THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1917

And the

Yearbook of the American Short Story

Edited by

Edward J. O'Brien

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Title: The best short stories of 1917, and the yearbook of the American short story

Editor: Edward J. O'Brien

Release date: March 22, 2007 [eBook #20872]
Most recently updated: January 1, 2021

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20872

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1917, AND THE YEARBOOK OF THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY ***

THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1917

AND THE

YEARBOOK OF THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY

EDITED BY

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN

EDITOR OF "THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1915,"
"THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1916,"
ETC.



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SMALL, MAYNARD & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

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Fourth printing, January, 1919
Fifth printing, September, 1919
Sixth printing, August, 1920
Seventh printing, August, 1921

TO

WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

BY WAY OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Grateful acknowledgment for permission to include the stories and other material in this volume is made to the following authors, editors, publishers, and copyright holders:

To The Pictorial Review Company and Miss Edwina Stanton Babcock for permission to reprint "The Excursion," first published in *The Pictorial Review*; to The Century Company and Mr. Thomas Beer for permission to reprint "Onnie," first published in *The Century Magazine*; to Charles Scribner's Sons and Mr. Maxwell Struthers Burt for permission to reprint "A Cup of Tea," first published in *Scribner's Magazine*; to The Pictorial Review Company

and Mr. Francis Buzzell for permission to reprint "Lonely Places," first published in *The Pictorial Review*; to The Curtis Publishing Company and Mr. Irvin S. Cobb for permission to reprint "Boys Will Be Boys," first published in *The Saturday Evening Post*; to Harper and Brothers and Mr. Charles Caldwell Dobie for permission to reprint "Laughter," first published in *Harper's Magazine*; to The Century Company and Mr. H. G. Dwight for permission to reprint "The Emperor of Elam," first published in *The Century Magazine*; to The Metropolitan Magazine Company and Miss Edna Ferber for permission to reprint "The Gay Old Dog," first published in *The Metropolitan Magazine*; to The Atlantic Monthly Company and Mrs. Katharine Fullerton Gerould for permission to reprint "The Knight's Move," first published in *The Atlantic Monthly*; to The Crowell Publishing Company, the editor of *Every Week*, and Mrs. George Cram Cook for permission to reprint "A Jury of Her Peers," by Susan Glaspell, first published in *Every Week* and *The Associated Sunday Magazines*; to The Century Company and Captain Frederick Stuart Greene for permission to reprint "The Bunker Mouse," first published in *The Century Magazine*; to Mr. Paul R. Reynolds for confirmation of Captain Greene's permission; to The Pictorial Review Company and Mr. Richard Matthews Hallet for permission to reprint "Rainbow Pete," first published in *The Pictorial Review*; to The International Magazine Company, the editor of *The Cosmopolitan*

Magazine, and Miss Fannie Hurst for permission to reprint "Get Ready the Wreaths," first published in *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*; to the editor of *The Pagan* and Mrs. Vincent Costello for permission to reprint "The Strange-Looking Man," by Fanny Kemble Johnson, first published in *The Pagan*; to The Stratford Journal, the editor of *The Stratford Journal*, and Mr. Burton Kline for permission to reprint "The Caller in the Night," first published in *The Stratford Journal*; to The Boston Transcript Company and Mr. Vincent O'Sullivan for permission to reprint "The Interval," first published in *The Boston Evening Transcript*; to Charles Scribner's Sons and Mr. Lawrence Perry for permission to reprint "'A Certain Rich Man —,'" first published in *Scribner's Magazine*; to The Curtis Publishing Company and Mrs. Mary Brecht Pulver for permission to reprint "The Path of Glory," first published in *The Saturday Evening Post*; to The Pictorial Review Company and Mr. Wilbur Daniel Steele for permission to reprint "Ching, Ching, Chinaman," first published in *The Pictorial Review*; and to Harper and Brothers and Miss Mary Synon for permission to reprint "None So Blind," first published in *Harper's Magazine*.

Acknowledgments are specially due to *The Boston Evening Transcript* and *The Bookman* for permission to reprint the large body of material previously published in their pages.

I wish specially to express my gratitude to the

following who have materially assisted by their efforts and advice in making this year-book of American fiction possible and more nearly complete:

Mrs. Padraic Colum, Mr. A. A. Boyden, Mr. Ellery Sedgwick, Mr. Henry A. Bellows, Mr. Herman E. Cassino, Mr. G. G. Wyant, Mr. Burton Kline, Mr. Douglas Z. Doty, Mr. Barry Benefield, Mr. T. R. Smith, Mr. Frederick Lewis Allen, Mr. Henry J. Forman, Miss Honoré Willsie, Mr. Harold Hersey, Mr. Bruce Barton, Miss Bernice Brown, Miss Mariel Brady, Mr. William Frederick Bigelow, Mr. John Chapman Hilder, Mr. Thomas B. Wells, Mr. Lee Foster Hartman, Mr. Sewell Haggard, Mr. Samuel W. Hippler, Mr. Joseph Bernard Rethy, Mr. Karl Edwin Harriman, Mr. Christopher Morley, Miss Margaret Anderson, Mrs. Hughes Cornell, Miss Myra G. Reed, Mr. Merrill Rogers, Mr. Charles Hanson Towne, Mr. Carl Hovey, Miss Sonya Levien, Mr. John T. Frederick, Mr. Ival McPeak, Mr. Robert H. Davis, Mrs. R. M. Hallowell, Mr. Harold T. Pulsifer, Mr. Wyndham Martyn, Mr. Frank Harris, Mr. Robert W. Sneddon, Miss Rose L. Ellerbe, Mr. Arthur T. Vance, Miss Jane Lee, Mr. Joseph Kling, Mr. William Marion Reedy, Mr. Leo Pasvolsky, Mr. Churchill Williams, Mr. Robert Bridges, Mr. Waldo Frank, Mr. H. E. Maule,

Mr. Henry L. Mencken, Mr. Robert Thomas Hardy, Miss Anne Rankin, Mr. Henry T. Schnittkind, Dr. Isaac Goldberg, Mr. Charles K. Field, Mrs. Mary Fanton Roberts, Miss Sarah Field Splint, Miss Mabel Barker, Mr. Hayden Carruth, Mrs. Kathleen Norris, Mrs. Ethel Hoe, Miss Mildred Cram, Miss Dorothea Lawrance Mann, Miss Hilda Baker, Mr. William Stanley Braithwaite, Mr. Frank Owen, Mr. Alexander Harvey, Mr. Seumas O'Brien, Madame Gaston Lachaise, Mr. John J. Phillips, Mr. Sylvester Baxter, Miss Alice Brown, Mr. Francis Buzzell, Mr. Will Levington Comfort, Mr. Robert A. Parker, Mr. Randolph Edgar, Miss Augusta B. Fowler, Captain Frederick Stuart Greene, Mr. Emanuel Haldeman-Julius, Mr. Reginald Wright Kauffman, Mr. J. B. Kerfoot, Mrs. Elsie S. Lewars, Miss Jeannette Marks, Mr. W. M. Clayton, Mr. Vincent O'Sullivan, Mr. Henry Wallace Phillips, Mr. Melville Davisson Post, Mr. John D. Sabine, Mr. Richard Barker Shelton, Mrs. A. M. Scruggs, Miss May Selley, Mr. Daniel J. Shea, Mr. Vincent Starrett, Mr. M. M. Stearns, Mrs. Ann Watkins, Dr. Blanche Colton Williams, Mr. Edward P. Nagel, Mr. G. Humphrey, Rev. J.-F. Raiche, Mr. Wilbur Daniel Steele, Miss Louise Rand Bascom, Mr. Octavus Roy Cohen, Mr. Robert Cumberland, Mr. Charles Divine, Mr. Frank C. Dodd, Mr. William R. Kane, Mr. David Gibson, Miss Ida

Warren Gould, Miss Ella E. Hirsch, Miss Marie Louise Kinsella, Mr. Frank E. Lohn, Mrs. Margaret Medbury, Miss Anna Mitchell, Mr. Robert W. Neal, Mr. Edwin Carty Ranck, Miss Anne B. Schultze, Mrs. Celia Baldwin Whitehead, Mr. Horatio Winslow, Miss Kate Buss, Mrs. E. B. Dewing, Mr. A. E. Dingle, Mr. Edmund R. Brown, Mr. George Gilbert, Mr. Harry E. Jergens, Mr. Eric Levison, Mr. Robert McBlair, Mrs. Vivien C. Mackenzie, Mr. W. W. Norman, Rev. Wilbur Fletcher Steele, Mrs. Elizabeth C. A. Smith, Captain Achmed Abdullah, Mr. H. H. Howland, Mr. Howard W. Cook, Mr. Newton A. Fuessle, Mr. B. Guilbert Guerney, Mr. William H. Briggs, Mr. Francis Garrison, Mr. Albert J. Klinck, Mr. Alfred A. Knopf, Miss Mary Lerner, Mr. H. F. Jenkins, Mr. Guy Holt, Mr. H. S. Latham, Mr. H. L. Pangborn, Miss Maisie Prim, Mr. S. Edgar Briggs, Mr. William Morrow, Mr. Sherwood Anderson, Hon. W. Andrews, Miss Edwina Stanton Babcock, Mr. Thomas Beer, Mrs. Fleta Campbell Springer, Miss Sarah N. Cleghorn, Mr. Irvin S. Cobb, Miss Alice Cowdery, Miss Bertha Helen Crabbe, Mr. H. G. Dwight, Miss Edna Ferber, Mrs. Elizabeth Irons Folsom, Miss Ellen Glasgow, Mrs. George Cram Cook, Mr. Armistead C. Gordon, Miss Fannie Hurst, Mrs. Vincent Costello, Mrs. E. Clement Jones, Mrs. Gerald Stanley Lee, Mr. Addison Lewis, Mr.

Edison Marshall, Mr. Edgar Lee Masters, Miss Gertrude Nafe, Mr. Meredith Nicholson, Mr. Harvey J. O'Higgins, Mr. Lawrence Perry, Mrs. Olive Higgins Prouty, Mrs. Mary Brecht Pulver, Mr. Benjamin Rosenblatt, Mr. Herman Schneider, Professor Grant Showerman, Miss Mary Synon, Mrs. Mary Heaton O'Brien, Mr. George Weston, and especially to Mr. Francis J. Hannigan, to whom I owe invaluable cooperation in ways too numerous to mention.

I shall be grateful to my readers for corrections, and particularly for suggestions leading to the wider usefulness of this annual volume. In particular, I shall welcome the receipt, from authors, editors, and publishers, of stories published during 1918 which have qualities of distinction, and yet are not printed in periodicals falling under my regular notice. It is also my intention during 1918 to review all volumes of short stories published during that year in the United States. All communications and volumes submitted for review in "The Best Short Stories of 1918" maybe addressed to me at *South Yarmouth, Massachusetts*. For such assistance, I shall make due and grateful acknowledgment in next year's annual.

If I have been guilty of any omissions in these acknowledgments, it is quite unintentional, and I trust that I shall be absolved for my good

intentions.

E. J. O.

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INTRODUCTION

A year ago, in the introduction to "The Best Short Stories of 1916," I pointed out that the American short story cannot be reduced to a literary formula, because the art in which it finds its concrete embodiment is a growing art. The critic, when he approaches American literature, cannot regard it as he can regard any foreign literature. Setting aside the question of whether our cosmopolitan population, with its widely different kinds of racial heritage, is at an advantage or a disadvantage because of its conflicting traditions, we must accept the variety in substance and attempt to find in it a new kind of national unity, hitherto unknown in the history of the world. The message voiced in President Wilson's words on several occasions during the past year is a true reflection of the message implicit in American literature.

Various in substance, it finds its unity in the new freedom of democracy, and English and French, German and Slav, Italian and Scandinavian bring to the common melting-pot ideals which are fused in a national unity of democratic utterance.

It is inevitable, therefore, that in this stage of our national literary development, our newly conscious speech lacks the sophisticated technique of older literatures. But, perhaps because of this very limitation, it is much more alert to the variety and life of the human substance with which it deals. It does not take the whole of life for granted and it often reveals the fresh naïveté of childhood in its discovery of life. When its sophistication is complete, it is the sophistication of English rather than of American literature, and is derivative rather than original, for the most part, in its criticism of life. I would specifically except, however, from this criticism the work of three writers, at least, whose sophistication is the embodiment of a new American technique. Katharine Fullerton Gerould, Wilbur Daniel Steele, and H. G. Dwight have each attained a distinction in our contemporary literature which places them at the head of their craft.

During the past year there has been much pessimistic criticism of the American short

story, some of it by Americans, and some by Europeans who are now residing in our midst. To the European mind, trained in a tradition where technique in story-writing is paramount, it is natural that the American short story should seem to reveal grave deficiencies. I am by no means disposed to minimize the weakness of American craftsmanship, but I feel that at the present stage of our literary development, discouragement will prove a very easy and fatal thing. The typical point of view of the European critic, when justified, is adequately reflected in an article by Mary M. Colum, which was published in the Dial last spring: "Those of us who take an interest in literary history will remember how particular literary forms at times seize hold of a country: in Elizabethan England, it was the verse drama; in the eighteenth century, it was the essay; in Scandinavia of a generation ago, it was the drama again. At present America is in the grip of the short story —so thoroughly in its grip indeed that, in addition to all the important writers, nearly all the literate population who are not writing movie scenarios are writing or are about to write short stories. One reason for this is the general belief that this highly sophisticated and subtle art is a means for making money in spare time, and so one finds everybody, from the man who solicits insurance to the barber who sells hair-

tonics, engaged in writing, or in taking courses in the writing, of short stories. Judging from what appears in the magazines, one imagines that they get their efforts accepted. There is no doubt that the butcher, the baker, and the candle-stick maker are easily capable of producing the current short stories with the aids now afforded."

Now this is the heart of the matter with which criticism has to deal. It is regrettable that the American magazine editor is not more mindful of his high calling, but the tremendous advertising development of the American magazine has bound American literature in the chains of commercialism, and before a permanent literary criticism of the American short story can be established, we must fight to break these bonds. I conceive it to be my essential function to begin at the bottom and record the first signs of grace, rather than to limit myself to the top and write critically about work which will endure with or without criticism. If American critics would devote their attention for ten years to this spade work, they might not win so much honor, but we should find the atmosphere clearer at the end of that period for the true exercise of literary criticism.

Nevertheless I contend that there is much fine work being accomplished at present, which is

buried in the ruck of the interminable commonplace. I regard it as my duty to chronicle this work, and thus render it accessible for others to discuss.

Mrs. Colum continues: "Apart from the interesting experiments in free verse or polyphonic prose, the short story in America is at a low ebb. Magazine editors will probably say the blame rests with their readers. This may be so, but do people really read the long, dreary stories of from five to nine thousand words which the average American magazine editor publishes? Why a vivid people like the American should be so dusty and dull in their short stories is a lasting puzzle to the European, who knows that America has produced a large proportion of the great short stories of the world."

I deny that the American short story is at a low ebb, and I offer the present volume as a revelation of the best that is now being done in this field. I agree with Mrs. Colum that the best stories are only to be found after a laborious dusty search, but this is the proof rather than the refutation of my position.

Despite the touch of paradox, Mrs. Colum makes two admirable suggestions to remedy this condition of affairs. "A few magazine editors

could do a great deal to raise the level of the American short story. They could at once eradicate two of the things that cause a part of the evil—the wordiness and the commercial standardization of the story. By declining short stories over three thousand words long, and by refusing to pay more than a hundred dollars for any short story, they could create a new standard and raise both the prestige of the short story and of their magazines. They would then get the imaginative writers, and not the exploiters of a commercial article."

I am not sure that the average American editor wishes to welcome the imaginative writer, but assuming this to be true, I would modify Mrs. Colum's suggestions and propose that, except in an unusual instance, the short story should be limited to five thousand words, and that the compensation for it should not exceed three hundred dollars.

To repeat what I have said in previous volumes of this series, for the benefit of the reader as yet unacquainted with my standards and principles of selection, I shall point out that I have set myself the task of disengaging the essential human qualities in our contemporary fiction which, when chronicled conscientiously by our literary artists, may fairly be called a criticism of life. I am not at all interested in formulas, and

organized criticism at its best would be nothing more than dead criticism, as all dogmatic interpretation of life is always dead. What has interested me, to the exclusion of other things, is the fresh living current which flows through the best of our work, and the psychological and imaginative reality which our writers have conferred upon it.

No substance is of importance in fiction, unless it is organic substance, that is to say, substance in which the pulse of life is beating. Inorganic fiction has been our curse in the past, and bids fair to remain so, unless we exercise much greater artistic discrimination than we display at present.

During the past year I have sought to select from the stories published in American magazines those which have rendered life imaginatively in organic substance and artistic form. As the most adequate means to this end, I have taken each short story by itself, and examined it impartially. I have done my best to surrender myself to the writer's point of view, and granting his choice of material and personal interpretation of its value, have sought to test it by the double standard of substance and form. Substance is something achieved by the artist in every act of creation, rather than something already present, and accordingly a fact or group

of facts in a story only obtain substantial embodiment when the artist's power of compelling imaginative persuasion transforms them into a living truth. The first test of a short story, therefore, in any qualitative analysis is to report upon how vitally compelling the writer makes his selected facts or incidents. This test may be known as the test of substance.

But a second test is necessary if a story is to take high rank above other stories. The true artist will seek to shape this living substance into the most beautiful and satisfying form, by skilful selection and arrangement of his material, and by the most direct and appealing presentation of it in portrayal and characterization.

The short stories which I have examined in this study, as in previous years, have fallen naturally into four groups. The first group consists of those stories which fail, in my opinion, to survive either the test of substance or the test of form. These stories are listed in the year-book without comment or a qualifying asterisk. The second group consists of those stories which may fairly claim that they survive either the test of substance or the test of form. Each of these stories may claim to possess either distinction of technique alone, or more frequently, I am glad to say, a persuasive sense of life in them to

which a reader responds with some part of his own experience. Stories included in this group are indicated in the year-book index by a single asterisk prefixed to the title. The third group, which is composed of stories of still greater distinction, includes such narratives as may lay convincing claim to a second reading, because each of them has survived both tests, the test of substance and the test of form. Stories included in this group are indicated in the year-book index by two asterisks prefixed to the title.

Finally, I have recorded the names of a small group of stories which possess, I believe, an even finer distinction—the distinction of uniting genuine substance and artistic form in a closely woven pattern with such sincerity that these stories may fairly claim a position in our literature. If all of these stories by American authors were republished, they would not occupy more space than six average novels. My selection of them does not imply the critical belief that they are great stories. It is simply to be taken as meaning that I have found the equivalent of six volumes worthy of republication among all the stories published during 1917. These stories are indicated in the year-book index by three asterisks prefixed to the title, and are listed in the special "Rolls of Honor." In compiling these lists, I have

permitted no personal preference or prejudice to influence my judgment consciously for or against a story. To the titles of certain stories, however, in the American "Roll of Honor," an asterisk is prefixed, and this asterisk, I must confess, reveals in some measure a personal preference. It is from this final short list that the stories reprinted in this volume have been selected.

It has been a point of honor with me not to republish an English story, nor a translation from a foreign author. I have also made it a rule not to include more than one story by an individual author in the volume. The general and particular results of my study will be found explained and carefully detailed in the supplementary part of the volume.

The Yearbook for 1917 contains three new features. The Roll of Honor of American Short Stories includes a short biographical sketch of each author; a selection from the volumes of short stories published during the past year is reviewed at some length; and, in response to numerous requests, a list of American magazines publishing short stories, with their editorial addresses, has been compiled.

Wilbur Daniel Steele and Katharine Fullerton Gerould are still at the head of their craft. But

during the past year the ten published stories by Maxwell Struthers Burt and Charles Caldwell Dobie seem to promise a future in our literature of equal importance to the later work of these writers. Sherwood Anderson and Waldo Frank emerge as writers with a great deal of importance to say, although they have not yet fully mastered the art of saying it. The three new short story writers who show most promise are Gertrude Nafe and Thomas Beer, whose first stories appeared in the Century Magazine during 1917, and Elizabeth Stead Taber, whose story, "The Scar," when it appeared in the Seven Arts, attracted much favorable comment. Edwina Stanton Babcock and Lee Foster Hartman have both published memorable stories, and "The Interval," which was Vincent O'Sullivan's sole contribution to an American periodical during 1917, compels us to wonder why an artist, for whom men of such widely different temperaments as Lionel Johnson, Remy de Gourmont, and Edward Garnett had high critical esteem, finds the American public so indifferent to his art.

Addison Lewis has published during the past year a series of stories in Reedy's Mirror which have more of O. Henry's magic than the thousand writers who have endeavored to imitate him to the everlasting injury of

American literature. Frederick Stuart Greene, in "The Bunker Mouse" and "Molly McGuire, Fourteen," shows marked literary development, and reinforces my belief that in him we have an important new story-teller. I suppose the best war story of the year is "The Flying Teuton," by Alice Brown, soon to be reprinted in book form.

I do not know whether it is an effect of the war or not, but during 1917, even more than during 1916, American magazines have been almost absolutely devoid of humor. Save for Irvin S. Cobb, on whom the mantle of Mark Twain has surely fallen, and for Seumas O'Brien, whom Mr. Dooley must envy, I have found American fiction to be sufficiently solemn and imperturbable.

I need not emphasize again the fine art of Fannie Hurst. Two years ago Mr. Howells stated more truly than I can the significance of her work. Comparing her with two other contemporaries, he wrote: "Miss Fannie Hurst shows the same artistic quality, the same instinct for reality, the same confident recognition of the superficial cheapness and commonness of the stuff she handles; but in her stories she also attests the right to be named with them for the gift of penetrating to the heart of life. No one with the love of the grotesque which is the American portion of the human

tastes or passions, can fail of his joy in the play of the obvious traits and motives of her Hebrew comedy, but he will fail of something precious if he does not sound the depths of true and beautiful feeling which underlies the comedy."

A similar distinction marks Edna Ferber's story entitled "The Gay Old Dog."

Of the English short story writers who have published during the past year in American periodicals, Mr. Galsworthy has presented the most evenly distinguished work. Hardly second to his best are the six stories by J. D. Beresford and D. H. Lawrence, both well known realists of the younger generation. Stacy Aumonier has continued the promise of "The Friends" with three new stories written in the same key. Although the vein of his talent is a narrow one, it reveals pure gold. Good Housekeeping has published three war stories by an Englishwoman, I. A. R. Wylie, which I should have coveted for this book had they been by an American author. But perhaps the best English short story of the year in an American magazine was "The Coming of the Terror," by Arthur Machen, since republished in book form.

Elsewhere I have discussed at some length the more important volumes of short stories published during the year. "A Munster

Twilight," by Daniel Corkery is alone sufficient to mark a notable literary year. And "The Echo of Voices," by Richard Curle is hardly second to it. Yet the year has seen the publication of at least three other books by English authors who are new to the reading public. Thomas Burke, Caradoc Evans, and Arthur Machen have added permanent contributions to English literature.

In "A Handbook on Story Writing," Dr. Blanche Colton Williams has written the first definitive textbook on the subject. Its many predecessors have either been content to deal with narrow branches in the same field, or have exploited quite frankly and shamelessly the commercial possibilities of story writing as a cheap trade. Dr. Williams's book will not be in all likelihood superseded for many years to come, and the effects of her work are already to be seen in the short stories of many established writers.

In the death of Edward Thomas, England has lost a rare artist who, in his particular field, was only rivalled by Richard Jefferies.

During the past year the Seven Arts and the Masses have ceased publication. The Craftsman, which ceased publication a year ago, has been succeeded by the Touchstone, which is already beginning to print many interesting stories; and

to the list of magazines which publish short stories must now be welcomed the Bookman.

As it has been my happiness in past years to associate this annual with the names of Benjamin Rosenblatt and Richard Matthews Hallet, whose stories, "Zelig" and "Making Port," seemed to me respectively the best short stories of 1915 and 1916, so it is my pleasure and honor this year to dedicate the best that I have found in the American magazines as the fruit of my labors to Wilbur Daniel Steele, who has contributed to American literature, preëminently in "Ching, Ching, Chinaman," and almost as finely in "White Hands" and "The Woman At Seven Brothers," three stories which take their place for finality, to the best of my belief, in the great English line.

Edward J. O'Brien.

South Yarmouth, Massachusetts,
December 23, 1917.

THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1917

Note. The twenty stories which follow are arranged in the alphabetical order of their authors' names. This arrangement does not imply any precedence in merit of particular stories.

THE EXCURSION[2]

By EDWINA STANTON BABCOCK

From *The Pictorial Review*

Mrs. Tuttle arrived breathless, bearing a large gilt parrot-cage. She swept up the gangway of the *Fall of Rome* and was enthusiastically received. There were, however, concealed titterings and suppressed whispers. "My sakes! She's went and brought that bird."

"I won't believe it till I see it."

"There he sets in his gold coop."

Mrs. Turtle brought Romeo to the excursion with the same assurance that a woman of another stamp brings her Pekingese dog to a restaurant table. While the *Fall of Rome*

sounded a warning whistle, and hawsers were loosed she adjusted her veil and took cognizance of fellow passengers.

In spite of wealth and "owning her own automobile," Mrs. Turtle's fetish was democratic popularity. She greeted one after another.

"How do, Mis' Bridge, and Mister, too! Who's keeping store while you're away?

"Carrie Turpin! You here? Where's Si? Couldn't come? Now that's too bad!" After a long stare, "You're some fleshier, ain't you, Carrie?"

A large woman in a tan-colored linen duster came slowly down the deck, a camp-stool in either hand. Her portly advance was intercepted by Mrs. Tuttle.

"Mis' Tinneray! Same as ever!"

Mrs. Tinneray dropped the camp-stools and adjusted her smoked glasses; she gave a start and the two ladies embraced.

Mrs. Tuttle said that "it beat all," and Mrs. Tinneray said "she never!"

Mrs. Tuttle, emerged from the embrace, re-adjusting her hat with many-ringed fingers,

inquiring, "How's the folks?"

Up lumbered Mr. Tinneray, a large man with a chuckle and pale eyes, who was introduced by the well-known formula, "Mis' Tuttle, Mr. Tinneray, Mr. Tinneray, Mis' Tuttle."

The Tinnerays said, "So you brought the bird along, hey?" Then, without warning, all conversation ceased. The *Fall of Rome*, steaming slowly away from the pier, whistled a sodden whistle, the flags flapped, every one realized that the excursion had really begun.

This excursion was one of the frank displays of human hopes, yearnings, and vanities, that sometimes take place on steamboats. Feathers had a hectic brilliancy that proved secret, dumb longings. Pendants known as "lavaleers" hung from necks otherwise innocent of the costly fopperies of Versailles. Old ladies clad in princess dresses with yachting caps worn rakishly on their grey hair, vied with other old ladies in automobile bonnets, who, with opera glasses, searched out the meaning of every passing buoy. Young girls carrying "mesh-bags," that subtle connotation of the feminine character, extracted tooth-picks from them or searched for bits of chewing gum among their over scented treasures.

As it was an excursion, the *Fall of Rome*

carried a band and booths laden with many delicious superfluities such as pop-corn and the misleading compound known as "salt-water taffy." There were, besides, the blue and red pennants that always go on excursions, and the yellow and pink fly-flappers that always come home from them; also there were stacks of whistle-whips and slender canes with ivory heads with little holes pierced through. These canes were bought only by cynical young men whose new straw hats were fastened to their persons by thin black strings. Each young man, after purchasing an ivory-headed cane retired to privacy to squint through it undisturbed. Emerging from this privacy the young man would then confer with other young men. What these joyless young men saw when they squinted they never revealed. But among their elders they spread the strong impression that it was the Capital at Washington or Bunker Hill Monument.

Besides bottled soda and all soft drinks the *Fall of Rome* carried other stimuli in the shape of comic gentlemen—such beings, as, more or less depressed in their own proper environment, on excursions suddenly see themselves in their true light, irresistibly facetious. These funny gentlemen, mostly husbands, seated themselves near to large groups of indulgent women and

kept up an exquisite banter directed at each other's personal defects, or upon the idiosyncrasies of any bachelor or spinster near. These funny gentlemen kept alluding to the excursion as the "Exertion." If the boat rolled a little they said, "Now, Mother, don't rock the boat."

"Here, girls, sit up close, we'll all go down together."

"Hold on to yer beau, Minnie. He'll fall overboard and where'll you git another?"

The peals of laughter at these sallies were unfailing. The crunch of peanuts was unfailing. The band, with a sort of plethoric indulgence, played slow waltzes in which the bass instruments frequently misapplied notes, but to the allure of which came youthful dancers lovely in proud awkward poses.

Mrs. Tuttle meanwhile was the social center, demonstrating that mysterious psychic force known as being the "life of the party." She advanced upon a tall sallow woman in mourning, challenging, "Now Mis' Mealer, why don't you just set and take a little comfort, it won't cost you nothing? Ain't that your girl over there by the coffee fountain? I should ha' known her by the reesemblance to you; she's rill refined lookin'."

Mrs. Mealer, a tall, sallow widow with carefully maintained mourning visage, admitted that this was so. Refinement, she averred, was in the family, but she hinted at some obscure ailment which, while it made Emma refined, kept her "mizzable."

"I brought her along," sighed Mrs. Mealer, "tain't as if neither of us could take much pleasure into it, both of us being so deep in black fer her Popper, but the styles is bound to do her good. Emma is such a great hand for style."

"Yuess?" replied Mrs. Tuttle blandly. This lady in blue was not nearly so interested in Emma as in keeping a circle of admirers hanging around her cerulean presence, but even slightly encouraged, Mrs. Mealer warmed to her topic.

"Style?" she repeated impressively, "style? Seems like Emma couldn't never have enough of it. Where she got it I don't know. I wasn't never much for dress, and give her Popper coat and pants, twuz all *he* wanted. But Emma—ef you want to make her happy tie a bow onto suthin'."

Mrs. Tuttle nodded with ostentatious understanding. Rising, she seized Romeo's cage and placed it more conspicuously near her. She was critically watched by the older women.

They viewed the thing with mingled feelings, one or two going so far as to murmur darkly, "Her and her parrot!"

Still, the lady's elegance and the known fact that she owned and operated her own automobile cast a spell over most of her observers, and many faces, as Mrs. Tuttle proceeded to draw out her pet, were screwed into watchful and ingratiating benevolence.

Romeo, a blasé bird with the air of having bitter memories, affected for a long time not to hear his mistress's blandishments. After looking contemptuously into his seed-cup, he crept slowly around the sides of his cage, fixing a cynical eye upon all observers.

"How goes it, Romeo?" appealed Mrs. Tuttle. Making sounds supposed to be appreciated by birds, the lady put her feathered head down, suggesting, "Ah there, Romeo?"

"Rubberneck," returned Romeo sullenly. To show general scorn, the bird revolved on one claw round and round his swing; he looked dangerous, repeating, "Rubberneck."

At this an interested group gathered around Mrs. Tuttle, who, affable and indulgent, attempted by coaxings and flirtings of a fat bediamonded finger to show Romeo off, but the

pampered bird saw further opportunity to offend.

"Rubberneck," screamed Romeo again. He ruffled up his neck feathers, repeating "Rubberneck, I'm cold as the deuce; what's the matter with Hannah; let 'em all go to grass."

Several of the youths with ivory-headed canes now forsook their contemplations to draw near, grinning, to the parrot-cage.

Stimulated by these youths, Romeo reeled off more ribald remarks, things that created a sudden chill among the passengers on the *Fall of Rome*. Mrs. Tinneray, looked upon as a leader, called up a shocked face and walked away; Mrs. Mealer after a faint "Excuse *me*," also abandoned the parrot-cage; and Mrs. Bean, a small stout woman with a brown false front, followed the large lady with blue spectacles and the tan linen duster. On some mysterious pretext of washing their hands, these two left the upper deck and sought the calm of the white and gold passenger saloon. Here they trod as in the very sanctities of luxury.

"These carpets is nice, ain't they?" remarked Mrs. Bean.

Then alluding to the scene they had just left: "Ain't it comical how she idolizes that there

bird?"

Mrs. Tinneray sniffed. "And what she spends on him! 'Nitials on his seed-cup—and some says the cage itself is true gold."

Mrs. Bean, preparing to wash her hands, removed her black skirt and pinned a towel around her waist. "This here liquid soap is nice"—turning the faucets gingerly—"and don't the boat set good onto the water?" Then returning to the rich topic of Mrs. Tuttle and her pampered bird, "Where's she get all her money for her ottermobile and her gold cage?"

Mrs. Tinneray at an adjacent basin raised her head sharply, "You ain't heard about the Tuttle money? You don't know how Mabel Hutch that was, was hair to everything?"

Mrs. Bean confessed that she had not heard, but she made it evident that she thirsted for information. So the two ladies, exchanging remarks about sunburn and freckles, finished their hand-washing and proceeded to the dark-green plush seats of the saloon, where with appropriate looks of horror and incredulity Mrs. Bean listened to the story of the hairs to the Hutches' money.

"Mabel was the favorite; her Pa set great store by her. There was another sister—consumpted

—she should have been a hair, but she died. Then the youngest one, Hetty, she married my second cousin Hen Cronney—well it seemed like they hadn't nothing but bad luck and her Pa and Mabel sort of took against Hetty."

Mrs. Bean, herself chewing calculatingly, handed Mrs. Tinneray a bit of sugared calamus-root.

"Is your cousin Hen dark-complexioned like your folks?" she asked scientifically.

Mrs. Tinneray, narrowing both eyes, considered. "More auburn-inclined, I should say —he ain't rill smart, Hen ain't, he gets took with spells now and then, but I never held *that* against him."

"Uh-huh!" agreed Mrs. Bean sympathetically.

"Well, then, Mabel Hutch and her Popper took against poor little Hetty. Old man Hutch he died and left everything to Mabel, and she never goes near her own sister!"

Mrs. Bean raised gray-cotton gloved hands signifying horror.

"St—st—st——!" she deplored. She searched in her reticule for more calamus-root. "He didn't leave her *nothing*?"

"No, ma'am! This one!" With a jerk of the head, Mrs. Tinneray indicated a dashing blue feather seen through a distant saloon window. "This one's got it all; hair to everything."

"And what did she do—married a traveling salesman and built a tony brick house. They never had no children, but when he was killed into a railway accident she trimmed up that parrot's cage with crape—and now,"—Mrs. Tinneray with increasing solemnity chewed her calamus-root—"*now* she's been and bought one of them ottermobiles and runs it herself like you'd run your sewin'-machine, just as *shameless*—"

Both of the ladies glared condemnation at the distant blue feather.

Mrs. Tinneray continued, "Hetty Cronney's worth a dozen of her. When I think of that there bird goin' on this excursion and Hetty Cronney stayin' home because she's too poor, I get *nesty*, Mrs. Bean, yes, I do!"

"Don't your cousin Hetty live over to Chadwick's Harbor," inquired Mrs. Bean, "and don't this boat-ride stop there to take on more folks?"

Mrs. Tinneray, acknowledging that these things were so, uncorked a small bottle of cologne and

poured a little of it on a handkerchief embroidered in black forget-me-nots. She handed the bottle to Mrs. Bean who took three polite sniffs and closed her eyes. The two ladies sat silent for a moment. They experienced a detachment of luxurious abandon filled with the poetry of the steamboat saloon. Psychically they were affected as by ecclesiasticism. The perfume of the cologne and the throb of the engines swept them with a sense of esthetic reverie, the thrill of travel, and the atmosphere of elegance. Moreover, the story of the Hutch money and the Hutch hairs had in some undefined way affiliated the two. At last by tacit consent they rose, went out on deck and, holding their reticules tight, walked majestically up and down. When they passed Mrs. Turtle's blue feathers and the gold parrot-cage they smiled meaningly and looked at each other.

As the *Fall of Rome* approached Chadwick's Landing more intimate groups formed. The air was mild, the sun warm and inviting, and the water an obvious and understandable blue. Some serious-minded excursionists sat well forward on their camp-stools discussing deep topics over half-skinned bananas.

"Give me the Vote," a lady in a purple raincoat

was saying, "Give me the Vote and I undertake to close up every rum-hole in God's World."

A mild-mannered youth with no chin, upon hearing this, edged away. He went to the stern, looking down for a long time upon the white path of foam left in the wake of the *Fall of Rome* and taking a harmonica from his waistcoat pocket began to play, "Darling, I Am Growing Old." This tune, played with emotional throbbings managed by spasmodic movements of the hands over the sides of the mouth, seemed to convey anything but age to Miss Mealer, the girl who was so refined. She also sat alone in the stern, also staring down at the white water. As the wailings of the harmonica ceased, she put up a thin hand and furtively controlled some waving strands of hair. Suddenly with scarlet face the mild-mannered youth moved up his camp-stool to her side.

"They're talkin' about closing up the rum-holes." He indicated the group dominated by the lady in the purple raincoat. "They don't know what they're talking about. Some rum-holes is real refined and tasty, some of them have got gramophones you can hear for nothin'."

"Is that so?" responded the refined Miss Mealer. She smoothed her gloves. She opened her "mesh" bag and took out an intensely

perfumed handkerchief. The mild-mannered youth put his harmonica in his pocket and warmed to the topic.

"Many's the time I've set into a saloon listening to that Lady that sings high up—higher than any piano can go. I've set and listened till I didn't know where I was settin'—of course I had to buy a drink, you understand, or I couldn't 'a' set."

"And they call that *vice*," remarked Miss Mealer with languid criticism.

The mild-mannered youth looked at her gratefully. The light of reason and philosophy seemed to him to shine in her eyes.

"You've got a piano to your house," he said boldly, "can you—ahem—play classic pieces, can you play—ahem—'Asleep on the Deep'?"

In another group where substantial sandwiches were being eaten, the main theme was religion and psychic phenomena with a strong leaning toward death-bed experiences.

"And then, my sister's mother-in-law, she set up, and she says, 'Where am I?' she says, like she was in a store or somethin', and she told how she seen all white before her eyes and all like gentlemen in high silk hats walkin' around."

There were sighs of comprehension, gasps of dolorous interest.

"The same with my Christopher!"

"Just like my aunt's step-sister afore she went!"

Mrs. Tuttle did not favor the grave character of these symposia.

With the assured manner peculiar to her, she swept into such circles bearing a round box of candy, upon which was tied a large bow of satin ribbon of a convivial shade of heliotrope. Opening this box she handed it about, commanding, "Help yourself."

At first it was considered refined to refuse. One or two excursionists, awed by the superfluity of heliotrope ribbon, said feebly, "Don't rob yourself."

But Mrs. Tuttle met this restraint with practised raillery. "What you all afraid of? It ain't poisoned! I got more where this come from." She turned to the younger people. "Come one, come all! It's French-mixed."

Meanwhile Mrs. Bean and Mrs. Tinneray, still aloof and enigmatic, paced the deck. Mrs. Tuttle, blue feathers streaming, teetered on her high heels in their direction. Again she proffered the box. One of the cynical youths with the

ivory-headed canes was following her, demanding that the parrot be fed a caramel. Once more the sky-blue figure bent over the ornate cage; then little Mrs. Bean looked at Mrs. Tinneray with a gesture of utter repudiation.

"Ain't she *terrible*?"

As the steamboat approached the wharf and the dwarf pines and yellow sand-banks of Chadwick's Landing, a whispered consultation between these two ladies resulted in one desperate attempt to probe the heart of Mabel Hutch that was. Drawing camp-stools up near the vicinity of the parrot's cage, they began with what might to a suspicious nature have seemed rather pointed speculation, to wonder who might or might not be at the wharf when the *Fall of Rome* got in.

Once more the bottle of cologne was produced and handkerchiefs genteelly dampened. Mrs. Bean, taking off her green glasses, polished them and held them up to the light, explaining, "This here sea air makes 'em all of a muck."

Suddenly she leaned over to Mrs. Tuttle with an air of sympathetic interest.

"I suppose—er—your sister Hetty'll be comin' on board when we get to Chadwick's Landing—her and her husband?"

Mrs. Tuttle fidgeted. She covered Romeo's cage with a curious arrangement like an altar-cloth on which gay embroidered parrakeets of all colors were supposed to give Romeo, when lonely, a feeling of congenial companionship.

Mrs. Bean, thus evaded, screwed up her eyes tight, then opened them wide at Mrs. Tinneray, who sat rigid, her gaze riveted upon far-off horizons, humming between long sighs a favorite hymn. Finally, however, the last-named lady leaned past Mrs. Bean and touched Mrs. Turtle's silken knee, volunteering,

"Your sister Hetty likes the water, I know. You remember them days, Mis' Tuttle, when we all went bathin' together down to old Chadwick's Harbor, afore they built the new wharf?"

Mrs. Tinneray continued reminiscently.

"You remember them old dresses we wore—no classy bathin'-suits then—but my—the mornings used to smell good! That path to the shore was all wild roses and we used to find blueberries in them woods. Us girls was always teasin' Hetty, her bathin'-dress was white muslin and when it was wet it stuck to her all over, she showed through—my, how we'd laugh, but yet for all," concluded Mrs. Tinneray sentimentally, "she looked lovely—just like a little wet angel."

Mrs. Tuttle carefully smoothed her blue mitts, observing nervously, "Funny how Mis' Tinneray could remember so far back."

"Is Hetty your sister by rights," suavely inquired Mrs. Bean, "or ony by your Pa's second marriage, as it were?"

The owner of the overestimated parrot roused herself.

"By rights," she admitted indifferently, "I don't see much of her—she married beneath her."

The tip of Mrs. Tinneray's nose, either from cologne inhalings or sunburn, grew suddenly scarlet. However she still regarded the far-off horizons and repeated the last stanza of her hymn, which stanza, sung with much quavering and sighing was a statement to the effect that Mrs. Tinneray would "cling to the old rugged cross." Suddenly, however, she remarked to the surrounding Summer air,

"Hen Cronney is my second cousin on the mother's side. Some thought he was pretty smart until troubles come and his wife was done out of her rights."

The shaft, carefully aimed, went straight into Mrs. Turtle's blue bosom and stuck there. Her eyes, not overintelligent, turned once in her

complacent face, then with an air of grandiose detachment, she occupied herself with the ends of her sky-blue automobile veil.

"I'll have to fix this different," she remarked unconcernedly, "or else my waves'll come out. Well, I presume we'll soon be there. I better go down-stairs and primp up some." The high heels clattered away. Mrs. Bean fixed a long look of horror on Mrs. Tinneray, who silently turned her eyes up to heaven!

As the *Fall of Rome* churned its way up to the sunny wharf of Chadwick's Landing, the groups already on the excursion bristled with excitement. Children were prepared to meet indulgent grandparents, lovers their sweethearts, and married couples old school friends they had not seen for years. From time to time these admonished their offspring.

"Hypatia Smith, you're draggin' your pink sash, leave Mommer fix it. There now, don't you dare to set down so Grammer can see you lookin' good."

"Lionel Jones, you throw that old pop-corn overboard. Do you want to eat it after you've had it on the floor?"

"Does your stomach hurt you, dear? Well, here don't cry Mommer'll give you another cruller."

With much shouting of jocular advice from the male passengers the *Fall of Rome* was warped into Chadwick's Landing and the waiting groups came aboard. As they streamed on, bearing bundles and boxes and all the impedimenta of excursions, those already on board congregated on the after-deck to distinguish familiar faces. A few persons had come down to the landing merely to look upon the embarkation.

These, not going themselves on the excursion, maintained an air of benevolent superiority that could not conceal vivid curiosity. Among them, eagerly scanning the faces on deck was a very small thin woman clad in a gingham dress, on her head a battered straw hat of accentuated by-gone mode, and an empty provision-basket swinging on her arm. Mrs. Tinneray peering down on her through smoked glasses, suddenly started violently. "My sakes," she ejaculated, "my sakes," then as the dramatic significance of the thing gripped her, "My—my—my, ain't that *terrible*?"

Solemnly, with prunella portentousness, Mrs. Tinneray stole back of the other passengers leaning over the rail up to Mrs. Bean, who turned to her animatedly, exclaiming,

"They've got a new schoolhouse. I can just see the cupola—there's some changes since I was

here. They tell me there's a flag sidewalk in front of the Methodist church and that young Baxter the express agent has growed a mustache, and's got married."

Mrs. Tinneray did not answer. She laid a compelling hand on Mrs. Bean's shoulder and turned her so that she looked straight at the small group of home-stayers down on the wharf. She pointed a sepulchral finger,

"*That there, in the brown with the basket, is Hetty Cronney, own sister to Mis' Josiah Tuttle.*"

Mrs. Bean clutched her reticule and leaned over the rail, gasping with interest.

"Ye don't say—that's her? My! My! My!"

In solemn silence the two regarded the little brown woman so unconscious of their gaze. By the piteous wizened face screwed up in the sunlight, by the faded hair, nut-cracker jaws, and hollow eyes they utterly condemned Mrs. Tuttle, who, blue feathers floating, was also absorbed in watching the stream of embarking excursionists.

Mrs. Tinneray, after a whispered consultation with Mrs. Bean went up and nudged her; without ceremony she pointed,

"Your sister's down there on the wharf," she announced flatly, "come on over where we are and you can see her."

Frivolous Mrs. Tuttle turned and encountered a pair of eyes steely in their determination. Re-adjusting the gold cage more comfortably on its camp-stool and murmuring a blessing on the hooked-beak occupant, the azure lady tripped off in the wake of her flat-heeled friend.

Meanwhile Mr. Tinneray, standing well aft, was calling cheerfully down to the little figure on the wharf.

"Next Summer you must git your nerve up and come along. Excursions is all the rage nowadays. My wife's took in four a'ready."

But little Mrs. Cronney did not answer. Shading her eyes from the sun glare, she was establishing recognizance with her cerulean relative who, waving a careless blue-mitted hand, called down in girlish greeting,

"Heigho, Hetty, how's Cronney? Why ain't you to the excursion?"

The little woman on the wharf was seen to wince slightly. She shifted her brown basket to the other arm, ignoring the second question.

"Oh, Cronney's good—ony he's low-spirited—

seems as tho he couldn't get no work."

"Same old crooked stick, hey?" Mrs. Tuttle called down facetiously.

Mrs. Bean and Mrs. Tinneray stole horrified glances at each other. One planted a cotton-gloved hand over an opening mouth. But little Mrs. Cronney, standing alone on the pier was equal to the occasion. She shook out a small and spotless handkerchief, blowing her nose with elegant deliberation before she replied,

"Well—I don't know as he needs to work *all* the time; Cronney is *peculiar*, you know, he's one of them that is high-toned and nifty about money—he ain't like *some*, clutching onto every penny!"

By degrees, other excursionists, leaning over the railing, began to catch at something spicy in the situation of these two sisters brought face to face. At Mrs. Cronney's sally, one of the funny men guffawed his approval. Groups of excursionists explained to each other that that lady down there, her on the wharf, in the brown, was own sister to Mrs. Josiah Tuttle!

The whistle of the *Fall of Rome* now sounded for all aboard. It was a dramatic moment, the possibilities of which suddenly gripped Mrs. Tinneray. She clasped her hands in effortless

agony. This lady, as she afterward related to Mrs. Bean, felt mean! She could see in her mind's eye, she said, how it all looked to Hetty Cronney, the *Fall of Rome* with its opulent leisurely class of excursionists steaming away from her lonely little figure on the wharf; while Mabel Tuttle, selfish devourer of the Hutches' substance and hair to everything, would still be handing aroun' her boxes of French-mixed and talking baby talk to that there bird!

At the moment, Mrs. Tinneray's mind, dwelling upon the golden cage and its over-estimated occupant, became a mere boiling of savage desires. Suddenly the line of grim resolution hardened on her face. This look, one that the Tinneray children invariably connected with the switch hanging behind the kitchen door, Mr. Tinneray also knew well. Seeing it now, he hastened to his wife.

"What's the matter, Mother, seasick? Here I'll git you a lemon."

Mrs. Tinneray, jaw set, eyes rolling, was able to intimate that she needed no lemon, but she drew her husband mysteriously aside. She fixed him with a foreboding glare, she said it was a wonder the Lord didn't sink the boat! Then she rapidly sketched the tragedy—Mrs. Tuttle serene and pampered on the deck, and Hetty

Cronney desolate on the wharf! She pronounced verdict.

"It's *terrible*—that's what it is!"

Mr. Tinneray with great sagacity said he'd like to show Mabel Tuttle her place—then he nudged his wife and chuckled admiringly,

"But yet for all, Hetty's got her tongue in her head yet—say, ain't she the little stinger?"

Sotto voce Mr. Tinneray related to his spouse how Mabel Tuttle was bragging about her brick house and her shower-bath and her automobile and her hired girl, and how she'd druv herself and that there bird down to Boston and back.

"Hetty, she just stands there, just as easy, and hollers back that Cronney has bought a gramophone and how they sets by it day and night listening, and how it's son and daughter to 'em. Then she calls up to Mabel Tuttle, 'I should think you'd be afraid of meddlin' with them ottermobiles, *your* time of life.'"

Mr. Tinneray choked over his own rendition of this audacity, but his wife sniffed hopelessly.

"*They* ain't got no gramophone—*her*, with that face and hat?—Cronney don't make nothing; they two could *live* on what that Blue Silk Quilt feeds that stinkin' parrot."

But Mr. Tinneray chuckled again, he seemed to be possessed with the humor of some delightful secret. Looking carefully around him and seeing every one absorbed in other things he leaned closer to his wife.

"She's liable to lose that bird," he whispered. "Them young fellers with the canes—they're full of their devilment—well, they wanted I shouldn't say nothing and I ain't sayin' nothing —only—"

Fat Mr. Tinneray, pale eyes rolling in merriment, pointed to the camp-stool where once the parrot's cage had rested and where now no parrot-cage was to be seen.

"As fur as I can see," he nudged his wife again, "that bird's liable to get left ashore."

For a moment Mrs. Tinneray received this news stolidly, then a look of comprehension flashed over her face. "What you talkin' about, Henry?" she demanded. "Say, ain't you never got grown up? Where's Manda Bean?"

Having located Mrs. Bean, the two ladies indulged in a rapid whispered conversation. Upon certain revelations made by Mrs. Bean, Mrs. Tinneray turned and laid commands upon her husband.

"Look here," she said, "that what you told me is true—them young fellers—" she fixed Mr. Tinneray with blue-glassed significant eyes, adding *sotto voce*, "*You keep Mabel Tuttle busy*."

Fat Mr. Tinneray, chuckling anew, withdrew to the after-rail where the azure lady still stood, chained as it were in a sort of stupor induced by the incisive thrusts of the forlorn little woman on the wharf. He joined in the conversation.

"So yer got a gramophone, hey," he called down kindly—"Say, that's nice, ain't it?—that's company fer you and Cronney." He appealed to Mrs. Tuttle in her supposed part of interested relative. "Keeps 'em from gettin' lonesome and all," he explained.

That lady looking a pointed unbelief, could not, with the other excursionists watching, but follow his lead.

"Why—er—ye-ess, that's rill nice," she agreed, with all the patronage of the wealthy relative.

Little Mrs. Cronney's eyes glittered. The steamboat hands had begun lifting the hawsers from the wharf piles and her time was short. She was not going to be pitied by the opulent persons on the excursion. Getting as it were into her stride, she took a bolder line of imagery.

"And the telephone," looking up at Mr. Tinneray. "I got friends in Quahawg Junction and Russell Center—we're talkin' sometimes till nine o'clock at night. I can pick up jelly receipts and dress-patterns just so easy."

But Mrs. Tuttle now looked open incredulity. She turned to such excursionists as stood by and registered emphatic denial. "Uh-huh?" she called down in apparent acceptance of these lurid statements, at the same time remarking baldly to Mr. Tinneray, who had placed himself at her side,

"*She* ain't got no telephone!"

At this moment something seemed to occur to little Mrs. Cronney. As she gave a parting defiant scrutiny to her opulent sister her black eyes snapped in hollow reminiscence and she called out,

"Say—how's your parrot? How's your beau—Ro-me-o?"

At this, understood to be a parting shot, the crowd strung along the rail of the *Fall of Rome* burst into an appreciative titter. Mrs. Tuttle, reddening, made no answer, but Mr. Tinneray, standing by and knowing what he knew, seized this opportunity to call down vociferously,

"Oh—he's good, Romeo is. But your sister's had him to the excursion and he's got just a little seasick comin' over. Mis' Tuttle, yer sister, is going to leave him with you, till she can come and take him home, by land, ye know, in her ottermobile—she's coming to get you too, fer a visit, ye know."

There was an effect almost as of panic on the *Fall of Rome*. Not only did the big whistle for "all aboard" blow, but some one's new hat went overboard and while every one crowded to one side to see it rescued, it was not discovered that Romeo's cage had disappeared! In the confusion of a band of desperadoes composed of the entire group of cynical young men with ivory-headed canes, seized upon an object covered with something like an altar-cloth and ran down the gangplank with it.

Going in a body to little Mrs. Cronney, these young men deposited a glittering burden, the gold parrot-cage with the green bird sitting within, in her surprised and gratified embrace. Like flashes these agile young men jumped back upon the deck of the *Fall of Rome* just before the space between wharf and deck became too wide to jump. Meanwhile on the upper deck, before the petrified Mrs. Tuttle could open her mouth, Mr. Tinneray shouted instructions,

"Your sister wants you should keep him," he roared, "till she comes over to see you in her ottermobile—to—fetch—him—and—git—you —for—a—visit!"

Suddenly the entire crowd of excursionists on the after-deck of the *Fall of Rome* gave a rousing cheer. The gratified young men with the ivory-headed canes suddenly saw themselves of the age of chivalry and burst into ragtime rapture; the excursion, a mass of waving flags and hats and automobile veils, made enthusiastic adieu to one faded little figure on the wharf, who proud and happy gently waved back a gleaming parrot's cage!

It was Mr. Tinneray, dexterous in all such matters, that caught at a drooping cerulean form as it toppled over.

"I know'd she'd faint," the pale-eyed gentleman chuckled. He manfully held his burden until Mrs. Tinneray and Mrs. Bean relieved him. These ladies, practised in all smelling-bottle and cologne soothings, supplied also verbal comfort.

"Them young fellows," they explained to Mrs. Tuttle, "is full of their devilment and you can't never tell what they'll do next. But ain't it *lucky*, Mis' Tuttle, that it's your own sister has charge of that bird?"

When at last a pale and interesting lady in blue appeared feebly on deck, wiping away recurrent tears, she was received with the most perfect sympathy tempered with congratulations. There may have been a few winks and one or two nods of understanding which she did not see, but Mrs. Tuttle herself was petted and soothed like a queen of the realm, only, to her mind was brought a something of obligation—the eternal obligation of those who greatly possess—for every excursionist said,

"My, yes! No need to worry—your sister will take care of that bird like he was one of her own, and then you can go over in yer ottermobile to git him—and when you fetch him you can take her home with yer—fer a visit."

ONNIE[3]

By THOMAS BEER

From *The Century Magazine*

Mrs. Rawling ordered Sanford to take a bath, and with the clear vision of seven years Sanford noted that no distinct place for this process had

been recommended. So he retired to a sun-warmed tub of rain-water behind the stables, and sat comfortably armpit deep therein, whirring a rattle lately worn by a snake, and presented to him by one of the Varian tribe, sons of his father's foreman. Soaking happily, Sanford admired his mother's garden, spread up along the slope toward the thick cedar forest, and thought of the mountain strawberries ripening in this hot Pennsylvania June. His infant brother Peter yelled viciously in the big gray-stone house, and the great sawmill snarled half a mile away, while he waited patiently for the soapless water to remove all plantain stains from his brown legs, the cause of this immersion.

A shadow came between him and the sun, and Sanford abandoned the rattles to behold a monstrous female, unknown, white-skinned, moving on majestic feet to his seclusion. He sat deeper in the tub, but she seemed unabashed, and stood with a red hand on each hip, a grin rippling the length of her mouth.

"Herself says you'll be comin' to herself now, if it's you that's Master San," she said.

Sanford speculated. He knew that all things have an office in this world, and tried to locate this preposterous, lofty creature while she

beamed upon him.

"I'm San. Are you the new cook?" he asked.

"I am the same," she admitted.

"Are you a *good* cook?" he continued. "Aggie wasn't. She drank."

"God be above us all! And whatever did herself do with a cook that drank in this place?"

"I don't know. Aggie got married. Cooks *do*," said Sanford, much entertained by this person. Her deep voice was soft, emerging from the largest, reddest mouth he had ever seen. The size of her feet made him dubious as to her humanity. "Anyhow," he went on, "tell mother I'm not clean yet. What's your name?"

"Onnie," said the new cook. "An' would this be the garden?"

"Silly, what did you think?"

"I'm a stranger in this place, Master San, an' I know not which is why nor forever after."

Sanford's brain refused this statement entirely, and he blinked.

"I guess you're Irish," he meditated.

"I am. Do you be gettin' out of your tub now,

an' Onnie'll dry you," she offered.

"I can't," he said firmly; "you're a lady."

"A lady? Blessed Mary save us from sin! A lady? Myself? I'm no such thing in this world at all; I'm just Onnie Killelia."

She appeared quite horrified, and Sanford was astonished. She seemed to be a woman, for all her height and the extent of her hands.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"As I am a Christian woman," said Onnie. "I never was a lady, nor could I ever be such a thing."

"Well," said Sanford, "I don't know, but I suppose you can dry me."

He climbed out of his tub, and this novel being paid kind attention to his directions. He began to like her, especially as her hair was of a singular, silky blackness, suggesting dark mulberries, delightful to the touch. He allowed her to kiss him and to carry him, clothed, back to the house on her shoulders, which were as hard as a cedar trunk, but covered with green cloth sprinkled with purple dots.

"And herself's in the libr'y drinkin' tea," said his vehicle, depositing him on the veranda. "An'

what might that be you'd be holdin'?"

"Just a rattle off a snake."

She examined the six-tiered, smoky rattle with a positive light in her dull, black eyes and crossed herself.

"A queer country, where they do be bellin' the snakes! I heard the like in the gover'ment school before I did come over the west water, but I misbelieved the same. God's ways is strange, as the priests will be sayin'."

"You can have it," said Sanford, and ran off to inquire of his mother the difference between women and ladies.

Rawling, riding slowly, came up the driveway from the single lane of his village, and found the gigantic girl sitting on the steps so absorbed in this sinister toy that she jumped with a little yelp when he dismounted.

"What have you there?" he asked, using his most engaging smile.

"'Tis a snake's bell, your Honor, which Master San did be givin' me. 'Tis welcome indeed, as I lost off my holy medal, bein' sick, forever on the steamship crossin' the west water."

"But—can you use a rattle for a holy medal?"

said Rawling.

"The gifts of children are the blessin's of Mary's self," Onnie maintained. She squatted on the gravel and hunted for one of the big hair-pins her jump had loosened, then used it to pierce the topmost shell. Rawling leaned against his saddle, watching the huge hands, and Pat Sheehan, the old coachman, chuckled, coming up for the tired horse.

"You'll be from the West," he said, "where they string sea-shells."

"I am, an' you'll be from Dublin, by the sound of your speakin'. So was my father, who is now drowned forever, and with his wooden leg," she added mournfully, finding a cord in some recess of her pocket, entangled there with a rosary and a cluster of small fishhooks. She patted the odd scapular into the cleft of her bosom and smiled at Rawling. "Them in the kitchen are tellin' me you'll be ownin' this whole country an' sixty miles of it, all the trees an' hills. You'll be no less than a President's son, then, your Honor."

Pat led the horse off hastily, and Rawling explained that his lineage was not so interesting. The girl had arrived the night before, sent on by an Oil City agency, and Mrs. Rawling had accepted the Amazon as manna-fall. The lumber valley was ten miles above a tiny railroad

station, and servants had to be tempted with triple wages, were transient, or married an employee before a month could pass. The valley women regarded Rawling as their patron, heir of his father, and as temporary aid gave feudal service on demand; but for the six months of his family's residence each year house servants must be kept at any price. He talked of his domain, and the Irish girl nodded, the rattles whirring when she breathed, muffled in her breast, as if a snake were crawling somewhere near.

"When my father came here," he said, "there wasn't any railroad, and there were still Indians in the woods."

"Red Indians? Would they all be dead now? My brother Hyacinth is fair departed his mind readin' of red Indians. Him is my twin."

"How many of you are there?"

"Twelve, your Honor," said Onnie, "an' me the first to go off, bein' that I'm not so pretty a man would be marryin' me that day or this. An' if herself is content, I am pleased entirely."

"You're a good cook," said Rawling, honestly. "How old are you?"

He had been puzzling about this; she was so

wonderfully ugly that age was difficult to conjecture. But she startled him.

"I'll be sixteen next Easter-time, your Honor."

"That's very young to leave home," he sympathized.

"Who'd be doin' the like of me any hurt? I'd trample the face off his head," she laughed.

"I think you could. And now what do you think of my big son?"

The amazing Onnie gurgled like a child, clasping her hands.

"Sure, Mary herself bore the like among the Jew men, an' no one since that day, or will forever. An' I must go to my cookin', or Master San will have no dinner fit for him."

Rawling looked after her pink flannel petticoat, greatly touched and pleased by this eulogy. Mrs. Rawling strolled out of the hall and laughed at the narrative.

"She's appalling to look at, and she frightens the other girls, but she's clean and teachable. If she likes San, she may not marry one of the men —for a while."

"He'd be a bold man. She's as big as Jim

Varian. If we run short of hands, I'll send her up to a cutting. Where's San?"

"In the kitchen. He likes her. Heavens! if she'll only stay, Bob!"

Onnie stayed, and Mrs. Rawling was gratified by humble obedience and excellent cookery. Sanford was gratified by her address, strange to him. He was the property of his father's lumbermen, and their wives called him everything from "heart's love" to "little cabbage," as their origin might dictate; but no one had ever called him "Master San." He was San to the whole valley, the first-born of the owner who gave their children schools and stereopticon lectures in the union chapel, as his father had before him. He went where he pleased, safe except from blind nature and the unfriendly edges of whirling saws. Men fished him out of the dammed river, where logs floated, waiting conversion into merchantable planking, and the Varian boys, big, tawny youngsters, were his body-guard. These perplexed Onnie Killelia in her first days at Rawling's Hope.

"The agent's lads are whistlin' for Master San," she reported to Mrs. Rawling. "Shall I be findin' him?"

"The agent's lads? Do you mean the Varian

boys?"

"Them's them. Wouldn't Jim Varian be his honor's agent? Don't he be payin' the tenantry an' sayin' where is the trees to be felled? I forbid them to come in, as Miss Margot—which is a queer name!—is asleep sound, an' Master Pete."

"Jim Varian came here with his honor's father, and taught his honor to shoot and swim, also his honor's brother Peter, in New York, where we live in winter. Yes, I suppose you'd call Jim Varian his honor's agent. The boys take care of Master San almost as well as you do."

Onnie sniffed, balancing from heel to heel.

"Fine care! An' Bill Varian lettin' him go romping by the poison-ivy, which God lets grow in this place like weeds in a widow's garden. An' his honor, they do be sayin', sends Bill to a fine school, and will the others after him, and to a college like Dublin has after. An' they callin' himself San like he was their brother!"

As a volunteer nurse-maid Onnie was quite miraculous to her mistress. Apparently she could follow Sanford by scent, for his bare soles left no traces in the wild grass, and he moved rapidly, appearing at home exactly when his stomach suggested. He was forbidden only the

slate ledges beyond the log basin, where rattlesnakes took the sun, and the trackless farther reaches of the valley, bewildering to a small boy, with intricate brooks and fallen cedar or the profitable yellow pine. Onnie, crying out on her saints, retrieved him from the turn-table-pit of the narrow-gauge logging-road, and pursued his fair head up the blue-stone crags behind the house, her vast feet causing avalanches among the garden beds. She withdrew him with railings from the enchanting society of louse-infested Polish children, and danced hysterically on the shore of the valley-wide, log-stippled pool when the Varians took him to swim. She bore him off to bed, lowering at the actual nurse. She filled his bath, she cut his toe-nails. She sang him to sleep with "Drolien" and the heart-shattering lament for Gerald. She prayed all night outside his door when he had a brief fever. When trouble was coming, she said the "snake's bells" told her, talking loudly; and petty incidents confirmed her so far that, after she found the child's room ablaze from one of Rawling's cigarettes, they did not argue, and grew to share half-way her superstition.

Women were scarce in the valley, and the well-fed, well-paid men needed wives; and, as time went on, Honora Killelia was sought in

marriage by tall Scots and Swedes, who sat dumbly passionate on the back veranda, where she mended Sanford's clothes. Even hawk-nosed Jim Varian, nearing sixty, made cautious proposals, using Bill as messenger, when Sanford was nine.

"God spare us from purgatory!" she shouted. "Me to sew for the eight of you? Even in the fine house his honor did be givin' the agent I could not stand the noise of it. An' who'd be mendin' Master San's clothes? Be out of this kitchen, Bill Varian!"

Rawling, suffocated with laughter, reeled out of the pantry and fled to his pretty wife.

"She thinks San's her own kid!" he gasped.

"She's perfectly priceless. I wish she'd be as careful of Margot and Pete. I wish we could lure her to New York. She's worth twenty city servants."

"Her theory is that if she stays here there's some one to see that Pat Sheehan doesn't neglect —what does she call San's pony?" Rawling asked.

"The little horse. Yes, she told me she'd trample the face off Pat if Shelty came to harm. She keeps the house like silver, too; and it's

heavenly to find the curtains put up when we get here. Heavens! listen!"

They were in Rawling's bedroom, and Onnie came up the curved stairs. Even in list house-slippers she moved like an elephant, and Sanford had called her, so the speed of her approach shook the square upper hall, and the door jarred a little way open with the impact of her feet.

"Onnie, I'm not sleepy. Sing Gerald," he commanded.

"I will do that same if you'll be lyin' down still, Master San. Now, this is what Conia sang when she found her son all dead forever in the sands of the west water."

By the sound Onnie sat near the bed crooning steadily, her soft contralto filling both stories of the happy house. Rawling went across the hall to see, and stood in the boy's door. He loved Sanford as imaginative men can who are still young, and the ugly girl's idolatry seemed natural. Yet this was very charming, the simple room, the drowsy, slender child, curled in his sheets, surrounded with song.

"Thank you, Onnie," said Sanford. "I suppose she loved him a lot. It's a nice song. Goo' night."

As Onnie passed her master, he saw the stupid eyes full of tears.

"Now, why'll he be thankin' me," she muttered —"me that 'u'd die an' stay in hell forever for him? Now I must go mend up the fish-bag your Honor's brother's wife was for sendin' him an' which no decent fish would be dyin' in."

"Aren't you going to take Jim Varian?" asked Rawling.

"I wouldn't be marryin' with Roosyvelt himself, that's President, an' has his house built all of gold! Who'd be seein' he gets his meals, an' no servants in the sufferin' land worth the curse of a heretic? Not the agent, nor fifty of him," Onnie proclaimed, and marched away.

Sanford never came to scorn his slave or treat her as a servant. He was proud of Onnie. She did not embarrass him by her all-embracing attentions, although he weaned her of some of them as he grew into a wood-ranging, silent boy, studious, and somewhat shy outside the feudal valley. The Varian boys were sent, as each reached thirteen, to Lawrenceville, and testified their gratitude to the patron by diligent careers. They were Sanford's summer companions, with occasional visits from his

cousin Denis, whose mother disapproved of the valley and Onnie.

"I really don't see how Sanford can let the poor creature fondle him," she said. "Denny tells me she simply wails outside San's door if he comes home wet or has a bruise. It's rather ludicrous, now that San's fourteen. She writes to him at Saint Andrew's."

"I told her Saint Andrew's wasn't far from Boston, and she offered to get her cousin Dermot—he's a bellhop at the Touraine—to valet him. Imagine San with a valet at Saint Andrew's!" Rawling laughed.

"But San isn't spoiled," Peter observed, "and he's the idol of the valley, Bob, even more than you are. Varian, McComas, Jansen—the whole gang and their cubs. They'd slaughter any one who touched San."

"I don't see how you stand the place," said Mrs. Peter. "Even if the men are respectful, they're so familiar. And anything could happen there. Denny tells me you have Poles and Russians—all sorts of dreadful people."

Her horror tinkled prettily in the Chinese drawing-room, but Rawling sighed.

"We can't get the old sort—Scotch, Swedes,

the *good* Irish. We get any old thing. Varian swears like a trooper, but he has to fire them right and left all summer through. We've a couple of hundred who are there to stay, some of them born there; but God help San when he takes it over!"

Sanford learned to row at Saint Andrew's, and came home in June with new, flat bands of muscle in his chest, and Onnie worshiped with loud Celtic exclamations, and bade small Pete grow up like Master San. And Sanford grew two inches before he came home for the next summer, reverting to bare feet, corduroys, and woolen shirts as usual. Onnie eyed him dazedly when he strode into her kitchen for sandwiches against an afternoon's fishing.

"O Master San, you're all grown up sudden'!"

"Just five foot eight, Onnie. Ling Varian's five foot nine; so's Cousin Den."

"But don't you be goin' round the cuttin' camps up valley, neither. You're too young to be hearin' the awful way these news hands do talk. It's a sin to hear how they curse an' swear."

"The wumman's right," said Cameron, the smith, who was courting her while he mended the kitchen range. "They're foul as an Edinburgh fishwife—the new men. Go no place wi'out a

Varian, two Varians, or one of my lads."

"Good Lord! I'm not a kid, Ian!"

"Ye're no' a mon, neither. An' ye're the owner's first," said Cameron grimly.

Rawling nodded when Sanford told him this.

"Jim carries an automatic in his belt, and we've had stabbings. Keep your temper if they get fresh. We're in hot water constantly, San. Look about the trails for whisky-caches. These rotten stevedores who come floating in bother the girls and bully the kids. You're fifteen, and I count on you to help keep the property decent. The boys will tell you the things they hear. Use the Varians; Ling and Reuben are clever. I pay high enough wages for this riffraff. I'll pay anything for good hands; and we get dirt!"

Sanford enjoyed being a detective, and kept the Varians busy. Bill, acting as assistant doctor of the five hundred, gave him advice on the subject of cocaine symptoms and alcoholic eyes. Onnie raved when he trotted in one night with Ling and Reuben at heel, their clothes rank with the evil whiskey they had poured from kegs hidden in a cavern near the valley-mouth.

"You'll be killed forever with some Polack beast! O Master San, it's not you that's the polis.

'Tis not fit for him, your Honor. Some Irish pig will be shootin' him, or a sufferin' Bohemyun."

"But it's the property, Onnie," the boy faltered. "Here's his honor worked to death, and Uncle Jim. I've got to do something. They sell good whisky at the store, and just smell me."

But Onnie wept, and Rawling, for sheer pity, sent her out of the dining-room.

"She—she scares me!" Sanford said. "It's not natural, Dad, d' you think?"

He was sitting on his bed, newly bathed and pensive, reviewing the day.

"Why not? She's alone here, and you're the only thing she's fond of. Stop telling her about things or she'll get sick with worry."

"She's fond of Margot and Pete, but she's just idiotic about me. She did scare me!"

Rawling looked at his son and wondered if the boy knew how attractive were his dark, blue eyes and his plain, grave face. The younger children were beautiful; but Sanford, reared more in the forest, had the forest depth in his gaze and an animal litheness in his hard young body.

"She's like a dog," Sanford reflected. "Only

she's a woman. It's sort of—"

"Pathetic?"

"I suppose that's the word. But I *do* love the poor old thing. Her letters are rich. She tells me about all the new babies and who's courting who and how the horses are. It *is* pathetic."

He thought of Onnie often the next winter, and especially when she wrote a lyric of thanksgiving after the family had come to Rawling's Hope in April, saying that all would be well and trouble would cease. But his father wrote differently:

"You know there is a strike in the West Virginia mines, and it has sent a mass of ruffians out looking for work. We need all the people we can get, but they are a pestiferous outfit. I am opening up a camp in Bear Run, and our orders are enormous already, but I hate littering the valley with these swine. They are as insolent and dirty as Turks. Pete says the village smells, and has taken to the woods. Onnie says the new Irish are black scum of Limerick, and Jim Varian's language isn't printable. The old men are complaining, and altogether I feel like Louis XVI in 1789. About every day I have to send for the sheriff and have some thug arrested. A

blackguard from Oil City has opened a dive just outside the property, on the road to the station, and Cameron tells me all sorts of dope is for sale in the hoarding-houses. We have cocaine-inhalers, opium-smokers, and all the other vices."

After this outburst Sanford was not surprised when he heard from Onnie that his father now wore a revolver, and that the overseers of the sawmill did the same.

On the first of June Rawling posted signs at the edge of his valley and at the railroad stations nearest, saying that he needed no more labor. The tide of applicants ceased, but Mrs. Rawling was nervous. Pete declared his intention of running away, and riding home in the late afternoon, Margot was stopped by a drunken, babbling man, who seized her pony's bridle, with unknown words. She galloped free, but next day Rawling sent his wife and children to the seaside and sat waiting Sanford's coming to cheer his desolate house, the new revolver cold on his groin.

Sanford came home a day earlier than he had planned, and drove in a borrowed cart from the station, furious when an old cottage blazed in the rainy night, just below the white posts marking his heritage, and shrill women

screamed invitation at the horse's hoof-beats. He felt the valley smirched, and his father's worn face angered him when they met.

"I almost wish you'd not come, Sonny. We're in rotten shape for a hard summer. Go to bed, dear, and get warm."

"Got a six-shooter for me?"

"You? Who'd touch you? Some one would kill him. I let Bill have a gun, and some other steady heads. You must keep your temper. You always have. Ling Varian got into a splendid row with some hog who called Uncle Jim—the usual name. Ling did him up. Ah, here's Onnie. Onnie, here's—"

The cook rushed down the stairs, a fearful and notable bed-gown covering her night-dress, and the rattles chattering loudly.

"God's kind to us. See the chest of him! Master San! Master San!"

"Good Lord, Onnie. I wasn't dead, you know! Don't *kill* a fellow!"

For the first time her embrace was an embarrassment; her mouth on his cheek made him flush. She loved him so desperately, this poor stupid woman, and he could only be fond of her, give her a sort of tolerant affection.

Honesty reddened his face.

"Come on and find me a hard-boiled egg, there's a—"

"A hard-boiled egg? Listen to that, your Honor! An' it's near the middle of the night! No, I'll not be findin' hard-boiled eggs for you—oh, he's laughin' at me! Now you come into the dinin'-room, an' I'll be hottin' some milk for you, for you're wet as any drowned little cat. An' the mare's fine, an' I've the fishin'-sticks all dusted, an' your new bathin'-tub's to your bath-room, though ill fate follow that English pig Percival that put it in, for he dug holes with his heels! An' would you be wantin' a roast-beef sandwidge?"

"She's nearly wild," said Rawling as the pantry door slammed. "You must be careful, San, and not get into any rows. She'd have a fit. What is it?"

"What do you do when you can't—care about a person as much as they care about you?"

"Put up with it patiently." Rawling shrugged. "What else *can* you do?"

"I'm sixteen. She keeps on as if I were six. S-suppose she fell in love with me? She's not old —very old."

"It's another sort of thing, Sonny. Don't worry," said Rawling, gravely, and broke off the subject lest the boy should fret.

Late next afternoon Sanford rode down a trail from deep forest, lounging in the saddle, and flicking brush aside with a long dog-whip. There was a rain-storm gathering, and the hot air swayed no leaf. A rabbit, sluggish and impertinent, hopped across his path and wandered up the side trail toward Varian's cottage. Sanford halted the mare and whistled. His father needed cheering, and Ling Varian, if obtainable, would make a third at dinner. His intimate hurtled down the tunnel of mountain ash directly and assented.

"Wait till I go back and tell Reuben, though. I'm cooking this week. Wish Onnie 'd marry dad. Make her, can't you? Hi, Reu! I'm eating at the house. The beef's on, and dad wants fried onions. Why won't she have dad? *You're* grown up."

He trotted beside the mare noiselessly, chewing a birch spray, a hand on his friend's knee.

"She says she won't get married. I expect she'll stay here as long as she lives."

"I suppose so, but I wish she'd marry dad," said Ling. "All this trouble's wearing him out, and he

won't have a hired girl if we could catch one. There's a pile of trouble, San. He has rows every day. Had a hell of a row with Percival yesterday."

"Who's this Percival? Onnie was cursing him out last night," Sanford recollected.

"He's an awful big hog who's pulling logs at the runway. Used to be a plumber in Australia. Swears like a sailor. He's a—what d' you call 'em? You know, a London mucker?"

"Cockney?"

"Yes, that's it. He put in your new bath-tub, and Onnie jumped him for going round the house looking at things. Dad's getting ready to fire him. He's the worst hand in the place. I'll point him out to you."

The sawmill whistle blew as the trail joined open road, and they passed men, their shirts sweat-stained, nodding or waving to the boys as they spread off to their houses and the swimming-place at the river bridge.

A group gathered daily behind the engine-yard to play horseshoe quoits, and Sanford pulled the mare to a walk on the fringes of this half-circle as old friends hailed him and shy lads with hair already sun-bleached wriggled out of the crowd

to shake hands, Camerons, Jansens, Nattiers, Keenans, sons of the faithful. Bill Varian strolled up, his medical case under an arm.

"I'm eating with you. The boss asked me. He feels better already. Come in and speak to dad. He's hurt because *he's* not seen you, and you stopped to see Ian at the forge. Hi, Dad!" he called over the felt hats of the ring, "here's San."

"Fetch him in, then," cried the foreman.

Bill and Ling led the nervous mare through the group of pipe-smoking, friendly lumbermen, and Varian hugged his fosterling's son.

"Stop an' watch," he whispered. "They'll like seein' you, San. Onnie's been tellin' the women you've growed a yard."

Sanford settled to the monotony of the endless sport, saluting known brown faces and answering yelps of pleasure from the small boys who squatted against the high fence behind the stake.

"That's Percival," said Ling, as a man swaggered out to the pitching-mark.

"Six foot three," Bill said, "and strong as an ox. Drinks all the time. Think he dopes, too."

Sanford looked at the fellow with a swift

dislike for his vacant, heavy face and his greasy, saffron hair. His bare arms were tattooed boldly and in many colors, distorted with ropes of muscle. He seemed a little drunk, and the green clouds cast a copper shade into his lashless eyes.

"Can't pitch for beans," said Ling as the first shoe went wide. When the second fell beside it, the crowd laughed.

"Now," said Ian Cameron, "he'll be mad wi' vainglory. He's a camstearlie ring' it an' a claverin' fu'."

"Ho! larf ahead!" snapped the giant. "'Ow's a man to 'eave a bloody thing at a bloody stike?"

The experts chuckled, and he ruffled about the ring, truculent, sneering, pausing before Varian, with a glance at Sanford.

"Give me something with some balance. Hi can show yer. Look!"

"I'm looking," said the foreman; "an' I ain't deaf, neither."

"'Ere's wot you blighters carn't 'eave. Learned it in Auckland, where there's *real* men." He fumbled in his shirt, and the mare snorted as the eight-inch blade flashed out of its handle under her nose. "See? That's the lidy! Now watch! There's a knot-'ole up the palings there."

The crowd fixed a stare on the green, solid barrier, and the knife soared a full twenty yards, but missed the knot-hole and rattled down. There was flat derision in the following laughter, and Percival dug his heel in the sod.

"Larf ahead! Hany one else try 'er?"

"Oh, shut up!" said some one across the ring. "We're pitchin' shoes."

Percival slouched off after his knife, and the frieze of small boys scattered except a lint-haired Cameron who was nursing a stray cat busily, cross-legged against the green boarding.

"Yon's Robert Sanford Cameron," said the smith. "He can say half his catechism."

"Good kid," said Sanford. "I never could get any—"

Percival had wandered back and stood a yard off, glaring at Bill as the largest object near.

"Think I can't, wot?"

"I'm not interested, and you're spoiling the game," said Bill, who feared nothing alive except germs, and could afford to disregard most of these. Sanford's fingers tightened on his whip.

"Ho!" coughed the cockney. "See! You—there!"

Robert Cameron looked up at the shout. The blade shot between the child's head and the kitten and hummed gently, quivering in the wood.

"Hi could 'a' cut 'is throat," said Percival so complacently that Sanford boiled.

"You scared him stiff," he choked. "You hog! Don't—"

"'Ello, 'oo's the young dook?"

"Look out," said a voice. "That's San, the—"

"Ho! 'Im with the Hirish gal to 'elp 'im tike 'is bloody barth nights? 'Oo's *he*? She's a—"

A second later Sanford knew that he had struck the man over the face with his whip, cutting the phrase. The mare plunged and the whole crowd congested about the bellowing cockney as Bill held Cameron back, and huge Jansen planted a hand on Rawling's chest.

"No worry," he said genially. "Yim an' us, Boss, our job."

Varian had wedged his hawk face close to the cockney's, now purple blotched with wrath, and

Rawling waited.

"Come to the office an' get your pay. You hear? Then you clear out. If you ain't off the property in an hour you'll be dead. You hear?"

"He ought to," muttered Ling, leading the mare away. "Dad hasn't yelled that loud since that Dutchman dropped the kid in the—hello, it's raining!"

"Come on home, Sonny," said Rawling, "and tell us all about it. I didn't see the start."

But Sanford was still boiling, and the owner had recourse to his godson. Ling told the story, unabridged, as they mounted toward the house.

"Onnie'll hear of it," sighed Rawling. "Look, there she is by the kitchen, and that's Jennie Cameron loping 'cross lots. Never mind, San. You did the best you could; don't bother. Swine are swine."

The rain was cooling Sanford's head, and he laughed awkwardly.

"Sorry I lost my temper."

"I'm not. Jennie's telling Onnie. Hear?"

The smith's long-legged daughter was gesticulating at the kitchen trellis, and Onnie's

feet began a sort of war-dance in the wet grass as Rawling approached.

"Where is this sufferin' pig, could your honor be tellin' me? God be above us all! With my name in his black, ugly mouth! I *knew* there'd be trouble; the snake's bells did be sayin' so since the storm was comin'. An' him three times the bigness of Master San! Where'd he be now?"

"Jim gave him an hour to be off the property, Onnie."

"God's mercy he had no knife in his hand, then, even with the men by an' Master San on his horse. Blessed Mary! I will go wait an' have speech with this Englishman on the road."

"You'll go get dinner, Onnie Killelia," said Rawling. "Master San is tired, Bill and Ling are coming—and look there!"

The faithful were marching Percival down the road to the valley-mouth in the green dusk. He walked between Jansen and Bill, a dozen men behind, and a flying scud of boys before.

"An' Robbie's not hurt," said Miss Cameron, "an' San ain't, neither; so don't you worry, Onnie. It's all right."

Onnie laughed.

"I'd like well to have seen the whip fly, your Honor. The arm of him! Will he be wantin' waffles to his dinner? Heyah! more trouble yet!" The rattles had whirred, and she shook her head. "A forest fire likely now? Or a child bein' born dead?"

"Father says she's fëy," Jennie observed as the big woman lumbered off.

"You mean she has second sight? Perhaps. Here's a dollar for Robbie, and tell Ian he's lucky."

Bill raced up as the rain began to fall heavily in the windless gray of six o'clock. He reported the cockney gone and the men loud in admiration of Sanford; so dinner was cheerful enough, although Sanford felt limp after his first attack of killing rage. Onnie's name on this animal's tongue had maddened him, the reaction made him drowsy; but Ling's winter at Lawrenceville and Bill's in New York needed hearing. Rawling left the three at the hall fireplace while he read a new novel in the library. The rain increased, and the fall became a continuous throbbing so steady that he hardly heard the telephone ring close to his chair; but old Varian's voice came clear along the wire.

"Is that you, Bob? Now, listen. One of them girls at that place down the station road was just talkin' to me. She's scared. She rung me up an' Cameron. That dam' Englishman's gone out o' there bile drunk, swearin' he'll cut San's heart out, the pup! He's gone off wavin' his knife. Now, he knows the house, an' he ain't afraid of nothin'—when he's drunk. He might get that far an' try breakin' in. You lock up—"

"Lock up? What with?" asked Rawling. "There's not a lock in the place. Father never had them put in, and I haven't."

"Well, don't worry none. Ian's got out a dozen men or so with lights an' guns, an' Bill's got his. You keep Bill an' Ling to sleep down-stairs. Ian's got the men round the house by this. The hog'll make noise enough to wake the dead."

"Nice, isn't it, Uncle Jim, having this whelp out gunning for San! I'll keep the boys. Good-night," he said hastily as a shadow on the rug engulfed his feet. The rattles spoke behind him.

"There's a big trouble sittin' on my soul," said Onnie. "Your Honor knows there's nothing makes mortal flesh so wild mad as a whipping, an' this dog does know the way of the house. Do you keep the agent's lads to-night in this place with guns to hand. The snake's bells keep ringin'."

"My God! Onnie, you're making me believe in your rattles! Listen. Percival's gone out of that den down the road, swearin' he'll kill San. He's drunk, and Cameron's got men out."

"That 'u'd be the why of the lanterns I was seein' down by the forge. But it's black as the bowels of purgatory, your Honor, an' him a strong, wicked devil, cruel an' angry. God destroy him! If he'd tread on a poison snake! No night could be so black as his heart."

"Steady, Onnie!"

"I'm speakin' soft. Himself's not able to hear," she said, her eyes half shut. She rocked slowly on the amazing feet. "Give me a pistol, your Honor. I'll be for sleepin' outside his door this night."

"You'll go to bed and keep your door open. If you hear a sound, yell like perdition. Send Bill in here. Say I want him. That's all. There's no danger, Onnie; but I'm taking no chances."

"We'll take no chances, your Honor."

She turned away quietly, and Rawling shivered at this cool fury. The rattles made his spine itch, and suddenly his valley seemed like a place of demons. The lanterns circling on the lawn seemed like frail glow-worms, incredibly

useless, and he leaned on the window-pane listening with fever to the rain.

"All right," said Bill when he had heard. "'Phone the sheriff. The man's dangerous, sir. I doctored a cut he had the other day, and he tells me he can see at night. That's a lie, of course, but he's light on his feet, and he's a devil. I've seen some rotten curs in the hospitals, but he's worse."

"Really, Billy, you sound as fierce as Onnie. She wanted a gun."

The handsome young man bit a lip, and his great body shook.

"This is San," he said, "and the men would kill any one who touched you, and they'd burn any one who touched San. Sorry if I'm rude."

"We mustn't lose our heads." Rawling talked against his fear. "The man's drunk. He'll never get near here, and he's got four miles to come in a cold rain. But—"

"May I sleep in San's room?"

"Then he'll know. I don't want him to, or Ling, either; they're imaginative kids. This is a vile mess, Billy."

"Hush! Then I'll sleep outside his door. I *will*,

sir!"

"All right, old man. Thanks. Ling can sleep in Pete's room. Now I'll 'phone Mackintosh."

But the sheriff did not answer, and his deputy was ill. Rawling shrugged, but when Varian telephoned that there were thirty men searching, he felt more comfortable.

"You're using the wires a lot, Dad," said Sanford, roaming in. "Anything wrong? Where's Ling to sleep?"

"In Pete's room. Good-night, Godson. No, nothing wrong."

But Sanford was back presently, his eyes wide.

"I say, Onnie's asleep front of my door and I can't get over her. What's got into the girl?"

"She's worried. Her snake's bells are going, and she thinks the house'll burn down. Let her be. Sleep with me, and keep my feet warm, Sonny."

"Sure," yawned Sanford. "'Night, Billy."

"Well," said Bill, "that settles that, sir. She'd hear anything, or I will, and you're a light sleeper. Suppose we lock up as much as we can and play some checkers?"

They locked the doors, and toward midnight

Cameron rapped at the library window, his rubber coat glistening.

"Not a print of the wastrel loon, sir; but the lads will bide out the night. They've whusky an' biscuits an' keep moving."

"I'll come out myself," Rawling began, but the smith grunted.

"Ye're no stirrin' oot yer hoos, Robert Rawling! Ye're daft! Gin you met this ganglin' assassinator, wha'd be for maister? San's no to lack a father. Gae to yer bit bed!"

"Gosh!" said Bill, shutting the window, "*he's* in earnest. He forgot to try to talk English even. I feel better. The hog's fallen into a hole and gone to sleep. Let's go up."

"I suppose if I tell Onnie San's with me, she'll just change to my door," Rawling considered; "but I'll try. Poor girl, she's faithful as a dog!"

They mounted softly and beheld her, huddled in a blanket, mountainous, curled outside Sanford's closed door, just opposite the head of the stairs. Rawling stooped over the heap and spoke to the tangle of blue-shadowed hair.

"Onnie Killelia, go to bed."

"Leave me be, your Honor. I'm—"

Sleep cut the protest. The rattles sounded feebly, and Rawling stood up.

"Just like a dog," whispered Bill, stealing off to a guest-room. "I'll leave my door open." He patted the revolver in his jacket and grinned affectionately. "Good-night, Boss."

Rawling touched the switch inside his own door, and the big globe set in the hall ceiling blinked out. They had decided that, supposing the cockney got so far, a lightless house would perplex his feet, and he would be the noisier. Rawling could reach this button from his bed, and silently undressed in the blackness, laying the automatic on the bedside table, reassured by all these circling folk, Onnie, stalwart Bill, and the loyal men out in the rain. Here slept Sanford, breathing happily, so lost that he only sighed when his father crept in beside him, and did not rouse when Rawling thrust an arm under his warm weight to bring him closer, safe in the perilous night.

The guest-room bed creaked beneath Bill's two hundred pounds of muscle, and Ling snored in Peter's room. Rawling's nerves eased on the mattress, and hypnotic rain began to deaden him, against his will. He saw Percival sodden in some ditch, his knife forgotten in brandy's slumbers. No shout came from the hillside. His

mind edged toward vacancy, bore back when the boy murmured once, then he gained a mid-state where sensation was not, a mist.

He sat up, tearing the blankets back, because some one moved in the house, and the rain could be heard more loudly, as if a new window were open. He swung his legs free. Some one breathed heavily in the hall. Rawling clutched his revolver, and the cold of it stung. This might be Onnie, any one; but he put his finger on the switch.

"Straight hover—hover the way it was," said a thick, puzzled voice. "There, that one! 'Is bloody barth!"

The rattles whirred as if their first owner lived. Rawling pressed the switch.

"Your Honor!" Onnie screamed. "Your Honor! Master San! Be lockin' the door inside, Master San! Out of this, you! You!"

Rawling's foot caught in the doorway of the bright hall, and he stumbled, the light dazzling on the cockney's wet bulk hurling itself toward the great woman where she stood, her arms flung cruciform, guarding the empty room. The bodies met with a fearful jar as Rawling

staggered up, and there came a crisp explosion before he could raise his hand. Bill's naked shoulder cannoned into him, charging, and Bill's revolver clinked against his own. Rawling reeled to the stair-head, aiming as Bill caught at the man's shirt; but the cockney fell backward, crumpling down, his face purple, his teeth displayed.

"In the head!" said Bill, and bent to look, pushing the plastered curls from a temple. The beast whimpered and died; the knife rattled on the planks.

"Dad," cried Sanford, "what on—"

"Stay where you are!" Rawling gasped, sick of this ugliness, dizzy with the stench of powder and brandy. Death had never seemed so vile. He looked away to the guardian where she knelt at her post, her hands clasped on the breast of her coarse white robe as if she prayed, the hair hiding her face.

"I'll get a blanket," Bill said, rising. "There come the men! That you, Ian?"

The smith and a crowd of pale faces crashed up the stairs.

"God forgie us! We let him by—the garden, sir. Alec thought he—"

"Gosh, Onnie!" said Bill, "excuse *me*! I'll get some clothes on. Here, Ian—"

"Onnie," said Sanford, in the doorway —"Onnie, what's the matter?"

As if to show him this, her hands, unclasping, fell from the dead bosom, and a streak of heart's blood widened from the knife-wound like the ribbon of some very noble order.

A CUP OF TEA[4]

By MAXWELL STRUTHERS BURT

From *Scribner's Magazine*.

Young Burnaby was late. He was always late. One associated him with lateness and certain eager, impossible excuses—he was always coming from somewhere to somewheres, and his "train was delayed," or his huge space-devouring motor "had broken down." You imagined him, enveloped in dust and dusk, his face disguised beyond human semblance, tearing up and down the highways of the world; or else in the corridor of a train, biting his nails

with poorly concealed impatience. As a matter of fact, when you saw him, he was beyond average correctly attired, and his manner was suppressed, as if to conceal the keenness that glowed behind his dark eyes and kept the color mounting and receding in his sunburnt cheeks. All of which, except the keenness, was a strange thing in a man who spent half his life shooting big game and exploring. But then, one imagined that Burnaby on the trail and Burnaby in a town were two entirely different persons. He liked his life with a thrust to it, and in a great city there are so many thrusts that, it is to be supposed, one of Burnaby's temperament hardly has hours enough in a day to appreciate all of them and at the same time keep appointments.

On this February night, at all events, he was extremely late, even beyond his custom, and Mrs. Malcolm, having waited as long as she possibly could, sighed amusedly and told her man to announce dinner. There were only three others besides herself in the drawing-room, Masters—Sir John Masters, the English financier—and his wife, and Mrs. Selden, dark, a little silent, with a flushed, finely cut face and a slightly sorrow-stricken mouth. And already these people had reached the point where talk is interesting. People did in Mrs. Malcolm's house. One went there with anticipation, and came

away with the delightful, a little vague, exhilaration that follows an evening where the perfection of the material background—lights, food, wine, flowers—has been almost forgotten in the thrill of contact with real persons, a rare enough circumstance in a period when the dullest people entertain the most. In the presence of Mrs. Malcolm even the very great forgot the suspicions that grow with success and became themselves, and, having come once, came again vividly, overlooking other people who really had more right to their attentions than had she.

This was the case with Sir John Masters. And he was a very great man indeed, not only as the world goes but in himself: a short, heavy man, with a long, heavy head crowned with vibrant, still entirely dark hair and pointed by a black, carefully kept beard, above which arose —"arose" is the word, for Sir John's face was architectural—a splendid, slightly curved nose —a buccaneering nose; a nose that, willy-nilly, would have made its possessor famous. One suspected, far back in the yeoman strain, a hurried, possibly furtive marriage with gypsy or Jew; a sudden blossoming into lyricism on the part of a soil-stained Masters. Certainly from somewhere Sir John had inherited an imagination which was not insular. Dangerous

men, these Sir Johns, with their hooked noses and their lyric eyes!

Mrs. Malcolm described him as fascinating. There was about him that sense of secret power that only politicians, usually meretriciously, and diplomats, and, above all, great bankers as a rule possess; yet he seldom talked of his own life, or the mission that had brought him to New York; instead, in his sonorous, slightly Hebraic voice, he drew other people on to talk about themselves, or else, to artists and writers and their sort, discovered an amazing, discouraging knowledge of the trades by which they earned their living. "One feels," said Mrs. Malcolm, "that one is eyeing a sensitive python. He uncoils beautifully."

They were seated at the round, candle-lit table, the rest of the room in partial shadow, Sir John looking like a lost Rembrandt, and his blonde wife, with her soft English face, like a rose-and-gray portrait by Reynolds, when Burnaby strode in upon them ... strode in upon them, and then, as if remembering the repression he believed in, hesitated, and finally advanced quietly toward Mrs. Malcolm. One could smell the snowy February night still about him.

"I'm so sorry," he said. "I—"

"You broke down, I suppose," said Mrs.

Malcolm, "or the noon train from Washington was late for the first time in six years. What do you do in Washington, anyway? Moon about the Smithsonian?"

"No," said Burnaby, as he sank into a chair and unfolded his napkin. "Y'see—well, that is—I ran across a fellow—an Englishman—who knew a chap I met last summer up on the Francis River—I didn't exactly meet him, that is, I ran into him, and it wasn't the Francis River really, it was the Upper Liara, a branch that comes in from the northwest. Strange, wasn't it?—this fellow, this Englishman, got to talking about tea, and that reminded me of the whole thing." He paused on the last word and, with a peculiar habit that is much his own, stared across the table at Lady Masters, but over and through her, as if that pretty pink-and-white woman had entirely disappeared,—and the warm shadows behind her,—and in her place were no one could guess what vistas of tumbling rivers and barren tundras.

"Tea!" ejaculated Mrs. Malcolm.

Burnaby came back to the flower-scented circle of light.

"Yes," he said soberly, "tea. Exactly."

Mrs. Malcolm's delicate eyebrows rose to a

point. "What," she asked, in the tones of delighted motherhood overlaid with a slight exasperation which she habitually used toward Burnaby, "has tea got to do with a man you met on the Upper Liara last summer and a man you met this afternoon? Why tea?"

"A lot," said Burnaby cryptically, and proceeded to apply himself to his salad, for he had refused the courses his lateness had made him miss. "Y'see," he said, after a moment's reflection, "it was this way—and it's worth telling, for it's queer. I ran into this Terhune this afternoon at a club—a big, blond Englishman who's been in the army, but now he's out making money. Owns a tea house in London. Terhune & Terhune—perhaps you know them?" He turned to Sir John.

"Yes, very well. I imagine this is Arthur Terhune."

"That's the man. Well, his being in tea and that sort of thing got me to telling him about an adventure I had last summer, and, the first crack out of the box, he said he remembered the other chap perfectly—had known him fairly well at one time. Odd, wasn't it, when you come to think of it? A big, blond, freshly bathed Englishman in a club, and that other man away up there!"

"And the other man? Is he in the tea business too?" asked Mrs. Selden. She was interested by now, leaning across the table, her dark eyes catching light from the candles. It was something—to interest Mrs. Selden.

"No," said Burnaby abruptly. "No. He's in no business at all, except going to perdition. Y'see, he's a squaw-man—a big, black squaw-man, with a nose like a Norman king's. The sort of person you imagine in evening clothes in the Carleton lounge. He might have been anything but what he is."

"I wonder," said Sir John, "why we do that sort of thing so much more than other nations? Our very best, too. It's odd."

"It was odd enough the way it happened to me, anyhow," said Burnaby. "I'd been knocking around up there all summer, just an Indian and myself—around what they call Fort Francis and the Pelly Lakes, and toward the end of August we came down the Liara in a canoe. We were headed for Lower Post on the Francis, and it was all very lovely until, one day, we ran into a rapid, a devil of a thing, and my Indian got drowned."

"How dreadful!" murmured Lady Masters.

"It was," agreed Burnaby; "but it might have

been worse—for me, that is. It couldn't have been much worse for the poor devil of an Indian, could it? But I had a pretty fair idea of the country, and had only about fifty miles to walk, and a little waterproof box of grub turned up out of the wreck, so I wasn't in any danger of starving. It was lonely, though—it's lonely enough country, anyhow, and of course I couldn't help thinking about that Indian and the way big rapids roar. I couldn't sleep when night came—saw black rocks sticking up out of white water like the fangs of a mad dog. I was pretty near the horrors, I guess. So you can imagine I wasn't sorry when, about four o'clock of the next afternoon, I came back to the river again and a teepee standing up all by itself on a little pine-crowned bluff. In front of the teepee was an old squaw—she wasn't very old, really, but you know how Indians get—boiling something over a fire in a big pot. 'How!' I said, and she grunted. 'If you'll lend me part of your fire, I'll make some tea,' I continued. 'And if you're good, I'll give you some when it's done.' Tea was one of the things cached in the little box that had been saved. She moved the pot to one side, so I judged she understood, and I trotted down to the river for water and set to work. As you can guess, I was pretty anxious for any kind of conversation by then, so after a while I said brightly: 'All alone?' She grunted again and

pointed over her shoulder to the teepee. 'Well, seeing you're so interested,' said I, 'and that the tea's done, we'll all go inside and ask your man to a party—if you'll dig up two tin cups. I've got one of my own.' She raised the flap of the teepee and I followed her. I could see she wasn't a person who wasted words. Inside a little fire was smouldering, and seated with his back to us was a big, broad-shouldered buck, with a dark blanket wrapped around him. 'Your good wife,' I began cheerily—I was getting pretty darned sick of silence—'has allowed me to make some tea over your fire. Have some? I'm shipwrecked from a canoe and on my way to Lower Post. If you don't understand what I say, it doesn't make the slightest difference, but for God's sake grunt —just once, to show you're interested.' He grunted. 'Thanks!' I said, and poured the tea into the three tin cups. The squaw handed one to her buck. Then I sat down.

"There was nothing to be heard but the gurgling of the river outside and the rather noisy breathing we three made as we drank; and then —very clearly, just as if we'd been sitting in an English drawing-room—in the silence a voice said: 'By Jove, that's the first decent cup of tea I've had in ten years!' Yes, just that! 'By Jove, that's the first decent cup of tea I've had in ten years!' I looked at the buck, but he hadn't

moved, and then I looked at the squaw, and she was still squatting and sipping her tea, and then I said, very quietly, for I knew my nerves were still ragged, 'Did any one speak?' and the buck turned slowly and looked me up and down, and I saw the nose I was talking about—the nose like a Norman king's. I was rattled, I admit; I forgot my manners. 'You're English!' I gasped out; and the buck said very sweetly: 'That's none of your damned business.'"

Burnaby paused and looked about the circle of attentive faces. "That's all. But it's enough, isn't it? To come out of nothing, going nowheres, and run into a dirty Indian who says: 'By Jove, that's the first decent cup of tea I've had in ten years!' And then along comes this Terhune and says that he knows the man."

Mrs. Malcolm raised her chin from the hand that had been supporting it. "I don't blame you," she said, "for being late."

"And this man," interrupted Sir John's sonorous voice, "this squaw-man, did he tell you anything about himself?"

Burnaby shook his head. "Not likely," he answered. "I tried to draw him out, but he wasn't drawable. Finally he said: 'If you'll shut your damned mouth I'll give you two dirty blankets to sleep on. If you won't, I'll kick you out of

here.' The next morning I pulled out, leaving him crouched over the little teepee fire nursing his knees. But I hadn't gone twenty yards when he came to the flap and called out after me: 'I say!' I turned about sullenly. His dirty face had a queer, cracked smile on it. 'Look here! Do you —where did you get that tea from, anyway? I— there's a lot of skins I've got; I don't suppose you'd care to trade, would you?' I took the tea out of the air-tight box and put it on the ground. Then I set off down river. Henderson, the factor at Lower Post, told me a little about him: his name—it wasn't assumed, it seems; and that he'd been in the country about fifteen years, going from bad to worse. He was certainly at 'worse' when I saw him." Burnaby paused and stared across the table again with his curious, far-away look. "Beastly, isn't it?" he said, as if to himself. "Cold up there now, too! The snow must be deep." He came back to the present. "And I suppose, you know," he said, smiling deprecatingly at Mrs. Selden, "he's just as fond of flowers and lights and things as we are."

Mrs. Selden shivered.

"Fonder!" said Sir John. "Probably fonder. That sort is. It's the poets of the world who can't write poetry who go to smash that way. They ought to take a term at business, and"—he reflected—"the business men, of course, at

poetry." He regarded Burnaby with his inscrutable eyes, in the depths of which danced little flecks of light.

"What did you say this man's name was?" asked Lady Masters, in her soft voice. She had an extraordinary way of advancing, with a timid rush, as it were, into the foreground, and then receding again, melting back into the shadows. She rarely ever spoke without a sensation of astonishment making itself felt. "She is like a mist," thought Mrs. Malcolm.

"Bewsher," said Burnaby—"Geoffrey Boisselier Bewsher. Quite a name, isn't it? He was in the cavalry. His family are rather swells in an old-fashioned way. He is the fifth son—or seventh, or whatever it is—of a baronet and, Terhune says, was very much in evidence about London twenty-odd years ago. Terhune used to see him in clubs, and every now and then dining out. Although he himself, of course, was a much younger man. Very handsome he was, too, Terhune said, and a favorite. And then one day he just disappeared—got out—no one knows exactly why. Terhune doesn't. Lost his money, or a woman, or something like that. The usual thing, I suppose. I—You didn't hurt yourself, did you?"...

He had paused abruptly and was looking across

the table; for there had been a little tinkle and a crash of breaking glass, and now a pool of champagne was forming beside Lady Masters's plate, and finding its way in a thin thread of gold along the cloth. There was a moment's silence, and then she advanced again out of the shadows with her curious soft rush. "How clumsy I am!" she murmured. "My arm—My bracelet! I—I'm so sorry!" She looked swiftly about her, and then at Burnaby. "Oh, no! I'm not cut, thanks!" Her eyes held a pained embarrassment. He caught the look, and her eyelids flickered and fell before his gaze, and then, as the footman repaired the damage, she sank back once more into the half-light beyond the radiance of the candles. "How shy she is!" thought Burnaby. "So many of these English women are. She's an important woman in her own right, too." He studied her furtively.

Into the soft silence came Sir John's carefully modulated voice. "Barbara and I," he explained, "will feel this very much. We both knew Bewsher." His eyes became somber. "This is very distressing," he said abruptly.

"By Jove!" ejaculated Burnaby, and raised his head like an alert hound.

"How odd it all is!" said Mrs. Malcolm. But she was wondering why men are so queer with

their wives—resent so much the slightest social clumsiness on their part, while in other women—provided the offense is not too great—it merely amuses them. Even the guarded manners of Sir John had been disturbed. For a moment he had been very angry with the shadow that bore his name; one could tell by the swift glance he had cast in her direction. After all, upsetting a glass of champagne was a very natural sequel to a story such as Burnaby had told, a story about a former acquaintance—perhaps friend.

Sir John thoughtfully helped himself to a spoonful of his dessert before he looked up; when he did so he laid down his spoon and sat back in his chair with the manner of a man who has made a sudden decision. "No," he said, and an unexpected little smile hovered about his lips, "it isn't so odd. Bewsher was rather a figure of a man twenty years ago. Shall I tell you his history?"

To Mrs. Malcolm, watching with alert, humorous eyes, there came a curious impression, faint but distinct, like wind touching her hair; as if, that is, a door into the room had opened and shut. She leaned forward, supporting her chin in her hand.

"Of course," she said.

Sir John twisted between his fingers the stem

of his champagne-glass and studied thoughtfully the motes of at the heart of the amber wine. "You see," he began thoughtfully, "it's such a difficult story to tell—difficult because it took twenty-five—and, now that Mr. Burnaby has furnished the sequel, forty-five years—to live; and difficult because it is largely a matter of psychology. I can only give you the high lights, as it were. You must fill in the rest for yourselves. You must imagine, that is, Bewsher and this other fellow—this Morton. I can't give you his real name—it is too important; you would know it. No, it isn't obviously dramatic. And yet—" his voice suddenly became vibrant —"such things compose, as a matter of fact, the real drama of the world. It—" he looked about the table swiftly and leaned forward, and then, as if interrupting himself, "but what *was* obviously dramatic," he said—and the little dancing sparks in the depths of his eyes were peculiarly noticeable—"was the way I, of all people, heard it. Yes. You see, I heard it at a dinner party like this, in London; and Morton—the man himself—told the story." He paused, and with half-closed eyes studied the effect of his announcement.

"You mean—?" asked Burnaby.

"Exactly." Sir John spoke with a certain cool eagerness. "He sat up before all those people

and told the inner secrets of his life; and of them all I was the only one who suspected the truth. Of course, he was comparatively safe, none of them knew him well except myself, but think of it! The bravado—the audacity! Rather magnificent, wasn't it?" He sank back once more in his chair.

Mrs. Malcolm agreed. "Yes," she said. "Magnificent and insulting."

Sir John smiled. "My dear lady," he asked, "doesn't life consist largely of insults from the strong to the weak?"

"And were all these people so weak, then?"

"No, in their own way they were fairly important, I suppose, but compared to Morton they were weak—very weak—Ah, yes! I like this custom of smoking at table. Thanks!" He selected a cigarette deliberately, and stooped toward the proffered match. The flame illumined the swarthy curve of his beard and the heavy lines of his dark face. "You see," he began, straightening up in his chair, "the whole thing—that part of it, and the part I'm to tell—is really, if you choose, an allegory of strength, of strength and weakness. On the one side Morton—there's strength, sheer, undiluted power, the thing that runs the world; and on the other Bewsher, the ordinary man, with all his mixed-

up ideas of right and wrong and the impossible, confused thing he calls a 'code'—Bewsher, and later on the girl. She too is part of the allegory. She represents—what shall I say? A composite portrait of the ordinary young woman? Religion, I suppose. Worldly religion. The religion of most of my good friends in England. A vague but none the less passionate belief in a heaven populated by ladies and gentlemen who dine out with a God who resembles royalty. And coupled with this religion the girl had, of course, as have most of her class, a very distinct sense of her own importance in the world; not that exactly—personally she was over-modest; a sense rather of her importance as a unit of an important family, and a deep-rooted conviction of the fundamental necessity of unimportant things: parties, and class-worship, and the whole jumbled-up order as it is. The usual young woman, that is, if you lay aside her unusual beauty. And, you see, people like Bewsher and the girl haven't much chance against a man like Morton, have they? Do you remember the girl, my dear?" he asked, turning to his wife.

"Yes," murmured Lady Masters.

"Well, then," continued Sir John, "you must imagine this Morton, an ugly little boy of twelve, going up on a scholarship to a great public school—a rather bitter little boy, without

any particular prospects ahead of him except those his scholarship held out; and back of him a poor, stunted life, with a mother in it—a sad dehumanized creature, I gathered, who subsisted on the bounty of a niggardly brother. And this, you can understand, was the first thing that made Morton hate virtue devoid of strength. His mother, he told me, was the best woman he had ever known. The world had beaten her unmercifully. His earliest recollection was hearing her cry at night.... And there, at the school, he had his first glimpse of the great world that up to then he had only dimly suspected. Dramatic enough in itself, isn't it?—if you can visualize the little dark chap. A common enough drama, too, the Lord knows. We people on top are bequeathing misery to our posterity when we let the Mortons of the world hate the rich. And head and shoulders above the other boys of his age at the school was Bewsher; not that materially, of course, there weren't others more important; Bewsher's family was old and rich as such families go, but he was very much a younger son, and his people lived mostly in the country; yet even then there was something about him—a manner, an adeptness in sports, an unsought popularity, that picked him out; the beginnings of that Norman nose that Mr. Burnaby has mentioned. And here"—Sir John paused and puffed thoughtfully at his

cigarette—"is the first high light.

"To begin with, of course, Morton hated Bewsher and all he represented, hated him in a way that only a boy of his nature can; and then, one day—I don't know exactly when it could have been, probably a year or two after he had gone up to school—he began to see quite clearly what this hate meant; began to see that for such as he to hate the Bewshers of the world was the sheerest folly—a luxury far beyond his means. Quaint, wasn't it? In a boy of his age! You can imagine him working it out at night, in his narrow dormitory bed, when the other boys were asleep. You see, he realized, dimly at first, clearly at last, that through Bewsher and his kind lay the hope of Morton and his kind. Nice little boys think the same thing, only they are trained not to admit it. That was the first big moment of Morton's life, and with the determination characteristic of him he set out to accomplish what he had decided. In England we make our future through our friends, in this country you make it through your enemies. But it wasn't easy for Morton; such tasks never are. He had a good many insults to swallow. In the end, however, from being tolerated he came to be indispensable, and from being indispensable eventually to be liked. He had planned his campaign with care. Carefulness, recklessly

carried out, has been, I think, the guiding rule of his life. He had modelled himself on Bewsher; he walked like Bewsher; tried to think like Bewsher—that is, in the less important things of life—and, with the divination that marks his type of man, the little money he had, the little money that as a schoolboy he could borrow, he had spent with precision on clothes and other things that brought him personal distinction; in what people call necessities he starved himself. By the time he was ready to leave school you could hardly have told him from the man he had set out to follow: he was equally well-mannered; equally at his ease; if anything, more conscious of prerogative than Bewsher. He had come to spend most of his holidays at Bewsher's great old house in Gloucestershire. That, too, was an illumination. It showed him what money was made for—the sunny quiet of the place, the wheels of a spacious living that ran so smoothly, the long gardens, the inevitableness of it all. Some day, he told himself, he would have just such a house. He has. It is his mistress. The world has not allowed him much of the poetry that, as you must already see, the man has in him; he takes it out on his place.

"It was in Morton's last year at Oxford, just before his graduation, that the second great moment of his life occurred. He had done well

at his college, not a poor college either; and all the while, you must remember, he was borrowing money and running up bills. But this didn't bother him. He was perfectly assured in his own mind concerning his future. He had counted costs. In that May, Bewsher, who from school had gone to Sandhurst, came up on a visit with two or three other fledgling officers, and they had a dinner in Morton's rooms. It turned into rather a 'rag,' as those things do, and it was there, across a flower-strewn, wine-stained table, that Morton had his second revelation. He wasn't drunk—he never got drunk; the others were. The thing came in upon him slowly, warmingly, like the breeze that stirred the curtains. He felt himself, as never before, a man. You can see him sitting back in his chair, in the smoke and the noise and the foolish singing, cool, his eyes a little closed. He knew now that he had passed the level of these men; yes, even the shining mark Bewsher had set. He had gone on, while they had stood still. To him, he suddenly realized, and to such as he, belonged the heritage of the years, not to these men who thought they held it. These old gray buildings stretching away into the May dusk, the history of a thousand years, were his. These sprawled young aristocrats before him—they, whether they eventually came to know it or not, they, and Bewsher with them—would one day

do his bidding: come when he beckoned, go when he sent. It was a big thought, wasn't it, for a man of twenty-two?" Sir John paused and puffed at his cigarette.

"That was the second high light," he continued, "and the third did not come until fifteen years later. Bewsher went into the Indian army—his family had ideas of service—and Morton into a banking-house in London. And there, as deliberately as he had taken them up, he laid aside for the time being all the social perquisites which he had with so much pains acquired. Do you know—he told me that for fifteen years not once had he dined out, except when he thought his ambitions would be furthered by so doing, and then, as one turns on a tap, he turned on the charm he now knew himself to possess. It is not astonishing, is it, when you come to think of it, that eventually he became rich and famous? Most people are unwilling to sacrifice their youth to their future. He wasn't. But it wasn't a happy time. He hated it. He paid off his debts, however, and at the end of the fifteen years found himself a big man in a small way, with every prospect of becoming a big man in a big way. Then, of course—such men do—he began to look about him. He wanted wider horizons, he wanted luxury, he wanted a wife; and he wanted them as a starved man wants food. He

experienced comparatively little difficulty in getting started. Some of his school and university friends remembered him, and there was a whisper about that he was a man that bore watching. But afterward he stuck. The inner citadel of London is by no means as assailable as the outer fortifications lead one to suppose.

"They say a man never has a desire but there's an angel or a devil to write it down. Morton had hardly made his discovery when Bewsher turned up from India, transferred to a crack cavalry regiment; a sunburnt, cordial Bewsher, devilishly determined to enjoy the fulness of his prime. On his skirts, as he had done once before, Morton penetrated farther and farther into the esoteric heart of society. I'm not sure just how Bewsher felt toward Morton at the time; he liked him, I think; at all events, he had the habit of him. As for Morton, he liked Bewsher as much as he dared; he never permitted himself to like any one too much.

"I don't know how it is with you, but I have noticed again and again that intimate friends are prone to fall in love with the same woman: perhaps it is because they have so many tastes in common; perhaps it is jealousy—I don't know. Anyhow, that is what happened to these two, Morton first, then Bewsher; and it is characteristic that the former mentioned it to no

one, while the latter was confidential and expansive. Such men do not deserve women, and yet they are often the very men women fall most in love with. At first the girl had been attracted to Morton, it seems; he intrigued her—no doubt the sense of power about him; but the handsomer man, when he entered the running, speedily drew ahead. You can imagine the effect of this upon her earlier suitor. It was the first rebuff that for a long time had occurred to him in his ordered plan of life. He resented it and turned it over in his mind, and eventually, as it always does to men of his kind, his opportunity came. You see, unlike Bewsher and his class, all his days had been an exercise in the recognition and appreciation of chances. He isolated the inevitable fly in the ointment, and in this particular ointment the fly happened to be Bewsher's lack of money and the education the girl had received. She was poor in the way that only the daughter of a great house can be. To Morton, once he was aware of the fly, and once he had combined the knowledge of it with what these two people most lacked, it was a simple thing. They lacked, as you have already guessed, courage and directness. On Morton's side was all the dunder-headism of an aristocracy, all its romanticism, all its gross materialism, all its confusion of ideals. But you mustn't think that he, Morton, was cold or

objective in all this: far from it; he was desperately in love with the girl himself, and he was playing his game like a man in a corner—all his wits about him, but fever in his heart.

"There was the situation, an old one—a girl who dare not marry a poor man, and a poor man cracking his brains to know where to get money from. I dare say Bewsher never questioned the rightness of it all—he was too much in love with the girl, his own training had been too similar. And Morton, hovering on the outskirts, talked—to weak people the most fatal doctrine in the world—the doctrine of power, the doctrine that each man and woman can have just what they want if they will only get out and seek it. That's true for the big people; for the small it usually spells death. They falter on methods. They are too afraid of unimportant details. His insistence had its results even more speedily than he had hoped. Before long the girl, too, was urging Bewsher on to effort. It isn't the first time goodness has sent weakness to the devil. Meanwhile the instigator dropped from his one-time position of tentative lover to that of adviser in particular. It was just the position that at the time he most desired.

"Things came to a head on a warm night in April. Bewsher dropped in upon Morton in his chambers. Very handsome he looked, too, I dare

say, in his evening clothes, with an opera-coat thrown back from his shoulders. I remember well myself his grand air, with a touch of cavalry swagger about it. I've no doubt he leaned against the chimney-piece and tapped his leg with his stick. And the upshot of it was that he wanted money.

"Oh, no! not a loan. It wasn't as bad as that. He had enough to screw along with himself; although he was frightfully in debt. He wanted a big sum. An income. To make money, that was. He didn't want to go into business if he could help it; hadn't any ability that way; hated it. But perhaps Morton could put him in the way of something? He didn't mind chances."

"Do you see?" Sir John leaned forward. "And he never realized the vulgarity of it—that product of five centuries, that English gentleman. Never realized the vulgarity of demanding of life something for nothing; of asking from a man as a free gift what that man had sweated for and starved for all his life; yes, literally, all his life. It was an illumination, as Morton said, upon that pitiful thing we call 'class.' He demanded all this as his right, too; demanded power, the one precious possession. Well, the other man had his code as well, and the first paragraph in it was that a man shall get only what he works for. Can you imagine him,

the little ugly man, sitting at his table and thinking all this? And suddenly he got to his feet. 'Yes,' he said, 'I'll make you a rich man.' But he didn't say he would keep him one. That was the third high light—the little man standing where all through the ages had stood men like him, the secret movers of the world, while before them, supplicating, had passed the beauty and the pride of their times. In the end they all beg at the feet of power—the kings and the fighting men. And yet, although this was the great, hidden triumph of his life, and, moreover, beyond his hopes a realization of the game he had been playing—for it put Bewsher, you see, utterly in his power—Morton said at the moment it made him a little sick. It was too crude; Bewsher's request too unashamed; it made suddenly too cheap, since men could ask for it so lightly, all the stakes for which he, Morton, had sacrificed the slow minutes and hours of his life. And then, of course, there was this as well: Bewsher had been to Morton an ideal, and ideals can't die, even the memory of them, without some pain."

Mrs. Malcolm, watching with lips a little parted, said to herself: "He has uncoiled too much."

"Yes"—Sir John reached out his hand and, picking up a long-stemmed rose from the table,

began idly to twist it in his fingers. "And that was the end. From then on the matter was simple. It was like a duel between a trained swordsman and a novice; only it wasn't really a duel at all, for one of the antagonists was unaware that he was fighting. I suppose that most people would call it unfair. I have wondered. And yet Bewsher, in a polo game, or in the game of social life, would not have hesitated to use all the skill and craft he knew. But, you say, he would not have played against beginners. Well, he had asked himself into this game; he had not been invited. And so, all through that spring and into the summer and autumn the three-cornered contest went on, and into the winter and on to the spring beyond. Unwittingly, the girl was playing more surely than ever into Morton's hand. The increasing number of Bewsher's platitudes about wealth, about keeping up tradition, about religion, showed that. He even talked vaguely about giving up the army and going into business. 'It must have its fascinations, you know,' he remarked lightly. In the eyes of both of them Morton had become sort of fairy godfather—a mysterious, wonderful gnome at whose beck gold leaped from the mountainside. It was just the illusion he wished to create. In the final analysis the figure of the gnome is the most beloved figure in the rotten class to which we

belong.

"And then, just as spontaneously as it had come, Bewsher's money began to melt away—slowly at first; faster afterward until, finally, he was back again to his original income. This was a time of stress, of hurried consultations, of sympathy on the part of Morton, of some rather ugly funk on the part of Bewsher; and Morton realized that in the eyes of the girl he was rapidly becoming once more the dominant figure. It didn't do him much good"—Sir John broke the stem of the rose between his fingers.

"Soon there was an end to it all. There came, finally, a very unpleasant evening. This too was in April; April a year after Bewsher's visit to Morton's chambers, only this time the scene was laid in an office. Bewsher had put a check on the desk. 'Here,' he said, 'that will tide me over until I can get on my feet,' and his voice was curiously thick; and Morton, looking down, had seen that the signature wasn't genuine—a clumsy business done by a clumsy man—and, despite all his training, from what he said, a little cold shiver had run up and down his back. This had gone farther than he had planned. But he made no remark, simply pocketed the check, and the next day settled out of his own pockets Bewsher's sorry affairs; put him back, that is, where he had started, with a small income

mortgaged beyond hope. Then he sent a note to the girl requesting an interview on urgent business. She saw him that night in her drawing-room. She was very lovely. Morton was all friendly sympathy. It wasn't altogether unreal, either. I think, from what he told me, he was genuinely touched. But he felt, you know—the urge, the goad, of his own career. His kind do. Ultimately they are not their own masters. He showed the girl the check—not at first, you understand, but delicately, after preliminary discussion; reluctantly upon repeated urging. 'What was he to do? What would she advise? Bewsher was safe, of course; he had seen to that; but the whole unintelligible, shocking aspect of the thing!' He tore the check up and threw it in the fire. He was not unaware that the girl's eyes admired him. It was a warm night. He said good-by and walked home along the deserted street. He remembered, he told me, how sweet the trees smelled. He was not happy. You see, Bewsher had been the nearest approach to a friend he had ever had.

"That practically finished the sordid business. What the girl said to Bewsher Morton never knew; he trusted to her conventionalized religion and her family pride to break Bewsher's heart, and to Bewsher's sentimentality to eliminate him forever from the scene. In both

surmises he was correct; he was only not aware that at the same time the girl had broken her own heart. He found that out afterward. And Bewsher eliminated himself more thoroughly than necessary. I suppose the shame of the thing was to him like a blow to a thoroughbred, instead of an incentive, as it would have been to a man of coarser fibre. He went from bad to worse, resigned from his regiment, finally disappeared. Personally, I had hoped that he had begun again somewhere on the outskirts of the world. But he isn't that sort. There's not much of the Norman king to him except his nose. The girl married Morton. He gave her no time to recover from her gratitude. He felt very happy, he told me, the day of his wedding, very elated. It was one of those rare occasions when he felt that the world was a good place. Another high light, you see. And it was no mean thing, if you consider it, for a man such as he to marry the daughter of a peer, and at the same time to love her. He was not a gentleman, you understand, he could never be that—it was the one secret thing that always hurt him—no amount of brains, no amount of courage could make him what he wasn't; he never lied to himself as most men do; so he had acquired a habit of secretly triumphing over those who possessed the gift. The other thing that hurt him was when, a few months later, he discovered that his wife still

loved Bewsher and always would. And that"—Sir John picked up the broken rose again—"is, I suppose, the end of the story."

There was a moment's silence and then Burnaby lifted his pointed chin. "By George!" he said, "it *is* interesting to know how things really happen, isn't it? But I think—you have, haven't you, left out the real point. Do you—would you mind telling just why you imagine Morton did this thing? Told his secret before all those people? It wasn't like him, was it?"

Sir John slowly lighted another cigarette, and then he turned to Burnaby and smiled. "Yes," he said, "it was extremely like him. Still, it's very clever of you, very clever. Can't you guess? It isn't so very difficult."

"No," said Burnaby, "I can't guess at all."

"Well, then, listen." And to Mrs. Malcolm it seemed as if Sir John had grown larger, had merged in the shadows about him; at least he gave that impression, for he sat up very straight and threw back his shoulders. For a moment he hesitated, then he began, "You must go back to the dinner I was describing," he said—"the dinner in London. I too was intrigued as you are, and when it was over I followed Morton out and walked with him toward his club. And, like you, I asked the question. I think that he had

known all along that I suspected; at all events, it is characteristic of the man that he did not try to bluff me. He walked on for a little while in silence, and then he laughed abruptly. 'Yes,' he said, 'I'll tell you. Yes. Just this. What there is to be got, I've got; what work can win I've won; but back of it all there's something else, and back even of that there's a careless god who gives his gifts where they are least deserved. That's one reason why I talked as I did to-night. To all of us—the men like me—there comes in the end a time when we realize that what a man can do we can do, but that love, the touch of other people's minds, these two things are the gifts of the careless god. And it irritates us, I suppose, irritates us! We want them in a way that the ordinary man who has them cannot understand. We want them as damned souls in hell want water. And sometimes the strain's too much. It was to-night. To touch other minds, even for a moment, even if they hate you while you are doing it, that's the thing! To lay yourself, just once, bare to the gaze of ordinary people! With the hope, perhaps, that even then they may still find in you something to admire or love. Self-revelation! Every man confesses sometime. It happened that I chose a dinner party. Do you understand?'" It was almost as if Sir John himself had asked the question.

"And then"—he was speaking in his usual calm tones again—"there happened a curious thing, a very curious thing, for Morton stopped and turned toward me and began to laugh. I thought he would never stop. It was rather uncanny, under the street lamp there, this usually rather quiet man. 'And that,' he said at length, 'that's only half the story. The cream of it is this: the way I myself felt, sitting there among all those soft, easily lived people. That's the cream of it. To flout them, to sting them, to laugh at them, to know you had more courage than all of them put together, you who were once so afraid of them! To feel that—even if they knew it was about yourself you were talking—that even then they were afraid of you, and would to-morrow ask you back again to their houses. That's power! That's worth doing! After all, you can keep your love and your sympathy and your gentlemen; it's only to men like me, men who've sweated and come up, that moments arise such as I've had to-night.' And then, 'It's rather a pity,' he said, after a pause, 'that of them all you alone knew of whom I was talking. Rather a pity, isn't it?'" Sir John hesitated and looked about the table. "It was unusual, wasn't it?" he said at length gently. "Have I been too dramatic?"

In the little silence that followed, Mrs. Malcolm leaned forward, her eyes starry. "I

would rather," she said, "talk to Bewsher in his teepee than talk to Morton with all his money."

Sir John looked at her and smiled—his charming smile. "Oh, no, you wouldn't," he said. "Oh, no! We say those things, but we don't mean them. If you sat next to Morton at dinner you'd like him; but as for Bewsher you'd despise him, as all right-minded women despise a failure. Oh, no; you'd prefer Morton."

"Perhaps you're right," sighed Mrs. Malcolm; "pirates are fascinating, I suppose." She arose to her feet. Out of the shadows Lady Masters advanced to meet her. "She *is* like a mist," thought Mrs. Malcolm. "Exactly like a rather faint mist."

Burnaby leaned over and lit a cigarette at one of the candles. "And, of course," he said quietly, without raising his head, "the curious thing is that this fellow Morton, despite all his talk of power, in the end is merely a ghost of Bewsher, after all, isn't he?"

Sir John turned and looked at the bowed sleek head with a puzzled expression. "A ghost!" he murmured. "I don't think I quite understand."

"It's very simple," said Burnaby, and raised his head. "Despite all Morton has done, in the things worth while, in the things he wants the

most, he can at best be only a shadow of the shadow Bewsher has left—a shadow of a man to the woman who loves Bewsher, a shadow of a friend to the men who liked Bewsher, a shadow of a gentleman to the gentlemen about him. A ghost, in other words. It's the inevitable end of all selfishness. I think Bewsher has rather the best of it, don't you?"

"I—I had never thought of it in quite that light," said Sir John, and followed Mrs. Malcolm.

They went into the drawing-room beyond—across a hallway, and up a half-flight of stairs, and through glass doors. "Play for us!" said Mrs. Malcolm, and Burnaby, that remarkable young man, sat down to the piano and for perhaps an hour made the chords sob to a strange music, mostly his own.

"That's Bewsher!" he said when he was through, and had sat back on his stool, and was sipping a long-neglected cordial.

"Br-r-r-!" shivered Mrs. Selden from her place by the fire. "How unpleasant you are!"

Sir John looked troubled. "I hope," he said, "my story hasn't depressed you too much. Burnaby's was really worse, you know. Well, I must be going." He turned to Mrs. Malcolm.

"You are one of the few women who can make me sit up late."

He bade each in turn good-night in his suave, charming, slightly Hebraic manner. To Burnaby he said: "Thank you for the music. Improvisation is perhaps the happiest of gifts."

But Burnaby for once was awkward. He was watching Sir John's face with the curious, intent look of a forest animal that so often possessed his long, dark eyes. Suddenly he remembered himself. "Oh, yes," he said hastily, "I beg your pardon. Thanks, very much."

"Good-night!" Sir John and Lady Masters passed through the glass doors.

Burnaby paused a moment where he had shaken hands, and then, with the long stride characteristic of him, went to the window and, drawing aside the curtain, peered into the darkness beyond. He stood listening until the purr of a great motor rose and died on the snow-muffled air. "He's gone!" he said, and turned back into the room. He spread his arms out and dropped them to his sides. "Swastika!" he said. "And God keep us from the evil eye!"

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Malcolm.

"Sir John," said Burnaby. "He has 'a bad

heart.'"

"Stop talking your Indian talk and tell us what you mean."

Burnaby balanced himself on the hearth. "Am I to understand you don't know?" he asked. "Well, Morton's Masters, and 'the girl's' Lady Masters, and Bewsher—well, he's just a squaw-man."

"I don't believe it!" said Mrs. Malcolm. "He wouldn't dare."

"Wouldn't dare?" Burnaby laughed shortly. "My dear Minna, he'd dare anything if it gave him a sense of power."

"But why—why did he choose us? We're not so important as all that?"

"Because—well, Bewsher's name came up. Because, well, you heard what he said—self-revelation—men who had sweated. Because—" suddenly Burnaby took a step forward and his jaw shot out—"because that shadow of his, that wife of his, broke a champagne-glass when I said Geoffrey Boisselier Bewsher; broke her champagne-glass and, I've no doubt, cried out loud in her heart. Power can't buy love—no; but power can stamp to death anything that won't love it. That's Masters. I can tell a timber-wolf

far off. Can you see him now in his motor? He'll have turned the lights out, and she—his wife—will be looking out of the window at the snow. All you can see of him would be his nose and his beard and the glow of his cigar—except his smile. You could see that when the car passed a corner lamp, couldn't you?"

"I don't believe it yet," said Mrs. Malcolm. "It's too preposterous."

LONELY PLACES[5]

By FRANCIS BUZZELL

From *The Pictorial Review*

She was not quite forty years old, but so aged was she in appearance that another twenty-five years would not find her perceptibly older. And to the people of Almont she was still Abbie Snover, or "that Snover girl." Age in Almont is not reckoned in years, but by marriage, and by children, and grandchildren.

Nearly all the young men of Abbie's generation had gone to the City, returning only in after

years, with the intention of staying a week or two weeks, and leaving at the end of a day, or two days. So Abbie never married.

It had never occurred to Abbie to leave Almont because all the young men had gone away. She had been born in the big house at the foot of Tillson Street; she had never lived anywhere else; she had never slept anywhere but in the black walnut bed in the South bedroom.

At the age of twenty-five, Abbie inherited the big house, and with it hired-man Chris. He was part of her inheritance. Her memory of him, like her memory of the big house, went back as far as her memory of herself.

Every Winter evening, between seven and eight o'clock, Abbie lighted the glass-handled lamp, placed it on the marble-topped table in the parlor window, and sat down beside it. The faint light of this lamp, gleaming through the snow-hung, shelving evergreens, was the only sign that the big house was there, and occupied. When the wind blew from the West she could occasionally hear a burst of laughter from the boys and girls sliding down Giddings's Hill; the song of some young farmer driving home. She thought of the Spring, when the snow would disappear, and the honeysuckle would flower, and the wrens would again occupy the old

teapots hung in the vines of the dining-room porch.

The things that made the people of Almont interesting to each other and drew them together meant nothing to Abbie Snover. When she had become too old to be asked in marriage by any one, she had stopped going to dances and to sleigh-rides, and no one had asked her why. Then she had left the choir.

Except when she went to do her marketing, Abbie was never seen on the streets.

For fifteen years after Amos Snover died, Abbie and Old Chris lived alone in the big house. Every Saturday morning, as her mother had done before her, Abbie went to the grocery store, to the butcher shop, and to "Newberry's." She always walked along the East side of Main Street, Old Chris, with the market-basket, following about three feet behind her. And every Saturday night Old Chris went down-town to sit in the back of Pot Lippincott's store and visit with Owen Frazer, who drove in from the sixty acres he farmed as a "renter" at Mile Corners. Once every week Abbie made a batch of cookies, cutting the thin-rolled dough into the shape of leaves with an old tin cutter that had been her mother's. She stored the cookies in the shiny tin pail that stood on the shelf in the

clothes-press of the downstairs bedroom, because that was where her mother had always kept them, to be handy and yet out of reach of the hired help. And when Jennie Sanders's children came to her door on their way home from school she gave them two cookies each, because her mother had always given her two.

Once every three months "the Jersey girls," dressed in black broadcloth, with black, fluted ruffles around their necks, and black-flowered bonnets covering their scanty hair, turned the corner at Chase's Lane, walked three blocks to the foot of Tilson Street, and rang Abbie Snover's door-bell.

As Old Chris grew older and less able, Abbie was compelled to close off first one room and then another; but Old Chris still occupied the back chamber near the upstairs woodroom, and Abbie still slept in the South bedroom.

Early one October afternoon, Jim East, Almont's express agent and keeper of the general store, drove his hooded delivery cart up to the front steps of the big house. He trembled with excitement as he climbed down from the seat.

"Abbie Snover! Ab—bie!" he called. "I got somethin' for you! A package all the way from China! Just you come an' look!"

Jim East lifted the package out of the delivery cart, carried it up the steps, and set it down at Abbie's feet.

"Just you look, Abbie! That there crate's made of little fishin' poles, an' what's inside's all wrapped up in Chinee mats!"

Old Chris came around from the back of the house. Jim East grabbed his arm and pointed at the bamboo crate:

"Just you put your nose down, Chris, an' smell. Ain't that foreign?"

Abbie brought her scissors. Carefully she removed the red and yellow labels.

"There's American writin' on 'em, too," Jim East hastened to explain, "'cause otherwise how'd I know who it was *for*, hey?"

Abbie carried the labels into the parlor and looked for a safe place for them. She saw the picture-album and put them in it. Then she hurried back to the porch. Old Chris opened one end of the crate.

"It's a plant," Jim East whispered; "a Chinee plant."

"It's a dwarf orange-tree," Old Chris announced. "See, it says so on that there card."

Abbie carried the little orange-tree into the parlor. Who could have sent it to her? There was no one she knew, away off there in China!

"You be careful of that bamboo and the wrappings," she warned Old Chris. "I'll make something decorative-like out of them."

Abbie waited until Jim East drove away in his delivery cart. Then she sat down at the table in the parlor and opened the album. She found her name on one of the labels—Abbie Snover, Almont, Michigan, U. S. A. It seemed queer to her that her name had come all the way from China. On the card that said that the plant was a dwarf orange-tree she found the name—Thomas J. Thorington. Thomas? Tom? Tom Thorington! Why, the last she had heard of Tom had been fifteen years back. He had gone out West. She had received a picture of him in a uniform, with a gun on his shoulder. She dimly recollected that he had been a guard at some penitentiary. How long ago it seemed! He must have become a missionary or something, to be away off in China. And he had remembered her! She sat for a long time looking at the labels. She wondered if the queer Chinese letters spelled Abbie Snover, Almont, Michigan. She opened the album again and hunted until she found the picture of Tom Thorington in his guard's

uniform. Then she placed the labels next to the picture, closed the album, and carefully fastened the adjustable clasp.

Under Abbie's constant attention, the little orange-tree thrived. A tiny green orange appeared. Day by day she watched it grow, looking forward to the time when it would become large and yellow. The days grew shorter and colder, but she did not mind; every week the orange grew larger. After the first snow, she moved the tree into the down-stairs bedroom. She placed it on a little stand in the South window. The inside blinds, which she had always kept as her mother liked them best—the lower blinds closed, the top blinds opened a little to let in the morning light—she now threw wide open so that the tree would get all of the sun. And she kept a fire in the small sheet-iron stove, for fear that the old, drafty wood furnace might not send up a steady enough heat through the register. When the nights became severe, she crept down the narrow, winding stairs, and through the cold, bare halls, to put an extra chunk of hardwood into the stove. Every morning she swept and dusted the room; the ashes and wood dirt around the stove gave her something extra to do near the orange-tree. She removed the red and white coverlet from the

bed, and put in its place the fancy patch-quilt with the green birds and the yellow flowers, to make the room look brighter.

"Abbie Snover loves that orange-tree more'n anything in the world," Old Chris cautioned the children when they came after cookies, "an' don't you dare touch it, even with your little finger."

The growing orange was as wonderful to the children as it was to Abbie. Instead of taking the cookies and hurrying home, they stood in front of the tree, their eyes round and big. And one day, when Abbie went to the clothes-press to get the cookie-pail, Bruce Sanders snipped the orange from the tree.

The children were unnaturally still when Abbie came out of the clothes-press. They did not rush forward to get the cookies. Abbie looked quickly at the tree; the pail of cookies dropped from her hands. She grabbed the two children nearest and shook them until their heads bumped together. Then she drove them all in front of her to the door and down the path to the gate, which she slammed shut behind them.

Once outside the gate the children ran, yelling: "Ab-bie Sno-ver, na—aa—ah! Ab-bie Sno-ver, na—aa—ah!"

Abbie, her hands trembling, her eyes hot, went back into the house. That was what came of letting them take fruit from the trees and vines in the yard; of giving them cookies every time they rang her door-bell. Well, there would be no more cookies, and Old Chris should be told never to let them come into the yard again.

That evening, when the metallic hiccough of the well pump on the kitchen porch told her that Old Chris was drawing up fresh water for the night, Abbie went out into the kitchen to make sure that he placed one end of the prop under the knob of the kitchen door and the other end against the leg of the kitchen table.

"It'll freeze afore mornin'," said Old Chris.

"Yes," Abbie answered.

But she did not get up in the night to put an extra chunk of wood in the stove of the down-stairs bedroom.

"Ab-bie Sno-ver, na—aa—ah! Ab-bie Sno-ver, na—aa—ah!"

Old Chris stopped shoveling snow to shake his fist at the yelling children.

"Your Mas'll fix you, if you don't stop that

screechin'!"

And they answered: "Ab-bie Sno-ver, an' old Chris! Ab-bie Sno-ver, an' old Chris!"

Every day they yelled the two names as they passed the big house. They yelled them on their way to and from school, and on their way to Giddings's Hill to slide. The older boys took it up, and yelled it when they saw Abbie and Old Chris on Main Street Saturday mornings. And finally they rimed it into a couplet,

"Ab-bie Sno-ver, an' Old Chris—
We saw Chris an' Ab-bie kiss!"

It was too much. Abbie went to Hugh Perry's mother.

Mrs. Perry defended her young son. "He couldn't have done it," she told Abbie. "He ain't that kind of a boy, and you can just tell that Old Chris I said so. I guess it must be true, the way you're fussin' round!"

Mrs. Perry slammed the door in Abbie's face. Then she whipped her young son, and hated Abbie and Old Chris because they were responsible for it.

"That Abbie Snover came to my house," Mrs. Perry told Mrs. Rowles, "an' said my Hugh had been a-couplin' her name with Old Chris's in a nasty way. An' I told her—"

"The idea! the idea!" Mrs. Rowles interrupted.

"An' I told her it must be so, an' I guess it is," Mrs. Perry concluded.

Mrs. Rowles called upon Pastor Lucus's wife.

"Abbie Snover an' Old Chris was seen kissin'."

"It's scandalous," Mrs. Lucas told the pastor.

"The town shouldn't put up with it a minute longer. That's what comes of Abbie Snover not coming to church since her Ma died."

On Saturday mornings when Abbie went down-town followed by Old Chris, the women eyed her coldly, and the faces of the men took on quizzical, humorous expressions. Abbie could not help but notice it; she was disturbed. The time for "the Jersey girls" to call came around. Every afternoon Abbie sat in the window and watched for them to turn the corner at Chase's Lane. She brought out the polished apples which she kept in the clothes-press all ready for some one, but "the Jersey girls" did not come.

"You haven't heard of anybody being sick at the Jersey house, have you, Chris?"

"Um? Nope!"

"Haven't seen Josie or Em Jersey anywhere lately?"

"Seen 'em at the post-office night afore last."

"H'mp!"

Abbie pushed the kettle to the front of the kitchen stove, poked up the fire, and put in fresh sticks of wood. When the water boiled she poured it into a blue-lacquered pail with yellow

bands around the rim, carried it up the steep back stairs, and got out fresh stockings.

An hour later Old Chris saw her climbing up Tillson street. He scratched his head and frowned.

Abbie turned the corner at Chase's Lane. The snow, driven by the wind, blinded her. She almost bumped into Viny Freeman.

"My, Viny! What you doing out on such a day?"

Viny Freeman passed her without answering.

"Seems she didn't see me," Abbie muttered. "What can she be doing away down here on such a day? Must be something special to bring her out of her lonely old house with her lame side. My! I almost bumped that hand she's always holding up her pain with. My!"

Abbie turned into the Jersey gate and climbed the icy steps, hanging onto the railing with both hands. She saw Em Jersey rise from her chair in the parlor and go into the back sitting-room. Abbie pulled the bell-knob and waited. No one answered. She pulled it again. No answer. She rapped on the door with her knuckles. Big Mary, the Jersey hired girl, opened the door part way.

"They ain't to home."

"Ain't to home?" exclaimed Abbie. "My land! Didn't I just see Em Jersey through the parlor window?"

"No'm, you never did. They ain't to home."

"Well, I never! And their Ma and mine was cousins! They ain't sick or nothing? Well!"

The snow melted; the streets ran with water and then froze. Old Chris no longer came into the parlor in the evening to sit, his hands clasped over his thin stomach, his bald head bent until his chin rested upon the starched neckband of his shirt.

They ate in silence the meals which Abbie prepared: Old Chris at one end of the long table, and Abbie at the other end.

In silence they went about their accustomed tasks.

Abbie, tired with a new weariness, sat in her chair beside the marble-topped table. The village was talking about her; she knew it; she felt it all around her. Well, let them talk!

But one day Almont sent a committee to her. It

was composed of one man and three women. Abbie saw them when they turned in at her gate —Pastor Lucus Lorina Inman, Antha Ewell, and Aunt Alphie Newberry.

Abbie walked to the center of the parlor and stood there, her hands clenched, her face set. The door-bell rang; for a moment her body swayed. Then she went into the bay window and drew the blinds aside. Antha Ewell saw her and jerked Pastor Lucus's arm. Pastor Lucus turned and caught sight of Abbie; he thought that she had not heard the bell, so he tapped the door panel with his fingers and nodded his head at her invitingly, as if to say:

"See, we're waiting for you to let us in." Abbie's expression did not change. Pastor Lucus tapped at the door again, this time hesitantly, and still she looked at them with unseeing eyes. He tapped a third time, then turned and looked at the three women. Aunt Alphie Newberry tugged, at his arm, and the committee of four turned about without looking at Abbie, and walked down the steps.

A few minutes later Abbie heard the door between the parlor and dining-room open. Old Chris came in. For a moment or two neither spoke. Old Chris fingered his cap.

"Abbie, I lived here forty-two years. I was here

when you was born. I carried you around in my arms a little bit of thing an' made you laugh."

Abbie did not turn away from the window.

"I know what they came for," Old Chris continued. "Your Ma—your Ma, she'd never thought I'd have to go away from here."

Abbie could not answer him.

"I don't know who'll keep the furnace a-goin' when I'm gone, nor fill the up-stairs woodroom."

Still no answer.

"I'm old now—I'll go to Owen Frazer's farm—down to Mile Corners. He'll have some work I can do."

Old Chris stroked his baggy cheeks with trembling hands. Abbie still looked out of the window.

"I'm a-goin' down to the post-office now," said Old Chris, as he turned and went to the door. "Be there anything you want?"

Abbie shook her head; she could not find words. As Old Chris went down the hall she heard him mumble, "I don't know what she'll do when I'm gone."

That night Abbie sat in the parlor window longer than usual. It was a white night; wet snow had been falling heavily all day. Some time between eight and nine o'clock she arose from her chair and went into the long, narrow dining-room. The pat-pat of her slippered feet aroused Old Chris from his nodding over the *Farm Herald*. Finding that the hot air was not coming up strong through the register over which he sat, the old man slowly pushed his wool-socked feet into felt-lined overshoes and tramped down into the cellar, picking up the kitchen lamp as he went. Abbie followed as far as the kitchen. The pungent dry-wood smell that came up the stairs when Old Chris swung open the door of the wood cellar made her sniff. She heard the sounds as he loaded the wheelbarrow with the sticks of quartered hardwood; the noise of the wheel bumping over the loose boards as he pushed his load into the furnace-room. She went back into the parlor and stood over the register. Hollow sounds came up through the pipe as Old Chris leveled the ashes in the fire-box and threw in the fresh sticks.

When Old Chris came up from the cellar and went out onto the porch to draw up fresh water for the night, Abbie went back into the kitchen.

"It's snowin' hard out," said Old Chris.

"Yes," Abbie answered.

She led the way back into the dining-room. Old Chris placed the kitchen lamp on the stand under the fruit picture and waited. For a few moments they stood in the blast of hot air rising from the register. Then Abbie took up the larger of the two lamps. Through the bare, high-ceilinged rooms she went, opening and closing the heavy doors; on through the cold, empty hall, up the stairs, into the South bedroom. While she was closing the blinds she heard Old Chris stumble up the back stairs and into the chamber he had occupied ever since she could remember.

The night after Old Chris had gone, Abbie took the brass dinner-bell from the pantry shelf and set it on the chair beside her bed. Over the back of the chair she placed her heavy, rabbit-lined coat; it would be handy if any one disturbed her. Once or twice when she heard sounds, she put out her hand and touched the bell; but the sounds did not recur. The next night she tried sleeping in the down-stairs bedroom. The blue-and-gray carpet, the blue fixings on the bureau and commode, the blue bands around the wash-bowl and pitcher—all faded and old-looking—reminded her of her mother and father, and would not let her sleep. On the wall in front of her was a picture in a black frame of a rowboat

filled with people. It was called "From Shore to Shore." Trying not to see it, her eyes were caught by a black-and-white print in a gilt frame, called "The First Steps." How she had loved the picture when she was a little girl; her mother had explained it to her many times—the bird teaching its little ones to fly; the big, shaggy dog encouraging its waddling puppies; the mother coaxing her baby to walk alone.

At midnight Abbie got out of bed, picked up the dinner-bell by the clapper, and went back up-stairs to the South bedroom.

The tall, bare walls of the big house, the high ceilings with their centerpieces of plaster fruits and flowers, the cold whiteness, closed her in. Having no one to talk to, she talked to herself: "It's snowin' hard out——why! that was what Old Chris said the night before he went away." She began to be troubled by a queer, detached feeling; she knew that she had mislaid something, but just what she could not remember. Forebodings came to her, distressing, disquieting. There would never be any one for her to speak to—never! The big house grew terrible; the rooms echoed her steps. She would have given everything for a little house of two or three small, low-ceilinged rooms close to the sidewalk on a street where people passed up and down.

A night came when Abbie forgot that Old Chris had gone away. She had been sitting in her chair beside the marble-topped table, staring out into the night. All day the wind had blown; snow was piled high around the porch. Her thoughts had got back to her childhood. Somehow they had centered around the old grandfather who, years before, had sat in the same window. She saw him in his chair; heard his raspy old voice, "I married Jane sixty-eight an' a half years ago, an' a half year in a man's life is something, I'll bet you. An' I buried her thirty years ago, an' that's a long time, too. We never tore each other's shirts. Jane wanted to live a quiet life. She wanted one child, an' she was tenacious 'bout that. She never wanted any more, an' she had three, an' one of 'em was your Ma. She never wanted to be seen out with a baby in her arms, Jane didn't. I made her get bundled up once or twice, an' I hitched up the horse an' took her ridin' in my phaeton that cost two hundred dollars.—You'll be in your dotage some day, Abbie. I've been in my dotage for years now.—Oh, I altered my life to fit Jane's. I expected I had a wife to go out and see the neighbors with. By gosh! we never went across the street—I'll take on goodness some day, Abbie. By goll! that's all I'm good for to take on now.—Oh, it beat all what a boy I was. I and Mother broke our first team of oxen. When you

get children, Abbie, let them raise themselves up. They'll do better at it than a poor father or mother can. I had the finest horses and the best phaeton for miles around, but you never saw a girl a-ridin' by the side of me.—Some men can't work alone, Abbie. They got to have the women around or they quit. Don't you get that kind of a man, Abbie.—Oh, she was renowned was my old mare, Kit. You never got to the end of her. She lived to be more'n thirty year, an' she raised fourteen colts. She was a darned good little thing she was. I got her for a big black mare that weighed fourteen hundred pound, an' I made 'em give me ten dollars, too, an' I got her colt with her—"

Abbie suddenly realized that she was shivering; that her feet were cold; that it was long after nine o'clock. Old Chris must have fallen asleep in his chair. She went to the dining-room door and opened it; the dining-room was dark. Why?—why, of course! Old Chris had been gone for more than three weeks. She took hold of the door to steady herself; her hands shook. How could she have forgotten? Was she going crazy? Would the loneliness come to that?

Abbie went to bed. All night she lay awake, thinking. The thoughts came of themselves. What the town had to say didn't matter after all;

the town had paid her no attention for years; it was paying her no attention now. Why, then, should she live without any one to speak to? "I'll go and get Old Chris, that's what I'll do. I won't live here alone any longer." And with this decision she went to sleep.

In the morning when Abbie opened the kitchen door and stepped out onto the porch, frost lay thick upon the well pump.

She drew her shawl close around her and took hold of the pump-handle with her mittened hands. When she had filled the pail she went back into the kitchen. The sound of the wind made her shiver. To walk all the way to Mile Corners on such a day required green tea, so Abbie drank three cupfuls. Then, as on the day when she went out to call upon "the Jersey girls," she carried hot water up-stairs and got out fresh stockings.

About nine o'clock three women of Pastor Lucus's church, standing on the front steps of Aunt Alphie Newberry's house, saw Abbie struggling through a drift.

"Why, there's Abbie Snover," said Jennie Chipman.

"She's turnin' down the road to Mile Corners," added Judie Wing.

Aunt Alphie Newberry opened the door to the three women:

"Whatever's the matter to be bringin' you callin' so early?"

"Ain't you heard yet?"

"We come to tell you."

"My! my! my! What can have happened?" Aunt Alphie exclaimed.

"Old Chris died last night—"

"Just after bein' middlin' sick for a day an'—"

"An' they say," Judie Wing interrupted, "that it was 'cause Abbie Snover turned him out."

Abbie reached the end of the town sidewalk. Lifting her skirts high, she waded through the deep snow to the rough-rutted track left by the farmers' sleighs. Every little while she had to step off the road into the deep snow to let a bob-sled loaded high with hay or straw pass on its way into town. Some of the farmers recognized her; they spoke to her with kindly voices, but she made no answer. Walking was hard; Owen Frazer's farm was over the hill; there was a steep climb ahead of her. And besides, Owen Frazer's

house was no place for Old Chris. No one knew anything about Owen Frazer and that woman of his; they hadn't been born in Almont. How could she have let Old Chris go down there, anyway?

"Whoa up! Hey! Better climb in, Abbie, an' ride with me. This ain't no day for walkin'. Get up here on the seat. I'll come down an' help you."

Abbie looked up at Undertaker Hopkins. In the box of his funeral wagon was a black coffin with a sprinkling of snow on its top. Abbie shook her head, but did not speak.

"Guess I shouldn't have asked you," Undertaker Hopkins apologized. "Sorry! Get along as fast as you can, Abbie. It's gettin' mighty, all-fired cold. It'll be a little sheltered when you get over the hill."

Undertaker Hopkins drove on. Abbie tried to keep her feet in the fresh track made by the runners. She reached the top of the hill. Owen Frazer's red barn stood up above the snow. Undertaker Hopkins and his funeral wagon had disappeared.

"He must have turned down the Mill Road," Abbie muttered.

She reached the gate in front of the low, one-story farmhouse. A shepherd dog barked as she went up the path. She rapped at the front door. A woman appeared at the window and pointed to the side of the house. Abbie's face expressed surprise and resentment. She backed down the steps and made her way to the back door. The woman, Owen Frazer's wife, let her into the kitchen.

"Owen! Here be Abbie Snover!"

Owen Frazer came in from the front of the house.

"Good day! Didn't expect you here. Pretty cold out, ain't it? Have a chair."

Abbie did not realize how numb the cold had made her body until she tried to sit down.

"Maggie, give her a cup of that hot tea," Owen Frazer continued. "She's been almost froze, an' I guess she'll have a cup of tea. Hey! Miss Snover?"

"I want to talk to Old Chris."

"Talk to Old Chris! Talk to Old Chris, you want to?"

Owen Frazer looked at his wife. Abbie Snover didn't know, yet she had walked all the way to

Mile Corners in the cold. He couldn't understand it.

"What'd you come for, anyhow, Abbie Snover?"

"Now, Owen, you wait!" Owen Frazer's wife turned to Abbie:

"Got lonesome, did you, all by yourself in that big barn of a house?"

"I want to talk to Old Chris," Abbie repeated.

"Was you so fond of him, then?"

Abbie made no answer. Owen Frazer went over to the sink and looked out of the window at the bed-tick smoldering on the rubbish heap. Owen Frazer's wife pushed open the door of the sitting-room, then stood back and turned to Abbie:

"You may be fine old family, Abbie Snover, but we're better. You turned Old Chris out, an' now you want to talk to him. All right, talk to him if you want to. He's in the parlor. Go on in now. Talk to him if you want to—go on in!"

The animosity in Mrs. Frazer's voice shook Abbie; she was disturbed; doubt came to her for the first time. As she went through the sitting-room, fear slowed her steps. Perhaps they had

turned Old Chris away from her and she would have to go back alone, to live alone, for all the remaining years of her life, in that big house.

BOYS WILL BE BOYS[6]

By IRVIN S. COBB

From *The Saturday Evening Post*

When Judge Priest, on this particular morning, came puffing into his chambers at the courthouse, looking, with his broad beam and in his costume of flappy, loose white ducks, a good deal like an old-fashioned full-rigger with all sails set, his black shadow, Jeff Poindexter, had already finished the job of putting the quarters to rights for the day. The cedar water bucket had been properly replenished; the jagged flange of a fifteen-cent chunk of ice protruded above the rim of the bucket; and alongside, on the appointed nail, hung the gourd dipper that the master always used. The floor had been swept, except, of course, in the corners and underneath things; there were evidences, in streaky scrolls of fine grit particles upon various flat surfaces,

that a dusting brush had been more or less sparingly employed. A spray of trumpet flowers, plucked from the vine that grew outside the window, had been draped over the framed steel engraving of President Davis and his Cabinet upon the wall; and on the top of the big square desk in the middle of the room, where a small section of cleared green-blotter space formed an oasis in a dry and arid desert of cluttered law journals and dusty documents, the morning's mail rested in a little heap.

Having placed his old cotton umbrella in a corner, having removed his coat and hung it upon a peg behind the hall door, and having seen to it that a palm-leaf fan was in arm's reach should he require it, the Judge, in his billowy white shirt, sat down at his desk and gave his attention to his letters. There was an invitation from the Hylan B. Gracey Camp of Confederate Veterans of Eddyburg, asking him to deliver the chief oration at the annual reunion, to be held at Mineral Springs on the twelfth day of the following month; an official notice from the clerk of the Court of Appeals concerning the affirmation of a judgment that had been handed down by Judge Priest at the preceding term of his own court; a bill for five pounds of a special brand of smoking tobacco; a notice of a lodge meeting—altogether quite a sizable batch of

mail.

At the bottom of the pile he came upon a long envelope addressed to him by his title, instead of by his name, and bearing on its upper right-hand corner several foreign-looking stamps; they were British stamps, he saw, on closer examination.

To the best of his recollection it had been a good long time since Judge Priest had had a communication by post from overseas. He adjusted his steel-bowed spectacles, ripped the wrapper with care and shook out the contents. There appeared to be several inclosures; in fact, there were several—a sheaf of printed forms, a document with seals attached, and a letter that covered two sheets of paper with typewritten lines. To the letter the recipient gave consideration first. Before he reached the end of the opening paragraph he uttered a profound grunt of surprise; his reading of the rest was frequently punctuated by small exclamations, his face meantime puckering up in interested lines. At the conclusion, when he came to the signature, he indulged himself in a soft low whistle. He read the letter all through again, and after that he examined the forms and the document which had accompanied it.

Chuckling under his breath, he wriggled

himself free from the snug embrace of his chair arms and waddled out of his own office and down the long bare empty hall to the office of Sheriff Giles Birdsong. Within, that competent functionary, Deputy Sheriff Breck Quarles, sat at ease in his shirt sleeves, engaged, with the smaller blade of his pocketknife, in performing upon his finger nails an operation that combined the fine deftness of the manicure with the less delicate art of the farrier. At the sight of the Judge in the open doorway he hastily withdrew from a tabletop, where they rested, a pair of long thin legs, and rose.

"Mornin', Breck," said Judge Priest to the other's salutation. "No, thank you, son. I won't come in; but I've got a little job for you. I wisht, ef you ain't too busy, that you'd step down the street and see ef you can't find Peep O'Day fur me and fetch him back here with you. It won't take you long, will it?"

"No, suh—not very." Mr. Quarles reached for his hat and snuggled his shoulder holster back inside his unbuttoned waistcoat. "He'll most likely be down round Gafford's stable. Whut's Old Peep been doin', Judge—gettin' himself in contempt of court or somethin'?" He grinned, asking the question with the air of one making a little joke.

"No," vouchsafed the Judge; "he ain't done nothin'. But he's about to have somethin' of a highly onusual nature done to him. You jest tell him I'm wishful to see him right away—that'll be sufficient, I reckin."

Without making further explanation, Judge Priest returned to his chambers and for the third time read the letter from foreign parts. Court was not in session, and the hour was early and the weather was hot; nobody interrupted him. Perhaps fifteen minutes passed. Mr. Quarles poked his head in at the door.

"I found him, suh," the deputy stated. "He's outside here in the hall."

"Much obliged to you, son," said Judge Priest. "Send him on in, will you, please?"

The head was withdrawn; its owner lingered out of sight of His Honor, but within earshot. It was hard to figure the presiding judge of the First Judicial District of the State of Kentucky as having business with Peep O'Day; and, though Mr. Quarles was no eavesdropper, still he felt a pardonable curiosity in whatsoever might transpire. As he feigned an absorbed interest in a tax notice, which was pasted on a blackboard just outside the office door, there entered the presence of the Judge a man who seemingly was but a few years younger than the

Judge himself—a man who looked to be somewhere between sixty-five and seventy. There is a look that you may have seen in the eyes of ownerless but well-intentioned dogs—dogs that, expecting kicks as their daily portion, are humbly grateful for kind words and stray bones; dogs that are fairly yearning to be adopted by somebody—by anybody—being prepared to give to such a benefactor a most faithful doglike devotion in return.

This look, which is fairly common among masterless and homeless dogs, is rare among humans; still, once in a while you do find it there too. The man who now timidly shuffled himself across the threshold of Judge Priest's office had such a look out of his eyes. He had a long simple face, partly inclosed in gray whiskers. Four dollars would have been a sufficient price to pay for the garments he stood in, including the wrecked hat he held in his hands and the broken, misshaped shoes on his feet. A purchaser who gave more than four dollars for the whole in its present state of decrepitude would have been but a poor hand at bargaining.

The man who wore this outfit coughed in an embarrassed fashion and halted, fumbling his ruinous hat in his hands.

"Howdy do?" said Judge Priest heartily. "Come in!"

The other diffidently advanced himself a yard or two.

"Excuse me, suh," he said apologetically; "but this here Breck Quarles he come after me and he said ez how you wanted to see me. 'Twas him ez brung me here, suh."

Faintly underlying the drawl of the speaker was just a suspicion—a mere trace, as you might say—of a labial softness that belongs solely and exclusively to the children, and in a diminishing degree to the grandchildren, of native-born sons and daughters of a certain small green isle in the sea. It was not so much a suggestion of a brogue as it was the suggestion of the ghost of a brogue; a brogue almost extinguished, almost obliterated, and yet persisting through the generations—South of Ireland struggling beneath south of Mason and Dixon's Line.

"Yes," said the Judge; "that's right. I do want to see you." The tone was one that he might employ in addressing a bashful child. "Set down there and make yourself at home."

The newcomer obeyed to the extent of perching himself on the extreme forward edge of a chair. His feet shuffled uneasily where they

were drawn up against the cross rung of the chair.

The Judge reared well back, studying his visitor over the tops of his glasses with rather a quizzical look. In one hand he balanced the large envelope which had come to him that morning.

"Seems to me I heared somewheres, years back, that your regular Christian name was Paul —is that right?" he asked.

"Shorely is, suh," assented the ragged man, surprised and plainly grateful that one holding a supremely high position in the community should vouchsafe to remember a fact relating to so inconsequent an atom as himself. "But I ain't heared it fur so long I come mighty nigh furgittin' it sometimes, myself. You see, Judge Priest, when I wasn't nothin' but jest a shaver folks started in to callin' me Peep—on account of my last name bein O'Day, I reckin. They been callin' me so ever since. Fust off, 'twas Little Peep, and then jest plain Peep; and now it's got to be Old Peep. But my real entitled name is Paul, jest like you said, Judge—Paul Felix O'Day."

"Uh-huh! And wasn't your father's name Philip and your mother's name Katherine Dwyer O'Day?"

"To the best of my recollection that's partly so, too, suh. They both of 'em up and died when I was a baby, long before I could remember anything a-tall. But they always told me my paw's name was Phil, or Philip. Only my maw's name wasn't Kath—Kath—wasn't whut you jest now called it, Judge. It was plain Kate."

"Kate or Katherine—it makes no great difference," explained Judge Priest. "I reckin the record is straight this fur. And now think hard and see ef you kin ever remember hearin' of an uncle named Daniel O'Day—your father's brother."

The answer was a shake of the tousled head.

"I don't know nothin' about my people. I only jest know they come over frum some place with a funny name in the Old Country before I was born. The onliest kin I ever had over here was that there no-'count triflin' nephew of mine—Perce Dwyer—him that uster hang round this town. I reckin you call him to mind, Judge?"

The old Judge nodded before continuing:

"All the same, I reckin there ain't no manner of doubt but whut you had an uncle of the name of Daniel. All the evidences would seem to p'int that way. Accordin' to the proofs, this here Uncle Daniel of yours lived in a little town

called Kilmare, in Ireland." He glanced at one of the papers that lay on his desktop; then added in a casual tone: "Tell me, Peep, whut are you doin' now fur a livin'?"

The object of this examination grinned a faint grin of extenuation.

"Well, suh, I'm knockin' about, doin' the best I kin—which ain't much. I help out round Gafford's liver' stable, and Pete Gafford he lets me sleep in a little room behind the feed room, and his wife she gives me my vittles. Oncet in a while I git a chancet to do odd jobs fur folks round town—cuttin' weeds and splittin' stove wood and packin' in coal, and sech ez that."

"Not much money in it, is there?"

"No, suh; not much. Folks is more prone to offer me old clothes than they are to pay me in cash. Still, I manage to git along. I don't live very fancy; but, then, I don't starve, and that's more'n some kin say."

"Peep, whut was the most money you ever had in your life—at one time?"

Peep scratched with a freckled hand at his thatch of faded whitish hair to stimulate recollection.

"I reckin not more'n six bits at any one time,

suh. Seems like I've sorter got the knack of livin' without money."

"Well, Peep, sech bein' the case, whut would you say ef I was to tell you that you're a rich man?"

The answer came slowly:

"I reckin, suh, ef it didn't sound disrespectful, I'd say you was prankin' with me—makin' fun of me, suh."

Judge Priest bent forward in his chair.

"I'm not prankin' with you. It's my pleasant duty to inform you that at this moment you are the rightful owner of eight thousand pounds."

"Pounds of whut, Judge?" The tone expressed a heavy incredulity.

"Why, pounds in money."

Outside, in the hall, with one ear held conveniently near the crack in the door, Deputy Sheriff Quarles gave a violent start; and then, at once, was torn between a desire to stay and hear more and an urge to hurry forth and spread the unbelievable tidings. After the briefest of struggles the latter inclination won; this news was too marvelously good to keep; surely a harbinger and a herald were needed to spread it

broadcast.

Mr. Quarles tiptoed rapidly down the hall. When he reached the sidewalk the volunteer bearer of a miraculous tale fairly ran. As for the man who sat facing the Judge, he merely stared in a dull bewilderment.

"Judge," he said at length, "eight thousand pounds of money oughter make a powerful big pile, oughten it?"

"It wouldn't weigh quite that much ef you put it on the scales," explained His Honor painstakingly. "I mean pounds sterlin'—English money. Near ez I kin figger offhand, it comes in our money to somewheres between thirty-five and forty thousand dollars—nearer forty than thirty-five. And it's yours, Peep—every red cent of it."

"Excuse me, suh, and not meanin' to contradict you, or nothin' like that; but I reckin there must be some mistake. Why, Judge, I don't scursely know anybody that's ez wealthy ez all that, let alone anybody that'd give me sech a lot of money."

"Listen, Peep: This here letter I'm holdin' in my hand came to me by to-day's mail—jest a little spell ago. It's frum Ireland—frum the town of Kilmare, where your people came frum. It was

sent to me by a firm of barristers in that town—lawyers we'd call 'em. In this letter they ask me to find you and to tell you what's happened. It seems, from whut they write, that your uncle, by name Daniel O'Day, died not very long ago without issue—that is to say, without leavin' any children of his own, and without makin' any will.

"It appears he had eight thousand pounds saved up. Ever since he died those lawyers and some other folks over there in Ireland have been tryin' to find out who that money should go to. They learnt in some way that your father and your mother settled in this town a mighty long time ago, and that they died here and left one son, which is you. All the rest of the family over there in Ireland have already died out, it seems; that natchelly makes you the next of kin and the heir at law, which means that all your uncle's money comes direct to you.

"So, Peep, you're a wealthy man in your own name. That's the news I had to tell you. Allow me to congratulate you on your good fortune."

The beneficiary rose to his feet, seeming not to see the hand the old Judge had extended across the desktop toward him. On his face, of a sudden, was a queer, eager look. It was as though he foresaw the coming true of long-

cherished and heretofore unattainable visions.

"Have you got it here, suh?"

He glanced about him as though expecting to see a bulky bundle. Judge Priest smiled.

"Oh, no; they didn't send it along with the letter—that wouldn't be regular. There's quite a lot of things to be done fust. There'll be some proofs to be got up and sworn to before a man called a British consul; and likely there'll be a lot of papers that you'll have to sign; and then all the papers and the proofs and things will be sent across the ocean. And, after some fees are paid out over there—why, then you'll git your inheritance."

The rapt look faded from the strained face, leaving it downcast. "I'm afeared, then, I won't be able to claim that there money," he said forlornly.

"Why not?"

"Because I don't know how to sign my own name. Raised the way I was, I never got no book learnin'. I can't neither read nor write."

Compassion shadowed the Judge's chubby face; and compassion was in his voice as he made answer:

"You don't need to worry about that part of it. You can make your mark—- just a cross mark on the paper, with witnesses present—like this."

He took up a pen, dipped it in the inkwell and illustrated his meaning.

"Yes, suh; I'm glad it kin be done thataway. I always wisht I knowed how to read big print and spell my own name out. I ast a feller oncet to write my name out fur me in plain letters on a piece of paper. I was aimin' to learn to copy it off; but I showed it to one of the hands at the liver' stable and he busted out laughin'. And then I come to find out this here feller had tricked me fur to make game of me. He hadn't wrote my name out a-tall—- he'd wrote some dirty words instid. So after that I give up tryin' to educate myself. That was several years back and I ain't tried sence. Now I reckin I'm too old learn.... I wonder, suh—I wonder ef it'll be very long before that there money gits here and I begin to have the spendin' of it?"

"Makin' plans already?"

"Yes, suh," O'Day answered truthfully; "I am." He was silent for a moment, his eyes on the floor; then timidly he advanced the thought that had come to him. "I reckin, suh, it wouldn't be no more'n fair and proper ef I divided my money with you to pay you back fur all this

trouble, you're fixin' to take on my account. Would—would half of it be enough? The other half oughter last me fur what uses I'll make of it."

"I know you mean well and I'm much obliged to you fur your offer," stated Judge Priest, smiling a little; "but it wouldn't be fittin' or proper fur me to tech a cent of your money. There'll be some court dues and some lawyers' fees, and sech, to pay over there in Ireland; but after that's settled up everything comes direct to you. It's goin' to be a pleasure to me to help you arrange these here details that you don't understand—a pleasure and not a burden."

He considered the figure before him.

"Now here's another thing, Peep; I judge it's hardly fittin' fur a man of substance to go on livin' the way you've had to live durin' your life. Ef you don't mind my offerin' you a little advice I would suggest that you go right down to Felsburg Brothers when you leave here and git yourself fitted out with some suitable clothin'. And you'd better go to Max Biederman's, too, and order a better pair of shoes fur yourself than them you've got on. Tell 'em I sent you and that I guarantee the payment of your bills. Though I reckin that'll hardly be necessary—when the news of your good luck gits noised round I

misdoubt whether there's any firm in our entire city that wouldn't be glad to have you on their books fur a stiddy customer.

"And, also, ef I was you I'd arrange to git me regular board and lodgin's somewheres round town. You see, Peep, comin' into a property entails consider'ble many responsibilities right frum the start."

"Yes, suh," assented the legatee obediently. "I'll do jest ez you say, Judge Priest, about the clothes and the shoes, and all that; but—but, ef you don't mind, I'd like to go on livin' at Gafford's. Pete Gafford's been mighty good to me—him and his wife both; and I wouldn't like fur 'em to think I was gittin' stuck up jest because I've had this here streak of luck come to me. Mebbe, seein' ez how things has changed with me, they'd be willin' to take me in fur a table boarder at their house; but I shorely would hate to give up livin' in that there little room behind the feed room at the liver' stable. I don't know ez I could ever find any place that would seem ez homelike to me ez whut it is."

"Suit yourself about that," said Judge Priest heartily. "I don't know but whut you've got the proper notion about it after all."

"Yes, suh. Them Gaffords have been purty nigh the only real true friends I ever had that I could

count on." He hesitated a moment. "I reckin—I reckin, suh, it'll be a right smart while, won't it, before that money gits here frum all the way acrost the ocean?"

"Why, yes; I imagine it will. Was you figurin' on investin' a little of it now?"

"Yes, suh; I was."

"About how much did you think of spendin' fur a beginnin'?"

O'Day squinted his eyes, his lips moving in silent calculation.

"Well, suh," he said at length, "I could use ez much ez a silver dollar. But, of course, sence—"

"That sounds kind of moderate to me," broke in Judge Priest. He shoved a pudgy hand into a pocket of his white trousers. "I reckin this detail kin be arranged. Here, Peep"—he extended his hand—"here's your dollar." Then, as the other drew back, stammering a refusal, he hastily added: "No, no, no; go ahead and take it—it's yours. I'm jest advancin' it to you out of whut'll be comin' to you shortly.

"I'll tell you whut: Until sech time ez you are in position to draw on your own funds you jest drap in here to see me when you're in need of cash, and I'll try to let you have whut you

require—in reason. I'll keep a proper reckinin' of whut you git and you kin pay me back ez soon ez your inheritance is put into your hands.

"One thing more," he added as the heir, having thanked him, was making his grateful adieu at the threshold: "Now that you're wealthy, or about to be so, I kind of imagine quite a passel of fellers will suddenly discover themselves strangely and affectionately drawed toward you. You're liable to find out you've always had more true and devoted friends in this community than whut you ever imagined to be the case before.

"Now friendship is a mighty fine thing, takin' it by and large; but it kin be overdone. It's barely possible that some of this here new crop of your well-wishers and admirers will be makin' little business propositions to you—desirin' to have you go partners with 'em in business, or to sell you desirable pieces of real estate; or even to let you loan 'em various sums of money. I wouldn't be surprised but whut a number of sech chances will be comin' your way durin' the next few days, and frum then on. Ef sech should be the case I would suggest to you that, before committin' yourself to anybody or anything, you tell 'em that I'm sort of actin' as your unofficial adviser in money matters, and that they should come to me and outline their little schemes in person. Do you git my general drift?"

"Yes, suh," said Peep. "I won't furgit; and thank you ag'in, Judge, specially fur lettin' me have this dollar ahead of time."

He shambled out with the coin in his hand; and on his face was again the look of one who sees before him the immediate fulfillment of a delectable dream.

With lines of sympathy and amusement crosshatched at the outer corners of his eyelids, Judge Priest, rising and stepping to his door, watched the retreating figure of the town's newest and strangest capitalist disappear down the wide front steps of the courthouse.

Presently he went back to his chair and sat down, tugging at his short chin beard.

"I wonder now," said he, meditatively addressing the emptiness of the room, "I wonder whut a man sixty-odd-year old is goin' to do with the fust whole dollar he ever had in his life!"

It was characteristic of our circuit judge that he should have voiced his curiosity aloud. Talking to himself when he was alone was one of his habits. Also, it was characteristic of him that he had refrained from betraying his inquisitiveness to his late caller. Similar motives of delicacy had kept him from following the other man to

watch the sequence.

However, at secondhand, the details very shortly reached him. They were brought by no less a person than Deputy Sheriff Quarles, who, some twenty minutes or possibly half an hour later, obtruded himself upon Judge Priest's presence.

"Judge," began Mr. Quarles, "you'd never in the world guess whut Old Peep O'Day done with the first piece of money he got his hands on out of that there forty thousand pounds of silver dollars he's come into from his uncle's estate."

The old man slanted a keen glance in Mr. Quarles' direction.

"Tell me, son," he asked softly, "how did you come to hear the glad tidin's so promptly?"

"Me?" said Mr. Quarles innocently. "Why, Judge Priest, the word is all over this part of town by this time. Why, I reckin twenty-five or fifty people must 'a' been watchin' Old Peep to see how he was goin' to act when he come out of this courthouse."

"Well, well, well!" murmured the Judge blandly. "Good news travels almost ez fast sometimes ez whut bad news does—don't it, now? Well, son, I give up the riddle. Tell me

jest whut our elderly friend did do with the first installment of his inheritance."

"Well, suh, he turned south here at the gate and went down the street, a-lookin' neither to the right nor the left. He looked to me like a man in a trance, almost. He keeps right on through Legal Row till he comes to Franklin Street, and then he goes up Franklin to B. Weil & Son's confectionery store; and there he turns in. I happened to be followin' 'long behind him, with a few others—with several others, in fact—and we-all sort of slowed up in passin' and looked in at the door; and that's how I come to be in a position to see what happened.

"Old Peep, he marches in jest like I'm tellin' it to you, suh; and Mr. B. Weil comes to wait on him, and he starts in buyin'. He buys hisself a five-cent bag of gumdrops; and a five-cent bag of jelly beans; and a ten-cent bag of mixed candies—kisses and candy mottoes, and sech ez them, you know; and a sack of fresh-roasted peanuts—a big sack, it was, fifteen-cent size; and two prize boxes; and some gingersnaps—ten cents' worth; and a cocoanut; and half a dozen red bananas; and half a dozen more of the plain yaller ones. Altogether I figger he spent a even dollar; in fact, I seen him hand Mr. Weil a dollar, and I didn't see him gittin' no change back out of it.

"Then he comes on out of the store, with all these things stuck in his pockets and stacked up in his arms till he looks sort of like some new kind of a summertime Santy Klaws; and he sets down on a goods box at the edge of the pavement, with his feet in the gutter, and starts in eatin' all them things.

"First, he takes a bite off a yaller banana and then off a red banana, and then a mouthful of peanuts; and then maybe some mixed candies—not sayin' a word to nobody, but jest natchelly eatin' his fool head off. A young chap that's clerkin' in Bagby's grocery, next door, steps up to him and speaks to him, meanin', I suppose, to ast him is it true he's wealthy. And Old Peep, he says to him, 'Please don't come botherin' me now, sonny—I'm busy ketchin' up,' he says; and keeps right on a-munchin' and a-chewin' like all possessed.

"That ain't all of it, neither, Judge—not by a long shot it ain't! Purty soon Old Peep looks round him at the little crowd that's gathered. He didn't seem to pay no heed to the grown-up people standin' there; but he sees a couple of boys about ten years old in the crowd, and he beckons to them to come to him, and he makes room fur them alongside him on the box and divides up his knick-knacks with them.

"When I left there to come on back here he had no less'n six kids squatted round him, includin' one little nigger boy; and between 'em all they'd jest finished up the last of the bananas and peanuts and the candy and the gingersnaps, and was fixin' to take turns drinkin' the milk out of the cocoanut. I s'pose they've got it all cracked out of the shell and et up by now—the cocoanut, I mean. Judge, you oughter stepped down into Franklin Street and taken a look at the picture whilst there was still time. You never seen sech a funny sight in all your days, I'll bet!"

"I reckin 'twould be too late to be startin' now," said Judge Priest. "I'm right sorry I missed it.... Busy ketchin' up, huh? Yes; I reckin he is.... Tell me, son, whut did you make out of the way Peep O'Day acted?"

"Why, suh," stated Mr. Quarles, "to my mind, Judge, there ain't no manner of doubt but whut prosperity has went to his head and turned it. He acted to me like a plum' distracted idiot. A grown man with forty thousand pounds of solid money settin' on the side of a gutter eatin' jimcracks with a passel of dirty little boys! Kin you figure it out any other way, Judge—except that his mind is gone?"

"I don't set myself up to be a specialist in mental disorders, son," said Judge Priest softly;

"but, sence you ask me the question, I should say, speakin' offhand, that it looks to me more ez ef the heart was the organ that was mainly affected. And possibly"—he added this last with a dry little smile—"and possibly, by now, the stomach also."

Whether or not Mr. Quarles was correct in his psychopathic diagnosis, he certainly had been right when he told Judge Priest that the word was already all over the business district. It had spread fast and was still spreading; it spread to beat the wireless, traveling as it did by that mouth-to-ear method of communication which is so amazingly swift and generally so tremendously incorrect. Persons who could not credit the tale at all, nevertheless lost no time in giving to it a yet wider circulation; so that, as though borne on the wind, it moved in every direction, like ripples on a pond; and with each time of retelling the size of the legacy grew.

The *Daily Evening News*, appearing on the streets at five P. M., confirmed the tale; though by its account the fortune was reduced to a sum far below the gorgeously exaggerated estimates of most of the earlier narrators. Between breakfast and supper-time Peep O'Day's position in the common estimation of his fellow citizens

underwent a radical and revolutionary change. He ceased—automatically, as it were—to be a town character; he became, by universal consent, a town notable, whose every act and every word would thereafter be subjected to close scrutiny and closer analysis.

The next morning the nation at large had opportunity to know of the great good fortune that had befallen Paul Felix O'Day, for the story had been wired to the city papers by the local correspondents of the same; and the press associations had picked up a stickful of the story and sped it broadcast over leased wires. Many who until that day had never heard of the fortunate man, or, indeed, of the place where he lived, at once manifested a concern in his well-being.

Certain firms of investment brokers in New York and Chicago promptly added a new name to what vulgarly they called their "sucker" lists. Dealers in mining stocks, in oil stocks, in all kinds of attractive stocks showed interest; in circular form samples of the most optimistic and alluring literature the world has ever known were consigned to the post, addressed to Mr. P. F. O'Day, such-and-such a town, such-and-such a state, care of general delivery.

Various lonesome ladies in various lonesome

places lost no time in sitting themselves down and inditing congratulatory letters; object matrimony. Some of these were single ladies; others had been widowed, either by death or request. Various other persons of both sexes, residing here, there, and elsewhere in our country, suddenly remembered that they, too, were descended from the O'Days of Ireland, and wrote on forthwith to claim proud and fond relationship with the particular O'Day who had come into money.

It was a remarkable circumstance, which speedily developed, that one man should have so many distant cousins scattered over the Union, and a thing equally noteworthy that practically all these kinspeople, through no fault of their own, should at the present moment be in such straitened circumstances and in such dire need of temporary assistance of a financial nature. Ticker and printer's ink, operating in conjunction, certainly did their work mighty well; even so, several days were to elapse before the news reached one who, of all those who read it, had most cause to feel a profound personal sensation in the intelligence.

This delay, however, was nowise to be blamed upon the tardiness of the newspapers; it was occasioned by the fact that the person referred to was for the moment well out of contact with

the active currents of world affairs, he being confined in a workhouse at Evansville, Indiana.

As soon as he had rallied from the shock this individual set about making plans to put himself in direct touch with the inheritor. He had ample time in which to frame and shape his campaign, inasmuch as there remained for him yet to serve nearly eight long and painfully tedious weeks of a three-months' vagrancy sentence. Unlike most of those now manifesting their interest, he did not write a letter; but he dreamed dreams that made him forget the annoyances of a ball and chain fast on his ankle and piles of stubborn stones to be cracked up into fine bits with a heavy hammer.

We are getting ahead of our narrative, though —days ahead of it. The chronological sequence of events properly dates from the morning following the morning when Peep O'Day, having been abruptly translated from the masses of the penniless to the classes of the wealthy, had forthwith embarked upon the gastronomic orgy so graphically detailed by Deputy Sheriff Quarles.

On that next day more eyes probably than had been trained in Peep O'Day's direction in all the unremarked and unremarkable days of his life put together were focused upon him. Persons

who theretofore had regarded his existence—if indeed they gave it a thought—as one of the utterly trivial and inconsequential incidents of the cosmic scheme, were moved to speak to him, to clasp his hand, and, in numerous instances, to express a hearty satisfaction over his altered circumstances. To all these, whether they were moved by mere neighborly good will, or perchance were inspired by impulses of selfishness, the old man exhibited a mien of aloofness and embarrassment.

This diffidence or this suspicion—or this whatever it was—protected him from those who might entertain covetous and ulterior designs upon his inheritance even better than though he had been brusque and rude; while those who sought to question him regarding his plans for the future drew from him only mumbled and evasive replies, which left them as deeply in the dark as they had been before. Altogether, in his intercourse with adults he appeared shy and very ill at ease.

It was noted, though, that early in the forenoon he attached to him perhaps half a dozen urchins, of whom the oldest could scarcely have been more than twelve or thirteen years of age; and that these youngsters remained his companions throughout the day. Likewise the events of that day were such as to confirm a majority of the

observers in practically the same belief that had been voiced of Mr. Quarles—namely, that whatever scanty brains Peep O'Day might have ever had were now completely addled by the stroke of luck that had befallen him.

In fairness to all—to O'Day and to the town critics who sat in judgment upon his behavior—it should be stated that his conduct at the very outset was not entirely devoid of evidences of sanity. With his troupe of ragged juveniles trailing behind him, he first visited Felsburg Brothers' Emporium to exchange his old and disreputable costume for a wardrobe that, in accordance with Judge Priest's recommendation, he had ordered on the afternoon previous, and which had since been undergoing certain necessary alterations.

With his meager frame incased in new black woolens, and wearing, as an incongruous added touch, the most brilliant of neckties, a necktie of the shade of a pomegranate blossom, he presently issued from Felsburg Brothers' and entered M. Biederman's shoe store, two doors below. Here Mr. Biederman fitted him with shoes, and in addition noted down a further order, which the purchaser did not give until after he had conferred earnestly with the members of his youthful entourage.

Those watching this scene from a distance saw —and perhaps marveled at the sight—that already, between these small boys, on the one part, and this old man, on the other, a perfect understanding appeared to have been established.

After leaving Biederman's, and tagged by his small escorts, O'Day went straight to the courthouse and, upon knocking at the door, was admitted to Judge Priest's private chambers, the boys meantime waiting outside in the hall. When he came forth he showed them something he held in his hand and told them something; whereupon all of them burst into excited and joyous whoops.

It was at that point that O'Day, by the common verdict of most grown-up onlookers, began to betray the vagaries of a disordered intellect. Not that his reason had not been under suspicion already, as a result of his freakish excess in the matter of B. Weil & Son's wares on the preceding day; but the relapse that now followed, as nearly everybody agreed, was even more pronounced, even more symptomatic than the earlier attack of aberration.

In brief, this was what happened: To begin with, Mr. Virgil Overall, who dealt in lands and houses and sold insurance of all the commoner

varieties on the side, had stalked O'Day to this point and was lying in wait for him as he came out of the courthouse into the Public Square, being anxious to describe to him some especially desirable bargains, in both improved and unimproved realty; also, Mr. Overall was prepared to book him for life, accident and health policies on the spot.

So pleased was Mr. Overall at having distanced his professional rivals in the hunt that he dribbled at the mouth. But the warmth of his disappointment and indignation dried up the salivary founts instantly when the prospective patron declined to listen to him at all and, breaking free from Mr. Overall's detaining clasp, hurried on into Legal Row, with his small convoys trotting along ahead and alongside him.

At the door of the Blue Goose Saloon and Short Order Restaurant its proprietor, by name Link Iserman, was lurking, as it were, in ambush. He hailed the approaching O'Day most cordially; he inquired in a warm voice regarding O'Day's health; and then, with a rare burst of generosity, he invited, nay urged, O'Day to step inside and have something on the house—wines, ales, liquors or cigars; it was all one to Mr. Iserman. The other merely shook his head and, without a word of thanks for the offer, passed on as though bent upon a important

mission.

Mark how the proofs were accumulating: The man had disdained the company of men of approximately his own age or thereabout; he had refused an opportunity to partake of refreshment suitable to his years; and now he stepped into the Bon Ton toy store and bought for cash—most inconceivable of acquisitions!—a little wagon that was painted bright red and bore on its sides in curlicued letters, the name Comet.

His next stop was made at Bishop & Bryan's grocery, where, with the aid of his youthful compatriots, he first discriminatingly selected, and then purchased on credit, and finally loaded into the wagon, such purchases as a dozen bottles of soda pop, assorted flavors; cheese, crackers—soda and animal; sponge cakes with weather-proof pink icing on them; fruits of the season; cove oysters; a bottle of pepper sauce; and a quantity of the extra large sized bright green cucumber pickles known to the trade as the Fancy Jumbo Brand, Prime Selected.

Presently the astounding spectacle was presented of two small boys, with string bridles on their arms, drawing the wagon through our town and out of it into the country, with Peep O'Day in the rôle of teamster walking alongside

the laden wagon. He was holding the lines in his hands and shouting orders at his team, who showed a colty inclination to shy at objects, to kick up their heels without provocation, and at intervals to try to run away. Eight or ten small boys—for by now the troupe had grown in number and in volume of noise—trailed along, keeping step with their elderly patron and advising him shrilly regarding the management of his refractory span.

As it turned out, the destination of this preposterous procession was Bradshaw's Grove, where the entire party spent the day picnicking in the woods and, as reported by several reliable witnesses, playing games. It was not so strange that holidaying boys should play games; the amazing feature of the performance was that Peep O'Day, a man old enough to be grandfather to any of them, played with them, being by turns an Indian chief, a robber baron, and the driver of a stagecoach attacked by Wild Western desperadoes.

When he returned to town at dusk, drawing his little red wagon behind him, his new suit was rumpled into many wrinkles and marked by dust and grass stains; his flame-colored tie was twisted under one ear; his new straw hat was mashed quite out of shape; and in his eyes was a light that sundry citizens, on meeting him, could

only interpret for a spark struck from inner fires of madness.

Days that came after this, on through the midsummer, were, with variations, but repetitions of the day I have just described. Each morning Peep O'Day would go to either the courthouse or Judge Priest's home to turn over to the Judge the unopened mail which had been delivered to him at Gafford's stables; then he would secure from the Judge a loan of money against his inheritance. Generally the amount of his daily borrowing was a dollar; rarely was it so much as two dollars; and only once was it more than two dollars.

By nightfall the sum would have been expended upon perfectly useless and absolutely childish devices. It might be that he would buy toy pistols and paper caps for himself and his following of urchins; or that his whim would lead him to expend all the money in tin flutes. In one case the group he so incongruously headed would be for that one day a gang of make-believe banditti; in another, they would constitute themselves a fife-and-drum corps—with barreltops for the drums—and would march through the streets, where scandalized adults stood in their tracks to watch them go by, they all the while making weird sounds, which with them passed for music.

Or again, the available cash resources would be invested in provender; and then there would be an outing in the woods. Under Peep O'Day's captaincy his chosen band of youngsters picked dewberries; they went swimming together in Guthrie's Gravel Pit, out by the old Fair Grounds, where his spare naked shanks contrasted strongly with their plump freckled legs as all of them splashed through the shallows, making for deep water. Under his leadership they stole watermelons from Mr. Dick Bell's patch, afterward eating their spoils in thickets of grapevines along the banks of Perkins' Creek.

It was felt that mental befuddlement and mortal folly could reach no greater heights—or no lower depths—than on a certain hour of a certain day, along toward the end of August, when O'Day came forth from his quarters in Gafford's stables, wearing a pair of boots that M. Biederman's establishment had turned out to his order and his measure—not such boots as a sensible man might be expected to wear, but boots that were exaggerated and monstrous counterfeits of the red-topped, scroll-fronted, brass-toed, stub-heeled, squeaky-soled bootees that small boys of an earlier generation possessed.

Very proudly and seemingly unconscious of,

or, at least, oblivious to, the derisive remarks that the appearance of these new belongings drew from many persons, the owner went clumping about in them, with the rumply legs of his trousers tucked down in them, and ballooning up and out over the tops in folds which overlapped from his knee joints halfway down his attenuated calves.

As Deputy Sheriff Quarles said, the combination was a sight fit to make a horse laugh. It may be that small boys have a lesser sense of humor than horses have, for certainly the boys who were the old man's invariable shadows did not laugh at him, or at his boots either. Between the whiskered senior and his small comrades there existed a freemasonry that made them all sense a thing beyond the ken of most of their elders. Perhaps this was because the elders, being blind in their superior wisdom, saw neither this thing nor the communion that flourished. They saw only the farcical joke. But His Honor, Judge Priest, to cite a conspicuous exception, seemed not to see the lamentable comedy of it.

Indeed, it seemed to some almost as if Judge Priest were aiding and abetting the befogged O'Day in his demented enterprises, his peculiar excursions and his weird purchases. If he did not actually encourage him in these constant

exhibitions of witlessness, certainly there were no evidences available to show that he sought to dissuade O'Day from his strange course.

At the end of a fortnight one citizen, in whom patience had ceased to be a virtue and to whose nature long-continued silence on any public topic was intolerable, felt it his duty to speak to the Judge upon the subject. This gentleman—his name was S. P. Escott—held, with many, that, for the good name of the community, steps should be taken to abate the infantile, futile activities of the besotted legatee.

Afterward Mr. Escott, giving a partial account of the conversation with Judge Priest to certain of his friends, showed unfeigned annoyance at the outcome.

"I claim that old man's not fittin' to be runnin' a court any longer," he stated bitterly. "He's too old and peevish—that's what ails him! For one, I'm certainly not never goin' to vote fur him again. Why, it's gettin' to be ez much ez a man's life is worth to stop that there spiteful old crank in the street and put a civil question to him—that's whut's the matter!"

"What happened S. P.?" inquired some one.

"Why, here's what happened!" exclaimed the aggrieved Mr. Escott. "I hadn't any more than

started in to tell him the whole town was talkin' about the way that daffy Old Peep O'Day was carryin' on, and that somethin' had oughter be done about it, and didn't he think it was beholdin' on him ez circuit judge to do somethin' right away, sech ez havin' O'Day tuck up and tried fur a lunatic, and that I fur one was ready and willin' to testify to the crazy things I'd seen done with my own eyes—when he cut in on me and jest ez good ez told me to my own face that ef I'd quit tendin' to other people's business I'd mebbe have more business of my own to tend to.

"Think of that, gentlemen! A circuit judge bemeanin' a citizen and a taxpayer"—he checked himself slightly—"anyhow, a citizen, thataway! It shows he can't be rational his ownself. Personally I claim Old Priest is failin' mentally—he must be! And ef anybody kin be found to run against him at the next election you gentlemen jest watch and see who gits my vote!"

Having uttered this threat with deep and significant emphasis Mr. Escott, still muttering, turned and entered the front gate of his boarding house. It was not exactly his boarding house; his wife ran it. But Mr. Escott lived there and voted from there.

But the apogee of Peep O'Day's carnival of weird vagaries of deportment came at the end of two months—two months in which each day the man furnished cumulative and piled-up material for derisive and jocular comment on the part of a very considerable proportion of his fellow townsmen.

Three occurrences of a widely dissimilar nature, yet all closely interrelated to the main issue, marked the climax of the man's new rôle in his new career. The first of these was the arrival of his legacy; the second was a one-ring circus; and the third and last was a nephew.

In the form of sundry bills of exchange the estate left by the late Daniel O'Day, of the town of Kilmare, in the island of Ireland, was on a certain afternoon delivered over into Judge Priest's hands, and by him, in turn, handed to the rightful owner, after which sundry indebtednesses, representing the total of the old Judge's day-to-day cash advances to O'Day, were liquidated.

The ceremony of deducting this sum took place at the Planters' Bank, whither the two had journeyed in company from the courthouse. Having, with the aid of the paying teller, instructed O'Day in the technical details requisite to the drawing of personal checks,

Judge Priest went home and had his bag packed, and left for Reelfoot Lake to spend a week fishing. As a consequence he missed the remaining two events, following immediately thereafter.

The circus was no great shakes of a circus; no grand, glittering, gorgeous, glorious pageant of education and entertainment, traveling on its own special trains; no vast tented city of world's wonders and world's champions, heralded for weeks and weeks in advance of its coming by dead walls emblazoned with the finest examples of the lithographer's art, and by half-page advertisements in the *Daily Evening News*. On the contrary, it was a shabby little wagon show, which, coming overland on short notice, rolled into town under horse power, and set up its ragged and dusty canvases on the vacant lot across from Yeiser's drug store.

Compared with the street parade of any of its great and famous rivals, the street parade of this circus was a meager and disappointing thing. Why, there was only one elephant, a dwarfish and debilitated-looking creature, worn mangy and slick on its various angles, like the cover of an old-fashioned haircloth trunk; and obviously most of the closed cages were weather-beaten stake wagons in disguise. Nevertheless, there was a sizable turnout of people for the afternoon

performance. After all, a circus was a circus.

Moreover, this particular circus was marked at the afternoon performance by happenings of a nature most decidedly unusual. At one o'clock the doors were opened; at one-ten the eyes of the proprietor were made glad and his heart was uplifted within him by the sight of a strange procession, drawing nearer and nearer across the scuffed turf of the Common, and heading in the direction of the red ticket wagon.

At the head of the procession marched Peep O'Day—only, of course, the proprietor didn't know it was Peep O'Day—a queer figure in his rumpled black clothes and his red-topped brass-toed boots, and with one hand holding fast to the string of a captive toy balloon. Behind him, in an uneven jostling formation, followed many small boys and some small girls. A census of the ranks would have developed that here were included practically all the juvenile white population who otherwise, through a lack of funds, would have been denied the opportunity to patronize this circus or, in fact, any circus.

Each member of the joyous company was likewise the bearer of a toy balloon—red, yellow, blue, green, or purple, as the case might be. Over the line of heads the taut rubbery globes rode on their tethers, nodding and

twisting like so many big iridescent bubbles; and half a block away, at the edge of the lot, a balloon vender, whose entire stock had been disposed of in one splendid transaction, now stood, empty-handed but full-pocketed, marveling at the stroke of luck that enabled him to take an afternoon off and rest his voice.

Out of a seemingly bottomless exchequer Peep O'Day bought tickets of admission for all. But this was only the beginning. Once inside the tent he procured accommodations in the reserved-seat section for himself and those who accompanied him. From such superior points of vantage the whole crew of them witnessed the performance, from the thrilling grand entry, with spangled ladies and gentlemen riding two by two on broad-backed steeds, to the tumbling bout introducing the full strength of the company, which came at the end.

They munched fresh-roasted peanuts and balls of sugar-coated popcorn, slightly rancid, until they munched no longer with zest but merely mechanically. They drank pink lemonade to an extent that threatened absolute depletion of the fluid contents of both barrels in the refreshment stand out in the menagerie tent. They whooped their unbridled approval when the wild Indian chief, after shooting down a stuffed coon with a bow and arrow from somewhere up near the top

of the center pole while balancing himself jauntily erect upon the haunches of a coursing white charger, suddenly flung off his feathered headdress, his wig and his fringed leather garments, and revealed himself in pink fleshings as the principal bareback rider.

They screamed in a chorus of delight when the funny old clown, who had been forcibly deprived of three tin flutes in rapid succession, now produced yet a fourth from the seemingly inexhaustible depths of his baggy white pants—a flute with a string and a bent pin attached to it—and, secretly affixing the pin in the tail of the cross ringmaster's coat, was thereafter enabled to toot sharp shrill blasts at frequent intervals, much to the chagrin of the ringmaster, who seemed utterly unable to discover the whereabouts of the instrument dangling behind him.

But no one among them whooped louder or laughed longer than their elderly and bewhiskered friend, who sat among them, paying the bills. As his guests they stayed for the concert; and, following this, they patronized the side show in a body. They had been almost the first upon the scene; assuredly they were the last of the audience to quit it.

Indeed, before they trailed their confrère away

from the spot the sun was nearly down; and at scores of supper tables all over town the tale of poor old Peep O'Day's latest exhibition of freakishness was being retailed, with elaborations, to interested auditors. Estimates of the sum probably expended by him in this crowning extravagance ranged well up into the hundreds of dollars.

As for the object of these speculations, he was destined not to eat any supper at all that night. Something happened that so upset him as to make him forget the meal altogether. It began to happen when he reached the modest home of P. Gafford, adjoining the Gafford stables, on Locust Street, and found sitting on the lowermost step of the porch a young man of untidy and unshaved aspect, who hailed him affectionately as Uncle Paul, and who showed deep annoyance and acute distress upon being rebuffed with chill words.

It is possible that the strain of serving a three-months' sentence, on the technical charge of vagrancy, in a workhouse somewhere in Indiana, had affected the young man's nerves. His ankle bones still ached where the ball and chain had been hitched; on his palms the blisters induced by the uncongenial use of a sledge hammer on a rock pile had hardly as yet turned to calluses. So it is only fair to presume that his

nervous system felt the stress of his recent confining experiences also.

Almost tearfully he pleaded with Peep O'Day to remember the ties of blood that bound them; repeatedly he pointed out that he was the only known kinsman of the other in all the world, and, therefore, had more reason than any other living being to expect kindness and generosity at his uncle's hands. He spoke socialistically of the advisability of an equal division; failing to make any impression here he mentioned the subject of a loan—at first hopefully, but finally despairingly.

When he was done Peep O'Day, in a perfectly colorless and unsympathetic voice, bade him good-by—not good-night but good-by! And, going inside the house, he closed the door behind him, leaving his newly returned relative outside and quite alone.

At this the young man uttered violent language; but, since there was nobody present to hear him, it is likely he found small satisfaction in his profanity, rich though it may have been in metaphor and variety. So presently he betook himself off, going straight to the office in Legal Row of H. B. Sublette, Attorney-at-law.

From the circumstance that he found Mr. Sublette in, though it was long past that

gentleman's office hours, and, moreover, found Mr. Sublette waiting in an expectant and attentive attitude, it might have been adduced by one skilled in the trick of putting two and two together that the pair of them had reached a prior understanding sometime during the day; and that the visit of the young man to the Gafford home and his speeches there had all been parts of a scheme planned out at a prior conference.

Be this as it may, so soon as Mr. Sublette had heard his caller's version of the meeting upon the porch he lost no time in taking certain legal steps. That very night, on behalf of his client, denominated in the documents as Percival Dwyer, Esquire, he prepared a petition addressed to the circuit judge of the district, setting forth that, inasmuch as Paul Felix O'Day had by divers acts shown himself to be of unsound mind, now, therefore, came his nephew and next of kin praying that a committee or curator be appointed to take over the estate of the said Paul Felix O'Day, and administer the same in accordance with the orders of the court until such time as the said Paul Felix O'Day should recover his reason, or should pass from this life, and so forth and so on; not to mention whereases in great number and aforesaids abounding throughout the text in the utmost

profusion.

On the following morning the papers were filed with Circuit Clerk Milam. That vigilant barrister, Mr. Sublette, brought them in person to the courthouse before nine o'clock, he having the interests of his client at heart and perhaps also visions of a large contingent fee in his mind. No retainer had been paid. The state of Mr. Dwyer's finances—or, rather, the absence of any finances—had precluded the performance of that customary detail; but to Mr. Sublette's experienced mind the prospects of future increment seemed large.

Accordingly he was all for prompt action. Formally he said he wished to go on record as demanding for his principal a speedy hearing of the issue, with a view to preventing the defendant named in the pleadings from dissipating any more of the estate lately bequeathed to him and now fully in his possession—or words to that effect.

Mr. Milam felt justified in getting into communication with Judge Priest over the long-distance 'phone; and the Judge, cutting short his vacation and leaving uncaught vast numbers of bass and perch in Reelfoot Lake, came home, arriving late that night.

Next morning, having issued divers orders in

connection with the impending litigation, he sent a messenger to find Peep O'Day and to direct O'Day to come to the courthouse for a personal interview.

Shortly thereafter a scene that had occurred some two months earlier, with his Honor's private chamber for a setting, was substantially duplicated: there was the same cast of two, the same stage properties, the same atmosphere of untidy tidiness. And, as before, the dialogue was in Judge Priest's hands. He led and his fellow character followed his leads.

"Peep," he was saying, "you understand, don't you, that this here fragrant nephew of yours that's turned up from nowheres in particular is fixin' to git ready to try to prove that you are feeble-minded? And, on top of that, that he's goin' to ask that a committee be app'inted fur you—in other words, that somebody or other shall be named by the court, meanin' me, to take charge of your property and control the spendin' of it frum now on?"

"Yes, suh," stated O'Day. "Pete Gafford he set down with me and made hit all clear to me, yestiddy evenin', after they'd done served the papers on me."

"All right, then. Now I'm goin' to fix the hearin' fur to-morrow mornin' at ten. The other side is

askin' fur a quick decision; and I rather figger they're entitled to it. Is that agreeable to you?"

"Whutever you say, Judge."

"Well, have you retained a lawyer to represent your interests in court? That's the main question that I sent fur you to ast you."

"Do I need a lawyer, Judge?"

"Well, there have been times when I regarded lawyers ez bein' superfluous," stated Judge Priest dryly. "Still, in most cases litigants do have 'em round when the case is bein' heard."

"I don't know ez I need any lawyer to he'p me say whut I've got to say," said O'Day. "Judge, you ain't never ast me no questions about the way I've been carryin' on sence I come into this here money; but I reckin mebbe this is ez good a time ez any to tell you jest why I've been actin' the way I've done. You see, suh—"

"Hold on!" broke in Judge Priest. "Up to now, ez my friend, it would 'a' been perfectly proper fur you to give me your confidences ef you were minded so to do; but now I reckin you'd better not. You see, I'm the judge that's got to decide whether you are a responsible person—whether you're mentally capable of handlin' your own financial affairs, or whether you ain't. So you'd

better wait and make your statement in your own behalf to me whilst I'm settin' on the bench. I'll see that you git an opportunity to do so and I'll listen to it; and I'll give it all the consideration it's deservin' of.

"And, on second thought, p'raps it would only be a waste of time and money fur you to go hirin' a lawyer specially to represent you. Under the law it's my duty, in sech a case ez this here one is, to app'int a member of the bar to serve durin' the proceedin's ez your guardian *ad litem*.

"You don't need to be startled," he added, as O'Day flinched at the sound in his ears of these strange and fearsome words. "A guardian *ad litem* is simply a lawyer that tends to your affairs till the case is settled one way or the other. Ef you had a dozen lawyers I'd have to app'int him jest the same. So you don't need to worry about that part of it.

"That's all. You kin go now ef you want to. Only, ef I was you, I wouldn't draw out any more money from the bank 'twixt now and the time when I make my decision."

All things considered, it was an unusual assemblage that Judge Priest regarded over the top rims of his glasses as he sat facing it in his

broad armchair, with the flat top of the bench intervening between him and the gathering. Not often, even in the case of exciting murder trials, had the old courtroom held a larger crowd; certainly never had it held so many boys. Boys, and boys exclusively, filled the back rows of benches downstairs. More boys packed the narrow shelf-like balcony that spanned the chamber across its far end—mainly small boys, barefooted, sunburned, freckle-faced, shock-headed boys. And, for boys, they were strangely silent and strangely attentive.

The petitioner sat with his counsel, Mr. Sublette. The petitioner had been newly shaved, and from some mysterious source had been equipped with a neat wardrobe. Plainly he was endeavoring to wear a look of virtue, which was a difficult undertaking, as you would understand had you known the petitioner.

The defending party to the action was seated across the room, touching elbows with old Colonel Farrell, dean of the local bar and its most florid orator.

"The court will designate Col. Horatio Farrell as guardian *ad litem* for the defendant during these proceedings," Judge Priest had stated a few minutes earlier, using the formal and grammatical language he reserved exclusively

for his courtroom.

At once old Colonel Farrell had hitched his chair up alongside O'Day; had asked him several questions in a tone inaudible to those about them; had listened to the whispered answers of O'Day; and then had nodded his huge curly white dome of a head, as though amply satisfied with the responses.

Let us skip the preliminaries. True, they seemed to interest the audience; here, though, they would be tedious reading. Likewise, in touching upon the opening and outlining address of Attorney-at-Law Sublette let us, for the sake of time and space, be very much briefer than Mr. Sublette was. For our present purposes, I deem it sufficient to say that in all his professional career Mr. Sublette was never more eloquent, never more forceful never more vehement in his allegations, and never more convinced—as he himself stated, not once but repeatedly—of his ability to prove the facts he alleged by competent and unbiased testimony. These facts, he pointed out, were common knowledge in the community; nevertheless, he stood prepared to buttress them with the evidence of reputable witnesses, given under oath.

Mr. Sublette, having unwound at length, now

wound up. He sat down, perspiring freely and through the perspiration radiating confidence in his contentions, confidence in the result, and, most of all, unbounded confidence in Mr. Sublette.

Now Colonel Farrell was standing up to address the court. Under the cloak of a theatrical presence and a large orotund manner, and behind a Ciceronian command of sonorous language, the colonel carried concealed a shrewd old brain. It was as though a skilled marksman lurked in ambush amid a tangle of luxuriant foliage. In this particular instance, moreover, it is barely possible that the colonel was acting on a cue, privily conveyed to him before the court opened.

"May it please Your Honor," he began, "I have just conferred with the defendant here; and, acting in the capacity of his guardian *ad litem*, I have advised him to waive an opening address by counsel. Indeed, the defendant has no counsel. Furthermore, the defendant, also acting upon my advice, will present no witnesses in his own behalf. But, with Your Honor's permission, the defendant will now make a personal statement; and thereafter he will rest content, leaving the final arbitrament of the issue to Your Honor's discretion."

"I object!" exclaimed Mr. Sublette briskly.

"On what ground does the learned counsel object?" inquired Judge Priest.

"On the grounds that, since the mental competence of this man is concerned—since it is our contention that he is patently and plainly a victim of senility, an individual prematurely in his dotage—any utterances by him will be of no value whatsoever in aiding the conscience and intelligence of the court to arrive at a fair and just conclusion regarding the defendant's mental condition."

Mr. Sublette excelled in the use of big words; there was no doubt about that.

"The objection is overruled," said Judge Priest. He nodded in the direction of O'Day and Colonel Farrell. "The court will hear the defendant. He is not to be interrupted while making his statement. The defendant may proceed."

Without further urging, O'Day stood up, a tall, slab-sided rack of a man, with his long arms dangling at his sides, half facing Judge Priest and half facing his nephew and his nephew's lawyer. Without hesitation he began to speak. And this was what he said:

"There's mebbe some here ez knows about how I was raised and fetched up. My paw and my maw died when I was jest only a baby; so I was brung up out here at the old county porehouse ez a pauper. I can't remember the time when I didn't have to work for my board and keep, and work hard. While other boys was goin' to school and playin' hooky, and goin' in washin' in the creek, and playin' games, and all sech ez that, I had to work. I never done no playin' round in my whole life—not till here jest recently, anyway.

"But I always craved to play round some. I didn't never say nothin' about it to nobody after I growed up, 'cause I figgered it out they wouldn't understand and mebbe'd laugh at me; but all these years, ever sence I left that there porehouse, I've had a hankerin' here inside of me"—he lifted one hand and touched his breast —"I've had a hankerin' to be a boy and to do all the things a boy does; to do the things I was chiseled out of doin' whilst I was of a suitable age to be doin' 'em. I call to mind that I uster dream in my sleep about doin' 'em; but the dream never come true—not till jest here lately. It didn't have no chancet to come true—not till then.

"So, when this money come to me so sudden and unbeknownstlike I said to myself that I was

goin' to make that there dream come true; and I started out fur to do it. And I done it! And I reckin that's the cause of my bein' here to-day, accused of bein' feeble-minded. But, even so, I don't regret it none. Ef it was all to do over ag'in, I'd do it jest the very same way.

"Why, I never knowed whut it was, till here two months or so ago, to have my fill of bananas and candy and gingersnaps, and all sech knickknacks ez them. All my life I've been cravin' secretly to own a pair of red-topped boots with brass toes on 'em, like I used to see other boys wearin' in the wintertime when I was out yonder at that porehouse wearin' an old pair of somebody else's cast-off shoes—mebbe a man's shoes, with rags wropped round my feet to keep the snow frum comin' through the cracks in 'em, and to keep 'em from slippin' right spang off my feet. I got three toes frostbit oncet durin' a cold spell, wearin' them kind of shoes. But here the other week I found myself able to buy me some red-top boots with brass toes on 'em. So I had 'em made to order and I'm wearin' 'em now. I wear 'em reg'lar even ef it is summertime. I take a heap of pleasure out of 'em. And, also, all my life long I've been wantin' to go to a circus. But not till three days ago I didn't never git no chancet to go to one.

"That gentleman yonder—Mister Sublette—he

'lowed jest now that I was leadin' a lot of little boys in this here town into bad habits. He said that I was learnin' 'em nobody knowed whut devilment. And he spoke of my havin' egged 'em on to steal watermelons frum Mister Bell's watermelon patch out here three miles frum town, on the Marshallville gravel road. You-all heared whut he jest now said about that.

"I don't mean no offense and I beg his pardon fur contradictin' him right out before everybody here in the big courthouse; but, mister, you're wrong. I don't lead these here boys astray that I've been runnin' round with. They're mighty nice clean boys, all of 'em. Some of 'em are mighty near ez pore ez whut I uster be; but there ain't no real harm in any of 'em. We git along together fine—me and them. And, without no preachin', nor nothin' like that, I've done my best these weeks we've been frolickin' and projectin' round together to keep 'em frum growin' up to do mean things. I use chawin' tobacco myself; but I've told 'em, I don't know how many times, that ef they chaw it'll stunt 'em in their growth. And I've got several of 'em that was smokin' cigarettes on the sly to promise me they'd quit. So I don't figger ez I've done them boys any real harm by goin' round with 'em. And I believe ef you was to ast 'em they'd all tell you the same, suh.

"Now about them watermelons: Sence this gentleman has brung them watermelons up, I'm goin' to tell you-all the truth about that too."

He cast a quick, furtive look, almost a guilty look, over his shoulder toward the rear of the courtroom before he went on:

"Them watermelons wasn't really stole at all. I seen Mister Dick Bell beforehand and arranged with him to pay him in full fur whutever damage mout be done. But, you see, I knowed watermelons tasted sweeter to a boy ef he thought he'd hooked 'em out of a patch; so I never let on to my little pardners yonder that I'd the same ez paid Mister Bell in advance fur the melons we snuck out of his patch and et in the woods. They've all been thinkin' up till now that we really hooked them watermelons. But ef that was wrong I'm sorry fur it.

"Mister Sublette, you jest now said that I was fritterin' away my property on vain foolishment. Them was the words you used—'fritterin" and 'vain foolishment.' Mebbe you're right, suh, about the fritterin' part; but ef spendin' money in a certain way gives a man ez much pleasure ez it's give me these last two months, and ef the money is his'n by rights, I figger it can't be so very foolish; though it may 'pear so to some.

"Excusin' these here clothes I've got on and

these here boots, which ain't paid fur yet, but is charged up to me on Felsburg Brothers' books and Mister M. Biederman's books, I didn't spend only a dollar a day, or mebbe two dollars, and once three dollars in a single day out of whut was comin' to me. The Judge here, he let me have that out of his own pocket; and I paid him back. And that was all I did spend till here three days ago when that there circus come to town. I reckin I did spend a right smart then.

"My money had come frum the old country only the day before; so I went to the bank and they writ out one of them pieces of paper which is called a check, and I signed it—with my mark; and they give me the money I wanted—an even two hundred dollars. And part of that there money I used to pay fur circus tickets fur all the little boys and little girls I could find in this town that couldn't 'a' got to the circus no other way. Some of 'em are settin' back there behind you-all now—some of the boys, I mean; I don't see none of the little girls.

"There was several of 'em told me at the time they hadn't never seen a circus—not in their whole lives. Fur that matter, I hadn't, neither; but I didn't want no pore child in this town to grow up to be ez old ez I am without havin' been to at least one circus. So I taken 'em all in and paid all the bills; and when night come there

wasn't but 'bout nine dollars left out of the whole two hundred that I'd started out with in the mornin'. But I don't begredge spendin' it. It looked to me like it was money well invested. They all seemed to enjoy it; and I know I done so.

"There may be bigger circuses'n whut that one was; but I don't see how a circus could 'a' been any better than this here one I'm tellin' about, ef it was ten times ez big. I don't regret the investment and I don't aim to lie about it now. Mister Sublette, I'd do the same thing over ag'in ef the chance should come, lawsuit or no lawsuit. Ef you should win this here case mebbe I wouldn't have no second chance.

"Ef some gentleman is app'inted ez a committee to handle my money it's likely he wouldn't look at the thing the same way I do; and it's likely he wouldn't let me have so much money all in one lump to spend takin' a passel of little shavers that ain't no kin to me to the circus and to the side show, besides lettin' 'em stay fur the grand concert or after show, and all. But I done it once; and I've got it to remember about and think about in my own mind ez long ez I live.

"I'm 'bout finished now. There's jest one thing more I'd like to say, and that is this: Mister

Sublette he said a minute ago that I was in my second childhood. Meanin' no offense, suh, but you was wrong there too. The way I look at it, a man can't be in his second childhood without he's had his first childhood; and I was cheated plum' out of mine. I'm more'n sixty years old, ez near ez I kin figger; but I'm tryin' to be a boy before it's too late."

He paused a moment and looked round him.

"The way I look at it, Judge Priest, suh, and you-all, every man that grows up, no matter how old he may git to be, is entitled to 'a' been a boy oncet in his lifetime. I—I reckin that's all."

He sat down and dropped his eyes upon the floor, as though ashamed that his temerity should have carried him so far. There was a strange little hush filling the courtroom. It was Judge Priest who broke it.

"The court," he said, "has by the words just spoken by this man been sufficiently advised as to the sanity of the man himself. The court cares to hear nothing more from either side on this subject. The petition is dismissed."

Very probably these last words may have been as so much Greek to the juvenile members of the audience; possibly, though, they were made aware of the meaning of them by the look upon

the face of Nephew Percival Dwyer and the look upon the face of Nephew Percival Dwyer's attorney. At any rate, His Honor hardly had uttered the last syllable of his decision before, from the rear of the courtroom and from the gallery above, there arose a shrill, vehement, sincere sound of yelling—exultant, triumphant, and deafening. It continued for upward of a minute before the small disturbers remembered where they were and reduced themselves to a state of comparative quiet.

For reasons best known to himself, Judge Priest, who ordinarily stickled for order and decorum in his courtroom, made no effort to quell the outburst or to have it quelled—not even when a considerable number of the adults present joined in it, having first cleared their throats of a slight huskiness that had come upon them, severally and generally.

Presently the Judge rapped for quiet—and got it. It was apparent that he had more to say; and all there hearkened to hear what it might be.

"I have just this to add," quoth His Honor: "It is the official judgment of this court that the late defendant, being entirely sane, is competent to manage his own affairs after his preferences.

"And it is the private opinion of this court that not only is the late defendant sane but that he is

the sanest man in this entire jurisdiction. Mister Clerk, this court stands adjourned."

Coming down the three short steps from the raised platform of the bench, Judge Priest beckoned to Sheriff Giles Birdsong, who, at the tail of the departing crowd, was shepherding its last exuberant members through the doorway.

"Giles," said Judge Priest in an undertone, when the worthy sheriff had drawn near, "the circuit clerk tells me there's an indictment for malicious mischief ag'in this here Perce Dwyer knockin' round amongst the records somewheres—an indictment the grand jury returned several sessions back, but which was never pressed, owin' to the sudden departure frum our midst of the person in question.

"I wonder ef it would be too much trouble fur you to sort of drap a hint in the ear of the young man or his lawyer that the said indictment is apt to be revived, and that the said Dwyer is liable to be tuck into custody by you and lodged in the county jail sometime during the ensuin' forty-eight hours—without he should see his way clear durin' the meantime to get clean out of this city, county and state! Would it?"

"Trouble? No, suh! It won't be no trouble to me," said Mr. Birdsong promptly. "Why, it'll be more of a pleasure, Judge."

And so it was.

Except for one small added and purely incidental circumstance, our narrative is ended. That same afternoon Judge Priest sat on the front porch of his old white house out on Clay Street, waiting for Jeff Poindexter to summon him to supper. Peep O'Day opened the front gate and came up the graveled walk between the twin rows of silver-leaf poplars. The Judge, rising to greet his visitor, met him at the top step.

"Come in," bade the Judge heartily, "and set down a spell and rest your face and hands."

"No, suh; much obliged, but I ain't got only a minute to stay," said O'Day. "I jest come out here, suh, to thank you fur whut you done to-day on my account in the big courthouse, and—and to make you a little kind of a present."

"It's all right to thank me," said Judge Priest; "but I couldn't accept any reward fur renderin' a decision in accordance with the plain facts."

"'Tain't no gift of money, or nothin' like that," O'Day hastened to explain. "Really, suh, it don't amount to nothin' at all, scursely. But a little while ago I happened to be in Mr. B. Weil & Son's store, doin' a little tradin', and I run acrost a new kind of knickknack, which it seemed like

to me it was about the best thing I ever tasted in my whole life. So, on the chancet, suh, that you might have a sweet tooth, too, I taken the liberty of bringin' you a sack of 'em and—and—and here they are, suh; three flavors—strawberry, lemon and vanilly."

Suddenly overcome with confusion, he dislodged a large-sized paper bag from his side coat pocket and thrust it into Judge Priest's hands; then, backing away, he turned and clumped down the graveled path in great and embarrassed haste.

Judge Priest opened the bag and peered down into it.

It contained a sticky sugary dozen of flattened confections, each molded round a short length of wooden splinter. These sirupy articles, which have since come into quite general use, are known, I believe, as all-day suckers.

When Judge Priest looked up again, Peep O'Day was outside the gate, clumping down the uneven sidewalk of Clay Street with long strides of his booted legs. Half a dozen small boys, who, it was evident, had remained hidden during the ceremony of presentation, now mysteriously appeared and were accompanying the departing donor, half trotting to keep up with him.

LAUGHTER[7]

By CHARLES CALDWELL DOBIE

From *Harper's Magazine*

As Suvaroff neared his lodgings, he began to wonder whether the Italian who had the room next him would continue to grind out tunes all night upon his accordion. The thought made Suvaroff shudder. What in Heaven's name possessed people to grind out tunes, Suvaroff found himself inquiring, unless one earned one's living that way? Certainly this weather-beaten Italian was no musician; he smelled too strongly of fish for any one to mistake his occupation. He tortured melody from choice, blandly, for the pure enjoyment of the thing. With Suvaroff it was different; if he did not play, he did not eat.

Suvaroff's head had ached all day. The café where he scraped his violin from early afternoon until midnight had never seemed so stuffy, so tawdry, so impossible! All day he had sat and played and played, while people ate and chattered and danced. No, that did not describe what people did; they gorged and shrieked and gyrated like decapitated fowls, accomplishing everything with a furious energy, primitive, abandoned, disgusting. He wondered if he

would ever again see people eat quietly and simply, like normal human beings.

If only the Italian would go away, or decide to sleep, or die! Yes, Suvaroff would have been glad to have found his neighbor quite dead—anything to still that terrible accordion, which had been pumping out tunes for over a week at all hours of the day and night! The music did not have the virtue of an attempt at gaiety; instead it droned out prolonged wails, melancholy and indescribably discordant.

The night was damp, a typical San Francisco midsummer night. A drizzling fog had swept in from the ocean and fell refreshingly on the gray city. But the keenness of the air irritated Suvaroff's headache instead of soothing it; he felt the wind upon his temples as one feels the cool cut of a knife. In short, everything irritated Suvaroff—his profession, the café where he fiddled, the strident streets of the city, the evening mist, the Hôtel des Alpes Maritimes, where he lodged, and the Italian fisherman and his doleful accordion.

Turning off Kearny Street into Broadway, he had half a notion not to go home, but his dissatisfaction was so inclusive that home seemed, at once, quite as good and as hopeless a place to go as any other. So he pushed open the

door of his lodging-house and stamped rather heavily up-stairs.

Although midnight, the first sound which greeted Suvaroff was the wheezing of the Italian's accordion.

"Now," muttered Suvaroff, "I shall suffer in silence no longer. Nobody in this city, much less in these wretched lodgings, has an ear for anything but the clink of money and the shrill laughter of women. If fifty men were to file saws in front of the entrance of any one of these rooms, there would be not the slightest concern. Every one would go on sleeping as if they had nothing more weighty on their conscience than the theft of a kiss from a pretty girl."

He tossed his hat on the bed and made for the Italian's door. He did not wait to knock, but broke in noisily. The accordion stopped with a prolonged wail; its owner rose, visibly frightened.

"Ah!" cried the Italian, "it is you! I am glad of that. See, I have not left the house for three days."

There was a genial simplicity about the man; Suvaroff felt overcome with confusion. "What is the matter? Are you ill?" he stammered, closing the door.

"No. I am afraid to go out. There is somebody waiting for me. Tell me, did you see a cripple standing on the corner, near Bollo's Wine Shop, as you came in?"

Suvaroff reflected. "Well, not a cripple, exactly. But I saw a hunchback with—with—"

"Yes! yes!" cried the other, excitedly. "A hunchback with a handsome face! That is he! I am afraid of him. For three days he has sat there, waiting!"

"For you? How absurd! Why should any one do such a ridiculous thing?"

The Italian slipped his hands from the accordion and laid it aside. "Nobody but one who is mad would do it, but he is mad. There is no doubt about that!"

Suvaroff began to feel irritated. "What are you talking about? Have you lost your senses? If he is waiting for you, why do you not go out and send him away? Go out and pay him what you owe him."

The Italian rose and began to shudder. "I owe him nothing. He is waiting for me—*to kill me*!"

"Nonsense!" cried Suvaroff. "What is his reason?"

"He is waiting to kill me because I laughed at him."

"That is ridiculous!" said Suvaroff.

"Nevertheless, it is true," replied the Italian. "He kills every one who laughs at him. Three days ago I laughed at him. But I ran away. He followed me. He does not know where I lodge, but he has wit enough to understand that if he waits long enough he will find me out. In Heaven's name, my friend, can you not help me? See, I am a simple soul. I cannot think quickly. I have prayed to the Virgin, but it is no use. Tell me, what can I do to escape?"

"Why do you not see a policeman?"

The Italian let his hands fall hopelessly. "A policeman? What good would that do? Even *you* do not believe me!"

A chill seized Suvaroff. He began to shake, and in the next instant a fever burned his cheeks. His head was full of little darting pains. He turned away from the Italian, impatiently. "You must be a pretty sort of man to let a little hunchback frighten you! Good night."

And with that Suvaroff went out, slamming the door.

When Suvaroff got to his room he felt dizzy.

He threw himself on the bed and lay for some time in a stupor. When he came to his senses again the first sound to greet him was the wail of his neighbor's accordion.

"What a fool I am!" he muttered. "Here I go bursting into this Italian's room for the purpose of asking him to quit his abominable noise, and I listen like a dumb sheep to *his* bleatings, and so forget my errand!"

The noise continued, grew more insistent, became unbearable. Suvaroff covered his ears with a comforter. His head was throbbing so violently that even the ticking of a clock upon the table by his bed cut his senses like a two-edged sword. He rose, stumbling about with a feeling of indescribable weakness. What was the matter? Why did he feel so ill? His eyes burned, his legs seemed weighted, his throat was so dry that there was no comfort when he swallowed. All this he could have stood if it had not been for the fiendish noise which, he began to feel, was being played merely for his torture.

He put on his hat and stumbled down-stairs, out into the night. Crossing the street, he went at once to Bollo's Wine Shop. The hunchback was sitting on a garbage-can, almost at the entrance. At the sight of this misshapen figure, the irritating memory of the Italian and his

impossible music recurred to Suvaroff. A sudden sinister cruelty came over him; he felt a wanton ruthlessness that the sight of ugliness sometimes engenders in natures sensitive to beauty. He went up to the hunchback and looked searchingly into the man's face. It was a strangely handsome face, and its incongruity struck Suvaroff. Had Nature been weary, or merely in a satirical mood, when she fashioned such a thing of horror?—for Suvaroff found that the handsome face seemed even more horrible than the twisted body, so sharp and violent was the contrast.

The hunchback returned Suvaroff's stare with almost insulting indifference, but there was something in the look that quickened the beating of Suvaroff's heart.

"You are waiting here," began Suvaroff, "for an Italian who lodges across the street. Would you like me to tell you where he may be found?"

The hunchback shrugged. "It does not matter in the slightest, one way or another. If you tell me where he lodges, the inevitable will happen more quickly than if I sat and waited for the rat to come out of his hole. Waiting has its own peculiar interest. If you have ever waited, as I wait now, you know the joy that a cat feels—expectation is two-thirds of any game."

Suvaroff shuddered. He had an impulse to walk away, but the eyes of the other burned with a strange fascination.

"Nevertheless," said Suvaroff, "I shall tell—"

The hunchback waved him to silence. "Do whatever you wish, my friend, but remember, if you do tell me this thing, you and I will be forever bound by a tie that it will be impossible to break. With me it does not matter, but you are a young man, and all your life you will drag a secret about like a dead thing chained to your wrist. I am Flavio Minetti, and I kill every one who laughs at me! This Italian of whom you speak has laughed at me. I may wait a week—a month. It will be the same. No one has yet escaped me."

An exquisite fear began to move Suvaroff. "Nevertheless," he repeated again, "I shall tell you where he lodges. You will find him upon the third landing of the Hôtel des Alpes Maritimes. There are no numbers on the doors, but it will be impossible for you to mistake his room. All day and night he sits playing an accordion."

Flavio Minetti took a cigarette from his pocket. "Remember, my young friend, I gave you fair warning."

"I shall not forget," replied Suvaroff.

Suvaroff climbed back to his room. He sat upon his bed holding his head in his hands. The sound of the accordion seemed gruesome now.

Presently he heard a step on the landing. His heart stood still. Sounds drifted down the passageway. The noise was not heavy and clattering, but it had a pattering quality, like a bird upon a roof. Above the wailing of the music, Suvaroff heard a door opened—slowly, cautiously. There followed a moment of silence; Suvaroff was frightened. But almost immediately the playing began again.

"Now," thought Suvaroff, "why is the Italian not frightened? The door has been opened and he goes on playing, undisturbed.... It must be that he is sitting with his back to the door. If this is so, God help him!... Well, why need I worry? What is it to me? It is not my fault if a fool like that sits with his door unlocked and his face turned from the face of danger."

And, curiously, Suvaroff's thoughts wandered to other things, and a picture of his native country flashed over him—Little Russia in the languid embrace of summer—green and blue and golden. The soft notes of the balalaika at

twilight came to him, and the dim shapes of dancing peasants, whirling like aspen-leaves in a fresh breeze. He remembered the noonday laughter of skylarks; the pear-trees bending patiently beneath their harvest; the placid river winding its willow-hedged way, cutting the plain like a thin silver knife.

Now, suddenly, it came upon him that the music in the next room had stopped. He waited. There was not a sound!... After a time the door banged sharply. The pattering began again, and died away. But still there was no music!...

Suvaroff rose and began to strip off his clothes. His teeth were chattering. "Well, at last," he muttered, "I shall have some peace!" He threw himself on the bed, drawing the coverings up over his head.... Presently a thud shook the house. "He has slipped from his seat," said Suvaroff aloud. "It is all over!" And he drew the bedclothes higher and went to sleep.

Next morning, Suvaroff felt better. To be sure, he was weak, but he rose and dressed.

"What strange dreams people have when they are in a fever!" he exclaimed, as he put on his hat. Nevertheless, as he left the house, he did not so much as glance at the Italian's door.

It was a pleasant morning, the mist had lifted and the sky was a freshly washed blue. Suvaroff walked down Kearny Street, and past Portsmouth Square. At this hour the little park was cleared of its human wreckage, and dowdy sparrows hopped unafraid upon the deserted benches. A Chinese woman and her child romped upon the green; a weather-beaten peddler stooped to the fountain and drank; the three poplar-trees about the Stevenson monument trembled to silver in the frank sunshine. Suvaroff could not remember when the city had appeared so fresh and innocent. It seemed to him as if the gray, cold drizzle of the night had washed away even the sins of the wine-red town. But an indefinite disquiet rippled the surface of his content. His peace was filled with a vague suggestion of sinister things to follow, like the dead calm of this very morning, which so skilfully bound up the night wind in its cool, placid air. He would have liked to linger a moment in the park, but he passed quickly by and went into a little chop-house for his morning meal.

As he dawdled over his cup of muddy coffee he had a curious sense that his mind was intent on keeping at bay some half-formulated fear. He felt pursued, as by an indistinct dream. Yet he was cunning enough to pretend that this

something was too illusive to capture outright, so he turned his thoughts to all manner of remote things. But there are times when it is almost as difficult to deceive oneself as to cheat others. In the midst of his thoughts he suddenly realized that under the stimulating influence of a second cup of coffee he was feeling quite himself again.

"That is because I got such a good night's sleep," he muttered. "For over a week this Italian and his wretched accordion—" He halted his thoughts abruptly. "What am I thinking about?" he demanded. Then he rose, paid his bill, and departed.

He turned back to his lodgings. At Bollo's Wine Shop he hesitated. A knot of people stood at the entrance of the Hôtel des Alpes Maritimes, and a curious wagon was drawn up to the curb.

He stopped a child. "What is the trouble?" he inquired.

The girl raised a pair of mournful eyes to him. "A man has been killed!" she answered.

Suvaroff turned quickly and walked in another direction. He went to the café where he fiddled. At this hour it was like an empty cavern. A smell of stale beer and tobacco smoke pervaded

the imprisoned air. He sat down upon the deserted platform and pretended to practise. He played erratically, feverishly. The waiters, moving about their morning preparations with an almost uncanny quiet, listened attentively. Finally one of them stopped before him.

"What has come over you, Suvaroff?" questioned the man. "You are making our flesh creep!"

"Oh, pardon me!" cried Suvaroff. "I shall not trouble you further!"

And with that he packed up his violin and left. He did not go back to the café, even at the appointed hour. Instead, he wandered aimlessly about. All day he tramped the streets. He listened to street-fakirs, peered into shop-windows, threw himself upon the grass of the public squares and stared up at the blue sky. He had very little personal consciousness; he seemed to have lost track of himself. He had an absurd feeling that he had come away from somewhere and left behind a vital part of his being.

"Suvaroff! Suvaroff!" he would repeat over and over to himself, as if trying to recall the memory of some one whose precise outline had escaped him.

He caught a glimpse of his figure in the mirror of a shop-window. He went closer, staring for some moments at the face opposite him. There followed an infinitesimal fraction of time when his spirit deserted him as completely as if he were dead. When he recovered himself he had a sense that he was staring at the reflection of a stranger. He moved away, puzzled. Was he going mad? Then, suddenly, everything grew quite clear. He remembered the Italian, the accordion, the hunchback. Characters, circumstances, sequences—all stood out as sharply as the sky-line of a city in the glow of sunset.... He put his fingers to his pulse. Everything seemed normal; his skin was moist and cool. Yet last night he had been very ill. That was it! Last night he had been ill!

"What strange dreams people have when they are in a fever!" he exclaimed for the second time that day. He decided to go home. "I wonder, though," thought he, "whether the Italian is still playing that awful instrument?" Curiously enough, the idea did not disturb him in the least. "I shall teach him a Russian tune or two!" he decided, cheerfully. "Then, maybe his playing will be endurable."

When he came again to his lodgings he was surprised to find a knot of curious people on the opposite side of the street, and another before

the entrance. He went up the stairs. His landlady came to meet him.

"Mr. Suvaroff," she began at once, "have you not heard what has happened? The man in the next room to you was found this morning—*dead*!"

He did not pretend to be surprised. "Well," he announced, brutally, "at least we shall have no more of dreadful music! How did he kill himself?"

The woman gave way to his advance with a movement of flattering confusion. "The knife was in his side," she answered. "In his side—toward the back."

"Ah, then he was murdered!"

"Yes."

He was mounting the second flight of stairs when his landlady again halted him. "Mr. Suvaroff," she ventured, "I hope you will not be angry! But his mother came early this morning. All day she has sat in your room, weeping. I cannot persuade her to go away. What am I to do?"

Suvaroff glared at her for a moment. "It is nothing!" he announced, as he passed on, shrugging.

The door of his room was open; he went in. A gnarled old woman sat on the edge of the bed; a female consoler was on either side. At the sight of Suvaroff the mourner rose and stood trembling before him, rolling a gaudy handkerchief into a moist bundle.

"My good woman," said Suvaroff, kindly, "do not stand; sit down."

"Kind gentleman!" the old woman began. "Kind gentleman—"

She got no further because of her tears. The other women rose and sat her down again. She began to moan. Suvaroff, awkward and disturbed, stood as men do in such situations.

Finally the old woman found her voice. "Kind gentleman," she said, "I am a poor old woman, and my son—Ah! I was washing his socks when they came after me.... You see what has happened! He was a good son. Once a week he came to me and brought me five dollars. Now—What am I to do, my kind gentleman?"

Suvaroff said nothing.

She swayed back and forth, and spoke again. "Only last week he said: 'There is a man who lodges next me who plays music.' Yes, my son was fond of you because of that. He said: 'I have

seen him only once. He plays music all day and night, so that he may have money enough to live on. When I hear him coming up the stairs I take down my accordion and begin to play. All day and night he plays for others. So I think, Now it will be nice to give him some pleasure. So I take down my accordion and play for *him*!'... Yes, yes! He was like that all his life. He was a good son. Now what am I to do?"

A shudder passed over Suvaroff. There was a soft tap upon the door. The three women and Suvaroff looked up. Flavio Minetti stood in the doorway.

The three women gave the hunchback swift, inclusive glances, such as women always use when they measure a newcomer, and speedily dropped their eyes. Suvaroff stared silently at the warped figure. Minetti leaned against the door; his smile was at once both cruel and curiously touching. At length Minetti spoke. The sound of his voice provoked a sort of terror in the breast of Suvaroff.

"I have just heard," he said, benevolently, "from the proprietor of the wine-shop across the way, that your neighbor has been murdered. The landlady tells me that his mother is here."

The old woman roused herself. "Yes—you can see for yourself that I am here. I am a poor old

woman, and my son—Ah! I was washing his socks when—"

"Yes, yes!" interrupted the hunchback, advancing into the room. "You are a poor old woman! Let me give you some money in all charity."

He threw gold into her lap. She began to tremble. Suvaroff saw her hands greedily close over the coins, and the sight sickened him.

"Why did you come?" Suvaroff demanded of Minetti. "Go away! You are not wanted here!"

The three women rose. The old woman began to mumble a blessing. She even put up her hand in the fashion of bestowing a benediction. Suvaroff fancied that he saw Minetti wince.

"He was a good son," the old woman began to mutter they led her out. At the door she looked back. Suvaroff turned away. "Once a week he came to me and brought me five dollars," she said, quite calmly. "He was a good son. He even played his music to give pleasure to others. Yes, yes! He was like that all his life...."

When the women were gone, Suvaroff felt the hunchback's hand upon his. Suvaroff turned a face of dry-eyed hopelessness toward his tormentor.

"Did you not sleep peacefully last night, my friend?" Minetti inquired, mockingly.

"After the thud I knew nothing," replied Suvaroff.

"The thud?"

"He fell from his chair."

"Of course. That was to be expected. Just so."

"You see for yourself what you have done? Fancy, this man has a mother!"

"See, it is just as I said. Already you are dragging this dead thing about, chained to your wrist. Come, forget it. I should have killed him, anyway."

"That is not the point. The point is—My God! Tell me, in what fashion do these people laugh at you? Tell me how it is done."

"Laughter cannot be taught, my friend."

"Then Heaven help me! for I should like to laugh at you. If I could but laugh at you, all would be over."

"Ah!" said the hunchback. "I see."

At the end of the week Minetti came to

Suvaroff one evening and said, not unkindly: "Why don't you leave? You are killing yourself. Go away—miles away. It would have happened, anyway."

Suvaroff was lying upon his bed. His face was turned toward the wall. He did not trouble to look at Minetti.

"I cannot leave. You know that as well as I do. When I am absent from this room I am in a fever until I get back to it again. I lie here and close my eyes and think.... Whenever a thud shakes the house I leap up, trembling. I have not worked for five days. They have given up sending for me from the café. Yesterday his mother came and sat with me. She drove me mad. But I sat and listened to her. 'Yes, he was a good son!' She repeats this by the hour, and rolls and unrolls her handkerchief.... It is bad enough in the daytime. But at night—God! If only the music would play again! I cannot endure such silence."

He buried his face in the pillow. Minetti shrugged and left.

In about an hour Suvaroff rose and went out. He found a squalid wine-shop in the quarter just below the Barbary Coast. He went in and sat alone at a table. The floors had not been freshly sanded for weeks; a dank mildew covered the

green wall-paper. He called for brandy, and a fat, greasy-haired man placed a bottle of villainous stuff before him. Suvaroff poured out a drink and swallowed it greedily. He drank another and another. The room began to fill. The lights were dim, and the arrival and departure of patrons threw an endless procession of grotesque silhouettes upon the walls. Suvaroff was fascinated by these dancing shadows. They seemed familiar and friendly. He sat sipping his brandy, now, with a quieter, more leisurely air. The shadows were indescribably fascinating; they were so horrible and amusing! He began to wonder whether their antics would move him to laughter if he sat and drank long enough. He had a feeling that laughter and sleep went hand in hand. If he could but laugh again he was quite sure that he would fall asleep. But he discovered a truth while he sat there. Amusement and laughter were often strangers. He had known this all his life, of course, but he had never thought of it. Once, when he was a child, an old man had fallen in the road before him, in a fit. Suvaroff had stood rooted to the spot with amusement, but he had not laughed. Yet the man had gone through the contortions of a clown.... Well, then he was not to be moved to laughter, after all. He wearily put the cork back in the bottle of brandy. The fat bartender came forward. Suvaroff paid him and departed.

He went to the wine-shop the next night—and the next. He began to have a hope that if he persisted he would discover a shadow grotesque enough to make him laugh. He sat for hours, drinking abominable brandy. The patrons of the shop did not interest him. They were squalid, dirty, uninteresting. But their shadows were things of wonder. How was it possible for such drab people to have even interesting shadows? And why were these shadows so familiar? Suvaroff recognized each in turn, as if it were an old friend that he remembered but could not name. After the second night he came to a definite conclusion.

"They are not old friends at all," he said to himself. "They are not even the shadows of these people who come here. They are merely the silhouettes of my own thoughts.... If I could but draw my thoughts, they would be as black and as fantastic."

But at another time he dismissed this theory.

"No," he muttered, "they are not the shadows of my thoughts at all. They are the souls of these men. They are the twisted, dark, horrible souls of these men, that cannot crawl out except at nightfall! They are the souls of these men seeking to escape, like dogs chained to their kennels!... I wonder if the Italian had such a

soul?..."

He rose suddenly. "I am wasting my time here," he said, almost aloud. "One may learn to laugh at a shadow. One may even learn to laugh at the picture of one's thoughts. But to laugh at a soul—No! A man's soul is too dreadful a thing to laugh at." He staggered out into the night.

On his way home he went into a pawn-shop and bought a pistol. He was in a fever to get back to his lodgings. He found Minetti waiting for him. He tried to conceal the pistol, but he knew that Minetti had seen it. Minetti was as pleasant as one could imagine. He told the most droll stories of his life in London. It appeared that he had lived there in a hotbed of exiled radicals; but he, himself, seemed to have no convictions. Everything he described was touched with a certain ironic humor. When he rose to go he said, quite simply:

"How are things? Do you sleep nights now?"

"No. I never expect to sleep again."

Minetti made no comment. "I see you have bought a pistol," he observed.

"Yes," replied Suvaroff.

"You have wasted your money, my young friend," declared the hunchback. "You will

never use it."

With that Minetti left the room. Suvaroff laid the pistol on the table and threw himself upon the bed. He lay there without moving until morning.... Toward six o'clock he rose. He went over to the table and deliberately put the pistol to his temple. The coldness of the muzzle sent a tremor through him.... He put down the weapon in disgust.

Suvaroff stayed away from the wine-shop for two nights, but finally the memory of its fascinating shadows lured him back. The fat bartender saw him enter, and came forward with a bottle of brandy. Suvaroff smiled grimly and said nothing. He turned his back upon the company and began to watch the shadows enter and disappear. To-night the puppets seemed more whimsical than grotesque, and once he nearly laughed. A shadow with an enormous nose appeared; and a fly, as big as a bumblebee, lit upon the nose and sat rubbing its legs together in insolent content. A hand, upraised, struck at the fly. The nose disappeared as if completely annihilated by the blow, while the fly hovered safely aloof. Feeling encouraged, Suvaroff took another drink. But the more he drank the less genial were the shadows, and by

midnight they all had become as sinister and terrible as ever.

On the way home to his room Suvaroff suddenly remembered that he had a friend who was a druggist.

"Perhaps he can give me something to make me sleep," Suvaroff muttered.

But the drug-store was closed. Suvaroff climbed wearily up the stairs of the Hôtel des Alpes Maritimes. Minetti was sitting on the steps near the third landing.

"I was preparing to go home," said the hunchback. "What kept you so late?"

"I went around another way," answered Suvaroff. "I thought I might get something from a druggist friend to help me sleep."

They stood before the door of Suvaroff's room. Suvaroff opened the door and they went in.

"Sleeping-powders are dangerous," observed Minetti, throwing his hat upon the bed.

"So I fancied," replied Suvaroff, dryly.

"Where do you spend your nights?" Minetti demanded suddenly.

Suvaroff sat down. "Watching shadows in a

wine-shop."

"Ah—a puppet show!"

"No, not exactly. I will explain.... No; come to think of it, there is no explanation. But it is extremely amusing. To-night, for instance, I nearly laughed.... Have you ever watched shadows upon a wall? Really, they are diverting beyond belief."

"Yes. I have watched them often. They are more real to me than actual people, because they are uglier. Beauty is a lie!"

A note of dreadful conviction crept into the hunchback's voice. Suvaroff looked at him intently, and said, quite simply:

"What a bitter truth *you* are, my friend!"

Minetti stared at Suvaroff, and he rose. "Perhaps I shall see you at your puppet show some evening," he said. And, without waiting for a reply, he left the room.

Suvaroff lay again all night upon his bed staring in a mute agony at the ceiling. Once or twice he fancied he heard the sounds of music from the next room. His heart leaped joyfully. But almost instantly his hopes sank back, like spent swimmers in a relentless sea. It seemed as if his brain were thirsting. He was in a pitiless

desert of white-heated thought, and there was not a cloud of oblivion upon the horizon of his despair. Remembrance flamed like a molten sun, greedily withering every green, refreshing thing in its path. How long before this dreadful memory would consume him utterly?

"If I could only laugh!" he cried in his agony. "*If I could only laugh!*"

All next day Suvaroff was in a fever; not a physical fever, but a mental fever that burned with devastating insistence. He could not lie still upon his bed, so he rose and stumbled about the city's streets. But nothing diverted him. Before his eyes a sheet of fire burned, and a blinding light seemed to shut out everything else from his vision. Even his thoughts crackled like dry faggots in a flame.

"When evening comes," he said, "a breeze will spring up and I shall have some relief." But almost at once he thought: "A breeze will do no good. It will only make matters worse! I have heard that nothing puts out a fire so quickly as a shower. Let me see—It is now the middle of August.... It does not rain in this part of the world until October. Well, I must wait until October, then. No; a breeze at evening will do no good. I will go and watch the shadows again.

Shadows are cool affairs if one sits in them, but how...."

And he began to wonder how he could contrive to sit in shadows that fell only on a wall.

How he got to the wine-shop he did not know, but at a late hour he found himself sitting at his accustomed seat. His bottle of brandy stood before him. To-night the shadows were blacker than ever, as if the fury of the flames within him were providing these dancing figures with a brighter background.

"These shadows are not the pictures of my thoughts," he said to himself. "Neither are they chained souls seeking to escape. They are the smoke from the fire in my head. They are the black smoke from my brain which is slowly burning away!"

He sat for hours, staring at the wall. The figures came and went, but they ceased to have any form or meaning. He merely sat and drank, and stared.... All at once a strange shadow appeared. A shadow? No; a phantom—a dreadful thing! Suvaroff leaned forward. His breath came quickly, his body trembled in the grip of a convulsion, his hands were clenched. He rose in his seat, and suddenly—quite suddenly, without warning—he began to laugh.... The shadow halted in its flight across the wall. Suvaroff

circled the room with his gaze. In the center of the wine-shop stood Flavio Minetti. Suvaroff sat down. He was still shaking with laughter.

Presently Suvaroff was conscious that Minetti had disappeared. The fire in his brain had ceased to burn. Instead his senses seemed chilled, not disagreeably, but with a certain pleasant numbness. He glanced about. What was he doing in such a strange, squalid place? And the brandy was abominable! He called the waiter, paid him what was owing, and left at once.

There was no mist in the air to-night. The sky was clear and a wisp of moon crept on its disdainful way through the heavens.

"I shall sleep to-night," muttered Suvaroff, as he climbed up to his room upon the third story of the Hôtel des Alpes Maritimes.

He undressed deliberately. All his former frenzy was gone. Shortly after he had crawled into bed he heard a step on the landing. Then, as usual, sounds began to drift down the passageway, not in heavy and clattering fashion, but with a pattering quality like a bird upon a roof. And, curiously, Suvaroff's thoughts wandered to other things, and a picture of his native country flashed over him—Little Russia in the languid embrace of summer—green and blue and golden. The soft notes of the balalaika

at twilight came to him, and the dim shapes of dancing peasants, whirling like aspen-leaves in a fresh breeze. He remembered the noonday laughter of skylarks; the pear-trees bending patiently beneath their harvest; the placid river winding its willow-hedged way, cutting the plain like a thin silver knife.

A fresh current of air began to blow upon him. He heard the creak of a rusty hinge.

"He has opened the door," Suvaroff whispered. His teeth began to chatter. "Nevertheless, I shall sleep to-night," he said to himself reassuringly.

A faint footfall sounded upon the threshold.... Suvaroff drew the bedclothes higher.

THE EMPEROR OF ELAM[8]

By H. G. DWIGHT

From *The Century Magazine*.

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

Ecclesiastes, ix, 11.

I

The first of the two boats to arrive at this unappointed rendezvous was one to catch the eye even in that river of strange craft. She had neither the raking bow nor the rising poop of the local *mehala*, but a tall incurving beak, not unlike those of certain Mesopotamian sculptures, with a windowed and curtained deck-house at the stern. Forward she carried a short mast. The lateen sail was furled, however, and the galley was propelled at a fairly good gait by seven pairs of long sweeps. They flashed none too rhythmically, it must be added, at the sun which had just risen above the Persian mountains. And although the slit sleeves of the fourteen oarsmen, all of them young and none of them ill to look upon, flapped decoratively enough about the handles of the sweeps, they could not be said to present a shipshape appearance. Neither did the black felt caps the

boatmen wore, fantastically tall and knotted about their heads with gay fringed scarves.

This barge had passed out of the Ab-i-Diz and was making its stately enough way across the basin of divided waters below Bund-i-Kir, when from the mouth of the Ab-i-Gerger—the easterly of two turbid threads into which the Karun above this point is split by a long island—there shot a trim white motor-boat. The noise she made in the breathless summer sunrise, intensified and reechoed by the high clay banks which here rise thirty feet or more above the water, caused the rowers of the galley to look around. Then they dropped their sweeps in astonishment at the spectacle of the small boat advancing so rapidly toward them without any effort on the part of the four men it contained, as if blown by the breath of jinn. The word *Firengi*, however, passed around the deck—that word so flattering to a great race, which once meant Frank but which now, in one form or another, describes for the people of western Asia the people of Europe and their cousins beyond the seas. Among the friends of the jinn, of whom as it happened only two were Europeans, there also passed an explanatory word. But although they pronounced the strange oarsmen to be Lurs, they caused their jinni to cease his panting, so struck were they by the

appearance of the high-beaked barge.

The two craft drifted abreast of each other about midway of the sunken basin. As they did so, one of the Europeans in the motor-boat, a stocky black-moustached fellow in blue overalls, wearing in place of the regulation helmet of that climate a greasy black *béret* over one ear, lifted his hand from the wheel and called out the Arabic salutation of the country:

"Peace be unto you!"

"And to you, peace!" responded a deep voice from the doorway of the deck-house. It was evident that the utterer of this friendly antiphon was not a Lur. Fairer, taller, stouter, and older than his wild-looking crew, he was also better dressed—in a girdled robe of gray silk, with a striped silk scarf covering his hair and the back of his neck in the manner of the Arabs. A thick brown beard made his appearance more imposing, while two scars across his left cheek, emerging from the beard, suggested or added to something in him which might on occasion become formidable. As it was he stepped forward with a bow and addressed a slim young man who sat in the stern of the motor-boat. "Shall we pass as Kinglake and the Englishman of *Eothen* did in the desert," asked the stranger, smiling, in a very good English, "because they

had not been introduced? Or will you do me the honor to come on board my—ark?"

The slim young man, whose fair hair, smooth face, and white clothes made him the most boyish looking of that curious company, lifted his white helmet and smiled in return.

"Why not?" he assented. And, becoming conscious that his examination of this surprising stranger, who looked down at him with odd light eyes, was too near a stare, he added: "What on earth is your ark made of, Mr. Noah?"

What she was made of, as a matter of fact, was what heightened the effect of remoteness she produced—a hard dark wood unknown to the lower Karun, cut in lengths of not more than two or three feet and caulked with reeds and mud.

"'Make thee an ark of gopher wood,'" quoted the stranger. "'Rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and thou shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.'"

"Bitumen, eh?" exclaimed the slim young man. "Where did you get it?"

"Do you ask, you who drill oil at Meidan-i-Naft?"

"As it happens, I don't!" smiled the slim young

man.

"At any rate," continued the stranger, after a scarcely perceptible pause, "let me welcome you on board the Ark." And when the unseen jinni had made it possible for the slim young man to set foot on the deck of the barge, the stranger added, with a bow: "Magin is my name —from Brazil."

If the slim young man did not stare again, he at least had time to make out that the oddity of his host's light eyes lay not so much in the fact of their failing to be distinctly brown, gray, or green, as that they had a translucent look. Then he responded briefly, holding out his hand:

"Matthews. But isn't this a long way from Rio de Janeiro?"

"Well," returned the other, "it's not so near London! But come in and have something, won't you?" And he held aside the reed portière that screened the door of the deck-house.

"My word! You do know how to do yourself!" exclaimed Matthews. His eye took in the Kerman embroidery on the table in the centre of the small saloon, the gazelle skins and silky Shiraz rugs covering the two divans at the sides, the fine Sumak carpet on the floor, and the lion pelt in front of an inner door. "By Jove!" he

exclaimed again. "That's a beauty!"

"Ha!" laughed the Brazilian. "The Englishman spies his lion first!"

"Where did you find him?" asked Matthews, going behind the table for a better look. "They're getting few and far between around here, they say."

"Oh, they still turn up," answered the Brazilian, it seemed to Matthews not too definitely. Before he could pursue the question farther, Magin clapped his hands. Instantly there appeared at the outer door a barefooted Lur, whose extraordinary cap looked to Matthews even taller and more pontifical than those of his fellow-countrymen at the oars. The Lur, his hands crossed on his girdle, received a rapid order and vanished as silently as he came.

"I wish I knew the lingo like that!" commented Matthews.

Magin waved a deprecatory hand.

"One picks it up soon enough. Besides, what's the use—with a man like yours? Who is he, by the way? He doesn't look English."

"Who? Gaston? He isn't. He's French. And he doesn't know too much of the lingo. But the blighter could get on anywhere. He's been all

over the place—Algiers, Egypt, Baghdad. He's been chauffeur to more nabobs in turbans than you can count. He's a topping mechanic, too. The wheel hasn't been invented that beggar can't make go 'round. The only trouble he has is with his own. He keeps time for a year or two, and then something happens to his mainspring and he gets the sack. But he never seems to go home. He always moves on to some place where it's hotter and dirtier. You should hear his stories! He's an amusing devil."

"And perhaps not so different from the rest of us!" threw out Magin. "What flea bites us? Why do you come here, courting destruction in a cockleshell that may any minute split on a rock and spill you to the sharks, when you might be punting some pretty girl up the backwaters of the Thames? Why do I float around in this old ark of reeds and bulrushes, like an elderly Moses in search of a promised land, who should be at home wearing the slippers of middle age? What is it? A sunstroke? This is hardly the country where Goethe's citrons bloom!"

"Damned if I know!" laughed Matthews. "I fancy we like a bit of a lark!"

The Brazilian laughed too.

"A bit of a lark!" he echoed.

Just then the silent Lur reappeared with a tray.

"I say!" protested Matthews. "Whiskey and soda at five o'clock in the morning, in the middle of July—"

"1914, if you must be so precise!" added Magin jovially. "But why not?" he demanded. "Aren't you an Englishman? You mustn't shake the pious belief in which I was brought up, that you are all weaned with Scotch! Say when. It isn't every day that I have the pleasure of so fortunate an encounter." And, rising, he lifted his glass, bowed, and said: "Here's to a bit of a lark, Mr. Matthews!"

The younger man rose to it. But inwardly he began to feel a little irked.

"By the way," he asked, nibbling at a biscuit, "can you tell me anything about the Ab-i-Diz? I dare say you must know something about it—since your men look as if they came from up that way. Is there a decent channel as far as Dizful?"

"Ah!" uttered Magin slowly. "Are you thinking of going up there?" He considered the question, and his guest, with a flicker in his lighted eyes. "Well, decent is a relative word, you know. However, wonders can be accomplished with a stout rope and a gang of natives, even beyond

Dizful. But here you see me and my ark still whole—after a night journey, too. The worst thing is the sun. You see I am more careful of my skin than you. As for the shoals, the rapids, the sharks, the lions, the nomads who pop at you from the bank, *et cetera*—you are an Englishman! Do you take an interest in antiques?" he broke off abruptly.

"Yes—though interest is a relative word too, I expect."

"Quite so!" agreed the Brazilian. "I have rather a mania for that sort of thing, myself. Wait. Let me show you." And he went into the inner cabin. When he came back he held up an alabaster cup. "A Greek kylix!" he cried. "Pure Greek! What an outline, eh? This is what keeps me from putting on my slippers! I have no doubt Alexander left it behind him. Perhaps Hephaistion drank out of it, or Nearchus, to celebrate his return from India. And some rascally Persian stole it out of a tent!"

Matthews, taking the cup, saw the flicker brighten in the Brazilian's eyes.

"Nice little pattern of grape leaves, that," he said. "And think of picking it up out here!"

"Oh you can always pick things up, if you know where to look," said Magin. "Dieulafoy

and the rest of them didn't take everything. How could they? The people who have come and gone through this country of Elam! Why just over there, at Bund-i-Kir, Antigonus fought Eumenes and the Silver Shields for the spoils of Susa—and won them! I have discovered—But come in here." And he pushed wider open the door of the inner cabin.

Matthews stepped into what was evidently a stateroom. A broad bunk filled one side of it, and the visitor could not help remarking a second interior door. But his eye was chiefly struck by two, three, no four, chests, which took up more space in the narrow cabin than could be convenient for its occupant. They seemed to be made of the same mysterious dark wood as the "ark," clamped with copper.

"I say! Those aren't bad!" he exclaimed. "More of the spoils of Susa?"

"Ho! My trunks? I had them made up the river, like the rest. But I wonder what would interest you in my museum. Let's see." He bent over one of the chests, unlocked it, rummaged under the cover, and brought out a broad metal circlet which he handed to Matthews. "How would that do for a crown, eh?"

The young man took it over to the porthole. The metal, he then saw, was a soft antique gold,

wrought into a decoration of delicate spindles, with a border of filigree. The circlet was beautiful in itself, and astonishingly heavy. But what it chiefly did for Matthews was to sharpen the sense of strangeness, of remoteness, which this bizarre galley, come from unknown waters, had brought into the familiar muddy Karun.

"As a matter of fact," went on the Brazilian, "it's an anklet. But can you make it out? Those spindles are Persian, while the filigree is more Byzantine than anything else. You find funny things up there, in caves—"

He tossed a vague hand, into which Matthews put the anklet, saying:

"Take it before I steal it!"

"Keep it, won't you?" proposed the astonishing Brazilian.

"Oh, thanks. But I could hardly do that," Matthews replied.

"Why not?" protested Magin. "As a souvenir of a pleasant meeting! I have a ton of them." He waved his hand at the chests.

"No, really, thanks," persisted the young man. "And I'm afraid we must be getting on. I don't know the river, you see, and I'd like to reach Dizful before dark."

The Brazilian studied him a moment.

"As you say," he finally conceded. "But you will at least have another drink before you go?"

"No, not even that, thanks," said Matthews. "We really must be off. But it's been very decent of you."

He felt both awkward and amused as he backed out to the deck, followed by his imposing host. At sight of the two the crew scattered to their oars. They had been leaning over the side, absorbed in admiration of the white jinn-boat. Matthews' Persian servant handed up to Magin's butler a tray of tea glasses—on which Matthews also noted a bottle. In honor of that bottle Gaston himself stood up and took off his greasy cap.

"A thousand thanks, Monsieur," he said. "I have tasted nothing so good since I left France."

"In that case, my friend," rejoined Magin in French as good as his English, "it is time you returned!" And he abounded in amiable speeches and ceremonious bows until the last *au revoir*.

"*Au plaisir!*" called back Gaston, having invoked his jinni. Then, after a last look at the barge, he asked over his shoulder in a low

voice: "Who is this extraordinary type, M'sieu Guy? A species of an Arab, who speaks French and English and who voyages in a galley from a museum!"

"A Brazilian, he says," imparted M'sieu Guy—whose surname was beyond Gaston's gallic tongue.

"Ah! The uncle of America! That understands itself! He sent me out a cognac, too! And did he present you to his *dame de compagnie*? She put her head out of a porthole to look at our boat. A Lur, like the others, but with a pair of blistering black eyes! And a jewel in her nose!"

"It takes you, Gaston," said Guy Matthews, "to discover a dame of company!"

II

When the white motor-boat had disappeared in the glitter of the Ab-i-Diz, Senhor Magin, not unlike other fallible human beings when released from the necessity of keeping up a pitch, appeared to lose something of his gracious humor. So, it transpired, did his decorative boatmen, who had not expected to row twenty-five miles upstream at a time when most people in that climate seek the relief of their *serdabs*—which are underground

chambers cooled by running water, it may be, and by a tall *badgir*, or air chimney. The running water, to be sure, was here, and had already begun to carry the barge down the Karun. If the high banks of that tawny stream constituted a species of air chimney, however, such air as moved therein was not calculated for relief. But when Brazilians command, even a Lur may obey. These Lurs, at all events, propelled their galley back to the basin of Bund-i-Kir, and on into the Ab-i-Shuteit—which is the westerly of those two halves of the Karun. Before nightfall the barge had reached the point where navigation ends. There Magin sent his majordomo ashore to procure mounts. And at sunset the two of them, followed by a horse boy, rode northward six or seven miles, till the city of Shuster rose dark above them in the summer evening, on its rock that cleaves the Karun in two.

The Bazaar by which they entered the town was deserted at that hour, save by dogs that set up a terrific barking at the sight of strangers. Here the *charvadar* lighted a vast white linen lantern, which he proceeded to carry in front of the two riders. He seemed to know where he was going, for he led the way without a pause through long blank silent streets of indescribable filth and smells. The gloom of

them was deepened by jutting balconies, and by innumerable *badgirs* that cut out a strange black fretwork against amazing stars. At last the three stopped in front of a gate in the vicinity of the citadel. This was not one of the gateways that separate the different quarters of Shuster, but a door in a wall, recessed in a tall arch and ornamented with an extraordinary variety of iron clamps, knobs, locks, and knockers.

Of one of the latter the *charvadar* made repeated use until someone shouted from inside. The horse-boy shouted back, and presently his lantern caught a glitter of two eyes in a slit. The eyes belonged to a cautious doorkeeper, who after satisfying himself that the visitors were not enemies admitted the Brazilian and the Lur into a vaulted brick vestibule. Then, having looked to his wards and bolts, he lighted Magin through a corridor which turned into a low tunnel-like passage. This led into a sort of cloister, where a covered ambulatory surrounded a dark pool of stars. Thence another passage brought them out into a great open court. Here an invisible jet of water made an illusion of coolness in another, larger, pool, overlooked by a portico of tall slim pillars. Between them Magin caught the glow of a cigar.

"Good evening, Ganz," his bass voice called from the court.

"Heaven! Is that you?" replied the smoker of the cigar. "What are you doing here, in God's name? I imagined you at Mohamera, by this time, or even in the Gulf." This remark, it may not be irrelevant to say, was in German—as spoken in the trim town of Zurich.

"And so I should have been," replied the polyglot Magin in the same language, mounting the steps of the portico and shaking his friend's hand, "but for—all sorts of things. If we ran aground once, we ran aground three thousand times. I begin to wonder if we shall get through the reefs at Ahwaz—with all the rubbish I have on board."

"Ah, bah! You can manage, going down. But why do you waste your time in Shuster, with all that is going on in Europe?"

"H'm!" grunted Magin. "What is going on in Europe? A great family is wearing well cut mourning, and a small family is beginning to turn green! How does that affect two quiet nomads in Elam—especially when one of them is a Swiss and one a Brazilian?" He laughed, and lighted a cigar the other offered him. "My dear Ganz, it is an enigma to me how a man who can listen to such a fountain, and admire such stars, can perpetually sigh after the absurdities of Europe! Which reminds me that I

met an Englishman this morning."

"Well, what of that? Are Englishmen so rare?"

"Alas, no—though I notice, my good Ganz, that you do your best to thin them out! This specimen was too typical for me to be able to describe him. Younger than usual, possibly; yellow hair, blue eyes, constrained manner, everything to sample. He called himself Mark, or Matthew. Rather their apostolic air, too—except that he was in the Oil Company's motor-boat. But he gave me to understand that he was not in the Oil Company."

"Quite so."

"I saw for myself that he knows nothing about archæology. Who is he? Lynch? Bank? Telegraph?"

"He's not Lynch, and he's not Bank, and he's not Telegraph. Neither is he consul, or even that famous railroad. He's—English!" And Ganz let out a chuckle at the success of his own characterization.

"Ah! So?" exclaimed Magin elaborately. "I hear, by the way, that that famous railroad is not marching so fast. The Lurs don't like it. But sometimes even Englishmen," he added, "have reasons for doing what they do. This one, at any

rate, seemed more inclined to ask questions than to answer them. I confess I don't know whether it was because he had nothing to say or whether he preferred not to say it. Is he perhaps a son of Papa, making the grand tour?"

"More or less. Papa gave him no great letter of credit, though. He came out to visit some of the Oil people. And he's been here long enough to learn quite a lot of Persian."

"So he starts this morning, I take it, from Sheleilieh. But why the devil does he go to Dizful, by himself?"

"And why the devil shouldn't he? He's out here, and he wants to see the sights—such as they are. So he's going to take a look at the ruins of Susa, and at your wonderful unspoiled Dizful. Shir Ali Khan will be delighted to get a few *tomans* for his empty house by the river. Then the 21st, you know, is the coronation. So I gave him a letter to the Father of Swords, who—"

"Thunder and lightning!" Magin's heavy voice resounded in the portico very like a bellow. "You, Ganz, sent this man to the Father of Swords? He might be one of those lieutenants from India who go smelling around in their holidays, so pink and innocent!"

"What is that to me?" demanded the Swiss,

raising his own voice. "Or to you either? After all, Senhor Magin, are you the Emperor of Elam?"

The Brazilian laughed.

"Not yet! And naturally it's nothing to you, when you cash him checks and sell him tinned cows and quinine. But for a man who perpetually sighs after Europe, Herr Ganz, and for a Swiss of the north, you strike me as betraying a singular lack of sensibility to certain larger interests of your race. However—What concerns me is that you should have confided to this young man, with such a roll of sentimental eyes as I can imagine, that Dizful is still 'unspoiled'! If Dizful is unspoiled, he might spoil it. I've found some very nice things up there, you know. I was even fool enough to show him one or two."

"Bah! He likes to play tennis and shoot! You know these English boys."

Magin considered those English boys in silence for a moment.

"Yes, I know them. This one told me he liked a bit of a lark! I know myself what a lark it is to navigate the Ab-i-Diz, at the end of July! But what is most curious about these English boys is that when they go out for a bit of a lark they

come home with Egypt or India in their pocket. Have you noticed that, Ganz? That's their idea of a bit of a lark. And with it all they are still children. What can one do with such people? A bit of a lark! Well, you will perhaps make me a little annoyance, Mr. Adolf Ganz, by sending your English boy up to Dizful to have a bit of a lark. However, he'll either give himself a sunstroke or get himself bitten in two by a shark. He asked me about the channel, and I had an inspiration. I told him he would have no trouble. So he'll go full speed and we shall see what we shall see. Do you sell coffins, Mr. Ganz, in addition to all your other valuable merchandise?"

"Naturally, Mr. Magin," replied the Swiss. "Do you need one? But you haven't explained to me yet why you give me the pain of saying good-bye to you a second time."

"Partly, Mr. Ganz, because I am tired of sleeping in an oven, and partly because I—the Father of Swords has asked me to run up to Bala Bala before I leave. But principally because I need a case or two more of your excellent *vin de champagne*—manufactured out of Persian petroleum, the water of the Karun, the nameless abominations of Shuster, and the ever effervescing impudence of the Swiss Republic!"

"What can I do?" smiled the flattered author of this concoction. "I have to use what I can get, in this Godforsaken place."

"And I suppose you will end by getting a million, eh?"

"No such luck! But I'm getting a piano. Did I tell you? A Blüthner. It's already on the way up from Mohamera."

"A Blüthner! In Shuster! God in heaven! Why did you wait until I had gone?"

"Well, aren't you still here?" The fact of Magin's being still there, so unexpectedly, hung in his mind. "By the way, speaking of the Father of Swords, did you give him an order?"

"I gave him an order. Didn't you pay it?"

"I thought twice about it. For unless you have struck oil, up in that country of yours where nobody goes, or gold—"

"Mr. Adolf Ganz," remarked the Brazilian with some pointedness, "all I ask of you is to respect my signature and to keep closed that many-tongued mouth of yours. I sometimes fear that in you the banker is inclined to exchange confidences with the chemist—or even with the son of Papa who cashes a check. Eh?"

Ganz cleared his throat.

"In that case," he rejoined, "all you have to do is to ask him, when you meet him again at Bala Bala. And the English bank will no doubt be happy to accept the transfer of your account."

Magin began to chuckle.

"We assert our dignity? Never mind, Adolf. As a matter of fact I have a high opinion of your discretion—so high that when I found the Imperial Bank of Elam I shall put you in charge of it! And you did me a real service by sending that motor-boat across my bow this morning. For in it I discovered just the chauffeur I have been looking for. I am getting tired of my galley, you know. You will see something when I come back."

"But," Ganz asked after a moment, "do you really expect to come back?"

"But what else should I do? End my days sneezing and sniffling by some polite lake of Zurich like you, my poor Ganz, when you find in your hand the magic key that might unlock for you any door in the world? That, for example, is not my idea of a lark, as your son of Papa would say! Men are astounding animals, I admit. But I never could live in Europe, where you can't turn around without stepping on some

one else's toes. I want room! I want air! I want light! And for a collector, you know, America is after all a little bare. While here—!"

"O God!" cried Adolf Ganz out of his dark Persian portico.

III

As Gaston very truly observed, there are moments in Persia when even the most experienced chauffeur is capable of an emotion. And an unusual number of such moments enlivened for Gaston and his companions their journey up the Ab-i-Diz. Indeed Matthews asked himself more than once why he had chosen so doubtful a road to Dizful, when he might so much more easily have ridden there, and at night. It certainly was not beautiful, that river of brass zigzagging out of sight of its empty hinterland. Very seldom did anything so visible as a palm lift itself against the blinding Persian blue. Konar trees were commoner, their dense round masses sometimes shading a white-washed tomb or a black tent. Once or twice at sight of the motor-boat a *bellam*, a native canoe, took refuge at the mouth of one of the gullies that scarred the bank like sun-cracks. Generally, however, there was nothing to be seen between the water and the sky but two yellow walls of

clay, topped by endless thickets of tamarisk and nameless scrub. Matthews wondered, disappointed, whether a jungle looked like that, and if some black-maned lion walked more softly in it, or slept less soundly, hearing the pant of the unknown creature in the river. But there was no lack of more immediate lions in the path. The sun, for one thing, as the Brazilian had predicted, proved a torment against which double awnings faced with green were of small avail. Then the treacheries of a crooked and constantly shallowing channel needed all the attention the travelers could spare. And the rapids of Kaleh Bunder, where a rocky island flanked by two reefs threatened to bar any further progress, afforded the liveliest moments of their day.

The end of that day, nevertheless, found our sight-seer smoking cigarettes in Shir Ali Khan's garden at Dizful and listening to the camel bells that jingled from the direction of certain tall black pointed arches straddling the dark river. When Matthews looked at those arches by sunlight, and at the queer old flat-topped yellow town visible through them, he regretted that he had made up his mind to continue his journey so soon. However, he was coming back. So he packed off Gaston and the Bakhtiari to Sheleilieh, where they and their motor-boat

belonged. And he himself, with his servant Abbas and the *charvadar* of whom they hired horses, set out at nightfall for the mountain citadel of Bala Bala. For there the great Salman Taki Khan, chieftain of the lower Lurs, otherwise known as the Father of Swords, was to celebrate as became a redoubtable vassal of a remote and youthful suzerain the coronation of Ahmed Shah Kajar.

It was nearly morning again when, after a last scramble up a trough of rocks and gravel too steep for riding, the small cavalcade reached a plateau in the shadow of still loftier elevations. Here they were greeted by a furious barking of dogs. Indeed it quickly became necessary to organize a defence of whips and stones against the guardians of that high plateau. The uproar soon brought a shout out of the darkness. The *charvadar* shouted back, and after a long-distance colloquy there appeared a figure crowned by the tall *kola* of the Brazilian's boatmen, who drove the dogs away. The dialect in which he spoke proved incomprehensible to Matthews. Luckily it was not altogether so to Abbas, that underling long resigned to the eccentricities of the *Firengi*, whose accomplishments included even a sketchy knowledge of his master's tongue. It appeared that the law of Bala Bala forbade the door of the

Father of Swords to open before sunrise. But the tall-hatted one offered the visitor the provisional hospitality of a black tent, of a refreshing drink of goats' buttermilk, and of a comfortable felt whereon to stretch cramped legs.

When Matthews returned to consciousness he first became aware of a blinding oblong of light in the dark wall of the tent. He then made out a circle of pontifical black hats, staring at him, his fair hair, and his indecently close-fitting clothes, in the silence of unutterable curiosity. It made him think, for a bewildered instant, that he was back on the barge he had met in the river. As for the black hats, what astonished them not least was the stranger's immediate demand for water, and his evident dissatisfaction with the quantity of it they brought him. There happily proved to be no lack of this commodity, as Matthews' ears had told him. He was not long in pursuing the sound into the open, where he found himself at the edge of a village of black tents, pitched in a grassy hollow between two heights. The nearer and lower was a detached cone of rock, crowned by a rude castle. The other peak, not quite so precipitous, afforded foothold for scattered scrub oaks and for a host of slowly moving sheep and goats. Between them the plateau looked down on two sides into two converging valleys. And the clear air was full of the noise of

a brook that cascaded between the scrub oaks of the higher mountain, raced past the tents, and plunged out of sight in the narrower gorge.

"Ripping!" pronounced Matthews genially to his black-hatted gallery.

He was less genial about the persistence of the gallery, rapidly increased by recruits from the black tents, in dogging him through every detail of his toilet. But he was rescued at last by Abbas and an old Lur who, putting his two hands to the edge of his black cap, saluted him in the name of the Father of Swords. The Lur then led the way to a trail that zigzagged up the lower part of the rocky cone. He explained the quantity of loose boulders obstructing the path by saying that they had been left there to roll down on whomever should visit the Father of Swords without an invitation. That such an enterprise would not be too simple became more evident when the path turned into a cave. Here another Lur was waiting with candles. He gave one each to the newcomers, leading the way to a low door in the rock. This was opened by an individual in a long red coat of ceremony, carrying a heavy silver mace, who gave Matthews the customary salutation of peace and bowed him into an irregular court. An infinity of doors opened out of it—chiefly of the stables, the old man said, pointing out a big white mule or two of the

famous breed of Bala Bala. Thence the visitor was led up a steep stone stair to a terrace giving entrance upon a corridor and another, narrower stone stair. From its prodigiously high steps he emerged into a hall, carpeted with felt. At this point, the Lurs took off their shoes. Matthews followed suit, being then ushered into what was evidently a room of state. It contained no furniture, to be sure, save for the handsome rugs on the floor. The room did not look bare, however, for its lines were broken by a deep alcove, and by a continuous succession of niches. Between and about the niches the walls were decorated with plaster reliefs of flowers and arabesques. Matthews wondered if the black hats were capable of that! But what chiefly caught his eye was the terrace opening out of the room, and the stupendous view.

The terrace hung over a green chasm where the two converging gorges met at the foot of the crag of Bala Bala. Matthews looked down as from the prow of a ship into the tumbled country below him, through which a river flashed sinuously toward the faraway haze of the plains. The sound of water filling the still clear air, the brilliance of the morning light, the wildness and remoteness of that mountain eyrie, so different from anything he had yet seen, added a last strangeness to the impressions of

which the young man had been having so many.

"What a pity to spoil it with a railroad!" he could not help thinking, as he leaned over the parapet of the terrace.

"Sahib!" suddenly whispered Abbas behind him.

Matthews turned, and saw in the doorway of the terrace a personage who could be none other than his host. In place of the *kola* of his people this personage wore a great white turban, touched with gold. The loose blue *aba* enveloping his ample figure was also embroidered with gold. Not the least striking detail of his appearance however, was his beard, which had a pronounced tendency toward scarlet. His nails were likewise reddened with henna, reminding Matthews that the hands belonging to the nails were rumored to bear even more sinister stains. And the bottomless black eyes peering out from under the white turban lent surprising credibility to such rumors. But there was no lack of graciousness in the gestures with which those famous hands saluted the visitor and pointed him to a seat of honor on the rug beside the Father of Swords. The Father of Swords furthermore pronounced his heart uplifted to receive a friend of Ganz Sahib, that prince among the merchants of Shuster. Yet he

did not hesitate to express a certain surprise at discovering in the friend of the prince among the merchants of Shuster one still in the flower of youth, who at the same time exhibited the features of good fortune and the lineaments of prudence. And he inquired as to what sorrow had led one so young to fold the carpet of enjoyment and wander so far from his parents.

Matthews, disdaining the promptings of Abbas —who stood apart like a statue of obsequiousness, each hand stuck into the sleeve of the other—responded as best he might. In the meantime tea and candies were served by a black hat on bended knee, who also produced a pair of ornate pipes. The Father of Swords marvelled that Matthews should have abandoned the delights of Shuster in order to witness his poor celebrations of the morrow, in honor of the coronation. And had he felt no fear of robbers, during his long night ride from Dizful? But what robbers were there to fear, protested Matthews, in the very shadow of Bala Bala? At that the Father of Swords began to make bitter complaint of the afflictions Allah had laid upon him, taking his text from these lines of Sadi: "If thou tellest the sorrows of thy heart, let it be to him in whose countenance thou mayst be assured of prompt consolation." The world, he declared, was fallen into disorder, like

the hair of an Ethiopian. Within the city wall was a people well disposed as angels; without, a band of tigers. After which he asked if the young *Firengi* were of the company of those who dug for the poisoned water of Bakhtiari Land, or whether perchance he were of the People of the Chain.

These figures of speech would have been incomprehensible to Matthews, if Abbas had not hinted something about oil rigs. He accordingly confessed that he had nothing to do with either of the two enterprises. The Father of Swords then expatiated on those who caused the Lurs to seize the hand of amazement with the teeth of chagrin, by dragging through their valleys a long chain, as if they meant to take prisoners. These unwelcome *Firengis* were also to be known by certain strange inventions on three legs, into which they would gaze by the hour. Were they warriors, threatening devastation? Or were they magicians, spying into the future and laying a spell upon the people of Luristan? Their account of themselves the Father of Swords found far from satisfactory, claiming as they did that they proposed to build a road of iron, whereby it would be possible for a man to go from Dizful to Khorremabad in one day. For the rest, what business had the people of Dizful, too many of whom were Arabs, in

Khorremabad, a city of Lurs? Let the men of Dizful remain in Dizful, and those of Khorremabad continue where they were born. As for him, his white mules needed no road of iron to carry him about his affairs.

Matthews, recalling his own thoughts as he leaned over the parapet of the terrace, spoke consolingly to the Father of Swords concerning the People of the Chain. The Father of Swords listened to him, drawing meditatively at his waterpipe. He thereupon inquired if Matthews were acquainted with another friend of the prince among the merchants of Shuster, himself a *Firengi* by birth, though recently persuaded of the truths of Islam; and not like this visitor of good omen, in the bloom of youth, but bearded and hardened in battles, bearing the scars of them on his face.

Matthews began to go over in his mind the short list of Europeans he had met on the Karun, till suddenly he bethought him of that extraordinary barge he had encountered—could it be only a couple of days ago?

"Magin Sahib?" he asked. "I know him—if he is the one who travels in the river in a *mehala* not like other *mehalas*, rowed by Lurs."

"'That is a musk which discloses itself by its scent, and not what the perfumers impose upon

us,'" quoted the Father of Swords. "This man," he continued, "our friend and the friend of our friend, warned me that they of the chain are sons of oppression, destined to bring misfortune to the Lurs. Surely my soul is tightened, not knowing whom I may believe."

"Rum bounder!" said Matthews to himself, as his mind went back to the already mythic barge, and its fantastic oarsmen from these very mountains, and its antique-hunting, history-citing master from oversea, who quoted the Book of Genesis and who carried mysterious passengers with nose-jewels. But our not too articulate young man was less prompt about what he should say aloud. He began to find more in this interview than he had expected. He was tickled at his host's flowery forms of speech, and after all rather sympathized with the suspicious old ruffian, yet it was not for him to fail in loyalty toward the "People of the Chain." Several of them he knew, as it happened, and they had delighted him with their wild yarns of surveying in Luristan. So he managed no more than to achieve an appearance of slightly offended dignity.

Considering which, out of those opaque eyes, the Father of Swords clapped those famous hands and commanded a responsive black hat to bring him his green chest. At that Matthews

pricked up interested ears indeed. The chest, however, when set down in front of the Father of Swords, proved to be nothing at all like the one out of which the Brazilian had taken his gold anklet. It was quite small and painted green, though quaintly enough provided with triple locks of beaten iron. The Father of Swords unlocked them deliberately, withdrew from an inner compartment a round tin case, and from that a roll of parchment which he pressed to his lips with infinite solemnity. He then handed it to Matthews.

He was one, our not too articulate young man, to take things as they came and not to require, even east of Suez, the spice of romance with his daily bread. His last days, moreover, had been too crowded for him to ruminate over their taste. But it was not every day that he squatted on the same rug with a scarlet-bearded old cutthroat of a mountain chief. So it was that his more or less casual lark visibly took on, from the perspective of this castle in Luristan, as he unrolled a gaudy emblazonment of eagles at the top of the parchment, a new and curious color. For below the eagle he came upon what he darkly made out to be a species of treaty, inscribed neither in the Arabic nor in the Roman but in the German character, between the Father of Swords and a more notorious War Lord. And below that was

signed, sealed, and imposingly paraphed the signature of one Julius Magin. Which was indeed a novel aspect for a Brazilian, however versatile, to reveal.

He permitted himself, did Guy Matthews, a smile.

"You do not kiss it?" observed the Father of Swords.

"In my country," Matthews began—

"But it is, may I be your sacrifice," interrupted the Father of Swords, "a letter from the Shah of the Shahs of the *Firengis*." It was evident that he was both impressed and certain of impressing his hearer. "He has promised eternal peace to me and to my people."

The Englishman in Matthews permitted him a second smile.

"The Father of Swords," he said, "speaks a word which I do not understand. I am a *Firengi*, but I have never heard of a Shah of the Shahs of the *Firengis*. In the house of Islam are there not many who rule? In Tehran, for instance, there is the young Ahmed Shah. Then among the Bakhtiaris there is an Ilkhani, at Mohamera there is the Sheikh of the Cha'b, and in the valleys of Pusht-i-Kuh none is above the Father

of Swords. I do not forget, either, the Emirs of Mecca and Afghanistan, or the Sultan in Stambul. And among them what *Firengi* shall say who is the greatest? And so it is in *Firengistan*. Yet as for this paper, it is written in the tongue of a king smaller than the one whose subject I am, whose crown has been worn by few fathers. But the name at the bottom of the paper is not his. It is not even a name known to the *Firengis* when they speak among themselves of the great of their lands. Where did you see him?"

The Father of Swords stroked his scarlet beard, looking at his young visitor with more of a gleam in the dull black of his eyes than Matthews had yet noticed.

"Truly is it said: 'Fix not thy heart on what is transitory, for the Tigris will continue to flow through Baghdad after the race of Caliphs is extinct!' You make it clear to me that you are of the People of the Chain."

"If I were of the People of the Chain," protested Matthews, "there is no reason why I should hide it. The People of the Chain do not steal secretly through the valleys of Pusht-i-Kuh, telling the Lurs lies and giving them papers in the night. I am not one of the People of the Chain. But the king of the People of the

Chain is also my king. And he is a great king, lord of many lands and many seas, who has no need of secret messengers, hostlers and scullions of whom no one has heard, to persuade strangers of his greatness."

"Your words do not persuade me!" cried the Father of Swords. "A wise man is like a jar in the house of the apothecary, silent but full of virtues. If the king who sent me this letter has such hostlers and such scullions, how great must be his khans and viziers! And why do the Turks trust him? Why do the other *Firengis* allow his ships in Bushir and Basra? Or why do not the People of the Chain better prove the character of their lord? But the hand of liberality is stronger than the arm of power. This king, against whom you speak, heard me draw the sigh of affliction from the bosom of uncertainty. He deigned to regard me with the eye of patronage, sending me good words and promises of peace and friendship. He will not permit the house of Islam to be troubled. From many we have heard it."

"Ah!" exclaimed Matthews. "Now I understand why you have not kept your promises to the People of the Chain!" And he rubbed his thumb against his forefinger, in the gesture of the East that signifies the payment of money.

"Why not?" demanded the Father of Swords, angrily. "The duty of a king is munificence. Or why should there be a way to pass through my mountains? Has it ever been said of the Lur that he stepped back before a stranger? That is for the Shah in Tehran, who has become the servant of the Russian! Let the People of the Chain learn that my neck does not know how to bow! And what guest are you to sprinkle my sore with the salt of harsh words? A boy, who comes here no one knows why, on hired horses, with only one follower to attend him!"

Matthews flushed.

"Salman Taki Khan," he retorted, "it is true that I come to you humbly, and without a beard. And your beard is already white, and you can call out thirty thousand men to follow you. Yet a piece of gold will make you believe a lie. And I swear to you that whether I give you back this paper to put in your chest, or whether I spit on it and tear it in pieces and throw it to the wind of that valley, it is one."

To which the Father of Swords made emphatic enough rejoinder by snatching the parchment away, rising to his feet, and striding out of the room without a word.

IV

The festivities in honor of the Shah's coronation took place at Bala Bala with due solemnity. Among the black tents there was much plucking of plaintive strings, there was more stuffing of mutton and *pilau*, and after dark many a little rockets, improvized out of gunpowder and baked clay, traced brief arabesques of gold against the black of the underlying gorges. The castle celebrated in the same simple way. The stuffing, to be sure, was more prolonged and recondite, while dancers imported from Dizful swayed and snapped their fingers, singing for the pleasure of the Father of Swords. The eyes of that old man of the mountain remained opaque as ever, save when he rebuked the almoner who sat at meat with him for indecorously quoting the lines of Sadi, when he says: "Such was this delicate crescent of the moon, and fascination of the holy, this form of an angel, and decoration of a peacock, that let them once behold her, and continence must cease to exist in the constitutions of the chaste."

This rebuke might have been called forth by the presence of another guest at the board. Be that as it may, the eyes of the Father of Swords glimmered perceptibly when they rested on the unannounced visitor for whom he fished out, with his own henna'ed fingers, the fattest

morsels of mutton and the juiciest sweets. I hasten to add that the newcomer was not the one whose earlier arrival and interview with the Father of Swords has already been recorded. He was, nevertheless, a personage not unknown to this record, whether as Senhor Magin of Brazil or as the emissary of the Shah of the Shahs of *Firengistan*. For not only had he felt impelled to bid good-by a second time to his friend Adolf Ganz, prince among the merchants of Shustar. He had even postponed his voyage down the Karun long enough to make one more journey overland to Bala Bala. And he heard there, not without interest, the story of the short visit and the sudden flight of the young Englishman he had accidentally met on the river.

As for Matthews, he celebrated the coronation at Dizful, in bed. And by the time he had slept off his fag, Bala Bala and the Father of Swords and the green chest and the ingenious Magin looked to him more than ever like figures of myth. He was too little of the timber out of which journalists, romancers, or diplomats are made to take them very seriously. The world he lived in, moreover, was too solid to be shaken by any such flimsy device as the one of which he had happened to catch a glimpse. What had been real to him was that he, Guy Matthews, had been suspected of playing a part in story-

book intrigues, and had been treated rudely by an old barbarian of whom he expected the proverbial hospitality of the East. His affair had therefore been to show Mr. Scarlet Beard that if a Lur could turn his back, an Englishman could do likewise. He now saw, to be sure, that he himself had not been altogether the pattern of courtesy. But the old man of the mountain had got what was coming to him. And Matthews regretted very little, after all, missing what he had gone to see. For Dizful, peering at him through the arches of the bridge, reminded that there was still something to see.

It must be said of him, however, that he showed no impatience to see the neighboring ruins of Susa. He was not one, this young man who was out for a bit of a lark, to sentimentalize about antiquity or the charm of the unspoiled. Yet even such young men are capable of finding the rumness of strange towns a passable enough lark, to say nothing of the general unexpectedness of life. And Dizful turned out to be quite as unexpected, in its way, as Bala Bala. Matthews found that out before he had been three days in the place, when a sudden roar set all the loose little panes tinkling in Shir Ali Khan's garden windows.

Abbas explained that this was merely a cannon shot, announcing the new moon of Ramazan.

That loud call of the faith evidently made Dizful a rummer place than it normally was. Matthews soon got used to the daily repetitions of the sound, rumbling off at sunset and before dawn into the silence of the plains. But the recurring explosion became for him the voice of the particular rumness of the fanatical old border town—of fierce sun, terrific smells, snapping dogs, and scowling people. When the stranger without the gate crossed his bridge of a morning for a stroll in the town, he felt like a discoverer of some lost desert city. He threaded alleys of blinding light, he explored dim thatched bazaars, he studied tiled doorways in blank mud walls, he investigated quaint water-mills by the river, and scarce a soul did he see, unless a stork in its nest on top of a tall badgir or a naked dervish lying in a scrap of shade asleep under a lion skin. It was as if Dizful drowsed sullenly in that July blaze brewing something, like a geyser, and burst out with it at the end of the unendurable day.

The brew of the night, however, was a different mixture, quite the rummiest compound of its kind Matthews had ever tasted. The bang of the sunset gun instantly brought the deserted city back to life. Lights began to twinkle—in tea houses, along the river, among the indigo plantations—streets filled with ghostly costumes

and jostling camels, and everywhere voices would celebrate the happy return of dusk so strangely and piercingly that they made Matthews think of "battles far away." This was most so when he listened to them, out of sight of unfriendly eyes, from his own garden. Above the extraordinary rumor that drifted to him through the arches of the bridge he heard the wailing of pipes, raucous blasts of cow horns, the thumping of drums; while dogs barked incessantly, and all night long the caravans of Mesopotamia jingled to and fro. Then the cannon would thunder out its climax, and the city would fall anew under the spell of the sun.

The moon of those Arabian nights was nearing its first quarter and Matthews was waiting for it to become bright enough for him to fulfill his true duty as a sightseer by riding to the mounds of Susa, when Dizful treated Matthews to fresh discoveries as to what an unspoiled town may contain. It contained, Abbas informed him with some mystery after one of his prolonged visits to the bazaar, another *firengi*. This *firengi's* servant, moreover, had given Abbas explicit directions as to the whereabouts of the *firengi's* house, in order that Abbas might give due warning, as is the custom of the country, of a call from Matthews. Whereat Matthews made the surprising announcement that he had not

come to Dizful to call on *firengis*. The chief charm of Dizful for him, as a matter of fact, was that there he felt himself free of the social obligations under which he had lain rather longer than he liked. But if Abbas was able to resign himself to this new proof of the eccentricity of his master, the unknown *firengi* apparently was not. At all events, Matthews soon made another discovery as to the possibilities of Dizful. An evening or two later, as he loitered on the bridge watching a string of loaded camels, a respectable-looking old gentleman in a black *aba* addressed him in French. French in Dizful! And it appeared that this remarkable Elamite was a Jew, who had picked up in Baghdad the idiom of Paris! He went on to describe himself as the "agent" of a distinguished foreign resident, who, the linguistic old gentleman gave Matthews to understand, languished for a sight of the newcomer, and was unable to understand why he had not already been favored with a call. His pain was the deeper because the newcomer had recently enjoyed the hospitality of this distinguished foreign resident on a little yacht on the river.

"The unmitigated bounder!" exclaimed Matthews, unable to deliver himself in French of that sentiment, and turning upon the stupefied

old gentleman a rude Anglo-Saxon back. "He has cheek enough for anything."

He had enough, at any rate, to knock the next afternoon, unannounced, on Matthews' gate, to follow Matthews' servant into the house without waiting to hear whether Matthews would receive him, to present himself at the door of the dim underground *serdab* where Matthews lounged in his pajamas till it should be cool enough to go out, to make Matthews the most ceremonious of bows, and to give that young man a half-amused, half-annoyed consciousness of being put at his ease. The advantage of position, Matthews had good reason to feel, was with himself. He knew more about the bounder than the bounder thought, and it was not he who had knocked at the bounder's gate. Yet the sound of that knock, pealing muffled through the hot silence, had been distinctly welcome. Nor could our incipient connoisseur of rum towns pretend that the sight of Magin bowing in the doorway was wholly unwelcome, so long had he been stewing there in the sun by himself. What annoyed him, what amused him, what in spite of himself impressed him, was to see how the bounder ignored advantages of position. Matthews had forgotten, too, what an imposing individual the bounder really was. And measuring his tall figure, listening to his deep

voice, looking at his light eyes and his two sinister scars and the big shaved dome of a head which he this time uncovered, our cool enough young man wondered whether there might be something more than fantastic about this navigator of strange waters. It was rather odd, at all events, how he kept bobbing up, and what a power he had of quickening—what? A school-boyish sense of the romantic? Or mere vulgar curiosity? For he suddenly found himself aware, Guy Matthews, that what he knew about his visitor was less than what he desired to know.

The visitor made no haste, however, to volunteer any information. Nor did he make of Matthews any but the most perfunctory inquiries.

"And Monsieur—What was his name? Your Frenchman?" he continued.

"Gaston. He's not my Frenchman, though," replied Matthews. "He went back long ago."

"Oh!" uttered Magin. He declined the refreshments which Abbas at that point produced, even to the cigarette Matthews offered him. He merely glanced at the make. Then he examined, with a flicker of amusement in his eyes, the bare white-washed room. A runnel of water trickled across it in a stone channel that widened in the centre into a

shallow pool. "A bit of a lark, eh? I remember that *mot* of yours, Mr. Matthews. To sit steaming, or perhaps I should say dreaming, in a sort of Turkish bath in the bottom of Elam while over there in Europe—"

"Is there anything new?" asked Matthews, recognizing his caller's habit of finishing a sentence with a gesture. "Archdukes and that sort of thing don't seem to matter much in Dizful. I have even lost track of the date."

"I would not have thought an Englishman so—*dolce far niente*," said Magin. "It is perhaps because we archæologists feed on dates! I happen to recollect, though, that we first met on the eighteenth of July. And to-day, if you would like to know, is Saturday, the first of August, 1914." The flicker of amusement in his eyes became something more inscrutable. "But there is a telegraph even in Elam," he went on. "A little news trickles out of it now and then. Don't you ever catch, perhaps, some echo of the trickle?"

"That's not my idea of a lark," laughed Matthews.

Magin regarded him a moment.

"Well," he conceded, "Europe does take on a new perspective from the point of view of Susa.

I see you are a philosopher, sitting amidst the ruins of empires and wisely preferring the trickle of your fountain to the trickle of the telegraph. If Austria falls to pieces, if Serbia reaches the Adriatic, what is that to us? Nothing but a story that in Elam has been told too often to have any novelty! Eh?"

"Why," asked Matthews, quickly, "is that on already?"

Magin looked at him again a moment before answering.

"Not yet! But why," he added, "do you say already?"

His voice had a curious rumble in the dim stone room. Matthews wondered whether it were because the acoustic properties of a *serdab* in Dizful differ from those of a galley on the Karun, or whether there really were something new about him.

"Why, it's bound to come sooner or later, isn't it? If it's true that all the way from Nish to Ragusa those chaps speak the same language and belong to the same race, one can hardly blame them for wanting to do what the Italians and the Germans have already done. And, as a philosopher sitting amidst the ruins of empires, wouldn't you say yourself that Austria has bitten

off rather more than she can chew?"

"Very likely I should." Magin took a cigar out of his pocket, snipped off the end with a patent cutter, lighted it, and regarded the smoke with a growing look of amusement. "But," he went on, "as a philosopher sitting amidst the ruins of empires, I would hardly confine that observation to Austria-Hungary. For instance, I have heard"—and his look of amusement verged on a smile—"of an island in the Atlantic Ocean not much larger than the land of Elam, an island of rains and fogs whose people, feeling the need of a little more sunlight perhaps, or of pin-money and elbow-room, sailed away and conquered for themselves two entire continents, as well as a good part of a third. I have also heard that the inhabitants of this island, not content with killing and enslaving so many defenseless fellow-creatures, or with picking up any lesser island, cape, or bay that happened to suit their fancy, took it upon themselves to govern several hundred million unwilling individuals of all colors and religions in other parts of the world. And, having thus procured both sunlight and elbow-room, those enterprising islanders assumed a virtuous air and pushed the high cries —as our friend Gaston would say—if any of their neighbors ever showed the slightest symptom of following their very successful

example. Have you ever heard of such an island? And would you not say—as a philosopher sitting amidst the ruins of empires—that it had also bitten off rather more than it could chew?"

Matthews, facing the question and the now open smile, felt that he wanted to be cool, but that he did not altogether succeed.

"I dare say that two or three hundred years ago we did things we wouldn't do now. Times have changed in all sorts of ways. But we never set out like a Cæsar or a Napoleon or a Bismarck to invent an empire. It all came about quite naturally. Anybody else could have done the same. But nobody else thought of it—at the time. We simply got there first."

"Ah?" Magin smiled more broadly. "It seems to me that I have heard of another island, not so far from here, which is no more than a pin-point, to be sure, but which happens to be the key of the Persian Gulf. I have also heard that the Portuguese got there first, as you put it. But you crushed Portugal, you crushed Spain, you crushed Holland, you crushed France—or you meant to. And I must say it looks to me as if you would not mind crushing Germany. Why do you go on building ships, building ships, building ships, always two to Germany's one? Simply

that you and your friends can go on eating up Asia and Africa—and perhaps Germany too!"

Matthews noticed that the elder man ended, at any rate, not quite so coolly as he began.

"Nonsense! The thing's so simple it isn't worth repeating. We have to have more ships than anybody else because our empire is bigger than anybody else's—and more scattered. As for eating, it strikes me that Germany has done more of that lately than any one. However, if you know so much about islands, you must also know how we happened to go into India—or Egypt. In the beginning it was pure accident. And you know very well that if we left them to-morrow there would be the devil to pay. Do we get a penny out of them?"

"Oh, no!" laughed Magin. "You administer them purely on altruistic principles, for their own good and that of the world at large—like the oil-wells of the Karun!"

"Well, since you put it that way," laughed Matthews in turn, "perhaps we do!"

Magin shrugged his shoulders.

"Extraordinary people! Do you really think the rest of the world so stupid? Or it is that the fog of your island has got into your brains? You

always talk about truth as if it were a patented British invention, yet no one is less willing to call a spade a spade. Look at Cairo, where you pretend to keep nothing but a consul-general, but where the ruler of the country can't turn over in bed without his permission. A consul-general! Look at your novels! Look at what you yourself are saying to me!"

Matthews lighted a pipe over it.

"In a way, of course, you are right," he said. "But I am not sure that we are altogether wrong. Spades exist, but there's no inherent virtue in talking about them. In fact it's often better not to mention them at all. There's something very funny about words, you know. They so often turn out to mean more than you expected."

At that Magin regarded his companion with a new interest.

"I would not have thought you knew that, at your age! But after all, if you will allow me to say so, it is a woman's point of view. A man ought to say things out—and stick by them. He is less likely to get into trouble afterward. For example, it would have been not only more honest but more advantageous for your country if you had openly annexed Egypt in the beginning. Now where are you? You continually have to explain, and to watch very

sharply lest some other consul-general tell the Khedive to turn over in bed. And since you and the Russians intend to eat up Persia, why on earth don't you do it frankly, instead of trying not to frighten the Persians, and talking vaguely about spheres of influence, neutral zones, and what not? I'm afraid the truth is that you're getting old and fat. What?" He glanced over his cigar at Matthews, who was regarding the trickle of the water beside them. "Those Russians, they are younger," he went on. "They have still to be reckoned with. And they aren't so squeamish, either in novels or in life. Look at what they have done in their 'sphere.' They have roads, they have Cossacks, they have the Shah under their thumb. And whenever they choose they shut the Baghdad train against your caravans—yours, with whom they have an understanding! A famous understanding! You don't even understand how to make the most of your own sphere. You have had the Karun in your hands for three hundred years, and what have you done with it? Why, in heaven's name, didn't you blast out that rock at Ahwaz long ago? Why haven't you made a proper road to Isfahan? Why don't you build that railroad to Khorremabad that you are always talking about, and finish it before the Germans get to Baghdad? Ah! If they had been here in your place you would have seen!"

"It strikes me," retorted Matthews, with less coolness than he had yet shown, "that you are here already—from what the Father of the Swords told me." And he looked straight at the man who had told him that an Englishman couldn't call a spade a spade. But he saw anew how that man could ignore an advantage of position.

Magin returned the look—frankly, humorously, quizzically. Then he said:

"You remind me, by the way, of a question I came to ask you. Would you object to telling me what you are up to here?"

"What am I up to?" queried Matthews, in astonishment. The cheek of the bounder was really beyond everything! "What do you mean?"

Magin smiled.

"I am not an Englishman. I mean what I say."

"No you're not!" Matthews threw back at him. "No Englishman would try to pass himself off for a Brazilian."

Magin smiled again.

"Nor would a German jump too hastily at conclusions. If I told you I was from Brazil, I spoke the truth. I was born there, as were many

Englishmen I know. That makes them very little less English, and it has perhaps made me more German. Who knows? As a philosopher sitting with you amidst the ruins of empires I am at least inclined to believe that we take our mother country more seriously than you do yours! But to return to our point: what are you doing here?"

"I'm attending to my business. Which seems to me more than you are doing, Mr. Magin."

Matthews noticed, from the reverberation of the room, that his voice must have been unnecessarily loud. He busied himself with the bowl of his pipe. As for Magin, he got up and began walking to and fro, drawing at his cigar. The red of it showed how much darker the room had been growing. It increased, too, the curious effect of his eyes. They looked like two empty holes in a mask.

"Eh, too bad!" sighed the visitor at last. "You disappoint me. Do you know? You are, of course, much younger than I; but you made me hope that you were perhaps—how shall I put it?—a spirit of the first class. I hoped that without padding, without rancor, like true philosophers, we might exchange our points of view. However—Since it suits you to stand on your dignity, I must say that I am very distinctly attending to my business. And I am obliged to

add that it does not help my business, Mr. Matthews, to have you sitting so mysteriously in Dizful—and refusing to call on me, but occasionally calling on nomad chiefs. I confess that you don't look to me like a spy. Spies are generally older men than you, more cooked, as Gaston would say, more fluent in languages. It does not seem to me, either, that even an English spy would go about his affairs quite as you have done. Still, I regret to have to repeat that I dislike your idea of a lark. And not only because you upset nomad chiefs. You upset other people as well. You might even end up by upsetting yourself."

"Who the devil are you?" demanded Matthews, hotly. "The Emperor of Elam?"

"Ha! I see you are acquainted with the excellent Adolf Ganz!" laughed Magin. "No," he went on in another tone. "His viceroy, perhaps. But as I was saying, it does not suit me to have you stopping here. I can see, however, that you have reason to be surprised, possibly annoyed, at my telling you so. I am willing to be reasonable about it. How much do you want—for the expenses of your going away?"

Matthews could hardly believe his ears. He got up in turn.

"What in hell do you mean by that?"

"I am sorry, Mr. Matthews," answered the other, slowly, "that my knowledge of your language does not permit me to make myself clear to you. Perhaps you will understand me better if I quote from yourself. I got here first. Did you ever put your foot into this country until two weeks ago? Did your countrymen ever trouble themselves about it, even after Layard showed them the way? No! They expressly left it outside of their famous 'sphere,' in that famous neutral zone. And all these centuries it has been lying here in the sun, asleep, forgotten, deserted, lost, given over to nomads and to lions —until I came. I am the first European since Alexander the Great who has seen what it might be. It is not so impossible that I might open again those choked-up canals which once made these burnt plains a paradise. In those mountains I have found—what I have found. What right have you to interfere with me, who are only out for a lark? Or what right have your countrymen? They have already, as you so gracefully express it, bitten off so much more than they can chew. The Gulf, the Karun, the oil-wells—they are yours. Take them. But Baghdad is ours: if not today, then tomorrow. And if you will exercise that logical process of which your British mind appears to be not altogether destitute, you can hardly help seeing that this part of your famous neutral zone, if not the whole of it, falls into the

sphere of Baghdad. You know, too, that we do things more thoroughly than you. Therefore I must very respectfully but very firmly ask you, at your very earliest convenience, to leave Dizful. I am quite willing to believe, however, that your interference with my arrangements was accidental. And I dislike to put you to any unnecessary trouble. So I shall be happy to compensate you, in marks, *tomans*, or pounds sterling, for any disappointment you may feel in bringing this particular lark to an end. Do you now understand me? How much do you want?"

He perceived, Guy Matthews, that his lark had indeed taken an unexpected turn. He was destined, far sooner than he dreamed, to be asked of life, and to answer, questions even more direct than this. But until now life had chosen to confront him with no problem more pressing than one of cricket or hunting. He was therefore troubled by an unwonted confusion of feelings. For he felt that his ordinary vocabulary —made up of such substantives as lark, cheek, and bounder, and the comprehensive adjective "rum"—fell short of coping with this extraordinary speech. He even felt that he might possibly have answered in a different way, but for that unspeakable offer of money. And the rumble of Magin's bass in the dark stone room somehow threw a light on the melancholy land

without, somehow gave him a dim sense that he did not answer for himself alone—that he answered for the tradition of Layard and Rawlinson and Morier and Sherley, of Clive and Kitchener, of Drake and Raleigh and Nelson, of all the adventurous young men of that beloved foggy island at which this pseudo-Brazilian jeered.

"When I first met you in the river, Mr. Magin," he said, quietly, "I confess I did not realize how much of the spoils of Susa you were carrying away in your chests. And I didn't take your gold anklet as a bribe, though I didn't take you for too much of a gentleman in offering it to me. But all I have to say now is that I shall stay in Dizful as long as I please—and that you had better clear out of this house unless you want me to kick you out."

"Heroics, eh? You obstinate little fool! I could choke you with one hand!"

"You'd better try!" shouted Matthews.

He started in spite of himself when a muffled boom suddenly answered him, jarring even the sunken walls of the room. Then he remembered that voice of the drowsing city, bursting out with the pent-up brew of the day.

"Ah!" exclaimed Magin strangely—"The

cannon speaks at last! You will hear, beside your fountain, what it has to say. That, at any rate, you will perhaps understand—you and the people of your island." He stopped a moment. "But," he went on, "if some fasting dervish knocks you on the head with his mace, or sticks his knife into your back, don't say I didn't warn you!"

And the echo of his receding stamp in the corridor drowned for a moment the trickle of the invisible water.

V

The destiny of some men lies coiled within them, invisible as the blood of their hearts or the stuff of their will, working darkly, day by day and year after year, for their glory or for their destruction. The destiny of other men is an accident, a god from the machine or an enemy in ambush. Such was the destiny of Guy Matthews, as it was of how many other unsuspecting young men of his time. It would have been inconceivable to him, as he stood in his dark stone room listening to Magin's receding stamp, that anything could make him do what Magin demanded. Yet something did it—the last drop of the strange essence Dizful had been brewing for him.

The letter that accomplished this miracle came to him by the hand of a Bakhtiari from Meidan-i-Naft. It said very little. It said so little, and that little so briefly, that Matthews, still preoccupied with his own quarrel, at first saw no reason why a stupid war on the Continent, and the consequent impossibility of telegraphing home except by way of India, should affect the oil-works, or why his friends should put him in the position of showing Magin the white feather. But as he turned over the Bakhtiari's scrap of paper the meaning of it grew, in the light of the very circumstances that made him hesitate, so portentously that he sent Abbas for horses. And before the Ramazan gun boomed again he was well on his way back to Meidan-i-Naft.

There was something unreal to him about that night ride eastward across the dusty moonlit plain. He never forgot that night. The unexpectedness of it was only a part of the unreality. What pulled him up short was a new quality in the general unexpectedness of life. Life had always been, like the trip from which he was returning, more or less of a lark. Whereas it suddenly appeared that life might, perhaps, be very little of a lark. So far as he had ever pictured life to himself he had seen it as an extension of his ordered English countryside, beset by no hazard more searching than a

hawthorne hedge. But the plain across which he rode gave him a new picture of it, lighted romantically enough by the moon, yet offering a rider magnificent chances to break his neck in some invisible nullah, if not to be waylaid by marauding Lurs or lions. It even began to come to this not too articulate young man that romance and reality might be the same thing, romance being what happens to the other fellow and reality being what happens to you. He looked up at the moon of war that had been heralded to him by cannon and tried to imagine what, under that same moon far away in Europe, was happening to the other fellow. For it was entirely on the cards that it might also happen to him, Guy Matthews, who had gone up the Ab-i-Diz for a lark! That his experience had an extraordinary air of having happened to some one else, as he went back in his mind to his cruise on the river, his meeting with the barge, his first glimpse of Dizful, the interlude of Bala Bala, the return to Dizful, the cannon, Magin. Magin! He was extraordinary enough, in all conscience, as Matthews tried to piece together, under his romantic-realistic moon, the various unrelated fragments his memory produced of that individual, connoisseur of Greek kylixes and Lur nose-jewels, quoter of Scripture and secret agent.

The bounder must have known, as he sat smoking his cigar and ironizing on the ruins of empires, that the safe and settled little world to which they both belonged was already in a blaze. Of course he had known it—and he had said nothing about it! But not least extraordinary was the way the bounder, whom after all Matthews had only seen twice, seemed to color the whole adventure. In fact, he had been the first speck in the blue, the forerunner—if Matthews had only seen it—of the more epic adventure into which he was so quickly to be caught.

At Shuster he broke his journey. There were still thirty miles to do, and fresh horses were to be hired—of some fasting *charvadar* who would never consent in Ramazan, Matthews very well knew, to start for Meidan-i-Naft under the terrific August sun. But he was not ungrateful for a chance to rest. He discovered in himself, too, a sudden interest in all the trickle of the telegraph. And he was anxious to pick up what news he could from the few Europeans in the town. Moreover, he needed to see Ganz about the replenishing of his money-bag; for not the lightest item of the traveler's pack in Persia is his load of silver *krans*.

At the telegraph office Matthews ran into Ganz himself. The Swiss was a short, fair, faded man,

not too neat about his white clothes, with a pensive mustache and an ambiguous blue eye that lighted at sight of the young Englishman. The light, however, was not one to illuminate Matthews' darkness in the matter of news. What news trickled out of the local wire was very meager indeed. The Austrians were shelling Belgrade, the Germans, the Russians, and the French had gone in. That was all. No, not quite all; for the bank-rate in England had suddenly jumped sky-high—higher, at any rate, than it had ever jumped before. And even Shuster felt the distant commotion, in that the bazaar had already seen fit to put up the price of sugar and petroleum. Not that Shuster showed any outward sign of commotion as the two threaded their way toward Ganz's house. The deserted streets reminded Matthews strangely of Dizful. What was stranger was to find how they reminded him of a chapter that is closed. He hardly noticed the blank walls, the archways of brick and tile, the tall *badgirs*, even the filth and smells. But strangest was it to listen to the hot silence, to look up at the brilliant stripe of blue between the adobe walls, while over there—!

The portentous uncertainty of what might be over there made his answers to Ganz's questions about his journey curt and abstracted. He gave no explanation of his failure to see the

celebration at Bala Bala and the ruins of Susa, which Ganz supposed to be the chief objects of his excursion. Yet he found himself looking with a new eye at the anomalous exile whom the Father of Swords called the prince among the merchants of Shuster, noting the faded untidy air as he had never noted it before, wondering why a man should bury himself in such a hole as this. Was one now, he speculated, to look at everybody all over again? He was not the kind of man, Ganz, to interest the Guy Matthews who had gone to Dizful. But it was the Guy Matthews who came back from Dizful who didn't like Ganz's name or Ganz's good enough accent. Nevertheless he yielded to Ganz's insistence, when they reached the office and the money-bag had been restored to its normal portliness, that the traveler should step into the house to rest and cool off.

"Do come!" urged the Swiss. "I so seldom see a civilized being. And I have a new piano!" he threw in as an added inducement. "Do you play?"

He had no parlor tricks, he told Ganz, and he told himself that he wanted to get on. But Ganz had been very decent to him, after all. And he began to perceive that he himself was extremely tired. So he followed Ganz through the cloister of the pool to the court where the great basin

glittered in the sun, below the pillared portico.

"Who is that?" exclaimed Ganz suddenly. "What a tone, eh? And what a touch!"

Matthews heard from Ganz's private quarters a welling of music so different from the pipes and cow-horns of Dizful that it gave him a sudden stab of homesickness.

"I say," he said, brightening, "could it be any of the fellows from Meidan-i-Naft?"

The ambiguous blue eye brightened too.

"Perhaps! It is the river music from *Rheingold*. But listen," Ganz added with a smile. "There are sharks among the Rhine maidens!"

They went on, up the steps of the portico, to the door which Ganz opened softly, stepping aside for his visitor to pass in. The room was so dark, after the blinding light of the court, that Matthews saw nothing at first. He stepped forward eagerly, feeling his way among Ganz's tables and chairs toward the end of the room from which the music came. They gave him, the cluttering tables and chairs, after the empty rooms he had been living in, a sharper renewal of his stab. And even a piano—! It made him think of Kipling and the *Song of the Banjo*:

"I am memory and torment—I am

Town!
I am all that ever went with evening
dress!"

But what mute inglorious Paderewski of the restricted circle he had moved in for the past months was capable of such parlor tricks as this? Then, suddenly, he saw. He saw, swaying back and forth against the dark background of the piano, a domed shaven head that made him stop short—that head full of so many astounding things! He saw, traveling swiftly up and down the keys, rising above them to an extravagant height and pouncing down upon them again, those predatory hands that had pounced on the spoils of Susa! They began, in a moment, to flutter lightly over the upper end of the keyboard. It was extraordinary what a ripple poured as if out of those hands. Magin himself bent over to listen to the ripple, partly showing his face as he turned his ear to the keys. He showed, too, in the lessening gloom, a smile Matthews had never seen before, more extraordinary than anything. Yet even as Matthews watched it, in his stupefaction, the smile changed, broadened, hardened. And Magin, sitting up straight again with his back to the room, began to execute a series of crashing chords.

After several minutes he stopped and swung

around on the piano-stool. Ganz clapped his hands, shouting "Bis! Bis!" At that Magin rose, bowed elaborately, and kissed his hands right and left. He ended by pulling up a table-cover near him, gazing intently under the table.

"Have you lost something?" inquired Ganz.

"I seem," answered Magin, "to have lost half my audience. What has become of our elusive English friend? Am I so unfortunate as to have been unable to satisfy his refined ear? Or can it be that his emotions were too much for him?"

"He was in a hurry," explained Ganz. "He is just back from Dizful, you know."

"Ah?" uttered Magin. "He is a very curious young man. He is always in a hurry. He was in a hurry the first time I had the pleasure of meeting him. He was in such a hurry at Bala Bala that he didn't wait to see the celebration which you told me he went to see. He also left Dizful in a surprising hurry, from what I hear. I happen to know that the telegraph had nothing to do with it. I can only conclude that some one frightened him away. Where do you suppose he hurries to? And do you think he will arrive in time?"

Ganz opened his mouth; but if he intended to say something, he decided instead to draw his hand across his spare jaw. However, he did

speak after all.

"I notice that you at least do not hurry, Majesty! Do you fiddle while Rome burns?"

"Ha!" laughed Magin. "It is not Rome that burns! And I notice, Mr. Ganz, that you seem to be of a forgetful as well as of an inquiring disposition. I would have been in Mohamera long ago if it had not been for your son of Papa, with his interest in unspoiled towns. I will thank you to issue no more letters to the Father of Swords without remembering me. Do you wish to enrich the already overstocked British Museum at my expense? But I do not mind revealing to you that I am now really on my way to Mohamera."

"H'm," let out Ganz slowly. "My dear fellow, haven't you heard that there is a war in Europe?"

"I must confess, my good Ganz, that I have. But what has Europe to do with Mohamera?"

"God knows," said Ganz. "I should think, however, since you are so far from the Gulf, that you would prefer the route of Baghdad—now that French and Russian cruisers are seeking whom they may devour."

"You forget, Mr. Ganz, that I am so fortunate as to possess a number of valuable objects of

virtue. I would think twice before attempting to carry those objects of virtue through the country of our excellent friends the Beni Lam Arabs!"

Ganz laughed.

"Your objects of virtue could very well be left with me. What if the English should go into the war?"

"The English? Go into the war? Never fear! This is not their affair. And if it were, what could they do? Sail their famous ships up the Rhine and the Elbe? Besides, that treacherous memory of yours seems to fail you again. This is Persia, not England."

"Perhaps," answered Ganz. "But the English are very funny people. There is a rumor, you know, of pourparlers. What if you were to sail down to the gulf and some little midshipman were to fire a shot across your bow?"

"Ah, bah! I am a neutral! And Britannia is a fat old woman! Also a rich one, who doesn't put her hand into her pocket to please her neighbors. Besides, I have a little affair with the Sheikh of Mohamera—objects of virtue, indigo, who knows what? As you know, I am a versatile man." And swinging around on his stool, Magin began to play again.

"But even fat old women sometimes know how to bite," objected Ganz.

"Not when their teeth have dropped out," Magin threw over his shoulder—"or when strong young men plug their jaws!"

VI

Two days later, or not quite three days later, the galley and the motor-boat whose accidental encounter brought about the events of this narrative met again. This second meeting took place in the Karun, as before, but at a point some fifty or sixty miles below Bund-i-Kir. And now the moon, not the sun, cast its paler glitter between the high dark banks of the stream. It was a keen-eared young Lur who first heard afar the pant of the mysterious jinni. Before he or his companions descried the motor-boat, however, Gaston, rounding a sharp curve above the island of Umm-un-Nakhl, caught sight of the sweeps of the barge flashing in the moonlight. The unexpected view of that flash was not disagreeable to Gaston. For, as Gaston put it to himself, he was sad—despite the efforts of his friend, the telegraph operator at Ahwaz, to cheer him up. It is true that the operator, who was Irish and a man of heart, had accorded him but a limited amount of cheer, together with hard

words not a few. Recalling them, Gaston picked up a knife that lay on the seat beside him—an odd curved knife of the country, in a leather sheath. There is no reason why I should conceal the fact that this knife was a gift from Gaston's Bakhtiari henchman, who had presented it to Gaston, with immense solemnity, on hearing that there was a war in Firengistan and that the young men of the oil works were going to it. What had become of that type of a Bakhtiari, Gaston wondered? Then, spying the flash of those remembered oars, he bethought him of the seigneur of a Brazilian whose hospitable yacht, he had reason to know, was not destitute of cheer.

When he was near enough the barge to make out the shadow of the high beak on the moonlit water he cut off the motor. The sweeps forthwith ceased to flash. Gaston then called out the customary salutation. It was answered, as before, by the deep voice of the Brazilian. He stood at the rail of the barge as the motor-boat glided alongside.

"Ah, *mon vieux*, you are alone this time?" said Magin genially. "Where are the others?"

"I do not figure to myself," answered Gaston, "that you derange yourself to inquire for my sacred devil of a Bakhtiari, who has taken the

key of the fields. As for Monsieur Guy, the Englishman you saw the other time, whose name does not pronounce itself, he has gone to the war. I just took him and three others to Ahwaz, where they meet more of their friends and all go together on the steamer to Mohamera."

"Really! And did you hear any news at Ahwaz?"

"The latest is that England has declared war."

"Tiens!" exclaimed Magin. His voice was extraordinarily loud and deep in the stillness of the river. It impressed Gaston, who sat looking up at the dark figure in front of the ghostly Lurs. What types, with their black hats of a theater! He hoped the absence of M'sieu Guy and the Brazilian's evident surprise would not cloud the latter's hospitality. He was accordingly gratified to hear the Brazilian say, after a moment: "And they tell us that madness is not catching! But we, at least, have not lost our heads. Eh? To prove it, Monsieur Gaston, will you not come aboard a moment, if you are not in too much of a hurry, and drink a little glass with me?"

Gaston needed no urging. In a trice he had tied his boat to the barge and was on the deck. The agreeable Brazilian was not too much of a seigneur to shake his hand in welcome, or to

lead him into the cabin where a young Lur was in the act of lighting candles.

"It is so hot, and so many strange beasts fly about this river," Magin explained, "that I usually prefer to travel without a light. But we must see the way to our mouths! What will you have? Beer? Bordeaux? Champagne?"

Gaston considered this serious question with attention.

"Since Monsieur has the goodness to inquire, if Monsieur has any of that *fine champagne* I tasted before—"

"Ah yes! Certainly." And he gave a rapid order to the Lur. Then he stood silent, his eyes fixed on the reed portière. Gaston was more impressed than ever as he stood too, *béret* in hand, looking around the little saloon, so oddly, yet so comfortably fitted out with rugs and skins. Presently the Lur reappeared through the reed portière, which aroused the Brazilian from his abstraction. He filled the two glasses himself, waving his attendant out of the cabin, and handed one to Gaston. The other he raised in the air, bowing to his guest. "To the victor!" he said. "And sit down, won't you? There is more than one glass in that bottle."

Gaston was enchanted to sit down and to sip

another cognac.

"But, Monsieur," he exclaimed, looking about again, "you travel like an emperor!"

"Ho!" laughed Magin, with a quick glance at Gaston. "I am well enough here. But there is one difficulty." He looked at his glass, holding it up to the light. "I travel too slowly."

Gaston smiled.

"In Persia, who cares?"

"Well, it happens that at this moment I do. I have affairs at Mohamera. And in this tub it will take me three days more at the best—without considering that I shall have to wait till daylight to get through the rocks at Ahwaz." He lowered his glass and looked back at Gaston. "Tell me: Why shouldn't you take me down, ahead of my tub? Eh? Or to Sablah, if Mohamera is too far? It would not delay you so much, after all. You can tell them any story you like at Sheleilieh. Otherwise I am sure we can make a satisfactory arrangement." He put his hand suggestively into his pocket.

Gaston considered it between sips. It really was not much to do for this uncle of America who had been so amiable. And others had suddenly become so much less amiable than their wont.

Moreover that Bakhtiari—he might repent when he heard the motor again. At any rate one could say that one had waited for him. And the Brazilian would no doubt show a gratitude so handsome that one could afford to be a little independent. If those on the steamer asked any questions when the motor-boat passed, surely the Brazilian, who was more of a seigneur than any employee of an oil company, would know how to answer.

"*Allons!* Why not?" he said aloud.

"Bravo!" cried the Brazilian, withdrawing his hand from his pocket. "Take that as part of my ticket. And excuse me a moment while I make arrangements."

He disappeared through the reed portière, leaving Gaston to admire five shining napoleons. It gave him an odd sensation to see, after so long, those coins of his country. When Magin finally came back, it was through the inner door.

"Tell me: how much can you carry?" he asked. "I have four boxes I would like to take with me, besides a few small things. These fools might wreck themselves at Ahwaz and lose everything in the river. It would annoy me very much—after all the trouble I have had to collect my objects of virtue! Besides, the tub will get

through more easily without them. Come in and see."

"*Mon Dieu*!" exclaimed Gaston, scratching his head, when he saw. "My boat won't get through more easily with them, especially at night." He looked curiously around the cozy stateroom.

"But it will take them, eh? If necessary, we can land them at Ahwaz and have them carried around the rapids."

The thing took some manoeuvering; but the Lurs, with the help of much fluent profanity from the master, finally accomplished it without sinking the motor-boat. Gaston, sitting at the wheel to guard his precious engine against some clumsiness of the black-hatted mountaineers, looked on with humorous astonishment at this turn of affairs. He was destined, it appeared, to be disappointed in his hope of cheer. That cognac was really very good—if only one had had more of it. Still, one at least had company now; and he was not the man to be insensible to the fine champagne of the unexpected. Nor was he unconscious that of many baroque scenes at which he had assisted, this was not the least baroque.

When the fourth chest had gingerly been lowered into place, Magin vanished again. Presently he reappeared, followed by his

majordomo, to whom he gave instructions in a low voice. Then he stepped into the stern of the boat. The majordomo, taking two portmanteaux and a rug from the Lurs behind him, handed them down to Gaston. Having disposed of them, Gaston stood up, his eyes on the Lurs who crowded the rail.

"Well, my friend," said Magin gaily, "for whom are you waiting? We shall yet have opportunities to admire the romantic scenery of the Karun!"

"Ah! Monsieur takes no—other object of virtue with him?"

"Have you so much room?" laughed Magin. "It is a good thing there is no wind to-night. Go ahead."

Gaston cast off, backed a few feet, reversed, and described a wide circle around the stern of the barge. It made a strange picture in the moonlight, with its black-curved beak and its spectral crew. They shifted to the other rail as the motor-boat came about, watching silently.

"To your oars!" shouted Magin at them. "Row, sons of burnt fathers! Will you have me wait a month for you at Mohamera?"

They scattered to their places, and Gaston

caught the renewed flash of the sweeps as he turned to steer for the bend. It was a good thing, he told himself, that there was no wind to-night. The gunwale was nearer the water than he or the boat cared for. She made nothing like her usual speed. However, he said nothing. Neither did Magin—until the dark shadow of Umm-un-Nakhl divided the glitter in front of them.

"Take the narrower channel," he ordered then. And when they were in it he added: "Stop, will you, and steer in there, under the shadow of the shore? I think we would better fortify ourselves for the work of the night. I at least did not forget the cognac, among my other objects of virtue."

They fortified themselves accordingly, the Brazilian producing cigars as well. He certainly was an original, thought Gaston, now hopeful of experiencing actual cheer. That originality proved itself anew when, after a much longer period of refreshment than would suit most gentlemen in a hurry, the familiar flash became visible in the river behind them.

"Now be quiet," commanded the extraordinary uncle of America. "Whatever happens we mustn't let them hear us. If they take this channel, we will slip down, and run part way up the other. We shall give them a little surprise."

Nearer and nearer came the flash, which

suddenly went out behind the island. A recurrent splash succeeded it, and a wild melancholy singing. The singing and the recurrent splash grew louder, filled the silence of the river, grew softer; and presently the receding oars flashed again, below the island. But not until the last glint was lost in the shimmer of the water, the last sound had died out of the summer night, did the Brazilian begin to unfold his surprise.

"*Que diable allait-on faire dans cette galère!*" he exclaimed. "It's the first time I ever knew them to do the right thing! Let us drink one more little glass to the good fortune of their voyage. And here, by the way, is another part of my ticket." He handed Gaston five more napoleons. "But now, my friend, we have some work. I see we shall never get anywhere with all this load. Let us therefore consign our objects of virtue to the safe keeping of the river. He will guard them better than anybody. Is it deep enough here?"

It was deep enough. But what an affair, getting those heavy chests overboard! The last one nearly pulled Magin in with it. One of the clamps caught in his clothes, threw him against the side of the boat, and jerked something after it into the water. He sat down, swearing softly to himself, to catch his breath and investigate the

damage.

"It was only my revolver," he announced. "And we have no need of that, since we are not going to the war! Now, my good Gaston, I have changed my mind. We will not go down the river, after all. We will go up."

Gaston, this time, stared at him.

"Up? But, Monsieur, the barge—"

"What is my barge to you, dear Gaston? Besides, it is no longer mine. It now belongs to the Sheikh of Mohamera—with whatever objects of virtue it still contains. He has long teased me for it. And none of them can read the note they are carrying to him! Didn't I tell you I was going to give them a little surprise? Well, there it is. I am not a man, you see, to be tied to objects of virtue. Which reminds me: where are my portmanteaux?"

"Here, on the tank."

"Fi! And you a chauffeur! Give them to me. I will arrange myself a little. As for you, turn around and see how quickly you can carry me to the charming resort of Bund-i-Kir—where Antigonus fought Eumenes and the Silver Shields for the spoils of Susa, and won them. Did you ever hear, Gaston, of that interesting

incident?"

"Monsieur is too strong for me," replied Gaston, cryptically. He took off his cap, wiped his face, and sat down at the wheel.

"If a man is not strong, what is he?" rejoined Magin. "But you will not find this cigar too strong," he added amicably.

Gaston did not. What he found strong was the originality of his passenger—and the way that cognac failed, in spite of its friendly warmth, to cheer him. For he kept thinking of that absurd Bakhtiari, and of the telegraph operator, and of M'sieu Guy, and the others, as he sped northward on the silent moonlit river.

"This is very well, eh, Gaston?" uttered the Brazilian at last. "We march better without our objects of virtue." Gaston felt that he smiled as he lay smoking on his rug in the bottom of the boat. "But tell me," he went on presently, "how is it, if I may ask, that you didn't happen to go in the steamer too, with your Monsieur Guy? You do not look to me either old or incapable."

There it was, the same question, which really seemed to need no answer at first, but which somehow became harder to answer every time! Why was it? And how could it spoil so good a cognac?

"How is it?" repeated Gaston. "It is, Monsieur, that France is a great lady who does not derange herself for a simple vagabond like Gaston, or about whose liaisons or quarrels it is not for Gaston to concern himself. This great lady has naturally not asked my opinion about this quarrel. But if she had, I would have told her that it is very stupid for everybody in Europe to begin shooting at each other. Why? Simply because it pleases *ces messieurs* the Austrians to treat *ces messieurs* the Serbs *de haut en bas*! What have I to do with that? Besides, this great lady is very far away, and by the time I arrive she will have arranged her affair. In the meantime there are many others, younger and more capable than I, whose express business it is to arrange such affairs. Will one *piou-piou* more or less change the result of one battle? Of course not! And if I should lose my hand or my head, who would buy me another? Not France! I have seen a little what France does in such cases. My own father left his leg at Gravelotte, together with his job and my mother's peace. I have seen what happened to her, and how it is that I am a vagabond—about whom France has never troubled herself." He shouted it over his shoulder, above the noise of the motor, with an increasing loudness. "Also," he went on, "I have duties not so far away as France. Up there, at Sheleilieh, there will perhaps be next month a

little Gaston. If I go away, who will feed him? I have not the courage of Monsieur, who separates himself so easily from objects of virtue. *Voilà!*"

Magin said nothing for a moment. Then:

"Courage, yes! One needs a little courage in this curious world." There was a pause, as the boat cut around a dark curve. "But do not think, my poor Gaston, that it is I who blame you. On the contrary, I find you very reasonable—more reasonable than many ministers of state. If others in Europe had been able to express themselves like you, Gaston, Monsieur Guy and his friends would not have run away so suddenly. It takes courage, too, not to run after them." He made a sound, as if changing his position, and presently he began to sing softly to himself.

"Monsieur would make a fortune in the *café-chantant*," commented Gaston. He began to feel, at last, after the favorable reception of his speech, a little cheered. He felt cooler, too, in this quiet rushing moonlight of the river. "What is it that Monsieur sings? It seems to me that I have heard that air."

"Very likely you have, Gaston. It is a little song of sentiment, sung by all the sentimental young ladies of the world. He who wrote it,

however, was far from sentimental. He was a fellow countryman of mine—and of the late Abraham!—who loved your country so much that he lived in it and died in it." And Magin sang again, more loudly, the first words of the song:

"Ich weiss nicht, was soll es
bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin;
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem
Sinn."

Gaston listened with admiration, astonishment, and perplexity. It suddenly came back to him how this original Brazilian had sworn when the chest caught his clothes.

"But, Monsieur, I thought—Are you, then, a German?"

Magin, after a second, laughed.

"But Gaston, am I then an enemy?"

Gaston examined him in the moonlight.

"Well," he answered slowly, "if your country and mine are at war—"

"What has that to do with us, as you just now so truly said? You have found that your

country's quarrel was not cause enough for you to leave Persia, and so have I. *Voilà tout!*" He examined Gaston in turn. "But I thought you knew all the time. Such is fame! I flattered myself that your Monsieur Guy would leave no one untold. Whereas he has left us the pleasure of a situation more piquant, after all, than I supposed. We enjoy the magnificent moonlight of the south, we admire a historic river under its most successful aspect, and we do not exalt ourselves because our countrymen, many hundreds of miles away, have lost their heads." He smiled over the piquancy of the situation. "Strength is good," he went on in his impressive bass, "and courage is better. But reason, as you so justly say, is best of all. For which reason," he added, "allow me to recommend to you, my dear Gaston, that you look a little where you are steering."

Gaston looked. But he discovered that his moment of cheer had been all too brief. A piquant situation, indeed! The piquancy of that situation somehow complicated everything more darkly than before. If there were reasons why he should not go away with the others, as they had all taken it for granted that he would do, was that a reason why he, Gaston, whose father had lost a leg at Gravelotte, should do this masquerading German a service? All the

German's amiability and originality did not change that. Perhaps, indeed, that explained the originality and amiability. The German, at any rate, did not seem to trouble himself about it. When Gaston next looked over his shoulder, Magin was lying flat on his back in the bottom of the boat, with his hands under his head and his eyes closed. And so he continued to lie, silent and apparently asleep, while his troubled companion, hand on wheel and *béret* on ear, steered through the waning moonlight of the Karun.

VII

The moon was but a ghost of itself, and a faint rose was beginning to tinge the pallor of the sky behind the Bakhtiari mountains, when the motor began to miss fire. Gaston, stifling an exclamation, cut it off, unscrewed the cap of the tank, and measured the gasolene. Then he stepped softly forward to the place in the bow where he kept his reserve cans. Magin, roused by the stopping of the boat, sat up, stretching.

"*Tiens!*" he exclaimed. "Here we are!" He looked about at the high clay banks enclosing the tawny basin of the four rivers. In front of him the konar trees of Bund-i-Kir showed their dark green. At the right, on top of the bluff of

the eastern shore, a solitary peasant stood white against the sky. Near him a couple of oxen on an inclined plane worked the rude mechanism that drew up water to the fields. The creak of the pulleys and the splash of the dripping goatskins only made more intense the early morning silence. "Do you remember, Gaston?" asked Magin. "It was here we first had the good fortune to meet—not quite three weeks ago."

"I remember," answered Gaston, keeping his eye on the mouth of the tank he was filling, "that I was the one who wished you peace, Monsieur; and that no one asked who you were or where you were going."

Magin yawned.

"Well, you seem to have satisfied yourself now on those important points. I might add, however, for your further information, that I think I shall not go to Bund-i-Kir, which looks too peaceful to disturb at this matinal hour, but there—on the western shore of the Ab-i-Shuteit. And that reminds me. I still have to pay you the rest of my ticket."

He reached forward and laid a little pile of gold on Gaston's seat. Gaston, watching out of the corner of his eye as he poured gasolene, saw that there were more than five napoleons in that pile. There were at least ten.

"What would you say, Monsieur," he asked slowly, emptying his tin, "if I were to take you instead to Sheleilieh—where there are still a few of the English?"

"I would say, my good Gaston, that you had more courage than I thought. By the way," he went on casually, "what is this?"

He reached forward again toward Gaston's seat, where lay the Bakhtiari's present. Gaston dropped his tin and made a snatch at it. But Magin was too quick for him. He retreated to his place at the stern of the boat, where he drew the knife out of its sheath.

"Sharp, too!" he commented, with a smile at Gaston. "And my revolver is gone!"

Gaston, very pale, stepped to his seat.

"That, Monsieur, was given me by my Bakhtiari brother-in-law—to take to the war. When he found I had not the courage to go, he ran away from me."

"But you thought there might be more than one way to make war, eh? Well, I at least am not an Apache. Perhaps the sharks will know what to do with it." The blade glittered in the brightening air and splashed out of sight. And Magin, folding his arms, smiled again at

Gaston. "Another object of virtue for the safe custody of the Karun!"

"But not all!" cried Gaston thickly, seizing the little pile of gold beside him and flinging it after the knife.

Magin's smile broadened.

"Have you not forgotten something, Gaston?"

"But certainly not, Monsieur," he replied, putting his hand into his pocket. The next moment a second shower of gold caught the light. And where the little circles of ripples widened in the river, a sharp fin suddenly cut the muddy water.

"Oho! Mr. Shark loses no time!" cried Magin. He stopped smiling, and turned back to Gaston. "But we do. Allow me to say, my friend, that you show yourself really too romantic. This is no doubt an excellent comedy which we are playing for the benefit of that gentleman on the bluff. But even he begins to get tired of it. See? He starts to say his morning prayer. So be so good as to show a little of the reason which you know how to show, and start for shore. But first you might do well to screw on the cap of your tank—if you do not mind a little friendly advice."

Gaston looked around absent-mindedly, and took up the nickel cap. But he suddenly turned back to Magin.

"You speak too much about friends, Monsieur. I am not your friend. I am your enemy. And I shall not take you there, to the Ab-i-Shuteit. I shall take you into the Ab-i-Gerger—to Sheleilieh and the English."

Magin considered him, with a flicker in his lighted eyes.

"You might perhaps have done it if you had not forgotten about your gasolene—And you may yet. We shall see. But it seems to me, my—enemy!—that you make a miscalculation. Let us suppose that you take me to Sheleilieh. It is highly improbable, because you no longer have your knife to assist you. I, it is true, no longer have my revolver to assist me; but I have two arms, longer and I fancy stronger than yours. However, let us make the supposition. And let us make the equally improbable supposition that I fall into the hands of the English. What can they do to me? The worst they can do is to give me free lodging and nourishment till the end of the war! Whereas you, Gaston—you do not seem to have reflected that life will not be so simple for you, after this. There is a very unpleasant little word by which they name

citizens who do not respond to their country's call to arms. In other words, Mr. Deserter, you have taken the road which, in war time, ends between a firing-squad and a stone wall."

Gaston, evidently, had not reflected on that. He stared at his nickel cap, turning it around in his fingers.

"You see?" continued Magin. "Well then, what about that little Gaston? I do not know what has suddenly made you so much less reasonable than you were last night; but I, at least, have not changed. And I see no reason why that little Gaston should be left between two horns of a dilemma. In fact I see excellent reasons not only why you should take me that short distance to the shore, but why you should accompany me to Dizful. There I am at home. I am, more than any one else, emperor. And I need a man like you. I am going to have a car, I am going to have a boat, I am going to have a place in the sun. There will be many changes in that country after the war. You will see. It is not so far, either, from here. It is evident that your heart, like mine, is in this part of the world. So come with me. Eh, Gaston?"

"Heart!" repeated Gaston, with a bitter smile. "It is you who speak of the heart, and of—— But you do not speak of the little surprise with

which you might some day regale me, Mr. Enemy! Nor do you say what you fear—that I might take it into my head to go fishing at Umm-un-Nakhl!"

"Ah bah!" exclaimed Magin impatiently. "However, you are right. I am not like you. I do not betray my country for a little savage with a jewel in her nose! It is because of that small difference between us, Gaston, between your people and my people, that you will see such changes here after the war. But you will not see them unless you accept my offer. After all, what else can you do?" He left Gaston to take it in as he twirled his metal cap. "There is the sun already," Magin added presently. "We shall have a hot journey."

Gaston looked over his shoulder at the quivering rim of gold that surged up behind the Bakhtiari mountains. How sharp and purple they were, against what a deepening blue! On the bluff the white-clad peasant stood with his back to the light, his hands folded in front of him, his head bowed.

"You look tired, Gaston," said Magin pleasantly. "Will you have this cigar?"

"No, thank you," replied Gaston. He felt in his own pockets, however, first for a cigarette and then for a match. He was indeed tired, so tired

that he no longer remembered which pocket to fumble in or what he held in his hand as he fumbled. Ah, that sacred tank! Then he suddenly smiled again, looking at Magin. "There is something else I can do!"

"What?" asked Magin as he lay at ease in the stern, enjoying the first perfume of his cigar. "You can't go back to France, now, and I should hardly advise you to go back to Sheleilieh. At least until after the war. Then there will be no more English there to ask you troublesome questions!"

Gaston lighted his cigarette. And, keeping his eyes on Magin, he slowly moved his hand, in which were both the nickel cap and the still-burning match, toward the mouth of the tank.

"This!" he answered.

Magin watched him. He did not catch the connection at first. He saw it quickly enough, however. In his pale translucent eyes there was something very like a flare.

"Look out—or we shall go together after all!"

"We shall go together, after all," repeated Gaston. "And here is your place in the sun!"

Magin still watched, as the little flame flickered through the windless air. But he did not move.

"It will go out! And you have not the courage Apache!"

"You will see, Prussian!" The match stopped, at last, above the open hole; but the hand that held it trembled a little, and so did the strange low voice that said: "This at least I can do—for that great lady, far away."

The peasant on the bluff, prostrated toward Mecca with his forehead in the dust, was startled out of his prayer by a roar in the basin below him. There where the trim-white jinn-boat of the *Firengi* had been was now a blazing mass of wreckage, out of which came fierce cracklings, hissings, sounds not to be named. As he stared at it the wreckage fell apart, began to disappear in a cloud of smoke and steam that lengthened toward the southern gateway of the basin. And in the turbid water, cut by swift sharks' fins, he saw a sudden bright trail of red, redder than any fire or sunrise. It paled gradually, the smoke melted after the steam, the current caught the last charred fragments of wreckage and drew them out of sight.

The peasant watched it all silently, as if waiting for some new magic of the *Firengi*, from his high bank of the Karun—that snow-born river bound for distant palms, that had seen so many generations of the faces of men, so many of the

barks to which men trust their hearts, their hopes, their treasures, as it wound, century after century, from the mountains to the sea. Then, at last, the peasant folded his hands anew and bowed his head toward Mecca.

THE GAY OLD DOG[9]

By EDNA FERBER

From *The Metropolitan Magazine*

Those of you who have dwelt—or even lingered—in Chicago, Illinois (this is not a humorous story), are familiar with the region known as the Loop. For those others of you to whom Chicago is a transfer point between New York and San Francisco there is presented this brief explanation:

The Loop is a clamorous, smoke-infested district embraced by the iron arms of the elevated tracks. In a city boasting fewer millions, it would be known familiarly as downtown. From Congress to Lake Street, from Wabash almost to the river, those thunderous tracks make a complete circle, or loop. Within it

lie the retail shops, the commercial hotels, the theaters, the restaurants. It is the Fifth Avenue (diluted) and the Broadway (deleted) of Chicago. And he who frequents it by night in search of amusement and cheer is known, vulgarly, as a loop-hound.

Jo Hertz was a loop-hound. On the occasion of those sparse first nights granted the metropolis of the Middle West he was always present, third row, aisle, left. When a new loop café was opened, Jo's table always commanded an unobstructed view of anything worth viewing. On entering he was wont to say, "Hello, Gus," with careless cordiality to the head-waiter, the while his eye roved expertly from table to table as he removed his gloves. He ordered things under glass, so that his table, at midnight or thereabouts, resembled a hot-bed that favors the bell system. The waiters fought for him. He was the kind of man who mixes his own salad dressing. He liked to call for a bowl, some cracked ice, lemon, garlic, paprika, salt, pepper, vinegar and oil, and make a rite of it. People at near-by tables would lay down their knives and forks to watch, fascinated. The secret of it seemed to lie in using all the oil in sight and calling for more.

That was Jo—a plump and lonely bachelor of fifty. A plethoric, roving-eyed and kindly man,

clutching vainly at the garments of a youth that had long slipped past him. Jo Hertz, in one of those pinch-waist belted suits and a trench coat and a little green hat, walking up Michigan Avenue of a bright winter's afternoon, trying to take the curb with a jaunty youthfulness against which every one of his fat-encased muscles rebelled, was a sight for mirth or pity, depending on one's vision.

The gay-dog business was a late phase in the life of Jo Hertz. He had been a quite different sort of canine. The staid and harassed brother of three unwed and selfish sisters is an under dog. The tale of how Jo Hertz came to be a loop-hound should not be compressed within the limits of a short story. It should be told as are the photoplays, with frequent throw-backs and many cut-ins. To condense twenty-three years of a man's life into some five or six thousand words requires a verbal economy amounting to parsimony.

At twenty-seven Jo had been the dutiful, hard-working son (in the wholesale harness business) of a widowed and gummidging mother, who called him Joey. If you had looked close you would have seen that now and then a double wrinkle would appear between Jo's eyes—a wrinkle that had no business there at twenty-seven. Then Jo's mother died, leaving him

handicapped by a death-bed promise, the three sisters and a three-story-and-basement house on Calumet Avenue. Jo's wrinkle became a fixture.

Death-bed promises should be broken as lightly as they are seriously made. The dead have no right to lay their clammy fingers upon the living.

"Joey," she had said, in her high, thin voice, "take care of the girls."

"I will, ma," Jo had choked.

"Joey," and the voice was weaker, "promise me you won't marry till the girls are all provided for." Then as Jo had hesitated, appalled: "Joey, it's my dying wish. Promise!"

"I promise, ma," he had said.

Whereupon his mother had died, comfortably, leaving him with a completely ruined life.

They were not bad-looking girls, and they had a certain style, too. That is, Stell and Eva had. Carrie, the middle one, taught school over on the West Side. In those days it took her almost two hours each way. She said the kind of costume she required should have been corrugated steel. But all three knew what was being worn, and they wore it—or fairly faithful copies of it. Eva, the housekeeping sister, had a

needle knack. She could skim the State Street windows and come away with a mental photograph of every separate tuck, hem, yoke, and ribbon. Heads of departments showed her the things they kept in drawers, and she went home and reproduced them with the aid of a two-dollar-a-day seamstress. Stell, the youngest, was the beauty. They called her Babe. She wasn't really a beauty, but some one had once told her that she looked like Janice Meredith (it was when that work of fiction was at the height of its popularity). For years afterward, whenever she went to parties, she affected a single, fat curl over her right shoulder, with a rose stuck through it.

Twenty-three years ago one's sisters did not strain at the household leash, nor crave a career. Carrie taught school, and hated it. Eva kept house expertly and complainingly. Babe's profession was being the family beauty, and it took all her spare time. Eva always let her sleep until ten.

This was Jo's household, and he was the nominal head of it. But it was an empty title. The three women dominated his life. They weren't consciously selfish. If you had called them cruel they would have put you down as mad. When you are the lone brother of three sisters, it means that you must constantly be

calling for, escorting, or dropping one of them somewhere. Most men of Jo's age were standing before their mirror of a Saturday night, whistling blithely and abstractedly while they discarded a blue polka-dot for a maroon tie, whipped off the maroon for a shot-silk, and at the last moment decided against the shot-silk in favor of a plain black-and-white, because she had once said she preferred quiet ties. Jo, when he should have been preening his feathers for conquest, was saying:

"Well, my God, I *am* hurrying! Give a man time, can't you? I just got home. You girls have been laying around the house all day. No wonder you're ready."

He took a certain pride in seeing his sisters well dressed, at a time when he should have been reveling in fancy waistcoats and brilliant-hued socks, according to the style of that day, and the inalienable right of any unwed male under thirty, in any day. On those rare occasions when his business necessitated an out-of-town trip, he would spend half a day floundering about the shops selecting handkerchiefs, or stockings, or feathers, or fans, or gloves for the girls. They always turned out to be the wrong kind, judging by their reception.

From Carrie, "What in the world do I want of a

fan!"

"I thought you didn't have one," Jo would say.

"I haven't. I never go to dances."

Jo would pass a futile hand over the top of his head, as was his way when disturbed. "I just thought you'd like one. I thought every girl liked a fan. Just," feebly, "just to—to have."

"Oh, for pity's sake!"

And from Eva or Babe, "I've *got* silk stockings, Jo." Or, "You brought me handkerchiefs the last time."

There was something selfish in his giving, as there always is in any gift freely and joyfully made. They never suspected the exquisite pleasure it gave him to select these things; these fine, soft, silken things. There were many things about this slow-going, amiable brother of theirs that they never suspected. If you had told them he was a dreamer of dreams, for example, they would have been amused. Sometimes, dead-tired by nine o'clock, after a hard day downtown, he would doze over the evening paper. At intervals he would wake, red-eyed, to a snatch of conversation such as, "Yes, but if you get a blue you can wear it anywhere. It's dressy, and at the same time it's quiet, too." Eva,

the expert, wrestling with Carrie over the problem of the new spring dress. They never guessed that the commonplace man in the frayed old smoking-jacket had banished them all from the room long ago; had banished himself, for that matter. In his place was a tall, debonair, and rather dangerously handsome man to whom six o'clock spelled evening clothes. The kind of a man who can lean up against a mantel, or propose a toast, or give an order to a man-servant, or whisper a gallant speech in a lady's ear with equal ease. The shabby old house on Calumet Avenue was transformed into a brocaded and chandeliered rendezvous for the brilliance of the city. Beauty was there, and wit. But none so beautiful and witty as She. Mrs.—er—Jo Hertz. There was wine, of course; but no vulgar display. There was music; the soft sheen of satin; laughter. And he the gracious, tactful host, king of his own domain—

"Jo, for heaven's sake, if you're going to snore go to bed!"

"Why—did I fall asleep?"

"You haven't been doing anything else all evening. A person would think you were fifty instead of thirty."

And Jo Hertz was again just the dull, gray, commonplace brother of three well-meaning

sisters.

Babe used to say petulantly, "Jo, why don't you ever bring home any of your men friends? A girl might as well not have any brother, all the good you do."

Jo, conscience-stricken, did his best to make amends. But a man who has been petticoat-ridden for years loses the knack, somehow, of comradeship with men. He acquires, too, a knowledge of women, and a distaste for them, equaled only, perhaps, by that of an elevator-starter in a department store.

Which brings us to one Sunday in May. Jo came home from a late Sunday afternoon walk to find company for supper. Carrie often had in one of her school-teacher friends, or Babe one of her frivolous intimates, or even Eva a staid guest of the old-girl type. There was always a Sunday night supper of potato salad, and cold meat, and coffee, and perhaps a fresh cake. Jo rather enjoyed it, being a hospitable soul. But he regarded the guests with the undazzled eyes of a man to whom they were just so many petticoats, timid of the night streets and requiring escort home. If you had suggested to him that some of his sisters' popularity was due to his own presence, or if you had hinted that the more kittenish of these visitors were palpably making

eyes at him, he would have stared in amazement and unbelief.

This Sunday night it turned out to be one of Carrie's friends.

"Emily," said Carrie, "this is my brother, Jo." Jo had learned what to expect in Carrie's friends. Drab-looking women in the late thirties, whose facial lines all slanted downward.

"Happy to meet you," said Jo, and looked down at a different sort altogether. A most surprisingly different sort, for one of Carrie's friends. This Emily person was very small, and fluffy, and blue-eyed, and sort of—well, crinkly looking. You know. The corners of her mouth when she smiled, and her eyes when she looked up at you, and her hair, which was brown, but had the miraculous effect, somehow, of being golden.

Jo shook hands with her. Her hand was incredibly small, and soft, so that you were afraid of crushing it, until you discovered she had a firm little grip all her own. It surprised and amused you, that grip, as does a baby's unexpected clutch on your patronizing forefinger. As Jo felt it in his own big clasp, the strangest thing happened to him. Something inside Jo Hertz stopped working for a moment, then lurched sickeningly, then thumped like

mad. It was his heart. He stood staring down at her, and she up at him, until the others laughed. Then their hands fell apart, lingeringly.

"Are you a school-teacher, Emily?" he said.

"Kindergarten. It's my first year. And don't call me Emily, please."

"Why not? It's your name. I think it's the prettiest name in the world." Which he hadn't meant to say at all. In fact, he was perfectly aghast to find himself saying it. But he meant it.

At supper he passed her things, and stared, until everybody laughed again, and Eva said acidly, "Why don't you feed her?"

It wasn't that Emily had an air of helplessness. She just made you feel you wanted her to be helpless, so that you could help her.

Jo took her home, and from that Sunday night he began to strain at the leash. He took his sisters out, dutifully, but he would suggest, with a carelessness that deceived no one, "Don't you want one of your girl friends to come along? That little What's-her-name—Emily, or something. So long's I've got three of you, I might as well have a full squad."

For a long time he didn't know what was the matter with him. He only knew he was

miserable, and yet happy. Sometimes his heart seemed to ache with an actual physical ache. He realized that he wanted to do things for Emily. He wanted to buy things for Emily—useless, pretty, expensive things that he couldn't afford. He wanted to buy everything that Emily needed, and everything that Emily desired. He wanted to marry Emily. That was it. He discovered that one day, with a shock, in the midst of a transaction in the harness business. He stared at the man with whom he was dealing until that startled person grew uncomfortable.

"What's the matter, Hertz?"

"Matter?"

"You look as if you'd seen a ghost or found a gold mine. I don't know which."

"Gold mine," said Jo. And then, "No. Ghost."

For he remembered that high, thin voice, and his promise. And the harness business was slithering downhill with dreadful rapidity, as the automobile business began its amazing climb. Jo tried to stop it. But he was not that kind of business man. It never occurred to him to jump out of the down-going vehicle and catch the up-going one. He stayed on, vainly applying brakes that refused to work.

"You know, Emily, I couldn't support two households now. Not the way things are. But if you'll wait. If you'll only wait. The girls might —that is, Babe and Carrie—"

She was a sensible little thing, Emily. "Of course I'll wait. But we mustn't just sit back and let the years go by. We've got to help."

She went about it as if she were already a little matchmaking matron. She corraled all the men she had ever known and introduced them to Babe, Carrie, and Eva separately, in pairs, and en masse. She arranged parties at which Babe could display the curl. She got up picnics. She stayed home while Jo took the three about. When she was present she tried to look as plain and obscure as possible, so that the sisters should show up to advantage. She schemed, and planned, and contrived, and hoped; and smiled into Jo's despairing eyes.

And three years went by. Three precious years. Carrie still taught school, and hated it. Eva kept house, more and more complainingly as prices advanced and allowance retreated. Stell was still Babe, the family beauty; but even she knew that the time was past for curls. Emily's hair, somehow, lost its glint and began to look just plain brown. Her crinkliness began to iron out.

"Now, look here!" Jo argued, desperately, one

night. "We could be happy, anyway. There's plenty of room at the house. Lots of people begin that way. Of course, I couldn't give you all I'd like to at first. But maybe, after a while —"

No dreams of salons, and brocade, and velvet-footed servitors, and satin damask now. Just two rooms, all their own, all alone, and Emily to work for. That was his dream. But it seemed less possible than that other absurd one had been.

You know that Emily was as practical a little thing as she looked fluffy. She knew women. Especially did she know Eva, and Carrie, and Babe. She tried to imagine herself taking the household affairs and the housekeeping pocketbook out of Eva's expert hands. Eva had once displayed to her a sheaf of aigrettes she had bought with what she saved out of the housekeeping money. So then she tried to picture herself allowing the reins of Jo's house to remain in Eva's hands. And everything feminine and normal in her rebelled. Emily knew she'd want to put away her own freshly laundered linen, and smooth it, and pat it. She was that kind of woman. She knew she'd want to do her own delightful haggling with butcher and vegetable peddler. She knew she'd want to muss Jo's hair, and sit on his knee, and even

quarrel with him, if necessary, without the awareness of three ever-present pairs of maiden eyes and ears.

"No! No! We'd only be miserable. I know. Even if they didn't object. And they would, Jo. Wouldn't they?"

His silence was miserable assent. Then, "But you do love me, don't you, Emily?"

"I do, Jo. I love you—and love you—and love you. But, Jo, I—can't."

"I know it, dear. I knew it all the time, really. I just thought, maybe, somehow—"

The two sat staring for a moment into space, their hands clasped. Then they both shut their eyes, with a little shudder, as though what they saw was terrible to look upon. Emily's hand, the tiny hand that was so unexpectedly firm, tightened its hold on his, and his crushed the absurd fingers until she winced with pain.

That was the beginning of the end, and they knew it.

Emily wasn't the kind of girl who would be left to pine. There are too many Jo's in the world whose hearts are prone to lurch and then thump at the feel of a soft, fluttering, incredibly small hand in their grip. One year later Emily was

married to a young man whose father owned a large, pie-shaped slice of the prosperous state of Michigan.

That being safely accomplished, there was something grimly humorous in the trend taken by affairs in the old house on Calumet. For Eva married. Of all people, Eva! Married well, too, though he was a great deal older than she. She went off in a hat she had copied from a French model at Fields's, and a suit she had contrived with a home dressmaker, aided by pressing on the part of the little tailor in the basement over on Thirty-first Street. It was the last of that, though. The next time they saw her, she had on a hat that even she would have despaired of copying, and a suit that sort of melted into your gaze. She moved to the North Side (trust Eva for that), and Babe assumed the management of the household on Calumet Avenue. It was rather a pinched little household now, for the harness business shrank and shrank.

"I don't see how you can expect me to keep house decently on this!" Babe would say contemptuously. Babe's nose, always a little inclined to sharpness, had whittled down to a point of late. "If you knew what Ben gives Eva."

"It's the best I can do, Sis. Business is something rotten."

"Ben says if you had the least bit of—" Ben was Eva's husband, and quotable, as are all successful men.

"I don't care what Ben says," shouted Jo, goaded into rage. "I'm sick of your everlasting Ben. Go and get a Ben of your own, why don't you, if you're so stuck on the way he does things."

And Babe did. She made a last desperate drive, aided by Eva, and she captured a rather surprised young man in the brokerage way, who had made up his mind not to marry for years and years. Eva wanted to give her her wedding things, but at that Jo broke into sudden rebellion.

"No, sir! No Ben is going to buy my sister's wedding clothes, understand? I guess I'm not broke—yet. I'll furnish the money for her things, and there'll be enough of them, too."

Babe had as useless a trousseau, and as filled with extravagant pink-and-blue and lacy and frilly things as any daughter of doting parents. Jo seemed to find a grim pleasure in providing them. But it left him pretty well pinched. After Babe's marriage (she insisted that they call her Estelle now) Jo sold the house on Calumet. He and Carrie took one of those little flats that were springing up, seemingly over night, all through

Chicago's South Side.

There was nothing domestic about Carrie. She had given up teaching two years before, and had gone into Social Service work on the West Side. She had what is known as a legal mind, hard, clear, orderly, and she made a great success of it. Her dream was to live at the Settlement House and give all her time to the work. Upon the little household she bestowed a certain amount of grim, capable attention. It was the same kind of attention she would have given a piece of machinery whose oiling and running had been entrusted to her care. She hated it, and didn't hesitate to say so.

Jo took to prowling about department store basements, and household goods sections. He was always sending home a bargain in a ham, or a sack of potatoes, or fifty pounds of sugar, or a window clamp, or a new kind of paring knife. He was forever doing odd little jobs that the janitor should have done. It was the domestic in him claiming its own.

Then, one night, Carrie came home with a dull glow in her leathery cheeks, and her eyes alight with resolve. They had what she called a plain talk.

"Listen, Jo. They've offered me the job of first assistant resident worker. And I'm going to take

it. Take it! I know fifty other girls who'd give their ears for it. I go in next month."

They were at dinner. Jo looked up from his plate, dully. Then he glanced around the little dining-room, with its ugly tan walls and its heavy dark furniture (the Calumet Street pieces fitted cumbersomely into the five-room flat).

"Away? Away from here, you mean—to live?"

Carrie laid down her fork. "Well, really, Jo! After all that explanation."

"But to go over there to live! Why, that neighborhood's full of dirt, and disease, and crime, and the Lord knows what all. I can't let you do that, Carrie."

Carrie's chin came up. She laughed a short little laugh. "Let me! That's eighteenth-century talk, Jo. My life's my own to live. I'm going."

And she went. Jo stayed on in the apartment until the lease was up. Then he sold what furniture he could, stored or gave away the rest, and took a room on Michigan Avenue in one of the old stone mansions whose decayed splendor was being put to such purpose.

Jo Hertz was his own master. Free to marry. Free to come and go. And he found he didn't even think of marrying. He didn't even want to

come or go, particularly. A rather frumpy old bachelor, with thinning hair and a thickening neck. Much has been written about the unwed, middle-aged woman; her fussiness, her primness, her angularity of mind and body. In the male that same fussiness develops, and a certain primness, too. But he grows flabby where she grows lean.

Every Thursday evening he took dinner at Eva's, and on Sunday noon at Stell's. He tucked his napkin under his chin and openly enjoyed the home-made soup and the well-cooked meats. After dinner he tried to talk business with Eva's husband, or Stell's. His business talks were the old-fashioned kind, beginning:

"Well, now, looka here. Take, f'rinstance your raw hides and leathers."

But Ben and George didn't want to take f'rinstance your raw hides and leathers. They wanted, when they took anything at all, to take golf, or politics, or stocks. They were the modern type of business man who prefers to leave his work out of his play. Business, with them, was a profession—a finely graded and balanced thing, differing from Jo's clumsy, downhill style as completely as does the method of a great criminal detective differ from that of a village constable. They would listen, restively,

and say, "Uh-uh," at intervals, and at the first chance they would sort of fade out of the room, with a meaning glance at their wives. Eva had two children now. Girls. They treated Uncle Jo with good-natured tolerance. Stell had no children. Uncle Jo degenerated, by almost imperceptible degrees, from the position of honored guest, who is served with white meat, to that of one who is content with a leg and one of those obscure and bony sections which, after much turning with a bewildered and investigating knife and fork, leave one baffled and unsatisfied.

Eva and Stell got together and decided that Jo ought to marry.

"It isn't natural," Eva told him. "I never saw a man who took so little interest in women."

"Me!" protested Jo, almost shyly. "Women!"

"Yes. Of course. You act like a frightened school boy."

So they had in for dinner certain friends and acquaintances of fitting age. They spoke of them as "splendid girls." Between thirty-six and forty. They talked awfully well, in a firm, clear way, about civics, and classes, and politics, and economics, and boards. They rather terrified Jo. He didn't understand much that they talked

about, and he felt humbly inferior, and yet a little resentful, as if something had passed him by. He escorted them home, dutifully, though they told him not to bother, and they evidently meant it. They seemed capable, not only of going home quite unattended, but of delivering a pointed lecture to any highwayman or brawler who might molest them.

The following Thursday Eva would say, "How did you like her, Jo?"

"Like who?" Jo would spar feebly.

"Miss Matthews."

"Who's she?"

"Now, don't be funny, Jo. You know very well I mean the girl who was here for dinner. The one who talked so well on the emigration question."

"Oh, her! Why, I liked her, all right. Seems to be a smart woman."

"Smart! She's a perfectly splendid girl."

"Sure," Jo would agree cheerfully.

"But didn't you like her?"

"I can't say I did, Eve. And I can't say I didn't. She made me think a lot of a teacher I had in the

fifth reader. Name of Himes. As I recall her, she must have been a fine woman. But I never thought of her as a woman at all. She was just Teacher."

"You make me tired," snapped Eva impatiently. "A man of your age. You don't expect to marry a girl, do you? A child!"

"I don't expect to marry anybody," Jo had answered.

And that was the truth, lonely though he often was.

The following year Eva moved to Winnetka. Any one who got the meaning of the Loop knows the significance of a move to a north shore suburb, and a house. Eva's daughter, Ethel, was growing up, and her mother had an eye on society.

That did away with Jo's Thursday dinner. Then Stell's husband bought a car. They went out into the country every Sunday. Stell said it was getting so that maids objected to Sunday dinners, anyway. Besides, they were unhealthy, old-fashioned things. They always meant to ask Jo to come along, but by the time their friends were placed, and the lunch, and the boxes, and sweaters, and George's camera, and everything, there seemed to be no room for a man of Jo's

bulk. So that eliminated the Sunday dinners.

"Just drop in any time during the week," Stell said, "for dinner. Except Wednesday—that's our bridge night—and Saturday. And, of course, Thursday. Cook is out that night. Don't wait for me to 'phone."

And so Jo drifted into that sad-eyed, dyspeptic family made up of those you see dining in second-rate restaurants, their paper propped up against the bowl of oyster crackers, munching solemnly and with indifference to the stare of the passer-by surveying them through the brazen plate-glass window.

And then came the War. The war that spelled death and destruction to millions. The war that brought a fortune to Jo Hertz, and transformed him, over night, from a baggy-kneed old bachelor whose business was a failure to a prosperous manufacturer whose only trouble was the shortage in hides for the making of his product—leather! The armies of Europe called for it. Harnesses! More harnesses! Straps! Millions of straps! More! More!

The musty old harness business over on Lake Street was magically changed from a dust-covered, dead-alive concern to an orderly hive

that hummed and glittered with success. Orders poured in. Jo Hertz had inside information on the War. He knew about troops and horses. He talked with French and English and Italian buyers—noblemen, many of them—commissioned by their countries to get American-made supplies. And now, when he said to Ben or George, "Take f'rinstance your raw hides and leathers," they listened with respectful attention.

And then began the gay dog business in the life of Jo Hertz. He developed into a loop-hound, ever keen on the scent of fresh pleasure. That side of Jo Hertz which had been repressed and crushed and ignored began to bloom, unhealthily. At first he spent money on his rather contemptuous nieces. He sent them gorgeous fans, and watch bracelets, and velvet bags. He took two expensive rooms at a downtown hotel, and there was something more tear-compelling than grotesque about the way he gloated over the luxury of a separate ice-water tap in the bathroom. He explained it.

"Just turn it on. Ice-water! Any hour of the day or night."

He bought a car. Naturally. A glittering affair; in color a bright blue, with pale-blue leather straps and a great deal of gold fittings and wire

wheels. Eva said it was the kind of a thing a soubrette would use, rather than an elderly business man. You saw him driving about in it, red-faced and rather awkward at the wheel. You saw him, too, in the Pompeiian room at the Congress Hotel of a Saturday afternoon when doubtful and roving-eyed matrons in kolinsky capes are wont to congregate to sip pale amber drinks. Actors grew to recognize the semi-bald head and the shining, round, good-natured face looming out at them from the dim well of the parquet, and sometimes, in a musical show, they directed a quip at him, and he liked it. He could pick out the critics as they came down the aisle, and even had a nodding acquaintance with two of them.

"Kelly, of the *Herald*," he would say carelessly. "Bean, of the *Trib*. They're all afraid of him."

So he frolicked, ponderously. In New York he might have been called a Man About Town.

And he was lonesome. He was very lonesome. So he searched about in his mind and brought from the dim past the memory of the luxuriously furnished establishment of which he used to dream in the evenings when he dozed over his paper in the old house on Calumet. So he rented an apartment, many-roomed and

expensive, with a man-servant in charge, and furnished it in styles and periods ranging through all the Louis. The living room was mostly rose color. It was like an unhealthy and bloated boudoir. And yet there was nothing sybaritic or uncleanly in the sight of this paunchy, middle-aged man sinking into the rosy-cushioned luxury of his ridiculous home. It was a frank and naïve indulgence of long-starved senses, and there was in it a great resemblance to the rolling-eyed ecstasy of a school-boy smacking his lips over an all-day sucker.

The War went on, and on, and on. And the money continued to roll in—a flood of it. Then, one afternoon, Eva, in town on shopping bent, entered a small, exclusive, and expensive shop on Michigan Avenue. Exclusive, that is, in price. Eva's weakness, you may remember, was hats. She was seeking a hat now. She described what she sought with a languid conciseness, and stood looking about her after the saleswoman had vanished in quest of it. The room was becomingly rose-illumined and somewhat dim, so that some minutes had passed before she realized that a man seated on a raspberry brocade settee not five feet away—a man with a walking stick, and yellow gloves, and tan spats, and a check suit—was her brother Jo. From him

Eva's wild-eyed glance leaped to the woman who was trying on hats before one of the many long mirrors. She was seated, and a saleswoman was exclaiming discreetly at her elbow.

Eva turned sharply and encountered her own saleswoman returning, hat-laden. "Not to-day," she gasped. "I'm feeling ill. Suddenly." And almost ran from the room.

That evening she told Stell, relating her news in that telephone pidgin-English devised by every family of married sisters as protection against the neighbors and Central. Translated, it ran thus:

"He looked straight at me. My dear, I thought I'd die! But at least he had sense enough not to speak. She was one of those limp, willowy creatures with the greediest eyes that she tried to keep softened to a baby stare, and couldn't, she was so crazy to get her hands on those hats. I saw it all in one awful minute. You know the way I do. I suppose some people would call her pretty. I don't. And her color! Well! And the most expensive-looking hats. Aigrettes, and paradise, and feathers. Not one of them under seventy-five. Isn't it disgusting! At his age! Suppose Ethel had been with me!"

The next time it was Stell who saw them. In a restaurant. She said it spoiled her evening. And

the third time it was Ethel. She was one of the guests at a theater party given by Nicky Overton II. You know. The North Shore Overtons. Lake Forest. They came in late, and occupied the entire third row at the opening performance of "Believe Me!" And Ethel was Nicky's partner. She was glowing like a rose. When the lights went up after the first act Ethel saw that her uncle Jo was seated just ahead of her with what she afterward described as a Blonde. Then her uncle had turned around, and seeing her, had been surprised into a smile that spread genially all over his plump and rubicund face. Then he had turned to face forward again, quickly.

"Who's the old bird?" Nicky had asked. Ethel had pretended not to hear, so he had asked again.

"My uncle," Ethel answered, and flushed all over her delicate face, and down to her throat. Nicky had looked at the Blonde, and his eyebrows had gone up ever so slightly.

It spoiled Ethel's evening. More than that, as she told her mother of it later, weeping, she declared it had spoiled her life.

Ethel talked it over with her husband in that intimate, kimonoed hour that precedes bedtime. She gesticulated heatedly with her hair brush.

"It's disgusting, that's what it is. Perfectly disgusting. There's no fool like an old fool. Imagine! A creature like that. At his time of life."

There exists a strange and loyal kinship among men. "Well, I don't know," Ben said now, and even grinned a little. "I suppose a boy's got to sow his wild oats some time."

"Don't be any more vulgar than you can help," Eva retorted. "And I think you know, as well as I, what it means to have that Overton boy interested in Ethel."

"If he's interested in her," Ben blundered, "I guess the fact that Ethel's uncle went to the theater with some one who wasn't Ethel's aunt won't cause a shudder to run up and down his frail young frame, will it?"

"All right," Eva had retorted. "If you're not man enough to stop it, I'll have to, that's all. I'm going up there with Stell this week."

They did not notify Jo of their coming. Eva telephoned his apartment when she knew he would be out, and asked his man if he expected his master home to dinner that evening. The man had said yes. Eva arranged to meet Stell in town. They would drive to Jo's apartment together, and wait for him there.

When she reached the city Eva found turmoil there. The first of the American troops to be sent to France were leaving. Michigan Boulevard was a billowing, surging mass: Flags, pennants, bands, crowds. All the elements that make for demonstration. And over the whole—quiet. No holiday crowd, this. A solid, determined mass of people waiting patient hours to see the khaki-clads go by. Three years of indefatigable reading had brought them to a clear knowledge of what these boys were going to.

"Isn't it dreadful!" Stell gasped.

"Nicky Overton's only nineteen, thank goodness."

Their car was caught in the jam. When they moved at all it was by inches. When at last they reached Jo's apartment they were flushed, nervous, apprehensive. But he had not yet come in. So they waited.

No, they were not staying to dinner with their brother, they told the relieved houseman. Jo's home has already been described to you. Stell and Eva, sunk in rose-colored cushions, viewed it with disgust, and some mirth. They rather avoided each other's eyes.

"Carrie ought to be here," Eva said. They both smiled at the thought of the austere Carrie in the midst of those rosy cushions, and hangings, and lamps. Stell rose and began to walk about, restlessly. She picked up a vase and laid it down; straightened a picture. Eva got up, too, and wandered into the hall. She stood there a moment, listening. Then she turned and passed into Jo's bedroom. And there you knew Jo for what he was.

This room was as bare as the other had been ornate. It was Jo, the clean-minded and simple-hearted, in revolt against the cloying luxury with which he had surrounded himself. The bedroom, of all rooms in any house, reflects the personality of its occupant. True, the actual furniture was paneled, cupid-surmounted, and ridiculous. It had been the fruit of Jo's first orgy of the senses. But now it stood out in that stark little room with an air as incongruous and ashamed as that of a pink tarleton danseuse who finds herself in a monk's cell. None of those wall-pictures with which bachelor bedrooms are reputed to be hung. No satin slippers. No scented notes. Two plain-backed military brushes on the chiffonier (and he so nearly hairless!). A little orderly stack of books on the table near the bed. Eva fingered their titles and gave a little gasp. One of them was on

gardening. "Well, of all things!" exclaimed Stell. A book on the War, by an Englishman. A detective story of the lurid type that lulls us to sleep. His shoes ranged in a careful row in the closet, with shoe-trees in every one of them. There was something speaking about them. They looked so human. Eva shut the door on them, quickly. Some bottles on the dresser. A jar of pomade. An ointment such as a man uses who is growing bald and is panic-stricken too late. An insurance calendar on the wall. Some rhubarb-and-soda mixture on the shelf in the bathroom, and a little box of pepsin tablets.

"Eats all kinds of things at all hours of the night," Eva said, and wandered out into the rose-colored front room again with the air of one who is chagrined at her failure to find what she has sought. Stell followed her, furtively.

"Where do you suppose he can be?" she demanded. "It's—" she glanced at her wrist, "why, it's after six!"

And then there was a little click. The two women sat up, tense. The door opened. Jo came in. He blinked a little. The two women in the rosy room stood up.

"Why—Eve! Why, Babe! Well! Why didn't you let me know?"

"We were just about to leave. We thought you weren't coming home."

Jo came in, slowly. "I was in the jam on Michigan, watching the boys go by." He sat down, heavily. The light from the window fell on him. And you saw that his eyes were red.

And you'll have to learn why. He had found himself one of the thousands in the jam on Michigan Avenue, as he said. He had a place near the curb, where his big frame shut off the view of the unfortunates behind him. He waited with the placid interest of one who has subscribed to all the funds and societies to which a prosperous, middle-aged business man is called upon to subscribe in war time. Then, just as he was about to leave, impatient at the delay, the crowd had cried, with a queer dramatic, exultant note in its voice, "Here they come! here come the boys!"

Just at that moment two little, futile, frenzied fists began to beat a mad tattoo on Jo Hertz's broad back. Jo tried to turn in the crowd, all indignant resentment. "Say, looka here!"

The little fists kept up their frantic beating and pushing. And a voice—a choked, high little voice—cried, "Let me by! I can't see! You man,

you! You big fat man! My boy's going by—to war—and I can't see! Let me by!"

Jo scrooged around, still keeping his place. He looked down. And upturned to him in agonized appeal was the face of little Emily. They stared at each other for what seemed a long, long time. It was really only the fraction of a second. Then Jo put one great arm firmly around Emily's waist and swung her around in front of him. His great bulk protected her. Emily was clinging to his hand. She was breathing rapidly, as if she had been running. Her eyes were straining up the street.

"Why, Emily, how in the world!—"

"I ran away. Fred didn't want me to come. He said it would excite me too much."

"Fred?"

"My husband. He made me promise to say good-by to Jo at home."

"Jo's my boy. And he's going to war. So I ran away. I had to see him. I had to see him go."

She was dry-eyed. Her gaze was straining up the street.

"Why, sure," said Jo. "Of course you want to see him." And then the crowd gave a great roar.

There came over Jo a feeling of weakness. He was trembling. The boys went marching by.

"There he is," Emily shrilled, above the din. "There he is! There he is! There he—" And waved a futile little hand. It wasn't so much a wave as a clutching. A clutching after something beyond her reach.

"Which one? Which one, Emily?"

"The handsome one. The handsome one. There!" Her voice quavered and died.

Jo put a steady hand on her shoulder. "Point him out," he commanded. "Show me." And the next instant. "Never mind. I see him."

Somehow, miraculously, he had picked him from among the hundreds. Had picked him as surely as his own father might have. It was Emily's boy. He was marching by, rather stiffly. He was nineteen, and fun-loving, and he had a girl, and he didn't particularly want to go to France and—to go to France. But more than he had hated going, he had hated not to go. So he marched by, looking straight ahead, his jaw set so that his chin stuck out just a little. Emily's boy.

Jo looked at him, and his face flushed purple. His eyes, the hard-boiled eyes of a loop-hound,

took on the look of a sad old man. And suddenly he was no longer Jo, the sport; old J. Hertz, the gay dog. He was Jo Hertz, thirty, in love with life, in love with Emily, and with the stinging blood of young manhood coursing through his veins.

Another minute and the boy had passed on up the broad street—the fine, flag-bedecked street—just one of a hundred service-hats bobbing in rhythmic motion like sandy waves lapping a shore and flowing on.

Then he disappeared altogether.

Emily was clinging to Jo. She was mumbling something over and over. "I can't. I can't. Don't ask me to. I can't let him go. Like that. I can't."

Jo said a queer thing.

"Why, Emily! We wouldn't have him stay home, would we? We wouldn't want him to do anything different, would we? Not our boy. I'm glad he volunteered. I'm proud of him. So are you, glad."

Little by little he quieted her. He took her to the car that was waiting, a worried chauffeur in charge. They said good-by, awkwardly. Emily's face was a red, swollen mass.

So it was that when Jo entered his own hallway

half an hour later he blinked, dazedly, and when the light from the window fell on him you saw that his eyes were red.

Eva was not one to beat about the bush. She sat forward in her chair, clutching her bag rather nervously.

"Now, look here, Jo. Stell and I are here for a reason. We're here to tell you that this thing's got to stop."

"Thing? Stop?"

"You know very well what I mean. You saw me at the milliner's that day. And night before last, Ethel. We're all disgusted. If you must go about with people like that, please have some sense of decency."

Something gathering in Jo's face should have warned her. But he was slumped down in his chair in such a huddle, and he looked so old and fat that she did not heed it. She went on. "You've got us to consider. Your sisters. And your nieces. Not to speak of your own—"

But he got to his feet then, shaking, and at what she saw in his face even Eva faltered and stopped. It wasn't at all the face of a fat, middle-aged sport. It was a face Jovian, terrible.

"You!" he began, low-voiced, ominous. "You!"

He raised a great fist high. "You two murderers! You didn't consider me, twenty years ago. You come to me with talk like that. Where's my boy! You killed him, you two, twenty years ago. And now he belongs to somebody else. Where's my son that should have gone marching by to-day?" He flung his arms out in a great gesture of longing. The red veins stood out on his forehead. "Where's my son! Answer me that, you two selfish, miserable women. Where's my son!" Then as they huddled together, frightened, wild-eyed. "Out of my house! Out of my house! Before I hurt you!"

They fled, terrified. The door banged behind them.

Jo stood, shaking, in the center of the room. Then he reached for a chair, gropingly, and sat down. He passed one moist, flabby hand over his forehead and it came away wet. The telephone rang. He sat still, it sounded far away and unimportant, like something forgotten. I think he did not even hear it with his conscious ear. But it rang and rang insistently. Jo liked to answer his telephone when at home.

"Hello!" He knew instantly the voice at the other end.

"That you, Jo?" it said.

"Yes."

"How's my boy?"

"I'm—all right."

"Listen, Jo. The crowd's coming over to-night. I've fixed up a little poker game for you. Just eight of us."

"I can't come to-night, Gert."

"Can't! Why not?"

"I'm not feeling so good."

"You just said you were all right."

"I *am* all right. Just kind of tired."

The voice took on a cooing note. "Is my Joey tired? Then he shall be all comfy on the sofa, and he doesn't need to play if he don't want to. No, sir."

Jo stood staring at the black mouth-piece of the telephone. He was seeing a procession go marching by. Boys, hundreds of boys, in khaki.

"Hello! Hello!" the voice took on an anxious note. "Are you there?"

"Yes," wearily.

"Jo, there's something the matter. You're sick.

I'm coming right over."

"No!"

"Why not? You sound as if you'd been sleeping. Look here—"

"Leave me alone!" cried Jo, suddenly, and the receiver clacked onto the hook. "Leave me alone. Leave me alone." Long after the connection had been broken.

He stood staring at the instrument with unseeing eyes. Then he turned and walked into the front room. All the light had gone out of it. Dusk had come on. All the light had gone out of everything. The zest had gone out of life. The game was over—the game he had been playing against loneliness and disappointment. And he was just a tired old man. A lonely, tired old man in a ridiculous, rose-colored room that had grown, all of a sudden, drab.

THE KNIGHT'S MOVE[10]

By KATHARINE FULLERTON GEROULD

From *The Atlantic Monthly*.

I

Havelock the Dane settled himself back in his chair and set his feet firmly on the oaken table. Chantry let him do it, though some imperceptible inch of his body winced. For the oak of it was neither fumed nor golden; it was English to its ancient core, and the table had served in the refectory of monks before Henry VIII decided that monks shocked him. Naturally Chantry did not want his friends' boots havocking upon it. But more important than to possess the table was to possess it nonchalantly. He let the big man dig his heel in. Any man but Havelock the Dane would have known better. But Havelock did as he pleased, and you either gave him up or bore it. Chantry did not want to give him up.

Chantry was a feminist; a bit of an æsthete but canny at affairs; good-looking, and temperate, and less hipped on the matter of sex than feminist gentlemen are wont to be. That is to say, while he vaguely wanted *l'homme moyen sensuel* to mend his ways, he did not expect him to change fundamentally. He rather thought the women would manage all that when they got the vote. You see, he was not a socialist: only a feminist.

Havelock the Dane, on the other hand, was by

no means a feminist, but was a socialist. What probably brought the two men together—apart from their common likableness—was that each, in his way, refused to "go the whole hog." They sometimes threshed the thing out together, unable to decide on a programme, but always united at last in their agreement that things were wrong. Havelock trusted Labor, and Chantry trusted Woman; the point was that neither trusted men like themselves, with a little money and an inherited code of honor. Havelock wanted his money taken away from him; Chantry desired his code to be trampled on by innumerable feminine feet. But each was rather helpless, for both expected these things to be done for them.

Except for this tie of ineffectuality, they had nothing special in common. Havelock's life had been adventurous in the good old-fashioned sense: the bars down and a deal of wandering. Chantry had sown so many crops of intellectual wild oats that even the people who came for subscriptions might be forgiven for thinking him a mental libertine, good for subscriptions and not much else. Between them, they boxed the compass about once a week. Havelock had more of what is known as "personality" than Chantry; Chantry more of what is known as "culture." They dovetailed, on the whole, not

badly.

Havelock, this afternoon, was full of a story. Chantry wanted to listen, though he knew that he could have listened better if Havelock's heel had not been quite so ponderous on the sæcular oak. He took refuge in a cosmic point of view. That was the only point of view from which Havelock (it was, by the way, his physical type only that had caused him to be nicknamed the Dane: his ancestors had come over from England in great discomfort two centuries since), in his blonde hugeness, became negligible. You had to climb very high to see him small.

"You never did the man justice," Havelock was saying.

"Justice be hanged!" replied Chantry.

"Quite so: the feminist slogan."

"A socialist can't afford to throw stones."

The retorts were spoken sharply, on both sides. Then both men laughed. They had too often had it out seriously to mind; these little insults were mere convention.

"Get at your story," resumed Chantry. "I suppose there's a woman in it: a nasty cat invented by your own prejudices. There usually

is."

"Never a woman at all. If there were, I shouldn't be asking for your opinion. My opinion, of course, is merely the rational one. I don't side-step the truth because a little drama gets in. I am appealing to you because you are the average man who hasn't seen the light. I honestly want to know what you think. There's a reason."

"What's the reason?"

"I'll tell you that later. Now, I'll tell you the story." Havelock screwed his tawny eyebrows together for a moment before plunging in. "Humph!" he ejaculated at last. "Much good anybody is in a case like this—What did you say you thought of Ferguson?"

"I didn't think anything of Ferguson—except that he had a big brain for biology. He was a loss."

"No personal opinion?"

"I never like people who think so well of themselves as all that."

"No opinion about his death?"

"Accidental, as they said, I suppose."

"Oh, 'they said'! It was suicide, I tell you."

"Suicide? Really?" Chantry's brown eyes lighted for an instant. "Oh, poor chap; I'm sorry."

It did not occur to him immediately to ask how Havelock knew. He trusted a plain statement from Havelock.

"I'm not. Or—yes, I am. I hate to have a man inconsistent."

"It's inconsistent for any one to kill himself. But it's frequently done."

Havelock, hemming and hawing like this, was more nearly a bore than Chantry had ever known him.

"Not for Ferguson."

"Oh, well, never mind Ferguson," Chantry yawned. "Tell me some anecdote out of your tapestried past."

"I won't."

Havelock dug his heel in harder. Chantry all but told him to take his feet down, but stopped himself just in time.

"Well, go on, then," he said, "but it doesn't sound interesting. I hate all tales of suicide. And

there isn't even a woman in it," he sighed maliciously.

"Oh, if it comes to that, there is."

"But you said—"

"Not in it exactly, unless you go in for *post hoc, propter hoc*."

"Oh, drive on." Chantry was pettish.

But at that point Havelock the Dane removed his feet from the refectory table. He will probably never know why Chantry, just then, began to be amiable.

"Excuse me, Havelock. Of course, whatever drove a man like Ferguson to suicide is interesting. And I may say he managed it awfully well. Not a hint, anywhere."

"Well, a scientist ought to get something out of it for himself. Ferguson certainly knew how. Can't you imagine him sitting up there, cocking his hair" (an odd phrase, but Chantry understood), "and deciding just how to circumvent the coroner? I can."

"Ferguson hadn't much imagination."

"A coroner doesn't take imagination. He takes a little hard, expert knowledge."

"I dare say." But Chantry's mind was wandering through other defiles. "Odd, that he should have snatched his life out of the very jaws of what-do-you-call-it, once, only to give it up at last, politely, of his own volition."

"You may well say it." Havelock spoke with more earnestness than he had done. "If you're not a socialist when I get through with you, Chantry, my boy—"

"Lord, Lord! don't tell me your beastly socialism is mixed up with it all! I never took to Ferguson, but he was no syndicalist. In life *or* in death, I'd swear to that."

"Ah, no. If he had been! But all I mean is that, in a properly regulated state, Ferguson's tragedy would not have occurred."

"So it was a tragedy?"

"He was a loss to the state, God knows."

Had they been speaking of anything less dignified than death and genius, Havelock might have sounded a little austere and silly. As it was —Chantry bit back, and swallowed, his censure.

"That's why I want to know what you think," went on Havelock, irrelevantly. "Whether your damned code of honor is worth Ferguson."

"It's not my damned code any more than yours," broke in Chantry.

"Yes, it is. Or, at least, we break it down at different points—theoretically. Actually, we walk all round it every day to be sure it's intact. Let's be honest."

"Honest as you like, if you'll only come to the point. Whew, but it's hot! Let's have a gin-fizz."

"You aren't serious."

Havelock seemed to try to lash himself into a rage. But he was so big that he could never have got all of himself into a rage at once. You felt that only part of him was angry—his toes, perhaps, or his complexion.

Chantry rang for ice and lemon, and took gin, sugar, and a siphon out of a carved cabinet.

"Go slow," he said. He himself was going very slow, with a beautiful crystal decanter which he set lovingly on the oaken table. "Go slow," he repeated, more easily, when he had set it down. "I can think just as well with a gin-fizz as without one. And I didn't know Ferguson well; and I didn't like him at all. I read his books, and I admired him. But he looked like the devil—*the* devil, you'll notice, not *a* devil. With a dash of Charles I by Van Dyck. The one standing by a

horse. As you say, he cocked his hair. It went into little horns, above each eyebrow. I'm sorry he's lost to the world, but it doesn't get me. He may have been a saint, for all I know; but there you are—I never cared particularly to know. I am serious. Only, somehow, it doesn't touch me."

And he proceeded to make use of crushed ice and lemon juice.

"Oh, blow all that," said Havelock the Dane finally, over the top of his glass. "I'm going to tell you, anyhow. Only I wish you would forget your prejudices. I want an opinion."

"Go on."

Chantry made himself comfortable.

II

"You remember the time when Ferguson didn't go down on the *Argentina*?"

"I do. Ferguson just wouldn't go down, you know. He'd turn up smiling, without even a chill, and meanwhile lots of good fellows would be at the bottom of the sea."

"Prejudice again," barked Havelock. "Yet in point of fact, it's perfectly true. And you would

have preferred him to drown."

"I was very glad he was saved." Chantry said it in a stilted manner.

"Why?"

"Because his life was really important to the world."

Chantry might have been distributing tracts. His very voice sounded falsetto.

"Exactly. Well, that is what Ferguson thought."

"How do you know?"

"He told me."

"You must have known him well. Thank heaven, I never did."

Havelock flung out a huge hand. "Oh, get off that ridiculous animal you're riding, Chantry, and come to the point. You mean you don't think Ferguson should have admitted it?"

Chantry's tone changed. "Well, one doesn't."

The huge hand, clenched into a fist, came down on the table. The crystal bottle was too heavy to rock, but the glasses jingled and a spoon slid over the edge of its saucer.

"There it is—what I was looking for."

"What were you looking for?" Chantry's wonder was not feigned.

"For your hydra-headed prejudice. Makes me want to play Hercules."

"Oh, drop your metaphors, Havelock. Get into the game. What is it?"

"It's this: that you don't think—or affect not to think—that it's decent for a man to recognize his own worth."

Chantry did not retort. He dropped his chin on his chest and thought for a moment. Then he spoke, very quietly and apologetically.

"Well—I don't see you telling another man how wonderful you are. It isn't immoral, it simply isn't manners. And if Ferguson boasted to you that he was saved when so many went down, it was worse than bad manners. He ought to have been kicked for it. It's the kind of phenomenal luck that it would have been decent to regret."

Havelock set his massive lips firmly together. You could not say that he pursed that Cyclopean mouth.

"Ferguson did not boast. He merely told me. He was, I think, a modest man."

Incredulity beyond any power of laughter to express settled on Chantry's countenance. "Modest? And he *told* you?"

"The whole thing." Havelock's voice was heavy enough for tragedy. "Listen. Don't interrupt me once. Ferguson told me that, when the explosion came, he looked round—considered, for fully a minute, his duty. He never lost control of himself once, he said, and I believe him. The *Argentina* was a small boat, making a winter passage. There were very few cabin passengers. No second cabin, but plenty of steerage. She sailed, you remember, from Naples. He had been doing some work, some very important work, in the Aquarium. The only other person of consequence—I am speaking in the most literal and un-snobbish sense—in the first cabin, was Benson. No" (with a lifted hand), "*don't interrupt me*. Benson, as we all know, was an international figure. But Benson was getting old. His son could be trusted to carry on the House of Benson. In fact, every one suspected that the son had become more important than the old man. He had put through the last big loan while his father was taking a rest-cure in Italy. That is how Benson *père* happened to be on the *Argentina*. The newspapers never sufficiently accounted for that. A private deck on the *Schrecklichkeit*

would have been more his size. Ferguson made it out: the old man got wild, suddenly, at the notion of their putting anything through without him. He trusted his gouty bones to the *Argentina*."

"Sounds plausible, but—" Chantry broke in.

"If you interrupt again," said Havelock, "I'll hit you, with all the strength I've got."

Chantry grunted. You had to take Havelock the Dane as you found him.

"Ferguson saw the whole thing clear. Old Benson had just gone into the smoking-room. Ferguson was on the deck outside his own stateroom. The only person on board who could possibly be considered as important as Ferguson was Benson; and he had good reason to believe that every one would get on well enough without Benson. He had just time, then, to put on a life-preserver, melt into his stateroom, and get a little pile of notes, very important ones, and drop into a boat. No, don't interrupt. I know what you are going to say. 'Women and children.' What do you suppose a lot of Neapolitan peasants meant to Ferguson—or to you and me, either? He didn't do anything outrageous; he just dropped into a boat. As a result, we had the big book a year later. No" (again crushing down a gesture of Chantry's),

"don't say anything about the instincts of a gentleman. If Ferguson hadn't been perfectly cool, his instincts would have governed him. He would have dashed about trying to save people, and then met the waves with a noble gesture. He had time to be reasonable; not instinctive. The world was the gainer, as he jolly well knew it would be—or where would have been the reasonableness? I don't believe Ferguson cared a hang about keeping his individual machine going for its own sake. But he knew he was a valuable person. His mind was a Kohinoor among minds. It stands to reason that you save the Kohinoor and let the little stones go. Well, that's not the story. Only I wanted to get that out of the way first, or the story wouldn't have meant anything. Did you wish," he finished graciously, "to ask a question?"

Chantry made a violent gesture of denial. "Ask a question about a hog like that? God forbid!"

"Um-m-m." Havelock seemed to muse within himself. "You will admit that if a jury of impartial men of sense could have sat, just then, on that slanting deck, they would have agreed that Ferguson's life was worth more to the world than all the rest of the boiling put together?"

"Yes, but—"

"Well, there wasn't any jury. Ferguson had to

be it. I am perfectly sure that if there had been a super-Ferguson on board, our Ferguson would have turned his hand to saving him first. In fact, I honestly believe he was sorry there hadn't been a super-Ferguson. For he had all the instincts of a gentleman; and it's never a pleasant job making your reason inhibit your instincts. You can't look at this thing perfectly straight, probably. But if you can't, who can? I don't happen to want an enlightened opinion; I've got one, right here at home. You don't care about the State: you want to put it into white petticoats and see it cross a muddy street."

"I don't wonder the socialists won't have anything to do with you."

"Because I'm not a feminist? I know. Just as the feminists won't have anything to do with you because you're so reactionary. We're both out of it. Fifty years ago; either of us could have been a real prophet, for the price of a hall and cleaning the rotten eggs off our clothes. Now we're too timid for any use. But this is a digression."

"Distinctly. Is there anything more about Ferguson?"

"I should say there was. About a year ago, he became engaged. She's a very nice girl, and I am sure you never heard of her. The engagement

wasn't to be announced until just before the marriage, for family reasons of some sort—cockering the older generation somehow. I've forgotten; it's not important. But they would have been married by now, if Ferguson hadn't stepped out."

"You seem to have been very intimate with Ferguson."

"He talked to me once—just once. The girl was a distant connection of my own. I think that was why. Now I've got some more things to tell you. I've let you interrupt a good lot, and if you're through, I'd like to start in on the next lap. It isn't easy for me to tell this thing in bits. It's an effort."

Havelock the Dane set down his second emptied glass and drew a long breath. He proceeded, with quickened pace.

III

"He didn't see the girl very often. She lives at some little distance. He was busy,—you know how he worked,—and she was chained at home, more or less. Occasionally he slipped away for a week-end, to see her. One time—the last time, about two months ago—he managed to get in a whole week. It was as near happiness as

Ferguson ever got, I imagine; for they were able to fix a date. Good heaven, how he loved that girl! Just before he went, he told me of the engagement. I barely knew her, but, as I said, she's some sort of kin. Then, after he came back, he sent for me to come and see him. I didn't like his cheek, but I went as though I had been a laboratory boy. I'm not like you. Ferguson always did get me. He wanted the greatest good of the greatest number. Nothing petty about him. He was a big man.

"I went, as I say. And Ferguson told me, the very first thing, that the engagement was off. He began by cocking his hair a good deal. But he almost lost control of himself. He didn't cock it long: he ruffled it instead, with his hands. I thought he was in a queer state, for he seemed to want to give me, with his beautiful scientific precision—as if he'd been preparing a slide—the details of a country walk he and she had taken the day before he left. It began with grade-crossings, and I simply couldn't imagine what he was getting at. It wasn't his business to fight grade-crossings—though they might be a very pretty symbol for the kind of thing he was fighting, tooth and nail, all the time. I couldn't seem to see it, at first; but finally it came out. There was a grade-crossing, with a 'Look out for the Engine' sign, and there was a tow-headed

infant in rags. They had noticed the infant before. It had bandy legs and granulated eyelids, and seemed to be dumb. It had started them off on eugenics. She was very keen on the subject; Ferguson, being a big scientist, had some reserves. It was a real argument.

"Then everything happened at once. Tow-head with the sore eyes rocked onto the track simultaneously with the whistle. They were about fifty yards off. Ferguson sprinted back down the hill, the girl screaming pointlessly meanwhile. There was just time—you'll have to take my word for this; Ferguson explained it all to me in the most meticulous detail, but I can't repeat that masterpiece of exposition—for Ferguson to decide. To decide again, you understand, precisely as he had decided on the *Argentina*. Rotten luck, wasn't it? He could just have flung tow-head out of the way by getting under the engine himself. He grabbed for tow-head, but he didn't roll onto the track. So tow-head was killed. If he had got there ten seconds earlier, he could have done the trick. He was ten seconds too late to save both Ferguson and tow-head. So—once more—he saved Ferguson. Do you get the situation?"

"I should say I did!" shouted Chantry. "Twice in a man's life—good Lord! I hope you walked out of his house at that point."

"I didn't. I was very much interested. And by the way, Chantry, if Ferguson had given his life for tow-head, you would have been the first man to write a pleasant little article for some damned highbrow review, to prove that it was utterly wrong that Ferguson should have exchanged his life for that of a little Polish defective. I can even see you talking about the greatest good of the greatest number. You would have loved the paradox of it; the mistaken martyr, self-preservation the greatest altruism, and all the rest of it. But because Ferguson did exactly what you would have said in your article that he ought to have done, you are in a state of virtuous chill."

"I should have written no such article. I don't see how you can be so flippant."

"Flippant—I? Have I the figure of a flippant man? Can't you see—honestly, now, can't you see?—that it was a hideous misfortune for that situation to come to Ferguson twice? Can't you see that it was about as hard luck as a man ever had? Look at it just once from his point of view."

"I can't," said Chantry frankly. "I can understand a man's being a coward, saving his own skin because he wants to. But to save his own skin on principle—humph! Talk of

paradoxes: there's one for you. There's not a principle on earth that tells you to save your own life at some one's else expense. If he thought it was principle, he was the bigger defective of the two. Of course it would have been a pity; of course we should all have regretted it; but there's not a human being in this town, high or low, who wouldn't have applauded, with whatever regret—who wouldn't have said he did the only thing a self-respecting man could do. Of course it's a shame; but that is the only way the race has ever got on: by the strong, because they were strong, going under for the weak, because they were weak. Otherwise we'd all be living, to this day, in hell."

"I know; I know." Havelock's voice was touched with emotion. "That's the convention—invented by individualists, for individualists. All sorts of people would see it that way, still. But you've got more sense than most; and I will make you at least see the other point of view. Suppose Ferguson to have been a good Catholic—or a soldier in the ranks. If his confessor or his commanding officer had told him to save his own skin, you'd consider Ferguson justified; you might even consider the priest or the officer justified. The one thing you can't stand is the man's giving himself those orders. But let's not

argue over it now—let's go back to the story. I'll make you 'get' Ferguson, anyhow—even if I can't make him 'get' you.

"Well, here comes in the girl."

"And you said there was no girl in it!"

Chantry could not resist that. He believed that Havelock's assertion had been made only because he didn't want the girl in it—resented her being there.

"There isn't, as I see it," replied Havelock the Dane quietly. "From my point of view, the story is over. Ferguson's decision: that is the whole thing—made more interesting, more valuable, because the repetition of the thing proves beyond a doubt that he acted on principle, not on impulse. If he had flung himself into the life-boat because he was a coward, he would have been ashamed of it; and whatever he might have done afterwards, he would never have done that thing again. He would have been sensitive: not saving his own life would have turned into an obsession with him. But there is left, I admit, the murder. And murders always take the public. So I'll give you the murder—though it throws no light on Ferguson, who is the only thing in the whole accursed affair that really counts."

"The murder? I don't see—unless you mean the murdering of the tow-headed child."

"I mean the murder of Ferguson by the girl he loved."

"You said 'suicide' a little while ago," panted Chantry.

"Technically, yes. She was a hundred miles away when it happened. But she did it just the same. Oh, I suppose I've got to tell you, as Ferguson told me."

"Did he tell you he was going to kill himself?" Chantry's voice was sharp.

"He did not. Ferguson wasn't a fool. But it was plain as day to me after it happened, that he had done it himself."

"How—"

"I'm telling you this, am I not? Let me tell it, then. The thing happened in no time, of course. The girl got over screaming, and ran down to the track, frightened out of her wits. The train managed to stop, about twice its own length farther down, round a bend in the track, and the conductor and brakeman came running back. The mother came out of her hovel, carrying twins. The—the—thing was on the track, across the rails. It was a beastly mess, and Ferguson

got the girl away; set her down to cry in a pasture, and then went back and helped out, and gave his testimony, and left money, a lot of it, with the mother, and—all the rest. You can imagine it. No one there considered that Ferguson ought to have saved the child; no one but Ferguson dreamed that he could have. Indeed, an ordinary man, in Ferguson's place, wouldn't have supposed he could. It was only that brain, working like lightning, working as no plain man's could, that had made the calculation and *seen*. There were no preliminary seconds lost in surprise or shock, you see. Ferguson's mind hadn't been jarred from its pace for an instant. The thing had happened too quickly for any one—except Ferguson—to understand what was going on. Therefore he ought to have laid that super-normal brain under the wheels, of course!

"Ferguson was so sane, himself, that he couldn't understand, even after he had been engaged six months, our little everyday madnesses. It never occurred to him, when he got back to the girl and she began all sorts of hysterical questions, not to answer them straight. It was by way of describing the event simply, that he informed her that he would just have had time to pull the creature out, but not enough to pull himself back afterwards.

Ferguson was used to calculating things in millionths of an inch; she wasn't. I dare say the single second that had given Ferguson time to turn round in his mind, she conceived of as a minute, at least. It would have taken her a week to turn round in her own mind, no doubt—a month, a year, perhaps. How do I know? But she got the essential fact: that Ferguson had made a choice. Then she rounded on him. It would have killed her to lose him, but she would rather have lost him than to see him standing before her, etc., etc. Ferguson quoted a lot of her talk straight to me, and I can remember it; but you needn't ask me to soil my mouth with it. 'And half an hour before, she had been saying with a good deal of heat that that little runt ought never to have been born, and that if we had decent laws it never would have been allowed to live." Ferguson said that to me, with a kind of bewilderment. You see, he had made the mistake of taking that little fool seriously. Well, he loved her. You can't go below that: that's rock-bottom. Ferguson couldn't dig any deeper down for his way out. There *was* no deeper down.

"Apparently Ferguson still thought he could argue it out with her. She so believed in eugenics, you see—a very radical, compared with Ferguson. It was she who had had no doubt

about tow-head. And the love-part of it seemed to him fixed: it didn't occur to him that that was debatable. So he stuck to something that could be discussed. Then—and this was his moment of exceeding folly—he caught at the old episode of the *Argentina*. *That* had nothing to do with her present state of shock. She had seen tow-head; but she hadn't seen the sprinkled Mediterranean. And she had accepted that. At least, she had spoken of his survival as though it had been one of the few times when God had done precisely the right thing. So he took that to explain with. The fool! The reasonable fool!

"Then—oh, then she went wild. (Yet she must have known there were a thousand chances on the *Argentina* for him to throw his life away, and precious few to save it.) She backed up against a tree and stretched her arms out like this"—Havelock made a clumsy stage-gesture of aversion from Chantry, the villain. "And for an instant he thought she was afraid of a Jersey cow that had come up to take part in the discussion. So he threw a twig at its nose."

IV

Chantry's wonder grew, swelled, and burst.

"Do you mean to say that that safety-deposit vault of a Ferguson told you all this?"

"As I am telling it to you. Only much more detail, of course—and much, much faster. It wasn't like a story at all: it was like—like a hemorrhage. I didn't interrupt him as you've been interrupting me. Well, the upshot of it was that she spurned him quite in the grand manner. She found the opposites of all the nice things she had been saying for six months, and said them. And Ferguson—your cocky Ferguson—stood and listened, until she had talked herself out, and then went away. He never saw her again; and when he sent for me, he had made up his mind that she never intended to take any of it back. So he stepped out, I tell you."

"As hard hit as that," Chantry mused.

"Just as hard hit as that. Ferguson had had no previous affairs; she was very literally the one woman; and he managed, at forty, to combine the illusions of the boy of twenty and the man of sixty."

"But if he thought he was so precious to the

world, wasn't it more than ever his duty to preserve his existence? He could see other people die in his place, but he couldn't see himself bucking up against a broken heart. Isn't that what the strong man does? Lives out his life when he doesn't at all like the look of it? Say what you like, he was a coward, Havelock—at the last, anyhow."

"I won't ask for your opinion just yet, thank you. Perhaps if Ferguson had been sure he would ever do good work again, he wouldn't have taken himself off. That might have held him. He might have stuck by on the chance. But I doubt it. Don't you see? He loved the girl too much."

"Thought he couldn't live without her," snorted Chantry.

"Oh, no—not that. But if she was right, he was the meanest skunk alive. He owed the world at least two deaths, so to speak. The only approach you can make to dying twice is to die in your prime, of your own volition." Havelock spoke very slowly. "At least, that's the way I've worked it out. He didn't say so. He was careful as a cat."

"You think"—Chantry leaned forward, very eager at last—"that he decided she was right? That I'm right—that we're all of us right?"

Havelock the Dane bowed his head in his huge hands. "No. If you ask me, I think he kept his own opinion untarnished to the end. When I told him I thought he was right, he just nodded, as if one took that for granted. But it didn't matter to him. I am pretty sure that he cared only what *she* thought."

"If he didn't agree with her? And if she had treated him like a criminal? He must have despised her, in that case."

"He never said one word of her—bar quoting some of *her* words—that wasn't utterly gentle. You could see that he loved her with his whole soul. And—it's my belief—he gave her the benefit of the doubt. In killing himself, he acted on the hypothesis that she had been right. It was the one thing he could do for her."

"But if no one except you thinks it was suicide—and you can't prove it—"

"Oh, he had to take that chance—the chance of her never knowing—or else create a scandal. And that would have been very hard on her and on his family. But there were straws she could easily clutch at—as I have clutched at them. The perfect order in which everything happened to be left—even the last notes he had made. His laboratory was a scientist's paradise, they tell me. And the will, made after she threw him

over, leaving everything to her. Not a letter unanswered, all little bills paid, and little debts liquidated. He came as near suggesting it as he could, in decency. But I dare say she will never guess it."

"Then what did it profit him?"

"It didn't profit him, in your sense. He took a very long chance on her guessing. That wasn't what concerned him."

"I hope she will never guess, anyhow. It would ruin her life, to no good end."

"Oh, no." Havelock was firm. "I doubt if she would take it that way. If she grasped it at all, she'd believe he thought her right. And if he thought her right, of course he wouldn't want to live, would he? She would never think he killed himself simply for love of her."

"Why not?"

"Well, she wouldn't? She wouldn't be able to conceive of Ferguson's killing himself merely for that—with *his* notions about survival."

"As he did."

"As he did—and didn't."

"Ah, she'd scarcely refine on it as you are

doing, Havelock. You're amazing."

"Well, he certainly never expected her to know that he did it himself. If he had been the sort of weakling that dies because he can't have a particular woman, he'd have been also the sort of weakling that leaves a letter explaining."

"What then did he die for? You'll have to explain to me. Not because he couldn't have her; not because he felt guilty. Why, then? You haven't left him a motive."

"Oh, haven't I? The most beautiful motive in the whole world, my dear fellow. A motive that puts all your little simple motives in the shade."

"Well, what?"

"Don't you see? Why, I told you. He simply assumed, for all practical purposes, that she had been right. He gave himself the fate he knew she considered him to deserve. He preferred—loving her as he did—to do what she would have had him do. He knew she was wrong; but he knew also that she was made that way, that she would never be right. And he took her for what she was, and loved her as she was. His love—don't you see?—was too big. He couldn't revolt from her: she had the whole of him—except, perhaps, his excellent judgment. He couldn't drag about a life which she felt that way

about. He destroyed it, as he would have destroyed anything she found loathsome. He was merely justifying himself to his love. He couldn't hope she would know. Nor, I believe, could he have lied to her. That is, he couldn't have admitted in words that she was right, when he felt her so absolutely wrong; but he could make that magnificent silent act of faith."

Chantry still held out. "I don't believe he did it. I hold with the coroner."

"I don't. He came as near telling me as he could without making me an accessory before the fact. There were none of the loose ends that the most orderly man would leave if he died suddenly. Take my word for it, old man."

A long look passed between them. Each seemed to be trying to find out with his eyes something that words had not helped him to.

Finally Chantry protested once more. "But Ferguson couldn't love like that."

Havelock the Dane laid one hand on the arm of Chantry's chair and spoke sternly. "He not only could, but did. And there I am a better authority than you. Think what you please, but I will not have that fact challenged. Perhaps you could count up on your fingers the women who are loved like that; but, anyhow, she was. My

second cousin once removed, damn her!" He ended with a vicious twang.

"And now"—Havelock rose—"I'd like your opinion."

"About what?"

"Well, can't you see the beautiful sanity of Ferguson?"

"No, I can't," snapped Chantry. "I think he was wrong, both in the beginning and in the end. But I will admit he was not a coward. I respect him, but I do not think, at any point, he was right—except perhaps in 'doing' the coroner."

"That settles it, then," said Havelock. And he started towards the door.

"Settles what, in heaven's name?"

"What I came to have settled. I shan't tell her. If I could have got one other decent citizen—and I confess you were my only chance—to agree with me that Ferguson was right,—right about his fellow passengers on the *Argentina*, right about tow-head on the track,—I'd have gone to her, I think. I'd rather like to ruin her life, if I could."

A great conviction approached Chantry just then. He felt the rush of it through his brain.

"No," he cried. "Ferguson loved her too much. He wouldn't like that—not as you'd put it to her."

Havelock thought a moment. "No," he said in turn; but his "no" was very humble. "He wouldn't. I shall never do it. But, my God, how I wanted to!"

"And I'll tell you another thing, too." Chantry's tone was curious. "You may agree with Ferguson all you like; you may admire him as much as you say; but you, Havelock, would never have done what he did. Not even"—he lifted a hand against interruption—"if you knew you had the brain you think Ferguson had. You'd have been at the bottom of the sea, or under the engine wheels, and you know it."

He folded his arms with a hint of truculence.

But Havelock the Dane, to Chantry's surprise, was meek. "Yes," he said, "I know it. Now let me out of here."

"Well, then,"—Chantry's voice rang out triumphant,—"what does that prove?"

"Prove?" Havelock's great fist crashed down on the table. "It proves that Ferguson's a better man than either of us. I can think straight, but he had the sand to act straight. You haven't even the

sand to think straight. You and your reactionary rot! The world's moving, Chantry. Ferguson was ahead of it, beckoning. You're an ant that got caught in the machinery, I shouldn't wonder."

"Oh, stow the rhetoric! We simply don't agree. It's happened before." Chantry laughed scornfully. "I tell you I respect him; but God Almighty wouldn't make me agree with him."

"You're too mediæval by half," Havelock mused. "Now, Ferguson was a knight of the future—a knight of Humanity."

"Don't!" shouted Chantry. His nerves were beginning to feel the strain. "Leave chivalry out of it. The *Argentina* business may or may not have been wisdom, but it certainly wasn't cricket."

"No," said Havelock. "Chess, rather. The game where chance hasn't a show—the game of the intelligent future. That very irregular and disconcerting move of his.... And he got taken, you might say. She's an irresponsible beast, your queen."

"Drop it, will you!" Then Chantry pulled himself together, a little ashamed. "It's fearfully late. Better stop and dine."

"No, thanks." The big man opened the door of

the room and rested a foot on the threshold. "I feel like dining with some one who appreciates Ferguson."

"I don't know where you'll find him." Chantry smiled and shook hands.

"Oh, I carry him about with me. Good-night," said Havelock the Dane.

A JURY OF HER PEERS[11]

By SUSAN GLASPELL

From *Every Week*

When Martha Hale opened the storm-door and got a cut of the north wind, she ran back for her big woolen scarf. As she hurriedly wound that round her head her eye made a scandalized sweep of her kitchen. It was no ordinary thing that called her away—it was probably farther from ordinary than anything that had ever happened in Dickson County. But what her eye took in was that her kitchen was in no shape for leaving: her bread all ready for mixing, half the flour sifted and half unsifted.

She hated to see things half done; but she had been at that when the team from town stopped to get Mr. Hale, and then the sheriff came running in to say his wife wished Mrs. Hale would come too—adding, with a grin, that he guessed she was getting scarey and wanted another woman along. So she had dropped everything right where it was.

"Martha!" now came her husband's impatient voice. "Don't keep folks waiting out here in the cold."

She again opened the storm-door, and this time joined the three men and the one woman waiting for her in the big two-seated buggy.

After she had the robes tucked around her she took another look at the woman who sat beside her on the back seat. She had met Mrs. Peters the year before at the county fair, and the thing she remembered about her was that she didn't seem like a sheriff's wife. She was small and thin and didn't have a strong voice. Mrs. Gorman, sheriff's wife before Gorman went out and Peters came in, had a voice that somehow seemed to be backing up the law with every word. But if Mrs. Peters didn't look like a sheriff's wife, Peters made it up in looking like a sheriff. He was to a dot the kind of man who could get himself elected sheriff—a heavy man

with a big voice, who was particularly genial with the law-abiding, as if to make it plain that he knew the difference between criminals and non-criminals. And right there it came into Mrs. Hale's mind, with a stab, that this man who was so pleasant and lively with all of them was going to the Wrights' now as a sheriff.

"The country's not very pleasant this time of year," Mrs. Peters at last ventured, as if she felt they ought to be talking as well as the men.

Mrs. Hale scarcely finished her reply, for they had gone up a little hill and could see the Wright place now, and seeing it did not make her feel like talking. It looked very lonesome this cold March morning. It had always been a lonesome-looking place. It was down in a hollow, and the poplar trees around it were lonesome-looking trees. The men were looking at it and talking about what had happened. The county attorney was bending to one side of the buggy, and kept looking steadily at the place as they drew up to it.

"I'm glad you came with me," Mrs. Peters said nervously, as the two women were about to follow the men in through the kitchen door.

Even after she had her foot on the door-step, her hand on the knob, Martha Hale had a moment of feeling she could not cross that

threshold. And the reason it seemed she couldn't cross it now was simply because she hadn't crossed it before. Time and time again it had been in her mind, "I ought to go over and see Minnie Foster"—she still thought of her as Minnie Foster, though for twenty years she had been Mrs. Wright. And then there was always something to do and Minnie Foster would go from her mind. But *now* she could come.

The men went over to the stove. The women stood close together by the door. Young Henderson, the county attorney, turned around and said, "Come up to the fire, ladies."

Mrs. Peters took a step forward, then stopped. "I'm not—cold," she said.

And so the two women stood by the door, at first not even so much as looking around the kitchen.

The men talked for a minute about what a good thing it was the sheriff had sent his deputy out that morning to make a fire for them, and then Sheriff Peters stepped back from the stove, unbuttoned his outer coat, and leaned his hands on the kitchen table in a way that seemed to mark the beginning of official business. "Now, Mr. Hale," he said in a sort of semi-official

voice, "before we move things about, you tell Mr. Henderson just what it was you saw when you came here yesterday morning."

The county attorney was looking around the kitchen.

"By the way," he said, "has anything been moved?" He turned to the sheriff. "Are things just as you left them yesterday?"

Peters looked from cupboard to sink; from that to a small worn rocker a little to one side of the kitchen table.

"It's just the same."

"Somebody should have been left here yesterday," said the county attorney.

"Oh—yesterday," returned the sheriff, with a little gesture as of yesterday having been more than he could bear to think of. "When I had to send Frank to Morris Center for that man who went crazy—let me tell you, I had my hands full *yesterday*. I knew you could get back from Omaha by to-day, George, and as long as I went over everything here myself—"

"Well, Mr. Hale," said the county attorney, in a way of letting what was past and gone go, "tell just what happened when you came here yesterday morning."

Mrs. Hale, still leaning against the door, had that sinking feeling of the mother whose child is about to speak a piece. Lewis often wandered along and got things mixed up in a story. She hoped he would tell this straight and plain, and not say unnecessary things that would just make things harder for Minnie Foster. He didn't begin at once, and she noticed that he looked queer—as if standing in that kitchen and having to tell what he had seen there yesterday morning made him almost sick.

"Yes, Mr. Hale?" the county attorney reminded.

"Harry and I had started to town with a load of potatoes," Mrs. Hale's husband began.

Harry was Mrs. Hale's oldest boy. He wasn't with them now, for the very good reason that those potatoes never got to town yesterday and he was taking them this morning, so he hadn't been home when the sheriff stopped to say he wanted Mr. Hale to come over to the Wright place and tell the county attorney his story there, where he could point it all out. With all Mrs. Hale's other emotions came the fear now that maybe Harry wasn't dressed warm enough—they hadn't any of them realized how that north wind did bite.

"We come along this road," Hale was going on,

with a motion of his hand to the road over which they had just come, "and as we got in sight of the house I says to Harry, 'I'm goin' to see if I can't get John Wright to take a telephone.' You see," he explained to Henderson, "unless I can get somebody to go in with me they won't come out this branch road except for a price *I* can't pay. I'd spoke to Wright about it once before; but he put me off, saying folks talked too much anyway, and all he asked was peace and quiet—guess you know about how much he talked himself. But I thought maybe if I went to the house and talked about it before his wife, and said all the women-folks liked the telephones, and that in this lonesome stretch of road it would be a good thing—well, I said to Harry that that was what I was going to say—though I said at the same time that I didn't know as what his wife wanted made much difference to John—"

Now, there he was!—saying things he didn't need to say. Mrs. Hale tried to catch her husband's eye, but fortunately the county attorney interrupted with:

"Let's talk about that a little later, Mr. Hale. I do want to talk about that, but I'm anxious now to get along to just what happened when you got here."

When he began this time, it was very deliberately and carefully:

"I didn't see or hear anything. I knocked at the door. And still it was all quiet inside. I knew they must be up—it was past eight o'clock. So I knocked again, louder, and I thought I heard somebody say, 'Come in.' I wasn't sure—I'm not sure yet. But I opened the door—this door," jerking a hand toward the door by which the two women stood, "and there, in that rocker"—pointing to it—"sat Mrs. Wright."

Every one in the kitchen looked at the rocker. It came into Mrs. Hale's mind that that rocker didn't look in the least like Minnie Foster—the Minnie Foster of twenty years before. It was a dingy red, with wooden rungs up the back, and the middle rung was gone, and the chair sagged to one side.

"How did she—look?" the county attorney was inquiring.

"Well," said Hale, "she looked—queer."

"How do you mean—queer?"

As he asked it he took out a note-book and pencil. Mrs. Hale did not like the sight of that pencil. She kept her eye fixed on her husband, as if to keep him from saying unnecessary

things that would go into that note-book and make trouble.

Hale did speak guardedly, as if the pencil had affected him too.

"Well, as if she didn't know what she was going to do next. And kind of—done up."

"How did she seem to feel about your coming?"

"Why, I don't think she minded—one way or other. She didn't pay much attention. I said, 'Ho' do, Mrs. Wright? It's cold, ain't it?' And she said, 'Is it?'—and went on pleatin' at her apron.

"Well, I was surprised. She didn't ask me to come up to the stove, or to sit down, but just set there, not even lookin' at me. And so I said: 'I want to see John.'

"And then she—laughed. I guess you would call it a laugh.

"I thought of Harry and the team outside, so I said, a little sharp, 'Can I see John?' 'No,' says she—kind of dull like. 'Ain't he home?' says I. Then she looked at me. 'Yes,' says she, 'he's home.' 'Then why can't I see him?' I asked her, out of patience with her now. "Cause he's dead,' says she, just as quiet and dull—and fell to pleatin' her apron. 'Dead?' says I, like you do

when you can't take in what you've heard.

"She just nodded her head, not getting a bit excited, but rockin' back and forth.

"'Why—where is he?' says I, not knowing *what* to say.

"She just pointed upstairs—like this"—pointing to the room above.

"I got up, with the idea of going up there myself. By this time I—didn't know what to do. I walked from there to here; then I says: 'Why, what did he die of?'

"'He died of a rope round his neck,' says she; and just went on pleatin' at her apron."

Hale stopped speaking, and stood staring at the rocker, as if he were still seeing the woman who had sat there the morning before. Nobody spoke; it was as if every one were seeing the woman who had sat there the morning before.

"And what did you do then?" the county attorney at last broke the silence.

"I went out and called Harry. I thought I might —need help. I got Harry in, and we went upstairs." His voice fell almost to a whisper.

"There he was—lying over the—"

"I think I'd rather have you go into that upstairs," the county attorney interrupted, "where you can point it all out. Just go on now with the rest of the story."

"Well, my first thought was to get that rope off. It looked—"

He stopped, his face twitching.

"But Harry, he went up to him, and he said, 'No, he's dead all right, and we'd better not touch anything.' So we went downstairs.

"She was still sitting that same way. 'Has anybody been notified?' I asked. 'No,' says she, unconcerned.

"'Who did this, Mrs. Wright?' said Harry. He said it businesslike, and she stopped pleatin' at her apron. 'I don't know,' she says. 'You don't *know*?' says Harry. 'Weren't you sleepin' in the bed with him?' 'Yes,' says she, 'but I was on the inside.' 'Somebody slipped a rope round his neck and strangled him, and you didn't wake up?' says Harry. 'I didn't wake up,' she said after him.

"We may have looked as if we didn't see how that could be, for after a minute she said, 'I sleep sound.'

"Harry was going to ask her more questions, but I said maybe that weren't our business; maybe we ought to let her tell her story first to the coroner or the sheriff. So Harry went fast as he could over to High Road—the Rivers' place, where there's a telephone."

"And what did she do when she knew you had gone for the coroner?" The attorney got his pencil in his hand all ready for writing.

"She moved from that chair to this one over here"—Hale pointed to a small chair in the corner—"and just sat there with her hands held together and looking down. I got a feeling that I ought to make some conversation, so I said I had come in to see if John wanted to put in a telephone; and at that she started to laugh, and then she stopped and looked at me—scared."

At sound of a moving pencil the man who was telling the story looked up.

"I dunno—maybe it wasn't scared," he hastened; "I wouldn't like to say it was. Soon Harry got back, and then Dr. Lloyd came, and you, Mr. Peters, and so I guess that's all I know that you don't."

He said that last with relief, and moved a little,

as if relaxing. Every one moved a little. The county attorney walked toward the stair door.

"I guess we'll go upstairs first—then out to the barn and around there."

He paused and looked around the kitchen.

"You're convinced there was nothing important here?" he asked the sheriff. "Nothing that would —point to any motive?"

The sheriff too looked all around, as if to re-convince himself.

"Nothing here but kitchen things," he said, with a little laugh for the insignificance of kitchen things.

The county attorney was looking at the cupboard—a peculiar, ungainly structure, half closet and half cupboard, the upper part of it being built in the wall, and the lower part just the old-fashioned kitchen cupboard. As if its queerness attracted him, he got a chair and opened the upper part and looked in. After a moment he drew his hand away sticky.

"Here's a nice mess," he said resentfully.

The two women had drawn nearer, and now the sheriff's wife spoke.

"Oh—her fruit," she said, looking to Mrs. Hale for sympathetic understanding. She turned back to the county attorney and explained: "She worried about that when it turned so cold last night. She said the fire would go out and her jars might burst."

Mrs. Peters' husband broke into a laugh.

"Well, can you beat the women! Held for murder and worrying about her preserves!"

The young attorney set his lips.

"I guess before we're through with her she may have something more serious than preserves to worry about."

"Oh, well," said Mrs. Hale's husband, with good-natured superiority, "women are used to worrying over trifles."

The two women moved a little closer together. Neither of them spoke. The county attorney seemed suddenly to remember his manners—and think of his future.

"And yet," said he, with the gallantry of a young politician, "for all their worries, what would we do without the ladies?"

The women did not speak, did not unbend. He went to the sink and began washing his hands.

He turned to wipe them on the roller towel—whirled it for a cleaner place.

"Dirty towels! Not much of a housekeeper, would you say, ladies?"

He kicked his foot against some dirty pans under the sink.

"There's a great deal of work to be done on a farm," said Mrs. Hale stiffly.

"To be sure. And yet"—with a little bow to her—"I know there are some Dickson County farm-houses that do not have such roller towels." He gave it a pull to expose its full length again.

"Those towels get dirty awful quick. Men's hands aren't always as clean as they might be."

"Ah, loyal to your sex, I see," he laughed. He stopped and gave her a keen look. "But you and Mrs. Wright were neighbors. I suppose you were friends, too."

Martha Hale shook her head.

"I've seen little enough of her of late years. I've not been in this house—it's more than a year."

"And why was that? You didn't like her?"

"I liked her well enough," she replied with

spirit. "Farmers' wives have their hands full, Mr. Henderson. And then—" She looked around the kitchen.

"Yes?" he encouraged.

"It never seemed a very cheerful place," said she, more to herself than to him.

"No," he agreed; "I don't think any one would call it cheerful. I shouldn't say she had the home-making instinct."

"Well, I don't know as Wright had, either," she muttered.

"You mean they didn't get on very well?" he was quick to ask.

"No; I don't mean anything," she answered, with decision. As she turned a little away from him, she added: "But I don't think a place would be any the cheerfuler for John Wright's bein' in it."

"I'd like to talk to you about that a little later, Mrs. Hale," he said. "I'm anxious to get the lay of things upstairs now."

He moved toward the stair door, followed by the two men.

"I suppose anything Mrs. Peters does'll be all

right?" the sheriff inquired. "She was to take in some clothes for her, you know—and a few little things. We left in such a hurry yesterday."

The county attorney looked at the two women whom they were leaving alone there among the kitchen things.

"Yes—Mrs. Peters," he said, his glance resting on the woman who was not Mrs. Peters, the big farmer woman who stood behind the sheriff's wife. "Of course Mrs. Peters is one of us," he said, in a manner of entrusting responsibility. "And keep your eye out Mrs. Peters, for anything that might be of use. No telling; you women might come upon a clue to the motive—and that's the thing we need."

Mr. Hale rubbed his face after the fashion of a show man getting ready for a pleasantry.

"But would the women know a clue if they did come upon it?" he said; and, having delivered himself of this, he followed the others through the stair door.

The women stood motionless and silent, listening to the footsteps, first upon the stairs, then in the room above them.

Then, as if releasing herself from something

strange, Mrs. Hale began to arrange the dirty pans under the sink, which the county attorney's disdainful push of the foot had deranged.

"I'd hate to have men comin' into my kitchen," she said testily—"snoopin' round and criticizin'."

"Of course it's no more than their duty," said the sheriff's wife, in her manner of timid acquiescence.

"Duty's all right," replied Mrs. Hale bluffly; "but I guess that deputy sheriff that come out to make the fire might have got a little of this on." She gave the roller towel a pull. "Wish I'd thought of that sooner! Seems mean to talk about her for not having things slicked up, when she had to come away in such a hurry."

She looked around the kitchen. Certainly it was not "slicked up." Her eye was held by a bucket of sugar on a low shelf. The cover was off the wooden bucket, and beside it was a paper bag—half full.

Mrs. Hale moved toward it.

"She was putting this in there," she said to herself—slowly.

She thought of the flour in her kitchen at home—half sifted, half not sifted. She had been

interrupted, and had left things half done. What had interrupted Minnie Foster? Why had that work been left half done? She made a move as if to finish it,—unfinished things always bothered her,—and then she glanced around and saw that Mrs. Peters was watching her—and she didn't want Mrs. Peters to get that feeling she had got of work begun and then—for some reason—not finished.

"It's a shame about her fruit," she said, and walked toward the cupboard that the county attorney had opened, and got on the chair, murmuring: "I wonder if it's all gone."

It was a sorry enough looking sight, but "Here's one that's all right," she said at last. She held it toward the light. "This is cherries, too." She looked again. "I declare I believe that's the only one."

With a sigh, she got down from the chair, went to the sink, and wiped off the bottle.

"She'll feel awful bad, after all her hard work in the hot weather. I remember the afternoon I put up my cherries last summer."

She set the bottle on the table, and, with another sigh, started to sit down in the rocker. But she did not sit down. Something kept her from sitting down in that chair. She straightened

—stepped back, and, half turned away, stood looking at it, seeing the woman who had sat there "pleatin' at her apron."

The thin voice of the sheriff's wife broke in upon her: "I must be getting those things from the front room closet." She opened the door into the other room, started in, stepped back. "You coming with me, Mrs. Hale?" she asked nervously. "You—you could help me get them."

They were soon back—the stark coldness of that shut-up room was not a thing to linger in.

"My!" said Mrs. Peters, dropping the things on the table and hurrying to the stove.

Mrs. Hale stood examining the clothes the woman who was being detained in town had said she wanted.

"Wright was close!" she exclaimed, holding up a shabby black skirt that bore the marks of much making over. "I think maybe that's why she kept so much to herself. I s'pose she felt she couldn't do her part; and then, you don't enjoy things when you feel shabby. She used to wear pretty clothes and be lively—when she was Minnie Foster, one of the town girls, singing in the choir. But that—oh, that was twenty years ago."

With a carefulness in which there was

something tender, she folded the shabby clothes and piled them at one corner of the table. She looked up at Mrs. Peters and there was something in the other woman's look that irritated her.

"She don't care," she said to herself. "Much difference it makes to her whether Minnie Foster had pretty clothes when she was a girl."

Then she looked again, and she wasn't so sure; in fact, she hadn't at any time been perfectly sure about Mrs. Peters. She had that shrinking manner, and yet her eyes looked as if they could see a long way into things.

"This all you was to take in?" asked Mrs. Hale.

"No," said the sheriff's wife; "she said she wanted an apron. Funny thing to want," she ventured in her nervous little way, "for there's not much to get you dirty in jail, goodness knows. But I suppose just to make her feel more natural. If you're used to wearing an apron—. She said they were in the bottom drawer of this cupboard. Yes—here they are. And then her little shawl that always hung on the stair door."

She took the small gray shawl from behind the door leading upstairs, and stood a minute looking at it.

Suddenly Mrs. Hale took a quick step toward the other woman.

"Mrs. Peters!"

"Yes, Mrs. Hale?"

"Do you think she—did it?"

A frightened look blurred the other thing in Mrs. Peters' eyes.

"Oh, I don't know," she said, in a voice that seemed to shrink away from the subject.

"Well, I don't think she did," affirmed Mrs. Hale stoutly. "Asking for an apron, and her little shawl. Worryin' about her fruit."

"Mr. Peters says—." Footsteps were heard in the room above; she stopped, looked up, then went on in a lowered voice: "Mr. Peters says—it looks bad for her. Mr. Henderson is awful sarcastic in a speech, and he's going to make fun of her saying she didn't—wake up."

For a moment Mrs. Hale had no answer. Then, "Well, I guess John Wright didn't wake up—when they was slippin' that rope under his neck," she muttered.

"No, it's *strange*," breathed Mrs. Peters. "They think it was such a—funny way to kill a man."

She began to laugh; at sound of the laugh, abruptly stopped.

"That's just what Mr. Hale said," said Mrs. Hale, in a resolutely natural voice. "There was a gun in the house. He says that's what he can't understand."

"Mr. Henderson said, coming out, that what was needed for the case was a motive. Something to show anger—or sudden feeling."

"Well, I don't see any signs of anger around here," said Mrs. Hale. "I don't—"

She stopped. It was as if her mind tripped on something. Her eye was caught by a dish-towel in the middle of the kitchen table. Slowly she moved toward the table. One half of it was wiped clean, the other half messy. Her eyes made a slow, almost unwilling turn to the bucket of sugar and the half empty bag beside it. Things begun—and not finished.

After a moment she stepped back, and said, in that manner of releasing herself:

"Wonder how they're finding things upstairs? I hope she had it a little more red up up there. You know,"—she paused, and feeling gathered, —"it seems kind of *sneaking*: locking her up in town and coming out here to get her own house

to turn against her!"

"But, Mrs. Hale," said the sheriff's wife, "the law is the law."

"I s'pose 'tis," answered Mrs. Hale shortly.

She turned to the stove, saying something about that fire not being much to brag of. She worked with it a minute, and when she straightened up she said aggressively:

"The law is the law—and a bad stove is a bad stove. How'd you like to cook on this?"—pointing with the poker to the broken lining. She opened the oven door and started to express her opinion of the oven; but she was swept into her own thoughts, thinking of what it would mean, year after year, to have that stove to wrestle with. The thought of Minnie Foster trying to bake in that oven—and the thought of her never going over to see Minnie Foster—.

She was startled by hearing Mrs. Peters say: "A person gets discouraged—and loses heart."

The sheriff's wife had looked from the stove to the sink—to the pail of water which had been carried in from outside. The two women stood there silent, above them the footsteps of the men who were looking for evidence against the woman who had worked in that kitchen. That

look of seeing into things, of seeing through a thing to something else, was in the eyes of the sheriff's wife now. When Mrs. Hale next spoke to her, it was gently:

"Better loosen up your things, Mrs. Peters. We'll not feel them when we go out."

Mrs. Peters went to the back of the room to hang up the fur tippet she was wearing. A moment later she exclaimed, "Why, she was piecing a quilt," and held up a large sewing basket piled high with quilt pieces.

Mrs. Hale spread some of the blocks out on the table.

"It's log-cabin pattern," she said, putting several of them together. "Pretty, isn't it?"

They were so engaged with the quilt that they did not hear the footsteps on the stairs. Just as the stair door opened Mrs. Hale was saying:

"Do you suppose she was going to quilt it or just knot it?"

The sheriff threw up his hands.

"They wonder whether she was going to quilt it or just knot it!"

There was a laugh for the ways of women, a

warming of hands over the stove, and then the county attorney said briskly:

"Well, let's go right out to the barn and get that cleared up."

"I don't see as there's anything so strange," Mrs. Hale said resentfully, after the outside door had closed on the three men—"our taking up our time with little things while we're waiting for them to get the evidence. I don't see as it's anything to laugh about."

"Of course they've got awful important things on their minds," said the sheriff's wife apologetically.

They returned to an inspection of the block for the quilt. Mrs. Hale was looking at the fine, even sewing, and preoccupied with thoughts of the woman who had done that sewing, when she heard the sheriff's wife say, in a queer tone:

"Why, look at this one."

She turned to take the block held out to her.

"The sewing," said Mrs. Peters, in a troubled way. "All the rest of them have been so nice and even—but—this one. Why, it looks as if she didn't know what she was about!"

Their eyes met—something flashed to life,

passed between them; then, as if with an effort, they seemed to pull away from each other. A moment Mrs. Hale sat her hands folded over that sewing which was so unlike all the rest of the sewing. Then she had pulled a knot and drawn the threads.

"Oh, what are you doing, Mrs. Hale?" asked the sheriff's wife, startled.

"Just pulling out a stitch or two that's not sewed very good," said Mrs. Hale mildly.

"I don't think we ought to touch things," Mrs. Peters said, a little helplessly.

"I'll just finish up this end," answered Mrs. Hale, still in that mild, matter-of-fact fashion.

She threaded a needle and started to replace bad sewing with good. For a little while she sewed in silence. Then, in that thin, timid voice, she heard:

"Mrs. Hale!"

"Yes, Mrs. Peters?"

"What do you suppose she was so—nervous about?"

"Oh, *I* don't know," said Mrs. Hale, as if dismissing a thing not important enough to

spend much time on. "I don't know as she was—nervous. I sew awful queer sometimes when I'm just tired."

She cut a thread, and out of the corner of her eye looked up at Mrs. Peters. The small, lean face of the sheriff's wife seemed to have tightened up. Her eyes had that look of peering into something. But next moment she moved, and said in her thin, indecisive way:

"Well, I must get those clothes wrapped. They may be through sooner than we think. I wonder where I could find a piece of paper—and string."

"In that cupboard, maybe," suggested Mrs. Hale, after a glance around.

One piece of the crazy sewing remained unripped. Mrs. Peters' back turned, Martha Hale now scrutinized that piece, compared it with the dainty, accurate sewing of the other blocks. The difference was startling. Holding this block made her feel queer, as if the distracted thoughts of the woman who had perhaps turned to it to try and quiet herself were communicating themselves to her.

Mrs. Peters' voice roused her.

"Here's a bird-cage," she said. "Did she have a bird, Mrs. Hale?"

"Why, I don't know whether she did or not." She turned to look at the cage Mrs. Peter was holding up. "I've not been here in so long." She sighed. "There was a man round last year selling canaries cheap—but I don't know as she took one. Maybe she did. She used to sing real pretty herself."

Mrs. Peters looked around the kitchen.

"Seems kind of funny to think of a bird here." She half laughed—an attempt to put up a barrier. "But she must have had one—or why would she have a cage? I wonder what happened to it."

"I suppose maybe the cat got it," suggested Mrs. Hale, resuming her sewing.

"No; she didn't have a cat. She's got that feeling some people have about cats—being afraid of them. When they brought her to our house yesterday, my cat got in the room, and she was real upset and asked me to take it out."

"My sister Bessie was like that," laughed Mrs. Hale.

The sheriff's wife did not reply. The silence made Mrs. Hale turn round. Mrs. Peters was

examining the bird-cage.

"Look at this door," she said slowly. "It's broke. One hinge has been pulled apart."

Mrs. Hale came nearer.

"Looks as if some one must have been—rough with it."

Again their eyes met—startled, questioning, apprehensive. For a moment neither spoke nor stirred. Then Mrs. Hale, turning away, said brusquely:

"If they're going to find any evidence, I wish they'd be about it. I don't like this place."

"But I'm awful glad you came with me, Mrs. Hale," Mrs. Peters put the bird-cage on the table and sat down. "It would be lonesome for me—sitting here alone."

"Yes, it would, wouldn't it?" agreed Mrs. Hale, a certain determined naturalness in her voice. She had picked up the sewing, but now it dropped in her lap, and she murmured in a different voice: "But I tell you what I *do* wish, Mrs. Peters. I wish I had come over sometimes when she was here. I wish—I had."

"But of course you were awful busy, Mrs. Hale. Your house—and your children."

"I could've come," retorted Mrs. Hale shortly. "I stayed away because it weren't cheerful—and that's why I ought to have come. I"—she looked around—"I've never liked this place. Maybe because it's down in a hollow and you don't see the road. I don't know what it is, but it's a lonesome place, and always was. I wish I had come over to see Minnie Foster sometimes. I can see now—" She did not put it into words.

"Well, you mustn't reproach yourself," counseled Mrs. Peters. "Somehow, we just don't see how it is with other folks till—something comes up."

"Not having children makes less work," mused Mrs. Hale, after a silence, "but it makes a quiet house—and Wright out to work all day—and no company when he did come in. Did you know John Wright, Mrs. Peters?"

"Not to know him. I've seen him in town. They say he was a good man."

"Yes—good," conceded John Wright's neighbor grimly. "He didn't drink, and kept his word as well as most, I guess, and paid his debts. But he was a hard man, Mrs. Peters. Just to pass the time of day with him—." She stopped, shivered a little. "Like a raw wind that gets to the bone." Her eye fell upon the cage on the table before her, and she added, almost

bitterly: "I should think she would've wanted a bird!"

Suddenly she leaned forward, looking intently at the cage. "But what do you s'pose went wrong with it?"

"I don't know," returned Mrs. Peters; "unless it got sick and died."

But after she said it she reached over and swung the broken door. Both women watched it as if somehow held by it.

"You didn't know—her?" Mrs. Hale asked, a gentler note in her voice.

"Not till they brought her yesterday," said the sheriff's wife.

"She—come to think of it, she was kind of like a bird herself. Real sweet and pretty, but kind of timid and—fluttery. How—she—did—change."

That held her for a long time. Finally, as if struck with a happy thought and relieved to get back to every-day things, she exclaimed:

"Tell you what, Mrs. Peters, why don't you take the quilt in with you? It might take up her mind."

"Why, I think that's a real nice idea, Mrs.

Hale," agreed the sheriff's wife, as if she too were glad to come into the atmosphere of a simple kindness. "There couldn't possibly be any objection to that, could there? Now, just what will I take? I wonder if her patches are in here—and her things."

They turned to the sewing basket.

"Here's some red," said Mrs. Hale, bringing out a roll of cloth. Underneath that was a box. "Here, maybe her scissors are in here—and her things." She held it up. "What a pretty box! I'll warrant that was something she had a long time ago—when she was a girl."

She held it in her hand a moment; then, with a little sigh, opened it.

Instantly her hand went to her nose.

"Why—!"

Mrs. Peters drew nearer—then turned away.

"There's something wrapped up in this piece of silk," faltered Mrs. Hale.

"This isn't her scissors," said Mrs. Peters, in a shrinking voice.

Her hand not steady, Mrs. Hale raised the piece of silk. "Oh, Mrs. Peters!" she cried. "It's—"

Mrs. Peters bent closer.

"It's the bird," she whispered.

"But, Mrs. Peters!" cried Mrs. Hale. "*Look* at it! Its *neck*—look at its neck! It's all—other side *to*."

She held the box away from her.

The sheriff's wife again bent closer.

"Somebody wrung its neck," said she, in a voice that was slow and deep.

And then again the eyes of the two women met—this time clung together in a look of dawning comprehension, of growing horror. Mrs. Peters looked from the dead bird to the broken door of the cage. Again their eyes met. And just then there was a sound at the outside door.

Mrs. Hale slipped the box under the quilt pieces in the basket, and sank into the chair before it. Mrs. Peters stood holding to the table. The county attorney and the sheriff came in from outside.

"Well, ladies," said the county attorney, as one turning from serious things to little pleasantries, "have you decided whether she was going to quilt it or knot it?"

"We think," began the sheriff's wife in a flurried voice, "that she was going to—knot it."

He was too preoccupied to notice the change that came in her voice on that last.

"Well, that's very interesting, I'm sure," he said tolerantly. He caught sight of the bird-cage. "Has the bird flown?"

"We think the cat got it," said Mrs. Hale in a voice curiously even.

He was walking up and down, as if thinking something out.

"Is there a cat?" he asked absently.

Mrs. Hale shot a look up at the sheriff's wife.

"Well, not *now*," said Mrs. Peters. "They're superstitious, you know; they leave."

She sank into her chair.

The county attorney did not heed her. "No sign at all of any one having come in from the outside," he said to Peters, in the manner of continuing an interrupted conversation. "Their own rope. Now let's go upstairs again and go over it, piece by piece. It would have to have been some one who knew just the—"

The stair door closed behind them and their

voices were lost.

The two women sat motionless, not looking at each other, but as if peering into something and at the same time holding back. When they spoke now it was as if they were afraid of what they were saying, but as if they could not help saying it.

"She liked the bird," said Martha Hale, low and slowly. "She was going to bury it in that pretty box."

"When I was a girl," said Mrs. Peters, under her breath, "my kitten—there was a boy took a hatchet, and before my eyes—before I could get there—" She covered her face an instant. "If they hadn't held me back I would have"—she caught herself, looked upstairs where footsteps were heard, and finished weakly—"hurt him."

Then they sat without speaking or moving.

"I wonder how it would seem," Mrs. Hale at last began, as if feeling her way over strange ground—"never to have had any children around?" Her eyes made a slow sweep of the kitchen, as if seeing what that kitchen had meant through all the years. "No, Wright wouldn't like the bird," she said after that—"a thing that sang. She used to sing. He killed that too." Her voice tightened.

Mrs. Peters moved uneasily.

"Of course we don't know who killed the bird."

"I knew John Wright," was Mrs. Hale's answer.

"It was an awful thing was done in this house that night, Mrs. Hale," said the sheriff's wife. "Killing a man while he slept—slipping a thing round his neck that choked the life out of him."

Mrs. Hale's hand went out to the bird-cage.

"His neck. Choked the life out of him."

"We don't *know* who killed him," whispered Mrs. Peters wildly. "We don't *know*."

Mrs. Hale had not moved. "If there had been years and years of—nothing, then a bird to sing to you, it would be awful—still—after the bird was still."

It was as if something within her not herself had spoken, and it found in Mrs. Peters something she did not know as herself.

"I know what stillness is," she said, in a queer, monotonous voice. "When we homesteaded in Dakota, and my first baby died—after he was two years old—and me with no other then—"

Mrs. Hale stirred.

"How soon do you suppose they'll be through looking for the evidence?"

"I know what stillness is," repeated Mrs. Peters, in just that same way. Then she too pulled back. "The law has got to punish crime, Mrs. Hale," she said in her tight little way.

"I wish you'd seen Minnie Foster," was the answer, "when she wore a white dress with blue ribbons, and stood up there in the choir and sang."

The picture of that girl, the fact that she had lived neighbor to that girl for twenty years, and had let her die for lack of life, was suddenly more than she could bear.

"Oh, I *wish* I'd come over here once in a while!" she cried. "That was a crime! That was a crime! Who's going to punish that?"

"We mustn't take on," said Mrs. Peters, with a frightened look toward the stairs.

"I might 'a' *known* she needed help! I tell you, it's *queer*, Mrs. Peters. We live close together, and we live far apart. We all go through the same things—it's all just a different kind of the same thing! If it weren't—why do you and I *understand*? Why do we *know*—what we know this minute?"

She dashed her hand across her eyes. Then, seeing the jar of fruit on the table, she reached for it and choked out:

"If I was you I wouldn't *tell* her her fruit was gone! Tell her it *ain't*. Tell her it's all right—all of it. Here—take this in to prove it to her! She—she may never know whether it was broke or not."

She turned away.

Mrs. Peters reached out for the bottle of fruit as if she were glad to take it—as if touching a familiar thing, having something to do, could keep her from something else. She got up, looked about for something to wrap the fruit in, took a petticoat from the pile of clothes she had brought from the front room, and nervously started winding that round the bottle.

"My!" she began, in a high, false voice, "it's a good thing the men couldn't hear us! Getting all stirred up over a little thing like a—dead canary." She hurried over that. "As if that could have anything to do with—with—My, wouldn't they *laugh*?"

Footsteps were heard on the stairs.

"Maybe they would," muttered Mrs. Hale —"maybe they wouldn't."

"No, Peters," said the county attorney incisively; "it's all perfectly clear, except the reason for doing it. But you know juries when it comes to women. If there was some definite thing—something to show. Something to make a story about. A thing that would connect up with this clumsy way of doing it."

In a covert way Mrs. Hale looked at Mrs. Peters. Mrs. Peters was looking at her. Quickly they looked away from each other. The outer door opened and Mr. Hale came in.

"I've got the team round now," he said. "Pretty cold out there."

"I'm going to stay here awhile by myself," the county attorney suddenly announced. "You can send Frank out for me, can't you?" he asked the sheriff. "I want to go over everything. I'm not satisfied we can't do better."

Again, for one brief moment, the two women's eyes found one another.

The sheriff came up to the table.

"Did you want to see what Mrs. Peters was going to take in?"

The county attorney picked up the apron. He laughed.

"Oh, I guess they're not very dangerous things the ladies have picked out."

Mrs. Hale's hand was on the sewing basket in which the box was concealed. She felt that she ought to take her hand off the basket. She did not seem able to. He picked up one of the quilt blocks which she had piled on to cover the box. Her eyes felt like fire. She had a feeling that if he took up the basket she would snatch it from him.

But he did not take it up. With another little laugh, he turned away, saying:

"No; Mrs. Peters doesn't need supervising. For that matter, a sheriff's wife is married to the law. Ever think of it that way, Mrs. Peters?"

Mrs. Peters was standing beside the table. Mrs. Hale shot a look up at her; but she could not see her face. Mrs. Peters had turned away. When she spoke, her voice was muffled.

"Not—just that way," she said.

"Married to the law!" chuckled Mrs. Peters' husband. He moved toward the door into the front room, and said to the county attorney:

"I just want you to come in here a minute, George. We ought to take a look at these windows."

"Oh—windows," said the county attorney scoffingly.

"We'll be right out, Mr. Hale," said the sheriff to the farmer, who was still waiting by the door.

Hale went to look after the horses. The sheriff followed the county attorney into the other room. Again—for one final moment—the two women were alone in that kitchen.

Martha Hale sprang up, her hands tight together, looking at that other woman, with whom it rested. At first she could not see her eyes, for the sheriff's wife had not turned back since she turned away at that suggestion of being married to the law. But now Mrs. Hale made her turn back. Her eyes made her turn back. Slowly, unwillingly, Mrs. Peters turned her head until her eyes met the eyes of the other woman. There was a moment when they held each other in a steady, burning look in which there was no evasion nor flinching. Then Martha Hale's eyes pointed the way to the basket in which was hidden the thing that would make certain the conviction of the other woman—that woman who was not there and yet who had been there with them all through that hour.

For a moment Mrs. Peters did not move. And then she did it. With a rush forward, she threw back the quilt pieces, got the box, tried to put it

in her handbag. It was too big. Desperately she opened it, started to take the bird out. But there she broke—she could not touch the bird. She stood there helpless, foolish.

There was the sound of a knob turning in the inner door. Martha Hale snatched the box from the sheriff's wife, and got it in the pocket of her big coat just as the sheriff and the county attorney came back into the kitchen.

"Well, Henry," said the county attorney facetiously, "at least we found out that she was not going to quilt it. She was going to—what is it you call it, ladies?"

Mrs. Hale's hand was against the pocket of her coat.

"We call it—knot it, Mr. Henderson."

THE BUNKER MOUSE[12]

By FREDERICK STUART GREENE

From *The Century Magazine*

Larry Walsh slowly climbed the stairs of a

house near the waterfront, in a run-down quarter of old New York. He halted on the top floor, blinking in the dim light that struggled through the grime-coated window of the hallway. After a time he knocked timidly on the door before him.

There was nothing in the pleasant "Come in" to alarm the small man; he started to retreat, but stopped when the door was thrown wide.

"Then it's yourself, Mouse! It's good for the eyes just to look at you."

The woman who greeted Walsh was in striking contrast to her shabby surroundings. Everything about the old-fashioned house, one floor of which was her home, spoke of neglected age. This girl, from the heavy, black braids encircling her head to the soles of her shoes, vibrated youth. Her cheeks glowed with the color of splendid health; her blue Irish eyes were bright with it. Friendliness had rung in the tones of her rich brogue, and showed now in her smile as she waited for her visitor to answer.

Larry stood before her too shy to speak.

"Is it word from Dan you're bringin' me?" she encouraged. "But there, now, I'm forgettin' me manners! Come in, an' I'll be makin' you a cup of tea." She took his arm impulsively, with the

frank comradeship of a young woman for a man much older than herself, and led him to a chair.

Larry sat ready for flight, his cap held stiffly across his knees. He watched every movement of the girl, a look of pathetic meekness in his eyes.

"You're right, Mrs. Sullivan," he said after an effort; "Dan was askin' me to step in on my way to the ship."

She turned quickly from the stove.

"You're not tellin' me now Dan ain't comin' himself, an' the boat leavin' this night?"

Larry was plainly uneasy.

"Well, you see—it's—now it's just like I'm tellin' you, Mrs. Sullivan; he's that important to the chief, is Dan, they can't get on without him to-day at all."

"Then bad luck, I say, to the chief! Look at the grand supper I'm after fixin' for Dan!"

"Oh, Mary—Mrs. Sullivan, don't be speakin' disrespectful' of the chief, an' him thinkin' so highly of Dan!"

Mary's blue eyes flashed.

"An' why wouldn't he! It's not every day he'll

find the likes of Dan, with the strong arms an' the great legs of him, not to mention his grand looks." She crossed to Larry, her face aglow. "Rest easy now while you drink your tea," she urged kindly, "an' tell me what the chief be wantin' him for."

She drew her chair close to Larry, but the small man turned shyly from her searching gaze.

"Well, you see, Mrs.—"

"Call me Mary. It's a year an' more now since the first time you brought Dan home to me." A sudden smile lighted her face. "Well I remember how frightened you looked when first you set eyes on me. Was you thinkin' to find Dan's wife a slip of a girl?"

"No; he told me you was a fine, big lass." He looked from Mary to the picture of an older woman that hung above the mantel. "That'll be your mother, I'm thinkin'." Then, with abrupt change, "When did you leave the old country, Mary?"

"A little more'n a year before I married Dan. But tell me, Mouse, about the chief wantin' him."

"We'll you see, Dan's that handy-like—"

"That's the blessed truth you're speakin'," she

interupted, her face lovely with its flush of pride. "But tell me more, that's a darlin'."

Larry thought rapidly before he spoke again.

"Only the last trip I was hearin' the chief say: 'Dan,' says he, 'it's not long now you'll be swingin' the shovel. I'll be makin' you water-tender soon.'"

Mary leaned nearer, and caught both of Larry's hands in hers.

"Them's grand words you're sayin'; they fair makes my heart jump." She paused; the gladness faded quickly from her look. "Then the chief don't know Dan sometimes takes a drop?"

"Ain't the chief Irish himself? Every man on the boilers takes his dram." Her wistful eyes spurred him on. "Sure's I'm sittin' here, Dan's the soberest of the lot."

Mary shook her head sadly.

"Good reason I have to fear the drink; 't was that spoiled my mother's life."

Larry rose quickly.

"Your mother never drank!"

"No; the saints preserve us!" She looked up in surprise at Larry's startled face. "It was my

father. I don't remember only what mother told me; he left her one night, ravin' drunk, an' never come back."

Larry hastily took up his cap.

"I must be goin' back to the ship now," he said abruptly. "An' thank you, Mary, for the tea." He hurried from the room.

When Larry reached the ground floor he heard Mary's door open again.

"Can I be troublin' you, Mouse, to take something to Dan?" She came down the stairs, carrying a dinner-pail. "I'd thought to be eatin' this supper along with him," Mary said, disappointment in her tone. She followed Larry to the outer landing. "It's the true word you was sayin', he'll be makin' Dan water-tender?"

Larry forced himself to look into her anxious eyes.

"Sure; it's just as I said, Mary."

"Then I'll pray this night to the Mother of God for that chief; for soon"—Mary hesitated; a light came to her face that lifted the girl high above her squalid surroundings—"the extra pay'll be comin' handy soon," she ended, her voice as soft as a Killarney breeze.

Larry, as he looked at the young wife standing between the scarred columns of the old doorway, was stirred to the farthest corner of his heart.

"They only smile like that to the angels," he thought. Then aloud: "Bad cess to me! I was forgettin' entirely! Dan said to leave this with you." He pushed crumpled, coal-soiled money into her hand, and fled down the steps.

When Larry heard the door close creakily behind him, he looked back to where Mary had stood, his eyes blinking rapidly. After some moments he walked slowly on toward the wharves. In the distance before him the spars and funnels of ships loomed through the dusk, their outlines rapidly fading into the sky beyond —a late September sky, now fast turning to a burned-out sheet of dull gray.

Larry went aboard his ship, and, going to the forecastle, peered into an upper bunk.

"Your baby's not to home, Mouse," a voice jeered. "I saw him over to Flanagan's awhile ago."

A hopeless look crossed Larry's face.

"Give me a hand up the side, like a good lad, Jim, when I come aboard again."

A few minutes later the little man was making his way back to the steamer, every step of his journey harassed by derisive shouts as he dodged between the lines of belated trucks that jammed West Street from curb to string-piece. He pushed a wheelbarrow before him, his knees bending under the load it held. Across the barrow, legs and head dangling over the sides, lay an unconscious heap that when sober answered to the name of Dan Sullivan.

Larry Walsh, stoker on the coastwise freighter *San Gardo*, was the butt of the ship; every man of the crew imposed on his good nature. He was one of those persons "just fool enough to do what he's told to do." For thirty of his fifty years he had been a seaman, and the marks of a sailor's life were stamped hard on his face. His weathered cheeks were plowed by wrinkles that stretched, deep furrowed, from his red-gray hair to the corners of his mouth. From under scant brows he peered out on the world with near-sighted eyes; but whenever a smile broadened his wide mouth, his eyes would shine with a kindly light.

Larry's defective sight had led to his banishment as a sailor from the decks. During a storm off Hatteras a stoker had fallen and died

on the boiler-room plates.

"It don't take no eyes at all to see clean to the back of a Scotch boiler," the boatswain had told the chief engineer. "I can give you that little squint-eyed feller." So, at the age of forty or thereabouts, Larry left the cool, wind-swept deck to take up work new to him in the superheated, gas-stifling air of the fire-room. Though entered on the ship's papers as a sailor, he had gone without complaint down the straight ladders to the very bottom of the hull. Bidden to take the dead stoker's place, "he was just fool enough to do what he was told to do."

Larry was made the coal-passer of that watch, and began at once the back-breaking task of shoveling fuel from the bunkers to the floor outside, ready for the stokers to heave into the boilers. He had been passing less than an hour during his first watch when the coal ran short in the lower bunker. He speared with a slice-bar in the bunker above. The fuel rested at a steeper angle than his weak eyes could see, and his bar dislodged a wedged lump; an instant later the new passer was half buried under a heap of sliding coal. Bewildered, but unhurt, he crawled to the boiler-room, shaking the coal from his back and shoulders. Through dust-filled ears he heard the general laugh at his plight.

"Look at the nigger Irishman!" a stoker called.

"Irishman!" came the answer. "It's no man at all; it's a mouse you're seein'—a bunker mouse."

From that moment the name Larry Walsh was forgotten.

The *San Gardo* was late getting away that night; two bells of the evening watch had sounded when at last she backed from her pier into the North River and began the first mile of her trip to Galveston. Though she showed a full six inches of the red paint below her water-line, the loading of her freight had caused the delay. In the hold lay many parts of sawmill machinery. When the last of this clumsy cargo had settled to its allotted place, there was left an unusual void of empty blackness below the deck hatches.

"It's up to you now, Matie," the stevedore had said to the impatient first officer. "My job's done right, but she'll roll her sticks out if it's rough outside."

"That's nice; hand me all the cheerful news you have when you know they hung out storm-warnings at noon," the officer had growled as the stevedore went ashore.

Signs that both the Government and the stevedore had predicted correctly began to show as soon as the vessel cleared the Hook. The wind was blowing half a gale from the southeast and had already kicked up a troublesome sea. The ship, resenting her half-filled hold, pitched with a viciousness new to the crew.

There was unusual activity on board the *San Gardo* that night. Long after the last hatch-cover had been placed the boatswain continued to inspect, going over the deck from bow to stern to see that every movable thing was lashed fast.

In the engine-room as well, extra precautions were taken. It was Robert Neville's watch below; he was the first of the three assistant engineers. Neville, a young man, was unique in that most undemocratic institution, a ship's crew, for he apparently considered the stokers under him as human beings. For one of his fire-room force he had an actual liking.

"Why do you keep that fellow they call Bunker Mouse in your watch?" the chief once asked.

"Because he's willing and the handiest man I have," Neville answered promptly.

"Well, suit yourself; but that brute Sullivan will kill him some day, I hear."

"I don't know about that, Chief. The Mouse is game."

"So's a trout; but it's got a damn poor show against a shark," the chief had added with a shrug.

Neville's watch went on duty shortly after the twin lights above Sandy Hook had dropped astern. The ship was then rolling heavily enough to make walking difficult on the oily floor of the engine-room; in the boiler-room, lower by three feet, to stand steady even for a moment was impossible. Here, in this badly lighted quarter of the ship, ill humor hung in the air thicker than the coal-gas.

Dan Sullivan, partly sobered, fired his boiler, showing ugly readiness for a fight. Larry, stoking next to him, kept a weather-eye constantly on his fellow-laborer.

Neville's men had been on duty only a few minutes when the engineer came to the end of the passage and called Larry.

"That's right," Dan growled; "run along, you engineer's pet, leavin' your work for me to do!"

Larry gave him no answer as he hurried away.

"Make fast any loose thing you see here," Neville ordered.

Larry went about the machinery-crowded room securing every object that a lurching ship might send flying from its place. When he returned to the fire-room he heard the water-tender shouting:

"Sullivan, you're loafin' on your job! Get more fire under that boiler!"

"An' ain't I doin' double work, with that damn Mouse forever sneakin' up to the engine-room?"

Larry, giving no sign that he had heard Dan's growling answer, drove his scoop into the coal, and with a swinging thrust spread its heaped load evenly over the glowing bed in the fire-box. He closed the fire-door with a quick slam, for in a pitching boiler-room burning coal can fall from an open furnace as suddenly as new coal can be thrown into it.

"So, you're back," Dan sneered. "It's a wonder you wouldn't stay the watch up there with your betters."

Larry went silently on with his work.

"Soft, ain't it, you jellyfish, havin' me do your job? You eel, you—." Dan poured out a stream of abusive oaths.

Still Larry did not answer.

"Dan's ravin' mad," a man on the port boilers said. "Will he soak the Mouse to-night, I wonder."

"Sure," the stoker beside him answered. "An' it's a dirty shame for a big devil like him to smash the little un."

"You're new on this ship; you don't know 'em. The Mouse is a regular mother to that booze-fighter, an' small thanks he gets. But wait, an' you'll see somethin' in a minute."

Dan's temper, however, was not yet at fighting heat. He glared a moment longer at Larry, then turned sullenly to his boiler. He was none too steady on his legs, and this, with the lurching of the ship, made his work ragged. After a few slipshod passes he struck the door-frame squarely with his scoop, spilling the coal to the floor.

"Damn your squint eyes!" he yelled. "You done that, Mouse! You shoved ag'in' me. Now scrape it all up, an' be quick about it!"

Without a word, while his tormentor jeered and cursed him, Larry did as he was told.

"Ain't you got no fight at all in your shriveled-up body?" Dan taunted as Larry finished. "You're a disgrace to Ireland, that's what you

are."

Larry, still patient, turned away. Dan sprang to him and spun the little man about.

"Where's the tongue in your ugly mouth?" Dan was shaking with rage. "I'll not be havin' the likes of you followin' me from ship to ship, an' sniffin' at my heels ashore. I won't stand for it no longer, do you hear? Do you think I need a nurse? Now say you'll leave this ship when we makes port, or I'll break every bone in you."

Dan towered above Larry, his arm drawn back ready to strike. Every man in the room stopped work to watch the outcome of the row.

At the beginning of the tirade Larry's thin shoulders had straightened; he raised his head; his lower jaw, undershot, was set hard. The light from the boiler showed his near-sighted eyes steady on Sullivan, unafraid.

"Get on with your work, an' don't be a fool, Dan," he said quietly.

"A fool, am I!"

Dan's knotted fist flashed to within an inch of Larry's jaw. The Bunker Mouse did not flinch. For a moment the big stoker's arm quivered to strike, then slowly fell.

"You ain't worth smashin'," Sullivan snarled, and turned away.

"Well, what d'yer know about that!" the new stoker cried.

"It's that way all the time," he was answered; "there ain't a trip Dan don't ball the Mouse out to a fare-you-well; but he never lays hand to 'im. None of us knows why."

"You don't? Well, I do. The big slob's yeller, an' I'll show 'im up." The stoker crossed to Sullivan. "See here, Bo, why don't you take on a man your size?" He thrust his face close to Dan's and shouted the answer to his question: "I'll tell you why. You ain't got sand enough."

Dan's teeth snapped closed, then parted to grin at his challenger.

"Do you think you're big enough?" The joy of battle was in his growl.

"Yes, I do." The man put up his hands.

Instantly Dan's left broke down the guard; his right fist landed squarely on the stoker's jaw, sending him reeling to the bunker wall, where he fell. It was a clean knock-out.

"Go douse your friend with a pail of water, Mouse." Dan, still grinning, picked up his

shovel and went to work.

When Neville's watch went off duty, Larry found the sea no rougher than on countless other runs he had made along the Atlantic coast. The wind had freshened to a strong gale, but he reached the forecastle with no great difficulty.

Without marked change the *San Gardo* carried the same heavy weather from Barnegat Light to the Virginia capes. Beyond Cape Henry the blow began to stiffen and increased every hour as the freighter plowed steadily southward. Bucking head seas every mile of the way, she picked up Diamond Shoals four hours behind schedule. As she plunged past the tossing light-ship, Larry, squinting through a forecastle port, wondered how long its anchor chains would hold. The *San Gardo* was off Jupiter by noon the third day out, running down the Florida coast; the wind-bent palms showed faintly through the driving spray.

Neville's watch went on duty that night at eight. As his men left the forecastle a driving rain beat against their backs, and seas broke over the port bow at every downward plunge of the ship. To gain the fire-room door, they clung to rail or stanchion to save themselves from being swept overboard. They held on

desperately as each wave flooded the deck, watched their chance, then sprang for the next support. On freighters no cargo space is wasted below decks in passageways for the crew.

When Larry reached the fire-room there was not a dry inch of cloth covering his wiry body. He and his fellow-stokers took up immediately the work of the men they had relieved, and during the first hours of their watch fired the boilers with no more difficulty than is usual in heavy weather.

At eleven o'clock the speaking-tube whistled, and a moment later Neville came to the end of the passage.

"What are you carrying?" he shouted to the water-tender. "We've got to keep a full head of steam on her to-night."

"We've got it, Mr. Neville—one hundred and sixty, an' we've held between that and sixty-five ever since I've been on."

"The captain says we've made Tortugas. We lost three hours on the run from Jupiter," Neville answered, and went back to his engine.

During the next hour no one on deck had to tell these men, toiling far below the water-line, that wind and sea had risen. They had warnings

enough. Within their steel-incased quarters every bolt and rivet sounded the overstrain forced upon it. In the engine-room the oiler could no longer move from the throttle. Every few minutes now, despite his watchfulness, a jarring shiver spread through the hull as the propeller, thrown high, raced wildly in mid-air before he could shut off steam.

At eleven-thirty the indicator clanged, and its arrow jumped to half-speed ahead. A moment later the men below decks "felt the rudder" as the *San Gardo*, abandoning further attempts to hold her course, swung about to meet the seas head on.

Eight bells—midnight—struck, marking the end of the shift; but no one came down the ladders to relieve Neville's watch. The growls of the tired men rose above the noise in the fire-room. Again Neville came through the passage.

"The tube to the bridge is out of commission," he called, "but I can raise the chief. He says no man can live on deck; one's gone overboard already. The second watch can't get out of the forecastle. It's up to us, men, to keep this ship afloat, and steam's the only thing that'll do it."

For the next hour and the next the fire-room force and the two men in the engine-room stuck doggedly to their work. They knew that the *San*

Gardo was making a desperate struggle, that it was touch and go whether the ship would live out the hurricane or sink to the bottom. They knew also, to the last man of them, that if for a moment the ship fell off broadside to the seas, the giant waves would roll her over and over like an empty barrel in a mill-race. The groaning of every rib and plate in the hull, the crash of seas against the sides, the thunder of waves breaking on deck, drowned the usual noises below.

The color of the men's courage began to show. Some kept grimly at their work, dumb from fear. Others covered fright with profanity, cursing the storm, the ship, their mates, cursing themselves. Larry, as he threw coal steadily through his fire-doors, hummed a broken tune. He gave no heed to Dan, who grew more savage as the slow hours of overtoil dragged by.

About four in the morning Neville called Larry to the engine-room. On his return Dan blazed out at him:

"Boot-lickin' Neville ag'in, was you? I'd lay you out, you shrimp, only I want you to do your work."

Larry took up his shovel; as usual his silence enraged Sullivan.

"You chicken-livered wharf-rat, ain't you got no spunk to answer wid?" Dan jerked a slice-bar from the fire and hurled it to the floor at Larry's feet. The little man leaped in the air; the white-hot end of the bar, bounding from the floor, missed his legs by an inch.

Larry's jaw shot out; he turned on Sullivan, all meekness gone.

"Dan," he cried shrilly, "if you try that again —"

"Great God! what's that!"

Dan's eyes were staring; panic showed on every face in the room. The sound of an explosion had come from the forward hold. Another followed, and another, a broadside of deafening reports. The terrifying sounds came racing aft. They reached the bulkhead nearest them, and tore through the fire-room, bringing unmasked fear to every man of the watch. The crew stood for a moment awed, then broke, and, rushing for the ladder, fought for a chance to escape this new, unknown madness of the storm.

Only Larry kept his head.

"Stop! Come back!" His shrill voice carried above the terrifying noise. "It's the plates

bucklin' between the ribs."

"Plates! Hell! she's breakin' up!"

Neville rushed in from the engine-room.

"Back to your fires, men, or we'll all drown! Steam, keep up—" He was shouting at full-lung power, but his cries were cut short. Again the deafening reports started at the bows. Again, crash after crash, the sounds came tearing aft as if a machine-gun were raking the vessel from bow to stern. At any time these noises would bring terror to men locked below decks; but now, in the half-filled cargo spaces, each crashing report was like the bursting of a ten-inch shell.

Neville went among the watch, urging, commanding, assuring them that these sounds meant no real danger to the ship. He finally ended the panic by beating the more frightened ones back to their boilers.

Then for hours, at every plunge of the ship, the deafening boom of buckling plates continued until the watch was crazed by the sound.

This new terror began between four and five in the morning, when the men had served double time under the grueling strain. At sunrise another misery was added to their torture: the

rain increased suddenly, and fell a steady cataract to the decks. This deluge and the flying spray sent gallons of water down the stack; striking the breeching-plates, it was instantly turned to steam and boiling water. As the fagged stokers bent before the boilers, the hot water, dripping from the breeching, washed scalding channels through the coal-dust down their bare backs. They hailed this new torment with louder curses, but continued to endure it for hours, while outside the hurricane raged, no end, no limit, to its power.

Since the beginning of the watch the bilge-pumps had had all they could do to handle the leakage coming from the seams of the strained hull. Twice Neville had taken the throttle and sent his oiler to clear the suctions. The violent lurching of the ship had churned up every ounce of sediment that had lain undisturbed beneath the floor-plates since the vessel's launching. Sometime between seven and eight all the bilge-pumps clogged at the same moment, and the water began rising at a rate that threatened the fires. It became a question of minutes between life and death for all hands. Neville, working frantically to clear the pumps, yelled to the oiler to leave the throttle and come to him. The water, gaining fast, showed him that their combined efforts were hopeless. He ran to the boiler-room

for more aid. Here the water had risen almost to the fires; as the ship rolled, it slushed up between the floor-plates and ran in oily streams about the men's feet. Again panic seized the crew.

"Come on, lads!" Sullivan shouted above the infernal din. "We'll be drowned in this hell-hole!"

In the next second he was half-way up the ladder, below him, clinging to the rungs like frightened apes, hung other stokers.

"Come back, you fool!" Neville shouted. "Open that deck-door, and you'll swamp the ship!"

Dan continued to climb.

"Come down or I'll fire!"

"Shoot an' be damned to you!" Dan called back.

The report of Neville's revolver was lost in the noise; but the bullet, purposely sent high, spattered against the steel plate above Dan's head. He looked down. Neville, swaying with the pitching floor, was aiming true for his second shot. Cursing at the top of his voice, Dan scrambled down the ladder, pushing the men below him to the floor.

"Back to your boilers!" Neville ordered; but the stokers, huddled in a frightened group, refused to leave the ladder.

It was only a matter of seconds now before the fires would be drenched. Bilge-water was splashing against the under boiler-plates, filling the room with dense steam. Neville left the men and raced for the engine-room. He found Larry and the oiler working desperately at the valve-wheel of the circulating pump. Neville grasped the wheel, and gave the best he had to open the valve. This manifold, connecting the pump with the bilges, was intended only for emergency use. It had not been opened for months, and was now rusted tight. The three men, straining every muscle, failed to budge the wheel. After the third hopeless attempt, Larry let go, and without a word bolted through the passage to the fire-room.

"You miserable quitter!" Neville screamed after him, and bent again to the wheel.

As he looked up, despairing of any chance to loosen the rusted valve, Larry came back on the run, carrying a coal-pick handle. He thrust it between the spokes of the wheel.

"Now, Mr. Neville, all together!" His Celtic jaw was set hard.

All three threw their weight against the handle. The wheel stirred.

As they straightened for another effort, a louder noise of hissing steam sounded from the boilers, and the fire-room force, mad with fright, came crowding through the passage to the higher floor of the engine-room.

"Quick! Together!" Neville gasped.

The wheel moved an inch.

"Once more! *Now!*"

The wheel turned and did not stop. The three men dropped the lever, seized the wheel, and threw the valve wide open.

"Good work, men!" Neville cried, and fell back exhausted.

The centrifugal pump was thrown in at the last desperate moment. When the rusted valve finally opened, water had risen to the lower grate-bars under every boiler in the fire-room. But once in action, the twelve-inch suction of the giant pump did its work with magic swiftness. In less than thirty seconds the last gallon of water in the bilges had been lifted and sent, rushing through the discharge, overboard.

Neville faced the boiler-room crew sternly.

"Now, you cowards, get to your fires!" he said.

As the men slunk back through the passage Dan growled:

"May that man some day burn in hell!"

"Don't be wishin' him no such luck," an angry voice answered; "wish him down here wid us."

The morning dragged past; noon came, marking the sixteenth hour that the men, imprisoned below the sea-swept decks, had struggled to save the ship. Sundown followed, and the second night of their unbroken toil began. They stuck to it, stood up somehow under the racking grind, their nerves quivering, their bodies craving food, their eyes gritty from the urge of sleep, while always the hideous noises of the gale screamed in their ears. The machine-gun roar of buckling plates, raking battered hull, never ceased.

With each crawling minute the men grew more silent, more desperate. Dan Sullivan let no chance pass to vent his spleen on Larry. Twice during the day his fellow-stokers, watching the familiar scene, saw the big man reach the point of crushing the small one; but the ever-expected blow did not fall.

Shortly after midnight the first hope came to the exhausted men that their fight might not be in vain. Though the buckling plates still thundered, though the floor under their feet still pitched at crazy angles, there was a "feel" in the fire-room that ribs and beams and rivets were not so near the breaking-point.

Neville came to the end of the passage.

"The hurricane's blowing itself to death," he shouted. "Stick to it, boys, for an hour longer; the second watch can reach us by then."

The hour passed, but no relief came. The wind had lost some force, but the seas still broke over the bows, pouring tons of water to the deck. The vessel pitched as high, rolled as deep, as before.

As the men fired their boilers they rested the filled scoops on the floor and waited for the ship to roll down. Then a quick jerk of the fire-door chain, a quick heave of the shovel, and the door was snapped shut before the floor rolled up again. Making one of these hurried passes, Larry swayed on tired legs. He managed the toss and was able to close the door before he fell hard against Dan. His sullen enemy instantly launched a new tirade, fiercer, more blasphemous, than any before. He ended a stream of oaths, and rested the scoop ready for his throw.

"I'll learn yuh, yuh snivelin'—" The ship rolled deep. Dan jerked the fire-door open—"yuh snivelin' shrimp!" He glared at Larry as he made the pass. He missed the opening. His shovel struck hard against the boiler front. The jar knocked Dan to the floor, pitched that moment at its steepest angle. He clutched desperately to gain a hold on the smooth-worn steel plates, his face distorted by fear as he slid down to the fire.

Larry, crying a shrill warning, sprang between Sullivan and the open furnace. He stooped, and with all the strength he could gather shoved the big stoker from danger. Then above the crashing sounds a shriek tore the steam-clouded air of the fire-room. Larry had fallen!

As his feet struck the ash-door, the ship rolled up. A cascade falling from Dan's fire had buried Larry's legs to the knees under a bed of white-hot coals. He shrieked again the cry of the mortally hurt as Dan dragged him too late from before the open door.

"Mouse! Mouse!" Horror throbbed in Sullivan's voice. "You're hurted bad!" He knelt, holding Larry in his arms, while others threw water on the blazing coals.

"Speak, lad!" Dan pleaded. "Speak to me!"

The fire-room force stood over them silenced.

Accident, death even, they always expected; but to see Dan Sullivan show pity for any living thing, and above all, for the Bunker Mouse—

The lines of Larry's tortured face eased.

"It's the last hurt I'll be havin', Dan," he said before he fainted.

"Don't speak the word, Mouse, an' you just after savin' me life!" Then the men in the fire-room saw a miracle: tears filled the big stoker's eyes.

Neville had heard Larry's cry and rushed to the boiler-room.

"For God's sake! what's happened now?"

Dan pointed a shaking finger. Neville looked once at what only a moment before had been the legs and feet of a man. As he turned quickly from the sight the engineer's face was like chalk.

"Here, two of you," he called unsteadily, "carry him to the engine-room."

Dan threw the men roughly aside.

"Leave him be," he growled. "Don't a one of you put hand on him!" He lifted Larry gently and, careful of each step, crossed the swaying floor.

"Lay him there by the dynamo," Neville ordered when they had reached the engine-room.

Dan hesitated.

"'T ain't fittin', sir, an' him so bad' hurt. Let me be takin' him to the store-room."

Neville looked doubtfully up the narrow stairs.

"We can't get him there with this sea running."

Sullivan spread his legs wide, took both of Larry's wrists in one hand, and swung the unconscious man across his back. He strode to the iron stairs and began to climb. As he reached the first grating Larry groaned. Dan stopped dead; near him the great cross-heads were plunging steadily up and down.

"God, Mr. Neville, did he hit ag'in' somethin'?" The sweat of strain and fear covered his face.

The vessel leaped to the crest of a wave, and dropped sheer into the trough beyond.

"No; but for God's sake, man, go on! You'll pitch with him to the floor if she does that again!"

Dan, clinging to the rail with his free hand, began climbing the second flight.

At the top grating Neville sprang past him to the store-room door.

"Hold him a second longer," he called, and spread an armful of cotton waste on the vise bench.

Dan laid Larry on the bench. He straightened his own great body for a moment, then sat down on the floor and cried.

Neville, pretending not to see Dan's distress, brought more waste. As he placed it beneath his head Larry groaned. Dan, still on the floor, wrung his hands, calling on the saints and the Virgin to lighten the pain of this man it had been his joy to torture.

Neville turned to him.

"Get up from there!" he cried sharply. "Go see what you can find to help him."

Dan left the room, rubbing his red-flanneled arm across his eyes. He returned quickly with a can of cylinder oil, and poured it slowly over the horribly burned limbs.

"There ain't no bandages, sir; only this." He held out a shirt belonging to the engineer; his eyes pleaded his question. Neville nodded, and Dan tore the shirt in strips. When he finished the task, strange to his clumsy hands, Larry had

regained consciousness and lay trying pitifully to stifle his moans.

"Does it make you feel aisier, Mouse?" Dan leaned close to the quivering lips to catch the answer.

"It helps fine," Larry answered, and fainted again.

"You'll be leavin' me stay wid him, sir?" Dan begged. "'T was for me he's come to this."

Neville gave consent and left the two men together.

Between four and five in the morning, when Neville's watch had lived through thirty-three unbroken hours of the fearful grind, a shout that ended in a screaming laugh ran through the fire-room. High above the toil-crazed men a door had opened and closed. A form, seen dimly through the smoke and steam, was moving backward down the ladder. Again the door opened; another man came through. Every shovel in the room fell to the steel floor; every man in the room shouted or laughed or cried.

The engine-room door, too, had opened, admitting the chief and his assistant. Not until he had examined each mechanical tragedy

below did the chief give time to the human one above.

"Where's that man that's hurt?" he asked as he came, slowly, from an inspection of the burned-out bearings down the shaft alley.

Neville went with him to the store-room. Dan, sagging under fatigue, clung to the bench where Larry lay moaning.

"You can go now, Sullivan," Neville told him.

Dan raised his head, remorse, entreaty, stubbornness in his look.

"Let me be! I'll not leave him!"

The chief turned to Neville.

"What's come over that drunk?" he asked.

"Ever since the Mouse got hurt, Sullivan's acted queer, just like a woman."

"Get to your quarters, Sullivan," the chief ordered. "We'll take care of this man."

Dan's hands closed; for an instant he glared rebellion from blood-shot eyes. Then the iron law of sea discipline conquering, he turned to Larry.

"The Blessed Virgin aise you, poor Mouse!" he

mumbled huskily and slouched out through the door.

At midday the *San Gardo's* captain got a shot at the sun. Though his vessel had been headed steadily northeast for more than thirty hours, the observation showed that she had made twenty-eight miles sternway to the southwest. By two in the afternoon the wind had dropped to half a gale, making a change of course possible. The captain signaled full speed ahead, and the ship, swinging about, began limping across the gulf, headed once more toward Galveston.

Neville, who had slept like a stone, came on deck just before sunset. The piled-up seas, racing along the side, had lost their breaking crests; the ship rose and fell with some degree of regularity. He called the boatswain and went to the store-room.

They found Larry in one of his conscious moments.

"Well, Mouse, we're going to fix you in a better place," the engineer called with what heart he could show.

"Thank you kindly, sir," Larry managed to answer; "but 't is my last voyage, Mr. Neville."

And the grit that lay hidden in the man's soul showed in his pain-twisted smile.

They carried him up the last flight of iron stairs to the deck. Clear of the engine-room, the boatswain turned toward the bow.

"No. The other way, Boson," Neville ordered.

The chief, passing them, stopped.

"Where are you taking him, Mr. Neville?"

"The poor fellow's dying, sir," Neville answered in a low voice.

"Well, where are you taking him?" the chief persisted.

"I'd like to put him in my room, sir."

"A stoker in officers' quarters!" The chief frowned. "Sunday-school discipline!" He disappeared through the engine-room door, slamming it after him.

They did what they could, these seamen, for the injured man; on freighters one of the crew has no business to get hurt. They laid Larry in Neville's berth and went out, leaving a sailor to watch over him.

The sun rose the next day in a cloudless sky, and shone on a brilliant sea of tumbling, white-

capped waves. Far off the starboard bow floated a thin line of smoke from a tug's funnel, the first sign to the crew since the hurricane that the world was not swept clean of ships. Two hours later the tug was standing by, her captain hailing the *San Gardo* through a megaphone.

"Run in to New Orleans!" he shouted.

"I cleared for Galveston, and I'm going there," the *San Gardo's* captain called back.

"No, you ain't neither."

"I'd like to know why, I won't."

"Because you can't,"—the answer carried distinctly across the waves,—"there ain't no such place. It's been washed clean off the earth."

The *San Gardo* swung farther to the west and with her engine pounding at every stroke, limped on toward the Mississippi.

At five o'clock a Port Eads pilot climbed over the side, and taking the vessel through South Pass, straightened her in the smooth, yellow waters of the great river for the hundred-mile run to New Orleans.

When the sun hung low over the sugar plantations that stretch in flat miles to the east and west beyond the levees, when all was quiet

on land and water and ship, Neville walked slowly to the forecastle.

"Sullivan," he called, "come with me."

Dan climbed down from his bunk and came to the door; the big stoker searched Neville's face with a changed, sobered look.

"I've been wantin' all this time to go to 'im. How's he now, sir?"

"He's dying, Sullivan, and has asked for you."

Outside Neville's quarters Dan took off his cap and went quietly into the room.

Larry lay with closed eyes, his face ominously white.

Dan crept clumsily to the berth and put his big hand on Larry's shoulder.

"It's me, Mouse. They wouldn't leave me come no sooner."

Larry's head moved slightly; his faded eyes opened.

Dan stooped in awkward embarrassment until his face was close to Larry.

"I come to ask you—" Dan stopped. The muscles of his thick neck moved jerkily—"to

ask you, Mouse, before—to forgit the damn mean things—I done to you, Mouse."

Larry made no answer; he kept his failing sight fixed on Dan.

After a long wait Sullivan spoke again.

"An' to think you done it, Mouse, for me!"

A light sprang to Larry's eyes, flooding his near-sighted gaze with sudden anger.

"For you!" The cry came from his narrow chest with jarring force. "You! *You!*" he repeated in rising voice. "It's always of yourself you're thinkin', Dan Sullivan!" He stopped, his face twitching in pain; then with both hands clenched he went on, his breast heaving at each word hurled at Dan:

"Do you think I followed you from ship to ship, dragged you out of every rum-hole in every port, for your own sake!"

He lay back exhausted, his chest rising and falling painfully, his eyelids fluttering over his burning eyes.

Dan stepped back, and, silenced, stared at the dying man.

Larry clung to his last moments of life, fighting

for strength to finish. He struggled, and raised himself on one elbow.

"For you!" he screamed. "No, for Mary! For Mary, my own flesh and blood—Mary, the child of the woman I beat when I was drunk an' left to starve when I got ready!"

Through the stateroom door the sun's flat rays struck full on Larry's inspired face. He swayed on his elbow; his head fell forward. By a final effort he steadied himself. His last words came in ringing command.

"Go back! Go—" he faltered, gasping for breath—"go home sober to Mary an' the child that's comin'!"

The fire of anger drifted slowly from Larry's dying gaze. The little man fell back. The Bunker Mouse went out, all man, big at the end.

RAINBOW PETE[13]

By RICHARD MATTHEWS HALLET

From *The Pictorial Review*

In pursuance of a policy to detain us on the island at Sick Dog until the arrival of his daughter, Papa Isbister thought fit to tell us the fate of Rainbow Pete, of whose physical deformity and thirst for gold we knew something already. Rainbow Pete had come to Mushrat Portage, playing his flute, at a time when preparations were being made to blast a road-bed through the wilderness for the railroad.

Mushrat Portage had been but recently a willow clump, and a black rock ledge hanging over a precipitous valley: the hand of the Indian could be seen one day parting the leaves of the trail, and on the next, drills came and tins of black powder, and hordes of greedy men, blind with a burning zeal for "monkeying with powder" as our host of Sick Dog said. They were strange men, hoarse men, unreasonable men who cast sheep's-eyes at the dark woman from Regina, whose shack, rented of Scarecrow Charlie, crowned the high point of the ledge. She was the only woman on Mushrat, and at a time just before the blasting began, when Rainbow Pete sauntered over the trail with his pick and his flute and his dirty bag of rock specimens, she was hungrily watched and waited on by the new inhabitants of that ancient portage—Mushrat, whose destinies were soon to be so splendid, and whose skies were to be

rocked and rent by the thunders of men struggling with reluctant nature, monkeying with powder.

When Pete laid down his tools and guns on the table at Scarecrow Charlie's, where the woman was employed, had he in his heart some foreshadowing presentiment of the peril he was in, of the sharp destroying fire of a resolute woman's eyes, which he was subjecting himself to, in including her in his universal caress? Who knows? Perhaps his flute had whispered tidings to him. He was, said Papa Isbister, immensely proud of his plaything, this huge gaunt sailor, who had been bent into the shape of a rainbow —the foot of a rainbow—by a chance shot, which shattered his hip and gave him an impressive forward cant, which appeared to women, it seemed—I quote my old friend—in the light of an endearing droop.

The romantic visitation of this musical sailorman made the efforts of all Mushrat as nothing. But Rainbow Pete seemed unaware of the fiery jealousies glowing in the night on all sides of him when he fixed his eyes on her for the first time—with that mellow assurance of a careless master of the hearts and whims of women.

"What's this he said to her?" said our old

friend. "It was skilful; it was put like a notable question if she took it so."

"You don't want to go out to-night," he said to her, with his guns on the table.

"No, I do not," she said to the man.

"There you will be taking the words out of my mouth to suit your heart," he went on saying to her. "Mark this, I'm making this a command to you. You don't want to go out to-night. Do not do it."

This he told her was on account of stray bullets, because he was meaning to shoot up that place.

Heh! It was a trick of his, to trap her into denying him when he had made no offer.

Old Isbister laughed heartily at this picture of Pete in the days of his triumph.

He was a captivating man, it appeared. He was tattooed. On his arms were snakes and the like of that, daggers and the like of that, dragons and the like of that. This was a romantic skin to the man; and his blue eyes were like the diamond drills they were bringing to Mushrat.

"Oh my," said the woman, leaning at his table, "this is what will be keeping me from mass, I

shouldn't wonder."

This was a prairie woman from Regina; now mark, it was whispered to be no credit to human nature that she had had to leave that town. No. She was a full woman, very deep, with burning eyes. It was hard talking with her, because of her lingering speech. Oh, she was a massive woman, for the small shoes she wore. She was tall, as high as Rainbow Pete's shoulder. She purchased scent for her hair. This I know, having seen it standing in the bottles. She was a prairie woman.

This was a wild night we spent on Mushrat, after Pete's reproving the woman there in Scarecrow Charlie's place. Smash McGregor, the little doctor, was sitting between us in his yellow skull-cap; and Willis Countryman was reading and drinking in one corner, listening to the laughing men there. They were laughing, thinking of the fortunes there would be here when blasting begun.

But Rainbow Pete was not one of the rockmen. No. He told them strange tales of gold. Heh! He was athirst for gold. Strange tales he told of gold. Once how in Australia he had hold of a lump of it as big as poor McGregor's skull, but isn't it a perishing pity, oh my, this was just a desert where he was, there was no water, he

grew faint carrying the nugget. Our mouths were open when the man told us he had dropped it in the desert, with his name carved on it.

"There it is to this day, sinking in the sands," he said. Oh, the proud woman from Regina. There she turned her dark eyes over our heads, never looking at the plausible man at all; but she had heard him.

"Gold?" said Smash McGregor. "Why, there's gold enough in the world."

"Ay, there's comfort too, if you know where to take it," said Rainbow Pete, twirling here at his mustache and looking at the woman.

"There's gold," said McGregor, "for any man."

"Yes, my hearty," said Pete, "it's twinkling in the river-beds, it shines in the sands under your feet, but still it's hard to get in your two fisties."

"Why," said Smash McGregor, "did you never hear there's a pot of gold at the foot of every rainbow?"

Oh, my friend, as he went mentioning the rainbow, there was a thunder-cap on the brow of that great sailor.

"So they call me—Rainbow Pete," he said.

"Look then," said McGregor, "take the pick, and strike the ground at your feet."

Rainbow Pete was not hearing them.

"This is a man I have been following on many trails," he muttered, "This man who made a rainbow of me. Mark this, he shall thirst, if I meet him. Ay! He shall burn with these fingers at his throat. He shall have gold poured into him like liquid, however."

It was plain he had no love for this man who had fashioned him in the form of a rainbow.

"What is this man called?" said the little doctor.

"It's a dark man wearing a red cap, called Pal Yachy," said Rainbow Pete. "He spends his time escaping me. Look, where he shot me in the hip."

Now we shielded him, and he drew out his shirt showing the wound in the thigh which made a rainbow of him; but stop, didn't McGregor discover the strange business on his spine?

"What's this, however?" he said.

"This is a palm-tree," said the man. "Stand close about me."

Oh my, we stood close, watching the man twisting up his shirt, and here we saw the palm-tree going up his spine, and every joint of his spine was used for a joint of the tree, like; and the long blue leaves were waving on his shoulder-blade when he would be rippling the skin. This was a fine broad back like satin to be putting a palm-tree on. Look, as I am lifting my head, here I see the dark woman silent at the bar, burning up with curiosity at what we are hiding here. Listen, it's the man's voice, under his shirt.

"This was done in the South Seas, when I was young," he said to us, "and the bigger I grow, the bigger the tree is. And now what next?" Then he put his shirt back, and stood up to be fixing an eye on the woman from Regina.

He was first to be waited on at Scarecrow Charlie's. Yes, he was first. This was a mystery of a man to that dark woman from Regina.

Now in these days before blasting began, they were fond of talking marriage on Mushrat, thinking of this woman from Regina, who was at the disposal of no man there. They were full of doubts and wonderments, when they would be idling together in Scarecrow Charlie's. But now one morning when they were idling there, Shoepack Sam must be yawning and saying to

them,

"Oh, my, this is the time now, before the sun is up, I'm glad I am not married. It's a pleasure to be a single man at this hour."

Heh! Heh! As a usual thing we are not gratified at all for this favor of heaven. A single man, Shoepack Sam was saying, would not have to be looking at the wreck of his wife in the morning; and this is when women were caught unawares in the gill-nets time is lowering for them.

"They are pale about the gills then," he said. "They are just drowned fish. They have stayed in the nets too long."

"No, it's not certain," said Rainbow Pete. "She might be pleasant-looking on the pillow with her hair adrift."

Then Shoepack told him that the salt water had leaked into his brains, what with his voyages.

"Still, this is a beautiful cheek," said Pete, speaking low, because she was moving about beyond the boards.

"These things are purchased," said Shoepack, scraping his feet together in yellow moosehides. "Listen to me, I have seen them in a long line, on her shelf, with many odors."

So they were talking together, and Rainbow Pete was putting his fingers to the flute and staring down the valley, where Throat River was twisting like a rag.

"I could have had a wife for speaking at Kicking Horse," he said.

"There is one for speaking now," said Shoepack.

"In a few days I go North," Rainbow Pete went muttering. "There is gold at Dungeon Creek. I have seen samples of this vein."

"She will be the less trouble to you then, if you are not satisfied on this question," said Shoepack Sam.

Then Rainbow Pete said he was not so certain of her, on questioning himself. He was a modest man.

"This palm-tree and the other designs you have not been speaking about will be enticing her," said Shoepack Sam. "But do not speak to her of going away at the time of asking her."

"This is wisdom," said Rainbow Pete, and he put his lips to the flute, to be giving us a touch of music.

This was a light reason for marriage, disn't it

seem? This was what Willis Countryman called a marriage of convenience, in the fashion of frogs. Ay! It was convenient to them to be married. He was a great reader—Willis.

So they were married, I'm telling you, but it's impossible to know what he said to her in speaking about it. They were married by the man called Justice of the Peace on Mushrat. This was before the blasting, and it was the first marriage on Mushrat.

Then they lived together in the little house she had chosen, sitting on the black ledge above Scarecrow Charlie's eating-place. Now it was a wonderment to Mushrat, to hear the sound of Rainbow Pete's old flute dropping from the dark ledge, by night, when they were taking their opinion of matrimony up there together, with a candle at the window.

But now look here, when Shoepack Sam came plucking him at the elbow, saying, "Was I right or was I wrong?" then Rainbow Pete stared at him with his eyes like drills, and he said to him, "You were curious and nothing more." Oh my, isn't this the perversity of married men.

They bore him a grudge on Mushrat, for his silence, because, disn't it seem, this was like a general marriage satisfying all men's souls. It was treasonable. Oh my, it was sailor's mischief

to be living on that ledge, and dropping nothing but notes from his greasy flute. These are sweet but they are hard to be turning into language.

Now one morning, when I saw him coming from the ledge with his bag of specimens over his shoulder, I saw without speaking to him that he was parching with his thirst for gold. He was going away into the bush, thinking no more of his new wife. Oh, he was a casual man.

"How is this?" I said. "Can she be left alone on the ledge?"

"Can she not?" said Rainbow Pete. "Old fellow, this is a substantial woman. She was alone before I came."

"This is not the same thing," I said.

"It is the same woman," said Rainbow Pete, "she will be missing nothing but the flute."

Oh my, wasn't the flute a little thing to reckon with. He went North, dreaming of gold, and here the matter they were thinking about was locked in his heart. They were angry with the man on Mushrat. This was not what they were looking for between friends. They were hoping to learn the result of the experiment; but this was vain.

When he was gone, I saw her looking down

into the valley, where the first shots were being fired in the rock. Ay, the sun was dazzling her eyes, but she dis not move, sitting as if her arms have been chopped from the shoulders.

Now it was not many days after this that the blasting was begun on Mushrat. Men came with instruments stamped by the government; these they pointed down the trail and drove stakes into the ground. These were great days on Mushrat. Oh yes, numbers of Swedes and Italians were in a desperate way monkeying with powder. It's a fetching business. In a week, look here, Scarecrow Charlie left his eating-place to go monkeying with powder like the others, and disn't he get a bolt of iron through his brain one morning? Oh, it's very much as if some one had pushed a broom-handle through his skull.

That dark woman from Regina was not dismayed. She ran the eating-place herself. This was a famous place: they heard of this as far West as Regina and they came here to work and eat, attracted by her. She was valuable to the contractors, bringing labor here. Disn't it seem an achievement for a married woman? Still, Rainbow Pete was not remembered after a time; and she was a dark beauty, with a reputation for not saying much.

My, my, these were golden days for Smash McGregor. I ponder over them, thinking what a business he had. He was paid by the contractors to be sorting out arms and legs, putting the short ones together in one box, and the long ones in another, marked with charcoal to be shipped. Oh, they were just gathering up parts of mortals in packing cases, dispatching them to Throat River Landing; and blood was leaking on the decks every way in little lines. They were unlikely consignments.

Then, my friend, there came one night a dark man wearing a red cap and here under his arm he had the instrument with strings. This was the Chief Contractor under the Government in this region. He was rich; at Winnipeg he had stabled many blood horses. Then they were clustering about him at Scarecrow Charlie's, asking him his name. This, he said, was Pal Yachy.

Oh my, now we knew him. This was the man who had given Pete his shape of a rainbow. Disn't it seem an unfortunate thing for him to be coming here? Still he did not know at first that this dark woman standing there was the wife of Rainbow Pete.

He went flashing at her with his teeth, the dark musician. Ay, he was better with the music than Rainbow Pete's old flute. He sang, plucking this

instrument, with a jolly face. Heh! Heh! She leaned over the bar, looking at him, and dreaming of the prairies.

Then they told him that this woman was the wife of Rainbow Pete.

"Aha," he said, "but, my friends, a rainbow is not for very long. It is beautiful, but look, it vanishes in air."

Was he afraid, without saying so? That I can not tell you. Still he stayed on Mushrat. He was the destroyer of his countrymen. They blew themselves to pieces in his service, coming in great numbers when he crooked his finger.

Then my friend, he made himself noticeable to that dark woman. He took his instrument to the ledge and sang to her.

This I know from Willis Countryman who lived near that place. He told me that the man sang in the night a soft song and that the woman listened. Ay, she listened in the window, looking down into the valley where Throat River went roaring and the great Falls were like rags waving in the dark. Ay, she sat watching the River come out of the North, where Rainbow Pete was cruising after gold.

This Willis Countryman I'm telling you about

was a fine man in his old age for reading. Oh, it was not easy talking to the man, with his muttering and muttering and his chin down firm intil the book. When he had his shack on Mouse Island the fire jumped over from the wind-rows they were burning in a right of way. What next? Disn't he put his furs in a canoe to sink in the lee of the island, and there he went on reading in the night with his chin out of water, and the light from his house blazing and lighting up the book in his fist. Oh my, he was great for reading, Willis.

Well, here, one night he came telling me about some queer women on a beach, singing. "Ay! It was impossible to keep away from them while they were at it. What is their name again?"

He made a prolonged effort to remember, sighed painfully, fixed his gaze. I brought him back as if from a fit of epilepsy by the interjection of the word, "Siren."

"Ay," he said, slowly and sadly. "The men put wax in their ears—" Now mark this. The day after I was hearing this of Willis, the woman put her hand on my arm as I was passing the ledge.

"You are a friend of my husband's," she whispered to me.

"What now?" I said.

"Will he come back to me, I wonder?" she said, looking in the valley.

"This is a long business, searching for gold," I went muttering.

"No man can say I have been unfaithful to him," she said to me, the fierce woman, breathing through her teeth. "I have been speaking to no man."

"This is certain," I said to her.

"If he dis not come according to my dream I am a lost woman, by this way of going on," she said to me.

How is this? There were tears flowing on the face, while she was telling me she was bewitched by the singing of Pal Yachy.

Oh, at first she would just lie listening there, but now the man with his sweet voice was drawing her from her bed, to come putting aside the scented bottles and leaning in the window.

Now I said, "My good woman, I am an old man with knowledge of the world. This man is a —what's this again—siren. He has a fatal voice. You must simply put wax in your ears not to hear it when he comes."

What next? Disn't she confess to me that she

has listened to him too many times to be deaf to him. No, she must watch the valley when he comes singing his rich song; her cheeks were wet then, and the wind went shaking her. No, this was not a moment for wax. I was an old man. She prevailed upon me to sit outside her window in a chair, watching for him.

"Oh, I am afraid," she whispered to me, "being alone so high out of the valley."

There I sat by night, hearing sounds of thunder below this crag. Pebbles came rattling on the window, the rapid was choked with flying rock. They were growing rich, these madmen monkeying with powder. The government sent them gold in sacks, to pay those who were left for the lives that had been lost.

They were mad; they tumbled champagne out of bottles into tubs, frisking about in it. They had heard that this was done with money.

But Pal Yachy was more foolish. He came singing; oh my, this was a powerful song, ringing against the ledges. This was a fantastic Italian, singing like an angel to the deserted woman. Her eyes were dark; the breast heaved. Oh, these sweet notes were never lost on her.

Now at this time, too, Pal Yachy offered a great prize for the first child to be born on Mushrat.

He came grinning under his red cap, saying to us, "There are so many dying, should there not be a prize offered for new life?"

He had learned what manner the woman had of surprising Rainbow Pete. It was a great prize he offered. When the child was born, he stopped the monkeying with powder in the valley for that day, though this too was a great loss in money. The woman pleased him.

Then, my friend, on the night of the day when this child was born, Rainbow Pete came back into the valley. Oh my, it's plain to us, looking at the man under the stars, he has been toughing it. Ay! His beard was tangled, the great bones were rising on his bare chest, his fingers twitched as he was drooping over us. Now I'm telling you his eyes were dim, and the sun had bleached his mustache the color of a lemon. There he stood before us, holding the bag over his shoulder, while he went scratching his bold nose like the picture of a pirate. Still he was gentle in the eye; he was mild in misfortune. Oh, this sailorman was just used to toughing it.

Look here, there he stopped, in the shadow of this great rock I'm speaking of, and these men of Mushrat came asking him if he had made the grade. They were fresh from dipping their carcasses in champagne. They were sparkling

men, not accountable to themselves.

"Have you made the grade?" they went bawling to him. This is to say, had he struck gold?

"Oh, there's gold enough," Pete went rumbling at them, "but it's too far to the North, mate. There's no taickle made for getting purchase on it."

"So I am thinking," said the little medicine-man, McGregor. "It lies still at the foot of the rainbow."

"Ay," said Rainbow Pete; but with this word we went thinking of Pal Yachy. Still we did not speak the name of that Italian. No, this would be stronger in the ear of that sailorman than gunpowder in the valley.

"Look you here," said Rainbow Pete. "I am starving. I have not eaten in two days. This is the curse falling on me for hunting gold."

Then they laughed, these mad rockmen, mocking him with their eyes. Their eyes were twitching; there was powder in the corners of them.

"Are you not master of the eating-place?" they howled at him. "Look, there it stands; is not your wife alone in it?"

"Oh my, oh my, he stood looking at them with a ghastly face. Disn't he seem the casual man? It's as if he had forgotten that woman. He had no memories at all.

"My wife," said the rainbow-man.

"Look," said Shoepack Sam—oh, he remembered treason well—"he is forgetful that he has a wife on Mushrat."

This was so appearedly. There he stood in the blue star-shine, fingering his flute to bring her back to mind. Now, I thought, he will be asking what description of wife is this answering to my name on Mushrat? Oh, man is careless in appointing himself among various women.

Now, my friend, Rainbow Pete, blew a note on his flute to settle the thing clear in his mind. Oh, he was not too brisk in looking up at the black ledge, with the candle in the window. Now he was taken by the knees. This is not the convenient part of a marriage of convenience. No. But Shoepack Sam was waving a hand to us to be telling the man nothing of destiny at that moment.

"Come," he said, "the flute is nothing now. There must be more song than this, by what is going on."

Here he took Rainbow by the elbow, telling him to come and eat at Scarecrow Charlie's, for he will need his strength.

"I am in charge here for the day," said Shoepack.

"How is this?" said Rainbow, whispering.

They went laughing on all sides of him. Oh the demons, they were cackling while he sat devouring a great moose joint, until he was close to braining them with the yellow ball of the joint. He went eating like a timber-wolf from Great Bear.

"This is the palm-tree man," they sang in his ear. "Oh, why is it he grew no cocoanuts stumbling on that lost trail? Isn't it convenient for the man he is married this night?"

Oh, they were full of mischief with him, remembering the secret face he had for them in the days of his experiment.

"Drink this," said Shoepack Sam. There he put champagne in a glass before him. Oh, they were careful of the man.

"Here, take my hand, and let me see if strength is coming back," said Shoepack. "What is a rainbow without colors?"

Then the little medicine-man took his pulse, kneeling on the floor beside him. Oh, the great sailor was puzzled. Still he drank what was in the glass before him and after this he put his mustache into his mouth, sipping it by chance.

"What is this you are preparing?" he said, pointing his bold nose to them. Oh, the eyes were like a dreamer's: he was a child to appearances.

Then they went speaking to him of the stringed instrument they had heard humming on the ledge, speaking another language than his own.

"This is a wife to be defended," said Shoepack Sam, padding there with his yellow shoepacks bringing another drink. But still there was no word of Pal Yachy. That black Italian was not popular at Throat River.

"Now I see you are speaking of another man," said Rainbow Pete. Then Shoepack Sam went roaring, it was time for honest men to speak, when an honest woman was being taken by a voice.

"Wait," said Rainbow Pete, with his thumb in the foam, "this is unlikely she will want me cruising in, with another man singing in her ear."

Oh my, he was a considerate man, he was a natural husband, thinking of his wife's feelings.

"Are you a man?" said Smash McGregor. "Here she has fed you when you were starving —this is her food you have been eating. Will you pass this ledge, leaving her to fortune?"

Rainbow Pete went putting the edge of the cruiser's ax to his twisted thumb.

"I come to her in my shoes only," he said. "This is not what she will be wanting. I have no gold."

They were shouting to him to have no thought of that, those mad rockmen. There would be gold in plenty. There would be gold. Only go up on the ledge.

"Heard you nothing of the prize?" they bawled to him, the mischief makers. "Oh, there will be no lack of money."

"How is this?" said Rainbow Pete. But they would not be answering him. No! No! They went tumbling him out of Scarecrow Charlie's place, and making for the ledge with him. Oh my, the mystified man. This was a great shameface he had behind his mustache.

"I am much altered for the worse," he went muttering to us. "She will think nothing of me

now."

"There is still time for constancy," said Shoepack Sam. "Do not lose hope."

Then he told them to be quiet, looking up at the dark ledge where the woman lay.

"Old Greyback," said Rainbow Pete, whispering to me, "I am mistrustful of this moment."

"Hist!" said McGregor, "that was the sound of his string. He will be beginning now."

Ay, the voice began. We were wooden men, in rows, listening to this Italian singing here a golden dream between his teeth.

"Who is this man?" said Rainbow Pete. Heh! Heh! Had he not heard this voice before? We were dumb. Oh, this was wild, this was sweet, the long cry of the man over the deep valley. He sang in his throat, saying to the woman there would be no returning. The night was blue. I'm telling you. He was a cunning beggar, Pal Yachy, for making the stars burn in their sockets.

Now I saw him lift his arm to his head, the wicked sailor, listening to the tune of his enemy. Ay, this was the man who had fashioned him in the form of a rainbow. Still he did not know it,

dreaming on his feet. He went swaying like a poplar.

Look, I am an old man, but I stood thinking of my airly days. Yes, yes. My brain was heavy. Oh, it was a sweet dagger here twisting in the soul of man. I went picturing the deep snow to me, and the dark spruces of the North; oh, the roses are speaking to me again from this cheek that has been gone from me so long.

Heh! Heh! I should not be speaking of this. It was a sorrowful harp, the voice of that fiend. It was like the wind following the eddy into Lookout Cavern. Now it went choking that great sailor at the throat; look, he was mild, he was a simple man for crying. The tears rolled in his cheek, they sparkled there like the champagne.

Oh my, the song was done.

He was dumb, the great sailor, twisting his mustache.

"Come now," said McGregor, "quick, he will be going into the house."

They were gulls for diving at the ledge; but Rainbow Pete held out his arm, stopping them.

"Stand away," he said, "I will be going into my house with old Greyback here and no other."

This arm was not yet withered he had. No! They stayed in their tracks, as we were going up the ledge.

The door was open of that house; the stringed instrument was laid against it. Ay, the strings were humming still, the song was spinning round like a leaf in the cavern of it; but the black Italian was inside.

Yes, he had gone before into the chamber where she was lying, with his beautiful smile.

The door here was open. Look, by candle-light I saw her lying in a red blanket, staring at the notable singer. Yes, I saw the bottles containing odors standing in a row. There was scent in the room. Now she closed her eyes, this prairie woman, lying under him like death. My friend, there is no doubt she was beautiful upon the pillow without the aid of scented bottles.

Heh! I felt him quiver, this great sailor, when he saw Pal Yachy standing there, but I put my arms about him whispering to him to wait. It was dark where we were, there was a light from the stove only.

Oh my, there the dark Italian was glittering and heaving; he went holding in his fist a canvas sack stamped by the Government, containing the proper weight of gold.

"This is his weight in gold," he said, and there he laid it at her knees. Still her eyes were closed against that demon of a singer, as he went saying, "But now my dear one, there must be no more talk of husbands. Ha! ha! they are like smoke, these husbands. When it has drifted, there must be new fire. So they say in my country."

She lay, not speaking to him, with the sack of gold heavy against her knees.

"Is this plain?" said that Italian. Look now, Rainbow Pete is in his very shadow. Ay, in the shadow of this man who had fashioned him like a rainbow.

"This is a great sum," said Pal Yachy, never looking behind him. "To this must be added the silence of one day in the valley."

"The silence," she went whispering, "the silence."

Ha! ha! this was not so dangerous as song. She was leaning on her elbow, clutching the red blanket to her throat, with her long fingers twisting at the bag. Now my heart stumbled. Oh now, I thought, the gold is heavy against her; this is a misfortunate time to be forsaking her husband, isn't it? Look, the shadow was deeper in the cheek of this sailor. He saw nothing, I

fancied, but the gold lying on the blanket.

What next I knew? Here was McGregor in his yellow skull, whispering,

"Is this the gold then at the foot of the rainbow? This is fool's gold where the heart is concerned."

Then, my friend, she threw it clear of the bed. Ay! I heard it falling on the ledge there, but at this time she did not know that Rainbow Pete was in the room.

When she had thrown it, then she saw him, standing behind that demon of a singer. Her eyes were strange then. By the expression of her eyes Pal Yachy saw that he was doomed. He was like a frozen man.

"Wait now," said Rainbow Pete, "am I in my house here?"

"Am I not your wife?" cried the dark woman from Regina.

Oh, the pleasant sailor. The song had touched him.

"Look now," he said to Pal Yachy, "you made a rainbow of me in the beginning. Do you bring gold here now to plant at my feet, generous man?"

My, my, this fantastic Italian knew that words were wasted now. He was like a snake with his sting. But Rainbow Pete was not an easy man. He broke the arm with one twist, look, the knife went spinning on the ledge. And at this moment the blasting in the rock began again below the ledge. They were at it again, monkeying with powder. Oh, it was death they were speaking to down there. It was like a battle between giants going on, there were thunders and red gleams in the black valley; and the candle-flame went shivering with the great noises.

"Here," said Rainbow Pete, "I will scatter you like the rocks of the valley."

Oh, the righteous man. Isn't it a strange consideration, the voice of Pal Yachy moving this crooked sailor to good deeds? Ay! He was a noble man, hurling the Italian from the house by his ears. Oh, it's a circumstance to be puzzling over. He threw the gold after him. Ay, the gold after—like dirt; and here the clothes hung loose on his own body where he had been starving in the search for bags like that.

Now, as he went kneeling by his wife, he discovered his son, by the crowing under the blanket.

"Look here at the little nipper, old Greyback," he said, "come a little way into the room. Look

now, at the fat back for putting a little palm-tree on, while he is young. This is truth, old fellow, here is true gold lying at the foot of the rainbow, according to the prophecy."

Our old friend stopped to breathe and blink.

"He had staked this claim but he had never worked it," he said solemnly. But isn't it strange, the same man who had been fashioning him like a rainbow, should be pointing out the gold to him. Oh, there's no doubt Pal Yachy was defeated in the end by his own voice—

He went away that night, leaving all to the sub-contractors. Heh! He was not seen on Mushrat again. Still he had a remarkable voice. Many times afterward I have heard Rainbow Pete playing on his flute—this is in the evening when the ledge is quiet—but this is not the same thing. No, no, he could never bewitch her with his music, she must love him for his intention only, to be charming her. Ay! This is safer.

GET READY THE WREATHS[14]

By FANNIE HURST

From *The Cosmopolitan Magazine*

Where St. Louis begins to peter out into brick-and limestone-kilns and great scars of unworked and overworked quarries, the first and more unpretentious of its suburbs take up—Benson, Maplehurst, and Ridgeway Heights intervening with one-story brick cottages and two-story packing-cases—between the smoke of the city and the carefully parked Queen Anne quietude of Glenwood and Croton Grove.

Over Benson hangs a white haze of limestone, gritty with train and foundry smoke. At night, the lime-kilns, spotted with white deposits, burn redly, showing through their open doors like great, inflamed diphtheretic throats, tongues of flame bursting and licking-out.

Winchester Road, which runs out from the heart of the city to string these towns together, is paved with brick, and its traffic, for the most part, is the great tin-tired dump-carts of the quarries and steel interurban electric cars, which hum so heavily that even the windows of outlying cottages titillate.

For blocks, from Benson to Maplehurst and from Maplehurst to Ridgeway Heights, Winchester Road repeats itself in terms of the

butcher, the baker, the corner saloon. A feed store. A monument-and stone-cutter. A confectioner. A general-merchandise store, with a glass case of men's collars outside the entrance. The butcher, the baker, the corner saloon.

At Benson, where this highway cuts through, the city, wreathed in smoke, and a great oceanic stretch of roofs are in easy view, and at closer range, an outlying section of public asylums for the city's discard of its debility and its senility.

Jutting a story above the one-storied march of Winchester Road, The Convenience Merchandise Corner, Benson, overlooks, from the southeast up-stairs window, a remote view of the City Hospital, the Ferris wheel of an amusement-park, and on clear days, the oceanic waves of roof. Below, within the store, that view is entirely obliterated by a brace of shelves built across the corresponding window and brilliantly stacked with ribbons of a score of colors and as many widths. A considerable flow of daylight thus diverted, The Convenience Merchandise Corner, even of early afternoon, fades out into half-discernible corners; a rear-wall display of overalls and striped denim coats crowded back into indefinitude, the haberdashery counter, with a giant gilt shirt-stud suspended above, hardly more outstanding.

Even the notions and dry-goods, flanking the right wall in stacks and bolts, merge into blur, the outline of a white-sateen and corseted woman's torso surmounting the top-most of the shelves with bold curvature.

With spring sunshine even hot against the steel rails of Winchester Road, and awnings drawn against its inroads into the window display, Mrs. Shila Coblenz, routing gloom, reached up tiptoe across the haberdashery counter for the suspended chain of a cluster of bulbs, the red of exertion rising up the taut line of throat and lifted chin.

"A little light on the subject, Milt."

"Let me, Mrs. C."

Facing her from the outer side of the counter, Mr. Milton Bauer stretched also, his well-pressed, pin-checked coat crawling up.

All things swam out into the glow. The great suspended stud; the background of shelves and boxes; the scissors-like overalls against the wall; a clothes-line of children's factory-made print frocks; a center-bin of women's untrimmed hats; a headless dummy beside the door, enveloped in a long-sleeved gingham apron.

Beneath the dome of the wooden stud, Mrs.

Shila Coblenz, of not too fulsome but the hour-glass proportions of two decades ago, smiled, her black eyes, ever so quick to dart, receding slightly as the cheeks lifted.

"Two twenty-five, Milt, for those ribbed assorted sizes and reenforced heels. Leave or take. Bergdorff & Sloan will quote me the whole mill at that price."

With his chest across the counter and legs out violently behind, Mr. Bauer flung up a glance from his order-pad.

"Have a heart, Mrs. C. I'm getting two forty for that stocking from every house in town. The factory can't turn out the orders fast enough at that price. An up-to-date woman like you mustn't make a noise like before the war."

"Leave or take."

"You could shave an egg," he said.

"And rush up those printed lawns. There was two in this morning, sniffing around for spring dimities."

"Any cotton goods? Next month this time, you'll be paying an advance of four cents on percales."

"Stocked."

"Can't tempt you with them wash silks, Mrs. C.? Neatest little article on the market to-day."

"No demand. They finger it up, and then buy the cotton stuffs. Every time I forget my trade hacks rock instead of clips bonds for its spending-money, I get stung."

"This here wash silk, Mrs. C., would—"

"Send me up a dress-pattern off this coral-pink sample for Selene."

"This here dark mulberry, Mrs. C., would suit you something immense."

"That'll be about all."

He flopped shut his book, snapping a rubber band about it and inserting it in an inner coat pocket.

"You ought to stick to them dark, winy shades, Mrs. C. With your coloring and black hair and eyes, they bring you out like a Gipsy. Never seen you look better than at the Y. M. H. A. entertainment."

Quick color flowed down her open throat and into her shirtwaist. It was as if the platitude merged with the very corpuscles of a blush that sank down into thirsty soil.

"You boys," she said, "come out here and throw in a jolly with every bill of goods. I'll take a good fat discount instead."

"Fact. Never seen you look better. When you got out on the floor in that stamp-your-foot kind of dance with old man Shulof, your hand on your hip and your head jerking it up, there wasn't a girl on the floor, your own daughter included, could touch you, and I'm giving it to you straight."

"That old thing! It's a Russian folk-dance my mother taught me the first year we were in this country. I was three years old then, and, when she got just crazy with homesickness, we used to dance it to each other evenings on the kitchen floor."

"Say, have you heard the news?"

"No."

"Guess."

"Can't."

"Hammerstein is bringing over the crowned heads of Europe for vaudeville."

Mrs. Coblenz moved back a step, her mouth falling open.

"Why—Milton Bauer—in the old country a man could be strung up for saying less than that!"

"That didn't get across. Try another. A Frenchman and his wife were traveling in Russia, and—"

"If—if you had an old mother like mine upstairs, Milton, eating out her heart and her days and her weeks and her months over a husband's grave somewhere in Siberia and a son's grave somewhere in Kishinef, you wouldn't see the joke, neither."

Mr. Bauer executed a self-administered pat sharply against the back of his hand.

"Keeper," he said, "put me in the brain-ward. I —I'm sorry, Mrs. C., so help me! Didn't mean to. How is your mother, Mrs. C.? Seems to me, at the dance the other night, Selene said she was fine and dandy."

"Selene ain't the best judge of her poor old grandmother. It's hard for a young girl to have patience for old age sitting and chewing all day over the past. It's right pitiful the way her grandmother knows it, too, and makes herself talk English all the time to please the child and tries to perk up for her. Selene, thank God, ain't suffered, and can't sympathize!"

"What's ailing her, Mrs. C.? I kinda miss seeing the old lady sitting down here in the store."

"It's the last year or so, Milt. Just like all of a sudden, a woman as active as mamma always was, her health and—her mind kind of went off with a pop."

"Thu! Thu!"

"Doctor says with care she can live for years, but—but it seems terrible the way her—poor mind keeps skipping back. Past all these thirty years in America to—even weeks before I was born. The night they—took my father off to Siberia, with his bare feet in the snow—for distributing papers they found on him—papers that used the word '*svoboda*'—'freedom.' And the time, ten years later—they shot down my brother right in front of her for—the same reason. She keeps living it over—living it over till I—could die."

"Say, ain't that just a shame, though!"

"Living it, and living it, and living it! The night with me, a heavy three-year-old, in her arms that she got us to the border, dragging a pack of linens with her! The night my father's feet were bleeding in the snow, when they took him! How with me a kid in the crib, my—my brother's face

was crushed in—with a heel and a spur—all night, sometimes, she cries in her sleep—begging to go back to find the graves. All day she sits making raffia wreaths to take back—making wreaths—making wreaths!"

"Say, ain't that tough!"

"It's a godsend she's got the eyes to do it. It's wonderful the way she reads—in English, too. There ain't a daily she misses. Without them and the wreaths—I dunno—I just dunno. Is—is it any wonder, Milt, I—I can't see the joke?"

"My God, no!"

"I'll get her back, though."

"Why, you—she can't get back there, Mrs. C."

"There's a way. Nobody can tell me there's not. Before the war—before she got like this, seven hundred dollars would have done it for both of us—and it will again, after the war. She's got the bank-book, and every week that I can squeeze out above expenses, she sees the entry for herself. I'll get her back. There's a way lying around somewhere. God knows why she should eat out her heart to go back—but she wants it. God, how she wants it!"

"Poor old dame!"

"You boys guy me with my close-fisted buying these last two years. It's up to me, Milt, to squeeze this old shebang dry. There's not much more than a living in it at best, and now with Selene grown up and naturally wanting to have it like other girls, it ain't always easy to see my way clear. But I'll do it, if I got to trust the store for a year to a child like Selene. I'll get her back."

"You can call on me, Mrs. C., to keep my eye on things while you're gone."

"You boys are one crowd of true blues, all right. There ain't a city salesman comes out here I wouldn't trust to the limit."

"You just try me out."

"Why, just to show you how a woman don't know many real friends she has got, why—even Mark Haas, of the Mound City Silk Company, a firm I don't do two hundred dollars' worth of business with a year, I wish you could have heard him the other night at the Y. M. H. A., a man you know for yourself just comes here to be sociable with the trade."

"Fine fellow, Mark Haas!"

"'When the time comes, Mrs. Coblenz,' he says, 'that you want to make that trip, just you let me

know. Before the war there wasn't a year I didn't cross the water twice, maybe three times, for the firm. I don't know there's much I can do; it ain't so easy to arrange for Russia, but, just the same, you let me know when you're ready to make that trip.' Just like that he said it. That from Mark Haas!"

"And a man like Haas don't talk that way if he don't mean it."

"Mind you, not a hundred dollars a year business with him. I haven't got the demands for silks."

"That wash silk I'm telling you about though, Mrs. C., does up like a—"

"There's ma thumping with the poker on the upstairs floor. When it's closing-time, she begins to get restless. I—I wish Selene would come in. She went out with Lester Goldmark in his little flivver, and I get nervous about automobiles."

Mr. Bauer slid an open-face watch from his waistcoat.

"Good Lord, five-forty, and I've just got time to sell the Maplehurst Emporium a bill of goods!"

"Good-night, Milt; and mind you put up that order of assorted neckwear yourself. Greens in ready-tieds are good sellers for this time of the

year, and put in some reds and purples for the teamsters."

"No sooner said than done."

"And come out for supper some Sunday night, Milt. It does mamma good to have young people around."

"I'm yours."

"Good-night, Milt."

He reached across the counter, placing his hand over hers.

"Good-night, Mrs. C.," he said, a note lower in his throat; "and remember, that call-on-me stuff wasn't just conversation."

"Good-night, Milt," said Mrs. Coblenz, a coating of husk over her own voice and sliding her hand out from beneath, to top his. "You—you're all right!"

Upstairs, in a too tufted and too crowded room directly over the frontal half of the store, the window overlooking the remote sea of city was turning taupe, the dusk of early spring, which is faintly tinged with violet, invading. Beside the stove, a base-burner with faint fire showing

through its mica, the identity of her figure merged with the fat upholstery of the chair, except where the faint pink through the mica lighted up old flesh, Mrs. Miriam Horowitz, full of years and senile with them, wove with grasses, the écru of her own skin, wreaths that had mounted to a great stack in a bedroom cupboard.

A clock, with a little wheeze and burring attached to each chime, rang six, and upon it, Mrs. Coblenz, breathing from a climb, opened the door.

"Ma, why didn't you rap for Katie to come up and light the gas? You'll ruin your eyes, dearie."

She found out a match, immediately lighting two jets of a center-chandelier, turning them down from singing, drawing the shades of the two front and the southeast windows, stooping over the upholstered chair to imprint a light kiss.

"A fine day, mamma. There'll be an entry this week. Fifty dollars and thirteen cents and another call for garden implements. I think I'll lay in a hardware line after we—we get back. I can use the lower shelf of the china-table, eh, ma?"

Mrs. Horowitz, whose face, the color of old linen in the yellowing, emerged rather startling

from the still black hair strained back from it, lay back in her chair, turning her profile against the upholstered back, half a wreath and a trail of raffia sliding to the floor. It was as if age had sapped from beneath the skin, so that every curve had collapsed to bagginess, the cheeks and the underchin sagging with too much skin. Even the hands were crinkled like too large gloves, a wide, curiously etched marriage band hanging loosely from the third finger.

Mrs. Coblenz stooped, recovering the wreath.

"Say, mamma, this one is a beauty! That's a new weave, ain't it? Here, work some more, dearie—till Selene comes with your evening papers."

With her profile still to the chair-back, a tear oozed down the corrugated surface of Mrs. Horowitz's cheek. Another.

"Now, mamma! Now, mamma!"

"I got a heaviness—here—inside. I got a heaviness—"

Mrs. Coblenz slid down to her knees beside the chair.

"Now, mamma; shame on my little mamma! Is that the way to act when Shila comes up after a good day? Ain't we got just lots to be thankful

for, the business growing and the bank-book growing, and our Selene on top? Shame on mamma!"

"I got a heaviness—here—inside—here."

Mrs. Coblenz reached up for the old hand, patting it.

"It's nothing, mamma—a little nervousness."

"I'm an old woman. I—"

"And just think, Shila's mamma, Mark Haas is going to get us letters and passports and—"

"My son—my boy—his father before him—"

"Mamma—mamma, please don't let a spell come on! It's all right. Shila's going to fix it. Any day now, maybe—"

"You'm a good girl. You'm a good girl, Shila." Tears were coursing down to a mouth that was constantly wry with the taste of them.

"And you're a good mother, mamma. Nobody knows better than me how good."

"You'm a good girl, Shila."

"I was thinking last night, mamma, waiting up for Selene—just thinking how all the good you've done ought to keep your mind off the

spells, dearie."

"My son—"

"Why, a woman with as much good to remember as you've got oughtn't to have time for spells. I got to thinking about Coblenz to-day, mamma, how—you never did want him, and when I—I went and did it anyway, and made my mistake, you stood by me to—to the day he died. Never throwing anything up to me! Never nothing but my good little mother, working her hands to the bone after he got us out here to help meet the debts he left us. Ain't that a satisfaction for you to be able to sit and think, mamma, how you helped—"

"His feet—blood from my heart in the snow—blood from my heart!"

"The past is gone, darling. What's the use tearing yourself to pieces with it? Them years in New York, when it was a fight even for bread, and them years here trying to raise Selene and get the business on a footing, you didn't have time to brood then, mamma. That's why, dearie, if only you'll keep yourself busy with something—the wreaths—the—"

"His feet—blood from my—"

"But I'm going to take you back, mamma. To

papa's grave. To Aylorff's. But don't eat your heart out until it comes, darling. I'm going to take you back, mamma, with every wreath in the stack; only, you mustn't eat out your heart in spells. You mustn't, mamma; you mustn't."

Sobs rumbled up through Mrs. Horowitz, which her hand to her mouth tried to constrict.

"For his people he died. The papers—I begged he should burn them—he couldn't—I begged he should keep in his hate—he couldn't—in the square he talked it—the soldiers—he died for his people—they got him—the soldiers—his feet in the snow when they took him—the blood in the snow—O my God—my—God!"

"Mamma, darling, please don't go over it all again. What's the use making yourself sick? Please!"

She was well forward in her chair now, winding her dry hands one over the other with a small rotary motion.

"I was rocking—Shila-baby in my lap—stirring on the fire black lentils for my boy—black lentils—he—"

"Mamma!"

"My boy. Like his father before him. My—"

"Mamma, please! Selene is coming any minute now. You know how she hates it. Don't let yourself think back, mamma. A little will-power, the doctor says, is all you need. Think of to-morrow, mamma; maybe, if you want, you can come down and sit in the store awhile and __"

"I was rocking. O my God, I was rocking, and __"

"Don't get to it—mamma, please! Don't rock yourself that way! You'll get yourself dizzy. Don't, ma; don't!"

"Outside—my boy—the holler—O God, in my ears all my life! My boy—the papers—the swords—Aylorff—Aylorff—"

"Shh-h-h—mamma—"

"It came through his heart out the back—a blade with two sides—out the back when I opened the door—the spur in his face when he fell—Shila—the spur in his face—the beautiful face of my boy—my Aylorff—my husband before him—that died to make free!" And fell back, bathed in the sweat of the terrific hiccoughing of sobs.

"Mamma, mamma—my God! What shall we do? These spells! You'll kill yourself, darling.

I'm going to take you back, dearie—ain't that enough? I promise. I promise. You mustn't, mamma! These spells—- they ain't good for a young girl like Selene to hear. Mamma, ain't you got your own Shila—your own Selene? Ain't that something? Ain't it? Ain't it?"

Large drops of sweat had come out and a state of exhaustion that swept completely over, prostrating the huddled form in the chair.

With her arms twined about the immediately supporting form of her daughter, her entire weight relaxed, and footsteps that dragged without lift, one after the other, Mrs. Horowitz groped out, one hand feeling in advance, into the gloom of a room adjoining.

"Rest! O my God, rest!"

"Yes, yes, mamma; lean on me."

"My—bed."

"Yes, yes, darling."

"Bed."

Her voice had died now to a whimper that lay on the room after she had passed out of it.

When Selene Coblenz, with a gust that swept

the room, sucking the lace curtains back against the panes, flung open the door upon that chromatic scene, the two jets of gas were singing softly into its silence, and, within the nickel-trimmed base-burner, the pink mica had cooled to gray. Sweeping open that door, she closed it softly, standing for the moment against it, her hand crossed in back and on the knob. It was as if standing there with her head cocked and beneath a shadowy blue sailor-hat, a smile coming out, something within her was playing, sweetly insistent to be heard. Philomela, at the first sound of her nightingale self, must have stood thus, trembling with melody. Opposite her, above the crowded mantelpiece and surmounted by a raffia wreath, the enlarged-crayon gaze of her deceased maternal grandparent, abetted by a horrible device of photography, followed her, his eyes focusing the entire room at a glance. Impervious to that scrutiny, Miss Coblenz moved a tiptoe step or two further into the room, lifting off her hat, staring and smiling through a three-shelved cabinet of knick-knacks at what she saw far beyond. Beneath the two jets, high lights in her hair came out, bronze showing through the brown waves and the patches of curls brought out over her cheeks.

In her dark-blue dress with the row of silver

buttons down what was hip before the hipless age, the chest sufficiently concave and the silhouette a mere stroke of hard pencil, Miss Selene Coblenz measured up and down to America's Venus de Milo, whose chief curvature is of the spine. Slim-etched, and that slimness enhanced by a conscious kind of collapse beneath the blue-silk girdle that reached up halfway to her throat, hers were those proportions which strong women, eschewing the sweetmeat, would earn by the sweat of the Turkish bath.

When Miss Coblenz caught her eye in the square of mirror above the mantelpiece, her hands flew to her cheeks to feel of their redness. They were soft cheeks, smooth with the pollen of youth, and hands still casing them, she moved another step toward the portièred door.

"Mamma!"

Mrs. Coblenz emerged immediately, finger up for silence, kissing her daughter on the little spray of cheek-curls.

"Shh-h-h! Gramaw just had a terrible spell."

She dropped down into the upholstered chair beside the base-burner, the pink and moisture of exertion out in her face, took to fanning herself with the end of a face-towel flung across her

arm.

"Poor gramaw!" she said. "Poor gramaw!"

Miss Coblenz sat down on the edge of a slim, home-gilded chair, and took to gathering the blue-silk dress into little plaits at her knee.

"Of course—if you don't want to know where I've been—or anything—"

Mrs. Coblenz jerked herself to the moment.

"Did mamma's girl have a good time? Look at your dress all dusty! You oughtn't to wear you best in that little flivver."

Suddenly Miss Coblenz raised her eyes, her red mouth bunched, her eyes all iris.

"Of course—if you don't want to know—anything."

At that large, brilliant gaze, Mrs. Coblenz leaned forward, quickened.

"Why, Selene!"

"Well, why—why don't you ask me something?"

"Why I—I dunno, honey, did—did you and Lester have a nice ride?"

There hung a slight pause, and then a swift

moving and crumpling-up of Miss Coblenz on the floor beside her mother's knee.

"You know—only, you won't ask."

With her hand light upon her daughter's hair, Mrs. Coblenz leaned forward, her bosom rising to faster breathing.

"Why—Selene—I why—"

"We—we were speeding along and—all of a sudden—out of a clear sky—he—he popped. He wants it in June—so we can make it our honeymoon to his new territory out in Oklahoma. He knew he was going to pop, he said, ever since the first night he saw me at the Y. M. H. A. He says to his uncle Mark, the very next day in the store, he says to him, 'Uncle Mark,' he says, 'I've met *the* little girl.' He says he thinks more of my little finger than all of his regular crowd of girls in town put together. He wants to live in one of the built-in-bed flats on Wasserman Avenue, like all the swell young marrieds. He's making twenty-six hundred now, mamma, and if he makes good in the new Oklahoma territory, his uncle Mark is—is going to take care of him better. Ain't it like a dream, mamma—your little Selene all of a sudden in with—the somebodys?"

Immediately tears were already finding

staggering procession down Mrs. Coblenz' face, her hovering arms completely encircling the slight figure at her feet.

"My little girl! My little Selene! My all!"

"I'll be marrying into one of the best families in town, ma. A girl who marries a nephew of Mark Haas can hold up her head with the best of them. There's not a boy in town with a better future than Lester. Like Lester says, everything his uncle Mark touches turns to gold, and he's already touched Lester. One of the best known men on Washington Avenue for his blood-uncle, and on his poor dead father's side related to the Katz & Harberger Harbergers. Was I right, mamma, when I said if you'd only let me stop school, I'd show you? Was I right, momsie?"

"My baby! It's like I can't realize it. So young!"

"He took the measure of my finger, mamma, with a piece of string. A diamond, he says, not too flashy, but neat."

"We have 'em, and we suffer for 'em, and we lose 'em."

"He's going to trade in the flivver for a chummy roadster, and—"

"Oh, darling, it's like I can't bear it!"

At that, Miss Coblenz sat back on her tall wooden heels, mauve spats crinkling.

"Well, you're a merry little future mother-in-law, momsie."

"It ain't that, baby. I'm happy that my girl has got herself up in the world with a fine upright boy like Lester; only—you can't understand, babe, till you've got something of your own flesh and blood that belongs to you, that I—I couldn't feel anything except that a piece of my heart was going if—if it was a king you was marrying."

"Now, momsie, it's not like I was moving a thousand miles away. You can be glad I don't have to go far, to New York or to Cleveland, like Alma Yawitz."

"I am! I am!"

"Uncle—Uncle Mark, I guess, will furnish us up like he did Leon and Irma—only, I don't want mahogany—I want Circassian walnut. He gave them their flat-silver, too, Puritan design, for an engagement present. Think of it, mamma, me having that stuck-up Irma Sinsheimer for a relation! It always made her sore when I got chums with Amy at school and got my nose in it with the Acme crowd, and—and she'll change her tune now, I guess, me marrying her

husband's second cousin."

"Didn't Lester want to—to come in for a while, Selene, to—to see—me?"

Sitting there on her heels, Miss Coblenz looked away, answering with her face in profile.

"Yes; only—I—well if you want to know it, mamma, it's no fun for a girl to bring a boy like Lester up here in—in this crazy room all hung up with gramaw's wreaths and half the time her sitting out there in the dark looking in at us through the door and talking to herself."

"Gramaw's an old—"

"Is—it any wonder I'm down at Amy's half the time. How—do you think a girl feels to have gramaw keep hanging onto that old black wig of hers and not letting me take the crayons or wreaths down off the wall. In Lester's crowd, they don't know—nothing about Revolutionary stuff and—and persecutions. Amy's grandmother don't even talk with an accent, and Lester says his grandmother came from Alsace-Lorraine. That's French. They think only tailors and old-clothes men and—"

"Selene!"

"Well, they do. You—you're all right, mamma, as up to date as any of them, but how do you

think a girl feels with gramaw always harping right in front of everybody the—the way granpa was a revolutionist and was—was hustled off barefooted to Siberia like—like a tramp. And the way she was cooking black beans when—my uncle—died. Other girls' grandmothers don't tell everything they know. Alma Yawitz's grandmother wears lorgnettes, and you told me yourself they came from nearly the same part of the Pale as gramaw. But you don't hear them remembering it. Alma Yawitz says she's Alsace-Lorraine on both sides. People don't—tell everything they know. Anyway—where a girl's got herself as far as I have."

Through sobs that rocked her, Mrs. Coblenz looked down upon her daughter.

"Your poor old grandmother don't deserve that from you! In her day, she worked her hands to the bone for you. With—the kind of father you had, we—we might have died in the gutter but—for how she helped to keep us out, you ungrateful girl—your poor old grandmother that's suffered so terrible!"

"I know it, mamma, but so have other people suffered."

"She's old, Selene—old."

"I tell you it's the way you indulge her,

mamma. I've seen her sitting here as perk as you please, and the minute you come in the room, down goes her head like—like she was dying."

"It's her mind, Selene—that's going. That's why I feel if I could only get her back. She ain't old, gramaw ain't. If I could only get her back where she—could see for herself—the graves—is all she needs. All old people think of—the grave. It's eating her—eating her mind. Mark Haas is going to fix it for me after the war—maybe before—if he can. That's the only way poor gramaw can live—or die—happy, Selene. Now—now that my—my little girl ain't any longer my responsibility, I—I'm going to take her back—my little—girl"—her hand reached out, caressing the smooth head, her face projected forward and the eyes yearning down—"my all."

"It's you will be my responsibility now, ma."

"No! No!"

"The first thing Lester says was a flat on Wasserman and a spare room for mother Coblenz when she wants to come down. Wasn't it sweet for him to put it that way right off, ma. 'Mother Coblenz,' he says."

"He's a good boy, Selene. It'll be a proud day for me and gramaw. Gramaw mustn't miss none of it. He's a good boy and a fine family."

"That's why, mamma, we—got to—to do it up right."

"Lester knows, child, he's not marrying a rich girl."

"A girl don't have to—be rich to get married right."

"You'll have as good as mamma can afford to give it to her girl."

"It—it would be different if Lester's uncle and all wasn't in the Acme Club crowd, and if I hadn't got in with all that bunch. It's the last expense I'll ever be to you, mamma."

"Oh, baby, don't say that!"

"I—me and Lester—Lester and me were talking, mamma—when the engagement's announced next week—a reception—"

"We can clear out this room, move the bed out of gramaw's room into ours, and serve the ice-cream and cake in—"

"Oh, mamma, I don't mean—that!"

"What?"

"Who ever heard of having a reception *here*! People won't come from town way out to this old—cabbage patch. Even Gertie Wolf with

their big house on West Pine Boulevard had her reception at the Walsingham Hotel. You—we—can't expect Mark Haas and all the relations—the Sinsheimers—and—all to come out here. I'd rather not have any."

"But, Selene, everybody knows we ain't millionaires, and that you got in with that crowd through being friends at school with Amy Rosen. All the city salesmen and the boys on Washington Avenue, even Mark Haas himself, that time he was in the store with Lester, knows the way we live. You don't need to be ashamed of your little home, Selene, even if it ain't on West Pine Boulevard."

"It'll be—your last expense, mamma. The Walsingham, that's where the girl that Lester Goldmark marries is expected to have her reception."

"But, Selene, mamma can't afford nothing like that."

Pink swam up into Miss Coblenz's face, and above the sheer-white collar there was a little beating movement at the throat, as if something were fluttering within.

"I—I'd just as soon not get married as—as not to have it like other girls."

"But, Selene—"

"If I—can't have a trousseau like other girls and the things that go with marrying into a—a family like Lester's—I—then—there's no use. I—I can't! I—wouldn't!"

She was fumbling now for a handkerchief against tears that were imminent.

"Why, baby, a girl couldn't have a finer trousseau than the old linens back yet from Russia that me and gramaw got saved up for our girl—linen that can't be bought these days. Bed-sheets that gramaw herself carried to the border, and—"

"Oh, I know. I knew you'd try to dump that stuff on me. That old worm-eaten stuff in gramaw's chest."

"It's hand-woven, Selene, with—"

"I wouldn't have that yellow old stuff—that old-fashioned junk—if I didn't have any trousseau. If I can't afford monogrammed up-to-date linens, like even Alma Yawitz, and a—a pussy-willow-taffeta reception dress, I wouldn't have any. I wouldn't." Her voice crowded with passion and tears rose to the crest of a sob. "I—I'd die first!"

"Selene, Selene, mamma ain't got the money. If

she had it, wouldn't she be willing to take the very last penny to give her girl the kind of a wedding she wants? A trousseau like Alma's cost a thousand dollars if it cost a cent. Her table-napkins alone they say cost thirty-six dollars a dozen, unmonogrammed. A reception at the Walsingham costs two hundred dollars if it costs a cent. Selene, mamma will make for you every sacrifice she can afford, but she ain't got the money."

"You—have got the money!"

"So help me God, Selene! You know, with the quarries shut down, what business has been. You know how—sometimes even to make ends meet, it is a pinch. You're an ungrateful girl, Selene, to ask what I ain't able to do for you. A child like you that's been indulged, that I ain't even asked ever in her life to help a day down in the store. If I had the money, God knows you should be married in real lace, with the finest trousseau a girl ever had. But I ain't got the money—I ain't got the money."

"You have got the money! The book in gramaw's drawer is seven hundred and forty. I guess I ain't blind. I know a thing or two."

"Why Selene—that's gramaw's—to go back—"

"You mean the bank-book's hers?"

"That's gramaw's to go back—home on. That's the money for me to take gramaw and her wreaths back home on."

"There you go—talking loony."

"Selene!"

"Well, I'd like to know what else you'd call it, kidding yourself along like that."

"You—"

"All right. If you think gramaw, with her life all lived, comes first before me, with all my life to live—all right!"

"Your poor old—"

"It's always been gramaw first in this house, anyway. I couldn't even have company since I'm grown up because the way she's always allowed around. Nobody can say I ain't good to gramaw; Lester say it's beautiful the way I am with her, remembering always to bring the newspapers and all, but just the same I know when right's right and wrong's wrong. If my life ain't more important than gramaw's, with hers all lived, all right. Go ahead!"

"Selene, Selene, ain't it coming to gramaw, after all her years' hard work helping us that—she should be entitled to go back with her

wreaths for the graves? Ain't she entitled to die with that off her poor old mind? You bad, ungrateful girl, you, it's coming to a poor old woman that's suffered as terrible as gramaw that I should find a way to take her back."

"Take her back. Where—to jail? To prison in Siberia herself—"

"There's a way—"

"You know gramaw's too old to take a trip like that. You know in your own heart she won't ever see that day. Even before the war, much less now, there wasn't a chance for her to get passports back there. I don't say it ain't all right to kid her along, but when it comes to—to keeping me out of the—the biggest thing that can happen to a girl—when gramaw wouldn't know the difference if you keep showing her the bank-book—it ain't right. That's what it ain't. It ain't right!"

In the smallest possible compass, Miss Coblenz crouched now upon the floor, head down somewhere in her knees, and her curving back racked with rising sobs.

"Selene—but some day—"

"Some day nothing! A woman like gramaw can't do much more than go down-town once a

year, and then you talk about taking her to Russia! You can't get in there, I—tell you—no way you try to fix it after—the way gramaw—had—to leave. Even before the war, Ray Letsky's father couldn't get back on business. There's nothing for her there even after she gets there. In thirty years do you think you can find those graves? Do you know the size of Siberia? No! But I got to pay—I got to pay for gramaw's nonsense. But I won't. I won't go to Lester, if I can't go right. I—"

"Baby, don't cry so—for God's sake don't cry so!

"I wish I was dead."

"Sh-h-h—you'll wake gramaw."

"I do!"

"O God, help me to do the right thing!"

"If gramaw could understand, she'd be the first one to tell you the right thing. Anybody would."

"No! No! That little bank-book and its entries are her life—her life."

"She don't need to know, mamma. I'm not asking that. That's the way they always do with old people to keep them satisfied. Just humor 'em. Ain't I the one with life before me—ain't I,

mamma?"

"O God, show me the way!"

"If there was a chance, you think I'd be spoiling things for gramaw? But there ain't, mamma—not one."

"I keep hoping if not before, then after the war. With the help of Mark Haas—"

"With the book in her drawer like always, and the entries changed once in a while, she'll never know the difference. I swear to God she'll never know the difference, mamma!"

"Poor gramaw!"

"Mamma, promise me—your little Selene. Promise me?"

"Selene, Selene, can we keep it from her?"

"I swear we can, mamma."

"Poor, poor gramaw!"

"Mamma? Mamma darling?"

"O God, show me the way!"

"Ain't it me that's got life before me? My whole life?"

"Yes—Selene."

"Then, mamma, please—you will—you will—darling?"

"Yes, Selene."

In a large, all-frescoed, seventy-five dollars an evening with lights and cloak-room service ballroom of the Hotel Walsingham, a family hostelry in that family circle of St. Louis known as its West End, the city holds not a few of its charity-whists and benefit musicales; on a dais which can be carried in for the purpose, morning readings of "Little Moments from Little Plays," and with the introduction of a throne-chair, the monthly lodge-meetings of the Lady Mahadharatas of America. For weddings and receptions, a lane of red carpet leads up to the slight dais; and, lined about the brocade and paneled walls, gilt-and-brocade chairs, with the crest of Walsingham in padded embroidery on the backs. Crystal chandeliers, icicles of dripping light, glow down upon a scene of parquet floor, draped velours, and mirrors wreathed in gilt.

At Miss Selene Coblenz's engagement reception, an event properly festooned with smilax and properly jostled with the elbowing figures of waiters tilting their plates of dark-meat chicken salad, two olives, and a finger-roll

in among the crowd, a stringed three-piece orchestra, faintly seen and still more faintly heard, played into the babel.

Light, glitteringly filtered through the glass prisms, flowed down upon the dais; upon Miss Selene Coblenz, in a taffeta that wrapped her flat waist and chest like a calyx and suddenly bloomed into the full inverted petals of a skirt; upon Mr. Lester Goldmark, his long body barely knitted yet to man's estate, and his complexion almost clear, standing omnivorous, omnipotent, omnipresent, his hair so well brushed that it lay like black japanning, a white carnation at his silk lapel, and his smile slightly projected by a rush of very white teeth to the very front. Next in line, Mrs. Coblenz, the red of a fervent moment high in her face, beneath the maroon-net bodice the swell of her bosom fast, and her white-gloved hands constantly at the opening and shutting of a lace-and-spangled fan. Back, and well out of the picture, a potted hydrangea beside the Louis Quinze armchair, her hands in silk mitts laid out along the gold-chair sides, her head quavering in a kind of mild palsy, Mrs. Miriam Horowitz, smiling and quivering her state of bewilderment.

With an unfailing propensity to lay hold of to whomsoever he spake, Mr. Lester Goldmark placed his white-gloved hand upon the white-

gloved arm of Mrs. Coblenz.

"Say, mother Coblenz, ain't it about time this little girl of mine was resting her pink-satin double A's? She's been on duty up here from four to seven. No wonder uncle Mark bucked."

Mrs. Coblenz threw her glance out over the crowded room, surging with a wave of plumes and clipped heads like a swaying bucket of water which crowds but does not lap over its sides.

"I guess the crowd is finished coming in by now. You tired, Selene?"

Miss Coblenz turned her glowing glance.

"Tired! This is the swellest engagement-party I ever had."

Mrs. Coblenz shifted her weight from one slipper to the other, her maroon-net skirts lying in a swirl around them.

"Just look at gramaw, too! She holds up her head with the best of them. I wouldn't have had her miss this, not for the world."

"Sure one fine old lady! Ought to have seen her shake my hand, mother Coblenz. I nearly had to holler, 'Ouch!'"

"Mamma, here comes Sara Suss and her mother. Take my arm, Lester honey. People mamma used to know." Miss Coblenz leaned forward beyond the dais with the frail curve of a reed.

"Howdado, Mrs. Suss.... Thank you. Thanks. Howdado, Sara. Meet my *fiancé*, Lester Haas Goldmark; Mrs. Suss and Sara Suss, my *fiancé*.... That's right; better late than never. There's plenty left.... We think he is, Mrs. Suss. Aw, Lester honey, quit! Mamma, here's Mrs. Suss and Sadie."

"Mrs. Suss! Say—if you hadn't come, I was going to lay it up against you. If my new ones can come on a day like this, it's a pity my old friends can't come, too.

"Well, Sadie, it's your turn next, eh?... I know better than that. With them pink cheeks and black eyes, I wish I had a dime for every chance." (*Sotto.*) "Do you like it, Mrs. Suss? Pussy-willow taffeta.... Say, it ought to be. An estimate dress from Madame Murphy—sixty-five with findings. I'm so mad, Sara, you and your mamma couldn't come to the house that night to see her things. If I say so myself, Mrs. Suss, everybody who seen it says Jacob Sinsheimer's daughter herself didn't have a finer. Maybe not so much, but every stitch, Mrs. Suss,

made by the same sisters in the same convent that made hers.... Towels! I tell her it's a shame to expose them to the light, much less wipe on them. Ain't it?... The goodness looks out from his face. And such a love-pair! Lunatics, I call them. He can't keep his hands off. It ain't nice, I tell him.... Me? Come close. I dyed the net myself. Ten cents' worth of maroon color. Don't it warm your heart, Mrs. Suss? This morning, after we got her in Lester's uncle Mark's big automobile, I says to her, I says, 'Mamma, you sure it ain't too much.' Like her old self for a minute, Mrs. Suss, she hit me on the arm. 'Go 'way,' she said, 'on my grandchild's engagement-day anything should be too much? Here, waiter, get these two ladies some salad. Good measure, too. Over there by the window, Mrs. Suss. Help yourselves."

"Mamma, sh-h-h, the waiters know what to do."

Mrs. Coblenz turned back, the flush warm to her face.

"Say, for an old friend, I can be my own self."

"Can we break the receiving-line now, Lester honey, and go down with everybody? The Sinsheimers and their crowd over there by themselves, we ought to show we appreciate their coming."

Mr. Goldmark twisted high in his collar, cupping her small bare elbow in his hand.

"That's what I say, lovey; let's break. Come, mother Coblenz, let's step down on high society's corns."

"Lester!"

"You and Selene go down with the crowd, Lester. I want to take gramaw to rest for a while before we go home. The manager says we can have room fifty-six by the elevator for her to rest in."

"Get her some newspapers, ma, and I brought her a wreath down to keep her quiet. It's wrapped in her shawl."

Her skirts delicately lifted, Miss Coblenz stepped down off the dais. With her cloud of gauze scarf enveloping her, she was like a tulle-clouded "Springtime," done in the key of Botticelli.

"Oop-si-lah, lovey-dovey!" said Mr. Goldmark, tilting her elbow for the downward step.

"Oop-si-lay, dovey-lovey!" said Miss Coblenz, relaxing to the support.

Gathering up her plentiful skirts, Mrs. Coblenz stepped off, too, but back toward the secluded

chair beside the potted hydrangea. A fine line of pain, like a cord tightening, was binding her head, and she put up two fingers to each temple, pressing down the throb.

"Mrs. Coblenz, see what I got for you!" She turned, smiling. "You don't look like you need salad and green ice-cream. You look like you needed what I wanted—a cup of coffee."

"Aw, Mr. Haas—now where in the world—aw, Mr. Haas!"

With a steaming cup outheld and carefully out of collision with the crowd, Mr. Haas unflapped a napkin with his free hand, inserting his foot in the rung of a chair and dragging it toward her.

"Now," he cried, "sit and watch me take care of you!"

There comes a tide in the affairs of men when the years lap softly, leaving no particular inundations on the celebrated sands of time. Between forty and fifty, that span of years which begin the first slight gradations from the apex of life, the gray hair, upstanding like a thick-bristled brush off Mr. Haas's brow, had not so much as whitened, or the slight paunchiness enhanced even the moving-over of a button. When Mr. Haas smiled, his mustache, which ended in a slight but not waxed flourish, lifted to

reveal a white-and-gold smile of the artistry of careful dentistry, and when, upon occasion, he threw back his head to laugh, the roof of his mouth was his own.

He smiled now, peering through gold-rimmed spectacles attached by a chain to a wire-encircled left ear.

"Sit," he cried, "and let me serve you!"

Standing there with a diffidence which she could not crowd down, Mrs. Coblenz smiled through closed lips that would pull at the corners.

"The idea, Mr. Haas—going to all that trouble!"

"'Trouble,' she says! After two hours hand-shaking in a swallowtail, a man knows what real trouble is!"

She stirred around and around the cup, supping up spoonfuls gratefully.

"I'm sure much obliged. It touches the right spot."

He pressed her down to the chair, seating himself on the low edge of the dais.

"Now you sit right here and rest your bones."

"But my mother, Mr. Haas. Before it's time for the ride home, she must rest in a quiet place."

"My car'll be here and waiting five minutes after I telephone."

"You—sure have been grand, Mr. Haas!"

"I shouldn't be grand yet to my—let's see what relation is it I am to you?"

"Honest, you're a case, Mr. Haas—always making fun!"

"My poor dead sister's son marries your daughter. That makes you my—nothing-in-law."

"Honest, Mr. Haas, if I was around you, I'd get fat laughing."

"I wish you was."

"Selene would have fits. 'Never get fat, mamma,' she says, 'if you don't want——'"

"I don't mean that."

"What?"

"I mean I wish you was around me."

She struck him then with her fan, but the color rose up into the mound of her carefully piled hair.

"I always say I can see where Lester gets his comical ways. Like his uncle, that boy keeps us all laughing."

"Gad, look at her blush! I know women your age would give fifty dollars a blush to do it that way."

She was looking away again, shoulders heaving to silent laughter, the blush still stinging.

"It's been so—so long, Mr. Haas, since I had compliments made to me—you make me feel so —silly."

"I know it, you nice, fine woman, you, and it's a darn shame!"

"Mr.—Haas!"

"I mean it. I hate to see a fine woman not get her dues. Anyways, when she's the finest woman of them all!"

"I—the woman that lives to see a day like this —her daughter the happiest girl in the world with the finest boy in the world—is getting her dues all right, Mr. Haas."

"She's a fine girl, but she ain't worth her mother's little finger nail."

"Mr.—Haas!"

"No, sir-ee!"

"I must be going now, Mr. Haas—my mother —"

"That's right. The minute a man tries to break the ice with this little lady, it's a freeze-out. Now, what did I say so bad? In business, too. Never seen the like. It's like trying to swat a fly to come down on you at the right minute. But now, with you for a nothing-in-law, I got rights."

"If—you ain't the limit, Mr. Haas!"

"Don't mind saying it, Mrs. C., and, for a bachelor, they tell me I'm not the worst judge in the world, but there's not a woman on the floor stacks up like you do."

"Well—of all things!"

"Mean it."

"My mother, Mr. Haas, she—"

"And if anybody should ask you if I've got you on my mind or not, well I've already got the letters out on that little matter of the passports you spoke to me about. If there's a way to fix that up for you, and leave it to me to find it, I—"

She sprang now, trembling, to her feet, all the red of the moment receding.

"Mr. Haas, I—I must go now. My—mother—"

He took her arm, winding her in and out among crowded-out chairs behind the dais.

"I wish it to every mother to have a daughter like you, Mrs. C."

"No! No!" she said, stumbling rather wildly through the chairs. "No! No! No!"

He forged ahead, clearing her path of them.

Beside the potted hydrangea, well back and yet within an easy view, Mrs. Horowitz, her gilt armchair well cushioned for the occasion, and her black grenadine spread decently about her, looked out upon the scene, her slightly palsied head well forward.

"Mamma, you got enough? You wouldn't have missed it, eh? A crowd of people we can be proud to entertain, not? Come; sit quiet in another room for a while, and then Mr. Haas, with his nice big car, will drive us all home again. You know Mr. Haas, dearie—Lester's uncle that had us drove so careful in his fine big car. You remember, dearie—Lester's uncle?"

Mrs. Horowitz looked up, her old face cracking

to smile.

"My grandchild! My grandchild! She'm a fine one. Not? My grandchild! My grandchild!"

"You—mustn't mind, Mr. Haas. That's—the way she's done since—since she's—sick. Keeps repeating—"

"My grandchild! From a good mother and a bad father comes a good grandchild. My grandchild! She'm a good one. My—"

"Mamma, dearie, Mr. Haas is in a hurry. He's come to help me walk you into a little room to rest before we go home in Mr. Haas's big fine auto. Where you can go and rest, mamma, and read the newspapers. Come."

"My back—*ach*—my back!"

"Yes, yes, mamma; we'll fix it. Up! So—la!"

They raised her by the crook of each arm, gently.

"So! Please, Mr. Haas, the pillows. Shawl. There!"

Around a rear hallway, they were almost immediately into a blank, staring hotel bedroom, fresh towels on the furniture-tops only enhancing its staleness.

"Here we are. Sit her here, Mr. Haas, in this rocker."

They lowered her almost inch by inch, sliding down pillows against the chair-back.

"Now, Shila's little mamma, want to sleep?"

"I got—no rest—no rest."

"You're too excited, honey, that's all."

"No rest."

"Here—here's a brand-new hotel Bible on the table, dearie. Shall Shila read it to you?"

"Aylorff—"

"Now, now, mamma. Now, now; you mustn't! Didn't you promise Shila? Look! See, here's a wreath wrapped in your shawl for Shila's little mamma to work on. Plenty of wreaths for us to take back. Work awhile, dearie, and then we'll get Selene and Lester, and, after all the nice company goes away, we'll go home in the auto."

"I begged he should keep in his hate—his feet in the——"

"I know! The papers. That's what little mamma wants. Mr. Haas, that's what she likes better than anything—the evening papers."

"I'll go down and send 'em right up with a boy, and telephone for the car. The crowd's beginning to pour out now. Just hold your horses there, Mrs. C., and I'll have those papers up here in a jiffy."

He was already closing the door after him, letting in and shutting out a flare of music.

"See, mamma, nice Mr. Haas is getting us the papers. Nice evening papers for Shila's mamma." She leaned down into the recesses of the black grenadine, withdrawing from one of the pockets a pair of silver-rimmed spectacles, adjusting them with some difficulty to the nodding head. "Shila's—little mamma! Shila's mamma!"

"Aylorff, the littlest wreath for—Aylorff—*Meine Kräntze*—"

"Yes, yes."

"*Mein Mann. Mein Sühn.*"

"Ssh-h-h, dearie!"

"Aylorff—*der klenste Kranz far ihm*!"

"Ssh-h-h, dearie—talk English, like Selene wants. Wait till we get on the ship—the beautiful ship to take us back. Mamma, see out the window! Look! That's the beautiful Forest

Park, and this is the fine Hotel Walsingham just across—see out—Selene is going to have a flat on—"

"*Sey hoben gestorben far Freiheit. Sey hoben* __"

"There, that's the papers!"

To a succession of quick knocks, she flew to the door, returning with the folded evening editions under her arm.

"Now," she cried, unfolding and inserting the first of them into the quivering hands, "now, a shawl over my little mamma's knees and we're fixed!"

With a series of rapid movements, she flung open one of the black-cashmere shawls across the bed, folding it back into a triangle. Beside the table, bare except for the formal, unthumbed Bible, Mrs. Horowitz rattled out her paper, her near-sighted eyes traveling back and forth across the page.

Music from the ferned-in orchestra came in drifts, faint, not so faint. From somewhere, then immediately from everywhere, beyond, below, without, the fast shouts of newsboys mingling.

Suddenly and of her own volition, and with a cry that shot up through the room, rending it like a gash, Mrs. Horowitz, who moved by inches, sprang to her supreme height, her arms, the crooks forced out, flung up.

"My darlings—what died—for it! My darlings what died for it—my darlings—Aylorff—my husband!" There was a wail rose up off her words, like the smoke of incense curling, circling around her. "My darlings what died to make free!"

"Mamma—darling—mamma—Mr. Haas! Help! Mamma! My God!"

"Aylorff—my husband—I paid with my blood to make free—my blood—my son—my—own —" Immovable there, her arms flung up and tears so heavy that they rolled whole from her face down to the black grenadine, she was as sonorous as the tragic meter of an Alexandrian line; she was like Ruth, ancestress of heroes and progenitor of kings. "My boy—my own—they died for it! *Mein Mann! Mein Sühn!*"

On her knees, frantic to press her down once more into the chair, terrified at the rigid immobility of the upright figure, Mrs. Coblenz paused then, too, her clasp falling away, and leaned forward to the open sheet of the newspaper, its black headlines facing her:

RUSSIA FREE

bans down
100,000 siberian prisoners liberated

In her ears a ringing silence, as if a great steel disk had clattered down into the depths of her consciousness. There on her knees, trembling seized her, and she hugged herself against it, leaning forward to corroborate her gaze.

most rigid autocracy in the world overthrown

RUSSIA REJOICES

"Mamma! Mamma! My God, Mamma!"

"Home, Shila; home! My husband who died for it—Aylorff! Home now, quick! My wreaths! My wreaths!"

"O my God, Mamma!"

"Home!"

"Yes—darling—yes—"

"My wreaths!"

"Yes, yes, darling; your wreaths. Let—let me think. Freedom!—O my God, help me to find a way! O my God!"

"My wreaths!"

"Here—darling—here!"

From the floor beside her, the raffia wreath half

in the making, Mrs. Coblenz reached up, pressing it flat to the heaving old bosom.

"There, darling, there!"

"I paid with my blood—"

"Yes, yes, mamma; you—paid with your blood. Mamma—sit, please. Sit and—let's try to think. Take it slow, darling—it's like we can't take it in all at once. I—we—sit down, darling. You'll make yourself terrible sick. Sit down, darling, you—you're slipping."

"My wreaths—"

Heavily, the arm at the waist gently sustaining, Mrs. Horowitz sank rather softly down, her eyelids fluttering for the moment. A smile had come out on her face, and, as her head sank back against the rest, the eyes resting at the downward flutter, she gave out a long breath, not taking it in again.

"Mamma! You're fainting!" She leaned to her, shaking the relaxed figure by the elbows, her face almost touching the tallowlike one with the smile lying so deeply into it. "Mamma! My God, darling, wake up! I'll take you back. I'll find a way to take you. I'm a bad girl, darling, but I'll find a way to take you. I'll take you if—if I kill for it. I promise before God I'll take you.

To-morrow—now—nobody can keep me from taking you. The wreaths, mamma! Get ready the wreaths! Mamma, darling, wake up. Get ready the wreaths! The wreaths!" Shaking at that quiet form, sobs that were full of voice, tearing raw from her throat, she fell to kissing the sunken face, enclosing it, stroking it, holding her streaming gaze closely and burningly against the closed lids. "Mamma, I swear to God I'll take you! Answer me, mamma! The bank-book—you've got it! Why don't you wake up—mamma? Help!"

Upon that scene, the quiet of the room so raucously lacerated, burst Mr. Haas, too breathless for voice.

"Mr. Haas my mother—help—my mother! It's a faint, ain't it? A faint?"

He was beside her at two bounds, feeling of the limp wrists, laying his ear to the grenadine bosom, lifting the reluctant lids, touching the flesh that yielded so to touch.

"It's a faint, ain't it, Mr. Haas? Tell her I'll take her back. Wake her up, Mr. Haas! Tell her I'm a bad girl, but I—I'm going to take her back. Now! Tell her! Tell her, Mr. Haas, I've got the bank-book. Please! Please! O my God!"

He turned to her, his face working to keep

down compassion.

"We must get a doctor, little lady."

She threw out an arm.

"No! No! I see! My old mother—my old mother—all her life a nobody—she helped—she gave it to them—my mother—a poor little widow nobody—she bought with her blood that freedom—she—"

"God, I just heard it downstairs—it's the tenth wonder of the world. It's too big to take in. I was afraid—"

"Mamma darling, I tell you, wake up! I'm a bad girl, but I'll take you back. Tell her, Mr. Haas, I'll take her back. Wake up, darling! I swear to God—I'll take you!"

"Mrs. Coblenz, my—poor little lady—your mother don't need you to take her back. She's gone back where—where she wants to be. Look at her face, little lady; can't you see she's gone back?"

"No! No! Let me go. Let me touch her. No! No! Mamma darling!"

"Why, there wasn't a way, little lady, you could have fixed it for that poor—old body. She's beyond any of the poor fixings we could do for

her. You never saw her face like that before. Look!"

"The wreaths—- the wreaths!"

He picked up the raffia circle, placing it back again against the quiet bosom.

"Poor little lady!" he said. "Shila—that's left for us to do. You and me, Shila—we'll take the wreaths back for her."

"My darling—my darling mother! I'll take them back for you! I'll take them back for you!"

"*We'll* take them back for her—Shila."

"I'll—"

"*We'll* take them back for her—Shila."

"*We'll* take them back for you, mamma. We'll take them back for you, darling!"

THE STRANGE-LOOKING MAN[15]

By FANNY KEMBLE JOHNSON

From *The Pagan*

A tiny village lay among the mountains of a country from which for four years the men had gone forth to fight. First the best men had gone, then the older men, then the youths, and lastly the school boys. It will be seen that no men could have been left in the village except the very aged, and the bodily incapacitated, who soon died, owing to the war policy of the Government which was to let the useless perish that there might be more food for the useful.

Now it chanced that while all the men went away, save those left to die of slow starvation, only a few returned, and these few were crippled and disfigured in various ways. One young man had only part of a face, and had to wear a painted tin mask, like a holiday-maker. Another had two legs but no arms, and another two arms but no legs. One man could scarcely be looked at by his own mother, having had his eyes burned out of his head until he stared like Death. One had neither arms nor legs, and was mad of his misery besides, and lay all day in a cradle like a baby. And there was a quite old man who strangled night and day from having sucked in poison-gas; and another, a mere boy, who shook, like a leaf in a high wind, from shell-shock, and screamed at a sound. And he too had lost a hand, and part of his face, though

not enough to warrant the expense of a mask for him.

All these men, except he who had been crazed by horror of himself, had been furnished with ingenious appliances to enable them to be partly self-supporting, and to earn enough to pay their share of the taxes which burdened their defeated nation.

To go through that village after the war was something like going through a life-sized toy-village with all the mechanical figures wound up and clicking. Only instead of the figures being new, and gay, and pretty, they were battered and grotesque and inhuman.

There would be the windmill, and the smithy, and the public house. There would be the row of cottages, the village church, the sparkling waterfall, the parti-colored fields spread out like bright kerchiefs on the hillsides, the parading fowl, the goats and cows,—though not many of these last. There would be the women, and with them some children; very few, however, for the women had been getting reasonable, and were now refusing to have sons who might one day be sent back to them limbless and mad, to be rocked in cradles—for many years, perhaps.

Still the younger women, softer creatures of impulse, had borne a child or two. One of these,

born the second year of the war, was a very blonde and bullet-headed rascal of three, with a bullying air, and of a roving disposition. But such traits appear engaging in children of sufficiently tender years, and he was a sort of village plaything, here, there, and everywhere, on the most familiar terms with the wrecks of the war which the Government of that country had made.

He tried on the tin mask and played with the baker's mechanical leg, so indulgent were they of his caprices; and it amused him excessively to rock the cradle of the man who had no limbs, and who was his father.

In and out he ran, and was humored to his bent. To one he seemed the son he had lost, to another the son he might have had, had the world gone differently. To others he served as a brief escape from the shadow of a future without hope; to others yet, the diversion of an hour. This last was especially true of the blind man who sat at the door of his old mother's cottage binding brooms. The presence of the child seemed to him like a warm ray of sunshine falling across his hand, and he would lure him to linger by letting him try on the great blue goggles which he found it best to wear in public. But no disfigurement or deformity appeared to frighten the little fellow. These had been his playthings

from earliest infancy.

One morning, his mother, being busy washing clothes, had left him alone, confident that he would soon seek out some friendly fragment of soldier, and entertain himself till noon and hunger-time. But occasionally children have odd notions, and do the exact opposite of what one supposes.

On this brilliant summer morning the child fancied a solitary ramble along the bank of the mountain-stream. Vaguely he meant to seek a pool higher up, and to cast stones in it. He wandered slowly straying now and then into small valleys, or chasing wayside ducks. It was past ten before he gained the green-gleaming and foam-whitened pool, sunk in the shadow of a tall gray rock over whose flat top three pine-trees swayed in the fresh breeze. Under them, looking to the child like a white cloud in a green sky, stood a beautiful young man, poised on the sheer brink for a dive. A single instant he stood there, clad only in shadow and sunshine, the next he had dived so expertly that he scarcely splashed up the water around him. Then his dark, dripping head rose in sight, his glittering arm thrust up, and he swam vigorously to shore. He climbed the rock for another dive. These actions he repeated in pure sport and joy in life so often that his little spectator became dizzy

with watching.

At length he had enough of it and stooped for his discarded garments. These he carried to a more sheltered spot and rapidly put on, the child still wide-eyed and wondering, for indeed he had much to occupy his attention.

He had two arms, two legs, a whole face with eyes, nose, mouth, chin, and ears, complete. He could see, for he had glanced about him as he dressed. He could speak, for he sang loudly. He could hear, for he had turned quickly at the whir of pigeon-wings behind him. His skin was smooth all over, and nowhere on it were the dark scarlet maps which the child found so interesting on the arms, face, and breast of the burned man. He did not strangle every little while, or shiver madly, and scream at a sound. It was truly inexplicable, and therefore terrifying.

The child was beginning to whimper, to tremble, to look wildly about for his mother, when the young man observed him.

"*Hullo!*" he cried eagerly, "if it isn't a child!"

He came forward across the foot-bridge with a most ingratiating smile, for this was the first time that day he had seen a child and he had been thinking it remarkable that there should be so few children in a valley, where, when he had

travelled that way five years before, there had been so many he had scarcely been able to find pennies for them. So he cried "Hullo," quite joyously, and searched in his pockets.

But, to his amazement, the bullet-headed little blond boy screamed out in terror, and fled for protection into the arms of a hurriedly approaching young woman. She embraced him with evident relief, and was lavishing on him terms of scolding and endearment in the same breath, when the traveler came up, looking as if his feelings were hurt.

"I assure you, Madam," said he, "that I only meant to give your little boy these pennies." He examined himself with an air of wonder. "What on earth is there about me to frighten a child?" he queried plaintively.

The young peasant-woman smiled indulgently on them both, on the child now sobbing, his face buried in her skirt, and on the boyish, perplexed, and beautiful young man.

"It is because he finds the Herr Traveler so strange-looking," she said, curtsying. "He is quite small," she showed his smallness with a gesture, "and it is the first time he has even seen a whole man."

THE CALLER IN THE NIGHT[16]

By BURTON KLINE

From *The Stratford Journal*

By the side of a road which wanders in company of a stream across a region of Pennsylvania farmland that is called "Paradise" because of its beauty, you may still mark the ruins of a small brick cabin in the depths of a grove. In summertime ivy drapes its jagged fragments and the pile might be lost to notice but that at dusk the trembling leaves of the vine have a way of whispering to the nerves of your horse and setting them too in a tremble. And the people in the village beyond have a belief that three troubled human beings lie buried under those ruins, and that at night, or in a storm, they sometimes cry aloud in their unrest.

The village is Bustlebury, and its people have a legend that on a memorable night there was once disclosed to a former inhabitant the secret of that ivied sepulchre.

All the afternoon the two young women had chattered in the parlor, cooled by the shade of the portico, and lost to the heat of the day, to the few sounds of the village, to the passing hours themselves. Then of a sudden Mrs. Pollard was recalled to herself at the necessity of closing her front windows against a gust of wind that blew the curtains, like flapping flags, into the room.

"Sallie, we're going to get it again," she said, pausing for a glance at the horizon before she lowered the sash.

"Get what?" Her visitor walked to the other front window and stooped to peer out.

Early evening clouds were drawing a black cap over the fair face of the land.

"I think we're going to have some more of Old Screamer Moll this evening. I knew we should, after this hot—"

"There! Margie, that was the expression I've been trying to remember all afternoon. You used it this morning. Where did you get such a poetic nickname for a thunder—O-oh!"

For a second, noon had returned to the two women. From their feet two long streaks of black shadow darted back into the room, and vanished. Overhead an octopus of lightning

snatched the whole heavens in its grasp, shook them, and disappeared.

The two women screamed, and threw themselves on the sofa. Yet in a minute it was clear that the world still rolled on, and each looked at the other and laughed at her fright—till the prospect of an evening of storm sobered them both.

"Mercy!" Mrs. Pollard breathed in discouragement. "We're in for another night of it. We've had this sort of thing for a week. And to-night of all nights, when I wanted you to see this wonderful country under the moon!"

Mrs. Pollard, followed by her guest, Mrs. Reeves, ventured to the window timidly again, to challenge what part of the sky they could see from under the great portico outside, and learn its portent for the night.

An evil visage it wore—a swift change from a noon-day of beaming calm. Now it was curtained completely with blue-black cloud, which sent out mutterings, and then long brooding silences more ominous still in their very concealment of the night's intentions.

There was no defence against it but to draw down the blinds and shut out this angry gloom in the glow of the lamps within. And, with a

half hour of such glow to cozen them, the two women were soon merry again over their reminiscences, Mrs. Pollard at her embroidery, Mrs. Reeves at the piano, strumming something from Chopin in the intervals of their chatter.

"The girl" fetched them their tea. "Five already!" Mrs. Pollard verified the punctuality of her servant with a glance at the clock. "Then John will be away for another night. I do hope he won't try to get back this time. Night before last he left his assistant with a case, and raced his horse ten miles in the dead of the night to get home," Mrs. Pollard proudly reported, "for fear I'd be afraid in the storm."

"And married four years!" Mrs. Reeves smilingly shook her head in indulgence of such long-lived romance.

In the midst of their cakes and tea the bell announced an impatient hand at the door.

"Well, 'speak of angels!'" Mrs. Pollard quoted, and flew to greet her husband. But she opened the door upon smiling old Mr. Barber, instead, from the precincts across the village street.

Mr. Barber seemed to be embarrassed. "I—I rather thought you mought be wanting something," he said in words. By intention he was making apology for the night. "I saw the

doctor drive away, but I haven't seen him come back. So I—I thought I'd just run over and see—see if there wasn't something you wanted." He laughed uneasily.

Mr. Barber's transparent diplomacy having been rewarded with tea, they all came at once to direct speech. "It ain't going to amount to much," Mr. Barber insisted. "Better come out, you ladies, and have a look around. It may rain a bit, but you'll feel easier if you come and get acquainted with things, so to say." And gathering their resolution the two women followed him out on the portico.

They shuddered at what they saw.

Night was at hand, two hours before its time. Nothing stirred, not a vocal chord of hungry, puzzled, frightened chicken or cow. The whole region seemed to have caught its breath, to be smothered under a pall of stillness, unbroken except for some occasional distant earthquake of thunder from the inverted Switzerland of cloud that hung pendant from the sky.

Mr. Barber's emotions finally ordered themselves into speech as he watched. "Ain't it grand!" he said.

The two women made no reply. They sat on the steps to the portico, their arms entwined.

The scene beat their more sophisticated intelligences back into silence. Some minutes they all sat there together, and then again Mr. Barber broke the spell.

"It do look fearful, like. But you needn't be afraid. It's better to be friends with it, you might say. And then go to bed and fergit it."

They thanked him for his goodness, bade him good-by, and he clinked down the flags of the walk and started across the street.

He had got midway across when they all heard a startling sound, an unearthly cry.

It came out of the distance, and struck the stillness like a blow.

"What is it? What is it, Margie?" Mrs. Reeves whispered excitedly.

Faint and quavering at its beginning, the cry grew louder and more shrill, and then died away, as the breath that made it ebbed and was spent. It seemed as if this unusual night had found at last a voice suited to its mood. Twice the cry was given, and then all was still as before.

At its first notes the muscles in Mrs. Pollard's arm had tightened. But Mr. Barber had hastened back at once with reassurance.

"I guess Mrs. Pollard knows what that is," he called to them from the gate. "It's only our old friend Moll, that lives down there in the notch. She gets lonesome, every thunderstorm, and let's it off like that. It's only her rheumatiz, I reckon. We wouldn't feel easy ourselves without them few kind words from old Moll!"

The two women applauded as they could his effort toward humor. Then, "Come on, Sallie, quick!" Mrs. Pollard cried to her guest, and the two women bolted up the steps of the portico and flew like girls through the door, which they quickly locked between themselves and the disquieting night.

Once safe within, relief from their nerves came at the simple effort of laughter, and an hour later, when it was clear that the stars still held to their courses, the two ladies were at their ease again, beneath the lamp on the table, with speech and conversation to provide an escape from thought. The night seemed to cool its high temper as the hours wore on, and gradually the storm allowed itself to be forgotten.

Together, at bed time, the two made their tour of the house, locking the windows and doors, and visiting the pantry on the way for an apple. Outside all was truly calm and still, as, with mock and exaggerated caution, they peered

through one last open window. A periodic, lazy flash from the far distance was all that the sky could muster of its earlier wrath. And they tripped upstairs and to bed, with that hilarity which always attends the feminine pursuit of repose.

But in the night they were awakened.

Not for nothing, after all, had the skies marshalled that afternoon array of their forces. Now they were as terribly vociferous as they had been terrifyingly still before. Leaves, that had drooped melancholy and motionless in the afternoon, were whipped from their branches at the snatch of the wind. The rain came down in a solid cataract. The thunder was a steady bombardment, and the frolic powers above, that had toyed and practised with soundless flashes in the afternoon, had grown wanton at their sport, and hurled their electric shots at earth in appallingly accurate marksmanship. Between the flashes from the sky, the steady glare of a burning barn here and there reddened the blackness. The village dead, under the pelted sod, must have shuddered at the din. Even the moments of lull were saturate with terrors. In them rose audible the roar of waters, the clatter of frightened animals, the rattle of gates, the

shouts of voices, the click of heels on the flags of the streets, as the villagers hurried to the succor of neighbors fighting fires out on the hills. For long afterward the tempest of that night was remembered. For hours while it lasted, trees were toppled over, and houses rocked to the blast.

And for as long as it would, the rain beat in through an open window and wetted the two women where they lay in their bed, afraid to stir, even to help themselves, gripped in a paralysis of terror.

Their nerves were not the more disposed to peace, either, by another token of the storm. All through the night, since their waking, in moments of stillness sufficient for it to be heard, they had caught that cry of the late afternoon. Doggedly it asserted itself against the uproar. It insisted upon being heard. It too wished to shriek relievingly, like the inanimate night, and publish its sickness abroad. They heard it far off, at first. But it moved, and came nearer. Once the two women quaked when it came to them, shrill and clear, from a point close at hand. But they bore its invasion along with the wind and the rain, and lay shameless and numb in the rude arms of the night.

They lay so till deliverance from the hideous

spell came at last, in a vigorous pounding at the front door.

"It's John!" Mrs. Pollard cried in her joy. "And through such a storm!"

She slipped from the bed, threw a damp blanket about her, and groped her way out of the room and down the stair, her guest stumbling after. They scarcely could fly fast enough down the dark steps. At the bottom Mrs. Pollard turned brighter the dimly burning entry lamp, shot back the bolt with fingers barely able to grasp it in their eagerness, and threw open the door.

"John!" she cried.

But there moved into the house the tall and thin but heavily framed figure of an old woman, who peered about in confusion.

In a flash of recognition Mrs. Pollard hurled herself against the intruder to thrust her out.

"No!" the woman said. "No, you will not, on such a night!" And the apparition herself, looking with feverish curiosity at her unwilling hostesses, slowly closed the door and leaned against it.

Mrs. Pollard and her friend turned to fly, in a mad instinct to be anywhere behind a locked

door. Yet before the instinct could reach their muscles, the unbidden visitor stopped them again.

"No!" she said. "I am dying. Help me!"

The two women turned, as if hypnotically obedient to her command. Their tongues lay thick and dead in their mouths. They fell into each other's arms, and their caller stood looking them over, with the same fevered curiosity. Then she turned her deliberate scrutiny to the house itself.

In a moment she almost reassured them with a first token of being human and feminine. On the table by the stairs lay a book, and she went and picked it up. "Fine!" she mused. Then her eye travelled over the pictures on the walls. "Fine!" she said. "So this is the inside of a fine house!" But suddenly, as her peering gaze returned to the two women, she was recalled to herself. "But you wanted to put me out—on a night like this! Hear it!"

For a moment she looked at them in frank hatred. And on an impulse she revenged herself upon them by sounding, in their very ears, the shrill cry they had heard in the afternoon, and through the night, that had mystified the villagers for years from the grove. The house rang with it, and with the hard peal of laughter

that finished it.

All three of them stood there, for an instant, viewing each other. But at the end of it the weakest of them was the partly sibylline, partly mountebank intruder. She swayed back against the wall. Her head rolled limply to one side, and she moaned, "O God, how tired I am to-night!"

Frightened as they still were, their runaway hearts beating a tattoo that was almost audible, the two other women made a move to support her. But she waved them back with a suddenly returning air of command. "No!" she said. "You wanted to put me out!"

The creature wore some sort of thin skirt whose color had vanished in the blue-black of its wetness. Over her head and shoulders was thrown a ragged piece of shawl. From under it dangled strands of grizzled gray hair. Her dark eyes were hidden in the shadows of her impromptu hood. The hollows of her cheeks looked deeper in its shadows.

She loosed the shawl from her head, and it dropped to the floor, disclosing a face like one of the Fates. She folded her arms, and there was a rude majesty in the massive figure and its bearing as she tried to command herself and speak.

"I come here—in this storm. Hear it! Hear that! I want shelter. I want comfort. And what do you say to me!... Well, then I take comfort from you. You thought I was your husband. You called his name. Well, I saw him this afternoon. He drove out. I called to him from the roadside. 'Let me tell your fortune! Only fifty cent!' But he whipped up his horse and drove away. You are all alike. But I see him now—in Woodman's Narrows. It rains there, same as here. Thunder and lightning, same as here. Trees fall. The wind blows. The wind blows!"

The woman had tilted her head and fixed her eyes, shining and eager, as if on some invisible scene, and she half intoned her words as if in a trance.

"I see your husband now. His wagon is smashed by a tree. The horse is dead. Your husband lies very still. He does not move. There!"—she turned to them alert again to their presence—"there is the husband that you want. If you don't believe me, all I say is, wait! He is there. You will see!"

She ended in a peal of laughter, which itself ended in a weary moan. "Oh, why can't you help me!" She came toward them, her arms outstretched. "*Don't* be afraid of me. I want a woman to know me—to comfort me. I die to-

night. It's calling me, outside. Don't you hear?...

"Listen to me, you women!" she went on, and tried to smile, to gain their favor. "I lied to you, to get even with you. You want your husband. Well, I lied. He isn't dead. For all you tried to shut me out. Do you never pity? Do you never help? O-oh—"

Her hand traveled over her brow, and her eyes wandered.

"No one knows what I need now! I got to tell it, I got to tell it! Hear that?" There had been a louder and nearer crash outside. "That's my warning. That says I got to tell it, before it's too late. No storm like this for forty years—not since one night forty years ago. My God, that night!" Another heavy rumble interrupted her. "Yes, yes!" she turned and called. "I'll tell it! I promise!"

She came toward her audience and said pleadingly, "Listen—even if it frightens you. You've got to listen. That night, forty years ago"—she peered about her cautiously—"I think—I think I hurt two people—hurt them very bad. And ever since that night—"

The two women had once again tried to fly away, but again she halted them. "Listen! You have no right to run away. You got to comfort

me! You hear? Please, please, don't go."

She smiled, and so seemed less ugly. What could her two auditors do but cling to each other and hear her through, dumb and helpless beneath her spell?

"Only wait. I'll tell you quickly. Oh, I was not always like this. Once I could talk—elegant too. I've almost forgotten now. But I never looked like this then. I was not always ugly—no teeth —gray hair. Once I was beautiful too. You laugh? But yes! Ah, I was young, and tall, and had long black hair. I was Mollie, then. Mollie Morgan. That's the first time I've said my name for years. But that's who I was. Ask Bruce—he knows."

She had fallen back against the wall again, her eyes roaming as she remembered. Here she laughed. "But Bruce is dead these many years. He was my dog." A long pause. "We played together. Among the flowers—in the pretty cottage—under the vines. Not far from here. But all gone now, all gone. Even the woods are gone —the woods where Bruce and I hunted berries. And my mother!"

Again the restless hands sought the face and covered it.

"My mother! Almost as young as I. And how

she could talk! A fine lady. As fine as you. And oh, we had good times together. Nearly always. Sometimes mother got angry—in a rage. She'd strike me, and say I was an idiot like my father. The next minute she'd hug me, and cry, and beg me to forgive her. It all comes back to me. Those were the days when she'd bake a cake for supper—the days when she cried, and put on a black dress. But mostly she wore the fine dresses—all bright, and soft, and full of flowers. Oh, how she would dance about in those, sometimes. And always laughed when I stared at her. And say I was Ned's girl to my finger-tips. I never understood what she meant—then."

The shrill speaker of a moment before had softened suddenly. The creature of the woods sniffed eagerly this atmosphere of the house, and faint vestiges of a former personage returned to her, summoned along with the scene she had set herself to recall.

"But oh, how good she was to me! And read to me. And taught me to read. And careful of me? Ha! Never let me go alone to the village. Said I was too good for such a place. Some day we would go back to the world—whatever she meant by that. Said people there would clap the hands when they saw me—more than they had clapped the hands for her. Once she saw a young man walk along the road with me. Oh,

how she beat my head when I came home! Nearly killed me, she was so angry. Said I mustn't waste myself on such trash. My mother —I never understood her then.

"She used to tell me stories—about New York, and Phil'delph. Many big cities. There they applaud, and clap the hands, when my mother was a queen, or a beggar girl, in the theatre, and make love and kill and fight. Have grand supper in hotel afterward. And I'd ask my mother how soon I too may be a queen. And she'd give me to learn the words they say, and I'd say them. Then she'd clap me on the head again and tell me, 'Oh, you're Ned's girl. You're a blockhead, just like your father!' And I'd say, 'Where is my father? Why does he never come?' And after that my mother would always sit quiet, and never answer when I talked.

"And then she'd be kind again, and make me proud, and tell me I'm a very fine lady, and have fine blood. And she'd talk about the day when we'd go back to the world, and she'd buy me pretty things to wear. But I thought it was fine where we were—there in the cottage, I with the flowers, and Bruce. In those days, yes," the woman sighed, and left them to silence for a space,—for silent seemed the wind and rain, on the breaking of her speech.

A rumble from without started her on again.

"Yes, yes! I'm telling! I'll hurry. Then I grow big. Seventeen. My mother call me her little giantess, her handsome darling, her conceited fool, all at the same time. I never understood my mother—then.

"But then, one day, it came!"

The woman pressed her fingers against her eyes, as if to shut out the vision her mind was preparing.

"Everything changed then. Everything was different. No more nights with stories and books. No more about New York and Phil'delph. Never again.

"I was out in the yard one day, on my knees, with the flowers. It was Springtime, and I was digging and fixing. And I heard a horse's hoofs on the road. A runaway, I thought at first. I stood up to look, and—" She faltered, and then choked out, "I stood up to look, and the man came!" And with the words came a crash that rocked the house.

"Hear that!" the woman almost shrieked. "That's him—that's the man. I hear him in every storm!...

"He came," she went, more rapidly. "A tall

man—fine—dressed in fine clothes—brown hair —brown eyes! Oh, I often see those brown eyes. I know what they are like. He came riding along the bye-road. When he caught sight of my mother he almost fell from his horse. The horse nearly fell, the man pulled him in so sharp. 'Good God!' the man said. 'Fanny! Is this where you are! Curse you, old girl, is this where you are!' Funny, how I remember his words. And then he came in.

"And he talked to my mother a long time. Then he looked round and said, 'So this is where you've crawled to!' And he petted Bruce. And then he came to me, and looked into my face a long time, and said, 'So this is his girl, eh? Fanny junior, down to the last eyelash! Come here, puss!' he said. And I made a face at him. And he put his hands to his sides and laughed and laughed at me. And he turned to my mother and said, 'Fanny, Fanny, what a queen!' I thought he meant be a queen in the theatre. But he meant something else. He came to me again, and squeezed me and pressed his face against mine. And my mother ran and snatched him away. And I ran behind the house.

"And by-and-by my mother came to find me, and said, 'Oho, my little giantess! So here you are! What are you trembling for!' And she kicked me. 'Take that!' she said.

"And I didn't understand—not then. But I understand now.

"Next day the man came again, and talked to my mother. But I saw him look and look at me. And by-and-by he reached for my hand. And my mother said, 'Stop that! None of that, my little George! One at a time, if you please!' And he laughed and let me go. And they went out and sat on a bench in the yard. And the man stroked my mother's hair. And I watched and listened. They talked a long time till it was night. And I heard George say, 'Well, Fanny, old girl, we did for him, all right, didn't we?' I've always remembered it. And they laughed and they laughed. Then the man said, 'God, how it does scare me, sometimes!' And my mother laughed at him for that. And George said, 'Look what I've had to give up. And you penned up here! But never mind. It will blow over. Then we'll crawl back to the old world, eh, Fanny?'"

All this the woman had rattled off like a child with a recitation, as something learned long ago and long rehearsed against just this last contingency of confession.

"Oh, I remember it!" she said, as if her volubility needed an explanation. "It took me a long time to understand. But one day I understood.

"He came often, then—George did. And I was not afraid of him any more. He was fine, like my mother. Every time I saw him come my stomach would give a jump. And I liked to have him put his face against mine, the way I'd seen him do to mother. And every time he went away I'd watch him from the hilltop till I couldn't see him any more. And at night I couldn't sleep. And George came very often—to see me, he told me, and not my mother.

"And my mother was changed then. She never hit me again, because George said he'd kill her if she did. But she acted very strange when he told her that, and looked and looked at me. And didn't speak to me for days and days. But I didn't mind—I could talk to George. And we'd go for long walks, and he'd tell me more about New York and Phil'delph—more than my mother could tell. Oh, I loved to hear him talk. And he said such nice things to me—such nice things to me! Bruce—I forgot all about Bruce. Oh, I was happy!... But that was because I knew nothing....

"Yes, I pleased George. But by-and-by he changed too. Then I couldn't say anything that he liked. 'Stupid child!' he called me. I tried, ever so hard, to please him. But it was like walking against a wind, that you can't push aside. You women, you just guess how I felt

then! You just guess! You want your husband. It was the same with me. I want George. But he wouldn't listen to me no more."

The woman seemed to sink, to shrivel, under the weight of her recollection. Finding her not a monster but a woman after all, her two hearers were moved to another slight token of sympathy. They were "guessing," as she commanded. But still, with a kind of weary magnanimity, she waved them back, away from the things she had yet to make clear.

"But one day I saw it. One day I saw something. I came home with my berries, and George was there. His breath was funny, and he talked funny, and walked funny. I'd seen people in the village that way. But—my mother was that way, too. She looked funny—had very red cheeks, and talked very fast. Very foolish. And her breath was the same as George's. And she laughed and laughed at me, and made fun of me.

"I said nothing. But I didn't sleep that night. I wondered what would happen. Many days I thought of what was happening. Then I knew. My mother was trying to get George away from me. That was what had happened.

"Another day I came back with my berries, and my mother was not there. Neither was George there. So! She had taken George away. My

George. Well! I set out to look. No rest for me till I find them. I knew pretty well where they might be. I started for George's little brick house down in the hollow. That's where he had taken to living—hunting and fishing. It was late—the brick house was far away—I was very tired. But I went. And—"

She had been speaking more rapidly. Here she stopped to breathe, to swallow, to collect herself for the final plunge.

"I heard a runaway horse. 'George's horse!' I said. 'George is coming back to me, after all! George is coming back to me! She can't keep him!' And, yes, it was George's horse. But nobody on him. I was so scared I could hardly stand. Something had happened to George. Only then did I know how much I wanted him—when something had happened to him. I almost fell down in the road, but I crawled on. And presently I came to him, to George. He was walking in the road, limping and stumbling and rolling—all muddy—singing to himself. He didn't know me at first. I ran to him—to my George. And he grabbed me, and stumbled, and fell. And he grabbed my ankle. 'Come to me, li'l' one!' he said. 'Damn the old hag!' he said. 'It's the girl I want—Ned's own!' he said. 'Come here to me, Ned's own. I want you!' And he pinched me. He bit my hand. And—and I—all of a

sudden I was afraid.

"And I snatched myself loose. 'George!' I screamed. 'No!' I said—I don't know why. I was very scared. I was wild. I kicked away—and ran—ran, ran—away—I don't know where—to the woods. And oh, a long time I heard George laugh at me. 'Just like the very old Ned!' I heard him shout. But I ran, till I fell down tired. And there I sat and thought.

"And all of a sudden I understood. All at once I knew many things. I knew then what my mother had said about Ned sometimes. He was my father. He was dead. Somebody had killed him, I knew—I knew it from what they said. George knew my father, then, too. What did he know? That was it! He—he was the man that killed my father. He was after my mother then—he had been after her before, and made her breathe funny, made a fool of her. That was why my beautiful mother was so strange to me sometimes. That's why there was no more New York and Phil'delph. George did that—spoiled everything. Now he was back—making a fool of her again—my mother! And wanted to make a fool of me. Oh, then I knew! That man! And I had liked him. His brown hair, his brown eyes! But oh, I understood, I understood.

"I got up from the ground. Everything reeled

and fell apart. There was nothing more for me. Everything spoiled. Our pretty cottage—the stories—all gone. Spoiled. So I ran back. Maybe I could bring my mother back. Maybe I could save something. Oh, I was sick. The trees, they bent and rolled the way George walked. The wind bent them double. They held their stomachs, as if they were George, laughing at me. They seemed to holler 'Ned's girl!' at me. I was dizzy, and the wind nearly blew me over. But I had to hurry home.

"I got near. No one there. Not even George. But I had to find my beautiful little mother. All round I ran. The brambles threw me down. I fell over a stump and struck my face. I could feel the blood running down over my cheeks. It was warmer than the rain. No matter, I had to find my mother. My poor little mother.

"Bruce growled at me when I got to the house. He didn't know me. That's how I looked! But there was a light in the house. Yes, my mother was there! But George was there, too. That man! They had bundles all ready to go away. They weren't glad to see me. I got there too soon. George said, 'Damn her soul! Always that girl of Ned's! I'll show her!' And he kicked me.

"George kicked me!...

"But my mother—she didn't laugh when she

saw me. She was very scared. She shook George, and said, 'George! Come away, quick! Look at her face! Look at her eyes!' she said.

"Oh, my mother, my little mother. She thought I would hurt her. Even when she'd been such a fool. I was the one that had to take care of her, then. But she wanted to go away—with that man! That made me wild.

"'You, George!' I said, 'You've got to go! You've—you've done too much to us!' I said. 'You go!' And 'Mother!' I said. 'You've got to leave him! He's done too much to us!' I said.

"She only answered, 'George, come, quick!' And she dragged George toward the door. And George laughed at me. Laughed and laughed—till he saw my eyes. He didn't laugh then. Nor my mother. My mother screamed when she saw my eyes. 'Shut up, George!' she screamed. 'She's not Ned's girl now!' And George said, 'No, by God! She's *your* brat now, all right! She's the devil's own!'

"And they ran for the door. I tried to get there first, to catch my little mother. My mother only screamed, as if she were wild. And they got out—out in the dark. 'Mother!' I cried. 'Mother! Come back, come back!' No answer. My mother was gone.

"Oh, that made me feel, somehow, very strong. 'I'll bring you back!' I shouted. 'You, George! I'll send you away. Wait and see!' They never answered. Maybe they never heard. The wind was blowing, like to-night.

"But I knew where I could find them. I knew where to go to find George. And I ran to my loft, for my knife. But, O my God, when I saw poor Mollie in the glass! Teeth gone. I wasn't beautiful any more. And my eyes!—they came out of the glass at me, like two big dogs jumping a fence. I ran from them. I didn't know myself. I ran out of the door, in the night. I went after that man. He had done too much. That storm—the lightning that night! Awful! But no storm kept me back. Rain—hail—but I kept on. Trees fell—but I went on. I called out. I laughed then, myself. I'll get him! I say, 'Look out for Ned's girl! Look out for Ned's girl!' I say...."

Unconsciously the woman was re-enacting every gesture, repeating every phrase and accent of her journey through the night, that excursion out of the world, from which there had been no return for her. "Look out for Ned's girl!"—the house rang with the cry. But this second journey, of the memory, ended in a moan and a faint.

"I said I would tell it! Help me!" she said.

In some fashion they worked her heavy bulk out of its crazy wrappings and into a bed. John arrived, to help them. Morning peered timidly over the eastern hills, as if fearful of beholding what the night had wrought. In its smiling calm the noise of the storm was already done away. But the storm in the troubled mind raged on.

For days it raged, in fever and delirium. Then they buried the rude minister of justice in the place where she commanded—under the pile of broken stones and bricks among the trees in the hollow. And it is said that the inquisitive villagers who had a part in the simple ceremonies stirred about till they made the discovery of two skeletons under the ruins. And to this day there are persons in Bustlebury with a belief that at night, or in a storm, they sometimes hear a long-drawn cry issuing from that lonely little hollow.

THE INTERVAL[17]

By VINCENT O'SULLIVAN

From *The Boston Evening Transcript*

Mrs. Wilton passed through a little alley leading from one of the gates which are around Regent's Park, and came out on the wide and quiet street. She walked along slowly, peering anxiously from side to side so as not to overlook the number. She pulled her furs closer round her; after her years in India this London damp seemed very harsh. Still, it was not a fog to-day. A dense haze, gray and tinged ruddy, lay between the houses, sometimes blowing with a little wet kiss against the face. Mrs. Wilton's hair and eyelashes and her furs were powdered with tiny drops. But there was nothing in the weather to blur the sight; she could see the faces of people some distance off and read the signs on the shops.

Before the door of a dealer in antiques and second-hand furniture she paused and looked through the shabby uncleaned window at an unassorted heap of things, many of them of great value. She read the Polish name fastened on the pane in white letters.

"Yes; this is the place."

She opened the door, which met her entrance with an ill-tempered jangle. From somewhere in the black depths of the shop the dealer came forward. He had a clammy white face, with a sparse black beard, and wore a skull cap and

spectacles. Mrs. Wilton spoke to him in a low voice.

A look of complicity, of cunning, perhaps of irony, passed through the dealer's cynical and sad eyes. But he bowed gravely and respectfully.

"Yes, she is here, madam. Whether she will see you or not I do not know. She is not always well; she has her moods. And then, we have to be so careful. The police—Not that they would touch a lady like you. But the poor alien has not much chance these days."

Mrs. Wilton followed him to the back of the shop, where there was a winding staircase. She knocked over a few things in her passage and stooped to pick them up, but the dealer kept muttering, "It does not matter—surely it does not matter." He lit a candle.

"You must go up these stairs. They are very dark; be careful. When you come to a door, open it and go straight in."

He stood at the foot of the stairs holding the light high above his head as she ascended.

The room was not very large, and it seemed very ordinary. There were some flimsy,

uncomfortable chairs in gilt and red. Two large palms were in corners. Under a glass cover on the table was a view of Rome. The room had not a business-like look, thought Mrs. Wilton; there was no suggestion of the office or waiting-room where people came and went all day; yet you would not say that it was a private room which was lived in. There were no books or papers about; every chair was in the place it had been placed when the room was last swept; there was no fire and it was very cold.

To the right of the window was a door covered with a plush curtain. Mrs. Wilton sat down near the table and watched this door. She thought it must be through it that the soothsayer would come forth. She laid her hands listlessly one on top of the other on the table. This must be the tenth seer she had consulted since Hugh had been killed. She thought them over. No, this must be the eleventh. She had forgotten that frightening man in Paris who said he had been a priest. Yet of them all it was only he who had told her anything definite. But even he could do no more than tell the past. He told of her marriage; he even had the duration of it right—twenty-one months. He told too of their time in India—at least, he knew that her husband had been a soldier, and said he had been on service in the "colonies." On the whole, though, he had

been as unsatisfactory as the others. None of them had given her the consolation she sought. She did not want to be told of the past. If Hugh was gone forever, then with him had gone all her love of living, her courage, all her better self. She wanted to be lifted out of the despair, the dazed aimless drifting from day to day, longing at night for the morning, and in the morning for the fall of night, which had been her life since his death. If somebody could assure her that it was not all over, that he was somewhere, not too far away, unchanged from what he had been here, with his crisp hair and rather slow smile and lean brown face, that he saw her sometimes, that he had not forgotten her....

"Oh, Hugh, darling!"

When she looked up again the woman was sitting there before her. Mrs. Wilton had not heard her come in. With her experience, wide enough now, of seers and fortune-tellers of all kinds, she saw at once that this woman was different from the others. She was used to the quick appraising look, the attempts, sometimes clumsy, but often cleverly disguised, to collect some fragments of information whereupon to erect a plausible vision. But this woman looked as if she took it out of herself.

Not that her appearance suggested intercourse with the spiritual world more than the others had done; it suggested that, in fact, considerably less. Some of the others were frail, yearning, evaporated creatures, and the ex-priest in Paris had something terrible and condemned in his look. He might well sup with the devil, that man, and probably did in some way or other.

But this was a little fat, weary-faced woman about fifty, who only did not look like a cook because she looked more like a sempstress. Her black dress was all covered with white threads. Mrs. Wilton looked at her with some embarrassment. It seemed more reasonable to be asking a woman like this about altering a gown than about intercourse with the dead. That seemed even absurd in such a very commonplace presence. The woman seemed timid and oppressed; she breathed heavily and kept rubbing her dingy hands, which looked moist, one over the other; she was always wetting her lips, and coughed with a little dry cough. But in her these signs of nervous exhaustion suggested overwork in a close atmosphere, bending too close over the sewing-machine. Her uninteresting hair, like a rat's pelt, was eked out with a false addition of another color. Some threads had got into her hair too.

Her harried, uneasy look caused Mrs. Wilton to

ask compassionately: "Are you much worried by the police?"

"Oh, the police! Why don't they leave us alone? You never know who comes to see you. Why don't they leave me alone? I'm a good woman. I only think. What I do is no harm to any one."...

She continued in an uneven querulous voice, always rubbing her hands together nervously. She seemed to the visitor to be talking at random, just gabbling, like children do sometimes before they fall asleep.

"I wanted to explain—" hesitated Mrs. Wilton.

But the woman, with her head pressed close against the back of the chair, was staring beyond her at the wall. Her face had lost whatever little expression it had; it was blank and stupid. When she spoke it was very slowly and her voice was guttural.

"Can't you see him? It seems strange to me that you can't see him. He is so near you. He is passing his arm round your shoulders."

This was a frequent gesture of Hugh's. And indeed at that moment she felt that somebody was very near her, bending over her. She was enveloped in tenderness. Only a very thin veil,

she felt, prevented her from seeing. But the woman saw. She was describing Hugh minutely, even the little things like the burn on his right hand.

"Is he happy? Oh, ask him does he love me?"

The result was so far beyond anything she had hoped for that she was stunned. She could only stammer the first thing that came into her head. "Does he love me?"

"He loves you. He won't answer, but he loves you. He wants me to make you see him; he is disappointed, I think, because I can't. But I can't unless you do it yourself."

After a while she said:

"I think you will see him again. You think of nothing else. He is very close to us now."

Then she collapsed, and fell into a heavy sleep and lay there motionless, hardly breathing. Mrs. Wilton put some notes on the table and stole out on tip-toe.

She seemed to remember that downstairs in the dark shop the dealer with the waxen face detained her to shew some old silver and jewellery and such like. But she did not come to

herself, she had no precise recollection of anything, till she found herself entering a church near Portland Place. It was an unlikely act in her normal moments. Why did she go in there? She acted like one walking in her sleep.

The church was old and dim, with high black pews. There was nobody there. Mrs. Wilton sat down in one of the pews and bent forward with her face in her hands.

After a few minutes she saw that a soldier had come in noiselessly and placed himself about half-a-dozen rows ahead of her. He never turned round; but presently she was struck by something familiar in the figure. First she thought vaguely that the soldier looked like her Hugh. Then, when he put up his hand, she saw who it was.

She hurried out of the pew and ran towards him. "Oh, Hugh, Hugh, have you come back?"

He looked round with a smile. He had not been killed. It was all a mistake. He was going to speak....

Footsteps sounded hollow in the empty church. She turned and glanced down the dim aisle.

It was an old sexton or verger who approached. "I thought I heard you call," he said.

"I was speaking to my husband." But Hugh was nowhere to be seen.

"He was here a moment ago." She looked about in anguish. "He must have gone to the door."

"There's nobody here," said the old man gently. "Only you and me. Ladies are often taken funny since the war. There was one in here yesterday afternoon said she was married in this church and her husband had promised to meet her here. Perhaps you were married here?"

"No," said Mrs. Wilton, desolately. "I was married in India."

It might have been two or three days after that, when she went into a small Italian restaurant in the Bayswater district. She often went out for her meals now: she had developed an exhausting cough, and she found that it somehow became less troublesome when she was in a public place looking at strange faces. In her flat there were all the things that Hugh had used; the trunks and bags still had his name on them with the labels of places where they had been together. They were like stabs. In the restaurant, people came and went, many soldiers too among them, just glancing at her in her

corner.

This day, as it chanced, she was rather late and there was nobody there. She was very tired. She nibbled at the food they brought her. She could almost have cried from tiredness and loneliness and the ache in her heart.

Then suddenly he was before her, sitting there opposite at the table. It was as it was in the days of their engagement, when they used sometimes to lunch at restaurants. He was not in uniform. He smiled at her and urged her to eat, just as he used in those days....

I met her that afternoon as she was crossing Kensington Gardens, and she told me about it.

"I have been with Hugh." She seemed most happy.

"Did he say anything?"

"N-no. Yes. I think he did, but I could not quite hear. My head was so very tired. The next time ——"

I did not see her for some time after that. She found, I think, that by going to places where she

had once seen him—the old church, the little restaurant—she was more certain to see him again. She never saw him at home. But in the street or the park he would often walk along beside her. Once he saved her from being run over. She said she actually felt his hand grabbing her arm, suddenly, when the car was nearly upon her.

She had given me the address of the clairvoyant; and it is through that strange woman that I know—or seem to know—what followed.

Mrs. Wilton was not exactly ill last winter, not so ill, at least, as to keep to her bedroom. But she was very thin, and her great handsome eyes always seemed to be staring at some point beyond, searching. There was a look in them that seamen's eyes sometimes have when they are drawing on a coast of which they are not very certain. She lived almost in solitude: she hardly ever saw anybody except when they sought her out. To those who were anxious about her she laughed and said she was very well.

One sunny morning she was lying awake, waiting for the maid to bring her tea. The shy London sunlight peeped through the blinds. The room had a fresh and happy look.

When she heard the door open she thought that the maid had come in. Then she saw that Hugh was standing at the foot of the bed. He was in uniform this time, and looked as he had looked the day he went away.

"Oh, Hugh, speak to me! Will you not say just one word?"

He smiled and threw back his head, just as he used to in the old days at her mother's house when he wanted to call her out of the room without attracting the attention of the others. He moved towards the door, still signing to her to follow him. He picked up her slippers on his way and held them out to her as if he wanted her to put them on. She slipped out of bed hastily....

It is strange that when they came to look through her things after her death the slippers could never be found.

"A CERTAIN RICH MAN ____"[18]

By LAWRENCE PERRY

From *Scribner's Magazine.*

Evelyn Colcord glanced up the table with the appraising eye of a young hostess who had already established a reputation for her dinners. The room had been decorated with a happy effect of national colors, merged with those of the allied nations, and neither in the table nor its appointments was a flaw revealed—while the low, contented murmur of conversation and light laughter attending completion of the first course afforded assurance that the company was well chosen and the atmosphere assertive in qualities that made for equanimity and good cheer.

She smiled slightly, nodding at the butler, who had been watching her anxiously, and then glanced out the corner of her eye at Professor Simec, seated at her right. She had entertained doubts concerning him, had, in fact, resented the business necessity which had brought him thither as guest of honor, not through any emotion approximating inhospitality but wholly because of her mistrust as to the effect of this alien note upon her dinner, which was quite impromptu, having been arranged at the eleventh hour in deference to the wishes of Jerry Dane, a partner of Colcord's, who was handling

the firm's foreign war patents.

She had done the best she could as to guests, had done exceedingly well, as it chanced, fortune having favored her especially in the cases of several of those who sat about the table. And now Simec was fully involved in conversation with Bessie Dane, who seemed deeply interested. As for the man, weazened and attenuate, she could catch only his profile—the bulging, hairless brow, and beard curling outward from the tip, forming sort of a crescent, which she found hardly less sinister than the cynical twist where grizzled whiskers and mustaches conjoined and the cold, level white eyes that she had noted as dominant characteristics when he was presented.

Simec was a laboratory recluse who had found his *métier* in the war. Rumor credited to him at least one of the deadliest chemical combinations employed by the allied armies. But it was merely rumor; nothing definite was known. These are things of which little is hinted and less said. None the less, intangible as were his practical achievements—whatever they might be—his reputation was substantial, enhanced, small doubt, by the very vagueness of his endeavors. The element of mystery, which his physical appearance tended not to allay, invested him, as it were, with a thaumaturgic

veil through which was dimly revealed the man. It was as though his personality was merely a nexus to the things he stood for and had done, so that he appeared to Evelyn less a human entity than a symbol. But at least Bessie Dane was interested and the fine atmosphere of the table was without a taint.

Shrugging almost imperceptibly, she withdrew her eyes and looked across the table with an expression which Nicholas Colcord could have interpreted had he not been engrossed with Sybil Latham. Evelyn studied him with admiring tenderness as he lounged in his chair, toying idly with a fork, smiling at something his partner was saying, while her mind ran lovingly over the dominant traits of a personality which was so strong, so keenly alive, so sensitive to decent, manly things, so perfectly balanced.

Failing to catch his eye, Evelyn turned to her plate filled with a subtle melancholy. When would there be another dinner like this? Not, at all events, until the war was over. Nick had spoken about this—very definitely; there would be no more entertaining. She had agreed with him, of course, not, however, escaping the conviction that her husband's viewpoint was more or less in keeping with a certain unusual sombreness which she had caught creeping into his mood in the past year or so.

Still, everybody who amounted to anything was pulling up on the bit and doing something or talking of doing something or other for the country. It was already assured that the season would be insufferably dull—from a social standpoint at least. Evelyn could not suppress a certain resentment. She was not one of those who had found an element of thrill in the suddenly altered perspectives. Her plans for the spring season had been laid; engagements had been accepted or declined, as functions promised to be worth while or uninteresting; all the delicate interlocking machinery of the life in which Evelyn Colcord moved, somewhat prominently, was in motion—then the sudden checking of the wheels: war.

Now there were memories of her husband's sober words; now there was young Jeffery Latham at her elbow—he had been almost shot to pieces in France—now there was Simec, the genius of diabolical achievement.... What were things coming to? Even the weather had gone wrong. Outside, an unseasonable cold rain, lashed by a northeast gale, was driving against the panes of the French windows, and the sizzling effulgence of an arc-lamp revealed pools of water lying on the asphalt of the avenue....

The dry, softly modulated voice of Captain

Latham at her left lifted Evelyn from her trend of sombre revery.

"Nick is looking uncommonly fit—he'll go in for the cavalry, I suppose."

The young British officer spoke more with a half-humorous effort at conversation than any other motive, but she turned to him with a gesture of appeal.

"Jeffery," she said, "you make me shiver!"

The man stared at her curiously.

"Why, I—I'm sorry. I'm sure I didn't—"

"Oh, of course," she interrupted, "I know you didn't. Don't be silly. As for me, I'm perfectly foolish, don't you know. Only"—she paused—"I detest war talk. It's so fearfully upsetting. It seems only yesterday that it was a subject to drag in when conversation lagged. But now—"

Latham's quizzical reply was almost upon his lips, when, evidently changing his mind, he spoke dryly.

"No doubt you'll become used to it in time.... By the by, I was in fun about old Nick. His objection to grouse coverts and deer-stalking—I can't fancy him in war."

As she didn't reply he picked up his fork, adding: "Yet he's a tremendous athlete—polo and all that sort of thing. Do you know, I suspect that when the real pull comes he won't object to potting at Germans.... Did you do these menu cards, Evelyn? They're awfully well done."

She nodded, eying him eagerly.

"Yes, I painted them this afternoon. You see, it was a rush order.... As to Nick, I don't think it will come to his enlisting. I've never considered it, really. He's awfully mixed up in government finances, don't you know. We all tell him he's more valuable where he is."

Latham smiled faintly.

"What does Nick say to that?"

"Oh, I don't know." She shrugged. "Nothing very definite. War has been a taboo subject with him—I mean from the first when you all went in. I know he has strong feelings about it, terribly strong. But he never talks about them."

"He went in strong on the financial end, didn't he?" asked the Englishman. "Some one in London told me he'd made a lot of oof."

She nodded, coloring.

"Yes, oceans of money.... Not that we needed it," Evelyn added, a trifle defensively.

"I know; it just came," was Latham's comment. "Well, it all helped us out of a nasty mess."

Evelyn was thinking and did not reply immediately. When she did speak it was apparent that in changing the subject she had followed a natural impulse without intention or design.

"Jeffery," she said, "do you know I haven't been able to make you out since you arrived here—nor Sybil either," she added, nodding toward Latham's wife, whose classic, flaxen-haired profile was turned toward them.

The man was smiling curiously.

"I didn't realize we had changed so."

"Well, you have, both of you. You talk the same and act the same—except a—a sort of reserve; something; I don't know just what.... Somehow, you, and Sybil, too, seem as though you felt strange, aloof, out of place. You used to be so absolutely—well, natural and at home with us all—"

"My word!" Latham laughed but made no further comment.

"Of course," Evelyn went on, "you've been through a lot, I can appreciate that. When I got Sybil's letter I simply wept: twenty-four hours in a muddy shell-hole; invalided for good, with an arm you can't raise above your shoulder; a horrid scar down your face...."

"It does make rather a poor face to look at, doesn't it?" Latham flushed and hurried on. "Well, I've no complaint."

She glanced at the cross on his olive-drab coat.

"Of course not! How absurd, Jeffery! But how did Sybil ever stand it? How did she *live* through it? I mean the parting, the months of suspense, word that you were missing, then mortally wounded?... Her brother killed by gas?"

Latham glanced at his wife, a soft light in his eyes.

"Poor Sybil," he replied. "She was a brick, Evelyn—a perfect brick. I don't know how she got through it. But one does, you know."

"Yes, one does, I suppose." Evelyn sighed. "But how? *I* couldn't; I simply couldn't. Why, Jeffery, I can't bear even to think of it."

Latham shook his head negatively at the footman, who stood at his side, and then turned

smiling to Evelyn. "Oh, come! Of course you could. You don't understand now, but you will. There's a sort of grace given, I fancy."

"Jeffery, I don't want to understand, and I don't want any grace, and I think you're horrid and unsympathetic." She tapped him admonishingly on the arm, laughing lightly. But the gloom was still in her dark-gray eyes. "But, after all, you are right. We *are* in for it, just as you have been.... God grant there are women more Spartan than I."

Latham grimaced and was raising a deprecating hand when she caught it impulsively.

"Please let's talk about something else."

"Very well." He smiled mockingly and lowered his voice. "Your friend at your right there—curious beggar, don't you think?"

Evelyn glanced at Simec, turning again to Latham.

"He gives me the creeps," she confessed. "It seems absurd, but he does."

"Really!" The Englishman stared at the man a moment. "Do you know," he resumed, "he does seem a bit uncanny. Where'd Nick pick him up?"

"It was Jerry Dane," she replied. "He's done some tremendous things on the other side. Jerry met him in Washington the other day and seems to regard him as a find. He has no business sense and has given away practically everything. Now we are going to capitalize him; I believe that's the word. I never saw him before tonight"—her voice sank to a whisper—"and, do you know, I hope I never shall again." She shrugged. "Listen to him."

Several of the guests were already doing that. His toneless voice rose and fell monotonously, and he appeared so detached from what he was saying that as Evelyn gazed at him she seemed to find difficulty in relating words that were said to the speaker; only the slight movement of the lips and an occasional formless gesture made the association definite.

"Doctor Allison," he was saying, "has missed the distinction between *hostia honoraria* and *hostia piacularis*. In the former case the deity accepts the gift of a life; in the latter he demands it."

"What in the world are you all talking about now?" asked Evelyn plaintively. "Not war—?"

"Sacrifice, Mrs. Colcord." Simec inclined his head slightly in her direction.

"I was saying," explained Doctor Allison, "that we do well if we send our young men to battle in the spirit of privileged sacrifice, as—as something that is our—our—yes—our proud privilege, as I say, to do."

Simec shook his head in thoughtful negation.

"That is sentiment, excellent sentiment; unfortunately, it doesn't stand assay. Reaction comes. We do better if we make our gift of blood as a matter of unalterable necessity. We make too much of it all, in any event. The vast evil of extended peace is the attachment of too great value to luxuries and to human life—trite, but true. We know, of course, that the world has progressed chiefly over the dead bodies of men and, yes, women and children."

Some new element had entered into the voice. Whether it was herself or whether it was Simec, Evelyn was in no mood to determine.... She was aware only of a certain metallic cadence which beat cruelly upon her nerves. Silence had followed, but not of the same sort as before. As though seeking complete withdrawal, Evelyn turned her eyes out of the window. A wayfarer, head down, was struggling through the nimbus of watery electric light; a horse-drawn vehicle was plodding by. Colcord's voice brought her back; it was strained.

"I don't feel as Allison does," he said. "And I certainly have no sympathy with Simec." He leaned forward, his elbows on the table. "You see," he went on, "I—I—well, maybe, I'm a product of extended peace, as Simec puts it. No doubt I'm soft. But this war—I've never talked nor let myself think much about the war—but this whole thing of sacrifice got under me from the very first.... Young men, thousands, hundreds of thousands of them, yes, millions, torn from their homes, from their mothers, their fathers—their wives, for what? To be blown into shapeless, unrecognizable clay, to be maimed, made useless for life. My God! It has kept me awake nights!"

"Colcord"—Simec's white eyes rested professionally upon the host—"let us get to the root of your state of mind; your brief is for the individual as against the common good, is it not?"

Colcord frowned.

"Oh, I haven't any brief, Simec; I've never reasoned about the thing, that is, in a cold, scientific way. It's a matter of heart, I suppose—of instinct. I just can't seem to stand the calculating, sordid wastage of young life and all that it involves. Now, of course, it has come closer home. And it's terrible."

"You never would shoot anything for sport, would you, old fellow?" said Latham, sympathetically, "not even pheasants."

Colcord tossed his beautifully modelled head.

"Latham, I tell you, I'm soft; I'm the ultimate product of peace and civilization."

"Yes, you're soft, terribly so," smiled Dane. "I ought to know; I played opposite you at tackle for two years."

"Stuff! You understand what I mean, Jerry; I guess you all do. I've never talked this way before; as I say, I've always kept the war in the background, tried to gloss it over, forget it. But I couldn't; I've done a heap of thinking." He sat bolt upright, his clinched fist upon the table. "All these young chaps herded together and suddenly turned loose from all they've known and done and thought—I tell you I can't duck it any more."

"I know, old chap." Arnold Bates, who wrote light society novels, spoke soothingly. "It is—rotten. But what are you going to do about it?"

Colcord's fine brow was wrinkled painfully.

"Nothing, Arnold, nothing. That's the trouble; you have to sit still and watch this wrecking of civilization or else get out and take a hack at the

thing yourself. I can't do that; not unless I have to." He paused. "I've had a good time in this life; things have always come easily—"

Sybil Latham was regarding him contemplatively.

"Yes," she murmured, "I don't know a man who has impressed me as so thoroughly enjoying life as you, Nick—"

Colcord stared at her a moment.

"Well, I do," he replied at length. "But I want to say this right here: if some person or presence, some supernatural being, say, should come here to-night, at this table, and tell me that by giving up my life right now I would, through that act, bring an end to—"

"Nick!" Evelyn Colcord's voice was poignantly sharp.

"If through that little sacrifice the blood glut in Europe would end, I'd do it cheerfully, joyfully, in a minute."

Simec was gazing at the speaker with half-closed eyes; the others, in thrall of his words, were staring at the table or at one another.

"What a thought!" Mrs. Allison glanced at him curiously. "Coming from you, of all men,

Nick!"

"I wonder if I could say that?" Jerry Dane sank down in his chair, put his hands in his pockets, and gazed sombrely up at the ceiling. "By George! I wish I could—but I can't."

Bates shifted uneasily. He shrugged.

"It's too hypothetical. And yet—of course it's absurd—yet if the thing *could* happen, I think I'd stick with Colcord."

"In other words"—Simec's voice now had a sibilant hiss—"if you could end war through your death you'd be willing to die—now, or at any specified time?"

"If you're talking to me," said Colcord, "I'm on record. Those who know me well know I don't have to say a thing twice."

"I was talking to Mr. Bates," replied the inventor. "He seemed doubtful."

"Well, I'm not now," retorted the writer sharply. "I'm with Nick absolutely."

Doctor Allison was shaking his head.

"Theoretically, I would make the same assertion," he confessed, "but I wish to be honest; I don't know whether I could do it or

not."

"Neither do I," said Dane. "A certainty like that and taking a chance on the battlefield are two different things. What do you say, Latham; you've been through the mill?"

"Well, you know," shrugged the soldier, "I fancy I'm a bit hardened. I'd like to see the thing through now. We've gone so far, don't you know."

There was a momentary silence broken only by the soft movements of the butler and footman. One of the windows rattled in a gust of wind and rain. Under the flickering candle-lights the company seemed to draw to-gether in a fellowship that was not the bond of gustatory cheer—which Evelyn could so infallibly establish at her table—but a communion of sympathetic feeling as of one drawing to another in the common thrall of subdued emotion. The prevailing mood impressed Evelyn Colcord strongly, and, glancing down the table, she started at her accuracy in divining the cause. Simec's place was vacant. She recalled now that but a moment before he had been summoned to the telephone. She had noted his temporary departure only as one notices the lifting of a saffron mist.

Unquestionably, the absorbing topic had

gripped the imagination of all. It was sufficiently theoretical, so absolutely hypothetical, in fact, so utterly impossible, that Evelyn's alert intellect found pleasure in grappling with it.

"I wonder—!" Her elbows were on the table, her chin upon her hands. "Of course, it's awfully easy to say; but I wonder how it would be if we really faced such a question. Just consider, Arnold,"—she was smiling at Bates—"the superhuman firing squad is outside the door; the superhuman agent stands at your side ready to push the button and end the war as the shots ring out. You picture it, of course, with your imagination. Well, sir, what do you say?"

Bates grimaced, twisting the stem of his wine-glass in his fingers.

"Well, one can say only what he *thinks* he would do. It's so absurd that I can't visualize your picture—not even with my imagination. But it seems to me—it *seems* that I would gladly make the sacrifice."

Doctor Allison, who had been scowling at the ceiling, passing his fingers thoughtfully through his sparse gray hair, sighed deeply.

"That's just it; how could one possibly tell? The mind adapts itself to situations, I suppose; in

fact, of course it does. It's altogether difficult, sitting at this table with its food and color and light and excellent company, to place yourself in the position Nicholas has devised. It's simply flying from the very comfortable and congenial and normal present into a dark limbo that is deucedly uncomfortable, uncongenial, and abnormal. I can't go beyond what I've already said; I don't know whether I'd do it or not."

"You'd like to, of course," suggested Mrs. Dane.

"Oh, of course I'd *like* to," was the reply. "The point I make is whether I could or not; I don't *know*."

"Well"—the young woman paused—"I'm not going to put the question to my husband because I wouldn't let Jerry do it, even if he were willing."

"Oh, come now, Bess!" grinned Dane.

"Well, I wouldn't, and I imagine I'd have some rights in the matter."

"Now we're getting back to Simec's *hostia honoraria* and *hostia piacularis*," laughed Bates.

"It is a new viewpoint," sighed Evelyn. "Curiously, I hadn't thought of *that*."

She smiled across the table at her husband, but he was slouched in his chair, his eyes staring vacantly over her head.

"Of course you'd all do it, every one," he said presently. "The trouble now is that you are attempting to visualize the tragic part of it and not considering the humanitarian side—the great good that would come of the sacrifice. When you look at it that way you would be willing to do it—and think it a mighty darn cheap exchange."

"Well, perhaps so," grumbled Allison. "But I can't help thinking I'm glad I don't have to face the alternative."

Evelyn turned swiftly toward Sybil Latham, under the impression that she had made some little exclamation or that she had checked one. But her face was hard and inscrutable.

"Let's change the subject." Evelyn laughed self-consciously. "It's so far-fetched; it's getting a bit on my nerves."

Even as she spoke she knew that Simec had resumed his seat, although he had made no sound and her eyes were upon her husband. She was thus not surprised to hear his voice.

"I gather, then," he said, as though picking up a

conversational thread, "that there are two of you who would be willing to make the gift of sacrifice—Colcord and Bates."

His manner was such as to draw them all from their mood of idle, comfortable speculation to rigidity. Turning to him, searching him, they saw, as it seemed to them, a new being divested of vagueness—dominant, commanding, remorseless. Sitting rigid, his thin, hairy neck stretched outward, he suggested some sinister bird of prey. Thus poised for an instant he regarded the two men whom he had named.

"Suppose," he proceeded, "that I could make this absurd condition—as Bates terms it—exist. Would you gentlemen still hold your position? Believe me, I ask this in the utmost good faith —"

Evelyn Colcord spoke before either man could make reply.

"Nick, this is getting a bit unpleasant, really." She laughed nervously. "Don't you think we could turn to something more cheerful? I adore a joke—"

"But this is not a joke, Mrs. Colcord," rejoined Simec gravely.

"Well, in any event—" began Evelyn, but her

husband interrupted.

"I told you I was on record, Simec," he said. "You show me a way to end this carnival of murder—and I'm your man."

"I, too." Bates chuckled. "Perhaps, after all, we've been dining closer to the supernatural than we realized. Well, I'm game. Life, after all, is only a few more summers and a few more winters, even if we live it out. Go to it, Simec." There was sort of a reckless ring in the writer's voice which was taken as a sign that he was seriously impressed. But Bates would be; he had imagination and was temperamental.

"I wish you all would stop." Bessie Dane's voice was childishly plaintive.

"Nick, please!" cried Evelyn. "This is not at all funny."

"I don't see the joke, I must confess," grumbled Allison.

Evelyn wished that Latham or his wife would add weight to the protest, but they remained silent, staring curiously at the inventor, as, indeed, they had throughout. Now she thought of it, she realized that the two had remained practically aloof from the discussion that had preceded Simec's *dénouement*.

"I'm afraid, Simec," said Colcord crisply, "that we're getting a bit unpopular. We'd better drop the subject. It was rather a cheap play, I'll admit, stacking myself up as a martyr in a wholly impossible situation. You called me—and Bates there—rather cleverly.... The drinks are on us.... At the same time I meant what I said, even if it was far-fetched; I mean I was sincere."

Simec threw out his arm in a long, bony gesture.

"I am perfectly convinced of that. That is why I am going to ask you to make your offer good."

Had it come from any one else there would have been derisive laughter. But Simec, a man to whom had been credited so much of mystery and achievement, was speaking. In the soft crimson glow of the table he stood, reducing to practical application the very situation which they had found so attractive, only because of its utter grotesque impossibility. It was startling, grimly thrilling. There was the sense among some about the table of struggling mentally to break the spell which this coldly unemotional creature of science had cast. At length Dane spoke as though by sheer physical effort.

"Simec—we—we all know you're a genius. But just now you don't quite get over."

The inventor turned his head slowly toward the speaker.

"I don't think I quite understand."

"Rats," said Dane roughly. "Here Nick says he'd give up his life if the war could be stopped and you bob up and tell him to make good, throwing sort of a Faust effect over the whole dinner. All right for Nick and Arnold Bates—but how about you, Simec? How will you stop the war if they shuffle off? I'll bite once on anything; how will you do it?" There was a general movement of the diners. Dane's wife laughed a trifle hysterically.

Simec arose and stood leaning forward, his hands upon the table.

"The situation which Colcord devised, as it happens, is not so impossible as you think. In fact, it may prove to be quite feasible—" He paused, but no voice rose to break the silence. The candle-lights were flickering softly in an entering breath of wind. Evelyn looked appealingly at her husband, who grimaced and shrugged slightly.

"I imagine I have some sort of a reputation in the way of physical formula as applied to war," Simec went on presently. "Dane is about to handle a rather extraordinary gun of mine in the

foreign market. But one gun differs from another only inasmuch as it is somewhat more deadly—its destructiveness is not total." He raised a thin forefinger and levelled it along the table.

"Let us assume," he said, "that there has been devised and perfected an apparatus which will release a destructive energy through the medium of ether waves. If you understand anything about the wireless telegraph you will grasp what I mean; in itself the wireless, of course, involves transmitted power. Let us transform and amplify that power and we encompass—destruction. The air is filled with energy. A sun-ray is energy; you will recall that Archimedes concentrated it through immense burning-glasses which set fire to Roman ships."

His voice had grown clear and strong, as though he was lecturing to a class of students.

"Now, then, assume an instrument such as I have roughly described be placed in the hands of our allied nations, an instrument which releases and propels against the enemy energy so incomprehensibly enormous that it destroys matter instantaneously, whether organic or inorganic; assume that in a few hours it could lay the greatest host the world ever saw in death, whether they were concealed in the earth

or were in the air, or wherever they were; assume it could level a great city. Assuming all this, can you conceive that the nations holding this mighty force in their hands could bring about peace which would not only be instant but would be permanent?"

There was silence for a moment. The footman, obeying a significant glance from the butler, withdrew; the butler himself went softly out of the room. Latham looked up with the expression of a man emerging from a trance.

"I don't fancy any one could doubt that," he said.

"No, indeed. Certainly not." Allison gestured in playful salute. "Let me congratulate you upon a fine flight of imagination, Professor Simec."

"Thank you—but it isn't imagination, Doctor Allison." The man's voice had again become flat and unemotional, with the effect of withdrawal of personality. "I have reason to think I have perfected some such device.... At least I believe I now possess the means of destroying human life on a wholesale scale. There is yet more to do before we may successfully assail inorganic matter. The waves penetrate but do not as yet destroy, so that while we should easily bring dissolution to human beings we cannot yet disintegrate the walls behind which they lurk.

That, however, is a detail—"

"Just like that, eh?" No one smiled at Jerry Dane's comment. Bates leaned forward.

"Where do Colcord and I come in?"

Simec, who had resumed his seat, turned to him.

"Of course—I beg your pardon. I should have explained at the outset that the discovery has never had adequate practical test. One of my assistants lost his life a month or so ago, to be sure; an extremely promising man. The incident was of value in demonstrating practically a theoretical deadliness; unfortunately, it proved also that the power energized ether waves in all directions, whereas obviously it should be within the power of the operator to send it only in a given direction."

"Otherwise," remarked Latham, "it would be as fatal to the side using it as to the army against whom it was directed."

"Precisely." Simec lifted his wine-glass and sipped slowly. "For a time," he went on, "this drawback seemed insuperable, just as it has been in wireless telegraphy. Within the past week, however, I am convinced that a solution of that difficulty has been reached. In theory and

in tests on a minor scale it certainly has. My assistants, however, refuse to serve in the demonstrations at full power—which, of course, are vitally necessary—even though I engage to share a part, but not, of course, the major part, of the risk. I have been equally unfortunate in enlisting others, to whom, naturally, I was in duty bound to designate possible—in fact, extremely probable—dangers."

"In more precise words," snapped Bates, "if your invention is what you think it is your assistants are bound to die."

Simec hesitated a moment, his gleaming brow wrinkled thoughtfully.

"Well, not precisely," he said at length. "That is, not necessarily. There is, of course, as I have said, that possi—that probability. I cannot be certain. Assuming the more serious outcome materializes, there will be no further danger for those who operate; I shall have learned all that it is necessary to know." He paused. "Then war will cease; either before or immediately after the initial field application."

"But this is absurd." Allison smote the table in agitation. "Why don't you secure condemned convicts?"

"Even were that possible, I should not care to

proceed in that way. Again, I must have one or more men of keen intelligence."

"But neither Colcord nor Bates is a scientist!"

"That is not at all necessary," was the composed reply. "I am the scientist."

"And Nick the victim," flashed Evelyn Colcord. "Well, I most decidedly and unalterably object, Professor Simec."

"Your husband and Mr. Bates, inspired by humanitarian motives, named a condition under which they would *give*—not risk—their lives. I meet their condition, at least so far as it lies within human agency to do.... Of course they can withdraw their offer—"

Bates, who had left his seat and was walking up and down the room, turned suddenly, standing over the scientist with upraised hand.

"Simec, I withdraw right here. I'm no fool. The whole spirit of this—this situation is not in keeping with the original idea. Not at all. Whether you are joking, serious, or simply insane, I'm out. Try it on yourself."

"I have already assumed great risks. In furtherance of my device—which, as you may imagine, will have far-reaching effects—I must survive, if I can."

Evelyn, who had suppressed an exclamation of approval of Arnold Bates's stanch words, turned to her husband. His jaws were bulging at the corners, his eyes alight. In a species of panic she tried to speak but could not.

"And you, Colcord?" Simec's colorless delivered question came as from afar.

Colcord had arisen and was staring at the inventor with the face of one exalted.

"If you have what you say you have, Simec, you meet my condition to the letter. At the very least, it will be a most important asset to the cause of my country. In either case the least I can give to help it along is my life—if that proves necessary.... When do you want me?"

In the silence that followed Evelyn Colcord, sitting like a statue, unable to move nor to speak, passed through a limbo of nameless emotion. Through her mind swept a flashing filament of despair, hope, craven fear, and sturdy resolution. Tortured in the human alembic, she was at length resolved, seeing with a vision that pierced all her horizons. And then, trembling, tense, there came—a thought? A vision? She knew not what it was, nor was she conscious of attempting to ascertain. She knew only that for a fleeting instant the veil had been lifted and that she had gazed upon serenity and

that all was well. Further, she had no inclination to know. Not that she feared complete revelation; for that matter, some subconscious conviction that all would be well illumined her senses. This she spurned, or rather ignored, in a greater if nameless exaltation. Stern with the real fibre of her womanhood, she lifted her head in pride.

Then, moved by initiative not her own, her face turned, not to her husband, but to her guests, each in turn. Arnold Bates was crushing a napkin in his sensitive fingers, flushed, angry, rebellious, perhaps a trifle discomfited. Dane was smiling foolishly; Bessie was leaning forward on the table, dead white, inert. Doctor Allison's head was shaking; he was clicking his tongue and his wife was twisting her stout fingers one around another. So her gaze wandered, and then, as though emerging from a dream, revivified, calm, she studied each intently. She knew not why, but something akin to contempt crept into her mind.

It was as though seeking relief that her eyes rested upon Sybil Latham. The Englishwoman's face was turned to Colcord; her color was heightened only slightly, but in her blue eyes was the light of serene stars, and about her lips those new lines of self-sacrifice, anxiety, sorrow, which Evelyn had resented as marring

the woman's delicate beauty, now imparted to her face vast strength, ineffable dignity, nobility.

Evelyn Colcord's throat clicked; for a moment she did not breathe, while a vivid flash of jealous emotion departed, leaving in its place a great peace, an exaltation born of sudden knowing. Instinctively seeking further confirmation, her eyes, now wide and big and flaming, swept to Latham. His face, too, was turned toward her husband. It was the grimly triumphant visage of the fighter who knows his own kind, of the friend and believer whose faith, suddenly justified, has made him proud.

Evelyn rose and stood erect, staring into vacancy. Here were two who *knew*, who understood—who had been through hell and found it worth while.

Voices, expostulatory voices, roused her. Allison was at her side and Dane, whose wife, weeping, was pulling at her bare arm. Colcord and Simec stood to one side, aloof, as though already detached from the world.

"Evelyn!" Allison's voice was peremptory. "I command you! You're the only one who has the right to check this damn foolishness. I command you to speak."

"Evelyn—" Dane's voice trailed into

nothingness.

Again her eyes turned to Sybil Latham, and then, rigidly as an automaton, she walked swiftly to her husband's side. For a moment the two stood facing each other, eye riveted to eye. Her beautiful bare arms flew out swiftly, resting upon his shoulders, not encircling his neck.

"Nick—" Her voice was low, guttural. "I—I didn't help you much, did I, dear heart? I didn't understand. They've been saying it would all come home to us. But I didn't think so quickly —nor to us. I—I wasn't ready. I am now. I want to help; I—I—" Her fingers clutched his shoulders convulsively. "When—when do you go?"

Colcord stood a moment, his eyes smouldering upon her.

"To-morrow morning at seven," he replied. "That was the hour, Professor Simec?" he added with a side-wise inclination of his head.

"Yes." The scientist looked away, hesitated, and then joined in the little procession to the dimly lighted hall. Evelyn started as she felt her fingers locked together in a firm hand.

"You *know*, dear girl, don't you?" There was a mist in Latham's eyes.

But Evelyn's face was light.

"Yes, Jeffery," she said proudly, "I know now."

THE PATH OF GLORY[19]

By MARY BRECHT PULVER

From *The Saturday Evening Post*.

It was so poor a place—a bitten-off morsel "at the beyond end of nowhere"—that when a February gale came driving down out of a steel sky and shut up the little lane road and covered the house with snow a passer-by might have mistaken it all, peeping through its icy fleece, for just a huddle of the brown bowlders so common to the country thereabouts.

And even when there was no snow it was as bad—worse, almost, Luke thought. When everything else went brave and young with new greenery; when the alders were laced with the yellow haze of leaf bud, and the brooks got out of prison again, and arbutus and violet and buttercup went through their rotation of bloom up in the rock pastures and maple bush—the

farm buildings seemed only the bleaker and barer.

That forlorn unpainted little house, with its sagging blinds! It squatted there through the year like a one-eyed beggar without a friend—lost in its venerable white-beard winters, or contemplating an untidy welter of rusty farm machinery through the summers.

When Luke brought his one scraggy little cow up the lane he always turned away his head. The place made him think of the old man who let the birds build nests in his whiskers. He preferred, instead, to look at the glories of Bald Mountain or one of the other hills. There was nothing wrong with the back drop in the home stage-set; it was only home itself that hurt one's feelings.

There was no cheer inside, either. The sagging old floors, though scrubbed and spotless, were uncarpeted; the furniture meager. A pine table, a few old chairs, a shabby scratched settle covered by a thin horse blanket as innocent of nap as a Mexican hairless—these for essentials; and for embellishment a shadeless glass lamp on the table, about six-candle power, where you might make shift to read the *Biweekly*—times when there was enough money to have a Biweekly—if you were so minded; and window shelves full of corn and tomato cans, still

wearing their horticultural labels, where scrawny one-legged geraniums and yellowing coleus and begonia contrived an existence of sorts.

And then, of course, the mantelpiece with the black-edged funeral notice and shiny coffin plate, relics of Grampaw Peel's taking-off; and the pink mug with the purple pansy and "Woodstock, N.Y.," on it; the photograph of a forgotten cousin in Iowa, with long antennæ-shaped mustaches; the Bible with the little china knobs on the corners; and the pile of medicine testimonials and seed catalogues—all these contributed something.

If it was not a beautiful place within, it was, also, not even a pleasant place spiritually. What with the open door into his father's room, whence you could hear the thin frettings made by the man who had lain these ten years with chronic rheumatism, and the untuneful whistlings of whittling Tom, the big brother, the shapely supple giant whose mind had never grown since the fall from the barn room when he was eight years old, and the acrid complaints of the tall gaunt mother, stepping about getting their inadequate supper, in her gray wrapper, with the ugly little blue shawl pinned round her shoulders, it was as bad a place as you might find in a year's journeying for anyone to keep

bright and "chirk up" in.

Not that anyone in particular expected "them poor Hayneses" to keep bright or "chirk up." As far back as he could remember, Luke had realized that the hand of God was laid on his family. Dragging his bad leg up the hill pastures after the cow, day in and day out, he had evolved a sort of patient philosophy about it. It was just inevitable, like a lot of things known in that rock-ribbed and fatalistic region—as immutably decreed by heaven as foreordination and the damnation of unbaptized babes. The Hayneses had just "got it hard."

Yet there were times, now he was come to a gangling fourteen, when Luke's philosophy threatened to fail him. It wasn't fair—so it wasn't! They weren't bad folks; they'd done nothing wicked. His mother worked like a dog —"no fair for her," any way you looked at it. There were times when the boy drank in bitterly every detail of the miserable place he called home and knew the depths of an utter despair.

If there was only some way to better it all! But there was no chance. His father had been a failure at everything he touched in early life, and now he was a hopeless invalid. Tom was an idiot—or almost—and himself a cripple. And Nat! Well, Nat "wa'n't willin'"—not that one

should blame him. Times like these, a lump like a roc's egg would rise in the boy's throat. He had to spit—and spit hard—to conquer it.

"If we hain't the gosh-awfulest lot!" he would gulp.

To-day, as he came up the lane, June was in the land. She'd done her best to be kind to the farm. All the old heterogeneous rosebushes in the wood-yard and front "lawn" were pied with fragrant bloom. Usually Luke would have lingered to sniff it all, but he saw only one thing now with a sudden skipping at his heart—an automobile standing beside the front porch.

It was not the type of car to cause cardiac disturbance in a connoisseur. It was, in fact, of an early vintage, high-set, chunky, brassily æsthetic, and given to asthmatic choking on occasion; but Luke did not know this. He knew only that it spelled luxury beyond all dreams. It belonged, in short, to his Uncle Clem Cheesman, the rich butcher who lived in the village twelve miles away; and its presence here signaled the fact that Uncle Clem and Aunt Mollie had come to pay one of their detestable quarterly visits to their poor relations. They had come while he was out, and Maw was in there now, bearing it all alone.

Luke limped into the house hastily. He was not

mistaken. There was a company air in the room, a stiff hostile-polite taint in the atmosphere. Three visitors sat in the kitchen, and a large hamper, its contents partly disgorged, stood on the table. Luke knew that it contained gifts—the hateful, merciful, nauseating charity of the better-off.

Aunt Mollie was speaking as he entered—a large, high-colored, pouter-pigeon-chested woman, with a great many rings with bright stones, and a nodding pink plume in her hat. She was holding up a bifurcated crimson garment, and greeted Luke absently.

"Three pair o' them underdrawers, Delia—an' not a break in one of 'em! I sez, as soon as I see Clem layin' 'em aside this spring, 'Them things'll be jest right fur Delia's Jere, layin' there with the rheumatiz.' They may come a little loose; but, of course, you can't be choicey. I've b'en at Clem fur five years to buy him union suits; but he's always b'en so stuck on red flannen. But now he's got two aut'mobiles, countin' the new delivery, I guess he's gotta be more tony; so he made out to spare 'em. And now that hat, Delia—it ain't a mite wore out, an' fur all you'll need one it's plenty good enough. I only had it two years and I guess folks won't remember; an' what if they do—they all know you get my things. Same way with that collarette. It's a little

moth-eaten, but it won't matter fur you.... The gray suit you can easy cut down fur Luke, there —"

She droned on, the other woman making dry automatic sounds of assent. She looked cool—Maw—Luke thought; but she wasn't. Not by a darn sight! There was a spot of pink in each cheek and she stared hard every little bit at Grampaw Peel's funeral plate on the mantel. Luke knew what she was thinking of—poor Maw! She was burning in a fire of her own lighting. She had brought it all on herself—on the whole of them.

Years ago she had been just like Aunt Mollie. The daughters of a prosperous village carpenter, they had shared beads, beaux and bangles until Maw, in a moment's madness, had chucked it all away to marry poor Paw. Now she had made her bed, she must lie in it. Must sit and say "Thank you!" for Aunt Mollie's leavings, precious scraps she dared not refuse—Maw, who had a pride as fierce and keen as any! It was devilish! Oh, it was kind of Aunt Mollie to give; it was the taking that came so bitter hard. And then they weren't genteel about their giving. There was always that air of superiority, that conscious patronage, as now, when Uncle Clem, breaking off his conversation with the invalid in the next room about the price of

mutton on the hoof and the chances of the Democrats' getting in again, stopped fiddling with his thick plated watch chain and grinned across at big Tom to fling his undeviating flower of wit:

"Runnin' all to beef, hain't ye, Tom, boy? Come on down to the market an' we'll git some A-1 sirloins outen ye, anyway. Do your folks that much good."

It was things like this that made Luke want to burn, poison, or shoot Uncle Clem. He was not a bad man, Uncle Clem—a thick sandy chunk of a fellow, given to bright neckties and a jocosity that took no account of feelings. Shaped a little like a log, he was—back of his head and back of his neck—all of a width. Little lively green eyes and bristling red mustaches. A complexion a society bud might have envied. Why was it a butcher got so pink and white and sleek? Pork, that's what Uncle Clem resembled, Luke thought—a nice, smooth, pale-fleshed pig, ready to be skinned.

His turn next! When crops and politics failed and the joke at poor Tom—Tom always giggled inordinately at it, too—had come off, there was sure to be the one about himself and the lame duck next. To divert himself of bored expectation, Luke turned to stare at his cousin,

S'norta.

S'norta, sitting quietly in a chair across the room, was seldom known to be emotional. Indeed, there were times when Luke wondered whether she had not died in her chair. One had that feeling about S'norta, so motionless was she, so uncompromising of glance. She was very prosperous-looking, as became the heiress to the Cheesman meat business—a fat little girl of twelve, dressed with a profusion of ruffles, glass pearls, gilt buckles, and thick tawny curls that might have come straight from the sausage hook in her papa's shop.

S'norta had been consecrated early in life to the unusual. Even her name was not ordinary. Her romantic mother, immersed in the prenatal period in the hair-lifting adventures of one Señorita Carmena, could think of no lovelier appellation when her darling came than the first portion of that sloe-eyed and restless lady's title, which she conceived to be baptismal; and in due course she had conferred it, together with her own pronunciation, on her child. A bold man stopping in at Uncle Clem's market, as Luke knew, had once tried to pronounce and expound the cognomen in a very different fashion; but he had been hustled unceremoniously from the place, and S'norta remained in undisturbed possession of her honors.

Now Luke was recalled from his contemplation by his uncle's voice again. A lull had fallen and out of it broke the question Luke always dreaded.

"Nat, now!" said Uncle Clem, leaning forward, his thick fingers clutching his fat knees. "You ain't had any news of him since quite a while ago, have you?" The wit that was so preponderate a feature of Uncle Clem's nature bubbled to the surface. "Dunno but he's landed in jail a spell back and can't git out again!" The lively little eyes twinkled appreciatively.

Nobody answered. It set Maw's mouth in a thin, hard line. You wouldn't get a rise out of old Maw with such tactics—Maw, who believed in Nat, soul and body. Into Luke's mind flashed suddenly a formless half prayer: "Don't let 'em nag her now—make 'em talk other things!"

The Lord, in the guise of Aunt Mollie, answered him. For once, Nat and Nat's character and failings did not hold her. She drew a deep breath and voiced something that claimed her interest:

"Well, Delia, I see you wasn't out at the Bisbee's funeral. Though I don't s'pose anyone really expected you, knowin' how things goes with you. Time was, when you was a girl, you counted in as big as any and traveled with the

best; but now"—she paused delicately, and coughed politely with an appreciative glance round the poor room—"they ain't anyone hereabouts but's talkin' about it. My land, it was swell! I couldn't ask no better for my own. Fourteen cabs, and the hearse sent over from Rockville—all pale gray, with mottled gray horses. It was what I call tasty.

"Matty wasn't what you'd call well-off—not as lucky as some I could mention; but she certainly went off grand! The whole Methodist choir was out, with three numbers in broken time; and her cousin's brother-in-law from out West—some kind of bishop—to preach. Honest, it was one of the grandest sermons I ever heard! Wasn't it, Clem?"

Uncle Clem cleared his throat thoughtfully.

"Humiliatin'!—that's what I'd call it. A strong maur'l sermon all round. A man couldn't hear it 'thout bein' humiliated more ways'n one." He was back at the watch-chain again.

"It's a pity you couldn't of gone, Delia—you an' Matty always was so intimate too. You certainly missed a grand treat, I can tell you; though, if you hadn't the right clothes—"

"Well, I haven't," Maw spoke dryly. "I don't go nowheres, as you know—not even church."

"I s'pose not. Time was it was different, though, Delia. Ain't nobody but talks how bad off you are. Ann Chester said she seen you in town a while back and wouldn't of knowed it was you if it hadn't of b'en you was wearin' my old brown cape, an' she reconnized it. Her an' me got 'em both alike to the same store in Rockville. You was so changed, she said she couldn't hardly believe it was you at all."

"Sometimes I wonder myself if it is," said Maw grimly.

"Well, 's I was sayin', it was a grand funeral. None better! They even had engraved invites, over a hundred printed—and they had folks from all over the state. They give Clem, here, the contract fur the supper meat—"

"The best of everything!" Uncle Clem broke in. "None o' your cheap graft. Gimme a free hand. Jim Bisbee tole me himself. 'I want the best ye got,' he sez; an' I give it. Spring lamb and prime ribs, fancy hotel style—"

"An' Em Carson baked the cakes fur 'em, sixteen of 'em; an' Dickison the undertaker's tellin' all over they got the best quality shroud he carries. Well, you'll find it all in the *Biweekly*, under Death's Busy Sickle. Jim Bisbee shore set a store by Matty oncet she was dead. It was a grand affair, Delia. Not but what

we've had some good ones in our time too."

It was Aunt Mollie's turn to stare pridefully at the Peel plate on the chimney shelf.

"A thing like that sets a family up, sorta."

Uncle Clem had taken out a fat black cigar with a red-white-and-blue band. He bit off the end and alternately thrust it between his lips or felt of its thickness with a fondling thumb and finger. Luke, watching, felt a sudden compassion for the cigar. It looked so harried.

"I always say," Aunt Mollie droned on, "a person shows up what he really is at the last—what him and his family stands fur. It's what kind of a funeral you've got that counts—who comes out an' all. An' that was true with Matty. There wa'n't a soul worth namin' that wasn't out to hers."

How Aunt Molly could gouge—even amicably! And funerals! What a subject, even in a countryside where a funeral is a social event and the manner of its furniture marks a definite social status! Would they never go? But it seemed at last they would. Incredibly, somehow, they were taking their leave, Aunt Mollie kissing Maw good-by, with the usual remark about "hopin' the things would help some," and about being "glad to spare somethin'

from my great plenty."

She and Señorita were presently packed into the car and Tom had gone out to goggle at Uncle Clem cranking up, the cold cigar still between his lips. Now they were off—choking and snorting their way out of the wood-yard and down the lane. Aunt Mollie's pink feather streamed into the breeze like a pennon of triumph.

Maw was standing by the stove, a queer look in her eyes; so queer that Luke didn't speak at once. He limped over to finger the spilled treasures on the table.

"Gee! Lookit, Maw! More o' them prunes we liked so; an' a bag o' early peaches; an' fresh soup meat fur a week—"

A queer trembling had seized his mother. She was so white he was frightened.

"Did you sense what it meant, Luke—what Aunt Molly told us about Matty Bisbee? We was left out deliberate—that's what it meant. Her an' me that was raised together an' went to school and picnics all our girlhood together! Never could see one 'thout the other when we was growin' up—Jim Bisbee knew that too!

But"—her voice wavered miserably—"I didn't get no invite to her funeral. I don't count no more, Lukey. None of us, anywheres.... We're jest them poor Gawd-forsaken Hayneses."

She slipped down suddenly into a chair and covered her face, her thin shoulders shaking. Luke went and touched her awkwardly. Times he would have liked to put his arms round Maw—now more than ever; but he didn't dare.

"Don't take on, Maw! Don't!"

"Who's takin' on?" She lifted a fierce, sallow, tear-wet face. "Hain't no use makin' a fuss. All's left's to work—to work, an' die after a while."

"I hate 'em! Uncle Clem an' her, I mean."

"They mean kindness—their way." But her tears started afresh.

"I hate 'em!" Luke's voice grew shriller. "I'd like—I'd like—Oh, damn 'em!"

"Don't swear, boy!"

It was Tom who broke in on them. "It's a letter from Rural Free Delivery. He jest dropped it."

He came up, grinning, with the missive. The mother's fingers closed on it nervously.

"From Nat, mebbe—he ain't wrote in months."

But it wasn't from Nat. It was a bill for a last payment on the "new harrow," bought three years before.

II

One of the earliest memories Luke could recall was the big blurred impression of Nat's face bending over his crib of an evening. At first flat, indefinite, remote as the moon, it grew with time to more human, intimate proportions. It became the face of "brother," the black-haired, blue-eyed big boy who rollicked on the floor with or danced him on his knee to—

> This is the way the lady rides!
> Tritty-trot-trot; tritty-trot-trot!

Or who, returning from school and meeting his faltering feet in the lane, would toss him up on his shoulder and canter him home with mad, merry scamperings.

Not that school and Nat ever had much in common. Even as a little shaver Luke had realized that. Nat was the family wilding, the migratory bird that yearned for other climes. There were the times when he sulked long days by the fire, and the springs and autumns when he played an unending round of hookey. There were the days when he was sent home from

school in disgrace; when protesting notes, and sometimes even teacher, arrived.

"It's not that Nat's a bad boy, Mrs. Haynes," he remembered one teacher saying; "but he's so active, so full of restless animal spirits. How are we ever going to tame him?"

Maw didn't know the answer—that was sure. She loved Nat best—Luke had guessed it long ago, by the tone of her voice when she spoke to him, by the touch of her hand on his head, or the size of his apple turnover, so much bigger than the others'. Maw must have built heavily on her hopes of Nat those days—her one perfect child. She was so proud of him! In the face of all ominous prediction she would fling her head high.

"My Nat's a Peel!" she would say. "Can't never tell how he'll turn out."

The farmers thereabouts thought they could tell her. Nat was into one scrape after another—nothing especially wicked; but a compound of the bubbling mischief in a too ardent life—robbed orchards, broken windows, practical jokes, Halloween jinks, vagrant whimsies of an active imagination.

It was just that Nat's quarters were too small for him, chiefly. Even he realized this presently.

Luke would never forget the sloppy March morning when Nat went away. He was wakened by a flare of candle in the room he shared with his brothers. Tom, the twelve-year-old, lay sound asleep; but Nat, the big man of fifteen, was up, dressed, bending over something he was writing on a paper at the bureau. There was a fat little bundle beside him, done up in a blue-and-white bandanna.

Day was still far off. The window showed black; there was the sound of a thaw running off the eaves; the white-washed wall was painted with grotesque leaping shadows by the candle flame. At the first murmur, Nat had come and put his arms about him.

"Don't ye holler, little un; don't ye do it! 'Tain't nothin'—on'y Natty's goin' away a spell; quite a spell, little un. Now kiss Natty.... That's right!... An' you lay still there an' don't holler. An' listen here, too: Natty's goin' to bring ye somethin'—a grand red ball, mebbe—if you're good. You wait an' see!"

But Natty hadn't brought the ball. Two years had passed without a scrap of news of him; and then—he was back. Slipped into the village on a freighter at dusk one evening. A forlorn scarecrow Nat was; so tattered of garment, so smeared of coal dust, you scarcely knew him.

So full of strange sophistications, too, and new trails of thought—so oddly rich of experience. He gave them his story. The tale of an exigent life in a great city; a piecework life made of such flotsam labors as he could pick up, of spells of loafing, of odd incredible associates, of months tagging a circus, picking up a task here and there, of long journeyings through the country, "riding the bumpers"—even of alms asked at back doors!

"Oh, not a tramp, Nat!"

The hurt had quivered all through Maw.

But Nat only laughed.

"Jiminy Christmas, it was great!"

He had thrown back his head, laughing. That was Nat all through—sipping of life generously, no matter in what form.

He had stayed just three weeks. He had spent them chiefly defeating Maw's plans to keep him. Wanderlust kept him longer the next time. That was eight years ago. Since then he had been back home three times. Never so poor and shabby as at first—indeed, Nat's wanderings had prospered more or less—but still remote, somewhat mysterious, touched by new habits of life, new ways of speech.

The countryside, remembering the manner of his first return, shook its head darkly. A tramp—a burglar, even. God knew what! When, on his third visit home, he brought an air of extreme opulence, plenty of money, and a sartorial perfection undreamed of locally, the heads wagged even harder. A gambler probably; a ne'er-do-well certainly; and one to break his mother's heart in the end.

But none of this was true, as Luke knew. It was just that Nat hated farming; that he liked to rove and take a floater's fortune. He had a taste for the mechanical and followed incomprehensible quests. San Francisco had known him; the big races at Cincinnati; the hangars of Mineola. He was restless—Nat; but he was respectable. No one could look into his merry blue eyes and not know it. If his labors were uncertain and sporadic, and his address that of a nomad, it all sufficed, at least for himself.

If at times Luke felt a stirring doubt that Nat was not acquitting himself of his family duty, he quenched it fiercely. Nat was different. He was born free; you could tell it in his talk, in his way of thinking. He was like an eagle and hated to be bound by earthly ties. He cared for them all in his own way. Times when he was back he helped Maw all he could. If he brought money he gave of it freely; if he had none, just the look

of his eye or the ready jest on his lip helped.

Upstairs in a drawer of the old pine bureau lay some of Nat's discarded clothing—incredible garments to Luke. The lame boy, going to them sometimes, fingered them, pondering, reconstructing for himself the fabric of Nat's adventures, his life. The ice-cream pants of a bygone day; the pointed, shriveled yellow Oxfords! the silk-front shirt; the odd cuff link or stud—they were like a genie-in-a-bottle, these poor clothes! You rubbed them and a whole Arabian Night's dream unfurled from them.

And Nat lived it all! But people—dull stodgy people like Uncle Clem and Aunt Mollie, and old Beckonridge down at the store, and a dozen others—these criticized him for not "workin' reg'lar" and giving a full account of himself.

Luke, thinking of all this, would flush with impotent anger.

"Oh, let 'em talk, though! He'll show 'em some day! They dunno Nat. He'll do somethin' big fur us all some day."

III

Midsummer came to trim the old farm with her wreaths. It was the time Luke loved best of all

—the long, sweet, loam-scented evenings with Maw and Tom on the old porch; and sometimes —when there was no fog—Paw's cot, wheeled out in the stillness. But Maw was not herself this summer. Something had fretted and eaten into her heart like an acid ever since Aunt Mollie's visit and the news of Matty Bisbee's funeral.

When, one by one, the early summer festivities of the neighborhood had slipped by, with no inclusion of the Hayneses, she had fallen to brooding deeply,—to feeling more bitterly than ever the ignominy and wretchedness of their position.

Luke tried to comfort her; to point out that this summer was like any other; that they "never had mattered much to folks." But Maw continued to brood; to allude vaguely and insistently to "the straw that broke the camel's back." It was bitter hard to have Maw like that—home was bad enough, anyway. Sometimes on clear, soft nights, when the moon came out all splendid and the "peepers" sang so plaintively in the Hollow, the boy's heart would fill and grow enormous in his chest with the intolerable sadness he felt.

Then Maw's mood lifted—pierced by a ray of heavenly sunlight—for Nat came home!

Luke saw him first—heard him, rather; for Nat came up the lane—oh, miraculous!—driving a motor car. It was not a car like Uncle Clem's—not even a stepbrother to it. It was low and almost noiseless, and shaped like one of those queer torpedoes they were fighting with across the water. It was colored a soft dust-gray and trimmed with nickel; and, huge and powerful though it was, it swung to a mere touch of Nat's hand.

Nat stood before them, clad in black leather Norfolk and visored cap and leggings.

"Look like a fancy brand of chauffeur, don't I?" he laughed, with the easy resumption of a long-broken relation that was so characteristically Nat.

But Nat was not a chauffeur. Something much bigger and grander. The news he brought them on top of it all took their breaths away. Nat was a special demonstrator, out on a brand-new high-class job for a house handling a special line of high-priced goods. And he was to go to Europe in another week—did they get it straight? Europe! Jiminy! He and another fellow were taking cars over to France and England.

No; they didn't quite get it. They could not grasp its significance, but clung humbly, instead, to the mere glorious fact of his

presence.

He stayed two days and a night; and summer was never lovelier. Maw was like a girl, and there was such a killing of pullets and extravagance with new-laid eggs as they had never known before. At the last he gave them all presents.

"Tell the truth," he laughed, "I'm stony broke. 'Tisn't mine, all this stuff you see. I got some kale in advance—not much, but enough to swing me; but of course, the outfit's the company's. But I'll tell you one thing: I'm going to bring some long green home with me, you can bet! And when I do"—Nat had given Maw a prodigious nudge in the ribs—"when I do—I ain't goin' to stay an old bachelor forever! Do you get that?"

Maw's smile had faded for a moment. But the presents were fine—a new knife for Tom, a book for Luke, and twenty whole round dollars for Maw, enough to pay that old grocery bill down at Beckonridge's and Paw's new invoice of patent medicine.

They all stood on the porch and watched him as far they could see; and Maw's black mood didn't return for a whole week.

Evenings now they had something different to

talk about—journeys in seagoing craft; foreign countries and the progress of the "Ee-ropean" war, and Nat's likelihood—he had laughed at this—of touching even its fringe. They worked it all up from the boiler-plate war news in the *Bi-weekly* and Luke's school geography. Yes; for a little space the blackness was lifted.

Then came the August morning when Paw died. This was an unexpected and unsettling contingency. One doesn't look for a "chronic's" doing anything so unscheduled and foreign to routine; but Paw spoiled all precedent. They found him that morning with his heart quite still, and Luke knew they stood in the presence of imminent tragedy.

It's all very well to peck along, hand-to-mouth fashion. You can manage a living of sorts; and farm produce, even scanty, unskillfully contrived, and the charity of relatives, and the patience of tradesmen, will see you through. But a funeral—that's different! Undertaker—that means money. Was it possible that the sordid epic of their lives must be capped by the crowning insult, the Poormaster and the Pauper's Field? If only poor Paw could have waited a little before he claimed the spotlight—until prices fell a little or Nat got back with that "long green"!

Maw swallowed her bitter pill.

She went to see Uncle Clem and ask! And Uncle Clem was kind.

"He'll buy a casket—he's willin' fur that—an' send a wreath and pay fur notices, an' even half on a buryin' lot; but he said he couldn't do no more. The high cost has hit him too.... An' where are we to git the rest? He said—at the last—it might be better all round fur us to take what Ellick Flick would gimme outen the Poor Fund—" Maw hadn't been able to go on for a spell.

A pauper's burial for Paw! Surely Maw would manage better than that! She tried to find a better way that very night.

"This farm's mortgaged to the neck; but I calculate Ben Travis won't care if I'm a mind to put Paw in the south field. It hain't no mortal good fur anything else, anyhow; an' he can lay there if we want. It's a real pleasant place. An' I can git the preacher myself—I'll give him the rest o' the broilers; an' they's seasoned hickory plankin' in the lean-to. Tom, you come along with me."

All night Luke had lain and listened to the sound of big Tom's saw and hammer. Tom was real handy if you told him how—and Maw would be showing him just how to shape it all

out. Each hammer blow struck deep on the boy's heart.

Maw lined the home-made box herself with soft old quilts, and washed and dressed her dead herself in his faded outlawed wedding clothes. And on a morning soft and sweet, with a hint of rain in the air, they rode down in the farm wagon to the south field together—Paw and Maw and Luke—with big Tom walking beside the aged knobby horse's head.

Abel Gazzam, a neighbor, had seen to the grave; and in due course the little cavalcade reached the appointed spot inside the snake fence—a quiet place in a corner, under a graybeard elm. As Maw had said, it was "a pleasant place for Paw to lay in."

There were some old neighbors out in their own rigs, and Uncle Clem had brought his family up in his car, with a proper wreath; and Reverend Kearns came up and—declining all lien on the broilers—read the burial service, and spoke a little about poor Paw. But it wasn't a funeral, no how. No supper; no condolence; no viewing "the remains"—not even a handshake! Maw didn't even look at her old friends, riding back home between Tom and Luke, with her head fiercely high in the air.

A dull depression settled on Luke's heart. It

was all up with the Hayneses now. They had saved Paw from charity with their home-made burial; but what had it availed? They might as well have gone the whole figure. Everybody knew! There wasn't any comeback for a thing like this. They were just nobodies—the social pariahs of the district.

IV

Somehow, after the fashion of other years, they got their meager crops in—turnips, potatoes and Hubbard squashes put up in the vegetable cellar; oats cradled; corn husked; the buckwheat ready for the mill; even Tom's crooked furrows for the spring sowings made. Somehow, Maw helping like a man and Tom obeying like a docile child, they took toll of their summer. And suddenly September was at their heels—and then the equinox.

It seemed to Luke that it had never rained so much before. Brown vapor rose eternally from the valley flats; the hilltops lay lost entirely in clotted murk. By periods hard rains, like showers of steel darts, beat on the soaking earth. Gypsy gales of wind went ricocheting among the farm buildings, setting the shingles to snapping and singing; the windows moaned and rattled. The sourest weather the boy could

remember!

And on the worst day of all they got the news. Out of the mail box in the lane Luke got it—going down under an old rubber cape in a steady blinding pour. It got all damp—the letter, foreign postmark, stamp and all—by the time he put it into Maw's hand.

It was a double letter—or so one judged, first opening it. There was another inside, complete, sealed, and addressed in Nat's hand; but one must read the paper inclosed with it first—that was obvious. It was just a strip, queer, official looking, with a few lines typed upon it and a black heading that sprang out at one strangely. They read it together—or tried to. At first they got no sense from it. Paris—from clear off in France—and then the words below—and Maw's name at the top, just like the address on the newspaper:

Mrs. Jere Haynes,
Stony Brook, New York.

It was for Maw all right. Then quite suddenly the words came clear through the blur:

Mrs. Jere Haynes,
Stony Brook, New York.

Dear Madam: We regret to inform you that the official *communiqué* for September sixth contains the tidings that the writer of the enclosed letter, Nathaniel Haynes, of Stony Brook, New York, U. S. A., was killed while on duty as an ambulance driver in the Sector of Verdun, and has been buried in that region. Further details will follow.

The American Ambulance, Paris.

Even when she realized, Maw never cried out. She sat wetting her lips oddly, looking at the words that had come like evil birds across the wide spaces of earth. It was Luke who remembered the other letter:

"*My dear kind folks—Father, Mother and Brothers*: I guess I dare call you that when I get far enough away from you. Perhaps you won't mind when I tell you my news.

"Well we came over from England last Thursday and struck into our contract here. Things was going pretty good; but you might guess yours truly couldn't stand the dead end of things. I bet Maw's guessed already. Well sir it's that roving streak in me I guess. Never could stick to nothing steady. It got me bad when I got here any how.

"To cut it short I throwed up my job with the firm yesterday and have volunteered as an Ambulance driver. Nothing but glory; but I'm going to like it fine! They're short-handed anyhow and a fellow likes to help what he can. Wish I could send a little money; but it took all I had to outfit me. Had to cough up eight bucks for a suit of underclothes. What do you know about that?

"You can write me in care of the Ambulance, Paris.

"Now Maw don't worry! I'm not going to fight. I did try to get into the Foreign Legion but had no chance. I'm all right. Think of me as a nice little Red Cross boy and the Wise Willie on the gas wagon. And won't I have the hot stuff to make old Luke's eyes pop out! Hope Paw's legs are better. And Maw have a kiss on me. Mebbe you folks think I don't appreciate you. If I was any good at writing I'd tell you different.

"Your Son and Brother,
"Nat Haynes."

The worst of it all was about Maw's not crying —just sitting there staring at the fire, or where the fire had been when the wood had died out of neglect. It's not in reason that a woman shouldn't cry, Luke felt. He tried some words of

comfort:

"He's safe, anyhow, Maw—'member that! That's a whole lot too. Didn't always know that, times he was rollin' round so over here. You worried a whole lot about him, you know."

But Maw didn't answer. She seldom spoke at all—moved about as little as possible. When she had put out food for him and Tom she always went back to her corner and stared into the fire. Luke had to bring a plate to her and coax her to eat. Even the day Uncle Clem and Aunt Mollie came up she did not notice them. Only once she spoke of Nat to Luke.

"You loved him the most, didn't ye, Maw?" he asked timidly one dreary evening.

She answered in a sort of dull surprise.

"Why, lad, he was my first!" she said; and after a bit as though to herself: "His head was that round and shiny when he was a little fellow it was like to a little round apple. I mind, before he ever come, I bought me a cap fur him over to Rockville, with a blue bow onto it. He looked awful smart an' pretty in it."

Sometimes in the night Luke, sleeping ill and thinking long, lay and listened for possible sounds from Maw's room. Perhaps she cried in

the nights. If she only would—it would help break the tension for them all. But he never heard anything but the rain—steadily, miserably beating on the sodden shingles overhead.

It was only Luke who watched the mail box now. One morning his journey to it bore fruit. No sting any longer; no fear in the thick foreign letter he carried.

"It'll tell ye all's to it, I bet!" he said eagerly.

Maw seemed scarcely interested. It was Luke who broke the seal and read it aloud.

It was written from the Ambulance Headquarters, in Paris—written by a man of rare insight, of fine and delicate perception. All that Nat's family might have wished to learn he sought to tell them. He had himself investigated Nat's story and he gave it all fully and freely. He spoke in praise of Nat; of his friendly associations with the Ambulance men; of his good nature and cheerful spirits; his popularity and ready willingness to serve. People, one felt, had loved Nat over there.

He wrote of the preliminary duties in Paris, the preparations—of Nat's final going to join one of the three sections working round Verdun. It

wasn't easy work that waited for Nat there. It was a stiff contract guiding the little ambulance over the shell-rutted roads, with deftness and precision, to those distant dressing stations where the hurt soldiers waited for him. It was a picture that thrilled Luke and made his pulses tingle—the blackness of the nights; the rumble of moving artillery and troops; the flash of starlights; the distant crackling of rifle fire; the steady thunder of heavy guns.

And the shells! It was mighty close they swept to a fellow, whistling, shrieking, low overhead; falling to tear out great gouges in the earth. It was enough to wreck one's nerve utterly; but the fellows that drove were all nerve. Just part of the day's work to them! And that was Nat too. Nat hadn't known what fear was—he'd eaten it alive. The adventurer in him had gone out to meet it joyously.

Nat was only on his third trip when tragedy had come to him. He and a companion were seeking a dressing station in the cellar of a little ruined house in an obscure French village, when a shell had burst right at their feet, so to speak. That was all. Simple as that. Nat was dead instantly and his companion—oh, Nat was really the lucky one....

Luke had to stop for a little time. One couldn't

go on at once before a thing like that.... When he did, it was to leave behind the darkness, the shell-torn houses, the bruised earth, the racked and mutilated humans.... Reading on, it was like emerging from Hades into a great Peace.

"I wish it were possible to convey to you, my dear Mrs. Haynes, some impression of the moving and beautiful ceremony with which your son was laid to rest on the morning of September ninth, in the little village of Aucourt. Imagine a warm, sunny, late-summer day, and a village street sloping up a hillside, filled with soldiers in faded, dusty blue, and American Ambulance drivers in khaki.

"In the open door of one of the houses, the front of which was covered with the tri-color of France, the coffin was placed, wrapped in a great French flag, and covered with flowers and wreaths sent by the various American sections. At the head a small American flag was placed, on which was pinned the *Croix de Guerre*—a gold star on a red-and-green ribbon—a tribute from the army general to the boy who gave his life for France.

"A priest, with six soldier attendants, led the procession from the courtyard. Six more soldiers bore the coffin, the Americans and

representatives of the army branches following, bearing wreaths. After these came the General of the Army Corps, with a group of officers, and a detachment of soldiers with arms reversed. At the foot of the hill a second detachment fell in and joined them....

"The scene was unforgettable, beautiful and impressive. In the little church a choir of soldiers sang and a soldier-priest played the organ, while the Chaplain of the Army Division held the burial service. The chaplain's sermon I have asked to have reproduced and sent to you, together with other effects of your son's....

"The chaplain spoke most beautifully and at length, telling very tenderly what it meant to the French people that an American should give his life while trying to help them in the hour of their extremity. The name of this chaplain is Henri Deligny, *Aumônier Militaire*, Ambulance 16-27, Sector 112; and he was assisted by the permanent curé of the little church, Abbé Blondelle, who wishes me to assure you that he will guard most reverently your son's grave, and be there to receive you when the day may come that you shall wish to visit it.

"After leaving the church the procession marched to the military cemetery, where your son's body was laid beside the hundreds of

others who have died for France. Both the lieutenant and general here paid tributes of appreciation, which I will have sent to you. The general, various officers of the army, and ambulance assisted in the last rites....

"I have brought back and will send you the *Croix de Guerre*...."

Oh, but you couldn't read any further—for the great lump of pride in your throat, the thick mist of tears in your eyes. A sob escaped the boy. He looked over at Maw and saw the miraculous. Maw was awake at last and crying—a new-fledged pulsating Maw emerged from the brown chrysalis of her sorrows.

"Oh, Maw!... Our Nat!... All that—that—funeral!... Some funeral, Maw!" The boy choked.

"My Nat!" Maw was saying. "Buried like a king!... Like a King o' France!" She clasped her hands tightly.

It was like some beautiful fantasy. A Haynes—the despised and rejected of earth—borne to his last home with such pomp and ceremony!

"There never was nothin' like it heard of round here, Maw.... If folks could only know—"

She lifted her head as at a challenge.

"Why, they're goin' to know, Luke—for I'm goin' to tell 'em. Folks that have talked behind Nat's back—folks that have pitied us—when they see this—like a King o' France!" she repeated softly. "I'm goin' down to town to-day, Luke."

V

It was dusk when Maw came back; dusk of a clear day, with a rosy sunset off behind the hills. Luke opened the door for her and he saw that she had brought some of the sun along in with her—its colors in her worn face; its peace in her eyes. She was the same, yet somehow new. Even the tilt of her crazy old bonnet could not detract from a strange new dignity that clothed her.

She did not speak at once, going over to warm her gloveless hands at the stove, and staring up at the Grampaw Peel plate; then:

"When it comes—my Nat's medal—it's goin' to set right up here, 'stead o' this old thing—an' the letters and the sermons in my shell box I got on my weddin' trip.... Lawyer Ritchie told me to-day what it means, the name o' that medal—Cross o' War! It's a decoration fur soldiers and

earned by bravery."

She paused; then broke out suddenly:

"I b'en a fool, settin' here grievin'. My Nat was a hero, an' I never knew it!... A hero's folks hadn't ought to cry. It's a thing too big for that. Come here, you little Luke! Maw hain't b'en real good to you an' Tommy lately. You're gittin' all white an' peaked. Too much frettin' 'bout Nat. You an' me's got to stop it, I tell you. Folks round here ain't goin' to let us fret—"

"Folks! Maw!" The words burst from the boy's heart. "Did they find out?... You showed it to 'em? Uncle Clem—"

Maw sniffed.

"Clem! Oh, he was real took aback; but he don't count in on this—not big enough." Then triumph hastened her story. "It's the big ones that's mixin' into this, Lukey. Seems like they'd heard somethin' a spell back in one o' the county papers, an' we didn't know.... Anyhow, when I first got into town I met Judge Geer. He had me right into his office in Masonic Hall 'fore I could git my breath almost—had me settin' in his private room, an' sent his stenugifer out fur a cup o' cawfee fur me. He had me give him the letter to read, an' asked dare he make some copies. The stenugifer took 'em like lightnin',

right there.

"The judge had a hard time of it, coughin' an' blowin' over that letter. He's goin' to send some copies to the New York papers right off. He took me acrost the hall and interduced me to Lawyer Ritchie. Lawyer Ritchie, he read the letter too. 'A hero!' they called Nat; an' me 'A hero's mother!'

"'We ain't goin' to forgit this, Mis' Haynes,' Lawyer Ritchie said. 'This here whole town's proud o' your Nat.'... My land! I couldn't sense it all!... Me, Delia Haynes, gettin' her hand wrung, 'count o' anything Nat'd b'en doin', by the big bugs round town! Judge Geer, he fetched 'em all out o' their offices—Slade, the supervisor, and Fuller Brothers, and old Sumner Pratt—an' all! An' Ben Watson asked could he have a copy to put in the *Bi-weekly*. It's goin' to take the whole front page, with an editor'al inside. He said the Rockville Center News'd most likely copy it too.

"I was like in a dream!... All I'd aimed to do was to let some o' them folks know that those people acrost the ocean had thought well of our Nat, an' here they was breakin' their necks to git in on it too!... Goin' down the street they was more of it. Lu Shiffer run right out o' the hardware store an' left the nails he was weighin'

to shake hands with me; and Jem Brand came; and Lan'lord Peters come out o' the Valley House an' spoke to me.... I felt awful public. An' Jim Beckonridge come out of the Emporium to shake too.

"'I ain't seen you down in town fur quite a spell,' he sez. 'How are you all up there to the farm?... Want to say I'm real proud o' Nat—a boy from round here!' he sez.... Old Beckonridge, that was always wantin' to arrest Nat fur takin' his chestnuts or foolin' down in the store!

"I just let 'em drift—seein' they had it all fixed fur me. All along the street they come an' spoke to me. Mame Parmlee, that ain't b'en able to see me fur three years, left off sweepin' her porch an' come down an' shook my hand, an' cried about it; an' that stylish Mis' Willowby, that's president o' the Civil Club, followed me all over the Square and asked dare she read a copy o' the letter an' tell about Nat to the schoolhouse next Wednesday.

"It seems Judge Geer had gone out an' spread it broadcast that I was in town, for they followed me everywhere. Next thing I run into Reverend Kearns and Reverend Higby, huntin' me hard. They both had one idee.

"'We wanted to have a memor'al service to the

churches 'bout Nat,' they sez; 'then it come over us that it was the town's affair really. So, Mis' Haynes,' they sez, 'we want you should share this thing with us. You mustn't be selfish. You gotta give us a little part in it too. Are you willin'?'"

"It knocked me dumb—me givin' anybody anything! Well, to finish, they's to be a big public service in the Town Hall on Friday. They'll have it all flags—French ones, an' our'n too. An' the ministers'll preach; an' Judge Geer'll tell Nat's story an' speak about him; an' the Ladies' Guild'll serve a big hot supper, because they'll probably be hundreds out; an' they'll read the letters an' have prayers for our Nat!" She faltered a moment. "An' we'll be there too—you an' me an' Tom—settin' in the seat o' honor, right up front!... It'll be the greatest funeral service this town's ever seen, Luke."

Maw's face was crimson with emotion.

"An' Uncle Clem an' Aunt Mollie—"

"Oh—them!" Maw came back to earth and smiled tolerantly. "They was real sharp to be in it too. Mollie took me into the parlor an' fetched a glass o' wine to stren'then me up." Maw mused a moment; then spoke with a touch of patronage: "I'm goin' to knit Clem some new socks this winter. He says he can't git none like

the oldtime wool ones; an' the market floors are cold. Clem's done what he could, an' I'll be real glad to help him out.... Oh, I asked 'em to come an' set with us at the service—S'norta too. I allowed we could manage to spare 'em the room."

She dreamed again, launched on a sea of glory; then roused to her final triumph:

"But that's only part, Luke. The best's comin'. Jim Beckonridge wants you to go down an' see him. 'That lame boy o' yours,' he sez, 'was in here a spell ago with some notion about raisin' bees an' buckwheat together, an' gittin' a city market fur buckwheat honey. Slipped my mind,' he sez, 'till I heard what Nat'd done; an' then it all come back. City party this summer had the same notion an' was lookin' out for a likely place to invest some cash in. You send that boy down an' we'll talk it over. Shouldn't wonder if he'd get some backin'. I calculate I might help him, myself,' he sez, 'I b'en thinkin' of it too.'... Don't seem like it could hardly be true."

"Oh, Maw!" Luke's pulses were leaping wildly. Buckwheat honey was the dear dream of many a long hour's wistful meditation. "If we could—I could study up about it an' send away fur printed books. We could make some money—"

But Maw had not yet finished.

"An' they's some about Tom, too, Luke! That young Doctor Wells down there—he's on'y b'en there a year—he come right up, an' spoke to me, in the midst of several. 'I want to talk about your boy,' he sez. 'I've wanted to fur some time, but didn't like to make bold; but now seem's as good a time as any.' 'They're all talkin' of him,' I sez. 'Well,' he sez, 'I don't mean the dead, but the livin' boy—the one folks calls Big Tom. I've heard his story, an' I got a good look over him down here in the store a while ago. Woman'—he sez it jest like that—'if that big boy o' your'n had a little operation, he'd be as good as any.'

"I answered him patient, an' told him what ailed Tom an' why he couldn't be no different—jest what old Doc Andrews told us—that they was a little piece o' bone druv deep into his skull that time he fell. He spoke real vi'lent then. 'But—my Lord!—woman,' he sez, 'that's what I'm talkin' about. If we jack up that bone'—trepannin', he called it too—'his brains'd git to be like anybody else's.' Told me he wants fur us to let him look after it. Won't cost anything unless we want. They's a hospital to Rockville would tend to it, an' glad to—when we git ready.... My poor Tommy!... Don't seem's if it could be true."

Her face softened, and she broke up suddenly.

"I got good boys all round," she wept. "I always said it; an' now folks know."

Luke lay on the old settle, thinking. In the air-tight stove the hickory fagots crackled, with jeweled color-play. On the other side Tom sat whittling silently—Tom, who would presently whittle no more, but rise to be a man.

It was incredible! Incredible that the old place might some day shake off its shackles of poverty and be organized for a decent struggle with life! Incredible that Maw—stepping briskly about getting the supper—should be singing!

Already the room seemed filled and warmed with the odors of prosperity and self-respect. Maw had put a red geranium on the table; there was the crispy fragrance of frying salt pork and soda biscuit in the air.

These the Hayneses! These people, with hope and self-esteem once more in their hearts! These people, with a new, a unique place in the community's respect! It was all like a beautiful miracle; and, thinking of its maker, Luke choked suddenly and gulped.

There was a moist spot on the old Mexican hairless right under his eyes; but it had been

made by tears of pride, not sorrow. Maw was right! A hero's folks hadn't ought to cry. And he wouldn't. Nat was better off than ever—safe and honored. He had trod the path of glory. A line out of the boy's old Reader sprang to his mind: "The paths of glory lead but to the grave." Oh, but it wasn't true! Nat's path led to life—to hope; to help for all of them, for Nat's own. In his death, if not in his life, he had rehabilitated them. And Nat—who loved them—would look down and call it good.

In spite of himself the boy sobbed, visioning his brother's face.

"Oh, Nat!" he whispered. "I knew you'd do it! I always said you'd do somethin' big for us all."

CHING, CHING, CHINAMAN[20]

By WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

From *The Pictorial Review*

How gaily we used to chant it over Yen Sin's scow when I was a boy on Urkey water-front,

and how unfailingly it brought the minister charging down upon us. I can see him now, just as he used to burst upon our vision from the wharf lane, face paper-white, eyes warm with a holy wrath, lips moving uncontrollably. And I can hear his voice trembling at our heels as we scuttled off:

"For shame, lads! Christ died for him, lads! For shame! Shame!"

And looking back I can see him there on the wharf above the scow, hands hanging, shoulders falling together, brooding over the unredeemed.

Minister Malden had seen "the field" in a day of his surging youth—seen it, and no more. He had seen it from the deck of the steamer by which he had come out, and by which he had now to return, since his seminary bride had fallen sick on the voyage. He perceived the teeming harbor clogged with junks and house-boats, the muddy river, an artery out of the heart of darkness, the fantastic, colored shore-lines, the vast, dull drone of heathendom stirring in his ears, the temple gongs calling blindly to the blind, the alluring and incomprehensible accents of the boatmen's tongue which he was to have made his own and lightened with the fierce sweet name of the Cross—and now could not.

Poor young Minister Malden, he turned his

face away. He gave up "the field" for the bride, and when the bride went out in mid-ocean, he had neither bride nor field. He drifted back to New England, somehow or other, and found Yen Sin.

He found another bride too; Minister Malden was human. It was a mercy of justice, folks said, when Widow Gibbs got a man like Minister Malden. Heaven knows she had had bad enough luck with Gibbs, a sallow devil of a whaler who never did a fine act in his life till he went down with his vessel and all hands in the Arctic one year and left Sympathy Gibbs sitting alone in the Pillar House on Lovett's Court, pretty, plump, and rather well-to-do as Urkey goes.

Everybody in the island was glad enough when those two undertook to mend each other's blasted life—everybody but Mate Snow. He had been thinking of Sympathy Gibbs himself, they said; and they said he stood behind the prescription screen in his drug-store far into the night, after the betrothal was given out in Center Church, his eyes half-closed, his thin lips bluish white, and hell-fire smouldering out of sight in him. And they said Mate was the kind that never forget. That was what made it so queer.

It seems to me that I must remember the time when the minister lived in the Pillar House with

Sympathy Gibbs.

Back there in the mists of youth I seem to see them walking home together after the Sunday morning preaching, arm in arm and full of a sedate joy; turning in between the tubbed box-trees at Lovett's Court, loitering for a moment to gaze out over the smooth harbor and nod to the stragglers of the congregation before they entered the big green door flanked by the lilac panes.

Perhaps it was told me. There can be no question, though, that I remember the night when Minister Malden came home from the Infield Conference, a father of two days' standing. Urkey village made a festival of that homecoming to the tiny daughter he had never seen, and to Sympathy Gibbs, weak and waiting and radiant. Yes, I remember.

We were all at the landing, making a racket. The minister looked ill when he came over the packet's side, followed by Mate Snow, who had gone to Conference with him as lay delegate from Center Church. Our welcome touched him in a strange and shocking way; he staggered and would have fallen had it not been for Mate's quick hand. He had not a word to say to us; he walked up the shore street between the wondering lines till he came to the Pillar House,

and there he stood for a moment, silhouetted against the open door, a drooping, hunted figure, afraid to go in.

We saw his shadow later, moving uncertainly across the shades in the upper chamber where Sympathy Gibbs lay with her baby, his hand lifted once with the fingers crooked in mysterious agony. Some one started a hymn in the street below and people took it up, bawling desperately for comfort to their souls. Mate Snow didn't sing. He stood motionless between the box-trees, staring up at the lighted window shades, as if waiting. By-and-by Minister Malden came down the steps, and moving away beside him like a drunken man, went to live in the two rooms over the drugstore. And that was the beginning of it.

Folks said Mate Snow was not the kind to forget an injury, and yet it was Mate who stood behind the minister through those first days of shock and scandal, who out-faced the congregation with his stubborn, tight lips, and who shut off the whisperings of the Dorcas Guild with the sentence which was destined to become a sort of formula on his tongue through the ensuing years:

"You don't know what's wrong, and neither do

I; but we can all see the man's a saint, can't we?"

"But the woman?" some still persisted.

"Sympathy Gibbs? You ought to know Sympathy Gibbs by this time."

And if there was a faint curling at the corners of his lips, they were all too dull to wonder at it. As for me, the boy, I took the changing phenomena of life pretty well for granted, and wasted little of my golden time speculating about such things. But as I look back now on the blunt end of those Urkey days, I seem to see Minister Malden growing smaller as he comes nearer, and Mate Snow growing larger—Mate Snow browbeating the congregation with a more and more menacing righteousness—Minister Malden, in his protecting shadow, leaner, grayer, his eyes burning with an ever fiercer zeal, escaping Center Church and slipping away to redeem the Chinaman.

"There is more joy in heaven over one sinner," was his inspiration, his justification, and, I suspect, his blessed opiate.

But it must have been hard on Yen Sin. I remember him now, a steam-blurred silhouette, earlier than the earliest, later than the latest, swaying over his tubs and sad-irons in the shanty on the stranded scow by Pickett's wharf,

dreaming perhaps of the populous rivers of his birth, or of the rats he ate, or of the opium he smoked at dead of night, or of those weird, heathen idols before which he bowed down his shining head—familiar and inscrutable alien.

An evening comes back to me when I sat in Yen Sin's shop and waited for my first "stand up" collar to be ironed, listening with a kind of awe to the tide making up the flats, muffled and unfamiliar, and inhaling the perfume compounded of steam, soap, hot linen, rats, opium, tea, idols and what-not peculiar to Yen Sin's shop and to a thousand lone shops in a thousand lone villages scattered across the mainland. When the precious collar was at last in my hands, still limp and hot from its ordeal, Yen Sin hung over me in the yellow nimbus of the lamp, smiling at my wonder. I stared with a growing distrust at the flock of tiny bird-scratches inked on the band.

"What," I demanded suspiciously, "is *that*?"

"Lat's Mista You," he said, nodding his head and summoning another hundred of wrinkles to his damp, polished face.

"That ain't my name. You don't know my name," I accused him.

"Mista Yen Sin gottee name, allee light."

The thing fascinated me, like a serpent.

"Whose name is *that*, then?" I demanded, pointing to a collar on the counter between us. The band was half-covered with the cryptic characters, done finely and as if with the loving hand of an artist.

Yen Sin held it up before his eyes in the full glow of the lamp. His face seemed incredibly old; not senile, like our white-beards mumbling on the wharves, but as if it had been a long, long time in the making and was still young. I thought he had forgotten me, he was so engrossed in his handiwork.

"Lat colla?" he mused by-and-by. "Lat's Mista Minista, boy."

"Mister Minister *Malden*?"

And there both of us stared a little, for there was a voice at the door.

"Yes? Yes? What is it?"

Minister Malden stood with his head and shoulders bent, wary of the low door-frame, and his eyes blinking in the new light. I am sure he did not see me on the bench; he was looking at Yen Sin.

"How is it with you to-night, my brother?"

The Chinaman straightened up and faced him, grave, watchful.

"Fine," he said. "Mista Yen Sin fine. Mista Minista fine, yes?"

He bowed and motioned his visitor to a rocker, upholstered with a worn piece of Axminster and a bit of yellow silk with half a dragon on it. The ceremony, one could see, was not new. Vanishing into the further mysteries of the rear, he brought out a bowl of tea, steaming, a small dish of heathenish things, nuts perhaps, or preserves, deposited the offering on the minister's pointed knees, and retired behind the counter to watch and wait.

An amazing change came over the minister. Accustomed to seeing him gentle, shrinking, illusively non-resisting, I scarcely knew this white flame of a man, burning over the tea-bowl!

"You are kind to me," he cried, "and yet your heart is not touched. I would give up my life gladly, brother, if I could only go up to the Throne and say to Jesus, 'Behold, Lord, Thy son, Yen Sin, kneeling at the foot of the Cross. Thou gavest me the power, Lord, and the glory is thine!' If I could say that, brother, I—I—"

His voice trailed off, though his lips continued

to move uncertainly. His face was transfigured, his eyes filmed with dreams. He was looking beyond Yen Sin now, and on the lost yellow millions. The tea, untasted, smoked upward into his face, an insidious, narcotic cloud. I can think of him now as he sat there, wresting out of his easeless years one moment of those seminary dreams; the color of far-away, the sweet shock of the alien and the bizarre, the enormous odds, the Game. The walls of Yen Sin's shop were the margins of the world, and for a moment the missionary lived.

"He would soften your heart," he murmured. "In a wondrous way. Have you never thought, Yen Sin, 'I would like to be a good man'?"

The other spread his right hand across his breast.

"Mista Yen Sin velly humble dog. Mista Yen Sin no good. Mista Yen Sin's head on le glound. Mista Yen Sin velly good man. Washy colla fine."

It was evidently an old point, an established score for the heathen.

"Yes, I must say, you do do your work. I've brought you that collar for five years now, and it still seems new." The minister's face fell a little. Yen Sin continued grave and alert.

"And Mista Matee Snow, yes? His colla allee same like new, yes?"

"Yes, I must say!" The other shook himself. "But it's not that, brother. We're all of us wicked, Yen Sin, and unless we—"

"Mista Minista wickee?"

For a moment the minister's eyes seemed fascinated by the Chinaman's; pain whitened his face.

"All of us," he murmured uncertainly, "are weak. The best among us sins in a day enough to blacken eternity. And unless we believe, and have faith in the Divine Mercy of the Father, and confess—confession—" His voice grew stronger and into it crept the rapt note of one whose auditor is within. "Confession! A sin confessed is no longer a sin. The word spoken out of the broken and contrite heart makes all things right. If one but had faith in that! If—if one had Faith!"

The life went out of his voice, the fire died in his eyes, his fingers drooped on the tea-bowl. The Chinaman's clock was striking the half after seven. He stared at the floor, haggard with guilt.

"Dear me, I'm late for prayer-meeting again. Snow will be looking for me."

I slipped out behind him, glad enough of Urkey's raw air after that close chamber of mysteries. I avoided the wharf-lane, however, more than a little scared by this sudden new aspect of the Minister, and got myself out to the shore street by Miah White's yard and the grocery porch, and there I found myself face to face with Mate Snow. That frightened me still more, for the light from Henny's Notions' window was shining oddly in his eyes.

"You're lookin' for the minister," I stammered, ducking my head.

He stopped and stared down at me, tapping a sole on the cobbles.

"What's this? What's this?"

"He—he says you'd be lookin' for 'im, an' I seen 'im to the Chinaman's an' he's comin' right there, honest he is, Mr. Snow."

"Oh! So? I'd be looking for him, would I?"

"Y—y—yessir."

I sank down on the grocery steps and studied my toes.

"He was *there*, though!" I protested in desperation, when we had been waiting in vain for a long quarter-hour. The dark monitor lifted

his chin from his collar and looked at his watch.

"It's hard," I heard him sigh, as he turned away down Lovett's Court, where Center Church blossomed with its prayer-meeting lamps. Shadows of the uneasy flock moved across the windows; Emsy Nickerson, in his trustee's black, peered out of the door into the dubious night, and beyond him in the bright vestry Aunt Nickerson made a little spot of color, agitated, nursing formless despairs, an artist in vague dreads.

I was near enough, at the church steps, to hear what Mate told them.

"I'll lead to-night. He's gone out in the back-country to pray alone."

Aunt Nickerson wept quietly, peeping from the corners of her eyes. Reverent awe struggled with an old rebellion in Emsy's face, and in others as they came crowding. The trustee broke out bitterly:

"Miah White's took to the bottle again, along o' him. If only he'd do his prayin' at Miah's house a spell, 'stead o' the back-country—"

"There was a back-country in Judea," Mate cried him down. "And some one prayed there, not one night, but forty nights and days!"

What a far cry it was from the thwarted lover behind the prescription screen, fanning the flames of hell-fire through the night, to the Seer thundering in the vestry—had there been any there with heads enough to wonder at it.

It happened from time to time, this mysterious retreat into the moors, more frequently as the Infield Conference drew on and the hollows deepened in the minister's cheeks and his eyes shone brighter with foreboding. Nor was this the first time the back-country had been mentioned in the same breath with the Wilderness of Judea. I can remember our Miss Beedie, in Sunday School, lifting her eyes and sighing at the first verse of the fourth chapter of the Book of Luke.

And to-night, while I crept off tingling through the dark of Lovett's Court, he was in the Wilderness again, and I had seen him last.

I brought up by one of the tubbed box-trees and peered in at the Pillar House with a new wonder. I was so used to it there, dead on the outside and living on the inside, that I had never learned to think of it as a strange thing. Perhaps a dozen times I had seen little Hope Gibbs (they still said "Gibbs") playing quietly among the lilacs in the back yard. It was always at dusk when the shadows were long there, and she a shadow among them, so unobtrusive and far

away. As for her mother, no one ever saw Sympathy Gibbs.

Crouching by the box-tree, I found myself wondering what they were doing in there, Sympathy Gibbs and the little girl; whether they were sleeping, or whether they were sitting in the dark, thinking, or whispering about the husband and father who was neither husband nor father, or whether, in some remote chamber, there might not be a lamp or a candle burning.

The dead hush of the place oppressed me. I turned my head to look back at the comfortable, bumbling devotion of Center Church, and this is what I saw there.

The door was still open, a blank, bright rectangle giving into the deserted vestry, and it was against this mat of light that I spied Minister Malden's head and shoulders thrust furtively, as he peeped in and seemed to harken to the muffled unison of the prayer.

You may imagine me startled enough at that, but what of my emotion when, having peeped and listened and reassured himself for a dozen seconds, Minister Malden turned and came softly down the Court toward the gate and the box-trees and me, a furtive silhouette against the door-light, his face turned back over one shoulder.

I couldn't bolt; he was too close for that. The wonder was that he failed to see me, for he stopped within two yards of where I cowered in the shadow and stood for a long time gazing in between the trees at the pillared porch, and I could hear his breathing, uneven and laborious, as though he had been running or fighting. Once I thought he struck out at something with a vicious fist. Then his trouble was gone, between two winks, and he was gone too, up the walk and up the steps, without any to-do about it. I don't know whether he tapped on the door or not. It was open directly. I caught a passing glimpse of Sympathy Gibbs in the black aperture; the door closed on them both, and the Pillar House was dead again.

Now this was an odd way for Minister Malden to fast and pray in the Wilderness—odd enough, one would say, to keep me waiting there a while to see what would come of it all. But it didn't. I had had enough of mysteries for one Summer's night, or at any rate I had enough by the time I got my short legs, full tilt, into the shore street. For I had caught a fleeting glimpse, on the way, of a watcher in the shadow behind the *other* box-tree—Yen Sin, the heathen, with a surprised eyeball slanting at me over one shoulder.

Among the most impressive of the phenomena of life, as noted in my thirteenth year, is the amazing way in which a community can change while one is away from it a month. Urkey village at the beginning of my 'teens seemed to me much the same Urkey village upon which I had first opened my eyes. And then I went to make a visit with my uncle Orville Means in Gillyport, just across the Sound, and when I came back on the packet I could assure myself with all the somber satisfaction of the returning exile that I would scarcely have known the old place.

Gramma Pilot's cow had been poisoned. There had been a fire in the Selectmen's room at Town Hall. Amber Matheson had left Mrs. Wharf's Millinery and set up for herself, opposite the Eastern School. And Mate Snow, all of a sudden, had bought the old Pons house, on the hill hanging high over the town, and gone to live there. With a leap, and as it were behind my back, he sat there dominating the village and the harbor and the island—our Great Man.

He took Minister Malden with him, naturally, out of the two rooms over the store, into one room in the third story of the house on the hill—where Sympathy Gibbs could see him if she chose to look that way, as frankly and ignominiously a dependent as any baron's

chaplain in the Golden Days.

"She'd have done better with Mate, after all," folks began to say.

But of all the changes in the village, the most momentous to me was the change in Yen Sin. I don't know why it should have been I, out of all the Urkey youth, who went to the Chinaman's; perhaps it was the spiritual itch left from that first adventure on the scow. At any rate, I had fallen into a habit of dropping in at the cabin, and not always with a collar to do.

I had succeeded in worming out of him the meaning of that first set of bird-scratches on my collar-band—"The boy who throws clam-shells"—and of a second and more elaborate writing—"The boy who is courageous in the face of all the water of the ocean, yet trembles before so much of it as may be poured in a wash-basin." There came a third inscription in time, but of that he would not tell me, nor of Mate Snow's, nor the minister's. It was a queer library he had, those fine-written collars of Urkey village.

He had been growing feebler so long and so gradually that I had made nothing of it. Once, I remember, it struck me queer that he wasn't working so hard as he had used to. Still earliest of all and latest of all, he would sometimes

leave his iron cooling on the board now and stand for minutes of the precious day, dreaming out of the harbor window. When the sun was sinking, the shaft through the window bathed his head and his lean neck with a quality almost barbaric, and for a moment in the gloom made by the bright pencil, the new, raw things of Urkey faded out, leaving him alone in his ancient and ordered civilization, a little wistful, I think, and perhaps a little frightened, as a child waking from a long, dreaming sleep, to find his mother gone.

He had begun to talk about China, too, and the river where he was born. And I made nothing of it, it came on so gradually, day by day. Then I went away, as I have said, and came back again. I dropped in at the scow the second day after the packet brought me home.

"Hello, there!" I cried, peeping over the counter, "I got a collar for you to—to—" I began to stumble. "Mr. Yen Sin, dear me, what's the matter of you?"

"Mista Yen Sin fine," he said in a strengthless voice, smiling and nodding from the couch where he lay, half propped up by a gorgeous, faded cushion. "Mista Yen Sin go back China way pletty quick now, yes."

"Honest?"

He made no further answer, but took up the collar I had brought.

"You been gone Gillypo't, yes? You take colla China boy, yes?"

"Yessir!"

"He pletty nice man, Sam Low, yes?"

"Oh, you know him, then? Oh, he's all right, Yen Sin."

It was growing dark outside, and colder, with a rising wind from landward to seaward against the tide. A sense of something odd and wrong came over me; it was a moment before I could make it out. The fire was dead in the stove for the first time in memory and the Vestal irons were cold. Yen Sin asked me to light the lamp. In the waxing yellow glow he turned his eyes to mine, and mine were big.

"You know Mista God?" he questioned.

"Oh, yes," I answered soberly. "Yes, indeed."

"Mista God allee same like Mista Yen Sin, yes?"

I felt myself paling at his blasphemy, and thought of lightning.

"Mista God," he went on in the same

speculative tone, "Mista God know allee bad things, allee same like Mista Yen Sin, yes?"

"Where is the minister?" I demanded in desperation.

"Mista Yen Sin likee see Mista Minista." When he added, with a transparent hand fluttering over his heart: "Like see pletty quick now," I seemed to fathom for the first time what was happening to him.

"Wait," I cried, too full of awe to know what I said. "Wait, wait, Yen Sin. I'll fetch 'im."

It was dark outside, the sky overcast, and the wind beginning to moan a high note across the roofs as it swept in from the moors and out again over the graying waters. In the shore street my eyes chanced upon the light of Center Church, and I remembered that it was meeting-night.

There was only a handful of worshippers that evening, but a thousand could have had no more eyes it seemed to me as I tiptoed down the aisle with the scandalized pad-pad of Emsy Nickerson's pursuing soles behind my back. Confusion seized me; I started to run, and had come almost up to Mister Malden before I had

wit enough to discover that it wasn't Minister Malden at all, but Mate Snow in the pulpit, standing with an open hymn-book in one hand and staring down at me with grim, inquiring eyes. After a time I managed to stammer:

"The Chinaman, you know—he's goin' to die—the minister—"

Then I fled, dodging Emsy's legs. Confused voices followed me; Aunt Nickerson's full of a nameless horror; Mate Snow's, thundering: "Brother Hemans, you will please continue the meeting. I will go and see what I can do. But your prayers are needed here."

Poor Minister Malden! His hour had struck—the hour so long awaited—and now it was Mate Snow who should go to answer it. Perhaps the night had something to do with it, and the melancholy disaster of the wind. Perhaps it was the look of Mate Snow's back as he passed me, panting on the steps, his head bowed with his solemn and triumphant stewardship. But all of a sudden I hated him, this righteous man. He had so many things, and Minister Malden had nothing—nothing but the Chinaman's soul—and he was going to try and get that too.

I had to find Minister Malden, and right away. But where *was* he, and on prayer-meeting night too? My mind skipped back. The "Wilderness."

I was already ducking along the Court to reconnoiter the Pillar House, black and silent beyond the box-trees. And then I put my hands in my pockets, my ardor dimmed by the look of that vacant, staring face. What was I, a boy of thirteen, against that house? I could knock at the door, to be sure, as the minister had done that other night. Yes; but when I stood, soft-footed, on the porch, the thought that Sympathy Gibbs might open it suddenly and find me there sent the hands back again into the sanctuary of my pockets. What did I know of her? What did any one know of her? To be confronted by her, suddenly, in the dark behind a green door—I tiptoed down the steps.

If only there were a cranny of light somewhere in the dead place! I began to prowl around the yard, feeling adventurous enough, you may believe, for no boy had ever scouted that bit of Urkey land before. And I did find a light, beneath a drawn shade in the rear. Approaching as stealthily as a red Indian, I put one large, round eye to the aperture.

If I had expected a melodramatic tableau, I was disappointed. I had always figured the inside of the Pillar House as full of treasures, for they told tales of the old whaler's wealth. My prying eyes found it bare, like a deserted house gutted by seasons of tramps. A little fire of twigs and a

broken butter-box on the hearth made a pathetic shift at domestic cheer. Minister Malden sat at one side of it, his back to me, his face half-buried in his hands. Little Hope Gibbs played quietly on the floor, building pig-pens with a box of matches, a sober, fire-lined shade. Sympathy Gibbs was not in the picture, but I heard her voice after a moment, coming out from an invisible corner.

"How much do you want this time, Will?"

"Want?" There was an anguished protest in the man's cry.

"Need, then." The voice was softer.

The minister's face dropped back in his hands, and after a moment the words came out between his tight fingers, hardly to be heard.

"Five hundred dollars, Sympathy."

I thought there was a gasp from the corner, suppressed. I caught the sound of a drawer pulled open and the vague rustling of skirts as the woman moved about. Her voice was as even as death itself.

"Here it is, Will. It brings us to the end, Will. God knows where it will come from next time."

"It—it—you mean—" An indefinable horror

ran though the minister's voice, and I could see the cords shining on the hands which gripped the chair-arms. "Next time—next year—" His eyes were fixed on the child at his feet. "God knows where it will come from. Perhaps—before another time—something will happen. Dear little Hope—little girl!"

The child's eyes turned with a preoccupied wonder as the man's hand touched her hair; then went back to the alluring pattern of the matches.

Sympathy Gibbs spoke once more.

"I've found out who holds the mortgage, Will. Mr. Dow told me."

His hand slid from Hope's hair and hung in the air. During the momentary hush his head, half-turned, seemed to wait in a praying suspense.

"It's Mate Snow," the voice went on. The man covered his face.

"Thank God!" he said. I thought he shivered. "Then it's all—all right," he sighed after a moment. "I was afraid it might be somebody who would—who might make trouble." He took out a handkerchief and touched his forehead with it. "Thank—God!"

"Why do you thank God?" A weariness, like anger, touched her words.

"Why? Why do I thank God?" He faced her, wondering. "Because he has given me a strong man to be my friend and stand behind me. Because Mate Snow, who might have hated me, has—"

"Has sucked the life out of you!" It came out of the corner like a blade. "Yes, yes, he has sucked the life out of you in his hate, and thrown the dry shell of you to me; and that makes him feel good on his hill there. No, no, no; I'm going to say it now. Has he ever tried to find out what was wrong with us? No. He didn't need to. Why? Because no matter what it was, we were given over into his hands, body and soul. And now it's Mate Snow who is the big man of this island, and it's the minister that eats the crumbs that fall from his table, and folks pity you and honor him because he's so good to you, and—"

And this was Urkey village, and night, and Yen Sin was dying.

"And he's down to the Chinaman's *now*!" I screamed, walking out of my dream. "An' the Chinaman's dyin' an' wants the minister, an' Mate Snow he got there first."

The light went out in the room; I heard a chair knocked over, and then Minister Malden's voice: "God forgive me! God forgive me!"

I ran, sprawling headlong through the shrubs.

Out in the dark of Lovett's Court I found people all about me, the congregation, let out, hobbling and skipping and jostling shoreward, a curious rout. Others were there, not of the church; Kibby Baker, the atheist, who had heard the news through the church window where he peeped at the worshipers; Miah White's brother, the ship-calker, summoned by his sister; a score of others, herding down the dark wind. At the shore street, folks were coming from the Westward. It was strange to see them all and to think it was only a heathen dying.

Or, perhaps, it wasn't so strange, when one remembered Minister Malden coming down the years with that light in his eyes, building his slow edifice, like one in Israel prophesying the coming of the Messiah.

I shall never forget the picture I saw that night from the deck of the Chinaman's scow. The water here in the lee was as smooth as black glass, save for the little ground-swell that rocked the outer end of the craft. The tide was rising; the grounded end would soon be swimming. There were others on the deck with me, and more on the dock overhead, their faces picked out against the sky by the faint irradiations from the lighted shanty beneath.

And over and behind it all ran the tumult of the elements; behind it the sea, where it picked up on the Bight out there beyond our eyes; above it the wind, scouring the channels of the crowded roofs and flinging out to meet the waters, like a ravening and disastrous bride.

Mate Snow stood by the counter in the little cabin, his close-cropped head almost to the beams, his voice, dry austere, summoning the Chinaman to repentance. "Verily, if a man be not born again, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." His eyes skipped to the door.

"And to be born again," he went on with a hint of haste, "you must confess, Yen Sin, and have faith. That is enough. The outer and inner manifestations—confession and faith."

"Me, Mista Yen Sin—confessee?"

A curious and shocking change had come over the Chinaman in the little time I had been away. He lay quite motionless on his couch, with a bit of silken tapestry behind his head, like a heathen halo protecting him at last. He was more alive than he had been, precisely because the life had gone out of him, and he was no longer bothered with it. His face was a mask, transparent and curiously luminous, and there for the first time I saw the emotion of humor, which is another

name for perception.

His unclouded eyes found me by the door and he moved a hand in a vague gesture. I went, walking stiff-legged, awe mingling with self-importance.

"Mista Boy, please," he whispered in my ear. "The collas on the shelf theah. Led paypah—"

Wondering, I took them down and piled them on the couch beside him, one after another, little bundles done up carefully in flaring tissue with black characters inked on them.

"That one!" he whispered, and I undid the one under his finger, discovering half a dozen collars, coiled with their long imprisonment.

"And that one, and that one—"

They covered his legs and rose about his thin shoulders, those treasured soiled collars of his, gleaming under the lamp like the funeral-pyre of some fantastic potentate. Nothing was heard in the room save the faint crackling of the paper, and after a moment Lem Pigeon murmuring in amazement to his neighbor, over in a corner.

"Look a-there, will ye? He's got my collar with the blood spot onto it where the Lisbon woman's husband hit me that time down to New Bedford. What ye make o' that now?"

Yen Sin lifted his eyes to Mate Snow's hanging over him in wonder.

"Mista Matee Snow confessee, yes?"

There was a moment of shocked silence while our great man stared at Yen Sin. He took his weight from the counter and stood up straight.

"I confess my sins to God," he said.

The other moved a fluttering hand over his collars. "Mista Yen Sin allee same like Mista God, yes."

In the hush I heard news of the blasphemy whispering from lip to lip, out the door and up the awe-struck dock. Mate Snow lifted a hand.

"Stop!" he cried. "Yen Sin, you are standing in the Valley of the Shadow of Death—"

"Mista Matee Snow wickee man? No? Yes? Mista Matee Snow confessee?"

The Chinaman was making a game of his death-bed, and even the dullest caught the challenge. Mate Snow understood. The yellow man had asked him with the divine clarity of the last day either to play the game or not to play the game. And Mate Snow wanted something enough to play.

"Yes," he murmured, "I am weak. All flesh is weak." He faltered, and his brow was corded with the labor of memory. It is hard for a good man to summon up sins enough to make a decent confession; nearly always they fall back in the end upon the same worn and respectable category.

"I confess to the sin of pride," he pronounced slowly. "And to good deeds and kind acts undone; to moments of harshness and impatience—"

"Mista Matee Snow confessee?" Yen Sin shook a weary protest at the cheater wasting the precious moments with words. Mate Snow lifted his eyes, and I saw his face whiten and a pearl of sweat form on his forehead. A hush filled the close cave of light, a waiting silence, oppressive and struck with a new expectancy. Little sounds on the dock above became important—young Gilman Pilot's voice, cautioning: "Here, best take my hand on that ladder, Mr. Malden. Last rung's carried away."

It was curious to see Mate Snow's face at that; it was as if one read the moving history of years in it as he leaned over the counter and touched the dying man's breast with a passion strange in him.

"I will tell you how wicked I am, Yen Sin.

Three years ago I did Ginny Silva out of seventy dollars wages in the bogs; and if he's here tonight I'll pay him the last cent of it. And—and —" He appealed for mercy to the Chinaman's unshaken eyes. Then, hearing the minister on the deck behind, he cast in the desperate sop of truth. "And—*and I have coveted my neighbor's wife*!"

It was now that Minister Malden cried from the doorway: "That is nothing, Yen Sin—*nothing*— when you think of *me*!"

You may laugh. But just then, in that rocking death-chamber, with the sea and the dark and the wind, no one laughed. Except Yen Sin, perhaps; he may have smiled, though the mask of his features did not move. Minister Malden stepped into the room, and his face was like new ivory.

"Look at me! I have wanted to bring your soul to Christ before I died. That is white, but all the rest of me is black. I have lived a lie; I have broken a law of God; to cover that I have broken another, another—"

His voice hung in the air, filled with a strange horror of itself. The Chinaman fingered his collars. Without our consent or our understanding, he had done the thing which had so shocked us when he said it with his lips; the

heathen sat in judgment, weighing the sins of our little world.

"Yes?" he seemed to murmur. "And then?"

The minister's eyes widened; pain lifted him on his toes.

"I am an adulterer," he cried. "And my child is a—a—bastard. Her mother's husband, Joshua Gibbs, didn't go down with his vessel after all. He was alive when I married her. He is alive today, a wanderer. He learned of things and sent me a letter; it found me at the Infield Conference the day before I came home that time to see my baby. Since that day it has seemed to me that I would suffer the eternity of the damned rather than that that stain should mar my child's life, and in the blackness of my heart I have believed that it wouldn't if it weren't known. I have kept him quiet; I have hushed up the truth. I have paid him money, leaving it for him where he wrote me to leave it. I have gone hungry and ragged to satisfy him. I have begged my living of a friend. I have drained the life of the woman I love. And yet he is never content. And I have betrayed even *him*. For he forbade me to see his wife ever again, or even to know the child I had begotten, and I have gone to them, in secret, by night. I have sinned not alone against God, but against the devil. I have sinned

against—*everything*!"

The fire which had swept him on left him now of a sudden, his arms hung down at his sides, his head drooped. It was Mate Snow who broke the silence, falling back a step, as if he had been struck.

"God forgive me," he said in awe. "And *I* have kept you here. *You*! To preach the word of God to these people. God forgive me!"

"I think Mista God laugh, yes."

Yen Sin wasn't laughing himself; he was looking at his collars. Mate Snow shrugged his shoulders fiercely, impatient of the interruption.

"I have kept you here," he pursued bitterly, "for the good of my own soul, which would have liked to drive you away. I have kept you here, even when you wanted to go away—"

"Little mousie want to go away. Little cat say, 'no—no.'" Yen Sin's head turned slowly and he spoke on to the bit of yellow silk, his words clear and powerless as a voice in a dream. "No—no, Mousie, stay with little cat. Good little cat. Like see little mousie jump. Little cat!"

Mate Snow wheeled on him, and I saw a queer

sight on his face for an instant; the gray wrinkles of age. My cousin Duncan was there, constable of Urkey village, and he saw it too and came a step out of his corner. It was all over in a wink; Mate Snow lifted his shoulders with a sigh, as much as to say: "You can see how far gone the poor fellow is."

The Chinaman, careless of the little by-play, went on.

"Mista Sam Kow nice China fella. Mista Minista go to Mista Sam Kow in Infield, washy colla. Mista Yen Sin lite a letta to Mista Sam Kow, on Mista Minista colla-band. See? Mista Sam Kow lite a letta back on colla-band. See?"

We saw—that the yellow man was no longer talking at random, but slowly, with his eyes on the collar he held in his hand, like a scholar in his closet, perusing the occult pages of a chronicle.

"Mista Sam Kow say: 'This man go night-time in Chestnut Stleet; pickee out letta undah sidewalk, stickee money-bag undah sidewalk, cly, shivah, makee allee same like sick fella. Walkee all lound town allee night. Allee same like Chlistian dlunk man. No sleepee. That's all —Sam Kow.' Mista Yen Sin keepee colla when Mista Minista come back; give new colla: one, two, five, seven time; Mista Minista say: 'You

washy colla fine, Yen Sin: this colla, allee same like new.' Mista Matee Snow, his colla allee same like new, too—"

Something happened so suddenly that none of us knew what was going on. But there was my cousin Duncan standing by the counter, his arm and shoulder still thrust forward with the blow he had given; and there was our great man of the hill flung back against the wall with a haggard grimace set on his face.

"No, you don't!" Duncan growled, his voice shivering a little with excitement. "No, you don't, Mate!"

Mate Snow screamed, and his curse was like the end of the world in Urkey island.

"Curse you! The man's a thief, I tell you. He's stolen my property! I demand my property—those collars there in his hand now. You're constable, you say. Well, I want my—"

He let himself down on the bench, as if the strength had left his knees.

"He's going to tell you lies," he cried. "He's making fools of you all with his—his—Duncan, boy! Don't listen to the black liar. He's going to try and make out 'twas *me* put the letter under

the walk in Chestnut Street, up there to Infield; that it was *me*, all these years, that went back and got out money he put there. *Me! Mate Snow*. Duncan, boy; he's going to tell you a low, black-hearted lie!"

"*How do you know?*" That was all my cousin Duncan said.

To the dying man, nothing made much difference. It was as if he had only paused to gather his failing breath, and when he spoke his tone was the same, detached, dispassionate, with a ghost of humor running through it.

"How many times?" He counted the collars with a finger tip. "One two, tlee, six, seven time. Seven yeahs. Too bad. Any time Mista Minista wantee confessee, Mista God makee allee light. Mista Yen Sin allee same like Mista God. Wait. Wait. Wait. Laugh. Cly inside!"

Mate Snow was leaning forward on the bench in a queer, lazy attitude, his face buried in his hands and his elbows propped on his knees. But no one looked at him, for Minister Malden was speaking in the voice of one risen from the dead, his eyes blinking at the Chinaman's lamp.

"Then you mean—you mean that he—isn't alive? After all? That he wasn't alive—*then*? You mean it was all a—a kind of a—*joke*? I—I

—Oh, Mate! *Mate Snow!*"

It was queer to see him turning with his news to his traditional protector. It had been too sudden; his brain had been so taken up with the naked miracle that Gibbs was not alive that all the rest of it, the drawn-out and devious revenge of the druggist, had somehow failed to get into him as yet.

"Mate Snow!" he cried, running over to the sagging figure. "Did you hear, Mate? Eh? It isn't true! It was all a—a joke, Mate!" He shook Snow's shoulder with a pleading ecstasy. "It's been a mistake, Mate, and I am—she is—little Hope is—"

He fell back a step, letting the man lop over suddenly on his doubled knees, and stared blankly at a tiny drug-phial, uncorked and empty, rolling away across the floor. He passed a slow hand across his eyes. "Why—why—I—I'm afraid Mate is—isn't very—well."

Urkey had held its tongue too long. Now it was that the dam gave way and the torrent came whirling down and a hundred voices were lifted. Crowds and shadows distracted the light. One cried. "The man's dead, you fools; can't you see?" A dozen took it up and it ran out and away along the rumbling dock. "Doctor!" another bawled. "He's drank poison! Where's the doctor

at?" And that, too, went out, and a faint shout answered from somewhere shoreward that the doctor was out at Si Pilot's place and Miah White was after him, astraddle of the tar-wagon horse. Through it all I can remember Aunt Nickerson's wail continuing, undaunted and unquenchable, "God save our souls! God save our souls!"

And then, following the instinct of the frightened pack, they were all gone of a sudden, carrying the dead man to meet the doctor. I would have gone, too, and I had gotten as far as the door at their heels, when I paused to look back at the Chinaman.

He lay so still over there on the couch—the thought came to me that he, too, was dead. And of a sudden, leaning there on the door-frame, the phantom years trooped back to me, and I saw the man for the first time moving through them—a lone, far outpost of the thing he knew, one yellow man against ten thousand whites, unshaken, unappalled, facing the odds, working so early, so late, day after day and year after year, and smiling a little, perhaps, as he peeped behind the scenes of the thing which we call civilization. Yes, cry as he might inside, he must have smiled outside, sometimes, through those years of terror, at the sight of Minister Malden shrinking at the shadow of the ghost of

something that was nothing, to vanish at a touch of light.

And now his foreign service was ended; his post was to be relieved; and he could go wherever he wanted to go.

Not quite yet. He had been dreaming, that was all. His eyes opened, and rested, not on me, but to the right of me. Then I saw for the first time that I wasn't alone in the room with him after all, but that Minister Malden was standing there, where he had stood through all the din like a little boy struck dumb before a sudden Christmas tree.

And like a little boy, he went red and white and began to stammer.

"I—I—Yen Sin—" He held his breath a moment. Then it came out all together. "*I'll run and fetch them—both!*" With that he was past me, out of the door and up the ladder, and I heard his light feet drumming on the dock, bearing such news as never was.

The Chinaman's eyes had come to me now, and there was a queer light in them that I couldn't understand. An adventure beyond my little comprehension was taking shape behind them,

and all I knew enough to do was to sneak around behind the counter and take hold of one of his fingers and shake it up and down, like one man taking a day's leave of another. His eyes thanked me for my violence; then they were back again to their mysterious speculations. An overweening excitement gathered in them. He frightened me. Quite abruptly, as if an unexpected reservoir of energy had been tapped, the dying man lifted on an elbow and slid one leg over the edge of the couch. Then he glanced at me with an air almost furtive.

"Boy," he whispered. "Run quick gettee Mista Minista, yes."

"But he's coming *himself*," I protested. "You better lay back."

"Mista Yen Sin askee *please*! Please, boy."

What was there for me to do? I ran. Once on the dock above, misgivings assailed me. I was too young, and the night was too appalling. I had forgotten the wind, down in the cabin, but in the open here I felt its weight. It grew all the while; its voice drowned the world now, and there was spindrift through it, picked from the back shore of the island and flung all the way across. Objects were lost in it; ghostly things, shore lights, fish-houses, piers, strained seaward. I heard the packet's singing masts at the next wharf, but I saw no packet. The ponderous scow below me became a thing of life and light, an eager bird fluttering at its bonds and calling to the wide spaces. To my bewildered eyes it seemed to move—it *was* moving, shaking off the heavy hands of bondage, joining itself with the wind. I got down on my knees of a sudden and peered at the deck.

"*Yen Sin!*" I screamed. "*What you doin' out there?*"

I saw him dimly in the open air outside his door, fumbling and fumbling at something. This was his great adventure, the thing that had gleamed in his eyes and had tapped that unguessed reservoir of strength. His voice crept back to me, harassed by the wind,

"This velly funny countly, Mista Boy. Mista Yen Sin go back China way."

His bow-line was fast to an iron ring on the wharf. I wanted to hold him back, and I clutched at the rope with my hands as if my little strength were something against that freed thing. The line came up to me easily, cast off from the scow at the other end.

He was waning. His window and door and the little fan-light before the door were all I could see now, and even that pattern blurred and became uncertain and ghostly on the mat of the night. He was clear of the wharves now, and the wind had him—sailing China way—so peaceful, so dreamless, surrounded by his tell-tale cargo of Urkey's unwashed collars.

I don't know how long it was I crouched there on the timbers, staring out into the havoc of that black night, and listening to the hungry clamor of the Bight. I must have been crying for the

minister, over and over, without knowing it, for when my cousin Duncan's hand fell on my shoulder and I started up half out of my wits, he pointed a finger toward the outer edge of the wharf.

And there they were in a little close group, Sympathy Gibbs standing straight with the child in her arms, and Minister Malden down on his knees. There were many people on the pier, all with their eyes to sea, all except Sympathy Gibbs; hers were up-shore, where Mate Snow lay in state on his own counter, all his sweet revenge behind him and gone.

I thought little Hope was asleep in the swathing shawl, till I saw the dark round spots of her eyes. If it was a strange night for the others, it was stranger still to her.

The wind and the rain beat on Minister Malden's bended back. He loved it that way. The missionary was praying for the soul of the heathen.

NONE SO BLIND[21]

By MARY SYNON

From *Harper's Magazine*.

We were listening to Leila Burton's music—her husband, and Dick Allport, and I—with the throb of London beating under us like the surge of an ocean in anger, when there rose above the smooth harmonies of the piano and the pulsing roar of the night a sound more poignant than them both, the quavering melody of a street girl's song.

Through the purpling twilight of that St. John's Eve I had been drifting in dreams while Leila had gone from golden splendors of chords which reflected the glow on westward-fronting windows into somber symphonies which had seemed to make vocal the turbulent soul of the city—for Dick Allport and I were topping the structure of that house of life that was to shelter the love we had long been cherishing. With Leila playing in that art which had dowered her with fame, I was visioning the glory of such love as she and Standish Burton gave each other while I watched Dick, sensing rather than seeing the dearness of him as he gave to the mounting climaxes the tense interest he always tendered to Leila's music.

I had known, before I came to love Dick

Allport, other loves and other lovers. Because I had followed will-o'-the-wisps of fancy through marshes of sentiment I could appreciate the more the truth of that flame which he and I had lighted for our guidance on the road. A moody boy he had been when I first met him, full of a boy's high chivalry and of a boy's dark despairs. A moody man he had become in the years that had denied him the material success toward which he had striven; but something in the patience of his efforts, something in the fineness of his struggle had endeared him to me as no triumph could have done. Because he needed me, because I had come to believe that I meant to him belief in the ultimate good of living, as well as belief in womanhood, I cherished in my soul that love of him which yearned over him even as it longed for him.

Watching him in the dusk while he lounged in that concentrated quiet of attention, I went on piling the bricks of that wide house of happiness we should enter together; and, although I could see him but dimly, so well did I know every line of his face that I could fancy the little smile that quivered around his lips and that shone from the depths of his eyes as Leila played the measures we both loved. I must have been smiling in answer when the song of the girl outside rose high.

Not until that alien sound struck athwart the power and beauty of the spell did I come to know how high I had builded my castles; but the knocking at the gate toppled down the dreams as Leila swept a discord over the keyboard and crossed to the open window.

In the dusk, as she flung back the heavy curtains, I could see the bulk of Brompton Oratory set behind the houses like the looming back-drop of a painted scene. Nearer, in front of a tall house across the way, stood the singer, a thin girl whose shadowy presence seemed animated by a curious bravery. In a nasal, plaintive voice she was singing the words of a ballad of love and of loving that London, as only London can, had made curiously its own that season. The insistence of her plea—for she sang as if she cried out her life's longing, sang as if she called on the passing crowd not for alms, but for understanding—made her for the moment, before she faded back into oblivion, an artist, voicing the heartache and the heartbreak of womankind; and the artist in Leila Burton responded to the thrill.

Until the ending of the song she stood silent in front of the window, unconscious of the fact that she, and not the scene beyond her, held the center of the stage. Not for her beauty, although at times Leila Burton gave the impression of

being exquisitely lovely, was she remarkable, but rather for that receptive attitude that made her an inspired listener. In me, who had known her for but a little while, she awakened my deepest and drowsiest ambition, the desire to express in pictures the light and the shade of the London I knew. With her I could feel the power, and the glory, and the fear, and the terror of the city as I never did at other times. It was not alone that she was all things to all men; it was that she led men and women who knew her to the summits of their aspirations.

Even Standish Burton, big, sullen man that he was, immersed in his engineering problems, responded to his wife's spiritual charm with a readiness that always aroused in Dick and myself an admiration for him that our other knowledge of him did not justify. He was, aside from his relationship to Leila, a man whose hardness suggested a bitter knowledge of dark ways of life. Now, crouched down in the depths of his chair, he kept watching Leila with a gaze of smouldering adoration, revealing that love for her which had been strong enough to break down those barriers which she had erected in the years while he had worked for her in Jacob's bondage. In her he seemed to be discovering, all over again, the vestal to tend the fires of his faith.

Dick Allport, too, bending forward over the table on which his hands fell clenched, was studying Leila with an inscrutable stare that seemed to be of query. I was wondering what it meant, wondering the more because my failure to understand its meaning hung another veil between my vision and my shrine of belief in the fullness of love, when the song outside came to an end and Leila turned back to us.

Her look, winging its way to Standish, lighted her face even beyond the glow from the lamps which she switched on. For an instant his heavy countenance flared into brightness. Dick Allport sighed almost imperceptibly as he turned to me. I had a feeling that such a fire as the Burtons kindled for each other should have sprung up in the moment between Dick and me, for we had fought and labored and struggled for our love as Standish and Leila had never needed to battle. Because of our constancy I expected something better than the serene affectionateness that shone in Dick's smile. I wanted such stormy passion of devotion as Burton gave to Leila, such love as I, remembering a night of years ago, knew that Dick could give. It was the old desire of earth, spoken in the street girl's song, that surged in me until I could have cried out in my longing for the soul of the sacrament whose substance I had been given; but the knowledge

that we were, the four of us, conventional people in a conventional setting locked my heart as it locked my lips until I could mirror the ease with which Leila bore herself.

"I have been thinking," she said, lightly, "that I should like to be a street singer for a night. If only a piano were not so cumbersome, I should go out and play into the ears of the city the thing that girl put into her song."

"Why not?" I asked her, "It would be an adventure, and life has too few adventures."

"It might have too many," Dick said.

"Not for Leila," Standish declared. "Life's for her a quest of joy."

"That's it," Dick interposed. "Her adventures have all been joyous."

"But they haven't," Leila insisted. "I'm no spoiled darling of the gods. I've been poor, poor as that girl out there. I've had heartaches, and disappointments, and misfortunes."

"Not vital ones," Dick declared. "You've never had a knock-out blow."

"She doesn't know what one is," Standish laughed, but there sounded a ruefulness in his laughter that told of the kind of blow he must

once have suffered to bring that note in his voice. Standish Burton took life lightly, except where Leila was concerned. His manner now indicated, almost mysteriously, that something threatened his harbor of peace, but the regard Leila gave to him proved that the threat of impending danger had not come to her.

"Oh, but I do know," she persisted.

"Vicariously," I suggested. "All artists do."

"No, actually," she said.

"You're wrong," said Standish. "You're the sort of woman whom the world saves from its own cruelties."

There was something so essentially true in his appraisal of his wife that the certainty covered the banality of his statement and kept Dick and myself in agreement with him. Leila Burton, exquisitely remote from all things commonplace, was unquestionably a woman to be protected. Without envy—since my own way had its compensations in full measure—I admitted it.

"I think that you must have forgotten, if you ever knew," she said, "how I struggled here in London for the little recognition I have won."

"Oh, that!" Dick Allport deprecated. "That isn't

what Stan means. Every one in the world worth talking about goes through that sort of struggle. He means the flinging down from a high mountain after you've seen the glories, not of this world, but of another, the casting out from paradise after you've learned what paradise may mean. He spoke with an odd timbre of emotion in his voice, a quality that puzzled me for the moment.

"That's it," said Standish, gratefully. "Those are the knock-out blows."

"Well, then, I don't know them"—Leila admitted her defeat—"and I hope that I shall not."

Softly she began to play the music of an accompaniment. There was a familiar hauntingness in its strains that puzzled me until I associated them with the song that Burton used to whistle so often in the times when Leila was in Paris and he had turned for companionship to Dick and to me.

"I've heard Stan murder that often enough to be able to try it myself," I told her.

"I didn't know he knew it," she said. "I heard it for the first time the other day. A girl—I didn't hear her name—sang it for an encore at the concert of the Musicians' Club. She sang it well,

too. She was a queer girl," Leila laughed, "a little bit of a thing, with all the air of a tragedy queen. And you should have heard how she sang that! You know the words?"—she asked me over her shoulder:

"And because I, too, am a lover,
And my love is far from me,
I hated the two on the sands there,
And the moon, and the sands,
and the sea."

"And the moon, and the sands, and the sea," Dick repeated. He rose, going to the window where Leila had stood, and looking outward. When he faced us again he must have seen the worry in my eyes, for he smiled at me with the old, endearing fondness and touched my hair lightly as he passed.

"What was she like—the girl?" Standish asked, lighting another cigarette.

"Oh, just ordinary and rather pretty. Big brown eyes that seemed to be forever asking a question that no one could answer, and a little pointed chin that she flung up when she sang." Dick Allport looked quickly across at Burton, but Stan gave him no answering glance. He was staring at Leila as she went on: "I don't believe I should have noticed her at all if she hadn't come

to me as I was leaving the hall. 'Are you Mrs. Standish Burton?' she asked me. When I told her that I was, she stared me full in the face, then walked off without another word. I wish that I could describe to you, though, the scorn and contempt that blazed in her eyes. If I had been a singer who had robbed her of her chance at Covent Garden, I could have understood. But I'd never seen her before, and my singing wouldn't rouse the envy of a crow!" She laughed light-heartedly over the recollection, then her face clouded. "Do you know," she mused, "that I thought just now, when the girl was singing on the street, that I should like to know that other girl? There was something about her that I can't forget. She was the sort that tries, and fails, and sinks. Some day, I'm afraid, she'll be singing on the streets, and, if I ever hear her, I shall have a terrible thought that I might have saved her from it, if only I had tried!"

"Better let her sort alone," Burton said, shortly. He struck a match and relit his cigarette with a gesture of savage annoyance. Leila looked at him in amazement, and Dick gave him a glance that seemed to counsel silence. There was a hostility about the mood into which Standish relapsed that seemed to bring in upon us some of the urgent sorrows of the city outside, as if he had drawn aside a curtain to show us a world

alien to the place of beauty and of the making of beauty through which Leila moved. Even she must have felt the import of his mood, for she let her hands fall on the keys while Dick and I stared at each other before the shock of this crackle that seemed to threaten the perfection of their happiness.

From Brompton came the boom of the bell for evensong. Down Piccadilly ran the roar of the night traffic, wending a blithesome way to places of pleasure. It was the hour when London was wont to awaken to the thrill of its greatness, its power, its vastness, its strength, and its glory, and to send down luminous lanes its carnival crowd of men and women. It was the time when weltering misery shrank shrouded into merciful gloom; when the East End lay far from our hearts; when poverty and sin and shame went skulking into byways where we need never follow; when painted women held back in the shadows; when the pall of night rested like a velvet carpet over the spaces of that floor that, by daylight, gave glimpses into loathsome cellars of humanity. It was, as it had been so often of late, an hour of serene beauty, that first hour of darkness in a June night with the season coming to an end, an hour of dusk to be remembered in exile or in age.

There should have come to us then the strains

of an orchestra floating in with the fragrance of gardenias from a vendor's basket, symbols of life's call to us, luring us out beneath stars of joy. But, instead, the bell of Brompton pealed out warningly over our souls, and, when its clanging died, there drifted in the sound of a preaching voice.

Only phrases clattering across the darkness were the words from beyond—resonant through the open windows: "The Cross is always ready, and everywhere awaiteth thee.... Turn thyself upward, or turn thyself downward; turn thyself inward, or turn thyself outward; everywhere thou shalt find the Cross;... if thou fling away one Cross thou wilt find another, and perhaps a heavier."

Like sibylline prophecy the voice of the unseen preacher struck down on us. We moved uneasily, the four of us, as he cried out challenge to the passing world before his voice went down before the surge of a hymn. Then, just as the gay whirl of cars and omnibuses beat once more upon the pavements, and London swung joyously into our hearts again, the bell of the telephone in the hall rang out with a quivering jangle that brought Leila to her feet even as Standish jumped to answer its summons.

She stood beside the piano as he gave answer to the call, watching him as if she expected evil news. Dick, who had moved back into the shadow from a lamp on the table, was staring with that same searching gaze he had bestowed on her when she had lingered beside the window. I was looking at him, when a queer cry from Standish whirled me around.

In the dim light of the hall he was standing with the instrument in his hands, clutching it with the stupidity of a man who has been struck by an unexpected and unexplainable missile. His face had gone to a grayish white, and his hands trembled as he set the receiver on the hook. His eyes were bulging from emotion and he kept wetting his lips as he stood in the doorway.

"What is it?" Leila cried. "What's happened, Stan? Can't you tell me? What is it?"

Not to her, but to Dick Allport, he made answer. "Bessie Lowe is dead!"

I saw Dick Allport's thunderstruck surprise before he arose. I saw his glance go from Standish to Leila with a questioning that overrode all other possible emotion in him. Then I saw him look at Burton as if he doubted his sanity. His voice, level as ever, rang sharply across the other man's distraction.

"When did she die?" he asked him.

"Just now." He ran his hand over his hair, gazing at Dick as if Leila and I were not there. "She—she killed herself down in the Hotel Meynard."

"Why?" Leila's voice, hard with terror, snapped off the word.

"She—she—I don't know." He stared at his wife as if he had just become conscious of her presence. The grayness in his face deepened, and his lips grew livid. Like a man condemned to death, he stared at the world he was losing.

"Who is Bessie Lowe?" Leila questioned. "And why have they called you to tell of her?" Her eyes blazed with a fire that seemed about to singe pretense from his soul.

His hand went to his throat, and I saw Leila whiten. Her hand, resting on the piano, trembled, but her face held immobile, although I knew that all the happiness of the rest of her life hung upon his answer. On what Standish Burton would tell her depended the years to come. In that moment I knew that she loved him even as I loved Dick, even as women have always loved and will always love the men whom fate had marked for their caring; and in a sudden flash of vision I knew, too, that Burton, no matter what

Bessie Lowe or any other girl had ever been to him, worshiped his wife with an intensity of devotion that would make all his days one long reparation for whatever wrong he might have done her. I knew, though, that, if he had done the wrong, she would never again be able to give him the eager love he desired, and I, too, an unwilling spectator, waited on his words for his future, and Leila's; but his voice did not make answer. It was Dick Allport who spoke.

"Bessie Lowe is a girl I used to care for," he said. "She is the girl who sang at the Musicians' Club, the girl who spoke to you. She heard that I was going to be married. She wanted me to come back to her. I refused."

He was standing in the shadow, looking neither at Leila nor at me, but at Standish Burton. Burton turned to him.

"Yes," he muttered thickly, "they told me to tell you. They knew you'd be here."

"I see," said Leila. She looked at Standish and then at Dick Allport, and there came into her eyes a queer, glazed stare that filmed their brightness. "I am sorry that I asked questions, Mr. Allport, about something that was nothing to me. Will you forgive me?"

"There is nothing to be forgiven," he said. He

turned to her and smiled a little. She tried to answer his smile, but a gasp came from her instead.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," she said, "so sorry for her!"

It was Standish's gaze that brought to me sudden realization that I, too, had a part in the drama. Until I found his steady stare on me I had felt apart from the play that he and Dick and Leila were going through, but with his urgent glare I awoke into knowledge that the message he had taken for Dick held for me the same significance that Leila had thought it bore for her. Like a stab from a knife came the thought that this girl—whoever she was—had, in her dying, done what she had not done in life, taken Dick Allport from me. There went over me numbing waves of a great sense of loss, bearing me out on an ocean of oblivion. Against these I fought desperately to hold myself somewhere near the shore of sensibility. As if I were beholding him from a great distance, I could see Dick standing in the lamplight in front of Leila Burton. Understanding of how dear he was to me, of how vitally part of me he had grown in the years through which I had loved him—sometimes lightly, sometimes stormily, but always faithfully—beaconed me inshore; and the plank of faith in him, faith that held in itself something of forgiving charity, floated out to

succor my drowning soul. I moved across the room while Standish Burton kept his unwinking gaze upon me, and Leila never looked up from the piano. I had come beside Dick before he heard me.

He looked at me as if he had only just then remembered that I was there. Into his eyes flashed a look of poignant remorse. He shrank back from me a little as I touched his hand, and I turned to Leila, who had not stirred from the place where she had listened to Standish's cry when he took the fateful message. "We are going," I said, "to do what we can—for her."

She moved then to look at me, and I saw that her eyes held not the compassion I had feared, but a strange speculativeness, as if she questioned what I knew rather than what I felt. Their contemplating quiet somehow disturbed me more than had her husband's flashlight scrutiny, and with eyes suddenly blinded and throat drawn tight with terror I took my way beside Dick Allport out from the soft lights of the Burtons' house into the darkness of the night.

Outside we paused a moment, waiting for a cab. For the first time since he had told Leila of Bessie Lowe, Dick spoke to me. "I think," he said, "that it would be just as well if you didn't

come."

"I must," I told him, "It isn't curiosity. You understand that, don't you? It is simply that this is the time for me to stand by you, if ever I shall do it, Dick."

"I don't deserve it." There was a break in his voice. "But I shall try to, my dear. I can't promise you much, but I can promise you that."

Down the brightness of Piccadilly into the fuller glow of Regent Street we rode without speech. Somewhere below the Circus we turned aside and went through dim cañons of houses that opened a way past the Museum and let us into Bloomsbury. There in a wilderness of cheap hotels and lodging-houses we found the Meynard.

A gas lamp was flaring in the hall when the porter admitted us. At a desk set under the stairway a pale-faced clerk awaited us with staring insolence that shifted to annoyance when Dick asked him if we might go to Bessie Lowe's room. "No," he said, abruptly. "The officers won't let any one in there. They've taken her to the undertaker's."

He gave us the location of the place with a scorn that sent us out in haste. I, at least, felt a sense of relief that I did not have to go up to the

place where this unknown girl had thrown away the greatest gift. As we walked through the poorly lighted streets toward the Tottenham Court Road I felt for the first time a surge of that emotion that Leila Burton had voiced, a pity for the dead girl. And yet, stealing a look at Dick as he walked onward quietly, sadly, but with a dignity that lifted him above the sordidness of the circumstances, I felt that I could not blame him as I should. It was London, I thought, and life that had tightened the rope on the girl.

Strangely I felt a lightness of relief in the realization that the catastrophe having come, was not really as terrible as it had seemed back there in Leila's room. It was an old story that many women had conned, and since, after all, Dick Allport was yet young, and my own, I condoned the sin for the sake of the sinner; and yet, even as I held the thought close to my aching heart, I felt that I was somehow letting slip from my shoulders the cross that had been laid upon them, the cross that I should have borne, the burden of shame and sorrow for the wrong that the man I loved had done to the girl who had died for love of him.

The place where she lay, a gruesome establishment set in behind that highway of reeking cheapness, the Tottenham Court Road, was very quiet when we entered. A black-

garbed man came to meet us from a room in which we saw two tall candles burning. Dick spoke to him sharply, asking if any one had come to look after the dead girl.

"No one with authority," the man whined —"just a girl as lived with her off and on."

He stood, rubbing his hands together as Dick went into hurried details with him, and I went past them into the room where the candles burned. For an instant, as I stood at the door, I had the desire to run away from it all, but I pulled myself together and went over to the place where lay the girl they had called Bessie Lowe.

I had drawn back the sheet and was standing looking down at the white face when I heard a sob in the room. I replaced the covering and turned to see in the corner the shadowy form of a woman whose eyes blazed at me out of the dark. While I hesitated, wondering if this were the girl who had lived occasionally with Bessie Lowe, she came closer, staring at me with scornful hate. Miserably thin, wretchedly nervous as she was, she had donned for the nonce a mantle of dignity that she seemed to be trailing as she approached, glaring at me with furious resentment. "So you thought as how you'd come here," she demanded of me, her

crimsoned face close to my own, "to see what she was like, to see what sort of a girl had him before you took him away from her? Well, I'll tell you something, and you can forget it or remember it, as you like. Bessie Lowe was a good girl until she ran into him, and she'd have stayed good, I tell you, if he'd let her alone. She was a fool, though, and she thought that he'd marry her some day—and all the time he was only waiting until you'd take him! You never think of our kind, do you, when you're living out your lives, wondering if you care enough to marry the men who're worshipping you while they're playing with us? Well, perhaps it won't be anything to you, but, all the same, there's some kind of a God, and if He's just He'll punish you when He punishes Standish Burton!"

"But I—" I gasped. "Did you think that I—?"

"Aren't you his wife?" She came near to me, peering at me in the flickering candle-light. "Aren't you Standish Burton's wife?"

"No," I said.

"Oh, well"—she shrugged—"you're her sort, and it'll come to the same thing in the end."

She slouched back to the corner, all anger gone from her. Outside I heard Dick's voice, low, decisive. Swiftly I followed the girl. "You must

tell me," I pleaded with her, "if she did it because of Standish Burton."

"I thought everybody knew that," she said, "even his wife. What's it to you, if you're not that?"

"Nothing," I replied, but I knew, as I stood where she kept vigil with Bessie Lowe, that I lied. For I saw the truth in a lightning-flash; and I knew, as I had not known when Dick perjured himself in Leila's music-room, that I had come to the place of ultimate understanding, for I realized that not a dead girl, but a living woman, had come between us. Not Bessie Lowe, but Leila Burton, lifted the sword at the gateway of my paradise.

With the poignancy of a poisoned arrow reality came to me. Because Dick had loved Leila Burton he had laid his bond with me on the altar of his chivalry. For her sake he had sacrificed me to the hurt to which Standish would not sacrifice her. And the joke of it—the pity of it was that she hadn't believed them! But because she was Burton's wife, because it was too late for facing of the truth, she had pretended to believe Dick; and she had known, she must have known, that he had lied to her because he loved her.

The humiliation of that knowledge beat down

on me, battering me with such blows as I had not felt in my belief that Dick had not been true to me in his affair with this poor girl. Her rivalry, living or dead, I could have endured and overcome—for no Bessie Lowe could ever have won from Dick, as she could never have given to him, that thing which was mine. But against Leila Burton I could not stand, for she was of my world, of my own people, and the crown a man would give to her was the one he must take from me.

There in that shabby place I buried my idols. Not I, but a power beyond me, held the stone on which was written commandment for me. By the light of the candles above Bessie Lowe I knew that I should not marry Dick Allport.

I found him waiting for me at the doorway. I think that he knew then that the light of our guiding lantern had flickered out, but he said nothing. We crossed the garishly bright road and went in silence through quiet streets. Like children afraid of the dark we went through the strange ways of the city, two lonely stragglers from the procession of love, who, with our own dreams ended, saw clearer the world's wild pursuit of the fleeing vision.

We had wandered back into our own land when, in front of the darkened Oratory and

almost under the shadow of Leila Burton's home, there came to us through the soft darkness the ominous plea that heralds summer into town. Out of the shadows an old woman, bent and shriveled, leaned toward us. "Get yer lavender tonight," she pleaded. "'Tis the first of the crop, m'lidy."

"That means—" Dick Allport began as I paused to buy.

I fastened the sprigs at my belt, then looked up at the distant stars, since I could not yet bear to look at him. "It means the end of the season," I said, "when the lavender comes to London."

THE YEARBOOK OF THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY FOR 1917

ADDRESSES OF

AMERICAN MAGAZINES PUBLISHING SHORT STORIES

Note. *This address list does not aim to be complete, but is based simply on the magazines which I have considered for this volume.*

Ainslee's Magazine, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City.
All-Story Weekly, 8 West 40th Street, New York City.
American Magazine, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Art World, 2 West 45th Street, New York City.
Atlantic Monthly, 3 Park Street, Boston, Mass.
Bellman, 118 South 6th Street, Minneapolis, Minn.
Black Cat, Salem, Mass.
Bookman, 443 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Boston Evening Transcript, 324 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.
Century Magazine, 353 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Collier's Weekly, 416 West 13th Street, New York City.
Cosmopolitan Magazine, 119 West 40th Street, New York City.
Delineator, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New

York City.
Detective Story Magazine, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City.
Everybody's Magazine, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City.
Every Week, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Forum, 286 Fifth Avenue, New York City.
Good Housekeeping, 119 West 40th Street, New York City.
Harper's Bazar, 119 West 40th Street, New York City.
Harper's Magazine, Franklin Square, New York City.
Hearst's Magazine, 119 West 40th Street, New York City.
Illustrated Sunday Magazine, 193 Main Street, Buffalo, N. Y.
Ladies' Home Journal, Independence Square, Philadelphia, Pa.
Live Stories, 35 West 39th Street, New York City.
McCall's Magazine, 236 West 37th Street, New York City.
McClure's Magazine, 251 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Metropolitan Magazine, 432 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Midland, Moorhead, Minn.
Milestones, Akron, Ohio.

Munsey's Magazine, 8 West 40th Street, New York City.
Outlook, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Pagan, 174 Centre Street, New York City.
Parisienne, Printing Crafts Building, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City.
Pearson's Magazine, 34 Union Square, New York City.
Pictorial Review, 216 West 39th Street, New York City.
Queen's Work, 3200 Russell Avenue, St. Louis, Mo.
Reedy's Mirror, Syndicate Trust Building, St. Louis, Mo.
Saturday Evening Post, Independence Square, Philadelphia, Pa.
Scribner's Magazine, 597 Fifth Avenue, New York City.
Short Stories, Garden City, Long Island, N. Y.
Smart Set, Printing Crafts Building, New York City.
Snappy Stories, 35 West 39th Street, New York City.
Southern Woman's Magazine, American Building, Nashville, Tenn.
Stratford Journal, 32 Oliver Street, Boston, Mass.
Sunset Magazine, 460 Fourth Street, San Francisco, Cal.
To-day's Housewife, 461 Fourth Avenue, New

York City.
Top-Notch Magazine, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City.
Touchstone, 118 East 30th Street, New York City.
Woman's Home Companion, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.
Woman's World, 107 So. Clinton Street, Chicago, Ill.
Youth's Companion, St. Paul Street, Boston, Mass.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL ROLL OF HONOR OF AMERICAN SHORT STORIES FOR 1917

Note. *Only stories by American authors are listed. The best sixty-three stories are indicated by an asterisk before the title of the story. The index figures 1, 2, and 3 prefixed to the name of the author indicate that his work has been included in the Rolls of Honor for 1914, 1915, and 1916 respectively.*

"Amid, John." (M. M. Stearns.) Born at West Hartford, Conn., 1884. Lived in New England at Hartford, South Dartmouth, Mass., and Randolph, N. H., until 1903, with the exception of two years abroad. Threatened with blindness when fifteen years old, and gave up school work, but later resumed studies, graduating from Stanford University, 1906. Has been active in newspaper work in Los Angeles. Has since developed water, broken horses, and set out lemon trees. Married. Three children. Good mechanic. Musical. Fond of boating and chess. Authority on turkey raising. At present associate scenario editor of the American Film Company, Santa Barbara, Cal.

Professor, A.

(3) Anderson, Sherwood. Born in Camden, Ohio. Primary school education. Newsboy until he became strong enough to work; then a day laborer. With American army in Cuban campaign. Studied for a few months at college, Springfield, Ohio. Now an advertising writer. Author of "Windy McPherson's Son" and "Marching Men." Has three novels, three books of short stories, and book of songs unpublished. First short story published, "The Rabbit-pen," Harper's Magazine, July, 1914.

Lives in Chicago.

"Mother."
Thinker, The.
Untold Lie, The.

(3) Andrews, Mary Raymond Shipman. Born at Mobile, Ala. While still a baby, moved with her parents to Lexington, Ky., where she lived until about 1880. Married W. S. Andrews, 1884, now Justice Supreme Court of New York. Chief interests: horseback riding, shooting, and fishing. Author of "The Marshal," "The Enchanted Forest," "The Three Things," "The Good Samaritan," "The Perfect Tribute," "Bob and the Guides," "The Militants," "The Eternal Feminine," "The Eternal Masculine," "The Courage of the Commonplace," "The Lifted Bandage," "Counsel Assigned," "Better Treasure," and "Old Glory." First short story, "Crowned with Glory and Honor," Scribner's Magazine, February, 1902. Resides in Syracuse, N. Y.

Blood Brothers.
Return of K. of K., The.

(3) Babcock, Edwina Stanton. Born at Nyack, N. Y. One of eleven children. Academic experience up to age of twenty-three, one year in private school. Attended

extension classes in English, Teachers' College, Columbia University. Author "Greek Wayfarers," a volume of verse. First short story, "The Diary of a Cat," Harper's Magazine, August, 1904. Her deepest enthusiasms are children, the mountains of Greece, the French Theatre, and the Irish imagination. She lives at Nyack, N. Y., and Nantucket, Mass.

*Excursion, The.

Barnard, Floy Tolbert. Born in Hunter, Ohio, 1879. High school education in Perry, Iowa. Married Dr. Leslie O. Barnard, 1902. Went West, 1905. Descendant of Rouget de Lisle, author of the "Marseillaise," through her mother. Her great-grandfather dropped the "de" to please a Quaker girl, who would not otherwise marry him, so opposed was she to the French, and to a name so associated with war. Her first story, "—Nor the Smell of Fire," appeared in Young's Magazine February, 1915. Lives in Seattle, Wash.

Surprise in Perspective, A.

Beer, Thomas. Born in 1889, Council Bluffs, Iowa. Educated at MacKenzie School, Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., Yale College (1911), Columbia Law School. Now in National army. First

story, "The Brothers," Century, February, 1917. Chief interest: the theatre. Lives at Yonkers, N. Y.

*Brothers, The.
*Onnie.

(3) Bottome, Phyllis. Born of American parents. Now resident in England. Author of "The Derelict," "The Second Fiddle," and "The Dark Tower."

*Ironstone.

"Breck, John." (Elizabeth C. A. Smith.) Lives in Grosse Isle, Mich.

*From Hungary.

(3) Brooks, Alden. Author of "The Fighting Men." Lives in Paris. Now in the American army in France.

Three Slavs, The.

(23) Brown, Alice. Born at Hampton Falls, N. H., 1857. Graduated from Robinson Seminary, Exeter, N. H., 1876. Author "Fools of Nature," "Meadow-Grass," "The Road to Castaly," "The Day of His Youth," "Tiverton Tales," "King's End," "Margaret Warrener," "The Mannerings," "High Noon," "Paradise,"

"The County Road," "The Court of Love," "Rose MacLeod," "The Story of Thyrza," "Country Neighbors," "John Winterbourne's Family," "The One-Footed Fairy," "The Secret of the Clan," "Vanishing Points," "Robin Hood's Barn," "My Love and I," "Children of Earth," "The Prisoner," "Bromley Neighbourhood," and other books. Lives in Boston.

*Flying Teuton, The.
Nemesis.

(1) Burt, Maxwell Struthers. Born in Philadelphia, 1882. Educated at Princeton, 1904, and at Merton College, Oxford. Author of "In the High Hills." Instructor of English at Princeton for two years. Then went West, settling in Jackson Hole, Wyo., where he is senior partner of a cattle ranch. He is now in the Signal Corps, Aviation Section, U. S. Army. First story, "The Water-Hole," Scribner's Magazine, July, 1915 (reprinted in "The Best Short Stories of 1915").

*Closed Doors.
*Cup of Tea, A.
Glory of the Wild Green Earth, The.
John O'May.
Le Panache.

(13) Buzzell, Francis. Born in Romeo, Mich., 1882. His father was editor of the Romeo Hydrant, which Mr. Buzzell mentions in his Almont stories as the "Almont Hydrant." Moved when he was seven years old to Port Huron, Mich. Backward student. Educated in private school, and one year in Port Huron High School and Business College. Worked in railroad yards, and at age of nineteen as reporter on Port Huron Herald. At twenty-one became Chicago newspaper reporter, and later, associate editor, Popular Mechanics. In 1912 began literary career by publishing two poems in Poetry. Went to New York determined to become a great poet, and stayed there nine months. Married Miriam Kiper and returned to Chicago. Now a chief petty officer, U. S. N., and associate editor of Great Lakes Recruit. Lives in Lake Bluff, Ill.

*Lonely Places.
*Long Vacation, The.

(3) Campbell, Fleta. (*See Roll of Honor for 1916 under* Springer, Fleta Campbell.) Born in Newton, Kan., 1886, moved to Oklahoma, 1889. Educated in common schools of the frontier, no high school, and a year and a half preparatory school, University of Oklahoma. Lived in Texas and California.

First story, "Solitude," Harper's Magazine, March, 1912. Lives in New York City.

*Mistress, The.

Cederschiöld, Gunnar.

*Foundling, The.

Chamberlain, George Agnew. Born of American parents, São Paulo, Brazil, 1879. Educated Lawrenceville School, N. J., and Princeton. Unmarried. In consular service since 1904. Now American Consul at Lourenço Marquez, Portuguese East Africa.

Man Who Went Back, The.

Cleghorn, Sarah Norcliffe. Born at Norfolk, Va., 1876. Educated at Burr and Burton Seminary, Manchester, Vt., an old country co-educational school; and one year at Radcliffe. Writer and tutor by profession. Chief interests are anti-vivisection, socialism, and above all, pacifism of the "extreme" kind. She likes best of everything in the world to go on a picnic with plenty of children. First short story, "The Mellen Idolatry," Delineator, about 1900. Author of "A Turnpike Lady," "The Spinster," "Fellow Captains" (with Dorothy Canfield), and "Portraits and Protests." Lives in Manchester, Vt.

"Mr. Charles Raleigh Rawdon, Ma'am."

(23) Cobb, Irvin Shrewsbury. Born at Paducah, Ky., 1876. Education limited to attendance of public and private schools up to age of sixteen. Reporter and cartoonist for several years; magazine contributor since 1910. Chief interests, outdoor life and travel. First short story, "The Escape of Mr. Trimm," Saturday Evening Post, November, 1910. Author of "Back Home," "Cobb's Anatomy," "The Escape of Mr. Trimm," "Cobb's Bill of Fare," "Roughing It de Luxe," "Europe Revised," "Paths of Glory," "Speaking of Operations," "Local Color," "Fibble, D. D.," "Old Judge Priest," "Speaking of Prussians," "Those Times and These," and "'Twixt the Bluff and the Sound." Lives within commuting distance of New York City.

*Boys Will Be Boys.
Cinnamon Seed and Sandy Bottom.
*Family Tree, The.
*Quality Folks.

(3) Connolly, James Brendan. Born at South Boston, Mass. Education, parochial and public schools of Boston and a few months in Harvard. Married Elizabeth F. Hurley, 1904. Clerk, inspector, and surveyor with U. S. Engineering Corps, Savannah, 1892-95. Won

first Olympic championship of modern times at Athens, 1896. Served in Cuban campaign and in U. S. Navy, 1907-08. Progressive candidate for Congress, 1912. Member National Institute of Arts and Letters. Author "Jeb Hutton," "Out of Gloucester," "The Seiners," "The Deep Sea's Toll," "The Crested Seas," "An Olympic Victor," "Open Water," "Wide Courses," "Sonnie Boy's People," "The Trawler," "Head Winds," and "Running Free." Lives in Boston.

Breath o' Dawn.

(2) Cowdery, Alice. Born in San Francisco. Graduate of Leland Stanford University. First short story, "Gallant Age," Harper's Magazine, September, 1914. Lives in California.

Robert.

Crabbe, Bertha Helen. Born in 1887 in Coxsackie, N. Y. Her father moved his family to Rockaway Beach, L. I., in 1888, when it was little more than an isolated fishing-station. It was her good fortune to live among the novel conditions attending the rapid growth of this pioneer village, and to be surrounded by those interesting and widely varying types of people who are drawn to a city-in-the-making. Educated in public schools of the Rockaways,

and at a boarding school in Tarrytown, N. Y. Student of painting. First story published in 1913 in a magazine of the Munsey group. Lives in Far Rockaway.

Once in a Lifetime.

Dobie, Charles Caldwell. Born in San Francisco, 1881. Education; grammar school and seventeen years' supplementary schooling in University of Hard Knocks. In fire insurance business for nearly twenty years. First story, "An Invasion," San Francisco Argonaut, Oct. 8, 1910. Gave up business, 1916, to devote himself to literature. Lives in San Francisco.

Empty Pistol, The.
Gifts, The.
*Laughter.
*Our Dog.

Dodge, Mabel.

Farmhands.

(23) Duncan, Norman. Born at Brantford, Ont., 1871. Educated University of Toronto. On staff New York Evening Post, 1897-01; professor rhetoric, Washington and Jefferson College, 1902-06; adjunct professor English literature, University Of Kansas, 1908-10. Travelled widely in Newfoundland, Labrador,

Asia, and Australasia. Died 1916. Author: "The Soul of the Street," "The Way of the Sea," "Dr. Luke of the Labrador," "Dr. Grenfell's Parish," "The Mother," "The Adventures of Billy Topsail," "The Cruise of the Shining Light," "Every Man for Himself," "Going Down from Jerusalem," "The Suitable Child," "Higgins," "Billy Topsail & Company," "The Measure of a Man," "The Best of a Bad Job," "A God in Israel," "The Bird-Store Man," "Australian Byways," and "Billy Topsail, M.D."

*Little Nipper of Hide-an'-Seek Harbor, A.

(13) Dwight, H. G. Born in Constantinople, 1875. Educated at St. Johnsbury Academy, St. Johnsbury, Vt., and Amherst College. Chief interests: gardening and sailing. He remembers neither the title nor the date of his first published story. This because he was his own first editor and publisher. "First real story," "The Bathers," Scribner's Magazine, December, 1903. Author of "Constantinople," "Stamboul Nights," and "Persian Miniatures." Lives in Roselle, N. J. Is now an army field clerk in France.

*Emperor of Elam, The.

Ferber, Edna. Born in Kalamazoo, Mich.,

1887. Educated in public and high schools, Appleton, Wis. Began as reporter on Appleton Daily Crescent at seventeen. Employed on Milwaukee Journal and Chicago Tribune; contributor to magazines since 1910. First short story, "The Homely Heroine," Everybody's Magazine, November, 1910. Jewish religion. Author of "Dawn O'Hara," "Buttered Side Down," "Roast Beef Medium," "Personality Plus," "Emma McChesney & Co.," and "Fanny Herself." Co-author with George V. Hobart of "Our Mrs. McChesney." Lives in New York City.

*Gay Old Dog, The.

Folsom, Elizabeth Irons. Born at Peoria, Ill., 1876. Grandfather and father were both writers. For a number of years member of editorial staff of The Pantagraph at Bloomington, Ill., doing the court work there and reading law at the same time. Left newspaper in 1916 to devote herself to fiction. First short story, "The Scheming of Letitia," Munsey's Magazine, April, 1914. Lives in New York City.

Kamerad.

Frank, Waldo. Born in 1800, Long Branch, N. J. Educated in New York public schools

and at Yale. (B.A., M.A., and Honorary Fellowship.) While still at college, wrote regular signed column of dramatic criticism in New Haven Journal-Courier. Two years' newspaper work in New York. Went to Europe, devoting himself to study of French and German theater. One of the founders and associate editor of the Seven Arts Magazine. Chief interests: fiction, drama, criticism of American literary standards, and strengthening of relations between America and contemporary European (non-English) cultures. First story, "The Fruit of Misadventure," Smart Set, July, 1915. Author of "The Unwelcome Man." Lives in New York City.

*Bread-Crumbs.
Candles of Romance, The.
Rudd.

(123) Freeman, Mary E. Wilkins. Born at Randolph, Mass., 1862. Educated at Randolph and Mt. Holyoke. Married Dr. Charles M. Freeman, 1902. Author of "A Humble Romance," "A New England Nun," "Young Lucretia," "Jane Field," "Giles Corey," "Pembroke," "Madelon," "Jerome," "Silence," "Evelina's Garden," "The Love of Parson Lord," "The Heart's Highway," "The Portion of Labor," "Understudies," "Six Trees," "The

Wind In the Rose Bush," "The Givers," "Doc Gordon," "By the Light of the Soul," "Shoulders of Atlas," "The Winning Lady," "Green Door," "Butterfly House," "The Yates Pride," "Copy-Cat," and other books. Lives in Metuchen, N. J.

Boomerang, The.
Cloak Also, The.
Ring with the Green Stone, The.

Geer, Cornelia Throop, is an instructor in Bryn Mawr College.

*Pearls Before Swine.

(123) Gerould, Katharine Fullerton. Born in Brockton, Mass., 1879. Graduate of Radcliffe College. Married, 1910. Reader in English, Bryn Mawr, 1901-10. Author: "Vain Oblations," "The Great Tradition," "Hawaii," and "A Change of Air." Lives in New Jersey.

*East of Eden.
*Hand of Jim Fane, The.
*Knight's Move, The.
*Wax Doll, The.
*What They Seem.

Glasgow, Ellen. Born in Richmond, Va., 1874. Educated at home, but this has been supplemented by a wide range of reading, and

travel both abroad and in this country. Her first short story was "A Point in Morals," Harper's Magazine, about 1897. Author of "The Descendant," "Some Phases of an Inferior Planet," "The Voice of the People," "The Freeman and Other Poems," "The Battleground," "The Deliverance," "The Wheel of Life," "The Ancient Law," "The Romance of a Plain Man," "The Miller of Old Church," "Virginia," "Life and Gabriella." She lives in Richmond, Va.

*Dare's Gift.

Glaspell, Susan. (Mrs. George Cram Cook.) Born in Davenport, Iowa, 1882. Graduate Drake University. Reporter in Des Moines for several years. The idea for "A Jury of Her Peers" came from a murder trial which she reported. Chief interest: the little theater. Associated with the Provincetown Players. Married George Cram Cook, 1913. First story, "In the Face of His Constituents," Harper's Magazine, October 1903. Author of "The Glory of the Conquered," "The Visioning," "Lifted Masks," "Fidelity," several one-act plays: "Trifles," "Suppressed Desires" (in collaboration with George Cram Cook), "The People," and "Close the Book." Lives in Provincetown and New York City.

*Hearing Ear, The.
*Jury of Her Peers, A.
Matter of Gesture, A.

(13) Gordon, Armistead Churchill. Born in Albemarle County, Va., 1855. Educated at classical academy in Warrenton, N. C., and Charlottesville, Va., and at University of Virginia. Lawyer in Staunton, Va., since 1879. First story, "Envion," South Atlantic Magazine, July, 1880. Of this story his friend, Thomas Nelson Page, wrote in a preface to a volume of Mr. Gordon's stories, printed in 1899, but never published, entitled "Envion and Other Tales of Old and New Virginia": "To one of these sketches the writer is personally indebted for the idea of a tragic love affair during the war, an idea which he employed in his story 'Marse Chan,' and also for the method which he adopted of telling the story through the medium of a faithful servant." Author of "Befo' de War: Echoes in Negro Dialect" (with Thomas Nelson Page), "Congressional Currency," "For Truth and Freedom: Poems of Commemoration," "The Gay Gordons," "The Gift of the Morning Star," "The Ivory Gate," "Robin Aroon: A Comedy of Manners," "William Fitzhugh Gordon, a Virginian of the Old School," "J. L. M. Curry" (with E. A. Alderman), "Maje, a

Love Story," and "Ommirandy." Lives in Staunton, Va.

*His Father's Flag.

(3) Greene, Frederick Stuart. Born in Rappahannock County, Va., 1870. Graduated from Virginia Military Institute, 1890. Civil engineer until May 14, 1917. Now commanding officer of Company "B," 302d Engineers, National Army, Camp Upton, N. Y. His chief interests are to see this war to a successful conclusion, and to devote himself thereafter to writing. First story, "Stictuit," Saturday Evening Post, April 5, 1913. Editor of "The Grim 13." Lives on Long Island, N. Y.

*Bunker Mouse, The.
*"Molly McGuire, Fourteen."

(3) Hallet, Richard Matthews. Born in Yarmouthport, Mass. Author of "The Lady Aft" and "Trial By Fire."

*Rainbow Pete.

Harris, Corra May. Born at Farm Hill, Ga. 1869. Married Rev. Lundy Howard Harris, 1887. Methodist. Began writing for the Independent, 1899. Author: "The Jessica Letters" (with Paul Elmer More), "A Circuit Rider's Wife," "Eve's Second Husband," "The

Recording Angel," "In Search of a Husband," and "Co-Citizens." Lives in Rydal, Ga.

Other Soldiers in France, The.

Hartman, Lee Foster. Born in Fort Wayne, Ind., 1879. Graduate of Wesleyan University. Engaged in newspaper and magazine work in New York City since 1901. Now assistant editor of Harper's Magazine. First story, "My Lady's Bracelet," Munsey's Magazine, October, 1904. Author of "The White Sapphire." Lives in New York City.

*Frazee.

Hemenway, Hetty Lawrence. (Mrs. Auguste Richard.) Born in Boston, 1890. Educated in private schools in her home city. She has always been fond of outdoor life and devoted to animals, especially dogs and horses. Married Lieut. Auguste Richard, 1917. First story, "Four Days," Atlantic Monthly, May, 1917, since reprinted in book form.

*Four Days.

Hunt, Edward Eyre. Graduate of Harvard. Associated with American Relief Commission in Belgium. Author of "War-Bread."

Ghosts.

Saint Dympna's Miracle.

(23) Hurst, Fannie. Born in Hamilton, Ohio, 1889, but spent the first nineteen years of her life in St. Louis, Mo. An only child, and consequently forced into much solitude and a precocious amount of reading. Educated at home and in public schools of St. Louis. Graduate of Washington University. Two years' graduate work at Columbia. After vacillating between writing and the stage, the pen finally conquered, and between 1909 and 1912 just thirty-three manuscripts were submitted to and rejected by one publication alone,—a publication which later came to feature her work. First short story published in Reedy's Mirror, 1909; second story in Smith's Magazine, 1912. Lives in New York City. Active in women's suffrage, tennis and single tax; but her chief interest is her writing, her work-day being six hours long. Has made personal studies of the life she interprets, having at various times apprenticed herself as waitress, saleswoman, and factory-girl. Author of "Just Around the Corner," "Every Soul Hath Its Song," "Gaslight Sonatas."

*Get Ready the Wreaths.
Solitary Reaper.

Hutchison, Percy Adams. Graduate of, and

for some years instructor at, Harvard University.

*Journey's End.

(3) Johnson, Fanny Kemble. (Mrs. Vincent Costello.) Born in Rockbridge County, Va., and educated in private schools. Moved to Charleston, W. Va., 1897. Married Vincent Costello, 1899. Has lived in Wheeling, W. Va., since 1907. Her chief interests are her four children, her writing, and contemporary history as it is made from day to day. "The Pathway Round," Atlantic Monthly, August, 1900, marked her entrance into the professional magazines. Author of "The Beloved Son."

*Strange-Looking Man, The.

Jones, E. Clement. Born in Boston, 1890. First short story in verse, "Country Breath and the Ungoverned Brother," London Nation, 1911. Contributor to The New Republic and The Seven Arts. Lives in Concord, Mass.

*Sea-Turn, The.

Kauffman, Reginald Wright. Born at Columbia, Pa., 1877. Educated at St. Paul's School, Concord, and at Harvard. Married, 1909. In newspaper work since 1897.

Associate editor Saturday Evening Post, 1904-07; later associate editor Delineator, and managing editor Hampton's Magazine. Author of "Jarvis of Harvard," "The Things That Are Cæsar's," "The Chasm," "Miss Frances Baird, Detective," "The Bachelor's Guide to Matrimony," "What is Socialism?", "My Heart and Stephanie," "The House of Bondage," "The Girl That Goes Wrong," "The Way of Peace," "The Sentence of Silence," "The Latter Day Saints" (with Ruth Kauffman), "Running Sands," "The Spider's Web," "Little Old Belgium," "In a Moment of Time," "Jim," and "The Silver Spoon." Lives in Columbia, Pa.

Lonely House, The.

Kline, Burton. Born at Williamsport, Pa., 1877. Educated at Dickinson Seminary, Williamsport, and at Harvard. Married, 1909. Newspaper man. Magazine editor Boston Transcript. Republican. Lutheran. Author of "Struck by Lightning" and "The End of the Flight." Lives in Arlington, Mass.

*Caller in the Night, The.

Krysto, Christina. Born in Batum, Russia, 1887. Her early education was thoroughly Russian. She was taught at home and given unrestricted freedom in a really fine library.

Emigrated to California when nine years old. Studied at University of California. Now engaged in ranch work and the endeavor to arrange her life so that there will be room in it for writing. "Babanchik" is her first story. She lives in Alta Loma, Cal.

Babanchik.

Lee, Jennette. Born at Bristol, Conn., 1860. Attended Bristol schools. Began teaching, 1876. Graduated from Smith College, 1886. First story, "Bufiddle," published in the Independent, 1886. Taught English at Vassar, Western Reserve College for Women, and Smith College. Her special interest is relating education to life. Resigned professorship in English at Smith College, 1913. Married Gerald Stanley Lee, 1896. Author of "Kate Wetherell," "A Pillar of Salt," "The Son of a Fiddler," "Uncle William," "The Ibsen Secret," "Simeon Tetlow's Shadow," "Happy Island," "Mr. Achilles," "The Taste of Apples," "The Woman in the Alcove," "Aunt Jane," "The Symphony Play," "Unfinished Portraits," and "The Green Jacket." She lives in Northampton, Mass.

John Fairchild's Mirror.

Lewis, Addison. Born in Minneapolis, 1889.

Educated in public schools. Graduated from University of Minnesota in 1912. Regards as a liberal share of his education a very brief circus career, and five years spent as assistant managing editor of The Bellman and the Northwestern Miller. His professions are journalism and advertising; is bothered mostly with the necessity of getting the nebulous idea for a story on paper, freshwater sailing, and the problem of improving his game of golf. First story, "The End of the Lane," Reedy's Mirror, Feb. 2, 1917. He lives in Minneapolis.

*When Did You Write Your Mother Last?

London, Jack. Born at San Francisco, 1876. Educated at University of California. Married Bessie Maddern, 1900; Charmian Kittredge, 1905. Went to the Klondike instead of graduating from college; went to sea before the mast; traveled as a tramp through the United States and Canada; war correspondent during the Russo-Japanese War; and navigated his yacht "Snark" in the South Seas, 1907-09. Socialist. Author of "The Son of the Wolf," "The God of His Fathers," "A Daughter of the Snows," "The Children of the Frost," "The Cruise of the Dazzler," "The People of the Abyss," "Kempton-Wace Letters," "The Call of the Wild," "The Faith of Men," "The Sea Wolf," "The Game," "War of the Classes,"

"Tales of the Fish Patrol," "Moon-Face," "Scorn of Women," "White Fang," "Before Adam," "Love of Life," "The Iron Heel," "The Road," "Martin Eden," "Lost Face," "Revolution," "Burning Daylight," "Theft," "When God Laughs," "Adventure," "The Cruise of the Snark," "South Sea Tales," "Smoke Bellew Tales," "The House of Pride," "A Son of the Sun," "The Night-Born," "The Abysmal Brute," "John Barleycorn," "The Valley of the Moon," "The Strength of the Strong," "The Mutiny of the Elsinore," "The Scarlet Plague," "The Star Rover," "The Little Lady of the Big House," "Jerry," and "Michael, the Brother of Jerry." He died in 1916.

Like Argus of the Ancient Time.

(3) Marshall, Edison. Born in Rensselaer, Ind. Moved to Medford, Ore., in 1907. Educated at University of Oregon. In newspaper work till 1916. Now writing for the magazines. Unmarried. Chief interests: hunting and fishing. His first story was, "The Sacred Fire," Argosy, April, 1915. Age, twenty-four. Principal ambition is to get to France. Lives in Medford, Ore.

Man that Was in Him, The.

Masters, Edgar Lee. Born at Garnett, Kan., 1868. Educated at high school and Knox College. Studied law in his father's office. Admitted to the bar, 1891. Married, 1898. Democrat. Author of "A Book of Verses," "Maximilian," "The New Star Chamber and Other Essays," "Blood of the Prophets," "Althea," "The Trifler," "Spoon River Anthology," "Songs and Satires," and "The Great Valley." His first story was published in the Peoria Call in 1886 or 1887, and in 1889 he published several short stories in the Waverly Magazine. Lives in Chicago.

Boyhood Friends.
*Widow La Rue.

Morton, Johnson.

*Understudy, The.

Nafe, Gertrude. Born in Grand Island, Neb., 1883. Graduate of University of Colorado. Teaches English in East Denver High School. Her chief interest in life is revolution. Her first contribution was "The Woman Who Stood in the Market Place," published in Mother Earth in February, 1914. Lives in Denver, Colo.

One Hundred Dollars.

Nicholson, Meredith. Born at

Crawfordsville, Ind., 1866. Educated in Indianapolis public schools. Married, 1896. Member of National Institute of Arts and Letters. Author of "Short Flights," "The Hoosiers," "The Main Chance," "Zelda Dameron," "The House of a Thousand Candles," "Poems," "The Port of Missing Men," "Rosalind at Red Gate," "The Little Brown Jug at Kildare," "The Lords of High Decision," "The Siege of the Seven Suitors," "The Hoosier Chronicle," "The Provincial American," "Otherwise Phyllis," "The Poet," "The Proof of the Pudding," "The Madness of May," and "A Reversible Santa Claus."

"My first literary tinklings were in verse; you will note two volumes of poems in my list. Finding at fifteen that the schools within my reach did not meet my requirements, I went to work and began educating myself along lines of least resistance. My occupations were various: worked in printing offices, learned shorthand, became stenographer in a law office; was in newspaper work for twelve years; at thirty was auditor and treasurer of a coal-mining corporation in Colorado; after three years of business became a writer of books. When I was eighteen I wrote three short stories which were published, and after that wrote no fiction till I was thirty-two. I

haven't thought of it before, but it was odd that I wrote no short stories and had no interest in that form until about five years ago. Since then I have done a number every year. Without being a politician, I have dabbled somewhat in political matters, making speeches at times, and abusing my fellow partisans (I am a Democrat) when they needed chastisement. I have been defeated for nominations and have declined nominations, and I once refused a foreign appointment of considerable dignity that was very kindly offered me by a President. When it comes to 'interests' I have, I suppose, a journalistic mind. Anything that is of contemporaneous human interest interests me —even free verse, which I despise, but read." Mr. Nicholson lives in Indianapolis.

*Heart of Life, The.

Norton, Roy. Born at Kewanee, Ill., 1869. High school education. Studied law, mining, and languages. Married, 1894. Practiced law at Ogden, 1892. In newspaper work for some years. Democrat. Roman Catholic. Mason. Author of "Guilty" (with William Hallowell), "The Vanishing Fleets," "The Toll of the Sea," "Mary Jane's Pa," "The Garden of Fate," "The Plunderer," "Captains Three," "The Mediator," "The Moccasins of Gold," "The Boomers," and "The Man of Peace." Lives in New Jersey.

Aunt Seliny.

(2) O'Brien, Seumas. Born at Glenbrook, County Cork, Ireland, April 26, 1880,—three days and three hundred and sixteen years (?) after Mr. William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon. Education: none or very little, and less German than French. Profession: pessimist. Chief interests: Russian Jewesses and American dollars. In more sober truth, education: Presentation Brothers Schools, Cork School of Art, Cork School of Music, Metropolitan School of Art, Dublin, and Royal College of Art, London. Profession: sculptor and dramatist. Chief interests: literature, art, and music. First magazine to publish his work, The Tatler. Author of "The Whale and the Grasshopper," "Duty, and Other Irish Comedies," and "The Knowledgeable Man." Lives in Brooklyn, N. Y.

*Murder?

O'Higgins, Harvey J. Born in London, Ont., 1876. Educated at public schools and Toronto University. In newspaper work from 1897 to 1902. First short story, "Not for Publication," in Youth's Companion, March, 1902. Chief interests: those of a publicist, aiding social and political reforms. Author of "The Smoke Eaters," "Don-a-Dreams," "A Grand Army

Man," "Old Clinkers," "The Beast and the Jungle" (with Judge Ben B. Lindsey), "Under the Prophet in Utah" (with Frank J. Cannon), "The Argyle Case" (with Harriet Ford), "The Dummy," "Polygamy," "Silent Sam" (with Harriet Ford), and "Adventures of Detective Barney." He lives in New Jersey.

From the Life: Thomas Wales Warren.

(3) O'Sullivan, Vincent. Born in New York, 1872. Graduate of Oxford. Author of "The Good Girl," "Sentiment," "Of Human Affairs," and many other books. Lives in Brooklyn, N. Y.

*Interval, The.

Pangborn, Georgia Wood. Born at Malone, N. Y., 1872. Educated at Franklin Academy, Malone; Packer Institute, Brooklyn, and Smith College. Married, 1894. First short story, "The Grek Collie," Scribner's Magazine, July, 1903. Author of "Roman Biznet" and "Interventions." Lives in New York City.

*Bixby's Bridge.

Perry, Lawrence. Born in Newark, N. J., 1875. Educated in public and private schools. He had a choice between college and the New York Sun (Charles A. Dana, then editor) as a

medium of higher education. Has always regarded his decision in favor of the Sun as wise, considering an ambition to learn life and then write about it. On staff of Sun and Evening Sun, 1897-1905. Went to Evening Post, 1906; there organized and edited "Yachting" until 1909. Has since concentrated on inter-collegiate sport and fiction. His first story, "Joe Lewis," in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, September, 1902. Author of "Dan Merrithew," "Prince or Chauffeur," "Holton," and "The Fullback." Lives in New York City.

*"Certain Rich Man, A.—"

Portor, Laura Spencer.

Boy's Mother, The.
Idealist, The.

Pottle, Emery. Is a poet and short-story writer of distinction, now with the Aviation Corps in France, specializing in Observation Balloon work.

Breach in the Wall, The.
*Portrait, The.

Prouty, Olive Higgins. Born in Worcester, Mass., 1882. Educated in public schools. Graduated from Smith College, 1904. Post-graduate work at Simmons College and

Radcliffe. Chief interests: home and her children's development and education. Married in 1907. First story, "When Elise Came," American Magazine, April, 1909. Author of "Bobbie, General Manager," and "The Fifth Wheel." Lives in Brookline, Mass.

New England War Bride, A.

Pulver, Mary Brecht. Born in Mount Joy, Pa., 1883. Educated in public schools, normal school, and Philadelphia School of Applied Art. Married, 1906. Chief interests: music, painting, and literature. Author of "The Spring Lady." Lives in Binghamton, N. Y.

*Path of Glory, The.

Raisin, Ovro'om, is a distinguished Yiddish writer of fiction now living in New York City.

Ascetic, The.

Richardson, Norval. Born at Vicksburg, Miss., 1877. Educated at Lawrenceville School, N. J., and Southwestern Presbyterian University. Secretary and treasurer Lee Richardson & Company. In diplomatic service since 1909 at Havana, Copenhagen, and Rome. Author of "The Heart of Hope," "The Lead of Honour," "George Thorne," and "The Honey Pot." Is now connected with the

American Embassy, Rome, Italy.

*Miss Fothergill.

(23) Rosenblatt, Benjamin. Born on New Year's Eve, 1880, in a tiny Russian village named Resoska. When he was ten, his parents brought him to New York, where he was set to work in a shop at once. Later he sold newspapers. At the age of seventeen his first story in Yiddish, entitled "She Laughed," appeared in Vörwarts. At that time he studied English diligently, and prepared himself for college. For a number of years he was a frequent contributor to the Jewish press. His first English story, entitled "Free," appeared in The Outlook, July 4, 1903. After leaving the normal training school he taught English to foreigners, opening a preparatory school. His story "Zelig," in my opinion, was the best American short story in 1915. He is now attending New York University, and is an insurance agent. He lives in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Madonna, The.

Schneider, Herman. Born at Summit Hill, Pa., 1872. Graduated from Lehigh University in science, 1894. Now Dean of the College of Engineering, University of Cincinnati. Profession: civil engineer. Chief interests:

advancing technical education, promoting scientific research, and planning methods to give free outlook to the creative genius of the country in science, art, music, literature, and every other phase of human endeavor. Author of "Education for Industrial Workers." First short story, "Arthur McQuaid, American," Outlook, May 23, 1917. At present, living in Washington, working in the Ordnance Department on industrial service problems.

Shaft of Light, A.

Shepherd, William Gunn, is a war correspondent in Europe, who was with Richard Harding Davis at Salonika when the incident occurred which suggested to Davis the idea for his short story, "The Deserter."

*Scar that Tripled, The.

Showerman, Grant. Born in Brookfield, Wis., 1870, of Dutch and English stock, his grandfather, Luther Parker, having in 1836 driven the entire distance from Indian Stream, N. H., to Wisconsin, where he was the first permanent settler in his township. Educated in Brookfield district school, Carroll College, and University of Wisconsin. Fellow in the American School of Classical Studies at Rome, 1898-1900. Married, 1900. Now

professor of classics, University of Wisconsin. Interested chiefly in literature and finds his diversion on the Four Lakes. First short story, "Italia Liberata," Scribner's Magazine, January, 1908. Author of "With the Professor," a translation of Ovid's "Heroides" and "Amores," "The Indian Stream Republic and Luther Parker," "A Country Chronicle," and "A Country Child." Lives in Madison, Wis.

*Country Christmas, A.

(123) Singmaster, Elsie. (Mrs. Harold Lewars.) Born at Schuylkill Haven, Pa., 1879. Graduate of Radcliffe College. Her first story, "The Lése Majesté of Hans Heckendorn," Scribner's Magazine, November, 1905. Author of "When Sarah Saved the Day," "When Sarah Went to School," "Gettysburg," "Katy Gaumer," "Emmeline," "The Long Journey," "Martin Luther: the Story of His Life," and "History of Lutheran Missions." Lives in Gettysburg, Pa.

*Christmas Angel, The.
*Flag of Eliphalet, The.

Smith, Elizabeth C. A. (*See* "Breck, John.")

(23) Smith, Gordon Arthur, was born in

Rochester, N. Y., 1886. Educated at Harvard. Studied architecture in Paris for four years. Now a writer by profession. Chief interests: aviation, architecture, and music. First published story, "The Bottom of the Sea," in Black Cat at age of sixteen. Author of "Mascarose" and "The Crown of Life." Now an ensign in the U. S. Navy Flying Forces, "somewhere in France." Home: Rochester, N. Y.

*End of the Road, The.
Friend of the People, A.

(23) Sneddon, Robert W. Born in 1880 at Beith, Ayrshire, Scotland, the son of a doctor. Studied arts and law at Glasgow University, and served law apprenticeship at Glasgow and Edinburgh. Lived in London and Paris, and since 1909 has lived in New York. First short story, "Little Golden Shoes," The Forum, August, 1912. Author of "The Might-Have-Beens." Fond of outdoors and fireside. Chief interest: reaching the heart of the public. Chief sport: hunting for a publisher for three volumes of short stories and for producers for his plays.

"Mirror! Mirror! Tell Me True!"

"Star, Mark," is the pseudonym of a lady who

prefers to remain unknown.

Garden of Sleep, The.

(23) Steele, Wilbur Daniel. Born in Greensboro, N. C., 1886. Educated at University of Denver. Studied art in Denver, Boston, and Paris. First short story, "On the Ebb Tide," Success, 1910. Author of "Storm." Lives in Provincetown, Mass.

*Ching, Ching, Chinaman.
Devil of a Fellow, A.
Free.
*Ked's Hand.
Point of Honor, A.
*White Hands.
*The Woman at Seven Brothers.

Steffens, (Joseph) Lincoln. Born at San Francisco, 1866. Educated at University of California, Berlin, Heidelberg, Leipzig, Paris, and Sorbonne. Married, 1891. In newspaper work, 1892-1902. Since then managing and associate editor at different times of McClure's Magazine, American Magazine, and Everybody's Magazine. Author of "The Shame of the Cities," "The Struggle for Self Government," "Upbuilders," and "The Least of These." He lives in New York City.

Bunk.

Great Lost Moment, The.

Sullivan, Alan, is a Canadian author.

Only Time He Smiled, The.

(123) Synon, Mary. Born in Chicago, 1881. Educated at St. Jarlath's School, West Division High School, and University of Chicago. In newspaper work since 1900. Chosen by Gaelic League in 1912 to write for American newspapers a series of articles on the Irish situation. First story, "The Boy Who Went Back to the Bush," Scribner's Magazine, November, 1909. For three years secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Catholic Church Extension Society; now executive secretary of the Woman's Liberty Loan Committee. Author of "The Fleet Goes By." Lives in Wilmette, Ill.

Clay-Shattered Doors.
End of the Underground, The.
*None So Blind.

Taber, Elizabeth Stead.

*Scar, The.

(3) Vorse, Mary Heaton. (Mary Heaton Vorse O'Brien.) Born in New York. Never went properly to school because her family traveled widely, but studied art in Paris at

several academies. She is most interested in radical thought, especially as expressed in the radical wing of the labor movement. Married Albert W. Vorse, 1898; Joseph O'Brien, 1912. First story, "The Boy Who Didn't Catch Things," Everybody's Magazine, June, 1904. Author of "The Breaking in of a Yachtsman's Wife," "The Very Little Person," "The Autobiography of an Elderly Woman," "The Heart's Country," and "The Ninth Man." Lives in Provincetown, Mass., and New York City.

Great God, The.
Pavilion of Saint Merci, The.

(23) Weston, George. Born in New York, 1880. High school education. Studied law and founded the Western Engineering Company. On editorial staff of New York Evening Sun from 1900. Retired to farm in Connecticut, 1912. An enthusiastic sportsman, farmer, and motorist. Single, white, an ardent Republican, a staunch admirer of Mr. Charles Chaplin, an accomplished listener to the violin, a Latin versifier, a connoisseur of roses, a fancier of fox-terriers, a lover of shad-roe and bacon, and a never-swerving champion of woman's suffrage. First short story, "After Many Years," Harper's Magazine, 1910. Author of "Oh, Mary, Be Careful!" Lives in Packer, Conn.

Perfect Gentleman, A.

THE ROLL OF HONOR OF FOREIGN SHORT STORIES IN AMERICAN MAGAZINES FOR 1917

Note. *Stories of special excellence are indicated by an asterisk. The index figures 1, 2, and 3 prefixed to the name of the author indicate that his work has been included in the Rolls of Honor for 1914, 1915, and 1916 respectively.*

I. English and Irish Authors

(23) Aumonier, Stacy.

*In the Way of Business.
*Packet, The.
*Them Others.

(3) Beresford, J. D.

*Escape, The.
*Little Town, The.

*Powers of the Air.

(13) Conrad, Joseph.

*Warrior's Soul, The.

Dudeney, Mrs. Henry.

*Feather-bed, The.

Dunsany, Lord.

*How the Gods Avenged Meoul Ki Ning.

(123) Galsworthy, John.

*Defeat.
Flotsam and Jetsam.
Juryman, The.

George, W. L.

*Interlude.

Gibson, Wilfrid Wilson.

*News, The.

Hamilton, Cosmo.

Ladder Leaning on a Cloud, The.

Houseman, Laurence.

Inside-out.

Lawrence, D. H.

*England, My England.
*Mortal Coil, The.
*Thimble, The.

Le Gallienne, Richard.

Bugler of the Immortals, The.

Machen, Arthur.

*Coming of the Terror, The.

MacManus, Seumas.

*Mad Man, the Dead Man, and the Devil, The.

Mordaunt, Elinor.

*Gold Fish, The.

Pertwee, Roland.

*Camouflage.
*Red and White.

(3) Soutar, Andrew.

Behind the Veil.

Thomas, Edward.

*Passing of Pan, The.

(3) Wylie, I. A. R.

*Holy Fire.
*'Melia No-Good.
*Return, The.

II. Translations

Andreyev, Leonid Nikolaevich. (*Russian.*)

*Lazarus.

Anonymous. (*German.*)

Evocation, The.
"Huppdiwupp."

Bazin, René. (*French.*)

*Mathurine's Eyes.

Boutet, Frederic. (*French.*)

*Medallion, The.

Chekhov, Anton. (*Russian.*) (*See* Tchekhov, Anton.)

Chirikov, Evgeniy. (*Russian.*)

*Past, The.

Delarue-Madrus, Lucie. (*French.*)

*Death of the Dead, The.

Heine, Anselma. (*German.*)

*Vision, The.

Le Braz, Anatole. (*French.*)

Christmas Treasure, The.

Lev, Bernard. (*Bohemian.*)

Bert, the Scamp.
*Marfa's Assumption.

Madeiros e Albuquerque, José de. (*Brazilian.*)

*Vengeance of Felix, The.

Netto, Coelho. (*Brazilian.*)

*Pigeons, The.

Philippe, Charles-Louis. (*French.*)

*Meeting, The.

Rinck, C. A. (*German.*)

Song, The.

Saltykov, M. Y. ("N. Schedrin.") (*Russian.*)

*Hungry Officials and the Accommodating Muzhik, The.

"Skitalets." (*Russian.*)

*"And the Forest Burned."

Tchekhov, Anton. (*Russian.*)

Dushitchka.
*Old Age.

THE BEST BOOKS OF SHORT STORIES OF 1917: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Christmas Tales of Flanders, illustrated by

Jean de Bosschere (Dodd, Mead & Co.). If you like Andersen's Fairy Tales, here is a book which comes as truly from the heart of a people. Many old folk legends are here set down just as they came from the lips of old people in Flanders, and as they have never grown old in that countryside let us hope that they will take root equally well here. The volume is superbly illustrated with many pictures from the whimsical fancy of Jean de Bosschere. These pictures are indescribable, but they will rejoice the heart of any child, old or young.

From Death to Life by *A. Apukhtin*, translated by *R. Frank* and *E. Huybers* (R. Frank). This story, which so happily inaugurates a series of translations from Russian literature, is a poetic study in life after death, chronicling the experiences of a soul between death and rebirth. The translators have succeeded in reflecting successfully the fine imaginative style of this prose poem, which deserves to be widely known. It tempts us to wish that other stories by Apukhtin may soon find an English translator.

Tales of the Revolution by *Michael Artzibashev*, translated by *Percy Pinkerton*. (B. W. Huebsch.) The five tales by Artzibashev

included in this volume all have the same quality of bitter irony and mordant self-analysis. The psychological revelation of the mind that has made the later phases of the present Russian Revolution possible is complete, and I know of no book that presents more clearly and truthfully the rudderless pessimism of these particular spiritual reactions. Such courageous dissection of the diseased mind has never been undertaken in American or English fiction, and though its realism is appalling, it is healthful in its naked frankness.

The Friends by *Stacy Aumonier* (The Century Co.). When "The Friends" was published two years ago in The Century Magazine, it was evident at once that an important new short-story writer had arrived. The homely humanity of his characterization was but the evidence of a rich imaginative talent that found self-expression in the more quiet ways of life. I said at the time that I believed "The Friends" to be one the two best short stories of 1915, and others felt it to be the best story of the year. To "The Friends" have now been added in this volume two other stories of almost equal distinction,—"The Packet" and "'In the Way of Business.'" While Mr. Aumonier has a certain didactic intention in these stories, he

has kept it entirely subordinate to the artistry of his exposition, and it is the few characters which he has added to English fiction that we remember after his somewhat obvious moral has been conveyed. His short stories have the same flavor of belated Victorianism that one enjoys in the novels of William De Morgan, and he is equally noteworthy in his chosen field.

Irish Idylls by *Jane Barlow* (Dodd, Mead & Co.). This new edition of "Irish Idylls" should introduce the admirable studies of Miss Barlow to a new audience that may not be familiar with what was a pioneer volume in its day. Published in 1893, it almost marked the beginning of the Irish literary movement, and so many fine writers followed Miss Barlow that she has been most unfairly concealed by their shadows. Her studies of the lives and deaths, joys and sorrows, of Connemara peasants are none the less real because they are the product of observation by one who did not live among them. They show, as Miss Barlow says, that "there are plenty of things beside turf to be found in a bog." It is true that they represent a slight spirit of condescension, entirely absent from the work of Padraic Colum, for instance, but they approach far more closely to the heart of the Irish fishermen

and farmers than the work of any other English type of mind; and although Miss Barlow is best known today by her poetry, I have always felt that she conveyed more poetry into "Irish Idylls" than into any other of her books. The volume is a necessary and permanent edition to any small collection of modern Irish literature.

Day and Night Stories by *Algernon Blackwood* (E. P. Dutton & Co.). In these fifteen short stories Mr. Blackwood has adequately maintained the quality of his best previous animistic work. To those who found a new imaginative world in "The Centaur" and "Pan's Garden," the old familiar magic still has power in many of these stories,—almost completely in "The Touch of Pan" and "Initiation." Hardly inferior to these stories for their passionate reality are "The Other Wing," "The Occupant of the Room," "The Tryst," and "H. S. H." There is no story in this volume which would not have made the reputation of a new writer, and I can hardly find a better introduction than "Day and Night Stories" to the beauty of Mr. Blackwood's imaginative life. He serves the same altar of beauty in our day that John Keats served a century ago, and I cannot but believe that his magic will gain greater poignancy as generations pass.

The Derelict by *Phyllis Bottome* (The Century Co.). This collection of Miss Bottome's short stories, many of which have previously appeared in the Century Magazine during the past two years, gives a more complete revelation of her talent than either of her novels. I suspect that the short story is her true literary medium, and certainly there are at least six of these eight short stories which I should be compelled to list with three stars in my annual Roll of Honor. In subject and mood they range from tragedy to social comedy. Elsewhere in this volume I have discussed "'Ironstone,'" which seems to me the best of these stories. A subtle irony pervades them, but it is so definitely concealed that its insistence is never evident.

Old Christmas, and Other Kentucky Tales in Verse by *William Aspenwall Bradley* (The Houghton-Mifflin Co.). In this series of vignettes in verse Mr. Bradley has presented the Kentucky mountaineer as imaginatively as Robert Frost has presented the farmer-folk of New Hampshire in "North of Boston" and "Mountain Interval." The racy humor of these narratives is thoroughly indigenous, and Mr. Bradley's work has a vivid dramatic power which challenges successfully a comparison with the stories of

John Fox, Jr. These poems prove Mr. Bradley's rightful claim to be the first adequate imaginative interpreter of the people who live in the Cumberland Mountains.

The Fighting Men by *Alden Brooks* (Charles Scribner's Sons). Of these six stories four have been published in Collier's Weekly during the past two years, and elsewhere I have had occasion to comment upon their excellence. These narratives may be regarded as separate cantos of a war epic, which is fairly comparable for its vividness of portrayal to Stephen Crane's masterpiece, "The Red Badge of Courage." Few writers, other than these two, have been able to portray the naked ugliness of warfare, and the passions which warfare engenders, with more brutal power. Time alone will tell whether these stories have a chance of permanence, but I am disposed to rank them with that other portrait of the mercilessness of war, "Under Fire," by Henri Barbusse.

Limehouse Nights by *Thomas Burke* (Robert M. McBride & Co.). These colorful stories of life in London's Chinatown are in my humble belief destined never to grow old. This volume is the most important volume of short stories by a new English writer to appear during 1917,

and is only surpassed by Daniel Corkery's volume "A Munster Twilight." Such patterned prose in fiction has not been known since the days of Walter Pater, and Mr. Burke's sense of the almost intolerable beauty of ugly things has a persuasive fascination for the reader who may have a strong prejudice against his subjects. Such horror as Mr. Burke has imagined is almost impossible to portray convincingly, yet the author has softened its starkness into patterns of gracious beauty and musical rhythmic speech.

Rinconete and Cortadillo by *Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra*, translated from the Spanish by *Mariano J. Lorente*, with a preface by *R. B. Cunninghame Graham* (The Four Seas Co.). This is an excellent translation by a Spanish man of letters of what is perhaps the best exemplary Novel by Cervantes. As Mr. Cunninghame Graham points out in his delightful introduction, "Rinconete and Cortadillo" is perhaps the best sketch of Spanish low-life that has come down to us. It is highly amoral, despite its sub-title, and all the more delightful perhaps on that account. I hope that the translator may be persuaded, if the volume goes into the second edition it so richly deserves, to omit his very contentious preface, which can be of interest only to

himself and two other people. Then our delight in this volume would be complete.

The Duel (Macmillan), The House with the Mezzanine (Scribner), The Lady with the Dog (Macmillan), The Party (Macmillan), and Rothschild's Fiddle (Boni and Liveright) by *Anton Chekhov*. To The Darling, which was the first volume, so far as I know, of Chekhov, to be presented to the American public, five new collections of Chekhov's tales have been added during the past year in excellent English renderings. Three of these volumes are translated by Constance Garnett, whose superb translations of Turgenieff and Dostoievsky are well known to American readers. Because Chekhov ranks with Poe and De Maupassant as one of the three supreme masters of the short story, it is a matter of signal importance that these translations should appear, and in them every mood of Russian life is reflected with subtle artistry and a passionate reality of creative vision. Chekhov is destined to exert greater and greater influence on the American short story as the translations of his work increase, and these five volumes prove him to be fully equal to Dostoievsky in sustained and varied spiritual observation. These stories range

through the entire gamut of human emotion from sublime tragedy to the richest and most golden comedy. If I were to choose a single author of short stories for my library on a desert island, my choice would inevitably turn to these volumes.

Those Times and These by *Irvin S. Cobb* (George H. Doran Co.). This is quite the best volume of short stories that Mr. Cobb has yet published. Since "The Escape of Mr. Trimm," which was his first short story, was printed in the Saturday Evening Post seven years ago, Mr. Cobb's literary development has been rapid, if not sure; but he may now with this volume lay claim fairly to the mantle of Mark Twain for the rich humanity with which he has endowed his substance and the inimitable humor of his characterizations. In "The Family Tree" and "Cinnamon Seed and Sandy Bottom" Mr. Cobb has added two stories of permanent value to American literature, and in "Mr. Felsburg Gets Even" and "And There Was Light" Mr. Cobb's literary art is almost as well sustained. My only quarrel with him in this book is for the inclusion of "A Kiss for Kindness," where a fine short-story possibility seems to have been entirely missed by the author, perhaps because, as he ingenuously confessed shortly afterward, he had just

become an abandoned farmer.

Running Free by *James B. Connolly* (Charles Scribner's Sons). Of the ten short stories included by Mr. Connolly in this collection, four are among the best he has ever written: "Breath O' Dawn," "The Sea-Birds," "The Medicine Ship," and "One Wireless Night." With the simplicity of speech which characterizes all of Mr. Connolly's work, he relates his story for the story's sake. Because he is an Irishman he is an incorrigible romanticist, and I suspect that characterization interests him for the story's sake rather than for itself alone. But now that Richard Harding Davis is dead, I suppose that James B. Connolly may fairly take his place as our best born yarner, with all a yarner's privileges.

Teepee Neighbors by *Grace Coolidge* (The Four Seas Co.). This quiet little book of narratives and Indian portraits by Miss Coolidge deserves more attention than it has yet received, and for its qualities of quiet pathos and sympathetic insight into the Indian character I associate it as of equal value with Margaret Prescott Montague's stories of blind children in West Virginia.

A Munster Twilight by *Daniel Corkery* (Frederick A. Stokes Co.). I have never read a

new volume of short stories with such a sense of discovery as I felt when these tales came to my hand. Because the volume appears to have attracted absolutely no attention as yet in this country, I wish to emphasize my firm belief that this is the most memorable volume of short stories published in English within the past five years. It makes us eager to read Mr. Corkery's new novel, "The Threshold of Quiet," in order that we may see if such a glorious imaginative sweep can be maintained in a novel as the reader will find in any single short story of this volume. Here you will find the very heart of Ireland's spiritual adventure revealed in folk speech of inevitable beauty. There is not a story in the book which does not disclose new aspects after repeated readings. A craftsmanship so fine and vigorous is seldom related with such artistic humility. "A Munster Twilight" proves that there are still great men in Ireland.

Brought Forward, Faith, Hope, Charity, Progress, and Success by *R. B. Cunninghame Graham* (Frederick A. Stokes Co.). It is an extraordinary fact that a short-story writer so deservedly well-known in England as Mr. Cunninghame Graham, whose sketches of life in many parts of the globe have been published at frequent intervals

through the past decade, is yet entirely unknown in this country. To be sure, such has been the fate of W. H. Hudson until very recently. These six volumes certainly rank, by virtue of the quality of their style and the imaginative reality of their substance, with the best work of Mr. Hudson, and the parallel is the more complete because both writers have made the vanished life of the South American plains real to the English mind. Mr. Cunninghame Graham is one of the great travel writers, and ranks with Borrow and Ford, but he is more impartially interested in character than either Borrow or Ford, and has a far more vivid feeling for the spiritual values of landscape. It may be that these stories are for the few only, but I am loth to believe it. The life of the pampas and the life of the Moroccan desert live in these pages with an actuality as great as the life of the American plains lives in the work of Hamlin Garland, and there is an epic sweep in Mr. Cunninghame Graham's vision that I find in no other contemporary English writer.

The Echo of Voices by *Richard Curle* (Alfred A. Knopf). It is very rarely that a disciple as faithful as Mr. Curle publishes a volume which his master would be proud to sign, but I think that the reader will detect in

this book the authentic voice of Joseph Conrad. Mr. Conrad's own personal enthusiasm for the book is an ingratiating introduction to the reader, but in these eight stories Mr. Curle can certainly afford to stand alone. Preoccupied as he is with the mystery of human existence, and the effect of circumstance upon the character, he portrays eight widely different human types, almost all of them with a certain pathetic futility of aspect, so surely and finely that they live before us. It is an interesting fact that the three best short story books in English of 1917 come from the other side of the water. "Limehouse Nights," "A Munster Twilight," and "The Echo of Voices" make this year so memorable in fiction that later years may well prove disappointing.

The Eternal Husband and Other Stories and The Gambler and Other Stories by *Fyodor Dostoievsky* (The Macmillan Co.). These two new volumes continue the complete English edition of Dostoievsky which is being translated by Constance Garnett. The renderings have the same qualities of idiomatic speech and subtly rendered nuance which is always to be found in this translator's work, and although both of these volumes represent the minor work of Dostoievsky, his minor

work is finer than our major work, and characterized by a passionate curiosity about the human soul and a deep insight into its mysteries. It is idle to argue as to whether these narratives are short stories or brief novels. However we classify them, they are profound revelations of human relationship, and place their author among the great masters of the world's literature. Nor is it pertinent to discuss their technique or lack of it. Their technique is sufficient for the author's purpose, and he has achieved his will nobly in a manner inevitable to him.

Billy Topsail, M.D., by *Norman Duncan* (Fleming H. Revell Co.). In this posthumous volume Norman Duncan has woven together a selection of his later short stories, in which further adventures of Doctor Luke of the Labrador are chronicled. They represent the very best of his later work, and in them the stern physical conditions with which nature surrounds the life of man provide an admirably rendered background for the portrayal of character developed by circumstance. Norman Duncan can never have a successor, and in "Billy Topsail, M.D." the reader will find him very nearly at his best.

My People by *Caradoc Evans* (Duffield &

Co.). "My People" is a record of the peasantry of West Wales, and these chronicles are set down with a biblical economy of speech that makes for a noteworthy literary style. I refuse to believe that they are a truthful portrait of the folk of whom Mr. Evans writes, but I believe that he has created a real subjective world of his own that is thoroughly convincing. H. G. Wells has written eulogistically of the book and also of the author's novel, "Capel Sion." I appreciate the qualities in the book that have won Mr. Wells' esteem, and the book is indeed memorable. But I believe that its excellence is an artificial excellence, and I commend it to the reader as a work of incomparable artifice rather than as a faithful reflection of life.

In Happy Valley by *John Fox, Jr.* (Charles Scribner's Sons). Of these ten new chronicles of the Kentucky mountains, gathered from the pages of Scribner's Magazine during the past year for the most part, "His Last Christmas Gift" is the most memorable. But all the stories are brief and vivid vignettes of the countryside which Mr. Fox knows so well, told with the utmost economy of speech and with a fine sense of atmospheric values. These stories are a happy illustration of the better regionalism that is characteristic of contemporary American fiction, and like "Ommirandy" will

prove valuable records to a later generation of a life that even now is rapidly passing away.

The War, Madame, by *Paul Géraldy* (Charles Scribner's Sons). The delicate fantasy of this little story only enhances the poignant tragedy that it discloses. Somehow it suggests a comparison with "Four Days" by Hetty Hemenway, although it is told with greater deftness and a more subtle irony. In these pages pulses the very heart of France, and it is compact of the spirit that has made France a mistress to die for. The translation is admirable.

Collected Poems by *Wilfrid Wilson Gibson* (The Macmillan Co.). In these noble studies of English social life among the laboring classes Mr. Gibson has collected all of his stories in verse which he wishes to retain in his collected works. He has already become an influence on the work of many of his contemporaries, and the qualities of incisive observation, warm humanity, and subtle art which characterize his best work are adequately disclosed in his poems. I am sure that the reader of short stories will find them as fascinating as any volume of prose published this year, and the sum of all these poems is an English *Comédie Humaine* which portrays every type of English

labor in rich imaginative speech. The dramatic quality of these stories is achieved by virtue of a constant economy of selection, and a nervous singing speech as authentic as that of Synge.

Ommirandy by *Armistead C. Gordon* (Charles Scribner's Sons). In this collection Mr. Gordon, whose name is so happily associated with that of Thomas Nelson Page, has collected from the files of Scribner's Magazine the deft and insinuating chronicles of negro life on a Virginia plantation which have attracted so much favorable comment in recent years. This collection places Mr. Gordon in the same rank as the author of "Marse' Chan," as a literary artist of the vanished South. These transcripts from the folk life of the people are told very quietly in a persuasive style that reveals a rich poetic sense of human values. The mellow atmosphere of these stories is particularly noteworthy, and Mr. Gordon's instinctive sympathy with his subject has saved him from that spirit of condescension which has been the weakness of so much American folk writing in the past. "Ommirandy" will long remain a happy and honorable tradition in American literature.

The Grim 13, edited by *Frederick Stuart Greene* (Dodd, Mead & Co.), is a collection of

thirteen stories of literary value which have been declined with enthusiastic praise by the editors of American magazines because of their grim quality, or because they have an extremely unhappy ending. The collection was gathered as a test of the public interest, in order to remove if possible what the editor believed to be a false editorial policy. It is interesting to examine these stories, and to pretend that one is an editor. The experiment has been extremely successful and has produced at least one story by an American author ("The Abigail Sheriff Memorial" by Vincent O'Sullivan) and one story by an English author ("Old Fags" by Stacy Aumonier), which are permanent in their literary value.

Four Days: the Story of a War Marriage, by *Hetty Hemenway* (Little, Brown & Co.). Of this story I have spoken elsewhere in this volume, I shall only add here that it is one of the most significant spiritual studies in fiction that the war has produced, and that it is directly told in a style of sensitive beauty.

A Diversity of Creatures by *Rudyard Kipling* (Doubleday, Page & Co.) is the first collection of Mr. Kipling's short stories

published in several years. I must confess frankly that there is but one story in the volume which seems to me a completely realized rendering of the substance which Mr. Kipling has chosen, and that is the incomparable satire on publicity entitled "The Village That Voted the Earth Was Flat." In this volume you will find many stories in many moods, and some of them are postscripts to earlier volumes of Mr. Kipling. I cannot believe that his war stories deserve as high praise as they have been accorded. This volume presents Mr. Kipling as the most consummate living master of technique in the English tongue, but his inspiration has failed him except for the single exception which I have chronicled. The volume is a memory rather than an actuality, and it has the pathos of a forgotten dream.

The Bracelet of Garnets and Other Stories by *Alexander Kuprin*, translated by *Leo Pasvolsky*, with an Introduction by *William Lyon Phelps* (Charles Scribner's Sons). This collection of stories is based on the author's own selection for this purpose, and although the translation is not thoroughly idiomatic, the sheer poetry of Kuprin's imagination shines through the veil of an alien speech and captures the imagination of the

reader. Kuprin's pictorial sense is curiously similar to that of Wilbur Daniel Steele, and it is interesting to study the reactions of similar temperaments on widely different substances and backgrounds. Kuprin achieves a chiselled finality of utterance which is as evident in his tragedy as in his comedy, and in some of these pieces a fine allegorical beauty shines prismatically through a carefully economized brilliance of narrative.

The Prussian Officer and Other Stories by *D. H. Lawrence* (B. W. Huebsch). The twelve short stories collected in this volume are full of the same warm color that one always associates with Mr. Lawrence's best work, and the nervous complaining beauty of his style makes him the English compeer of Gabriele d'Annunzio. The warm lush fragrance of many European countrysides pervades these stories and a certain poignant sensual disillusionment is insistently stressed by the characters who flit through the shadowy foreground. It is the definitely realized and concrete sense of landscape that Mr. Lawrence has achieved which is his finest artistic attribute, and the sensitive response to light which is so characteristic an element in his vision bathes all the pictures he presents in a rich glow, whose gradations of light and

shadow respond finely to the emotional reactions of his characters. He is the most sophisticated of the contemporary English realists, and has the sense of poetry to a high degree which is conspicuously absent in the work of other English novelists.

A Designer of Dawns and Other Tales by *Gertrude Russell Lewis* (Pilgrim Press). I set this volume of allegories beside "Flame and the Shadow-Eater" by Henrietta Weaver as one of the two best books of allegories published in 1917. These seven little tales have a quiet imaginative glow that is very appealing and I find in them a folk quality that is almost Scandinavian in its naïvete.

The Terror: A Mystery, by *Arthur Machen* (Robert M. McBride & Co.). When this story was first published in the Century Magazine in 1917, under the title of "The Coming of the Terror," it was at once hailed by discriminating readers as the best short story by an English writer published in an American magazine since "The Friends" by Stacy Aumonier. It is now published in its complete form as originally written, and although it is as long as a short novel, it has an essential unity of incident which justifies us in claiming it as a short story. I suppose that Algernon

Blackwood is the only other English writer who has the same gift for making strange spiritual adventures completely real to the imagination, and the author of "The Bowmen" has surpassed even that fine story in this description of how a mysterious terror overran England during the last years of the great war and how the mystery of its passing was finally revealed. The emotional tension of the reader is enhanced by the quiet matter-of-fact air with which the story is presented. The volume is one of the best five or six books of short stories which England has produced during the past year.

The Second Odd Number: Thirteen Tales, by *Guy de Maupassant*, the translation by *Charles Henry White*, an Introduction by *William Dean Howells* (Harper & Brothers). It is reported in some volume of French literary memoirs that Guy de Maupassant regarded the first series of "The Odd Number" as better than the original. Be this as it may, the thirteen stories which make up this volume are admirably rendered with a careful reflection of the slightest nuances. As Mr. Howells states in his introduction to the volume: "The range of these stories is not very great; the effect they make is greater than the range." But this selection has been admirably chosen with a

view to making the range as wide as possible, and I can only hope that it will serve to influence some of our younger writers toward a greater descriptive and emotional economy.

The Girl and the Faun by *Eden Phillpotts* (J. B. Lippincott Co.). These eight idylls of the four seasons are graceful Greek legends told with a modern touch in poetic prose. They have a quality of quiet beauty which will commend them to many readers to whom the more realistic work of Mr. Phillpotts does not appeal, and the admirable illustrations by Frank Brangwyn are a felicitous accompaniment to the modulated prose of Mr. Phillpotts.

Barbed Wire and Other Poems by *Edwin Ford Piper* (The Midland Press, Moorhead, Minn.). As Grant Showerman's "A Country Chronicle" is an admirable rendering of the farm life of Wisconsin in the seventies, so these poems are a fine imaginative record of the pioneer life of Nebraska a little later. I believe this volume to contain quite as fine poetry as Robert Frost's "North of Boston." Here you will meet many men and women struggling against the loneliness of prairie life, and winning spiritual as well as material conquests out of nature. The greater part of

this volume is composed of a series of narrative poems entitled "The Neighborhood." Their lack of literary sophistication is part of their charm, and the calculated ruggedness of the author's style is a faithful reflection of his barren physical background.

Best Russian Short Stories, compiled and edited by *Thomas Seltzer* (Boni and Liveright). This is the first anthology of Russian short stories which has yet been published in English, and the selections are excellent. There is a wide range of literary art represented in this volume, and the translations are extremely smooth and idiomatic. As is only fitting, the work of Tolstoi, Dostoievsky, Turgenev, and other Russians, whose work is already well known to the American reader, are only represented lightly in the collection, and greater space is devoted to the stories of Chekhov and other writers less familiar to the American public. Nineteen stories are translated from the work of Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoievsky, Tolstoi, Saltykov, Korolenko, Garshin, Chekhov, Sologub, Potapenko, Semyonov, Gorky, Andreyev, Artzybashev, and Kuprin, and the volume is prefixed with an excellent critical introduction by the editor.

A Country Child by *Grant Showerman* (The Century Co.). This is a sequel to Professor Showerman's earlier volume, "A Country Chronicle." The book is an epic of what a little boy saw and felt and dreamed on a farm in Wisconsin forty years ago, told just as a little boy would tell it. It will help you to remember how you went to the circus and how you stayed up late on your birthday. You will also recall the ball game the day you didn't go home from school, and how you went in swimming, and about that fight with Bill, and ever so many other things which you thought that you had forgotten. I think all the boys and girls that used to write to James Whitcomb Riley should send a birthday letter this year to Grant Showerman, so that he will get it on the 9th of January. Let's start a movement in Wisconsin to have a Showerman Day.

Flame and the Shadow-eater by *Henrietta Weaver* (Henry Holt & Co.). In these fifteen short allegorical tales Henrietta Weaver has introduced with considerable skill much Persian philosophy, and presented it to the American reader so attractively that it is thoroughly persuasive. Akin in a measure to certain similar stories by Jeannette Marks, they have the same prismatic quality of brilliance and impermanence. I do not believe that the

reader who enjoys the poetry of the mind will find these allegories specially esoteric, but I may commend them frankly for their story value, irrespective of the symbols which the author has chosen to attach to them.

The Great Modern French Stories edited by *Willard Huntington Wright* (Boni and Liveright), Married by *August Strindberg* (Boni and Liveright), and Visions by *Count Ilya Tolstoy* (James B. Pond) have reached me too late for extended review. I list them here as three volumes of permanent literary value.

VOLUMES OF SHORT STORIES PUBLISHED DURING 1917

Note. *An asterisk before a title indicates distinction. This list includes single short stories, collections of short stories, and a few continuous narratives based on short stories previously published in magazines.*

I. American Authors

Adams, Samuel Hopkins.
*Our Square and the People In It. Houghton-Mifflin.

Bain, R. Nisbet.
*Cossack Fairy Tales. Stokes.

Bangs, John Kendrick.
Half Hours With the Idiot. Little, Brown.

Bassett, Wilbur.
Wander-Ships. Open Court Pub. Co.

Beach, Rex.
Laughing Bill Hyde. Harper.

Bend, Rev. John J.
Stranger than Fiction. Sheehan.

Bottome, Phyllis.
*Derelict, The. Century.

Bradley, William Aspenwall.
*Old Christmas, and Other Kentucky Tales in Verse. Houghton-Mifflin.

Brady, Cyrus Townsend.
Little Book for Christmas, A. Putnam.

Brooks, Alden.
*Fighting Men, The. Scribner.

Brown, Katharine Holland.
*Wages of Honor, The. Scribner.

Brubaker, Howard.
Ranny. Harper.

Brunton, F. Carmichael.
Enchanted Lochan, The. Crowell.

Bunner, H. C.
*More "Short Sixes." Scribner.
*"Short Sixes." Scribner.

Bunts, Frederick Emory.
Soul of Henry Harrington, The. Cleveland: privately printed.

Butler, Ellis Parker.
Dominie Dean. Revell.

Carmichael, M. H.
Pioneer Days. Duffield.

Carter, Charles Franklin.

Stories of the Old Missions of California. Elder.

Chambers, Robert W.
*Barbarians. Appleton.

Cobb, Irvin S.
*Those Times and These. Doran.

Coffin, Julia H.
Vendor of Dreams, The. Dodd, Mead.

*Collier's, Prize Stories From. 5 v. Collier.

Connolly, James B.
*Running Free. Scribner.

Coolidge, Grace.
*Teepee Neighbors. Four Seas.

Crownfield, Gertrude.
Little Tailor of the Winding Way, The. Macmillan.

Davis, Charles Belmont.
Her Own Sort and Others. Scribner.

Davis, Richard Harding.
*Boy Scout, The, and Other Stories. Scribner.

*Deserter, The. Scribner.

Duncan, Norman.
*Billy Topsail, M.D. Revell.

Eells, Elsie Spicer.
*Fairy Tales from Brazil. Dodd, Mead.

Fisher, Fred B.
Gifts from the Desert. Abington Press.

Foote, John Taintor.
Dumb-bell of Brookfield. Appleton.

Ford, Sewell.
Wilt Thou Torchy. Clode.

For France. Doubleday, Page.

Fox, Edward Lyell.
New Gethsemane, The. McBride.

Fox, John, Jr.
*In Happy Valley. Scribner.

Futrelle, Jacques.
Problem of Cell 13, The. Dodd, Mead.

Gordon, Armistead C.
*Ommirandy. Scribner.

Greene, Frederick Stuart, *Editor*.
*Grim Thirteen, The. Dodd, Mead.

"Hall, Holworthy."
Dormie One. Century.

Hanshew, T. W.
Cleek's Government Cases. Doubleday, Page.

Hemenway, Hetty.
*Four Days. Little, Brown.

"Henry, O."
*Waifs and Strays. Doubleday, Page.

Hines, Jack.
Blue Streak, The. Doran.

Holmes, Mary Caroline.
"Who Follows in Their Train?" Revell.

Hough, Lynn Harold.
Little Old Lady, The.

Hughes, Rupert.

In a Little Town. Harper.

Ingram, Eleanor M.
Twice American, The. Lippincott.

Irwin, Wallace.
Pilgrims Into Folly. Doran.

Jefferson, Charles E.
Land of Enough, The. Crowell.

Johnston, Mary.
*Wanderers, The. Houghton-Mifflin.

Johnston, William.
"Limpy." Little, Brown.

Karr, Louise.
Trouble. Himebaugh and Browne.

Kellerhouse, Lucy Charlton.
*Forest Fancies. Duffield.

Kirk, R. G.
White Monarch and the Gas-House Pup. Little, Brown.

Kirkland, Winifred.

*My Little Town. Dutton.

Lait, Jack.
Gus the Bus and Evelyn, the Exquisite Checker. Doubleday, Page.

Lardner, Ring W.
Gullible's Travels. Bobbs-Merrill.

Leacock, Stephen.
Frenzied Fiction. Lane.

Lewis, Gertrude Russell.
*Designer of Dawns, A. Pilgrim Press.

McClung, Nellie L.
Next of Kin, The. Houghton-Mifflin.

Mackay, Helen.
*Journal of Small Things. Duffield.

Meirovitz, Joseph M.
Path of Error, The. Four Seas Co.

Merwin, Samuel.
Temperamental Henry. Bobbs-Merrill.

Newton, Alma.

Memories. Duffield.

Noble, Edward.
Outposts of the Fleet. Houghton-Mifflin.

O'Brien, Edward J., *Editor*.
The Best Short Stories of 1916. Small, Maynard.

Osborn, E. B.
Maid with Wings, The. Lane.

Paine, Albert Bigelow.
Mr. Crow and the Whitewash. Harper.
Mr. Rabbit's Wedding. Harper.
Mr. Turtle's Flying Adventure. Harper.

Paine, Ralph D.
Sons of Eli. Scribner.

Perkins, J. R.
Thin Volume, A. Saalfield.

Perry, Montanye.
Where It Touches the Ground. Abingdon Press.
Zerah. Abingdon Press.

Piper, Edwin Ford.
*Barbed Wire and Other Poems. Midland Press.

Putnam, Nina Wilcox.
When the Highbrow Joined the Outfit. Duffield.

Reeve, Arthur B.
Ear in the Wall, The. Hearst.
Treasure Train, The. Harper.

Richmond, Grace S.
Whistling Mother, The. Doubleday, Page.

Rinehart, Mary Roberts.
Bab: A Sub-deb. Doran.

Rodeheaver, Homer.
Song Stories of the Sawdust Trail. Moffat, Yard.

Rosenbach, A. S. W.
Unpublishable Memoirs, The. Kennerley.

Ryder, Arthur W.
*Twenty-two Goblins. Dutton.

Sabin, Edwin L.
How Are You Feeling Now? Little, Brown.

Schayer, E. Richard.
Good Loser, The. McKay.

Scott, Leroy.
Mary Regan. Houghton-Mifflin.

Showerman, Grant.
*Country Child, A. Century.

Steiner, Edward A.
My Doctor Dog. Revell.

Stern, Gertrude.
My Mother and I. Macmillan.

Stitzer, Daniel Ahrens.
Stories of the Occult. Badger.

Stuart, Florence Partello.
Piang, the Moro Jungle Boy. Century.

Taber, Susan.
Optimist, The. Duffield.

"Thanet, Octave."
And the Captain Entered. Bobbs-Merrill.

Thomson, Edward William.
Old Man Savarin Stories. Doran.

Tompkins, Juliet Wilbor.
At the Sign of the Oldest House. Bobbs-Merrill.

Turpin, Edna.
Peggy of Roundabout Lane. Macmillan.

Tuttle, Florence Guertin.
Give My Love to Maria. Abingdon Press.

Van Loan, Charles E.
Old Man Curry. Doran.

Weaver, Henrietta.
*Flame and the Shadow-Eater. Holt.

Willsie, Honoré.
Benefits Forgot. Stokes.

II. English and Irish Authors

Aumonier, Stacy.
*Friends, The, and Two Other Stories. Century.

"Ayscough, John."
*French Windows. Longmans.

Barlow, Jane.
*Irish Idylls. Dodd, Mead.

Bell, J. J.
Cupid in Oilskins. Revell.
*Kiddies. Stokes.

Benson, Edward Frederic.
Freaks of Mayfair, The. Doran.

Blackwood, Algernon.
*Day and Night Stories. Dutton.

Burke, Thomas.
*Limehouse Nights. McBride.

Corkery, Daniel.
*Munster Twilight, A. Stokes.

Cunninghame Graham, R. B.
*Brought Forward. Stokes.
*Charity. Stokes.
*Faith. Stokes.
*Hope. Stokes.
*Progress. Stokes.
*Success. Stokes.

Curle, Richard.
*Echo of Voices. Knopf.

Dawson, Coningsby.
*Seventh Christmas, The. Holt.

Dell, Ethel M.
Safety Curtain, The. Putnam.

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan.
His Last Bow. Doran.

Dunsany, Lord.
*Dreamer's Tales, A. Boni and Liveright.
*Fifty-one Tales. Little, Brown.

Evans, Caradoc.
*My People. Duffield.

Gate, Ethel M.
*Broom Fairies, The. Yale Univ. Press.

Gibson, Wilfrid Wilson.
*Collected Poems. Macmillan.

Hall, Mordaunt.
Some Naval Yarns. Doran.

Harrison, Cuthbert Woodville.
*Magic of Malaya, The. Lane.

Howard, Keble.
Smiths in War Time, The. Lane.

Jerome, Jerome K.
Street of the Blank Wall, The. Dodd, Mead.

Kipling, Rudyard.
*Diversity of Creatures, A. Doubleday, Page.

Machen, Arthur.
*Terror, The. McBride.

Mason, A. E. W.
*Four Corners of the World, The. Scribner.

Newbolt, Sir Henry.
*Happy Warrior, The. Longmans, Green.
Tales of the Great War. Longmans, Green.

Peacocke, E. M.
Dicky, Knight-Errant. McBride.

Phillpotts, Eden.
*Girl and the Faun, The. Lippincott.

Ransome, Arthur.
*Old Peter's Russian Tales. Stokes.

Rendall, Vernon Horace.
London Nights of Belsize, The. Lane.

"Rohmer, Sax."
Hand of Fu-Manchu, The. McBride.

"Sapper."
*No Man's Land. Doran.

Stacpoole, H. De Vere.
Sea Plunder. Lane.

Swinton, Lieut.-Col. E. D.
Great Tab Dope, The. Doubleday, Page.

"Taffrail."
Sea Spray and Spindrift. Lippincott.

Tree, Sir Herbert Beerbohm.
Nothing Matters. Houghton-Mifflin.

Wren, Percival C.
Young Stagers. Longmans, Green.

III. Translations

Apukhtin, A. (*Russian.*)
*From Death to Life. Frank.

Artzibashev, Michael Mikhailovich. (*Russian.*)

*Tales of the Revolution. Huebsch.

Cervantes, Miguel de. (*Spanish.*)
*Rinconete and Cortadillo. Four Seas.

Chekhov, Anton. (*Russian.*) (*See* Tchekhov, Anton.)

*Christmas Tales of Flanders. (*Belgian.*) Dodd, Mead.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor Mikhailovich. (*Russian.*)
*Eternal Husband, The. Macmillan.
*Gambler, and Other Stories, The. Macmillan.

France, Anatole. (*French.*)
*Girls and Boys. Duffield.
*Our Children. Duffield.

Géraldy, Paul. (*French.*)
*The War, Madame. Scribner.

Ispirescu, Petre. (*Rumanian.*)
*Foundling Prince, The. Houghton-Mifflin.

Kuprin, Alexander Ivanovich. (*Russian.*)
*Bracelet of Garnets, The. Scribner.

Maupassant, Guy de. (*French.*)
*Mademoiselle Fifi. Boni and Liveright.
*Second Odd Number, The. Harper.

Seltzer, Thomas, *Editor.* (*Russian.*)
*Best Russian Short Stories, The. Boni and Liveright.

*Shield, The. (*Russian.*) Knopf.

Strindberg, August. (*Swedish.*)
*Married. Boni and Liveright.

Sudermann, Hermann. (*German.*)
*Dame Care. Boni and Liveright.

Tchekhov, Anton. (*Russian.*)
*Duel, The. Macmillan.
*House with the Mezzanine, The. Scribner.
*Lady with the Dog, The. Macmillan.
*Party, The. Macmillan.
*Rothschild's Fiddle. Boni and Liveright.
*Will o' the Wisp. International Authors' Association.

Tolstoi, Ilya, Count.
*Visions. Pond.

Wright, Willard Huntington, *Editor.* (*French.*)
*Great Modern French Stories, The. Boni and Liveright.

THE BEST SIXTY-THREE AMERICAN SHORT STORIES OF 1917

The sixty-three short stories published in the American magazines during 1917 which I shall discuss in this article are chosen from a larger group of about one hundred and twenty-five stories, whose literary excellence justified me in including them in my annual "Roll of Honor." The stories, which are included in this Roll of Honor have been chosen from the stories published in about sixty-five American periodicals during 1917. In selecting them, I have sought to accept the author's point of view and manner of treatment, and to measure simply the degree of success he had in doing what he set out to achieve. But I must confess that it has been difficult to eliminate personal admiration completely in the further winnowing which has

resulted in this selection of sixty-three stories. Below are set forth the particular qualities which have seemed to me to justify in each case the inclusion of a story in this list.

1. The Excursion by *Edwina Stanton Babcock* (The Pictorial Review) is in my belief one of the best five American short stories of the year. It is significant because of its faithful and imaginative rendering of American folk-life, because of its subtle characterization, and the successful manner in which it reveals the essentially racy humor of the American countryside with the utmost economy of means. The characterization is achieved almost entirely through dialogue, and the portraiture of the characters is rendered inimitably in a phrase or two. In this story, as well as in "The Band," Miss Babcock has earned the right to a place beside Francis Buzzell as a regional story writer, fairly comparable to John Trevena's renderings of Dartmoor.

2. The Brothers by *Thomas Beer* (The Century Magazine) will remind the reader in some respects of Frederick Stuart Greene's story, "The Black Pool," published in "The Grim 13." But apart from a superficial resemblance in the substance with which both writers deal, the two stories are more notable in

their differences than in their resemblances. If "The Brothers" is less inevitable than "The Black Pool," it is perhaps a more sophisticated work of art, and I am not sure but that its conclusion and the resolution of character that it involves is not more artistically convincing than the end of "The Black Pool." It is certainly a memorable first story by a new writer and would of itself be enough to make a reputation. Mr. Beer is the most original new talent that the Century Magazine has discovered since Stacy Aumonier.

3. Onnie by *Thomas Beer* (The Century Magazine) has a certain stark faithfulness which makes of somewhat obvious material an extremely vivid and freshly felt rendering of life. There is a certain quality of observation in the story which we are accustomed to think of as a Gallic rather than an American trait. I think that Mr. Beer has slightly broadened his canvas where greater restraint and less cautious use of suggestion would have better answered his purpose. But "Onnie" is a better story than "The Brothers" to my mind, and Mr. Beer, by virtue of these two stories, is one of the two or three most interesting new talents of the year.

4. Ironstone by *Phyllis Bottome* (The Century Magazine). To those who have enjoyed in

recent years the admirable social comedy and deft handling of English character to which Miss Bottome has accustomed us, "Ironstone" must have come as a surprise in its revelation of a new aspect in the author's talent, akin to the kind of tale which is found at its best as a "middle" in the London Nation. It compresses the emotion of a Greek drama into a space of perhaps four thousand words. I find that the closing dialogue in this story is as certain in its march as the closing pages of "Riders to the Sea," and the *katharsis* is timeless in its final solution.

5. From Hungary by "*John Breck*" (The Bookman) is perhaps not to be classified as a short story, but the academic limitations of the short story have never interested me greatly, and in its own field this short fiction sketch is memorable. Its secret is the secret of atmosphere rather than speech, but atmosphere here becomes human in its reality and the resultant effect is not unlike that of "When Hannah Var Eight Yar Old" by Miss Girling, which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly a few years ago. "John Breck," or Elizabeth C. A. Smith, to reveal her authorship, has found complete embodiment for her conception in this story for the first time, and it is a promise for a vivid and interesting future.

6. The Flying Teuton by *Alice Brown* (Harper's Magazine) is the best short story that has come out of this war as yet in either English or American magazines. Accepting the old legend of the Flying Dutchman, Miss Brown has imagined it reëmbodied in a modern setting, and out of the ironies of this situation a most dramatic story results with a sure and true message for the American people. It is in my opinion one of the five best short stories of the year, and I am happy to say that it will soon be accessible to the public once more in book form.

7. Closed Doors, and 8. A Cup of Tea by *Maxwell Struthers Burt* (both in Scribner's Magazine). In these two stories, and in "The Glory of the Wild Green Earth," "John O'May," and "Le Panache," all of which appeared in Scribner's Magazine during the past year, a place is made for the author among American short story writers beside that of Mrs. Gerould, Wilbur Daniel Steele, and H. G. Dwight. Two years ago I had the pleasure of reprinting his first short story, "The Water-Hole," in "The Best Short Stories of 1915." I thought at that time that Mr. Burt would eventually do fine things, but I never suspected that, in the short period of two years, he would win for himself so important a place in contemporary American letters. Mr. Burt's technique is still a trifle over-

sophisticated, but I suppose this is a fault on virtue's side. A collection of Mr. Burt's short stories in book form should be anxiously awaited by the American public.

9. Lonely Places, and 10. The Long Vacation by *Francis Buzzell* (The Pictorial Review). The attentive reader of American fiction must have already noted two memorable stories by Francis Buzzell published in previous years, "Addie Erb and Her Girl Lottie" and "Ma's Pretties." These two stories won for Mr. Buzzell an important position as an American folk-writer, and this position is amply sustained by the two fine stories which he has published during the past year. His imaginative realism weaves poignant beauty out of the simplest and most dusty elements in life, and it is my belief that it is along the lines of his method and that of Miss Babcock that America is most likely eventually to contribute something distinctively national to the world's literary culture.

11. The Mistress by *Fleta Campbell* (Harper's Bazar) is a most highly polished and sharply outlined story of the war. It makes an art out of coldness in narration which serves to emphasize and bring out by contrast the human warmth of the story's substance.

12. The Foundling by *Gunnar Cederschiöld* (Collier's Weekly). Readers who recall the fine series of stories by Alden Brooks published during the past two years in Collier's Weekly and the Century Magazine will find in "The Foundling" a story equally memorable as a ruthless portrayal of the effects of war. Whether one approves or disapproves in general of the ending is irrelevant in this case. This story must take its place as one of the best dozen stories of the war.

13. Boys Will Be Boys, 14. The Family Tree, and 15. Quality Folks by *Irvin S. Cobb* (all in the Saturday Evening Post). It is seven years since Irvin Cobb published his first short story, "The Escape of Mr. Trimm," in the Saturday Evening Post. During that short period he has passed from the position of an excellent journalist to that of America's most representative humorist, in the truer meaning of that word. Upon him the mantle of Mark Twain has descended, and with that mantle he has inherited the artistic virtues and the utter inability to criticize his own work that was so characteristic of Mr. Clemens. But the very gusto of his creative work has been shaping his style during the past two years to a point where he may now fairly claim to have mastered his material, and to have found the most effective

human persuasiveness in its presentation. Our grandchildren will read these three stories, and thank God that there was a man named Cobb once born in Paducah, Kentucky.

16. Laughter (Harper's Magazine), and 17. Our Dog (Pictorial Review) by *Charles Caldwell Dobie*. The rapid rise of Mr. Dobie in less than two years from the date when his first short story was published challenges comparison with the similar career of Maxwell Struthers Burt. As Mr. Burt's art has its analogies with that of Mrs. Gerould, so Mr. Dobie's art has its analogies with that of Wilbur Daniel Steele. I am not certain that Mr. Dobie's talent is not essentially that of a novel-writer, but certainly at least four of the short stories which he has published during the past year are notable artistic achievements in widely different moods. If tragedy prevails, it is purified by a fine spiritual idealism, which takes symbols and makes of them something more human than a mere allegory. If an American publisher were courageous enough to start publishing a series of volumes of short stories by contemporary American writers, he could not do better than to begin with a selection of Mr. Dobie's tales.

18. A Little Nipper of Hide-an'-Seek Harbor by *Norman Duncan* (Pictorial Review).

This story has a melancholy interest, because it was the last story sold by its author before his sudden death last year. But it would have been remembered for its own sake as the last and not the least important of the long series of Newfoundland sagas which Mr. Duncan has given us. It shows that Norman Duncan kept his artistic vigor to the last, and those who know Newfoundland can testify that such stories as these will always remain its most permanent literary record.

19. The Emperor of Elam by *H. G. Dwight* (The Century Magazine). Those who have read Mr. Dwight's volume of short stories entitled "Stamboul Nights" do not need to be told that Mr. Dwight is the one American short story writer whom we may confidently set beside Joseph Conrad as a master in a similar literary field. American editors have been diffident about publishing his stories for reasons which cast more discredit on the American editor than on Mr. Dwight, and accordingly it is a genuine pleasure to encounter "The Emperor of Elam," and to chronicle the hardihood of the editor of the Century Magazine. The story is a modern odyssey of adventure, set as usual in the Turkish background with which Mr. Dwight is most familiar. In it atmosphere is realized completely for its own sake, and as a motive power urging

the lives of his characters to their inevitable end.

20. The Gay Old Dog by *Edna Ferber* (Metropolitan Magazine) is in my opinion the big story which "The Eldest" was not. It is my belief that Edna Ferber is a novelist first and a short story writer afterwards, but in "The Gay Old Dog" she has accepted a theme which can best be handled in the short story form and has made the most of it artistically, much as Fannie Hurst has done in all of her better stories. Miss Ferber has not sentimentalized her substance as she does most often, but has let it remain at its true valuation.

21. Bread-Crumbs by *Waldo Frank* (Seven Arts Magazine). I cannot help feeling that this is an extremely well written and honestly conceived story whose substance is essentially false, but the author has apparently persuaded himself of its truth and presents it almost convincingly to the reader. Be this as it may, Mr. Frank has not failed to make his two characters real for us, and the poignancy of their final revelation is certainly genuine. Mr. Frank, however, should save such material as this for longer fiction, as his method is essentially that of a novelist.

22. Pearls Before Swine by *Cornelia Throop Geer* (Atlantic Monthly). With a quiet

and somewhat reticent art, the author of this story has succeeded in deftly conveying to her readers a delicate pastoral scene of innocence reflecting the dreams of two little Irish children. It was a difficult feat to attempt, as few can safely reproduce the atmosphere of an alien race successfully, and, even to Irish-Americans, Ireland cannot be sufficiently realized for creative embodiment. I am told that a volume of Irish stories is promised from the pen of Miss Geer, and it should take its place with the better folk stories of modern Irish life. Miss Geer's method is the result of identification with, rather than condescension toward, her subject.

23. East of Eden (Harper's Magazine), 24. The Hand of Jim Fane (Harper's Magazine), 25. The Knight's Move (Atlantic Monthly), 26. The Wax Doll (Scribner's Magazine), and 27. What They Seem (Harper's Magazine) by *Katharine Fullerton Gerould*. In these five short stories Mrs. Gerould amply sustains her claim to rank as one of the three most distinguished contemporary writers of the American short story. Preoccupied as she is with the subtle rendering of abnormal psychological situations, her work is in the great traditional line whose last completely adequate exponent was Henry James. One and all, these

stories have the fascination of strange spiritual adventure, and the persuasiveness of her exposition conceals inimitably the closely woven craftsmanship of her work. Of these five stories, "The Knight's Move" and "East of Eden" surely represent a development in her art which it will be almost impossible for her to surpass.

28. Dare's Gift by *Ellen Glasgow* (Harper's Magazine). I prefer to beg the question whether this is a short story or a very short novel. It certainly has the unity of a well-defined spiritual incident, and if one recalls its substance, it is only to view it as a completely rounded whole. As such it is surely as fine a study of the influence of place as Mrs. Wharton's "Kerfol" or Mrs. Pangborn's "Bixby's Bridge." The brooding atmosphere of a house mindful of its past and reacting upon successive inmates morally, or perhaps immorally, has seldom been more faithfully rendered.

29. The Hearing Ear (Harper's Magazine), and 30. A Jury of Her Peers (Every Week) by *Susan Glaspell*. It is always interesting to study the achievement of a novelist who has won distinction deservedly in that field, when that novelist attempts the very different technique of the short story. It is particularly

interesting in the case of Susan Glaspell, because with these two stories she convinces the reader that her future really lies in the short story rather than in the novel. Few American writers have such a natural dramatic story sense, and to this Susan Glaspell has added an increasing reticence in the portrayal of her characters. In these two stories you will not find the slightest sentimentalization of her subject matter, nor is it keyed so tightly as some of her previous work. "A Jury of Her Peers" is one of the better folk stories of the year, sharing that distinction with "The Excursion" by Miss Babcock and the two stories by Francis Buzzell, of which I have spoken above.

31. His Father's Flag by *Armistead C. Gordon* (Scribner's Magazine). The many readers who have revelled in Mr. Gordon's admirable portraits of Virginia negro plantation life will be surprised and gratified at Mr. Gordon's venture in this story into a new field. This story has all the infectious emotional feeling of memory recalling glorious things, and I can only compare it for its spiritual fidelity toward a cause to the stories by Elsie Singmaster which she has gathered into her volume about Gettysburg, and particularly to that fine story, "The Survivors."

32. The Bunker Mouse, and 33. "Molly McGuire, Fourteen" by *Frederick Stuart Greene* (The Century Magazine). Captain Greene's story "The Cat of the Cane-Brake" attracted so much attention at the time of its publication in the Metropolitan Magazine a year ago that it is interesting to find him achieving high distinction in other imaginative fields. Captain Greene's natural gift of narrative is the result of a strong impulse toward creative expression, which molds its form a little self-consciously, but convincingly, for the most part. I think that he is at his best in these two stories rather than in "The Cat of the Cane-Brake" and "The Black Pool," because they are based upon a more direct apprehension and experience of life. "Molly McGuire, Fourteen" adds one more tradition to those of the Virginia Military Institute.

34. Rainbow Pete by *Richard Matthews Hallet* (The Pictorial Review) reveals the author in his most incorrigibly romantic mood. Mr. Hallet casts glamour over his creations, partly through his detached and pictorial perception of life, and partly through the magic of his words. He has been compared to Conrad, and in a lesser way he has much in common with the author of "Lord Jim," but his artistic method is essentially different and quite as individual.

35. Frazee by *Lee Foster Hartman* (Harper's Magazine). Mr. Hartman has been a good friend to other story writers for so long that we had begun to forget how fine an artist he can be himself. In "Frazee" he has taken a subject which would have fascinated Mrs. Gerould and handled it with reserve and power. It is pitched in a quieter key than is usual in such a story, and the result is that character merges with atmosphere almost imperceptibly. I regard the story as almost a model of construction for students of short story writing.

36. Four Days by *Hetty Hemenway* (Atlantic Monthly). This remarkable story of the spiritual effect of the war upon two young people was so widely commented upon, not only after its appearance in the Atlantic Monthly, but later when it was republished in book form, that I shall only commend it to the reader here as an artistically woven study in war psychology.

37. Get Ready the Wreaths by *Fannie Hurst* (Cosmopolitan Magazine). The artistic qualities in Miss Hurst's work which have commended themselves to such disinterested critics as Mr. Howells are revealed once more in this story, in which Miss Hurst accepts the shoddiness of background which characterizes her literary types, and reveals the fine human

current that runs beneath it all. I am not sure that Miss Hurst has not diluted her substance a little too much during the past year, and in any case that danger is implicit in her method. But in "Get Ready the Wreaths" the emotional validity of her substance is absolutely unimpeachable and her handling of the situation it presents is adequate and fine.

38. Journey's End by *Percy Adams Hutchison* (Harper's Magazine). An attentive reader of the American short stories during the past few years may have observed with interest at rare intervals the work of Mr. Hutchison. In it there was always a promise of an achievement not unlike that of Perceval Gibbon, but a certain looseness of texture prevented Mr. Hutchison from being completely persuasive. In "Journey's End," however, it must be confessed that he has written a memorable sea story that is certainly equal at least to the better stories in Mr. Kipling's latest volume.

39. The Strange-Looking Man by *Fanny Kemble Johnson* (The Pagan). I suppose that this story is to be regarded as a sketch rather than a short story, but in any case it is a vividly rendered picture of war's effects portrayed with subtle irony and quiet art. I associate it with "Chautonville" by Will Levington Comfort, and

"The Flying Teuton" by Alice Brown, as one of the three stories with the most authentic spiritual message in American fiction that the war has produced.

40. The Sea-Turn by *E. Clement James* (The Seven Arts). In this study of the spiritual reactions of a starved environment upon an imaginative mind, Mrs. Jones has added a convincing character portrait to American letters which ranks with the better short stories of J. D. Beresford in a similar *genre*. The story is in the same tradition as that of the younger English realists, but it is an essential contribution to our nationalism, and as such helps to point the way toward the future in which a true national literature must find its only and inevitable realization.

41. The Caller in the Night by *Burton Kline* (The Stratford Journal). I believe that Mr. Kline has completely realized in this story a fine imaginative situation and has presented a folk story with a significant legendary quality. It is in the tradition of Hawthorne, but the substance with which Mr. Kline deals is the substance of his own people, and consequently that in which his creative impulse has found the freest scope. It may be compared to its own advantage with "The Lost Phoebe" by Theodore Dreiser, which

was equally memorable among the folk-stories of 1916, and the comparison suggests that in both cases the author's training as a novelist has not been to his disadvantage as a short-story teller.

42. When Did You Write Your Mother Last? by *Addison Lewis* (Reedy's Mirror). This is the only story I have read in three years in which it seemed to me that I found the authentic voice of "O. Henry" speaking. Mr. Lewis has been publishing a series of these "Tales While You Wait" in Reedy's Mirror during the past few months, and I should much prefer them to those of Jack Lait for the complete success with which he has achieved his aims. Imitation of "O. Henry" has been the curse of American story-telling for the past ten years, because "O. Henry" is practically inimitable. Mr. Lewis is not an imitator, but he may well prove before very long to be "O. Henry's" successor. In the words of Padna Dan and Micus Pat, "Here's the chance for some one to make a discovery."

43. Widow La Rue by *Edgar Lee Masters* (Reedy's Mirror). This is the best short story in verse that the year has produced, and as literature it realizes in my belief even greater imaginative fulfilment than "Spoon River Anthology." I should have most certainly

wished to include it in "The Best Short Stories of 1917" had it been in prose, and it adds one more unforgettable legend to our folk imagination.

44. The Understudy by *Johnson Morton* (Harper's Magazine) is an ironic character study developed with much finesse in the tradition of Henry James. Its defect is a certain conventional atmosphere which demands an artificial attitude on the part of the reader. Its admirable distinction is its faithful rendering of a personality not unlike the "Tante" of Anne Douglas Sedgwick, if a novel portrait and a short story portrait may fittingly be compared. If the portraiture is unpleasant, it is at any rate rendered with incisive kindliness.

45. The Heart of Life by *Meredith Nicholson* (Scribner's Magazine). Mr. Nicholson has treated an old theme freshly in "The Heart of Life" and discovered in it new values of contrasting character. Among his short stories it stands out as notably as "A Hoosier Chronicle" among his novels. It is in such work as this that Mr. Nicholson justifies his calling, and it is by them that he has most hope of remembrance in American literature.

46. Murder? by *Seumas O'Brien* (The Illustrated Sunday Magazine). With something

of Hardy's stark rendering of atmosphere, Mr. O'Brien has portrayed a grim situation unforgettably. Woven out of the simplest elements, and with an entire lack of literary sophistication, his story is fairly comparable to the work of Daniel Corkery, whose volume, "A Munster Twilight," has interested me more than any other volume of short stories published in America this year. The story is of particular interest because Mr. O'Brien's reputation as an artist has been based solely upon his work as a satirist and Irish fabulist.

47. The Interval by *Vincent O'Sullivan* (Boston Evening Transcript). It is odd to reflect that a literary artist of Mr. O'Sullivan's distinction is not represented in American magazines during 1917 at all, and that it has been left to a daily newspaper to publish his work. In "The Interval," Mr. O'Sullivan has sought to suggest the spiritual effect of the war upon a certain type of mind. He has rendered with faithful subtleness the newly aroused longing for religious belief or some form of concrete spiritual expression that bereavement brings. This state has a pathos of its own that the author adequately realizes in his story, and his irony in portraying it is Gallic in its quality.

48. Bixby's Bridge by *Georgia Wood*

Pangborn (Harper's Magazine). Mrs. Pangborn is well known for her artistic stories of the supernatural, and this will rank among the very best of them. She shares with Algernon Blackwood that gift for making spiritual illusion real which is so rare in contemporary work. What is specially distinctive is her gift of selection, by which she brings out the most illusive psychological contrasts.

49. "A Certain Rich Man—," by *Lawrence Perry* (Scribner's Magazine). I find in this story an emotional quality keyed up as tightly, but as surely, as in the best short stories by Mary Synon. Remote as its substance may seem, superficially, it touches the very heart of the experience that the war has brought to us all, and reveals the naked stuff out of which our war psychology has emerged.

50. The Portrait by *Emery Pottle* (The Touchstone). This study in Italian backgrounds is by another disciple of Henry James, who portrays with deft sure touches the nostalgia of an American girl unhappily married to an Italian nobleman. It just fails of complete persuasiveness because it is a trifle overstrung, but nevertheless it is memorable for its artistic sincerity.

51. The Path of Glory by *Mary Brecht*

Pulver (Saturday Evening Post). This story of how distinction came to a poor family in the mountains through the death of their son in the French army is simply told with a quiet, unassuming earnestness that makes it very real. It marks a new phase of Mrs. Pulver's talent, and one which promises her a richer fulfilment in the future than her other stories have suggested. Time and time again I have been impressed this year by the folk quality that is manifest in our younger writers, and what is most encouraging is that, when they write of the poor and the lowly, there is less of that condescension toward their subject than has been characteristic of American folk-writing in the past.

52. Miss Fothergill by *Norval Richardson* (Scribner's Magazine). The tradition in English fiction, which is most signally marked by "Pride and Prejudice," "Cranford," and "Barchester Towers," and which was so pleasantly continued by the late Dr. S. Weir Mitchell and by Margaret Deland, is admirably embodied in the work of this writer, whose work should be better known. The quiet blending of humor and pathos in "Miss Fothergill" is unusual.

53. The Scar That Tripled by *William Gunn Shepherd* (Metropolitan Magazine) is none the less truly a remarkable short story

because it happens to be based on fact. "The Deserter" was the last fine short story written by the late Richard Harding Davis, and "The Scar That Tripled" is the engrossing narrative of the adventure which suggested that story. Personally, I regard it as superior to "The Deserter."

54. A Country Christmas by *Grant Showerman* (Century Magazine). Professor Showerman's country chronicles are now well known to American readers, and this is quite the best of them. These sketches rank with those of Hamlin Garland as a permanent and delightful record of a pioneer life that has passed away for ever. Their deliberate homeliness and consistent reflection of a small boy's attitude toward life have no equal to my knowledge.

55. The Christmas Angel (The Pictorial Review), and 56. The Flag of Eliphalet (Boston Evening Transcript) by *Elsie Singmaster* add two more portraits to the pleasant gallery of Elsie Singmaster's vivid creations. Although her vein is a narrow one, no one is more competent than she in its expression, and few surpass her in the faithful rendering of homely but none the less real spiritual circumstance.

57. The End of the Road by *Gordon Arthur Smith* (Scribner's Magazine) is a sequel to "Feet of Gold" and chronicles the further love adventures of Ferdinand Taillandy, and their tragic conclusion. In these two stories Mr. Smith has proven his literary kinship with Leonard Merrick, and these stories surely rank with the chronicles of Tricotrin and Pitou.

58. Ching, Ching, Chinaman (Pictorial Review), 59. Ked's Hand (Harper's Magazine), 60. White Hands (Pictorial Review), and 61. The Woman at Seven Brothers (Harper's Magazine) by *Wilbur Daniel Steele*. With these four stories, together with "A Devil of a Fellow," "Free," and "A Point of Honor," Mr. Steele assumes his rightful place with Katharine Fullerton Gerould and H. G. Dwight as a leader in American fiction. "Ching, Ching, Chinaman," "White Hands," and "The Woman at Seven Brothers" are, in my belief, the three best short stories that were published in 1917, by an American author, and I may safely predict their literary permanence. Mr. Steele's extraordinary gift for presenting action and spiritual conflict pictorially is unrivalled, and his sense of human mystery has a rich tragic humor akin to that of Thomas Hardy, though his philosophy of life is infinitely

more hopeful.

62. None so Blind by *Mary Synon* (Harper's Magazine) is a study in tragic circumstance, the more powerful because it is so reticently handled. It is Miss Synon's first profound study in feminine psychology, and reveals an unusual sense of emotional values. Few backgrounds have been more subtly rendered in their influence upon character, and the action of the story is inevitable despite its character of surprise.

63. The Scar by *Elisabeth Stead Taber* (The Seven Arts). The brutal realism of this story may repel the reader, but its power and convincing quality cannot be gainsaid. So many writers have followed John Fox's example in writing about the mountaineers of the Alleghanies, that it is gratifying to chronicle so exceptional a story as this. It is as inevitable in its ugliness as "The Cat of the Cane-Brake" by Frederick Stuart Greene, and psychologically it is far more convincing.

MAGAZINE AVERAGES

FOR 1917

The following table includes the averages of American periodicals published during 1917. One, two, and three asterisks are employed to indicate relative distinction. "Three-asterisk stories" are of somewhat permanent literary value. The list excludes reprints.

PERIODICALS	NO. OF STORIES PUBLISHED	NO. OF DISTINCTIVE STORIES PUBLISHED			PERCE (DISTI STO PUBL
		*	* *	* * *	*
American Magazine	54	25	3	1	46
Atlantic Monthly	20	17	11	5	85
Bellman	47	34	17	2	72
Bookman	5	5	4	1	100
Boston Evening Transcript	6	6	6	2	100
Century	50	40	29	17	80
Collier's Weekly	108	51	22	3	47
Delineator	46	18	5	2	39
Everybody's Magazine	45	26	7	3	58

Every Week	87	18	5	2	21
Forum	6	4	1	1	67
Good Housekeeping	40	12	9	5	30
Harper's Magazine	80	64	39	27	80
Illustrated Sunday Magazine	25	10	4	1	40
Ladies' Home Journal	33	11	4	1	33
Masses (except Oct. and Nov.)	11	6	3	0	54
McClure's Magazine	45	9	4	2	20
Metropolitan	43	16	8	5	37
Midland	22	21	17	2	95
New Republic	5	5	2	1	100
New York Tribune	30	22	7	4	73
Outlook	18	10	8	1	56
Pagan	11	8	8	4	72
Pictorial Review	42	26	18	14	62
Reedy's Mirror	32	18	10	3	56
Saturday Evening Post	235	62	25	7	21

Scribner's Magazine	65	52	31	16	80
Seven Arts	23	22	19	14	96
Smart Set	107	22	12	3	20
Stratford Journal	10	10	10	9	100
Sunset Magazine	32	6	0	0	19
Touchstone	15	15	10	2	100

The following tables indicate the rank, during 1917, by number and percentage of distinctive stories published, of the nineteen periodicals coming within the scope of my examination which have published during the past year over twenty-five stories and which have exceeded an average of 15% in stories of distinction. The lists exclude reprints.

BY PERCENTAGE OF DISTINCTIVE STORIES

1. Harper's Magazine 80%
2. Scribner's Magazine 80%
3. Century Magazine 80%
4. New York Tribune 73%
5. Bellman 72%

6.	Pictorial Review	62%
7.	Everybody's Magazine	58%
8.	Reedy's Mirror	56%
9.	Collier's Weekly	47%
10.	American Magazine	46%
11.	Delineator	39%
12.	Metropolitan Magazine	37%
13.	Ladies' Home Journal	33%
14.	Good Housekeeping	30%
15.	Saturday Evening Post	21%
16.	Every Week	21%
17.	Smart Set	20%
18.	McClure's Magazine	20%
19.	Sunset Magazine	19%

BY NUMBER OF DISTINCTIVE STORIES

1.	Harper's Magazine	64
2.	Saturday Evening Post	62
3.	Scribner's Magazine	52
4.	Collier's Weekly	51
5.	Century Magazine	40
6.	Bellman	34
7.	Everybody's Magazine	26
8.	Pictorial Review	26
9.	American Magazine	25

10.	New York Tribune	22
11.	Smart Set	22
12.	Reedy's Mirror	18
13.	Delineator	18
14.	Every Week	18
15.	Metropolitan Magazine	16
16.	Good Housekeeping	12
17.	Ladies' Home Journal	11
18.	McClure's Magazine	9
19.	Sunset Magazine	6

The following periodicals have published during 1917 ten or more "two-asterisk stories." The list excludes reprints. Periodicals represented in this list during 1915 as well are indicated by an asterisk. Periodicals represented in this list during 1916 are indicated by a dagger.

1.	*†Harper's Magazine	39
2.	*†Scribner's Magazine	31
3.	*†Century Magazine	29
4.	*†Saturday Evening Post	25
5.	*†Collier's Weekly	20
6.	Seven Arts	19
7.	†Pictorial Review	18
8.	Midland	17
9.	*†Bellman	17

10.	*†Smart Set	12
11.	Atlantic Monthly	11
12.	Touchstone	10

The following periodicals have published during 1917 five or more "three-asterisk stories." The list excludes reprints. Periodicals represented in this list during 1915 as well are indicated by an asterisk. Periodicals represented in this list during 1916 are indicated by a dagger.

1.	*†Harper's Magazine	27
2.	*†Century Magazine	17
3.	*†Scribner's Magazine	16
4.	Seven Arts	14
5.	†Pictorial Review	14
6.	Stratford Journal	9
7.	*†Saturday Evening Post	7
8.	Atlantic Monthly	5
9.	*Metropolitan	5
10.	Good Housekeeping	5

Ties in the above lists have been decided by taking relative rank in other lists into account.

INDEX OF SHORT STORIES FOR 1917

All short stories published in the following magazines and newspapers during 1917 are indexed.

American Magazine
Atlantic Monthly
Bellman
Bookman
Boston Evening Transcript
Century
Collier's Weekly
Current Opinion
Delineator
Everybody's Magazine
Every Week
Forum
Harper's Magazine
Illustrated Sunday Magazine
Ladies' Home Journal
Little Review (except Oct.)
Masses (Jan.-Sept.)
McClure's Magazine
Metropolitan
Midland
New Republic
New York Tribune
Outlook

Pictorial Review
Poetry
Pagan
Reedy's Mirror
Russian Review (Jan.-July)
Saturday Evening Post
Scribner's Magazine
Seven Arts
Stratford Journal
Sunset Magazine
Touchstone
Yale Review

The October and November issues of the Masses are not listed, as they were not procurable through ordinary channels. The October issue of the Russian Review was not yet published when this book went to press. The October issue of the Little Review was withdrawn from circulation before it could come to my notice.

Short stories, of distinction only, published in the following magazines and newspapers during 1917 are indexed.

Black Cat
Boston Herald
Colonnade
Cosmopolitan
Good Housekeeping
Harper's Bazar

Hearst's Magazine
Live Stories
McCall's Magazine
Milestones
Munsey's Magazine
Parisienne
Pearson's Magazine
Short Stories
Smart Set
Snappy Stories
Southern Woman's Magazine
To-day's Housewife
Woman's Home Companion
Youth's Companion

Certain stories of distinction published in the following magazines and newspapers during 1917 are indexed, because they have been called to my attention by authors or readers.

All-Story Weekly
Art World
Ainslee's Magazine
Dernier Cri
Detective Story Magazine
Los Angeles Times
Queen's Work
Saucy Stories
Top-Notch Magazine
Woman's World
Young's Magazine

The Red Book Magazine is not represented in these lists, in deference to the wishes of its editor, who sent me the following telegram: "We prefer not to be listed."

One, two, or three asterisks are prefixed to the titles of stories to indicate distinction. Three asterisks prefixed to a title indicate the more or less permanent literary value of a story, and entitle it to a place on the annual "Rolls of Honor." An asterisk before the name of an author indicates that he is not an American.

The following abbreviations are used in the index:—

Ain.	Ainslee's Magazine
All.	All-Story Weekly
Am.	American Magazine
Atl.	Atlantic Monthly
Art W.	Art World
B. C.	Black Cat
Bel.	Bellman
B. E. T.	Boston Evening Transcript
B. Her.	Boston Herald
Cen.	Century
C. O.	Current Opinion
Col.	Collier's Weekly
Colon.	Colonnade
Cos.	Cosmopolitan
Del.	Delineator

Det.	Detective Story Magazine
Ev.	Everybody's Magazine
E. W.	Every Week
For.	Forum
G. H.	Good Housekeeping
Harp. B.	Harper's Bazar
Harp. M.	Harper's Magazine
Hear.	Hearst's Magazine
I. S. M.	Illustrated Sunday Magazine
L. A. Times.	Los Angeles Times
L. H. J.	Ladies' Home Journal
Lit. R.	Little Review
L. St.	Live Stories
McC.	McClure's Magazine
McCall	McCall's Magazine
Met.	Metropolitan
Mid.	Midland
Mir.	Reedy's Mirror
Mun.	Munsey's Magazine
N. Rep.	New Republic
N. Y. Trib.	New York Tribune
Outl.	Outlook
Pag.	Pagan
Par.	Parisienne
Pear.	Pearson's Magazine
Pict. R.	Pictorial Review
Q. W.	Queen's Work

(*R.*)	(Reprint)
Rus. R.	Russian Review
Sau. St.	Saucy Stories
Scr.	Scribner's Magazine
S. E. P.	Saturday Evening Post
Sev. A.	Seven Arts
Sh. St.	Short Stories
Sn. St.	Snappy Stories
So. Wo. M.	Southern Woman's Magazine
S. S.	Smart Set
Strat. J.	Stratford Journal
Sun.	Sunset Magazine
To-day	To-day's Housewife
Top-Notch	Top-Notch Magazine
Touch.	Touchstone
W. H. C.	Woman's Home Companion
Wom. W.	Woman's World
Yale	Yale Review
Y. C.	Youth's Companion
Young	Young's Magazine

A

Abbott, Frances C.
**Memorial Window, The. Del. Nov.

Mrs. Bodkin's Début. Del. June.

*Abdullah, Achmed. (Achmend Abdullah Nadir Khan el-Durani el-Iddrissyeh.) ("A. A. Nadir.") (1881- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
(*See also* Uzzell, Thomas H., *and* Abdullah, Achmed.)
*As He Reaped. Ain. July.
*Consider the Oath of M'Taga. All. March 10.
*Disappointment. All. May 19.
*East or West? Top-Notch. April 15.
*Five-Dollar Gold-Piece, The. Sn. St. Dec. 18.
**Gamut, The. S. S. Dec.
**Gentlemen of the Old Régime, A. S. S. Feb.
*Guerdon, The. S. S. Feb.
**Home-Coming, The. Harp. M. May.
**Letter, The. S. S. Jan.
**Silence. All. April 21.

Adams, Katharine.
*"Silent Brown." So. Wo. M. Oct.

Adams, Minnie Barbour. (*See* 1916.)
*Half a Boy. Pict. R. Sept.

Adams, Samuel Hopkins. (1871- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

Letter to Nowhere, A. E. W. Feb. 12.
*Little Red Doctor of Our Square, The. Col Aug. 25.
*Meanest Man in Our Square, The. Col. March 24.
*Paula of the Housetop. Col. July 7.
*Room "12 A." Ev. Nov.
"Wamble: His Day Out." Col. Jan. 13.

Adler, Henry.

Coward, The. Pag. Sept.

*Aicard, Jean. (1848- .)

*Mariette's Gift. N. Y. Trib. Feb. 18.

Alexander, Mary.

Ashamed of Her Parents. Del. Nov.
Girl Who Is Not Popular, The. Del. May.
How Can I Meet the Right Sort of Men? Del. March.
Out of Touch With Life. Del. Oct.
Too Sure of Herself. Del. July.
When She Runs After the Boys. Del. Aug.

Allen, Frederick Lewis. (*See 1915.*)

Big Game. Cen. March.
Fixing Up the Balkans. Cen. May.
Small Talk. Cen. Feb.

Allen, Loraine Anderson.
**Going of Agnes, The. Touch. Sept.

Allendorf, Anna Stahl.
*Dallying of Celia May, The. G. H. July.
**Leavening of St. Rupert, The. G. H. June.

"Amid, John." (M. M. Stearns.) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Alone. Det. Sept. 25.
*Busted Poor. All. Dec. 8.
Freeze, The. Mid. Aug.
*Interlude. Young. April.
*Prem Singh. Bel. Dec. 1.
***Professor, A. Mid. Nov.
Strachan's Hindu. Bel. Oct. 27.

Anderson, Sherwood. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***"Mother." Sev. A. March.
***Thinker, The. Sev. A. Sept.
***Untold Lie, The. Sev. A. Jan.

Anderson, William Ashley. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Unwrit Dogma, The. Ev. Dec.

Andrade, Cipriano, Jr.
*Applied Hydraulics. S. E. P. Aug. 25.

Andres, Mary Raymond Shipman. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Blood Brothers. Scr. May.
***Return of K. of K., The. McC. March.
*Russian, The. Milestones. Oct.

*Andreyev, Leonid Nikolaevich. (1871- .)
(*See 1916.*)
***Lazarus. Strat. J. June.

Anonymous.
Apparition, The. N. Y. Trib. Nov. 11.
Coeur de Lion. N. Y. Trib. July 22.
***Evocation, The. N. Y. Trib. April 22.
Eyes of the Soul, The. N. Y. Trib. Feb. 25.
Fools. Mir. Sept. 28.
***"Huppdiwupp." Lit. R. Jan.
*Pipe, The. N. Y. Trib. Nov. 4.
**Poilu's Dream on Christmas Eve, The. B. Her. Dec. 23.
*Rendezvous, The. N. Y. Trib. Sept. 30.
**Slacker with a Soul, A. N. Y. Trib. Sept. 16.
*Spirit of Alsace, The. N. Y. Trib. May 6.
*Voice of the Church Bell, The. N. Y. Trib. Oct. 21.
War Against War. McC. April-May.
When Lulu Made Trouble. Mir. May 18.

Arbuckle, Mary.

Freedom and Robbie May. Sun. Nov.

Armstrong, William.
Cupid in High Finance. Del. Sept.

Ashe, Elizabeth. (*See 1915.*)
*Appraisement. Atl. March.

*Assis, Machado de. (1839-1908.) (*See 1916.*)
**Attendant's Confession, The. (*R.*) Strat. J. Dec.

Auernheimer, Raoul. (1876- .)
*Demonstrating That War Is War. N. Y. Trib. Jan. 28.

*Aumonier, Stacy. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***In the Way of Business. Pict. R. March.
***Packet, The. Col. May 26.
***"Them Others." Cen. Aug.

Austin, F. Britten. (*See 1915.*)
**Zu Befehl! S. E. P. Dec. 1.

B

Babcock, Edwina Stanton. (*See 1916.*)

***Excursion, The. Pict. R. Oct.

Bacon, Josephine Daskam. (1876- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Comrades in Arms. S. E. P. Oct. 27.
*Entrances and Exits. Del. Oct.
Ghost of Rosy Taylor, The. S. E. P. Nov. 17.
*Magic Casements. Del. Nov.
Square Peggy. S. E. P. Dec. 22.
*Year of Cousin Quartus, A. Del. Feb.

Bailey (Irene) Temple. (*See 1915.*)
*Red Candle, The. Scr. Dec.

Baker, Katharine. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Fifty-Cent Kind, The. Atl. April.

Ball, William David.
Man Who Paid, The. E. W. April 2.

Balmer, Edwin. (1883- .) (*See 1915.*)
Madcap. Col. Jan. 27.
S. Orton, Stockholder. E. W. May 28.
Telegraph Trail, The. Col. March 17.
Thing That He Did, The. L. H. J. Jan.
With Sealed Hood. Col. Sept. 22.

Banks, Helen Ward.
*Mrs. Pepper Passes. Y. C. April 5.

*Barbusse, Henri.
**Paradis Polishes the Boots. (*R.*) C. O. Dec.

Barnard, Floy Tolbert. (1879- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Surprise in Perspective, A. Harp. M. April.

Barry, Richard. (1881- .)
Legacy, The. Del. March.

Bartlett, Frederick Orin. (1876- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Time to Go to Newport. E. W. July 23.

Bartley, Nalbro.
Benedict & Company. S. E. P. Oct. 13.
Briggles "Goes West." S. E. P. March 10.
Have a Heart! S. E. P. April 7.
Reel True. S. E. P. Nov. 10.
Total Bewitcher, The. S. E. P. June 16.
Town Mouse, The. S. E. P. April 21.

Bassett, Willard Kenneth.
*End of the Line, The. S. S. Oct.

Bates, Sylvia Chatfield. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Let Nothing You Dismay. W. H. C. Dec.
*Light from the Holy Hill. Wom. W. Dec.

*Bazin, René. (1853- .)
***Mathurine's Eyes. Strat. J. March.

Beach, Roy.
Cline's Injunction. Sun. April.

Beatty, Jerome.
"Attaboy!" McC. March.
Gee-Whiz Guy, The. McC. Aug.
"Take 'Im Out!" McC. May.

Bechdolt, Frederick R.
Pecos Kid, The. Col. Jan. 6.

Bechdolt, Jack.
Black Widow's Mercy, The. (*R.*) Mir. Feb. 16.

Beer, Thomas. (1889- .)
***Brothers, The. Cen. Feb.
***Onnie. Cen. May.
**Rescuer, The. S. E. P. Aug. 11.

Behrman, S. N.
**Coming of the Lord, The. Touch. Oct.
**Song of Ariel. Sev. A. May.

*Beith, Ian Hay. (*See* "Hay, Ian.")

*Bell, J(ohn) J(oy). (1871- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Wanted—A Pussy-Mew. Bel. March 3.

Bell, Lilian (Lida). (1867- .)
Mrs. Galloway Goes Shopping. Del. Sept.
Mrs. Galloway Tries to Reduce. Del. Nov.

Benefield, Barry. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Simply Sugar Pie. (*R.*) I. S. M. April 29.

Benét, William Rose. (1886- .)
But Once a Year. Cen. Dec.

Bennet-Thompson, Lillian. (*See* Thompson, Lillian Bennet-.)

*Benson, Edward Frederic. (1867- .)
*"Through." Cen. July.

Benson, Ramsey. (1866- .)
*Shad's Windfall. B. C. March.

*Beresford, John Davys. (1873- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Escape, The. Sev. A. Feb.
***Little Town, The. Sev. A. June.
***Powers of the Air. Sev. A. Oct.

Berry, John. (*See 1916.*)
*Clod, The. B. C. April.

Betts, Thomas Jeffries. (*See 1916.*)
**Alone. Scr. May.

Biggers, Earl Derr. (1884- .) (*See 1916.*)
Each According to His Gifts. S. E. P. April 14.
Same Old Circle. S. E. P. April 7.
Soap and Sophocles. McC. July.

*"Birmingham, George A." (Canon James O. Hannay.) (1865- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Von Edelstein's Mistake. McC. Nov.

Blair, Gertrude.
Water-Witch, The. Scr. May.

Bledsoe, Joe.
*Fuzz. B. C. May.

Blythe, Samuel G.
Der Tag for Us. S. E. P. Dec. 22.

Boggs, Russell A.
Boomer from the West, The. S. E. P. April 28.

Booth, Frederick. (*See 1916.*)
**Cloud-Ring, The. Sev. A. April.

Bottome, Phyllis. (*See 1916.*)
***"Ironstone." Cen. March.

Bourne, Randolph.
*Ernest, or Parent for a Day. Atl. June.

*Boutet, Frederic.
*Convalescent's Return, The. N. Y. Trib. Dec. 30.
***Medallion, The. N. Y. Trib. Oct. 28.
*Messenger, The. N. Y. Trib. Aug. 12.
*Promise, The. N. Y. Trib. Sept. 2.

Bower, B. M., *and* Connor, Buck. (*See 1916.*)
Go-Between, The. McC. March.
Red Ride, The. McC. May.

Boyer, Wilbur S.
*Bum Throwers. Ev. June.
*Getting Even with Geo'gia. Ev. April.
*One Week of Kelly. Ev. March.
*There's Many a Slip. Ev. Nov.

*Boyes, Dan.
Lilium Giganteum. (*R.*) Mir. Feb. 16.

Boykin, Nancy Gunter.
*Christmas Medley, A. Met. Jan.
Leavings. E. W. Dec. 3.
Retta Rosemary. E. W. July 16.

Brady, Elizabeth.
*Ladislav Saves the Day. Q. W. Nov.

Brady, Mariel. (*See 1916.*)
Thermopylæ. Bel. Oct. 6.

Braley, Berton. (*See 1915.*)
Stuff of Dreams, The. Del. Aug.

*Braz, Anatole Le. (*See* Le Braz, Anatole.)

"Breck, John." (Elizabeth C. A. Smith.)
***From Hungary. Bookman. Dec.
**Man Who was Afraid, The. Ev. Sept.

Brooks, Alden. (*See 1916.*)
**Man From America, The. Cen. July.
***Three Slavs, The. Col. May 5.

Brown, Alice. (1857- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Flying Teuton, The. Harp. M. Aug.

***Nemesis, Harp. M. April.
*Preaching Peony, The. Harp. M. June.

Brown, Bernice.
**Last of the Line, The. E. W. Nov. 5.

Brown, Katharine Holland. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Millicent: Maker of History. Scr. June.
**On a Brief Text from Isaiah. Scr. Feb.

Brown, Marion Francis.
*Husks and Hawthorn. So. Wo. M. Aug.

Brown, Phyllis Wyatt. (Phyllis Wyatt.) (*See 1916.*)
*Checked Trousers, The. Masses. June.
*Extra Chop, The. Cen. Oct.

Brown, Royal.
*Seventy Times Seven. McCall. April.

Brownell, Agnes Mary.
*Fifer, The. Y. C. June 28.

Brubaker, Howard. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Baby's Place, A. Harp. M. Jan.
Cabbages and Queens. Harp. M. Aug.
Greeks Bearing Gifts. Harp. M. Nov.

*Ranny and the Higher Life. Harp. M. June.

Bruckman, Clyde A. (*See 1916.*)
Joe Gum. S. E. P. May 5.

Bryson, Lyman. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Under a Roof. Mid. July.

Bulger, Bozeman. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Heart of the System, The. S. E. P. Jan. 6.
Queen's Mistake, The. S. E. P. March 3.
*Skin Deep. Ev. March.

Bunner, Anne.
Road to Arcady, The. Ev. July.

Burnet, Dana. (1888- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Christmas Fight of X 157. L. H. J. Dec.
*Dub, The. S. E. P. March 17.
***Fog. (*R.*) I. S. M. April 1.
Genevieve and Alonzo. L. H. J. March.
**Sadie Goes to Heaven. G. H. Aug.
**Sponge, The. Am. Jan.

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. (1849- .) (*See 1915.*)
**White People, The. Harp. M. Dec., '16-Jan., '17.

*Burrow, C. Kennett.
*Café de la Paix, The. (*R.*) Mir. Sept 21.

Burt, Jean Brooke.
Way of the West, The. Sun. June.

Burt, Maxwell Struthers. (1882- .) (*See 1915.*)
***Closed Doors. Scr. Nov.
***Cup of Tea, A. Scr. July.
***Glory of the Wild Green Earth, The. Scr. Oct.
***John O'May. Scr. Jan.
***Panache, Le. Scr. Dec.

Busbey, Katherine Graves. (1872- .)
**Senator's Son, The. Harp. M. March.

Buss, Kate (Meldram).
**Medals. Mid. May.

Butler, Ellis Parker. (1869- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Markley's "Size-Up" of Dix. Am. July.
Mutual Spurs, Limited. S. E. P. July 21.
*Red Avengers, The. Am. Jan.
*Scratch-Cat. E. W. Feb. 26.
Temporary Receiver, The. Am. Aug.
*Trouble with Martha, The. Harp. M. Dec.

**Wasted Effort. Am. May.

Buzzell, Francis. (1882- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Lonely Places. Pict. R. Dec.
***Long Vacation, The. Pict. R. Sept.

"Byrne, Donn." (Bryan Oswald Donn-Byrne.) (1888- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Day After Tomorrow. McC. Oct.
Gryphon, The. S. E. P. April 28.
*Prodigal in Utopia, The. S. E. P. Sept. 8.
**Sound of Millstones, The. S. E. P. March 24.
*Treasure Upon Earth, A. S. E. P. Nov. 3.
*Woman in the House, A. S. E. P. March 3.

C

*Caine, William. (*See 1916.*)
**Spanish Pride. Cen. Dec.

Cameron, Anne.
Sadie's Opportunity. Am. March.

Cameron, Margaret. (Margaret Cameron Lewis.) (1867- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Dolliver's Devil. Harp. M. Jan.

Camp (Charles) Wadsworth. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Veiled Woman, The. Col. Nov. 17.

Campbell, Fleta. (1886- .) (*See 1915 and 1916 under* Springer, Fleta Campbell.)
**Incompetent, Irrelevant, and Immaterial. Harp. M. May.
**Millward. Harp. M. Oct.
***Mistress, The. Harp. B. Oct.

Campbell, Jay.
**Jim. Scr. Feb.

Campen, Helen Van. (*See* Van Campen, Helen.)

Carlton, Augustus.
*Lady from Ah-high-ah, The. Mir. Aug. 31.

Carruth, Gorton Veeder.
*Chivalry at Goldenbridge. Y. C. Aug. 30.

Carver, Ada Jack. (*See 1916.*)
*"Joyous Coast, The." So. Wo. M. Sept.

Casey, Patrick *and* Terence. (*See 1915.*)
**Kid Brother, The. Col. May 19.

*Castle, Egerton. (1858- .)
*Guinea Smuggler, The. Bel. June 16.

Castle, Everett Rhodes.
Coats Is In. S. E. P. Nov. 17.
Dark-Brown Liquid, The. S. E. P. Dec. 8.
Harvest Gloom. S. E. P. Dec. 15.
In the Movies They Do It. S. E. P. Dec. 29.

Cather, Willa Sibert. (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Gold Slipper, A. Harp. M. Jan.

Cederschiöld, Gunnar.
***Foundling, The. Col. Oct. 27.

Chamberlain, George Agnew. (1879- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Man Who Went Back, The. L. H. J. June.
Neutrality and Siamese Cats. S. E. P. June 30.

Chamberlain, Lucia.
Under Side, The. S. E. P. Aug. 11.

Chambers, Robert William. (1865- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Brabançonne, La. Hear. Feb.

Channing, Grace Ellery. (Grace Ellery Channing Stetson.) (1862- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Out of the Earth. S. E. P. Aug. 18.

*Chekhov, Anton. (*See* Tchekov, Anton Pavlovitch.)

Chenault, Fletcher.
Strategy Wins. Col. March 31.
Young Man from Texas, The. Col. June 23.

Chester, George Randolph. (1869- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Heavenly Spat, The. Ev. Jan.

Child, Richard Washburn. (1881- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Chasm, The. S. E. P. Dec. 8.
Eagle Shannon Assists Mr. Sleed. Col. May 12.
Eagle Shannon Deals a Blow at Progress. Col. June 16.
Eagle Shannon Gives a Treatment. Col. Feb. 10.
Eagle Shannon Meets the Ivory Woman. Col. April 14.
*Faith. E. W. Dec. 31.
**Forever and Ever. Pict. R. April.
God's Laugh. Col. March 17.
*Hard of Head. E. W. Jan. 22.

Her Boy. E. W. Oct. 15.
*Her Countenance. Hear. Oct.
Love Is Love. E. W. March 12.

*Chirikov, Evgeniy.
***Past, The. Rus. R. Jan.

Cleghorn, Sarah N(orcliffe). (1876- .)
***"Mr. Charles Raleigh Rawdon, Ma'am." Cen. Feb.

*Clifford, Sir Hugh. (1866- .) (*See 1916.*)
**"Our Trusty and Well-Beloved." Sh. St. April.

*Clifford, Mrs. W. K. (*See 1915.*)
Quenching, The. Scr. Jan.

Closser, Myra Jo.
**At the Gate. Cen. March.

Cloud, Virginia Woodward.
Boy Without a Name, The. Bel. June 30.
Her Arabian Night. Bel. Aug. 11.

Cobb, Irvin S(hrewsbury). (1876- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Boys Will Be Boys. S. E. P. Oct. 20.
***Cinnamon Seed and Sandy Bottom. S. E. P.

June 9.
*Ex-Fightin' Billy. Pict. R. June.
***Family Tree, The. S. E. P. March 24.
*Garb of Men, The. S. E. P. Jan. 20.
*Hark! From the Tombs. S. E. P. April 14.
Kiss for Kindness, A. S. E. P. April 7.
***Quality Folks. S. E. P. Nov. 24.

Cocke, Sarah Johnson.
**Men-Fokes' Doin's. S. E. P. Oct. 27.
*Rooster and the Washpot, The. S. E. P. June 2.

Cody, Rosalie M. (*See* Eaton, Jacquette H., *and* Cody, Rosalie M.)

Cohen, Inez Lopez. (*See* "Lopez, Inez.")

Cohen, Octavus Roy. (1891- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*) (*See also* Cohen, Octavus Roy, *and* Levison, Eric.)
**Fair Play. Col. Nov. 24.
Lot for a Life, A. E. W. Jan. 1.
Oil and Miss Watters. I. S. M. July 8.
*Partners. Col. May 5.

Cohen, Octavus Roy (1891-), *and* Levison, Eric.
*Pro Patria. Ev. July.

Collamore, Edna A.
*Those Twin Easter Hats. Del. April.

Collins, Dorothy.
Honest Mind, An. Pag. March.

Colton, John.
**On the Yellow Sea. E. W. Nov. 26.

Comfort, Will Levington. (1878- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Lempke. S. E. P. Nov. 3.
*Lit Up. E. W. July 30.
*Pale Torrent, The. Touch. June.
*Plain Woman, The. S. E. P. Nov. 24.
**Respectable House, A. Touch. Aug.
*Shielding Wing, The. Hear. April.
**Woman He Loved, The. Touch. Nov.

Condon, Frank. (*See 1916.*)
Five, Six, Pick Up Sticks. S. E. P. Nov. 17.
Ne Coco Domo. S. E. P. April 7.
Nothing But Some Bones. Col. Oct. 20.
This Way Out. S. E. P. March 10.
Water on the Side. Col. April 28.

Connolly, James Brendan. (1868- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

***Breath o'Dawn. Scr. Sept.
*Bullfight, The. Col. Feb. 10.
Strategists, The. Scr. July.

Connor, Brevard Mays. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Desert Rose, The. Sun. Sept.

Connor, Buck. (*See* Bower, B. M., *and* Connor, Buck.)

Connor, Torrey.
*"Si, Señor!" Sun. March.

*"Conrad, Joseph." (Joseph Conrad Korzeniowski.) (1857- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Warrior's Soul, The. Met. Dec.

Converse, Florence. (1871- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Culprit, The. Atl. Jan.

Conway, Norman.
*Cleansing, The. Masses. June.

Cook, Mrs. George Cram. (*See* Glaspell, Susan.)

Cooke, Marjorie Benton. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
"It Might Have Happened." Scr. April.
Morals of Peter, The. Am. Aug.

Cooper, Courtney Ryley.
*Congo. Ev. Nov.
Ship Comes In, The. Pict R. Nov.

Corbin, John. (1870- .)
Father Comes Back. Col. June 23.

Cornell, Hughes. (*See 1916.*)
*Holbrook Hollow. L. A. Times. June 23.

Cornish, Reynelle G. E., *and* Cornish, Evelyn N.
*Letter of the Law, The. Outl. July 4.

Costello, Fanny Kemble. (*See* Johnson, Fanny Kemble.)

Couch, Sir Arthur T. Quiller-. (*See* Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur T.)

Cowdery, Alice. (*See 1915.*)
***Robert. Harp. M. Feb.

Crabb, Arthur.
Decision, The. S. E. P. Sept. 8.
Third Woman, The. S. E. P. Sept. 15.

Crabbe, Bertha Helen. (1887- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Lavender Satin. Y. C. Nov. 29.
***Once in a Lifetime. Bel. April 21.

Cram, Mildred R. (*See 1916.*)
*Not Quite an Hour. S. S. Aug.
**Statuette, The. S. S. May.

Crawford, Charlotte Holmes. (*See 1915.*)
**Daughter of Nish, A. Col. Jan. 20.

Crissey, Forrest. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Pretender, The. Harp. M. May.

Curtiss, Philip Everett. (1885- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Colonel Volunteers, The. Harp. M. Oct.
Gods and Little Fishes, The. E. W. Oct. 29.
"Overture and Beginners!" S. E. P. Oct. 13.
Pioneers, The. Harp. M. Aug.

Curwood, James Oliver. (1878- .)
*Fiddling Man, The. E. W. April 16.

D

Daly, Alice F.
*Aunt Virginia's Box. Y. C. Nov. 22.
*Heirloom, The. Y. C. Dec. 6.

Davies, Marion.
Runaway Romany. I. S. M. Sept. 16.

Davis, J. Frank.
*Almanzar's Perfect Day. E. W. Aug. 27.
White Folks' Talk. E. W. June 25.

Davis, Jacob.
*Striker, The. Mir. July 27.

Davis, Rose B.
Bremington's Job. Sun. March.

Dawson, (Francis) Warrington. (1878- .)
**Man, The. Atl. March.

Delano, Edith Barnard. (*See 1915.*)
Social Folks Next Door, The. L. H. J. Nov.

*Delarue-Madrus, Lucie.
***Death of the Dead, The. Strat. J. Dec.
Godmother, The. N. Y. Trib. Sept. 23.

Godmother, The. (II.) N. Y. Trib. Oct. 14.

Derieux, Samuel A. (*See 1916.*)
*Destiny of Dan VI, The. Am. March.

Dickson, Harris. (1868- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Jigadier Brindle, The. Col. July 14.
*Jigadier's Drum, The. Col. Sept. 29.
*Left Hind Tail, The. Pict. R. Feb.
Redpate the Rookie. Col. July 21.
War Trailer, The. Col. Sept. 15.

Divine, Charles.
*Last Aristocrat, The. S. S. April.
*Mrs. Smythe's Artistic Crisis. S. S. March.

Dix, Beulah Marie. (Mrs. George H. Flebbe.) (1876- .)
(*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**One Who Stayed, The. Harp. B. Sept.

Dobie, Charles Caldwell. (1881- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Empty Pistol, The. Harp. M. Dec.
***Gift, The. Harp. M. Aug.
***Laughter. Harp. M. April.
***Our Dog. Pict. R. Nov.
*Sign Language, The. Harp. M. July.

**Where the Road Forked. Harp. M. June.

Dodge, Henry Irving. (*See 1916.*)
Skinner's Big Idea. S. E. P. Dec. 15.

Dodge, Louis.
**Wilder's Ride. Scr. Dec.

Dodge, Mabel.
***Farmhands. Sev. A. Sept.

Doring, Winfield.
Boy's Night, A. L. H. J. Jan.

Doty, Madeleine Zabriskie. (*See 1915.*)
*Mutter, Die. (*R.*) *C. O.* May.

Douglas, David. (*See 1915.*)
Casey Gets a Surprise. McC. Feb.

Dounce, Harry Esty.
**Garden of Proserpine, The. Cen. Aug.

*Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. (1859- .) (*See 1916.*)
**His Last Bow. Col. Sept. 22.

*"Doyle, Lynn." (Lewis A.

Montgomery.)
Compulsory Service in Ballygullion. Cen. April.

Draper, John W.
*Guilleford Errant. Colon. March.

Dreiser, Theodore. (1871- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Married. Cos. Sept.

Driggs, Laurence La Tourette.
Battle Royal, The. Outl. Nov. 21.
Bridge on the Oise, The. Outl. Oct. 31.
My First Submarine. Outl. Nov. 7.
Strafing Jack Johnson. Outl. Dec. 5.
Zeppelin Raid over Paris, A. Outl. Oct. 17.

*Dudeney, Mrs. Henry. (1866- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Feather-bed, The. Harp. M. Oct.

Duncan, Norman. (1871-1916.) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Little Nipper o' Hide-an'-Seek Harbor, A. Pict. R. May.
*Mohammed of the Lion Heart. Del. Aug.

*Dunsany, Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, 18th Baron. (1878- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

***East and West. (*R.*) Mir. Jan. 19.
***Gifts of the Gods, The. (*R.*) Mir. Oct. 5.
***How the Gods Avenged Meoul Ki Ning. S. S. Nov.

*During, Stella M.
Top Floor Front, The. I. S. M. Feb. 18.

*Dutton, Louise Elizabeth. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Paradise Alley. Met. July.
Poor Butterfly. S. E. P. Sept. 29.
When the Half-Gods Go. S. E. P. July 14.

Dwight, H(arry) Griswold. (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Emperor of Elam, The. Cen. July.

Dwyer, James Francis. (1874- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Land of the Pilgrims' Pride. Col. April 28.

Dyer, Walter Alden. (1878- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Annabel's Goose. Col. Dec. 15.
Mission of McGregor, The. Col. Feb. 10.

Dyke, Catherine Van. (*See* Van Dyke, Catherine.)

Dyke, Henry van. (*See* Van Dyke, Henry.)

E

Eastman, Max. (1883- .) (*See 1916.*)
**Lover of Animals, A. Masses. April.

Eaton, Jacquette H., *and* Cody, Rosalie M.
*Thankful. Y. C. Nov. 22.

Eaton, Walter Prichard. (1878- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Altitude. E. W. Sept. 24.
White-Topped Boots, The. E. W. May 21.

*Echegaray, José.
*Birth of the Flowers, The. (*R.*) C. O. Jan.

Edgar, Randolph. (*See 1916.*)
**Iron. Bel. May 26.

Edgelow, Thomas. (*See 1916.*)
Whimsical Tenderness, A. Scr. April.

Ellerbe, Alma Estabrook. (*See 1915 under* Estabrook, Alma Martin.)
*Brock. Touch. July.

Ellerbe, Rose L.
*Peasant's Revolt, A. Pear. Nov.

Evans, Ida May. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Brew of Ashes. McC. April.
End of a Perfect Day, The. Col. Sept. 1.
Great Little Old Understander, A. S. E. P. Oct. 20.
Ideal of His Dreams, The. S. E. P. March 10.
Kimonos and Pink Chiffon. McC. Dec.
Leaves of Graft. S. E. P. April 7.
Whither Thou Goest. S. E. P. May 26.
You Never Can Tell What a Minister's Son Will Do. S. E. P. Aug. 25.

*"Eye-witness." (*See* Swinton, Lieut.-Col. E. D.)

F

*Farjeon, J. Jefferson.
*Sixpence. (*R.*) Mir. Dec. 14.

*Farnol, Jeffery.

*Absentee, The. Wom. W. June.

Fawcett, Margaret.
Pursuit of Peter, The. Met. June.

Ferber, Edna. (1887- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Cheerful—By Request. Col. Nov. 24.
***Gay Old Dog, The. Met. Oct.

Ferris, Eleanor. (*See 1915.*)
*Coup de Grâce. Cen. Oct.

Ferris, Elmer Ellsworth. (1861- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Helping Out Olaf. Am. April.

Ferris, Walter. (*See 1916.*)
Matter of Quality, A. Ev. Sept.

Finn, Mary M.
Bentley's Adventure in New York. Am. Sept.

Flower, Elliott. (1863- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Point of View, The. Harp. M. Aug.

Folsom, Elizabeth Irons. (1876- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Kamerad. Touch. Oct.
**When the Devil Drives. Pag. July-Aug.

Ford, Sewell. (1868- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
All the Way with Anna. E. W. Nov. 12.
And Wilt Thou, Torchy? E. W. Jan. 15.
At the Turn with Wilfred. E. W. Nov. 19.
Back with Clara Belle. E. W. July 9.
Carry-On for Clara, A. E. W. Oct. 22.
Even Break with Bradley, An. E. W. Jan. 29.
Flicketty One Looks On, A. E. W. Jan. 1.
Little Sully's Double Play. E. W. June 11.
On the Gate with Waldo. E. W. Aug. 6.
Qualifying Turn for Torchy, A. E. W. April 30.
Recruit for the Eight-Three, A. E. W. May 28.
Ringer from Bedelia, A. E. W. Aug. 20.
Showing Up Brick Hartley. E. W. Feb. 26.
Switching Arts on Leon. E. W. May 14.
Time Out for Joan. E. W. March 26.
Torchy and Vee on the Way. E. W. Feb. 12.
Torchy in the Gazinkus Class. E. W. June 25.
Vee Goes Over the Top. E. W. Dec. 10.
Vee with Variations. E. W. March 12.
When Torchy Got the Call. E. W. July 23.
Where Herm Belonged to Be. E. W. April 16.

Foster, Maximilian. (1872- .) (*See 1915.*)
Dollar Bill, The. S. E. P. June 16.
Fifi. S. E. P. July 7.
Last Throw, The. S. E. P. Feb. 24.
*Wraiths. S. E. P. April 7.

Fox, Edward Lyell. (1887- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Man and the Other Man, The. I. S. M. March 18.

Fox, John (William), Jr. (1863- .)
*Angel from Viper, The. Scr. May.
*Battle-Prayer of Parson Small, The. Scr. April.
*Compact of Christopher, The. Scr. Feb.
*Courtship of Allaphair, The. Scr. Jan.
*Goddess of Happy Valley, The. Scr. Oct.
**Lord's Own Level, The. Scr. March.
*Marquise of Queensberry, The. Scr. Sept.
*Pope of the Big Sandy, The. Scr. June.

Fox, Paul Hervey.
**Remembered Hour, The. Bel. June 2.

Frank, Waldo. (1890- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Bread-Crumbs. Sev. A. May.
***Candles of Romance, The. S. S. Feb.
***Rudd. Sev. A. Aug.

Freeman, Mary E. Wilkins-. (1862- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Boomerang, The. Pict. R. March.
Both Cheeks. S. E. P. Nov. 17.
***Cloak Also, The. Harp. M. March.
**Cross Purposes. (*R.*) I. S. M. Nov. 25.

*Liar, The. Harp. M. Nov.
***Ring with the Green Stone, The. Harp. M. Feb.
*Thanksgiving Crossroads. W. H. C. Nov.

*Freksa, Friedrich. (1882- .)
*"Le Châtelet de Madame." N. Y. Trib. Jan. 14.

Fuessle, Newton A. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Legal Mind, The. Mir. Nov. 23.

Fullerton, Hugh Stewart. (*See 1916.*)
Bingles and Black Magic. Met. May.
Old Ambish, The. Am. July.
Runarounds, The. Col. April 14.
Severe Attack of the Gerties, A. Am. Oct.
Taking a Reef in Tadpole. Am. April.
World Series—Mex., A. Col. Oct. 13.

Futrelle, (L.) May (Peel). (Mrs. Jacques Futrelle.) (1876- .) (*See 1915.*)
Late Betsy Baker, The. Ev. May.

G

Gale, Annie G.
Out of Tophet. Sun. July.

Gale, Zona. (1874- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Arpeggio Courts. Harp. M. Dec.
Deal, The. E. W. Jan. 1.
*When They Knew the Real Each Other. L. H. J. May.

*Galsworthy, John. (1867- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Defeat. Scr. Aug.
***Flotsam and Jetsam. Scr. Dec.
***Juryman, The. G. H. Sept.

Gambier, Kenyon.
Huge Black One-Eyed Man, The. S. E. P. June 23-30.

Ganoe, William Addleman.
*Ruggs—R. O. T. C. Atl. Dec.

Garrett, Garet. (1878- .)
Gold Token, The. S. E. P. Jan. 6.

Gates, Eleanor. (Mrs. Frederick Ferdinand Moore.) (1875- .)
Tomboy. S. E. P. Jan. 27.
**Waiting Soul, The. Harp. B. June.

Gatlin, Dana. (*See 1915 and 1916.*) (*See also*

Gatlin, Dana, *and* Hately, Arthur.)
Full Measure of Devotion, The. McC. Nov.
In a Japanese Garden. McC. Jan.
Let's See What Happens Next! McC. Sept.
Lovers and Lovers. Col. March 3.
Orchids. McC. Dec.
Rosemary's Great Wish. Am. April.
*Spring Mischief. Met. April.
Where Youth Is Also. Col. March 31.
Wild Roses. McC. June.

Gatlin, Dana, *and* Hately, Arthur.
"Divided We Fall." McC. July.

Gaunt, Mary.
Cyclone, The. For. March-April.

Geer, Cornelia Throop.
***Pearls Before Swine. Atl. Oct.

*George, W. L. (1882- .)
***Interlude. Harp. M. Feb.
**Water. (*R.*) Mir. Dec. 7.

Gerould, Katharine Fullerton. (1879- .)
(*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***East of Eden. Harp. M. Dec.
***Hand of Jim Fane, The. Harp. M. Aug.
***Knight's Move, The. Atl. Feb.

***Wax Doll, The. Scr. May.
***What They Seem. Harp. M. Sept.

Gerrish, Josette.
Would-Be Free Lance, The. Met. May.

Gerry, Margarita Spalding. (1870- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Berenice's First Dance. L. H. J. April.
Flag Factory, The. L. H. J. Oct.
Her Record. Pict. R. Feb.
*Midwinter-Night's Dream, A. Harp. M. Dec.

*Gibbon, Perceval. (1879- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Plain German. S. E. P. Sept. 29.

*Gibson, Wilfrid Wilson.
***News, The. Poetry. Jan.

Giesy, J. U.
Strategy of Desperation, The. Del. Nov.

Gifford, Franklin Kent. (1861- .)
Along Came George. L. H. J. March.

Gill, Austin. (*See 1916.*)
Introducing the Auto to Adder Gulch. Col. Jan. 6.

Gillmore, Inez Haynes. (*See* Irwin, Inez Haynes.)

Glasgow, Ellen (Anderson Gholson.) (1874- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Dare's Gift. Harp. M. Feb.-March.

Glaspell, Susan (Keating.) (Mrs. George Cram Cook.) (1882- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Everything You Want to Plant. E. W. Aug. 13.
***Hearing Ear, The. Harp. M. Jan.
***Jury of Her Peers, A. E. W. March 5.
***Matter of Gesture, A. McC. Aug.

Gleason, Arthur Huntington. (1878- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Irishman, The. Cen. Oct.

Goetschius, Marie Louise. (*See* Van Saanen, Marie Louise.)

Golden, Harry.
End of the Argument, The. Sun. July.

Goldman, Raymond Leslie.
Smell of the Sawdust, The. Col. Sept. 15.

Gordon, Armistead Churchill. (1855- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***His Father's Flag. Scr. Oct.
**Pharzy. Scr. March.

Graeve, Oscar. (1884-). (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Kamp. McC. May.

Granich, Irwin. (*See 1916.*)
**God Is Love. Masses. Aug.

Grant, Ethel Watts-Mumford. (*See* Mumford, Ethel Watts.)

Gray, David. (1870- .) (*See* 1915.)
Felix. S. E. P. Feb. 17.
Way a Man Marries, The. Pict. R. July.

Greene, Frederick Stuart. (1870- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Bunker Mouse, The. Cen. March.
***"Molly McGuire, Fourteen." Cen. Sept.
***Ticket to North Carolina, A. (*R.*) I. S. M. April 15.
**"Vengeance Is Mine!" McC. Sept.

Greenman, Frances.
Impossible Angela. L. H. J. June.

Impossible Angela Discovers That a Pretty Girl is Visiting the Jaspers. L. H. J. Aug.

Grimes, Katharine Atherton.
**Return of Michael Voiret, The. So. Wo. M. April.

Grunberg, Alfred.
Maizie, the Magazine Eater. Met. Jan.

Guild, Alexa.
Farleigh's Farewell. I. S. M. April 15.

*Gull, Cyril Arthur Edward Ranger. (*See* "Thorne, Guy.")

Gurlitz, Amy Landon.
**Eagle's Nest, The. Ev. May.

H

Haines, Donal Hamilton. (1886- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Heels of Achilles, The. Bel. March 10.
*Old Man Who was Always There, The. Bel. Nov. 17.

Hale, Louise Closser. (1872- .) (*See 1915.*)

Measure of a Man, The. Ev. Dec.
*Parties of Maygie, The. Del. Dec.
*Soldier of the Footlights, A. McC. Feb.

"Hall, Holworthy." (Harold Everett Porter.) (1887- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Between Friends. Ev. Sept.
"Consolation." Cen. June.
Diplomat, The. E. W. Jan. 8.
Dormie One. Ev. Feb.
Grim Visage, The. McC. Oct.
Iberia. S. E. P. March 31.
"If You Don't Mind My Telling You." Cen. Jan.
Last Round, The. Col. May 12.
Man-Killer, The. S. E. P. March 10.
Mouse-Traps. McC. Feb.
Not a Chance in a Thousand. E. W. Dec. 24.
Out in the Open Air. Ev. June.
Persons of Rank. McC. Nov.
Stingy! S. E. P. May 5.
Straight from Headquarters. Dec.
Sunset. S. E. P. Oct. 6.
Turn About. E. W. Sept. 10.
Wild Bill from Texas, Pict. R. Oct.

Hall, May Emery.
Countess' Reincarnation, The. Del. April.

Hall, Wilbur Jay. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

Elijah and the Widow's Cruiser. Col. Jan. 6.
Matter of Pressure, A. S. E. P. April 14.
Maxim—Caveat Emptor, The. S. E. P. Sept. 22.
Pronounced Cwix-ot-ic. Ev. Dec.
Typical Westerner, A. Sun. Aug.

Hallet, Richard Matthews. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Rainbow Pete. Pict. R. Oct.

Halsey, Frederick.
Up—Through the Garden. Am. May.

*Hamilton, Cosmo. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Ladder Leaning on a Cloud, The. Del. July.
*"Steady" Hardy's Christmas Present. G. H. Dec.

Hamilton, Gertrude Brooke. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Bonnie McGlint, Late of Broadway. Pict. R. May.
Hot Coals. E. W. March 26.
*Sons of God, The. G. H. Dec.
Wax Beauty, The. E. W. Dec. 17.

*Hannay, Canon James O. (*See* "Birmingham, George A.")

Harger, Charles Moreau. (1863- .) (*See 1916.*)
Workman No. 5,484. Outl. Oct. 10.

*Harker, L(izzie) Allen. (1863- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Misfit, A. Scr. Dec.

Harper, Ralph M.
How the Rector Recovered. Outl. Aug. 8.

Harris, Corra (May White). (Mrs. L. H. Harris.) (1869- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Her Last Affair. S. E. P. Sept. 1.
***Other Soldiers in France, The. S. E. P. Nov. 3.
Windmills of Love, The. Pict. R. Nov.

Harris, Kennett. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Crop Failure in Sullivan, A. S. E. P. April 7.
Jai Alai. Pict. R. April.
Talismans. S. E. P. May 5.
Vendetta of Bogue Grenouille, The. S. E. P. July 7.

Hartman, Lee Foster. (1879- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Consul at Paraminta, The. E. W. April 2.
***Frazee. Harp. M. Nov.

Haskell, Elizabeth Louise.
*On Duty. Harp. M. May.

Hately, Arthur. (*See* Gatlin, Dana, *and* Hately, Arthur.)

Hawes, Charles Boardman. (*See 1916.*)
Off Pernambuco. Bel. July 21.
**On a Spring Tide. Bel. Sept. 29.
*Patriots. Bel. June 9.
*Thanks to the Cape Cod Finn. B. C. May.
**"Within That Zone." B. E. T. Feb. 7.

Hawkes, Clarence. (1869- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Angela. (*R.*) C. O. April.

*"Hay, Ian." (John Hay Beith.) (1876- .) (*See 1915.*)
Noncombatant, The. S. E. P. March 24.
*Petit Jean. Ev. April.

Hecht, Ben. (*See 1915.*)
*Sort of a Story, A. All. Dec. 22.
**Unlovely Sin, The. S. S. July.
*Woman with the Odd Neck, The. B. C. Nov.

*Heine, Anselma.
***Vision, The. Strat. J. Jan.

Hemenway, Hetty Lawrence. (Mrs. Auguste Richard.)
**Adolescence. Cen. June.
***Four Days. Atl. May.

Hendryx, James B.
*In the Outland. Ev. Oct.

Henschen, Sigmund.
**Christmas in the Trenches. I. S. M. Dec. 23.

Hepburn, Elizabeth Newport. (*See 1916.*)
*Elm Tree Ghosts, The. McCall. Dec.

Hergesheimer, Joseph. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Asphodel. S. E. P. Aug. 4.
Epheimer. S. E. P. Feb. 3.
**Tol'able David. S. E. P. July 14.

Herrick, Elizabeth. (*See 1915.*)
**After All. Scr. Feb.
*Canker at the Root, The. Sn. St. Jan. 18.

Hersey, Harold.
**Dead Book, The. Le Dernier Cri. Feb.-March.

Higgins, Aileen Cleveland. (Mrs. John

Archibald Sinclair.) (1882- .) (*See 1916.*)
*'Dopters, The. Bel. Sept. 8.

Higgins, John.
*Man Who Was Ninety-Nine, The. Mir. Sept. 14.

Hillhouse, A. K.
*Sheba. Sn. St. Nov. 4.

Hinkley, Laura L.
*Magic of Dreams, The. W. H. C. Feb.

Hollingsworth, Ceylon. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Strong Medicine. Col. Dec. 1.

Hooper, Samuel Dike.
Nemesis, The. Sun. June.

Hopper, James Marie. (1876- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Enter Charity. Col. July 21.
**Last Make-Believe, The. Col. June 9.
*Rice, The. Col. June 30.
Weight Above the Eyes. Col. Nov. 10.
**Within the Swirl. S. E. P. July 7.

Horne, Margaret Varney Van. (*See* Van

Horne, Margaret Varney.)

Hotchkiss, Chauncey Crafts. (1852- .)
Taking of Spitzendorf. I. S. M. Nov. 11.
Test, The. I. S. M. Sept. 16.
Unexpected, The. I. S. M. Oct. 14.

Hough, Emerson. (1857- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Claxton, O. C. Sun. Dec.

*Housman, Laurence. (1865- .)
***Inside-out. Cen. Aug.

Houston, Margaret Belle.
White Diane, The. Met. April.

Howe, Edgar Watson. (1854- .)
**Stubborn Woman, The. (*R.*) C. O. March.

Howells, William Dean. (1837- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Tale Untold, A. Atl. Aug.

Howland, Arthur Hoag.
*Governor and the Poet, The. For. Sept.

Hoyt, Charles A.

*Goddess of the Griddle, The. Y. C. Nov. 29.

Hubbard, George, *and* Thompson, Lillian Bennet-. (*See also* Thompson, Lillian Bennet-.)
*Coward, The. Sn. St. Nov. 4.

Hubbard, Philip E.
None But the Brave. S. E. P. Jan. 20.
Very Temporary Captain McLean. S. E. P. Feb. 3-10.

Hughes, Elizabeth Burgess. (*See 1915.*)
Floods of Valpré. Sn. St. Jan. 18.

Hughes, Rupert. (1872- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Oompah Oompah, The. Hear. Nov.

Hull, Alexander.
**New Generation Shall Rise, A. E. W. Nov. 19.

Hull, George Charles.
*"Breathes There the Man—." Scr. July.
Through the Eyes of Mary Ellen. Scr. March.

Hull, Helen R. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

**Blight. Touch. May.
*Fire, The. Cen. Nov.
**Groping. Sev. A. Feb.
**"Till Death—." Masses. Jan.

Huneker, James Gibbons. (1860- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Modern Montsalvat, A. S. S. Feb.

Hunt, Edward Eyre. (*See 1916.*)
**Flemish Tale, A. Outl. April 4.
***Ghosts. N. Rep. Jan. 13.
**In the Street of the Spy. Outl. Oct. 10.
**Microcosm. Outl. Aug. 8.
**Pensioners, The. Outl. Feb. 7.
***Saint Dympna's Miracle. Atl. May. C. O. July.
**White Island, The. Outl. Jan. 17.

Hurst, Fannie. (1889- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Get Ready the Wreaths. Cos. Sept.
*Golden Fleece. Cos. July.
**Oats for the Woman. Cos. June.
*On the Heights. Cos. Dec.
**Sieve of Fulfilment. Cos. Oct.
***Solitary Reaper. Cos. May.
**Would You? Met. May.
*Wrong Pew, The. S. E. P. Jan. 6.

Hutchison, Percy Adams. (*See 1915.*)
***Journey's End. Harp. M. Sept.

I

Irwin, Inez Haynes (Gillmore). (1873- .) (*See 1916*, and *also 1915 under* Gillmore, Inez Haynes.)
When Mother and Father Got Going. L. H. J. May.

Irwin, Wallace. (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Ah-Lee-Bung. Del. July.
All Front and No Back. S. E. P. Oct. 13.
Echo, The. S. E. P. Jan. 27.
Eternal Youth. S. E. P. July 21.
**Hole-in-the-Ground. Col. Oct. 27.
Monkey on a Stick. S. E. P. Dec. 29.
*Old Red Rambler. S. E. P. June 16.
One of Ten Million. McC. Dec.
Peaches and Cream. S. E. P. Nov. 10.
Silence. Harp. M. July.
Starch and Gasolene. Harp. M. Jan.
**Wings. Col. April 7.

Irwin, Will(iam Henry). (1873- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

Evening in Society, An. S. E. P. April 28.

J

*Jacobs, W(illiam) W(ymark). (1863- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Convert, The. Hear. Sept.
*Substitute, The. Hear. Dec.

*Jameson, Elaine Mary. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Return of Sanderson, The. Del. May.

Jenkins, Nathalie.
*Winter's Tale, A. So. Wo. M. Jan.

Johnson, Alvin Saunders. (1874- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Lynching in Bass County. N. Rep. Aug. 18.
*Place in the Sun, A. N. Rep. Nov. 17.

Johnson, Burges. (1877- .) (*See 1916.*)
Unmelancholy Dane, An. Pict. R. Sept.

Johnson, Fanny Kemble. (*See 1916.*) (Fanny Kemble Costello.)
*Idyl of Uncle Paley, The. Harp. M. March.
*Magic Casements. Cen. Oct.

*New Lamps for Old. Cen. July.
*On the Altar of Friendship. Cen. Feb.
***Strange-Looking Man, The. Pag. Dec.

Johnson, Gladys E.
Two-Bit Seats. Am. July.

Johnston, Calvin. (*See 1915.*)
*Playgrounds Dim. S. E. P. Aug. 25.

Johnston, Charles. (1867- .) (*See 1915.*)
How Liberty Came to Ivan Ivanovitch. Col. Dec. 22.

Johnston, Erle.
*Man with Eyes in His Back, The. Cen. Sept.
*Square Edge and Sound. Cen. Nov.

Johnston, Hubert McBean.
Honest Value. Am. July.

Jones, (E.) Clement. (1890- .)
***Sea-Turn, The. Sev. A. Oct.

Jones, Frank Goewey. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Christmas "Bunk," The. L. H. J. Dec.
Divided Spoils. McC. Sept.
Nine Points of the Law. Col. Oct. 13.
Suspense Account, The. E. W. Sept. 3.

Wall Street Puzzle, A. S. E. P. May 26.
Warm Dollars. S. E. P. Feb. 17.

Jones, Johnson.
Great American Spoof Snake, The. Bel. Nov. 3.

Jones, Thane Miller.
Invaders of Sanctuary. S. E. P. Sept. 8.
N. Brown. S. E. P. Aug. 18.

Jordan, Elizabeth (Garver). (1867- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Mollycoddle, The. E. W. June 4.
What Everyone Else Knew. L. H. J. April.
Young Ellsworth's Hat Size. S. E. P. June 16.

*Joy, Maurice.
*Twenty-Four Hours. S. S. Sept.

Julius, Emanuel Haldiman-.
"Young Man, You're Raving." Pag. Jan.

K

Kahler, Hugh.
*Unforbidden. S. S. Sept.

Kauffman, Reginald Wright. (1877- .) (*See*

1916.)
**Bounty-Jumper, The. Bel. Feb. 10.
***Lonely House, The. S. S. Feb.

Kelland, Clarence Budington. (1881- .)
(*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Leak, The. E. W. July 9.
*Mountain Comes to Scattergood, The. S. E. P. Nov. 24.
Omitted Question, The. E. W. Feb. 19.
Options. S. E. P. March 24.
*Practice Makes Cock-Sure. E. W. Aug. 27.
Saving It For Dad. S. E. P. Jan. 20.
Scattergood Baines-Invader. S. E. P. June 30.
Scattergood Kicks Up the Dust. S. E. P. Oct. 13.
Speaking of Souls. E. W. Aug. 6.

Keller, Lucy Stone.
Hail to the Conqueror. Del. Jan.

Kelley, Leon.
All Under One Roof. McC. Oct.
Four Cylinders and Twelve. McC. Aug.

Kelly, Kate.
Emancipation of Galatea, The. S. E. P. March 3.

Kenamore, Clair.
*Sonora Nights' Entertainments. Bookman.

July.

Kennon, Harry B. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Back from the Border. Mir. May 4.
Crumbs of Conservation. Mir. Dec. 28.
Fifty-Twelve. Mir. Sept. 21.
Girl Who Talked Out Loud, The. L. H. J. Nov.
Gold Tooth. Mir. May 18.
**Hell's Legacy. Mir. Aug. 24.
Mrs. Chichester's Confession. Mir. June 1.
Poppy Seed. Mir. March 16.
Rice and Old Shoes. Mir. Nov. 16.
*Scum. Mir. April 6.
Three Modern Musketeers. Mir. Dec. 14.

Kent, Eileen.
*Moon Madness. Masses. May.

Kenton, Edna.
*Black Flies. Sn. St. Dec. 18.

Kenyon, Camilla E. L.
Pocketville Bride, The. Sun. Oct.
Runaways, The. Sun. May.
Treasure from the Sea. Sun. Sept.
Tuesday. Sun. April.

Kerr, Sophie. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Bitterest Pill, The. McC. Jan.

*Clock That Went Backward, The. W. H. C. July.
"Governor Putty." McC. Feb.
High Explosive. McC. June.
Marriage By Capture. E. W. May 7.
*Monsieur Rienzi Takes a Hand. Am. June.
*Orchard, The. Col. Dec. 15.
Over-Reached. McC. Nov.

Kilbourne, Fannie. (*See 1915.*)
*Betty Bell and Love. Wom. W. Oct.
Bluffer, The. Del. March.

Kilty, Mack.
Taotaomona, The. Bel. Sept. 1.

*Kipling, Rudyard. (1865- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Regulus. Met. April.

Kirk, R. G.
*Glenmere White Monarch and the Gas-House Pup. S. E. P. March 17.
*Zanoza. S. E. P. Oct. 27.

Klahr, Evelyn Gill. (*See 1915.*)
She of the U. J. L. H. J. Sept.
*Souvenirs of Letty Loomis. Harp. M. March.

Kline, Burton. (1877- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

***Caller in the Night, The. Strat. J. Dec.
**Point of Collision, The. S. S. Nov.

Knight, Leavitt Ashley. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Village Orator, The. Am. March.

Knight, Reynolds. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Clay. Mid. April.

Kobbé, Gustav. (1857- .)
Clothes. (*R.*) Mir. Jan. 12.

*Korzeniowski, Joseph Conrad. (*See* "Conrad, Joseph.")

Krysto, Christina. (1887- .)
***Babanchik. Atl. April.

Kummer, Frederic Arnold. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Madman, The. Pict. R. Feb.-March.

Kyne, Peter Bernard. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Cappy Ricks Takes On the Kaiser. S. E. P. Sept. 8.
Cappy Ricks, Wheat Baron. S. E. P. Feb. 17.
Circumventing Wilhelm. S. E. P. April 21.

Floating the Dundee Lassie. Col. Feb. 17.
For Revenue Only. S. E. P. June 9.
Over and Back. Col. March 10.
*Saint Patrick's Day in the Morning. S. E. P. May 19.
Salt of the Earth. S. E. P. Feb. 3.
Swanker, The. Sun. Oct.

L

Lait, Jack. (Jacquin L.) (1882- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Clause for Santa Claus, A. Milestones. Dec.
If a Party Meet a Party. (*R.*) Mir. Jan. 26.
*Jersey Lil. Am. June.
Toilers in the Night. Am. Nov.

Lane, George C.
*Jones of the Iron Grip. Y. C. Dec. 20.

Lardner, Ring W. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Ball-a-Hole. S. E. P. May 12.
Facts, The. Met. Jan.
Friendly Game, A. S. E. P. May 5.
Hold-Out, The. S. E. P. March 24.
Three Without, Doubled. S. E. P. Jan. 13.
Tour Y-10. Met. Feb.
Yellow Kid, The. S. E. P. June 23.

"La Rue, Edgar." (*See* Masters, Edgar Lee.)

*Lawrence, D. H. (*See 1915.*)
***England My England. Met. April.
***Mortal Coil, The. Sev. A. July.
***Thimble, The. Sev. A. March.

Lazar, Maurice.
Boarder, The. Masses. Feb.
*Habit. Touch. July.

Lea, Fannie Heaslip. (Mrs. H. P. Agee.) (1884- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Big Things. McC. May.
Lone Wolf, The. Harp. M. Aug.
On the Spring Idea. E. W. April 9.
Opened by Censor 1762. Del. Sept.

*Le Braz, Anatole. (1859- .)
***Christmas Treasure, The. So. Wo. M. Dec.
**Frame, The. Outl. Feb. 21.

Lee, Jennette (Barbour Perry). (1860- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***John Fairchild's Mirror. Cen. April.
Miss Somebody's Chair. L. H. J. June.
Three Boats that the Two Men Saw, The. L. H. J. Aug.

*Two Doctors, The. L. H. J. July.

*Le Gallienne, Richard. (1866- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Bugler of the Immortals, The. Del. July.

Lerner, Mary. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Forsaking All Others. Col. May 26.
***Little Selves. (*R.*) I. S. M. May 13.
*Sixteen. McCall. March.
**Wages of Virtue. All. Feb. 3.

*Lev, Bernard.
***Bert, the Scamp. Strat. J. Dec.
***Marfa's Assumption. Strat. J. Dec.

*Level, Maurice.
*After the War. N. Y. Trib. Oct. 7.
*At the Movies. N. Y. Trib. Dec. 9.
**Great Scene, The. B. Her. Dec. 2.

Leverage, Henry.
*Last Link, The. Sh. St. April.
*Passage for Archangel, A. Sh. St. Feb.
*Salt of the Sea. Sh. St. May.

Levison, Eric. (*See* Cohen, Octavus Roy, *and* Levison, Eric.)

Lewars, Elsie Singmaster. (*See* Singmaster, Elsie.)

Lewis, Addison. (1889- .)
**Black Disc, The. Mir. Oct. 26.
"Elevator Stops At All Floors." Mir. Dec. 7.
*End of the Lane, The. Mir. Feb. 2.
*New Silhouette, The. Mir. Nov. 2.
*9:15, The. Mir. Nov. 16.
**Rejected, The. Mir. Oct. 12.
**Sign Painter, The. Mir. Oct. 5.
**Spite. Mir. Oct. 19.
***When Did You Write Your Mother Last? Mir. Nov. 9.

Lewis, Austin. (*See 1916.*)
Contra Bonos Mores. Masses. Sept.
Lucky Sweasy! Masses. Jan.

Lewis, Sinclair. (1885- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Black Snow and Orange Sky. Met. Oct.
*For the Zelda Bunch. McC. Oct.
Hobohemia. S. E. P. April 7.
Joy-Joy. S. E. P. Oct. 20.
Poinsettia Widow, The. Met. March.
*Scarlet Sign, The. Met. June.
Snappy Display. Met. Aug.
Twenty-Four Hours in June. S. E. P. Feb. 17.

Whisperer, The. S. E. P. Aug. 11.
Woman By Candlelight, A. S. E. P. July 28.
**Young Man Axelbrod. Cen. June.

*Liddell, Scotland.
**Olitchka. (*R.*) C. O. Nov.

Lighton, Louis Duryea. (*See* Lighton, William Rheem, *and* Lighton, Louis Duryea.)

Lighton, William Rheem. (1866- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
(*See also* Lighton, William Rheem, *and* Lighton, Louis Duryea.)
Billy Fortune and the Hard Proposition. E. W. May 14.
Judge Jerry and the Eternal Feminine. Pict. R. July.

Lighton, William Rheem (1866- .), *and* Lighton, Louis Duryea. (*See 1916.*)
*Billy Fortune and That Dead Broke Feeling. Pict. R. May.
Billy Fortune and the Spice of Life. Pict. R. March.
Man Without a Character, The. Sun. May.

Lindas, B. F. (*See 1916.*)
*Dago, The. Mir. Jan. 19.

Loan, Charles E. Van. (*See* Van Loan, Charles E.)

London, Jack. (1876-1916.) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Grit of Women, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. Jan. 7.
***Like Argus of the Ancient Time. Hear. March.
*Thousand Deaths, A. (*R.*) B. C. Jan

Long, Lily Augusta.
"To Love, Honor, and Obey." Harp. M. May.

Loon, Hendrik Willem Van. (*See* Van Loon, Hendrik Willem.)

"Lopez, Inez." (Mrs. Octavus Roy Cohen.)
**Answer, The. B. E. T. May 5.

Lowe, Corinne.
Flavius Best, Pinxit. S. E. P. Sept 29-Oct. 6.
Slicker, The. S. E. P. Nov. 17.

Ludwig, Frances A.
Square Pegs in Round Holes. Am. Dec.

Lund, Adelaide.
*Pay-Roll Clerk, The. Atl. Aug.

Lynch, J. Bernard.
*Making Good on the Props. Hear. Feb.

Lynn, Margaret. (*See 1915.*)
**Mr. Fannet and the Afterglow. Atl. Nov.

M

Mabie, Louise Kennedy. (*See 1915.*)
Efficient Mrs. Broderick, The. L. H. J. Feb.

McCasland, Vine.
**Spring Rains. Mir. May 25.

McClure, John. (*See 1916.*)
**King of Sorrows, The. S. S. Nov.

McConnell, Sarah Warder.
Influence, The. Ev. Oct.

McCourt, Edna Wahlert. (*See 1915.*)
*David's Birthright. Sev. A. Jan.

McCoy, William M.
*Little Red Decides. Am. Dec.
*Rough Hands—But Gentle Hearts. Am. Nov.
Scum of the Earth. Col. Sept. 8.

Macfarlane, Peter Clark. (1871- .)
**Deacon Falls, The. S. E. P. Nov. 10.
Great Are Simple, The. S. E. P. Sept. 1.
Live and Let Live! S. E. P. Sept. 22.

MacGowan, Alice. (1858- .) (*See 1916.*)
Golden Hope, The. E. W. June 4.

MacGrath, Harold. (1871- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Seas That Mourn, The. Col. Oct. 6.

*Machard, Alfred.
*Repatriation. N. Y. Trib. Dec. 16.

*Machen, Arthur. (1863- .)
***Coming of the Terror, The. Cen. Oct.

Mackenzie, Cameron. (1882- .) (*See 1916.*)
Firm, The. S. E. P. Oct. 6.
Main-Chance Lady, The. S. E. P. Feb. 10.
Thing, The. McC. Jan.

McLaurin, Kate L. (*See 1916.*)
*"Sleep of the Spinning Top, The." (*R.*) C. O.

Aug.

MacManus, Seumas. (1870- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Fluttering Wisp, The. Del. Dec.
**Lord Mayor of Buffalo, The. Del. Oct.
***Mad Man, the Dead Man, and the Devil, The. Pict. R. April.

MacNichol, Kenneth.
*Long Live Liberty! Col. June 2.

*Madeiros e Albuquerque, José de. (1867- .)
***Vengeance of Felix, The. Strat. J. Dec.

*Madrus, Lucie Delarue-. (*See* Delarue-Madrus, Lucie.)

Manning, Marie. (Mrs. Herman E. Gasch.) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
No Clue. McC. June.
Seventeen-Year Locusts, The. Pict. R. June.

Marks, Jeannette. (1875- .) (*See 1916.*)
Golden Door, The. Bel. April 7.

Marquis, Don (Robert Perry). (1878- .)

(*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Being a Public Character. Am. Sept.

Marriott, Crittenden. (1867- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
God's Messenger. E. W. July 16.

Marsh, George T. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**For the Great Father. Scr. March.
**Out of the Mist. Cen. April.
*Valley of the Windigo, The. Scr. June.

Marshall, Edison. (*See 1916.*)
Chicago Charlie Lancelot. Am. Sept.
***Man That Was in Him, The. Am. Aug.
*Vagabond or Gentleman? Am. June.

Marshall, Rachael, *and* Terrell, Maverick.
Heroizing of Amos Chubby, The. Pict. R. Aug.

Martin, Katharine.
*Celebrating Father. L. H. J. Nov.

*Mason, Alfred Edward Woodley. (1865- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Silver Ship, The. Met. Jan.

Mason, Grace Sartwell. (1877- .) (*See 1915*

and 1916.)
For I'm To Be Queen of the May. E. W. April 30.
*Jessie Passes. E. W. Feb. 5.
Potato Soldier, The. E. W. Nov. 12.
Summer Wives. Met. Nov.
*Woman Who Was a Shadow, The. Met. Aug.

Masters, Edgar Lee. ("Edgar La Rue.") (1868- .)
***Boyhood Friends. Yale. Jan.
***Widow La Rue. Mir. Jan. 19.

*Maxwell, William Babington.
*Woman's Portion, The. Ev. Dec.

May, Noble.
*Mabel Plays the Game. Am. Feb.

Meaker, S. D.
Man's Own Wife, A. Scr. April.

Mellett, Berthe Knatvold. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Kolinsky. Col. March 10.

Merchant, Abby.
**Presentiment, The. Harp. M. July.

Metcalf, Thomas Newell.
Martin's Chickens. Cen. Nov.

Meyer, Ernest L.
Non Compos Mentis. (*R.*) Mir. Feb. 16.

Miles, Emma Bell. (*See 1915.*)
*Destroying Angel, The. So. Wo. M. May.

*Mille, Pierre. (1864- .)
*How They Do It. N. Y. Trib. July 8.
*Man Who Was Afraid, The. N. Y. Trib. June 24.
*Soldier Who Conquered Sleep, The. N. Y. Trib. March 11.

Miller, Helen Topping. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
From Wimbleton to Wambleton. Del. March.

Minnigerode, Meade. (*See 1916.*)
Macaroons. S. E. P. Feb. 24.

Minuit, Peter.
*Class of 19—, The. Sev. A. June.
Modern Accident, A. Sev. A. April.

Mitchell, Mary Esther. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

**Miss Barcy's Waterloo. Harp. M. Oct.
**Smaller Craft, The. Harp. M. March.
*Strike in the Mines, A. Harp. M. Nov.
*"Then Came David." Harp. M. Sept.

Mitchell, Ruth Comfort. (*See 1916.*)
**Call, The. Mir. March 30. N. Y. Trib. April 15.
Glory Girl, The. Cen. Dec.
*Jane Meets an Extremely Civil Engineer. Cen. Sept.
Jane Puts It Over. Cen. Jan.
*Let Nothing You Dismay! Mir. Dec. 21.

*Montgomery, Lewis A. (*See* "Doyle, Lynn.")

Moore, Mrs. Frederick Ferdinand. (*See* Gates, Eleanor.)

Moore, James Merriam.
*On an Old Army Post. Atl. July.

*Mordaunt, Elinor. (*See 1915.*)
***Gold Fish, The. Met. Feb.

Morley, Christopher.
*Question of Plumage, A. Bel. Jan. 20.
**Revenge. B. E. T. Feb. 28.

**Rhubarb. Col. Dec. 29.

Moroso, John Antonio. (1874- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Dad. Am. May.
*Light in the Window, The. Wom. W. Feb.
*Maggie. I. S. M. Oct. 28.
Mister Jones. I. S. M. March 4.
*Poor 'Toinette. Del. Oct.
*Shoes that Danced, The. Met. Dec.
*Uncle Jules. Del. April.

Morris, Gouverneur. (1876- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**"Death in Both Pockets." Harp. B. Sept.
*Doing Her Bit. S. E. P. Sept. 22.
*Honor Thy Father. Harp. B. Oct.
*Mary May and Miss Phyllis. Harp. B. Nov.
Senator in Pelham Bay Park, A. Col. Dec. 8.

Morton, Johnson.
Henrietta Intervenes. Harp. M. Sept.
***Understudy, The. Harp. M. Aug.

*Muenzer, Kurt. (1879- .)
"Weltfried." N. Y. Trib. Jan. 21.

Muilenburg, Walter J. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***At the End of the Road. (*R.*) I. S. M. May

27.
*Thanksgiving Lost and Found. To-day. Nov.

Muir, Bliss.
Wedding Dress, The. Met. July.

Muir, Ward.
**Unflawed Friendship, The. S. S. Jan.

Mumford, Ethel Watts. (Mrs. Ethel Watts-Mumford Grant.) (1878- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Bounty. G. H. May.
Opal Morning, The. McC. April.
*Second Sight of Hepsey McLean, The. Col. July 28.

N

"Nadir, A. A." (*See* Abdullah, Achmed)

Nafe, Gertrude. (1883- .)
***One Hundred Dollars. Cen. Feb.

Neidig, William Jonathan. (1870- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Camel from Home, The. Harp. M. Oct.
Gunman, The. S. E. P. March 10.

*Hair of the Dog, The. S. E. P. Dec. 15.

*Netto, Coelho. (1864- .)
***Pigeons, The. Strat. J. Dec.

Nicholson, Meredith. (1866- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Doubtful Dollars. S. E. P. Jan. 13.
***Heart of Life, The. Scr. Dec.
Made in Mazooma. Met. Feb.

Norris, Kathleen. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Children, The. Pict. R. Jan.

Norton, Roy. (1869-1917.) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Aunt Seliny. Pict. R. April.
**Fine Old Fool, The. L. H. J. July.

O

O'Brien, Howard Vincent.
Eight Minutes from the Station. L. H. J. Jan.

O'Brien, Seumas. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Bargain of Bargains, A. I. S. M. Feb. 4.

***Murder? I. S. M. Dec. 9.

O'Hara, Frank Hurburt. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Green Silk Dress, The. E. W. Jan. 22.
Sham Girl, The. E. W. April 23.

O'Higgins, Harvey J. (1876- .) (*See 1915.*)
**Benjamin McNeil Murdock. S. E. P. Sept. 8.
**From the Life: Sir Watson Tyler. Cen. March.
***From the Life: Thomas Wales Warren. Cen. April.
**Jane Shore. Cen. July.

*Okunev, J.
*Flanking Movement, A. Rus. R. Jan.

Oliver, Jennie Harris.
*Devil's Whirlpool, The. Del. Aug.
*Rusty. Del. Nov.

O'Neill, Eugene G.
**Tomorrow. Sev. A. June.

*Opotawshu, Joseph K. (*See 1916.*)
**Cabalist, The. Pag. April-May.
**New-World Idyll. Pag. Oct.-Nov.
**Night in the Forest, A. Pag. April-May.

*Oppenheim, Edward Phillips. (1866- .) (*See 1916.*)
Bride's Necklace, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. Feb. 4.
*Cunning of Harvey Grimm, The. Harp. B. Dec.
Sad Faced Hermit, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. Sept. 30.
Unlucky Rehearsal, An. I. S. M. Jan. 7.

O'Reilly, Edward S. (*See 1916.*)
**Dead or Alive. Col. Sept. 29.
Dominant Male, The. Pict. R. Dec.
Soothing the Savage Breast. Pict. R. Nov.
Two-Cylinder Lochinvar, A. Pict. R. Oct.

Osborne, (Samuel) Duffield. (1858- .) (*See 1915.*)
**Dark Places. Art W. Oct.

Osborne, William Hamilton. (1873- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Clandestine Career, A. S. E. P. April 14.
**Knife, The. Bel. May 12.
Kotow de Luxe. S. E. P. Nov. 3.
*Signor. Sn. St. March 4.

Osbourne, Lloyd. (1868- .) (*See 1915.*)
Marrying Money. S. E. P. Oct. 6.
*Out of the Mist. S. E. P. Dec. 1.

Ostrander, Isabel. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

Eye for an Eye, An. I. S. M. April 29.
Followers of the Star. I. S. M. Dec. 23.
Ransom, The. I. S. M. April 1.
Winged Clue, The. I. S. M. May 27.

O'Sullivan, Vincent. (1872- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Interval, The. B. E. T. Sept. 8.

Oxford, John Barton.
*Importance of Mr. and Mrs. Dinsmore, The. Am. Oct.

P

Pain, Wellesley.
Beginner's Luck. (*R.*) Mir. Sept. 7.

Paine, Albert Bigelow. (1861- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Excursion in Memory, An. Harp. M. March.

Palmer, Helen.
Old Diggums. Bel. Jan. 6.

Palmer, Vance. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Island of the Dead, The. Bel. Oct. 13.
Love and the Lotus. Sun. May.
Rajah and the Rolling Stone, The. Bel. Dec. 8.

Will to Live, The. Bel. Jan. 13.

Pangborn, Georgia Wood. (1872- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Bixby's Bridge. Harp. M. March.
*Twilight Gardener, The. Touch. June.

Pattee, Loueen.
Muted Message, A. Outl. Feb. 14.

Pattullo, George. (1879- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Being Nice to Nellie. S. E. P. Jan. 27.
First Aid to M'sieu Hicks. S. E. P. Oct. 20.
Going After the Inner Meaning. S. E. P. Aug. 11.
Half a Man. S. E. P. Feb. 3.
Little Sunbeam. E. W. June 18.
Never Again! S. E. P. March 24.
*Wrong Road, The. S. E. P. Jan. 6.

Payne, Will. (1865- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Crime at Pribbles, The. S. E. P. Nov. 10.
Natural Oversight, A. S. E. P. Oct. 13.

Peake, Elmore Elliott. (1871- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Foreman of Talulla, The. Del. June.
House of Hoblitzell, The. E. W. June 11.

Wrath of Elihu, The. E. W. May 7.

Pearl, Jeanette D.
Pride. Masses. June.

Peattie, Elia Wilkinson. (1862- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Lion Light, The. Y. C. Nov. 1.

Peck, Ward.
Forty-Niner, The. Sun. June.

Peeler, Clare P. (*See 1916.*)
Jewel Song, The. E. W. July 2.
Prince Enchanted, The. E. W. Jan. 29.

Pelley, William Dudley. (*See 1916.*)
Courtin' Calamity. S. E. P. April 21.
*Four-Square Man, The. Am. Oct.
Jerry Out-o'-My-Way. S. E. P. March 3.
One-Thing-at-a-Time O'Day. S. E. P. May 19.
*Russet and Gold. Am. Dec.
*She's "Only a Woman." Am. Nov.
*Their Mother. Am. Aug.

Pendexter, Hugh. (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Brand from the Burning, A. I. S. M.
Lost and Found. I. S. M. Sept. 2.

Pennell, Elizabeth Robins. (*See* Robins, Elizabeth.)

Perry, Lawrence. (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***"Certain Rich Man ——, A." Scr. Nov.
Diffident Mr. Kyle, The. Harp. M. Sept.
Golf Cure, The. Scr. June.
King's Cup, The. Met. Aug.
Sea Call, The. Harp. M. June.

*Pertwee, Roland. (*See 1916.*)
***Camouflage. Cen. May.
Page from a Notebook, A. S. E. P. Dec. 8.
***Red and White. Cen. Aug.
Third Encounter, The. S. E. P. Jan. 20.

*Petrov, Stefan Gavrilovich. (*See* "Skitalets.")

*Philippe, Charles-Louis.
***Meeting, The. Mir. May 11.

*Phillpotts, Eden. (1862- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Christmas Day in the Morning. Del. Dec.
*Key to the Church, The. Del. June.
**Told to Parson. Bel. July 14. Mir. Aug. 17.

*Under Messines Ridge. Bel. Sept. 15.

Piper, Edwin Ford. (1871- .)
**Claim-Jumper, The. Mid. Dec.
**In a Public Place. Mid. Dec.
**In the Canyon. Mid. Oct.
**Joe Taylor. Mid. Dec.
**Man With the Key Once More, The. Mid. Dec.
**Meanwhile. Mid. April.
**Mister Dwiggins. Mid. Dec.
**Nathan Briggs. Mid. Dec.
**Ridge Farm, The. Mid. Oct.
**Well Digger, The. Mid. Feb.

Piper, Margaret Rebecca. (1879- .)
**Boy's Will, A. Harp. M. Feb.

Pitt, Chart.
*Law of the Abalone, The. B. C. July.

Porter, Harold Everett. (*See* "Hall, Holworthy.")

Porter, Laura Spencer. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Boy's Mother, The. Harp. M. June.
***Idealist, The. Harp. M. April.

Post, Melville Davisson. (1871- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Act of God, An. (*R.*) I. S. M. March 4.
**Adopted Daughter, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. May 13.
**Devil's Tools, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. Dec. 9.
**Lord Winton's Adventure. Hear. June.
*Pacifist, The. S. E. P. Dec. 29.
***Riddle, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. Jan. 21.
***Straw Man, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. June 10.
**Wage-Earners, The. S. E. P. Sept. 15.
*Witch of the Lecca, The. Hear. Jan.

Pottle, Emery.
***Breach in the Wall, The. Harp. M. March.
Mistake in the Horoscope, A. Harp. M. Nov.
Music Heavenly Maid. Col. Feb. 24.
***Portrait, The. Touch. Dec.
Sophie's Great Moment. McC. Sept.

Pratt, Lucy. (1874- .) (*See 1916.*)
**Sunny Door, The. Pict. R. June.

Prouty, Olive Higgins. (1882- .) (*See 1916.*)
***New England War Bride, A. Ev. May.
Pluck. Am. Feb.
Price of Catalogues, The. Ev. Jan.
Unwanted. Am. May.

Pulver, Mary Brecht. (1883- .) (*See 1915*

and 1916.)
Good Fight, The. S. E. P. May 5.
Inept Lover, The. S. E. P. Dec. 8.
*Long Carry, The. S. E. P. Oct. 20.
Man-Hater, The. S. E. P. June 9.
Man Who Was Afraid, The. S. E. P. Feb. 10.
***Path of Glory, The. S. E. P. March 10.
Pomegranate Coat, The. S. E. P. Jan. 13.

Putnam, Nina Wilcox. (1888- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Spring Night, A. Ev. Feb.

Q

*Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur Thomas. (1863- .)
**Fire at Rescrugga, The. Bel. March 24.
**"Not Here, O Apollo!" Bel. May 19.
**Pilot Matthey's Christmas. Bel. Dec. 22.

R

R., J.
Wrestlers. (*R.*) Mir. Feb. 9.

Raisin, Ovro'om. (*See 1916.*)

***Ascetic, The. Pag. Dec.

Raphael, John N. (*See 1916.*)
*From Marie-Anne to Anne-Marie. Ev. Oct.

Reed, John (S). (1887- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Buccaneer's Grandson, The. Met. Jan.

Reely, Mary Katharine.
*Doctor Goes North, A. Mid. Nov.
**Mothers' Day. Mid. May.

Reese, Lowell Otus. (*See 1916.*)
Constable of Copper Sky, The. S. E. P. March 31.
Grandpa Makes Him Sick. S. E. P. Feb. 10.
*Kentucky Turns. S. E. P. March 17.
Pariah, The. S. E. P. Aug. 25.

Reighard, J. Gamble.
Pedro. Bel. June 23.

"Relonde, Maurice."
**Delightful Legend, A. Sev. A. March.

Reyher, Ferdinand M. (1891- .) (*See 1916.*)
Astor Place. S. E. P. April 21.

Rice, Margaret.
**Harvest Home. Touch. Nov.

Rich, Bertha A. (*See 1916.*)
Goat Man and Nancy, The. Am. July.

Richard, Hetty Hemenway. (*See* Hemenway, Hetty Lawrence.)

Richards, Raymond.
*Chink, The. B. C. March.

Richardson, Anna Steese. (1865- .)
Not a Cent in the House. McC. June-July.

Richardson, Norval. (1877- .)
**Adelaide. Scr. Aug.
***Miss Fothergill. Scr. Oct.
**Mrs. Merryweather. Scr. Sept.
**Sheila. Scr. Nov.

Richmond, Grace S.
Taking It Standing. (*R.*) C. O. Dec.
Whistling Mother, The. L. H. J. Aug.

Richter, Conrad. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Girl That "Got" Colly, The. L. H. J. May.
Sure Thing, The. S. E. P. Nov. 17.

Rideout, Henry Milner. (1877- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Hury Seke. S. E. P. Sept. 22.

Riggs, Kate Douglas Wiggin. (*See* Wiggin, Kate Douglas.)

*Rinck, C. A.
***Song, The. N. Y. Trib. Jan. 7.

Rinehart, Mary Roberts. (1876- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Bab's Burglar. S. E. P. May 12.
*Down Happy Valley. (*R.*) I. S. M. Nov. 25.
G. A. C., The. S. E. P. June 2.
Her Dairy. S. E. P. Feb. 17.
Tish Does Her Part. S. E. P. July 28.
Twenty-Two. Met. June.

Rinehart, Robert E.
*And Tezla Laughed. Par. Feb.

Ritchie, Robert Welles. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Blue Bob Comes Home. Col. July 28.
Dreadful Fleece, The. Sun. Aug.
Light That Burned All Night, The. Sun. Oct.
**Road to Sundance, The. Col. June 16.

*Rods of the Law. Harp. M. April.
Schoolma'am's Little Lamp, The. L. H. J. March.
Shuttle, The. E. W. Oct. 22.
*Trail from Desolation, The. S. E. P. Sept. 29.

Rix, George.

Russet Bag, The. Sun. Sept.

Robbins, F. E. C.

*Good Listener, A. Y. C. Nov. 8.
**Writer of Fiction, A. Y. C. Oct. 4.

Robbins, Royal.

*After Fifty Years. So. Wo. M. Dec.

Roberts, Charles George Douglas. (*See 1915.*)

*Eagle, The. Cos. Nov.

Roberts, Kenneth L.

Good Will and Almond Shells. S. E. P. Dec. 22.

*Roberts, Morley. (1857- .)

**Man Who Lost His Likeness, The. Met. Sept.

Robertson, Edna.

*Moon Maid, The. I. S. M. July 22.

Robins, Elizabeth. (Mrs. Joseph Pennell.) (1855- .) (*See 1915.*)
*Tortoise-shell Cat, The. Cos. Aug.

Robinson, Eloise. (1889- .) (*See 1916.*)
*Bargain in a Baby, A. Harp. M. July.
*Beautiful as the Morning. Harp. M. Dec.
*Idols and Images. Harp. M. Feb.
*Infant Tenderness, The. Harp. M. April.

Roche, Arthur Somers. (*See 1915.*)
Scent of Apple Blossoms, The. S. E. P. Feb. 10.

Roe, Vingie E. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Broken Hilt, The. Col. Aug. 11.
Euphemia Miller. Col. Feb. 3.
*Little Boy Makes It Through, The. Sun. Nov.
Little Boy of Panther Mountain, The. Sun. July.
Pocket Hunter, The. Sun. Dec.
Smoky Face. Col. June 9.
True-Bred. Col. Nov. 17.

Rogers, Howard O.
Jenkins' Secret. Sun. July.

*"Rohmer, Sax." (Arthur Sarsfield Ward.) (1883- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Black Chapel, The. Col. June 2.
House of Hashish. Col. Feb. 17.

Ki-Ming. Col. March 3.
*Shrine of Seven Lamps. Col. April 21.
*Valley of the Just, The. Pict. R. Sept.
Zagazig Cryptogram, The. Col. Jan. 6.

Rosenblatt, Benjamin. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Madonna, The. Mid. Sept.
***Menorah, The. (*R.*) I. S. M. July 8.

Rothery, Julian. (*See 1916.*)
*Idaho Thriller, An. Am. Jan.
*Legend of 'Frisco Bar, The. Am. April.

Rouse, William Merriam. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Dog Fight, The. Bel. May 5.
In the Name of the Great Jehovah. For. Jan.
*Light in the Valley, The. Bel. Dec. 29.
*Pete the Gump. Bel. Feb. 24.
*Strawberry Shortcake. Y. C. July 5.
*Strength of Simeon Niles, The. Mid. March.

Russell, John. (*See 1916.*)
*Doubloon Gold. S. E. P. Jan. 20.
*East of Eastward. Col. Oct. 20.
**Fourth Man, The. Col. Jan. 6.
Jetsam. Col. Feb. 24.
*Jonah. S. E. P. Sept. 15.

*Lost God, The. Col. Aug. 18.
**Meaning—Chase Yourself. Col. March 17.
**Practicing of Christopher, The. Col. Dec. 29.
*Wicks of Macassar, The. Col. Jan. 27.
Wise Men, The. Del. Jan.-Feb.

Rutledge, Archibald (Hamilton). (1883- .)
*Terrible Brink, The. B. C. April.

"Rutledge, Marice." (*See* Van Saanen, Marie Louise.)

Ryder, Charles T. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Rahim of the Hollow Tree. Bel. Sept. 22.

Ryerson, Florence. (*See 1915.*)
Apartment No. 3. E. W. Oct. 1.

S

Saanen, Marie Louise van. (*See* Van Saanen, Marie Louise.)

Sabin, Edwin L(egrand). (1870- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Best Man. Sun. Aug.
*True Blood. Mun. Dec.

*Saltykov, M. Y. ("N. Schedrin.")
***Hungry Officials and the Accommodating Muzhik, The. (*R.*) C. O. Sept.

*"Sapper."
**Awakening of John Walters, The. Col. Nov. 3.
*Point of Detail, A. Col. Aug. 4.

Sawhill, Myra.
Acid Test, The. Am. Feb.

Sawyer, Ruth. (Mrs. Albert C. Durand.)
(1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Man Who Wouldn't Die, The. L. H. J. April.
*Wee Lad on the Road to Arden, The. L. H. J. March.

Saxby, Charles. (*See 1916.*)
*Reginald Sydney and the Enemy Spy. Sh. St. Oct.

*Scapinelli, Count Carl.
Russian Lead. N. Y. Trib. Feb. 11.

Schaick, George Van. (*See* Van Schaick, George.)

*"Schedrin, N." (*See* Saltykov, M. Y.)

Schneider, Herman. (1872- .)
**Arthur McQuaid, American. Outl. May 23.
***Shaft of Light, A. Outl. Aug. 22.

Schneider, Louis.
*Their Piece of Art. B. C. March.

Scott, Harold H.
*Checkmate. Sun. Feb.

Scott, Leroy. (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Fate of Mary Regan, The. Met. Nov.
Golden Doors, The. Met. May.
Life Pulls the Strings. Met. March.
Mary Goes Alone. Met. July.
Master of Dreams, The. Met. Oct.
Return of Mary Regan, The. Met. Feb.
Squire of Dames, The. Met. Sept.
Testing of Mary Regan, The. Met. Aug.

Scott, Mildred Wilkes.
"In Time." Del. Sept.

Scott, Rose Naomi. (*See 1916.*)
**Chasm of a Night, The. So. Wo. M. Oct.

Sears, Mary.

Expectations. (*R.*) Mir. Aug. 31.

*Seefeld, Hans.
"In the Woods Stands a Hillock." N. Y. Trib. Feb. 4.

Shawe, Victor.
Book and the Believers, The. S. E. P. June 2.

Sheldon, Mary Boardman.
*Aunts Redundant. Harp. M. Jan.

Shepherd, William Gunn.
*Bell, The. Bel. Feb. 17.
***Scar that Tripled, The. Met. July.

Shipp, Margaret Busbee.
Kitten in the Market, A. Ev. Aug.

Showerman, Grant. (1870- .) (*See 1916.*)
***Country Christmas, A. Cen. Dec.
**Old Neighbors. Mid. Oct.
**Summertime. Mid. Sept.

*Simpson, Horace J.
Epic of Old Cark, The. B. C. April.

Simpson, John Lowrey.
**Holiday in France, A. N. Rep. Oct. 20.

*Sinclair, May. (*See 1915.*)
**Portrait of My Uncle. Cen. Jan.

Singmaster, Elsie. (Elsie Singmaster Lewars.) (1879- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Christmas Angel, The. Pict. R. Dec.
**Eye of Youth, The. B. E. T. Sept. 19.
***Flag of Eliphalet, The. B. E. T. May 29.
*House of Dives, The. Bel. Nov. 10.

Skinner, Constance (Lindsay). (*See 1915.*)
*Label, The. E. W. March 19.

*"Skitalets." (Stepan Gavrilovich Petrov.)
***And the Forest Burned. Rus. R. Feb.

Slyke, Lucille Van. (*See* Van Slyke, Lucille.)

Smith, Elizabeth C. A. (*See* "Breck, John.")

Smith, Gordon Arthur. (1886- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***End of the Road, The. Scr. Aug.
***Friend of the People, A. Pict. R. Oct.

Smith, Kate.
*Near the Turn of the Road. For. June.

Sneddon, Robert W. (1880- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Bright Star of Onésime. Sn. St. Oct. 18.
*Doll, The. Sn. St. June 4.
*"I Shew You a Mystery." Sn. St. Oct. 4.
**Le Rabouin—Soldier of France. S. E. P. May 12.
***"Mirror! Mirror! Tell Me True!" Bel. Feb. 3.
**Mute, The. Bel. Dec. 15.
*Nest for Ninette, A. Par. June.
**Prosperity's Pinch. Par. Oct.
*Two Who Waited, The. Sau. St. Oct.

Sothern, Edward Hugh. (1859- .)
Lost and Found. Scr. Aug.

*Soutar, Andrew. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Behind the Veil. To-day. Dec.
*Ingrate, The. I. S. M. June 24.
My Lady's Kiss. Pict. R. Dec.
**Step on the Road, The. Pict. R. July.

Spadoni, Adriana. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
Foreladies. Masses. March.

Spears, Raymond Smiley. (1876- .)
*"Levee Holds! The." Col. Nov. 10.
*Miller of Fiddler's Run, The. Col. Aug. 11.

Springer, Fleta Campbell. (*See* Campbell, Fleta.)

Springer, Norman. (*See 1915.*)
*Recruit, A. S. E. P. Nov. 10.

"Star, Mark."
***Garden of Sleep, The. Pag. April-May.

Starrett, William Aiken. (1877- .)
**Marked "Shop." Atl. July.

Stearns, L. D.
*Game, The. So. Wo. M. Aug.

Stearns, M. M. (*See* "Amid, John.")

Steele, Alice Garland. (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
**Homing Bird, The. Wom. W. Nov.
Miracle of It, The. L. H. J. Oct.
Mrs. Deering's Answer. Ev. Aug.

Steele, Rufus (Milas). (1877- .) (*See 1915.*)
Young Man's Game, A. S. E. P. Nov. 3.

Steele, Wilbur Daniel. (1886- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Ching, Ching, Chinaman. Pict. R. June.
***Devil of a Fellow, A. Sev. A. April.
***Down on Their Knees. (*R.*) I. S. M. Aug. 5.
***Free. Cen. Aug.
**Half Ghost, The. Harp. M. July.
***Ked's Hand. Harp. M. Sept.
***Point of Honor, A. Harp. M. Nov.
***White Hands. Pict. R. Jan.
***Woman at Seven Brothers, The, Harp. M. Dec.

Steffens, (Joseph) Lincoln. (1866- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
***Bunk. Ev. Feb.
***Great Lost Moment, The. Ev. March.

Stern, Elizabeth Gertrude.
**On Washington—Lincoln's Birthday. W. H. C. Feb.

Stewart, Alpheus.
Medal Winner, The. Mir. Jan. 12.

Stewart, Lucy Shelton.
*Wolves of Bixby's Hollow, The. Am. Feb.

Stoddard, William Leavitt. (1884- .)
Disciplined. Ev. July.

*Stoker, Bram. (Abraham Stoker.) (-1912.)
**Dracula's Guest. Sh. St. Jan.

Stores, Caryl B.
*Teenie an' Aggie Take an Outing. (*R.*) C. O. Oct.

"Storm, Ethel."
**Burned Hands. Harp. B. Nov.

Sullivan, Alan. (*See 1915.*)
***Only Time He Smiled, The. E. W. Dec. 31.

Sullivan, Francis William. (*See 1915.*)
Godson of Jeannette Gontreau, The. L. H. J. Oct.

*Swinton, Lt. Col. Ernest Dunlop. ("Eye-Witness.") (1868- .) (*See 1915 under* "Eye-Witness.")
*Private Riley. Sh. St. June.

Synon, Mary. (1881- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
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*One of the Old Girls. Harp. B. May.
**Wallaby Track, The. Scr. Feb.

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Tarkington, (Newton) Booth. (1869- .)
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*Fairy Coronet, The. Met. March.
*Only Child, The. Ev. Jan.
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*Tchekov, Anton Pavlovitch. (1860-1904.) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
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*Leaf in the Wind, A. I. S. M. Oct. 14.

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*Thomas, Edward. ("Edward Eastaway.") (1878-1917.)
***Passing of Pan, The. (*R.*) Mir. Dec. 14.

Thomas, (Stanley Powers) Rowland. (1879- .)
*Mistress. Pear. Nov.

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*In Fifteen Minutes. L. St. July.
*Prisoner, The. Sn. St. April 4.
*Together. L. St. Oct.

*"Thorne, Guy." (Cyril Arthur Edward Ranger Gull.) (1876- .)
**Guilt. I. S. M. Oct. 28.

*Thurston, Ernest Temple. (1879- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
*Over the Hills. Ain. July.

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*Lars the Unthinking. Ev. May.

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*Painting Healthy Hal. Y. C. Sept. 27.

*Tolstoi, Count Alexis N. (*See 1916.*)
**Under-Seas. Bookman. April.

*Tolstoi, Count Lyof Nikolaevich. (1828-1910.)
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*Immoral Reformation of Billy Lunt, The. Cen. Jan.

Torrey, Grace.
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Train, Arthur (Cheney). (1875- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)
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*Helenka. S. E. P. Jan. 27.
*Pillikin. S. E. P. Dec. 1

Train, Ethel. (Mrs. Arthur Train.) (*See 1916.*)
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Bleecker Street Bleecker, A. McC. Nov.

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*François' Journey. Scr. March.
*When Our Flag Came to Paris. Scr. Nov.

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*Vane, Derek.
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*Wodehouse, Pelham Grenville. (1881- .) (*See 1915 and 1916.*)

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