A DYING PROMISE

OR, THE MISSING WILL

CHAPTER XXIV.

"What's the meaning of all this, Abraham?" asked Roger Plummer, "all this" indicating a black eye which adorned the otherwise plain countenance of Abraham Bush, who was sitting on the floor of the barn with his legs spread out in front of him, while he wielded an implement soon destined to vanish from rural life, an implement consisting of two sticks loosely jointed together, one, the hansel held in the hand, and the other jointed to it, the swingel descending with a dull thud upon the wheat-ears before him, a sound that used to make pleasant music the winter long upon barn floors, and an occupation that warmed laborer's bodies in the cold winter days when no other work was to be found.

"I knacked en down," growled Abraham, bringing the flail music to an end.

"Knocked who down?" asked Roger, "and why?"

"Job Ash! A zaid summant about Miss—you knows what a zaid—Iss. I knacked en down. Job he got up and a knacked me down. Then I gets up and I knacks en down agin, and Job he ups and cuts and hruns. I lows he hrunned pretty smart. Aye, that's how't was, I hreckon."

Thud, thud went the flail, and the chaff fluttered and whirled in the wind raised by the energetic strokes for a minute or two, then Abraham paused again. "Iss," he repeated, "I knacked en down, zure enough."

"You done hright, Abraham," said Roger, who had been standing scowling with his hands in his pockets, whence he withdrew one with half a crown, which he offered to Abraham.

"What be ye gwine at with he?" growled Abraham, glaring with mingled vindictiveness and longing at the comfortable-looking coin.

"Take it, Abram."

"You putt that there in yure packet, Mr. Roger," he replied, growing more and more surly under the witchery of the shining silver and the depressing consciousness that Mr. Roger was a "near one," and might not offer him another half-crown that side of Christmas. "Anybody's think I caint knack nobody down athout being paid vor 't."

"Trust you for that. Why, you've known her from a baby." Roger returned, pitching the half-crown neatly between Abraham's outspread legs. "But you've no call to look so sure at a good half-crown. Chuck it away if you don't want it. I shan't hev it. So you knacked en down?"

"Wasn't I mad!" continued Abraham. "Shouldn't a ben sa mad if it hadn't a ben true."

"You don't think it, Abraham?" groaned Roger.

"Zeen 'em in copse together, two or three times, never thought nothen at the time. She's always up Court. Out painten long with Miss Lonsdale, long with t'other one that's laame. But a young maid din't ought to be out long with he."

Roger growled an execration on the unnamed.

"Wish I had the Capen under this yer zwingel!" added Abraham, bringing his flail down with both hands.

"Wish you'd a told me first time you saw them," said Roger.

"You tell your vather, Mr. Roger; tell en to pen her up in garret, if she wunt bide at home nohow else."

"No, Abraham, 't is best to keep a still tongue if you can. I know and you know, and between us we can keep her in sight whenever she goes out. If there's anything more between them I expect he won't have a whole bone left in his body. But she's going to Cleeve to-morrow for a week, so she'll be out of harm's way for a time."

"Let her bide in Cleeve long with school-missus, that's the best plaace vur she. A young maid is like a heifer, zure to fall in trench, or go droo vence, or summat, athout you looks pretty sharp after her. One heifer is more tarment than twenty wold cows."

Thud, thud, thud went the flail, while Abraham's face, the lips and chin of which bristled with a week's spiky growth, was drawn into such grim and vicious lines as would lead one to suppose that he was wreaking vengeance on the corn before him.

Roger took up a wooden shovel and made the winnowed corn into a neat heap ready for a sack to the tune of the flail strokes, then he turned back through a cloud of floating chaff to Abraham, whose face was more viciously set and his strokes, then he turned back through a cloud of floating chaff to Abraham whose face was more viciously set and his strokes fiercer than ever.

"No, no, Abraham," he said, "keep a still tongue; don't even tell your wife."

Abraham paused and wiped his brow, "No call to tell she," he returned, with a sort of surly grin, "Trust Sarow to find out. Darned if that ar ooman caint zee better droo a stone wall and hround a carner then you and me zees what's straight avore our noses. Aye, she's a deep 'un, is Sarow."

Roger went away with a hopeless air, "Knack em all down, Abram," was his final injunction as he crossed the farm yard. Seeing Jessie coming in from the garden with a basket of filberts.

"Hullo, Jess," he cried, "so you're off to-morrow. Wish you'd wait till next day, and I could drive you in."

"Thank you, Roger," she returned, "the carrier's cart will really be more convenient with my luggage."

"Look here, Jess," continued Roger, taking off his hat to thrust his hand through his thick tangle of curls, "I suppose you don't want a friend?"

"A friend, Roger?" asked Jessie, smiling and stopping by the low stone wall, on which she set her basket. "Why?"

"Only if you want anybody knocked down or anything," he continued, turning very red, "I'm your man." thing done, no matter what, I'm your man. Oh! I say, Jessie, Jessie!"

She was crying in a way that went to the honest fellow's heart, crying quietly but sadly.

"You were always good to me, Roger," she replied at last, "far better than I deserved. You used to let me pull your hair as a boy. But I wish you wouldn't talk like that."

"It was only if you wanted anything done," he murmured. "I'd never 'a spoke else. If there'd been a chance, I wouldn't have been so mean with poor Phil away."

"Forget me, Roger," she said, drying her eyes, "but I will never forget you and your kindness." She gave him her hand and left him stabbed by his words and touched by his friendliness, and thinking of the way in which she had undervalued this sterling fellow because of his rough exterior and intolerable ways. And yet to be pitied and extenuated by Roger! Well, it would not be for long.

She had not left Redwoods since her visit to the Inglebys. It was evident to Jessie that Mrs. Plummer had heard nothing of that terrible gossip—which was not surprising, since scandal usually reaches all ears but those most concerned in it.

In the afternoon Mrs. Plummer wanted to send a message to a woman, whose cottage was about a mile and a half distant.

"Do you run over, my dear," she said to Jessie, "the day's fine, though dull, and 'twill be a nice walk. Why, you haven't been out this three days."

Jessie did not know how to refuse this small request; she suggested sending the young maid-servant, or a letter, and even broached the immense heresy of her cousin's faring forth with her.

"It's not much you'll hev at my death, Jessie," moaned Mrs. Plummer, in response, "so I can't think why you want me to be gallied into my grave so quick, I'm sure. Not that 'twill be long, anyhow. And I'm the last to want to live on, a burden to my own flesh and blood. Plummer'd find a difference in the housekeeping, not to speak of the dairy, and as for the poultry, I never was one to boast, but I should wish you to pint out finer broods of turkeys than what I've rared this summer. Night and day did I wait on them turkeys, I don't know what more I could a done for them short of sleeping outside their coops and not closing an eye all night, I'm sure. If anybody'd tell me what I could a done more, trapezing through the archard grass wet days, and wearing away to a shadow, I'd a done it and thankful."

Jessie hastened to reassure her cousin, while Mrs. Plummer, whose curls were in their full-dress condition and would not bear rough treatment from damp pocket-handkerchiefs very carefully wiped her round, plump, apple-like cheeks.

"Not that I ever look to you to do anything, Jessie," continued Cousin Jane, with a mournful sigh from the depths of her broad and wholesome chest; "many a time your poor mother hev said to me, 'I've a ben useful myself, cousin, and I should wish the little un to be arnamental.' I was always against it myself, but there was never anybody forerighter than your mother without 'twas your poor father. The times I warned poor Martha against having him; but hev him she would and cart-ropes wouldn't hold her. You'd a been easier to manage if she'd a married a more persuadabler man, Jessie, though I don't cast it up agen you that your mother would marry Mat Meade. As for asking of you to spile your hands, I wouldn't do it to save anybody's life. And I'm sure I never shut an eye last night with pig-killing and Roger's shirts on my mind, and you going in to Miss Blushford's to-morrow; not that I wanted you to help pickle walnuts, which do black the hands terrible. But ready to drop as I am, going over to Mrs. Woodford's is no matter; after all, when anybody's worn out a mile or two's nothing. What if it do take me off a week or so sooner? I may as well die and a done with it, I suppose."

So Jessie thought, but she did not say so.

"You mustn't be cross on my last day, cousin," she said, after receiving Mrs. Plummer's final directions on the doorstep at starting, "and please try and think as gently as you can of me, whatever happens."

Her words and something unusual in her manner struck Cousin Jane with an uneasy sensation. "Whatever have come over the child of late?" she wondered. "Dear, dear, how I wish Philip would come home or else have her out! She finds the time long, poor thing, she's lonesome and she frets. It was just like poor Mat Meade to tie her up with Philip, and him going out to the Mutiny. But there, what is anybody to do with a girl that's neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring? She can't be happy with plain folk, that's sure. Poor Mat meant well, I will give him credit for that."

The day had clouded heavily since the morning, the weather was breathless and oppressive, though of late the air had had the strong, sharp bite which tells of coming winter, warms young blood, and inspirits drooping nerves. The heavy langor weighed upon Jessie's overburdened heart and depressed her, body and soul; yet she walked with a quick, alert air and there was a tense, strained look on her face.

Her shortest, most direct way lay straight across the Marwell woods, but she chose to go the long way by the highroad and through the village. There she encountered Miss Ingleby and Ellen Dale, respectively, and it was these ladies who blushed and seemed conscience of neglect, while the infinitesimal bow and utterly neutral expression with which Jessie passed on would have done credit to any woman of the world.

"As bold as brass," murmured Miss Ingleby to herself; "I should like William to have seen my lady sweep by with her princess air. Innocent child, indeed! Artful young minx! Well, I am glad they have great and freely expressed indignation."

"I really think the ingratitude of that class of people is beyond everything," was Lady Gertrude's comment upon Jessie's written excuse for refusing Ethel's request, "and after the manner in which you took her up, Clara."

"I am not in the least surprised, Aunt Gertrude," her niece replied; "I am too much accustomed to ingratitude to expect anything else in a world like this," she added, with a plaintive sigh which suggested acquaintance with infinitely superior worlds.

"Your pets always round upon you, Clara, don't they?" interposed Claude, with an indifferent air.

"I really don't know what we are coming to," moaned Lady Gertrude; "Pauline had but just learnt a really becoming way of dressing my hair, and she must needs give warning to-day because her mother is paralyzed; as if her mother could not go to a hospital. I suppose there are hospitals in France. The world is really becoming too material for me."

Jessie had done her errand that sultry afternoon, the woman of the house then begged her to sit down and rest after her walk. "It's a good step from Redwoods, miss,' she said, looking her over with a curiosity that Jessie felt in every fibre, keenly sensitive to the fact that Mrs. Woodford had never before regarded her with such interest. It's gwine to thunder afore long. Wun't ye bide till the starm's blowed over?"

"Thunder!" echoed Jessie. "Oh, I hope not. I must hurry home then. I'll run quick the short way, Mrs. Woodford; thank you."

She left the cottage, and struck across a piece of common toward the wood, scarcely turning her head when Mrs. Woodford called after her to offer an umbrella. The heavens were now dark with gathering storm, the cottage fire glowed redly from the open door, lighting up the tall oak-cased clock and throwing into strong relief the figure of the cottager in the door-way crying, "You'd better bide, you'd better bide."

Swiftly she sped over the soundless turf. She felt the hot glow from the lurid wall of purple storm advancing against the wind before her, and quivered with the indescribable nervous trouble thunder always caused her. It did not exactly terrify her, it was simply intolerable to her nerves. Lightning and thunder, together with the oppression of air over-charged with electricity, distressed and prostrated her; her only thought now was to get home, where she would throw herself into Sarah's arms and bury her face. As a child she had passed through many storms with her head covered by Philip's jacket and her face pressed against him; her great horror was to be alone in these nervous crises, when the touch of some familiar and loving hand alone soothed her.

She plunged into the woodland, the warning, "You'd better bide, you'd better bide," of the hospitable cottager echoing in her ear. The sky was iron-hued where it was not lurid with swift-gathering tempest, the brooding expectancy of the gray still afternoon had changed to one disquiet of imminent trouble; the long grasses shuddered, the dry leaves rustled anxiously and complained upon the trees which groaned as if foreboding pain; cows and sheep moved restlessly about the pastures, birds fluttered with anxious cries from the sere foliage, all the woods shivered before the impending terror. The day was like Jessie's life.

She was too late to outrun the storm, she felt herself drawn beneath the dark wings of it, the hot breath of it lifted her hair and came in fitful gusts through the creaking trees, whirling clouds of sere leaves hither and thither. Suddenly, with a crack and a crash and a long booming roar, the awful thing burst right above her head. How frail she was before this iron blast, and how futile her speed against the rapid stride of the tempest!

Some large scattered drops fell on the dry yellow leaves she pressed on, panting and shrinking. She went blindly, closing her eyes to the dazzle of the lightning, and saw nothing till the rustle of a quick step through the dead leaves and the sound of a voice through the storm made her look up with an involuntary cry of joy into Claude Medway's face.

"Claude!" she cried, knowing and remembering nothing but that she was safe and calm and happy after all the tumults and trouble.

"Freddie, come here! I regret to say I've got to punish you; your teacher tells me you're the worst in your class." "Mebbe she's right, ma. Only yesterday she told me I took after you."

Happy is the man who works—provided he doesn't work the wrong party.

FAMOUS BATTLE SONGS

SOLDIERS OF EVERY COUNTRY SING THEM.

Battle Hymns Which Have Completely Swayed the Nations.

Always have men gone to war with songs on their lips. By music, patriotism and courage are revived in soldiers in the darkest moments. It cheers them as they leave the dear homeland, it inspires them on the field of battle. Modern conditions of warfare do not, are not allowed to, interfere unduly in this matter. During the South African conflict our men marched and fought, whenever possible, to the strains of national patriotic hymns and songs, from "God Save the King" to "The Absent-Minded Beggar" and "Soldiers of the King," says London Tit-Bits.

And ever has it been thus with our men in the field. On the morning of Agincourt the sadly outnumbered band of English raised their spirits with hymns, as in a later century did Cromwell's terrible Ironsides, whenever they found themselves face to face with the foe. We find over and over again examples of the part played by songs in our wars, such ditties as "Men of Harlech," "Bonnie Dundie," "The Minstrel Boy" (sung by the Irish soldiers at Abu Klea), and others.

Now we learn that the Russian authorities, gathering wisdom from the teaching of history, have sent out musicians to cheer the Muscovite troops in their difficult task in Manchuria. This in itself can give no advantage, for the Jap soldiers too, march to the fight chanting their own national anthem,

A HYMN TO THE MIKADO.

This is it:—

Kima ga yo wa
Chi yo ni, ya chi yo ni
Sazare ishi no
Iwao to narite
Koke no musu made.

These words signifying 'Until a thousand, yea to eight thousand, ages be thine enlightened rule: until pebbles rocks become, till these rocks be all moss-grown."

There are battle hymns which have completely swayed the nations. Take for instance, the "Marseillaise." A young officer, Rouget de Lisle, composed it during the Siege of Strasburg in 1792, and it quickly spread among the revolutionaries of France. The volunteers of Marseilles, "defiant of death, despot, and devil," sang this song as they marched to Paris, and as they went to the storming of the Tuileries:—

To arms! To arms! ye brave,
March on! March on!
All hearts resolved
On victory or death,

So it came to be known as the "Marseillaise," and ever on French soldiers has it exercised a magical effect, rousing them to transports of enthusiasm. It was sung everywhere on the outbreak of the Prussian War, after having been interdicted during the Restoration.

Other songs which had wonderful power over the French in the stormy days of the Revolution were the "Ca Ira" ("It shall go on") and the "Carmagnole." These were yelled by the mobs who committed

THOSE FRIGHTFUL DEEDS

with which history has made us familiar. The "Ca Ira" was so named because of its refrain:—

Ah, ca ira, ca ira, ca ira,
Les aristocrates a la lanterne!

How fearsome it must have sounded in the ears of the aristocrat victims! The "Carmagnole" was the song of people wearing the kind of jacket known as the carmagnole. Every verse had its refrain:—

Dansonsle carmagnole,
Vive le son du canon!

This was the battle chant which carried the French to victory in their Italian and Egyptian campaigns.

Teutonic and Scandinavian fighting songs have been usually imbued with deep religious feeling. Of such is the battle hymn of Germany, the "Watch on the Rhine." Its noble melody rose wherever the sons of the Fatherland made their camp fires during the war with France, stirring those deep feelings which lie under the German mask of stolidity, and inspiring the troops with such intense devotion to their cause and country as precluded any result of the fighting but victory or death.

The soldiers of the unconquerable Gustavus Adolphus went into battle with hymns. "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" ("A sure stronghold our God is He") they sang at Lutzen. This famous hymn, which was called "God Almighty's Grenadier March" by Frederick the Great, was

COMPOSED BY LUTHER

for the Diet of Spires. Its notes followed Napoleon as he retreated from Moscow; it was one of the German hymns during the Franco-Prussian War.

America has its famous war-songs. Who has not heard of the grand "Battle Hymn of the Republic" ("Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord"), with its refrain, "Glory! Glory! Hallelujah"? It was sung to the music of "John Brown," which is known wherever the English tongue is spoken.

John Brown's body lies mouldering
in the grave,
His soul is marching on.

Those words, and the fine marching tune to which they were sung, electrified the people of the Northern States during the great Civil War. John Brown was one of the first men to pay with his life for his efforts against slavery, he being executed for his share in the plot to liberate the slaves of Virginia, and in the capture of the arsenal at Harper's Ferry. His fate was immortalized in the repetitive verses to whose harmonies the Northern soldiers swung to final victory.

Two other famous American songs, "The Star-spangled Banner" and "Yankee Doodle," were of earlier origin, the tune of the latter having been composed in derision of American levies by an English surgeon, and adopted by the Americans in their fight for independence. They sung it at Lexington, as well as at the surrender of Burgoyne.

Broad-headed horses are the cleverest. In cavalry regiments it has been noticed that horses with broad foreheads learn their drill more rapidly than the others.

A priest at Holyoda, Hungary, recently inherited $25,000 from a relative in Russia. When he received the money he parcelled it out among the 255 villagers and kept $250 for himself.

In France the lady bank-clerk has come to stay, The Credit Lyonnais was, a French correspondent points out, the first bank to employ women. There are now in that great institution 1,000 lady clerks.

Treasure-hunting has become the principal occupation of the islanders of Martinique. They dig day and night among the ruins caused by the eruptions of Mont Pelee for gold and other valuables.

For some unknown reason the shark has returned to European waters. In the Baltic, for example, where sharks had been extinct since 1759, they made their appearance in considerable numbers.

The young Japanese who wishes to enter the public service, a profession, or even to rank as educated, has practically to learn four languages—pure Japanese, Japano-Chinese, epistolary Japanese, and colloquial dialect.

The British National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children estimates that of the 140,000 or 160,000 cases that come under its notice yearly one-half are caused directly by drunkenness and consequent neglect by parents.

Stunted dogs are very much admired by Parisian ladies. The demand for them is met by at least forty professional "dog dwarfers," who bring up the pups on an alcoholic diet, which has the effect of checking their growth.

The Chinese are perhaps the most lightly taxed people in the world. In China all the land belongs to the State, and a trifling sum per acre is paid as rent. This is the only tax in the country, and it amounts to about 62 cents per head yearly.

In Iceland there are no prisons, and the inhabitants are so honest in their habits that such material defences to property as locks, bolts, and bars are not required. Yet its history for the past 1,000 years records no more than two thefts.

At the birth of a Japanese baby a tree is planted, which must remain untouched until the marriage-day of the child. Then the tree is cut down, and a skilled cabinet-maker transforms the wood into furniture, which is considered by the young couple as the most beautiful of all the ornaments of the house.

GENERAL INFORMATION.

Australia is capable of supporting at least 100,000,000 inhabitants.

Common house-sparrows fly at the rate of seventy-two miles an hour.

The Bank of England contains silver ingots which have lain in its vaults since 1696.

The highest point to which a man can ascend without his health being seriously affected is 16,500 feet.

A street in Germany has been paved with indiarubber. The result is said to be most satisfactory.

The smallest oak trees are to be found in China. They are not 1½in. high, and will take root in thimbles.

France has kept 200,000 tons of coal stored at Toulon since 1893, to be ready in case war should break out.

German locomotive engineers receive a gold medal and $500 for every ten years of service without accident.

The Czar has a single estate covering over 100,000,000 acres—that is, about three times the entire area of England.

The only two animals whose brains are heavier than that of man are the whale and the elephant.

Every person in England consumes, on an average, 12½lb. of cheese per annum, and more than half of it comes from abroad.

In Cairo at the present time there is an endowment in operation founded expressly for the lodging and feeding of homeless cats.

Germany is probably the most densely-wooded country in Europe. Over one quarter of the entire area of the Empire is covered with forest.

An Austrian has invented self-lighting cigars and cigarettes. Tipped with a chemical mixture, they ignite on being struck against anything.

Flying fish do not usually rise more than 3 feet above the sea, but they have been known to fall on a deck as much as 20 feet above the water.

A child born in London may expect to live about forty-one years, but a Glasgow baby has only a little over thirty-five years' expectation of life.

No carnivorous bird or quadruped in England will eat the flesh of a cat The rule applies even to the carrion crow, which will devour dead dogs greedily.

Among civilized nations 4 per cent of the men and 1 per cent. of the women are color-blind. The, Chinese are the only people free from color-blindness.

Of the thirty-eight Sultans who have ruled the Ottoman Empire since the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, thirty-four have died violent deaths.

MUCH TOO ECONOMICAL.

"Mary," he said, as he scowled at her over the breakfast-table.

"John," she replied, fearlessly.

"Mary," he said, "what kind of a breakfast do you call this?"

"I call it an excellent one," she returned, bravely.

"You do?" he exclaimed. "Well, I don't. I think a little variety occasionally would be a good thing. Do you realize that this is the third morning that we have had corned beef hash?"

"Certainly, John."

"And that we had corned beef for dinner yesterday, and cold corned beef for supper?"

"Of course, John. You wanted me to run the house as economically as I could."

"Yes, but——"

"You said that the amount of meat consumed in this house would bankrupt a millionaire."

"I know, but I——"

"And that I ought to plan with more regard to the expense."

"Certainly, certainly, Mary; but, hang it all——"

"I've been following your instructions."

"But I don't like corned beef."

"I know it, John," she said, in a business-like way. "That's what makes it last so long. It keeps expenses down splendidly, and if you want——"

"I don't!" he exclaimed. "I don't! Let them run up! You've got too good a business head for anything outside of a boarding-house."

Cash for brains is still the cry. The Queensland Government find that the prickly pear, a kind of cactus, has proved so vigorous a weed that $25,000 has been offered for a sure means of eradicating it.

HAND-MADE SHIRTWAISTS.

A very fashionable white crepe waist has its front, stock and cuffs embroidered with clusters of small pink roses and forget-me-not in ribbon embroidery. The bunches of flowers have their leaves and stems done in pale, dull shades of green and golden brown. The bunches of flowers are connected by and interspersed with bowknots and loops and ends of ribbon. The ribbon effect is produced by outlining the supposed ribbon with a single gold thread and working small black dots in embroidery silk, about an eighth of an inch apart between the gold lines. The effect is that of a dainty and novel ribbon. It is no wider, and probably not as wide, as baby ribbon.

"Do you believe," she asked "that a genius can possibly be a good husband?" "Well," he modestly replied, "I would prefer not to answer that question. But my wife ought to be able to tell you."

Old Richley—"I don't want you for a son-in-law, sir." Young Man—"No? Well, you haven't any other good position you could give a fellow, have you?"

A JAPANESE HERO.

Deeds of Courage Performed by Takeo Hirose.

All Japan has been ringing with the fame of Takeo Hirose, the first naval hero of the Japanese-Russian War, who was killed in Admiral Togo's second attempt to block up Port Arthur. Hirose was leader of the volunteers who set out to sink their ships and, if necessary, themselves, in the mooth of the harbor. He was killed by a projectile from a Russian quick-firing gun while seeking to save the life of his friend and subordinate, Petty-Officer Sugino. The New York World tells of other deeds of courage performed by Hirose.

He first proved his bravery in the war with China. After that war Lieutenant Hirose, who spoke Russian and French well, was sent as naval attache to the Japanese legation at St. Petersburg. He came into prominence there through an incident which occurred at a banquet. A Russian officer declared that the Japanese, so small of stature, could not, as individuals, hold their own in any war. Hirose smilingly defied any three Russians to overcome him at wrestling. Roars of laughter greeted the challenge, for in those days Japanese Jiu-jitsu was not described in every newspaper.

At last, for the fun of it, the Russian officer sent for three large and sturdy soldiers. The little Japanese threw the Russians, one after another.

Hirose remained in St. Petersburg three years. The daughter of a Russian naval officer fell in love with the gallant young Japanese. Her father, who greatly admired Hirose, let it be known to him that he would not be unwelcome as the young girl's suitor. Hirose, who also cared for the girl, struggled with his affection for three days.

Then he wrote to her father, and pointed to the inevitable war between Russia and Japan. He said, "When my country calls me to duty I shall have to turn to account all the valuable professional hints received from your kind lips and so help to do moral hurt to your country's navy. Thus ill must patriotic duty make me repay all your kindness. With this in mind and in my heart, how can I promise to sue for your daughter's hand, knowing that after the outbreak of the most likely of wars the hand of fate might destroy the happiness of your daughter in the most ruthless of ways, should I have been so happy as to have won her hand."

Hirose in his poetic temperament as well as in his dauntless spirit truly represented the old warrior class of Japan, the Samurai.

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"I've just 'eard that your little Bill got run over," said one. "'Ow did it 'appen?" "'E was picking up a 'orseshoe for luck," replied little Bill's father.

In an old mill near Dublin an inventor has discovered a profitable way of making peat into brown-paper. There will probably be a boot factory there soon.

Two Japanese officers, who were shot as spies, bequeathed a thousand roubles to the Russian Red Cross Society in acknowledgement of the kind treatment that they had received from the Russians after their capture.

The counsel for the plaintiff had been bullying the witness for an hour, when he finally asked: "Is it true that there are traces of insanity in your family?" "Very likely," answered the witness. "My grandfather, who was studying for the ministry, gave it up to become a lawyer."

Aubrey—"I say, old boy. I suppose you can't lend me a fiver?" Plantagenet—"No, my dear boy; but a man with your capacity for guessing the right thing ought to be able to win a fortune on the turf."

FORTUNE SPENT IN BUTTONS.

Two hundred thousand dollars was paid by Louis XVI. for one set of buttons for a waistcoat. This monarch had a positive passion for buttons, and in the year 1685 he spent a very large amount on this hobby. Amongst the items of his expenditure two ar? worthy of note: August, 1685—Two diamond buttons, 67,866 francs ($13,500); seventy-five diamond buttons, 586,703 francs, $115,000). It is estimated that during his lifetime he spent $5,000,000 on buttans alone, and that at a time when the Empire of France was in a state of bankruptcy.

HAUNTS OF FISH AND GAME,

Attractions for Sportsmen on the Line of the Grand Trunk.

The Grand Trunk Railway Company has issued a handsome publication, profusely illustrated with half-tone engravings, descriptive of the many attractive localities for sportsmen on their line of railway. Many of the regions reached by the Grand Trunk seem to have been specially prepared for the delectation of mankind, and where for a brief period the cares of business are cast aside and life is given up to enjoyment. Not only do the "Highlands of Ontario" present unrivalled facilities for both hunting, fishing and camping, but the 30,000 Islands of the Georgian Bay, Thousand Islands and St. Lawrence River, Rideau River and Lakes, Lake St. John, and the many attractive localities in Maine and New Hampshire, present equal opportunities for health, pleasure and sport. All these localities are reached by the Grand Trunk Railway System, and on trains unequalled on the continent. Abstracts of Ontario, Michigan, Quebec, New Hampshire and Maine fish and game laws are inserted in the publication for the guidance of sportsmen. The Grand Trunk Railway has also issued descriptive illustrated matter for each district separately, which are sent free on application to the agents of the Company and to Mr. J. D. McDonald, District Passenger Agent, G. T. R., Union Station, Toronto.

Much amusement is being caused in South Africa by the adoption by ladies of young calves as pets. This does not mean the two-legged variety.

"So you really think that dogs sometimes possess more intelligence than their masters?" "Certainly, I've got one myself that does!"

The London Crystal Palace accommodates more people than any other building in the world. It will hold 100,000 people.

"I shall be married to Dick next week!" "I thought you said you'd be the last person to marry him!" "Well, I hope I shall be!"

Jones—"Do you remember how we all sought fair Mildred's hand with fear and trembling?" Smith—"And how poor Brown now shuns it with the same feeling when he arrives home late."

GUILLOTINE IN SWEDEN.

Who would have supposed during the Reign of Terror that a day would come when the guillotine would be used for a laudable purpose? Yet this has just happened in Swedan, for a guillotine has been erected in the market place at Gothenburg, where it is used daily for the purpose of decapitating chickens, ducks and other domestic animals. The local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is responsible for this novel step.