



RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW, RING OUT THE FALSE, RING IN THE TRUE.

its New Year's presents as positive proof of his coming.

Among the young he ranks as high as St. Nicholas in Russia, Germany and other countries; but among the old he is held in great veneration as one of the most eminent Greek Fathers, and also as the most eloquent promoter of monasticism throughout the East. Besides, he was a great philanthropist, and an ardent apostle.

Caesarea, the capital of the former province of Cappadocia, was St. Basil's native place. At the age of thirty-three he was made a presbyter, and a few years later bishop of the same city, a position which he held until his death, A. D. 379.

Elaborate preparations are made for his festival, which begins at an early hour on the evening of December 31st. The shopkeepers adorn their windows with an attractive medley of toys and holiday gifts. Oranges, dried and fresh fruit, imported and domestic table delicacies, candles, cakes, are either displayed in the show-cases or piled up in front of the stores, which are extravagantly lighted up for the occasion, and decorated with garlands of colored paper skillfully cut out in the shape of natural flowers. From the ceilings, from the top of the windows, they fall in the chandeliers, from the pictures, from grouped festoons.

The mild climate permits a large and variegated crowd to circulate through the streets and gather in the stores, and no sight is more picturesque than a street in the East on St. Basil's eve.

There are to be seen people of communities and races having nothing in common but the land and the surrounding atmosphere; there are curious contrasts of complexion and wearing apparel; there the genuine attire of five races is on constant exhibition.

You see, for instance, the long, loose robes of the Jews, and the bright red or yellow silk garments worn by their wives. There are the short, wide breeches of the Turks, contrasting with the long ones of the Rayahs. The small red fez and the large vermilion one, designed to hang down on one side of the face like the Phrygian cap, are intermingled with the plain Derby and black silk hats of the European gentlemen, whose simple attire is made obtrusively plain by the bright-colored goods used by the natives.

Conceive, too, the variety of garments worn by the women. Imagine, for instance, the Parisian dress and bonnet of a European merchant's daughter, side by side with the loose yellow breeches, the lilac doublet and the long green veil of a wealthy Armenian lady! Every day one sees embroidered bosoms, long garments sometimes trimmed with fur, robes, cashmere shawls and bright red silk slippers, on the women.

Among men it is not uncommon to behold bare legs and gorgeous holiday turbans; often a gallant Mohammedan, covered with rags and filth, carries in his belt an assortment of Damascus blades, yatagians and jewel-encrusted firearms, worth a small fortune.

Two singular customs contribute to this holiday's particular character; one is the making of "St. Basil's cakes," the other the singing of a song through the streets on the eve of the saint's alleged birthday.

Elaborate preparations for the kneading of the cake begin in every house two days, at least, before the festival, for much labor is involved in its confection. All the women of the family squat on a rug, in the Turkish fashion.

The ignorance, debasement and sluggishness of the Rayahs are extreme, notwithstanding the efforts of the Greek government to supply them with educational institutions, in the hope that they may rise against their oppressors and succeed in shaking off their yoke. But it is likely to be long before these descendants of a noble race shall appreciate the philanthropic efforts of their freed brethren.

At present they have adopted nearly all the Turkish fashions, and lack ambition to improve their condition. They are fond of their ease, love drinking and smoking, and care for nothing beyond their material welfare.

Still they have remained faithful to their religion nevertheless, and follow all its rites with a respectful and blindly superstitious obedience. They observe all the holidays of the church, but prefer above all St. Basil's day.

Popular tradition represents St. Basil as a venerable man, clad in bishop's vestments, carrying incense, myrrh and other Oriental perfumes. He is supposed to come on the eve of his birthday, reputed as January 1st old style—January 12th according to the Gregorian calendar—and distribute presents to children. He is the patron saint of the home and of the young. From Armenia to the Archipelago, and from the Black Sea to Syria, there is not a Rayah child who does not regard

the cake consists of butter, eggs and

sugar, and its flavoring is of certain spices. It is usually made very rich, so that it may keep soft for days after it is baked.

Housekeepers dread the task, for a large quantity of St. Basil's cake is made in each family. A large part of it is destined for the hospitals, the children's and orphan's asylums, the prisons and the poor; another part is given away to callers, to servants and to the boys who come round in the early evening to sing St. Basil's song.

New Year's eve is a great time for the Rayah boys. As soon as they ring the bell of a house the door is thrown open and the voice of the master is heard, saying:

"Let the boys in at once! Give them money, fruit, and all that they can carry of St. Basil's cake. Come on, servants, fill their pockets while they give us their song!"

Then the poor children, delighted by the warm welcome of the host and the profusion of dainty things given them, sing with frenzy the romantic little tale of St. Basil, which ends with the calling down of numerous blessings on the generous family during the new year.

But the strangest thing of all is neither St. Basil's song nor St. Basil's cake; it is a curious mistake as to date which has prevailed among the Greek Rayahs for many generations. For history declares that the 1st day of January is not the anniversary of St. Basil's birth, but that of his death!—Alecide de Andria, in Youth's Companion.

GARDEN AND CRADLE.

When our babe he goeth walking in his garden, Around his frail feet the softest grasses play. The posies they are good to him, And bow them as they should to him. As fawn he upon a kindly way, And bring him of the wood to him, Make music gentle music all the day, When our babe he goeth walking in his garden.

The Great Hesper.

BY FRANK BARRETT.

CHAPTER X.—CONTINUED.

Glancing over my shoulder, I saw the Judge, his shoulders bent forward, his arms swinging from side to side, bearing down upon us with long strides, and rapidly diminishing the distance between us.

"There is no one in sight—no one we can call to for help," he asked.

"No one. I see a footpath through the wood, if you think that will be safer."

"Yes, yes—anything is better than this open road."

But we advanced now with great diffidence. There was room only for one in the path, yet I had to keep hold of Van Hoek's hand and guide him, for the brake met before us, the trailing brambles that crossed the path caught his feet; at every step he stumbled. It was hopeless to continue. Already I fancied I caught a glimpse through the trees of the Judge swinging along the bridge-way.

"Your only chance is to get among the brake, and throw yourself down while I go on," I said. "I can go quicker alone, and coming behind, he may imagine that you are still before me."

"Show me where to go."

I opened a way through the brake, led him behind a thicket, and bade him lie down. As he carried out this instruction, I got back into the footpath, and was then enabled to trot along at a brisk pace.

It was only just in time, for looking back a couple of minutes later, I perceived the Judge plowing his way through brake and bramble, which came well up to the level of his breast, with as little difficulty as though it had been meadow-grass, and with the same steady swing of his bent shoulders. He had caught sight of me from the bridge-way, and struck out at once into the thicket of the undergrowth.

I did not in the slightest degree participate in Van Hoek's suspicions and fears, and having, as I hoped, succeeded in diverting from him the object of his dread, I was indifferent as to whether the Judge overtook me or not. Had I been in the humor to enjoy a joke, I think I should have enjoyed giving him a long chase for nothing; but circumstances were too grave for that. I pursued the path until it dipped down into a hollow, and there finding a fallen tree across the path, I sat down and waited for the Judge to come up. In a few minutes he stood before me with his arms folded on his chest, his feet planted apart, and a particularly stern look on his gaunt, weather-beaten face.

"He has given me the slip; has he given it to you likewise?" he asked.

"No," I replied; "I gave it to him. I helped him to escape."

"Stand up, Gentleman Thorne, and let us look each other in the face," he said.

I stood up. He held out his hand and I gave him mine.

"Now, stand in here hand in hand and face to face, say, air we the noblest works of nature or air we 'not'?"

I could not go so far as to admit that his appearance realized my highest ideal of nobility, but I understood his allusion, and replied:

"I believe you are an honest man, if that is what you mean, Brace."

"It is; and that is my opinion of you likewise. Let us sit down and hold a committee. Now, partner, will you tell me why you let Israel get?"

"Because the poor wretch is half distracted with the loss of the diamond and his fear of you."

"Why do he fear me?"

"He believes that you took the diamond, and intend to have his life, in order to get the reversionary share, or something of that kind. And now, tell me why you pursued him when you saw how he wished to avoid you?"

"Because he did so wish for one thing," and he added, with emphasis, "because he's got to speak. Israel's got to speak," he repeated, with still greater decision. "A man what has presentiments as a thing is going to be took so accurate as his'n, must nat'rally have presentiments what's gone of it when it's took."

"We must get back to the house. The police must be sent for."

"I don't see any harm they can do, and it's the regular thing, and so they ought to be called in," he said, rising from the trunk on which we had been holding this discussion. "I am going for Israel. So long!"

I hesitated to separate from the Judge.

"You must promise me, Brace, not to commit violence on Van Hoek."

"If you mean by violence taking of his life away, I will give you my word not to be violent with him. There's my hand on it."

On this understanding we shook hands and parted. He plunged again into the wood; I returned to the Abbey. That was between 7 and 8 o'clock.

At two o'clock I went once more into the wood. Lola was wanted.

The police officer from Southampton, on hearing my story, declared at once that the thief had been com-

mitted by a servant, and that Lola must be found at once, to know if she had seen the thief as he escaped by the window, and could identify him.

To find Lola, however, was not my sole object.

The protracted absence of Brace and Van Hoek excited my misgivings, and, despite the Judge's promise, I already repented myself with having abandoned my blind partner.

The Judge's notions of justice were peculiar, and based upon the rough usage of California miners. In the days when they made and executed their own laws, I believed him capable of applying torture, only stopping short of actual murder, to wring from Van Hoek the secret which he believed him to hold with respect to the lost diamond.

I retraced my steps to the spot where I had helped to conceal Van Hoek. The broken brake marked a distinct trail, and in a pit less than a hundred yards from that point the undergrowth was beaten down, as if a struggle had taken place.

Was it not possible that Brace had gone further than he intended, and killed Van Hoek? Had he concealed the body, and fled with his daughter to escape the consequences of his act?

Asking myself these questions, I followed a track from the pit that brought me into the bridge-way. Looking for further traces of a passage through the brake, I made my way down toward the road.

Again I perceived broken brake, and following the line, I threaded my way between the trees upon the slope of the hill until I emerged from the wood upon the high bank that edged the Abbey road at that part. It was as nearly as possible the point where Van Hoek had stopped me in the morning upon hearing Brace in our rear. Looking up the road, I saw the finger post at the cross-roads; looking down, I saw that which took my breath away with amazement—Brace was trudging along the road toward the Abbey, with Van Hoek holding his arm on one side, and Lola his hand upon the other—an incomprehensible picture of unity, friendly assistance, and reliance.

It was true that without assistance Van Hoek could not have found his way along the road, and very possible that, without restraint of her father's hand, Lola would not have walked by his side; but all doubt as to the existence of a friendly understanding between the two men was dispelled from my mind by what followed.

Arrived opposite the bridge-path leading into the wood they stopped, and consultation ensued between the two men. I could not hear their voices at that distance, but I saw by their gesticulations that they were discussing some point; it ended in Brace going to the side of the road, and craning his neck to see if any one were in sight. I crouched down beside the thicket, which partly concealed me.

When I cautiously raised my head and looked again, Brace, still standing opposite the bridge-way, was drawing his arm out of the sandy bank that there skirted the road.

I ducked my head, as once more he peered to the right and left. They were gone, all three, when I looked again.

When I thought it safe to venture, I went to the spot where Brace had stood. There was a rabbit-hole in the sandy cutting, partly hidden by the trailing growth from the overhanging edge. I took off my coat, turned back my sleeve, thrust in my arm, and drew out—the leather case in which the diamond had been taken from my wrist! It was empty.

I again thrust my arm in and explored the hole, thinking though it was little likely—that the diamond had slipped out of the case or been put in separately. It was a kind of cul-de-sac the earth had fallen in from above and blocked the passage at less than the length of my arm from the entrance; but I did not give up the search until I was absolutely certain that the Great Hesper was not there. It was not probable they would place the diamond in such an open place, the leather case was different. It was unsafe to keep that, but it was of little consequence where they abandoned it. But why had they taken the diamond from the case and what had they done with it?

A clew to this mystery also I discovered before long.

When I got back to the abbey, Brace, Van Hoek, and Lola were in the library with the police officer, Sir Edmund, Mr. Wray—his lawyer—and a couple of friends, justices of the peace, who had been brought by the rumors which were already widely spread.

The police officer asked me to go into the adjoining dining room with him.

"May I ask," he said, "if you have any reason to suspect that you have been robbed by your friends—your partners in the diamond? Because they profess to have been in the woods all the morning, whereas I have good cause to believe that they have been in the town of Southampton part of the time."

"Are you sure of that?"

"I will take my oath that I saw the little savage in the red petticoat in the High street as I started to come here."

CHAPTER XI.

"I advise you, sir," said the officer, "to take the advice of Sir Edmund's solicitor, Mr. Wray."

I agreed, and he called in the lawyer. I told him, without reserve, all that had happened, showing him the leather case I had taken from the hole where Brace had placed it.

"A couple of cunning scoundrels," he exclaimed; "their pretended sus-

picion of each other was, of course, intended to blind you to their complicity, while each, by implicating the other, diverted suspicion from himself."

"I was never in my life so completely deceived," I said. "Brace seemed to me the embodiment of rough honesty. I liked the man, and it was a painful shock to me when I found him unfaithful and a thief."

"He is worse than that, Mr. Thorne; he is a murderer at heart; for there can be no doubt it was he who attempted your life; it was a sheer impossibility for the other man to do it. We have heard the story of the robbery from Sir Edmund. The intelligence that planned the attack was doubtless Van Hoek's. He looks like a man of subtle intellect. I do not see what other part he could have played in this affair."

"Sir Edmund told me, sir," said the officer, "that on your return from the left wing, you heard snoring in Brace's room."

"I certainly did."

"That could very well have been Van Hoek, who had taken Brace's place while he slipped off into your room. Another proof that the two were acting together."

"Precisely," said Mr. Wray, and then, with an air of business—"Well, now, what is to be done? That is the first question. The evidence is insufficient to charge either of the men even with being concerned in the robbery. The leather case proves nothing. They might declare they found it empty, and have concealed it through fear of accusation, or they might all three swear your statement to be false, and absolutely accuse you of being yourself the thief. And until we can substantiate the charge by positive proof, we must be careful to conceal our suspicions from them. If they think they are likely to be brought to justice, they will quit the country by the first steamer that leaves Southampton—and we can not stop them. The thing that must be done at once is to search for the diamond. I counsel you, Mr. Thorne, to conceal your own feelings. Not one of those three ought to see any change in your demeanor toward them."

When the officer had completed his investigation, he said sagaciously, as he closed his note-book—

"I have sufficient information for my present purpose. I may not be able to discover the perpetrators of this outrage and robbery immediately, but I think I shall be in a position to tell you something about the lost diamond within twenty-four hours."

Sir Edmund accompanied him to the door. When he returned and took the seat he had occupied at the head of the long table, Brace rose, and placing himself at the opposite end, inclined his head first to the baronet, then to the right and to the left.

"Squire and gentlemen, this committee," he said, "I don't want to speak disrespectfully of the police, but the intelligent officer who has just left us, as if he'd got hold of the tail end of a racket, and meant flogging it right up, and holdin' tight on till it bust, ain't goin' to do any good for hisself, or any one else in this business. The big diamond's lost, and he ain't goin' to find it in twenty-four hours, nor in twenty-four years. If it was a haystack, I don't say but what, with the help of Providence, and a good lot of it—he might be up to the job he's undertook. But it ain't a haystack. End of he was to grind up the whole of this country, and every blessed thing upon it small, buddled it in a clean flame, and sifted the tailins careful, he wouldn't find it. End these bein' my views, it stands to reason that I ain't goin' to hang about here lookin' at the place where I've come to grief, like an old female what's slipped off the sidewalk on a bit of orange-peel. With your permission, squire, I'm goin' away right off."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A FRISKY SYSTEM.

Lord Peterborough, who lived in the reign of Queen Anne, was very frolicsome; and one day, seeing from his carriage a dancing-master with pearl-colored stockings lightly stepping over the broad stones and picking his way in extremely dirty weather, he alighted and ran after him with drawn sword, in order to drive him into the mud, but into which he, of course, followed himself. This nobleman was once taken for the duke of Marlborough, and was mobbed in consequence. The duke was then in disgrace with the people, and Lord Peterborough was about to be roughly handled. Turning to them he said: "Gentlemen, I can convince you by two reasons that I am not the duke of Marlborough. In the first place, I have only five guineas in my pocket; and in the next they are heartily at your service.—Argonaut."

The American Plan.

Foreigner—What do you Americans do when the officials you elect fall in their duty to the public, and line their own pockets?

American—Do? Why, sir, we hold indignation meetings—yes, sir; and sometimes, sir, our righteous wrath passes all bounds of propriety, and we actually burn them in effigy—yes, sir.

What do you do next?

Next? Why—or—we go back to our business, forget all about it, and elect 'em again."

Getting into Shape.

"That man over there has eaten seven dishes of cucumbers," said the astonished waiter. "I wonder if he is trying to commit suicide?"

"Naw," said the head-waiter. "He rides in a bicycle race this afternoon, and he wants to be in good shape for speed."