

"I do not in general," I proceeded, "make distractions, but without doubt"—
 M. Constant stopped to listen.
 "Without doubt," I said deliberately, "it is M. le Capitaine Larne."
 "But," put in M. Constant excitedly, "I have just touched him five times to nothing in a bout."
 "Ah, monsieur," I said smilingly, "assuredly you also are becoming an excellent fencer. Your practice is most commendable; but here in the salle M. le Capitaine plays—he does not exert his skill. In a duel!"—I shrugged my shoulders—"I myself should not care to meet him."
 It was a lie, but how much better a lie than an assassination! I perceived that M. Constant departed in great haste, and almost I could vow that his teeth chattered as he went. What happened?
 It was reported that M. le Capitaine was much enraged to be kept waiting in the morning, for his bravery was indubitable. But it appeared that M. Constant had conceived so pressing an admiration for the colonies that he felt himself compelled to leave for Tonquin by the night train. He was a little rat.—(R. E. Verne, in Black and White.)

"MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCES."

OFTEN ACCOUNTED FOR AS A FORM OF EPILEPSY.

If all the cases in which men and women wander away from their homes without any particular reason and without giving any notice to friends were reported to the newspapers occasional disappearances of prominent persons would not cause so much public interest. Prominent physicians who have made a special study of nerve and brain diseases say that the public has no idea how many persons take unconscious trips of greater or less extent, and on regaining consciousness wonder how they got where they are. They are generally unable to remember anything which happened in the interim. It is one of the wonders of brain investigation that men can move about under the control of a sub-consciousness and appear perfectly rational among strangers.

Medical investigation has shown that such attacks are chiefly the result of epilepsy, although the victim may have shown no previous signs of the disease, and may never have suffered an epileptic fit. Hysterical persons are often affected in a similar manner as the result of some mental shock, such as the sudden loss of money or the death of a relative. The effect is the same whether the trouble is caused by epilepsy or sudden mental shock. The person loses consciousness and a sub-consciousness is set up. The change is often accompanied by absolute failure of memory, which frequently causes the sufferer to forget his own name. When consciousness is regained there is not the faintest memory of anything which happened after the attack came on.

The state of sub-consciousness may last for a few hours or for several months. A year ago a man was found wandering about the streets of Binghamton, N. Y., in a sub-conscious state. He was taken to a neighboring insane asylum and received the best of treatment, but it has been impossible to re-establish the conscious ego, nor has the man been able to remember his name. A travelling magician gave an entertainment in Binghamton a few months ago, and consented to go to the asylum to entertain the inmates. He had performed a number of clever tricks when the victim of lost memory arose in his seat and insisted on being allowed to show his skill. He performed the tricks which the sleight-of-hand artist had executed, and did others which were much more difficult. It was evident that at one time he had been in the business, but the clew did not result in establishing his identity.

Another case of this nature was recently reported by a London medical society. A well known English business man lost consciousness in Paris. He came into his right mind several months later in the stateroom of a steamer which was entering Bombay. Why he had undertaken the trip to India or what he had done in Paris was beyond his memory. The passengers told him that he had behaved in a seemingly rational manner. This case was due to epilepsy.

Nearly every New-York physician who is a specialist in nervous diseases can give instances of strange cases of this sort which have come under his personal observation. Only a few weeks ago a prominent business man had an experience of this kind which has caused him considerable worry. He left his office one afternoon intending to go home. Three days later he found himself on his knees in a church in Pittsburg. He must have acted in a rational manner, as he had not attracted undue attention.

A young married couple visited a prominent physician a short time ago to have the wife examined as to her sanity. Both were convinced that she was insane. She had wandered away from home on the West Side, and regained consciousness in an East Side street hours afterward and several miles away from her residence. She was also troubled at times with an "imperative impulse" which caused her to attempt her husband's life. Both of these cases were due to epilepsy in a mild form. In each a treatment calculated to build up the general system was given, and the patients were then treated as in ordinary cases of epilepsy. Hopes are entertained of permanent cures.

ACTIVE SERVICE.

Harold Begbie, in Punch.
 A bomb exploded on the breakfast table of Captain and Mrs. Caraway, just as Mrs. Caraway was pouring boiling water upon the Indian tea.
 "Jane!" cried the old gentleman; "I'm called out! They want me at the depot."
 "George! it's impossible! Oh, they can never be so cruel!"
 "They want me immediately," he made answer. And then his wife burst into tears.
 You see, Captain Caraway was in the carpet slipper period of life. He had never been a keen soldier, and with his twelve years of service accomplished, and his pension attained, the gentle souled little man had laid by his uniform and retired into civil life with a glad heart. On his pension and a small income enjoyed by Mrs. Caraway, the worthy couple had lived for many years on the outskirts of London, going regularly to church on Sunday and tending their garden and three Persian cats during the week. He envied no general his fame, never abused the War Office, belonged to no military club, and looked back on his soldiering as the majority of undergraduates look back on their schooldays. That he should ever buckle on his armor again was the last thought that ever entered the Captain's placid mind.

Now, while Mrs. Caraway dreaded the breaking up of the home more than anything else, Captain Caraway, it must be confessed, viewed the order from the War Office in other lights as well. To go back to barracks meant to him a return to bullying, or, at any rate, to what schoolboys call "ragging." His colonel, a man named Watt, he remembered distinctly as a fine, dashing major, who loved to make him the butt of messroom witticisms. If, then, he had been ragged by the major in those faraway days of his early manhood, how much more would he find himself chaffed and teased now that he was in middle life and less like a soldier than ever? Thoughts of this kind gnawed at Captain Caraway's heart, but he kept them from his wife.

Mrs. Caraway was a fine, bustling woman. Her first grief over, the good woman insisted on making the old uniform do, and herself let it out where necessary, arranging for belts and sashes to hide the trail of her needle. "We must save as much as possible," she said, when her husband hinted that Watt was always very particular about kit.

Then the day came for Captain Caraway to depart. As he kissed his wife thoughts of all she had been to him, all she had grown to mean to him, surged tumultuously into his heart.

"What shall I do without my pretty Jane?" he cried.

"Take care of yourself," she answered, "and remember to see that your servant airs your shirts and underclothing. Oh, George, promise me," she went on, "that you will change your boots and socks whenever you have been out in the rain?"

"I promise," he said, a little hoarsely.
 "Then it will soon be over," said she, cheerfully, "and you will come back safe and sound. I wrote last night to the Colonel, asking him to see that your bed was aired?"

"Jane!" he shrieked in horror.

"Dear George. What is it?"

"You don't mean to say you asked the Colonel to air my bed?"

"Of course, I did. Now, none of your ridiculous nonsense about military etiquette. I wrote secretly, because I knew you would be sure to raise some trifling objection of that kind. Your life, my dear, is much too precious for me to stand on ceremony in things of this kind. Good-by, George, good-by; and promise that you will change your boots?"

And so he departed from London.

It was sunset when he arrived at the country station and hailed a fly. The train was late, and with a three miles' drive before him he was fearful of arriving late for mess. Never did milkop entering school for the first time suffer greater torments than did poor Caraway during that drive. The thought that his wife had asked the Colonel—the Colonel!—to air his bed caused the poor fellow infinite anguish. He pictured to himself the fate in front of him. The Colonel would meet him on the steps of the quarters with carpet slippers and a tumbler of warm milk. The other men would be grinning at the Colonel's side, and saying over and over again: "Are you quite sure, sir, that you've aired Captain Caraway's bed?" And his servant would be in the background witnessing his humiliation. The mess waiters would have heard the Colonel roaring over his wife's fatal letter that very morning at breakfast, and now all the men in barracks would be making merry at his expense. But worse than forfeiting his company's respect was the prospect of being baited by the young sprigs of subalterns. What would they say to him? What would they do to him? A cold wind blew across the darkening fields. The sun's last beams flickered behind the chimneys of a manu-

facturing town in the distance. Captain Caraway shivered.

He began to remember different points in the landscape, the trees in the hedges, the bends of the road. A few minutes more, and the dust stained fly would turn sharp to the left, jolt up a narrow lane, and then—the red brick barracks? He pulled out his watch and shivered again. It was 8 o'clock; he had fifteen minutes in which to dress for dinner!

The fly turned the corner, crawled slowly up the lane, and presently rattled slowly over cobblestones through the barrack gates. The sentry, a smooth faced boy, looked up at the Captain, but did not salute. The barrack square seemed empty. Outside the officers' quarters, a dull, cheerless red brick building, a civilian was lounging. When the fly stopped he approached and touched his forehead. "Captain Caraway?" said he. "Yes," said our hero. "I'm Private Moore, sir, and I'm told off to be your servant. You've got ten minutes to dress in, sir."
 Captain Caraway followed his servant meekly up the steps, and climbed with him the echoing wooden stairs. Full as his mind was of apprehension, he yet had room there for thoughts of his home and the girl he had left behind him. Ah! how greatly to be desired was that little snug villa, with its thick carpets, its pretty curtains and the three comfortable Persian cats! He looked about him, and his heart grew sick. Here was his room. Moore had returned to the fly for his luggage, and he stood alone in a big, bare, hideous apartment; a few seedy old wicker chairs and a dull deal table occupied the larger half of this room, while on the other side of the partition was an untidy dressing table, a miserable washstand and a bed. The bed! He took a step forward, his mouth open, his eyes staring from their sockets. The bed! There on the pillow, peeping wickedly out of the sheets, was the handle of a warming pan. A warming pan! Poor Caraway moved hurriedly across the room, and thrust his hand between the bedclothes. They were warm, horribly, vilely warm.

When Moore returned he was prepared for the worst. While the soldier knelt over his boxes, he undressed with a swiftness that surprised himself, plunged his face into warm water and dried it on towels that were warm, too. After all, thought he, it can only be for a few weeks, and I shall soon be back again with Jane and the cats. But his heart was aching very badly when he hurried down the steps and passed out into the open on his way to the mess. When he opened the door of the anteroom his agony of mind was intense.

"Caraway," said a voice he seemed to remember, and the next minute he was shaking hands with the Colonel. "I'm very glad to see you again, my dear fellow. Eh, what? We're a very dull party here, a very dull party, but you mustn't mind that. Eh, what? You must speak up when you talk to me; I'm as deaf as a post—can't hear a single word. Let me introduce you to Major Bullen. D'you remember Bullen? After your time, I think. Eh, what? A very fat old man with two stout walking sticks in his hands extricated himself from the depths of an armchair and hobbled over to Caraway.

"Very pleased to meet you," he wheezed. "Fear you'll find us a bit dull after town. The Colonel's deaf and I'm lame. Gout. Anything the matter with you?"

"A little sciatica at times," said Caraway, wishing to make himself pleasant.

"Sciatica! Cure you in two days. Remedy of my own. Perfectly simple, and no demmed quackery. Come over to my quarters after dinner, and I'll tell you about it."

"And now," said the Colonel, "let me introduce Captain Simmonds. He thinks because I'm deaf he must shout; the greatest mistake in the world. I can hear well enough if people only speak distinctly."

Captain Simmonds came forward. He was a big fellow, boasting a great chest measurement and a deep bass voice.

"Beastly nuisance calling us out," he said. "I believe we shall be here for a couple of years!" And then he burst out laughing. Caraway laughed, too.

"What does he say?" asked the Colonel.

"He says, sir," replied Major Bullen, asthmatically, "that we shall be here for a couple of years."

"A couple of what?" said the Colonel.

"A couple of years, sir," cried Captain Simmonds.

"Don't shout! Don't shout!" the Colonel said.

"Well, what if we are? We're four now, and that's enough for a rubber."

"You're still fond of whist, then?" Caraway asked.

"Eh?"

"You're still fond of whist, he says," bawled Simmonds.

"Oh, yes; very. Never lost my love of a rubber. How that fellow Simmonds does below!"

The mess sergeant threw open the door and announced dinner. Colonel Watt took Caraway's arm and led him forward. Major Bullen, wheezing horribly and stumbling painfully along with his two sticks, followed at a respectable

distance, Captain Simmonds lounging behind, yawning loudly.

"Oh, by the way, Caraway," said the Colonel, "your wife was very wise to write about your bed. Directly I arrived here I sent out for warming pans. A most important point, that. Eh, what? Ah, glad you agree with me. A damp bed is the devil, the very devil. I have kept my bed aired every night since I came here, and Bullen does the same. Simmonds, of course, is young, and doesn't take advice. Never heard a fellow shout as he does," he continued, whispering. "Got a voice like the bull of Bashan. Eh, what? Caraway smiled and bowed acquiescence. The Colonel, no longer the dashing major, seemed to him the pleasantest fellow he had ever met. Bullen, in spite of his groans, was a cheerful companion, and as long as one laughed at his single joke Simmonds seemed harmless itself. This, then, was his return to soldiering. A deaf chief, a lame major, and a captain who made one joke and went to sleep after dinner. In his room that night Captain Caraway, happy as a schoolboy, sat down and wrote a letter to his wife.

"My Dearest Jane: Here I am, a soldier again. Much as I like the quiet of civilian life, there is, I must confess it, a certain fascination about the dashing life of a soldier. When I had got into my kit I felt the old glow again, and when I walked into the anteroom I felt all that elation—shall I say swagger?—which an ignorant public associates only with the Blues. The men are charming. Colonel Watt—you remember what a dashing fellow he was—is just as handsome as ever. Bullen, the major, a very good sort, and another man, Captain Simmonds, is a tremendous wit, and keeps us all on the roar. One cannot be dull in his society. We are all very gay and jolly. And now, with love to yourself and the cats, ever your devoted husband."
 "GEORGE CARAWAY."

"P. S.: The fellows were awfully good about the 'bed' business. The Colonel took it quite nicely. I will write more fully next time."

To describe Mrs. Caraway's feelings on reading this letter is quite impossible. Over and over again did the dear soul peruse her husband's words, and every time the foreboding at her heart deepened. Finally, she sat down at her modest little escritoire, and took paper and pen. What she wrote it would be wickedness to divulge, but we may at least disclose the concluding sentence of the postscript:

"Promise me, dear George," it ran; "promise me that you will not allow the dashing recklessness of a soldier's life to make you despise our little home."

By the next post Captain Caraway gave her the promise.

AN ENGLISH "PARADISE."

INNUMERABLE SPECIES OF ANIMALS ON THE DUKE OF BEDFORD'S ESTATE.

From The London News.

A "paradise" is the technical term for a preserve in which attempts are made with more or less success to acclimatize foreign birds and animals. The three most successful paradises in England are Haggerstone Castle, near Bealey, Leonardlee, in Sussex, and Woburn Abbey. Leonardlee provides the nearest approach to perfectly wild conditions, and the innumerable foreign species—the big red kangaroos, the wallabies, the mouflon, or wild sheep; the prairie dogs, the Patagonian cavies and countless other species—give the landscape a very un-English appearance. A writer in "The Quarterly Review" thus describes a vista on the Duke of Bedford's estate at Woburn Abbey:

There, in a single picture, axis deer, Japanese deer, Peking deer, red deer, Caucasian red deer, Virginian deer, and a mouflon sheep may be seen grazing quietly together; while the portraits of many other stags and bucks show to what health and vigor the animals attain in this unique paradise. But no photograph could ever do justice to the general effect of the herds there gathered together. Probably nothing like it could be seen anywhere nearer than the Athi plains in our East African Protectorate, where the great fauna of Africa still wander and feed in herds of hundreds of individuals, all at peace with one another and not greatly scared by man. In the centre of the scene lies the big gray palace, set among rolling waves of park, studded with ancient trees. Under the trees, out on the open lawns and glades, all along the sky line, and round the pools, gaze the fallow bucks and does, Japanese stags, red deer, and hybrid fawns and stags. Among them stalk gigantic wapiti, lords and masters of the mixed multitude. Under the chestnut trees is a herd of black and white yaks with their calves, with thar and other wild sheep, and close to the drive is a small herd of zebras, with a foal or two, as much at their ease as if they were commoners' ponies on Matley Heath in the New Forest.

The variety of strange birds is just as great. Chiefly remarkable are the brilliant Reeves's pheasant and the Australian brush turkey.

One of the most useful functions of a "paradise" is to preserve moribund species which once flourished in this country. The beaver, for instance, is busy with his marvellous feats of engineering and architecture in the brook at Leonardlee, though it is probably eight hundred years since a beaver made a weir on a British stream. Says the writer in "The Quarterly":

If beavers are to flourish on a river they must have a constant depth of water in which to dive and to cover the entrance to their "lodges," even if the surface is frozen thick with ice. As few small rivers or brooks have a constant flow, but are sometimes shallow, sometimes in flood, the beavers make a weir to keep up a head of water. How serious are the difficulties of building and maintaining such a weir every engineer knows. The phenomenal cleverness and industry of beavers are devoted to this end. This is not the place to give details of their log rolling paths, canals, wood cutting and weir making; but, apart from the two former processes, which were not needed in their home at Leonardlee, all the mechanical skill of beavers may there be seen to admiration. They soon made and have ever since maintained a large weir, cutting down all the unprotected trees, except some large beeches and big pines, and using all the branches, large and small, for building with. They left one tree, a small oak, to support what was to be the centre of the weir. Soon a long, deep pool was formed above the weir, flooding the adjacent banks and submerging the bases of several large trees which the beavers had begun to cut. One, a large beech, they rooted up, when the water had moistened the earth below. In order to cut down another, around which their pool had formed deep water, they built a platform, and then sat on that and gnawed the tree. Later they cut down the supporting oak, probably knowing that the dam was strong enough without it, and began a new weir below.



MAMMA—NOW GO AND SAY GOOD-NIGHT TO YOUR GOVERNESS, LIKE A GOOD LITTLE GIRL, AND GIVE HER A KISS.
 LITTLE PUSS—I'LL SAY GOOD-NIGHT, BUT I WON'T GIVE HER A KISS.
 MAMMA—THAT'S NAUGHTY! WHY DON'T YOU GIVE HER A KISS?
 LITTLE PUSS—BECAUSE SHE SLAPS PEOPLE'S FACES WHEN THEY TRY TO KISS HER.
 MAMMA—NOW, DON'T TALK NONSENSE, BUT DO AS YOU'RE TOLD.
 LITTLE PUSS—WELL, MUMMY, IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, ASK PAPA! (Tableau).—(Punch.)