

THE SOLDIER'S EXPERIENCE.

Why the Old Man Loved the Mignonettes.

The Hermit of Chelsea College Gardens Spins an Interesting Story of Love and Flowers.

(From Thursday's Daily.)

One dreamy, drowsy afternoon toward the end of June, having nothing particular to do, I sauntered in the direction of the Chelsea college gardens. This shady little nook holds the home of some of our old soldiers. There they sat, in solemn rows of fours and fives, on the wooden benches in the cool, green avenue, dreaming away the long summer afternoon, while they watched the children at play on the grass before them.

A great longing came over me to learn something of their lives.

If I could come across one alone, I thought, there might be a chance of it. So, with a lingering, backward look at the old fellows, I walked on until I came to a more secluded part of the gardens, where the pensioners cultivated little plots of ground and sold flowers and ferns to the nurse and children, the proceeds of which enabled them to buy tobacco and rum and other small luxuries.

It had been intensely hot, but now a refreshing breeze was tossing the lilac and laburnum trees, and in the cool of the day the old men were all hard at work, watering, weeding and raking away, while they smoked and changed opinions as to their respective nurseries.

Crossing the gravel path, I came upon a bed composed entirely of mignonette. Its fragrance was delightful, and I paused a moment to enjoy the scent.

This little garden excited my curiosity, and I looked with interest at the gardener. His face was thin and lined, with an expression of settled melancholy in it, but there was something in the large, dark eyes and sensitive mouth that took my fancy.

"Here is an opportunity," I thought. "He looks like a nice, approachable old man and, I dare say, would be glad to have a chat."

At that moment, as if by some sudden transition of mind, he glanced up and fixed his speaking orbs on me.

"What lovely mignonette!" I exclaimed by way of opening fire.

He smiled, but it was such a sad smile I wished he hadn't. It somehow made me feel sick and sorry.

"Let me cut you some, madam," he said gravely. "I will in a moment, if you can wait."

"Please, oh, I should like nothing better!" I answered, seating myself and looking on contentedly, while my new friend went to work with a long pair of rusty scissors.

His face interested me, strangely, none the less when I noticed that the Victoria cross adorned his breast. How could I get him to talk?

"May I ask why you cultivate only one flower?" I inquired, with sudden inspiration.

He looked at me again in that intense way of his for at least a minute without speaking, then said irrelevantly:

"You have a good, kind face, lady, and—"

He paused.

"Thank you for saying so," I rejoined, somewhat tamely, feeling baffled and wondering what was coming next.

"You asked me just now why I only grew one flower. I will tell you if you care to listen."

"Yes," I replied eagerly; "I am all attention."

"It happened so long ago, yet it seems only like yesterday. Mignon, Mignon!" he half-murmured to himself.

I coughed softly to remind him of my presence.

"Lady, did you ever love any one very dearly?" he asked abruptly.

"Have I?" I returned, somewhat taken aback by this unexpected question. "Well, yes, I have been fond of several people I have met at different times of my life," was my discreet rejoinder.

"Those two were the only ones I cared for in this world—Mignon and Ralph Stanley."

"Who was Mignon?" I queried gently, for the old man's face was full of emotion when he spoke her name.

"I always called her Mignon and so did he," he continued, without heeding me; "the name suited her so well. She was never without a slip of this—"

"—touching the flowers in my lap—in her belt or gown. She had a passion for mignonette. That is why we called her Mignon, and she was as sweet as

the flower itself, with her bluebell eyes and nut brown hair."

"Who was this other?" I ventured to ask after a pause.

Again the veteran seemed to forget my existence, as he sighed and said musingly:

"To think that I never guessed it. And they were such a bonny pair, too. She could not help loving him, the genial, handsome laddie. Men and officers alike in our regiment simply adored him."

"He served with you, then?"

"Yes, but I was only in the ranks, while he held a commission."

"Yet you were friends?"

"Friends—aye, that we were; from our schoolboy days we were chums. When Ralph was sent to the Crimean war, I threw everything to the winds, enlisted in his regiment and went, too, and we fought in many a fierce battle together. But one thought kept us up through all—dear little Mignon, the vicar's daughter. Ah, what happy old times they were at the vicarage!"

"Mignon was an only child; her father, our coach, Ralph's and mine. What merry little tea parties we had—just we four, the scent of mignonette everywhere. The garden, the windows and the rooms of the old house were full of it—mignonette, all mignonette!"

My glance wandered to the flowers blooming at my feet as I tried to picture the little scene put before me.

"And Ralph loved Mignon as well as I," he pursued, "though neither of us knew the other's secret. Well, those happy days came to an end. Young Stanley left us to study for the army, while I remained to stagnate in my father's office in town."

"How I envied Ralph's luck! Not that I grudged him any good thing, but my lot in life did seem—hard in comparison to his. As the time passed my restlessness and discontent increased. Despite my attachment to Mignon, my numdrum, monotonous existence was so hateful to me. So, when the war broke out and Ralph was ordered abroad, I made up my mind to go, too, in the ranks of the same regiment. Here was an opportunity not to be lost of leading a more glorious life—to fight for my country, my people and for the love of 'old England.'"

"How I dreamed of the home coming after the work was done! Death had no place in my mind. How I anticipated the meeting with Mignon with the love light that I—poor fool—imagined she felt for me shining in her soft blue eyes. I thought I would pour out my heart and tell her I had come back to claim her, never to part any more. Ah, if I had but known!"

He smiled again in his melancholy way and continued:

"Yes, if I had only known that she cared for Ralph I should have spared many a heartache in after years."

The old soldier gazed abstractedly at his mignonette and doubtless lived over again that memorable campaign, while I wondered if the cross on his breast had anything to do with his history. He answered my glance.

"I am coming to that now, lady. One bitter November night, or rather morning, we awoke to find the enemy bearing down on us in overwhelming numbers before our camp was astir. The men, however, soon roused and fought shoulder to shoulder amid the roar and din of cannon, which maddened alike men and beast. After awhile I became conscious only of one thing—a figure a few yards ahead of me fighting for dear life. I can see the look on his face now! It was transfixed, shining with dauntless courage that quailed not before the onslaught of the Russians. I believe, at that moment, Ralph lived in every fiber of his being. He glowed in a fight—no more. He was surrounded and cut off from the rest of us by six or seven of the enemy double his size. Suddenly he staggered and fell. Then I found myself struggling and, crushing through countless forms and brandishing steel until I reached the stricken figure. There he lay so white and still, with his brave young face upturned to the leaden sky. My arms went instinctively round him, and as I turned and faced the lot of them—perhaps it was fancy—but a change seemed to come into their eager, glittering eyes as they involuntarily fell back a pace or two. It was only for a moment. They again pressed forward, and no doubt the pair of us would have been quickly cut into mince meat out for an unexpected diversion created just then by the arrival of the Enniskillen dragoons. With their aid the Russians were completely routed, and in the confusion of their retreat and flight I managed to carry Ralph safely back to camp."

"And you escaped unscathed?"

"No, unluckily, lady. I received some very bad cuts on my head and back, which brought about my discharge from the army as being unfit for active service. When I had somewhat recovered,

Ralph told me that Mignon had promised to become his wife, and six months later they were married."

"Did Mignon ever know that you cared for her?" I asked rather huskily.

"Yes; many years after, when they came to see me here, I think, as they carried away some of my mignonette, they both guessed it for the first time."

A bell near by clanged out the tea hour as he finished speaking, so, with a close clasp of the hand, my old man and I parted.—Chicago Herald.

A Serious Charge.

Bennett, May 24.—Ted Cullen is in jail here charged with the attempt of rape on an 11-year-old girl, May Neilson, last Thursday afternoon. The little girl, it is said, was playing on the streets and was enticed into a room at the jail by Cullen. The father of the little girl swore out a warrant for the arrest of Cullen, and he is now behind the bars.

Cullen is a well-known special provincial policeman.

The foregoing report is corroborated by Judge D. L. Fry, formerly editor of the Atlin Globe, who arrived last evening from Bennett. He reports further that Cullen was given a preliminary hearing before magistrates Vickers and Clifford, and remanded for trial. Mr. Fry says further:

"Since the arrest of Cullen a new charge has been made against him by a woman who says that prior to his arrest on the charge of attempted rape he cut a hole in her tent and took out something, but that she was then afraid to proceed against him because he was a policeman."

"The little girl who it is alleged Cullen attempted to victimize is a child of delicate frame, and such an act as is charged against Cullen cannot be too roundly censured. I have known men to be hung in some states for the far less heinous crime of horse stealing."

"I looked up the statutes of Canada and found that rape is punishable in that country by life imprisonment, and attempted rape by two years in jail and a whipping."—Alaskan.

Filipinos Lost Heavily.

Manila, May 21.—A force of 500 insurgents attacked 25 scouts of the 48th regiment near San Jacinto, Province of Pangasinan, on Monday, May 7, but were routed by the scouts, ten of their number being killed. The Americans lost two killed.

On April 26 the rebels burned and sacked the town of Trocin, near Bulacan, murdering natives who were friendly to the Americans, and two Spaniards. The Americans killed 37 of the insurgents.

On the same date Major Andrews, with two companies of troops, attacked Gen. Mojica's stronghold near Ormoc, Leyte island. Mojica had brass cannon and plenty of ammunition, but after three hours of fighting the insurgents fled. Their loss is not known. The Americans lost two killed and eleven wounded. They destroyed the enemy's rifles, powder and stores.

Rivers Are Late in Rising.

The fact that the Yukon continues to remain at a fixed stage with but little navigation is not gratifying to the owners and operators of large steamers either on the upper or lower river.

It can not be learned for a certainty what amount of snow there is back in the headwater countries of the Hootalingua, Big and Little Salmon river and other streams tributary to the Yukon to melt and thereby raise the portion of the river this side of Thirtymile; but on the upper rivers and lakes it is authentically stated that the rise will be very slow.

A report has been brought down, although it is not vouched for, to the effect that the railroad construction party, in order to get along the bank of Lewis lake which lies on its line between Caribou and Whitehorse, lowered the water in that lake by opening a channel on the west side, and that now the overflow water from that lake which formerly poured into Lake Marsh runs off to the eastward and does not get into Marsh. It is also said that there is not a great amount of water now flowing into either Lindeman or Bennett lakes and that the prospects for steamers drawing two feet and more for getting over the caribou bar are not at all favorable, as the water there was still quite low, only 16 inches deep, eight days ago, and at that time it was not reported as rising over an inch in 48 hours.

There has as yet been very little warm weather and no warm rains to melt what snow there is in the country surrounding the upper lakes. Yesterday at Bennett the mercury stood at 55; at Whitehorse it was 50 and at all points on down from which reports were received the messages said "cool and cloudy."

A theory is advanced, and it looks like a feasible one, that the rise in the upper lakes and river is caused more from the water oozing from the ground

as it thaws in the early summer than from the melting of snow and ice. If this theory is correct, all that is needed to bring about the desired result is continuous warm weather, and the sooner it comes the better pleased will be the operators of the many large steamers which now only await water sufficient to insure them against being hung up on bars in an attempt to come down the river for the purpose of entering regularly into the summer's trade.

The fact that navigation is not regularly open by long odds when the last piece of ice passes down toward the sea has been fully demonstrated this spring. The river has now been free from ice for 30 days, and yet only a light draught craft can it be said that navigation is open.

If conditions on the upper rivers and lakes do not soon change for the better, the capacity of the transportation companies will be strained to the utmost to handle the thousands of tons of freight now at Bennett and Skagway awaiting transportation and the thousands of tons which will arrive between now and the end of the season. In the meantime many shippers will provide themselves with scows and not wait for the steamers and run the risk of having their goods left at Bennett when the end of the season arrives, as was the case with many shippers last fall.

COULDN'T MAKE IT PAY.

BY THE DISCOVERER OF BONANZA.

I crossed the summit in '85. With some boys by the name of Day. We drove our stakes around the lakes, but we couldn't make it pay.

I went to the Salmon the following year. With spirits light and gay. And worked and worked and never shirked, but I couldn't make it pay.

I went to trading the following year. Bought goods out at Dyea. But the Indians laughed and had a graft, so I couldn't make that pay.

Then I mined on the auburn Hootaling. Rocked out 'bout five a day. Not quite enough to live, and tough—so I couldn't make it pay.

Then I worked three years on Fortymile. In gravel, muck and clay. I dropped my rail—seven hundred in the hole—so I couldn't make that pay.

The upper river then I tried;—Three winters did I stay. The big A. C. got all from me, and I couldn't make it pay.

Next year I fished on the Klondike. With nets and traps I lay; I expected tun but there was no run, so I couldn't make it pay.

Then I rushed up the Creek Bonanza, which is better known today. Did I have good luck? Well I found some truck, and I guess I'll make it pay.

—George Carmack.

Skagway a Military Post.

The site offered by Skagway for a United States military post has been accepted by Gen. George M. Randall, commander of the department of Alaska. The news came in a letter received from the general to Capt. Hovey. In the letter the general asks for all deeds, surveys and other papers in regard to the site, and states that he wants them right away so he can forward them to the secretary of war for approval. The general is particularly anxious to get the data right away because he will leave Seattle soon, it is expected, for St. Michael.

The chamber of commerce committee, says the Alaskan, will go to work on preparation of the information and raising of the money to buy the site. Surveys will also have to be made in a hurry.

It is thought likely the war department will approve the plans to be submitted by the general, and that before many weeks definite orders will be received. The report from Seattle may be sent to Washington by wire, and the business transacted in the shortest possible time. It is thought that should the general get away from Seattle before the department makes its decision in the matter that the final word may be forwarded right to Capt. Hovey and he be authorized to take up the work of putting the site in condition for occupancy.

The site under consideration is on the west side of the Skagway river between Seventeenth and Twenty-first avenues, and comprises thirteen and a fraction acres. It is partly cleared, but considerable clearing and grubbing will have to be done to put the ground in condition for use as a post site. It is likely, therefore, the site being accepted, that the troops will not be on the ground to call it their home until fall, but it may that some of the boys will have an opportunity to prove their abilities as landscape beautifiers and reclaimers.

Carbon paper for sale at the Nugget office.

Sour Dough Letter Heads for sale at the Nugget office.

MEAT FAMINE IS NOW ON.

Butcher Shops Out of Meat and Close Up.

Heavy Consignments Expected Soon—No Pork for Past 30 Days—Canned Meat Now Has Its Day.

This morning three of the leading meat markets were closed by the proprietors owing to the alarming scarcity of meat, they having no fresh meat of any description, neither, beef, mutton or pork.

There has been no fresh pork in town for the past month and the supply of beef was completely exhausted, save some few quarters held by the Denver and Victoria markets. The shops which have closed temporarily are the City market on Second avenue, the Bonanza and Bay City markets on Third street, or that matter all shops in town can be said to have closed save to their particular customers.

Chas. Murphy, of the Bonanza market said: "We are practically out of beef, pork and mutton. What little we have we will sell for from 65 cents to \$1.25 a pound. I do not think meat will go any higher, but if it does we will not continue in the business, at least not until prices come back to an equitable rate."

Chas. Bussard, of the Bay City market said: "We have closed up temporarily, but expect to do business again tomorrow. Ten head of cattle arrived yesterday and \$600 a head is asked for them—\$6000 for the lot. There are lots of cattle at Bennett, but owing to the low stage of the water it is impossible at present to ship them in. There are a number of scows on the way down, however, and probably there will be plenty of beef in a few more days."

At the City Market there was but a few pounds of boiling beef and no hind quarters.

Mr. Walle, of the Victoria market, said: "What little we have at present is saved for our old customers and sells for \$1.25 per pound when taken by the half beef. There is no profit at that price. We expect 160 head in soon, however, and will then have plenty for all. We had to refuse restaurants this morning. Fortunately there is plenty of eggs in the city, consequently the lack of meat will not be so severely felt. Canned meats will have to be served in many places. We have had no mutton since last Friday and pork has not been seen for the past month; there is none in town. We paid for five steers and one cow \$3500 a few days ago. They cost us \$1 a pound on the hoof. We are losing money right along on the stock at the prices even at their high figure, but will continue to supply our customers as long as we can obtain a pound of beef."

It was learned later in the day that the stock which was held at \$600 a head was sold to Chas. Bussard of the Bay City market and Murphy Bros., of the Bonanza market for \$525 a head. They will weight dressed about 675 pounds each.

Wholesale Litigation.

During the past winter and spring, while there was continuous litigation in which, to use a provincialism, "master and servant" were involved, it was not often that more than two or three claimants were in court at one time. Now, however, things have changed, as it is not unusual to see from 10 to 25 men all in court at one time with complaints against the same party, the party usually being a mine operator who has a lay. These days it is not unusual to see every man that has been employed about a mine from the foreman down to the dishwasher in the cook house all in court with the common complaint—suit for services rendered.

In many instances the gold has been washed out of the dumps and is not in evidence, while the laborers are still holding their empty sacks. There is no concealing the fact that, so far as labor is concerned, things are in a deplorable condition in the Klondike district.

They Look Moth-Eaten.

To a great extent the same old signs hold good. In the winter it was easy to distinguish new arrivals over the ice from their smoked ham complexions. The same complexions is acquired now by those coming down on scows, and in addition to the dark, brown color, very few noses escape becoming more or less blistered on the route which gives them something of moth-eaten appearance for several days after landing. However, a large portion of the travel from above is by scows at the present time.