

hands met blindly, and clasped each other. I burst into silent tears.

When I looked up, Charley was staring into the mist again. His eyes too were full of tears, but some troubling contradiction prevented their flowing: I saw it by the expression of that mobile but now firmly-closed mouth.

Often ere we left Switzerland I saw similar glories: this vision remains alone, for it was the first.

I will not linger over the tempting delight of the village near which we landed, its houses covered with quaintly notched wooden scales like those of a fish, and its river full to the brim of white-blue water, rushing from the far-off bosom of the glaciers. I had never had such a sense of exuberance and plenty as this river gave me—especially where it filled the planks and piles of wood that hemmed it in like a trough. I might agonize in words for a day and I should not express the delight. And, lest my readers should apprehend a diary of a tour, I shall say nothing more of our journey, remarking only that if Switzerland were to become as common to the mere tourist mind as Cheapside is to a Londoner, the meanest of its glories would be no whit impaired thereby. Sometimes, I confess, in these days of overcrowded cities, when, in periodical floods, the lonely places of the earth are from them inundated, I do look up to the heavens and say to myself that there at least, between the stars, even in thickest of nebulous constellations, there is yet plenty of pure, unadulterated room—not even a vapour to hang a colour upon; but presently I return to my better mind and say, that any man who loves his fellow, will yet find he has room enough and to spare.

#### CHAPTER XVI. THE ICE-CAVE.

During our journey, Mr. Osborne had seldom talked to us, and far more seldom in speech sympathetic. If by chance I came out with anything I thought or felt, even if he did not disapprove altogether, he would yet first lay hold of something to which he could object, coming round only by degrees, and with differences, to express a little consent. Evidently his objection was the first step in instruction. It was better in his eyes to say you were wrong than to say you were right, even if you should be much more right than wrong. He had not the smallest idea of siding with the truth in you, of digging about it and watering it, until it grew a great tree in which all your thought-birds might nestle and sing their songs; but he must be ever against the error—forgetting that the only antagonist of the false is the true. "What," I used to think in after years, "is the use of battering the walls to get at the error, when the kindly truth is holding the postern open for you to enter, and pitch it out of window?"

The evening before we parted, he gave us a solemn admonishment on the danger of being led astray by what men called the beauties of Nature—for the heart was so desperately wicked, that even of the things God had made to show his power, it would make snares for our destruction. I will not go on with his homily, out of respect for the man; for there was much earnestness in him, and it would utterly shame me if I were supposed to hold that up to the contempt which the forms it took must bring upon it. Besides, he made such a free use of the most sacred of names, that I shrink from representing his utterance. A good man I do not doubt he was; but he did the hard parts of his duty to the neglect of the genial parts, and therefore was not a man to help others to be good. His own son revived the moment he took his leave of us—began to open up as the little red flower called the Shepherd's Hour-Glass opens when the cloud withdraws. It is a terrible thing when the father is the cloud and not the sun of his child's life. If Charley had been like the greater number of boys I have known, all this would only have hardened his mental and moral skin by the natural process of accommodation. But his skin would not harden, and the evil wrought the deeper. From his father he had inherited a conscience of abnormal sensibility; but he could not inherit the religious dogmas by means of which his father had partly deadened, partly distorted his; and constant pressure and irritation had already generated a great soreness of surface.

When he began to open up, it was after a sad fashion at first. To resume my simile of the pimpernel—it was to disclose a heart in which the glowing purple was blanched to a sickly violet. What happiness he had, came in fits and bursts, and passed as quickly, leaving him depressed and miserable. He was always either wishing to be happy, or trying to be sure of the grounds of the brief happiness he had. He allowed the natural blessedness of his years hardly a chance: the moment its lobes appeared above ground, he was handling them, examining them, and trying to pull them open. No wonder they crept underground again! It may seem hardly credible that such should be the case with a boy of fifteen, but I am not mistaken in my diagnosis. I will go a little further. Gifted with the keenest perceptions, and a nature unusually responsive to the feelings of others, he was born to be an artist. But he was content

neither with his own suggestions, nor with understanding those of another; he must, by the force of his own will, generate his friend's feeling in himself, not perceiving the thing impossible. This was one point at which we touched, and which went far to enable me to understand him. The original in him was thus constantly repressed, and he suffered from the natural consequences of repression. He suffered also on the physical side from a tendency to disease of the lungs inherited from his mother.

Mr. Forest's house stood high on the Grindelwald side of the Wengern Alp, under a bare grassy height full of pasture both summer and winter. In front was a great space, half meadow, half common, rather poorly covered with hill-grasses. The rock was near the surface, and in places came through, when the grass was changed for lichens and mosses. Through this rocky meadow, now roamed, now rushed, now tumbled one of those Alpine streams, the very thought of whose ice-born plenitude makes me happy yet. Its banks were not abrupt but rounded gently in, and grassy down to the water's brink. The larger torrents of winter were the channel wide, and the sinking of the water in summer let the grass grow within it. But peaceful as the place was, and merry with the constant rush of this busy stream, it had, even in the hottest summer day, a memory of the winter about it, a look of suppressed desolation; for the only trees upon it were a score of straggling pines—all dead, as if blasted by lightning or smothered by snow. Perhaps they were the last of the forest in that part, and their roots had reached a stratum where they could not live. All I know is, that there they stood, blasted and dead every one of them.

Charley could never bear them, and even disliked the place because of them. His father was one whom a mote in his brother's eye repelled; the son suffered for this in twenty ways—one of which was, that a single spot in the landscape was to him enough to destroy the loveliness of exquisite surroundings.

A good way below lay the valley of the Grindelwald. The Elger and the Matterhorn were both within sight. If a man has any sense of the infinite, he cannot fail to be rendered capable of higher things by such embodiments of the high. Otherwise they are heaps of dirt, to be scrambled up and conquered, for scrambling and conquering's sake. They are but warts, Pelion and Ossa and all of them. They seemed to oppress Charley at first.

"Oh Willie," he said to me one day, "if I could but believe in those mountains, how happy I should be! But I doubt, I doubt they are but rocks and snow."

I only half understood him. I am afraid I never did understand him more than half. Later, I came to the conclusion that this was not the fit place for him; and that if his father had understood him, he would never have sent him there.

It was some time before Mr. Forest would take us any mountain ramble. He said we must first get accustomed to the air of the place, else the precipices would turn our brains. He allowed us however to range within certain bounds.

One day soon after our arrival, we accompanied one of our school-fellows down to the valley of the Grindelwald, specially to see the head of the snake-glacier, which having crept thither can creep no further. Somebody had even then hollowed out a cave in it. We crossed a little brook which issued from it constantly, and entered. Charley uttered a cry of dismay, but I was too much delighted at the moment to heed him. For the whole of the white cavern was filled with blue air, so blue that I saw the air which filled it. Perfectly transparent, it had no substance, only blueness, which deepened and deepened as I went further in. All down the smooth white walls evermore was stealing a thin veil of dissolution; while here and there little runnels of the purest water were tumbling in tiny cataracts from top to bottom. It was one of the thousand birthplaces of streams, ever creeping into the day of vision from the unlike and the unknown, unrolling themselves like the fronds of a fern out of the infinite of God. Ice was all around, hard and cold and dead and white; but out of it and away went the water babbling and singing in the sunlight.

"Oh Charley!" I exclaimed, looking round in my transport for sympathy. It was now my turn to cry out, for Charley's face was that of a corpse. The brilliant blue of the cave made us look to each other most ghastly and fearful.

"Do come out, Wilfrid," he said; "I cannot bear it."

I put my arm in his, and we walked into the sunlight. He drew a deep breath of relief, and turned to me with an attempt at a smile, but his lip quivered.

"It's an awful place, Wilfrid. I don't like it. Don't go in again. I should stand waiting to see you come out in a winding sheet. I think there's something wrong with my brain. That blue seems to have got into it. I see everything horribly dead."

On the way back he started several times, and looked round as if with involuntary ap-

prehension, but mastered himself with an effort, and joined again in the conversation. Before we reached home he was much fatigued, and complaining of headache, went to bed immediately on our arrival.

We slept in the same room. When I went up at the usual hour, he was awake.

"Can't you sleep, Charley?" I said. "I've been asleep several times," he answered. "but I've had such a horrible dream every time! We were all corpses that couldn't get to sleep, and went about pawing the slimy walls of our marble sepulchre—so cold and wet! It was that horrible ice-cave, I suppose. But then you know that's just what it is, Wilfrid."

"I don't know what you mean," I said, instinctively turning from the subject, for the glitter of his black eyes looked bodeful. I did not then know how like he and I were, or how like my fate might have been to his, if, instead of finding at once a fit food for my fancy, and a safety-valve for its excess, in those old romances, I had had my regards turned inwards upon myself, before I could understand the phenomena there exhibited. Certainly I too should have been thus rendered miserable, and body and soul would have mutually preyed on each other.

I sought to change the subject. I could never talk to him about his father, but he had always been ready to speak of his mother and sister. Now, however, I could not rouse him. "Poor mamma!" was all the response he made to some admiring remark; and when I mentioned his sister Mary, he only said, "She's a good girl, our Mary," and turned uneasily towards the wall. I went to bed. He lay quiet, and I fell asleep.

When I woke in the morning, I found him very unwell. I suppose the illness had been coming on for some time. He was in a low fever. As the doctor declared it not infectious, I was allowed to nurse him. He was often delirious and spoke the wildest things. Especially, he would converse with the Saviour after the strangest fashion.

He lay ill for some weeks. Mr. Forest would not allow me to sit up with him at night, but I was always by his bedside early in the morning, and did what I could to amuse and comfort him through the day. When at length he began to grow better, he was more cheerful than I had known him hitherto; but he remained very weak for some time. He had grown a good deal during his illness, and indeed never looked a boy again.

To be continued.

(REGISTERED in accordance with the Copyright Act of 1868.)

(Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.)

## TALES OF THE LINKS OF LOVE.

BY ALEXANDER SOMERVILLE.

### LILLYMERE.

#### 'CHAPTER XXXIII.

##### BATTLE, AND BATTLE, AND BATTLE.

It is morning by the hours, and will soon be light enough to find the dead left from yesterday, and of the night combat, lying between the sleeping hosts, along lines of seven miles.

On the low banks of the smaller river. On the bluffs above the larger. In the woodlands and the clearings, green in bud and leaf this early spring. On slopes and plains unsworn of grain, a mighty crop is planted—brigades, battalions, batteries; cannon, rockets, steel.

Along miles and miles from right to left of this line; from left to right of the other line, masses of men are standing awaiting stealth of strategy. In graves dug in the night some thousands of dead were gathered; with as many more to gather. In sleepy, dreamy weariness tens, and tens, and tens of thousands lie with heads on wallets.

Surging up through crowded valleys other columns of tens of thousands come hurrying on to the lines of combat, leaving in the impassable roadways the unadvantageable commissariat with provision trains; blocked in the intensity of the crying to hurry on to the lines of combat.

The columns tramp, tramp, climb on the acclivities, scramble in the bush, jostle and make jests. They halt, and spread down in the mud, heads on wallets; light pipes, smoke and chaff one another on the chances. Make ineffectual efforts to cook imperfect rations, without utensils, on impossible fires. Then sing in chorus of lusty life, "Hark! the boys are marching!" And tramp, tramp, tramping, surge forward to allotted places in the seven miles of positions.

Three hundred years, or any number of years you prefer to name, the harvest of today has been growing to this ripening and reaping. It is the harvest of man's inhumanity to man; sown in America by Spain, England, France, jointly or severally.

If you had inherited slaves, and grown to fullness of estate and years with them under you, around you, a part of your social life, a part of your religion, and comprising all your politics, you also might have hesitated to accept the intervention of the emancipators on their conditions.

The conditions? That they, by freeing your slaves, should secure political ascendancy in Congress; and get, reputedly, ahead of you on the way to Heaven.

Rather than yield emancipators those advantages, and lose the slaves too, you also might have fired on Sumter. Who knows?

Or would you have purchased the emancipation at honest price, as the Donna Euryntia essayed to do often; and by persistency in essaying to do, when too late, incurred the suspicion of traitress?

Man's inhumanity to man. A few preliminary croppings before this morning; but now comes the reaping of the reddest harvest gathered this side of the day of Cain.

On bluff, on flat, on slope. On batteries thrown up in the night within the woodland coverts. On batteries masked in the valleys; on gunboats creeping up the creeks. Within scope of the eye at daybreak, and in deep recesses unseen, columns and lines are massed and assembled.

Brother boys in blue, along this line of positions.

Brother boys in grey, along that line of positions.

Seven miles or more the lines of battle. Arrayed the serried ranks front to front. Deceptive motions of strategy opposite to other motions of strategy, neither meaning what they seem. Arrayed in serried ranks, boys in blue against boys in grey. Blue and grey taking up the battle which, begun by sordid injustice twenty generations back, is now exalted to the supreme height of dissolution, or conservation of a nation's life.

And now it is day. Already the light shows half of the dead of yesterday still lying in bush, or swamp, where they crept to die. And all night, and still this morning the shattered of limb, the slashed, bruised, torn, and bleeding, are gathered into ambulance surgeries; man in blue, man in grey, considerably mixed; moaning, murmuring, praying, defying in one mother tongue. Surgeons and nurses treating all with the humanity of a science knowing no politics.

The great Captains in command, who are they? Where are they? Listen, my country.

From Westminster Abbey to St. Paul's tombs of the heroes, the streets have been traversed by the thinker who knows what heroes are made of, how they are made, and how born but not developed; traversed by the thinker many thousand times. And in the crowds of eager passengers pushing along, he met day by day hundreds of undeveloped Wellingtons and Nelsons. And so the American meets on Broadway, or anywhere from Eastern to Western horizon, undeveloped Washingtons.

This morning there is an American man in grey, and an American man in blue, neither much known as chieftains yet, but to be. Great occasions give great men.

Hark! the occasion! The reveille sounds along the lines on slopes, flats, woodlands, bluffs. And voices of other bugles echo to the reveille. Or, where strategy is stealthiest, silence is broken but by whispers.

Men in grey at battery guns step back, bring up the heavy shell; step forward, and again retire. The scientific eye of one observes, as the muscular power of several depresses or elevates the gun.

Away in Massachusetts there is a homestead post, at which all the children were measured on birth days, and a notch made, preserving year by year the inches they had grown. They are men now and in the war. In this thin line of sharpshooters, ensconced to take aim as occasion offers, three of them in blue, Eli, Zeph, Richard, are levelling rifles at the men in grey at yonder gun—too far out for rifles. At the homestead post the Massachusetts mother kneels praying for her boys, reckoning the notches of their years, though her heart needs not that kind of reckoning. And mothers, somewhere, remember tenderly those stalwart, Southern gunners in grey.

Flash, flash, flash, from that battery. Boo—oo—oom! Boom, the great guns. Up in the sky the flying shells curve and descend in a soughing, swish—ush on head of columns, on head of lines, on head of ensconced sharpshooters.

Flash, flash, flash, the batteries of the men in blue, and swish—ush the shells curve in the air, falling, crashing and exploding on heads of the columns and lines of men in grey.

"Fall in!" "Stand to your arms!" Sound the bugles. "Steady men, steady; remain in your places."

The impulse of every soldier of infantry is to rush with point of bayonet on the batteries; but the higher law of strategy demands that they remain steady in their place yet a while.

Batteries by the score as yet silent await the time to open, of which the man in the ranks knows not, but the Chieftain of battle blue knows, and plans to circumvent the Chieftain of the battle grey.