

's Greatest Piano."

with
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eriority is easy. Anyone

firm, does not rest its
care and skill and ability
is those who know the
ses, and they are of those
n to speak knowingly of

orsed by musical critics
at Steinway and Carro
at artist with a piano
felt gratified with the
as can be had. Indeed
n & Co. was the firmest
ossessed a singing yet
r. Burmeister certainly
the Liszt rhapsody were
while Beethoven and
subdued tonal effects of

Piano we have
an assortment of
ers, for we are
as manufacturers,
ny difficult taste or
suit your taste or
ade in Chicago,
abinet Grand for
piano for \$275 00
cluding Gerard
n & Risch that
in good condition

& CO.

on, Ont.

PY. THOUGHT."

REY
THOUGHT

There is a slight feeling of exulta-
tion when one drops down the shaft
through the living man has not
penetrated the entrance of the plant
for over sixteen years; and this feel-
ing, exhilarating, the cage descended
slowly, screaming and grating along
the rusted guide-iron, and in a mat-
ter of many minutes descended up on
a platform of ebony bog left by the
ceiling waters.

LEN only.

DIAN
EXCURSIONS

3'

WAY

EXCURSIONS

and Canadian North-West

every TUESDAY during

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urs and copy of "Settlers"

Canadian Pacific Agent,

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n. Pass, Agent,

King St., East, Toronto,

Agent at Aylmer.

The Duel in The Deeper Pit

It came upon me like the shock of a
bullet-wound. The thing was im-
possible to refute; it was real. The
nickel-plated revolver was in the mil-
lowed locker where he said I should
find it.

Valpy was mad; his mania was
homicide.

The net which his maniac cunning
had spun around my life seemed of
such malignant strength and grip
that no human effort could win me
clear of its coils.

For a while I was so stunned by its
discovery that Valpy's letter fluttered
from my fingers to the coal mud of
the floor, and the fluttering tallow-
candle with its stepping of clay
threatened to follow it. Peril of life
is no great novelty to me. It was not
so much the physical danger which
caused my head to whirl then, as the
shock of the other discovery. Valpy
had been my friend for more than
twenty years; we had known one an-
other in salon and steam-iron, by
tent and camp-fire; our camaraderie
had run its course with never a hitch
—and now he demanded my life for an
offense which could never in possi-
bility have existed. He said in the bit-
ter letter which he left me to read,
that I had alienated from him the af-
fections of his wife. Why, the man
had no wife.

This challenge of his was no sudden
assault; I saw that he had been con-
triving for weeks to pin me so that I
must fight him. He had laid his
plans with consummate skill; laid
them, too, in the full sight of myself,
and yet never allowed me a gleam or
a glimmer of his real object will the
time was full and ripe for doing so.

He had found the advertisement in
the "Daily Courier," as it were by ac-
cident, before my very eyes, and after
we had talked chaffingly about it dur-
ing a lazy afternoon, it was actually
this which suggested his taking up this
pit which was offered for lease.

"Do you know, Calvert," he had said,
"I've the deuce of a good mind to fol-
low your advice. I'm getting rather
bored with wandering over the globe
doing nothing. It sounds fascinating
to have an occupation in life, and the
idea of being a colliery proprietor is,
to a man of my antecedents, distinctly
attractive. He said, however, that if
this place turns out to be anything
like the advertisement states I believe
I'll go for it. Will you come with me
when I go to prospect?"

I had laughed and assented, and for
the succeeding days he was full of the
mine as a child with its first school-
boy hobby. Our rooms were littered
with plans, tables, reports and specu-
mens. The smuggled Tanchin
novels had disappeared, the bookcase
was reinforced by technical literature
of a new genus. Everything about
the mine was dinned into my ears
about twenty times a day. It was
in the neighborhood of a shallow seam
of coal recently worked out. The
shaft penetrated lower than this, and
was known usually as the Deeper Pit.

For years it had been unworked,
flooded. Now the water had drained
away of its own accord—as mine wa-
ter does once in a thousand times—
and the workings were again ready
for the collier's pick. The royalties
surrounding the original workings
could be obtained readily and cheaply.
Altogether it was a most desirable
property to secure.

So the rusted engine on the pit-bank
was cleaned, a wire rope rove over
the sheave in the derrick, and the
iron cage bent to its end. On a
day my friend Valpy and I came to
Bromley to make the descent.

There is a slight feeling of exulta-
tion when one drops down the shaft
through the living man has not
penetrated the entrance of the plant
for over sixteen years; and this feel-
ing, exhilarating, the cage descended
slowly, screaming and grating along
the rusted guide-iron, and in a mat-
ter of many minutes descended up on
a platform of ebony bog left by the
ceiling waters.

With our candles thrust out at
shoulder-height, we stepped off the
floor of the cage, descending heavily
through the mud. The gallery was
low enough to make us crouch our
heads; the air was chill and moist.
Presently we came to a small, ob-
long cavern which formerly had been
the colliers' drawing-room and eat-
ing-chamber. Valpy went in first,
asking me to remain in the gallery.

Presently he called that I should
come to him.

"Look here, old man," he said,
thrusting a roll of foolscap into my
fingers, "have another turn at geo-
graphy; make sure how you stand,
and then we can move more comfort-
ably. I'll just go out and see if the
narrow gallery which runs round the
back of this is still sound, or whether
it has fallen in."

He went through the doorway and
after the yellow beam of his candle
had been swamped in the darkness,
I could still hear the faint splashing
of his feet in the semi-liquid mud.
Then I stuck my candle by its clay
socket against the wall, and care-
lessly unrolled the crisp paper and

So confident had I been that it was
merely a map of the mine which had
been handed to me, that it caused me
a genuine shock to find it was in-
stead a note scribbled in blue pencil.
As I looked through, the hair tickled
on my scalp.

Valpy accused me of tampering
with the love of this imaginary wife
of his, setting forth this indictment
with detail and circumstance. He
called to my memory the fact that our
engine-man on the pit-bank had re-
ferred to this home, and had been or-
dered not to revisit us to the sur-
face for eight more hours. Then he
challenged me to fight him to the
death. Previous to my entrance into
the room he had placed a revolver and

cartridges in the locker opposite the
door; he himself possessed an arma-
ment similar in all respects.

Furthermore, he had observed that
our watches coincided. So I should
be able to know when he made it ex-
actly 10:30; up to that time there was
a truce between us. The second it
passed, he gave me his most sacred
word of honor, he should set about
endeavoring to slay me.

Some people reading so strange a
scenario under such strange circum-
stances might have sensed the prac-
tical joke and endeavored to treat the
matter as such. I knew Valpy too
well; he was always an earnest sort
of man; and the letter was pious to
a degree. By some cerebral lesion
he had lost his mind, and as with other
mad creatures, his first wrath
rose against his stanchest friend. If
the chance came to him he would
shoot me down like a beast.

Now, as I have said, the first shock
stunned me; but the habits of a life
spent for the greater part in wild
places soon made themselves felt. My
own self-preservation clamored to be
thought about.

I glanced at my watch. There were
left to me four minutes' grace. Then
the truce would come to an end, and
I might expect war to open at any
moment.

Next I blew out the candle-flame.
Everything seemed to point to this as
a necessity. Then when the cold dark-
ness had closed down, I nipped the
smelling wax and slipped the candle
into a pocket. It might be wanted
again. I most sincerely hoped it
would be wanted, because at that
stage of the affair I had but one idea
in my mind; I must come upon Valpy
suddenly and disarm him; the rest
would be simple. I was by far his su-
perior in point of bodily strength.

First, however, he must be found; and
that, moreover, without letting him
know he was being sought for until
we came to hand-grips. In other
words, he must be stalked. This
seemed plain enough.

But as I went out of the door into
the gallery, a sense of the difficulties
of my position began to grow upon me
at once. There were two ways to
turn-up and down. From the far-
ther side, other galleries led off at
right angles; on my own side, there
were still others; in fact, as I knew
from the maps and plans, the coal
ram round the foot of the shaft was
burrowed till the retentions, if
measured end on end, would make
a line of tunnel many miles in length.

Of course, there would be stoppages
at all places where the roof had caved,
but these points were to me unknown.
Valpy and I descended the pit mainly
to find how frequently they existed.

Thinking of these things, I listen-
ed intently. In that black silence the
only sound which fell upon the ear
was the distant rattle of water
tickling from a roof-track into a
shallow pool below. Then a voice
started me.

"Half-past ten, Calvert. I see you
have put out your candle, so we be-
gin on entirely even terms. I need
hardly recommend you to do your best
to kill me. Because if you fail, as
sure as God can see us even through
all this great roof of rock, so surely
will I satisfy my honor with your life."

The voice seemed to come from close
to my elbow. On the first tone I be-
gan moving toward it, using infinite
care to stalk noiselessly. Yet the
voice receded before me like an ignis
fatuus, if one may use such a word in
reference to sound, and I saw that
Valpy had anticipated the maneuver
and was in equal-paced retreat. His
original distance I could not guess,
because the tunnels acted like a speak-
ing trumpet, and the sounds with lit-
tle diminution of volume.

I traveled on thus for quite two
hundred yards, with every muscle
ready to spring every nerve at high-
est tension. Then I stopped to listen.
At first it appeared that the silence
around was absolute, but as my ear
strained to even further refinements,
it seemed to me that I caught ever
and anon a faint, far-off breathing.
Then, not very far away, a splinter
of stone, dislodged from roof or wall,
fell with a falsetto splash to the slime
of the roadway, and what had before
been a suspicion now became a cer-
tainty.

Valpy had rounded my flank and
was now stalking me!

Let it be confessed that my first
thought was for flight. My first
move, however, pointed out that he was
playing my game. If he came upon
me in the darkness, I could seize him
before he was able to use his weapon;
with him once in my grip, I should be
content. The gallery there was a
good six feet in height, and I leaned
against the cold, slime-covered wall
with hands half raised. You can
guess how keenly I listened for the
smallest sound speaking of his advance,
but not the faintest whisper came to
me. In our many wanderings Valpy
and I often stalked big game together,
and I remembered with a grin, a
smile how well he had earned the title
of "Cat" which had once been ad-
mirably bestowed upon him by a Ben-
gatshikari. Hence he was stalking me
now, through slush which to another
man's movements would have been
noisy with splashes and splashes,
and yet, though I felt that he was
advancing, yes, and following my
spoor with his finger-tips in each foot-
step, the deep earth-silence was never
intruded upon.

Suspense in many of its lurid
shapes had been shown to me before,
but the agony of that wait for the
madman is one of the deepest scars
on my memory.

Always far sharper than my own,
and now more keenly stung, by in-
sanity, his animal senses showed him
my whereabouts first, and he raised
the muzzle of the revolver and pulled
the trigger.

The sum of what my dazed eyes
saw was Valpy's smudged white face,
and the pistol, in a dazzling halo of
flame. The bullet struck the wall
beneath my left arm, bringing down
a small avalanche of shale.

I had no thought of returning his
fire. Indeed, my revolver was in my
pocket, still unloaded, but I leaped
forward, endeavoring to grapple with
him before he could get in another
shot. Doubling like an eel in the
utter darkness, he left a side-pocket
of his coat in my hand and fled, giv-
ing parting shots behind him till he
had emptied his revolver. The lead
brought down great sheets of stone
from the roof and sides till I thought
that the whole stratum must have
collapsed about our ears; still no

shot touched me, and I crashed on at
his heels. But Valpy ran like a deer
and distanced me; and at length I
slowed down, with hands and arms
bleeding from contact with the rocky
walls; and I heard Valpy slack his
pace at the same time, and heard also
the tinkle of the empty shells as he
ejected them and reloaded his revolver.

My original feeling toward my com-
panion had been one of compassion.
This was beginning to give way now,
and wild anger was coming in. This
place, what had I done, that my
life should be so savagely attacked?

The breach of his revolver closed
with a vicious snap, and I heard him
beck the hammer. Then he halted,
waiting for me. I halted, too; to ad-
vance upon him so would be a demand
for instant death. As a general
thing he was but an indifferent shot,
but now I knew instinctively that he
would not fire until the muzzle of
his weapon rested against my breast.

He advanced again; I retreated,
keeping pace with him; we were both
too excited by this time to heed the
about treading delicately. Under-
neath were L-rails, and on these, our
boots slid and clanked. The darkness
was profound, and as I ran I
might as well have been groping
along the jagged walls. The plan of
the mine was fixed pretty securely in
my head, and twice I turned corners
at right angles, hoping that the dou-
ble would cause him to miss me. He
did nothing of the kind, hanging like
a dog on the tail, and the third time
I tried it he laughed loud in derision.

I was not enough with exertion,
heaven knows, but that laugh chilled
me to the bone. The particular hor-
ror of it was something I could not
describe, a something I would wish
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perience.

So Valpy hunted me on through the
network of the colliery, till a thing
happened which brought me to bay
where he wished it, or no. I was
ground round beneath my feet, and for
a while the roof rose too. Then the
roof dropped again and the floor
stayed up to meet it. There had
been a fall of rock. The gallery was
barred effectually. The madman was
not a dozen yards from my heels.

I turned then like a cornered animal
to fight desperately for life. At my
feet were jagged masses of newly
fallen shale, and as if by instinct, they
found their way into my clutch and
with them I opened a furious bom-
bardment of defense.

The roof of the gallery was rotten
and crumbling, and where my
missiles, vaguely aimed in the dark-
ness, crashed against it, great masses
detached themselves and fell into
the slime of the roadway. Why mer-
ciful Providence prevented me from
only slaying myself to a living grave,
I cannot think, but I had the
chance in my mind with every splinter
of rock that I hurled, and in my sav-
age fury cared not, so that Valpy
might be smothered by the avalanche
which waited in my hand, that I
all that infernal turmoil of crashing
stones his pistol-shots rang out shrill
and clear, till the thick air grew bit-
ter with powder-smoke, and once more
the chambers of his weapon were
empty. Then, with a final discharge
of missiles to herald my coming, I
charged furiously at him and he in
turn fled as I followed him, using in-
finite care to stalk noiselessly. Yet the
voice receded before me like an ignis
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been a fall of rock. The gallery was
barred effectually. The madman was
not a dozen yards from my heels.

Eventually my poor chum recovered,
though only after a long and tedious
convalescence; but he knew nothing
of that awful duel he forced upon me
in the black abysses of the Deeper Pit,
and to this day I have never told him.

THE COURTIN'.

God makes sech nights, all white an'
still
Fur' you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekie crep up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the window,
An' there sot Hudly all alone,
'Til no one nigh to hinder.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in—
There war'n't no stoves, tell comfort
died.

To hake ye to a puddin',
The wa'nt logs shot sparkless out
Towards the poorest, blest hear;
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's arm that gran'ther
Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceiling,
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed creature,
A dogrose 'lushtin' to a brook
Ain't modest'er nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clean grit an' human natur';
None could n't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dork a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty
gals,
Had squired 'em, danced 'em, druv
'em,
Fust this one, an' then that, by spells—
All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed fell full o' sun,
Ez a south slope in April.

She thought no vice hed sech a swing
Ez him in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring,
She knowed the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlet, right in prayer,
When her ne' meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upo' it.

The night, I tell ye, she looked some!
She seemed to 've got a new soul,
For she felt sartain-sure hed come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin on the scraper,
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnin' paper.

He kin' o' fivered on the mat,
Some doubtin' o' the sekie,
His heart kep' goin' pty-pat,
But hern went pty Zekie.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him fuder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

'You want to see my pa, is'pose?
'Wal—no—I come designin'—
To see my mat Sies sprinklin'
Close.

Agin to-morrow's'nin'—
To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin'—
Mebby to mean yes an' say no
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t' other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, 'I'd better call agin';
The sekie, 'Think likely, 'Mister';
The last word pricked him like a pin,
An'—Wal, he up an' kist her.

When ma bimby upon 'em ship,
Hudly sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily 'roun the lips
An' teary 'roun the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose natures never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenuary.

The blood clot 'roun' her heart felt
glued
Tell mother see how matters stood,
An' gin 'em both her blessing.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

—James Russell Lowell.

DERIVATION OF BOER.

It is curious to note, in connection
with the national designation of our
present foes in South Africa, the agri-
cultural parlance of the closely allied
term "Boer," pronounced Booyr. The
expression is properly applied to a
person who hires, from the proprie-
tor or principal tenant of a farm, a
stock of cows along with the right of
grazing them on certain fields. The
Boer makes in return a money pay-
ment of so much per cow, and trusts
to making his profit out of the sale
of the dairy produce. The precise
legal position of a party who has a
"boving" lease is somewhat interme-
diate, being midway between that
of a mere manager and that of a
subtenant. Instances of this mixed
contract of lease and hiring of
labor are now rare, but it is still to be
found in agricultural districts. An
instance of it in Ardenland, in the sub-
ject of judicial consideration in 1894.

The word "bover" is allied to the
Gaelic "bo," a cow, and among its
numerous cognates in the Aryan lan-
guages is included the Dutch term
"Boer."

GOT WHAT HE ASKED FOR.

irate Customer: Look here, I've
been swindled. When I bought this
collar button of you last week I asked
for something in gold, and you gave
me this miserable plated affair.

Butstone. Well, vat for you make
a complaint? Dot gutton vat in gold
even you bought it.

AN OUTDOOR COSTUME.

Outing skirts are more in favor
than ever and have proved a blessing to
woman-kind, as they are invaluable for
rainy days or long walking expedi-
tions. Those most in favor re-
ach

HOUSEHOLD.

TROUBLES THAT DO NOT COME.

Of the hard and weary loads
'Neath which we bend and fall,
The troubles that do not come
Are the heaviest ones of all.

For grief that cuts like a knife
There's oil of comfort and cure,
And the hand which binds the weight
Brings strength and grace to endure.

But to phantoms of pain and woe
And go