

The House of Too Much Trouble.

BY ALBERT BIZLOW PAINE.

In the House of Too Much Trouble  
Lived a lonely little boy;  
He was eager for a playmate,  
He was hungry for a toy.  
But 'twas always too much bother,  
Too much dirt and too much noise,  
For the House of Too Much Trouble,  
Wasn't meant for little boys.

And sometimes the little fellow  
Left a hook upon the floor,  
Or forgot and laughed too loudly,  
Or he failed to close the door.  
In a House of Too Much Trouble,  
Things must be precise and trim—  
In the House of Too Much Trouble  
There was little room for him.

He must never scatter playthings,  
He must never romp and play;  
Every room must be in order,  
And kept quiet all the day.  
He had never had companions,  
He had never owned a pet—  
In the House of Too Much Trouble,  
It is trim and quiet yet.

Ev'ry room is set in order—  
Ev'ry book is in its place,  
And the lonely little fellow  
Wears a smile upon his face.  
In the House of Too Much Trouble  
He is silent and at rest—  
In the House of Too Much Trouble,  
With a lily on his breast.

—Munsey's.

PROMOTED:

A Story of the Zulu War.

By SYDNEY WATSON.

Author of "The Slave Chase," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IV.

A DANGEROUS BIT OF SERVICE.

The sentry on the colonel's quarters admitted him at once, and he found his superior sitting at a table, spread with maps and official-looking documents; a cup of strong coffee at his side on a smaller table, and a look of evident perplexity upon his face. It brightened,



"YOU SEE THIS DOTTED LINE ON THE MAP?"

however, as Captain Morgan entered, and he said, "Sit down, Morgan, I want a little consultation over a rather difficult matter." Then placing his forefinger on a spot of the map spread out before him, he said, "It seems to me that, as our line of march up to the main body of our troops lies across here," pointing to a line of dots in red ink on the map, "and that this river runs across the direct road; and as these late rains must have considerably swollen all the streams, that if we could safely work round this bend, and cross the river at a shallower spot later on (every day of this fine weather will make a difference), we should gain time in the long run, save an immense amount of physical energy, and probably keep our men from taking a chill at the first. But my difficulty is just this: what sort of country lies this way; and how far is it practicable to try it? I do not feel that I can spare an officer for this survey, and I suppose our fellows know so little of rough riding, and general bush lore, that I could not entrust such an important matter to either of them. Now, the question is, have we a man? and if not, whom shall we send?" In a moment Captain Morgan thought of the foregoing conversation between himself and Captain Elcombe, and smiling, he said, "Well, colonel, I think we have got the very man for that bit of work; in fact, if we searched the whole army through, I don't believe we could find another more fitted."

"Capital!" broke in the colonel, "but who is this splendid article ready made to our hand?"

"Corporal Harris," replied the captain. "Corporal Harris?" said the colonel, meditatively; "Corporal Harris?" Ah! I remember, the man whose wife died suddenly when we were marching to Waterloo Station. What makes you think he would be so admirably fitted for this service?"

"Well, colonel, he has been a rough rider in Mexico, and in the thick of some of the more recent border fights, and for several years almost lived in the saddle in his connection with an extensive cattle ranch; and, strangely enough, not an hour ago I was speaking to Elcombe of this man's special qualifications for such work, and the possibility that we might find him very useful out here."

"You think he is thoroughly trustworthy, Morgan?"

"Yes, colonel, he is as true as steel, and I shall be much surprised indeed if we are not all astonished at the completeness of his observations and report, on his return."

"Well, Morgan, this is very lucky. I think, if you will wait a few minutes, we will send for him, and together hear what he has to say about it. Sentry!"

"Here, sir!"

"Tell Orderly Jones to summon Corporal Harris to me at once."

"Yes, sir."

In a few moments Harris appeared; saluting the officers, he stood at "Attention," when the colonel opened fire by at once remarking, "I have sent for you, Harris, on the recommendation of Captain Morgan, to entrust to you a most critical and most dangerous bit of service. Come round here to this side of the table, and follow me closely in what I say."

"You see this dotted line on the map?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, that is the direct line of our march, and as I have been explaining to Captain Morgan, and you will please notice, it brings us to the widest part of that river; now it has struck me (and my advices suggest some such course), that if we could forge round this bend, and cross the river at one of its narrower points, later on in the march, when the effects of the recent rains will have considerably lessened it, we should gain much all round. And Captain Morgan tells me you are quite at home in the saddle, and used to bush life. Now, it will mean four or five days' hard riding, and all the time with your life in your hand. Will you undertake it?"

"Yes, colonel," he replied.

"When will you be ready to start?"

"At daylight, sir."

"What will you need to take with you?"

"Let me see," said Harris, thoughtfully; "a good compass, a large warm rug, a belt of cartridges, a short rifle, a pair of revolvers, a small bag of food, and a thorough good horse; that, colonel, is about all, I think."

Then, after a few more directions, the colonel dismissed him, simply saying, "Captain Morgan will see you start in the morning. Remember, Harris, this is a great trust, show your British pluck, and your loyalty to our confidence in you. Good-night."

"Good night, sir."

CHAPTER V.  
A LONELY RIDE.

When Teddy Jones had grasped the hand of our hero in that farewell grip before he left the ship, he had said, "Let me give you my guiding star among texts, and let us both use it always: 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths,'" and as Harris left the colonel's room these words came to his heart with force and power, and he sought a few moments' solitude where he could pour out his soul to God.

Standing under the deep shadow of an angle in one of the lofty walls, he prayed, "O Lord, thou knowest how my soul hates war now, and all to do with war, but that I yet feel I must do my duty as unto thee, while I am here. Thou knowest this service entrusted to me, and thou hast said, 'Acknowledge me in all thy ways, and I will direct thy paths.' Please, Lord, guide, direct, and bless me, and make me valiant for thee, and help me to lead others to thy feet, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

About five o'clock next morning, Harris and Captain Morgan might have been seen talking together just outside the precincts of the barracks; Harris' arm is through the bridle of the horse, which is walking slowly in pace with them, but is eagerly impatient to be off. The animal was of comparatively small breed, but evidently full of fire, and of strong staying powers, and in general build and appearance quite unlike the usual type of

a soldier's horse. Seeing the animal's impatience, Captain Morgan turned to Harris, and with a voice touched with evident emotion, he said, "God bless you, Harris, and bring you back in safety;" then, turning quickly upon his heel, he walked back to his room. Harris meanwhile tightened the saddle girth, examined each buckle of the harness separately and carefully, then, leaping into the saddle, with a cheery word to the horse, he started off at a rapid but even pace.

Wondrously sweet was the sense of Divine communion with him as, in stillness of that early African morning he rode on, alone—yet not alone.

How varying was the country through which he passed, as he constantly consulted the compass he carried with him for guidance. For many miles he passed over a sandy, slightly uneven road, where here and there the rock peeped up through the thin crust of sandy soil; then



"HE OPENED HIS LITTLE BREAST-POCKET BOOK."

again the track would run close beside miles of dense underwood and thicket, and now, when at last the sun was setting, and horse and rider were both tired, he looked about for a good place to camp; where there would be food for the horse, and comparative shelter for himself.

Having selected a spot he dismounted, and after talking a moment or two to the horse, as if the animal could understand the praise that he was giving him, he proceeded to hobble him after the Mexican fashion; then turning him loose he commenced to gather dry wood for a fire, and branches and leaves to form a slightly raised bedstead, according to the official instructions drawn up a few years before by Sir Garnet Wolseley for the Ashantee expedition.

How solemn was the sense of his position, yet how secure he felt! Jesus was his Friend and Brother, God his Father, the Holy Spirit his Guide. After a good repast he opened his little breast-pocket book—a New Testament with the Psalms bound together, and, after reading the story of Christ's temptation in the wilderness, he opened on the 78th Psalm, and read on till he came to the fourteenth verse, "And all the night with a light of fire;" and, looking at the bright flames of his own camp fire, he thought what a beautiful word just then for him! How cheerful it looked! And he was joyfully conscious of the brightness of God's presence as his soul's firelight amid the darkness. Then, again, he thought of the power of the bush firelight in keeping off wild beasts, and God's promise to him, "No ravenous beast shall go up thereon." He thought of the value of the firelight to show up enemies; and, watching the curling flames, thoughts crowded upon his mind, he blessed God for his confidence and joy; and though he knew that possibly his camp fire might go out while he slept, yet that God's eye would not close. His protecting firelight would overshadow him; and in this simplicity of trust he rolled himself in his rug, and slept till daybreak

(To be continued.)

A CAN OF LIQUID AIR.

Charles E. Tripler, the famous experimenter in liquid air, recently went to Boston, says an exchange, to visit his friend, Elihu Thomson, the electrical expert. He took with him a can of liquefied air.

It was a simple-looking can, and might have held baked beans or cold coffee so far as its outward appearance went. But it contained a fluid so cold that a cake of ice acts on it like fire on water. It makes it boil. It is so cold that it freezes alcohol stiff and turns mercury into a substance hard enough to drive nails with. It was a quart of the coldest thing on earth that Mr. Tripler had in this tin can, and he took it with him to luncheon,

where he put it on the floor by his chair. They lunched in a hotel cafe and ordered a steak. After it had been brought in, and while the waiter's back was turned, Mr. Tripler lifted it from the platter, opened the can and exposed the meat to the liquid air. When he put it back on the platter it was as hard as a rock.

"Waiter," called Mr. Tripler; "come here." The waiter obeyed.

"What's the matter with this steak?" he asked anxiously.

He lifted it from the plate by two fingers and struck it with his knife. The frozen meat rang like a bell.

"I d—d—on't k—n—now, sir," he faltered, and he started for the head waiter on the run.

Mr. Tripler, by the way, is one of the fiercest-looking men in the inventing business. His moustache is of the pirate cut and his eyebrows bristle and meet in the middle. Therefore, the head waiter approached him with almost timidity:

"Do you serve your steaks like this as a rule?" asked Mr. Tripler, as he struck the time of day on it.

"It's that chef," explained the head waiter, as he started for the kitchen.

A few minutes later the chef appeared with the head waiter. He recognized the steak by sight at once. Then Mr. Tripler took it up and made it ring again.

"Mercy! Gracious!" ejaculated the chef, "I didn't do it, sure!"

Then Mr. Tripler smiled and Mr. Thompson laughed. A new steak was ordered and the frozen one was carried below to fool the rest of the kitchen.—Christian Uplook.

The Ermine.

BY ELIZABETH STUART PHILLIPS.

I read of the ermine to-day,  
Of the ermine who will not step  
By the faint of a step in the mire;  
The creature who will not stain  
Her garment of wild white fire,

Of the dumb, flying, soulless thing,  
(So we with our souls dare to say),  
The being of sense and of soul,  
That will not, that will not defile  
The nature she took from her God.

And we with the souls that we have,  
Go cheering the hunters on,  
To prey with that pleading eye,  
She cannot go into the mud!  
She can stay like the snow, and die!

The hunters come leaping on,  
She turns like a hart at bay,  
They do with her as they will,  
O, thou who thinkest on this,  
Stand like a star, and be still.

"Here the soil oozes under thy feet"  
Better, ah! better to die  
Than to take one step in the mire;  
Oh! blessed to die or to live,  
With garment of holy fire!

THE ERMINE.

Writing of the ermine, Miss D. V. Farley tells us that the ermine is an animal of the genus Mustela, and is an inhabitant of northern climates in Europe and America. In form, food, and manners it very closely resembles the weasel. During the summer months the fur on the upper part of the little animal's body is of a reddish-brown colour, and the under part of a pale yellow; it is then called a stoat. In the winter the fur changes to a snowy-white, and it is then that the animal is recognized as the ermine. The tip of the tail is of the most intense black throughout the year.

In consequence of the change that occurs in the colour of its fur at different seasons it is not generally known that the stoat and ermine are identical. The fur of the ermine is quite valuable, and is always in demand. At one time it was an insignia of royalty, the state robes of judges and magistrates were lined with ermine as an emblem of purity. The ermine is such a cunning little animal in its ways that it is almost as difficult to catch as it is to "catch a weasel asleep."

In fact, about the only way to capture it is to mark its course from its home, and then strew mud and dirt in its pathway. When the dainty, fastidious little animal reaches the point in its path where the mud and dirt are strewn, it will lie down and subject itself to capture and death rather than soil or even smirch one of its snow-white hairs. Truly, it is a fitting emblem of purity!

Boys and girls, take to your hearts a lesson from the ermine counsels Miss Farley, and shun the mud and dirt that Satan may strew in your pathway to capture you. Pass it by, touch it not, yes, die, if necessary, rather than allow it to smirch your character and good name. Bad company, irreverence, intoxicating drinks are all mud and dirt of the vilest kind, and will surely smirch you if you dare to touch them.