roped, of course, over miles of unbroken snow. Occasionally one or other of us would disappear down a hidden crevasse, but the others soon pulled him out. When night came on we scooped a large hole in the snow, and, wrapped in our blankets, did not feel much the worse for the intense cold. For three days we were on this giant snow slope, and, during this part of the ascent, experienced less difficulty than we had expected. But on the fourth day, we came to the point where it was necessary to take to the terrible arête which we had observed previously with the glass. Without exception, it was the most terrific place I have ever found myself on. For seven hours we had to advance, step by step, along that fearful knife-like edge. A perpendicular precipice, nearly four miles in sheer depth, yawned on our right, and on our left was a snow slope so steep that a single slip must of necessity prove fatal. Fortunately, none of the party did slip; and at last, to our great relief, we got to the end of the arête, and found ourselves on a comparatively smooth plateau of frozen snow. We pushed on rapidly, till we came to an ice-wall, directly barring our way, and so perpendicular that we could not entertain the thought of cutting our way up it. Under this we halted for the night, though beginning to feel very much the effects of the rare atmosphere and the intense cold. None of us were able to close an eye that night, and at earliest dawn I got the apparatus ready for filling the balloon. In a couple of hours all was prepared; and as the little car would only hold one, I volunteered to be the first to try it. A long rope was attached to the car, which the others let out as I ascended. As soon as the top of the ice-wall was reached, I got out and fastened the rope securely to a huge block of ice, and the others, without difficulty, pulled themselves up. We left the rope there to assist our descent, and pressed on to the summit. We were now on a small level plateau, from the centre of which rose a cone. This we could see at a glance must be the top. It was with great difficulty that we could breathe, but the excitement made us forget everything. The three of us together rushed up the cone, and in another moment a frantic shout—frantic though weak and quivering—announced that we had attained to the summit of Mount Everest—that we stood on the highest spot in the world. I cannot describe to you the ecstasy of the moment—more than repaying the long months of preparation, and toil, and weariness which we had gone through. And above all came the thought that now at length my honor was secured—that there was no danger of the American ever rivalling the feat of to-day.

"But soon came other and nobler thoughts. 'How wonderful it is to consider,' I soliloquized, 'that this snow has never been trodden by the foot of man—that never, during the thousands of years which have rolled over the world since the time of the flood, has the eternal stillness of the mountain-top been broken by aught save the howling of the blast.'

"'That's a very fine idea of yours about the flood,' interrupted Jack, 'but, hanged if I ever knew before that the Antediluvians used to go in for soda-water.'

"As he spoke, he held up a soda-water bottle which he had noticed sticking up through the snow. I feel sure that I grew very pale as I snatched it from his hand, and drew out the cork. A slip of paper was inside, and on it were written the following words:

"'Zachariah Johnston, April 1st, 1884.' Just a week before the day I read it.

"Well, sir, I need hardly finish my story; I think I have gone far enough to show that I have good reason to dislike betting."

THE WINDS OF THE WEST.

Sumner was a mushroom city which had sprung up on the banks of a ravine that cut through the western bluffs of the Missouri. In a thicket of oak saplings, high up on the side of one of those bluffs, stood a hastily built house, sided with rough, upright cottonwood boards—as are many of its Western neighbors—a rusty stove-pipe sticking through the roof; a small window, curtained by a scalloped-edge newspaper, and a white door taken from a sunken steamboat, whose nicely finished panels contrasted strangely with its surroundings, completing the exterior.

One pleasant May evening, just as the shrill whistle of a steamboat echoed among the hills, this door was opened by a pleasant young woman who was followed by a crying child.

"O Sammy, quit your noise; that's pappy's little man; see the great big boat 'way yonder"—lifting him up; "don't you see? look right sharp now, close ag'in the bank. Does Sammy want to go down town and see the big boat, and see pappy?" The willing feet toddled down the path; but the mother called, "Wait a bit, and mammy 'll pack Sammy;" and, tying on a pink sunbonnet, she took him in her arms and started down the steep, crooked path.

It was a picturesque scene that lay before her. The sunlight, sifting through the trees that covered the western hills, glinted the windows here and there and reached, like a golden bar, just across the top of the forest on the low eastern shore. Scattered through the hollow and up the sides of the bluffs were divers houses, from the pretentious Gothic dwelling on the northern hill and the brick business houses down street, to log cabins and cottonwood shanties; while the road that wound up the bed of the ravine was lined with a long, white train of Denver-bound freight-wagons.

She reached the steep main street to find it filled with wagons that had been turned crosswise of the street to rest the teams. But, edging her way close to the clay bank, she reached the river just as the steamer was leaving the wharf. The snorting of the engine and the shouting of the deck-hands, together with the puffing of the mill near by, was too much for baby bravery, and Sammy's lips began to quiver. Catching him in her arms, his mother sat down on a saw-log, saying, "There, there, honey, don't be afeared; be pappy's man, now."

The tide-waves of the receding boat sank lower and lower on the sand; the gay crowd that leaned over the guards grew indistinct, and she peered more and more eagerly in among the tall cottonwood trees on the opposite shore. At length four men came out of the woods and, entering a skiff, started across the river. She watched the skiff anxiously, for it frequently disappeared between the waves which were raised by the strong south wind—such winds belonging as proverbially to Kansas Springs as whooping-cough to children or gapes to chickens.

Four rough-looking men, in red woolen shirts—for lumbermen did not pretend to wear coats, except in the coldest weather—jumped out of the skiff, and, with boisterous laughter and rude jests, entered the mill. Presently one of them spied her, and came towards her, saying boisterously, "Hoorah for you, Nancy! Whatever brought you'uns down 'ere this time of evening? Mighty fine doins, when you oughter be to home gettin' your old man a bite o' supper! Packed that young 'un down, too, I'll bet! Reckon you'd as well get back, right quick, now!" He snatched the baby from her and tossed him on his shoulder, shouting, "Hoorah for pappy's man! Peertest boy in this 'ere town! Mighty proud to see his pap!" Poor Nancy! Her husband was drunk again.

She hurried up the street, pinning her deep sunbonnet more closely about her face, that the passers might not see the tears that would come. He had kept sober so long that she had hoped he would come home sober again. She had anticipated so much pleasure on meeting him, after his week's absence. How often she had thought of it in those long, lonely nights, when she had only her child and her thoughts for company.

It took but a few minutes to put supper on the table. Then she sat down on the door-step to watch for her husband, worrying all the time lest he let something happen to Sammy. When at last he came, the effects of the liquor were wearing off, and he ate his supper and smoked his pipe in sullen silence. She could not eat a mouthful, but she dared not let the tears come, for she knew that it would make him angry. So she fed Sammy, laying her face on his little head once in a while, to force back the choking lump that kept rising in her throat. Then she hastened to rock him asleep, lest his fretfulness disturb his father.

The first peep of dawn found her busily preparing breakfast, for she knew that John wanted an early start. The sound of the coffee-mill woke him from his heavy sleep, and he lay quietly watching her by the light of the dim grease lamp, as she moved quickly back and forth from table to stove; from thence to the little row of shelves, in lieu of a cupboard, setting on the dishes, watching the bacon, and taking the crisp corn-dodger from the oven. "She is a dear, good wife," thought he; "what a scoundrel I was to make her feel so badly." He knew that he had been rough to her the night before. He wished that he could remember what he said. Of course, he never got dead-drunk, but he wished that he ever could let whiskey alone.

His breakfast was just to his liking, and his wife as cheerful as if he was the best man in the world. He wanted to say something pleasant to break the awkward silence, but he did not know how to begin. He had an uncomfortable feeling that he ought to beg her pardon, but, being a man, of course he did not condescend to that. At length he began by saying, "You was right peert about your breakfast this morning, Nancy."

"Oh, I allowed most likely you'd want to get off soon," she answered.

"Yes, Jones wants us there ag'in' sun-up. It's only a fifty-log raft; reckon we can get it down to Leavenworth ag'in the night train starts, and I'll get right on, and be back to Atchison afore day. Don't catch me foolin' away another day 'round that old fort."

"Oh, John! I'm so proud"—she paused abruptly, for his eyes dropped with a look of conscious shame. What mood was he in? Would it do to speak then? He had shoved back from the table, and there was a serious, far-away look in his eyes, but nothing sullen or forbidding. She went around, and dropping on her knees beside him, slipped her arms about his neck, saying: "Oh, John, I wish you'd promise me you'd never drink no more whiskey."

"That's most too hard on a fellow; but I'll promise not to—not drink too much ag'in," he answered.

"But I'm afeared that wouldn't do no good."

"You talk like you thought I hadn't sense enough to stop when I've got enough, if I try," he exclaimed.

"O, John, don't talk so; you know you promised me that night onto a year ago; but you think you'll just take one dram, and then just one more, and afore you know it, it's too much. If you'd only promise now that you'd never taste nary drop ag'in."

Still he kept his eyes steadily turned away from hers.

"Don't you mind, now," she went on, "how your mother said one time, 'I reckon, Nancy, you count John a mighty rough chap, but he's all right at the core;' and don't you mind how she used to pray for you in them old times? Don't you mind the evenin' we heard her praying down by the old spring? If she's watching you among the stars, how proud she'd be to hear you promise. And, John," she continued, dropping her voice to a whisper, "I pray, too, sometimes, I haven't never told you, but I've been feeling right serious here of late. I've taken to readin' my Bible, and I've just made up my mind to live better'n I used to; and pray for you, too, and it seems like God hears me." And she laid her head on his shoulder to hide her tears.

His arms slipped around her, but he still kept his eyes turned stubbornly away from hers. At last, laying his face against hers, he spoke earnestly: "Yes, Nancy, I promise."

Presently, starting up, he exclaimed, "If I haven't stayed till plum daylight!"

"O John! come and kiss baby afore you go, he looks so sweet. Sammy! Sammy! wake up, honey, and kiss pappy."

"Bless his sleepy eyes! Pappy's little man! I'll bring him some candy when I come home ag'in."

All day Nancy went about with such a light, cheery heart as she had not carried in her bosom for many a day; singing snatches of old hymns, and thinking happy, hopeful thoughts of him who, all those long hours, was working his rudder against the strong current of the Missouri.

That evening the stars shone brightly down upon her, when she knelt down by the little window, and asked God's blessings on her husband and his good resolutions.

But she was awakened a few hours afterwards by a rush and confusion, a shower of glass and hail across her bed; and, catching her baby in her arms, she sprang up, frightened and bewildered. It was a terrible storm; one long to be remembered by all who felt its terrors. The deafening roar of the wind and hail almost drowned the loud thunder-claps. A blinding flash of lightning showed the trees almost bent to the ground, and the house rocked to and fro like a cradle. She suddenly felt a new, strange feeling, as if she was flying, floating, through the air. She thought she was dizzy, and caught hold of the bed. A terrible crash—she never knew how it all happened! Her baby's cries aroused her. The wind and rain chilled her through. She started to spring up, but something held her down. A shock of pain darted, over her, and putting out her hand, she felt a great beam lying heavily across her limbs. It seemed as though it was crushing her. Something struck her, then another, and another. How they stung! Oh! was her child unsheltered from that pitiless storm? His screams grew louder. Oh! she must reach him! She could see nothing through the thick darkness, but she knew that he was not far off. What if he, too, was fastened, crippled? She stretched her arms; every movement made her pain more excruciating. She strained every nerve: she could almost reach him. What if he was free and could come to her? "O Sammy! Sammy!" she called, "come to mammy." The child ceased crying. She heard him move. His warm body touched her hands that were groping in the darkness. She caught him in her arms and hugged him to her breast. She felt, of his head, his arms, his feet; sound and whole. How thankful she was for that. But how those cruel hailstones must have bruised him. She rested him on the ground and crouched over him; she could move just enough for that. The frightened child ceased crying, and put his arm about her neck. If she could only find something to cover them from the storm. She reached around, but could touch only cold mud.

Oh! that terrible pain! She had almost forgotten it in her anxiety for her child. It grew more and more intolerable. It seemed as though the hail-stones struck through into her brain. What if they killed her! Was she afraid to die? Visions of eternity, of the heaven of her faith, rose before her. Should she dwell with God and the angels forever? Was it possible that there never would be an end? No, she was not afraid of death. But her child, her husband—how could she leave them? Not yet! No, no, when life opened before her? She must live to help John keep his promise. God would spare her for that. How long it would be until morning. How could she bear the pain so long? Oh! it would be terrible if John should come and find her lying there, cold and stiff. John did love her, oh! so well. He had loved her so long. It seemed so many years since he first told her that he loved her. It was on the mountain side in dear old Tennessee. How far away it seemed. How the sun shone and the birds sang. How dreamy and bewildered her thoughts were. How still the baby was. Yes, she could feel his heart beat. She no longer felt the pelting of the storm; had it ceased?

Her thought was answered by a rush of wind from a new direction. She felt the great weight lifting off from her. She was free! Then—something struck her.

The train went snorting into Winthrop just at daylight. John jumped off and was the first to reach the ferry. He had never seen Atchison so quiet. With the exception of those who had crossed on the ferry and a few early risers who were hurrying up the street, the town seemed asleep; but as he passed Commercial street, he saw a man who was riding a mule, coming down in great haste, who cried out,

"How d'y, John!"

"Why, Jake?" he replied, "Is that you?" I allowed you was half way to Denver afore now."

"We started yesterday, but we had a powerful storm on the prairie out here, last night. We chanced to be right near to a house and they let us in; but it sent our old wagons rolling over and across the prairie, like a patch of tumble-weeds, and our oxen are all stampeded; I'm on the hunt of 'em."

"It don't took like it had reached Atchison."

"No; I reckon it just took a streak."

John hurried on down the river. The road ran so near the bank that the steady swash of the water seemed under his feet. The birds were singing in the trees, and the sunshine came creeping down the bluffs overhead. How eager he was to get home that morning. His heart was full of new plans and new purposes. He could keep his promise, and he would; he would never make Nancy's heart ache again by breaking that promise. He stopped suddenly—had the storm reached Sumner? The tall buildings along the wharf were leaning roofless, one this way, another that; as if the wind, coming over the bluffs, had reached just low enough to unroof them. He hastened around the foot of the hill; there lay the brick hotel, the boast of the town, in scattered fragments on the ground, like a wasp's nest scattered by the housekeeper's broom. He looked around; three-fourths of the town lay in ruins. How was it with his home? He ran up the street until he could see where it stood. Gone! Not a vestige of it left. And his family? Perhaps they had escaped before the storm; perhaps——Scarce knowing what he did, he hurried to the nearest house that was yet standing, and without ceremony opened the door. There was no one in the room, but on a couch in one corner, a white sheet "sunk to the still proportions" of two silent forms. Move by some strange impulse, he turned back the covering that shrouded the faces—Nancy and the baby! Shocked, stunned, he sank on his knees and laid his face on that dear form. Who can describe, who can comprehend the utter desolation of that hour? None but those who have felt it. Oh, the thoughts and memories that crowded upon him—many of them bitter, regretful thoughts. But there was one memory for which he was thankful; that he had not listened to the tempter which whispered to him yestermorn that it would be weak and unmanly to yield to her request.

They found him there an hour afterwards, but he asked no questions, made no reply to their attempts at consolation, and they left him alone with his dead.

There was "hurrying to and fro" in Sumner that day, for many were left homeless, many bruised and crippled by the storm. And the mourners who wended their way up the long hill to the burying ground were as sad as though the silence had been broken by the tolling of solemn bells.

HONORABLE HONORS.—In a conversation reported in the Atlanta (Ga.) *Constitution*, a duellist named Colonel Say is reported as remarking: "I have been engaged in forty-two affairs of honor as principal and second, and I concur with you fully in your suggestions. It is the duty of a second to prevent a resort to arms if possible. I recollect in one of the first duels I ever fought I came very near losing my life by having a fool for a second. He allowed me to fight the best swordsman in Europe with a rapier. I, at that time was not so proficient as I am now in the use of that weapon, and considered my life as good as lost, but met my antagonist, and, after parrying a few of his thrusts, was compelled to allow him to pass his sword entirely through my stomach, the point coming out at my backbone. As I stood thus transfixed, it occurred to my mind to do an act which I have never heard of being equalled before or since. I, with my left hand, with remarkable presence of mind, coolness, and firmness, seized my adversary's blade, holding it so firmly that he could neither turn it nor pull it out, and in that position plunged my sword entirely through my adversary's left breast up to the hilt, just one inch and a half above his heart; and what is remarkable is that we both recovered."

A TRIBUTE TO THIERS.—The French residents of California have decided upon a suitable testimonial for presentation to M. Thiers in the shape of a magnificent album, twelve inches long and nine wide, costing about $1,650. The materials of which it is composed include gold, silver, diamonds, quartz, agates, and ten different kinds of California wood. The wood, which forms the body of the volume, comprises laurel, oak, cedar, and several other varieties peculiar to the State. The precious metals are set in the wood—gold on one side and silver on the other. On the former is a monogram in diamonds formed by the two letters A. and T. neatly interlaced. Eight different sorts of wood are worked into the back, in the centre of which is a shield, with the inscription of "Gratitude—1873." The clasp, which represents two hands clasped in friendship, is opened by pressing a little diamond button. Inside of the album there is a plate, on which are inscribed the most memorable acts in which M. Thiers has participated since the declaration of war between Germany and France in 1870. On the first page is the address asking the recipient to accept the testimonial, regretting the vote of May 25th last, which deposed M. Thiers from the Presidency, and expressing the hope that the Government will remain republican. Then come the signatures, nearly 2,200 in number, covering 128 pages.