

**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1997

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming are checked below.

- Coloured covers / Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged / Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated / Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing / Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps / Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black) / Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations / Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material / Relié avec d'autres documents
- Only edition available / Seule édition disponible
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin / La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure.
- Blank leaves added during restorations may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming / Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- Additional comments / Commentaires supplémentaires:

L'institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured pages / Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged / Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated / Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed / Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached / Pages détachées
- Showthrough / Transparence
- Quality of print varies / Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Includes supplementary material / Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image / Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.
- Opposing pages with varying colouration or discolourations are filmed twice to ensure the best possible image / Les pages s'opposant ayant des colorations variables ou des décolorations sont filmées deux fois afin d'obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below / Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10x		14x		18x		22x		26x		30x
	12x		16x		20x		24x		28x	32x

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

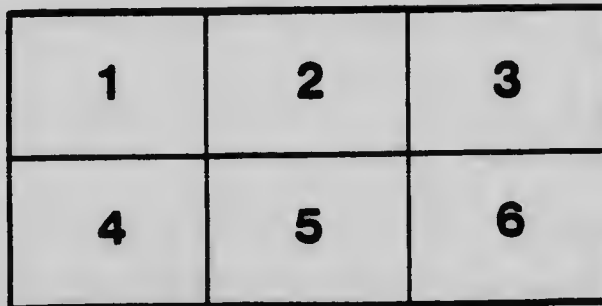
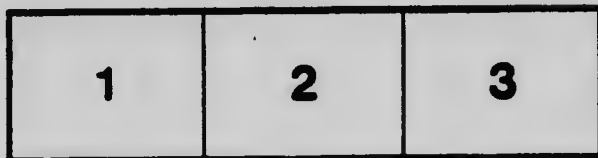
National Library of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

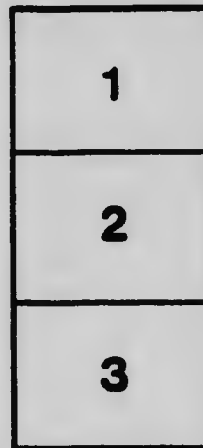
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



4.5

5.0

5.6

6.3

7.1

8.0

9.0

10

11.2

12.5

14

16

18

20

22.5

25

28

31.5

36

40

45

50

56

63

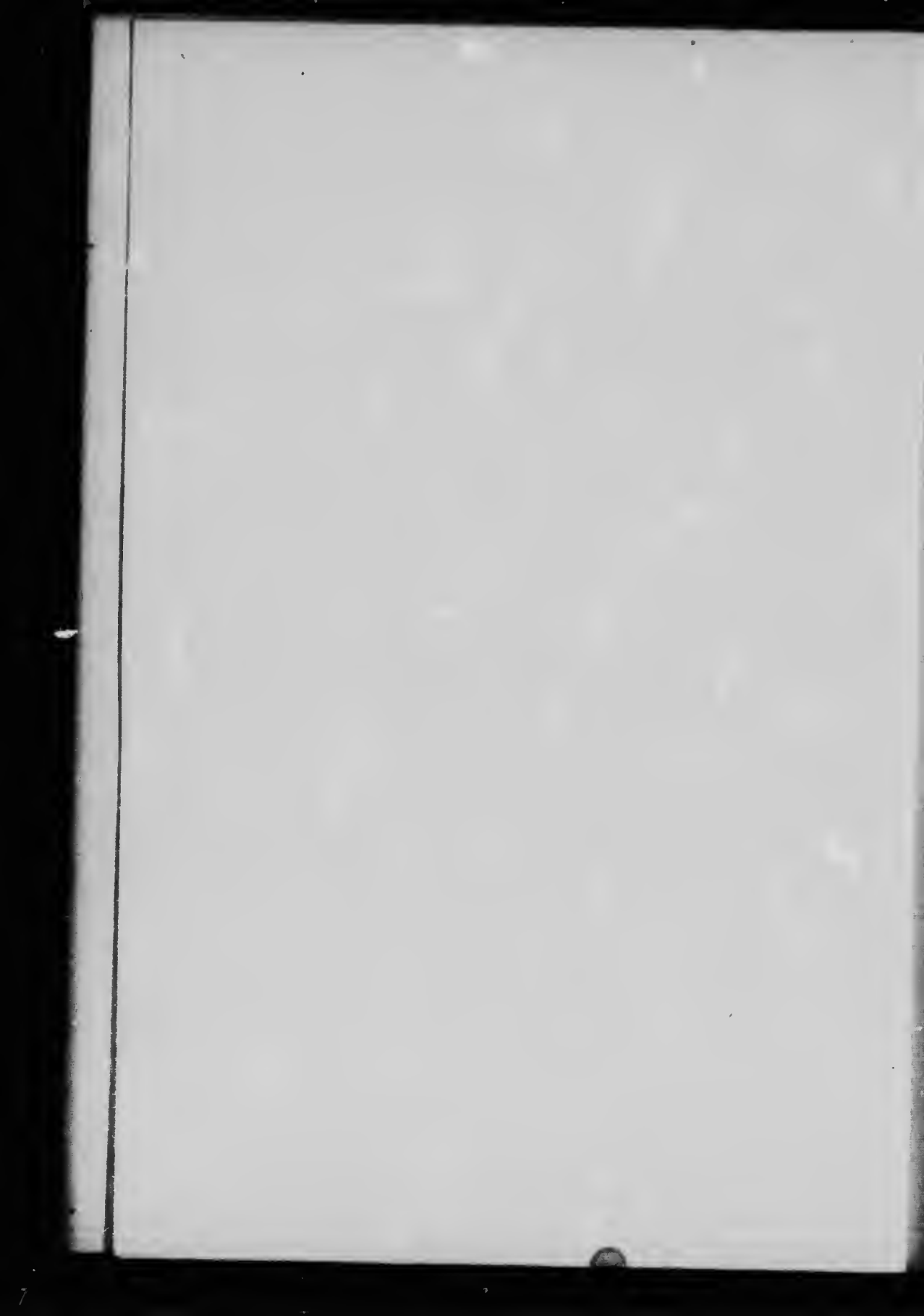


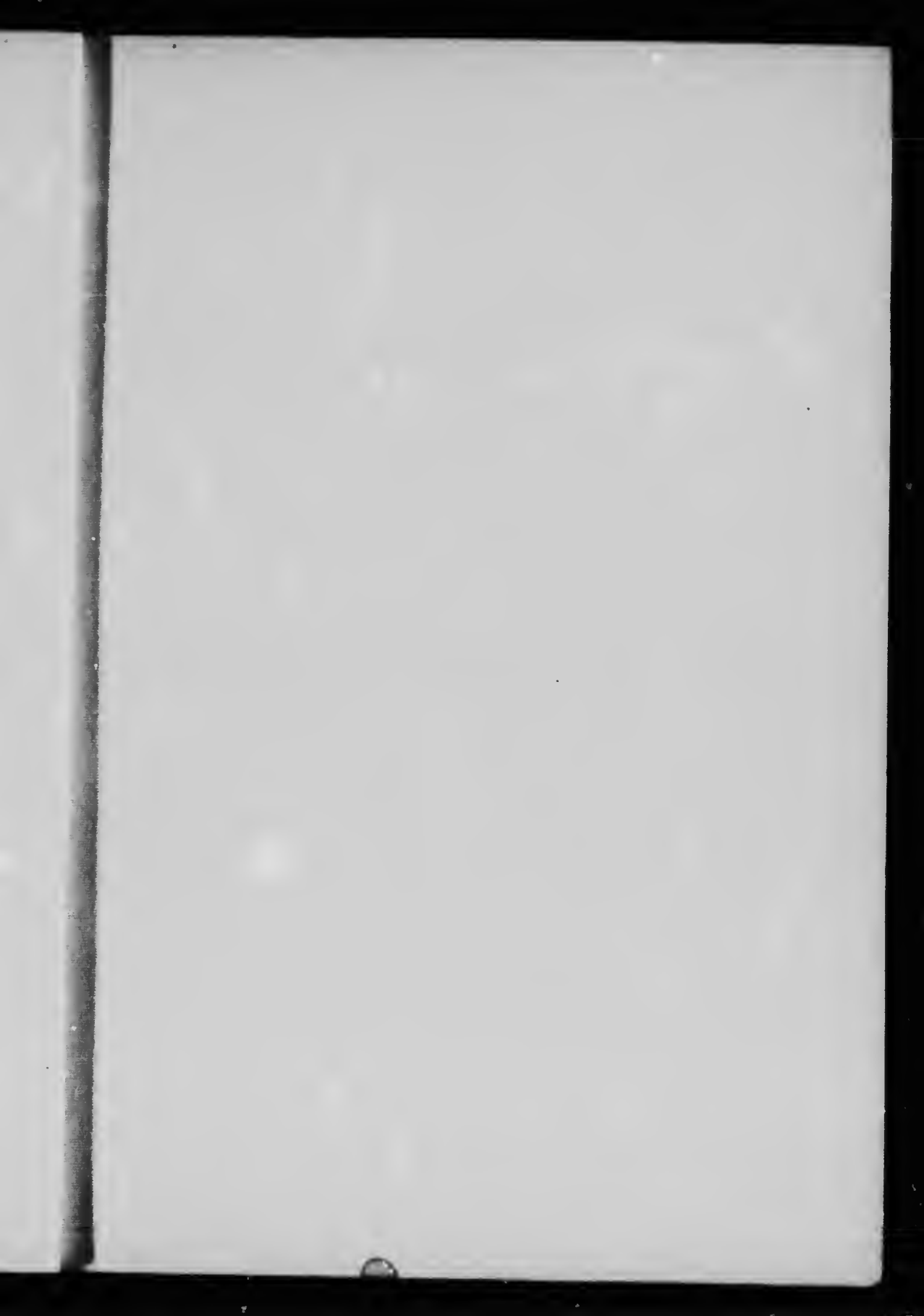
 **APPLIED IMAGE Inc**

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482-0300 - Phone
(716) 288-5989 - Fax

u2511875A

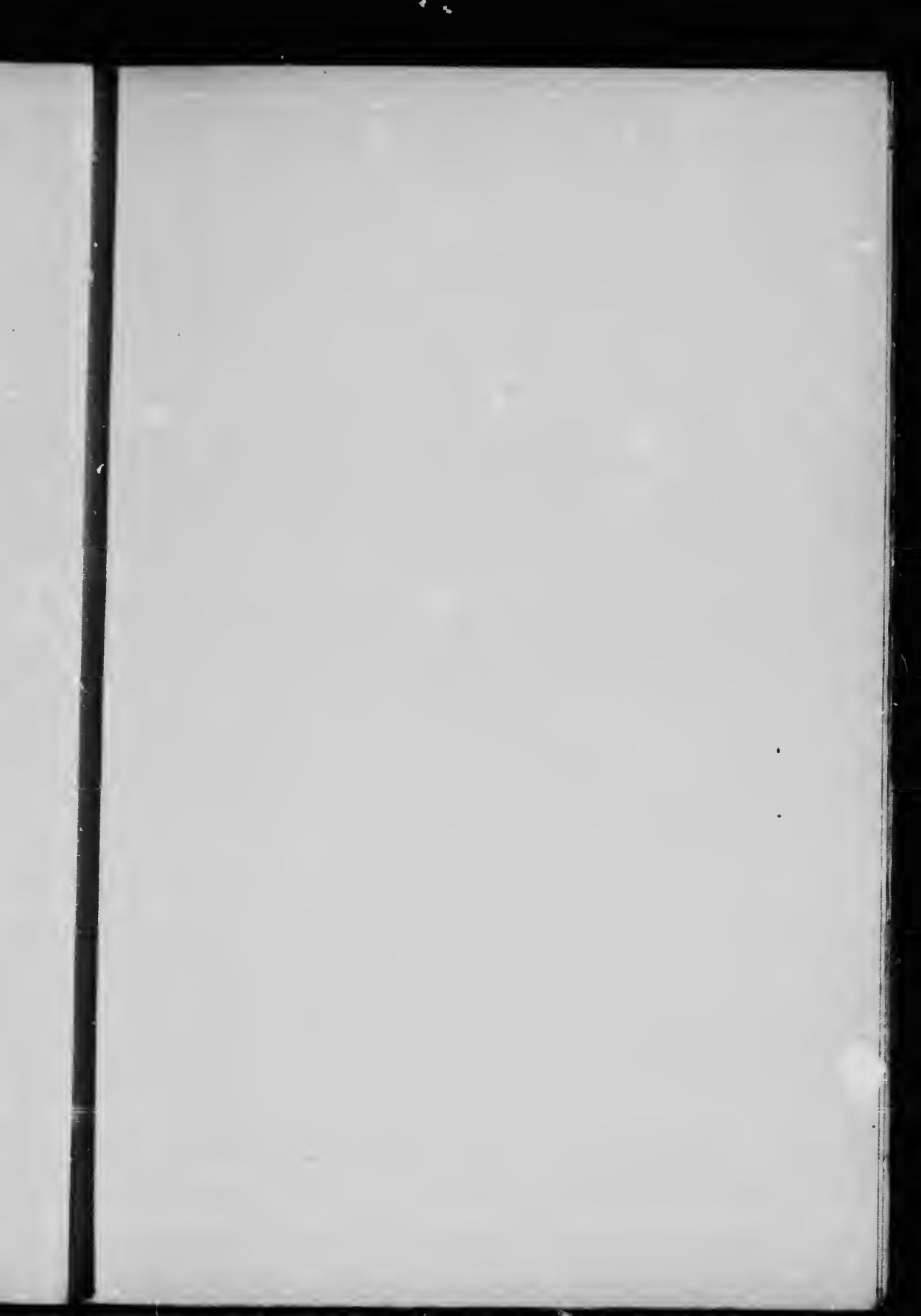
6500











The NECKLACE
of PANDURA

By
REGINALD GOURLAY



BROADWAY PUBLISHING CO.
835 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

R58463

067

N42

1907

Copyright 1907

BY

REGINALD GOURLAY

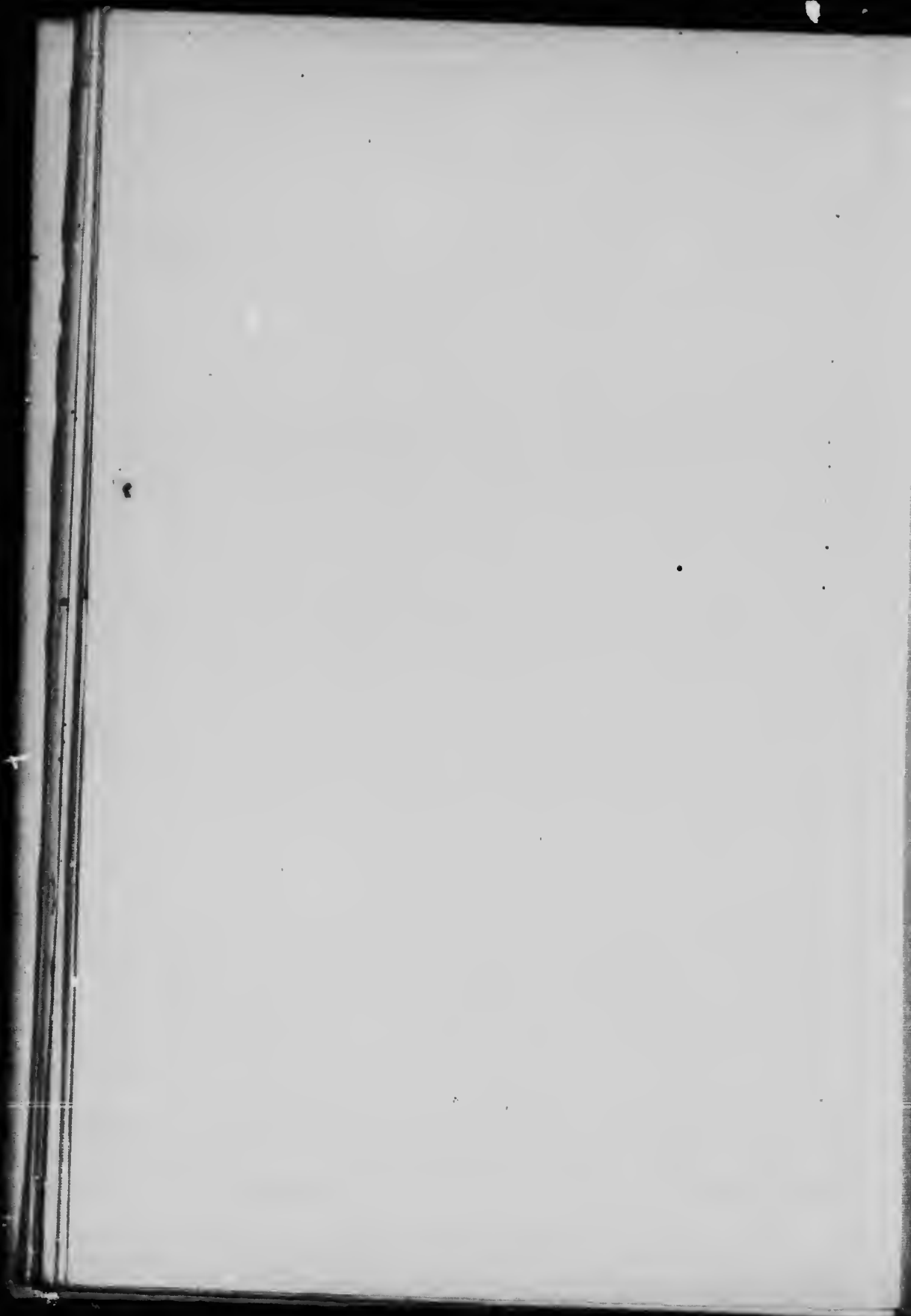
All rights reserved

"APRES."

Oh, loved and lost, can the passing years
Bring aught that will e'er atone
For loss of the love, past doubts and fears,
That once was ours alone?

Lost through the malice of slanderous foes,
Lost,—while beloved and lovely still,—
No grief of all Earth's myriad woes
Can strike my heart so deep and chill.

With thee is lost the light of life,
That led to hope, to peace,—to God
Through Earth's wild field of wolfish strife,
While by me thy light footstep trod.



THE NECKLACE OF PANDURA;
OR,
THE CORD, THE POISON, AND THE
SHADOW.

"A strange but beautiful ornament this," said I to my uncle, the old East India Colonel.

"It is indeed a very *strange* ornament," returned he dryly, as he replaced it in the small steel coffer from which I had lifted it—"and has stranger attributes—and uncanny ones!"

"This same ornament—if the tale I heard of it when it came into my hands from *my* uncle, an old East Indian soldier like myself—be true—and I have reason to believe it is"—he added gravely, closing the coffer, "is no present for a bride!"

We had been choosing from among his splendid and unique collection of Eastern gems, a suitable wedding present for my promised bride, beautiful Mary Trevor, when I thus first beheld the accursed thing, which—but for the warning I was soon to receive about its dangers—might, I firmly believe, have wrecked the happiness of my life.

"Why, what on earth can you mean?" exclaimed I, taking the ornament again from the box, and holding it up to the light. "It is mag-

nificent enough for a princess' wedding present, and would tempt any woman."

It was indeed a curious and beautiful piece of jewelry. It was a necklace of exquisite Indian goldsmith's work, with a pendant of a single immense blazing ruby of great beauty and value. Below this were three pearls—all large, and of the finest quality. The outer ones were the ordinary white pearls, though peculiarly fine specimens. The centre one was a splendid black pearl, which literally glowed with a peculiar translucent splendor, though its beauty and value were somewhat spoiled to the eyes of a connoisseur by the fact that there was an inscription on it in some unknown Oriental characters.

"Do you know what that means?" said my uncle abruptly, pointing to the mysterious letters on the gem.

"Not I," I replied, scrutinizing the queer characters closely; "it's an unknown script to me. Ordinary Hindustanee, and mighty little of that, fills up my stock of knowledge of East Indian languages."

"Well, these are Punjanbee characters," said he, "and this is a necklace sacred to the great and terrible goddess Kalee—or Kali—goddess of pestilence, bloodshed, and murder, and patroness of the horrible order of 'Thuggee,' whose votaries strangled thousands of victims with the 'sacred cord' in honor of the goddess. This order has only just been suppressed by the British government in India—if it *has* been quite suppressed.

"The necklace was given to my uncle by a Mahratta princess, before the Mutiny, who had

been his mistress, and who, it would seem from his tale—gave it to him not altogether with a beneficent motive.

"Her ancestors obtained it—stole it, that is—from the statue of the goddess in her great temple in Benares long ago.

"It was supposed to be the property of the owner of it, if a *man*, and if it was not *worn* by a woman.

"Now you may call me superstitious, Harry Chaloner," my uncle, Colonel Chaloner, went on, pulling the while his great white moustache, "but when I've read you the inscription on that thing, and you've heard my uncle's story about it, you'll understand at least why I'm going to choose some other wedding present for Mary."

"What is the infernal inscription in plain English?" I interrupted, for I was very curious now. Who wouldn't be?

"This is it," answered Colonel Chaloner. "Just as my uncle translated it to me. How he got its meaning I don't know, but he had some reason—as you shall hear—to think it wasn't put there on the pearl for nothing. It means literally this: 'The Cord, the Poison, and the Shadow to her that wears me.'"

"You observe that it says 'to *her* that wears me.'"

"By Jove!" said I, getting up with my hands in my pockets, half derisive, half impressed, for I had lived some time in India myself—"a genuine bit of Indian 'Black Magic,' and a genuine necklace of the great goddess Kali! She would have no women among her terrible votaries, I remember; that is, among the actual stranglers,

though lots of women were employed to entice and cajole the intended victim, and even to occupy his attention till the cord was actually round his neck. That perhaps is the cause of this pretty strongly worded prohibition against a woman wearing the sacred jewel. But, uncle, do you seriously believe here in sensible prosaic England, far away from the superstitious mystic East, that there's anything unlucky or dangerous about a woman's wearing this fine necklace? Why, it's a woman's ornament!"

"Yes, that's just where the trap came in!" said my relative; "wait till I tell you my uncle's story about the thing, and then tell me what you think. To save time, I won't give it in his own words as he told it to me, but just give you the gist of it, keeping as much as may be to what I remember he said. And, remember, too, that his tale is corroborated by facts—terrible facts!"

"Well, to get to it. A great many years ago, my uncle and your great uncle, General Chaloner, gave into my keeping this necklace and many other valuable jewels.

"It was just before the great Mutiny of '58, and he was home on leave, being almost heart-broken by the mysterious and terrible death of his young wife, married but a few weeks before. He told me that I was his heir in any case, and that he might as well give me these things to put away at my banker's, for I was at once to join my regiment in India for the first time as 'a Griffin'—the name we had then for newly joined officers.

"'As for myself,' he said, 'I have but a few days at most to live!'

"Now, my uncle was then a man under fifty—strong, bronzed by service, and with a frame of steel. He was deeply depressed, it is true, by his wife's cruel and strange taking off, but as far as health went, he looked less likely to die suddenly than I do at this moment.

"I said as much, thinking he was distracted by his grief. Then he opened this coffer, drew out this necklet, and read me the inscription on it, and told me what reason he had to *know* that the threat and warning on the devilish thing were terribly backed by some devilish power.

"You don't find old army officers, or old residents in India, from the Viceroy or the Commander-in-Chief down, who don't believe that there are unseen principalities and powers in old Asia that exist—can show their might, and had better not be meddled with by sceptical Europeans!

"This infernal talisman," said he, holding up this very necklace, "was given me a year ago as a wedding present to my young bride by the Maharanee (Princess) of Ranapore, at whose court in far upper India close to Nepaul (where no white man goes) and where Nana Sahib undoubtedly took refuge after the Muntiy from English vengeance, I had for a long time been 'Resident.' In 'John company's' day they frequently sent a military man as 'Resident' to those dangerous outlying 'Protected States.' They found it worked better.

"I served her well, and saw her daily. These women of the East either love or hate strongly, and at once, and in short, she soon became my mistress. The 'Ranee was a beautiful, clever vol-

cano of a woman, like many of those brilliant intriguing, conscienceless, refined savages of the 'high caste' upper Indian females of rank, but I loved her madly for a time. What wonder? We made some little wars on our own hook, and saw danger together (that greatest of ties to draw and bind mortals to each other). Her love for me was real, but it was ever blended with a sort of ferocity, like that of a tigress for her mate.

"Yes, yes! I used her falsely, cruelly, and basely at the last, but the vengeance she took was too dreadful!

"It was no vengeance from this world that she called down on me and mine!

"His strong frame shuddered as he said this.

"Well, I met Jeanie, my poor young wife, at Darjeling when on leave there one hot season. We fell in love at first sight, were engaged, and married before the end of the summer. Then I took my young wife down to Calcutta, and went back to Ramapore to resign my post as 'Resident' before going on 'marriage leave' to England, and incidentally, to acquaint the 'Ranee with the fact that we must part then and forever.

"I didn't anticipate a very pleasant interview, but after all, India was India then, and these ties, often formed, were lightly made and lightly dissolved on both sides.

"But I ought to have known the 'Ranee better than to have supposed that she regarded our liason as one of that sort. We had, as may be imagined, more than one terrible scene. At last, the day before I was to take my leave of her for good, she sent for me. I came. She received

quite alone in a small luxuriously furnished room adjoining her private apartments. We had met there before, and I observed with some misgiving that the great anti-chambers were filled with armed Pathan guards. But with the wonderful and subtle dissimulation of the high caste Oriental woman, she received me with the sad, sweet melancholy of one who bows to the inevitable.

“‘Chaloner Sahib!’ she said, ‘I have loved you much, and thought, being but a foolish woman, to have loved you long. But we are even as leaves blown before the breath of the Gods!’

“Then she drew forth this steel coffer from her robes, and opening it showed me this fatal ornament of death.

“‘I only ask this,’ she went on, ‘in memory of the love we dreamed would outlast the very shrines of the Gods!’ (She pointed through the lattice to the great temple of Bhrama, which shut out the whole view beyond the Palace grounds.) ‘It is that you will give this necklet to the fair Ferenghee girl who is your bride as a wedding gift from the Maharanee Pandura Mahal. It is beautiful and not unworthy of even so fair a maid and so brave and true a lover!’ and she laughed somewhat strangely.

“I took it, for I didn’t know what else to do, and indeed was relieved at being let off so easily.

“I passed out from her presence with what grace I might, which was indeed but little, for as you may imagine, I felt small—despicably small, leaving her standing drawn up to her full height, looking steadfastly after me with that strange,

weird regard which never left me for a moment, in her great steadfast eyes.

"I passed through the lines of guards in the outer court. None molested me—almost to my surprise—for I was already cursing my folly for being there at all. I found my orderlies at the gate and mounted. As I was about to ride off, the Captain of the gate, a tall, powerful Pathan—a man devoted to his mistress, and unscrupulous in her service, laid his hand a moment on my bridle.

"'You go in peace, O Sahib,' he said, 'under the protection of the gods! But I tell you this, Feringhee, neither you or these would have passed alive through these portals, had not we all known how the great goddess whose token you carry, punishes treachery and wrong to herself and her faithful ones! Dwell you and yours henceforth under the shadow of Kali!'

"I made haste down country to Calcutta, where my wife (oh, my fair young wife—bride of a week!) was awaiting me, and one evening about a fortnight later, held her once more in my arms.

"We were to sail for England in a week or so. Meanwhile we occupied a large house—or rather bungalow—in the environs of Calcutta, with great piazzas or verandas all around it, and situated in the midst of a large compound or garden. It was shaded by heavily foliated tropical trees, and bright with many a beautiful Orient flower.

"We had the usual large Indian retinue of servants. After dinner, while seated on the veranda, in a fatal moment, I took out this casket and

showed Jeanie the wedding gift of the Maharanee Pandura.

"It seemed at once to have a strange fascination for her—so much so that she insisted on clasping it round her neck at once. Of course, I had told her nothing of the ominous words of the 'Ranee when she gave it to me, and indeed had already quite persuaded myself that they were the mere meaningless threats of a piqued woman.

"We were then sitting together on the broad veranda which surrounded the bungalow. Before us the great masses of banked foliage of bamboo, of palm, pepul, cassiar, and a hundred other trees and shrubs made dense obscure recesses of blackness, though laced here and there with silver streaks by the just rising moon, their great leaves rattling in the cooling night wind like the slats of a quickly twirled window shutter.

"As the clasp of the necklet snapped together on her white throat, a strange chill, without any discoverable reason, ran through my veins. It was like the chill we feel when the vulgar say 'that someone is walking over our grave'; or when, as the Arabs say, 'Allah is deciding the hour of our death.'

"But I turned towards Jeanie, who had sprung up, crying 'Look! what's that?' and as I live, I saw—we both saw—a tall, black shadow like that of a veiled woman, cross the broad road just at our feet and fade into the ebony masses of the foliage that lined it.

"I ran swiftly down the steps, looking every-where about, called even. There was nothing to be seen; nothing to be heard but the wind pour-

ing through the great leaves of the bamboos and bananas.

"I was recalled by my wife's voice, calling in tones of alarm, 'Charlie, come here! Quick!'

"I ran back up the steps. My wife was drawn back in her lounging chair, her startled face turned towards the great front door of the house, which was just behind her. As I came up, she clutched my arm like one thoroughly frightened, and said in a swift whisper:

"'Charlie, who is that new woman servant? The tall dark woman in black robes? I don't like her! I don't like her looks!'

"Why, there's no new female servant in the house, dearest," I said quite truly (for my servants, as usual, in an East Indian bachelor's home, were nearly all males, and I'd as yet had no time to make new arrangements). "And if there was, she would never venture to come into your presence unsent for.

"I tell you, Charlie," she said, clasping me closer, 'a tall, dark woman stood *there*'—she pointed to the doorway—"looking at me! And, oh, what a dreadful woman! and what awful, awful eyes!"

"What woman? What do you mean, dear?" exclaimed I, filled with a strange foreboding of some unseen peril hanging over us both.

"You had scarcely gone a few moments," she whispered, 'when I experienced the same shivering chill that I felt when that strange shadowy *thing* passed before us both just now, and a black shadow fell across me—from *behind* this time. I started, and turned round. And there—

just in the doorway—bending forward and looking intently at me, was a tall dark female form, robed from head to foot in black, clinging garments.

“But this time the veil was raised, and from beneath it two burning eyes glared on me as I sat frozen in my chair.

“Oh, Charlie, those eyes! Do you remember those of that tigress just trapped in the jungle when some natives were bringing her out in a rude cage? Well, they were just like hers! Only more intelligent—more demon-like! And they were fixed on *me*, and the creature was bending towards me like that tigress about to spring!

“Then I screamed for you, and you came—and the creature was gone. But I know she is lurking somewhere in the house. Oh, Charlie, I am afraid! Take me away from this place!

“I was more than startled, as you may suppose, by this strange appearance, and its effect on Jeanie, but still clung to the hope—in fact, honestly believed—that she had but been frightened by some crazy fanatic. Such people are common enough in Calcutta.

“I rang for servants, had the house lit up, and spent some time in reassuring and cheering my wife, at last apparently completely succeeding in doing so. Then I removed the baleful ornament from her neck, telling her carelessly that I must put it away. This I did, locking it up in its coffer, and placing it among my other valuables.

“Then, telling her to await me in her boudoir, at the door of which I placed a trustworthy servant, so that she might not feel nervous in my ab-

sence, I took Rujeet Sing, my Shikaree, and another resolute and faithful servant, and searched the house from garret to cellar. No trace of a living thing outside the members of my own household was to be found.

"Much easier in mind now, I went back to Jeanie, and found her—she being a girl of courageous spirit and elastic temperament—already disposed to laugh at her fears.

"'It was only a crazy fanatic, as I said, dear,' I called to her as I entered the room. 'There are hundreds of them in a great city like this. I'll make the servants keep strict watch to-night so as to be sure nothing of the sort enters the house again. To-morrow, since you've been so frightened here, we'll go to a hotel for the week before the ship sails.'

"'Very well,' said Jeanie, laughing. 'I'm ashamed to have been such a little fool. But now you have an important dispatch to write (this was true enough). Hurry and finish it, for it is late. I don't feel a bit sleepy, so I'll wait till you've done on the veranda, on the other side, where the wind is so cooling, if you'll place some of the people within call.'

"'Right, love,' said I, kissing her. 'I'll post Rujeet Sing and another man at the door where you saw the woman. They'll be within a easy call, and yet not so near as to disturb you.'

"I kissed her again, and we parted, I to write my dispatch, and she to go back to the veranda.

"I did not, however, tell her of a singular thing which happened during our search of the house,

for I made light of it at the time, and did not want to disturb her mind again.

"As we had passed through the hall, after searching the upper part of the house, one of the servants—a sweeper and low caste man—came salaaming and crouching to me, and said, putting forth his hands deprecatingly,

"Oh, Protector of the Poor! The Mem-Sahib (lady) has seen 'The Dark One!' The Mem Sahib is right. Take her away! Not till she is on 'the Black Water' (the sea) will she be safe!"

"We couldn't get a word of explanation out of him, or indeed another word, good or bad, and I disregarded his saying as the babble of native superstition, but, oh, if I had but taken Jeanie away that night!

"I finished my dispatch in rather less than an hour, and, rising, went to call my wife.

"I found the servants awake and vigilant where I had posted them by the doorway.

"My wife was on the part of the broad veranda (which ran all round the bungalow) that was just round the corner of the house, and was therefore out of sight of the servants, but, as I said, within easy call. Now, remember! These men had heard *nothing*—absolutely nothing—to awake on their minds the slightest suspicion that anything was wrong.

"I called 'Jeanie!' in my ordinary voice—then louder—thinking she might have fallen asleep—then strode forward round the corner of the veranda, followed by the servants.

"The veranda was mostly in shadow, but with broad bars of the moonlight spread across it.

"She was lying on a broad lounge at the further corner. I was approaching her, still thinking that she was asleep, when something strangely contorted in her attitude struck me and made my heart stand still. There seemed to be a broad band of something white across her face, too.

"With one bound I was beside her. There lay my young bride dead—strangled by some demon's hand! A broad silk sash had been thrown across her face, effectually and at once stifling the slightest outcry, on her fair white arms were the purple marks of strong clutching hands, and round her neck, which the cursed necklace had just encircled, was a deep black ring, which marked where the cord of the strangler had been. Her limbs were horribly contorted—and her face! Oh, Heaven! I can't tell you more! If it were not that I know I am soon to join her, I would go mad!"

"My poor uncle!" I exclaimed in pity and horror. Most cruel—most horrible! Some devilish Thuggee murder, of course, in some way connected with the necklace consecrated to Kali."

"So thought every one—so thought the Government," he answered sadly, "and Calcutta and half India were scoured for weeks by hundreds of Government agents and detectives; and what's more, in India, immense rewards were offered, without—needless to say—the slightest result. I think otherwise. I think that the East has its own gods and its own mysteries. I think that for some unknown reason whoever lets a white

woman wear that demon's necklace, awakens sinister powers that no mortal can contend against!"

"Why, uncle, why?"

He took from his desk a letter—or rather scroll—written in Hindustanee characters.

"I'll read this to you," he said. "This came from the 'Ranee Pandura Mahal' the very day after the murder, showing that she had been so certain of what would occur, that she had sent her messenger after me the very day after my departure from her court and some time before the crime was committed. It runs thus:

"How likes now your fair young Fereenghee wife, Chaloner-Sahib—true and honorable Fereenghee soldier—the gift of neckiace of Kali. No mortal can be punished for the deed. The Goddess herself hath honored your house. And know this also, for your comfort—In a *man's* hands the talisman is harmless—nay, even brings good fortune. But whoever lets a *woman* of your race wear it, on *him* falls also the Shadow—and soon.
Pandura Mahal."

"Whether I'm right or wrong we'll soon see. I care little. Take these jewels in keeping, my lad, as a gift from your old uncle, who has made you his heir, and who wishes you well in your career. But, remember, I charge you as my last request, never let any *white* woman ever even see that necklace! Good-bye!"

"These were the last words I ever heard him speak. Three days afterwards he was found sitting upright in his great arm chair in his study. The door of the room was locked on the inside.

His face was greatly swollen and blackened with suffused blood, so was his left arm and shoulder, and on the wrist of that left arm were two deep punctures, exactly like those made by the teeth of a cobra."

"Let me recommend you, nephew Harry, to take that fine rope of Ceylon pearls as a wedding gift for your fiance, Mary Trevor, instead of the necklet you admire so much."

I drew a long breath, and spoke for the first time since my uncle had begun his narrative.

"Thanks, uncle, I *will* take that splendid rope of pearls for Mary. As for that infernal thing, I'd send it back to my banker's at once—or, better still, row out with it to sea a mile or so, and drop it in. The necklace of Kali is no wedding gift for an English woman!"

THE CAPTURE OF TOM DARE.

There were some peculiarities about my English friend, Tom Dare. To begin with, he was an enthusiastic sportsman. There's nothing strange about that. Most Englishmen of his type are. But then, he was besides, one of the worst shots (when he first came out to this country—he improved afterwards) that I ever saw "waste his *lead* upon the desert air."

Now, most Englishmen of his type (he was the younger son of a Buckinghamshire squire) are excellent shots, being "to the manor born," as it were, which made this defect of his the more remarkable. He was very credulous in some things, particularly as regards game and shooting in America. Here again, he resembled many other Englishmen. But, as a western friend—who had, I believe, made the experiment—remarked, "Any one that tried to pick up Tom Dare for a fool, got left—and left bad." He was brave, generous, and impulsive, much more resembling an Irishman than an Englishman in this last respect. He was not, perhaps, strong enough to knock down an ox after the fashion of the old Greek heroes; but he could knock down a man with ease and dispatch, if the occasion warranted it.

He was very near-sighted, which accounted in

part for his frequent bad shots, and he always wore what he called "glawses."

His principal characteristics, when I first knew him, were, First, a most determined and persistent passion for the pursuit of all sorts of game, large and small, and, Second, a rooted and inveterate distrust of the fairer portion of the human race. This last trait of his gave me a sort of foreboding anxiety about him from the first hours of our acquaintance. It seemed to point at him unerringly as one predestined to an early doom—or to an early marriage, which is much the same thing.

I never saw a mysogynist yet, that any clever girl couldn't capture in a week, if she thought it worth her while.

So I kept an eye on Tom Dare, as I liked him from the first, and knew what the fate of a virulent woman hater like him would be, if any astute female once got on his trail.

This artless tale will show what success I had. When I first saw Tom, it was on the Canadian Grand Trunk train, going west, somewhere between Kingston and Toronto. His compartment in the Pullman car resembled a small shop for the sale of sporting goods, or an exhibit of deadly and murderous weapons. Gun and rifle cases lay around him. He had evidently not been able to endure their removal from his sight to the baggage car. At every stop, he would move forward to the said car, and inspect a huge St. Bernard, a pair of pointers, and an evil minded bulldog with mournful solicitude. These interesting animals were making about as much noise as a

pack of hounds in full cry; and two of them—the St. Bernard and the bulldog—were dangerous to come near.

There is a singular freemasonry among sportsmen of the genuine order. So some ideas exchanged on sporting topics, and some timely assistance I was able to give him in soothing his excited quadrupeds, caused him to chat quite freely on various congenial topics.

I soon found out that he was bound for the very city I lived in, and that he had letters of introduction to several people I knew. On finding out that we had mutual acquaintances—Englishman-like—Dare expanded at once, and I was soon in possession of most of his experiences, tribulations, and trials since his recent arrival in the New World; and of some of his hopes and plans for the future. He had some property left him by a deceased maiden aunt, besides the usual younger son's allowance; so he was able to a great extent to follow his own inclinations.

These inclinations led him to Canada "to look about him," and, incidentally, to lessen the number of wild animals in that country by every means in his power. He confided to me in a burst of enthusiasm, invoked by some appreciative remarks of mine, betokening a congenial spirit—that "Spawt"—"real wild spawt"—was at present the guiding star of his existence, and that to enjoy it, unfettered by any of the effete restraints which hedged it in at home, was the chief reason of his leaving his native shore.

"Besides, don't ye know," he went on with refreshing candor; "out here you can get spawt

without having women always botherin' after you, as they're getting to do in England. As a rule, I cawn't bear women—and they cawn't bear me. At least they couldn't till my awnt left me her property. I consider 'em a sort of necessary evil at the best; and when they take to joinin' in, and spoilin' all kinds of spawt (shootin' particularly), as they've taken to doing now; they're an unmixed evil. Why, I pledge ye my word, just aftaw I came into my awnt's money, a girl from Lunnon, who was staying at our place, would actually hang herself onto me when I'd go out shootin' (partridge driving—that sawt of thing, ye know). Would do it, and she insisted on fiawing a gun at last. And when she did fiaw it, she pulled both triggers at once, and kicked herself ovah backwards, and knocked all her hairpins out. Then she called me a murderaw—said it was all my fault! I had to lug her home, and lost the best day's spawt that season. Aftaw that, I cut the old country and came out heah."

I asked him how he liked the New World as far as he'd got.

"Well, don't ye know," said he, "I'm rather disappointed so far. There seem to be just as many girls hangin' about in New York and Halifax and Montreal as there are in England. But most likely, things will improve up country. Then, as to spawt. Of cawse, I haven't regularly set to work yet. Haven't had the chawnce, ye know. Only tried my luck once, when I got to a place called Kingston a few days ago. I had to put in a week there arranging about forwarding

my remittances from England. So I thought I'd 'prospect a bit,' as you Canadian fellows say.

"So I took my gun and dogs, and the train, and got off at a small station a few miles out in the woods. It was a glorious September mawning, and I was truly more happy than for yeahs. Deep wild forest all around me—no botherin' girls, no wretched conventionalities! I shot some squirrels, and what you call partridges, but saw no deahs or beahs. I was just reflecting, however, that they would probably be scarce neah a place the size of Kingston—when, to my infinite delight, I stumbled on a flock of wild turkeys. They were ridiculously tame—so much so that though far from being a good shot, I soon got six. And me pointaws caught one, and the bulldog anothaw. I was collecting my game with the joy and pride that only a true sportsman can feel, when I heard a series of the most awful shouts and execrations, and lookin' up, I perceived a dreadfully wild and unkempt old woman comin' at me with a pitchfork. I gathered from her uproarious and singularly rude remawks that 'she was a squatter in that block of woods,' and that I had been deastatin' her flock of turkeys. I had to pay er dollars for those birds. So my first day's sport in the wilds of Canada was a wretched disappointment."

I cheered up Dare with the hope of better things, when I would be able to show him something of real Canadian shooting; for I could see that he had the disposition of a true sportsman, and as we were drawing near the city of our destination, offered to help him disembark his dogs,

and get them safely off to whatever hotel he might select as his resting place for the night.

The station was very crowded, a matter which the bulldog seemed to consider as a personal insult to himself.

We had got a cab at last, and had begun to stow away the first instalment of firearms, when some one accidentally kicked the bull dog, who forthwith froze to him with a silent attention to business that showed me Dare hadn't boasted at all when he said it was a thoroughbred. That wasn't all. The big St. Bernard, who had been as good as gold up till then, seeing the bulldog at work, uttered a roar like a lion, and pulled down the cabman, while the pointers, who were coupled together, got their chain entangled round some ladies, and then pulled against each other with panic stricken howls.

As Dare was trying to choke off his dogs, some one hit him. Dare promptly knocked the aggressor down, and a fierce battle of dogs and men took place over his prostrate carcass.

This "spawting" episode was terminated only by Dare's having to pay a smart sum to the bitten men, in order to avoid being summoned; and we got off to the hotel at last, where we parted, after arranging various shooting expeditions.

Dare, in due time, presented his letters of introduction to various families, was taken up very kindly by society, and "put up" at most of the clubs; and was even to be seen, with an intense expression of hopeless gloom overshadowing his countenance, assisting at various fashionable functions.

I met him often at the club and elsewhere, and got to like him very much. We had managed to get off for a day's shooting two or three times together, though with great difficulty, as it was almost impossible for Dare, at this period of his advent, to escape from the toils woven round him by fashionable sirens.

For, alas! it had gone abroad among the fair dames of the city that Tom was distinctly eligible, besides being of good family, and "English, you know." Of course, not being a bankrupt Duke, or a "done up" Nobleman, Tom was hardly big enough game for the American Heiress with a big H, but he was an excellent match notwithstanding for any girl with reasonable expectations; besides being a good, honest manly fellow, though of course that was merely a minor consideration to most of the many matrons who already had an eye on him for dear Jane, or darling Gladys, or Ethel.

So, if he had left the old country for solitary sport, and to escape feminine blandishments, Tom might have been said to have slipped out of the frying pan into the fire.

Still, we had a day or two out after such game as the neighborhood afforded. Dare had learned by this time that elk and caribou did not abound in the vicinity of New York; that buffalo were extinct on the Hamilton mountain, and in the neighborhood of Toronto. In fact, that they were virtually extinct everywhere in America. Also that to get big game *anywhere* in America, you must go a long way back. So he pursued the partridge, the wild duck, and the rabbit, with

more zeal than luck, sighing meanwhile for the day, later on in the fall, when he could burst from his silken bonds, escape to the forest primeval, and slaughter bears in peace. His short sight, his impetuosity, and his want of experience, combined to get him into some funny scrapes during these expeditions. We were coming down a dense piece of swampy cover one evening, when it was almost dark, after an afternoon's shooting, during which Dare had fired about thirty cartridges, and shot a partridge and two rabbits. The dogs were working in the cover, and our companion (a Mr. Saunders, who had out with him two very valuable dogs, field spaniels) was on the far side of the thicket. Dare was some fifty yards in front of me. I had stopped to light my pipe. I saw him halt, and fire both barrels into the thicket. Then came an exultant shout. "Hurrah, old man! I've turned over the biggest hare I ever saw! Blamed good shot in this light! or else"—here a painful thought seemed to strike him—"I've shot one of Saunders' dogs!" With a fluttering heart, I joined him, and we went to see. He had shot one of Saunders' dogs. We literally dared not tell the bereaved Saunders what had happened just then, while he was armed, so we skulked away towards the city, hearing, as we departed, the air rent with the whistles and yells of the unconscious Saunders, as he strove to recall one, who, like the girl in Edgar Poe's "Raven," "would return, ah, nevermore!"

Next day, Dare confessed to Saunders. But

I'm not writing a tragedy, so I won't describe the scene.

Next trip Dare got more game, but he also put the best part of a charge of No. 10 (dust shot, luckily) into the back of a (previously) unconscious farmer, who was smoking a restful pipe beneath the maple boughs. The man so stirringly aroused from autumnal day dreams, never knew who hit him, for Tom and I managed to elude him, though we heard him routing like a demon through the woods for a long time.

A few days after this last adventure, Dare was invited by a Mr. Parkes, a well-to-do merchant of the city, to spend a few weeks at a hunting lodge he had, on one of the upper lakes in Muskoka, for the purpose of having some deer shooting.

A similar invitation was extended to myself. We both accepted with alacrity. The only drawback about the matter, in Dare's opinion, was that Mrs. Parkes, and a party of ladies, her friends, were to accompany us; for the "lodge in the wilderness" was a commodious one, and there was no fear that they would have to rough it.

"Great baw!" Tom remarked to me at the club the day after receiving the invitation. "It must be sheer perversity—cawn't be anything else, ye know—that makes a lot of women lug themselves and their traps at this time of the yeah up into the nawthern wilderness, merely to prevent a lot of fellows who've nevah done 'em any harm from having the least chawnce of spawt. Women don't *really* like spawt. They

hate it. The only kind of huntin' they like's man huntin'. You mawk my words, my boy; they'll either stop our shootin' altogether and keep us hangin' round with 'em grubbin' up ferns, or chiovyng aftaw autumn leaves, or else they'll insist on goin' out shootin' with us, and 'then some of 'em 'll get killed trying to show off."

"You wouldn't be so hard on them, Dare," said I, "if Miss Helen Seebright and her aunt were going to be of the party."

Dare looked at me with a gaze of dreamy, and of what, in view of subsequent events, I may almost call prophetic melancholy. "They *are* going to be of the pawty," said he, and looked up at his cigar smoke circling towards the ceiling in a lost sort of way.

"The deuce they are!" said I, looking at my friend with grave, almost sympathetic interest.

Now, it may be said here, that I'd observed, from seeing them together at various garden parties and dances, that this same Miss Helen Seebright was rapidly causing Mr. Tom Dare to make *one* exception at least, to his rule that *all* women were born merely to deceive and oppress mankind; and prevent them from enjoying any sensible amusement in peace. I'd noticed with astonishment that Tom actually *liked* to talk to her, and even tolerated her dreadful aunt, evidently for her sake.

Miss Helen Seebright was, I must admit, now that it's all over, a very nice girl, and a very clever girl, too, as I'd reason to admit soon. She hadn't a cent, being dependent entirely on her aunt aforesaid, Mrs. McKetchar.

She was that dangerous and perplexing thing known as a "gentleman's beauty." Women said she hadn't a good feature in her face, as they always do of similar girls. They were wrong. She had lovely dark eyes, beautiful teeth, and abundant hair. These, with a good figure (which she had) are all that a man cares about in the way of feminine beauty. She sang exquisitely, and had that rare charm—a sweet, soft voice when speaking.

Above all, she could make herself *interesting*. That is, she could make a man think she liked what he liked; and, incidentally, manage to convey the impression to his mind that his sentiments, opinions, and ideas on all subjects were superior and admirable. So that she was altogether a dangerous little person for a man who didn't want to fall in love, to have anything to do with.

Her aunt, Mrs. McKetchar, was briefly what is called in Western America, "A Terror."

She was a tall, lank woman, with a long face like a horse, ornamented by a prodigious Roman nose, above which a pair of small, rat-like, twinkling black eyes shone beneath a glaringly false front of faded brown hair. She was the wife of an impecunious M. P., who had spent all his means, and a great deal more, getting into "the House," and who now lived on his wits, and some mysterious thing called "Patronage," which somehow seemed at times to bring in quite a lot of money. She was an English woman, but the careless way in which she dealt with the letter H, when excited, or indeed, at all unguarded mo-

ments, showed she was not exactly descended from one of the county families. She was a great match maker, and incidentally, match breaker. She had married her own daughters off well, by dint of sheer effrontery—what the vulgar call “gall.”

When she wasn't match making, she was mischief making. To conclude, she could cringe to those above her, or to those from whom she wanted to get anything, and insult those from whom she had nothing to gain or expect, as only a vulgar lower middle class English woman can.

The very next night after our talk at the club, I heard (accidentally, and quite involuntarily) a few words of a conversation between Miss Seebright and Dare, at a garden party, which made me reflect.

'Twas but a fragment, but significant. I had been seized, nolens volens, by dear old Mrs. McKetchar, who cornered me in a nook of one of the piazzas, near a small conservatory, where she, having first made me bring her some light refreshment, proceeded to put me through a good steady catechism as to my friend, Mr. Dare: his means, family expectations, etc., etc. I evaded her for a time, but driven desperate at last by the vulgar directness of her questions, I adopted the expedient recommended by Bismarck in similar circumstances, of telling all I knew, and a great deal more. I'd just finished informing her that, though a commoner himself, two of Dare's uncles were dukes, who, unfortunately for Dare, had taken a solemn oath on the great altar at Westminster Abbey (having travelled up to London

from their country seats for the express purpose) to disown their nephew if he married during his travels in America.

While she was pondering over this important piece of information, she suddenly perceived the Bishop of the diocese, whom she was always badgering about something or other, and saying quickly that "she would be back in a hinstant to finish our delightful conversation, was off in pursuit of the unhappy prelate like a hawk after its prey. She left her fan, and sundry other impedimenta in my charge, so I couldn't bolt. She had scarcely gone when I heard the voices of Miss Seebright and Tom Dare from the small conservatory. The young lady spoke first.

"I assure you, Mr. Dare, I was never so vexed in my life, as when I found my aunt had bound us both over to go on this Muskoka trip. Girls are out of place in these shooting trips. It's so new-womanish, too!"

Dare (interrupting): "Oh, don't dream of thinking that, Miss Helen! *Some* girls would be in the way, but *you*—so chawming, so—so—so." (Words fail him.)

Miss Helen (quite calm): "That's very nice of you, Mr. Dare, but it's only your good nature. In summer a mixed party is all very well. But in the fall, when men want to shoot, and rough it, women are nuisances." (Dare's very sentiments, as expressed to me a short time before.)

Dare: "Oh, Miss Helen! Really now! The ideah of your being a nuisance!—evah—anywhere!" (Laughs wildly.)

Miss Helen (calmly pursuing the subject):

"And all *manly* men, like you, Mr. Dare, don't care to see women out of their places, though I do love the woods with all my heart. The only time when I long to be a man is when I see some of you setting off on your shooting expeditions. How glorious to gallop through the primeval forest on your thoroughbred horses, in pursuit of bears, and—and—porcupines!"

Dare: "Ya'as—thrilling—enthraling! But I b'lieve they don't chase beahs on horseback in Canada; and as I'm infawmed porcupines live up twees, in holes in the wocks, you cawn't gallop aftaw them on horses much."

Miss Helen (with feminine logic): "Yes, but the principle's the same. The woodland life is unique, as you say so cleverly—enthraling. But I promise you, though, if I have to go, that you'll see very little of me during the trip."

Dare (aghast): "Oh, don't say anything so cruel, Miss Helen! When a fellah's chief inducement to go was to have the chawnce of seeing you often!" (What next, Tom? thought I.)

Miss Helen (looking at him very effectively): "How much of that may I believe, I wonder? Well, Mr. Dare, you're so nice about it, that I almost wish you were my brother, for then, you know, I could make you take me out to see you shoot bears and things, without caring if I bored you or not."

Dare (wildly and recklessly): "Oh, Miss Helen, if I were only a brothaw! I mean if I loved you more than a brothaw! I don't mean than my own brothaw, ye know. I mean *any*

brothaw. I mean more than any brothaw! Would—might—could—I—oh" (breaks down).

Here I upset a chair with a crash.

Miss Helen (with mild interest): "Who is that tall girl in green silk over there?—see—with the pink flowers. Pink on green—what lovely taste! Let's go and find out. She must be someone from the country."

At this point, I grabbed the fan and things, and rushed off to meet Mrs. McKetchar, whom I saw approaching, and escaping from her as soon as possible, mingled with the other guests. But it began to dawn on me that, like most professed woman haters, Tom was as wax in the hands of a clever girl, and that, if things went on like this, in our impending trip, the imaginary dukes—had they existed—would certainly be obliged to disown him. Two days after this, our expedition started for Muskoka. The party consisted of our host, and hostess, their son, Jack, Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Naylor, a young married pair, "who both were young, and one (the lady) was beautiful," to quote Byron, slightly altered. Then there was Mrs. McKetchar (her husband was absent, absorbed in public affairs, i.e., borrowing money, and beguiling his constituents with imaginary visions of government favors and benefits to be obtained for them by his unselfish efforts), her niece, Miss Seebright, Dare and myself.

Mrs. Parkes was really very fond of Miss Seebright, and I'm sure would not have been at all averse to seeing her favorite comfortably settled as the wife of such an eligible as Dare.

Between our hostess and Mrs. McKetchar, on the other hand, there merely existed that armed truce that stands for friendship amongst most women. We got to Mr. Parkes' roomy and comfortable hunting lodge, situated on a beautiful lake, in the midst of some of the best deer country in the district without adventure, and delighted with each other. There's nothing like a trip to the woods, to bring out people's best qualities; that is, as long as the weather's good—but beware of rain! We found the two guides, Jack Scott and Kit Todd, waiting for us at Mr. Parkes' private wharf and the very next day, after arriving, yielding to Dare's wild appeals, that gentleman and myself, accompanied by Kit Todd, went for a short, still hunt over the ridges, "to sorter prospect," as Todd said. We, I may say here, never dreamed of driving our deer into the water, and then murdering them at close range, as is too often done now by people who should know better, though we did shoot them with the rifle on runways in front of hounds.

This is quite advantage enough to take of them, though when a man stops a buck going past him at full speed through brush, with a single bullet, he deserves his deer even more than when he crawls into range, and gets a standing shot at him, still-hunting.

Tom's emotions on being at last a denizen of the vast and trackless woods, were genuine, and uncontrolled. I could appreciate them, for a more glorious October morning never dawned. It was pretty enough by the lake, where our lodge was; the light blue of the water exactly

matching the color of the sky, while the startling vivid tints in comparison of the brilliant autumnal foliage of the trees encircling its shores, made the water seem almost unreal—like air.

But in the great woods, it was grand. The endless contrast of huts—the dark red of the oak against the light yellow of the beeches; the vivid crimson of the maple standing out like a fire on a dark night against a black belt of cedars; the scarlet of the sumach and the gold of the birch; the great white pines and hemlocks, with mighty column-like stems, lifting their changeless mass of dark needles far above the medley of gay colors beneath, as in disdain of their tawdry fickleness, struck one first, and next—the silence, or rather, what seemed a great silence at first, for one soon discovered it was broken by innumerable undertones—the many voices of the great forest—the never-ceasing tokens of the eternal unrest of Nature. The creaking of one giant bough against another, the far-off drumming of a partridge, the bark of the red fox, the dropping of a pine cone, even the vague uncertain descent of a leaf, or the cry of the jay, or ivory-billed woodpecker far off in the deep melancholy forest, impressed one with the idea that here at last were the frontiers of the great wild Nature, that man in America is ever driving further and further away. But she, patient and biding her time, will come back in a few thousands of years, and hide him and his works, as she has hidden those of many a race and dynasty in the old world and the new, since the earth was young.

Dare felt all these things so much, that he

asked to be allowed to take care of himself for a while, "to give him the true feeling of solitude," he said; so Kit and I went along one ridge, and Dare made his way along another one running parallel with ours, and about a hundred yards to the right. He hadn't been gone twenty minutes, when he put a bullet (45.75 Winchester) through the top of my fore and aft cap, which I had foolishly decorated with a deer's tail—an absurdity which almost invited accident, when a "tenderfoot" was one of the party. "Thet gent with the goggles is out after meat," said Kit Todd, dryly, as he surveyed the two holes, "an' seemin'ly, he ain't no ways pertic'ler what kind he gits."

Tom's consternation, of course, was extreme; but it was mingled with a sort of injured feeling towards me for not having been a deer. After that, Todd accompanied Dare to prevent little mistakes as to the nature of his game, of the above-mentioned kind, and also to prevent his indulging in what Todd called "permiskyus gunning," i.e., firing his rifle at partridge, rabbits, etc., which he showed evcry disposition to do, and which would effectually settle any hope of our even getting sight of a deer.

I went along the parallel ridge alone. There were many deer in the Muskoka woods in those days, and we saw plenty of tracks, but I didn't expect much success for several reasons. For one thing, the day was too fine. There was no wind in the woods, and the rustle of our steps in the dead leaves would be audible to the keen hearing of a deer far away. Then there were

too many of us. The solitary sportsman is the one that gets game still-hunting. So I was agreeably surprised, when not five minutes after we separated, Dare and Todd jumped a deer from an oak top with the leaves still on, left by lumberers. Todd let drive at it with his single-fire rifle, as it made its first long, beautiful bound out of cover—and, strange to say—for he was a first rate shot—only scraped its flank.

The deer—a spike-buck—went straight away up the ridge in full view; while with frenzied haste, and uncertain aim—crack!—crack!—crack! went Tom's repeater.

The buck was just topping the ridge, about a hundred and fifty yards off, when Dare fired a last wild, despairing shot, and the deer gave a great bound, stretching his fore and hind legs stiffly out. Then all its limbs collapsed in mid air, and it pitched straight forward on its head

"By gee, sir! you killed him!" yelled the guide, looking at Dare with a wild surprise, similar to that which Mark Twain's musing spider exhibited when he stepped on the red hot shovel. But Dare had had uttered a long, loud yell of triumph and victory, and was tearing up the ridge, brandishing a murderous looking knife. We followed, and arrived just in time to prevent his cutting the dead buck's head off at once, for a trophy. As Todd and I came up the ridge together, I heard the guide muttering:

"Killed in his tracks! Goin' full lick. Two hundred yards good—an' by a tenderfoot ez takes a man's hat fer a deer! Meeracles ain't through happ'nin yet, by Gum!"

The buck was hit in the back of the head, just below the horns. The bullet had passed through the brain, and out at the forehead, killing him instantly. It was a ghastly fluke—but a lucky one, for Tom had killed his first deer the very first day out, and fairly, too. We hung the game up, and after prowling about a bit, returned in triumph to the lodge, and sent Todd back with a pony to bring it in. When we got home, we were all (Dare especially) received with acclamations by the ladies. Even Mrs. McKetchar, who regarded Nature, the woods and sport of all kinds, with secret distrust and dislike, and who was sacrificing herself in this instance, to her niece's interests, fell into well-feigned raptures over the deer.

"Ha! there are no sportsmen like the Henglish haristocrats!" I heard her say to Dare. "I suppose you've shot 'undreds finer than that in your huncle's pawks and moors."

"Nevah saw a real wild deer befaw in my life, Mrs. McKetchar," said Tom. "The deer in English pawks are tame deer, and to shoot deer in Scotland one has to be a prince, or duke, or something of that sawt."

"But, Mr. Dare!" said Mrs. McKetchar, archly turning the head crowned with the false front on one side, and surveying him with an admiring leer in her cunning little eyes, "you must hoften 'ave seen 'ole 'erds when visiting at your huncle's—your hobdurate huncle's."

I providentially heard this dangerous remark of Mrs. McKetchar's in time to catch her eye, and by energetically shaking my head, and press-

ing my finger on my lips, succeeded in checking her in full tide.

Then I resumed the conversation in which I was engaged with pretty Mrs. Naylor, who though still young and charming, was beginning to abandon flirtation for the safer if less entrancing paths of gastronomy, and who was unfeignedly interested in the subject of venison. Pretty soon, Tom came up.

"Look here, old man," said he, with a serious look on his face, "is Mrs. McKetchar ever—a little——" and he covertly tapped his forehead.

"Oh, no, old boy," I replied quickly. "But sometimes y' know—don't mention it—amiable weakness—she"—here I regret to say, I imitated drinking something out of a glass.

"Oh, that's it!" said Tom, enlightened. "Accounts for her rummy manner at times—pity!—some one ought to keep an eye on her to-night," and Tom looked compassionately back on the unconscious Mrs. McKetchar.

Then he went on to induce Miss Helen Seebright to "come down to the lake, and show some of the wild plawnts and flowaws that grew there," for "I am perfectly crazy about flowaws!—wild flowaws especially, Miss Helen." (Tom knew a sunflower from a snowdrop, and that was about all.) The young lady was difficle and indifferent at first, but finally allowed herself to be persuaded, and they set forth. Perhaps they might have selected a better month than October to find wild flowers. This possibly was the reason why they were so long away, and why they came back long after the moon had risen with-

out a single specimen. They didn't seem a bit put out, or disappointed either. Just before we all retired, Miss Seebright happened to be near me for a moment, while Mrs. Naylor was singing a very "up-to-date song," to the enchantment of the men, and the horror of Mrs. McKetchar.

"Oh, Mr. Rainald!" she cried, turning towards me, "I've been trying to speak to you all the evening."

"Oh, if I'd only known!" said I. (We didn't like each other much then, and even an old bachelor doesn't like to see the prettiest girl in the district quite absorbed in his bosom friend.)

"Well, you know now," she said with more asperity than exactly suited her seraphic style. "But what I want to find out from you, Mr. Rainald," she continued, coming nearer me and lifting up her eyes confidently, in quite her old manner, "is whether the Rainbow river is safe for canoeing?" (The Rainbow river was a beautiful little stream, which ran into the lake, within five hundred yards of the lodge.)

"Well, Miss Helen," I replied. "It's safe in the sense that you can't be drowned in it, for the water in it isn't more than three or four feet deep anywhere, even in the pool under the falls. But it's full of rapids, and besides, if you didn't take care, or couldn't manage your canoe, you might get carried over the falls, just above where it empties into the lake. Then you'd have to get one of the guides to track the canoe a mile or two up stream for you, and float back, for the current is too strong to paddle up comfortably, to say nothing of the falls near the mouth of the

stream. You see, besides, that these falls are just round a curve of the river, and you don't realize what's up till you're at the brink."

"But," she interrupted, "I hear they are only about five or six feet high, and the water below too shallow to drown you if you *did* go over."

"True enough," said I, "but you'd get an awful ducking, to say nothing of bumps. I'd leave Rainbow river alone, if I were you, Miss Helen, while we're away, and stick to the lake."

"Oh, you're going away," she said, after a moment's deep reflection. "Mr. Dare and yourself, I suppose?"

"Yes, we start to-morrow," said I, "with Todd. We'll camp for a week or so some distance back from the lake, where the deer are less disturbed, and leave Parkes and Naylor to protect you ladies from wolves and things."

"Dare's red hot about it," I added, "avec intention."

"Indeed!" she said very slowly. "Are you *quite* sure Mr. Dare will start with you to-morrow?"

"*Quite!*" I said, with emphasis. "Why, he's been talking of nothing else all day!"

She slightly raised her eyebrows.

"How charming to have such a devotion to any pursuit! My '*Gun* to me a kingdom is!' and Mr. Dare talks of *nothing* else. How funny! But I see Mrs. Naylor has finished her song, so we women must be off to bed, and so must you, if you're going to start so *very* early in the morning. Good-night!"

She laughed musically, and vanished. I hadn't

the least idea what the young lady was driving at during this conversation of ours. I soon found out.

"Look here, Tom!" said I, as soon as we were alone together for a single pipe in the smoking room before turning in. "I think it's better to get off about five to-morrow, or before, if we can. There's no wind then. It gets up with the sun, and we've a good way down the lake to go, with a heavy load in the canoe. I told Todd, and he'll attend to the packing, but you must try and lug yourself up early."

To my amazement, instead of the delighted alacrity I'd expected, Dare showed positive signs of uneasiness—I might almost say—of guilt. He got up, walked to the fireplace, lit a match, applied it to his nose, instead of his cigar, dropped it in a hurry, lit another, failed to get a light again, then turned to me at last, and delivered the following astounding sentiments:

"See here, old fellow! Don't be in a wax. But—er—I really—er—hardly think we'd bettaw stawt to-morrow—day aftaw if you like—ye see—ladies in the pawty. Must show them *some* attention—cawn't rush off befaw sunrise, as if we wanted to get rid of the very sight of them."

"These are beautiful sentiments, Tom," replied I, slowly, "and do you credit, but I've heard you quite lately express rather different ones. May I ask if your unusual remarks to-night are original or suggested?"

Tom looked more confused than ever. "Look here, old man!" he burst out, "I may as well confess. I don't know exactly how it happened, but

I—er—I awsked Miss Seebright to let me paddle her down Rainbow river in my canoe to-morrow afternoon."

"Oh, that's it!" said I.

"Ya-as," said Tom. "I don't know exactly how I came to awsk her, but I did. D' you know," he continued, fixing his large, round eyes solemnly upon me. "D' you know, old man, for the first time in my life, when I'm talking with Miss Seebright, I find myself in the presence of a superior intellect to my own?"

"You don't say so!" said I.

"Ya-as—strange, isn't it?" replied the unconscious Tom. "And then she's so chawming!" he added, gazing dreamily at the embers. "So lovely!—so perfect in every way!—so——"

But I wasn't going to stand that sort of thing for a moment, so bidding Tom "to be sure to be on hand" for our shoot the day after to-morrow, I departed abruptly, and left him still gazing at the fire, in what seemed to me a very ominous manner for a man "who thought girls a nuisance, don't you know."

Late in the afternoon of the next day—the day, that but for Tom's sudden change of front, would have seen us far in the woods, perchance crawling breathlessly up some ridge, after hours of stealthy approach, with the maddening prospect of seeing a great buck standing in full view, when we peered over the top—I was lying under a rock below the falls of Rainbow river, smoking. I'd gone there to do nothing, and was doing it, being out of sorts and disinclined for company. In short, being in that frame of mind, which in a

person of genius or importance is called abstracted, and in an ordinary person—sulky. I'd forgotten all about Tom and Miss Seebright—and pretty much everything else, for I believe I was going off into a gentle doze, when I was roused by hearing a stentorian bellowing, which gradually resolved itself into an attempt on the part of some one to sing "The Canadian Boat Song,"

"Row, brothaws, row! The stream runs fawst—
The rapids aw neah, and the daylight's pawst!"

came by no means faintly on the evening breeze. My first thought was that the criminal who was murdering the melody could be no other than Dare, taking Miss Seebright out for that canoe ride on the river which he'd spoken of; and my second—which brought me to my feet in an instant—was that he must be uncommonly near the brink of the falls. I scrambled up the steep little ridge of rocks over which the stream fell, and the moment I put my head over the top of it—a pretty sight greeted me.

Just rounding the last curve of the little river, and already hopelessly in the suck of the current that swept over the pretty little falls, was Tom's canoe. Miss Helen Seebright was in the bow, reclining tranquilly, facing Dare—her back to the danger, listening to the dulcet tones of her admirer, who was paddling astern. He was just remarking again, tunefully, "Row, brothaws, row! the stream runs fawst!" when I roared out: "Paddle for the bank—hard, you idiot!"

(There was no time for ceremony.) "Quick! or you'll be over!"

Miss Seebright turned round, saw the danger and with the promptitude and presence of mind characteristic of her sex on similar occasions, completely destroyed their last chance, by throwing her arms round Tom with a wild scream, thus rendering him perfectly helpless.

The canoe dashed wildly on, stuck at the very brink of the falls with a sharp jerk (the water was quite shallow) and delivered them both neatly into the pool below with a plop!—plop! that sounded exactly like two frogs plunging into a marsh, only much louder. It was a tragic sight, and I nearly choked with emotion—or something else—as I tore down the slope, "to pick up the pieces." Quick as I was, when I arrived, Tom Dare, decorated with a beautiful black eye, the result of contact with a boulder, was wading ashore, bearing the drenched, but lovely form of Miss Helen, whose beautiful golden hair (all her own) had come down, and did not render her by any means less attractive. She seemed pretty self-possessed, too, considering, for I heard her tell Tom as I came up "that he had saved her" and that "he was a hero!" She then, however, became quite faint, and Tom had to support her again. So, as there was no time to be lost after the drenching they'd had, I suggested that Tom should get the lady home as quickly as possible, while I tried to fish out their canoe for them. You see, I had an idea that they could do without my help, or company.

Accordingly, off they set—Tom supporting the

young lady, and she looking up into his unextinguished eye with sweet confidence. I was a long time getting their canoe out, and when I got home, Miss Seebright had been put to bed, and was being attended to by all the ladies of the party "en masse." I was sitting alone in the smoking room, when Tom, who had changed his attire, but whose darkened orb had assumed quite startling proportions, wandered in. There was a dreamy ecstatic look in his sound eye, that went to my heart.

"By Jove! old man," he began, grasping my unresponsive hand. "What a lucky beggar I am!"

"For getting that black eye?" I replied. "Well, you're easily pleased."

He glowered at me a moment. "I'd take a million black eyes--fifty million black eyes--to gain the prize I've won to-day," he exclaimed.

"Oh, I understand, old boy!" said I, seeing it was all over with him. "You're engaged to Miss Seebright. Lucky dog! Congratulate you!" And we shook hands again warmly.

"Ya-as, my boy. How clevah you are to guess it so quickly! And d' you know, your very first remawk showed great penetration. That black eye" (he surveyed it in the looking glass with deep and appreciative interest) "was, so to speak, the lucky stah of my life."

"An eclipsed star, at present," I put in.

"Helen told me," he continued, with a slight frown, "that she had nevah dreamed of me, or anyone, as a lovah; but that my reckless heroism, the undaunted courage I displayed in her rescue, completely conquered her heart. Made her feel

that she loved, and would evah love, me alone. Of cawse I didn't think it necessary to tell her that the watah was only about three feet deep, and, look heah, old man! Keep dark about that—er—I mean—don't *volunteah* anything about it!"

"Of course I won't," said I, laughing heartily; "trust me!" and I escaped, for I saw our hunting trip was over.

Well, I was glad afterwards, for it turned out a very happy marriage. Mrs. Tom Dare, besides being pretty, was clever; so she allowed her husband all the shooting he could possibly desire, which had a good deal to do with the undoubted and unvarying felicity of their nuptial life. Foolish women often interfere with a husband's favorite pursuit, just because it *is* his favorite pursuit. Clever women never do.

I have said Mrs. Dare was clever, but I never knew *how* clever she was till she vouchsafed me a glance into the depths of her intellect, nearly two years after they were married, which filled me with awe.

"Do you remember, Mr. Rainald," she said, as we were sitting in her cosy drawing room one winter afternoon, "your telling me the evening before the day I got engaged to Tom that the water was only three feet deep *anywhere* in the Rainbow river?" (We had somehow chanced to have been talking of those pleasant Muskoka days.)

"Of course I do," I said, "and I've often wondered why you asked me."

"Well, you see, Mr. Rainald," replied Mrs.

Dare, looking at me over her fan in a peculiarly arch and roguish way. "You see, I'd got to like Tom very much, and I knew he liked me, too; but he was so stupid and slow—and we hadn't long to stay—and you two were going off on that horrid shooting trip next morning—when you told me that. So I thought a little *shock*, you know, might wake Tom up. Bring him to the point, as it were. Dear old Tom's as blind as a bat, and I knew he wouldn't see the rapids till it was all up, or rather down with us, you know. So I risked it!"

Here her infant began howling up stairs, and she rushed off, leaving me thinking very deeply.

EVERY YEAR.

(A Tale of Northern Quebec)

It was in this way that my friend, Donald McIntosh, a Scotch barrister, whom I had long known and valued for his clear intellect and sterling qualities, came to relate the strange tale I now set down on paper.

I must say here that the very practical nature and clear-headed common sense of the man who told it convinced me of its truth, and caused it to make a deep impression on me.

As we sat smoking our pipes in my little study one night some years ago, the conversation chanced to turn on some mysterious murders which had occurred in various parts of the United States, and the perpetrators of which had escaped all discovery on the part of the authorities. Some of these murders remain mysteries while I write this.

As we spoke of the complete manner in which the police had been baffled in their attempts to trace these crimes home to their authors, I chanced to make the trite remark, "That perhaps half or more of the murders that were committed each year escaped detection, and that the oft-heard saying, "Murder will out," was one of the most conspicuous of popular fallacies."

"I don't know about that," said McIntosh, very seriously. "The justice of *man* the murderer may escape perhaps, but I am well inclined to think that there is a deep and terrible truth contained in a sentence written by Charles Dickens: 'Let no man talk of murderers escaping justice, and hint that Providence must sleep! There were twenty score of violent deaths in one long minute of the murderer's agony of fear!' And this agony of fear, mind you," he continued, "was an agony caused by direct supernatural terror, and was felt by no imaginative criminal, but by Bill Sykes, one of the most callous and brutal of ruffians."

"No doubt there's something in what you say, old man," replied I, "though it surprises me to hear a lawyer and man of the world take the line you do. You must know by experience that conscience is lost—absolutely gone—in many criminals. Even the approach of death finds many a malefactor and atheist with a conscience as comfortably callous as the hide of a rhinoceros. After all, it's pretty much a matter of temperament."

"In the case of minor sins—perhaps, yes," said McIntosh, slowly and thoughtfully, "but in the case of murder, or some such deadly crime, I'm inclined to think that some influence works on the individual himself, from *outside*—something permitted!"

"Oh, come," I said, laughing. "You're not going to bring up the old superstition of the murdered man hunting the murderer to justice?"

"Old and universal superstitions, as you call them, common to all races, mind you," said Mc-

Intosh, "have great elements of truth in them. Look here," he continued, after a short pause. "Once I thought pretty much as you do about these things, but years ago a strange and dreadful case came under my own personal notice, which changed forever my views on this subject. I have never spoken to anyone, even to yourself, about it, for many reasons. But all concerned in the affair are now dead, and it can do no harm to speak of it. It is very strange, and remember, so true and terrible that I almost fear to recall it, even to you. Would you like to hear the story?"

"Go on," said I.

"It was in the early part of May, 1878," said McIntosh, "that I was making my way home from a short trout fishing expedition, varied by a turn at the onananiche in far Northern Quebec, to a little French village from which I had set out into the bush, and whence I meant to return to the City of Quebec. I had one guide with me, François Le Maitre, a French 'habitant,' as were all the inhabitants of this wild region, and a good fellow, as most of them are. We were about eight miles from the village at sunset, and being tired out with portages and with steering down a swift, dangerous current, François and I pulled out our canoe at a good spot, and went into camp.

"It was twilight by the time we had pitched our tent, and had supper, but François, who had been much opposed to our camping at all, to my utter amazement, wished to push on to the village, although there was a bad rapid on the way,

to run which in the dark would have meant an almost certain smash up.

"After supper he literally petrified me by renewing his request to 'go on'—to push ahead while there was any light at all. Finally he blurted out, 'to move further from here.'

"I couldn't get at his motives, try all I could, though at last, under strong pressure, he muttered something about the place where we were being '*malin*,' i.e., 'evil'—'uncanny.' I tried hard to get something more out of him, for I knew what a superstitious lot the simple-minded voyagers of Northern Quebec were at times. But though restless and frightened, he refused to be 'pumped' as to the cause of his fear, and at last turned sullen, and went and shut himself up in the tent, as if he actually feared to look abroad on the spot where we were. As he rolled himself in his blankets, he said something that sounded like 'Monsieur might find something more bad in the St. R mi woods than shooting a rapid in the dark!'

"I saw that the man was really frightened about something, so I forgave his unusual conduct, for Fran ois was both a brave and a civil and clever guide. So I let him alone, lit my pipe, and strolled down to the river as the moon was rising, leaving him to sleep if he could.

"I had been looking out over the beautiful sparkling stream and the vast barren wilderness of rocks and forest beyond for some ten or fifteen minutes, when there was a slight crackling in the under brush by the river, and a rolling of loose stones, and there stepped out into the little

elevated open space where I stood—a man. The moonlight was clear in the little open space, and as he came close to me I could see him distinctly. He was a French 'habitant,' evidently a resident of the district, dressed in homespun clothes, and he moved steadily on, as one who knew his way, and had an object in his journey.

"You know the backwoods saying, 'Every man is a friend in the woods,' so I stepped forward to greet him, and then I saw his face! It was not a bad face—rather an intellectual one for a man of his class—but there was a look on it that would have made you pick it out at once from a crowd of a thousand others. There was a look of dread, but above all, a look of *expectation* of some horror to come upon it; with a sort of set determination about it, too, which I know affected me with a strange feeling that was very like fear, and yet had pity for the man in it, too.

"I felt a similar mixture of repugnance and pity once for a murderer whom I saw brought out to be hanged whose nerve had failed him and who saw before him a horror he had no strength to endure.

"I shook off the feeling with some self-contempt, and spoke to the man.

"'Bon soir, mon ami. You travel late. I'm camped close to here. You'd better turn in with us till morning. This is a poor country for night walking.' He started slightly.

"'Bon soir m' sieu,' he replied in a strange, strained voice, like one suppressing some strong emotion. 'Non m'sieu, I cannot wait. I cannot stop. Not an hour, not an instant! I am ex-

pected! A strong shudder ran through him. 'He is waiting for me!'

"There was something even more in the man's strange wild look than in his words that sent a chill through my blood.

"'Nonsense, man!' said I. 'Do you know you look too ill to travel. Devilish queer, in short! Better come with me.'

"'I rest in no man's tent to-night,' he answered, in the same strange, wild way. 'It is the twelfth of May! He calls me from the forest, from the dreadful place of crime! For the sake of Le Grand Dieu, who punishes a sinner, you must neither detain me nor follow me! I am Pierre La Rose. I am the Evil One's to-night!'

"He shook off my detaining hand, parted the bushes, and was gone, on his way up the river. I stood a few moments undecided, and to tell the truth, not a little shaken; for though our dialogue sounds tame enough in the telling, there was something about the man himself that made me shrink from detaining him—or even talking with him—a moment longer.

"So, after a short pause to pull myself together, I went back to camp to arouse François, and to tell him about my strange reconnoitre. I found François awake, and unfeignedly glad to see me. I related my adventure. François sprang instantly to his feet, clutching my arms in his strong agitation. 'Ah, Monsieur!' he cried, literally stammering with fright and nervousness. 'You have met him—the accursed one! Mon dieu! Why did we camp so near the guilty place? Ecoutez, monsieur,' he continued, lower-

ing his voice and looking all about him as one who feared invisible listeners. 'Pierre La Rose is a murderer! Worse! Le Bon Dieu has permitted that at this time of the year—the time of his crime—he shall be under the power of the evil soul of his victim or of some bad spirit. He is *drawn* to meet him, he says, at the spot where he slew. Let us go, monsieur, à l'instant, lest we meet La Rose again—and *that other!*'

"'Come, man,' I said, seeing the habitant was getting frantic with terror, 'this will never do. Murderer or not, the man is crazy, and ought to be coaxed, or if necessary, brought back by force to St. Rème. Where is he going? What murder did he commit? And when?'

"'He is going, monsieur,' said François, more composedly, but shivering and speaking low, 'to a place not a quarter of a mile from here, up the river. Ah, mon dieu! So close, so close! A wild spot amidst great rocks, where the deed was done. There he meets that evil thing. As for the murder, monsieur, it was thus. If I tell you, will you come away—at once?'

"'I'll see,' said I.

"'Bieu, monsieur! This night of May, the twelfth, three years ago, this Pierre La Rose and his 'camarade,' Jean Thibeault, were passing that place I spoke of on their way back to St. Rème from a trapping and fishing trip. Pierre was gentile, gallant, bon garçon then, beloved by all. Jean Thibeault sullen, ill conditioned, a vile tongue about women, enfin—a brute. He was a stranger in the district, but already had an evil name. There was bad blood, too, between the

men on account of Josephine Dupont, to whom Pierre was affianced; and whom Jean was pursuing to win away from him—as Pierre knew—indeed, Jean made no secret of it.

“Then Jean—brute as he was—was handsome—and could say sweet things to a silly girl when he liked. It seems they had quarrelled on the way about her. Enfin, monsieur, they were passing that place. Pierre slipped off a high rock, and broke his leg between knee and ankle. He called to Jean, who was in front. Jean turned, saw his plight, laughed and passed on. As he went, he looked round and said, ‘Lie there, maladroït, till you are found. I go to comfort Josephine.’

“Whether he was in earnest, or meant only a brutal jest, I know not, but Pierre’s French blood was in flames.

“He snatched up his rifle, and Jean fell on his face, shot below the shoulder blade. A party coming up the river some days after, found Jean’s already festering body, and Pierre near him—mad. When Pierre recovered his mind, he confessed all this to Père La Loude, our priest, a good man and a wise—and when his punishment came upon him, others knew.’

“‘But why in the name of Heaven,’ said I, my legal instincts getting the better of me, ‘wasn’t the man brought to justice for the murder? I don’t think it could be made out anything more than manslaughter. I’d swear that few juries would convict him of murder, though there’s no betting on what a Canadian jury may do nowadays,’ I added, reflectively.

“Monsieur, the place was far away from civilization. La Rose's parents were respected and liked. He had many friends and relatives, and we had no wish to see one of our small community die a disgraceful death. And as for Thibeault, he was *hated*. Besides, Père La Loude said, no—even when Pierre wished to give himself up to escape the evil thing that called him—called him—always to the woods when the day of his crime came round. Why we know not, but the priest knew more than we, and he was the servant of God. ‘Assez!’ So poor Josephine Dupont entered the Convent of the Ursulines at Quebec.’

“Pierre lived on among us, broken, pale, heart-stricken. He did good, helped all men, was much with the good priest.

“But when the first anniversary of his crime came near, a strange terror—a relentless horror—came over him.’

“He said Thibeault *called* him to the woods to meet him where they were found, and there was something so awful in his terror, monsieur, that men feared to speak with him. The first time, the priest took him to the church on the evening of the twelfth of May, meaning to pass the dreaded night with him in prayer; but when two of our elder men, whom the father had asked to join in their prayers, came later on, they found the accursed one gone, and the priest lay insensible before the altar.

“Then all the parish said that the good God must have permitted the evil spirit to have power for a time, or he could never have drawn Pierre

from the altar. But the priest never spoke of what he saw.

"Two of our hunters followed him the next time to the evil tryst, and came back again in such deadly terror that they went away from their native district to the settlements. They would only say that Pierre talked with the lost soul of Jean Thibeault of impious and awful things. So it is ever, monsieur! When Pierre wanders back from these meetings, he is mad—really mad—and raves and cries to God for mercy, till he falls into a long swoon, out of which he comes sane, but more broken, nearer his grave than before. Voila tout! And now, monsieur partons! For the love of God, let us go!"

"'Ecoutez, François,' said I, for I had got my pluck back again by now; 'the poor fellow's a monomaniac, that's all, and should be brought back at once, before exposure kills him, as it will sooner or later. And I'm going to do it. Allons, mon garçon, du courage! You're a brave fellow enough. Why, I've seen you face the charge of a bull moose without taking the pipe out of your mouth. Come along! We'll have La Rose in camp here in less than half an hour.'

"'I come, monsieur! Not for all the lands in Quebec. Not for all the money in its banks would I follow La Rose to where he meets that evil thing!'

"'Stay, then,' I said, really angry at his superstition, 'and cover your head with your blanket, while I go and fetch him.'

"The poor fellow still tried to stop me, but I

shook him off, and set out for the place he had designated—a little disturbed in mind, but quite determined, and as free from fear as you are now.

"I soon found the place. There was no mistaking it. A desolate, open space, strewn with great rocks, no growth of tree or bush on it, save here and there a stunted pine tree, showing black against the night sky. 'One might almost say,' says Victor Hugo, 'that some places are criminal.' This looked like one of them.

"Crouched together on a large flat rock in the midst of this space, was the man for whom I sought.

"He was talking aloud at intervals in a strange, unearthly, high-pitched voice. Every word he said was distinctly audible where I stood; and his words—and still more—a certain dreadful atmosphere of horror and despair that seemed to surround him, and to emanate from him, filled me with such a thrill of deadly terror as I have never felt before or since. Raving—screaming—cursing—all the extravagances of ordinary dementia I had been prepared for, but this man's madness—if madness it was—impressed me as being the strangest and most awful I had ever seen or heard of. He seemed to be carrying on a conversation or dialogue with some invisible being—dreaded, hated, yet withstood and resisted.

"Often he would say: 'You cannot always have power; God will save me at last!' Then a pause. 'Yes, I *will* name him!' Another interval. Then with quick horror, 'Curse God and be at rest from your torments? Never! Though

He slay me, yet will I not deny him.' Then again, after a still longer pause, 'But in those places—those dreadful places of the lost—God is there also. He is stronger than you, and him who gives you dominion over me in this hour!'

"Then (was I mad, too?) I heard—or seemed to hear—like the low shiver of the forest, the words, 'Others than the God we hate and fear are there—and here!'

"And with the words, a sudden overwhelming sense of a malignant hostile presence drawing nearer and nearer to me, and a swift internal warning of imminent danger—danger to myself—swept over me like a torrent, destroying nerve and courage.

"I fled like a coward, to escape from that place my only instinct. One glance at my face when I joined him was enough for François. We snatched our rifles, packs and so forth, rushed down to the river, and launching our canoe, were off.

"Small to us now appeared the dangers of the rapid, risked in the night in comparison with what was behind us in that accursed place of fear that we had left. We scraped through somehow, and reached St. Rème before morning.

"As soon as it was practicable, I sought Père La Loude, and told him all that I had seen and heard..

"He corroborated all François had told me, and added this curious theory of his own: 'With regard to this unhappy man, it may be that the good God has permitted an evil spirit to have

power over him for a time, in order that his great sin may be all—or in part—expiated here, and so he be spared much hereafter.

“‘You know,’ he said, with a slight smile, ‘we of the old church believe in purgatory; that is, in expiation of our sins after death, followed by ultimate salvation. If hereafter, why not sometimes here? All places and times are the same to God.’

“More than a year after I received a letter from Père La Loude, a paragraph from which might interest you. He wrote thus:

“‘Poor Pierre La Rose died some days ago, in consequence of the exhaustion which always followed his strange yearly visits to the scene of his crime. He died penitent—hopeful—and I trust—redeemed. But for all that, till the day of his death, he had to pass through his awful ordeal—every year.

"SATANISM" AND THE "BLACK MASS"
(LE MESSE NOIR) IN PARIS.

Of late many European and American newspapers have been making allusions to the singular fact that there has been a strange revival among certain of the fashionable and wealthy classes in Paris of "Satanism"—that is, of Satan worship—and of the "Black Mass" (*la Messe Noir*), which is one of the most profane and terrible modes by which that worship is celebrated.

This Satan worship has always had a peculiar hold on the Latin races, and on the French in particular—and not in the Dark Ages only.

Eugene Sue and other writers refer to a revival of it in "*la haute monde*" during that period of unrest and ferment which preceded the "*Coup d'état*" of Louis Napoleon.

We have a recrudescence of it now—always in the same wealthy and aristocratic circles. It would appear that this strange and terrible Gallic cult flourished only in those circles from the Middle Ages till now.

Gillies de Retz, the most noted exponent of it in the Dark Ages, was a man of power (he was lord of three manors), birth, and learning. He was *proved* to have sacrificed *hundreds* of children to Satan during his awful career. The sacrifice of a young child to "*Satanas Rex Inferne*"

was the principal and most horrible feature of "Le Misse Noir."

The modern Parisian exponents of this peculiar sort of cult for the twentieth century, it is said, sacrificed to him either a lamb (emblem of our Savior) or a dove (emblem of the Holy Spirit). Probably the sacrifice of a human being might prove inconvenient nowadays, and lead eventually to awkward inquiries, even in liberal and enlightened Paris.

The reader will remember the terrible exposé (or partial exposé) during the time of Louis the Fourteenth of France, of these practices, when the Marquise de Brinvilliers was burned at the stake at La Grève for poisoning and sorcery; and when her accomplice, the professional sorceress, poisoner, and priestess of Satan—Voisin—or La Voisin—shared the same fate.

The latter awful woman before her execution boasted that she had celebrated the "Black Mass," with the assistant of a "Celebrant" (who had to be an ordained priest) *hundreds* of times for the most aristocratic men and women (mostly women) in Paris; besides poisoning and distributing poisons wholesale for years. Many of her revelations were hushed up, as they implicated persons of the very highest rank.

The records of her trial and execution (no romancer's invention, but taken from the authentic court records of the period) show this woman La Voisin to have been a monster of wickedness, cunning, and diabolical courage. "She was indeed," says a chronicler of the period, "one of

those inspired and strengthened by her lord and master, Satan."

Whether she believed in her infernal creed and calling is uncertain—it is certain that her dupes and clients did.

She defied, and was unconquered by the subtlest tortures. What confessions she made were made by her own free will—and awful confessions they were! They implicated so many of rank, position, and power (the Princesse de Condé, wife of a prince of the royal blood, and Athenäis, Comtesse de Montespan, Mistress of the King, and mother of his son, the Duc de Maine), that the evidence thus elicited by the "Chambre Ardente" was quietly hushed up, as I have said.

A slight description of this dreadful woman, and of her end (taken from authentic records of the period), might be interesting to the reader.

She was a tall woman, very stout, "rousse" (red haired), of great physical strength, and of a powerful but repulsive expression of countenance. Nothing daunted her. Her wicked courage was almost sublime.

She confessed nothing except from bravado after sentence, while La Marquise de Brinvilliers, who shared her fate, confessed all at the mere threat of torture.

Between the intervals of the "Examinations" (the mild term applied then to racking and the water torture), she abandoned herself with her guards to the vilest orgies and debaucheries. There is no doubt that this licence was allowed to prisoners under sentence in those days if they

had money, and this fact throws a curious light on the times.

Once after having undergone the "water torture," and having drop by drop absorbed six quarts of water, she vowed she would drink that night six bottles of wine, and did so.

Even at the last dreadful scene, her diabolical spirit never failed her. She cursed the officiating priests, and chanted in savage derision an obscene and blasphemous parody on the prayers for her soul.

When chained to the stake, with the fire blazing round her, she swore repeatedly and furiously, and five different times threw off the straw and faggots enveloping her.

At the same time, and in the same way, died La Marquise de Brinvilliers and several priests, "Celebrants" of "Le Messe Noir." This dreadful example, however, did not stop poisoning and Satan worships in Paris.

During the Regency of Philippe D'Orleans, while Louis the Fifteenth, grandson of Louis the Fourteenth, was a minor, a lady of high position and a favorite of the Regents, was proved to have had a "Black Mass" celebrated for her, paying for the same to a certain "sorceress," Marie Latour, or Lafour, two thousand louis (rather less than ten thousand dollars). The woman Latour poisoned herself on hearing she had been denounced.

The executioner of Paris was likewise implicated in this singular affair, which was also "hushed up" when it threatened revelations damaging to the very highest circles.

Why the executioner should have been mixed up with the celebration of a "Black Mass" for a lady of high rank, will appear when we examine the ritual and ceremonial of this demoniacal rite more closely.

It may now be interesting to the reader to know exactly *what* the ritual of this Infernal Mass was, and what the "Postulant" (the person for whom the Mass was said, and who had some special, urgent, overwhelming wish, which caused him or her to run such risks in this world and in the next) had to do, and what was the nature of the prayers he or she offered up. Also, what were the duties of the priestly "Celebrant."

I cannot do better—if I wish shortly and satisfactorily to gratify this natural wish—than to place before him the actual authentic details of the "Black Mass" which—according to her own confession—La Voisin procured to be celebrated for Madame de Montespan (née De Tonnay-Charente), Mistress of King Louis the Fourteenth. La Voisin—as I have said before—boasted that she had celebrated hundreds of these "Messés Noirs" for the aristocracy, male and female—mostly female.

On the occasion of the particular "Black Mass," of which I speak, in a spacious vaulted room, hung with black, perfumed with incense, and lit with candles, exactly as if for an ordinary celebration of the Mass (with the ghastly exception that the candles were made of the fat of a human being—of an executed person—"un pendu"), stood a large black altar.

On it was a mattress, and on the mattress lay

prone the perfectly nude form of a beautiful woman.

This was "The Postulant"—"the living altar"—as she was called in the jargon of this satanic sect, for whom the Mass was said. When we note the peculiar and horrible composition of the candles which lit up this profane rite, we can guess how an executioner came to be mixed up with one or more of these affairs. On the nude woman's face was a black velvet mask. In front of her who thus formed the "living altar," stood the "Celebrant," on one side the "Sorceress," who now comes forward and places over her body at the waist an embroidered pall. On this is placed a gold crucifix *reversed*, and a gold chalice, containing the pre-sanctified Host, horribly and profanely desecrated, in a manner which it is needless to describe here.

The "Celebrant," who, as I have said before, was always an ordained priest, was dressed in the usual robes worn by a vicar when celebrating a true Mass, save that over them he wore a chausuble of bright yellow, embroidered with cones of the fir tree—the tree of Satan.

And now in the dark recesses of the chapel, illuminated by the light of the corpse-candles, the deep note of a gong is heard, struck by invisible hands, and the priest says:

"Kyrie elieson!

"Satanas elieson!

"Kyrie elieson!"

The gong is struck a second time, and the "Celebrant" recites the following invocational prayer to Satan, to which, as well as to the pray-

ers that follow, I have ventured to supply the English translation.

"Gloria tibi Satanas! Gloria in excelsis, et benedictio, et honor, et potestas, in cæcula cæculorum! Landamus te! Benedicamus te! Adoramus te! Glorificamus te! Agimus tibi gratiae propter magnam gloriam tuam! Domine Deus! Rex Inferne! Deus omnipotens! Respice supplicationem nostrum!"

"Glory to the Satan! Glory and blessing, and honor, and power in the highest for ever and ever! We praise thee! We bless thee! We adore thee! We glorify thee! We thank thee because of thy great glory! Lord God! King of Hell! God omnipresent! Receive our supplication!"

The gong is struck a third time; the Sorceress holds up a living child drugged to insensibility and naked, and the "Celebrant" proceeds: "Te igitur, Clementissime Domine, supplices rogamus ac petimus, uti accepta habeas et benedicas hac dona, hac munera, hac sacrificia illibata quae tibi offerimus!"

"Accept, most gracious Lord, accept, I conjure thee, the sacrifice of this child I now offer, in return for the grace I am about to ask!"

The gong is struck for the last time. The child is brought, and held over the "living altar"—its throat is cut, and the blood is received into the chalice. The "Celebrant" raises the cup aloft, repeating in horrible travesty of the Sacrament, "Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei!" (This is the cup of my blood.) Then, "Oramus." (Let us pray.) At this the "Postulant" must reply, "I pray!"

And the "Celebrant" proceeds: "Satan, Lord of Life and Death! Prince of the Air! Acceptor of blood! Hear the prayer of this thy servant! (Here follows the full name of the 'Postulant,' and the particular wish or petition, to obtain which this terrible and blasphemous Mass was said.) In the case of Madame de Montespan the petition was that the King would loathe all other women, and that her son, the Duc de Maine, would succeed to the throne. To this prayer the "Postulant" responds "Amen." The "Celebrant" then advancing, draws with the blood of the sacrifice a pentacle on the breast of the "Postulant." The half empty cup is then held over the altar. A paten is brought from a side table, the remaining fragments of the Host in it are emptied into the chalice and spat on.

Then the cup is emptied over the "Postulant," and the candles are blown out. Then in the darkness, the Infernal Mass concludes with the usual words, "Ite—missa est!"

Such was the ritual of the "Black Mass," the chief ceremonial of that fantastic and blasphemous Satan worship which was so curiously frequent among the Latin races in the Middle Ages—and later.

Its reported revival among certain of the fashionable degenerates of Paris—though, as I have said—without the human sacrifice which formed its chief feature and horror, exhibits a phase of the brilliant but abnormal Gallic intellect simply incomprehensible to Anglo-Saxons.

"EVEN IF I AM DEAD!"

(A Story.)

"I am sorry to have been so hard—so cruel—as I was then; but I should never see you again—you know I should not! Far less meet you, as you want me to. You have no right——"

So spoke I, Jessie Halstead, a weak, wicked girl, to my lover, Conrad Holmes, one who should not have been my lover, and whose young wife I hated, as I was beginning, to my shame, to love him, as we stood together in the post office of the small country town where we both lived.

"But this once, sweet! On my honor, but this once! A few minutes of Heaven before you send me away to the devil—that isn't much. I have something to say to you—something that must be said, which I can't say now with all these people around us," he said quickly, seeing me waver.

"I mean you no harm. There will be no danger."

"But there *will* be danger!" I cried. "You can't come to our house. You know what wicked things people are saying. Oh, Conrad, if you really loved me as you say you do, you would spare me all this!"

"I must see you once, love! You *shan't* refuse

me!" he said. (He well understood the saying, "La femme qui écoute est perdue." "But it shall be where you please. See, slip out at half past eight to-night. It will be dark then. Go up that small street straight from your house which all those great elms shadow. I will be waiting under the last of them by the park gates. I won't detain you, but I have something that *must* be said. Oh, love, come! This once!")

"Oh, I ought not! I ought not!" I cried.

"You will, my own. He was sure enough now. How can I thank you, Jessie?"

For the first time I looked up at him.

"Yes," I said, with a sudden reckless access, which many a woman has recalled with bitterness to her dying day, "I will come. This once!"

"You will never be sorry, Jess! For Heaven's sake, don't fail me!"

"Much Heaven will have to do with it!" I cried in my reckless mood. "Perhaps you'll fail me."

"Fail you!" I can hear that passionate voice now. "I would not fail at such a tryst with my little queen, *even if I were dead!*" Then bending his dark, handsome face toward me, he quoted Tennyson's lovely lines:

"She is coming, my own, my sweet!
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Had it lain for a century dead.
Would start and tremble under her feet
And blossom in purple and red!"

"Hush! Hush!" I said. "Don't say such

things! They may be *heard!* They are unlucky! Oh, Conrad, we are doing wrong!"

"I care not!" his passionate voice replied. "I have your promise, and nothing good or evil will now bar my way, or keep me from my little Jess. I say it again. I would meet you—call you my own again, even if I were dead!"

He had raised his voice, and some of the people near—for it was a public place where we had met—turned half around.

"You must go," I said. "We have talked long enough. Those women are looking——"

"Yes—yes, dear. I must go for a while. Remember, to-night, and remember what I have said!"

We parted, and I, wicked girl, had promised to meet him, and I meant to keep my promise.

Now, remember, all that day was passed by me in a sort of feverish, restless happiness, like the troubled joy of the opium eater.

I had no presentiment, no foreboding of the strange and awful experience I was to go through that night—absolutely none.

And yet the terror of that one night was to make the rest of my life a scene of penance and prayer, which is unavailing for a moment to remove the shuddering dread with which I look forward to the coming of my last hour.

When I slipped out to meet my lover at the time he told me, I went with a fierce longing to see him in which there was not a trace of repentance or foreboding, though I knew he would ask me to go away with him—and that I meant to consent.

I passed up the unfrequented street, under the thick, heavy foliage of the trees, through the dark, still midsummer night, till I saw the electric light shining on the great row of elms by the park gate, where I was to meet him.

And now, let me think! When I saw and recognized that tall form waiting by the last of the great elms, I felt nothing but the old thrill of delight which the sight of no other human being could cause to me.

It was not till he turned and came slowly forward to meet me—still some paces distant—that without warning—without reason—without control—came creeping over me that strange, resistless thrill of indefinable horror.

Now, mind—I had parted from him a few hours before full of strength and passion and life; and yet before that shape had taken three paces toward me—I *knew*.

It was my Conrad—my tempter—come to meet my wicked self, but not in the flesh, and from any place where good spirits rest in peace, but from some awful home of expiation and despair.

Beneath the dark shadow of the great trees, where our meeting was to be, my dead lover paused beside me, as I shrank against the railing with starting eyes, and every limb benumbed with deadly terror.

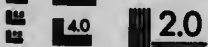
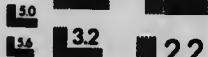
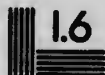
And as he paused the bright electric light shone broad and full upon his face—my Conrad's face!

No love *now*—no passion—no gentle thought for me on that white, drawn, awful face; su-



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482-0300 - Phone
(716) 288-5989 - Fax

preme terror, intense malignity, hopeless, endless despair, were stamped upon it now, for a lost soul in torment looked forth on me from those glaring eyes. Then he bent over me as in the morning—as then he spoke.

He said, "I come—even though dead!"

My sister was bending over me.

"Don't speak, Jess! You have been in a swoon for hours, but are better now. The doctor has just left us. Father and the coachman found you insensible at the park gates under the last of those great elms. How lucky they should have driven home that way! They were detained in town by the dreadful news about poor Conrad Holmes."

"Conrad! What news?"

"I shouldn't have told you yet—you are too weak. Well, well, it seems Mr. Holmes was galloping home from his usual ride about six o'clock. He was in a great hurry about something. The horse stumbled on the loose stones at his very gate, and rolled right over him. He was killed on the spot! Poor, poor fellow! He was rather wild, but so handsome, and so nice. I always liked him. Didn't you, Jess?"

In one of the strictest of our Sisterhoods, in penance and in prayer, I await with shuddering dread the day when I may again be called to meet my lost lover.

"NEVER ALONE."

(A Story.)

'Tis long, long ago since the crime was committed. I was no millionaire then, but a poor miner in the Sierras, and *he*—he was my partner.

We had found gold at last in a lonely ravine, enough to make rich men of us in a few weeks, after many a month of weary and dangerous prospecting in that barren, awful land.

I can scarcely remember how the quarrel started—about some mere trifle it was at most. A thing we would have laughed over at any other time; but we were crazed with toil, hunger, and excitement—and our revolvers were handy.

I packed his body on one of our horses to a great torrent that roared through one of the neighboring gulches, which carried it off like a feather. Then slowly and in pain—for I was hurt in the arm by one of his bullets—I collected specimens, put up my claim, and then packing specimens enough on his horse, I mounted my own, and leading the other, picked my way slowly down to the plains, and rode to the nearest town to register my claim, and get some solid men for partners, as I wasn't rich enough to develop it alone.

And always—whatever I did—I had the fancy that the dead man was close beside me, having his say in everything, just as if he was alive.

I thought this a mere mad fancy then. I've known better since!

Soon I *knew* that he was always with me, invisible, but ever at hand. I was an iron nerved, reckless ruffian then, and at first it wasn't so bad.

"It was a fair fight!" I would say to myself. "He drew on me first. Even if the whole thing were known, nothing could be done to me!"

But the continued unseen presence was *awful*; awful even then, when I was young and strong and bold. In everything I did—in everything I planned—that unseen presence was behind me—that subtle whisper was ever in my ear, urging, suggesting, commanding, and always to evil. Not from a worldly point of view, for nearly always his diabolical plans led to financial success—but always through evil ways.

What he sought for was to wreck my soul. Well, I interested capitalists, and developed the mine. It brought me in great wealth. I increased it. I embarked in many speculations—always driven, always haunted by my terrible adviser.

I became a multi-millionaire. One of the richest men in America, and one of the most hated—and with reason.

Yet, I swear before Heaven, that every evil deed, every grinding down of the poor, every great financial scheme of mine, that made thousands of widows and orphans beggars, was his doing—not mine.

At first I tried to resist him. It was no use—and he grew stronger and stronger as I grew older and weaker.

And the dreadful horror of his presence, and of his devilish promptings, grew more awful as the hour when I must die and meet him face to face drew nearer and nearer.

It was he that made me wreck those railways and spread wide ruin over six states. It was *he* that urged me on, and kept me from doing what was just during the great strike in my iron works where fifty starving workmen were shot down like dogs, and their wives and children left penniless to the cold and famine of coming winter.

At last, here in Paris, the last fatal illness fell upon me, and *then* the *presence* grew unbearably horrible. I could feel its hand upon my shoulder. I could hear its footsteps behind me. It knew that its prey was almost in its grasp, and exulted.

Then, in despair, I consulted some of the greatest doctors and specialists of this great and wise city. I spoke of the horrors that beset me, and asked if they could help me. You see, I clung—though my reason, though my soul knew better—*to* a faint hope that this thing might be the offspring of monomania, of a touch of madness. And they talked to me as scientists and schoolmen talk. They spoke of the hallucinations of an overworked brain, of nervous prostration, and such jargon of the schools.

So (it was but yesterday) I received them in a small unfurnished room, the floor of which I

had covered an inch deep with fine sand. They came—four of them.

"Tell me," I said to the eldest and greatest among them as he stood at the threshold, "what marks see you in the sand just behind me?"

"The prints," he said, turning pale, "of two naked human feet!"

I moved towards them. "What follows me?" said I.

"Still," he said, shuddering, "the prints of naked human feet!"

"Now, tell me," I shrieked, "shall I ever be alone?"

And the schoolmen gave a low cry, and fled panic-stricken from my apartments.

Enough—there is no help for me! As I write these lines, I know that I must die in a day or two at furthest—and *he*—he is in the room with me!

"A MATCH BY MISHAP."

"Mamma said I was not on any account to dance with you more than once, and now you've got yourself down for six. And she wouldn't bring Muriel. She said 'one of us was enough to look after, goodness knows!' I had to fetch a letter from Muriel to Guy Hastings (you know he's the eldest son of our hostess) sixteen pages long, packed up in Dante's Vita Nuova, which she borrowed from him on purpose to send back with a letter in it, for she can't read a line of Italian—neither can he. Muriel said if I didn't she'd insist on coming instead of me, being the eldest, and mamma nearly caught me giving it to Guy, first thing."

"(Yes, Mr. Brown, I can give you four or six. You'll always find me near mamma.) Now, Algy, remember! Don't come *near* me before nineteen or twenty. Mamma will be on the prowl all the time before supper. After that she's quieter, and if she gets to whist or bridge after supper, she's pretty safe. Now, remember! It's for my sake! That old wretch, M^{rs}. McFadden, told her we were engaged, so she says she'll tell papa if she sees the least sign of anything of the sort this evening. (I haven't a waltz left, Mr. Smithers. So sorry!) So we must look out!"

Thus spoke breathlessly and emphatically the pretty Miss Ellinor Fortescue, aged nineteen, a fair daughter of Toronto, to a handsome young detrimental called Algernon Southcote, aged twenty-six, a youth of good English family, who, like many others of that ilk, had come to Canada "to try his luck" and was trying it now at this Toronto ball, given by a Mrs. Hastings, one of those exalted beings whom fashionable papers when in an effervescent mood term "Queens of Society."

Ellinor and Algernon imagined themselves engaged, but as Algernon, though a gentleman, the son of a high dignitary in the church, etc., etc., was the happy recipient of an income of about \$800 per annum, and as Miss Ellinor was the scion of one of the first families in the city, and accustomed to spend a good deal more than that amount on her clothes alone yearly, and meant by her fond but obstinate parents to "marry wealth," their chances for a union seemed "faint and far away."

Of course, Algernon said "he would do anything for his Ellinor's sake—*anything!*" Then, observing the vast though aristocratic form of his beloved one's mother advancing upon them with the ponderous dignity of a whole herd of elephants, he "effaced himself," as the French say, and slid dexterously into the windings of the mazy throng which now crowded the ball room.

It has been observed by various gifted authors, noted as students of human nature, such as Sterne, Thackeray and others, that in dissimulat-

ing mental suffering, especially that peculiarly painful kind caused by the tender passion, the so-called weaker sex can give many points to the apparently stronger nerved wearer of—masculine garments.

The saying that "Poverty, real love, and a tight boot are three things which cannot long be concealed," only applies to men. A woman wears shoes two sizes too small for her, and positively does not feel it, if only she is certain that her chassure is becoming. She can smile like a whole sky full of seraphs on a man she doesn't care a pin for during a whole evening, and freeze or snub the man she secretly likes for a similar period, or for as much longer as she pleases, or harder still, she can appear to be utterly unconscious of the latter's presence, or indeed existence, as long as she pleases. No man living, however experienced a hand, can perform this last feat.

The truth of this was exemplified by the very different demeanor of our two lovers during the earlier part of that fateful ball.

The lovely Ellinor was to all appearances as calm as a Muskoka lake and evidently, like John Gilpin, "on pleasure bent" from the start. She danced, she flirted, she sought secluded spots with various appreciative partners. She made Tom Trippet, just engaged to her dearest friend, Clara Turner, "follow her about," as that indignant damsel remarked to him later, "like a little cur dog!" And she made old Jack Prodggers, aged fifty-six, seriously consider how he could manage to induce "that sweet, artless, amiable

girl, Ellinor Fortescue," to become Mrs. Jack Prodgers.

She also whiled away a little of her spare time by indulging in a slight flirtation with the youthful Alexander Hastings, the youngest son of her hostess, who was consumed with the most hopeless kind of calf-love for herself, and with a correspondingly bitter hatred for her Algernon. This youth, who may be briefly described as a baddish sort of cub, endowed with a sort of gloomy intelligence when any kind of mischief was to be done, finally departed in anything but an amiable mood, impelled thereto by certain decided snubs administered by Ellinor, who saw supper time, and therefore the time for conversing and dancing with the beloved Algernon drawing nigh.

These snubs were pretty unmistakable ones, for the youth was somewhat obtuse, and as the lady finally remarked to him, "It was no use trying to shoot a rhinoceros with snip shot."

On this the youth departed, vowing vengeance on all and sundry.

If Ellinor had only refrained from this last little amusement, events would have been very different. But who can rule his fate?

Very different meanwhile was the demeanor of the lovelorn Algernon. He was in that mood when the soul spurns the noisy reveller. Entering the ball room, he leaned in a haughty Byronic attitude against what in his imagination he thought was a pillar, till roused by the voice of the fair and vivacious Mrs. Alexander McStinger, requesting to be allowed to move. He

fled aghast, without asking for a dance, whereon the irate fair one took occasion to sweetly remark to several of her numerous friends "that she was really angry with Mr. Southcote at first, but when she saw he was so very bad that he actually mistook her for the wall, she had to pardon him! She added that "it was quite too dreadfully awful to see so nice a young fellow in such a state, and so early in the evening, too!"

Now, Algernon prided himself, and with reason, on being particularly abstemious.

Fleeing from the ball room to a smaller apartment, sacred to chaperons, cards and scandal, the luckless Algernon first trod on, and then kicked into the grate the favorite pug dog of his hostess, receiving "a good warm bite" from the animal for his pains, and earning the undying hate of the lady of the house. After this episode, and after asking a young lady he knew slightly "who that fat, vulgar woman in the awful crazy quilt gown was?" and hearing from her "that it was her aunt," Algernon passed on to other social successes. He was a pretty fair dancer usually, and when he gave his mind to it, but when the soul is filled with the idea of one loved object, a man is very much out of place in a crowded ball room.

This Algernon proved indisputably. He tore skirts, he trod crushingly on tiny toes, and finally had "quite the fall of the evening" near the ball room door, butting, in his agonized attempts to save himself and partner, a stout and stately dowager, clean out of the room. When he rose and saw that the lady to whom he had given this

little surprise was the mother of his intended, he felt that his cup was about overwhelmingly full.

So he sought a secluded recess, and remained there in a crushed condition for over half an hour, oblivious of engagements, or of anything else in the wide, wide world.

From this somewhat unpleasant frame of mind he was roused by the light tap of a fan on his shoulder, and lifting his drooping head, saw before him Miss Ellinor Fortescue, looking distractingly pretty, and as sweet and calm as a May morning. At this longed-for spectacle, "A light on Algy's visage spread, and fired his glazing eye."

"Mamma has gone to supper now, and it is safe for three dances at least," said the young lady calmly. "You were a very good boy never to come near me. But, oh, Algy! you need not have made yourself so *very* conspicuous! Mamma said she thought the house had fallen on her. What *was* the matter with you?"

"I'm aware I was very awkward," said Southcote, somewhat sullenly. "How could I think of what I was doing while I could see you flirting and going on as you were, and with such a lot of cads, too!" he added viciously.

"There now! When I took particular pains to dance only with the ugliest and stupidest men I could pick out—to have you misunderstand me like that!" said the adroit maiden. "I thought surely even *you* couldn't be jealous of that lot! If you only knew what I underwent all the time! And now, when I thought I was going to have some pleasure at last, you speak so unkindly to

me!" And her voice trembled, either with laughter or tears.

Whereupon, of course, Algernon at once caved in, acknowledged his transgressions, and "his unworthiness to be even noticed by such a peerless girl as his faithful darling Nellie, etc., etc.!"

Then the reunited pair sought the ball room. They had three waltzes straight on end, and a lovely time generally, when the influx of people from the supper room and the appearance of sundry flushed and talkative dowagers and chaperons gave warning to fly to safer scenes. Adroitly eluding Mrs. Fortescue, who was leaning on the arm of the Honorable Hugh Howler—"the last and latest of a noble line" in the old country, who had come out to Canada to "learn fawming"—but who so far had not got beyond the delight and surprise occasioned by his first contact with Canadian whiskey, Ellinor and Algernon rushed off to the supper room.

They were both too far gone by this time to indulge in such a coarse earthly thing as supper. The lady took an ice and three-quarters of a glass of champagne; the gentleman, half a macaroon and three glasses of the same beverage. A small glass door on one side of the supper room led to a tiny conservatory, where some of the more valuable plants, which wanted more care than those in the great conservatories, were kept. A walk led down to a sequestered nook at the end, completely screened by foliage and flowers from any one till he got within three paces of it; while those occupying it had the advantage of being able to see the intruder all the way down the

straight walk. On the other side of this nook was a strong door, leading to the furnace room of the conservatory. To this secluded spot, Ellinor, who knew the house as well as her own, led Algernon, for they both perceived that the ball room was safe no longer. Though there was a fine after supper glow on the massive countenance of Mrs. Fortescue when they passed her, born of "champagne and chat," still there was an ominous restiveness in the way she glanced around her, evidently in search of her daughter—whose little ways she well knew—that foreboded trouble.

"Mamma's quite capable of bolting out of the whist room and catching us at any moment, if we try any more dances," remarked the intelligent Ellinor, "but it will take her some time to rout us out here." Then ensued ten minutes of elisium—moments too sacred and too sweet to be described by a light and frivolous pen.

But the serpent was already approaching this little twentieth century Eden. The revengeful cub, Alick Hastings—the snubbed and jealous one—had (alas!) perceived the lovers pass through the small glass door. Algernon was just requesting to know for the fifteenth time "if his Ellinor would always love him as she did now?" and was being reassured on that point, when they were both startled by the sound of voices, and, what's more, by the voices of Mrs. Fortescue, Mrs. Hastings and the perfidious cub aforesaid. This youth had induced his mother to take Mrs. Fortescue into the small conservatory to show her some rare plants, meaning, of

course, that Ellinor and his rival should be caught without chance of escape.

As yet, the pair were concealed by the plants from the gaze of the two old ladies, but discovery, with very unpleasant consequences, was simply a matter of time. At this moment of almost despair, Algernon's eye fell on the furnace room door, just beside them. Here was a gleam of hope! In another moment he had softly drawn the large outside bolt of the door, and Ellinor and he were inside it, and for the time in safety. They found themselves in a small room with three steps on one side of it, leading down to the great furnace door, furnished simply with some gardener's tools, two or three old baskets, and an immense quantity of cobwebs and dust. There was no other exit but the door by which they had entered. It was as dark as pitch and as hot as Tartarus. Not at all the place where even two lovers would enjoy a tête-à-tête. Hardly daring to breathe, they listened to the three intruders, who were now close to the door that concealed them. They heard Mrs. Fortescue say: "Lovely! perfectly lovely!" (alluding to some plant), "but I must find Ellinor. I haven't seen her since before supper. Have you, Mrs. Hastings?" Then the voice of the wily cub, "I saw her dancin' with Mr. Southcote most of supper time. Thought I saw 'em come in here just after."

Their hearts stood still. That malicious youth evidently knew of their retreat. Would he give them away at once—or what would he do? But

Mr. Alick Hastings meant a better and deeper vengeance than anything of that sort.

They heard Mrs. Fortescue say in a very flurried manner, "Dear! dear! I must get back to the ball room and find her at once!"

Then with chilling horror, they heard the cub slowly drawl out, "How careless of the gardener to leave that door unfastened! Wait till I bolt it, Mrs. Fortescue, and I'll take you."

Then he slowly shoved to the bolt, thoroughly enjoying meanwhile the deep but muffled execrations of his rival inside.

He then escorted his mother and Mrs. Fortescue back to the ball room with a politeness and urbanity so unusual in him that his mother had an immediate suspicion that he had been up to some mischief or other beyond the common. And so indeed he had! The situation of the imprisoned pair was more than awkward—it was awful! Southcote, whose collar was rapidly melting, endeavored to console Ellinor, whose hair was coming out of curl—and who felt cobwebs all over her. Also to open the door. He failed signally in both tasks.

Realizing what an awful scrape they were in, and almost prostrated by the heat, Ellinor's high spirit gave way, and she began to cry. Madened by his adored one's sobs, the hapless Southcote made a furious attack on that obdurate door. In an evil moment he did so!

Mrs. Fortescue and Mrs. Hastings meanwhile had been playing the parts of those who sought the unhappy heroine in the ballad of "The Old Oak Chest."

"In the highest, the lowest, the loneliest spot,
They sought her wildly—but found her not."

Neither did they find Mr. Southcote. This simultaneous disappearance of both seemed more than ominous to Mrs. Fortescue. She turned wildly to her sympathizing friend. "They've eloped—I know they have!" she cried. "Oh, why did I bring her here? Why did I bring her?" This was overheard, and it flew like wildfire through the "four hundred friends" that Miss Fortescue had eloped with Mr. Southcote and a pleased and expectant crowd rapidly gathered round the two ladies.

It was at this crisis that the malignant cub was moved to suggest "That he was sure he had seen them last in the conservatory which the two ladies had just left." Off rushed—or rather waddled—the agonized matrons, followed by a deeply interested throng of their nearest and dearest friends, making friendly comments.

They entered the conservatory, just as Mr. Southcote was in the loudest stage of his racket on the furnace room door.

Dryly remarking, "That there seemed to be some one in the furnace room that wanted to get out," the cub drew the bolt, feeling that he hadn't altogether lived in vain that night.

Poor Ellinor emerged first—her lovely face flushed and tear-stained, covered with confusion and cobwebs as with a garment, and was at once pounced upon by her incensed mother, who hissed in her ear,

"This is most disgraceful conduct, Ellinor!"

and with difficulty refrained from shaking her "coram publico."

Here followed Algernon Southcote with more cobwebs, who, feeling that the eyes of Europe and America, so to speak, were upon him, thus explained the situation, wearing meanwhile the easy air of a disconcerted pickpocket. "We—that is—ahem!—Very sorry!—Accident—very tired—ahem!—got very warm dancin'—came in here to get cool—door bolted itself—comin' out again in a minute—ahem!"

These excellent reasons for being found locked up within five feet of a blazing furnace, were received by Mrs. Fortescue with what, in a lady of less aristocratic demeanor, would be called a snort, as she marched away, keeping her daughter in close custody.

How poor Ellinor passed through the throng and got upstairs, she never knew.

Her mother, too, remembered the comments—the pleasing and audible comments—of their "dear five hundred friends," such as "If she was my daughter, I'd send her abroad at once." "Locked up with him all the evening! dear—dear!" "What a funny place to hide in!" "Well, if I had to lock a man up to keep him from running away from me, I'd rather not have it found out!" (This last from a vivacious and piratical young widow, Mrs. Fortescue's pet aversion.)

Then just as she passed the ball room door, a matron of position and social importance leaned towards her, and said: "I suppose, dear Mrs. Fortescue, the engagement will be announced now?"

This was the last straw. Ellinor had a very bad time of it driving home afterwards.

Meanwhile Algernon, turning on the cub, and casting aside all conventional scruples, requested him in a hoarse voice "to come out into the shrubbery for five minutes." The cub had no objections—none in the least. So there, on the frozen ground, under a starry sky, and in the midst of a mob of enthusiastic cabmen, the two went at each other like tigers. At the end of about fifteen minutes fortune favored the righteous cause, and Mr. Alexander Hastings was "knocked out." He looked, as one of the cabbies remarked at the time, "as if some helephant 'ad been 'avin a game with 'im."

Algernon was also somewhat damaged, but feeling somewhat relieved at having paid his enemy out pretty well, sought his solitary rooms with the despairing conviction that Ellinor was lost to him forever. But this was just where he was mistaken.

When Mrs. Fortescue grew calm, the matter presented itself to her husband and herself as one that couldn't be settled by packing Ellinor off on a long penitential visit to some spinster aunt or on that trip to Europe which seems to be the usual recipe for causing trans-Atlantic maidens to forget impecunious lovers.

Ellinor, who was a high-spirited girl (and between ourselves worth three of Algernon, though he was a good fellow enough, as men go) stuck to her colors. She declared that "Never! no never—under any circumstances whatever—

would she wed another," and looked as if she meant it.

Last and most decisive, that remark made by that matron of position as they left the ball, viz.: "That she supposed the engagement would be announced *now!*" had sank deeply into Mrs. Fortescue's aristocratic soul. After all, Southcote was a gentleman, and had neither pedlar or washerwoman among, at any rate, his recent ancestors. Also, he had no bad habits, and though his present income was small, would be sure to "get on." Besides, they always meant to give Ellinor plenty.

So just six months after that eventful ball, Miss Ellinor Fortescue, exquisitely attired in bridal array, with sweet and calm composure in every movement, marched, leaning on her father's arm, down the aisle towards the expectant and frightfully nervous Algernon and his best man, while the choir sang "The voice that breathed o'er Eden."

The discomfited cub was among the spectators and didn't think himself quite so clever as he did one night six months before.

How Mr. and Mrs. Southcote got on afterwards, I really don't know.

"RURAL CULTURE."

(A Comedietta.)

An "Advisory Committee" at work choosing books for the Public Library of a small Country Town.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Mrs. Dasher Swift—Third rate fashionable. Sham culturist. Much admired leader of "Our Set" in the village. Prefers on all occasions fiction to fact.

Mrs. Porker Swipes—Also fashionable and fabricative. Has great literary reputation on the ground of having once badgered the editor of a fifth-rate magazine into accepting an outrage on English grammar perpetrated by her. Is about sixty, and very kittenish and juvenile.

Looney Lulu—Local poetess. Contributes weird wanderings to the corners of country newspapers.

Mrs. Barker Snarl—Old married lady. Brusque, unkempt, and distinctly "cracked." Opposes everything and everybody on principle.

Mrs. Jerry McCheek—Young married lady. Bumptious, and superlatively ignorant.

Great follower and admirer of Mrs. Dasher Swift.

Mrs. Githar Strate—Well-to-do farmer's wife. Honestly and frankly ignorant on all literary matters, but nevertheless knowing quite as much about them as any of the rest. Put on the Advisory Committee to conciliate the farming interest.

Cynthia Orelia—Daughter of the above.
The Old Librarian.

SCENE—THE TOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The ladies seated with piles of volumes of all sorts on the tables before and around them.

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Now, ladies, we'll get through with the Heavy Brigade first. The books on Theology, Science, Politics, Religion—all those slow sort of subjects—serious subjects, I mean, Mrs. Snarl, so you needn't object. We can run them through to-night. In fact, if we rushed things, we might get through Biography, Travels, and Poetry besides. Then we can put off the Novels—Fiction, you know—till next meeting. They'll take a long time. Require real serious consideration, you know. Besides, we want to read all the up-to-date books before we let those sewing girls and common people put their paws on 'em."

Mrs. Jerry McCheek—"That's the only good of being on an Advisory Committee. I never read any but the new books, because one *has* to just read them—or look through them anyway. Just to be able to *say* one has read 'em. But to

read a book that's been pawed all over by those common females sends creeps up and down my back. I'm that nervous and refined!"

Mrs. Barker Snarl—"Are ye indeed? But you're right about the new books. Besides, ii there's any of them that's a little—well queer or risky like—we can read 'em ourselves, and then say they ain't fit for the rest to read."

Mrs. Githar Strate—"That's so!"

Looney Lulu—"And some of the most enthralling—the most subtly and sensuously entrancing of poesy is by no means suited for the coarse criticisms of the vulgar herd."

Mrs. Jerry McCheek—"I just adore the more subtle sorts of poetry! McPercy Snapper, who's spending his vacation here, is what he calls indoctrinat' me in the higher kinds of emotions. He's puffedly splendid, and too cute to live. Why he's been rusticated from his University! Told me so himself. That's what a man's college does with him when he's too smart for anything."

Mrs. Githar Strate (loudly)—"Mr. Snapper's quite tuk up with our Cynthinany Orelia. Comes to our house three times a week, an' stops till all hours."

Mrs. Jerry McCheek (proceeding scornfully)—"We were out for a paddle—canoe paddle, I mean—only last evenin', and really it was so improvin' you can't tell! He quoted especial from Shelley, Browning, and Swinburne. I remember one sweet piece from Swinburne he recited, 'cause he said the description was so like me—

"Soft lids that hide eyes like a jewel,
Hard eyes that grow soft for an hour,
The heavy white limbs, and the cruel
Red mouth like a poisonous flower."

Mrs. Barker Snarl—"Well, he had a nerve to talk that way to a young married lady!"

Mrs. Jerry McCheek—"Why, Mrs. Snarl, that's culcher! Thus do refined and congenial souls commune together, Mr. Snapper says. Vulgar minds can never know such refining intercourses. Mr. Snapper told me he needs the support of a congenial bein' like me. He says he finds me so sustainin'!"

Mrs. Barker Snarl—"Humph!"

Mrs. Githar Strate (not to be suppressed)—
"As I was sayin', Mr. Snapper's so tuk up with our Cynthiana Orelia, an' last week he atted her to study Brownin'. Sed she jest *hed* to, if she wanted to acquire culcher. So Cynthiana she tuk a holt on Brownin', an' the effects on that pore child was jest turr'ble. Fer more'n a week she kept goin' round in a blind sort of way. She'd walk over the churn, an' into the barb wire fencin'. There was times when I trembled fer her intellects. I did so!"

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Is your daughter delicate, ma'am? She don't look it."

Mrs. Githar Strate—"Oh, no! Most *indelicate*, ma'am, I assure you! She looks sorter blind and set down now, 'cause she's in company, but when she's with her playmate, you can hear her acrost a hundred acre lot."

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"She's quite a fille de Joie in fact, Mrs. Strate."

Mrs. Githar Strate (puzzled, but flattered)—"Yes, indeed, she is, Mrs. Swift, an' all the neighbors says so, too! An' I know how to symperthise with her about Brownin', for Mr. Snapper he atted me to read Herb. Spencer's—the great philosopher and scienter's—'Soshul Statics,' an' before I'd worried through half a page I felt like a lost dog!"

Mrs. Porker Swipes (bursting out into a flood of erudition)—Browning's a great poet! The Greek note is not so perdominant in his work as in Mathew Arnold's—but he's fine! D'you know, he'd a wife who wrote poetry, too. Mrs. Flamcult lectured us about her in Boston. She wrote Casa Guidi Windows, and other poems. They're fine, but not so good as her husband's, of course."

Looney Lulu (interrupting)—"All mod. rn poesy seems to me to lack *depth*. That sound-ing of the sad minor chord of life's sweet song that wails uninterruptedly throughout our ex-istences. (Murmurs abstractedly.)

"Ah, me! Ah, me! Ah woe is me!
I moan like the drone of a bumble bee!"

Mrs. Barker Snarl (in a loud whisper)—"She's composin' a pome about that ham and pork man that went round with her all summer, an' cleared out without proposin'!"

Mrs. Dasher Swift (impatiently)—"Come, la-dies, let's get on! We've got theology and

philosophy before us yet. Let's take all those books on the table here before us in a heap. (Carried unanimously.) Now, here's all the new books on theology. Gracious, what a heap!"

Mrs. Porker Swipes (with a happy inspiration)—"Let's leave the choice to the Reverend Hiram Snort. He's the only one that reads 'em." (Proposal agreed to with enthusiasm. Theology laid aside for professional examination.)

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Stop! Here's Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress.' We can pass that anyhow. When I was in Lunnon lawst yeah, the deah old Bishop of Lincoln told me that Bunyan—though unhappily a dissenter—was a 'sine quam on' (I think he said) in every theological library."

Mrs. Jerry McCheek—"Who's Bunnions?"

Mrs. Barker Snarl—" 'Pilgrim's Progress!' I guess that ought to go among 'Voyages and Travels,' Mrs. Swift."

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Oh, no! The Bishop explained to me that it was a great religious allegation or allegory—or alligator, perhaps (giggles). Now, let's get at science and philosophy. There's twice as much of that as there is of religion."

Mrs. Githar Strate (despondently)—"We'll never git through that pile in a dog's age!"

Mrs. Dasher Swift (cheerfully)—"Oh, I don't know! S'pose we take 'em in lots. Here's all Huxley's works, Tyndall's, Herbert Spencer's, Drummonds', Balfour's book (we must have that, because he was the English premier), and lots more. Well, about Huxley?"

Mrs. Barker Snarl—"I've hearn he's unsettlin'—"

and infidelistic. I guess he won't fill the bill for this libery."

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Oh, yes, he will, Mrs. Snarl. Deah Lord Keivin explained all about him and his writings to me in Lunnon lawst yeah. He discovered the molecular vibrations of light.

Mrs. Porker Swipes—"Yes, and the invertebrate vibrations of sound waves which transposes themselves over the universe."

Mrs. Githar Strate (greatly impressed)—
"No! Is that so?"

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Besides, Lord Rosebery told me that the King (he was Prince of Wales then) went to his funeral!" (General sensation. Huxley's works admitted "nem con.")

Mrs. Githar Strate (with fine impartiality)—
"T'ain't fair not to give the others a show. Let's take all the other scientists in. (Agreed to. All the scientific writers admitted.)

Mrs. Jerry McCheek (looking at her watch)—
My! It's near twelve! Weil, I think we done puffedly splendid!"

Mrs. Dasher Swift—"Indeed we have! Well, ladies, we can break up now. We'll have all the next evening for the novels."

(They break up, and depart conversing.)

The old librarian, as he locks the library door, murmurs softly to himself:

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing,
Drink deep, or taste not of the Pierian spring."

"UNKNOWN FORCES."

A young literary friend of mine, Ronald Leslie, once told me a very queer, perhaps I should say almost incredible, story.

He was a young man who had gained considerable fugitive celebrity as an apt and sometimes brilliant writer in various leading magazines; and would have got more if it had not been for the somewhat mystical turn of his mind, which sometimes led him into writing articles on occult and out of the way subjects, such as "Undeveloped Forces in Nature," "Facts and Frauds of Spiritualism," and topics of a kindred nature. Some of these, the editors of the said leading magazines, while admiring their style and the forcible and intelligible English in which they were written (for this latter quality is, in these days of "Journalese" and ungrammatical feminine fluency, becoming quite valuable) were compelled to reject, as being "caviare to the multitude." They would then beg him to turn his attention to "live subjects," such as the biography of some multi-millionaire, whose lambent genius had just inspired him to corner the market in lard, and who still *printed* his signature in scrambling capital letters, not having condescended to acquire the trivial accomplishment of writing current hand.

While smarting under a more than usual inflection of excellent advice of this nature, Leslie said to me suddenly as we were sitting in my study one evening (we had been talking about animal magnetism, occult forces, etc.):

"Well, I know—personally *know*—of a case, an awful proof of the existence of these 'unknown forces,' which, if I dared publish an account of it, would rather astonish the materialistic and superficial inhabitants of this city of New York. It happened in this very city, too, and not three years ago. I've longed to let them have it often!"

"Why don't you?" I asked.

"Well," he answered reflectively, "there are reasons why it would be imprudent to tell it all. A very dreadful tragedy it was, and the public would never believe how it happened."

"If you tell me, I promise to believe every word," I said somewhat eagerly.

"Well, I feel just now as if I must inflict the tale on somebody," replied Leslie, laughing, "so you shall hear it." But not to tell again till I give you leave, for, mind you, it's *true*—too true!"

"I promise," said I. "Go on with your story."

"You may have observed," he began, "certain meetings of myself and a few friends three years ago, for the purpose of investigating various occult phenomena—in which, without actually believing in them—we had taken deep interest, and concerning which I often spoke to you at that time with enthusiasm."

"I remember well," I said, "what strange no-

tions you were getting into your head at that time, and I often wondered why these meetings terminated so suddenly; why Louis Rostoffchin, that singular Russian 'savant' who came from nowhere in particular, and whom all you 'illuminati' swore by, disappeared into the unknown as suddenly as he had appeared. If you remember, I questioned you at the time about some of these things; but you were so strangely gloomy, so self-absorbed—in fact, so changed from your usual self for a time, and moreover so very touchy when I even hinted at the subject, that I had to leave it and you severely alone."

"Well, you are going to hear all about it now," replied Leslie, "about the Russian Louis Rostoffchin and his—disappearance,' he went on, turning pale, and shivering as if a cold draught had suddenly blown upon him. "You remember then," he proceeded, "at this time that we spoke of a certain circle of literary and scientific friends, male and female, who met often at each other's houses, to hold 'seances' (to adopt a name so vulgarized by spiritualistic impostors) for the purpose, if possible, of investigating or finding out what we could know here of the other world and its conditions."

"We all began in a spirit of curiosity and of virtual skepticism, but before long our moods all changed (it was impossible to help it, considering the strange mysteries that we gained tantalizing glimpses of), and some of us, at any rate, were ready to go to any lengths almost to solve these enigmas. We had begun by the processes usually employed by the spiritualists, but had soon

got into mysterious regions far beyond the trivial puerile rappings and table turnings of these people.

"Well, we went *too* far, and the awful catastrophe which ensued made us all see how dangerous was the path we were treading on, and convinced me at any rate that it is not the will of the Almighty that we should penetrate the secrets of the world beyond the grave before our time—so terrible are the guards and perils He has placed in the way of any real attempt to master them.

"Our party on that eventful night consisted of, first, our host, Mr. Adams, an immensely wealthy business man, a man moreover of clear brain, and possessed of a great deal of what Huxley aptly terms 'that common ignorance which is called common sense.'

"He was the last man you would suspect of a tendency to mysticism, but there he was among us nevertheless, and a most useful member of our circle he was, representing always the useful restraining element in it—'who put down enthusiasm,' and who insisted on reasonable evidence before considering any theory, however beautiful and consoling.

"Then there was Doctor Creswell, one of the first men in the city, a great physician and scientific discoverer; a man not holding by the tenets of orthodox religion, but one whose mind was clear, and whose life was beautiful. Like many others of his scientific brothers, his best strength and efforts were given to help and benefit other men; and he formed as conspicuous an example

of the virtues enjoined by that Christian creed which he could not altogether accept, as many of the so-called disciples of that creed do of selfish disregard of its very first principles.

"Then there was myself, and my young wife, Clara. You know us both well enough to escape any description of us from me.

"But you should know that my dear Clara, whose imaginative temperament was in many respects the counterpart of my own, had been found by us to possess that rare power called the 'trance' or 'mediumistic' faculty. It is by this strange, and when genuine, rare power, that all the future discoveries of that dread knowledge, which I shall seek to learn no more, shall be made.

"She had several times during our sittings felt that singular slowly creeping on sleepiness which is the sure forerunner of the magnetic slumber. But that night (thank Heavens!) her health had been slightly affected, and her nerves, usually in the best condition, were a little unstrung, so that both Mr. Adams and myself insisted that she should take no part in the proceedings, except as a spectator.

"Another present that night was Robert Hastings, an artist of talent and celebrity, who had travelled much in Europe and the East, had mixed in much of the best society in Europe; but who also had been led by his love of occultism, and by his 'researches after truth,' into the society of some of the cleverest, most daring and most unscrupulous men in the world—'wolves of intellect,' flying at the throat of civilization—

Nihilists, Anarchists and, if possible, still more advanced sons of havoc and destruction. It was he who had introduced the ill-fated Russian Rostoffchin to our circle, as 'a man of mighty and comprehensive knowledge in all that was known of occultism—as indeed he was.

"Last of our circle—save his sister—and most prominent on that last night, was the Russian savant, Louis Rostoffchin. A great savant he truly was, and a great noble he had been. This much we knew of him for certain. He had lost estates, and well nigh life for the cause of Nihilism, and had all the almost maniacal thirst for the destruction of all existing creeds, governments, and civilizations, which—strange phenomenon of the age—is so often found ingrained in the very nature of many educated and intellectual Russians. He was tall, dark, very handsome, and had most expressive eyes, which in times of excitement glittered with a strange wild fire. He spoke English fluently, and like many educated Russians, six or eight other languages. We found soon that he was far deeper in the secrets of occultism and telepathy than we had yet any hope of penetrating, but we knew not how deep and terrible his knowledge was till that awful night.

"His sister, Vera Rostoffchin, a most beautiful and intellectual girl, was also that rarest and most gifted of mortal women—a being born once in a century or so—known as 'a perfect medium,' or 'pythoress,' as the ancient Greeks called one of these peculiarly endowed women. Her love for her brother was something beautiful. She

had known his sacrifices and sufferings for what she, like many other educated Russian women, had been taught to consider the noblest of causes. Naturally the most gentle and compassionate of women, she nevertheless approved of—or at least acquiesced in—the most ferocious and cruel schemes of her brother, who, we found out afterwards, was a member of the terrible 'Inner Circle' of the Nihilists. She was his chief assistant in his researches into the mysteries of occultism.

"He pursued these researches from no scientific curiosity, or with the idea of adding new religious guesses and theories to the myriad creeds that have bewildered poor humanity, but solely to endeavor to comprehend and, if possible, utilize for their potent and awful powers of destruction, certain 'Unknown Forces,' as he termed them, of whose existence and terrible and as yet uncontrollable power he had become dimly aware.

"Little did any of us dream what the awful result of the attempt of that gifted pair to trifle with the dangerous secrets and sinister undiscovered forces which lurk within the confines of what I must for want of a better term call 'The world beyond the grave.'

"It chanced, I must think by some most evil fatality, that on the night when we met at the house of Mr. Adams, the minds of most of us had all that day been directed to trains of thought concerning primitive violence, thoughts of the days when prehistoric man was half a wild beast with a strain of the demon in his nature besides, which is wanting in the fiercest wild animal.

"Hastings, for instance, had been engaged on a picture of Cave Men—the prehistoric half brute inhabitants of Europe—engaged in battle. In the picture one tribe was storming the rude stronghold of another, and with their primitive weapons and primitive ferocity, were hacking and tearing to pieces men, women and children.

"I had been engaged on one of a series of short stories founded on early and striking historic events on the continent of America. I had thus been led through the majestic pages of Prescott to the blood-stained rites and human sacrifices of Mexico, when half-demon men worshipped a demon god, and by means of the wonderful picture-creating pen of Parkman, who excels even MacAulay in placing before his reader the exact image of the event or locality he describes, I had vividly brought before me the incredible cruelties and fiendish attributes of the Red Indian of North America—that survival of the Stone Age.

"Louis Rostoffchin that night seemed animated and happy to a degree so far beyond what his self-contained and repressive nature ever suffered to appear, that as I was speaking to his sister before the 'seance' began, I laughingly pronounced him to be what the Scotch call 'fey,' and explained what was meant by that term.

"'You mean that when a man's nature suddenly changes,' she said, deeply interested, and with an interest which seemed to me to partake of the nature of fear, 'that when a melancholy man becomes all at once gay, when a naturally reserved man becomes all at once sociable, without any adequate reason for it, it means that some

great change for good or evil is soon to take place in his life—and, since this is an evil world, in nine cases out of ten for evil.’

“‘So the Scotch Highlanders say,’ I answered, ‘and it’s astonishing how often the so-called superstition has been observed to come true.’”

“‘Yes, and this wild flow of spirits is so strange—so unnaturally strange—in my brother’s case,’ she interrupted. ‘You know how quiet, absorbed, even gloomy, he generally is. He is never like this unless he thinks himself on the track of some great discoveries in “Occultism,” regarding ‘The Unknown Forces,’ as he calls them. Mr. Leslie,’ she suddenly exclaimed. ‘promise me that to-night you will not let the other gentlemen try any experiments outside the ordinary ones—the ones that are at any rate harmless and not impious, while I am in the magnetic sleep!’”

“‘Why do you ask this?’ I questioned, for the beautiful girl seemed deeply in earnest, while I had been speaking in jest.

“‘Because the last time my brother was like this (it was in Paris just before the killing, what we patriots call the execution of the Czar Alexander), he was similarly excited, and talked as he did to-night of these ‘Unknown Forces.’ He said they were powers which, if their nature was known, and if it was known how to direct them as steam and electricity are directed now, would make their discoverer the master of the world.

“‘He would be able,’ he said, ‘to slay whom he willed at any distance, with absolute impunity, to throw down the walls of fortresses, to

shatter fleets, to even remove or divert Nature's barriers, such as mountains and rivers. He would command powers more potent than those of the fabled genii of Eastern tales and tradition, which he explained were mere allegories to explain the mastery, or partial mastery, of these powers by learned men.

"But unlike the physical forces hitherto discovered by mankind, these were spiritual unseen forces—only to be controlled by the strength or wisdom of each individual soul. Thus they could never become—like steam or electricity—the servants of mankind, as a whole. But one in a thousand—perhaps in ten thousand—could ever control them at all; and then at uncertain times, under uncertain conditions, and at the risk of dreadful and ever present perils. That time in Paris—I cannot tell you of the awful danger, of the narrow escape, of the haunting fear ever since that my brother may renew his presumptuous experiments!

"To seek to know of the welfare of our friends in another world, and to learn what we can of the nature of their existences there, is natural, and cannot be displeasing to God, for He gave us our affections. But to presumptuously seek dread secrets, dread powers of destruction, meant only to be known in worlds beyond the grave, when we are wiser, stronger and more able to deal with such mighty forces, must bring peril and destruction on the rash intruder in unknown roads. And this my brother is trying to do! He will try to-night—if you and the others do not stop him.'

"I promised her I would do what I could, and I meant honestly and earnestly to keep my promise, for we had all learned to respect and admire this beautiful and gifted girl, and I was quite certain, moreover, that—mistaken or not—she believed every word she said. Besides, since my marriage, I had about made up my mind to abandon these occult or spiritualistic researches altogether.

"It was not only that the effect on my young wife's nervous system was bad, and the results and messages obtained mostly—as they nearly always are with triflers and beginners—trivial and ridiculous; but that (especially since the Russian directed our researches,) and we 'progressed'—to use his own term, we sometimes obtained aphorisms of singular wisdom in certain of the sentences dictated to our medium, coming often in the midst of the most trivial nonsense. And above all, we had once or twice indications and signs of a most sinister nature.

"They seemed tokens and warnings that among the inhabitants of the unknown country into which we were advancing, were some of unknown and great power, and intense malignity toward the human race, only held in check by invisible bands, which our own ranks might be ignorantly engaged in loosening. In short, I was seriously determined that the evil of our experiments outweighed the good of them. But I went that last night.

"Louis Rostoffchin, as I have said, was in high spirits on that fatal night when his destiny met him. He said one thing that I shall always re-

member before the seance began, for it showed me that for ends of his own, he deliberately courted the dangers he called up, and had also some idea of their nature.

"'We shall have much 'force' to-night, my friend,' he said abruptly, 'unless I am much at fault. More than I have ever had, even in St. Petersburg, even in Paris, with many of the most gifted present. When my sister goes into the trance, I will take control. By some strange happy chance, we men are almost all 'en rapport,' that is, our minds are strongly turned in the same direction—are all 'pulling at one rope.' You comprehend. That will give much force. We shall not have such another chance once in a thousand—in a hundred thousand meetings! I have been reading your minds. I can sometimes, when there is a strong current of thought similar to that in my own mind; and what do I see? Images—positive pictures of primitive violence—force—the eternal forces that have existed in prehistoric and savage times, and which might be called up now—controlled—and used!"

"'What for?' asked Hastings.

"The Russian laughed fiercely. 'Who knows? Perhaps to help a people. Perhaps to kill a tyrant!' he added suddenly. Better than the knife or revolver—better than dynamite! Safer and more terror striking. Perhaps we can use them to remove mountains, pierce tunnels. Bah! we trifle. Commençons! Still he paused a moment, seeming to ponder again heavily. 'But there is much force, he resumed, as if speaking to himself—'perhaps too much. I can actually *see* here,

there, everywhere'—he pointed to the walls to right and left of him—images of the things you have been thinking of. The half man, half brute fight between two tribes of cave men (Hastings started). The horrible tortures and mutilations of those semi-demons, the North American Red Indians. (I started in *my* turn.) Yes, we shall have much force. Perhaps too much! There may be danger.'

"How danger?" I asked. He seemed in a curious mood, which somehow impressed us all.

"Because thoughts—concentrated thoughts—are facts—the only real facts. Just as each soul is a concentrated thought of a Higher Power, and therefore can be called from the Abyss—materialized, controlled, used perhaps—we shall see! As for danger, well, my friends, you have read in mediaeval legends of how from time to time sages of the Alchemists or of the still more wisdom-gifted 'Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross,' the predecessors of the Occultists of to-day, were found in their cells torn limb from limb by the fiends they had invoked. These legends were not all lies (few universally believed legends of any period are). These wise but rash men merely encountered forces—not fiends—which they could not control. Voila tout! I think I know something of the nature of these forces, and that they *can* be controlled.'

"But if not," interrupted Dr. Cresswell, speaking for the first time.

"If not," answered the Russian, shrugging his shoulders, they may be a little—troublesome! Let us *begin*.'

"'We will have the dark seance,' he continued, as we entered the large room where our experiments were usually tried, when we met in Mr. Adam's house.

"'We want no child's play to-night of table rapping and that little rubbish, and we know each other too well to fear imposition on the part of any of us.'

"'Why is it,' said I, as we made our preparations, 'that total darkness is so much more favorable to the advanced experiments than light? It doesn't look well for their origin,' I added, joking weakly.

"'Because,' he answered seriously enough, 'as a well-known writer speaking of this very thing has said, 'the force we deal with is a vibration of ether, and so also is light.' We have all the wires to ourselves, so to speak, by being in total darkness.'

"So the sitting began in pitchy darkness in a large room in the left wing of Mr. Adams' house, where we held our meetings usually, as it was more quiet there than in the apartments in the front of the house. We sat around a great table, our hands not touching each other, but resting upon it. At first we could see nothing—scarcely even each other's forms in the darkness, but sat there silent, expectant, waiting for—a sign.

"There was 'much power,' as the Russian had said. The first phenomena, like those we had noted in previous meetings, such as strange tinglings in all the veins and nerves like those produced by shocks of electricity, bright flashes and gleams of light before the eyes, and above all, a

singular strained feeling of expectancy—a compound of curiosity, and deep-seated *fear*, of a different kind from ordinary physical fear, were soon apparent; but in a stronger degree than we had ever before experienced.

“Then came stronger indications of ‘power’; stronger shocks ran through our limbs; raps and sharp blows volleyed on the table before us, rapid as the snapping of dry twigs in a fire, and—what we had never seen before—a luminous cloud appeared, growing so much brighter that we could faintly distinguish each other’s faces and forms. It rolled in folds over the table, gradually seeming to condense and draw together, getting brighter as it did so. At the same moment, light regular breathing near me told me that Vera Rostoffchin had already, with surprising swiftness, sank into the magnetic sleep.

“The light grew—diffused—deepened. There was something indescribably baleful and threatening about it.

“The Russian spoke for the first time. ‘It is well,’ he said. ‘There is indeed much power! We are very near them to-night!’

“‘Yes, you *are* very near them!’ said a deep, calm voice among us. We all started.

“‘Who was that? Did you speak, Mademoiselle Rostoffchin?’ said Hastings and I together.

“‘It is not her voice!’ said my wife tremulously.

“‘Vera Rostoffchin is safe and happy far away,’ came that strange voice again. ‘I have taken her place for a purpose.’

“‘What purpose?’ said the Russian.

“To warn you all—and *you* most of all. Go no further!”

“And who are you?” demanded Rostoffchin.

“It matters nothing. I lived as you all live. I died as you all will die!”

“The Russian leaned back laughing scornfully. ‘The warning again!’ he said.

“But we others eagerly continued to ply the ‘Presence’ (I can call it by no other name) with questions.

“The luminous cloud still rolled over the table, and for the first time I experienced, as did the others, a strange vibratory movement of the room, floor, walls and ceiling, like the first paralyzing tremor of an earthquake; and these novel vibrations were not confined to inanimate objects, but ran through every nerve and fibre of our own bodies like a series of electric waves. It was stimulating to a great extent, but terrifying, too.

“‘We had better stop, perhaps,’ said Hastings.

“‘Oh, yes, yes,’ echoed my wife Clara, eagerly. ‘I seem to see such dreadful things!’”

“‘Why we are doing no harm,’ said the calm voice of Doctor Cresswell. (Here the Russian laughed.) ‘We are simply pursuing lawful scientific knowledge. We will go on. But, Mrs. Leslie, this is bad for you. The excitement has ‘got on your nerves,’ and it won’t do for you to try them any more. ‘Leslie, take her away to Mrs. Cresswell, and come back if you like.’”

“I looked at Clara. She was trembling all over. Her dilated eyes were fixed on the luminous cloud as if she saw strange things there which were hidden from us. I saw Dr. Cress-

well was right and instantly took her unresistingly from the room to where Mrs. Cresswell (who did not approve of these 'scientific investigations') was sitting, and left them together.

"I have been thankful ever since that I did so!

"Then Cresswell spoke again. 'You say you have taken the place of Vera Rostoffchin, the medium. Where is she?'

"'In another place and happy.'

"'Will she remember anything of it when she returns?'

"'Yes, but confusedly, as people remember dreams, or some persons on earth remember incidents of past lives.'

"'We have lived before then?'

"'Of course.'

"'And will live again?'

"'Of course.'

"'And will the end for us be happiness at last?'

"'I cannot tell you.'

"'Then you dead do not know the future.'

"'More of it than you do; but we have our limitations, ignorances and troubles just as you have. Our knowledge is greater, and our powers greater than yours, but still limited.'

"'Are you happy?'

"'Yes, for I strive to do good and have much more power than on earth. I have come to try and do good now. To warn you.'

"'Of what?'

"'Of awakening evil forces.'

"'We wish to do no such thing.'

"'You do not; but the strongest one among you does.'

“What do you mean by evil forces?”

“Uncontrolled forces. Dangerous forces. Some of them are evil thoughts materialized.”

“Can you not tell us more of them?”

“I know no more.”

“Here the Russian spoke impatiently. ‘This leads to nothing! We are losing a great opportunity to acquire knowledge by wasting precious time in parleying with a feeble and ignorant spirit—a spirit from one of the lower planes. Let me assume control.’

“‘One more question!’ said the Doctor and Hastings together. ‘Are *all* spirits like you happy?’

“‘Very happy. We have enlarged spheres of knowledge, and sometimes large opportunities of doing good.’

“‘Then you know now more of the source of all good?’

“‘We know little more than you do.’

“‘Have you then religions like ours?’

“‘No. The good hope and trust; the bad distrust and despair. But I can answer no more curious and vile questions. I came to do you good—to help you, as I said. You are all here to-night in impulsive and daring moods. By chance your minds have been filled with images of violence and primitive savagery. These images—these imaginings—under certain conditions can be materialized, and there is a strong, daring influence among you who means to do this, if it can be done. Beware of the result!’

“‘Bah, but this is absurd!’ here broke in the Russian. ‘“ Anglo-Saxons think of nothing

but what you call religion! Good things—evil things—all phantasms! Every savant—every educated man knows that there is no good and no evil—only circumstances, knowledge and will. Finish quickly, and then I will show you a great—a real—experiment, which may teach us something—which may give us a power—a mighty power. But see, you can ask no more! The influence has departed. Try!

“It was as he had said. Question after question was only answered by the regular breathing of the medium in her magnetic sleep. The strange, ghastly, luminous cloud still swirled over the table, and the feeling of dread, which had quite gone from all of us while speaking with the last influence, returned suddenly—and with redoubled force.

“The Russian spoke again. ‘You will let me try now?’ he said. As he looked round at us his face, seen in that strange illumination, wore an expression of wrought up resolve and desperate concentration of will, as if against some strong adversary which he yet hoped to overcome. We all assented. ‘I will show you something worth while then,’ he said, ‘something that will lead to results that may give us new and great forces to employ in the world; or that may destroy us every one—who knows? At any rate the risk is no greater than those run every day by explorers, travellers and investigators, and the results and rewards—how infinitely greater! Commençons!’

“We knew not what those strange and arrogant words meant then, but we have since been cer-

tain that the ill-fated Russian savant had obtained some insight into the means by which the terrible power of materializing thoughts (a thing which can be done, and which *has* been done) could be effected.

"To some extent he succeeded, but by the unhappy sequence of events which I have endeavored to trace, the terrible forces called up by him proved beyond his control.

" 'May I ask you to sit still, and not to move, whatever happens—or get frightened—if you can help it,' he said. 'That might be dangerous. This is serious,' he added, sitting down.

"We all sat silent in the darkness with our hands on the table waiting. We had not long to wait. Again the shiver came that passed through nerve and bone. Again came the strange tremor like that of a slight passing earthquake, and at the same time an overwhelming wave of what I can only call sheer physical terror was felt by all of us.

"The luminous cloud rolled off the table, and wavered across the room, and there condensed, and rapidly changed form and color. It grew brighter, deeper red every moment, and seemed, too, every moment to contract—to concentrate—to materialize, in short.

"Rapidly the ominous cloud condensed—grew dark red—then darker still—assuming the appearance of a misshapen, gigantic, but yet human-like form. It was almost pitch dark in the room now, the ghastly light having vanished, but still we could see amidst the darkness the darker shape of that strange nameless thing as it

crouched in a corner—and the green glare of a pair of demon-like rolling eyes.

“Rostoffchin stood up erect—calm and strong. What he meant I do not know, but these were the words he spoke:

“‘Spirit of murder! Spirit and inspirer of primitive force and violence, you must obey my will!’

“For the moment he succeeded. The dimly seen hideous appearance seemed to bend and cower as before a master, and to slowly approach.

“All at once his sister, our medium, Vera Rostoffchin, rose slowly to her feet, and gazed with dilated eyes at that hideous thing which came slowly creeping out of the darkness. Then so startling—so agonized a shriek sprung from her white lips that our hearts stood still. That shriek broke the spell laid on the appearance, and I believe, caused what happened.

“That unhappy moment and cry of his sister broke the concentrated force of his will, which controlled the thing which he had called up, by distracting for a moment his attention—and this cost him his life. He sprang towards his sister.

“Instantly the huge form, as if released from a chain, rushed at us in the dark.

“All that I have ever known of terror before was as nothing to the nightmare-like horror of the next few moments. The great table was smashed to kindling wood, furniture was hurled about like leaves, and a horrible jabbering sound like that made by an infuriated ape came from the dark corner where a desperate struggle was evidently proceeding.

"I remember raising the insensible form of Vera Rostoffchin and endeavoring to carry her off from the dreadful room by the great door at the end of it which led by a corridor to Mrs. Cresswell's apartments.

"As I endeavored to open the door, there was a horrible choking cry in the dark behind and a sound like the snapping of dry sticks. Then something black and huge rushed out of the blackness and an immense hand attached to a tremendously muscular arm of abnormal length, covered with coarse matted hair, gripped me like a vice. Such strength I had never felt.

"I struggled a moment in fierce despair, then a heavy Indian club, snatched by Robert Hastings from one of the trophies that adorned the walls, fell crushingly on that clutching hand; and the thing with a bellow, released me, and started back. I carried Vera through the door, followed swiftly by Hastings and Dr. Cresswell, and we hurriedly barred the door behind us, thinking in our confusion that Rostoffchin was with us. We bore the girl up the dimly lighted corridor to the rooms where Mrs. Cresswell, my wife and some of the affrighted servants rushed to meet us.

"We laid her gently down on a lounge, and Dr. Cresswell bent over her. 'Good Heavens, she is dead!' he gasped instantly.

"'Impossible!' 'Are you sure?' 'Nonsense! Do something, man!' came from all sides.

"'Nothing can be done,' he said, looking up from where he knelt beside her. 'She is quite dead. Dead from heart failure. She died in that

room (he pointed back) from an attack of heart failure caused by excitement—and fear!

"Fear! I could well believe it. In the beautiful dilated eyes and frozen on the delicate perfect features was an expression that it broke my heart to see—the unmistakable stamp of dread, intense, hopeless fear! What was it that she saw with her clearer spiritual vision which could thus paralyze and stop that dauntless heart! Heaven only knows!

"'Rostoffchin! Where's Rostoffchin? Call him! Where is he? Heavens, he's nowhere here! He must be still in that room!' Thus calling, we rushed back down the corridor, ready (to do us all justice) to face the horror of that dark chamber without hesitation, now that we realized that he was there. As we approached the door, there was not a sound. Instead of the trampling, smashing and roaring that had rung in our ears a few moments ago, there was a silence in that room 'which might have been felt.'

"'The power' has passed away. The influence—whatever it was—that brought about these things, has ended,' whispered Dr. Cresswell. 'We will find nothing of the thing he materialized in here.'

"We opened the door of the room, and went in, holding our lamps above our heads.

"He was sitting in a strange contorted attitude in the great arm chair at the top of the table, his head fallen singularly and limply on one shoulder. The hands were clinched, and the whole attitude of the limbs betokened that the man had been thrust back into the position in which we found him by some gigantic force. But

when we raised the head, and saw the face, there was the ghastly horror!

"I once saw the corpse of a man in Madrid who had suffered death by that hideous Spanish instrument of execution—'the garrotte.' This machine, by means of an iron ring or collar round the neck, tightened by turning a screw behind, crushes to atoms the vertebrae of the neck. The face of the executed man, with its starting eyes and blood streaming nostril, was exactly similar to the one before us—and with good reason. The neck of our ill-fated friend had been literally twisted round, the vertebrae crushed and dislocated by the clutch of some gigantic hand.

"Well, of course, there was an inquiry—some sensation—some discussion—soon desisted from somehow (my friends were men of great influence, social and political), during which various theories were suggested—all wrong ones.

"There is in my opinion only one solution to this grim mystery. Poor Rostoffchin, whether accidentally or by design (but I think the latter) had managed for a time to materialize some form of those primitive beings—half beast, half man, who lived in this earth long ago—in the horrible times before all history; or, perhaps—I don't know—even something worse. The feat cost him his life, as well as that of his beautiful and gifted sister.

"At any rate, you know why I have given up theosophy and occultism. I admit the fascination of these cults, but after what I have seen, I have no desire while investigating their wonderful secrets, to come during some unguarded moment in contact again with some of their 'Unknown Forces.'"

Sam S. & Lee Shubert

direct the following theatres and theatrical attractions in America:

Hippodrome, Lyric, Casino, Dalys, Lew Fields, Herald Square and Princess Theatres, New York.

Garrick Theatre, Chicago.

Lyric Theatre, Philadelphia.

Shubert Theatre, Brooklyn.

Belasco Theatre, Washington.

Belasco Theatre, Pittsburg.

Shubert Theatre, Newark.

Shubert Theatre, Utica.

Grand Opera House, Syracuse.

Baker Theatre, Rochester.

Opera House, Providence.

Worcester Theatre, Worcester.

Hyperion Theatre, New Haven.

Lyceum Theatre, Buffalo.

Colonial Theatre, Cleveland.

Rand's Opera House, Troy.

Garrick Theatre, St. Louis.

Sam S. Shubert Theatre, Norfolk, Va.

Shubert Theatre, Columbus.

Lyric, Cincinnati.

Mary Anderson Theatre, Louisville.

New Theatre, Richmond, Va.

New Theatre, Lexington, Ky.

New Theatre, Mobile.

New Theatre, Atlanta.

Shubert Theatre, Milwaukee.

Lyric Theatre, New Orleans.

New Marlowe Theatre, Chattanooga.

New Theatre, Detroit.

Grand Opera House, Davenport, Iowa.

New Theatre, Toronto.

New Sothern Theatre, Denver.

Sam S. Shubert Theatre, Kansas City.

Majestic Theatre, Los Angeles.

Belasco Theatre, Portland.

Shubert Theatre, Seattle.

Majestic Theatre, San Francisco.

E. H. Sothern & Julia Marlowe in repertoire.

Margaret Anglin and Henry Miller.	'Shore Acres.'
Virginia Harned.	Louis Mann in "The White Hen."
Mary Mannering in "Glorious Betsy."	"The Road to Yesterday."
Mme. Alla Nazimova.	Henry Woodruff in "Brown of Harvard."
Thos. W. Ross in "The Other Girl."	"The Secret Orchard," by Channing Pollock.
Cecelia Loftus.	De Wolf Hopper in "Happyland."
Clara Bloodgood.	Eddie Foy in "The Orchid."
Blanche Ring.	Marguerite Clark, in a new opera.
Alexander Carr.	"The Social Whirl," with Chas. J. Ross.
Digby Bell.	James T. Powers in "The Blue Moon."
"The Girl Behind the Counter."	Bertha Kalich.
"The Light Eternal."	"Leah Kleschna."
"The Snow Man."	"The Man on the Box."
Blanche Bates in "The Girl from the Golden West."	Cyril Scott in "The Prince Chap."
David Warfield in "The Music Master."	"Mrs. Temple's Telegram."
"The Rose of the Rancho," with Rose Starr.	"The Three of Us."
HARRISON GRAY FISKE'S ATTRACTIONS.	
Mrs. Fiske in "The New York Idea."	

You cannot go wrong in selecting one of these play-houses for an evening's entertainment in whatever city you may happen to be.

te

"

n

y

y

"

w

b

e

e

.

.

