IMPROVEMENT OF SAFES.

The Days When a Watch Dog Gave the Greatest Security.

Safes That Were Not Safe in Themselves—Lugging Them Around to Sleeping Apartments—Some Incidents—The Present Modern Idea.

The safes of years ago, and not many years at that, what were they? Mere traps; easy to pass by burglars, an invitation to clerks who had any kind of access to them, and a prey to flames. A *Globe-Democrat* writer the other day sought information on this score. The years of the burglar, fire and mob-proof safe are few, indeed. The claim has been made for a long time that all safes and every make of safes were proof against almost every possible raid, the burglar, the flame or the mob; but amidst all the progress that has been made the fact remains that, until within very recent years, there has been very little faith in anything that would resist them. Where the burglar wanted to get he generally got, and he got there, too, within a very short time. A good, honest watchman, with a trusty gun, was better than any safe that had ever been dreamed of. As for anything that would resist a mob, that was out of all question. A force of arms stronger than the mob was the only thing there. To prevent the attack of the flames there have long been ideas, but the really fire-proof safes and vaults have been few in number, and until very recent years their builders were not absolutely satisfied that they were fire-proof until they had actually been tried by fire. The change from these conditions was very gradual indeed.

Not to go back to ancient history, the old safe, known to many people who are still in business to-day, was nothing but a heavy iron box, with a heavy iron door and a big heavy iron or brass key. The security of the safe was presumably increased as the key was larger and heavier. It was for all the world like the big heavy door key which a storekeeper formerly had to cart home with him, and which was at once a key and a weapon, as he could easily fell a man with it. The lock into which it fitted was more or less complicated in design, but it, too, was big and heavy, and offered the burglar abundant opportunity for picking it. The manufacturer of these safes should also have had a regular dog farm for the breeding and training of fierce watch dogs, one to go with each safe. In fact, bankers resorted to the use of dogs to such an extent that the name was given to the safe. The animals were trained to hold a position directly in front of the safe, and to allow no one to approach except their masters. More faith was put in a dog than in the cumbersome iron box, lock and key.

There are some good stories told of experiences with these safes. In one case small amounts of money were constantly being abstracted between the time the safe was locked up in the evening and the time it was reopened in the morning. The cashier could not understand it. He was certain of the amount of money in the safe; he was certain the key had not been out of his possession, as he had carried it home with him. The dog was a fierce and well-trained one, and was always at his post of duty, stretched out before the safe. He did not think it possible that he could have been tampered with by anybody; in fact, he would himself approach him cautiously at night. But still the money was being taken almost nightly. One night the bank was entered by a burglar; the dog was at him in a moment and held him until the watchman arrived and arrested him. The stealing stopped then for a couple of weeks, at the end of which time it began again. A closer watch was kept upon the bank, and it was found that the thief was a clerk in the place who had made friends with the dog, had worked the lock of the safe, for which he had had a key made, and had gone to it just whenever he wanted any spare change. The safe was no obstacle so long as he had the dog on his side.

A still more insecure safe, if that be possible, was spoken of by an old country banker who was met at the Boatmen's Bank. It was simply a heavy cedar box, covered with sheet-iron, strapped and locked with a padlock. It was an arrangement to put money and valuables in to prevent their getting dusty, and that was about all. The old gentleman in speaking of them laughed heartily as he recited how they put their money in the heavy box at the close of business. Then they would all take hold and join in lugging it upstairs, where they had their sleeping apartments. They didn't trust simply to the box or the dog, though they had both. "Those were the days," he said, continuing, "when banking meant something else than keeping your cash straight. You couldn't go home then and enjoy yourself with your family with the abandon you can now. The cashier was always just a little anxious to get around in the morning and see that everything was all right, and he was just a little bit sleepless in his bed, too, in fear that some one would break into his house and force him to give up the keys, for, of course, there weren't any combinations then."

The express safe, as it is known from being used largely by express companies, was largely used after this time, and during the wildcat money days, when the city banks made raids on the country banks for coin, and when the country people did everything in their power to prevent the representatives of the city banks from taking the coin away from country banks. This is simply an iron box, with a key of modified size. Then the banks had ordinary brick vaults, in which their safes were placed. The only difference was that the burglar would have to go through two locks, or through a brick wall, instead of through the one lock of the safe if it was allowed to remain in position in the regular banking-room. The dog was the security of the vault as well as of the safe. Many and many a time have the representatives of city banks taken silver to the amount of thousands of dollars from the country banks, packed in boxes, and slept on them at night, feeling that the money was as secure as in these safes and vaults. They were armed, ready for any foe and able to keep him back at least as long as he would be kept back by the ordinary lock and iron boxes, and then they had the possibility of making him bite the dust.

Since then the tumbler lock, the combination, the screw door, the burglar and the time locks have all come in, and even yet there are many safes and vaults which cannot be confidently relied upon as proof against the assault of burglars, flames, etc. Fire-proof and burglar-proof, however, are two entirely different things. There are several safes which are probably burglar-proof. The very latest is a globe within a globe, locked and unlocked by a combination, the turning of a small lever and the working of a large crank. The Boatmen's Bank has two of these, the largest capacity of any bank in the country. Cashier W. H. Thomson selected them, and he is satisfied that they have really got burglar, mob and fire-proof safes and vaults. The safes each weigh eighteen tons, and are made of chilled steel, or of some material known only to the manufacturer and inventor. It is so hard, however, that no impression can be made upon it. The gratings of the vaults are made of the same material. A short time ago some iron men were called in to put a shelf on the partition gratings, but though they had the most approved tools and worked half a day they failed to make an impression on the bars, and were compelled to give up the attempt and set the brackets on clamps. It may be that a burglar would know about it; but unmolested and perfectly equipped these men failed to make even a mark, except on the paint.

As stated, this latest of all late safes is a globe within a globe. It is, however, a peculiar arrangement. When locked it looks like a screw door contrivance. It is anything but that, however. First, there are two combinations. Then a little lever is turned, which acts with it, pressing a spring into the portions of the lock operated by the combinations, just as you would place the ends of three fingers together and press them apart by inserting a finger of the other hand between them. Then there is a large crank which must be turned to make all these parts work together. Any one of these operations may be gone through with separately and to the letter, but they will not budge the door. Fully unlocked, the inside globe is swung on a pivot, turning to different compartments, including one in which the lock works are placed. In this is clearly seen the mechanism which might have been thought of in the days when the watch dog was safer than the safe, but which was not then even dreamed of. Then the globe is turned around to the different compartments, showing a most surprising amount of space. In one compartment, when seen by the writer, there was about $1,250,000 in currency, largely $5 and $10 bills, and there was room for twenty times as much. And yet that was but one compartment. Turning again, the inside globe is broken, so it can not be turned, and turning it in position to lock and throwing it off the pivot, it is fitted so tightly that a piece of tissue paper could not be pushed between the globes.

Fire-proof and burglar-proof, as remarked, are two different things. Examining vaults in which these safes are placed, one would jump very naturally at the conclusion that they are burglar-proof. It would be a mistake, however. They are fire-proof, and would give a burglar an awful lot of work before he would get through, but no one ever attempts to make a burglar-proof vault. They are fire-proof, however, and an immense improvement over old ideas. In fact, the improvement in vaults is as marked as in safes. There are few now of the old brick ones. These have double doors, which are provided with flanges, worked by the combination, the flange of one pressing into a corresponding space in the other. The trouble is that fire causes the doors to swell, and this danger is averted by this arrangement. The vaults are also an improvement in the provisions made for handling books. There are no more of the old wooden shelves, to wear out books in pulling them out and shoving them in, and to tire a man out with their weight. There are now iron frames, with the books set on rollers, working so easily that a child could pull a sixty-pound book out with one hand.—Globe-Democrat.

[For the RECORD-UNION.]

THE WAY TO KISS.

A yarn I'll try and spin to you about the California girls,
Who try to appear just like a saint, and frizz their pretty curls.
There's one thing they are fond of sure—a kiss upon the sly;
The way they kiss I'll tell to you in the sweet bye-and-bye.
They like to hear some funny tales when walking by their side,
But when you try to steal a kiss their faces they're sure to hide.
But when you ask one for a kiss, I'm sure she won't say no;
Take my advice and try it on, it isn't wrong, you know.
The Placerville girl just bows her head and fixes her stylish lips
In a firm hard way, and lets them go in spasmodic little sips.
The Marysville girl takes off her specs, on her face she puts a smile,
And shapes her lips just like an egg and chewed her gum meanwhile.
The Auburn girl, the pride of C. A. L., in her clinging sort of way,
Absorbs it all in a yearnful yearn as big as a bale of hay.
The Colfax girl says not a word, and you'd think her kind of tame,
With her practical view of the matter in hand she gets there just the same.
The Truckee girl gets a grip on herself as she takes off her hat,
Then grabs her prize in a hugging way like a dog shaking a rat.
The Newcastle girl, so gentle and sweet, lets her lips meet the coming kiss
With a rapturous warmth and youthful soul floats away on a sea of bliss.
I've told you a yarn about how the girls kiss, and it sets one's brain to whirl,
But to reach the hight of earthly bliss you must kiss a Sacramento girl.
When close together you draw your lips till they meet with rapturous glow,
And the small boy hidden behind the fence cries, "Gallagher, let her go!"

—G. H. HALLAM.

Sacramento, January, 1892.

THE OPENING YEAR.

Your hand, New Year, since we must comrades be
Through the strange circles of the seasons four!
Plodding in lonely paths 'mid drifting snow
When days are dark, and whirling tempests roar
Will your strong guiding arm be 'round me pressed?
And when the ice-bars melt, and warm blue streams
Laugh in the sun, and leap toward the sea,
Will you, then, share my happy spring-time dreams—
The waking songs that birds and poets know?
And when red roses burn on bended sprays,
And lovers roam through shadowy woodland ways,
Will you keep kindly pace? and last when brown
Lie the sweet fields, and faded leaves come down,
And we are tired, both, and fain to rest—
Will you be friends with me, still true and near?
Then take my hand and heart, dear comrade year.

—Madeline S. Bridges, in the Ladies' Home Journal.

A Doubtful Compliment.

A man who was selling rugs stopped at a house on Howard street, at the door of which a woman was sweeping. A great pile of dirt had accumulated under her vigorous wielding of the broom.

"G'mornin'," said the man, "can I sell you a rug to-day?"

"No, you can't sell me anything," snapped the woman.

"Sorry," murmured the man, as he folded the rugs; "that's a powerful sight of dust you've got there."

"I guess I've swept the whole house," retorted the woman; "'taint every day I kin do the sweepin'."

"You must be the cleanest woman in the world," continued the silver-tongued rugseller.

"Dew tell," said the woman, leaning on her broom. "What makes you think so?"

"That pile of dust. My wife could sweep for a month and not get such a pile of dust as that."

She was flattered and looked at his rugs, with the result that she bought two; and as he went away he chuckled to himself:

"'Carn't sell me anythin'.' No? May be I didn't sell *her* and the rugs both. An' she never tumbled!"—Detroit Free Press.

IN 15 MINUTES.

I suffered severely with face neuralgia, but in 15 minutes after application of ST. JACOBS OIL was asleep; have not been troubled with it since. No return since 1882. F. B. ADAMS, Perry, Mo.

"ALL RIGHT! ST. JACOBS OIL DID IT."

IN RELIGION'S REALM.

Expressions from the Various Religious Newspapers.

The Religious Thought of the Day as Expressed in the Sectarian Press—Some Matters of Interest to Both Ministers and Laymen.

Referring to the reputed movement among Methodist divines in favor of a liturgy, the New York *Churchman* (P. E.) says: "The separation of Wesley's followers from the Church of England was an accidental breach which was no part of the purpose of that wonderful leader and organizer of religious revival. It was an unnatural division, and we regard its continuance as both unnecessary and unwise. If the Methodist General Conference shall be led to the adoption of liturgical worship, it will have taken away a formidable barrier to reunion. The Spirit of God is mighty to overcome obstacles, and even to remove mountains of difficulty, and when the time is ripe for union we believe the terms can be arranged without condescension or humiliation on the one side or the other. It is reported that the liturgy to be urged for adoption is that of 'Wesley, which differed but slightly from that of the Established Church.' We venture to suggest to our Methodist brethren that the American Book of Common Prayer, which has just been revised, would meet every requirement and prove the best practical solution of the question of a liturgy for America. We commend to the consideration of the leaders of thought among the Methodists the question whether they could, not, by accepting that book, which is perfectly free to them, help to make it the prayer-book of all American Christians."

The *Cumberland Presbyterian* of Nashville, Tenn., declares that the "Westminster confession is a monument of the past showing what the Presbyterian Church formerly believed—an historic document rather than a living creed. There is evidently a growing tendency in that church so to regard it. At least twenty-six of the 120 presbyteries that have voted express their preference for an entirely new creed. Our Presbyterian brethren are thus experiencing difficulty in the work of so amending their creed as to leave out what has ceased to be believed and to put in the larger faith of the present. The work of our own Cumberland Presbyterian creed-makers, both in 1814 and 1883, was somewhat embarrassed and marred by the same difficulty. They attempt to follow the Westminster model too closely, hence the creed they gave us is too long. There are thoughtful men in our church who believe that we ought at no distant day to have a new Cumberland Presbyterian confession of faith—that is, that the truth we hold should be stated in clearer language and briefer form, as well as in more logical order."

"The turning point between Christianity and infidelity is the position given to the Bible," says the *Presbyterian Banner* of Pittsburg, Pa. "Christianity receives it as God's Word, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Infidelity rejects its claim to divine inspiration and authority, and thus casts contempt upon it and upon all who receive the way of salvation which it makes known. And just in proportion as the unerring and absolute truthfulness of the Bible is denied is the spirit of irreverence toward God's revelation and unbelief fostered. The oft-repeated assertion that the inaccuracies and mistakes alleged by Drs. Briggs, Brown and Evans to be in the Bible only concern minor details and things within the 'sphere of the natural' and 'things subject to human observation,' gives away at once the whole argument in favor of its authority and truthfulness in regard to what is beyond and above human observation and knowledge. For at once the inquiry comes up, if the Bible is in error with respect to matters historical, and also as to what we are capable of examining and knowing for ourselves, what evidence have we to believe that it may not be in error as to God Himself, the incarnation and atonement of Christ, and many other things pertaining to salvation of which we know nothing except as we learn from the Word of God? To answer this satisfactorily is impossible."

"Archdeacon Farrar's last book contains a paragaph which is being printed in the newspapers as a sample of the 'new and sunnier view' which is beaming from the modern pulpit. He says: 'Where would be the popular teachings about hell if we calmly and deliberately erased from our English Bible the three words, "damnation," "hell" and "everlasting?" Yet I say unhesitatingly—I say, claiming the fullest right to speak with the authority of knowledge—I say, with the calmest and most unflinching sense of responsibility—I say, standing here in the sight of God and my Savior, and it may be of the angels and spirits of the dead, that not one one of these words ought to stand any longer in our English Bible, for in our present acceptation of them they are simple mistranslations.' Without entering upon any philological discussion," says the New York *Observer*, (Pres.), "we would remind all readers of this rhetorical outburst, that the Archdeacon is utterly mistaken if he fancies that he or any one else can change the teaching of the Word of God and the convictions of the Christian churches by putting three other words in the place of the three words 'damnation,' 'hell' and 'everlasting.' It is the old story of calling a sheep's tail a sheep's leg, and thereby making a sheep have five legs. Change these words into what you will, you have left the meaning which is determined by all the words in the passage where they occur, by all the words which precede and follow, by all the rest of the teachings of God's Word relating to the issues included in these terms."

Replying to an article by George S. Merriam in the *Christian Register* (Unit.), the New York *Christian Union* says: "For ourselves, we declare our profound conviction that religious truth is not to be arrived at by the mere study of 'known and near facts.' Religious truth is the product of life; or, to speak more accurately, religious truth and life are one. A profound philosophy underlies and is expressed by Christ's declaration, 'I am the truth.' No man can see religious truth clearly except as he is himself that religious truth. God is not a hypothesis devised to account for the phenomena of nature and of life; God is within the soul, and the heart knows God as it knows a friend, by the personal intermingling of two lives in one. We must be always ready to take this life into the light, to bring it before the reason, to subject it to critical analysis, to see if it harmonizes with the 'known and near facts,' but we do not and cannot obtain that life by the scientific method—by a study of those facts. It is not in them. Mr. Merriam is quite right in saying that we put the sovereignty of God at the foundation of our thought as emphatically as did Calvin; we may add as emphatically as does Browning:

Thou God art love; I build my faith on that.

We have more faith in the theology of the intuitions than in that of the senses; in the theology of the seers and prophets than in that of the scientists; in the theology of David, Isaiah, Paul, Plato, Dante, Tennyson, and Browning than in that of Aristotle, Laplace, Haeckel and Huxley. But the true creed will not be reached till the prophesyings of the one school are accepted as the known and near facts, to be studied, examined, and tested by the methods of the other school."

In relation to the alliance between the school boards of Fairbault and Stillwater, Minn., and the Roman Catholic Church, the St. Louis *Mid-Continent* (Pres.) remarks: "The Minnesota incident is one of the signs of the times which the American people should not be slow to discern. What has been undertaken in that State will be attempted in other States. One concession after another, each one apparently innocent and just, will be secured, resulting finally in a repetition of the Minnesota experiment, or something substantially equivalent thereto. We therefore agree with the Minneapolis association when it says that 'the duty to resist beginnings, always imperative, has special urgency in this matter, because our generous construction of religious liberty, our lack of centralization in both church and State, make it well nigh impossible to cope with the vigilant and strategic methods of the Roman Catholic Church in holding fast to every concession once gained, whether right or not.' Our people should awake to the fact that the restless activity of the Catholic hierarchy shows that our public school system is not in a state of absolute security. Upon our part there is imperative need of incessant watchfulness."

A STRANGE STORY.

Mark Twain On the Influence of Mind Upon Mind.

Now I come to the oddest thing that ever happened to me. Two or three years ago I was lying in bed, idly musing, one morning—it was the 2d of March—when suddenly a red hot new idea came whistling down into my camp and exploded with such comprehensive effectiveness as to sweep the vicinity clean of rubbishy reflections and fill the air with their dust and flying fragments. This idea, stated in simple phrase, was that the time was ripe and the market ready for a certain book; a book which ought to be written at once; a book which must command attention and be of peculiar interest—to wit, a book about the Nevada silver mines. The "Great Bonanza" was a new wonder then and everybody was talking about it. It seemed to me that the person best qualified to write this book was William H. Wright, a journalist of Virginia, Nevada, by whose side I had scribbled many months when I was a reporter there ten or twelve years before. He might be alive still; he might be dead; I could not tell; but I would write him, anyway. I began by merely and modestly suggesting that he make such a book; but my interest grew as I went on and I ventured to map out what I thought ought to be the plan of the work, he being an old friend, and not given to taking good intentions for ill. I even dealt with details and suggested the order and sequence which they should follow.

I was about to put the manuscript in an envelope, when the thought occurred to me that if this book should be written at my suggestion, and then no publisher happen to want it, I should feel uncomfortable; so I concluded to keep my letter back until I should have secured a publisher. I pigeon-holed my document, and dropped a note to my own publisher, asking him to name a day for a business consultation. He was out of town on a far journey. My note remained unanswered, and at the end of three or four days the whole matter had passed out of my mind. On the 9th of March the postman brought three or four letters, and among them a thick one whose superscription was in a hand which seemed dimly familiar to me. I could not "place" it at first, but presently I succeeded. Then I said to a visiting relative who was present:

"Now I will do a miracle. I will tell you everything this letter contains—date, signature, and all—without breaking the seal. It is from a Mr. Wright, of Virginia, Nevada, and is dated the 2d of March—seven days ago. Mr. Wright proposes to make a book about the silver mines and the Great Bonanza, and asks what I, as a friend, think of the idea. He says his subjects are to be so and so, their order and sequence so and so, and he will close with a history of the chief feature of the book, the Great Bonanza."

I opened the letter, and showed that I had stated the date and the contents correctly. Mr. Wright's letter simply contained what my own letter, written on the same date, contained, where it had been lying during the seven days since it was written.

There was no clairvoyance about this, if I rightly comprehend what clairvoyance is. I think the clairvoyant professes to actually *see* concealed writing, and read it off word for word. This was not my case. I only seemed to know, and to know absolutely, the contents of the letter in detail and due order, but had to word them myself. I translated them, so to speak, out of Wright's language into my own.

Wright's letter and the one which I had written to him, but never sent, were in substance the same.

Necessarily this could not come by accident; such elaborate accidents cannot happen. Chance might have duplicated one or two of the details, but she would have broken down on the rest. I could not doubt—there was no tenable reason for doubting—that Mr. Wright's mind and mine had been in close and crystal-clear communication with each other across 3,000 miles of mountain and desert on the morning of the 2d of March. I did not consider that both minds originated that succession of ideas, but that one mind originated them, and simply telegraphed them to the other.

I was curious to know which brain was the telegrapher and which the receiver, so I wrote and asked for particulars. Mr. Wright's reply showed that his mind had done the originating and telegraphing and mine the receiving. Mark that significant thing, now; consider for a moment how many a splendid "original" idea has been unconsciously stolen from a man three thousand miles away! If one should question that this is so, let him look into the cyclopedia and con once that curious thing in the history of inventions which has puzzled every one so much—that is, the frequency with which the same machine or other contrivance has been invented at the same time by several persons in different quarters of the globe. The world was without an electric telegraph for several thousand years; then Professor Henry, the American, Wheatstone in England, Morse on the sea, and a German in Munich, all invented it at the same time. The discovery of certain ways of applying steam was made in two or three countries in the same year. Is it not possible that inventors are constantly and unwittingly stealing each other's ideas whilst they stand thousands of miles asunder?—Mark Twain in Harper's Magazine.

The Wonders of Our Country.

If we would cease to depend so much upon other countries for our models of life and thought, we would have taken the first step toward the Americanism which should be, but is not, ours. We read a vast amount of the wonders of foreign lands; but very few writers—and still fewer reliable ones—tell us of the marvelous secrets of our own. Every intelligent youth knows that there are boomerang-throwers in Australia; but how many are aware that there are thousands of natives in the United States just as expert with the magic club as are the bush-men? All have read of the feats of the jugglers of India; but how many know that there are as good Indian jugglers within our own boundaries? How many young Americans could say, when some traveler recounted the exploits of the famous snake-charmers of the Orient, "Why, yes, we have tribes of Indians in this country whose trained charmers handle the deadliest snakes with impunity," and go on to tell the facts in the case? How many know that there are Indians here who dwell in huge six-story tenements of their own building? How many know that the last witch in the United States did not go up in cruel smoke above old Salem, but that there is still within our borders a vast domain wherein witchcraft is fully believed in?—Charles F. Lummis, in St. Nicholas.

Why It Was So.

He (accepted)—You say you were never engaged before?

She—Yes.

He—How does that happen? I thought all women usually had three or four engagements.

She (guilelessly)—Well, I presume I shall, too. You see this is the first chance I've had.

"My Daughter's Life

Was saved by Hood's Sarsaparilla," says Mr. B. B. Jones of Alma, Maine. "She had seven running sores in different places on her body, but since giving her Hood's Sarsaparilla she has become well, strong and healthy."

"POPPY."

[Written for the RECORD-UNION by Gale Braith.]

A little barefooted child is toddling down the dusty road. Such a pretty blue-eyed baby girl, upon whose rumpled, unprotected golden head the summer sun is pouring unmercifully.

Each chubby hand holds tightly to the corners of the tattered pinafore, which is filled to overflowing with gorgeous, fragrant wildflowers. One string of the faded blue bonnet is held between the little white teeth; the bonnet hangs loosely down her back with the other string trailing in the dust behind.

The sun becomes hotter and hotter—almost scorching the wee brown feet, which leave behind them at each step the imprint of five tiny dimples and a little round dot in the sand.

By-and-by the feet commenced to lag and wearily falter. The sweet lips part in a troubled sigh. The tired fingers relax their hold upon the ragged apron, from which the brilliant flowers are slowly dropping one by one. Standing still the mite looks around with a bewildered air.

"Poppy's tired; Poppy's lost," say the trembling little lips. "Wolf catch Poppy and eat her all up"—a frightened sob arises in her throat—"Poppy's 'fraid." And, then, all unheeding, the wildflowers fall in a heap at her feet, whilst the frightened baby sobs piteously. Instantly a great dog bursts through the bushes, and, with a gulp of dread, the child sits down, covering her face with both trembling hands. "Wuff, Wuff," barks the dog, coming with long, playful bounds toward her. The poor little creature moans with terror. "Oh, good wolf, please don't eat Poppy."

Then a gentleman on horseback rides quickly down the dust-white road, drawing rein beside the child and dog.

"Lie down, Rover! Quiet sir! For shame! See! you have frightened her." And in another instant he is off his horse and is holding the girl in his arms.

A woman with a long red cloak comes flying down the dusty road; "one of those confounded gypsies," growls the young man, still holding the trembling child in his arms. The handsome, dark-eyed gypsy girl breathlessly holds out her arms, "Pray, give her to me, sir. We thought she was lost."

But the child shrinks against her new friend's shoulder, "No, no; Poppy won't go. Bad Stelia; whips Poppy."

Half amused, half vexed, Dick Mowbray laughs. "Come, little one, won't you go to your sister?" But the child's arms clasp his handsome neck closer, whilst the sunny head is pressed against his shoulder. Then, impulsively, he asks, "Why not let me keep her? My wife wants to adopt a child."

The girl looks at him in wonder. "I don't know if her grandmother would be willing to part with her."

"Her grandmother! Has she then no mother?"

"No, her mother is dead these two years past."

"Where is your camp?"

"In the fir grove yonder."

"Good; I will go with you and have a talk with the old woman. What is the child's name?"

"Pasquelina, though for short we call her Poppy."

The young man pats the rumpled head on his shoulder reassuredly, and, slipping his disengaged arm through the horse's bridle, prepares to follow the girl to her people's camp.

A few questions asked, a few answered. A purse filled with silver and shining golden pieces is passed from a strong white hand, to be clasped greedily by five brown, wrinkled fingers, and Poppy, lucky Poppy, passes from her old comrades and leaves behind a vagabond's life, to turn, with her new protector, toward Mowbray Hall.

Mrs. Mowbray, a pale, fretful woman, some dozen years her husband's senior, received the new-comer in angry astonishment, and little Pasquelina was soon banished to the servants' quarters.

Fourteen years have flown apace. There is a mysterious shadow hanging and hovering over Mowbray Hall—a horrible, black shadow which is enveloping a fair, young girl, who has passed these fourteen years in neglected idleness, spending the most of her time amongst the servants since the day she came, a little barefooted child, to Mowbray Hall, poking her dainty fingers into various dainties, dipping mischievous little hands around the edges of shallow milk-pans, to convey thence the rich, yellow cream to her rosy mouth. Poor Poppy!

Love, love, you terrible, beautiful word, what sins, what crimes are you not guilty of? One moment raising us to the highest pinnacle of bliss; anon plunging us into the deepest abyss of black despair. Poppy, with her half-savage nature, now dimly realizes the act of folly for which she must now suffer. Poor, erring Poppy!

Two more years have taken wing. The warm, soft lights from the cosy fire flicker and dance upon the sunny curls of the pretty, brown-eyed child sitting upon the hearth-rug with plump little fingers busily employed in destroying a nude and battered doll, from whose body and limbs the sawdust is running in a dozen tiny streams.

The plain, though tastefully furnished, room is softly lighted. At the farthest end stands an upright piano, before which is seated a graceful, girlish form. She is singing in pure, strong tones an aria from "Norma."

As the last notes die away the gray-haired listener standing silent turns eagerly, patting her shoulder triumphantly.

"*Brava, brava;* your fame is assured." He touches the wick and the dimly burning lamp flares a little higher, lighting up the wondrously beautiful face of the performer as she turns smiling gladly around upon the music stool.

"*Brava*; wonderful," chuckled the old man; "to-morrow night will see you famous," and with a courtly, old-fashioned bow Signore Giovanni Pazzini takes her fair, slim fingers and presses them to his lips. "You will be the greatest, the most beautiful Norma the lyric stage has ever yet known," and once more bowing deeply, with the grace of old-time knighthood, the leader of the grand opera of V—— passes through the heavily portiered entrance.

Ere the curtains have closed upon him the girl arises, and, with a choking sob, quickly crosses the room. Perhaps, as she snatches the child from the rug, covering his sweet, fire-flushed face with quick, loving kisses, she strangely resembles that priestess whose airs she has just been rehearsing: "For your sake, my darling, my sweet."

The child clasps both little fat arms about his fair young mother's neck, murmuring in baby prattle, "Pitty, mamma, pitty, pitty, mamma." The soft, warm fingers pat her cheeks, and tangle themselves amid her glorious hair.

She presses him tightly, almost cruelly to her breast, and bursts into a passion of tears. "My baby, my love, my all," she moans, burying her wet face in the sweet, soft neck of the child who, half frightened by such an unexpected burst of grief, lays his curly head upon his weeping mother's shoulder, "Teddy break doli; Teddy sorry." The portieres are quickly parted, and a half smothered exclamation escapes the intruder, as, with swift, eager footsteps he stands beside them. A slight, startled scream, and the girl turns, clasping the child against her heart.

He holds out his arms imploringly. "Oh, love, love, won't you speak to me. I am here for you; for you I have searched the world over."

She shrinks close against the wall, the glow from the fire lighting up the folds of her dull, red gown, and disclosing the hot, crimson blush of shame which has suffused her face and throat.

With a swift, passionate movement he has taken them both in his arms.

"Poppy, darling, don't shrink from me; I love you, God knows, better than my soul—love you, and have loved you ever since the day I found you a little lost child in the dusty road."

With a desperate effort she wrenches herself free from his burning embrace.

"Leave me," she pants; "your presence only makes my lot harder to bear. Here, where I am striving to forget the past, leave me, I pray."

His hands relax their hold, as, with bared head, he stands humbly before her.

"Poppy, for the past I can in a measure atone. For this purpose I have sought you to offer you honorable marriage." She starts violently, and he continues: "For sixteen months I have been free—my wife is dead. I now offer you the love and affection of my heart, which no woman has ever possessed but yourself."

With a low cry of joy she turns toward him, placing the child in its father's arms.

Well, my story is almost told. Poppy is now the mistress of Mowbray Hall.

But in concluding, I will admit the lyrical stage has lost a Norma whose fame would have been immortal.

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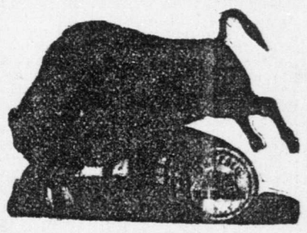

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