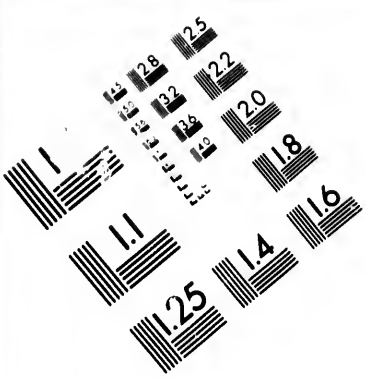

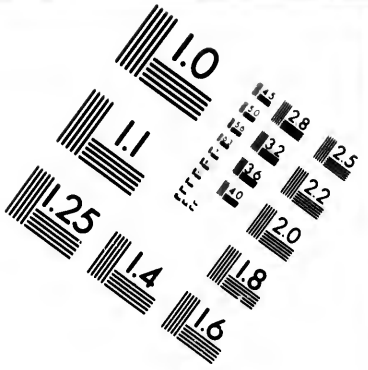

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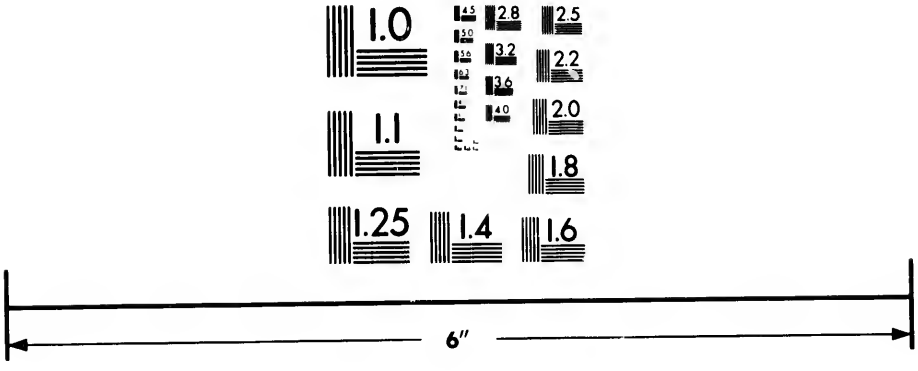

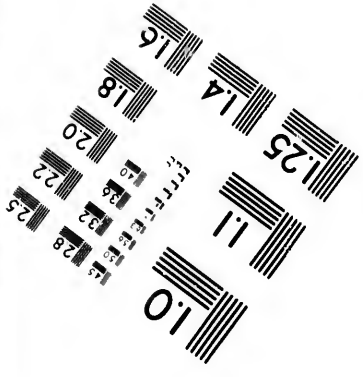

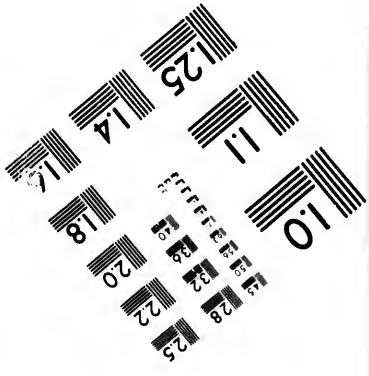

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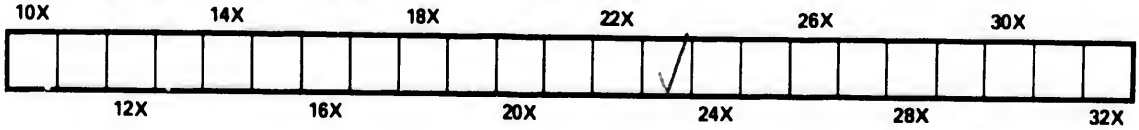

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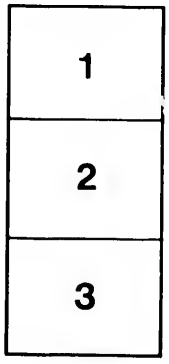

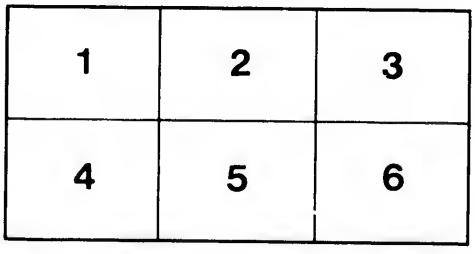

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☞ This is one of the best Novels issued this season.

No Laggards We

Price Twenty Cents.

[Lancefield, R.T.]

W. p 232

NO LAGGARDS WE.

CHAPTER I.

BROUGHT OUT OF THE WATER.

"OPSHAW! Mr. Palmer, don't worry about me. No one ever gets cold from a wetting in salt water."

"Yes, but you are so very wet, you know."

"Not half so wet as I was this morning while bathing."

"But won't your dress spoil?" Jack was an ingenuous young man.

"Spoil!" A merry laugh and the careless air with which she wrung the water out of her dripping muslin was her only reply.

Indeed, the misfortune was barely enough to furnish an after-dinner anecdote at the hotel table, certainly not enough to exalt Jack into a hero or Alice into a heroine of romance—a boat upset in water so shallow that Jack easily waded ashore with Alice in his arms, a thorough wetting, and a hearty good laugh on the beach when the absurdity of the situation asserted itself. A lucky fellow this Jack Palmer! A few weeks ago he had been driving the wearisome pen, conjuring coy inspiration, and now he is not only acquainted with the handsomest girl at Old Point Comfort, but has actually held her in his arms. Happy chance, of course; for Jack was no modern practical wooer, and would have idled away half a summer ere he had embraced an opportunity or a maiden had not the lucky capsizing of the boat flung both into his arms. Once there, it was not in human nature to let either go, save very reluctantly, and it was no ordinary girl that this old mischief-maker, Opportunity, had placed in such tempting proximity to his manly bosom.

Alice Vining was not only the handsomest girl at Old Point Comfort, but also a reputed heiress—a country bred girl of eighteen years, full of life and animation, with a clear, ringing laugh whose music was infectious, a warm, impulsive manner, generous heart, and more engaging qualities than any heroine who had ever driven Jack into a sonnet, or, to speak more correctly, had ever been driven by him into a sonnet; for Jack drew his heroines from the world of his imagination rather than that of his experience. She rested her claim to beauty on two big soft eyes—Jack called them violet, and he ought to know—fair wavy hair of the tint that alternates in various lights between brown and golden, a mouth like a cleft rosebud, shrining a wealth of unexpected

pearls, and hands and feet of the daintiest. Rumor gave her $100,000, which, even if divided by three—a fair allowance for the dame's report—was more money than had ever yet gilded Jack's dreamy, idle, dilettante life.

"So you're sure you won't take cold?" he pursued as they walked up the beach together, he with the rescued oars on his shoulder, and she sprinkling the sand with her draperies like an overdressed Nereid.

"Take cold an afternoon like this! Now you must be laughing at me, Mr. Palmer. The only thing I am afraid of is that there may be some strangers at the hotel, and what a figure I must cut!"

"The sweetest figure that ever rose out of the sea since Venus came to astonish a waiting world! I wonder what they did in those very dark ages before the goddess—"

"How it is clouding up, Mr. Palmer! I shouldn't wonder if we had a thunder-storm before sunset." Alice, for a country girl, wielded a practised foil. Jack, disarmed by the first parry, relapsed into silence; he certainly was neither a clever nor a sanguine antagonist. But silence suited Alice still less than compliment. Perhaps she repented, as many a skilful swordswoman has done, that she was so clever of fence.

"Who would have thought a week ago that you would have rescued me from a watery grave!"

"A watery grave!" cried Jack impetuously. "I only wish it had been. No! no! I don't mean that, but I wish it had been deep enough to make my service of some account. Why, you could have walked out quite easily."

"Yes? Thanks! I got out very comfortably as it was." A side-long glance of the violet eyes accompanied this, but Jack would not lunge over the guard thus temptingly dropped for him.

"Very awkward of me to upset the boat" (Miss Alice's quicksilver habits had occasioned that mishap), "and I got you all wet, too." Alice appreciated the generosity that took the blame, but without apparent notice.

"O! no. See, I am drying as fast as possible." Jack barely touched the sleeve offered for his inspection. Another moment and the hotel would be in sight. Jack could be very bold—on paper.

"Here we are at the boat-house; excuse me a moment, I must leave the oars here." As he turned aside to deposit his burden her frank eyes followed him admiringly. He was a fine-looking young fellow, and his boating-flannels set off his fine proportions. More of the athlete than the poet in that physique, yet Alice read his verses and admired them. Abundance of the best traits of our young manhood in the open, ingenuous face which meets her as he returns.

"I did not think, Mr. Palmer, that I should ever be such friends with anybody in a week, still less that he should rescue me from—"

"You will insist on that watery grave. Do you know that before I had known you ten minutes a watery grave was the least of the adventures in which I fancied you the heroine and I the rescuing knight?"

"See what it is to be a poet! Now, my fancies about you were much more prosaic."

"Did you have any fancies about me?" cried Jack eagerly. "Oh! what were they?"

"Nothing worth repeating, I assure you."

"But if I ask you to repeat them?"

"I shall say, 'No, thank you.'"

"But if I say, 'Please, do,' and 'Ah! do'?"

"I shall still be obliged even more reluctantly to decline."

"I don't believe you thought much about me one way or the other," said Jack, rather morosely.

"Don't you? Well, *I* am too polite to contradict you. Here we are almost at the hotel; I do hope I sha'n't meet anybody."

"You'll meet my friend Harry Bolton, I'm sure. He was to have arrived this afternoon, and his punctuality is proverbial."

"My gracious! with all my skirts sticking to me as if I had been ducked in a barrel and dragged out through the bung-hole; I hope not."

"Your hope must die a sudden death, Miss Alice, for there he is." And as they reached the piazza of the hotel a nattily-dressed little figure—a city man from the crown of his accurate hat to the tips of his shining patent-leathers—came forward to meet them.

"Harry!"

"Jack!"

A warm hand-clasp, two pairs of eyes with a glad expression beaming therefrom, and—

"Miss Vinning, allow me to present to you my dearest friend, Mr. Harry Bolton."

But Alice had gathered her dripping draperies around her and fled past them into the house.

"Make my apologies, Mr. Palmer, and tell your friend how happy I shall be to make his acquaintance when I am more presentable." The voice floated out to them as she ascended the stairs, but its owner had vanished.

"A charming little girl, as far as I could see," said Harry carelessly; "but I suppose, like better things, she will keep."

"Like better things!" (indignantly); "there isn't a better thing in the whole length and breadth of the United States."

"Hard hit already, eh? Well, my indignant poet, I'll judge at dinner whether it will be worth my while to cut you out."

"Wait until I cut in, Hal.'

"I probably sha'n't interfere with you, Jack."

"Thanks!"

"Lots of girls here, I suppose?"

"Eh? Oh! yes, plenty."

"You seem absorbed, my *fides*. I suppose you will admit that I shall cut you out if I try—eh, Jack? Ha! ha! it wouldn't be the first time."

"Yes, but I never was in earnest before."

"In earnest—sober earnest—angels and ministers of grace, *et cetera!* A girl, to make our poet in earnest, must have something

about her out of the common. I shall take observations at dinner. By the way, do we dress for dinner here?"

"As you please."

"Well, I shall please; and I suppose you will at least take off those wet flannels?"

"Time enough!"

"Time enough! Why, Jack, how grumpy you are of a sudden! You're not offended at my chaff about the girl, are you?"

"Excuse me, Harry; I acknowledge that you can come the swell over me too strong at times, but I don't think your society graces will have much effect in this quarter."

"Think not, eh? Well, you've had a week's start of me, but what's that?"

"Why, nothing, with your superior advantages."

"Don't be sarcastic, Jack."

"Don't be over-confident, Harry."

"My nature to be, old chum. I feel assured that I have only to enter the lists [illegible] you bag and baggage."

"Oh! list

"To be c[illegible] by the Queen of Love and Beauty, to revel in the bliss of pure maidenly affection, to be transported into the—eh?"

"Let us dress for dinner."

CHAPTER II.

PERSIFLAGE AND FLIRTATION.

HARRY BOLTON was a stockbroker. In the hours of business he shouted, screamed, and hurrahed on 'Change, sheared a "lamb" when he got a chance, discussed railroad stocks and securities, gave points (that were valueless), kept a weather eye on the movements of Jay Gould and Russell Sage, and on the Street was regarded as one of the very clever ones. He made lots of money, and spent it with a free hand; he had his bachelor quarters, where he gave jolly suppers that were sometimes kept up until a late hour; drove a natty T-cart, and generally prided himself, as he expressed it in the Wall-Street idiom, on "never losing a trick." He owned a yacht; patronized the races; kept the run of theatrical happenings; knew something of music, something of art; could row a little; had had some fishing experiences; was a member of the Crescent and Knickerbocker Clubs; could box, fence, shoot; knew something of politics; but, above all, prided himself upon his society graces. The fit of his clothes was faultless, but the bright intelligence of his countenance, and the eager, restless flash of his eye would quickly undeceive anybody who, from his *personnel*, might feel inclined to take him for a model dry goods-store floor-walker. His best faculty was to catch on, and he had good staying qualities; he knew that he had a taking way, and he knew how to profit by it. Summing him up, we may say that he was a man-about-town, with all the good qualities of that article in city furniture and few of the bad.

His friend was his antipodes in nearly every respect. How they came to be friends was, and ever will remain, a wonder. Harry liked show—Jack was modest and retiring to the verge of bashfulness; Harry had a toleration for poetry and art—Jack was devoted to them; Harry appreciated the value of money and knew how to use it—Jack didn't know how to make it, didn't know how to use it, couldn't keep it when he got it, and didn't want any more than afforded him quiet living and gratified his modest desires. He was a student and a dreamer, thoughtful, earnest, self-reliant, not in the least ambitious for himself, at least not immoderately so—in short, a thoroughly good fellow, in whom there had never been awakened any considerable power or developed any great strength of character. As a poet he had found the attainment even of his modest wishes just the least bit difficult, and he had turned his attention to playwriting, newspaper sketches, magazine stories—in short, any literary labor that presented itself.

He and Bolton had made each other's acquaintance on the occasion of a first night of one of Palmer's unsuccessful plays, and this chance

meeting had ripened into a friendship quite as extraordinary as the difference between the young men themselves.

In May they had gone to Pike County fishing, and Palmer, very regretfully, had promised himself that the extent of his summer pleasuring shou'd end there and he would go to work, a necessary process for obvious pecuniary reasons. Harry insisted upon his taking a point in Wabash, however, promising to carry it for him; and as a result we find him in the middle of June, with a nice roll of hundred-dollar bills in his pocket, enjoying the opening of the season at Old Point Comfort, and quite indifferent to the demands of the labor he had engaged himself to perform. Thither he had come in advance of his volatile friend, who had taken a run down Tennessee way to inspect a railway enterprise he had just engaged in, and the day on which they meet again is the one so fraught with fate to Jack.

As Jack shook himself out of his wet clothing he felt for the first time a slight revulsion of feeling in his liking for Bolton. He couldn't quite explain why. Hitherto he had not in the least cared what Harry had said or how he had comported himself towards women; his temperament was quite too phlegmatic to allow of his taking more than a passing notice of Bolton's rather flippant ways of speech and manner.

"But, hang it! he shouldn't talk that way about Alice—Miss Vining," he said to himself, as he vigorously brushed his hair; and then, catching in the three-by-five, salt-discolored looking-glass a reflection of a flush o'erspreading his ruddy cheeks and brow, with which the sun had nothing to do, he rubbed his head the harder and dismissed both reflections. Bolton calling out from the next room just then:

"I say! Jack, how would a Vermouth cocktail go before dinner?" he replied cheerily:

"Just the thing!" and a few minutes afterward he was clinking glasses with his friend without a trace of the resentful feeling that had sent the blood mantling to his cheek as he stood before the dressing-table in his own room.

They went down to dinner together, and found seats across the table from Alice, to whom Bolton was then introduced in due form, as also to her father and his maiden sister, who, by virtue of that relation, was Alice's aunt. As Jack went over the formula of the introduction and repeated, "Miss Alice Vining, Miss Vining, and Mr. Vining," he caught himself smiling as the thought occurred to him how much more appropriate and altogether natural it would be to say: "Miss Alice Vining, Miss Alice Vining's aunt, and Miss Alice Vining's father."

Mr. Vining was a Western man; had been a judge of something or other, and rejoiced in the title, of which he was very tenacious. The Judge possessed a decided talent for self-assertiveness, was particularly fond of brandy-and-soda, but also extremely fond of a pride he had managed to construct for himself—heaven knows from what foundation—in his family name and his personal honor. Let the truth be told, even though it wound the blatant judgeship in what he was pleased to consider his most sensitive point, "his honah," he had none; and for his family name, he had done nothing, except blow about it; so, at least,

said those who knew him best. His talk was bald and rather disjointed at all times, the result, obviously, of laying on of hands and laying down of tumblers—emptied.

"Glad see you, sir—glad see you. Palmer spoke of you 'fore—firm of Bolton, Rich & Moore, New York—yes, sir—banking-house, just so—'zactly, sir—had many dealings with house, sir—name of Vining in former days a lever, sir—lever, sir, of financial world—yes, sir, lever, sir—'tegrity of family 'ntarnished, sir—tr'nsmitted to self—lost nothing, sir, 'sure you, by tr'nsmission 'N my time, sir, person'l honor considered precious heritage—guard with life—with life, sir. Present day, sir, sadly degen'rate—try to check rapid decay by 'xample, sir—pers'nal 'xample—but only one man—almost alone—sometimes discouraged—nothing but family 'ntegrity, Mr Bolton, causes me persevere. Proud to know you, sir. Quiet here at present—fill up by'n by. Sister's health forces anticipation of season—benefit of salt air—bracing, sir—bracing. No society, sir—feel recluse—officers army—drink too freely—point, sir, of personal honor—always stop at enough."

The Judge would have continued to present his views on different subjects had not his soup just then been placed before him, and he attacked it with an appetite and vigor born of much brandy-and-soda.

"I told you, father," spoke Alice, "that Mr. Palmer rescued me from a watery grave this afternoon, and—"

Jack blushed and tried to say something of a deprecatory nature.

"So you did," sputtered the judge, spurting his soup in a liquid shower in the direction of Jack. "Certainly—perfectly c'rect—young men present day only fit rescue girls from watery graves. 'N my time—young men—escort—personal honor first consideration—fish!"

"Brother means to thank you, as I do very heartily," said Miss Vining.

Bolton here got in his first words by saying: "There are many men who would gladly thank Miss Alice for such an opportunity as my fortunate friend has just obtained."

Alice lifted up her eyes and looked Bolton fairly in the face; as he said afterwards, "She weighed me up, by George!" "Yes," she said, with the faintest suggestion of an imitation in her manner, "I might have been bitten by a frightfully horrid crab, you know, or been shamefully treated by a vagrant beggar of a sea nettle."

Then turning to Jack, and with quite a perceptible warmth in her voice: "Indeed, Mr. Palmer, I thank you very much, and the fact that the bottom was near to make your effort the easier takes away nothing of the gratitude I feel." Impulsively she put out her hand across the table, and Jack, in his embarrassment over this demonstration, got his knife and fork into his lap, his confusion being heightened by catching the amused twinkle in Harry's eye.

"Alice!" said her aunt reprovingly.

"Alice!" grunted the judge.

"Miss Vining," stammered Jack with difficulty.

CHAPTER III.

"THE CRUISE OF THE JOUGSTER."

THE following morning Bolton's yacht arrived from New York, and that admirable reflection of social perfection precipitated himself into a wealth of gold lace and brass buttons.

For the reason that yachts are registered in the New York Custom-House, with no end of statistics as to length, breadth of beam, depth of hold, measurement of spars, and so on, attached, we, the chroniclers of this too true tale, withhold the schooner's real name and call her the *Jougster*—a title having no relation whatsoever to her identity—and we may be excused if we do not give descriptive particulars about her for the same good and competent reason.

As soon as the yacht had come to an anchor and the sailing-master had reported to her owner, Mr. Bolton invited the Vinings to lunch on board that day and afterwards take a sail.

In doing this he had found it necessary to include in his invitation Mrs. Chauncey Hazard and another lady, guests at the hotel, who had seats at the same table. Mrs. Hazard deserves an introduction. Then see a woman of indeterminate age—let us say thirty—tall, straight, graceful, with lustrous black eyes, a large mouth, somewhat redeemed by a set of strong, large, evenly-set teeth; square chin, indicative of firmness of will; sensuous lips, wreathed constantly with an almost indescribable smile, which served principally to soften the otherwise masculine appearance of the determined jaw; a sinuous movement of the body as she walked, a quick, hasty way of speaking, and a simplicity of manner which would have been delightful had she not at times betrayed a deeper knowledge of life and its intricacies than her ordinary deportment would appear to suggest. She was a widow of ample means, she explained, and resided with her father, a retired merchant. The other lady was a drab little party, with hair and complexion of no decided tint. Her toilet was Quakerish in its simplicity, and yet the set and fit of her dress might have raised a pang of envy even in the breast of a devout worshipper at the shrine of Worth. Sea-side gallants, endeavoring to "charm never so wisely," retired in confusion from the honest, searching glance of her soulful brown eyes, leaving the compliment unuttered and her to the solitude and reading she seemed so much to enjoy. Her name, Elizabeth Newell, suited her plain, quiet ways, and in the eyes of the people at the hotel she soon assumed that neutral position which was so much in harmony with her appearance and manner.

The night after Harry's arrival he and Jack had sat out on the pier, smoking their pipes, until a late hour. Jack had been strangely inquisitive as to the methods of making money in speculative operations.

"It's all very kind of you, Harry, to carry stock for me in order that I may have a little money to keep up this idling, but can't I get at the way myself? Now, I've got brains enough to make money, if I only knew how. Theoretically I have an abundance of monetary wisdom. I have written no end of newspaper editorials about bimetallism in currency, on funding the national debt in three per cents. and three and one-half per cents., writing for both figures with equal facility and strength; and I have discussed the finance of the Latin nations, and so on, with such effect as to attract considerable attention."

"I thought you only wanted money enough to live, and that your poem of the future would bring you all the income you wanted for your old age," said Harry sardonically.

"The fact of it is," replied Jack, stretching himself out on the pier-bench and puffing away reflectively, "that, while I have courted the Muse with satisfactory results, I have never realized much profit from my wooing. It was that failure, Harry, that drove me to writing more salable if less graceful material. Between you and me, I think I would like to be rich, not vulgarly rich, but something like you are."

"Why, Jack, you don't know anything about it. With the exception of a few thousand dollars, represented in the solid old bank, a place in whose partnership I inherited, my wealth is as vague and impalpable at times as the substance of your poems. Do you remember the Jersey Central deal? I was short on that to an amount that would have left me stranded beyond the hope of ever floating again; I would have been $100,000 worse off than nothing. Fortunately there was a recover the next day, and by twelve o'clock I was even. No, Jack, if your desires for wealth have a fixed object, don't make my condition the subject of your envy. What do you want of money, any way?"

"I don't know," replied his friend after a pause.

"Why don't you marry a rich girl? Marry old Brandyjug's daughter."

"Marry for money? Marry! not I, indeed."

Bolton swung around in his seat to get a better look at Jack. There was something in the indignant tone of his voice, a peculiar emphasis, that conveyed an impression not apparent in the words themselves. Their eyes met, and Harry laughed heartily as he said:

"I see you are really smitten; it is the Vining who has done it. Now, Jack, confess."

"Nonsense! I am not; but she is quite the best thing in girls I ever saw, measured by my standard. What do you think of her?"

"Her father is quite as interesting. Ha! ha! he is a rare old guy. I had a buzz with him after dinner, while you were reading the description of the *Merrimac* and *Monitor* fight to the aunt and niece and taxing your imagination to point out historic spots. He only drank six ponies of brandy right off the reel—which, by the way, I paid for—and then intimated that he would like to have a drink; swore barkeepers had no sense of personal honor; in his time a drink was a drink. He grew very maudlin before he left, and treated me to a confused account of himself and family, his hopes and feelings; but whether it was his

daughter who was the apple of his aged eyes, the core of his very soul, or the brandy he was drinking, I could not determine.

Jack made no answer; his eyes had wandered to the eastern horizon, out of which the moon was just then lifting herself, tinting the sandy beach that stretched away under the lighthouse on Cape Henry with shades of gold and silver that mingled in exquisite harmony with the green and blue shimmer of the waves beyond.

"If I was in love," he said, "I should wish the object of my affection to be as perfect in her way as nature shows herself in such glorious vistas. I think I shall write a poem."

"And I will go to bed," was his friend's response; "so, my moon-struck friend, good-night."

The invitation to lunch on board the yacht had been made at the breakfast table, where Bolton extended it with an easy grace and hospitality of manner that sat much better upon him than the affected style, almost amounting to priggishness, he had seen fit to assume at dinner the evening before. The Judge had said, "By all means, we will go. Fact is, Bolton," he added, with a shameless exposure of his ruling desire —"fact is, Bolton, am tired sir—tired of Otard Dupuy in the bar—change beneficial, sir, 't my time of life. Hennessey, rare old Hennessey, is ticket, sir—got case on board—certainly—no need t' ask—Mr. Bolton —gentleman, sir—gentleman—'fected with deep sense of pers'nal honor. Hennessey grateful, sir—'xtremely grateful—soothing—ordered case from Baltimore—not arrived, sir—withdraw patronage if not more punctual—case not arrived yet, has it sister?"

Miss Mahala avoided an answer by gratuitously asking Mr. Palmer to repeat what he had said, as if he had made a remark of some kind, which he had not thought of doing, and was somewhat disconcerted by perceiving that Bolton had detected her little ruse, though seemingly unconscious of the occasion which had called it forth.

About eleven o'clock the gig came ashore to take the party off to the yacht, which was anchored well under the Rip Raps. Whatever opinion the pretty Alice had formed of Mr. Bolton on the occasion of their first meeting, his behavior now was such as to dissipate any unfavorable impression she may have entertained. He was vastly amusing, told witty stories of his yachting exploits, and assuming the *role* of an experienced sailor, made even timid Aunt Mahala to forget her fear of the water, and caused the old Judge to neglect several opportunities to narrate incidents of his alleged judicial career. The lunch was perfect in its substance and service, and when the party came on deck they found the sails hoisted and the crew manning the capstan. In a few minutes the anchor was tripped, the head-sails hoisted, and the *Jougster* was running down and out under the guns of Fortress Munroe. A man-of-war at anchor there dipped her colors as they passed by, and the officers on her quarter-deck raised their caps in response to the waving handkerchief of the gushing Mrs. Hazard. Jack devoted himself to the especial service of protecting Miss Alice's head from the swinging main-boom, Mr. Bolton was attentive to Mrs. Hazard, and the Judge was equally so to his favorite beverage, that the steward had brought on deck for his special delectation. Miss Newell reposed on a heap of

deck-cushions, reading intently, while Miss Mahala clutched the rail of the after cockpit in a strained, intense spirit of fear which no assurances of safety could entirely dispel. The air was soft and balmy, the sea almost unruffled, save for the fine sailing-breeze that swept its surface.

It seemed a model yachting party, with every condition favoring its pleasure. Whoever ought to have suggested returning to port neglected to do so. The old Judge had fallen asleep. Miss Mahala's fears had been so laughed at before that she had relapsed into silence, and read and re-read the advertisements of the religious papers she had brought with her. Mrs. Hazard didn't care if they never came back. Jack and Alice were quite as indifferent. Miss Newell calmly enjoyed the sail and her book, while Bolton, having delegated to his guests the direction of the cruise and sent, at their request, the *Jougster* into blue water, was quite too hospitable as the representative of Neptune to even suggest the propriety of leaving his domain. And so the charming June afternoon slipped away, the happy party taking no thought of time. At four o'clock they were far off land, the trees of the Virginia shore looking like a fringe on the horizon, below which the sea extended into infinity. At five o'clock the *Jougster's* head still lay to the eastward, with a decided swell on the bosom of the deep, and a freshening wind hauling to the westward.

"The barometer falling very fast, sir," reported the captain to Mr. Bolton, "and the sky getting murky toward the nor'west. If we get into the Capes on the next flood, we'll be doing well, sir."

"What does he mean?" simpered Mrs. Hazard.

"Mean, marm! Why, there's a gale a-brewin' outer the nor'west, and the yacht, having racing spars and canvas on, not suited for such weather, had better get out of its way, marm, that's all."

"Then you had better go about and stand in for shore, captain," said Bolton carelessly, although he cast a furtive look at the barometer and another at the heavy bank of clouds forming.

In a few minutes the *Jougster* was close hauled on the port tack, her sheets well aft, and the water bubbling over the lee gunwale. At six o'clock Cherry-stone was fairly under her port bow; the flying-jib had been stowed, the topsails sent down, and the deck-furniture lashed fast. The sea had risen rapidly, and the sun had sunk behind the clouds, which in hazy rifts were scudding away to the northward. Every now and again the little schooner plunged her bow into one of the great waves, that sent the spray flying into the belly of her great foresail and distributed the saline drops in the cockpit abaft the cabin.

The crew were alert, stationed at sheets and halyards; the guests had sought the shelter of the cabin, all save Palmer, who, with his friend, was in anxious consultation with the sturdy sailing-master near the wheel.

The captain had said it would be well to throw a reef in the fore and main sails, and take the bonnet out of the jib when they went about, which they would soon have to do; but when Bolton asked him if they could make the Capes that evening under short canvas his reply in the negative was short and forcible. So now to consider what course to pursue. A violent gust of wind that bent the tall masts like whip-

stocks and careened the gallant *Jougster* so that her lee cat-heads were quite buried in the foamy sea, quickened their deliberations and decided them, and all hands were called to reef down the mainsail. Jack and Bolton were both good sailors, and they turned to with a will, hauling on the reef-tackle, passing ear-rings, and knotting points like old *matelots*.

By the time the foresail had been reduced by half, the sheets doubled up, and the storm-staysail hoisted forward, it was almost dark, and the *Jougster* was making heavy weather of it as she tumbled down along the coast, Cape Henry light showing from her decks only as she rose on the crest of some mighty wave, and then disappearing as she sank into the trough again.

In the cabin all was confusion and panic. Even the unlimited supplies of brandy-and-soda which the attentive steward placed before the Judge did not quiet his nerves. Mrs. Hazard had retired to her state-room, where she divided her time between seasickness and hysterics; Miss Newell sat beside her, making vain efforts to soothe her; Miss Mahala, with the religious paper clasped between her folded hands, knelt in silent prayer over a pile of life-floats; while Alice sat on a cushioned locker, braced against the bulkhead, her face pale but composed, and her eyes fastened on the swinging "tell-tale" in the skylight hatch, which gave the angle of the rolling and pitching of the struggling *Jougster*.

At this minute the cabin-door opened and Jack and Harry entered, their clothes sparkling with spray, hair and beard glistening with evidence of the gale.

"All right ladies!" called out Harry in reassuring tones; "we have been carrying a little too much canvas, but we have reduced sail, and the schooner is now as safe as if she were anchored inside Fortress Monroe. We may not be back to-night, but there are plenty of state-rooms for your accommodation. We will have some dinner, music afterwards, some grog if you like, a few sea-yarns, and Jack shall contribute his famous sea-song, 'Le Bonhomme Richard'—seventy-three verses with their accompanying choruses—to wind up with. How is that for a programme? To-morrow we will be in port again, with a charming, exciting adventure to relate, and none of us the worse for our experience."

"Mr. Bolton, I must be back to-night! How dare you talk about music and eating? Ugh! O Mr. Bolton! I am afraid I am going to die!" sobbed Mrs. Hazard from the privacy of her state-room.

"I sincerely sympathize with you, Mrs. Hazard," said Harry, "but I am afraid getting back to-night is an impossibility. You will feel better in a little while, the vessel will be easier shortly."

But she wasn't. As the night closed in the wind increased and the sea became very heavy: every now and again a great wave would lift itself over the yacht, threatening to engulf it, but each time the little vessel drew away from the danger, and with a roar the angry wave, dropping upon her deck the curling foam from its crest, broke and retired, to make way for another.

The little vessel, under close-reefed mainsail and storm-staysail, labored heavily, creaking and groaning in every timber. It was deemed advisable to still further lighten her, and the tramping of the sailors on deck as they furled the mainsail and hoisted the foresail close-reefed, the swish of the water, the hoarse roar of the word of command and hoarser roar of the gale, the rattle of blocks and cordage, sounded to the unaccustomed ears of the neophytes below as the very crack of doom and the last despairing effort of the *Jougster* to keep afloat.

CHAPTER IV.

THE YACHT ON STORMY WATERS.

THE night passed in fear and anxious waiting, even Harry and Jack finding it difficult to conceal their apprehension of the probable danger. They stood watch and watch, Harry on deck, Jack trying to soothe the cabin inmates, going on deck when his eloquence gave out to relieve Harry, who in turn continued the soothing process in the cabin. Alice was quiet but hopeful, Mrs. Hazard sick and querulous, Miss Newell calm and self-possessed, Aunt Mahala wrapped in devotion and resigned to what she regarded as their certain and unavoidable fate, while the Judge, who had finally drowned his terrors in the copious draughts of brandy with which he had deluged himself, slept soundly on a rug in the main cabin, oblivious of personal honor, danger, or any other disturbing influence.

Daylight broke, and the scene presented from the deck of the struggling yacht was calculated to daunt the heart of the stoutest sailor. The little vessel's light spars had been struck and were now securely lashed on deck, her jib-boom had been rigged inboard, and a storm-stay-sail bent on to the foreboom and hoisted on her foremast, by means of a jewel-block, half way to the cross-trees; preventer-stays had been reeved off, the hatches battened down, and the little craft, with everything snug, was bravely striving to "lay to" in the face of a heavier gale and sea than any man on board had ever before seen from the deck of so small a vessel. There was a patch of tarpaulin seized on to the weather main-rigging, which answered the dual purpose of keeping her "head on" to the toppling seas which threatened to engulf her and partially sheltered the skipper from the flying shower of "spoon drift" which swept over the deck with a stinging rapidity.

There was no land in sight; the sky was gloomy and threatening, and the wind seemed to increase in violence rather than diminish.

The sailing-master shook his head gloomily as he caught Bolton's eye, and said:

"I'm afraid, sir, we'll have to scud to sea for it, if we can get her safely paid off. She can't stand this much longer."

The word was passed to make everything secure in the cabins, in anticipation of the fearful rolling she would have to take as she fell off in the trough of the sea; and if she were not thrown on her beam ends, there was a chance for her. When all was ready her helm was eased up, a corner of the jib hoisted, and as she rose on the top of a great wave, still heading to the westward, she commenced to fall off, and with a sheer into the trough of the sea swung due south; the next wave on her broadside lifted her high in the air upon its towering crest, and,

settling away, left her heading E. S. E. If she could draw way enough on her and get fairly before the gale ere the next sea came, she was safe; but the next sea was a short, quick, foamy billow that broke just over her stern, descending like a cataract fairly down upon the little craft and sweeping its great green volume entirely over her. Jack had seen it coming, and his clear, ringing voice, "Hold fast, everybody," was heard even above the roaring of the wind and the crash of the wave that swept the deck.

All but one sailor heeded the warning, and when the sea had passed by, leaving the *Jougster* trembling and staggering under the force of the shock it had bestowed, the place where he had stood was vacant; but on the top of a sea away to leeward was seen for an instant a yellow oilskin jacket, and from near there arose a piercing cry for help which thrilled the ears of those who heard it; then the jacket disappeared and the voice was for ever hushed.

As soon as the yacht was fairly before the wind, and enough sail made to prevent her from being "pooped" by the great seas that chased her, Harry and Jack went below to change their soaking garments and relieve the natural anxiety which rested upon the passengers. Alice, aiding herself by the rail of the stationary table, came to Jack and looked appealingly into his face.

"Do not fear, Miss Alice; every thing is all right. The yacht is seaworthy and ably manned, there are plenty of provisions on board, and abundance of fresh water."

"Water!" grunted the Judge depreciatingly.

"And," continued Jack, "the worst that can happen us is to be blown out to sea for a few days. When the gale abates we will 'bout ship,' make sail, and come pleasantly back again."

"There is no immediate danger then?"

"None in the least," replied Jack.

"There, aunty, do you hear that? Mr. Palmer says there is no danger."

"I am glad to be able to reassure your aunt, Miss Alice. We have doubtless caught the whip-end of a hurricane that has swept over the coast. It cannot last long; indeed, the fury of the storm is already nearly exhausted."

"I am so glad to believe you, and you do reassure us, Mr. Palmer. I have been awfully frightened, so has aunty,"

"Yes, we have had a pretty lively time," broke in Harry; "but the barometer is rapidly rising, and that is a sure precursor of good weather."

"I should like so much to see the ocean in a storm," said Alice appealingly.

"Well, then, Miss Alice, let me encase you in this oilskin—so—and tie this nor'wester over your head—so—and now you can come on deck with some degree of comfort," said Jack, having suited the action to the word, while with rather nervous fingers he arranged the protective head-gear, that it took him quite a while to fasten.

As Miss Alice did not attempt to direct or hurry the operation, we suppose his clumsiness passed unnoticed during this interesting episode.

Harry, after looking to the comfort of the rest of his guests, addressed Mrs. Hazard through the door of her state-room.

"Would you like to come on deck, Mrs. Hazard?"

"I want to go ashore," was the sepulchral reply.

"I would very much like to go on deck," said Miss Newell, to whom Harry had turned with a shrug; "that is," she added, "if you don't mind." She stood braced against the companion-ladder, a flush on her cheeks and a sparkle in those wonderful eyes (Harry had not noticed them much before), her attitude one of unstudied grace.

"Why, certainly I should mind—be charmed," said Harry. Wonderful eyes, he thought, as he hastened to say a number of polite things.

A bright smile broke over the girl's face as she listened to Harry's persiflage, and quietly replied to it while preparing for the proposed walk on deck.

Meanwhile, Alice, leaning on Jack's arm—which she clutched with both her pretty hands, to Jack's great delight—and wrapped in the great oiled coat, which quite enshrouded her figure, had reached the deck, and stood under the lee of the cabin-house, watching the sublimity of the storm.

She was, indeed, a pretty girl. How often that thought danced into Jack's mind as he looked down upon her, the chestnut-colored hair blowing over her face and the violet eyes reflecting the thoughts of her soul!

They were presently joined by Harry and Miss Newell. A few remarks passed between them, until the sublimity of the scene asserted itself, and a feeling of awe inspired them as in silence they gazed on the heaving, mighty waters, and watched the horizon, which appeared to lift itself toward the zenith or sink again as the *Jougster* rose and fell over the tumbling seas.

In the cabin the Judge, aroused from his drunken slumber, and having called in vain for the steward, sought out for himself the spirit-locker, and was engaged in mixing a "refresher" when the groans of Mrs. Hazard in her state-room attracted his attention. Now, one of the Judge's redeeming points was his chivalric treatment of women. He was nothing if not a ladies'-man, a knight, a perfect Bayard and Launcelot combined—in his own judgment, at least—a beau of the *ancien regime*, of courtly grace and irresistable address and manner. He hastened to her door to assure her of his devotion, and was just in time to catch her as she staggered out into his arms. A sudden lurch of the vessel caused him to lose his feet, and he found himself sitting on the floor of the cabin, his precious burden on his lap in a half-fainting condition, and himself unable to move.

Never before since reaching mature years had the Judge felt himself so utterly unable to rise with the occasion. It was very unfortunate. In the first place, he had left the "refresher" untasted, and there temptingly it lay within provokingly easy distance, but he, alas! powerless to grasp it. This disappointment lay incubus-like on his mind, the widow being another of a less spiritual nature on his lap.

Not in his previous experience had the Judge's gallantry been so severely tested. He could not lift the weight that oppressed him; it was doubtful, even, if he could roll her off, and gallantry forbade such an act of barbarity. He had no appliances at his command to summon help, no restoratives wherewith he could bring her out of her semi-unconscious state. The charm of his voice alone was left to him, and that organ, from repeated "refreshers" and violent exercise in hailing the steward, was not calculated to soothe the nerves of distressed womanhood, being best described as husky. Something had to be done.

"Mrs. Hazard—dear madam—'sure you no danger. Brace up—beg pardon—mean look up, ma'am. Personal honor 't stake where lady's concerned—assure you ma'am. Where devil's that steward? Steward!" with a husky yell.

Now, the lady in question was a widow—proverbially dangerous creatures. Even the Judge's experience of *les dames* might well teach him caution. To beware of danger is an instinct; but when danger takes the form of a more than ordinarily charming widow, who is propelled into your arms, and then, in spite of everything, sits down on you, or you sit down with her, what is even a learned Judge to do? And though the Judge infinitely preferred the plumpness of a well-filled tumbler, still his faculties were not so blunted. Well, it is certain he surveyed her with an added interest. She certainly was pretty "hefty" and solid—solid in more ways than one, thanks to the dear departed. The Judge mused on the chances of her marrying again. The widow, if her "dear friends" spoke truly, was not averse to creating an earthly paradise for yet another masculine sinner; but being a sensible woman, exceedingly so, she fully understood the mercantile value of society "heavy-weights," while diamonds, opera-boxes in season, etc., with the thousand and one trifles dear to the feminine heart, had their full appreciation.

The Judge was a reputed millionaire. Possibly this might have had something to do with the duration of her limp attitude on the Judge's lap. These widows are very astute, and an old imbecile with plenty of money and an unlimited supply of Hennessey might—who knows? At all events, the Judge, after shouting himself still huskier, was induced to recommence his attentions by some slight signs of returning animation.

"Cheer up, ma'am—relieved, Mrs. Hazard? Know me, ma'am?—friend Judge. Don't give way, dear creature—don't give way,"

"Ah!" sighed the lady—"ah! Judge. Who called me dear? No, no! I am alone—deserted! Oh! oh! oh!"

To the Judge's horror, the convulsive sobs gave sign of another relapse, but no sign of moving.

"My dear ma'am—my dear Mrs. Hazard!" cried the Judge apprehensively, adopting instinctively the saving tactics. A half-smile and a heavy sigh were his instant reward.

"My dear ma'am," he repeated—"deepest sympathy in affliction—suffering unmans me—dear Mrs. Hazard—unmans me—crushed to the earth, ma'am—yes, ma'am, crushed. Steward!"

"Ah! Judge, many thanks, dear Judge! Where am I? Oh! do not call so loud" (as the Judge made a husky preparation). "My poor nerves—I am so weak and tired. Where are they all? Oh! Judge, are we wrecked? Am I deserted?" (Signs of another lapse). "Dear, dear Judge, you will not desert me!"

"'Fend you with life, ma'am!" groaned the poor Judge, whose back was aching terribly.

"Ah! I knew it; I expected nothing less from you. Dear Judge, how kind you are!"

"Thank you, ma'am—but 'xcuse me."

"You are, Judge; I will not be contradicted. You are exceedingly kind."

"Politeness forbids—contradict a lady, ma'am" (another groan stifled), "but, ma'am—"

"Then don't do it; besides, Judge, it flies to my head, and my nerves are so unstrung."

"My case 'xactly, ma'am—nerves unstrung—nothing but refresher—"

"Refreshing indeed! Judge, to have a sympathetic friend in whom one can have entire confidence, to whom one can open her heart, pour out, as it were—"

"Just so, ma'am—want to pour it out but can't get at it."

"Why not? Am I not here, dear Judge, to commune with and help you? Ah! Judge, only a week back—"

"I know it, ma'am—awfully sorry, ma'am—can't help it, assure you—aches, ma'am—aches dreadfully—getting old" (another groan). "Steward!"

"Why, Judge, what do you mean? Ah! your heart aches. Ah! the aching void in the human heart."

"No, ma'am, not the heart—back, ma'am—the back—nothing rest it against."

"You are tired of your *tete-a-tete*, Judge, evidently. I don't understand you."

"No, ma'am; but call your 'tention to fact."

"What fact, Judge?"

"Fact, ma'am—simple fact, ma'am—I'm sitting on floor—you're sitting in my lap, and back aches."

The lady's attention being thus summarily called to a fact which in her hysterical condition had evidently passed unnoticed, the Judge was emboldened to become warmer in his demeanor, to prevent the involuntary imprisonment, that would be indefinitely extended in case of a relapse. By repeated assurances he succeeded in calming her agitation and quieting her nerves, and at length by their combined efforts a seat was reached, the lady safely deposited thereon, and the Judge proceeded to mix a "refresher"—two, in fact—and never was the favorite beverage more grateful to the Judge's parched palate. Another, craftily qualified, for Mrs. H., and the Judge, relieved in mind and body, returned to her side.

"Ah! Judge;" she sighed, "poor Judge! you must have suffered terribly. I am afraid I am very heavy. You must not think me unwomanly."

"'Markable fine woman—'markable fine, ma'am—'n my young days, should have been devoted, ma'am—devoted slave, ma'am.

"Why, Judge, you talk about your young days as if you were an old man. Why, you are in your prime!"

"Flattered ma'am—sure young in feeling yet, ma'am" (a twinge in his back gave the lie to his assertion as he drew himself proudly up) "old 'n years, ma'am—still youthtful, assure you, 'n all constitutes gentleman of honor—personal honor, ma'am—still a youth."

The lady smiled upon him as he drained his tumbler, and said:

"Do you know, Judge, that occasionally you remind me of my late husband? Ah! Judge, he was as great a lover of honor as yourself; and how he adored poor me! There is something in the set of the head when you hold it in a certain position. Will you excuse me, my dear Judge! I knew you would. There—so; no, that is not quite the pose—a little more to the left—that way. Now look me in the eye so that I can judge of the effect; there, that's about it."

The magic touch of the widow's taper fingers about his neck and hair destroyed the small remnant of the old Judge's equanimity. The widow was a dear, tender-hearted soul—a magnificent creature, too, sir. She seemed already more than half disposed to like him; had she not said he resembled her late husband? complimented him on his adherence to his pet theory? He had made a profound impression, no doubt of it. The correct pose may not have been obtained, but the Judge was. Seizing her hands, he mumbled them in a senile manner, while the charming widow sat regarding her slave with quiet complacency.

To what greater length they would have gone just at that time in their amatory *tete-a-tete* will never be known, for just then Alice and Miss Newell were handed down the companion-way by their respective escorts.

"O father!" cried Alice, "the storm has broken; the wind has hauled and come out from somewhere, and is going to knock the sea down, and it will be plain sailing back to Fortress Monroe, where we will have breakfast to-morrow morning." And she clapped her hands with delight.

"Yes, the barometer has risen one and thirty-eight-hundredths," added Miss Newell, thereby indicating that she was quite as accomplished a sailor as Alice; "and as soon as the sea goes down a little we are going to haul on the wind, although that seems to me impossible, and head up for the two capes of Virginia."

"It's quite time for something to eat, too. Steward!" shouted Bolton, "Pipe all hands to breakfast as soon as possible."

Half an hour later the clatter of knives and forks, the merry ring of laughter and voices disturbed Miss Mahala at her devotions in the cabin

that Harry had assigned to her the night before. She came out pale and anxious, still clutching the religious newspaper.

What wonder if she started and cried out, "Brother"!

What wonder if the Judge sputtered over his coffee and essayed to tell something about a great case he once tried?

What wonder if Mrs. Hazard vainly attemped to greet Miss Mahala with placid mien but changed color under the reproachful gaze of the vestal's calm, upbraiding eyes?

Miss Vining had seen the Judge and the widow pressing each other's hands under the table.

CHAPTER V.

QUARTER-DECK LOVE-MAKING.

WHEN the company went on deck the sun was shining brightly, the topmasts were aloft, and under all full sail the *Jougster* was standing in toward land, which it was confidently expected would be sighted by sundown. The decks were cleared up, the sailors were cleaning the brass-work, the awning had been spread aft, easy-chairs disposed about the cock-pit; a bottle of brandy and quite a stack of bottled soda nestling in a cooler were ready for the use of the Judge, and everything seemed a continuation of the interrupted pleasure of the day before.

Alice, her feet wrapped in a warm robe, had sought a seat where Jack could and did find a place near her. Whatsoever his feelings may have been when he carried this charming burden out of the shallow depths near the hotel, and however doubtful he may have been as to their character then, he was in no state of uncertainty now. The events of the last twenty-four hours had done much to break through the restraint of conventional social intercourse, and had certainly swept away any cobwebs that might have obsured Jack's mental vision. He recalled with a thrill of pleasure the imploring glance and trusting words with which Alice had greeted him as he entered the cabin while the storm was still at its height, and the memory thereof was not likely soon to desert him.

Let us not imagine that Alice was in the least unaware of these sentiments. Like every other girl she had devoted considerable time and study to the solution of that difficult problem—the relation of the masculine heart to cause and effect; and however distant she may have been from the complete and satisfactory knowledge thereof, she had certainly made sufficient progress to enable her to derive no small satisfaction from her researches. A clever girl was Alice, one whose quick intuition had placed her *en rapport* with every difficult and tender situation she had yet known. She was fully aware of the longing, admiring gaze at her pretty face in which Jack was indulging, and, in the kindness of her heart not wishing to interrupt his evident enjoyment, sat contentedly watching the foam that lashed the schooner's sides.

"We have had quite an adventurous voyage," said Jack at last, feeling that he ought to say something, but not knowing exactly what.

"Yes, it has indeed been exciting. But tell me, Mr. Palmer, what was it happened this morning when you and Mr. Bolton looked so serious? I heard you asking questions about somebody's family, and something about leaving a wife and children."

"Oh! yes," replied Jack; "it was a sailor of whom we were speaking. The poor fellow was washed overboard during one of Mr.

Bolton's cruises, and naturally he feels bound to make some provision for the widow."

"Poor thing!" sighed Alice sympathetically. "How very sad! What a gloom such an accident must cast over a family! Do you know, Mr. Palmer, I had some silly forebodings when we sailed from Fortress Monroe of some such terrible catastrophe happening to us. How I would like to assist the poor widow!"

Jack murmured, "Generous heart!" and then made a successful effort to divert her thoughts from the subject.

"And are you subject to premonitions of good as well as evil, Miss Alice?" he asked.

"Yes, I think so. At school I was the weather-vane of fate to my companions, and could foretell invariably what was going to happen to the class."

"Did you ever try to analyze your peculiar gift, Miss Alice?"

"I tried once, but I became frightened and stopped. Some experiments in mesmerism were conducted by an eminent physician in New York when I was visiting there last winter. Shall I tell you about it?"

Jack looked in her face, a glow of admiration on his ruddy cheeks.

"Do, by all means. Your narrations have a piquancy and charm that will interest me more than the subject."

She smiled at the clumsiness of this compliment, and Jack, as he saw that he had not said what he had intended exactly, flushed a little, but his natural good sense came to his rescue and he made no effort to correct the blunder.

"I am afraid you will find it very dull, but the punishment be on your own head."

"On my head be it," echoed Jack.

"Well, the doctor had what he called a high magnetic quality, and cured sick headaches and nervous pains and that sort of thing by putting people into a mesmeric trance. A number of the guests at the hotel had been successfully treated by him, and had invited him to give a parlor exhibition of his powers. Well now, are you interested, sure enough?"

"Mesmerized—no, I mean enthralled," was Jack's earnest reply.

"Of course you have seen people mesmerized?" Jack nodded his head. "He succeeded in bringing everybody in the room—a dozen or so—under his control except me, and he strove hard to exert his mental influence over me, but without avail. It was wonderfully amusing to see, however; the people followed the bent of his most erratic inclinations, seemingly without the slightest will or volition of their own."

"Just my case," murmured Jack.

"That night, just before we went to bed, and while we were all brimming over with interest in the subject, the young ladies proposed some further experiments between ourselves."

"How interesting!" ejaculated Jack.

"It was, indeed, and it was much more so when, to my horror, my companions passed into a mesmeric state and I couldn't bring them out of it."

"Did you scream?" said Jack.

"How silly! Certainly not."

"What did you do then?" queried Jack, all interest and interrogation.

"I just sat down and wondered, and finally had to send for the doctor to restore them."

"And you accomplished this?" said Jack.

"Yes; the doctor said I was so charged with the magnetic influence which he had imparted that I unconsciously operated upon them."

Jack gazed on her in wonder and admiration. "What a smart girl!" he thought.

"I wish—" he began.

"What?" she asked.

"That you would experiment on me and bring me under your control."

Alice laughed heartily. "I never shall make any further efforts. My success once deters me from making any more experiments."

"I don't think you would need to use mesmerism."

Alice was on guard at once. "I think the air is a little chilly. Do you mind, Mr. Palmer?"

"Certainly, with pleasure;" and Jack rather unwillingly broke off his *tete-a-tete* and disappeared through the cabin-door, emerging in a few seconds with an armful of wraps. When he returned Alice was leaning over the binnacle, the quarter-master trying to instruct her in the mysteries of "boxing the compass." Jack, with a nervous tremor, put the wraps over her shoulders and relieved the seaman at once of the office of preceptor. Alice was a shocking dull scholar, and when she had been told that the main-gaff topsail-sheet was used to haul out the sail she insisted that the fore-peak halyards performed that duty, and that the main-boom topping-lift was the essential element in the manœuvre of "going about."

How fared it with Bolton the while, and with the brown-eyed Miss Newell, to whom he had been paying the most assiduous attention? He had already found her altogether the most interesting girl he had ever met. He began his conversation by trotting out his large stock of small-talk and store of compliments, delivering them with the air of one who knew it was only a matter of time before the object of them succumbed to their power.

He had just lodged a complimentary shaft at those same eyes, that certainly would have struck the gold had the target been held by an ordinary girl, but Miss Newell simply raised those "man-killing orbs" and said with demolishing quietness:

"Mr. Bolton, you have a vagrant tendency to be very sensible at times. The fact that we are yachting, and that you consider it your duty to entertain your guests, ought not to limit the exercise of that rather intangible element in your character."

Harry didn't know what to make of such a speech as this. His first impulse was to feel offended, his next to be amused, and the final one to be angry with himself for being knocked so completely off his intellectual feet by a demure, quakerish little party whose calibre he had supposed was of the lightest.

As he looked at her, hesitating what he should say, he thought he caught a recognition of his embarassment in the slight twinkle of the deep brown eyes, that seemed intently gazing over the blue waters.

Presently he said: "Miss Newell, perhaps you will lead the conversation? Your critical analysis of my character, if continued, would certainly be interesting."

"It might furnish you the opportunity for self-contemplation, Mr. Bolton."

"Do you think I would enjoy that?" asked Harry, quizzically.

"I do"—very frankly.

"And why do you wish me to see myself in the mirror of your reflected observation?"

She turned toward him and laughed, a merry, ringing peal, in which, despite himself, he joined."

"Shall I tell you?" she asked.

"By all means."

"And you will not be offended?"

"Not in the least."

"Well, then, in order that you may enjoy the contrast between your own compliments and my plain statement, I may tell you that the nonsense with which you regale the ear of the girl you have just swung round in the *raquette* is the reverse of pleasing to my ear."

"Why, how would you have me talk?"

She gazed at Harry with an honest directness which, as he afterwards said, "brought him up with a round turn" and said:

"Mr. Bolton, I want to ask a favor of you. Will you grant it?"

A slight movement of the hand checked the eager acquiescence and affirmation on his lips.

"Your behavior during the past eventful hours has exhibited qualities that I assure you I am quite capable of appreciating. Will you let me become acquainted with the man and allow the complimentary gentleman to lie *perdu* for the appreciation of others?"

"Remarkable girl!" thought Harry, while he attempted to frame a reply in the affirmative, and the thought framing itself, "How charmingly unaffected!"

"Do you consent, Mr. Bolton?"

Harry had by this time recovered his equanimity, and, looking into her earnest eyes with an amused sparkle in his own, replied:

"I do, Miss Newell, and here's my hand on it."

CHAPTER VI.

INTO THE BREAKERS.

THAT night, when all the people in the cabin were soundly sleeping, the sailing-master stuck his head down the companion-way and shouted sharp and quick :

"Everybody on deck ; we're in the breakers !"

Almost simultaneously the schooner struck bottom heavily, and before the startled occupants of the cabin were fairly awake she struck again, and by the time they had reached the deck she was thumping away on the beach, a froth of foam surrounding her, and the gray sands of the shore gleaming white against the dark background of pine-trees less than three hundred yards away.

"What does this mean ?" roared Bolton at the sailing-master.

"Judge's brandy-bottle left where the watch got at it, sir," replied the captain shortly. "Settle away main-halyards ! Lay out there, a couple of hands, and loose the flying jib ! Hard over with that helm and keep it so ! Hoist away the flying-jib ! Trim jib-sheets flat aft ! Shove main-boom off ! Lively there now ! Haul down fore-sheet !"

All in vain. The efforts to swing the *Jougster's* head off shore, energetic and prompt as had been the action of the captain, were without avail. She had only struck a few times, but her sharp, deep model had cut for itself a bed in the soft, yielding sand, and she was locked in as securely as if she had been in a dry-dock, with this difference : that she stood a fair chance of going to pieces.

"Better get the people ashore, sir," said the skipper to Bolton in a confidential whisper ; "the wind is rising."

"By all means," replied Bolton composedly. "Ladies, will you prepare yourselves to go ashore in the small boats ; there is not the slightest danger, but it is always best to err on the side of caution. Jack, will you take charge of the landing-party ? Thanks. Captain, you see to the boats."

While the captain and crew were getting the boats ready and the passengers preparing for the transfer, Harry, full of anxiety for his beautiful little craft, sounded the pump-well and found that there was four feet of water in the hold and rapidly deepening, showing conclusively that the yacht had sustained a terrible strain or stove in her timbers somewhere. Nothing could be done, however, at present. The most important thing was to get the ladies ashore in safety, and in a short time, each with a life-belt secured arround her waist, they announced themselves in readiness, while the gig and cutter were in waiting to receive them. Safely handed into the boats, they were just shoving off when the Judge became clamorous for his supply of beverage,

and insisted upon detaining them until it should be transferred to the custody of himself.

"What," he splutteringly vociferated, "take voyage in cockle-shell without brandy! 'Mpossible, sir—necessary to comfort, Mr. Palmer. Gentl'man 'n my day, sir, always carried brandy into surf—point of honor, sir—personal—honor, sir—follow tradition of ancestors—custom of the Vinings, sir—palmy days—" Observing Jack's impatient gesture to cast off, added hastily: "The ladies, sir—comfort of ladies—revive in sickness or faint, sir. Damn it, sir, you boys don't 'sider personal comfort of ladies!"

As the suggestion of the Judge contained a grain of common sense, the brandy was placed in the cutter, and, the boats' painters being cast off, they started for the beach, which they approached stern on. As each inrolling wave drove them in its direction the bows of the little shallops were lifted to meet it, and, backing water rapidly on the outflow, the keels soon scraped on the shingle. Springing overboard, waist-deep in the foam, the crew held on until the next wave came along, when, seizing each boat by the thwarts, they ran them high on the beach, where the passengers stepped out dry-shod and in safety.

But what an inhospitable shore! Not a light in sight, not a house, no signs of humanity, nothing but the dry, yielding sand stretching away north and south, the dark ridge of pine-forest inland, the dreary waste of salt-water far to sea, the only sound the hollow, monotonous beat of the surf as it lashed the barren shore.

Bolton, the sailing master, and two men had remained on board, retaining for their use the dingy, and could be seen by those on shore lowering the sails and making all snug, clearing away the anchor and getttng it overboard. Presently they embarked in their tiny boat. Tossed like a cork in the heavy surf, they had almost reached the shore when the frail craft was overtaken by a boisterous billow, raised by the stern, and capsized end over end. The crew succeeded in scrambling out of the water, but Bolton seemed to be caught in the undertow and was being swept out to sea, when Jack, throwing off his coat, on seeing his friend's danger, seized the end of a small heaving-line that was coiled in the bow of the cutter, and, calling to the crew to stand by to haul in, dashed into the surf. The two men were seen battling the waves. Jack had reached his friend, and supporting him in his powerful arms, a steady strain on the line aided them to reach the shore; it had only been the work of a few moments, and they stood side by side on the land.

"All right, Harry?"

"Thank you, Jack. I struck my arm on the boat and numbed it. I couldn't swim strong; I—"

Then he fell fainting on the beach. They picked him up and laid him carefully on some shawls the ladies immediately spread on the dry sand.

"Brandy 's thing for him—yes, sir, Mr. Palmer, what 's needed 's brandy. See if this 's brandy—yes, 'tis—ah!" And the Judge took a loving pull at the flask he had taken from the cutter before passing it to the impatient hands of Miss Newell. Alice stood by, pale and anxious.

Mrs. Hazard knelt on the sand with the prostrate man's head on her lap, all her real womanly qualities evoked by her sympathy with his suffering. Miss Newell occasionally moistened the pallid lips with the liquor, and listened anxiously to the stertorous breathing which indicated the internal injury whose nature Jack was busying himself trying to discover. The painful suspense and uncertainty of the next ten minutes was broken by Bolton opening his eyes and saying with a suppressed groan:

"It really don't amount to much; don't disturb yourselves, I beg. Jack, I think the pain is here," placing his hand upon his side.

"Broken rib, I guess, Harry. Here, take a pull at the brandy."

Harry took a pull that made the Judge involuntarily sigh with envy, and striving with manly effort to subdue all sign of his misery, called the sailing-master and asked him:

"How did this happen, and where are we?"

"I scarcely know, sir. I got a sight about nine o'clock and saw the North Star. We were then thirty-two miles east by south from Cape Henry, which I expected we'd sight by eleven o'clock. The weather was clear and the wind northing. I gave the course west by north, and left orders to be called when the watch saw the light. I lay down on deck to catch a little nap; have had no sleep since we started, sir; in about an hour and a half I awoke and found the watch drunk and the yacht in the breakers. That's about all, sir."

"Well, we must make the best of it. Jack, I shall look to you to take care of our friends and make them as comfortable as possible." The last words he uttered with an effort; he had fainted again.

Of the rest of that night, the dreary waiting for morn, the weary tramp to Kempersville in the glare of the blazing sun over the burning sand, a place where a wagon was obtained, of Harry's fever and delirium during the long ride to reach Norfolk, and thence Old Point Comfort, no one of that party ever cared to speak for ever afterward.

Jack and the Judge walked beside the wagon, in which sat the ladies, Mrs. Hazard supporting Harry's head. Palmer, as he noticed the gentle manner in which she ministered to his friend Bolton's wants, her patience and tenderness, accused himself of having entirely mistaken her character, and mentally apologized for his hasty conclusions. The Judge was unusually silent. The recent occurrences had been by far the most important and fraught with more danger than any in which he had been before engaged. No incident of his judicial career could be dragged forth that, under the present circumstances, would be effective. The Judge felt that he was reduced to a minor position. His personal honor was impinged upon—not violently, but still he felt it. An occasional refresher from the flask would cause him to forget everything save the appalling fact that he was on short allowance of brandy, and the small quantity left was fast disappearing. In the face of this overwhelming calamity what could be said; words were a mockery; so with his tongue silenced, but a very anxious expression on his face, he trudged manfully on.

At last Norfolk was reached and they procured a surgeon. Harry had indeed broken a couple of ribs, besides receiving other slight injuries.

So far as medical skill could help he was given relief, and the town being hot and dusty, it was deemed advisable to take him back to the hotel on the shore.

. . . . . .

Two nights after, while Bolton was tossing about in a feverish sleep, Jack sitting by his side, there came a gentle tap at the door, and Miss Newell's voice was heard in a very quiet tone, calling, "Mr. Palmer."

"How is he?" she asked, as Jack opened the door.

"Restless, but still asleep," said Jack. "But you are in travelling dress?" noticing her equipped for a journey.

"Should he become worse, Mr. Palmer, open this envelope and you will find an address where you can telegraph me."

"Miss Newell—"

"Will you?" she said impatiently.

"Why, certainly; but—"

She thrust the letter into his hesitating hand and flitted down the hall, leaving Jack staring after her in vacant wonderment. A moment later he heard carriage-wheels, and, looking out in the moonlight, he saw a gray cloud of dust on the road that led to the steamboat-landing. In answer to his enquiries the clerk simply said that Miss Newell had received a telegraph despatch an hour before, and she had gone to New York, probably in response to the summons therein contained.

Jack had to be contented with this vague information, so he returned to his vigil. As he sat thinking of the last few days, of Alice, ever present in his mind and heart; of the love for her that so pervaded his being that only by a mighty effort was he able to check its outward manifestations; of his poverty and prospects, or rather lack of any; of dozens of other matters, including the sudden departure the previous day of Mrs. Hazard, followed closely by that of Miss Newell, while Alice, dear Alice, ran in his mind like a vein of pure virgin gold surrounded by a lode of less precious metal, the uneasy movement of Harry and the half-articulated sound he uttered recalled Jack's vagrant attention, and, leaning over him, he caught the half-murmured words:

"Brownie—little brown-eyes."

In the light of his own feelings it dawned upon Jack like a flash.

"Oho! he loves her and she loves him."

The next moment he laughed softly and wondered he had not noticed any sign of it earlier. He felt strangely interested in this love affair. Had he been growing obtuse, or were his own feelings so absorbing that he was oblivious to all else? Certainly, now he came to think of it, poor Henry, lying there asleep, had seemed very much absorbed by Miss Newell. She was a charming girl—not to be compared to Alice, but still she would look very pretty as a bridesmaid, while Alice, decked with orange-blossoms and spotless white, leaning upon the arm of—dear, dear Alice! Poor Jack had embarked, like many others, in search of Cape Fly Away, and his fool's paradise was bright with the dawn of hope, "that nurse of life."

CHAPTER VII.

INTENTION FOLLOWING ATTENTION.

THE night following the abrupt departure of Miss Newell from Old Point Comfort the clock on the steeple of the Brick Church on Fifth Avenue marked the hour of eleven. An occasional stage broke the silence as it rumbled up-town on its last trip, the white-slave driver sleepy and tired, the over-worked horses thankful for the approaching slight respite from labor. With this exception, and now and then a hasty pedestrian, the fashionable avenue seemed deserted. From one of the side-streets a woman flitted and stood hesitatingly at the corner of the great reservoir. A man, roughly dressed, with cap drawn well down over his face, a woollen comforter loosely tied round his throat, and a woolly puppy-dog under his arm, had been slouching under the shadow of the masonry from the direction of Forty-second Street, and as he neared her with that indescribable gait which seems inseparable from the genus dog-fancier she shrank perceptibly from him.

"Buy a dorg, marm? Larst one I got—kind as a kitten, mild as a hangel. Aren't a better bred un in New York." A hasty glance around and his tone changed: "Turn down Thirty-ninth Street, my darling, to Madison Avenue; I'll join you in a minute."

"O Fred!" with a revulsion of feeling.

"Don't waste time, dear," he replied; "off with you at once."

The woman obeyed, and as she passed the lamp-post she cast an anxious glance over her shoulder. For an instant she raised her vail, the better to observe the figure in the distance, and the gas-light fell upon a fair face whose lineaments were tightly drawn in lines of mental anguish. As she turned the corner she cast another rapid glance in the direction she had come and slowly followed the instructions she had received. As he had promised, the man rejoined her in a very short time; but now he walked erect, he came along with a free, swinging stride; the slouchy gait had disappeared, the rough garments were gone, the cap and comforter had vanished, also the puppy, while the neat spring overcoat, disclosing the full dress beneath, the opera hat, and the gloves he was drawing on to his exquisitely-shaped hands completed the metamorphosis.

"My darling!" he said, putting out both hands and grasping hers; "my own true wife!" A rapid glance along the street in both directions, and he drew her closely to her bosom and kissed her warmly on the mouth.

"Fred, dear Fred, when will it end?"

"I had hoped it would end long before this, but it's so hard to find a place to stop."

"Let it all go, Fred, and let us go away, far away somewhere, and work for our living honestly."

"That sounds nice, darling; but the men with whom I am associated would track me, kill me, Julia. I know what I am talking about. Pretty soon we will have done our last job, and I will be able to retire."

"O Fred! dear, I do hope so, but -"

"But what? Surely you are not getting squeamish now, after our experience?"

"It would be strange, dear, wouldn't it?" she asked dreamily.

"Besides," pursued the man, "I am shadowed even now on account of that Barre Bank forgery. I was obliged to give them the slip to get to New York, and to get through the depot safely I turned dog-fancier. Pretty good make-up, I fancy, too, Julia. I don't think even you would have known me. But now business. What have you found?"

The woman's demeanor changed.

"Nothing. I have continued the work you laid out for me, but nothing has developed except in a general way. I have made the acquaintance of the richest family there, and of some other people. The game we had originally in view is not worth the candle."

They were walking leisurely along the street now, the woman talked volubly, the man listening intently, occasionally making a slight comment or asking a question.

"Well, I really don't see much there," said the man presently, after a few moments' thought; "do you? From what you say, the old man seems to be the best subject. Are these people pleasant company? Are you contented with them?"

"As much so as I could be anywhere that you were not."

"Then stay there for the present with them. Where are they going to from there?"

"Coming to New York for a while, and then they go to Newport. I will do as you wish, Fred, but it must soon end. I cannot live this life much longer—haunted by constant fear, standing continually on the verge of the precipice. It is growing terrible."

They had walked down Madison Avenue to Madison Square, and were turning past the Brunswick when a liveried servant came out of the hotel assisting an old gentleman who was far advanced in a state of inebriation. The couple did not observe him until he was in front of them, then he lurched heavily, almost falling upon the lady. Her husband caught him in a strong grasp and with a whirl sent him spinning to the ground. Intoxicated as he was, as to fact his head was tolerably clear; however irresponsive his legs were to the wishes he vainly tried to have them execute, his first words showed plainly that his faculties were in working order.

"'Strodinary coinc'dence. 'Pon my word—point of personal honor—seems s'matic effort—endeavor confuse me. But, by Jove! sir—Judge Vining—weather-eye open—saw young man—stranger—'n Widow Hazard—Widow Hazard—on honor of gen'leman."

And it was.

. . . . . .

The June days slipped slowly by, and for the patient with his broken ribs they were unmistakably dull and dreary in spite of the best nursing and attention. Aunt Mahala was a rare hand at that. She knew exactly how to humor the patient, to please his fancies, and almost anticipated his wishes. Harry was by no means a patient patient. He was fretful and querulous, and his forced inaction made him decidedly disagreeable. Jack sometimes lost temper with him, but the unruffled serenity and placidity of Aunt Mahala was never for an instant disturbed.

There are some women in the world who are constantly taking care of some one. A combination of circumstances may have deprived them of their inherited marital and maternal rights, but the instinct survives even when the hope has fled. The pleasure they derive from this protective quality in their disposition may reasonably be considered in the light of a partial compensation for their disappointment.

Aunt Mahala was of this class.

The Judge had gone to New York charged with several commissions from the ladies, and to transact some imaginary business which needed his immediate attention, and it was on the occasion of that presence in Gotham, and the "high old time" accompanying it, that he accidentally encountered Mrs. Hazard under such peculiar circumstances.

Much to his surprise, upon his immediate return to Old Point Comfort the first object that greeted him was the lady he imagined still in New York. Down the broad steps she floated rather than walked, arrayed in soft muslin, a bunch of General Jacqueminot and Marechal Niel roses at her waist.

"Well, ma'am? Glad to see you, 'sure you. Must 'pologize—gen'leman always 'pologize—too much soda in Brunswick brandy—barkeeper lost to all sense, ma'am, of personal honor."

"Why, to what do you refer, Judge?" said the lady.

"Meeting the other night, ma'am—'n New York, ma'am."

"I do not understand what you mean. O Judge!" (shaking her forefinger at him) "I am afraid your running away alone has resulted in too much—"

"Pardon, ma'am—no, 'sure you—mean I saw you 'n New York—night 'fore last."

"Why, Judge, I only went as far as Philadelphia to see my poor father, who was quite ill."

"Possible, ma'am, not in New York?"

"Why, certainly not," with a laugh.

The Judge looked into those black eyes, open so wide and looking so honest, and his first impressions seemed to grow cloudy.

"Pardon, Mrs. Hazard—twins in your family?"

The lady laughed heartily. "No, Judge."

"'Strodinary likeness—'strodinary—coming home—scientific lecture, ma'am—always spend evenings in New York 'n intellectual research—if have any choice, 'stronomical—met lady near Brunswick Hotel—'markable 'semblance."

Mrs. Hazard remarked simply: "Very likely. Your arm, Judge." And the old Judge, with all his old-time gallantry, began a string of

compliments, and before they passed into the house he was quite convinced that for once in his life his "weather-eye" had misled him.

That evening, for the first time, Harry got down to dinner, and, while replying to the warm congratulations on his convalescence, enjoyed the pleasing surprise of seeing Miss Newell, who had just returned, enter the dining-room. Jack made room for her at his friend's side, and was rewarded by a grateful glance from both.

Dinner over, Alice and Jack wandered off together, she leaning upon his arm in that charming, indefinable way which so surely indicates proprietorship, so easy to recognize yet so hard to describe.

Yet they had spoken no word of their love. They had skirted the edges of the subject, gently coquetted and ranged around it, at times approaching dangerously near, and calling into play all of Miss Alice's knowledge of *finesse*. The tones of their voices when addressing each other, the expressive glances of their eyes, had long indicated their mutual feelings, but the final declaration remained unuttered. Certainly not entirely Jack's fault; he had made many efforts, but, as we before explained, he was easily depressed, and though feeling almost morally certain that the answer would be favorable to his wishes, was not as entirely confident as a less modest wooer might have been. As is usually the case, everybody else was perfectly cognizant of what they blissfully deemed their own secret.

They talked this evening of books and poetry, Jack was eloquent on such subjects, and held Alice enthralled; but when he tried to lead the conversation into a more personal channel he was not quite so fluent, and his hesitating effort responded only too readily to the curb she put upon it by reference to the fact that "it was only four weeks since they first met."

"So it is," poor Jack groaned to himself miserably—"so it is only four weeks, but I love her now as much as if I had dwelt under her sweet influence for ten—ay, forty years."

"Hang it all! why—oh! why am I poor? I couldn't keep her on poetry, much as she likes it now." And Jack ground his teeth in impotent rage, postponing the declaration and taking the earliest opportunity to rush off to Harry to get a point on stock, which he immediately acted upon

Strange to say, his speculations were successful, and one day he received notice from his bankers that there were several thousand dollars to his credit. Said Jack upon the receipt of this pleasing intelligence:

"That is quite as much as I could make by two years' industrious pen-driving. When it doubles I'll speak to her."

But it did not double right away, and poor Jack's anxiety, divided between his prospect of winning Alice and his chances of losing the money upon which he counted to support her after the winning, found himself constantly at fever-heat, forced to endure hours of miserable self-contemplation.

Harry, on the other hand, was by no means satisfied with his condition; so, to while away the hours, he got a "ticker" into his bedroom

and went in for stock-gambling at a high old rate. He lost money rapidly, and was becoming quite morose and gloomy. When the Vinings announced their intention of leaving for Newport, Mrs. Hazard so manœuvred that she was included in the invitation which Alice had extended to Miss Newel! to accompany them.

It is scarcely necessary to say that under these circumstances Harry thought himself able to travel, and Jack decided to go along, only with the view of taking care of his friend. *En route.*

CHAPTER VIII.

AUNT MAHALA'S HEART STORY.

WHAT did the Vining people want to go to Newport for, any way? The old Judge didn't care a penny about it, to Alice it didn't matter in the least where they went, and surely Miss Mahala would find that ultra-fashionable watering-place most uncongenial. It would be rather shocking to disclose the fact that lovable, kind Aunt Mahala had directed the whole affair and led the party captive. Her excuse must be that she had a good object in view.

Before she decided on this step she had a long talk with Mrs. Hazard, whose fine-society manner had very much impressed the simple-minded spinster, and confided to her that she was very anxious about her niece's settlement in life, and, although she saw that the condition of affairs between Palmer and Alice was likely to result seriously, she recognized the force of Mrs. Hazard's remark that thousands of young girls select husbands for whom they are totally unsuited because of their limited sphere. To prevent this it is only necessary to give a girl a chance to see men before she selects one of them for a husband. With this view Aunt Mahala heartily agreed; hence Newport.

It is needless to say that Mrs. Hazard had explained to Miss Mahala's entire satisfaction the little hand-squeezing episode on board of the yacht, that lady being familiar with her brother's nonsense and old-fashioned gallantry; so that at the present time Mrs. Hazard was firmly implanted in the good graces of the spinster.

Shortly after they had established themselves in comfortable quarters at the Ocean House Miss Mahala knocked upon the door of her room, and, being bidden to enter, sniffed suspiciously, exclaiming:

"My, what a smell of tobacco-smoke!"

"Yes," Mrs. Hazard calmly replied, deftly dropping a package of Turkish cigarettes into the bureau-drawer; "we cannot prevent the gentlemen's smoking on the piazza, and the breeze is blowing in this direction." And, beaming with smiles, she drew the elder lady into an easy-chair, declaring how pleased she was to have her visit her. So winning was her manner that, had Miss Mahala been a suspicious woman, which she was not, her suspicions would have been dissipated at once, even against the evidence of her senses.

Stroking the hair of Mrs. Hazard as that lady half lay, half sat on an ottoman at her feet, she approached the subject that lay nearest her heart, and to which, in her *tete-a-tetes* with her, she was constantly referring.

"I want your advice, Mrs. Hazard," she began. "It will appear absurd to you, perhaps, that a confirmed old maid as I am, not given

much to sentiment—at least, apparently—finds time and reason to worry about the love-affairs of a young girl. What do you think of Mr. Palmer?"

"I think he is an unmistakably fine young fellow, but scarcely calculated to make Alice happy, unless she loves him very much indeed. He is poor as a church-mouse, too easy-going, has no ambition to speak of, and, while I think he is honest and good and above seeking to marry Alice for money, he is scarcely calculated to ensure her a happy home-life such as every rightly-constituted woman should look forward to."

"Alice has money enough, or will have, to provide a home for both of them," said Aunt Mahala thoughtfully.

"Yes, but the thought of that might cause him to bury what little energy he has already."

"But if they were in love—I mean for ever in love, you know—as people ought to be who seek happiness with each other?"

The words and the low, intense tone in which they were spoken caused Mrs. Hazard to look wonderingly at her companion.

"Why, how romantic you are, to be sure! Your own love-affair must have been serious" (a slight pause and a caress); "I should like to hear about it."

There was a decided suggestion of a blush on the thin, pale face, a nervous interlacing of the fingers, and when Miss Mahala spoke her voice was strangely subdued and tremulous.

Then she began to tell the story of her girlhood, speaking of the beauty of whose existence she knew because of the homage that was done to it—perhaps, after all, only the potent, wonderful charm of youth—of the young and ardent lover, their betrothal, and the glowing promise of the future. As she talked her narration became earnest to eloquence, her thoughts framing her speech into poetry. She told how her lover had gone on a long sea-voyage, and described with almost tearful pathos the bitter yet hopeful parting that marked their eternal farewell. She had waited and waited, faithful to the memory, until her youth had fled, leaving the crumbled leaves of its hope tenderly preserved and shrined in the loyal heart. "And—and sometimes it seems that my life began when he came; and I—and I know it stopped when he went away."

She took from her neck an old-fashioned guard, to which was attached a time-worn locket she was never seen without, and after a long, earnest look without a word handed it to Mrs. Hazard. That lady, with the interest that every woman displays in a real love story, had been enchained during its recital. The picture contained within the locket was an old-fashioned ambrotype, showing the profile of a strong, handsome face, whose expression was marred by the slight lurking sneer that settled in the corners of the mouth, giving a sinister appearance to the lower part of the face.

Aunt Mahala had turned her face to the window and was gazing over the sea, the usually stern features relaxed, her eyes humid, and her lips quivering on the verge of a sob.

A moment of silence, broken suddenly by a sharp exclamation from Mrs. Hazard, who sprang to her feet, gazing upon the locket in her hand.

"And this is your lover?" she gasped.

"He was."

"His name—tell me?"

"Frederick Campbell."

. . . . . .

Aunt Mahala never asked the reason of this emotion, nor did Mrs. Hazard accord any explanation, further than to say that she was accustomed to nervous attacks when her sympathies were excited. Sometimes she caught the eyes of the putative widow fixed upon her with a strange, melancholy light in their depths. Once Mrs. Hazard broke the silence as they walked together by suddenly asking:

"And do you still love him?"

"Yes," was the hopeless, dreary answer.

"How much better for you that he went away!" sighed Mrs. Hazard musingly. "How very, very much better!"

This time Miss Mahala was thoroughly aroused, but the quick question on her lips was checked by Alice, who came dancing along the hall.

"O aunty! here you are. I've tried to find you everywhere. Good-morning, Mrs. Hazard. We are going to have an archery-match this lovely day, so come along, you dear old aunty, and see it. I think you said that you would engage in it, Mrs. Hazard, so off we go." And the high-spirited girl, chattering away, put her arm around Aunt Mahala's waist and carried her off in triumph.

The archery of that day proved an important event. The party—Jack, Harry, the Vinings, Mrs. Hazard, and Miss Newell had come to regard themselves as one party—had been in Newport several weeks. Harry had completely recovered, and although not yet able to engage in polo-playing or the more violent athletic sports, was quite strong enough to dispense with a boatman when he took Miss Newell to row.

"And the way that fellow walks and the way Miss Newell walks with him is a very wonderful thing altogether," remarked the sapient Jack to Alice.

When they reached the archery ground they found the targets up and Miss Newel Harry, and Jack experimenting with the bows. The Judge had brought out a shaded chair, assumed the position of umpire, and proceeded to fulfil its duties by at once falling asleep.

The match had been made with the young ladies pitted against the two young men, with liberal distance allowances in favor of the ladies, and no end of gloves, bouquets, and forfeits wagered on the result.

Perhaps it wasn't the archery after all that did the mischief, but it at least furnished the opportunity which Jack had longed for, and it came about in an odd way.

The Judge had been aroused from his slumber, and Jack was adjusting Alice's bow in the lawn-tent when her father's voice was heard outside.

"Fact, Mrs. Hazard—you are, indeed—lovely woman, ma'am—kept a critical eye on woman since 'n infant—always devoted 'mirer—point of pers'nal honor. Offer you name of Vining—proud name, Vining, ma'am. Shearing remarks, techn'calities—will you be wife—'xactly, my wife?"

Alice blushed crimson. Jack's first impulse was to laugh, but her obvious misery restrained him. He sought in vain for something appropriate to say. How he envied the old Judge his coolness and nerve! It seemed to him the most extraordinary thing that a man could accomplish to ask a woman to marry him, and he used to wonder, as he looked at the married people he met, how in the world they ever mustered up the courage to talk about love. This feeling was intensified at this moment by hearing the lady just honored with the Judge's frank offer of marriage exclaim:

"Judge, don't make an idiot of yourself if you can help it. Your arm to the house, please."

Alice was about to pass out of the tent. Jack cast a rapid glance over his shoulder and saw that Harry and Miss Newell were away down in front of the targets, that Aunt Mahala was placidly knitting out of earshot, and, finding the coast clear, with a mighty resolve born of desperation blocked the way.

"Don't go," he said, with a firmness of voice that surprised him. "Don't go, Alice; I have something to say to you."

"I implore you, Mr. Palmer. Please—see, they are coming towards the tent."

"All the more reason for me to speak quick," broke forth Jack impetuously. "Alice, my darling, I love you, earnestly and honestly. I would die to make one hour of your life happier. When you are with me I can scarcely refrain from falling at your feet. Alice, do you hear what I say? What answer do I get? Sweetheart, speak to me!"

He did not know what he had said himself; he only knew that the words came hot from his heart, and that they were not ing like what he had planned to say. Alice was silent. If she made no answer she made no effort to move, nor did she call attention to the fact that Harry and Miss Newell were sauntering toward the tent.

"Alice, why don't you answer me? Have you no mercy?"

"Which question shall I answer, Jack?"

He seized her hands and kissed them fervidly.

"Dear Alice!"

"Dear Jack!"

The shadows of Harry and Miss Newell were at this moment cast across the the entrance of the tent.

"I guess that bow-string is tight enough, Mr. Palmer. I don't like so strong a bow."

"Then I'll slacken it a little," said Jack.

CHAPTER IX.

THE JUDGE ON POLO.

JACK'S next embarrassment was to tell Harry. Meanwhile, he was in a perfect fever of delight. In his own room he danced up and down, sang love-songs, interspersing these hilarious occupations with dashing off verses expressive of his rhapsody; then, as it occurred to him that this was not the proper thing to do after all, and that it behooved him to deal with much more practical topics and to inform himself as to what really constituted the domestic virtues in the good men he sought to emulate, he rushed off and purchased Michelet's "La Famme" and "L'Amour," and buried himself in that philosopher.

Then, too, he had to think of more practical matter than is found in Michelet—the means by which they should live while he practised the domestic virtues he hoped so soon to acquire. His stock operations had not always been successful, and the day that he had boldly declared himself to Alice he had drawn out of speculation $3,500, saying, "That's safe anyway." With his active capital thus impaired and his transactions reduced in volume, his profits were proportionately smaller, and some days he lost. Nevertheless, as a rule, chance seemed to favor him, and he made money—the result not of a close study of the condition of the market, but by a freak of Dame Fortune. Altogether, the prospect was by no means gloomy. Finally, he made up his mind to tell Harry. His diffidence in matters where his heart was concerned was something awful, although he *had* won Alice in less than two months.

One night after Harry had returned from a flying visit to New York they were indulging in their ante-bedtime smoke on the piazza when Jack said to his friend abruptly: "This has been a strange summer, Hal."

"Has indeed, Jack," quoth Harry, as he puffed away vigorously. A pause, and, "How do you like it as far as you've got?"

"Couldn't ask it to be improved," said Jack.

"I don't wonder that you say so," said Bolton, pushing back his chair and rising, "You are having everything your own way. Make room for the king."

"Why, Harry—you—why, you speak with bitterness. What is the matter?"

"Perhaps I have been neglecting him in his sickness," thought Jack, "and in my own happiness have appeared to avoid him."

Harry walked nervously up and down, stopped in front of his friend, who had also risen, and, speaking as if he had read the other's thoughts, said: "Jack, old man, things are going wrong with me. If I am peevish and cross at times, believe me it is not that I envy you

your happiness or do not heartily congratulate you. Give me your hand. Forgive the way I spoke."

The hearty pressure that followed dispelled Jack's fear, and he asked kindly as they again sat side by side :

"What is it? What's the trouble, Harry? Tell me about it."

"Oh! it's business affairs, old man. They are getting awfully muddled."

"Can I help you Harry? I've made $5,000 ; take that," nervously broke in Jack.

Harry laughed long and heartily. "O you blessed innocent! Ha! ha!" And another peal of laughter, while poor Jack, abashed, said :

"Well, Harry, it's all that I've got. I wish it were more."

"My dear, stupid boy, twenty times what you have would about do. Five thousand would only be a drop in the bucket. I went down to New York and found a summer market—the lambs have been fleecing the shepherds. I was going to sell the *Jougster*. She is on the way, but her repairs will cost a great deal of money, and, besides, nearly all the fellows who would buy a yacht are hard up. Fact is that the market is dull—no inquiry. I don't want to let her go anyway. If you could only buy her now!"

This time Jack laughed. Harry didn't seem to mind him, but went on : "But that is not my serious trouble."

"No?" exclaimed Jack, who, having everything that his heart desired but money, couldn't extend his imagination to embrace anything else. "No! Why, what can be more serious?"

"I'm in love!"

Harry turned to his friend to observe the effect of his thunderbolt, and was not a little annoyed that he smoked away calmly.

"I'm in love," he repeated.

"I knew it."

"Knew it! Why, how?"

"You told me about it, you know—when you were asleep."

"Asleep!" echoed mystified Harry.

"Certainly—Miss Newell. It's all right, Harry."

"But it isn't all right. She has something to say about it."

"I know it ; that's why it's all right."

"What in—well, what do you mean? Is it because you are assured, as I am, that I have no chance, that you regard me as safe? Surely, in the light of your own happiness, you can't argue like that."

Jack hesitated what to say. He had almost told Harry that Miss Newell was by no means indifferent to him, and had been on the point of telling him how he knew it, when it flashed upon him that he had no right to divulge a secret which the young lady had reposed with him. Upon her return to Old Point Comfort he had returned her the envelope, which she had destroyed, saying as she did so, "This is an affair in which I alone am concerned, Mr. Palmer"; and he had replied, "Certainly, to be sure," and, raising his hat, left her, comprehending quite easily that she wished him to respect her confidence.

"Why do you say that?" persisted Harry.

"Oh! well—I don't know; it seems to me she reciprocates your feeling—why, hang it, man! it's apparent."

An amused smile hovered around Harry's lips as he replied: "Well, you ought to know something about apparent affection. Surely, on that you ought to speak 'as one having authority, and not as one of the scribes.'"

Jack flushed rosy red. "Why, what do you mean?"

"Mean? Why, Alice and you are apparently in love."

"Yes," mused Jack, "I guess that's so."

"Well, when are you going to tell her about it?"

Jack, with a few vigorous puffs at his pipe, leaned back in his chair. "Told her about it."

"The dickens, you have!"

"Yes, Harry, I am glad to tell you we have found out the state of our mutual feelings."

"Well, for a lazy fellow like you, things seem to have been pushed with amazing rapidity. When is the marriage to take place?"

"Oh! I haven't spoken about that yet, of course."

"Not spoken of marriage? Why, Jack, Jack!"

"No, certainly not; we have just found out that we love each other."

"What! haven't you asked her to marry you?"

"Great Heaven! I never thought of that."

"Then you had better."

"Why, Harry, I took that as a matter of course. I'll do it to-morrow."

"You must not take that sort of thing for granted. Girls want not only love made to them all the time by the fellows they love, but they also want definite expression on every kindred subject."

Jack retorted: "I hope you will demonstrate the truth of your theory when you begin the practice."

"Perhaps that is the reason I have failed in my approach so far. The practice I have had in love-making has either not been of the right kind or else the theories I have evolved are all wrong."

"You don't mean to say you have met with a repulse?"

"I mean to say I have not been accepted."

"And did you ask her to marry you?"

"Y-e-e-s, I tried to; but as soon as she saw where I was tending she brought me up in that frank way of hers, and from which there is no appeal. To tell you the truth, Jack, I am much more 'short' on love than I am on Michigan Southern. And now you know my troubles; I may get through the latter, but the other one is, after all, the main difficulty. Let's have a tipple of the Judge's favorite beverage and go to bed."

They found the Judge in the bar, his florid face more florid than ever, and his voice raised to a high pitch, the centre of an admiring crowd. He was in his element. In anticipation of capturing the widow, he had spruced up in a new suit of broadcloth of the style he always affected—black frock-coat, the bottom button of which was always buttoned, low-cut vest, broad expanse of shirt-bosom, old-fashioned

collar, and high black silk stock. The coat and stock were unfailing barometers of the Judge's spiritual condition, each succeeding potation causing the one to be hoisted a little higher over his ample paunch, the other gradual y veering around until the bow reached his left ear. At the present moment the indications were that the Judge had by no means been stinting himself. His rubicund visage glowed with indignation and Hennessey; his sparse gray hair, usually trained carefully over his bald crown, was rubbed up and stood out like quills, each hair antagonistic. With one arm outstretched, the hand of the other hooked by the thumb to the arm-hole of his vest (his favorite forensic attitude), the Judge acknowledged the advent of our two friends by a slight nod, and continued:

"'All nonsense, gen'lemen—hold my 'riginal prop'sition. What's polo? Bah! what gen'leman invented game—eh? Marco Polo only gen'leman of any histor'cal reputation. He was nav'gator—never catch him riding pony sev'ral sizes too small for him—trying poke small ball with big stick—too much gen'leman. Pony shy—course they shy—'nough make 'em shy. Young men not 'ffected that way—strip to undershirts—striped undershirts—'sgraceful garment for gen'lemen—uniform convicts. Polo—bosh! Reds get the blues, 'n' blues get bruised—fact, get all colors o' rainbow—crack across shins—'s if gen'leman was a nigger—'sgraceful. If I was to return judicial bench, gen'lemen, would hold polo-players same class 's faro-players. Poker only fit game for gen'lemen. S'ciety for P'vention Cruelty to Animals—ought make riders carry little ponies—eh?—pony, Mr. Bolton? Yes, thank you, with little soda—same as 'fore. Gen'lemen, your health."

CHAPTER X.

THE POLO-MATCH.

THE old gentleman's remarks had been called forth by reason of a polo match in which the crack riders and players were to engage. The games were to be contested on the following day, and all Newport was excited in its dilettante sort of way over the prospect.

Harry, before his injury, had been one of the most expert players, and really loved the sport. He was a daring horseman, to the extent almost of recklessness, and the fact that he was to play created quite an interest in the game independent of any other feature of it. He had indulged in some practice since his illness, and on the morning of the match had raced down over the beach just after sunrise, and was exercising his pony by devious turns and wheels under the cliffs when he encountered Aunt Mahala walking alone. He drew rein, and, dropping out of the saddle, walked alone beside her, leaving Chiquita to follow, which she did, looking as staid and demure as if she had never tossed a rider or ran wild over the pampas of Western Texas.

"It's quite early for you to be out, Miss Vining. Are you always such an early riser?" queried Harry.

"Generally; I like to come down to the beach before it is crowded. I do not like crowds, Mr. Bolton, and am not much in sympathy with the gay and useless life that is led here."

"That has a suggestion of a rebuke directed at me, Miss Vining. I hope you think better of me than your remark would imply."

"Well, Mr. Bolton, you lead a pretty gay life. Everybody seems to know you and you know everybody, or appear at least to have a bowing acquaintance with every person on the Island."

"That is merely the result of long association with the class of people who come here year after year. I am sure you don't think any the worse of me for that, and if you don't," he continued hastily as he saw that Aunt Mahala, with an ominous shake of the head, was about to speak, "why, I wanted to ask your kind advice. You see, Miss Vining, I am without female relatives almost, except a sister younger than myself, and of course I couldn't speak to her on this subject."

"Go on, Mr. Bolton, and if I can aid you I will most gladly."

"Well," blurted out Harry, "I am in love with Miss Newell—very, very deeply in love—and I would like to make her my wife."

"Why don't you ask her?" said Aunt Mahala kindly.

"I have tried, but she shunts me off the topic whenever she sees I am approaching it, and I don't know why. What I want to ask you, Miss Vining, is if my life is such that a pure, good woman could not love me and trust her happiness in my hands. I do not live a fast life

really. I have, of course, lived as have most men in my station, I suppose, but there are, after all, but few things in the past I would blot out."

Aunt Mahala simply said: "As you seem to be at once your own accuser and apologist, I do not quite see where you have reason to ask advice from me."

"No; but tell me—you see Miss Newell is so different from other girls, the sort of girl I have been accustomed to, that I lose confidence in her presence, and you see, Miss Mahala, I—that is—" said Harry blunderingly.

"Well, Mr. Bolton, frankly, I do not see or know any reason that should stand between your hopes and their realization.

> "He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small."

Harry was disappointed. He had hoped that the spinster would be able to give him some clue to the state of Miss Newell's feelings, having a vague idea that women confided in each other to that extent. If, however, she had been the recipient of any confidence she did not see fit to betray it, and he was forced to unbosom himself still further, until they neared the hotel, when Miss Mahala said, at separating:

"An honest love, Mr. Bolton, can do no man anything but good. I wish you every success in your wooing, and may you win what you deserve."

"How few would 'scape whipping!" quoted Harry ruefully as he leaped into the saddle, and, putting spurs to Chiquita, to her amazement, dashed away at a pace that astonished the morning idlers on the porch.

Four men were to play—Mr. Montgomery Bell and Harry for the Blues, Whyte Rockford and Oliver Rich for the Reds, all of them well-known society-men in Gotham, and the leaders in the polo interest. Under the canopy sat a crowd of brilliant women, among them Alice, Miss Newell, and Mrs. Hazard—as lovely a trio as could be seen there—and Aunt Mahala. The Judge, his black stock only half way to his left ear, and the lower button of his coat just lifting over the swell of his rotundity, stood near them, rather abashed and silent in his unaccustomed surroundings.

The scene presented on the ground was gay and animated. Young America was in his glory, and, emulous of his British cousins, was laying numerous wagers on the result, giving and taking odds with a recklessness born of ignorance of their values. The ladies, bless them! shone resplendent in all the gorgeous tints of the rainbow, fully entitled to the reputation American ladies have won of being the best-dressed in the world. Of course, the long list of gloves and trifles which they stood to win in the event of their favorites being successful cannot be classed as bets—a little harmless excitement; yet they seemed equally as earnest, decided and positive as the heaviest plunger among their attendant cavaliers.

The ponies on the ground, well cared for by their respective grooms, divided the attention with the riders—compact, hardy little animals,

with any amount of fire and "staying power" in them, more renowned for their hare-like doubling qualities than absolute speed. Among the ladies Harry's Chiquita was deservedly a favorite, being honored with the declaration that she was a perfect love, just too awfully awful sweet. And we must confess she bore it very well. She tossed her little head and champed the bit as if proud of the notice she excited and of her personal appearance; and with good reason, for she was a splendid specimen of her breed. Perfectly white, with the exception of a black star in her forehead, flashing, intelligent eye, wide-open nostril, long mane and tail, her whole appearance indicative of careful grooming and tending, well and cleanly built, with all the good points that horsemen love to descant upon, she was a picture. Fully up to Harry's weight, as she caracoled around the sward she exhibited a docility that spoke volumes for her complete and careful training.

Harry was proud of his bachelor den, of his yacht, his pet meerschaum, of many of his possessions; but his chief weaknesss was Chitiqua. She would follow him like a dog. No matter at what portion of the field he was standing, a shrill whistle would bring her bounding to his side, when a caressing motion of her small head against his sleeve and a whinnying neigh showed how thoroughly horse and man were in accord. Harry to-day was enjoying himself. Possibly he felt at his best, and knew that Miss Newell would have no cause to be ashamed of him. He was almost ubiquitous, flitting hither and thither on the back of his favorite, chaffing with one group, laughing and amusing himself with another, and, in response to Miss Newell's express fear that his pony would be tired before the game began, laughingly assured her that his favorite scarcely warmed up to her work until most other ponies were exhausted. Harry certainly was in excellent form. We have described him before as a small man; but in his polo dress, wiih tight-fitting Guernsey shirt, he looked bigger than in ordinary every-day costume. Constant exercise at the games he delighted in had divested him of all superfluous flesh, and, in spite of his recent accident, the well-trained muscles stood out in bold relief. Having no weight to carry, his shoulder and arm development enabled him to outstay many larger and seemingly stronger men. He sat his horse like a centaur, and it needed but a pressure to cause an instant response to his will.

Jack, much to the Judge's disgust—"for who should be a better judge than he?"—had been asked to act as umpire, and, all being ready, had advanced to the centre, and, having placed the ball, sprang to his saddle in time to escape the charge.

The first two games were hotly and evenly contested, fortune, supplemented with skill, daring, and readiness of eye and hand, having secured for each a victory. The third and deciding game was now to be played, and party-feeling ran high. The gentlemen had equally distinguished themselves in the preceding games, and the friendly emulation was intensified by the fact that they had been so closely contested, so hardly won.

Again they stood in rank, opposed to each other for the final heat, drawn up in line like unto the knights of old in a grand tournament, but with a small ball to receive the shock, instead of shield or casque.

Each heart beat high with hope and the desire to win. The eyes of their respective queens of beauty beamed upon them and spurred them to renewed effort. 'Twas only sport; yet the flashing eyes, the compressed lips, and general air of determination of each contestant gave evidence that they were of the stuff that could perform deeds of "derring do," should ever occasion require it.

"Go!"—a rush. "Charge!"—a clash of mallets, and all the practised skill and *finesse* of the riders and docility of the horses is exercised. The opponents are playing a preventive game; with mallets crossed they feint, parry, and foil any attempt to break away. A sudden twist on the part of Harry causes a disengagement, when, with a rapid movement, the ball is crooked under his pony, and the blue skirmisher sends it spinning towards the goal. The movement has not been so rapid, however, but one of the Reds has anticipated the move and now sends it bounding in an oblique direction. A rush from the main body, a scramble, and away it flies to cross field at right-angles to the goals. Helter-skelter, the principal favorites in a ruck! A taste of Chiquita's speed puts Harry slightly in advance, gives him barely time to hook it off the line by a rapid double recover and send it spinning towards home. Again it was intercepted and sent in the opposite direction. Away they go, this time with one man and a horse down, and Whyte Rockford, a noted hard-hitter and deliberate player, slightly to the fore. With a force that sends a daisy-cutter in the direction of the opposing goal, away it goes. "Stop it!" Stopped it is and sent spinning back again. Another crash, men and horses mixed in a heterogeneous mass, and Harry disappears from view.

Miss Newell, sitting with her hands clasped, does not change her attitude or seem to move a muscle, but was it the pressure of her fingers that burst that pair of gloves?

'Tis but a second; the group divides and Harry is seen again erect, having swooped down, Indian fashion. After a long scoop, the force of which not being strong enough to carry the ball far away, the struggle is renewed, riders and horses swaying together in one mass. Another opening and Rockford darts out of the press, closely followed by Rich, and before the Blues can interpose they get the flying ball between them and commence the nursing process, their skirmishers meanwhile well placed for defence. The game seems almost hopeless now for the Blues, for the goal is but a short distance and is being slowly but steadily reached. Harry sends Chiquita flying away for a rod, and, wheeling, returns at full speed, as if he will ride them down. A word checks her on haunches—a slight wheel and a rapid movement between the legs of Rockford's pony—the Blues have the ball, and away it flies back again. The skirmishers ride full speed to intercept it in crossing the goal, while the Red champions charge down to recover the lost treasure; but Harry has the ball well in hand, and by rapid drives has almost reached the goal when, for the first time in her life, Chiquita stumbled and she and Harry rolled over on the sward. With a shout Rockford recovers the ball, but is met by Bell, who struggles manfully but vainly to keep the ground Harry has won. The latter had shaken himself together and started to circle Rockford and Bell, interposing between the goal, when

Bell stumbled and fell, while Rockford gathered for a drive which should decide the game. It struck, but Harry had gauged its direction correctly, and, checking Chiquita, he struck at the ball flying in his direction. All the force of his arm was launched into that saving stroke. It succeeded, and the rebound sent the ball spinning to goal in the right direction. A word to Chiquita and she was off like the wind, passing Rockford like a flash, and, with a ringing hurrah and a cheery cry of, "Lie still, Monty, old fellow!" Harry raised his little pet to a jump, and a few more strides brought him level with the ball and victory.

The Blues had won.

CHAPTER XI.

JUDGE VINING FOR THE PLAINTIFF.

ON the day following the polo-match Alice, Jack, Miss Newell, and Bolton disposed themselves comfortably in the shady corner of the hotel piazza and discussed general topics languidly and lazily, vainly attempting to impress themselves with the belief that they were interested in Newport and the world t large, when the Judge, in his ponderous way, sauntered toward them.

Now it is a fact that the Judge was rarely sober, and it is also true that on this occasion he was splendidly drunk. In his cups he was generally boisterous, always dogmatic, aggressive in speech and manner, and, when brimming over, he added to these ever-present qualities the more imposing one of great dignity. His dignity this morning was lofty and overpowering.

His black stock was quite a distance behind his left ear, the lower button of his coat was far up toward his shirt-stud, and his stride was mighty, as became a man to whom all others were simply and only human beings.

"Gen'l'men, mornin'. Glorious mornin'. Al'ce, my soul's ap'le, its eye—'low me—proud par'nt—to comp'ment. Beau'ful child, gen'l'men. Practice in Vining fam'ly—have beau'ful children—matter pers'nal honor—ancien' custom—hon'r'd thousan years' 'bservance—women al'ays lovely—men al'ays brave—brilliant—m'self judicial—I'm judge. Gen'l'men, mornin'."

Alice, feeling heartily ashamed of her father's condition, and anxious to shield him from Bolton's irrepressible raillery, hastily said:

"Will you not come with me for a walk on the piazza?"

"Walk? no, m'd'm, You, scion Vinings, want walk? No, m'd'm—Vinings al'ays ride—coach all time—I join pl's'n't party—asked walk—p'nt of honor—pers'n'l honor—not walk," replied the Judge, twisting his neck so that the stock threatened to make the complete circuit of his throat, and dragging the coat still higher over his chest with a flourish of haughty indignation.

"Judge Vining will sit—sit, sir—have sat upon bench thirty years—judge—'lways had Judge Vining in our fam'ly."

So saying, the Judge settled himself unsteadily into a chair and monopolized the situation. "Mizzer Bolton," he began, after surveying the group with a wavering glance of patronizing superiority, addressing Harry, as was his invariable custom, and ignoring Jack, as was also his custom when he met the young men together, "Pardon me—take the right of judge to speak as feel to young men. Not right, sir—then, sir, this op'tunity to say my daughter—in presence of ge'l'man—and this lady

—Miss Newell—say, sir—and you, mad'm—that Judge—Judge Vining's man of honor—Judge—Bible says not good man be alone—Judge a man—prou' station—if s'low man, say so—'cause Judge, want be 'lone—no, gen'l'man—Alice—Go' bless you—Judge—your father—Judge Vining—going get married—not goo' be 'lone."

"Father!" exclamined Alice.

"Dazzer—what is it—waz matter Judge's daughter?"

While Alice sat with a wondering look in her great violet eyes and a pained expression on her face, the old gentleman vainly tried to give utterance to some further details of his intentions, but his voice grew inarticulate, his speech became a blended sibilation of aspirates, and as his head fell forward on his capacious shirt front he was heard by Harry to murmur something which, being interpreted, sounded like: "Judge drunk—man drunk—pers'nal honor drunk—dignity drunk—drunk all round." And thus he fell asleep.

When he awoke he found himself alone. There was a merry party of young people at a little distance, talking and laughing loudly, and beyond them sat Mrs. Hazard.

Her dress was creamy in color and soft in fabric, and a broad-brimmed hat, deftly wreathed in lace and roses, shaded her face, and her white hands gracefully moved in and out through the intricate pattern of some fancy-work.

The Judge's condition was a trifle steadier after his short nap than before, so he made such haste as his dignity and cups admitted to place himself beside the lady toward whom he had directed his matrimonial hopes.

"Good mornin' ma'am," he began, when he had finally reached her—"good mor'in', ma'am. Not seen you 'cepting at polo yest'day—then s'rrounded crowd 'mirers—loveliness 'tracts crowd 'mirers, ma'am—couldn't help 't, ma'am."

"You are inclined to be complimentary, Judge. What a beautiful day!" replied Mrs. Hazard, with a dazzling smile, making room for him by a sweeping in of her flowing draperies.

"If day ten time's lovely—not lovely 'nough to 'low sun to cast your shadow, ma'am."

"Why, Judge, you are indeed—"

"True—quite true—speak as Judge—no decisions reserved in court I pay you, ma'am—pers'nal honor deman's should pass judgment at once, ma'am."

Mrs. Hazard beamed at the Judge and he drew his chair closer, and, readjusting himself in it, did not observe that the lady still preserved the distance between them by quietly removing her own.

"Vinings, Mrs. Hazard, hold it point honor—pers'nal honor—to come to point. 'Xcuse me, ma'am—have'nt got answer proposal—do you 'cept offer to be Mrs. Judge—ma'am—Mrs.—Judge's wife?"

Mrs. Hazard's eyes danced with merriment as she surveyed her ardent though aged adorer, and then, as she saw the earnestness in his face, the anxiety of his manner, and his nervous trepidation, the fact was impressed upon her for the first time that the Judge meant what he

said, and was bent on obtaining an answer to a question dictated by a deeper feeling than she had ever thought him capable of.

Mrs. Hazard had had frequent surprises before, and as a rule was prepared for any emergency, but she had never had one so entirely astonishing and so far beyond her experience as this.

"What a mistake I have made in this man!" was her thought.

She was not the first woman who too readily accepted as the whole what was really only the preface, who mistook intention for attention, and when her mistake is discovered knows not which way to turn or how to act.

In this case Mrs. Hazard did just as a woman usually does under such circumstances—she gathered her skirts about her and ran away.

The Judge sat morosely in his chair for an hour after that, punctuating his thoughts with an occasional deep drawn sigh, and then, with a philosophy confined to his own experiences, sought the bar-room, and in lonelir nd silence strove in vain to dull the edge of a feeling by no me sant or comfortable.

A little later he encountered Harry on the hotel piazza, and, standing erect before him, asked abruptly:

"Mizzer Bolton, why does man drink brandy?"

Bolton looked at him with surprise, and, although feeling as if he should say, if the question were direct and personal, that it was "because he likes it," replied:

"I have read that drinking is the effect of weak minds seeking occupation."

"S'posin' 'tis," roared the Judge—s'posin' 'tis? Fond quotation, sir? So 'm I. Remember this?

"'If Horatius Flaccus
Made jolly old Bacchus
S'oft'n his fav'rite theme;
If 'n 'im it was classic
To praise 's old Massic
And Falernian to gulp in a stream;
Sh'd we not make merry
O'er port, claret, 'n' sherry,
Goo' brandy, and boiling poteen?'"

With this he strutted off indignantly, leaving Harry surprised at the new phase of his character, as indeed nearly everybody else had recently been by some unexpected developments from the same source, and sought again the comforts of the bar.

CHAPTER XII.

LOVE ON THE TANTIVY.

THE summer days passed swiftly by. There were balls and drives, bathing, flirtation, dresses, gossip, the attractions of the casino, more polo games, the arrival of the New York Yacht Club, the attendant regattas and gayeties, the little runs over to Martha's Vineyard and Shelter Island, and all the rest of it that goes to make up a watering place life. To Jack it was simply heaven. The whole world took on a new color of beauty to his enchanted vision, and life became so entrancing that he could not contemplate the thought of death. Strange, isn't it, the way love affects some people? Every day he discovered some new beauty in Alice. Every night he sighed, "God bless her! God bless my love, my darling!" He tried in vain to regard his own condition as something quite natural and only the reasonable and proper relationship to "spooneyism," but without avail.

"What a glorious life!" he said to Alice one day—"summer weather and hammocks in the open air." So little does it take to satisfy the already satisfied heart.

All the time his stock ventures prospered, and he had withdrawn fifteen thousand dollars over and above what he had retained in speculation. On the day he did this he resolved to speak to Alice's relatives, but whether it should be first to the pompous father or the gentle aunt he had not yet decided.

Blissfully unconscious of the fact that not only the immediate family of his love were aware of his idolatry, but that every one else who saw them together rightly estimated that they were "awfully mashed," as Harry remarked, he pondered deeply on the way the words he would adopt in making a formal proposal for Alice's hand.

He had acted on Harry's suggestion and consulted Alice herself, and she, having taken something, as he had done, as a matter of course, simply put up her red lips to be kissed, and that had settled it.

At the same time they knew that the formula must of necessity be observed, and Alice was sometimes quite nettled when Jack day after day came back and referred again to the old, old topic and sought her advice as to how he should proceed in this momentous matter.

"Dear, darling," (kiss), "stupid," (kiss), "blundering old Jack, aunty is the one to speak to. Papa always accedes to my wishes. He can't help it, you know, and Aunt Mahala has had your foolish, loving girl in charge so long; and he never interferes in the least, why should he?" Magnificent May-storm of kisses.

Aunt Mahala had witnessed the destruction of all her well-laid plans in coming to Newport.

"Now about my niece Alice," she had said to Mrs. Hazard. "I don't think she has had that opportunity to see fashionable life that I had wished and which I hoped to gain for her by bringing her here. She is head and ears in love with Mr. Palmer."

Mrs. Hazard had smilingly replied that it was no trifling matter to attract a young girl's attention from her first love-affair.

It is a fact that, brilliant and clever as Mrs. Hazard was in all the ways of watering-place life, so far as her experience had extended, Newport was a trifle "swell" for even her ready adaptability, but, while no one of the party except Harry, and possibly Miss Newell, had suspected this, she managed to preserve her social eminence unquestioned in the eyes of the others. She had learned soon after their arrival that hotel life in Newport was not the right thing, and having delicately conveyed this fact to the simple-minded spinster, the third week of their stay saw the Vinings established in a cottage which happened to be vacant at the time, and with them Mrs. Hazard herself and Miss Newell, while Harry and Jack, although retaining their rooms at the hotel, were so frequently at the cottage that they might almost be said to live there.

At any rate, they often came to breakfast, were rarely absent from dinner, and invariably present at tea.

Miss Mahala thus having the cares of a household to divert her mind and occupy her time, found in them a compensation for the otherwise, to her, rather dreary and uninteresting life on the sea-shore.

One day Jack found her under circumstances that favored his intentions to formally ask for Alice in marriage, when, as he wisely thought, she was in one of her best moods, so he began:

"Miss Vining, can I have a little of your time to say something of the deepest importance?"

"Why, certainly, Mr. Palmer, you can always have my time," replied the old lady, rubbing away at the silver castor she held in her hands.

Jack, much encouraged by this reception, stepped into the dining-room out of the embrasure of the window from whence he had spoken.

"Well, Miss Vining—" he began.

"Well?" said Aunt Mahala, taking up another piece of silver.

"I have long—no, I don't mean long—I, in fact, I—"

"You were saying?" said the kind-hearted woman interrogatively, who knew just what Jack was not saying and what he wanted to say. "You were saying?" she repeated after a pause.

"Perhaps you have noticed, Miss Vining," pursued Jack after an effort, during which he felt as if he had swallowed the round part of his head several times and it would not stay down, "that between—" then he stopped short and speech failed him entirely.

Aunt Mahala cast off her apron, and, drawing the diffident young man into a seat beside her, took up the thread of his failing intentions and came to his rescue by saying:

"Of course I have noticed, Mr. Palmer, that you are in love with Alice, my niece, and I have noticed, too, that she by no means fails to respond in some measure to your love."

"Oh! no," broke in our able diplomat; "she reciprocates it quite as ardently as I do hers."

"Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" casting a look at the picture of "Miles Standish's Courtship" that hung on the wall before her.

"Yes, I am trying to; and I am authorized by your niece to ask you for her hand in marriage, as she has already accepted me." This with dignity.

"Then why do you ask my approval?"

"Why, Miss Vining, as a matter of form, you know, said Jack, all earnestness.

"Only as a matter of form, Mr. Palmer?"

"No, no! I don't mean that way. I—I—really, this is harder to face than the original situation."

Then the words came to him fast enough, as he felt this was the decisive time indeed.

"Miss Vining, forgive my blunders; I beg of you, don't weigh what I've said against what I'm trying to say. Were the circumstances the same as when I first met you I would hesitate to ask you to give me Alice, but I now have a little money, not a great deal it is true—$15,000 that I have made in Wall Street this summer. I feel that it is not enough to justify me in asking for the hand of Alice, but perhaps it shows, as I hope it does, how I am striving to keep you from thinking I care for Alice's money. I wish with all my heart she hadn't a penny. I will try to make her happy, indeed I will, and, Aunt Mahala, we love each other."

Now that Aunt Mahala was brought face to face with the question that had so long filled her mind, she knew not what to say. She had no thought of withholding her consent, even if she did interpose a few objections. She was too tender-hearted to refuse him, but, being a woman besought to do something, she wasn't ready to yield off-hand. Then he had called her Aunt Mahala.

"May be, Mr. Palmer, money obtained in stock speculations will do you no good," she mildly said.

"I will not attempt to combat any opinion you may have like that. You know that in fact I almost agree with you, and very likely it won't," replied Jack, trying to trim sail to the wind.

"At the same time, if you hadn't made it somebody else would," continued Miss Mahala; "and, then, we can't reform the world in a day."

"Just what I was going to say," broke forth Jack. "But you do not answer my request; you see how unhappy your refusal would make me."

"And me, aunty," cried Alice, who had entered unobserved, throwing herself into her aunt's arms.

"And do you love him so much, my darling?" she asked her.

"Yes, dear aunty; if you separate us it will kill me. I love him so much that—well, aunty, he knows."

"Yes, aunty, I know, said Jack.

"Well, my children, you know that I am not inclined to oppose your wishes. God knows I would not stand between you and your happiness—no, not for worlds. But you must speak to Alice's father, Mr. Palmer. I believe you to be a good honest man, and that you love my niece. So far as I can, I will influence the Judge in your favor."

"Won't you speak to him yourself? Do, please," pleaded Jack, almost piteously.

"Yes, do, aunty, dear; Jack's such a donkey about some things, you know," echoed Alice.

While this scene was being enacted another love affair was going forward between Harry and Miss Newell as they sat together on the high seats of the Tantivy coach.

It was not the best place in the world to make love, perhaps, but in Harry's state of mind any place where he could get the brown-eyed little Quaker to look at him was good enough, and he pressed his wooing with earnestness and assiduity.

When Harry found that his speculations were going all to pieces and that he stood on the threshold of serious disaster he had made frequent trips to New York, and after a while he began to see light; but it came slowly, and only just as the festivities of the closing season were upon them he found himself established in good financial standing.

During these days of doubt and fear he had, of course, refrained from seeking at Miss Newell's hands the answer that he felt must transport him with joy or plunge him into the depths of misery, but this day he had made up his mind to speak, come what would, now that he had her where she could not escape him as she had done on other occasions.

So, as the Tantivy rolled along over the country road on the outskirts of the town, with a couple behind and another in front, perhaps within listening distance, but entirely too much engrossed in their own affairs to pay much heed to this solemn-looking pair, Harry began, with the same result in view but in a style quite different from that of his friend Jack.

"Miss Newell, I am going to say something to you that does not concern the green fields, the ocean, the ships, or anything that we have been talking about."

Harry was much more at ease than was Jack under similar circumstances. Perhaps he had had experience.

"Surely there is no reason why you should always talk about fields, oceans, or ships, Mr. Bolton," was the demure reply.

"But what I am going to say concerns you and me very much, Miss Newell."

"Something of a mutual importance, doubtless," was her nervous comment, for she saw that her suitor was determined to arrive at a definite expression this time, unless she could hit upon some way to avert it. May be she didn't want him to be silent and was almost ready to hear him, for in her close companionship with Alice that vivacious creature had doubtless told what Jack had certainly not withheld from her. Jack couldn't keep anything from Alice.

"Well, Miss Newell, will you hear me?"

"If the coach doesn't get into rough ground, I suppose, sir, I will have to."

For once Miss Newell couldn't lift her brown eyes and demolish that young man at her side.

"Miss Newell," began Harry earnestly, "you have seen that I am very much in love with you, and when I have attempted to give my feelings the expression they sought you have avoided me. Time after time have you either escaped from me yourself or prevented me by some charming ruse from uttering the words almost on my lips."

He had caught her hand in his own as he spoke, but she some way or other managed to tangle the points of her gray silk sunshade in the scarf about her hat, and she drew away her hand, not unkindly, as Harry thought, to release it.

When this was done he felt that he had made no progress whatever, and that it was necessary to begin all over again or adopt different tactics, so he frankly asked: "Miss Newell, will you be my wife?"

And Miss Newell quite as frankly answered: "No, Mr. Bolton, I cannot."

For a moment Harry could not reply. When he spoke again, and it was some time before he could control his voice, the young lady had the sunshade so held that he could only see the lower part of her face, but his heart gave a bound as he thought he saw the sympathetic underlip quiver.

"Your refusal," he said, "is so positive that I can't ask you the reason. It carries its reason with it, Miss Newell."

"And I could not tell you the reason if you asked it," was the mournful reply.

"Then there is a reason. Is it one that may be overcome?"

"No, I fear not, Mr. Bolton. Believe me that I appreciate your offer at its full value, and if I say to you that I would rather be your wife than be assured of all the happiness in the world beside, you will then understand that the reason is indeed insuperable."

"Then you do love me?"

"With all my heart and soul!" was the earnest answer, and this time the brown eyes looked into his and Harry saw that they were full of tears.

CHAPTER XIII.

ALL ABROAD.

THAT night five letters were written. Bolton wrote to his business partner in New York as follows:

"My Dear Moore: When I was in New York last we discussed several business prospects that on their face looked so promising that I was inclined to join with you in them; but on further consideration I feel unable to undertake anything of the magnitude they embrace. I am far from well; indeed, I have been ailing continually since my accident, and the flurry in stocks last month did much to retard my recovery.

"My physician says it would be well for me to go to Europe or some place where stocks are unknown and a quotation is never heard. This may surprise you, knowing me as you do, but what is the use of a man pushing on so fast in this world when the price he pays is his health?

"I have made up my mind to go abroad for an extended tour, and I will either dispose of my interest in the firm to you, or I will, under a new partnership contract whereby your share shall be made with regard to your responsibilities, leave my entire business interests in your hands. It is exceedingly painful to me to withdraw from an association with you which has furnished at once a pleasant companionship and a highly successful business career for us both, and did I not feel it imperative I would not do so.

"Wire me in answer to this, for I hope to be able to leave the United States early in October.

"Very truly your friend,

"Henry Bolton.

"Mr. Thomas H. Moore,
"Bond Street, N. Y."

Jack wrote one in answer to a business proposition from a publisher:

Mr. Literary B. Roe:

Dear Sir: I have delayed answering your letter of the 20th of August, which contained a proposal for me to conduct the new magazine you are about to establish. My excuse for the delay rests in the fact that my affairs are in such a condition that until to-day I was unable to give you a definite answer. I regret very much to have to decline your flattering offer. I do not think I shall engage in literary work any more except as a recreation, but if I do it will be as a publisher.

"Our old acquaintanceship, and quite apart, my dear Roe, from other consideration, renders it appropriate for me to give you the delightful information that I am about to be married—in fact, within a month. I shall then take my wife abroad for a short tour, sailing early in October, and will probably spend the winter in Pau. If I can serve you as an occasional contributor, command me. Bless you, my old friend, and wishing that you may prosper as you deserve in your new undertaking, I remain,

"Your old chum,

"John Palmer.

Mr. L. B. Roe,
"Park Row, N. Y."

Miss Alice wrote one to her cousin:

"YOU DEAR, DARLING HATTIE:

"It's all fixed, and I am the happiest girl in Newport. I wrote you how dear Jack had finally decided to make the request for my hand, and the amount of encouragement he had to have was something simply awful. At one time I feared he would back down altogether. You just ought to see him! He's the tallest man in Newport, and just as shy as he can be. Well, as I was saying, he trembled like an aspen when he was beginning to speak to Aunt Mahala. But she helped him out, and I was listening behind the curtain, and came on the scene at the right time. Well, the dear old aunty made a respectable demur and then said, 'Bless you!' and it was too cute for anything to hear Jack call her aunty. Anyway, aunty spoke to papa, and you know how he is. She just said in that quiet way she has: 'Brother, Mr. Palmer (the idea of calling my Jack Mr. Palmer) 'has proposed for Alice's hand, and, as the young people are in love' (of course we are), 'I think it best they should be married without delay. Delays are dangerous!' And she sighed so strangely.

"Do you know anything about aunty's love-affair? Well, papa snuffed and swore that no Vining should marry a poet fortune-hunter—his personal honor was concerned; but aunty just said: 'It is my fortune that is concerned, brother;' and then papa cried over me and said, 'Bless you,' and all that you know, and I ran away to tell Jack. I'm so happy! Do you know, everybody thinks that papa is rich. Poor papa, he is poorer than I, and people think I am his heiress, not aunty's.

"But you will come on right away now, won't you? We're going to be married in October, and then we are going abroad. I want you for first bridesmaid. I have told you about my friend, Miss Newell. She is the strangest girl! I want her to be my second bridesmaid, and I asked her this evening, but she acted so funny I can't tell you. She kissed me and cried over me as if I was going to be a funeral. I thought she and Harry Bolton, Jack's friend, were going to make a match, but something has happened.

"Now, I am going to wear" (and the letter went off into a world of satin, lace, blossoms, and trousseau, all of which Alice having written, she signed),

"Your loving, happy little cousin,

"ALICE VINING."

In the quiet of her own room Miss Newell, in agony of spirit and with tearful eyes, wrote a letter to her mother. In it she said:

"Dear mother, I am coming home soon, very soon. I believe my errand is about accomplished. As I approach the end I tremble with apprehension lest our worst fears shall be realized. Perhaps it would have been better to have allowed poor Will's name to be forgotten.

"I feel my own weakness now more than ever, for strange things have happened, dear mother, and in carrying out my duty as a sister I find that I cannot forget that I am also a woman. This very day, only a few hours ago, a noble, honest gentleman spoke to me of love and marriage. It was so sweet, dear mother! I denied him, but, mother, God help me! my heart is breaking. In a few days I will be back to our dear Quaker home, and if I cannot live there and forget, we will sell the old homestead and go abroad, you and I together, my mother.

"Your heart-broken daughter.

"ELIZABETH NEWELL."

Judge Vining also indulged in a little epistolary recreation, selecting a table in the bar-room for his task, and enjoying the assistance in his effort of no end of "refreshers." Having written on the left-hand upper corner of a score of sheets "Hazard *vs.* Vining" and destroyed them, he finally accomplished the following:

MRS. CHAUNCEY HAZARD:

"HONORED MADAME: It was my proud privilege, as you will doubtless remember, to address you with reference to a proposal made by myself as party of the second part" (the legal phrase was erased and the letter continued) "for the hand of your deceased husband's widow.

"In thus offering myself at the shrine of your transcendent charms of person and virtue, believe me, noble lady, loveliest of your sex, that your petitioner is actuated solely, only, exclusively, and entirely by the pure motives which you of all women awaken most in the heart of mankind.

"It affords me unspeakable gratification to continue the suit already begun, and believe me, respected madam, that I shall carry my case to the court of last resort, in the hopeful endeavor to obtain judgment for the plaintiff. And your petitioner will always pray.

"*Justum et tenacem propositi virum*, as we say in the law, which, to translate, means a just man and one tenacious at his purpose.

"Should you regard the application favorably it would be my greatest pleasure to lead you abroad after our marriage.

"With feelings of the profoundest regard, permit me, in anxious expectancy of your answer,

"To subscribe myself,
"Your most obedient
"Servant and admirer,
"C. LYTTLETON VINING."

To the first letter came back the following answer by telegraph:

"HENRY BOLTON,
"Ocean House, Newport:

"Am astonished at your decision. Leave on Fall River boat at five. See you to-morrow morning.

"THOS. H. MOORE.

"Pd. 38c."

Also by telegraph:

"JOHN PALMER,
"Ocean House, Newport:

"I congratulate you with all my heart. Do I get a card?

"L. B. ROE.

"Collect 29c."

Also by wire:

"MISS MAHALA VINING,
"Newport:

"Hattie leaves by rail Saturday five A. M. Arrives 6:30. Meet at depot.

"ROBERT VINING.

"Pd. 52c."

Found by the Judge on his plate at breakfast:

"Motion denied. Plaintiff non-suited.

MRS. CHAUNCEY HAZARD."

CHAPTER XIV.

CLOSE QUARTERS.

THE last ball of the season was under way, a brilliant affair, with the most distinguished attendance, the richest dressing and display of diamonds that had been seen. They were all there, all our party, even Aunt Mahala, who, feeling more out of place than ever, had for an ever attentive and delightful companion the evening through the society favorite, Mr. Bolton. Vainly had she striven to drive him from her. He had found in the charming spinster a confidant for his troubles and a sympathizing friend. He had told her how ill fared his love-making, and that his disappointment was so bitter that he proposed to go abroad as soon as he could arrange his business affairs. She in turn had urged him not to decide so hastily, not to relinquish all claims to the little Quakeress, that until some other man got her there was always hope for him. But he shook his head gloomily, and said: "Not so, there was no hope, no chance for him—no, none for ever?" and had clung to her for the balm of sympathy, which Jack, in his ecstatic state of happiness, was unable to bestow.

So all the evening he stayed by her side, much to the dear lady's embarrassment, taking especial delight in having Miss Newell see that his attentions were devoted to so worthy an object. The little Quaker party was in the very vortex of the social whirlpool. She had suddenly, and much to her own surprise, become the rage among the Newport beaux, who found in her quaint ways, dry sayings, and unvarying good nature an attractive relief from the society belles, with their conventional chatter and half-balanced minds, and they with one accord had come to offer the incense of their admiration at her feet.

A less sensible party than our little friend might have had her head turned by such adulation, but one of her greatest charms to her newly-organized army of adorers was the practical way with which she accepted their attention and turned the edge of their compliments. Still, it was not in human nature (certainly not in the part of it remaining after man had got his share) to be insensible to such a condition of affairs; so it is not strange if Miss Newell's eyes flashed brighter and in her staid way she metaphorically tossed her head as she reigned supreme at the grand ball.

Let us not attempt to penetrate to her more secret and tender feelings as she passed Harry half a score of times, bowing in silence in return to his respectful obeisance. Heart-broken women may not long continue in that identity, but surely none of them recover quite so easily that a week's interval will cement the pieces and obliterate all signs of the fracture.

Mrs. Hazard was in her element, and when they all met in the gray light of the breaking morning, after the last whirl of the German, and watched for a time from the piazza of the cottage the gathering fogs, and the stars fade out, she laughed and chatted, as merry as could be. But under the folds of lace on her heaving bosom reposed a note scratched on rough paper whose contents might easily have disturbed a stronger-minded woman than this one. It had been pushed into her hand just as she had left the ball and was entering the carriage by a man who wore an ill-fitting coachman's coat, and whose face she had only caught a glimpse of as its owner hurried away, leaving Aunt Mahala to enter the coach unassisted, and herself half fainting in the corner. By the time home was reached she had recovered her spirits, or at least control of them, and was exceptionally witty and brilliant. As soon as she reached her room she tore open the paper, and, sinking down at the window, read by the dim light of daybreak the following:

"My Love: Come to me at sharp sunrise at the foot of the steps below the cottage. Don't let anybody see you; you may be shadowed. Be careful, and for God's sake don't fail. For ever, Fred."

There was not an instant of hesitation. Kissing the note fervidly and thrusting it into her bosom, she tore off her fine dress, and, wrenching open the white satin boots without stopping to unloose them, drew about her a wrapper of dark-colored stuff and threw over her powdered hair a black lace scarf. Her feet encased in walking shoes, she hurried to the window and looked out to the east. The horizon was not yet brightened by the sun, and she had a few minutes to wait. She glanced in the mirror and caught the reflection of her face, ashy pale, her eyes gleaming with excitement, the red lips drawn tightly over her white teeth, while her hands trembled with nervous excitement. She laughed half hysterically as she muttered:

"This won't do, my girl—no, no! this won't do," and, hastily opening a vial that lay in her dressing-case, she poured out half a handful of belladonna pellets and swallowed them. Then she sat down and tried to compose herself, and ten minutes later, when she again approached the window, the face that looked out was calm and impassive as the gray eastern hills on which she gazed, watching for the rays of the rising sun. Casting another look in the glass, she nodded at herself in an approving way, and, stepping down the stairway and out through the French window, she stood for a moment on the piazza looking about her, and then with a leisurely step strolled over the dew-laden grass stopping now and then to pluck a rose from its stem or to look about her, as one to whom the beauties of dawn were inexpressibly charming.

. . . . . .

The morning sun stretched his rays out over the hills and gilded the tops of the steeples, and as he climbed a little higher lifted the gray off the cottages and blazoned their windows with gold. Presently he cast a shadow with the lovely rose-bushes from which Mrs. Hazard had just plucked the flowers, and, creeping still higher, his blaze fell upon the edge of the cliff and the shingly beach below, as also upon the

haggard face of a man peering fearfully around the gray edge of a rock, casting at intervals nervous glances over his shoulder.

"Why don't she come?" he muttered between his teeth. "Why don't she make haste? I don't know how much longer I can keep up on grocery whiskey," he continued, taking a long pull from a flask. "Ugh! what beastly stuff, damnable rot, but I can't get anything else just now. Where can she be?"

Again he looked around, and this time he saw the erect figure of a woman at the head of a flight of stairs that led down from the top of the cliff, her form standing out in bold relief against the blue sky behind her. A moment she paused, throwing a sharp, quick look in the direction she came and another along the beach, then, gathering her skirts around her, she ran swiftly down the steps. When she reached the bottom the man was there, but ere he had time to greet her—

"What is the matter, Fred? What has happened?" she questioned breathlessly. "Is it serious?"

"Serious! yes; more than that, it couldn't be worse. Have you got any money?"

"Money? no, my dear, I have had only a little from you this summer, and I have not economized."

"Confound the luck! God! what shall I do?"

The man threw his hands in the air, and, clasping them over his head, with quick, nervous steps walked up and down on the board walk that ran an equal distance on either side of the ivy-covered summer-house. The woman followed him, and, catching his arm with both her white hands, walked by his side with a tender, clinging movement inexpressibly touching. As they walked they passed and repassed the summer-house, screening themselves somewhat by keeping well under the bluffs.

"Fred," said the woman, "tell me what has happened? I am mad with anxiety."

"Happened? the whole game is up. We took a detective into our confidence, believing him to be a crooked man himself. Our mistake we discovered just too late. Jem and Tom were nipped."

"And you?"

"I heard them coming into the hotel after me and I got on the roof, taking the porter's clothes with me as a disguise. I had but little money—only enough to bring me here. I hoped you had some."

"O dear, dear!" wringing her hands.

"Yes, but that won't help the matter. No doubt you thought we had succeeded, and I had come to take you on a long journey after honesty and respectability."

The lady reached out and caught a sprig of trailing vine as they passed the summer-house.

"I didn't know what to think, dear. I was so glad to know you were near, and then my anxiety for you is so great that at no time can I escape the bitterest pangs of fear."

"Fear! Julia, a crooked man's wife should not be so squeamish. There, Julia, I don't want to be hard, but I want your help."

"Yes, dear, I know," was the sad reply.

"You must get me some money, and that right away."

They were passing the summer-house again, and another sprig of ivy was added to the roses she had gathered on the lawn; then, as they moved on again, she asked:

"But how?"

"How! do you stop to ask me how? Twenty years in prison stare me in the face, and you ask me how! Can you not think of some way? Can't you borrow it? Surely you have not been throwing away all the good opportunities of the season."

They have turned again; the man stopped to light a cigar under the lee of the summer-house, and as she asked:

"How much will do, Fred?"

"Not less than $500," was the sharp reply.

"And I haven't a tenth of that sum. I really do not know from whom I could borrow it," she added thoughtfully as they walked on again.

"Steal it, then."

"My God! no."

"Why not? It's nothing worse than we have done, although, in plain words, it sounds worse."

"I will not steal even for you." She shut her lips tightly.

"No," he quietly retorted, "you will only live on the money that I steal for you."

She dropped her head, covering her face with her hands, while he continued:

"This is what you call your devotion. When you assured me that you were ready to die for me you didn't mean it, you—"

"Yes, I would die for you—try me; but, Frederick Campbell, the absolutely unreasoning love I bear you does not reach to such a contemptible crime as theft."

"Very pretty, very grand—indeed, quite dramatic!"

"Fred, I implore you!"

The man had seated himself on a stone at the end of the walk, and his wife was standing before him.

He continued bitterly:

"Why did you not decline the escort of the Wyoming bank cashier while the bank was being cracked? Why did you not refuse to become the messenger who carried the forged bonds from San Francisco to London? And why, in God's name, if you are now become so tender as to conscience, did you lure that poor devil to his ruin! I have thought sometimes that he was your lover, only you—"

"Don't say another word; don't you dare accuse me. Is this a time for recriminations? Better you never speak again than open your lips to upbraid me at such a time as this. It is cowardly, Fred."

"Don't get on your defence so quick. As you say, this is no time for recrimination."

The woman did not turn toward him, and then as he could see no relaxation of the hard look on her face, he continued in a conciliatory way:

"It's my wretched plight, Julia, that makes me so bitter. I never would say such a thing if I were not trying to hurt somebody's feelings. I feel like having revenge out of some one. Forgive me, my darling."

She flew to his side, and, catching his hand, kissed it again and again.

"You ought not to speak so to me, Fred, who am so faithful to you."

"True enough; I know it, dear. But can you not aid me now?"

"I don't know; there must be some way. I could get you some money from Bolton to day, but I couldn't borrow such an amount."

"Then give him light-weight security, a draft on New York."

"Fred, is there no other way?"

"No," was the impatient reply, "none, and you must do it quickly. I have some drafts here that I could possibly get cashed myself if I could go into the town; they are only dummies, though. Take this one, it's for seven hundred dollars, endorse it with the name you are known by. Don't be excited; say quietly to Bolton that you want the money, and ask him to oblige you with it. You don't like to go into the hotel office, the clerks stare so, or to the bank; he will do it, and if they require his signature he will readily give that, you know. Bring the money here, and then I can be off."

"And what becomes of me?"

"You shall follow me."

"Where?"

"Oh! I will send you word."

"How soon?"

"In a little while—in a few days."

"But the draft will have gone to protest by that time, and everything will be discovered."

"That's so; I never thought of that."

"No, selfish man! you were willing to expose me to disgrace, arrest, and punishment that you might escape now. Fred! Fred! Fred!"

"Then you must come before anything is discovered. But you must stay a day or so, at least, in order that your disappearance may not be connected with the draft. You must not leave until it has gone into the bank here for collection at the bank against which it is drawn in New York."

"Give me the draft; I will get you the money."

He put the slip of paper into her hand, and, without a word, she turned and walked to the steps that led to the top of the bluff. As she ascended them he said:

"I will busy myself in piling up this drift-wood, so that my appearance may not be remarked. Don't be long, and I will stay here till you come back. You ought to be back by half-past ten."

She never looked around nor appeared to hear, and he watched her until she had disappeared.

"I am tired enough," he muttered; "I wish I could get an hour's sleep. Egad! I need it. I wonder if I dare go into this summer house. Nobody will be on the beach for an hour yet. I'll risk it."

He pushed open the door as he spoke and looked in; his face blanched for a moment, but instantly, doffing his old hat and stepping

back in a shambling sort of way, he said, with a quick assumption of an English laboring-man's surly manner:

"Arxes yer parding, marm, for disturbin' on yer. Aw didn't know as noboddy were 'ere nor nothink."

"There is no necessity for concealing your identity from me, Frederick Campbell."

It was Aunt Mahala who spoke.

Howsoever well deserved this man's reputation for self-possession and nerve had hitherto been, those who accorded it to him would have withdrawn it could they have seen him then.

He tried to speak, but his voice refused to utter the words that the motion of his lips framed as he fell back and Aunt Mahala came out into the open air.

"Yes, Frederick Campbell, it is Mahala Vining," she said as she advanced toward him, "the woman who was your betrothed wife."

"I—I thought—I heard, in fact, that you were dead," he stammered. "I never got any letters in reply to those I sent you. I—"

"Do not add falsehood to your list," she interrupted; "at least, do not lie to me, Frederick Campbell!"

She hissed out the words as she towered above him. Placid Aunt Mahala, like many women from whom such demonstrations could hardly be looked for, was thoroughly aroused, but there was a dignity in her rage before which this hard man crouched and would have fled from could he have done so.

"Do you remember," she went on, "that it was a morning not unlike this that we parted? And now nearly twenty years have gone by; no day has passed that I have not watched the dawn, and, with this picture pressed close to my heart, thought of you and the love of my youth that could never die. It was my only solace in life. I will not reproach you for destroying the idol, for shattering the faith that until now was never for a moment shaken."

She paused breathless, her thin hand clutching convulsively at her breast where hung the locket.

Her long speech, though uttered quickly, gave the man time to recover himself.

"Whatever has been your life, Mahala, however overcast with sorrow and deprived of its hope and blessing it may have been, it has been happier than if I had come back to you again. Believe me, I could have brought you only a deeper sorrow, and perhaps something harder to encounter than sorrow—"

She put out her hand toward him to stay his words.

"Do not speak of that," she said. "Let me pass, and we will go our ways, and all shall be as if we never met."

"That, alas! can never be, Mahala." He drew aside as he spoke, and she moved by him and slowly ascended the steps, leaving him gazing after her.

When she had got half way up she stopped and looked back. The man's face was lifted toward her, and there was something in his look that reminded her of happier days.

"You are in great trouble?" she asked hesitatingly.

"Then you have overheard," was his quick answer.

"I only heard you say that your need of money was vital."

"And did you not hear me say why?"

"I could not help hearing what I have repeated. You were by the summer-house when you said it. I would not have heard that much if I could have helped it. Neither should you have seen me could I have escaped then, or had you not pushed open the door."

It flashed upon him that she had not heard all, that the whole truth had not been revealed to her. He tried to think of some way to detain her, for he knew her presence at the house might, and most likely would, prevent the success of his wife's plan. He thought he saw his opportunity now.

"Come back here," he began; "come back and let me tell you of the influences so powerful that I could not return to you. Let me tell you of my days of struggle, my life of failure and suffering. Let me tell you a story so sad in its truth that even you, burning as you are with a woman's sense of outraged pride and love, will forgive its cause even if you cannot forget. Let me, I beseech you, when we part, carry away the recollection of one bright moment in my hard, unhappy life, and let that moment be the one when you say, 'I forgive you.'"

"I have nothing to forgive, and there is nothing I can forget. Your needs must indeed be pressing that at my hands you seek forgiveness and at the hands of another woman you seek money. If your life has been what you indicate, it is at her hands you should seek to be forgiven. Then let me furnish you with the money, since your search for each, it appears, is at the wrong place."

As she spoke she drew from the pocket of her dress an old bead purse, and, leaning over the rail of the stairs, she dropped it at his feet, and tearing the locket from her neck, she threw it at him. Then she turned and fled away.

"No, no, Mahala!—no, do not humiliate me by such an offer as this." But she had gone, and he stood still and looked at the purse where it lay in the sand. After a while he picked it up. Evidently he was thinking how he could return it to her. Then he slid back the ring and opened it. His eyes sparkled as he saw the coins it contained were double eagles, and that the roll of bills were of large denominations. He glanced around and saw some people on horseback riding towards him. He took up the locket and laid it with the purse in his open hand. He looked again and saw the people on horseback coming nearer. Then he dropped the purse into his pocket, and, turning away, started on a sharp run under the bluff.

CHAPTER XV.

"EVIL, BE THOU MY GOOD."

WHEN Aunt Mahala got back to the cottage she found Mrs. Hazard dressed in a flowing white wrapper seated on the shady side of the piazza. A freshly-gathered rose was in her hair and a few tendrils of vine, artistically arranged, drooped on the left side of her head back of the ear. She was apparently buried in the pages of her magazine, but her face wreathed with smiles as she addressed Miss Mahala in her cheeriest tones:

"Ah! good-morning. I did not know anybody was stirring so early as I. After your dissipation of last night you surely needed rest."

Aunt Mahala's lips looked very prim and her features set. She bowed stiffly. Mrs. Hazard saw that something had occurred, and her quick perceptions indicated danger; but she was too wily to assume any other position save the defensive. If her heart beat faster, or the hands that held the magazine trembled, the woman who stood grim and threatening before her was unaware of it.

"I was tempted out so early because of the pure air and cool breeze," she rippled on; "and then I was interested in an article I began to read last night."

After a pause, during which she filliped the leaves of the book she held:

"What a splendid ball last night! I used to go to many such before my marriage. I am sure you enjoyed yourself immensely—you seemed to, at all events. To tell the truth, there was no reason why you should not, you had a gallant escort."

The situation was getting more and more embarrassing to the woman who sat complacently running her white fingers over the leaves of her book and from her half-closed eyelids studying the strained face of the spinster.

"Do you expect the young gentlemen, Mr. Bolton and Mr. Palmer, over to breakfast?" she finally asked, putting the question so direct that it necessitated some reply.

Aunt Mahala looked her full in the face while she said deliberately:

"I have just left Frederick Campbell."

"You have seen him?" suppressing all sign of the shock by an effort. "Where?" Mrs. Hazard had risen to her feet, and the two women faced each other in evident antagonism. To the younger the situation was important, but only an incident in her eventful life; the elder found it the greatest ordeal she had yet known.

"Yes," she spoke like one in a dream—"yes, I saw him—and I saw you with him."

"Well, what of it?" replied the other expectantly.

"I once showed you a picture—a picture of the man who was my lover—the man I was to have married. I told you he was dead. I was wrong, it seems; he did not die."

"He did not die!" echoed the other.

"He is the man I saw this morning—the man I saw with you."

"Well?"

"Well! I say I saw you with the man whom I thought dead—the man—my lover."

"And I say again, What of it?"

"Why did you not tell me the truth then, not leave me to discover what I have to-day?"

Mrs. Hazard felt that the end was near, but until it was she would sacrifice no chance or opportunity.

"Why did I not tell you?" she queried; "why? Tell me what you have discovered, and I'll tell you why."

"I discovered sufficient to render an explanation necessary. My relations with you are such that I may well demand it."

"Yes!"

"Yes! Apart from any personal feeling involved in the fact that I saw you at an unusual hour walking familiarly with the man who foully deserted and deceived me, and overheard his demands upon you for money, I have in charge a young and innocent girl with whom you are in daily association; that is reason enough why I should question you."

"And did you not overhear also on what grounds and by what right that man demanded money from me?"

"No, I did not; that is for you to explain, and you must make it clear as day."

An expression of relief passed over Mrs. Hazard's face as she sank back into her chair, and, pressing her handkerchief to her eyes, began to sob convulsively; but could any one have caught sight of those eyes 'neath that handkerchief he would have found them guiltless of tears, while the face alone simulated grief.

"O Miss Vining! don't say any more; don't accuse me even in your thoughts. I cannot bear it from you," she sobbed. "Alas! injustice from those we love is indeed hard."

"Injustice! Mrs. Hazard, what do you mean?"

"I follow your thoughts, and they are cruel and unjust to me. Oh! why, why am I fated to suffer so much?"

"I do not understand."

"No, how should you? Sit down, please—no, come to my room and I will tell you."

She sprang to her feet and darted up-stairs, Aunt Mahala slowly following in wonderment and expectancy. As she entered the door Mrs. Hazard swung an easy chair into the light and half ushered, half pushed Miss Mahala into it, seating herself so that her face remained in shadow. She had had time to prepare for the part she was about to enact, and, throwing a sharp, questioning glance at the spinster's face, she began:

"Do you remember that when you showed me the picture of Frederick Campbell I remarked, 'It was well for you he never came back?'"

"Yes, I remember."

"It must have appeared strange to you that I did not tell you why?"

"I did not speculate upon that, or seek to know. I thought possibly, that some page from your wedded experience had suggested the remark."

"How kind you are in little things, and how thoughtful of the feelings of others!" A gesture from Aunt Mahala checked the half-caress, and without appearing to regard the repulse Mrs. Hazard, with sorrowful face, continued:

"I never would have told you of the shame and disgrace he has heaped upon me and mine. I would much rather that you had not sought it. My wrongs and grief are great in comparison to your own. You at least were left a pleasant if sad memory, whilst I—"

"Became his victim," said Aunt Mahala with a flush on her cheek.

"Great God! no. How you misjudge me! No; Frederick Campbell is a fugitive from justice. He came to me to aid him, for money to enable him to escape. Where else should he come but to me? Where should a brother seek help if not—"

"Your brother?"

"Yes, my poor erring brother. His life has been stained with crime. Vainly have we tried to rescue him, vainly have we sought to restore him to position and respectability."

"Your brother!" Aunt Mahala sat as one stunned.

"You did not know his family," Mrs. Hazard continued, her voice tremulous with emotion. "They lived in a distant State, and Heaven only knows what story he told you about himself and his former life. Had you known them, Mahala Vining, you would have known that at the very time he was at your feet breathing the sweetest vows of love his mother was dying, heart-broken, over her son's conduct and disgrace. When he left you it was in response to a summons to her death-bed."

"Is this true?"

"The saddest thing in it is its truth."

"Tell me no more—no more!" rising.

"Mahala Vining, I have accorded you the explanation you claimed and I recognized as your right, and you have no right to shrink from the cruel truth that I have borne so long alone."

Miss Mahala's face was whiter than ever as she sank back in the chair.

"You shall hear the whole story that has hung over my life like a black cloud," continued Mrs. Hazard vehemently, her eyes seeming to penetrate the very soul of her listener. "I will tell you how, even as a boy, he was the incarnation of deceit and fraud, how he robbed his own father and before he was thirteen had begun a course of crime that his parents were powerless to check. I was a child at the time, but my young life was clouded by his career even then. Nevertheless, I grew to love him; he was my brother, and when even his own father cast him off I clung hopefully to him. After my marriage I brought him to my

husband's home; he repaid his kindness by forging his name, and fled, having made his name a by-word and a reproach to us. I have occasionally heard of him, but always connected with some tale of shame and infamy, until his life has brought him to what you have witnessed to-day."

"This is terrible!" moaned Mahala.

"I would have spared you the knowledge of this, but you placed me on my defence, and now you know the reason why I thought it well your lover never came back to you."

There was a long period of silence, broken only by the short breathing of the two women. The deepening of the lines in the ashen-hued face of the spinster, the pained, hunted look in her eyes, and the nervous interlacing of the fingers alone showed with what agony she endured the violent disruption of the cherished romance of her youth. At length, rising to her feet, she moved slowly and silently to the door. Turning as she reached it, with a far-away look in her eyes, she said, almost in a whisper, as she extended her hand to the widow:

"I was wrong. I am very sorry I misjudged you, Mrs. Hazard; forgive me, please."

The door closed, and with a gleam of triumph in her eyes, yet with a big sigh of relief, Mrs. Hazard sank into the chair the spinster had just vacated, exclaiming:

"Anything to gain time; one obstacle vanquished, at all events, but it was warm while it lasted."

She fell into a musing vein, and a shade of sadness overspread her face as she quoted:

"'Farewell, remorse. All good to me is lost. Evil, be thou my good.'

CHAPTER XVI.

FUTURE HOPES AND PRESENT BRANDY.

PALMER and Bolton, returning from their plunge in the surf that morning, engaged in conversation as they loitered along toward the cottage summer-house which had been the scene of the exciting events of the last few hours. Bolton was gloomy and morose, Jack light-hearted and happy. The former had chosen that morning hour to tell his companion how wretchedly astray had gone every hope and desire of the summer. It had been on Jack's lips a score of times to tell Harry that his love was reciprocated, as he had nearly done once before, and, when the question he regarded as inevitable followed, to narrate this time the little episode of Miss Newell's visit to Harry's sick chamber at Old Point Comfort Hotel. He had long felt that it was right and proper to do this, even though he had tacitly promised to respect the lady's confidence. Adopting the cant phrase of similar sophists, he had repeated to himself that "Circumstances alter cases," and "It is right to do a wrong if good may come," and had finally resolved that at the first favorable opportunity he would acquaint his friend with all the important facts in his possession. Harry's free expression of his own feelings and disappointment furnished the occasion he had been looking for, and he began:

"Harry, if I tell you something that applies to your case, will you consider it under the seal of confidence? I ask you this because in telling you I am in a measure violating confidence myself."

"It is only necessary, Jack, for you to say that it is in confidence to assure yourself that no word of it shall ever pass my lips."

"I know that, old fellow. Well, when you were sick last June I discovered that Miss Newell loved you."

"So you told me."

"But I didn't tell you how I knew it."

"No."

"I will now. One night, as you were sleeping feverishly and I was dozing by your bedside, she came to the door equipped for travelling."

"Yes."

"She asked after you anxiously, and gave me enclosed in an envelope her address while she was away. I was to telegraph her in case your illness became more serious."

"Well?"

"That's all—only she flew away."

"And that proved to you that she loved me?"

"Why, yes; certainly. She seemed very anxious, and I should consider it ample proof. Was it not?"

"I have better proof than that, Jack; she told me—confessed it herself."

"Then why are you so despondent? What more do you want? When Alice and I—well, when we came to an understanding we hardly said that much."

"Yes, Jack, unfortunately, I heard more than I wanted to hear. After confessing that she would rather be my wife than anything in the world, she crushed me by saying it was impossible. Hang the women, anyway! they are as hard to understand as a Central syndicate."

Jack felt that further attempt to console his friend would be to act the part of a Job's comforter, and was silent.

On the lawn they met the Judge on his way to the hotel, arrayed in sumptuous attire, but with the reverse of a cheerful cast of countenance.

"Mor'ng, Mr. Bolton; glad t' see you. Ah! Jack," familiarly and patronizingly, as became a prospective father-in-law.

"Charming morning, Judge," said Harry, with a smile at the Judge's manner and distinction. "We've been having our plunge."

"Jus' so—plunge—noth'ng like plunge—char'cteristic of gen'leman—in 'fairs of life alw'ys plunge—'nvariably successful—last plunge made—great shock."

"Shock, Judge? Why, I never heard of it," said Harry, with a sly wink at Jack. "Won't you tell us about it?"

"Gen'lemen, notice an'thing 'tic'lar in my 'pearance?"

"Well, Judge, now you call attention to the fact, you don't seem so sprightly as usual—don't enjoy life as you used to."

"'Zactly. 'Life's but a fleeting show,' gen'lemen—bud of my 'fections blasted—life barren—all lost save honor—ashes—Red Sea ashes."

"Cheer up, Judge; not so bad as that, I hope. Come, let us go and drown your sorrow."

"Gen'lemen, 'xcuse me. 'Look not upon wine when 's red'—biteth like copperhead—stingeth like bumble-bee. No, sir—fault of young men pres'nt day—drown sorrow—gen'leman, sir—old school—'ndure 'n silence—silence, sir."

"Some love-affair, Judge?"

"Sir—pangs of human heart," smiting his capacious shirt-front. "In'xpress'bly charming female, sir—charming angel, sir—too good for mis'able sinner—merciful to me, mis'able sinner."

By this time they had reached the bar of the hotel, and it needed no persuasion to induce the Judge to discriminate in favor of brandy *versus* wine.

"Gen'lemen, pleasant days spent 'gether this summer. I like you, boys—Jack, son-in-law by 'n' by—will have him under m'own eye—force 'xample; you, Mr. Bolton—d'barred priv'lege—give you benefit of 'dvice, young man—never let charming woman sit in your lap—never, sir."

"Why, Judge?"

"Dangerous, sir—char'ct'ristic of gen'leman face danger—cannon's

mouth—swords' points—all that sort thing—'nly flesh-wounds, sir—nothing 'pared to ag'nies breaking heart."

"Breaking heart, Judge?"

"All result fair lady in gen'leman's lap—accident—pure accident—'sure you, sir—but never'less fatal—vista future par'dise—mansion in skies—man's 'llusion given."

"I wish you would relate the incidents, Judge," said Harry, evincing great interest.

"'Xcuse me, Mr. Bolton—blighted hopes—too harrow'ng—youthful dis'ppointment—soon got over—time great healer—my age, sir—too deep scar—buried 'fore time chance t' operate."

"Is your case, then, so hopeless? Why, Judge, with your charm of manner and appearance—"

"Jes' so, sir—manifold 'tractions—pers'nal and mental—no hitch there—lady loves me—no doubt 'bout it—obstacle can't un'stand—thought knew someth'ng 'bout women—read book Sol'mon—wise man—un'stood women—ought to cer'nly—says all van'ty, vexation and bad spirits. Yes, thank you, some with soda."

"Well, Judge, you are sufficient of a philosopher to contemplate even a woman's refusal."

"Philosophy no cure, sir—reed, sir—broken reed—dry—only two things ov'come 'tack of love like mine."

"Judge, I would like the benefit of your judicial mind on the remedy."

"Cern'ly, Mr. Bolton—judicial mind brought to bear heav'ly on subject—subject become pers'nal, sir—pleaded cause bar of lady's 'fections—all el'quence at command—natural and 'equired. Verdict adverse—moved reconsid'ration—judgment previous count sustained—refused, sir—better to loved and been 'fused than never felt an inclination that way. Hope told flat'ring tale—loved doomed to mourn. Rem'dy, sir? Brandy with soda, please."

"Brandy, Judge, the remedy?"

"No, cern'ly not—low—vulgar—morning headache worse 'n pangs 'spised love Int'lectual, moral remedy—'ligion."

"'Ligion? Oh! yes, religion, I see."

"Soothing syrup for mind—fills heart with hope. Poet Byron says 'naught in doubt s' much the spirit calms as rum and true religion.' Choice of drinks, prefer brandy. 'Ligion 'vigorated—external ord'nances—an'mated faith and hope—salutary influence of 'xample—'ligion is love—love's 'ligion—fight one love 'gainst 'nother love—overcome dis'pointed love with 'ligion. Follow me?"

"Judge, I am convinced; but have you decided to what denomination you will belong?"

"That's trouble—s' many d'nominations, puzzle which to patronize—Baptis' ruled out—other 'nominations to receive 'sideration—form new sect—call Viningtons, or Fold of Broken-Hearted—organize fam'ly services 'mediately—begin this mornin' at breakfast."

"That reminds me that we are about due," said Jack, and the young men took the Judge by the arm, one on each side, and started for the cottage.

CHAPTER XVII.

HALF BREAKFAST, HALF TRAGEDY.

EVENTS were crowding themselves very rapidly into the morning hours of this day.

Breakfast was rarely served at the cottage until after ten o'clock, and this morning Alice did not appear, the fatigue of the previous night's ball causing her to indulge in lengthened beauty-sleep. Aunt Mahala sent word that she was not well and could not come down, and therefore Miss Newell sat behind the coffee-urn to greet the Judge, Harry, and Jack, and bow rather stiffly to Mrs. Hazard, who floated in rather than walked, her morning robe exquisitely fresh, roses in her hair and at her waist.

The intercourse between these two women had always been constrained, but it also had always been managed with such consummate tact that the influence of it had never reached to the other members of our party. Among the ladies Mrs. Hazard and Aunt Mahala had been companions, Alice and Miss Newell, naturally enough on account of their youth, being more closely associated. At best, regarded in the light of the summer's experiences, it was a party made up of opposites whose intimacy could not be accounted for on any ordinary grounds.

"Miss New'll, morning — Mrs. Haz'rd, slave, ma'am — devoted. Ladies, 'llow me—wish to state prop'sition—always point pers'nal honor —just 'xplained t' Mr. Bolton—also Jack—retrieve error of ways—sinful habits of youth—vind'cate claim to morality 'n old age. Friends all here—least, nearly all. Alice s'ciety lady, sleep all day—sister doubtless 'sposed too—'xcitement last night—also sleep. Never too late mend —permit me—ask blessing?"

The Judge looked round benignantly; Harry's eyes met Jack's with a twinkle of fun in them; Miss Newell looked somewhat shocked; while Mrs. Hazard, bowing her head over her plate, might be waiting in respectful silence for the Judge to begin or pondering deeply over her own affairs, more likely the latter.

The Judge, with a solemn look upon his rubicund visage, rolled up his eyes and formulated as follows:

"Desire return thanks this A.M.—court now open—ten o'clock—priv'lige of sitting opposite charming woman—roses match bloom on cheeks, Mrs. Hazard—digression - sanctify trout—charming women to our use—tea and coffee service—supply good appetites—teach us to love those who spitefully reject us—freshen our eggs 'n lives—mis'able sinners. 'Men."

After this religious and mental effort the conversation assumed a general character, the Judge coming forward now and again with refer-

ences to saving grace, sanctification through faith, the happiness of repentance, the joys of a new life, and other indirect allusions to his proposed conversion and personal honor.

Finally he pushed back his chair, and, asking to be excused, was presently seen making his way toward the hotel where he usually spent his morning hours in company with a retired captain of the navy, who, like himself, was affected with a deep sense of personal honor, and addicted to deep potations and spiritual influences.

All this time Mrs. Hazard had been the life of the table, her clever wit and quick repartee proving exceptionally brilliant. She had turned to look after the Judge, remarking that salvation and brandy were evidently on equal terms with him that morning and was idling with her fork when Harry said something to Jack about driving down to the business part of the town.

She caught her breath, and then said in the most natural way in the world:

"If you are going near the bank, I hope you will not mind executing a trifling commission for me."

"Certainly not," replied Harry with urbanity, "certainly not. What is it?"

"I wouldn't trouble you, but the fact is that I so much dislike to go to the office of the hotel, the clerks stare at one so; and if you will get this draft cashed I shall be so much obliged."

She drew from her pocket the slip of paper, and with a light laugh put it into his extended hand.

"Not the least trouble, Mrs. Hazard. If it is not a large sum perhaps I can give you the money myself."

Bolton had opened the paper as he spoke, and remarking, "Please endorse it, Mrs. Hazard," handed her a stylographic pen for that purpose, while he proceeded to draw forth his pocket-book.

Jack had drawn his chair near to the window, saying:

"I have some money, Hal; if you haven't enough draw on me, with your permission, Mrs. Hazard."

"I am afraid I am troubling you, gentlemen," with a sweet smile; "but I really know so little of business and its forms."

"Oh! it's no trouble, Mrs. Hazard. Don't mention it." And Harry passed a roll of bills over to Jack, saying in an undertone:

"Put a hundred on that, please."

Mrs. Hazard had written the endorsement and had placed the draft in front of Mr. Bolton when a puff of wind through the open window lifted it and sent it fluttering into Miss Newell's lap. As she picked it up with one hand she glanced rapidly over the draft, and, stretching out the other hand, laid it on the roll of bills Harry had laid on the table, saying, quietly:

"Do not take that money, madam."

"I — what do you mean?" stammered Mrs. Hazard, her face for a moment changing color, and starting to her feet.

"That you must not touch that money."

"Explain yourself; why not?" said the other sharply.

Jack and Harry had arisen in surprise, gazing at each other inter-

rogatively, as who should say, "What the deuce is the matter with the women?" A shrug of Harry's shoulders, and—

"Pardon me, Miss Newell, there is evidently a misunderstanding here; surely you do not comprehend the nature of this transaction?"

"I comprehend it perfectly, was the quiet reply."

"There is certainly some mistake, Miss Newell. We are simply, in a business way, giving Mrs. Hazard money for her draft. That draft we will collect ourselves. It is the simplest mercantile matter in the world," explained Jack nervously.

"I understand that, gentlemen," replied Miss Newell, calm as ever; "I understand the full nature of the transaction. If it were only that, there would be no interference on my part—none."

Mrs. Hazard clutched the back of her chair and leaned upon it heavily. She felt that this time she had an adversary of a different calibre than poor Aunt Mahala Vining to encounter. Something terrible was impending, the more fearful because she had no conception of its nature and could form no plan to meet it.

"I am at a loss, then," said Bolton.

"Not nearly so much as I am, gentlemen. I am sure Miss Newell has, or fancies she has, a reason."

Miss Newell's eyes were fixed on Mrs. Hazard.

"I have a reason. Shall I tell that reason in the presence of these gentlemen?" she asked.

Mrs. Hazard was face to face with the situation now. She was called upon for a decision, and she chose it on the side of boldness. Her voice was as low and soft as that of the woman facing her as she replied:

"By all means give it now."

"That draft is a forged one," came the reason, sharp and decisive.

"Forged!" echoed Jack and Harry.

Mrs. Hazard never removed her eyes from the girl's steady face as she gently said:

"To assert this is no proof."

"Do you insist upon the proof?" A slight movement of the head and a hard glitter in the eyes of Mrs. Hazard. "Mr. Bolton, will you compare this paper with this, and this, and these?" handing him several papers drawn rapidly from her bosom. "You will observe they are all fraudulent—written by the same hand, the fruit of the same subtle brain, the work of the accomplished scoundrel who is the ruling passion of this woman's life."

"Mrs. Hazard!" cried Harry.

"Not Mrs. Hazard," broke in Miss Newell, "not even a widow; but the wife of the notorious bank-robber, forger, and thief, Frederick Campbell!"

The blow had struck at last, and Mrs. Hazard—as we shall still call her—drew up her form bravely to receive it. A slight smile hovered about her mouth as she replied:

"You evidently take a great interest in my belongings, Miss Newell—an interest born of what?"

"Born of justice—of retributive justice. For months I have done

violence to my feelings in associating with one whose life I knew to be a living lie, an epitome of crime."

"It was in your power to cease the association and spare your sensitive feelings. Why did you not do so?"

"It was in my power to put an end to your career of deception by bringing you at any time to justice. The proofs I have had in my possession for a long time are overwhelming, but I wanted to make sure of the greater criminal, your husband. For a long time he has escaped me and the officers engaged by me to discover him; but I knew that by keeping near you I would gain some clue to his movements, and eventually he would be trapped."

"Yes, but you see he has escaped."

"You are mistaken, Mrs. Campbell; he is within twenty minutes' walking-distance of this cottage, carefully watched, and the expression of my wish will consign him at once into the hands of the law."

The wife's eyes flashed and her breath came hard as her husband's danger was so confidently predicted.

"I would like to hear what reason you had for this determined pursuit and espionage"

"You shall hear it," said Miss Newell grimly, "and if anything could call you to a sense of shame and wrong-doing, surely it would be the recollection of the young, confiding victim that you so foully murdered. Ay, murdered! Was it not enough that by your wiles you ensnared his boyish heart into a devotion that was hopeless? Was it not enough that you led him into the society of your sinful set and had him instructed in all the base vices that pollute and distinguish them? Could you not leave the poor widowed mother her only son, the sole hope and prop of her life? Was it necessary that you should blast both body and soul, enticing him to commit a crime by which you and your worthless husband alone benefited? but you must needs, to save your contemptible selves, threaten him with exposure and shame, the dread of which induced the poor boy's suicide. Ay, murdered! Do you ever think of that poor boy, woman? And can you, in the knowledge that his only sister, who loved and mourned him with a devotion his kindly, generous nature merited, find no reason in her determination to pursue to the bitter end his tempters and murderers and bring them to the justice they merit?"

No trace of primness now in Miss Newell's demeanor. As the words came rushing in fierce denunciation from her lips her large brown eyes flashed fire and her figure towered the incarnation of a Nemesis. Mrs. Hazard had shrunk before the withering accusation, the allusion to which evidently touched a weak spot in her armor; it was but for a second, however, and she recovered herself and stood pale and contained. The men had watched the rapid scene breathlessly, and felt that it was not their cue to interfere.

"I have watched you carefully during the past few months," continued Miss Newell, "endeavoring to find why a nature like yours, strong and contained, capable of great deeds and generous impulses, should so thoroughly subordinate itself. Why do you allow that bad, wicked man to control your life?"

Mrs. Hazard smiled—such a smile! "He is not good—not very good—but I love him."

"Such love is idolatry. I have prevented your attempted outrage against the hospitality you have enjoyed, and I would spare you, for I have found out that your nature is not thoroughly bad, if you will promise to leave that man to his punishment and fate. For him I have no pity."

"For good or evil, for better or worse!" breathed the woman.

"No wonder the scoundrel has been so successful in his career, having such a devoted slave at his back," burst forth Harry.

Mrs. Hazard gazed into vacancy, and her voice sounded far away, as if following her thoughts.

"Slave! Yes, I am his slave, for I love him. I would rather be his slave than queen it over the milk-and-water specimens whose only claim is negative goodness. I knew he was not a good man when I married him—but I loved him. Hard and cruel at times to others, he was always kind to me." Her voice was growing exquisitely soft and tender. "I have schemed and striven for him; it was his pleasure, and his pleasure was my commandment. I have sinned with him and for him, for are we not one? I would die for him just as readily if it would save him any pain, for I love him." Her face had lost its strained, fierce look, and the firm set of the mouth and square jaw were relaxed, as she turned to Miss Nowell, who had been watching her intently. "In the light of my love for him, I can understand how you feel. Were any harm to come to him I could kill; but I was most to blame in your brother's case. Only a couple of hours ago my husband reproached me with it. It was more my fault than his, and I demand that I am the one shall be punished. Let my husband go. He is not all bad, his anxiety for me led him on. I am very extravagant, and—O Fred! my love, my darling."

A sharp cry escaped her lips, the only sign of weakness she had yet displayed, but it was quickly smothered, and she stood waiting Miss Newell's decision, looking, save for the rise and fall of the heaving bosom, as if carved in stone.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MISS NEWELL'S MISSION FULFILLED.

THE silence that ensued was almost painful. Miss Newell stood gazing at the woman who had just spoken, and whose words had seemed to fill the room with their deep, earnest tones. She was not wondering if she had told the truth. Every accent, every gesture, every heart-cry that came up in those words, not of self-defence or apology, carried the weight of indisputable fact in them. They told the story of this woman's magnificent devotion more effectively than could any art this subtle creature was wont to use so skilfully. The heart of the woman had spoken, and none could doubt.

Mrs. Hazard stood there to all outward appearance the most composed and unmoved person in the room. The two men turned their eyes first to one, then to the other, and waited. Miss Newell seemed on the point of speaking. It was not difficult to fathom the cause of her silence.

Harry's quick perception went straightway to the truth in the matter, and, although he felt he would not interfere now, he interpreted the fact aright; that had not this strange little woman had a new light of life and love her action would not now be delayed.

At length she spoke. Her tones were subdued, almost tender, and the hard flash in her eyes had disappeared.

"I asked you for a promise," she said. "I asked you to say that you would leave this man, who has dragged you through crime and misery solely for his gain, made you a fugitive when you might have been honored and respected, who has wrecked your life, and you should go free."

"And I said in answer to that that I loved him. Do you know what love in a nature like mine means? Do you know that it is idolatry, that by the virtue of such a love as mine I refuse to do what you know is right, because he should think it wrong? I have no life, no happiness, no religion, no God but in him. Do you understand that? And if there is a throb of mercy in your heart, one of pity, one of womanly love, you will let him go. See, I beg of you, I entreat; let me suffer, let me bear the disgrace, the shame, the sorrow—only let it be with the knowledge that he does not suffer, that he goes free."

The white hands were outstretched, the eyes were filled with a tender supplication, and the voice was like the music of some wondrous prayer.

Miss Newell was about to speak, when the door swung open and the neat parlor-maid entered.

"There are some gentlemen to see you, Miss Newell," she said.

At that moment there were voices in the hallway, and Mrs. Hazard, looking up, caught in the glass the reflection of the shining buttons and glittering shield of the police officer.

From an attitude of supplication her form assumed one of defiance. Her tall, willowy figure seemed to tower in air, and her voice rang out clear and piercing:

"Don't answer. You would preach to me of a pure life, you who have never been tempted; you would point the way to repentance and reform who have never sinned; and you would weigh the measure of right and wrong in another's life and name its punishment, you who have never known what the mainspring of a woman's life is. You were ready, were you not? Come in, officers, come in, and in obedience to the pitiless tongue of a good, pure, and virtuous woman lead away the woman whose crime has been a loyal heart."

"Stop a moment, please; stop a moment, officer; just step back," interposed Harry. "Jack," with a nod which the other quickly understood, and, with Jack at the door, Harry advanced to the centre of the room and, taking Miss Newell's hand, said:

"I do not know the extent of the wrong this woman has done you, except as I gathered it just now from your own speech, but whatever that wrong was it is done, and it cannot be undone, for death has stayed the undoing. Let us, then, fairly consider what we should do, in mercy quite as much as in justice. Putting aside every consideration of public scandal growing out of such a scene as this, should it or any of its attendant circumstances come to light—and in such an exposure there are others to be regarded than ourselves—would it not be well to leave the punishment of this woman to the time when our mercy cannot intervene to prevent it?"

"I have no desire now that she should be punished, certainly not through any act or agency of mine. I do wish, with all my heart, that the happiness her love merits may come to her. It ought to make a worse man than Frederick Campbell worthy of it."

"Then, Mrs. Hazard, let me say to you for Miss Newell, and for Jack and myself, that we not only do not wish to move one step against you, but we will, if you will allow us, aid you. Your needs must have been pressing; take this money as a loan only, these $700, and leave quietly. Your husband is in no danger from this source now."

The woman turned toward him and tried to speak, but tears leaped into her eyes and sobs choked her utterance. There was a look of gratitude that could not have been expressed by a volume of words.

She caught up the money, and with an eager and feverish haste drew a veil over her head and darted out of the window, and was seen for a moment flying along the path that led to the steps down the bluff.

"It was right," murmured Miss Newell.

"It was indeed right," replied Jack, as he opened the door and bade the officer enter.

"I am sorry to disturb you," he said, with rough politeness, "I asked for the gentleman of the house, and they told me he was out. Then I asked for the lady of the house, and they said she was sick, so I did not know who to ask for. I came on a very peculiar errand."

"Speak out," said Harry; "what is it?"

"Well, you see—there is a body down in the summer-house on the beach."

"A body—a dead body?"

"Yes, it was a man I saw talking to some ladies near there very early this morning. We got a dispatch to look out for a man of his description, and I followed him up the beach when he went away. It was about six o'clock.

"Go on! go on!"

"Well, he got into a boat and rowed away. My partner and me was onter him then. You see, I always work with a partner."

"Never mind that now, but tell us what you are trying to say."

"Well, I didn't know but what the man might be something to you, so that's the reason I was hesitating."

"Well! well! go on with your story."

"Well, when he got into a boat we took another, and when we got pretty near him he fired at us and we fired at him, and—well, you see—he fell out of the boat and was drowned."

"Horrible!" cried Jack.

"Well, we grappled for the body and got it, and it's down at the summer-house. I thought some of you might be able to identify it perhaps.

"It is Frederick Campbell."

It was Miss Newell who spoke, and in her voice there was a tone of awe, for vengeance had been disarmed by death.

They walked out by the same path over which Mrs. Hazard had flown down to the head of the stairs. On the way they met some men bearing the inanimate form of a woman.

"It's a lady what's fainted," they exclaimed.

They carried her back to the cottage, and bore her to her room and laid her upon the undisturbed bed. After awhile she recovered, and, singling out Elizabeth Newell from the group about her, she said feebly:

"He can never be taken now. You said he was within twenty minutes of this place—only twenty minutes. True, but that twenty minutes is a time over which the world's justice cannot cross. Do you know he is dead?"

There was something so womanly and tender in the little Quaker lady's manner as she came forward, taking the other's hand, at the same time stroking the pale, white forehead that looked strangely white over the glittering eyes, that Mrs. Hazard yielded to the softening influence and listened as she heard the other say:

"Yes, I know it; perhaps it is for the best."

"Perhaps it is"; hopelessly, with a strained look in her eyes while she lay silent. A motion of Miss Newel's hand and the party considerately retired, leaving her alone to her grief.

An hour afterward they came back and knocked at the door. There was no answer. They knocked again; still no response. They tried the door; it was locked. Then they went around and came into the room by the window. They found the woman there. She did not reply to them; and the doctor's foot, as he hastened to the bed-side, crushed a little vial, from the fragments of which they afterward picked a label reading, "Poison."

"She has been dead nearly half an hour," said the doctor.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TRUE BEGINNING OF OUR END.

THE early fall frost was just tinting the leaves of the Pennsylvania forest-land. Elizabeth Newell sat on the steps under the shaded porch of the fine old Quaker homestead, from which sloped the rich pasture-lands of the farm. Her mother sat near her, arrayed in the stiffest attire of the sect of orthodox Friends.

"Thee has always done well and right, Elizabeth; far be it from thy mother to reprove thee; but the youth thou hast named is not of thy people."

"True, mother, he is not, but we love each other, and where love is there is content. There comes a carriage now."

A cloud of dust flew over the limestone road down under the shaded spring-house even as she spoke, and as it drew nearer the adipose figure of the Judge was seen on the front seat with the driver. When it drew up at the steps and the door opened who should it contain but Alice, blooming and happy, Aunt Mahala, Harry, and Jack.

As Aunt Mahala got out they saw she was in deep mourning."

"Glorious country—glorious," said the Judge. "Horses rather used up from jaunt—depot. If owned this farm—sell a field—build railroad to the rest—great idea railroads—v'st 'stitution. Ah! Miss Newell, the 'carnation of every charm. Your m'ternal relative? Madam, your m'st 'bedient—'joyed your daughter's company most all summer—sorry have her leave—had t' follow—cur' 'preciation of her made it point of pers'nal honor—your blessed child—blessed, ma'am."

That evening the moon rose over the hills full and rich in its autumnal color. It tinted the tops of the trees and glorified the maple-leaves. It carried its shadows off the white road and wound down the valley to the railroad station, and brought into the range of Aunt Mahala's visions as she sat with the Judge and their Quaker hostess on the vine-embowered stoop, a group of figures that sauntered idly towards the house. They walked in couples, and they moved very slowly. They must be lovers.

As they came nearer and the moon rose higher, it was seen that they were, first, Jack and Alice; second, a long way behind, Harry and Elizabeth. . . . . .

That night as Jack and Harry sat together and smoked, said the latter:

"I have won her at last. We will be married the same day you and Alice are."

"Why did she fight *you* off so long?"

"She felt that she could vindicate her brother's name, and that was her life's work." A long pause.

"Are you happy, Hal?"

"Yes"

"So am I." Another longer pause.

"Harry!"

"Yes."

"We pushed our wooing."

"Yes; in love, at least, 'no laggards we.'"