

A VOICE FROM THE VORTEX.

By EDGAR WELTON COOLEY.

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For an hour after the dozen pupils which the thialy populated district furnished had gone to their homes, Miss Blanchard sat at the west window of the little white schoolhouse watching the evening sunlight shimmering upon the nodding prairie grass that stretched like a yellow sea for miles and miles.

It was mid-September. For a month not a drop of moisture had fallen. In the road that wound, a dull, gray streak, across the plain, the dust was ankle deep. Verdure was sere, and lifeless, and dry. The sky was cloudless; the sun's heat almost intolerable.

But Miss Blanchard's thoughts were not of the parched, glittering landscape nor yet of her school duties. They were of John Mallory.

She could not remember when she had not loved John Mallory. All their young lives they had been sweethearts. But at last they had quarreled—and parted in anger.

While she still considered that he had been unjust to her, and her eyes snapped indignantly at the recollection of his harsh words, she could not dull the keen edge of regret; the dazzling brightness of the sunshine could not dissipate the shadow—the deep, dark-some shadow—that seemed to wrap her in its mantle.

With a sigh she turned from the window and her glance rested upon the telephone back of her desk. Dear, thoughtful John! It was he who had ordered the telephone placed in the schoolhouse.

"There are so many tramps in the country," he had said to her. "If they bother you, little woman, or if you are ever in need of help, ring me up."

Her heart had thrilled with affection at the time, but now— She tossed her head proudly. "I do not need his assistance," she said; "I am quite capable of taking care of myself, I think."

Again she turned to gaze across the monotonous fields, and became conscious of a peculiar haze that seemed to fill the air with increasing density. With never a thought but that a much needed shower was not far distant, she watched it in idle curiosity, but presently, with sudden foreboding, she noticed that heavy clouds of vapor occasionally rolled over the building, borne westward. And then, through the open window there drifted a strong, familiar odor—the odor of smoke.

Hurrying to the door, she pushed it open and cast one apprehensive glance to the eastward, then shrank back appalled. The prairie was afire!

Across the eastern horizon was a livid wall of flame, whose red tongues seemed reaching to the very portals of heaven. The long, parched blades of grass, dry as tinder, were food most tempting to the ravenous element. The wind had increased to a gale and already a shower of sparks was falling within a few rods of the schoolhouse.

The nearest residence, a mile away, was towards the east, from which the fire was rapidly approaching. To the westward twice that distance must be traversed before she could reach a habitation. She knew the plowed fields, surrounding the dwellings, insured safety to the buildings, but she could not hope to reach any of them in advance of this scarlet agent of destruction. Yet certain death awaited her if she remained, for the schoolhouse was without protection of any nature.

An agony of thoughts crowded her brain and in a frenzy of fear she dashed into the road. Already she could feel the heat of the fire that was racing towards her with the speed of a railway train. It seemed no more than two miles away; she could hear the ominous crackling of the dry grass as the flames leaped forth and embraced the writhing verdure in their hot embrace.

The sky was hidden by a mantle of smoke; the sun, visible only at intervals, was a great, round ball of crimson. Before the rolling vapor frightened birds flew past in flocks; along the dusty road, almost dashing against her in their mad flight, droves of rabbits fled. To her terrified eyes the whole world seemed ablaze. Vainly she scanned the prairie in all directions, hoping some one with a team would come to her assistance, but not a human being did she see.

With a cry of God for mercy, she sank upon the ground and covered her face with her hands. And the blistering demon of rampant flame roared louder and still louder in her ears, and the scarlet of its breath tinged red the

snow of her face, the ebony of her hair.

"John! John!" she cried, in the depths of her despair. Then, like an inspiration, came the recollection of the telephone.

She staggered to her feet and dashed into the schoolhouse. The interior was aglow with the reflections of the flames; the air was stifling with the smoke.

With her hand upon the receiver she paused irresolutely, then turned her head slightly and glanced out the window at the hurricane of death bearing down upon her.

"No, no," she said, "I will not. No power on earth can save me now. And he—it would be but agony for him to know that I am in this sea of flame



A moment later she was folded in John Mallory's strong arms.

and he unable to give me aid. When it is over—is over—it will be time enough for him to know."

With her face illumined with a gleam of heroic determination, she turned away and walked slowly to the window. And there she stood pale, but gazing calmly out at the raging flood of fire. The flames were only a few feet away now and their hungry tongues almost licked the window panes. In despair she wrung her hands.

"Oh, God," she cried, "I cannot die without once more hearing the voice I love, without asking to be forgiven for the hasty, the angry words I uttered!"

Again she hastened to the telephone and rang the bell. And when at last she heard his familiar voice the fire was laying greedy hands upon the walls of the building.

"John," she said, "you are not angry with me, are you, dear? . . . You do not know how glad I am to hear you say that, dear. I was afraid you held resentment, and I— . . . Oh, no, John, dear, it was all my fault, and I am sorry—so sorry. . . . Where am I now? Do you think I would be standing at the telephone if I were in the schoolhouse? There must be fire all around it by this time. Isn't it awful?"

She shrank for an instant before the intense heat. The roar of the flames was like wail of a hurricane in a forest.

"John—John! . . . Perhaps—perhaps I will never see you again, dear. But if I never do, remember that I loved you—John—better than—"

She staggered beneath the choking cloud of smoke. Scarlet tongues of flame were lapping the floor almost at her feet.

"Yes, John I am going away—far, far away. . . . Where? . . . I cannot tell you—now. . . . To-morrow—to-night, perhaps. . . . you will know. . . . Oh, John—dear, dear John. . . . Good bye. . . . Good—"

The receiver dropped from her nerveless fingers and, blinded with smoke and faint from the intense heat, she reeled forward through the blackness. Stumbling, falling, rising again, she reached the door unscathed, hearing the desperate ringing of the telephone bell and the deafening roaring of the flames.

Onward she staggered until she reached the road—that one narrow break in the wall of flame. And there she paused and turned her flushed face upward toward the sky in mute appeal to heaven. Something fell upon her forehead, something damp and cool. She reached forth her hands, palms upwards. Cooling drops of moisture kissed the quivering flesh. It was raining!

With a cry of joy upon her lips, she sank upon her knees in the dust and offered up a prayer of thanksgiving for the shower that had come in time.

In a mighty torrent fell the rain, and when at last the woman raised her eyes, she saw a wide expanse of blackened stubble, but not a spark was glowing. Then, through the mist her dazed eyes beheld a familiar, broad-shouldered figure running towards her with outstretched hands. And a moment later she was folded in John Mallory's strong arms.

"Minnie! Thank God; oh, thank God!" he cried.

Strasburg to Honor Goethe. Strasburg is about to erect a monument to Goethe. The German poet passed some of the best years of his youth in the Alsatian town and referred to it frequently with words of admiring affection in his memoirs. The design for the statue has not yet been selected, but no attempt will be spared to make it worthy of the great name which it is to commemorate.

HOW SOME MEN ADVERTISE.

There is a Knack in Getting One's Business Before the Public.

"I've come to the conclusion that success in advertising depends on how it is done," said a member of the vestry of a prominent Episcopal church. "Several weeks ago on a rainy Sunday morning my umbrella disappeared from the stand in church. I advertised for its return, offering a generous reward, but no one returned it. Later on talking to a friend who is in the advertising business I mentioned the matter to him. How was your 'ad' worded?" he asked. "Something like: 'Person who found stray umbrella in vestibule of St. — church, please return same to —. Reward, etc.'" I answered.

"He smiled and scribbled on a piece of paper: 'Iry this as an "ad,"' he said. I took the paper and read: 'Person who was seen taking umbrella from vestibule of St. — church must return it at once to save himself trouble, as he is known.' Acting on my friend's advice, I inserted the notice in the papers. Did it work? I should say so! Next day I found not one, but half a dozen umbrellas awaiting me at home. They had been sent to the house during the day and attached to each was an unsigned note praying that I would overlook the matter, as the writer had taken the umbrella by mistake."—Philadelphia Record.

ROUNDED HORN WITH HOBOS.

Only One Man in Twenty Ever Had Been Before the Mast.

The ship Erskine M. Phelps arrived at Honolulu recently from Norfolk, Va., having broken all previous records for a sailing vessel from a north Atlantic port. She made the trip in ninety-seven days. She "rounded the Horn"—from 50 south in the Atlantic to 50 south in the Pacific—in eleven days, whereas the usual time is twice that.

What added to the interest of the voyage was that when the Phelps was well to sea the captain discovered that nearly every man of his crew had shipped under false pretenses. Only one man in the twenty before the mast was a sailor. The rest were just plain "hobos" who had palmed themselves off as sailors. The result was that the captain and the mates had to take turns at the wheel and do most of the work aloft.

In a terrible squall off Cape Horn, says the New York Mail and Express, when the safety of the ship hung in the balance and all hands were called to save ship, only six men came on deck, the others were lying below half dead with terror and seasickness. Nevertheless the Phelps broke the record.

Oysters and Disease.

In a recent scientific work by Profs. Herdman and Boyce, entitled "Oysters and Disease," they report the result of their investigations on the cause which produces green oysters. Many epicures prefer their oysters to have the emerald hue, though there is a widespread opinion that green oysters are not edible.

The investigators arrive at the conclusion that there are several forms of greenness. Copper is said to be present in minute quantity in all oysters. It was found that the greenest American oysters contained about four times the amount of copper which is present in the whitest American oysters. Careful chemical examination demonstrated conclusively that there is proportionately more copper in the greener parts of the oysters than in those parts which are less green. The green color of the highly prized Marannes oysters was found to be produced by the presence of a certain pigment and did not depend upon the amount of the contained copper.

Using Law Books to Advantage.

One supposes that it is the duty of naval officers to fight, not negotiate. Nevertheless, all officers of modern navies have more to do with international law than with ball and cannon. Prof. Moore of Columbia, was lecturing a few summers ago at the Newport Naval College, and international law was one of the most important studies. The professor was setting forth all imaginable situations and allowing the students to suggest the best way out of them. One of the men could not appreciate the value of law in a sea fight. What he was yearning for was powder and shot. Asked by the professor as to what argument for international law he would use to convince the enemy of their error, he said contemptuously: "I would let them have all the volumes of international law in wad form, and add the supplement by way of emphasis."

Do Stars Explode?

The appearance of a new star in the constellation of Perseus, and its rapid expansion into a nebula, which has been going on for some time past, have revived among astronomers the theory that some nebulae may be formed by explosion. About 1870 Prof. Bickerton of Canterbury college, New Zealand, showed that if two stars should graze one another the abraded parts, if relatively small, would have so high a temperature that they would at once become nebulous, and that the nebula so formed would under certain conditions, continue to expand until dissipated in space. The present expanding nebula has been growing at the extraordinary rate of several thousand miles a second and is, in many ways, one of the greatest celestial wonders of the time.—From Success.

A rope often gets tight because that is the way it is taut

Indigestion, congested liver, impure blood, constipation, there are what afflict thousands of people who do not know what is the matter with them. They drag along a miserable existence; they apply to the local doctors occasionally, and sometimes obtain a little temporary relief, but the old, tired, worn-out, all-gone, distressed feeling always comes back again worse than ever, until in time they become tired of living, wonder why they were ever born, and why they are alive unless to endure constant suffering. To such sufferers there is a haven of refuge in Dr. August Koenig's Hamburg Drops, which was discovered more than 60 years ago, and which is a wonderful medicine. One trial will convince the most skeptical that any or all of these difficulties may be removed, and a perfect cure effected, by taking Dr. August Koenig's Hamburg Drops. Get a bottle at once, before it is too late.

The mortality in the colored population of the United States is nearly double that of the white population.

\$100 Reward \$100.
The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure now known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by holding up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of Testimonials.
Address F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.
Lall's Family Pills are the best.

M. Cassimir-Perier, who celebrated his 55th birthday anniversary on November 8, is the only living ex-president of the French republic. He was 23 years old when the Franco-Prussian war broke out, and took part in that conflict and in the siege of Paris, being decorated with the Legion of Honor at its close. He entered the chamber of deputies in 1874, and became president in 1894, in succession to M. Carnot, who had been assassinated. He scarcely reigned six months, suddenly resigning in 1895.

The producers of alcohol in France are somewhat disturbed because of the new invention by which alcohol is manufactured by synthesis by means of acetylene. Although the process is as yet too costly to endanger their industry, the members of the Society of Agriculture of the Nord, in a recent meeting, memorialized the government asking that a duty of 4½ cents a pound be placed upon carburets.

A Pertinent Question.
From the New York Sun: In a country so grievously beset with foreign foes as Venezuela is, it seems queer, no matter how objectionable President Castro may be, that the civil war should continue. Where does General Matos, for instance, get his funds?

DR. COFFEE

Discovers Remedies That Restore Sight to Blind People.

Dr. W. Q. Coffee, a noted oculist, 390 Good Block, Des Moines, Iowa, has discovered medicines for the eyes that people can use at home and cure Cataracts, Scums, Granulated Lids, Ulcers or Blindness and restore sight.
Dr. Coffee has published an 80-page book on Eye Diseases which he will send free to every reader of this paper. This book tells how to prevent old sight and make weak eyes strong. Write Dr. Coffee today for his book.

Herr Caspar Gerstle, the oldest man in Lower Austria, has just died, aged 110.

The Australian taleg jla is the only bird which leaves its nest full-fledged.

FITS permanently cured. No fits or nervousness after first day's use of Dr. Kline's Great Nerve Restorer. Send for FREE \$2.00 trial bottle and treatise. Dr. R. H. KLINE, Ltd., 531 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Taxes on foreign visitors and residents are proposed to the Vaud Canton, Switzerland.

MORE FLEXIBLE AND LASTING.
won't shake out or blow out; by using Defiance starch you obtain better results than possible with any other brand and one-third more for same money.

Frau Theresa Kulla, the oldest woman in Vienna, has just celebrated her one hundred and third birthday.

Try One Package.
If "Defiance Starch" does not please you, return it to your dealer. If it does, you get one-third more for the same money. It will give you satisfaction and will not stick to the iron.

Morocco is not yet completely civilized in spite of the fact that the sultan has a motor and plays a good game of billiards. During the recent disturbances some villagers who had been grossly ill-treated sent a deputation to the bashaw at Tangier, who promptly imprisoned them, and set out with his aid-de-camp and eighty men to punish the malcontents. But the villagers were desperate and defended themselves, captured the bashaw and rolled him in the mud, while the wretched aid-de-camp had his eyes burned out with his own spurs and was left naked on the ground in the rain the whole night. The son of the sherefa was permitted to take him to Tangier next day, on condition that the deputation should be released from prison, and no further trouble ensued.

M. Merignac and Kirchoffer, well known French swordsmen, accompanied by MM. Breittmayer and Lasciez, their seconds, left Paris for Naples recently, where they are to take part in duels with Signori Verza and Pessina, Italians. The duels will be for the purpose of testing the superiority of the two national styles of swordsmanship, over which there has been an embittered controversy.

Spreading the Good News.

Whitcom, Wash., January 5th.—Mrs. A. M. Ferguson who came here from Winnipeg, Manitoba, relates how that great destroyer of Kidney Complaints, Dodd's Kidney Pills first reached the extreme North West corner of the United States:

"I had used Dodd's Kidney Pills for what the Doctors pronounced Bright's Disease in Winnipeg." Mrs. Ferguson says, "And the disease disappeared entirely. That was about three years ago and I enjoyed good health till about two years later when I removed to Whitcom.

"Whether it was the change of climate I can't tell but my old trouble returned in full force. My legs were swelled to nearly twice their size. I could not go up or down stairs for about two months.

"My husband hunted Whitcom for Dodd's Kidney Pills but could get none till a Druggist sent away and got them for him.

"I began to get well as soon as I began taking them." Others in Whitcom have learned to know and appreciate Dodd's Kidney Pills.

Mrs. Margaret McCoy, who was known as the "Mother of Methodism in the West," has just died at Omaha, Neb. Her mother, an earnest Methodist, was driven from France by the Reign of Terror in Robespierre's time.



Mrs. Emmons, saved from an operation for Ovaritis, tells how she was cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"I am so pleased with the results I obtained from Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound that I feel it a duty and a privilege to write you about it.

"I suffered for over five years with ovarian troubles, causing an unpleasant discharge, a great weakness, and at times a faintness would come over me which no amount of medicine, diet, or exercise seemed to correct. Your Vegetable Compound found the weak spot, and however, within a few weeks—and saved me from an operation—all my troubles had disappeared, and I found myself once more healthy and well. Words fail to describe the real, true grateful feeling that is in my heart, and I want to tell every sick and suffering sister. Don't dally with medicines you know nothing about, but take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and take my word for it, you will be a different woman in a short time."—MRS. LAURA EMMONS, Walkerville, Ont.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

Don't hesitate to write to Mrs. Pinkham if there is anything about your case which you do not understand. She will treat you with kindness and her advice is free. No woman ever regretted writing her and she has helped thousands. Address is Lynn, Mass.

Work for heaven is better than weeping over Eden.

INSIST ON GETTING IT.
Some grocers say they don't keep Defiance Starch. This is because they have a stock on hand of other brands containing only 12 oz. in a package, which they won't be able to sell first, because Defiance contains 16 oz. for the same money. Do you want 16 oz. instead of 12 oz. for same money? Then buy Defiance Starch. Requires no cooking.

One hundred pounds is the price expected for a sheet of 119 unused black English penny stamps issued in 1840, which will be offered for sale in London.

DO YOUR CLOTHES LOOK YELLOW?
Then use Defiance Starch. It will keep them white—16 oz. for 10 cents.

DROPSY NEW DISCOVERY: gives quick relief and cures worst cases. Book of testimonials and 10 DAYS' treatment FREE. Dr. H. H. GREEN'S SONS, Box R, Atlanta, Ga.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.
I hereby bequeath my life to the Edes Hair Tanning Co., to be tanned with the hair on, and made into a robe or coat, and returned to my bereaved owner. I have many nice kids I am very particular about it, and insist that none but the said firm be allowed to do this work. They have the largest, most complete factory and are the most capable of tanning my kids to suit me.

Write today for custom price list. Edes Hair Tanning Co., Baltimore, Md., Fur Dressers, Fur Dyers, Furriers.

SYRUP OF FIGS



Acts Gently;
Acts Pleasantly;
Acts Beneficially;
Acts truly as a Laxative.

Syrup of Figs appeals to the cultured and the well-informed and to the healthy, because its component parts are simple and wholesome and because it acts without disturbing the natural functions, as it is wholly free from every objectionable quality or substance. In the process of manufacturing figs are used, as they are pleasant to the taste, but the medicinal virtues of Syrup of Figs are obtained from an excellent combination of plants known to be medicinally laxative and to act most beneficially.

To get its beneficial effects—buy the genuine—manufactured by the

CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO.

Louisville, Ky. San Francisco, Cal. New York, N.Y.
For sale by all druggists. Price fifty cents per bottle.