

TWO LEAVES FROM A WOMAN'S LIFE.

An old and wrinkled woman, shivering over a scanty fire. The wind shrieks like a mad thing around the rattling windows, then rushes off into the night, only to return and with redoubled fury rend at the quaking casements.

The withered crone pulls the ragged remnants of a shawl more closely around her lean shoulders and fills a long pipe with some brown substance she draws from a pocket hidden somewhere in her rags. The opium fumes steal over her and fill the wretched hovel, and in them this is what she sees:

A large and beautifully furnished room, although the fast thickening veil of twilight is settling down upon the luxurious divans, the embroidered screens and the soft rugs, and half obscures them from view. The wind, heavy with the perfume of near water-lilies, strays through the open casement and out again to murmur in the thick-leaved branches silhouetted against the darkening sky. A nightingale somewhere in the wood is mourning to the wind.

Now the eastern horizon pales at the approach of the queen of night. Concentrated stars grow dim. The silvery rays light as with a halo the red-gold curls of a little maid framed in the window-seat. Toward the west the dark river turns on its way, and it, too, bears a silver gleam on its crest.

There is a face shining through the gloom within the room, framed in shadows like a dream picture, and light fingers sweep the strings of a guitar. Softly the strains of a Spanish ballad echo through the dark stillness:

When, in thy dreaming,
Moons like these shall shine again,
And daylight beaming,
Prove thy dreams are vain;
Wilt thou not, relenting,
For thine absent lover sigh,
In thy heart consenting
To a prayer gone by!

Outside, the mightier gale mourns to the wind and the odor of lilies weights the air.

The fire has gone out. The opium pipe will never be smoked again. A motionless heap of rags in the corner. The war of the elements rages on in the black battle-ground of the sky.

WHERE IT CAME FROM.

There are many amusing and varied stories afloat regarding the origin of that all-prevalent ditty, "Ta-ra-ra-Boom-de-ay," and so many have laid claim to being the discoverer or composer of it that the mystery is almost as deep as the authorship of "Beautiful Snow," though up to the present writing Col.

John A. Joyce has not filed his bill. In writing of these two productions in his interesting little sheet, Stage News, Augustus P. Dunlop says: "I saw the original poem of 'Beautiful Snow' in poor Mr. Watson's handwriting and read it in Harper's Weekly, and even before that time I had heard 'Ta-ra-ra-Boom-de-ay.'" I have watched the paragraphs floating on the crest waves of journalism and for six months waited for one, of many that could tell, to come forward. Not being myself as old as to remember the advent of the song in America, I can only tell what I heard about its importation, which was neither from France nor England, but from Africa, for the song is 'negro' in every detail. There lives upon the west coast of Africa a tribe of hardy seafaring black men, known all over the south, West Indies and South America as Krumen. They were unlike the other slaves captured and brought over in many particulars. Their noses were not flat, no 'nigger driver' ever drove them to any great extent, they did not, as a rule, mix with the other slaves and could be implicitly trusted both on land and at sea. They were magnificent sailors, and as sailors were 'worth more,' hence they were mostly employed on the water—one of their conditions being if free, that they should be allowed to see their homes once a year, and they kept tally of the time to a day. When pulling at a rope, hoisting a sail or an anchor, one Kruman would shout 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,' and with 'boom' all would give a mighty pull, just as any other sailor to-day pulls when singing. The negroes at the docks in New Orleans caught the refrain and 50 years ago it had reached far into Louisiana, when a ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay was shouted when anything was to be hoisted at the sugar mills. 'Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay' means 'Easy, easy, up she goes'—and there you are, all reports to the contrary notwithstanding." This will relieve the public mind greatly

A NEWSPAPER MAN'S ROMANCE

A daily newspaper in Boston had on its editorial staff a young graduate of Harvard university, whose parents reside in Waltham, Mass. The young editor wrote well, and his reviews attracted the attention of the older literary men of Boston and the neighborhood. An occasion arose for sending the young gentleman to Montreal for a piece of newspaper work. He went there and registered at the St. Lawrence hotel. He had been there but a few hours when he noticed that he was closely watched by a gentleman older than himself, who seemed to be staying in the hotel. Before his first

evening was passed, he was surprised to receive a card bearing his own name from a gentleman who waited for an interview below. The gentleman was asked to come to his room and proved to be the same one who had watched the young man in the office of the hotel. He at once explained his reason for calling. He said he was a member of the English parliament on a visit to Canada. He had lost a son by death to whom the young man from Boston bore a striking resemblance, and his interest in him had been increased by finding their names to be identical. He inquired concerning the young man's family and all about him. The result was he gave the Boston boy an urgent invitation to come to England as his guest, at the same time expressing a desire to make the acquaintance of his parents. He at once accepted an invitation to visit Waltham and meet them.

So pressing was his request that the young man should return with him to London that it was complied with at the earliest possible moment. Taking with him letters of introduction to a number of literary men in England, the young editor sailed for that country, and in the space of a few weeks found himself possessed of a valuable acquaintance among some of the most important people of the Old Country. Among others whom he met were the Walter family, the principal proprietors of the London Times. One of the ladies of the family took a special interest in him, and this is not strange, for he was a man of attractive person and manners. Through her active instrumentality, an offer was soon made to him of employment in the Times office. This came to him unexpected and undesired, and he was disposed to refuse it. He was urged to accept, however, and was told that it would be easy for him after spending a few months in the home office in London to go abroad on some desirable duty for the paper. He accepted the offer, and after a few months was sent to Paris with independent authority and under circumstances every way most agreeable. He is not a subordinate of the noted de Blowitz, but acts as a special commissioner from the editor of the Times in Paris. This brings him into relations with the highest functionaries, and it is doubtful if any one connected with the paper has ever held a more important and responsible place on its staff.

From the time when he left Boston for Montreal, this young man's destiny seemed to have been shaped for him by influences over which he has held no control whatever. His name is W. M. Fullerton, and every word of what has been written about him is stated to me by one of his personal friends, to whom he told the story in Paris last year.—M.

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