In that superb boudoir the bride beheld her-self reflected on every side in panels of richly set crystal; the framings of choicest furniture woods. On the vaulted roof were figures of beauty winged; illumined through the lateral clerestory by the glowing sun; or lighted at night from radiating lustres softened by applied science.

Her toilet tables near, she rested amid silken cushions, fairest damasks, richest and rarest curtains of gossamer.

Burnished silver and marble fountains gushed at her will, offering fragrant essences, or cooling refreshment.

All that science and refined taste could devise were there, soothing the senses, solacing the mind, promoting luxurious ease.

And the bride, awaiting there the coming in of the bridegroom, was aware of this gorgeous chamber shooting through space; running, running, running; flying, flying; shooting through the hours of the weddingday and night; over plains, through severed hills: over rivers, streets, gardens; hurrying on, whirling on; running and flying; love flying too, in chase of the senses it is ever losing.

And so they reached River du Loup, then drove to the Chateau St. John.

Young Tom Inkle, stepping from the bank a few minutes to the adjoining residence for consultation with his mother on the day following Emily's wedding, a day of excessive activity in finance, owing to the Rama gold rush, cried:

" Mother, what is the use of those two niggers, anyhow? I called Moss to ride an errand for me to Dicky Rickaby's, he couldn't go. I called Brand, he wouldn't go. What earthly object do you keep them tor?"

"Mr. Thomas," replied the mother, in a tone of high state, still surviving since yester-

day; "Demosthenes was then engaged on my affairs, therefore could not undertake yours Hildebrand did not undertake your affairs because I permitted him to decline. You, sir, have an independent income; and should engage and remunerate servants for your own

"The young black beggars! I wanted to see Dicky Rickaby, and had none else to send. What would it have mattered, mother, had Moss saddled Stilter and rode over to Second Concession, Lot Four? It is but two miles."

"Thomas, when my servant Hildebrand was last at Lot Four on a message to the medical student Dickenson Rickaby, who is living there because every boarding-house in town casts him out, the youth was made to suffer greatly. So alarmed by the medical student's misconduct as to return home insane, and remain partially insane a week! For that illusage of Hildebrand, I declined to permit Demosthenes to ride there to-day; as no inducement will ever again compel Hildebrand to step within that threshold so long as Dickenson Rickaby remains a boarder."

"For which reason, mother, I was desirous Moss should go and behold what Brand alleges Rickaby showed him. 'Twould do the cuss of

a nigger good."

'It might deprive me of the services of a faithfully attached page. That ends the matter, Thomas. Neither of my coloured servants can undertake to transact your affairs at Lot Four, Second Concession."

"Very well, mother, send the table maid Betty."

"Betty shall not go, sir. The young woman was there once already, and returned home almost beside herself with fright."

"Yes? Never heard of that. Send Lingly, your maid." "My own maid running your messages!

Tom, you're going mad!"

"Mother, I only jested about Lingly; but send some one, please. We've a rush of people at the bank to-day seeking money to go in joint stock mining ventures, or to buy crushing machinery. And seeking information about price of nuggets and gold dust. Father he's away arranging mining lots and agencies; and I want to see Dicky Rickaby, bad."

"Tom, thou aren't agoing to discount for Rickaby, or lend small cash, I hope? Thy father'd brain thee if thou did."

"Don't you fear, mother. Father's son and yours, Tom Inkle is his name, is a child not likely to fool money out of hand by lending small cash to Dicky Rickaby; far less by dis-counting his paper. But I want him over here; and don't wish everybody on the street to know I sent for him. Let me see; who can we get? Old John Tush, couldn't you send him? Make a pretence of sending Tush to Lot Four on some of your affairs, and give my written message to deliver at the same time."

"Tom, thou'rt fooling thy mother. Those are the people, one after another, who will not approach that house while it contains the medical student lad, Dickenson Rickaby. was poor old Tush who, by permission lying a night in the barn, saw the thing rise on the floor. He came to hospital delirious. Thou'd as soon get Johnny Tush, poor man, to climb t'high church tower, and leap o' top o' t' vestry as go message to Dickenson Rickaby."

"Mother, a minute since you talked high banker's wife English, and now you're at old Lancashire. Guess I'll be like to let Rickaby | range it in a manner, but imperfectly. Some

alone till after father comes back. But one thing before I return to the bank, mother dear; say not a word to any visitor about your servants having been scared by the young doctor; nor let a hint fall to any of the servants that I know of the frightful thing alleged to be secreted at Rickaby's."

"Tell me what it is, Tom; that's a good son."

"Cannot, mother; don't know; daren't if I did know."

"Ah, me! what secrets of other people my husband and son do have a hold on! Hope some haven't got secrets of theirn of a like kind."

"Why, mother, our business couldn't go on if we didn't know everybody's mysteries. like as if we were a bank of issue as the chartered institutions; wish we were, and hope soon to be; but this being a business of discounting paper, and advancing on mortgage, it's fearfully hazardous, though profitable, and we're bound to know everybody s secrets. How else would father accumulate? How else retain? I'll hint this much of the Rickaby affair-quite an innocent thing in itself: it may assist your son to retain in safe keeping the treasure father is fast accumulating, and those gold nuggets now likely to flow in. That being its object, guess you'll be content, and remain silent, mother."

"A shooting machine, I'd bet my life. Is it something to kill burglars, Tommy, my son?

"A machine of that sort, mother; you bet."

They parted. When alone Tom Inkle threw himself in the office chair and laughed. the hearty ha! ha! ha! of humour and candour; but the smaller he! he! he! of a man who had outwitted some one, getting to know what he wanted, his immediate motive unsuspected.

Not that Tom was so bad a fellow as deceive his mother in any really serious matter. He loved his mother; sharing her impulsive nature largely; but he also inherited avarice and cunning from the other side. He had just now, for a personal object, desired to ascertain to what extent the two negro youths and other servants had been frightened at seeing a human skeleton.

Young Inkle knew where and how to find Dicky Rickaby well enough. In the evening he rode to Steelyard's Mills, a village two miles away not long since; now a suburb of the wondrously progressive town of Conway. In the Steelyard's Arms Hotel they met.

"So you think of going to the States, Dicky?"
"Think so; unless there be truth about

gold digging at the Ramasine hills. I might go dig, but fear it is a got-up thing to sell mining lots."

"They who have auriferous lots to sell don't get up that sort of thing or any other, Mr. Rickaby."

"No? Thought everybody speculated in a 'good thing' if they could. Hope it is true the Rama Corners school teacher, Anna Liffey, g t a baskettul of nuggets. Intend trying in there before I'm much older."

"You'd better not: Anna's engaged "You interested there, Mr. Inkle?"

"Rather. Anyhow Anna's not open to advances from you, Dicky. Now, what do you want to see me about?"

"Mr. Inkle, my remittances have failed coming regularly of late, and I'm cleaned." "Oh, but this is not business! You know I don't lend; have no cash of my own what-

ever. Thought it was another subject." "Another 'subject,' Tom! You are funny. But this is not fun. Wish I had not had a hand in getting that 'subject' all the bother was about; it has ruined me for the next two

"Thought the affair was settled."

"Yes, settled in a manner. The school escaping, and poor Dicky bearing all blame and costs. Won't you help a poor fellow out of the scrape, Tom?

"You know I'm prohibited by the most stringent articles of agreement with Mr. Inkle, my father, our sole manager, from lending cash. To lend a dollar, even, vitiates my partnership. Couldn't do it."

"I want to raise two hundred dollars some

"Couldn't do it. Durstn't do it, Dicky.

Very sorry, but couldn't do it." "What are two hundred dollars to you, Tom, considering our friendship and the time we've known one another? Might sell this watch and chain, certainly, but got them from my poor mother dead and gone, so cannot do that. And the diamond ring from my sister now in California, couldn't part with that?"

" Have you no medical apparatus, surgeon's instruments, books, or other properties of a student suitable for some one buying such?"

"Nothing I'd like to part with; and nothing you'd buy, Mr. Inkle."

"Buy! I'm not a broker; I buy nothing. Yet, perhaps, in this matter might speak to a person I know, to oblige you."

"Well, that's so far kind of you, Tom; only what have I to sell? There is the 'thing,' but in its present condition a non-scientist would only see a boxful of bones. I did ar-

gaping idiots got sight of the figure when once or twice I showed it with lights inside; skeleton partially dressed in female attire. They made such outcry, and my landlandy raved at me to such degree that I was obliged to put the whole thing in a packing case; the clothing on top to conceal the bones. Thought of sending it to the States, but the American Customs might seize it. and perhaps the police come after me. Then we'd have another trouble. Confound the thing! Wish I'd never seen that 'subject!'
"No flesh on the bones? or cartilage? or

anything to smell?"

"No, sir. All clean and polished, and could be easily put together, a perfect skeleton."

"Female, aint it?"

"Yes, young woman." " Who was she?"

"Nobody knows. Died in hospital, some say. We didn't get it there. And what is more, didn't resurrect it."

"But somebody did?"

"Yes, somebody did. We paid two hundred dollars; the money advanced by me, and now I'm as usual left to face all comers; and that 'stiffest of all subjects' debt."

"Say? You spoke of having dressed it in female garments; not the grave clothes?"
"It had no grave clothes, so far as I ever saw.

A party of us were at the 'comers' on an out. I made bold to go have a glimpse of Anna Liffey, whom we'd heard so much of. She was shy; but introducing myself as a Medico she relaxed, intimating that one near and dear to her was a medical student; I didn't get his He lived far from there, she said. Splendid girl that school governess! What reach of thought! What purity and force of style! If that lady of science has really tapped a mine of gold in the Ramasine Hills, what a confluence of treasures!"

"But the 'thing,' you were explaining about dressing it to appear in semblance of some

one.'

"Was I? Perhaps. My mind wanders when the image of Anna comes again in view. Were I in your boots, Tom, which seem to make everything gold they tread on, I'd away to the flowery bowers of Anna, and never leave Rama Corners but with her as my

"What! Take her from the medical student fellow?"

"Aye, from any man living."

"Hah, h'm! h'm! Finish about that other affair; talk of Miss Liffey afterwards, if you must prate of her.

"Beg pardon, Mr. Inkle; forgot you may have an eye there yourself, now she's found gold. What was it? Something we did, or said to her; I did or said; ah, yes, this was it. We had just that day got the unfortunate thing, the 'subject,' I mean; and were, in fact, 'slewed some,' else wouldn't have been driving to the Corners; nor I intruding on privacy of Anna Liffey. I mentioned to her having under professional charge in town an unfortunate friendless lady of fallen fortunes, who, by accident, had lost her clothing, and in fact, destitute, as well as requiring W88. medical treatment."

"You rascal! What did she say?"

"Not one word; but rose, went to her ward-robe, selected underclothing, a dress and, shawl, brought them nicely done up in a parcel, gave the bundle in my hand, saying, it was kind of me to take medical charge of the unfortunate stranger. If any way near her size the clothes might suit; she could spare them. Hoped the poor creature would be kindly treated, and soon be well." "What did you do?"

"Tom, I felt at that moment of imposture, in presence of that pure angelic being, as if the earth would open and bury me alive."

"Should have opened, you mean." "Yes, should have opened and swallowed

me in; a hateful monster, from presence of that gracious impersonation of all that is good, great, and beautiful in woman-"You brought away the clothes?"

[To be continued,]

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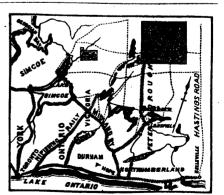
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