

# STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

At the edge of the quarry and beneath the summit there is a small platform upon which stands a wooden hut for the use of the labourers. It was into this, then, that he had darted. Perhaps he had thought, the fool, that, in the darkness, I would not venture to follow him. He little knew Etienne Gerard. With a spring I was on the platform, with another I was through the doorway, and then, hearing him in the corner, I hurled myself down upon the top of him.

He fought like a wild cat, but he never had a chance with his shorter weapon. I think that I must have transfixed him with that first mad lunge, for, though he struck and struck, his blows had no power in them, and presently his dagger tinkled down upon the floor. When I was sure that he was dead, I rose up and passed out into the moonlight. I climbed up on to the heath again, and wandered across it as nearly out of my mind as a man could be. With the blood singing in my ears, and my naked sword still clutched in my hand, I walked aimlessly on until, looking round me, I found that I had come as far as the glade of the Abbot's Beech, and saw in the distance that gnarled stump which must ever be associated with the most terrible moment of my life. I sat down upon a fallen trunk with my sword across my knees and my head between my hands, and I tried to think about what had happened and what would happen in the future.

The Emperor had committed himself to my care. The Emperor was dead. Those were the two thoughts which clanged in my head, until I had no room for any other ones. He had come with me and he was dead. I had done what he had ordered when living. I had avenged him when dead. But what of all that? The world would look upon me as responsible. They might even look upon me as the assassin. What would I prove? What witnesses had I? Might I not have been the accomplice of these wretches? Yes, yes, I was eternally dishonoured—the lowest, most despicable creature in all France. This then was the end of my fine military ambitions—the hopes of my mother. I laughed bitterly at the thought. And what was I to do now? Was I to go into Fontainebleau, to wake up the palace, and to inform them that the great Emperor had been murdered within a pace of me? I could not do it—no, I could not do it! There was but one course for an honourable gentleman whom Fate had placed in so cruel a position. I would fall upon my dishonoured sword, and so share, since I could not avert, the Emperor's fate. I rose with my nerves strung to this last piteous deed, and as I did so, my eyes fell upon something which struck the breath from my lips. The Emperor was standing before me!

He was not more than ten yards off, with the moon shining straight upon his cold, pale face. He wore his grey overcoat, but the hood was turned back, and the front open, so that I could see the green coat of the Guides, and the white breeches. His hands were clasped behind his back, and his chin sunk forward upon his breast, in the way that was usual with him.

"Well," said he, in his hardest and most abrupt voice, "what account do you give of yourself?"

I believe that, if he had stood in silence for another minute, my brain would have given way. But those sharp military accents were exactly what I needed to bring me to myself. Living or dead, here was the Emperor standing before me and asking me questions. I sprang to the salute.

"You have killed one, I see," said he, jerking his head towards the beech.

"Yes, sire."

"And the other escaped?"

"No, sire, I killed him also."

"What!" he cried. "Do I understand that you have killed them both?" He approached me as he spoke with a smile which set his teeth gleaming in the moonlight.

"One body lies there, sire," I answered.

"The other is in the tool-house at the quarry."

"Then the Brothers of Ajaccio are no more," he cried, and after a pause, as if speaking to himself: "The shadow has passed me for ever. Then he bent forward and laid his hand upon my shoulder.

"You have done very well, my young friend," said he. "You have lived up to your reputation."

He was flesh and blood, then, this Emperor. I could feel the little, plump palm that rested upon me. And yet I could not get over what I had seen with my own eyes, and I stared at him in such bewilderment that he looked once more into one of his smiles.

"No, no, Monsieur Gerard," said he, "I am not a ghost, and you have not seen me killed. You will come here, and all will be clear to you."

He turned as he spoke, and led the way towards the great beech stump.

The bodies were still lying upon the ground, and two men were standing beside them. As we approached I saw from the turlan that they were Roustan and Mustafa, the two Mameluke servants the Emperor paused when he came to the grey figure upon the ground, and turning back the hood which surrounded the features, he showed a face which was very different from his own.

"Here lies a faithful servant who has given up his life for his master," said he. "Monsieur de Goudin resembles me in figure and in manner, as you must admit."

What a delirium of joy came upon me when these few words made everything clear to me. He smiled again as he saw the delight which urged me to throw my arms round him and to embrace him, but he moved a step away, as if he had divined my impulse.

"You are unhurt?" he asked.

"I am unhurt, sire. But in another minute I should be in my despair—"

"Tut, tut!" he interrupted. "You did very well. He should himself have been more on his guard. I saw everything which passed."

"You saw it, sire?"

"You did not hear me follow you through the wood then? I hardly lost sight of you from the moment that you left your quarters until poor De Goudin fell. The counterfeit Emperor was in front of you and the real one behind. You will now escort me back to the palace."

He whispered an order to his Mamelukes, who saluted in silence and remained where they were standing. For my part, I followed the Emperor with my pelisse bursting with pride. My word, I have always carried myself as a hussar should, but Lasalle himself never strutted and swung his dolman as I did that night! Who should clink his spurs and clatter his sabre if it were not I—I, Etienne Gerard—the confident of the Emperor, the chosen swordsman of the light cavalry, the man who slew the would-be assassins of Napoleon? But he noticed my bearing and turned upon me like a blight.

"Is that the way to carry yourself on a secret mission?" he hissed, with that cold glare in his eyes. "Is it thus that you will make your comrades believe that nothing remarkable has occurred? Have done with this nonsense, monsieur, or you will find yourself transferred to the sappers, where you would have harder work and duller plumage."

That was the way with the Emperor. If ever he thought that anyone might have a claim upon him, he took the first opportunity to show him the gulf that lay between. I saluted and was silent, but I must confess to you that it hurt me after all that had passed between us. He led on to the palace, where we passed through the side door and up into his own cabinet. There were a couple of grenadiers, at the staircase, and their eyes, started out from under their fur caps, to promise you, when they saw a young lieutenant of hussars going up to the Emperor's room at midnight. I stood by the door, as I had done in the afternoon while he flung himself down in an armchair, and remained silent so long that it seemed to me that he had forgotten all about me. I ventured at last upon a slight cough to remind him.

"Ah, Monsieur Gerard," said he, "you are very curious, no doubt, as to the meaning of all this?"

"I am quite content, sire, if it is your pleasure not to tell me," I answered.

"Ta, ta, ta," said he impatiently. "These are only words. The moment that you were outside that door you would begin making inquiries about what it means. In two days your brother officers would know about it, in three days it would be all over Fontainebleau, and it would be in Paris on the fourth. Now, if I tell you enough to appease your curiosity, there is some reasonable hope that you may be able to keep the matter to yourself."

He did not understand me, this Emperor, and yet I could only bow and be silent.

"A few words will make clear to you," said he, speaking very swiftly and pacing up and down the room. "They were Corsicans, these two men. I had known them in my youth. We had belonged to the same society—Brothers of Ajaccio, as we called ourselves. It was founded in the old Paoli days, you understand, and we had some strict rules of our own which were not infringed with impunity."

A very grim look came over his face as he spoke, and it seemed to me that all that was French had gone out of him, and that it was the pure Corsican, the man of strong passions and of strange revenge, who stood before me. His memory had gone back to those early days of his, and for five minutes wrapped in thought, he paced up and down the room with his quick little tiger steps. Then with an impatient wave of his hands he came back to his palace and to me.

"The rules of such a society," he continued, "are all very well for a private citizen. In the old days there was no more loyal brother than I. But circumstances change, and it would be not for my welfare nor for that of France that I should now submit myself to them. They wanted to hold me to it, and so brought their fate upon their own heads. These were the two chiefs of the order and they had come from Corsica to summon me to meet them at the spot which they named. I knew what such a summons meant. No man had ever returned from obeying me. On the other hand if I did not go, I was sure that disaster would follow. I am a brother myself, you remember, and I know their ways."

Again there came that hardening of his mouth and cold glitter of his eyes.

"You perceive my dilemma, Monsieur Gerard," said he. "How would you have acted yourself, under such circumstances?"

"I was on the ward to the 10th Hussars, sire," I cried. "Paroiss could have swept the woods from end to end, and brought these two rascals to your feet."

He smiled but he shook his head.

"I had very excellent reasons why I did not wish them taken alive," said he. "You can understand that an assassin's tongue might be as dangerous a weapon as an assassin's dagger. I will not disguise from you that I wished to avoid scandal at all cost. That was why I ordered you to take no prisoners with you. That also is why my Mamelukes will remove all traces of the affair and nothing more will be heard about it. I thought of all possible plans, and I am convinced that I selected the best one. Had I sent more than one guard with De Goudin into the woods, then the Brothers would not have appeared. They would not change their plans or miss their chance for the sake of a single man. It was Colonel Lasalle's accidental presence at the moment when I received the summons which led to my choosing one of his hussars for the mission. I selected you, Monsieur Gerard, because I wanted a man who could handle a sword, and who would not pry more deeply into the affair than I desired. I trust that, in this respect, you will justify my choice as well as you have done in your bravery and skill."

"Sire," I answered, "you may rely upon it."

"As long as I live," said he, "you never open your lips upon this subject."

"I dismiss it entirely from my mind, sire. I will face it from my recollection as if it had never been. I will promise you to go out of your cabinet at this moment exactly as I was when I entered it at four o'clock."

"You cannot do that," said the Emperor, smiling. "You were a lieutenant at that time. You will permit me, Captain, to wish you a very good-night."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## NO WEATHER SIGNS, EH?

### NOT EVEN A WET MOON LEFT BY AN ENGLISH INVESTIGATOR.

Common Beliefs About the Weather Knocked on the Head by Modern Meteorological Study—Animals, Plants, and Proverbs All Said to Be Worthless in Forecasting.

Superstitious and proverbial lore about the weather were cruelly rent in the iconoclastic address on "Weather Fallacies" read to the Royal Meteorological Society at its recent annual meeting in London by the President, R. Inwards. In early times, when the weather had to be studied from cloud, sky, and sea, and from the behavior of animals and plants, men were pardonable for doing what is still often a cause of error, fore-telling what they most wished for and putting down as a universal law what was only a coincidence of independent events. One class of prophecies connects the weather with certain seasons of the year, particularly days in the week, or the days of certain saints, which was a convenient way of fixing a date and even with particular times of the day. We often hear such sayings as "Fine on Friday, fine on Sunday," or "Friday is the best and the worst day of the week," and proverbs like "rain at seven, fine at eleven." When these sayings come true they are faithfully remembered, when they fail they are forgotten. There is no kind of foundation for such rules, which Mr. Inwards calls "self-exploding," or for the belief that if it rains on St. Swithin's day, July 15, it will rain for forty days after. That date to very near a well known bad period in wet years, as the terms "St. Margaret's flood," July 20, and "Lammas flood," Aug. 1, show; the fact that some heavy rains began on July 15 was enough to establish the "law," which every one knows is CONSTANTLY BROKEN.

Equally unfounded are the scientific superstitions, presented under the shield of astronomy, which base infallible rules for the weather on the relative position of the moon, sun, and planets. These appeal to analogy, to reason, and to common sense. The known action of sun and moon on ocean tides is generally the starting point of such theories, and it is clear to common sense that when the earth is nearer to the sun or the moon to the earth, or both sun and moon are pulling together, there ought to be tide of atmosphere similar to the tide of ocean which these influences undoubtedly produce. But the facts do not bear the theory out; the atmospheric tides do not ebb and flow, except in an infinitesimal degree. Again, the sun and moon move in planes that are at an angle to each other, so that at times their attraction acts in widely diverging lines, at others almost in the same plane. Here is a clear case: When the angle is greatest, when the moon is "on her back," there must be atmospheric disturbances. Unfortunately, the storms do not come, and we must find some other cause for our weather. Hardly a year goes by without a new moon theory to account for it. M. Flaugergues, as the result of twenty years of observations, has found that when the moon was furthest from the earth the barometer averaged 755 millimetres, and when nearest, 754 millimetres, a difference of only one millimetre.

Some prophets have built their faith on cycles, predicting that weather changes would repeat themselves when sun and moon got back into the same relative position, when they do in nine-year cycles, with an error of only an hour and a half. Others advocate a cycle of fifty-four years, but all the cycle systems have broken down when tested, and as far as we know, there is no period within which weather changes repeat themselves. There are plenty of other fallacies

#### ABOUT THE MOON,

such as that the full moon clears away clouds, that you should sow beans or cut trees on the wane of the moon; that it is a bad sign if the moon changes on Saturday or Sunday; that two full moons in a month will bring a flood; that to see the old moon in the arms of the new brings on rain. M. Flammarion says that "moon's influence on the weather is negligible. The heat coming from it would affect our temperature by twelve millionths of a degree, and the atmospheric tides caused by it would only affect the barometric pressure a few hundredths of an inch, far less than the changes always taking place from other causes."

The Moon and the Weather May change together; But the change of the Moon Does not change the weather.

Even the halo round the moon is discredited; it has been found by observers that it is followed by fine weather as often as by rain.

About the sun there are many fallacies, and ever since the discovery that the spots on its surface appear with greater or less frequency, theorists in shoals have tried to prove that they rule our weather. It has been proved that the frequency of sun spots and the variations of the magnetic needle are intimately connected, and that the aurora appears and disappears in some sort of sympathy with the sun spot variations, but this is as far as we can get for the present, as these changes seem to have no definite relation to our weather. Mr. Scott has proved that there are no equinoctial gales.

Coming down to earth, we find a long list of statements of the behavior of animals and plants having a supposed connection with the weather. E. J. Lowe has carefully examined a number of well known signs, and all seem to break down completely. He took the signs of bats flying about in the evening, many toads appearing at sunset, great quantities of snails, fish raising to the surface, bees busy, crowds of locusts, restless cattle, landrills clamorous, flies and gnats troublesome, many insects, crows flocking and noisy, spider webs thick on the grass, spiders hanging from their webs in the evening, and ducks and geese mak-

ing more noise than usual. Calling a day fine when no rain was measured in the rain gauge, he found in 361 observations of such signs that they were followed 213 times by the fine weather and only 148 by rain. Even SWALLOWES FLYING LOW

cannot be depended upon, as especially in summer and autumn they almost invariably skim along the ground. Animals probably feel the dampness or darkness preceding wet weather, and this makes them uneasy, but to cows scratching their ears, and goats uttering cries, they are no more true as signs of rain than the adage which credits pigs with seeing the wind. The leech is believed to be a weather prophet and two books have been written about its behavior. The author of one devised an instrument by which leeches could give audible storm warnings. It consisted of twelve bottles of water, each containing a leech and a metal tube too small for it to enter easily, but into which it would try to squeeze when a thunderstorm came on, according to its nature. In the tube was a piece of whalebone, attached to a chain from which hung a bell, which rang when the whalebone was touched. Twelve leeches were used so as to make sure that at least one would do his duty.

Plants are also used as weather indicators and as they act in sympathy with the dampness, gloom, and chilliness of the air, and these are conditions that generally precede rain, their indications cannot be called altogether fallacious. The pimpernel and the marigold close their petals before rain, because the air is getting damper, and for the same reason the poplar and the maple show the under surface of their leaves. An artificial leaf of paper will do the same. If hard, thin paper is used for the upper side and thicker unsized paper for the lower, the leaf will curl up in sympathy with the condition of the air. So will a slip of ordinary photographic paper. And the slackness that moisture produces in plants applies to insects, some of which can fly only in the sunshine.

In 1892 attention was directed to a plant, the *Atrium precatorius*, a beautiful shrub of the mimosa kind, which has the property of being sensitive in a high degree, so that its pinnate leaflets go through many curious movements, and it was claimed that these forms a guide of unerring certainty to forewarn the coming weather. Even earthquakes were said to be predicted by

#### THIS WONDERFUL PLANT.

If it closed its leaflets upward, after the manner of a butterfly about to settle, fair weather was shown; when the leaflets remained flat, changeable and gloomy weather was indicated; while thunder at various distances was to be foretold by the curling of the leaflets, and the nearer the thunder the greater the curl, until when the points of the leaflets crossed, the thunder storm was indicated as being overhead. Changes of wind, hurricanes, and other phenomena were to be shown by the various curious and beautiful movements of the leaflets and stalks. These movements undoubtedly took place, but the botanists at Kew were unable to find any connection between them and the weather, and found that most of them were due to the agency of light and moisture. At the meteorological office the movements were found to have nothing to do with either cyclones or earthquakes. Yet this sensitive plant had been made the subject of an English patent.

In the country a large drop of hips, haws, and holly berries is held to be a sign that a severe winter is coming, and that nature thus provides winter food for the birds. But it is not so. Neither is it true a green Christmas makes a fat churchyard, as Mr. Dine's statistics have shown. It is often stated that the noise of cannon will produce rain, and in Austrian Tyrol the church bells are rung to avert thunder; but the notion is a fallacy. The experiments made in America to test whether rain could be produced by exploding a large quantity of gunpowder in the air resulted in nothing but smoke and noise.

Only a selection has here been made of the vast catalogue of fallacies that have grown up about the weather. There are still people, Mr. Inwards remarked in conclusion, who believe that the saints' days rule the weather, that the sun puts out fire, and that warm water freezes sooner than cold.

#### GRAINS OF GOLD.

Politeness has been defined to be artificial good nature; but we may affirm, with much greater propriety, that good nature is natural politeness.—Stanislaus.

The stage is a supplement to the pulpit, where virtue, according to Plato's sublime idea moves our love and affection when made visible to the eye.—Disraeli.

Opinions, theories and systems pass by turns over the grindstone of time, which at first gives them brilliancy and sharpness, but finally wears them out.—Rivarol.

I have also seen the world, and after long experience have discovered that ennuis is our greatest enemy and remunerative labor our most lasting friend.—Justus Moser.

Speech is too often not, as the Frenchman defines it, the art of concealing thought, but of quite stifling and suspending thought, so that there is none to conceal.—Carlyle.

What we truly and earnestly aspire to be that in some sense we are. The mere aspiration, by changing the frame of the mind, for the moment realizes itself.—Mrs. Jameson.

Montesquieu wittily observes, that, by building professed mad houses, men tacitly insinuate that all who are out of their senses are to be found only in those places.—Warton.

Gross and vulgar minds will always pay a higher respect to wealth than to talent; for wealth, although it be a far less efficient source of power than talent, happens to be far more intelligible.—Colton.

What man in his right senses, that has wherewithal to live free, would make himself a slave for superfluities? What does that man want who has enough? Or what is he she better for abundance that can never be satisfied?—L'Estrange.

Youth is not the age of pleasure; we then expect too much, and we are, therefore, exposed to daily disappointments and mortifications. When we are a little older and have brought down our wishes to our experience, then we become calm and begin to enjoy ourselves.—Lord Liverpool.

## THE LIME-KILN CLUB.

### A DISCOURSE ON THE FUTURE OF THE COLORED MAN.

Brother Gardner Offers a Few Ponderous Truths—He Ventures to Contradict a Learned Professor—Deacon Frazine, Who Has a New Theory, Admitted to Membership.

At the last regular meeting of the Lime-Kiln Club, after Brother Gardner had removed his coat and signaled to Samuel Shin to drop three windows and open the door, he looked up and down Paradise Hall and said:

"I see by de papers dat Purfessor Gilliam predicts dat in 1995 de cul'd man will be in de ascendancy. Jist so. We'll drap two mo' winders an' discuss de subject a little. In one hundred y'ars, den, 'cordin' to de purfessor, de Samuel Shins an' Giveadam Joneses an' Pickles Smithses of our race will be at de head of de gov'm't. P'raps a p'uson named Waydown Bebes will be president of de United States. Whalebone Howker will be leadin' chief justice of de highest court in de lan'. Judge Cavader will be gov'nor of Michigan an' Chewso Chapman an' Depravity Johnson will be de Vanderbilt an' Gould of de period. Purfessors Backdown Turner an' Rise Up Bunker will flourish at Harvard an' Yale, Three-ply Jones, Discount White, Bunko Jackson an' oders will be presidents of national banks, an' boards of trade, chambers of commerce an' stock exchanges, will be run by cul'd men.

"It am a beautiful landscape to look upon, an' I really pity de poor white man. He has bin lordin' it ober de world at large so long, an' has made sich progress in science an' philosophy, dat it will seem purty tuff fur him to saw our wood, clean our alleys an' black our butes."

At this point Reconstructed Taylor began to stamp his feet and clap his hands and seek to start an encore, but the president interrupted him with:

"Burdler Taylor, drap it! Now draw yer feet out of de alley an' doan' move agin till de meetin' am out! No doubt you an' tickled half to death, but let us see what tickles you. In a hundred y'ars we am to be at de top of de heap. We am to lose our kinks an' grow straight ha'r; our feet am to be pared down; our noses am to be trimmed up; our mouths puckered on a new plan, an' we am to lose our brunette complexions. Den our heads am to be reshaped and restuffed, our speech changed about, an' we am to progress faster in 100 y'ars dan de white man has in 1,000. I think I see us at de pinnacle! I look awful purty at de top of de heap! Nobody would know us as we stan' erect on de cap-shaft an' wave de glorious baner!"

"My fren's," continued the president, after a long and solemn silence, "if Purfessor Gilliam am not a fool he am de nex' bes' thing—a crank. One hundred y'ars will not do what he says. We can't fetch it. We was bo'n in de wrong time of de moon, brought up on de wrong sort of eatables, an' eddecated in de wrong sort of skules. We have an' shall progress. Our chill'en will know mo' dan we do, an' deur chill'en will be a peg higher in all de arts an' sciences, but we must not forget de present. Dar am mouths to feed an' bodies to clothe an' house rent to pay an' fuel to buy, an' he who loses a day's work to dream ober Purfessor Gilliam's prophecy shows his lack of sense. If, arter all de present members of dis club have bin sleepin' fur half a century in de grave, de white man begins to lose his grip an' de black man begins to cotech on it, it will be all right. Meanwhile doan' miss a cog. Doan' be made fools of. Doan' try to clothe de chill'en wid de raiment of a hundred y'ars hence, an' doan' expect dat de predickshun dat we shall ultimately warm our feet in de halls of congress am gwine to satisfy present hunger. We will now tighten our belts an' pitch into de regular order of business."

#### RULES SUSPENDED.

At this juncture Bradawl Wilkins arose to make a statement. He had for sometime past been in communication with Deacon Frazine, of Warren, Pa. The deacon is a square up and down man, with a theory that the earth is gradually rounding up in the center like a hog's back, and that in the course of the next fifty years everybody who can't get on the ridge will find himself tumbling down hill. Brother Wilkins had looked into and accepted the theory, and he desired to present the name of Deacon Frazine for membership. He would therefore move that the rules be suspended and the name put to a vote.

Elder Crossbones supported the motion. He was also a believer in theory. For the last four weeks he had felt as if he was walking on a side hill, and he was becoming a little anxious to know through what part of the country that ridge was going to pass.

A vote was then taken, and Deacon Frazine was made a member. As to his theory, the club will look into it before committing itself.

#### A Steamboat Attacked by a Shark.

A despatch from Vancouver says:—The Blonde, a small steamer, was caught in a violent storm in Queen Charlotte Sound on her last trip north. While the waves were sweeping over the boat and the Captain feared that they might never reach port alive, a shark, over thirty feet long, made its appearance directly in front of them, and appeared to be preparing to charge the steamer. Capt. Beck could not resist a shot from his rifle at the huge fish. His aim was true and a rifle ball was imbedded in the head of the man eater. The shark, furiously lashing the water, retreated several yards and, turning on its back, charged directly at the little steamer. The shock was so severe when the boat and fish met that those on board said it felt as if they had struck a rock. The boat quivered from stem to stern and swayed even more fiercely than in the storm. The shark, however, had had enough, and retreating, sank out of sight.