HAD A ROW.

We two had a row,
Somehow.
Perhaps she was fretful, and I didn't care,
Or perhaps I did something that she couldn't bear,
Or perhaps a depression advanced in the air;
But however that be the disturbance was there
And a storm began to brew,
At first it muttered,
And hard words were uttered;
Then harder and harder until things grew
Supremely unpleasant for each of the two
And I came to think
We reached the brink
Of the grave of a friendship whose loss we should rue,
So I begged her pardon—what else could I do?
She declared she was sorry—I hope it was true.
And the tempest's frown,
Smoothed slowly down,
And it rumbled and sighed,
And whispered and died
Away.
Yet all I can say
To this day,
Is—we two had a row
Somehow.
But couldn't make out
What brought it about,
And I don't know now.

SAVED BY A MADSTONE.

"Mind how you go pokin' round 'mong ther rocks and bushes, or you'll come to yer death," was the impressive warning of an old "Craker" woman from whom Paul Myratt had obtained shelter the previous night, and as he was about to resume his journey.

An employe of the Smithsonian, experienced and fearless, though still young, he was exploring the mountain regions of North Carolina in search of novelties in geology, fauna and flora, and smilingly questioned in return:

"In what shape, my kind friend?"

"Waal, ther mountinns, 'specerly ther out-of-ther-way spots, am jest erlive with rattlesnakes and pilots, and ther bite am always more deadly at this time of year than any other."

"Yes, I know that is the popular belief with regard to August, though very much to be questioned. Blind? When the skin they are shedding is over their eyes, not otherwise I fancy. But have no fears about me. I am accustomed to them, and shall not be deterred from adding a few rattles to my collection if chance offers for large ones."

"Thar be plenty on 'em monstr'us—jest monstr'us," was answered with a shudder, for a long life in the locality had not in the least diminished her fear.

Bidding his kind friend farewell, Paul Myratt took a little path that led still deeper into mountains. But he did not neglect the warning, and cut a stout, ash staff, though having much greater faith in its weight and toughness than any power of its peculiar hypnotism as applied to any species of the Cratalus horridus.

Easily killed were the few he chanced upon, for the stories of numbers found are much larger than the reality, and he sauntered carelessly along, knocking off a fragment of rock, picking a flower, watching the birds or listening to their song until the westerning of the sun gave warning of the nearness ef night.

"Not a very enticing spot to camp," he mused, as he looked over the rocky surroundings, the multiplicity of dark, wide seams and cavernous openings, most unquestionably the home of scaly enemies of mankind. "Ah, a town within easy travel. That is favorable and timely, and I was not mistaken, there are mutterings of thunder in the distance and the wind and clouds indicate a storm.

Carefully noting the direction, he gathered up his bundle of travelling conveniences and started. Soon he reached a bold bluff, and was compelled to travel along its brink until he could discover some path that permitted descent. But suddenly and fearfully his footsteps were arrested, first by the sight of an easle, a girl sketching, with her long brown hair, of the peculiar shade that readily melts into gold, floating uncovered, and then by the fearful vision of an immense rattlesnake that had crawled from an opening undiscovered to near her feet, and was coiled for its deadly stroke!

He shouting in warning, but his voice was lost in the reverberating echoes; he detached and threw a fragment of rock, but it fell short of its destined mark and dropped into a yawning chasm; he ran with all his swiftness, but the distance was much too great for him to cover in time to save the unconscious girl from the poisonous frangs. For one stroke of his stout staff he would have given all of his earthly posessions; now it was as useless to him as the tree from which it had been severed.

He saw the snake strike, its efforts to get loose whan the curved teeth became entangled in the dress the white hand fall, as to brush away some unknown intruder, saw it bitten, that and the arm, again and again, and then as the girl realized the horror of her situation, heard the most agonizing screams.

A little later (though it seemed to the young naturalist as the lapsing of hours) he reached the spot of the terrible combat disabled the loathsome and furious reptile with a single blow, flung it far away, and raised the fainting girl in his arms. Whiter than a lily, and as helpless as a crushed one, she lay there, with her lips trembling with sobs, bosom heaving convulsively, and eyes fixed upon him with the most pleading appeal for help.

"My God!" he groaned, as he interpreted her wishes, "I am utterly without the means to aid you. Even the customary antidotes I recklessly flung away as a useless burden. Now I would give my life for them. But have courage! We can surely reach the village in time to save your life, though not you from suffering. Is it very far?"

"No," was answered with contracted throat and husky voice; "no, but death is much nearer, and I shall never see father or mother again."

"I pray it may not be as you fear, and we must hurry along as rapidly as possible. You know the shortest way?"

"Yes," with painful utterance.

"Wait yet a moment," he said aloud, and then mentally, "the chance is desperate and dangerous. My life may be the forfeit, but I cannot see one so young and fair die the most fearful of deaths without risking it to save, at least relieve, her."

Trained in the school he had been, familiar with toxicology, especially the venom of serpents, none knew better than he the dangerous task he was about to undertake. A single abrasion of mouth or tongue, a carious tooth through which poison could be absorbed, would be as fatal and a more sudden death than bullet or knife. Yet there was nothing of hesitation after that first shuddering thought. Wiping away the bloody ooze from the almost invisible punctured wounds he applied his lips to to them one after the other and sucked out the poison, freeing his mouth from time to time, and not desisting until assured the work was thoroughly done, that he could do no more. Then, and without giving heed to the faintly whispered thanks, he put his arm around the girl and hurried her forward.

But not long could she direct the way to travel, not long could her limbs sustain her. Another terror came to break down the little remaining nerve and strength, and she faltered, reeled and fell. She had gone through as much of mental and physical suffering as nature would endure, had gone as far as she could.

With the rain descending as if the windows of heaven had been flung wide open and a second flood came to earth, with the thunder rolling and crashing above their heads and shaking the solid rocks beneath their feet, with the lightning flashing and blinding, she lay, scarcely able to move hand or foot for self-preservation. But no fear of rattlesnakes then. Before the terrible majesty of the elemental war even they had fled terrified to the lowest depths of their noisome dens, and cowered in such fear as instinct gives, instict that in many cases is twin brother of reason.

Though despairing of saving the fleeting life, yet driven nearly frantic by being alone with the girl in the now dense darkness and now blinding glare, Myratt lifted her again in his strong arms and dashed forward. Guided by the lights of the village he proceeded, whispering hope he did not feel, receiving moaning whispers for a time and then no recognition.

The girl was beyond speech! He saw by the flames of lightning that the bitten hand and arm had swollen to an immense size, that upon the delicate flesh were reproduced the spots of the serpent, felt that the beating of the heart was growing fainter and fainter, that the hot breath was becoming less and less, knew that in a little time he would be carrying a corpse, beautiful but an hour before, the loathsome, discolored and hideous beyond the conception of those who have never seen such a death.

Straining every nerve, panting from speed and worn with his burden, Myratt still kept on, reached the path that led down to the village, and was about to descend, when he was met by a party anxiously searching for the lost girl.

"Bitten by a rattlesnake? Dying or dead? Stained and spotted with the horrible leprosy of the serpent poison? Oh, my God! it is terrible," groaned the poor father as the insensible form was placed within his arms and the fearful tale told.

But the grief was as nothing to the wild agonized sobbing and shrieking of the loving mother, when she saw her darling brought in and laid upon a bed, as hideous and repulsive as she had last seen her bright and beautiful.

Physicians came, but their experience and wisdom availed little. The poison had spread rapidly, been strongly incorporated with the circulation, the action of the heart paralyzed until it had almost ceased to beat. Ammonia, iodine, everything to be thought of as an antidote, hydratic and palliative medicine were tried without giving relief. The hideous spots grew larger and more distinct; sinuous, twisting, creeping motions took the place of natural ones, and hand and limb became more swollen. The sufferings of the stricken girl became so terrible as to cause several to be carried fainting from the room, others to turn ghastly pale, grow sick and eagerly rush into the open air.

"Can nothing be done? Oo, my poor, dear child!" sobbed the heart-broken mother, still clinging to the writhing form, still clinging to the hope long given up by all others,

"Nothing," came answered back from the firmly compressed lips of the physician-in-chief. "We have exhausted all our knowledge, all our skill, but—"

He motioned to his associates, drew them aside and a whispered consultation was held.

"Chloroform" was the only word that reached the strained ears of Paul Myratt, but it was enough. He knew but too well what it portended; that they were discussing the propriety of easing her terrible sufferings and freeing her pure soul from the rotting clay by a long, deep anæsthetic slumber, by one that would never be broken in this world.

It was so decided, and while one of their number was absent procuring the powerful chemical combination, they again gathered around their patient and watched the spasms of pain, the horrible writhings and contorsions, with professional interest, though not with tearless eyes. Other than human would they have been could they have done so.

In the midst of the stillness that was worse than that of death, a silence to which sound would come as the falling of clods upon the coffin lid, a stranger entered. So wild with excitement was the town that no one could escape hearing of the accident. In the great sorrow his presence was unnoticed. For a single instant he remained, then went out into the now clear and tranquil night, and mounting a horse rode away at a dangerous speed. His absence was brief, but even as he again entered the physicians were holding the sometimes easing, the destined to be fatal anæsthetic for the stricken girl to breathe.

Hastening to the side of the bed the stranger almost rudely pushed the men of medicine aside, and exclaimed in a voice commanding, though intensely permeated with emotion:

"Cease! Why would you commit even professional murder when the poor child may be saved? Stand back and give me room."

They looked upon him as a madman, and would have laid violent hands upon and thrust him out, but the distracted mother flung herself upon her knees and at his feet, and as one clinging to a straw when sinking for the last time, begged him to save the life of her child.

"I will, God helping me," he answered firmly and positively. "Human means, seconded by the prayer of faith, can accomplish great results."

He took a little package from his pocket. When the wrappings had been removed there was exposed to view a small, dark grayish something, scarcely more than an inch long and less in width and thickness.

"The madstone! The madstone!" burst from many lips. "Now may heaven be thanked."

"Be silent," sternly commanded the stranger, "and control yourselves, whatever comes."

"And my child, my darling will live!" exclaimed the almost exhausted mother.

"She is in the hands of the Great Physician," was answered, reverently. "By mysterious ways now, as in the olden time, He can heal and raise the dead, if such be His holy will."

The followers of Æsculapius looked on with scornful eyes and curling lips, and the young naturalist with absorbing interest, as the stone was applied to the bite of the serpent. Neither had ever seen one of the almost fabulous articles before, and doubted its reputed power. For a moment it was held lightly on the swollen and discolored flesh, then it clung firmly and pressed deeply of its own volition, and screams, prolonged and of indescribable agony, burst from the ashy and purple lips of the girl.

"It adheres—is sucking out the poison! Watch how it changes color," said the stranger, with wonderful self-control.

There was no denying the fact. The dull, blackish gray rapidly gave place to green, that deepened and brightened until the stone loosened its hold and fell into the awaiting hand. It was placed in warm water to disgorge and again applied, its power evidently less than at first, its green less pronounced until it absolutely refused to attach itself to the skin—had lost all its adhesive power.

From the first touch the screams of the girl had diminished, grown fainter and fainter, then entirely ceased, and when the madstone in its silent way told that its mission had been accomplished, she had sunk into a sound and healthy slumber.

"She will awake cured, will live," said the stranger. "Leave her now to the rest she needs, and morning and evening praise him whose mysteries are past finding out, the God of mercy, pity and love."

"And you?" was questioned, amid the tearful blessings of father and mother.

"A humble servant of the Christ crucified, the Redeemer and Saviour. He guided my wandering footsteps hither. He caused me to have knowledge of the whereabouts of this wonderful stone. I am but a simple instrument in his hand,"

A year later a young, blushing and happy bride stood at the altar of a Northern church. The same lips that had pronounced her cured from the virus of the deadly mountain rattesnake, pronounced her and Paul Myratt man and wife. She would have no other. As they entered the room prepared for them, and because hidden to the eyes of the public, she whispered to him upon whose arm she would lean lovingly for life.

"Paul, dearest, all honor to the madstone; all glory to the high power that gave it its wonderful charm; all thanks to the man that used it, who has given you to me; but in my heart I know it was to your lips I owe my life most of all. It was you who sucked the poison from my veins, and—"

"Your lips, darling, shall ever repay me with their sweetness—as they do now?"—William H. Bushnell. in Mercury.

Terre Haute Express: Parishioner—Which do you think is the better, wealth or fame?

Country Minister—Now, that is a fine question to come to me with, ain't it?

Through the Fire.

"Listener," in the Boston Transcript; remarks that great calamities are not altogether calamaitous, since they serve to bring into action some of the nobler qualities of human nature. Several years ago, he says, a young man set up in business and became indebted to a Lynn manufacturer for three or four hundred dollars. The business, and worse yet, the young man himself, proved to be a failure, and the manufacturer did not recover a cent of his money.

The young man's father was employed in the manufacturer's establishment, and took his son's misconduct so much to heart that he went to the office and voluntarily assumed the debt, requesting that a certain amount should be deducted from his wages, week by week, till the obligation was discharged.

The manufacturer objected; the son's debt was not the father's; the old man was poor, and he felt that it would be mean to take the money from him. The workman insisted upon it, however, and his employer finally gave his consent to the plan, but he privately instructed his cashier to keep the amount deducted from the old man's pay in an envelope by itself.

Time passed, and, as it happened, the very last deduction was made only a week or two before the recent fire in Lynn. In that fire the manufacturer's establishment was burned but the safe came out of the ruins unharmed, and in it was the envelope containing the amount with which the workman had cancelled his son's debt.

The manufacturer had it under his hand. He had lost heavily by the fire. The money was his; but he could not find it in his heart to keep it.

He inquired into the old man's circumstances and learned that his house, with everything in it, had been destroyed. The manufacturer sent for him.

"What are you going to do now?" hs asked the veteran employe.

"I don't know, sir; everything is gone."

"Well," said the manufacturer, "I believe you have just completed the payment of some four hundred dollars which you didn't really owe me."

"It was money, sir, that my son owed you."

"Yes, I know; but I have kept it by itself, and it came through the fire all right. I don't want it, and I want you to have it."

He produced the envelope. The old man's necessities overcame his pride, and full of gratitude, he accepted the money with which to make a new start in the world.

No man who knows what real wealth is, will believe that the manufacturer can ever be poorer for his generosity.

Dead Husbands.

An exchange contains this strange item: It is said that some of the chief railroads in the country employ special persons to inform the bereaved family when an employe has been killed. This does not seem incredible, considering that every year a small army of men meet their death on the track. At the union depot I met a veteran railroader the other day, who said he was from Reading, Pa., and had frequently discharged this painful office. In giving his experience, among other things he related the following: "It was only a few days ago that I went to a home and found the wife chatting and laughing with a neighbor's wife while she was at work among her rose bushes and flowers. She hadn't been married very long. I first asked her whether her husband was at home. She stared at me, became white as a piece of chalk, then shrieked and fell among the plants. I helped to carry her into the house. 'He's dead; my husband is dead. I know he has been killed!' 'Who told you?' I asked, when she revived. 'No one. I only thought so. Is it true?' It was easy, then, to finish my errand. I once called on a woman to tell her her husband had been killed by striking an over head bridge. This was three years ago near Philadelphia. The woman curled up her lip and replied: 'If he's been killed, heaven has revenged me. He abused me long enough. He'll abuse no more women now.' That was the easiest job in my line I ever had. Five minutes later the woman was in hysterics."

An Extraordinary Beard.

Philip Hensen, a planter residing near Corinth, Miss., is believed to be the possessor of the longest beard in the world. He is a man of unusual stature, standing nearly 6½ feet in his stockings; this notwithstanding, his beard reaches the ground when he is standing erect. A German residing in Chicago a few years ago boasted of his 60 inches of beard, but Hensen goes him several better, having many threads in his beard which measure over 70 inches. This remarkable growth is but 14 years old.

A School Mistress to be Sued.

Miss Ella Eaves, a school teacher at Upland, in Deleware county, has the bad fortune of getting into trouble through her mode of chastising her pupils. She is to be brought before a justice of the peace to answer for putting a piece of sticking plaster over a pupil's mouth to keep the child from talking in school. The boy's father says he must have redress for this wrong, as his son was not the guilty party.—Philadelphia Times.

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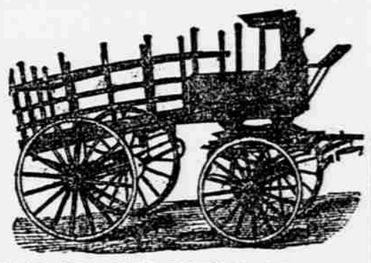

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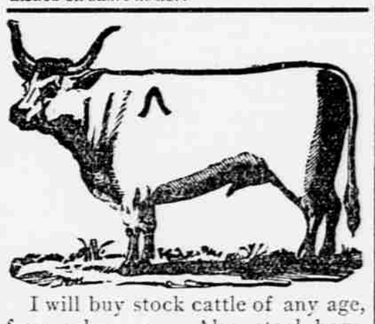

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