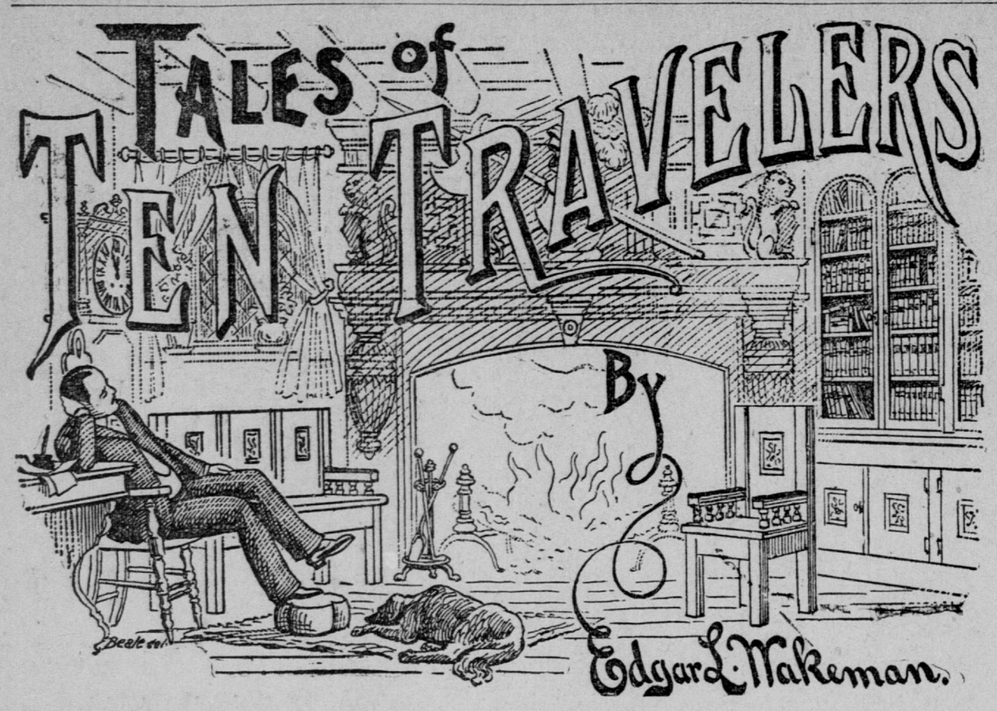

THE VERGERS' DAUGHTERS.

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"However others may feel," began the clerical traveler ruminatively and with some hesitation," "I never enter an old-world cathedral without awe in my heart apart and distinct from that direct and unconscious reverence which the sacred character of the structure impels.

"This is because I stand in a spot which is a tomb of innumerable personages who have assisted in making, or who have gained places in, the world's history; because the upbuilding, preservation, destruction, rehabilitation of what my hands may touch or my eyes behold, have often changed dynasties, impoverished treasures, created pilgrimages and sacrificed countless lives; and more than all else because, for century after century thousands upon thousands of great minds have with matchless fidelity given of their best effort or absolutely their lives' devotion, toward the perfection of this mighty prayer in stone.

"I mention this personal feeling and tendency in these matters because they connected me with a pleasant life romance growing out of a reverential pilgrimage during my earlier years among the cathedrals of England; and I will relate the somewhat curious incidents, as nearly as I can recall them, precisely as they occurred."

Through the generosity of my patron and uncle, Kirby Dorklin, who had returned from his extensive mining operations at Ballarat in time to witness my ordination, I had taken orders at Oxford, had just entered orders and was as happy, hopeful and proud a young clergyman as could be found in all the United Kingdom.

As for Kirby Dorklin, his happiness knew no bounds.

At times it took on the form of almost ecstatic imbecility. He would sit by the half-hour and regard me with grinning face, open mouth and a trembling little shake of his grizzled old head, which would always terminate in his tightly closing his eyes and giving vent to some explosive expression indicative of his lack of verbal power to fully convey his enjoyment.

"Bless me! Bless me, Robert Dorklin!" he would say, "it's all like the gold of Ballarat—twenty times and a half karats fine, in every pennyweight o' thinkin' of it. So it is, indeed, Robert Dorklin!"

Then the good, grizzled old fellow would stump up and down the apartment, puff hard at his pipe, mop his red face, red forehead and the shiny red crown of his hard, knotty head with his fiery red handkerchief, and poke his huge walking-stick gaily and vigorously at the furniture and chandelier, as though merrily beating some invisible antagonist.

I would of course thank him again and again for the kindness which had led to this mutual delight. This always had curious results. The old fellow would stiffen up with:

"Not a bit of it! Not a bit of it! Nonsense! Tut, tut, tut! Thank the 'tother one; not me. Thank the hussey-mussey-fussey; not me. Thank the fudge-budge-mudge; not me. Than the ninny-pinny-winny; not me. Aha, wouldn't 'tother one like to know how the 'tother one was fooled, and what the 'tother one has missed? Perhaps not, though! Bah!"

Then he would whip his arms around his body gleefully, hug himself as if inexpressibly enjoying "'tother one's" imaginary discomfiture over his long cunning and present happiness, and temporarily end his strange antics by embracing me and pitifully begging me to never become entangled with a "'tother one," in which case all would be well.

Strange old soul! As grateful to him as I was, as much as I really loved him, despite his often offensive eccentricities, there was to me something deeply pathetic in these expressions of child-like happiness, thinly disguised victory over the mysterious "'tother one" and his plaintive implied pleadings that no love affair on my part should ever change or lessen the affection between us.

For uncle Kirby Dorklin, so the legend in our family ran, had suffered in a love affair, which had made him what he was and all he was.

A quarter of a century before, somewhere in England he had come upon a mite of a maiden, fair as an English rose. He had loved this girl madly. Some foolish misunderstanding arose; a week later he had found himself on board a vessel bound for Melbourne, shaking his fist in bitterness back at his native land; and he had never once returned until rich and old in appearance if not in years, he had come to gloat over the little success that I, his protege, had made, and to lavish upon me an affection which in youth had been untimely diverted from its proper source.

So far as our family could learn, he had never divulged any of the particulars of the infatuation or its unfortunate ending; nor had he written to friend or relative for years. In a dim way only we all knew that he was prospering.

Suddenly brief word came that *he* had decided my career should be a clerical one; and, as an astoundingly large remittance had accompanied this announcement, as well as word that if I minded my ways and did him honor. I should be his only heir, what had so far happened was but natural and sequential.

But here he was, a crabbed, grotesque, hilarious and ecstatic personage; cunning and frank by turns; parsimonious and illogically generous, as the mood might take him; ogre-like and child-like in the same moment; in fact, a grand nature dwindled and gnarled and, in places, distorted through his years of brave miserliness and effort to be rich, simply as an abstract victory over disappointment; positively gloating in his pitiful, weak way at the mortification his riches must cause some mythical or real human, and often gibbering in an almost senile exaltation that he had finally purchased outright, like a Ballarat mine, the right perforce to human affection and gratitude.

Study him as I might, lay snares for his confidences as I continually did, all that I could know of his inner life, save from its odd every-day expression, was that the "hussey-mussey-fuzzey," the "fudge-budge-mudge" and the "ninny-pinny-winny," to whose discomfiture rather than Kirby Dorklin's inherent generosity I was ceaselessly commanded to attribute my fortune, present and perspective, were simply contemptuous terms for the, to him, omnipresent and intolerable "'tother one."

And the "'tother one," I saw more and more clearly, must have been, a quarter of a century before, the real cause of the embitterment of his life, and had become, in his disordered and perverted mind, an unbearable phantasm, standing to Kirby Dorklin as the source of every ill to humankind, concentrated in an emanating from the one word—Woman.

It was an age of romance with me, and I immediately built a romance about Kirby Dorklin's "'tother one." That strange principle of contrariness in human nature, which affects the relations of men more than is generally allowed, also took possession of me.

I treacherously built about the woman he had loved all manner of bright and gentle attributes. I was even foolish enough to resolve to find her, if living, and make some sort of love to her myself; or, at least, some secret reparation for what I felt must have been the crabbed old fellow's injustice; and, though it is an unpleasant confession, I was actually determined, if my quest should prove successful and I ever came into possession of Kirby Dorklin's wealth, to divide it fairly with "'tother one," for what she had doubtless suffered far more keenly than the one I conceived to be the author of both her own and Kirby Dorklin's embittered lives.

In this mood and with these Quixotic resolves, I announced to my uncle my purpose of a brief tour, half in youthful vagarious sentimentalism and half for its direct bearing on my chosen vocation, among the cathedrals of England, and insisted on his accompanying me.

"Lord! Nonsense! Bah!" he instantly retorted, reddening startlingly. "Tut, tut, tut! I'll cut you off, sir, first! After the ninny-pinny-winnies! After the hussey-mussey-fussies! That's what's in your head, sir! Tut, tut, tut! Never!"

As I watched him puff and stamp and make vicious lunges at the furniture, I felt that I had already made unexpected progress in unlocking the mystery of the "'tother one." Youth is ever recklessly brave, and I at once pitted my will against his.

"I shall go to-morrow," I answered stolidly.

"No you won't; no you won't! Not a penny, you young rebel! How'll you go without money? Bah!" he gurgled with cunning triumph.

"Oh, I'll walk," I returned determinedly.

He looked at me excitedly for a moment and his scraggy features contorted hideously. He had never been opposed like this. At Ballarat he would have struck a man down for less.

"We evidently do not understand one another, Mr. Dorklin," I added without a quaver in my voice.

If I had said "Kirby Dorklin" or "Uncle Kirby" he would have stormed on indefinitely. But to him, as he confessed to me years later, a seemingly immeasurable distance between us flashed upon him through the mere words "Mr. Dorklin," which startled him wofully, as he thought of the possible loss of all that on which his selfish though tender old heart was now so doggedly set.

"Boy!—Tut, tut, tut!—You wouldn't throw away everything for a fool's errand, would you? No, never!—Bah!" he returned gloweringly and hoarsely, but with a pathetic trace of whimpering in his voice.

"Oh, no, but I wouldn't be anybody's cur for any sort of prospects, no more than yourself, sir!"

His eyes closed tightly at this. His head sank and wavered strangely back and forth. He seemed to shrink and double into half his usual figure, and both his hands rested feebly and tremblingly upon his stick. He remained so long a time like this that I became alarmed and was about to step to his side. The movement awakened him with a start.

"Gad, but there's mettle in him! He's like Ballarat gold—twenty-three and a half karats, first assay!" This bravely as if to some invisible audience; and then wheedlingly:

"Who said I wouldn't go? Nobody!—Bah! Of course we'll go!—to some; to some of 'em, Robert!"

"Thank you wholeheartedly," I replied with real feeling, for I saw how the old man's soul had been torn in the brief and sudden storm.

In an instant more his irrascibility had reasserted itself.

"Damnation!" he shouted, jumping up and down and banging the floor with his stick in a petty frenzy. "Not all of 'em, mind you! Bah! If it's anything like all of 'em, I'll cut for Ballarat!"

"We'll have a glorious time, and you'll see England at its fairest again," I persisted enthusiastically.

"I hate cathedrals and all that's in 'em! Good time? Never! Bah!" he snorted savagely.

"And I'll make you love cathedrals and all that's in them for the rest of your happy life," I urged glowingly.

"Gad, you'll drive me mad, sir!" he roared as he tore away from our little parlor, overlooking Covent Garden, and rushed in a rage to his own room.

"Egad, I'll drive you glad, sir!" I unsparingly shouted after him, as his door slammed upon my words, and my heart smote me for my unfeelingness, though still, as is the way with aged youth and youthful age, elated at my partial victory.

Kirby Dorklin did not reappear to supper or during the evening. Snorting, fretting, fuming, he stumped about his room, lunging at invisible objects and whacking at tangible furniture, ever and again storming at the bugaboo, "Ninny-pinny winnies" and the "hussey-mussey-fussies" of his poor beleagured brain.

I knew he was having it out with "'tother one." For now and then, after a loud resounding whack, he would snort defiantly, "Not to all of 'em, I'll throttle him first. Not hear to 'tother one—never! Damnation! Bah!"

But I remembered as I turned in my own bed to sleep, I said to myself:

"Kirby Dorklin, the cathedral town you are determined not to enter, is the very one I will try to lead you into; and if I am not much mistaken, somewhere near or within its mossy, tranquil cathedral close I will search for and find the key which will unlock to the sunlight the sepulchred disquiet of your pitiful old wasted life!"

He was ready for me, and our journey in the morning, chipper and cheery as when he had nearly choked me with embraces, as I stood before him in the first flush and exaltation of ordination.

We first visited Oxford. Then we ran down to Canterbury and Rochester. Back through the south and southwest we came to Winchester, "dear old Winchester" to him, for he was a Wykehamite, to Exeter and to Salisbury.

I loved him better and respected him more as we progressed.

I found him to have some time been a profound student, and to still be a keen critic of ecclesiastic architecture and art, and a wonderful storehouse of profane and religious history. The different periods, their relations and contrasts, and the false notes of "restorers" were all as an open book to him.

Clearly, masterfully, he traced the various examples in church architecture from the time of the old Saxon builders, down past the early Norman workers and the transitional Norman, and along through the splendid development of first and middle Pointed, Perpendicular and the modern Gothic, interweaving the whole with a world of legend and fact from the time of Lucius in the second century, to that of Victoria in this.

One day at Winchester as I was marveling at his knowledge, he involuntarily exclaimed:

"Nonsense! Tut, tut, tut! I helped Dr. Jeune plan all the restorations for the cathedral of—"

He never finished that sentence as he had begun it. What he did say was only:

"I mean a castle of air! Tut, tut! Nonsense!—Bah!"

Pressing him was useless. As we neared the West of England cluster of cathedrals his irascibility, nervousness and cunning returned in full force. Leaving Salisbury, we visited that

"* * * mysterie of the human hand
The pride of Bristowe and the Westerne Land,"

St. Mary Redcliff Church, at Bristol, "the fairest, the godliest, and the most famous parish church in England," with its sad memories of Chatterton; and at the Bristol railway station I accidentally noticed that Kirby Dorklin had secured our bookings through Gloucester to Worcester, although he knew, from my interminable praises of Gloucester cathedral, that I desired to visit and study it more than any other sacred edifice in England.

I kept silent, resolved to meet cunning with stratagem.

It was night; we were both exceedingly tired; I tucked up the old gentleman carefully in our traveling rugs, and he was soon sound asleep.

I sent a message from the first telegraph station, ordering a carriage to be in readiness at Gloucester. On arrival there I waited in my seat until the train was just on the point of departure; and then with a lively scramble and unfeeling hellos of "Worcester!" I rushed my easy and drowsy victim out of his snug corner, through the din and clamor of the station platform, and, finally, into a tranquil apartment of the ancient "New Inn," where, unconscious of the ruse which had been perpetrated upon him, he slept sweetly as a child until morn.

"In a moment! In a moment!" shouted Kirby Dorklin, in response to my gentle tapping at the door of his chamber the next morning. "Ah!" he continued gaily, "at old Worcester Cathedral we shall find the tomb of King John, the most ancient regal monument in England!"

"But we will first see the tomb of the murdered Edward here, at Gloucester," I answered back as cheerily.

There was at first a loud snort within the apartment. Then my uncle retorted fiercely:

"Here—in—Gloucester?"

"Certainly, Gloucester. You booked from Bristol to Gloucester, didn't you?" We are at the most charming of all ancient inns of England—the 'New Inn,' on Northgate street, you know; built during the abbacy of Thomas Sebroke, over 550 years ago, to house the pilgrims to Edward's tomb."

There was ominous silence in Kirby Dorklin's room.

"Think of it!" I continued enthusiastically. "What an experience to pass a night in a hostel more than half a thousand years old; to perhaps sleep in the very bed where pilgrim princes and prelates have slept; to—"

"Damnation! Bah!" roared Kirby Dorklin, as I heard the huge inner iron bolt of the door crash into its socket.

"Come, now; make haste! Let's have an early breakfast. I want you to point out to me all the interesting things about Dr. Jeune's restorations!"

There was no answer from Kirby Dorklin's room.

"If you won't come," I continued proddingly, "I'll hunt up "'tother one" and get *her* to act as my guide!"

There was now a commingled uproar of snortings, stormings, exasperated exclamations and crashing furniture in Kirby Dorklin's room.

I waited a long time for the resumption of tranquillity, which evidently finally resulted more from exhaustion than the calming of Kirby Dorklin's spirit; and then, after various efforts to rescue the self-made prisoner from himself, with hearty assurances that his breakfast should be served at his door and with as cheering parting words as I could muster, I descended into the vine-embowered court of the ancient inn.

Never elsewhere can be seen such a radiant jumble of old corners, little arches, rose-covered galleries, protruding upper stories, peep-holes of tiny-paned windows, fantastic dormers and gables, low and shadowy offices, strange "ostries," shining tap-rooms and wealth of foliage and chubby-cheeked barmaids, toighten the mysteries, cheer and charm of the typical old English inn as was here.

The gray cathedral town, far from the ways of travel, rich in history, legend and the quaint old architecture of the long ago, and still simple and peaceful in its provincial coloring and ways, at last won me from the cosy breakfast-room, out upon old Northgate street, on past the ancient city "Cross," along dim Westgate street, through the narrow passage or "slype" of College Court, and into the shadowy and sunshine-dappled cathedral close.

It was a glorious morning, and I was glad I was alone. I endeavored to analyze my strange sense of elation and my stranger indifference to Kirby Dorklin's savagery and discomfiture. But I found that my tinge of regret was as fleeting as the gentle breeze whispering among the limes of St. Mary's square and the dreamy, restful close.

As I wandered about the exterior of the massive pile another curious feeling possessed me. I could not see where, when nor how, but an impression, a presentiment or a conviction seized me that right there, near me, something was to be discovered, revealed, or was to occur, which would happily affect my eccentric uncle's strangely ordered life as well as my own.

This was so strong upon me that I looked up startled into the windows of the fine old fourteenth century houses which huddled upon the close and the square, half expecting the embarrassment of their occupants' consciousness of my thought. It was early, and only here and there had a tiny old window been thrown open to the light and fragrance of the morning.

Not a soul was stirring within the close nor in the sweet old thoroughfares surrounding it. I stepped forward to the open door of the south cathedral porch, smiling at the vagariousness of my own thoughts. With this smile still on my face, I turned again and looked above me at the quiet houses.

Just over my head I saw a maiden's face, fair as the morning. Its owner was leaning from a window casement, bareheaded and radiant, as if for a draught of the sunlight and odor of the roses and flowers. Our eyes met. She, too, was smiling, as though she had interpreted my thoughts as they had sent the glow of genial merriment into her cheeks and great hazel eyes.

At almost the same instant, a woman stood beside her. She had come forward with that intangible trace of a smile in her own face which a smile in a sympathetic companion's always prompts, even before its cause is known. It was a kindly face, the face of an elderly woman who had known dolor, but had conquered pain; a face sweet and good and patient, molded into divine if not physical beauty out of consideration for others, out of the stilling of some life cry in her own heart, out of the brave and tender burial of self.

Some sort of swift and unexplainable intelligence must have flashed between us, for I saw her face grow pale. She stepped back quickly, the maiden with her, and a half repressed exclamation escaped her lips.

"The 'tother one!" involuntarily burst from my own.

If her look, her sudden paleness and her quick disappearance were not enough to force this willing conviction upon me, her words—they were so near me—as I could hear her companion's anxious expressions of soothing and alarm, dispelled all doubt.

"It's nothing, nothing, Grace," she said. "For a moment—he was like him—it startled me."

"And you lost your precious keepsake, the little prayer-book that he gave you at vespers last evening, poor dear! That made it worse, didn't it, auntie?" I could hear the maiden comfortingly reply. "Was—was he very like the—the young man in the street, auntie?"

"Very, very like, Grace. Oh, very, very like!"

"Poor, poor auntie. Let's run right over and take another good look for the prayer-book before the visitors begin coming to the cathedral."

This is all that I saw and overheard, for I passed into the cathedral at once; but there was a tone in the older woman's words which I longed to have reach the ears of the savage prisoner from Ballarat, and a thrill in the maiden's inquiry which stirred another member of the Dorklin family as no cathedral incident had ever affected him before.

A moment later the woman and maiden had crossed St. Mary's square and the close and entered the cathedral, passing at once to the choir. From within the west window angle, where I remained unobserved, I now and then saw their forms flitting between the choir screen and the altar.

They were still bareheaded, and they moved about the place as those having known its mellowed lights through years of loving familiarity. Their search had evidently been futile, for they finally slowly retraced their steps, with haltings and frequent quests through transepts and nave. Just as they disappeared the elder woman turned at the porch door, shaded her eyes and cast a sweeping, longing glance around the sanctuary, as though the wraith of Kirby Dorklin, conjured by my accidental presence beneath her window, might be fluttering somewhere along the inner shadows.

"Never mind, auntie. Come along," said the maiden cheerily. "Here's papa now. He'll keep a sharp lookout for the prayer book."

"Yes, yes, dears," heartily answered a portly, merry-faced man, who at that moment entered the cathedral.

A comfortable-looking man he was, with pompous little ways; ways that in any place would have puzzled one whether to set him down for a bishop or clergyman. Huge keys jingled musically in his hand, and a bright air of vigor and bustling came with him. He trundled bravely to a little table beside the choir-screen, tossed the keys upon it, clapped his chubby hands together smartly, looked approvingly from arch vaulting to nave tiling and from transept to transept, as if to say:

"Ah, everything is here, just as I left it. Monuments, effigies, brasses and all!—We are now ready for the business and recitals of the day!"

Then I knew that he was the verger; that the sweet young face at the window was the face of the verger's daughter; that the "'tother one" I had so strangely discovered was a sister mayhap; and an unaccountable feeling of fondness for the cheery old fellow, half prophetic and grateful, followed him from my heart where his echoing footsteps led.

Confused as my emotions were, the influence of the sacred and glorious structure was for a time paramount. Standing just beneath its west window, beside the font, my eyes followed its splendid lines of depth and hight, up and on, up and on—past choir-screen and choir, past delicate flying buttresses across the huge transept-opening above, past the wondrous carvings of the chancel and chantry faces, past the high altar and the filmy Gothic reredos, to that marvelous east window, greatest in Britain—and feasted upon as perfect a Christian temple as the inspired builders have ever wrought.

Rapt and exultant I started idly forward, musing that it could be likened only to the arched vaulting of majestic forest trees where innumerable interlacing branches and leaves so filter, but never turn back, the sunlight, that from point of arch to sward beneath there is a pulsing, palpable, transcendent glow, when my foot touched some tiny, dark object beside the font.

I stooped and picked it up. Day of dreams and miracles! thought I, here was the anxiously sought prayer book!

I tremblingly scanned its yellow pages. Inside the first cover I saw the inscription:

D. K. to Dorothy Newton.

At the back, bound in next the "Table of Kindred and Affinity," were blank leaves for a diary. Only one page had been written upon. In red ink, near the bottom, opposite the date, May 24, 1851, was the legend:

Our engagement day—
D. N. and K. D.

Just beneath this was the one word:

Miseria!

This was all, but the entire miserable and pitiful tragedy was revealed and sank deeply into my heart.

I do not remember just how it all came about, but that evening I found myself walking arm in arm within the tranquil cloisters with portly John Newton, verger of Gloucester Cathedral. Oddly, too, his daughter, Grace Newton, was beside him, looking, with the same quizzical, merry smile I had first seen glowing from her hazel eyes, now in her father's face and then into mine, with a shade of anxiety, a flash of interest, or a deeper glow of enthusiasm, occasionally hightening its beauty into greater winsomeness for me.

Stranger still, I had become their pledged guest and arch conspirator, for we were already conspirators three. We had got Dorothy Newton, the verger's sister, daughter of another verger Newton—for the Newtons had been vergers here since the days of Abbot Newton, away back in the sixteenth century, and Grace and her aunt Dorothy were affectionately known as "the vergers' daughters"—away to Cheltenham for a few days' visit, mercifully unconscious of my identity or the presence of the man from Ballarat, that very afternoon.

The whole story of my uncle's splendid architectural labors under Canon Jeune in the restorations, his betrothal to Dorothy, the lovers' foolish quarrel, the young and hot-headed architect's sudden disappearance, with the succeeding cruel, unbroken silence, had been recounted; and now, every imaginable plan for a possible reconciliation of the long suffering lover was being discussed with the mutual enthusiasm of friends of many years.

Nearly a week of double life passed by; idylic days they were with Grace and her father at their rose-embowered home; idyllic days in my dreamful loiterings in ancient cathedral and more ancient cathedral town; but they were days and nights of anxiety and unrest, as I sought by every art to win over the unyielding spirit within the New Inn.

My uncle had extended his prison bounds to the limits of the inn court. Not for all the mines of Ballarat would he budge a foot further, not he!

"Stay as long as you like, hunt 'tother ones till the end of time if you will, Robert Dorklin," he would say with exasperating resignation whenever I touched upon the subject of the city or the cathedral, "but don't you dare to leave this inn till you're ready to take me as I come—by night and in a closed carriage that can go!—Bah!

And Kirby Dorklin would have fairly contentedly sat about that pleasant old inn until this day, innocently disturbing its discipline of service with his ill-considered and grotesque generosities, had I not again resorted to heroic measures.

One afternoon, after making secret arrangements with Grace Newton regarding her aunt, upon her arrival from Cheltenham the same day I returned to the New Inn, and, finding Kirby Dorklin dozing in a corner of the churchyard, I awakened with:

"Dorothy Newton has passed away!"

I fully expected him to storm and rave furiously. But he only looked at me fixedly, feebly and pitifully for a time, as though he had suddenly lost the power of speech.

"The young artist who jilted her, or whom she jilted, has no more to fear from her gentle, suffering presence. Her's was a saint's life, until it was stilled, I am told," I carelessly added.

Hot tears trickled from the old woman-hater's quivering face.

"I wish you would go with me to see and know and remember where she is at rest," I urged quietly but with emphatic finality in my tones.

Poor old soul! So long as he could marshal his offended pride, stubbornness and self-inflicted hurts against the living phantasm of his disordered mind, no human power could touch his stern and flinty blindness.

Even the fancied irrevocability of death had never before set his awful and impassive relentlessness against his own. A storm-burst of remorse swept over him for a time; when he staggered to his feet, and, clutching my arm for support, said feebly but determinedly:

"We will go. We will go at once, Robert!"

As we entered the cathedral the vesper-chanting of the "Magnificat" had just begun. The uplifting notes of "My soul doth magnify the Lord" swept gloriously among the massive arches. With bowed and uncovered heads we softly crossed the nave into the north transept. The verger, standing beside the north door, gently opened it and in a moment we were within the tranquil cloisters, moving slowly beneath the marvelous fan-shaped arches of the South Walk.

The figures of two women were approaching us from the opposide side of the garth, along the West Walk. The attention of one was cunningly diverted from us. We met them at the corner just where the wise abbots in ages gone stood to scan the tiny arched recesses where the old monks studied and wrote.

"My God!" shrieked Kirby Dorklin, with trembling, upraised hands. "Robert! — Robert! It's Dorothy's ghost!"

Ghost or human, in an instant more the taller figure of the two was locked in Kirby Dorklin's arms.

Somehow in the confusion and the overwhelming excitement of it all, the other little woman clung fast to me and I to her; and I was glad to have it so; for at that moment I saw the face of John Newton, at the open north cathedral door, glowing through tears of joy upon the vergers' daughters and their companions, while from the cathedral came the mighty organ notes with the pean of voices in praise:

"*As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end.*"

And all our hearts, if not our speechless lips, joined fervently in the exultant and solemn "*Amen.*"

ROCK OF AGES.

Some years ago the following exquisite verses appeared in *Public Opinion*, London. They surely have in them power to gently touch every heart and to soothe the weary. It is but one of the many beautiful forms of the story of a life lived according to faith in God:

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me—"
Thoughtlessly the maiden sung;
Fell the words unconsciously
From her girlish, guileless tongue;
Sang as little children sing;
Sang as sing the birds in June;
Fell the words as light leaves down
On the current of the tune—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

Felt her soul no need to hide,
Sweet the song as song could be,
And she had no thought beside;
All the words unheedingly
Fell from lips untouched by care,
Dreaming not that each might be
On some other lips a prayer—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me—"
'Twas a woman sung them now;
Sung them slow and wearily—
Wan hand on her aching brow.
Rose the song as storm-tossed bird
Beats with weary wing the air;
Every note with sorrow stirred,
Every syllable a prayer—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me—"
Lips grown aged sung the hymn
Trustingly and tenderly;
Voices grown weak and eyes grown dim—
"Let me hide myself in Thee."
Trembling though the voice and low,
Ran the sweet strain peacefully,
Like a river in its flow;
Sung as only they can sing
Who life's thorny paths have pressed;
Sung as only they can sing
Who behold the promised rest—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me—"
Sung above a coffin lid;
Underneath all restfully
All life's joys and sorrow hid.
Never more a storm-tossed soul,
Never more from wind and tide,
Never more from billows' roll
Wilt thou ever need to hide.
Could the sightless, sunken eyes
Closed beneath the soft, white hair;
Could the mute and stiffened lips
Move again in pleading prayer,
Still, aye, still, the words would be—
"Let me hide myself in Thee."

AMOR VINCET.

She was a Western heiress, young and fair,
Eyes, hair and bank account beyond compare,
He was a youth, kind, handsome, true and bold.
No further adjectives will that line hold.

They loved each other. Yet no word of plight
Had passed their lips until the glorious night,
One radiant night, one perfect night in June,
While soared in heaven the star-encircled moon.

He said, "I'd wed thee. Yet, ere thou reply,
Learn the grave fact, a British peer am I.
Nine titles I could use if so inclined;
I have two more, but they've escaped my mind.

"I could not, secret laden, meet thine eyes;
I tell my sad tale, though my fond hope dies."
He paused. A moment naught the silence broke,
Save ocean's moan; then thus the maiden spoke:

"'Honor and shame from no condition rise,'
Even a peer need not apologize.
Not his the fault that he's not Smith or Brown;
Be brave, my darling! We will live it down!"
—Puck.

PERSONS who are afflicted with scrofula, salt rheum, boils and pimples, will find an absolute cure in Hood's Sarsaparilla. Be sure to get Hood's and only Hood's Sarsaparilla, for it's Hood's that cures.

It has been found by the British Ordnance Department that workmen in the works at Woolwich are turning out as much work in a week of forty-eight hours as they used to do in one of fifty-four. The quality of the work is said to be better than ever before.

THE genuine Angostura Bitters, manufactured by Dr. J. G. B. Siegert & Sons, imparts a delicious flavor to all cold drinks, and prevents all summer diseases.

MISCELLANEOUS.

GRIM-VISAGED WAR.

Hath Smoothed His Wrinkled Front.

And This Is the Most Favorable Season of the Year To Make War Upon

Catarrh, That Most To Be Dreaded of All Human Maladies, Especially in Children.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A VERY GENeral impression even among well-informed people that catarrh of the nose and throat, in children under twelve or fifteen years of age, cannot be successfully treated. This is a very great mistake, and oftentimes a most unfortunate mistake for the little sufferer.

The following case is a fair illustration of the correctness of the above statements.

AVA CATHARINE JORDON,
Of Oak Park, near Sacramento.

Of this child's severe illness, speedy and complete recovery, Mrs. J. R. Jordon said: "Katie had been suffering from a headache almost constantly for a year or more, caused, as we supposed, by a catarrh. During all this time one of her ears gathered and broke a great many times; so often, in fact, that the discharge from it became constant, causing her to become very hard of hearing. She grew thin of flesh, her complexion became sallow, her appetite poor, she was easily fatigued, indisposed to make any exertion, even at play, was weak, and seemed to have lost all interest in everything. There was some swelling of the glands about the throat, and severe catarrh of the throat and nasal passages. Her cough became very distressing, especially at night, causing her to hawk and spit a great deal during the day.

"We become alarmed about our child's condition, and on the 25th of April, 1894, took her to the Nagele Medical Institute.

"We were told that her case was one of catarrh and bronchitis complicated with a slight scrofulous habit.

"At the end of two months' treatment she had completely recovered, and is now perfectly well. MRS. L. R. JORDON."

THE NAGELE MEDICAL INSTITUTE, 724½ K street, Sacramento.

MONEY MAY BE LOST.
TRAVELERS' CHEQUES
OF THE
AMERICAN EXPRESS COMPANY
Are refunded if lost and are as available as cash anywhere in the world.
Principal office of Co., 65 Broadway, N. Y.

PAINE'S
CELERY COMPOUND
—MAKES—
PEOPLE WELL.

IRON AND STEEL.

PRODUCTION DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE PRESENT YEAR.

At No Time in Modern History Have So Few Furnances Been in Blast in America.

Special to the RECORD-UNION.

PHILADELPHIA, July 26.—The American Steel Association has received from the manufacturers complete statistics of the production of pig-iron, Bessemer steel ingots and Bessemer steel rails in the United States in the first half of 1894; also, complete statistics of the stocks of pig-iron which were on hand for sale on the 30th of June last.

The total production of pig-iron in the United States in the first half of 1894 was 2,717,083 gross tons against 2,561,584 tons in the second half of 1893, an increase of 156,399 tons. As compared with the first half of 1893, however, the production in the first half of 1894 shows a great decline in figures, being 4,562,918 tons, or 1,844,935 tons more than the production in the first half of 1894.

The production of pig-iron in the last twelve months from July 1, 1893, to July 1, 1894, was 5,278,567 gross tons. In 1892 the production was 9,157,000 tons. Not since the dull year of 1885 have we made as little pig-iron in one year as in the last twelve months. Four States which made pig-iron in the first half of 1893 made no pig-iron in the first half of 1894—Massachusetts, North Carolina, Indiana and Minnesota. Five other States show only a nominal production of pig-iron in the first half of 1894—Connecticut, Maryland, Texas, Missouri and Oregon. The number of furnaces which were in blast on the 30th of June, 1894, was 108, and the number out of blast was 408.

At no time in the modern history of the American iron trade have so few furnaces been in blast as on the 30th of June last. The production of Bessemer steel ingots in the first half of 1894 was as follows: Pennsylvania, 189,559; Illinois, 252,080; Ohio, 171,048; other States, 114,767. Total, 867,454.

The following is the production of Bessemer steel rails of all weights and sections, including street rails in the first half of 1894. In this statement we do not include street and other Bessemer rails, which were rolled from purchased blooms: Pennsylvania, 284,061; Illinois, 25,955; other States, 19,808. Total, 399,404.

The great decline in the production of both Bessemer steel ingots and rails in the twelve months preceding, beginning with July 1, 1893, is shown by a comparison of this production with that of the first six months of 1893. In these same months we produced 2,092,057 gross tons of ingots and 704,240 tons of rails; in the last twelve months we produced 2,791,083 tons of ingots and 731,517 tons of rails. In no year since 1875 have we made so few steel rails as in the last twelve months.

EFFECT OF THE SCARCITY OF FUEL.

NEW YORK, July 26.—The *Iron Age* today says: While moderate progress is being made in firing additional coke ovens, the rate is distressingly slow. The scarcity of fuel is the dominating factor in the Western iron trade, and indirectly, of course, affects Eastern producers. Some of the latter, being largely dependent upon the Connellsville region, suffer. Others are gainers, since the Western works, are practically letting the Eastern markets alone.

The Eastern mills are, therefore, taking what current work is coming out, and the breathing spell they are enjoying gives their local markets an air of great cheerfulness.

The Western, the Pittsburg and Chicago districts are pretty nearly taking care of the requirements of buyers, who on the whole, are not great. The scarcity of raw material keeps Bessemer pig-iron and steel billets pretty steady for early delivery, but buyers cover only what they must have. For later delivery or larger transactions buyers and sellers are still apart. There is a movement among Southern furnaces which have long been idle. It is pretty well known that the best-managed plant in the Birmingham district is stopped because there is no money in making iron, and other concerns are getting ready for the fray.

REAL ESTATE, ETC.

Exchanges.

WE HAVE SOME GOOD PROPERTY TO exchange, both city and country. It is often easy to get good land outside the city, when money is scarce, by putting in some city property as part payment.

EDWIN K. ALSIP & CO.,

Oldest and leading Real Estate House in Central and Northern California. 1015 Fourth street, Sacramento; No. 9, Rotunda, Mills Building, San Francisco; 17 North First street, San Jose.

W. P. COLEMAN,
Real Estate Salesroom, 325 J Street.

FOR SALE.

$125 PER ACRE—110 acres of the Sargent Tract, about three miles from the city, near County Hospital. This is very fine land, well drained. Small payment down; balance at a low rate of interest. Call and we will drive you out.

$1,100—10 acres east of Oak Park. Good fruit land. This is only a short distance from town. Well worth looking at.

MONEY TO LOAN.

P. BOHL. E. A. CROUCH.

GEO. KROMER.

REAL ESTATE AND INSURANCE, 723 K STREET.

RENTS COLLECTED. MONEY TO LOAN. Agent Covenant Mutual Benefit Association of Galesburg, Illinois.

A RARE OPPORTUNITY

Good Agricultural Land for $10 to $20 per Acre.

The Pacific Improvement Company has recently purchased twelve thousand acres of land in the heart of Tehama County, for the purpose of promoting subdivision and settlement. This land embraces lands from first-class Sacramento Valley agricultural land, to land of fair average quality, and is offered at from $10 to $20 per acre, in subdivisions of 40, 80, 120, 160 and 320 acres.

The terms upon which these lands are offered are especially attractive. They will be sold in subdivisions, as above indicated, by the payment of interest only for three years, at which time the purchaser can begin the payment of principal by paying the first of five equal annual installments. Thus no part of the principal is to be paid for three years, and then the purchaser is to have five years in which to pay five equal annual installments, with interest at the rate of 7 per cent. per annum, making payments extending over a period of eight years. Intending purchasers are assured that this is an opportunity to purchase land of fair average quality at $10 per acre, and good agricultural land at $20 an acre, with other grades of land at prices to correspond between these figures.

The assertion is frequently made that good lands, suitable for general farming, and especially adapted for fruit-growing, cannot be had in California for less than from $60 to $100 an acre. An examination of the land subject of this advertisement will prove to home-seekers that this is an opportunity for the purchase of good agricultural land at $20 an acre, and for qualities grading down to fair agricultural land at $10 an acre, on terms of payment which should make the disposition of these lands to actual settlers a result easy of accomplishment.

The primary object of the purchase of this body of land was the breaking up of a large holding for the purpose of promoting its settlement in smaller quantities and its devotion to diligent husbandry.

For further particulars, call upon or address WM. H. MILLS,
Land Agent of the C. P. R. R., Fourth and Townsend streets, San Francisco, Cal.

After This Strike

ALL FRUIT WILL BE HIGHER.

Plums.

Can your Plums now. They only cost you 35c per crate for any of the choicest varieties.

Apricots

Are better and cheaper now than ever before.

Blackberries

Are a drug on the market and at your own price.

CHRISTIANSON & CO.,

Near Corner Seventh and J.

NEW STAGE ROUTE

FROM SACRAMENTO TO BARTLETT Springs, stopping at Woodland, Blacks, Dunnigans, College City, Williams, Colusa and northern points. Stages leave principal hotels at 7 o'clock daily.
MILLER & LONG, Proprietors.

NO HIGHER PRICES.

We have not advanced prices on Fresh Meats since the tie-up of the roads, but sell at the same rates—even at less for some cuts—and guarantee quality same as always, FIRST-CLASS.

MOHR & YOERK PACKING CO.

Lathe,
Drill Press,
Grindstone,
Emery Wheel,
Shafting,
Pulleys and
Belting,

Just suited for starting a
SMALL * MACHINE * SHOP.
Apply to
WESLEY ROSE,
1031 K Street.

Fruits and Vegetables

Of all kinds and a complete stock of

GROCERI