The Stories of Frank Nelson Stratton Nome de Plume Frank Neilson, F. N. Stratton, Frank N. Stratton. From 1902 to 1905 he published 42 short stories, vignettes and novelettes

The Missing Moves g

By FRANK NEILSON.

I SHALL always believe that if Robert Maxwell had lost his inherited for tune the world would have gained another Edison. His fine residence was full of strange and bewildering electri cal devices. His well-equipped labora tory, into which only Dr. Bell and I were allowed to penetrate, was the re pository of many secrets that might have enriched the scientific world. But Maxwell chose to keep his secretB for his own amusement.

I formed the acquaintance of this strange, taciturn genius through the mediumship of Dr. Bell, whose only sister, at this time deceased, had been Maxwell's wife. As an insanity-expert the doctor had been employed by my clients in an important case involving the distribution of a large estate. A strong intimacy resulted from this as sociation which led to my being received by Maxwell-as a friend and companion, a privilege accorded to only the doctor and myself. Electricity, chemistry, and chess, these were Maxwell's three hob bies, and the greatest of these was chess. I have seen him absorbed for hours in the solution or composition of some intricate problem in that gamo of games. He was a faithful and highly valued correspondent of several chesB-publications, and a member of several chess-clubs. I was no novice at the game, but soon found myself no match in the checkered field for the silent, studious Maxwell.

My professional duties had called me, one rainy evening, into tho vicinity of Max well's residence. Returning at a Into hour, I passed his house. Observing a light in his study, and knowing thut he usually kept late hours, I ascended the steps, rang the boll, and was shortly ad mitted by a sleepy servant. As 1 stepped into the dimly lighted hall 1 heard a struggle, a choking cry, the fall of a heavy body, and u sound of crush ing gifts*. I rushed into the study, whence the sounds came, and belW there a sight I shall never forget. Prout on his face, near the center of the room bleeding profusely from a wound in thi head, lay the master of the house. The shattered window near him showed hci the assailant, in his haste, had escaped Hastily I lifted the almost lifeless v' tim, administered such aid as I could and hurried one of the aroused and frightened servants after Dr. Bell, who lived near, and who quickly arrived. Under his skillful treatment the flow of blood was soon lessened and the peculiar nature of the wound became apparent., The instrument used was evidently X short, heavy sort of Cuban machetti, which, along with other weapons of wai and chase, had adorned the walls of the study, but which now lay blood-stained on the floor. The weapon, wielded by a powerful arm, had actually severed from the skull a large section of the frontal bone without inflicting any apparen* injury to the brain, which lay bare a' throbbing under our gaze. The severed section lay attached to TEeTace by skin at the lower part of the forehes and could be thrown to and fro, the sk. acting us a hinge. The unusually prr jecting forehead of the victim* made such a wound possible. 1

' the doctor murmur, • ' wonderful, wonu ful," and iu answer to my auxio inquiry, he replied: "It is almost miracle that the brain is not' woundr He has a powerful constitution and m live. There have been several install* of recovery where the brain itself b been badly wounded. I shall cal! Dr. Herrington. I prefer not toassun all the responsibility in such a case. M

To mo it was deeply interest iug to nc the rapid, deft work of those two t eran surgeons. All parts of thewt^l were carefully cleansed, and the d*|K< ed portion of tho skull was replacm* skilfully secured, the wounded iu*n ' tenderly carried to hu bed and left Doctor Harrington, while Dr. P

myself endeavored to find some clew to the identity of the intruder. Under the shattered window, and leading from the house to the street, were the tracks of broad, heavy shoes indistinctly im printed on the rain-soaked lawn. After reaching the street these tracks were lost in the multitude of others. No clew whatever could we find. As to motive, there could be but one—that of robbery. Maxwell always kept a large sum of money in a safe in his laboratory. Distrust of banks was one of his eccen tricities. So far as we knew, he had no enemies. The case was turned over to the police. The best detectives were employed. Time sped on, and the mys tery remained unsolved. The patient fought a good fight and was well on the road to recovery when I was called to west rn states on professional busi-

V, hen I returned, Dr. Bell, by appointment, met me at the Grand Cen- depot. "He is convalescent," the . ported, "and practically out of sically; but I fear for his ie can only remember that he ed for the night but conld not ome brilliant passage at chess uing through his mind. He arose, partly dressed himself, .vrote the game on a sheet with his new ink and was preparing to impress it on his hektograph. From that moment until he recovered consciousness, after the operation, his mind is a blank. I do not allow him to talk of the affair. I fear he will never fully regain his former strength of mind and body. The shock was too great. No, there is yet no clew; but I shall never give up the search. You will, I know, pardon me if I ask yon not to see Robert until I give permission. He often asks for you, but if you met he would insist on playing, and at present any mental strain might prove injurious."

And so a month had passed when we three again sat in the familiar room, f Maxwell was greatly pleased to meet me and seemed in high spirits, but often during that evening a wild, frightened expression flitted across his features, his head would droop, his conversation cease, and his hand would be drawn nervously across the high, white fore head, now so cruelly disfigured. At such times I saw the doctor watching him as anxiously as a mother watches her sick child. At length I arose to de part, but Maxwell demurred. "I have my heart set on at least one game to night," he pleaded, "just to see if Rich ard is himself again." I glanced in quiringly at the doctor, who smiled and nodded acquiescence. The board with its beautiful ivory-pieces was placed by the doctor. Maxwell took the white and played pawn to king's fourth. I made the same play. He then played pawn to queen's fourth and I captured the pawn. He hesitated a moment, played bishop to queen's third, and I followed with queen's knight to bishop's third. He seemed slightly perplexed at this, studied the board intently for several minutes, passed his hand nervously his forehead, and then slowly moved his king's pawn to the square occupied by my king's pawn and removed the latter from the board. As I raised my eyes in astonishment, I saw the doctor regard ing him with the intentness of an Apache on the trail, at the same time murmuring to me, "Go on." More than ever perplexed, but wishing to see the result, as did evidently the doctor, I captured the trespassing pawn with my knight. Maxwell immediately played bishop to knight's sixth, where it could be captured by either pawn, and, al though the pawn remained between his bishop and my king, he cried "Mate !" and, with a smile, threw himself back Tn Tils chair, remarking, "Very neat; very neat, indeed. You do not display your usual skill tonight, Neilson. Shall we try another?" Completely bewil dered, I looked at the doctor for my cue. He nodded slightly, without removing his eyes from his patient. I rearranged the pieces, while Maxwell sat with drooping head, apparently abstracted, until I made the first move. Then he straightened up and said: "You play very curiously, my friend. It seems to me that some of your moves were clearly inadmissible. How's this? You have given me black. Will you turn the board, please?" Again following the doctor's instructions, I reversed the board, saying, "I am somewhat absent minded tonight, I fear. I have a per plexing case in court. But look to your laurels this time."

Eagerly Maxwell again opened the game with pawn to king's fourth. I varied my former moveB, somewhat, but his moves were exactly as before, and for his fifth move he again placed his bishop on knight's sixth, over-leaping all obstacles, cried "Mate!" and smiled complacently. "Evidently, Neilson,you are no match for our friend tonight," the doctor said, laughingly, "and to spare you further humiliation I now de clare a truce."

"One more, doctor," cried Maxwell, "give him one more ohance to retrieve his prestige."

"No," the doctor replied, "I must in sist that you play no more tonight, Robert. Now, don't be stubborn. You must defer to my judgment in matters concerning your health."

"It is spoken," said Maxwell, laugh ing and wheeling his chair away from the table, "but as Neilson stays with us tonight, I shall insist upon a game be fore he leaves in the morning."

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After a half-hoar's pleasant conversation, I retired to the chamber that had been prepared for me. I could not sleep, , but lay pondering over my host's strange notions. His perfectly natural manner when not playing, his erratic and exactly similar moves in both games, the doctor's watchfulness and anxious curiosity—all these things puzzled me and awakened fears that poor Maxwell's mind was deranged.

I was yet awake, and I remember that the great clock in the study above me had just chimed the witching hour of midnight, when someone rapped at my door. Hastily arising I admitted Dr. Bell. He was considerably excited, the first time I had ever seen him so. His —hand, grasping a thick, heavy sheet of paper, trembled quite perceptibly. "Neilson," he said, speaking rapidly, but in a low tone, "do not think me a lunatic when you hear what I have come to say. I may be wrong; probably I am. But if my theory is correct, I have made a discovery that will puzzle the medical fraternity—aye, the scientific world. Will you pass me a glass of water, please? I am slightly feverish. Thanks. Now, to begin at the beginning. About one week before the assault, Robert told me of a peculiar ink he had invented, or, rather, compounded, for use in connection with the hektograph. But I will first explain the nature and use of the hektograph, as it is a new invention with which 'few are as yet familiar. It is a copying or duplicating process consisting of a shallow pan filled with an elastic, jelly-like, semi-transparent substance, having the quality of receiving and transmitting any writing impressed on its surface when written with what is known as hektograph-ink. The writing to be duplicated is first written on a good quality of paper with hektograph-ink. That original sheet is then laid, face down, on the hektograph, firmly pressed down, and allowed to remain there for a few minutes. When removed, the hektograph has absorbed the ink, or much of it, and the writing appears, in reverse, of course, upon the surface of the jelly, Now, if blank sheets are pressed on this surface, each sheet when removed is an exact copy of the original. Several hundred copies can thus be made from one original under favorable conditions. Robert used this process for copying games and problems in chess to be sent to the various publications and to his numerous ohess-correspondents. Instead of paper, however, he used a fine quality of linen for the last few copies because of its greater durability. Theso he keeps for further use and reference, He found that the ordinary

lt 1 l 111 1-1 nnwrtnd and blui . this linen, and to avoid this he compounded the ink he Bpoke of. It answered the purpose fully, and is so cohesive and powerful that if an impression made with it is allowed to remain on the jelly for thirty minutes it is deposited at the bottom of the pan in precisely the same formation as when first impressed on the surface. Now, examine this sheet of paper. It is an original sheet from which copies were to be made." I took the paper, and although it was somewhat blurred with what seemed to me blood-stains, I saw at once that it was the record of a game of chess, written in Maxwell's large, familiar hand, and ran thus:

WHITE.	BLACK.
1. P.—K. 4	P.—Q. Kt. 3
2. P.-Q. 4	B.—Kt. 2
8. B.-Q. 3	P.—K. B. 4
4. P. XP.	B. XP.
5. Q.—R. 5 (ch.)	P. Kt. 3
0. P. X P.	Kt.—K. B. 3
7. P. XP. (dis. ch.)	Kt. X Q.
8. B —Kt. 6 (mate)	

I at ouce saw that "white's" first four and last moves were the identical plays made by Maxwell that evening.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK |

The doctor continued, "You observe—the same moves, excepting the fifth, sixth and seventh." I nodded. "You also observe," he went on, "that the column of Black's moves is clear and bright, the ink untouched; no impression has yet been taken from it. On the other hand, White's column is stained with blood and the characters are dim and faint, indicating that an impression has been taken of them. But the fifth, sixth, and seventh moves are somewhat brighter and stronger than the other five, indicating two separate impressions of White's column." Again I nodded, silent but deeply interested. "Now," the doctor continued, leaning forward and lowering his voice almost to a whisper, "comes the astonishing part of my theory. When we dressed poor Robert's wound I observed a peculiar grouping of very faint, purplish marks upon the exposed portion of the brain. I gave them but little attention and proceeded with the operation. But his peculiar play last night set me to studying seriously on a theory already faintly suggested. Nelson, those marks came from this sheet and were White's first, second, third, fourth, and eighth moves, just as Robert played them last night. You smile, but, my friend, the finger of Science has as yet but pointed to the border-land of anatomical and psychological knowledge. With all our boasted discoveries we are yet but

groping in the dim light of the dawn. I believe that Robert fell in such a po sition that the exposed brain was pressed on White's side of that sheet. Some other snbstnnco, at the timo covered the fifth, sixth, and seventh moves or had previously absorbed them. Otherwise Robert would have played the entire eight moves last night. The idea startles yon. You aro asking yourself if this theory can possibly be correct. I say, yes. Moreover, I predict that Robert will never play other than thoso five moves so long as thoy remain im pressed on his brain. If I am cor rect. the situation is truly astounding-dumbfounding. There is a method of testing my theory, but I would never resort to it simply as a test."

Ho arose and paced excitedly to and fro for several minutes. Finally I spoke. "May I ask, doctor, the naturo of your test?"

For some time ho mado no answer. Then, again seating himself and en deavoring to subdue his excitement, ho said, "I will answer your question by asking another. Supposo we woro to again expose that part of the brain and impress on it in the proper position and with the same ink, those missing moves. Suppose, then, that when fully recovered from this second operation, the patient should play all of White's moves in their proper order. Would my theory be proved?"

"It would at least be supported by rather strong circumstantial evidence," I said, hesitatingly, "but surely, doctor, yon have no thought of resorting to so dangerous an experiment ?"

"Not as an experiment. Certainly not. But as a last resort it may become necessary. Possibly you do not know what a fascination the game of chess possesses for certain natures. From a casual amusement it grows into a fixed habit; from a fixed habit it ofton be comes a vico. I have seen more than one man neglect his family, and his social duties to brood and puzzle day after day over the infinite com binations of the gamo, until his mental faculties failed and the victim sank into the obscurity of the asylum. For years I have seen this fatal pas sion growing on Robert, and absorbing more and more of his time and thought. In his present condition he dimly re alizes that something is wrong with his play. In his waking and sleeping hours I have heard him muttering over those moves. He worries constantly, i and the worry grows and preys on him. It must ceaso. Now that I have this sheet, I shall try to teach him to grasp the game in its entirety. If I fail there is but one resort left. But I have inter fered with your rest and I beg your par don. You have a long journey before • you tomorrow. If anything unusual occurs I shall inform you. Good-night."

Two weeks later, while in the west, I received from the doctor a Bhort letter letter informing mo that ho and Dr. Herrington had found the proposed operation necessary and had performed it; thnt the patient had rallied nicely and was recovering rapidly; that Dr. Herrington had consented to tho oper ation with the greatest reluctantance and scouted his theory, and that tho final test would bo deferred until my return, which was impatiently nwaited. My business detained mo much longer thnn I had anticipated, but when I again rang the familiar bell it was Dr. Bell himself who admitted me. Ho greeted mo cordially and gave mo tho welcome information that Maxwell was in bettor health and spirits than when I left, but was impatient to again cross swords with me.

"Doctor," I said, as we turned toward the study, "it is somewhat presumptuous in me to question your theory in this case. It is within the bounds of your profession and entirely outsido mine. But when we consider that tho dreams of tho healthiest persons are ofton on the subject uppermost in his mind at the moment of falling asleep, may wo not suspect some analogy between such a fact and the facts in this case? Per haps Maxwell's thoughts, at the moment of receiving the blow, were concentrated upon an analysis and variation of those five moves to tho exclusion of tho three missing ones. The action of tho brain was arrested at that point. On its partial recovery it took up its work where it had left off, but for some occult reason was unablo to proceed or throw off thoso last conditions, a situation that timo ntid increased strength might have remedied."

"Why, then, did ho make no nttompt to play thoso possible variations?" tlio doctor exclaimed, impatiently. "And why did he refuse to play Black's moves? They must necessarily enter into any variation. And yon forgot that there were sounds and ovidencos of a struggle before tho blow was struck, so that thoso were not his lust thoughts be fore unconsciousness. But why waste timo aud words when the answer awaits us? Come."

I found Dr. Herrington with tho patient. Maxwell did, indeed, look bet ter thnn when I Inst saw him. Yet I could discern tho same strange gaze, aud, as before, the hand often passed nervously over tho marred forehead.

It was but a short timo until wo again smiled at each other across the mimic field of war. Tho two physicians were seated at my right, and as Maxwell adjusted his pieces. Dr. Bell laid on my

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kneo the sluet he had brought'To 1HJ room. Again Maxwell opened the game with pawn to king's fourth. Following the text, I answered with pawn to queen'6' knight's third. He instantly followed with pawn to queen's fourth, and the game progressed as written down to the fifth move. Here was the critical point, and here Maxwell hesitated, his hand poised over the pieces. Tlio two doctors almost arose from their chairs. I myself tingled with nervousness. A moment of intense suspense; then the poised head descended "cn the queen, pushed her to rook's fifth, and Maxwell murmured "check." Dr. Bell aroso, walked to the window, came back and stood behind his patient. Amnzed, I proceedetl with pawn to king's knight's third and my opponent quietly took pawn with pawn. Here Herrington could conceal his agitation no longer and he joined Dr. Bell. I placed my knight on king's bishop's third and my> pawn was immediately captured, discovering check. As I captured queen with knight, Maxwell announced mate, played bishop to knight's sixth, nnd settled back in his chair triumphantly.

"A beautiful little gamo," ho exclaimed, "You probably expected me to play—why, what's the matter? Have you three seen a ghost?"

"Quite the contrary," said Dr. Bell, quickly. "Wo seo our patient, not yot out of the shadow of the valley, playing with all his old brilliancy, and I suspect that our faces betray our surprise and satisfaction. But do not overtax your strength, Robert. You had better play no more tonight."

"One more, doctor; one more. I feel quite strong. Ono more, nnd I bow to your holiest."

"Ono more bo it then, but only one," the doctor replied, and as Maxwell again eagerly seized the white pieces, he whispered, "Vary your moves." Again Maxwell opened with the same attack, and although I followed tho doctor's suggestion and played a totally different dofenso, ho persistently followed tho text, apparently unconscious of all obstacles. and at tho eighth move played bishop to knight's sixth, called "mate," made n few complimentary remarks to me, wheeled his chair to its accustomed place nt the grate, and turned the conversation to other subjects. We three conspirators wore nervously anxious to bo alono together, but scarcely a half-hour had passed when I received an urgent message requiring my immediate presence at my office. The next morning found me fifty miles up tho river. I dined nt Newburg and took the night express back to the city. To complete the business I was then engaged on it was necessary that I see tho proprietor of a certain second-rate hotel not far from the Grand Control, and although the night was far advanced I determined to go to him at once. And now follows, perhaps, tho strangest part of this strange experience. Dusty and travel-stained I stepped to tho wash room, and as I passed the large mirror I mechanically glanced into it. What I saw tliero paralyzed me for an instant as might an electric shock. Then I turned nnd inspected the cuff of a "shabby gon-'ee1" who was eanfully^dfustingHnit>e. Within two minutes I was in telephone-communication with police-headquarters and in twenty minutes my man was in custody and on his way to jail. What did I see in tho mirror? Write a few words in ink, heavily, on a clean sheet. Take a fresh blotting-pad nnd absorb tho writing. Hold that pad before a mirror and seo how legibly tho writing is reflected. On the mirrored imago of the linen-cuff' on the left wrist of the culprit these characters stood forth, ns clear to mo as "proof of holy writ":

F>. Q — R. 5 (ch.)
6. P. XP.
7. P. XP. (dis. ch.)

I had found tlio missing moves and the missing man. In the office of tho Inspector I examined the cuff. It was frayed with wear and washing, but tho powerful ink had refused to "out," and tliero were tho familiar characters, in roverse, of course, and absolutely unintelligible to the uninitiated. When ho realized how strong tlio proof was tho fellow confessed. Ho had been a clerk in a wholesale grain-liouso, had "played" tho markets, becamo more and more involved, used his firm's money, and saw ruin and imprisonment beforo him. Ono ovoning ho had gone with a friend to a chess-club, saw Maxwell, and learned of his eccentric habit of keeping large sums of money in his house. In his desperate situation he formed tho resolve suggested by this information. When lie ontored the house tho lights wero extinguished, but before ho could find the safe Maxwell aroso, turned on the lights, and began work at liis table. My entrance frightened tho amateur-burglar, and as he rushed toward the window, his only means of escape, Maxwell seized him. In his terror ho snatched tho weapon from tho wall and struck tho blow. Ho renumbered that during the strugglo Maxwell had hurled him against tho table and that his left arm had rested on it. He had afterward noticed the stains on the cuff but had given them no special attention. I may add that ho served his time, was a model convict, and after his release vanished from my knowledge. Dr. Bell, of course, was overjoyed at the arrest. Maxwell heard of it with wondering

eyes and puzzled gaze, and said but little. Poor fellow, he has never recovered, and he still plays the same game and ever with the same zest. He never knew of tho doctor's theory or the real reason for tho second operation. The doctor, realizing tho failure of his experiment, in atonemont gavo up hie practice and is devoting his life to Max well. But lie still insists on the correctness of his theory. I have long since ceased puzzling my brain over tho question. Possibly the strange piny of Maxwell's was only one of those startling coincidences that sometimes appear in this mysterious life. What surgeons and psychologists may think of my story I know not, neither do 1 care. I only know that, with tho exception of names, I have related tho facts as thoy occurred. More learned brains than mine may solve tho riddle.

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THE MAN AND THE HORS E.

BY FRANK NEILSON.

How justice came to be tempered with mercy at the hands of an Improvised court.

I IE sat under the largest tree in 1~1 sight. Ho was hatloHs and dusty. A horse that had Been better days, and many of them, stood near him, panting painfully with drooping head. South ward the prairie rolled away to the hori zon. Northward the mountains climbed / to the cloudB.

The cry of a distant coyote smote the silence. The shadow of a circling buz zard swept about the tree.

The man glanced upward at the sub stance of the shadow, shrugged his < shoulders, and said, " You are early, my friends. The feast is not yet pre- ' pared?'

Then he fixed his gaze steadily upon the distant mountains.

Down the pass that cleft them asunder six dark objects appeared in rapid, undulatory motion. The man under the tree dropped his head upon his breast and closed his eyes.

When he looked up again six horse men were approaching at a long gallop.

They were dusty and rough looking. One of them carried a rope at his saddle bow.

They slackened their pace and ad vanced cautiously. The man under the tree hailed them from where he sat.

" Looking for some one, gentle men? "

" We was," replied the man with the rope. " We ain't now."

The man under the tree stood up. He was tall, straight, and handsome.

" Make it short," he said. " With a good horse instead of that plug I might have been over the line. But last night was a dark one, and I was in a hurry."

" You surely was, stranger," said the man with the rope as he dropped the noose over the head of the hatless one. " 'Nother case of haste makes waste. Best hoss in th' camp was in th' next stall."

The six drew a short distance away and consulted in low tones. Then the man who had carried the rope called out, " Stranger, 'you admit takin'ihe boss, don't you? "

The hatless one smiled and nodded.

" There ain't no use of a trial," urged the man who had carried the rope^to the other five. " I'm a law abidin' citi zen, but when a man pleads guilty there ain't no use a wastin' time a tryin' him.

" Stranger, the jedgment of this court is that you air guilty of hoss stealin', the particular hoss bein' Dick Arp's old black Bill there. The sen tence of the court is that you be hung by the neck from this here tree until dead, an' may God have mercy on your soul. Have you anything to say before we purceed?"

" I think not, gentlemen," said the hatless one thoughtfully, " except to call your attention to my courtesy in halting under the only available tree in the neighborhood."

"It *was* obligin' in you, stranger, it was so. You've saved us considerable time, and we're in right smart of a rush to git back to th' diggin's. He's a game one all right, boys. Hitch on there now an' let's git th' job over with."

The five seized the loose end of the rope and awaited the signal.

" Sure you ain't got no folks you'd like to send word to, stranger. By the way, what is your name, anyhow? "

" Ananias."

" Fust er last name? "

" Both. And—yes—there are those who are—waiting for me. Perhaps it would be better if they—knew."

" Gimme th' address, stranger, an' they'll git th' word. 'N' I'll make it easy for 'em—easy as I kin. I like a game man, 'n' I'm sorry you're at that end of th' rope. Gimme th' address."

"I think it is in the letter in my coat pocket. Will you look at it now? The other pocket. Thanks. Sorry to

trouble you, but you will observe that you have tied my hands. Just examine it, please."

" Couldn't read it in a week of Sun days. Here, Bob, you're a book sharp. Come 'n' read out th' address of th' gent's folks, so's we kin all ketch it."

The smallest man of the six advanced and glanced over the sheet hastily. Then he read it carefully.

Next he turned to the hatless one and exclaimed, " My God, man, are you mad? Have you no plea to make? "

The hatless one smiled sadly.

" What's the use? You would not believe. You intend to murder me—and them. I will not beg, not even for —the children."

But the man with the letter was reading it aloud to the five.

"Deab Papa;

a You must come home, quick. Mamma much worse. The doctor Bays be might Bare her if you were here. And the liltie money yoa gave m ta all gone and baby and I are buagry* bat I caa t tell the doctor that So you moat come. 1 know yoa will, bo I told mamma you wore comdac* «*t *b* ta listening for yoa. Com boo* or aba east boar you. Good by, dear papa.

"Your loving little girl,
"MARY."

The four men had dropped the rope. The nun who had brought it had turned away and waa looking out over the prairie.

Pcrhapa be waa thinking of hi* brood, far away in th© ca*t waiting for hi* return when he should "atrike it rich." PrrhaiMi it wo* the du*t that choked him when he »pokr.

" Where air they, »I ranger?"

"Mexico. Ju4 over the line. Had to leare them there until 1 could *md for them. That *aa month* ago. I have had—hard luck.*

The man who had brought the rope looked inquiringly al the other fire. Then there wrre erven free men under the tree, and the rope waa coiled on the arm >>f the man who had br. ught It.

" 'I ake the ho**, atranger. Be'* yourn We've mad.- a miataka. He am i n.' rh g._M.d, but he'll take yon to th'*.*• cn' • h..'dren,*

H->» ' kallaae ahoofc hia head, " ' mra, HI frank with yen, (i> ? 4 ' I •* I *t?j / <> *tifitf* Ute *gnn to* d.<17' ! . i;C I a hi a frimtnal

" Twv ; catB «g.. | fojd t b:m»

• t *

ness, a happy family, and a comfortable home. My partner ruined me. In one awful day I lost everything. Then I was offered a good position as manager of a Mexican plantation. I accepted the offer thankfully, and with my little family had almost reached our destination, where I hoped to recoup my fortune, when I learned that the company had failed and had made an assignment.

"We were homeless, among strangers. My wife, who had never known an ungratified desire, was sinking under our adversities. I could find no employment. I gave them every dollar 1 had and left them in two little rooms, in tending to work my way northward into , God's country, where I might find steady ' employment

" I was a hundred miles north of here (when that letter reached me. I wa- sick, bad found no work, and had n<* i money. In desperation I took a horse and rode him until he dropped. You who have wives and children can understand.

"I did not want to steal. But they are after me for taking that horae. I threw them off the trail last night, nut before 1 took thia horae from you. But they have struck H again by thia time. They are well mounted. I cannot escape unlearn ! catch the midnight tram south at the station.

" And even then—1 hate no money. You may as well proceed. If they catch me they will take me back, f prefer this tree. I| b— nrarer home1'

When six earnest men are of the same opinion « conclusion is soon rw<hed. The man who had brought the rope announced the result of the hasty <''mutation.

* .Stranger I can't pronounce you' name nohow —you're agoin* home. W • am t no millionaires, but we've dag up enough coin here to see you through, 'a' a little to spare. Jump that roau, quirk. Here's your hat. Bobs th* treasurer of thia syndMate, bo s gma* with you to bring back the roan

"You kin make it yif buallr That* all right- know what \ >< wot to say. We re rough, but wi white So long. Get * miive on u_lt nue er p.u'll mtoi th' tr-ito*

Twenty four taur« kier tab

turned to the little mining town, from the south, hading the roan and hearing a sealed mosage to the man who had carried the rope.

MapvNKaors arr Kary FairNns:

ITlooked like a bold name, but there war every thing to rain and nothing to lone. Hanging is hanging, whether for home stealing or for murder.

I war really eorry for the children when I found that letter in hia pocket, but I needed his clothea ami home, and he war stubborn. It is very bad form to travel in convict's a tri pee. Kindly inform the sheriff when he reaches your town that at pres ent my address is Central America.

Miwt thankfully yours,

R. E.

At five thirty that evening the sheriff of Maricopa County and two deputies in wiirdi of Hiehard Earl, alias "Slick Dick," confidence num, escaped con vict and later murderer, galloped into town from (he north and had a very int('resting interview with six wrathful and crestfallen citizens.

At six o'clock they departed slowly over the same road they had come. None showed a disposition to talk.

At the summit of the pass the sheriff halted his weary horse, turned in his saddle and gazed down upon the town long and thoughtfully.

Then he said, earnestly, contemptu ously, deliberately, " Ananias! Well, 1*11 —be—duTned! "

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* The Voices That Came to Beasly.

f.u . *tf*

BY FRANK NEILSON.

Showing that the evil things listeners hear of themselves may prove to be blessings in disguise.

WHEN Mr. Beasly arrived within sight of his house he groaned. For when he arrived within sight he also arrived within hearing, and what ho heard reminded him of what he had for gotten—that Mrs. Beasly was entertain ing the Ladies' Whist Club.

The sounds of laughter, of animated voices, of clinking tableware indicated that Mrs. Beasly's entertainment was really entertaining. So Beasly groaned again.

Anything that pulled at his purse or produced pleasure made Beasly groan.

Pleasure meant expenditure of money, or of time, which was the same thing. Beasly believed in the encourage- ment of economy and the prohibition of pleasure.

Beasly was not a gregarious animal. Mrs. Beasly was. Beasly had found it cheaper to compromise than to contest, and Mrs. Beasly had been allowed to join the club upon the condition that she " entertain " but once per annum.

" I suppose they'll cackle around my table until every scrap is devoured," Beasly muttered. " Then I can buy more or go without my supper. If I hadn't forgotten this I'd have stayed down town. Wonder if I can hide in the library till the row's over. I'll try it."

He tried it, via the side window, and Succeeded.

" Must be about through," he growled as he turned the key. " Hear 'em telling Maria what a good time they've had. Good time indeed! Don't cost *them* any thing. Go ahead! Gorge yourselves! Beasly pays! "

Another groan.

"Yes, thank heaven, they're begin ning to straggle into the next room after their wraps. Some of 'em in there now. Wonder if they consider who's putting up for this infernal nonsense. Wonder if they'll give *me* any credit. I'll listen."

He Heated himself where he could em ploy eye and ear alternately at the key hole. He tried an eye first, unsuccess fully. Then he applied an ear.

" It's positively shameful," a low voice was saying. " She ought to be expelled from the club. I saw her cheat twice with my own eyes. She simply stole that prize."

" Why don't you protest to Mrs. Beasly? " queried voice number two.

" And what good would that do ? " re joined the first voice. " Mrs. Beasly's been browbeaten and cowed by her brute of a husband " (Beasly nearly fell off his chair) " till she hasn't the back bone of a mouse."

" That's the truth," asserted voice number two. "I just pity her. It's awful the way she has to skimp along. It's my opinion that lunch didn't cost over ten dollars. I could see how morti fied she was."

"John says," resumed voice number one, " that old Beasly's the meanest---------- Oh, come on, dear, quick.. There comes that Mary Jacobs, and I will *not* speak to her, the hateful cheat. I'd have won that prize if----------"

" They're gone," snarled Beasly, ap plying his eye. "Great Moses! Ten dollars for a lunch for such creatures to gobble up. And here comes another gang. What'll *they* have to say about me?"

Voice number three:

"So glad you won the prize, dear. *Isn't* it pretty?"

Voice number four:

" Do you really think so? I think it horrid. I priced that very bowl at Hub bard's bargain sale last week, and it was two ninety eight. What do you think of *that? Wouldn't* that jar you?"

It did jar Beasly so that he came near shrieking out what he " thought of that." Three dollars for a bowl to *give* away!

Vo'co number live:

" Well, it 1.01'/ hr expensive ns our club'-* uecuiitomed to. But Mrs. Booly just *han* to oeonomiie, vou know, and-[1]— but haven't you heard? Beally? You mustn't repeat it for the world, but Will Hays (hat it's generally understood that old Beasly is in hia last ditch financially. Yea—the crash may come any minute.

w Will told me to keep my eyes open this afternoon, and if I naw anything to confirm the rumor he would intimate the truth in his morning paper. That would be quite a scoop on the other papers, you know. And I've seen enough, goodness knows."

Voices three and four, in chorus, softly but intensely:

" Why, what? "

Voice number five:

* Lots of things. Isn't the house miserably cold? I'll guess there isn't a ton of coal in the bin. And there's no hired help. And Mrs. Beasly's wearing a last year's dress made over. And the carpets, and the curtains, and that lunch! How much proof do you re quire?"

Voice number three:

" And I saw a large darn in the table cover. Mrs. Beasly tried to hide it with a platter, but I saw it. And I know she borrowed most of that silverware. Probably they've had to sell or pawn their own. Tom was saying only last night that Beasly looked shabbier every day. Oh, it *must* be true—and Tom's put all my money in Beasly's hands, too."

Voice number four:

"Maybe it's only stinginess. Fred has often said to me that Beasly is too mean to live. Look at this house, and the furniture. Old fashioned, of course, but-------"

Voice number five:

" The house and furniture were left to Mrs. Beasly by her father. Didn't you know that? Catch old Beasly buy ing anything good. She'd have had more, too, but Beasly was executor, you know, and they say----------"

Voice number three:

, "Oh, I'm *so* glad you told us. I'll lave Tom draw my money the first "ling in the morning."

* Voice number five.

" /)<», dear. And do have him warn his friends. Beasly has aimply been speculating until he has lost all of his own money, and goodness only knows how much more. It's just awful. 1 *hope* Will will come right out plain in the morning paper, and-------r"

Beasly didn't try to hear any more, lie had heard enough to make the fringe of gray hair around his bald head bristle with rage and his red face turn crimson.

He waited, wrathfully, until the great, lonely house was silent. Then he climbed softly out of the window and let himself in at the front door.

Mrs. Beasly sat alone at the remnants of the lunch. She looked tired and sad.

She had often looked that way, but Beasly had been too busy making money to notice it before.

" Maria," he said gruffly as he sat down opposite her, "what did that lunch cost?"

" Not—not over twelve dollars, Alfred. I tried----------"

" And the prize? "

"I got that for two dollars, Alfred. It was marked-------- "

" Can you give another party • and have those same people—the very same, mind you? "

" Why—yes—I suppose—I could," Mrs. Beasly gasped.

" Well, do it—and do it quick. And make it double discount anything of the kind that has happened in this town. And don't you pay less than twenty five dollars for the prize.

" Oh, don't ask me any questions. I'll show 'em"—savagely. "And you get a girl. Two of 'em—the best. Don't mind the cost. Whose silver is this? Why *will* you wear that old dress?

" See here, in the morning you'll have an account of one thousand dollars at the First National Bank. And it'll grow. Buy everything you want. Show those people that Alfred Beasly is no pauper. I'm going down town to see Will Ware. You needn't wait for me. Go to bed."

Next day at breakfast Beasly called his wife's attention to an article on the first page of the morning *Banner:*

To the First Presbyterian Church of our thriving city next Sunday will prove to be a day long to be remernberod. The

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mortgage of five thousand dollars which has so long been a burden to the coiigrcgation and the faithful pastor, will then bo burned in public.

This is made possible by the beneficence of our esteemed fellow citizen, Mr. Alfred Beasly, one of the most enterprising and successful financiers in the State.

In an interview last night Mr. Beasly reluctantly admitted that he had just handed his check to the Rev. J. R. Lane for the amount and purpose above stated. Like Mr. Carnegie, Mr. Beasly purposes to devote much of his great wealth to charitable and educational institutions, and this first step in that direction will meet with the heartiest approval.

This church is first favored for the reason that Mr. Beasly's estimable wife has long been a member of that congregation. Mr. Beasly's valuable and increasing business warrants--------

"I—I—can't understand it at all," stammered Mrs. Beasly.

"Don't try," said Beasly.

And she didn't. She's too happy to care. But she believes in modern miracles—for Beasly never told her about the voices.

Rider's Revenge.

By F. N. STRATTON.

DR. ALFRED RIDER was in the market for a good bird dog, and all Kokomo knew it. In fact, Alf was anxious that it be generally known that anyone seeking a purchaser for cither a pointer or a setter with a good and sufficient pedigree need go no further than the City National Bank, wherein Alf ruled as president and chief stockholder.

Alf had discovered soon after coming to the town that its wealthiest business men were active members of the Kokomo Gun Club, a jovial and fraternal band that descended cn masse each fall upon the broad plains of Illinois in search of the savory prairie chicken and the elusive quail. As the members of this club, having a proper preference for unperforated skins and uncrippled dogs, made it a *sine qua non* that applicants should have some practical knowledge of the eccentricities of a gun, Alf had been persistently posing as one of the mightiest nimrods that ever flushed a bird, for Alf had an eye for business and deposits.

Now, in truth and in fact, the only game Alf had ever hunted was the ,at American game in which aces 'flushes are the chief trophies, and onjy birds he had ever flushed -hose so intimately connected ' < great American dollar. Therefore, when he was finally admitted to membership, li£ realized forcefully that lie must immediately and secretly go into training in order to make his bluff good when he should attend the fall hunt.

So it was quite natural that when he received the telephone message from Matthews, the local express agent, he should take with him Jib Gay, the club's president, to see the dog, for what Jib didn't know about dogs was not worth itemizing.

Alf knew this, but lie didn't know that Jib had him sized up right from the start, and that both Jib and Matthews loved a practical joke a. well as a day's sport in the field.

It is only fair to state that Alf cntertained some doubt when he saw tlu dog. He was a doubtful looking dog. He sat in the crate in the express office with drooping head and an expression of ennui and utter disgust. His ears had evidently usurped the material that should have been used in his tail, his legs were attached at different angles, he was hairy in some places and hairless in others and he lacked that air of chic and aplomb that distinguishes the bird-dog of ancient and honorable lineage.

"Philippine pointer, by smoke," Jib ejaculated.

"Sh-h-h/Imid Matthews, warning

ly; "don't talk so loud. Ijet All »ur- **prise** the boys this fall. Shipped here by mistake. Meant for Kankakee. Fellow there won't accept him now be cause of delay. Shipper says if 1 can **get** eighty dollars and charges to let him go rather than return. Had him sold for a hundred. See, here's the bill."

Jib encouraged the brute to stand up by poking him in the protruding ribs, looked into his mouth, examined his feet and then stood back and surveyed him critically.

"Alf, you're in luck. If the Govern ment never gets anything else out of those islands, the discovery of that breed of dogs will square the bill. Watched a couple of 'em at work out East last fall and never saw anything like it. Just look at that eye—and those legs. Of course, he's poor and fagged out now from the trip, but in a week you won't know him. You know the shipper's name, Alf. No kennels like his in the country."

"Yes; he's undoubtedly a fine speci men," said Alf, judicially, "but it strikes me that eighty dollars is a pretty stiff figure for an untrained pup."

"What, for a genuine Philippine pointer? Say, Alf, if you don't want him, he's mine. I'll train him on the q. t. this summer and then have the laugh on you this fall."

"I'd have jumped at him myself," said Matthews, with a sigh, "but I'm devilish short right now."

"I'll take him," said Rider, eagerly, "and you fellows keep quiet till this fall."

He gave Matthews his check for eighty dollars, plus eight dollars and fifty cents charges, with instructions h> deliver the prite at his house after dark that night.

How or just when he made the dis- cuvcry that he had bought an itinerant mongrel, sired by an unknown and damned by everybody that kept flower beds or made garden was never learned. Alf was game and suffered smilingly and silently. He even at- tended the club's banquet, given, so the cards of invitation announced, at an expense of eighty-eight dollars and fifty cents, donated by "our distin- guished member and dog connoisseur, Mr. Alfred Rider."

But he didn't go with the club that fall. He was not well, he said, and had most urgent business at home. Of course, Jib went and took his wife, as usual, leaving his home, 220 North Main street, unoccupied.

One Tuesday evening the following advertisement appeared in the local papers:

"WANTED—Dogs, for dog and pony show. Any size or color. Good prices. Deliver, Thursday afternoon, at 220 North Main street, side en trance."

Wednesday morning Jib received a telegram: "Meet me at bank Friday morning without fail. Important.

"Alfred Rider."

Jib was one of the heaviest depos- itors, and with dire foreboding of financial disaster he lost no time in em- barking upon the next train, due in Kokomo at 11.45 P- M.» Thursday.

Early Thursday afternoon an al most endless procession began the im vasion of Jib's premises, men a boys with "goods in hand." At t side entrance they read this placar large letters: "Out of town.]3 night. Tie dogs in yard for e

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tioii. Will pay at my office to-mor
row morning. "J. Gay."

At midnight Jib hurriedly rushed through his front gate and fell over a large dog. He then arose and trod on a small dog, who protested noisily, inaugurating a chorus that could have been heard from Dan to Beersheba. Then Jib discovered that his front lawn was full of dogs; likewise the back yard. Every tree and shrub, every post and pillar of fence and verandah, every object to which a rope could be fastened was adorned by a dog. There were big dogs and little dogs, smooth dogs and woolly dogs, white, black, yellow and spotted dogs, and those that didn't howl barked. Jib couldn't count them, but he estimated the number at one hundred and fifty and let it go at that. Some were good-tempered and some were not. Two large and ferocious brutes anchored to the side porch Jib was obliged to shoot in order to enter the house.

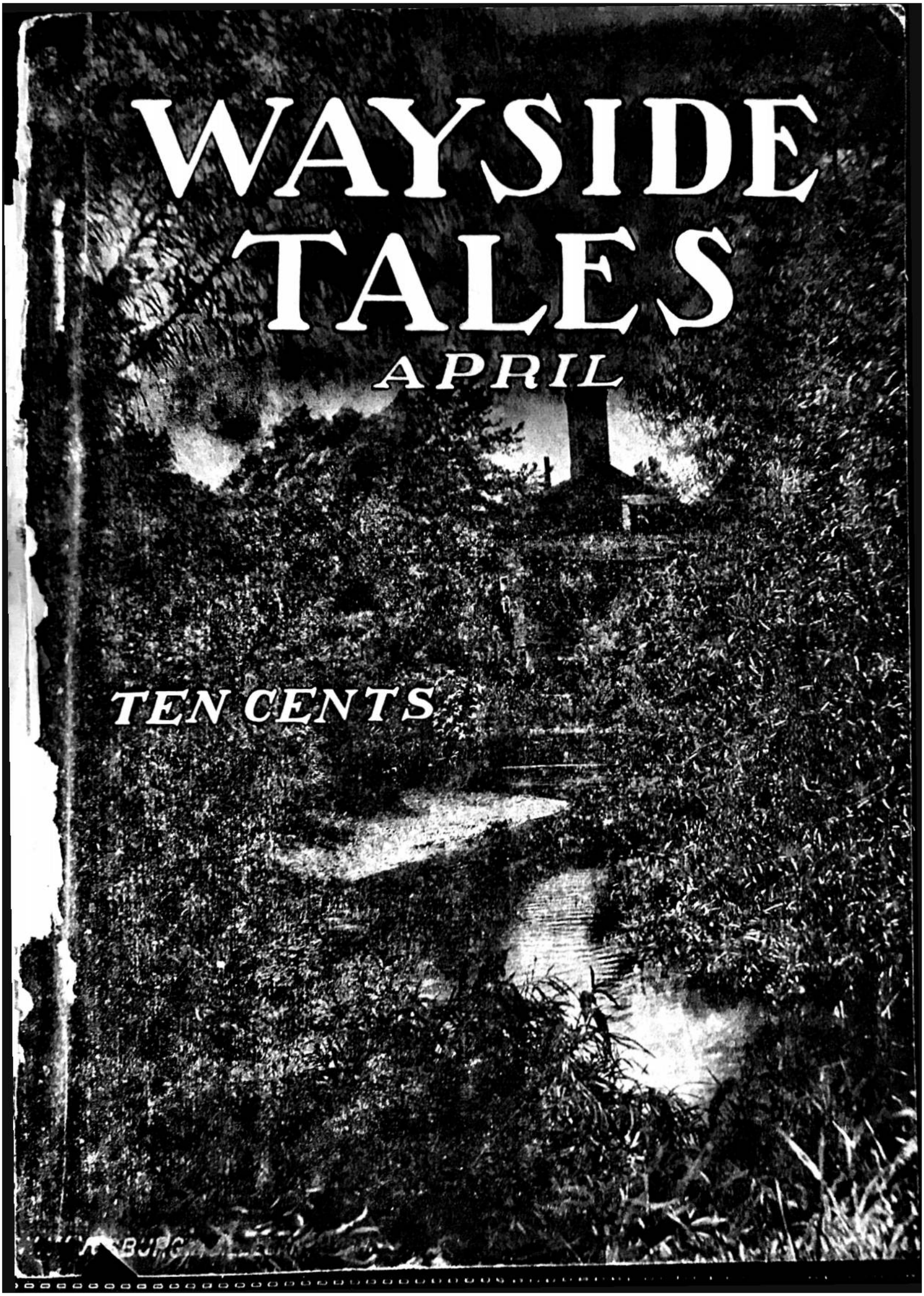
Jib was mad. When several of his neighbors asked him, from their bed room windows, if he purposed to keep that row up all night he made remarks that caused them to shut their win dows and mouths simultaneously. When he had severed about one hun dred and fifty ropes, chased the menagerie off the premises, hoisted the two carcasses over the back fence and viewed the damage to shrubbery, flower beds and young trees, he said bad things about Alf Rider.

To the clamorous crowd that sur rounded his office next morning he em phatically and violently denied all lia bility, and when the canine owners started angrily for 220 North Main street to retake their property he fled.

Next day he was made defendant in two law suits instituted by the owners of the murdered dogs, whose testi mony on the witness stand upon the question of value indicated, as was re marked by Alf Rider, that the dear de ceased were certainly genuine Philip pine pointers.

When he had finished fighting the suits, paying lawyers and repairing damaged premises, he dropped in at the bank and shook hands with Rider.

"It's on me, Alf," he said. You got off easy. Let's quit."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Hayseed Tales - Feb. 1903

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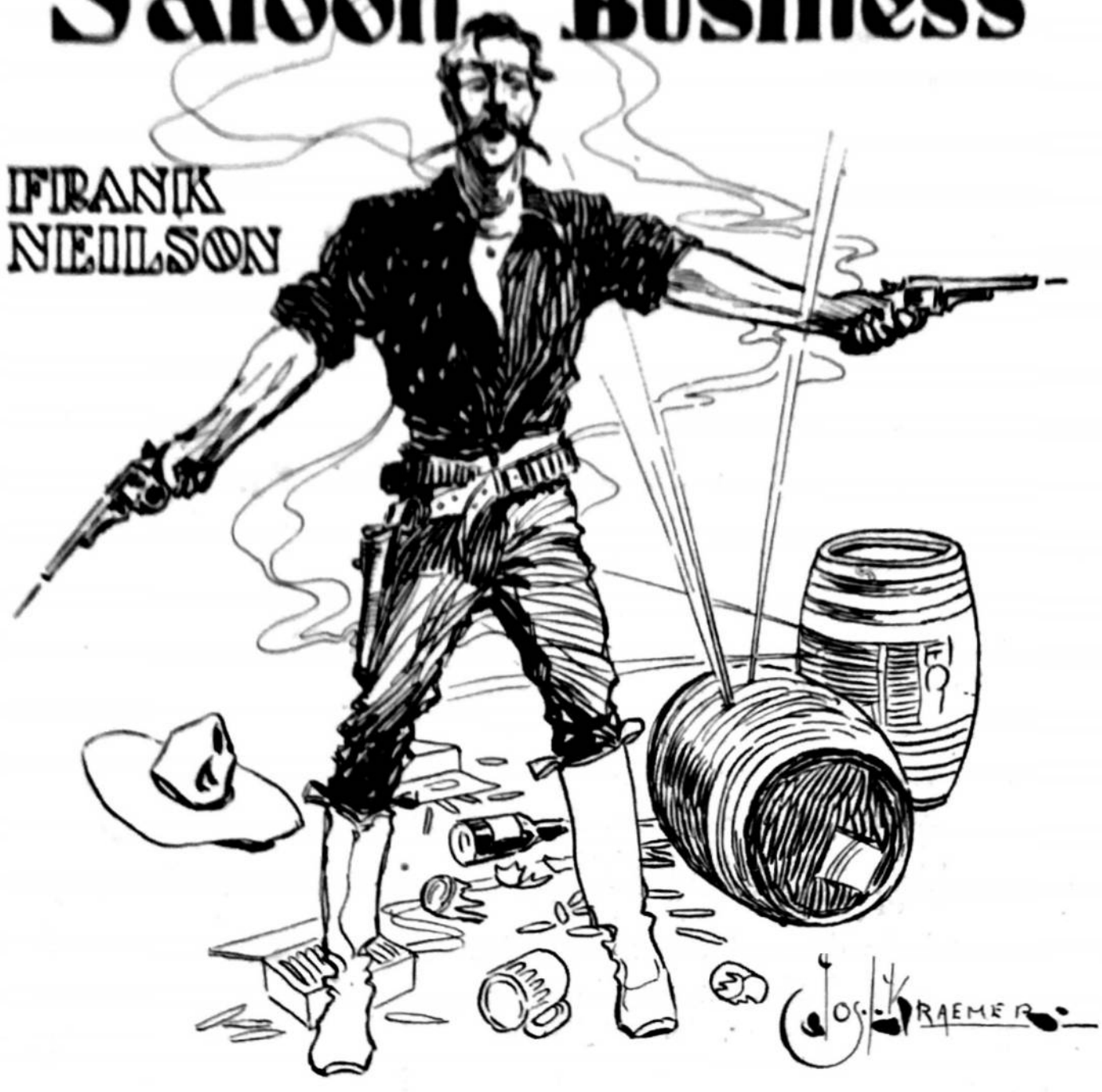
How Poiiermec Pete Went into the Saloon Business



"Jest one drink, Shorty."

"Nein. You owes me more as tree tollars, alretty. You vas one dead peat. I vas not in der pizness for mine gomplexion."

Pottering Pete, tall, gaunt, ragged and unkempt, leaned against the bar of the "Mountain Gem" and contemplated "Shorty" vigor ously polishing the woodwork preparatory to catering to the morning trade.

"But, Shorty, my luck can't last allers. Bound to come my way purty soon. I feel it in my bones—"

"You'll feel somedings outside your bones if you get not oud right avay, alretty. You drive away my gustomers."

"That's all right, Shorty. Gimme a drink and I'll—hold on there, Shorty, hold on."

Khortj held on —to the collar of Pete's ahirt mid the rear of his ether garment, until I*rte found hImwIf In the middle of the dusty road.

"Vnd don't you nefvr room park," ejaculated the panting German, from the door, "or J prvtika efry bone In your pody. You vas one fraud."

Accompanied by his great and growing thirst. Tottering Pete slowly shambled down the one street of the rambling little mining town. Since his last unsuccessful prospecting trip he had lived upon the generosity of its inhabitants. Lazy, shiftless, drunken and discourapnl, he had outstayed his welcome. Simultaneously he reached the end of the street and a determination to keep going. To reach a determination was a novel sensation for Pete, and he ratheV liked it. PoMibly he could impose for a week or two upon the citizens of the next town. There might even be a possibility of a "grub-stake" and another prospecting tour with a pot of gold at the end of it.

When he had toiled up the pass to its summit, Pete turned and looked down upon the town nestling in the distance, amid the lofty peaks bathed in the golden glory of the rising sun. In Pete's unromantic mind admiration for the picture was drowned by resentment against the citizens who had refused to harbor him longer.

From somewhere among the shallow pools of his memory arose a long forgotten tale of a prophet of old, spurned and reviled, who had stood upon a mountain-top at early dawn and hurled a curse upon the slumbering denizens of the valley, a curse so vehement and effective as to result in the immediate and utter annihilation of the unconscious objects of the prophet's wrath.

"Durned ef I don't try it," muttered Pete. "Durned ef I don't cubb the whole danged town once, jest fer luck. Don't cost nothin' 'n' ye can't tell what'll happen."

Inspired by this commendable resolution, he clambered slowly up the steep side of the pass to the top of the spur. After a moment's rest, he drew his long, gaunt body to its full height, tilted back his unsheared head for a supreme effort, and thrust out his arms to add force to his malediction. Then his foot slipped upon a rounded rock, and a tangled mass of long, waving arms and legs and hair rolled down the opposite side of the sharp spur and landed upon a ledge of rock with a crash. Slowly and painfully glancing up along the course of his sudden descent, Pete scrambled to his feet, gasped, gave great cry, and fell to clawing in the thin, loose soil like a wild beast.

For two hours he dug and scraped and pounded with boulder and knife, and when he finally climbed back to the top of the spur and down into the pass, his face was set toward the town and his pockets were bulging with rocks.

Hr ininmml through (hr town with aurh stride and manner that the rltiivM glanced after him In Burprl*?, and Rhoriy, looking out of thv open saloon door ami mldniMlng (hr early coterie at the bar, (*Xclalm«*d drelwlvrlj, *"I know cd II ronld room. Ho mooch drink can nichl one man aland, lie vm plum graiy at lm(, alrrtty. Yah."

K did not occur to any of (hem nl the time (hat Pete's nose was pointed straight toward (hr nenrent government office.

But it did occur to (hmi shortly after, when the truth came out, and a couple of capitalists, with a force of men, arrived to begin the develo|»mrnt of the richest mine In the region.

"And right in sight of town, too," bewailed sundry citlsens, "and us a prospectin' 'n' a proddin' around every place but that."

Shorty was handing out the drinks to a line of mourners, when hr became aware of the unexpected presence of Pottering Pete, a little better clothed than formerly, but still the same slouchy, listless, laxy-looking Pete.

"Shorty," he drawled, "gimme a drink"—and he got it.

"Shorty," he continued, lazily, "Pm a goin' inter th' saloon blxness. I kinder like yer place. What's th' price?"

"It vaa not for sale, Mr. Patten," said Shorty, obsequiously. "I haf a goot trade, alretty, und don't sell me oud."

"All right, Shorty. I starts opposition and see who breaks up fust. Gimme 'nother one, Shorty."

Shorty was not pleased at the prospect of the threatened "oppo sition."

"Der place vas wort a tousand tollars to me, Mr. Patten," he remarked, as he replenished Pete's glass.

Pete slowly swallowed the liquor, smacked his lips approvingly, and laboriously counted out ten beautiful one-hundred-dollar bills.

"Th* whole outfit ain't wuth th' half of it, Shorty, but I'm stuck on it bekase of old and sweet memories. Gimme a receipt, Shorty."

Then, as Shorty labored over the receipt, Pete scratched his left shin with the toe of his right boot and soliloquized.

"Short time sence Potterin' Pete wuz th' only critter in this,here town as couldn't git a drink at this bar. An' now Mr. Patten's th' only critter in this here town as kin—fer he's a-goin' into th' saloon bizness—fer a limited time only. Git out o' here, Shorty."

And Shorty got out—as did the bystanders. Some chose the front door, others utilized the back exit, and a few preferred the windows. For Pottering Pete had languidly produced a couple of wicked-looking "guns" and had started into the saloon business.

His first shot shattered the big mirror over the bar, the next decapitated a bust of Gambrinus, the third disarranged the internal anatomy of the superannuated nickle-in-the-slot machine, and w'hen last observed by the flying Shorty and his erstwhile customers, Pete

had turned a fusilade upon the little pile of kegs and jugs at the end of the room, creating a horizontal geyser with each shot.

At a respectful distance the amazed inhabitants gathered and watched liquors of various brands and colors gurgle out under the closed door and ooze through the cracks in the floor, forming miniature rivers and lakes in the dusty roadway. An occasional shot warned them that they might look but must not taste.

The prevailing opinion was that a man who would waste good liquor like that was undoubtedly crazy. It was felt that the affair was truly a public calamity, inasmuch as it would require at least four days to get more whiskey into the town.

Late in the afternoon a few of the most hardy, encouraged by resonant snoring, and the total absence of any other sound,-ventured into the wrecked saloon. As they lifted Pottering Pete from a pool of mingled whiskey, beer and gin, they heard him mutter lazily. "Have one on me, Shorty. I'm in th' bizness myself—fer a limited time only."

MIGNON.

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April 1903

How Pottering Pete Went Into the Real Estate Business.*

By Frank Niilson.

Puttering Pete stretched his long arms along the top board of the cemetery fence, and solemnly surveyed the grim array of stones and monuments.

"Dogged of it hain't changed even more'n th' town," he eolllo-quiied. "Reckon 'bout all th' folks I knowed twenty-five years ago is camped out here."

From the depths of a pocket he produced a long and twisted "plug," from which, with muoh facial contortion and grinding of teeth, he wrested a large segment, restored the shattered fragments to the pocket, and resumed his soliloquy.

"Wonder what corner they put her in. Ef I hadn't 'a be'n allers busted I could 'a----------"

A faint, pattering sound in the distance attracted his attention. At the foot of a green and gentle slope, little clouds of clay were rising from the surface of the earth and falling back at regular inter vals, like an infant geyser.

"Reckon he'll know," Pete muttered.

Lazily he clambered over the fence, and slouched down the slope, toward the upheaval.

From the bottom of an oblong excavation a little, weazened old man gazed shrewdly up at the hairy face that peered into the pit—then grinned, toothlessly, and thrust the handle of his shovel up into the palm of Pottering Pete.

. "Shake, Misther Pether Patthen 1" he exclaimed. "Fer thot's yer name, or me own's not Dennis O'Teague. Ye'll ixcuse me fer not climbin' up—me back's thot bad wid th' rheumatics."

"Right ye air, Denny," responded Pete, shaking the shovel handle vigorously. "Still at th'old job eh? And how's bizness?"

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22 —

The little old man leaned heavily on the shovel, and shook his gray head dolefully.

"Shlow, Pether, ahlow. It's an unwillln* thrade I have. Nobody pathronises me place 'til they're driven to It. Ol'm th' lust mon they'll ' dale wI«I. But—yersllf, Pether—'twas in th' papers thot Misther Pether l'atthen had found a gould moine out west, an' we're wonderin' la it our Pether thot runned away twinty-foive year agone."

"I Reckon it wuz, Denny. Yea, I reckon it wuz."

"Good fer ye! Manny's the toime whin folks said ye'd come to a bail end, 'twaa Dennis O'Teague towld thim to wait 'n' see. A gould moine! Glory be! I always knowed ye'd get th' credit ye desarved sometoime, Pether."

"Waal," Mr. Patten drawled, "I wuz a needin' some credit when I hit th' mine. I wuz a goin' down hill purty swift. Still, I don't know as enny partickilar praise orter be cornin' to me fer flndin' th' mine. I jest kinder fell into it."

"Shure, it's yer blessed mither would have joyed to see this day. Manny's th' toime th' Widdy Patthen's said to mesilf, 'Ah, Dinny, if me only child would but let me know where he is'----------"

A small avalanche of damp, unpleasant clay, starting from the 'unity of Pottering Pete's boot, caromed from Dennis' head, inter- .pting the unhappy reminiscence.

"Ginerally didn't know where I wuz myself," Pete remonstrated. "But I orter have wrote—yes, I orter have wrote. Reckon I might have borrowed a stamp. But I never thought she'd—Denny, where'd ye put her? I'm a goin' to give her a moniment that'll----------"

"A monument, is it," Dennis ejaculated, clawing the clay from his scant hair. "Shure, ye're too late agin, as ye always was, Pether. She's got one, th' saints be praised."

"What? Who—who did it?" exclaimed Pottering Pete, incred ulously.

"'Twas the Burtons, Pether—ould mon Burton 'n' wife—bekase yer mither, peace to her soul, nursed thim through th' small-pox whin nobody else would go nigh. D'ye mind the Burtons, Pether, thim as owned th' foine farm over th' hill beyant? Manny's th' apple ye've sthole from that orchard, Pether. 'Tis a monument will make yer mouth wather----------"

"Whar'bouts is it, Denny?"

" 'Tis behint ye, Pether, in th' corner beyant, by th' little willow—th' one wid th' blind angel holdin' th' dhruggists's scales."

Pottering Pete was gone a long time. When he returned, Dennis had ascended to the surface, and was industriously scraping clay from his shoes.

"Denny," said Pottering Pete—there was a suspicious tremor in his voice—"I'm agoin' to see old Burton."

• Tlii a long journo/ we'll be makln', thin, l'ether," observed Den nis, looking up qulsslcally. "Tin for hint I'm diggin' thin day. Th' funeral'* thia afthernoon- an' he'* betther off than th' wlddy."

"Hejrf What'* th' matter with th' wldder?" demanded Pottering Pete.

• Tl* a *ade tale, Pother—a tale of aicknes*—an' th' ohllder dyln' —an' payin' security debt*—an' droughts, an' panlo—till all goes but th' home eighty, an' they ha* to berry on that—an' th' mortgage l* foreclosed, and Clubba git* th' place tomorry, lavin' th' wlddy widout kith ner kin, nor roof fer her head, ner dollar fer her pocket."

•Who'* Clubb*?" asked Mr. Patten, hoarsely.

"Ye don't know him, Pether. He come since ye lift. It'* a foine gentlemen he is, wid a heart of brass, an' th' eye of a salted codfish, an'—by all th' saints, thot do be him cornin' now!"

Pottering Pete, following Dennis' gaze, beheld a small, skinny man tying a large, bony horse to the cemetery fence.

"Maybe he do be havin' a mortgage on th' Burton lot, here, an' is cornin' to sthop th' funeral till it's paid," Dennis suggested, ironically.

The small, skinny man hurried through the gate and ambled down the slope. As he neared Pottering Pete he removed his hat, bowed obsequiously and smiled profusely.

"Mr. Patten, I believe. My name is Glubbs, Simeon K. Clubbs, real estate and loans. Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Patten."

Mr. Patten certainly did not see the extended hand, for his own right hand wandered back to a hip pocket, while the left was trans formed into a knotty fist.

"Welcome back to your native heath, my dear sir,' continued the unabashed Mr. Clubbs. "Welcome back. Truly, fortune favors the brave. Let me be among the first to congratulate you, and to proffer my humble services should you desire to make a few investments.

"Our little city is on the eve of an era of prosperity, sir. The financial clouds that have so long obscured the national horizon are being swiftly dispersed, and a glowing future awaits us."

"Jedging from what I've heered sence I struck town this mornin' there's a glowin' future awaitin' fer you," growled Pottering Pete.

"Thank you, my dear sir, thank you. I do not deny, Mr. Patten, that I have prospered, and that my business is promising. Perhaps you would like to try the real estate business—with me. Splendid investment, sir, splendid! We would pull together famously. You furnish the capital, and I furnish the brains—that is—ah—hm-m-m—this open grave reminds me, Mr. Patten, that one of my dearest friends has been called to his reward. Sad, sir, very sad----------"

Mr. Patten drew a deep breath, and irrigated the atmosphere to windward of Mr. Clubbs with fluid extract of the "plug" so oopiously that Mr. Clubbs shifted his position hastily.

"I win at hI likin'," n-marked Mr. Pattim, meditatively, "I wm athinkin' *lm>ul a email farm -*aay righty acrva.* An* ef I(suited, I might go Into th' real estate blanraa tar limited—"

"Eighty a<rre? Yen, air, exactly I Thia way, Mr. Patten, to my buggy. Only • abort drive, air. Thia eighty will aatIt you—I'll make It ault you and we'll then discuss our partnership."

"How's th* title?" Inquired Pottering Petr, tia hr slowly climbed Into the <11 lapl da Ini vehicle.

••Hi might aa a at ring," asserted Mr. Clubbs cheerfully, encouraging the bogy home Into a shambling trot. "Own the place myself— that la, I hold the certificate, (let my deed from the sheriff thia evening. Foreclosure, you are. Year for redemption expires thia evening. Widow can't raise the money."

"Wlddrr Burton, I reckon," remarked Pottering Pete, carelessly.

"Yea. Juat »o. Hhe'e----------" 4

" 'Pears kinder rough fer ua to be prowlin' 'round th' place when th' funeral's giftin' ready, don't it?"

Mr. Clubba laughed, and laid his skinny hand caressingly on Mr. Patten's knobby knee.

"My dear air, businesH ia buninesB. The wheels of commerce can't atop because people will die. It's been an unfortunate affair for the widow, but, fortune of war, Mr. Patten, fortune of war. Up to day, down tomorrow. Ila, ha! As practical men, Mr. Patten, as men of affaire, you and I know that business and sympathy won't mix. It'B au ill wind that blows nobody any good. If I hadn't got this eighty us 1 did, 1 couldn't offer you such a bargain."

"What's yer Aggers?"

"Now, Mr. Patten, let's not be hasty. Well just go over the place first, and then—here we are, Mr. Patten—the big white house with the red barn. Everything spick and span, clean as a whistle. Old Burton was a model farmer, but he couldn't keep off of other people's paper."

"Just look at that timber, over there, Mr. Patten. Ten acres—mostly poplar. Timber alone is worth what the place cost me," and Mr. Clubbs chuckled.

"Let's hitch to th' fence here, and walk acrost to th' timber," sug gested Pottering Pete.

"Certainly, certainly, quite right," assented Mr. Clubbs, leaping out and proceeding to anchor the bony horse to the fence. Pottering Pete, as he leisurely descended, surreptitiously transferred something from underneath the buggy seat to his capacious pocket.

"I will state, Mr. Patten." resumed Mr. Clubbs. as they entered the woods, "that the price I shall name you will mean cash, though, of course, your check----- "

"Ye'll git th' cash—when we trade. I come heeled—fer another kind of investment."

"Real estate?" queried Mr. Clubbs, anxiously.

"Monlmvnt," atiawereil Mr. Patten, laconically.

"O, muuuiuent. Demined relative? Yea, Just ao. But you didn't invest? No. Quite right. Excellent. Too much money aquandered in auoh thing*. A man's fame and good name should be his monu ment, Mr. Patten."

"Hum folks is goin' to git a durn puny muniment," soliloquized Pottering Pete, in an undertone.

Possibly Mr. Clubbs did not catch the remark, for he was gazing rapturously upward at the top of a tali poplar.

"Just look at this tree, Mr. Patten. Isn't it a beauty? Two men couldn't span the trunk with their arms."

Pottering Pete's eyes twinkled.

"O, I reckon they could," he insisted.

"Try it," suggested Mr. Clubbs, knowingly, extending his arms about the rough trunk.

Pottering Pete stepped around the tree, out of Mr. Clubbs' sight, drew from his pocket a strong rope halter, and before Mr. Clubbs could comprehend his purpose, the skinny wrists were deftly bound about the tree.

"Why—what!" exclaimed the amazed Clubbs. "Ah, yes, a little joke. Very clever, very olever, indeed, Mr. Patten. Ha! Ha! But, as time is pressing, suppose we go on."

"I'm afeard ye will go on—and somebody might hear ye," remarked Pete. "So I'll finish th' job."

He took the big red bandanna from his neck and gagged the sput tering, struggling Clubbs.

"Now, ye kin buck all ye want. Th' more ye buck th' tighter ye git. I never cinched a burro eny better. Forchun of war, Clubbsey, forchun of war. Up to-day, down to-morrow. So long, old boy. I'm agoin' into th' real estate bizness—fer a limited time, only."

In a few minutes the enraged Clubbs heard the sound of his rattling buggy on its way toward the town.

That evening, the heart-sick Widow Burton opened an envelope handed her by Dennis O'Teague as she left the cemetery. It con tained a receipt from the sheriff in full of all claim against the eighty acres, and a few scrawled and labored lines running thus:

"Widder Burton—this is tu pay fer the moniment with intrust; ef ye hear enny yellin' back in yer woods let him yell its clubs mebbe the skinny leetle kuss will slip the gag don't wurry i told his offis boy clubs wants tu see him at the n w kornur yer woods at 6 p m—arid he duz—bad

"denis will giv ye this im goin back west on the 4pm clubs mite giv me trubel fer goin intu the reel state bizness fer a short time only—respeckfly

PETER PATTEN."


THE BACK-IO

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"* * kl'l 1 ik vj Lal 5 1 O C(in nude. For pArtkulir*. address

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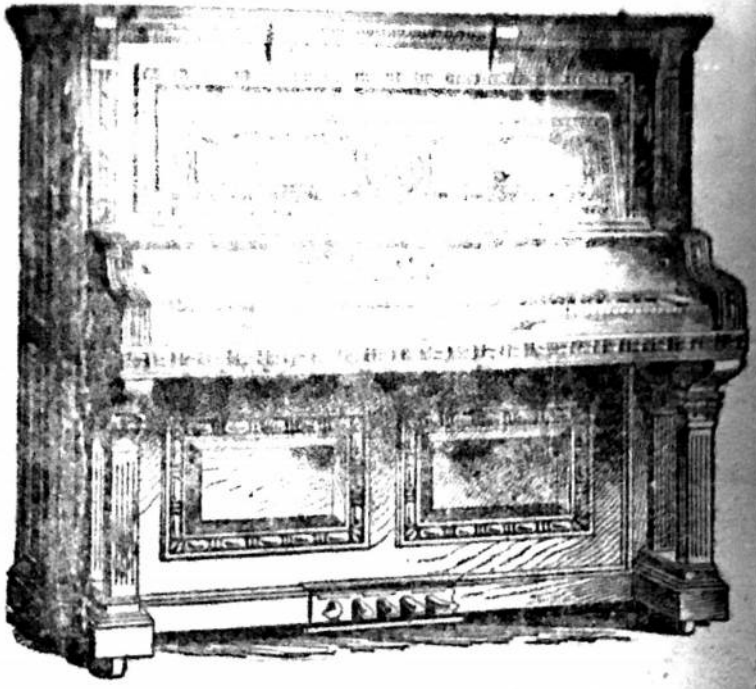

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At the Arrow's Point

R

By Prank Neilson.

R

"IT'S all over. Mary," lie said, as lie met her at the gate, "and I'm a fool for asking him again."

"Does he really refuse, as rich as he is—"

"Yes. ami even refuses to allow us to take any part of the crops. Says we knew when we planted them that the year of redemption expired to-day, and that we took the chance. Of course that's the law, but 1 did not think that he would take everything, and we were boys together and have been neighbors ever since,"

"1 can't understand why he wants to prosecute us. I never could understand why he bought the mortgage."

"I can tell you. now. He told me plainly that he had waited thirty years to get even with you for chosing me instead of him. Said he would show you now that von made a mistake."

"Oh. Phillip."

"Yes. he was very complimentary. Said I did not know how to practice economy. And when I sug gested that economy could not prevent sickness and death, he answered that he was not responsible for our afflictions, and that he would insist upon his rights: that he had made his money that way.'-

"Is it possible that William Otis is such a lieart-less brute? What can we do. Phillip?"

"Nothing. Absolutely nothing. If he would give me only one year more, as I told him. I could save the farm. This panic is almost over. But I have done all that can be done. We must leave here tomorrow. Come. Mary. I want to walk over the dear old place for the last time."

Side bv side they walked in the moonlight. The tall, odorous corn, softly stirred by the evening breeze, nodded and bowed, and whispered to them a pathetic farewell.

Across the distant meadow the dancing lights of the fire-flies flashed and faded like vanished hopes.

The little brook, made sacred years ago by the white feet of happy children, murmured and called to them to stay. The tree that child-hands had 'anted and cared for so proudly, showered its blos-

s.»nis upon their gray heads, as though stirred by unseen hands.'

They could almost hear the patter of little feet, the babble of baby voices, the cheery, childish laughter that had so lightened the burdens of the years gone by.

Here they had gone forth, hand in hand, with strength and vigor, and youth and hope, to hew a home from the wilderness. Every spot was hallowed by sweet memories, every toot of ground was sanctified by love-lightened toil.

And now all wfts lost; the labor, the sacrifices, the heartaches; all had been for naught, and they were adrift in the great world, old, childless and almost penniless.

"1 guess he was right, Mary," said Haynes, bitterIt. "You made a mistake. With him and his money you might have been always happy and comfortable."

She laid her gray head upon his toil-stooped shoulder, and her wrinkled hand stole as softly and tenderly into his as ever in days of old.

"1 made no mistake, I'hillip. I chose the honest man. not the scoundrel. If it were all to do over I would make the same choice. It will be very hard, but we must—try—to endure it."

He stooped and kissed her tears away and then lifted her to his side upon the high bank that overlooked the farm and the river below.

. "The old oak is down," he exclaimed, "I did not think the storm was so strong to-day. And 'the river is higher than for years."

"It is higher than I ever saw it," she said, wearily. "And what a peculiar shape it gives the tongue of land that the old oak stood on. Like an arrow with its barbed head."

"So it does. Odd, isn't it? Let us go down and see the old oak. before the river washes it away. It was the children's favorite tree, and we ought to say good-by to it."

Half way along the narrow strip of land that projected into the river. Haynes stopped to view the rising waters, and his wife walked on slowly toward the point of the arrow head where the oak had- stood

As the waters gradually rose the arrow-like shape of the little peninsula became more marked and apparent, and to Haynes' mind came memories of r, tale of how. long years ago. two Indians had journeyed from the far west to dig upon that very farm for asure that they failed to find. Before departing, disappointed, one of them had said that in their tribe was a story of some of the early French explorers who, hard pressed by savage foes, had buried some where along the river in that neighborhood, the treasure that they were carrying from Quebec to the settlements on the lower Mississippi.

never returned for it, but had sai®, «o ran. that it was buried at the point of «n a sight of (he falls.

"If it were only true, and if this snot if arrow." Phillip smiled at the idea, and J join his wife when he heard her calling hin he reached her she was deep in the hollow fallen tree had stood, and was waiting for 111 ing, with uplifted face.

"Look!" she cried.

And Phillip saw, back among the might glittering heap, struck full by the harvest was gold; gold coins of old and odd desil of them disfigured by the soil and dampj years, but still gold, as valuable as when

"At the arrow's point, "cried Phillip th hand into the heap, "but too late!" And up to her and smiled sadly.

"Who knows?" she cried. "O, Phil, to quick! If he hasn't made the deed to O may save the farm. I wonder if there's

x Laughing and crying, she helped hiiM treasure into her apron, and then they hug stable. She tied the precious coins secun^ while he bridled and saddled bay Nell, a leaned from the saddle that she might ik speed and good luck? her upturned fact® youthful with the radiance of hope.

Sheriff East, working late at his d^g wor.deringly to Haynes' hurried stor^g askance at the strange "ld disks of

"Don't know about this. Phil. T'a I reckon, 'nd old Bill (>tis is might® 1 take anything but legal tender hed^H hie if he can. He called for the deB but I was busy, 'n' told him he'll h®g morning. He kicked. Said theyea^^H o'clock. But it ain't up till midnight^^H got an hour 'n' a half yet. If you^^H tender we could fix it. Of course t^^H something, but how much?"

"But, Tom. the banks are both^^H gold, good gold, and there's certain If you refuse it my farm is gone."

"Yes. I reckon it's gold. But what^^H got to go by weight, 'n' I've got to lo^H ()tis 'n' my bondsmen. Tell you wliat®s Stanley, cashier of the Citizen's. H^® at the Elks' blow-out. If lie'll weig^^® value mebbe we can fix it. He's

He was back in half an hour, smili out his hand.

"Shake." he said, "the farm's you^^H as glad as you are.**

Phil could only look his thank^^H

Fee lie was thinking ot the brave little
iting in the old home.

eriff footed up the amount of princif al, in-
is and attorney fees.

K hundred and two dollars and fifty cents,"
meed. " *N' Stanley give me credit for
reu. Here's your receipt '11' the eight fifty
It*s a close call. Phil. It's striking eleven

wji- thinking of his last conversation with

he said thoughtfully, "what's the 'squire's
ire for a plain, ordinary case of assault and

riff looked up and grinned.

Squire Bradley's a friend of mine, 'll' in a
his | should sav not over eight fifty; just
ii of that change."

incidence might he considered a positive
of Providence, mightn't it. Tom?"

sure. 'N' I couldn't blame you."

I<I a sigh of self denial.

>th too old And it would shock Mary.
Tom. If I can ever be of service to

was thrown open and Otis rushed in,

elis me that Haynes has redeemed that
Mr. East. I'll stand for no such scheme.
redemption expired at six today. I
d immediately. Refuse if you dare."

laynes, quietly, though his eyes were
are twenty-four hours in each day,
s almost an hour to run. My farm is
he sheriff will give you your money
~>/ business hours in the morning."

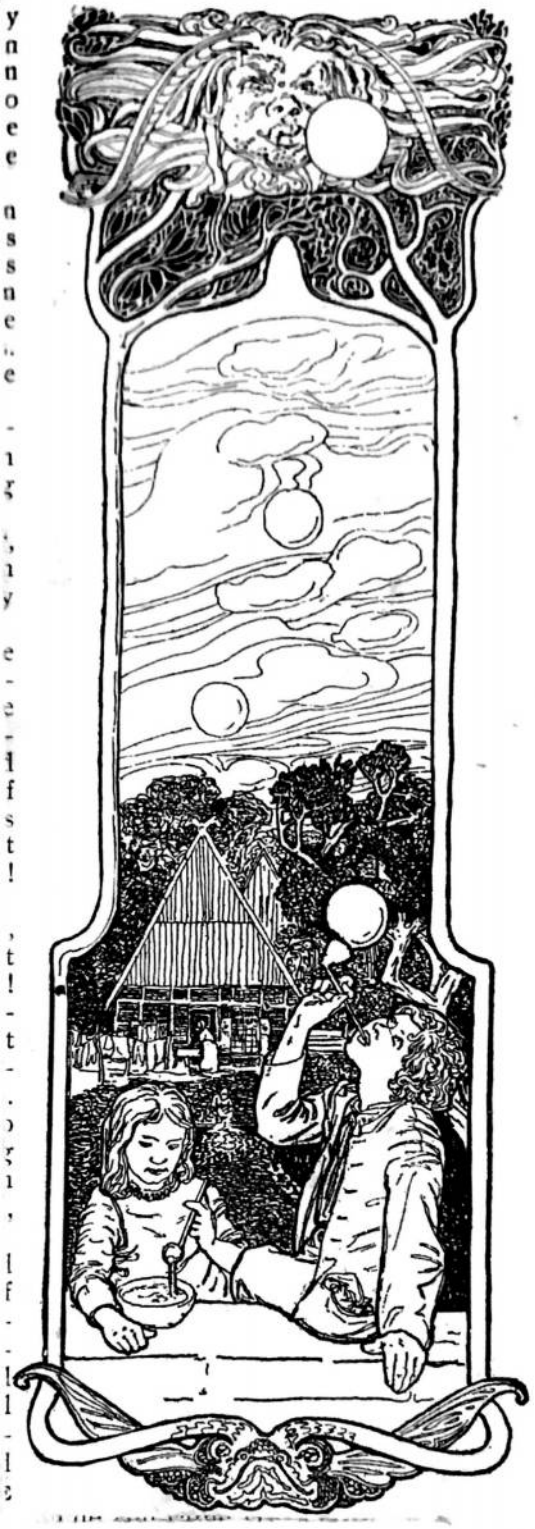
a sw indie," yelled Otis furiously, and
struck Haynes full in the face,
as surprisingly slow in reaching the

f self-defense," he said, as Otis arose
nd limped out cursing and threaten-
r to tha't in any court."

oman met Phil at the gate, and as he
he saddle and took her in his arms
manner that all was well.

she cried, between her sobs of joy,
iruised. How did you do that?"

economy," he answered, grimly,
dollars and fifty cents. Otis didn't
ix w."



ains.

CASEY'S COUP.

By FRANK NELSON.

CASEY, the itinerant, had been on the pay roll of "The Hillville Press" six months, and was growing restless. He knew that he was violating his established rule and custom, and that he should have "moved on" long before.

Peculiar circumstances were making Casey's sojourn in Hillville unusually pleasant The county was in the throes of a close and bitter political contest over the election of a representative to the state legislature. There were other officers to elect, but the real fight was over the representative.

The incoming legislature would, elect a United States Senator. The situation, state and national, was such that one vote in the legislative assembly might decide the political brand of the new Senator, whose vote in the United States Senate might determine the course of government.

The political telescopes, anxiously sweeping the field from Maine to California, lingered upon Hillville. Hillville seemed to be the pivotal point of the vast battle. At no other place was the sentiment so fluctuating and the result so uncertain. Speakers and specie were hurried to Hillville; it was the specie that made Casey's sojourn pleasant and prolonged.

With the opposing parties a vote was a vote, and to Casey the wanderer a dollar was a dollar and a drink was a drink. One day the blandishments of the Wilsonites appealed to him irresistibly, the next day the Hortonites claimed him as their own. On the Democratic poll-book of his precinct the upright mark opposite the name of Coriolanus Casey appeared in the column marked "D"; in the Republican poll-book a corpulent "R" headed the col-

umn in which the mark designated Casey's faith. Meanwhile, through all the orating and parading and horn-tooting, Casey flirted with Fate and waxed fat and wanted not Through the night he Bet up dry political articles in the back room of the "Press" building; during the day, in other back rooms, he participated recept ively in the setting up of other articles, political, but not dry.

The Hillville Press was the county or gan of the party, and its columns blazed with denunciations of Wilson and bloomed with laudations of Horton. Its editor, "the old man," a grim and uncompro mising veteran of a hundred political fights, had satisfactorily sounded Casey, and when he discovered, upon the evening preceding the election, that Casey, for rea sons sufficient unto himself, had positively promised to cast his sovereign vote for Wilson, a miniature cyclone swept the of fice of the "Press."

That evening, when Casey reported for duty, he was informed, in a forcible and unmistakable manner, that the name of Coriolanus Casey no longer disgraced the pay roll of The Hillville Press.

Casey accepted discharge and wages as a matter-of-course, dropped the latter into a pocket where it found congenial com pany from a different source, and departed silently to the convivial surroundings he wotted of. In the "wee sma' hours," through force of habit, perhaps, he wan dered back to the press-room. The anti quated press, in charge of a press-man and a "cub," had just begun its nightly toil. The "old man" had inspected the first im pressions and retired to well earned slum ber.

Casey picked up a damp sheet and ran his eye down the leading article on the first page. Then he whistled—that long drawn out, expressive sort of a whistle that denotes extreme surprise.

"Good-bye, Wilson 1" he muttered gloomily.

He folded the sheet, put it into his pocket, and sat down. For a long time he watched the slowly moving press, and pondered moodily. Suddenly his small red oyc> twinkled and flashed. He drew the paper from his pocket and closely scrutinized the offending "leader." With ink-stained finger he pointed off the num ber of letters in the respective names of the rival candidates. Then he approached the press-man and shouted above the din of clanking machinery:

"It's tired out ye look, Jerry. A sand wich and a cup of hot coffee'll do ye no harm—nor th' cub, naither. Take this, and run along—both of yez. It's on th' committee. I'll run th' macheen till ye come back."

As the door closed behind the weary press-man and the "cub" the old press stopped. With deft and nimble fingers, Casey unlocked a form, exchanged the names of the two candidates, replaced the form, and threw the little pile of printed sheets into the fire. When Jerry and the "cub" returned the groaning machine was throwing off copies of the Hillville Press containing the following:

"TREACHERY!

"DAMNABLE DUPLICITY!!

"JESSE K. HORTON BETRAYS HIS PARTY!!!

"Last week, while in our Capital city, a rumor reached our ears concerning a man who is asking of the voters of Walpole county the high privilege of representing them in the legislature of this state.

"We considered it our duty to the com munity, to our party, and to ourselves, to investigate this rumor. We have done so —with startling results.

"The last mail this evening placed in our hands incontestable proof that the said candidate is a party to an agreement, made with leaders of the opposing forces, for a consideration not yet ascertained, by the terms of which, in the event of his election, he is bound to betray his party, to deliver it into the hands of the enemy.

"To put it plainly, that candidate stands pledged to cast his vote for any man whom the opposite party may name as its candi date for United States Senator.

"Fellow citizens, the name of this scoundrel, this double-dyed traitor, is JESSE K. HORTON.

"If you doubt this almost incredible statement, come to the office of The Press and behold the proof.

"Voters of Walpole County, your course is clear. Let it be proclaimed to the world today that your verdict at the polls is for honesty and against corruption; that no party ties can dull your sense of justice; that you have cast aside all partisanship and have named as your representative in this hour of need, JAMES R. WILSON, a man against whose character, despite the croakings of political calumnists, no word of reproach has ever been truthfully uttered. Relegate to the depths of in famy from which he sprang this arch traitor, this political Judas, Jesse K. Horton.

"Men of Millville and of Walpole County, we have done our duty, painful as it has been. Sec that you do yours as well."

Before the rising sun had kissed' the bleak November hills the nimble news boys had distributed the bomb-shells, and all sorts of things were happening in Hill vine.

An astounded editor was vainly trying to "explain" to a howling mob headed by the frantic Horton; votes for Wilson were pouring into the polls; and the staunch members of "the old man's" own party were openly accusing that martyr of sell ing out.

Meanwhile, Casey, with light heart and heavy pockets, was reclining in a chair coach of the morning express, speeding toward the free and unfettered West.

Thus did Casey, Casey the itinerant, lit tle, red-headed, insignificant Coriolanus Casey, elect Wilson by a scant majority, determine the political complexion of a United States Senate, and mould the pol icy of the government upon national issues pregnant with disastrous possibilities.

Alone he did it—this modern Corio lanus.

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The Laughter of Farmer Dean

By Frank Neilson.

"Things are coming our way Joyce," said the Honorable James Lane pleasantly, from the depths of an easy chair in his private office. "I saw Evans and Bell today. Two hundred each. That makes nineteen of the necessary twenty-one, and I'll land Lunham and old Dean to-morrow. The nomination's mine, and that means election in this circuit this year."

"How can you get Dean and Dunham?" Joyce asked. "They were elected delegates for Allen, and you can't buy them; they're not that kind; at least Dean isn't."

The Honorable James chuckled softly.

"Bob. I wish you wouldn't talk about 'buying.' It's a harsh word to one of my sensitive temperament. My little tributes of- gratitude should not be considered as purchase money. If, because of certain favors done me in the convention, my gratitude should prompt me to present old Reuben Dean with the mortgage on his farm, and to assist Tom Dunham in his matrimonial inclinations, it would be rank injustice to insinuate that I had bought them, wouldn't it?"

Joyce removed his cigar from his lips and regarded the Honorable James keenly and curiously.

"I don't just catch your drift," he remarked.

The Honorable James clasped his red hands over his rotund front, lowered his massive chin until its folds overflowed his collar, and beamed placidly upon his lieutenant.

"Just a little stroke of diplomacy, Bob; that clinches

holding out her hands. The stranger came into the room, stooped down, raised her on his left arm, and whispered some thing in her ear.

" Why, my name's Lottie—Lottie Hun gerford," she laughed.

The revolver leaped from the tall man's holster, but the woman caught his arm, and he looked down the muzzle of the weapon in the hand of the Montana man.

" Hands up," the deputy growled, " and give me that gun—butt foremost—keep yer fingers outside the guard! Ye played me purty smooth, but it's----------" His eyes fell upon the extended weapon, carved and gold-mounted, and he started back.

" You're the man I gave my other gun to! " he cried.

The tall man nodded. The woman held out her hands appealingly. The child threw her arms round the stranger's neck.

" Please don't hurt my papa! " she sobbed.

The threatening weapon trembled, drooped, and dropped into its holster. The man from Montana held out his hand.

" The gal wins," he said huskily; " the gal and the gun. But it's lucky for you that I follered the call of the quail."

Frank Neilson.

the game. The mortgage on Dean's farm is past due and money's so tight now that he can't borrow. See the point, eh?"

"I see," replied Joyce, musingly. "But Joe Ayres Will never—"

"Joe Ayres doesn't own the mortgage now."

"Who docs?"

"Yours truly."

"The devil I"

'No, Bob; not the devil, but a man who intends to have what's coming to him," rejoined the Honorable James, with a complacent grin.

"And Dunham?"

"The girl, Joyce, the girl! Old Dean'9 daughter. Same one you were smitten with before you and old Dean quarrelled. Pretty as a picture, she is. Tom Dunham's crazy for her, and, of course, to save the farm, she'll—"

Joyce's feet dropped from the window sill to the floor with a crash. Ilis chair swung around until he faced the Honorable James squarely.

"Lane," he ejaculated tersely; "is it possible that to gratify your political ambition you would compel Bessie Dean to marry such a man as Tom Dunham?"

The Honorable James tilted his easy chair further back and lazily puffed clouds of fragrant smoke through the open window.

"I shall do just that. Bob. It takes those two votes to land this nomination. Business is business, and politics is politics. I'd be a rank sucker to allow a girl's foolish notions to block my game."

("Look here, Jim," exclaimed Joyce, hotly; "you're trotting too fast a clip for me. I entered this fight to learn something of practical politics, and it's get ting decidedly too practical for my tastes. I've seen men sent up for less deviltry than you're doing. You'll get the nomination and be elected judge, but what have I to gain in this—"

The Honorable James straightened up with a jerk and shook his fat fore-finger in his confident's face.

"Don't try that game on me Joyce," he growled, excitedly. "It won't work. I won't be held up, and I won't be bluffed. I need you and your vote in the convention, but if you're a quitter, quit now. Stay to the finish and you'll never regret it. But don't. try to bleed me for money—I won't stand it. Don't I you worry about my going to the penn. How < would they get the evidence? I'd like to see the? grand jury that would try that game on me in this country, anyway."

Joyce re-elevated his feet and puffed carelessly at his cigar, meditating between puffs.

"All right, Jim," he said, soothingly, after a mo ment's silence. 'Don't get huffy. I'll stay to the finish now that I'm in, but it's the last game of the kind that I'll ever play. When shall you see Dean and Dunham?"

' I've seen Dunham, He's all right if De promise him the girl, Old Dean will sqv course, but he'll have to take his medicine, *1 bring the suit for foreclosure, and that'll fet I'm going to see him to-morrow morning."

"Well, good luck to you," said Joyce, risin going now to get a little sleep. I'm almost w See you to-morrow, Jim. Good night."

On the street he glanced up at the blacl gathering ominously across the evening sky.

"A good night for bad deeds," he soli! "and perhaps a bad night for good ones- try it."

Next day, when FarmerDean's dinner b by Bessie's plump hands, called him from t he encountered the Honorable James Lane and jovial, who consented to stay to dinner, enlivened the occasion with many pleasant; and several compliments upon Bessie's culii

The after-dinner conversation between men, held under the old pear tree in the t was long and earnest, and when his gues ally departed, Farmer Dean seemed to be ceedingly bad humor, although at interval tied the semblance of a tune, a proceeding usual for grim Farmer Dean, and one whi to afford Bessie much quiet amusement.

Ths following day, when Farmer Dea Honorable James Lane in the latter's pr he 'was quite humble and downcast.

"I reckon I'll have to come to yourJ Lane," he said dejectedly, "though it duz erful. I wouldn't do it ef it wusn't fer Bes me's all alone sence her mother died, mighty nigh kill her to lose th' old L about this Dunham—I don't like thet .pa keep Bessie—"

"Too high, Reuben; too high," said able James, gayly. "That mortgage ca thing over a thousand dollars, anA^fl votes for it. Bessie—"

"Well. I reckon it's no use to argv^l o' thet yisterday. Dunham's old 'n' ugl must hev a home. I've heered. though ham never really got no divorce frum hi: nesoty. I don't want Bessie to git mi bigamy scrape. I'd rather—"

"All bosh, Reuben. Now, let us ur deal. Mr. Joyce, who is one of my del« near the ballot box. You and Dunham ballots open, so that Joyce can see t are both for me, Joyce will deliver to your note, mortgage and release of n~ f<Ft record. That's right, is it?"

"Yes. We kin both trust Joyce, T

? 1

ou promise Dunham that if he votes for me
.all marry him within thirty days after the
ion."
idin' she don't break no law. 1 wouldn't git
no trouble like thet fer ten farms."
'bailee that, Reuben. I have a certified copy
lam's decree of divorce."
I'll do what's right. But I 'low you're sar-
h' meanest man on airth. Ef 1 didn't know
wouldn't give you back them papers after 1
n 1 wouldn't trust you."
nk you, Reuben; thank you," said the Hon-
i allies, amiably, as he bowed the old farmer
Good-bye, Reuben, and don't be late at the
ion."
er Dean was not late. He was one of the
rrive when the convention assembled in the
court-room, and the forty-one judicial dele-
ninly transacted the preliminaries prepara-
asting their votes in obedience to the sov-
4 of the people. Allen, the opponent of the
ie Janies, was nervous and plainly apprehen-
: Honorable James was smiling, confident
From his seat near the bench which, in
eye. he already graced, he watched Dean
am as they walked forward, in their turn,
leir ballots. He smiled benignly upon
nier and Joyce as they passed him on their
i the room. He wondered if the case of
vs. The R. & S. Railway would be con-
il he should assume the ermine—th're
k> thing" in that case. He heard the tei'.
, the ballots, and just as he had begun to
s speech of acceptance he heard them,
yells that shook the old building, count
r ballots for—Allen. While he was yet
amazement stunned and confused, he
'hairman's voice rise above the tempest

mas Allen, having received twenty-one of
hts. is declared duly and regularly

ible James did not move to make the
unanimous. Dumbfounded and furious,
ut of the room and down the stairs, seek-
lle encountered that young gentleman,
" with Farmer Dean, issuing from the
rder's office.
bes this mean. Joyce?" he panted. "You
You must have thrown me—you and

jsiness is business, and politics is poli-
d Joyce, sarcastically.
m't rob me this way," roared the Hon-
"I il sue to cancel that release and
-ilgage. 1*11 teach you a trick."

Joyce stepped forward and shook his finger under the nose of the Honorable Janies.

"I don't think you will, Jim," he said, meaningly, "but if you do you will also appear as defendant in several prosecutions for bribery."

The Honorable James looked into that determined face and wilted.

"But—the girl" he protested feebly, keeping up a pretense of resistance. "Dunham kept his promise, and Dean promised him the girl."

"Pervidin' she wouldn't break no law. Allers per vidin' she wouldn't break no law," said Farmer Dean, slowly and solemnly. "'N" Joyce 'n' her wuz married th' night before you eat at my house!"

Then, grim old Farmer Dean stooped, placed his knotted hands on his knees, shook his grizzled head violently, and did something he hadn't done for manyj many years—he laughed—laughed aloud, actually shook and roared with laughter—hurled forth a howling, shrieking, snorting cataclysm of mirth that rent the atmosphere into tattered fragments and curdled the blood of the Honorable James as he fled overwhelmed to his office.

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SERIES A—NO. 1239.

A Woman's War.

BY FRANK NKILNON.

THE queen, gazing from an open window of the palace, looked not upon the myriads of gorgeous flowers! in the royal gardens beneath, heard not the warblings of bright-plumagedc birds, the tinkling lullabies of flowing* fountains—she saw only her subjects' gathering sullenly in the silent streets! —she heard only the rattle of the dis-j taut drums, the rumble of hurrynng, artillery, the ominous tread of march ing men. Amazed and anxious, she} turned to meet, the patriarchal mam whose faltering steps had scarce an-t nouneed his entrance.

"Your excellency," she exclaimed,* "I have sent for you that you may ex-| plain why the preparations for the marriage are discontinued, why ourj troops are assembling, why the peo-(pie have ceased to shout 'Live Princej Ludovic.' and scowl and mutter as they' pass this way."

The gray-haired minister bowed low.'

"Is it possible, your majesty, that; the princess has not informed you—"j

"The princess has informed me off nothing," interrupted the queen, im patiently. "It seems that the queen, must beg for information possessed by her meanest subject."

"Learn, then, your majesty," said the old minister, bluntly, "that a crisis, is upon us. Late last night your daughter dismissed Prince Ludovic and renounced the intended marriage. At. two o'clock this morning the prince, raging and furious, departed for his father's kingdom, taking his entire suite."

The queen sank upon a couch.

"Her reasons?" she gasped. "Thet princess' reasons?"

"None know, your majesty. I gus-i pect—strongly suspect—but am not I sure."

The queen summe

"Convey to th

"Your majesty has yet to learn the worst," continued the minister, as the messenger hurriedly departed. "At eight o'clock this morning I received an ultimatum from the king of Monte-gramo. Unless within 24 hours the prince is recalled, an apology tendered and the marriage consummated, the king will declare war and begin hostil ities."

"War?" cried the terrified queen. "War with Montegramo? Impossible! Our troops need arms, our treasury is exhausted, our people taxed to the i verge of revolution. The princess ' shall retract—she shall apologize—the marriage shall be consummated. You will' so inform the king immediately." I

"One moment, your majesty. If 1 obey and you, after hearing the prin cess' explanation, should determine to sustain her and defy the king, his majesty's wrath would[1] be intensi fied—"

"Have no fear, my lord. There can he no reasons sufficient to justify this outrageous conduct. I shall hear my daughter's explanation, but her fool ish fancies shall not plunge us into a war that must result in the loss of our kingdom and the subjugation of our people."

"Then your majesty must not listen to the princess—"

The queen arose haughtily.

"My lord, it appears to me that yon are dictating to your sovereign. Am I not the queen? Do you doubt my sincerity, my sanity?"

With trembling fingers the vener able minister unclasped the fastenings of his robe of state and allowed it to fall to the floor. He lifted the jeweled collar from his bent shoulder* u cast It aside.

"See. your majesty," he said, his voice shaking with emotion, "It is not now the minister who speaks to his queen- it is the old servant who re joiced at your birth, who held you hi his arms nt the christening, who has faithfully and loyally guided you through many perils to a throne,

"My queen, for many years you nn<l f your royal spouse of loving* memory , cherished the hope of uniting this kingdom with that of Montegramo. ' that you might found an empire and • Tear an timpassabte barrier against the encroachments of your mutual (foes. The king* of Montegramo wisely (agreed, and the concurrent births of , Ludovic and Alicia marked the ap proval of Providence. In all things { fate favored your design, and' the l time has now arrived when your am bition may be realized and the pros- ; parity of both nations be assured.

"My sovereign, I doubt not your sin* ' cerity, but I have grown old and gray in plot and. intrigue, in the study of men and of women. Do not, I entreat , you, listen to the princess. You are l the queen, but you are a woman, and, ' your majesty—there are some things a woman never forgives."

The silken curtains pf an archway stirred, parted, and enframed the prin cess. The queen turned and regarded her sternly.

"Princess Alicia, without cause you j have endangered: my greatest am'bi- , tion; you have invited a ruinous and suicidal war; you have invoked calam ity and disaster upon the nation and our throne. I had intended to demand of you an explanation of your con duct. I have changed, my mind. Your reasons are not material. Prince Lu dovic shall return this day, and* you will' immediately prepare for the mar riage."

Over the wan face of the princess crept an expression of inflexible deter mination. Tears sprang to her dark eyes—tears of indignation rather than of grief.

"Listen, your majesty, but for one moment. Last night—"

The qifeen made a gesture of impa tience.

"Explanations and entreaties are .useless. Only prompt and implicit iobedience can atone for your con* duct."

The princess turned to depart, hesi tated. ami glanced'back.

"Your majesty," >he «aid, softly, "1 obey. But before I go 1 ask one favor, not of the queen, but of the mother."

The queen smiled' an assent.

"Ilecull, then, my mother, my situa tion when you departed, from the Countess of Cannento's party last night."

The old minister cast a glance of warning and alarm toward the queen, but she, pondering curiously*) sawj.it not.

"1 recall." she mused, "that the last games were being played—that you and Prince Ludovic were partners, op posing the Duke and Duchess of For- monia—that you and the duchess were tied* for the prize—and. that you and the prince held' winning hands. By the way, my child, I congratulate you. It is the first prize you have won this season."

"But—we lost!" wailed the princess, extending her beautiful arms toward her mother.

"Lost!" cried the queen, incredu lously, starting forward. "Again? And you have tried so hard!"

"Lost!" reiterated the princess, cast ing herself into her mother's encir cling arms and sobbing piteously. "The prince — trum— trumped — my ace!"

"All is lost!" exclaimed the old min ister,. turning away despairingly.

From over her daughter's quivering shoulder the queen flashed her indig nant and tearful' eyes upon the de jected old man.

"My lord," she ejaculated, hoarsely, "you were right—there are some things a woman never forgives! You understand! Go!"

In a few moments the two women, sobbing in each other's arms, heard through the open window the tramp of armed squadrons rushing to defend the frontier.

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THE VINDICATION OF EAST.

By FRANK NEILSON.

LD Stephen Lee entered the ding}' office of Clinton East, and hurled this thunder-bolt at the young lawyer:

"Git your hat. young man. and come with me. Old Phillips had a tech of paraly sis last night. He's wuss skeered than hurt, but he's got to ease up. He'll have to have help in Fred's case, and he wants you. Come on; he's waitin' fer us now."

Mechanically, doubting his senses. East walked at Lee's side along the streets of the country town. For two weary years he had starved and struggled here, had watched litigants pass his door to patron ize old Phillips, until he saw no course to pursue but to return to his eastern home, where he could at least eke out a live lihood.

Ilis one consolation for the wasted years was the thought that ho had won the love of Ethel Lee. and that consolation was weakened by the fact that her father, the wealthiest farmer in the county, had refused his' consent to a marriage. Even when the shock of Fred Lee's arrest had co'ie, old Stephen Lee, disregarding the en ieaties of Ethel, had refused to allow Ea tto assist in the defense, had turned his bick upon him with the remark that he didnot "keer to have Phillips hampered by a y<ung sprig with nothin' in the world but a sheep-skin." Little wonder that East was dumbfounded when this sum mons came,' that he was asking himself as he strode along at Stephen Lee's side if the tide had turned at last.

Phillips, in gown and slippers, seated in an easy chair near a window, silently motioned his callers to chairs. An anx ious expression was on his wrinkled face as he slowly adjusted his glasses to his hooked nose and turned his shrewd gray ej'es toward his young competitor.

"I presume," he said in a low voice, "that Mr. Lee has informed you why I have sent for you. I have had a warning. The time has come to me, as it must come to all, when I must yield the right of way to younger and more vigorous rivals. I do not complain. I have fought a good fight and I have conquered. Those who have entered the race against me have fallen by the wayside. Now, at sixty-one, I am wealthy. I can afford to rest.

"I have chosen j-ou, because I know you have ability, courage and thoroughness. Don't interrupt me. I am overtaxing my present strength, and must finish. I make you this proposition: Under my direction you will at once take charge of the Lee case and will perforin all of the work of preparation that yet remains to be done. I shall be able, I think, to assist in the trial of the case—my last case If you meet my expectations you will assume

control of my business, subject to my advice and counsel. Your interest will be one fourth of all old business, one half of all new. As soon as you have all matters well in hand I shall go abroad, for an indefinite time. Five years after my departure the business becomes entirely yours. Do you accept?"

"I certainly do, sir," said East, huskily, "and I wish to—"

"Yes, yes, I understand. But your work will speak louder than your thanks. And now, good-morning, gentlemen. Return, both of you, in the morning. There are some points in young Lee's case that I wish to discuss with both of you."

At the gate, Lee faced East and said, "Well, I'm surprised, and I reckon you are. And I want to say to you that if you think I have ever disliked you, you are mistaken. But the man that gits my daughter must first show that he kin provide for her. You may have talent, but you can't eat talent; you must know how to market it, to cash it in. Now, I don't want no rush about this marriage, but I'll say this much: "If you git Fred clear, and if this here deal with Phillips pans out all right, you'll not find me in the way."

Left alone, Clinton wanted to throw his hat in the air and give one good, old-fashioned, hearty college yell. But he didn't. He hurried to his office, hurled his hat into a corner, half spoke, half shouted, "At last," and then sat down to think it all over. After which, of course, lie went to tell Ethel.

* * - * * *

It was the night before the trial of Fred Lee. Every necessary preparation for the defense had been made, and Clinton was enjoying'that feeling of satisfaction that follows work well done. Now, before seeking sleep, he sat in his office building castles in Spain, basking in sweet anticipation. The click of a crutch upon the deserted street rudely recalled him to earth.

"That's Joe," exclaimed East. "What can he want here at this time of night?" The crippled boy entered, hobbled to a seat, and sat there in silence, with bowed head.

"Well, Joe, what is it?" Clinton finally asked, kindly. More than once had he assisted the parentless lad, whose maimed body, quick intelligence and quiet manner appealed strongly to the young lawyer's sympathy.

Without raising his head the boy answered, almost whispered, "Mr. East, you will hate me, but I can't keep it any longer, I must—tell the prosecutor—that—I saw it."

"Saw what, Joe?" Clinton was wondering if the boy had gone daft.

Slowly the criple raised his face, turned his terrified eyes upon East, and answered, shuddering:

"The murder! I saw Fred Lee kill Bill Thurber! I can't keep the secret any longer. I am on my way to tell the prosecutor—but I wanted to tell you first."

Into his chair East sank, stunned, helpless, limp. Strange buzzing sounds rang in his ears. The room seemed whirling 'round. In a moment he regained possession of his faculties. Then followed desperate thoughts. This boy, sole witness of the awful deed, was in his power, would listen to his counsel. Before morning he could be taken far away and Fred would be safe. He glanced about him to see that windows and doors were tighter closed. Then he leaned forward and safl, "Go on, Joe. Tell me what you saw."

Slowly, with faltering voice, the Doy told his dreadful story; told how, vhile fishing in the river, he had heard iflgry voices, had seen Thurber and youn Tx'fr

appear on the bluff that overhung the nt ream, had witaeMed I ami strike down his fleeing victim with a weapon which, with the body of the murdered man, ho cast into the river.

"1 never meant to tell," the boy cried, "You've been kind to me, and I knew 'twould break Miss Lee's heart. But last night for the third time I saw my mother in my dreams, and she said to me, 'Joey, you must tell.' And she leaned over me and kissed me like she used to do. And all day she has seemed near me, pushing me on. 0, Mr. East, tell me what to do—tell me what is right. It seems awful to let a murderer go just because you have been kind to me. But I will do what you say. I know you will not tell me wrong."

Joe was on the floor now, sobbing, his head upon* Clinton's knees. East's^ face was very white as he stooped and gently lifted the little cripple into a chair. With bowed head, his hands opening and clinching convulsively, he paced up and down the little office. The boy huddled in the chair, watched him silent and ter ror stricken.

To and fro East strode, many times seeing two visions; one of peace and love and happiness, a united family, fame and wealth, the realization of all his hopes and dreams; the other a vision of sorrow, un fathomable, unutterable, a murderer's gibbet, a family broken and eternally dis graced, failure, a miserable future, the loss of everything his heart held dear.

Through both pictures came glimpses of Ethel's face, her dark eyes looking into his with abhorrence and reproach. But back of all lie saw a bruised and swollen form, its sightless eyes turned toward the stars, its lips gasping as the turbid waters hurried it onward, "Honor or Love? Which shall it be? Choose quickly."

Fiercely he turned upon the shrinking watcher and hissed, "Why did you come to me? What devil sent you here? Then he opened the door and said "Go I"

As the boy hobbled out into the dark ness of the night he raised his white and tear-stained face toward his only friend. Clinton, looking down into it, saw some thing that caused him to say, gently, "For give me. You are right. Tell all—and May God help us."

Then leaning on the old desk, he pil lowed his head on his arms and listened to the sound of the crutch, each stroke a knell of hope, until he heard it no more. Morning had dawned when he arose, mur muring wearily, "I must tell Phillips."

"Why, God bless me, sir, (which was not exactly the objurgation Phillips used) if I ever heard of such imbecility. Do you know, sir," he roared, "are you capable of comprehending, what you have done?

"I think I comprehend exactly what I have done; more thoroughly, perhaps, than anyone else concerned," Clinton re plied.

"You do, eh?" snarled the enraged old lawyer. Allow me to venture the opinion that young Lee's comprehension of the result of your action will be much more thorough than yours when he feels the pressure of the knot under his ear. We would have cleared him; the evidence was purely cir cumstantial, and weak at that. The devil himself can't save him now."

"Perhaps some less intimate acquaint ance of yours can," retorted East, losing his temper. "Doubtless my code of legal ethics differs from yours. I have not been in practice long enough to forget my oath. Generally, a lawyer's first duty is to his client, but under such circumstances as these that duty is due the State and the community. The true lawyer will fur-

ther justice, not obstruct it. I would not search for evidence to use against a client, but when the evidence presents itself I shall not be guilty of suppressing it. What talent I have is for sale; my integ rity is not"

"My scrupulous young friend," said Phillips, cynically, "you have much to learn, so much that I shall not undertake the task of instructing you. You will re member that the proposition I made you was conditional. You have broken thv condition, and I now withdraw the prop osition. But I trust that your wonderful sense of duty will bind you to remain in the case until the jury returns its verdict of murder in the first degree. Consider ing my condition, and your familiarity with the details of the case, you certainly owe that much to our client."

"I shall fight to the last," Clinton an swered. "As for the withdrawal of your offer, you have but anticipated my action. Nothing could induce me to remain here after this trial is over."

"I would think not," sneered Phillips. "You could not be expected to face either the father whose son you have betrayed or the sister whose brother you have mur dered. You—"

East, livid with rage, had clutched the old lawyer's throat.

"John Phillips," he panted, "do you want me to choke the life from your mis erable carcass? If you had one spark of honor in your despicable nature you would not add to my agony. I am losing more than life. Sit down there and listen to what I say."

Released from that vigorous grasp, Phillips sank down in his chair, sputter ing and cowed. East continued:

"You must go immediately and break this news to—Ethel. Conceal nothing. I bear the blame. I shall save Fred Lee, perhaps not from imprisonment, but from —the gallows. With all your craft and experience you can't do that. And then I shall leave this place forever."

Then he turned and left Phillips alone.

Despite the cold, raw weather and the steady down-pour of rain the court room was crowded with curious auditors; even halls and windows were filled by a gaping, eager mass of humanity.

. When East entered the room the jury had been selected and sworn, and Phillips was listening intently to the prosecutor's statement of the case. At the old law yer's side sat Stephen Lee and the accused, and a slight, veiled figure that caused East's heart to leap. As he took his seat at the table he met the scowls of father and son, and the latter, leaning forward, muttered, "Clinton East, if I get out of this, I'll *get* even with you."

Taking no notice of the threat, Clinton turned his attention to the. jury. The master hand of Phillips was seen there. All were comparatively young, and ap peared sympathetic and impressionable, and East, well knowing wherein his sole hope lay, was encouraged. Once he offer ed a suggestion to Phillips and was promptly snubbed.

When the State's attorney had finished, Phillip's, to East's surprise, at once made his statement to the jury. Though brief, it was strong as could have been expected under the circumstances, and at its close Clinton realized more than ever before how desperate were his client's chances.

The State, relying chiefly upon Joe's testimony, offerred but few witnesses, and they were subjected to a most searching cross-examination by Phillips. Joe was racked, threatened, bullied and denounced, until Clinton's heart ached. But the crippled boy could not be shaken nor con fused, and when the State rested, its testi-

ino>y, though small in volume, presented no weak points; it waa conclusive and un in peachable. All Decenary and material frets stood out in lx»ld relief to point the path to the gallows.

For the defense, young Lee himself was the chief and almost the only witness. To East it was apparent that Phillips had carefully coached him for the occasion. He firmly denied having been with Thur ber ou that fatal day, and he was cool and unshaken under the fire of a severe and skillful cross-examination. His story was a plausible one, and without Joe's testimony was sufficient to raise a "reason able doubt" and bring an acquittal.

The prosecuting atorney made a vigor ous and able argument, and Phillips fol lowed with an address that evoked East's genuine admiration. It was a profound and valuable lesson to the young barrister to see and hear that old gladiator upon such an occasion. How clearly and forc ibly he presented every favorable circum stance, however slight; how carefully and cunningly he avoided every dangerous point that could be safely omitted, and when avoidance was impolitic, how skill fully he handled, tossed and juggled the dangerous fact, how masterfully he twisted it to the prisoner's advantage. How subtle his reasoning, how plausible his theories, how ingenious his explana tions, how well-hidden his fallacies. His whole effort was directed toward the pro duction in the mind of one or more of the jurors of a "reasonable doubt," that sal vation of many a guilty wretch, and when he at length resumed his seat, trembling and exhausted, it seemed to many that he must have succeeded.

But he himself was not deceived. He could read too well the living page before him. He knew that powerful as his speech had been, the crippled boy, cower ing in the corner, had made a stronger one; he knew and had recognized the un mistakable accents of truth, and he knew that the jury admired the lawyer but be lieved the boy.

"East," he whispered, wiping his per spiring face, "I have failed. You must save this man. Get a life sentence and there may be a chance for a pardon some time. If you think you can't do that we may as well let the State close."

For one moment, as the young and un tried barrister arose and advanced toward the jury, his courage almost failed him. His head swam, his knees trembled, and he saw as through a mist the half-sneering features of the prosecuting attorney, the scowling faces of the two Lees, the calm, impassive countenance of the judge, and the crowding mass of expectant auditors.

Then, by a mighty effort, he riveted his attention on the twelve men before him, those dread arbiters who held life and death in their keeping. Here was the mighty, mysterious instrument whose mystic chords he must sweep with deft and skillful hand, must attune to har mony that they might sound a strain in unison with the passion surging within his own bosom. It was the grandest, the sublimest, the most difficult of instru ments that the young, untrained musician reached tremblingly forth to touch; it was the Creator's own. Harmony meant happiness, and discord death.

In low and hesitating accents he began his task. Gradually his voice grew stronger, his thoughts came faster and more clearly, his words followed more easily and eloquently. His was a plea for mercy, simple, yet strong, passionate and pathetic. There was no attempt at labored argument, no display of learning save that gleaned from Nature's open book. He talked at the jurors, not over

them, and they understood and followed him.

Ho appealed to them aa fathers, broth ers, sons, to their home life and home ties. Skillfully and touchingly he de picted the early life and environments of the accused, his rearing under the 6tern rule of an exacting father, deprived from infancy of a mother's love and teaching. Fervently he pictured the interweaving of the lives of the brother and sister, their mutual affection, their dependence upon one another in all the trials of their motherless existence.

Vividly he portrayed the many noble traits and generous characteristics of the accused, his blameless life up to that time when, thrown unguarded and uncounseled among evil and vicious associates, he fell a victim to the demon of drink. He declared that the object of all penal laws was reformation, not vindictive ven geance.

He dwelt upon the punishment already inflicted by the ordeal, insisting that the object of the law had been accomplished, and that the fearful lesson had started the feet of the unfortunate prisoner upon the pathway of the right, never to leave it. With powerful effect he contrasted the desolation and grief with the joy and thanksgiving that would follow their ver dict as it might be rendered.

He pleaded for the sake of that young girl whose faithful, sisterly love had clung so devotedly to its object for so many years, through so many trials; that sister who had labored so unceasingly to lift him, her only brother, from the depths into which evil and malicious hands had dragged him; that sister whose own life, perhaps, hung upon the verdict. He pleaded for that mercy that they them selves would ask for their loved ones; that forgivnese sanctioned and sanctified by Him whose mission was mercy.

When he had ended no sound broke the silence save the young sister's stifled sobs and the wailing of the storm without Judge and jury, audience and attorneys were 6ilent and motionless, and tears other than those of weak woman's were there.

Exhausted, and unwilling to witness Ethel's grief, Clinton quietly left the court room as the prosecutor arose to deliver his closing argument. As he passed out he overheard a threat made by one of young Lee's associates. He turned back and beckoned Joe to follow him. "Come with me," he said, "your life is in dan ger."

Together they went to East's little office, and from its window silently watched the lights that soon glimmered from the jury room through the fast gathering gloom of the night. Far into the night they waited, watching those ominous lights dancing and twinkling as though in mockery of their hopes. Through the darkness and the storm sounds of foot-steps came and went, and echoes of many voices arose and died away. Day dawned at last. The storm had passed, and still those fateful lights glared like the eyes of mocking demons.

Suddenly they vanished, and soon, from the court-house door, emerged a group of men, talking and gesticulating excitedly. Eagerly East went forth and questioned them.

Five years! It was a triumph—and his the victory! Would not they, would not she, relent? With returning hope Clinton re-entered the office, and for the is first time noticed on his desk a tiny package, placed there, doubtless, during his presence at the trial. He tore it open, and a jeweled circlet of gold rolled forth.

There wa« no other nicwnge. None other was needed.

Hnughtily, with swelling heart, ho turned to tOM it into the tire. Then the old spirit of patieneo and determination returned. He would triumph again, as he had triumphed yesterday. He under stood thoroughly the young girl's nature, her sense of justice and her love of truth. He seiied a pen ami wrote:

"Ethel:—I have but done my duty.You, yourself, would not have me do otherwise. Some day you will see this as I do. Knowing this, I cannot accept your mes sage as final. When that day comes re turn the ring as I now return it, and I shall understand."

CLINTON EAST."

That day an east-bound train, with clanging bell and. screaming whistle, sped toward the roar and bustle of a great city, carrying Clinton East and crippled Joe.

* * *

Clinton East, attorney and counsellor at law, is opening his morning mail. A few wrinkles and a sprinkling of. gray hairs denote care and toil, rather than age. His fortunes have changed more than his appearance, if we may judge from the commodious offices and ample library, so different from the dingy den and few books of former years.

Joe, from his desk in the next room, watches his benefactor with anxious and affectionate eyes. He alone suspects, aye, knows what sorrow gnaws at his friend's heart, knows that his cheerfulness and gaiety is assumed, knows that he must, in tirno, break down under the labor in which he seeks forgetfulness of vanished dreams.

As he watches, ho sees Clinton open a small packet, sees him spring to his feet, pale and trembling, staring first at the letter in his hand, then at a gleaming circlet of gold that has rolled from the packet. Then he hears East's voice ring out with the genuine, cheery ring of old days.

"Joe, I go west on the next train. Read this. I can trust you. Good-bye, my boy, and good luck until I return." Then he was gone, and this is what Joe read:

Baltimore, Md.

"Mr. Clinton East:

"Dear Sir—I am going to get even with you, as I promised almost five years ago. I can say, as my father, too, would say, were he alive, that you were right. To day I stand at my sister's side, a man, cured of all the old vices, ready to face the world anew. I hope to once more meet you here at the old home. As for Ethel, she sends---------- what you will find inclosed.

"Your debtor, FRED LEE."

Through the dust and smoke of the busy city tho morning sunlight forced its way to gleam in golden radiance across the cripple's face as he knelt in silent, tearful praise to the Giver of all good.

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The Music of Miguel ,

July 1903
Olympian

By Frank Neilson

THERE are many who remember the entrance into the musical circles of Spain some twenty years ago of Veraldi, the violinist. His marvelous mastery of the king of instruments, his preternatural power of improvisation, his magnetic presence, his abrupt advent, the mystery of his antecedents, all combined to compel his recognition as the peer of Paganini, and to render his success certain, his popularity permanent. The name of Antonio Veraldi was on every tongue. Men sought his society; fair women fell at his feet.

Suddenly, before his fame had fairly passed the Pyrennees, he disappeared, no one knew why, no one knew where. His genesis and his exodus were alike mysterious. Like a strange and shining star he had arisen from the realm of the unknown; like a flaming meteor he had vanished into the depths of the unknowable.

* * * *

Little Leon was hungry, was cold, was afraid. Hungry, because he had not eaten since morning; cold, because he was scantily clad against the winter wind; afraid, because his day's receipts had been light and Miguel's libations heavy. Reasons enough.

Slowly and sadly he climbed the desolate stairs and entered the dingy room that he and Miguel called home. Happily, Miguel, present in the flesh, was absent in the spirit, strolling with Bacchus in Elysian fields. Jetsam and flotsam of the morning meal Leon could therefore gather undisturbed. He laid down his violin, lighted the flickering lamp, drew the little table nearer the feeble fire, and, while he ate, he studied the sleeping man upon the shabby bed.

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Miguel was a perennial puzzle, a

profound problem, that Leon had often studied but had never solved. He could not remember a time when they had not been together, journeyed together, played together, he the violin, Miguel the great harp; and yet he did not know Miguel.

Two tastes they had in common, only two — the love of music and the love of books. Books were Leon's only playthings; through them he roamed the world. Miguel had taught him. When Miguel rewarded, it was with a book; when he punished, it was by a beating. Leon never knew which to expect until Miguel promised. Miguel never broke a promise. Books and beatings were alike awarded without apparent cause. Once, after a book, Leon had asked why, and Miguel had answered, softly, "Because you resemble — her." Once, after a beating, Leon had asked the reason, and Miguel had answered, savagely, "Because you resemble — him." Leon could not understand.

Master of the violin, Miguel never played except to teach Leon. Handsome in person, courtly in speech and manner when he chose, Miguel shunned mankind. Sober at all other seasons, Miguel was always drunk at this. The stages of his intoxication were always three. In the first he was cynically kind, in the second moodily morose, in the third somnolent. Recovering from the third he immediately re-entered the first, following the circle without intermission. From the morning of the twenty-fourth to the morning of the twenty-sixth day of each December he was continuously drunk. From the morning of the twenty-sixth to the morning of the twenty-fourth he was continuously sober. A strange creature, this Miguel.

Being now in the third stage, he would enter the first as soon as he awoke. The gin-bottle on the shelf was yet half full. That meant several hours of the dreaded second stage before morning. Leon sighed, pillowed his head on his arms, and patiently awaited the awakening.

From the crowded streets arose the laughter of happy children, the chatter of gift-laden shoppers, the merry music of the jingling bells, and all the roar and bustle of the Christmas-tide. Flashed up from the depths of child memory for one tremulous instant a fleeting vision of a happier time, a home, kind faces, treasures of toys, and then the vision vanished, leaving in its stead — Miguel and the garret. Often before had Leon dreamed such dreams. Sometimes there came a misty memory of a woman's face, of fond encircling arms, a soft, sweet voice calling him, not Leon, but another name his ear strained eagerly to catch, his heart leaped lovingly to answer.

The Christmas chimes of distant churches lulled and soothed him to drowsiness. Gradually the faint, melodious medley of the bells melted into a symmetrical melody, a soothing symphony of surpassing sweetness, rousing again those misty memories of a perished past. Surely, somewhere, sometime, he had heard that melody — somewhere amid a concourse of people — sometime before there had been a Miguel in his life. Oh, could he but fix it in his mind, remember it, play it, perhaps some portion of the past would be revealed. Eagerly he grasped the violin. His skillful fingers searched among the strings and slowly seized the weird, unwilling notes. His bow, obedient to its master's will, dragged from their hiding

place responsive chords. Fragment by fragment, broken but distinct, the mystic music of his fancy flowed and waked the echoes of the lonely room. The sleeper stirred uneasily, and Leon paused.

"Were you playing, Leon?"

"Yes, Miguel."

"\Vhat?"

"Nothing—a fancy — I do not know."

Miguel arose. When he sat down the bottle on the shelf was emptv. "Beggar's champagne," he cried, gayly, wiping his beard. Leon smiled. This was the first stage.

"I dreamed some one was playing—playing — something none but I can play; something never played but once; something that shall never be played again. What day is this, Leon?"

"This is Christmas Eve."

Miguel started.

"True," he murmured. "A time to be remembered. I had forgotten. When I am drunk I do not think. When I do not think I do not remem ber. Blessed be Bacchus!"

He staggered to the window and looked out. From a brilliantly lighted church in the distance came the swell ing tones of a great organ. Miguel laughed derisively.

" 'On earth peace, good-will toward men.' Beautiful words. Twelve years this night since I last heard them; one year before your birth; three years before you and I became companions. Truly, Leon, Christmas Eve is a time to be remembered by us — aye, and by others."

Again he laughed bitterly, triumph antly. Leon listened eagerly; never before had Miguel spoken of the past. But Miguel only said: "Play for me, L?on, while I forget."

With bow poised in air, the boy hesitated, glanced at his companion timidly, and then boldly struck the chords of the dim, dreamy melody caught from the Christmas chimes. With a cry of rage Miguel tore the violin from his hands and hurled him to the floor.

"Perdition I" he shrieked; "not that 1 What demon taught you that ?"

Leon, rising to his knees, cried out: "O, Miguel, tell me — tell me or kill me. I will not — cannot — live this miserable life."

In the uplifted, pleading face, in the great tearful eyes, Miguel, looking down, saw that which caused him to stoop, to lift the child, to clasp him to his breast.

"For love of her whose face you bear this night," he cried, "I, myself, dead for these many years, will tell you, will play for you, though you cannot understand. Listen, Leon. You are about to hear a tragedy. It began in — Spain. It will end here."

Then Miguel played, and lo, it was the music of the memories of Leon, such music as is heard but once in centuries, such music as enthralls the minds of men and wields them at its will. Slowly, softly, sweetly, at first, it rippled and glided and throbbed and trilled, telling of brooks and birds, of flowers and sunny climes, laughter and love, and hope and happiness. Sud denly it sank to troubled tones of dark ness and despair, madness and misery and revengeful rage; changing again to run the gamut of all earthly grief with sobs and sighs, terror and tears, the wails of women and a mother's moans.

Leon's slight form was quivering, his eyes were closed, his breath flut tered between parted lips. Trans ported by the magical music, fascinat

ed by the fiery orbs of the musician, for a time there was no Leon; lie had become in mind a part of Miguel, their memories mingled, the stronger had absorbed the weaker will.

The last impassioned chord vibrated, diminished, sobbed, and died away. The player, exhausted, withdrew his magnetic gaze from the child's face. With one long, quivering sigh, Leon opened his eyes; returned from ecsta sy to earth.

"Again, Miguel, again. Let me see her again."

"See — whom, Leon?"

"The lady of my dreams. She was with you, Miguel, with you, in a grove — and, again, in a great church — music — many people. She was at the altar — with a man, not you — you are outside — in the snow. Then an immense hall, bright uniforms, beau tiful ladies — and you, Miguel, you are playing — the same music. She leads me away — she is veiled — she weeps. O, Miguel, it is not a dream; It is real---------"

"A miracle!" gasped Miguel. "Go on! My God! Go on!"

"A magnificent house — fountains — statues. You are outside — in the darkness — watching. A great, glit tering Christmas tree — the beautiful lady again — she is playing with a lit tle boy, with me, Miguel, with me! O, Miguel, she is my mother! I know it now! Where is she — tell me, Miguel, where is she?"

"Stop! stop!" moaned Miguel, white, trembling. "But — yes — it is a command from above. Go on! Go on!"

"A ship — waves all around us — I am crying. Now we are in a great city; it is snowing; you carry me along the streets; you take something from about my neck---------"

Miguel had fallen upon the bed, writhing, clutching at his side. Leon ran to him, but Miguel, with a mighty effort, sat up.

"It is nothing," he said, after a mo ment, "nothing but—my heart. That was broken long ago. Leon, Leon, Death has touched me with his finger, and tonight the good God has spoken to me through your lips — has com manded me to speak before it is too late. Sit here, by me, Leon — I must still call you Leon, for I cannot speak the name that was — his. He never saw you, Leon. I swore that he should never behold the child that would have been mine had he not foully slandered me. Because of his rank he refused to meet me; he laughed at the poor musician until I revealed to him what I had kept from the world, even from — her. Then, daring no longer to refuse, he faced me and found my hand as cunning with the sword as with the bow.

"Now you will despise me, Leon; will leave me; will return to your own. But stay with me tonight, Leon, for I love you because of her — who broke her solemn promise. You will tell her that.

"Tomorrow I will give you rich gifts. See, Leon, I am a magician — I, who have nothing, will give much — home, mother, fortune. Many times have your hands grasped these gifts and you knew it not.

"Tomorrow we will sell the great harp and you shall take the money and leave me. A joyous Christmas for you, Leon; a sad one for me. But God has ordered it so — and I shall not stay long. Listen, Leon, to the chimes. They are calling to me—and I must go. Yes, this night, after so many years, I will ask pardon for the great sin I have committed — yea, I

will even beg that she be forgiven the great wrong she wrought inc. Once more, this night. I will bow before Him whose mission was mercy. Come, I.con."

He led the bewildered child down the dark stairway and along the white streets to the distant church. To gether they entered, and kneeling near the door, received the benediction. Then, as the grand organ filled the church with solemn music, Miguel, still on his knees with bowed head and clasped hands, sank slowly down, a gasping, quivering heap. With a cry of grief and terror, Leon bent over him to see him smile, a wan, pitiful smile; to-hear him whisper, "Fare well, Leon—Francisco — the violin— the violin;" and then, with a long shudder, a convulsive clenching of the slender hands over the failing heart, Miguel's dark, passionate eyes closed on this world forever.

*****

Leon in the garret; Miguel in the morgue. Christmas night, the first night in many years that had not found them together.

Leon had sold the great harp that Miguel might not be buried as a pauper, that a little stone might mark the spot where he would lie nameless and unknown; a stone upon which the one word, "Miguel," would tell all that Leon had ever learned. The child had refused the home offered him by sympathizing strangers, for somewhere in the great wide world a home and a mother awaited him. Miguel had said so, and Miguel, with all his faults, had never deceived. Earning his way with the old violin, he would wander from country to coun try, from city to city, until he should find the lady of his dream. A weary, weary quest for one who knew not even his own name.

Ah, if Miguel had only told; if Death had delayed but one more day. And yet — Miguel had promised that he should know today — and Miguel had never broken a promise. Perhaps — perhaps —*could* the dead return ? The lonely child glanced fearfully about the dim garret and shuddered at the thought. If Miguel could he would — to keep his promise — that was certain.

A shape leaped up from a dark cor ner and moved toward him; some thing rattled over the bare floor. The child moaned in terror. Only a shad ow cast through the little window by the street lamp swinging in the wind ; only a gaunt gray rat searching for food. No, Miguel would not, could not come. He had spoken for the last time. But why had his last words been of the violin ? Perhaps — Leon sprang up and bore the battered in strument to the dim lamp, shook it, peered into it, sought some inscription, some word, that might lead to light, and found — nothing.

He laid the violin upon the table and cast himself upon the bed, crying, "No hope! No hope!" The wailing wind without echoed his words. The rat tling window, the swinging, squeaking street-signs mocked him. The gaunt gray rat, emboldened by hunger, en tered the faint circle of light cast by the flickering lamp and sniffed and grinned ominously.

A fierce blast of wind screamed up the narrow stairway, the flimsy door flew open, the rat squeaked and scam pered away, the flame of the lamp leaped, quivered, and expired; the room grew suddenly icy cold. The child, rising to close the door, halted, terror-stricken, paralyzed by fear, for someone, something — he could not see — was playing upon the violin, softly, but surely, skillfully.

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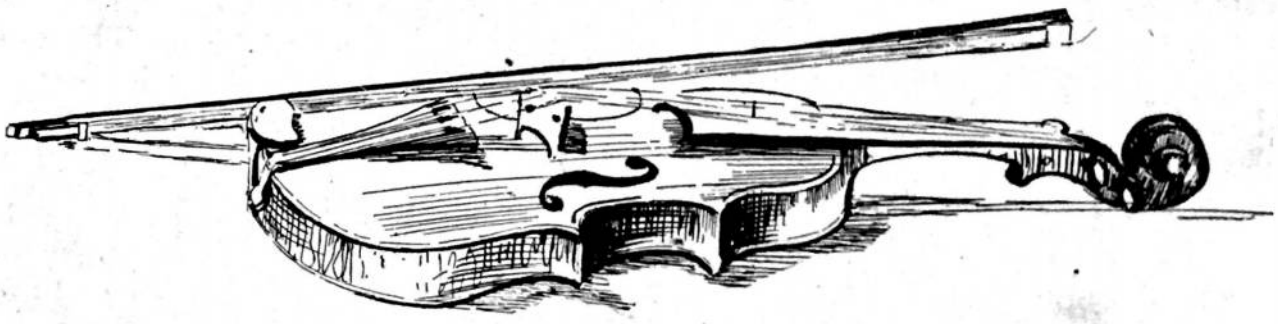
Stronger and louder swelled the notes, the marvelous music of Miguel, the chorus of the Christmas chimes, drowning the wailing of the wind, throbbing, pulsating, filling the wretched room with wondrous waves of heavenly harmony, and then — a snapping of strings, a splintering crash — silence and utter darkness.

Cowering in the corner, the child waited to hear the voice of the dead, to feel the touch of a ghostly hand, to see a shadowy shape bend over him; crouched there, fearing to move, hear ing only the throbbing of his leaping heart, feeling only the piercing cold of the searching wind, seeing only the shadows of the night that finally fled before the blessed sunlight that stole slowly in, illumining the garret with the promise of a glorious day and re vealing on the floor the shattered wreck of the old violin.

Emboldened by the light, the child arose upon his cold, cramped limbs, and turned to flee the fearful spot for ever. At the door, glancing back nerv ously, he saw gleaming from beneath the splintered finger-board, in the cun ningly hollowed neck, a locket of gold.

With a cry of joy he forced it open and beheld on one side a miniature of himself and the name "Francisco." On the other, the lady of his dreams, a woman's name and the name of a city across the sea. Miguel had kept his promise.



Lulu A. Adams.

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S^*^*****^ SERIES A—NO. 1280.

Mirey.

BY FRANK NEILSON.

 1

FLIP th' plller a leetle higher up, I .Mirey," said the old man, pcev* ishly. "Th' cher hurts my back—au'• th' sun's a shinin' right in my eyes."'

The girl tenderly adjust ml the pll- ' low and with maaeulin^ strength ' lifted the rude chair with Its purely-' tic burden to a shadier spot under» the apple tree.

"Ye ain't a treatin' Jake right, i Mirey." grumbled the old man. "lie ain't said nothin', but 1 kin see it; an' you a goin' to marry him this [1] fall."

"Mebbe I am—mebbe I ain't," the { girl said, impatiently.

The old man looked up at her anx iously.

"I knowed it," he exclaimed. "I've seed it a coinin' ever sence that Evans, come a snoopin' 'round here, a pizen- in' yer mind with his stories 'bout | fine houses, an' great ladies, ian' dresses, an' dimunds. What brought him 'way up here in this wild place? WhcXknows. what he is, ennyhow?' Like as not lie's one of them revnoo spies."

"Ye've got no call to slander him that a way, pap," retorted the girl, hotly. "Lots' of them city folks spends their vacations in th' moun- tains. An' ennybody kin see he's a gentleman. He ain't no spy." I

There were hot words over the> young city man, leaving the old mail sullen and dissatisfied and the girl defiant. As she turned to go he said: '

"Mirey, they's sumthin' I clean for got to tell Jake when he come by, an' I must see him. He ain't more'n half way to th' stm, yit. Run, Mirey, ye must bring him back."

The girl hurried obediently down, the steep path and along the base of the mountain, smiling as she went, j

"I kin coax him into it after while,"' she murmured, "an' then I kin. be sumbody. Rob says I kin have enny- thing 1—"

A crash, a rattle of descending[4] stones, a smothered ejaculation, and' two struggling, interlocked men rolled down into the path below her.' One of them, wrenching the revolver' from the other's hand, arose panting,, tall and powerful. His opponent layi quite still, blood trickling from al wound on the curly, handsome head.[1]

With a choking cry Mirey sprang[1] forward and raised the wounded head in her arms.

"Ye've killed him," she, moaned.

"He's onl" stunned a lectio,"

"You lie, .lake!" the girl cried, de fiantly. "An' this won't do ye no good, nut her."

The tall man bent down and from a the Inner pocket of the stylish coat® drew a long, official-looking envelope.[h]

"Look at. that, Mirey," he cried,'® with a note of triumph. "From th' Internal Itevnoo D'partmentl"

"That ain't his name on it—it's fer sinnbody else," she protested, wildly. j, "Let me rend what's inside."

She reached up a trembling hand,er took the opened sheet and her sun-e- browned face turned pale. The'"- wounded head dropped from the en circling arms and she staggered to her feet, swaying, crushing the let ter in her hands. The man at her feet stirred and sighed. The tall man knelt and with his handkerchief bound the unresisting hands cruelly! tight.

"What ye goin' to do with him, Jake?" asked the girl, quietly, al- most inaudibly.

"Ye've heered rumors of what wentne with 'tother one," the tall man mut-In tered, with a significant glance.>n- "But tain't fer me to say. Th' boys'll Hi decide that."

The girl shuddered and turned away.

"You'll have to go an' tell th' boys, Mirey. while I watch him. He musn't git away."

"I—I kain't—hring them. Jake. I'll watch him. He 11 not git away," sav- agely. "Give m h' gun."

Jake's eyes looked searchingly[e3'] into hers. She met the scrutiny un- flinchingly.

"Kin I trust ye, Mirey?"

"Don't I know what'll happen ef he gits away." she cried, indignantly. "D'ye think I'd send pap and—and you—to prison? I'll kill him first. Go—an' hurry."

She seated herself on a nearby bowlder and with drawn face and cold, pitiless eyes regarded the un-i conscious captive, The bees, home-i going, heavy-laden, droned musically[en'] among the blossoms, loath to leave.[04] '

From the distant river came the[™s]i faint whistle of a passing boat. A great, black buzzard flapped heavily .,' ,j. down upon the dead limb of ti[10]" sycamore, wiped his hooked beak on- [o]d his sable plumage and cocked his hey baleful eye inquisitively at the fallen find man.

The captive heaved a long, quiver- ing sigh, opened his eyes, struggled. and sat up, staring about him con- fusedly.

".Mirey," he said, faintly. "Is thnt you. Mirey?"

He drew his feet under him to rise.

The revolver in the heavy hand

".Mirey! Hnvc you turned g.lnat*'-' fle M tr51ne j hu- me?"

"Hain't ye played th' hypocrite long, rnuff, Joseph Armacnst," she sneered.

The breeae rustled the letter at/ her feet. lie ginneed at lt and started.

"1 guess the play'* over." he observed, wearily.

She made no reply. After n while he looked Up again and said softly:

"Mirey. before they—before i r»— , will you forgive me?" .

She turned awav her head to hide ". ---------- . » the tears of wounded pride that would not be repressed.

"It was mean, cruel, despicable," he continued, "but we have to do such i lungs sometimes—they're a part of our orders, 1 wish you could understand and forgive me. Mirey."

"Fergive ye!" she burst out. "Fer give ye! You lied to me, made love to me. learned me to love—yes, to love—sich a snake as you. You'd have sent poor old 'pap to prison, an' made me an outcast—a convict's dar ter. Fergive ye? Never—you hound."

"Mirey, it wasn't all a lie. I did! admire you—1 do yet. And 1 in tended to arrange that your father might escape if—"

"Then ye wouldn't have done ver duty. You'd have played traitor to both sides. Don't talk to me. I don't never want to hear yer voice."

There was a long silence—then the man remarked:

"I suppose Jake has gone after the gang."

"Don't mention Jake's name. You ain't fit to. He's a man."

"Look here. Mirey. Do you realize what you are doing? You are help ing murder me, as surely as though you had shot me through the head with that revolver. Do you under stand what that means—to take hu man life—in cold blood? Bad as I am I never did what you are doing now. You are helping murder me, Mirey."

The girl shuddered again, then steeled herself.

"How do 1 know what- they'll do with ye? That's their bizness—not mine. You an' them fer that."

"Mirey, you know as well as I that I'll never see another sunrise if you keep me here 30 minutes longer. Yqu loved me once, Mirey. An hour ago you would have gone with me to the ends of the earth. Do you hate me so now that you will stain your soul with my blood?"

She gave a great sob.

"What kin 1 do? 1 dascn't let ye go. Let me alone. Fer God's sake L m't tempt me."

strong wrists, flic handkerchief fell over the supple, pliant hands, and he sprang to his feet, defying the deadly weapon upraised hi the shaking hands.

"Stop! FI) have to shoot 1 1 prom ised Jake—ye're a spy."

"Shoot, then, Mirey. I'd better die that way than by torture. Shoot—* right, here—between the eyes—be sure."

The dark qyes looked into hit, filled with tears, and the grim muzzle dropped.

"O, llob—I kain't—I'm a coward."

He sprang forward, seized the weapon, and fired every chamber in the air.

"Now, you've done your duty," he exclaimed, breathlessly. "You've fired every bullet at me and only wounded me tis I ran. I've a boat concealed at the river. Goodby, Mirey."

She grasped his arm and clung to him desperately.

"Not till 1 know ye won't Inform on pap and—Jake. I must know that, er I'll hold ye till they come—an' they've heered th' shots."

"Could I betray you—after you've saVed me? Mirey—girl—look in my eyes—they shall never know."

She looked, knew, and released him. He stooped to kiss her, but she thrust him back fiercely. He seized the brown right hand, pressed it to his lips, and bounded away. The gill fell on her knees.

"O, Lord, fergive me fer what I've done. Fergive me fer the lie I'm about to tell. An'. 0, God, help me to fergit him."

Then she pressed her burning lips to the brown right hand, rubbed the spot madly with the crushed letter, and, with a little moan, cast the pa per away, as she cast him from her heart, and rose to face the hurrying men.

Late that night when Jake re turned, weary and desperate, from the fruitless search, Mirey, from the old man's side, stepped forward in the moonlight to meet him.

"Jake," she said, softly, "don't worry. He'll never tell. I know."

Jake looked down, sternly, into the dark eyes.

"Mirey—you let him go."

She laid both brown hands on his arm and looked up, pleadingly, into the grave, rugged face.

"Yes—it was better. I've been a fool. Jake. But it's* all past uow. An' —Jake—ye needn't wait till fall—ef ye'll have me yit."

Jake stooped, kissed the quivering lips, put his strong arm about her, and led her to the smiling old nma.

A SPECULATION IN ZINC

The Era Magazine August 1903

By Frank Neilson

Mr. Collins, of Collins & Hopkins, Real Estate & Loans, stroked his long "Burnsides" reflectively, and glanced at the despondent Hopkins reprovingly.

" Brace up, Hop," he said. " I'm ashamed of you. Because a young lady declines to sell a half section of Missouri land is no reason why you should tear your hair and smash the office furniture. Look here, Hop. For ten years we've been making profitable deals for other people. Now comes the opportunity to make our own fortunes, and if we can't engineer this deal against a girl we'd bet ter quit the business."

- "But what can we do? We've offered more than the market value of the land and she refused to sell 'because pa and ma are buried on the old place.' They'll probably stay there, won't they? Don't expect them to rise from the tomb and hustle themselves off the ancestral do main to accommodate us, do you? And we're out five hundred hard dollars now for the tip. If his company discovers that Thompson has betrayed them they'll put the girl on before they'll let us get the land. What do you propose to do? Forge a deed?"

"Don't talk nonsense, Hop, and don't talk so loud. The clerks will hear you. I've got an idea. Let's analyze this case. A woman owning a half section of land is not allowed to remain long unmarried, especially in a rural community. There fore this Miss Minerva Edgerton is young. Her letter indicates some educa tion. Her reasons for not selling show that she is sentimental, therefore suscep tible. Born and reared in that out-of-the-way corner she is ignorant of busi ness methods and the ways of the wicked world. Young, ignorant, sentimental and susceptible—why, Hop, it's a cinch—if we can find the right man—one that we can trust absolutely.

"She's beautiful: and therefore to be woo'd. She is a woman; therefore to be won."

The scowl on Hopkins's face was gradually displaced by an expression of hopefulness.

"It might work," he said doubtfully. "But where's the man? How would Richards answer?"

Collins shook his head. "Wouldn't do. Too risky. He has all the city graces to capture a rustic maiden's affection, but we'd have to explain everything to him, and then—well, would he play fair with us ? It's a matter of millions, you know."

There was a long silence. Then Col lins said decisively:

"I've found the man."

"Who"—

"Well, / call him Hop. His other friends call him Charley. His wife in sists upon C. Connell Hopkins."

"What—who—I—want *me* to commit bigamy—or get a divorce—from your own sister?"

"Hold on—did I say anything about divorce—or bigamy? You'll not have to marry the girl. Capture her young affections—set the day if necessary—and she'll sign the deed upon your advice. Then you skip. We'll cover up your tracks all right. She'll sniffle awhile and then marry some jay that wants her money. Nothing criminal about it. She gets her money—full market price for farm land. We discover the ore later—by accident. It's the only safe way, Hop. We can't trust anyone, and why should we divide the profits? It's easy, and it means a fortune to both of us."

"I guess you're right," Hopkins said, after a moment's thought. "I don't fancy the job, but I can do it. You arrange the details and I'll take the next train."

"All right, my boy. Notify me when you've landed her and I'll renew the offer. Send all communications through Orton of Springfield. And not a word of this to Laura. She might write or wire and excite suspicion. In a little town like that nothing can be kept secret. Tell her you're called suddenly to South America —tell her anything except the truth. Good-bye, old boy—and don't miss that train."

Thirty days afterward the ambitious Mr. Collins ripped open a large envelope bearing the Springfield. Mo., post-mark and extracted therefrom a scaled envelope containing the first report of the absent adventurer:

"New Shanghai, Mo., July loth, 1901.

Dear Coll: I'm It. She was offish for awhile, but I've got her going now, and any dance, picnic or spelling bee that we miss must be miles away and the roads muddy. Give me two weeks more—then renew your bid. Why not send deed and draft at same time ? That will let me off sooner. Can't stand this much longer.

Say, Coll, as an "analyzer" you are a miserable failure. "Young—sentimental — susceptible." O, Lord! Minnie, mv own Minnie, (to others she is "Nerve"), is as sentimental and susceptible as a wild buffalo, and if she ever sees thirty again she'll have to begin over. She is a bird—of the Dodo variety. Tips the beam at 185: all bone and sinew. Hands like Swift's Premium. Red hair. Squints. Voice like a fog horn, and the disposi tion of a demon. For heaven's sake be cautious, Coll, for if this gentle gazelle ever gets into our game you'll need a new partner. O, I'm up against it for sure, but we get that land. I'm going to run up to Springfield for a couple of days' rest and a sight of the upper regions again. My publishers are in Spring field, you know. I'm an author, Coll. Down here getting material for a new book. My name is Charles H. Connell. See? Tell Laura to not worry, and you hustle that deed, etc., in two weeks from date. Yours sufferingly.

Hop.

P. S.—She didn't write that letter. She got the P. M. to write it. He was sparking her and I had to cut him out. She can't write anything but her name, and she prints that. H."

Mr. Collins chuckled softly, leaned back in his easy chair, and clasped his fat red hands over his rotund front. With closed eyes he saw castles spring from barren Missouri lands—castles of zinc with turrets of copper. Steam yachts, automobiles, racing stables and all the luxuries of the "gilded gang" passed in renew before his ecstatic vision, trans porting him to a delicious dream-land from which he was suddenly and cruelly

recalled by the unannounced entrance of Mrs, Hopkins.

Now, if he had been wide awake and more prompt in concealing that letter, or if Mrs. Hopkins's eyes had been less keen, the post office at New Shanghai might not have received a letter, directed to C. Connell Hopkins, bearing upon its upper left hand corner a request that it be returned, if not called for, to Mrs. C. Connell Hopkins, 1313 Lakeview Ave., Chicago, Ill.

And if the postmaster had not been deposed in the affections of Miss Minerva he might not have aroused the demon of jealousy in that lady's bosom by communicating his suspicions.

For many generations the adventurous ancestors of Minerva had opposed the wily savage of the forest and the meddlesome revenue officers of an inquisitive government. Suspicion, caution and prompt action were the natural heritages of the offspring. Minerva resolved to investigate.

The dashing Hopkins returned from Springfield to be informed that his ladylove had been called to the bedside of a distant relative, and to receive from the scrutinizing postmaster two letters similarly addressed and displaying the Chicago postmark. Startled, and following the most natural impulse, he indiscreetly accepted the proffered letters. The next instant he realized his error,' but it was too late to amend it, and the postmaster's face was a revelation. Hurrying to his room he hastily opened the letter last mailed.

"You and Tom,"it ran, after the usual preliminaries, ."think yourselves •very clever, but I've fooled both of you; and until you explain your mysterious behavior I intend to write you regularly. ' * * * At last I've found a lovely girl, or rather she found me, for she came to the door looking for work. I don't mean lovely to the eye, for she is a giantess, and she squints and has red hair; nor to the ear, for she has a horrid voice, but she's *such* a cook, and *so* kind to the children. They tell her everything. She saw your picture on the wall and asked the children so many questions about you—where you were—how long you had been gone—your occupation—that I was really provoked when 'Pommy told me.

"One circumstance that I don't like—she gave her name as Mary Smith, but to-day I heard her muttering to herself, when she didn't know I was about, and she said, 'I'll fix him before to-morrow night or my name ain't Minerva Edgerton' "—

Here the shriek of an incoming train startled the stupefied Hopkins into immediate action. It occurred to him that a train that comes in almost invariably goes out, and he started toward the station with great earnestness, leaving behind him a large roll of fake manuscript and numerous clouds of dust. He carried with him an intuition amounting to a conviction that a cyclone was scheduled for that immediate vicinity and was almost due. The direction of the train was immaterial to him so that it went away from New Shanghai and went at once.

Half way to the station he suddenly executed a lateral movement and cast his panting form behind the shelter of a friendly hedge. A tall, bony female had swung round the corner ahead of him. She was dusty and travel stained. A straw hat decorated with fluttering blue ribbons and surmounted by a mass of faded artificial red roses was perched upon one side of the fiery head and pulled far down over the corrugated brow. The lower jaw protruded aggressively, and the voluminous mouth opened and closed regularly with suggestive gnashing of teeth. As she strode rapidly along the dusty road her gaze was fixed with savage intensity upon the distant village, and her massive right hand, grasping a frayed carpet bag, rose and fell in agitated motion as though threatening an invisible foe.

The apparition had barely passed him when the locomotive signaled departure, and Hopkins arose and sneaked hurriedly along the hedge. A recumbent pig noisily voiced his protest at being roused from repose, betraying the fugitive. Hopkins, glancing backward fearfully, heard a howl of fury and saw a tall figure enveloped in clouds of dust sweeping down upon him. Then Hopkins threw

his whole soul into his legs. Minerva ditto. As they sprinted by the station, passengers, train-crew and loafing villagers shouted encouragement.

"Hit it up, 'Nerv, you're a gainin'. We're bettin' on you."

"More steam, old boy. She'll git you in three more jumps."

Lucky it was for Hopkins that he succeeded in grasping the rear platform as the train pulled out. Even then the mad, wild gallop of the avenger might have carried her to victory had not the engineer been in haste to make up lost time. As the gap widened a long right arm swung upward like the beam of a catapult and a carpetbag hurtled through the air, materially assisted the exhausted Hopkins in his efforts to open the coach door.

That night Mr. Collins awoke trembling from a hideous nightmare. He had been crushed to death by the crashing downfall of a mighty castle, a castle of zinc with turrets of copper.

A NEW SERIAL STORY BY BRET HARTE

THE GUMBO SOIL OF A S S I N I B O I A

MAKING EMPLOYER ONE WITH EMPLOYE

THE OAKS

From a drawing by Hugh Stuart Campbell

ABSTRACTION

$2.00 Yearly **September 19, 1903** **5c Weekly**

THE C. AND C. CO., CHICAGO. ILL.

Frank Nielson

66

THE GOVERNOR'S VISITOR

BY FRANK NEILSON

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spread and curled
and drifted into the semblance of a marble hall, wherein sat senators in sc'etjm state: then massed, and rose. and took the shape, , of a gigantic chair, in which a president might sit to guide a mighty nation.

V A pleasing. Haltering vision, from which the dreamer turned unwillingly when the little, wan woman with expect ant face was usln red in.

"I am ven sorry, madam." said the governor, gruffly. when his insistent vis itor had paused for breath, "but I have examined your petition and find no grounds to ju*:if\ a pardon. Your son. pleaded guilty—did not deny the charge. M. Vfartors must be punished, and it is in) d 'tv to enforce the law. That is all I ha\ To say. 1 am very busy and see no r< n n for proL-nging this discussion."

* H< mi-ht have said that he had ex amined the signatures more carefully than the petition, and had found no name of political weight, but the little, wan woman could no! have understood. She wiped awav a tcar and arose with a weary sigil.

"It's 'Inillt AR I ex- pectcd—though I did think mebbe you'd see it different, ' Bc- cause he told th' truth he has to suffer, I 'most wish now he'd a-run awav, as sum of 'em wanted him to."

"Very foolish, madam." re-< marked the governor, turn- » infc to his desk. "He could not have escaped."

"O, I dunno. Sumtimes they git away. There was th' Widder Bennington's boy, back in Xew Hampshire, run away with th' bank's money, an' they never ketched him. But th' widder give up everything to make it good. I hain't got nothin' to give. That makes a difference."

z\ faint pallor crept over the gov ernor's bearded face; there was a tremor in the resolute voice as lie asked quietly: "You have lived in Xew Hampshire. Mrs. Appleby? Tlease be seated. Did you know Mrs. Bennington and her son ?"

"I never seen th' boy. He run off be fore th' widder moved to our town. I've heered a rumor that he changed his name an' got to be sumbody out W est here sumwhere—a jedge or sumthin'. I reckon it wasn't true."

"Did Mrs. Bennington grievemuch because of* her son's—misfortunen'

"Misfortune! 1 never heered ennvonc call it a misfortune. He took th' money, same's mv boy did. He took dollars where Joey took cents, an' be run—Joey didn't—that's th' difference. "

I he governor nervously lingered the pile* of papers on lds littered desk.

"There ma* have been mitigating cir minstamt* in young Kennington's case. I ltd v-ti ever hear that lie had Iren led into illation—that In* was not natu rails a criminal?"

"Neither is Joey," said the little woman, bitterly.* "Ain't there unfi gatin cui mnstanccs in *his* ease? lled ncvei a done it if I hadn't be'n down sick to long an' nobody to |tervidc fer me hut that p*i*"' l'o.V. An' lie stood up like a man he wouldn't run an' he wouldn't lie.. He'd a-paid lack every cent, too, after I got well, if they'd a-give him a c b a n c e—• though tlicx wasn't payin' him half de cent wages."

"Yes—yes —no doubt, Tluy all in tend to do that. But you haven't an- swered niy <1 u e s t i o n about M rs. Bennington.*'

"D id 1 know th' wid- der? Well. nobody could git much ac quainted with her. but we could all see she *teas'* a- grievin' her self to death 'bout some thin'. though we didn't hear 'bout til' h<>\ til! she'll been in our town ipiite a spell.

"Lived all alone in a little three-room house, an' didn't go round an' mix with folks, Sum 'lowed she was proud an' stuck up. Iml "he wasn't. As sweet an' gentle 11 little woman as you ever seen, she was. I know, 'cause she lived right next door to me. an' slim times she spoke tn me across th' fence. Seemed like she was lonesum. an' jest hungry to talk to sumbody. an' was afeard to. But when ever I mentioned callin' on her she'd kind o' shy off. an' I never was in her house till th' night she died.

"Why. she never even let ennybody know she was took down, not even a doctor. She'd a-died there all alone if I hadn't suspected sumthin', not seein' her around, an' jest went in an' found her ptirtv , n i g h gone. Then we had th' doctor, but we couldn't do nothin'. only make the poor soul more cumfer- b1e . She didn't say m u c h—she c o u 1 d n't— only once, when I axed her was there enn y t h i n g she wanted, she kind o' sobbed a n' whisp e r e d. 'My boy—if only I could see him once more.'

"She went purty soon after that— c a s y a n' peaceful, like goin' to sleep —jest as th' robins begun to sing in th' mornin'; 1 was holdin' her hand when she went. Jest grieved herself to death 'bout that boy.

"tiie GOVERNOR, GAZING THROUGH THE window"

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MI

THE OAKS

"\V« Uhl h»t away, mcr an' <lrcrnt — ** dhlnt grudge no rtprwr Had th' mmiatrr, an'—was you tryin' to say •iimthm', governor ' If you*<| jc*t turn your face thia uay—I'm a mite deaf. Mcbbr I'm a worryin* you with my talk. I reckon IM better go. ch?"

The governor did not answer. Hi* hack wa* turned to the little, wan woman in rusty black ; his eyes again saw visions in the distant, drifting clouds No halls of marble there- only a quaint old man sion, elm-embowered, 'mid odorous orchard* on New Hampshire hills; no proud procession now—but white sails swelling in the salt sea breeze; no sena tors in solemn state—only one face, pa tient and sweet, haloed by silver hair, that smiled ami called him by a long f<»rg-tt< n name

And then the west wind rose am) whipped the drifting cloud* into long shaft* that lav along the peaks hki liars of iron acros* a granite cell.

The governor seized a pen, ami with nervous haste filled up the space* in a printed form, affixed his signature and tile seal of state, and held out the docu ment to the little woman. With a chok ing cry of joy, and broken words of thanks, she sprang at it and hugged it to her breast.

"Yes—yes—I understand," the gov ernor interrupted, hoarsely. "It is not much in comparison to what you did for —Mrs. Bennington. Please go now. Mrs. Appleby — I wish to be alone."

A KOKOMO STORY PROVES PRIZE WINNER

F. N. Stratton Secures Fourth Award In Short-Story Contest.

Frank N. Stratton, who has become a somewhat prolific writer tor the magazines, has just r«Qeived notice that Ms story. "The Governor's Visit," was awarded the fourth prize in a short-story contest conducted by "The Oaks." a weekly magazine of high merit published in Chicago. The judg es were three well known authors, and several hundred manuscripts were submitted. The story was ot eleven hundred words and the price per word received by the Kokomo writer would hardly be spurned by the "demmed literary fellers" who can spend the summer in Europe.

Six stories from the pen of Mr. Stratton will appear this month in the various magazines, including Mun sey's, Everybody's, the Olympian and others.

THE OLYMPIAN

for

NOVEMBER, 1903

| The November Olympian will offer an interesting table of contents to the readers of the magazine. In fiction the leading contributions will be stories by JOSEPH A. Altsheler and Will N. Harben. Mr. Altsheler has written the fourth story in his series of Hawaiian tales. It is entitled "Old Manson's Sin," and is illustrated by JOHN Edwin Jackson. Mr. Altsheler is one of the best known of the younger American novelists, and his work always commands attention. Mr. Harben's story called " Gen tlemen of the Old Regime," announced for October, will appear, instead, in the Novem ber number. It is illustrated by W. BRANT LEY Smith.

The " Idaho Ike " series, written by Frank N. Stratton, will be continued in the November OLYMPIAN. Besides these there will be an interesting collection of shorter stories.

A

Ghe OLYMPIAN

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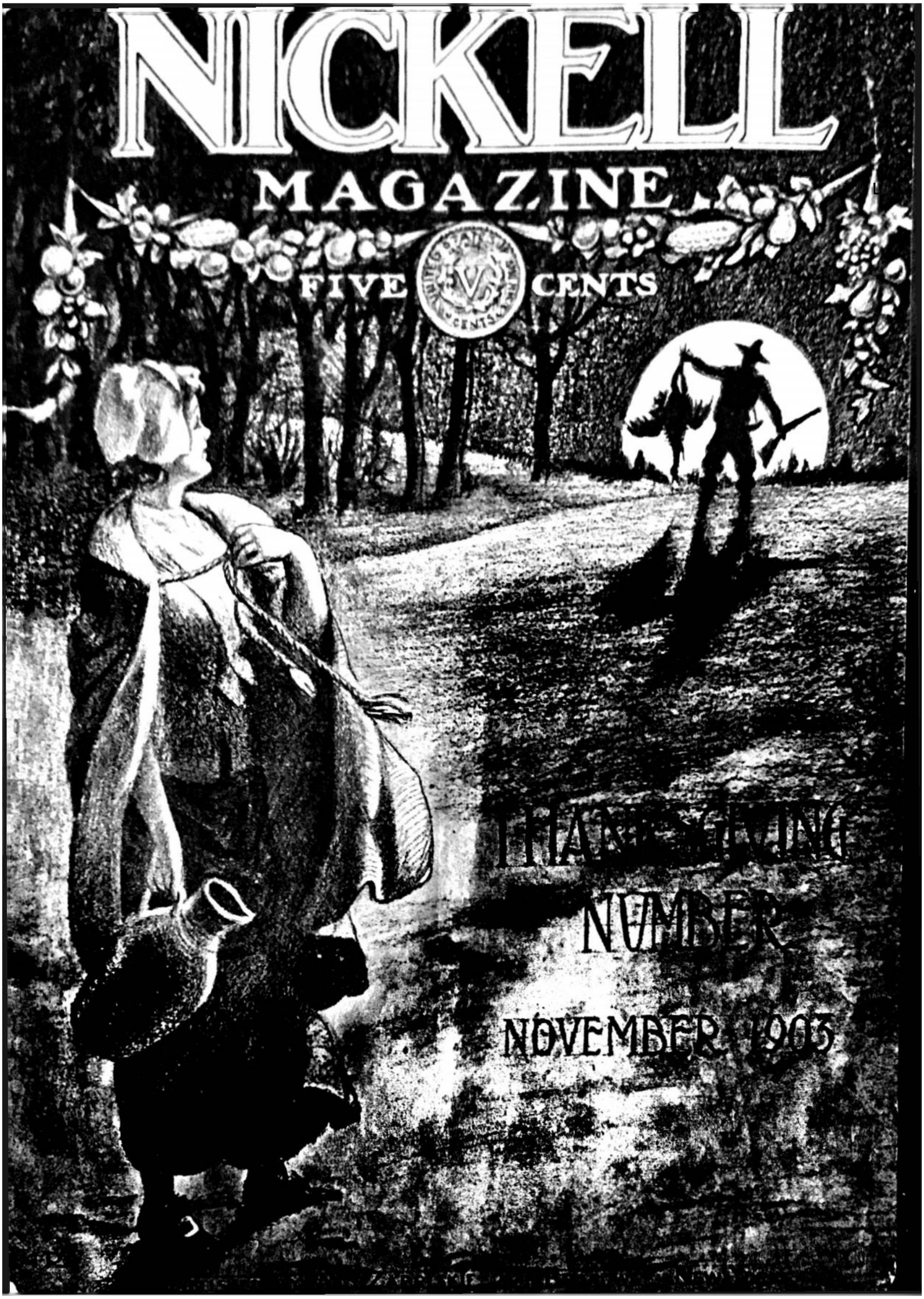
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THANKSGIVING
NUMBER
NOVEMBER 1903

NOEL SAYS:

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WE \\ II.L aend to every subscriber or reader of 1 he Nickell Magazine, or worthy person recommended by a l Subscriber or reader a full sized One Dollar 1 package of VIT-t-ORE, by mail, postpaid, ' nufhcicnt for one month's treatment, to be paid for tn one month's time after receipt, if the receiver can truthfully say that its use has done him or her more good than all the drugs and dopes of quacks or good doctors or patent medicines he or she has ever used. Read this over again carefully, and under stand that we ask our pay only when it has done you g<*>d. and not before. We take all the risk: you have nothing to lose. If it does a not benefit you, you pay us nothing. Vitae-Ore is a natural, hard, adamantine, rock-like substance—mineraR-Ore—mined from the ground like gold and silver, and requires about twenty years for oxidization. It contains free iron, free sulphur and magnesium, and one package will equal in medicinal strength and cura tive value Soo gallons of the most powerful, efficacious mineral water drunk fresh at the springs. It is a geological discovery, to which there is nothing added or taken from. It is the marvel of the century for curing such diseases as Rheumatism, Bright's Disease, Blood Poisoning, Heart Trouble. Dropsy. Catarrh and Throat Affections, Liver, Kidney and Blad der ailments. Stomach and Female Disorders. La Grippe. Malarial Fever, Nervous Prostra tion. and General Debility, as thousands testify, and as no one, answering this, writing for a package, will deny after using. Vitae-Ore has cured more chronic, obstinate, pronounced in curable cases than any other known medicine and will reach such cases with a more rapid and powerful curative action than any medicine, combinations of medicines, or doctor's prescrip tion which it is possible to procure.

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ADDRESS,

THEO. NOEL CO. A. W. Dept. Vitæ-Ore Bldg. Chicago, Ill.

The Little Brown Man

By FRANK STRATTON.

"COME on, Jack, let the kid go."

"No, indeed. The little imp came near winging me with that last poisoned arrow. And I want Kate to see a real, live Igorrote, fresh from his native jungle. Come along, Joe, or Filippe, or Miguel, or whatever your name may be. I'll not hurt you."

Far up on the mountain side, with wounded arm and broken bow, lay the little brown man. He heeded not the pain, felt not the awful heat of that mid-day sun; he only saw, with tiger eyes, his motherless boy, his little Juan, borne away by those two blue-shirted giants toward the troopers gathering in the valley. The heart of the father raged within him. But what could one little brown man, wounded, unarmed, do against so many? Had not he and his comrades just been scattered, chased up the valley, shot down by these terrible Americanos?

Ah, this was quite different sport from potting Spaniards, this ambuscading of Americano warriors.

And now little Juan was gone forever. But what a brave fight he had made, his little arrows all sped, before he turned to flee. No doubt he would be eaten to-night by these ferocious strangers. But there remained revenge. Another bow can be found, the trail is plain, and the Igorrote swift. Never mind the wounded arm. Bind it with healing herbs. There is work to be done.

Will they never halt, those troopers, that they may be overtaken ? Up mountain, walk; down mountain, trot; over plain, gallop; they are made of iron. The swarthy little captive, bound behind the big captain, notes with keen, quick eyes every landmark, rock and river, mountain and plain. Ah, my troopers, young though he be he is the finished product of generations of past masters in woodcraft, and though you carry him to the farthest confines of Luzon, let him once escape and he will regain home and kindred as surely and unerringly as the gigantic eagle of the Philippines that soars above you.

And far back on your trail comes the little brown man, never halting, never swerving, day after day, night after night, as vengeful, as unrelenting, as the Apache of your native land. Woe unto that good captain of yours, woe unto his waiting wife, if that little

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biuwn man with the lung bow and deadly arrow* ever come* within bow ahot.

But now the trail enter* a country new to the Igorrotc. Many villages and many people, rice field* and dyke*, "ariboudrawing squeaking carts; now and then groups of blue shirted sol diers with those wonderful, murderous guns. Caution, little brown man. These people, too, arc brown, but their tongues are strange and they joke and laugh with the Americanos. You must change your dress. That is eas ily done. Darkness, a crouch, a spring, a quick thrust; that is all, and the river is very swift and deep. The silver in the pockets will not come amiss in this strange land. Filipino gallants should not wander so far from the vil lage alone after night and in time of war, even though it be to woo Filipino maidens. And you must cast away your weapons, all but the long, keen knife. You must learn a few words of this strange language, and you must avoid company and must speak but sel dom.

The trail is lost now among so many, but it seems that all these white soldiers are sent from a village called Manila, and that a troop with a big, red-bearded captain and a little Igor- rote boy have passed along on their way to that village. Onward, then, to Manila! Juan is yet alive. Perhaps they are saving him for a grand feast in Manila. Manila!—the word is dif ficult for your Igorrote tongue, but by its use and inquiring gestures you may learn the direction from an occasional traveler.

Onward, onward, miles and miles.

And then, at last, in the oarly morn* ing, a* he leaves a rice swamp and cautiously ascends a small b ink to look about, the little brown man starts with surprise.

Away yonder, water, all dancing water and blue sky. Over there, a vil lage, a wonderful, mighty village, such as his simple mind could never con ceive of. The sun shines brightly on many spires, the bugle calls come faintly to his ears, monstrous canoes glide grandly over white crested waves, some with great white wings, some belching fire and smoke. Ma nila—at last!

******

Americano captain, you of the red beard, strolling carelessly homeward, you hear the bands playing upon the Luneta, the laughter of merry prome- naders, the babel of many tongues. You see the brilliant lights of street and shop flashing upon many faces fair and swarthy, upon gay costumes of charming women mingled with the khaki and the blue of army and navy. But you cannot hear the cat-like foot steps of the little brown man, you do not see the glitter of his bead-like eyes as he follows you through the crowded streets, halting as you halt, moving as you move, even to the entrance of your dwelling.

There is safety in the peopled streets, my Captain, there is security within the barred doors of your home, but beware the evening stroll in the shadowy shrubbery of the garden, for a little brown figure crouches there, keen eyed as the eagle, crafty as the fox, agile as the tiger, and his knife bears the venom of the serpent.

Ah. iide brown man, well may you ga»P <n eurpriae. well may your father ly. ,irt leap for *joy.* There, only a few yard* away, where the moonlight aifla through the tropical foliage, hand in hand with the mi-bearded one and Ina good wife, cornea little Juan, alive, well, amiling, trying to repeat the word* of the hated Americanoa, who laugh merrily at the effort! of their pupil.

And you, little Juan, why do you break from them and bound forward, crouching, listening, |>anting? Again it cornea, that low, weird cry, mingled with the strains of the distant music on the esplanade. To the ears of the Captain and his wife 'tis but the cry of some strange night-bird, but to you it is the wood-call of the Igorrote hunter. Many times in far-away for ests have you and your little brown father traced each other by that trem ulous signal. Warrior of the Igor- rotes, your weary, faithful quest is ended, for it is truly your child who bounds toward you, calling, with ex tended arms. Leap from the shadows and clasp him to your breast, while the Americanos gaze in wonder.

A strange tale this, that Juan tells. They have treated him like a little prince. They have taken him into their home, have clothed, feasted, petted him. He goes with them every where, sees and hears everything, the wonderful houses, the mighty canoes, the marvelous weapons, the thousands of invincible warriors of these power ful people from over the great water. He is pleased, delighted, charmed with this fairyland.

But his heart is who you and the forml home. u brown father, and he will return—yes—but not now. A little time yet in this enchanted realm filled with life and light and miracles and music—then he will come. Will you not stay here with him, with these good people whom it is folly to fight, who wish peace, who will be your friends ?

You listen, you hesitate—but you arc not a child. A warrior of the Igor- rotes must breathe the air of his moun tains, the odors of his forests, must hear the death wail of his enemy, the night cries of the prowling beasts. Yet, to please you, Juan, he will rest a little, will even accept a little food, will thank, gratefully, by signs and broken words, the Captain and his wife for their kindness to the little one.

And then, as a signal gun startles him with its mighty voice, he vanishes like a shadow in the night, calling back to *J* uan, in their native tongue, to come soon.

* * -

Two hundred picked fighting men, armed with deadly Mausers, lie con cealed on'either side of the mountain ous ravine. Four hundred pairs of glittering eyes watch exultantly for the appearance of the little band of troopers led by the treacherous guide, How should they know, those gallant forayers, that the farther end of the winding pass is closed by an impass able barrier; that one detachment of the hidden foe will bar their retreat when they have passed, while the others pour down a murderous flank ing fire from both sides ? Do but ride well into that cunning trap, my blue shirted ones, and your eyes will never

again behold Old Glory, your ears will forever be deaf to the call of the bugles.

The little brown man carefully shifts his position, that he may sooner scan the oncoming enemy. He cannot see them yet from where he lies, but he hears the clatter of hoofs, the jingle of accoutrements, the laughter of the troopers. Suddenly the little column swings into view around the base of the mountain. The little brown man starts to his feet. His gun clatters among the rocks. He does not hear the angry, low-toned caution of his officer. But he sees a great red-beard ed Captain and a little brown faced boy riding at the head of that column to certain death.

With a cry of warning he leaps for ward and is half way down the side of the steep ravine before his com rades divine his intention. Then the Mausers ring out and the little brown man pitches forward and rolls to the very feet of the red-bearded Captain, who, with a soldier's quick instinct, has already given the command to dis mount and deploy.

Saved 1—but the film of death is over the eyes of the Igorrote. He has only time to place the little hand of Juan within the great palm of the Cap tain, to see their signs of understand ing and assent. Then, with the sounds of battle in his ears, his shattered head on Juan's breast, the little brown man closes his eyes forever.

Back-Log of New York

Sept. 1903 issue

A Missing Witness

Ih Frank N. Stratton,
w

Ahw, in my office. near midnight. 1 *M review ing my rough note* cd the evidence given that day at the coroner * inqueit. They ran. substantially, thu»:

'EDWARD A. GRAY, Bachelor. Fifty-eight year* old. Owner and manager Edgewood Hotel. Waa on duty, at the desk, on the evening of July UM. About Op. m. the deceased entered the ho tel and registered as W. D. Straughn, Aurora, N. V. Was immediately shown to room 16. At 6:30 1 was relieved by my clerk, Robert B. Hayes. Retired to my rooms, 20 and 21, about 10 p. m. About 11 .jo I was awakened by some on moving about in my room, number 20. I called out, but received I • no answer. I took my revolve^ *from* under my pillow, sprang from bed, and reached up with my I left arm to turn on the electric light. Before I I could do so the man sprang at me, and stabbed me I in left fore-arm. Then I fired twice and he fell. I then turned on the light and saw Straughn, dead. Recognized him only by his clothes, as his face was | shot away. Several persons rushed in; think Hayes I came first. Think he picked up Straughn's knife. Know of no motive for Straughn's action, unless it / might be robbery. ”

l,r ^OBERT B. HAYES, unmarried. Twenty- I &ght years old. Born and reared in this county. H Clerk at the Edgewood three years. Went on duty ' at 6:30 that evening. Never saw Straughn alive. About 11:30 I heard two shots in quick succession. Rushed up stairs. The hall light was burning dimly. Saw Mrs. Emmett entering the door of her room, number 17, almost opposite, but a little south of number 20. Think s he had on a white wrapper. The door of 20 was not quite closed. I pushed it | open and entered. The light was turned on and Mr. Gray was standing with a revolver in his right hand. His left arm was bleeding from a fresh cut. Straughn lay on the floor dead, face shot awav, open . pocket-knife near his right hand. I picked up the knit'e. Mr. Gray said the man had broken.into his room and sta! bed him. Door catch was broken. ”

author's name. "Wessex Poems" appeared in 1898.

MKb. hLORA EMMETT: Widow. Thirty-.. >e years old. Beautiful. Wealthy. Husband, Wil liam D. Emmett, lost at sea three years ago. Came here from New York gne month ago. Took rooms .•rth the Edgewood, j6 and 17, intending to buy country residence when suited. Never saw Gray before' coming here. Had only a speaking ac quaintance with him. Was awakened that night .by severe tooth-ache. Arose, slipped white wrapper on, and stepped into the hall, intending to procure remedy of Mrs. Ralston in room 14. Heard scuff ling, then two shots, in room 20. Stood for a mo ment shocked and terrified, then fled back to 17. Was confined to her rooms by neuralgia for three days afterward. Never saw Straughn alive."

This was all the material evidence we had been able to find. I could learn nothing of Straughn or his antecedents. He was unknown in Aurora, N. Y. Nothing among his few personal effects furnished a clue to his identity. I had no choice but to accept the finding of the coroner's jury, "jus tifiable homicide."

Having reached this conclusion, I threw myself back in my chair for a few moments rest, then straightened up with a jerk.

A man was in the chair at the opposite side of my flat-topped desk. He was leaning back, his chin on his breast, staring at me thoughtfully. His eyes were dark and serious, his face pale and intel ligent, his head slightly bald. I at once judged him to be a professional man, about forty years old. I was impressed by the sadness of his expression.

While I was yet wondering how he had entered unnoticed, he spoke:

"You are Mr. Neilson, the prosecuting attorney of this circuit?"

"1 am. "

"You have just decided not to prosecute'Gray. Quite proper, with the evidence yotfhave at hand. But, Gray is guilty—guilty of unprovoked and pre meditated murder.

"Now," with an impatient gesture, "don't inter rupt me. My time is limited. The murdered man's name is not Straughn—it is Emmett, William D. Emmett. Yes, he is—or was—Mrs. Emmett's husband. They were married five years ago. One year afterward she deserted him. Emmett sailed for Europe on the 'Tuscola,' searching for her. The ship foundered at sea, but Emmet escaped. The de tails of his adventures and final return to New York are not essential.

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"He still sought his wife. Foolish. I know, but there are men. who, loving always, never love but once. He found that Mr#. Emmett, thinking him •lead, had returned to New York, and, as hia only heir, had secured hi# fortune. He alto discovered tlwt «hr had met Gray at a certain watering resort, and had followed him here at hi# request. They arranged. because of #on»e complication of Gray's, to meet here a# stranger#, and to lie married later.

"Impelled by hi# infatuation lor the adventuress, Emmett came her secretly to plead with her. He registered under the assumed name of Straughn, because, if his mission failed, he wished to leave her unsuspected, and free to follow her desire. He would not betray her.

"That fatal evening he went to his wife's apart-[XwpMiw ments. She had really believed him dead. A/ter w* the shock of recognition had passed, she threw her- self into his arms, she wept, she implored forgive- » ness, she landed him in honeyed words for his con-l st a ik y and charity. Then she begged him to leave her for a short time that she might compose herself. Ah,, she was cunning—as merciless as cunning—as adorable as merciless.

"She told him to return in two hours to room 20—Gray's room—she *old him it was hers. On *P the morrow they would depart on their second honey- moon, lie obeyed her, believed her, he was su-P«. premely happy. When he had gone she sent, for Gray, whom she loved. He was furious thought of losing her—and her fortune, arranged the plot.

"Promptly in two hours Emmett rapped door of room 20. His wife admitted him—in the darkness took his hand and led him to his death. Gray was nervous and fired too soon. In the dark- ness and excitement the woman, fleeing to her own room, could not immediately find the door of exit, and she was seen by Hayes. Gray broke the catch of his door, cut himself, and p laced the knife near the dying man's hand. The face was intentionally blown away and burned by the second shot, to pre vent any possible recognition. Mrs. Emmett knew that her husband had no friends who were likely to trace him. It was a cunning plot, made safe and feasible by the victim himself, when he registered • under an assumed name.

"I am here to ask you in the name of Justice, J the sake of that betrayed and murdered husband, » to bring the guilty to trial. Will you do your 3 duty?1'.

"My dear sir," I replied, cautiously, "this is a most serious charge against two apparently innocent per sons, one of whom is an old and highly esteemed, resident of this city. How can you prove this accusation ?"

lie looked, searcliingly into my eyes, as though doubtful of the effect of his answer.

"I heard Gray and Mrs. Emmett discuss the affair last night—they meet again to-morrow night for the same purpose, and—I saw the murder committed I"

''Now, sir;" I exclaimed, reaching for pen and paper; "have the kindness to give me your name and address, and to state why you withheld this evidence when the officers were putting forth every effort to sift this matter."

"My name—I will give you that later. My absence. believe me, was unavoidable."

''This will not do, sir. I cannel assume the responsibility of having these people indicted until I am satisfied that your story can be proved beyond any reasonable doubt. If you are sincere you will answer my questions. Unless you do so, it becomes my duty to compel you to appear before the grand jury and at the trial."

My visitor arose.

"I had feared this," he said, plaintively. "My attendance as an ordinary witness, under cross-examination is impossible. To give you my name would defeat my purpose. I can only urge you, implore you, to indict these murderers. I pledge you my honor that I will appear at the trial immediately after you have made such an opening statement to the jury as I have indicated. Look at me, sir; believe me, and rely on me. I swear I shall not fail you."

He held out his hands imploringly; his face glowed with seeming earnestness and sincerity.

I stepped quickly to the door, locked it, and put the key in my pocket.

"Your request is preposterous," I said. "You must either go with me quietly and give bond for you appearance, or I shall telephone for an officer to take you into custody."

"You doubt my sincerity," he replied, sadly. "Since there is no other way, if you will meet me on the cliff, above the falls, at ten-thirty, to-morrow night, I will convince you, and will give you my name."

I stepped to the telephone and called - an officer When I turned again to face my visitor, he had disappeared. I had heard no movement, but the open window—yes—the man had certainly dropped from that second-story window!

I rushed down into the deserted street, and saw no one but the officer answering my call. With all available police force I searched the city without success. The fellow had out-witted us. .

The next night, at 10:30, I stood on the cliff above the falls. I had taken no one into my confidence, for I felt that my errand would be fruitless, perhaps ridiculous. I was strong, active and well armed, and was determined that should my mysterious visitor by any chance appear, he should not again escape me.

In front of me, and a hundred feet below, the lake stretched, broad and deep, illumined by the full moon until the smallest object was discernible upon its placid bosom. At my right, and almost within a stone's throw, arose another cliff, the two forming a canon through whose narrow pass the waters swept with terrific rapidity to plunge straight downward over the falls below in a wild leap of more than forty feet.

It was a secluded and a lonely spot. Save the roaring of the falls, the croaking of the frogs, and the 'dccasidrial" \ve'ir' (I call of some distant night-bird, there was no sound to break the solemn solitude. An uncanny feeling, an intuition of some impending horror, gradually crept over me, and I was about to resume my saddle and return to the city when I saw a boat emerge, noiseless as a shadow, from an arm of the lake a few rods above me, and slowly guide toward the opposite shore.

There were two forms in the boat, a man at the oars, and a woman facing him. They were talking earnestly, but in so low a tone, that I caught no word. Suddenly a third form appeared, that of a man, standing in the bow. I could not see whence it came, it may have arisen from the bottom of the boat; I only saw it- appear as suddenly as the flash of the biograph, and then I heard a shriek, the most piercing, pitiful, despairing shriek that ever burst from mortal woman's throat, and the woman in the boat pitched forward on her face. I -saw Gray turn his face so that the moon shone full upon it, saw him drop the oars and throw up his hands as though to shield himself, and then crouch, still looking upward into the face of—my missing witness!

Slowly the boat drifted down toward me, its speed gradually increasing as it neared the deadly canon. Once in the grasp of that mighty current there could be no escape. Mortal thews and sinews could avail nothing against the immeasurable forces of those black, rushing waters.

"For God's sake," I yelled, "take up the oars and row! You are drifting into the falls!"

No one moved. Faster and faster came the frail boat, dancing, now, upon the troubled waters that heralded the impending peril. They were directly beneath me, and never shall I forget the awful expres sion on Gray's face, as they swept by, nor the sar donic smile and demonical eyes of the form that stood over him.

A threshing, foam-capped wave seized upon the boat, lifted it high, and hurled it whirling into the roaring canon, out of my sight. Horrified, I ran swiftly to a point directly over the falls, cast myself on the ground, and peered over just as the boat, with its three occupants, s hot out from the brink, poised for a moment in mid-air, and then plunged downward and disappeared in the mad maelstrom below.

Hardly had I risen, tremblingly, to my feet, when I was confronted 'by—the missing witness. He smiled pleasantly, and said:

"I trust you are convinced. They deserved a more ignominious death, but as you refused----------"

"In the name of God," I cried, rushing at him, "who or what are you?"

As I reached to grapple with him he vanished— to reappear, ten feet distant.

"My name?—I have none now, not even in the memory of man. I was once—William D. Emmett!"

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. . . NOVEMBER . . .

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Feb. 1904 Number

STORIETTES

Connors, McFee, and "Cook."

1.

Fhom the EasF came Connors, burly, bellicose, und blunt; from the South, MeFo'e, slender, sensitive, and silent. They met at Chilkoot's great gray wall; formed a friendship at Dawson City; staked out adjoining claims on Bonanza Creek, that marvelous treasure-field, concealed by capricious fortune from a dozen skilled prospectors to be revealed to a Chilkat buck whose savage name is already forgotten.

There, with thousands of others, Con nors and McFee built fires upon the icy earth; shoveled and washed the few inches of thawed soil; kindled more fires in the slowly deepening excavations; shoveled and washed again, anxiously, fruitlessly, while their joint stock of costly provisions steadily decreased.

Then, on the same short arctic day, the precious metal glistened in each pan, and each tired toiler saw amid the gold en grains the vision of a woman far away. To Connors came the memory of a mazy dance, music and moonlight, and low-whispered words. McFee was once more on a white-winged yacht, sighing sweet nothings into a not unwilling ear. Then both turned fiercely to the task at hand.

Henceforth there was little time for sleeping, less for eating, less still for cooking, and when, one morning, a starv ing, pain-racked wanderer appeared, offering to cook for his " grub," the bar gain was quickly closed. Neither Con nors nor McFee asked the newcomer's name or history; time was too precious to waste in profitless inquiries. They dubbed him " Cook," and placed him in charge of the hoarded provisions, pleased that his help would enable them to return to Paradise a few days sooner. Neither confided to the other his hope and ambition—there are some thoughts too sweet, too sacred, too near the heart, to be laid bare.

Three days after Cook came Connors cursed him vehemently, furiously. Cook only stared at him with sunken, tired, pathetic eyes. After dinner, in the pit, McFee remonstrated with his partner.

"lie warned us. you know, that he'd never cooked," he said mildly. " I shouldn't be surprised if he'd leave."

"1 wish he would leave, if he can't do better than that! We've got no food to burn. Grub's grub up here," Con nors retorted, viciously jabbing his shovel into the earth.

Cook didn't leave, and one evening McFee, lingering at work after supper call, heard an oath and a blow. Looking up, he saw Cook slowly rising from the hard earth, while Connors, still cursing, removed a smoking kettle from the fire. After the dismal supper, while Cook with bruised and bleeding face was busy with pots and pans, McFee called his partner aside.

" Now, look here. Connors," he said insistently, " this won't do, you know. The man's ill. and you're almost twice his size. I didn't think it of you, Con nors, and, if I must say it, it's—it's cowardly! "

Connors glared down at him pugna ciously.

"Cowardly, eh? Say, if you wasn't such a runt---------- "

McFee put up a hand in protest.

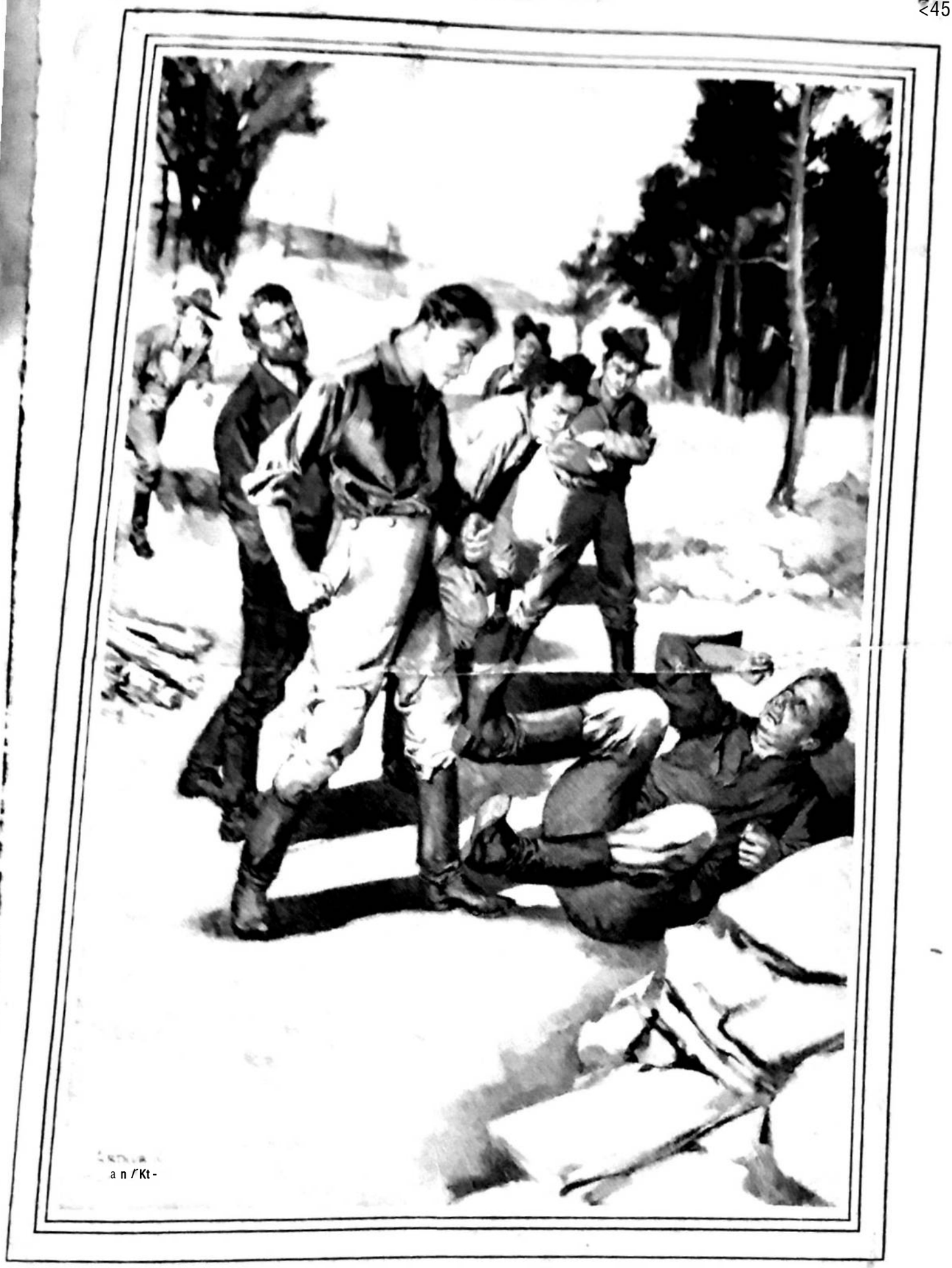
" There, there, let's not quarrel, Con nors. We've pulled together nicely so far. Just try to curb your temper, that's all. Cursing him is bad enough, but please don't strike him again. I can't-------- "

"All right: I'll not strike him again," Connors interrupted; and when McFee smiled gratefully he continued: "I'll kick him npxt time; that's what I'll do—just kick him off the diggings," and he strode down to the pit, growling to him self.

McFee returned to where Cook sat gazing thoughtfully into the fire, pass ing his left hand slowly up and down his right arm.

" I'm awfully sorry about this. Cook," he said softly. " but I can't help it, really. Maybe you'd better leave. It's likely to get worse, you know."

Cook looked up and grinned hideously. Not that he wasn't a handsome fellow, normally, but his swollen and discolored face made his attempt to look pleasant u ghastly failure.



"MOST FELLERS WOULD *BE KICKIN'* CONNORS' HEAD OFF, 'STEAD OF WAITIN' FER HIM TO GIT UP."

"It's *nil right," he* said slowly. "Im taiking on flesh and getting stronger faist. Maybe in Another month I 11 be re ady to—leave."

That was all McFee could get out of hi in. Cook was a man of few words.

Four weeks passed without an out- re'ak. Perhaps the rapidly increasing richness of the claims kept Connors in comparatively good humor; perhaps it was because Cook was more careful. He had rounded out wonderfully, had a bright eye and a good color, and moved about alertly. Then, one day. just be fore noon, Connors suddenly straight ened up, dropped his pick, and scrambled

out of the pit like n wild num, with Mc Fee clinging to him. The odor of scorch ing soup iignin pcrmeutcd the frosty air.

"lie's got n kicking coining this time," Connors roared, trying to shake McFee off.

'• Now, wait ti minute, Connors," pant ed McFee. " Let me reason with him. Cook. I really think the soup is burning, .von know, and---------- "

"Does smell like it, doesn't it?" re marked the offender complacently, fold ing his arms and sniffing vigorously.

" Curse you. 1 believe you meant to do it!" howled Connors, breaking McFee's grip.

Cook gave a quick, sweeping glance at the ground behind him, and unfolded his arms.

" Wj'll," he said in a tone that made McFee gasp, " if anybody asks you—I did!"

Connors hurled himself forward—up on Cook's fist. The big miner staggered and sank to one knee, while Cook waited, laughing. He arose unsteadily and ad vanced resolutely, but cautiously; his

• ' was at stake, and men were running liir^rr fun —..... claims.

Sparring and feinting clumsily, he saw what he thought was an opening, lie rushed in, and swung his right with a mighty sweep. Cook's head ducked under the catapult at the same instant that his left hand shot out; then he stepped back while Connors again strug gled to arise.

"Fair little game-cock, ain't he?" re marked one of the grinning circle of miners to McFee. " Most fellers would be kickin' Connors' head off, 'stead of waitin' fer him to git up."

McFee nodded. Amazement had tied his tongue.

Connors regained his feet, swayed for a moment, and then, red with rage, his huge arms guarding his reeling head, crept step by step, half crouching, war ily, watchfully, toward his antagonist. Let him but once get his foe within those ponderous arms, and all the fight, per haps the life, would be out of him in a moment.

Cook, circling about, stepping nimbly in and out, stumbled, apparently, and in an instant his adversary was over him with eager, outstretched hand. No two agreed, afterward, just how Cook did it. Some of them contended that lie was ac tually within the encircling arms when Connors went up in the air; but the opinion was unanimous that it was as neat an upper-cut as was ever landed on the point of a chin.

While some of the spectators labored with the unconscious man, Cook held out his hand to McFee.

"Good-by," he said. "You know now why 1 stayed. After he cursed me that, first time you couldn't have driven me awuy."

lie walked jauntily through the crowd that parted respectfully before him, and disappeared in the direction of Dawson City.

II.

Some months later, Connors and Mc Fee, with the independent air of men who had conquered fortune, followed the same course. Turning from the receiv ing teller's window in a Seattle bank, the big fellow took his companion's hand.

" Well, partner," he said, " I guess it's good-by at last. I'm off for Los An geles."

" That's odd," said McFee joyously. " There's where I'm going."

"Gondt" ovclaimed Connors. "Ac quainted there?"

" Only slightly. Passed my vacation there last summer. Good place to rest. And you ? "

"Have an uncle there. Visited him last year. Thought I'd stop off again, and—rest up."

Stepping from the train at Los An geles, McFee called out:

"Butler, Jack Butler! Don't you know me? What's the latest? How are--------"

Connors was shaking his shoulder and pointing to a scurrying automobile.

"Cook!" cried McFee.

"Cook?" said Butler. "I guess nit. That's Lamb, Sammy Lamb, the luckiest dog on the coast. First he wins the light-weight championship in the inter collegiate boxing contest—what are you laughing at, Mac?"

"Nothing!" roared McFee, beating Connors on the back. " Go on! What next ? "

" Well, then he quarrels with his mill ionaire father over his allowance, dis appears for almost a year, and when the old man is almost crazy, Sammy turns up, brown and hearty, from the Klon dike. The pater promptly kills the fatted calf, or rather the golden calf, and hands it over to Sammy, who promptly marries the prettiest girl on the coast. You know her, Mac—Rose Alton. Say, what

8TORI

is the matter with you fellows. any togf.
how!"
•n—I'm not quite well—change • ol'yag* '
climate, you know. f*-*'" McKee stammered. i wm r
staring hard at Connors. " See you paged
later, Jaek."
He pulleil Connors around the corner, naferi
stepped. and atari'll again into his sippi l
ghastly face. attn.
"You—you. toot" he asked lit she
Connors nodded and pulled out his ted in
watch. plan
" In three minutes u train goes east." il Wr
he murmured wearily. "1 think I'll go icrvei
with it. Good-by. McFee." the r
Frank N. Stratton. man.
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hpson

When ho mid nt last settled down, ho tried to turn his thoughts to the breeze-kissed lakes, denizened by voracious and Inquisitive bass, which he had reluctantly left behind; to the city of turmoil and smoke to which he was re luctantly returning; but they determinedly re fused to turn from—those eyes.

At each stop of the crowded excursion train he watched to see if she left the coach. When she and her mother arose, as the train pulled Into his own station, he hurried forward, elated, only to behold a handsome young fellow meet them and bear them triumphantly away, pay ing especial attention to her.

Thirty minutes later, Chelmsford slammed a grip upon his dressing-table, and scowled fierce ly at his reflection in the mirror.

"Just my luck!" he growled. "Missed the one opportunity of my life."

He slipped the catches of the grip and jerked it open savagely. Strange and surprising arti cles flew forth, articles quite foreign to the apartments of a batchelor. Marvelous and dain ty garments, decorated with delicate lace and bows of ribbons, rose up from the yawning re ceptacle to confound him. A bunch of tiny hair pins tinkled on the table. A downy powder-puff rolled forth, its faint incense rising to as-tonished nostrils.

"Shade of Saint Anthony, protect me!" Chelmsford gasped. "It's her grip! »»

A little package of letters nestlod at the bob tom, the uppermost envelope bearing an In scription:

"Miss Grace Olcott,
"2714 North Walnut Street,
"City."

Only five blocks away! One never knows Imw near lie may lie lo Parndlae

THE VALLEY WEEKLY
St. Louis, Mo. (
Jan. 13, 1904

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A ROMANCE

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6JFO GRIPuT

By Frank N. Stratton

----- SNKJI «3

IT MIGHT not have happened if Chelms ford hadn't noticed her vainly trying to overcome the obstinacy of the car win-dCW. And it might not have happened then, haf. Bhe not shot that appealing glance in Chdtan ford's direction. To that glance from tbo* eyes, Chelmsford—hitherto invincible—capit'datoil

He dropped his grip and tackled the window. ipder the spell of those eyes and that smile he < as conscious of a Samson-like strength; if necessary he could have torn the window from its casing. After he had conquered the win dow there was nothing to do but resume the grip, acknowledge the thanks, and continue his starch for a vacant seat. It was really too had that the other halt of her seat was occupied

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Gingerly, reverently, he tucked the escaped articles into the grip, snapped it shut, and rushed out.

At a neat little cottage In a shady street, she, herself, answered his ring. She uttered a little cry of mingled joy and dismay, and held out her hands—for the grip.

"Did you—open it?" she stammered.

"Naturally. They are precisely alike and—"

"Horrible!" she interrupted, and fled with her grip.

Soon her mother appeared, handed Chelmsford his property, with a few cool words of thanks, and laid her hand on the knob of the door. Evidently, she considered the affair as a closed incident. So Chelmsford lifted his hat politely, and returned to his rooms humbly.

An oblong of pasteboard on the floor caught his eye. He snatched it up, turned it over, saw a face, and—kissed it. Then, seeking solace, he searched his grip for something which should have been in it but which wasn't. Meditating for a moment, he smiled hopefully.

Next day arrived a little missive:

"Pardon me if I say that a gentleman would not have kept my photograph. Kindly return it at once—by mail.

"(Miss) Grace Olcott."

Promptly Chelmsford retaliated:

"Pardon me for wondering what use a lady can have for my pipe. I shall call for it—in person. Respectfully,

"John Chelmsford."

As he approached the cottage next morning she emerged, hatted and gloved, bearing a stenographer's note-book. She blazed at him for a moment with those eyes, then melted, and laughed merrily.

"What a muddle! That pipe must have fallen out when we opened your grip. We thought Brother Will had left it when he brought us _____ Horn tie- station I ll run in anil get il "

The pipe restored, Chelmsford observed, brazenly:

"Come on. We'll ride our car. You're going down town, aren't you?"

She was, of course, and to Chelmsford, and—*lyes,* to her—that car seemed to travel exasperatingly fast as they chatted together. Ah he handed her from the ear sho said, Huddenly:

"My photograph. You must return that—you know."

"Is It really necessary that I return It?"

"Why, certainly."

"By mail?" he asked, smiling.

She looked down, and shifted the note-book nervously.

"I think I shall bring it—this evening."

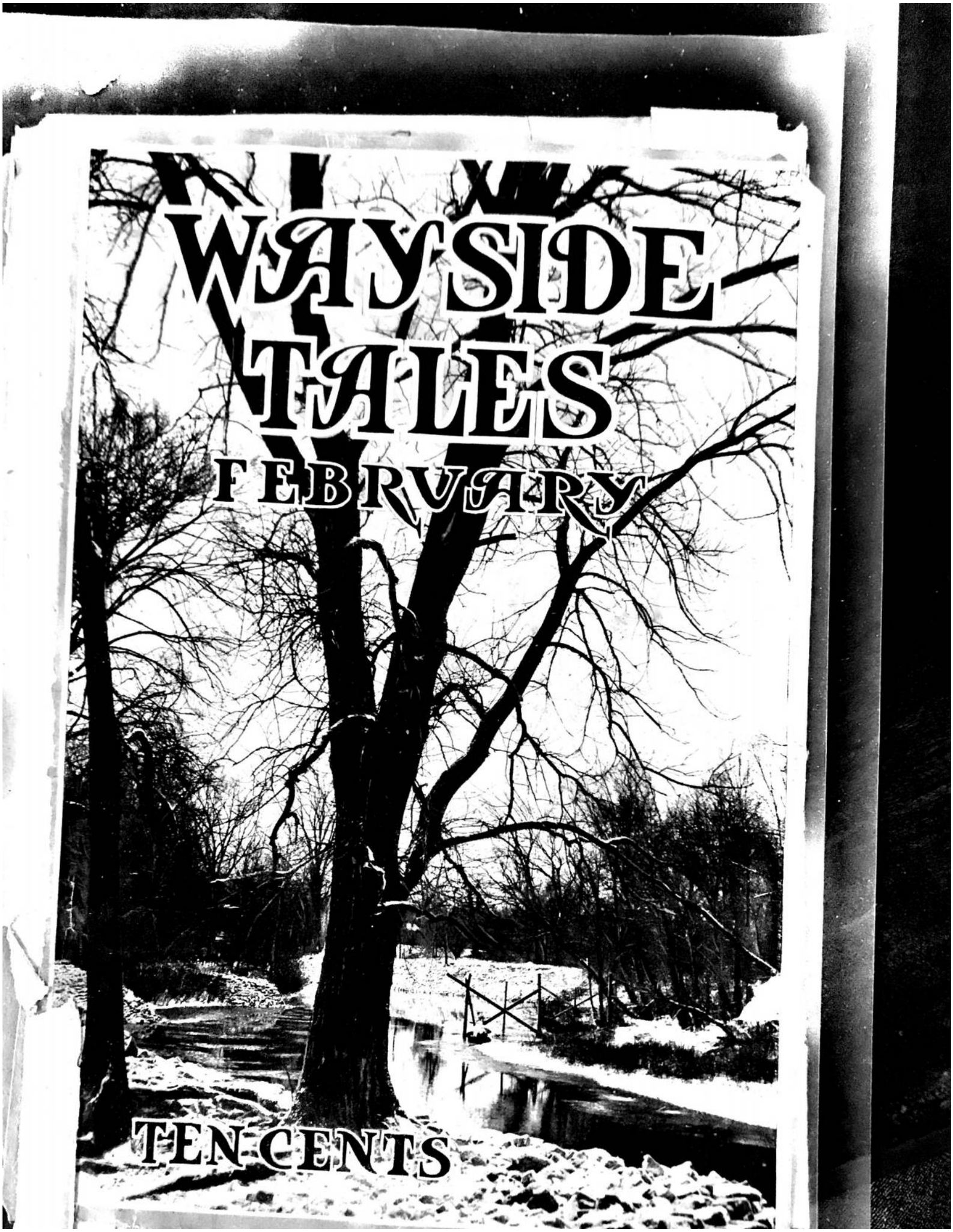
She looked up at him quickly, then down again.

"Quick! The car's going. May I?"

She glanced up, smiling "11 you think that safer than the mail," called he turned away.

—m ovuator. He be- is in 1859, and opposed the State's

112


WAYSIDE
TALES
FEBRUARY
TEN CENTS

HOW POTTERING PETE TOOK A LITTLE FLYER IN THE MATRI MONIAL MARKET

BY FRANK N. STRATTON.

U QARNEY," drawled Pottering Pete, as the two sat at the little table in Shorty's place, "I'm a-goin' to do a little speculatin'."

Old Barney McGlynn extracted the stumpy, black pipe from his grizzled whiskers, and stared incredulously at his employer.

"Speculatin' I Ain't ye satisfied with findin' th' richest gold mine in th'" country, without blowin' it in by specu latin'? It's a jolly ye're givin' me, Pete."

"Nary a jolly, Barney," Pete assert ed, gazing admiringly at the profile of a female head he was tracing in the small puddle on the table. "I'm a-go in' to take a little flyer. I've picked my market."

"Stocks?" asked Barney, anxiously.

Pete shook his head.

"Grain?"

"Onct more, Barney."

"Real 'state, then."

Pottering Pete glanced cautiously about him, then leaned over the table and whispered:

"Matrymonial!"

The stumpy, black pipe fell to the floor; Barney's gnarled hands dropped to his knees, and he glared across the table at his companion.

"A wife, is it?—a boss? Air ye plum crazy, Pete? I'd never a-thought it of ye!"

"What's th' matter with matry-mony, Barney? Where'd you an' me be ef it hadn't a-be'n fer matrymony?"

"So ye'd waste yer coin on a wife, when ye kin buy a scoldin' parrot fer five plunks, an' a fust-class, hidjeous night-mare fer th' price of three drinks! Matrymony! Hike over to th' mine, sonny, an' jump down th' shaft; it's quicker—an' less painful."

Pottering Pete gave a finishing stroke to the profile, straightened up and grinned.

" 'Cause you drew a blank in that lottery, Barney, ain't no sign I will."

"There ain't no prizes in that lot tery, Petey. They're all blanks; it's a skin game clean through."

Pete tilted his chair back, shoved his hands into his pockets, and smiled complacently.

"That may be your idee, Barney, but I've got a ticket that calls fer a prize, an' I'm a-goin' to cash it in.&

Barney groaned, picked up the stumpy pipe, and settled down in his chair with an air of patient resigna tion.

"Jim Sigsby's gal, I reckon," he grunted.

"That skinny critter? Not on yer life!"

"Betz Wilson?".

"No red-heads in this game, Bar ney."

"Well, who's th' female? Wh've ye selected fer gineral over-seer? Per-duce yer ticket."

From the pocket of his flannel shiri Pottering Pete fished a well-wor# newspaper clipping and passed it over the table.

"On th' q. t., Barney. Read that."

With much wagging of his gray head, and focusing of his solitary eyj

and stopped into a grimy and unoccupied back. The door at the further end being unceremoniously open Mr. Patton approached it noiselessly and peered into the adjoining room.

In a corner of the scantily furnished apartment a red-nosed individual, with a mop of muddy beard, rips for the night, dozed in a wobbly rocking-chair. Two women in shoddily garb conversed in guarded tones across a shabby table littered with letters, newspapers and writing material.

"Lully Hammond stung till we hear further from this Patton," the elder female was saying, while the other fastened with pursed pen. "Patton seems easy and promising. If he has half what he claims I've no objection to his wooing his blushing bride—until I'm ready to break away, with a fat slice of his property."

"In which case you'll not forget my customary percentage," added the younger lady, as she dipped her pen in the ink. Then she sprang up with a suppressed scream, for Pottering Pete stood in the room, hat in hand, bowing awkwardly.

"What t'ell!" sputtered the man in the chair, opening his bleary eyes and struggling to his feet. The elder woman silenced him with a gesture, and turned to the intruder.

"May I ask the nature of your business here?" she said, scanning the visitor suspiciously.

"Yes, ma'am, ye kin," Pete responded, languidly. "I'm th' privut sec'-tary of Mr. Peter Patton, an' I'm a-lookin' fer a young lady, objeck matrimony, by th' name of Tyce, Miss May N. Tyce. Mebbe I've rounded up th' wrong herd."

The woman smiled with a cordiality and expansiveness that accentuated the crow's-feet about her sharp eyes.

"*Please* be seated," she exclaimed. "This is indeed a most joyful surprise, Mr.——"

"McGlynn," Pete prompted, accepting the proffered chair, and carefully depositing the bottle on the bare floor, within easy reach. "S' ye've Miss Tyce, eh? I don't know th' photy-graph in a-your right."

"The photo was taken only one year ago, Mr. McGlynn," explained the beaming Miss Tyce, as the younger woman and the red-nosed individual hastily disappeared. "Since then the cares of business and sudden financial responsibilities have left their marks, but with some strong, manly companion to assume these burdens my youthful beauty will soon return."

"Sure it would," assented Pete, gallantly. "Enybody kin see it hain't gone far." Miss Tyce simpered and lowered her eyes.

"Mr. Patton got yer little billy due, all right," Pete continued, meditatively twirling his thumbs and surveying the smoke-stained ceiling. "He 'lowed it warn't safe to risk th' money in th' mail, so he sent me—him bein' consid'able under th' weather jest at present. Wants me to fetch ye right back."

Miss Tyce moved her chair a little nearer the private secretary, clasped her hands together, and gazed up at him rapturously.

"Such commendable prudence!" she exclaimed. "Ah, I see that I may safely trust him with my affairs. And such order! The dear man! I yearn to be with him,"—the eyes drooped again—"but it will require a few days' preparation, Mr. McGlynn, only a few days—after you give me the money. As I informed him, if it were a few weeks later—when the regular returns from my investments are due—I should not ask him for this favor."

"Can't wait no few days," said Pete, decisively. "Told me not to give ye th' stuff onless ye come to-day. He's a-needin' ye, bad."

Miss Tyce laughed pleasantly and glanced furtively toward the door through which her two companions had disappeared.

"Since Peter—I *must* call him

Barney spelled out the communication, interjecting Ins own observations.

"•Middle-aged lady (Humph I), educated, relined, affectionate (Rats!), wishes to correspond with wealthy gentleman* competent to manage her financial affairs. (Pete, this is orful) 1 Object, matrimony. (Sure) I Address, Box 257, Parson City.' "

With an expression of intense disgust, Barney tossed the clipping to its owner, and expectorated copiously.

"What d'ye think of it?" asked Pete.

"I don't kecr to say. I don't keer to bust up our old friendship."

Pottering Pete laughed softly, and extracted from a second pocket a photograph, and a perfumed letter written in a tine, feminine chirography.

"Squint at them, an' ye'll change yer mind," he said, confidently. Barney squinted, long and earnestly.

"Wuss an' wuss," he groaned. "She's too willin'. Ah, ten to one that picter ner th' hand-write ain't her'n. It's a salted mine, Petey; don't invest. Ye hain't sent her th' hundred dollars, have ye, Pete?"

" 'Lowed I'd send it to-morry."

Barney suddenly reached over the table, seized Pete by' the collar of his shirt, and emphasized his remarks by jabs and flourishes of the stumpy pipe.

"Lookv here, Peter Patton! This hain't my funeral, but I'm th' chief mourner. I've prospected with ye, an' starved with ye, an' fit Injuns an' alkali with ye, an' I'll be cussed ef I go back on ye now. Listen to me—an' quit pullin'.

"Pete, there ain't a man this side th' Great Divide that kin lay it over ye in findin' pay' dirt er guessin' on an assay, but when it comes to women ye'r crazier ner a locoed bronk. Ef ye send that hundred dollars ye'll never see th' woman, but th' whole fool bizness'll leak out, an' ye'll never hear th' last of it. I'm not a-going to set still an' see ye played fer a sucker an' a idjut."

"rm a-goin* to follcr this lead to th' end," Pete growled. "Ye kin gamble on that."

"Then jump th' kcers an' go to her. Ef ye don't find a gold brick at th' end of th' trail, bring her back with ye, an' kick old Barney McGlynn down th' shaft."

Pottering Pete folded his long arms and gazed reflectively out of the open door.

"There's only one man," he muttered, "that has license to stick his nose into my bizness without gittin' it broke off, an' that's old Barney McGlynn. He allers could see furder with his one eye than most fellers kin with two, an' I reckon I'll take his advice oncet more.

"I'm a-goin' to jump th' eight-forty to-morry mornin' an' tackle th' matrymonial market—fer a limited time only*. Ef it pans out I'll invest—heavy. Ef it don't a refined an' effeeshunate blonde, objeck matrymony, is a-goin' to lose th' chance of her life."

Mr. Patton's friends would have had some difficulty in recognizing him as he slouched lazily along a street in the suburbs of Parson City the following afternoon. A cheap suit of checked "hand-me-downs" flapped and fluttered on his bony frame, a narrow-brimmed derby perched jauntily amid his flowing locks, and he endured with commendatory fortitude the torture of a towering collar bound byr a gorgeous tie. He halted before , a shabby frame building and surveyed it dubiously.

"Reckon this must be th' cage of my turtle-dove," he soliloquized. "Her letter sez direct reply to number 2814."

The social circles in which Mr. Patton was a shining light considered it an unnecessary and superfluous ceremony to knock at a door before entering, and as to this point of etiquette Mr. Patton had not risen above his environments ; he gently opened the door

Peter—since Peter is so insistent I shall obey. I can lx* ready in a few hours—after a little shopping—the purchase of a modest bridal trousseau, So the dear boy is ill? Nothing serious, I trust, Mr. McGlynn."

Pete shifted uneasily in his chair, avoiding Miss Tyce's inquiring gaze. The lady wringing her hands and leaned fi6rwaK'.u;m"agony of alarm.

"Tell me," she implored. "1 have (he right to know all. What ails my pear boy?"

Pete looked wearily around the room, cleared his throat, leaned toward Miss Tyce and whispered.

"He's—he's got 'em agin 1"

"Got—what? 1 don't under-"

"'Leeryum trimmin's! Snakes!"

Miss Tyce recoiled, horrified.

"Delirium tre----------"

"Sh—sh—sb !" Pete hissed, warningly. " We're a-tryin' to keep it quiet. But I can't see a innocent, fine 'lookin' woman with prospects, like you, imposed on. Yes ma'am, snakes! Th' real article! Violent! 'Tween me an' you, Miss Tyce, 'tain't no wonder that his fust wife died so suddent, in th' night. He mighty nigh killed his three youngest children this time, before we could overpower 'im."

"Children!" gasped Miss Tyce. "And his wife died suddenly—in the night! Really, Mr. McGlynn, this is quite—sad!"

"Tumble, tumble!" Pete groaned, drawing the ends of the resplendent necktie across his eyes. "But I've done th' square thing by givin' ye th' tip."

Miss Tyce's sharp eyes assumed a stony glare. Her thin lips closed tightly, and she meditated, as though solving a perplexing problem. Then she arose and flung out her arms tragically.

"Shall I desert him in his affliction," she cried. "Never! My duty is clear! The money—the money, Mr. McGlynn! In two short hours I shall be ready to fly to his side."

Pottering Pete leisurely replaced the derby on bis head, rose to his feet, and drew forth a plethoric wallet.

"A hundred dollars is a big pile for Mr. Patton to let go of now," he observed, hesitatingly, "though lie don't know it. We dassent tell him' bout th' accident to th' mine; th' doc said it might make him wuss."

"Accident to the mine?" repeated Miss Tyce, eagerly eying the fat wallet.

"Yep. Struck an underground river yisterday. Mine flooded. Water runnin' out th' top of th' shaft. Pete ain't wuth a tinker's cuss."

Miss Tyce turned pale, and leaned against the rickety table. Then, with a cat-like movement, she snatched the wallet from Pete's hand.

"You scoundrel!" 'she shrieked. "How dare you threaten me. Help, Bill, help!'

The red-nosed man appeared with suspicious suddenness and rushed toward Mr. Patton, who promptly retreated—unpursued. Reaching the street, he continued his departure at an unwonted gait, the gaudy neck-tie fluttering behind him.

"Beats all," he muttered, "how a jay kin git took in. Reckon' I'd better hustle fer home, before sumbody swipes these here store clothes. Th' city ain't no place fer a sucker."

The waiting Barney seized him as he swung from the train, pulled him into the furthermost corner of Shorty's place, pushed him into a chair, and whispered solicitously:

"Well, what's th' verdick?"

"Barney," said Pete, solemnly, "she's a peach."

"Ye didn't give her th' money, did ye, Pete?"

"She got th' wallet an', contents—an' th' show was wuth it."

"An' ye're a-goin' to marry her! Pete Patton, ye're surely th' biggest dern——"

"Who sed ennything 'bout marry-

in ? Air. Patton growled, as lie produced a tightly wrapped roll of bills. "Ef ever ye open yer head 'bout thi. 1' 11 knock it off. What ye goin' trf have, Barney ? Name yer pize. We're 'bout to celebrate th' occashun of my monkyin' with th' matrymonial market—fer a limited time only—while an effecshunate blonde, objeck atrymony, is a-figgerin' how much "e trewso she kin buy with a wal- ' of corn shucks. "

(Ottawa, Iowa, Courier, January 21, 1904.'

The January number of Way side Tales contain s more pages of reading matter than any current magazine, and the list of famous names in its table of contents is calculated to convince the most skeptical of the place the magazine has won for itself in the magazine world. Although it is primar ily a short story monthly, a large number of timely and interesting articles are con tributed by leading thinkers of the day, and there is that much-alive-ness and up-to-date-ness about the periodi cal which savors of the breezy

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March

Tern C®nts

Everybody's Magazine

"The Word of J. Pierpont Morgan as an Asset"

"A Peep Behind the Purdah," Edmund Russell

The Tsar—A Study in Personality

Judge Taft and the Filipinos

Ten Strong Stories by John Oxenham, Seumas MacManus, Lillian Bell, Hartley Davis, and others

The Ridgway-Thayer Company
Union Square New York

Jimmy's Mother

By Frank N. Stratton

"T KAI N'T understand it. I jest kain't 1 understand it," wailed the old woman, rocking her bent body to and fro. "Fust they killed my old man, then they crippled Tommy fer life, an' now they're a-tryin'to send Jimmy to prison."

"Why did they kill your husband?" the old lawyer asked.

"Why? 'Diet's jest it — why? Didn't he hev ez much right to shoot ez they had? What I call did they hev to come a-breakin' up uv his bizness, an' him a-tryin' to make a livin' fer his fambly? Ef a man 'ud rather make whiskey than meal outen his own corn what bizness wuz it uv theirn? That's what I'd like to know."

"And Tommy—what did Tommy do?"

"Do? What did Tommy do? Nothin'. Thet's what. Nothin'. Th' hoss wuz hisn. Traded fer it, fair an' squar'. I heered Tommy say so. An' jest bekase he'd fergot th' man's name, they wuz ackchuly agoin' to take him to jail. What bizness wuz it uv theirn who he got th' hoss uv? An' they up an' crippled him while he wuz agoin' 's way peaceable. Wouldn't they 'a' run too? Reckon they'd 'a' hung him ef they'd 'a' ben smart enuff to ketch him."

"It is very unfortunate that your----------"

"Unfortunate. Thet's what. They've jest ben a-pickin' an' a-naggin' at me all my life. An' now they've gone an' 'rested Jimmy, th' only one I've got left, jest bekase he made a mistake an' got in th' wrong house.

"They say he wuzn't drunk, but Jimmy sez he wuz, an' I'll believe my boy, ev'ry time. Yes, siree, ev'ry time. D'ye s'pose ef he hadn't 'a' ben drunk he'd 'a' got so turned 'rond ez to think thet big house wuz our little shanty? No, sir. Don't tell me. They know a sight better, but they've jest got it in fer me an' mine; want me to starve, ez I will ef they take J immy away.

"He hain't guilty, an' you kin save him—you must save him. I hain't got no money now, but I'll work these old fingers to th' bone ef you'll only save my boy."

"My good woman," said the old lawyer, kindly, "I fear your boy's case is hopeless, but I'll try. Don't worry about the money. I 'll do my best, not for J immy, for I suspect he's not what he should be, but for his old mother. You see—I had a boy, once, long ago, and he—well, 1 know how you feel."

/

The careworn oh I face lighted up, the calloused lingers wiped away a t/ftr.

"God bless yon, sir, an' ma/ you never know sorrow. All, ef they V'iz all like you thcre'd be Some joy yit fo an old woman who hain't got long to li>e."

Jimmy, surly and d.nant, was guilty. The lawyers knew it, tin judge knew it, the jury knew it. None but the old mother enter tained a doubt. She, knowing him innocent, sat at his side', caressed him, pleaded silently but even more effectively than the old lawyer who so eloquently begged mercy for her sake.

Late in the night the amazed bailiff saw an old woman crouching, listening, watching, at the door of the jury room,

"They's only one agin Jimmy," she whis pered, as he hurriedly approached her.

••They's only one agin him now. . . an' he'll come over . . . he's got to come over."

"You can't stay here, ma'am," the bailiff said; "you must go home."

"Not without Jimmy. I jest kain't go home without Jimmy. It's too dark, an' lonesome, an' far. Let me stay back yan- der in th' dark corner. I'll not move."

"Back yander in th' dark corner" of the court-room she kneeled, and prayed in whis- pers, listening between the prayers.

At intervals, through the open transom, the voices of the jurors came distinctly to her anxious ears.

"It's of no use to argue with me, gentlemen. The boy is guilty. That's enough. We swore to bring in a verdict according to the law and the evidence, and I have some re gard for my oath, if you haven't."

"That's th' little skinny feller," muttered the old woman to herself. "O Lord, make him come over, please make him come over. *You* know Jimmy hain't guilty."

"We're not sayin' he's not guilty," came a deep, strong voice.

"That's not th' pint. Do you want to kill the old woman? That's about what you'll do if we dis agree, and th' boy goes back to jail for want of bond. Wouldn't that be a heap worse than to let him go free? Who'll suffer th' most, him or his old mother? As for our oaths, the judge said we are th' judges of th' law and th' evidence, and us eleven are makin' some law to suit ourselves."

"Tliet's him — thet's th' big man with th' whiskers," whispered Jimmy's mother. "May th' Lord reward him. He knows Jimmy hain't guilty."

'fhe dreary hours dragged on, and still one man opposed eleven. Finally, the pa tient watcher heard the weary jurors stretch themselves upon their rude cots, abandon ing the contest. She felt the oppressiveness of the ominous silence, she saw the lights go out, but she could not see the vision that came to "th' little, skinny man" during his fitful sleep: a vision of a face of long ago, fresh and fair as it bent over a child's little bed; then, tearful and more mature, bidding farewell to a youth in blue with musket and knapsack; then, wrinkled and seamed, with eyes forever closed. . . .

She did not see the dreamer rise-from-his cot and pace the floor while his companions slept, asking himself, "What if it were she? What if it were she?"

When morning came, the old woman, weak from the .night's vigil, tottered forward to greet Jimmy when he was brought in to learn his fate. When the clerk stood up to read the verdict, she too arose, trembling, her hand upon her boy's shoulder, her dimmed eyes fixed upon that fateful slip of paper.

"Not guilty."

The old woman sank.into her chair, laugh ing softly, the pale lips murmuring indistinct thanks, a light marvellously like the glow of girlhood illumining the wrinkled face.

The lawyer, a suspicious moisture in his eyes, took the bony, calloused hand as rev erently as any knight his ladylove's, and said, huskily:

"That's all. You may go—and take Jimmy."

"I knowed you could save him,'" laughed the old woman. "I knowed *ef* enny man could save him you could."

The old lawyer smiled.

"It wasn't me," he said. "It was his mother."

"Me? Why, I never sed a Word. I knowed all th' time he wuxn't guilty,"

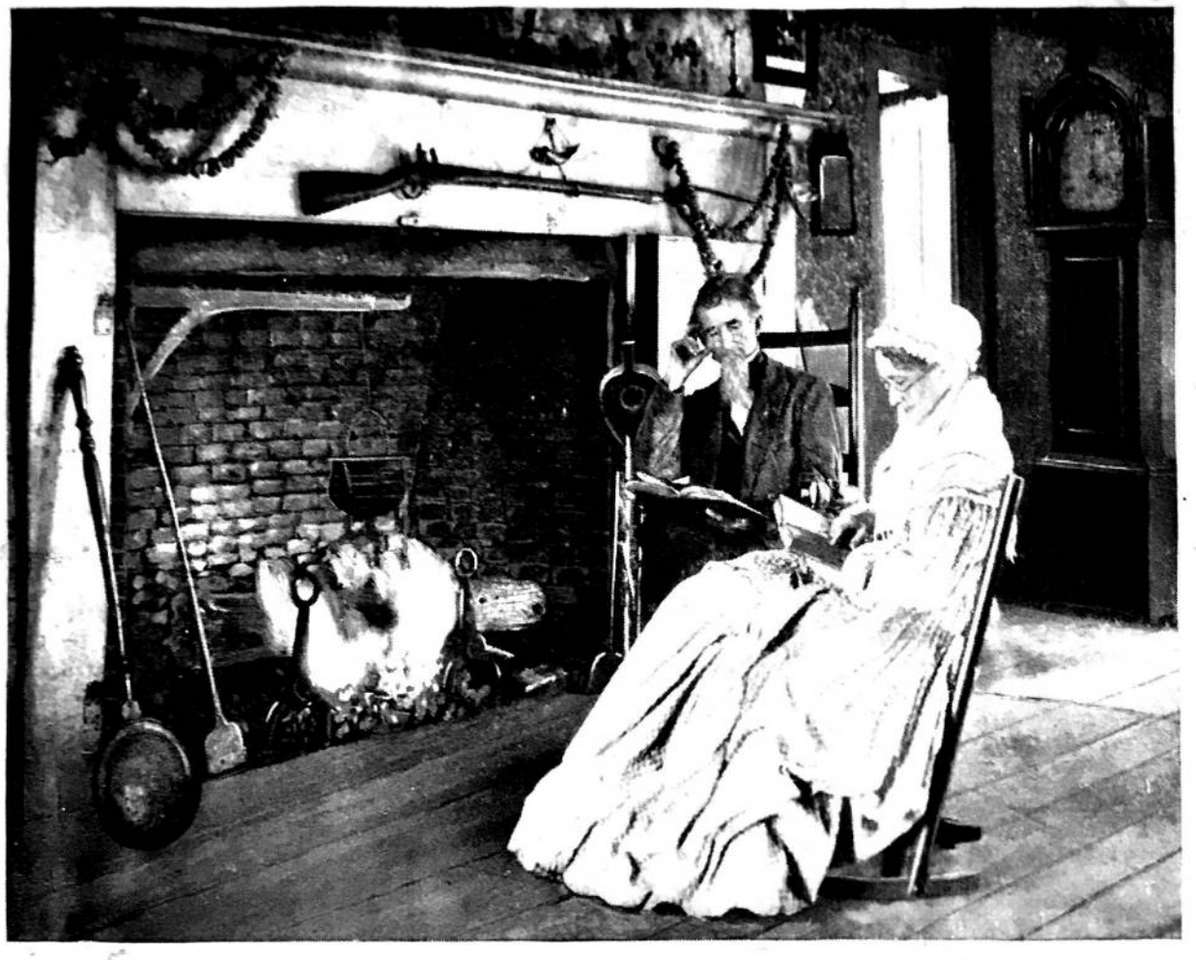
At the top of the atairs, Jimmy stooped ami drew the warm shawl closer about the shrunken shoulders, and put a brawny arm about the wasted form to aid the feeble feet

in

'k'uent. The "little, skinny man," watching Xiem, turned to his right-hand hi., neighbor aid d:

"I guess vc were right, after all, to letiity her go home—vith Jimmy."

Mach Rainbow /wy-



March, 1904

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The Woman in the Case.

TUB STORY OH RKDbY McGUIRK AND TUB SHKRIPF WHO WOULD NOT WAIT FOR HIM.

BY FRANK N. STRATTON.

I.

REDDY McGUIRE swung wearily from his saddle, leaned his gun against one of (he cottonwood trees, hung a brace of plump birds across its muzzle, and stretched his lean, lank length in the thick grass at the river's brink;

" They'll be along in an hour," he soliloquized, watching the gray mus tang graze.

lie rested his long chin in his tanned hands and beat a slow tattoo on the soft prairie soil with the toes of his cowhide boots as he meditated. The gleam in his gray eyes, the smile on his freckled face, indicated that lleddy was happy; the prolonged drooping of his eyelids, the steady gravitation of his red head toward the earth, indicated that he was also drowsy.

When the head finally rested on the folded arms, the two men who had been watching him from the cover of the thicket down the river rode swiftly forth, and Reddy, rudely awakened, struggled to his feet to tug impotently at the steel manacles on his wrists; to glare furiously into the smiling faces of his captors.

" Dan! " he cried. « Dan lldwe! "

" That's me, Reddy," responded the shorter man pleasantly. " And this is Ike Fenn, my dep'ty. Mebbe you re member Ike, too. Sorry to spile your nap, Reddy, but we're in a desprit hurry to get away before your friends come up. They might put up a kick, and there's only two of us."

Reddy's head had dropped on his breast; the freckled face had grown pale; the thin lips were tightly set.

"I suppose it's for the—scooting," he said, not looking up.

" Sure. Been follcrin' the wagons for a week waitin' for you to straggle."

" But he pulled first," the captive protested firmly. " Dan, 1 had to shoot! "

" flow'll you prove it ? " asked the sheriff. "I don't say that it wasn't a good riddance, but he was a big duck in the puddle, and besides---------"

The sheriff winked complacently at Ike, who grinned knowingly.

" There's the reward," said Reddy cynically, finishing the sentence.

" That's our business; eh, Ike ? Ain't holdin' down this office for our health, are we? If a man s'posed to be dead takes chances on cornin' through the State, and we, bein' out after smaller game, accident'ly catch a glimpse---------- "

" Look here, Dan; you know my rec ord was good till this was forced on me. Why can't von---------- "

" Come, Reddy; climb that mustang; there's a long ride before us. If you're reasonable you can ride in the saddle like a man; if not, you'll ride across it, like a log. Take your choice."

With a look of despair on his face, the captive slowly clambered into his saddle. For one moment he gazed east ward, where a long train of white-topped wagons, dimly seen through the gathering twilight, writhed sinuously across the rolling plain like some gigan tic serpent of the sea; then he struck the gray mustang with his heels and galloped madly down the river. Almost a mile the three rode silently, side by side, concealed within the fringe of trees.

At intervals came the faint squeak ing of the distant train, the lugubrious howls of prowling coyotes, the melan choly hooting of owls. Suddenly the captive raised his head and moistened his dry lips with his tongue.

" Dan," he said sullenly, " I want to see vour papers. How do I know this is regular? "

•Dofl't worry 'bout the papers, oiilh, " I lie sheriff chuckled, tupping Inn breiiM pocket. " I've got 'em nil right. Hud 'cm for three years. You'll -re *<in—uhut'u thi' matter. Ike?"

The deputy, with u sharp pull, had thrown his horse upon his haunches. With one long arm lie was pointing to the hill far ahead that ran to the river's edge, intersecting the fringe of trees.

I'pon the summit of the hill, in bold relief against the evening sky, a plumed and half-nude horseman rode in rapid circles, waving a fluttering blanket high above his head. The sheriff caught the bridle of Reddy's mustang and wheeled toward the river at their right. Then he halted quickly, with an oath. From the crest of the bluff across the stream great rings and curling wreaths of drifting smoke, the wireless telegraphy of a savage foe, rose lazily in the still and sultry air.

" We're up against it, Ike," the sher iff growled. "The red buzzards have scented that train- Jhey'H be swarmin' through these trees mIWe minutes! "

The deputy shifted his revolver fur ther to the front and peered about him anxiously.

"Hassen't leave th' trees; they'd spot us in the moonlight," he muttered. " Jest one thing to do—sneak back to the train. Mebbe it's strong enuff to fight 'em off."

" We'd lose Reddy," the sheriff whis pered. " His friends would never let us take him."

" Mebbe we kin dodge past the wag- ions an' git away on t'other----------"

The sheriff lifted his hand warningly. Fp the river, from a point they had just passed, arose the sounds of splash ing water, the snort of a pony, and low, •guttural words of command.

"They'll cut us off!" exclaimed the sheriff, whirling his horse up-stream. " Come, quick! "

Reddy, clutching his bridle-reins with manacled hands, held the mus tang back. In the shadows his eyes blazed like those of a wounded grizzly.

"To the wagons?" lie hissed. " Never—with these things on my wrists. She ddn't know; she mustn't know. It wonld\kill her—now. Take these cursed tilings off first; before I'll go buck this way, I'll give the alarm, and we'll all die right here! "

A gleam of cunning triumph shone in the sheriff's eves, lie leaned toward Heddy, unlocked the handcuffs and dropped them into his pocket.

" Have to risk it, Ike," he whis pered, " but I reckon we hold trumps; there's a woman in the case."

II.

Back up the river the three trotted stealthily, with every sense alert.

" Hope your friends has seen them signals, too, and rounded up the wag ons," the sheriff muttered to Reddy. " If they're caught hands down, the jig's up! "

Reddy did not reply. He was leaning over the mustang's neck, peering ea gerly in the direction of the train.

A perilous quarter of a mile was safely passed.

" Looks like we'd slip through," said the deputy.

As he spoke, from the river-nank ar their left came a flutter of feathers, a rising cluster of hideous faces, yells of wild surprise, and a mob of human vipers crashed like a hurricane toward the three.

"Straight for the wagons!" the sheriff yelled. " The devil gets the hindmost now! "

Out from the trees, over the rolling prairie, burst the desperate chase. For a time the three raced neck and neck, then the gray mustang forged ahead. A scattering volley of shots rang out, and Reddy, glancing backward, saw the deputy, far in the rear, throw up his hands and fall from his saddle; saw the whole mad mob sweep over him, save two who leaped eagerly from their ponies to complete their work.

Shuddering, he galloped to the sum mit of the next swell and gave a low cry of joy. At the foot of the slope, far below him. their white tops gleaming in the moonlight, lay the wagons, drawn in one great, protecting circle, ready for the attack.

Hall way down the slope another volley rattled in his ears, and lie turned his head to see the sheriff's horse, fifty

"THAT'S ME, REDDY. AND THIS IS IKE FENN, MY DEPUTY."

yards back, pitch headlong, roll over, and lie still; to see the rider struggle to his feet, cast one glance toward the train, then grimly turn, his weapons in his hands, to die amid the foe.

Then did young Reddy McGuire, his wrists still smarting from the hand cuffs. wheel the gray mustang right about and charge straight up the slope. High above the exultant yells his boy ish voice rang clear and shrill:

"Ready, Dan! I'm coming to pick you up!"

Quickly the sheriff turned and crouched to grasp the outstretched hand, to make the upward leap; then, with the double burden, the gallant mustang wheeled again and dashed panting down the slope, a scanty bow shot from the furious foe.

A desperate hundred yards they raced, and then the great, white-backed

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tnnintuln down in the valley bristled wi li fnining steel mid atung with Hush ing fire. Before it, snort lug ponies galloped riderless. The red mol) wa vered, wheeled, mid whirled away, be yond range of the avenging rifles, and hearty Anglo-Saxon cheers went up as the gray mustang galloped safely home.

A fail, gaunt, hook-nosed man, with eyes like beads of burnished steel, grasped Heddy's hand.

" .Highly close call, stranger," he said to the sheriff, scanning him search- ingly as Heddy hurried to one of the wagons. The sheriff glanced, scowling, toward the spot where his deputy had gone down.

" Lend me a rifle." he growled sav agely. " I'll get even before this fight's over! "

The hook-nosed man grinned and waved his hand to the north.

" Guess it's over now—fer us," he said.

Following the gesture with his eyes, the sheriff saw, far northward, a shim mering line of ldue and brass moving rapidly toward the bluffs across the river, up whose sides scurried squads of retreating marauders.

" Cavalry." observed the hook-nosed one. " Beckon they seen the signals, too. Them wards of the guv'ment'll have to jump lively er there'll be some more good Injuns afore mornin'."

HI.

An hour later, when the camp-fires were blazing cheerily, Reddy, coming from his wagon, was confronted by the sheriff leading Ike's horse.

" The coast's clear," said the sheriff in a low tone, watching the young fel low furtively. -" We'd better be goin'."

"Goin'? I thought—maybe—you'd given that up."

The sheriff shook his head.

"You've got another think cornin', Reddy."

Reddy's face turned pallid; the cords of his neck swelled and writhed; he drew back, and his hand dropped to the revolver at his belt. The sheriff drew a paper from his pocket and took a step toward the wagon from which Reddy had just emerged.

" Want to hear what this says? I'll read it—aloud."

" Stop! " cried Heddy, choking. " I'll go. I'll lake the chances of a trial. Give me a little time—to say good-by."

"Ten minutes is long enough to fix up some kind of a story. I'll wait here," replied the sheriff gruffly.

lie watched his retreating victim cu riously; then he walked stealthily around the outer side of the corral and peeped through the flaps of Reddy's wagon. At the further end, on a rude pallet, lay a young girl whose dark, dis heveled hair spread like a cloud about her pale, wan face. One wasted arm was around Reddy's neck, and the great, deep-sunken eyes stared ques- tioningly up at him as he bent over her, whispering, clasping her hand.

Suddenly the coarse blanket that covered the girl was stirred and lifted at her side by something unseen. A muffled wail rose from beneath, and the girl, with a smile of pride and jov, turned feebly toward the sound.

The sheriff walked slowly away.

"Well, I'll be cussed!" he growled. " A kid—a wife and a kid! And him al ways too bashful to look a gal in th' face! What d'ye think of that?"

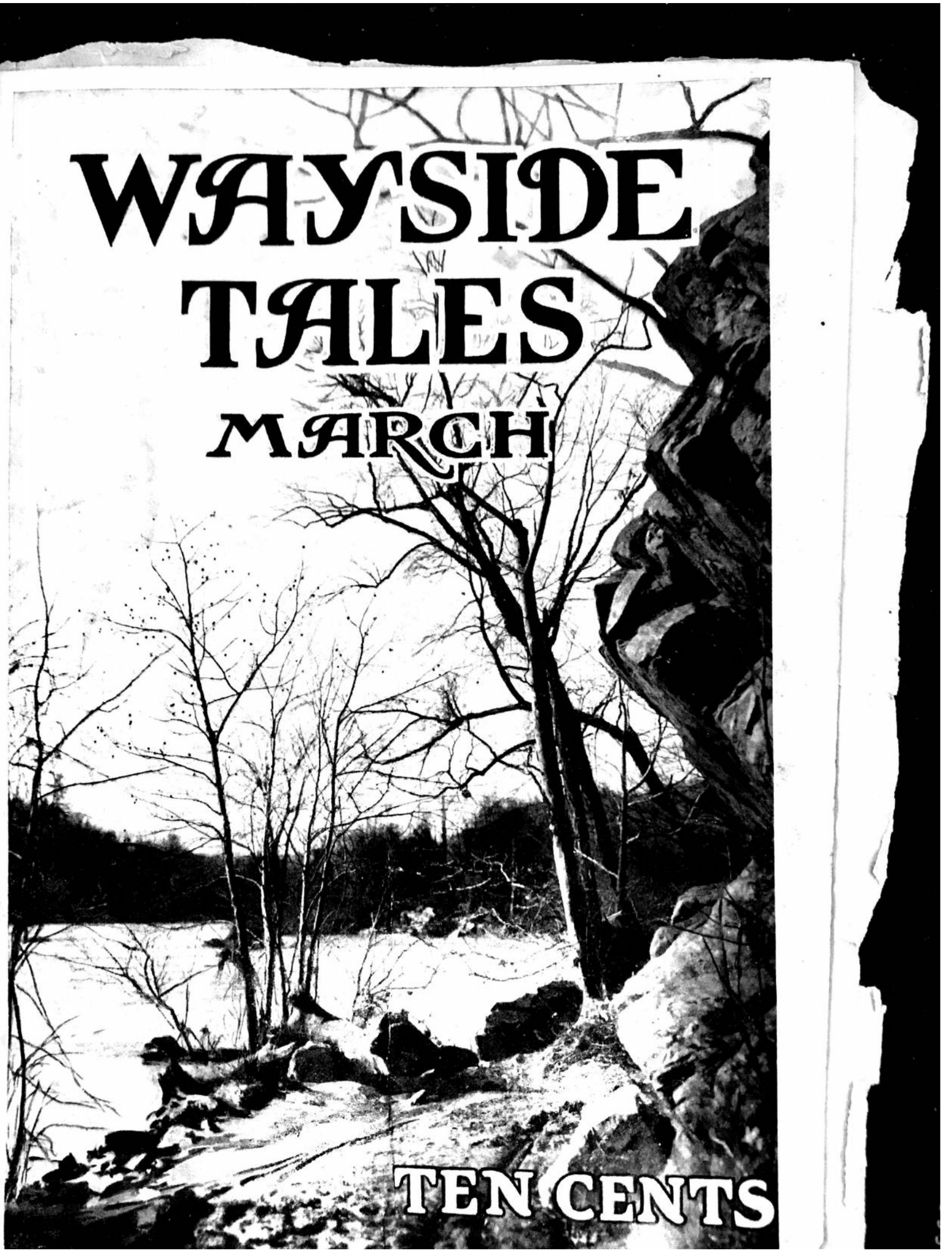
He halted at a deserted fire, drew a paper from his pocket, and gazed at it abstractedly.

" A kid," he repeated softly. " A blamed little red-faced, helpless kid— with its mammy fightin' death, and its daddy fightin' this! "

He stirred the smoldering fire with his boot, dropped the paper on the coals, and watched it as it blazed and turned to a little heap of ashes that a puff of wind lifted and whirled away far over the prairie. Then he strode to his horse, swung into the saddle, and trotted up the slope. At its summit he turned and looked down into the camp. In the shadow of the wagons he saw the dim form of Reddy hastily saddling the gray mustang, and he laughed aloud.

" Sorry to disappoint you, sonny, but you're too slow—I can't wait," he chuckled. " Good-bv, Reddv, and good luck to you—and the kid—and the lit tle woman!"

He leaned forward, struck his horse With the spurs, and galloped off.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TALES
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TEN CENTS

HOW POTTERING PETE WENT INTO THE PROMOTING BUSINESS

BY FRANK N. STRATTON

«A">ENT in th' office to see you, VJ Mr. Patton."

Pottering Pete, dozing in the shadow of the great building that inclosed the "Lucky Tumble" stamp-mills, slowly opened his eyes and gazed up at his red-shirted clerk.

"What's he want ?" he drawled, drowsily.

The red-shirted clerk shook his ' head.

"Won't tell; has to see you."

"Enny knots on 'im—like a book concealed 'bout his person?"

"Nary knot; smooth as an old sad dle."

"Mebbe he's another of them sub scription-paper devils, Jimmy," sug gested Pete, anxiously.

The swift upward movement of Jim my's eyebrows expressed utter ignor ance.

"Got me guessin'; it's a new speci men ; looks like it might be bizness."

Pottering Pete yawned protestingly, struggled to his feet, and followed the red-shirted clerk.

A small young man, smooth of face and long of nose, whose sharp, half closed eyes glittered behind gold mounted glasses, rose alertly from a chair in the outer office and held out a gloved hand.

"Mr. Patton?" he inquired, briskly. "Ah, yes! May I see you privately, Mr. Patton? Important business—highly important, I assure you."

Pottering Pete's gaze began at the patent-leather shoes, roamed inquisi-lively upward along the carefully creased trousers, gorgeous vest and short, stylish coat, paused for an indig nant instant on the immaculate shirt front and lofty collar, and halted con temptuously on the skin-white line that defined the exact center of the closely plastered hair.

"Who air ye, ennyway?" he grunt ed.

"My name, Mr. Patton, is Schott—Otto B. Schott---------- "

"An' that's no lie," Pete muttered, fumbling absently at his belt. " 'Taint too late yet.'

"Too late—did I understand you to say, Mr. Patton? Not at all, sir. This way, please. My business is confiden tial, strictly confidential."

Mr. Schott airily pushed open the door leading into Mr. Patton's private office, dropped into the easiest chair, and looked about him complacently. With an expression of extreme amaze ment, Pete followed him, closed the door, and seated himself at his desk.

"Ef you've got as much bizness as nerve you're It," he growled. "Say yer piece, an' say it quick."

Mr. Schott displaced a pile of pri vate papers on the desk to make room for his hat, and leaned forward con fidently:

"Now, Mr. Patton, I'm a promoter," he announced in a cautious tone.

"What's a promoter ?"

Mr. Schott smiled—a superior, pity ing smile.

"A promoter, my dear sir, is one

who creates and fosters financial un dertakings ; builds up substantial busi ness from airy nothing; groups and consolidates small and struggling ven tures into gigantic and profitable monopolies."

*'I see," observed Mr. Patton. "Melts down a few honest little men an' casts 'em into one big thief. Well, ye'd better begin by promotin' yourself out of this camp before th' boys ketches sight of them clothes. That's all there is to promote around here."

Mr. Schott grinned nervously and laid his hand on Mr. Patton's knee.

"You're wrong, sir; quite wrong. Allow me to demonstrate. You own a controlling interest in the 'Lucky Tumble' mine--------"

"An' I 'low to keep on ownin' it. Ye can't-------"

"Wait a moment 1 And you doubt less own a few worthless claims ad jacent to the mine."

"Reckon I do."

"For instance—that one?"

Mr. Schott pointed through the open window to a heap of sun-baked earth, surmounted by a meditative jack-rab bit, that projected from the rocky face of a distant slope.

"Yes," assented Mr. Patton. "Give old Bill Disbro a hundred fur that one, 'cause he was hard up. I'd ruther have th' rabbit."

"Wrong again, Mr. Patton. That abandoned claim — any abandoned claim in this vicinity—is worth to you at least ten thousand dollars 1"

Here, Mr. Schott struck the desk violently, and leaned back to note the effect of his startling assertion. Mr. Patton didn't seem to enthuse—his hand again wandered mechanically to his belt.

"Come out of th' bushes an' talk English," he said, gruffly. "What d'ye want ?"

Mr. Schott glanced about him warily, aga'in bent forward, and whis pered impressively:

"Your name I Ten thousand dollars —twelve thousand dollars—for your name 1"

Pottering Pete started to rise, and Mr. Schott threw up a deprecating hand.

"Now, don't be hasty, Mr. Patton. I'll make it plain. Listen. There are two other gentlemen in this—Mr. Squivers and Mr. Peek. Mr. Squivers puts up what little money we shall need for advertising purposes—the only outlay. I manage the scheme. You furnish nothing, absolutely noth ing, but the worthless claim—we'll call it the Jack-rabbit claim. We'll dig a couple more holes and call them 'Star of Hope,' and 'Dead Cinch,' 'all located on the 'Lucky Tumble' lode.' See ?"

Mr. Patton's face had taken on an expression of deep interest.

"I begin to ketch on," he murmured. "What next?"

. "Then we incorporate The Aurora Mining and Development Company, authorized capital One Million Dol lars, the Honorable Peter Patton, President; Mr. Hernando Squivers, Secretary and Treasurer; Mr. Otto B. Schott, General Manager—do you fol low, Mr. Patton?"

"Like a burro behind th' bell-mare," declared Pete. "You want my name —as a successful an' wealthy mine owner—to inspire confidence, so's we kin unload---------"

"Exactly! So that we can sell the stock," interrupted Mr. Schott, glee fully noting Pete's increasing interest. "We offer the public half the stock—and the public falls over itself to buy."

"Th' public don't do nothin' of th' kind; not fer stock like that,' declared Mr. Patton, energetically.

"Aren't they doing it all the time?"

"Mebbe they air—fer stock that's got good prospects behind it—claims that'll bear investigation. Bizness men don't shoot their cash into a hole like that one without investigation'."

Mr. Schott laughed softly, tilted his

chair back, and elevated the patent leathers to the desk.

"Guess you never heard of. United States Steel, Mr. Patton. Besides, we don't offer stock to business men. We sell only to those who've just enough money to invest and not enough to investigate ; widows, clerks, laborers—that's our class — safe, soft and sure."

"How's widders, an' clerks an' laborers goin' to buy high-priced minin' stock ?"

"High priced? Not at all. Ten cents on the dollar, Mr. Patton. Fifty shares, $5. Fifty shares in the Aurora Mining and Development Company—elegant steel engraved certificates—for only five dollars! 'Honorable Peter Patton, President'—Oh just wait till you see our prospectus, Mr. Patton ! That's my strong line—prospectuses—prospectuses that are poems of persuasion and plausibility. 'Fifty shares the minimum, at above price. Positively not more than two hundred shares to any one person. Price will be advanced, January 1, to fifteen cents. Additional advances as the ore increases in value.' Don't worry about the public not buying, Mr. Patton. Printers' ink, mixed with brains, will sell anything these prosperous times.'

"There'll have to be a show-down sometime," observed Mr. Patton, dubiously. "After th' stock's sold people'll be wantin' to hear about dividends."

"And they'll hear about bonds,' replied Mr. Schott, with a grim chuckle.

"Bonds?"

"Certainly. Early in the game the Board of Directors—that's us—find it necessary to issue bonds, to mortgage the plant. Bonds fall due—no money—foreclosures—bond-holder takes the property—we're out, slick as a whistle."

"Court might want to know what went with them proceeds. State's attorneys an' jedges git derned meddle some sometimes."

"That's where your pay-roll and political influence comes in, Mr. Patton—controls the appointment and election of those fellows. And we give them each a block of the stock—make them appear particeps criminis in case of inquiry. -Besides, there's padded pay-rolls, expensive machinery that breaks down, salaries, cave-ins—all kinds of bad luck. We keep the books! Understand ?"

Mr. Patton nodded, and thoughtfully contemplated the meditative jack rabbit in the distance.

"And that other feller—Peek?" he inquired. "Where does he come in?"

"Peek ? Early in the game he's the expert; at the wind-up he's the bond holder."

"Expert what?"

"Mining expert. 'Sent by prospective investors to investigate and report.' His report goes out with the second batch of circulars—and it's a hummer."

Pottering Pete bit a generous hunk from a plug of "Miner's Twist" and offered the remainder to Mr. Schott, who shrank back with a shuddering gesture of declination.

"Enny of you fellers practical miners?" Pete asked. "Know good ore when you see it?"

"No, indeed, sir. We're promoters, not miners."

Mr. Patton again relapsed into hesitative cogitation.

"Nothing criminal about the scheme, Mr. Patton,' ventured Mr. Schott, watching Pete anxiously. "We make no positive statements. 'There can be no doubt of our being on the Lucky Tumble lode.' 'Developments will undoubtedly prove, within the next sixty days, the unsurpassed richness' and sb on. We deal only in conjectures and promises. No direct misrepresentation of facts. Everything legitimate. Come, what do you say, Mr. Patton?"

"You think th' widders an' th' other suckers 'll come into th' net?"

"Shoals and mobs of them I"

"An' I don't put up no cash?"

"Not a cent. You can't lose. Noth ing to lose."

Mr. Patton leaned back and masti cated the "Miner's Twist" vigorously and blithely.

"Looks like a sure winner," he an nounced at length.

Mr. Schott sprang to his feet.

"Shall we say Tuesday, then, Mr. Patton, to close up the deal ?" he asked, eagerly.

"Ye kin say Chewsday, er Thursd'y, er Saturd'y. Don't keer what ye say."

"Tuesday, then. I'll be here with the articles of incorporation and the deed to the claim, ready for your sig nature. If you should wish to com municate with me in the meantime, my address is Coronado City. Good-day, Mr. Patton. Tuesday, mind—Tues day morning."

Through the window Pottering Pete watched the retreating figure of Mr. Otto B. Schott as it tripped down the trail on its way to the station. He closed one eye, calculated the distance to a nodding sun-flower, and projected a stream of "Miner's Twist" into its exact center. Then he stepped to the door, thrust his head into the outer of fice, and yelled, in a voice that jarred the pen from Jimmy's fingers:

"Git Barney McGlynn, an' come in here—an' be quick about it."

That nig'it old Barney McGlynn bought a round-trip ticket to Coronado City. Monday night Pottering Pete and the red-shirted clerk, from their place of concealment, saw three men with a dark lantern steal warily up the slope to th' Jack-rabbit Claim. One of the three bore a startling resem blance, in the uncertain light, to Mr. Otto B. Schott; another was portly, dignified and white-whiskered; the voice of the third could have fitted no one but old Barney McGlynn.

The three seemed intensely interest ed in numerous chunks of ore which, with much labor, they extracted from the Jack-rabbit Claim. Finally, after much low-voiced and animated dis cussion, the three, carrying specimens of said chunks, disappeared toward the heaps of ore near the Lucky Tumble mine.

Tuesday morning Mr. Schott pre sented to Mr. Patton a portly gentle man with benevolent white whiskers, who beamed genially upon Pete as he vigorously shook his hand.

"Mr. Patton, Mr. Squivers," said Mr. Schott, pleasantly. "We're punc tual, you see."

"Glad to see ye," declared Mr. Pat ton. "Perduce them papers an' we'll sign up. Time's money—widder's money—in this bizness."

Mr. Schott coughed uneasily, and edged nearer the door, while Mr. Squivers caressed the benevolent whis kers and beamed again.

"Fact is, Mr. Patton," he said, gravely, "we've decided to abandon the affair. Too risky."

Mr. Patton's face fell. He glared at his visitors.

"Put up job," he growled. "You fellers want to beat me out of makin' somethin' out of that wuthless claim."

"Tut, tut! Mr. Patton," exclaimed Mr. Squivers.

"Rather than have you harbor any such unjust suspicion we'll take the claim off your hands—at a reasonable figure, bearing in mind that it's abso lutely worthless."

"But I lose my sheer of them stock proceeds."

"Very sorry, very sorry, indeed, sir; but business is business, you know, Mr. Patton. We've something better in sight. If you care to put a price on the claim—merely enough to compensate you for loss of time—we'll do what's honorable. Say a hundred dol lars--------"

"Too much, entirely too much!" ex postulated Mr. Schott.

"True, true," Mr. Squivers rejoined, with much dignity. "But my word is out now. I said a hundred, and a hundred it is.,"

Pottering Pete was laboriously figuring upon an envelope, comment ing audibly to himself.

"Five hunderd thousan' sheers at ten cents is fifty thousan' dollars. One-fourth is twelve thousan' five hunderd. Knock off five fer my sheer of th' ex pense. Split th' balance fer spot cash. Gentlemen," he drawled, looking up, "th' claim's your'n fer six thousan' dol lars, spot cash."

"Preposterous!" ejaculated Mr> Schott.

"Superlatively preposterous!" Mr. Squivers exclaimed. "We wish you good-day, sir."

At the door the two paused, and Mr. Squivers turned around.

"Mr. Patton," he said in a solici-tious tone, "with a man of your promi nence and influence we can't afford to be unfair. If you'd say five hundred we might----------"

"My word is out," Pete broke in. "I said six thousan', an' six thousan' it is."

"But--------- "

"Take it er leave it. Ain't anxious to sell, nohow, 'fore I examine it. It's purty close to th' Lucky Tumble, an' ol' Bill Disbro was too boozy them days to tell pay-ore from saw-dust. Guess I'll go right now an' have a squint at it, jest fer luck."

Mr. Squivers' florid face turned pal lid as Pottering Pete arose. Mr. Schott nudged him in the rotund stom ach, and he hastily produced a roll of bills.

"I shan't squabble with you _. _.r a few paltry hundreds," he declared, pompously. "There's your money, Mr. Patton. And here's the deed, l ready for your signature, if you please."

"But I don't think th' claim's wuth a cuss."

"Undoubtedly worthless," responded Mr. Squivers, with an aggrieved air. "But the claim's not the point, Mr. Patton—it's my sense of business honor."

"Then jest write it in th' deed," Pete suggested.

" 'Understood an' agreed said claim not wuth a cuss,' an' I'll sign."

The pen in Mr. Schott's nervous fingers worked with the energy of a gas-meter.

"There it is, Mr. Patton, just as you desire. Now, if you'll sign, we'll end this unfortunate affair."

With much deliberate effort Potter ing Pete affixed a scrawling signature, and the red-shirted clerk took his ac knowledgment. Mr. Squivers pounced upon the document, laughed hysterical ly, and departed, followed closely by Mr. Schott. Pottering Pete tossed the roll of bills to the grinning clerk.

"Credit six thousand dollars to th' Lucky Tumble Employee's Co-opera tive Insurance Fund," he directed. Then he drew one hand across his bearded mouth.

"Talkin' to sich fellers makes me dry," he said, "an' Barney'll be down at Shorty's a-waitin' to hear. Come on, Jimmy."

"How'd it pan?" inquired Barney, anxiously, as the three ranged along the bar.

"Barney," said Pottering Pete, sol emnly, "Charley Swab's a baby an' J. Peerpont's an ol' woman, side of us."

"Did they have my name in th' deed?" asked Barney.

"Nope. Reckon they forgot ye was to have a third interest. Ye must have played yer keerds jest right, Barney."

Barney tapped his black pipe on the bar, and chuckled.

"They was a leetle juberous at fust 'bout my havin' an' ol' grudge agin ye,

but when I pried that orc outen th' Jack-rabbit, right under their noses, an' then showed 'em th' Lucky Tumble ore, they went plumb crazy. 'Lowed th' two wuz jest th' same."

"Dum good guessers, they was, too," remarked Pete, languidly. "Jim my an' me planted a whole cart-load of Lucky Tumble into th' Jack-rabbit 'fore we was satisfied with th' job. What'll it be, boys? Th' best ain't none too good fer celebratin' our goin' into th' promotin' bizness—fer a limited time only."

**

How Billy Pi Broke the Strike

BY FRANK N. STRATTON*

The novel weapon employed by a railway contractor to remove a disturbing element in his business.

<< (^PEAKIN' of strikes," said the O conductor, glancing out of the window, "reminds me that right there, in that bend of the crick, a world's record was made for breakin' a strike. Ever tell you about it?

"It was when this branch of the line was bein' built, say ten year ago. The boss contractor sent me word to turn over my gang to Murphy and come to headquarters.

" 'Baker,' says he, 'you can patter 'Dago pretty good, and I want you to take a couple of the men and a hand car and run down to the west end of the branch line. The Dagoes down there has struck for higher wages. They're a fresh importation, just over, and that damned Bald Pete has wandered down there and queered 'em. We're under bond to shove that branch through by the first of August, and something's got to be done quick. The quickest way is to buy Bald Pete off. Here's fifty dol lars; run down and see what can be done. Report to-night.'

"You see, Bald Pete was an old Dago who'd been fired by .the construction company, and had been makin' it his business to get even. Ugly devil, Pete was; his hide was the color of scum on an old frog pond, and his eyes—once I looked into the eyes of a live rattle snake, not two feet away, and Pete's eyes was just the same. Once, when he was cookin' for a party up in the Black Hills, he'd had a lop-sided argument with a band of Sioux who lifted his scalp and left him for dead, and their bright smiles still lingered in his dreams. That's why we called him Bald Pete, and that's why he was prejudiced against Injuns. Mighty proud of that head, though, Petey was; kept it tied up in a red bandanna, with the knot.hangin' down over one ear. Always braggin' to the other Dagoes 'bout bein' a terrific Injun fighter, and provin' it by that head.

"Well, when I reached the Dago camp first man I seen was Bald Pete sittin' in front of the shack, smokin' an old black pipe. He was polite as you please, grinnin' and flashin' his ragged, ' yellow teeth, but when I tried to talk business there wasn't but one side to it, and that was Pete's side. He was onto his game, all right—knowed that men was scarce and time precious—and the way the yellow fakir orated 'bout the wrongs of his dear countrymen was dis gustin', while the rest of the gang crowded up, waggin' their heads and flourishin' their dirty paws and chippin' in whenever Pete stopped to get his breath.

"I seen I couldn't do anything with 'em just then, so I left my two men with the hand car, and took my Winchester, intendin' to hunt for a couple of hours while the Dagoes cooled off. There was game in these parts then. I strolled to the top of the slope, and lookin' across the 'river I seen an antelope standin', head up, watchin' a clump of trees on my side of the stream. It was a long shot, and when the Winchester cracked that antelope was gone quicker'n a boy

after breakfast when the lawn needs mowin'. At the same time what should walk out of that clump of trees and stand starin' up at tne but an Injun. Couldn't hardly believe my eyes for a minute; then I seen it was old Billy—Billy Pi, I called him. His Injun name was too much for a white man's tongue—sounded like a bunch of sneezes and a cough—and mighty proud Billy was of that name; said it meant 'Eagle that soars.' I'd run across Billy and some of his relations two years before, when I was on a fishin' trip a hundred miles up the river, and they was as cowardly, dirty a gang of Piutes as ever boiled a root or eat a lizard.

"Well, sir. I don't know how the scheme struck me so quick, but the minute I seen Billy Pi I knowed the Dago strike was as good as broke. So I was mighty well pleased to see the old sinner, and he appeared tickled to see me. He come slouchin' up the hill, earnin' an old percussion smooth-bore that he shot pebbles out of when he could get powder. I met him halfway down the hill, for I didn't want them Dagoes to catch sight of him.

" 'How! How 1' he says, lookin' pompous, and stickin' out a dirty paw. 'Got any whisky?'

"I give him a swig from the cup of my flask, and he swallowed it at one gulp.

"'Any toback?' the old beggar asks next.

"I handed him a stogie and a match, and it was amusin' to see him squat down, shut his rheumy old eyes, and puff like a stalled locomotive.

" 'Where's your people, Billy?' I asks.

"Without openin' his eyes he points up the river and holds up one finger, meanin' they was one mile upstream.

" 'How many?' I asks.

" 'Much people,' he says, throwin' out all his fingers three or four times. 'Billy's brudder there, too. All much poor, much hungry.'

"'Hungry, eh!' I says. "You come wi^h me.'

'"I took him near the top of the hill, nade him lay down and peep over, and Jis eyes stuck out like a snail's horns when he seen them Dagoes down the cookin' supper. They had about week's provisions yet, that the compa: had furnished, besides some Dago de cacies of their own importation, a when the smell of that garlic and ma rony and fried bacon floated up to 1 ly's proboscis I thought the old thief ' took Saint Vitus' dance.

" 'Friends of mine,' I says, poin to the camp, 'want to see Injun. Ne see read Injun. I want to please frier. Billy come this evenin' and bring all people. Plenty grub, moth whis heap toback.'

"You ought to have seen how qu Billy hooked onto that proposition; > way he grunted you'd thought he the colic.

" 'All hide here,' I says, mak signs, 'till moon comes up. Want s'prise friends. Mustn't come till shoot. Then all come quick. Run yell—shoot Billy's gnu—big- ahow- s'prise friends—friends very glad.'

" -Good!' he says, poundin' his chest[1] and swellin' up. 'Billy un'stand. Billy great chief! Come like hell! Hea yell! Billy shoot gun! Big show Huh!' " Then he trailed up the riv< faster than I ever seen him move.

"I knowed no one would get hui even if the scheme fizzled, for the' wasn't a gun in the Dago outfit, an if they should put up any kind of front, them cowardly Piutes would sk< daddle back faster than they'd come So I hurried back to the camp, lookin very solemn.

"'What shoot at?' asks Bald Pete^ quite pleasant.

" 'Pete,' says I, loud, for some of the Dagoes could understand a little Eng lish, 'I shot at an Injun—and missed him.' j

"He humped his shoulders, cocked them eyes at me, and grinned—thought I was lyin' to scare him away.

" 'The senor is mistaken,' he says, with a sneer. 'Injuns all gone many year.'

" 'Come with me and I'll prove it,' says I. 'I'll show you the Injun's tracks.'

"When Tctcy's eyes lit on them print

of Billy's old moccasins he turned plumb B reen and jumped like he'd stepped on a Ack.*

" 'Santa Maria 1' lie gasps, crossin' ^niself. 'Injun sure I*

SB' They've broke away from the res- ^Hption again/ 1 says, doin' my best ^ ook scared. Tivc hundred mile ain't ^ hing to them Sioux when they're out MM blood. We'd better get a move on

sMI 1 onest. 1 had to pitv the yellojv cow- Ilis eyes rolled as if they were Mose, and his teeth chattered all the way ^Bek to the camp. I was afraid he'd Be a sneak if he wasn't watched, so I BMlic gang myself what we'd seen. IML-t^of 'em wanted to pull stakes right en, and some, with an eye for their talked big about fightin' it out 'un- r the brave and valiant Pietro's com- Kandership.' 1 could see that 'the rave and valiant Pietro' was prayin' B-- -» good excuse to flit, so I kept him the front, remindin' the Dagoes of Bis skill and experience, and arguin' hat mebbe there was only one Injun, Kfter all. I wanted 'em to stay—wanted » see the fun. I kept the arguments ^jin', so as to give Billy plenty of time, Ba the moon was well up, and then, Bhile they was chatterin' like a flock of Bared parrots, I made a dash for the Band car, where my men was, and Burned the Winchester loose.

k ."In less than a second it seemed to me Blat every Piute that had ever lived was I»ourin' over the top of that hill and Blown the slope for the Dago camp. 'Mebbe I was a little excited, but Billy and his brother certainly were prolific and hadn't left none behind.

" 'They're cornin',' I yelled, and they was—cornin' like a comet failin' through space. Scrcechin'? A fleet of steam tugs wouldn't have been in it; Billy and his brother led the procession, on the jump, with the bucks next, and the squaws and papooses tailin' behind, and every beggar of 'em was wavin' some kind of a weapon, from Billy's old smooth-bore to a rusty fish knife. Half way down the slope Billy let off the old musket with a roar like a Fourth of July anvil—like to have knocked the old scoundrel over—and when them pebbles come wailin' through the air that strike was broke. By that time the Dagoes had recovered their breath, which had left 'em when the irruption busted loose, and things begun to develop in that camp.

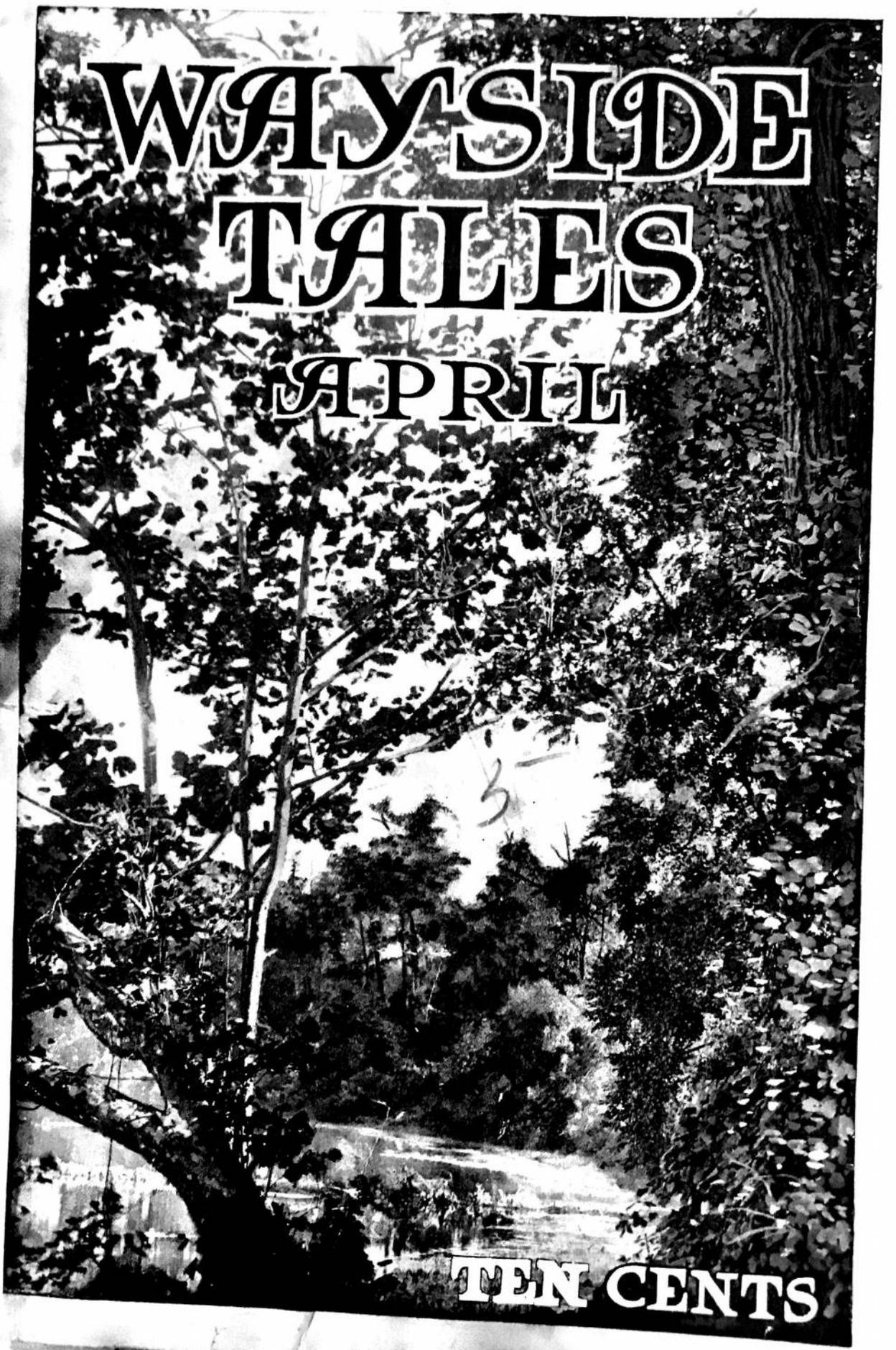
"First move Bald Pete made was to try to jump over a row of barrels—hadn't time to go 'round—and he didn't jump high enough. Must have fell twenty feet, and he was runnin' before he'd got up. It wasn't a minute till the prairie was dotted with Dagoes jumpin' like jack rabbits. Some of 'em headed for the hand car, and we shot her up the grade and round the bend, and waited till the racket died down; then we pumped back to the camp.

"The noble red man had full and un disputed possession, and he wasn't doin' a thing to that grub—just pitchin' it in, like that was the last half of the ninth, and the score tied. Billy's brother was experimentin' with a big, blue onion, one of the kind that will eat holes in anything but a Dago, and his eyes was squirtin' water like busted fire plugs. Billy had got busy with a mess of maca- rony in one fist and a hunk of raw bacon in the other, and he was sure a sight, with the grease drippin' from his mouth and runnin' down his skinny paunch.

" 'Whoopee—r-whoop 1' he yells at me, thumpin' his ribs with the bacon. 'Skeezy-kee-mah-chuk'—that's as near as I can say his Injun name—'great chief! Tell friend come back. Billy not hurt 'em. Billy good Injun.'

"But my friends never came back- no, sir! not much! Next time I seen Bald Pete was about a year after, in New York—reckon he'd run all the way—and you couldn't 'a' got him West of the Hudson then without killin' him first.

"And that's how Billy Pi broke the strike and made me solid with the boss —put me in the way to get this job. Here's your station. See you on $he down trip, I s'pose."


WAYSIDE
TALES
APRIL
TEN CENTS

HOW POTTERING PETE ENFORCED THE LAW

FRANK N. STRATTON

POTTERING PETE md Barney McGlynn stood on the platform in front of Shorty's Place and watched the train from the north, as, with a final puff and snort, it stopped at the little station.

"Mornin', Mr. Patton," called out the grimy engineer, as he swung from the cab, oil-can in hand.

"Mornin', Billy," Pete drawled; "how's tricks up th' road?"

"Quiet, quiet," Billy grunted, punc tuating his remarks with squirts of the oil; "though they was havin' a little excitement up at Peterson's as we come through. Hoss thief."

"Hang 'im?" Pete asked, careless ly, as he watched the passengers fil ing into the dingy lunch-room.

"Nope; they'll fix that when they git him back to Moccasin Camp. That's where he stole th' hoss."

"Plenty o' trees on Peterson's ranche," observed Mr. Patton, dryly. "Procrastynashun is th' thief of time."

"Nervy cuss, he was," Billy con tinued, straightening up and survey ing his engine critically. "Winged one of th' Moccasin boys jest as they grabbed him, gittin' onto th' train. Joe Burrows they said his name was. New comer in th' camp."

Pottering Pete's drooping shoulders squared with a jerk.

"What's that?" he asked. "Say that name ag'in, Billy."

"Joe Burrows," repeated the engi neer. "They caught him dead to rights, too."

Mr. Patton seized old Barney by the arm.

"Barney," he whispered, excitedly, "hike up to th' mine, hot foot, an' round up four of th' boys—boys that kin shoot—an' see that they're heeled fer bizness."

"What fool scheme ye up to now?" Barney growled.

"Don't ask no questions," said Mr. Patton, gruffly. "Have 'em here in an hour. I'm goin' to wire to headquar ters fer a speshul, an' to ol' Peterson to have six good hosses waitin' at his ranch. I'm fer law an' order, right now, Barney. Git a move on ye."

At one o'clock the special pulled in to receive six armed and stalwart pas sengers, five of whom wore mystified expressions on their rough faces. At two o'clock six horsemen galloped away from old Peterson's ranch.

"They've got a good start on us," muttered Mr. Patton to Barney, who galloped at his side, "but their hosses is tired an' they'll take it easy."

"Looky here, Pete," Barney growled; "I reckon ye know what's up, but I'd like to be took in as pard- ner in th' informashun."

"Told ye, Barney, that we're goin' into th' law an' order bizness—goin' to see that the law's enforced 'cordin' to th' statutes."

"Ain't goin' to try to take that hoss thief frum them Moccasin boys, air ye, Pete?" asked the old man, anx iously.

"Ain't goin' to jest try. Goin' to do it!"

Barney emitted an exclamation of disgust, and pulled on the bridle-reins,

only to be jerked almoat from his sad dle as his horse leaped forward in frightened obedience to Mr. Patton's persuasive spur.

"Own up ye're afeared, Barney, an' ye kin go home," said Pete, contemp tuously.

"But, Pete," the old man protested, "th* feller stole th' boss. We hain't got no bizness to butt in. An' them Moccasin boys'll fight."

"So'll we," answered Pete, savage ly-

Barney stared amazedly into the stern face and fiery eyes of the man whose listless, lazy ways had won for him the sobriquet of Pottering Pete.

"It's th' duty of ev'ry off'cer to en force th' law, Barney," Pete contin ued, in the old drawling tone. "An' I'm a off'cer—speshul const'ble—with a warrant fer Joseph Burrows, grand larc'ny. Fixed it with Squire Dibbs, afore we left."

Barney groaned, and relapsed into silence, listening to the sixteen gallop ing hoofs behind him as they beat in regular rhythm upon the tortuous trail. From the darkening recesses of the mountains at their right the night owls hooted weirdly. The mournful howls of prowling coyotes floated across the valley at their left. Dim ia the gathering twilight, the trail ahead of them rose and fell, sinuously, among projecting spurs. As they la bored up a steep ascent, Pottering Pete suddenly threw out a long arm, in warning to those behind. A faint note of laughter came from the far ther side of the spur.

"They're jest ahead," Pete an nounced, . as the others gathered around him. "Stay where ye kin see me, an' don't come till I strike th' second match. Then come—quick—but don't begin th' shootin'."

Half way down the slope, Pete saw the dim forms of four horsemen turn and face him.

"Halt I" commanded a voice ahead.

Pete laughed noisily.

" 'Fraid of Peter Patton ?" he called out. "Put up yer guns, boys. I'm lookin' fer company—not fer trubble."

"Oh, it's you, is it, Mr. Patton?" said the man on the gray horse, as Pete trotted up. "Thought mebbe it was some of Joe's friends—if he's got any."

Pete turned toward the man whose arms were bound behind him.

"Prisoner?" he asked.

The man on the gray horse nodded.

"Hoss thief," he said, laconically. "He won't be with us long."

One of the other men laughed, and the eyes of the prisoner flashed to ward him. Mr. Patton struck a match and held it near the captive's face.

"Th' image of ol' Joe," he mut tered, as the charred stick fell from his fingers.

"Pardner," he said, softly, to the man on the gray horse, "I reckon ye know that Peter Patton usually gits what he wants—an' he wants this man."

The man on the gray horse laughed —a short, sneering laugh.

"Sorry to refuse you, Mr. Patton," he said, "but we really can't disap point th' boys at Moccasin Camp."

He gave a silent signal, and his two companions rode nearer the prisoner. One of them carried his right arm in a rude sling.

"Two an' a half to six," chuckled Mr. Patton.

"You're the last man, Patton," con tinued the man on the gray horse, "that I'd think would interfere in this affair. Didn't you help swing---------- "

"I wasn't an off'cer then," Pete broke in. "I am, this trip. Speshul const'ble, sworn to enforce th' law. Here's my warrant. I'll strike an other match while ye read it."

The three peered at the paper by the light of the flickering match.

"No use buckin' th' lav; an' th' stat utes, boys," urged Mr. Patton.

"Ncr inv possy," he added, suavely, as the five miners dashed down the hill.

The man on the gray horse ripped out an oath.

"What you goin' to do with him, if we give him up, peaceable?" he asked, fingering the revolver at his belt.

"Th' Squire'll bind 'im over to Cir cuit Court, 'cordin' to th' statutes," answered Mr. Patton.

"What's th' use of all that tom foolery?" the captive interrupted, sul lenly. "I can't give bond, an' that dinky jail won't stand five minutes be fore th' Moccasin Camp gang."

"Kain't help it," said Mr. Patton. "I've got to go 'cordin' to law. When I land you in th' coop I'm out o' th' game."

The three Moccasin Camp men glanced at each other significantly.

"I guess you can take him, Mr. Pat ton," said the man on the gray horse. "Mebbe we'll see him later. You can leave the hoss at Peterson's."

"All right, pardner," replied Pete, cheerily. "Now, Joseph, come a-jumpin'. You've give us trubble enuff already; don't try enny tricks."

It was midnight when seven men stepped from the special in front of Shorty's Place.

"Hold her here," Mr. Patton direct ed the engineer. "Ye'll have a passen ger—in twenty minnits.[1]'

Squire Dibbs, roused from his slum ber, blinked sleepily over Hs docket as the posse gathered in the back room of the little shack.

"He pleads guilty, Squire/' Mr. Patton announced. "What's th' bond?"

"Considerin' th' shootiP ez well ez th' larc'ny, I've made it fixe hunderd, Mr. Patton," replied the Sqfire, look ing at Pete, uneasily.

"Cheap enuff; no time to change it, ennyhow. There's my name; reckon it's good, Squire?"

"This here court so considers it," replied the Squire, pompously.

"Now, Joseph,' said Pete, hastily, "th' quicker ye jump that speshul th' better fer yer health. At headquarters ye'll take th' next train south, an' ye'll not git off till ye hit El Paso. Yer transportashun's arranged fer, an' here's a little roll, to give ye a start. Git I"

The late prisoner hesitated.

"I don't understad all this," he said, huskily. "Why should you, a stran ger-------"

"Ye don't need to understand it," cried Mr. Patton, impatiently. "What ye need is to git a move on. That speshul won't wait all night—an' Moc casin Camp's a-comin' this way on th' jump."

The man seized Mr. Patton's hand, shook it heartily, then turned and sped toward the waiting car.

Pottering Pete put his elbows on the Squire's table, rested his bearded chin on his hairy hands, and gazed dreamily into the darkness beyond the open door.

"Boys," he said, softly, a queer in tonation in his rough voice, "I'm a-lookin' back fifteen year. I see Mr. Peter Patton snugglin' among th' rocks, under a blazin' sun, with no wa ter, mighty little ammunition, an' a broken arm, listenin' to th' howls of a dozen dirty Apaches a-waitin' to starve 'im out, er to plug 'im if he shows so much as th' tip of his nose.

"Two miles up th' ravine I sees ol' Joe Burrows an' little Speck Hillis, who'd come with me on that prospect in' trip. They hears th' racket. Duz they scoot fer safety? Not much ! Ol' Joe—drunk half th' time, an ornery always—hists Speck onto one of th' mules, an' starts him to th' camp, twenty mile away, fer help. Then he packs sum water an' ammunition on t'other mule, waits till night, an' rush es through them 'Paches like a skeered steer through a cornfiel'. Con-

nccts with Mr. Patton, an' helps 'ini to stand them red pups *off* till th' boys shows up next day. Otherwise, Mr. Patton would now be twangin' a golden harp.

" 'Bout a year after that ol' Joe gits his in a little argyment down at Striker's Point.

" 'Pete.' scz he, as he hit th' trail fer th' New Jerusalem, 'I've got a kid sumwhere back in th' states—named fer me, an' takes after me, though 1 hope he won't turn out as ornery'. Ef ye ever git a chance to give th' kid a lift ye'll do it, won't ye, Pete?'

"I sed I would—an' I have. I reckon th' account's square, now. That's why I wuz fer law an' order—fer a limited time only. Let's go home, Barney."

***

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

iUr- the author of "jr^stwWd, iloi"—one of ost stirring tales oWaventure\y land and sea; woor. June 12r*"19. Mr- Kinsley w'm edu-

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

The Doings of "Pottering Pete."

Indiana enjoy* the distinction of having produced a great number of aide fiction writers. Attorney Frank N. Stratton of Kokomo has for years been writing some of the best short stories printed in *he leading Eastern magazines.

Mr. Stratton's delightful series, "Pottering Pete," begun in **Wayside Talks** some years ago, is being continued in the current numbers of the magazine.

It is always a compliment for a man to be appreciated at home. *That Mr$_v$ Stratton is not without honor in his own town the following from Kokomo newspapers witness:

There is a remarkable difference between Frank N. Stratton and most of the popular writers of short stories. The Stratton contributions are popular in Kokomo, where he has been known so'long. It is not mere local enthusiasm which supports the desire of the people here and in other Indiana cities r^this section to read f"X the Stratton storiis, but it is an eagerness to see morr of the delightful and original wort /that has been coming from the versatile pen of the Kokomo lawyer. In the years that he has traveled, Frank Stratton has been an observer, one of those careful, sympathetic observers who sees the best and the truest side of any situation, as well as *h<e more* humorous. He gets all that there is in a situation, and he kno\A how to write about it in a way that attracts the people. Singularly eiuugh, he is as good a story teller as he a story writer,

and the listener frequently misses other things while he listens to what Stratton says.

In the March *Everybody's Magazine* there is a short story, "Jimmy's Mother." It is a pathetic tale of court and justice, of an aged woman, whose loyalty wins the victory of which the lawyer had despaired. It is a gem of the pathetic sort and makes the reader kinder and better for the reading. In the March *Munsey* the story of "The Woman in the Case." It is one of those western stories, teeming with interest and action, showing the author's intimate knowledge of the country where so much is strenuosity. The broad humanity of hunted Reddy McGuire and the fidelity of Sheriff Dan Rowe to his sense of duty, while yet not unmindful of the heroism of the man he wanted to arrest, are well described. In the March **Wayside Tales** the story is told of Pottering Pete's desire for a wife and the investigations he made of a matrimonial grafter. This is the first of a series of Pottering Pete stories that Mr. Stratton will furnish to **Wayside Tales,** and their clever humor will be well received. — *Kokomo Morning News.*

The third series of "Pottering Pete" t^les, by Frank N. Stratton of this city, appears in **Wayside Tales** for February. These products of the pen of the Kokomo writer have been contracted for by the Sampson-Hodges Company of Chicago, owners of **Wayside Tales** and one of the three great short-story syndicates, the other two being the Daily Story Publishing Company and the McClure Syndicate of New York. The Stratton tales are to be syndicated after publication in **Wayside Tales.**—*Kokomo Dispatch.*

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April 1904 Number.

A Deal in Dates.

AN KHSODB IN THE UFB OF TOM HARDWICK, SHERIFF OF MONTEBASCO COUNTY.

BY FRANK N. STRATTON.

1.

THE sheriff of Montebasco County pulled up his horse, leaned wearily upon the saddle-horn, and contemplated the lonely dugout, whose lowly, sod-thatched roof was scarcely distinguishable from its parent plain.

" Beats all," he muttered, " that anybody'd live in such a lonesome, des'late--------"

He stopped short as his restless eyes caught sight of the woman emerging from the bed of the sluggish stream below him. As he urged his horse toward her the woman dropped the bundle of drift-wood, folded her arms, and awaited his approach.

" So you've found us at last," she said sullenly.

The sheriff repressed an exclamation of surprise.

" Guess I have," he replied slowly. "Is Bob here?"

The lines in the woman's pinched face grew tenser.

" Yes, he's here—what's left of him," she answered.

"Wasn't lookin' for him; but I've just missed bigger game, an' I might as well take something back home. Reckon he'll come without the warrant. He'll have to, or----------"

" He'll give you no trouble," the woman interrupted. " He's out there—under those rocks."

She stretched a bony arm toward an oblong heap of stones half hidden by the drifted snow.

" There are wolves here, also," she said grimly. " But those prey only on the dead."

A quick pressure of the spur against the horse's flank turned the sheriff's back toward the bitter wind, his face from the bitter eyes. For just an instant he bared and bent his head, and the bitterness died out of the woman's eyes. She glanced at the drooping horse.

" You've been long in the saddle, and must be chilled through," she said quietly. " Come into the house."

As she swung the bundle to her back the sheriff seized it, laid it across his saddle, and followed the woman silently. A little boy, thin-faced and hollow-eyed, ran timidly to his mother as she entered.

" Better put your horse in the shed," the woman suggested, as she replenished the dying fire. " There's a little prairie hay left, I think."

The sheriff spent more time in intervals of profound meditation than in caring for the horse. When he reentered the solitary room, the woman and the child waited for him at a rough table.

" Corn bread, rye hominy, and water isn't much to offer a guest," the woman said, with a little, mirthless laugh; " though there's plenty of the water."

The sheriff ate silently and sparingly. When the child, having eagerly devoured its portion, glanced appealingly motherward, the sheriff, ignoring the maternal frown, filled the empty plate from his own.

" Had a plenty at Gulch Point," he murmured apologetically, " an' I like to see the youngster eat."

The woman shot a quick glance at him, half grateful, half resentful.

" Gulch Point," she repeated. " That's a mighty tired horse to have come only from Gulch Point! "

The sheriff grinned sheepishly, leaned back, and watched the voracious " youngster."

" What ailed Bob?" he asked softly, after a while.

A little tremor came into the woman's voice.

r.

" I don't know. Fever, I guess—and worry."

•• Didn't the doc know? "

" We had no doctor. Doctor* want money—and Robert thought he'd soon be well. Besides, we wanted no one to wee ua—you know why."

" Rut you had help—when---------- "

The sheriff gave a quick gesture in the direction of the heap of stones. The woman folded her hands in her lap and bowed her head.

"Just me and little Robbie," she said gently. " And—the Book."

The sheriff coughed, fumbled at his belt, and turned toward the fire. The child dropped his spoon into the empty plate, rested his head against the damp wall behind him, and heaved a little sigh of satisfaction.

" Thought you'd gone to Minnesoty, where Bob come from," the sheriff ob served. " Ilow'd you come to stop at this God-forsaken place?"

" One of the horses died here, and we hadn't money to buy another. We built the dugout and the shed, think ing we might push on, somehow, when spring came. After Robert went I had to sell the other horse and the wagon to get food."

"What d'ye 'low to do now? Spring's 'most here."

" I don't know. I might teach again —if there are any schools out here."

" Looky here, Mrs. Cruthers, you'd better come back----------"

" And ask charity! " the woman ex claimed. "No! If we hadn't lost the farm it would be different."

" It would be different if Bob hadn't tried to borrow money on the farm when it wasn't his any longer."

"He didn't!" the woman eried fiercely.

" Oh, I reckon the grand jury knowed what they was doin' when they fetched in that indictment."

The woman gripped the edge of the table, and leaned toward her guest.

"What does that indictment say?" she asked breathlessly.

" It says a plenty. Cuttin' out the ' then? ' and ' theres ' an' ' aforesaids,' it says that Bob tried to get money un der false pretense. An' Flint an' Ilnrmsley do tell a mighty ugly 6tory. 1 didn't think it of Bob. Knowed he was green an' easy flustrated, but thought he was straight."

The wan eyes of the woman gleamed and glittered in the dim room.

" Tell me what those men said," she demanded hoarsely. "I never under stood why we should run away, but Robert insisted, and never would tell me why."

" Why, when Bob couldn't renew the mortgage, an' couldn't borrow to pay it—the panic bein' on, you know— Harmsley offered to loan him the money. But he wouldn't accept an ordinary mortgage.' So you an' Bob made Harmsley ail absolute deed; re member signin' it, don't you ? "

" Yes; but I never knew why."

" Well, then Bob an' Harmsley signed an agreement----------"

" In duplicate ? "

" Don't know; ought to have been, if Bob had any sense. Agreement was that Harmsley would deed the farm back if Bob paid the thousand dollars, with twelve per cent, on or before last October----------"

" When?"

" First of last October—October 1, 1896. Record of Harmsley's contract, in the recorder's office, says so; read it myself. Well, Bob didn't pay, an' con sequently the farm was Harmsley's for good, 'cording to the contract. Then, about the middle of last October, Flint offered to loan the thousand at eight per cent, not knowin' the situation, an' Bob arranged to get the money on that ' farm that wasn't his; did get Flint to advance him a little—to skip out with, I reckon, in case Flint caught on before he got it all, which Flint did. That's all/an' that's enough—in this State."

The woman had crossed the room, and was unlocking an old and battered trunk. She lifted out and carried to the table a huge and well-worn Bible, from among whose pages she drew a pa per, frayed and stained.

" Tell me what this is," she said, an exultant ring in her voice.

The sheriff stirred the embers of the fire to brighter light, stooped, and glanced hastily over the document.

" It's ft duplicate, auro enough. In Hnrmslev's ha nd write, an' signed by him an' Bob—jii«t like the one Harmsley holds."

" Is it ? Look ngain."

Again the sheriff of Montebasco County stooped,then suddenly straightened up with ft puzzled, suspicious look on his bronzed face.

"If Bob had this, why did he----------"

" He lost it. The next day after I signed that deed he told me he'd lost an important paper, and it must have been that. I found it—only last week—inside the lining of his old coat."

"Did Harmsley know it was lost?"

" Yes, I'm almost sure Robert told him. Harmsley was friendly toward Robert. He warned him, later, that Flint intended to prosecute—advised him to run."

The sheriff of Montebasco County muttered an exclamation, dropped into his seat, and stared at the fire. The little boy crept into his mother's arms, and she swayed her body to and fro, crooning a lullaby, as she watched the sheriff curiously.

"Frien'ly toward Bob!" muttered the sheriff to himself. "Yes; oh, yes! That's why he asked me to hold the warrant for a while—so's Bob would have time to go, an' stay gone. Of course he showed Bob his copy—Harmsley's copy—an' the record! "

The woman ceased her lullaby, and interrupted the sheriff's cogitation.

"I've thought that if those figures are right, and Mr. Harmsley's are wrong, maybe he'd give me a chance to get the farm back by next October, as' it says. But if he wouldn't—I couldn't pay lawyers, and the thousand dollars and interest, as I'd have to, even if I should win."

A sarcastic smile played over the bronzed face.

"Oh, yes; Harmsley would do what was right—for Harmsley! " Then, as he looked up and saw the expression on the woman's face, a soft light shone in the keen gray eyes. " You've studied an' worried a good deal over this," he observed reflectively.

The woman buried her face in the child's curls.

" Worried ? Night and day—day and night! There's a mistake somewhere. I can't understand it. Do you?"

'I'lic two vertical furrows between the shaggy eyebrows of the sheriff of Montebiisco County deepened and length ened as he rose to his feet, slipped the paper into his inside pocket, and but toned his coat.

" I think I do," he growled. " I ain't sure, but I reckon I do. I'm goin' to find out."

The woman sprang up, distrust and alarm in the thin, gaunt face.

"You can't take that paper!" she cried. " It's all I have to prove Rob ert's innocence!"

The sheriff frowned.

" Can't you trust me ? " he asked gruffly.

" Trust you—trust the man who dogged us to this place ? I trust no one now. Give me that paper! "

She placed the drowsy child in the chair, and advanced upon the sheriff resolutely. He handed the paper to her, and she thrust it into the bosom of her threadbare dress. Then she fol lowed after him to the door, and stood there, watching him with suspicious eyes, as he bridled and mounted the horse. He rode up to her, and halted.

" Go to Gulch Point every week," he said, " and ask for mail. It's a long tramp—nigh ten mile—but you may get something that will clear—him."

He pointed again to the mound of stones. She looked up searchingly into his face.

" I'll go," she said quietly.

"Then let me see the date in that document again. I may have to swear to it."

The woman drew back, took the pa per from her bosom, opened it, and held it up, out of the sheriff's reach. Quick as a flash he bent from his sad dle and snatched it from her hand.

She was still following him when he glanced back before galloping into the distant foot-hills.

II.

When the sheriff of Montebasco County entered the office of Alexander

Hnrmnley, dealer in real estate and shaver of note*, and cloaad and locked the door behind him, Mr. Ilannaley wheeled in bin chair at the lint-topped desk and looked up inquiringly.

" A little private business, Aleck," explained the sheriff, " an' I don't want to be interrupted."

" At your service, sheriff," replied Mr. Harmsley briskly. "What can I do for you ? "

The aheriff leaned hack in the chair at the opposite aide of the desk and re garded Mr. Harmsley cordially.

" My term's 'most up, you know, Aleck, an' I don't care to run again. Concluded to settle down to farmin'. Been lookin' around a little, an' rather like that Cruthers place. What's your figures ? "

Mr. Harmsley summoned his most gracious smile, and caressed his re spectable whiskers thoughtfully.

" Fifty per acre—four thousand dol lars—and dirt cheap at that."

" Pretty high, Aleck. It don't stand you in more'n a thousand or so, you know."

Mr. Harmsley produced a cedar box on which was depicted an exceedingly burly gentleman engaged in the occu pation of holding up the world.

" Have a cigar, Tom. Don't smoke, myself."

" Too busy makin' other people smoke, eh, Aleck ? " the sheriff ob served pleasantly, as he struck a match. Mr. Harmsley chuckled.

" If you don't happen to have the ready cash, Tom, I can give you time on that---------- "

" Oh, I guess I won't need much time in this deal."

" Oughtn't to, as long as you've been in office—with the graft there is in it." remarked Mr. Harmsley, winking sig nificantly while the sheriff grinned.

"How's th' title?"

" To the Cruthers farm ? Straight as a string. Gilt-edged."

" Cruthers claimed, you know, that the time for redemption didn't expire till next October. I ain't buyin' no lawsuits. Tf he should come back----------"

"Come back? With you holding that warrant? Not much. You don't know Cruthers. And the statute of limitation don't run while he's con cealed, you know."

" Tbnt'a right. An' I reckon your contract's ironclad."

" It's recorded; read it."

" Recorders have made mistakes. I want the place, but I'd have to see the original contract. Four thousand dol lars is four thousand dollars, Aleck."

Mr. Harmsley frowned, meditated, walked slowly to the great steel safe, unlocked a private drawer, drew forth a folded and labeled paper, and tossed it upon the desk. The sheriff unfolded it leisurely.

" Excuse me for bein' so partic'lar, Aleck, specially with an old friend, but I've heard that Cruthers said----------"

" Damn what Cruthers said! He's done."

" Yes, I reckon he is," remarked the sheriff, scanning the paper. " Done—to a golden brown! "

Mr. Harmsley darted a quick, sus picious glance across the desk, and laughed, faintly and unpleasantly.

" You make devilish odd remarks sometimes, Tom; remarks that might cause talk if overheard."

" That's why I locked the door," ob served the sheriff dryly. He was hold ing the paper up, so that the light shone through it, and his weather beaten face was growing stern and rigid. Harmsley scowled, and reached an arm across the desk.

" You're insulting, Hardwick—and too damned suspicious. Give me that paper. The place is not for sale. I've changed my mind."

" As well as the figures, eh, Aleck ? "

" What are you talking about ? " roared Harmsley.

The sheriff had produced another pa per, and was comparing the two through keen, half-closed eyes.

" About forgery, Aleck," he an swered pleasantly. "That's what a jury would call it. It's really an artistic job, Aleck, but you scratched a little too deep on that seven; an' when you filled in the six, the ink was blacker an* thicker, an'—steady there! Drop that, quick! "

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120

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Harmsley's hand came up from out

lb looking down the ...1 of iho revolver of the sheriff of 1 ;>:• Iwm'o t'ountv.

" Now let me hear you puah that ouiwer shut—with your knee. Alack, unh your knee! That'* all right. Now '<>u tnav sign thia, if you don't mind •lust a matter of form, you know—per fectin' the title of Mrs. Cruthers to her farm. Bein' the sheriff, I can acknowl-< <lge your signature.**

Harmsley's fat face was livid with rage and terror as he stared at the deed t hat lay before him.

"This m Hackmail!" he protested. " Nothing less than blackmail! "

" Oh, no, Aleck. It's justice—some thing less than justice—for I ought to give you up to the State's attorney, along with these two papers, an' the letter you fooliahly wrote to your fel low conspirator, Flint, which I scared him into givin' me an hour ago. Are you goin' to sign, Aleck?"

Harmsley's shaking hand reached for a pen.

" You're a devil," he groaned. " If I sign, how do I know you'll---------- "

" You've got the word of Tom Hard wick, sir. But don't let anything I say influence your judgment. Aleck. If you'd rather take your chances—what an easy writer you are. Aleck! So smooth an' graceful. Thanks! Any time you want to make another little deal in dates like this one, Aleck, you can count me in—an' don't you forget it, either! So long, old bov. I've got to hustle to get this recorded an' into the next mail north."

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VALLEY WEEKLY

The Valley Girl

The Valley Wee

A Magazine of the Middle West'

One of Many Appreciation!

Frank N. Stratton
... Atturnrp at puu ...
tn t«2 £a*t Walnut Street
Kokomo, Indiana

April 4, 1904.

Editor Valley Weekly, *St. Louis, Mo.*

Dear Sir:

I have always believed devoutly, as becomes a patriotic Hoosier, that the Indiana girls were the prettiest in the wide, wide world, and that Kokomo was the home of the most beautiful. But if the girls of your covers are really Missouri products, Missouri is entitled to the palm on the girl question, as on the mule.

I want to congratulate and praise you for your able articles on reform. Iam a republican; have been honored by my party with the office of State's Attorney, but, boys, you must elect foe Folk. The great mass of honest people have no conception of the stinking rottenness of our politics, National, State and Local. I know—having been wading around the borders of the cesspool—and I pray the good Lord daily for absolution from what I have found it necessary to do in order to lick the other fellows.

Have you read Steffen"s article in current McClure"s ? He is giving us only the A B C of it as yet !

Sincerely yours,

MAY 1904

THE RED BOOK

Published Monthly by THE RED BOOK CORPORATION, 158-164 State St., Chicago
VOL. III. NO. 1

$1.00 A YEAR

Personal Pages by the Publishers

We belief that (he improvement* in The Kid Hook inaugurated in (hit issue arc the most noteworthy introduced since the magazine was founded. The first number of The Red Hook was that for May, 1903, so that this May number of 1904 begins the third volume of the maga zine. If any reader takes pains to compare the two issues, only one year apart, he will discover for him self that there has been a ye<r of untiring effort on the part of the publishers to improve The Red Book in every possible way, and make it the best of short story maga zines. The present number can hardly be recognized as the same periodical that made its appearance a year ago.

However, with the magazine in hand to speak for itself, it is not necessary to talk at length over what we have done in the past,' nor what we are going to do in the future. Just take note for your own satisfac tion of the changes in this particular magazine and the ones that will fol low it month by month. For one thing, this number has sixteen pages more than the preceding issues, in order to include more stories, so that Red Book readers will get even more for their money than they have in the past. The increase is entirely devoted to reading matter. Further more,, an enlarged number of illus trations adorn this month's pages, and this is a policy that will be maintained in the future.

The Red Book also changes form, in that the edges instead of being trimmed are merely separated, so that it takes thereby exactly the shape which is most favored by magazine readers—rough edges, but no paper knife required for reading purposes.

A pictorial feature of note is the series of photographic art studies by Tonnesen of Chicago. The fame of Miss Beatrice Tonnesen is not only national but international in the photographic world. Her forte is the (losing and photographing of charac ter studies and compositions, and the introduction of her work into The Red Book pages permits us to pre dict great things in the pictorial field.

The Red Book cover designs will be noteworthy for their excellence in the future as they have been in the past. Gustavus C. Widncy has contributed some of his best work ii the.designing and painting 01 ^.ed Book covers. For the June nuribcr Frederick J. Mulhaupt has pained a cover design which will rank high in this field, and will be recognized as one of the most beautiful to be found among the summer magazines.

Another feature of value_ intro duced next month is the reproduction of the world's famous paintings of beautiful women. Eight of these from Paris galleries will be included in the portrait section.

Not all of the changes in size and form, with the tremendous increase in circulation, could have been achieved except by the installation of part of the new machinery which has been in preparation for some months, to increase the facilities of The Red Book. Even now the equipment is not as complete as it will be, but we are enabled to in crease the edition this month an other 20,000, in spite of the enlarged size of the magazine.

With all our increased editions we have been unable to satisfy the de mand for the map£zine. The sulT> scription list is growing with gratify ing rapidity and regularity, and the great distributing agency which directs the newsstand distribution of this magazine clamors monthly for more copies than we can provide. Here is the list of the general dis tributing force of The Red Book— interesting to the advertisers and interesting to the public.

Personal Pages by the Publishers

The American Nows Company.
The Albany News Company.
The Baltimore News Company.
The Brooklyn News Company.
The Buffalo News Company.
Tue Central News Company.
The Cincinnati News Company.
The Cleveland News Company.
The Colorado News Company.
The Connecticut News Company.
The Detroit News Company.
The International News Company.
The Minnesota News Company.
The Montreal News Company.
The National News Company.
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The Pittsburg News Company.
The Puget Sound News Company.
The Rhode Island News Company.
The Rochester News Company.
The San Francisco News Company.
The South West News Company.
The Springfield News Company.
The St. Louis News Company.
The Toronto News Company.
The Washington News Company.
The Western News Company.
The Williamsburgh News Company.
The Wisconsin News Company.

The Publishers of The Red Book are no less proud of its literary and artistic attractiveness than they are of its business achievements. The plans for the coming year make it possible to promise that The Red Book will steadily and greatly im prove month by month, and that this improvement will be just the sort that readers want—better stories by better authors; better pictures by better artists.

In the June Red Book there will Jnt-fifteen stories. -every one of them zer and readable, the highest lard of literary excellence main- and the stories written by s whose names are a guarantee

iiTON Brandenburg has written a stirring story of J.emorial Day entitled "The Ascendancy of Lafay ette Sinks," which will delight not only the veterans but every one else who enjoys a good story. Gustavus C. Widnev has made some genuinely appreciative illustrations.

Eden Phillpotts, among4he most famous of fiction writers of to-day, has written for The Red Book one of his daintiest stories under the name of "Sand Daisy." The scene is among the native races of Mo rocco, and William Schmedtgen, whose travels into More -co have given him a wealth of valuable art material, has made the illustrations for the story.

Kenneth Brown contributes to The Red Book a dainty story of American life called "Afterwards." The scene is first the Far West and then a summer resort on the Atlantic Coast, where a touch of the occult brings it to a somewhat startling conclusion. Walter Whitehead illus trates the story. •

Henry C. Rowland is the author of one of the daintiest of Filipino stories, which he calls "Rosario." It is hardly as stirring as "The Man Who Knew" in this number of The Red Book, but there is a touch of tragedy in it as there is in almost every phase of our contact with native life in the Orient. Victor R. Lambdin illustrates the story.

Among the other contributors to this number of The Red Book are Henry M. IIVde, Adeline Knapp, Owen Oliver, Leigh Gordon Gilt ner, Hayden Carruth and Frank N. Stratton.

Among the other artists repre sented in the number are H. E. Townsend, Walter J. Enright, How ard Heath, W. Charles Tanner and Enos Comstock.

May 1904

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HOW POTTERING PETE IMPEDED THE PROGRESS OF REFORM

BY FRANK N. STRATTON

POTTERING PETE tilted his chair back against the sunny side of the little office building, stretched out his long, lank legs, and cast one more drowsy glance over the landscape before sinking into the arms of Morpheus.

Sleepily his gaze wandered over the noisy buildings of the Lucky Tumble mine, the numerous heaps of ore and refuse, the groups of busy laborers, and slowly swept down the slope toward the little town below. Then the front legs of the chair thumped heavily upon the rocky soil, Mr. Patton's eyes and mouth flew open, and his bearded face took on an expression of puzzled curiosity. He shifted the quid of Miner's Twist from his left cheek to his right, turned his head toward the office window, and called, in guarded tones:

"Jimmy! Hey, Jimmy! What's this a cornin' up th' trail ?"

The red-shirted clerk appeared in the doorway, thrust a pen behind his ear, and scrutinized the approaching object.

"Search me!" he finally responded.

"What's them things on Its shins, Jimmy ?"

The red-shirted clerk looked again.

"Bloomers 1" he ejaculated.

"Mebbe it's th' Sultan of Turkey, cornin' to s'licit a donashun fer them Armenyuns," Mr. Patton suggested.

Jimmy shook his head.

"He wouldn't be wearin' a skirt over 'em. It's a female."

Mr. Patton started from his chair.

"Shortly not, Jimmy," he said, apprehensively. "Look at that cap, an' coat, an' necktie, an' short hair."

"It's a woman," insisted Jimmy, confidently. "There's some of that brand runnin' at large. Seen one in Washington named Walker. Gosh! See them eyes glitter through th' specs."

"What d'ye reckon she could want of me, Jimmy?" Mr. Patton asked, tremulously.

"Dunno. Matrimony mebbe—hold up there! What you goin' to do?"

The red-shirted clerk had leaped forward and seized Mr. Patton's wrist, for that gentleman had jerked the revolver from his belt, and his long forefinger was groping nervously for the trigger.

"Jest a couple o' shots, Jimmy—over Its head—to skeer----------"

"Scare! That brand don't scare any more'n a rhinoceros. You're in for it, Mr. Patton !"

"An' there ain't no law----------"

"Good afternoon, Mr. Patton," the strident voice of the approaching personage interrupted. "No, thank you, young man; I prefer to stand. Can talk better. No doubt you have heard of me, Mr. Patton. I am Miss Ripper—Miss Angelina Ripper—better known as A. Ripper, Apostle of Reform. Sent by our noble Society into these Western wilds upon a great and glorious mission, Mr. Patton; a mission that appeals to every generous impulse in the breast of man."

Miss Ripper paused, filled her ample lungs with fresh mountain air, and glared at Mr. Patton, who retreated

one step and murmured weakly, "Yes, ma'am?'

"I find a great work awaiting me in your little town," pursued the Apostle. "A noble work, in which you will join me—in which you *shall* join me, Mr. Patton."

Again Mr. Patton retreated one step, and murmured: "Yes, ma'am."

"Ah, I knew you would; I could not err in my estimate of your manly nature. We will begin at once, Mr. Patton. Hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, we will----------"

• "What's th' graft this time?" Mr. Patton broke in, desperately.

"Sir?"

"What's yer game—scheme—mission—or whatever ye call it?"

"My mission ? Listen to me. Look me squarely in the eye, Mr. Patton, and heed my words. Down there, in that little town, two hundred female slaves of the tyrant Man lie bound in chains, denied the emancipating power of the ballot! More! In that same town the Demon of Rum rears his hateful head and stalks abroad, withering with baleful breath----------"

"Looky here, ma'am," exclaimed Pottering Pete, "I'm sorry to spile that speech, but ye'll have to deal me a new hand; ye'll have to talk English. What d'ye perpose to do to said town?"

The Apostle of Reform thrust out a long arm, terminating in a quivering forefinger, and struck a tragic pose.

"I purpose, sir—and I defy any human being to impede the Progress of Reform—I purpose to assemble those slaves and reveal to them those-rights given by God and denied by Man. I purpose, also, to drive the Demon of Rum from his lair. And generations yet unborn shall rise up and call me blessed!"

"Sum genyrashuns as is bom'll rise up, mighty suddent, an' call ye sumthin' else ef ye go to kickin' up a rumpus," Mr. Patton growled.

"Don't try to intimidate me, sir! I know too well how loyally my sex will llock to my. support when they have heard my battle-cry. You do not know the power of aroused womanhood. Mightier, far mightier, sir, than the hand that wields the sword is the hand that rocks the cradle."

"Ye'd a darn sight better invest in th' cradle-rockin' bizness yerself, then," observed Mr. Patton.

"And become the slave of tyrant Man ? Never---------"

"Oh, I kin see ye have good reasons," interrupted Mr. Patton, looking the Apostle over. "An' now, ma'am, let me give ye a little tip. Ye've dropped off at th' wrong station. Th' boys here is well paid, an' their women is contented an' happy, fer we don't keep no man who don't treat his fambly right. An' this ain't no stampin' ground fer th' Demon Rum. There ain't be'n no drunks here for over two year. Th' boys takes their little dram, but they has to keep sober an' peaceful, er git. There ain't no grand an' glorious misshun fer ye here, ma'am. So ye'd better move on an' not start nothin'—sumthin' might happen to hurt yer feelin's."

Miss Ripper laughed, scornfully and sarcastically.

"The stale, trite arguments of the blind and besotted! Hear me, benighted man! This very evening I begin my work, and woe to him who seeks to stay the Progress of Reform! Woe unto---------"

"Don't whoa me, ma'am," growled Pottering Pete, dodging the quivering forefinger. "I ain't no cayuse. Miss Nipper---------"

"Ripper, sir!"

"Yes, ma'am, Ripper. What I wuz goin' to sav, Miss Flipper----------"

"Sir! Ripper!"

'Shore! I wuz jest a goin' to remark, Miss Dipper, thet it's dangerous to work yerself into sich a latherin' sweat. Th' temperachure might, drap

suddcntly, an' give ye a cold tlict would strike in.

"You refuse to assist me, Mr. Pat ton ?"

"I shortly do. Ye're playin' a lone hand this round. Count me out."

"Very well, sir I You shall see what a woman, armed in the cause of right, can accomplish single-handed. You shall bitterly regret the glorious op portunity you have cast away. Mark my words!"

The Apostle of Reform stalked ma jestically down the slope. Mr. Pat ton heaved a sigh of relief, and dried his perspiring face with his shirt sleeve.

"Sence I stumbled onto th' Lucky Tumble mine," he asserted, watching the retreating figure of Miss Ripper, "I've be'n pestered by all kinds o' people with all kinds o' schemes, but th' 'postle shorely duz hold th' gavel. She's a wantin' to be bought off, Jim my. Ef she riles up them female slaves down yander there's a goin' to be trubbel."

The red-shirted clerk grinned and nodded, concurringly, and returned to his desk, leaving Mr. Patton in deep meditation.

"Jimmy," Mr. Patton called, after awhile, "I kind o' thought I heerd a yell. Jest take a peep out o' th' south winder."

"Looks like sumthin' had erupted down at Shorty's Place, Mr. Patton," Jimmy reported.

Pottering Pete arose slowly and slouched around the office building to the window that commanded a view of the little town. Looking downward he discerned a group of agitated chil dren gathered at a safe distance from Shorty's front door. An instant later Shorty himself emerged tumultuously, holding his head with both hands, while the Apostle of Reform, bran dishing an ax, appeared in the door way.

"The reform movement has begun," observed Mr. Patton. "Th' 'postle is Nationizin' Shorty's Place, fer a start er."

The red-shirted clerk snorted indig nantly.

"If it was only a man!" he snarled.

Pottering Pete scratched his,beard ed chin.

"But it's a woman, Jimmy," he said, softly. "I reckolect ol' Doc Phipps ust to say thet like cured like. Ain't Mike Hannigan's shack th' third frum th' big boulder, down there, Jimmy?"

"Fourth."

"I don't like to impede th' progress uv reform," Mr. Patton continued, "but I kind o' reckon it's up to Mike's wife to take a fall out o' th' Senorita Bloomerino. I'm a goin' now to per suade her to organize a box party of them female slaves to attend th' 'pos-tle's show, Jimmy. I'll be back in an hour.

When he returned, Mr. Patton seemed full of suppressed elation.

"Th' 'postle's meetin's goin' to be gin in a few minnits, Jimmy," he an nounced. "Th' slaves is a gatherin' now, right down there in th' flat, to hear th' 'mancipashun procklymashun. We'll set here in th' winder an' watch th' proceeding."

"And Mrs. Hannigan's box party ——."

"Will attend, Jimmy. It's a gath erin' now, back uv Mike's shack. Twould shock ye to hear Mrs. Han-, nigan's opinyun uv th' 'postle, Jimmy. Not a drap uv beer did th' Hannigan's have fer supper, 'count o' Shorty's Place bein' wrecked. 'Twas lucky fer th' 'postle I got to Hannigan's jest as I did. Mrs. Hannigan wuz jest a start in' to hurl th' curse uv Rome an' a few bricks at th' 'postle's head."

"They mustn't hurt the Apostle," said Jimmy, in alarm.' "I ain't got no special love for her, but she's a----------"

"No danger, Jimmy," said Mr. Patton. "Jest a little eskort uv slaves down to th' deep hole in th' crick, an'

ten to th' •eww-thirty train—which V *po«tlr*ll probably be anxtoux to git w<V on."

TSr red - whirled clerk jnnnrd ap movingly,

"TTwer'a th' 'poalle, now, Jimmy,'* vrlaimed Mr. Patton, **a climbin' up h' lug boulder to brgio her revvlashun lo tn wlavca."

Duwk had settled over mountains had gulch, but the brilliancy of a full trnon enabled the two watchers almost i<3 distinguish the faces of the little issemblagc of roughly •clad women that surrounded Miss Ripper as her first shrill tones floated up the slope.

Soon another voice chimed in—the liarsh and powerful voice of a tower ing giantess, who shook her bare and brawny arms above her auburn head as she shouted:

"It's a brazen hussy ye air, a ca-xoortin' around in thim pants, an' a causin' thrubble in th' town. Out vrid ye, a callin' dacint wimmin shlavea—as though lookin' afther her ould mon that wurruks fer her, an' th' little childer that cries fer her, wasn't all th' roights anny dacint woman wants. Kim down off there!" The bare and brawny arms had reached up and plucked the astounded Apostle from her perch. Quietly and quickly, in regular order, the little procession disappeared around a bend •in the gulch.

"Can't we slip down and see th' baptism?" asked the red-shirted clerk, eagerly.

Mr. Patton shook his head.

"It's fer female slaves only, Jimmy. How many dips d'ye reckon th' 'postle'll stand afore she agrees to be good ?"

"Ltown an' out in three rounds," Jimmy ventured. "Her jaw swings too luose for a stayer.'*

"Yer a good guesaer, Jimmy," re marked Puttering Pete, after several moments of expectant silence. "They're a cornin' back—in plenty o' time fer that seven-thirty. Observe th' Seno-rita Bloomerino, Jimmy; she's had a change uv raiment, ez well ez of con-vickshuns. She's a wearin' one uv Mrs. Hannigan's wrappers—an' wear in' it with th' grace uv a Dutch us at a soshul funkshun. There's nuthin' like th' water-cure, Jimmy—'speshully ef th' water's cold."

"Pay ye to start a sanitarium down there, Mr. Patton," suggested the red-shirted clerk.

"What kind uv a flag's that Mrs. Hannigan's a carryin' on that pole?" asked Pete, craning his long neck. "'Tain't th' flag uv oi' Erin, is it, Jimmy ?"

The red-shirted clerk shaded his eyes with his hand, and peered sharply downward at the procession as it moved up the only street of the town, toward the railroad station.

"S'help me Dr. Mary Walker!" he ejaculated. "It's bloomers!"

Pottering Pete slid from the win dow to the ground, took a fresh bite of Miner's Twist, and stroked his bearded chin caressingly.

"Th' reform movement is busted," he said, mildly, "an' th' victors has th' spoils. Bloomers! two uv a kind, an' no keerds to fill with, sence th' 'postle hez quit th' game. Jimmy, I move we go down to Shorty's Place an' see ef we can't find enuff fragments of th' Demon uv Rum to celybrate th' ockashun uv our impedin' th' Progress uv Reform."

* * *

When < man aud-woman appear before him with *tr* marriage license he always gives them a life sentence.

The Valley GUI and Other Mallett

Mr Frank \ fUrattoa. whose cvrapIlmentary letter lo the editor of Thu VaMey Weekly hi re produced oa lb* first png* <4 this iasue la a«>t iter only «a« wh«> heltevea that different norm bem of the fair sei haw pom-d for I hr beaut I h»I IttaaIretIona that, since last November have adoraiM the front cover of thia magariue. which la a tribute tn The Valley OHi pan t'WatMk* powers, and to th- art I at Ic efforts of that master photographer. J. C. HIrausa. before wh<** camera she has posed For then* ii only oae Valley Girl. and ahe ta a type of thli great regma of the Middle West, throbbing with IIf- aad sparkling with beauty, even aa does the country which ahe represents.

Mr Stratum also refer* to the recent article written by Lincoln J. St-ffens In McClure's Magni inc saying that this writer Is only tell ing the A. B C of municipal corruption True. The entire story, from Alpha to Omega, is told in "The Battle Againwt Bribery." now running as a serial in The Valley Weekly, the author of which, by the way. started the series of articles in McClure's by writing the first of all. "Tweed [Jays in St Louis," which was published in October. 1902

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MAGAZINE.

Short Stories.

FEBRUARY, 190 3

"THE BEST LAID PLANS"

By GERTRUDE RORTOH

And Four Othcr Good Short Stories
In This Number

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