THE DEAD KING.

The king was dead. His body lay
In splendor, stern and grim,
While round him fell the solemn day
Sifted through windows dim.

His sword was clasped within his hand
As firm as when in life
'Mid battle clouds that dreadful brand
Had flashed, and led the strife.

Beside his gray and stately head
His jeweled crown was set
In readiness, as though the dead
Had need to wear it yet.

And flags from many a battle plain,
Standing about his bier,
Told of rebellious chieftains slain,
And nations taught to fear.

And there, with plumes of tufted snow
Cresting their figures tall,
Stood steel-clad sentinels, arow
Like pillars of the hall.

And all day long with curious stare
And timid, bated breath,
The people passed, and eyed him there,
Dead, yet defying death.

Right royal seemed his upturned face,
For on it lingered still
The majesty of all his race
And of his own high will.

The king was dead; before God's throne
A soul stood in the light,
Shriveled, misshapen, stripped, alone,
And trembling with affright.
—George Horton, in the Century.

CHAPTER X.—CONTINUED.

Then, in less offensively defiant tones, perhaps in commiseration for the great anguish in the sweet white face before him, he added:

"She went away from me! Thank God, the last words she ever heard me say were in apology for that brutal outbreak. I had never spoken angrily to her before. I had never had occasion to do so. I believed in her utterly and entirely. Yes, she went away from me and returned to the women downstairs. I could hear her voice above every other one, the gayest, clearest one there, as I went out of the house again I dined at the clubhouse that day. I wanted time to think the whole miserable business over fully before I met her again. I was afraid I might forget that I was a gentleman and she a woman; false, damnably untruthful, but yet a woman. Nothing would be easier than for me to prove an alibi if need be. I did not care for my own company that evening. I picked two club men up on leaving the house, drove them to the club, dined with them, played whist with them, until—until—a messenger—Bennett, I believe it was—came to the club and informed me that Mrs. Norcross' maid, surprised at her mistress' not ringing for her at bedtime, went to look her up, she found her—as you are entitled to this much."

He stopped talking, and, reaching forward to a decanter on the table, poured out a large wineglassful of Madeira, which he drank off at a gulp. Nora's eyes had never once left his face while he was talking.

"You believe me, do you not?" he asked, leaning wearily back in his chair, and drawing his handkerchief slowly across his lips.

"You have left me no choice. I must believe you. I do."

"This is the first and only statement I shall make on the subject. I have offered the reward, as I told you before. In a few days I leave for Europe. There is one thing I should like to do. Before you came, it looked impossible."

She looked at him inquiringly. What a strange turn things had taken! He began again, in a broken voice:

"In that—letter—she spoke of a child. I should like to know that it would not become a pauper—would never know the need which sometimes drives women to deceive men. If you will help me—I do not know its name. There were no names mentioned. She only spoke of her little girl. By that I knew she was a widow."

"There is no need for that. The child will be well cared for. But it is generous of you."

She put out her hand to him impulsively. Perhaps, after all, he had been more sinned against than sinning. He took the proffered hand:

"Thank you. I am glad, after all, that I have been able to rid your mind of that hideous fancy, before I leave the country. It might have looked like a flight. And I don't know but what it is. Life, here, is intolerable—will be everywhere, in fact."

"And you have no theory? It was not a suicide?" she asked.

"No. Of that I am quite sure. She was too timid, and not miserable enough, by half! I had a theory—the same one the detectives seem to have hit upon."

He pointed to the papers she had thrown on his table.

"You mean the strange, plainly-dressed woman who was admitted to Mrs. Norcross in the afternoon, and who, according to the papers, 'stole out by a side entrance, evidently shunning observation.' That was I."

"So I presumed. That was why I said I had a theory. I have none now."

"Nor any clew whatever?"

"None. Unless"—he opened a drawer of the writing table and took from it a small pasteboard box—"this may eventually prove to be one." He extended it, unopened, to Nora Lorimer. "It was found clasped in one of her hands. But she had so many trinkets and baubles that I lay no stress upon it—scarcely know how to connect it with the crime."

Nora drew from the box with trembling fingers a broken piece of gold chain. Attached to it was a seal of some clear translucent stone. An intaglio with a device which it was not easy to read at a first glance marked it. It was such a seal as years before had been used for impressing the wax on letters. It was large, and not particularly fine in workmanship. She felt quite sure it had not been among Amelia's few possessions in her girlhood; nor was it such a seal as the wealthy Mrs. Norcross would have been likely to purchase. Moreover, seals were not in fashionable demand just then.

"May I keep this, Mr. Norcross?" she asked, replacing the possible clew in the box. She had studied it carefully.

He was leaning back in his chair with closed eyes. His face was worn and haggard. He waved his hand in consent, sat up presently, and held out his hand to her:

"I believe I must ask you to cut this interview short. It has been more trying than I anticipated. We have exonerated each other, but intensified the mystery. Perhaps time will solve it; perhaps we will never know until—"

"She solves the mystery for us herself, over there," said Nora, turning away from Amelia's husband and the darkened home which would never again resound to the chatter of gay voices or be converted into a bower of roses.

As she passed out into the lamp-lighted streets, she repeated his words with a sense of absolute powerlessness: "We have exonerated each other, but intensified the mystery."

She melted some wax as soon as she got back to her room, and made a succession of impressions with the seal she had brought away with her until the design was fully revealed. The result was disappointing.

She had hoped for a monogram, at least an initial, by way of clew. There stared her in the face, instead, a dozen more or less perfect waxen effigies of a "martlet," an absurd bird with abbreviated legs and wings. She held it close to the light to examine it minutely:

"Not at all pretty. Therefore it must mean something."

CHAPTER XI.

"Norcross, I see, has got off."

"Yes, poor devil, he has got off."

The emphasis was too significant to pass unnoticed. The speaker who had just found Eugene Norcross' name in the passenger list of an outgoing steamer laid the paper across his knee to stare at the other one. They were both club men. One of them was called the Cynic; his real name was McKenzie.

"What do you mean, McKenzie?"

"Nothing. I never by any oversight tax my utterances with a meaning."

"Yes, but, by Jove, the remarkable emphasis you put on the word off is equal to an indictment."

The cynic shifted his position carelessly, bringing into his line of vision a small table at which two men sat, with a bottle of wine between them.

"There is an improving spectacle. It is enough to make a good Universalist of a Digger Indian to see such harmony. Hereafter I will make no doubt that everybody will eventually be saved and occupy the same mansion of the blest."

"What is your interesting tableau? I can't turn round and stare without beastly rudeness."

"Two men hobnobbing over a bottle of wine, who according to all precedent ought to be at each other's throats, bulldog fashion. They are being false to their traditions,—not conducting the family feud properly."

This was too much for the polite man. He risked "beastly rudeness," squared himself in his deep leather chair sufficiently to take in the alcove and its occupants, and said, in a disappointed tone:

"Oh! Lorimer and Fairbanks. What's the matter with them? Why, they're a regular Damon and Pythias, Castor and Pollux, or any other of the immortal inseparables you choose. One never comes to the club but the other is sure to follow."

The cynic brought his eye-glass deliberately to bear on the men in the alcove: "Fairbanks is a superb-looking fellow! But what about the vendetta?"

"A rubbishy piece of inherited lumber, which those youngsters seem inclined to relegate to memory's attic,—a proof of common sense to which I take off my hat."

"But the vendetta?"

"Oh, yes. Well, I got the history of it from my grandfather, who at one time owned a plantation between the belligerents. It began with the shooting of a bull. Fairbanks shot Lorimer's bull, or Lorimer shot Fairbanks' bull. Doubtless my grandfather transmitted the gory legend correctly to me, but my villainous memory has refused to retain it. I confess to a certain confusion as to the original ownership of the bull whose horns have been as the horns of a very serious dilemma to all the succeeding Lorimers and Fairbanks."

"Gammon!"

"Gospel truth. Of course there was a row over that bull, but I believe his is the only gore that stains the scutcheons of two proud families."

"Be serious for once, McKenzie."

"Serious as a sexton, 'pon honor! My veneration for family feuds forbids levity. In the succeeding generation, tradition hath it, there were a boy and a girl of the two households madly in love with each other—perhaps the father and mother of this identical pair. Doubtless by that time the casus belli—or bull, if you will permit a vile pun—began to look a trifle shriveled; so an imaginary grievance of more respectable origin was manufactured. Years of bad blood had not improved the temper of either family. Consequently, row number two: hands parted, hopes blighted, and all that sort of thing. I have the satisfaction of feeling that I have helped the thing along somewhat in modern times."

"Satisfaction!"

"Unquestionably. When people have been quarreling over a dead bull half a century after the buzzards have done with it, it is a source of satisfaction to feel instrumental in furnishing fresh material for their ammunition. I wanted to sell out my place up there. I was wedged in between the two places of these mortal foes. I reaped a golden harvest from their idiocy. They bid against each other in the most reckless fashion. The result—I have been made comfortable for life. Fairbanks ruined himself buying the property, which has enabled him to impinge closer and closer upon the neighboring place. The Lorimers have nearly ruined themselves in lawsuits about the boundaries, and the bones of the poor old vendetta are rattled more feebly as each year goes by. But noblesse oblige, you know. Ta-ta. I promised my daughter a drive in the park this afternoon."

"And I must be going too."

The long reading-room was deserted by every one but the two men in the alcove. But for the full hour they had been sitting there, shielded from close surveillance by their position in the embrasure of the bay-window, they had seemingly been oblivious of the coming and going of the other men. They had come together with a more earnest purpose, perhaps, than any of the men who sauntered in and out, smoking, reading, gossiping, idling the hours away, waiting for dinner time.

A PIECE OF BROKEN GOLD CHAIN.

At the beginning of the interview the younger man had said:

"I told you, Fairbanks, that I would not trouble you again until I had something of importance to communicate. I received a letter this morning which I think you ought to see."

"From whom?"

"Miss Fairbanks." He took the letter from his pocket, but seemed loath to part with it. "It is not a pleasant letter, but I felt I could not answer it before seeing you."

A wintry smile passed over Fairbanks' face:

"Don't hesitate because of its unpleasantness, Lorimer. I am not easily floored nowadays."

"Fairbanks, were you ever married?"

The question was asked so suddenly, and was in itself, seemingly, so totally inconsequential, that for a second Fairbanks quailed perceptibly. Then his blue eyes flashed fire:

"What in the devil has that to do with our business? I promised to help you to bring two obstinate old people to a sense of what they owe others. I felt sorry for Ida. But I did not agree to turn my own private affairs inside out for your entertainment, Mr. Lorimer."

"Forgive me," said Dennis, as gently as a woman could have said it, "but there's a fresh snarl in affairs, and I am more bewildered than ever. My life, my usefulness, all that make existence worth having, Fairbanks, is being sapped by this suspense. I wish I had told your sister the whole truth before I left White Cliffs; for she had been nursing a wrong impression ever since the day her father found us together in the summer house and ordered me off the premises. She thought I was frightened off by him. She refused to come to see me when I was up there skulking around the place like a whipped cur, until I sent her word by John that I could give her some information about you. Then she came, God bless her, through the darkness, over the rough wild bayou path, and flooded my life for one blessed hour with sunshine. She loves me, Sibley; she tells me she would marry me and come away with me, but for leaving her father so helpless and alone. She thinks you ought to come home and lift that burden from her shoulders, Fairbanks; and, by Heaven, so do I. There is too much at stake here for her and for me to stand on a point of etiquette with you. I have already given up home and mother for her. She is ready to give up home and father for me. I dared not even go near White Cliffs; for mother, stern, unbending saint that she is, swore that she would never see or speak to me until I came to her and told her that I had given up all desire to marry Ida Fairbanks. That I never will do—never, by all that is sacred.

"I can support her myself, Sibley. Thank Heaven I've gained in brain and muscle since climbing out of the old rut, and we can be happy before we grow old and tired, if you will only do your part and set Ida free. That is—" he touched the letter with one finger—"if this doesn't put a fresh stumbling-block in our way."

Fairbanks made a gesture of impatience.

"We have gone over all this ground before, Lorimer, and, I had hoped, for the last time. That I left Glenburnie in a fit of temper there is no denying. Father simply grew unbearable in his tyranny. I believed, however, that after I came away he would renounce that brainless vow of his, and resume his proper place as head of his estate. I heard from you the very first I have ever known of Ida's hardships. I wrote three letters to him and one to her. When they all came back to me with unbroken seals, I gave it up. I told you the other night that I had something to do in town that must be settled; after it was settled I would return to Glenburnie and take charge of the place. Then you and Ida, my boy, may marry, and laugh the old vendetta into the grave while you are both still young."

"That is as I had hoped and planned too; but read that, Sibley."

He drew the letter from its envelope, and, flinging it across the table, sat moodily toying with the empty envelope. On the flap of it was the broken impress of a martlet.

Sibley Fairbanks read the letter flung across the table to him once rapidly, then more slowly, and, as he read, the bewildered contraction of his brows grew more and more decided. Finally he looked confusedly across at Dennis.

"Do I understand that my child, Ninette Fairbanks, was taken to Glenburnie by her aunt, your brother John Lorimer's wife?"

"So it seems."

"And her mother? The whole thing is so mixed."

"Cursedly so," said Dennis, hotly, "and unless you can unravel it no one else can, Sibley. It is an infernal complication, invented to perpetuate an old worn-out feud, and to keep Ida and myself apart."

"I don't see it that way. Perhaps I am growing stupid about the whole business."

Dennis Lorimer leaned towards him beseechingly:

"Fairbanks, for God's sake tell me the absolute, the entire truth. Was the woman who married my brother John the mother of that child? Don't you—can't you see how black it all looks?"

For a second Sibley Fairbanks looked as if he were ready to return to the family traditions and throttle this slight boyish Lorimer in front of him. Then he answered him with such fierce earnestness that there was no doubting his impetuous statement:

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CONFIRMING A DOUBT.

The Case of a Young Man Who Was Severely Snubbed.

A Detroit young man who does society now and then, that is to say as often as there are days and nights in a week, met a handsome girl not long ago, stopping at one of the hotels. He called once or twice, and, much to his surprise, the next time he met her at a function, she was polite enough, but was not extremely cordial. The next evening he called at the hotel and sent up his card. The boy reported the young woman out and the young man went away in all innocence. Again she was out and he began to be suspicious. Two nights later he went again and sent up his card for the third time. "Not at home," was the answer, as before, and it struck him very forcibly that he was being slowly but surely grounded. She was popular, however, and in demand, and he might be judging her wrongly. So he waited fifteen minutes, talking to a friend, and sent up a card again. This time another man's name went up. In a few minutes the boy reported the young lady at home and would be glad to see the gentleman in the parlor. Then he realized the situation in its fullest horror and he walked out of the hotel and left the girl waiting there in the parlor for the man who never came. —Detroit Free Press.

To Keep Iron from Rusting.

A simple method of keeping iron and steel from rusting is to coat them with a solution of rubber in benzol, made about the consistency of cream. It may be applied with a brush, and is easily rubbed off when desired. A coating of more use where the "tooth" imparted by rubber would be disadvantageous is prepared by dissolving two parts of crystals of chloride of iron, two of antimony chloride and one of tannin in four of water. Apply with a sponge or rag and allow to dry. As many coats can be given as are deemed necessary. When dry it is washed with water, again allowed to dry and polished with linseed oil. The antimony solution should be as nearly neutral as possible.

What He Meant.

"That fellow was deuced familiar for a man one hardly knows. He slapped me on the back and called me 'old man.' What did he mean by that, I should like to know?"

"Well, the fact is, he told me afterward he had forgotten your name."—Drake's Magazine.

As She Understood It.

Sympathizing Neighbor—Flossie, how is your mother this morning?

Four-Year-Old—I guess she's pretty sick. The doctor says if she don't look out she'll have ammonia on the lungs.—Chicago Tribune.

Why She Loved Them.

"I loves my enemies," said little Anne. "They gives me a chance to say such horrid things about 'em."—Judge.

Rara Avis.

"I never destroy a receipted bill, do you?" said Bunting to Gilley.

"I don't think I ever saw one," replied Gilley.—Brooklyn Life.

Roses and Kittens.

"Roses an' kittens is awful like each other," said Tommy. "They both have too many thorns on 'em for me."—Harper's Young People.

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By using Royal Baking Powder to the exclusion of all other leavening agents. The official analysts report it to be 27% greater in leavening strength than the other powders. It has three times the leavening strength of many of the cheap alum powders.

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Do dealers attempt, because times are dull, to work off old stock, or low grade brands of baking powder? Decline to buy them. During these times all desire to be economical, and

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AN elevator boy's contrariness can't last very long. There are too many people to call him down if he keeps it up.—Buffalo Courier.

AGNES—"Going to the seashore this season, Madge?" Madge—"No. I don't believe in the sequestration of the sexes."—Detroit Tribune.

Sustain the Sinking System.

This common sense injunction is too often unheeded. Business anxieties, overwork, exposure must and do cause mental and physical exhaustion, which lessens vigor and tells injuriously upon the system. That most beneficent of tonics and restoratives, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, effectually compensates for a drain of strength and loss of nerve power, regulates impaired digestion, arouses the dormant liver and renders the bowels active. It is, besides, a preventive of malarial and rheumatic ailments.

"BY Jove," said Caddy, "there is no change pocket in these trousers!" "Perhaps you can carry your change in the turned-up ends of the legs," suggested the valet.—Harper's Bazar.

WE will give $100 reward for any case of catarrh that cannot be cured with Hall's Catarrh Cure. Taken internally. F. J. CHENEY & Co., Props., Toledo, O.

AT THE THEATER.—"Mamma, doesn't papa like music?" "Yes, my child; why do you ask?" "He always goes out between the acts when the band plays."—Philadelphia Record.

THE evils of malarial disorders, fever, weakness, lassitude, debility and prostration, are avoided by taking Beecham's Pills.

THE only suspicion of crookedness in Heaven came about when an astronomer discovered that some of the stars had been fixed.—Picayune.

RED, angry eruptions yield to the action of Glenn's Sulphur Soap. Hill's Hair and Whisker Dye, 50 cents.

SEEDY clothes have a bad effect on the memories of one's friends.—Truth.

COME to think of it, isn't the parrot a sort of mocking bird, too?

BARKING dogs sometimes bite the dust.

WHAT is home made vinegar without a mother?—Puck.

IT is difficult to convince a girl with a silvery voice that silence is golden.—Troy Press.

VERY MODEST.—Fly—"I'm stuck on you." Paper—"And that, too, though there are flies on me."—Detroit Free Press.

THE bandmaster's business is nearly always conducted on a sound basis.—Buffalo Courier.

WHEAT never reaches the age that it won't take a drop now and then.—Inter Ocean.

VISITOR—"Well, Effie, do you know who I am?" Effie—"Yeth. You are that old idiot Dr. Browne."—Harper's Bazar.

AS SEVERE as rheumatism is, a great many are bent on having it.

MIKE—"Shure, Pat, health is a good thing to have." Pat—"Yis, Moike, especially when yez is sick."

THE difference between marbles and billiards is about ten years in the age of the player.—Puck.

"WHY do you call your mule 'Time,' Uncle Jasper?" "Kase you got to 'git 'im by de forelock to stand any show."

TOM—"How do you know she was out when you called?" Jack—"I heard her ask the girl to tell me she was."—N. Y. Times.

DICKER—"Why do you run out to your farm so often; what's there on the place to absorb your interest?" Friend—"A big mortgage."

"I CAN'T see any sense in calling them my sailing shoes." He—"Well, I notice you make about twenty knots an hour getting them tied."—Inter Ocean.

"IT'S strange Col. Bluegrass has never crossed the ocean when he enjoys traveling so much." "He—oh, no; water on land even makes him sick."

SWEARING may give relief to overworked feelings, but it doesn't bring back the excursion boat the swearer has missed.—Chester News.

PRICES TO SUIT.—"Here is a bridal suit advertised for four dollars and a half." "That is cheap—even cheaper than a divorce suit."—Judge.

SHE—"I wonder why they call these angel sleeves?" He—"What else could they be called when you wear them?"—Indianapolis Journal.

SOME people ride a hobby as they would a bicycle—simply for exercise.—N. Y. World.

KNOWLEDGE

Brings comfort and improvement and tends to personal enjoyment when rightly used. The many, who live better than others and enjoy life more, with less expenditure, by more promptly adapting the world's best products to the needs of physical being, will attest the value to health of the pure liquid laxative principles embraced in the remedy, Syrup of Figs.

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