

American Progress.

The department of commerce and labor has just issued a publication entitled "Statistical Record of the Progress of the United States, 1890-1907," which furnishes a great deal of timely and highly suggestive information.

Prosperity and West Point.

The present shortage of 70 or more in the authorized strength of the cadet corps at West Point is not explained by the superintendent as due entirely to the severity of the entrance examinations.

It is the opinion of Dr. Hirsch that children are entitled to fairy tales. They are one of the pleasures of youth which stern old people trying to raise them by rules should not take from them.

Liberia has lately lost nominal control of part of the territory over which the congress of the black republic was supposed to exercise sovereignty.

Here comes a correspondent who undertakes to show that Dr. Holmes didn't originate the title of the Atlantic Monthly, but that it was borrowed from another magazine which bore that name a quarter of a century earlier.

To the chronic investor in wildcat mining schemes who expects 20 per cent. on his money every other week the three per cent. a year offered by Uncle Sam looks small.

The Bell has apparently struck one for aerial navigation, but it is to be hoped that it will be long before we have "airy navies" battling in the central blue.

BOB HAMPTON of PLACER

By RANDALL PARRISH AUTHOR OF "WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING" "THE LADY OF THE NORTH" "HISTORIC ILLINOIS ETC."

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SYNOPSIS.

A detachment of the Eighteenth Infantry from Fort Bethune trapped by Indians in a narrow gorge. Among them is a stranger who introduces himself by the name of Hampton, also Gilles the post trader, and his daughter, Gilles and a majority of the soldiers are killed during a three days' siege.

CHAPTER XV.—Continued.

"The case seems fully proved," she confessed, laughing, "and it is surely not my duty to punish the culprit. What did you talk about? But, psaw, I know well enough without asking—she told you how greatly she admired the romance of the west, and begged you to call upon her with a recital of your own exploits. Have I not guessed aright?"

"I am afraid you do not greatly admire this Miss Spencer?" "Oh, but I do; truly I do. You must not think me ungrateful. No one has ever helped me more, and beneath this mask of artificiality she is really a noble-hearted woman. I do not understand the necessity for people to lead false lives. Is it this way in all society—eastern society, I mean? Do men and women there continually scheme and flirt, smile and stab, forever assuming parts like so many play-actors?"

"It is far too common," he admitted, touched by her naive questioning. "What is known as fashionable social life has become an almost pitiful sham, and you can scarcely conceive the relief it is to meet with one utterly uncontaminated by its miserable deceptions, its shallow make-believes. It is no wonder you shock the nerves of such people; the deed is easily accomplished."

"But I do not mean to," and she looked at him gravely, striving to make him comprehend. "I try so hard to be—be commonplace, and—and satisfied. Only there is so much that seems silly, useless, pitifully contemptible that I lose all patience. Perhaps I need proper training in what Miss Spencer calls refinement; but why should I pretend to like what I don't like, and to believe what I don't believe? Cannot one act a lie as well as speak one? And is it no longer right to search after the truth?"

"I have always felt it was our duty to discover the truth wherever possible," he said, thoughtfully; "yet, I confess, the search is not fashionable, nor the earnest seeker popular." "A little trill of laughter flowed from between her parted lips, but the sound was not altogether merry.

lutely baffled by an impenetrable wall, against which they batter mentally in vain. "Are you a church member?" "Yes."

"Do you believe those things you do not understand?" He drew a deep breath, scarcely knowing at that moment how best to answer, yet sincerely anxious to lead this girl toward the light.

"The majority of men do not talk much about such matters. They hold them sacred. Yet I will speak frankly with you. I could not stammer in words my faith so that it would be clearly apprehended by the mind of another. I am in the church because I believe its efforts are toward righteousness, because I believe the teachings of Christ are perfect, His life the highest possible type of living, and because through Him we receive all the information regarding a future existence which we possess. That my mind rests satisfied I do not say; I simply accept what is given, preferring a little light to total darkness."

"Such a judgment would seem to me narrow. I was fortunate in coming under the influence of a broad-minded religious teacher. To my statement of doubts he simply said: 'Believe what you can; live the very best you can, and keep your mind open toward the light.' It seems to me now this is all that anyone can do whose nature will not permit of blind, unquestionable faith."

"I am so glad you have spoken in that way," she confessed. "I shall never feel quite so much alone in the world again, and I shall see these matters from a different viewpoint. Is it wrong—unwomanly, I mean—for me to question spiritual things?" "I am unable to conceive why it should be. Surely woman ought to be

as deeply concerned in things spiritual as man." "How very strange it is that we should thus drift into such an intimate talk at our second meeting!" she exclaimed. "But it seems so easy, so natural, to converse frankly with some people—they appear to draw out all that is best in one's heart. Then there are others who seem to parch and wither up every germ of spiritual life."

"There are those in the world who truly belong together," he urged, darily. "They belong to each other by some divine law. They may never be privileged to meet; but if they do, the commingling of their minds and souls is natural. This talk of ours to-night has, perhaps, done me as much good as you."

do not remember any other subjects she talks about." "Yet it was the most natural topic imaginable—yourself." "You were discussing me? Why, how did that happen?" "Very simply, and I was wholly to blame. To be perfectly honest, Miss Naida, I attended the dance to-night for no other object than to meet you again. But I had argued myself into the belief that you were Miss Spencer. The discovery of my mistake merely intensified my determination to learn who you really were. With this purpose, I interviewed Miss Spencer, and during the course of our conversation the facts of my first meeting with you became known."

"You told her how very foolish I acted?" "I told her how deeply interested I had become in your outspoken manner."

"Oh! And she exclaimed, 'How romantic!'" "Possibly; she likewise took occasion to suggest that you were merely a child, and seemed astonished that I should have given you a second thought."

"Why, I am 18." "I told her I believed you to be of that age, and she ignored my remark. But what truly surprised both of us was, how you happened to know my name."

"The girl did not attempt to answer, and she was thankful enough that there was not sufficient light to betray the reddening of her cheeks. "And you do not mean, even now, to make clear the mystery?" he asked. "Not—now," she answered, almost timidly. "It is nothing much, only I would rather not now."

"The sudden sound of voices and laughter in the street beneath brought them both to their feet. "Why, they are coming across to supper," she exclaimed, in surprise. "How long we have been here, and it has seemed scarcely a moment! I shall certainly be in for a scolding, Lieut. Brant; and I fear your only means of saving me from being promptly sent home in disgrace will be to escort me in to supper."

"A delightful punishment!" He drew her hand through his arm, and said: "And then you will pledge me the first dance following?" "Oh, you mustn't ask me. Really, I have not been on the floor to-night; I am not in the mood."

"Do you yield to moods?" "Why, of course I do. Is it not a woman's privilege? If you know me long it will be to find me all moods." "If they only prove as attractive as the particular one swaying you to-night, I shall certainly have no cause for complaint. Come, Miss Naida,

please cultivate the mood to say yes before those others arrive." She glanced up at him, shaking her dark hair, her lips smiling. "My present mood is certainly a good-natured one," she confessed, softly, "and consequently it is impossible to say no."

His hand pressed hers, as the thronging couples came merrily up the steps. "Why, Naida, is this you, child? Where have you been all this time? It was Miss Spencer, clinging to Mr. Wynkoop's arm." "Merely sitting out a dance," was the seemingly indifferent answer; then she added sweetly, "Have you ever met my friend, Lieut. Brant, of the Seventh cavalry, Phoebe? We were just going in to supper."

Miss Spencer's glance swept over the silent young officer. "I believe I have had the honor. It was my privilege to be introduced to the gentleman by a mutual friend."

changed to one of buoyant, careless happiness, her dark eyes smiling, her lips uttering freely whatever thought came uppermost. Outwardly she pictured the gay and merry spirit of the night, yet to Brant, already observing her with the jealousy of a lover, she appeared distraught and restless, her affection of abandonment a mere mask to her feelings. Perhaps these things might have passed unnoticed but for their contrast with the late confidential chat.

He could not reconcile this sudden change with what he believed of her. It was not carried out with the practiced art of one accustomed to deceit. There must be something real influencing her action. These misgivings burdened his mind even as he swung lightly with her to the music, and they talked together in little snatches.

The last two waltzes ended, they walked slowly through the scattering throng, he striving vainly to arouse her to the former independence and intimacy of speech. Suddenly they came face to face with Mrs. Herndon, and Brant felt the girl's arm twitch.

"I have been looking everywhere for you, Naida," Mrs. Herndon said, a slight complaint in her voice. "We were going home."

Naida's cheeks reddened painfully. "I am so sorry if I have kept you waiting," her words spoken with a rush, "but—but, Lieut. Brant was intending to accompany me. We were just starting for the cloakroom."

"Oh, indeed!" Mrs. Herndon's expression was noncommittal, while her eyes surveyed the lieutenant. "With your permission, of course," he said.

"I hardly think I have any need to interfere." They separated, the younger people walking slowly, silently toward the door. He held her arm, assisting her to descend the stairway, his lips murmuring a few commonplace, to which she scarcely returned even monosyllabic replies, although she frequently flashed shy glances at his grave face.

Both realized that some explanation was forthcoming, yet neither was quite prepared to force the issue. "I have no wraps at the hotel," she said, as he attempted to turn that way. "That was a lie also; let us walk directly down the road."

He indulged in no comment, his eyes perceiving a pathetic pleading in her upturned face. Suddenly there came to him a belief that the girl was crying; he could feel the slight tremor of her form against his own. He glanced furtively at her, only to catch the glitter of a falling tear. To her evident distress, his heart made instant and sympathetic response. With all respect influencing the action, his hand closed warmly over the smaller one on his sleeve.

"Little girl," he said, forgetting the shortness of their acquaintance in the deep feeling of the moment, "tell me what the trouble is."

"I suppose you think me an awful creature for saying that," she blurted out, without looking up. "It wasn't ladylike or nice, but—but I simply couldn't help it, Lieut. Brant."



Orfis Boy—A lady with some poetry. Editor—How old? Boy—Bout 18. Editor—What!! Show her in at once, boy.

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