

platform had been built on the roof for the muezzin. But it still looked more like a fort than a place of worship.

Toward it the one-eyed ruffian led the way, with the long, leisurely-seeming gait of a mountaineer. At the door, in the middle of the end of the street, he paused and struck on the lintel three times with his gun-butt. And that was a strange proceeding, to say the least, in a land where the mosque is a public resting place for homeless ones, and all the "faithful" have a right to enter.

A mullah, shaven like a mummy for some unaccountable reason—even his eyebrows and eyelashes had been removed—pushed his bare head through the door and blinked at them. There was some whispering and more staring, and at last the mullah turned his back.

The door slammed. The one-eyed guide grounded his gun-butt on the stone, and the procession waited, watched by the crowd that had lost its interest sufficiently to talk or joke.

In two minutes the mullah returned and threw a mat over the threshold. It turned out to be the end of a long, narrow strip that he kicked and unrolled in front of him all across the floor of the mosque. After that it was not so astonishing that the horses and mules were allowed to enter.

"Which proves I was right after all!" murmured King to himself.

In a steel box at Simla is a memorandum, made after his former visit to the place, to the effect that the entrance into Khinjan Caves might possibly be inside the mosque. Nobody had believed it likely, and he had not more than half favoured it himself; but it is good, even when the next step may lead into a death-trap, to see one's first opinions confirmed.

He nodded to himself as the outer door slammed shut behind them, for that was another most unusual circumstance.

A faint light shone through slit-like windows, changing darkness into gloom, and little more than vaguely hinting at the Prophet's bed-sheet. But for a section of white wall to either side of it, the relic might have seemed part of the shadows. The mullah stood with his back to it and beckoned King nearer. He approached until he could see the pattern on the covering rugs, and the pink rims round the mullah's lashless eyes.

"What is thy desire?" the mullah asked—as a wolf might ask what a lamb wants.

Supposing Yasmini to be jealous of invasion of her realm, King did not doubt she would be glad to have him break down at this point. Until he had actually gained access to her, nobody could reasonably charge her with his safety. If he had been done to death in the Khyber, the sarkar would have known it in a matter of hours. If he were killed here they might never know it.

"Answer!" said the mullah. "What is thy desire?"

"Audience with her!" he answered, and showed the gold bracelet on his wrist.

The red eye-rims of the mullah blinked a time or two, and though he did not salute the bracelet, as others had invariably done, his manner underwent a perceptible change.

"That is proof that she knows thee. What is thy name?"

"Kurram Khan."

"And thy business?"

"Hakim."

"We need thee in Khinjan Caves! But none enter who have not earned right to enter! There is but one key. Name it!"

King drew in his breath. He had hoped Yasmini's talisman would prove to be key enough. The nails of his left hand nearly pierced the palm, but he smiled pleasantly.

"He who would enter must slay a man before witnesses in the teeth of written law!" he said.

"And thou?"

"I slew an Englishman!" The boast made his blood run cold, but his expression was one of sinful pride.

"Whom? When? Where?"

"Athelstan King—a British arrificer

—sent on his way to these 'Hills' to spy!"

It was like having spells cast on himself to order!

"Where is his body?"

"Ask the vultures! Ask the kites!"

"And thy witnesses?"

Hoping against hope, King turned and waved his hand. As he did so, being quick-eyed, he saw Ismail drive an elbow home into Darya Khan's ribs, and caught a quick interchange of whispers.

"These men are all known to me," said the mullah. "They all have right to enter here. They have right to testify. Did ye see him slay his man?"

"Aye!" lied Ismail, prompt as friend can be.

"Aye!" lied Darya Khan, fearful of Ismail's elbow.

"Then, enter!" said the priest resignedly, as one who admits a communicant against his better judgment.

HE turned his back on them so as to face the Prophet's bed-sheet and the rear wall, and in that minute a hairy hand gripped King's arm from behind, and Ismail's voice hissed hot-breathed in his ear.

"Ready of tongue! Ready of wit! Who told thee I would lie to save thy skin? Be thy kismet as thy courage, then—but I am hers, not thy man! Hers, thou light of life—though God knows I love thee!"

The mullah seized the Prophet's bed-sheet and its covering rugs in both hands, with about as much reverence as salesmen show for what they keep in stock. The whole lot slid to one side by means of noisy rings on a rod, and a wall lay bare, built of crudely cut but very well laid stone blocks. It appeared to reach unbroken across the whole width of the mosque's interior.

On the floor lay a mallet, a peculiar thing of bronze, cast in one piece, handle and all. The mullah took it in his hand and struck the stone floor sharply once—then twice again—then three times—then a dozen times in quick succession. The floor rang hollow at that spot.

After about a minute there came one answering hammer-stroke from beyond the wall. Then the mullah laid the mallet down and though King ached to pick it up and examine it he did not dare.

Excitement now was probably the least of his emotions. It had been swallowed in interest. But in his guise of hakim he had to beware of that superficial western carelessness, that permits folk to acknowledge themselves frightened or excited or amused. His business was to attract as little attention to himself as possible; and to that end he folded his hands and looked reverent, as if entering some Mecca of his dreams. Through his horn-rimmed spectacles his eyes looked far-away and dreamy. But it would have been a mistake to suppose that a detail was escaping him.

The irregular lines in the masonry began to be more pronounced. All at once the wall shook and they gaped by an inch or two, as happens when an earthquake has shaken buildings without bringing anything down. Then an irregular section of wall began to move quite smoothly away in front of him, leaving a gap through which eight men abreast could have marched.

As it receded he observed that the lowest course of stones was laid on a bronze foundation, that keyed into wide bronze grooves. There was oil enough in the grooves to have greased a ship's ways and there was neither squeak nor tremor as the tons of masonry slid back.

(To be continued.)

Winter in the Woods

(Concluded from page 20.)

dust—or rather weird pagan rite, as it looks to be, silhouetted against the pearly-gray sky of an oncoming storm.

The mountain ranges, veiled by this storm, and the inky foothills it has not yet reached, "compose"—if one may be permitted the painter's idiom

—a striking study in black and white. A still more unusual one awaits you in the park. Out of beleaguering drifts and down disappearing vistas rise tall, straight-limbed cedars, and up every ebony trunk runs a white stripe of snow, giving to the tout ensemble a startling, zebraesque effect. The spruces are literally swathed in snow—not hard crustations such as one sees in March, but snow of the consistency of softest down. Upon their branches and twigs are wrought a thousand fantastic shapes. (Marvels of indescribable beauty seen on another day, with the sun turning them flesh-pink and etching long blue shadows on the snow beneath.) The smaller firs resemble dryads wrapped in costly, jeweled ermine, caught holding high carnival in the moonlight, and by some spell of enchantment congealed as they sported.

Beautiful beyond words—and so

silent! Silence almost personal.

In Winslow Homer's studio, at Prout's Neck, there are, among the other old-world antiques, two curious clocks—stopped. Many of his animated seascapes, depicting nature and man in action, adorn the walls. But the arrested life of the famous artist, like his stopped clocks, is sensed in the silence.

Here the silence is not like that. Rather it is the kind out of which Maeterlinck says great things fashion themselves. If one thinks of cities, it is not in the decadent's formula, "Their slaves are failure and their gods defeat." Failure and defeat are meaningless synonyms in that rarefied air. The beauty, not the imperfections of life call.

Forgetful of self, and place, and time, you snowshoe on and on—till the storm voices die down, and night, in a white silence, closes in.

The National Directory of Schools and Colleges

The following is a list of some of the Leading Canadian Schools and Colleges which the Canadian Courier recommends as desirable institutions for the education of Canadian children. Most of them have years of reputation behind them.

BOYS' SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

Bishops College School, Lennoxville, P.Q.

Lower Canada College, Montreal.

Ridley College, St. Catharines, Ont.

St. Andrew's College, Toronto.

St. Michael's College, Toronto.

Stanstead Wesleyan College, Stanstead, Que.

Trinity College School, Port Hope, Ont.

BUSINESS SCHOOLS.

Shaw's Business Schools, Toronto.

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS.

Shaw's Correspondence Schools, Toronto.

GIRLS' SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

Bishop Bethune College, Oshawa, Ont.
Loretto Abbey College and Academy, Toronto.

Moulton College, Toronto.

Mount Allison Ladies' College and University, Sackville, N.B.

St. Margaret's College, Toronto.

Stanstead Wesleyan College, Stanstead, Que.

UNIVERSITIES.

Queen's University, Kingston, Ont.

EXAMINATIONS IN MUSIC.

The Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and Royal College of Music, for Examinations in Music in the British Empire. Resident Secretary's Office, 777 Shuter Street, Montreal.

13th ANNOUNCEMENT

For Business Men

This is the proper season for the Canadian business man to take his holiday, but he must not stay in Canada while doing so. He must go to a place where he is always in the open air—to a country where the windows are never closed—to an atmosphere that is absolutely pure and healthy.

Ships of the "Royal Mail" sail from Halifax each alternate Friday morning at nine o'clock. Note the following examples of cost of tickets from various points:

From Halifax a return ticket costs.....	\$125.00
(Rail trip, St. John-Halifax, \$5.00 extra.)	
From St. John a return ticket costs.....	125.00
(Rail trip, St. John-Halifax, \$5.00 extra.)	
From Quebec a return ticket costs.....	140.00
From Montreal a return ticket costs.....	140.00
From Toronto a return ticket costs.....	144.10
From Hamilton a return ticket costs.....	144.10
From Ottawa a return ticket costs.....	144.10
From Winnipeg a return ticket costs.....	194.70

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