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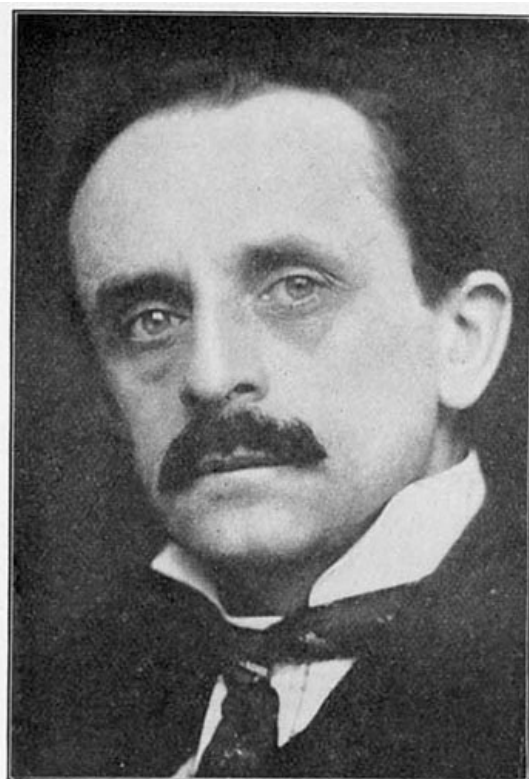
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SHORT STORIES OF VARIOUS TYPES ***

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JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

Merrill's English Texts

SHORT STORIES OF VARIOUS TYPES

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
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CHARLES E. MERRILL COMPANY
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Merrill's English Texts

This series of books includes in complete editions those masterpieces of English Literature that are best adapted for the use of schools and colleges. The editors of the several volumes are chosen for their special qualifications in connection with the texts issued under their individual supervision, but familiarity with the practical needs of the classroom, no less than sound scholarship, characterizes the editing of every book in the series.

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TO THE TEACHER

These stories have been chosen from authors of varied style and nationalities for use in high schools. The editor has had especially in mind students of the first year of the high school or the last year of the junior high school. The plots are of various types and appeal to the particular interests and awakening experiences of young readers. For instance, there will be found among these tales the detective story by the inimitable Conan Doyle; the true story of adventure, with an animal for the central figure, by Katherine Mayo; the fanciful story by the great stylist Hawthorne; tales of humor or pathos; of simple human love; of character; of nature; of realism; and of idealism. The settings give glimpses of the far West, the middle West, the East, of several foreign countries, of great cities, of little villages, and of the open country.

Each story should be read for the first time at a single sitting so that the pupil's mind may

receive the single dramatic effect in its unity of impression as the author desired, and more especially that the pupil may enjoy the story first of all as a story, not as a lesson. The pupil of this age, however, will not arrive at the other desirable points to be gained unless he then studies each story with the help of the study questions, of the related biographical sketch, and of the introductory notes, as the teacher feels they are needed for the closer study of the particular story.

The stories may be studied happily in connection with the student's composition work. For example, when he has read an adventure story and his mind is stirred by it, why not assign for his next composition, a story of an adventure in which he has been interested or has figured? The mechanics of composition, moreover, are more interestingly learned in connection with an admired author's work.

It is to be hoped that the students may be led to read other stories by the same and by different authors. A supplementary list of short stories has been added to the book for this purpose.

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INTRODUCTION

The Short Story. In the rush of modern life, particularly in America, the short story has come to be the most popular type of fiction. Just as the quickly seen, low-priced moving picture show is taking the place of the drama, with the average person, so the short stories that are found so plentifully in the numerous periodicals of the day are supplanting the novel.

The short story may be read at a single sitting. It is a distinct type of literature; that is, it is not just a novel made short or condensed; it is in its inner plan of a wholly different nature. It relates only some single important incident or a closely related series of events, taking place usually in a short space of time, and acted out by a single chief character. It is like a cross section of life, however, from which one may judge much of the earlier as well as the later life of the character.

Its History. The idea of the short story is a decidedly modern conception. It was in the first half of the last century that Edgar Allan Poe worked out the idea that the short story should create a single effect. In his story, "The Fall of the House of Usher," for example, the single effect is a feeling of horror. In the first sentence of the story he begins to create this effect by words that suggest to the reader's imagination gloom and foreboding. This he consciously carries out just as an artist creates the picture of his dreams with many skillful strokes of his brush. Poe gave attention also to compressing all the details of the plot of the story instead of expanding them as in a long story or novel. He believed, too, that the plot should be original or else worked out in some new way. The single incident given, moreover, should reveal to the imagination of the reader the entire life of the chief character. Almost at the same time, Nathaniel Hawthorne, with a less conscious effort to create a single effect, based his tales upon the same ideas, with a tendency towards romance.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Guy de Maupassant, a French author without acquaintance with the work of the American writers, conceived the same idea of the short story, adding to it the quality of dramatic effect; that is, the idea that the single main incident should appeal to the imagination of the reader just as if it were a little play presented to him.

Bret Harte followed in this country with short stories that brought out, less precisely, the same idea of the short story, with the addition of local color, the atmosphere of California and the West.

Rudyard Kipling, who became a master of the technique of the short story in England, has colored his stories with the atmosphere of India and the far East, while O. Henry, the American master, has given us character types of the big cities, particularly of New York.

Its Composition. You, no doubt, have written stories for your composition work, but so far they have probably been chronological narratives; that is, stories told, as the newspapers tell them, by relating a series of events in the order of time. The real short story, has, like the novel, a plot. The word *plot* here means the systematic plan or pattern into which the author weaves the events of the story up to some finishing point of intense interest or of great importance to the story. This vital part of the narrative is called the *climax* or crucial point. If you note the pattern or design in wall paper, carpet, or dress ornament, you will see that all the threads or lines are usually worked together to form a harmonious whole, but there is some special center of the design toward which everything works. In the short story, as soon as the author arrives at the crucial point he is through, often having no other conclusion. This ending is so important that it must always be thought out or planned for from the very beginning. This is true even in a surprise ending, such as O. Henry delights in.

Unlike the novel, the short story works its plot out in some single main incident, which is usually acted out by one chief character in a short space of time, and all but the necessary details are omitted. Thus the short story, which is read in a brief time, has a better opportunity than the novel to produce a complete unity of effect upon the mind of the reader, such as the effect of horror in Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher."

The short story consists of setting, characterization, and narrative. Any one of these may be emphasized more than the other two. To illustrate from the stories included in this book: Mr. Garland has emphasized setting, or time, place, and atmosphere, in "The Camping Trip." That is, the greatest interest in the story lies in the beautiful background of the out-of-doors in Iowa in the month of June. In "Friends," on the other hand, Myra Kelly has emphasized characterization, for Mrs. Mowgelewsky, Morris, and Miss Bailey present the real interest of the story. In "The Red-Headed League" by Conan Doyle the attention centers upon the action.

The technical details of the short story may be summed up and made clearer to you by illustrating them from the first story given in this collection, "The Gift of the Magi." The story is "set" in an eight-dollar-a-week apartment in New York City on the day before Christmas of some recent year, in an atmosphere of poverty, but a poverty made radiant by unselfish love. The plot of one main incident—Della's sacrifice of her hair in order to get a Christmas present for her husband—takes place in the short space of a few hours, and works out to a half-humorous, half-pathetic climax, when Della and Jim display their Christmas gifts for each other. This story has a conclusion of one paragraph in length where the author reflects upon what makes a real Christmas giver.

This is the skeleton of the story, but when you think it over, you will realize that the real charm and interest for you lay in something that the genius and style of the writer infused into this

framework of the story.

Suggestions. In the composition work that you do during the weeks that you are reading the short stories in this volume would it not be interesting to you to try to write stories with little plots that lead up to some high point of interest, stories of a single main incident or a closely related series of events covering a short space of time?

You will find that the stories in this collection are of different types with settings that take you in imagination all over our own country and into foreign lands. Try writing a story with a surprise ending like "The Gift of the Magi," a character story with the theme of unselfish love, and its setting in a big city. Again, "John G," the story of adventure with an animal for the hero, might suggest to you an adventuresome incident in your own experience. If you have a vivid imagination, it might be interesting to write a fanciful story like "Feathertop." All of you have heard of true and thrilling incidents of the recent Great War. Try to weave one into a good war story as did Daudet or Mrs. Andrews. Almost every young person loves nature or the open country. After you have read Mr. Garland's, "The Camping Trip," see how well you can tell a story of your own experience in the out-of-doors. Or, best of all, see if you can equal the great Conan Doyle in a detective story.

With the help of the biographical sketches and study notes, see if you can classify, as types, the stories that have not been classified in the preceding paragraph.

SHORT STORIES

O. HENRY

THE GIFT OF THE MAGI [11-1]

One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

There was clearly nothing to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it. Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating.

While the mistress of the home is gradually subsiding from the first stage to the second, take a look at the home. A furnished flat at \$8 per week. It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the mendicancy squad.

In the vestibule below was a letter-box into which no letter would go, and an electric button from which no mortal finger could coax a ring. Also appertaining thereunto was a card bearing the name "Mr. James Dillingham Young."

The "Dillingham" had been flung to the breeze during a former period of prosperity when its possessor was being paid \$30 per week. Now, when the income was shrunk to \$20, the letters of "Dillingham" looked blurred, as though they were thinking seriously of contracting to a modest and unassuming D. But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called "Jim" and greatly hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good.

Della finished her cry and attended her cheeks with the powder rag. She stood by the window and looked out dully at a gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard. To-morrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only \$1.87 with which to buy Jim a present. She had been saving every penny she could for months, with this result. Twenty dollars a week doesn't go far. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. They always are. Only \$1.87 to buy a present for Jim. Her Jim. Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something nice for him. Something fine and rare and sterling—something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honor of being owned by Jim.

There was a pier-glass between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier-glass in an \$8 flat. A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della, being slender, had mastered the art.

Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the glass. Her eyes were shining brilliantly, but her face had lost its color within twenty seconds. Rapidly she pulled down her hair and let it fall to its full length.

Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's. The other was Della's hair. Had the Queen of Sheba^[13-1] lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.

So now Della's beautiful hair fell about her, rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her. And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still where a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet.

On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she fluttered out the door and down the stairs to the street.

Where she stopped the sign read: "Mme. Sofronie, Hair Goods of All Kinds." One flight up Della ran, and collected herself, panting. Madame, large, too white, chilly, hardly looked the "Sofronie."

"Will you buy my hair?" asked Della.

"I buy hair," said Madame. "Take yer hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it."

Down rippled the brown cascade.

"Twenty dollars," said Madame, lifting the mass with a practiced hand.

"Give it to me quick," said Della.

Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor. She was ransacking the stores for Jim's present.

She found it at last. It surely had been made for Jim and no one else. There was no other like it in any of the stores, and she had turned all of them inside out. It was a platinum fob chain, simple and chaste in design, properly proclaiming its value by substance alone and not by meretricious ornamentation—as all good things should do. It was even worthy of The Watch. As soon as she saw it she knew that it must be Jim's. It was like him. Quietness and value—the description applied to both. Twenty-one dollars they took from her for it, and she hurried home with the eighty-seven cents. With that chain on his watch Jim might be properly anxious about the time in any company. Grand as the watch was, he sometimes looked at it on the sly on account of the old leather strap he used in place of a chain.

When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to prudence and reason. She got out her curling irons and lighted the gas and went to work repairing the ravages made by generosity added to love. Which is always a tremendous task, dear friends—a mammoth task.

Within forty minutes her head was covered with tiny close-lying curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy. She looked at her reflection in the mirror, long, carefully, and critically.

"If Jim doesn't kill me," she said to herself, "before he takes a second look at me, he'll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do—Oh! what could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?"

At seven o'clock the coffee was made and the frying-pan was on the back of the stove hot and ready to cook the chops.

Jim was never late. Della doubled the fob chain in her hand and sat on the corner of the table near the door that he always entered. Then she heard his step on the stair away down on the first flight, and she turned white for just a moment. She had a habit of saying little silent prayers about the simplest everyday things, and now she whispered: "Please, God, make him think I am still pretty."

The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two—and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves.

Jim stopped inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail. His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

Della wriggled off the table and went for him.

"Jim, darling," she cried, "don't look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold it because I couldn't live through Christmas without giving you a present. It'll grow out again—you won't mind, will you? I just had to do it. My hair grows awfully fast. Say 'Merry Christmas,' Jim, and let's be happy. You don't know what a nice—what a beautiful, nice gift I've got for you."

"You've cut off your hair?" asked Jim laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet, even after the hardest mental labor.

"Cut it off and sold it," said Della. "Don't you like me just as well, anyhow? I'm me without my hair, ain't I?"

Jim looked about the room curiously.

"You say your hair is gone?" he said, with an air almost of idiocy.

"You needn't look for it," said Della. "It's sold, I tell you—sold and gone, too. It's Christmas Eve, boy. Be good to me, for it went for you. Maybe the hairs of my head were numbered," she went on with a sudden serious sweetness, "but nobody could ever count my love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?"

Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction. Eight dollars a week or a million a year—what is the difference? A mathematician or a wit would give you the wrong answer. The magi brought valuable gifts but that was not among them. This dark assertion will be illuminated later.

Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table.

"Don't make any mistake, Dell," he said, "about me. I don't think there is anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first."

White fingers and nimble tore at the string and paper. And then an ecstatic scream of joy; and then, alas! a quick feminine change to hysterical tears and wails, necessitating the immediate employment of all the comforting powers of the lord of the flat.

For there lay The Combs—the set of combs, side and back, that Della had worshipped for long in a Broadway window. Beautiful combs, pure tortoise shell, with jewelled rims—just the shade to wear in the beautiful vanished hair. They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession. And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.

But she hugged them to her bosom, and at length she was able to look up with dim eyes and a smile and say: "My hair grows so fast, Jim!"

And then Della leaped up like a little singed cat and cried, "Oh, Oh!"

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

"Isn't it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it."

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hand under the back of his head and smiled.

"Dell," said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em a while. They're too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on."

The magi, as you know, were wise men—wonderfully wise men—who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are the wisest. They are the magi.

I

Penrod and Sam made a gloomy discovery one morning in mid-October. All the week had seen amiable breezes and fair skies until Saturday, when, about breakfast-time, the dome of heaven filled solidly with gray vapor and began to drip. The boys' discovery was that there is no justice about the weather.

They sat in the carriage-house of the Schofields' empty stable; the doors upon the alley were open, and Sam and Penrod stared torpidly at the thin but implacable drizzle which was the more irritating because there was barely enough of it to interfere with a number of things they had planned to do.

"Yes; this is *nice!*" Sam said, in a tone of plaintive sarcasm. "This is a *perty* way to do!" (He was alluding to the personal spitefulness of the elements.) "I'd like to know what's the sense of it—ole sun pourin' down every day in the week when nobody needs it, then cloud up and rain all Saturday! My father said it's goin' to be a three days' rain."

"Well, nobody with any sense cares if it rains Sunday and Monday," said Penrod. "I wouldn't care if it rained every Sunday as long as I lived; but I just like to know what's the reason it had to go and rain to-day. Got all the days o' the week to choose from and goes and picks on Saturday. That's a fine biz'nuss!"

"Well, in vacation——" Sam began, but at a sound from a source invisible to him he paused. "What's that?" he said, somewhat startled.

It was a curious sound, loud and hollow and unhuman, yet it seemed to be a cough. Both boys rose, and Penrod asked uneasily, "Where'd that noise come from?"

"It's in the alley," said Sam.

Perhaps if the day had been bright, both of them would have stepped immediately to the alley doors to investigate; but their actual procedure was to move a little distance in the opposite direction. The strange cough sounded again.

"Say!" Penrod quavered. "What *is* that?"

Then both boys uttered smothered exclamations and jumped, for the long, gaunt head which appeared in the doorway was entirely unexpected. It was the cavernous and melancholy head of an incredibly thin, old, whitish horse. This head waggled slowly from side to side; the nostrils vibrated; the mouth opened, and the hollow cough sounded again.

Recovering themselves, Penrod and Sam underwent the customary human reaction from alarm to indignation.

"What you want, you ole horse, you?" Penrod shouted. "Don't you come coughin' around *me!*"

And Sam, seizing a stick, hurled it at the intruder.

"Get out o' here!" he roared.

The aged horse nervously withdrew his head, turned tail, and made a rickety flight up the alley, while Sam and Penrod, perfectly obedient to inherited impulse,^[21-1] ran out into the drizzle and uproariously pursued. They were but automatons of instinct,^[21-2] meaning no evil. Certainly they did not know the singular and pathetic history of the old horse who had wandered into the alley and ventured to look through the open door.

This horse, about twice the age of either Penrod or Sam, had lived to find himself in a unique position. He was nude, possessing neither harness nor halter; all he had was a name, Whitey, and he would have answered to it by a slight change of expression if any one had thus properly addressed him. So forlorn was Whitey's case, he was actually an independent horse; he had not even an owner. For two days and a half he had been his own master.

Previous to that period he had been the property of one Abalene Morris, a person of color, who would have explained himself as engaged in the hauling business. On the contrary, the hauling business was an insignificant side line with Mr. Morris, for he had long ago given himself, as utterly as fortune permitted, to that talent which, early in youth, he had recognized as the greatest of all those surging in his bosom. In his waking thoughts and in his dreams, in health and in sickness, Abalene Morris was the dashing and emotional practitioner of an art^[22-1] probably more than Roman in antiquity. Abalene was a crap-shooter. The hauling business was a disguise.

A concentration of events had brought it about that, at one and the same time, Abalene, after a dazzling run of the dice, found the hauling business an actual danger to the preservation of his

liberty. He won seventeen dollars and sixty cents, and within the hour found himself in trouble with an officer of the Humane Society on account of an altercation with Whitey. Abalene had been offered four dollars for Whitey some ten days earlier; wherefore he at once drove to the shop of the junk-dealer who had made the offer and announced his acquiescence in the sacrifice.

"No, suh!" said the junk-dealer, with emphasis. "I awready done got me a good mule fer my deliv'ry-hoss, 'n'at ole Whitey hoss ain' wuff no fo' dollah nohow! I 'uz a fool when I talk 'bout th'owin' money roun' that a-way. I know what *you* up to, Abalene. Man come by here li'l bit ago tole me all 'bout white man try to 'rest you, ovah on the avvynoo. Yessuh; he say white man goin' to git you yit an' th'ow you in jail 'count o' Whitey. White man tryin' to fine out who you *is*. He say, nemmine, he'll know Whitey ag'in, even if he don' know you! He say he ketch you by the hoss; so you come roun' tryin' fix me up with Whitey so white man grab me, th'ow *me* in 'at jail. G'on 'way f'um hyuh, you Abalene! You cain' sell an' you cain' give Whitey to no cullud man 'in 'is town. You go an' drowned 'at ole hoss, 'cause you sutny goin' to jail if you git ketched drivin' him."

The substance of this advice seemed good to Abalene, especially as the seventeen dollars and sixty cents in his pocket lent sweet colors to life out of jail at this time. At dusk he led Whitey to a broad common at the edge of town, and spoke to him finally.

"G'on 'bout you biz'nis," said Abalene; "you ain' *my* hoss. Don' look roun' at me, 'cause *I* ain' got no 'quaintance wif you. I'm a man o' money, an' I got my own frien's; I'm a-lookin' fer bigger cities, hoss. You got you' biz'nis an' I got mine. Mista' Hoss, good-night!"

Whitey found a little frosted grass upon the common and remained there all night. In the morning he sought the shed where Abalene had kept him, but that was across the large and busy town, and Whitey was hopelessly lost. He had but one eye; a feeble one; and his legs were not to be depended upon; but he managed to cover a great deal of ground, to have many painful little adventures, and to get monstrously hungry and thirsty before he happened to look in upon Penrod and Sam.

When the two boys chased him up the alley, they had no intention to cause pain; they had no intention at all. They were no more cruel than Duke, Penrod's little old dog, who followed his own instincts, and, making his appearance hastily through a hole in the back fence, joined the pursuit with sound and fury. A boy will nearly always run after anything that is running, and his first impulse is to throw a stone at it. This is a survival of primeval man, who must take every chance to get his dinner. So, when Penrod and Sam drove the hapless Whitey up the alley, they were really responding to an impulse thousands and thousands of years old—an impulse founded upon the primordial observation that whatever runs is likely to prove edible. Penrod and Sam were not "bad"; they were never that. They were something which was not their fault; they were historic.

At the next corner Whitey turned to the right into the cross-street; thence, turning to the right again and still warmly pursued, he zigzagged down a main thoroughfare until he reached another cross-street, which ran alongside the Schofield's yard and brought him to the foot of the alley he had left behind in his flight. He entered the alley, and there his dim eye fell upon the open door he had previously investigated. No memory of it remained, but the place had a look associated in his mind with hay, and as Sam and Penrod turned the corner of the alley in panting yet still vociferous pursuit, Whitey stumbled up the inclined platform before the open doors, staggered thunderously across the carriage-house and through another open door into a stall, an apartment vacant since the occupancy of Mr. Schofield's last horse, now several years deceased.

II

The two boys shrieked with excitement as they beheld the coincidence of this strange return. They burst into the stable, making almost as much noise as Duke, who had become frantic at the invasion. Sam laid hands upon a rake.

"You get out o' there, you ole horse, you!" he bellowed. "I ain't afraid to drive him out. I——"

"*Wait* a minute!" shouted Penrod. "Wait till I——"

Sam was manfully preparing to enter the stall.

"You hold the doors open," he commanded, "so's they won't blow shut and keep him in here. I'm goin' to hit him with——"

"Quee-*yut!*" Penrod shouted, grasping the handle of the rake so that Sam could not use it. "Wait a *minute*, can't you?" He turned with ferocious voice and gestures upon Duke. "*Duke!*" And Duke, in spite of his excitement, was so impressed that he prostrated himself in silence, and then unobtrusively withdrew from the stable. Penrod ran to the alley doors and closed them.

"My gracious!" Sam protested. "What you goin' to do?"

"I'm goin' to keep this horse," said Penrod, whose face showed the strain of a great idea.

"What *for?*"

"For the reward," said Penrod simply.

Sam sat down in the wheelbarrow and stared at his friend almost with awe.

"My gracious," he said, "I never thought o' that! How—how much do you think we'll get, Penrod?"

Sam's thus admitting himself to a full partnership in the enterprise met no objection from Penrod, who was absorbed in the contemplation of Whitey.

"Well," he said judicially, "we might get more and we might get less."

Sam rose and joined his friend in the doorway opening upon the two stalls. Whitey had preëmpted the nearer, and was hungrily nuzzling the old frayed hollows in the manger.

"May be a hundred dollars—or sumpthing?" Sam asked in a low voice.

Penrod maintained his composure and repeated the new-found expression which had sounded well to him a moment before. He recognized it as a symbol of the non-committal attitude that makes people looked up to. "Well"—he made it slow, and frowned—"we might get more and we might get less."

"More'n a hundred *dollars*?" Sam gasped.

"Well," said Penrod, "we might get more and we might get less." This time, however, he felt the need of adding something. He put a question in an indulgent tone, as though he were inquiring, not to add to his own information but to discover the extent of Sam's. "How much do you think horses are worth, anyway?"

"I don't know," said Sam frankly, and, unconsciously, he added, "They might be more and they might be less."

"Well, when our ole horse died," said Penrod, "papa said he wouldn't taken five hundred dollars for him. That's how much *horses* are worth!"

"My gracious!" Sam exclaimed. Then he had a practical afterthought. "But maybe he was a better horse than this'n. What color was he?"

"He was bay. Looky here, Sam"—and now Penrod's manner changed from the superior to the eager—"you look what kind of horses they have in a circus, and you bet a circus has the *best* horses, don't it? Well, what kind of horses do they have in a circus? They have some black and white ones, but the best they have are white all over. Well, what kind of a horse is this we got here? He's perty near white right now, and I bet if we washed him off and got him fixed up nice he *would* be white. Well, a bay horse is worth five hundred dollars, because that's what papa said, and this horse——"

Sam interrupted rather timidly.

"He—he's awful bony, Penrod. You don't guess that'd make any——"

Penrod laughed contemptuously.

"Bony! All he needs is a little food and he'll fill right up and look good as ever. You don't know much about horses, Sam, I expect. Why, *our* ole horse——"

"Do you expect he's hungry now?" asked Sam, staring at Whitey.

"Let's try him," said Penrod. "Horses like hay and oats the best, but they'll eat most anything."

"I guess they will. He's tryin' to eat that manger up right now, and I bet it ain't good for him."

"Come on," said Penrod, closing the door that gave entrance to the stalls. "We got to get this horse some drinkin'-water and some good food."

They tried Whitey's appetite first with an autumnal branch which they wrenched from a hardy maple in the yard. They had seen horses nibble leaves, and they expected Whitey to nibble the leaves of this branch, but his ravenous condition did not allow him time for cool discriminations. Sam poked the branch at him from the passageway, and Whitey, after one backward movement of alarm, seized it venomously. "Here! You stop that!" Sam shouted. "You stop that, you ole horse, you!"

"What's the matter?" called Penrod from the hydrant, where he was filling a bucket. "What's he doin' now?"

"Doin'! He's eatin' the wood part, too! He's chewin' up sticks as big as baseball bats! He's crazy!"

Penrod rushed to see this sight, and stood aghast.

"Take it away from him, Sam!" he commanded sharply.

"Go on, take it away from him yourself!" was the prompt retort of his comrade.

"You had no biz'nuss to give it to him," said Penrod. "Anybody with any sense ought to know it'd make him sick. What'd you want to go and give it to him for?"

"Well, you didn't say not to."

"Well, what if I didn't? I never said I did, did I? You go on in that stall and take it away from him."

"Yes, I will!" Sam returned bitterly. Then, as Whitey had dragged the remains of the branch from the manger to the floor of the stall, Sam scrambled to the top of the manger and looked over. "There ain't much left to *take* away! He's swallered it all except some splinters. Better give him the water to try and wash it down with." And, as Penrod complied, "My gracious, look at that horse *drink!*"

They gave Whitey four buckets of water, and then debated the question of nourishment. Obviously, this horse could not be trusted with branches, and, after getting their knees black and their backs sodden, they gave up trying to pull enough grass to sustain him. Then Penrod remembered that horses like apples, both "cooking-apples" and "eating-apples," and Sam mentioned the fact that every autumn his father received a barrel of "cooking-apples" from a cousin who owned a farm. That barrel was in the Williams' cellar now, and the cellar was providentially supplied with "outside doors," so that it could be visited without going through the house. Sam and Penrod set forth for the cellar.

They returned to the stable bulging, and, after a discussion of Whitey's digestion (Sam claiming that eating the core and seeds, as Whitey did, would grow trees in his inside), they went back to the cellar for supplies again—and again. They made six trips, carrying each time a capacity cargo of apples, and still Whitey ate in a famished manner. They were afraid to take more apples from the barrel, which began to show conspicuously the result of their raids, wherefore Penrod made an unostentatious visit to the cellar of his own house. From the inside he opened a window and passed vegetables out to Sam, who placed them in a bucket and carried them hurriedly to the stable, while Penrod returned in a casual manner through the house. Of his *sang-froid*^[30-1] under a great strain it is sufficient to relate that, in the kitchen, he said suddenly to Della, the cook, "Oh, look behind you!" and by the time Della discovered that there was nothing unusual behind her, Penrod was gone, and a loaf of bread from the kitchen table was gone with him.

Whitey now ate nine turnips, two heads of lettuce, one cabbage, eleven raw potatoes, and the loaf of bread. He ate the loaf of bread last and he was a long time about it; so the boys came to a not unreasonable conclusion.

"Well, sir, I guess we got him filled up at last!" said Penrod. "I bet he wouldn't eat a saucer of ice-cream now, if we'd give it to him!"

"He looks better to me," said Sam, staring critically at Whitey. "I think he's kind of begun to fill out some. I expect he must like us, Penrod; we been doin' a good deal for this horse."

"Well, we got to keep it up," Penrod insisted rather pompously. "Long as *I* got charge o' this horse, he's goin' to get good treatment."

"What we better do now, Penrod?"

Penrod took on the outward signs of deep thought.

"Well, there's plenty to *do*, all right. I got to think."

Sam made several suggestions, which Penrod—maintaining his air of preoccupation—dismissed with mere gestures.

"Oh, *I* know!" Sam cried finally. "We ought to wash him so's he'll look whiter'n what he does now. We can turn the hose on him acrost the manger."

"No; not yet," said Penrod. "It's too soon after his meal. You ought to know that yourself. What we got to do is to make up a bed for him—if he wants to lay down or anything."

"Make up a what for him?" Sam echoed, dumfounded. "What you talkin' about? How can——"

"Sawdust," said Penrod. "That's the way the horse we used to have used to have it. We'll make this horse's bed in the other stall, and then he can go in there and lay down whenever he wants to."

"How we goin' to do it?"

"Look, Sam; there's the hole into the sawdust-box! All you got to do is walk in there with the shovel, stick the shovel in the hole till it gets full of sawdust, and then sprinkle it around on the empty stall."

"All I got to do!" Sam cried. "What are you goin' to do?"

"I'm goin' to be right here," Penrod answered reassuringly. "He won't kick or anything, and it isn't goin' to take you half a second to slip around behind him to the other stall."

"What makes you think he won't kick?"

"Well, I *know* he won't, and, besides, you could hit him with the shovel if he tried to. Anyhow, I'll be right here, won't I?"

"I don't care where you are," Sam said earnestly. "What difference would that make if he ki—"

"Why, you were goin' right in the stall," Penrod reminded him. "When he first came in, you were goin' to take the rake and—"

"I don't care if I was," Sam declared. "I was excited then."

"Well, you can get excited now, can't you?" his friend urged. "You can just as easy get—"

He was interrupted by a shout from Sam, who was keeping his eye upon Whitey throughout the discussion.

"Look! Looky there!" And undoubtedly renewing his excitement, Sam pointed at the long, gaunt head beyond the manger. It was disappearing from view. "Look!" Sam shouted. "He's layin' down!"

"Well, then," said Penrod, "I guess he's goin' to take a nap. If he wants to lay down without waitin' for us to get the sawdust fixed for him, that's his lookout, not ours."

On the contrary, Sam perceived a favorable opportunity for action.

"I just as soon go and make his bed up while he's layin' down," he volunteered. "You climb up on the manger and watch him, Penrod, and I'll sneak in the other stall and fix it all up nice for him, so's he can go in there any time when he wakes up, and lay down again, or anything; and if he starts to get up, you holler and I'll jump out over the other manger."

Accordingly, Penrod established himself in a position to observe the recumbent figure. Whitey's breathing was rather labored but regular, and, as Sam remarked, he looked "better," even in his slumber. It is not to be doubted that, although Whitey was suffering from a light attack of colic, his feelings were in the main those of contentment. After trouble, he was solaced; after exposure, he was sheltered; after hunger and thirst, he was fed and watered. He slept.

The noon whistles blew before Sam's task was finished, but by the time he departed for lunch there was made a bed of such quality that Whitey must needs have been born faultfinder if he complained of it. The friends parted, each urging the other to be prompt in returning, but Penrod got into threatening difficulties as soon as he entered the house.

III

"Penrod," said his mother, "what did you do with that loaf of bread Della says you took from the table?"

"Ma'am? *What* loaf o' bread?"

"I believe I can't let you go outdoors this afternoon," Mrs. Schofield said severely. "If you were hungry, you know perfectly well all you had to do was to—"

"But I wasn't hungry; I—"

"You can explain later," said Mrs. Schofield. "You'll have all afternoon."

Penrod's heart grew cold.

"I *can't* stay in," he protested. "I've asked Sam Williams to come over."

"I'll telephone Mrs. Williams."

"Mamma!" Penrod's voice became agonized. "I *had* to give that bread to a—to a poor ole man. He was starving and so were his children and his wife. They were all just *starving*—and they couldn't wait while I took time to come and ask you, mamma. I *got* to go outdoors this afternoon. I *got* to! Sam's—"

She relented.

In the carriage-house, half an hour later, Penrod gave an account of the episode.

"Where'd we been, I'd just like to know," he concluded, "if I hadn't got out here this afternoon?"

"Well, I guess I could managed him all right," said Sam. "I was in the passageway, a minute ago, takin' a look at him. He's standin' up agin. I expect he wants more to eat."

"Well, we got to fix about that," said Penrod. "But what I mean—if I'd had to stay in the house, where would we been about the most important thing in the whole biz'nuss?"

"What you talkin' about?"

"Well, why can't you wait till I tell you?" Penrod's tone had become peevish. For that matter, so had Sam's; they were developing one of the little differences, or quarrels, that composed the very texture of their friendship.

"Well, why don't you tell me, then?"

"Well, how can I?" Penrod demanded. "You keep talkin' every minute."

"I'm not talkin' *now*, am I?" Sam protested. "You can tell me *now*, can't you? I'm not talk——"

"You are, too!" shouted Penrod. "You talk all the time! You——"

He was interrupted by Whitey's peculiar cough. Both boys jumped and forgot their argument.

"He means he wants some more to eat, I bet," said Sam.

"Well, if he does, he's got to wait," Penrod declared. "We got to get the most important thing of all fixed up first."

"What's that, Penrod?"

"The reward," said Penrod mildly. "That's what I was tryin' to tell you about, Sam, if you'd ever give me half a chance."

"Well, I *did* give you a chance. I kept *tellin'* you to tell me, but——"

"You never! You kept sayin'——"

They renewed this discussion, protracting it indefinitely; but as each persisted in clinging to his own interpretation of the facts, the question still remains unsettled. It was abandoned, or rather, it merged into another during the later stages of the debate, this other being concerned with which of the debaters had the least "sense." Each made the plain statement that if he were more deficient than his opponent in that regard, self-destruction would be his only refuge. Each declared that he would "rather die than be talked to death"; and then, as the two approached a point bluntly recriminative, Whitey coughed again, whereupon they were miraculously silent, and went into the passageway in a perfectly amiable manner.

"I got to have a good look at him, for once," said Penrod, as he stared frowningly at Whitey. "We got to fix up about that reward."

"I want to take a good ole look at him myself," said Sam.

After supplying Whitey with another bucket of water, they returned to the carriage-house and seated themselves thoughtfully. In truth, they were something a shade more than thoughtful; the adventure to which they had committed themselves was beginning to be a little overpowering. If Whitey had been a dog, a goat, a fowl, or even a stray calf, they would have felt equal to him; but now that the earlier glow of their wild daring had disappeared, vague apprehensions stirred. Their "good look" at Whitey had not reassured them—he seemed large, Gothic,[\[36-1\]](#) and unusual.

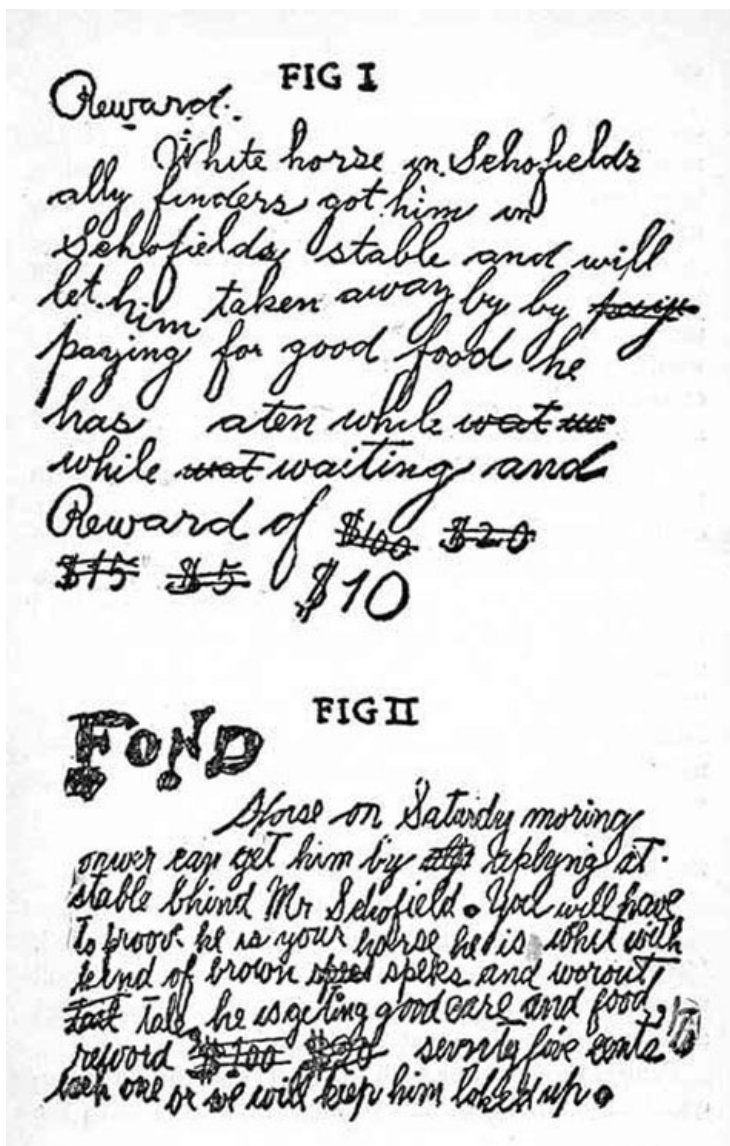
Whisperings within them began to urge that for boys to undertake an enterprise connected with so huge an animal as an actual horse was perilous. Beneath the surface of their musings, dim but ominous prophecies moved; both boys began to have the feeling that, somehow, this affair was going to get beyond them and that they would be in heavy trouble before it was over—they knew not why. They knew why no more than they knew why they felt it imperative to keep the fact of Whitey's presence in the stable a secret from their respective families, but they did begin to realize that keeping a secret of that size was going to be attended with some difficulty. In brief, their sensations were becoming comparable to those of the man who stole a house.

Nevertheless, after a short period given to unspoken misgivings, they returned to the subject of the reward. The money-value of bay horses, as compared to white, was again discussed, and each announced his certainty that nothing less than "a good ole hundred dollars" would be offered for the return of Whitey.

But immediately after so speaking they fell into another silence, due to sinking feelings. They had spoken loudly and confidently, and yet they knew, somehow, that such things were not to be. According to their knowledge, it was perfectly reasonable to suppose that they would receive this fortune, but they frightened themselves in speaking of it; they knew that they *could* not have a hundred dollars for their own. An oppression, as from something awful and criminal, descended

upon them at intervals.

Presently, however, they were warmed to a little cheerfulness again by Penrod's suggestion that they should put a notice in the paper. Neither of them had the slightest idea how to get it there, but such details as that were beyond the horizon; they occupied themselves with the question of what their advertisement ought to "say." Finding that they differed irreconcilably, Penrod went to a cache of his in the sawdust-box and brought two pencils and a supply of paper. He gave one of the pencils and several sheets to Sam; then both boys bent themselves in silence to the labor of practical composition. Penrod produced the briefer paragraph. (See Fig. I.) Sam's was more ample. (See Fig. II.)



Neither Sam nor Penrod showed any interest in what the other had written, but both felt that something praiseworthy had been accomplished. Penrod exhaled a sigh, as of relief, and, in a manner he had observed his father use sometimes, he said:

"Thank goodness, *that's* off my mind, anyway!"

"What we goin' do next, Penrod?" Sam asked deferentially, the borrowed manner having some effect upon him.

"I don't know what *you're* goin' to do," Penrod returned, picking up the old cigar box which had contained the paper and pencils. "I'm goin' to put mine in here, so's it'll come in handy when I haf to get at it."

"Well, I guess I'll keep mine there, too," said Sam. Thereupon he deposited his scribbled slip beside Penrod's in the cigar box, and the box was solemnly returned to the secret place whence it had been taken.

"There, *that's* 'tended to!" said Sam, and, unconsciously imitating his friend's imitation, he gave forth audibly a breath of satisfaction and relief. Both boys felt that the financial side of their great affair had been conscientiously looked to, that the question of the reward was settled, and that everything was proceeding in a businesslike manner. Therefore, they were able to turn their attention to another matter.

This was the question of Whitey's next meal. After their exploits of the morning, and the consequent imperilment of Penrod, they decided that nothing more was to be done in apples,

vegetables, or bread; it was evident that Whitey must be fed from the bosom of nature.

"We couldn't pull enough o' that frostbit ole grass in the yard to feed him," Penrod said gloomily. "We could work a week and not get enough to make him swaller more'n about twice. All we got this morning, he blew most of it away. He'd try to scoop it in toward his teeth with his lip, and then he'd haf to kind of blow out his breath, and after that all the grass that'd be left was just some wet pieces stickin' to the outsides of his face. Well, and you know how he acted about that maple branch. We can't trust him with branches."

Sam jumped up.

"I know!" he cried. "There's lots of leaves left on the branches. We can give them to him."

"I just said——"

"I don't mean the branches," Sam explained. "We'll leave the branches on the trees, but just pull the leaves off the branches and put 'em in the bucket and feed 'em to him out the bucket."

Penrod thought this plan worth trying, and for three-quarters of an hour the two boys were busy with the lower branches of various trees in the yard. Thus they managed to supply Whitey with a fair quantity of wet leaves, which he ate in a perfunctory way, displaying little of his earlier enthusiasm. And the work of his purveyors might have been more tedious if it had been less damp, for a boy is seldom bored by anything that involves his staying-out in the rain without protection. The drizzle had thickened; the leaves were heavy with water, and at every jerk the branches sent fat drops over the two collectors. They attained a noteworthy state of soginess.

Finally, they were brought to the attention of the authorities indoors, and Della appeared upon the back porch.

"Musther Penrod," she called, "y'r mamma says ye'll c'm in the house this minute an' change y'r shoes an' stockin's an' everythun' else ye got on! D'ye hear me?"

Penrod, taken by surprise and unpleasantly alarmed, darted away from the tree he was depleting and ran for the stable.

"You tell her I'm dry as toast!" he shouted over his shoulder.

Della withdrew, wearing the air of a person gratuitously insulted; and a moment later she issued from the kitchen, carrying an umbrella. She opened it and walked resolutely to the stable.

"She says I'm to bring ye in the house," said Della, "an' I'm goin' to bring ye!"

Sam had joined Penrod in the carriage-house, and, with the beginnings of an unnamed terror, the two beheld this grim advance. But they did not stay for its culmination. Without a word to each other they hurriedly tiptoed up the stairs to the gloomy loft, and there they paused, listening.

They heard Della's steps upon the carriage-house floor.

"Ah, there's plenty places t'hide in," they heard her say; "but I'll show ye! She tole me to bring ye, and I'm——"

She was interrupted by a peculiar sound—loud, chilling, dismal, and unmistakably not of human origin. The boys knew it for Whitey's cough, but Della had not their experience. A smothered shriek reached their ears; there was a scurrying noise, and then, with horror, they heard Della's footsteps in the passageway that ran by Whitey's manger. Immediately there came a louder shriek, and even in the anguish of knowing their secret discovered, they were shocked to hear distinctly the words, "O Lard in hivvin!" in the well-known voice of Della. She shrieked again, and they heard the rush of her footfalls across the carriage-house floor. Wild words came from the outer air, and the kitchen door slammed violently. It was all over. She had gone to "tell."

Penrod and Sam plunged down the stairs and out of the stable. They climbed the back fence and fled up the alley. They turned into Sam's yard, and, without consultation, headed for the cellar doors, nor paused till they found themselves in the farthest, darkest, and gloomiest recess of the cellar. There, perspiring, stricken with fear, they sank down upon the earthen floor, with their moist backs against the stone wall.

Thus with boys. The vague apprehensions that had been creeping upon Penrod and Sam all afternoon had become monstrous; the unknown was before them. How great their crime would turn out to be (now that it was in the hands of grown people), they did not know, but, since it concerned a horse, it would undoubtedly be considered of terrible dimensions.

Their plans for a reward, and all the things that had seemed both innocent and practical in the morning, now staggered their minds as manifestations of criminal folly. A new and terrible light seemed to play upon the day's exploits; they had chased a horse belonging to strangers, and it would be said that they deliberately drove him into the stable and there concealed him. They had, in truth, virtually stolen him, and they had stolen food for him. The waning light through the small window above them warned Penrod that his inroads upon the vegetables in his own cellar

must soon be discovered. Della, that Nemesis,[43-1] would seek them in order to prepare them for dinner, and she would find them not. But she would recall his excursion to the cellar, for she had seen him when he came up; and also the truth would be known concerning the loaf of bread. Altogether, Penrod felt that his case was worse than Sam's—until Sam offered a suggestion which roused such horrible possibilities concerning the principal item of their offense that all thought of the smaller indictments disappeared.

"Listen, Penrod," Sam quavered: "What—what if that—what if that ole horse maybe b'longed to a—policeman!" Sam's imagination was not of the comforting kind. "What'd they—do to us, Penrod, if it turned out he was some policeman's horse?"

Penrod was able only to shake his head. He did not reply in words, but both boys thenceforth considered it almost inevitable that Whitey *had* belonged to a policeman, and in their sense of so ultimate a disaster, they ceased for a time to brood upon what their parents would probably do to them. The penalty for stealing a policeman's horse would be only a step short of capital, they were sure. They would not be hanged; but vague, looming sketches of something called the penitentiary began to flicker before them.

It grew darker in the cellar, so that finally they could not see each other.

"I guess they're huntin' for us by now," Sam said huskily. "I don't—I don't like it much down here, Penrod."

Penrod's hoarse whisper came from the profound gloom:

"Well, who ever said you did?"

"Well——" Sam paused; then he said plaintively, "I wish we'd never *seen* that dern ole horse."

"It was every bit his fault," said Penrod. "*We* didn't do anything. If he hadn't come stickin' his ole head in our stable, it'd never happened at all. Ole fool!" He rose. "I'm goin' to get out of here; I guess I've stood about enough for one day."

"Where—where you goin', Penrod? You aren't goin' *home*, are you?"

"No; I'm not! What do you take me for? You think I'm crazy?"

"Well, where *can* you go?"

How far Penrod's desperation actually would have led him is doubtful, but he made this statement:

"I don't know where *you're* goin', but *I'm* goin' to walk straight out in the country till I come to a farm-house and say my name's George and live there!"

"I'll do it, too," Sam whispered eagerly. "I'll say my name's Henry."

"Well, we better get started," said the executive Penrod. "We got to get away from here, anyway."

But when they came to ascend the steps leading to the "outside doors," they found that those doors had been closed and locked for the night.

"It's no use," Sam lamented, "and we can't bust 'em, cause I tried to, once before. Fanny always locks 'em about five o'clock—I forgot. We got to go up the stairway and try to sneak out through the house."

They tiptoed back, and up the inner stairs. They paused at the top, then breathlessly stepped out into a hall which was entirely dark. Sam touched Penrod's sleeve in warning, and bent to listen at a door.

Immediately that door opened, revealing the bright library, where sat Penrod's mother and Sam's father.

It was Sam's mother who had opened the door.

"Come into the library, boys," she said. "Mrs. Schofield is just telling us about it."

And as the two comrades moved dumbly into the lighted room, Penrod's mother rose, and, taking him by the shoulder, urged him close to the fire.

"You stand there and try to dry off a little, while I finish telling Mr. and Mrs. Williams about you and Sam," she said. "You'd better make Sam keep near the fire, too, Mrs. Williams, because they both got wringing wet. Think of their running off just when most people would have wanted to stay! Well, I'll go on with the story, then. Della told me all about it, and what the cook next door said *she'd* seen, how they'd been trying to pull grass and leaves for the poor old thing all day—and all about the apples they carried from *your* cellar, and getting wet and working in the rain as hard as they could—and they'd given him a loaf of bread! Shame on you, Penrod!" She paused to

laugh, but there was a little moisture round her eyes, even before she laughed. "And they'd fed him on potatoes and lettuce and cabbage and turnips out of *our* cellar! And I wish you'd see the sawdust bed they made for him! Well, when I'd telephoned, and the Humane Society man got there, he said it was the most touching thing he ever knew. It seems he *knew* this horse, and had been looking for him. He said ninety-nine boys out of a hundred would have chased the poor old thing away, and he was going to see to it that this case didn't go unnoticed, because the local branch of the society gives little silver medals for special acts like this. And the last thing he said before he led the poor old horse away was that he was sure Penrod and Sam each would be awarded one at the meeting of the society next Thursday night."

... On the following Saturday morning a yodel sounded from the sunny sidewalk in front of the Schofields' house, and Penrod, issuing forth, beheld the familiar figure of Samuel Williams in waiting.

Upon Sam's breast there glittered a round bit of silver suspended by a white ribbon from a bar of the same metal. Upon the breast of Penrod was a decoration precisely similar.

"Lo, Penrod," said Sam. "What you goin' to do?"

"Nothin'."

"I got mine on," said Sam.

"I have, too," said Penrod. "I wouldn't take a hundred dollars for mine."

Each glanced pleasantly at the other's medal. They faced each other without shame. Neither had the slightest sense of hypocrisy either in himself or in his comrade. On the contrary!

Penrod's eyes went from Sam's medal back to his own; thence they wandered, with perhaps a little disappointment, to the lifeless street and to the empty yards and spectatorless windows of the neighborhood. Then he looked southward toward the busy heart of the town, where multitudes were.

"Let's go down and see what time it is by the court-house clock," said Penrod.

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

"AMERICAN, SIR!"^[A]

"Dear Uncle Bill:" (And why he should have called me "Uncle Bill," Heaven only knows. I was not his uncle and almost never had I been addressed as "Bill." But he chose the name, without explanation, from the first.) "Dear Uncle Bill: Where am I going to in vacation? The fellows ask. Their fathers come to Commencement and take them home. I'm the only one out, because my father's dead. And I haven't anybody to belong to. It would be great if you'd come. Yours Sincerely—John."

I threw the letter in the scrap-basket and an hour later fished it out. I read it over. I—go to a school commencement! Not if I knew it! The cheek of the whippersnapper! I had not even seen him; he might be any sort of wild Indian; he might expect me to "take him home" afterwards. Rather *not*! I should give him to understand that I would pay his bills and—well, yes—I would send him to a proper place in vacations; but be bothered by him personally I would not. Fishing trips to Canada interrupted by a child! Unthinkable. I would write to that effect.

I sat down to my orderly desk and drew out paper. I began: "Dear John." Then I stopped. An unwelcome vision arose of a small boy who was "the only one out." "My father's dead." Thirty years rolled back, and I saw the charming boy, a cousin, who had come to be this lad's father. I turned my head at that thought, as long ago I had turned it every morning when I waked to look at him, the beautiful youngster of my adoration, sleeping across the room which we shared together. For a dozen years we shared that room and other things—ponies, trips abroad, many luxuries. For the father and mother who worshipped and pampered John, and who were casually kind to me, an uninteresting orphan—these were rich, then, and free-handed. Too free-handed, it was seen later, for when the two were killed at one moment in an accident, only debts were left for John. I was suddenly important, I, the gray satellite of the rainbow prince, for I had a moderate fortune. The two of us were just graduated from Yale; John with honors and prizes and hosts of friends, I with some prizes and honors. Yet I had not been "tapped" for "Bones" or "Scroll and Key"^[49-1] and I was a solitary pilgrim ever, with no intimates. We stood so together, facing out towards life.

I split my unimpressive patrimony in two and John took his part and wandered south on a mining adventure. For that, he was always keen about the south and his plan from seventeen on was to live in Italy. But it was I, after all, who went to Italy year after year, while John led Lord knows what thriftless life in Florida. From the last morning when he had wheeled, in our old big room, and dashed across it and thrown his arms around me in his own impulsive, irresistible way—since that morning I had never seen him. Letters, plenty. More money was needed always. John always thought that the world owed him a living.

Then he did the thing which was incredible and I pulled him out and hushed up the story and repaid the money, but it made me ill, and I suppose I was a bit savage, for he barely answered my letters after, and shortly stopped writing altogether. John could not endure unpleasantness. I lost sight of him till years later when he—and I—were near forty and I had a note signed Margaret Donaldson, John's wife. John was dead. He had been on a shooting trip and a gun had gone off. Though it was not in words, yet through them I got a vague suggestion of suicide. Heavy-hearted, I wondered. The life so suddenly ended had once been dear to me.

"They did not bring John home," the note said. "He was so badly mutilated that they buried him near where he died. I believe he would have wanted you to know, and for that reason I am writing. I am an entirely capable bread-winner, so that John's boy and I will have no troubles as to money."

There was a child two years old. I liked the chill and the independence of the proud little note.

The next chapter opened ten years later with a letter saying that Margaret Donaldson's boy was left with her poor and elderly parents and that they did not want him. Would I, his mother being dead, take care of him? He was twelve, healthy and intelligent—which led directly to the evening when I sat, very cross, at my desk and fished young John's note out of the scrap-basket. I had got as far in answer as "Dear John"—when these visions of the past interrupted. I am not soft-hearted. I am crabbed and prejudiced and critical, and I dislike irregularity. Above all I am thoroughly selfish. But the sum of that is short of being brutal. Only sheer brutality could repel the lad's note and request. My answer went as follows:

"Dear John: I will come to your commencement and bring you back with me for a short time. I may take you on a fishing trip to Canada. Sincerely, Uncle Bill."

The youngster as he came into the school drawing-room was a thing to remember. He was a tall boy, and he looked like his father. Very olive he was—and is—and his blue eyes shone out of the dark face from under the same thickset and long lashes. His father's charm and beauty halted me, but I judged, before I let myself go, that he had also his mother's stability. I have seen no reason since to doubt my judgment. I never had so fine a fishing trip to Canada as that summer, in spite of the fact that John broke four good rods. He has been my most successful investment; and when the war broke out and he rushed to me clamoring to go, I felt indeed that I was giving humanity my best and my own. Then one day he came, in his uniform of an ambulance driver, to tell me good-bye.

That was in 1914, and the boy, just about to enter Yale, was eighteen. He went through bad fighting, and in March, 1917, he was given a Croix de Guerre.[\[52-1\]](#) Then America came in and he transferred to his own flag and continued ambulance work under our Red Cross. He drove one of the twenty ambulances hurried into Italy after the Caporetto disaster[\[52-2\]](#) in October, the first grip of the hand of America to that brave hand of Italy.

I did not know for a time that my lad was in the ambulance section rushed to Italy, but I had a particular interest from the first in this drive for I had spent weeks, twice, up in Lombardy and Venetia.[\[52-3\]](#) That was how I followed the Italian disaster—as a terrible blow to a number of old friends. Then after the Caporetto crisis came the stand behind the Tagliamento;[\[52-4\]](#) the retreat still farther and the more hopeful stand behind the Piave.[\[52-5\]](#) And with that I knew that the First Ambulance Section was racing to the Italian front and that my boy was driving one of the cars.

And behold it was now the year 1919 and the war was over and the cablegram from Bordeaux, which read: "Sailing 13th Santa Angela 12 day boat New York," was a week old.

Of course I met him. I left a director's meeting and vital engagements, with indecent firmness, to meet that ship. At crack of dawn on a raw morning in March I arose and drove miles to a freezing pier to meet it. And presently, as I stood muffled in a fur coat, an elderly, grizzled, small man, grim and unexhilarating—presently the soul of this monotonous person broke into song. For out of the early morning, out from behind a big anchored vessel near the pier, poked the nose of a troop ship and lumbered forward, and her decks were brown with three thousand soldiers—Americans of our victorious army coming home from overseas.

It was a sight which none of us will ever see again. Out in the harbor tugs were yelping, whistles blowing; the little fleet which had gone down the bay to meet the incoming troops was screaming itself mad in a last chorus of joyful welcome. And the good ship *Santa Angela*, blessed old tub, rolled nearer till the lads on her, shouting, waving, laughing, crying lads could be seen separately, and she had rounded the corner into the slip and was mere yards from the dock.

And then the boy came down the gangplank and I greeted him as in my ungracious way, as if he had been off on a sailing trip. But he knew, and he held to me, the tall fellow, with his arm around my shoulder unashamed, and from that moment to this in the den he had hardly let me out of his sight.

After dinner that night I settled back in deep satisfaction and lighted a fresh cigar. And the boy, standing before the blazing logs, which kept up a pleasant undertone to the music of his young voice, began.

"You know, Uncle Bill, we were blamed proud to be Red Cross when we knew what was doing about Italy. It was plumb great. You know it all of course. But I saw it. No worse fight ever—in all history. Towns turned into a rolling river of refugees. Hungry, filthy, rain-soaked, half-clad—old, babies, sick—a multitude pitiful beyond words—stumbling, racing down those mountain trails, anyhow—to get anywhere—away."

He dropped into a chair and went on.

"We didn't get there for the first, but it was plenty bad enough," and his eyes were seeing wordless sights. "The United States had declared war on Austria December 7th, and four days later Section One was rolling across the battlefield of Solferino.

"I was proud to be in that bunch. Talk about the flower of a country, Uncle Bill,—we grew 'em. Six wore the Croix de Guerre—well, of course that's often just luck." He reddened as he remembered who was one of that six. "All of them had gone through battles a-plenty. Whole shooting-match keen for service—no slackers and no greenhorns in that crowd.

"We started on the twelve hundred mile trip to Milan from Paris November 18th, and at Ventimiglia, just over the border, Italy welcomed us. Lord, Uncle Bill," the boy laughed out, and rubbed his eyes where tears stood. "They wouldn't look at our passports—no, sir! They opened the gate to Italy and we rolled in like visiting princes. They showered presents on us, those poor villagers—food, flowers—all they had. Often didn't keep any for themselves.

"We got there December 8th. Tuned up the cars and were off again in two or three days, to the job. They gave us a great send-off. Real party. Two parties. First a sort of reception in a big gray courtyard of an old palace, all dolled up with American and Italian flags. Big bugs and speeches—and they presented us to Italy. A bugle blew and a hundred of us in khaki—we'd been reinforced—stood at salute and an Italian general swept into the gates with his train of plumed Bersagliari^[55-1]—sent to take us over. Then we twenty drove our busses out with our own flags flying and pulled up again for Party Number Two in front of the Cathedral. Finally the Mayor bid us his prettiest good-bye, and off we drove again through the cheering crowds and the waving flags—this time out of the city gate—to the Piave front."

The boy rose from his chair, put on a fresh log, then turned and stood facing me, towering over me in his young magnificence.

It flashed to me that I'd never seen him look so like his father, yet so different. All John Donaldson's physical beauty, all his charm were repeated in his son, but underlaid with a manliness, a force which poor John never had.

"We were pitched into the offensive in the hottest of it," spoke the boy. "It was thick. We were hampered by lack of workers. We wanted Americans. Morgan had a thought.

"Italy's full of Americans,' he suggested. 'Living here. Over military age, but fit for a lot of our use. I miss my guess if bunches of 'em wouldn't jump at a chance to get busy under their own flag.'

"We sent out a call and they came. Down from hill-towns, out of cities, from villages we'd never heard of—it was amazing how they came. We didn't dream there was such a number. Every one middle-aged, American all, and gentlemen all. One morning, after brisk work the night before, I'd just turned out and was standing by my bus—I slept on a stretcher inside—I saw a big, athletic, grizzled chap, maybe fifty-five or over, shabby as to clothes, yet with an air like a duke, sauntering up. How he got in there I never thought to ask. He held out his hand as if we were old friends. 'Good morning,' he said. 'I hope I didn't wake you up. How do you like Italy?' There was something attractive about him, something suggestive of a gracious host whose flower garden was Italy—which he trusted was to my taste. I told him I worshipped Italy.

"Just then a shell—they were coming over off and on—struck two hundred yards down the road and we both turned to look. In thirty seconds, maybe, another—and another—placed middling close, half a minute apart maybe, till eight had plowed along that bit. When they stopped, he looked at me. 'That's the first time I ever saw shells light nearby,' he spoke. 'Eight, I made it. But two were duds, weren't they?'

"It didn't seem to occur to him that they might have hit him. About then he saw me wondering, I suppose, what a civilian was doing making conversation inside the lines before breakfast, and he explained.

"'You need men for the Red Cross, I believe,' he explained. 'I came to offer my services.' He

spoke English perfectly, yet with a foreign twist, and he was so very dark that I wondered about his nationality.

"'Are you Italian?' I asked, and at that he started and straightened his big shabby shoulders as if I'd hit him, and flushed through his brown skin.

"'American, sir,' he said proudly.

"And, Uncle Bill, something in the way he said it almost brought tears to my eyes. It was as if his right to being American was the last and most precious thing he owned, and as if I'd tried to take it from him.

"So I threw back 'That's great,' as heartily as I knew how, and shook hands with him over it.

"There was something about him which I couldn't place. He looked—natural. Especially his eyes.

"Well, I said we'd be delighted to use him, and told him where to report and then, though it wasn't my business, I asked his name. And what do you think he told me?"

I shook my head.

"He gave his name as John Donaldson," stated the boy.

"What!" I asked bewildered. "This man in Italy was called——"

"By my name," the boy said slowly. "John Donaldson."

I reasoned a bit. "John Donaldson" is a name not impossible to be duplicated. "It was devilish odd," I said, "to run into your own handle like that, wasn't it?"

The boy went on. "At that second Ted Frith ran along shouting, '7:30. Better hurry. Coffee's waiting.' So I threw the strange man a good-bye and bolted.

"That day we were going some. They were heaving eggs from the other side of the Piave and we were bringing back wounded to the dressing stations as fast as we could make it over that wrecked land; going back faster for more. When I stopped for chow at midday, I found Ted Frith near me, eating also.

"Remember the old boy you were talking to this morning?" asked Ted between two mouthfuls of dum-dums—that's beans, Uncle Bill. I 'lowed I remembered the old boy; in fact he'd stuck in my mind all day.

"Well,' Ted went on, 'he's a ring-tailed snorter. He's got an American uniform, tin derby and all, and he's up in the front trenches in the cold and mud with his chocolates and stuff, talking the lingo to the wops and putting heart into them something surprising. They're cheering up wherever he goes. Good work.'

"That afternoon I ran into the man under hot fire hurrying down the communication trench for more stuff. He looked as pleased as a boy with a new pony. 'Hello,' I yelled across the noise. 'How do you like our Italy? They tell me you're helping a lot.'

"He stopped and stared with those queerly homelike, big eyes. 'Do they?' he smiled. 'It's the best time I've had for years, sir.'

"'Needn't *sir* me,' I explained. 'I'm not an officer.'

"'Ah, but you are—my superior officer,' he argued in a courteous, lovely way. 'I'm a recruit—raw recruit. Certainly I must say *sir*, to you.'

"'Duck there,' I shouted. 'You're on a rise—you'll be hit.'

"He glanced around. 'If you knew what a treat I'd consider it to be done for wearing this.' He looked down and slapped his big knee in its khaki. 'But if I'm helping, it's the game to keep whole. You see, sir,' and he laughed out loud—'this is my good day. I'm American to-day, sir!'

"And as I let in the clutch and turned the wheel, I sniffled. The man's delight at being allowed to do a turn of any sort under the flag got me.

"The hideous day wore on; one of the worst I went through. We were rushing 'em steadily—four badly wounded in the back you know, and one who could sit up in the front seat with the driver, every trip. About 3:30 as I was going up to the front lines, I struck Ted Firth again coming down.

"'That you, Johnny?' he shouted as we jammed together, and then: 'Your friend's got his,' he said. We were caught in a crowd and had to wait, so we could talk.

"'Oh no!' I groaned. 'Gone west?'

"He shook his head. 'I think not yet. But I'm afraid he's finished. Had to leave him. Didn't see

him till I was loaded up. He's been stretcher-bearer the last three hours.'

"The devil he has. Why?'

"A sudden attack—bearer was killed. He jumped in and grabbed the stretcher. Powerful old boy. Back and forth from the hurricane to the little dressing station, and at last he got it. Thick to-day, isn't it?'

"Stretcher-bearer!' I repeated. 'Nerve for a new bird.'

"Nerve!' echoed Teddy. 'He's been eating it up. The hotter it got, the better it suited. He's one of the heroes fast enough. If he lives, he's due a cross for his last stunt—out under fire twice in five minutes to bring in wounded. But he won't live. There—it's clearing. You run along and find the old boy, Johnny.'

"I found him. He was hurt too badly to talk about. As gently as we knew how, Joe Barron and I lifted him into the car and he recognized me.

"Why, good evening, sir,' he greeted me, smiling at the disputed title, charming and casual as ever. He identified me—"The boy who adored Italy.' Then: 'Such luck!' he gasped. 'Killed—in our uniform—serving!' And as he felt my hand on his forehead: 'For God's sake don't be sorry, lad,' he begged. 'A great finish for me. I never hoped for luck like this.'

"There's a small village," the boy went on—"I never knew its name; it's back of the Piave; only a pile of broken stuff now anyhow. But the church was standing that night, a lovely old church with a tower pierced with windows. We stuck in a traffic jam in front of that church. The roads were one solid column going forward into the mess. Mile after mile of it in one stream—and every parallel road must have been the same.

"It got dark early and the ration truck was late coming up, being caught in the jam. It was night by the time the eats were ready and I left my bus in front of the church I spoke of. I'd wished myself on the officers of a battery having mess in trees back of a ruined house. When I went back to the bus, it was clean dark. But the sky was alight with gun flashes from everywhere, a continuous flicker like summer lightning with glares here and there like a sudden blaze from a factory chimney. The rumbling gun thunder was without a break, punctuated by heavier boomings; the near guns seemed an insane 4th of July. I looked in at my load and I saw that my namesake was worse. We were still trapped in the jam; no chance of breaking for hours maybe. I saw then that they'd turned the church into a dressing station. There was straw on the stone floors and two surgeons and some orderlies. Wounded were being carried in on stretchers. Joe Barron and I lifted out John Donaldson and took him in and cared for him as well as possible until we could corral an overworked doctor. I thought I'd talk to him a bit to distract him, and he seemed glad to have me."

The lad stopped; his big fingers pulled at the collar of his uniform.

"Little by little," he went on, "John Donaldson of Italy told his story. He held tight to my hand as he told it." The boy halted again and bit at his lower lip with strong white teeth. "I like to remember that," he went on slowly. "He had lived nearly twenty years in Perugia. He had run away from America. Because—he—took money. Quite a lot of money. He—was supposed to be dead."

I sat forward, grasping the sides of my chair, pulling the thing out of the boy with straining gaze.

"Uncle Bill," he spoke, and his dear voice shook, "you know who it was. I found why his eyes looked familiar. They were exactly like my own. The man I was helping to die was my father."

I heard my throat make a queer sound, but I said no word. The voice flowed on, difficultly, determinedly.

"It's a strange thing to remember—a weird and unearthly bit of living—that war-ruined church, strewn with straw, the wounded wrapped like mummies in dark blankets, their white bandages making high spots in the wavering, irregular lights of lanterns and pocket flashes moving about. I sat on the pavement by his side, hand in hand. A big crucifix hung above, and the Christ seemed to be looking—at him."

The voice stopped. I heard my own as a sound from beyond me asking a question. "How did you find out?" I asked.

"Why, you see, Uncle Bill," he answered, as if my voice had helped him to normality a bit, "I started off by saying I'd write to anybody for him, and wasn't there somebody at home maybe? And he smiled out of his torture, and said 'Nobody.'

"Then I said how proud we were of such Americans as he had shown himself and how much he'd helped. I told him what Teddy Frith said of how he'd put heart into the men. And about the war cross. At that his face brightened.

"Did he really say I'd helped?' He was awfully pleased. Then he considered a moment and spoke: 'There's one lad I'd like to have know—if it's possible to find him—and if he ever knows anything about me—that I died decently.'

"I threw at him—little dreaming the truth, yet eagerly—'I'll find him. I promise it. What's his name?'

"And he smiled again, an alluring, sidewise smile he had, and said: 'Why, the same name as mine—John Donaldson. He was my baby.'

"Then for the first time the truth came in sight, and my heart stood still. I couldn't speak. But I thought fast. I feared giving him a shock, yet I had to know—I had to tell him. I put my free hand over his that clung to me and I said: 'Do you know, Mr. Donaldson, it's queer, but that's my name too. I also am John Donaldson.'

"He turned his head with a start and his eyes got wide. 'You are?' he said, and he peered at me in the half light. 'I believe you look like me. God!' he said. His face seemed to sharpen and he shot words at me. 'Quick!' he said. 'I mayn't have time. What was your mother's name?'

"I told him.

"He was so still for a breath that I thought I'd killed him. Then his face lighted—quite angelically, Uncle Bill. And he whispered, two or three words at a time—you know the words, Uncle Bill—Tennyson:

"'Sunset and evening star' he whispered:

"'Sunset and evening star,

"'And one clear call for me——'

"He patted the breast of his bloody, grimy uniform. 'Following the flag! Me! My son to hold my hand as I go out! I hadn't dreamed of such a passing.' Then he looked up at me, awfully interested. 'So you're my big son,' he said. 'My baby.'

"I knew that he was remembering the little shaver he'd left twenty years back. So I leaned over and kissed him, and he got his arm around my neck and held me pretty tight a minute, and nobody cared. All those dying, suffering, last-ditch men lying around, and the two worn-out doctors hurrying among 'em—they didn't care. No more did he and I. I'd found my father; I wasn't caring for anything else."

There was deep silence in the room again and a log of the fire crackled and fell apart and blazed up impersonally; the pleasant sound jarred not at all the tense, human atmosphere.

"And he——! Uncle Bill," went on the throbbing voice, "through the devilish pain he was radiant. He was, thank God! I wanted to hold up a doctor and get dope to quiet him—and he wouldn't.

"'It might make me unconscious,' he objected. 'Would I lose a minute of you? Not if I know it! This is the happiest hour I've had for twenty years.'

"He told me, a bit at a time, about things. First how he'd arranged so that even my mother thought him dead. Then the bald facts of his downfall. He hated to tell that.

"'Took money,' he said. 'Very unjustifiable. But I ought to have had plenty—life's most unreasonable. Then—I couldn't face—discovery—hate, unpleasantness.' He shuddered. 'Might have been—jailed.' It was shaking him so I tried to stop him, but he pointed to his coat and laughed—Uncle Bill, a pitiful laugh. It tore me. 'John Donaldson's making a good getaway,' he labored out. 'Must tell everything. I'll finish—clean. To—my son. Honor of—the uniform.' He was getting exhausted. 'That's all,' he ended, 'Dishonor.'

"And I flung at him: 'No—no. It's covered over—wiped out—with service and honor. You're dying for the flag, father—father!' I whispered with my arms around him and crying like a child with a feeling I'd never known before. 'Father, father!' I whispered, and he lifted a hand and patted my head.

"'That sounds nice,' he said. Suddenly he looked amused. His nerve all through was the bulliest thing you ever saw, Uncle Bill. Not a whimper. 'You thought I was Italian,' he brought out. 'Years ago, this morning. But—I'm not. American, sir—I heard the call—the one clear call. American.'

"Then he closed his eyes and his breathing was so easy that I thought he might sleep, and live hours, maybe. I loosened his fingers and lifted his head on my coat that I'd folded for a pillow, for I thought I'd go outside and find Joe Barron and get him to take the bus down when the jam held up so I could start. Before I started, I bent over again and he opened his eyes, and I said very distinctly: 'I want you to know that I'll be prouder all my life than words can say that I've had you for a father,' and he brought out a long, perfectly contented sigh, and seemed to drop off.

"I began to pick my way through the clutter of men lying, some still as death, some writhing

and gurgling horrid sounds. I had got about eight feet when across the hideous noises broke a laugh like a pleased kid. I whirled. He'd lifted his big shoulders up from the straw and was laughing after me from under those thick black lashes; his eyes were brilliant. He stretched out his arms to me.

"American, sir," he said in a strong voice. And fell back dead."

I heard the clock tick and tick. And tick. Minutes went by. Then the boy got up in the throbbing silence and walked to the fire and stood, his back to me, looking down at the embers. His voice came over his square young shoulders, difficult but determined, as of a man who must say a thing which has dogged him to be said.

"God arranged it, Uncle Bill. I know that well enough. God forgave him enough to send him me and a happy day to go out on. So don't you believe—that things are all right with him now?"

It was hard to speak, but I had to—I had a message. "John," I said, "we two know the splendor of his going, and that other things count as nothing beside that redemption. Do you suppose a great God is more narrow-minded than we?"

And my boy turned, and came and sat on the broad side of the chair, and put his arm around my shoulder and his young head against mine. His cheek was hot and wet on my thin hair.

"American, sir," whispered my dear boy, softly.

KATHERINE MAYO

JOHN G.

It was nine o'clock of a wild night in December. For forty-eight hours it had been raining, raining, raining, after a heavy fall of snow. Still the torrents descended, lashed by a screaming wind, and the song of rushing water mingled with the cry of the gale. Each steep street of the hill-town of Greensburg lay inches deep under a tearing flood. The cold was as great as cold may be while rain is falling. A night to give thanks for shelter overhead, and to hug the hearth with gratitude.

First Sergeant Price, at his desk in the Barracks office, was honorably grinding law. Most honorably, because, when he had gone to take the book from its shelf in the day-room, "Barrack-Room Ballads"[68-1] had smiled down upon him with a heart-aching echo of the soft, familiar East; so that of a sudden he had fairly smelt the sweet, strange, heathen smell of the temples in Tien Tsin—had seen the flash of a parrot's wing in the bolo-toothed Philippine jungle. And the sight and the smell, on a night like this, were enough to make any man lonely.

Therefore it was with honor indeed that, instead of dreaming off into the radiant past through the well thumbed book of magic, he was digging between dull sheepskin covers after the key to the bar of the State, on which his will was fixed.

Now, a man who, being a member of the Pennsylvania State Police,[69-1] aspires to qualify for admission to the bar, has his work cut out for him. The calls of his regular duty, endless in number and kind, leave him no certain leisure, and few and broken are the hours that he gets for books.

"Confound the Latin!" grumbled the Sergeant, grabbing his head in his two hands. "Well—anyway, here's my night for it. Even the crooks will lie snug in weather like this." And he took a fresh hold on the poser.

Suddenly "buzz" went the bell beside him. Before its voice ceased he stood at salute in the door of the Captain's office.

"Sergeant," said Captain Adams, with a half-turn of his desk-chair, "how soon can you take the field?"

"Five minutes, sir."

"There's trouble over in the foundry town. The local authorities have jailed some I. W. W.[69-2] plotters. They state that a jail delivery is threatened, that the Sheriff can't control it, and that they believe the mob will run amuck generally and shoot up the town. Take a few men; go over and attend to it."

"Very well, sir."

In the time that goes to saddling a horse, the detail rode into the storm, First Sergeant Price on John G., leading.

John G. had belonged to the Force exactly as long as had the First Sergeant himself, which was from the dawn of the Force's existence. And John G. is a gentleman and a soldier, every inch of him. Horse-show judges have affixed their seal to the self-evident fact by the sign of the blue ribbon,[70-1] but the best proof lies in the personal knowledge of "A" Troop, soundly built on twelve years' brotherhood. John G., on that diluvian night, was twenty-two years old, and still every whit as clean-limbed, alert, and plucky as his salad days had seen him.

Men and horses dived into the gale as swimmers dive into a breaker. It beat their eyes shut with wind and driven water, and, as they slid down the harp-pitched city streets, the flood banked up against each planted hoof till it split in folds above the fetlock.

Down in the country beyond, mud, slush, and water clogged with chunks of frost-stricken clay made worse and still worse going. And so they pushed on through blackest turmoil toward the river road that should be their highway to Logan's Ferry.

They reached that road at last, only to find it as lost as Atlantis,[70-2] under twenty feet of water! The Allegheny had overflowed her banks, and now there remained no way across, short of following the stream up to Pittsburgh and so around, a *détour* of many miles, long and evil.

"And that," said First Sergeant Price, "means getting to the party about four hours late. Baby-talk and nonsense! By that time they might have burned the place and killed all the people in it. Let's see, now: there's a railroad bridge close along here, somewhere."

They scouted till they found the bridge. But behold, its floor was of cross-ties only—of sleepers to carry the rails, laid with wide breaks between, gaping down into deep, dark space whose bed was the roaring river.

"Nevertheless," said First Sergeant Price, whose spirits ever soar at the foolish onslaughts of trouble—"nevertheless, we're *not* going to ride twenty miles farther for nothing. There's a railroad yard on the other side. This bridge, here, runs straight into it. You two men go over, get a couple of good planks, and find out when the next train is due."

The two Troopers whom the Sergeant indicated gave their horses to a comrade and started away across the trestle.

For a moment those who stayed behind could distinguish the rays of their pocket flash-lights as they picked out their slimy foothold. Then the whirling night engulfed them, lights and all.

The Sergeant led the remainder of the detail down into the lee of an abutment, to avoid the full drive of the storm. Awhile they stood waiting, huddled together. But the wait was not for long. Presently, like a code signal spelled out on the black overhead, came a series of steadily lengthening flashes—the pocket-light glancing between the sleepers, as the returning messengers drew near.

Scrambling up to rail level, the Sergeant saw with content that his emissaries bore on their shoulders between them two new pine "two-by-twelves."[\[72-1\]](#)

"No train's due till five o'clock in the morning," reported the first across.

"Good! Now lay the planks. In the middle of the track. End to end. So."

The Sergeant, dismounting, stood at John G.'s wise old head, stroking his muzzle, whispering into his ear.

"Come along, John, it's all right, old man!" he finished with a final caress.

Then he led John G. to the first plank.

"One of you men walk on each side of him. Now, John!"

Delicately, nervously, John G. set his feet, step by step, till he had reached the centre of the second plank.

Then the Sergeant talked to him quietly again, while two Troopers picked up the board just quitted to lay it in advance.

And so, length by length, they made the passage, the horse moving with extremest caution, shivering with full appreciation of the unaccustomed danger, yet steadied by his master's presence and by the friend on either hand. As they moved, the gale wreaked all its fury on them. It was growing colder now, and the rain, changed to sleet, stung their skins with its tiny, sharp-driven blades. The skeleton bridge held them high suspended in the very heart of the storm. Once and again a sudden more violent gust bid fair to sweep them off their feet. Yet, slowly progressing, they made their port unharmed.

Then came the next horse's turn. More than a single mount they dared not lead over at once,

lest the contagious fears of one, reacting on another, produce panic. The horse that should rear or shy, on that wide-meshed footing, would be fairly sure to break a leg, at best. So, one by one, they followed over, each reaching the farther side before his successor began the transit.

And so, at last, all stood on the opposite bank, ready to follow John G. once more, as he led the way to duty.

"Come along, John, old man. You know how you'd hate to find a lot of dead women and babies because we got there too late to save them! Make a pace, Johnny boy!"

The First Sergeant was talking gently, leaning over his pommel. But John G. was listening more from politeness than because he needed a lift. His stride was as steady as a clock.

It was three hours after midnight on that bitter black morning as they entered the streets of the town. And the streets were as quiet, as peaceful, as empty of men, as the heart of the high woods.

"Where's their mob?" growled the Sergeant.

"Guess its mother's put it to sleep," a cold, wet Trooper growled back.

"Well, we *thought* there was going to be trouble," protested the local power, roused from his feather bed. "It really did look like serious trouble, I assure you. And we could not have handled serious trouble with the means at our command. Moreover, there may easily be something yet. So, gentlemen, I am greatly relieved you have come. I can sleep in peace now that you are here. Good-night! *Good-night!*"

All through the remaining hours of darkness the detail patrolled the town. All through the lean, pale hours of dawn it carefully watched its wakening, guarded each danger-point. But never a sign of disturbance did the passing time bring forth.

At last, with the coming of the business day, the Sergeant sought out the principal men of the place, and from them ascertained the truth.

Threats of a jail delivery there had been, and a noisy parade as well, but nothing had occurred or promised beyond the power of an active local officer to handle. Such was the statement of one and all.

"I'll just make sure," said the Sergeant to himself.

Till two o'clock in the afternoon the detail continued its patrols. The town and its outskirts remained of an exemplary peace. At two o'clock the Sergeant reported by telephone to his Captain:—

"Place perfectly quiet, sir. Nothing seems to have happened beyond the usual demonstration of a sympathizing crowd over an arrest. Unless something more breaks, the Sheriff should be entirely capable of handling the situation."

"Then report back to Barracks at once," said the voice of the Captain of "A" Troop. "There's *real* work waiting here."

The First Sergeant, hanging up the receiver, went out and gathered his men.

Still the storm was raging. Icy snow, blinding sheets of sharp-fanged smother, rode on the racing wind. Worse overhead, worse underfoot, would be hard to meet in years of winters.

But once again men and horses, without an interval of rest, struck into the open country. Once again on the skeleton bridge they made the precarious crossing. And so, at a quarter to nine o'clock at night, the detail topped Greensburg's last ice-coated hill and entered the yard of its high-perched Barracks.

As the First Sergeant slung the saddle off John G.'s smoking back, Corporal Richardson, farrier of the Troop, appeared before him wearing a mien of solemn and grieved displeasure.

"It's all very well," said he,— "all very well, no doubt. But eighty-six miles in twenty-four hours, in weather like this, is a good deal for any horse. And John G. is twenty-two years old, as perhaps you may remember. *I've brought the medicine.*"

Three solid hours from that very moment the two men worked over John G., and when, at twelve o'clock, they put him up for the night, not a wet hair was left on him. As they washed and rubbed and bandaged, they talked together, mingling the Sergeant's trenchantly humorous common sense with the Corporal's mellow philosophy. But mostly it was the Corporal that spoke, for twenty-four hours is a fair working day for a Sergeant as well as a Troop horse.

"I believe in my soul," said the Sergeant, "that if a man rode into this stable with his two arms shot off at the shoulder, you'd make him groom his horse with his teeth and his toes for a couple of hours before you'd let him hunt a doctor."

"Well," rejoined Corporal Richardson, in his soft Southern tongue, "and what if I did? Even if

that man died of it, he'd thank me heartily afterward. You know, when you and I and the rest of the world, each in our turn, come to Heaven's gate, there'll be St. Peter before it, with the keys safe in his pocket. And over the shining wall behind—*from the inside*, mind you—will be poking a great lot of heads—innocent heads with innocent eyes—heads of horses and of all the other animals that on this earth are the friends of man, put at his mercy and helpless.

"And it's clear to me—over, John! so, boy!—that before St. Peter unlocks the gate for a single one of us, he'll turn around to that long row of heads, and he'll say:—

"Blessed animals in the fields of Paradise, is this a man that should enter in?"

"And if the animals—they that were placed in his hands on earth to prove the heart that was in him—if the immortal animals have aught to say against that man—never will the good Saint let him in, with his dirty, mean stain upon him. Never. *You'll* see, Sergeant, when your time comes. *Will you give those tendons another ten minutes?*"

Next morning John G. walked out of his stall as fresh and as fit as if he had come from pasture. And to this very day, in the stable of "A" Troop, John G., handsome, happy, and able, does his friends honor.

MYRA KELLY

Friends[B] [77-1]

"My mamma," reported Morris Mowgelewsky, choosing a quiet moment during a writing period to engage his teacher's attention, "my mamma likes you shall come on mine house for see her."

"Very well, dear," answered Miss Bailey with a patience born of many such messages from the parents of her small charges. "I think I shall have time to go this afternoon."

"My mamma," Morris began again, "she says I shall tell you 'scuse how she don't send you no letter. She couldn't to send no letter the while her eyes ain't healthy."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Teacher, with a little stab of regret for her prompt acceptance of Mrs. Mowgelewsky's invitation; for of all the ailments which the children shared so generously with their teacher, Miss Bailey had learned to dread most the many and painful disorders of the eye. She knew, however, that Mrs. Mowgelewsky was not one of those who utter unnecessary cries for help, being in this regard, as in many others, a striking contrast to the majority of parents with whom Miss Bailey came in contact.

To begin with, Mrs. Mowgelewsky had but one child—her precious, only Morris. In addition to this singularity she was thrifty and neat, intensely self-respecting and independent of spirit, and astonishingly outspoken of mind. She neither shared nor understood the gregarious spirit which bound her neighbors together and is the lubricant which makes East Side crowding possible without bloodshed. No groups of chattering, gesticulating matrons ever congregated in her Monroe Street apartment. No love of gossip ever held her on street corners or on steps. She nourished few friendships and fewer acquaintanceships, and she welcomed no haphazard visitor. Her hospitalities were as serious as her manner; her invitations as deliberate as her slow English speech.

And Miss Bailey, as she and the First Readers followed the order of studies laid down for them, found herself again and again, trying to imagine what the days would be to Mrs. Mowgelewsky if her keen, shrewd eyes were to be darkened and useless.

At three o'clock she set out with Morris, leaving the Board of Monitors[78-1] to set Room 18 to rights with no more direct supervision than an occasional look and word from the stout Miss Blake, whose kingdom lay just across the hall. And as she hurried through the early cold of a November afternoon, her forebodings grew so lugubrious that she was almost relieved at last to learn that Mrs. Mowgelewsky's complaint was a slow-forming cataract, and her supplication, that Miss Bailey would keep a watchful eye upon Morris while his mother was at the hospital undergoing treatment and operation.

"But of course," Miss Bailey agreed, "I shall be delighted to do what I can, Mrs. Mowgelewsky, though it seems to me that one of the neighbors——"

"Neighbors!" snorted the matron; "What you think the neighbors make mit mine little boy? They got four, five dozens childrens theirselves. They ain't got no time for look on Morris. They come maybe in mine house und break mine dishes, und rubber on what is here, und set by mine

furniture und talks. What do they know over takin' care on mine house? They ain't ladies. They is educated only on the front. Me, I was raised private und expensive in Russia; I was ladies. Und you ist ladies. You ist Krisht[79-1]—that is too bad—but that makes me nothings. I wants *you* shall look on Morris."

"But I can't come here and take care of him," Miss Bailey pointed out. "You see that for yourself, don't you, Mrs. Mowgelewsky? I am sorry as I can be about your eyes, and I hope with all my heart that the operation will be successful. But I shouldn't have time to come here and take care of things."

"That ain't how mine mamma means," Morris explained. He was leaning against Teacher and stroking her muff as he spoke. "Mine mamma means the money."

"That ist what I means," said Mrs. Mowgelewsky, nodding her ponderous head until her quite incredible wig slipped back and forth upon it. "Morris needs he shall have money. He could to fix the house so good like I can. He don't needs no neighbors rubberin'. He could to buy what he needs on the store. But ten cents a day he needs. His papa works by Harlem. He is got fine jobs, und he gets fine moneys, but he couldn't to come down here for take care of Morris. Und the doctor he says I shall go *now* on the hospital. Und any way," she added sadly, "I ain't no good; I couldn't to see things. He says I shall lay in the hospital three weeks, may be—that is twenty-one days—und for Morris it is two dollars und ten cents. I got the money." And she fumbled for her purse in various hiding-places about her ample person.

"And you want me to be banker," cried Miss Bailey; "to keep the money and give Morris ten cents a day—is that it?"

"Sure," answered Mrs. Mowgelewsky.

"It's a awful lot of money," grieved Morris. "Ten cents a day is a awful lot of money for one boy."

"No, no, my golden one," cried his mother. "It is but right that thou shouldst have plenty of money, und thy teacher, a Christian lady, though honest—und what neighbor is honest?—will give thee ten cents every morning. Behold, I pay the rent before I go, und with the rent paid und with ten cents a day thou wilt live like a landlord."

"Yes, yes," Morris broke in, evidently repeating some familiar warning, "und every day I will say mine prayers und wash me the face, und keep the neighbors out, und on Thursdays und on Sundays I shall go on the hospital for see you."

"And on Saturdays," broke in Miss Bailey, "you will come to my house and spend the day with me. He's too little, Mrs. Mowgelewsky, to go to the synagogue alone."

"That could be awful nice," breathed Morris. "I likes I shall go on your house. I am lovin' much mit your dog."

"How?" snorted his mother. "Dogs! Dogs ain't nothing but foolishness. They eats something fierce, und they don't works."

"That iss how mine mamma thinks," Morris hastened to explain, lest the sensitive feelings of his Lady Paramount should suffer. "But mine mamma she never seen *your* dog. He iss a awful nice dog; I am lovin' much mit him."

"I don't needs I shall see him," said Mrs. Mowgelewsky, somewhat tartly. "I seen, already, lots from dogs. Don't you go make no foolishness mit him. Don't you go und get chawed off of him."

"Of course, of course not," Miss Bailey hastened to assure her; "he will only play with Rover if I should be busy or unable to take him out with me. He'll be safer at my house than he would be on the streets, and you wouldn't expect him to stay in the house all day."

After more parley and many warnings the arrangement was completed. Miss Bailey was intrusted with two dollars and ten cents, and the censorship of Morris. A day or so later Mrs. Mowgelewsky retired, indomitable, to her darkened room in the hospital, and the neighbors were inexorably shut out of her apartment. All their offers of help, all their proffers of advice were politely refused by Morris, all their questions and visits politely dodged. And every morning Miss Bailey handed her Monitor of the Goldfish Bowl his princely stipend, adding to it from time to time some fruit or other uncontaminated food, for Morris was religiously the strictest of the strict, and could have given cards and spades to many a minor rabbi[82-1] on the intricacies of Kosher law.

The Saturday after his mother's departure Morris spent in the enlivening companionship of the antiquated Rover, a collie who no longer roved farther than his own back yard, and who accepted Morris's frank admiration with a noble condescension and a few rheumatic gambols. Miss Bailey's mother was also hospitable, and her sister did what she could to amuse the quaint little child with the big eyes, the soft voice, and the pretty foreign manners. But Morris preferred Rover to any of them, except perhaps the cook, who allowed him to prepare a luncheon for himself after his own little rites.

Everything had seemed so pleasant and so successful that Miss Bailey looked upon a repetition of this visit as a matter of course, and was greatly surprised on the succeeding Friday afternoon when the Monitor of the Goldfish Bowl said that he intended to spend the next day at home.

"Oh, no!" she remonstrated, "you mustn't stay at home. I'm going to take you out to the Park and we are going to have all kinds of fun. Wouldn't you rather go and see the lions and the elephants with me than stay at home all by yourself?"

For some space Morris was a prey to silence, then he managed by a consuming effort:

"I ain't by mineself."

"Has your father come home?" said Teacher.

"No, ma'am."

"And surely it's not a neighbor. You remember what your mother said about the neighbors, how you were not to let them in."

"It ain't neighbors," said Morris.

"Then who——?" began Miss Bailey.

Morris raised his eyes to hers, his beautiful, black, pleading eyes, praying for the understanding and the sympathy which had never failed him yet. "It's a friend," he answered.

"Nathan Spiderwitz?" she asked.

Morris shook his head, and gave Teacher to understand that the Monitor of the Window Boxes came under the ban of neighbor.

"Well, who is it, dearest?" she asked again. "Is it any one that I know?"

"No, ma'am."

"None of the boys in the school?"

"No, ma'am."

"Have you known him long?"

"No, ma'am."

"Does your mother know him?"

"Oh, Teacher, *no*, ma'am! Mine mamma don't know him."

"Well, where did you meet him?"

"Teacher, on the curb. Over yesterday on the night," Morris began, seeing that explanation was inevitable, "I lays on mine bed, and I thinks how mine mamma has got a sickness, and how mine papa is by Harlem, and how I ain't got nobody beside of me. Und, Teacher, it makes me cold in mine heart. So I couldn't to lay no more, so I puts me on mit mine clothes some more, and I goes by the street, the while peoples is there, und I needs I shall see peoples. So I sets by the curb, und mine heart it go und it go so I couldn't to feel how it go in mine inside. Und I thinks on my mamma, how I seen her mit bandages on the face, und mine heart it goes some more. Und, Teacher, Missis Bailey, I cries over it."

"Of course you did, honey," said Teacher, putting her arm about him. "Poor, little, lonely chap! Of course you cried."

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am; it ain't fer boys they shall cry, but I cries over it. Und soon something touches me by mine side, und I turns und mine friend he was sittin' by side of me. Und he don't say nothings, Teacher; no, ma'am; he don't say *nothings*, only he looks on me, und in his eyes stands tears. So that makes me better in mine heart, und I don't cries no more. I sets und looks on mine friend, und mine friend he sets und looks on me mit smilin' looks. So I goes by mine house, und mine friend he comes by mine house, too, und I lays by mine bed, und mine friend he lays by mine side. Und all times in that night sooner I open mine eyes und thinks on how mine mamma is got a sickness, und mine papa is by Harlem, mine friend he is by mine side, und I don't cries. I don't cries never no more the whiles mine friend is by me. Und I couldn't to go on your house to-morrow the whiles I don't know if mine friend likes Rover."

"Of course he'd like him," cried Miss Bailey. "Rover would play with him just as he plays with you."

"No, ma'am," Morris maintained; "mine friend is too little for play mit Rover."

"Is he such a little fellow?"

"Yiss, ma'am; awful little."

"And has he been with you ever since the day before yesterday?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am."

"Does he seem to be happy and all right?"

"Teacher, yiss, ma'am."

"But," asked Miss Bailey, suddenly practical, "what does the poor little fellow eat? Of course ten cents would buy a *lot* of food for one boy, but not so very much for two."

"Teacher, no, ma'am," says Morris; "it ain't so very much."

"Well, then," said Miss Bailey, "suppose I give you twenty cents a day as long as a little strange friend is with you."

"That could to be awful nice," Morris agreed; "und, Missis Bailey," he went on, "sooner you don't needs all yours lunch mine friend could eat it, maybe."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," she cried; "It's ham to-day."

"That don't make nothings mit mine friend," said Morris, "he likes ham."

"Now, Morris," said Miss Bailey very gravely, as all the meanings of this announcement spread themselves before her, "this is a very serious thing. You know how your mother feels about strangers, and you know how she feels about Christians, and what will she say to you—and what will she say to me—when she hears that a strange little Christian is living with you? Of course, dearie, I know it's nice for you to have company, and I know that you must be dreadfully lonely in the long evenings, but I'm afraid your mother will not be pleased to think of your having somebody to stay with you. Wouldn't you rather come to my house and live there all the time until your mother is better. You know," she added as a crowning inducement, "Rover is there."

But Morris betrayed no enthusiasm. "I guess," said he, "I ain't lovin' so awful much mit Rover. He iss too big. I am likin' little dogs mit brown eyes, what walks by their legs und carries things by their mouths. Did you ever see dogs like that?"

"In the circus," answered Teacher. "Where did you see them?"

"A boy by our block," answered Morris, "is got one. He is lovin' much mit that dog und that dog is lovin' much mit him."

"Well, now, perhaps you could teach Rover to walk on his hind legs, and carry things in his mouth," suggested Teacher; "and as for this new little Christian friend of yours—"

"I don't know *be* he a Krisht," Morris admitted with reluctant candor; "he ain't said nothin' over it to me. On'y a Irish lady what lives by our house, she says mine friend is a Irisher."

"Very well, dear; then of course he's a Christian," Miss Bailey assured him, "and I shan't interfere with you to-morrow—you may stay at home and play with him. But we can't let it go on, you know. This kind of thing never would do when your mother comes back from the hospital. She might not want your friend in the house. Have you thought of that at all, Morris? You must make your friend understand it."

"I tells him," Morris promised; "I don't know can he understand. He's pretty little, only that's how I tells him all times."

"Then tell him once again, honey," Miss Bailey advised, "and make him understand that he must go back to his own people as soon as your mother is well. Where are his own people? I can't understand how any one so little could be wandering about with no one to take care of him."

"Teacher, I'm takin' care of him," Morris pointed out.

All that night and all the succeeding day Miss Bailey's imagination reverted again and again to the two little ones keeping house in Mrs. Mowgelewsky's immaculate apartment. Even increasing blindness had not been allowed to interfere with sweeping and scrubbing and dusting, and when Teacher thought of that patient matron, as she lay in her hospital cot trusting so securely to her Christian friend's guardianship of her son and home, she fretted herself into feeling that it was her duty to go down to Monroe Street and investigate.

There was at first no sound when, after climbing endless stairs, she came to Mrs. Mowgelewsky's door. But as the thumping of the heart and the singing in her ears abated somewhat, she detected Morris's familiar treble.

"Bread," it said, "iss awful healthy for you, only you dasn't eat it 'out chewin'. I never in my world seen how you eats."

Although the words were admonitory, they lost all didactic effect by the wealth of love and tenderness which sang in the voice. There was a note of happiness in it, too, a throb of pure enjoyment quite foreign to Teacher's knowledge of this sad-eyed little charge of hers. She rested against the door frame, and Morris went on:

"I guess you don't know what iss polite. You shall better come on the school, und Miss Bailey could to learn you what iss polite and healthy fer you. No, you couldn't to have no meat. No, *sir!* No, *ma'am!* You couldn't to have no meat 'till I cuts it fer you. You could to, maybe, make yourself a sickness und a bashfulness."

Miss Bailey put her hand on the door and it yielded noiselessly to her touch, and revealed to her guardian eyes her ward and his little friend. They were seated *vis-a-vis* [89-1] at the table; everything was very neat and clean and most properly set out. A little lamp was burning clearly. Morris's hair was parted for about an inch back from his forehead and sleeked wetly down upon his brow. The guest had evidently undergone similar preparation for the meal. Each had a napkin tied around his neck, and as Teacher watched them, Morris carefully prepared his guest's dinner, while the guest, an Irish terrier, with quick eyes and one down-flopped ear, accepted his admonishings with a good-natured grace, and watched him with an adoring and confiding eye.

The guest was first to detect the stranger's presence. He seized a piece of bread in his teeth, jumped to the ground, and walking up to Teacher on his hind legs, hospitably dropped the refreshment at her feet.

"Oh! Teacher! Teacher!" cried Morris, half in dismay at discovery, and half in joy that this so sure confidant should share his secret and appreciate his friend. "Oh! Teacher! Missis Bailey! this is the friend what I was telling you over. See how he walks on his feet! See how he has got smilin' looks! See how he carries somethings by his teeth! All times he makes like that. Rover, he don't carries nothin's, und gold fishes, they ain't got no feet even. On'y Izzie could to make them things."

"Oh, is his name Izzie?" asked Miss Bailey, grasping at this conversational straw and shaking the paw which the stranger was presenting to her. "And this is the friend you told me about? You let me think," she chided, with as much severity as Morris had shown to his Izzie, "that he was a boy."

"I had a 'fraid," said the Monitor of the Gold Fish Bowl frankly.

So had Teacher as she reviewed the situation from Mrs. Mowgelewsky's chair of state, and watched the friends at supper. It was a revelation of solicitude on one side, and patient gratitude on the other. Morris ate hardly anything, and was soon at Teacher's knee—Izzie was in her lap—discussing ways and means.

He refused to entertain any plan which would separate him immediately from Izzie, but he was at last brought to see the sweet reasonableness of preparing his mother's mind by degrees to accept another member to the family.

"Und he eats," his protector was forced to admit—"he eats somethin' fierce, Missis Bailey; as much like a man he eats. Und my mamma, I don't know what she will say. She won't leave me I shall keep him; from long I had a little bit of a dog, und she wouldn't to leave me I should keep *him*, und he didn't eat so much like Izzie eats, neither."

"And *I* can't very well keep him," said Miss Bailey sadly, "because, you see, there is Rover. Rover mightn't like it. But there is one thing I can do: I'll keep him for a few days when your mother comes back, and then we'll see, you and I, if we can persuade her to let you have him always."

"She wouldn't never to do it," said Morris sadly. "That other dog, didn't I told you how he didn't eat so much like Izzie, and she wouldn't to let me have him? That's a cinch."

"Oh! don't say that word, dear," cried Teacher. "And we can only try. We'll do our very, very best."

This guilty secret had a very dampening effect upon the joy with which Morris watched for his mother's recovery. Upon the day set for her return, he was a miserable battle-field of love and duty. Early in the morning Izzie had been transferred to Miss Bailey's yard. Rover was chained to his house, Izzie was tied to the wall at a safe distance from him, and they proceeded to make the day hideous for the whole neighborhood.

Morris remained at home to greet his mother, received her encomiums, cooked the dinner, and set out for afternoon school with a heavy heart and a heavier conscience. Nothing had occurred in those first hours to show any change in Mrs. Mowgelewsky's opinion of home pets; rather she seemed, in contrast to the mild and sympathetic Miss Bailey, more than ever dictatorial and dogmatic.

At a quarter after three, the gold fish having received perfunctory attention, and the Board of Monitors being left again to do their worst, unguarded, Morris and Teacher set out to prepare Mrs. Mowgelewsky's mind for the adoption of Izzie. They found it very difficult. Mrs.

Mowgelewsky, restored of vision, was so hospitable, so festive in her elephantine manner, so loquacious and so self-congratulatory, that it was difficult to insert even the tiniest conversational wedge into the structure of her monologue.

Finally Miss Bailey managed to catch her attention upon financial matters. "You gave me," she said, "two dollars and ten cents, and Morris has managed so beautifully that he has not used it all, and has five cents to return to you. He's a very wonderful little boy, Mrs. Mowgelewsky," she added, smiling at her favorite to give him courage.

"He iss a good boy," Mrs. Mowgelewsky admitted. "Don't you get lonesome sometimes by yourself here, huh?"

"Well," said Miss Bailey, "he wasn't always alone."

"No?" queried the matron with a divided attention. She was looking for her purse, in which she wished to stow Morris's surplus.

"No," said Teacher; "I was here once or twice. And then a little friend of his——"

"Friend," the mother repeated with a glare; "was friends here in mine house?"

Miss Bailey began a purposely vague reply, but Mrs. Mowgelewsky was not listening to her. She had searched the pockets of the gown she wore, then various other hiding-places in the region of its waist line, then a large bag of mattress covering which she wore under her skirt. Ever hurriedly and more hurriedly she repeated this performance two or three times, and then proceeded to shake and wring the out-door clothing which she had worn that morning.

"Gott!" she broke out at last, "mine Gott! mine Gott! it don't stands." And she began to peer about the floor with eyes not yet quite adjusted. Morris easily recognized the symptoms.

"She's lost her pocket-book," he told Miss Bailey.

"Yes, I lost it," wailed Mrs. Mowgelewsky, and then the whole party participated in the search. Over and under the furniture, the carpets, the bed, the stove, over and under everything in the apartment went Mrs. Mowgelewsky and Morris. All the joy of home-coming and of well-being was darkened and blotted out by this new calamity. And Mrs. Mowgelewsky beat her breast and tore her hair, and Constance Bailey almost wept in sympathy. But the pocket-book was gone, absolutely gone, though Mrs. Mowgelewsky called Heaven and earth to witness that she had had it in her hand when she came in.

Another month's rent was due; the money to pay it was in the pocket-book. Mr. Mowgelewsky had visited his wife on Sunday, and had given her all his earnings as some salve to the pain of her eyes. Eviction, starvation, every kind of terror and disaster were thrown into Mrs. Mowgelewsky's wailing, and Morris proved an able second to his mother.

Miss Bailey was doing frantic bookkeeping in her charitable mind, and was wondering how much of the loss she might replace. She was about to suggest as a last resort that a search should be made of the dark and crannied stairs, where a purse, if the Fates were very, very kind, might lie undiscovered for hours, when a dull scratching made itself heard through the general lamentation. It came from a point far down on the panel of the door, and the same horrible conviction seized upon Morris and upon Miss Bailey at the same moment.

Mrs. Mowgelewsky in her frantic round had approached the door for the one-hundredth time, and with eyes and mind far removed from what she was doing, she turned the handle. And entered Izzie, beautifully erect upon his hind legs, with a yard or two of rope trailing behind him, and a pocket-book fast in his teeth.

Blank, pure surprise took Mrs. Mowgelewsky for its own. She staggered back into a chair, fortunately of heavy architecture, and stared at the apparition before her. Izzie came daintily in, sniffed at Morris, sniffed at Miss Bailey, sniffed at Mrs. Mowgelewsky's ample skirts, identified her as the owner of the pocket-book, laid it at her feet, and extended a paw to be shaken.

"Mine Gott!" said Mrs. Mowgelewsky, "what for a dog iss that?" She counted her wealth, shook Izzie's paw, and then stooped forward, gathered him into her large embrace, and cried like a baby. "Mine Gott! Mine Gott!" she wailed again, and although she spent five minutes in apparent effort to evolve another and more suitable remark, her research met with no greater success than the addition:

"He ain't a dog at all; he iss friends."

Miss Bailey had been sent to an eminently good college, and had been instructed long and hard in psychology, so that she knew the psychologic moment when she met it. She now arose with congratulations and farewells. Mrs. Mowgelewsky arose also with Izzie still in her arms. She lavished endearments upon him and caresses upon his short black nose, and Izzie received them all with enthusiastic gratitude.

"And I think," said Miss Bailey in parting, "that you had better let that dog come with me. He

seems a nice enough little thing, quiet, gentle, and very intelligent. He can live in the yard with Rover."

Morris turned his large eyes from one to another of his rulers, and Izzie, also good at psychologic moments, stretched out a pointed pink tongue and licked Mrs. Mowgelewsky's cheek. "This dog," said that lady majestically, "iss mine. Nobody couldn't never to have him. When I was in mine trouble, was it mans or was it ladies what takes und gives me mine money back? No! Was it neighbors? No! Was it you, Miss Teacher, mine friend? No! It was that dog. Here he stays mit me. Morris, my golden one, you wouldn't to have no feelin's 'bout mamma havin' dogs? You wouldn't to have mads?"

"No, ma'am," responded her obedient son; "Missis Bailey she says it's *fer* boys they should make all things what is lovin' mit cats und dogs und horses."

"Goot," said his mother; "I guess, maybe, that ain't such a foolishness."

It was not until nearly bedtime that Mrs. Mowgelewsky reverted to that part of Miss Bailey's conversation immediately preceding the discovery of the loss of the purse.

"So-o-oh, my golden one," she began, lying back in her chair with Izzie on her lap—"so-o-oh, you had friends by the house when mamma was by hospital."

"On'y one," Morris answered faintly.

"Well, I ain't scoldin'," said his mother. "Where iss your friend? I likes I shall look on him. Ain't he comin' round to-night?"

"No ma'am," answered Morris, settling himself at her side, and laying his head close to his friend. "He couldn't to go out by nights the while he gets adopted off of a lady."

HAMLIN GARLAND

A CAMPING TRIP

It was the fifteenth of June, and the sun glazed down upon the dry cornfield as if it had a spite against Lincoln Stewart, who was riding a gayly painted new sulky corn-plow, guiding the shovels with his feet. The corn was about knee-high and rustled softly, almost as if whispering, not yet large enough to speak aloud.

Working all day in a level field like this, with the sun burning one's neck brown as a leather glove, is apt to make one dream of cool river pools, where the water snakes wiggle to and fro, and the kingfishers fly above the bright ripples in which the rock bass love to play.

It was about four o'clock, and Lincoln was tired. His neck ached, his toes were swollen, and his tongue called for a drink of water. He got off the plow, after turning the horses' heads to the faint western breeze, and took a seat on the fence in the shade of a small popple tree on which a king-bird had a nest.

Somebody was galloping up the road with a regular rise and fall in the saddle which showed the perfect horseman and easy rider. It was Milton Jennings.

"Hello, Lincoln!" shouted Milton.

"Hello, Milt," Lincoln returned. "Why ain't you at home workin' like an honest man?"

"Better business on hand. I've come clear over here to-day to see you——"

"Well, here I am."

"Let's go to Clear Lake."

Lincoln stared hard at him.

"D'ye mean it?"

"You bet I do! I can put in a horse. Bert Jenks will lend us his boat—put it right on in place of the wagon box—and we can borrow Captain Knapp's tent. We'll get Rance to go, too."

"I'm with you," said Lincoln, leaping down, his face aglow with the idea. "But won't you go up and break it gently to the boss? He's got his mind kind o' set on my goin' through this corn again."

When'll we start?"

"Let's see—to-day is Wednesday—we ought to get off on Monday."

"Well, now, if you don't mind, Milt, I'd like to have you go up and see what Father says."

"I'll fix him," said Milton. "Where is he?"

"Right up the road, mending fence."

Lincoln was so tickled he not only leaped the fence, but sprang into the plow seat from behind and started on another round, singing, showing how instantly hope of play can lighten a boy's task. But when he came back to the fence, Milton was not in sight, and his heart fell—the outlook was not so assuring.

It was nearly an hour later when Milton came riding back. Lincoln looked up and saw him wave his hand and heard his shout. The victory was won. Mr. Stewart had consented.

Lincoln whooped with such wild delight that the horses, swerving to the right, plowed up two rows of corn for several rods before they could be brought back into place.

"It's all O.K.," Milton called. "But I've got to come over with my team and help you go through the corn the other way."

From that on, nothing else was thought of or talked of. Each night the four boys got together at Mr. Jennings's house, each one bringing things that he thought he needed. They had never looked upon a sheet of water larger than the mill-pond on the Cedar River, and the cool face of that beautiful lake, of which they had heard so much, allured them.

The boat was carefully mended, and Rance, who was a good deal of a sailor, naturally talked about making a sail for it.

Lists of articles were carefully drawn up thus:

4 tin cups	4 knives and forks
1 spider	1 kettle, etc.

At Sunday School the campers became the center of attraction for the other small boys, and quite a number of them went home with Lincoln to look over the vehicle—a common lumber wagon with a boat for the box, projecting dangerously near the horses' tails and trailing far astern. From the edges of the boat arose a few hoops, making a kind of cover, like a prairie schooner. [100-1] In the box were "traps" innumerable in charge of Bert, who was "chief cook and bottlewasher."

Each man's duty had been assigned. Lincoln was to take care of the horses, Milton was to look after the tent and places to sleep, Rance was treasurer, and Bert was the cook, with the treasurer to assist. All these preparations amused an old soldier like Captain Knapp.

"Are you going to get back this fall?" he asked slyly, as he stood about, enjoying the talk.

"We'll try to," replied Milton.

Yes, there the craft stood, all ready to sail at day-break, with no wind or tide to prevent, and every boy who saw it said, "I wish I could go." And the campers, not selfish in their fun, felt a pang of pity, as they answered, "We wish you could, boys."

It was arranged that they were all to sleep in the ship that night, and so as night fell and the visitors drew off, the four navigators went into the kitchen, where Mrs. Jennings set out some bread and milk for them.

"Now, boys, d'ye suppose you got bread enough?"

"We've got twelve loaves."

"Well, of course you can buy bread and milk, so I guess you won't starve."

"I guess not—not with fish plenty," they assured her.

"Well, now, don't set up too late, *talkin'* about gettin' off."

"We're goin' to turn right in, ain't we, boys?"

"You bet. We're goin' to get out of here before sun-up to-morrow mornin'," replied Bert.

"Well, see't you do," said Mr. Jennings, who liked boys to have a good time. "I'll be up long before you are."

"Don't be too sure o' that."

It was delicious going to bed in that curious place, with the stars shining in and the katydids singing. It gave them all a new view of life.

"Now, the first feller that wakes up, yell," said Bert, as he crept under the blanket.

"First feller asleep, whistle," said Lincoln.

"That won't be you, that's sure," grumbled Rance, already dozing.

As a matter of fact, no one slept much. About two o'clock they began, first one, and then the other:

"Say, boys, don't you think it's about time?"

"Boys, it's gettin' daylight in the east!"

"No, it ain't. That's the moon."

At last the first faint light of the sun appeared, and Lincoln rose, fed the horses, and harnessed them while the other boys got everything else in readiness.

Mr. Jennings came out soon, and Mrs. Jennings got some hot coffee for them, and before the sun was anywhere near the horizon, they said good-by and were off. Mr. Jennings shouted many directions about the road, while Mrs. Jennings told them again to be careful on the water.

To tell the truth, the boys were a little fagged at first, but at last as the sun rose, the robins began to chatter, and the bobolinks began to ring their fairy bells, and the boys broke into song. For the first hour or two the road was familiar and excited no interest, but then they came upon new roads, new fields, and new villages. Streams curved down the slopes and ran musically across the road, as if on purpose to water their horses. Wells beside the fences under silver-leaf maples invited them to stop and drink and lunch. Boys they didn't know, on their way to work, stopped and looked at them enviously. How glorious it all was!

The sun grew hot, and at eleven o'clock they drew up in a beautiful grove of oaks, beside a swift and sparkling little river, for dinner and to rest their sweaty team. They concluded to eat doughnuts and drink milk for that meal, and this gave them time to fish a little and swim a good deal, while the horses munched hay under the trees.

After a good long rest, they hitched the team in again and started on toward the west. They had still half-way (twenty-five miles) to go. The way grew stranger. The land, more broken and treeless, seemed very wonderful to them. They came into a region full of dry lake-beds, and Bert, who had a taste for geology, explained the cause of the valleys so level at the bottom, and pointed out the old-time limits of the water. As night began to fall, it seemed they had been a week on the way.

At last, just as the sun was setting, they saw a dark belt of woods ahead of them and came to a narrow river, which the farmers said was the outlet of the lake. They pushed on faster, for the roads were better, and just at dusk they drove into the little village street which led down to the lake, to which their hungry eyes went out first of all.

How glorious it looked, with its waves lapping the gravelly beach, and the dark groves of trees standing purple-black against the orange sky. They sat and gazed at it for several minutes without saying a word. Finally Rance said, with a sigh, "Oh, wouldn't I like to jump into that water!"

"Well, this won't do. We must get a camp," said Milton; and they pulled the team into a road leading along the east shore of the lake.

"Where can a fellow camp?" Bert called to a young man who met them, with a pair of oars on his back.

"Anywhere down in the woods." He pointed to the south.

They soon reached a densely wooded shore where no one stood guard, and drove along an old wood road to a superb camping-place near the lake shore under a fine oak grove.

"Whoa!" yelled Milton.

All hands leaped out. Milton and Lincoln took care of the horses. Bert seized an axe and chopped on one side of two saplings, bent them together, tied them, cleared away the brush around them, and with Rance's help drew the tent cloth over them—this was the camp! While they dug up the bedding and put it in place, Rance built a fire and set some coffee boiling.

By the time they sat down to eat their bread and coffee and cold chicken, the grove was dark. The smoke rose in a billowy mass, vanishing in the dark, cool shadows of the oaks above. A breeze was rising. Below them they could hear the lap of the waves on the bowlders. It was all so fine, so enjoyable, that it seemed a dream from which they were in danger of waking.

After eating, they all took hold of the boat and eased it down the bank into the water.

"Now, who's goin' to catch the fish for breakfast?" asked Bert.

"I will," replied Rance, who was a "lucky" fisherman. "I'll have some fish by sun-up—see if I don't."

Their beds were hay, with abundant quilts and blankets spread above, and as Lincoln lay looking out of the tent door at the smoke curling up, hearing the horses chewing and an owl hooting, it seemed gloriously like the stories he had read, and the dreams he had had of sometime being free from care and free from toil, far in the wilderness.

"I wish I could do this all the time," he said to Milton, who was looking at the fire, his chin resting in his palms.

"I can tell better after a week of it," retorted Milton.

To a boy like Lincoln or Rance, that evening was worth the whole journey, that strange, delicious hour in the deepening darkness, when everything seemed of some sweet, remembered far-off world—they were in truth living as their savage ancestry lived, close to nature's mystery.

The pensiveness did not prevent Milton from hitting Bert a tremendous slap with a boot-leg, saying, "Hello! that mosquito pretty near had you that time."

And Bert, familiar with Milton's pranks, turned upon him, and a rough and tumble tussle went on till Rance cried out: "Look out there! You'll be tippin' over my butter!"

At last the rustle of the leaves over their heads died out in dreams and the boys fell asleep, deliciously tired, full of plans for the next day.

Morning dawned, cool and bright, and Bert was stirring before sunrise. Rance was out in the boat before the pink had come upon the lake, while Milton was "skirmishing" for some milk.

How delicious that breakfast! Newly fried perch, new milk with bread and potatoes from home—but the freedom, the strange familiarity of it all! There in the dim, sweet woods, with the smoke curling up into the leafy masses above, the sunlight just dropping upon the lake, the killdeer, the robin, and the blue jay crying in the still, cool morning air. This was indeed life. The hot cornfields were far away.

Breakfast having been eaten to the last scrap of fish, they made a rush for the lake and the boat. There it lay, moving a little on the light waves, a frail little yellow craft without keel or rudder, but something to float in, anyhow. There rippled the lake six miles long, cool and sparkling, and boats were getting out into the mid-water like huge "skimmer-bugs,"^[105-11] carrying fisherman to their tasks.

While the other boys fished for perch and bass for dinner, Lincoln studied the shore. The beach which was their boat-landing was made up of fine, varicolored boulders, many of them round as cannon balls, and Lincoln thought of the thousands of years they been rolling and grinding there, rounding each other and polishing each other till they glistened like garnets and rubies. And then the sand!

He waded out into the clear yellow waters and examined the bottom, which was set in tiny waves beautifully regular, the miniature reflexes of the water in motion. It made him think of the little wind waves in the snow, which he had often wondered at in winter.

Growing tired of this, he returned to the bank, and lying down on the grass gave himself up to the rest and freedom and beauty of the day. He no longer felt like "making the most of it." It seemed as if he were always to live like this.

The others came in after awhile with a few bass and many perch which were beautifully marked in pearl and gray, to correspond with the sand bottom, though the boys didn't know that. There were no large fish so near shore, and they lacked the courage to go far out, for the whitecaps glittered now and then in mid-water.

They ate every "smidgin" of the fish at dinner, and their larder looked desperately bare. They went out into the deeper water, all feeling a little timorous, as the little boat began to rock on the waves.

Lincoln was fascinated with the water, which was so clear that he could see fish swimming far below. The boat seemed floating in the air. At times they passed above strange and beautiful forests of weeds and grasses, jungles which scared him, for he remembered the story of a man who had been caught and drowned by just such clinging weeds, and besides, what monsters these mysterious places might conceal!

Other boats came around them. Sailboats passed, and the little steamer, the pride of the lake, passed over to "the island." Yachts that seemed to the boys immense went by, loaded with merry-makers. Everything was as strange, as exciting, as if they were in a new world.

Rance was much taken by the sailboats. "I'm going to rig a sail on our boat, or die tryin'," he declared.

He spent the whole afternoon at this work while the other boys played ball and shot at a target, and by night was ready for a sail, though the others were skeptical of results.

That second night was less restful. The mosquitoes bit and a loud thunderstorm passed over. As they heard the roar of the falling rain on the tent and the wet spatter in their faces, and heard the water drip-drop on their bread-box, Milton and Lincoln wished themselves at home.

It grew cooler toward morning and the mosquitoes left, so that they all slept like bear cubs, rising fresh and rested.

It was a little discouraging at first. Everything was wet and the bread was inclined to be mouldy and tasted of the box; but the birds were singing, the sky was bright and cool, and a fresh western wind was blowing.

Rance was eager to sail, and as soon as he had put away the breakfast, he shouldered his mast.

"Come on, boys, now for the boat."

"I guess not," said Milton.

The boat was soon rigged with a little triangular sail, with an oar to steer by, lashed in with wires. Lincoln finally had courage to get in, and with beating heart Rance pushed off.

The sail caught the breeze, and the boat began to move.

"Hurrah!" Rance threw water on the sail; where he learned *that* was a mystery. The effect was felt at once. The cloth swelled, became impervious to the wind, and the boat swept steadily forward.

Lincoln was cautious. "That is all right—the question is, can we get back?"

"You wait an' see me tack."

"All right. Tack or nail, only let's see you get back where we started from." Lincoln was skeptical of sailboats. He had heard about sailing "just where you wanted to go," but he had his doubts about it.

The boat obeyed the rudder nicely, came around slowly, and started in on a new tack smoothly and steadily. After this successful trip, the boys did little else but sail.

"I'm going up to town with it after dinner," Rance announced. But when they came out after dinner, they found the sky overcast and a strong breeze blowing from the southwest.

Milton refused to experiment. "I'd sooner walk than ride in your boat," he explained.

"All right; you pays your money—you takes your choice," replied Rance.

The boat drove out into the lake steadily and swiftly, making the water ripple at the stern delightfully; but when they got past a low-lying island where the waves ran free, the ship began to heave and slide wildly, and Lincoln grew a little pale and set in the face, which made Rance smile.

"This is something like it. I'm going to go out about half a mile, then strike straight for the town."

It was not long before he found the boat quite unmanageable. The long oar crowded him nearly off the seat, as he tried to hold her straight out into mid-water. She was flat-bottomed, and as she got into the region of whitecaps, she began to be blown bodily with the wind.

Lincoln was excited, but not scared; he realized now that they were in great danger. Rance continued to smile, but it was evident that he too was thinking new thoughts. He held the sail with his right hand, easing it off and holding it tight by looping the rope on a peg set in the gunwhale. But it was impossible for Lincoln to help him. All depended on him alone.

"Turn!—turn it!" shouted Lincoln. "Don't you see we can't get back?"

"I'm afraid of breakin' my rudder."

There lay the danger. The oar was merely lashed into a notch in the stern, with wire. The leverage was very great, but Rance brought the boat about and headed her for the town nearly three miles away.

They both thrilled with a sort of pleasure to feel the boat leap under them as she caught the full force of the wind in her sail. If they could hold her in that line, they were all right. She careened once till she dipped water.

"Get on the edge!" commanded Rance, easing the sail off. Lincoln climbed upon the edge of the little pine shell, scarcely eighteen inches high, and the boat steadied. Both looked relieved.

The water was getting a lead color, streaked with foam, and the hissing of the whitecaps had a curiously snaky sound, as they spit water into the boat. The rocking had opened a seam in the bottom, and Lincoln was forced to bail furiously.

Rance, though a boy of unusual strength, clear-headed and resolute in time of danger, began to feel that he was master only for a time.

"I don't suppose this is much of a blow," he grunted, "but I don't see any of the other boats out."

Lincoln glanced around him; all the boats, even the two-masters, were in or putting in. Lightning began to run down the clouds in the west in zigzag streams. The boat, from time to time, was swept sidewise out of its course, but Rance dared not ease the sail for fear he could not steer her, and besides he was afraid of the rapidly approaching squall. If she turned sideways toward the wind, she would instantly fill.

He sat there, with the handle of the oar at his right hip, the rope in his hand with one loop round the peg, and every time the gust struck the sail he was lifted from his seat by the crowding of the oar and the haul of the rope. His muscles swelled tense and rigid—the sweat poured from his face; but he laughed when Lincoln, with reckless drollery, began to shout a few nautical words.

"Luff, [111-1] you lubber—why don't you luff? Hard-a-port, there, you'll have us playin' on the sand yet. That's right. All we got to do is to hard-a-port when the wind blows."

The farther they went, the higher the waves rolled, till the boat creaked and gaped under its strain, and the water began to come in fast.

"Bail 'er out!" shouted the pilot. The thunder broke over their heads, and far away to the left they could see rain and the water white with foam, but they were nearing the beach at the foot of the street. A crowd was watching them with motionless intensity.

They were now in the midst of a fleet of anchored boats. The blast struck the sail, tearing it loose and filling the boat with water, but Rance held to his rudder, and threading her way among the boats, the little craft ran half her length upon the sand.

As Rance leaped ashore, he staggered with weakness. Both took shelter in a near-by boathouse. The boat-keeper jeered at them: "Don't you know any more'n to go out in such a *tub* as that on a day like this? I expected every minute to see you go over."

"We didn't," said Rance. "I guess we made pretty good time."

"Time! you'd better say time! If you'd been five minutes later, you'd had *time* enough."

It was a foolhardy thing—Rance could see it now as he looked out on the mad water, and at the little flat, awkward boat on the sand.

An hour later, as they walked up the wood, they met the other boys half-way on the road, badly scared.

"By golly! We thought you were goners," said Milton. "Why, we couldn't see the boat after you got out a little ways. Looked like you were both sittin' in the water."

They found the camp badly demoralized. Their blankets were wet and the tent blown out of plumb, but they set to work clearing things up. The rain passed and the sun came out again, and when they sat down to their supper, the storm was far away.

It was glorious business to these prairie boys. Released from work in the hot cornfields, in camp on a lovely lake, with nothing to do but swim or doze when they pleased, they had the delicious feeling of being travelers in a strange country—explorers of desert wilds, hunters and fishers in the wildernesses of the mysterious West.

To Lincoln it was all so beautiful that it almost made him sad. When he should have enjoyed every moment, he was saying to himself, "Day after to-morrow we must start for home"—the happy days passed all too swiftly.

Occasionally Milton said: "I wish I had one o' Mother's biscuits this morning," or some such remark, but some one usually shied a potato at him. Such remarks were heretical.

They explored the woods to the south, a wild jungle, which it was easy to imagine quite unexplored. Some years before a gang of horse thieves had lived there, and their grass-grown paths were of thrilling interest, although the boys never quite cared to follow them to the house where the shooting of the leader had taken place.

Altogether it was a wonderful week, and when they loaded up their boat and piled their plunder

in behind, it was with sad hearts. It was late Saturday night when they drew up in Mr. Jennings's yard, but to show that they were thoroughly hardened campers, they slept in the wagon another night—at least three of them did. Milton shamelessly sneaked away to his bed, and they did not miss him until morning.

Mrs. Jennings invited them all to breakfast and nobody refused. "Land o' Goshen," said she, "you eat as if you were starved."

"We are," replied Bert.

"Oh, but it was fun, wasn't it, boys?" cried Lincoln.

"You bet it was. Let's go again next year."

"All right," said Milton; "raise your weapons and swear."

They all lifted their knives in solemn covenant to go again the following year. But they never did. Of such changeful stuff are the plans of youth!

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

A THREAD WITHOUT A KNOT

I

When the assistant in the history department announced to Professor Endicott his intention of spending several months in Paris to complete the research work necessary to his doctor's dissertation,[114-1] the head of the department looked at him with an astonishment so unflattering in its significance that the younger man laughed aloud.

"You didn't think I had it in me to take it so seriously, did you, Prof?" he said, with his usual undisturbed and amused perception of the other's estimate of him. "And you're dead right, too! I'm doing it because I've got to, that's all. It's borne in on me that you can't climb up very fast in modern American universities unless you've got a doctor's degree, and you can't be a Ph.D. without having dug around some in a European library. I've picked out a subject that needs just as little of that as any—you know as well as I do that right here in Illinois I can find out everything that's worth knowing about the early French explorers of the Mississippi—but three months in the Archives[114-2] in Paris ought to put a polish on my dissertation that will make even Columbia and Harvard sit up and blink. Am I right in my calculations?"

Professor Endicott's thin shoulders executed a resigned shrug. "You are always right in your calculations, my dear Harrison," he said; adding, with an ambiguous intonation, "And I suppose I am to salute in you the American scholar of the future."

Harrison laughed again without resentment, and proceeded indulgently to reassure his chief. "No, sir, you needn't be alarmed. There'll always be enough American-born scholars to keep you from being lonesome, just as there'll always be others like me, that don't pretend to have a drop of real scholar's blood in them. I want to *teach!*—to teach history!—American history!—teach it to fool young undergraduates who don't know what kind of a country they've got, nor what they ought to make out of it, now they've got it. And I'm going in to get a Ph. D. the same way I wear a stiff shirt and collars and cuffs, not because I was brought up to believe in them as necessary to salvation—because I wasn't, Lord knows!—but because there's a prejudice in favor of them among the people I've got to deal with." He drew a long breath and went on, "Besides, Miss Warner and I have been engaged about long enough. I want to earn enough to get married on, and Ph. D. means advancement."

Professor Endicott assented dryly: "That is undoubtedly just what it means nowadays. But you will 'advance,' as you call it, under any circumstances. You will not remain a professor of history. I give you ten years to be president of one of our large Western universities."

His accent made the prophecy by no means a compliment, but Harrison shook his hand with undiminished good-will. "Well, Prof, if I am, my first appointment will be to make you head of the history department with twice the usual salary, and only one lecture a week to deliver to a class of four P.G's—post-graduates, you know. I know a scholar when I see one, if I don't belong to the tribe myself, and I know how they ought to be treated."

If, in his turn, he put into a neutral phrase an ironical significance, it was hidden by the hearty

and honest friendliness of his keen, dark eyes as he delivered this farewell.

The older man's ascetic face relaxed a little. "You are a good fellow, Harrison, and I'm sure I wish you any strange sort of success you happen to desire."

"Same to you, Professor. If I thought it would do any good, I'd run down from Paris to Munich[116-1] with a gun and try scaring the editor of the *Central-Blatt* into admitting that you're right about that second clause in the treaty of Utrecht." [116-2]

Professor Endicott fell back into severity. "I'm afraid," he observed, returning to the papers on his desk, "I'm afraid that would not be a very efficacious method of determining a question of historical accuracy."

Harrison settled his soft hat firmly on his head. "I suppose you're right," he remarked, adding as he disappeared through the door, "But more's the pity!"

II

He made short work of settling himself in Paris, taking a cheap furnished room near the Bibliothèque Nationale,[117-1] discovering at once the inexpensive and nourishing qualities of *crémèries* and the Duval restaurants, and adapting himself to the eccentricities of Paris weather in March with flannel underwear and rubber overshoes. He attacked the big folios in the library with ferocious energy, being the first to arrive in the huge, quiet reading-room, and leaving it only at the imperative summons of the authorities. He had barely enough money to last through March, April, and May, and, as he wrote in his long Sunday afternoon letters to Maggie Warner, he would rather work fifteen hours a day now while he was fresh at it, than be forced to, later on, when decent weather began, and when he hoped to go about a little and make some of the interesting historical pilgrimages in the environs of Paris.

He made a point of this writing his fiancée every detail of his plans, as well as all the small happenings of his monotonous and laborious life; and so, quite naturally, he described to her the beginning of his acquaintance with Agatha Midland.

"I'd spotted her for English," he wrote, "long before I happened to see her name on a notebook. Don't it sound like a made-up name out of an English novel? And that is the way she looks, too. I understand now why no American girl is ever called Agatha. To fit it you have to look sort of droopy all over, as if things weren't going to suit you, but you couldn't do anything to help it, and did not, from sad experience, have any rosy hopes that somebody would come along to fix things right. I'm not surprised that when English women do get stirred up over anything—for instance, like voting, nowadays—they fight like tiger-cats. If this Agatha-person is a fair specimen, they don't look as though they were used to getting what they want any other way. But here I go, like every other fool traveler, making generalizations about a whole nation from seeing one specimen. On the other side of me from Miss Midland usually sits an old German, grubbing away at Sanskrit roots. The other day we got into talk in the little lunchroom here in the same building with the library, where all we readers go to feed, and he made me so mad I couldn't digest my bread and milk. Once, just once, when he was real young, he met an American woman student—a regular P. G. freak, I gather—and nothing will convince him that all American girls aren't like her. 'May God forgive Christopher Columbus!' he groans whenever he thinks of her...."

There was no more in this letter about his English neighbor, but in the next, written a week later, he said:

"We've struck up an acquaintance, the discouraged-looking English girl and I, and she isn't so frozen-up as she seems. This is how it happened. I told you about the little lunchroom where the readers from the library get their noonday feed. Well, a day or so ago I was sitting at the next table to her, and when she'd finished eating and felt for her purse, I saw her get pale, and I knew right off she'd lost her money. 'If you'll excuse me, Miss Midland,' I said, 'I'll be glad to loan you a little. My name is Harrison, Peter Harrison, and I usually sit next you in the reading-room.' Say, Maggie, you don't know how queerly she looked at me. I can't tell you what her expression was like, for I couldn't make head or tail out of it. It was like looking at a Hebrew book that you don't know whether to read backward or forward. She got whiter, and drew away and said something about 'No! No! she couldn't think——' But there stood the waiter with his hand out. I couldn't stop to figure out if she was mad or scared. I said 'Look-y-here, Miss Midland, I'm an American—here's my card—I just want to help you out, that's all. You needn't be afraid I'll bother you any.' And with that I asked the waiter how much it was, paid him, and went out for my usual half-hour constitutional in the little park opposite the library.

"When I went back to the reading-room, she was there in the seat next me, all

right, but my, wasn't she buried in a big folio! She's studying in some kind of old music-books. You would have laughed to see how she didn't know I existed. I forgot all about her till closing-up time, but when I got out in the court a little ahead of her, I found it was raining and blowing to beat the cars, and I went back to hunt her up, I being the only person that knew she was broke. There she was, moping around in the vestibule under one of those awful pancake hats English women wear. I took out six cents—it costs that to ride in the omnibuses here—and I marched up to her. 'Miss Midland,' I said, 'excuse me again, but the weather is something terrible. You can't refuse to let me loan you enough to get home in a 'bus, for you would certainly catch your death of cold, not to speak of spoiling your clothes, if you tried to walk in this storm.'

"She looked at me queerly again, drew in her chin, and said very fierce, 'No, certainly not! Some one always comes to fetch me away.'

"Of course I didn't believe a word of *that!* It was just a bluff to keep from seeming to need anything. So I smiled at her and said, 'That's all right, but suppose something happens this evening so he doesn't get here. I guess you'd better take the six sous—they won't hurt you any.' And I took hold of her hand, put the coppers in it, shut her fingers, took off my hat, and skipped out before she could get her breath. There are a *few* times when women are so contrary you can't do the right thing by them without bossing them around a little.

"Well, I thought sure if she'd been mad at noon she'd just be hopping mad over that last, but the next morning she came up to me in the vestibule and smiled at me, the funniest little wavery smile, as though she were trying on a brand-new expression. It made her look almost pretty. 'Good morning, Mr. Harrison,' she said in that soft, singsong tone English women have, 'here is your loan back again. I hope I have the sum you paid for my lunch correct—and thank you very much.'

"I hated to take her little money, for her clothes are awfully plain and don't look as though she had any too much cash, but of course I did, and even told her that I'd given the waiter a three-cent tip she'd forgotten to figure in. When you *can*, I think it's only the square thing to treat women like human beings with sense, and I knew how I'd feel about being sure I'd returned all of a loan from a stranger. 'Oh, thank you for telling me,' she said, and took three more coppers out of her little purse; and by gracious! we walked into the reading-room as friendly as could be.

"That was last Wednesday, and twice since then we've happened to take lunch at the same table, and have had a regular visit. It tickles me to see how scared she is yet of the idea that she's actually talking to a real man that hasn't been introduced to her, but I find her awfully interesting, she's so different."

III

During the week that followed this letter, matters progressed rapidly. The two Anglo-Saxons took lunch together every day, and by Friday the relations between them were such that, as they pushed back their chairs, Harrison said: "Excuse me, Miss Midland, for seeming to dictate to you *all* the time, but why in the world don't you go out after lunch and take a half-hour's walk as I do? It'd be a lot better for your health."

The English girl looked at him with the expression for which he had as yet found no word more adequately descriptive than his vague "queer." "I haven't exactly the habit of walking about Paris streets alone, you know," she said.

"Oh, yes, to be sure," returned the American. "I remember hearing that young ladies can't do that here the way they do back home. But that's easy fixed. You won't be out in the streets, and you won't be alone, if you come out with me in the little park opposite. Come on! It's the first spring day."

Miss Midland dropped her arms with a gesture of helpless wonder. "Well, *really!*" she exclaimed. "*Do* you think that so much better?" But she rose and prepared to follow him, as if her protest could not stand before the kindly earnestness of his manner. "There!" he said, after he had guided her across the street into the tiny green square where in the sudden spring warmth, the chestnut buds were already swollen and showing lines of green. "To answer your question, I think it not only better, but absolutely all right—O. K!"

They were sitting on a bench at one side of the fountain, whose tinkling splash filled the momentary silence before she answered, "I can't make it all out—" she smiled at him—"but I think you are right in saying that it is all O.K." He laughed, and stretched out his long legs comfortably. "You've got the idea. That's the way to get the good of traveling and seeing other kinds of folks. You learn my queer slang words, and I'll learn yours."

Miss Midland stared again, and she cried out, "*My* queer slang words! What can you mean?"

He rattled off a glib list: "Why, 'just fancy now,' and 'only think of that!' and 'I dare say, indeed,' and a lot more."

"But they are not queer!" she exclaimed.

"They sound just as queer to me as 'O.K.' and 'I guess' do to you!" he said triumphantly.

She blinked her eyes rapidly, as though taking in an inconceivable idea, while he held her fixed with a steady gaze which lost none of its firmness by being both good-humored and highly amused. Finally, reluctantly, she admitted, "Yes, I see. You mean I'm insular."

"Oh, as to that, I mean we both are—that is, we are as ignorant as stotin'-bottles of each other's ways of doing things. Only I want to find out about your ways, and you don't about——"

She broke in hastily, "Ah, but I do want to find out about yours! You—you make me very curious indeed." As she said this, she looked full at him with a grave simplicity which was instantly reflected on his own face.

"Well, Miss Midland," he said slowly, "maybe now's a good time to say it, and maybe it's a good thing to say, since you *don't* know about our ways—to give you a sort of declaration of principles. I wasn't brought up in very polite society—my father and mother were Iowa farmer-folks, and I lost them early, and I've had to look out for myself ever since I was fourteen, so I'm not very long on *polish*; but let me tell you, as they say about other awkward people, I *mean* well. We're both poor students working together in a foreign country, and maybe I can do something to make it pleasanter for you, as I would for a fellow-student woman in my country. If I can, I'd like to, fine! I want to do what's square by everybody, and by women specially. I don't think they get a fair deal mostly. I think they've got as much sense as men, and lots of them more, and I like to treat them accordingly. So don't you mind if I do some Rube things that seem queer to you, and do remember that you can be dead sure that I *never* mean any harm."

He finished this speech with an urgent sincerity in his voice, quite different from his usual whimsical note, and for a moment they looked at each other almost solemnly, the girl's lips parted, her blue eyes wide and serious. She flushed a clear rose-pink. "Why!" she said, "Why, I *believe* you!" Harrison broke the tension with a laugh. "And what is there so surprising if you do?"

"I don't think," she said slowly, "that I ever saw any one before whom I would believe if he said that last."

"Dear me!" cried Harrison, gaily, getting to his feet. "You'll make me think you are a hardened cynic. Well, if you believe me, *that's* all right! And now, come on, let's walk a little, and you tell me why English people treat their girls so differently from their boys. You are a perfect gold mine of information to me, do you know it?"

"But I've always taken for granted most of the things you find so queer about our ways. I thought that was the way they were, don't you see, by the nature of things."

"*Aha!*" he said triumphantly. "You see another good of traveling! It stirs a person up. If you can give me a lot of new facts, maybe I can pay you back by giving you some new ideas."

"I think," said Miss Midland, with a soft energy, "I think you can, indeed."

IV

A week after this was the first of April, and when Harrison, as was his wont, reached the reading-room a little before the opening hour, he found a notice on the door to the effect that the fall of some plastering from a ceiling necessitated the closing of the reading-room for that day. A week of daily lunches and talks with Miss Midland had given him the habit of communicating his ideas to her, and he waited inside the vestibule for her to appear. He happened thus, as he had not before, to see her arrival. Accompanied by an elderly person in black, who looked, even to Harrison's inexperienced eyes, like a maid-servant, she came rapidly in through the archway which led from the street to the court. Here, halting a moment, she dismissed her attendant with a gesture, and, quite unconscious of the young man's gaze upon her, crossed the court diagonally with a free, graceful step. Observing her thus at his leisure, Harrison was moved to the first and almost the last personal comment upon his new friend. He did not as a rule notice very keenly the outward aspect of his associates. "Well, by gracious," he said to himself, "if she's not quite a good-looker!—or would be if she had money or gumption enough to put on a little more style!"

He took a sudden resolution and, meeting her at the foot of the steps, laid his plan enthusiastically before her. It took her breath away. "Oh, no, I *couldn't*," she exclaimed, looking about her helplessly as if foreseeing already that she would yield. "What would people——?"

"Nobody would say a thing, because nobody would know about it. We could go and get back here by the usual closing time, so that whoever comes for you would never suspect—she's not

very sharp, is she?"

"No, no. She's only what you would call my hired girl."

"Well, then, it's Versailles[125-1] for us. Here, give me your portfolio to carry. Let's go by the tram line[125-2]—it's cheaper for two poor folks."

On the way out he proposed, with the same thrifty motive, that they buy provisions in the town, before they began their sight-seeing in the chateau, and eat a picnic lunch somewhere in the park.

"Oh, anything you please now!" she answered with reckless light-heartedness. "I'm quite lost already."

"There's nothing disreputable about eating sandwiches on the grass," he assured her; and indeed, when they spread their simple provision out under the great pines back of the Trianon, she seemed to agree with him, eating with a hearty appetite, laughing at all his jokes, and, with a fresh color and sparkling eyes, telling him that she had never enjoyed a meal more.

"Good for you! That's because you work too hard at your old history of music."—By this time each knew all the details of the other's research—"You ought to have somebody right at hand to make you take vacations and have a good time once in a while. You're too conscientious."

Then, because he was quite frank and unconscious himself, he went on with a simplicity which the most accomplished actor could not have counterfeited, "That's what I'm always telling Maggie—Miss Warner. She's the girl I'm engaged to."

He did not at the time remark, but afterward, in another land, he was to recall with startling vividness the quick flash of her clear eyes upon him and the fluttering droop of her eyelids. She finished her éclair quietly, remarking, "So you are engaged?"

"Very much so," answered Harrison, leaning his back against the pine-tree and closing his eyes, more completely to savor the faint fragrance of new life which rose about them in the warm spring air, like unseen incense.

Miss Midland stood up, shaking the crumbs from her skirt, and began fitting her gloves delicately upon her slim and very white hands. After a pause, "But how would she like *this*?" she asked.

Without opening his eyes, Harrison murmured, "She'd like it fine. She's a great girl for outdoors."

His companion glanced down at him sharply, but in his tranquil and half-somnolent face there was no trace of evasiveness. "I don't mean the park, the spring weather," she went on, with a persistence which evidently cost her an effort. "I mean your being here with another girl. That would make an English woman jealous."

Harrison opened his dark eyes wide and looked at her in surprise. "You don't understand—we're not flirting with each other, Maggie and I—we're engaged." He added with an air of proffering a self-evident explanation, "As good as married, you know."

Miss Midland seemed to find in the statement a great deal of material for meditation, for after an "Ah!" which might mean anything, she sat down on the other side of the tree, leaning her blonde head against its trunk and staring up into the thick green branches. Somewhere near them in an early-flowering yellow shrub a bee droned softly. After a time she remarked as if to herself, "They must take marriage very seriously in Iowa."

The young man aroused himself, to answer sleepily: "It's Illinois where I live now—Iowa was where I grew up—but it's all the same. Yes, we do."

After that there was another long, fragrant silence which lasted until Harrison roused himself with a sigh, exclaiming that although he would like nothing better than to sit right there till he took root, they had yet to "do" the two Trianons and to see the state carriages. During this sightseeing tour he repeated his performance of the morning in the chateau, pouring out a flood of familiar, quaintly expressed historical lore of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which made his astonished listener declare he must have lived at that time.

"Nope!" he answered her. "Got it all out of Illinois libraries. Books are great things if you're only willing to treat them right. And history—by gracious! history is a study fit for the gods! All about folks, and they are all that are worth while in the world!"

They were standing before the Grand Trianon as he said this, waiting for the tram car, and as it came into sight he cried out artlessly, his dark, aquiline face glowing with fervor, "I—I just *love* folks!"

She looked at him curiously. "In all my life I never knew any one before to say or think that." Some of his enthusiasm was reflected upon her own fine, thoughtful face as a sort of wistfulness

when she added, "It must make you very happy. I wish I could feel so."

"You don't look at them right," he protested.

She shook her head. "No, we haven't known the same kind. I had never even heard of the sort of people you seem to have known."

The tram car came noisily up to them, and no more was said.

V

A notice posted the following day to the effect that for some time the reading-room would be closed one day in the week for repairs, gave Harrison an excuse for insisting on weekly repetitions of what he called their historical picnics.

Miss Midland let herself be urged into these with a half-fearful pleasure which struck the young American as pathetic. "Anybody can see she's had mighty few good times in *her* life," he told himself. They "did" Fontainebleau,[129-1] Pierrefonds,[129-2] Vincennes,[129-3] and Chantilly[129-4]—this last expedition coming in the first week of May, ten days before Miss Midland was to leave Paris. They were again favored by wonderfully fine spring weather, so warm that the girl appeared in a light-colored cotton gown and a straw hat which, as her friend told her, with the familiarity born of a month of almost uninterrupted common life, made her look "for all the world like a picture."

After their usual conscientious and minute examination of the objects of historical interest, they betook themselves with their lunch-basket to a quiet corner of the park, by a clear little stream, on the other side of which a pair of white swans were building a nest. It was very still, and what faint breeze there was barely stirred the trees. The English girl took off her hat, and the sunlight on her blonde hair added another glory to the spring day.

They ate their lunch with few words, and afterward sat in what seemed to the American the most comfortable and companionable of silences, idly watching a peacock unfold the flashing splendor of his plumage before the old gray fountain. "My! My! My!" he murmured finally. "Isn't the world about the best place!"

The girl did not answer, and, glancing at her, he was startled to see that her lips were quivering. "Why, Miss Midland!" he cried anxiously. "Have you had bad news?"

She shook her head. "Nothing new."

"What's the matter?" he asked, coming around in front of her. "Perhaps I can help you even if it's only to give some good advice."

She looked up at him with a sudden flash. "I suppose that, since you are so much engaged, you think you would make a good father-confessor!"

"I don't see that that has anything to do with it," he said, sitting down beside her, "but you can bank on me for doing anything I can."

"You don't see that that has anything to do with it," she broke in sharply, with the evident intention of wounding him, "because you are very unworldly, what is usually called very unsophisticated."

If she had thought to pique him with this adjective, she was disarmed by the heartiness of his admission, "As green as grass! But I'd like to help you all the same, if I can."

"You don't care if you are?" she asked curiously.

"Lord no! What does it matter?"

"You may care then to know," she went on, still probing at him, "that your not caring is the principal reason for my—finding you interesting—for my liking you—as I do."

"Well, I'm interested to know that," he said reasonably, "but blessed if I can see why. What difference does it make to *you*?"

"It's a great surprise to me," she said clearly. "I never met anybody before who didn't care more about being sophisticated than about anything else. To have you not even think of that—to have you think of nothing but your work and how to 'mean well' as you say——" she stopped, flushing deeply.

"Yes, it must be quite a change," he admitted sobered by her tone, but evidently vague as to her meaning. "Well, I'm very glad you don't mind my being as green as grass and as dense as a hitching-block. It's very lucky for me."

A quick bitterness sprang into her voice. "I don't see," she echoed his phrase, "what difference

it makes to *you!*"

"Don't you?" he said, lighting a cigarette and not troubling himself to discuss the question with her. She was evidently all on edge with nerves, he thought, and needed to be calmed down. He pitied women for their nerves, and was always kindly tolerant of the resultant petulances.

She frowned and said with a tremulous resentment, as if gathering herself together for a long-premediated attempt at self-defense. "You're not only as green as grass, but you perceive nothing,—any European, even the stupidest, would perceive what you—but you are as primitive as a Sioux Indian, you have the silly morals of a non-conformist preacher,—you're as brutal as ___"

He opposed to this outburst the impregnable wall of a calm and meditative silence. She looked angrily into his quiet eyes, which met hers with unflinching kindness. The contrast between their faces was striking—was painful.

She said furiously, "There is nothing to you except that you are stronger than I, and you know it—and that *is* brutal!" She paused a long moment, quivering, and then relapsed into spent, defeated lassitude,—*"and I like it,"* she added under her breath, looking down at her hands miserably.

"I don't mean to be brutal," he said peaceably. "I'm sorry if I am."

"Oh, it's no matter!" she said impatiently.

"All right, have it your own way," he agreed, good-naturedly, shifting into a more comfortable position, and resuming his patient silence. He might have been a slightly pre-occupied but indulgent parent, waiting for a naughty child to emerge from a tantrum.

After a while, "Well, then," she began as though nothing had passed between them since his offer to give her advice, "well then, if you want to be father-confessor, tell me what you'd do in my place, if your family expected you as a matter of course to—to—"

"What do they want you to do?" he asked as she hesitated.

"Oh, nothing that they consider at all formidable! Only what every girl should do—make a good and suitable marriage, and bring up children to go on doing what she had found no joy in."

"Don't you do it!" he said quietly. "Nobody believes more than I do in marrying the right person. But just marrying so's to *be* married—that's Tophet! Red-hot Tophet!"[\[133-1\]](#)

"But what else is there for me to do?" she said, turning her eyes to him with a desperate hope in his answer. "Tell me! My parents have brought me up so that there is nothing I can fill my life with, if—I think, on the whole, I will be more miserable if I don't than if I—"

"Why, look-y-here!" he said earnestly. "You're not a child, you're a grown woman. You have your music. You could earn your living by that. Great Scott! Earn your living scrubbing floors before you—"

She put her handkerchief to her eyes. "Ah, but I am so alone against all my world! Now, here, with you, it seems easy but—without any one to sustain me, to—"

Harrison went on: "Now let me give you a rule I believe in as I do in the sun's rising. Never marry a man just because you think you could manage to live with him. Don't do it unless you are dead sure you couldn't live without him!"

She took down her handkerchief, showing a white face, whose expression matched the quaver in her voice, as she said breathlessly: "But how if I meet a man and feel I cannot live without him, and he is already—" she brought it out squarely in the sunny peace,—*"if he is already as good as married!"*

He took it with the most single-hearted simplicity. "Now it's you who are unsophisticated and getting your ideas from fool novels. Things don't happen that way in real life. Either the man keeps his marriage a secret, in which case he is a sneak and not worth a second thought from any decent woman, or else, if she had known all along that he was married, she doesn't get to liking him that way. Don't you see?"

She looked away, down the stream for a moment with inscrutable eyes, and then broke into an unexpected laugh, rising at the same time and putting on her hat. "I see, yes, I see," she said. "It is as you say, quite simple. And now let us go to visit the rest of the park."

VI

The next excursion was to be their last, and Miss Midland had suggested a return to Versailles to see the park in its spring glory. They lunched in a little inclosure, rosy with the pink and white magnolia blossoms, where the uncut grass was already ankle-deep and the rose-bushes almost

hid the gray stone wall with the feathery abundance of their first pale green leaves. From a remark of the girl's that perhaps this was the very spot where Marie Antoinette had once gathered about her gay court of pseudo-milkmaids, they fell into a discussion of that queen's pretty pastoral fancy. Harrison showed an unexpected sympathy with the futile, tragic little merry-maker.

"I expect she got sick and tired of being treated like a rich, great lady, and wanted to see what it would feel like to be a human being. The king is always disguising himself as a goat-herd to make sure he can be loved for his own sake."

"But those stories are all so monotonous!" she said impatiently. "The king always is made to find out that the shepherdess does love him for his own sake. What would happen if she wouldn't look at him?"

Harrison laughed, "Well, by George, I never thought of that. I should say if he cared enough about her to want his own way, he'd better get off his high-horse and say, 'Look-y-here, I'm not the common ordinary mutt I look. I'm the king in disguise. *Now* will you have me?"

Miss Midland looked at him hard. "Do you think it likely the girl would have him then?"

"Don't you?" he said, still laughing, and tucking away the last of a foie-gras sandwich.

She turned away, frowning, "I don't see how you can call *me* cynical!"

He raised his eyebrows, "That's not cynical," he protested. "You have to take folks the way they are, and not the way you think it would be pretty to have them. It mightn't be the most dignified position for the king, but I never did see the use of dignity that got in the way of your having what you wanted."

She looked at him with so long and steady a gaze that only her patent absence of mind kept it from being a stare. Then, "I think I will go for a walk by myself," she said.

"Sure, if you want to," he assented, "and I'll take a nap under this magnolia tree. I've been working late nights, lately."

When she came back after an hour, the little inclosure was quite still, and, walking over to the magnolia, she saw that the young man had indeed fallen soundly asleep, one arm under his head, the other flung wide, half buried in the grass. For a long time she looked down gravely at the powerful body, at the large, sinewy hand, relaxed like a sleeping child's, at the eagle-like face, touchingly softened by its profound unconsciousness.

Suddenly the dark eyes opened wide into hers. The young man gave an exclamation and sat up, startled. At this movement she looked away, smoothing a fold of her skirt. He stared about him, still half-asleep. "Did I hear somebody call?" he asked. "I must have had a very vivid dream of some sort—I thought somebody was calling desperately to me. You didn't speak, did you?"

"No," she answered softly, "I said nothing."

"Well, I hope you'll excuse me for being such poor company. I only meant to take a cat-nap. I hope we won't be too late for the train."

He scrambled to his feet, his eyes still heavy with sleep, and pulled out his watch. As he did this, Miss Midland began to speak very rapidly. What she said was so astonishing to him that he forgot to put back his watch, forgot even to look at it, and stood with it in his hand, staring at her, with an expression as near to stupefaction as his keen and powerful face could show.

When she finally stopped to draw breath, the painful breath of a person who has been under water too long, he broke into baroque ejaculations, "Well, wouldn't that *get* you! Wouldn't that absolutely freeze you to a pillar of salt! Well, of all the darndest idiots, I've been the—" With Miss Midland's eyes fixed on him, he broke into peal after peal of his new-world laughter, his fresh, crude, raw, inimitably vital laughter, "I'm thinking of the time I loaned you the franc and a half for your lunch, and hated to take it back because I thought you needed it—and you rich enough to buy ten libraries to Andy's[137-1] one! Say, how did you keep your face straight!"

Miss Midland apparently found no more difficulty in keeping a straight face now than then. She did not at all share his mirth. She was still looking at him with a strained gaze as though she saw him with difficulty, through a mist increasingly smothering. Finally, as though the fog had grown quite too thick, she dropped her eyes, and very passive, waited for his laughter to stop.

When it did, and the trees which had looked down on Marie Antoinette had ceased echoing to the loud, metallic, and vigorous sound, he noticed his watch still in his hand. He glanced at it automatically, thrust it back into his pocket and exclaimed, quite serious again, "Look-y-here. We'll have to step lively if we are going to catch that train back to Paris, Miss Midland—Lady Midland, I mean,—Your highness—what *do* they call the daughter of an Earl? I never met a real live member of the aristocracy before."

She moved beside him as he strode off towards the gate. "I am usually called Lady Agatha," she

answered, in a flat tone.

"How pretty that sounds!" he said heartily, "Lady Agatha! Lady Agatha! Why don't we have some such custom in America?" He tried it tentatively. "Lady Marietta—that's my mother's name—don't seem to fit altogether does it? Lady Maggie—Oh, Lord! awful! No, I guess we'd better stick to Miss and Mrs. But it *does* fit Agatha fine!"

She made no rejoinder. She looked very tired and rather stern.

After they were on the train, she said she had a headache and preferred not to talk and, ensconcing herself in a corner of the compartment, closed her eyes. Harrison, refreshed by the outdoor air and his nap, opened his notebook and began puzzling over a knotty point in one of the French Royal Grants to LaSalle[138-1] which he was engaged at the time in deciphering. Once he glanced up to find his companion's eyes open and fixed on him. He thought to himself that her headache must be pretty bad, and stirred himself to say with his warm, friendly accent, "It's a perfect shame you feel so miserable! Don't you want me to open the window? Wouldn't you like my coat rolled up for a pillow? Isn't there something I can do for you?"

She looked at him, and closing her lips, shook her head.

Later, in the midst of a struggle over an archaic law-form, the recollection of his loan to his fellow-student darted into his head. He laid down his notebook to laugh again. She turned her head and looked a silent question. "Oh, it's just that franc and a half!" he explained. "I'll never get over that as long as I live!"

She pulled down her veil and turned away from him again.

When they reached Paris, he insisted that she take a carriage and go home directly. "I'll go on to the reading-room and explain to your hired girl that you were sick and couldn't wait for her." Before he closed her into the cab he added, "But, look here! I won't see you again, will I? I forgot you are going back to England to-morrow. Well, to think of this being good-bye! I declare, I hate to say it!" He held out his hand and took her cold fingers in his. "Well, Miss Midland, I tell *you* there's not a person in the world who can wish you better luck than I do. You've been awfully good to me, and I appreciate it, and I do hope that if there's ever any little thing I can do for you, you'll let me know. I surely am yours to command."

The girl's capacity for emotion seemed to be quite exhausted, for she answered nothing to this quaint valedictory beyond a faint, "Good-by, Mr. Harrison, I hope you——" but she did not finish the sentence.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

CHU CHU

I do not believe that the most enthusiastic lover of that "useful and noble animal," the horse, will claim for him the charm of geniality, humor, or expansive confidence. Any creature who will not look you squarely in the eye—whose only oblique glances are inspired by fear, distrust, or a view to attack, who has no way of returning caresses, and whose favorite expression is one of head-lifting disdain, may be "noble" or "useful," but can be hardly said to add to the gayety of nations. Indeed it may be broadly stated that, with the single exception of gold-fish, of all animals kept for the recreation of mankind the horse is alone capable of exciting a passion that shall be absolutely hopeless. I deem these general remarks necessary to prove that my unreciprocated affection for Chu Chu was not purely individual or singular. And I may add that to these general characteristics she brought the waywardness of her capricious sex.

She came to me out of the rolling dust of an emigrant wagon, behind whose tailboard she was gravely trotting. She was a half-broken colt—in which character she had at different times unseated everybody in the train—and, although covered with dust, she had a beautiful coat and the most lambent gazelle-like eyes I had ever seen. I think she kept these latter organs purely for ornament—apparently looking at things with her nose, her sensitive ears, and sometimes even a slight lifting of her slim near foreleg. On our first interview I thought she favored me with a coy glance, but as it was accompanied by an irrelevant "Look out!" from her owner, the teamster, I was not certain. I only know that after some conversation, a good deal of mental reservation, and the disbursement of considerable coin, I found myself standing in the dust of the departing emigrant wagon with one end of a forty-foot *riata* in my hand and Chu Chu at the other.

I pulled invitingly at my own end and even advanced a step or two towards her. She then broke into a long disdainful pace and began to circle round me at the extreme limit of her tether. I

stood admiring her free action for some moments—not always turning with her, which was tiring—until I found that she was gradually winding herself up *on me!* Her frantic astonishment when she suddenly found herself thus brought up against me was one of the most remarkable things I ever saw and nearly took me off my legs. Then when she had pulled against the *riata* until her narrow head and prettily arched neck were on a perfectly straight line with it, she as suddenly slackened the tension and condescended to follow me, at an angle of her own choosing. Sometimes it was on one side of me, sometimes on the other. Even then the sense of my dreadful contiguity apparently would come upon her like a fresh discovery, and she would become hysterical. But I do not think that she really *saw* me. She looked at the *riata* and sniffed it disparagingly; she pawed some pebbles that were near me tentatively with her small hoof; she started back with a Robinson-Crusoe-like horror of my footprints in the wet gully, but my actual personal presence she ignored. She would sometimes pause, with her head thoughtfully between her forelegs, and apparently say, "There is some extraordinary presence here: animal, vegetable, or mineral—I can't make out which—but it's not good to eat, and I loathe and detest it."

When I reached my house in the suburbs, before entering the "fifty vara" lot inclosure, I deemed it prudent to leave her outside while I informed the household of my purchase; and with this object I tethered her by the long *riata* to a solitary sycamore which stood in the centre of the road, the crossing of two frequented thoroughfares. It was not long, however, before I was interrupted by shouts and screams from that vicinity and on returning thither I found that Chu Chu, with the assistance of her *riata*, had securely wound up two of my neighbors to the tree, where they presented the appearance of early Christian martyrs. When I released them, it appeared that they had been attracted by Chu Chu's graces, and had offered her overtures of affection, to which she had characteristically rotated with this miserable result.

I led her, with some difficulty, warily keeping clear of the *riata*, to the inclosure, from whose fence I had previously removed several bars. Although the space was wide enough to have admitted a troop of cavalry, she affected not to notice it and managed to kick away part of another section on entering. She resisted the stable for some time, but after carefully examining it with her hoofs and an affectedly meek outstretching of her nose, she consented to recognize some oats in the feed-box—without looking at them—and was formally installed. All this while she had resolutely ignored my presence. As I stood watching her, she suddenly stopped eating; the same reflective look came over her. "Surely I am not mistaken, but that same obnoxious creature is somewhere about here!" she seemed to say, and shivered at the possibility.

It was probably this which made me confide my unreciprocated affection to one of my neighbors—a man supposed to be an authority on horses, and particularly of that wild species to which Chu Chu belonged. It was he who, leaning over the edge of the stall where she was complacently and, as usual, obliviously munching, absolutely dared to toy with a pet lock of hair which she wore over the pretty star on her forehead. "Ye see, captain," he said with jaunty easiness, "hosses is like wimmen; ye don't want ter use any standoffishness or shyness with *them*; a stiddy but keerless sort o' familiarity, a kind o' free but firm handlin', jess like this, to let her see who's master——"

We never clearly knew *how* it happened; but when I picked up my neighbor from the doorway, amid the broken splinters of the stall rail and a quantity of oats that mysteriously filled his hair and pockets, Chu Chu was found to have faced around the other way and was contemplating her forelegs, with her hind ones in the other stall. My neighbor spoke of damages while he was in the stall, and of physical coercion when he was out of it again. But here Chu Chu, in some marvelous way, righted herself, and my neighbor departed hurriedly with a brimless hat and an unfinished sentence.

My next intermediary was Enriquez Saltello—a youth of my age, and the brother of Consuelo Saltello, whom I adored. As a Spanish Californian he was presumed, on account of Chu Chu's half-Spanish origin, to have superior knowledge of her character, and I even vaguely believed that his language and accent would fall familiarly on her ear. There was the drawback, however, that he always preferred to talk in a marvelous English, combining Castilian[145-1] precision with what he fondly believed to be Californian slang.

"To confer then as to thees horse, which is not—observe me—a Mexican plug![145-2] Ah, no! you can your boots bet on that. She is of Castilian stock—believe me and strike me dead! I will myself at different times overlook and affront her in the stable, examine her as to the assault, and why she should do thees thing. When she is of the exercise, I will also accost and restrain her. Remain tranquil, my friend! When a few days shall pass, much shall be changed, and she will be as another. Trust your oncle do thees thing! Comprehend me! Everything shall be lovely, and the goose hang high!"

Conformably with this, he "overlooked" her the next day, with a cigarette between his yellow-stained finger tips, which made her sneeze in a silent pantomimic way, and certain blandishments of speech which she received with more complacency. But I don't think she ever even looked at him. In vain he protested that she was the "dearest" and "littlest" of his "little loves"—in vain he asserted that she was his patron saint, and that it was his soul's delight to pray to her; she accepted the compliment with her eyes fixed upon the manger. When he had exhausted his whole stock of endearing diminutives, adding a few playful and more audacious sallies, she remained with her head down, as if inclined to meditate upon them. This he declared was at least an improvement on her former performances. It may have been my own jealousy, but

I fancied she was only saying to herself, "Gracious! can there be *two* of them?"

"Courage and patience, my friend," he said, as we were slowly quitting the stable. "Thees horse is yonge, and has not yet the habitude of the person. To-morrow, at another season, I shall give to her a foundling" ("fondling," I have reason to believe, was the word intended by Enriquez)—"and we shall see. It shall be as easy as to fall away from a log. A leetle more of this chin music which your friend Enriquez possesses, and some tapping of the head and neck, and you are there. You are ever the right side up. Houp la! But let us not precipitate this thing. The more haste, we do not so much accelerate ourselves."

He appeared to be suiting the action to the word as he lingered in the doorway of the stable. "Come on," I said.

"Pardon," he returned, with a bow that was both elaborate and evasive, "but you shall yourself precede me—the stable is *yours*."

"Oh, come along!" I continued impatiently. To my surprise, he seemed to dodge back into the stable again. After an instant he reappeared.

"Pardon! but I am re-strain! Of a truth, in this instant I am grasp by the mouth of thees horse in the coat-tail of my dress! She will that I should remain. It would seem"—he disappeared again—"that"—he was out once more—"the experiment is a soocess! She recipocate! She is, of a truth, gone on me. It is lofe!"—a stronger pull from Chu Chu here sent him in again—"but"—he was out now triumphantly with half his garment torn away—"I shall coquet."

Nothing daunted, however, the gallant fellow was back next day with a Mexican saddle and attired in the complete outfit of a *vaquero*.^[147-1] Overcome though he was by heavy deerskin trousers, open at the side from the knees down, and fringed with bullion buttons, an enormous flat *sombrero*,^[147-2] and stiff, short embroidered velvet jacket, I was more concerned at the ponderous saddle and equipments intended for the slim Chu Chu. That these would hide and conceal her beautiful curves and contour, as well as overweight her, seemed certain; that she would resist them all to the last seemed equally clear. Nevertheless, to my surprise, when she was led out, and the saddle thrown deftly across her back, she was passive. Was it possible that some drop of her old Spanish blood responded to its clinging embrace? She did not either look at it nor smell it. But when Enriquez began to tighten the "cinch" or girth, a more singular thing occurred. Chu Chu visibly distended her slender barrel to twice its dimensions; the more he pulled the more she swelled, until I was actually ashamed of her. Not so Enriquez. He smiled at us, and complacently stroked his thin moustache.

"Eet is ever so! She is the child of her grandmother! Even when you shall make saddle thees old Castilian stock, it will make large—it will become a balloon! Eet is trick—eet is a leetle game—believe me. For why?"

I had not listened, as I was at that moment astonished to see the saddle slowly slide under Chu Chu's belly, and her figure resume, as if by magic, its former slim proportions. Enriquez followed my eyes, lifted his shoulders, shrugged them, and said smilingly, "Ah, you see!"

When the girths were drawn in again with an extra pull or two from the indefatigable Enriquez, I fancied that Chu Chu nevertheless secretly enjoyed it, as her sex is said to appreciate tight-lacing. She drew a deep sigh, possibly of satisfaction, turned her neck, and apparently tried to glance at her own figure—Enriquez promptly withdrawing to enable her to do so easily. Then the dread moment arrived. Enriquez, with his hand on her mane, suddenly paused and, with exaggerated courtesy, lifted his hat and made an inviting gesture.

"You will honor me to precede."

I shook my head laughingly.

"I see," responded Enriquez gravely. "You have to attend the obsequies of your aunt who is dead, at two of the clock. You have to meet your broker who has bought you feefty share of the Comstock lode^[149-1]—at thees moment—or you are loss! You are excuse! Attend! Gentlemen, make your bets! The band has arrived to play! 'Ere we are!"

With a quick movement the alert young fellow had vaulted into the saddle. But, to the astonishment of both of us, the mare remained perfectly still. There was Enriquez bolt upright in the stirrups, completely overshadowing by his saddle-flaps, leggings, and gigantic spurs the fine proportions of Chu Chu, until she might have been a placid Rosinante,^[149-2] bestridden by some youthful Quixote. She closed her eyes, she was going to sleep! We were dreadfully disappointed. This clearly would not do. Enriquez lifted the reins cautiously! Chu Chu moved forward slowly—then stopped, apparently lost in reflection.

"Affront her on thees side."

I approached her gently. She shot suddenly into the air, coming down again on perfectly stiff legs with a springless jolt. This she instantly followed by a succession of other rocket-like propulsions, utterly unlike a leap, all over the inclosure. The movements of the unfortunate Enriquez were equally unlike any equitation I ever saw. He appeared occasionally over Chu Chu's

head, astride her neck and tail, or in the free air, but never in the saddle. His rigid legs, however, never lost the stirrups, but came down regularly, accentuating her springless hops. More than that, the disproportionate excess of rider, saddle, and accoutrements was so great that he had, at times, the appearance of lifting Chu Chu forcibly from the ground by superior strength, and of actually contributing to her exercise! As they came towards me, a wild tossing and flying mass of hoofs and spurs, it was not only difficult to distinguish them apart, but to ascertain how much of the jumping was done by Enriquez separately. At last Chu Chu brought matters to a close by making for the low-stretching branches of an oak-tree which stood at the corner of the lot. In a few moments she emerged from it—but without Enriquez.

I found the gallant fellow disengaging himself from the fork of a branch in which he had been firmly wedged, but still smiling and confident, and his cigarette between his teeth. Then for the first time he removed it, and seating himself easily on the branch with his legs dangling down, he blandly waved aside my anxious queries with a gentle reassuring gesture.

"Remain tranquil, my friend. Thees does not count! I have conquer—you observe—for why? I have *never* for once *arrive at the ground!* Consequent she is disappoint! She will ever that I *should!* But I have got her when the hair is not long! Your uncle Henry"—with an angelic wink—"is fly! He is ever a bully boy, with the eye of glass! Believe me. Behold! I am here! Big Injun! Whoop!"

He leaped lightly to the ground. Chu Chu, standing watchfully at a little distance, was evidently astonished at his appearance. She threw out her hind hoofs violently, shot up into the air until the stirrups crossed each other high above the saddle, and made for the stable in a succession of rabbit-like bounds—taking the precaution to remove the saddle, on entering, by striking it against the lintel of the door. "You observe," said Enriquez blandly, "she would make that thing of *me*. Not having the good occasion, she ees dissatisfied. Where are you now?"

Two or three days afterwards he rode her again with the same result—accepted by him with the same heroic complacency. As we did not, for certain reasons, care to use the open road for this exercise and as it was impossible to remove the tree, we were obliged to submit to the inevitable. On the following day I mounted her—undergoing the same experience as Enriquez, with the individual sensation of falling from a third-story window on top of a counting-house stool, and the variation of being projected over the fence. When I found that Chu Chu had not accompanied me, I saw Enriquez at my side. "More than ever it is become necessary that we should do thees things again," he said gravely, as he assisted me to my feet. "Courage, my noble General! God and Liberty! Once more on to the breach! Charge, Chestare, charge! Come on, Don Stanley! 'Ere we are!"

He helped me none too quickly to catch my seat again, for it apparently had the effect of the turned peg on the enchanted horse in the Arabian Nights,[\[152-1\]](#) and Chu Chu instantly rose into the air. But she came down this time before the open window of the kitchen, and I alighted easily on the dresser. The indefatigable Enriquez followed me.

"Won't this do?" I asked meekly.

"It ees *better*—for you arrive *not* on the ground," he said cheerfully; "but you should not once but a thousand times make trial! Ha! Go and win! Nevare die and say so! 'Eave ahead! 'Eave! There you are!"

Luckily, this time I managed to lock the rowels of my long spurs under her girth, and she could not unseat me. She seemed to recognize the fact after one or two plunges, when to my great surprise, she suddenly sank to the ground and quietly rolled over me. The action disengaged my spurs, but righting herself without getting up, she turned her beautiful head and absolutely *looked* at me!—still in the saddle. I felt myself blushing! But the voice of Enriquez was at my side.

"Errise, my friend; you have conquer! It is *she* who has arrive at the ground! *You* are all right. It is done; believe me, it is feenish! No more shall she make thees think. From thees instant you shall ride her as the cow—as the rail of thees fence—and remain tranquil. For she is a-broke! Ta-ta! Regain your hats, gentlemen! Pass in your checks! It is ovar! How are you now?" He lit a fresh cigarette, put his hands in his pockets, and smiled at me blandly.

For all that, I ventured to point out that the habit of alighting in the fork of a tree, or the disengaging of one's self from the saddle on the ground, was attended with inconvenience, and even ostentatious display. But Enriquez swept the objections away with a single gesture. "It is the *preencipal*—the bottom *fact*—at which you arrive. The next come of himself! Many horse have achieve to mount the rider by the knees, and relinquish after thees same fashion. My grandfather had a barb of thees kind—but she has gone dead, and so have my grandfather. Which is sad and strange! Otherwise I shall make of them both an instant example!"

I ought to have said that although these performances were never actually witnessed by Enriquez's sister—for reasons which he and I thought sufficient—the dear girl displayed the greatest interest in them and, perhaps aided by our mutually complimentary accounts of each other, looked upon us both as invincible heroes. It is possible also that she over-estimated our success, for she suddenly demanded that I should *ride* Chu Chu to her house, that she might see her. It was not far; by going through a back lane I could avoid the trees which exercised such a

fatal fascination for Chu Chu. There was a pleading, childlike entreaty in Consuelo's voice that I could not resist, with a slight flash from her lustrous dark eyes that I did not care to encourage. So I resolved to try it at all hazards.

My equipment for the performance was modeled after Enriquez's previous costume, with the addition of a few fripperies of silver and stamped leather out of compliment to Consuelo, and even with a faint hope that it might appease Chu Chu. *She* certainly looked beautiful in her glittering accoutrements, set off by her jet-black shining coat. With an air of demure abstraction she permitted me to mount her, and even for a hundred yards or so indulged in a mincing maidenly amble that was not without a touch of coquetry. Encouraged by this, I addressed a few terms of endearment to her, and in the exuberance of my youthful enthusiasm I even confided to her my love for Consuelo and begged her to be "good" and not disgrace herself and me before my Dulcinea.[154-1] In my foolish trustfulness I was rash enough to add a caress and to pat her soft neck. She stopped instantly with a hysteric shudder. I knew what was passing through her mind: she had suddenly become aware of my baleful existence.

The saddle and bridle Chu Chu was becoming accustomed to, but who was this living, breathing object that had actually touched her? Presently her oblique vision was attracted by the fluttering movement of a fallen oak leaf in the road before her. She had probably seen many oak leaves many times before; her ancestors had no doubt been familiar with them on the trackless hills and in field and paddock, but this did not alter her profound conviction that I and the leaf were identical, that our baleful touch was something indissolubly connected. She reared before that innocent leaf, she revolved round it, and then fled from it at the top of her speed.

The lane passed before the rear wall of Saltello's garden. Unfortunately, at the angle of the fence stood a beautiful Madroño-tree, brilliant with its scarlet berries, and endeared to me as Consuelo's favorite haunt, under whose protecting shade I had more than once avowed my youthful passion. By the irony of fate Chu Chu caught sight of it, and with a succession of spirited bounds instantly made for it. In another moment I was beneath it, and Chu Chu shot like a rocket into the air. I had barely time to withdraw my feet from the stirrups, to throw up one arm to protect my glazed sombrero and grasp an over-hanging branch with the other, before Chu Chu darted off. But to my consternation, as I gained a secure perch on the tree and looked about me, I saw her—instead of running away—quietly trot through the open gate into Saltello's garden.

Need I say that it was to the beneficent Enriquez that I again owed my salvation? Scarcely a moment elapsed before his bland voice rose in a concentrated whisper from the corner of the garden below me. He had divined the dreadful truth!

"For the love of God, collect to yourself many kinds of thees berry! All you can! Your full arms round! Rest tranquil. Leave to your ole oncle to make for you a delicate exposure. At the instant!"

He was gone again. I gathered, wonderingly, a few of the larger clusters of parti-colored fruit and patiently waited. Presently he reappeared, and with him the lovely Consuelo—her dear eyes filled with an adorable anxiety.

"Yes," continued Enriquez to his sister, with a confidential lowering of tone but great distinctness of utterance, "it is ever so with the American! He will ever make *first* the salutation of the flower or the fruit, picked to himself by his own hand, to the lady where he call. It is the custom of the American hidalgo![156-1] My God—what will you? *I* make it not—it is so! Without doubt he is in this instant doing thees thing. That is why we have let go his horse to precede him here; it is always the etiquette to offer these things on the feet. Ah! Behold! it is he!—Don Francisco! Even now he will descend from thees tree! Ah! You make the blush, little sister (archly)! I will retire! I am discreet; two is not company for the one! I make tracks! I am gone!"

How far Consuelo entirely believed and trusted her ingenious brother I do not know, nor even then cared to inquire. For there was a pretty mantling of her olive cheek, as I came forward with my offering, and a certain significant shyness in her manner that were enough to throw me into a state of hopeless imbecility. And I was always miserably conscious that Consuelo possessed an exalted sentimentality, and a predilection for the highest mediæval romance, in which I knew I was lamentably deficient. Even in our most confidential moments I was always aware that I weakly lagged behind this daughter of a gloomily distinguished ancestry, in her frequent incursions into a vague but poetic past. There was something of the dignity of the Spanish *châtelaine*[157-1] in the sweetly grave little figure that advanced to accept my specious offering. I think I should have fallen on my knees to present it, but for the presence of the all seeing Enriquez. But why did I even at that moment remember that he had early bestowed upon her the nickname of "Pomposa"? This, as Enriquez himself might have observed, was "sad and strange."

I managed to stammer out something about the Madroño berries being at her "disposition" (the tree was in her own garden!), and she took the branches in her little brown hand with a soft response to my unutterable glances.

But here Chu Chu, momentarily forgotten, executed a happy diversion. To our astonishment she gravely walked up to Consuelo and, stretching out her long slim neck, not only sniffed curiously at the berries, but even protruded a black underlip towards the young girl herself. In another instant Consuelo's dignity melted. Throwing her arms around Chu Chu's neck she embraced and kissed her. Young as I was, I understood the divine significance of a girl's vicarious

effusiveness at such a moment, and felt delighted. But I was the more astonished that the usually sensitive horse not only submitted to these caresses, but actually responded to the extent of affecting to nip my mistress's little right ear.

This was enough for the impulsive Consuelo. She ran hastily into the house and in a few moments reappeared in a bewitching riding-shirt. In vain Enriquez and myself joined in earnest entreaty: the horse was hardly broken for even a man's riding yet; the saints alone could tell what the nervous creature might do with a woman's skirt flipping at her side! We begged for delay, for reflection, for at least time to change the saddle—but with no avail! Consuelo was determined, indignant, distressingly reproachful! Ah, well! if Don Pancho (an ingenious diminutive of my Christian name) valued his horse so highly—if he were jealous of the evident devotion of the animal to herself, he would—but here I succumbed! And then I had the felicity of holding that little foot for one brief moment in the hollow of my hand, of readjusting the skirt as she threw her knee over the saddle-horn, of clasping her tightly—only half in fear—as I surrendered the reins to her grasp. And to tell the truth, as Enriquez and I fell back, although I had insisted upon still keeping hold of the end of the *riata*, it was a picture to admire. The *petite*[158-1] figure of the young girl and the graceful folds of her skirt admirably harmonized with Chu Chu's lithe contour, and as the mare arched her slim neck and raised her slender head under the pressure of the reins, it was so like the lifted velvet-capped toreador[159-1] crest of Consuelo herself, that they seemed of one race.

"I would not that you should hold the *riata*," said Consuelo petulantly.

I hesitated—Chu Chu looked certainly very amiable—I let go. She began to amble towards the gate, not mincingly as before, but with a freer and fuller stride. In spite of the incongruous saddle, the young girl's seat was admirable. As they neared the gate, she cast a single mischievous glance at me, jerked at the rein, and Chu Chu sprang into the road at a rapid canter. I watched them fearfully and breathlessly, until at the end of the lane I saw Consuelo rein in slightly, wheel easily, and come flying back. There was no doubt about it; the horse was under perfect control. Her second subjugation was complete and final!

Overjoyed and bewildered, I overwhelmed them with congratulations; Enriquez alone retaining the usual brotherly attitude of criticism and a superior toleration of a lover's enthusiasm. I ventured to hint to Consuelo (in what I believed was a safe whisper) that Chu Chu only showed my own feelings towards her. "Without doubt," responded Enriquez gravely. "She have of herself assist you to climb to the tree to pull to yourself the berry for my sister." But I felt Consuelo's little hand return my pressure, and I forgave and even pitied him.

From that day forward, Chu Chu and Consuelo were not only firm friends but daily companions. In my devotion I would have presented the horse to the young girl, but with flattering delicacy she preferred to call it mine. "I shall erride it for you, Pancho," she said; "I shall feel," she continued with exalted although somewhat vague poetry, "That it is of you! You lofe the beast—it is therefore of a necessity *you*, my Pancho! It is *your* soul I shall erride like the wings of the wind—your lofe in this beast shall be my only cavalier for ever." I would have preferred something whose vicarious qualities were less uncertain than I still felt Chu Chu's to be, but I kissed the girl's hand submissively.

It was only when I attempted to accompany her in the flesh, on another horse, that I felt the full truth of my instinctive fears. Chu Chu would not permit any one to approach her mistress's side. My mounted presence revived in her all her old blind astonishment and disbelief in my existence; she would start suddenly, face about, and back away from me in utter amazement as if I had been only recently created, or with an affected modesty as if I had been just guilty of some grave indecorum towards her sex which she really could not stand. The frequency of these exhibitions in the public highway were not only distressing to me as a simple escort, but as it had the effect on the casual spectators of making Consuelo seem to participate in Chu Chu's objections, I felt that, as a lover, it could not be borne. An attempt to coerce Chu Chu ended in her running away. And my frantic pursuit of her was open to equal misconstruction. "Go it, Miss, the little dude is gainin' on you!" shouted by a drunken teamster to the frightened Consuelo, once checked me in mid-career. Even the dear girl herself saw the uselessness of my real presence, and after a while was content to ride with "my soul."

Notwithstanding this, I am not ashamed to say that it was my custom, whenever she rode out, to keep a slinking and distant surveillance of Chu Chu on another horse, until she had fairly settled down to her pace. A little nod of Consuelo's round black-and-red toreador hat or a kiss tossed from her riding-whip was reward enough!

I remember a pleasant afternoon when I was thus awaiting her in the village. The eternal smile of the Californian summer had begun to waver and grow less fixed; dust lay thick on leaf and blade; the dry hills were clothed in russet leather; the trade winds were shifting to the south with an ominous warm humidity; a few days longer and the rains would be here. It so chanced that this afternoon my seclusion on the roadside was accidentally invaded by a village belle—a Western young lady somewhat older than myself, and of flirtatious reputation. As she persistently and—as I now have reason to believe—mischievously lingered, I had only a passing glimpse of Consuelo riding past at an unaccustomed speed which surprised me at the moment. But as I reasoned later that she was only trying to avoid a merely formal meeting, I thought no more about it.

It was not until I called at the house to fetch Chu Chu at the usual hour, and found that Consuelo had not yet returned, that a recollection of Chu Chu's furious pace again troubled me. An hour passed—it was getting towards sunset, but there were no signs of Chu Chu nor her mistress. I became seriously alarmed. I did not care to reveal my fears to the family, for I felt myself responsible for Chu Chu. At last I desperately saddled my horse and galloped off in the direction she had taken. It was the road to Rosario and the *hacienda*[162-1] of one of her relations, where she sometimes halted.

The road was a very unfrequented one, twisting like a mountain river—indeed, it was the bed of an old watercourse—between brown hills of wild oats, and debouching at last into a broad blue lake-like expanse of alfalfa[162-2] meadows. In vain I strained my eyes over the monotonous level; nothing appeared to rise above or move across it. In the faint hope that she might have lingered at the *hacienda*, I was spurring on again when I heard a slight splashing on my left. I looked around. A broad patch of fresher-colored herbage and a cluster of dwarfed alders indicated a hidden spring. I cautiously approached its quaggy edges, when I was shocked by what appeared to be a sudden vision! Mid-leg deep in the center of a greenish pool stood Chu Chu! But without a strap or buckle of harness upon her—as naked as when she was foaled!

For a moment I could only stare at her in bewildered terror. Far from recognizing me, she seemed to be absorbed in a nymph-like contemplation of her own graces in the pool. Then I called "Consuelo!" and galloped frantically around the spring. But there was no response, nor was there anything to be seen but the all-unconscious Chu Chu. The pool, thank Heaven! was not deep enough to have drowned any one; there were no signs of a struggle on its quaggy edges. The horse might have come from a distance! I galloped on, still calling. A few hundred yards further I detected the vivid glow of Chu Chu's scarlet saddle-blanket in the brush near the trail. My heart leaped—I was on the track. I called again; this time a faint reply, in accents I knew too well, came from the field beside me!

Consuelo was there! reclining beside a manzanita bush which screened her from the road, in what struck me, even at that supreme moment, as a judicious and picturesquely selected couch of scented Indian grass and dry tussocks. The velvet hat with its balls of scarlet plush was laid carefully aside; her lovely blue-black hair retained its tight coils undisheveled, her eyes were luminous and tender. Shocked as I was at her apparent helplessness, I remember being impressed with the fact that it gave so little indication of violent usage or disaster.

I threw myself frantically on the ground beside her.

"You are hurt, Consita! For Heaven's sake, what has happened?"

She pushed my hat back with her little hand, and tumbled my hair gently.

"Nothing. *You* are here, Pancho—eet is enofe! What shall come after thees—when I am perhaps gone among the grave—make nothing! *You* are here—I am happy. For a little, perhaps—not mooch."

"But," I went on desperately, "was it an accident? Were you thrown? Was it Chu Chu?"—for somehow, in spite of her languid posture and voice, I could not, even in my fears, believe her seriously hurt.

"Beat not the poor beast, Pancho. It is not from *her* comes thees thing. She have make nothing—believe me! I have come upon your assignation with Miss Essmith! I make but to pass you—to fly—to never come back! I have say to Chu Chu, 'Fly!' We fly many miles. Sometimes together, sometimes not so mooch! Sometimes in the saddle, sometimes on the neck! Many things remain in the road; at the end, I myself remain! I have say, 'Courage, Pancho will come!' Then I say, 'No, he is talk with Miss Essmith!' I remember not more. I have creep here on the hands. Eet is feenish!"

I looked at her distractedly. She smiled tenderly and slightly smoothed down and rearranged a fold of her dress to cover her delicate little boot.

"But," I protested, "you are not much hurt, dearest. You have broken no bones. Perhaps," I added, looking at the boot, "only a slight sprain. Let me carry you to my horse; I will walk beside you, home. Do, dearest Consita!"

She turned her lovely eyes towards me sadly. "You comprehend not, my poor Pancho! It is not of the foot, the ankle, the arm, or the head that I can say, 'She is broke.' I would it were even so. But"—she lifted her sweet lashes slowly—"I have derrange my inside. It is an affair of my family. My grandfather have once toomble over the bull at a *rodeo*. [165-1] He speak no more; he is dead. For why? He has derrange his inside. Believe me, it is of the family. You comprehend? The Saltellos are not as the other peoples for this. When I am gone, you will bring to me the berry to grow upon my tomb, Pancho; the berry you have picked for me. The little flower will come too, the little star will arrive, but Consuelo, who lofe you, she will come not more!

"When you are happy and talk in the road to the Essmith, you will not think of me. You will not see my eyes, Pancho; thees little grass"—she ran her plump little fingers through a tussock—"will hide them; and the small animals in the black coats that lif here will have much sorrow—but you

will not. It ees better so! My father will not that I, a Catholique, should marry into a camp-meeting and lif in a tent." (It was one of Consuelo's bewildering beliefs that there was only one form of dissent—Methodism!) "He will not that I should marry a man who possess not the many horses, ox, and cow, like him. But *I* care not. *You* are my only religion, Pancho! I have enofe of the horse, and ox, and cow when *you* are with me! Kiss me, Pancho. Perhaps it is for the last time—the feenish! Who knows?"

There were tears in her lovely eyes; I felt that my own were growing dim; the sun was sinking over the dreary plain to the slow rising of the wind; and infinite loneliness had fallen upon us, and yet I was miserably conscious of some dreadful unreality in it all. A desire to laugh, which I felt must be hysterical, was creeping over me; I dared not speak. But her dear head was on my shoulder, and the situation was not unpleasant.

Nevertheless, something must be done! This was the more difficult as it was by no means clear what had already been done. Even while I supported her drooping figure, I was straining my eyes across her shoulder for succor of some kind. Suddenly the figure of a rapid rider appeared upon the road. It seemed familiar. I looked again—it was the blessed Enriquez! A sense of deep relief came over me. I loved Consuelo; but never before had lover ever hailed the irruption of one of his beloved's family with such complacency.

"You are safe, dearest; it is Enriquez!"

I thought she received the information coldly. Suddenly she turned upon me her eyes, now bright and glittering. "Swear to me at the instant, Pancho, that you will not again look upon Miss Essmith, even for once."

I was simple and literal. Miss Smith was my nearest neighbor, and unless I was stricken with blindness, compliance was impossible. I hesitated—but swore.

"Enofe—you have hesitate—I will no more."

She rose to her feet with grave deliberation. For an instant, with the recollection of the delicate internal organization of the Saltellos on my mind, I was in agony lest she should totter and fall, even then, yielding up her gentle spirit on the spot. But when I looked again, she had a hairpin between her white teeth and was carefully adjusting her toreador hat. And beside us was Enriquez—cheerful, alert, voluble, and undaunted.

"Eureka! I have found! We are all here! Eet is a leetle public—eh! A leetle too much of a front seat for a *tête-à-tête*,^[167-1] my yonge friends," he said, glancing at the remains of Consuelo's bower, "but for the accounting of taste there is none. What will you? The meat of the one man shall envenom the meat of the other. But" (in a whisper to me) "as to thees horse—thees Chu Chu, which I have just pass—why is she undress? Surely you would no make an exposition of her to the traveler to suspect! And if not, why so?"

I tried to explain, looking at Consuelo, that Chu Chu had run away, that Consuelo had met with a terrible accident, had been thrown, and I feared had suffered serious internal injury. But to my embarrassment Consuelo maintained a half scornful silence, and an inconsistent freshness of healthful indifference, as Enriquez approached her with an engaging smile. "Ah, yes, she have the headache, and the molligrubs. She will sit on the damp stone when the gentle dew is falling. I comprehend. Meet me in the lane when the clock strike nine! But," in a lower voice, "of thees undress horse I comprehend nothing! Look you—it is sad and strange."

He went off to fetch Chu Chu, leaving me and Consuelo alone. I do not think I ever felt so utterly abject and bewildered before in my life. Without knowing why, I was miserably conscious of having in some way offended the girl for whom I believed I would have given my life, and I had made her and myself ridiculous in the eyes of her brother. I had again failed in my slower Western nature to understand her high romantic Spanish soul! Meantime she was smoothing out her riding habit, and looking as fresh and pretty as when she first left her house.

"Consita," I said hesitatingly, "you are not angry with me?"

"Angry?" she repeated haughtily, without looking at me. "Oh, no! Of a possibility eet is Mees Essmith who is angry that I have interroopt her *tête-à-tête* with you, and have send here my brother to make the same with me."

"But," I said eagerly, "Miss Smith does not even know Enriquez!"

Consuelo turned on me a glance of unutterable significance. "Ah!" she said darkly, "you *tink*!"

Indeed I *knew*. But here I believed I understood Consuelo and was relieved. I even ventured to say gently, "And you are better?"

She drew herself up to her full height, which was not much. "Of my health, what is it? A nothing. Yes! Of my soul let us not speak."

Nevertheless, when Enriquez appeared with Chu Chu she ran towards her with outstretched arms. Chu Chu protruded about six inches of upper lip in response—apparently under the

impression, which I could quite understand, that her mistress was edible. And, I may have been mistaken, but their beautiful eyes met in an absolute and distinct glance of intelligence!

During the home journey Consuelo recovered her spirits and parted from me with a magnanimous and forgiving pressure of the hand. I do not know what explanation of Chu Chu's original escapade was given to Enriquez and the rest of the family; the inscrutable forgiveness extended to me by Consuelo precluded any further inquiry on my part. I was willing to leave it a secret between her and Chu Chu. But strange to say, it seemed to complete our own understanding, and precipitated, not only our love-making, but the final catastrophe which culminated that romance. For we had resolved to elope. I do not know that this heroic remedy was absolutely necessary from the attitude of either Consuelo's family or my own; I am inclined to think we preferred it because it involved no previous explanation or advice.

Need I say that our confidant and firm ally was Consuelo's brother—the alert, the linguistic, the ever-happy, ever-ready Enriquez? It was understood that his presence would not only give a certain mature respectability to our performance—but I do not think we would have contemplated this step without it. During one of our riding excursions we were to secure the services of a Methodist minister in the adjoining county, and later that of the Mission *padre*[\[169-1\]](#)—when the secret was out. "I will gif her away," said Enriquez confidently, "it will on the instant propitiate the old fellow who shall perform the affair and withhold his jaw. A little chin-music from your oncle 'Arry shall finish it! Remain tranquil and forget not a ring! One does not always, in the agony and dissatisfaction of the moment, a ring remember. I shall bring two in the pocket of my dress."

If I did not entirely participate in this roseate view, it may have been because Enriquez, although a few years my senior, was much younger-looking, and with his demure deviltry of eye and his upper lip close shaven for this occasion, he suggested a depraved acolyte rather than a responsible member of a family. Consuelo had also confided to me that her father—possibly owing to some rumors of our previous escapade—had forbidden any further excursions with me alone. The innocent man did not know that Chu Chu had forbidden it also, and that even on this momentous occasion both Enriquez and myself were obliged to ride in opposite fields like out-flankers. But we nevertheless felt the full guilt of disobedience added to our desperate enterprise. Meanwhile, although pressed for time and subject to discovery at any moment, I managed at certain points of the road to dismount and walk beside Chu Chu (who did not seem to recognize me on foot), holding Consuelo's hand in my own, with the discreet Enriquez leading my horse in the distant field. I retain a very vivid picture of that walk—the ascent of a gentle slope towards a prospect as yet unknown but full of glorious possibilities; the tender dropping light of an autumn sky, slightly filmed with the promise of the future rains, like foreshadowed tears, and the half-frightened, half-serious talk into which Consuelo and I had insensibly fallen.

And then, I don't know how it happened, but as we reached the summit Chu Chu suddenly reared, wheeled, and the next moment was flying back along the road we had just traveled, at the top of her speed! It might have been that, after her abstracted fashion, she only at that moment detected my presence; but so sudden and complete was her evolution that before I could regain my horse from the astonished Enriquez she was already a quarter of a mile on the homeward stretch, with the frantic Consuelo pulling hopelessly at the bridle.

We started in pursuit. But a horrible despair seized us. To attempt to overtake her, even to follow at the same rate of speed would only excite Chu Chu and endanger Consuelo's life. There was absolutely no help for it, nothing could be done; the mare had taken her determined, long, continuous stride, the road was a straight, steady descent all the way back to the village, Chu Chu had the bit between her teeth, and there was no prospect of swerving her. We could only follow hopelessly, idiotically, furiously, until Chu Chu dashed triumphantly into the Saltellos' courtyard, carrying the half-fainting Consuelo back to the arms of her assembled and astonished family.

It was our last ride together. It was the last I ever saw of Consuelo before her transfer to the safe seclusion of a convent in Southern California. It was the last I ever saw of Chu Chu, who in the confusion of that *rencontre*[\[172-1\]](#) was overlooked in her half-loosed harness and allowed to escape through the back gate to the fields. Months afterwards it was said that she had been identified among a band of wild horses in the Coast Range, as a strange and beautiful creature who had escaped the brand of the *rodeo* and had become a myth. There was another legend that she had been seen, sleek, fat, and gorgeously caparisoned, issuing from the gateway of the Rosario *patio*[\[172-2\]](#) before a lumbering Spanish *cabriolé*[\[172-3\]](#) in which a short, stout matron was seated—but I will have none of it. For there are days when she still lives, and I can see her plainly still climbing the gentle slope towards the summit, with Consuelo on her back and myself at her side, pressing eagerly forward towards the illimitable prospect that opens in the distance.

A MORALIZED LEGEND

"Dickon," cried Mother Rigby, "a coal for my pipe!"

The pipe was in the old dame's mouth when she said these words. She had thrust it there after filling it with tobacco but without stooping to light it at the hearth where, indeed, there was no appearance of a fire having been kindled that morning. Forthwith, however, as soon as the order was given, there was an intense red glow out of the bowl of the pipe and a whiff of smoke from Mother Rigby's lips. Whence the coal came and how brought hither by an invisible hand, I have never been able to discover.

"Good!" quoth Mother Rigby, with a nod of her head. "Thank ye, Dickon! And now for making this scarecrow. Be within call, Dickon, in case I need you again."

The good woman had risen thus early (for as yet it was scarcely sunrise) in order to set about making a scarecrow, which she intended to put in the middle of her corn-patch. It was now the latter week of May, and the crows and blackbirds had already discovered the little green, rolled-up leaf of the Indian corn just peeping out of the soil. She was determined, therefore, to contrive as lifelike a scarecrow as ever was seen, and to finish it immediately from top to toe, so that it should begin its sentinel's duty that very morning. Now Mother Rigby (as everybody must have heard) was one of the most cunning and potent witches in New England, and might with very little trouble have made a scarecrow ugly enough to frighten the minister himself. But on this occasion, as she had awakened in an uncommonly pleasant humor, and was further dulcified by her pipe of tobacco, she resolved to produce something fine, beautiful, and splendid rather than hideous and horrible.

"I don't want to set up a hobgoblin in my own corn-patch, and almost at my own doorstep," said Mother Rigby to herself, puffing out a whiff of smoke. "I could do it if I pleased, but I'm tired of doing marvelous things, and so I'll keep within the bounds of everyday business just for variety's sake. Besides, there is no use in scaring the little children for a mile roundabout, though 'tis true I'm a witch." It was settled, therefore, in her own mind that the scarecrow should represent a fine gentleman of the period so far as the materials at hand would allow.

Perhaps it may be as well to enumerate the chief of the articles that went to the composition of this figure. The most important item of all, probably, although it made so little show, was a certain broomstick on which Mother Rigby had taken many an airy gallop at mid-night, and which now served the scarecrow by way of a spinal column or, as the unlearned phrase it, a backbone. One of its arms was a disabled flail which used to be wielded by Goodman Rigby before his spouse worried him out of this troublesome world; the other, if I mistake not, was composed of the pudding-stick and a broken rung of a chair, tied loosely together at the elbow. As for its legs, the right was a hoe-handle, and the left an undistinguished and miscellaneous stick from the wood-pile. Its lungs, stomach, and other affairs of that kind, were nothing better than a meal-bag stuffed with straw. Thus we have made out the skeleton and entire corporosity of the scarecrow, with the exception of its head, and this was admirably supplied by a somewhat withered and shriveled pumpkin, in which Mother Rigby cut two holes for the eyes and a slit for the mouth, leaving a bluish-colored knob in the middle to pass for a nose. It was really quite a respectable face.

"I've seen worse ones on human shoulders, at any rate," said Mother Rigby. "And many a fine gentleman has a pumpkin head, as well as my scarecrow."

But the clothes in this case were to be the making of the man; so the good old woman took down from a peg an ancient plum-colored coat of London make and with relics of embroidery on its seams, cuffs, pocket-flaps, and buttonholes, but lamentably worn and faded, patched at the elbows, tattered at the skirts, and threadbare all over. On the left breast was a round hole whence either a star of nobility had been rent away or else the hot heart of some former wearer had scorched it through and through. The neighbors said that this rich garment belonged to the Black Man's wardrobe, and that he kept it at Mother Rigby's cottage for the convenience of slipping it on whenever he wished to make a grand appearance at the governor's table. To match the coat there was a velvet waist-coat of very ample size, and formerly embroidered with foliage that had been as brightly golden as the maple-leaves in October, but which had now quite vanished out of the substance of the velvet. Next came a pair of scarlet breeches once worn by the French governor of Louisbourg, and the knees of which had touched the lower step of the throne of Louis le Grand.^[176-1] The Frenchman had given these small-clothes to an Indian pow-wow, who parted with them to the old witch for a gill of strong waters at one of their dances in the forest. Furthermore, Mother Rigby produced a pair of silk stockings and put them on the figure's legs, where they showed as unsubstantial as a dream, with the wooden reality of the two sticks making itself miserably apparent through the holes. Lastly, she put her dead husband's wig on the bare scalp of the pumpkin, and surmounted the whole with a dusty three-cornered hat, in which was stuck the longest tail-feather of a rooster.

Then the old dame stood the figure up in a corner of her cottage and chuckled to behold its

yellow semblance of a visage, with its nobby little nose thrust into the air. It had a strangely self-satisfied aspect, and seemed to say, "Come, look at me!"

"And you are well worth looking at, that's a fact!" quoth Mother Rigby, in admiration at her own handiwork. "I've made many a puppet since I've been a witch but methinks this the finest of them all. 'Tis almost too good for a scarecrow. And, by the by, I'll just fill a fresh pipe of tobacco, and then take him out to the corn-patch."

While filling her pipe the old woman continued to gaze with almost motherly affection at the figure in the corner. To say the truth, whether it were chance or skill or downright witchcraft, there was something wonderfully human in this ridiculous shape bedizened with its tattered finery, and, as for the countenance, it appeared to shrivel its yellow surface into a grin—a funny kind of expression betwixt scorn and merriment, as if it understood itself to be a jest at mankind. The more Mother Rigby looked, the better she was pleased.

"Dickon," cried she, sharply, "another coal for my pipe!"

Hardly had she spoken than, just as before, there was a red-glowing coal on the top of the tobacco. She drew in a long whiff, and puffed it forth again into the bar of morning sunshine which struggled through the one dusty pane of her cottage window. Mother Rigby always liked to flavor her pipe with a coal of fire from the particular chimney-corner whence this had been brought. But where that chimney-corner might be or who brought the coal from it—further than that the invisible messenger seemed to respond to the name of Dickon—I cannot tell.

"That puppet yonder," thought Mother Rigby, still with her eyes fixed on the scarecrow, "is too good a piece of work to stand all summer in a corn-patch frightening away the crows and blackbirds. He's capable of better things. Why, I've danced with a worse one when partners happened to be scarce at our witch-meetings in the forests! What if I should let him take his chance among the other men of straw and empty fellows who go bustling about the world?"

The old witch took three or four more whiffs of her pipe and smiled.

"He'll meet plenty of his brethren at every street-corner," continued she. "Well, I didn't mean to dabble in witchcraft to-day further than the lighting of my pipe, but a witch I am and a witch I'm likely to be and there's no use trying to shirk it. I'll make a man of my scarecrow, were it only for the joke's sake."

While muttering these words Mother Rigby took the pipe from her own mouth and thrust it into the crevice which represented the same feature in the pumpkin-visage of the scarecrow.

"Puff, darling, puff!" she said. "Puff away, my fine fellow! Your life depends on it!"

This was a strange exhortation, undoubtedly, to be addressed to a mere thing of sticks, straw, and old clothes, with nothing better than a shriveled pumpkin for a head, as we know to have been the scarecrow's case. Nevertheless, as we must carefully hold in remembrance, Mother Rigby was a witch of singular power and dexterity; and, keeping this fact duly before our minds, we shall see nothing beyond credibility in the remarkable incidents of our story. Indeed, the great difficulty will be at once got over if we can only bring ourselves to believe that as soon as the old dame bade him puff there came a whiff of smoke from the scarecrow's mouth. It was the very feeblest of whiffs, to be sure, but it was followed by another and another, each more decided than the preceding one.

"Puff away, my pet! Puff away, my pretty one!" Mother Rigby kept repeating, with her pleasantest smile. "It is the breath of life to ye and that you may take my word for."

Beyond all question, the pipe was bewitched. There must have been a spell either in the tobacco or in the fiercely glowing coal that so mysteriously burned on top of it, or in the pungently aromatic smoke which exhaled from the kindled weed. The figure, after a few doubtful attempts, at length blew forth a volley of smoke extending all the way from the obscure corner into the bar of sunshine. There it eddied and melted away among the motes of dust. It seemed a convulsive effort, for the two or three next whiffs were fainter, although the coal still glowed and threw a gleam over the scarecrow's visage. The old witch clapped her skinny hands together, and smiled encouragingly upon her handiwork. She saw that the charm had worked well. The shriveled yellow face, which heretofore had been no face at all, had already a thin fantastic haze, as it were, of human likeness shifting to and fro across it, sometimes vanishing entirely, but growing more perceptible than ever with the next whiff from the pipe. The whole figure, in like manner, assumed a show of life such as we impart to ill-defined shapes among the clouds and half deceive ourselves with the pastime of our own fancy.

If we must needs pry closely into the matter, it may be doubted whether there was any real change, after all, in the sordid, worn-out, worthless and ill-jointed substance of the scarecrow, but merely a spectral illusion and a cunning effect of light and shade, so colored and contrived as to delude the eyes of most men. The miracles of witchcraft seem always to have had a very shallow subtlety and at least, if the above explanations do not hit the truth of the process, I can suggest no better.

"Well puffed, my pretty lad!" still cried old Mother Rigby. "Come! another good, stout whiff,

and let it be with might and main. Puff for thy life, I tell thee! Puff out of the very bottom of thy heart, if any heart thou hast, or any bottom to it. Well done, again! Thou didst suck in that mouthful as if for the pure love of it."

And then the witch beckoned to the scarecrow, throwing so much magnetic potency into her gesture that it seemed as if it must inevitably be obeyed, like the mystic call of the lodestone when it summons the iron.

"Why lurkest thou in the corner, lazy one?" said she. "Step forth! Thou hast the world before thee!"

Upon my word, if the legend were not one which I heard on my grandmother's knee, and which had established its place among things credible before my childish judgment could analyze its probability, I question whether I should have the face to tell it now.

In obedience to Mother Rigby's word and extending its arm as if to reach her outstretched hand, the figure made a step forward—a kind of hitch and jerk, however, rather than a step—then tottered and almost lost its balance. What could the witch expect? It was nothing, after all, but a scarecrow stuck upon two sticks. But the strong-willed old Beldam scowled and beckoned and flung the energy of her purpose so forcibly at this poor combination of rotten wood and musty straw and ragged garments that it was compelled to show itself a man, in spite of the reality of things; so it stepped into the bar of sunshine. There it stood, poor devil of a contrivance that it was, with only the thinnest vesture of human similitude about it, through which was evident the stiff, rickety, incongruous, faded, tattered, good-for-nothing patchwork of its substance, ready to sink in a heap upon the floor, as conscious of its own unworthiness to be erect. Shall I confess the truth? At its present point of vivification the scarecrow reminds me of some of the lukewarm and abortive characters composed of heterogeneous materials used for the thousandth time, and never worth using, with which romance writers (and myself, no doubt, among the rest) have so overpeopled the world of fiction.

But the fierce old hag began to get angry and show a glimpse of her diabolic nature, like a snake's head peeping with a hiss out of her bosom, at this pusillanimous behavior of the thing which she had taken the trouble to put together.

"Puff away, wretch!" cried she, wrathfully. "Puff puff, puff, thou thing of straw and emptiness! thou rag or two! thou meal-bag! thou pumpkin-head! thou nothing! Where shall I find a name vile enough to call thee by? Puff, I say, and suck in thy fantastic life along with the smoke, else I snatch the pipe from thy mouth and hurl thee where that red coal came from."

Thus threatened, the unhappy scarecrow had nothing for it but to puff away for dear life. As need was, therefore, it applied itself lustily to the pipe, and sent forth such abundant volleys of tobacco-smoke that the small cottage-kitchen became all-vaporous. The one sunbeam struggled mistily through, and could but imperfectly define the image of the cracked and dusty window-pane on the opposite wall.

Mother Rigby, meanwhile, with one brown arm akimbo and the other stretched toward the figure, loomed grimly amid the obscurity with such port and expression as when she was wont to heave a ponderous nightmare on her victims and stand at the bedside to enjoy their agony.

In fear and trembling did this poor scarecrow puff. But its efforts, it must be acknowledged, served an excellent purpose, for with each successive whiff the figure lost more and more of its dizzy and perplexing tenuity and seemed to take denser substance. Its very garments, moreover, partook of the magical change, and shone with the gloss of novelty, and glistened with the skilfully embroidered gold that had long ago been rent away, and, half revealed among the smoke, a yellow visage bent its lustreless eyes on Mother Rigby.

At last the old witch clenched her fist and shook it at the figure. Not that she was positively angry but merely acting on the principle—perhaps untrue or not the only truth, though as high a one as Mother Rigby could be expected to attain—that feeble and torpid natures, being incapable of better inspiration, must be stirred up by fear. But here was the crisis. Should she fail in what she now sought to affect, it was her ruthless purpose to scatter the miserable simulacrum into its original elements.

"Thou hast a man's aspect," said she, sternly, "have also the echo and mockery of a voice. I bid thee speak!"

The scarecrow gasped, struggled, and at length emitted a murmur which was so incorporated with its smoky breath that you could scarcely tell whether it were indeed a voice or only a whiff of tobacco. Some narrators of this legend held the opinion that Mother Rigby's conjurations and the fierceness of her will had compelled a familiar spirit into the figure, and that the voice was his.

"Mother," mumbled the poor stifled voice, "be not so awful with me! I would fain speak, but, being without wits, what can I say?"

"Thou canst speak, darling, canst thou?" cried Mother Rigby, relaxing her grim countenance into a smile. "And what shalt thou say, quotha? Say, indeed! Art thou of the brotherhood of the

empty skull and demandest of me what thou shalt say? Thou shalt say a thousand things, and saying them a thousand times over, thou shalt still have said nothing. Be not afraid, I tell thee! When thou comest into the world—whither I purpose sending thee forthwith—thou shalt not lack the wherewithal to talk. Talk. Why, thou shalt babble like a mill-stream, if thou wilt. Thou hast brains enough for that, I trow."

"At your service, mother," responded the figure.

"And that was well said, my pretty one!" answered Mother Rigby. "Then thou spakest like thyself and meant nothing. Thou shalt have a hundred such set phrases and five hundred to the boot of them. And now, darling, I have taken so much pains with thee and thou art so beautiful that, by my troth, I love thee better than any witch's puppet in the world; and I've made them of all sorts—clay, wax, straw, sticks, night fog, morning mist, sea-foam, and chimney-smoke. But thou art the very best; so give heed to what I say."

"Yes, kind mother," said the figure, "with all my heart!"

"With all thy heart!" cried the old witch, setting her hands to her sides, and laughing loudly. "Thou hast such a pretty way of speaking! With all thy heart! And thou didst put thy hand to the left side of thy waistcoat, as if thou really hadst one!"

So now in high good-humor with this fantastic contrivance of hers, Mother Rigby told the scarecrow that it must go and play its part in the great world, where not one man in a hundred, she affirmed, was gifted with more real substance than itself. And that he might hold up his head with the best of them, she endowed him on the spot with an unreckonable amount of wealth. It consisted partly of a gold-mine in Eldorado,^[185-1] and of ten thousand shares in a broken bubble, and of half a million acres of vineyard at the North Pole, and of a castle in the air and a chateau in Spain, together with all the rents and income therefrom accruing. She further made over to him the cargo of a certain ship laden with salt of Cadiz which she herself by her necromantic arts had caused to founder ten years before in the deepest part of mid-ocean. If the salt were not dissolved and could be brought to market, it would fetch a pretty penny among the fishermen. That he might not lack ready money, she gave him a copper farthing of Birmingham manufacture, being all the coin she had about her, and likewise a great deal of brass, which she applied to his forehead, thus making it yellower than ever.

"With that brass alone," quoth Mother Rigby, "thou canst pay thy way all over the earth. Kiss me, pretty darling! I have done my best for thee."

Furthermore, that the adventurer might lack no possible advantage toward a fair start in life, this excellent old dame gave him a token by which he was to introduce himself to a certain magistrate, member of the council, merchant, and elder of the church (the four capacities constituting but one man) who stood at the head of society in the neighboring metropolis. The token was neither more nor less than a single word, which Mother Rigby whispered to the scarecrow and which the scarecrow was to whisper to the merchant.

"Gouty as the old fellow is, he'll run thy errands for thee when once thou hast given him that word in his ear," said the old witch. "Mother Rigby knows the worshipful justice Gookin, and the worshipful justice knows Mother Rigby!"

Here the witch thrust her wrinkled face close to the puppet's, chuckling irrepressibly, and fidgeting all through her system with delight at the idea which she meant to communicate.

"The worshipful Master Gookin," whispered she, "hath a comely maiden to his daughter. And hark ye, my pet. Thou hast a fair outside and a pretty wit enough of thine own. Yea, a pretty wit enough! Thou wilt think better of it when thou hast seen more of other people's wits. Now with thy outside and thy inside thou art the very man to win a young girl's heart. Never doubt it; I tell thee it shall be so. Put but a bold face on the matter, sigh, smile, flourish thy hat, thrust forth thy leg like a dancing-master, put thy right hand to the left side of thy waistcoat, and pretty Polly Gookin is thine own."

All this while the new creature had been sucking in and exhaling the vapory fragrance of his pipe and seemed now to continue this occupation as much for the enjoyment it afforded as because it was an essential condition of his existence. It was wonderful to see how exceedingly like a human being it behaved. Its eyes (for it appeared to possess a pair) were bent on Mother Rigby, and at suitable junctures it nodded or shook its head. Neither did it lack words proper for the occasion—"Really!"—"Indeed!"—"Pray tell me!"—"Is it possible!"—"Upon my word!"—"By no means!"—"Oh!"—"Ah!"—"Hem!" and other such weighty utterances as imply attention, inquiry, acquiescence, or dissent on the part of the auditor. Even had you stood by and seen the scarecrow made, you could scarcely have resisted the conviction that it perfectly understood the cunning counsels which the old witch poured into its counterfeit of an ear. The more earnestly it applied its lips to the pipe, the more distinctly was its human likeness stamped among visible realities, the more sagacious grew its expression, the more lifelike its gestures and movements, and the more intelligibly audible its voice. Its garments too glistened so much the brighter with an illusory magnificence. The very pipe in which burned the spell of all this wonder-work ceased to appear as a smoke-blackened earthen stump, and became a meerschaum with painted bowl and amber mouthpiece.

It might be apprehended, however, that, as the life of the illusion seemed identical with the vapor of the pipe, it would terminate simultaneously with the reduction of the tobacco to ashes. But the beldam foresaw the difficulty.

"Hold thou the pipe, my precious one," said she, "while I fill it for thee again."

It was sorrowful to behold how the fine gentleman began to fade back into a scarecrow while Mother Rigby shook the ashes out of the pipe and proceeded to replenish it from her tobacco-box.

"Dickon," cried she, in her high, sharp tone, "another coal for this pipe."

No sooner said than the intensely red speck of fire was glowing within the pipe-bowl and the scarecrow, without waiting for the witch's bidding, applied the tube to his lips and drew in a few short, convulsive whiffs, which soon however became regular and equable.

"Now, mine own heart's darling," quoth Mother Rigby, "whatever may happen to thee, thou must stick to thy pipe. Thy life is in it; and that, at least, thou knowest well, if thou knowest nought besides. Stick to thy pipe, I say! Smoke, puff, blow thy cloud, and tell the people, if any question be made, that it is for thy health and that so the physician orders thee to do. And, sweet one, when thou shalt find thy pipe getting low, go apart into some corner, and—first filling thyself with smoke—cry sharply, 'Dickon, a fresh pipe of tobacco!' and 'Dickon, another coal for my pipe!' and have it into thy pretty mouth as speedily as may be, else instead of a gallant gentleman in a gold-laced coat, thou wilt be but a jumble of sticks, and tattered clothes, and a bag of straw, and a withered pumpkin. Now depart, my treasure, and good luck go with thee!"

"Never fear, mother," said the figure, in a stout voice, and sending forth a courageous whiff of smoke. "I will thrive if an honest man and a gentleman may."

"Oh, thou wilt be the death of me!" cried the old witch, convulsed with laughter. "That was well said! If an honest man and a gentleman may! Thou playest thy part to perfection. Get along with thee for a smart fellow and I will wager on thy head, as a man of pith and substance, with a brain and what they call a heart, and all else that a man should have against any other thing on two legs. I hold myself a better witch than yesterday for thy sake. Did I not make thee? And I defy any witch in New England to make such another! Here! take my staff along with thee."

The staff, though it was but a plain oaken stick, immediately took the aspect of a gold-headed cane.

"That gold head has as much sense in it as thine own," said Mother Rigby, "and it will guide thee straight to worshipful Master Gookin's door. Get thee gone, my pretty pet, my darling, my precious one, my treasure; and if any ask thy name, it is 'Feathertop,' for thou hast a feather in thy hat and I have thrust a handful of feathers into the hollow of thy head. And thy wig, too, is of the fashion they call 'feathertop'; so be 'Feathertop' thy name."

And issuing from the cottage, Feathertop strode manfully towards town. Mother Rigby stood at the threshold, well pleased to see how the sunbeams glistened on him, as if all his magnificence were real, and how diligently and lovingly he smoked his pipe, and how handsomely he walked in spite of a little stiffness of his legs. She watched him until out of sight and threw a witch-benediction after her darling when a turn of the road snatched him from her view.

Betimes in the forenoon, when the principal street of the neighboring town was just at its acme of life and bustle, a stranger of very distinguished figure was seen on the sidewalk. His port as well as his garments betokened nothing short of nobility. He wore a richly embroidered plum-colored coat, a waistcoat of costly velvet magnificently adorned with golden foliage, a pair of splendid scarlet breeches and the finest and glossiest of white silk stockings. His head was covered with a peruke so daintily powdered and adjusted that it would have been sacrilege to disorder it with a hat, which, therefore (and it was a gold-laced hat set off with a snowy feather), he carried beneath his arm. On the breast of his coat glistened a star. He managed his gold-headed cane with an airy grace peculiar to the fine gentlemen of the period and, to give the highest possible finish to his equipment, he had lace ruffles at his wrist of a most ethereal delicacy, sufficiently avouching how idle and aristocratic must be the hands which they half-concealed.

It was a remarkable point in the accoutrement of this brilliant personage that he held in his left hand a fantastic kind of pipe with an exquisitely painted bow and an amber mouthpiece. This he applied to his lips as often as every five or six paces and inhaled a deep whiff of smoke, which after being retained a moment in his lungs might be seen to eddy gracefully from his mouth and nostrils.

As may well be supposed, the street was all astir to find out the stranger's name.

"It is some great nobleman, beyond question," said one of the townspeople. "Do you see the star at his breast?"

"Nay, it is too bright to be seen," said another. "Yes, he must needs be a nobleman, as you say. But by what conveyance, think you, can his Lordship have voyaged or traveled hither? There has been no vessel from the old country for a month past; and if he have arrived overland from the

southward, pray where are his attendants and equipage?"

"He needs no equipage to set off his rank," remarked a third. "If he came among us in rags, nobility would shine through a hole in his elbow. I never saw such dignity of aspect. He has the old Norman blood[191-1] in his veins, I warrant him."

"I rather take him to be a Dutchman or one of your High Germans," said another citizen. "The men of those countries have always the pipe at their mouths."

"And so has a Turk," answered his companion. "But in my judgment, this stranger hath been bred at the French court and hath there learned politeness and grace of manner which none understand so well as the nobility of France. That gait, now! A vulgar spectator might deem it stiff—he might call it a hitch and jerk—but, to my eye, it hath an unspeakable majesty and must have been acquired by constant observation of the deportment of the Grand Monarque. The stranger's character and office are evident enough. He is a French ambassador come to treat with our rulers about the cession of Canada."

"More probably a Spaniard," said another, "and hence his yellow complexion. Or most likely he is from the Havana or from some port on the Spanish main and comes to make investigation about the piracies which our governor is thought to connive at. Those settlers in Peru and Mexico have skins as yellow as the gold which they dig out of their mines."

"Yellow or not," cried a lady, "he is a beautiful man! So tall, so slender! Such a fine, noble face, with so well shaped a nose and all that delicacy of expression about the mouth! And, bless me! how bright his star is! It positively shoots out flames."

"So do your eyes, fair lady," said the stranger, with a bow and a flourish of his pipe, for he was just passing at the instant. "Upon my honor, they have quite dazzled me!"

"Was ever so original and exquisite a compliment?" murmured the lady, in an ecstasy of delight.

Amid the general admiration excited by the stranger's appearance there were only two dissenting voices. One was that of an impertinent cur which, after sniffing at the heels of the glistening figure, put its tail between its legs and skulked into its master's backyard, vociferating an execrable howl. The other dissentient was a young child who squalled at the fullest stretch of his lungs and babbled some unintelligible nonsense about a pumpkin.

Feathertop, meanwhile, pursued his way along the street. Except for the few complimentary words to the lady, and now and then a slight inclination of the head in requital of the profound reverences of the bystanders, he seemed wholly absorbed in his pipe. There needed no other proof of his rank and consequence than the perfect equanimity with which he comported himself, while the curiosity and admiration of the town swelled almost into a clamor around him. With a crowd gathering behind his footsteps, he finally reached the mansion-house of the worshipful Justice Gookin, entered the gate, ascended the steps of the front door and knocked. In the interim before his summons was answered the stranger was observed to shake the ashes out of his pipe.

"What did he say in that sharp voice?" inquired one of the spectators.

"Nay, I know not," answered his friend. "But the sun dazzles my eyes strangely. How dim and faded His Lordship looks all of a sudden! Bless my wits, what is the matter with me?"

"The wonder is," said the other, "that his pipe, which was out an instant ago, should be all alight again and with the reddest coal I ever saw. There is something mysterious about this stranger. What a whiff of smoke was that! 'Dim and faded,' did you call him? Why, as he turns about the star on his breast is all ablaze."

"It is, indeed," said his companion, "and it will go near to dazzle pretty Polly Gookin, whom I see peeping at it out of the chamber window."

The door being now opened, Feathertop turned to the crowd, made a stately bend of his body, like a great man acknowledging the reverence of the meaner sort, and vanished into the house. There was a mysterious kind of a smile—if it might not better be called a grin or grimace—upon his visage, but of all the throng that beheld him not an individual appears to have possessed insight enough to detect the illusive character of the stranger, except a little child and a cur-dog.

Our legend here loses somewhat of its continuity, and, passing over the preliminary explanation between Feathertop and the merchant, goes in quest of the pretty Polly Gookin. She was a damsel of a soft, round figure with light hair and blue eyes, and a fair rosy face which seemed neither very shrewd nor very simple. This young lady had caught a glimpse of the glistening stranger while standing at the threshold and had forthwith put on a laced cap, a string of beads, her finest kerchief and her stiffest damask petticoat, in preparation for the interview. Hurrying from her chamber to the parlor, she had ever since been viewing herself in the large looking-glass and practising pretty airs—now a smile, now a ceremonious dignity of aspect, and now a softer smile than the former, kissing her hand likewise, tossing her head and managing her fan, while within the mirror an unsubstantial little maid repeated every gesture and did all the foolish things that Polly did, but without making her ashamed of them. In short, it was the fault of pretty

Polly's ability, rather than her will, if she failed to be as complete an artifice as the illustrious Feathertop himself; and when she thus tampered with her own simplicity, the witch's phantom might well hope to win her.

No sooner did Polly hear her father's gouty footsteps approaching the parlor door, accompanied with the stiff clatter of Feathertop's high-heeled shoes, than she seated herself bolt upright and innocently began warbling a song.

"Polly! Daughter Polly!" cried the old merchant. "Come hither, child."

Master Gookin's aspect, as he opened the door, was doubtful and troubled.

"This gentleman," continued he, presenting the stranger, "is the chevalier Feathertop—nay, I beg his pardon, My Lord Feathertop—who hath brought me a token of remembrance from an ancient friend of mine. Pay your duty to His Lordship, child, and honor him as his quality deserves."

After these few words of introduction the worshipful magistrate immediately quitted the room. But even in that brief moment, had the fair Polly glanced aside at her father instead of devoting herself wholly to the brilliant guest, she might have taken warning of some mischief nigh at hand. The old man was nervous, fidgety and very pale. Purposing a smile of courtesy, he had deformed his face with a sort of galvanic grin which, when Feathertop's back was turned, he exchanged for a scowl, at the same time shaking his fist and stamping his gouty foot—an incivility which brought its retribution along with it. The truth appears to have been that Mother Rigby's word of introduction, whatever it might be, had operated far more on the rich merchant's fears than on his good-will. Moreover, being a man of wonderfully acute observation, he had noticed that the painted figures on the bowl of Feathertop's pipe were in motion. Looking more closely, he became convinced that these figures were a party of little demons, each duly provided with horns and a tail, and dancing hand in hand with gestures of diabolical merriment round the circumference of the pipe-bowl. As if to confirm his suspicions, while Master Gookin ushered his guest along a dusky passage from his private room to the parlor, the star on Feathertop's breast had scintillated actual flames, and threw a flickering gleam upon the wall, the ceiling and the door.

With such sinister prognostics manifesting themselves on all hands, it is not to be marveled at that the merchant should have felt that he was committing his daughter to a very questionable acquaintance. He cursed in his secret soul the insinuating elegance of Feathertop's manners as this brilliant personage bowed, smiled, put his hand on his heart, inhaled a long whiff from his pipe, and enriched the atmosphere with the smoky vapor of a fragrant and visible sigh. Gladly would poor Master Gookin have thrust his dangerous guest into the street, but there was a restraint and terror within him. This respectable old gentleman, we fear, at an earlier period of life had given some pledge or other to the Evil Principle, and perhaps was now to redeem it by the sacrifice of his daughter.

It so happened that the parlor door was partly of glass shaded by a silken curtain the folds of which hung a little awry. So strong was the merchant's interest in witnessing what was to ensue between the fair Polly and the gallant Feathertop that after quitting the room he could by no means refrain from peeping through the crevice of the curtain. But there was nothing very miraculous to be seen—nothing except the trifles previously noticed, to confirm the idea of a supernatural peril environing the pretty Polly. The stranger, it is true, was evidently a thorough and practised man of the world, systematic and self-possessed, and therefore the sort of person to whom a parent ought not to confide a simple young girl without due watchfulness for the result. The worthy magistrate, who had been conversant with all degrees and qualities of mankind, could not but perceive every motion and gesture of the distinguished Feathertop came in its proper place. Nothing had been left rude or native in him; a well-digested conventionalism had incorporated itself thoroughly with his substance and transformed him into a work of art. Perhaps it was this peculiarity that invested him with a species of ghastliness and awe. It is the effect of anything completely and consummately artificial in human shape that the person impresses us as an unreality, and as having hardly pith enough to cast a shadow upon the floor. As regarded Feathertop, all this resulted in a wild, extravagant, and fantastical impression, as if his life and being were akin to the smoke that curled upward from his pipe.

But pretty Polly Gookin felt not thus. The pair were now promenading the room—Feathertop with his dainty stride, and no less dainty grimace, the girl with a native maidenly grace just touched, not spoiled, by a slightly affected manner which seemed caught from the perfect artifice of her companion. The longer the interview continued, the more charmed was pretty Polly, until within the first quarter of an hour (as the old magistrate noted by his watch) she was evidently beginning to be in love. Nor need it have been witchcraft that subdued her in such a hurry: the poor child's heart, it may be, was so very fervent that it melted her with its own warmth, as reflected from the hollow semblance of a lover. No matter what Feathertop said, his words found depth and reverberation in her ear; no matter what he did, his action was very heroic to her eye. And by this time, it is to be supposed, there was a blush on Polly's cheek, a tender smile about her mouth, and a liquid softness in her glance, while the star kept coruscating on Feathertop's breast, and the little demons careered with more frantic merriment than ever about the circumference of his pipe-bowl. Oh, pretty Polly Gookin! Why should these imps rejoice so madly that a silly maiden's heart was about to be given to a shadow? Is it so unusual a misfortune—so

rare a triumph?

By and by Feathertop paused and, throwing himself into an imposing attitude, seemed to summon the fair girl to survey his figure and resist him longer if she could. His star, his embroidery, his buckles, glowed at that instant with unutterable splendor; the picturesque hues of his attire took a richer depth of coloring; there was a gleam and polish over his whole presence betokening the perfect witchery of well-ordered manners. The maiden raised her eyes and suffered them to linger upon her companion with a bashful and admiring gaze. Then, as if desirous of judging what value her own simple comeliness might have side by side with so much brilliancy, she cast a glance toward the full-length looking glass in front of which they happened to be standing. It was one of the truest plates in the world and incapable of flattery. No sooner did the images therein reflected meet Polly's eye than she shrieked, shrank from the stranger's side, gazed at him a moment in the wildest dismay, and sank insensible upon the floor. Feathertop, likewise, had looked toward the mirror, and there beheld, not the glittering mockery of his outside show, but a picture of the sordid patchwork of his real composition stripped of all witchcraft.

The wretched simulacrum! We almost pity him. He threw up his arms with an expression of despair that went farther than any of his previous manifestations toward vindicating his claims to be reckoned human. For perchance the only time since this so often empty and deceptive life of mortals began its course, an illusion had seen and fully recognized itself.

Mother Rigby was seated by her kitchen hearth in the twilight of this eventful day and had just shaken the ashes out of a new pipe, when she heard a hurried tramp along the road. Yet it did not seem so much the tramp of human footsteps as the clatter of sticks or the rattling of dry bones.

"Ha!" thought the old witch, "what step is that? Whose skeleton is out of its grave now, I wonder?"

A figure burst headlong into the cottage door. It was Feathertop. His pipe was still alight, the star still flamed upon his breast, the embroidery still glowed upon his garments, nor had he lost in any degree or manner that could be estimated the aspect that assimilated him with our mortal brotherhood. But yet, in some indescribable way (as is the case with all that has deluded us when once found out), the poor reality was felt beneath the cunning artifice.

"What has gone wrong?" demanded the witch. "Did yonder sniffling hypocrite thrust my darling from his door? The villain! I'll set twenty fiends to torture him till he offer thee his daughter on his bended knees!"

"No, mother," said Feathertop, despondingly; "it was not that."

"Did the girl scorn my precious one?" asked Mother Rigby, her fierce eyes glowing like two coals of Tophet. "I'll cover her face with pimples! Her nose shall be as red as the coal in thy pipe! Her front teeth shall drop out! In a week hence she shall not be worth thy having."

"Let her alone, mother," answered poor Feathertop. "The girl was half won, and methinks a kiss from her sweet lips might have made me altogether human. But," he added after a brief pause and then a howl of self-contempt, "I've seen myself, mother! I've seen myself for the wretched, ragged, empty thing I am. I'll exist no longer."

Snatching the pipe from his mouth, he flung it with all his might against the chimney, and at the same instant sank upon the floor, a medley of straw and tattered garments, with some sticks protruding from the heap and a shriveled pumpkin in the midst. The eyeholes were now lustreless but the rudely carved gap that just before had been a mouth still seemed to twist itself into a despairing grin, and was so far human.

"Poor fellow!" quoth Mother Rigby, with a rueful glance at the relics of her ill-fated contrivance. "My poor, dear, pretty Feathertop! There are thousands upon thousands of coxcombs and charlatans in the world made up of just such a jumble of worn-out, forgotten and good-for-nothing trash as he was, yet they live in fair repute, and never see themselves for what they are. And why should my poor puppet be the only one to know himself and perish for it?"

While thus muttering the witch had filled a fresh pipe of tobacco, and held the stem between her fingers, as doubtful whether to thrust it into her own mouth or Feathertop's.

"Poor Feathertop!" she continued. "I could easily give him another chance, and send him forth again to-morrow. But no! His feelings are too tender—his sensibilities too deep. He seems to have too much heart to bustle for his own advantage in such an empty and heartless world. Well, well! I'll make a scarecrow of him, after all. 'Tis an innocent and useful vocation, and will suit my darling well; and if each of his human brethren had as fit a one, 'twould be the better for mankind. And as for his pipe of tobacco, I need it more than he."

So saying, Mother Rigby put the stem between her lips.

"Dickon," cried she, in her high, sharp tone, "another coal for my pipe!"

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

I had called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, [203-1] one day in the autumn of last year, and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced, elderly gentleman, with fiery red hair. With an apology for my intrusion, I was about to withdraw, when Holmes pulled me abruptly into the room, and closed the door behind me.

"You could not possibly have come at a better time, my dear Watson," he said, cordially.

"I was afraid that you were engaged."

"So I am. Very much so."

"Then I can wait in the next room."

"Not at all. This gentleman, Mr. Wilson, has been my partner and helper in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours also."

The stout gentleman half rose from his chair and gave a bob of greeting, with a quick, little, questioning glance from his small, fat-encircled eyes.

"Try the settee," said Holmes, relapsing into his arm-chair and putting his finger-tips together, as was his custom when in judicial moods. "I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love of all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of everyday life. You have shown your relish for it by the enthusiasm which has prompted you to chronicle, and, if you will excuse my saying so, somewhat to embellish so many of my own little adventures."

"Your cases have indeed been of the greatest interest to me," I observed.

"You will remember that I remarked the other day, just before we went into the very simple problem presented by Miss Mary Sutherland, that for strange effects and extraordinary combinations we must go to life itself, which is always far more daring than any effort of the imagination."

"A proposition which I took the liberty of doubting."

"You did, doctor, but none the less you must come round to my view, for otherwise I shall keep on piling fact upon fact on you, until your reason breaks down under them and acknowledges me to be right. Now, Mr. Jabez Wilson here has been good enough to call upon me this morning, and to begin a narrative which promises to be one of the most singular which I have listened to for some time. You have heard me remark that the strangest and most unique things are very often connected not with the larger but with the smaller crimes, and occasionally, indeed, where there is room for doubt whether any positive crime has been committed. As far as I have heard, it is impossible for me to say whether the present case is an instance of crime or not, but the course of events is certainly among the most singular that I have ever listened to. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would have the great kindness to recommence your narrative. I ask you, not merely because my friend, Dr. Watson, has not heard the opening part, but also because the peculiar nature of the story makes me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips. As a rule, when I have heard some slight indication of the course of events, I am able to guide myself by the thousands of other similar cases which occur to my memory. In the present instance I am forced to admit that the facts are, to the best of my belief, unique."

The portly client puffed out his chest with an appearance of some little pride, and pulled a dirty and wrinkled newspaper from the inside pocket of his great-coat. As he glanced down the advertising column, with his head thrust forward, and the paper flattened out upon his knee, I took a good look at the man, and endeavored, after the fashion of my companion, to read the indications which might be presented by his dress or appearance.

I did not gain very much, however, by my inspection. Our visitor bore every mark of being an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous, and slow. He wore rather baggy gray shepherd's check trousers, a not over-clean black frock-coat, unbuttoned in the front, and a drab waistcoat with a heavy brassy Albert chain, and a square pierced bit of metal dangling down as an ornament. A frayed top-hat and a faded brown overcoat with a wrinkled velvet collar lay upon a chair beside him. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head, and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features.

Sherlock Holmes's quick eye took in my occupation, and he shook his head with a smile as he

noticed my questioning glances, "Beyond the obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labor, that he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, [206-1] that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else."

Mr. Jabez Wilson started up in his chair, with his forefinger upon the paper, but with his eyes upon my companion.

"How, in the name of good fortune, did you know all that, Mr. Holmes?" he asked. "How did you know, for example, that I did manual labor? It's as true as gospel, for I began as a ship's carpenter."

"Your hands, my dear sir. Your right hand is quite a size larger than your left. You have worked with it, and the muscles are more developed."

"Well, the snuff, then, and the Freemasonry?"

"I won't insult your intelligence by telling you how I read that, especially as, rather against the strict rules of your order, you use an arc-and-compass breastpin."

"Ah, of course, I forgot that. But the writing?"

"What else can be indicated by that right cuff so very shiny for five inches, and the left one with the smooth patch near the elbow where you rest it upon the desk?"

"Well, but China?"

"The fish that you have tattooed immediately above your right wrist could only have been done in China. I have made a small study of tattoo marks, and have even contributed to the literature of the subject. That trick of staining the fishes' scales of a delicate pink is quite peculiar to China. When, in addition, I see a Chinese coin hanging from your watch-chain, the matter becomes even more simple."

Mr. Jabez Wilson laughed heavily. "Well, I never!" said he. "I thought at first that you had done something clever, but I see that there was nothing in it, after all."

"I begin to think, Watson," said Holmes, "that I make a mistake in explaining. '*Omne ignotum pro magnifico*,' [207-1] you know, and my poor little reputation, such as it is, will suffer shipwreck if I am so candid. Can you not find the advertisement, Mr. Wilson?"

"Yes, I have got it now," he answered, with his thick, red finger planted half-way down the column. "Here it is. This is what began it all. You just read it for yourself, sir."

I took the paper from him, and read as follows:

TO THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE: On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebanon, Pa., U. S. A., there is now another vacancy open which entitles a member of the League to a salary of £4 a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind, and above the age of twenty-one, are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at eleven o'clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street.

"What on earth does this mean?" I ejaculated, after I had twice read over the extraordinary announcement.

Holmes chuckled, and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when in high spirits. "It is a little off the beaten track, isn't it?" said he. "And now, Mr. Wilson, off you go at scratch, and tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will first make a note, doctor, of the paper and the date."

"It is *The Morning Chronicle*, of April 27, 1890. Just two months ago."

"Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson?"

"Well, it is just as I have been telling you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead; "I have a small pawnbroker's business at Coburg Square, near the city. It's not a very large affair, and of late years it has not done more than just give me a living. I used to be able to keep two assistants, but now I only keep one; and I would have a job to pay him, but that he is willing to come for half wages, so as to learn the business."

"What is the name of this obliging youth?" asked Sherlock Holmes.

"His name is Vincent Spaulding, and he's not such a youth, either. It's hard to say his age. I should not wish a smarter assistant, Mr. Holmes; and I know very well that he could better himself, and earn twice what I am able to give him. But, after all, if he is satisfied, why should I put ideas in his head?"

"Why, indeed? You seem most fortunate in having an employé who comes under the full market price. It is not a common experience among employers in this age. I don't know that your

assistant is not as remarkable as your advertisement."

"Oh, he has his faults, too," said Mr. Wilson. "Never was such a fellow for photography. Snapping away with a camera when he ought to be improving his mind, and then diving down into the cellar like a rabbit into his hole to develop his pictures. That is his main fault; but, on the whole, he's a good worker. There's no vice in him."

"He is still with you, I presume?"

"Yes, sir. He and a girl of fourteen, who does a bit of simple cooking, and keeps the place clean—that's all I have in the house, for I am a widower, and never had any family. We live very quietly, sir, the three of us; and we keep a roof over our heads, and pay our debts, if we do nothing more.

"The first thing that put us out was that advertisement. Spaulding, he came down into the office just this day eight weeks, with this very paper in his hand, and he says:

"I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a red-headed man.'

"Why that?' I asks.

"Why,' says he, 'here's another vacancy on the League of the Red-headed Men. It's worth quite a little fortune to any man who gets it, and I understand that there are more vacancies than there are men, so that the trustees are at their wits' end what to do with the money. If my hair would only change color, here's a nice little crib all ready for me to step into.'

"Why, what is it, then?' I asked. You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very stay-at-home man, and as my business came to me instead of my having to go to it, I was often weeks on end without putting my foot over the door-mat. In that way I didn't know much of what was going on outside, and I was always glad of a bit of news.

"Have you never heard of the League of the Red-headed Men?' he asked, with his eyes open.

"Never.'

"Why, I wonder at that, for you are eligible yourself for one of the vacancies.'

"And what are they worth?' I asked.

"Oh, merely a couple of hundred a year, but the work is slight, and it need not interfere very much with one's other occupations.'

"Well, you can easily think that that made me prick up my ears, for the business has not been over-good for some years, and an extra couple of hundred would have been very handy.

"Tell me all about it,' said I.

"Well,' said he, showing me the advertisement, 'you can see for yourself that the League has a vacancy, and there is the address where you should apply for particulars. As far as I can make out, the League was founded by an American millionaire, Ezekiah Hopkins, who was very peculiar in his ways. He was himself red-headed, and he had a great sympathy for all red-headed men; so, when he died, it was found that he had left his enormous fortune in the hands of trustees, with instructions to apply the interest to the providing of easy berths to men whose hair is of that color. From all I hear it is splendid pay, and very little to do.'

"But,' said I, 'there would be millions of red-headed men who would apply.'

"Not so many as you might think,' he answered. 'You see it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men. This American had started from London when he was young, and he wanted to do the old town a good turn. Then, again, I have heard it is no use your applying if your hair is light red, or dark red, or anything but real bright, blazing, fiery red. Now, if you cared to apply, Mr. Wilson, you would just walk in; but perhaps it would hardly be worth your while to put yourself out of the way for the sake of a few hundred pounds.'

"Now, it is a fact, gentlemen, as you may see for yourselves, that my hair is of a very full and rich tint, so that it seemed to me that, if there was to be any competition in the matter, I stood as good a chance as any man that I had ever met. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much about it that I thought he might prove useful, so I just ordered him to put up the shutters for the day, and to come right away with me. He was very willing to have a holiday, so we shut the business up, and started off for the address that was given us in the advertisement.

"I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west every man who had a shade of red in his hair had tramped into the city to answer the advertisement. Fleet Street was choked with red-headed folk, and Pope's Court looked like a coster's orange barrow. I should not have thought there were so many in the whole country as were brought together by that single advertisement. Every shade of color they were—straw, lemon, orange, brick, Irish-setter, liver, clay; but, as Spaulding said, there were not many who had the real vivid flame-colored tint. When I saw how many were waiting, I would have given it

up in despair; but Spaulding would not hear of it. How he did it I could not imagine, but he pushed and pulled and butted until he got me through the crowd, and right up to the steps which led to the office. There was a double stream upon the stair, some going up in hope, and some coming back dejected; but we wedged in as well as we could, and soon found ourselves in the office."

"Your experience has been a most entertaining one," remarked Holmes, as his client paused and refreshed his memory with a huge pinch of snuff. "Pray continue your very interesting statement."

"There was nothing in the office but a couple of wooden chairs and a deal table, behind which sat a small man, with a head that was even redder than mine. He said a few words to each candidate as he came up, and then he always managed to find some fault in them which would disqualify them. Getting a vacancy did not seem to be such a very easy matter, after all. However, when our turn came, the little man was much more favorable to me than to any of the others, and he closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us.

"This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,' said my assistant, 'and he is willing to fill a vacancy in the League.'

"And he is admirably suited for it,' the other answered. 'He has every requirement. I cannot recall when I have seen anything so fine.' He took a step backward, cocked his head on one side, and gazed at my hair until I felt quite bashful. Then he suddenly plunged forward, wrung my hand, and congratulated me warmly on my success.

"It would be injustice to hesitate,' said he. 'You will, however, I am sure, excuse me for taking an obvious precaution.' With that he seized my hair in both his hands, and pulled until I yelled with the pain. 'There is water in your eyes,' said he, as he released me. 'I perceive that all is as it should be. But we have to be careful, for we have twice been deceived by wigs and once by paint. I could tell you tales of cobbler's wax which would disgust you with human nature.' He stepped over to the window, and shouted through it at the top of his voice that the vacancy was filled. A groan of disappointment came up from below, and the folk all trooped away in different directions, until there was not a red head to be seen except my own and that of the manager.

"My name,' said he, 'is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. Are you a married man, Mr. Wilson? Have you a family?'

"I answered that I had not.

"His face fell immediately.

"Dear me!' he said, gravely, 'that is very serious indeed! I am sorry to hear you say that. The fund was, of course, for the propagation and spread of the red-heads as well as for their maintenance. It is exceedingly unfortunate that you should be a bachelor.'

"My face lengthened at this, Mr. Holmes, for I thought that I was not to have the vacancy after all; but, after thinking it over for a few minutes, he said that it would be all right.

"In the case of another,' said he, 'the objection might be fatal, but we must stretch a point in favor of a man with such a head of hair as yours. When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?'

"Well, it is a little awkward, for I have a business already,' said I.

"Oh, never mind about that, Mr. Wilson!' said Vincent Spaulding. 'I shall be able to look after that for you.'

"What would be the hours?' I asked.

"Ten to two.'

"Now a pawnbroker's business is mostly done of an evening, Mr. Holmes, especially Thursday and Friday evenings, which is just before pay-day, so it would suit me very well to earn a little in the mornings. Besides, I knew that my assistant was a good man, and that he would see to anything that turned up.

"That would suit me very well,' said I. 'And the pay?'

"Is £4 a week.'

"And the work?'

"Is purely nominal.'

"What do you call purely nominal?'

"Well, you have to be in the office, or at least in the building, the whole time. If you leave, you forfeit your whole position forever. The will is very clear upon that point. You don't comply with the conditions if you budge from the office during that time.'

"It's only four hours a day, and I should not think of leaving,' said I.

"No excuse will avail,' said Mr. Duncan Ross. 'Neither sickness nor business nor anything else. There you must stay, or you lose your billet.'

"And the work?'

"Is to copy out the "Encyclopædia Britannica." There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blotting-paper, but we provide this table and chair. Will you be ready to-morrow?'

"Certainly,' I answered.

"Then, good-bye, Mr. Jabez Wilson, and let me congratulate you once more on the important position which you have been fortunate enough to gain.' He bowed me out of the room, and I went home with my assistant, hardly knowing what to say or do, I was so pleased at my own good fortune.

"Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again; for I had quite persuaded myself that the whole affair might be some great hoax or fraud, though what its object might be I could not imagine. It seemed altogether past belief that any one could make such a will, or that they would pay such a sum for doing anything so simple as copying out the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up, but by bed-time I had reasoned myself out of the whole thing. However, in the morning I determined to have a look at it anyhow, so I bought a penny bottle of ink, and with a quill-pen, and seven sheets of foolscap paper, I started off for Pope's Court.

"Well, to my surprise and delight, everything was as right as possible. The table was set out ready for me, and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and then he left me; but he would drop in from time to time to see that all was right with me. At two o'clock he bade me good-day, complimented me upon the amount that I had written, and locked the door of the office after me.

"This went on day after day, Mr. Holmes, and on Saturday the manager came in and planked down four golden sovereigns for my week's work. It was the same next week, and the same the week after. Every morning I was there at ten, and every afternoon I left at two. By degrees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and then, after a time, he did not come in at all. Still, of course, I never dared to leave the room for an instant, for I was not sure when he might come, and the billet was such a good one, and suited me so well, that I would not risk the loss of it.

"Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots and Archery and Armor and Architecture and Attica, and hoped with diligence that I might get on to the B's before very long. It cost me something in foolscap, and I had pretty nearly filled a shelf with my writings. And then suddenly the whole business came to an end."

"To an end?"

"Yes, sir. And no later than this morning. I went to my work as usual at ten o'clock, but the door was shut and locked, with a little square of cardboard hammered on to the middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself."

He held up a piece of white cardboard about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE
IS
DISSOLVED

OCTOBER, 9, 1890.

Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed this curt announcement and the rueful face behind it, until the comical side of the affair so completely overtopped every other consideration that we both burst out into a roar of laughter.

"I cannot see that there is anything very funny," cried our client, flushing up to the roots of his flaming hair. "If you can do nothing better than laugh at me, I can go elsewhere."

"No, no," cried Holmes, shoving him back into the chair from which he had half risen. "I really wouldn't miss your case for the world. It is most refreshingly unusual. But there is, if you will excuse my saying so, something just a little funny about it. Pray, what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?"

"I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. Then I called at the offices round, but none of them seemed to know anything about it. Finally, I went to the landlord, who is an accountant living on the ground-floor, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Red-

headed League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was. He answered that the name was new to him.

"Well," said I, "the gentleman at No. 4."

"What, the red-headed man?"

"Yes."

"Oh," said he, "his name was William Morris. He was a solicitor, and was using my room as a temporary convenience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yesterday."

"Where could I find him?"

"Oh, at his new offices. He did tell me the address. Yes, 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul's."

"I started off, Mr. Holmes, but when I got to that address it was a manufactory of artificial knee-caps, and no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris or Mr. Duncan Ross."

"And what did you do then?" asked Holmes.

"I went home to Saxe-Coburg Square, and I took the advice of my assistant. But he could not help me in any way. He could only say that if I waited I should hear by post. But that was not quite good enough, Mr. Holmes. I did not wish to lose such a good place without a struggle, so, as I had heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk who were in need of it, I came right away to you."

"And you did very wisely," said Holmes. "Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, and I shall be happy to look into it. From what you have told me I think that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first sight appear."

"Grave enough," said Mr. Jabez Wilson. "Why, I have lost four pound a week."

"As far as you are personally concerned," remarked Holmes, "I do not see that you have any grievance against this remarkable league. On the contrary, you are, as I understand, richer by some £30, to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter A. You have lost nothing by them."

"No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and what their object was in playing this prank—if it was a prank—upon me. It was a pretty expensive joke for them, for it cost them two and thirty pounds."

"We shall endeavor to clear up these points for you. And, first, one or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement—how long had he been with you?"

"About a month then."

"How did he come?"

"In answer to an advertisement."

"Was he the only applicant?"

"No, I had a dozen."

"Why did you pick him?"

"Because he was handy, and would come cheap."

"At half-wages, in fact?"

"Yes."

"What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?"

"Small, stout-built, very quick in his ways, no hair on his face, though he's not short of thirty. Has a white splash of acid upon his forehead."

Holmes sat up in his chair in considerable excitement. "I thought as much," said he. "Have you ever observed that his ears are pierced for earrings?"

"Yes, sir. He told me that a gypsy had done it for him when he was a lad."

"Hum!" said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. "He is still with you?"

"Oh yes, sir; I have only just left him."

"And has your business been attended to in your absence?"

"Nothing to complain of, sir. There's never very much to do of a morning."

"That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall be happy to give you an opinion upon the subject in the course of a day or two. To-day is Saturday, and I hope that by Monday we may come to a conclusion."

"Well, Watson," said Holmes, when our visitor had left us, "what do you make of it all?"

"I make nothing of it," I answered, frankly. "It is a most mysterious business."

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace, featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter."

"What are you going to do, then?" I asked.

"To smoke," he answered. "It is quite a three-pipe problem, and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes." He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawk-like nose, and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the gesture of a man who has made up his mind, and put his pipe down upon the mantelpiece.

"Sarasate[221-1] plays at the St. James's Hall this afternoon," he remarked. "What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?"

"I have nothing to do to-day. My practice is never very absorbing."

"Then put on your hat and come. I am going through the city first, and we can have some lunch on the way. I observe that there is a good deal of German music on the program, which is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective, and I want to introspect. Come along!"

We traveled by the Underground as far as Aldersgate; and a short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. It was a poky, little, shabby-genteel place, where four lines of dingy two-storied brick houses looked out into a small railed-in enclosure, where a lawn of weedy grass and a few clumps of faded laurel-bushes made a hard fight against a smoke-laden and uncongenial atmosphere. Three gilt balls and a brown board with JABEZ WILSON in white letters, upon a corner house announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it with his head on one side, and looked it all over, with his eyes shining brightly between puckered lids. Then he walked slowly up the street, and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawn-broker's, and, having thumped vigorously upon the pavement with his stick two or three times, he went up to the door and knocked. It was instantly opened by a bright-looking, clean-shaven young fellow, who asked him to step in.

"Thank you," said Holmes, "I only wished to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand."

"Third right, fourth left," answered the assistant, promptly, closing the door.

"Smart fellow, that," observed Holmes, as we walked away. "He is, in my judgment, the fourth smartest man in London, and for daring, I am not sure that he has not a claim to be third. I have known something of him before."

"Evidently," said I, "Mr. Wilson's assistant counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Red-headed League. I am sure that you inquired your way merely in order that you might see him."

"Not him."

"What then?"

"The knees of his trousers."

"And what did you see?"

"What I expected to see."

"Why did you beat the pavement?"

"My dear doctor, this is a time for observation, not for talk. We are spies in an enemy's country. We know something of Saxe-Coburg Square. Let us now explore the parts which lie behind it."

The road in which we found ourselves as we turned round the corner from the retired Saxe-Coburg Square presented as great a contrast to it as the front of a picture does to the back. It was one of the main arteries which convey the traffic of the city to the north and west. The roadway was blocked with the immense stream of commerce flowing in a double tide inward and

outward, while the foot-paths were black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians. It was difficult to realize as we looked at the line of fine shops and stately business premises that they really abutted on the other side upon the faded and stagnant square which we had just quitted.

"Let me see," said Holmes, standing at the corner, and glancing along the line, "I should like just to remember the order of the houses here. It is a hobby of mine to have an exact knowledge of London. There is Mortimer's, the tobacconist, the little newspaper shop, the Coburg branch of the City and Suburban Bank, the Vegetarian Restaurant, and McFarlane's carriage-building depot. That carries us right on to the other block. And now, doctor, we've done our work, so it's time we had some play. A sandwich and a cup of coffee, and then off to violin-land, where all is sweetness and delicacy and harmony, and there are no red-headed clients to vex us with their conundrums."

My friend was an enthusiastic musician, being himself not only a very capable performer, but a composer of no mean merit. All the afternoon he sat in the stalls wrapped in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long, thin fingers in time to the music, while his gently smiling face and his languid, dreamy eyes were as unlike those of Holmes, the sleuth-hound,^[224-1] Holmes, the relentless, keen-witted, ready-handed criminal agent, as it was possible to conceive. In his singular character the dual nature alternately presented itself, and his extreme exactness and astuteness represented, as I have often thought, the reaction against the poetic and contemplative mood which occasionally predominated in him. The swing of his nature took him from extreme languor to devouring energy; and, as I knew well, he was never so truly formidable as when, for days on end, he had been lounging in his arm-chair amid his improvisations and his black-letter editions. Then it was that the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant reasoning power would rise to the level of intuition, until those who were unacquainted with his methods would look askance at him as on a man whose knowledge was not that of other mortals. When I saw him that afternoon so enwrapped in the music at St. James's Hall I felt that an evil time might be coming upon those whom he had set himself to hunt down.

"You want to go home, no doubt, doctor," he remarked, as we emerged.

"Yes, it would be as well."

"And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious."

"Why serious?"

"A considerable crime is in contemplation. I have every reason to believe that we shall be in time to stop it. But to-day being Saturday rather complicates matters. I shall want your help to-night."

"At what time?"

"Ten will be early enough."

"I shall be at Baker Street at ten."

"Very well. And, I say, doctor, there may be some little danger, so kindly put your army revolver in your pocket." He waved his hand, turned on his heel, and disappeared in an instant among the crowd.

I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbors, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened, but what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused and grotesque. As I drove home to my house in Kensington I thought it all over, from the extraordinary story of the red-headed copier of the "Encyclopædia" down to the visit to Saxe-Coburg Square, and the ominous words with which he had parted from me. What was this nocturnal expedition, and why should I go on? Where were we going, and what were we to do? I had the hint from Holmes that this smooth-faced pawnbroker's assistant was a formidable man—a man who might play a deep game. I tried to puzzle it out, but gave it up in despair, and set the matter aside until night should bring an explanation.

It was a quarter past nine when I started from home and made my way across the Park, and so through Oxford Street to Baker Street. Two hansoms were standing at the door, and, as I entered the passage, I heard the sound of voices from above. On entering his room I found Holmes in animated conversation with two men, one of whom I recognized as Peter Jones, the official police agent, while the other was a long, thin, sad-faced man, with a very shiny hat and oppressively respectable frock-coat.

"Ha! our party is complete," said Holmes, buttoning up his pea-jacket, and taking his heavy hunting crop from the rack. "Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones, of Scotland Yard? Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is to be our companion in to-night's adventure."

"We're hunting in couples again, doctor, you see," said Jones, in his consequential way. "Our friend here is a wonderful man for starting a chase. All he wants is an old dog to help him do the

running down."

"I hope a wild goose may not prove to be the end of our chase," observed Mr. Merryweather, gloomily.

"You may place considerable confidence in Mr. Holmes, sir," said the police agent, loftily. "He has his own little methods, which are, if he won't mind my saying so, just a little too theoretical and fantastic, but he has the makings of a detective in him. It is not too much to say that once or twice, as in that business of the Sholto murder and the Agra treasure,[\[227-1\]](#) he has been more nearly correct than the official force."

"Oh, if you say so, Mr. Jones, it is all right," said the stranger, with deference. "Still, I confess that I miss my rubber. It is the first Saturday night for seven-and-twenty years that I have not had my rubber."

"I think you will find," said Sherlock Holmes, "that you will play for a higher stake to-night than you have ever done yet, and that the play will be more exciting. For you, Mr. Merryweather, the stake will be some £30,000; and for you, Jones, it will be the man upon whom you wish to lay your hands."

"John Clay, the murderer, thief, smasher, and forger. He's a young man, Mr. Merryweather, but he is at the head of his profession, and I would rather have my bracelets on him than on any criminal in London. He's a remarkable man, is young John Clay. His grandfather was a royal duke, and he himself has been to Eton and Oxford. His brain is as cunning as his fingers, and though we meet signs of him at every turn, we never know where to find the man himself. He'll crack a crib in Scotland one week, and be raising money to build an orphanage in Cornwall the next. I've been on his track for years, and have never set eyes on him yet."

"I hope that I may have the pleasure of introducing you to-night. I've had one or two little turns also with Mr. John Clay, and I agree with you that he is at the head of his profession. It is past ten, however, and quite time that we started. If you two will take the first hansom, Watson and I will follow in the second."

Sherlock Holmes was not very communicative during the long drive, and lay back in the cab humming the tunes which he had heard in the afternoon. We rattled through an endless labyrinth of gas-lit streets until we emerged into Farringdon Street.

"We are close there now," my friend remarked. "This fellow Merryweather is a bank director, and personally interested in the matter. I thought it as well to have Jones with us also. He is not a bad fellow, though an absolute imbecile in his profession. He has one positive virtue. He is as brave as a bulldog, and as tenacious as a lobster if he gets his claws upon any one. Here we are, and they are waiting for us."

We had reached the same crowded thoroughfare in which we had found ourselves in the morning. Our cabs were dismissed, and, following the guidance of Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage and through a side door, which he opened for us. Within there was a small corridor, which ended in a very massive iron gate. This also was opened, and led down a flight of winding stone steps, which terminated at another formidable gate. Mr. Merryweather stopped to light a lantern, and then conducted us down a dark, earth-smelling passage, and so, after opening a third door, into a huge vault or cellar, which was piled all round with crates and massive boxes.

"You are not very vulnerable from above," Holmes remarked, as he held up the lantern and gazed about him.

"Nor from below," said Mr. Merryweather, striking his stick upon the flags which lined the floor. "Why, dear me, it sounds quite hollow!" he remarked, looking up in surprise.

"I must really ask you to be a little more quiet," said Holmes, severely. "You have already imperilled the whole success of our expedition. Might I beg that you would have the goodness to sit down upon one of those boxes, and not to interfere?"

The solemn Mr. Merryweather perched himself upon a crate, with a very injured expression upon his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees upon the floor, and, with the lantern and a magnifying lens, began to examine minutely the cracks between the stones. A few seconds sufficed to satisfy him, for he sprang to his feet again, and put his glass in his pocket.

"We have at least an hour before us," he remarked; "for they can hardly take any steps until the good pawnbroker is safely in bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for the sooner they do their work the longer time they will have for their escape. We are at present, doctor—as no doubt you have divined—in the cellar of the city branch of one of the principal London banks. Mr. Merryweather is the chairman of directors, and he will explain to you that there are reasons why the more daring criminals of London should take a considerable interest in this cellar at present."

"It is our French gold," whispered the director. "We have had several warnings that an attempt might be made upon it."

"Your French gold?"

"Yes. We had occasion some months ago to strengthen our resources, and borrowed, for that purpose, 30,000 napoleons[230-1] from the Bank of France. It has become known that we have never had occasion to unpack the money, and that it is still lying in our cellar. The crate upon which I sit contains 2000 napoleons packed between layers of lead foil. Our reserve of bullion is much larger at present than is usually kept in a single branch office, and the directors have had misgivings upon the subject."

"Which were very well justified," observed Holmes. "And now it is time that we arranged our little plans. I expect that within an hour matters will come to a head. In the meantime, Mr. Merryweather, we must put the screen over that dark lantern."

"And sit in the dark?"

"I am afraid so. I had brought a pack of cards in my pocket, and I thought that, as we were a *partie carrée*,[231-1] you might have your rubber after all. But I see that the enemy's preparations have gone so far that we cannot risk the presence of a light. And, first of all, we must choose our positions. These are daring men, and though we shall take them at a disadvantage, they may do us some harm unless we are careful. I shall stand behind this crate, and do you conceal yourselves behind those. Then, when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly. If they fire, Watson, have no compunction about shooting them down."

I placed my revolver, cocked, upon the top of the wooden case behind which I crouched. Holmes shot the slide across the front of his lantern, and left us in pitch darkness—such an absolute darkness as I have never before experienced. The smell of hot metal remained to assure us that the light was still there, ready to flash out at a moment's notice. To me, with my nerves worked up to a pitch of expectancy, there was something depressing and subduing in the sudden gloom, and in the cold, dank air of the vault.

"They have but one retreat," whispered Holmes. "That is back through the house into Saxe-Coburg Square. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones?"

"I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door."

"Then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait."

What a time it seemed! From comparing notes afterwards it was but an hour and a quarter, yet it appeared to me that the night must have almost gone, and the dawn be breaking above us. My limbs were weary and stiff, for I feared to change my position; yet my nerves were worked up to the highest pitch of tension, and my hearing was so acute that I could not only hear the gentle breathing of my companions, but I could distinguish the deeper, heavier in-breath of the bulky Jones from the thin, sighing note of the bank director. From my position I could look over the case in the direction of the floor. Suddenly my eyes caught the glint of a light.

At first it was but a lurid spark upon the stone pavement. Then it lengthened out until it became a yellow line, and then, without any warning or sound, a gash seemed to open and a hand appeared; a white, almost womanly hand, which felt about in the center of the little area of light. For a minute or more the hand, with its writhing fingers, protruded out of the floor. Then it was withdrawn as suddenly as it appeared, and all was dark again save the single lurid spark which marked a chink between the stones.

Its disappearance, however, was but momentary. With a rending, tearing sound, one of the broad, white stones turned over upon its side, and left a square, gaping hole, through which streamed the light of a lantern. Over the edge there peeped a clean-cut, boyish face, which looked keenly about it, and then, with a hand on either side of the aperture, the figure drew itself shoulder-high and waist-high, until one knee rested upon the edge. In another instant he stood at the side of the hole, and was hauling after him a companion, lithe and small like himself, with a pale face and a shock of very red hair.

"It's all clear," he whispered. "Have you the chisel and the bags? Great Scott! Jump, Archie, jump, and I'll swing for it!"

Sherlock Holmes had sprung out and seized the intruder by the collar. The other dived down the hole, and I heard the sound of rending cloth as Jones clutched at his skirts. The light flashed down upon the barrel of a revolver, but Holmes's hunting crop came down on the man's wrist, and the pistol clinked upon the stone floor.

"It's no use, John Clay," said Holmes, blandly. "You have no chance at all."

"So I see," the other answered, with the utmost coolness. "I fancy that my pal is all right, though I see you have got his coat-tails."

"There are three men waiting for him at the door," said Holmes.

"Oh, indeed! You seem to have done the thing very completely. I must compliment you."

"And I you," Holmes answered. "Your red-headed idea was very new and effective."

"You'll see your pal again presently," said Jones. "He's quicker at climbing down holes than I am. Just hold out while I fix the derbies."

"I beg that you will not touch me with your filthy hands," remarked our prisoner, as the handcuffs clattered upon his wrists. "You may not be aware that I have royal blood in my veins. Have the goodness, also, when you address me always to say 'sir' and 'please.'"

"All right," said Jones, with a stare and a snigger. "Well, would you please, sir, march up-stairs, where we can get a cab to carry your highness to the police-station?"

"That is better," said John Clay, serenely. He made a sweeping bow to the three of us, and walked quietly off in the custody of the detective.

"Really Mr. Holmes," said Mr. Merryweather, as we followed them from the cellar, "I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt that you have detected and defeated in the most complete manner one of the most determined attempts at bank robbery that have ever come within my experience."

"I have had one or two little scores of my own to settle with Mr. John Clay," said Holmes. "I have been at some small expense over this matter, which I shall expect the bank to refund, but beyond that I am amply repaid by having had an experience which is in many ways unique, and by hearing the very remarkable narrative of the Red-headed League."

"You see, Watson," he explained, in the early hours of the morning, as we sat over a glass of whiskey-and-soda in Baker Street, "it was perfectly obvious from the first that the only possible object of this rather fantastic business of the advertisement of the League, and the copying of the 'Encyclopædia,' must be to get this not over-bright pawnbroker out of the way for a number of hours every day. It was a curious way of managing it, but, really, it would be difficult to suggest a better. The method was no doubt suggested to Clay's ingenious mind by the color of his accomplice's hair. The £4 a week was a lure which must draw him, and what was it to them, who were playing for thousands? They put in the advertisement, one rogue has the temporary office, the other rogue incites the man to apply for it, and together they manage to secure his absence every morning in the week. From the time that I heard of the assistant having come for half wages, it was obvious to me that he had some strong motive for securing the situation."

"But how could you guess what the motive was?"

"Had there been women in the house, I should have suspected a mere vulgar intrigue. That, however, was out of the question. The man's business was a small one, and there was nothing in his house which could account for such elaborate preparations, and such an expenditure as they were at. It must, then, be something out of the house. What could it be? I thought of the assistant's fondness for photography, and his trick of vanishing into the cellar. The cellar! There was the end of this tangled clue. Then I made inquiries as to this mysterious assistant, and found that I had to deal with one of the coolest and most daring criminals in London. He was doing something in the cellar—something which took many hours a day for months on end. What could it be, once more? I could think of nothing save that he was running a tunnel to some other building.

"So far I had got when we went to visit the scene of action. I surprised you by beating upon the pavement with my stick. I was ascertaining whether the cellar stretched out in front or behind. It was not in front. Then I rang the bell, and, as I hoped, the assistant answered it. We have had some skirmishes, but we had never set eyes upon each other before. I hardly looked at his face. His knees were what I wished to see. You must yourself have remarked how worn, wrinkled, and stained they were. They spoke of those hours of burrowing. The only remaining point was what they were burrowing for. I walked round the corner, saw the City and Suburban Bank abutted on our friend's premises, and felt that I had solved my problem. When you drove home after the concert I called upon Scotland Yard, and upon the chairman of the bank directors, with the result that you have seen."

"And how could you tell that they would make their attempt to-night?" I asked.

"Well, when they closed their League offices that was a sign that they cared no longer about Mr. Jabez Wilson's presence—in other words, that they had completed their tunnel. But it was essential that they should use it soon, as it might be discovered, or the bullion might be removed. Saturday would suit them better than any other day, as it would give them two days for their escape. For all these reasons I expected them to come to-night."

"You reasoned it out beautifully," I exclaimed, in unfeigned admiration. "It is so long a chain, and yet every link rings true."

"It saved me from ennui," he answered, yawning. "Alas! I already feel it closing in upon me. My life is spent in one long effort to escape from the common-places of existence. These little problems help me to do so."

"And you are a benefactor of the race," said I.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, perhaps, after all, it is of some little use," he remarked. "*L'homme c'est rien — l'œuvre c'est tout,*" [237-1] as Gustave Flaubert wrote to Georges Sand."

JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

THE INCONSIDERATE WAITER

Frequently I have to ask myself in the street for the name of the man I bowed to just now, and then, before I can answer, the wind of the first corner blows him from my memory. I have a theory, however, that those puzzling faces, which pass before I can see who cut the coat, all belong to club-waiters.

Until William forced his affairs upon me, that was all I did know of the private life of waiters, though I have been in the club for twenty years. I was even unaware whether they slept downstairs or had their own homes, nor had I the interest to inquire of other members, nor they the knowledge to inform me. I hold that this sort of people should be fed and clothed and given airing and wives and children, and I subscribe yearly, I believe, for these purposes; but to come into closer relation with waiters is bad form; they are club fittings, and William should have kept his distress to himself or taken it away and patched it up, like a rent in one of the chairs. His inconsiderateness has been a pair of spectacles to me for months.

It is not correct taste to know the name of a club-waiter, so that I must apologize for knowing William's and still more for not forgetting it. If, again, to speak of a waiter is bad form, to speak bitterly is the comic degree of it. But William has disappointed me sorely. There were years when I would defer dining several minutes that he might wait on me. His pains to reserve the window-seat for me were perfectly satisfactory. I allowed him privileges, as to suggest dishes, and would give him information, as that someone had startled me in the reading-room by slamming a door. I have shown him how I cut my finger with a piece of string. Obviously he was gratified by these attentions, usually recommending a liqueur; and I fancy he must have understood my sufferings, for he often looked ill himself. Probably he was rheumatic, but I cannot say for certain, as I never thought of asking, and he had the sense to see that the knowledge would be offensive to me.

In the smoking-room we have a waiter so independent that once, when he brought me a yellow Chartreuse, [239-1] and I said I had ordered green, he replied, "No, sir, you said yellow." William could never have been guilty of such effrontery. In appearance, of course, he is mean, but I can no more describe him than a milkmaid could draw cows. I suppose we distinguish one waiter from another much as we pick our hat from the rack. We could have plotted a murder safely before William. He never presumed to have opinions of his own. When such was my mood he remained silent, and if I announced that something diverting had happened to me he laughed before I told him what it was. He turned the twinkle in his eye off or on at my bidding as readily as if it was the gas. To my "Sure to be wet to-morrow," he would reply, "Yes, sir;" and to Trelawney's "It doesn't look like rain," two minutes afterward, he would reply, "No, sir." It was one member who said Lightning Rod would win the Derby [240-1] and another who said Lightning Rod had no chance, but it was William who agreed with both. He was like a cheroot, which may be smoked from either end. So used was I to him that, had he died or got another situation (or whatever it is such persons do when they disappear from the club), I should probably have told the head waiter to bring him back, as I disliked changes.

It would not become me to know precisely when I began to think William an ingrate, but I date his lapse from the evening when he brought me oysters. I detest oysters, and no one knew it better than William. He has agreed with me that he could not understand any gentleman's liking them. Between me and a certain member who smacks his lips twelve times to a dozen of them, William knew I liked a screen to be placed until we had reached the soup, and yet he gave me the oysters and the other man my sardine. Both the other member and I called quickly for brandy and the head waiter. To do William justice, he shook, but never can I forget his audacious explanation, "Beg pardon, sir, but I was thinking of something else."

In these words William had flung off the mask, and now I knew him for what he was.

I must not be accused of bad form for looking at William on the following evening. What prompted me to do so was not personal interest in him, but a desire to see whether I dare let him wait on me again. So, recalling that a castor was off a chair yesterday, one is entitled to make sure that it is on to-day before sitting down. If the expression is not too strong, I may say that I was taken aback by William's manner. Even when crossing the room to take my orders he let his one hand play nervously with the other. I had to repeat "Sardine on toast" twice, and instead of answering "Yes, sir," as if my selection of sardine on toast was a personal gratification to him,

which is the manner one expects of a waiter, he glanced at the clock, then out at the window, and, starting, asked, "Did you say sardine on toast, sir?"

It was the height of summer, when London smells like a chemist's shop, and he who has the dinner-table at the window needs no candles to show him his knife and fork. I lay back at intervals, now watching a starved-looking woman asleep on a door-step, and again complaining of the club bananas. By and by, I saw a little girl of the commonest kind, ill-clad and dirty, as all these arabs are. Their parents should be compelled to feed and clothe them comfortably, or at least to keep them indoors, where they cannot offend our eyes. Such children are for pushing aside with one's umbrella; but this girl I noticed because she was gazing at the club windows. She had stood thus for perhaps ten minutes, when I became aware that some one was leaning over me, to look out at the window. I turned round. Conceive my indignation on seeing that the rude person was William.

"How dare you, William?" I said, sternly. He seemed not to hear me. Let me tell, in the measured words of one describing a past incident, what then took place. To get nearer the window, he pressed heavily on my shoulder.

"William, you forget yourself!" I said, meaning—as I see now—that he had forgotten me.

I heard him gulp, but not to my reprimand. He was scanning the street. His hands chattered on my shoulders, and, pushing him from me, I saw that his mouth was agape.

"What are you looking for?" I asked.

He stared at me, and then, like one who had at last heard the echo of my question, seemed to be brought back to the club. He turned his face from me for an instant, and answered, shakily:

"I beg your pardon, sir! I—I shouldn't have done it. Are the bananas too ripe, sir?"

He recommended the nuts, and awaited my verdict so anxiously while I ate one that I was about to speak graciously, when I again saw his eyes drag him to the window.

"William," I said, my patience giving way at last; "I dislike being waited on by a melancholy waiter."

"Yes, sir," he replied, trying to smile, and then broke out passionately, "For God's sake, sir, tell me, have you seen a little girl looking in at the club windows?"

He had been a good waiter once, and his distracted visage was spoiling my dinner.

"There," I said, pointing to the girl, and no doubt would have added that he must bring me coffee immediately, had he continued to listen. But already he was beckoning to the child. I had not the least interest in her (indeed it had never struck me that waiters had private affairs, and I still think it a pity that they should have); but as I happened to be looking out at the window I could not avoid seeing what occurred. As soon as the girl saw William she ran into the middle of the street, regardless of vehicles, and nodded three times to him. Then she disappeared.

I have said that she was quite a common child, without attraction of any sort, and yet it was amazing the difference she made in William. He gasped relief, like one who has broken through the anxiety that checks breathing, and into his face there came a silly laugh of happiness. I had dined well, on the whole, so I said:

"I am glad to see you cheerful again, William."

I meant that I approved his cheerfulness, because it helped my digestion, but he must needs think I was sympathizing with him.

"Thank you, sir," he answered. "Oh, sir! when she nodded and I saw it was all right, I could have gone down on my knees to God."

I was as much horrified as if he had dropped a plate on my toes. Even William, disgracefully emotional as he was at the moment, flung out his arms to recall the shameful words.

"Coffee, William!" I said, sharply.

I sipped my coffee indignantly, for it was plain to me that William had something on his mind.

"You are not vexed with me, sir?" he had the hardihood to whisper.

"It was a liberty," I said.

"I know, sir; but I was beside myself."

"That was a liberty also."

He hesitated, and then blurted out:

"It is my wife, sir. She——"

I stopped him with my hand. William, whom I had favored in so many ways, was a married man! I might have guessed as much years before had I ever reflected about waiters, for I knew vaguely that his class did this sort of thing. His confession was distasteful to me, and I said, warningly:

"Remember where you are, William."

"Yes, sir; but, you see, she is so delicate——"

"Delicate! I forbid your speaking to me on unpleasant topics."

"Yes, sir; begging your pardon."

It was characteristic of William to beg my pardon and withdraw his wife like some unsuccessful dish, as if its taste would not remain in the mouth. I shall be chided for questioning him further about his wife, but, though doubtless an unusual step, it was only bad form superficially, for my motive was irreproachable. I inquired for his wife, not because I was interested in her welfare, but in the hope of allaying my irritation. So I am entitled to invite the wayfarer who has bespattered me with mud to scrape it off.

I desired to be told by William that the girl's signals meant his wife's recovery to health. He should have seen that such was my wish and answered accordingly. But, with the brutal inconsiderateness of his class, he said:

"She has had a good day, but the doctor, he—the doctor is afeard she is dying."

Already I repented my question. William and his wife seemed in league against me, when they might so easily have chosen some other member.

"Pooh the doctor," I said.

"Yes, sir," he answered.

"Have you been married long, William?"

"Eight years, sir. Eight years ago she was—I—I mind her when—and now the doctor says——"

The fellow gaped at me. "More coffee, sir?" he asked.

"What is her ailment?"

"She was always one of the delicate kind, but full of spirit, and—and you see she has had a baby lately——"

"William!"

"And she—I—the doctor is afeard she's not picking up."

"I feel sure she will pick up."

"Yes, sir?"

It must have been the wine I had drunk that made me tell him:

"I was once married, William. My wife—it was just such a case as yours."

"She did not get better, sir?"

"No."

After a pause, he said, "Thank you, sir," meaning for the sympathy that made me tell him that. But it must have been the wine.

"That little girl comes here with a message from your wife?"

"Yes; if she nods three times, it means my wife is a little better."

"She nodded thrice to-day."

"But she is told to do that to relieve me, and maybe those nods don't tell the truth."

"Is she your girl?"

"No, we have none but the baby. She is a neighbor's. She comes twice a day."

"It is heartless of her parents not to send her every hour."

"But she is six years old," he said, "and has a house and two sisters to look after in the daytime, and a dinner to cook. Gentlefolk don't understand."

"I suppose you live in some low part, William."

"Off Drury Lane," he answered, flushing; "but—but it isn't low. You see, we were never used to anything better, and I mind, when I let her see the house before we were married, she—she a sort of cried, because she was so proud of it. That was eight years ago, and now,—she's afraid she'll die when I'm away at my work."

"Did she tell you that?"

"Never. She always says she is feeling a little stronger."

"Then how can you know she is afraid of that?"

"I don't know how I know, sir, but when I am leaving the house in the morning I look at her from the door, and she looks at me, and then I—I know."

"A green Chartreuse, William!"

I tried to forget William's vulgar story in billiards, but he had spoiled my game. My opponent, to whom I can give twenty, ran out when I was sixty-seven, and I put aside my cue pettishly. That in itself was bad form, but what would they have thought had they known that a waiter's impertinence caused it! I grew angrier with William as the night wore on, and next day I punished him by giving my orders through another waiter.

As I had my window seat, I could not but see that the girl was late again. Somehow I dawdled over my coffee. I had an evening paper before me, but there was so little in it that my eyes found more of interest in the street. It did not matter to me whether William's wife died, but when that girl had promised to come, why did she not come? These lower classes only give their word to break it. The coffee was undrinkable.

At last I saw her. William was at another window, pretending to do something with the curtains. I stood up, pressing closer to the window. The coffee had been so bad that I felt shaky. She nodded three times and smiled.

"She is a little better," William whispered to me, almost gayly.

"Whom are you speaking of?" I asked, coldly, and immediately retired to the billiard-room, where I played a capital game. The coffee was much better there than in the dining-room.

Several days passed, and I took care to show William that I had forgotten his maunderings. I chanced to see the little girl (though I never looked for her) every evening and she always nodded three times, save once, when she shook her head, and then William's face grew white as a napkin. I remember this incident because that night I could not get into a pocket. So badly did I play that the thought of it kept me awake in bed, and that, again, made me wonder how William's wife was. Next day I went to the club early (which was not my custom) to see the new books. Being in the club at any rate, I looked into the dining-room to ask William if I had left my gloves there, and the sight of him reminded me of his wife, so I asked for her. He shook his head mournfully, and I went off in a rage.

So accustomed am I to the club, that when I dine elsewhere I feel uncomfortable next morning, as if I had missed a dinner. William knew this; yet here he was, hounding me out of the club! That evening I dined (as the saying is) at a restaurant, where no sauce was served with the asparagus. Furthermore, as if that were not triumph enough for William, his doleful face came between me and every dish, and I seemed to see his wife dying to annoy me.

I dined next day at the club, for self-preservation, taking, however, a table in the middle of the room, and engaging a waiter who had once nearly poisoned me by not interfering when I put two lumps of sugar into my coffee instead of one, which is my allowance. But no William came to me to acknowledge his humiliation, and by and by I became aware that he was not in the room. Suddenly the thought struck me that his wife must be dead, and I—-. It was the worst-cooked and the worst-served dinner I ever had in the club.

I tried the smoking-room. Usually the talk there is entertaining; but on that occasion it was so frivolous that I did not remain five minutes. In the card-room a member told me, excitedly, that a policeman had spoken rudely to him; and my strange comment was:

"After all, it is a small matter."

In the library, where I had not been for years, I found two members asleep, and, to my surprise, William on a ladder dusting books.

"You have not heard, sir?" he said in answer to my raised eyebrows. Descending the ladder he whispered, tragically:

"It was last evening, sir. I—I lost my head and I—swore at a member."

I stepped back from William, and glanced apprehensively at the two members. They still slept.

"I hardly knew," William went on, "what I was doing all day yesterday, for I had left my wife so weakly that——"

I stamped my foot.

"I beg your pardon for speaking of her," he had the grace to say, "but I couldn't help slipping to the window often yesterday to look for Jenny, and when she did come and I saw she was crying, it—it a sort of confused me, and I didn't know right, sir, what I was doing. I hit against a member, Mr. Myddleton Finch, and he—he jumped and swore at me. Well, sir, I had just touched him after all, and I was so miserable, it a kind of stung me to be treated like—like that, and me a man as well as him, and I lost my senses, and—and I swore back."

William's shamed head sank on his chest, but I even let pass his insolence in likening himself to a member of the club, so afraid was I of the sleepers waking and detecting me in talk with a waiter.

"For the love of God," William cried, with coarse emotion, "don't let them dismiss me!"

"Speak lower!" I said. "Who sent you here?"

"I was turned out of the dining-room at once, and told to attend to the library until they had decided what to do with me. Oh, sir, I'll lose my place!"

He was blubbering, as if a change of waiters was a matter of importance.

"This is very bad, William," I said. "I fear I can do nothing for you."

"Have mercy on a distracted man!" he entreated. "I'll go on my knees to Mr. Myddleton Finch."

How could I but despise a fellow who would be thus abject for a pound a week?

"I dare not tell her," he continued, "that I have lost my place. She would just fall back and die."

"I forbade your speaking of your wife," I said, sharply, "unless you can speak pleasantly of her."

"But she may be worse now, sir, and I cannot even see Jenny from here. The library windows look to the back."

"If she dies," I said, "it will be a warning to you to marry a stronger woman next time."

Now, every one knows that there is little real affection among the lower orders. As soon as they have lost one mate they take another. Yet William, forgetting our relative positions, drew himself up and raised his fist, and if I had not stepped back I swear he would have struck me.

The highly improper words William used I will omit, out of consideration for him. Even while he was apologizing for them I retired to the smoking-room, where I found the cigarettes so badly rolled that they would not keep alight. After a little I remembered that I wanted to see Myddleton Finch about an improved saddle of which a friend of his has the patent. He was in the news-room, and having questioned him about the saddle, I said:

"By the way, what is this story about your swearing at one of the waiters?"

"You mean about his swearing at me," Myddleton Finch replied, reddening.

"I am glad that was it," I said. "For I could not believe you guilty of such bad form."

"If I did swear——" he was beginning, but I went on:

"The version which reached me was that you swore at him, and he repeated the word. I heard he was to be dismissed and you reprimanded."

"Who told you that?" asked Myddleton Finch, who is a timid man.

"I forget; it is club talk," I replied lightly. "But of course the committee will take your word. The waiter, whichever one he is, richly deserves his dismissal for insulting you without provocation."

Then our talk returned to the saddle, but Myddleton Finch was abstracted, and presently he said:

"Do you know, I fancy I was wrong in thinking that waiter swore at me, and I'll withdraw my charge to-morrow."

Myddleton Finch then left me, and, sitting alone, I realized that I had been doing William a service. To some slight extent I may have intentionally helped him to retain his place in the club, and I now see the reason, which was that he alone knows precisely to what extent I like my claret heated.

For a mere second I remembered William's remark that he should not be able to see the girl Jenny from the library windows. Then this recollection drove from my head that I had only dined

in the sense that my dinner-bill was paid. Returning to the dining-room, I happened to take my chair at the window, and while I was eating a devilled kidney I saw in the street the girl whose nods had such an absurd effect on William.

The children of the poor are as thoughtless as their parents, and this Jenny did not sign to the windows in the hope that William might see her, though she could not see him. Her face, which was disgracefully dirty, bore doubt and dismay on it, but whether she brought good news it would not tell. Somehow I had expected her to signal when she saw me, and, though her message could not interest me, I was in the mood in which one is irritated at that not taking place which he is awaiting. Ultimately she seemed to be making up her mind to go away.

A boy was passing with the evening papers, and I hurried out to get one, rather thoughtlessly, for we have all the papers in the club. Unfortunately I misunderstood the direction the boy had taken; but round the first corner (out of sight of the club windows) I saw the girl Jenny, and so I asked her how William's wife was.

"Did he send you to me?" she replied, impertinently taking me for a waiter. "My!" she added, after a second scrutiny, "I b'lieve you're one of them. His missis is a bit better, and I was to tell him as she took all the tapiocar."

"How could you tell him?" I asked.

"I was to do like this," she replied, and went through the supping of something out of a plate in dumb show.

"That would not show she ate all the tapioca," I said.

"But I was to end like this," she answered, licking an imaginary plate with her tongue. I gave her a shilling (to get rid of her), and returned to the club disgusted.

Later in the evening I had to go to the club library for a book, and while William was looking in vain for it (I had forgotten the title) I said to him:

"By the way, William, Mr. Myddleton Finch is to tell the committee that he was mistaken in the charge he brought against you, so you will doubtless be restored to the dining-room to-morrow."

The two members were still in their chairs, probably sleeping lightly; yet he had the effrontery to thank me.

"Don't thank me," I said, blushing at the imputation. "Remember your place, William!"

"But Mr. Myddleton Finch knew I swore," he insisted.

"A gentleman," I replied, stiffly, "cannot remember for twenty-four hours what a waiter has said to him."

"No, sir, but——"

To stop him I had to say:

"And, ah, William, your wife is a little better. She has eaten the tapioca—all of it."

"How can you know, sir?"

"By an accident."

"Jenny signed to the window."

"No."

"Then you saw her, and went out, and——"

"Nonsense!"

"Oh, sir, to do that for me! May God bl——"

"William!"

"Forgive me, sir, but—when I tell my missis, she will say it was thought of your own wife as made you do it."

He wrung my hand. I dared not withdraw it, lest we should waken the sleepers.

William returned to the dining-room, and I had to show him that, if he did not cease looking gratefully at me, I must change my waiter. I also ordered him to stop telling me nightly how his wife was, but I continued to know, as I could not help seeing the girl Jenny from the window. Twice in a week I learned from this objectionable child that the ailing woman had again eaten all the tapioca. Then I became suspicious of William. I will tell why.

It began with a remark of Captain Upjohn's. We had been speaking of the inconvenience of not being able to get a hot dish served after 1 A.M., and he said:

"It is because these lazy waiters would strike. If the beggars had a love of their work, they would not rush away from the club the moment one o'clock strikes. That glum fellow who often waits on you takes to his heels the moment he is clear of the club steps. He ran into me the other night at the top of the street, and was off without apologizing."

"You mean the foot of the street, Upjohn," I said, for such is the way to Drury Lane.

"No; I mean the top. The man was running west."

"East."

"West."

I smiled, which so annoyed him that he bet me two to one in sovereigns. The bet could have been decided most quickly by asking William a question, but I thought, foolishly doubtless, that it might hurt his feelings, so I watched him leave the club. The possibility of Upjohn's winning the bet had seemed remote to me. Conceive my surprise, therefore, when William went westward.

Amazed, I pursued him along two streets without realizing that I was doing so. Then curiosity put me into a hansom. We followed William, and it proved to be a three-shilling fare, for running when he was in breath and walking when he was out of it, he took me to West Kensington.

I discharged my cab, and from across the street watched William's incomprehensible behavior. He had stopped at a dingy row of workmen's houses, and knocked at the darkened window of one of them. Presently a light showed. So far as I could see, someone pulled up the blind and for ten minutes talked to William. I was uncertain whether the window was not opened, and I felt that, had William spoken through the glass loud enough to be heard inside, I must have heard him too. Yet he nodded and beckoned. I was still bewildered when, by setting off the way he had come, he gave me the opportunity of going home.

Knowing from the talk of the club what the lower orders are, could I doubt that this was some discreditable love affair of William's? His solicitude for his wife had been mere pretence; so far as it was genuine, it meant that he feared she might recover. He probably told her that he was detained nightly in the club till three.

I was miserable next day and blamed the devilled kidneys for it. Whether William was unfaithful to his wife was nothing to me, but I had two plain reasons for insisting on his going straight home from his club: the one, that, as he had made me lose a bet, I would punish him; the other, that he could wait upon me better if he went to bed betimes.

Yet I did not question him. There was something in his face that——. Well, I seemed to see his dying wife in it.

I was so out of sorts that I could eat no dinner. I left the club. Happening to stand for some time at the foot of the street, I chanced to see the girl Jenny coming, and——. No; let me tell the truth, though the whole club reads; I was waiting for her.

"How is William's wife to-day?" I asked.

"She told me to nod three times," the little slattern replied; "but she looked like nothink but a dead one till she got the brandy."

"Hush, child!" I said, shocked. "You don't know how the dead look."

"Bless yer," she answered, "don't I just! Why, I've helped to lay 'em out. I'm going on seven."

"Is William good to his wife?"

"Course he is. Ain't she his missis?"

"Why should that make him good to her?" I asked cynically, out of my knowledge of the poor. But the girl, precocious in many ways, had never had my opportunities of studying the lower classes in the newspapers, fiction, and club talk. She shut one eye, and looking up wonderingly, said:

"Ain't you green—just!"

"When does William reach home at night?"

"'Tain't night; it's morning. When I wakes up at half dark and half light and hears a door shutting I know as it's either father going off to his work or Mr. Hicking coming home from his."

"Who is Mr. Hicking?"

"Him as we've been speaking on—William. We calls him mister, 'cause he's a toff. Father's just

doing jobs in Covent Garden, but Mr. Hicking, he's a waiter, and a clean shirt every day. The old woman would like father to be a waiter, but he hain't got the 'ristocratic look."

"What old woman?"

"Go 'long! that's my mother. Is it true there's a waiter in the club just for to open the door?"

"Yes, but——"

"And another just for to lick the stamps? My!"

"William leaves the club at one o'clock?" I said, interrogatively.

She nodded. "My mother," she said, "is one to talk, and she says to Mr. Hicking as he should get away at twelve, 'cause his missis needs him more'n the gentlemen need him. The old woman do talk."

"And what does William answer to that?"

"He says as the gentlemen can't be kept waiting for their cheese."

"But William does not go straight home when he leaves the club?"

"That's the kid."

"Kid!" I echoed, scarcely understanding, for knowing how little the poor love their children, I had asked William no questions about the baby.

"Didn't you know his missis had a kid?"

"Yes, but that is no excuse for William's staying away from his sick wife," I answered, sharply. A baby in such a home as William's, I reflected, must be trying, but still——. Besides his class can sleep through any din.

"The kid ain't in our court," the girl explained. "He's in W., he is, and I've never been out of W.C., leastwise, not as I knows on."

"This is W. I suppose you mean that the child is at West Kensington? Well, no doubt it was better for William's wife to get rid of the child——"

"Better!" interposed the girl. "'Tain't better for her not to have the kid. Ain't her not having him what she's always thinking on when she looks like a dead one."

"How could you know that?"

"'Cause," answered the girl, illustrating her words with a gesture, "I watches her, and I sees her arms going this way, just like as she wanted to hug her kid."

"Possibly you are right," I said, frowning, "but William has put the child out to nurse because it disturbed his night's rest. A man who has his work to do——"

"You are green!"

"Then why have the mother and child been separated?"

"Along of that there measles. Near all the young 'uns in our court has 'em bad."

"Have you had them?"

"I said the young 'uns."

"And William sent the baby to West Kensington to escape infection?"

"Took him, he did."

"Against his wife's wishes?"

"Na-o!"

"You said she was dying for want of the child?"

"Wouldn't she rayther die than have the kid die?"

"Don't speak so heartlessly, child. Why does William not go straight home from the club? Does he go to West Kensington to see it?"

"'Tain't a hit, it's an 'e. 'Course he do."

"Then he should not. His wife has the first claim on him."

"Ain't you green! It's his missis as wants him to go. Do you think she could sleep till she knowed how the kid was?"

"But he does not go into the house at West Kensington?"

"Is he soft? Course he don't go in, fear of taking the infection to the kid. They just holds the kid up at the window to him, so as he can have a good look. Then he comes home and tells his missis. He sits foot of the bed and tells."

"And that takes place every night? He can't have much to tell."

"He has just."

"He can only say whether the child is well or ill."

"My! He tells what a difference there is in the kid since he see'd him last."

"There can be no difference!"

"Go 'long! Ain't a kid always growing? Haven't Mr. Hicking to tell how the hair is getting darker, and heaps of things beside?"

"Such as what?"

"Like whether he larfed, and if he has her nose, and how as he knowed him. He tells her them things more'n once."

"And all this time he is sitting at the foot of the bed?"

"'Cept when he holds her hand."

"But when does he get to bed himself?"

"He don't get much. He tells her as he has a sleep at the club."

"He cannot say that."

"Hain't I heard him? But he do go to his bed a bit, and then they both lies quiet, her pretending she is sleeping so as he can sleep, and him feared to sleep case he shouldn't wake up to give her the bottle stuff."

"What does the doctor say about her?"

"He's a good one, the doctor. Sometimes he says she would get better if she could see the kid through the window."

"Nonsense!"

"And if she was took to the country."

"Then why does not William take her?"

"My! you are green! And if she drank port wines."

"Doesn't she?"

"No; but William he tells her about the gentlemen drinking them."

On the tenth day after my conversation with this unattractive child I was in my brougham, with the windows up, and I sat back, a paper before my face lest any one should look in. Naturally I was afraid of being seen in company of William's wife and Jenny, for men about town are uncharitable, and, despite the explanation I had ready, might have charged me with pitying William. As a matter of fact, William was sending his wife into Surrey to stay with an old nurse of mine, and I was driving her down because my horses needed an outing. Besides, I was going that way, at any rate.

I had arranged that the girl Jenny, who was wearing an outrageous bonnet, should accompany us, because, knowing the greed of her class, I feared she might blackmail me at the club.

William joined us in the suburbs, bringing the baby with him, as I had foreseen they would all be occupied with it, and to save me the trouble of conversing with them. Mrs. Hicking I found too pale and fragile for a workingman's wife, and I formed a mean opinion of her intelligence from her pride in the baby, which was a very ordinary one. She created quite a vulgar scene when it was brought to her, though she had given me her word not to do so; what irritated me, even more than her tears, being her ill-bred apology that she "had been 'feared baby wouldn't know her again." I would have told her they didn't know anyone for years had I not been afraid of the girl Jenny, who dandled the infant on her knees and talked to it as if it understood. She kept me on tenterhooks by asking it offensive questions: such as, "Oo know who give me that bonnet?" and answering them herself, "It was the pretty gentleman there," and several times I had to affect

sleep because she announced, "Kiddy wants to kiss the pretty gentleman."

Irksome as all this necessarily was to a man of taste, I suffered even more when we reached our destination. As we drove through the village the girl Jenny uttered shrieks of delight at the sight of flowers growing up the cottage walls, and declared they were "just like music—all without the drink license." As my horses required a rest, I was forced to abandon my intention of dropping these persons at their lodgings and returning to town at once, and I could not go to the inn lest I should meet inquisitive acquaintances. Disagreeable circumstances, therefore, compelled me to take tea with a waiter's family—close to a window, too, through which I could see the girl Jenny talking excitedly to villagers, and telling them, I felt certain, that I had been good to William. I had a desire to go out and put myself right with those people.

William's long connection with the club should have given him some manners, but apparently his class cannot take them on, for, though he knew I regarded his thanks as an insult, he looked them when he was not speaking them, and hardly had he sat down, by my orders, than he remembered that I was a member of the club, and jumped up. Nothing is in worse form than whispering, yet again and again, when he thought I was not listening, he whispered to Mrs. Hicking, "You don't feel faint?" or "How are you now?" He was also in extravagant glee because she ate two cakes (it takes so little to put these people in good spirits), and when she said she felt like another being already, the fellow's face charged me with the change. I could not but conclude, from the way Mrs. Hicking let the baby pound her, that she was stronger than she had pretended.

I remained longer than was necessary, because I had something to say to William which I knew he would misunderstand, and so I put off saying it. But when he announced that it was time for him to return to London, at which his wife suddenly paled, so that he had to sign to her not to break down, I delivered the message.

"William," I said, "the head waiter asked me to say that you could take a fortnight's holiday just now. Your wages will be paid as usual."

Confound them! William had me by the hand, and his wife was in tears before I could reach the door.

"Is it your doing again, sir?" William cried.

"William!" I said, fiercely.

"We owe everything to you," he insisted. "The port wine——"

"Because I had no room for it in my cellar."

"The money for the nurse in London——"

"Because I objected to being waited on by a man who got no sleep."

"These lodgings——"

"Because I wanted to do something for my old nurse."

"And, now, sir, a fortnight's holiday!"

"Good-by, William!" I said, in a fury.

But before I could get away, Mrs. Hicking signed to William to leave the room, and then she kissed my hand. She said something to me. It was about my wife. Somehow I—— What business had William to tell her about my wife?

They are all back in Drury Lane now, and William tells me that his wife sings at her work just as she did eight years ago. I have no interest in this, and try to check his talk of it; but such people have no sense of propriety, and he even speaks of the girl Jenny, who sent me lately a gaudy pair of worsted gloves worked by her own hand. The meanest advantage they took of my weakness, however, was in calling their baby after me. I have an uncomfortable suspicion, too, that William has given the other waiters his version of the affair, but I feel safe so long as it does not reach the committee.

ALPHONSE DAUDET

THE SIEGE OF BERLIN[266-1]

We were walking up the Avenue des Champs-Élysées with Dr. V—, trying to read the story of the siege of Paris in the shell-scarred walls and the sidewalks plowed up by grape-shot. Just before we reached the Circle, the doctor stopped and, pointing out to me one of the big corner houses so pompously grouped around the Arc de Triomphe, [266-2] told me this story.

You see those four closed windows above the balcony? During the first day of August, that terrible August of last year, so full of storms and disaster, I was called there to attend a very severe case of apoplexy. The patient was Colonel Jouve, once a cuirassier of the First Empire, [266-3] and now an old gentleman mad about glory and patriotism. At the outbreak of war he had gone to live in the Champs-Élysées, in an apartment with a balcony. Can you guess why? That he might be present at the triumphant return of our troops. Poor old boy! The news of Wissemburg reached him just as he was leaving the table. When he read the name of Napoleon at the foot of that bulletin of defeat, he had a stroke and fell.

I found the old cuirassier stretched out on the carpet with his face bleeding and motionless as if struck by a heavy blow. If he had been standing, he would have seemed a tall man. Stretched out as he was, he seemed immense. He had a fine face, magnificent teeth, a thick head of curly white hair, and though eighty years old did not look more than sixty. Near him his granddaughter knelt weeping. There was a strong family resemblance between them. Seeing them side by side, you thought of two beautiful Greek medals struck from the same matrix, but one old and worn and the other bright and clear-cut with all the brilliancy and smoothness of a first impression.

I found the child's grief very touching. Daughter and granddaughter of a soldier (her father was on Mac Mahon's [267-1] staff), the sight of this splendid old man stretched out before her had suggested to her another scene, no less terrible. I did all I could to reassure her, but in my own mind I was not any too hopeful. There was no question that the stroke had been apoplectic, and that is the sort of thing from which at eighty one does not recover. As it turned out, the sick man remained in a state of coma for three days.

Meanwhile, the news of the battle of Reichshoffen reached Paris. You will remember in what form that news reached us first. Until evening we all believed that we had won a great victory, with 20,000 Prussians killed and the Crown Prince captured. Through some miracle, some magnetic current, an echo of this national rejoicing must have reached the sufferer, deaf and speechless and unable to move though he was. That evening when I went to his bedside, I found a different man. His eye was clear, his tongue was no longer thick, and he had strength enough to smile at me and to stammer, "Vic-to-ry!"

"Yes, Colonel, a great victory!"

And the more details I gave him of Mac Mahon's brilliant success, the more his face relaxed and brightened.

As I left, I found the little girl waiting for me outside the door. She was pale and was crying.

"But he is going to get well," I said, taking her hands in mine.

The poor child had hardly courage to answer me. The true story of the battle of Reichshoffen had just appeared on the bulletin boards. Mac Mahon was retreating and the army cut to pieces. Surprised and shocked, our eyes met, she thinking of her father and I of my patient. Surely he would succumb to this new blow; and yet what could we do? Leave him the joy, the illusion that had brought him back to life? That meant keeping him alive with lies.

"Very well, I will tell them," said the child, and quickly wiping away her tears she went back to her grandfather's room with a smile on her face.

It was not an easy task which she had set herself. For the first few days she had no great difficulty. The old gentleman's head was very weak and he was as easily deceived as a child, but as his strength came back his mind became clearer. He wanted to be kept in touch with troop movements and to have the War Department Bulletin read to him. It was pathetic to see the little girl, night and day, bent over her map of Germany, sticking in pins with little flags on them, and trying hard to invent to the last detail a successful campaign: Bazaine advancing on Berlin, Frossard penetrating Bavaria, and Mac Mahon reaching the Baltic.

To work this all out she needed help, and I helped her as much as I could. But the one who helped her most was her grandfather himself. He had conquered Germany so many times during the First Empire, he knew every move. "This will be the enemy's next move, here," he would say, "and ours will be this." His anticipations were always justified by the event, which made him not a little proud.

Unhappily, no matter how fast we took cities and won battles, we never went fast enough for him. The old fellow was insatiable. Each day as I came in, I learned of some new success.

"Doctor, we have taken Mayence," [269-1] said the little girl coming to meet me with a smile that went to your heart, and through the door I heard his glad salutation, "We're getting on! In another week we shall be in Berlin."

At that time the Prussians were only a week's march from Paris. At first we wondered whether

we had not better carry our patient into the country. Then we reflected that as soon as he was taken out of the house, he would learn the true state of affairs, and I decided that he was still too feeble, too stunned by his stroke, to let him find out the truth. So we decided to stay where we were.

The first day of the Prussian occupation, I climbed the stairs to his apartment, I remember, with a heavy heart at the thought of all the closed doors of Paris and the fighting going on under her walls, in the suburbs which were now on the frontier. I found the old gentleman sitting up in bed jubilant and proud.

"Well," he said, "the siege has begun."

I looked at him in amazement. "So you know now, Colonel?"

His grandchild turned to me; "Why, yes, doctor. That is the great news to-day. The siege of Berlin has begun."

And while she spoke, she went on with her sewing as calmly as you please. How could he suspect what was happening? He couldn't hear the guns at the fortifications. He couldn't see the city in its fear and sorrow.

From his bed he could see one side of the Arc de Triomphe, and his room was filled with odds and ends of the period of the First Empire—all admirably fitted to sustain his illusions. Portraits of Napoleon's marshals, battle prints, a picture of the little King of Rome in his baby dress; big stiff consoles decorated with trophies, covered with imperial relics, medallions, bronzes, a piece of the rock of St. Helena under a glass case, miniatures all representing the same blue-eyed lady, now with hair curled, now in a ball dress, now in a yellow gown with leg-of-mutton sleeves. And all this—consoles, King of Rome, marshals, yellow-gowned, short-waisted ladies, with that prim stiffness which was considered graceful in 1806, this atmosphere of victory and conquest—it was this more than anything we could say to him that made him accept so naïvely the siege of Berlin.

After that day, our military operations grew simpler and simpler. Nothing but a little patience was needed in order to take Berlin. Every little while, when the old gentleman grew listless, we read him a letter from his son, an imaginary letter of course, as Paris was by now cut off, and as since Sedan, the aide-de-camp of Mac Mahon had been sent to a German fortress.

You can easily imagine the despair of the poor child who heard nothing from her father, knowing that he was a prisoner, deprived of even comfort and perhaps sick, while she had to write letters in his name that were full of joy, brief indeed, such as a soldier would write from the field, a soldier advancing day by day through the enemy's country. Sometimes it was too much for her, and weeks went by without a letter. The old man began to worry and to be unable to sleep. Then presto! a letter from Germany would arrive, and she would read it gayly at her grandfather's bedside, holding back her tears.

The old colonel would listen gravely, smile knowingly, approve, criticize, and explain to us any passage which seemed confused. But it was in the replies that he made to his son that he was magnificent. "Never forget that you are French," he wrote. "Be generous to the poor Germans. Don't let them suffer more than is inevitable from the invasion of their country." And then came suggestions without end, charming, moralizing on property rights, the courtesy due to women, a veritable code of honor for conquerors. All this was interwoven with reflections on politics and discussions of the peace terms. On this last point he was not unduly exacting. "Indemnity, and nothing more—what good would their provinces be to us? A France could never be made out of a Germany." He dictated that in a firm voice, and one could not hear him without emotion, there was so much sincerity, so beautiful a patriotism in what he said.

Meanwhile, the siege was progressing—not the siege of Berlin, unfortunately! We had reached the period of severe cold, the bombardment, the epidemics, the famine. But thanks to our efforts, to the infinite tenderness which enfolded him, the serenity of the old old man was never troubled. To the end, I was able to get white bread and fresh meat for him—for him alone, of course. You can't imagine anything more touching than these luncheons so innocent in their egotism—the old gentleman sitting up in bed, fresh and smiling, his napkin tucked under his chin, and his pale little granddaughter at hand to guide his hand, make him drink, and help him as he ate all these forbidden good things.

Then, animated by his meal, in the comfort of his warm room, while the winter's wind whistled outside and the snow flakes whirled around the windows, the ex-cuirassier told us for the hundredth time the story of the retreat from Russia when frozen biscuit and horse flesh was all that there was to eat.

"Do you realize what that means, little one? We had to eat horse!"

Did she realize what that meant! For two months she had eaten no other meat.

As time went on and the old gentleman recovered little by little, our task increased in difficulty. The numbness of the senses which had made it so easy to deceive him was disappearing day by day. Two or three times already the terrible cannonading at the Porte Maillot had made him jump, his ear as keen as a hunting dog's, and we had been obliged to invent a last victory for

Bazaine at the gates of Berlin and salvos fired at the Invalides[273-1] in honor of the event.

Another day, when his bed had been brought over to the window (it was, I think, the Thursday on which the battle of Buzenval was fought), he distinctly saw the troops of the National Guard formed on the Avenue de la Grand Armée.

"What are those troops?" asked the old gentleman, and we heard him mutter, "Not well set up."

It went no farther, but we understood that thereafter we must take every precaution. Unfortunately we were not sufficiently careful. One evening as I reached the house, the little girl came to meet me, considerably troubled. "It is to-morrow that they enter the city," she said.

Was the door of her grandfather's bedroom open? In thinking it all over afterward, I remember that this evening his face wore a very striking expression. Probably he had overheard us; but while we were talking of the entry of the Prussians, the old gentleman was thinking of the triumphant return of the French troops, for which he had so long been waiting—Mac Mahon marching down the avenue in the midst of flowers, his son at the marshal's side, and he himself on his balcony wearing his full dress uniform as he did at Lutzen, saluting the riddled flags and the powder-blackened eagles.

Poor old Jouve! No doubt he thought that we did not want him to participate in this review of our troops in the fear that his emotion would be too much for him, so he carefully avoided speaking of it. But the next day, at the very minute when the Prussian battalions started on their march from the Porte Maillot to the Tuileries,[274-1] the window up there opened gently and the Colonel appeared on the balcony wearing his helmet, his saber and all the old-fashioned but still glorious regalia of one of Milhaud's cuirassiers.

I still wonder what will power, what spurt of vitality it had taken to put him on his feet again in all the trappings of war. At all events, there he was, standing erect behind the rail, surprised to find the avenues so large, so silent, the window curtains down, and Paris as gloomy as a great pesthouse; flags everywhere, but such strange flags bearing a red cross on a white field, and no crowd to meet our soldiers.

For an instant he thought he might be mistaken; but no, below, behind the Arc de Triomphe, there came an indistinct rattle and then a black line advanced in the early light. Then, little by little, the eagles on the tops of helmets could be seen shining in the sun, the little drums of Jena began to beat, and under the Arc de L'Etoile, accented by the heavy tread of marching men and by the clash of sidearms, Schubert's Triumphal March burst out.

Suddenly the silence of the Place de L'Etoile was broken by a terrible cry: "To arms! To arms! The Prussians!" And the four Uhlans[275-1] at the head of the column could see up there on the balcony a tall old man stagger and fall. This time Colonel Jouve was really dead.

SELMA LAGERLÖF

THE SILVER MINE

King Gustav the Third[276-1] was making a hurried trip through Dalarna. Though the horses seemed to be fairly skimming the ground, the King was dissatisfied. He leaned out of the window continually urging the driver to make haste, and his courtiers expected any minute that the royal coach or harness would break.

Finally the carriage tongue did indeed break. The courtiers leaped from the coach and after a hasty inspection said that it would be impossible to continue the journey without repairs. Anxious for the King's entertainment, they asked him if he would not like to attend the services in a little church which could be seen a short distance ahead.

The King agreed, and stepping into one of the other carriages, drove to the church. For hours he had been riding through large tracts of forest, so he was the more delighted to come out in view of green fields and small hamlets. The Dalelven sparkled forth, as it glided between masses of graceful willows.

The King, however, was unable to attend the service, for just as he stepped from the carriage to the churchyard, the sexton was ringing the bell for the closing. The worshippers came filing out of the church. As they passed the King, where he stood with one foot on the carriage step, he was impressed with their stalwart bearing and sturdy, wholesome appearance.

On the preceding day the King had remarked to his courtiers upon the poverty of the country

they were passing through. "Apparently now," he said, "I am driving through the poorest section of my domain." When he saw these people, however, he forgot about the poverty of the country. His heart warmed within him and he said to himself, "The Swedish King is not in such poor circumstances as some of his enemies would believe. As long as my subjects remain as fine and wholesome as these are, I shall be able to defend successfully my crown and my land."

Then he commanded a courtier to tell the people that the stranger among them was their King, and that he wished them to gather around in order that he might address them.

He spake to them, standing upon the top step that led into the sanctuary, and the step upon which he stood may be found there to this day.

The King first told his people how matters stood within the kingdom. Sweden had been attacked by both Russia and Denmark. Under ordinary circumstances this would not be alarming, but at present the army was so filled with traitors^[277-1] that he could hardly depend on it. He saw, therefore, no alternative but to go out himself to the small towns and ask his subjects whether they wished to side with the traitors or were willing to help the King with soldiers and money to save the Fatherland.

While he was making this earnest appeal, the sturdy peasants stood attentively before him, making no comment, nor giving any sign as to whether they agreed or not. Now the King had felt inwardly pleased at the forcefulness of his own appeal, so when the men stood silent, unable to give their answer, he frowned and showed his disappointment.

The farmers understood that the King was impatient for their reply, and at length one stepped forward. "Now you must know, King Gustav," he said, "that we were not expecting a visit from our King here to-day. We are therefore not prepared to answer you immediately. I would suggest that you go into the sanctuary and speak with our minister while we discuss among ourselves this matter which you have presented to us."

The King, perceiving that no better solution was possible, decided to take the farmer's advice.

When he entered the study, he found no one there except an old farmer. He was tall and rough, with hands large and horny from hard work. He wore neither robe nor collar, but only leather breeches and a long white homespun coat, like the other peasants. He arose and bowed as the King entered.

"I believed that I should meet the minister here," said the King.

The other reddened with embarrassment, for he realized that it might be annoying to the King to be told that he had mistaken the minister for a farmer.

"Yes," he admitted, "the pastor is usually found here."

The King seated himself in a large armchair that stood in the study at that time, and which still stands there with a single change; the congregation has placed upon the back a gold crown.

"Have you a good minister here?" asked the King, wishing to show interest in the people's welfare.

When the King questioned him thus, the pastor felt that it was impossible to admit who he was. He decided that it was better to let the King think he was only a farmer, so he answered: "The minister is fair; he preaches the clear word of God, and he tries to live as he preaches."

The King thought this a good recommendation. His sharp ear, however, had detected a certain hesitation in the tone of the man. He said, therefore, "It sounds, though, as if you are not entirely satisfied with your pastor."

"He may be a bit hardheaded," said the other, thinking inwardly, "If the King should later discover who I am, he will realize that I did not pour compliments over myself." He decided, therefore, to come out with a bit of criticism. "There be those who would say that the minister is inclined to want to be the ruler in this hamlet," he continued.

"Then he has surely directed and managed everything in the best possible way," said the King. He was not pleased to have the farmer finding fault with some one placed over him. "It appears to me that everything here is ruled by good habit and old-fashioned simplicity."

"The people are good," said the minister, "because they live in a remote place in isolation and poverty. The people here would probably be no better than others if the trials and temptations of the world came nearer to them."

"There is little chance that this will happen," said the King with a shrug of his shoulder.

He said nothing further but began drumming on the table with his fingers. He felt that he had exchanged enough words with this farmer, and wondered when the people would be ready with their answer.

"Those peasants are not very eager about coming to their King with aid," he thought. "If my

coach were only ready, I would drive away from them and their deliberations."

The minister, deeply troubled, strove within himself as to how he should act on an important question that must be settled quickly. He felt glad that he had not told the King who he was, for now he could discuss matters that otherwise he would have been unable to bring forward.

After a time he broke the embarrassing silence by asking the King if it really were true that enemies were besieging them and their kingdom was in danger.

The King, feeling that this person should have sense enough to leave him undisturbed, looked at him for a time without reply.

"I asked the question because, standing within the study here, I could not hear clearly what you said to the people. But in case it is true, I should like to state that the pastor of this parish might possibly be in a position to furnish the King as much money as he would need."

"I thought you said that every one here was poor," said the King, thinking that the farmer did not know what he was talking about.

"Yes, that is true," agreed the pastor, "and the minister has no more than any other. But if the King will honor me by listening, I will explain how it is that the minister has power to help."

"You may speak," said King Gustav. "You seem to find it easier to express yourself than your friends and neighbors outside, who never will be ready with their answer."

"It is not an easy matter to answer a King. I fear that, in the end, it will be necessary for their pastor to speak in their stead."

The King crossed his knees, folded his arms, and dropped his head. "You may begin," he said, with an air of preparing to fall asleep.

"Once upon a time the pastor and four men from his parish went elk hunting," began the minister. "Besides the pastor, there were two soldiers, Olaf and Erik Svard, the landlord of the village, and a farmer named Israëls Pers Perssons."

"Should not mention so many names," grumbled the King, as he shifted his head a bit.

"The men were good hunters and usually had good luck, but this day they traveled far without getting any game. At last they gave up the hunt and sat down on the ground to talk. They remarked upon the strange fact that so large a section of the country should be unsuitable for cultivation. All was rocks, hills, or morass.

"Our Lord has not done right by us, when he has given us such poor land to live in,' said one of them. 'In other sections people have riches and plenty, but here in spite of all our efforts we can hardly get sufficient for our daily needs.'"

The minister stopped a moment as if uncertain whether the King had heard him. The King, however, moved his little finger as a sign that he was still awake.

"As the hunters were talking of their ill fortune, the minister noticed something glittering where he had overturned a bit of moss with his boot. 'This is a remarkable mountain,' he thought. Overturning more of the moss and picking up a piece of stone that clung to it, he exclaimed, 'Can it be possible that this is lead ore!'

"The others came eagerly over to the speaker and began uncovering the rock with their rifle stocks. They thus exposed a broad mineral vein on the side of the mountain.

"What do you suppose this is?' asked the minister.

"Each man broke loose a piece of the rock and, biting it as a crude test, said he thought it should be at least zinc or lead.

"And the whole mountain is full of it,' eagerly ventured the landlord."

When the minister had reached this stage of the story, the King slightly raised his head and partly opened one eye.

"Do you know if any of these persons had any knowledge of minerals or geology?"

"No, they did not," answered the minister. Whereupon the King's head sank and both eyes closed.

"The minister and those with him were highly pleased," continued the pastor, undisturbed by the King's indifference. "They believed that they had found something which would enrich not only themselves, but their posterity as well.

"Nevermore shall I need to work,' said one of them. 'I can do nothing the whole week through and on Sunday I shall ride to church in a gold chariot.'

"These were usually men of good sense, but their great discovery had gone to their heads, so that now they spoke like children. They had enough presence of mind, however, to lay the moss carefully back in place so as to hide the mineral vein. Then, after taking careful note of the location, they journeyed home.

"Before parting, they all agreed that the minister should go to Falun and ask the mineralogist there what kind of ore this might be. He was to return as soon as possible, and until then they all swore by a binding oath that they would not reveal to any person the location of the ore."

The king slightly raised his head but did not interrupt the narrative. He began to believe apparently that the man really had something important to tell, though he did not permit himself to be aroused out of his indifference.

"The minister started upon his journey with a few samples of ore in his pocket. He was just as happy in the thought of becoming wealthy as any of the others were. He mused upon how he would repair the parsonage that now was no better than a cottage; and how he could marry the daughter of the bishop, as he had long desired. Otherwise he would be compelled to wait for her many years, for he was poor and obscure, and he knew it would be a long time before he would be assigned to a place that would enable him to marry the girl of his choice.

"The minister's journey to Falun took him two days. There he was compelled to wait a day for the return of the mineralogist. When he finally showed the samples of the ore, the man took them in his hand, looked at them, and then at the stranger. The minister told the story of how he had found these samples in the vicinity of his home, and asked if they might be lead.

"No, it is not lead."

"Zinc, then?" faltered the minister.

"No, neither is it zinc."

All hope sank within the breast of the minister. He had not felt so downcast in many a day.

"Do you have many stones like these in your country?" asked the mineralogist.

"We have a whole mountain," answered the minister.

"Then the man advanced toward the minister and slapping him on the shoulder said, 'Let us see that you make such use of it that will bring great good both to you and to our Kingdom, for you have found silver.'"

"Is that true?" said the minister rather dazed; 'so it is silver?'

"The mineralogist explained to him what he should do in order to obtain legal rights to the mine, and gave him much good advice, also. The minister, however, stood bewildered and heard not a word that was said. He thought only of the wonderful news that back home in his poor neighborhood lay a whole mountain of silver ore waiting for him."

The King raised his head so suddenly that the minister broke off the narrative. "I suppose when the minister came home and began working the mine he found that the mineralogist had misinformed him."

"No," said the minister, "it was as the man had said."

"You may continue," and the King settled himself again to listen.

"When the minister reached home, the first thing he did was to start out to tell his comrades of the value of their find. As he drove up to Landlord Stensson's place, where he had intended to go in and inform his friend that they had found silver, he paused at the gate, for he saw that white sheets had been hung before the windows and a broad path of hemlock boughs led up to the door step."

"Who has died here?" inquired the minister of a little boy who stood leaning against the fence.

"It is the landlord himself." Then he told the minister that for a week past the landlord had been drinking ever and ever so much liquor, until he was drunk all the time.

"How can that be?" asked the pastor. "The landlord never before drank to excess."

"Well, you see," said the boy, 'he drank because he was possessed with the idea that he had found a mine. He was so rich, he said, that he would never need to do anything now but drink. Last night he drove out, drunk as he was, and fell out of the carriage and was killed.'

"After the minister had heard all this, he started homeward, grieving over what he had learned. And only a moment before he had been so elated over the good news he had to tell his friends.

"When the minister had gone a short distance, he met Israëls Pers Persson walking along the road. He appeared as usual and the minister was glad that their good fortune had not turned his

head. He would immediately gladden him with the news that he was now a rich man.

"Good-day!" said the minister.

"Do you come now from Falun?"

"Yes, and I can tell you that things turned out better than we thought. The mineralogist said that it was silver ore."

"Pers Persson looked as if the earth had opened to engulf him. 'What is it you say? Is it silver?'"

"Yes, we shall all be rich men now and able to live as royalty."

"Oh, is it silver?" repeated Pers Persson, in still greater dejection.

"It certainly is silver," said the minister. "Don't think that I would deceive you. You should not be afraid of being glad."

"Glad!" said Pers Persson, 'should I be glad? I thought it was fool's gold, so it seemed better to take a certainty for an uncertainty. I sold my share in the mine to Olaf Svard for one hundred dollars.'

"He looked very downhearted, and the minister left him standing there with tears in his eyes.

"When the minister reached home, he sent a servant to Olaf Svard and his brother asking them to come to the manse that he might tell them the nature of their find. He felt that he had had enough of trying to spread the good news himself.

"But that evening, as the minister sat alone, joy again filled his heart. He went out and stood upon a hillock where he had decided to build the new parsonage. This, of course, should be very grand, as grand as the bishop's home itself. He was not satisfied, moreover, with the idea of repairing the old church. It occurred to him that, as there was so much wealth in the hamlet, many people would find their way to the place, until finally a large town would probably be built around the mine. He reasoned that it would be necessary then to build a large new church in place of the old one, which would require a great portion of his riches. Neither could he stop here in his dreams, for he thought that when the time came to dedicate this grand new church, the King and many bishops would be there. The King would be glad to see such a church, but he would remark that there were not fit accommodations to be had in the town. It would be necessary, therefore, to build a castle in the city."

At this point one of the King's courtiers opened the door of the study and announced that the King's coach had been repaired.

The King thought at first that he would depart immediately but, reconsidering, he said to the minister, "You may continue your story to the end, but make it shorter. We know how the man dreamed and thought; now we want to know what he did."

"While the minister sat in the midst of his dreams," went on the speaker, "word came to him that Israel's Pers Perrson had taken his life. He could not endure the thought of his folly in selling his share of the mine. He felt he would be unable to live and see from day to day another enjoy the wealth that might have been his."

The King moved slightly in his chair. He now had both eyes wide open. "Methinks," said he, "that had I been this minister, I should have had enough of that mine."

"The King is a rich man; at least he has plenty. It was not so with the minister, who owned nothing. This poor man, when he saw that God's blessing appeared not to be with his undertaking, thought: 'I shall not dream further about making myself prosperous and useful with these riches. I cannot let the silver mine lie in the ground, however; I must take out the ore for the poor and needy. I will work the silver mine to help put the whole community on its feet.'

"One day the minister went over to Olaf Svard's to talk with him and his brother about the best disposal of the mine. When he came near the soldier's home, he met a cart surrounded by awe-stricken farmers. Within the cart sat a man, his feet bound with a rope and his hands behind him.

"As the minister passed, the cart stopped, giving the minister an opportunity to observe the prisoner more closely. His head was bound around so that it was hard to see him, but the minister thought he recognized Olaf Svard. He heard the prisoner pleading with the guards to let him speak with the minister.

"As he came closer to the cart, the prisoner turned towards him, saying, 'You will soon be the only one who knows where the silver mine is.'

"What is that you say, Olaf?"

"You see, minister, since we heard that it is a silver mine we have found, my brother and I have not remained such good friends as formerly. We often have come to disputes, and last night we had an argument over which one of us five first found the mine. We came to blows, and I have

killed my brother and he has given me a deep mark on my forehead.[290-1] I shall hang now and you will then be the only one who knows the site of the mine. I should like to request something of you.'

"Speak up,' said the minister. 'I will do all in my power for you.'

"You know I shall leave several little children behind me,' said the soldier.

"So far as that is concerned,' interrupted the minister, 'you may rest easy. Whatever is your share they shall have.'

"No,' said Olaf, 'it is another thing I wanted to ask of you. Do not let them have any part of that which comes out of the mine.'

"The minister fell back a few steps, then remained motionless, unable to reply.

"If you do not promise me this, I cannot die in peace.'

"The minister at last promised reluctantly, and the cart continued on its way, bearing the murderer to his doom.

"The minister stood there in the road, deliberating on how he should keep the promise he had just given. All the way home he thought over the riches which he had expected would bring such joy.

"If it should prove,' he mused, 'that the people of this parish are unable to endure wealth, since already four have died who had been strong practical men, ought I not to give up the idea of working the mine?' He pictured his whole parish going to destruction because of the silver. Would it be right that he, who was placed as a guardian over the souls of these poor people, should put into their hands something which might be the cause of their ruin?"

The King raised himself upright in his chair and stared at the speaker. "I might say that you give me to understand that the pastor of this isolated community must be a real man."

"But this that I have related was not all," continued the minister, "for as soon as the news of the mine spread over the neighboring parishes, workers ceased to labor and went about light-heartedly, awaiting the time when the great riches should pour in on them. All idlers in that section roamed into the hamlet. Drunkenness, quarreling, and fighting became constant problems for the minister's solution. Many people did nothing but wander around through fields and forest looking for the mine. The minister noted, also, that as soon as he left home, men spied upon him to see whether he visited the silver mine, so that they might steal the secret of its location from him.

"When things had come to this pass, the minister called the farmers to a meeting. He reminded them of the many tragedies that the discovery of the silver mine had brought to their community and asked if they were going to allow themselves to be ruined or if they wished to save themselves. And then he asked if they wanted him, who was their pastor, to contribute to their ruin. He himself had decided that he would not reveal to anyone the location of the mine, nor would he ever attempt to derive any wealth therefrom.

"He then asked the farmers how they would vote for the future. If they desired to continue seeking after the mine and awaiting riches, he intended to go so far from them that no news of their misery would ever reach him. If, on the other hand, they would give up thinking of the silver mine, he would remain among them. 'But however you choose,' repeated the minister, 'remember that no one will ever hear from me any information about the location of the silver mine.'"

"Well," said the King, "what did the farmers decide?"

"They did as the minister desired of them. They understood that he meant well for them when he was willing to remain in poverty for their sake. They urged him to go to the forest and take every precaution to conceal the vein so that no one would ever find it."

"Since then the minister has remained here as poor as the others?"

"Yes, as poor as the others."

"Has he, in spite of this, married and built a new parsonage?"

"No, he has not had the means. He lives in the same old place."

"That is a beautiful story," said the King, bending his head.

The minister stood silent before the King. In a few minutes the latter continued: "Was it of the silver mine that you were thinking when you said that the minister here could furnish me with as much money as I should need?"

"Yes," said the other.

"But I can't put thumb-screws on him; and how otherwise could I bring a man like him to show me the mine—a man who has forsaken his beloved and all material blessings?"

"That is another matter," said the minister. "If it is the Fatherland that needs help, he will undoubtedly give up the secret."

"Do I have your assurance for that?"

"Yes, I will answer for it."

"Does he not care, then, how it goes with his parishioners?"

"That shall stand in God's hands."

The King arose from his chair and walked over to the window. He stood for a moment observing the people outside. The longer he stood, the clearer his large eyes glistened. His whole stature seemed to expand.

"You may present my compliments to the minister of this parish," said the King, "and say to him that there is given no more beautiful sight to Sweden's King than to see such a people as these."

Thereupon the King turned from the window and looked smilingly at the minister. "Is it true that the minister of this parish is so poor that he takes off his black robe as soon as the service is over and dresses as one of the peasants?"

"Yes, he is as poor as that," said the minister, and a flush of embarrassment spread over his rough but noble face.

The King again stepped to the window. He apparently was in his best mood. All that was great and noble within him had been awakened. "He shall let the silver mine rest in peace. Since through all his life he has starved and worked to perfect a people such as these, he shall be permitted to keep them as they are."

"But if the kingdom is in danger——"

"The kingdom is better served with men than with money." When he had said these words, the King shook hands with the minister and stepped out of the study.

Outside stood the people, as impassive as when he went in. But when the King came down the steps, one of the farmers approached him.

"Have you talked with our minister?"

"Yes, I have talked with him."

"Then you have also received answer from us," said the farmer.

"Yes, I have received your answer."

—*Translated from the Swedish by C. FREDERICK CARLSON.*

NOTES

O. HENRY (Page 11)

Sydney Porter, whose pen name was O. Henry, was an American journalist who lived during the years 1862 to 1910. For several years he wandered in the South and Southwest, gathering the many and varied experiences of a journalistic career. These he aptly used in his numerous short stories, and he was ever a beguiling story teller.

He finally settled down in New York City and there wrote his best stories. Instead of writing of the Four Hundred, or the social set of the great city, as so many other writers were fond of doing, with his clever pen he revealed to us through little sketches the real life of the four million others in New York. Laundresses, messenger boys, policemen, clerks, even the tramps ever present in the parks were pictured for us as real everyday people whom one could find anywhere. Read his stories in *The Four Million*, from which "The Gift of the Magi" is taken, for you will like them.

O. Henry, while his stories usually lack the qualities of enduring literature, those of a cultured style and a universal theme—a theme that will be true to human experience through the ages—is yet master of the composition of the short story. Examine "The Gift of the Magi" and you will find

that it develops one main incident carried out in a single afternoon with all the necessary details compressed; that is, the details are suggested in a few words but not developed. The story has originality and appeals to the imagination of the reader, for the whole life of the two characters is suggested through this brief, rather touching sketch. The end, though it is a surprise and comes like the crack of a whip, was nevertheless carefully prepared for. Then the writer is through, and we are left with the feeling that we know this everyday young couple, who after all have the priceless gift, an unselfish love, which, hidden from the eyes of the world, glorifies their commonplace existence.

O. Henry approaches true literature here, for he has a theme that has lived and will ever live to uplift human life. His style too, influenced by his theme, is raised somewhat from his usual slangy expression.

THE GIFT OF THE MAGI

[\(Return\)](#)

11, 1. The Magi. Wise men who brought gifts to the infant Christ as he lay in the manger at Bethlehem.

[\(Return\)](#)

13, 1. Queen of Sheba. A queen of Old Testament history, who is reported to have sought an alliance with Solomon, King of Israel, in the tenth century B.C., bringing to him fabulous gifts of gold and jewels.

BOOTH TARKINGTON (Page 19)

Booth Tarkington was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1869. The author's love for and knowledge of his native state is revealed to us in several of his best novels. He was educated at Exeter Academy, at Purdue University, and at Princeton.

Mr. Tarkington may truly be said to be a literary man. Unlike most of our other authors, he has had no other formal occupation except that of writing. To this work, since he left Princeton, he has given all of his time and energy. For eight years he wrote stories that were always rejected. His courage and perseverance, however, were finally richly rewarded. With his first accepted work, *The Gentleman from Indiana*, he attained a secure position as a writer of distinction.

Mr. Tarkington is said to be exceedingly companionable and entirely without self-consciousness and egotism. He is a ready and entertaining talker and tells a story as well as he writes one. He has, too, a keen sense of the humorous. This naturalness and this sense of humor may be noticed readily in the story, "A Reward of Merit" selected from *Penrod and Sam*.

The books, *Penrod*, *Penrod and Sam*, and *Seventeen* are studies of the human boy, presented in a series of chapters that read like so many short stories.

A REWARD OF MERIT

[\(Return\)](#)

21, 1. Obedient to inherited impulse. The boys followed an unreasoning impulse in their nature, inherited from their savage ancestors, who got their living by pursuing and killing running animals.

[\(Return\)](#)

21, 2. Automatons of instinct. Creatures guided, not by reason or will, but by tendencies inherited from savage ancestors.

[\(Return\)](#)

22, 1. Practioner of an art, etc. A humorous way of saying that gambling by the method of throwing dice dates back probably further than the time of the Romans.

[\(Return\)](#)

30, 1. Sang-froid. A French word meaning coolness under trying circumstances.

[\(Return\)](#)

36, 1. Gothic. A term applied to certain types of architecture of the Middle Ages. Whitey, with bones and ribs showing, suggested the pillars and pointed arches of a Gothic building.

[\(Return\)](#)

43, 1. Nemesis. An ancient goddess in Greek literature who justly punished any one who sinned.

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS (Page 48)

Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews is a well-known short story writer of the present day. She was born in Mobile, Alabama. Her present home is in Syracuse, New York.

Mrs. Andrews is perhaps best known by her story of Lincoln, "The Perfect Tribute," the one of her stories which will surely endure the test of time and rank high as literature. Among her best work are also stories of camping trips in the Canadian woods—stories which show her keen delight in life out-of-doors, for Mrs. Andrews says of herself, "I paddle a canoe much better than I write a story."

In "American, Sir!" the story of the World War given in this book, one finds Mrs. Andrews's usual qualities of sentiment, dramatic effect, and distinctive style. To readers of "The Perfect Tribute," it is enough to say that in her stories of the recent war Mrs. Andrews writes with the same exalted spirit of American patriotism that she showed in that story of the Civil War. She believes that out of the sorrow and suffering of the war have come the glory of courage and self-sacrifice and a new and deeper love for America.

"AMERICAN, SIR!"

[\(Return\)](#)

49, 1. "Tapped" for "Bones" or "Scroll and Key." "Bones" and "Scroll and Key" are two fraternities at Yale to which the students deem it a great honor to belong. On the great day when new members are chosen, every one assembles on the campus, where the new members are tapped on the shoulder by old members and told to go to their rooms.

[\(Return\)](#)

52, 1. Croix de Guerre. The French War Cross, a decoration given by France to soldiers for extreme bravery and self-sacrifice.

[\(Return\)](#)

52, 2. Caporetto disaster. The Italian army was overwhelmingly defeated by the Germans near the village of Caporetto on October 24, 1917. This disaster was brought about by fraternization, or friendly relations, between the soldiers of the Austro-German and Italian armies. Skillful German propaganda had led the Italians to believe that fighting would be brought to an end if the Italian soldiers would do no more shooting. Then new German troops were brought forward to make a deadly attack upon the Italian army. So thoroughly had the Germans played their game that the Italians lost more than 250,000 prisoners and 2300 guns before they realized how they had been duped.

[\(Return\)](#)

52, 3. Lombardy and Venetia. Provinces in northern Italy, which are noted for their beautiful scenery and places of interest to tourists.

[\(Return\)](#)

52, 4. Tagliamento. A small river in northern Italy. The Italian army made a stand here in a bloody encounter with the Germans.

[\(Return\)](#)

52, 5. Piave. Another river in northern Italy, south of the Tagliamento. Here the Italians brought the Germans to a stand and held them for several months. They did this by a system of lagoon defenses from the lower Piave to the Gulf of Venice. This is most interesting to read about in any of the histories of the World War.

[\(Return\)](#)

55, 1. Bersagliari. Italian sharpshooters.

KATHERINE MAYO (Page 68)

Katherine Mayo was born in Ridgway, Pennsylvania, but she was educated at private schools in Boston and Cambridge, and her home has long been in New York City.

She is a contributor to our best periodicals, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Scribner's*, *The North American*, *The Outlook*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Her stories are almost all founded on facts. The story "John G." in this collection of short stories is selected from *The Standard Bearers*, which is a group of true narratives concerning the Pennsylvania State Police. These tales are told by Miss Mayo in a finely distinctive way which makes vivid the gallant deeds of these brave men.

Miss Mayo's interest in the history and deeds of the Pennsylvania State Police was aroused by her personal experience of the helplessness of country districts in New York state to prevent or punish crime. Miss Mayo had heard that Pennsylvania years ago had acknowledged its duty to protect all its people, and to that end had established a rural patrol known as the State Police. Finding little in print concerning this force, she went to Pennsylvania to study the facts first hand.

The results of her investigations she published early in 1917 in her book, *Justice to All*, with an introduction by ex-President Roosevelt, in which he declares the volume to be so valuable that it should be in every public library and every school-library in the land.

In *The Standard Bearers*, she tells of some of the special feats of early members of that now famous force. No detective stories, no tales of the Wild West can exceed in thrilling human interest these true narratives of events that have happened in our own time and in our own country.

Miss Mayo during the world war has done active work over seas in the "Y." True stories of her experiences with the doughboys have appeared in *The North American*, and in *The Outlook*.

JOHN G.

[\(Return\)](#)

68, 1. Barrack-Room Ballads. Poems by Rudyard Kipling with the atmosphere of the far East.

[\(Return\)](#)

69, 1. Pennsylvania State Police. See sketch of Katherine Mayo.

[\(Return\)](#)

69, 2. I. W. W. Industrial Workers of the World, a revolutionary labor organization. The members have given much trouble by their extreme views, such as eternal war against their employers. They believe that they should organize as a class and take possession of the earth, abolishing the wage system.

[\(Return\)](#)

70, 1. Blue ribbon. A sign of distinction; a blue ribbon worn by a horse at a horse show denotes that he has won the first prize.

[\(Return\)](#)

70, 2. Atlantis. A mythical island of vast extent mentioned by Plato and other ancient writers and placed by them in the distant unknown West.

[\(Return\)](#)

72, 1. Two by twelves. A plank two inches thick by twelve inches wide.

MYRA KELLY (Page 77)

Myra Kelly, who later became Mrs. Allan Macnaughton, was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1876 and died in England in 1910. She lived almost all of her short life, however, in New York City. Here she was educated in the public schools and at Teachers College, Columbia University.

She was an American teacher and author. She taught in the New York public schools from 1899 to 1901 and at Teachers College in 1902 and 1903. She first became known by her stories of children in the primary schools of New York City. She wrote chiefly of the children of the East Side, with whom she had had first-hand experience, while teaching in the public schools. Her stories give the Yiddish dialect inimitably and they show a fine, wise tolerance as well as a shrewd knowledge of child character.

Mrs. Macnaughton's published volumes include *Little Citizens*, *Wards of Liberty*, *Rosnah*, *Little Aliens*, *New Faces*, and *Her Little Young Ladyship*. The story "Friends," presented in this collection, is taken from *Little Aliens*.

Little Aliens contains nine stories, of which the settings are all in the homes of the children. Most of the stories in her first volume, *Little Citizens*, have their settings in the schools. The stories reveal a rich humor, an underlying pathos, a deep understanding of child nature, and a full grasp of the conditions with which all aliens, big or little, must contend.

[\(Return\)](#)

77, 1. Friends. The dialect spoken by the child in this story is the American adaptation of the Yiddish, which is a German dialect spoken by the Jews of eastern Europe, containing many Hebrew and Slav expressions.

[\(Return\)](#)

78, 1. Board of Monitors. A group of children appointed by the pupils to help the teacher in various ways.

[\(Return\)](#)

79, 1. Krisht. Christian.

[\(Return\)](#)

82, 1. Rabbi. A Jewish title for a teacher or interpreter of the law, also a pastor of a Jewish congregation. **Kosher law** refers to special Jewish laws. The laws regarding food specify how animals must be slaughtered in order that the meat may be ceremonially clean.

[\(Return\)](#)

89, 1. Vis-a-vis. Opposite to one another.

HAMLIN GARLAND (Page 97)

Hamlin Garland is a poet and novelist, whose stories are set mostly in the Middle West. He was born in 1860 on a farm near the present site of West Salem, Wisconsin. In 1869 his family moved out on the prairie of Mitchell County, Iowa, the scene of his *Boy Life on the Prairie*, and of many of the stories in *Main-Traveled Roads*. The selection, "A Camping Trip," given in this volume, is taken from *Boy Life on the Prairie*.

Mr. Garland's education was different from that of most of his contemporaries. When about sixteen, he became a pupil at the Cedar Valley Seminary, Osage, Iowa, though he worked on a farm during six months of the year. He graduated in 1881 from this school and for a year tramped through the eastern states. His people having settled in Brown County, Dakota, he drifted that way in the spring of 1883 and took up a claim in McPherson County, where he lived for a year on the unsurveyed land, making studies of the plains country, which were of great value to him later. *The Moccasin Ranch* and several of his short stories resulted from this experience.

In the fall of 1884 he sold his claim and returned to the East, to Boston, intending to qualify himself for teaching. He soon found a helpful friend in Professor Moses True Brown, and became a pupil, and a little later an instructor, in the Boston School of Oratory. During years from 1885 to 1889 he taught private classes in English and American literature, and lectured in and about Boston on Browning, Shakespeare, the drama, etc., writing and studying meanwhile in the public library. In Boston he made the acquaintance of Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Dean Howells, Edward Everett Hale, Edwin Booth, and other leaders in literature and art.

Mr. Garland wrote his stories from first-hand experience with men under certain typical American conditions. His stories of *Boy Life on the Prairie* and of *Main-Traveled Roads* are grim stories of farm life in the West. They portray the conditions under which people lived on the prairies only a generation or two ago. He shows us that men may become true and strong because of their battle with such conditions. His books are as truly American as any our country has produced.

As a writer of literature, these books show Mr. Garland to be a realist, that is, a writer who deals with the facts of real life, but as you read *Boy Life on the Prairie*, you will see that he is fond of the ideal, of the fanciful, and of descriptions of simple rural scenes. The latter quality is very plain, when he writes of the birds and of the thrill of the open country that comes to the boys on their camping trip.

A CAMPING TRIP

[\(Return\)](#)

100, 1. A prairie schooner. A long canvas-covered wagon used especially by emigrants crossing the prairies.

[\(Return\)](#)

105, 1. Skimmer-bugs. Bugs that skip or glide over the surface of the water.

[\(Return\)](#)

111, 1. Luff. To turn the head of a vessel towards the wind. **Hard-a-port** is a direction given to the helmsman, meaning to put the helm quickly to the port or left side.

Dorothea Canfield, the author of "A Thread Without a Knot," is one of the most brilliant and forceful writers in America to-day. She was born in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1879. The daughter of a teacher and writer, her education was intensive and varied. As a child she learned to speak several languages. She received her B.A. from Ohio State University and a Ph. D. from Columbia University. She has studied and traveled extensively in Europe as well as in America.

Both as a person and as a writer, Dorothea Canfield has been extraordinarily well liked. As an author she is characterized by originality, clearness, and the vital quality of human sympathy. She always writes with a purpose, both in her works of fiction and in her educational writings. The writer's own ideals and common sense are revealed in her work and her stories are thoroughly interesting. Under the name, Dorothy Canfield, she has written some notable fiction. *The Bent Twig* is a graphic American novel in which are portrayed the influences of environment upon a most interesting character. *Understood Betsy* is a girl's story of warm sympathy and strong common sense. *The Real Motive* is a volume of short stories from which the story, "A Thread Without a Knot," is taken. The stories in the volume range in their settings from Paris to a middle western university town. As the title suggests, they are studies in human motives.

Under her married name, Dorothea Canfield Fisher, she has written some valuable educational works, as *The Montessori Mother* and *Mothers and Children*. During the World War, Mrs. Fisher spent her time in France working for the relief of those made blind by the war. *Home Fires in France* and *The Day of Glory* are truthful records of Mrs. Fisher's impressions of life in that tragic, mutilated land.

A THREAD WITHOUT A KNOT

[\(Return\)](#)

114, 1. Doctor's dissertation. Before a student can obtain the highest degree a university gives, the doctor's degree, he must write a dissertation, that is, a formal and elaborate essay on some original research work he has done. The degree Mr. Harrison was working for was that of Doctor of Philosophy, or Ph. D.

[\(Return\)](#)

114, 2. Archives. A place where public records and historical documents are kept.

[\(Return\)](#)

116, 1. Munich. A city in Germany where one of the largest and oldest German universities is located.

[\(Return\)](#)

116, 2. Treaty of Utrecht. A treaty of peace in 1713 which concluded the war of the Spanish succession, a war fought by most of the other countries of Europe against the armies of France and Spain.

[\(Return\)](#)

117, 1. Bibliothèque Nationale. The national library at Paris.

[\(Return\)](#)

125, 1. Versailles. A city about twelve miles from Paris, noted for the beautiful **chateau**, or palace, and gardens of Louis XIV. The palace is now used as a historical museum and art gallery. It was in the famous Hall of Mirrors at Versailles that the treaty between Germany and the Allies was signed at the end of the World War.

The formal gardens and the fountains are among the famous sights of Paris. In the garden stands the **Trianon**, sometimes called the Grand Trianon, a villa built by Louis XIV for one of his favorites. Near it is the Petit Trianon, or little Trianon, the favorite resort of **Marie Antoinette**, the unfortunate and beautiful queen of France who was executed during the French Revolution. Here she and her ladies-in-waiting used to play at being shepherdesses and milkmaids.

[\(Return\)](#)

125, 2. Tram line. A street railway or trolley line.

[\(Return\)](#)

129, 1. Fontainebleau. A town of northern France, situated in the midst of a beautiful forest which covers an area of nearly 66 miles. At Fontainebleau is a famous chateau of the French kings. It is noted for the beauty of its architecture and contains many wonderful paintings.

[\(Return\)](#)

129, 2. Pierrefonds. A small village in northern France where a very old and famous chateau is located.

[\(Return\)](#)

129, 3. Vincennes. A town about five miles from Paris, noted for its chateau which is now used as a great fortress.

[\(Return\)](#)

129, 4. Chantilly. A town in northern France noted for its lace-making, its horse races, and two beautiful chateaux built by the Prince of Condé, one of the French nobility. In the eighteenth century the most brilliant writers and artists of France used to gather at Chantilly.

[\(Return\)](#)

133, 1. Tophet. A valley, sometimes called Gehenna, near Jerusalem, where human sacrifices were burned to the heathen god Moloch.

[\(Return\)](#)

137, 1. Andy. Andrew Carnegie, a Scotch-American steel manufacturer and philanthropist, who established libraries in many cities of the United States.

[\(Return\)](#)

138, 1. La Salle. A French explorer of the seventeenth century. He discovered the Ohio River and was the first to explore the greater part of the Mississippi River.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE (Page 141)

Bret Harte, as he is familiarly known, was born in Albany, New York, in 1836. At fifteen he wandered to California, the state which has so vividly colored his best known short stories. The first three years he was there, for a living, he taught school, and, as a pastime, like every one else in California at that time, he dug for gold.

He then entered the office of the *Golden Era* as a compositor, but soon began to write articles for the paper. These attracted favorable notice and he was made assistant editor-in-chief.

His ready imagination was stirred by the teeming, adventuresome life about him and he began to put his ideas into short stories with the mellow background of the golden state of California. Poe and Hawthorne had made the short story a distinct type. Now Bret Harte, less artistic and careful in his style, followed their lead with short stories to which he added the new idea of coloring brilliantly the setting of the story with the atmosphere of a certain locality.

From 1868-1870 he edited the *Overland Monthly* in which appeared his best known short stories, "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," and "Tennessee's Partner," each of which presented stirring scenes of the early gold-seeking days of California. Their charm lies in his emphasis on the manners and actions of a picturesque community.

The material of his stories is romantic, melodramatic, often almost shocking. He handled it, however, with humor, irony, or pathos. He was a realist who pictured, marvelously, the life about him as he saw it.

In 1870 Mr. Harte was made professor of recent literature in the University of California. After 1878 he held consular appointments; in Germany 1878-1880, in Scotland 1880-1885. After 1885 he lived in England until his death in 1902.

CHU CHU

[\(Return\)](#)

145, 1. Castilian. Of pure Spanish origin.

[\(Return\)](#)

145, 2. Mexican plug. Slang for an inferior horse of Mexican breed.

[\(Return\)](#)

147, 1. Vaquero. A cowherder.

[\(Return\)](#)

147, 2. Sombrero. A hat.

[\(Return\)](#)

149, 1. Comstock lode. A rich vein of gold and silver discovered in Nevada in 1859. The discovery of its riches led people to rush to Nevada, and Virginia City grew up as if by magic.

[\(Return\)](#)

149, 2. Rosinante. The horse belonging to **Don Quixote** who was the romantic and absurdly

chivalric hero of a satirical Spanish novel entitled *The History of the Valorous and Witty Knight Errant, Don Quixote of the Mancha* by Miguel Cervantes.

[\(Return\)](#)

152, 1. Arabian Nights. *The Thousand and One Nights*, commonly called *The Arabian Nights' Tales*, are ancient oriental fairy tales. One of these is the story of the enchanted horse, a wooden horse with two pegs. When one of the pegs was turned, the horse rose in the air; when the other was turned, the horse descended wherever the rider wished.

[\(Return\)](#)

154, 1. Dulcinea. Sweetheart. Dulcinea was also the name of Don Quixote's lady.

[\(Return\)](#)

156, 1. Hidalgo. A man of wealth and position.

[\(Return\)](#)

157, 1. Châtelaine. The mistress of a castle.

[\(Return\)](#)

158, 1. Petite. Small.

[\(Return\)](#)

159, 1. Toreador. A bull-fighter.

[\(Return\)](#)

162, 1. Hacienda. A large estate.

[\(Return\)](#)

162, 2. Alfalfa. A species of grass valuable as fodder for horses and cattle.

[\(Return\)](#)

165, 1. Rodeo. Cattle market.

[\(Return\)](#)

167, 1. Tête-à-tête. A private conversation between two people.

[\(Return\)](#)

169, 1. Padre. Priest.

[\(Return\)](#)

172, 1. Rencontre. A meeting.

[\(Return\)](#)

172, 2. Patio. Courtyard.

[\(Return\)](#)

172, 3. Cabriolé. An open carriage.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (Page 173)

Because he was one of the founders of the short story in America, and because he is considered by many critics to be superior in style to all other American writers of fiction, Nathaniel Hawthorne has been chosen as the last of the group of American authors represented in this collection. In reading the story "Feathertop," therefore, it is interesting to compare the style of the author with that of the other American writers who are represented here. The story may also be used as a good test of the composition of the short story as given in the Introduction.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) was born of a stern Puritan line in Salem, Massachusetts, the grimmest of all the Puritan communities. He was a graduate of Bowdoin College and lived much of his life at Concord and Salem.

He was a happy child, by nature, but he was influenced by stern family traditions and the loneliness of his early environment. After the death of his silent, melancholy father, his mother brought up the children in the utmost seclusion. The decaying old seaport of witch-haunted memories in which he lived, also impressed profoundly the lively imagination of the solitary boy. All these influences may be traced in the stories of Hawthorne with their strong moral tone and their delicate but often rather morbid fancies.

Hawthorne, because of his timidity and self-depreciation, did not begin his real literary career until rather late. We owe it to his sympathetic yet practical wife that he ever published his writings. She recognized the value of the stories he had written and believed in his genius. Since he loathed the duties of the custom house where he was employed as an official, Mrs. Hawthorne

urged him to give up this occupation and devote himself to his true vocation, that of a writer, in spite of its uncertainties as to success and financial returns.

Hawthorne's imagination early led him into the field of romance; that is, he told tales full of strange and fanciful adventure, revealing the ideal or spiritual side of human nature. According to some of our best critics, Hawthorne is said to be our greatest romantic novelist.

FEATHERTOP

[\(Return\)](#)

176, 1. Louis le Grand or the **Grand Monarque**, was Louis XIV, king of France from 1638-1715.

[\(Return\)](#)

185, 1. Eldorado. An imaginary country, rich in gold and jewels, which the early Spanish explorers believed to exist somewhere in the New World.

[\(Return\)](#)

191, 1. Norman blood. A sign of aristocracy. The Norman-French conquered England in the eleventh century and became the aristocracy of England.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (Page 203)

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the eldest son of the artist, Charles Doyle, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in May, 1859. He was educated in England, Scotland, and Germany. In 1885 he received the degree of M.D. from Edinburgh University. Immediately afterward he began to practice as a physician, but although he attained no little success in this profession, it is as a writer that all the world knows him.

He made his first real appearance as an author in 1887 when he published *A Study in Scarlet*. It was in this novel that the wonderful Sherlock Holmes was introduced to the public. Dr. Doyle soon attained immense popularity by his narratives of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, which were first published in the *Strand Magazine*. This popular character returned at intervals in several other novels: *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, and others.

These ingenious stories of the success of the imperturbable Sherlock Holmes in detecting crime and disentangling mystery have become known wherever the English language is spoken. It is a notable thing to be able to create a character that is known even by people who have never heard of the author, or who have never even read a book. Ask any little street lad who Sherlock Holmes is, and see what he answers.

It is regrettable, however, that people know Sir Conan Doyle entirely as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, when his best work has really been done in other novels, such as *The Adventures of Brigadier Gerard*, *Rodney Stone*, *The White Company*, and *Beyond the City*.

His late works include plays as well as numerous novels. It is noteworthy that in all his writings women have played but little part. His men characters, on the other hand, are many and varied, as well as sharply defined. As an author Conan Doyle has a wonderful gift of narrative, unusual imagination, fine constructive powers, and an effective style.

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

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203, 1. Sherlock Holmes. See biographical sketch of Conan Doyle.

[\(Return\)](#)

206, 1. Freemason. A member of a secret order.

[\(Return\)](#)

207, 1. Omne ignotum pro magnifico. All the unknown is as something wonderful.

[\(Return\)](#)

221, 1. Sarasate. A famous Spanish violinist.

[\(Return\)](#)

224, 1. Sleuth hound. Detective.

[\(Return\)](#)

227, 1. The Sholto murder and the Agra treasure. This refers to another Sherlock Holmes story, *The Sign of Four*, which you may enjoy reading.

[\(Return\)](#)

230, 1. Napoleons. French gold coins worth 20 francs each.

[\(Return\)](#)

231, 1. Partie carrée. A party of four.

[\(Return\)](#)

237, 1. L'homme c'est rien—l'œuvre c'est tout. Man is nothing, his work is everything.

SIR JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE (Page 238)

Sir James Matthew Barrie, one of the best loved of contemporary novelists and dramatists, was born in 1860 in Kirriemuir, Scotland. His formal education was completed at Edinburgh University. And although his mature life has been spent largely in England, his stories reflect the village and country life of his native and beloved Scotland.

J. M. Barrie, as he is usually called, is a person interesting but difficult to know because of the reserve and shyness of his race. He has a sweetness of nature and a joy in life born of sympathy and faith. All these characteristics, together with his whimsical humor, are part of his great charm. One cannot help loving the man as one reads about him or reads his stories. The mental picture of him which one receives is of a shy and meditative little man, inconspicuous of dress, getting over the ground with strides almost as long as himself, and with a face that one cannot meet without stopping to look after it.

Barrie's mother, Margaret Ogilvy, is really the heroine of practically all of his stories and plays. From her, this man, shy of women, has learned all he knows of her sex. This accounts in part for the goodness and purity in his works. From his mother, too, he inherited his whimsically gay vision of life. Thus, his plays and novels, so much purer than those of many of his contemporaries, are never dull, for they are lightened by his wit, his fanciful humor, and his love for humanity.

The man's genial satire and kindly humanity may be distinguished in the selection, "The Inconsiderate Waiter," which you will read in this collection. The lovable Barrie, with his tenderness for child life, his poetic fancy and whimsical invention, will be revealed to you more truly when you have read his novels, *Sentimental Tommy*, *Tommy and Grizel*, *The Little Minister*, *The Little White Bird*, and his play *Peter Pan*.

THE INCONSIDERATE WAITER

[\(Return\)](#)

239, 1. Chartreuse. A highly esteemed liqueur, which derives its name from the celebrated monastery of the Grand Chartreuse, in France, where it is made.

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240, 1. The Derby. The most important annual horse race of England, founded in 1780 by the Earl of Derby and run at Epsom, in the spring.

ALPHONSE DAUDET (Page 266)

Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897) was a French humorist and satirist, who wrote novels, plays, and short stories. He was born in Provence in southeast France, a district of which he is typical in the warmth of his imagination. He lived for a time at Lyons but later went to Paris, where he came in contact with the literary artists of the capital.

Monsieur Daudet, like the moody, imaginative Hawthorne of America, was guided and influenced in his literary career by his wife, whose inspiring but practical mind guided his impulsive and impressionable nature into its best outlet.

As a writer Daudet is remarkable for the grace of his style and the keenness of his observations. Literary critics appreciate him, not only for his polished style, but also for his originality and insight into human nature.

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266, 1. The Siege of Berlin. This is a story of the Franco-Prussian War, the war between France and Germany in 1870. War was declared in July and the opening battle was fought the first of August before the French had had time to complete their preparations. This battle, at **Wissemburg**, resulted in a heavy loss for the French troops.

The fighting during August of 1870 covered much the same ground contested during the World War. It is especially interesting to note that it was at **Sedan** that the French met their great defeat in September, 1870, and that Sedan was captured by the French shortly before the signing of the Armistice in November, 1918.

The battle of Sedan in 1870 meant the total defeat of the French army, and the Germans immediately began a four months' siege of Paris. After terrible suffering the city surrendered to the enemy in January, 1871.

The territory of Alsace-Lorraine lost by France to Germany in the war of 1870 was returned after the World War.

[\(Return\)](#)

266, 2. Arc de Triomphe. Sometimes called the **Arc de l'Etoile**. The great triumphal arch at the head of the **Avenue des Champs-Élysées**, begun by Napoleon to celebrate his victories and completed by Louis Philippe. After the Germans marched under it in triumph after the siege of Paris, chains were stretched across the roadway and the order was given that no one was to drive under the arch again until the lost provinces should be restored to France. In the great celebration on July 14, 1919, the armies of the victorious French and their Allies marched up the avenue under the Arc de Triomphe.

[\(Return\)](#)

266, 3. A cuirassier of the First Empire. A cuirassier is a cavalryman whose body is protected by a cuirass, a piece of defensive armor, covering the body from neck to girdle, and combining a breastplate and a back piece. **The First Empire** was the Empire of France under Napoleon I, 1804-1814.

[\(Return\)](#)

267, 1. Mac Mahon. The Marshal of France during the War of 1870.

[\(Return\)](#)

269, 1. Mayence. The German town of Mainz, where one of the strongest German fortresses is located.

[\(Return\)](#)

273, 1. Invalides. The Hôtel des Invalides is an establishment in Paris where French veterans are maintained at the expense of the state. Part of the building is a great military museum where trophies of war are exhibited. Among them are German guns captured in the World War. Napoleon is buried in the Dome des Invalides, a chapel in this building.

[\(Return\)](#)

274, 1. The Tuileries. The palace of the French kings in Paris.

[\(Return\)](#)

275, 1. Uhlans. Prussian cavalrymen.

SELMA LAGERLÖF (Page 276)

Selma Lagerlöf, who was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1858, is the Swedish idol in literature. She has had a series of honors such as rarely have fallen to the lot of a woman novelist, the climax of which has been the winning of the Nobel prize. [C] This enrolls her in a small group of authors of cosmopolitan interest—writers who belong to the whole world. Yet she is a woman who aspires to no prominence. She is modest, retiring, and unconscious of self.

No other Swedish writer of any period has so faithfully mirrored the soul of the Swedish people as has Selma Lagerlöf, nor has any other writer been so worshipped by her people. In her native province her work has sunk deep into the hearts of the people. The places and characters she has described have become so intimately associated with her stories and legends that the real names are constantly being confused with the fictitious ones she has given them in her *Wonderful Adventures of Nils* and *Gösta Berling*. Everywhere in Sweden one finds postal cards representing scenes from the *Wonderful Adventures of Nils*. This is an enchanting fairy story that may be compared to the fairy classics of Grimm and of Hans Andersen. In it fact and fancy are delicately interwoven with the geography and natural history of Sweden.

Miss Lagerlöf's popularity is not confined exclusively to Scandinavian countries, however. In Germany, Russia, and Holland, she is more widely read than almost any other foreign writer. In recent years, moreover, she has conquered France, and since the bestowal of the Nobel prize, she has become a world figure. It is since that event that she has become known in America, though she is not yet read here so much as she deserves.

She might well be called the founder of a new school of literature. She turned away from the general tendency of the European literature of her day, a tendency to morbid realism, or dealing with the ugliest facts of life. Her method is to throw into obscurity human frailties and vices and turn the light on what is biggest and strongest in people. This idealistic tendency may be readily traced in the story of "The Silver Mine," which is given in this text. It was for *Optimism in Literature* that Selma Lagerlöf was given the Nobel prize.

THE SILVER MINE

(Return)

276, 1. Gustav the Third. King of Sweden, 1771-1792.

(Return)

277, 1. The army was so filled with traitors. The country of Sweden at this time was distracted by the intrigues of the rival political parties of Hom and Gyllenborg, known as "Caps" and "Hats."

(Return)

290, 1. Given me a deep mark on my forehead. This refers to the Bible story of Cain's murder of his brother Abel. Genesis 4:3-15.

SUGGESTED READING LIST OF SHORT STORIES

Abbott, Eleanor Hallowell (Mrs. Coburn)
Sick-a-bed Lady. Title Story and "The Happy Day"

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey
Marjorie Daw and Other People. Title Story
Two Bites at a Cherry. "Goliath"

Allen, James Lane
The Flute and the Violin. Title Story

Andrews, Mary Raymond Shipman
The Perfect Tribute
Joy in the Morning

Barrie, Sir James Matthew
Two of Them. Title Story
A Window in Thrums

Balzac, Honoré
Chouans. "A Passion in a Desert"

Bunner, Henry Cuyler
Short Sixes. Title Story and "Love Letters of Smith"

Butler, Ellis Parker
Pigs is Pigs. Title Story

Cable, George
Old Creole Days

Canfield, Dorothy (Mrs. Fisher)
Hillsboro People
The Real Motive

Coppée, François
Tales by Coppée. "The Substitute"

Cutting, Mary Stewart
Little Stories of Married Life
Little Stories of Courtship

Davis, Richard Harding
The Man Who Could Not Lose. "The Consul"
Somewhere in France. Title Story
Gallagher and Other Stories. Title Story
Ranson's Folly. "The Bar Sinister"

Deland, Margaret
Old Chester Tales
Dr. Lavendar's People

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan
Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
Adventures of Brigadier Gerard

Ferber, Edna
Emma McChesney & Co.
Cheerful by Request

Freeman, Mary E. Wilkins
The Copy Cat
A New England Nun
The Wind in the Rose Bush

Fox, John
Christmas Eve on Lonesome. Title Story

Gale, Zona
Friendship Village
Friendship Village Love Stories

Garland, Hamlin
Main Traveled Roads
Other Main Traveled Roads

Hale, Edward Everett
The Man Without a Country

Harris, Joel Chandler
Tales of the Home Folks in Peace and War

Harte, Francis Bret
The Luck of Roaring Camp. Title Story, "Tennessee's Partner," and "The Outcasts of
Poker Flat"

Hawthorne, Nathaniel
Twice Told Tales. "The Great Carbuncle" and "The Minister's Black Veil"

"Henry, O."
The Four Million
The Voice of the City. "The Memento" and "While the Auto Waits"

"Hope, Anthony"
Dolly Dialogues
Comedies of Courtship

Jewett, Sara Orne
Tales of New England

Kelly, Myra
Little Citizens
Wards of Liberty. "A Soul above Buttons"
Little Aliens
New Faces

Kipling, Rudyard
Life's Handicap. "Betram and Bimi," "The Man Who Was," and "Without Benefit of
Clergy"
Second Jungle Book. "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi"
The Phantom Rickshaw. "The Man Who Would Be King"
The Day's Work. "The Brushwood Boy" and "William the Conqueror"

- Lagerlöf, Selma
The Girl from the Marsh Croft
- Martin, Helen
The Betrothal of Elypholate. Title Story
- Maupassant, Guy de
The Odd Number. "A Piece of String" and "The Necklace"
- Mayo, Katherine
The Standard Bearers
Justice to All
- O'Brien, Edward J. (Editor)
Best Short Stories of 1917
Best Short Stories of 1918
- O'Brien, Fitz
The Diamond Lens. Title Story, "What Was It? A Mystery," and "The Thing"
- Page, Thomas Nelson
In Old Virginia
- Poe, Edgar Allan
Works. "The Gold-Bug," "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Purloined Letter," and "The Pit and the Pendulum"
- Rinehart, Mary Roberts
Bab, Sub-Deb
- Shute, Henry
The Misadventures of Three Good Boys
- Stevenson, Robert Louis
Merry Men. "Markheim" and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde"
New Arabian Nights. "A Lodging for the Night" and "The Sire de Maletroit's Door"
- Stockton, Frank
The Lady or the Tiger? Title Story
- Tarkington, Booth
Penrod
Penrod and Sam
Monsieur Beaucair
- "Twain, Mark"
The Jumping Frog
- Van Dyke, Henry
The Blue Flower. Title Story and "The Other Wise Man"
- White, Stewart Edward
Blazed Trail Stories
- White, William Allen
The Court of Boyville
- Wister Owen
Philosophy Four. Title Story
-

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

THE GIFT OF THE MAGI

1. Does the introduction of "The Gift of the Magi" awaken your interest at once?

2. Della and Jim are very poor. Why is neither their home nor Della in her shabby clothes, ugly or sordid?
3. Do Jim and Della seem like real people you have known? What makes them so happy in spite of their being poor?
4. Is there something about this simple story that is beautiful and that would be true for people ages ago or years from now? How would you put this idea in words?
5. Were you prepared for the surprise ending of the story? Read over the story and see if O. Henry had really prepared from the very beginning for such an ending and yet had kept the reader from knowing.
6. After reading the Introduction, would you say that "The Gift of the Magi" is a true short story?

A REWARD OF MERIT

1. Look over the story "A Reward of Merit" and gather up the real story or plot and see how briefly you can relate it in your own words.
2. Does the fact that the story is told so largely through the conversation of the boys make it more interesting to you?
3. Try writing a story of some escapade, adventure, or exciting event in which the story is largely told, and the characters revealed, by means of conversation between two boys or two girls.
4. Would you say that Mr. Tarkington, the writer of this story, has a sense of humor? Give instances of humor in the story.
5. In what ways does the story show a knowledge of boy life?

"AMERICAN, SIR!"

1. What type of story would you call this?
2. The setting of the main incident brings before you what part of the Great War? Were any of your friends in that country? In the ambulance service anywhere? Locate on the map the places named in the story.
3. Find in the story some of the dramatic, graphic scenes that John has sketched for his uncle. See how well you can fill them out and express them. Why would this story make a good play?
4. What three people does Mrs. Andrews make real and likable to you? Does Uncle Bill conceal his real character? Of what other character in this book does he remind you?
5. Some of you may be able to write a stirring story of the brave deed of some real or imaginary ambulance driver for the Red Cross in Italy or France during the Great War.

JOHN G.

1. What gives you the thrill in the story "John G."?
2. Does this story of Miss Mayo's gain or lack in interest, because it is founded on fact?
3. Who would you say was the main character or real hero of the story?
4. Where in the story would you say was the most critical and the most interesting point?
5. Could this incident make the foundation for a good moving picture scenario?
6. Write either a story or a scenario of an exciting and dangerous adventure in which a dog or a horse is the hero.

FRIENDS

1. In what are you most interested in this story?
2. Is the setting of the story in the school or at home?
3. Do Mrs. Mowgelewsky and Morris seem like any living persons you have known?

4. Do you think the children in the first grade would like Miss Bailey as a teacher? What makes her a lovable person?

5. How do this story and others by Myra Kelly that you may have read, show that she sympathized with and understood these American children of foreign birth?

A CAMPING TRIP

1. Does the interest of this story lie more in the nature or out-of-doors setting, or in the action or plot?

2. Note the number of birds mentioned in the story. How many of them do you know?

3. What are some of the beautiful or poetic pictures of nature given by the author? Did the scenes have any effect on the imagination and feeling of these real boys and add to their enjoyment?

4. Have you ever had a camping experience? In what ways was your experience like that of the boys in this story?

5. Write a story of a camping or other out-of-doors trip in which the characters have some narrow escape and which contains some description of nature.

THE THREAD WITHOUT A KNOT

1. Has the recent World War made any difference in the current idea in America that only foreign universities, art schools, and works of art are of any real value? Why did Mr. Harrison good-humoredly assent to this really false idea, when he was seeking higher education?

2. When does the story become really interesting to you? Why?

3. What American characteristics does Mr. Harrison illustrate?

4. Although the English girl's story is not told directly, can you gather what she thought of the young American? Does it remind you of what the French people thought of our American boys when they went to France during the recent war?

5. What characteristics of the English does the frank American bring out in his talk with the English girl?

6. What was the motive of the young American's conduct toward the English girl? Why was the American blameless, or *do* you blame him?

7. Is the slang this young man uses characteristic of Americans in general?

CHU CHU

1. Where is this story located? What are some of the things that give it the atmosphere or flavor of California?

2. Is "Chu Chu" anything like "John G."? Tell the likenesses and differences between the two horses. Which do you admire more?

3. Why are there so many Spanish words in this story?

4. Do you think Consuelo is like other Spanish girls you have read or heard about? In what ways is she different from American girls?

5. Is the love story, or the action of the horse, the most interesting incident in the story?

6. Read the Introduction and see what Bret Harte added to the idea of the short story. Does it apply to this story?

FEATHERTOP, A MORALIZED LEGEND

1. What do the words "moralized legend" mean? What *is* the moral of the story?

2. This is a fanciful story. Do you like it as well as "The Gift of the Magi" or "A Reward of Merit" in which there are real people?

3. Does Hawthorne show his personality and boyhood training in this story as much as Mr. Garland showed his in "A Camping Trip"? (See biographical sketches.)

4. What do you think was the word that Feathertop whispered in Mr. Gookin's ear?
5. Which do you think more difficult to write, a story wholly from the imagination like "Feathertop," or one from experience like "A Camping Trip"?

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

1. Do you think this a good detective story? What makes it better than the cheap ones you perhaps have bought at the news stands?
2. What do you know about Sherlock Holmes? (See biographical sketch of Conan Doyle.)
3. Where did the most thrilling moment come? Was this the place where you saw how the story was going to turn out? What might you call this point?
4. Relate a mystery from real life that you have heard of or read in a newspaper that is just as hard to find out about as those Conan Doyle explains in his stories.
5. When Sherlock Holmes explains how he knew things about people, as, for instance, how he knew that Wilson was a Freemason, does it all seem simple enough to you? Why then are there not more good Sherlock Holmeses?
6. Relate some sly bits of humor you find in the story.

THE INCONSIDERATE WAITER

1. What kind of humor is shown in this story? Is it different from "A Reward of Merit"?
2. Is there anything touching in the story?
3. What do you think are the real qualities of the narrator of this story? Why does he try to conceal his real self?
4. What do you think was Mr. Barrie's purpose in making this waiter of an exclusive English club show himself to be a real human being?
5. After you have read the biographical sketch of Mr. Barrie, see if you can discover anything in the story that shows his personality.

THE SIEGE OF BERLIN

1. What is it that holds your attention in this story, is it the character of the fine old soldier, the story itself, or both?
2. What qualities of a soldier does M. Jouve show to the last?
3. What noble qualities does war bring out in the women of a nation, as revealed by the granddaughter of the old soldier?
4. What recent attack on Paris does this one make you think of? In what ways is it similar? How different?
5. How near did the Germans get to Paris in the World War?
6. What places mentioned in this story were strategic points around which great and critical battles were fought during the World War?
7. Read the notes on this story carefully, and from what you have read or can find out from soldier friends who were in the late war, see how the battles of the Franco-Prussian War and the World War differed. For instance, were the same people victorious in each case?
8. Write a war story, using the most thrilling incident you have heard of the World War. Make the characters real and show some noble quality in them, such as heroism, generosity, or human kindness.

THE SILVER MINE

1. In what ways does this story of a hidden treasure differ from other stories of hidden treasure, such as "Treasure Island," for example?
2. Does the character of the minister as revealed in the story, so good and fine, yet so plain and

humanly near to his people, make you think of any other minister you have known or read about?

3. How does the sacrifice of the minister influence the king to noble action?

4. In what ways do these Swedish people differ in their faults and good qualities or any of their human ways from the people of any other nation?

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*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SHORT STORIES OF VARIOUS TYPES ***

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