If it Could Be.

If I could hold your hands to-night,
Just for a little while, and know
That only I, of all the world,
Possessed them so.

A slender shape in that old chair,
If I could see you here to-night
Between me and the twilight pale—
So light and frail.

Your cool white dress, its folding lost
In one broad sweep of shadow gray;
Your weary head just drooped aside,
The sweet old way,

Bowed like a flower-cup dashed with rain,
The darkness crossing half your face,
And just the glimmer of a smile
For one to trace.

If I could see your eyes that reach
Far out into the furthest sky,
Where, past the trail of dying suns,
The old year, lie;

Or touch your silent lips to-night,
And steal the sadness from their smile,
And find the last kiss they have kept
This weary while!

If it cuold be—Oh! all in vain
The restless trouble of my soul
Sets as the great tide to the moon,
Toward your control!

In vain the longing of the lips,
The eyes desire, and the pain;
The hunger of the heart—oh! love,
Is it in vain?

THE CONFESSIONS OF A CORPSE

6 "Yes—it is just the old story, as you and I foretold, you remember, when we heard that Bertha had married old Gage. Don't you know you said that if she wanted to be happy, she had best keep as far away from Eugene as possible?"

"Yes—I recollect that I had misgivings then. The truth is, that she always loved Eugene, and all the marriage-ceremonies in the world could not have made her one with John Gage.

"True enough. Women are the most extraordinary beings on the face of the earth. Eugene is well enough to do in the pecuniary way, to have married Bertha, and made her happy. Their families liked each other all around, and I could never see any reason for her accepting old Gage, except that he is as rich as Crœsus."

"Well, there is no accounting for a woman's nature. Of such is the kinfidom of crinoline!"

Eugene Lisle had been one of my few true friends. We were boys together—had grown up side by side—shared everything between us for many years, and were far more brotherly than most brothers are. But when a man falls in love, and is loved in return, it seperates him from his masculine companions as inevitably as death. Eugene was no exception to the rule. He met Bertha Linton, got acquainted with her, and loved her. For a while they were considered to be betrothed; but erelong John Gage—a retired broker, cold of eye, harsh of voice and slow of action—laid his money-bags at her feet, and bought her with their glittering contents.

With a culpable weakness for one who had the strength to make such a bargain, Bertha persuaded her husband to take lodgings in a house where she knew Eugene intended to take up his abode also. Gage had heard nothing of Eugene's love for Bertha, and consented without fear or suspicion. The young man came shortly to the house, met Bertha, and, as might have been expected, mutual unhappiness was the result.

As I sat gloomily thinking of the bright old days before Bertha had ever pierced the poor fellow's heart with her darkly-splendid glance or entangled it in the sable meshes of her long, graceful ringlets—comparing those days to the present, with its scattered friends, its withered blossoms of hope, and its lowering presentiments of an evil hour yet to come—I was startled by a tap at the door.

"Come in!"

The plump and buxom housemaid entered.

"A boy is waiting, sir, at the door. He brought this."

"My dear boy: Come in and see me. I, am sick, frightened. Can you come immediately? EUGENE."

"Tell the boy I will come, Joanna," I said to the girl, and began dressing myself to go out on the instant. A brisk walk of a half mile brought me to the quiet little house—half hotel, half boarding-house—where my old friend lived.

I found him lying on the sofa before the fire, in dressing-gown, smoking-cap, and slippers—the guady figures of which made his face look quite ghastly. His sharpened features and the blue black crescent underneath his eyes told of a sleepless night; and his languid action, as he arose and came forward to greet me, indicated the exhaustion that follows a mental storm.

"What's the matter now, old fellow?" I asked, with an assumption of gayety.

"It is all up with me, I'm afraid. I have been a fool, an egregious fool, and now comes the consequences."

"Don't be mysterious."

"Well, I must tell some one, and you are the best man I know for a confidant; so I had best give you the whole story. Sit down. There are cigars on the mantel-piece."

I lit a cigar, drew a capacious, softly-cushioned arm-chair up to the head of the lounge, and prepared myself to listen to his version of a story, the outline of which I had already anticipated.

It touched me to see how he shielded Bertha from all blame in telling this sad history.

"We are all human, you know, George," said Eugene; "and I am equally blamable with her; indeed, I am the most in fault."

Then he told the terrible sequel to the romance. It had only happened the night before. John Gage had heard something that had aroused his worst suspicions, and there had been a fearful scene between him and his wife. He swore that he would leave no stone unturned to get proofs of her incontinence; and when he got them he would ruin Eugene if it cost him his entire fortune. He had even gone so far as to strike Bertha a heavy blow on the face, and then had stalked away, muttering horrid oaths, while the poor girl, terrified beyond measure—a little for herself and a great deal for her lover—ran to Eugene's rooms and sought a refuge in his arms. It had been wiser had she sought that refuge before the altar.

This made Eugene fearfully angry; and his feeling of impotence—of being on the unpopular side—made him ill. The woman he loved more than his life was suffering, and liable to violence at any minute, yet he could not interfere without making matters worse. He talked, foolishly enough, about suicide, and asked me, with great naivete, whether I thought prussic acid or laudanum was prefer able!

"Use tobacco, by all means," said I. "Professor Youmans once demonstrated, in my hearing, that a single pipeful of tobacco, smoked in the ordinary way, would kill a man. I advise you to try it, and dismiss all nonsensical ideas of any other kind of poison, now and forever."

I cheered him up as best I could, and gave him open assurance that, comie what might, Charley Hale and myself were ready to befriend him.

Plainly, the best service Charley Hale and I could render our friend was to send him off to the antipodes or anywhere else as soon as possible. He was in a continual sort of low nervous fever that bid fair to bring him down unless something were done to change the tide of his life. Gage openly avowed his intention to be revenged on the poor fellow. He would not kill Eugene, he said, but would follow him up with his malice, and never allow him a moment's peace again

He was just the man to do it, too. Rich and cruel—a golden-hearted man—he had the means, as well as the desire, to ruin his enemy.

Eugene was fully alive now to the necessity of going away somewhere—anywhere out of scandal. He was satisfied that Bertha would be treated more harshly while he was near; so, after an impassioned leave-taking with her, he went off, away into the wilds of Minnesota, with a heavy heart and a blank future

We tried to keep it a secret where he had gone, but it was impossible. Gage found it out, and sent a police officer to arrest him for having stolen a diamond ring belonging to Bertha. So Eugene was brought back; and Bertha was compelled to swear in court that she gave him the ring herself!

This double humiliation nearly killed him, and for a long time he was confined to his bed by a severe illness. As soon as he recovered sufficiently Charlie and I sent him off again, incognito, to a far Southern city.

But Gage was too keen for us again. He found out where his enemy was once more, and by hiring two abandoned women to swear that they were both married to him had him brought a second time before a New York Judge, accused of bigamy. The greatest possible publicity was given to both these trials; and although the two women were proved to be notoriously bad characters, and would have been indicted for perjurers had it not been for the lavish use of Gage's gold, yet Eugene's fair fame was tarnished. Nobody knew who was right and who was wrong. It was a disreputable charge anyhow, and the young man found himself an object of distrust and suspicion everywhere.

"I am sick of this," said he, one day to himself and myself; "Eugene Lisle is a bad name. It has fallen into bad company, and he who bears it is worse than dead. I wish he were really so."

"Then, why the deuce don't you die?" asked Charley; "we will help you."

"What do you mean?"

"Simply that I have an idea. Stand up alongside of George there—so; that's it—yes—yes—I think I can do it."

"Do what?"

"Never mind; I'll show you."

"But what did you want us to stand up together for?"

"Only to see whether you could be made to look alike. I think with a little shaving and a little artistic making up, I could fix it so that George could be mistaken for you."

"We're not unlike."

"No. Now I want you to write a note to John Gage, in a trembling hand."

"John Gage? What for?"

"Never mind. I'll write the note, and you must copy it."

Charles sat down and wrote a few lines, which Eugene copied in a faint and irregular hand. They were as follows:

"MR. GAGE: I am upon my death-bed, and wish to see you. I have something important to say, and cannot live but a few hours. "EUGENE LISLE."

"Now prepare yourself for a long journey, to any place where you can go comfortably until old Gage dies—he can't live forever—or until this cursed affair if forgotten."

"I am prepared already. I have unpacked none of the baggage I took South with me. I can start off at two hours' notice."

"Well, get every thing ready, for you must go to-morrow."

The arrangements were soon made for a trip to St. Louis; and the name of Eugene Hawthorne was adopted by the young man, as a new title, under which he hoped for a uew life, with new fortunes.

"Now," said Charely, "let me get you up for a dying man, and then do you go to bed, while I go and bring Gage."

A little chalk and India-ink made a cadaverous-looking subject of Eugene—who, poor boy, was almost pale enough in his normal condition. He went to bed after receiving his cue from Charley concerning his reception of Gage, and I was stationed in the next room, where I could see and hear without being seen or heard.

In half an hour Gage was brought in, looking disappointed that he was about to have his revenge cut short by his victim's death.

"Ah, Mr. Gage," said Eugene faintly, "you have come, eh? I hardly expected you."

"You wished to speak with me."

"Yes. I want you to forgive me before I die. I can not leave this world with ill-feeling for any one. You have injured me severely, but I freely forgive you all. Will you do so by me, also?"

The hard-faced old stockbroker relaxed a little. Poor Eugeune seemed so weak—so near to death's door—that he felt as if his hatred ought to die with its victim; so after a lengthy death-bed scene, which Charley rendered as painful as possible by his remarks and by-play—at the great risk of making the dying man laugh—Gage pardoned his foe, gave him his hand, and promised to attend his funeral.

Two hours afterward Eugene Lisle was no more, but Eugene Hawthorn was *en route* for St. Louis.

The next morning Charley Hale called upon me, and got me to accompany him to an undertaker's. There he purchased a handsome mahogany coffin, and had it conveyed to the lodgings Eugene had occupied since his return from the South. He then sent word to Gage that the invalaid was dead, and would be burried the afternoon following. The death was duly announced in the papers, and a certificate written out by Charley, signed "Charles Hale, M. D.," stating that "the deceased, Eugene Lisle, died on the night of Wednesday, at eleven o'clock, of nervous fever."

"Now for your part of the drama," said he. "I wan't you to shave as nearly like Eugene as possible, and let me get you up for his 'cold corpse.'" We won't bury you, but we shall have to come pretty near it."

I submitted myself into his hands, like a lamb being led to the shambles, and in a short time was shaved, and whitened, and touched up with India-ink, like a bad photograph, until I bore quite a strong resemblance to a dead Lisle. The family in the house were strong sympathizers with Eugene, and lent all their aid to the deception. I was presently laid out, dressed in a suit of Eugene's clothing, left by him for the purpose, and was carefully placed in the coffin, upon the lid of which Charley had fastened a good immitation of a silver plate made of tinfoil, to the effect that "Eugene Lislie, aged twenty-five years and two months, died on the—of January, 18—."

I had never been in a coffin before, and hope that I shall find my occupancy of one more comforiable. The position was unpleasant, and the thoughts that it gave rise to were decidedly somber. Eugene had a few distant relatives living, but, fortunately, no near or dear ones. The secret was too grave to be intrusted to any save those who have to take part in the arrangements, and Charley accordingly gave it out far and wide that all who wished to see the remains of the young man must come to the funeral.

This was a grand affair. The minister firmly believed that I was dead, and so did all present with the exception of the undertaker's man, the family who kept the house, the driver of the hearse, Charley and myself.

I thought the ceremonies would never end. My back and legs were frightfully stiff. My shoulders ached—the coffin, being open only over the face, was terribly close, and smelled of new varnish strong enough to sicken me. Then I was so afraid that Bertha—who was present with her husband, and who believed Eugene to be dead—would get up a scene and discover the truth, that I trembled every time any body approached the table where I lay.

At length, however, the service was over. Charley came up, and bending down to take a last look, whispered to me:

"I say old boy, the lid isn't screwed down—get along as best you can till the hearse starts, then lift off your cover and get out of the coffin!"

This operation took about five minutes; and if it had taken three more they might have screwed me down and buried me with great propriety—for I should have been stifled to death.

As soon as I found myself fairly in the hearse, I lifted the lid from my face and breathed freely again. As the vehicle drove away I raised the rest of the lid off, got out of the coffin and found a note from Charley on the floor of the hearse, in a conspicuous place where I could'nt have helped seeing it.

This note contained instructions; and, in accordance with them, I took a quantity of iron bars, which had been stowed away beforehand in the front part of the hearse, and placed them in the coffin in such a manner that they could not rattle about. This gave weight to the illusion of those who lifted it. I then found a screw-driver in the corner of my vehicle, and with it fastened the roof of my quondam mahogany resting-place securely down.

This done, I coiled myself up in a comfortable position, lit a cigar, and, on the whole, rather enjoyed the ride.

Arrived at the cemetery, Charley and the undertaker's man contrived to stand at the end of the hearse, so as to conceal its opening while the coffin was being drawn out; and as soon as that operation was concluded, they disposed the curtain so as to hide me from the gaze of any body who might be standing near.

The hearse then drove away, and returned to the city at a rapid pace. At the stable where it was kept, I slipped out unseen, washed the paint and chalk from my face, and walked over to Charley's lodgings, as coolly as if I had not been undergoing a recent funeral.

In an hour the planner and executor of this extraordinary feat made his appearance. He told me that Mrs. Gage had evidently suffered intense pain during the whole scene; but the presence of her husband kept her from exhibiting any emotion.

"It is better for her to think him dead," said Charley; "and if old Gage should die she would be all the more glad to find Eugene alive. I think myself that it is a charitable action on our part, clear through. I know that I, for one, have no qualms of conscience about it."

I am happy to be able to add a pleasant sequel to my somewhat unpleasant confessions. Gage lived but two years longer, when an apoplectic fit, brought on by ungovernable passion, struck him down, and in less than an hour his life had fled.

Bertha, who had settled into a pensive melancholy, that made her more charming than ever, regarded his death as a happy emancipation for her from his unreasonable and tyrannical domination.

Charley and I immediately dispatched a joint letter to Eugene, who had entered in business in St. Louis, and was prospering. We then broke the news of our deception gradually to Bertha, and in a few months she removed to the home of Eugene's adoption, where she became, not Mrs. Lisle—for the young man would never own his unfortunate name again—but Mrs. Hawthorne.—*New York Mercury*.

Wit and Humor.

A COUP D'ETAT.

If little seeds by slow degree
Put forth their leaves and flowers unheard.
Our love had grown into a tree,
And bloomed without a single word.

I haply hit on six o'clock,
The hour her father came from town,
I gave his own peculiar knock,
And waited shyly, like a clown.

The door was opened. There she stood,
Lifting her mouth's delicious brim.
How could I waste a thing so good!
I took the kiss she meant for him.

A moment on an awful brink—
Deep breath, a frown, a smile, a tear;
And then, "O, Robert, don't you think
That that was rather—*cavalier?*"

—*London Society*.

Cleopatra.

NNE CLAYBOURNE.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, was one of the most brilliant and beautiful women the world has ever known, but her husband, Ptolemy Dionysius, who was her own brother, deprived her of her share of the kingdom and drove her to seek protection of the Romans. Cæsar was then emperor of Rome, and she used her powers of fascination to win his favor, and succeeded.

When Cæsar was assassinated, she was accused of having assented in the crime, and was brought before Marc Antony for trial. Although coming to judgment, she came in the pride of beauty and anticipated triumph. Her galley was burished with gold, its silken sails were filled with odors, and the silver oars, which were plied by the most beautiful maidens of Egypt, moved to the sweet sounds of music. The lovely Cleopatra, arrayed in slight drapery, reclined under a canopy on the deck, and appeared more like the dream of some sculptor or painter than like a human being.

Marc Antony was charmed with her person and talents and became her lover, neglecting his wife. But this woman of splendid attractions, who could make great men her slaves, and might have wielded an unlimited power for good, was ambitious, extravagant and unprincipled. After Cæsar's death, Antony aspired to the head of the government, but Octavius Augustus, grand nephew of Cæsar, opposed him; a battle was fought for the sovereignty of the world at Actium on the Mediterranean, west of Greece, at which Cleopatra had sixty of her finest vessels. Just as Antony was about to gain the victory, Cleopatra, with her sixty galleys, deserted him, and he, rashly abandoning the conquest, followed her off from the field of action.

She caused herself to be reported dead, upon hearing which Antony besought his faithful friend and servant, Erous, to kill him. Erous pretended to consent, but when Antony's face was turned away, he killed himself instead. Antony was so touched by this proof of his devotion, that he took the sword and wounded himself mortally, but lived long enough to be carried into the presence of Cleopatra. Here we find him in a magnificent apartment, its walls of purest alabaster, polished like mirrors, and its columns of gold, most delicately ornamented Through the open windows are seen the dark, glossy leaves of the fig, the broad canopy of palms a hundred feet high, pavements of milk-white marble, cool as snow, and beautiful fountains of sparkling water.

On a couch which glows with the pictured fabrics of Eastern looms lies Marc Antony in almost superhuman majesty, his eyes closed, the curls parted from his noble brow, but his face so natural that but for the rigidity of limbs, one might think he slept. Evidences of affection are all around; perfumes liberally sprinkled upon his auburn locks, and garlands of freshest flowers upon his cold limbs. Cleopatra sits beside him in speechless woe, with fixed yet vacant gaze. Unlike her regard for other heroes, she has loved him for himself, and not for his fame or power. Near them, on a table of the richest porphyry, negligently strewn with instruments of music, there stands a plain and common-looking basket, filled with the glossy leaves and purple fruit of the fig; they look very tempting, but there is a slight rustling sound, at times, and a movement of the leaves, not regular, as if shaken by the breeze, but heaving up at intervals, as if some living thing was lurking underneath, and on a close examination, deadly asps are found crawling among the fruit; these serpants Cleopatra has applied to her bosom, and a very tiny spot of blood shows where the poison has been injected into her veins. Octavius, the successor of Cæsor, has conquered, and she will not be his prisoner; her hero is dead, and she will follow him.

Octavous comes himself, with all the nobles of his court, and flattered her with honeyed words, but she rejects his clemency with haughty scorn. He says: "We would have the beautiful Cleopatra among our friends; she is queen of Egypt still."

"By the great gods, I am! Nor is it in the power of all Rome to make me other! Free was I born and royal; free will I die and royal! Cæsar, I scorn your mercies, as I defy your menaces! My father left me a crown, and crowned will I go to my father!"

With this she flung her hand in defiance toward the victor, placed the antique crown of the Ptolemies upon her raven locks, and stretching herself upon the couch by the side of Antony, closed her eyes, gave one long, convulsive shudder, and Cleopatra the beautiful was no more. Egypt never since has known a native sovereign.

No, You Can't Go In.

"Whither away, gentle youth?" said the gentleman in waiting at one of Princess Louise's receptions to an airy young Kanuck, who tried to insert himself amid the favored throng. "I would do honor as a loyal subject to the beauteous scion of royalty, the daughther of an Empress whose power extends from tropic to torrid zone, and whose morning drum-beat circles the globe, for the perpetuation of whose empire millions of swords would leap flashing from their scabbards, and—" "Yes, yes, but your necktie isn't the proper color, and inquiry has developed the fact that your grandfather kept a grocery store. You can't go in!" "Can' I can't go in and shake hands with Louise?" Exit youth in a rage.—*Traveller*.

INDIVIDUAL PRIZES.

"Nothing succeeds like success" means perhaps, apart from the implied sneer, that acquired impetus sends us forward to new achievements. At any rate, I found it so when I applied the theory to Kate.

It seemed to me that I had been in despair regarding the indifference of this bonny creature since time in immemorial. In reality it was only about a year since the fact dawned upon me, as she sat in the stern of my boat, her dark hair darker, and all her soft outlines clearly cut upon a tender evening sky, her cheeks bright with the breeze, her eyes bright with pleasure, that she was the most charming object that ever skimmed the river and absolutely in dispensable to my existence. But I had never once attempted to let her know as much without meeting a rebuff sufficient to make one's blood run cold; and it was in one such instance that I had declared no man could hope for favor with the women of her set who was not the captain of a nine, the driver of a four-in-hand, or a walker against time.

"You are quite mistaken, so far as I am concerned," said Kate. "For my part I don't believe in muscle at all. Samson and Goliath could do nothing worth while if they were on the earth to-day. I don't believe a boat-race, for example, was ever won by brute strength in the world."

"By what, then?"

"By science and nervous pluck."

I had occasion to remember Kate's words when a parcel of our fellows came into the office and began discussing the challenge lately sent to onr club, the Cheviots, by the Gaths. The Cheviots had become somewhat demoralized by their victories, and were, so to say, lying on their oars. It had been a hot summer, and the club had really done no work at all; now and then some members taking out a party of ladies, or a solitary man enjoying a stretch; but for the most we had contented ourselves by lounging over to the boat-house for a bath, and a gossip and a smoke on the balconies in the sunset. Our best men—those that had won in the previous contests—were one in Europe, one in Australia, and the rest at the land's end, with the exception of Rogers, who was ill. We were certainly in no condition to accept a challenge from the Gaths, yet still less could we refuse one. Holding the champion colors, as we did, we could hardly lower them to any, even to the Gaths. The Gaths, indeed, were in a splendid trim; there was Converse, an Englishman, who had been stroke of a winning crew at Oxford, a magnificent creature, one hundred and eighty pounds clear muscle; shoulders and chest that would have made Hercules shed tears; there was Dunbar, another young giant, who had beaten professionals at single scull four times; there was—well, there's no need to go through with them now; it made one's flesh creep to do it then. We hadn't a man left in the club that they couldn't get away with. Realizing the situation, we looked at each other blankly.

"You'll have to get into the boat yourself, Geoffreys," said Harden.

"Not unless I want to sink it."

"I don't see what else we can do."

"We can't do that; we can't afford to do it. No, we must look about—not in a hurry."

"Oh, come, Geoffrey's, you've been lying off long enough!" cried Jersey.

"What do they propose to w for? H g 'em!"

"Individual prizes."

"Individual prizes! We can't afford to do that, either; it will stick us for a couple of hundred extra—another assessment, and the boathouse just paid for. It can't be done. Row as we always have—row for colors."

Well, we looked about us, and the end of it was that they came on another day and took me by main force, and the crew was made up—Harden and Rogers, myself and little Jersey; I to pull stroke, little Jersey to steer; and he weighed, maybe, a hundred and sixteen pounds. And that was the most we could offer. The Gaths insisted on their individual prizes. I tell you, things looked dark; the whole thing seemed preposterous; and for a week I didn't dare look a soul in the face.

"So you are going to show the Gaths what we can do," said Kate one day; for the girls whom we were in the habit of taking out on sunset parties and at other times were all ardent Cheviots. There was another club in town—the Jasons—but the girls never seemed to know it.

"Or what we can't," said I.

"Down-hearted? 'Faint heart never won,' you know," she said.

'Nor monstrous conceit either. We can't refuse; we must row—that's all there is to it. Oh, we've no show at all!"

"I won't listen to such talk a moment," cried Kate, stooping to gather her train, and bringing her bright flush to her peachy cheek. "I have wagered all my next winter's gloves on Cheviots, and if you make me lose them—Mr. Geoffreys, if the Cheviots don't win. I don't know that I'll ever speak to you again!" And off she swept, the laugh on her lips, but a good deal of sparkle in her eye.

"And that too!" I said; and plunged my hands in my pockets with a groan, for of course there was nothing but dead failure before the Cheviots.

"Still, all we can do is our best," said Harden; and we used his remark as a catchword every day probably during the following weeks.

The thing being decided, we ordered a new boat at once, and went into training, messing together, and keeping up each other's spirits by stories of what we had heard of the Gaths' achievements.

We received a little encouragement, however, from the fact that we soon found ourselves pulling remarkably well together; but the Gaths had been pulling remarkably well together long enough to feel themselves entitled to challenge us as the champions.

"Boys," said I, fearing that if this state of mind continued, our defeat would be our disgrace also, "I lately heard competent authority declare that brute strength never yet won anywhere. If that was all we had, we'd lose this race anyway, the Gaths have so much more than their share. Science—science, gentlemen, tells in the long-run, and where the lion's skin falls short, we must eke it out with the fox's."

"Shakspeare," said little Jersy.

"Just leave this out to me," said I "and we'll see what can be done."

Accordingly I had outriggers attached to the shell full four inches longer than any we ever had before. Our oars were the heaviest made, But I had them plugged with handles an extra length.

It wanted only a week of the day, when a dreadful whisper stole through the club that Rogers was falling off. It was too true; he had trained too fine, and—Job was a joke to him. The whole club turned out in force, and there were a dozen men at one time in our quarters bring up reinforcements of hot poultices. It was of no use, Rogers had to lie by, and we had to do the best we could again gnash our teeth, and take Devlin for what he was worth in the place. "Give it to him gently," said Harden or the first night; so we pulled at a good and reasonable gait down to the turning-point, rested under the green shadow of the great hiils there that fell half across the river, and made it so transparent that we seemed to be swinging in a buble, the face of the river, far and near, still as a crystal except where our keel had rippled through it, and we went back at a little livelier rate, and Devlin was very well pleased with himself. The next day we quickened matters considerably; but on the third, as we stepped in, I said, "Now, Devlin, look to yourself," gave the stroke, and we shot away. Before we reached the shadow of the hills Devlin was swinging about his seat and rowing all at lo se ends.

Hold hard, old boy!" muttered Jersey behind him. "I'm nearly blown myself, but I'll never say di·!" Devlin picked himself up for the time, but a moment or two after we turned he cried, or rather gasped, "Gentlemen, if this is the way you row, I must get out of this boat. What's more, you don't need me."

"Sick of it?" said Jersey, encouragingly. "So am I. Should like to throw it up myself."

"Ease him off a little, Geoffreys," said Harden; and we came in leisurely. But after one or two days' further labor there was no complaint from Devlin. "I'm going to put it through if it breaks things," said he; and he rowed as the rest did—as if he had but one heart in four bodies.

The day before the race the Gaths arrived. Of course we had to receive them, do the honors, and show them the town and the girls and the river. With them came their boat—a swell thing, I can assure you, covered to the nose with linen, and in charge of their own janitor. As we hadn't any designs on their boat, and although expecting them to win, only meant to make them earn their honors, we didn't object to their janitor. But when we went up to the boathouse and saw him sitting there the picture of gentle pity and complacent contempt for all boatmen in creation but Gaths, we knew what good reason he had for his complacency in the proud possession of his giants, and felt it slightly exasperating.

"How's the wates?" said I, as we stepped down the slip, for the wind was blowing through the hills in gusts, and there was a good chop on the river.

"Calm's a pond," said he placidly.

We looked at each other and groaned inwardly—the Gaths had always rowed on the bay, about the same as sea water, and we had rowed on a smooth inland surface; a chop and swell that would anihilate us would be water over which they would skim like so many Camillas o'er the plain. But we went off quietly, serenading the janitor with "Weel may the boatie row!" as we went. Our new boat had come, and waited for us, outriggers and all, and we had taken her down to a spot secure from obseration, and given her a thorough trial. She was a beauty, and from the moment she took water answered to our will not merely like a steed beneath its rider, but as the breath does in one's nostrils. We came in after our breather on an easy jog and there sat the janitor as we had left him. "I say," said he, with an air of keeping the sad secret from our superiors, as I came up the slip—"I say, is that the best you can do?"

"Best?" I answered. I can't say that it is. We weren't on our mettle just now, you know. I suppose that we could do a little better on a spurt. But perhaps that is a fair average."

"I'm sorry for you," said he, with really compassionate condescension, not that we were to be simply beaten, but that we were to be beaten out of sight. But I had heard that in diplomacy it is sometimes what is not said that counts, and there were certain things to be read between the lines of my reply.

The first thing that we looked for in the morning was the water: it was as smooth as a baby's cheek, and as rosy in the sunrise that stole over it between the dewey shadows of the steep and woody shores. Latter in the forenoon some of the club went to the railway station, I happening to be with them, to meet certain friends of the Gaths who came over for the day, among the rest some wonderfully pretty girls, one whom I knew Harden would rather have in Jericho than on the boathouse balcony to see the Gaths come in best men. Kate and several of her companions were there too—all our acquaintances had made the affair their own, and there was to be a general half holiday in the town that afternoon.

I took Kate's hand a moment, drawing her a little apart, and she walked on with me few paces. "'Vox populi, vox Dei,'" I said. "You see, Kate, even the dogs would cry whipped if they"—

"'Vox, et præterea nihil,' a hundred times, and I don't see anything of the sort, moreover. If you can't whip those great"—

"Goliaths. Goliaths of Gath."

"Your oars are just as much weavers' beams as theirs."

"They don't row with the sun in faces, Kate, as I do. And the stakes are more to me than of all the races ever rowed in Christendom. If you mean never to speak to me"—

"Oh, is it there? I had quite forgotten"—

"What! you are not in earnest?"

"Never more so."

"Kate?"

"Well?"

"Give me something to row for, my girl," and I stopped short and looked down at her with the color rising on her lovely cheek.

"I will give you a signal."

"How shall I know what it means?"

"You will know."

"I believe you would send a man into a den of lions for your glove."

"I never blamed the woman who did," said Kate, with a gay laugh all at once, because, as I saw, her eyes were actually full of tears, "and never thought well of the man in that story."

So we parted. Kate's tears—they augured ill. Pitying me—burial before death! A sudden flash of anger swept through me. If she would not give me something to row for, I would give her something to cry for, I would win, or I would break a blood-vessel.

I went to my office for the mail, on the way back to quarters, and found it full of smoke and Cheviots. "Tell us the truth, Geoffreys," they cried. "These Gath people are up here with fists full of money, ready to wager thousands on their crew. Say, shall we take them up?"

"I can't advise you, boys," said I. "They are mighty men. They row to win. I never saw anything so handsome in my life as their morning exercises. No—don't bet on us. We won't disgrace the Cheviots. It'll be a close thing, perhaps, but it's out of the question to suppose we can win from them."

"That's as it may be," cried Brand. "But I've taken the offers of the Philistines to the last dollar in my pocket." And a cheer greeted him that fairly slammed the door behind me as I left, and told what the rest meant to do; and of course it didn't lighten our hearts any to know how they were going to lighten their pockets.

Well, it was a big crowd that lined the shores and the building-tops, that hung along the banks in boats and skiffs when we went down to the boat-house, and seemed only like one vast animal with countless eyes and tongues. The balconies were filled with ladies, the stake-boat was set, the tugs were ready to follow us, and such a tumult of excitement as there was in the boat-house nothing but a menagerie just before dinner-time could rival; old Reed was kicking through the panels of his dressing-room door because he had dropped his key, and young Smythe was taking his fist and smashing every pane in a sash because he couldn't open a window; they were yelling here and running there—the blood of all the Cheviots was up. In the midst of the confusion, there, on a heap of sail-cloth under one of the balconies, the Gaths lay stretched at their ease like a nest of young lions, and as I looked them over I wondered if four as superb gladiators ever fought in a Roman circus. They had a deuced pretty uniform, too, snow-white, with a deep crimson handkerchief knotted on their heads. "Come up here," I cried, leaning over—"come up and survey the course, and se the crowd, and be introduced to some—"

"Thank you, Geoffrey" answered Converse. "It's very clever of you, Geoffrey, you know; but we're very well as we are." And when time sounded, and they rose and strode down o their boat, I was not surprised at the shouts of admiration that rent the air—in act, we shouted ourselves.

I never want to endure another moment like that in which I grasped my oar, waiting for the start, after places were taken. I glanced back at Harden and the rest, and then across to the Gaths—such white, set faces! My pulse stopped for one second; there was a dead silence; then a word, a dip, a bound, a yell—I was all myself again, my heart beat at my oar's blade, my soul went out of me at every stroke, Harden and Devlin were one with me, little Jersey steered her to a hair; my dejection had vanished like smoke. I meant to win that race or die. We were side by side, we were creeping on, we gave them our wash, the swift tremendous strokes seem to come like our breaths; I heard nothing but one contiuous roar along the banks the whole of the way, I saw nothing but those fellows laboring after; and as for them, they never saw us again without turning their heads over their shoulders. As we rounded, they seemed to be losing, form a moment, although they rallied; and as we entered the quarter, I asked the men if they had anything left to call for.

"A last breath," piped Jersey.

"Let them have it," I cried. And we came in two lengths ahead, in the midst of a deafening tumult, wild women and yelling men, that might have waked the dead.

Of course we paddled aside to let the Gaths enter at the landing first. But as we came up ourselves, eight great arms were reaching out to seize me; powerless to struggle we were carried up the slip by Gaths and Cheviots together. Just as I passed under the balcony in that triumph, I looked up. There was Kate leaning far over. Upon my word for that instant, that one instant, I had forgotten that Kate existed. And there she stood with the others, framed in the sunset, her disordered hair gilded like a nimbus, laughing, crying, flushed, lovely and half divine! As her eye caught mine, she extended her hand impetuously, kissed the spray of flowers she held, and tossed it down to me. It was a spray of orange flowers.—*Harper's Weekly*.

"O Lord, Thou knowest," prayed a Connecticut deacon, "that I am afflicted with a most impious and depraved son. Thou knowest that he will swear and lie and steal, and do all sinful things. Thou knowest that on the last Sabbath day he was seen walking down the principal street in the village, with his hands in his pockets, whistling the following ungodly tune"—and the congregation were astonished to hear "Yankee Doodle" flow melodiously from the deacon's pursed-up lips,

The End.

The course of the weariest river
Ends in the great gray sea;
The acorn, forever and ever,
Strives upward to the tree.
The rainbow, the sky adorning,
Shines promise through the storm;
The glimmering of the coming morning
Through midnight gloom will form,
By time all knots are riven,
Complex although they be,
And peace will at last be given,
Dear, both to you and me.

Then, though the path may be dreary,
Look onward to the goal;
Though the heart and the head be weary,
Let faith inspire the soul,
Seek the right, though the wrong be tempting;
Speak truth at any cost;
Vain is all weak exempting
When once the gem is lost.
Let strong hand and keen eye be ready
For plain and ambushed foes;
Thought earnest and fancy steady
Bear best unto the close.

The heavy clouds may be raining
But with evening comes the light;
Through the dark are low winds complaining,
Yet the sunrise glides the height;
And love has hidden treasure
For the patient and pure;
And time gives its fullest measure
To the workers who endure;
And the word that no law has shaken
Has the future pledge supplied;
For we know that when we "awaken"
We shall be "satisfied."

—*Tensleys Magazine*.

News Through a Knot-Hole.

Mrs. Jenkins lived in the other part of Rev. Mr. Capers' house, and thought herself fortunate in the enjoyment of so great a privilege. Most good people like to be as near a minister as they can. Mrs. Jenkins did. Her part was merely an L., built on the main structure. Her little attic, therefore, was neighbor to the minister's study. Just in the corner of the minister's study floor was a knot-hole, a trifling sort of a thing in itself; but when once found to open into Mrs. Jenkins' attic, of the widest importance in its consequences.

When Mrs. Jenkins finally became aware of so close a connection with the minister's family, she sat down to fold her hands and congratulate herself. Next she formed her resolution not to let any good opportunity slip unimproved to inform herself of matters that would otherwise remain dark to her. Day after day, therefore, her ear and that knot-hole renewed their acquaintance with one another. Sometimes she picked up quite a little bunch of news, and sometimes she went off down stairs as hungry as ever. There was as much variation from day to day as there is in the price of stocks on exchange.

Going up to the little attic one afternoon to hear if anything special was doing in the adjoining apartment, she was delighted beyond expression to catch the sound of a voice. It was Mr. Capers in conversation with his wife. Up she climbed, walked tiptoe across the garret floor, got down on her knees, and put her ear as close to the knot-hole as she could get it. She even shut her eyes, lest some of the good things should escape by that way.

For awhile she did not understand anything clearly. Now she heard Mrs. Capers laugh; then Mr. Capers stopped a minute and laughed too. This served to excite her the more, and she pressed her head so close against the rough partition that when she came to go away she carried off splinters in plenty in her hair.

Finally she heard something with distinctness. Mr. Capers was telling his wife, who appeared to be in great glee, of a man who had been saying hard things to his wife. Said he in the course of his remarks:

"Mr. Jones got to abusing his wife, at last. He declared his wife should not go out visiting, and threatened to shut her up if she dared disobey him. As for going to those evening meetings, he declared he meant to put a stop to it; he had enough of it. It did not do her any sort of good, and made a great deal of trouble and expense to him. He should put an end to it at any and every hazard."

Mrs. Jenkins started up in blank surprise. "Now I want to know," said she to herself, "If our minister says that of Mr. Jones?"

Without waiting to hear any more, Mrs. Jenkins folded her arms tightly bout her, and started down the stairs. The next thing she did was to throw on her "things" and start off at high speed for her friend's, Mrs. Tautog.

"Now I want to know," said the latter, as Mrs. Jenkins came through the back entrance, "do tell if that's you? Sit down, do. What's the word this afternoon? Heard anything very new lately?"

"Oh, well, no—I do'no either; p'raps it may be new to you, though."

"Why, what is it?" said she. "I dare say 'tis. I'm not in the way of hearin' anything till everybody else has picked it up all clean. What is it now?"

"Oh well, nothin' really worth mentionin'. But then you may as well know as me. It's nothin,' though, that I care to have go from me; you know I don't wish to be mixed up in this scrape."

"No, your name shan't be mentioned. But what is it, Mrs. Jenkins? What is it? Do pray tell me suddin', for I am a dyin' to know."

"It's no great affair after all, though. Still it's something. But this is all there is to it,—Mr. Jones has got to abusin' his wife most dreadfully; and he declares that it she thinks of goin' out a visitin', he'll surely shut her up where she can't get out so soon."

"Of all the things in the world!"

"Yes, and more'n that; he's even gone and forbid her goin' to evenin' meetings. What do you think o' such a man as that?"

"I think he's a monster!"

"And so do I. But that ain't quite all, He jaws her all the time, abuses her, threatens her, and keeps her in mortal fear of her life. Only to think of it!"

"How did you hear about it? I wonder if folks generally know it. How did you hear about it, I'd like to know?"

"Well, I'd as lief tell you as not, Mrs. Tautog, but then you must promise not to tell anybody else about it."

"Oh, to be sure not. What should I be gaddin' around the neighborhood for, tellin' hard stories about respectable folks. Who did tell you, though?"

"Nobody told me exactly, but I happen to know it come, in the first place, from the minister."

"You don't say so!"

Mrs. Jenkins nodded in silence.

"Well, I do declare now! Who'd ever thought of such a thing of Mr. Jones! But I've seemed to take notice back along that his wife was a good deal down-hearted and sort o' melancholy like. And that must be the reason, I know,—that explains it all."

"Yes," said Mrs. Jenkins, that's it."

The latter did not stay very long after unbosoming herself of her heavy secret, when off posted Mrs. Tautog, armed and equipped for the brave business she had in hand. The first house she dropped into was Mrs. Mallory's.

"Mrs Mallory," said she, almost as soon as she was seated, "have you heard the news?"

"Why no," answered the astonished lady. "What is it, pray?"

And forthwith Mrs. Tautog related all that Mrs Jenkins had been kind enough to tell her, and a good deal more, saying nothing about the embellishments she laid on in the course of her story.

Mrs. Mallory was astonihsed, of course; and, as soon as her visitor had withdrawn, she dons her bonnet and shawl and whips across to Mrs. Brink's. There the story was repeated with variations and considerable additions. Then Mrs. Brink took it up; and then Mrs. Murry got interested in it, and then Mrs. Filpot, and so on, till every body had got hold of it and had talked it up, and had passed judgement upon the man who was guilty of such malpractice upon his family. If it had stopped right there, perhaps it would have answered; but it didn't. It spreads like a circle in the water till in the end, Mrs. Jones heard of it and heard of course, that the author of the story was the minister's own self.

The next thing to be done was for Mr. Jones and his family to leave Mr. Caper's church and go somewhere else. The clergyman was a good deal troubled about it, and his wife went over to see if she could discover the cause. Mrs. Jones received her with a good deal of coldness and seemed hardly civil. Unable to endure it any longer, Mrs. Capers asked the aggrieved lady, frankly, what the trouble was. Mrs. Jones, as frankly, told her; that was well, for now the latter knew exactly what the matter was and what it was necessary to do.

Going home and imparting the intelligence to her husband, he manifested quite as much astonishment as she. He sat and thought it over a little while, in order the better to collect himself before taking a single step, and then started on direct for Mr. Jones himself. He told Mr. Jones what he had heard, and declared the whole of it an untruth from beginning to end. Mr. Jones went on with all the minutest particulars connected with the affair, and making the most of the case in his power against the minister. Still the latter positively denied his guilt, and declared his determination to ferret out the auther of so base a slander, if it was within human possibility. And he hurried back home and set about it.

For some weeks it was a mystery still; he could not get no clue to anything. It perplexed him beyond conception. Finally his wife came running down stairs one day, her face flushed and excited, and said to him in unsteady breath:

"Mr. Capers, have you noticed that knot-hole in your study floor?"

"Why, no," said he. "Where is it and what of it?"

"Just come up stairs and see."

And up they went together. She pointed to the tell-tale spot, and remarked in a whisper:

"I just caught Mrs. Jenkins with her ear to that very hole."

That was the first step toward the unravelment of the mystery. In a few days more the whole of it began to come out. He had sent his wife round to make a few innocent inquiries; and she had brought back just such intelligence as he expected and required; and, putting this thing and that together, and recalling certain ideas that up to that time had passed out of his mind altogether, he thought the matter was explained at last. So he went over to Mr. Jones' once more.

"Come," said he, "if you will consent to go home with me for a short time, I think I can explain some things that have hitherto stood in the way of our friendship." Mr Jones did not happen to love malice well enough to refuse and accordingly took a walk with the minister over to his residence. The latter at once took him up into his study and shut the door.

"In the first place," said he, "I suppose you know that Mrs. Jenkins lives in the L?'

"Yes."

"Well, and you observe that knot-hole?"

"Oh, certainly."

"And this is my study."

"Yes."

"And where my wife often takes the liberty to come and sit with me."

Mr. Jones said he understood that.

"Now, then," continued the clergyman, "I am in the habit of frequently reading aloud to her. And, once upon a time, I happened to be reading from this very book (picking up a volume of fiction from the table,) and here is something out of that very same book that I am going so read to you," and he went on to read to Mr. Jones several paragraphs, in which occurred the following;

"Mr. Jones got to abusing his family at last. He declared his wife should not go out visiting, and threatened to shut her up if she dared disobey him. As for going to these evening meetings, he declared he meant to put a stop to it; he had had enough of it. It did not do her any sort of good, and made a great deal of trouble and expense for him. He should put an end to it at any and every hazard!" Mr. Jones burst out laughing. "Is that all?" said he, his face as red as the setting sun.

"That and the knot-hole," said Mr. Capers, smiling good naturedly.

Mr. Jones offered him his hand. From that moment they were friends again. He went back to church the next Sabbath as he should have done. But Mrs. Jenkins has never heard the last of it.

Choice Thoughts.

6 To rule one's spirit, is the first step under God toward ruling one's destiny. *

He censures God who quarrels with the imperfection of men.—*Burke*.

By these things examine yourself. By by whose rule am I acting; whose strength; in whose name; in what spirit; to what end; for whose glory?

It has been beautifully said, that "the veil which covers the future is woven by the hand of mercy." Seek not to raise that veil, lest the prospect that hope now clothes in light, might be clouded by the darkness of unwelcome certainty.

The man who succeed without the aid of education are the exceptions. Common men need all the help that education can give, to put themselves on a level; and even of the exceptional men it may be said that they would have succeeded still better with the advantages of education.—*National Baptist*.

Prayer is intended to increase the devotion of the individual, but if the individual himself prays he requires no formula; he pours himself forth much more naturally in self-chosen and connected thoughts before God and scarcely requires words at all. Real inward devotion knows no prayer but that arising from the depths of its own feeling.—*W. Von Humboldt*.