

'TIS BUT A SPAN.

What matters it that tears and toil and oft-times hapless yearning Oppress me while my daily bread with hard toil I am earning; That little jealousies and hates like insects fright or fret me, That some friends Janus-faced and false malign and then forget me? This life is but a little span befooled with sin and sorrow, My soul through unspanned spaces vast shall wing its way to-morrow.

Death, truest friend though somber browed, my fettered soul unchaining, Shall bid me rise through happy skies above all earth's complaining, Shall send me like an uncaged bird among the starlit wonders Above the reach of earthly storms, above their sudden thunder; I shall be free as angels are, no illa nor vain repining, No limitations less than love my deathless soul confining.

In other worlds of larger life I may meet nobler creatures, With gentle grace on every face illumining their features, With unbarbed tongues which do not sting nor seek assassination, Where justice, mercy, love and truth each day receive oblation; Where glided gauds rate but as trash, mere baubles fit for playing, Where men are judged by hearts of gold and what their souls are saying.

What shall it matter then that here the slanders and bars Were prone with sulphurous abuse to kindle folly's fires; That some wore garb and guise of gods to veil their selfish sinning, That men with crooked words and ways the wealth of earth were winning? My soul shall wing its way and sing among the glad immortals, And sweep to sounds of heavenly harps between the pearly portals.

So live thy life, O privileged soul, above the reach of sorrow, Do not from little ills of earth thy views of new worlds borrow; These, too, are days for endless praise, with blue skies bending o'er me, To glance entranced at what God's pledge has thus spread out before me; My eye of faith shall pierce the years, nor be discouraged never, 'Tis but a span, O fellow-man, ere we are free forever.

I. EDGAR JONES.

The Crime of the Great Gorilla.

By C. Randolph Lichfield.

WE all loved Zenobe, not merely for her pretty, pale face, but because she was a quiet, tender-hearted, plucky little woman, who found her way into all our hearts without any effort, and then innocently shut her eyes to the havoc she had wrought, treating us all alike, from the proprietor to the humblest of the performing troupe and tent men.

A circus "crowd" is not exactly the kind of society in which refinement and tender consideration are likely to be encouraged and developed. But Zenobe, "the queen of wire-walkers," as she was described in our flaming bills, never had any reason to complain of the treatment she received from the highest to the lowest person connected with Herr Shoffle's world-famous circus and menagerie. No one ever uttered a swear or coarse word or expression within ear-shot of her, and no one ever ventured to chaff or joke with her. Yet she was only a little simple girl of 17, with only a very poor performance on the programme, earning less than nearly all the other artists, including myself, who had the honor of introducing three under-sized and very ancient elephants to audiences twice daily on six days of the week.

But Zenobe was good; the worst among us saw that and respected her for it. Yes, the worst among us. Probably that person was myself, so I am more than right.

And it is strange that the possible best, certainly the steadiest and cleverest man in the "crowd," respected her least. It was not because he was, or thought he was, better than she, but because he loved her more than we did—more deeply, less tenderly, and consequently more selfishly. We were content for the day with a little word floating to us on her silvery voice, and followed by one of the cheering, sunny smiles from her pale lips. But he—Stavarta, "the agile wonder of the world"—would not have been contented with her soul could she have sacrificed it to him; no, not with a thousand souls as honest and as womanly as hers would he have been content if she had had a thousand and one to sacrifice.

It was at Preston, at the Great Iron hall, that the awful thing occurred so suddenly and hideously that it was over before any of the horrified on-lookers could realize how it began.

The circus performance was in full swing. The huge audience, which filled every seat in the great amphitheater (except those in the gallery, which had been temporarily closed as unsafe), had exhausted the attractions of the menagerie section of the show in the hour between opening of doors and the commencement of the circus perform-

ance, and they sat in their scared tiers of faces, ashy white in the blue electric light, gazing down with awe or interest upon the circus of sand and sawdust as one turn followed another.

Zenobe's performance was evidently awaited with great interest; she had made a stir in the town from the start, owing to her daring rather than her skill, however. When the company had arrived at the Iron hall on Sunday, Herr Shoffle discovered, to his dismay, that, owing to architectural shortcomings, it was impossible to erect Zenobe's slack-wire or her fall net satisfactorily. Consequently he had fallen in readily with Zenobe's suggestion that the net should be discarded, and that she should substitute her tight-rope walking feat for the slack-wire. And it so befell that Zenobe created a huge sensation in Preston by walking a 100 foot rope 80 feet above the arena, and amid the glaring, hissing arc-lamps which hung like balls of light from the lattice girding of the roof—walked bravely forward and back with only a two-inch rope between her and an awful death.

Zenobe was less nervous than any of us about her dangerous feat, and that alone was something in her favor. For my part I had stood each night during her performance and watched her at that dizzy height through the slightly-parted curtains, with my head giddy, my heart sick, and my pulse scarce beating. And I stood there that night, with my three elephants' trunks swinging about behind me as they waited my word to go in; and I watched, straining my eyes in a hopeless effort to read a line of doubt or fear upon Zenobe's pale young face.

I watched her slip her little foot into the hoop of the hoisting rope unhesitatingly. I saw her pirouetting in the air, until she reached and stepped upon the landing-stage. She seemed herself that night. She knew her audience and kept them waiting just long enough for their sensation. Then, picking up the balancing-pole she slid her foot upon the rope.

It was not much beyond mere walking that the girl could do. The feat of walking with a sack over her head appeared very sensational and went down with the audience that night. But, as most people know, the sack-trick is a very tame one in reality, the sack being a guide, rather than an obstacle to proper balance.

Zenobe was crossing the rope for the third time, carrying a big Japanese parasol, when I saw that the rope was swaying rather peculiarly and Zenobe commencing to walk back to the starting-stage. At first I could not understand the situation. There was nothing sufficiently violent in Zenobe's movements to so agitate the rope, and we all knew that she had the greatest objection to walking backwards.

"What's up?" I muttered in the ringmaster's ear.

"She's walking back because she can't turn on the rope," he replied. "But why she doesn't go on and turn on the other stage—"

At this moment a sudden fear seemed to possess the audience; a half-stifled murmur went round the hall, swelling into a mighty groan. Then the audience rose like an army, and stood spell-bound, hushed to paralyzed silence by the dawning knowledge of the tragedy that was being enacted.

Then I saw, and seeing, understood. With uncertain, backward steps, Zenobe was retreating, with her long balancing pole dipping first on one side then on the other, like a see-saw; and the rope was shaking violently, not from her movements, but from the farther end. And there, perched upon the little, narrow landing-shelf, sat Goble, the great gorilla, its long, ugly hands clenched round the rope, which it was shaking with all its strength.

I uttered a cry of horror. The cry was echoed by a thousand throats as something whirled through the air, and Zenobe—our Zenobe—lay upon her back in the middle of the sawdust ring!

It was not that I loved her less than all the others, but I alone of all kept my head at that hideous moment. With a sob, I turned and fled as fast as my feet could patter to the nearest door of the staircase that led to the closed gallery. To reach this door I had to pass through the menagerie, between the rows of horse-stalls and the rows of cages. And as I ran, the beasts, seeming to catch the fire that burned within me, set up their own wild cries.

Passing the leopards on my right, I threw a flying glance at the cage of the great gorilla, and—stopped.

Breathless, with the sweat of heat and horror thick upon my neck and brow, I stood and gazed in mute amazement at the great gorilla, as he stood up in front of his cage and stretched his long, muscular arms through the bars towards me.

In his cage! The great gorilla in his cage, when 20 seconds before my own eyes had seen him swinging from the lattice-girding of the roof 80 feet above my head on the other side of the great building!

What could it mean? I dashed the sweat from off my brow as if to free my brain from the weight of my agony. I tried the iron cage door, and saw that the bolt was shot—shot firmly home. Could the gorilla have done that? It was possible. Could he have got back to his cage in 20 seconds and done it? That also was just possible. But was it probable that the wild beast, having gained

his freedom, would make such violent haste to be a captive once again? No, no!

I turned quickly to the foot of the gallery stairs and, with my hand upon the rail, I paused. Pausing, I heard someone bounding down flight after flight; and a sudden thought struck me. Stepping behind a huge heap of canvas coverings, I waited, noiselessly panting, all eyes and ears.

I heard someone bounding down the last flight of gallery stairs. I saw the slight, lithe form of a man, clad in flesh-tight tights, spring up to the gorilla's cage and dash himself against the door. It was Stavarta!

"Oh, beast! Oh, son of evil!" he cried, in a voice quivering with hatred and terror. "Would that my hands were strong enough to pluck your life from out your hideous body! But wait, wait, wait!"

He sprang down from the cage, and, with a searching glance around him, bounded away and disappeared. I sat down on a bale of canvas, pressing my head between my hands, and tried to think what it could mean. But before I could collect my senses a score of men came rushing up, panting and white.

"Yes! there he is!" cried one. "I always said we should have trouble with him, and he able to unbolt his cage!"

"Zenobe!" I cried, "Zenobe!"

"More dead than alive," answered Ravello, the lion-tamer. "But just alive."

"But can she live?"

"She may—the doctors say she may just live. She broke her fall by catching at the trapeze nets."

"She did, thank Heaven!" broke in the ringmaster. "That brute!" he added, turning wildly upon the gorilla, which tried to snatch his hat. "That evil-minded brute shall be shot, or I'll resign."

"And here!" "And here!" "Same here!" the others cried.

"Some fiendish instinct," continued the ringmaster, "must have put him up to the vile crime. Had it not been for Stavarta's presence of mind and daring it might have done more injury still!"

"Stavarta!" I exclaimed. "And what did Stavarta do?"

"He was waiting for his turn in the gallery, he says, when he heard the audience murmur. He rushed to the balustrade just in time to see Zenobe fall, and the brute clamber along the girders to the gallery. Without a thought of his own flesh—the danger of attacking the powerful brute unarmed—he dashed forward. But the gorilla was too quick; it bounded off, and closely followed by Stavarta, rushed round the gallery, down the stairs, and leapt into its cage, when Stavarta slammed the door and shot the bolt."

"Stavarta told you that?"

"Stavarta."

"Stavarta lies!" I cried, springing to my feet.

Someone jostled through the ring of men around me, and a hand fell heavily across my face—Stavarta's hand.

"I lied, did I, you fellow?" he shouted. "You always were jealous of the love she bore me—jealous, you dog! And now behind my back, you dare to say I lied!"

"You lied," I answered, without returning the blow, but fixing him with my eyes. "And why you lied we soon shall know. Jealous of you! You know she loved not one of us, and least of all loved you! Now watch his face, and listen while I speak."

"The very moment when I saw Zenobe fall," I continued, passionately, "I turned and flew towards the staircase, thinking of nothing but vengeance on the gorilla—vengeance my hands should work. Running by here, I stopped and gazed in wildest wonder at Goble safe and quiet in his cage."

"You lie, you lie!" cried Stavarta, making a dash at me. But the men held him back rough-handedly.

"The cage was bolted," I continued.

"Bolted?" exclaimed some of the men.

"Aye, bolted, and Stavarta was not here!"

"Take off your hands!" shouted Stavarta, trying to free himself of those who held him. "Of course, I was not here, but running round to tell you men I had the great brute safe."

"You lie again!" I cried, "for I heard someone bounding down the stairs. I hid myself, and saw you bounding down—you, Stavarta! You sprang upon the cage and cursed the brute, and looked around as if expecting someone would run up at that moment and perceive you."

"You lie, you do," he cried, fighting with all his strength to get at me.

"Why all these lies on either side?" demanded the ringmaster, angrily.

"Because he hates me," cried Stavarta, growing black in the face with struggling and with passion. "Because he would not let me have the credit of my courage, if he could help."

"And why do you say he lies?"

"Because he knows too well," I answered, angrily, "what he was doing in the gallery, and how it was we saw a gorilla in the gallery, when the beast must certainly have been securely in his cage."

"My soul!" Stavarta hissed, between his teeth, flashing at me his eyes, which gleamed like living coal out of his gray face. "Let me but get my hands upon your throat, and by my soul I'll strangle you!"

"Silence, Stavarta, silence!" cried the ringmaster. Then turning to me, he asked: "You, like us, saw the gorilla on the roof. What of that?"

"Come, follow me," I said. "I think I know."

I mounted the staircase, followed by the rest, who compelled Stavarta to accompany us by force of numbers. Flight after flight of the winding stairs we mounted, and at each angular landing Stavarta's face grew graver, and his voice of protestation more hollow.

At last we reached the gallery floor, and, turning sharply to the left, I led the way to where I knew a row of six small offices were ranged. I pushed the first door and it gave. The room was empty. I tried the next door, which also gave. That room also was empty. The third door—it was locked.

"Where is the key?" I demanded.

"But no one knew."

"Here is a key that'll open 50 doors like that," said one of the men. And he shivered the lock with a mighty kick.

"A trap, a trap!" cried Stavarta, writhing to free himself, as we stood and gazed upon a heap of long brown-hair skins and the mask of a large man-monkey. The skins were torn, the mask was broken; broken and torn in the frenzied haste of throwing them off. The glove-like hands and feet of hair were smeared with blue paint. The paint upon the girder-work was new. And in one finger of the left-hand glove was a ring. The ring was Stavarta's!

Zenobe lived to walk about on crutches and marry me.

Stavarta died to show he was too poor a soul to live in punishment.—Tit-Bits.

ROMANCE IN FLOWERS.

Derivation of Names and Emblems Attached to Some Bright Blossoms.

There are many pretty stories connected with the wild flowers and their names. Take first the little Carolina thistle, whose golden eye set about with straw-colored rays is among the commonest wild plants on every wind-swept waste and barren down of England. His name of Carolina is contracted from Carolina, and there runs an ancient tradition that an angel appeared to Charlemagne when his army was sick of plague and pointed out to him a cure for the scourge in the shape of this common blossom. It was used for hysteria also, and to this day peasants in Germany and France hang it up as a weather glass, for the flowers expand in dry weather, but shut up if moisture threatens.

Another water lover is myosotis—Greek, mus, a mouse, and otos, an ear, from the shape of the foliage. Every rivulet, every river's brink is brightened by his blue eye, and the little plant has been emblem of friendship throughout Europe for many years. Tradition says that two lovers loitering beside deep waters in the old time saw mouse-ear growing upon an island in mid-stream. The girl wanted a bunch; the man, with more chivalry than common sense, plunged in, and, reaching the spot, plucked the flower. But his strength failed him on the homeward journey and he could not regain the shore. With a last effort he flung the flowers to the girl, cried "Forget-me-not!" and sank to rise no more.

Nasturtium is a word the derivation of which will occur to few who see it. Yet there is a laugh in it that you may recall when next you eat watercress and bread and butter, or see the plant sharing ditch or stream side with its little four-leaved blossoms. The word is derived from nasus torsus, a convulsed nose—an effect supposed to be produced on the human eater by its acrid and pungent qualities. The famous old remedy of spring juices, beloved by our great-grandmothers, was concocted of the watercress mingled with brook lime, or scurvy grass, and Seville oranges.—St. Louis Republic.

Kate Field's Love Letter.

If that charming woman, the late Kate Field, did not marry, it was assuredly not because she did not have many an admirer. A Washington lady has in her possession a little old bit of yellow paper upon which is penciled a boyish scrawl. It was preserved by Miss Field from her little girl days. The scrawl runs thus:

"Wont you mete me down bye The Gate after school Yue nowe i Lav yue."

On the other side of the bit of paper is the address, thus:

"Miss Kate Field, Esq., last Seat nex to the Door gate out."

It must have been like the breath of the forgotten perfume of yesteryears when the clever, kindly woman happened upon this little old piece of yellowed paper on a rainy afternoon of rummaging.—Washington Post.

Wholesomeness of Grapes.

Every autumn revives the discussion of the therapeutic value of grapes, and discovers anew the grape-cure enthusiasts. It is satisfactory to know, at least, that the delicious fruit is certainly one of the most wholesome, even while its properties as a cure-all may be doubted. In the matter of a fruit diet, an authority asserts that one meal a day exclusively of good fruit is more effective than the same quantity (taken with other food).—N. Y. Post.

HERRINGS AND SAWDUST.

Asphalt Pavements May Soon Be Made from These Substances in Combination.

The notice of making asphalt artificially from herrings and sawdust seems so extraordinary as to suggest burlesque. Nevertheless, this surprising feat has been accomplished by Prof. W. C. Day, of Swarthmore college, near Philadelphia. Specimens of the product are now in possession of the geological survey in Washington and were shown to a Washington correspondent by Prof. Diller, one of the members of the scientific staff of that government bureau.

Not long ago a very curious mineral substance, up to that time unknown, was found in Utah, deposited in veins which had once been fissures in the rocks. These fissures had been choked up by bituminous matter gushing from the bowels of the earth, and in this way the deposits of gilsonite, as it is now called, were formed. It is a singularly pure species of asphalt, and is now being mined in a large way, the production of it constituting an important industry. The stuff is used for making varnishes. For this purpose it is especially good, because varnishes made of it will not crack. Conspicuous streaks of the gilsonite run like strips of ribbon over hill and dale, so that they can be followed with the eye for miles.

Some of this "gum asphalt," as it is popularly called, was placed in the hands of Prof. Day for analysis, and he found that its make-up was such as to suggest an animal origin, at least in part. It is believed nowadays by scientific men generally that asphalts ordinarily are derived from vegetable matter. Such matter, being laid down in vast beds during the coal forming period, subsequently underwent chemical processes.

It occurred to him that an imitation of it might be made in the laboratory by combining such animal and vegetable elements as seemed to be represented in the gilsonite, including such nitrogenous compounds as were easily got from fish. So he took, because they happened to be most convenient, a few fresh herrings from the market and put them into a distilling apparatus, together with a quantity of sawdust. Then he subjected the mixture to distillation, the vapor being passed through a red-hot iron pipe and into a flask, in which it was condensed. The resulting product was a perfectly black, brittle, crystalline substance, exactly like gilsonite in all respects. In fact, neither by analysis nor in any other way can any difference be detected between the two.—N. Y. Journal.

Garden Suits.

Percale trimmed with linen braid makes a most desirable costume for country wear. Unless a woman is of extravagant tastes she will not care to wear an expensive gown through the fields to be ripped by the thorns and caught in the briars. This costume is developed in mahogany brown pique, striped diagonally with red. The skirt is close fitting at the top, with gathers at the back. It is trimmed around the foot with red braid put on in decorative design and faced with striped goods of brilliant hue. The waist is a loose-fitting blouse with fitted lining. Below the belt is a plain ruffle lined with the same goods that faces the skirt. The sleeves are small and trimmed with the braid in diamond and swirling design such as that upon the front of the blouse. A large hat of rough red straw is worn with this costume, trimmed plentifully with loops of red and ecru taffeta ribbon.—Chicago Chronicle.

A Unique Feature of Carnival Week in Kansas City.

The resident Chinese of Kansas City have arranged to give a genuine Oriental Chinese parade as a part of the grotesque and funny Carnival pageant. They have sent one of their number to San Francisco to purchase costumes and the paraphernalia for this ludicrous and strictly Chinese effort at fun making. It is an unwritten law among the Chinese that they are never to wear a costume in public on an occasion of this kind twice in succession. Costumes must be new each time they appear in public.

The Kansas City Carnival Krewe is assisting them financially, and they will expend thousands of dollars on this one single division of the great Carnival parade. Kansas City has had some very attractive Carnivals of fun, but the forthcoming ten days' season of festivities will far eclipse anything ever attempted in the history of the big town at Kaw's mouth.

Doing London.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling tells a good story of himself. One day, he says, I was sitting in my study, in London, when suddenly a gentleman appeared at the door unannounced, followed by two schoolboys. "Is this Rudyard Kipling?" inquired the gentleman.

"Yes," I answered.

He turned round.

"Boys, this is Rudyard Kipling."

"And is this where you write?" he continued.

"Yes," I replied.

"Boys, this is where he writes."

And before I had time to ask them to take a seat they were gone, boys and all. I suppose they had all literary London to do in that way.—Tit-Bits.