HIS MYSTERIOUS CORRESPONDENT.

Mershi id," said the funior parties of the great firm of Vaught, Cleveland and Vaught, "I want you to do not a favour."

He was sitting on a corner of his cell, heads in pockets and swinging one foot—rather impatiently his secretary though

Ley though:
Well, I shall be pleased to; what

Well, I snac or production to these letters started 'Nevada' in the Metropolitan ?" 'Ni vada ?" Miss Marshileld considered for a moment, their repiled 'Yea, I have; why do you ask ?" Well, you have excellent taste in Herature, don't you think them recoverable?"

markable?"

Why, I don't know that I do though they are fatrly good, I be-

Heve."

Alt, you are penurious with adject e.g. I (collect. Now, I think they are far above the average, and I should like to discover the identity of this "Nevada" she interests no intensely, "You think Nevada is a woman tiem?"

then?"
"Why, yes, I should judge so;
shouldn't you?"
"I haven't given the subject much

"I haven't given the subject much thought."

"Oh, I'm icasonably sure it's a woman, and what I want of you is to discover her for me."
Miss Marshifeld looked her astonishment and asked:—
"Why not try it yourself?"

"I have tried and falled ignominously. The unspeakableness of the sphinx is garrulity beside the silence those publishers have chosen to wrababut 'Nevada."

"But the silence is probably according to the instructions of 'Nevada' herself, so how can I hope to break it?"

"Why, that's what I can't exactly

hing to the investigation of the control of the con

author of those letters—man or wo-nam."

"The question of sex does not in-fluence your distre for acquaintance, then?" The secretary's penetrating gaze was fixed on her typewriter, and she asked the question with apparent

sne saked the question with apparent carelessues." Not at all; though, as I told you, I feel reasonably sure it is a woman." But granting that, you cannot feel reasonably sure she is a person you would wlah to know. She may be a nobody notwithstanding those articles." Not llitely, should say. Such talints as hers don't go a-begging. You know there is no caste in genius." "No? I am glad to hear that." "You speak as though you had been doubtful on the subject." "Not in my own mind, but I dibn't know what night be your opinion." "I see that you are not inclined to be enthusiastic with me over this new writer. The simple truth is that he or she, whichever it may be, has cast a speil upon me. I never saw such imagery—such magic with words." For a member of a firm dealing in machinery and requiring a practical knowledge of business, Russell Vaughn was about as unpractical a man as could have been found; that is to say, he would have been if he had given his magination free rein and followed after the things which most allured him. But the mind of Vaughn, the head of the firm, and Russell was proeminently a duitful son. He had sat at he desk on which he now reclined for ten years, and the constant effort of discipline his faculties down to the basis of machinery had worn indellibilities from the head of the firm, and Russell was proeminently a duitful son. He had set in a she know in what firmament he might have shone had he not sprung from a commercial race, with whom precedent was immutable law. His grandfather had dealt in machinery, ilkewise his father, so he, too, dealt in machinery, though under silent protest.

Previous to being taken into the firm he had spent several years in foreign travel, and these had been the happlest years of his life. He had recorded their experiences in a small volume, written in a whimsical style, which was brought out at his own expense, and though it had not become famous, and received many favourable press ritees and been-warmly welcomed by beple not too much asked with travel to

the 64 midship which had grown up between them during the three years In which she had been with the direct friendship platonic to all appearances. Of the two, the stemographer had the second the second she had been seen adaptability. In the three years she had mastered the details of their immense trade, and her keen insections and adaptability when the second se

their immense trade, and her keen insight and quick meaoty were relied on by all three partners.

"Talk about a woman being illogia," said the elder Yaughn; "that young woman in the office is worth a dozen ratio-pated dudes," and in proof of bis appreciation her surroundings were confortable to a degree bordering on inxury,
"Fuch magic with words," school Miss Marshfield, thoughtfully. "Have you considered that there is apt to be a wide breach between the personality of an autihor and his writings;"
"No, I hadn't thought of it—not par-

"No, I hadn't thought of it—not particularly,"
"I could point you to many notable

"I could point you to many notable examples."

"Oh, yee, I daresay there are examples, but you must admit that in a world the size of this there are examples to deverything."

"I did not mean to imply a rule, of course, but I think centus is often like a bright-winned switt conduct in house of very common clay. Your Nevada' might move a disappointment if you succeeded in finding her. Better be content with the articles and seek not to know the author. You might likewise be poorer by the loss of un fillusion."

Site looked at him with a laugh in her eyes and resolutely struck the keys of her typewriter.

"You mustn't bother me any more," she asserted. "I am behind with my work as it is."

"Jask for assistance, and you give ine axioms," he retorted. "Neverthers, I am not discouraged. Your opinions are usually worth looking into, but this is too gauzy."

"Go on," she said, over her shoulder; "never mind my opinions, but when you find yourself disenchanted, don't forget that I warned you."

"This ended the discussion for that day, and during many following days Youghn over mentioned "Nevada."

never mind my opinions, but when you find yourself disensinated, don't forget that I warned you."
This ended the discussion for that day, and during many following days Youghn never mentioned "Nevada."
Then, one morning, he came into the office, looking unusually cheerful, threw off his coat, and began tossing about the india on his desk in an absential anothing, rightly opining that he would soon disclose the cause of his satisfaction. Presently he paused in the net of opening a letter and sail:

"I feel greatly elated this morning; can you guess why?"
"I am not good at guessing."
"Yell, then, I shall have to tell you. I've found 'Novada'—or, rather, I've been this to communicate with her through her publishers, and the result is that she has consented to correspond with me as the boys trade jack-knives, out o' sight 'n unseen."
"Indeed! How did you manage it?"
"I'ly means of my prestige as the author of 'From Soa to Soa' which is the test mintained rever received that I had any such prestige. I played the card in desperation and it won. Quite romantic, don't you think?"
"Well, rather, If 'Nevada' is a woman. Have you ascertained that?"
"No, I don't know yet, but I shall soon learn, It won't be possible to keep me mystified long. But all thought of that aside, I am premisting myself untold pleasure from this correspondence. An interchange of ideas with a writer so versatile as 'Nevada,' is one of the Keenets pleasures of life."
"I'don't know anything about that, nover having had a 'regular correspondent."
"I'm vaushn went on with his work after this careless comment. He was not more than ordinarily selfish, but it never occurred to him that his secretary might possibly have a personal feeling with regard to this correspondent. If she had, however, it would not lave been suspected from her manner.

Somo days after this conversation he pulled a letter out of his pocket, and, handing it over to ner, said :---

her manner.

Butter out of his pocket, and, handing it over to ner, sald:
"Now, tell me what you think about "Newada" being a woman."

Miss Maushfield took the letter,

'Novada' being a woman."
Miss Maxshfield took the letter,
amoothel it with her long, alender fingers, and asked:—
"Do you think this perfectly fair?"
"Certainly—why not? It would be
a sint to keep such a letter as that to
myself."
After reading it she laid it on the
table before her, and seemed to be
pondering.

table before her, and seemed to be pondering.
"Why did you adopt the pseudonym of 'Darwin'?" she asked, presently.
"Oh, for no reason only that it was the first that occurred to me. You see, I was to use one, and not seek to penetrate heis."
"Hers! You are sure it is a woman, then, at last?"

then, at last?"

"Can you doubt it after rending that letter? I think she is certaint; a woman, and a y-ng one at that."

"Oh." sail the secretary, drily, "and beautiful too, no doubt. You seen to have gathered a large amount of information from this letter, while I see absolutely nothing in it which betrays either ago or gender. In this day of victorous writing it is impossible to tell who is be shind an article—whether man or woman—but If I were to judge by one or two expressions here. I should say the writer ought to be a big-beard-ed man."

ed man."

"Oh, Marshfield, positively you are the last person I should have accused of Jeakousy."

For a year this romantic correspondence went on, growing constantly more absorbing to Bussell Vaughn, and, it appeared from the trequency of her letters, the same to 'Nevada."

One of the days when Vaughn re-ceited one of these letters he was ab-sent minded to a marked degree, and the buden of responsibility for that lay rested on the se-nographer, but she arteed to complaint, nearly remind-ing him occasionally of neglected du-tes.

ties.

Sometimes be would spring suddenly to his feet in an abstracted mood and pace the office floor, sometimes stand before a window and gaze long out over the adjoining vacant tots, where were plied a few plecos of old machines. His accretary wateraed him narrowly at these times, and one day when she had called his attention to something thich needed it, he turned abruptly and said;

at these times, and one day when she ad called his attention to something thich needed it, he turned abruphly and said:

"Marshiled, there's no doubt about and said:

"Marshiled, there's no doubt about to the seek should be junior partner here. Upon my word, I'm good for nothing." fire a think to said, the said and to med toward him.

"Let me advise you," she said. "I think you had better give up this correspondence of yours, it is doing you no good. Better drop it and forget it, and attend to bushess."

"Drop it! You don't know what you are so ins. Have you any idea what part this friendship has come to play in my delly life? Now, don't, please, set me down for a drivelling idiot. I am not going about with my learnt on my sleeve tilling every one what 'Nevada' is to me, but there's something about you which invites my confidence notwithstanding that your criticisms have been rather acrid. I would give ten years of my life for the privilege of seeing 'Nevada's face—of hearing her talk as she writes. Why, did I show you her letters on Egyptology? I thought! knew a few things, but she makes me blush for my ignorance. Egypt! The very name is a mine of mystic delights under her facile pen. Sooff at me! I you will Marshifield—you with your cool wit and calm judgment of men, but I would willingly exchange my best propects in machinery for a voyage down the Nie with 'Nevada' as a companion."

Miss Marshifeld was rather paler than usual, but she only said quickly: "And she eliddes you negistenting."

Mile with 'Nevada,' as a companion." Miss Marshfeld was rather paler than usual, but she only said quickly: "And she cludes you pertiatently?" 'Yes, and I can't see why, I have done my best. I have brought all the power there is in words to the siege, and unfortunately words are my only available weapons. She promises an interview sometime in the future, but centinually puts me off. She has seen me, too, which doesn't seem all round fair."

centimally puts me on. See has seen all round fair."

Miss Marshi'ld looked at m with mirth in her eyes.

"What now?" he exclaimed in a vexed tone. "Look here, Marshfield, you're getting altogether too much fun out of me. I see my garrullry needs muzzling. It don't seem like you, though: I thought you'd have some sympathy."

"And so I have, but I can't help contemplating the possibility of your correspondent being some leathery old woman whose romance is all in the past, and who is annusing herself by warning it over the flame of your young passion. Of course she couldn't show herself, because that would mean—curtain."

"You are talking most unheard-of-

-curtain."
"You are talking most unheard-of-nonsense, for you. No leathery old woman could write with such fire and woman could write with such fire and cloquence. She is young and enthusi-natic. You have not seen all her letters."

"No 7 I think you might hav shown them to me." She looked hard at him as she spoke, and he actually blushed under her scrutiny.

"Ah! I see," she went on, mercileasity; "Nevada' has been making love to you."

time in their acquaintance—anrgy with her.

"Supposing," she went on, as if she had not noticed, "that you meet your 'Nevada' and find her, though at-tractive to the eye, unlovely in char-acter, would her genius obliterate the effect—"

"Utterly impossible for a presson"
writes like that to be spiritually unlovely."
"There you are in error. Neither bad nor good qualities are absolute in real people. Nature has its moods and tenses, and I have been told that writers as a class are especially susceptible to them—in fact, that it's a very good rule to know your pet author at a respectful distance."
"Well," said Vaughn, trying to throw off his sullenness, "you may be perfectly right—I dareasy you are—but all this is too complex for me. I am not an adept in analysing character, and to tell the truth, don't think I care to be. Not, however, that I mean to disparage the habit. Probably it is a very good one, only not congenial to my testes."

"No," said Miss Marshfield, thought—the not ense consenial to your

my tastes."

"No," said Miss Marshfield, thoughtfully," it is not congenial to your tastes. You care so much more for ideals than for actualities."

Vaughn had been standing with his back toward her, looking out of the window. Buddenly he wheeled about and stood beside her desk.

"Marshfield, it occurs to me that I must seem very puerlie and silly to you."

must seem very puerile and smy voyou."

"No, indeed; it I have said anything to imply that, forgive me—I never meant it. I do think though, that it's best to have no enthusiasms; they leave such heartaches in their wake. Hardly anything is life oomes up to the expectations of an impulsive person, while if we expect little or nothing, the good that comes to us seems a full measure. Have you not found it so sometimes?"

"Now that you mention it, I believe

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Cure."

AIR I. PALMER, HAIR DRESSER, 673 QUERN
STREET WEST, TORONTO, could not sleep for
years on account of the mucus dropping into the
threat; cured by Dr. Chase a Colatrip Cure.

STRET WEST, TORNING, could not sleep for years on account of the mucus dropping into the control of the mucus dropping into the control of the mucus dropping into the control of the country of the coun

ask, did you get all this viadom? One does not learn these things by bling told them."

"I have lived a great deal of it, and the rest I have seen others live."

"You say your friend taught you to conquer the ills of life. Now, how, for instance, would you overcome the fate which hold you bound to duties of a prosale sort when you were continually longing to shake them off and hy to the other end of the earth?"

"I should patiently blide the shaking time. You know 'all things come to kim who wants,' though my experience proves that they are not ulways satisfactorily attained."

"Not always, no; but how can a fellow tell that they won't be till her tries?"

"I have often thought," said the secretary, musingly, 'that it is a great pity to spend the best years of one's life in accumulating the means of subsistence. If the needs of civilization were fewer it would materially decrease the miseries of th; world."

"For my part," said Vaughn, quickly, "I could be content with the indian's blanket—or a yellow robe and leggling bowl. There are indute possibilities in the latter. Give me the freedom of the globe and civilization may have its 5-i-de-rols."

Six weeks after this conversation found Vaughn with still not clue to the dientity of his correspondent. All her letters reached lim through the publishers, but they were gradually growing less frequent and colder in tone. It was very strange, he thought, for it had not been long since in one of those thrilling opisities which so elated him she had exclaimed:—
"Almost thou persuadest me, 'Darwin,' that the only things desirable in this world are you, a moonlight night and the Nite; but wait yet a little longer. You shall see my face—I sweat it of him without fulfilling this

get rid of him without fulfilling this promise.

Miss Marshfield watched his growing disincilination for business with annoyance, and finally she said to him:—"Mr. Vaughn, you are not well."" he neturned, in surprise; "Oh, yes, I am always well." A moment after he added:—"Queer, my father said something about that, too, but I have never been sick in my life, and certainly am not now." She said no more, but watched him furtively as he sat over his work, the two little wrinkies in his forehead drawn into a positive scowl. She noticed that he was sallow, thinner in fieth han usual, and that his eyes bore evidences of insomnia. The afternoon light fell across him, and for the first time his secretary was fully conscious time his secretary was fully conscious of the change in him. Involuntarily she let her hands slip from the keys as she uttered an exclamation of

as alse uttered all and met her gaze, alarm.
Vaughn looked up and met her gaze, there was something in it besides alarm, too—something that astonished him. It seemed like a look of tender pity, but he thought it hardly possible that he could have read it aright.
Supposing he had! He felt almost

suffocated for a moment, and as Miss Marshirid dropped her eyes and codouted slightly, he sprang to this test and acked life from wasn't unounce fortably warm. She made some unmitted to the reply and he lowered with the chair came and stood beside her white he rimble fingers played rather nervously over the keys. At length he made some first ant ran of the results of the property of the results of the control of the results of the space (results).

sously over the keys. At tength he spoke: "Your eyes would entice the truth out of a confirmed list. Marshield. I may as well tell you the whole slekening story, though, of course, you'll say it was to be expected. She's given me the suck-without even the common decency of saying good-ive She's been trying it for a long time, and now she's done it. Very shabby of her, don't you think?" It undoubtedly seems shabby treatment from your point of view, but it was the most mereiful thing she could do."

lo." Because why?"

Because that correspondence was intiting you for business and making too more visionary and idealiste than ever, which wasn't at all necessary."

You speek with your accustomed paintness."

phalmness."
Yes, I am in carnest, but I hope you are not offended."
"Why should I bee with you? When you have not been giving me good advice—which, by the way, I wish I had taken—you have been doing my neglected work. I have no reason for complaining of you, at all events. Things have turned out about as you predicted she can't be a person of Rood

plaining of you, at all events. Things have turned out about as you predicted. She can't be a person of good principles—she must be a lift. She-she must have found somebody else." Oh, let us cover her with the mante or charity, and suppose her nothing had, but only wrinkled and usiy. She couldn't help that, you know. The transcendent love you offered her would have tempted any woman —"
"How do you know I offered her transcendent love?"
"I have heard you talk of her several times."
"Come, Marshried, let up on me. I'm rouly now to assent to all the spliteful things you've said about her. I do hereby solemnly swear that to the best of my knowledge and belief she's a big-bearded man; that in adultion to, and mowithstanding that, she's a teathery old woman who has been anading herself with my feeble-mind-deness, and warming over her state tomances at the life of my idlotte passion."
"Did I really mentlon feeble-mind-

edness?"

"Oh, you might as well! But this isn't wading through that pile of letters. Some one has got to take a trip, and owing to my father's fancy that have been contined too closely of late, it's been decided that I am the one. My ather, you see, doesn't know about 'Nevada."

"No," said Miss Marshfield, scarcely heeding the latter part of his remark. "Shall you be gone long?"

"Two or three weeks, I think,' he repiled, and became absorbed in his reading.

At six o'clock they had finished, and then, as she was doming her street clothes Vaughn remembered certain things it was necessary to talk over in view of the intended trip. So they linview of the intended trip. So they lin-gered by the grate fire, without light-ing up, because it was pleasanter to talk in the twilight. The business af-fairs they discussed were no. of vital importance, but the secretary seemed not to notice that, and the junior part-ner talked on leisurely, rocking his of-fice chair. The firelight played over their faces, and through the uncurtain-ed window shone the first refulgence of a full moon.

a full moon.

This was a window which commanded a view of the lots, with their lumber of old machinery. There was no snow and over the motley array the moon poured a silvery flood lending it a world interest it was far from possessing by daylight. The sharp angles and usity protuberances of the pilo were softened by the hasy glow that made the shadows seem to hide strange dings—mystical things—things which belonged to the land of draams.

The spell of the nour was on these

The spell of the nour was on these two, as they sat there by the fire, and neither was willing to break it. They talked in low tones, with throbbing

prairies belavem their mesors quest espation 28.

Presently Vaughn beamer over to feel to me me and win he settly that known is wearen to Miss Marchband than beamer so mear that his test hand than beamer so mear that his test hand cashly reached and classed bey takel, which lay in the arm of her chair She add not alternate to after that the had not been made some first and remark, to which he returned a cause reply. She booked at the coals, but his eyes were on her farce.

"Marshiddl." The name was uttered very softly, and he ferr toos will, "Could you ever would?" he possible."

Her book storned blue, She had turned.

hie—"

He look stopped life — She had turned on him those epositive eyes which sametimes accurate to belie the admission for demension, and there was no mistasking their expression this time. He undo istond as well as if she had put it into words.

Theroughly agitated, he see, and, standing be him her chat, add his hand on her shoulder as he said, unstability belief.

hand on her shoulder as he said, unsteadily :"Marshield, you force me to believe
in the litck of feels in a natural
counts or events you would despire me
-thank (dod for the unnatural Don't
-thank (dod for the unnatural Don't
-tech; it might controllet what your
speak, blease, I'm afteld of your
speak, it might controllet what your
speak not told me, and it's too good
to be contradicted." He had bent lower, until his dark ooks mingled with
lett.

or, until his dark tooks minsled with het?.

Miss Marshileld did not speak; she was sanking with shout baughter.

What was it." h asked; "more fun at my expense? My dear girl, I can't blame you, but I have a strange feeling. Marshileld—that it is your image I nave had in my heart all the time, and never a dream of a nyth. Explain that, will you?"

Then Miss Marshield spoke, and this was what she said.—"Durwin, almost thou persusdest me that the only thinss desirable in this would are you, a moonlight night, and the Nile."

"What I" exclaimed Vaughn, straightening up, well-nigh paralysed. "How did you know she said that "

ening up, well-nigh paralyzed, "How dild you know she said that?"
"Because 'she' and I are one."
Imperuously he whirled her chair shout until she faced him.
"You are 'Nevada'!"
"You; is it incredible?"
"Unity in the light of your outrageous equivocation."
"Oh. I didn't equivocate much; it wasn't necessary. You were very easy procy, Darwin."

"oth, I didn't equivocate much; it wasn't necessary. You were very easy prey, Darwin."
"Oh, I didn't equivocate much; it wasn't necessary. You were very easy prey, Darwin."
"Was I, Indeed ?"
"I'll admit that any course was a little irregular, but you see I was all the time casing my conscience with the promise of an explanation. It was very exciting, and I admit that temptation inude me carry it too far. Forsive me, pray. I have never romanced before, but you wrote such letters—sh, such letters, Darwin. You are a passic hieters, Darwin. You are a passic hieters, Darwin. You are to such letters—sh, such letters, Darwin. You are to the correspondence so soon, but for the correspondence so soon, but for the collect it was having on you."
"I was something undone, that's a fact. And to think it was my dear Marshield all the time. Don't you cremember when I asked why you couldn't have been 'Nevada.' You might have told me then."
"But I was somewhat plued to see you so coolly setting me down as increase evident that your plain secretary had not the ghost of a chance."
"So, then, you wanted me to fall in love with my secretary?"
"Perlaps I did—the possibility never presented itself to you, however."
"Oh, Marshield, it have always adorting should be seen to have a story as you have to tell; what, then, could be expound. Many a time I have said to myself, Marshield, it have always adorting the shadows which the freight was throwing into fantantic anapes." "The wonder of it!" said Vaugn. Marshield, who will keep me sober and with you in Egypt, even when you house to tell; what, then, could be extected of my, whose wild desire was with you in Egypt, even when you house to tell; what, then, could be extected of my, whose wild desire was with you in Egypt, even when you house to tell; what, then, could be extented to my on the promoting the fantantic anapes. "The wonder of it!" said Vaugn. Marshield, who will keep me sober and waters and the sign of the condition of the pramid."—Parma Gentry, in "Short Stories."

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