

path one of those scorpion eaters and snake wizards that are so common in the cities of Egypt at certain seasons of the year, though at other times they are never seen, and who reap a rich harvest by charming houses from being entered by serpents or anathematizing away those who have already made a home therein; who also head sundry of the religious processions and pretend to be imbued with the spirit of prophecy, on which occasion they become so excited that they not only foam at the mouth, but scatter it all about them as they rave, when it is eagerly collected by their credulous dupes who fancy it will secure them certain admission to Paradise when they die, no matter what may be the number and weight of their sins.

But in half the time we have taken to describe this ghoul-like being Captain Frank Donnelly had determined what he should do with him.

Doubtless he thought the mountain was his home and he was acquainted with its every cavern, in which case he would be able to show them many a secret hiding-place, from whose snug seclusion they would be able to laugh their foes to scorn; wherefore willing or unwilling, he should guide them thereunto.

He had no doubt that the man knew something of English, from the number of times he had doubtless performed before English-speaking people in Cairo, Alexandria and other places, and therefore at once tackled him in the language he best understood him self.

"My good fellow," said he, "we are pursued by Bedouins who would rob us of all that we possess and then murder us. Save us from such a fate and it shall be the best paid night's work that you have ever performed in your life."

The scorpion eater evidently understood what was said to him very well, but the promise of good pay altogether failed to win his services.

"Accursed Kaffirs," he yelled, "and is it to me that ye would appeal for your miserable lives? To me who have quaffed the blessed Zemzem well and kissed the black stone of Mecca? To me who have rubbed my brow against the sacred camel and flung stones at the devil? To me, who, by the leave of Allah and the friendship of the prophet, can handle the deadliest reptiles with impunity? By the hundred and fourteen Chapters of the El Khoran, if ye expect aid or assistance from Abou Seif the santon, ye are fools and the sons of fools."

The air of exultation with which he said all this sufficiently revealed the hatred which he bore to the entire European race, and as he concluded he planted himself right in the centre of the narrow pathway, with his right arm stretched toward them, and in the hand pertaining thereto, as though it had been a lethal weapon, the serpent he had just charmed forth from its nest in the bank, and which was a horrid looking reptile of at least five feet in length, and a flesh color reclining to rose, with a flat triangular shaped head, scintillating, rainbow-hued eyes, and an open mouth that displayed enormous poison fangs.

The snake looked as though at the charmer's bidding it was prepared to leap from his hand upon who ever approached him, but so much more serious to Frank Donnelly's notion was the danger fast coming up behind than the one which barred their passage in front that with a cheery word to Nellie not to be afraid, for that he was only "an old fool and humbug," he urged his horse forward, and as the huge serpent actually did spring toward him at the charmer's bidding, with one hissing sweep of his sabre, which for some little while he had held bare in his hand he cleft it right in twain the tail end dropping on the narrow path and the deadly head (fortunately, perhaps, for his horse's legs) going over into the abyss that yawned on their left.

Then, ere the somewhat astounded santon could draw another serpent from his basket, which it seemed to be his intention to do, Frank Donnelly had him by the beard, which, grasping firmly, he first of all gave his beard a good shaking thereby and then said in stern tones:

"You will either save us or perish yourself. That you can save us I know, and if you don't or won't, I swear to you that the most remarkable thing which these Bedouins shall find about us when they overtake us will be your head severed from the body. Can you understand that?"

"Yes, yes," gasped the now frightened santon, "let go my beard and I will serve you truly. By Allah and the prophet, I will save you all."

"You can walk beside my horse as well as in front of it, for whilst I hold you in this way I'll be the better able to take off your head on the slightest show of lukewarmness or treachery. If you serve us well you shall be well paid—aye, paid beyond your most greedy desires; and you must know well enough, you old fool that if you delivered us over to the Bedouins, they would only throw you a few paras for your pains."

All the while he was preaching to him in this manner, Frank Donnelly was dragging him along likewise, for they were in no position to waste even a minute.

By the time that he had finished speaking, however, the santon seemed to see the force of his remarks and to fall in with his reasoning as well, for he said in more decided tones, "I will save you," and presently added, "Behold, the door that leads to safety is at hand."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Ready to Oblige.

In former times, when the mails were carried less frequently than they are now, and when the rates of postage were so high as to be a heavy tax upon correspondence, it was much the custom for travellers to take parcels and messages from place to place, as a friendly or neighborly office. Here is an old-time anecdote relating to this custom:

"My dear fellow," says one who is about to start on a journey, as he takes leave of a friend, "I'm off to-morrow. Can I take any letters for you?"

"You're very kind," answered the friend, "But where are you going?"

"Oh, as to that, I haven't made up my mind yet!"

This same obliging spirit used to be shared by the stage drivers, who carried the mails before railroads were built. They did a general passenger and express business for the people who lived along the route on which they drove. In Warren's history of Waterford, Maine, there is a characteristic story told of a man who used to drive from Portland up into Oxford County.

It was in the spring, and the roads were at their worst from the frost leaving the ground. All the passengers who could walk were picking their way alongside the road, occasionally helping the horses up a long, tiresome hill by lifting at the wheels.

Near the top of the hill was a woman waiting by the roadside, to hail the driver as he came up. She explained that a heavy loom which was piled near by was borrowed of a neighbor, living farther up the road, and she wished to return it that afternoon.

"Would the driver be so good as to load it on his coach, and take it along to its destination?"

"I'm sorry, ma'am, I'm really very sorry," said the driver, deprecatingly, "but I'm afraid I shall have to disappoint you this time. There's a saw-mill at the foot of the hill over the other side, which I've engaged to take on this trip, and I couldn't carry both; I'm sure I couldn't."

How Royal Beds Were Made.

A curious story of the way in which royal beds were made some hundreds of years ago has just been published. Whenever the bed of Henry VII. was made at the Palace of Sheen, it had to be done in the following fashion: "First of all the curtains were to be drawn, and a gentleman nether held them together. Then two Squires of the Body stood at the bed's head, two yeomen of the Crown at the bed's feet, and all the clothes were laid on the carpet until the contents of the palliases were re-made. After this exercise the yeomen had to leap upon the bed and 'reel him up and down' to array the litter. Following this the servitors had to 'lay down the canvas again, then the feather-bed, and beat it well, and make it even and smooth.' The two yeomen afterwards took the fustian and cast it upon the bed without any wrinkles, and the sheet in the same fashion. Finally the yeomen had to beat the pillows and throw them up to the squires to lay them on the bed-head, as might please the King's grace. The bed-clothes were at this point to be brought pretty well up to the pillows and turned down the space of an ell. In the end, the gracious chronicler says, when all was done, 'the several functionaries engaged withdrew behind the curtain that divided the room, and had a drink all round.'"

Sir Leonard Tilley received a New Year's turkey from a friend in Quebec that turned the scales at twenty-eight pounds.

The Poet's Corner.

Puzzled.

You ask me whether I'm High Church,
You ask me whether I'm Low.
I wish you'd tell the difference,
For I'm sure that I don't know.
I'm just a plain old body,
And my brain works pretty slow;
So I don't know whether I'm High Church,
And I don't know whether I'm Low.

I'm trying to be a Christian
In the plain, old-fashioned way
Laid down in mother's Bible,
And I read it every day;
Our blessed Lord's life in the Gospels,
Or a comforting Psalm of old,
Or a bit from the Revelations
Of the city whose streets are gold.

Then I pray, why, I'm generally praying,
Though I don't always kneel or speak out,
But I ask the dear Lord, and keep asking
Till I fear He is all tired out.
A piece of the Litany sometimes,
The Collect, perhaps, for the day,
Or a scrap of a prayer that my mother
So long ago learned me to say.

But now my poor memory's failing,
And often and often I find
That never a prayer from the Prayer-book
Will seem to come into my mind.
But I know what I want, and I ask it,
And I make up the words as I go;
Do you think, now, that shows I ain't High Church?
Do you think it means I am Low?

My blessed old husband has left me,
The years since God took him away.
I know he is safe, well and happy,
And yet when I kneel down to pray,
Perhaps it is wrong, but I never
Leave the old man's name out of my prayer,
But I ask the Lord to do for him
What I would do if I was there.

Of course He can do it much better;
But He knows, and He surely won't mind
The worry about her old husband
Of the old woman left here behind.
So I pray, and I pray, for the old man,
And I am sure that I shall still die.
So may be that proves I ain't Low Church,
And may be it shows I am High.

My old father was never a Churchman,
But a Scotch Presbyterian saint;
Still his white head is shining in Heaven,
I don't care who says that it ain't;
To one of our blessed Lord's mansions,
That old man was certain to go.
And now do you think I am High Church?
Are you sure that I ain't pretty Low?

I tell you it's all just a muddle.
Too much for a body like me.
I'll wait till I join my old husband,
And then we shall see what we'll see.
Don't ask me again, if you please, sir;
For really it worries me so.
And I don't care whether I'm High Church,
And I don't care whether I'm Low.

That Boy.

Is the house turned topsy-turvy?
Does it ring from street to roof?
Will the racket still continue
Spite of all your mild reproof?
Are you often in a flutter?
Are you sometimes thrilled with joy?
Then I have my grave suspicions
That you have at home that boy.

Are the walls and tables hammered?
Are your nerves and ink upset?
Have two eyes so bright and roguish
Made you every care forget?
Have your garden beds a prowler
Who deliques but to destroy?
These are well-known indications
That you have at home that boy.

Have you seen him playing croust—
With his head upon the mat
And his heels in mid-air twirling—
For his audience, the cat?
Do you ever stop to listen,
When his merry pranks annoy—
Listen to a voice that whispers,
You were once just like—that boy?

Have you heard of broken windows,
And with nobody to blame?
Have you seen a trousseau urchin
Quite unconscious of the same?
Do you love a teasing mixture
Of perplexity and joy?
You may have a dozen daughters,
But I know you've got—that boy.

Paradise.

O, Paradise must fairer be
Than all on earth exelling;
O would that I, from trouble free,
Were there securely dwelling!
In Paradise a river clear
Of heavenly love is streaming,
Where every bitter earthly tear
A lucid pearl is gleaming.

In Paradise soft breezes blow
To cool the earth's hot fever;
The pains and pains that here we know
They wait away forever;
In Paradise, on greenest glade,
The tree of peace is planted;
The sleeper underneath its shade
By blissful dreams is haunted.

A cherub sentry at the gate
His watchful watch is keeping,
Least worldly din should penetrate
To rouse me, sweetly sleeping.
My heart, that shattered bark, will there
Be safe in harbor riding;
Its ever restless infant, Care,
Be lulled to rest abiding.

For every thorn that gave a wound
A rose will there be borne me;
And joy, that here no roses found,
With rosy wreaths a loam me;
These will all pleasures breathe and bloom.
That here untimely withered,
And blossoms rare of rich perfume
From arid stems be gathered.

All that was here my heart's pursuit,
Will grow from hour to hour,
From tender froud as golden fruit,
As summer's opening flower.
The blighted hopes that here were mine,
Like wreaths from many a fair land,
In fragrant bloom will round me twine
My never fading garland.

Youth, that on rapid beating wing
So swiftly o'er me darted,
And Love, that on a morn in spring
One nectar draught imparted,
Wingless and flightless there will be,
And to their hearts will hold me,
And, like a child or mother's knee,
In soft embraces fold me.

And that Divinity, whose light
Shone dim and dimly gleaming,
Whose lovely viwed angels bright
I only saw in dreaming
Fair poetry unvalued will show
Her eyes celestial fires,
While joyously my song shall flow
To sound of angel lyres.

Tobogganing.

A LA ROBERT BROWNING.

As I glide, as I glide
I own the steep toboggan slide,
Whither hied maid bright-eyed;
As I glide, as I glide,
I might well be terrified;
But my rising fears subside
(He has lied, the base "slide")
As I glide, as I glide.

As I glide, as I glide
Down the steep toboggan slide
They deride, who ne'er tried,
If my words stand but shied,
I might hit against the slide—
Or be "glid," steering wide—
As I glide, as I glide.

As I glide, as I glide
Down the steep toboggan slide,
On my slide, glorified,
As I glide, as I glide,
Wearing boots of toughest hide,
I, in wh'm the girl confide,
I'm the pride of the slide,
As I glide, as I glide.

As I glide, as I glide
Down the steep toboggan slide—
So derided, when untied—
As I glide, as I glide,
All my fears are uncolored;
That tobogganing's the id-
Eal ride's undenied,
As I glide, as I glide.

As I glide, as I glide
Down the steep toboggan slide—
Far derided, horrified—
As I glide, as I glide,
There's a smash-up on the slide,
And a back-set to my pride,
As I glide—scorified!

Mamie Sleeps.

BY L. A. MORRISON.

In the quiet church-yard's keeping
Mamie sleeps;
While the winter snowdrift sweeping,
Slowly heaps
Round the little grave we made her;
God knows best,
With what breaking hearts we laid her
Down to rest.

"It is easy work forgetting,"
So they say;
"There is little gain in fretting
Day by day;"
But the tender heart-strings riven,
Heal so slow;
'Gall'st what heart-pangs we have striven,
God doth know.

What bright hopes our hearts were weaving,
Every day!
Do not wonder at our grieving
For our May,
That her life, so full of promise
For the right,
Should go on so quickly from us,
In the night.

But we know that He who claimed her,
Knows the best;
When to take, and why He named her
For His rest;
So we take the task assigned us,
This in view:
Some sweet eve-tide will find us
Resting too.

Toronto, 1896.