly it whirled that the sparks scattered from it in a tiny shower. It stopped, quivered, and curved itself upward until it rattled like a fairy drum upon the glass shield.

In the west the splendor and the terror shot to the zenith. Barnett whirled the wheel. The ship responded perfectly.

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"I thought she might be bewitched, too," he murmured.

"You may head her for the light, Mr. Barnett," said Capt. Parkinson calmly. He had come from his cabin, all his nervous depression gone, in the face of an imminent and visible danger.

Slowly the great mass of steel swung to the unknown. For an hour the unknown guided her. Then fell blackness, sudden, complete. After that radiance the dazzled eye could make out no stars, but the look-out's keen vision discerned something else.

"Ship afire!" he shouted hoarsely.

"Where away?"

"Two points to leeward, near where the light was, sir."

They turned their eyes to the direction indicated, and beheld a majestic rolling volume of purple light. Suddenly a fiercer red shot it through.

"That's no ship afire," said Trendon. "Volcano in eruption."

"And the other?" asked the captain.

"No volcano, sir."

"Poor Billy Edwards wins his bet," said Forsythe in a low voice.

"God grant he's on earth to collect it," replied Barnett solemnly.

No one turned in that night. When the sun of June 8 rose it showed an ocean bare of prospect except that on the far horizon, where no land showed on the chart, there rose a smudge of dirty, rolling smoke. Of the schooner there was neither sign nor trace.

CHAPTER VI

THE CASTAWAY

"This ship," growled Carter, the second officer, to Dr. Trendon, as they stood watching the growing smoke-column, "is a worse hot-bed of rumors than a down-East village. That's the third sea-gull we've had officially reported since breakfast."

As he said, three distinct times the *Wolverine* had thrilled to an imminent discovery, which, upon nearer investigation, had dwindled to nothing more than a floating fowl. Upon the heels of Carter's complaint came another hail.

"Boat ahoy. Three points on the starboard bow."

The news ran electrically through the cruiser and all eyes were strained for a glimpse of the boat. The ship swung away to starboard.

"Let me know as soon as you can make her out," ordered Carter.

"Aye, aye, sir."

"There's certainly something there," said Forsythe presently. "I can make out a speck rising on the waves."

"She's a small boat," came in the clear tones of the look-out, "driftin' down."

"Any one in her?" asked Carter.

"Can't make out yet, sir. No one's in charge though, sir."

Capt. Parkinson appeared, and Carter pointed out the speck to him.

"Yes. Give her full speed," said the captain, replying to a question from the officer of the deck.

Forward leapt the swift cruiser, all too slow for the anxious hearts of those aboard. For there was not one of the *Wolverines* who did not expect from this aimless traveler of desert seas at the least a leading clue to the riddle that oppressed them.

"Rides high, like a dory," was the next information from aloft.

"Wasn't there a dory on the *Laughing Lass*?" cried Forsythe.

"On her stern davits," answered Trendon.

"It is hardly probable that unattached small boats should be drifting about these seas," said Captain Parkinson, thoughtfully. "If she's a dory, she's the *Laughing Lass's* boat."

"That's what she is," said Barnett. "You can see her build plain enough."

"Mr. Barnett, will you go aloft and keep me posted?" said the captain.

The executive officer climbed to join the look-out. As he ascended, those below saw the little craft rise high and slow on a broad swell.

"Two men rolling in the bottom," shouted the look-out.

"Are they alive?"

"No sir; not that I can see."

"Ives or McGuire," suggested Forsythe in low tones.

"Or Billy Edwards," amended Carter.

"Not Edwards," said Trendon.

"How do you know?" demanded Forsythe.

"Dory was aboard when we found her

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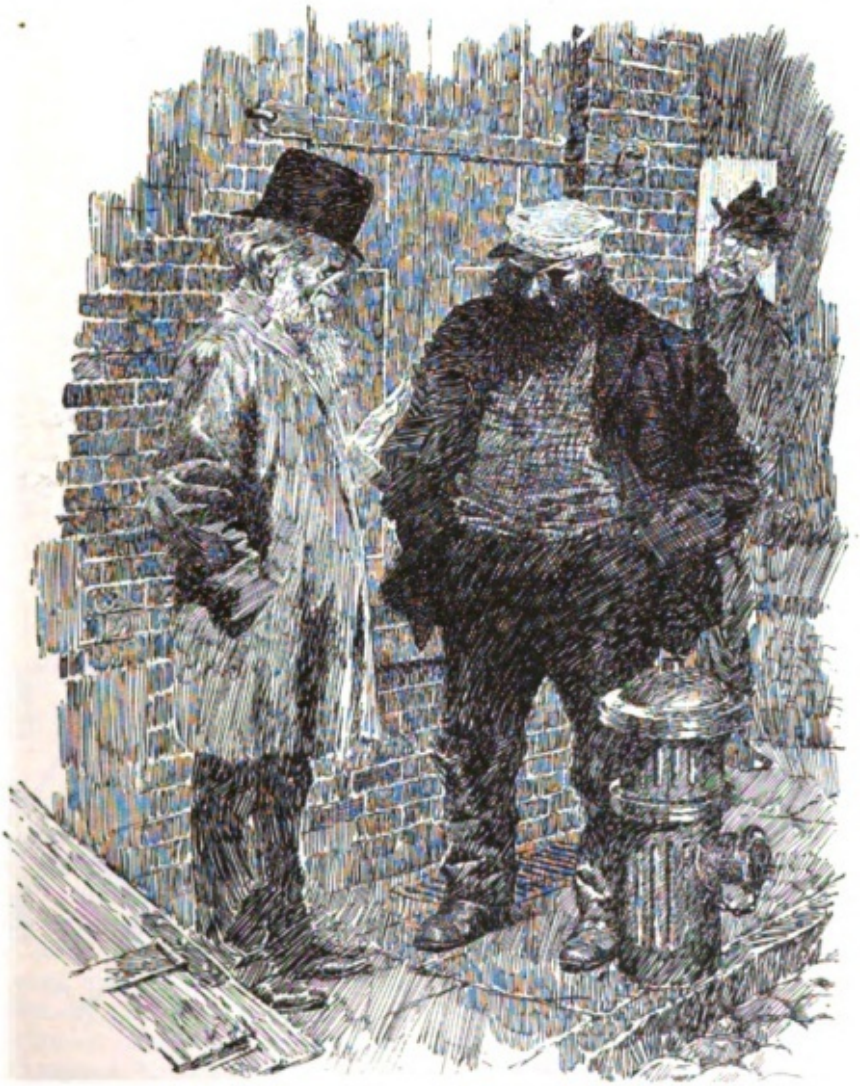
the second time; after Edwards had left."

"Can you make out which of the men is in her?" hailed the captain.

"Don't think it's any of our people," came the astonishing reply from Barnett.

"Are you sure?"



"Where we goin'?" *"I brefer not to say"*

"I can see only one man's face, sir. It isn't Ives or McGuire. He's a stranger to me."

"It must be one of the crew, then."

"No, sir, beg your parding," called the look-out. "Nothin' like that in our crew, sir."

The boat came down upon them swiftly. Soon the quarter-deck was looking into her. She was of a type common enough on the high seas except that a step for a mast showed that she had pre umably been used for skimming about open shores. Of her passengers, one lay forward, prone and quiet. A length of sail-cloth spread over him made it impossible to see his garb. At his breast an ugly protuberance, outlined vaguely, hinted a deformity.

The other sprawled aft, and at a nearer sight of him some of the men broke out into nervous titters. There was some excuse, for surely such a scarecrow had never before been the sport of wind and wave. A thing of shreds he was, elaborately ragged; a face overrun with a scrub of beard and preternaturally drawn,

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"You must not touch"

surmounted by a stiff-dried, dirty, cloth semi-turban with a wide, forbidding stain along the side, worked out the likeness to a make-up.

"My God!" cackled Forsythe with an hysterical explosion.

A long-drawn, irrepressible aspiration of expectancy rose from the warship's decks as the stranger raised his haggard face, turned eyes unseeingly upon them, and fell back. The forward occupant stirred not, save as the boat rolled.

From between decks someone called out, sharply, an order. In the grim silence it seemed strangely incongruous that the measured business of a ship's life should be going forward as usual. Something within the newcomer's consciousness stirred to that voice of authority. Mechanically, like some huge, hideous toy he raised first one arm, then the other, and hitched himself half way up on the stern seat. His mouth opened. His face wrinkled. He seemed groping for the meaning of a joke at which he knew he ought to laugh. Suddenly from his lips

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in surprising volume, raucous, rasping, yet with a certain rollicking deviltry fit to set the head a-tilt, burst a chanty.

Oh, their coffin was their ship, and their grave it was the sea;
Blow high, blow low; what care we!
And the quarter that we gave them was to sink them in the sea:
Down on the coast of the High Barbaree-ee.

Long-drawn, like the mockery of a wail the minor cadence wavered through the stillness, and died away.

"The High Barbaree!" cried Trendon.

"You know it?" asked the Captain, expectant of a clue.

"One of those cursed tunes you can't forget," said the surgeon. "Heard a scoundrel of a beach-comber sing it years ago. Down in New Zealand, that was. When the fever rose on him he'd pipe up. Used to beat time with a steel hook he wore in place of hand. The thing haunted me till I was sorry I hadn't let the rascal die. This creature might have learned it from him. Howls it out exactly like."

"I don't see that that helps us any," said Forsythe, looking down on the preparations that were making to receive the unexpected guests.

With a deftness which had made the *Wolverine* famous in the navy for the niceties of seamanship, the great cruiser let down her tackle as she drew skilfully alongside, and made fast, preparatory to lifting the dory gently to her broad deck. But before the order came to hoist away, one of the jackies who had gone down drew the covering back from the still figure forward, and turned it over. With a half-stifled cry, he shrank back. And at that the tension of soul and mind on the *Wolverine* snapped, breaking into outcries and sudden, sharp imprecations. The face revealed was that of Timmins, the bosun's mate who had sailed with the first vanished crew. A life-preserver was fastened under his arms. He was dead.

"I'm out," said the surgeon briefly, and stood with mouth agape. Never had the disciplined *Wolverines* performed a sea duty with so ragged a routine as the getting in of the boat containing the live man and the corpse. The dead seaman was reverently disposed and covered. As to the survivor there was some hesitancy on the part of the captain who was inclined to send him forward until Dr. Trendon, after a swift scrutiny, suggested that for the present, at least, he be berthed aft. They took the stranger to Edwards' vacant room where Trendon was closeted with him for half an hour. When he emerged he was beset with questions.

"Can't give any account of himself yet," said the surgeon. "Weak and not rightly conscious."

"What ails him?"

"Enough. Gash in his scalp. Fever. Thirst and exhaustion. Nervous shock, too, I think."

"How came he aboard the *Laughing Lass?*" "Does he know anything of Billy?" "Was he a stowaway?" "Did you ask him about Ives and McGuire?" "How came he in the small boat?" "Where are the rest?"

"Now, now," said the veteran chidingly. "How can I tell? Would you have me kill the man with questions?"

He left them, to look at the body of the bosun's mate. Not a word had he to say when he returned. Only the captain got anything out of him but growling and unintelligible expressions, which seemed to be objurgatory and to express bewildered cogitation.

"How long has poor Timmins been drowned?" the captain had asked him, and Trendon replied:

"Captain Parkinson, the man wasn't drowned. No water in his lungs."

"Not drowned! Then how came he by his death?"

"If I were to diagnose it under any other conditions I should say that he had inhaled flames."

Then the two men stared at each other in blank impotency. Meantime the scarecrow was showing signs of returning consciousness and a message was dispatched for the physician. On his way he met Barnett who asked and received permission to accompany him. The stranger was tossing restlessly in his bunk, opening and shutting his parched mouth in silent, piteous appeal for the water that must still be doled to him parsimoniously.

"I think I'll try him with a little brandy," said Trendon, and sent for the liquor.

Barnett raised the patient while the surgeon held the glass to his lips. The man's hand rose, wavered, and clasped the glass.

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"All right, my friend. Take it yourself if you like," said Trendon.

The fingers closed. Tremulously held, the little glass tilted and rattled against the teeth. There was one deep, eager spasm of swallowing. Then the fevered eyes opened upon the face of the *Wolverine's* first officer.

"Prosit, Barnett," said the man in a voice like the rasp of rusty metal.

The navy man straightened up as from a blow under the jaw.

"Be careful what you are about," warned Trendon, addressing his superior officer sharply, for Barnett had all but let his charge drop. His face was a puckered mass of amaze and incredulity.

"Did you hear him speak my name—or am I dreaming?" he half whispered.

"Heard him plain enough. Who is he?"

The man's eyes closed, but he smiled a little—a singular, wry-mouthed, winning smile. With that there sprung from behind the brush of beard, filling out the deep lines of emaciation, a memory to the recognition of Barnett; a keen and gay countenance that whisked him back across seven years' time to the days of Dewey and the Philippines.

"Ralph Slade, by the Lord!" he exclaimed.

"Of the *Laughing Lass?*" cried Trendon.

"Of the *Laughing Lass.*"

Such a fury of eagerness burned in the face of Barnett that Trendon cautioned him. "See here, Mr. Barnett; you're not going to fire a broadside of disturbing questions at my patient yet a while. He's in no condition."

But it was from the other that the questions came. Opening his eyes he whispered, "The sailor? Where?"

"Dead," said Trendon bluntly. Then, breaking his own rule of repression he asked:

"Did he come off the schooner with you?"

"Picked him up," was the straining answer. "Drifting."

The survivor looked around him, then into Barnett's face, and his mind, too, traversed the years.

"*North Dakota?*" he queried.

"No; I've changed my ship," said Barnett. "This is the *Wolverine.*"

"Where's the *Laughing Lass?*"

Barnett shook his head.

"Tell me," begged Slade.

"Wait till you're stronger," admonished Trendon.

"Can't wait," said the weak voice. The eyes grew wild.

"Mr. Barnett, tell him the bare outline and make it short," said the surgeon.

"We sighted the *Laughing Lass* two days ago. She was in good shape, but deserted. That is, we thought she was deserted."

The man nodded eagerly.

"I suppose you were aboard," said Barnett, and Trendon made a quick gesture of impatience and rebuke.

"No," said Slade. "Left three—four—don't know how many nights ago."

The officers looked at each other. "Go on," said Trendon to his companion.

"We put a crew aboard in command of an ensign," continued Barnett, "and picked up the schooner the next night, deserted. You must know about it. Where is Billy Edwards?"

"Never heard of him," whispered the other.

"Ives and McGuire, then. They were there after—Great God, man!" he cried, his agitation breaking out. "Pull yourself together! Give us something to go on."

"Mr. Barnett!" said the surgeon peremptorily.

But the suggestion was working in the sick man's brain. He turned to the officers a face of horror.

"Your man, Edwards—the crew—they left her? In the night?"

"What does he mean?" cried Barnett.

"The light! You saw it?"

"Yes; we saw a strange light," answered Trendon soothingly.

Slade half rose. "Lost; all lost!" he cried, and fell back unconscious. Trendon exploded into curses. "See what you've done to my patient," he fumed. Barnett looked at him with contrite eyes.

"Better get out before he comes to," growled the surgeon. "Nice way to treat a man half dead of exhaustion."

It was nearly an hour before Slade came back to the world again. The doctor forbade him to attempt speech. But of one thing he would not be denied. There was a struggle for utterance, then:

"The volcano?" he rasped out.

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"Dead ahead," was the reply.

"Stand by," gasped Slade. He strove to rise, to say something further, but endurance had reached its limit. The man was utterly done.

Dr. Trendon went on deck, his head sunk between his shoulders. For a minute he was in earnest talk with the captain. Presently the *Wolverine's* engines slowed down, and she lay head to the waves.

CHAPTER VII

THE FREE LANCE

By the following afternoon Dr. Trendon allowed his patient to come on deck.

Nearly twenty-four hours' rest and skilful treatment had done wonders for Slade. He was still a trifle weak and uncertain, and still a little glad to lean on the arms of his companions, but his eye was bright and alert, and his hollow cheeks mounted a slight color. This, with the clothes lent him by Barnett, transformed his appearance, and led Captain Parkinson to congratulate himself that he had not obeyed his first impulse to send the castaway forward with the men.

The officers pressed about him with hearty greeting, to which the journalist barely paid the courtesy of acknowledgment. His eye swept the horizon eagerly until it rested on the cloud of volcanic smoke belling up across the setting sun. A sigh of relief escaped him.

"Where are we?" he asked Barnett —"I mean since you picked me up. How long ago was that anyway?"

"Yesterday," replied the navigating officer. "We've stood off and on, looking for some of our men."

"Then that's the same volcano—?"

Barnett laughed softly. "Well, they aren't quite holding a caucus of volcanoes down in this country. One like that is enough."

But Slade brushed the remark aside.

"Head for it!" he cried excitedly. "We may be in time! There's a man on that island."

"A man?" "Another?" "Not Billy Edwards?" "Not some of our boys?"

Slade stared at them bewildered.

"Hold on," interposed Dr. Trendon authoritatively. "What's his name?" he inquired of the journalist.

"Darrow," replied the latter. "Percy Darrow—he's the assistant. It's a long story—"

"Of course it's a long story. There's a lot we want to know," interrupted Captain Parkinson. "Quartermaster, head for the volcano yonder. Mr. Slade, we want to know where you came from; and why you left the schooner, and who Percy Darrow is. And there's dinner, so we'll just adjourn to the mess room and hear what you can tell us. But there's one thing we're all anxious to know: how came you in the dory which we found and left on the *Laughing Lass* no later than two days ago?"

"I haven't set eyes on the *Laughing Lass* for—well, I don't know how long, but it's five days anyway, perhaps more," replied Slade.

They stared at him incredulously.

"Oh, I see!" he burst out suddenly; "there were twin dories on the schooner. The other one's still there, I suppose. Did you find her on the stern davits?"

"Yes."

"That's it, then. You see when I left—"

Captain Parkinson's raised hand checked him. "If you will be so good, Mr. Slade, let us have it all at once, after mess."

At the table the young officers at a sharp hint from Dr. Trendon conversed on indifferent subjects until the journalist had partaken heartily of what the physician allowed him. After he had pushed back his chair he looked about at the circle of faces, and sat silent for quite a minute, staring at the table, his fingers aimlessly rubbing into spots of wetness the water-beads as they gathered on the outside of his glass. Suddenly he looked up.

"I don't know how to begin," he confessed. "It's too confounded improbable. I hardly believe it myself, now that I'm sitting here in human clothes surrounded by human beings. Old Scrubs, and the Nigger, and Handy Solomon, and the Professor, and the Chest, and the—well, they were real enough when I was caught in the mess. But I warn you, you are not going to believe me, and hanged if I blame you a bit."

"We've seen marvels ourselves in the last few days," encouraged Captain Parkinson.

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The officers unconsciously relaxed into attitudes of greater ease. Overhead the lamps swayed gently to the swell.

"I'm a reporter by choice, and a detective by instinct," began Slade, with startling abruptness. "Furthermore, I'm pretty well off. I'm what hey call a free lance, for I have no regular desk on any of the journals. I generally turn my stuff in to *The Star* because they treat me well. In return it is pretty well understood between us that I'm to use my judgment in regard to 'stories' and that they'll stand back of me for expenses. You see, I've been with them quite a while."

He looked around the circle as though in appeal to the comprehension of his audience. Some of the men nodded.

"I loaf around here and there in the world, having a good time, traveling, visiting, fooling around. Every once in a while something interests me. The thing is a sort of instinct. I run it down. If it's a good story, I send it in. That's all there is to it." He laughed slightly.

"You see, I'm a sort of magazine writer in method, but my stuff is newspaper stuff. Also the game suits me. That's why I play it. That's why I'm here."

"So much for myself," Slade continued. "As for the *Laughing Lass*——"

PART II. THE BRASS-BOUND CHEST

Being the Story Told by Ralph Slade, Free Lance, to the Officers of the United States Cruiser *Wolverine*.

CHAPTER I

THE BARBARY COAST

A COINCIDENCE got me aboard her. I'll tell you how it was. One evening, late, I was just coming out of a dark alley on the Barbary Coast, San Francisco. You know—the water front, where you can hear more tongues than at Port Said, see stranger sights, and meet adventure with the joyous certainty of mediæval times.

Just at the turn of the alley I nearly bumped into two men. I pulled up, thanking fortune that they had not seen me. The first words were uttered in a voice I knew well.

You've all heard of Professor Karl Augustus Schermerhorn. He did some big things, and had in mind still bigger. I'd met him some time before in connection with his telepathy and wireless waves theory. It was queer enough to meet him again, at midnight, in a dark alley on the Barbary Coast in San Francisco, talking to an individual whose facial outline at least was not ornamental.

My curiosity, or professional instinct, whichever you please, was all aroused. I flattened myself against the wall.

The first remark I lost. The reply came to me in a shrill falsetto. So grotesque was the effect of this treble from a bulk so squat and broad and hairy as the silhouette before me that I almost laughed aloud.

"I guess you've made no mistake on that. I'm her master, and her owner too."

"Well, I haf been told you might rent her," said the doctor.

"Rent her!" mimicked the falsetto. "Well, that—hell, yes, I'll *rent* her!" he laughed again.

"Doch recht," the Professor was plainly at the end of his practical resources.

After waiting a moment for something more definite, the falsetto enquired rather drily:

"How long? What to? What for? Who are you anyway?"

"I am Professor Schermerhorn," the latter answered.

"Seen pieces about you in the papers."

"How many men haf you in the crew?"

"Me and the mate, and the cook, and four hands."

"And you could go—soon?"

"Soon as you want—*if* I go."

"I wish to leaf to-morrow."

"If I can get the crew together I might make it. But say, let's not hang out here in this run of darkness. Come over to the grog shop yonder where we can sit down."

To my relief, for my curiosity was fully aroused—Professor Schermerhorn's move-

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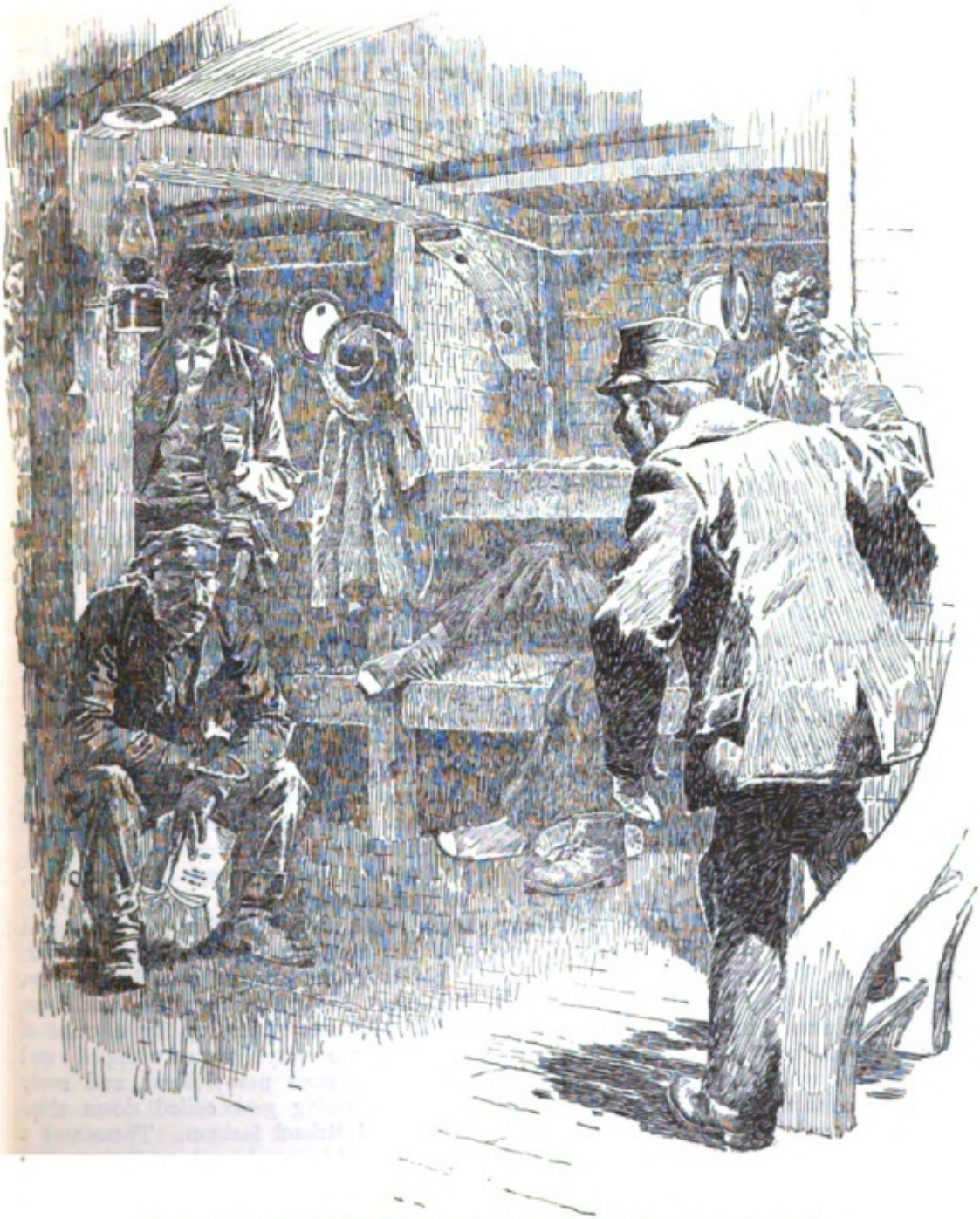

Slowly the man defined himself as a shape takes form in a fog

ments are usually productive—this proposal was vetoed.

"No, no," cried the Doctor with some haste, "this iss well! Somebody might oferhear."

The huge figure stirred into an attitude of close attention. After a pause, the falsetto asked deliberately:

"Where we goin'?"

"I brefer not to say."

"H'm! How long a cruise?"

"I want to rent your schooner and your crew so long ass I please to remain."

"H'm! How long's that likely to be?"

"Maybe a few months; maybe seferal years."

"H'm! Unknown port; unknown cruise. See here, anything crooked?"

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"No, no! Not at all! It iss simply business of my own."

"Not that I care," commented the other easily, "only risks is worth paying for."

"There shall not be risk."

"Pearls likely?" hazarded the other, without much heed to the assurance. "Them Jap gunboats is getting pretty hard to dodge of late years. However, I've dodged 'em before."

"Now as to pay—how mooch iss your boat worth?"

I could almost follow the man's thoughts as he pondered how much he dared ask.

"Well, you see, for a proposition like that—don't know where we're going, when we're going to get back—and them gunboats—how would a hundred and twenty-five a month strike you?"

"Double it up. I want you to do ass I say, and I will also your crew give double wages. Bud I want goot men, who will stay, and keep the mouth shut."

"Gosh all fish-hooks! They'd go to hell with you for that!"

"Now you can get all you want at Adams and Marsh. Tell them it iss for me. Brovisions for three years, anyway. Be ready to sail to-morrow."

"Tide turns at eight in the evening."

"I will send some effects in the morning."

The master hesitated.

"That's all right, Professor, but how do I know it's all right? Maybe by morning you'll change your mind."

"That cannot be. My plans are all—"

"It's the usual thing to pay something—"

"Ach, but yes. I haf forgot. Darrow told me. I will make you a check. Let us go to the table of which you spoke."

They moved away, still talking. I did not dare to follow them into the light, for I feared that the Professor would recognize me. I'd have given my eye teeth, though, to have gathered the name of the schooner, or that of her master. As it was, I hung around until the two had emerged from the corner saloon. They paused outside, still talking earnestly. I ventured a hasty interview with the bar-keeper. He could or would tell me nothing of either man.

I should have shadowed the captain to his vessel. I cursed myself for a blunderer. When I got to the street the two men had disappeared.

The affair interested me greatly. Apparently Professor Schermerhorn was about to go on a long voyage. I prided myself on being fairly up-to-date in regard to the plans of those who interested the public, and the public at that time was vastly interested in Professor Schermerhorn. I, in common with the rest of the world, had imagined him anchored safely in Philadelphia, immersed in chemical research. Here he bobbed up at the other end of the continent, making shady bargains with obscure shipping captains, and paying a big premium for absolute secrecy. It looked good.

Accordingly, I was out early the next morning. I had not much to go by; schooners are as plenty as tadpoles in San Francisco harbor. However, I was sure I could easily recognize that falsetto voice; and I knew where the supplies were to be purchased. Adams and Marsh are a large firm, and cautious. I knew better than to make direct inquiries, or to appear in the salesroom. But, by hanging around the door of the shipping-room, I soon had track of the large orders to be sent that day. In this manner I had no great difficulty in following a truck to Pier 10, nor to identify a consignment to Captain Ezra Selover, as probably that of which I was in search.

The mate was in charge of the stowage, so I could not be quite sure. Here, however, was a schooner of about a hundred and fifty tons burden. I looked her over.

She was the cleanest ship I ever saw. The deck looked as though it had been holystoned every morning by a crew of jackies; the stays were whipped and tarred, the mast new-slushed, and every foot of running gear coiled down shipshape and Bristol fashion. There was a good deal of brass about her; it shone like gold, and I don't believe she owned an inch of paint that wasn't either fresh or new-scrubbed.

I gazed for some time at this marvel. It's unusual enough anywhere, but aboard a California hooker it is little short of miraculous. The crew had all turned up, apparently, and a swarm of stevedores were hustling every sort of provisions, supplies, stock, spars, lines and canvas down into the hold. It was a rush job, and that mate was having his hands full. I didn't wonder at his language nor at his

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looks, both of which were somewhat mussed up. Then almost at my elbow I heard that shrill falsetto squeal, and turned just in time to see the captain ascend the after gang-plank.

He was probably the most dishevelled and untidy man I ever laid my eyes on. His hair and beard were not only long, but tangled and unkempt, and grew so far toward each other as barely to expose a strip of dirty brown skin. His shoulders were bowed and enormous. His arms hung like a gorilla's, palms turned slightly outwards. On his head was jammed a linen boating hat that had once been white; gaping away from his hairy chest was a faded, dingy, checked cotton shirt, that had once been brown and white; his blue trousers were spotted and splashed with dusty stains; he was chewing tobacco. A figure more in contrast to the exquisitely neat vessel it would be hard to imagine.

The captain mounted the gang-plank with a steadiness that disproved my first suspicion of his having been on a drunk. He glanced aloft, cast a speculative eye on the stevedores trooping across the waist of the ship, and ascended to the quarter-deck where the mate stood leaning over the rail and uttering directed curses from between sweat-beaded lips. There the big man roamed aimlessly on what seemed to be a tour of inspection.

As I watched him, his whole frame stiffened. The long gorilla arms contracted, the hairy head sunk forward in the tenseness of a serpent ready to strike. He uttered a shrill falsetto shriek that brought to a standstill every stevedore on the job, and sprang forward to seize his mate by the shoulder.

Evidently the grasp hurt. I can believe it might, from those huge hands. The man wrenched himself about with an oath of inquiry and pain. I could hear one side of what followed. The captain's high-pitched tones carried clearly; but the grumble and growl of the mate were indistinguishable at that distance.

"How far is it to the side of the ship, you hound of hell?" shrieked the captain.

Mumble—surprised—for an answer.

"Well, I'll tell you, you swab! It's just two fathom from where you stand. Just two fathom! How long would it take you to walk there? How long? Just about six seconds! There and back! You—" I won't bother with all the epithets, although by now I know Captain Selover's vocabulary fairly well. "And yet you couldn't take six seconds off to spit over the side! Couldn't walk two fathom! Had to spit on my quarter-deck, did you!"

Rumble from the mate.

"No, by God, you won't call up any of the crew! You'll get a swab and do it yourself. You'll get a *hand* swab and get down on your knees, damn you! I'll teach you to be lazy!"

The mate said something again.

"It don't matter if we ain't under way. That has nothing to do with it. The quarter-deck is clean, if the waist ain't, and nobody but a damn misbegotten son-of-a-sea-lawyer would spit on deck anyhow!"

From this, Captain Selover went on into a good old-fashioned deep-sea "cussing out," to the great joy of the stevedores.

The mate began to answer back. In a moment it was a quarrel. Abruptly it was a fight. The mate marked Selover beneath the left eye. The captain with beautiful simplicity crushed his antagonist in his gorilla-like squeeze, carried him to the side of the vessel and dropped him, limp and beaten, to the pier. And the mate was a good stout specimen of a seafarer, too. Then the captain rushed below, emerging after an instant with a chest which he flung after his subordinate. It was followed a moment later by a stream of small stuff—mingled with language—projected through an open port-hole. This in turn ceased. The captain reappeared with a pail and brush, scrubbed feverishly at the offending spot, mopped it dry with the same old red bandana handkerchief, glared about him—and abruptly became as serene and placid as a noon calm. He took up the direction of the stevedores. It was all most astounding.

Nobody paid any attention to the mate. He looked toward the ship once or twice, thought better of it, and began to pick up his effects, muttering savagely. In a moment or so he threw his chest aboard an outgoing truck and departed.

It was now nearly noon and I was just in the way of going for something to eat, when I caught sight of another dray, laden with boxes and crated affairs, which

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I recognized as scientific apparatus. It was followed in quick succession by three others. Ignorant as I was of the requirements of a scientist, my common-sense told me this could be no exploring outfit. I revised my first intention of going to the Club, and bought a sandwich or two at the corner coffee-house. I don't know why, but even then the affair seemed big with mystery, with the portent of tragedy. Perhaps the smell of tar was in my nostrils and the sea called. It has always possessed for me an extraordinary allurement.

A little after two o'clock a cab drove to the after gang-plank and stopped. From it alighted a young man of whom I shall later have occasion to tell you more, followed by Professor Schermerhorn. The young man carried only a light leather "serviette," such as students use abroad, while the Professor fairly staggered under the weight of a square, brass-bound chest without handles. The singularity of this unequal division of labor struck me at once.

It struck also one of the dock men, who ran forward, eager for a tip.

"Kin I carry th' box for you, boss?" he asked, at the same time reaching for it.

The Professor's thin figure seemed fairly to shrink at the idea.

"No, no!" he cried. "It iss not for you to carry!"

He hastened up the gang-plank clutching the chest close. At the top, Captain Selover met him.

"Hello, Professor," he squeaked. "Here in good time. We're busy, you see. Let me carry your chest for you."

"No, no!" Professor Schermerhorn fairly glared.

"It's almighty heavy," insisted the captain. "Let me give you a hand."

"You must not *touch!*" emphatically ordered the scientist. "Where iss the cabin?"

He disappeared down the companion-way, clasping his precious load. The young man remained on deck to superintend the stowing of the scientific goods and the personal baggage.

All this time I had been thinking busily. I remembered distinctly one other instant when Dr. Schermerhorn had disappeared. He had come back inscrutably, but within a week his results on aerial photography were public property. I told myself that in the present instance his lavish use of money, the elaborate nature of his preparations, the evident secrecy of the expedition as evidenced by the fact that he had negotiated for the vessel only the day before setting sail, the importance of personal supervision as proved by the fact that he —notoriously impractical in practical matters, and notoriously disliking anything to do with business—had conducted the affair himself instead of delegating it—why, gentlemen, don't you see that all this was more than enough to wake me up, body and soul? Suddenly I came to a definite resolution. Captain Selover had descended to the pier. I approached.

"You need a mate," said I.

He looked me over.

"Perhaps," he admitted; "where's your man?"

"Right here," said I.

His eyes widened a little. Otherwise he showed no sign of surprise. I cursed my clothes.

Fortunately I had my master's certificate with me—I'd passed fresh-water on the Great Lakes; I always carry that sort of document on the chance that it may come handy. It chanced to have a couple of naval endorsements, results of the late war.

"Look here," I said before I gave it to him. "You don't believe in me. My clothes are too good. That's all right. They're all I have that are good. I'm broke. I came down here wondering whether I'd better throw myself in the drink."

"You look like a dude," he squeaked. "Where did you ever ship?"

I handed him my certificate. The endorsements from Admiral Keays and Captain Arnold impressed him. He stared at me again, and a gleam of cunning crept into his eyes.

"Nothing crooked about this?" he breathed softly.

I had the key to this side of his character. You remember I had overheard, the night before, his statement of his moral scruples. I said nothing, but looked knowing.

"What was it?" he murmured. "Plain desertion, or something worse?"

I remained inscrutable.

"Well," he conceded, "I do need a mate; and a naval man—even if he is wantin' to get out of sight—"

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"He won't spit on your decks, anyway," I broke in boldly.

Captain Selover's hairy face bristled about the mouth. This I subsequently discovered was the symptom of a grin.

"You saw that, eh?" he trebled.

"Aren't you afraid he'll bring down the police and delay your sailing?" I asked.

He grinned again.

"You needn't worry. There ain't goin' to be any police. He had his advance money, and he won't risk it by tryin' to come back."

We came to an agreement. I professed surprise at the wages. The captain guardedly explained that the expedition was secret.

"What's our port?" I asked, to test him.

"Our papers are made out for Honolulu," he replied.

We adjourned to sign articles.

"By the way," said I, "I wish you wouldn't make them out in my own name. 'Eagen' will do."

"All right," he laughed, "I *sabe*. Eagen it is."

"I'll be aboard at six," said I. "I've got to make some arrangements."

"Wish you could help with the lading," said he. "Still, I can get along. Want any advance money?"

"No," I replied; then I remembered that I was supposed to be broke. "Yes," I amended.

He gave me ten dollars.

"I guess you'll show up," he said. "Wouldn't do this to everybody. But a naval man—even if he *is* dodgin' Uncle Sam—"

"I'll be here," I assured him.

At that time I wore a pointed beard. This I shaved. Also I was accustomed to use eye-glasses. The trouble was merely a slight astigmatism which bothered me only in reading or close inspection. I could get along perfectly well without the glasses, so I discarded them. I had my hair cut rather close. When I had put on sea-boots, blue trousers and a shirt, a pea-jacket and a cap I felt quite safe from the recognition of a man like Professor Schermerhorn. In fact, as you shall see, I hardly spoke to him during all the voyage out.

Promptly at six, then, I returned with a sea chest, bound I knew not whither, and pledged to act as second officer on a little hundred-and-fifty-ton schooner.

CHAPTER II

THE GRAVEN IMAGE

I had every reason to be satisfied with my disguise—if such it could be called. Captain Selover at first failed to recognize me. Then he burst into his shrill cackle.

"Didn't know you," he trebled. "But you look shipshape. Come, I'll show you your quarters."

Immediately I discovered what I had suspected before—that on so small a schooner the mate took rank with the men rather than the afterguard. Cabin accommodations were of course very limited. My own lurked in the waist of the ship—a tiny little airless hole.

"Here's where Johnson stayed," proffered Selover. "You can bunk here, or you can go in the foc'sle with the men. There's more room there. We'll get under way with the turn of the tide."

He left me. I examined the cabin. It was just a trifle larger than its single berth, and the berth was just a trifle larger than myself. My chest would have to be left outside. I strongly suspected that my lungs would have to be left outside also; for the life of me I could not see where the air was to come from. With a mental reservation in favor of investigating the forecastle, I went on deck.

The *Laughing Lass* was one of the prettiest little schooners I ever saw. Were it not for the lines of her bilges and the internal arrangement of her hold, it might be imagined she had been built originally as a pleasure yacht. Even the rake of her masts, a little forward of the plumb, bore out this impression, which a comparatively new suit of canvas, well stopped down, brass stanchions forward, and two little guns under tarpaulins, almost confirmed. One thing struck me as peculiar. Her complement of boats was ample enough. She had two surf boats, a dingey, and a dory slung to the davits. In addition another dory—the one you picked me up in—was lashed to the top of the deck house.

"They'd mighty near have a boat apiece," I thought, and went forward.

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Just outside the forecastle hatch I paused. Someone below was singing in a voice singularly rich in quality. The words and the quaintness of the minor air struck me immensely and have clung to my memory like a burr ever since.

"Are you a man-o'-war or a privateer," said he,
Blow high, blow low, what care we!
"Oh, I am a jolly pirate, and I'm sailing for my fee"
Down on the coast of the high Barbaree-ee.

I stepped to the companion. The voice at once ceased. I descended.

A glimmer of late afternoon struggled through the dead-lights. I found myself in a really commodious space, extending far back of where the forward bulkheads are usually placed, accommodating rows and rows of bunks—eighteen of them, in fact. The unlighted lamp cast its shadow on wood stained black by much use, but polished like ebony from the continued friction of men's garments. I wish I could convey to you the uncanny effect—this, of dropping from the decks of a miniature craft to the internal arrangements of a square-rigged ship. A fresh, sweet breeze of evening sucked down the hatch. I immediately decided on the forecastle.

I stood for a moment at the foot of the companion accustoming my eyes to the gloom. After a moment, with a shock of surprise, I made out a shining pair of bead-points gazing at me unblinkingly from the shadow under the bitts. Slowly the man defined himself, as a shape takes form in a fog. He was leaning forward in an attitude of attention, his elbows resting on his knees, his forearms depending between them, his head thrust out. I could detect no faintest movement of eye-lash, no faintest sound of breathing. The stillness was portentous. The creature was exactly like a wax figure, one of the sort you meet in corridors of museums and for a moment mistake for living beings.

He wore on his head a red bandanna handkerchief—I never saw him with other covering. From beneath it straggled oily and tangled locks of glossy black. His face was long, narrow, hook-nosed and sinister. His eyes, as I have described them, a steady and beady black. I could at first glance ascribe great activity, but only moderate strength to his slender, wiry figure. In this I was mistaken. His sheer physical power was second only to that of Captain Selover. One of his forearms ended in a steel hook. At the moment I could not understand this; could not see how a man so maimed could be useful aboard a ship. Later I wished we had more as handy. His name was Anderson, but I never heard him called that. It was always "Handy Solomon" with the men and masters.

We stared at each other, I fascinated by something, some spell of the ship, which I have never been able to explain to myself—nor even describe. It was a mystery, a portent, a premonition such as overtakes a man sometimes in the dark passageways of life. I cannot tell you of it, nor make you believe. Let it pass.

Then by a slow process of successive perceptions I became aware that I was watched by other eyes, other wax figures, other human beings with unwavering gaze. They seemed, to the sense of mystic apprehension that for the moment held possession of me, to be everywhere—in the bunks, on the floor, back in the shadows, watching, watching, watching from the advantage of another world.

Then the grotesque figure in the corner stirred.

"Well, mates," said the man, "believe or not believe, it's in the book, and it stands to reason, too. We have gold mines here in Californy and Nevada and all them States; and we hear of gold mines in Mexico and Australia too, but did you ever hear tell of gold mines in Europe? Tell me that! And where did the gold come from then, before they discovered America? Tell me that! Why they *made* it, just as the man that wrote this here says, and you can kiss the Book on that."

"How about that place, Ophir, I read about?" asked a voice from the bunks.

The man shot a keen glance thither from beneath his brows.

"Know last year's output from them mines of Ophir, Thrackles?" he enquired in silky tones.

"Why, no," stammered the man addressed as Thrackles.

"Well, I do," pursued the man with the

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steel hook, "and it's just the whole of nothing, and you can kiss the Book on that too! There ain't any gold output, because there aint any mines, and there never have been. They *made* their gold."

He tossed aside a book he had been holding in his left hand. I recognized the fat little paper duodecimo with amusement, and some wonder. The only other copy I had ever laid my eyes on is in the Astor Library. It is somewhat of a rarity, called *The Secret of Alchemy or the Grand Doctrine of Transmutation Fully Explained*, and was written by a Dr. Edward Duvall—a most extraordinary volume to have fallen into the hands of seamen.

I stepped forward, greeting and being greeted. Besides the men I have mentioned they were four. The cook was a bullet-headed, squat negro with a broken nose. I believe he had a name—Robinson, or something of that sort. He was to all of us simply the Nigger. Unlike most of his race he was gloomy and taciturn.

Of the other two, a little white-faced, thin-chested youth named Pulz, and a villainous-looking Mexican called Perdosa, I shall have more to say later.

My arrival broke the talk on alchemy. It resumed its course in the direction of our voyage. Each discovered that the others knew nothing; and each blundered against the astounding fact of double wages.

"All I know is the pay's good; and that's enough," concluded Thrackles from a bunk.

"The pay's too good," growled Handy Solomon. "This aint no job to go look at the 'clipse of the moon, or the devil's a preacher!"

"W'at you maik heem, den?" queried Perdosa.

"It's a treasure, of course," said Handy Solomon shortly.

"He, he, he!" laughed the negro without mirth.

"What's the matter with you, Doctor?" demanded Thrackles.

"Treasure!" repeated the Nigger. "You see dat box he done carry so cairful? You see dat?"

A pause ensued. Somebody scratched a match and lit a pipe.

"No, I don't see that!" broke out Thrackles finally with some impatience. "I *sabe* how a man goes *after* treasure with a box; but why should he take treasure away *in* a box? What do you think, Bucko?" he suddenly appealed to me.

I looked from my investigation of the empty berths.

"I don't think much about it," I replied, "except that by the look of the stores we're due for more than Honolulu; and from the look of the light we'd better turn to on deck."

An embarrassed pause fell.

"Who are you, anyway?" bluntly demanded the man with the steel hook.

"My name is Eagen," I replied. "I've the berth of mate. Which of these bunks are empty?"

They indicated what I desired with just a trace of sullenness. I understood well enough their resentment at having a ship's officer quartered on them—the forecastle they considered as their only liberty when at sea, and my presence as a curtailment to the freedom of speech. I subsequently did my best to overcome this feeling, but never quite succeeded.

At my command the Nigger went to his galley. I ascended to the deck. Captain Selover came to my side and leaned over the rail, peering critically at the black water against the piles.

"She's at the flood," he squeaked. "And here comes the *Lucy Belle*."

The tug took us in charge and puffed with us down the harbor and through the Golden Gate, where we set all canvas. About midnight we drew up on the Farallones.

The schooner handled well. Our crew was divided into three watches—an unusual arrangement, but comfortable. Two men could sail her handily in most sorts of weather. Handy Solomon had the wheel. Otherwise the deck was empty.

I brooded in wonder at what I had seen and how little I had explained. The number of boats, sufficient for a craft of three times the tonnage; the capacity of the forecastle with its eighteen bunks—enough for a passenger ship—what did it mean? And this wild, unkempt, villainous crew with its master and his almost ridiculous contrast of neatness and filth—did Professor Schermerhorn realize to what he had entrusted himself and his precious expedition, whatever it might be?

(To be continued)

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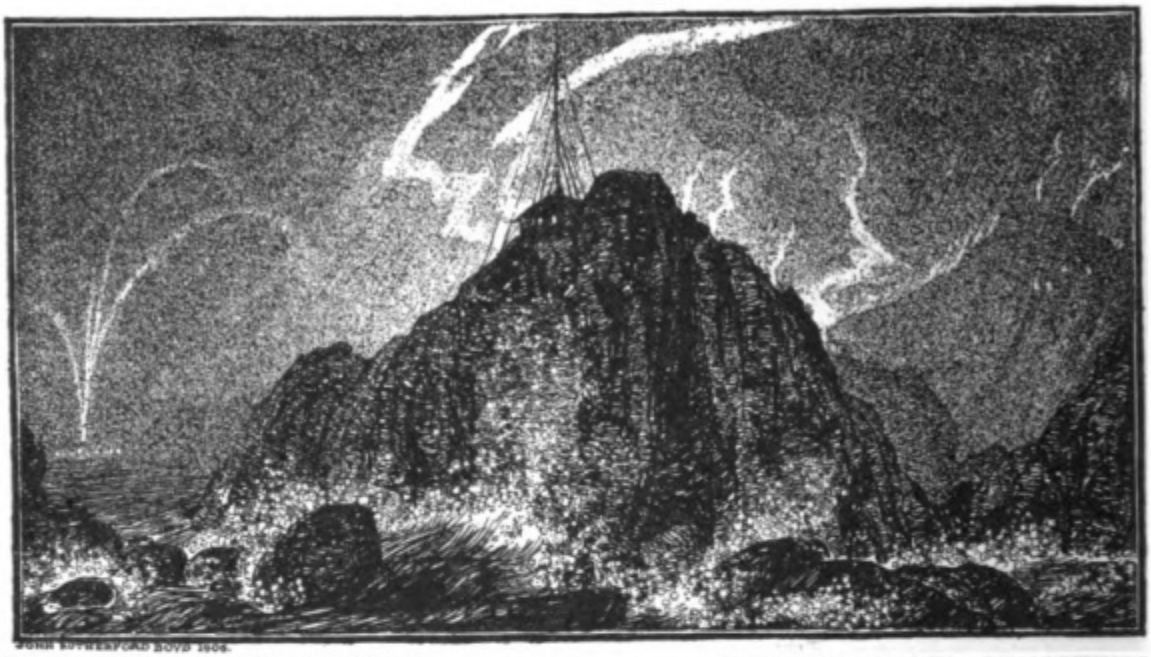

Wireless Telegraph

By Don Marquis

WITH DECORATIONS BY JOHN RUTHERFORD BOYD

Dead priests that have sung when the world was young at Mercury's temple-place,
Your myth, it was true. It is born anew in the death of time and space!

MORE swift, more fleet, than the sun-stained feet of the Dawns that trample the night—
More fleet, more swift, than the gleams that lift in the wake of a wild star's flight—
Through the unpathed deeps of a sea that sweeps unplumbed, unsailed, unknown,
Where the forces untamed, unseen, unnamed, have ruled from the First, alone,
Now the Ghosts of Thought, with a message caught from the tales of the dreaming past,
Unheard, unseen, with nor sound nor sheen, speed through the ultimate vast.

ALL battered and lamed and shattered and maimed the mail-ship crawls into port,
And the belted tire and the volted wire are the toys of the whirlwind's sport;

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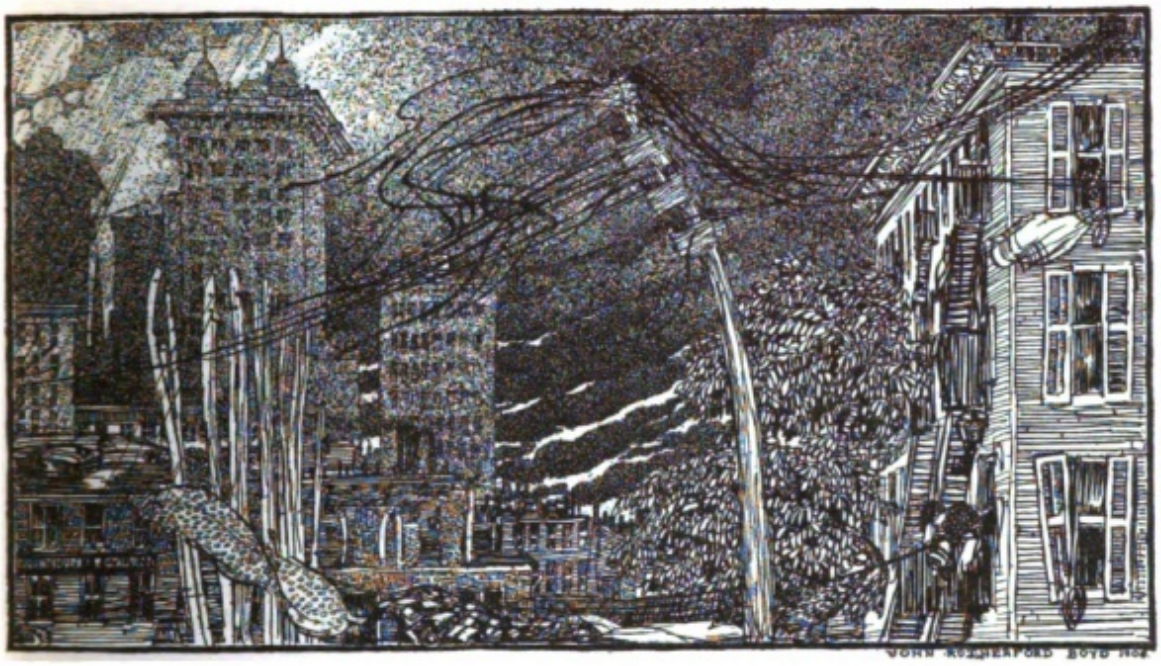

AND the gray sea's teeth in the depths beneath where the coiled, green serpents play
Are crumbling, crunching, mumbling, munching, at the cable lengths alway—
But now they may howl, the storms, and growl, at the work of the lineman's hands,
But gone is their pride with the boast of the tide that bit at the deep-sea strands.

FOR a sentience thrills through the bastioned hills that has neither voice nor form,
Nor recks of the might of the Chaos-sprite that lashes the earth with his storm;
Bitted and bridled and shackled and girdled and bound with a linkless chain,
The brute powers cower at the god-like power that dwells in a human brain;
Man has stolen the wings of the deathless Things that range where the spirit is lord,
He is leagued anew with the Silence through the strands of a strandless cord.

MAN'S feet are clay and they halt and stay with the graveyard worms and clods,
But his plumed thought flings to the wind its wings in the haunts of the careless gods—
For those old gods live, and they weave and give new meanings to old myth;
And blossoms and gleams of the world-old dreams flower fresh from the truth at their pith—

SO the tales that twine round the ruined shrine where Hermes' priests have sung,
They were true, they are true, they are born anew in the speech of a younger tongue.

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The Last of the Wire-tappers

The True Story of the Famous Felix Case

By Arthur Train

AUTHOR OF "COLONEL AMMON AND THE FRANKLIN SYNDICATE," "THE CASE OF MABEL PARKER," ETC.

"Sir," replied the knave unabashed, "I am one of those who do make their living by their wits."

JOHN FELIX, a dealer in automatic musical instruments in New York City, was swindled out of $50,000 on February 2, 1905, by what is commonly known as the "wire-tapping" game. During the previous August a man calling himself by the name of Nelson had hired Room 46, in a building at 27 East Twenty-second Street, as a school for "wireless telegraphy." Later on he had installed over a dozen deal tables, each fitted with a complete set of ordinary telegraph instruments and connected with wires which, while apparently passing out of the windows, in reality plunged behind a desk into a small "dry" battery. Each table was fitted with a shaded electric drop-light, and the room was furnished with the ordinary paraphernalia of a telegraph office. The janitor never observed any activity in the "school." There seemed to be no pupils, and no one haunted the place except a short, ill-favored person who appeared monthly and paid the rent.

On the afternoon of February 1, 1905, Mr. Felix was called to the telephone of his store and asked to make an appointment, later in the afternoon, with a gentleman named Nelson who desired to submit to him a business proposition. Fifteen minutes afterwards Mr. Nelson arrived in person and introduced himself as having met Felix at "Lou" Ludlam's gambling house. He then produced a copy of the *Evening Telegram* which contained an article to the effect that the Western Union Telegraph Company was about to resume its "poolroom service,"—that is to say, to supply the poolrooms with the telegraphic returns of the various horse races being run in different parts of the United States. The paper also contained, in connection with this item of news, a photograph which might, by a stretch of the imagination, have been taken to resemble Nelson himself.

Mr. Felix, who was a German of French sympathies married to an American lady, had recently returned to America after a ten years' sojourn in Europe. He had had an extensive commercial career, was possessed of a considerable fortune, and had at length determined to settle in New York, where he could invest his money to advantage and at the same time conduct a conservative and harmonious business in musical instruments. Like the Teutons of old, dwelling among the forests of the Elbe, Mr. Felix knew the fascination of games of chance and had heard the merry song of the

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wheel at both Hambourg and Monte Carlo. In Europe the pleasures of the gaming table had been comparatively inexpensive, but in New York for some unknown reason the fickle goddess had not favored him and he had lost upwards of $51,000. "Zu viel!" as he himself expressed it. Being of a philosophic disposition, however, he had pocketed his losses and contented himself with the consoling thought that, whereas he might have lost all, he had in fact lost only a part. It might well have been that had not The Tempter appeared in the person of his afternoon visitor, he would have remained *in statu quo* for the rest of his natural life. In the sunny window of his musical store, surrounded by zitherns, auto-harps, dulcimers, psalteries, sackbuts, and other instruments of melody, the advent of Nelson produced the effect of a sudden and unexpected discord. Felix distrusted him from the very first.

The "proposition" was simplicity itself. It appeared that Mr. Nelson was in the employ of the Western Union Telegraph Company, which had just opened a branch office for racing news at 27 East Twenty-second Street. This branch was under the superintendence of an old associate and intimate friend of Nelson's by the name of McPherson. Assuming that they could find some one with the requisite amount of cash, they could all make their everlasting fortunes by simply having McPherson withhold the news of some race from the poolrooms long enough to allow one of the others to place a large bet upon some horse which had in fact already won and was comfortably in the stable. Felix grasped the idea instantly. At the same time he had his suspicions of his visitor. It seemed peculiar that he, an inconspicuous citizen who had already lost $50,000 in gambling houses, should be selected as the recipient of such a momentous opportunity. Moreover, he knew very well that gentlemen in gambling houses were never introduced at all. He thought he detected the odor of a rodent. He naively inquired why, if all these things were so, Nelson and his friend were not already yet millionaires two or three times? The answer was at once forthcoming that they had been, but had been robbed—unmercifully robbed, by one in whom they had had confidence and to whom they had entrusted their money.

"And now we are poor, penniless clerks!" sighed Nelson, "and if we should offer to make a big bet ourselves, the gamblers would be suspici us and probably refuse to place it."

"I think this looks like a svindling game," said Felix shrewdly. So it did; so it was.

By and by Felix put on his hat and, escorted by Nelson, paid a visit to the "branch office" at 27 East Twenty-second Street. Where once solitude had reigned supreme and the spider had spun his web amid the fast gathering dust, all was now tumultuous activity. Fifteen busy operators in eye shades and shirt sleeves took the news hot from the humming wires and clicked it off to the waiting poolrooms.

"Scarecrow wins by a neck!" cried one, "Blackbird second!"

"Make the odds 5 to 3," shouted a short, ill-favored man, who sat at a desk puffing a large black cigar. The place buzzed like a beehive and ticked like a clockmaker's. It had an atmosphere of breathless excitement all its own. Felix watched and marvelled, wondering if dreams came true.

The short, ill-favored man strolled over and condescended to make Mr. Felix's acquaintance. An hour later the three of them were closeted among the zitherns. At the same moment the fifteen operators were ranged in a line in front of a neighboring bar, their elbows simultaneously elevated at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Felix still had lingering doubts. Hadn't Mr. McPherson some little paper,—a letter, a bill, a receipt or a check, to show that he was really in the employ of the Western Union? No, said "Mac," but he had something better,—his badge which he had received as the fastest operator among the company's employees. Felix wanted to see it, but "Mac" explained that it was locked up in the vault at the Farmers' Loan and Trust Co. To Felix this had a safe sound—"Farmers' Trust Co." Then matters began to move rapidly. It was arranged that Felix should go down in the morning and get $50,000 from his bankers, Seligman & Meyer. Then he was to meet Nelson at the store and go with him to the poolroom where the big financiers played their money. McPherson was to remain at the "office" and telephone them the results of the races in advance. By nightfall they would be worth half a million.

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"I hope you have a good safe," remarked Nelson, tentatively. The three conspirators parted with mutual expressions of confidence and esteem.

Next morning Mr. Felix went to his bankers and procured $50,000 in five ten-thousand-dollar bills. The day passed very slowly. There was not even a flurry in zitherns. He waited impatiently for Nelson who was to come at five o'clock. At last Nelson arrived and they hurried to the Fifth Avenue Hotel where the *coup* was to take place.

And now another marvel. Wassermann Brothers' stock-brokering office, which closes at three, hummed just as the "office" had done the evening before,—and with the very same bees, although Felix did not recognize them. It was crowded with men who struggled violently with one another in their eagerness to force their bets into the hands of a benevolent-looking person, who, Felix was informed, was the "trusted cashier" of the establishment. And the sums were so large that even Felix gasped.

"Make that $40,000 on 'Coco'!" cried a baldheaded "capper."

"Mr. Gates wants to double his bet on 'Jackstone',—make it $80,000!" shrieked another.

"Gentlemen! Gentlemen!" begged the "trusted cashier," "not quite so fast, if you please. One at a time."

"Sixty thousand on 'Hesper'—for a place!" bawled one addressed as Mr. Keene, while Messrs. Ryan, Whitney, Belmont, Sullivan, McCarren, and Murphy all made handsome wagers.

From time to time a sporty looking man standing beside a ticker, shouted the odds and read off the returns. Felix heard with straining ears:

"They're off!"

"Baby leads at the quarter."

"Susan is gaining!"

"They're on the stretch!"

"Satan wins by a nose—Peter second."

There was a deafening uproar, hats were tossed ceilingwards, and great wads of money were passed out by the "trusted cashier" to indifferent millionaires. Felix wanted to rush in and bet at once on something—if he waited it might be too late. Was it necessary to be introduced to the cashier? No? Would he take the bet? All right, but——

At that moment a page elbowed his way among the money calling plaintively for "Felix! Mr. Felix." Shrinking at the thought of such publicity in such distinguished company, Felix caught the boy's arm and learned that he was wanted at the telephone booth in the hotel.

"It must be 'Mac,' said Nelson. "Now don't make any mistake!" Felix promised to use the utmost care.

It was "Mac."

"Is this Mr. Felix?—Yes? Well, be very careful now. I am going to give you the result of the third race which has already been run. I will hold back the news three minutes. This is merely to see if everything is working right. Don't make any bet. If I give you the winners correctly, you can put your money on the fourth race. The horse that won the last is 'Tom Platt,'—'O. Dell' is second. Now just step back and see if I am right."

Felix rushed back to the poolroom. As he entered the man at the tape was calling out that "they" were off. In due course "they" reached the quarter and then the half. A terrific struggle was in progress between "Tom Platt" and "O. Dell." First one was ahead and then the other. Finally they came thundering down to the stretch, "Tom Platt" winning by a neck. Gates won $90,000, and several others pocketed wads running anywhere from $20,000 to $60,000.

Felix hurried back to the telephone. "Mac" was at the other end.

"Now write this down," admonished McPherson; "we can't afford to have any mistake. 'Old Stone' has just won the fourth race, with 'Calvert' second. Play 'Old Stone' to win at 5 to 1. We shall make $250,000—and 'Old Stone' is safely in the stable all the time and his jockey is smoking a cigarette on the Club House veranda. Good luck, old man."

Felix had some difficulty in getting near the "trusted cashier" so many financiers were betting on "Calvert." Felix smiled to himself. He'd show them a thing or two.

Finally he managed to push his envelope containing the five ten-thousand-dollar bills into the "trusted cashier's" hand. The latter marked it "Felix, 5 to 1 to win!" and thrust it into his pocket. Then Whitney or somebody bet $70,000 on "Calvert."

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"They're off!" shouted the man at the tape.

How he lived while they tore around the course Felix never knew. Neck and neck "Old Stone" and "Calvert" passed the quarter, the half, and the three-quarter post, and with the crowd yelling like demons came hurtling down the stretch.

"Old Stone wins!" cried the "booster" at the tape in a voice husky with excitement. "Calvert a close second!" Felix nearly fainted. His head swam. He had won a quarter of a million. Then the voice of the "booster" made himself audible above the confusion.

"What! A mistake. Not possible!—Yes. Owing to some confusion at the finish, both jockies wearing the same colors, the official returns now read 'Calvert,' first; 'Old Stone,' second."

Among the zitherns Felix sat and wondered if he had been swindled. He had not returned to Wassermann Brothers. Had he done so he would have found it empty five minutes after he had lost his money. The millionaires were already streaming hilariously into Sharkey's. "Gates" pledged "Belmont" and "Keene" pledged "Whitney." Each had earned five dollars by the sweat of his brow. The glorious army of wiretappers had won another victory and their generals had consummated a campaign of months. Expenses (roughly), $600. Receipts, $50,000. Net profits, $48,400. Share of each, $16,133.

A day or two later Felix wandered down to Police Headquarters, and in the Rogue's Gallery identified the photograph of Nelson, whom he then discovered to be none other than William Crane, alias John Lawson, alias John Larsen, a well-known "wire tapper," arrested some dozen times within a year or two for similar offenses. McPherson turned out to be Christopher Tracy, alias Charles J. Tracy, alias Charles Tompkins, alias Topping, alias Toppin, etc., etc., arrested some eight or ten times for "wire-tapping." The "trusted cashier" materialized in the form of one Wyatt, alias Fred Williams, etc., a "wire tapper" and pal of "Chappie" Moran and "Larry" Summerfield. Detective Sergeants Fogarty and Mundy were at once detailed upon the case and arrested within a short time both Nelson and McPherson. The "trusted cashier" who had pocketed Felix's $50,000 has never been caught. It is said that he is running a first-class hostelry in a Western city. But that is another story.

When acting Inspector O'Brien ordered McPherson brought into his private room, the latter unhesitatingly admitted that the three of them had "trimmed" Felix of his $50,000, exactly as the latter had alleged. He stated that Wyatt (alias Williams) was the one who had taken in the money, that it was still in his possession, and still intact in its original form. He denied, however any knowledge of Wyatt's whereabouts.

The reason for this indifference became apparent when the two prisoners were arraigned in the Magistrate's court, and their counsel demanded their instant discharge on the ground that they had committed no crime for which they could be prosecuted. He cited an old New York case, McCord vs. The People*, which seemed in a general way to sustain his contention, and which had been followed by another and much more recent decision, The People vs. Livingston.† The first of these cases had gone to the Court of Appeals, and the general doctrine had been annunciated that where a person parts with his money for an unlawful or dishonest purpose, even though he is tricked into so doing by false pretenses, a prosecution for the crime of larceny cannot be maintained.

In the McCord case, the defendant had falsely pretended to the complainant, a man named Miller, that he was a police officer and held a warrant for his arrest. By these means he had induced Miller to give him a gold watch and a diamond ring as the price of his liberty. The conviction in this case was reversed on the ground that Miller parted with his property for an unlawful purpose; but there was a very strong dissenting opinion from Mr. Justice Peckham, now a member of the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States.

In the second case, that of Livingston, the complainant had been defrauded out of $500 by means of the "green goods" game; but this conviction was reversed by the Appellate Division of the Second Department on the authority of the McCord

* 46 New York 470.
† 47 App. Div. 283.

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case. The opinion in this case was written by Mr. Justice Cullen, now Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, who says in conclusion:

"We very much regret being compelled to reverse this conviction. Even if the prosecutor intended to deal in counterfeit money, it is no reason why the appellant should go unwhipped of justice. We venture to suggest that it might be well for the legislature to alter the rule laid down in McCord vs. People."

Well might the judges regret being compelled to set a rogue at liberty simply because he had been ingenious enough to invent a fraud (very likely with the assistance of a shyster lawyer) which involved the additional turpitude of seducing another into a criminal conspiracy. Livingston was turned loose upon the community in spite of the fact that he had swindled a man out of $500 because he had incidentally led the latter to believe that in return he was to receive counterfeit money or "green goods," which might be put into circulation. Yet, because some years before, the Judges of the Court of Appeals had, in the McCord matter, adopted the rule followed in civil cases, to wit, that as the complaining witness was himself in fault and did not come into court with clean hands he could have no standing before them, the Appellate Division in the next case felt obliged to follow them and to rule tantamount to saying that two wrongs could make a right and two knaves one honest man. It may seem a trifle unfair to put it in just this way, but when one realizes the iniquity of such a doctrine as applied to criminal cases, it is hard to speak softly. Thus the broad and general doctrine seemed to be established that so long as a thief could induce his victim to believe that it was to his advantage to enter into a dishonest transaction, he might defraud him to any extent in his power. Immediately there sprang into being hordes of swindlers, who, aided by adroit shyster lawyers, invented all sorts of schemes which involved some sort of dishonesty upon the part of the person to be defrauded. The "wire-tappers," of whom "Larry" Summerfield was the Napoleon, the "gold-brick" and "green-goods" men, and the "sick engineers" flocked to New York, which, under the unwitting protection of the Court of Appeals, became a veritable Mecca for persons of their ilk.

To readers unfamiliar with the cast of mind of professional criminals it will be almost impossible to appreciate with what bold insouciance these vultures now hovered over the metropolitan barnyard. Had not the Court of Appeals itself recognized their profession? They had nothing to fear. The law was on their side. They walked the streets flaunting their immunity in the very face of the police. "Wire-tapping" became an industry, a legalized industry with which the authorities might interfere at their peril. Indeed, there is one instance in which a "wire-tapper" successfully prosecuted his victim (after he had trimmed him) upon a charge of grand larceny arising out of the same transaction. One crook bred another every time he made a victim, and the disease of crime, the most infectious of all distempers, ate its way unchecked into the body politic. Broadway was thronged by a prosperous gentry, the aristocracy and elite of knavery, who dressed resplendently, flourished like the green bay tree, and spent their (or rather their victims') money with the lavish hand of one of Dumas's gentlemen.

But the evil did not stop there. Seeing that their brothers flourished in New York, and neither being learned in the law nor gifted with a power of nice discrimination between rogueries, all the other knaves in the country took it for granted that they had at last found the Elysian fields and came trooping here by hundreds to ply their various trades. The McCord case stood out like a cabalistic sign upon a gate-post telling all the rascals who passed that way that the city was full of honest folk waiting to be turned into rogues and "trimmed."

> "And presently we did pass a narrow lane, and at the mouth espied a written stone, telling beggars by a word like a wee pitchfork to go that way."

The tip went abroad that the city was "good graft" for everybody, and in the train of the "wire-tappers" thronged the "flimflammer," "confidence man," "booster," "capper" and every sort of affiliated crook, recalling Charles Reade's account in *The Cloister and the Hearth* of Gerald in Lorraine among their kin of another period:

> "With them and all they had, 'twas lightly come and lightly go; and when we left them my

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master said to me, 'This is thy first lesson, but tonight we shall be at Hansburgh. Come with me to the "rotboss" there, and I'll show thee all our folk and their lays, and especially "the lossners," "the dutzers," "the schleppers," "the gickisses," "the schwanfelders," whom in England we call "shivering Jemmies," "the süntregers," "the schwiegers," "the joners," "the sessel-degers," "the gennscherers," in France "marcandiers a rifodés," "the veranerins," "the stabulers," with a few foreigners like ourselves, such as "pietres," "francmitoux," "polissons," "malingreux," "traters," "rufflers," "whipjacks," "dommerars," "glymmerars," "jarkmen," "patricos," "swadders," "autem morts," "walking morts,—"' 'Enow!' cried I, stopping him, 'art as gleesome as the evil one a counting of his imps. I'll jot down in my tablet all these caitiffs and their accursed names: for knowledge is knowledge. But go among them alive or dead, that will I not with my good will.'"

And a large part of it was due simply to the fact that seven learned men upon seven comfortable chairs in the city of Albany had said, many years ago, that "neither the law or public policy designs the protection of rogues in their dealings with each other, or to insure fair dealing and truthfulness as between each other, in their dishonest practices."

The reason that the "wire-tapping" game was supposed to come within the scope of the McCord case was this: it deluded the victim into the belief that he was going to cheat the poolroom by placing a bet upon a "sure thing." Secondarily it involved, as the dupe supposed, the theft or disclosure of messages which were being transmitted over the lines of a telegraph company,—a misdemeanor. Hence, it was argued, the victim was as much a thief as the proposer of the scheme, had parted with his money for a dishonest purpose, did not come into court with "clean hands," and no prosecution could be sustained, no matter whether he had been led to give up his money by means of false pretenses or not.

While "wire-tapping" differed technically from the precise frauds committed by McCord and Livingston, it nevertheless closely resembled those swindles in general character and came clearly within the doctrine that the law was not designed to protect "rogues in their dealings with each other."

No genuine attempt had ever been made to prosecute one of these gentry until the catastrophe which deprived Felix of his $50,000. The "wire-tappers" rolled in money; for as "Larry" Summerfield expressed it, "There is a sucker born every minute." Indeed, the fraternity were so liberal with their "rolls" that they became friendly with certain police officials and intimately affiliated with various politicians of influence, one of whom went on Summerfield's bond, when he was being prosecuted for the "sick engineer" frauds to the extent of $30,000. They regularly went to Europe in the summer season and could be seen at all the race courses and gambling resorts of the Continent. It is amusing to chronicle in this connection that just prior to McPherson's arrest—that is to say during the summer vacation of 1904—he crossed the Atlantic on the same steamer with an assistant district attorney of New York county, who failed to recognize his ship companion and found him an entertaining and agreeable comrade.

The trial came on before Judge Warren W. Foster in Part 3 of the General Sessions on February 27, 1906. A special panel quickly supplied a jury, which, after hearing the evidence, returned a verdict of guilty in short order. Mr. James Osborne who defended McPherson refused to sum up the case or to put in any defense, relying solely upon points of law; but of course no defense was possible upon the facts which could not, in the very nature of things, be denied.

It now remains for the judges of the Court of Appeals to decide whether they will extend the doctrine of the McCord and Livingston cases to a fraud of this character, whether they will limit the doctrine strictly to cases of precisely similar facts, or whether they will frankly refuse to be bound by any such absurd and iniquitous theory and consign the McCord case to the dust-heaps of discarded and mistaken doctrines where it rightfully belongs. Their action will determine whether the perpetrators of the most ingenious, elaborate and successful bunco game in the history of New York county shall be punished for their offense or instead be turned loose to prey at will upon the community at large.

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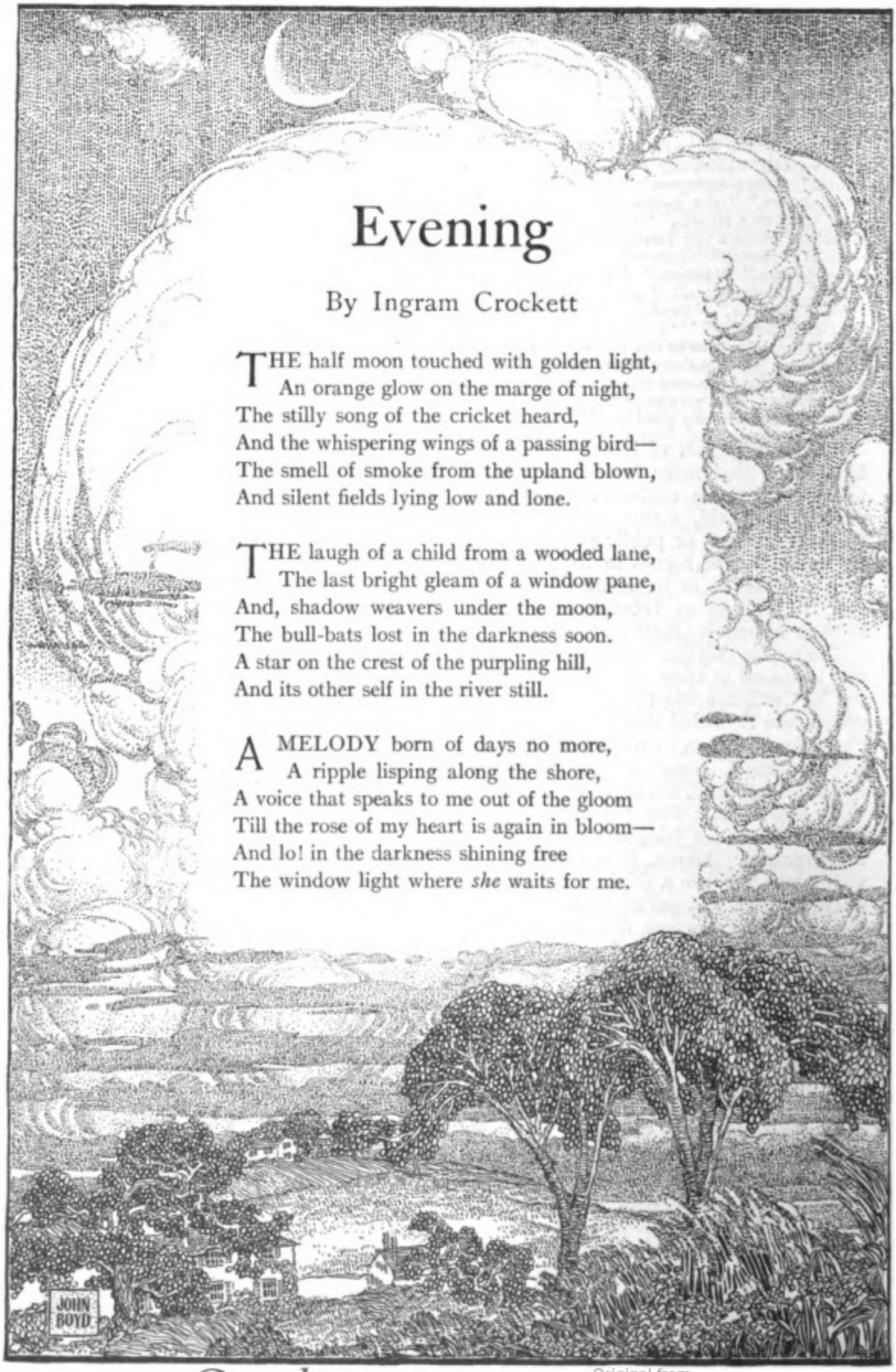

Evening

By Ingram Crockett

THE half moon touched with golden light,
An orange glow on the marge of night,
The stilly song of the cricket heard,
And the whispering wings of a passing bird—
The smell of smoke from the upland blown,
And silent fields lying low and lone.

THE laugh of a child from a wooded lane,
The last bright gleam of a window pane,
And, shadow weavers under the moon,
The bull-bats lost in the darkness soon.
A star on the crest of the purpling hill,
And its other self in the river still.

A MELODY born of days no more,
A ripple lisping along the shore,
A voice that speaks to me out of the gloom
Till the rose of my heart is again in bloom—
And lo! in the darkness shining free
The window light where *she* waits for me.

JOHN BOYD

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The perfect poise that is the aeronaut's despair

Home Life in a Gull Colony

By William L. Finley

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY HERMAN T. BOHLMAN

THE lake region of Southern Oregon is perhaps the most extensive breeding ground on the Pacific Coast for all kinds of water birds. The country is interspersed with great lakes, many from twenty to thirty miles across, and reaching out on all sides of these are vast marsh areas and tule fields extending for miles and miles.

The latter part of last May we set out to study and photograph the bird life of this region. For several days we packed through the mountains with our heavy camera equipment and then across a rolling, sage-brush country till we reached Lost River, which empties into Tule or Rhett Lake. Here we abandoned our horses for a stout rowboat, and then for over a month we cruised about Tule Lake, crossed over to White Lake and out into the Lower Klamath.

Tule Lake is a body of water about twenty-five miles long and fifteen to twenty miles wide, cut through the northern half by the Oregon and California boundary line. A few miles to the northwest is Lower Klamath Lake, about the same size. Between these two larger lakes is a smaller body of water called White Lake, separated from the Lower Klamath by a broad strip of tule land.

The border of these lakes is a veritable jungle. The tules grow in an impenetrable mass from ten to fifteen feet high, and one can never get to a point where he can look out above the tops of the reeds and see where he is going. Then the foundation below is made of decayed vegetation and is treacherous to tread upon. One may wade along in two feet of water a short distance and sink over his head at the next step. We found a few places where the solid roots had formed a sort of a floor at

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Each pair of gulls has its own home spot

The green blind generates confidence—notice the young gull on ***Mr. Finley's knee***

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the surface of the water, which was buoyant enough to support us. These precarious footholds were the only camping spots we had for two weeks.

In Lower Klamath Lake stretching for miles and miles to the west is a seemingly endless area of floating tule "islands," between which flow a network of narrow channels. These so-called islands are composed of the decayed growth of generations of tules. Most of them are soft and springy and sink under the weight of a person.

Gulls love society. They always nest in colonies and live together the entire year. They are most useful birds about the water-fronts of our cities. These gulls have developed certain traits that mark them as land birds rather than birds of the sea. In Southern California and Oregon I have watched flocks of them leave the ocean and rivers at daybreak every morning and sail inland for miles, skirmishing about the country to pick up a living in the fields, following the plow all day long as blackbirds do, and fighting at the farmer's heels for angle-worms. I have seen others rummage daily about pig-pens and gorge on the offal thrown out from the

A seascape at Klamath Lake

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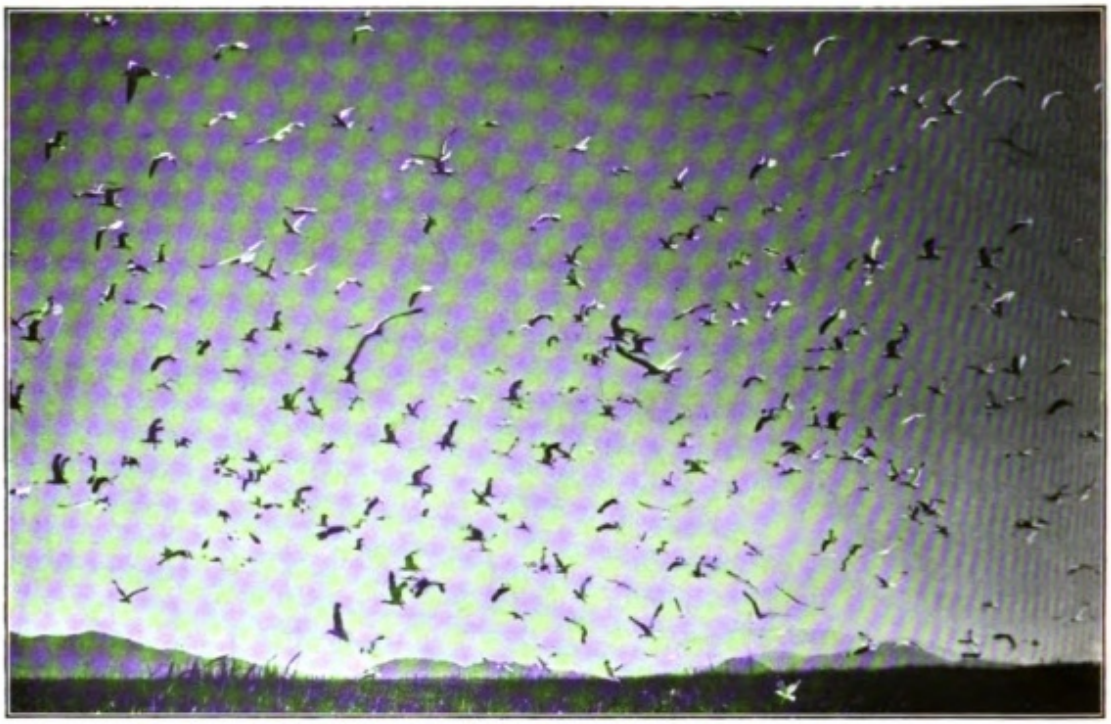

When the photographers approached the nesting grounds

slaughter-houses. If any bird is useful to man, the gull is certainly of great economic importance as a scavenger.

It was several days before we found the colony of nesting gulls on Lower Klamath Lake. We were led to the place by watching the course of the small flocks that spread out over the lake in the morning and returned homeward about dusk each evening. From a full mile away, with our field glass, we could see the gulls rising and circling over the low-lying islands. As we rowed nearer, the birds came out to meet us, cackling excitedly at the dubious-looking craft approaching so near their homes. They swam about on all sides, curiously following in the wake of our boat. Cormorants flapped along over the surface, pelicans rose heavily from the water, and gulls and terns got thicker and thicker, until, when the nose of the boat pushed in at the edge of the island, the air seemed completely filled with a crying, chaotic swarm. We stepped out among the reeds, but had to tread cautiously to keep from breaking eggs or killing young birds. Many youngsters crouched low in their tracks and others scudded off in all directions. Our presence caused such confusion among old and young that we jumped in the boat again and pulled away for fifty yards.

We wanted the opportunity of making an intimate study of the home life of the gull, but unless in some way we could hide near at hand this was simply impossible, for the whole colony of birds went frantic whenever we approached their nests and young. To overcome this difficulty, we had brought a blind, specially built for the purpose. We had secured an old wagon umbrella of dark-green color. Then taking a long piece of green canvas, we had sewed hooks along the edge about eighteen inches apart, and, when these were hooked in at the end of each rib, we had the sides hanging down all around, making a covered tent, in which we could hide with our cameras.

The next morning we pulled down below the gull colony and landed under cover of the high tules. Here we erected the blind and got underneath with our cameras. Then, holding up the umbrella, we began slowly edging toward the rookery. It is hard to say just what the gulls thought this queer-looking object was; they could see no legs, no head, but still it moved. Whereas, the day before they had gone wild at our approach, now they paid little attention to the green thing that blended fairly well with the green tules, even though it gradually approached closer and closer. After manœuvring for

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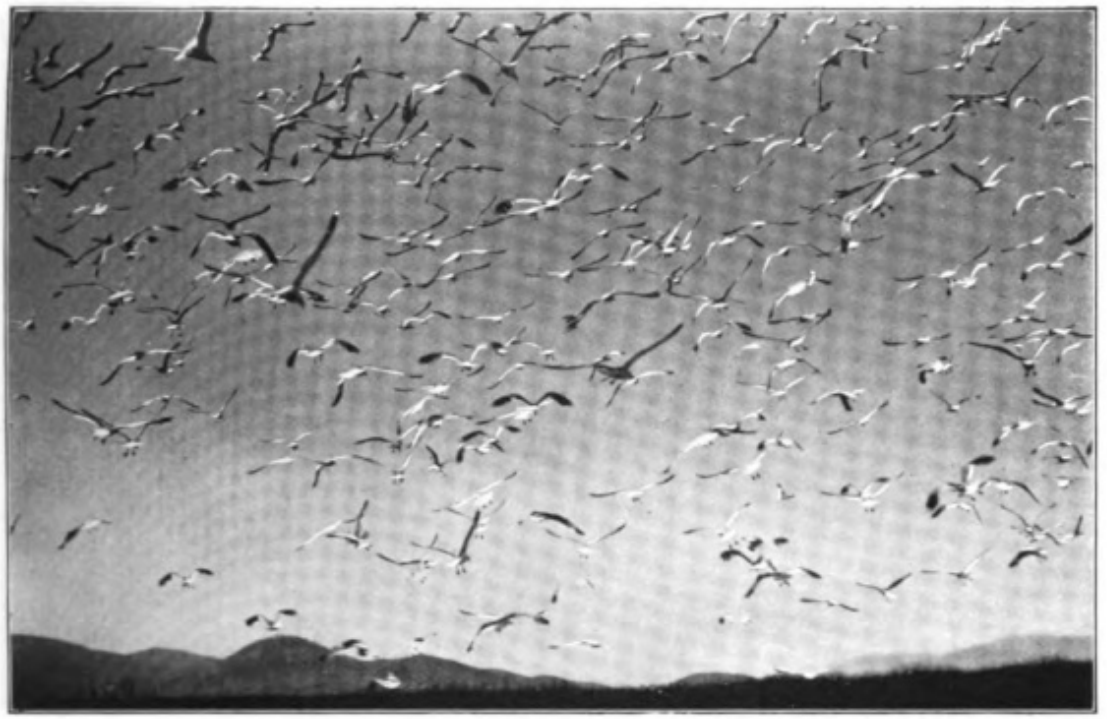

the whole gull colony turned out in their honor

almost an hour, we reached the edge of the colony and planted our blind by driving the extension handle of the umbrella in the mud. Some of the parents regarded the green tent with suspicion, backing off or rising to circle around where they could get a full view. But it was not long before the blind seemed to pass as part of the scenery and we were surrounded on all sides by the snow-plumaged birds coming and going and paying little or no attention to us, as we peered out or pointed our cameras through the loop-holes we cut in the canvas.

Although there were at least a thousand pair of gulls nesting so close together, yet housekeeping was in no sense a communal matter. The nests were within two or three feet of each other, but each pair of gulls had its own home spot and the invasion of that place by any other gull was the challenge for a fight. Several times we were the excited spectators of fights that were going on just outside our tent. I watched one old hen, who was very angry because she couldn't find her chicks. As one of her neighbors lit near, she grabbed the tail of the intruder and gave it a sharp jerk. At that both birds grasped each other by the bill and a lively set-to followed. They pulled and tugged till suddenly the old hen let go and grabbed her opponent by the neck and began shaking and hanging on with all the tenacity of a bull pup, till the intruder got enough and departed, leaving the victor with a mouthful of feathers.

Almost all the eggs had hatched and some of the young gulls were about grown. By watching the actions of the parents, I soon discovered that their greatest anxiety seemed to be to keep their children crouching low in the nest so they would not run away and get lost in the crowd. I saw one young gull start to run off through the reeds, but he hadn't gone a yard before the mother dived at him with a blow that sent him rolling. He got up dazed and started off in a new direction, but she rapped him again on the head till he was glad to crouch down in the dry reeds.

The parents seemed to recognize their own chicks largely by location. Several times I saw old birds pounce upon youngsters that were running about and beat them unmercifully. It seemed to be as much the duty of a gull mother to beat her neighbor's children, if they didn't stay home, as to whip her own if they moved out of the nest, but often this would lead to a rough-and-tumble fight among the old birds. Sometimes a young gull would start to swim off in the water, but it never

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Never an instant when the wings and tail are not adjusted to meet the air currents

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Like a section of a Japanese screen

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The bird gives the photographer but a fraction of a second as he sweeps across the angle of vision

went far before it was pounced upon and driven back shoreward.

Although we had an excellent chance to study gull life from our blind, yet we found little pleasure in it at the time. The sun was pelting hot and there was not the faintest movement in the sultry atmosphere. We had to breathe the foulest kind of air on account of the dead birds and decaying fish scattered about, and we were standing in a muck that was continually miring deeper. Swarms of flies and mosquitoes harassed us constantly, while the perspiration kept dripping from our bodies, till, after three or four hours in the blind, our tongues were parched from thirst, and with loss of strength and patience, we were compelled to quit for the day. But for all we suffered there was a fascination in watching these wild birds going and coming fearlessly almost within arm's reach. For three different days we

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A flight picture well focused is a rare shot

worked in the blind trying to picture the gulls in their characteristic attitudes of flight.

These gulls are masters in the air. I have watched by the hour birds similar to these following along in the wake of a steamer, but had never before had such chances with a camera. Often they poise, resting apparently motionless on outstretched wing. It is a difficult feat. A small bird can't do it. A sparrow hawk can only poise by the rapid beating of his wings. The gull seems to hang perfectly still, yet there is never an instant when the wings and tail are not constantly adjusted to meet the different air currents. Just as in shooting the rapids in a canoe, the paddle must be adjusted every moment to meet the different eddies, currents and whirlpools, and it is never the same in two different instants. A gull by the perfect adjustment of its body, without a single flap of the wings, makes headway straight in the teeth of the wind. I saw one retain

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At close range

a perfect equilibrium in a stiff breeze, and at the same time reach forward and scratch his ear.

Even though we had good chances to picture the flying gulls, yet wing shooting with a camera is such a difficult feat, that several dozen plates yielded but few good negatives. The short interval of time during which it takes a flying bird to sweep across the angle of vision of the lens generally gives the photographer only part of a second's time to aim, focus and shoot. A flight picture well focused and clear and satisfactory in its make-up is the record of a rare shot and a great many misses; perhaps it is more often a good guess, but it is rarely if ever made without a great deal of practice.

A sociable colony

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The "Brute"

By Herman Whitaker

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY G. W. PETERS

MUGGY tropical night was settling down on La Luna, a Mexican rubber plantation. Across the river from the plantation house, gloom shrouded the jungle—inky blackness gemmed with the greenish incandescence of myriad lantern flies. It was very hot, close, oppressive as a northern nightmare, but there was, at least, cess of the *rodedores*, most virulent of insect pests, for Gilson, the field superintendent, stretched at ease on the veranda.

He was alone. In the office, Fleming, the manager, was sweating over his monthly report in vain efforts to make actual results in rubber culture take the color of stockholders' expectations. Mrs. Fleming had gone for a ride in the cool with Jackson, the bookkeeper, and Miss Mabel, the manager's sister, about whom Gilson's thoughts were centered.

Inimitable as Cupid is in his methods, it is doubtful if he ever presented himself to mortal in more original guise than that which he assumed for Gilson. While taking a short vacation in the City of Mexico two months before, he and Bender of Las Glorias had descried a party of tourists, one of those "personally conducted" plagues that are visited upon foreign countries for their sins of evil living. Blue and gold tags proclaimed that this particular aggregation was the "Association of Brownsville Joiners," and as, all bloated with the pride of travel, it sailed down Calle San Francisco, Gilson drew his companion aside into the doorway of a church.

But they were not to escape so easily, for two girls at the tail of the procession stopped and, raising fine gray eyes to Gilson's height, the taller girl inquired the name of the church. Ordinarily, he would have answered courteously, but, irritated by the party's foolish behavior, he replied in Spanish,

"*No comprende, Señorita.*" He did not understand.

"He *looks* like an American," the other girl said, and after they passed on, Bender turned on Gilson.

"You chump! What made you do that? Here we've seen nothing but dirty enganchada women for the last six months, and you balk at a chance like that!"

Gilson loftily waved away the other's indignation. "I never expected to renege on my nationality, but I wouldn't give a fool of that bunch a chance to brand me in with their herd." Then, ignorant of the fact that he was playing with Cupid's lightnings, he added, "I wouldn't be seen on the calle with either."

It discharged, the lightning, at noon, taking form in a telegram from Fleming: "My sister telegraphs will arrive City of Mexico to-day. Please escort her down."

"That was yesterday," Bender commented. "We had better do the hotels and see if she has registered."

She had, at the Palazio, but there was nothing in the neat signature to recall their adventure of the morning, and the two vied in quantity and quality of blushes when Gray-Eyes and her companion rustled into the parlor.

Having obtained a glimpse of their visitors in the patio below, the girls were quite composed. Only a slight dimpling at the corners of a very sweet mouth betrayed Mabel Fleming's appreciation of the situation as she introduced her companion, the daughter of a neighboring planter; and only once did she permit herself the very slightest of allusions.

"If you will please see the porter about our trunks, Mr. Gilson," she said as the young men took leave after making train arrangements for next morning, "that is, if you speak Spanish. We can get nothing out of him but a '*No comprende.*'"

Outside, on the street, Bender punched Gilson in the chest. "You wouldn't walk the length of the calle with either, would you? Two days on a slow train and fourteen hours horseback, alone, with

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those eyes. I see your finish, old misogynist!" Then as Gilson grinned appreciatively, he went on, "But why didn't you apologize and get on a proper footing?"

"Inform the lady that I mistook her for the pompadour-over-the-left-eye type of girl? I see myself." And when Bender reasserted his opinion that he, Gilson, was starting under a "bit of a handicap," he replied with the sangfroid of youth, "Oh, I have hopes."

An unfortunate remark, for as the two walked away a girl on the balcony above removed a handkerchief from her mouth, and the tears of mirth evaporated under the sudden flash of large gray eyes.

"Have you?" she commented, gazing after.

On the train, however, there had been no trace of resentment in Miss Fleming's manner, nothing to indicate the REVENGE which she had spread on her diary. As the cars rattled, banged and jerked through the hot lands, she had turned eyes up to him that were, as aforesaid, big and liquid enough for a man to drown in. It was a hard ordeal. Yet he had curbed himself; rejecting the gray suicide so sweetly offered until arriving at La Luna, the tension relaxed with a suddenness that broke the spring of a new-born hope.

Musing in the dusk, Gilson bitterly recalled that the change came with her introduction to Jackson. Jackson! If it had been Bender; Gregg, his subordinate at Las Glorias; Polson, of Sol Suchia. But Jackson! It irked him the more because he had little more than an intuition to advance against the bookkeeper, and that was largely formed on a nasty way of shoving to a winning or piking to a losing in a friendly game of poker. That would not count much to his prejudice with a woman. Moreover, Jackson was son of the president and richest stockholder of the La Luna corporation!

Deep in his musing, Gilson missed the clatter of hoofs on the other side of the house and a soft footfall stealing along the veranda a minute thereafter; did not rouse till arms suddenly clasped his neck and moist lips pressed his.

"Why, Jack? Sitting all alone?"

Warned by the absence of Fleming's beard, she drew instantly away, and as Gilson girded himself against the weakness as of water which the caress brought upon him, he felt her blushing in the gloom.

"I'm afraid that I was dosing," he said.

"*Dosing?*"

The accent conveyed her full knowledge of the intense wakefulness of the lips that returned her kiss. Brass, unmitigated effrontery alone would carry him through.

"And accidents will happen," he went on quietly. "So don't apologize."

"*Accidents?*"

"If it was—intentional——"

"O—h! you—" Anger choked her.

"— accept my thanks," he finished, and before she could frame her anger in words, he stepped from the veranda.

Shaping a course through the gloom, he ran into Bender—whom Mrs. Fleming had captured on trail and brought in to dinner—and carried him off to his quarters.

"Like all the other women when they first come down," he said, answering his friend's query, "Miss Fleming is running full tilt at our labor system, and as my work brings me closest to the people, she naturally busts most of her lances on me. Of course the system isn't ideal. The long working hours under a boiling tropical sun; the dirt, disease, awful death rate, the working under guard by day, the confinement in the galera at night, all these things must shock a tender girl. She doesn't understand the irresponsibility of the peon. That before we get them the Mexican labor contractors have cinched them from fifty to a hundred dollars, and that we must restrict their liberty till the debt is worked off.

"She sees only the misery; charging it all to me, though I've done my best under the conditions. You know the stand we have always taken with our women—given them a separate galera, a chance to be decent if they feel that way. Well, four of them complained the other day of Ilarion, the overseer. I was for firing him, but Jackson has the hiring of the free people and wouldn't stand for it. Said we couldn't get as good a man for twice the price, and that the stockholders—that's his dad—were already kicking at the expense. Of course I had to do something, but when I cautioned Ilarion, he was cheeky and I batted him one—as the luck would have it, just as Miss Mabel went riding by. Since then she alludes

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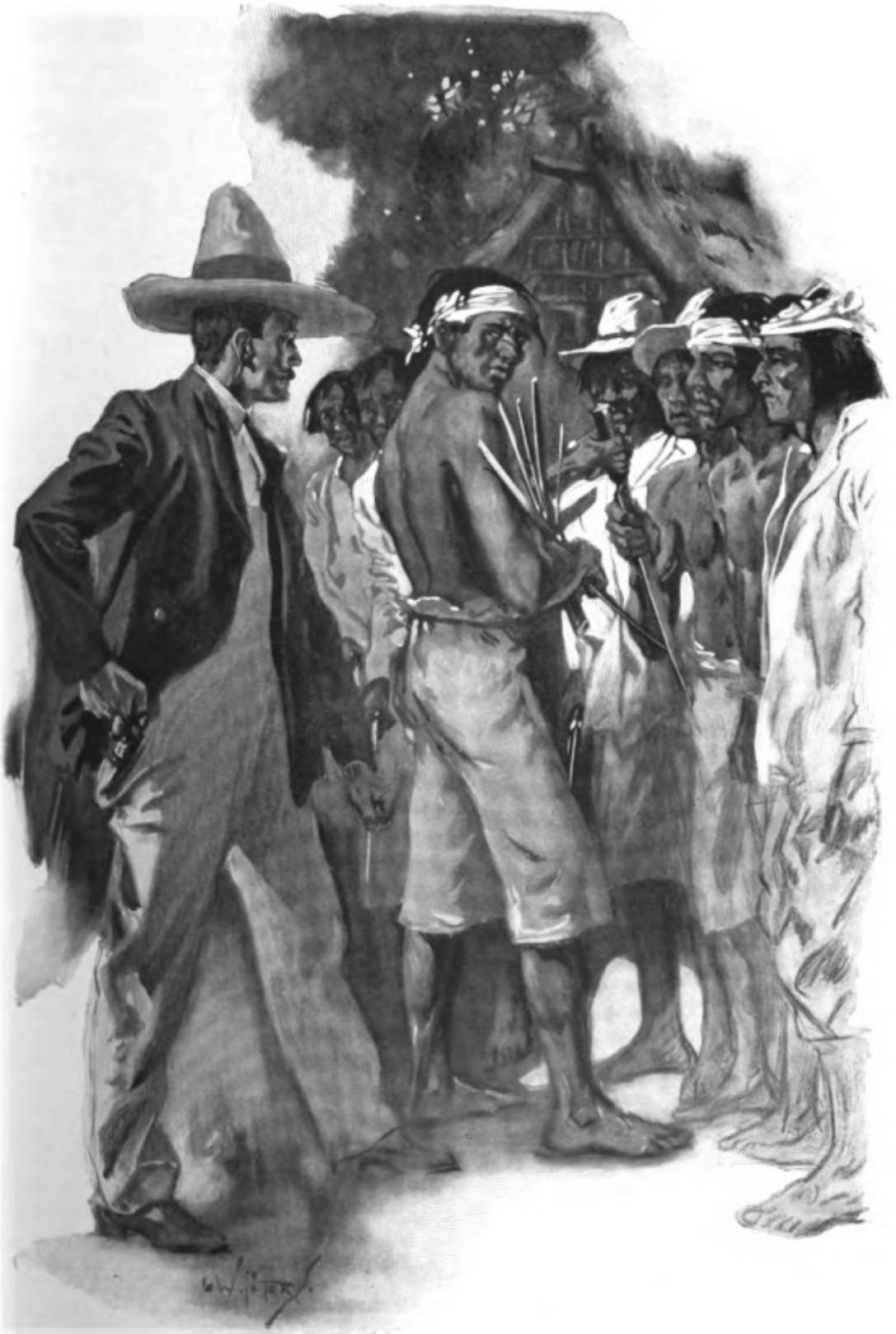

"Back to the galera! In with you!"

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to me as 'The Brute.' Jackson told me; he thinks it no end of a joke."

Bender grinned. "Peculiar sense of humor, hasn't he?"

Shrugging, Gilson went on, "Last night I heard him talking to her on the veranda. I didn't mean to eavesdrop." Pausing, he indicated the siding of split poles through which one could have thrown a cat. "This is no better than a bird cage, and he was talking quite loudly as he assured her that things would be run differently when he came in to his own."

"Just after he had refused to fire that old rip of a mandador," Bender commented. "He's a beauty. What are you going to do?"

"There's the dinner bell!" Gilson answered. "Come out afterwards with me and you'll see."

During the meal, Bender saw also. In the quiet of her own room Mabel had striven to abate the colors that flowed at the memory of the kiss, and, failing, she came to table just spoiling for the fight that ensued when Fleming made inquiry of a sick woman.

"I should imagine," she said, glancing at Gilson, "that they would all be sick. At three o'clock this morning I heard them go by my window, panting as they carried water up to the cookhouse. I wonder, Jack, that you stand for such inhumanity?"

It was the tocsin of war and, well used to its alarm by this time, Fleming turned a twinkling eye on Gilson. "What about it, Gill?"

"'Panting?'" Without looking up from his dinner, Gilson answered, "Shouldn't wonder. They are getting too lazy and fat to do anything but eat."

Applied to the gaunt enganchadas, fatness was so eminently ridiculous that Fleming roared, his wife tittered, Bender choked, and even Jackson's yellow mustache drew up to his nose. Ignoring them, the girl wrathfully eyed Gilson.

"You are shameless," she said, after a long pause.

Later, walking out through the moonlight, Gilson led Bender in among the plantation buildings, a double row of palm-thatched huts, that rose on either hand, looming sere and black in the tender light. Passing the galera—a huger hut, wound and fenced with barb wire till it resembled a bird cage—the night wind brought them the sleep breathing of the hundred contract slaves imprisoned within.

"Sounds like a huge sigh," Gilson commented as they walked on. "Do you know I never get quite used to it—the squalor, misery, hell of it all."

"It's surely hell," Bender agreed. "But if we don't make the best of the system someone else will make the worst."

Stopping at a hut that stood by itself, Gilson called out the mandador, a huge Indian of the Isthmus tribes. "To-morrow," he said, "you will set two men to carry water for the women in the cookhouse, two to chop wood for their fires, and a third to grind corn for tortilla paste."

As they walked away, Bender patted his friend delightedly upon the back. "Now you are doing things. That ought to take the wind out of Mr. Jackson's sails. But say!" he added quickly. "With his mania for sitting on expense don't you suppose that he will object to your weakening the field force?"

Gilson shrugged. "That's just what I do expect; the very reason for my passing it up to him."

"You think that he will——"

"—— report me to headquarters. I don't *think*—I'm *sure*."

Suddenly enlightened, Bender grinned. "You old fox! I see your game. You will call his sympathetic bluff. But take care that he doesn't deal you out from a cold deck. Anyway this play is bound to serve you with Miss Mabel."

The concession to her opinion did serve Gilson with Mabel, though, obedient to the law of feminine contrariness, she was at pains to conceal the fact. For this he was largely responsible. Having sized her up as a girl of mettle, one of the kind that are not to be coaxed with sugar, he bore himself toward her with a superlative indifference that sharply piqued her sense of power. Apparently, she was no more in his eyes than the dirtiest enganchada; an appearance that was the more maddening because long ago she had divined the love that lay behind it. Her inability to draw him from his entrenchments, strange to say, both piqued and pleased her; a paradox that is explainable only on the hypothesis that she could have no further use for a conquered foe. She

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would have loved, yet feared to defeat him. So, for another month, they played at cross purposes; Mabel riding or walking in the cool of the evening with Jackson, carrying on a desperate flirtation under the indifferent eyes of Gilson who, on his part, went quietly about his business.

One morning the rising sun caught Mabel and Mrs. Fleming sewing upon the veranda. Fleming was away; had gone to Chicago to report personally at a stockholders' meeting, and thus the heavy work of breaking in a new draft of enganchadores had fallen upon Gilson. To-day, however, he was also away; down the river purchasing corn for the work folks' tortillas. Jackson was the only white man on the plantation.

The latter was in her mind when, looking over her sewing, Mrs. Fleming asked, "Well—did he—last night——"

"No, he didn't," Mabel bluntly interrupted.

Blushing a little, Mrs. Fleming yet brazened it out. "He has been so—well, I can't think of any other word than 'spoony'——"

"Don't apologize," Mabel cut in again. "It fits—exactly."

"—— lately," Mrs. Fleming continued. "And when you sat out so late I felt sure that he would——"

"I didn't let him."

"Why, Mab?" Like a good sister-in-law, Mrs. Fleming wished to see Mabel comfortably settled. "I should have imagined—" Dropping her sewing, she jumped up. "Good Gracious! What's that?"

A shout, long, loud, raucous, came floating over from the galera, and as the two stood, staring at each other, Jackson turned the corner. Flushed, breathless, an uneasy smile accentuated the nervousness it was intended to conceal.

"Mutiny!" he exclaimed. "It's the new batch that Fleming sent down from Vera Cruz! Cabos and mandador have taken to the jungle! Come, we must escape to Las Glorias!"

"And leave the plantation without a white man?" Mrs. Fleming looked her surprise. At this season the rubber was cumbered two feet deep with dried grass, brush, weeds, the jungle growths of a season. A match, and two hundred thousand dollars investments would go up in smoke. "No," she finished, "I will stay."

"But they are drunk—and armed!" he stammered.

"Drunk? How did they get the liquor?"

"Well — you see — " He hemmed, hawed, stammered, then under the urge of his fright confessed his cowardly folly. Thinking to placate the mutineers he had ordered aguardiente to be served and they were armed with the machetes, the yard-long knives used in clearing jungle.

"Why didn't you collect them up?" she demanded.

"What?" he gasped. "Go in—among them?"

"Yes, Jack would have done it."

As she stood, puckering her brow in angry perplexity, the uproar grew in raucous volume. At the bawl of one drunken voice she shuddered, remembering thankfully that Mabel did not understand Spanish. There was room here, ample room, for one of those tropical tragedies that occasionally make nasty reading in northern papers. But the plucky little woman never faltered.

"You can go," she said, "but I stay by the plantation." Then, stamping her foot, she exclaimed, "Oh, if Mr. Gilson were only here!"

Mabel took pity on Jackson's mortified flush. "Why, Nell! What could he do? Don't be unjust."

"Do? Drive them!"

"Then here's his chance," Mabel said, quietly pointing. "He's there now—out at the store."

"Impossible!" Mrs. Fleming cried. "He couldn't possibly——"

But he could and had; moreover his talismanic appearance sprang out of very simple causes. Getting a chance upstream with the Las Glorias steam launch, he had gained a day on the canoes that were heavily laden with corn.

But now that man and occasion were met, Mrs. Fleming shifted her ground with feminine suddenness. "Come back!" she screamed as, after tying the horse he had borrowed from Bender, Gilson headed for the galera. "Come back! They have had liquor!"

Having come on a scared cabo out in the jungle, Gilson was aware of the fact. He knew also that he had to face men with whom the impeccable tradition of Gringo bravery had been weakened by Jackson's folly. Yet though his uncertainty of re-

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"It was a very clever jump

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sults amounted almost to certainty that two minutes would see him mincemeat, he waved a cheery greeting and sauntered on.

"Now for a great big bluff!" about covered his active thought.

As he approached the yelling ceased and the men who were scattered among the buildings came running to join the bulk of their fellows in the wire compound; and as he turned in at the gate the mob bunched as does a bunch of harried steers. Steerlike, too, it shifted its formation as he advanced, those in front slipping back to the rear, till one man, bolder than the rest, was left to face him. A huge fellow of the true Indian type, his broad cheek-bones, flat nose, savage eyes, summed the stupidity, ignorance, cowardly ferocity of his hundred mates. Like a red-eyed bull at bay, he stood, the mob behind him, uneasy, nervous, the more dangerous for its innate cowardice.

Looking on from the veranda, Mabel experienced a dread shrinking, the exact counterpart of the feeling she had when, a little girl, she saw a lion tamer enter a cage. She caught herself wishing she had called him back; gave a momentary glance of wonder at Jackson, who stood, nervously chewing his mustache.

"Can he control them?" she whispered.

"A minute will tell," Mrs. Fleming whispered back.

"No, Señor, we will not work," the man answered Gilson's question. "We have been deceived. The food, the work, nothing is as represented."

He doubtless spoke the truth; the rascally labor contractors habitually spoon-fed their dupes with broth of lies. But the plantation had made an honest bargain; stood to lose thousands by a successful defection. Very coolly, Gilson set about the re-establishment of authority.

If he could get them in some kind of order. His blue eye wandered coldly over the mob. "Form in line!" he sharply ordered. "Then we will talk."

Success, life itself, hung in uncertain balance that moment. If they did not obey—but, curious as children, the pack loosened, shuffled into disorderly line. The beginnings of discipline thus established, the problem now centered on the ringleader.

Gilson surveyed the line. "So you won't work?"

"No, Señor!" The answer rolled out from a hundred throats.

He pondered. "Very well! there's no hurry. You can take a day to think it over. You!" he swung smartly round on the ringleader. "Gather in the machetes!"

The man hesitated—one second. The hard glance, the hand, lightly resting on a Colt's 45, told that *he*, at least, would die. "Si, Señor!" Dropping his own machete into the hollow of his arm, he walked down the line and gathered up the blades.

"Now!" Gilson rapped the pile with his gun, and the line started at the steel's sharp ring. "Back to the galera! Every man! In with you!"

It was done. As the bolt shot on the last mutineer, Mrs. Fleming collapsed in a chair. She braced, however, and refused the cologne which Mabel brought. "There, there! It was only my silliness. Now, what do you think of him?"

Flushing color drowned out the girl's pallor. "I think—that he is splendid."

Though she almost whispered it, yet Jackson heard, and he plumbed greater deeps of mortification when, a few minutes later, he offered Gilson insincere congratulations. "You are out of my class," he said with a hollow laugh. "I'd sized them up as impossible and was going for help."

Gilson measured him with unwavering eye. "Nobody sick, was there?"

"No—but the men—" Jackson unwisely blundered on.

"—oh! the men? Yes! Well, you needn't bother. They'll be very well after they've worked your liquor out of their systems."

Laughing uneasily, Jackson concealed his fury till he was alone in his office. There, alone with his naked soul, he was not pretty to look upon. "Oh, you—" Beyond blasphemy, he shook both fists in the air. "Oh, you—I've fooled too long!"

Sitting down, he dashed a letter off, chewing viciously on his mustache the while. "There!" he finished. "That ought to do your business."

"He is splendid!" said Miss Mabel. But who shall explain the subtilities, contradictions, unreason of the complex fem-

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inine heart? She had never treated Gilson more coldly than she did at table that evening and during the month that elapsed before an answer came to Jackson's letter, continued to walk and ride with the latter.

The letter was very much to the point. "We beg to inform you that owing to the unprecedented falling off in field work as shown in the report of Mr. Jackson, we have decided to dispense with your services. Dismissal to take effect end of current month."

"The beast!" Bender commented, when Gilson showed him the letter a few days later. "Pretty raw work. I thought he'd make a better job; cover his tracks."

Gilson nodded. "He thought to report me to Jackson *père*, and have me fired for cold reasons of state. But it appears from one of Fleming's letters that the old chap was sick and the vice-president acted in his absence."

"Does Jackson know of it?"

"Only that I'm fired. I spent a whole evening with him discussing the sanity of the Chicago office."

"And the folks?"

Gilson laughed. "He was so good as to suggest that I had resigned and they believe it. What am I going to do with this?" He patted the letter. "Save it for a right proper season."

The "season" came the following Sunday, Gilson's last day as field superintendent of La Luna; and no stage manager could have been more careful in the preparation of his climax. Having ordered the cookhouse detail back to the fields, he came in to lunch confident that Mabel would not let the event pass unchallenged.

"I cannot imagine what constrained you to do it," she said, but in a tone so gentle that he felt compunction for the thing he was about to do. It was the first hint of the value she had placed in his concessions.

He answered quietly, "The men are needed in the fields."

"Oh, well." She glanced at Jackson. "It isn't worth while—now. Things will soon be changed."

"You think so?" Selecting his dismissal from a handful of papers, he handed it across the table. Then he watched—watched the red tide sweep from the lace at her throat up under the fluff of her hair. A crackling of paper marked deep emotion as Jackson's hypocrisy was flashed upon her. But she gripped herself in the time required to read the letter twice.

"Thank you," she said, handing it back. "How very interesting! I'll trouble you for the butter."

Her marvelous coolness drew his admiration, while his compunction would have increased a hundred-fold could he have seen her, an hour later, crying into her pillow tears of anger and mortification; the latter for herself, the former for him. It was all his fault! Of course! If he hadn't spoken so flippantly under the Palazio balcony, nor turned her small attempts at revenge with his imperturbable front? As for this crowning outrage? She would never forgive him.

Having come to this conclusion she rose, for it was hot and stuffy in her bedroom, and adjourned to a nest she had made in the roots of a big saber down by the river, there to take further census of her feelings. Catching the flutter of the white skirt, as she went by his office, Gilson looked after her and, after a moment's hesitation, followed. He had better stayed. No well-regulated girl cares to be disturbed when she is trying to get even with her feelings. Her glance was coldly interrogative when, looking up, she saw him beside her.

Hesitantly, he began, "I wanted—to apologize. It was brutal of me to spring that letter on you. If——"

She interrupted with a weary gesture. "What does it matter? I have come to expect anything—from you."

"And is there *no* pardon?" He spoke very gently. "I had hoped—when we met—up there in Mexico City, that—" He stopped, chilled by the ironical uplift of her brows.

"The hope you so candidly expressed under the Palazio balcony?" She assisted his puzzled look. "You remember, 'you had hopes.'"

Dumbfounded, he stared, then a low whistle escaped him as his mind laid hold of that forgotten incident. The whistle was not offensive—particularly. But when his mouth puckered—that was a crime. She grew hot, all over.

"I'm surprised——" he began.

"I'm not," she promptly interrupted. "Everything you do lacks that element—even this intrusion."

"S—o?" He waited a little while she

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