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Select Poetry.

From the INDEPENDENT.

WHISPERIN' BILL.

BY IRVING BACHELLER.

I.

So you're takin' the census, mister? There's
three of us livin' still.
My wife, an' I, an' our only son, that folks
call Whisperin' Bill,
But Bill couldn't tell ye his name, sir, an' so
it's hardly worth givin',
For ye see a bullet killed his mind, an' left
his body livin'.

II.

Set down a minute, mister; ye see Bill was
only fifteen
At the time o' the war, an' as likely a boy as
ever this world has seen;
An' what with the news o' battles lost, the
speeches an' all the noise,
I guess every farm in the neighborhood lost a
part of its crop o' boys.

III.

'Twas harvest time when Bill left home; every
stalk in the fields o' rye
Seemed to stand tip-toe to see him off an'
waved him a fond good-by:
His sweetheart was here with some other girls
—the sassy little miss!
An' pretendin' she wanted to whisper 'n his
ear, she gave him a rousin' kiss.

IV.

Oh, he was a han'some feller, an' tender an'
brave an' smart,
An' tho' he was bigger than I was, the boy
had a woman's heart,
I couldn't control my feelin's, but I tried with
all my might,
An' his mother an' me stood a cryin' till Bill
was out o' sight.

V.

His mother she often told him when she knew
he was going away
That God would take care o' him, maybe, if he
didn't forget to pray;
An' on the bloodiest battle-fields when bullets
whizzed in the air,
An' Bill was a-fighting desperit, he used to
whisper a prayer.

VI.

Oh, his comrades has often told me that Bill
never flinched a bit
When every second a gap in the ranks told
where a ball had hit.
An' one night when the field was covered with
the awful harvest o' war,
They found my boy 'mongst the martyrs o'
the cause he was fightin' for.

VII.

His fingers were clutched in the dewy grass—
Oh, no, sir, he wasn't dead,
But he lay sort o' helpless an' crazy with a
rifle-ball in his head;
An' if Bill had really died that night I'd give
all I've got worth givin';
For you see the bullet had killed his mind an'
left his body livin'.

VIII.

An officer wrote an' told us how the boy had
been hurt in the fight,
But he said that the doctors reckoned they
could bring him around all right.
An' then we heard from a neighbor, disabled
at Malvern Hill,
That he thought in the course of a week or so
he'd be comin' home with Bill.

IX.

We was that anxious t' see him we'd set up
an' talk o' nights
'Till the break o' day had dimmed the stars
an' put out the northern lights;
We waited an' watched for a month or more,
an' the summer was nearly past,
When a letter came one day that said they'd
started for home at last.

X.

I'll never forget the day Bill came—'twas harvest time again—
An' the air blown over the yellow fields was
sweet with the scent o' the grain;
The dooryard was full o' the neighbors, who
had come to share our joy,
An' all of us sent up a mighty cheer at the
sight o' that soldier boy.

XI.

An' all of a sudden somebody said': "My God!
don't the boy know his mother?"
An' Bill stood a-whisperin', fearful like, an'
starin' from one to another;
"Don't be afraid, Bill," said he to himself, as
he stood in his coat o' blue,
"Why God'll take care o' you, Bill, God'll take
care o' you."

XII.

He seemed to be loadin' an' firin' a gun, an'
to act like a man who hears
The awful roar o' the battle-field a-sounding
in his ears;
I saw that the bullet had touched his brain
an' somehow made it blind,
With the picture o' war before his eyes, an'
the fear o' death in his mind.

XIII.

I grasped his hand, an' says I to Bill, "Don't
ye remember me?
I'm yer father—don't ye know me? How
frightened you seem to be!"
But the boy kep' a-whisperin' to himself, as
if 'twas all he knew,
"God'll take care o' you, Bill, God'll take care
o' you."

XIV.

He's never known us since that day, nor his
sweetheart, an' never will;
Father an' mother an' sweetheart are all the
same to Bill.
An' many's the time his mother sets up the
whole night through,
An' smooths his head, and says: "Yes, Bill,
God'll take care o' you."

XV.

Unfortunit? Yes, but we can't complain, It's
a livin' death more sad
When the body clings to a life o' shame an'
the soul has gone to the bad;
An Bill is out o' the reach o' harm an' danger
of every kind,
We only take care of his body, but God takes
care of his mind.

NEW YORK CITY.

Select Story.

"ROY'L."

An Incident of Travel in the South.

BY FRANCES ALBERT DOUGHTY.

From the HOME MAGAZINE.

There is a small town in North Carolina, near the boundary line of Virginia, that is noted as a railroad junction, seven different roads meeting there. Doubtless people are born, live and die in Weldon with independent histories, but the outside world only speaks of the town in this way, "Did you make the connection at Weldon?"

There was a disjointed period when it seemed exceptional to make this necessary connection properly, in traveling South, and it was my lot to miss it by half an hour. They told me at the depot that there was nothing for me to do but to wait twenty-four hours at the hotel. The one I hit upon proved very dreary, having the barren air of a restaurant in which no one has stayed long enough to make it feel inhabited. To add to the loneliness, the rain was pouring down in great torrents outside, and the only books I could discover in the hotel parlor were a ponderous gilt-edge Bible, a moth-eaten copy of "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," "Baxter's Call to the Unconverted" and some old census reports.

I cherished many fascinating illusions about the South; its romantic social life beckoned to me invitingly through the perfumed vistas of orange groves to come on and get initiated into the beguiling ways of dark-eyed women with soft speech, and a strong under-tow of easy-going men, whose chivalric dalliance formed but a light coating for the volcanic energies of Cœur de Leon. I loved this land of extremes, but it might be a "Great Tropical Delusion" to-day, for all that was visible of it at Weldon. My tour must be a short one. Delay was irritating. Could nothing be done to make this day count?

Glancing at the negroes who were waiting on me at the table, I had to confess that, though attentive, they were far from picturesque. There appeared to be a great many of them. Judging hastily from this dining-room, one might infer that the staples of the South were negroes and flies, the latter charging at me in battalions from their ambush in the fringed arsenic-green papers attached to the chandeliers. The fried chicken and corn bread, however, were compensating.

When embowered in my solitary bedroom I began to count the hours to be spent there—twenty-three; and it would be impossible to sleep away more than eleven of them.

Hark! Somebody was crooning snatches of a quaint tune in the back premises.

An idea broke in upon me. I disrobed my banjo of its "traveling ulster."

Why not spend the time learning the songs the negroes were singing over their work down in the yard and kitchen? In all the accounts of Southern life I had read in novels and magazines the negroes were represented as always singing merrily, except when they were drowsy and nodding.

I tuned the banjo; then the song stopped. Not another note did I hear for an hour; there was plenty of noise, but it came from the clatter of dishes, and slamming the doors, the steady rainfall and the shrieking of the locomotives on the seven roads.

I was not to be balked of my project. I rang for the chambermaid, and asked her to get some colored man who could sing and play the banjo to come up and give me a lesson—I would pay him well.

She first gazed at me vacantly for a moment, as if her brain were busy enlarging to receive a brand-new idea; then she grinned from ear to ear.

"Yes, miss, I'll see ef I kin find you one of de good singhs; ef you had only a sont word fo' you arrove, and got it norrated roun' dat you want structions in de banjer—dat would a' been de bes' way. But Louvinia 'll do de bes' she kin for you. I gwine ter be a real good darkey to you while you heah—dat I is; you can put pennance on dat, miss."

She talked to herself all the way down the hall about what she meant to do for my comfort while I was at the hotel.

Imagination now began to work; I expected to see a lively young fellow with laughing eyes and dancing feet ushered into my room. It would be jolly; he should teach me all he knew.

Presently a muffled knock came at my door.

"Come in!"

A large, middle-aged negro, with a very grave and very black face, stood on the threshold, making a low bow with all the "deportment" of a Turveydrop, hat in one hand, banjo in the other. He wore a shabby blue tweed suit, his toilet getting poorer as it went down, the coat still attempting to make an impression of style, with its double row of white china buttons, the pants well patched about the knees and threadbare in spots, and his shoes broken into gaping holes, and tied with red twine strings.

"Yes, come right in. I sent for you. What's your name?"

"Simon Barjona, dat's my proper name, m'am; but dey mostly calls me Roy'l (Royal) 'bout heah, 'kase I come out o' de Roy'l fam'ly in Fahginy fo' I come to Weldon."

"I hope you are well, Royal?"

"Pretty well, m'am, cep'n I subjic' to typhoid fever an' consumption; when I gets het up I is attacked wid de fever, an' ef I gits cold, I breaks out wid de consumption; but I makes out to keep agoin'; my health is tol'able good now, m'am."

"I'm glad to hear it; sit down there."

The negro looked doubtfully at the chair indicated, as if it would be disrespectful to me to take it.

"I want you to make yourself comfortable, Royal, so you can teach me some of your best songs. You sing, don't you?"

"Oh, yes'm!"

"Did you ever live on a plantation?"

"Sho'ly I did. I ain' live nowhar' else, clear o' dese las' two years I been refugeein' down heah in Weldon. I was riz on de ole Roy'l plantation, an' I nuver come away twull ole Mis' die. You heard how she met with a terrible accident? I tole her dat was a superstitious ladder, an' she mustn't sot her foot on it again—I seen a ha'nt on dat same ladder one moonlight night in de barn. Spirits is mighty quiet folks mostly; dey stays whar dey put, dey ain't a gwine ter meet up wid you les'n dey come for sump'n; but ole Mis' she won't listen ter me, she full o' whimsies, an' she got ter hang up dem greens wid her own hands, Christmas, an' sho' nuff, she tumble down an' broke her spinal bone, so she couldn't git up no mo'! Ole Mis', she set a heap o' sto' by me; white folks allers did like me; I nuver had no boss'n an' doggin', kase dey soon see t'err people's property ain't got no chawms for my principles an' character. I bewar' o' covishness, I does, I too much enameled wid Christianity for dat. Well, w'en dey sell de ole place, I come down heah ter work on de railroad; but dey tu'n me off las' wintah w'en dey done layin' de new track. I keep a hangin' on, an' hopin' to git sum'n ter do on de road agin—but I got to scratch roun' an' make out ter live in de meantime."

"What are you doing now?"

"I ain't got no speshual employmun, m'am; only w'at I kin pick up a whitewash'n an' a mendin' cha'rs an' tables at de hotel, w'en dey gits so onsteadfas' dey can't do nuffin wid 'em. Times is gittin' harder ev'y day now." He scratched his head and looked down on the floor with a becoming reserve.

"Have you any family?"

"Yessum, I has had consi'able family—my wife she present me wid fo' o' de fines' an' de brackes' niggah babies in de State o' Fahginy, fo' de wah, an' to make shorts out of a very long tale—we raised 'em all, an' dey tu'ned out scamps, dey did, its de naked trufe, an' its a scannel an' a shame. I ain' kep' track of all of 'em. I don't want hear no mo' 'bout 'em. I ain't got much use for niggahs no how." He gave a deep sigh. "Den after all our sufferment, de Lawd he greed ter make a complomise, an' he son't down a l'il lamb f'om de great white frone, ter be de pride of our life. Dat was des fo' years ago, she come lak de las' button on Gabe's collar, after Tildy done give de cradle away. Oh, dat blessed l'il gal!"

Royal's voice quivered with a mysterious parental tenderness, and there was a moist look in his eyes. "But my membunce gittin' slack—w'at kinder song dat yo' want yo' humblin' servant teach yo'?"

"I'd rather you should choose one."

With a firm, solemn chord or two, he preluded a strangely stirring hymn I had never heard before. What a roll and volume of sound he brought out of his dilapidated banjo, as he sang his "Old Ship Zion!" The woodwork was warped, every string tied at the bottom, yet a longing seized me to possess it, such as a violinist might cherish for a Paganini. It seemed to me it must have a superior soul to that of my frisky, be-ribboned instrument, which was so independent of my touch that it would only twang and clang with defiant metallic echoes. The coy banjo deity was a familiar of this grave, dignified negro, and yielded such melody to his fingers as I never heard from the expert in a Northern city who had been giving me lessons at the rate of two dollars per hour.

Royal's voice showed no signs of the consumption it was subject to; it was rich and deep beyond a suggestion of fatigue.

When the hymn ceased I said: "'The Old Ship Zion' is very fine, I am glad to hear it, but it's not exactly the kind I'd rather learn from you—I can find that in a book somewhere. Let me have some of your regular plantation tunes that you used to sing at corn-shuckings."

He hesitated a moment, with a reluctant air. "Seem lak' I kinder tu'n ter de hymn chunes ter day, lady, des natchul, but I mus' try to please yo'. How yo' lak' dis one?"

Straightening up briskly he changed the key entirely—

"Look-a-look-a-heah, look-a-look a whar!
Look-a-look away o' yander!
Don't you de old gray goose
A smilin' at de gandah?
Unh unh um, a low down!
Unh unh um, a low down!
Unh unh um, a low down!
Johny come down the hollow!

"A settin' on a ole gum log,
A lookin' for his dahtah,
Terrapin crepe up behind dat frog
An' push him into de watah.
Unh unh um, a low down!
Unh unh um, a low down!
Unh unh um, *a low down!*
Johny come down the hollow!

"Oh, de squirrel am got de bushy tail,
De possum tail am bar',
De racccoon tail am ring all 'roun',
An' stumpy am de tail ob de bar';
Unh unh um, a low down!
Unh unh um, a low down!
Unh unh um, *a low down!*
Woow! Johny come down de hollow!"

I laughed and clapped heartily—"Splendid! Just the thing. I'll put the words down right away"—taking a pencil and sheet of paper out of my satchel. "Now say the first words over."

"Look-a-look a heah, look-a-look a whar!"—he repeated—"set that down in yo' rememberandum book."

Then, when I had all the words before me, I began to sing them as well as I could, with a random accompaniment on my banjo. How weak and thin my imitation!

Royal wriggled in his seat—"Scuse me ef I disrup' you, m'am, but you don't screech mo'n half loud enough; des make up yo' mind ter take de roof off—*dis* way—'*woow!*'"—he opened his mouth like a yawning cavern—"'Johny, come down de hollow!' Strike t'err string dar, dat off string yandah, pull on it lak' yo' boun' ter rip de insides outen de banjer. You is as well built a lady as ever I see; don't be skeered o' yo' own voice—des holler 'woow!' wid de bes' of 'em. Dat's some better." After I had gone over the song twice—"Don' yo' be disencourged; ef I had yo' two or free days I'd make a fust-rate singin' bird out o' yo'. Can't yo' lay yo' plans ter stay awhile in Weldon?"

"Stay here, in this place? no, indeed!"

"Dat w'at dey all say dat has ter stop heah—dey swivetin' to get on."

"I wish you'd let me have *your* banjo to carry away with me, Royal, and take mine in place of it. Perhaps I could learn to play if I had yours."

He glanced down lovingly at his, as a parent regards an afflicted child. "Laws, m'am! dis heah instrumen' ain' wuf shucks 'long side o' yourn; can't tell me nuffin' 'bout him; I knows dis banjer inside and out; didn't dese hands make him f'om de wud go? He gittin' ole an' skreaky. He don't hold he age as good as he master, but I got ottached to him, somehow. I don't want ter part wid him twell dey gives me a harp to play on, up in de New Jerusalem. I made dis here banjer on de ole Roy'l plantation w'en I was co'tin Tildy. Dat 'oman—she gwine ter stick to me clean fru' twell de crack o' doom—I nuver had no wife like her."

After strumming at "Look-a-look-a-heah" awhile longer, I said: "Can't you sing me another one now, Royal?"

He turned his eyes up to the ceiling with an abstracted air, as though his thoughts were wandering far away from this room. There was something pathetic in his gaze, something imploring—was the man praying? His fingers strayed over the strings till they found a soft minor, and then came a tender, lingering wail that thrilled me to the core, his voice melting to the consistency of a wistful lullaby:

"Oh, Susie, oh, Susie! wouldn't you like to go
Way up in de mountains?
Dar's whar de river flow.
Oh, de hills an' de mountains will all pass away,
An' you will have a new heart again some
other day."

The music ceased with a broken sob. Royal leaned his head against the banjo; his tears fell over the strings. "What's the matter? Poor fellow! Are you sick? Is it that you are so awfully poor? Never mind, I'll help you some."

"I mighty po', lady; dat why I 'bleege to come heah an' pick up a few cents to-day; but dat ain't troublin' me now. You must 'scuse me. Roy'l heart too heavy. He can't sing no mo'. Oh, my l'il Susie! dat onlies' lamb de Lawd send me after all my mis'ry—she lying *daid* at home!"

Lightning Strokes Statistics.

The statistics of lightning strokes in Germany during the past 26 years have been investigated by Herr Kastner, who shows that the annual number of cases has more than doubled [redacted] that time. Last year there were fewer than 1145 strokes. They [redacted] most frequent in the hottest mon[redacted] of the year, June and July, and [redacted] the hottest hours of the day, or th[redacted] following them (from 3 to 4 p. m.[redacted] It appears that the thunderstor[redacted] proceed from the hills, and the pa[redacted] of their course most liable to be struck are woodless and flat places, valleys of rivers, and low meadows, near lakes, while wooded and hilly districts generally escape. This last deduction is hardly in accordance with our popular ideas on the subject.

And now, announces the New York, *Press*, they are cutting the tendons of children's third fingers to increase their power of piano playing. This is the greatest cruelty to the greatest number. There would be only the same cruelty to the child, and less cruelty to everybody else, if its tendons were cut so that it could not play the piano.

Half of the commercial sugar of the world is produced from beets.

THE TWO LOVERS.

How My Skeptical Views of True Love Were Removed.

I was tired. I had worked in the school-room until, now that vacation had come, I felt that I had earned a rest, and I determined it should be had where I would not be hampered by formal regulations and conventional rules. I wanted to ramble in the green fields, among the wild flowers. I wanted to linger by the riverside and watch the ripples, or read my favorite books, or listen to birds and feel as free as they. I would sketch a little, perhaps, or catch fish if I could. I would forget care, be a happy child once more, and rest.

I knew just where to go. I had been there once, and two days after my school closed I was there again. It was a quiet country town. The surroundings were picturesque and romantic. There were bluffs crowned with trees on the north and east; rolling hills, adorned with wild-flowers, on the south and west, and a beautiful little river, fed by numerous springs under the bluffs, almost encircling the town. These were the general features, but there were numberless grassy slopes, mossy glens, rocky caves and cozy nooks. Here it was that I proposed to spend the greater part of my vacation. I had a passion for painting and sketching, and here brush and pencil would find use.

But my two lovers! They were on the hotel piazza when I arrived, though I did not know then that they were lovers. I merely noticed the respectful attention with which a gentleman listened to some remark of a lady and the kindly smile with which he responded. I changed my dusty garments and sat by the open window of my room to enjoy the beauty without. There were people on the piazza, but I did not heed them. I did not even glance at them until I heard the landlord mutter: "Two lovers!" He stood in the doorway, and I wondered what had occasioned his comment. I looked around. Two gentlemen were smoking and talking politics in tones which precluded the idea of their being lovers. A group of school-girls were laughing and chattering with the host's daughter. "They may be lovers," thought I, "but there are more than two."

Several little children were playing on the walk just beyond; of course, the landlord did not mean them, and I was about to conclude that I had mistaken his words or that they had no connection with what was transpiring on the piazza when my eyes fell on the couple I had noticed on my arrival. They were sitting a little apart from all the others, conversing in low, tender tones and evidently very much interested in each other, and almost aloud I echoed the landlord's words.

Lovers are to me a very attractive class of people, and though I gazed with enjoyment at the bluffs, the trees and the sunset clouds, thought and glance would turn involuntarily again and again to these lovers. The lady was beautiful, with a beauty that seemed increased at every glance. That broad, pure brow, those earnest, soulful eyes, that sweet, quiet smile, the whole face radiant in the rosy glow of light, seemed made to bless the beholder. What a beautiful face! O! that I might see it daily. What an inspiration it would be! No wonder he loves her.

I could not see her companion's face so well, but tone and attitude were eloquent, and I remembered the gentle, kindly expressian of his face when I had noticed him first. Just the expression one would naturally acquire in such a presence, I thought, and my glance again sought the la[redacted] as long as I could see, but the results were unsatisfactory. I could not obtain the desired expression. I decided to take time to study her face. I did not see her again until the next afternoon. She was sitting in the ladies' parlor, reading; and, mindful of my sketch, I looked for the beauty that had so thrilled me on the previous evening. To my astonishment, it seemed to have vanished. I could scarcely recognize her. She looked quite ordinary. I had seen hundreds of women fully as beautiful. I was disappointed and puzzled and I started for a ramble, almost ready to adopt the theory that beauty was merely subjective; not the quality of an object, but an emotion of one's own mind. I concluded that I did not care to make a sketch.

It was late when I returned and found the lady sitting on the piazza. Presently, I noticed her lover coming down the street. She saw him, and her face lighted up with a wondrous glow, and as she rose to greet him it was fairly transfigured. The puzzle was solved; the mystery was plain to me. It was love that made her lovely, and it was love that made him look so grand and noble, and I pondered over my discovery. I had seen school-girl and school-boy love, and love, so-called, in other various phases, and I had seen the article transferred from one object to another with apparently the greatest ease. Never having had much experience of my own, and my observation of lovers after marriage being unfortunate, perhaps, I had come to regard true and lasting love as purely an ideal never to be realized, except in Heaven, and it might be that which made it Heaven.

Here was a love very different from any that had previously come under my observation. It had the power to transform, to glorify the human face, and love that had such power must of necessity be pure and true. O why are so many satisfied with a base imitation! Such a love as theirs is the most desirable thing in life, thought I, as I noticed the subtle interchange of sympathy and the appreciation each felt for the beauty of the sunset which neither needed to express in words. Years could make no difference in a love like this, unless to increase its depth and fervor.

Thus I mused. Soon they strolled off toward the river, and I suddenly became conscious that the book I had been pretending to read was held upside down. The hostess came out just then, and I expressed to her the interest with which these two people had inspired me. She became enthusiastic at once and told me many facts about them, which deepened the feeling I had already had. Once more, I resolved to make a sketch, but not of the lady alone; I would paint them both. One would be incomplete without the other. They were ideal lovers and my picture should express my ideal of love, yet taken from life. I sought my room, and with more than my former enthusiasm began again the difficult work. I sketched from memory, for the impression on my mind was vivid. Several days passed. This particular sketch was not yet finished for it was elaborate, and I worked on it only when inspired by seeing my two lovers together.

Meanwhile I rambled, read and fished, sometimes alone, sometimes with acquaintances. I made several sketches of landscapes in the vicinity of the town, but none seemed complete without the figures of my two lovers placed in the foreground, and they were in nearly every one, and I endeavored in each and all to give vivid expression to the mutual confidence and love which so fascinated me in the originals.

What pleasant days those were! How keenly I enjoyed them after my months of work in the close school-room. One afternoon, sketch-book in hand, I started for a ramble, and after reaching the river wandered on along the bank until I came to a fallen tree. Here I seated myself on the trunk, where one limb made a convenient foot-rest and another formed a comfortable support for the back. A short distance up the stream and in full view from the tree, a foot-bridge spanned the river. The bluffs, which were on the left of the stream, at this point were not so steep. They sloped down from either way and formed something like a pass between the two mountains, and though to reach the top of the bluffs involved labor, it was often done, as a footpath testified. Just across the river from the fallen tree, a beautiful spring bubbled from under the rocks and flowed into the river. All these I had soon reproduced on paper. The rustic bridge, the sloping cliff, the bubbling spring, made a pretty and effective picture.

Well pleased with my success, I was about to leave my cozy nook, when I saw two well-known figures crossing the bridge. What a joy this was to me! They reached the shore, and, taking the path between the foot of the bluffs and the river, they soon reached the spring just opposite where I was sitting. Here they paused, and the lady producing a silver cup filled it with water and offered the gentleman a drink. He drank, and gallantly exclaimed, as he returned the cup:

"A sweeter draught
From fairer hand was never quaffed."

This incident filled me with a sudden inspiration. What an addition they would make to my picture! I seized my pencil and began to put them into my sketch. I worked rapidly and soon had a fair representation of her as she presented him with the silver cup.

They passed on down the river out of sight and I soon left the tree and, crossing the foot-bridge, climbed the bluff, intending to sketch the town. With some difficulty I gained a good position, but my exertions in climbing had rendered my nerves somewhat unsteady and I concluded to postpone sketching, and enjoy a walk along the edge of the bluffs, which commanded a view not only of the town but of the surrounding country for many miles to the south and west, which was beautiful and charming.

But all this could not render me oblivious to the fact that walking was hard work. The ground was uneven, and rocks and bushes intercepted my progress, and I had not walked more than half a mile before the unwonted exercise had made me very tired. The sun was hot and I was thirsty, and in spite of the beautiful views I heartily wished myself back on the level ground. But how to get there? Must I retrace my steps? Was there no other way? I approached the edge of the cliff and looked over. I noticed the jutting ledges, the projecting points and the sharp rocks below. How terrible to fall! One could not escape with life. I drew back with a shudder.

Looking down the river, I saw what appeared to be an old stone quarry. The stone had been taken out in large quantities, and rejected stones and earth formed a sloping bank which extended into the river. Could I but get into the quarry from above, I was sure I could clamber down this stony slope and reach a more desirable position than the one I now occupied without the labor and fatigue of returning as I had come. The excavation was broad and did not look very deep. There must be some way to get into it, of course. "I can fall in, if there is no other way," I exclaimed aloud; and I walked on quite elated with the prospect. Reaching the place, I found a descent would be more difficult than had at first appeared; in fact, it seemed almost impossible. While I was considering the matter, the sound of voices reached me. I knew well to whom they belonged. They might be near; they might be far off, for sounds deceived one here; and I stood on the brink, listening intently and looking down into the quarry. I had no idea of carrying out my suggestion to fall in, but a sudden dizziness came over me as I gazed. I tried to step back. The stone on which I stood settled slightly, and I felt that I was falling. I clutched at the brink and grasped it, but I could not save myself and, with a wild scream, I loosed my hold and fell.

Fortunately I was not much hurt, only a little stunned and much frightened, and I lay trembling, but dimly conscious that footsteps were approaching clambering up the stones. Presently, I felt my face bathed with water, and I opened my eyes to see the lady and gentleman bending over me, the lady holding the silver cup which I had been sketching only a short time before.

After a little I felt able to sit up and look about me. There lay my sketch-book with all the sketches fallen out and spread around to view, no less than seven of them representing these two people too accurately to be unrecognized, and the gentleman was slowly gathering them up. The sight restored me, and I rose up with a nervous laugh. He finished, and, turning toward me, said:

"When you are sufficiently recovered, we will assist you to get down from here;" and then, as he pointed to the sketches: "You must have spent a great deal of time over us, and you have rather flattered us, I think."

This interested the lady, and she begged permission to examine them for herself. I could not refuse, and I sat down and leaned back against the rocky wall, while they looked them over together. The lady was greatly moved. Tears were in her eyes, and as she replaced the last sketch she murmured: "Every one speaks eloquently of love."

"Love true and exalted," added the gentleman.

"The landlord called you two lovers," I began, apologetically.

"We are two lovers," said he with emphasis.

Why was this so remarkable? Why were these two lovers so fascinating to me, and why had they the wondrous power to restore my faith in real and disinterested human love?

They had been married fifteen years.

Fruit growers have only the choice now between spraying their trees or seeing the fruit destroyed or badly damaged by insects.

Guinea fowls consume grubs and insects.

Some Curious Seizures.

The New York custom house occasionally affords interesting glimpses into the vast foreign life of the United States. Recently, while calling upon a friend, who holds a responsible position in that circumlocutory institution, he showed me samples of a large number of invoices of liquors which had recently been imported. Every one would puzzle the average man about town. One was a greenish yellow fluid called slivovitsch. It comes from Austria and the Balkan states and is made from a small wild plum which grows in that district. It is fiery and to a Yankee palate very disagreeable, but is extremely popular with the Hungarians and Wallaks.

A suggestion of the Holy Land was given by samples of honey wine, passover honey wine and Jerusalem plum brandy. The first and second were sweet and odorous, but a trifle insipid. In composition they are like the metheglin and honey mead used in England during the Middle Ages. The brandy was raw and almost vitriolic. The three stimulants are consumed by the Slovaks and Polaks from Russia and the Greeks and Syrians from Asia Minor.

Specimens of pulque and mescal showed that Mexico has some influence upon its sister republic. The former is a beer made from cactus, and tastes somewhat like that gaseous German horror, weiss bier. It is far stronger, however, and is said to produce the most intense drunkenness known to erring man. The mescal is the distillate of pulque, and can be described only by the word atrocious.

The Scandinavians show their love of the fatherland by unceasing importations of Christiana beer, Swedish punch and korn brandtvin. The beer is light, pleasant and wholesome; the punch is aromatic, savory, but so sweet as to be insipid; the korn brandtvin is not corn brandy, as the name literally translated would imply, but a whiskey made from rye, oats and barley. It is rich in fusel oil and consequently headache.

From Russia every now and then comes vodka or wodky, an impure, reeking strong alcohol; from Central America some delicious cordials made out of pine apple, guava and banana; from China no less than fifty stimulants, running from tea wine, rosebud wine and almond beer to heavy millet whisky and rice brandy; from Turkey some liquid for making sherbet, and from Brazil lavangia, or orange peel gin. Over 5,000 different kinds of stimulants are known and recorded in the custom house, of which 2,800 were unknown to Americans fifteen years ago.

A Canine "Flagman."

Scarcely anyone who passes the point of intersection of the Gravois road and the St. Louis & Oak Hill Railway fails to notice a little dog acting as flagman at the railway crossing. The animal is named Curly and is the property and assistant of Flagman Edward Howard, stationed at the above named crossing. Curly is a Spanish fox terrier, scarcely over two feet in length and not quite two years old. When the Oak Hill Railway Company began to operate its road Flagman Howard was assigned to watch the Gravois road crossing and trim the signal lamps.

Curly made her home at the watch-house and when her master would go out to collect the switch lamps the dog would lie down at the door and patiently await her master's return. One day, says the St. Louis *Post-Despatch*, as Howard was busy cleaning the lamps a train dashed into sight around the curve. Several wagons were approaching the crossing and would probably have driven on, meeting with a serious accident, had not the little animal rushed past its master and began barking furiously, which had the desired effect of stopping the teams.

An idea then struck the master to train the dog to hold a flag. She could stand on her hind feet with perfect ease and to hold a red signal flag in her mouth would be a great help to him as the passing trains are numerous. It took very little time "to break her in" to hold a little red flag, and now every time a train whistles she runs to fetch it, and standing on her hind legs, holds it aloft to warn drivers of wagons of the danger. The engineers all know the dog and look out for her. In addition to this flagwork Curly performs a variety of tricks and is a good mimic.

Do not depend on borrowing the ordinary farm tools from your neighbors. Own them and keep them in good condition.

Taking full loads to market pays best.

Help at Last.

Henry M. Stanley has an article in *Scribner's Magazine* on "The Emin Pasha Relief Expedition." The following extract tells how the great explorer's party, after enduring many hardships in the depths of an African forest, met with a settlement of friendly Arabs:

"Resting awhile to debate upon our course, we heard a sonorous voice singing in a language none of us knew, and a lusty hail and an argument with what appeared to be some humor. As this was not a land where aborigines would dare to be so lighthearted and frivolous, this singing we believed could proceed from no other people than those who knew they had nothing to fear. I fired a Winchester rapidly in the air. The response by heavy-loaded muskets revealed that these were the Manyema whom we had been so long seeking, and scarcely had the echoes ceased their reverberations than the cavaran relieved its joy by long-continued hurrahs.

"We descended the slope of the clearing to a little valley, and from all sides of an opposite slope were seen issuing lines of men and women to welcome us with friendly hails. We looked to the right and left and saw thriving fields, Indian corn, rice, sweet potatoes and beans. The well-known sounds of Arab greeting and hospitable tenders of friendship burst upon our ears; and our hands were soon clasped by lusty, huge fellows, who seemed to enjoy life in the wilds as much as they could have enjoyed it in their own lands. These came principally from Manyema, though their no less stout slaves, armed with percussion muskets and carbines, echoed heartily their superiors' sentiments and professions.

"We were conducted up the sloping clearing through fields of luxuriant grain by troops of men and youngsters, who were irrepressibly frolicsome in their joy at the new arrivals and dawning promise of a holiday. On arrival at the village we were invited to take seats in deep, shady verandas, where we soon had to answer to hosts of questions and congratulations. As the caravan filed past us to its allotted quarters, which men were appointed to show, numerous were the praises to God uttered by them for our marvellous escapes from the terrible wilderness that stretched from their settlement of Ipoto to the Basopo Cataract, a distance of 197 miles—praises in which, in our inmost hearts, each one of our sorely tried caravan most heartily joined."

The Rabbi's Wife.

When a Campanian lady on one occasion visited Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, she displayed her jewels ostentatiously and asked Cornelia to favor her with a sight of her own. Cornelia thereupon produced her two sons, remarking: "These are the only jewels of which I can make any boast." Nobly said, indeed, and worthy of the immortality which is Cornelia's portion. But a story in the Talmud has a tenderness in it which might have wooed Boccaccio's pen. During the absence from his home of Rabbi Meir, named the Light of the Law, two of his sons departed to the spiritual world. On the return of the rabbi his wife greeted him with a pleasant countenance, and then said: "My husband, some time since there were two jewels placed in my keeping—jewels beautiful, and costly beyond all price. And to-day, in your absence, the owner of the jewels came to me, and I have returned them into his possession." To which the rabbi replied that his wife had done well, adding that "we must always give back with faithfulness and cheerfulness whatever is placed in our charge." After a little time the Light of the Law asked for his sons, whereupon the mother took him by the hand and gently led him to the chamber of silence, wherein his sons lay dead. The rabbi gazed upon them, and his great heart gave way, for he loved his sons better than his own life, and in Israel sons are a treasure beyond all other treasures—indeed a treasure recognized as given by a benignant Heaven—and the light of his hopes was extinguished in the darkness of despair, and he lifted up his voice and wept bitterly. Upon this his wife meekly said: "Weep not thus, my beloved husband. Didst thou not say to me, even just now, that we must return with cheerfulness whatever is placed in our charge—when it is called for? These jewels were given us of God. He left them with us for a time, and we have rejoiced and gloried in the possession; but now, beloved husband, He has called for His own, and we should not repine."

The baggage of returning European tourists is thoroughly searched at New York now for dutiable articles, and the result has been a large increase in the amount of duties collected. In May this year, $10,466 was collected from passengers' baggage.

Do not sell fruit when the market is glutted. Evaporate it, dry it or can it.

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