HEARTLESS.

Horace—Ah! Miss Gwace, what should a young man do when he wants to write spring poetry?

Grace—He should see a doctor.

The Force of Habit.

One of the campers had done something peculiarly idiotic, and the dean said: "Dick reminds me of Thomas' colt."

"What about Thomas' colt?" asked Dick, cheerfully.

"Why," the dean responded, readily, "where I lived in Maine when I was a boy an old man named Thomas raised horses. He once put out to pasture a colt, which had been fed from its birth in a box stall and watered at the trough in the yard.

"The pasture lay across a small river, and in the middle of the day the colt swam the stream to go up to the barn-yard for a drink of water."—Youth's Companion.

The Water Bite.

He was six years old and had never gazed into the mystic lens of a microscope. Several slides containing animalcula had been displayed to his astonished vision. He was too amazed to make any comment until he came to one slide that seemed more wriggly than any of the others. It was merely a drop of water.

The little fellow gazed at it a long time, with all its nimble particles of animal life, and finally exclaimed to his mother:

"Oh, mamma, now I know what it is that bites you when you drink soda water.

And the Old Man Grinned.

"Duke," said the heiress, eagerly, "did you see father?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"We talked about the weather."

"What? Lose your nerve again? Why don't you brace up and talk like a man?—a subject of a king on whose domain the sun never sets!"

"Can't," moaned the duke. "All the time I was in your father's office he kept grinning at a big painting."

"What painting?"

"The battle of Bunker Hill."

Followed Her, Lighting the Way.

The BRASS BOWL

PICTURES BY A. WEIL

BY LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

SYNOPSIS.

"Mad" Dan Maitland, on reaching his New York bachelor club, met an attractive young woman at the door. Janitor O'Hagan assured him no one had been within that day. Dan discovered a woman's finger prints in dust on his desk, along with a letter from his attorney. Maitland dined with Bannerman, his attorney. Dan set out for Greenfields, to get his family jewels. During his walk to the country seat, he met the young woman in gray, whom he had seen leaving his bachelors' club. Her auto had broken down. He fixed it. By a ruse she "lost" him. Maitland, on reaching home, surprised lady in gray, cracking the safe containing his gems. She, apparently, took him for a well-known crook, Daniel Anisty. Half-hypnotized, Maitland opened his safe, took therefrom the jewels, and gave them to her, first forming a partnership in crime. The real Dan Anisty, sought by police of the world, appeared on the same mission. Maitland overcame him. He met the girl outside the house and they sped on to New York in her auto. He had the jewels and she promised to meet him that day. Maitland received a "Mr. Snaith," introducing himself as a detective. To shield the girl in gray, Maitland, about to show him the jewels, supposedly lost, was felled by a blow from "Snaith's" cane. The latter proved to be Anisty himself and he secured the gems. Anisty, who was Maitland's double, masqueraded as the latter. The criminal kept Maitland's engagement with the girl in gray. He gave her the gems, after falling in love at first sighe They were to meet and divide the loot. Maitland revived and regretted missing his engagement. Anisty, masquerading as Maitland, narrowly avoided capture through mysterious tip. The girl in gray visited Maitland's apartments during his absence and returned gems, being discovered on return.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

But not to rest. The portion of the mentally harassed, sleeplessness, was his; and for an hour or more he tossed upon his bed (upon which he had thrown himself without troubling to undress), pondering, to no profit of his, the hundred problems, difficulties and disadvantages suggested or created by the events of the past 24 hours.

The gray girl, Anisty, the jewels, himself; unflagging, his thoughts circumnavigated the world of his romance, touching only at these four ports, and returning always to linger longest in the harbor of sentiment.

The gray girl: Strange that her personality should have come to dominate his thoughts in a space of time so brief! and upon grounds of intimacy so slender! Who and what was she? What cruel rigor of circumstance had impelled her to seek a livelihood in ways so sinister? At whose door must the blame be laid, against what flaw in the body social should the indictment be drawn, that she should have been forced into the ranks of the powers that prey—a girl of her youth and rare fiber, of her cultivation, her charm, and beauty?

The sheer loveliness of her, her grace and gentleness her ingenuous sensitiveness, her wit; they combined to make the thought of her, to him, at least, at once terrible and a delight. Remembering that once he had held her in his arms, and gazed into her starlit eyes, and inhaled the impalpable fragrance of her, he trembled, was both glad and afraid.

And her ways so hedged about with perils! While he must stand aside, impotent, a pillar of the social order secure in its shelter, and see her hounded and driven by the forces of the Law, harried and worried like an unclean thing, forced, as it might be, to resort to stratagems and expedients unthinkable, to preserve her liberty.

It was altogether intolerable. He could not stand it. And yet—it was written that their paths had crossed and parted and were never again to touch. Or was it? It must be so written: They would never meet again. After all, her concern with, her interest in, him, could have been nothing permanent. They had encountered under strange auspices, and he had treated her with common decency, for which she had repaid him in good measure by permitting him to retain his own property. Their account was even, and she for ever done with him. That must be her attitude. Why should it be anything else?

"Oh, the devil!" exclaimed the young man in disgust. And rising, took his distemper to the window.

Leaning on the sill, he thrust head and shoulders far out over the garish abyss of metropolitan night. The hot breath of the city fanned up in stifling waves into his face, from the street below, upon whose painted pavements men crawled like insects—round moving spots, to each his romance under his hat.

The window was on the corner, overlooking the junction of three great highways of humanity: Twenty-third street, with its booming crosstown cars, stretching away into the darkness on either hand; Broadway, forking off to the left, its distances merging into a hot glow of yellow radiance; Fifth avenue, branching into the north with its desolate sidewalks oddly patterned in areas of dense shadow and a cold, clear light. Over the way the park loomed darkly, for all its scattered arcs, a black and silent space, a well of mystery.

It was late, quite late; the clock in front of Dorlon's (he craned his neck to see) made the hour one in the morning; the sidewalks were comparatively deserted, even the pillared portico of the Fifth Avenue hotel destitute of loungers. A timid hint of coolness, forerunning the dawn, rode up on the breeze.

He looked up and away northward, for many minutes, over housetops stenciled black against the glowing sky, his gaze yearning into vast distances of space, melancholy tingeing the complexion of his mind. He fancied himself oppressed by a vague uneasiness, unaccountable as to cause, unless—

From the sublime to the ridiculous with a vengeance, his thoughts tumbled. Gone the glamour of romance in a twinkling, banished by rank materialism. He could have blushed for shame; he got slowly to his feet, irresolute, trying to grapple with a condition that never before in his existence had he been called upon to consider.

He had just realized that he was flat-strapped for cash. He had given his last quarter to the cabby, hours back. He was registered at a strange hotel, under an assumed name, unable to beg credit even for his breakfast without declaring his identity and thereby laying himself open to suspicion, discourtesy, insult.

Of course there were ways out. He could telephone Bannerman, or any other of half a dozen acquaintances, in the morning; but that involved explanations, and explanations involved making himself the butt of his circle for many a weary day.

There was money in his lodgings, in the Chippendale escritoire; but to get it he would have to run the gauntlet of reporters and detectives which had already dismayed him in prospect. O'Hagan—ah!

At the head of his bed was a telephone. Impulsively, inconsiderate of the hour, he turned to it.

"Give me nine-o-eight-nine Madison, please," he said; and waited, receiver to ear.

There was a slight pause; a buzz; the voice of the switchboard operator below stairs repeating the number to central; central's appropriately mechanical reiteration; another buzz; a silence; a prolonged buzz; and again the sounding silence.

"Hello!" he said, softly, into the transmitter, at a venture.

No answer.

"Hello!"

Then central, irritably: "Go ahead. You've got your party."

"Hello, hello!"

A faint hum of voices, rising and falling, beat against the walls of his understanding. Were the wires crossed? He lifted an impatient finger to jiggle the hook and call central to order, when—something crashed heavily. He could have likened the sound, without a strain of imagination, to a chair being violently overturned. And then a woman's voice, clear, accents informed with anger and pain: "No!" and then—

"Say, that's my mistake. That line you had's out of order. I had a call for them a while ago, and they didn't answer. Guess you'll have to wait."

"Central! Central!" he pleaded, desperately. "I say, central, give me that connection again, please."

"Ah, say! what's the matter with you, anyway? Didn't I tell you that line was out of order? Ring off!"

Automatically Maitland returned the receiver to its rest; and rose, white-lipped and trembling. That woman's voice!

CHAPTER X.
Consequences.

Breathing convulsively, wide eyes a little wildly fixed upon his face in the lamplight, the girl stumbled to her feet, and for a moment remained cowering against the wall, terribly shaken, a hand gripping a corner of the packing box for support, the other pressed against the bosom of her dress as if in attempt forcibly to quell the mad hammering of her heart.

In her brain, a turmoil of affrighted thought, but one thing stood out clearly; now she need look for no mercy. The first time it had been different; she had not been a woman had she been unable then to see that the adventure intrigued Maitland with its spice of novelty, a new sensation, fully as much as she, herself, the pretty woman out of place, interested and attracted him. He had enjoyed playing the part, had been amused to lead her to believe him an adventurer of mettle and caliber little inferior to her own—as he understood her; unscrupulous, impatient of the quibble of meum-et-tuum, but adroit and keen-witted, and distinguished and set apart from the herd by grace of gentle breeding and chivalric instincts.

How far he might or might not have let this enjoyment carry him, she had no means of surmising. Not very far, not too far, she was inclined to believe, strongly as she knew her personality to have influenced him; not far enough to induce him to trust her out of sight with the jewels. He had demonstrated that, to her humiliation.

The flush of excitement waning, manlike soon had he wearied of the game—she thought; to her mind, in distorted retrospect, his attitude when leaving her at dawn had been insincere, contemptuous, that of a man relieved to be rid of her, relieved to be able to get away in unquestioned possession of his treasure. True, the suggestion that they lunch together at Eugene's had been his. But he had forgotten the engagement, if ever he had meant to keep it, if the notion had been more than a whim of the moment with him. And O'Hagan had told her by telephone that Maitland had left his rooms at one o'clock—in ample time to meet her at the restaurant.

No, he had never intended to come; he had wearied; yet, patient with her, true to the ethics of a gentle man, he had been content to let her go, rather than to send a detective to take his place.

And this was something, by the way, to cause her to revise her theory as to the manner in which Anisty had managed to steal the jewels. If Maitland had gone abroad at one, and without intending to keep his engagement at Eugene's, then he must have been despoiled before that hour, and without his knowledge. Surely, if the jewels had been taken from him with his cognizance, the hue and cry would have been out and Anisty would not have dared to linger so long in the neighborhood!

To be just with herself, the girl had not gone to the restaurant with much real hope of finding Maitland there. Curiosity had drawn her—just to see if— But it was too preposterous to credit that he should have cared enough. Quite too preposterous! It was her cup, her bitter cup, to know that she had learned to care enough—at sight! And she recalled (with what pangs of shame and misery begged expression!) how her heart had been stirred when she had found him (as she thought) true to his tryst; even as she recalled the agony and distress of mind with which she had a moment later fathomed Anisty's impersonation.

For, of course, she had known that Maitland was Maitland and none other from the instant when he told her to make good her escape and leave him to brazen it out; a task to daunt even as bold and resourceful a criminal as Anisty, and more especially if he were called upon to don the mask at a minute's notice, as Maitland had pretended to. Or, if she had not actually known, she had been led to suspect; and it had hardly needed what she had heard him say to the servants, when he thought her flying hotfoot over the lawn to safety, to harden suspicion into certainty.

And now that he should find her here, a second time a trespasser, doubly an ingrate—that he should have caught her red-handed in this abominably ungrateful treachery! She could pretend, of course, that she had returned merely to restore the jewels and the cigarette case; and he would believe her, for he was generous. She could, but—she could not. Not now. Yesterday, the excitement had buoyed her; she had gained a piquant enjoyment from befooling him, playing her part of the amateur cracksman in this little comedy of the stolen jewels. But therein lay the difference; yesterday it had been comedy, but to-day—ah! to-day she could no longer laugh. For now she cared.

A little lie would clear her—yes. But it was not to be cleared that she now so passionately desired; it was to have him believe in her, even against the evidence of his senses, even in the face of the world's condemnation; and to prove that he, too, cared—cared for her as his attitude toward her had taught her to care.

Ever since leaving him in the dawn she had fed her starved heart with the hope, faint hope though it were, that he would come to care a little, that he would not utterly despise her, that he would understand and forgive, when he learned why she had played out her part, nor believe that she was the embodiment of all that was ignoble, coarse, and crude; that he would show a little faith in her, a little faith that like a flickering taper might light the way for—love.

But that hope was now dead within her, and cold. She had but to look at him to see how groundless it had been, how utterly unmoved he was by her distress. He waited patiently—that was all—seeming so very tall, a pillar of righteous strength, distinguished and at ease in his evening clothes; waiting patient but cold, dispassionate and disdainful.

"I am waiting, you see. Might I suggest that we have not all week for our—our mutual differences?"

His tone was altogether changed; she would hardly have known it for his voice. Its incisive, clipped accents were like a knife to her sensitiveness. She summoned the reserve of her strength, stood erect, unsupported, and moved forward without a word. He stood aside, holding the lamp high, and followed her, lighting the way down the hall to the study.

Once there, she sank quivering into a chair, while he proceeded gravely to the desk, put down the lamp—superfluous now, the gas having been lighted—and after a moment's thought faced her, with a contemptuous smile and lift of his shoulders, thrusting hands deep into his pockets.

"Well?" he demanded, cuttingly.

She made a little motion of her hands, begging for time; and, assenting with a short nod, he took a turn up and down the room, then abstractedly reached up and turned out the gas.

"When you are quite composed I should enjoy hearing your statement."

"I—have none to make."

"So!"—with his back to the lamp, towering over and oppressing her with the sense of his strength and self-control. "That is very odd, isn't it?"

"I have no—no explanation to give that would satisfy you, or myself," she said, brokenly. "I—I don't care what you think," with a flicker of defiance. "Believe the worst and—and do what you will—have me arrested—"

He laughed sardonically. "Oh, we won't go so far as that, I guess; harsh measures, such as arrest and imprisonment, are so unsatisfactory to all concerned. But I am interested to know why you are here."

Her breathing seemed very loud in the pause; she kept her lips tight, fearing to speak lest she lose her mastery of self. And hysteria threatened; the fluttering in her bosom warned her. She must be very careful, very restrained, if she were to avert that crowning misfortune.

"I don't think I quite understand you," he continued, musingly; "surely you must have anticipated interruption."

"I thought you safely out of the way—"

"One presumed that." He laughed again, unpleasantly. "But how about Maitland? Didn't you have him in your calculations, or—"

He paused, unfeignedly surprised by her expression. And chuckled when he comprehended.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Schemer.

"I notice a peculiar thing about your hotel," said the boarder. "In all your guest rooms you have two very narrow windows, when one bigger one would do as well. I don't see the economy of such construction." "You don't eh?" chuckled the landlord. "Well, if you'll figger awhile you'll see that there ain't no trunks made that c'n be passed out through them winders."

OH, MY!

He—A woman is peculiar in one way.

She—What's that?

He—She won't tear up a love letter, even after she's forgotten who wrote it.

A City Clerk's Garden.

A city clerk never misses a chance of expatiating on his garden to his colleagues, who, however, were never taken home to see it, but were under the impression it was of enormous size. Five of them resolved to have a look at it, discovered his address, and called one Saturday afternoon to see the hundreds of roses all a-growing and a-blooming. On being taken to the rear of the house, judge of their surprise on seeing a back yard about 12 feet by ten feet. One bold spirit ventured that it was not very big.

"Big!" replied the proud owner, pointing to the sky. "Why, man, alive, look at the height of it!"—Chicago Daily Socialist.

Not Her Fault.

"It is the duty of every man and woman to be married at the age of 32," said the lecturer.

"Well," said a woman of 30, with some asperity, "you needn't tell me that. Talk to the man."