

BY MUTUAL CONSENT.



HE was seated on a grassy bank, with her shoulders propped up against a camp stool; there were two or three garden benches standing about, but she said she preferred to sit on the grass—it made her feel more "country."

To intensify this feeling she had clothed her fresh young beauty in a marvelous organdy, so sheer that her arms gleamed through it like alabaster, and had pinned on her bright head a great hat drooping with roses. By her side leaned a white parasol edged with lace.

Her companion, a young man in tennis flannels, who was stretched at her feet, had commented sarcastically upon her "rustic attire," and a hot discussion had ensued, a discussion happily interrupted by the arrival of a servant with a tray of iced lemonade.

"Ah," said Miss Gresham, helping herself to one of the frosted glasses, "if there is one person for whom I entertain an undying affection it is Betty. I know we are indebted to her for this. She is one of those rare people who always do the correct thing."

"Betty," repeated Markland, lazily, sipping his lemonade, "and who is Betty?"

"He has forgotten Betty?" cried the girl, "and has no more shame than to confess it! Betty, who was always his sworn companion and who has helped him out of I do not know how many scrapes. This is the effect, I suppose, of college and travel and society."

"Betty!" again repeated Markland. "A sudden light springing to his eyes—"your old nurse, of course. Why, certainly I remember her—learned companion of my youth! But I did not recognize her by so common a title. To me she has always seemed a beneficent genius, a good angel, rather than an ordinary mortal." He lifted his glass—"To Betty," he said; "may her shadow never grow less."

"Betty was asking me about you the other day," said the girl; "she wanted to know if you still rode and boated and swam like you used to. I told her you had given up dancing because of the exertion." She looked at him innocently.

"Did she ask you anything about your own life?" said Markland, sitting up—"a resume of how you put in your time



I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED YOU, during the winter season in town might be interesting to her, and certainly profitable."

"Anything I do is interesting to her," she responded, coldly.

"Do you know," he said, "I have been marveling over you ever since I came. I cannot quite realize that you have been ten days in the country without being bored. How have you accomplished it? I thought that the day of miracles was past."

"My good Tony," remarked Miss Gresham, patronizingly, "you must not judge other people by yourself; it is a very foolish and narrow-minded way of doing. Because you cannot exist happily without your clubs and theaters is no reason why I can't."

"I never knew you belonged to a club," observed Markland, miffily. "Have you developed into that wonder, a new woman?"

"Oh, nonsense! You know I was speaking figuratively! I mean that I am not wedded to any particular state of things—that I can adapt myself to circumstances and enjoy whatever comes."

"Can you? How delightful! But, jesting aside, has it not been rather slow for you here, without any girls for you to see through and scorn and be amused by—hor men to analyze and draw you out and get interested in?"

"How do you know there have been no men?"

"I have your own word for it. I heard you refuse four of your best friends permission to visit you down here, and I inferred that the common herd had been no better treated."

"Yes," she said, "you were right. My solitude has been uninvaded. I have been resting and enjoying myself thoroughly. By the way—suddenly—who told you that you could come?"

"No one, but I had to run down to my place on business, and I thought it would look unneighborly not to drop in and find out how you were getting on."

"Very thoughtful, indeed! So you have remembered your old home at last! How long has it been since you were here?"

"Five years"—pondering—"five years his June."

"Is it much changed?"

"A good deal; the old willow by the pond is down; fell in the August storm, Bastion tells me."

"Oh, I am so sorry! We used to—"

"Yes," he responded, "so we did." And he glanced at her laughingly.

"And the house?" she hurried on; "how does it look?"

"Awfully—everything gone to pieces; dust, cobwebs and mold everywhere; the family portraits white with mildew."

"Oh, Tony," she cried, "how dreadful! You really ought to do something about them."

"I shall," he said. "I was fond of the place as a lad, and the trip down here has awakened all the old feeling. I am tired to death of society, the exertion of dancing—smiling—and the bother of being agreeable to people that one doesn't care a rap about; so I have half made up my mind to marry and settle down in the country; that is—slowly—if I can persuade the girl I love to consent to bury herself for my sake."

Miss Gresham looked down; her face had lost a little of its bright color, but the pallor was in no way unbecoming.

"I thought the best thing to do was to come and talk over the matter with you," he said, after a somewhat awkward pause; "you always help a fellow so with your advice."

"I imagine," she replied, "that if a woman cared for a man she would go with him anywhere."

"Exactly, but that is the question—does she care for me? You see—gazing at her steadily—"she is a society girl, used to a good deal of gaiety and movement and excitement, and it does not seem quite fair to ask her to come down here, does it? It looks conceited and selfish, as if one thought a good deal of oneself, don't you know?"

She looked at him gravely.

"Do I know her?" she asked. "Is she some one you have known a long time?"

"Oh, yes, since I was quite a boy."

"Is she pretty?"

"Of course, you ought to know that."

"And clever?"

"I suppose—slowly—"she never says unkind things or sees through other people as—as—some of your other friends do."

"Unkind things? No. But as to seeing through people—breaking into a laugh—"I am obliged to admit that she does. You see, she has been out a lot, and the rosy bondage is a bit out of place; natural enough, don't you think?"

"I suppose so"—doubtfully—"one cannot go through life with one's eyes shut; that is, if anyone has any brains, and yet, somehow or other, I don't quite like the description. You are such a good fellow, Tony, for all your affection, that you ought to marry somebody very much above the average."

"And so I shall."

"You always said," she went on, "that I might choose a wife for you. Don't you remember just before you went to college that last ride we took?"

"Assuredly."

"How we agreed to ask each other's advice about the people we should marry, and how we promised that neither of us would get engaged without the other's consent?"

"Of course I remember. I am quite willing to abide by the old contract. I shall never marry without your permission."

"Oh, Tony, really?"

"Really."

She gazed at him with parted lips and shining eyes.

"You are very trusting—how do you know that I shall not take a base advantage of your implicit confidence and refuse my consent altogether? You don't know how lonely it will be going out next winter without you. I have got so used to having you around that I don't believe I'll enjoy myself in the least unless you are there."

She pondered a moment.

"Come," she said, "I will compromise. I won't forbid the banes altogether, but you must not think of marrying until I am tired of society and ready to take the fatal step myself. How will that suit you?"

"Perfectly, if you don't put it off too long."

"Oh, well, that I don't know. I have about decided to become a spinster."

"Come, now, that isn't fair. Suppose we agreed to be married the same day? That meets with your approval? Well, to keep that promise fresh in your memory"—reaching over and taking her hand—"wear this for my sake."

He drew her glove off very gently and slipped a loop of diamonds on her finger.

The blood flashed to her cheeks.

"Tony?" she cried, the full meaning of his action breaking over her. "Tony, I don't understand."

"Oh, yes, you do," he answered, drawing a reassuring arm about her, "but for fear you might make a mistake and go off and marry another fellow, I will make my meaning clearer. I love you—I have always loved you. I have never dreamed of asking anyone else to marry me. I would have told you so before, but you are such a dreadful little flirt that I was afraid to test my fate. What say you, sweetheart? Shall we marry and settle down at the old place?"

"And it was I all the time," she murmured, "and I thought you meant—"

"Who?" asked Markland, curiously.

"Oh, never mind"—hastily—"I see now what an absurd idea it was. So you always loved me, ever since I was a child? Well, really, Tony, it was only fair, for I never cared for anyone as I cared for you. Come, let us go in and tell Betty."

Launching a Big Ship.

That it costs something to launch a big battleship is shown by the statement that the expense of getting the Victorious, the latest addition to England's fleet, afloat was about \$10,000. She is a sister ship to the Magnificent and Majestic, and is 290 feet long, 75 feet beam, and 27½ feet draft. There were used up on the ways over which she slid into the water 7,000 pounds of Russian tallow, 160 gallons of train oil and 700 pounds of soft soap. The gross weight of the ship, equipped and ready for sea, is 15,725 tons.

CRAWLED ON HIS BACK.

Experience of a Man with a Broken Leg on a Trestle.

James Starr, aged 65, took six hours to crawl with a broken leg from the trestle at the foot of 24th street to High, says the Louisville Courier-Journal. Starr is a carpenter who lives with his daughter, Mrs. R. M. Sanders, at 2499 West Jefferson street. He left home Saturday morning and did not return. He drinks some and his son-in-law believes he was drunk Saturday night when he started to cross the canal on the trestle. The old man said it was about 10 o'clock Saturday night when he concluded to spend the night across the canal and not go home. When he got opposite 24th street he missed his footing in the dark and fell. As he shot through the trestle his head struck one of the ties, and he landed on the ground unconscious. How long he lay there he does not know. When he awoke it was with the consciousness of great pain in his leg. He tried to yell, but his voice was weak and he was unable to speak above a whisper. The pain in his leg made cold perspiration cover his body. He waited for what seemed an hour in the hope that some one would pass along and lend him assistance.

The place was as quiet as a grave, and he could not hear even the rap of a policeman. He started to work his way from under the trestlework, but every attempt to move forward made him scream with pain. Finally he turned on his back and began to crawl along with his head and hands, dragging his injured leg with him. This was very slow and very painful. Once he remembers to have lost consciousness, the pain was so great. He does not know how long he lay where he was, but the thought that he might die there before any assistance could reach him nerved him to press on. He began again to crawl on his back. He felt that he was about to faint again, so he stopped. He struggled with himself to keep from losing consciousness, fearing that he might never awaken. When he felt that he had gained enough strength to venture on he began his laborious and painful task again. After he had struggled along between rests and partial unconsciousness for what seemed to him a week he began to break down. He rested from his labors awhile, thinking some one would surely pass along, but no one appeared. He spied some salt sheds near by and made his way toward them. When he reached the sheds the night watchman was making his last round. Just as the watchman discovered Starr the latter fainted. The watchman saw the man was badly hurt and telephoned for the ambulance. By the time the ambulance reached the sheds Starr had regained consciousness. He was taken to the city hospital, where it was found he had suffered a compound fracture of the left leg.

AMERICAN ENERGY WINS.

Minister White's Story of a Chance Meeting with a Former New Yorker.

From the Troy Times: The American can always be trusted to make his way, no matter what may be his environment. A story told by Andrew D. White, ex-minister to Germany and Russia, illustrates this fact. Mr. White stated that once when he was at Berlin, after all the diplomatic corps had been duly presented to his wife, the Chinese minister, in pursuance to custom, brought round his principal secretaries and presented them to his colleagues. Among these was a tall, fine-looking man, evidently a European, dressed in a superb court costume and covered with gold lace. As his Chinese colleague introduced him to Mr. White in German, the conversation was continued in that language, when suddenly this splendidly-dressed personage said in English: "Mr. White, I do not see why we should be talking in German. I come from Waterloo, in western New York, and was educated at Rochester university under your friend, Dr. Anderson." Mr. White said that had the gentleman dropped through the ceiling it would not have seemed more surprising, and that it was hard to believe that the pretty little village of Waterloo, or even Rochester, with all the added power of this noble university, should have been able to develop a creature so gorgeous. It turned out that the gentleman concerned, after graduating at the University of Rochester, had gone to China with certain missionaries, had then been taken into the Chinese service, and had proved to be a thoroughly intelligent, patriotic man, faithful to his duties to China, as well as to the United States.

The Pet Dog Craze.

Among occasional objects of one's pity are the little pet dogs which elderly ladies, who are generally clad in rich black silk, cuddle in their arms, indoors and out of doors, through the liveling day. At a certain Brighton hotel I counted no less than seven of these little curly-haired animals, caught to seven capacious bosoms. Some visitors, it is well known, object to dogs in a hotel, and consequently a prohibitive price is put upon their admittance. The charge is sometimes as high as one guinea per day.—St. James Budget.

A White Moose.

The big white moose recently shot in the Maine woods by a Mr. Sargent of Grafton has greatly interested naturalists, as well as sportsmen. It is the only white moose ever seen in Maine, and very few have ever been heard of elsewhere. The naturalists say it is, of course, not strange that there should be a freak of nature, as white deer and other albino game animals are not uncommon. But white moose are a great rarity.

THE SERPENT VINE.

By Brian E. Barr.

WE had pushed our way far into the bounds of the Great Dismal Swamp—far beyond the danger line that Solomon, our Indian guide, had pointed out. In vain Solomon entreated us to turn back. We found game abundant, and with the reckless folly of youth, I permitted my dark-faced cousin Paul to lead me on and on.

At length the time came when Solomon could be induced to proceed no farther.

"Go on there, never one of us come back," he declared over and over. "The snake vine be there."

"The snake vine?" I questioned.

"Bah!" sneered Paul. "The serpent vine is a myth."

"But what is it said to be?"

"A vine that grows in the depth of the swamp—a plant that coils about any living thing that may come within its grasp. It is said to thrive on flesh and blood; but who believes the tale? Who has seen the serpent vine?"

"I have," declared Solomon. "I seen it once."

"When?"

"Many year ago. I came here then to hunt with my brother. We do not mind what they tell us of the snake vine. We laugh at all the stories. While we be here the vine find my brother, and when I see him is dead, with the vine all twist, twist, twist round him."

"Bah!" sneered Paul once more. "Solomon has told that story so many times he now believes it is true. I say the vine is a myth. Such a thing does not exist in nature."

"You say to me that I lie?" asked the Indian guide, calmly.

"Yes," replied my cousin, with insulting insolence. "It is as natural for an Injun to lie as it is to breathe. Like the others, Solomon, you are a born liar."

The guide arose, picking up his rifle and blanket.

"You go your way," he said. "I go



"SENT ME REELING."

mine. Maybe the serpent vine find you, and then you think of me."

"Where are you going?"

"Back."

"But how are you going to get out of the swamp without a boat?"

"I find my way; you find yours. Good-by."

I would have called him back, but Paul prevented me.

"Let the fool go!" he exclaimed, loudly enough for the retreating Indian to hear. "We can get along without him. I have been in the swamp before, cousin, and it will not be a difficult thing to retrace our course when we are ready to leave."

I was sorry to see the guide go away in such a manner, and I regretted what had happened very much, but Paul overruled me, and I submitted to his superior will.

That day, without Solomon, we pushed on still further into the swamp, although my heart was filled with a fear that we might never be able to get out of that labyrinth of sluggish streams which seemed to flow in all directions, for already I could not have told to save me how to retrace our course.

The great herons rose from the morass, as we advanced, sometimes an alligator slipped away into the dark shadows where the water twisted beneath the thick tropical foliage, strange birds fitted amid the trees, from which the Spanish moss hung thick and rank. It was a strange wild place, and I felt the fear growing upon me.

Once or twice I felt sure that I saw my cousin's eyes flit upon me with a fierce triumphant look that made my blood grow chill. This was while we passed through dense shadows, but as we emerged to lighted spots Paul no longer looked at me, and I tried to make myself believe it was a trick of my imagination.

We did not go very far. I induced Paul to land and camp on a spot that seemed favorable. Our camp fire gleamed brightly in the gloom of that dismal place, but did not drive the shadow from my heart.

That night I slept little. Paul seemed to slumber as peacefully as a babe. Morning came, and I awoke to find that I was alone. I had slept soundly the last two hours of the night.

I started up in terror, fearing I had been abandoned there, but the boat floated close by, and the outfit had not been disturbed. Paul and his rifle alone were gone. I called to him, and he answered from the forest near at hand.

"Come here," he shouted; "come and see what I have found."

I followed the sound of his voice, and found him not very far from the camp. He was standing and staring at something that lay stretched toward him on the ground in a moving twisting mass. I thought he had shot something, and hurried to see what it could be.

"What is it?" I asked.

"The serpent vine!" was his reply.

"It must be that. Solomon did not lie after all."

I gazed at the thing, fascinated, for I saw that it was indeed a vine that grew from the ground there amid the rank growing things of the swamp. It lay stretched toward my cousin, seeming to reach out and grasp for him, but he was safe beyond its touch. It twisted and twined like a mass of serpents, and I felt my heart grow sick and faint as I looked.

"Come closer," cried Paul. "It cannot reach beyond its length."

He drew me nearer, and then, of a sudden, with a strong thrust he sent me reeling and shrieking fairly amid that mass of writhing things. In the twinkling of an eye they had coiled about my legs, and I could not break away, although I desperately strove to do so.

"Paul, Paul, save me!"

My answer was a mocking laugh.

"Save me!" I panted again.

"Save you!" returned my cousin scornfully. "I brought you here for this! I hate you. I swore that one of us should not leave this swamp alive. You miserable little Yankee; what right have you to come here from the north and displace me in my uncle's

to the boat, which still swung up the bosom of the dead water, held fast by the mooring line. My cousin had not gone.

No, he had not gone. Beneath the trees near the water's edge a dark form dangled above the earth. I would have rushed up, but Solomon held me back.

"Look!" he said. "The end has come! The snake vine was not to be cheated this time."

"But the tree—my cousin—he is hanging—"

"The snake vine climbs trees to find food; look near root of tree. See it grows there—see, it runs up trunk—out on limb. It is round his neck, and he is dead already!"

It was true. In passing beneath that tree Paul had been clutched by the dangling vine. One cry was all that ever came from his lips, for the serpent vine quickly choked him to silence.

It was retribution swift and sure, but such a death seemed none the less terrible to me that it destroyed one who had doomed me to a like fate a short time before.

One of us would not leave the swamp alive.

THE BURSTING OF A GLACIER.

A Frightful Disaster Near the Gemmi Pass.

A correspondent, writing to the London Globe, from Zurich, on Nov. 13, says: "At daybreak on Wednesday a frightful disaster took place at a distance of four miles from Kanderstag, on the Gemmi pass. A huge mass of ice, measuring 1,250,000 cubic meters, detached from the Aletsch glacier and was precipitated into the valley. Such was the impetus of the might avalanche that it was not checked in the valley, but dashed up the opposite side, which has a slope of 45 degrees, to a height of 13,000 feet, carrying everything before it until it met a wall of rock which sent the main mass surging back.

"At the foot of this rock lies, or rather lay, the Spitalmatte, an exceedingly beautiful and rich mountain pasture, with chalets for the cowherds, for storing cheeses, etc. At the time of the disaster there were collected there 150 head of valuable cattle, under the care of four cowherds. There were also two officials from Leuk, who had come up to arrange about bringing down the cattle, which event has always taken place on Nov. 15. All have been overwhelmed. Of the animals, only three have escaped. The loss in the live stock, the ownership of which was partitioned among about thirty families, mostly quite poor, belonging to the village of Leuk, is estimated at 100,000 francs. The pasture itself, which for years will now be useless, strewn as it is with debris, is valued at 400,000 francs. The bodies of the two officials and of two of the cowherds have been recovered, but in a horribly mutilated condition. It seems that the disaster overtook them while sleeping in their huts. The other two men, whose bodies have not yet been found, are supposed to have been up early for the purpose of milking the cows. The blocks of fallen ice and rocks cover a space of two square miles to a depth of many yards, the whole scene being one of indescribable desolation. Besides the trees which were in the track of the avalanche, great numbers have been uprooted by the wind which it produced. Many of the cattle, too, lie about in such positions that they must have been hurled great distances through the air by the same force. Men are hard at work trying to make some sort of footpath over the debris, the ordinary road being, of course, completely obliterated. From old records in Leuk it appears that a similar catastrophe occurred at the same spot in 1782, also only two days before the date fixed for the return of the cattle to the valleys."

Found at Delphi.

Two more slabs of stone inscribed with words and music have been found in the treasury of the Athenians at Delphi by the French. By using some of the fragments previously discovered a second hymn to Apollo, with its notes, has been put together. The date is after the conquest of Greece by the Romans. The Greeks seem to have used twenty-one notes in their musical notation, where we use only twelve.

USEFUL ITEMS.

Books with clasps or raised sides damage those near them on shelves.

To Remove Iron Mould.—Apply first a solution of sulphuret potash, and afterward one of oxalic acid. The sulphuret acts on the iron.

To Polish Old Book Bindings.—Thoroughly clean the leather by rubbing with a piece of flannel; if the leather is broken fill up the holes with a little paste, beat up the yolk of an egg, and rub it well over the covers with a piece of sponge; polish it by passing a hot iron over.

To Loosen Glass Stoppers.—Apply salad oil to the mouth of the decanter by means of a feather; the bottle should then be placed about one-half yard from the fire. When warm the stopper should be gently struck on all sides, and attempts should be made to move it. If it still remains fast, apply more oil. A few sharp taps on the stopper, all the way round, with a hammer is also very effectual.

Dress of Nurses.—Nurses in the room should always dress in light colored clothes, and these should be cotton, so that they may be less liable to harbor infectious matter, and more easily cleaned.—Free Silver Knight.

Edmund Gosse does not think Dickens died the whole nation suddenly impoverished by the away of a man of letters as if Stevenson left them.