

**AT THE BAL-MASQUE.**

When music sounded through the hall  
And jewelry was ruing all  
With gentle sway,  
When laughing eyes were strangely bright  
With thoughts that wait and wine excite,  
In every way,  
He bent his lofty head to say:

"Forever thus to dance with you  
Would bring me lasting joy and true,  
Nor would I ask  
From now until life's final end  
That fate should ever to me send  
More grateful task  
Than guiding you—pray lift your mask!"

She owned it would be passing sweet  
If down the halls of time their feet  
Together strayed  
To measure of the merry dance,  
Then, with an upward saucy glance,  
"But then," she said,  
"You know the piper must be paid."  
—Detroit Tribune.

**THE MISADVENTURES  
OF JOHN NICHOLSON.**

BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**CHAPTER III—CONTINUED.**

And suddenly there came upon him a mad fear lest his father should have locked him in. The notion had no ground in sense; it was probably no more than a reminiscence of similar calamities in childhood, for his father's room had always been the chamber of indignation and the scene of punishment; but it stuck so rigorously in his mind that he must instantly approach the door and prove its untruth. As he went he struck upon a drawer left open in the business table. It was the money-drawer, a measure of his father's disarray; the money-drawer—perhaps a pointing providence! Who is to decide, when even divines differ between a providence and a temptation? or who, sitting calmly under his own vine, is to pass a judgment on the doings of a poor, hunted dog, slavishly afraid, slavishly rebellious, like John Nicholson, on that particular Sunday? His hand was in the drawer almost before his mind had conceived the hope; and rising to his feet, he wrote, sitting in his father's chair and using his father's blotting pad, his pitiful apology and farewell:

"My Dear Father: I have taken the money, but I will pay it back as soon as I am able. I will never hear of me again. I did not mean any harm by anything, so I hope you will try and forgive me. I wish you would say ready to Alexander and Macia, but not if you don't want so. I could not wait to see you really. Please try to forgive me. Your affectionate son,  
JOHN NICHOLSON."

The coins abstracted and the misadventure written, he could not be gone too soon from the scene of these transgressions; and remembering how his father had once returned from church on some slight illness in the middle of the second psalm, he durst not even make a packet of a change of clothes. Attired as he was he slipped from the paternal doors, and found himself in the cool spring air, the thin spring sunshine, and the great Sabbath quiet of the city, which was now only pointed by the cawing of the rooks. There was not a soul in Randolph Crescent, nor a soul in Queensferry street; in this outdoor privacy and the sense of escape, John took heart again, and with a pathetic sense of leave-taking, he even ventured upon the lane and stood awhile, a strange perit at the gates of a quaint paradise, by the west end of St. George's church. They were singing within; and by a strange chance the tune was St. George's "Edinburgh," which bears the name, and was first sung in the choir of that church. "Who is this King of Glory?" went the voices from within; and, to John, this was like the end of all Christian observances, for he was now to be a wild man like Ishmael, and his life was to be cast in homeless places and with godless people.

It was thus, with no rising sense of the adventurous, but in mere desolation and despair, that he turned his back on his native city, and set out on foot for California, with a more immediate eye to Glasgow.

**CHAPTER IV.  
The Second Sowing.**

It is no part of mine to narrate the adventures of John Nicholson, which were many, but simply his more momentous misadventures, which were more than he desired, and, by human standards, more than he deserved; how he had reached California, how he was rooked, and robbed, and beaten, and starved; how he was at last taken up by charitable folks, restored to some degree of self-dependency, and installed as a clerk in a bank in San Francisco, it would take too long to tell; nor in these episodes were there any marks of the peculiar Nicholsonian destiny, for they were just such matters as befell some thousands of other young adventurers in the same days and places. But once posted in the bank, he fell for a time into a high degree of good fortune, which, as it was only a longer way about to fresh disaster, it behooves me to explain.

It was his luck to meet a young man in what is technically called a "dive," and thanks to his monthly wages, to extricate this new acquaintance from a position of present disgrace and possible danger in future. This young man was the nephew of one of the Nob Hill magnates, who run the San Francisco stock exchange, much as more humble adventurers, in the corner of some public park at home, may be seen to perform the simple artifice of pea and thimble; for their own profit, that is to say, and the discouragement of public gambling. It was thus in his power—and as he was of grateful temper—it was among the things that he desired—to put John in the way of growing rich, and thus, without thought or industry, or so much as understanding the game at which he played, but by simply buying and selling what he was told to buy and sell, that plaything of fortune was presently at the head of between eleven and twelve thousand pounds, or, as he reckoned it, of upward of sixty thousand dollars.

How he had come to deserve this wealth, any more than how he had formerly earned disgrace at home, was a problem beyond the reach of his philosophy. It was true that he had been industrious at the bank, but no more so than the cashier, who had seven small children and was visibly sinking in decline. Nor was the step which had determined his advance—a visit to a dive with a month's wages in his pocket—an act of such transcendent virtue, or even wisdom, as to seem to merit the favor of the gods. From some sense of this, and of the dizzy see-saw— heaven high, hell deep—on which men sit clutching; or perhaps fearing that the sources of his fortune might be insidiously traced to some root in the field of petty cash; he stuck to his work, said not a word of his new circumstances, and kept his account with a bank in a different quarter of the town. The concealment, innocent as it seems, was the first step in the tragedy of John's existence.

Meanwhile he had never written home. Whether from diffidence or shame, or a touch of anger, or mere procrastination, or because, as we have seen, he had no skill in literary arts, or because, as I am sometimes tempted to suppose, there is a law in human nature that prevents young men, not otherwise beasts, from the performance of this simple act of piety, months and years had gone by and John had never written. The habit of not writing, indeed, was already fixed before he had begun to come into his fortune, and it was only the difficulty of breaking this long silence that withheld him from an instant restitution of the money he had stolen, or, as he preferred to call it, borrowed. In vain he sat before paper, attending on inspiration. That heavenly nymph, beyond suggesting the words "my dear father," remained obstinately silent; and presently John would crumple up the sheet and decide, as soon as he had "a good chance," to carry the money home in person. And this delay, which is indefensible, was his second step into the snares of fortune.

Ten years had passed and John was drawing near to thirty. He had kept the promise of his boyhood, and was now of a lusty frame, verging toward corpulence; good features, good eyes, a genial manner, a ready laugh, a long pair of sandy whiskers, a dash of an American accent, a close familiarity with the great American joke, and a certain likeness to a R-y-I-P-r-a-g-e, who shall remain nameless for me, made up the man's externals as he could be viewed in society. Inwardly, in spite of his gross body and highly masculine whiskers, he was more like a maiden lady than a man of twenty-nine.

It chanced one day, as he was strolling down Market street on the eve of his fortnight's holiday, that his eye was caught by certain railway bills, and in very idleness of mind he calculated that he might be home for Christmas if he started on the morrow. The fancy thrilled him with desire, and in one moment he decided he would go.

There was much to be done; his portmanteau to be packed, a credit to be got from the bank, where he was a wealthy customer, and certain offices to be transacted for that other bank in which he was an humble clerk; and it chanced, in conformity with human nature, that out of all this business it was the last that came to be neglected. Night found him not only equipped with money of his own, but once more, as on that former occasion, saddled with a considerable sum of other people's.

Now it chanced there lived in the same boarding-house a fellow-clerk of his, an honest fellow, with what is called a weakness for drink—though it might, in this case, have been called a strength, for the victim had been drunk for weeks together without the briefest intermission. To this unfortunate John entrusted a letter, with an enclosure of bonds, addressed to the bank manager. Even as he did so he thought he perceived a certain haziness of eye and speech in his trustee; but he was too hopeful to be stayed, silenced the voice of warning in his bosom, and with one and the same gesture committed the money to the clerk, and himself into the hands of destiny.

I dwell, even at the risk of tedium, on John's minutest errors, his case being so perplexing to the moralist; but we have done with them now, the roll is closed, the reader has the worst of our poor hero, and I leave him to judge for himself whether he or John has been the less deserving. Henceforth we have to follow the spectacle of a man who was a mere whiptop for calamity; on whose unmerited misadventures not even the humorist can look without pity, and not even the philosopher without alarm.

That same night the clerk entered upon a bout of drunkenness so consistent as to surprise even his intimate acquaintances. He was speedily ejected from the boarding-house; deposited his portmanteau with a perfect stranger, who did not even catch his name; wandered he knew not where, and was at last hove-to, all standing, in a hospital at Sacramento. There, under the impenetrable alias of the number of his bed, the capulous being lay for some more days unconscious of all things, and of one thing in particular: that the police were after him. Two months had come and gone before the convalescent in the Sacramento hospital was identified with Kirkman, the absconding San Francisco clerk; even then, there must elapse nearly a fortnight more till the perfect stranger could be hunted up, the portmanteau recovered, and John's letter carried at length to its destination, the seal still unbroken, the enclosure still intact.

Meanwhile, John had gone upon his holidays without a word, which was irregular; and there had disappeared with him a certain sum of money, which was out of all bounds of palliation. But he was known to be careless, and believed to be honest; the manager besides had a regard for him; and little was said, although something was no doubt thought, until the fortnight was finally at an end, and the time had come for John to reappear. Then, indeed, the affair began to look black; and when inquiries were made and the penniless clerk was found to have amassed thousands of dollars, and kept them secretly in a rival establishment, the stoutest of his friends abandoned him, the books were overhauled for traces of ancient and artful fraud, and though none were found, there still prevailed a general impression of loss. The telegraph was set in motion; and the correspondent of the bank in Edinburgh, for which place it was understood that John had armed himself with extensive credits, was warned to communicate with the police.

Now this correspondent was a friend of Mr. Nicholson's; he was well acquainted with the tale of John's calamitous disappearance from Edinburgh; and putting one thing with another, heated with the first word of this scandal, not to the police, but to his friend. The old gentleman had long regarded his son as one dead; John's place had been taken, the memory of his faults had already fallen to one of those old aches, which awaken again indeed upon occasion, but which we can always vanquish by an effort of the will; and to have the long lost resuscitated in a fresh disgrace was doubly bitter.

"Macewen," said the old man, "this must be hushed up, if possible. If I give you a check for this sum, about which they are certain, could you take it on yourself to let the matter rest?"

"I will," said Macewen. "I will take the risk of it."

"You understand," resumed Mr. Nicholson, speaking precisely, but with ashen lips, "I do this for my family, not for that unhappy young man. If it should turn out that these suspicions are correct, and he has embezzled large sums he must lie on his bed as he has made it." And then looking up at Macewen with a nod, and one of his strange smiles: "Good-by," said he; and Macewen, perceiving the case to be too grave for consolation, took himself off, and blessed God on his way home that he was childless.

**CHAPTER V.  
The Prodigal's Return.**

By a little after noon on the eve of Christmas John had left his portmanteau in the cloak-room, and stepped forth into Prince's street, with a wonderful expansion of the soul, such as men enjoy on the completion of long-nourished schemes. He was at home again, incognito and rich; presently he could enter his father's house by means of the pass-key, which he had piously proscribed through all his wanderings; he would throw down the borrowed money; there would be a reconciliation, the details of which he frequently arranged; and he saw himself, during the next month, made welcome in many stately houses at many frigid dinner parties, taking his share in the conversation with the freedom of the man and the traveler, and laying down the law upon finance with the authority of a successful investor. But this programme was not to be begun before evening—not till just before dinner, indeed, at which meal the reassembled family were to sit roscate, and the best wine, the modern fatted calf, should flow for the prodigal's return.

**A Ballad and Its Story.**

The famous ballad of "Auld Robin Gray" was written by Lady Anne Lindsay, daughter of the earl of Balcarres, when she was twenty-one years old, but it was not for fifty years later that she told how she came to write it. Robin Gray was a shepherd on her father's farm, and for something he had done she wished to immortalize him. So she began this ballad, but before she finished it she asked her little sister for her advice about it. She said she was making a ballad about distress in humble life; she was bringing sorrows upon her heroine's head; she had sent her Jamie to sea, broken her father's arm, caused her mother to fall ill, and given her auld Robin Gray for a lover. "I want her to have a fifth sorrow. Now what shall I do?" "Steal the cow, Annie," was the little girl's reply. And accordingly Lady Anne completed the round of Jennie's troubles by having the cow stolen away.

**Legal Lore.**  
John Jones recently passed his examination and is now a member of the New York bar. His strong card is in getting the truth out of witnesses. The following is a sample of his system of cross examination:  
"Are you a married man?"  
"No, sir; I am a bachelor."  
"Will you please tell the court and jury how long you have been a bachelor, and what were the circumstances that induced you to become one?"  
—Texas Siftings.

**Electric Light Baths.**  
Electric light baths are among the latest inventions. The necessary parts of such a bath are a cabinet which will enclose the entire body except the head, and fifty electric lamps of sixteen-candle power, or 110 volts, arranged about the body in groups, with a separate switch for each group. The light is thrown on a section at a time, making the patient frisky, and browning the skin like an ocean bath.

**THE AGRICULTURAL WORLD**

**SOME INTERESTING SUBJECTS FOR RURAL READERS.**

**How to Clear Timbered Land— Have you an Ice House?—When Bees Need Feeding—Breeding and Rearing Horses— Instructive Pointers.**

**How to Clear Timber Land.**

The first thing to be done after all the valuable timber has been taken off is the "underbrushing," which may be done as well in winter when the ground is frozen, as the bushes will then cut easily. The usual way is to cut all saplings up to five or six inches in diameter, but I only cut the brush and smallest saplings, because the ax is liable to become dull from coming in contact with the ground, and it does not pay to chop large timber with a dull ax.

**When Bees Need Feeding.**

How can you tell whether or not bees need feeding?—C. G. R.

The question, doubtless, refers to bees in winter quarters. As a rule, there should be no need for such a question to arise, for bees should go into winter quarters with more than enough stores to carry them through, so that there need be no attention paid to the matter until spring.

**Have You an Ice House?**

We hope none of our agricultural readers are so unwise as to have neglected to provide for laying in a store of ice for the coming summer, provided they live where ice is procurable. But if any have been so improvident, let them be so no longer. There is time enough yet to build a house and fill it with ice.

**Management of Sheep.**

One day of the Wisconsin institute was given to sheep. In speaking of the management of breeding sheep, Robert Miller of Brougham, Can., said a sheep raiser should know his sheep and carefully watch them daily. The flock should not be too large, and should be sorted according to age, size and condition. The change from winter quarters to spring fields should be carefully made, with a gradual change of feed at the same time. There was a great deal to be learned about the care of sheep in very hot weather. At all times they should be fed so as to drink as small a quantity of water as possible.

**Instructive Pointers.**

Many losses are made by not getting all the cream out of the milk and by not getting all the milk out of the feed.

**Do You Get All the Cream There is in Milk?**

It is easy to lose a pound or two of butter a week from each cow by not setting the milk properly.

**One Advantage with the Better Grades of Cattle is that There is Less Competition from Overproduction with these than with the lower grades.**

**Breeding native cows to a pure bred bull, it is rarely the case that he does not strongly impress his good qualities upon his offspring.**

**Get things in as compact shape as possible about the barn and outbuildings and be ready for the soft time of spring.**

**Don't stop the winter rations off short as soon as you see the first glimmer of green grass in the pastures. There is not a great deal of nutrition in the very young grass.**

**There are two favorable factors in the outlook for the cattle trade. The opportunity for establishing great Western ranches is continually narrowing, and our exports are growing.**

**Feed contains just so much milk; to get this milk we must use the feed in such a way that it will be readily eaten and digested; then, if the cows eating the feed are of the right kind we will get all of the milk.**

**An abundant supply of pure water on the farm is essential both for health and profit. If you have not such it might pay to invest some of your surplus earnings toward securing it. While you are about it get a supply that will amply suffice for the house, the stock and the garden.**

**No branch of agriculture demands a higher intelligence on the part of its followers than does successful horticulture. Such as feel their ability to rise above the ordinary level could hardly do better than to take up this work.**

**A small farmer can hardly afford to load himself up with expensive machinery for cultivating every separate crop. Very often the farmers of a neighborhood can unite to advantage in such purchases. Practice co-operation when you can.**

**One of the surest methods of conserving the fertility of the farm is to observe the proper rotation of crops. No farmer can afford to neglect this no matter how rich his land may be. Where it has been attempted the results have always been disastrous.**

During the discussion, ensilage and rape both came to the front as sheep foods. Ensilage in proper proportion was excellent. Mr. Miller, when called upon to give his experience with rape, said that he had never lost a sheep by going on rape. He let them stay in the pasture continuously, and they seemed to thrive on it.

**Breeding and Rearing Horses.**

There is a tendency among stock raisers to breed the class of animals most in demand on the market at the particular time. Ordinary horses have not sold well during the past year. Farmers are often at the mercy of local buyers who fall to make reasonable distinctions in the prices paid for different grades of animals. Breeders who have given the care and expense necessary to build up a good stock of horses feel discouraged when obliged to sell their animals at the prices paid for inferior ones. High merit is occasionally found in animals of comparatively unknown breeding. When three or more generations of ancestry possess nearly all the desirable qualities, do not hesitate to claim excellence. Horses can be kept on grass and hay mainly after two years of age if they are not worked. Do not sell a good one for a poor price; it will pay to carry it over a year. Worked steadily and moderately they increase in value until eight years old. It is economy to hold desirable colts this year, working them two or three times a week. They will be in a good condition to sell a year hence. There will be a great decrease in breeding in 1893-4 and in 1895 and the following years the effects will probably be seen. There never was a better outlook for careful horse breeders than at the present. High stallion fees are as a rule not desirable, but if they restrict breeding to only sound mares of good disposition, this apparent bar to progress may prove a blessing to the business.

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**GOTHENBURG BUS.**

THRIVING CITY OF WESTERN BRASKA AT THE FRONT.

Climate Like That of California.  
Rolling Mill, Paper Mill and  
Industries in Progress—Manufacturing  
Industry.

GOTHENBURG, Neb., April 15.—Strong point that has been made in relating the excellent climate of great state. The fact is we have been reduced to the extreme of the climate as one of our admirers. This was called vividly to mind by the remarks of a gentleman who has spent many years in Texas. He was standing in front of the Houston Hotel talking with some strangers. Everyone was remarking on the magnificent sunshine, the fresh air and the beautiful view of valley and river in sight.

"The climate of Gothenburg is a delightful surprise to a Texan. He is accustomed to the orange and magnolia groves south. It is refreshing and braces. Instead of reducing energy, it increases it. I find out life it builds it up. I find just humid enough and not enough for robust, inspiring life."

Every word was true. The full days of warm, joyous youth that we are having was never enjoyed in any tropical country. It had the same she would spend hundreds of dollars calling attention, expecting to sell them the highest bidder.

The stream of strangers here is new, new factories and blocks are the only topics of conversation. If three men stand together one of them is sure to have planned a new building.

Mr. David Kemlo of New York here to arrange for a straw paper mill.

Mr. A. S. Hills of Philadelphia made a proposition to the water company to build 100 houses.

Mr. Fred H. Holton of Boston arrived yesterday. His copper mill will be the only one west of Troy, Mich. Five of the last five cars of machinery for his foundry are on the way and will arrive this week.

The surveying corps of the Gothenburg, Broken Bow & Velasco Road were surveying the crossing of the Union Pacific to-day.

The members of the Commercial Union are making preparations to give attention to Green's farmer exponents, who are to arrive here on Wednesday, April 18.

Gothenburg business men and estate men pride themselves on the fact that no stranger, visitor or tourist is ever importuned to buy property. They are proud of the thrift, the business and the water power, and wish it were great for fifty places in our State to have great or greater powers as they assure our prosperity.

Four new brick buildings have been decided upon this week. They will be built by our own merchants, any traveling man, and he will see that Gothenburg's business is splendid and growing.

**Here's a Question.**

"Has the Jew, with his reputation as the champion of prosperity, not done in the Yankee more than his fair share? Has he not in reality been outstandingly successful in his efforts to build a better world than a dreary one?" The foregoing inquiry appears in the American Hebrew and the inquirer is Max J. Ullman, New Bedford, Mass.

**DO YOU  
COUGH  
DON'T DELAY  
TAKE  
KEMP'S  
BALSAM  
FOR COUGHS  
AND COLDS**

It Cures Croup, Whooping Cough, Sore Throat, Croup, Bronchitis, Asthma, and all ailments of the Respiratory System in First Stage, and a cure is guaranteed. Price 25 cents. Sold by all druggists and grocers. Large bottles 50 cents and \$1.00.

**NOT WITHSTANDING reported hotel extension, the practically proof "GREAT EASTERN," at 60th and Lawrence Av., Chicago, the largest in the world.**

**Will book guests on the European plan at \$1.50 each, two in room. Write for information to Copeland Townsend, (formerly) Manager, Palmer House, Chicago.**

**INSURE in the Farmers and Merchants Mutual Company of Lincoln, Nebraska, and other companies. 1,500 license paid to Nebraska people since 1880.**

**YOUNG MEN** John Telegraphy and Business Management. Write J. D. BROWN, Chicago, Ill.

**Eighty-Eight Degrees Below Zero.** The coldest known spot on the earth's surface is on the Eastern slope, a rising mountain that runs down to the water's edge, on the eastern side of the Lena river, in Eastern Siberia. The spot in question is nine and a half miles from Serkerekooof, about latitude 67 north and longitude 134 east.

Wolkoff, director of the Russian meteorological service, gives the minimum temperature of the place as being 88 degrees below zero. It is a place of most perpetual calm. In the mountains near by, where windy weather is the rule, it is not nearly so cold.