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LIFE IN DAWSON CITY Illustrated
A NEW FOOD ROUTE TO EUROPE Illustrated
IN THE DAY OF TEMPTATION Wm. LeQueux

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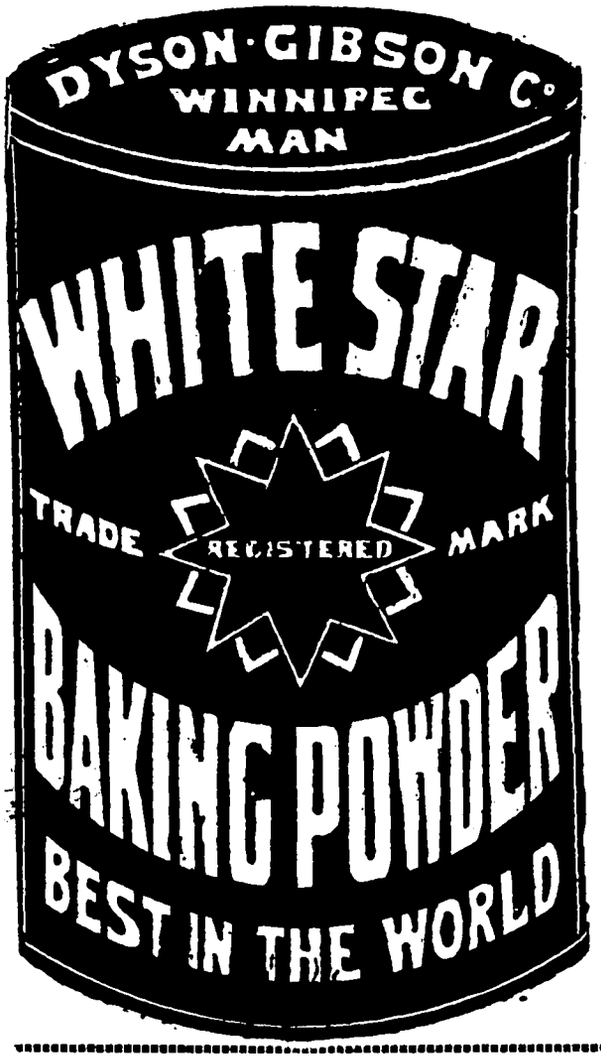

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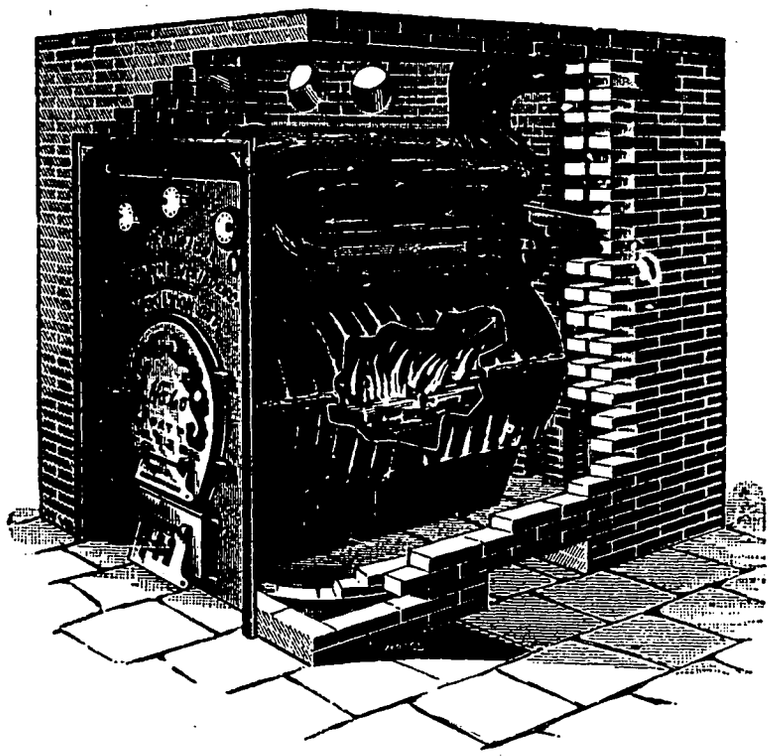

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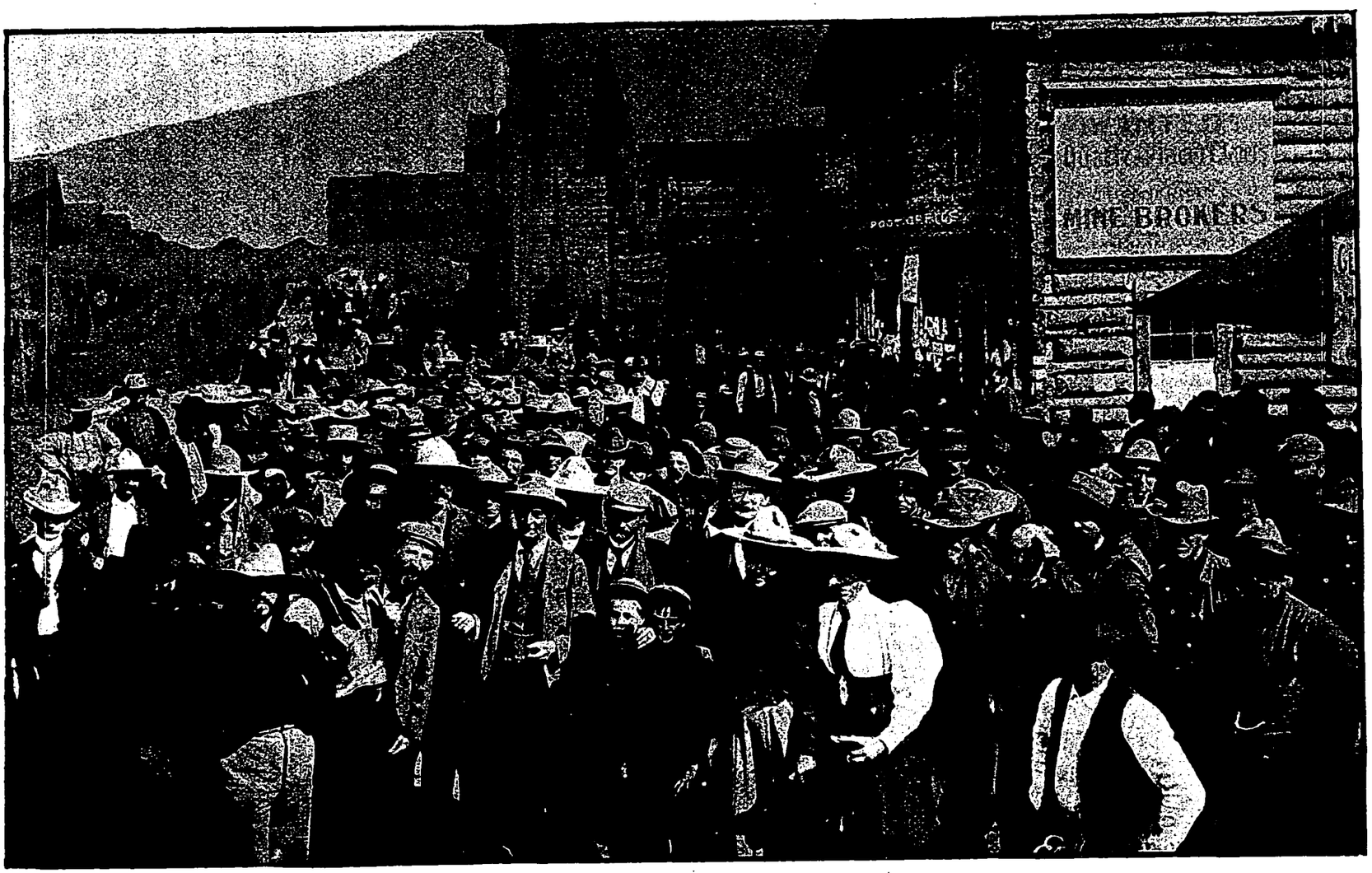


WAITING FOR THE MAIL, DAWSON CITY, YUKON.

The Great West Magazine

VOL. XIII.
(NEW SERIES).

NOVEMBER, 1898.

No. 3.

GOAT TEAM ON WHITE PASS, EN ROUTE TO DAWSON CITY.

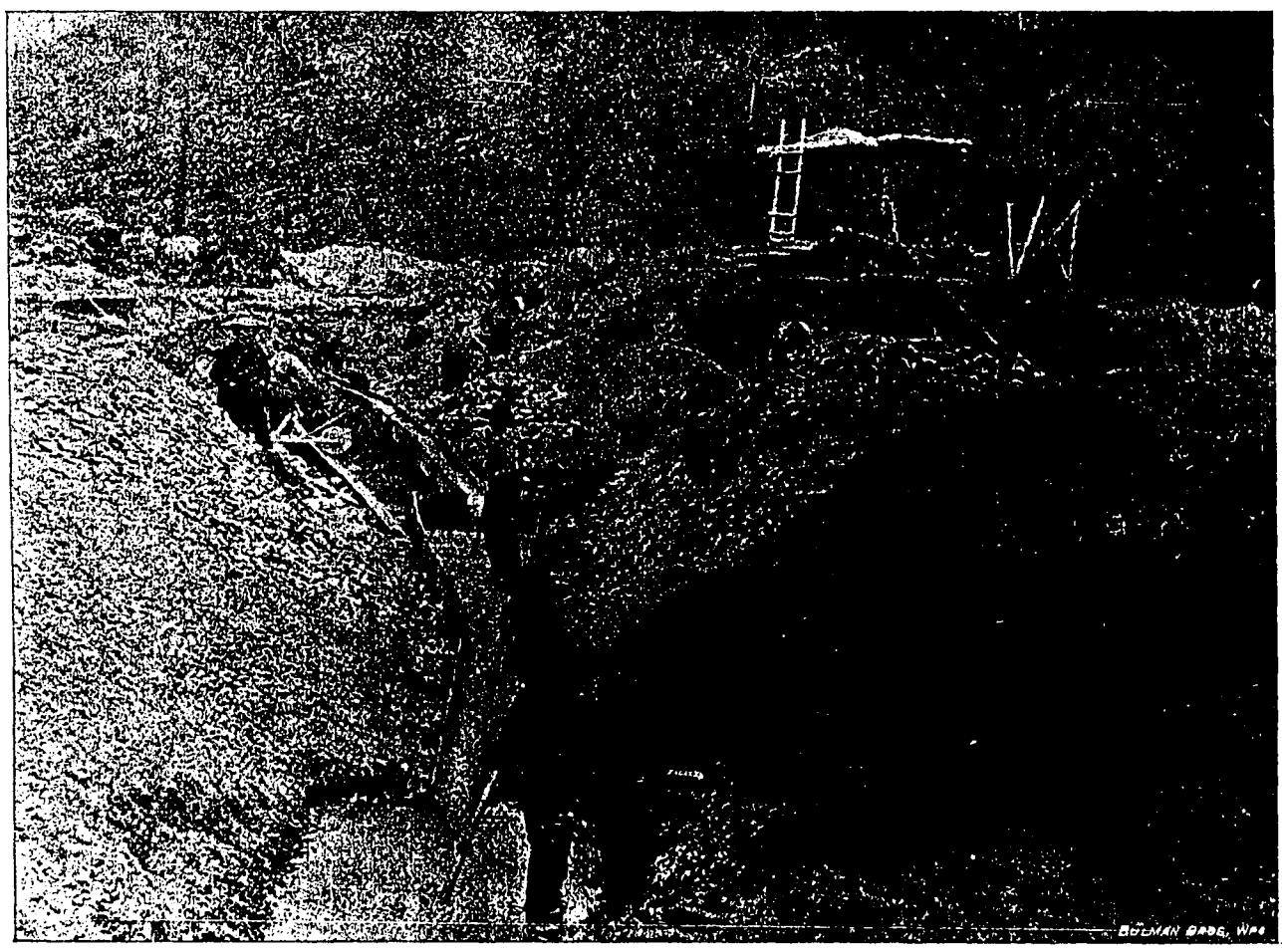
LIFE IN DAWSON CITY.

BY THE WANDERER.

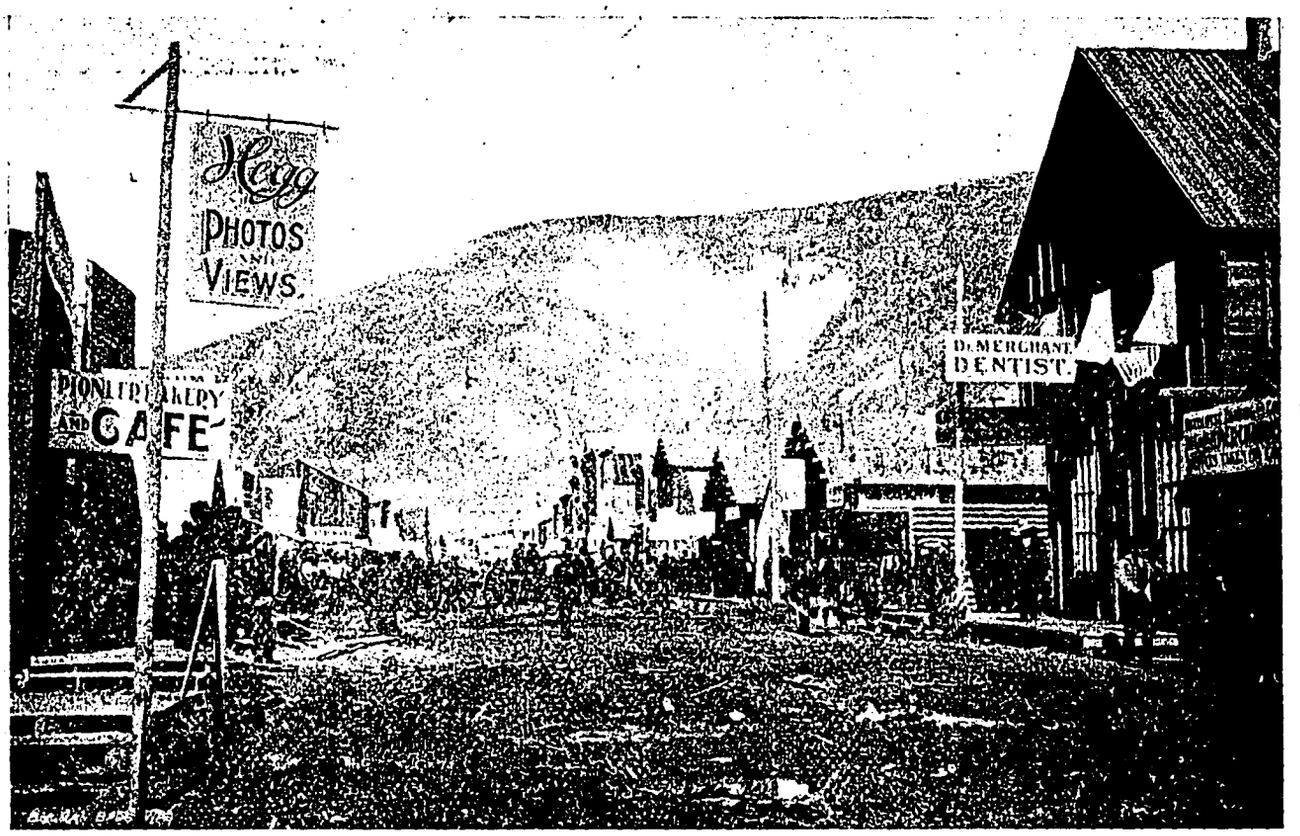
ARRIVING at Dawson City on a day in midsummer the veteran miner of Cariboo, Ballarat or the Californian gulches, will find himself in an atmosphere and amid surroundings that will conjure up pleasant memories of the past. As the river steamer swings into her landing and he scans the thousands of eager faces that line the dock, he will almost fancy himself back again in the good old days when he first sought fortune in the diggings. Here is the same rough, unkempt, bearded lot of stalwart fellows he remembers so well; the same hearty greetings, the same torrent of questions as to the doings of the outer world and, when he lands, the same free and easy method of making the acquaintance of and entertaining the newcomer—Dawson is nothing if not hospitable. Much as has been written about the place, its wonders, its progress, its extravagances and wild, untramelled life, it owes its title to distinction to two circumstances, first, its northern situation—for in the history of the world no great mining camp has been located quite so near the north pole—and, secondly, the lawabiding character of its inhabitants. Golden circumstances placed Dawson where it is, but it required a squad of Northwest Mounted Police, backed by Canadian law, to make it what it is, a typical mining camp with the elements of murder and lawlessness

left out — the romance of treasure seeking with the tragedy eliminated. All Bret Harte's and Rolp Bolderwood's heroes are to be seen on Front Street or lounging about the bars, laughing blue eyes, flaxen locks, rubber boots and all, but not a pistol or a knife in sight. Cases of theft occur, but not a murder of one white man by another, and Judge Lynch has never exercised his judicial functions as he did so often and so wantonly in California. Saloons, dance houses, variety theatres and gambling hells are everywhere in full blast, night and day, but the music is never interrupted by the crack of a pistol shot and "drapping a slice of liver or two," would be regarded as outre and quite indefensible, so the merry-makers wisely refrain from such incidental pleasantries. The presence of a Northwest Mounted Policeman has a deterring influence on the bellicose tendencies of the roysterers, so much so that it has become the vogue in Dawson to live within the law and any infraction is frowned upon, not only by the authorities, but by a vast majority of the population.

Dawson City is not remarkable for its architectural beauty. It is a straggling conglomeration of log shanties, tents and wickiups, built on a narrow strip of muskeg that lies between the bank of the Yukon River and the hills which back the town. Little attempt at symmetry has been made, though some of the buildings are solid and substantial looking, while many are shacks of the most wretched description, thrown together with a view to shelter and warmth. If you desire a mental picture of Dawson City, recall some railway construction camp, multiply it by a thousand, and you will have a fair presentment of the



ELDORADO, "BONANZA OF THE CREEK."



FRONT STREET, DAWSON CITY.

capital of Yukon. The river front is crowded with nondescript buildings of all kinds. Front Street is pretty well built up, but the "avenues" and cross-streets are as yet rather sketchy. The place is rather better than worse than one could expect of what was an unknown wilderness three years ago, and is now the abiding place—for there are no real homes in Dawson—of from 15,000 to 20,000 people. The stores may lack in exterior attractions, but they are stocked with a variety and profusion of goods that is a surprise to the stranger. They have all the necessaries of life and nearly all the luxuries which he who has the dust may acquire, though, if he go in for "extrays," he must have lots of the yellow stuff. The saloons are, most of them, hovels on the outside, but their interiors are gorgeous, and the same may be said of the theatres and dance houses. Real estate offices are thick as telephone poles in an Eastern city, and town lots are held at prices that would appal any but a millionaire or a plunger.

There are several hotels, some of which are quite comfortable, but the rates are outrageously high, judged by civilized standards. Restaurants are quite numerous also and differ in their standards of goodness or indifference as one star differeth from another. The prices charged are about uniform. This is the bill of fare of one of them :

Soup	$1 00
Mush and Milk	1 25
Corn	1 25
Tomatoes	2 00
Stewed Fruit	1 25
Pie	75
Sandwich and Coffee	1 25
Beans, Bread and Coffee	2 00
Beef Steak	3 50
Porterhouse Steak	5 00

Front Street on a summer afternoon is a sight worth seeing and never to be forgotten. There is little bustle or hurry, the crowd is large but leisurely and apparently aimless, slouching along, gathered in bunches before the saloon doors or on the corners, sitting on boxes

or barrels, leaning against the walls, listless and lazy looking. And what a crowd it is. It is said in London that if you want to find a man you must go to Cairo and wait for him at Sheppard's Hotel, where he is sure to turn up in time. On this continent one would be inclined to say, if you want to find a long lost friend, go to Dawson and you will be sure to meet him. But it is not America alone that has provided the population of the camp. Every shire in England, every townsland and country side in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, every country in Europe, not to speak of Australia, Africa and Asia, has furnished its quota to the cosmopolitan aggregation. In attire this crowd would give a fashionable tailor the nightmare. Nothing more bizarre could be imagined outside a comic opera, and there is a general air of ragged, slovenly carelessness that in some rare cases lends a certain picturesqueness, but the first impression is, general degeneration—a parting with all the niceties and decencies of life. The women are an exception. They, as everywhere, bear themselves with an alert, jaunty air that is in refreshing contrast to the squalor of the men. Many of them who flit about in gaudy raiment, like butterflies over a cesspool, are the syrens of the camp who lure the thoughtless miners to squander their hard won gold in the dance houses and brothels. Others, happily quite numerous, are the faithful helpmates who have braved the terrors of the passes and the rapids and exiled themselves to be with their best beloved. All womankind, be she Siwash squaw, dame du pave, or Christian lady, is treated with consideration and respect by the men of Dawson. A woman is as safe in the streets of Dawson City as she would be in any of the cities of the East—a redeeming feature which has been exemplified in the history of all mining camps. Reckless, lawless and heathenish as miners have been

LOOKING UP BONANZA FROM DISCOVERY.

A BACHELOR'S PARADISE.

pictured the fact that they are miners—pioneer knights of civilisation in the wild places of the earth—has lifted them above the crimes of the creatures of the slums of the great cities. They may be uncouth in dress and rough in speech, but they are men and beneath the rugged shell they carry hearts that leap out to a woman, holding her as the precious link that binds them to those other women, mothers, sweethearts, wives or sisters, for whom their toil was undertaken and whose images are their holiest inspiration. To descend by an easy stage from the sublime to the other extreme, one cannot better illustrate the chivalry of the Yukon miner than by reproducing the following soulful ballad :

THE DAWSON CITY BELLE.

Down in Dawson on the Klondike, there's a lady in command
Who rules the good old pioneers and the great Cheechacah band.
To the Company's store she goes each day and there she helps herself
To anything that pleases her, they dare put on the shelf.
Oh, the Captain never says to her, "I have no goods to sell,"
She's a hiyu-skokum lady, she's the Dawson City Belle.

CHORUS.

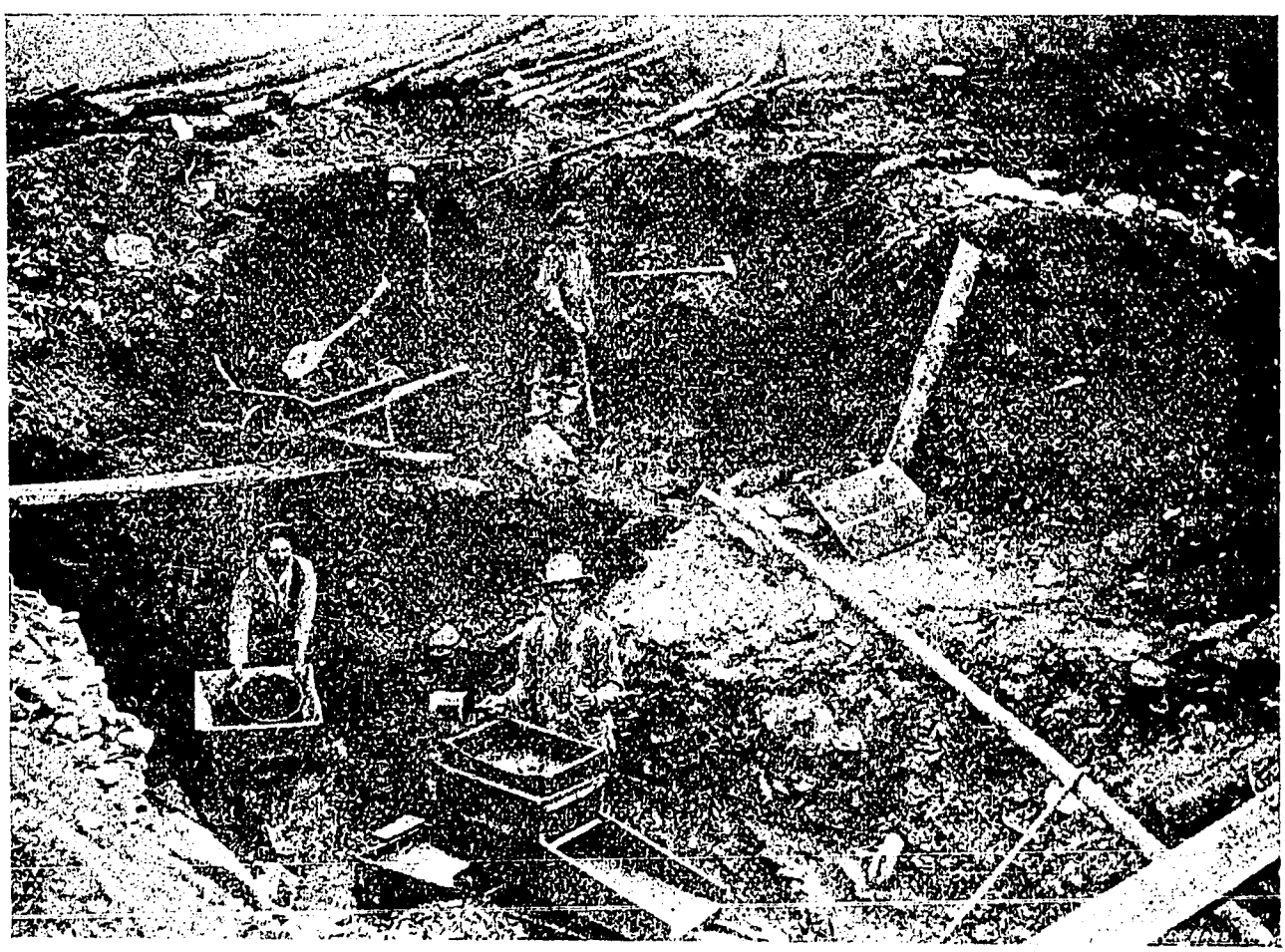
She's refused just five and forty of the Eldorado kings.
The Swedes upon Dominion think she wears a pair of wings.
On Bonanza from Discovery to Forty-two above,
You could not name a single claim she could not buy for love.

On every new discovery she's sure to have a claim.
She stampedes like a whirl-wind and she gets there just the same.
At the Gold Commissioner's office then she taps upon the pane,
And smiles upon the clerk inside, and never smiles in vain.
That the door is quickly opened, oh I do not need to tell,
For this hiyu-skookum lady, for this Dawson City Belle.

In furs she sets the fashion for the other girls in town;
She receives her friends each morning in a lovely beaver gown.
Her parkee, made of Caribou, it is a lovely fit,
And she's all right from muck-a-luck unto her dainty mit.

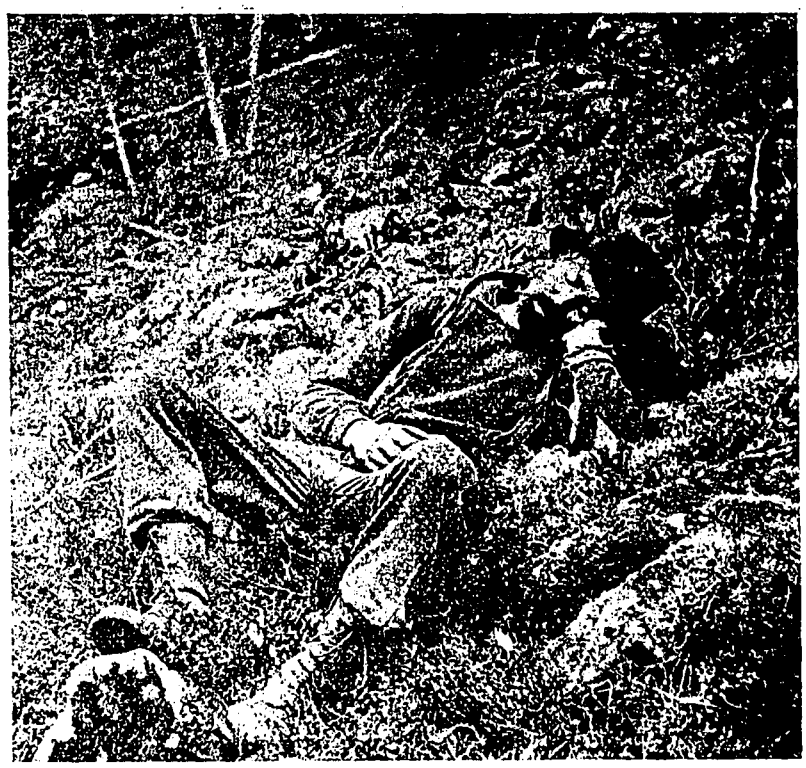
This lovely Klooch is fond of Hooch, and
makes it very well.
She's a hiyu-skookum lady, she's a Dawson
City Belle.

It must not be imagined from what has been said of the Dawson City crowd that they are an idling, no account lot. In the foregoing description they were in repose, as they generally are when waiting for the mail—a popular occupation—or when there are no "tips" going. A tip is one of the great events of Dawson City life and this is about the manner of its happening. Somebody notices a boat coming down stream, or it may be a man with a pack approaching from the direction of the diggings. He mentions the fact to a friend and they break off from the crowd and go to meet the new-comer. Others follow in their wake until a little procession is formed. If the arrival is known he is peppered with questions to which he returns scant replies until he sees some chum or partner with whom he is quickly in close confab. They steer straight for the Gold Commissioner's office and the whole population wakes up. Within half an hour wild rumors are afloat. The saloons are crowded with men anxious to hear the news. Presently some men are seen hurrying towards their shacks. They've got the tip. Others get it. It passes round from mouth to mouth till every man who has a grubstake is packed up and away, the tip has evolved into a stampede and the town is almost deserted. Often the stampede ends in a brokenhearted return to town after a weary and fruitless tramp over swamp and rock and mountain. Another excitement of the camp is the arrival of some lucky one with a load of dust, which he feels in duty bound to get rid of as soon as possible. That is the bonanza of the harpies who infest



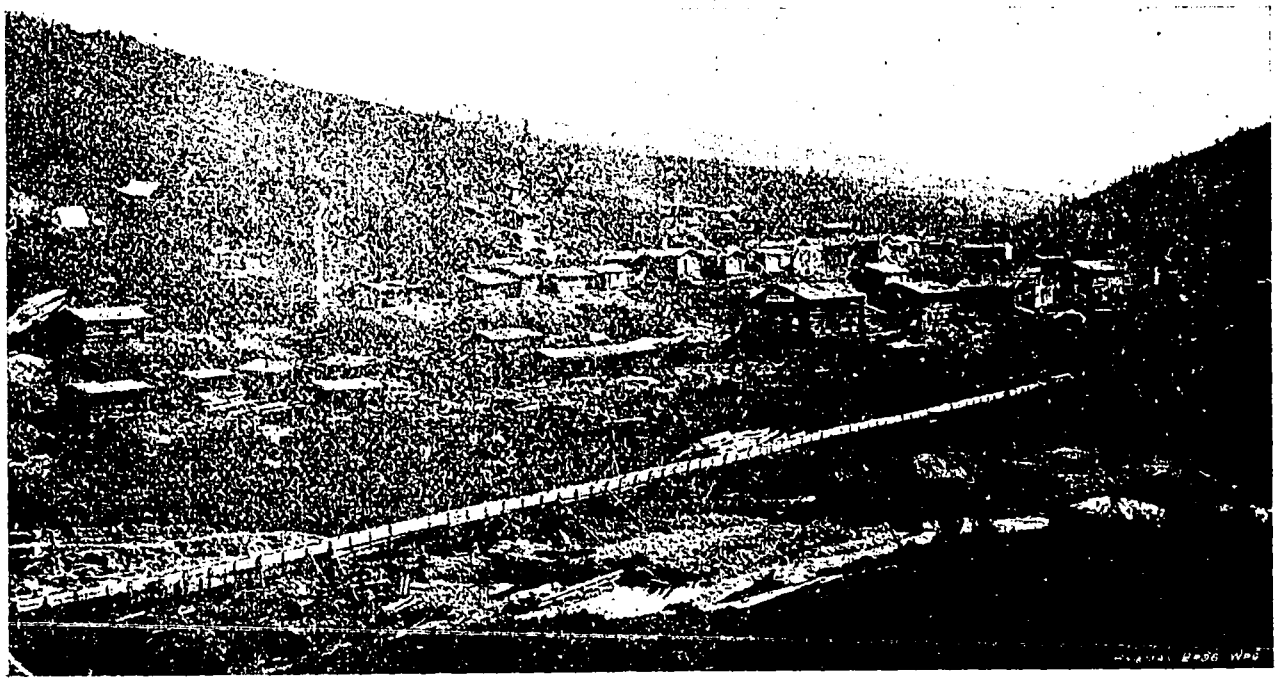
"ON SKOOKUM," WASHING GOLD.

the place, and they are a numerous class. 'Tis then that everything is thrown wide open, saloons, dance halls and faro dives, and other miners possessed of much dust, infected by the spirit of recklessness, join in the orgie till the whole town echoes with the notes of carousal. 'Tis then the tip goes round among the idlers, pimps, sponges and sneak thieves who make the most of their opportunity to secure some of the gold they are too lazy to work for, while the revel is in progress. It must not be inferred that Dawson is a city of drunkards and spendthrifts, far from it, there are hundreds of hard working, hard headed, sober men of business who devote their time industriously to their affairs and conduct them with all the precision and method of older communities, but there is a very large class of miners and claim owners, who spend their money or gamble it away as quickly as they can earn it, and a still more numerous class of worthless, shiftless adventurers who live, no one knows how, but mainly by preying upon the industrious, but improvident, workers.



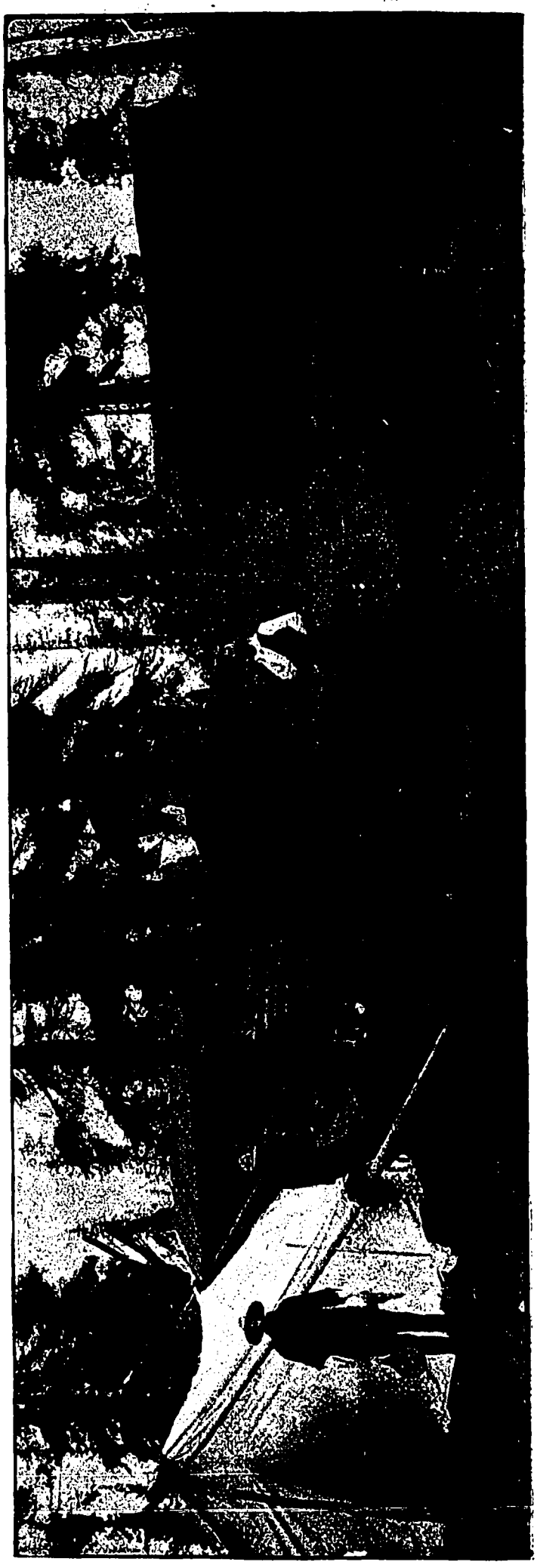
AN EXHUSTED STAMPEDER.

A character in Dawson, who is pointed out to every newcomer is George W. Carmack. He is the man who made the first discovery of coarse gold on Bananza Creek in August, 1896. He is a remarkable



"FORKS," BONANZA FROM DISCOVERY.

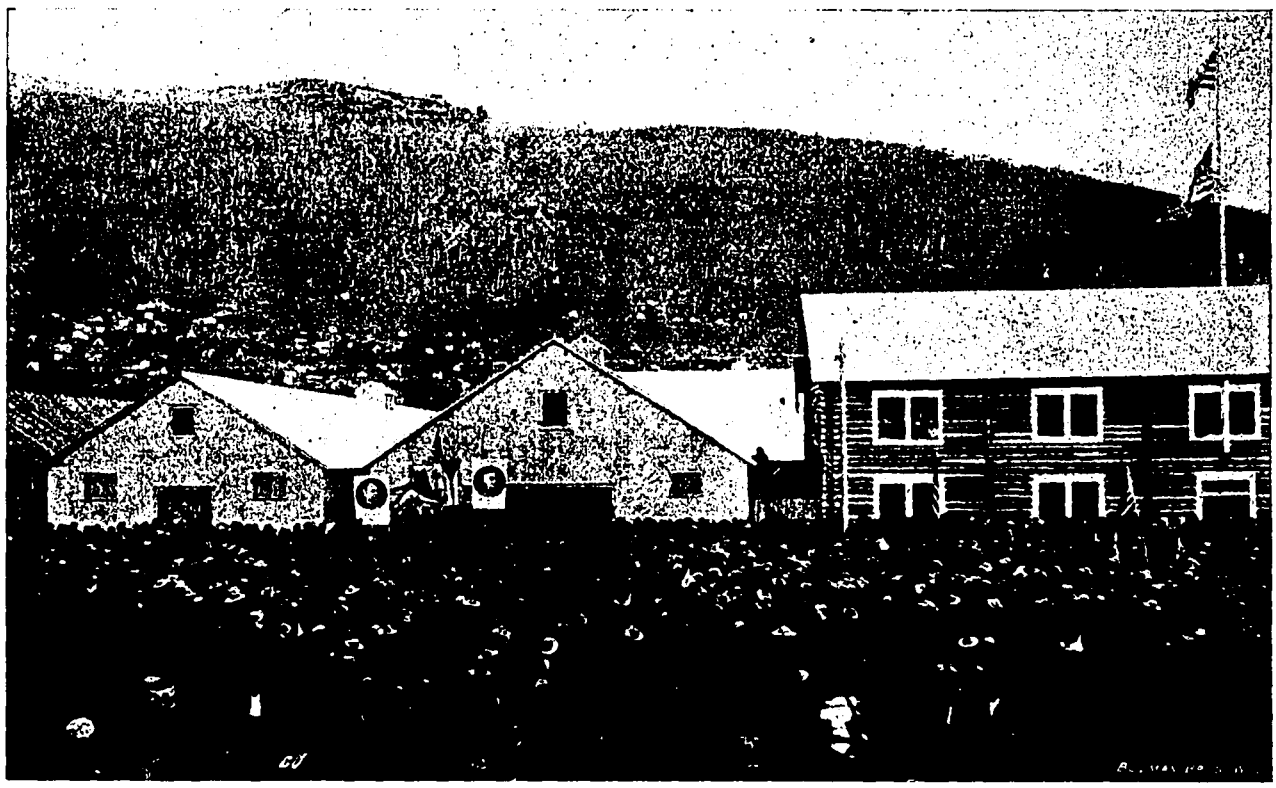
man and a prominent figure in the life of Dawson. Born in California in 1860 he wandered to the north and cast his lot with the Indians with whom he lived for many years before the Yukon became famous as a gold country. When he made his great find in company with two Indian companions, Skookum Jim and Takish Charlie, he gave the tip to Forty-mile camp and broke it up, as the whole population stampeded to Bonanza and Dawson City was founded. Carmack, although he has spent the greater part of his life in the northern wilds, is a man of considerable culture and possessed of decided literary tastes. The following verses were written by him on Christmas Eve, 1888 :



CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

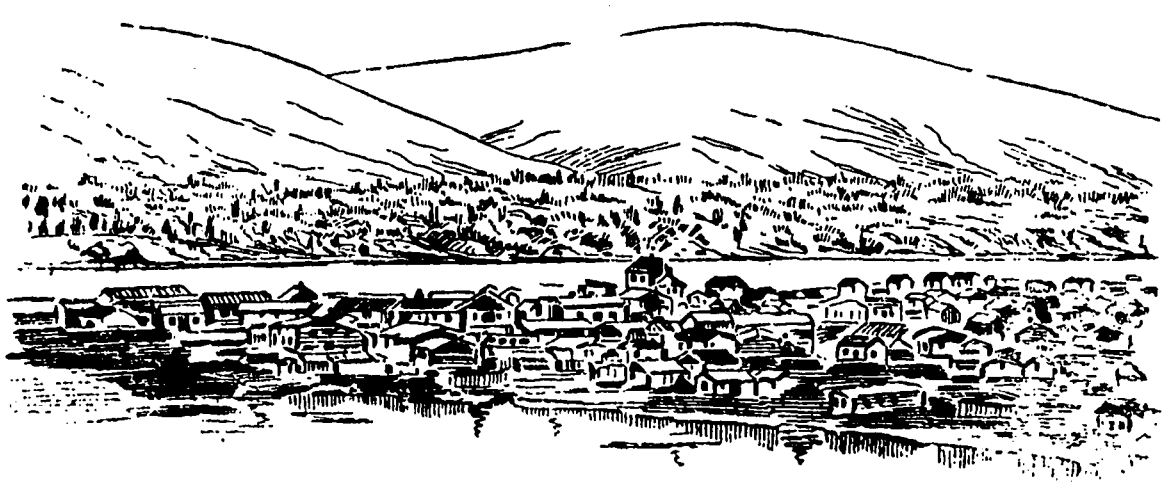
I'm camped on a mountain side to-night, one hundred miles from the sea,
And the smell of the caribou steak on the coals is a grateful odor to me.
For the deer were fleet-footed and shy to-day, and I've roamed the mountain's breast,
Till the bear-skin robe on my cozy bed seems beckoning me to rest.
But a tall old spruce by the camp-fire's glow, bows his glittering top to me,
And seems to whisper "'Tis Christmas eve, and I am your Christmas Tree."

Then a flood of memories o'er me sweeps, and my spirit far doth roam,
To where there's another glittering tree, in a California home.
There all is light and life and love, and the children laugh with glee.
And I cannot but wonder with wistful pain, are they thinking to-night of me?
But a whisper comes from the tall old spruce, and my soul from pain is free,
For I know when they kneel together to-night they'll all be praying for me.



CELEBRATION AT DAWSON CITY OF UNITED STATES NAVAL VICTORY.
(July 20th, 1898).

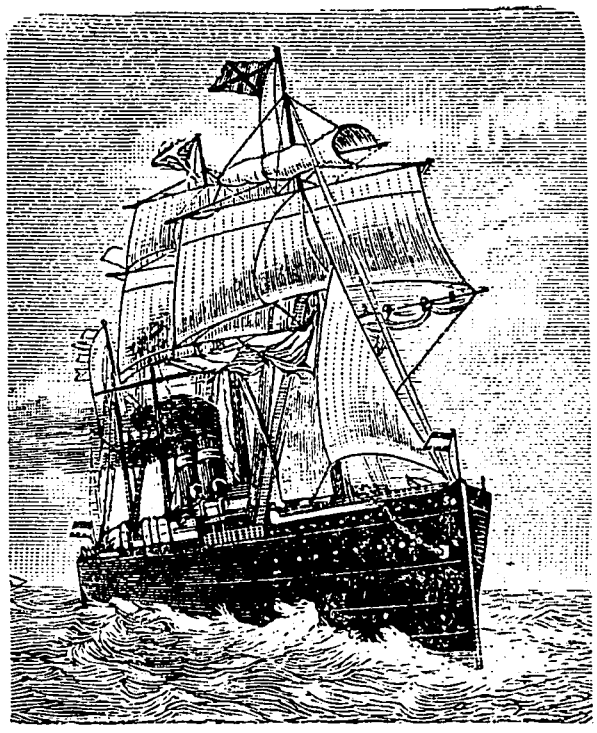
Social conditions in Dawson are improving rapidly. Despite its reputation as a drinking town a flourishing Good Templars' Lodge is one of the institutions and Masonic and Oddfellows' lodges have also been organized. A reading room and library has been established. Hospitals and churches are generously supported and Sunday is strictly observed, every saloon and place of amusememt being closed on that day. Many ladies have joined their husbands during the summer and the coming winter will be enlivened by parties, dances, concerts and other entertainments of a social nature that will serve to alienate the better class of men from the saloons and gambling houses which heretofore have been their only refuge from the monotony of an arctic winter.



FORTY MILE CREEK, YUKON.

A NEW FOOD ROUTE:
TO EUROPE VIA HUDSON BAY.

BY T. C. SCOBLE, C.E.



WHY should the food producers of the larger half of the North-American continent be impelled to seek an outlet for their produce through sea-ports thousands of miles to the south-east of the area of production, when they have in Hudson Bay, immediate access to the Atlantic ocean, and a shorter route from thence than is afforded from either New York or Montreal? Why, indeed, save that ignorance of the circumstances surrounding the navigation of Hudson Bay and Straits, combined with determined opposition from interested corporations, has placed the question seemingly beyond the range of commercial possibilities. It is the more extraordinary that such should be the case, when no question appears to have arisen as to the feasibility of taking ordinary sea-going vessels through the dangers of Behring Sea to the Yukon, the White Sea to Archangel, or the Kara Sea to the Obi and Lena; voyages of much more hazard than that involved in the passage of Hudson Straits, and thousands of miles farther from the sea ports of Great Britain! It is with a view of dispelling some erroneous ideas, by affording precise and accurate information, that this paper has been compiled from the most reliable sources. But first, in order to arrive at the need for a new ocean outlet, it is advisable to describe the country waiting to be developed by such means.

Hudson Bay is an inland sea, covering 350,000 square miles, and draining an area of 3,000,000 square miles. Including Fox's channel in the North, and James Bay in the South, it has an extreme length of nearly 1300 miles, and a width of about 600 miles. The straits which connect Hudson Bay with the North Atlantic Ocean are 500 miles in length, and from 45 to 100 miles in width, emptying into the ocean between 60° and 62° north latitude. It is the navigation of these straits, and not of Hudson Bay itself, which has been called in question, and to settle which the Canadian Government despatched expeditions in 1884, 1885, 1886, and 1897. But the reports of these expeditions have been inconclusive, inasmuch as the deductions drawn by their commanders are not borne out by their recorded experiences, and are dissented from by persons of greater experience who accompanied the expeditions as observers. Moreover, overwhelming testimony has been given before Dominion Parliamentary Committees and a committee of the Manitoba Legislature that the navigation of the straits is

commercially safe for at least four and a half to five months in the year. Even that timid navigator, Lieut. Gordon, says in his report (1885) : "As to the length of season for practical navigation, if we regard the presence of field ice as the only barrier, the information which we have got would point to the months of July, August, September and October as being the months in which the straits are passable. As a rule, in July there will be delays, but to vessels strengthened and gave his opinion, having accompanied Lieut. Gordon in the Alert as a semi-official representative of the British admiralty. He says :

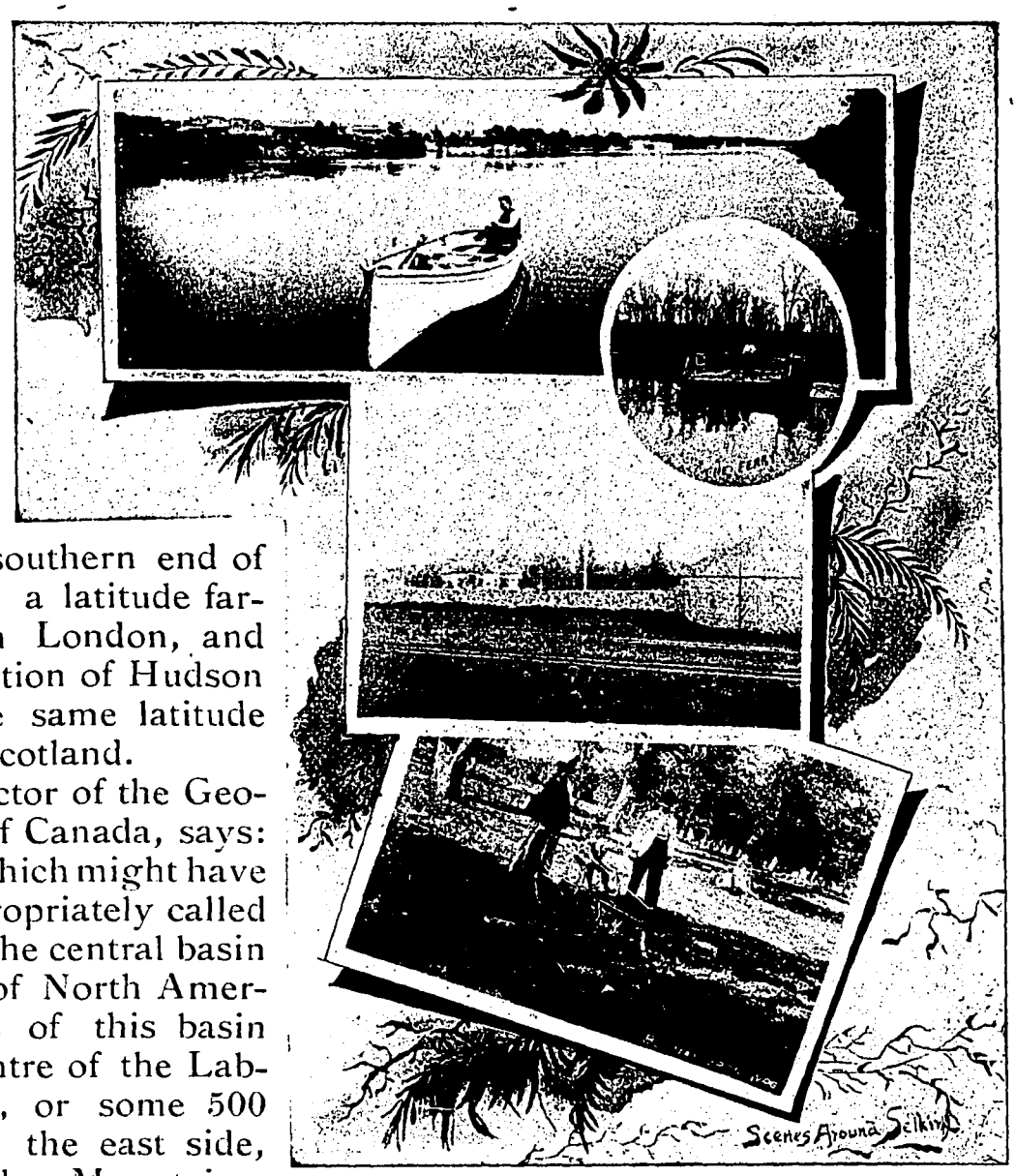
"Steam has made a revolution in ice navigation. A well found steamer is able to make her way with ease through the ice found in Hudson straits in June and July, when a sailing ship would be hopelessly beset and incapable of pushing on." And again, in writing upon the same subject he says : "The most advantageous time for

A YORK BOAT.

sheathed there would be no danger in making the passage." Subsequently he cut off a month from this period, but it must be remembered that the years of his exploration were co-incident with those of the construction of the Canadian Pacific railway, and it was not the policy of the Government to further any scheme or enterprise which would conflict with what was then termed "a great national undertaking." As an antidote to Lieut. Gordon's wavering testimony, Commander, now Admiral, Markham pushing on is, of course, in calm weather when the ice is loose. Under the same conditions a sailing vessel would be utterly helpless. It is, therefore, only reasonable to infer that what has been performed regularly, and year after year, by sailing ships, can be accomplished with greater regularity and certainty by well-found steamers specially constructed for ice navigation, and provided with powerful machinery. A channel which has been navigated for 270 years, first by the little fly boats of the seven-

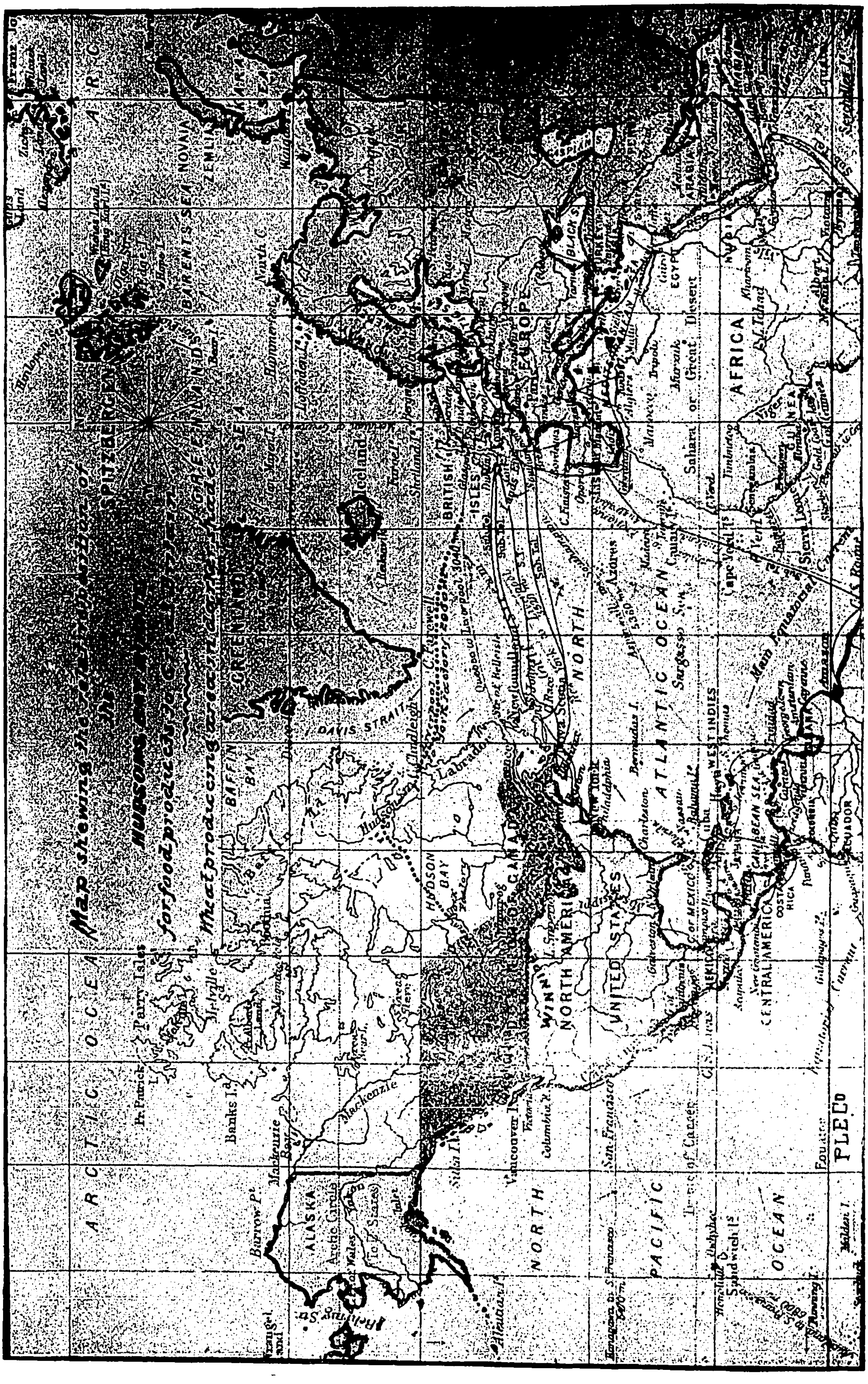
teenth century, then by the bluff-bowed, slow-sailing, exporting vessels of Parry's days, and for a long period by the Hudson's Bay Company's ships, cannot be very formidable, and if sailing ships can annually pass through it, 'a fortiori,' steamers will find less difficulty in doing so. The result of all the experience gathered from voyages during two centuries, and from observation at the stations, is that Hudson strait is perfectly navigable and free from ice in August, and later in the season. It must be remembered that this passage has been successfully accomplished nearly every year during the last two centuries, while the vessels which have been employed in the service have been ordinary sailing ships, dependent entirely upon wind and weather. It is very rare, indeed, that they have failed to get through, and still more rare that any of them have been destroyed by the ice. It appears from the official reports of the Hudson's Bay Company that Moose Factory, on the southern shore of the bay, has been visited annually by a ship since 1735, with but one exception namely, in 1779, when for once the vessel failed to achieve the passage of the strait. The percentage of losses by wreckage among the vessels employed in the Hudson Bay is far less than would have to be recorded in a like number of ships engaged in general ocean traffic."

He further says: "Early on the morning of July 11th we arrived off the station on the north side of the strait and anchored in a snug little bay called Ashe inlet. The observers informed us that ice did not form in the strait before December, and that the channel was perfectly free for navigation for the entire month of November." Thus Gordon gives us July as the opening, and Markham November as the closing, month of navigation, or five months, and this is a conservative estimate.



A popular error lies in the supposition that Hudson Bay and its vicinity is in the Arctic regions, that the climate is unendurable and the land destitute of everything except fur bearing animals; the fact being that the southern end of James' Bay is in a latitude farther south than London, and the northern portion of Hudson Bay in about the same latitude as the north of Scotland.

Dr. Bell, director of the Geological Survey of Canada, says: "Hudson Bay, which might have been more appropriately called Hudson Sea, is the central basin of the drainage of North America. The limits of this basin extend to the centre of the Labrador peninsula, or some 500 miles inland on the east side, and to the Rocky Mountains, a distance of 1300 miles on the west. The southernmost portion of this basin, namely the source of the Red River, extends nearly to latitude 45°. The head waters of the southern rivers of James' Bay are not far to the north of Lake Huron, while one of the branches of the Albany rises within twenty-five miles of the north shore of Lake Superior. Including the Winnipeg system, the basin of Hudson Bay has a width of about 2,100 miles from east to west, and a length of about 1,500 miles from north to south, and its dimensions approach the enormous area of 3,000,000 square miles. Over a great part of this region there is a temperate climate, and although the soil of much of it is comparatively barren, yet large tracts are very fertile. Both the bay and the strait are remarkably free from rocks and shoals which might interfere with their free navigation. The depth is very uniform over most of the bay, and nowhere does it present any great irregularities. It averages about seventy fathoms throughout, deepening to one hundred and upwards in approaching the outlet of Hudson Strait, while in the strait itself the soundings along the centre vary from about 100 to upwards of 300 fathoms. Near the shores a stiff clay bottom, affording good holding ground for anchors, is almost invariably met with on both sides." After speaking of the undeveloped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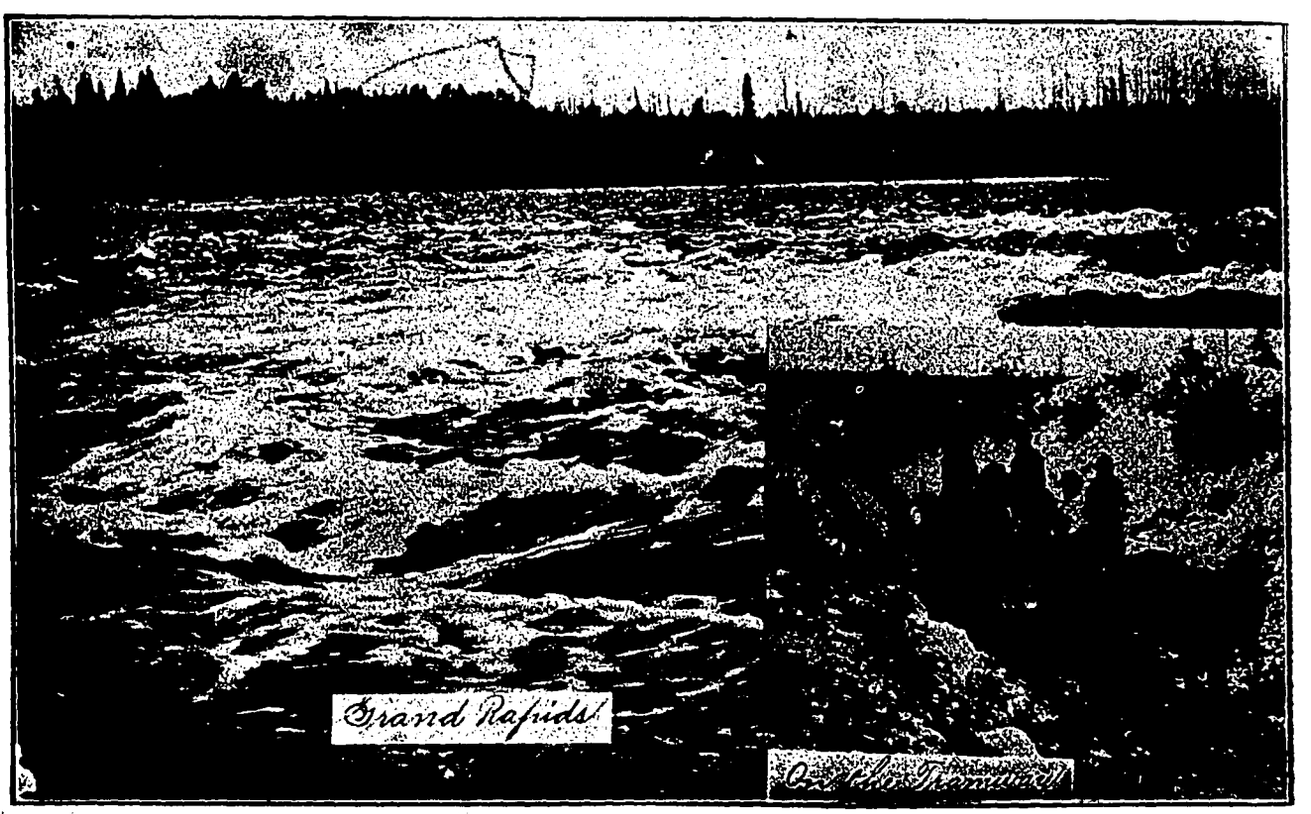
TURKEY
EGYPT
ARABIA
AFRICA
Sahara or Great Desert
DAVIS STRAIT
BAFFIN BAY
HUDSON BAY
Labrador
CANADA
NORTH AMERICA
UNITED STATES
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Azores
Bermudas I.
WEST INDIES
CARIBBEAN SEA
CENTRAL AMERICA
ECUADOR
Amazon
Parry Isles
Banks I.
Mackenzie
ALASKA
Arctic Circle
Barrow Pt.
Vancouver I.
San Francisco
Tropic of Cancer
PACIFIC
NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN

fisheries, and the petty industry of the fur trade, Dr. Bell says, "But perhaps the most important of the undeveloped resources of the country round the bay are its soil, timber, and minerals. To the south and south-west of James' Bay, in the latitude of Devonshire and Cornwall there is a large tract in which much of the land is good, and the climate sufficiently favorable for the successful prosecution of stock and dairy farming. To the south-west of the wide part of the bay the country is well wooded. Missanaibi, gypsum on the Moose, and petroleum bearing limestone on the Abbittibbi River. Anthracite coal on Long Island south of Great Whale River, which yielded the following analysis :

Fixed Carbon	94.91
Volatile combustible matter	1.29
Water	3.45
Ash	0.35
	100.00

The same mineral was also stated by some Indians to crop out some miles inland from the mouth of Little Whale River. Soapstone



Some of the timber may prove to be of value for export. Among the kinds may be mentioned white, red and pitch pine, black and white spruce, balsam, larch, white cedar and white birch. In 1877 inexhaustable supplies of good manganiferous iron ore were discovered on the islands near the East main coast, and promising quantities of galena around Richmond Gulf and also Little Whale River. Traces of gold, silver, molybdenum and copper were likewise noticed on the East main coast. Lignite was met with on the is abundant near Mosquito Bay, and iron pyrites near Marble island. Good building stones, clays, and limestones exist on both sides of the bay. A cargo of mica is said to have been taken from Chesterfield Inlet to New York, and valuable deposits of plumbago are reported to occur on the north side of Hudson Strait."

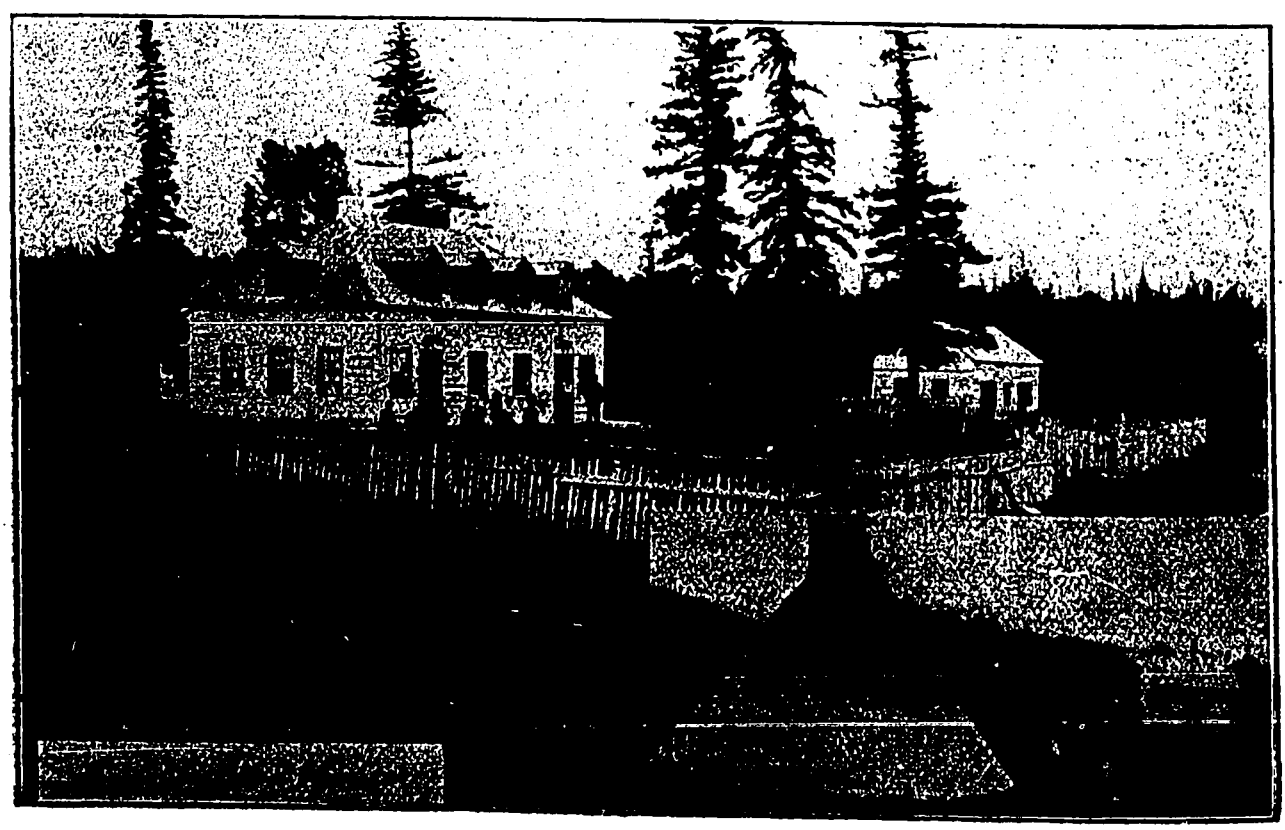
In the eleven years ending in 1874, New Bedford whalers were known to have taken oil and whalebone from Hudson Bay to the value of $1,373,023.36, and the

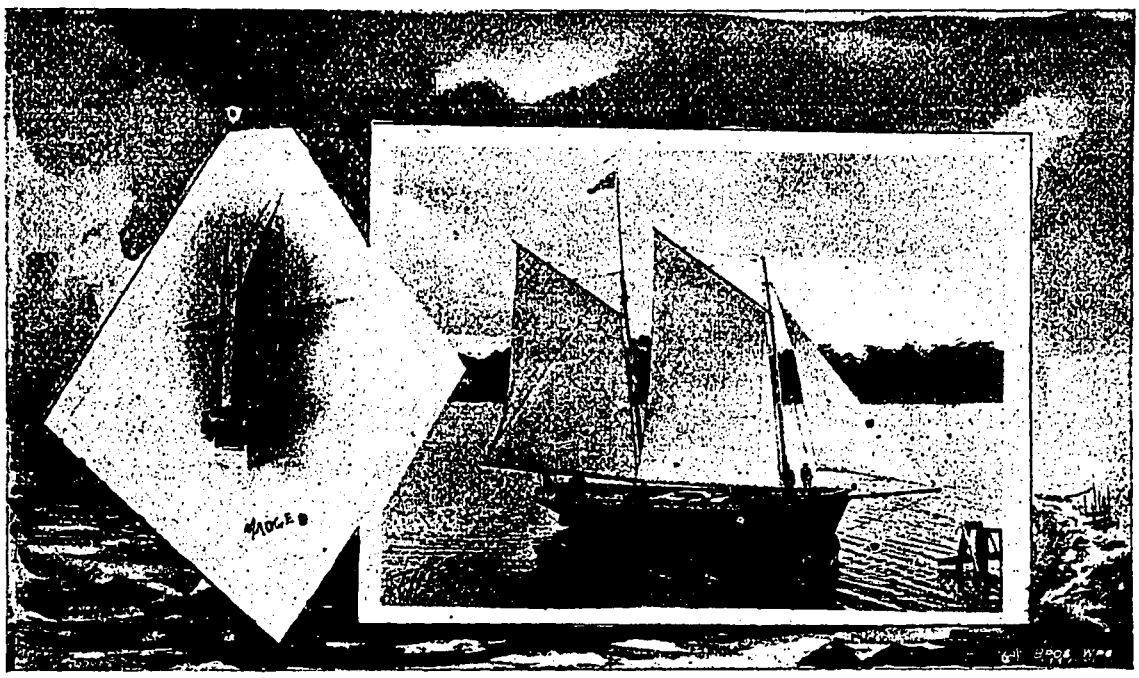
estimated value of their fisheries between 1846 and 1897 exceeds $10,000,000. Salmon and rock cod exist in great profusion in these waters, but no organized fisheries have yet been established. The Hudson's Bay Company did for some years ship salmon from Ungava Bay, but do so no longer. The white whale fishery, also, which once flourished at East main has been dropped, except by United States whalers, who incidentally engage in it. Why should not these resources be exploited for the benefit of Canada.

So much for the bay itself, and now for the land and water tributary to it. The area drained into Lake Winnipeg and thence, by the Nelson River, into Hudson Bay is estimated at 432,000 square miles. It embraces the valley of the Red River of the north, which takes its rise close to the source of the Mississippi, and flows northward, with a tortuous course, for nearly 700 miles. The lower part of the river, for 120 miles, runs through the Province of Manitoba ; and, so far little effort has been made to improve its navigation, but the upper portion, southward from the International Boundary line, has been systematically improved by the Government of the United States so as to afford continuous navigation for 450 miles.

The area of U.S. Territory drained by the Red River and its tributaries, is about 35,000 square miles. This vast area is capable of producing, annually, at a low average to the acre, 500,000,000 bushels of cereals. The area of the Red River valley within the Province of Manitoba is about 7,000 square miles, of the best wheat growing land in the world, the birth place of the famous No. 1 Manitoba hard.

North-West Ontario, north of the height of land dividing the waters flowing south and north, drains an area of some 30,000 square miles, through the Winnipeg river, into Lake Winnipeg, at its south-eastern extremity. Eight rivers flow into the lake on its eastern side, some of which take their rise far into Labrador. Lakes Dauphin





(387 square miles), Manitoba (1850 square miles), and Winnipegoosis (2030 square miles) pour their waters through the little Saskatchewan into the broad bosom of the lake, and eleven rivers contribute their quota on the west side. But the most important affluent is the great Saskatchewan River, which empties into the lake at its north-western extremity, and which takes its rise in the Rocky Mountains. Its upper course consists of two branches, which are born in the glaciers of the mountains, diverging north-east and south-east from their source until some 300 miles apart, whence they gradually converge and meet again about 500 miles from their birth place, and 700 miles from their outlet into Lake Winnipeg. From this point the united river flows through a depression in the prairie level from 150 to 500 feet deep, fed by numberless streams and water courses, and widening into lake-like channels at various points, unobstructed, until within a few miles of its mouth, when, flowing through a rocky channel, falls and rapids aggregating 60 feet of descent occur in about twelve miles of its course. Above these rapids the river is navigable for 1513 miles. Light draught vessels, stern wheel steamers, drawing from 2 feet to 2·6 feet of water were plying on the river as far as Edmonton, until 1886, when the completion of the railway to that point caused a diversion of traffic.

Lake Winnipeg, the receptacle of this enormous drainage system, is nearly 270 miles long, and over 70 miles broad at its northern extremity, its area being stated at 9,400 square miles. It is divided at about one third of its length from the southern extremity, by a contraction in its width, or narrows, from two to five miles in width, and ten miles in length. The area of this lower portion is 1280 square miles, and of the upper portion, over 8000 square miles, or 700 square miles greater than that of Lake Ontario.

The elevation of Lake Winnipeg above sea level is not yet definitely settled. The Canadian Pacific Railway survey first fixed it at 710 feet, but more recent levels have reduced this to 682 feet. Professor Hind gives it as 628 feet, but so far as it is possible to judge from barometrical observations and boiling point experiments, the elevation

between Lake Winnipeg and Hudson Bay near York Factory is not greater than 650 feet. The average depth of the lake varies from seven to fifteen fathoms, and the navigation of the upper portion is unobstructed; only a few islands intervening in the straight course from the narrows to the mouth of the Saskatchewan. From June until October, comfortable passenger steamers ply between Selkirk (19 miles north of Winnipeg) and the Grand Rapids; and the lake is seldom rough enough to prevent this being an enjoyable week's round trip.

Only the two industries of lumbering and fishing have, so far, been developed in the Lake Winnipeg region; the valuable mineral resources remaining untouched. On the east side the Laurentian series extend along the shore line for the greater length of the lake. "Along the north-west shore the rock exposures are lower Silurian." (Macoun.) "The eastern margin of the great interior continental basin is composed of Silurian and Devonian rocks, which, resting almost horizontally on the upturned edges of the Laurentian and Huronian, form a belt of varying width, which appears to extend from Minnesota to the shores of the Arctic Sea. Prof. Hind has recognized the chazy formation on Lake Winnipeg, while in Manitoba and Winnipegoosis Lakes, Devonian rocks occur, and it is probable that the intervening formations will be found to be extensively developed in the Lake Winnipeg region as it is more fully examined." (Physical Geography and Geology of Canada, Selwyn & Dawson.) "The east shore is low and sandy, with points and numerous small islands and reefs of Laurentian gneiss. A belt of Huronian schists, chiefly micaceous, occupies a long stretch between Big Island and Point Metasse." (Bell, 1877).

It will be interesting to the student of geology to note, as above indicated, that the dividing line between the Laurentian and cretaceous systems is covered by the waters of the lake, and that, in consequence, while the eastern shore presents nothing to the eye but granitic rock and boulders, the western shore shows nothing but limestone and sandstone. But the islands present the most interesting study, in some cases embracing the two formations. On Black Island is a deposit of hepatic iron ore, a species of soft brown hematite with interspersed crystals of calcite and quartz, yielding an assay from 44 to 62 per cent. of metallic iron. This island contains some 35,000 acres, heavily wooded with timber admirably suited to make charcoal, and it is estimated that as the ore is of a remarkably tractable charac-

ter, and carries with it a large percentage of its own flux, and with limestone near at hand, that charcoal pig of good quality can be produced for about $10 per ton. The ore in sight is estimated at forty-five million tons. There are grey quartz seams in the overcropping containing gold to the value of $9 to the ton. On the same island exist iron and copper pyrites and sulphurets of silver and gold in a coarse grained, greenish gray, silvery mica schist.

Red hematite is also found at Berens River, and auriferious and argentiferious rocks on Blood or Bad Throat River and in the high lands opposite Dog's head. On Bad throat river thirty or more gold claims have been located, which promise well from assays of specimens. At Pipestone Lake, on the upper Nelson River, the same Huronian belt which attracts so much attention, and has proved so rich in the Lake of the Woods district, crosses the Nelson river, and is reported to be full of veins of auriferous quartz and free milling gold bearing rocks. The same belt of mineral lands undoubtedly exists all along the east side of Lake Winnipeg, though no recorded explorations exist to prove the fact.

On the west shore of Lake Winnipeg are found limestone flags of large dimensions, of suitable thickness for pavements, and sandstone of excellent quality for building purposes. At Grindstone Point exists material from which it derives its name. On the Little Saskatchewan, near Partridge Crop Lake, there is an extensive deposit of gypsum of an unusually pure description ; and saline springs, from which salt has been manufactured, abound a little further westward. In addition to these abounding mineral resources, the whole country, on both sides of the lake, is more or less heavily timbered with spruce and poplar, of excellent quality for the manufacture of wood pulp, which so largely enters into manufactures of paper, etc., in the present day. "The country to the northward and north-eastward of Lake Winnipeg is emphatically a region of lakes. The general character of the district renders it possible for the rock basins to occupy a large proportion of the whole area. The solidity of the fundamental rocks and the impervious nature of the clay combine to render permanent all the lakes which may have been formed during the later geological history of the region. Besides the larger lakes the mixture of land and water in some of the intervening tracts appears to be interminable. The origin of this condition is evidently owing to the glacial force having crossed at greater or less angles the strike, cleavage, or jointing of the rocks." (Bell, 1877). Wherever the rivers flow in rocky channels, these have apparently been excavated during the glacial period before the deposition of softer material. The streams have sometimes cut down through a considerable depth of drift in order to follow a rocky channel lying beneath." (Bell, 1877). The abundance of waterways thus indicated point to an easy method of reaching the mineral and other resources of this district, few portions of which are not accessible by water, if a system of connecting links is constructed.

The only ostensible outlet for the drainage of the Winnipeg basin, as depicted by geographers in extant maps and charts, is the Nelson River, the inlet for which is at the north-eastern extremity of Lake Winnipeg. After flowing for four miles through a

channel, averaging over a mile in width, its waters enter Great Playgreen Lake, leaving it by two channels which again unite in Cross Lake, having formed an island between them fifty-three miles in length and twenty-one miles in width. (Ross, Jno.). Following the eastern branch, which is locally called the Sea River, there are several channels divided by islands which all unite about 23½ miles from the entrance of Lake Winnipeg, in a lake about four miles in length and two and a half miles in breadth, called Little Playgreen Lake. It is on the south shore of this lake that Norway House, so celebrated in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, is situated. This is the starting point for the boat route along which for over 100 years the Hudson's Bay Company transported its trading goods from, and its furs to, York Fort or Factory on Hudson Bay. This boat route follows the Nelson River for about twenty miles below Norway House, diverging below Sea River Falls along a series of water courses to the north-eastward.

The traffic of the Hudson's Bay Company between Norway House and York Factory, embracing all imports and exports in their fur trading business, was, until lately, carried in flat bottom boats, capable of bearing from 3 to 5 tons with a crew of nine men. These boats drew from two feet and six inches to three feet and six inches loaded, and were provided with masts and square sails, like lighters, as well as oars. When coming up a rapid current a line was attached to the boat, which was pulled (or tracked) up by four of the crew walking on the bank of the river or in the shallows near the shore, while the remainder of the crew pulled or poled from the boat. These boats are locally known as "York" boats.

The route to Hudson Bay followed by these boats from Norway House is thus described by Dr. Bell :—

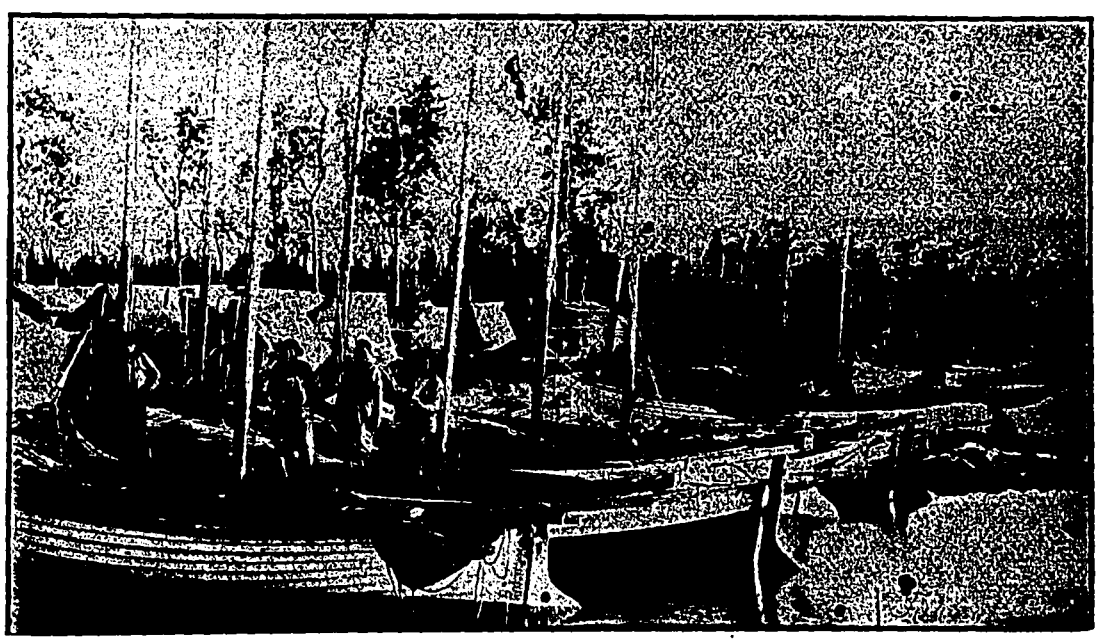
"Lake Winnipeg has been ascertained by the engineers of the C. P. R. to be 710 feet above the sea. Notwithstanding this considerable amount of fall, in going from Norway House to York Factory, the difficulties of boat navigation in descending are not great. * * The boat route leaves the Nelson River twenty-five miles below Norway House, and turns up a small swampy and marshy stream called Echimamish. which signifies a channel in which the water flows each way. Its course is eastward and at twenty-eight miles in a straight line from the east channel, we come to an abrupt termination of the western part at a low rock called the Painted Stone, twenty-eight yards in width, which forms the watershed of the channel. * * The boats are unloaded and hauled over the little watershed and landed into what is regarded as a continuation of the same channel." (Bell, 1877).

After crossing this portage the route lies through alternate wide and narrow channels for twenty miles until Robinson portage is reached, which is three-quarters of a mile in length, and overcomes a descent of about 45 feet to Franklin's Lake. Thence, passing through a rocky gorge with perpendicular walls from 70 to 80 feet in height, known at its lower extremity as "Hell Gate," through Pine and Windy lakes, a distance of 50 miles to Winipinaipis or the "fishing place," whereat falls of about five feet obstruct the passage. Thence across Oxford Lake and Back Lake,

down Trout River (falls of ten feet) to Knee Lake, whence the route lies through Jack River with five rapids, Swampy Lake, Hill River with eight rapids, Steel River, and Hayes River to York Factory. In the downward journeys it is necessary to haul the boats over three portages only, viz: at the Painted Stone, 29 yards; at Robinson portage, 1315 yards; and at Trout River falls, 24 yards, respectively. In the upward journey there are twenty-one demicharges or tracking places, and an additional portage must be made of 40 yards at Island portage. The distance over this route, as stated by Thompson, is 372 geographical miles.

The foregoing description of the Hudson's Bay Company's boat route, affords conclusive evidence that another route must needs be sought which presents lesser obstacles to improvement of the waterways between Lake Winnipeg and Hudson Bay. The volume of water, the difficult country traversed and the numerous falls and rapids of the Nelson River renders the improvement of its navigation a formidable undertaking. The Hudson's Bay Cumpany's boat route is barred because there is not sufficient water storage on the height of land to enable "locking up," in addition to the formidable falls on the Sea River.

A third route is, however, available which presents no formidable obstacles, and on which the water supply could be easily controlled, although the whole drainage area of the Winnipeg basin can be employed, if necessary, to develop it. A natural system of waterways exists connecting the Winnipeg basin with Hudson Bay, which can be improved, at little cost, so as to secure seven feet of continuous navigation; or greater depth, if considered desirable, at a proportionate increase in cost. Fifteen miles north of Norway House, the Sea River shows a deep indentation or bay which presents every appearance of having been at one time the inlet of a branch of the Nelson River. The "height of land," or dividing elevation between waters flowing east and flowing west, impinges upon the Sea River at this point, and consists of a slight rocky barrier about two miles in width from east to west, and from three feet six inches to four feet in height. Nor



FISHING SCENE ALONG THE ROUTE.

is this barrier continuous, for slight depressions exist which, upon careful survey, might be utilized to form a channel by which a floating mossy bog, lying eastward, could be reached. This "muskeg" is known locally as the Musketabaan, and on penetrating through the surface about eighteen inches, water from eight to ten feet deep is found. From this point the waterways all flow north-eastward and downward to Hudson Bay. There is no elevation to "lock up" to, it is all "locking down," and head gates in the rocky barrier referred to would determine absolutely how much or how little water should be let into the system when completed. The distance is 681½ miles between Winnipeg and York Factory, and is distributed as follows :

	Miles.
Winnipeg (city) to foot of St. Andrew's rapids	16
Head of Red River navigation to Lake Winnipeg	26
Mouth of Red River to Warren's Landing (Lake Winnipeg)	270
Warren's Landing to Norway House	23½
Norway House to Winter Portage (Sea River)	15
Winter Portage to Molson's Lake	12
Molson's Lake to inlet Whitewater River	22
Whitewater River	12
Echemamish and Robinson Lakes to Portage	12
Robinson Portage	¾
Franklin Lake to Portage	12
Portage between Franklin Lake and Lake Max	⅓
Lake Max to Pine Lake	11
Pine Lake and Channel to Windy Lake	10
Windy Lake and Channel to Oxford Lake	12
Oxford Lake and Jackson's Bay	24
Jackson's Bay to Knee Lake and portages (3)	8
Knee Lake	40
Jack River	10
Swampy Lake	10
Hill River to the Rock	26
The Rock to York Factory	109

Totalling up altogether 681½ miles, the last 109 miles of which is navigable for boats drawing seven feet of water.

The navigable stretches for canal boats and steamers of light draught *without improvement* are approximately as follows :

	Miles.
Head of navigation on Red River to Winter Portage on Sea River	334½
Musketabaan Channel, Molson's Lake and Whitewater River to Fall	36
Whitewater River, Echimamish River and Robinson's Lake to Portage	24
Franklin Lake to Portage to Lake Max	12
Lake Max, Pine and Windy Lakes, and intervening channels to the first rapids on Winnipinaipis	27
Oxford Lake and Jackson's Bay	24
Knee Lake	40
Swampy Lake	10
The Rock to York Factory	109

Or 616½ miles.

The distances which would require to be improved are as follows:

	Miles.
Rock-cutting, height of land, Whitewater Falls, Robinson Portage, Lake Max Portage, Winnipinaipis River (two cuts), Mission Portage (3 cuts)	4¼
Dredging, sand and marsh, Winter Portage Bay, Musketabaan, Robinson Portage, Pine River, Mission Creek, Knee Lake Creek and three other points	14
Improvement by dams and locks, Red River, Jack River, Hill River and other points	46½

That is 51 miles altogether in the whole of that distance, requiring any improvement to make it naviable from the city of Winnipeg to Hudson Bay.

Of this distance only 10½ miles will requiring canalling, and eight dams with locks, require to be constructed to group together and overcome the rapids on the Jack and Hill Rivers. The cost of such improvements as are above indicated would not exceed five millions of dollars, (£1,000,000 stg.) and will open communication by water transportation to half a continent.

The advantage to north western America of a short and cheap route to the sea is so obvious that labored demonstration is unnecessary. A glance at the map of British America, showing the great sea of Hud-

son, deep set in the heart of the British Northwest, stretching southward to the 51st parallel — eight degrees further to the south than the sites of St. Petersburg, Christiania and Stockholm, and fourteen degrees further south than Archangel—will show its geographical advantages. It is surprising that any question should have arisen as to its value as a trade route. The records of fifty two years' observation at York Factory of the opening and closing of the port, show an average from 1871 to 1891 of 186 days' open water. Hudson Bay never freezes—the Straits are never frozen across—the Nelson River mouth is seldom closed by ice. These are not mere assertions, but

are founded on statements of men who have passed their lives on the shores of Hudson Bay. Taking Winnipeg as a starting point, the relative distances would be :

All water route—		
Winnipeg to Hudson Bay, by canal	681½	miles
Hudson Bay to Liverpool	2,960	miles
	3,641½	miles
Via C.P.R. and Lakes—		
Winnipeg to Port Arthur	426	miles
Port Arthur to Montreal, lake and canal route	1,274	miles
Montreal to Liverpool	3,220	miles
	4,920	miles
Via C.P.R., Lakes, Erie canal and New York—		
Winnipeg to Port Arthur	426	miles
Port Arthur to Buffalo	941	miles
Buffalo to New York, Erie canal	363	miles
New York to Liverpool	3,057	miles
	4,787	miles

showing a distance in favor of the all-water route, via Hudson Bay, of 1,278 miles over the mixed route, via Montreal, and 1,145 miles, via New York. The value of all-water route is exemplified in some figures showing that whereas New York and Boston were until a short time ago the chief shipping points for Indian corn in the United States, the water route has so far prevailed that last year the predominance was given to Newport News, on Chesapeake Bay, to New Orleans, and even to Galveston, Texas, routes many hundreds of miles longer than the rail routes to New York and Boston.

It may be pointed out that water communication would be of greater advantage than any other means of reaching the seaboard, because of the control which it would exercise over competing railway rates, and the consequent saving to the farmer. And this does not apply to wheat alone, but to other articles of produce, some of which cannot now be marketed owing to prohibitive freight rates. Among these may be mentioned potatoes, oats, butter, eggs, etc. The enormous market that would be opened for all food products is set forth in the agricultural returns for Great Britain for 1895, in which the values of imports of agricultural food products into the United Kingdom are set down as follows :

Live cattle, sheep and pigs	£ 8,966,252
Dead meat, bacon and hams	23,454,053

Butter, margarine, cheese and milk	22,581,131
Poultry, game, eggs and lard	7,866,132
Wheat and flour	30,205,188
Other grains and meals	19,513,064
	£112,585,820
Or in round numbers	$560,000,000
In addition there were imported horses to the value of £922,815 sterling	4,500 000

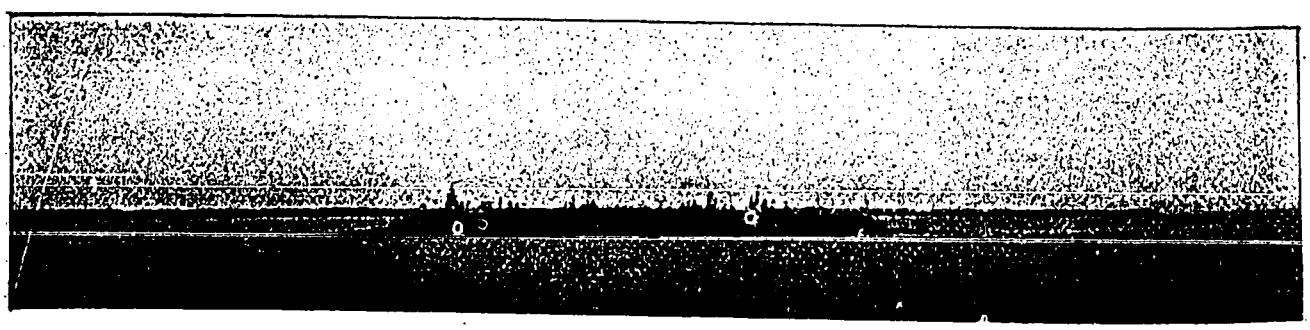
The value of eggs imported amounted to $20,000,000, and butter to $65,000,000. The estimated requirements, over and above the grown crops of cereals, were :

Wheat	194,000,000 bushels
Oats	53,401,104 bushels
Barley	47,586,560 bushels
Potatoes	2,750,000 bushels

(Sir John Bennett Lowes.) Other exportable products would be cabbages, turnips, onions, carrots and celery, of all which large importations take place annually.

For live cattle this route possesses exceptional advantages. No long period of confinement in crowded railway carriages would deteriorate and weaken them for the ocean passage ; and, reaching their destination in better order, they would command better prices. This trade has already been so far developed that one firm of shippers (Gordon & Ironside) shipped last season 50,000 head of live cattle, 12,000 sheep and 7,000 hogs. This traffic would naturally follow the Hudson Bay route. There would also be the pulp trade to develop, an industry now in its infancy in Europe, and for which the spruce and poplar of the Hudson Bay basin is specially fitted.

To successfully deal with the several elements of opposition to the present undertaking is difficult and delicate. The prejudices must be broken down without doing violence or giving offence, In the first place it must be distinctly understood that the project is altogether commercial and non-political, and must be judged entirely upon its merits. In the second place the people of Great Britain must be made aware that there are other places besides South Africa and China, and that in British North America they have an heritage that far exceeds in value the "empire" that Cecil Rhodes promised, but so far has not succeeded in giving. There are no native races to subdue, no truculent Boers to encounter, and no tropical climate to endure in the Canadian North-West, where over 200,000,000 acres of virgin soil await cultivation, and are to be had for the asking. And when Sir William Crookes talks about the impending starvation of the world in 1931, he could surely not have taken into consideration the vast area, at present lying fallow, which, when fully occupied and cultivated, is capable of producing thousands of millions of bushels of wheat and other cereals, besides a sufficiency of cattle, sheep and hogs, enough to support the surplus nonproducing population of Great Britain until the millennium ! All that is necessary is "population and capital," and both will come with the exploitation of the Hudson Bay route.



THE SONG OF THE BINDER.

BY A. EVELYN GUNNE.

Click-click ! Click-click ! Click-click !
Humming ! Whirring ! Humming !
Click-click ! Click-click ! Click-click !
I am coming, coming, coming.

A shining sword I wield, and my armor is steel well tried ;
Oh swaying, golden fields ! I am coming, my bride ! my bride !

Click-click ! Click-click ! Click-click !
Humming ! Whirring ! Humming !
Click-click ! Click-click ! Click-click !
I am coming, coming, coming.

I have waited, I have waited
Since the earliest breath of spring,
The long days have I hated
They tarried so on the wing.
This morning I heard the black bird
Lift up his raucous note ;
I knew my waiting was ended
And my heart leapt to my throat.

Click-click ! Click-click ! Click-click !
Humming ! Whirring ! Humming !
Click-click ! Click-click ! Click-click !
I am coming, coming, coming.

Humming ! Whirring ! Humming ! My beautiful golden sheaves !
I am coming, coming, coming, in the haze the Northland weaves.
The music of tinkling bells floats lazily over the wheat,
From where in the cool, wet dells, the cattle drowse in the heat.

Humming ! Whirring ! Humming !
Hasten ye laggard knaves !
I am coming, coming, coming,
With my retinue of slaves.
Hasten ye men my chariot wheels !
Lash hard my chargers three !
My love is held in durance,
And I come to set her free.

Humming ! Whirring ! Humming ! Right joyously I sing,
I am coming, coming, coming, a Norseman and a King !

REGISTRATION INSURANCE.

BY W. J. H. MURISON.

THE new postal regulations of Canada and the Empire have recently been attracting a good deal of attention. The Postmaster General, for the hearty way in which he so ably co-operated with Mr. Henniker Heaton (who has since been offered a peerage for his magnificient efforts in the cause of Imperial Penny Postage) has done much for Canada and deserves much at the hands of the Canadian people ; and they have not witheld either their gratitude or their praise. But if it be a matter of high import to Canada to have a penny postal rate to Great Britain, it appears to be a little illogical to be charged three cents per ounce on our inland and United States correspondence, which is certainly of equal importance to this country. No doubt the new Imperial and Canadian postal rates will bring about many other changes in the postal system, but the Newspaper Postage Act seems to be a change as unwelcome as it was unexpected. Moreover, in conjunction with the Imperial penny rate it has all the appearance of inconsistency — a quality not unknown in our politics.

I should like to submit two suggestions in connection with our postage stamp duties :

1st.—The advisability of having a one cent rate on local town or city letters, say one cent per half ounce.

A rate of two cents per half ounce on Canadian and United States letters ; without abolishing the existing rate of three cents per ounce.

2nd.—In place of the radical change effected by the Newspaper Postage Act, I would suggest the creation of a new duty altogether ; namely, a registration insurance stamp. The present system of registration is very imperfect. To those who frequently have occasion to send packets or parcels of value by mail, the fact that there is no guarantee of indemnity in case of loss, is a matter always of the greatest anxiety. For a considerable charge one *can* get a guarantee of this nature from the Express companies, and I believe there is a company in the United States which issues a policy covering packets of value sent through the mails. But these cases do not meet the requirements of the public at large, and their use entails both trouble and expense. Moreover, that one of the insurance companies has seen fit to issue a policy of this nature, illustrates the need, and is an argument in favor of the institution by the Government, of a registration insurance stamp. The actuaries of the sub-department of the Government which regulates all matters of insurance, could very easily make the rate for registration insurance fit the risk. It would be merely a matter of adjustment. The result would be that every letter containing valuable papers, every packet of cash or jewellery, in fact a large proportion of the matter now sent by ordinary registered mail, would bear in addition to the registration stamp, the proposed insurance stamp, insuring the repayment to the sender, of the given value of the package for which the stamp was the premium, and the stamps issued by the postmaster the policy. This new stamp could be introduced for a small cost and surely it is worth a trial. In my opinion it would not only be a great convenience to the public but would prove a valuable and increasing source of revenue to the country.

Published by Special Arrangement.

The Ring and the Lead.

BY W. CLARKE RUSSELL,

Author of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor," "The Golden Hope," etc., etc.

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I travelled thirty miles to find out the truth of the thing. I had thought the story stranger than an Arabian Night's fable. The man I called upon was an intelligent boatman named Fox. It was a summer day, and we sat together on a bench in front of a quaint public house, the sign of which was a ship's figure-head representing a man in a sky-blue jacket and flowing white trousers taking the altitude of the sun. I had never felt more nautical than when I glanced up at that wonderful, eager effigy, and sipped a glass of excellent nut-brown ale, and looked into the face of my companion, ploughed like a sandy foreshore with the furrows of weather.

"It fell out in this way," he began. "I was leaning against a post one fine morning, just like this might be, when a gentleman coming along stopped, snuffed, and took a look at the sea; on which I said, in the insinuating way of the coast,

"A fine day for a sail, sir."

"'It is,' he answered a little more cheerfully than I had expected.

"'Grand day for a row, sir,' I said.

"'No nobler day for a row could be prayed for than this,' he said.

"'Will you go then?' says I. 'Say for a couple of hours, out to that there bouy and back, a comfortable spin.'

"'Oh, dear no,' he answered, but very politely.

"'Would you like to try a little fishing, sir?' said I; for a man's not bred up a boatman to learn the word defeat. It is the defeated covey who does not man the lifeboat. It is the defeated shingle grinder who knows how to get drunk at another man's expense, and if that don't work then at the landlord's. You may lay that to heart, sir, if you take any interest in boatmen, for I've been one of the blooming lot all my life.

"'A little fishing?' he exclaimed, and I thought his face lighted up. 'Yes,' he said, after thinking, 'I should like to try a little fishing very much indeed. Do you know a good spot?'

"'The spot,' said I.

"'All right then,' said he, 'get hooks and worms and I'll be down here in half-an-hour with some food; as I shall want to be out some hours, as the weather looks promising.'

"In about half-an-hour he arrived with a basket, and found the boat waiting for him. He had made up a comfortable basket of provisions and drink. Appeared a widower; anyhow was dressed in black, with a gray or white hat on, and a black band round it. His ornaments were handsome; his chain very fine. Lord! didn't I think that there chain fine? The value of it seemed to me such that I reckoned if I had it and the watch attached to it I could lead a gentlemen's life for the rest of my days.

"Well, it was a quiet, calm time, and we partly rowed and partly sailed towards the place I had in my mind, which was about two miles and a-half distant. When we arrived we let go the little anchor, baited our hooks and began to fish.

"It was middling hot, but the gentleman didn't seem to care. On the contrary, often he'd clap his hat on to the back of his head, and look up at the sky as if he would coax some of the stains of the ocean light into his London cheeks. After we had been fishing for some time with pretty good success, we lunched; by which I mean that the gentleman very handsomely divided the contents of his basket with me. I made one of the best meat meals that day which ever I ate, and never enjoyed a smoke more than the pipe I lighted arter it. We fished for another hour or so. The gent then got tired. Besides, our cargo was a middling good one, so we lifted our anchor, hoisted our lugsail and steered with a plentiful sparkle of fish in the bottom of our boat for the harbor.

"All on a sudden I saw the gentleman catch hold of one of his fingers and turn as pale as the stern sheets he was sitting in. He then started up with a groan."

"'Why, whatever's wrong, sir?' I asked. 'Lost nothing, I hope?'

"'I've lost a ring which I would not have taken a thousand guineas for. I would not have taken all the money there is in the world for the ring,' cried he, ghastly white and staring aft at the sea as a man looks when he comes to a stand on finding he's forgotten something.

"'How could you have lost it?' said I.

"'It must have slipped from my finger when my hand was in the water,' he answered.

"And then he became like one fallen mad, blasting and blooming his own folly as never I heard a man, searching every pocket with frantic looks, then dropping on his knees and hunting over that part of the boat where he had been sitting when fishing. The fish were well for'ard; there was no chance of the ring having fallen amongst them. It came to this, then; if the ring wasn't in that part of the

boat where we could see and hunt over, it was overboard, and it didn't take us long to discover it wasn't in the boat.

"'Good God!' cried the poor gentleman in a piteous lamenting voice, sitting down. 'What shall I do? That ring contained an exquisite little portrait of my wife who is dead, and a lock of her hair under a seal. Is it possible to recover such a thing?'

"The tears were standing in his eyes. They fell from him as he looked sternwards towards the spot where he had been fishing. 'Oh no!' he groaned, 'that ring is gone for ever' I was afraid it was, and didn't think it worth while to comfort him by telling long-shore lies on the chance of its recovery. A ring isn't a grindstone. Most things give a man a chance with his dredging and creeping machinery, but a ring none.

"Next morning I was down by the water's side when the gentleman came up to me along with Inspector Bunn.

"'Fox,' said the inspector, who knew me well, 'the loss of this ring is a bad job. We are going to offer a reward of fifty guineas for the recovery of it. Now I think it may be found,' says he, 'providing we can get the exact bearings of the spot you were fishing at along with this gentleman.'

"The gentleman stood listening eagerly.

"'I could give you the bearings,' said I, 'within a few fathoms, but a few fathoms, when so small an object as a ring is concerned —I say a few fathoms,' says I, 'more or less, in that case makes all the difference of the width of this here channel. However, I'll row out presently and get the bearings with my compass, and bring them up to the office arter dinner.'

"'Thanks very much," said the gentleman, slipping half a sovereign into my hand.

"Well, those bearings simply consisted of a windmill on a line with a spire north, a red buoy on a line with a lightship south-west, and the likes of that. I stepped up to the police office in the afternoon, and that same evening a large bill was stuck up all over the town, offering a reward of fifty guineas to anyone who should discover a ring that had been dropped in the sea—and here the situation of the place, as worked out by me, was given. The poster said more than that, but what more it said was not to the purpose of this tale.

"Next day, early in the morning, all about the spot where the gentleman and I had been fishing was dark with boats creeping and dragging, and trying in several other fashions to fish up the ring. One fashion was this: a man towed a small rake with fine teeth: another chap worked away with lumps of soft pitchy and tarry stuff, hoping the ring would stick and come up—he brought up nothing but sand and shingle and pieces of crab.

"I didn't think it worth while to try my hand: I looked upon the job as hopeless. So did the rest of them after a few days. Now and again, perhaps, you would see a man scull out in a forlorn sort of way, and sit a-bobbin over the spot with some contrivance for the fishing up of rings, manufactured out of his nut. The gentleman, whose name was Maltby, returned to London. He was in despair. The loss had made him ill. I carried his portmanteau to the train for him, and whilst we waited he asked me if I thought there was the least chance of his ring being found.

"I answered, to cheer him, 'Well, sir, it's true enough that its nearly always the unexpected that you've got to look for at sea. There's perhaps one chance in a million that the ring might be fished up, by some means it's not likely any man can foresee. Anyway, that one chance exists, and it's a good chance so far as it goes, and though I shouldn't place much faith in it myself,' says I, with a look at the gleaming ocean through the open doors of of the railway station, 'still I'd try to find heart in it just enough as it were to help to tide me over the trouble with.'

"But this was comfort he didn't want. He gave me five shillings, and I put his portmanteau into a carriage.

"Do you see that steamer?" continued Fox, pointing to a clumsy barrel of a boat rolling under the pier wall of the harbor, albeit a soup plate would have floated there, so calm it was. "She's a vessel called the Narcissa, and belongs to the Trinity House, and has charge of the surveying for some leagues along shore. One of the crew of that vessel married a relation of mine. His name's George Chubb. The steamer left the harbor one morning in order to sight the bearings of the buoys in the neighborhood of the port. I happened to have turned out early, meaning to go afishing, but there was no wind. I didn't like the look of the weather, either, so I thought I'd wait a spell.

"I watched the old funnelled ark roll out betwixt the two piers into the shining sea that was panting, filled with beautiful morning colors like the sides of a dying mackerel. I little guessed whilst watching her what was going to happen. I may as well say here the ring had been lost three weeks that day, and for at least a week past no one had given himself any trouble to search for it. In fact, the posters offering a reward were beginning to be pasted over with other placards; the matter was no longer talked of and the town was fast losing sight of it altogether.

"The Narcissa steamed slowly out with the commander on the bridge holding his sextant. She had a couple of huge buoys lashed on either hand of her, and they kept her wallowing like an empty bottle amongst ripples. You may suppose that I heard the yarn afterwards, and so I can tell it you here as if I had been aboard and an eye-witness.

"'They wanted on this occasion, for some particular reason, to get a fresh idea of the character of the bottom of the water, and with that intention slung men over the side with armed leads. A lead, first of all, means a metal cone to take soundings with; it has a hollow into which you stick grease, or fat, or soap and the like, and that they call the arming. The soil below sticks to the stuff, and

by examination of it you can tell what it's like."

I burst into a laugh, Fox screwed his eye up at my face, and proceeded.

"It chanced that my relation, George Chubb, was hanging in the bight of the belt, over the port side of the vessel, swinging the lead as she scarcely floated over the water, at the moment when she was much about the place where the gentleman had lost the ring. George sent the lead flying. It cut the water, touched bottom, he sung out the fathoms, and leisurely drew up the lead to look at the arming.

"When he got the cone of metal in his hand, the first thing he saw sticking amongst the bits of shell and sand was a ring. He could scarcely credit his eyes.

"'Good thunder!' he thought to himself, his hands trembling with excitement, 'this must be the identical ring they're offering fifty guineas reward for.' He cautiously took it off the grease, and looked at it. Yes, it was the ring as described, and none the worse, seemingly, for having been overboard three weeks—bright gold, with a red-crested seal in the shape of a little box, under which George supposed was the picture and the hair.

"On a sudden, the commander of the vessel leans over the edge of the bridge and yells to George to know why he don t report the nature of the stuff the lead brought up. This flurried the idiot. He was always a nervous man; stammers, and winks one eye without meaning it. The ring was greasy. George started on hearing his name called, and in that start, sir, I'm durned if he didn't let drop the ring, which sank sweetly to the bottom again!

"I'll not presume to take it upon myself to say that my relation cursed and swore. I think, seeing he's a sailor, it's very likely that he did. You see, sir, in one minute, within the hollow of his hand, lay fifty golden guineas; the next, all was sunk to the bottom. George was a poor man with a wife and four children. He told the Captain what was on the arming, but said nothing about the ring. Why should he? He felt such a fool over the silly job that he could have chucked himself after the blooming bauble.

"When the vessel returned to the harbor that evening, after the work of the ship was ended, and the men had come ashore, George Chubb steps round to my little shanty. He found me smoking a pipe after a bit of supper.

"'What a blessed fool you must have been!' said I, tripped out of my good behavior by my astonishment and annoyance, 'to let the darned thing slip after you had once got hold of it. Why didn't you put it into you pocket soon as ever you had it in your hand, knowing the value of it?'

"'It fell like a drop of grease,' he groaned. 'Smite me if I even knew it was gone till I looked for it. But what I've come along to say is this: I've told no man the yarn so far. The ring, therefore, remains pretty much on the spot where it was lost. Suppose you go out early to-morrow morning under the mask of fishing and try for it.'

"'In what way?' says I.

"'Say by an armed lead,' says he.

"I grinned coldly, and shook my head.

"I think I see myself,' said I 'fooling round some twenty or forty fathoms of water a-bobbing with an armed lead. No fear, George. There's nothing short of diving that's going to recover the ring, and since it's pretty certain it's at the bottom where it was fust lost, it may be a question for the gentleman to consider whether it wouldn't be worth while to pay a diver to go down and look for it.'

"'Not in all them fathoms,' says Chubb, who knew all about diving, as the Trinity coves have a diver of their own, who often goes out in the Narcissa.

"'I certainly had no idea of hunting for the ring for myself, and heartily hoped that George would keep his counsel. There was no joy to be got in seeing rows of blooming idiots overhanging the sides of their boats a-dredging and mucking about, and ruining the ground so far as fishing went, without a bubble of a chance of bringing up the ring.

"'Luckily George held his tongue. In truth as I afterwards got to hear, he meant to have a try for the thing himself all in a quiet way one Saturday afternoon when off duty, as though he was out afishing.

"Sir, I'm a bachelor; I'm one of those men who live all alone by themselves. You know the yard I live in; there's always a neighbor sitting in an open door, willing to fall into a yarn if so be as we are both so disposed. Being alone meant this with me that night, after George said good-bye; I mean there was no females with the tears trickling down their cheeks to pester me into contriving something to creep for the ring with. 'For, oh Steve!' I can hear them say, whilst the babies lay hurrahing in the kitchen, 'only think of fifty guineas lying ready to your hand; nothing to do but to set your clever wits to work, and afore you go to bed to-night you'll have invented the very contrivance that will lift the ring into your pocket.' No, sirree, I was alone and wasn't pestered.

"Unless George could have given me the bearings of the place where he had dropped the ring within two or three fathoms I might as well have swept the English Channel for it. Then again the steamer was floating slowly through the water at the time; on the top of that, who was to tell where the ring lay within a mile of deep water?

"Next morning, early, I walked down the harbor to take a look round. It was a bright morning, the sky curly with cloud to the horizon. The water came from all th t way off, shivering in ripples which grew into pretty little seas as they approached the land. The 'arbor tug was towing out a number of fishing smacks, and the water looked lively enough, with the colors of the fanning sails and the white foam of the red wheels flying off the sharp bows of the towed craft.

"Whether it was the sight of those boats or the quality of the morning, or the sight of old Tom Goldsmith fishing in his boat away past the green buoy, it came into my fancy to try a bit of fishing myself. So I went home to get some breakfast, then prepared myself for a fishing excursion and started. I sailed away down into the south-east yonder, making certain there was no sport to be got on that favorite spot of mine where the ring had been lost after all the scraping the bottom of it had undergone. I passed Tom and sung out 'What cheer?' and he says nothing but holds up two large empty fists.

"I sailed on into about ten fathom, then bringing the spire of the church of Saint Barnabas on a line with the tower of a house beyond it, I let go my anchor. I had fished in this place before and had had good sport. I had fair luck, sir. Before noon I had loaded as much as I reckoned would earn me ten shillings. When I got ashore almost the first man I saw was my relation, George Chubb. He was working along with other Trinity men down in the yard that belongs to the Trinity House close by the pier gate.

"'Steve,' he says to me, 'thats a fine cod you've got there mate; what will you take for him?'

"I reckoned the fish worth three shillings to me, but George had a family, and Trinity House wages arn't filling money, sir; they don't keep a man looking rosy and greasy with good living; they're that sort of wage which a rise of a shilling makes a great difference to.

"So I says to George after a look at the cod, 'You shall have him for a shilling.'

"'Right,' says he, 'and I thank you Steve. Just lay him down here and I'll carry him home when I go to dinner, and Mary (that was his wife) shall bring the money along to you.'

"I put down the fish, and taking my basket went the rounds with what I had caught, and I made about twelve shillings that morning. I was in good spirits, and changed a shilling on a piece of tenderloin; and I also took home a pint of beer and a good crust of bread and cheese, for I had earned a dinner that day, and meant to enjoy what I had money enough to put before me.

"I stopped in the High Street to look at one of the old posters concerning the ring, still uncovered. I stood debating whether it wasn't my duty to communicate what George had related to the gentleman who had lost the ring, so that if he chose he might employ skilled labor in seeking for it. 'Twas not as if it had been lost three weeks; in that time the movement of the sea at the bottom and the action of the current, along with the heave of the swell, might well have set the ring widely clear of the bearings I had given the gentleman and the superintendant. No, Sir; the ring was just off yonder that morning the same as if it had been then dropped; 'twas there of a certainty, but I shook my head after reflecting a bit, and passed along on my way home to cook my grub and get a bit of dinner.

"It was a pleasant afternoon; the sun lay mild upon the water. Tom Goldsmith came into the yard and leaned in the doorway, talking to me whilst I fried my bit of meat.

"'What luck?' says he, with a sour face.

"I told him.

"'Ne'er a bite for my part,' says he. 'Two blooming crabs and a mountain of sea-weed that's my haul. Tell yer though what I've looked in to say. Do yer think that there ring which your gent dropped lies anywhere nigh where it sunk?'

"'You know these parts as well as me,' I answered. 'Anybody been talking about the ring again?'

"For I reckoned that if George had told his wife, then the secret was already the town's property.

"'No,' he answered, I got thinking of that there ring whilst I sat wondering what had become of the fish. A notion entered my head: Suppose you should take a piece of wood say six foot long, and seize stoutly to it at intervals, of half an inch a number of strong fishing hooks, fixed to lines each about a foot long. Well, by dragging this contrivance very carefully over the spot—what d'ye think, Steve?'

"That you'd lose all your hooks, Tom, afore you'd been sculling five minutes.'

"'Blamed if that don't sound right, too,' said he, and with his dogged face and his hands sunk deep in his breeches' pockets, he marched off.

"Whilst I was eating my dinner, and thinking over Tom's scheme, which was a silly notion to enter the head of an old hand like Tom Goldsmith, my relation, Mary Chubb, knocks with her knuckles on the little green door, and walks in with a basket on her arm, and the tail and head of a cod sticking out at either end.

"'Stephen,' said she, putting the basket on the floor and sitting down, 'George was to have sent me down with a shilling for this here fish, but the truth is—he not knowing it will take it upon himself to sell and buy without first finding out what's in the money-box. The fact is, Steve, I can't muster a shilling to pay you for this fish, and so I've brought it back.'

"'You can keep it,' said I, it's a blooming good fish. It will make three or four meals for the family.'

"'No, Steve,' says Mary, 'I don't think under the circumstances George would wish it. A thing is supposed to be bought, the money can't be found to pay for it; it wouldn't be right,' said she, bridling, with a little show of her fine airs, 'to take it as a gift.'

"'All right, then,' says I, 'you can leave it here, and go along home.'

"'I'll take the basket,' says she.

"She pulls out the cod, a fine handsome fish, and lays it upon the table, then picking up her basket, stops to indulge in a short gossip, as is the trick of women of her sort, and presently went her way. I cleared the table, and then turned to gut the cod. It was time that job was done. I got a tin pail and

a knife, and went to work. Just as I had ripped open the belly of the fish, Jim Roach's cat came lurching into my door, tail erect, body fawning the doorway. I took out a handful of gut, and chucked it to the cat, who, instead of eating it at my door, bolted across the yard with it into Roach's house.

"I went on with my job of cleaning and scraping, trying to think of a party likely to buy this fine cod, when, in the midst of my thoughts, there arose such a noise of words in the yard that I ran out to see what the matter was. Roach was a boatman, and he stood near his door holding something in his hand. Two or three persons had gathered around him, and they were all talking with excitement.

"'Well, I'm bloomed, Steve,' sings out Roach, when he sets eyes on me, 'if this here arn't the identical ring, according to the description, that your gent lost.'

"'Let me see it,' says I, drawing close.

"'Look at it as it lies in my hand,' says he, backing.

"It was certainly the ring, just as the gentleman had described it: the ring that George Chubb had lifted on the arming of his lead and let fall again.

"'How did yer come by it?' says I.

"'That there cat of mine,' says he, pointing to the beast that was indoors eating my fish's guts, 'brought it into my house.'

"'It was in my fish then,' says I, 'and it's my property.'

"'No fear!' cries he, pocketing the ring; 'what's brought into a man's house is his. I know the law. No use talking, mate. I'm agoing round with this ring to claim the reward.'

"Just then, along comes George Chubb. He sings out as a man in a hurry:

"'Steve, Mary had no business to return that cod. It's no use her saying it can't be paid for. Here's the shillin' if I had to eat my boot for the next meal.'

"He was red in the face, and seemed to have come from a quarrel.

"'The cod was returned, and it's my cod,' says I; 'I gutted him, and inside was found the ring the gent's offered fifty guineas for.'

"'Where is it?' shouted George, looking all round the yard.

"'I chucked some of the fired gut,' continued I, 'to Roach's cat, who ran with it and the ring inside of the gut into Roach's house, and the bloomed ring is now in Roach's pocket.'

"'Show 'un,' shouts George.

"'Roach pulled the ring out and gave him a view of it.

"'It was in my cod, though,' bawled George, a ter fetching a deep breath of astonishment, 'That there ring belongs to me by rights of being the owner of the fish it was found in.'

"'That be jiggered,' says I.

"Well, I think we stood for ten minutes jawing, rowing, arguing, until at last it came to Roach saying that as he was the owner of the ring he was not going to stand there all day reasoning whose cod the fish had been, since his cat had made the gut with the ring in it his'n, and he was going up town to Inspector Bunn to lodge the ring and claim the reward.

"'Blamed if you go without me, says George.

"'Or without me,' says I, feeling as if I could screw the scaramouch's head off.

"So I pulled my little green door to and the three of us walked up to Inspector Bunn, to whom we told our yarn.

"The Inspector took possession of the ring and said he would write that night to the gentleman, who, sure enough came down next day to claim the ring. He arrived in the afternoon, and bet your boots, sir, that me and George and t' other weren't far off. We were called into the office and the gentleman shook hands with me, and his face shone as though he had been made happy for life.

"'You are three claimants,' said he. 'Two certainly deserve a share; I don't see where you come in Roach.'

"'The cat might ha' swallowed the ring,' said Roach, 'and ha' killed herself, and the ring would ha' been more lost then than when it was at the bottom. My cat rattled the ring on the stones, and that was finding it, I guess, for it had been lost until then.'

"This was pretty powerful reasoning. The Inspector seemed impressed, and I hove a curse at the boatman for his readiness.

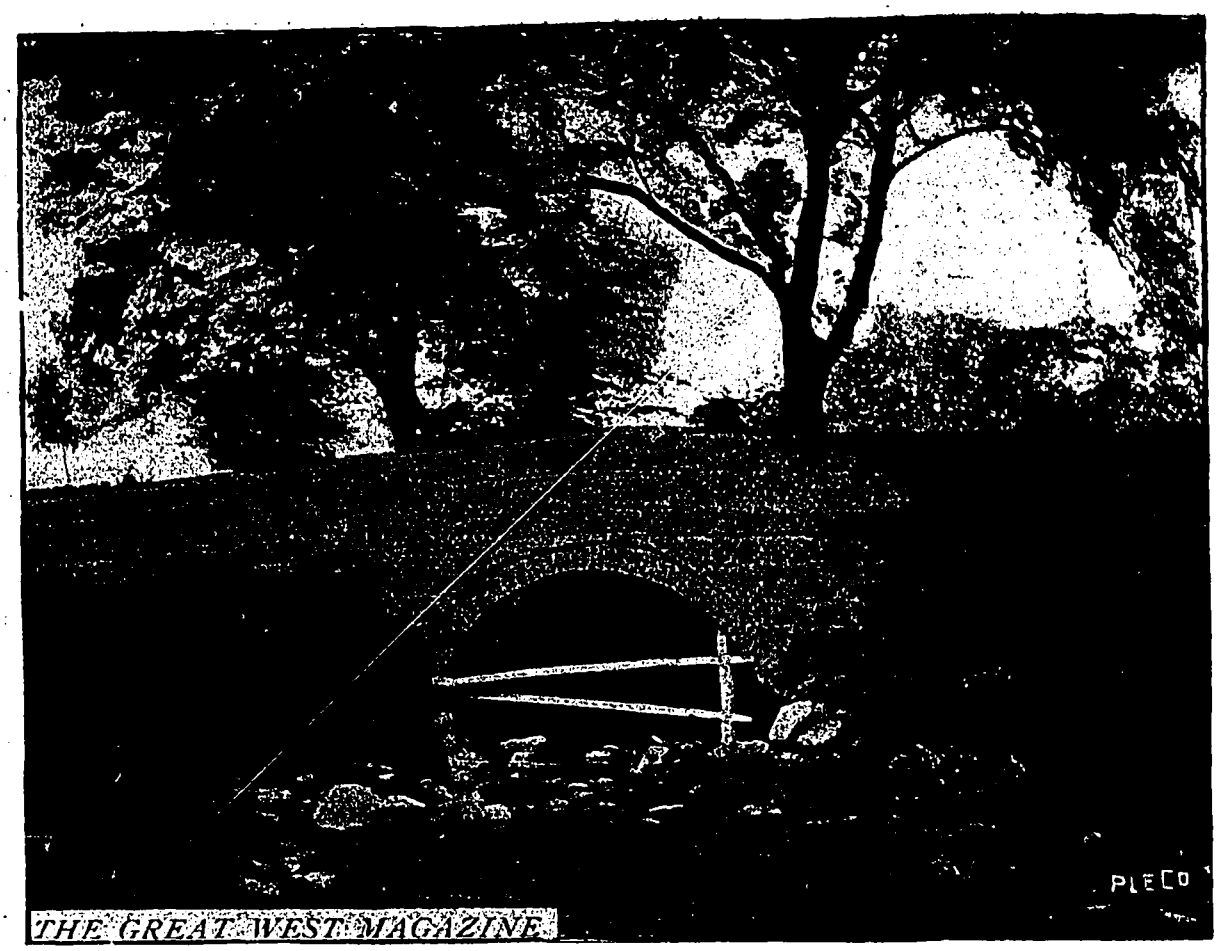
"'Will you leave the dividing of this money to me?' said the gentleman.

"'Sartainly,' George and I shouted.

"'Then,' said the gentleman, looking at Roach's darkening face, 'I shall give twenty-five guineas to my friend Stephen Fox, fifteen guineas to George Chubb, and ten guineas to the cat.'

"I and George were satisfied: Roach wasn't. He kicked up such a shiny that the gentleman threatened to give him nothing at all, and to leave him to find his remedy by going to law. This threat proved too much: Roach was a sensible man at bottom, and knew when he was welloff, and so the matter ended. A good fish yarn do yer call it, sir? True all the same, and let me tell you, as one who has wandered upon the ocean, that more's left in the sea than ever comes out of it."

THE END.



A YORKSHIRE BECK.

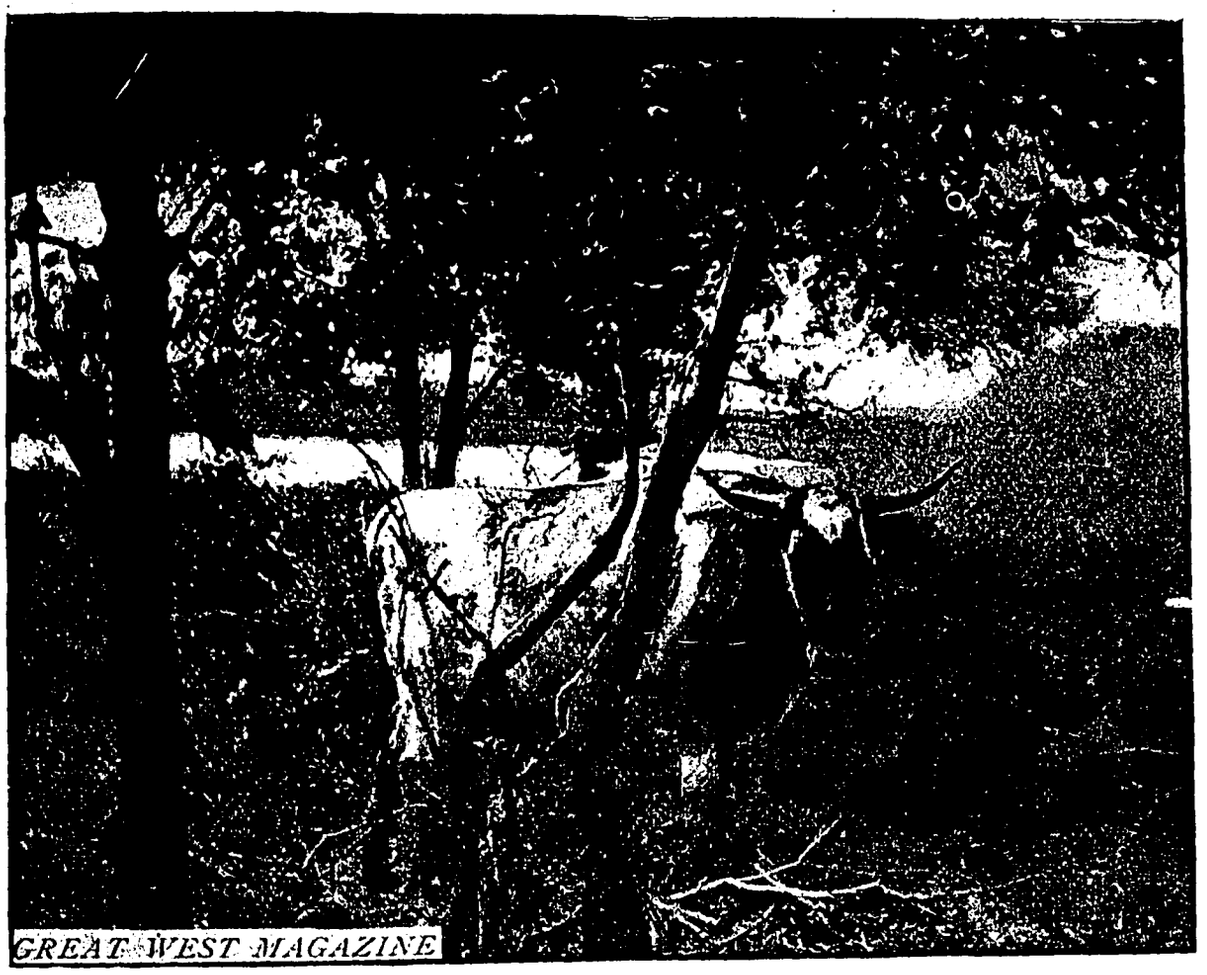
Photo by F. W. Gill.

THE AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER.

BY VIEWFINDER.

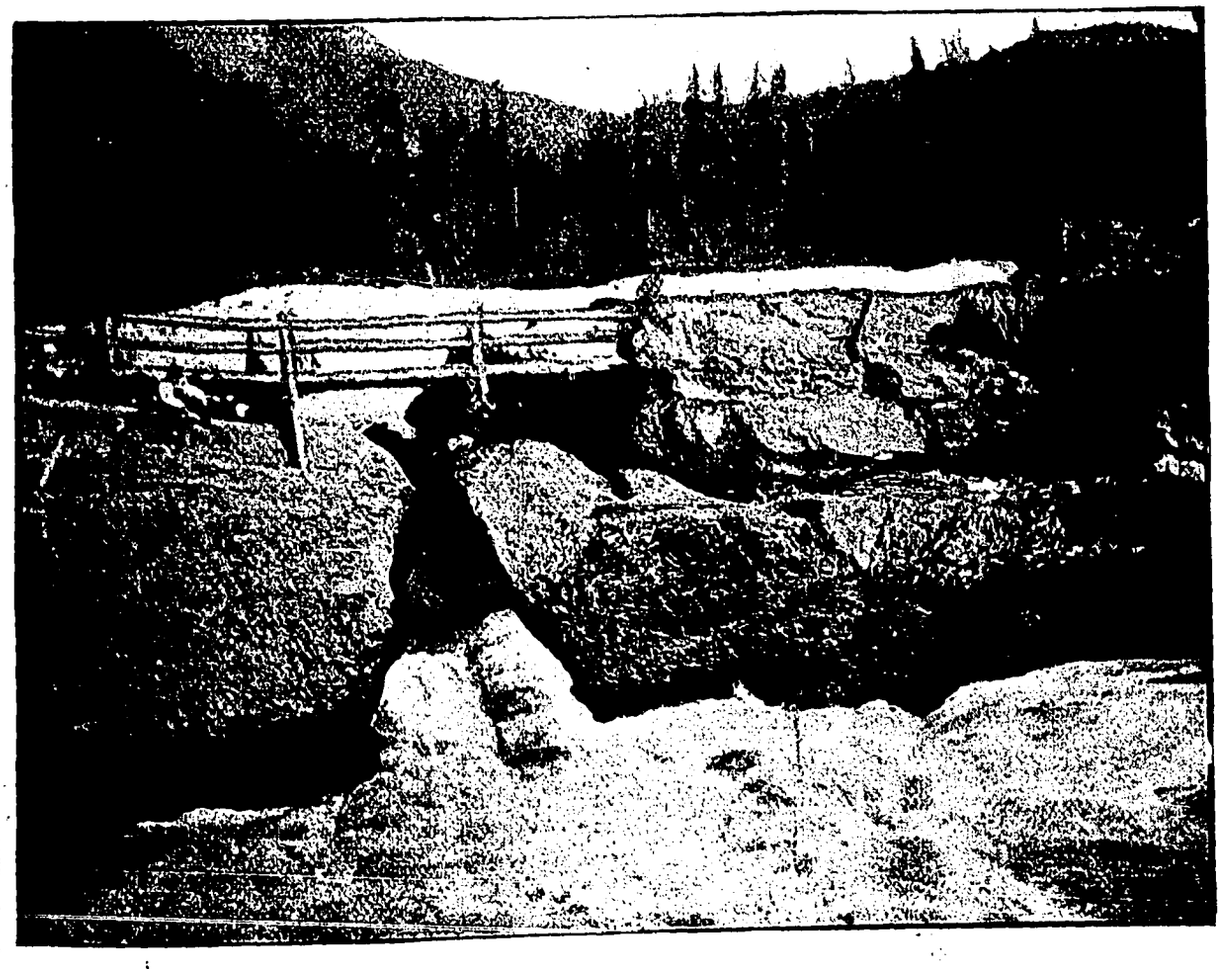
IT was my intention this month to write an article with illustrations, on the possibilities of the camera, but through unfavorable weather I have been unable to complete my illustrations and therefore ask for an extension of time, and wind and weather permitting, I will, with the editor's permission include it in next month's issue.

It has occurred to me that our Winnipeg amateurs are not any too energetic in the way of experimenting. There are hundreds of little trade secrets in photography that have been found out by accident whilst experimenting, and whilst I do not advocate nothing but experiments, still I contend that a good deal might be learned by the adoption of that means. An amateur will not, in many cases, think anything of taking out with him, for an afternoon's "shooting" ten or twelve plates and exposing them all on different objects, and in many cases only getting a small percentage of good results. It would be infinitely more to his or her own advantage to take out, say the same number of plates and expose them on the *one* object, also carrying a note book in which to note the details, as to what stop was used, length of exposure, etc.; they would then have an intelligent idea of the use of "stopping down" and the marked difference in a picture which is stopped down and a longer exposure given, over one taken without using a stop and given a smaller exposure, and vice versa. One feature of the Camera Club



"MEDITATION," A MANITOBA NATIVE.

Photo by J. A. Echlin.



NATURAL BRIDGE, NEAR FIELD, B.C.

Photo by C. Driver.

outings during the past summer which has been conspicious by its absence is the educative part of it. As a matter of course the fact of having the exchange of opinions and the comparison of work to note has been of great assistance to its members, but if they had all taken the same object using different stops and with different lightings and times of exposure, and then compared closely the results, I fancy that very much more real work would have been accomplished. The button contests have proved of real benefit in advancing the standard of the work produced, and the pictures are a standing proof of the wisdom of such a series of competitions amongst it members. It is a very general opinion that in the winter time very little can be done in photography, but when the desire is there the work can be found. After a good season's work the amateur should have a good supply of negatives and these will not be any the worse for a little overhauling, and by varnishing them a degree of permanency will be arrived at. Then there is the making of transparencies and magic lantern slides. To those who have not already taken up the making of magic lantern slides I would say that there is a whole lot of fascination in the work that must be experienced to be appreciated, and there is a good deal of satisfaction to the maker to have the work of his hands thrown on the screen and admired. The making of the slides is very easy and the result, where really good slides are produced is very gratifying. A competition in this direction might be commenced and if necessary the buttons might be awarded for a competition of this kind, as an experiment. I have been asked several times as to what is the best developer to use for ordinary work and in reply I would say that any of the standard developers are good, and in the hands of one who understands its composition and use, it will be to him, the best. Having started with one developer, I would say, continue it, and in time good results will be secured.

TRADES AND LABOR DELEGATES AT OLD FORT GARRY GATE, WINNIPEG.
Photo by C. Driver.

CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE, DAWSON CITY.

BANKING IN YUKON.

THE Canadian Bank of Commerce is the second largest bank in Canada, and while it has the reputation of being one of the most conservative, it is also one of the most enterprising banks in the country. One of the best evidences of this is shown by its recent action in establishing a branch of the bank at Dawson City, which was opened for business last July. It must be conceded that any bank which shows a willingness to tackle such a problem as that of opening a branch within the Arctic Circle is entitled to any profit which may accrue from such a move.

An expedition consisting of eight experienced officers of the bank left for Yukon last spring; they were chosen not only on account of their business capacity, but because of their especial fitness to grapple with the conditions likely to be met with in a new mining country. They went through the usual hardships in getting into the country, and carried an outfit with them sufficient to open up business, which was commenced in a tent. The bank is now housed in a comfortable log building, as shown by the accompanying illustration, and the officials have their residence above it.

It speaks volumes for the admirable banking system of Canada when a country situated in such a far away region as Yukon can be furnished with banking facilities such as those afforded by The Canadian Bank of Commerce.

BANKING UNDER CANVAS IN DAWSON CITY.

The Day of Temptation;

A STORY OF TWO CITIES,

BY WILLIAM LE QUEUX,

Author of "The Earl of Istar," "Zoraida," "Whoso Findeth a Wife, &c., &c.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTERS I. & II.—Dr. Filippo Malvano, an alien residing in England, is entertaining at his house in Rutlandshire a foreigner, Arnoldo Romanelli. They are talking in tones of mystery of the dreaded presence in England of a certain lady, Vittorina, who would be fatal to their plans and safety. It is arranged that Romanelli shall go to the Continent to, if possible, intercept Vittorina. As they are talking, a telegram is delivered to the foreigner which causes some alarm. That same night the Paris train arrived at Charing Cross, bringing amongst the passengers Captain Frank Tristram, one of Queen Victoria's foreign messengers, and Signorina Vittorina Rinaldo. After a few words with Major Maitland he hails a cab and places the lady in it. They drive to the Criterion and Tristram alighting, passed into the room and vanished. Then the cabman, looking at his charge, discovers that she is dead.

CHAPTERS III & IV.—An inquest was held on the body of the lady, and an examination of her belongings showed a letter written in Italian giving instructions for her stay in London, and strange to say a photograph of the Major who spoke to Tristram and herself on arrival at Charing Cross. An open verdict is returned.

CHAPTER V.—*Continued.*

At the same hour that Malvano, had been reading the account of the previous day's inquest, Frank Tristram was sitting in his handsome, well-furnished chambers in St. James Street. He had breakfasted early, as was his wont, and had afterward started his habitual cigarette. The room in which he sat was a typical bachelor's quarter, filled with all sorts of curios and bric-a-brac which its owner had picked up in the various corners of the earth, he had visited bearing dispatches from the Foreign Office at Whitehall. Upon the floor lay a couple of fine tiger-skins, presents from an Indian Rajah, while around were inlaid coffee-stools and trays of beaten brass from Constantinople, a beautiful screen from Cairo, a rare statuette from Rome, quaint pictures and time-yellowed ivories from the curiosity-shops of Florence and Vienna, savage weapons from Africa and South America, and a bright shining samovar from St. Petersburg. In a corner stood the much-worn travelling-bag which he kept always ready packed, and hanging upon a nail above the mantel-shelf was the blue ribbon with its silver greyhound, the badge which carried its owner everywhere with the greatest amount of swiftness and the least amount of personal discomfort. Over the fireplace, too, were many autographed portraits of British ambassadors and distinguished statesmen, together with those of one or two ladies of this constant traveller's acquaintance.

As he lay back in a wicker deck-chair, the same in which he had taken his after-luncheon nap on board many an ocean steamer, well-shaven, smart and spruce, his legs stretched out lazily, his hands thrust deep into his pockets, he sighed deeply.

"Italy again!" he grumbled to himself as he took up a scribbled note on official paper.

"Just my infernal luck. Italy is the very last place I want to visit just now, yet, by Jove! the Chief sends me a message to start this morning." And rousing himself he stretched his arms and glanced wearily at the little carriage-clock. The discarded newspaper on the floor recalled all that he had read half-an-hour before.

"I wonder," he went on, "I wonder if anyone on Charing Cross platform spotted me with the girl?" Then he remained silent for a moment. "No. I oughtn't to go to Italy; it's far too risky. There's plenty of time yet for Marvin to be called. I must feign illness, and await my chance to go on a long trip to Pekin, Teheran or Washington. Yes, a touch of fever will be a good excuse." But, after a moment's further consideration, he added, "Yet after all, to be ill will be to arouse suspicion. No, I'll go," and he pressed the electric bell.

In answer to the summons his man-servant, a smart tall private of Dragoons, entered.

"A foreign telegraph-form, Smayle," he said.

The man obeyed with military promptitude, and his master a minute later scribbled a few hasty words on the yellow form, securing a berth in the through sleeping-car leaving Paris that night for Rome.

"Take this to the telegraph-office in Regent Street," he said. "I'm leaving this morning, and if anybody calls tell them I've gone to Washington, to Timbuctoo, or to the devil, if you like—anyhow, I shan't be back for a month. You understand?"

"Yes, sir," answered the man, with a smile. "Shall I forward any letters?"

"Yes, Poste Restante, Leghorn."

At that moment the bell of the outer door rang out sharply, and Smayle went in response, returning a moment later, saying:

"Major Maitland, sir."

"Show him in," answered his master, in a tone of suppressed excitement.

The man disappeared, and a second later the Major entered jauntily, his silk hat slightly askew, extended his well-gloved hand, greeted his friend profusely with the easy air of a man about town, and sank into one of the comfortable saddle-bag chairs.

"Well, my dear fellow," he exclaimed, as soon as they were alone. "Why do you risk London after the events of the other night? I never dreamed that I should find you at home."

"I'm leaving for Italy again by the eleven train," the other answered. "Have you read the morning's paper?"

"Of course I have," answered the Major, "It's an infernally awkward bit of business for both of us, I'm afraid. That introduction at the station was the greatest mistake possible, for the cabman will no doubt identify us. Besides, he overheard you address me by rank."

"But the police have no suspicion," Tristram observed. "At present we are safe enough."

"If I were you I wouldn't arrive or depart from Charing Cross, for a few months at least," the Major suggested. "The business is far too ugly for us to run any unnecessary risks, you know."

"No, I shall make a habit of departing from London Bridge and arriving at Waterloo. I never have more than hand-baggage with me."

"Where are you going to-day?"

"To Leghorn again. Right into the very midst of the enemy's camp," he laughed.

"Suppose any facts regarding the mystery have been published in the local papers, don't you think you'd stand a good chance of being arrested? The police in Italy are very arbitrary."

"They dare not arrest me with dispatches in my possession. I have immunity from arrest while on official business," Her Majesty's messenger answered.

"That may be so," replied the Major, selecting a cigar from the box at his elbow uninvited, and slowly clipping off the end with the punch on his watch-chain. "But you'd have considerable difficulty in persuading the police of either London or Leghorn that you were not the amiable young man who arrived at Charing Cross with Vittorina."

"And you would have similar difficulty, my dear old chap, in convincing the detectives that you were not the person who waited for us on the platform," the other replied, without removing his cigarette. "You're so well known about town that if I were you I should leave London at once, and not take a return ticket."

"I leave to-night."

"By which route?"

"By a rather roundabout one," the Major, answered, slowly striking a vesta. "The ordinary Channel passage might disagree with me, you know, so I shall travel this evening to Hull, and sail to-morrow morning for Christiania. Thence I shall get down into Germany via Hamburg."

"A very neat way of evading observation," observed the Captain in a tone of admiration.

"I booked my passage a fortnight ago, in case I might require it," the elder man observed carelessly. "When one desires to cover one's track's the ordinary Channel services are worse than useless. I call the Norwegian the circular route. I've used it more than once before. They know me on the Wilson liners."

Tristram glanced at his watch.

"I must be off in five minutes. What will be your address?"

"Portland before long, if I'm not wary," the other replied with a grim smile.

"This is no time for joking, Maitland," Tristram said severely. "Reserve your witticisms for the warders, if you really anticipate chokee. They'll no doubt appreciate them."

"Then address me Poste Restante, Brussels. I'm certain to drift to the 'Europe' there sooner or later within the next three months," the Major said.

"Very well, I must go;" and the Queen's messenger quickly obtained his soft grey felt hat and heavy travelling coat from the hall, filled a silver flask from a decanter, took down the blue ribbon, deftly fastened it around his neck out of sight beneath his cravat, and snatched up his travelling-bag.

"I'm going along to the Foreign Office for dispatches. Can I drop you anywhere from my cab?" he asked, as they made their way down the stairs together.

"No, my dear fellow," the Major replied. "I'm going up Bond Street."

Then, on gaining St. James's Street, the Captain sprang into a cab, and shouting a cheery adieu to his friend, drove off on the first stage of his tedious thousand-mile journey to the Mediterranean shore.

CHAPTER VI.—IN TUSCANY.

Leghorn, the gay, sun-blanched Tuscan watering-place, known to the Italians as Livorno, is at its brightest and best throughout the month of August, to the English, save those who reside permanently in Florence, Pisa, or Rome, its beauties are unknown. But those who know Italy—and to know Italy is to love it—are well aware that at "cara Livorno," as the Tuscans call it, one can obtain perhaps the best sea-bathing in Europe, and enjoy a perfect, delightful summer beside the Mediterranean.

It is never obtrusive by its garishness, never gaudy or inartistic, for it makes no pretentions to being a first-class holiday resort like Nice or Cannes. Still, it has its long, beautiful Passeggio extending the whole of the sea-front, planted with tamarisks, ilexes, and flowering oleanders; it has wide airy

piazzas, its cathedral, its Grand Hotel, its pensions, and lastly its little open cabs in which one can drive two miles for the not altogether ruinous fare of six-pence-halfpenny. Its baths, ingeniously built out upon the bare brown rocks into the clear, bright sea, take the place of piers at English seaside resorts, and here during the afternoon everybody, clad in ducks and muslins, lounges in chairs to gossip beneath the wide-spread awnings, while the waves beat with musical cadence up to their very feet. At evening there are gay well-lit cafe chantants and several theatres, while the musical can sit in a stall at the opera and hear the best works performed by the best Italian artists for the sum of one and threepence.

But life at Livorno is purely Tuscan. As yet, it is unspoilt by English-speaking tourists; indeed, it is safe to say that not three Cookites set foot within the city in twelve months. In this very aspect the town is beautiful. From the sea it presents a handsome appearance, with its lines of high white houses with their red roofs and closed sun-shutters, backed by the distant blue peaks of the Lucca mountains and the serrated spurs of the purple Appenines, while in its sun-whitened streets the dress of the Livornesi, with their well-made skirts of the palest and most delicate tints of blue, grey and rose, and with their black silk scarfs or lace mantillas twisted about their handsome heads, is the most artistic and tasteful in all fair Italy. The men are happy, careless, laughing fellows, muscular and bronzed by the sun; the women dark-eyed, black-haired, and notable throughout the length and breadth of Europe for their extreme beauty, and their grace of carriage.

Little wonder is it that stifled Florentines, from shopkeepers to princes, unable to bear the heat and mosquitos beside the muddy Arno, betake themselves to this bright little watering place during August and September, where even if the heat is blazing at mid-day the wind is delightfully cool at evening, and the sea-baths render life really worth living. Unless one has spent a summer in Tuscany it is impossible to realize its stifling breathlessness and its sickening sun-glare. Unless one has lived among the sly, secretive, proud but carelessly happy Livornesi, has shared their joys, sympathised with their sorrows, fraternized with them and noted their little peculiarities one can never enjoy Livorno.

At first the newly-arrived foreigner is pointed at by all as one apart, and considered an imbecile for preferring Livorno to Florence or Milano; every shopkeeper endeavors to charge him double prices, and for every trifling service performed he is expected to disburse princely tips. But the Tuscan heart is instantly softened towards him as soon as he seems likely to become a resident; all sorts and conditions of men do him little kindnesses without monetary reward, grave faced monks will call at his house and leave him presents of lucious fruits and fresh-cut salads; and even his cabman the last to relent, will one day, with profuse apology for previous extortions, charge only his just fare.

The Italians are indeed an engaging people. It is because they are so ingenuous, so contented, so self-denying, so polite yet so sarcastic, that one learns to love them so well.

Along the Viale Regina Margherita, or esplanade, better known perhaps by its ancient name, the Passeggio, are a number of baths, all frequented by different grades of society, the one most in vogue among the better class residents and visitors being a handsome establishment with cafe and skating-rink attached, known as the Pancaldi.

It was here one evening after the mysterious death of Vittorina in London, that two persons, a man and a woman, were sitting, watching the ever changing hues of one of those glorious blazing sunsets seen nowhere else in the world but in the Mediterranean. The broad asphalt promenade, covered with its wide canvas awnings, were almost blocked by the hundreds of gaily dressed persons sitting on chairs chattering and laughing, and it seemed as though all the most notable people of Florence and Bologna had assembled there to enjoy the cool breeze after the terrific heat of the August day. Along the Viale the road was sun-bleached, the wind-swept tamarisks were whitened by the dust, and the town that day had throbbed and gasped beneath the terrible fiery August glare. But here, at the Pancaldi, was light, happy chatter, in Italian of various dialects of course, a cool refreshing breeze, and that indefinable air of delicious laziness which Italy alone claims as her birthright.

The pair sitting together at the end of the asphalted walk, at some distance from the crowd, were young and to a casual observer, well matched. Unlike all others round about her the woman was of fair complexion, about twenty-two, with that gold-brown hair that Titian loved to paint, eyes of a deep and wonderous blue, a small adorable mouth, the upper lip of which possessed that rare attribute the true Cupid's bow, a face sweet, almost child-like in expression, perfect in its purity. Her great beauty was well set off by her black dress and tiny black bonnet, but from the crown of her head to the toe of her pointed patent-leather shoe there was a chic and daintiness about her which to an English eye stamped her as foreign, even though her face bore no trace of Italian blood.

Half that gay gossiping crowd, attracted by her beauty, had already set her down as English, perhaps because her fairness was uncommon in Tuscany, perhaps because they detected by the cut of her companion's clothes that he was English. But Gemma Fanetti was really a native of Florence, a true-bred Tuscan, who knew not half a dozen words of English. She could chatter French a little and could gabble the nasal Milanese dialect, but it always amused her to be taken for an Englishwoman.

Her dress, although black, and only relieved by a little white lace at the throat and wrists, was made in the latest mode and fitted h[illegible] perfectly. On her slim wrist was a single bangle of diamonds, which flashed in the dying sunlight with all the colours of the spectrum as, in chatting idly with her companion, she slowly traced semi-circles on the ground with the point of her black sunshade. Undoubtedly she was strikingly beautiful, for men in twos and threes were passing and repassing, solely for the purpose of obtaining a glance at her.

Utterly unconscious of their admiration, of the whisperings of those about her, or of the glorious wealth of color spread before them as the sun sank deep into the grey, glittering sea, causing the islands of Gorgona, Capraja, Elba, and Corsica to loom forth upon the distant horizon like giant shadows rising from those tideless waters, they both chatted on, glancing now and then into each other's eyes.

Her companion was about twenty-eight, good-looking, dark-eyed, with a merry face and an air of carelessness as, in a suit of cool white duck with his straw hat tilted slightly over his brow to shade his eyes, he sat back in his chair joining in her low well-bred laughter. Truth to tell Charles Armytage was desperately in love.

For seven years, ever since he came of age and succeeded to his father's property in Wales, he had led a wild rather dissipated life on the Continent, and had found himself world-weary before his time. His college career had terminated somewhat ignominiously, for he had been "sent down" on account of a rather serious practical joke; he had studied for the Bar and failed; he had done the whole round of the public gaming establishments, Monte Carlo, Ostend, Spa, Dinant, Namur, and Trouville, losing heavily at each; he had idled on the sands of Scheveningen, flirted on the Promenade des Anglais at Nice, tasted the far-famed oysters at Areachon, the bouillabaisse at Marseilles, and bathed on San Sabastian's golden sands. Once he had taken a fit into his head to visit all the spas, and beginning with Royat he made a tour of all the principal ones as far as Carlsbad. Thus, had he developed into a thorough cosmopolitan, travelling hither and thither just as his fancy led him, his only hobby being in occasionally writing a short story or travel article for one or other of the English magazines.

It was in this restless, dejected mood that six months before he had arrived in Florence, and by mere chance had first met the woman who was now beside him. He had one morning been walking along the Via Tornabuoni when he first saw her, accompanied by her servant. Suddenly something fell to the pavement and an urchin instantly snatched it up. Armytage ran after him, recovered the little golden charm and handed it to its owner, being rewarded by a few words of thanks. Her grace, her beauty, her soft musical voice rekindled within him a desire for life. Instantly he became fascinated by her wondrous beauty, and she, too, seemed content to chat with him, and listen to his very faulty Italian, which must have been exceedingly difficult for her to understand.

They did not meet often but always casually. Once or twice he encountered her cycling in the Cascino, and had joined her in a spin along the shady avenues. They had exchanged cards, but she had never invited him to call, and he, living at a hotel, could scarcely invite her. Italian manners strictly preserve the convenances. No unmarried lady in any Tuscan city, not even a woman of the people, ever dreams of going out alone. Even the poorest girl is chaperoned whenever she takes an airing.

Suddenly, just when Armytage found himself hoplessly infatuated, he one morning received an urgent telegram calling him to London, and he had been compelled to leave without a word of farewell, or any knowledge of her address.

As soon as he could he returned to Florence, but the weather had then grown hot, and all who were able had left the sun-baked city. Then, disappointed at not finding her after an active search, he had drifted down to the sea at Livorno, and within three days was delighted to see her strolling along in the Passeggio with her ugly, cross-eyed serving maid. The recognition was mutual, and after one or two meetings she explained that she had a flat for the season in one of the great white houses opposite, and expressed the hope that he would call.

He lost no time in renewing the acquaintance, and now they were inseparable. He loved her.

"Do you know, Gemma," he was saying seriously, "when I left Florence in March I left my heart behind me—with you."

She blushed slightly beneath her veil, and raising her clear blue eyes to his, answered with a sigh in her soft Italian, lisping almost like a child she spoke so low—

"You say you love me, caro, but can I really believe you?"

"Of course you can, dearest," he answered earnestly, speaking her tongue with difficulty, and without any regard for grammatical rules. "I love no other woman in the whole world but you."

"Ah!" she exclaimed sadly, gazing blankly away across the sea now glittering crimson in the blaze of the dying day. "I sometimes fear to love you because you may tire of me some day, and go back to some woman of your own people."

"Never," he answered fervently. "As I told you yesterday, Gemma, I love you; and you, in your turn have already given me your pledge."

"And you can actually love me like this, blindly, without inquiring too deeply into my past?" she whispered regarding him gravely with those calm, clear eyes which seemed to penetrate his very soul.

"Your past matters not to me," he answered in a deep intense voice under his

breath, so that passers by should not overhear. "I have asked you nothing, you have told me nothing. I love you, Gemma, and trust to your honour to tell me what I ought to know."

"Ah, you are generous, caro!" she exclaimed, and he saw beneath her veil a single tear upon her cheek. "The past life of a man can always be effaced; that of a woman never. A false step, alas! lives as evidence against her until the grave."

"Why are you so melancholy this evening?" he asked after a pause.

"I really don't know," she answered after vainly endeavoring to smile. "Perhaps it is because I am so happy and contented. My peace seems too complete to be lasting, therefore I dread the reaction."

"While you love me, Gemma, I shall love you always," he exclaimed decisively. "You need never have any doubt about my earnestness. I adore you."

Her breast heaved and fell beneath its black lace and jet, and she turned her fine eyes upon him with an expression more eloquent than any words of assurance or affection.

Then, after a brief silence, during which she slowly retraced the semi-circle with her sunshade, he glanced around at the crowd about them, saying—

"It is impossible to speak further of our private affairs here. You will dine with me to-night. Where shall it be?"

He always consulted her on such matters, for being herself Tuscan she could order an exquisite dinner at quarter the cost of his own clumsy demands.

"Let's dine at the Eden. There's plenty of air there. We can get a table facing the sea, and stay to the performance afterwards. Shall we?" she asked her face brightening.

"Certainly," he replied. "I'll go across to the hotel and dress, while you go along home and put on another frock. I know you won't go in black to a cafe chantant," he added, laughing.

"You'll call for me?" she asked.

"Yes, at eight."

As these words fell from his lips a man's voice in English exclaimed

"Hulloa, Charlie! Who'd have thought of finding you here?"

Armytage looked up quickly, and to his surprise found standing before him his old college chum and fellow clubman, Frank Tristram.

"Why, Frank, old fellow!" he cried, jumping up and grasping the others hand warmly. "We haven't met for how long? The last time was one night in the Wintergarten at Berlin, fully two years ago—eh?

"Yes. Neither of us are much in London now-a-days, therefore we seldom meet. But what are you doing here?" asked the Queen's messenger, looking cool and smart in his suit of grey flannel.

"Killing time, as usual," his friend replied, with a smile.

"Lucky devil!" Tristram exclaimed. "While I'm compelled to race from end to end of Europe for a paltry eight hundred a year, you laze away your days in an out-of-the-world place like this." And he glanced significantly at the sweet, fair-faced girl who, having given him a swift glance, was now sitting motionless, her hands idly crossed upon her lap, her eyes fixed blankly upon the sunlit sea.

"Let me introduce you," Armytage exclaimed in Italian, noticing his friend's look of admiration. Then, with a polite wave of his hand, he said: "The Signorina Gemma Fanneti—my friend, Captain Frank Tristram."

The latter bowed, made a little complimentary speech in excellent Italian, and seated himself with Armytage beside her.

"Well," Tristram said, still speaking in Italian, "this is quite an unexpected pleasure. I thought that in addition to the Ambassador out at Ardenza, and the jovial Jack Hutchinson, the Consul, I was the only Englishman in this purely Tuscan place." Then turning to his friend's companion, he asked, "Are you Livornese?"

"Oh, no," she replied, with a gay, rippling laugh. "I live in Florence: only just now the place is stifling, so I'm down here for fresh air."

"Ah, Florence!" he said. "The old city is justly termed 'La Bella.' I sometimes find myself there in winter, and it is always interesting, always delightful."

At that moment an English lady, the wife of an Italian officer, bowed in passing, and Armytage sprang to his feet and began to chat to her. He had known her well during his stay in Florence earlier in the year.

As soon as Gemma noticed that her lover was no longer listening, her manner at once changed, and bending quickly toward the Captain, she exclaimed in rapid Italian which she knew Armytage would not understand:

"Well, did you see Vittorina safely to London?"

Tristram started at the unexpected mention of that name.

"Yes," he answered, with slight hesitation. "I saw her safely as far as Charing Cross, but was compelled to leave her there, and put her in a cab for Hammersmith."

"How far is that?"

"About four kilometres," he replied.

"I have had no telegram from her," she observed. "She promised to wire to me as soon as she arrived, and I am beginning to feel anxious about her."

"Worry is useless," he said, calmly. "She is no doubt quite safe with her friends. I gave the cabman the right address. My official business was pressing, or I would have gone out to Hammersmith with her."

"You remember what I told you on the night we parted in Florence?" she said mysteriously.

He nodded, and his dark face grew a shade paler.

"Well, I have discovered that what I suspected was correct," she said, her eyes flashing for an instant with a strange glint. "Someone has betrayed the secret."

"Betrayed you! he gasped.

She shrugged her shoulders. Her clear eyes fixed themselves fiercely upon him.

"You alone knew the truth," she said. "And you have broken your promise of silence."

He flinched, glancing furtively at his friend, who in ignorance was still calmly talking with the officer's wife.

"Well?" he said. "You are of course, at liberty to make any charge you like against me, but I can only declare that I have not divulged one single word." Then he added quickly, "But what of Armytage? Does he know anything?"

Absolutely nothing," she answered quickly. "I love him. Remember that you and I have never met before our introduction this afternoon."

"Of course," the Captain answered beneath his breath. "We are perfect strangers."

"Curious that Vittorina has disappeared! If I hear nothing of her I shall go to London and find her," Gemma observed, after a few moments' silence.

"Better not, if you really have been betrayed, as you allege you have," he answered quickly.

"I have been betrayed, Captain Tristram!" she said rapidly with withering scorn, her face flushing instantly, her large luminous eyes flashing. "You are well aware that I have, and further, you know that you yourself are my bitterest enemy. I spare you now, mean, despicable coward that you are, but utter one word to the man I love, and I will settle with you swiftly and relentlessly."

She held her breath, panting for an instant, then turning from him, greeted her lover with a sweet, winning smile, as at that moment he returned to her side.

CHAPTER VII.—DOCTOR MALVANO.

Among the thousand notable dining places in London, Bonciani's restaurant, in Regent-st. is notable for its recherche repasts. It is by no means a pretentious place, for its one window displays a few long-necked, rush-covered flasks of Tuscan wine, together with some rather sickly-looking plants, a couple of framed menus, and two or three large baskets of well selected fruits. Indeed, the average Londoner who has passed times without number from Piccadilly Circus to Oxford-st., has never known its existence, for outwardly there is nothing to distinguished it from any other of the host of small Italian restaurants with which the metropolis abounds.

Yet to many, mostly clubmen and idlers about town, the Boniciani is a feature of London life. In the daytime the passer-by sees no sign of activity within, and even at night the place presents an ill-lit, paltry and uninviting appearance beside the St. Jame's, the Cafe Royal and the glaring Monico. But among the few in London who know where to dine well the little unpretentious place half-way up Regent-st., on the left going towards Oxford-st., is well-kuown for its unrivalled cuisine, its general cosiness, and its well-matured wines. At the Boniciani the dinners are cooked separately by Augustino, a first-class chef who was chef of the kitchen of the Grand Hotel at Rome, and one can rely upon the Italian dishes being done to a turn. The interior is not striking. There are no gilt-edged mirrors as is usual in Anglo-Italian restaurants, but the walls are frescoed as in Italy, with lounges upholstered in red velvet, a trifle shabby, extending down the long, rather low room. Upon the dozen little marble-topped tables with their snow-white cloths are objects seen nowhere else in London, namely, silver-plated holders for the wine flasks; for with the dinner here wine is inclusive, genuine Pomino imported direct from old Galuzzo in the Val d'Ema beyond Firenze, a red wine of delicate bouquet which connoisseurs know cannot be equalled anywhere in London. Yes, many people dine at Kettner's, at the Florence, at Gatti's, at the Monico, and the Cafe Royal, but few of London's millions have ever set foot within the small unique establishment of Boniciani. To dine there is, indeed, an education in the gastronomic art.

One evening, about a week after the meeting between Gemma and Tristram at Livorno, nearly all the tables were occupied, as they usually are at the dining hour, but at the extreme end sat two men, eating leisurely, and taking long draughts from the great rush-covered flask before them. They were Tristram and Romanelli.

Four days ago the pair had met late at night at the railway station at Leghorn, and the one hearing the other demand a ticket for London, they had got into conversation and travelled through together, arriving at Victoria on the previous evening. During the three days of travelling they had become very friendly, and now, at the Italian's invitation, Tristram was dining previous to his return on the morrow to Livorno, for at that period Italy was approaching England on the subject of a treaty, and the correspondence between our Ambassador and the Foreign Office was considerable, necessitating despatches being sent to Italy almost daily.

"So you return to-morrow?" Romanelli exclaimed, twirling his tiny black moustache affectedly. To men his foppishness was nauseating; but women liked him because of his amusing gossip.

"Yes," the other answered, sighing. I expected to get a few days rest in London, but this afternoon I received orders to leave again to-morrow."

"Your life must be full of change and entertainment," the young Italian said.

"Rather too full," the other laughed. "Already this year I've been to Italy more than twenty times, besides three times to Constantinople, once to Stockholm, twice to St. Petersburg, and innumerable trips to Brussels and Paris. But, by the way," he added, putting down his glass as if a sudden thought had occurred to him, "you know Leghorn well, I think you said?"

"I'm not Livornese, but I've lived there for ten years," the other answered. "I came to London a year ago to learn English, for they said it was impossible to get any sort of good pronounciation in Italy."

"I've passed through Pisa hundreds of times, but have only been in Leghorn once or twice," observed the Queen's Messenger. "Charming place. Full of pretty girls."

"Ah! yes," cried Romanelli, "The English always admire our Livornesi girls."

Tristram paused for a few seconds, then raising his eyes until they met those of his new acquaintance, asked—

"Do you happen to know a girl there named Fanetti—Gemma Fanetti?"

Romanelli started perceptibly, and for an instant held his breath. He was utterly unprepared for this question, and strove vainly not to betray any surprise.

"Fanetti," he repeated aloud, as if reflecting. "I think not, it is not a Livornese name."

"She lives in Florence, I believe, but always spends the bathing season at Leghorn," added Tristram. His quick eyes had detected the Italian's surprise and anxiety when he had made the unexpected inquiry, and he felt confident that his foppish young friend was concealing the truth.

"I've never to my recollection met anyone of that name," Romanelli answered, with well-feigned carelessness. "Is she a lady, or merely a girl of the people?"

"A lady."

"Young?"

"Quite. She's engaged to be married to a friend of mine."

"Engaged to be married?" the young man repeated with a smile. "Is the man an Englishman?"

"Yes, a college chum of mine. He's well off, and they seem a most devoted pair."

There was a brief silence, during which Tristram continued eating his costoletta alla Milanese, a dish of which the Boniciani makes a specialty.

"I have no recollection of the name in Florence society, and I certainly have never met her in Livorno," Romanelli said. "So she's found a husband! Is she pretty?"

"Extremely. The prettiest I've ever seen in Italy."

"And there are a good many in my country," the Italian said. "The poor girl who died so mysteriously—or who some say was murdered—outside the Criterion was very beautiful. I knew her well—poor girl!"

"You knew her!" gasped the Captain, in turn surprised. "You were acquainted with Vittorina Rinaldo!"

"Yes," replied his companion slowly, glancing at him with some curiosity. "But tell me," he added, after a pause, "how did you know her surname? The London police have failed to discover it?"

Frank Tristram's brow contracted. He knew he had foolishly betrayed himself. In an instant already lie was upon his lips.

"I was told so in Livorno," he replied glibly, "She was Livornese."

"Yes," Romanelli observed, only half convinced. "According to the papers it appears as if she were accompanied by some man from Italy. But her death and her companion's disappearance, are alike unfathomable mysteries."

"Extraordinary!" the Captain acquiesced. "I've been away so much that I haven't had a chance to read the whole of the details. But the scraps I have read seem remarkably mysterious."

"There appears to have been absolutely no motive whatever in murdering her," Arnoldo said, glancing sharply across the table at his companion.

"If it was really murder there must have been some hidden motive," Tristram declared. "Personally, however, in the light of the Coroner's verdict I'm inclined to the opinion that the girl died suddenly in the cab, and the man sitting beside her, fearing an accusation of murder might bring about some further revelation, made good his escape."

"He must have know London pretty well," Romanelli observed.

"Of course. The evidence proves that he was an Englishman; and that he knew London was quite evident from the fact that he gave instruction to the cabman to drive up the Haymarket, instead of crossing Leicester Square."

Again silence fell between them as a calm-faced elderly waiter in the most correct garb of the Italian cameriere, a short jacket and long white apron reaching almost to his feet, quickly removed their empty plates. He glanced swiftly from one man to the other, polished Tristram's plate with his cloth as he stood behind him, and exchanged a meaning look with Romanelli. Then he turned suddenly and went off to another table to which he was summoned by the tapping of a knife upon a plate. The glance he had exchanged with the young Italian was one of recognition and mysterious significance.

This man, the urbane head-waiter known well to frequenters of the Boncioni as Filippo, was known equally well in the remote Rutlandshire village as Doctor Malvano, the man who had expressed fear at the arrival of Vittorina in England, and who, truth to tell, led the strangest dual existance of doctor and waiter.

None in rural Lyddington suspected that their jovial doctor with his merry chaff and imperturable good humor became grave-faced and suddenly transformed each day he visited London; none dreamed that his many absences from his practice were due to anything beyond his natural liking for theatres and the gaiety of town life, and none would have credited, even had it ever been alleged, that this man who could afford that large comfortable house, rent shooting, and keep hunters in his stables, on each of his visits to London assumed a badly starched shirt, black tie, short jacket and long white apron, in

order to collect stray pence from diners in a restaurant. Yet such was the fact. Doctor Malvano, who for years had practised among the English colony in Florence, was none other than Filippo, head-waiter at the obscure little cafe in Regent Street.

"It is still a mystery who that dead girl was," Tristram observed at last, after Filippo had brought another dish. "The man who told me her name only knew very little about her."

"What did he know?" Romanelli enquired quickly. "I had often met her at various houses in Livorno, but knew nothing of her parentage."

"Nobody seems to know who she really was," Tristram remarked, pensively; "and her reason for coming to England seems to have been entirely a secret one."

"A lover perhaps," Arnoldo said, with an assumed air.

"Perhaps," acquiesced his friend.

"But who told you about her?" the Italian demanded.

"There have been official inquiries through the British Consulate," the other answered mysteriously.

"Inquiries from the London police?"

The Queen's Messenger nodded in the affirmative, adding:

"I believe they have already discovered a good many curious facts."

"Have they?" asked Romanelli, quickly exchanging a hasty glance with Filippo, who at that moment had paused behind his companion's chair. "What's the nature of their discoveries?"

"Ah!" Tristram answered, with a provoking smile, "I really don't know, except that I believe they have discovered something of her motive for coming to England."

"Her motive!" the other gasped, a trifle pale. "Then there is just a chance that the mystery will be elucidated, after all."

"More than a chance, I think," the Captain replied. "The police no doubt hold a clue by that strange letter written from Lucca which was discovered in her dressing-case. And, now that I recollect," he added, in surprise, "this very table at which we are sitting is the one expressly mentioned by her mysterious correspondent. I wonder what was meant by it?"

"Ah! I wonder!" the Italian exclaimed mechanically, his brow darkened by deep thought. "It was evident that the mysterious Egisto feared that some catastrophe might occur if she arrived in England and he therefore warned her in a vague, veiled manner."

Filippo came and went almost noiselessly, his quick ears constantly on the alert to catch their conversation, his clean-shaven face grave, smileless, sphinx-like.

"Well," the Captain observed in a decisive manner, "you may rest assured that Scotland Yard will do its utmost to clear up the mystery surrounding the death of your friend, for I happen to know that the Italian Ambassador in London has made special representation to our Home Office upon the subject, and instructions have gone forth that no effort is to be spared to solve the enigma."

"Then our Government at Rome have actually taken up the matter?" the Italian said, in a tone which betrayed alarm.

Tristram smiled, but no word passed his lips. He saw that his new acquaintance had not the slightest suspicion that it was he who had accompanied Vittorina from Italy to London; that it was he who had escaped so ingeniously through the bar of the Criterion; that it was for him the police were everywhere searching.

At last, when they had concluded their meal, Romanelli paid Filippo, giving him a tip, and the pair left the restaurant to pass an hour at the Empire before parting.

Once or twice the young Italian referred to the mystery, but found his companion disinclined to discuss it further.

"In my official capacity I dare not say what I know," Tristram said at last in an attitude of confidence, as they were sitting together in the crowded lounge of the theatre. "My profession entails absolute secrecy. Often I am entrusted with the exchange of confidences between nations, knowledge of which would cause Europe to be convulsed by war from end to end, but secrets entrusted to me remain locked within my own heart."

"Then you are really aware of true facts," inquired the other.

"Of some," he replied vaguely, with a mysterious smile.

The hand of his foppish companion trembled as he raised his liquer-glass to his pale lips. But he laughed a hollow, artificial laugh, and then was silent.

CHAPTER VIII.—HER LADYSHIP'S SECRET.

Filippo, grave-faced but smart nevertheless continued to attend to the wants of customers at the Boniciani until nearly ten o'clock. He took their orders in English, transmitted them in Italian through the speaking-tube to the kitchen, and deftly handed the piles of plates and dishes with the confident air of a professional waiter. When a customer had finished he weighed the wine-flask in his hand in true Tuscan style to ascertain how much Pomino had been consumed, and expressed profuse thanks for every tip he received, however small.

Evidence was not wanting that to several elderly Italians he was well-known for he greeted them cheerily, advised them as to the best dishes, and treated them with fatherly solicitude from the moment they entered until their departure. Once, indeed, having a few moments repose he stood beside one of the tables where two elderly men in evening dress were dining, and discussed with them some local question affecting that old-world city, dear to every Tuscan heart. "Florence, La Bella."

At ten o'clock, however, only two or three stray customers remained, smoking their long rank cigars and sipping their coffee, therefore Filippo handed over his cash, assumed his shabby black overcoat, and wishing "buona

notte" to his fellow waiters and "good-night" to the English check-taker at the small counter, made his way out and eastward along Regent Street. It was a bright brilliant night, cool and refreshing after the heat of the day. As he crossed Piccadilly Circus the glare of the Criterion brought back to him the strange occurence that had recently taken place before that great open portal, and with a glance in that direction, he muttered to himself—

"I wonder if the truth will ever be discovered? Strange that Arnoldo's friend knows so much yet tells so little. That the girl was killed seems certain. But how, and by whom? Strange," he added, after a pause, as he strode on, deep in thought.

"Very strange."

In his soft felt hat and frayed coat he looked a typical waiter, and certainly none would recognize in him the smart, well-dressed, well-groomed medical man, who was a dead shot, who rode straight in the hunting field, and was a welcome guest in every house throughout Rutland. Engrossed in his own reflections he passed along Wardour Street into Shaftesbury Avenue, and presently entered the heart of the foreign quarter of London, a narrow dismal street of high, smoke-blackened, uninviting looking houses known as Church Street, a squalid and sunless thorough fare behind the glaring Palace of Varieties, inhabited mostly by French and Italians.

He paused before a large dingy house, a residence of some importance a century ago, judging from its deep area its wide portals and its iron extinguishers once used by the now forgotten linkman, and taking a latch-key opened the door, ascending to a small bed-sitting-room on the third floor, not over clean but nevertheless comfortable. Upon the small side-table, with its cracked and clouded mirror, stood the removable centre of his dressing-bag with its silver fittings, and hanging behind the door were the clothes he wore when living his other life.

He lit the cheap paraffin lamp, pulled down the faded crimson blind, threw his hat and coat carelessly on the bed, and after glancing at his watch sank into the shabby armchair.

"Still time," he muttered. "I wonder whether she'll come? If she don't—if she refuses——"

And sighing he took out a cigarette, lit it, and throwing back his head meditatively watched the smoke-rings as they curled upward.

"I'd give some thing to know how much the police have actually discovered," he continued, speaking to himself, as he held his cigarette for a moment at arm's length. If they've really discovered Vittorina's object in visiting London then I must be wary not to betray my existence. Already the Ambassador must have had his suspicions roused, but fortunately, her mouth is closed forever. She cannot now betray the secret which she held, nor can she utter any wild denunciations. Our only fear is that the police may possibly discover Egisto at Lucca, make enquiries of him and thus obtain a key to the whole matter. Our only hope, however, is that Egisto, hearing of the fatal termination of Vittorina's journey and not desiring to court inquiry, has wisely fled. If he has remained in Lucca after writing that most idiotic letter he deserves all the punishment he'll get for being such a confounded imbecile."

Then with an expression of disgust, he smoked on in a lazy, indolent attitude, regardless of the shabbiness and squalor of his surroundings.

"It is fortunate," he continued, at last, speaking slowly to himself, "very fortunate indeed that Arnoldo should have met this cosmopolitan friend of his. He evidently knows something, but does not intend to tell us. One thing is evident, he can't have the slightest suspicion of the real facts, as we know them; but on the other hand there seems no doubt that the police have ascertained something. How much it is impossible to tell. That the Italian Ambassador has made representation to the Home Office is quite correct. I knew it days ago. Therefore his other statements are likely to be equally true. By Jove!" he added, starting suddenly to his feet. "By Jove! If Egisto should be surprised by the police the fool is certain to make a clean breast of the whole thing in order to save his own neck. Then will come the inevitable crisis! Dio! Such a catastrophe is too terrible to contemplate."

He drew a deep breath, murmured some inaudible words, and for a long time sat consuming cigarette after cigarette. Then, glancing at his watch again and finding it past eleven he rose and stretched himself, saying—

"She's not coming. Well—I suppose I must go to her."

Quickly he took from his bag a clean shirt, and assuming a light covert-coat and crush hat he was once again transformed into a gentleman. By the aid of a vesta he found his way down the dark, carpetless stairs, and hurrying along, soon gained Shaftesbury Avenue, where he sprang into a hansom and gave the man instructions to drive to Sussex Square, Hyde Park.

In twenty minutes the conveyance pulled up before the wide portico of a handsome but rather gloomy-looking house at the corner of Stanhope street and the Square, and alighting, Malvano ascended the steps and rang the bell. His summons was answered by a footman who, recognizing him at once, exclaimed:

"Her ladyship is at home, sir," and ushered him into a well furnished morning-room, leaving him and closing the door.

A few moments elapsed, when the man returned, and Malvano, with the air of one perfectly acquainted with the arrangements of the house, followed him up the wide, well-lit staircase to the drawing-room, a great apartment on the first floor, resplendant with huge mirrors, gilt furniture and costly bric-a-brac.

Seated in an armchair at the furthest end of the room, beside a table whereon was a shaded lamp, sat a small, ugly woman, whose aquiline face was wizened by age, whose hair was an unnatural flaxen tint, and whose cheeks were not altogether devoid of artificial coloring.

"So you are determined to see me?" she exclaimed, petulantly, raising her brows as she turned in her chair to face her visitor.

Her greeting was the reverse of cordial. As she spoke, her lips parted, displaying her even rows of false teeth; as she moved, her dress of rich black silk rustled loudly,; and as she placed her book upon the table with a slight sigh the fine diamonds on her bony, claw-like hands sparkled with a thousand fires.

"Well, why have you come—at this hour, too?" she inquired with a haughtiness which she always assumed towards her servants and inferiors. She sat rigid, immoveable, and Malvano, student of character that he was, saw plainly that she had braced herself for an effort.

"I asked you to come to me, and you have refused," he said, folding his arms calmly and looking straight into her rouged and powdered face. "Therefore I have come to you,"

"For what purpose? Surely we could have met at the Bonciani?"

"True, but it was imperative that I should see you to-night.

"More complications—eh?"

"Yes," he replied "more complications—serious ones."

"Serious!" her ladyship gasped, turning instantly pale. "Is the truth known?" she demanded quickly. "Tell me at once; don't keep me in suspense."

"Be patient for a moment, and I'll explain my object in calling," the doctor said gravely. "Compose yourself and listen."

The Countess of Marshfield drew her skirts around her and moved uneasily in her chair. She was a woman well known in London society, whose eccentricities had for years afforded plenty of food for the gossips, and whose very name was synonymous with senile coquetry. Her age was fully sixty-five, yet like many other women of position, she delighted in the delusion that she was still young, attractive and fascinating. Her attitude towards young marriageable men would have been nauseating, were it not so absolutely ludicrous; and the way she manipulated her fan at night caused her to be ridiculed by all the exclusive set in which she moved.

The dead Earl, many years her senior, had achieved brilliant success in the Crimea, and his name was inscribed upon the roll of England's heroes. Ever since his death twenty years ago, however, she had been notable on account of her foolish actions, her spasmodic generosity to various worthless institutions, her wild speculations in rotten companies, and her extraordinary eccentricities. As she sat waiting for her visitor to commence, her thin, blue lips twitched nervously, and between her eyes was the deep furrow that appeared there whenever she was unduly agitated. But even then she could not resist the opportunity for coquetry, for taking up her small ivory fan, she opened it, and slowly waving it to and fro, glanced at him across it, her lips parted in a smile.

But of all men Malvano was one of the least susceptible to female blandishments, especially those of such a painfully ugly artificial person as Lady Marshfield, therefore heedless of her sudden change of manner towards him, he said bluntly—

"The police have already discovered some facts regarding Vittorina."

"Of her past?" she cried, starting forward.

"No, of her death," he answered.

"Have they discovered whether or not it was murder?" she inquired, her bejewelled hand trembling perceptibly.

"They have no doubt that it was murder," he replied. They accept the doctor's theory, and moreover, as you already know, the Italian Embassy in London are pressing the matter."

"They suspect at the Embassy—eh?" she observed sharply, regarding him with her dark eyes.

"Without doubt. It can scarcely come as a surprise that they are endeavoring to get at the truth. One thing, however, is in our favor, and that is she cannot tell what she knew. If she were still alive I'm confident the whole affair would have been exposed before this."

"And you would have been under arrest," she observed with a grim smile,

He raised his shoulders to his ears, exhibited his palms, grinned, but did not reply.

"How have you ascertained this about the police?" her ladyship continued.

"Arnoldo is acquainted with the Queen's Messenger who carries despatches between the Foreign Office and the British Ambassador in Italy. The messenger knows everything, but refuses to say much."

"Knows everything!" she cried in alarm. "What do you mean? Has our secret really been divulged?"

"No," answered he. "He is not aware of the true facts, but he knows how far the knowledge of Scotland Yard extends."

"What's his name?"

"Tristram. Captain Tristram."

"Do yo know him?"

"No."

"Then don't make his acquaintance," the eccentric woman urged with darkening countenance. "He's no doubt a dangerous friend."

"But we may obtain from him some useful knowledge. You know the old saying about being forewarned."

"Our warnings must come from Livorno," she answered briefly.

"That will be impossible."

"Why?"

"Gemma has unfortunately fallen in love"

"Love! Bah!" she cried in astonishment. "With whom?"

"With an Englishman," he answered.

"Arnoldo saw them together several time in Livorno last week."

"Who is he?"

"His name is Armytage—Charles Armytage. He——"

"Charles Armytage!" her ladyship echoed, starting from her chair. "And he is in love with Gemma?"

"No doubt he is. He intends to marry her."

"But they must never marry never," she cried quickly. They must be parted immediately, or our secret will at once be out."

"How; I don't understand," he said with a puzzled expression. "Surely Gemma, of all persons, is still friendly disposed? She owes much to us."

"Certainly," Lady Marshfield answered. "But was she not present with Vittorina on that memorable night in Livorno? Did she not witness with her own eyes that which we witnessed?"

"Well, what of that? We have nothing to fear from her."

"Alas! we have. A word from her would expose the whole affair," the wizen-faced old woman declared, both hands clenched vehemently, "By some means or other we must part her from Armytage."

"And by doing so you will at once make her your enemy."

"No. Your own enemy, Doctor Malvano," she exclaimed, correcting him haughtily. "I am blameless in this matter."

He looked straight into her dark sunken eyes and smiled grimly.

"It is surely best to preserve her friendship," he urged. "We have enemies enough, in all conscience."

"Reflect," she answered quickly. "Reflect for a moment what exposure means to us. If Gemma marrys Charles Armytage, then our secret is no longer safe."

"But surely she has no object to attain in denouncing us, especially as in doing so she must inevitable implicate herself," he observed.

"No," she said after a brief pause. "In this matter I have my own views. They must be parted Filippo. Armytage has the strongest motive—the motive of a fierce and terrible vengence—for revealing everything."

"But why has Armytage any motive in denouncing us? You speak in enigmas."

"The secret of his motive is mine alone," the haggard-eyed woman answered. "Seek no explanation, for you can never gain knowledge of the truth until too late, when the whole affair is exposed. It is sufficient for me to tell you that he must be parted from Gemma."

"Her wizen-face was bloodless and brown beneath its paint and powder, her blue lips were closed tight, and a hard expression showed itself at the corners of her cruel mouth.

"Then Gemma is actually as dangerous to us as Vittorina was?" Malvano said, deeply reflecting.

"More dangerous," she declared in a low harsh voice. "She must be parted from Armytage at once. Every moments delay increases our danger. Exposure and disgrace are imminent. In this matter we must risk everything to prevent betrayal."

CHAPTER IX.—BENEATH THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE.

August passed slowly but gaily in lazy Leghorn. The town lay white beneath the fiery sun-glare through those blazing breathless hours, the cloudless sky was of that intense blue which one usually associates with Italy, and by day the deserted Passeggio of tamarisks and ilexes beside the almost waveless sea was for ever enlivened by the chirp of that unseen harbinger of heat, the cicale. Soon, however, the season waned, the stormy libeccio blew frequently, rendering out-door exercise impossible, but Charles Armytage still lingered on at Gemma's side, driving with her in the morning along the sea road to Ardenza and Antignano, or beyond as far as the high-up villa in which lived and died Smollet the English historian, or ascending to the venerated shrine of the Madonna of Montenero, the little place peeping forth white and scattered on the green hillside overlooking the glassy sea. Their afternoons were usually spent amidst the crowd of chatterers at Pancaldi's baths, and each evening they dined together at one or other of the restaurants beside the sea.

One morning in September, when Armytage's coffee was brought to his room at the Grand Hotel, the waiter directed his attention to an official looking note lying upon the tray. He had just risen, and was standing at the window gazing out upon the distant islands indistinct in the morning haze, and thinking of the words of assurance and affection his well beloved had uttered before he had parted from her at the door after the theatre on the preceding night. Impatiently he tore open the note and carelessly glanced at its contents. Then, with an expression of surprise, he carefully re-read the letter, saying aloud:

"Strange! I wonder what he wants?"

The note was a formal one bearing on a blue cameo official stamp the superscription "British Consulate, Leghorn," and ran as follows:

Dear Sir, I shall be glad if you can make it convenient to call at the Consulate this morning between 11 and 1, as I desire to speak with you upon an important and most pressing matter which I have reason to think concerns you nearly.—Yours faithfully, John Hutchinson, Her Majesty's Consul."

"Hutchinson," he repeated to himself, "Is the Consul here called Hutchinson? It must be the Jack Hutchinson of whom Tristram spoke. He called him 'jovial Jack Hutchinson.' I wonder what's the pressing matter. Some infernal worry, I suppose. Perhaps some dun or other in town has written to him for my address."

He paused, his eyes fixed seriously upon the distant sea.

"No," he exclaimed aloud at last. "Her Majesty's Consul must wait. I've promised to take Gemma driving this morning. I suppose this chap Hutchinson is some dry-as-dust old fossil, or else some stupid, head-swollen ass who sits in a frowzy office from ten to three, signs his name half-a-dozen times, smokes the best cigars, draws a handsome salary from the much-suffering British tax-payer, and scoops in any amount of fees. Good thing to be a Consul!" and he tossed the letter upon the table, and sat down to his coffee. "Some of them are rum fellows, though. I particularly remember one down in a more southerly part of the Mediterranean as frowsy a frump as you could ever hope to meet," he added, sighing at the recollection.

Presently, when he had shaved, and assumed his suit of cool white ducks, the official letter again caught his eye, and he took it up.

"I suppose, after all, it's only decent behaviour to go round and see what's the matter," he muttered aloud. "Yes, I'll go, and drive with Gemma afterwards."

Then he leisurely finished his toilet, strolled out into the Viale, and entering one of the little open cabs, was driven rapidly to the wide handsome Piazzo Vittorio Emanuele, where on the front of a great old palazzo at the further end were displayed a flagstaff surmounted by the English crown and an escutcheon of the British Royal arms. The Union Jack waved from the flagstaff, for Her Majesty's ships "Anson" and "Vulcan" were in port. The cathedral clock opposite showed that it was already half-past eleven, and as he ascended the stairs he noticed that the approach to the Consulate of Leghorn was very much more imposing than those of the Consulates he had had occasion to visit during his many journeys east and west.

On the first floor, passing through an entrance of bank-like appearance, with its mahogany portals and glass door, he entered the first of a handsome suite of offices which certainly did justice to the dignity and prestige of the greatest country in the world. On the walls were displayed the Royal arms, together with a few familiar "Notices to seamen," a huge and wonderful scale of consular fees fixed by the Foreign Office, and a warning to all and sundry regarding the use of the British flag. A tall, well-built, fierce-moustached Italian concierge, who looked as if he might once have been an elegant gendarme of the Prince of Monaco, inquired his business and took his card into an inner room on the right, the private office of the Consul.

After the lapse of a few minutes the concierge returned, and with ceremony ushered him into the presence of the representative of the British Foreign Office.

The room was large, lofty and airy, with windows overlooking the great Piazza, the centre of Livornese life. The furniture was antique and comfortable, and testified to the taste of its owner, the writing-table littered with documents clearly proved that the office of Consul at Leghorn was no sinecure, and the bookcases were stocked with well selected and imposing works of reference. Over the fire-place hung a large steel engraving of Her Majesty, and on the mantel-shelf some signed portraits of celebrities.

"You've enjoyed your stay in Leghorn, I hope," the Consul observed rather stiffly, after inviting his visitor to a seat on the opposite side of his table.

"Very much," Armytage answered, sinking into the chair.

"You'll excuse me for one moment," the Consul said, and scribbling something he touched the bell and the concierge summoned the Vice-Consul, a slim tall young Englishman, to whom he gave some directions.

Contrary to Charles Armytage's expectations Mr. Consul Hutchinson had, notwithstanding his professoinal frigidity and gravity of manner, the easy-going, good-natured bearing of the genial man of the world. He was a fair, somewhat portly man, comfortably built, shaven save for a small well-trimmed moustache, the very picture of good health, whose face beamed with good humour, and in every line of whose countenance was good-fellowship portrayed.

There were few skippers up or down the Mediterranean—or seamen for the matter of that—who did not know Consul Hutchinson at Leghorn, and who had not at some time or another received a little kindness at his hands. From "Gib," to "Constant" Jack Hutchinson had the reputation of being the best, good-natured and happiest of all Her Majesty's Consuls, devoted to duty, not to be trifled with certainly, but ever ready to render immediate assistance to the Englishman in difficulties.

"Well," he exclaimed, looking across at Armytage at last, when they were alone again. "I am glad you have called, because I have something to communicate in confidence to you."

"In confidence?" Armytage repeated, puzzled.

Mr. Consul Hutchinson, still preserving his professional air of dignity as befitted his office, leaned one elbow upon the table, and looking straight into his visitor's face, said—

"The matter is a purely private and somewhat painful one. You will, I hope, excuse what I am about to say, for I assure you that it is in no spirit of presumption that I venture to speak to you. Remember, you are a British subject, and I am here in order to assist, sometimes even to advise, any subject of Her Majesty."

"I quite understand," Armytage said, mystified at the Consul's rather strange manner.

"Well," Hutchinson went on slowly and deliberately. "I am informed that you are acquainted with a lady here, in Leghorn, named Fanetti—Gemma Fanetti. Is that so?"

"Certainly. Why?"

"How long have you known her? It is not out of idle curiosity that I ask."

"Nearly seven months."

"She is Florentine. I presume you met her in Florence."

"Yes."

"Were you formally introduced by any friend who knew her?"

"No," he answered, after slight hesitation. "We met quite casually."

"And you followed her here?"

"No. We met here again accidently. I had no idea she was in Leghorn. Since our first meeting I have been in London several months and had no knowledge of her address," he replied.

"And you are, I take it, in ignorance of who she really is?" Hutchinson said, regarding him with a calm, searching look and twisting his pen betwen his fingers.

Armytage sat silent for a few moments, then quickly recovering himself, said a trifle haughtily:

"I really don't think I'm called upon to answer such a question. I cannot see any reason whatever for this cross-examination regarding my private affairs."

"Well," the Consul exclaimed seriously, "the reason is briefly this. It is an extremely painful matter, but I may as well explain at once. You are known by the authorities here to be an associate of this lady- Gemma Fanetti,"

"What of that?" he cried in surprise.

"From what I can understand, this lady has a past—a past which the police have investigated."

"The police! What do you mean?" he cried, starting up.

"Simply this, answered the Consul, gravely. "Yesterday I received a call from the Questore, and he told me in confidence that you, a British subject was the close associate of a lady whose past, if revealed, would be a startling and unpleasant revelation to you, her friend. The authorities had, he further said, resolved to order her to leave Leghorn or remain on penalty of arrest, and in order that you, an English gentleman, might have time to end your acquaintance he suggested that it might be as well for me to warn you of what the police intended doing. It is to do this that I have asked you here to-day."

Armytage sat pale, silent, open-mouthed.

"Then the police intend to hound the Signorina Fanetti from Leghorn? he observed blankly.

"The Italian police possess power to expel summarily from a town any person of whom they have suspicion, the Consul replied, calmly.

"But what do they suspect? he cried bewildered. "You speak as if she were some common criminal or adventuress."

"I have unfortunately no further knowledge of the discovery they have made regarding her. It must, however, be some serious allegation, or they would not go the length of expelling her from the city."

"But why should she be expelled?" he protested angrily. "She has committed no offence. Surely there is some protecting for a defenceless woman!"

Hutchinson raised his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders, an expresssive gesture one soon acquires after residence in Italy.

"The Questore has supreme power in such a matter," he said. "He is a very just and honourable official, and I m sure he would never have taken these steps to avoid you disgrace if there was not some very strong reasons."

Charles Armytage, leaning upon the edge of the Consul table, laid down his head in deep contemplation.

"Then to-morrow they will order her to quit this place?" he observed thoughtfully. "It's unjust and brutal. Such treatment of a peaceful woman is scandalous."

"But remember you've admitted that you have no knowledge of her past," Hutchinson said. "Is it not possible that the police have discovered something she has concealed from you?"

"It's an infernal piece of tyranny?" Armytage cried fiercely. "I suppose the police have fabricated some extraordinary allegations against her, and want money to hush it up. They want to levy blackmail."

"No, no," Jack Hutchinson said, his manner at once relaxing as he rose and crossed to the window, his hands behind his back. "The position is a simple one," he continued, looking him straight in the face. "The police have evidently discovered that this lady is either not what she represents herself to be, or some extraordinary mystery is attached to her, therefore cut her acquaintance, my dear sir. Take my advice. It will save you heaps of bother."

"I cant," the other answered hoarsely. "I'll never forsake her."

"Not if she's hounded from town to town by the police, like this?"

"No. I love her," he replied brokenly.

Hutchinson sighed. A silence fell between them, deep and complete.

At last the Consul spoke in a grave tone. His professional air had relaxed, as it always did when he desired to assist an Englishman in distress.

"Before you love her," he suggested, "would it not be as well to ask her what chapter of her life she has concealed? If she really loves you she will no doubt tell you everything. Is it not an excellent test?"

"But that will not answer the decision of the Questore," Armytage observed wofully.

"No, that's true. The lady must leave Leghorn this evening. Take my advice and part from her," he added sympathetically. "In a few weeks you will forget. And if you would spare her the disgrace of being sent out of Leghorn urge her to leave of her own accord. If you will pledge your word that she shall leave to-day, I will at once see the Questore and beg him to suspend the orders he is about to give."

"I love Gemma, and intend to marry her."

"Surely not without a clear knowledge of her past?"

"Already I have decided to make her my

wife," Armytage said, his face set and pale. "What the police may allege will not influence me in any way."

"Ah! I fear you are hopelessly infatuated," Hutchinson observed.

"Yes, hopelessly."

"Then I suppose you will leave Leghorn with her? That she must go is absolutely imperative. In that case, if I may advise you, I should certainly not only leave Leghorn, but leave Italy altogether."

"What!" he cried indignantly. "Will the police of Milan and Venice act in the same cowardly way that they have done here?"

"Most probably. When she leaves, the police will without doubt take good care to know her destination and inform the authorities of the next town she enters. Your only plan is to leave Italy."

"Thanks for your advice," the other replied in a despondent tone. "Loving her as I do, what you have just told me, and what you have hinted, have upset me and destroyed my peace of mind. I fear I'm not quite myself, and must apologize for any impatient words I have used. I shall act upon your suggestion and leave Italy."

Then he paused, but after a few moments raised his head, saying:

"You have been good enough to give me friendly advice upon many points, may I encroach upon your good nature still further? Tell me, do you think it wise to acquaint her with the facts you have told me?"

Hutchinson looked at the man before him, and saw how hopelessly he was in love. He had seen them driving together, and had long noticed how beautiful his companion was.

"No," he answered at last. "If you intend to marry her there is really no necessity for demanding an immediate explanation. But as soon as you are out of Italy, and have an opportunity, I should certainly invite her to tell you the whole truth."

Then, after some further conversation, the two men shook hands, and Charles Armytage slowly made his way downstairs and out across the wide sunlit Piazza.

From the window Consul Hutchinson watched his retreating figure, and noticed how self-absorbed he was as he strode along. His heart had gone out to sympathise in this brief interview, and a strong desire came upon him to help and protect the lonely Englishman. "Poor devil," he muttered, "he's badly hit, and I fear he has troublous times before him. I wish to God I could help him. But now to work!" and he flung himself into his chair with a sigh, and commenced to handle some ships' papers that the Pro-Consul at that moment handed him.

CHAPTER X.—THE MYSTERY OF GEMMA.

When Armytage entered Gemma's pretty salon, the window of which commanded a wide view of the blue Mediterranean, she rose quickly from the silken divan with a glad cry of welcome. She was veiled and gloved ready to go out, wearing a smart costume of pearl grey, with a large black hat which suited her fair face admirably.

"How late you are!" she exclaimed a trifle impetuously, pouting prettily as their lips met. "You said eleven o'clock and now it is nearly one."

"I've had a good deal to see after," he stammered. "Business worries from London."

"Poor Nino!" she exclaimed sympathetically, in her soft Italian, putting up her tiny hand and stroking his hair tenderly. Nino was the pet name she had long ago bestowed upon him. "Poor Nino! I didn't know you were worried, or I would not have complained. Excuse, won't you?"

"Of course, dearest," he answered, sinking a trifle wearily into a chair, whilst she, regarding him with some surprise, reseated herself upon the divan, her little russet-brown shoe stretched forth coquettishly from beneath the hem of her well-made skirt.

The room was small, but artistic. The painted stone floor was carpetless, as are all Italian houses in summer, the furniture was upholstered in crimson silk and old-gold, a tall lamp stood near the window, artificial flowers ornamenting its great lace shade, the walls were decorated with many pictures and photographs, and in the centre of the frescoed ceiling was suspended a huge Japanese umbrella. Its cosiness and general arrangement everywhere betrayed the daily presence of an artistic woman, and as he sat there with his eyes fixed upon her, he became intoxicated by her marvellous beauty. There was a softness about her face, an ingenuous sweetness which always entranced him, holding him spell-bound when in her presence.

"You are tired," she said in a low, caressing tone. "Will you you have some vermouth or marsala? Let me tell Margherita to bring you some."

"No," he answered quickly, "I had a vermouth at Campari's as I passed. I'm a trifle upset to-day."

"Why?" she inquired, quickly, regarding him with some astonishment.

He hesitated. His eyes were rivetted upon her. The sun-shutters were closed, the glare of day subdued, and he was debating whether or not he should relate to her in that dim light all that had been told him an hour ago. In those brief moments of silence he remembered how, on the afternoon he had encountered Tristram at Pancaldi's, she had expressed surprise that he should love her so blindly without seeking to inquire into her past. He remembered his foolish reply. He had told her he wished to know nothing. If he demanded an explanation now it would convince her that he doubted. Yes, Hutchinson's advice was best. At present he must act diplomatically and remain silent.

"The reason why I am not myself to-day is because I must leave you, Gemma," he said, slowly at last, in a low earnest voice.

"Leave me!" she gasped, starting and turning pale beneath her veil.

"Yes," he replied, quickly. "It is impera-

tive that I should start for Paris to-night."

"Has my Nino had bad news this morning?" she asked in a sympathetic tone, bending and extending her hand until it touched his.

Its contact thrilled him. In her clear blue eyes he could distinguish the light of unshed tears.

"Yes," he answered. "News which makes it necessary that I should be in Paris at the earliest possible moment."

"And how long shall you remain?" she inquired.

"I shall not return to Italy," he replied, decisively, his eyes still upon her.

"You will not come back to me?" she cried blankly. "What have I done, Nino? Tell me, what have I done that you should thus forsake me?"

"I do not intend to forsake you," he answered, grasping her hand. "I will never forsake you. I love you far too well."

"You love me!" she echoed, tears coursing down her cheeks. "Then why go away and leave me alone? You must have seen how loadly I love you in return."

"I shall not go alone," he answered her, rising and placing his arms tenderly about her neck. "That is if you will go with me."

"With you?" she exclaimed, her face suddenly brightening. "With you, Nino?"

There was a deep silence. She gazed into his dark serious eyes with an expression of love and devotion more eloquent than words, and he, still holding her hand, bent until their lips met in a fierce passionate caress.

"Surely you do not fear to travel with me, without regard for the convenances!" he said.

"Have we not already set them at naught?" she answered, looking earnestly into his face. "Unfortunately I have no chaperone, no friends, therefore, according to Italian manners, your presence here, in my house, is against all the laws of etiquette," and she laughed a strange hollow laugh through her tears.

"We can, I think, Gemma, set aside etiquette, loving each other as we do," he exclaimed, pressing her hand. "Let us go together to London, and there marry."

Why not marry in Italy?" she suggested, after a pause. "Marriage at your British Consulate is binding."

The mention of the Consulate brought back to his memory all that Hutchinson had said. Her words seemed to imply that she did not wish to leave Tuscany.

"Why in Italy?" he inquired. "You have no tie here?"

She hesitated for a moment.

"No, none whatever," she assured him, in a voice which sounded strangely harsh and unconvincing. He attributed her agitation to the excitment of the moment and the fervency of her love.

"Then why do you wish to remain?" he inquired bluntly.

"I have reasons," she replied mechanically, her eyes slowly wandering around the room. Suddenly she rose, and hastily snatching up an open letter that was lying upon the mantelshelf, crushed it within the palm of her gloved hand. He was sitting with his back to the mantel, therefore he saw nothing of this strange action, and believed, when she went out of the room a moment later, that she went to speak with her servant.

True, she spoke some words with Margherita in the kitchen, but placing the letter upon the burning charcoal, she watched the flame slowly consume it.

Then, with a parting order to Margherita, uttered in a tone distinctly audible to her lover, she returned smilingly to his side.

"For what reason do you want to remain here?" he inquired, when she had again reseated herself with a word of apology for her absence.

"It is only natural that I should be loth to leave my own country," she answered evasively laughing.

"No further motive?" he asked, a trifle incredulously.

"Well, I have many acquaintances in Florence, in Milan and Rome."

"And you desire to remain in Italy on their account!" he exclaimed. "Only the other day you expressed satisfaction at the suggestion of leaving Italy."

"I have changed my mind," she said in a low strained voice.

"And you intend to remain?"

"Not if you are compelled to leave Livorno, Nino," she answered with that sweet smile which always entranced him.

In her attitude he detected mystery. She appeared striving to hide from him some important fact, and he suddenly determined to discover what was its nature. Why, he wondered, should she desire to remain in Tuscany after the satisfaction she had already expressed at the prospect of seeing life in England.

"I am compelled to go to-night," he said. "The train leaves at half-past nine, and we shall take the through wagon-lit from Pisa to Paris at midnight. If you'll be ready I'll wire to Rome to secure our berths in the car."

"Then you really intend to leave?" she asked in a tone of despair.

"Certainly," he replied, puzzled at her strange manner.

"It will perhaps be better for me to remain," she observed with a deep sigh.

"Why?"

"If we married you would tire of me very, very soon. Besides, you really know so little of me," and she regarded him gravely with her great clear, wide open eyes.

"Ah! that's just it!" he cried. "You have told me nothing."

She shrugged her shoulders with a careless air, and smiled.

"You have never inquired," she answered.

"Then I ask now," he said.

"And I am unable to answer you—unable to tell the truth, Nino," she replied brokenly, her trembling hand seeking his.

"Why unable?" he demanded, sitting erect and staring at her in blank surprize.

"Because—because I love you too well to deceive you," she sobbed. Then she added: "No, after all, it will be best for us to part—best for you. If you knew all, as you must someday; if we married, you would only hate me," and she burst into a torrent of blinding tears.

"Hate you, piccina, why?" he asked, uttering the term of endearment which she had taught him in the early days of their acquaintance, and slipping his arm around her slim waist.

With a sudden movement she raised her veil and wiped away the tears with her little lace handkerchief.

"Ah! forgive me," she exclaimed apologetically. "I did not believe I was so weak. But I love you, Nino. I cannot bear the thought of being parted from you."

"There is surely no necessity to part," he said, purposely disregarding the strange self-accusation she had just uttered.

"You must go to Paris. Therefore we must part," she said, sighing deeply.

"Then you will not accompany me?"

Her blue eyes, child-like in their innocence, were fixed upon his. They were again filled with tears.

"For your sake it is better that we should part," she answered hoarsely.

"Why? I cannot understand your meaning," he cried. "We love one another. What do you fear?"

"I fear myself."

"Yourself!" he echoed. Then, drawing her closer to him he exclaimed in a low, intense voice: "Come, Gemma, confide in me. Tell me why you desire to remain here; why you are acting so strangely to-day?"

She rose slowly from the divan, a slim, woeful figure, and swayed unevenly as she answered:

"No, Nino. Do not ask me."

"But you still love me?" he demanded, earnestly. "Have you not just expressed readiness to marry me?"

"True," she replied, pale and trembling. "I will marry you if you remain here, in Livorno. But if you leave—if you leave, then we must part."

"My journey is absolutely necessary," he declared. "If it were not, I should certainly remain with you."

"In a week, or a fortnight at most, you can return, I suppose. Till then, I shall remain awaiting you."

"No," he replied firmly. "When I leave Italy I shall not return." Then, after a slight pause, he added in a low, sympathetic tone: "Some secret oppresses you, Gemma. Why not take me into your confidence?"

"Because—well, because it is utterly impossible," she stammered, in a low tremulous tone.

"Impossible! Yet we love one another. Is your past such a profound secret, then?"

"All of us, I suppose, have our secrets, Nino," she replied earnestly. "I, like others, have mine."

"Is it of such a character that I, your affianced husband, must not know?" he asked in a voice of bitter reproach.

"Yes," she answered nervously. "Even to you, the man I love, I am unable to divulge the strange story which must remain locked for ever within my heart."

"Then you have no further confidence in me?" he observed despairingly.

"Ah! Yes, I have, Nino. It is my inability to tell everything, to explain myself, and to present my actions to you in a true light, that worries me so."

"But why can't you tell me everything?" he demanded.

"Because I fear to."

"I love you, Gemma," he assured her tenderly. "Surely you do not doubt the strength of my affection?"

No," she whispered, agitated, her trembling fingers closing upon his. "I know you love me. What I fear is the dire consequences of the exposure of my secret."

"Then to speak plainly, you are in dread of the actions of some person who holds power over you," he hazarded.

"She was silent. Her heart beat wildly, her breast heaved and fell quickly; her chin sank upon her chest in an attitude of utter dejection.

Have I guessed the truth?" he asked in a calm serious voice.

She nodded in the affirmative, with a deep-drawn sigh.

"Who is this person whom you fear?" he inquired, after a pause brief and painful.

"Ah! no, Nino," she burst forth, trembling with suppressed agitation she had vainly striven to suppress. "Do not ask me that—I can never tell you—never."

"But you must—you shall!" he cried fiercely. "I love you, and will protect you from all your enemies, whoever they may be."

"Impossible," she answered despairingly. "No, let us part. You can have no faith in me after my wretched admissions of to-day."

"I still have every faith in you, darling," he hastened to re-assure her. "Only tell me everything, and set my mind at rest."

"No," she protested. "I can tell you nothing—absolutely nothing."

"You prefer, then, that we should be put asunder rather than answer my questions."

"I cannot leave Italy with you," she answered simply but harshly.

"Not if we were to marry in England as soon as the legal formalities were accomplished?"

"I am ready to marry you here—to-day if you desire," she said. "But I shall not go to London."

"Why?"

"I have reasons. Strong ones," she answered vehemently, with a slight shrug of her shoulders.

"Then your enemies are in London!" he said quickly. "Are they English?"

At that instant the door-bell rang loudly, and both listened intently as Margherita answered the somewhat impetuous summons. There were sounds of low-talking,

and a few moments later the servant, pale-faced and scared, entered the room saying—

"Signorina! There are two officers of police in the house and they wish to speak with you immediately."

"The police!" Gemma gasped trembling. "Then they've discovered me."

There was a look of unutterable terror in her great blue eyes; the light died instantly out of her sweet face; she reeled and would have fallen had not her lover sprang up and clasped her tenderly. Her beautiful head with its mass of fair hair fell inert upon his shoulder. This blow, added to the mental strain she had already undergone, had proved too much for her.

"Nino," she whispered hoarsely. "You still love me—you love me, don't you? And you will not believe what they allege against me—not one single word?"

CHAPTER XI—SILENCE IS BEST.

"Let the police enter," Armytage said, still pressing her slim figure in her arms. "You know, Gemma that I love you."

"No, no," she cried trembling, "I will see them alone. I must see them alone."

"Why?"

"I cannot bear that you should stand by and hear the terrible charge against me," she answered hoarsely. "No, let me go alone to them and she struggled so free herself.

But he grasped her slim waist firmly, saying:

"I love you and will be your protector. If they make allegations against you they must prove them. I, the man who is to be your husband, may surely know the truth?"

"But promise that you will not heed what they say—you will not believe their foul, unfounded charges," she implored, lifting her pale face to his.

"I believe implicitly in you, Gemma," he answered calmly, looking seriously into her terror-strickened eyes. "Let them come in."

Then turning to the faithful Margherita, who had stood by in silence and wonderment, he added:

"Ask them in."

Gemma, her hand in that of her lover, stood blanched and trembling in the centre of the room, as the two police officers in plain clothes, advanced, and encountering Armytage bowed with that politeness which an Italian, even though he may be an official, never fails to show to his superiors.

One was a tall, broad-shouldered, middle-aged man with a pleasant face, a pair of dark piercing eyes, a tiny coal-black mustache, while the other was young, and from the bronze of his countenance evidently a Sicilian.

"We are police officers," the elder man exclaimed, opening his coat and displaying the badge of a delegato on his breast. "We would prefer to speak to the Signorina alone."

"I am the closest friend of the Signorina," Armytage said, calmly. "I am about to make her my wife."

The officer shrugged his shoulders, exhibited his palms, and a sarcastic smile played about his lips.

"If I may presume to advise the Signor Conte," he said, preserving his ineffable politeness, "I certainly think that it would be best for both the Signore and the Signorina if I spoke to her alone."

And Gemma, clinging to her lover, gazed imploringly into his face, adding,

"Yes caro. Let them speak to me alone."

"No," the young Englishman answered firmly.

"But the matter is a delicate one, extremely delicate," urged the delegato. "I certainly think that the Signorina should be allowed to decide whether or not you should be present."

"In a week or so we shall marry," declared Armytage, 'What concerns the Signorina also concerns myself."

"To please me, caro, will you not go out of the room for a moment?" Gemma cried, in a low voice of earnest supplication.

Her attitude was that of one who feared the revelation of some terrible secret, and in those moments her lover had become filled with a keen desire to penetrate the cloak of mystery which enveloped her. She had told him nothing of her past, and all these mysterious events had occurred so suddenly that he was bewildered. The earnestness of her appeals not to be present only stirred within him greater curiosity, and a stronger desire to ascertain the whole truth. In those moments her face, previously so bright and innocent, had grown perceptibly worn and haggard; in her eyes was a look of blank despair, and as he held her gloved hand, she trembled from head to foot.

"No," he answered her, after a brief silence. "I have decided to remain and hear what the Signor delegato has to say."

The police official and the trembling woman exchanged quick glances. In the officer's gaze was a look of sympathy, for perhaps her beauty had softened his impressionable Italian nature; in her blue eyes was an expression of humiliation and abject fear.

"My mission is very quickly accomplished," the delegato exclaimed slowly.

"You intend to arrest me!" Gemma cried hoarsely. "I—I have dreaded this for a long time past. I knew that, one day or other, you would come for me and my reputation would be ruined forever."

"Listen, Signorina," the official said gravely. "Certain information has been obtained by the Questore, and upon that information I have been sent here to you. I regret very much that the Signore is determined to remain while I speak to you, for it would have been far better for both of you had this matter been settled in private. But as he desires to hear all, I will proceed."

"Yes," said Armytage, with a tender pressure of the little hand he held. "Speak, I am ready to hear all you have to say."

"Well," the police official continued, turning to Gemma, and hesitating slightly in order to present the matter as politely as possibly. "Much as I regret to disturb you, Signorina, the Questore, after fully considering certain statements before him, has decided that your presence is undesirable in Livorno, and further, he wishes to inform you that you must leave this city."

Gemma, her face white and drawn, humiliated and abased, sighed deeply, and then breathed more freely. She had expected arrest, but instead was ordered out of Livorno. To say the least, the police had been merciful towards her.

"Then I must leave to-day?" she repeated mechanically.

"Yes, Signorina. The penalty for remaining here after the order of the Questore is immediate arrest," he said.

"But why is such a course pursued?" Armytage asked. "For what reason is the presence of the Signorina deleterious to the city? It all seems very remarkable to me."

"The information before the Questore is of a confidential character, Signore.'.

"Are you not aware of the allegations against her?"

"No," he replied. "I have only been deputed to warn her to leave Livorno."

"Is such a measure frequently resorted to?"

"Usually we arrest the suspected individual, question him, and afterwards deport him to the railway station if there is not sufficient ground to justify a prosecution. In this case there is just a simple warning. Only in very exceptional cases is the course followed which the Questore is now pursuing."

"Then you have no knowledge of the actual charge in this case?"

"No, Signore, I have not. But," he added, "the Signorina must herself know the reason."

Armytage turned quickly to her. Their eyes met for a single instant. Then she slowly nodded, saying in an indistinct voice:

"Yes, yes, I know too well the meaning of this. I must leave Livorno, leave Italy, my own country that I love, never to return."

"That would be the best course to pursue," the delegato urged. "If you leave Italy, Signorina, you will, I think, hear no more of the unfortunate affair. Indeed, I have strong reasons for believing that the Questore has acted in the manner he has done purposely, in order that you should be afforded an opportunity to leave Italy."

"He thinks that exile is preferable to imprisonment," she said aloud, as if reflecting. "Well, perhaps he is right," and she laughed a short hollow laugh.

"Yes," urged Armytage, turning again to her. "You must leave to-night."

She was silent. The police official exchanged glances with the tall, good-looking young Englishman, then said, bowing politely:

"I will wish you adieu, Signore. A thousand pardons for disturbing you, but it was my duty, therefore pray forgive me."

"Certainly, certainly," he replied, and both men went out bowing, leaving Armytage alone with the woman he loved.

"All this is strange—very strange," he observed when they had gone. He was puzzled; for after all he now knew no more than what Consul Hutchinson had already told him.

"Yes," she said slowly, in a voice scarcely above a whisper. "To you it must appear extraordinary, but to me, who expected and who dreaded it, it was only what might be anticipated. They have warned me out of Italy, it's true, but it they knew everything," she added, "if they knew everything, I should to-night be placed in a criminal's cell."

"Why?"

"Already I have told you it is impossible for me to explain," she answered vehemently, in her voluble Italian. "If you really love me it is surely sufficient to know that the police are in ignorance of facts which I feared were revealed, and that they have not obtained the one item of information necessary to effect my ruin and disgrace."

"Why do you speak like this?" he demanded, quickly. "Has your past life in Florence been so full of mystery that you fear its exposure?"

"There are certain matters which I desire to keep secret—which I will keep secret, even if it costs me the loss of you, the man I adore," she answered, fiercely.

"Then they are matters which surely concern me—if I am to be your husband," he said, gravely.

"No," she answered calmly, still pale to the lips. "They only concern myself. I admit freely that there is a secret connected with my past—a secret which I shall strive to preserve, because its revelation would, I know, cause you, my beloved, much worry and unnecessary pain. I, therefore, prefer to hide this truth and fight my enemies alone."

"Is not this secret one that, before marrying you, I ought to know?" he demanded, earnestly.

"It cannot concern you in any way," she declared. "True, it has reference to my past life, but surely you don't believe me to be an adventuress—do you?"

"Of course not, piccina," he answered, laughing as he again placed his arm tenderly around her waist. "You an adventuress! What made you suggest such a thing?"

"I must be an enigma to you," she said. "But believe me, I would tell you everything if I could see that you could be benefited in the least. The story is a long and wretched one, and when I reflect upon the closed chapter of my life's history, I am always dolorous and unhappy. The more so because I'm unable to confide in you, the man I love."

"Will you explain all to me someday?" he asked, in his ungrammatical Italian.

"Yes, everything. At present, if I were to tell you, the result would only be disastrous to myself, and in all probability wreck your

happiness. Silence is best now—far the best."

His face wore a heavy expression of disappointment and dissatisfaction. Truth to tell, the whole matter was so utterly inexplicable that he entertained serious misgivings. She noticed this, and raising her face, now no longer haggard, but pale and sweet looking, she added:

"Cannot you trust me further, Nino?"

"Trust you, darling?" he cried. "Why of course I can. Only this secrecy worries me."

"Ah, no! Dont think of it any more," she urged. "To-night I will leave with you for Paris. I have a friend there to whom I can go. Afterwards, in London, we will marry—if you still desire that we should."

The last words were uttered in a low, tremulous, hesitating tone.

"Still desire!" he echoed. "I still love you as fondly, ah! even more fervently than before. If you would only confide in me I should be entirely happy."

"At present that is impossible," she declared. "Some day before long I hope to be in a position to tell you everything."

"And you are ready to go to London," he observed. Half-an-hour ago you said you did not wish to go to England!"

"True, because I feared to go. Now I no longer fear. I am ready, even eager to accompany you, if you still wish."

"Then we will go straight through to Paris, and when I have concluded my business, which will occupy perhaps a couple of days, we'll go on to London."

"Benissimo!" she answered, raising her full red lips to his. "I so want to see your great and wonderful London, Caro. I've read so much about it, and seen lots of pictures and photographs of its crowded streets and its motley people. It must be gigantic. I shall be so happy and content with you as my guide."

"It will be all very strange to you, dearest—the people, the language, the ways of life," he said, the heavy look of despondency giving way to a joyous smile. "All will seem curious to you after your own beautiful Tuscany, with its mountains, its rich and picturesque country and its cities of ancient palaces. But in London there is nothing half so beautiful as the Duomo at Florence; in England no scenery so picturesque as the wild valleys up beyond the Bagni di Lucca, the country you know so well."

"To see London," she said, "has ever been the dream of my life."

"Ah! I'm afraid you'll be sadly disappointed, piccina," he said, again smiling. "After your bright and beautiful Italy, our busy, bustling, smoke-blackened city will seem terribly dull, monotonous and dreary. The sky is seldom blue, and the atmosphere never clear and bright like this. In your Tuscany everything is artistic; the country, the town, the people; but in England—well, you will see for yourself."

"But there are lots of amusements in London," she said, "and life there is always gay."

"For the rich, London offers the greatest and most diverse attractions of any place in the world; but for the poor, herded together in millions as they are, it is absolutely the worst. In Italy you have much poverty and distress, but the lot of the poor man is far easier here than in toiling, turbulent, overcrowded London."

"One never appreciates the town in which one lives, be it ever so beautiful," she laughed.

"Well, be patient, and you shall see what London is like," he said. "But it is already two o'clock. You must lunch, and afterwards pack your trunks. Our train leaves at half-past nine to-night, and at Pisa we shall join the night mail to the frontier. I'll wire to the sleeping-car office in Rome and secure our berths in the through car for Paris."

"Ah, Nino," she exclaimed, happily, "I am content, very content to leave Italy with you. An hour ago I had reasons for remaining; but now it is of course impossible, and strangely enough I have no further object in staying here."

"And you will not regret leaving?"

"Of course not," she said, flinging herself into his ready arms and shedding tears of joy. "I fear nothing now, because I know that you love me, Nino, she sobbed. I know you will not believe anything that is alleged against me. You have asked me to marry you, and I am content—ah! absolutely content to do so. But even now I do not hold you to your promise, because of my inability to divulge to you my secret. If you think me untrue or scheming, then let us part. If you believe I love you, then let us marry in England and be happy."

"I love you, Gemma," he answered, low and earnestly. "Let us go together to London, and let this be the last hour of our doubt and unhappiness.

CHAPTER XII.—A WORD WITH HIS EXCELLENCY

One morning, about ten days after Armytage had left Leghorn with Gemma, a rather curious consultation took place at the Italian Embassy in Grosvenor Square, between Count Castellani, the Ambassador to the Court of St. James and Inspector Elmes, of the Criminal Investigation Department.

The Ambassador, a handsome gray-haired man of sixty, with courtly manner as became the envoy of the most polite nation in the world, stroked his beard thoughtfully while he listened to the detective. He was sitting at his big writing-table, in the small well-furnished room where he was in the habit of holding private conference with those with whom the Chief Secretary of the Embassy had no power to deal. Elmes, smart, well-shaven and ruddy, sat in a large easy chair close by, and slowly explained the reason of his visit.

"I remember the case quite well," His Excellency exclaimed when the detective paused. "Some papers regarding it were placed before me, but I left my Secretary to deal with them. The girl, if I remember right, arrived

in London from Livorno accompanied by an unknown Englishman, and was found dead in a cab at Piccadilly Circus — mysteriously murdered according to the medical evidence."

"The jury returned an open verdict, but without doubt she was the victim of foul play," Elmes said decisively.

"One moment," the Ambassador interrupted, placing his hand upon the electric button upon the table.

In answer to his summons the thin, dark-faced Neapolitan man-servant appeared, and by him the Ambassador sent a message to the Secretary, who in a few moments entered.

He was younger by ten years than the Ambassador, foppishly dressed as Italians are wont to be, but nevertheless pleasant-faced, with manners which were the essence of good breeding.

"You remember the case of the girl—Vittorina I think her name was—who was found dead in a cab outside the Criterion?"

"Yes."

"Did we make any inquiries of the police in Livorno regarding her identity? This gentleman is an inspector from Scotland Yard," he explained.

"Yes. Do you wish to see the reply?"

"You might send it in to me at once," the Ambassador said, and the Secretary withdrew.

"What you have told me is certainly extraordinary — most extraordinary," exclaimed His Excellency, addressing Elmes.

"All the inquiries I have made point to the one fact I have already suggested," the detective said. "At Scotland Yard we received a request from your Excellency that we should carefully investigate the matter, and we are doing so to the very best of our ability."

"I'm sure you are. The police system of England is excellent, notwithstanding what some may say of its small defects. You have not the power of arrest which our Italian police have, but certainly next to the Paris detective force that of London is the most shrewd, the most intelligent, and the most successful in the detection of crime. I well recollect now signing a formal request to your Department to make searching investigation."

At that moment a clerk entered bearing a file of papers, which he placed before His Excellency.

"Now," exclaimed the latter, "let us see what reply we have received from the police of Livorno," and he slowly turned over letter after letter. The correspondence had evidently been considerable. Its magnitude surprised the detective.

Suddenly the Count paused, and his brows contracted as he read one of the official letters. He glanced at the signature, and saw that it was that of the Marquis of Montelupo, Minister of Foreign Affairs at Rome. Twice he read it through. It was a long despatch closely written, and as the Ambassador re-read it his brow darkened.

Again he touched the electric bell, and a second time summoned the Secretary of the Embassy.

When the latter appeared His Excellency beckoned him into an inner room, and taking the file of papers with him, left the Inspector alone with "The Times."

After the lapse of some ten minutes both men returned.

"But what I desire to know, and that clearly, is why this despatch was never handed to me," His Excellency was saying angrily as they emerged.

"You were away at Scarborough, therefore I attended to it myself," the Secretary returned.

"Did you not appreciate its extreme importance?" His Excellency cried impetuously. "Surely in the interests of our diplomacy this matter should have been placed immediately before me! This despatch, a private one from the Minister, has apparently been laying about the Embassey for servants or any chance caller to read. The thing's disgraceful. Suppose for one moment the contents of this despatch leaked out. What would be the result?"

The Secretary made no reply, but shrugged his shoulders.

"Such gross carelessness on the part of anyone connected with the Embassy amounts almost to treason," the Ambassador continued, livid with rage and indignation. "We are here to do our utmost to preserve the honour and prestige of our nation. Is not our national motto 'For the country and the king.' Yet because I was absent a week, a matter of the most vital importance is calmly shelved in this manner. Moreover, it was sent by a special messenger from Rome; yet it has been allowed to lie about for anybody to copy."

"Pardon me, your Excellency," exclaimed the Secretary. "The file has been kept in the private safe until this moment, and the key has never left my pocket."

"Then why did you send it here by a clerk, and not bring it yourself?" was His Excellency's withering retort."

"It was impossible for me to return at that moment," the Secretary explained. "I was dictating an important letter to catch the post."

"I see by these papers that we wrote direct to the Questore at Livorno, and his reply came by special messenger under cover from the Foreign Minister. Surely that in itself was sufficient to convince you of its extreme importance? Your previous experiences in Vienna and Berlin ought to have shown you that the Minister does not send despatches by special messenger unless he fears the "cabinet noir."

"I wrote formally to the Questore at Livorno according to your instructions, and certainly received from the Ministry at Rome the reply attached. I must confess, however, that it did not strike me as extraordinary until this moment. Now that I read it in the light of recent occurrences I see how secret is its nature. It is impossible, however, that anyone besides myself has read it."

"Let us hope not," His Excellency snapped, as he reseated himself. "It was most inju-

dicious, to say the least;" and then with politeness he bowed to the Secretary as a sign that he had concluded his expressions of displeasure.

"It is most fortunate that you called," the Ambassador observed, turning to Elmes when his secretary had left. "If you had not, a most important matter would have escaped my attention. As it is, I fear I shall be too late in intervening owing to the gross negligence which has been displayed. After the inquest had been held upon the body of the unfortunate girl, we wrote it appears, to the police at Livorno to endeavor to discover who she was;" and he slowly turned over the papers one by one until he came to a formidable document, headed, "Questra de Livorno," which he glanced through.

"The police, it seems, have no knowledge of any person missing," he continued, slowly and deliberately, when he had read through the report. "The name Vittorina, is, of course, as common in Tuscany as Mary in England. The photograph taken by your Department after death has been seen by the whole of the detectives in Livorno, but no one has identified it. If we had the surname we might possibly have traced her by means of the register which is carefully kept in every Italian town; but as it is, the Questore expresses regret that he is unable to furnish us with more thanone item of information."

"What is that?" said Elmes, eagerly.

"It is stated that by the last train from Livorno one night in August, two persons, a man and a woman, inquired for tickets for London. They were informed that tickets could only be issued as far as Milan or Modena. The man was English and the woman Italian. The detective on duty at the station took careful observation of them, as persons who ask for through tickets for London are rare. The description of the woman tallies exactly with that of the unknown Vittorina, and that of the man with the fellow who so cleverly escaped through the Criterion bar."

"We already knew that they came from Leghorn," the Inspector observed disappointedly, but the Ambassador took no notice of his words. He was re-reading, for the third time, the secret instructions contained in the despatch from the Minister at Rome, and stroking his pointed grey beard, a habit of his when unusually puzzled.

"You, of course, still have the original of that curiously-worded letter found in the dead girl's dressing-bag, and signed 'Egisto?'" Count Castellani exclaimed presently, without taking his keen eyes off the despatch before him.

"Yes, your Excellency," Elmes answered. "I have it in my pocket."

"I should like to see it, if you'll allow me," he said in a cold dignified voice.

The detective took out a well-worn leather wallet, containing many notes of cases on which he was or had been engaged, and handed to the Ambassador the strange note which had so puzzled the police and the readers of the newspapers.

His Excellency assumed his gold-rimmed pince-nez, and carefully scrutinized the note.

"It is strangely worded—very strangely," he said. "Have you formed any opinion regarding the mention of Bonciani's Restaurant in Regent Street? What kind of place is it? I've never heard of it."

"The Bonciani is a small restaurant half way up Regent Street, frequented by better-class Italians, but what the veiled reference to appointments on Mondays can mean, I've at present utterly failed to discover."

"This Egisto, whoever he is, writes from Lucca, I see," His Excellency remarked. "Now Lucca is only half-an-hour from Pisa, and if the man wished to say adieu to her, he might have taken half-an-hour's journey and seen her off in the train for the frontier. Have you made any inquires regarding this strange communication."

"A letter has been written to the British Consul at Leghorn, in whose district Lucca is, sending him a copy of the letter, together with the evidence, and asking him to communicate with the authorities."

"Has that letter been sent?" the Ambassador inquired quickly.

"No. I only made application for it to be sent when I was round at the Chief Office this morning."

"Then stop it," His Excellency said, "In this matter Consular inquiries are not required, and may have the effect of thwarting the success of the police. If you will leave the letter in my hands I shall be pleased to make enquiries through the Ministry, and at once acquaint you with the result."

"That will be extremely kind of you, your Excellency," the Inspector said, for he at once saw that the Ambassador had far greater chance of discovering some clue than he had. A request from the Italian representative in London would, he knew, set the police office in Lucca in a flutter, and all their wits would be directed toward discovering the identity of the writer of the extraordinary missive.

"This piece of evidence will be quite safe in my hands, of course," added the Count. "If I am compelled to send it to Italy, in order that the handwriting should be identified, I shall make it a condition that it shall be returned immediately. Do you speak Italian?"

"A little, your Excellency," he answered. "I've been in Italy once or twice on extradition cases."

"Then you can read this letter, I suppose," the courtly diplomat asked, eyeing him keenly.

"Yes. I made the translation for the Coroner," answered Elmes, with a smile.

"Well, it does you credit. Very few of our police, unfortunately, know English. In your inquiries in this case what have you discovered?" the Ambassador asked. "You may be perfectly frank with me, because the woman was an Italian subject, and I am prepared to assist you in every way possible."

"Thanks," the detective said. "Already I've made—and am still making—very careful

investigations. The one fact, however, which I have really established is the identity of the mysterious Major—who was waiting on the platform of Charing Cross Station, who was introduced to the girl, who afterwards spoke to her English companion in the Criterion, and whose photograph, fortunarely enough, was found in the dead girl's dressing-bag."

"The Major?" repeated His Excellency, as if reflecting. "Ah! yes, of course, I recollect. Well, who is that interesting person?" he asked.

"The photograph has been identified by at least a dozen persons as that of a Major Gordon Maitland, who lives in the Albany, and who is a member of the Junior United Service Club."

"Maitland!" echoed the Ambassador, starting at the mention of the name. "He's rather well-known, isn't he? I fancy I've met him somewhere or other."

"He's very well known," answered Elmes. "It is strange, however, that he left London a few days after the occurrence, and has not left his address either at his chambers or his club."

"That is certainly curious," the Ambassador agreed. "It may, however, be only accidental that he left after the tragic affair."

"I have made judicious inquiries in quarters where he is known, but absolutely nothing is discoverable regarding his whereabouts, although I have three officers engaged on the case."

"You have found out nothing regarding his friend, the mysterious Englishman, I suppose?"

"Absolutely nothing. All trace of him has vanished as completely as if the earth had swallowed him up."

"He may have been an American, and by this time is in New York, or even San Francisco." the Count hazarded.

"True, he might have been. Only Major Maitland can tell us that. We are certain to find him sooner or later."

"I sincerely hope you will," the Ambassador said. "I am here to guard the interests of all Italian subjects, and if the life of one is taken it is my duty to press upon your department the urgent necessity of discovering the assassin. If, however, I can be of any service to you in the matter, or can advise you, do not hesitate to call on me. You can always see me privately if you send in your card," and rising as a sign the interview was at an end, His Excellency bowed and wished the detective "good morning."

The instant Inspector Elmes had closed the door after him, the Ambassador took the letter found in the dead girl's bag, together with the file of papers lying before them.

Carrying them swiftly to the window he readjusted his gold-rimmed pince-nez, and hurriedly turned over folio after folio until he came to the secret despatch with the sprawly signature of the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Then, placing the letter beside the despatch, he closely compared the signature with the handwriting of the letter.

His face grew pale, his grey brows contracted, and he bit his lip.

The "l's" "p's" and "t's" in the strange missive were identical with those in the signature to the closely-written despatch which had been penned by the private secretary.

With trembling hand he held the soiled scrap of paper to the light.

"The watermark shows this to be official paper," he muttered aloud. "There is certainly some deep, extraordinary mystery here—a mystery which must be fathomed."

Again he glanced at the long formal despatch.

Then the Ambassador added, in a low, subdued, almost frightened tone—

"What if it is proved that the Marquis Montelupo and 'Egisto' are one and the same!"

CHAPTER XIII.—A DISCOVERY IN EBURY STREET.

The soft, musical Tuscan tongue, the language which Gemma spoke always with her lover, is full of wise sayings and wise proverbs. The assertion that "L'amore della donna e come il vino di Champagni; se non si beve subito, ricade in fondo al calice," is a daily maxim of those light-hearted, happy, indolent dwellers north and south of Arno's valley, from grey old Lucca, with her crumbling city gates and ponderous walls, across the mountains and plains to where the high towers of Siena stand out clear-cut like porcelain against the fiery blaze of sunset. Nearly every language has an almost similar proverb—a proverb which is true indeed, but like many another equally wise, is little heeded.

When Armytage and Gemma had arrived in London, he had not been a little surprised at the address where she stated some of her friends resided. While still in the train, before she reached London, she took from her purse a soiled and carefully treasured piece of paper whereon was written, "76, Bridge Avenue, Hammersmith," and to this house they drove, after depositing their heavy baggage in the cloak-room. They found it a poor wretched thoroughfare off King street, and in the wet evening it looked grey, depressing and unutterably miserable after the brightness of Italy. Suddenly the cab pulled up before the house indicated, a small two-storied one, but it was evident that the person they sought no longer lived there, for a board was up announcing the house was to let. Armytage, after knocking at the door and obtaining no response, rapped at the neighboring house, and inquired whether they were aware of the address of Mr. Nenci, who had left. From the good woman who answered his inquiries, he obtained the interesting fact that owing to the non-payment of the weekly rent, the landlord had a month ago, seized the goods, and the foreigner, who had resided there some six months had disappeared, and being deeply

in debt among the neighboring small shops, had conveniently forgotten to leave his address.

"Was Mr. Nenci married?" Charlie Armytage asked, determined to obtain all the information he could.

"Yes sir," the woman answered. "His wife was a black-faced scowling Italian, who each time she passed me looked as though she'd like to stick a knife into me. And all because I one day complained of 'em throwing a lot of rubbish over into my gardin. My husban' 'e says 'e'd go in and talk to 'em, but I persuaded him not to. Them foreigners don't have any manners. And you should have seen the state they left the house in. Somethin' awful, the lan'lord says.

"Then you haven't the slightest idea where they've gone?"

"No sir. Back to their own country, I hope, for London's better off without such rubbish," and she indignantly shut the door almost before he could wish her good evening.

Returning to the cab, he told her of the departure of her friends, and suggested that for the present she should stay at Hotel Victoria, in Northumberland Avenue, while he took up his bachelor quarters in Ebury street. Therefore, they drove back again to Charing Cross, and having seen her comfortably installed in the hotel, he drove to his own rooms. It was a whim of his to keep on his bachelor chambers while he travelled, first because he had gone to considerable expense in furnishing and decorating them, and secondly, because he could not find it in his heart to part with his housekeeper, an old and trusted servant of the family. Although he spent scarcely a month a year there, he had in his chambers a pied-a-terre in London, and he knew that at any moment he would find things clean, well ordered and ready at any moment for his reception even if he did not telegraph of his intended arrival.

On this occasion, however, he had written from Paris, and on entering his cosy little flat, with its curiously decorated rooms with their Moorish lounges and hangings, he found a bright fire, a comfortable chair ready placed for him, his spirit-stand and a syphon of soda ready to hand, and Mrs. Wright, his housekeeper welcoming him back cordially, and expressing the hope that his journey had been a pleasant one.

Having deposited his bag, he washed, dressed, swallowed a whiskey-and-soda and drove back to the Victoria, where he dined with his well-beloved. Afterwards he wished her a fond "good night" in the brightly lit hall where the eternal bustle of the great hotel was concentrated, and having seen her into the lift, returned again to his own chambers.

At eleven o'clock next morning, according to his promise he came to the hotel, and they drove out in a hansom to see some of the principal streets of London. She had chosen a dress of dark-grey, which fitted her perfectly, and beneath her large black hat her fair face and blue eyes looked the perfect incarnation of innocence and ingenuousness. As he had anticipated, all was strange to her, and in everything she became deeply interested. To her, London was a revelation after the quiet idleness of Tuscany. They drove along the busy Strand, past the Law Courts, down Fleet street with its crowd of lounging printers, and up Ludgate Hill. At St. Paul's they alighted and entered the Cathedral. Its exterior was admired, but at its bare interior she was disappointed. She had expected the Duomo of London to be resplendent in gilt and silver altars with holy pictures, but instead found a great gaunt building, grey, silent and depressing.

Armytage noticed the blank look upon her beautiful countenance, and asked her her opinion.

"It is fine, very fine," she said in her pure Tuscan. "But how bare it is."

"This is not a Catholic country like yours," he explained. "Here we don't believe in gaudy altars, or pictures of the Vergine Annunziata."

"Are all your churches the same, Nino," she inquired. "Are there no altars?"

"Only the central one, and that is never golden as in Italy."

He pointed out to her tombs of great men, about whom she had read long ago in her school days at the Convent of San Palo della Croce in Florence, and in them she was interested. But afterwards when they drove round St. Paul's churchyard into Cheapside, where the traffic was congested and progress was slow, she looked upon the mighty crowded city with eyes wide open in wonder as a child's. At every point she indicated something she had never seen before, and Bennett's clock striking mid-day caused her as much delight as if she had been a girl of twelve. Hers was an extraordinary temperament. As he sat beside her, listening to her original remarks anent things which to his world-weary eyes were so familar as to be unnoticeable, he saw how genuinely ingenuous she was, how utterly unlike the callous adventuress which once, in Livorno, he feared her to be.

To show and explain to her all the objects of interest they passed was to him an intense pleasure. She saw the Mansion House, was impressed by the black gloominess of the Bank of England—an instution revered by every foreigner of either sex—and admired the fine facade of the Exchange.

"How strange!" she exclaimed, "while in turning back toward Queen Victoria Street, the cab again became blocked by the traffic. "Everyone here seems to be in a hurry. Look at the men's hats, they have apparently had no time to put them on properly."

(To be continued.)

THE WORLD MOVES.

THE European war drum is being persistently thumped by the bellicose editors of London, and the continental capitals and its muffled thunder reverberates throughout the world, keeping people on the tenter-hooks of expectation. But happily, the dread consequences of this iterated call to arms, seem as far distant as ever. The bugle blasts which diplomats interject at opportune moments, in the form of after-dinner speeches, give momentary zest to the monotonous drum beats, but while throwing a sop to the groundlings, in the shape of a covert threat, these wily ones take care not to commit themselves to any definite line of action or declare a policy beyond the stage of generalization. The extraordinary military and naval preparations recently made by Great Britain have roused the people of the Empire as they were never roused before, but their significance rests in the tradition, "Ready, aye Ready." Great Britain will never declare war unless absolutely forced into it, and her preparedness for hostilities is her warning to the nations that if a conflict is thrust upon her, she and her sons the wide world over will be found shoulder to shoulder and equipped for the fray.

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BY all odds the most notable item of world-wide interest of the past month is Nikola Tesla's announcement in the Electrical Review of his invention for the transmission of electrical energy without the use of wires. The possibilities of the discovery are so vast that it is impossible to concieve more than a fraction of the importance of the ultimate results. The whole manufacturing systems of the world would be revolutionized; steam would practically dissappear as a factor in transportation and industrial production; coal and wood would cease to be necessities of life, and the present telegraph and telephone systems would disappear, antiquated and worthless. M. Tesla thus describes his invention in the Review: "My invention comprises a novel method or system for the tranmission of electrical energy without the employment of metallic line conductors, and is primarily designed for use in cases where large amounts of electrical energy are to be transmitted to considerable distances, but the results arrived at are of such character and magnitude as compared with any heretofore secured, as to render indispensible the employment of means and the utilization of effects essentially different in their characteristics and actions from those before used or investigated. I have devised means whereby I am enabled to generate with safety and ease electrical pressures measured by hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of volts, and in pursuing investigations with such apparatus, I have discovered certain highly important and useful facts which render practicable the method of transmission of electrical energy hereinafter described. Among these, and bearing directly upon the invention, are the following: First, that with electrical pressures of the magnitude and character which I have made it possible to produce, the ordinary atmosphere becomes, in a measure, capable of serving as a true conductor for the transmission of the current. Second, that the conductivity of the air increases so materially with the increase of electrical pressure and

degree of rarefaction, that it becomes possible to transmit through even moderately rarified strata of the atmosphere electrical energy up to practically any amount and to any distance.

"The system of transmission comprised in my present invention, and which, as above stated, was rendered possible only by the production of apparatus of a character radically new and different from any before known, and which is based upon discoveries made in the investigation of the results produced thereby, consists then in producing at a given point a very high electrical pressure, conducting the current caused thereby to earth and to a terminal at an elevation at which the atmosphere serves as a conductor therefor, and collecting the current by a second elevated terminal at a distance from the first. In order to attain this result it is necessary to employ an apparatus capable of generating electrical pressures vastly in excess of any heretofore used, and to lead the current to earth and to a terminal maintained at an elevation where the rarified atmosphere is capable of conducting freely the particular current produced; then, at a distant point, where the energy is to be utilized, to maintain a terminal at or about the same elevation to receive the current and to convey it to earth through suitable means for transforming and utilizing it. The apparatus which I have invented, and by means of which this method of transmission may be affected, comprises a spiral conductor with many turns surrounded by a conductor with a very few revolutions.

"The secondary coil is built up as usual, the wire being wound around an insulating core or spool until its convolutions fill up the space and form one complete layer. The winding is continued in the same way until another layer is formed and so on. When the desired length of secondary or high-tension coil is thus obtained, the primary or low-tension coil is wound outside of it, but this latter coil is composed of only a very few turns of wire or conductor, which is of much larger diameter or cross-section than the secondary wire. The transformer thus consists simply of two eccentric coils, the inner coil having very many turns of fine wire, the outer coil a very few turns of coarse wire. From this plan of construction it follows that one of the high tension terminals is at the center of the secondary coil, and in the use of the coil the other terminal, whether it be connected to ground or not, is electrically connected to the primary, in order that there may be no material difference of potential between the latter and the adjacent convolutions of the secondary. It will be understood that either or both of the coils or transformers and terminals may be movable, as, for instance, when carried by vessels floating in the air, or by ships at sea. In the former case the connection of one terminal with the ground might not be permanent, but might be intermittently or inductively established without departing from the spirit of the invention."

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The race question in the United States would seem to be approaching a critical stage. Not a day passes but news of lynchings and murder reaches us while the patrolling of armed mobs of whites and the announcements of organization to put down "negro domination" are frequently noted. On one day, October 24th, the Buffalo Express summarized the previous Sunday's doings in the south as follows: "Sunday's record of race lawlessness in different parts of the

South included two race wars, one plain lynching, and two murders, one of which is expected to lead to a lynching, with a total of ten negroes killed and four wounded; four white men killed and seven wounded. Six negroes were arrested and several more yesterday, with a good prospect that a number of these will yet be taken from the authorities and lynched. The disturbances occurred in Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas. Rather an appalling picture of nineteenth-century civilization in the freest nation in the world." A gruesome record enough truly, to mark one Christian Sabbath in a land of enlightenment and civil and religious liberty and whose constitution declares the equality of all men. What might occur were the negroes organized and armed under the direction of a competent leader, is past telling—the possibility of such a contingency is decidedly unpleasant to contemplate. Our good friend, the Khan, has embodied his view of the question in the following powerful and throbbing stanzas:

I know he'll come—I know he'll come—
I look for that time with dread,
When clouds of smoke old Dixie cloak
And the cotton fields are red.
I watch to see his signal lights,
I hark for his bull-hide drums.
God help the whites in th' torch-lit nights
When the fierce Black Prophet comes.

"Revenge!" his battle-cry afar
(Lo, see how the white folks wince),
Not for the scar before the war,
But the wrongs inflicted since;
Not for the days ere Lee went down,
But the days since Ham was free,
That he will drown old Boston town
In the flames of Tennessee!

The big canefields will furnish knives
And the forest arches tar.
With steel and torch to cut and scorch,
It is thus they'll go to war.
And dusky maids shall conches blow,
Boys beat the bull-hide drums,
The dead and gone shall hiss him on,
As the fierce Black Prophet comes.

The sea—the gulf—the Mississip—
Shall bound his smoking trail,
Up north we'll hear—we need not fear—
The throb of his vengeful flail.
We'll hear his spear as through the drear,
Dark atmosphere it hums,
We'll feel the beat of a million feet
As the fierce Black Prophet comes!

* * * * *

I know he'll come—I know he'll come—
I look for that day with dread,
When clouds of smoke old Dixie cloak
And the cotton fields are red.
I watch to see his signal lights,
I hark for his bull hide drums.
God help the whites in the torch-lit nights,
When the fierce Black Prophet comes!

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The Paris peace negotiations drag woundily. The Spaniards, evidently, are playing a waiting game, hoping against hope, that some of the many European complications may assume the acute stage that will in some way help them out of the slough of despond in which they are so helplessly wallowing. The United States demand for the complete surrender of the Philippines is such an extreme departure from its previously avowed policy of holding possession of Manila only for so long as would ensure peace and good government to the Islanders, that it is somewhat of a shock to those who were holding their breath in admiration of its beneficent intentions. British public opinion, however, if we may accept the London papers as its exponent, favors the United States pretensions and if the Republic chooses to borrow the latest motto of the British people, "What we have we'll hold" and live up to it it is its own affair, though Germany, Russia and France may feel inclined to intervene, if not out of friendship to unhappy Spain, in their own interests. In that event the indications are that Great Britain in her present mood would side with the United States even to accepting gage of battle which would involve greater interests than the mere pos-

session of those islands and might give dying Spain the satisfaction of seeing the destruction of some of those powerful states who withheld their succor in her day of trial.

The coming of the Doukhobors to the Canadian West marks another step towards the settlement of the Great Lone Land. The wisdom of the Government in encouraging the immigration of these people has been severely criticised by a section of the press, but the arguments advanced against them have not been convincing to any one who holds to the opinion that the country is in need of settlers who are able and possess the skill to cultivate its waste places. From all accounts the Doukohobors are just the class of settlers we require, peaceful, frugal and industrious, satisfied to work hard for a bare existence if they be allowed to do so unmolested in the practice of their religion. Such people would prove a valuable acquisition to any country and we, who have so much land to spare, should give them a hearty welcome.

The Galicians have caused much needless annoyance to certain newspaper editors who strongly object to them on account of their uncouth appearance and their ignorance. Removed as they are from the cities and towns the editorial eyes are not often shocked by the sight of a sheepskin coat and so far as can be learned the despised Slavs are attending to their own affairs, toiling painfully and assiduously at making homes for themselves, so the papers have ceased in a great measure to abuse them. But they are disproving some of the charges made against them. It was urged among other things that they were lacking in ambition, but we find them not only sending their children to the public schools, where schools are available, but even sending their sons to college, proving beyond doubt that they are possessed of the very highest ambitions and aspirations, the desire to raise themselves to the level of their new surroundings, to fit themselves to enjoy their lately found freedom and independence. May success attend their efforts.

During the recess of the International High Joint Commission some of the members, notably Lord Herschell, have expressed their confidence in the outcome of the negotiations. From the remarks let fall by these gentlemen it is to be inferred that the conferences at Quebec were conducted with such perfect courtesey and friendliness that they left the council board with the impression that the meetings at Washington would surely result in mutual concessions which would ensure a removal of the friction which has existed so long between Canada and the United States. In the matter of the Behring Sea seals the contention of the United States, that the herds were being decimated by the pelagic hunters, has been materially weakened by the returns of the Canadian department of fisheries, which show that the present season's catch amounted to 27,865 skins, as against a total of 30,140 for the previous year. Only thirty-five vessels, little more than half the usual number, were engaged in the hunt this year so that the catch has been one of the best for many seasons, making it obvious that the herds have not decreased to any appreciable extent. As this Behring Sea question appears to be held by the United States as the one of the highest importance of all those under consideration, upon its adjustment will depend largely the success or failure of the whole convention.

The
Great West Magazine.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

at Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, by

THE COLONIST PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED.

WEISS & ROBERTS, *Managing Directors.*

THE GREAT WEST desires a reliable agent in every town in Canada to whom liberal commissions will be paid. For instructions and terms write THE GREAT WEST, Subscription Department.

THE GREAT WEST will be mailed, postage paid, in Canada and the United States, for one dollar a year payable strictly in advance. Any person sending $4.00 for four yearly subscriptions will receive THE GREAT WEST for one year free.

THE GREAT WEST is for sale at all the principal bookstores and news agencies in Canada, 10 cents per number.

ADVERTISEMENTS.—THE GREAT WEST will prove an excellent medium for advertisers in all lines of business reaching as it will a numerous and intelligent class of readers. For rates and terms address ROBERTS ADVERTISING CO., Winnipeg, Manitoba.

CONTRIBUTIONS.—Original articles on subjects of general interest, short stories and poems, are solicited. All contributions must be accompanied with stamps for return postage otherwise we will not hold ourselves responsible for them. Address all MSS. to the Editor, THE GREAT WEST MAGAZINE, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

PUBLISHERS NOTES.

THE October GREAT WEST drew encomiums from the press in many parts of the Dominion and the number of subscriptions received during the month proves conclusively that the Magazine is advancing in public favor. The November number, we think, an improvement on former issues both in the variety of reading matter and attractiveness of illustration. Our desire and aim is to so improve each number that ere many months we will have the satisfaction of issuing a Canadian Magazine as perfect in every particular as any of the foreign ones. To do this in Winnipeg, it must be understood, is not an easy task. There are many drawbacks and difficulties, which it would take much time and space to explain, but we hope in time to surmount these and produce a magazine that will be a credit to Canada. To enable us to accomplish this object we require and expect the co-operation of the business men of Manitoba, for we hold that the production of a first-class magazine in the commercal metropolis of the Great West is the best advertisement that this country can possibly have. Circulated abroad it will show the world that while the Great West is advancing along the lines of industrial progress, its people are not neglecting those niceties of life, the making of literature and the encouragement of art, which mark the real prosperity and growth of a community.

Thirty years ago the Overland Monthly was started in San Francisco. The publisher issued a circular to the business men of the city asking their assistance in the way of advertising and so generous was their response that he was assured of an income of $9,000 per month for a year, before the first number went to press. That act of patriotism ensured the success of the Overland and the city was rewarded a thousand-fold for the magazine fulfilled its mission by dispelling the generally accepted eastern idea of California as the "jumping off place of the wild and woolly west." It was reasoned that a country that could produce the Overland could not be a semi-civilized region such as it

had been described, interest in the state was aroused, eastern capital became interested and flowed towards the Golden Gate and California entered upon that era of prosperity which she is still enjoying. The Overland did more for her than her gold mines for it taught the world that she possessed other resources quite as important as her diggings and infinitely more permanent. We are about to issue a circular to advertisers and we trust that they will aid us as generously and benefit themselves as largely as in the case of the Overland.

The December GREAT WEST will be an especially attractive number. The cover, from an original design modelled in clay by a young Winnipeg girl, will be symbolic of Christmas, something unique and never before attempted in Canada. Profusely illustrated articles on Canadian sports ; the Mound Builders ; Tricks of the Camera ; Christmas poems and stories and a generous instalment of William LeQueux' fine serial, " In the Day of Temptation," will form the principal features. Subscribers desiring extra copies of the Christmas GREAT WEST should send in their orders early.

THE GREAT WEST is offering splendid premiums to persons securing new subcribers. For particulars see advertising pages or address the Business Manager, GREAT WEST MAGAZINE, Winnipeg.

Before sending Christmas cards to your friends see the GREAT WEST for December. The cover is a strikingly appropriate souvenir of Christmas ; nothing more suitable can be desired.

We want agents in every city and town in Canada to secure subscriptions for the GREAT WEST. We are offering special inducements to agents and solicit correspondence on this subject.

THE GREAT WEST offices have been removed to more commodious quarters in the new Bank of Hamilton Block, immediately opposite the Post Office, where we will be glad to see our contributors and subscribers when they visit Winnipeg.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—The Editor of the GREAT WEST has to apologize to the numerous ladies and gentlemen who have favored him with contributions. The removal of the offices has interfered somewhat with his work and several contributions have not been acknowledged, but he is making an effort to overtake his correspondence and asks the writers' consideration in the meantime.

PRIZE PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTEST.—We would remind our amateur photographers that the Prize Contest closes on December 1st, and that all pictures for the competition must be in on or before that date ; we would urge intending competitors to send in their pictures immediately.

NEW BOOKS.

" His Brother's Keeper," by Charles M. Sheldon, is a delightful story told in the well known style of this favorite author. The scene is laid in the iron mining regions and the time that of the great strike of 1895. The publishers are the Poole Printing Company, Limited,

Toronto, who have already published seven of Sheldon's books. The titles of the others are: "Overcoming the World," "The Crucifixion of Philip Strong," "Robert Hardy's Seven Days," "Richard Bruce," and "The Twentieth Door."

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"The Adventures of Francois; Foundling, Thief, Juggler and Fencing-master, during the French Revolution." By Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, author of "Hugh Wynne." The Copp, Clark Co., Limited, Toronto. Paper, 75c.; cloth, $1.25.

To lovers of melo-dramatic romance in which historical facts are blended with the personal adventures of the hero, The Adventures of Francois will prove a veritable treat. The story is intensely interesting and holds the attention of the reader from cover to cover. Francois, as may be gleaned from the sub-title, is of decidedly objectionable habits and mode of life, but so deftly has Dr. Mitchell drawn the character that one unconsciously sympathizes with the rascal and his misfortunes.

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The Parliamentary Guide and Work of General Reference, 1898-9, for Canada, the Provinces, Northwest Territories and Newfoundland. Edited by Arnott J. Magurn. Winnipeg—The Manitoba Free Press Company. Ottawa—James Hope and Sons.

Mr. Magurn has compiled in this work an invaluable mass of information in small compass. The book contains election returns, Dominion and Provincial, up to the latest available date; lists and sketches of members of Dominion and Provincial Parliments; the cabinets of the United Kingdom, United States and Canada; revised customs and excise tariffs; constitution of Canada; electoral population and census returns; the new franchise act; plebiscite returns; proceedings of the Colonial Conference; the militia staff; the B.N.A. Acts, and much general information. The collection, condensation and arrangement of the information contained in the book entailed a vast amount of research and labor and reflects credit on the judgment and industry of the editor. The Guide is a long step in advance of previous efforts in the same line and should command such liberal support as will encourage Mr. Magurn to continue its publication yearly.

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John Splendid, a Tale of the Highlands and the Wars of Montrose. By Neil Munro. The Copp, Clark Company, Limited, Toronto. Paper, 75c.; cloth, $1.25.

Mr. Munro is a newcomer of whose work it is very difficult to speak without being extravagant. And yet eminent critics, who have read John Splendid as it appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* this year, do not hesitate to place him in the same rank with Stevenson and Scott, even going so far as to assert his superiority to either in some points, in that he surpasses Stevenson in the glamour of witchery about his heroine, and is free from the wearisome descriptions of Scott.

To a Highlander this tale is delightful, because its author has by a rare intuition caught the very spirit of the Highlands. One catches even in reading it a breath of the strong free air of loch and glen, and moorland heather. But perhaps its chief charm is the wealth of unspoken sentiment, which makes the Celtic life so beautiful, but which, if put into the mouths of the *dramatis personæ*, would seem unworthy of the warlike Gael.

The Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Co.

TIME TABLE.

To take effect Friday, September, 23rd, 1898.

		Lv.	Arr.
Winnipeg		7 50	22 00
Portage la Prairie	Mon and Fri	10 15	
Portage la Prairie	Tues and Sat		19 15
Gladstone	Mon and Fri	12 30	
Gladstone	Tues and Sat		17 00
Dauphin	Mon and Fri	18 45	
Dauphin	Tues and Sat		12 00
Sifton	Mon and Fri	19 40	
Sifton	Sues and Sat		9 05
Winnipegosis	Mon and Fri	20 50	
Winnipegosis	Tues and Sat		7 45

D. B. HANNA, Supt.

The Great West Magazine is printed and bound for the publishers by E. W. Rugg Co., 182-4 McDermot Avenue, opposite Post Office, Winnipeg.

$50.00 IN CASH PRIZES.

THE GREAT WEST PRIZE STORY COMPETITION.

The publishers of THE GREAT WEST feel confident that a vast amount of literary talent lies dormant in Canada, and particularly in the West, for want of encouragement. We possess many distinguished writers who have made their mark in the world of literature, but there are scores of others unknown to fame who will one day see their names enrolled on the scroll of honor. To encourage these budding literateurs we have decided to offer cash prizes for original short stories by Canadian writers. The competition will open at once, and will close on December 31st, 1898. Manuscripts received on or before that date will be submitted to a committee of literary men, who will award the prizes as follows:

For the Best Story	$25.00
For the Second Best Story	15.00
For the Third and Fourth Best Stories .. .. (each)	5.00

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

☞PLEASE READ CAREFULLY☜

1. The stories must contain not less than fifteen hundred nor more than four thousand words.

2. Manuscripts must be legibly written—typewriting preferred—on one side of the paper only.

3. The paper used should be large note—8 inches by 9½ is a good size—and the manuscript should be mailed flat, not folded if possible, and never rolled.

4. Each MSS. should be addressed THE GREAT WEST MAGAZINE, Winnipeg, Manitoba, and on the corner "Prize Story Competition."

5. At the top of each MSS, above the title of the story, must be written "Prize Story"—words by —— —— —— (some distinctive name by which the writer may be identified), and enclosed in the same envelope with the MSS, must be one dollar for one year's subscription to THE GREAT WEST. Enclose also a sealed envelope, marked on the outside "Prize Story," by —— —— (the pen name chosen) and containing the real name and address. After the prizes have been awarded these envelopes will be opened, and the names of the winners announced, unless for any cause a prize winner wishes his or her name withheld. MSS. which do not secure a prize will be returned to the writer.

6. In every case stamps for return postage must accompany MSS.

7. The stories securing prizes shall become the exclusive property of THE GREAT WEST MAGAZINE.

8. THE GREAT WEST MAGAZINE reserves the right to purchase from the author any story which, although it may not be awarded a prize, is deemed suitable for publication. The price of any such story to be agreed upon between the author and the publishers.

9. All MSS., to be elegible for this competition, must be received at this office on or before the 31st day of December, 1898.

Prizes for Photographs.

The Great West Prize Contests for Amateur Photographers.

The Publishers of the Great West Magazine have pleasure in offering a series of Prizes for the best Photographic Prints made by Amateurs. The contests will run for a year, and two prizes will be awarded every second month.

The First Prize will be $10.00 in cash or a gold medal suitably engraved, at the option of the winner, and the second $5.00 or a silver medal The conditions are as follows :

The competitions are open to amateurs only.

Prints are to be made from original negatives on Aristo or Albumen paper, and suitably mounted.

Postage or express charges are to be paid by the competitor,

The prints will not be returned whether successful or not; and the publishers of the GREAT WEST will have the right to publish them during the contests or afterwards at their discretion.

The art editor of the GREAT WEST will select for publication the best photographs sent in by the first of the month preceding the date of each competition. His selection will be governed by three qualities : photographic perfection, artistic treatment, subject. Each published photograph will be given a number. The makers name, address and title of subject will also be printed. The readers of the GREAT WEST will then be invited to record their votes on coupons which will be supplied, in favor of **ONE** of the published pictures; and the one that receives the greatest number of votes will be awarded the first prize of ten dollars; the one that receives the next greatest number will receive the second prize of five dollars.

It is an essential condition that competitors be yearly subscribers to this magazine. Anyone who is not a subscriber may compete by sending a dollar for a years subscription **at the same time** that he sends his photographs.

The best half-tones are made from Aristo prints, toned to a warm sepia. The larger the print the better.

Particulars of make of camera, lens and plates should be sent with every photograph.

Photographs for the first competition should reach the office of the GREAT WEST not later than the first of December. The best among them will be printed in the January number, and the votes will be recorded till the end of the month last named, when the award will be made and the prizes paid.

Address : **Art Editor, Great West Magazine, Winnipeg.**

HOMESTEAD REGULATIONS.

All even-numbered sections of Dominion lands in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories, excepting 8 and 26, which have not been homesteaded, reserved to provide wood lots for settlers or other purposes, may be homesteaded by any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years of age, to the extent of one quarter section of 160 acres, more or less.

ENTRY.

Entry may be made personally at the local land office in which the land to be taken is situated, or, if the homesteader desires, he may, on application to the Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, or the Commissioner of Dominion Lands, Winnipeg, receive authority for some one to make the entry for him. A fee of $10 is charged for an ordinary homestead entry; but for lands which have been occupied an additional fee of $10 is chargeable to meet inspection and cancellation expenses.

HOMESTEAD DUTIES

Under the present law homestead duties may be performed under the following conditions: Three years cultivation and residence, during which period the settler may not be absent for more than six months in any one year without forfeiting the entry.

APPLICATION FOR PATENT

may be made before the local agent or any homestead inspector. Before making application for patent the settler must give six months' notice in writing to the Commissoner of Dominion Lands of his intention to do so. When for convenience of settlers, application for patent is made before a homestead inspector, a fee of $5 is chargeable.

A SECOND HOMESTEAD.

may be taken by anyone who has received a homestead patent or a certificate of recommendation countersigned by the Commissioner of Dominion Lands upon application for patent made by him, or had earned title to his first homestead on, or prior to, the second day of June, 1889.

INFORMATION.

Full information respecting the land, timber, coal and mineral laws, and copies of these regulations, as well as those respecting Dominion lands in the Railway Belt in British Columbia, may be obtained upon application to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ottawa; the Commissoner of Dominion Lands, Winnipeg, Manitoba; or to any of the Dominion Land Agents in Manitoba or the Northwest Territories.

JAMES A. SMART,
Deputy Minister of the Interior.

Advertising Rates

AT WEST is an excellent medium for advertisers in all ...ness reaching as it does a numerous and intelligent class ... For rates and terms address Advertising Department, ...EST MAGAZINE, Winnipeg, Canada.

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