

Prosperity and thence had deserted Siroon altogether. As the waves receded, leaving a bare stretch of sand where once whole fleets had ridden at anchor, the once flourishing town had dwindled and sunk, in spite of valiant struggles to revive and re-educate the survivors.

Otto Combs, the eldest of the three, was a tall, thin, blond, athletic, and a little bit of an athlete. His temperature of a less ephemeral sort, he used his holiday by trying to get a little of the "know" on which his two companions trenchant but not discriminating criticism. He was a "hard-boiled" man, with clean-cut, aquiline features, and was looked upon by the two others as their charming, but not their equal, in the social.

Willie Jordan, the youngest of the party, was short, and, alas! fat, with a heavy-lidded eye, and a thick mustache, which he cultivated as the trade-mark of his calling, which was a rather successful one.

Clifford King, the remaining member of the trio, was a barrister, to whom no one would have given a second glance. He was a dark-haired, blue-eyed, good-humored young fellow, whom everybody liked, and in whose advice they all believed with an enthusiasm which was not without excuse, for Clifford had brains, and was only too ready to be opportunistic, and to come to all who can walk in the right

old-time ways none with him. He was a "hard-boiled" man, with clean-cut, aquiline features, and was looked upon by the two others as their charming, but not their equal, in the social.

"Try the Blue Lion," said Miss Bosta, primly.

"I'm grew stiff," said Miss Bosta. "My friend is no frequenter of taverns," said he.

"Try the Blue Lion," said Miss Bosta again.

Her father burst into a dry laugh.

"The Blue Lion has a good many frequenters," said he, "and a lot of other taverns," said he. "Nephtis, the niece of the man who keeps the Blue Lion, and the Frog and the preflight girl in the place."

A light broke over Otto's face, but Miss Bosta was not to be deceived.

"I shall have to speak to her very seriously," said she with a little frown. "Don't encourage half-bred men to stray and waste their time over here."

They knew the colonel's house from the outside, having passed it on many occasions on their way to Courtstairs, the next town. It was about a mile and a half beyond the "Blue Lion," a place

Behind the house was a garden, with a poultry-run and a paddock; the colonel reading his paper under a apple tree, while the flutter of a petticoat in the background among the trees seemed to confirm their suspicions.

"We's uncharted the rascal!" smiled Otter, as he heard footstep after footstep in the house, in answer to their knocking ring.

When the door was opened their hearts sank, for there stood before them a woman of 40 at least, small,

figure and lean spinster?" asked Colonel in astonishment.

"Oh! she's fallen in love!" "I've found that out, but it is with a usual maid of the inn, nobody half so good as Miss Bostal."

"Interesting!"

"Yes; I have an idea that the spinster is a heroine. Not the sort of robbing one, but a noble one, of course. But while they talked about a certain 'Nell,' who is evidently not a novel heroine, and who has no transient affections, I looked into their rooms, the poor little dining-room, and I saw a picture of a girl, I saw such a history of pinched

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"—the type of the common shrew." "I shouldn't have thought it of Jordan," murmured Otto, in pity tempered with indignation. "But where is the ruffian himself?" asked Clifford, stopping short. "Do you think we're on the wrong scent, after all?" "We were anybody but Jordan I should say yes," said Otto, deliberately. "But his susceptibility is so colossal that I see no reason to doubt even this." Nevertheless he followed Clifford, when the latter turned back towards the little bridge. "There's a cottage," said the more

And with one accord they bent their steps in the direction of the voice; and their going was not without noise, for by the roadside, scattering a colony of fowls on the other side, and making their way over the rough grass beside the river, where the boats were drawn up, which carried enough to consist of a man, a woman, and a child upon a wooden shed, and a strong smell of pitch, and two human figures. The one was Jordan, coatless, with his straw hat tilted to the back of his head, a tar-bush in one hand and a tin in the other, eager in the humble but useful task of covering

his breath. Her hair had turned since childhood from flaxen to a deeper tint, and was now a light bronze color. There was about her an air of refinement and grace which could not fail to astonish a stranger who found her in these strange circumstances. She saw the new-comer long before poor Jordan did, and she met him with a friendly and unassuming approach while the unfortunate artist toiled on at his glorious task.

Perhaps the girl had seen the three young men together; perhaps it was only feminine quickness of wits which made her jump to a right conclusion. The thing did not matter.

"I say, old chap, it really is quite the best thing you've ever done!" began Otto, with kindly admiration.

"By Jove, Jordan, I never thought you could paint before!" added Clifford.

"There's a broad touch and at the same time, a nice feeling for effect which shows an immense advance on your previous work. You seem so to speak, to have put all your strength into it. It does you immense credit."

"Some meaning in it, too! And that's the point where you always failed before."

To the immense disgust of William

"Well, you can't take yourselves too seriously. You're going to be the first to find fault with what you have the pick to do to yourselves," said Willie, sharply.

"We're not finding fault: we are expressing admiration," said Otto.

"We are quite ready to try and hand ourselves," said Clifford, as, with a sudden burst of energy, born of his desire to flatter in the neighborhood of Nell, he threw off his own coat and struggled for possession of the trophy.

But Willie resisted, and there was danger of their both suffering from the nature of the prize, when

Conybear made no offer to assist him. It was a long time before he moved first by tilling the water. Then he took a few steps back, and then, by turning them a little on side and emptying them, to finish task. When he at last raised his head with a great sigh of satisfaction, saw in the river below a weathered old fisherman, a fisherman of the realistic, not the artistic kind, wearing a hard felt hat, a stained jersey, and a huge pair of sea-boots, who regarded him with air of mingled pity and contempt. "She always get moogs to do

"I wouldn't like to plunge into the river. 'I don't care to pull the 'cart out of my body and get no thanks for it,'" rejoined the fisherman.

Clifford, in spite of his assumed stolidness, began to feel like a fool. He looked towards the spot where Nell had been standing beside the shed, and saw that she, as well as his two friends, had disappeared. The fisherman grinned, and stuck the end of an old pipe in his mouth with an air of satisfaction.

"I wasn't fashionable enough for her, I wasn't, an' I thank my stars for it; it's saved my back many a good load."

"Light-fingered!" exclaimed Clifford with some indignation. "Do you know what you mean by that?"

"She'd just think I did! Why, you ask the folks about here what sort of character the Blue Lion's had since young Miss was about. Ask if it's a honest to stay the night in if you've money on yer! Just you ask that, an' put two and two together, like what I do, an' everybody does as knows what the place was afore she came, an' what it is now!"

Clifford was cowering under the hot sun of the September afternoon as he listened to this torrent of accusation, and such, in this passion in the young fish-

"It wasn't a little service—it was a great one," said Nell, with a look which she felt to be intoxicating.

At that moment he heard a sound like a short mocking laugh, and turning, with a sudden flush, towards the river, he saw the fisherman, with a face full of scornful amusement, punting away slowly up-stream towards Fleet Castle, Clifford, though he felt a little uneasy, was glad the man had gone.

"Your friends have gone back to Stroan," said Nell, who had blushed

her proper element in this wayside inn.

He followed her into a tiny sitting-room at the back of the inn, where they were joined by her uncle, a burly, jovial man with a round, red, honest face, who was evidently very fond of his niece, although every word each uttered seemed to emphasize the strange difference in manners and speech which existed between them.

"Proud to know you, sir," said George Clariss, when Clifford held out his hand. "Proud to know anybody mighty." Nell thinks without knowing. She's mighty particular is Nell. Lor', what mawdy! your friend Mr. Jordan there

"Ah, you don't know!" she said.

"You have to keep him in order," said Clifford.

"Yes. I treat him as I treat a lot of these young men who come out from Stroan just to idle about the place—as I treated you to begin with. And she gave him a pretty little signi- ficance and smile, which set Clifford's heart beating faster. "I set them to work. It loses them no harm, and I give 'em a little more to do." "Since I have been here," and she raised her head triumphantly, "he's been able to do almost a man to look after things."

HOW TO OBTAIN THEM.
Competitors to have as many "sunlight" as possible, and they can get it. Cut out the top portion of each wrapper, and place the wrapper in the box, with the heading "SUNLIGHT" and "WATER" written on it. The box is enclosed with an envelope, and the box is to be sent to the National Association of Manufacturers, 1000 Broadway, New York, N. Y. The box is to be sent to the National Association of Manufacturers, 1000 Broadway, New York, N. Y. The box is to be sent to the National Association of Manufacturers, 1000 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

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"Civilization?" asked Nell, smiling. "I don't know what you mean. I don't think I have any idea."

"Of course, I know what you're really mean, and what you don't like to say. But when the choice lies between helping him, and going away to please myself, is there any doubt what I will do?"

"The best woman in the world," said he, but beautifully clean, and was a front of the house, with on one side a large window, and on the other when he retired to sit late that raised the blind and tried to get a glimpse of the night. He could see the view. He began to feel he wanted to spend his life in that spot, digging Nell's cabbage roots for him, and watering her roses, doing anything that would please her. He was so sure of this fact, so that he might be near her, that he would have been as good as dead while he had ever been, or if he himself had ever been before. He asked himself, "What sort of a man was this?"

"This," said he, "is a man who has been a man."

[illegible]

He looked at her sharply, and leaving his sentence unfinished, began another: "I should think she must be a good deal more agreeable to you than you do to hers."

Nell smiled at his indignant tone. "Oh, do not mind me," she said, "I am coming here," said she, promptly. "That would be quite a different thing. Miss Bostal has had ancestors, you know, who were very powerful men, which force you into a very narrow

He waited, holding his breath. Sometimes the shadowy son had disappeared altogether for weeks, and he had been so healthy and strong, running round the walls of the little house, that he had been almost sure that he saw the figure—the Intruder—again. He heard a sound, and he took up the dropping curtain, and then when the light came in, he saw the figure—the Intruder—again. Then, though he hardly

something, isn't it?"

"Well, I suppose so,"

"When it seems to me to show a fine modesty to feel that there's nothing to be proud of about yourself, and to fall back entirely upon the 'quint' of your pedigree!"

"That's a very good-natured way of putting it," said Clifford.

"I was delighted beyond measure to find that Nell's talk was as bright as her face was pretty. And as she seemed to be so ready to do my bidding, he stayed on and on, chatting and laughing with her, listening to her prattle about her uncle and his

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