

seemed to say 'You, now, just trust yourself to us and we will do everything; we understand without fail how everything is done the same way for any man.' Is it any wonder Howells said Tolstoi's works were not a description of life but *life*.

Ilyitch becomes worse by almost imperceptible degrees. The idea of death is impressed for so long a time upon his wife and acquaintances that the hypocritic stock of sorrow which usually lasts through a funeral, becomes exhausted under this long strain and the real feelings crop out. His wife can't help showing that she wishes he were out of the way, and his colleagues calculate upon their chances for promotion in case of his death. A man, somehow, feels worse about dying himself than anybody else does, and Ilyitch does not lose any of this scarcely concealed impatience. People call, "asking after his health, for the sake of asking, and not from a desire for information"—in short, we have a perfect picture of what must be the feelings of consumptives or invalids who know they have a limited time to live, and that everybody knows it.

Another of the most skillful touches is the intense disgust inspired in him by the self sufficient, domineering bearing of his physicians, exactly analogous to his own conduct as a justice. One is often most disgusted by seeing one's own characteristics displayed by another person.

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The best thing Julian Hawthorn has written, and the one perhaps which will justify his claim to any of the ability of his illustrious father is "Archibald Malmaison." It is a psychological story, reinforced by such a formidable array of facts that one almost believes it. I presume it must be a kind of poetical license which permits an author to build up an appalling tale upon an alleged scientific truth, corroborating all his statements by foot notes and references having as honest a look as any in a standard history. Perhaps the demand for such exhaustive attempts to prove the story true may be accounted for as a survival of that trait so common to childhood—the desire for a "true" story. But isn't it odd that we will make, or allow an author to make for us, such an elaborate proof that a story is really true, when we know all the time it can't be so. Hawthorne's evidence is so assuring throughout and his remark at the end of the volume that he finds truth and facts hamper him and that in future he is going to stick to fiction, is given with such apparent frankness that I fell an easy victim to the plausibility of the story, and was only called back to a rational opinion by the reviews.

Archibald Malmaison is an English second son, who has inherited a little family trait of sleeping every alternate seven years (and he wasn't a policeman either). The first seven years of his blissful existence was passed in this somnambulistic condition. He moved about, of course, but had a general air of stupor about him which nothing could effect. At the end of seven years he wakened up, but to the surprise of his parents he had forgotten everything he had learned and had to be treated like a new born babe. He learned remarkably fast, however, and soon regained what he had lost, but very oddly the affections were all just reversed and he hated everybody he had formerly loved.

When he awoke at the end of each seven years he went right on completing the thought or sentence he had left unfinished seven years before. Of course the inconvenience of this trait is apparent at once.

In the family mansion was a room which had been occupied by the ancestor from whom Archibald had inherited his somnambulistic tendencies. That worthy gentleman had

acquired an unenviable reputation as a wizard on account of his supposed ability to disappear instantaneously, and as a proof of this accomplishment was quoted the fact that he had actually disappeared from this very room when there was no possible mode of egress, remained absent three days and then appeared as mysteriously as he had departed. The room came in for a lasting share of the prejudice which had been accorded to the ancestor and nobody but Archibald would have anything to do with it. He, however, took quite a fancy to it and accidentally discovered the spring which opened into a secret chamber.

Archibald had taken the usual fancy to the "lovely and accomplished daughter" of a neighboring nobleman and in fact they had the foundation for a mutual admiration society, but unfortunately Archibald was overtaken by one of his sleepy periods and when he awoke his adored one was the wife of a widower twice her age. Of course he didn't enjoy this at all. In a few years he met Kate and their intimacy was renewed. Shortly after Archibald shot her husband in a duel resulting from a long standing feud. He placed Kate in the secret chamber until the excitement should blow over and was then going to elope with her,—closed the doors and went to show himself so his servants would not connect him with the duel. While absent he was overcome by the sleep. At the end of the seven years he remembered that he had left Kate as he thought a few moments before and went back to the chamber. He found her a skeleton.

After reading the realists a novel like this is refreshing. It is so delightfully unreal.

#### A RACE TO THE FINISH.

I may be somewhat reckless. Recklessness is a characteristic of western boys who seldom take a back seat for eastern boys. But sometimes this spirit of daring leads to trouble; at least it did so in my case. I have not spoken much of a certain adventure or mishap rather, that I met with a year ago last winter, while visiting in ———; but as a warning to those who may be placed in similar circumstances, I will relate the story, and let it be taken for what it is worth.

To "prairie boys" coasting is a novelty. It was so to me as I learned to my cost. Perhaps the reader thinks it is an easy task to guide a sled down hill. But it is not so to an inexperienced coaster. It is far easier to let the sled take its own course while making the trip to the bottom of the hill, but the attendant risks are greater. Actual misfortunes instead of risks however were my lot.

To day toboggan slides are the rule, instead of the old time coasting ground. In this small town of ———, however, the young people still used the old time sleds; and a steep hill served as a coasting place.

Every evening the hill was crowded with young and old. There was no lack of sport. Every unfortunate coaster, who was upset or who by an unlucky effort, sent his sled grating sideways, and then went rolling down the hill in consequence, was greeted with shouts of laughter. The coasting place was about three quarters of a mile in length. The impetus gained by the time the bottom of the hill was reached, enabled the coasters to slide far out in the field below. Bonfires were kindled near the top of the hill, and gave a cheerful aspect to the scene.

Many of the sleds were large enough for two, and in fact each sled, whether large enough or not, carried a happy couple down the hill at a startling speed. But the young fellows of my acquaintance were by no means alarmed at