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FAME'S COST.

Oh, scorn not things of low degree,
And sigh for wealth and state;
Far better court humility
Than burdens of the great.

For he who wins ambition's fight
Can never be at ease;
He gains, 'tis true, a worldly height,
But has a world to please.

For cares increase as honors grow,
And in his new estate
He finds, though bright those honors glow,
'Tis thraldom to be great.

The flatterers that about him throng
Each has some dole to ask;
To please them is no idle song,
But a herculean task.

We value things as they appear,
Nor count the cost nor pain
Which line the road to that bright sphere
The envied ones attain.

Fame is no royal heritage;
Its crowns are free to all;
But who its dizziest heights would gage
Must risk the dizziest fall.

Then sigh not for ambition's meed,
Its scepter and its crown;
"Uneasy lies the kingly head,"
Though pillowed upon down.
—Harriet Smead, in Chicago Inter Ocean.

A CLEW BY WIRE

Or, An Interrupted Current.

BY HOWARD M. YOST.

CHAPTER VIII.—CONTINUED.

When we arrived at the cross roads, Florence insisted on riding her horse the rest of the way to her home.

A thought occurred to me after I had assisted her to remount. I laid my hand on the bridle to restrain her going.

"Do you mind if I ask you a question?" I inquired.

"Assuredly not."

"Then tell me, do you see much of Horace Jackson? Has he asked you to marry him?"

"Yes, he has asked me to marry him," she replied, drooping her head. "Indeed, there is a compact between us about it."

"Oh!"

"Yes. Now, please do not be foolish and feel badly over it. But I have promised Mr. Jackson that I will marry him if the robbery can be traced to you, and the stolen property, or a portion of it, be found in your possession."

"Good heavens! Why did you give him that promise?"

"Well, he bothered me so, lately, that I gave him the promise to get rid of him. His part of the compact is not to mention the subject again until you are shown to be the robber. So you see how absolutely safe I am in this."

"Does Jackson believe I am guilty?" I asked.

"No, he does not. In his inmost heart he does not. And he used to affirm his belief in your innocence until—" She hesitated here, and seemed reluctant to proceed. I waited in anxiety, and she finally went on—"until lately he, for some reason, has changed his opinion. At least so he says. And it made me angry when he told me that he had. Then it was I gave him the promise."

"How long is it since you discovered that he had changed?"

"About six weeks ago. I have not seen him since. He and his father had a terrible quarrel that day, and he has not been here since then."

"What reason did he give for now believing I was the guilty party?" I asked.

"Oh, he mumbled something about discoveries recently made which would throw new light on the case."

Florence gazed earnestly into my face, and she must have noticed the troubled expression upon it. For she leaned toward me and with great earnestness exclaimed: "Nelson, oh, tell me, you had nothing to do with it, did you?"

"Florence!"

"Forgive me: I know you are honest and true." She laid her hand upon mine. "I will not wrong you by the least doubt. But Jackson seemed so confident. There is no way by which a seeming proof of the robbery could be shown against you, is there?"

"Good heavens, how could there be?" I exclaimed. "Oh, I see it all," I went on bitterly. "Jackson has become wealthy, and is trying to ingratiate himself with your father and undermine my reputation with you and so finally gain your hand."

Florence listened to my incoherent outburst with an amused smile.

"Do you like Jackson at all? Is he agreeable to you?" I asked, in jealousy.

The smile died from her face and her eyes flashed with an angry fire.

"Like him? No, indeed; I detest the man. I hate him." This outburst made me happy, and I laughed merrily.

"It is not kind of you to compel me to show temper," she said. "But remember, sir, you provoked me to it. It is not only for myself alone that I dislike him, but it seems to me that he is the cause of the change that has come over my father lately. Ever since that quarrel father has been so different."

"In what respect?" I asked, sympathetically.

"He seems terribly worried and anxious."

"It is probably business care. There are very few men directing great enterprises who have not times of worry and anxiety, who have not financial storms and the fear of wreck to face," I added, consolingly. "And as for the quarrel with Jackson, that was probably no more than a difference of opinion regarding business methods. Jackson told me once he had business relations with your father, and that is what makes me almost fearful that he will gain you after all."

"But I have promised you; what more can you ask? I would not marry Mr. Jackson even if I had never met you," Florence said, with a decided shake of her head.

"Unless it was proved I robbed the bank," I suggested.

"No, not even then. I'd rather die."

"Oh, my darling love!" I burst out, "I must be first in your heart or nothing—first or nothing!"

"What a foolish fellow you are! You make me feel quite hurt at your implied doubt of me."

She urged her horse forward a few steps, then turned her face toward me.

"Rest easy about that," with the true light in her eyes. "You are first, dear one—first now, first always."

I made a spring for the bridle, but, with a merry laugh, she gave her horse the whip and eluded me.

I watched the dear form rising and falling like a bird along the road, then climbed into the buggy and slowly drove home.

CHAPTER IX.

After supper I lit a cigar and walked up and down in front of the house. During the meal Mrs. Snyder had kept up an incessant chatter concerning the mysteries about my house. I did not hear half her words, but nevertheless there was an element so foreign to my thoughts in the few sentences I caught that I was glad to escape her.

The evening shadows were settling over the valley, and the moon was rising in splendor.

Leisurely I tramped to and fro, giving up my thoughts undisturbed to the pleasant realization of new-found happiness and to anticipations of future joy in the constant companionship of my sweetheart.

The cigar finished, I repaired to my room, with the intention of reading. But the evening was so fine that I soon blew out the light and sat down by the window.

Then I remembered how, on rising from the same chair the evening before, a tall, white specter had confronted me. This recollection coming to me suddenly in the midst of happy thoughts caused me to glance somewhat nervously toward the closed window opposite.

I could see a faint image of myself swaying to and fro in unison with the motion of the rocking-chair in which I was seated.

Directly underneath was the cellar, whose solid walls, defying investigation of the interior, had so impressed the old nurse Sarah with an unreasonable fear. Even Sonntag, who, from his vocation, was accustomed to hold himself well in hand against surprise, had exhibited profound amazement when informed of the circumstance.

It was irritating to have thoughts concerning the mysteries which seemed to abound in the old homestead come crowding up and play at cross-purposes with the happy state that the meeting with Florence had induced.

The mysteries had seemed trivial in the daytime, had been wholly forgotten in Florence's society, but now that I was again alone and the night coming on, the thought of the cellar came back to me tinged with a shadow of fear. And the voice, the unearthly voice—what was it?

At first I had felt a hope that the vague account given by Mrs. Snyder might have something of truth in it. The unraveling of a chain of events which seemed to border on the supernatural would be a new experience to me, and therefore furnish a diversion in the quiet, uneventful life I expected to lead in Nelsonville.

But now I needed no such diversion to lead my thoughts away from the robbery and its blighting effect upon my life and honor. I did not regard that affair any longer as the one great barrier which stood between me and happiness, although the desire for exculpation was keener than ever.

I was sure of Florence's love and trust, but I could not wish her sweet self linked forever to one over whose life a cloud of suspicion hung. Her love was an inspiration, an incentive; under its influence I hoped to accomplish results which even the vast resources of the bank had failed in.

To devote all my thought, all the energy I possessed, to this one end was now my purpose. That small mysterious events were arising with their attendant irritations, threatening to divide the resources of my mind and body which I desired concentrated to one end, filled me with impatience.

Then, too, the certainty that Horace Jackson seemed to feel that Florence would be compelled to fulfill her promise, weighed heavily upon me. Why had Jackson changed his opinion regarding my innocence? What developments had arisen which would throw new light on the case, and make an innocent man bear the consequences of a crime he knew nothing of?

Just before retiring it occurred to me that the lights of Mr. Morley's house might be seen from the attic window. It seemed as though sleep would be sweeter after a glimpse of those lights, some of which were casting radiance over Florence's loved form.

I left my room and quietly ascended the stairs. Arrived at the attic, I grouped my way to the small window through which I had gazed that morning. I stood for a few minutes contemplating the lights of the Morley residence on the hill opposite.

A brisk breeze was piping down the valley. Through cracks and crevices it crept into the old attic with soft wailing and moaning. There was homesickness in the mournful tones, and a sadness, as though the spirits of the departed were sighing for a return to old familiar scenes.

What was there about my old place that produced such a depressing effect upon my spirits?

The happiest moments of life have a slight shadow to them, as though to warn us that all joy is fleeting. Perhaps it was only this shadow which caused the undefinable feeling of insecurity. But there was a quality, also, which breathed of events to come of dire import. I seemed like the mariner on a dark sea, conscious of breakers ahead, and knowing not which way to steer. Even my dreams in the restless slumber of the past night seemed premonitions.

That vague forebodings should come when my mind was filled with thoughts of the beloved one who had given me her heart, was most strange. I could not shake off the depression. The darkness of the attic deepened it.

I was about to retrace my steps to the stairway, when sounds reached my ear which caused me to pause and listen—a series of raps, alternating with a rasping noise, but so feeble and indistinct that I was unable to form an opinion of the cause. All I could determine was that they seemed to come from above.

A loose shingle or piece of timber, rattling in the wind, would have made a dull, heavy sound, while the gentle raps I heard had a clear, mellow ring, like that produced by the vibrations of a tuning fork.

After lighting all the matches I had with me and making as thorough an examination of the roof as the brief flickering lights would allow, I groped toward the stairs.

Probably half the distance to the landing was passed when upon my ear fell the voice, the unearthly voice, the weird tones of which I had first heard in my room downstairs.

It could not possibly be heard up in the attic, when speaking in my chamber. So then it must have the faculty of being able to change from one apartment to another just as the whim seized it.

Like the voice which had sounded downstairs, the tones were intermittent; in the present instance they alternated with the rappings.

After standing motionless, with hearing strained to the utmost, I noticed that at no time did the voice and the rappings sound together.

The few detached words I distinguished had no possible reference to myself; nevertheless the voice seemed to follow me. I was unwilling to attribute the sounds to supernatural causes, for I was not a believer in the supernatural. It might be that the parties who had walled up the cellar found some of their plans, whatever they may have been, upset by my advent, and had taken this way to frighten me and cause my departure.

On second thought the idea did not appear tenable. For if the purpose was to frighten me, a fiercer and more terrifying demonstration would be used.

Was there only one voice which in some way sounded both in my room and in the attic, or were there various voices all over the place, each independent of the other?

I hastened downstairs, but when I reached my room no sounds were heard there.

While in my bedroom, I had no way of knowing if the voice in the attic was still sounding.

The remainder of the evening I spent in rushing from my room to the attic and back again, and quietly stealing through the vacant rooms, in the hope of laying hold of some explanation of the strange voice. I did hear it again in the attic, but there was no sound in my room, though I had immediately hastened there.

Finally I gave up the quest for the time, and, thoroughly fatigued, undressed and went to bed.

My head had hardly touched the pillow when the report of a pistol reached my ear. The sound was muffled, as though coming from a distant apartment. Indeed, it seemed to come from underneath, as had the sound of the slamming door; but yet not directly beneath; it would undoubtedly have sounded much plainer had the shooting taken place in the walled-up cellar below my room.

There was no answering shot, and no more unaccountable noises, though I hearkened intently.

All through the night I lay vainly trying to find repose, but sleep would not come. I was resolved to leave no stone unturned to unravel these mysteries. For the events, trivial as they seemed and as they probably would prove when explained, were certainly irritating, and threatened wholly to destroy the rest and peace I had expected to find in Nelsonville.

It was exasperating that, besides being burdened with a load of guilt which rightfully belonged on other shoulders, I should also be subjected to petty annoyances which promised to make my stay in Nelsonville anything but peaceful. True, I was my own master. I could leave the old house on the morrow. But to be utterly routed and driven from the field by a few harmless though inexplicable happenings was contrary to my nature. Then, too, Florence; how could I leave the place, now that I had found my love abiding here?

When the first rosy tints of dawn showed in the east, slumber closed my weary eyes.

As on the previous morning, Mrs. Snyder was compelled to arouse me for breakfast. On the present occasion she announced rather testily that the morning meal had been waiting for over an hour.

I could not resist the desire to begin investigations immediately, and therefore after hastily dressing I walked all around the house, keeping at such distance from it that every part of the roof could be seen.

There was a line of wire running along the side of the road, which, as I afterward ascertained, belonged to a telephone circuit embracing half a dozen towns and villages in the vicinity. This wire crossed the roof of the house, but was not fastened to it in any way, swinging at least three feet clear of the ridge-pole. Within a few inches of the wire was a section of lightning rod. The air was still, and the wire hung motionless. On the previous night a strong breeze had been blowing, as I remembered from the mournful cadences it produced up in the attic.

Here was one mystery which could be very reasonably explained. The wind had swung the wire, causing it to strike against the perpendicular portion of the lightning rod, thereby causing the series of gentle vibratory raps I had heard.

Satisfied that the other mysterious events would also give up their secrets upon investigation, I went to breakfast. Mrs. Snyder was not nearly so talkative as during former meals. Indeed, she appeared rather glum. The reason of the old widow's taciturn manner was soon explained.

After pouring my coffee, she watched me in silence for some itme. But silence was not the widow's forte, and, as I was busy with my own speculations, she was compelled to begin.

"I guess you ton't like my cookin'," he said.

"Indeed I do; the proof lies in the quantity I find room for. You are an excellent cook."

The old woman's face relaxed somewhat under my praise.

"Vell, bud you ton't come rite avay when id is retty," she continued, "und I tought maybe you not like de cookin'."

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Snyder. I did oversleep. I'll be more punctual in future."

"So you schleep ofer yourself? Vhat for?" she inquired.

"Oh, I was up rather late the evening before," I remarked, indifferently, for I knew questions relating to the strange things which had come under her observation were trembling on her lips.

"You remember our discovery of the walled-up cellar?" I continued, Mr. Sonntag's suggestion regarding the wisdom of secrecy coming to mind.

She nodded, and her old eyes brightened expectantly.

"It is advisable to keep the matter a secret," I continued. "You have not mentioned it to anyone, have you?"

"Ach, no."

"Then please do not, for the present."

She promised compliance with my request.

As the cellar was the next mystery I determined to turn my attention to, I went home immediately after finishing my breakfast, harnessed the horse in the buggy, and drove off toward Sarah's house.

If I had the necessary tools it would not be a difficult matter to cut the floor of my bedroom.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Their Opinion of Each Other.

What Emerson and Ruskin thought of each other comes out in their letters: Ruskin wrote: "Emerson came to my rooms a day or two ago. I found his mind a total blank on matters of art, and had a fearful sense of the whole being of him as a gentle cloud—intangible." Emerson said: "I had seen Ruskin at Oxford, and had been charmed by his manner in the lecture-room, but in talking with him at his room I found myself wholly out of sympathy with Ruskin's views of life and the world. I wonder such a genius can be possessed by so black a devil. I cannot but pardon him for a despondency so deep. It is detestable in a man of such powers, in a poet, a seer such as he has been. Children are right with their everlasting hope. Timon is always inevitably wrong."—Detroit Free Press.

—Every man can tell about some experience he had on the train.—Washington Democrat.

—Some husbands are so indulgent that they can never come home sober.—Chicago News.

OUR FIRST DEFEAT.

Ensign Bagley and Four Companions Killed at Cardenas.

Torpedo Boat Winslow Receives the Terrific Fire of an Entire Battery—The Ship Fatally Disabled—Particulars of the Battle.

KEY WEST, Fla., May 13.—America's first dead fell Wednesday in a fierce and bloody combat off Cardenas, on the north coast of Cuba. Five men were blown to pieces and five were wounded on the torpedo boat Winslow. The dead are: Worth Bagley, ensign; John Varveres, oiler; John Denefee and John Meek, both first-class firemen, and Josiah Tunnell, colored, cabin cook. The wounded are: R. E. Cox, gunner's mate; D. McKeown, quartermaster; J. Patterson, fireman; F. Gray, and Lieut. J. H. Bernardou. The battle lasted 35 minutes. It was between the torpedo boat Winslow, the auxiliary tug Hudson and the gunboat Wilmington on one side, and the Cardenas batteries and four Spanish gunboats on the other. The Winslow was the main target of the enemy and was put out of service. The other American vessels were not damaged, except that the Hudson's two ventilators were slightly scratched by flying shrapnel.

The enemy's loss is largely conjectural. One of their gunboats caught fire, and the men of the Hudson think it sank. The flames spread to the barracks and swept away several small warehouses, and for a time the whole water front seemed to be ablaze. The Hudson's crew also believe that two Spanish torpedo boat destroyers were disabled, but they admit that their estimate of the damage is largely guesswork, as the action was too sharp for outside observations to be made.

The Winslow was within 2,500 yards of shore when the shells struck her. How she came to be so close was told by her commander, Lieut. John Bernardou. He said: "We were making observations when the enemy opened fire on us. The Wilmington ordered us to go in and attack the gunboats. We went in under full steam, and there's the result." He was on the Hudson when he said this and with the final words he pointed to a huddle of American flags on the deck near by. Under the stars and stripes were outlined five rigid forms.

During the battle a four-inch shell struck the Winslow on the starboard beam, knocking her forward boiler and starboard engine and crippling her steering gear, but no one was injured. Lieut. Bernardou did not stop for an examination. He knew his boat was uncontrollable. The Hudson was a short distance away, still pounding away with her guns. She was hailed and asked to take the Winslow in tow. A group of sailors on the Hudson was making ready to heave a line to the Winslow and Ensign Bagley and his four men stood on the port side of the latter vessel waiting to receive it. There was a momentary delay in heaving the tow line and Ensign Bagley suggested that the Hudson's men hurry. "Heave her," he called. "Let her come; it's getting pretty warm here." The line was thrown and grabbed by the Winslow's men. Almost at the same instant another four-inch shell shrieked through the smoke and burst directly under them. Five bodies went whirling through the air. Two of the group were dead when they fell—Ensign Bagley and Fireman Denefee. The young ensign was literally disembowled and the entire lower portion of the fireman's body was torn away. The other three died within a few minutes. A flying piece of shrapnel struck Lieut. Bernardou in the thigh cutting an ugly gash, but he did not know it then. With the explosion of the shell the hawser parted and the Winslow's helm went hard to the starboard, and with her steering gear smashed the torpedo boat floundered about in the water at the mercy of the enemy's fire which never relaxed. The Hudson quickly threw another line to the Winslow, and the hapless torpedo boat was made fast and pulled out of the Spaniard's range. The tug then pulled her to Piedras bay, a little island 12 miles off, near which the Machias lay. There she was anchored for temporary repairs, while the Hudson brought her ghastly cargo into Key West with Dr. Richards, of the Machias, attending the wounded.

Reign of Anarchy at Havana.

TAMPA, Fla., May 13.—A note received by Gen. Shafter at Tampa from a scout now in Havana says:

The volunteers have the city and are plundering every one they may fancy has something worth stealing. Even Spaniards are sick of this rule of anarchy and are praying that the troops of the United States may take possession speedily. Gen. Blanco is helpless and his life is in danger. The soldiers have not been paid for eight months and an awful revolt is threatened. Nightly from church towers all see the camp fires of Gen. Alejandro Rodriguez's troops, a mile or two from the walls of Havana.

Edna Whitney Leaves Her Husband.

CHILLICOTHE, Mo., May 13.—Mrs. J. B. Lane, formerly Edna Whitney, who became widely known as the "Queen of Labor" by reason of her carnival experience, is again a shader in a cigar factory. She is now at Gallatin. The queen married J. B. Lane, a druggist of Stuttgart, Ark., about three months ago and returned here three weeks ago. They could not agree.