KAISER AND SULTAN.

ABDUL HAMID'S HOSPITALITY TO HIS GERMAN GUESTS.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

Constantinople, November 6.

The city has been in gala dress for four days offering its homage to the Emperor and Empress of Germany. Nature has done its best to heighten the impressions of cordiality in the Sultan's reception of his guests; for cloudless skies and a summer temperature have left nothing to be desired in the way of evironment.

Saturday morning the little scout boat sent out by the Navy Department came scuttling in from the Marmora about half-past 10, with the news that the fleet was coming. A large number of merchant steamers anchored under the Asiatic shore opposite to the Seraglio Point dressed ship and displayed bunting from stem to stern. Two great state caiques of the Sultan put out from the ancient boat-houses of the Seraglio Palace, and shot through the water toward the palace of Dolma Baghche, on the Bosphorus, propelled each by twenty-six oarsmen pulling the peculiar Turkish Imperial stroke, in which the oarsmen, in regular rhythm of motion, rise to their feet and make a profound bow, which carries the blade of the oar at least six feet into the air before its sudden plunge into the water. Hundreds upon hundreds of caiques with sight-seers flocked together in the vicinity of the palace, driven hither and thither like a frightened school of fishes by the officious and unsympathizing police boats. Thousands of spectators, on the Seraglio Point, on every available foot of the Kabatash shore, on the Scutari quay, on all the housetops that command the outer harbor, and in every window and balcony overlooking the water-front of the great palace, waited in patience. At last, from out of the midst of the heavy autumn haze looms the great black mass of the German ironclad the Kaiser, which has sailed right through the treaties that bar to ironclads the passage of the Dardanelles. At its mainmast-head floats the broad yellow flag of the head of the German Imperial house. The Turkish flag rises to the foremast as it hails the Sultan from the throats of its black guns; a salute feebly responded to by a battery of field pieces on the shore. Close after the Kaiser comes the yacht Hohenzollern, flying the standard of the Empress. Then come the seven or eight other steamers and Turkish ironclads freighted with the escort of the great visitors.

At the sound of the guns all the vessels in the harbor, down to the little Bosphorus ferryboats, dress ship. The German squadron casts anchor within a hundred yards of the palace steps. A state barge is lowered away from the Kaiser, and carries the Emperor to the Hohenzollern, where his wife is waiting. Meanwhile the police boats by putting forth enormous efforts cleave a lane through the midst of the swarm of caiques from the ships to the shore. Then the multitude hold their breath, for a Turkish crowd does not cheer, as the Emperor and Empress descend from the Hohenzollern into the barge from the Kaiser and traverse the short distance to the palace of Dolma Baghche.

"How will the Sultan receive the Emperor?" is the question in the thoughts of all, for Abdul Hamid is not wont to go forth from his palace to meet a guest. In a moment the question is decided, and that moment is a startling revelation to the Turks. As the Emperor's boat rounds to in front of the palace grounds, to the utter amazement of every one, the Sultan appears in the golden gateway, comes forward down the steps, and offers his hand to help William II from the boat. Never before has a Sultan of Turkey received so great a European sovereign, and never any one on such terms. In another moment the Sultan has offered his arm to the Empress Victoria Augusta, and the party are moving between the ranks of a glittering mass of officials, over the rich silken carpets which have been spread from the landing to the door of the magnificent Hall of Audience. After a short pause in the palace for the presentation on both sides of the dignitaries of the suites, the Sultan led the Empress to his carriage and took his seat beside her; the Emperor and Prince Henry, his brother, taking the second carriage, with the Grand Vizier on the front seat; Count Herbert Bismarck and others of the Emperor's suite following in carriages of diminishing state, proportioned to their respective degrees of rank. A cloud of kawasses, pages and palace guards in gala attire of red and gold, preceded and surrounded the carriages. The magnificent cortege swept through the winding streets of Beshiktash, freshly sanded for the occasion, and lined by interminable files of troops of the Imperial Guard, and by an absolutely numberless rabble of Turks, Greeks and Armenians.

Thus escorted, the guests were conveyed to the Sultan's residence at the Yildiz Palace on the heights overlooking the Bosphorus, where a separate building had been set apart for their occupancy and furnished with the richest materials of Oriental splendor. The spectacle of this Imperial procession was in the highest degree magnificent. But the feature thereof that most impressed the strangers was the absolute silence of the multitudes. Neither the presence of their own Sultan nor the advent of these illustrious visitors called forth a single cheer, a sign of salutation, nor indeed any demonstration of feeling save the flooking together of the multitudes and the stolid, emotionless glare of thousands of eyes. This is one of the peculiarities of Eastern etiquette. In the presence of royalty the untitled subject is expected to be as humble as Uriah Heep; so infinitely humble that it is presumption for him to be self-conscious enough to salute, or to be so little awed by the Presence as to have the use of his voice for cheers. In the European quarters of the city the enthusiastic foreigners have always doffed their hats and cheered the Emperor when he has driven by. But in his rides about Constantinople the Emperor has not received one demonstration of respect, much less anything like a cheer, from a purely Turkish crowd. Nor have the natives, aside from the officials of the Turkish Government, had any more active part in the decoration of the city in honor of the Emperor's visit. In Pera and Galata, and also in Stamboul, foreigners have decked their windows with flags and have lavished their money on illuminations. But in the Turkish districts the streets have been bare; the most that the Turkish shopkeeper has done to emulate his European neighbors has been to daub a pot of water tinged with red or yellow ochre over the boards that his great-grandfather put together for his shop front and left unpainted to this day.

But if the Turks have made little outward display they have not failed to honor the Emperor in their newspapers in the fulsome Oriental style, of which the following is an example, taken from the "Vakit," the most important of the Turkish dailies:

"Their Grand Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Germany, the most choice guests of the Sultan, went, about 10 o'clock, to see the most sublime palace of Dolma-Baghche. After the said most sublime palace had been visited, their Majesties visited the noble palace of Top Kapou and the Imperial Treasury. Then they returned to the palace of Yildiz. After the return of their Majesties to the Imperial Majesty-enveloping palace of Yildiz, His Grand Majesty the Emperor gave a banquet in the apartments of State Functions, the dwelling-place of the Essence of Grand Majesty, in the honor, Excellent and Sublime, and peculiar to the King of Kings, of the guardian of all our benefits, who never taunts the recipient of His mercies, Our Lord, to whom Imperial Majesty ever returns to abide."

Pages of this sort of stuff have been printed in the Turkish papers in the last four days.

On the other hand, the official demonstrations in honor of the Emperor have been unlimited, and in many cases most effective. Since the most superhuman efforts are necessary to impart to the streets of Constantinople an appearance of prosperity, cleanliness and taste at all approximating the every-day condition of cities in Western lands, after all was done the city could not avoid looking the ragged, unwashed and poverty-stricken city that it is. But after once noting the fact that a proper preparation for an approving inspection of the city by an Imperial visitor should have been begun twenty-five years ago, it can only be said that the efforts of the Government to do honor to the Emperor William deserve all praise. The energy and variety of the Emperor's movements have made the officials of the palace, of the garrison and of the police perspire freely, as was shown by the plaintive answer of one of them to a foreigner, who, when asked if the Emperor would pass soon and by what road, replied: "Man! Do I know when or where he will go? Not even the Sultan can tell you where he is going. He is a guest, and he is an Emperor. When he likes, and where he likes, and as fast as he likes, there he will go!" The result, however, of the labors of the officials has been that the Emperor never once failed to find troops in line, the road clear, and provision for his personal comfort complete wherever he went. If he crossed the Bosphorus, at the landing on the other side the Sultan's choicest Arabian horses were waiting for him. If at the end of a long ride he found himself wishing for a boat at a point five miles from his landing-place, the Sultan's steam-launch would appear before he could dismount from his horse. If after a sail down the Marmora he wished to land far outside of the city walls, the Sultan's horses, with magnificently jewelled saddles, were pawing the ground as he stepped out of the steamer, and a full escort in red and gold sprang up, ready to fall into his train. After a ride around the old walls to the head of the Golden Horn, if he concluded that he would like to return to the palace by water, the Sultan's steam-launch instantly appeared; or, if some one suggested that a sail in a caique would be a novelty, on his acceptance of the idea the steam-launch would disappear and the great state caiques would be at the landing. Then, as the procession went down the Golden Horn, the ships would be decked in flags, and the bridges would open to save him the humiliation of passing under the roadway. Wherever he went, even without the least notice, he found the streets newly swept and watered, clear of encumbering hamals, and with troops to hold back the crowd or to present arms in due form. True, those who saw the machinery at work to produce these effects—the staff-officers on foaming horses galloping to give warning; the double-quicking of jaded troops by short cuts; the frenzied rush of water-carts and sand-carts over the road, sometimes but five minutes in advance of the Imperial party; the fury wreaked by the police upon hamals and pack-mules that happened to be in a street when the order to clear it arrived; the imperious orders to beggars to go out of sight; the hustling of horse-cars from the track and over the cobble-stones into by-ways—whoever saw these herculean efforts put forth, aye, and often put forth in vain in consequence of the uncertainty of the actual route to be followed, was not perhaps so much impressed by the result. But to the Emperor and Empress the provision for their convenience must sometimes have seemed like the work of the Genii.

The illuminations on the night of the Emperor's arrival and again on Monday night were magnificent. The Bosphorus lends itself to such displays as readily as the Grand Canal of Venice, and far more grandly. On Monday night, when the Emperor and Empress came down the Bosphorus from a short excursion into the Black Sea, the houses on both sides for eighteen miles were outlined by thousands of tiny lamps, or were beautified by lanterns in the form of arches, palaces, suns and moons, hung from scaffoldings on the water's edge. The myriads of lamps threw quivering lines of light across the water, while rafts moored by the Government at various points projected into space all manner of pyrotechnics almost by the ton. On the ships of the fleet spars and rigging were crusted with lamps; and when the Emperor's steamer arrived off Dolma Baghche, the whole fleet blazed out with port fires and turned on their electric lights to illuminate the landing of the Imperial guests. Over a veritable sea of silver they sailed to the shore, where the court carriages were in waiting to take them to the Sultan's dinner.

The Empress Victoria Augusta had here one experience not to be matched in any other place in Europe. To be received as a guest, but by men alone; to be entertained with perfect devotion, but exactly as if her host was a bachelor; to find not a single woman on the premises in any capacity, and then, after twenty-four hours of this kind of life, to be taken through a side door into a walled-up section of the palace, and there, in the midst of waiting women innumerable, and of unsurpassed magnificence, to be introduced to Madame the First Wife, Madame the Second, Madame the Third, Madame the Fourth, etc., etc., must of course impart a slight impression of limited hospitality to the flavor of the entertainment previously offered in the halls outside of the real household. This is what happened to the Empress of Germany. The impression produced by the passing glimpse of the real home of the Sultan was heightened by the fact that in Turkey etiquette forbids speaking to a man about his wife. The subject is very properly tabooed. The man who has fallen into multiple entanglements of the heart does not care to be addressed concerning them any more than he wishes to be talked to about any other weakness or failure of his life.

The ladies of the Harem have had one revelation in this connection, even more startling to them than this opening of the Harem door and the taste of its democratic life could have been to the Empress. The rumor that their Imperial master had taken the Empress on his arm, and had driven through the streets sitting by her side in his own carriage as no one of them could possibly do, was in itself sufficiently amazing. But to read in all the daily papers the account of the visit of the Empress without her husband to the city, when the Turkish sailors manned the yards of the fleet in her honor, and when salutes were fired for her sole benefit, was a most unexpected disclosure of the heights of dignity to which a woman may attain in some parts of the world. Not one of the ladies of the Harem is known even by name to the Nation, much less honored by the Nation as this stranger from Germany has been honored.

The Emperor William has been very active in seeing the sights of the city. No personally conducted tourist ever "did" the city more conscientiously, or more hurriedly. But the Sultan has not broken through his rule of exclusion so far as to accompany his guest on any excursion. He has given him every facility, but he has left him to the society of his suite when outside of the walls of Yildiz. The impression which one forms of the young Emperor from his four days' sojourn here, on the whole relieves somewhat the impression of Imperial hauteur derived from accounts of his bearing when at home. Here he has been seen to smile, has not seemed utterly unapproachable, and has delighted many by taking notice of their private interests. Hardly a European in the city has chanced to be on the wayside when the Emperor passed without being able to say that the Emperor saluted him personally. The lifting of a hat in the midst of a great motionless crowd of fez caps always attracted attention, and brought quick and courteous response from the Emperor. The Empress delighted every one who came in contact with her by her affability and kind-heartedness. She visited the mosques and the antiquities with evident interest, but shunned parades. The Emperor hurried through the real estate of the Empire, but gave careful attention to every military display. He found more in the army to praise than he had expected, and took care to say so to the Sultan.

Of the political bearing of this visit it is too soon to speak. The visit of the Emperor William has doubtless done something in the way of impressing the mind of the Sultan with the value of his friendship. But it is nearly certain that the Emperor did not "talk shop" with the Sultan to any great extent. Count Herbert Bismarck did undoubtedly make use of his opportunities for free and suggestive conversation with the Ministers. However this may be, that the visit is a political event of European importance is beyond question. Its fruits may be unlimited. This afternoon at 3 o'clock the Sultan escorted his guests to the landing. The Emperor went on board the Kaiser, and the Empress returned to her luxurious cabins on the Hohenzollern. Then, amid much banging of guns, the two vessels steamed out of the harbor and were lost to view behind the Seraglio Point. No sooner had they gone than the Ministry were tempted to give way to remorse.

POLICE TORTURE IN HUNGARY.

From The London Times.

The "Ujsag," of Budapest, has received the following atrocious stories from its correspondent at Alt Beese. In consequence of sheep-stealing at Alt Beese, the police arrested Blasius Kovacs, and subjected him to terrible tortures. The pain wrung from him the name of one Cseke. Cseke was arrested and laid on his back. Two gendarmes held his hands and a third knelt on his chest, while a fourth beat him on the soles of his feet with a leather strap till he fainted. Cseke, however, would not confess to the crime, so his tormentors steeped his feet, dripping with blood, in vinegar, and thrashed him again till he fainted a second time. The next day Cseke's innocence was amply demonstrated. The gendarmes waited till night, then turned him into the street, with a stick to support him. He had to be conveyed home in a cart, and will remain, it is said, crippled for life. A woman named Szilak was lately arrested on suspicion of theft. She also was tortured, and the following day her innocence was proved. The doctor who examined her after her release declared there was not a place as large as one's hand on her body without a wound. Her husband instructed a lawyer to obtain redress for him, but the gendarmes, learning this, hurried round to the lawyer's residence and beat him till he promised to withdraw the action. Elizabeth Major, age sixty-three, was arrested on a charge of having found a sum of money and kept the matter secret. She, too, was able to prove her innocence, but not until she had been tortured. As she was about to be discharged, the gendarmes heard that she meant to prosecute them, so they shut her up and tortured her again. Then, after setting her free for the second time, they ran after her and gave her a brutal beating. The correspondent of the "Ujsag" says that he can establish evidence of other cases equally horrible.

OTTERS TOBOGGANING.

A LIVE MOUSE AS BAIT FOR A TROUT—INTOXICATED CROWS.

Blakesley, Penn., Nov. 30.—This is one of the best game sections between the Delaware and Susquehanna valleys. Nearly every local householder hunts more or less, and many of them occasionally tell interesting stories of their sporting experiences in the region. On the north bank of Trout Run, two miles from here, a steep knoll rises from the edge of a deep pool. The spot is a great resort for otters in winter, and Samuel Price, who has watched them on many a bright moonlight night when the temperature was several degrees below zero, tells about how the furry fellows frolic there. If the pool happens to be frozen over, the otters gnaw and dig a hole through the ice at the foot of the knoll. Then one after another they all plunge into the pool, get their fur full of water and skip up the hill. The water drips off on the way and freezes as soon as it strikes the ground or snow, and in a little while, the playful otters have a regular toboggan slide as slippery as ice on a steep hillside can be. When the slide is completed, each otter takes its turn at sliding down the knoll "kerplunk" into the pool, and they keep up the sport until daylight, catching a trout now and then and eating it on the bank. One night last winter Mr. Price trapped a full-grown otter at the slide. He has it yet, but he has not been able to tame it very much.

In a cooper shop here the other evening, Ezra Hubbard, whose home is at the base of Leverst Ridge, related his experience with a bear this fall. The night was so warm that they had to leave the windows up, and the moon was shining brightly. Mr. Hubbard said he was aroused some time in the night by a noise in his orchard, and when he looked out he saw a bear shaking apples from his best pound sweet tree. The tree stood on a steep hillside, and the big apples rolled down against the fence as fast as the bear shook them off. As soon as the bear had shaken off all the fruit he wanted, he slid down the tree, waddled to the fence and began to devour the apples greedily. Then Mr. Hubbard pulled on his trousers and boots, loaded his rifle, climbed out of the window and stole along to a spot where he could get a good shot at the thief. He said that he let the bear take in a pretty big jag of apples before he fired, and then he blazed away and sent a bullet into the bear's head, just below his left ear. The animal flounced and tumbled against the fence for a minute, but he soon kicked his last. He weighed 383 pounds. The next morning, Mr. Hubbard said, he ascertained that the bear had climbed the fence at the upper side of the orchard and passed seven tons of winter apples to get at the pound sweet tree.

Otis Goddard, of East Hill, came into Blakesley the other day to have his oxen shod. While waiting in the blacksmith shop, the brawny young backwoodsman told this fish story, declaring that Jack Hayner, who was with him when he caught the trout, would swear to every word of his statement. For months Goddard had tried to land a wily old trout that lurked in one of the deep pools in Tobyhanna Creek. He had angled, he said, with flies, grasshoppers, worms, minnows and other kinds of bait, but he couldn't get the big trout to notice any of them. He had seen the cunning speckled fellow time and again and he wanted him ever so much. One day in July he caught a little deer mouse in the pasture, and he stuck his hook through the loose skin on the mouse's neck and threw it into the pool. It was a lively swimmer, but it hadn't swam six feet before the trout gobbled it with a dash that sent his snout out of the water. That was an unfortunate move for the trout, because within five seconds Goddard had him flopping on dry land, with his hat over the fighting beauty. The trout weighed two pounds and fourteen ounces, Goddard declared.

Howard Cable was crossing Oak Hill one day last month, when he came across a big hollow birch tree that looked as though there might be a nest of coons somewhere inside of the trunk. So he returned home, filled his Marlin rifle with cartridges, packed some charcoal and sulphur in a basket and went back to the tree. In the opening at the butt of the tree he built a charcoal fire, and then he sprinkled a lot of sulphur on the glowing coals. There was a good draught through the hollow trunk to a hole near the crotch, and pretty soon a fat coon crawled out of the top hole, sneezed and clung to a limb. It was followed by four others, and Cable said he shot the whole five and lugged them home.

Delos Griffin lives on Laurel Run, three miles from here. Crows dug up his corn last spring until he got very angry. He couldn't get the best of the black thieves, and finally he soaked a pint of corn in a quart of cheap whiskey for forty-eight hours. Then he sprinkled the corn in the field, and five crows gobbled it up and hung around for more until they got so drunk that they couldn't fly away. They tipped up on their tails, cawed hoarsely and tumbled about, and Griffin got some cord, he said, and tied them to the fence by their legs till they sobered up. Then they fluttered hard for freedom, and Griffin wrung their necks.

APPEALING TO THEIR SYMPATHIES.

A TALE OF TWO GOOD WOMEN AND A RAGGED URCHIN.

Two handsomely dressed women, with beaming and benevolent faces, were walking southward along Broadway by the triangle at Thirty-third-st. one afternoon last week. Goodness was unmistakably stamped on each woman's face and their placid looks showed that they were at peace with the world. When they reached Thirty-second-st. they saw a ragged urchin who was in the act of picking up something from the gutter. It was a piece of stale bread covered with the dirt of the street. A shudder ran over both women as they saw the boy put the bit of bread to his mouth. It was a slim, shivering boy, whose woe-begone and weazen features told of poverty that would appeal to the stoniest heart.

"Poor, dear boy," said the elder of the women, and a tear crept into her eye. "You do look hungry, indeed. Have you nothing better to eat than that?"

"Na-a-w, nuffin 'tall, mum," he replied in thin shivering tones. "Got no 'ome, no farder, no mudder; gits me livin' in de street."

"There, there, throw away that dirty bread. Take this quarter and go and get some warm coffee and a roll," replied the good woman, as she felt her kindly heart seem to rise up in her throat and choke her.

The wretched lad took the shining coin in his begrimed fingers and blubbered out his thanks. Then the second lady fished a quarter out of her reticule and gave it to the urchin. The boy seemed overcome by such good fortune, and between his thanks he stuffed the hand holding the two quarters into the bosom of his ragged shirt. Then the two good women patted the mat of hair on his hatless head, spoke cheery words to the boy, and resumed their walk down Broadway, their hearts filled with a warm glow of gladness that they had been able to relieve a case of genuine distress. And the boy—he went around the block to the Sixth-ave. side of the Union Dime Savings Bank, taking his crust of dirty bread with him, and prepared to work his "lay" again.

ROMANCE OF AN ARCHDUKE.

From Galignani's Messenger.

During his stay of several hours in Bozen, the Emperor Francis Joseph paid a visit to the Archduke Henry, on which occasion the Archduke's consort, Baroness Waldeck, and their daughter, Baroness Marie, were introduced to his Majesty. In his marriage the Archduke had committed such a breach of the traditional rules and usages of the Hapsburg family that for twenty-one years he has lived estranged from the Head of the Imperial House. On the 4th of February, 1868, Archduke Henry married Fraulein Leopoldine Hofmann. She was the daughter of a very humble official employed in the Assessment Office at Krems, in Upper Austria. In all princely families it is, of course, a strict and invariable rule that the sanction of the Head of the House must be previously obtained to any proposed matrimonial alliance; but to the marriage of the Archduke Henry, not only was the Emperor's approval not obtained, but the prohibition of the nuptials issued by his Majesty was disobeyed, and the Archduke was for many years expatriated.

Archduke Henry, who is now sixty-one years of age, felt deeply the loss of his military rank, and still more his exile, but otherwise his marriage brought him unalloyed happiness. At length the Emperor's displeasure began to disappear, and the Archduke was allowed to take up his permanent residence in a Tyrolese town. With his wife, who had meanwhile been raised to noble rank under the title of Baroness Waldeck, and with the only child of their marriage, a daughter, who is now eighteen years old, the "civilian" Archduke Henry for some time lived the quiet, contented life of a landed proprietor.

It was when stationed in Graz that he made the acquaintance of Fraulein Hofmann, a singer at the theatre, with a monthly salary of fifty florins. She was by no means a great singer. Her best role was that of Pamela in "Fra Diavolo"; but she was pretty, quick-witted, the very type of a Viennese girl, and, above all, irreproachable in her conduct and manners. The acquaintance, which never ceased to be a most honorable one, had already lasted some time, when war broke out in the North as well as in the South, and the Archduke had to take the field in Italy. Before leaving he gave his word of honor to the girl that he would marry her if his life were spared, and this promise he faithfully kept.

A CAPRIOTE.

Upon her cheek a damask glows,
And comes and goes,
As fine as the pomegranate knows

And such a light her eye escapes
As gleams on grapes
That purple all her island capes.

Her figure has the wondrous grace
That marks her race—
Well-rounded curves from foot to face.

I look! she smiles bewitchingly;
I turn and see
Two fierce dark eyes fixed fast on me.

That smile—that marvelled poise of head!
Sweet dream be fled!
These Capriotes carry knives, 'tis said.

THE STORY OF A WALK.

I was one evening presiding over a happy party of young people, my guests, who had trooped into my sitting-room to partake of that pleasant and movable feast, a 5 o'clock tea. We were all thoroughly at home with each other, most of the individuals present being cousins, and all of them near relations to myself. Some had just returned from riding, others from driving or walking, and all seemed bent upon half an hour's unconstrained, unconventional comfort. One damsel had thrown herself at full length upon the sofa, two others sat upon cushions placed for that purpose in front of the fire, while the young men were sprawling about—as young men will—in different attitudes, indicative of each one's peculiar stage of fatigue or laziness. Candles and lamps had been discarded, and the firelight alone illumined the room. Suddenly one of the young girls addressed me in a coaxing tone, thus:

"Dear Aunty Madge, do tell us a story!"

"A story!" I exclaimed; "and, pray, what about?"

"A ghost story," exclaimed a chorus of young voices.

"Oh, no! I never tell ghost stories, although I know a good many, but——"

"Well," persisted the first speaker, "tell us something—something truly dreadful and dreadfully true!"

"Would you like me to tell you something that really happened to myself years ago?"

"Oh, yes; better than anything else."

"Very well. Poke the fire into a blaze—so, and now if you are all ready I will begin; and remember that what I am going to tell you is really and literally true.

"Some years ago I took to the strange habit of rising early—but very, very early I mean—and taking a solitary country walk. This would not have been such a strange thing to do had the hour been less unconventionally early, and had I confined my pedestrian feats to the summer time; but this I did not do. Winter and summer were alike to me then, and at both seasons I invariably rose at 4 o'clock, and was out of the house before 5; and I need hardly remind you that at that hour, in the winter, it is quite dark, unless, of course, there should be a moon.

"Some of you, no doubt, are saying to yourselves, 'What a foolish old woman to leave her comfortable warm bed at such an unheard-of hour, instead of waiting, like a sensible person, to go out in the daytime!'

"Ah! foolish it may have been, and, as it turned out, it certainly was; but the habit did not originate in my case from caprice. It arose from a wretched restlessness of mind and body, the effects of a great sorrow—the greatest, in my opinion, that can befall any woman, especially a young one, as I was then. Some of you here know to what I allude, so I need not enter into the circumstances, beyond saying briefly that on one wretched winter's morning, as the clocks were striking 5, a blow fell upon me, shattering all my earthly hopes of future happiness.

"For months afterward I could not sleep, and I used to lie restlessly, feverishly tossing about in my bed, morbidly recalling and living over again each particular of the awful night which preceded my trouble, dreading also to hear the ruthless clock chime out the fatal hour; and after it had done so, my agitation and distress would reach such a pitch that nothing could quiet me.

"At last I conceived the plan of rising early from my weary, sleepless couch, dressing hastily, and being out and far away before the dreaded moment should arise. God grant that none of you may ever experience the torture I did then, only to find out, too, how impossible it is to run away with from oneself.

"My home at that time was in Scotland. I lived in a dear old house, which was poised, like a bird, upon a rock, and literally hung over the sea, the silver spray dashing ceaselessly against its windows. On one side of the house there was a good-sized old-fashioned garden, laid out in terraces down to the sea, and not a quarter of a mile distant from the other side was a thick firwood. It was into this wood that I generally strayed of a morning, and, sitting upon one of the felled trees—of which there were always a number lying prone upon the ground—I would watch the daylight gradually appearing, and the sun rising grandly out of the sea. After the sun had fairly risen I always hastened homeward, so as to avoid meeting any early risers who might be about the place; and the rest of the day I would shut myself up with my books and music, a prey to harrowing memories. I cannot defend my worse than useless life at this time. My grief was selfish, and, therefore, all the harder to bear, for God has taught me since that there is no such comfort in sorrow as that of seeking to comfort others.

There were no gentlemen's places near my home; consequently, no neighbors, no visitors ever molested me. But not many miles distant there existed an old, melancholy-looking mansion, called Mornington, which had been uninhabited for many years, but latterly, to the great annoyance of the farmers and small gentry around, it had been let to a Dr. Sterndale, who kept an establishment for incurable lunatics.

"Everything, however, seemed to go on quietly enough there; the unhappy patients never, apparently, venturing beyond the park, which was shut in by large iron gates. These gates were always locked, but now and then passers by caught glimpses through them of gaunt, strangely attired figures, and sometimes, though rarely, of pale, anxious-looking faces peering through the ironwork.

"There was a dilapidated lodge at the entrance gates, surrounded by what years ago had been a garden, but now it was choked up by overgrown shrubs, evergreens, which seemed vainly struggling and struggling, out of kindly delicacy, to hide their old friend's broken windows and unhinged doors! Certainly this lodge had an uncanny appearance, and the report had once been spread (a ridiculously false one, of course) that it was at times used as a 'dead-house': for no living person was ever seen to enter the door, no smoke to issue from the chimney, and when Dr. Sterndale drove out in his lumbering coach, which he did now and again, accompanied by some of his most favored patients, he invariably opened the lodge gates himself and carefully relocked them, thus requiring no aid from a lodge-keeper.

"The doctor's vehicle, just mentioned, rather struck awe, I found, in the simple villager mind; for my gardener related that one day as it was coming toward him, he saw it suddenly shut itself up with a loud snap. 'For all the wor-r-rld,' said the man timorously, 'like a large mouth, gulping down the puir folk who were inside.' In vain I assured him that this phenomenon was simply the result of some clever inside mechanism; he and the country people became superstitiously alarmed; and this sentiment was by no means lessened when the gardener proceeded to give further details. He stated that at the moment the carriage passed him, one of the blinds, which had been hastily drawn down, was violently pushed aside by a large white hand covered with glittering rings; that then a face was thrust forward, making horrid grimaces and gesticulations; but that both head and hands hastily disappeared with a jerk, as though the individual who claimed them had been forcibly dragged back. The blind was then replaced, but it shook exceedingly, as if some struggle were going on behind it; than the carriage passed by, vanishing in a cloud of dust.

"I laughed at the story to some, and endeavored to explain it simply to others; but finding it was impossible to stem the torrent of obstinacy or ignorance, or both, I left the matter alone.

"That the lunatics were of a dangerous class I had often heard it said, but such a report would be sure, I thought, to get afloat, were it true or the reverse; and as Mornington was a long way from my house (it was quite a mile the other side of the fir-wood, which itself was nearly a mile broad) I did not trouble myself about such tales. My maid, however, who had lived years with me, constantly implored me to be less venturesome in my morning walks; but I felt no fear—the greatest calamity that could befall me had come, so I was callous about anything else.

"Well, one morning late in the autumn, having been more restless than usual during the previous night, I got up earlier even than was my wont, and after a brisk walk found myself in the very heart of the wood. I knew exactly where I was, for a seat had been placed there to mark the centre-point. It was one of the (then) new-fashioned double seats, upon which people sit back to back, and just as I reached it I heard a village clock strike 5, and for the first time in my life (I knew not why) when I realized my distance from home, and the earliness of the hour, a shudder came over me, and the fact that the place was very lonely, and that I was only a weak woman and utterly defenceless, forced itself unpleasantly upon me. I determined, however, to pooh-pooh my fears, to pull myself together, and to persuade myself that I was not afraid.

"'It is the weather,'" I said, 'which has unnerved me,' and certainly it was not reassuring.

"It was a fitful morning; there had been a good deal of rain during the night, accompanied by wild gusts of wind. Heavy black and white clouds were hurrying across the sky, and seemed to chase the terrified and fugitive moon. She was at her full, and at one moment her bright and almost blinding beams would pierce through the waving trees, casting strange, unearthly shadows around; and at the next, she and the shuddering wood would be enveloped in a funeral pall of inky blackness. The effect was weird in the extreme, and during one of the moments of sudden obscurity, I sank down on a seat spellbound, looking up at the sky with a beating heart, and longing for the next appearance of the rolling moon. One angry cloud had already released her, but I saw that yet another must pass over her face before the blessed light could reappear, and it was the strangest cloud I ever beheld, being the exact shape of a man's hand, with one long bony finger stretched out (I fancied) in warning. The moon seemed to roll slowly and painfully between the fingers, looking very pale and faint the while; but at last, with a bound, she emerged from the shadows, shining with a wild and happy brightness, as though rejoicing to escape from the clutch of the hand.

"I also was inexpressibly relieved, and rose quickly from my seat, intending to hurry home; but how can I paint the amazement, the horror I felt, when I perceived I was no longer alone! Another human being had silently—with catlike steps—arrived during the darkness; a man was sitting on the seat, on the further end of the other side! His face was turned away, but his appearance was so peculiarly alarming that my heart stood still; for at a glance I 'took in' the situation.

"'An escaped lunatic!' I thought, 'and my only chance of safety is to brave it out!'

"As these thoughts darted through my brain, the man slowly, very slowly, turned his head and locked deliberately at me. Oh, that look! Never, to my dying day, shall I forget it! I see it now! Everything most terrifying, most sinister, most repulsive, was in that look. Audacity, cowardice, insolence, malice—all, all these were there, and above all, and through them all—madness!

"The man was deadly pale, or the struggling dawn (which was just silvering the horizon) made him appear so. His eyes were frightfully bloodshot, his teeth were large and very white, and there was a light froth upon his lips, which had the blue-gray appearance of a corpse! He wore a long 'Ulster' coat, buttoned from his throat to his feet, and a tumbled white collar appeared above it, giving me the impression that he must have escaped from his bed, and in his night-gear. What alarmed me almost more than anything (if anything could be more alarming than everything was) was the fact that a centre button of the coat, at the waist, was unbuttoned, and in the aperture thus formed, one of the man's hands was thrust, and I kept asking myself——

"'What is he hiding there? a pistol, a knife, or what?'

"Feeling my extreme helplessness, and how entirely I was, humanly speaking, at the mercy of a madman, I sent up a prayer to the All-Powerful God—a cry for help—for wisdom how to act; and on looking back now, I can see how wonderfully my ejaculatory prayer was instantly answered, for I felt suddenly impelled by a discretion (not my own) not to run, or even walk away; but to reseat myself with the greatest apparent calmness.

"This act seemed to surprise—to please the man, for he smiled, and, to my unspeakable terror, slid slowly along the seat till he came close to me, although still on the other side. I felt his shoulder touch mine—but I dared not shrink from the contact—then he bent his head back till it rested on my veil; his fetid breath mingling with mine, while he peered, insolently, mockingly, into my face. After a few moments (which appeared hours to me), during which he intently scanned my features, while I, God helping me, tried to meet his gaze bravely, he said deliberately, and evidently watching the effect of his words:

"'I saw you coming into the wood; I hid behind a tree, and then—I followed you. When the moon shone out I hid again, and touched your gown as you passed, but you didn't know. Ha, ha! funny, isn't it? Then, when it got dark again, I crept up to the seat and when you sat down, I did so, too. Why shouldn't I? I have as much right here as you. I say' (coming a trifle nearer, and putting his horrid mouth close to my ear), 'we are quite alone in the wood—you and I! Nice, isn't it? Are you afraid—eh?'

"'No,' I answered boldly; 'why should I be afraid? We are not alone, as you suppose, for——'

"'Eh?' said he, nervously looking round; then, in a whisper, 'Who is here besides us?'

"'God!' I answered, clearly and firmly. 'He is here. He is stronger than I—or you; and He takes care of us both.'

"He looked hard at me, and I looked back fearlessly (apparently) at him, resolved that my glance should not be the first to falter. At last—after a deadly but silent battle between his will and mine—his eyes quailed and fell; and I knew instinctively that I had gained a victory, for he shifted uneasily on the seat, and turned his head away, while I breathed more freely.

"After a short silence, he said in a hoarse whisper, as though afraid of being overheard:

"'I say, I can't sleep; that's why I come out so early. My servants' (with a wave of the hand and the assumption of a 'grand seigneur') 'have their orders always to keep my breakfast hot!' Then, with a howl of bitter distress, he cried out: 'Oh, oh! If I only could sleep! I would give kingdoms to sleep!'

"It is remarkable that as he gave utterance to this bitter cry, in spite of the deadly fear I felt, and of the almost certainty that I should never live to tell this tale, a mighty sympathy arose in my heart for this wretched maniac; for did I not know, as well almost as he, the agony of sleeplessness?

"I therefore said, kindly and pityingly:

"'How strange! I, too, cannot sleep!'

"Looking at me with a world of despair in his face, he said:

"'Is it a curse?' Then rocking himself to and fro on the seat, he moaned out, 'Oh, what—what shall I do to sleep?'

"There was such a ring of anguish in his tones that my heart bled for him, and I said gently:

"'Oh! try what I have tried—that which is after all the only comfort, waking or sleeping!'

"'What's that?' he said eagerly.

"'Pray!' I said.

"'Oh!' he answered wearily, 'I have prayed, but God won't hear me. How can He, when He is up there'—pointing to the sky—'and I am in that hell?'

"'But He does hear,' I said solemnly, and as to a child. 'He sees and hears everything. He sees you and me here—now. He knew we should meet this morning, and He it is who teaches me to say to you, pray! Tell Him, when lying on your restless bed—just as you have told me—that you can't sleep, that you suffer, that you are unhappy, that——' I was going on, when my companion suddenly started up, and looking uneasily around, whispered, 'Hush! hark!'

"He seemed to listen eagerly, and then, with an expression in his face of intense hatred, gradually and cautiously drew the hand, hitherto concealed, out of his breast. A deadly sickness seized me, for my worst fears were realized, when I beheld the light of the dawning day gleam upon the blade of a murderous-looking knife; but a ray of hope was at the same moment vouchsafed to me, for following with my eyes the direction of his—oh, joy! two horsemen were apparent through the trees, trotting slowly along a grassy pathway generally only used by foot-passengers, and each carried a ready-cocked pistol and seemed in eager search.

"Of course I knew they were on the track of the wretched man at my side, and although they were quite within hail, I dared not either call or make them a sign, feeling convinced that had I done either, the knife would have been plunged into my bosom, for I perceived the maniac was watching me narrowly, and he evidently meant to sell his liberty dearly.

"Had the horsemen seen us? I wondered, in an agony of hope and fear; but I dared not move, and words would utterly fail me to express my sensations when I suddenly saw my miserable companion start to his feet, brandishing the knife, and, leaving his side of the seat, come toward mine. I was preparing, as a last resource, to scream and run for my life, when, to my amazement, instead of attacking me, the poor wretch threw himself on his knees at my feet, trembling like a leaf, and, burying his face in my lap (I had never relinquished my seat), said, in a hurried and imploring whisper:

"'Save me from those two men! They did not see me. For the love of God don't give me up to them! You are good and kind, and are sorry for me, and you have told me to pray; so now I pray God and I pray you, don't, don't give me up!'

"For an instant he remained motionless, with his face buried in my lap, and I really don't know what folly my womanly impulse of intense sympathy might not have tempted me to commit, had I not at that instant caught sight of the knife which he still grasped tightly in his hand. I shuddered as I saw it, and he must have felt me do so, for, raising his head quickly and putting his awful face close to mine, he muttered fiercely and half to himself, 'She doesn't look true. Oh, if I thought she would betray me!'

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